

# IS THERE A CENTRAL ASIAN SECURITY COMPLEX?

An Application of Security Complex Theory  
and Securitization  
to Problems Relating to Identity in Central Asia.

by

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## **Abstract**

This thesis is an application of security complex theory and the concept of security as an 'intentional act' to the problem of Central Asian security and is specifically focussed on issues relating to identity. Security complex theory allows external and systemic influences to be compartmentalised, revealing the 'natural' course of regional security dynamics. The approach postulates the existence of a durable structure of regional security formed by the natural dynamics of state interaction in the region. Relations are marked by patterns of amity and enmity that have developed over the historical interaction between entities, such that the majority of their security interactions are directed internally within this structure. The Central Asian Security Complex postulated here includes Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Afghanistan and the Chinese Province of Xinjiang.

Five identities including, local, clan, national, ethnic and Islamic, are analysed to determine whether they are sufficiently able to act as securitizing agents. Security as an intentional act is a recent re-conceptualisation of the traditional realist definition that considers security to be an extreme version of politicisation. The approach sets parameters on specific issues by isolating the point when an issue is perceived to be an existential threat and when it is no longer considered as such. As such, the sub-state regional and state levels are determined to be most likely, with case studies on Gorno-Badakhshan and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan providing supporting evidence for those conclusions. Security Complex Theory and securitization are both determined to be useful approaches to the study of societal security in Central Asia.

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## Table of Contents

	<u>Abstract</u>	ii
	<u>Acknowledgements</u>	iii
	<u>Figures and Tables</u>	vi
1	<b><u>Introduction</u></b>	<b>1</b>
	1.1 The 'New Great Game' and 'Eurasian Balkanisation'	2
2	<b><u>Theoretical Background: Security, Weak States and Security Complex Theory</u></b>	<b>10</b>
	2.1 Introduction	10
	2.2 Security, Securitization and the Copenhagen Research Group	12
	2.3 Weak State Characteristics and Problems for Defining Security	18
	2.4 Security Complex Theory 1983-1998	26
3	<b><u>Societal Security and the Central Asian Security Complex</u></b>	<b>34</b>
	3.1 Societal Security	35
	3.2 Further Theoretical Considerations	38
	3.3 The Borders of the Central Asian Security Complex	43
	3.4 Defining the Boundaries of the CASC	46
4	<b><u>Identities of Central Asia and the Problem of Ethnicity</u></b>	<b>58</b>
	4.1 Sub-State Units	60
	4.2 Ethnicity	67
	4.3 Nationalism	73
	4.4 Islam	75
	4.5 Conclusion	78
5	<b><u>The IMU and Pamir Cases as Societal Security Issues</u></b>	<b>80</b>
	5.1 Pamir Regionalism in the Tajik Civil War (1991-1994)	82
	5.2 Karimov's Authoritarianism and the IMU	89
	5.3 Conclusion	99
6	<b><u>Conclusion</u></b>	<b>101</b>
	<b><u>Bibliography</u></b>	<b>106</b>

**Appendix**  
**Vita**

**114**  
**121**

## List of Figures and Illustrations

1.1	<u>Central Asia</u>	115
2.1	<u>Spectrum of Public Issues</u>	17
2.2	<u>The Component Parts of the State</u>	21
2.3	<u>Sectors and the Component Parts of the State</u>	31
3.1	<u>Levels of Security Complexes</u>	40
3.2	<u>Russians in Kazakhstan</u>	116
3.3	<u>Central Asian Levels of Analysis</u>	57
4.1	<u>Ethnicity in Central Asia</u>	117
4.2	<u>Tsarist Central Asia</u>	118
5.1	<u>A Regional View of Tajikistan</u>	119
5.2	<u>Uzbekistan and The Ferghana Valley</u>	120

## 1 Introduction

The study of Central Asia reached its apex in the late 19th century when the competition for territorial control was most intense between Britain and Russia. Between William Moorcroft's expedition for the British East India Company in 1812, and 1907 when Russian suzerainty over the region was no longer in question, diplomats and adventurers from both countries sought to gain the upper hand over their opposites. Although the goal for each side was mastery over Central Asia, the reasoning behind this desire was couched in security terms. Russia's empire had been in almost continual growth since the end of Mongol rule in the 16th Century. The reason was that the wide steppes of Central Asia, like Poland in the west, had served to be the "highways of conquest" for invading peoples. Russia feared British expansion in the south.<sup>1</sup> For Great Britain, the concern is most clearly voiced in Victorian scholar J. R. Seeley's 1883 statement:

Every movement in Turkey, every new symptom in Egypt, any stirrings in Persia or Transoxiana or Burmah or Afghanistan, we are obliged to watch with vigilance. The reason is that we have possession of India, and a leading interest in the affairs of all those countries that lie upon the route to India. This and only this involves us in the permanent rivalry with Russia . . .<sup>2</sup>

For each then, the issue of who controlled Central Asia was understood through the lens of security, and the battle for territorial control to attain this security came to be known as the Great Game. Introduced into history through the writings of John Kaye who quoted from letters by British adventurer Arthur Conolly in 1841, the 'Great Game' was

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<sup>1</sup> Karl E. Meyer and Shareen Blair Brysac, Tournament of Shadows: the Great Game and the Race for Empire in Central Asia, (Washington: Counterpoint, 1999), xx.

<sup>2</sup> J. R. Seeley, The Expansion of England, 1883 quoted in Meyer and Brysac, Tournament of Shadows. xix.

popularised by Rudyard Kipling's Kim in 1901.<sup>3</sup> Although the metaphor found great cultural currency, it was less appropriate than a second label proposed in an article by Halford Mackinder in 1904 that provided the essential strategic justification for this competition between Russia and Britain. In a lecture to the Royal Geographical Society, Mackinder proposed:

Is not the pivot region of the world's politics that vast area of Euro-Asia which is inaccessible to ships, but in antiquity lay open to the horse-riding nomads, and is to-day about to be covered with a network of railways? There have been and are here the conditions of a mobility of military and economic power of a far-reaching and yet limited character. Russia replaces the Mongol Empire. . . . The oversetting of the balance of power in favour of the pivot state [Russia], resulting in its expansion over the marginal lands of Euro-Asia, would permit of the use of vast continental resources for fleet-building, and the empire of the world would then be in sight.<sup>4</sup>

Mackinder's vision was never born out. We saw Russia and then the Soviet Union accomplish the task of capturing the heartland; however, neither was able to utilise its vast resources to conquer the entirety of the Euro-Asian landmass.

Central Asia is a region that is broadly contained between China and the Caucasus Mountains and from the Russian border to the Middle East and South Asia, though the actual borders are relatively indeterminate in academic literature. These boundaries roughly correlate with nineteenth and early twentieth century geographical and archaeological studies. The modern Central Asian region has also found less than exacting parameters drawn by observers. Most authors agree that its core is the five post-Soviet states of Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan (See Figure 1.1 in Appendix). Other areas that are often included are Azerbaijan (due to its

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<sup>3</sup> Meyer and Brysac, xxiii. John Kaye quotes Conolly in Lives of Indian Officers, (London: 1867).

<sup>4</sup> H. J. Mackinder, "The Geographical Pivot of History," *The Geographical Journal* XXIII: 4 (1904), 434-436.

Turkic heritage), Afghanistan and Xinjiang (China) and, less frequently, the southern (Muslim) rim of the Russian Federation, Siberia, Tibet and the Indian subcontinent.<sup>5</sup> In the following study, Central Asia will be deemed to be the five core states of the post-Soviet south, Afghanistan and the Xinjiang province of China. That said, the focus of the study will be a particular construct called a security complex whose definition does not correlate directly to a particular regional entity for reasons explained in Chapter 2.

### **1.1 The 'New Great Game' and 'Eurasian Balkanisation'**

The romantic vision inspired by Kipling's portrayal of the Great Game and the strategic conclusions reached by Mackinder have influenced the early approaches taken by western authors following Central Asia's independence in 1991. Generally, security studies have focussed on Central Asia's role in and effect on the international system. As such, authors have fallen into a stock approach to its study.<sup>6</sup> Most begin with a short section outlying the region of study and provide some background of its road to independence. Security is studied in state-by-state fashion highlighting the location of past security problems (generally ethnic conflicts/uprisings, wars and secessionist organisations) and where potential problems are likely to find their sources in the future. Often, these studies incorporate inter-state relations, but these are generally limited to the bilateral conditions of hostility, thereby neglecting to provide a complete picture of

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<sup>5</sup> What is included is often dependent on the focus of the specific study. For example, studies of ethnicity will consider Azerbaijan as being one of the Central Asian states even though it lies across the Caspian Sea that acts as a natural barrier.

<sup>6</sup> See for example Graham E. Fuller, *Central Asia: The New Geopolitics*, *Rand Research Report R-4219-USDP*, 1992; Sergei Lounev and Gerii Shirokov, "Central Asia as a New Region in World Politics," in Roald Z. Sagdeev and Susan Eisenhower (eds.) *Central Asia: Conflict, Resolution and Change* (New York: The Center for Political and Strategic Studies, 1995), 293-310; Maxim Shashenkov, "Security Issues of the Ex-Soviet Central Asian Republics," *London Defence Studies* 14 (1992); and Roy Allison, "The Military and Political Security Landscape in Russia and the South" in Rajan Menon, Yuri E. Fedorov, and Ghia Nodia (eds.) *Russia, the Caucasus and Central Asia: The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Security Environment*. (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1999), 27-60.

'regional' security. Finally, western approaches usually include a section outlining Russian and American interests in the region in tones reminiscent of the cold war. Here American policy makers are recommended to counter Russia's interest with active direction of Central Asia's democratic and economic transition. Two key examples of this methodology are the 'New Great Game' and 'European Balkanisation' metaphors of Central Asian security.

Early journalistic accounts of the new region trumpeted the dawn of a 'New Great Game' where the United States, Iran, Turkey and, possibly, China replaced Great Britain in a quest for regional influence against Russia.<sup>7</sup> As before, it was a zero-sum competition for strategic influence, but this time the newly discovered petroleum reserves in the Caspian Sea region raised the ante. Instead of adventurers and archaeologists, financiers and oil executives led the charge with the expected rewards in the form of lucrative drilling rights. Partly, this approach was the result of a profound lack of Western knowledge of the region. Although some academics had produced research on the region during the Soviet era,<sup>8</sup> the majority of western political leaders, not to mention the general public, were unaware of the historical significance of Central Asia at independence. Thus, early observers pulled a metaphor from history that could define how Central Asia would affect the interests of the external powers. Each competing state was considered to have an advantage over the others. Russia had its historical ties and

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<sup>7</sup> See for example Robert Kaplan, "The Great Game Isn't Over," *The Wall Street Journal* November 24, 1999; Marshall Ingwerson, "The Next Great Game: Players Jostle to Pipe Home a Share of the Oil Prize," *Christian Science Monitor*, August 25, 1997; and Nancy Dewolf Smith, "Central Asia's New Great Game," *Wall Street Journal*, October 12, 1995. Excellent arguments refuting this view are found in Amy Myers Jaffe and Robert A. Manning, "The Myth of the Caspian 'Great Game': The Real Geopolitics of Energy," *Survival* 40:4 (1998-1999), 112-129 and Anatol Lieven, "The (not so) Great Game," *National Interest* 58 (1999-2000), 69-80.

continuing economic hegemony, the United States could supply the necessary capital (and American know-how), Iran was connected by a common Islamic faith, and Turkey had the advantage of its shared Turkish heritage. However, 'the game' has not been borne out by experience. Russian interest remains an essential variable in every decision made by regional leaders, as its power continues to loom large over the region. Although American influence made major inroads as a useful counterweight to Russian preponderance, it remains very limited. So far, the US is unwilling to provide the post-Soviet South<sup>9</sup> with security guarantees sufficient to replace those offered by Russia. Recent speeches by Madeleine Albright and the US diplomatic corps seem to imply a larger American role in the future, but not one drastically different from its present commitment of financial and moral support. As for the remaining early candidates for the 'New Great Game', Iran and Turkey have not been able to provide enough financial incentives to keep their place at the table, and China has remained at a cautious distance.

The modern version of Mackinder's heartland thesis underlies Zbigniew Brzezinski's 'European Balkanization' in The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and its Geostrategic Imperatives. Intended to provide American foreign policy makers with a recipe to maintain and extend its position of primacy, it argues for the west to remain actively engaged in Eurasia if it is to be successful in maintaining its international position. Central Asia is considered a power vacuum and the inner core of a greater region of instability that connects Central Asia to the Middle East, the Black Sea Region.

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<sup>8</sup> Edward Allworth, James Critchlow, Martha Brill Olcott and Seymour Becker were some of the most influential.

<sup>9</sup> Central Asia and the Caucasus are often referred to jointly as the post-Soviet South, the Southern Successor States of the Soviet Union. The United States government refers to all of the states that grew from the Soviet Union as the 'Newly Independent States' (NIS) and by its organisational identity, the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). I will use Central Asia when discussing the region and post-

and Southern Russia.<sup>10</sup> Brzezinski sees the future of the region shaped by the interplay of external actors, but with a delicate balance among competing interests to avoid potential ethnic conflict and political fragmentation.<sup>11</sup> In effect, without great power agreement, Central Asian instability would externalize through the 'zone of instability,' possibly balkanizing the entirety of Eurasia into ever smaller, possibly hostile, entities.

Each of these metaphors argues the same theme: Central Asia as a new region in a systemic security analysis. Both treat regional security as the subject of the international balance of power dynamics, supporting or undermining the position of the various competing poles. Moreover, external influences either produce, or ameliorate regional instabilities depending upon how they interact. International interests gradually draw the Central Asia states into various spheres of influence, subordinating the 'natural' course of regional security relations to global or, at least, super-regional security dynamics.<sup>12</sup> However, without a strong understanding of what constitutes Central Asian security, systemic and state levels of analysis will be deficient in explanatory value. Analysis of this 'natural' course of regional security relations provides the focus for the following chapters. Central Asian security will be considered an object of study in its own right rather than a subject of external influences. This will require that Central Asia be considered a unit of study, with its own unique security dynamics that are independent of, yet related to, the systemic level of analysis that underlies the 'New Great Game' and the 'Eurasian Balkanization' approaches.

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Soviet South more broadly. I will seek to avoid the others unless it is in context of American policy (NIS) or organisationally (CIS)

<sup>10</sup> Zbigniew Brzezinski, *The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and Its Geostrategic Imperatives*, (New York: Basic Books, 1997), 124.

<sup>11</sup> Brzezinski, *The Grand Chessboard*, 150.

<sup>12</sup> These would include the historical competitions for regional dominance between Turkey-Russia, Russia-Iran, and Turkey-Iran and at the global level the US-Russian competition for influence.

The approach taken in the following chapters is unique to the study of Central Asian security. The first half of the following thesis answers the question: 'Is security complex theory an appropriate framework for the study of Central Asian security?' Chapters 2 and 3 postulate the existence of a Central Asian Security Complex (CASC) as a durable structure of regional security formed by the natural dynamics of state interaction in the region. Drawing extensively from the writings of Barry Buzan, security complex theory (SCT) proves to be a more valuable theoretical construct to study the particular characteristics Central Asia than its realist and liberal predecessors. The utilisation of this theoretical construct proves to be beneficial in three ways. First, it accommodates the inherent analytical problems in studying security in weak and very weak states. Secondly, the theory postulates the existence of four other levels of analysis lying between the state and the system and, in so doing, allows external influences to be compartmentalized away from those naturally existing at the regional level. Finally, SCT is an analytical device that disaggregates 'total security' into five specific sectors of study as a means of reducing the breadth of study into manageable pieces. A complete analysis has all five sectors studied individually and then the overall regional security question answered upon the aggregation of the individual results. To do so would require much more space than allowed for here. Therefore, the analysis in the following chapters is restricted to the societal sector, dealing with issues arising from identity and threats to identity, although some effort is made to relate it to the other sectors. The third chapter will define and identify the parameters of study within the societal sector and then, using Buzan's levels of analysis, postulate the boundaries of the CASC.

What will make this approach unique to the study of Central Asia is how the concept of security is applied. Ole Wæver proposed that security is an intentional act taken by legitimate authorities in the face of an existential threat, as opposed to security as the result of the accumulation of power in realist and liberal thought. Wæver and the Copenhagen Research Group turned the concept on its head and considered it to be an extreme form of political action. Instead of being in evidence when an entity is absent of threat (realist perspective), security is considered a situation where an entity has responded appropriately (by any means possible) to meet a threat. The effort has allowed analysts to place parameters on specific issues by highlighting the perception and recognition of a threat, the response to it and, effective re-incorporation of the issue into the political realm.

The second half of the following thesis will answer the question: 'Given that SCT is a useful framework, what does it tell us of security problems relating to identity?' Chapters 4 and 5 will apply SCT, societal security, and Wæver's definition of security to Central Asia. The scope of the application considers the possible security problems that find their source in identity, ethnicity and nationalism in the CASC. Chapter 4 will consider five possible securitizing identity groups that range from the local level to super-national. The goal of this chapter is to identify those groups that are most likely to be affected by, and more importantly, to be able to react to, security problems. It will seek to find where security problems will occur in the societal sector and cast some doubt on the prevailing notions of identity-based security problems in the region. Though the period of study is limited to the post-independence decade, it is clear that the dire predictions of ethnic collapse and Islamicisation have been overestimated thus far.

Chapter 4 will note that this is not surprising to those that have studied the situation from the ground-up and realize that ethnicity, like nationalism, requires a sense of collectivity that is simply not in evidence in the region. Chapter 5 will provide two very brief case studies of societal security issues that led to wide-scale violence. The first is the Tajik civil war considered in terms of one regional party to the conflict. The Pamiris of Gorno-Badakhshan will be the focus of study and the case will detail how demands for political reorganisation led to the securitizing moves by Pamiri authorities in face of possible extermination at the hands of other regional entities. The second case is the ongoing challenge to Uzbek President Karimov by radical Islamic elements in the Ferghana Valley. In this case, securitization and societal security are considered from the perspective of the Uzbek authorities that face violent reactions to its stabilising policies. Though neither case is clear cut, evidence produced in Chapter 5 does make clear that SCT and securitization as an intentional act prove to be useful approaches to studying security in Central Asia.

## 2 Theoretical Background: Security, Weak States and Security Complex Theory

### 2.1 Introduction

Security complex theory (SCT) has gone through several permutations since Barry Buzan developed it almost two decades ago. The first edition of People, States and Fear in 1983 tentatively introduced security complexes as an alternate approach to the study of security. The original book sought to investigate national security as a concept by clarifying its meaning, and the implications thereof, so as to provide a window into the study of the national security problem.<sup>1</sup> However, SCT was only introduced in a minor role to suggest that there may be a level of analysis between security at the system level and at the state level. In the second edition (1991) Buzan chose to “reconsider the whole agenda” and emphasise economic, societal and environmental aspects of security along with the political and military sectors.<sup>2</sup> Notably, it had a clearer emphasis on non-traditional aspects of security and an expanded section on security complexes. Recently, Buzan, Ole Wæver, and Jaap de Wilde, have again reconsidered SCT and applied some concepts from the constructivist research agenda to modify its focus. In so doing, they have completely reconfigured the theory’s characteristics so that it would reflect the “widespread feeling in the mid-1990s that the post-Cold War international system was going to be much more decentralized and regionalized in character.”<sup>3</sup> More importantly, this latest book provides the first comprehensive treatment of security complex theory and serves as the basis for much of its application to Central Asia that follows.

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<sup>1</sup> Barry Buzan, People, States and Fear: The National Security Problem in International Relations, (Great Britain: Wheatsheaf Books, 1983), 1.

<sup>2</sup> Barry Buzan, People, States and Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Great Britain: Wheatsheaf Books, 1991), xiii-xiv.

Consideration of security in a Central Asian context must be informed by the prevailing conditions of the region's ongoing state-building process. Central Asia has been independent for just under a decade, it has third world economic and political conditions, and it is subject to residual but declining Russian hegemony. Amitav Acharya correctly observed that at least some of the states that succeeded the Soviet Union had security conditions similar to those found in third world states, and he highlights Central Asia as a particularly obvious case.<sup>4</sup>

The first section of this chapter will be a brief survey of the approaches to the study of security and will consider the realist, neo-liberal institutionalist (regime) and constructivist schools.<sup>5</sup> Originally, strategic studies, the original field name for what now is called security studies, was developed under the rubric of realism where it was considered in terms of either the state (national security) or the system (great power rivalry or polarity). In this conception, references to the security of weak states tend to resemble the conditions underlying the 'Near Abroad', 'Great Game', or 'Eurasian Balkan' scenarios discussed in the Introduction. As I will show below, SCT attempts to add meat to the skeletal bones of the realist approach by adding characteristics such as historical interaction and patterns of amity and enmity to the realist bases of power. The second section will briefly outline the theoretical conception of the weak state. This section will focus on those aspects of statehood that are most likely to be the most important referents of security and the characteristics evident in weak states that provide

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<sup>3</sup> Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver and Jaap de Wilde, Security: A New Framework for Analysis, (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1998), vii.

<sup>4</sup> See note 10 of Amitav Acharya, "Developing Countries and the Emerging World Order: Security and Institutions," in Louise Fawcett and Yezid Sayigh (eds.), The Third World Beyond the Cold War: Continuity and Change, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 259.

the means for insecurity to develop. The final section will pinpoint the structures of a SCT and show why Buzan and others believe it to be an important contribution to the study of security.

## **2.2 Security, Securitization and the Copenhagen Research Group**

Since World War II, 'security studies' has evolved and been transformed into a relatively coherent field.<sup>6</sup> The timing of this evolution reflects the growth of realist theory into a position of academic hegemony in politics departments of North America and, to a lesser but still significant extent, Great Britain. Therefore, security's pedigree is of realism's focus on war and power. Security is defined as the survival of the state, a unit of analysis considered to be the inseparable aggregate of its government, territory, and society. Realist theorists consider security to exist when a state is successful in the international struggle for power.<sup>7</sup> On the other hand, insecurity is the result of a state's lack of power, and justifies the use of force against the sources of the existential threat. The realist conception of security was most clearly focussed on the military-political sectors where a threat would induce the state to compensate for a recognised vulnerability or direct military actions against the state or states seen to be the source of an existential threat. Examples of this include the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis and the present dialogue considering American national missile defence programs. Environmental, societal or economic threats were seen to have little relevance, although the latter became of greater interest in the latter 1980s as American academics posited a relative decline of the United

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<sup>5</sup> The traditional, liberal counterpoint to strategic studies is peace research and is often premised upon the formation of democratic structures of government. Regime theory in security terms is the natural offshoot of liberal thought.

<sup>6</sup> Ole Wæver, "Securitization and Desecuritization," in Ronnie Lipschultz (ed.), *On Security*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 50.

States' global economic position.<sup>8</sup> In the cold war, realist theory had very little to say about the third world unless a third-world state was the arena for an ideological battle between the United States and the Soviet Union.

In the early 1980s, regime theory gained prominence as a method of explaining international cooperation under anarchy and as a means to span the perceived realist/idealist divide in international relations theory. Its security aspect was introduced in the 1982 special edition of *International Organization*, in an article by Robert Jervis. Security regimes are defined as being "principles, rules and norms that permit nations to be restrained in their behaviour in the belief that others will reciprocate."<sup>9</sup> However, unlike most of the other issues considered within the regime framework, security was determined to be more problematic and, as such, remained relatively under-developed. Jervis' article has notable realist leanings that are visible in his conditions for the formation of a security regime and in his hesitation about a broader application of his thesis. A security regime requires that the great powers demand its establishment, that other states share the great states' value for the regime, that there are no revisionist powers among those agreeing to the regime's conditions, and that war, or preparation for war, is considered to be too costly.<sup>10</sup> The author believes that these conditions would be difficult to attain because of the security dilemma where, in event of a breach (i.e. refusing restraint or violating the terms of the security regime) the price paid in insecurity

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<sup>7</sup> Buzan, *People, States and Fear: The National Security Problem*, 7, and Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, 21.

<sup>8</sup> See for example Michael Mastanduno, "Do Relative Gains Matter? America's Response to Japanese Industrial Policy," in David A. Baldwin (ed.), *Neorealism and Neoliberalism: The Contemporary Debate*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 250-266. Hegemonic stability theory and imperial overstretch particularly influenced conceptions of economic threats. See Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

<sup>9</sup> Robert Jervis, "Security Regimes," *International Organization* 36:2 (1982), 173. Regime theory dates back to John Ruggie's "International Responses to Technology: Concepts and Trends," *International Organization*, 29:3 (1975), 557-584.

would exceed the costs incurred to prepare for war. Security regimes as defined by Jervis are considered in global terms, yet they could reasonably be considered in regional terms as well. As such, Jervis' reasons for hesitation are more visible in Central Asia. In the region there exist at least two revisionist powers (Russia and Uzbekistan) and as Uzbek intervention in the Tajik Civil War displays, preparations for war are seen to be necessary. Moreover, the lack of a coherent vision of a security regime in post-Soviet space is evident in the failures of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and GUUAM structures in recent years.<sup>11</sup> In Central Asia, security regime theory is therefore a non-starter.

The tentative application of security complex theory as an alternative conception of security finds its genesis in the conceptual morass of realism that has security studied at the systemic and state levels of analysis. SCT posits the existence of an intermediate level where security is considered in terms of the regional interaction between states. As for the concept of security, Buzan notes that it is term that "like power, justice, peace, equality, love and freedom, is an essentially contested concept."<sup>12</sup> Since the late 1980s, greater academic emphasis has been placed on defining the term and finding parameters that would avoid "definitions so protean as to be almost meaningless" and parameters so large as to produce "conceptual flabbiness".<sup>13</sup> In part, the recent theoretical push has to

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<sup>10</sup> Jervis, "Security Regimes," 176-177.

<sup>11</sup> Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan have 'defected' from the collective security aspect of the CIS, and most of the rest do not believe that it is any more than a means for Russian influence on their domestic situation. GUUAM, an acronym for its members Georgia, Uzbekistan, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldova, was agreed upon as an alternative mutual security structure to the CIS, but has not yet produced anything significant.

<sup>12</sup> Buzan, *People, States and Fear: An Agenda*, 7. The phrase 'essentially contested concepts' is attributed to W.B. Gallie in Maz Black (ed.), *The Importance of Language*. (Englewood Cliffs NJ: Prentice Hall, 1962).

<sup>13</sup> Rajan Menon, "Introduction: The Security Environment in the South Caucasus and Central Asia: Concepts, Setting, and Challenges," in Rajan Menon, Yuri E. Fedorov, and Ghia Nodia (eds.), *Russia, the Caucasus and Central Asia: The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Security Environment*, (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1999), 4

do with the advent of the constructivist school of international relations as well as with the recognition that previous theories applied to only a few great powers. As a result, the concept of security has been gradually disconnected from its strong military focus even if the defence against challenges to sovereignty remains central to its study.<sup>14</sup>

John Gerard Ruggie defines constructivism as “about human consciousness and its role in international life.” Constructivists “contend that not only are identities and interests of actors socially constructed, but also that they must share the stage with a whole host of other ideational factors.”<sup>15</sup> This approach calls into question the very basic assumptions of the realist model and is an attempt to crack realism’s billiard ball by “rummaging in the ‘graveyard’ of sociological studies”<sup>16</sup> to look beyond power to explain the nature of relations between states. In this approach, security is a socially constructed concept and its study “has specific meaning only within a specific social context” emerging and changing “as a result of discourses and discursive actions intended to reproduce historical structures and subjects within states and among them.”<sup>17</sup> This is particularly true for the studies of Ole Wæver and his colleagues at the Centre for Peace and Conflict Research in Copenhagen who have applied the speech act as used in the study of linguistics to the field of security studies. With this and a process they call securitization, the ‘Copenhagen School’ has revolutionised the way security is studied and greatly influenced the development of security complex theory between 1991 and 1998.

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<sup>14</sup> Wæver, “Securitization”, 50.

<sup>15</sup> John Gerard Ruggie, “What Makes the World Hang Together? Neo-Utilitarianism and the Social Constructivist Challenge,” *International Organization*, 52:4 (1998), 856.

<sup>16</sup> Peter J. Katzenstein, “Introduction: Alternative Perspectives on National Security,” in Peter J. Katzenstein (ed.), *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*. (NY: Columbia University Press, 1998), 1.

Wæver notes that Buzan's approach powerfully showed that national security is not sufficiently understood if approached from the perspective of one state. Rather, national security is dependent on the dynamics of interstate relations.<sup>18</sup> The field of security should be understood to be a contest of wills between states where, allegedly, one state seeks to override the sovereignty of another, forcing the threatened state to respond if possible. In effect, security problems are imbued with intentionality and are defined as something that can rapidly undercut the political order within a state, deprive it of the capacity to manage itself, and thereby "alter the premises for all other questions."<sup>19</sup> Chronic insecurity can then be considered to be a problem of capacity, whereby an actor's survival is dependent on its ability to recognise (thus the use of the word 'allegedly' above) and respond to the existence of security problems. Security is therefore a two-step process. The first, recognition, relies on a state's capacity to perceive an issue to be a security threat, that is, a threat to its ability to continue as a viable entity. The security dilemma is an example of this process, where a weapon that has both defensive and offensive capability is determined to be a threat, at least partially, by the historical conditions of the states' relations. Outside of the military dimension, an issue could be considered a threat depending on how it is perceived to affect a specific component of the state (society, territory or institutional apparatus). Examples of these include demographic upheaval due to the influx of migrants, problems of shared resource allocations such as water, and external manipulation of domestic minority or opposition groups. The second aspect of security is a state's capacity to respond to a problem wherein it must muster its capability to offset a perceived threat. This includes military

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<sup>17</sup> Ronnie D. Lipschultz, "On Security," in Ronnie Lipschultz (ed.), *On Security*, 10.

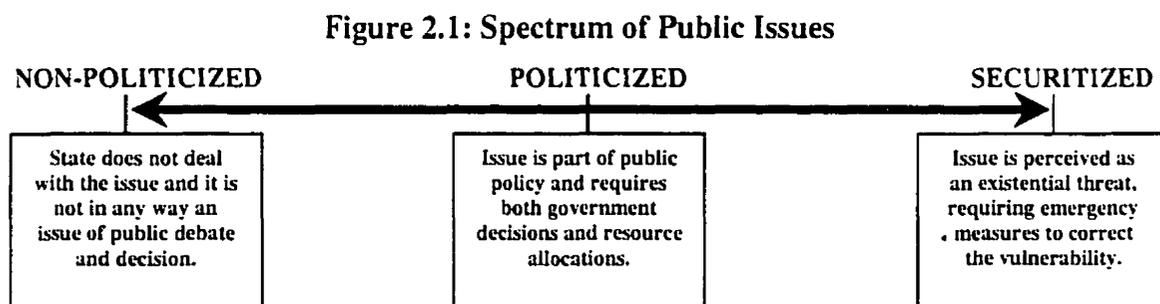
<sup>18</sup> Wæver, *On Security*, 49.

and any available economic, institutional and societal resources. It is from this perspective that Wæver defines security as “a situation marked by the presence of a security problem *and* some measure taken in response,” and insecurity as a security problem without the response.<sup>20</sup>

Buzan notes that national security “has an enormous power as an instrument of social and political mobilisation.”<sup>21</sup> In both Wæver’s conception and 1998 version of security complex theory, security is a speech act, whereupon an issue becomes a *security* issue with a legitimate actor’s statement thereof. Wæver expands:

“security is not of interest as a sign that refers to something more real; the utterance *itself* is the act. By saying it, something is done. By uttering ‘security’ a state-representative moves a particular development into a specific area, and thereby claims a special right to use whatever means are necessary to block it.”<sup>22</sup>

Security can be considered to lie on a spectrum of issues that range from non-political to securitized with an implicit role for the state at each (see Figure 2.1).



Securitization is therefore a more extreme version of politicization; yet whether an issue is placed at the security end of this spectrum is dependent on the social makeup of the

<sup>19</sup> Wæver, “Securitization,” 52, 54 and 63.

<sup>20</sup> Wæver, “Securitization,” 56. Though Wæver does not specifically deal with the recognition of the problem, it underlies his entire discussion of security and security problems.

<sup>21</sup> Barry Buzan, “Environment as a Security Issue,” in Paul Painchaud (ed.), *Geopolitical Perspectives on Environmental Security*, (Cahier du GERPE, No. 92-05, Université Laval, Quebec, 1992), 1 and 24f.

state in question. For example, religion in Iran and Saudi Arabia is considered a political issue, whereas in France and the United States it generally is situated as a non-political issue.<sup>23</sup> For an issue to move from political to security, it must be considered an existential threat, or something that overflows from the normal political logic of weighing issues against one another and moves beyond the established rules of 'normal politics'.<sup>24</sup> A problem is securitized when a legitimate authority acknowledges an issue as an existential threat and receives support from its society to take all necessary means to meet it. Security is attained when the securitizing action successfully neutralises the 'existential' aspect of the threat and allowing the issue to be reconstituted within the political. Admittedly, this conception reflects a liberal democratic conception of the state where the 'normal rules' and 'legitimate authority' are well defined. However, it is equally possible to determine securitization in other (but likely not all), societies based on their particular rules of normality.<sup>25</sup> This issue will be taken up again in the next section when the weak states are considered more closely.

### **2.3 Weak State Characteristics and Problems for Defining Security**

One of the key problems with the realist school's conceptualisation of security is that it is assumed that the state has monopolised the legitimate use of force on its territory, from which threats to other states emanate.<sup>26</sup> As will be shown in this section, this assumption is simply not valid for weak states. More commonly, the ruling governments of weak states face multiple, and competing, centres of authority, each with

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<sup>22</sup> Wæver, "Securitization," 55.

<sup>23</sup> Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, Security, 24

<sup>24</sup> Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, Security, 23-24

<sup>25</sup> Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, Security, 24.

<sup>26</sup> Lipschultz, "On Security," 5.

its own perspective of who has legitimacy. By the end of the cold war, very little had been written in a systematic fashion about the interaction of the Third World with the international system, particularly about security.<sup>27</sup> As stated earlier, theories of *national* security developed by, and for, western states have built-in assumptions of the nature of the state in question, assumptions that do not reflect conditions existing in post-colonial settings. The physical and ideational structure of post-colonial environments is alien to modern, western states, although some recognisable trappings have been grafted onto leftover colonial institutions.

During the cold war, various descriptors were applied as a means to differentiate between states in the international arena. These include the first, second, and third worlds which are shorthand for the Western and Eastern Blocs and others respectively. Robert Jackson argues that the term 'third world' is "value-loaded and ideological" and was used to "signify a globe divided vertically in terms of wealth and class rather than horizontally in terms of sovereign populated territory."<sup>28</sup> Moreover, each is an all-encompassing label that, while useful in defining the boundaries between the various worlds, is ill-suited for comparisons among the states that fall under a specific label. Although the first and second worlds had states that politically and economically resembled one another, the third world was a diverse menage of communist, socialist, social-democratic, pseudo-democratic and authoritarian structures. With the end of the cold war, the second has been divided between the first and third worlds leaving a rather truncated spectrum. A second method of classification is by relative power, splitting the

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<sup>27</sup> Mohammed Ayoob, "Review Article: The Security Problematic of the Third World," *World Politics* 43 (January 1991), 258.

<sup>28</sup> Robert Jackson, Quasi-States: Sovereignty, International Relations and the Third World, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 2.

community of states, variously, between super (the USSR/Russia and US), great (for example Britain and France), middle (Canada), weak and mini (Micronesia). Some of the criteria for placement are the possession of nuclear weapons (the quantity held perhaps determining whether a state is great or super), non-nuclear military power, economic strength and territory. A weak state is one that scores far below the middle powers on a combination of the criteria.<sup>29</sup>

However, as Buzan points out in his first edition of People, States and Fear, “strength as a state neither depends on, nor correlates with, power.”<sup>30</sup> Rather, state strength has everything to do with a society’s belief in the existence of that state and its legitimate authority. Therefore, the concept of *weak state* should be de-linked from *weak power*, with only the latter being entirely based on material attributes such as military, population and territory. A weak state implies something wholly different: although the term is related to material capability, it is defined by characteristic deficiencies in legitimacy and unity, and concerns the level of acceptance of something called the idea of the state.

The framework for the weak state-weak power duality is the vision of a “fuller, more organic, conception of the state in terms of territory/population (the body) and socio-political character (the mind)”.<sup>31</sup> Buzan argues that the nexus between body and mind, in terms of territory, government and society, is what defines the state at the systemic level. It is the linkages that bind this entity together that are central to

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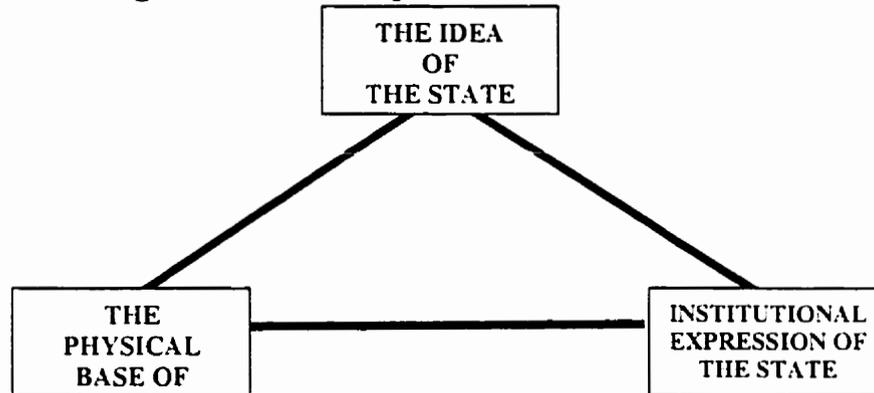
<sup>29</sup> See Michael I. Handel, Weak States in the International System, (Great Britain, Frank Cass, 1990), 30-46.

<sup>30</sup> Buzan, People, States and Fear: The National Security Problem, 66.

<sup>31</sup> Buzan, People, States and Fear: An Agenda, 60 and 62.

understanding security, with the shared idea of the state providing the essential cement holding the whole territorial-polity-society package together (see Figure 2.2).<sup>32</sup>

**Figure 2.2: The Component Parts of the State<sup>33</sup>**



As Buzan argues, neither population nor territory requires the state to exist but the socio-political expression of an idea held in common by the population is the very essence of the state.<sup>34</sup> If the state were the central object of security studies, then the socio-political expression of that state would be the essential referent of security. A strong idea is a function of its acceptance by a nation, as defined as a large group of people sharing the same cultural and possibly the same ethnic or racial heritage, and an organising ideology. When a state is backed by both of these, it will have greater control over its physical base and a more functional institutional expression. In weak states, one or both of these sources are deficient. A 'very weak state' is one possessing neither a widely accepted and coherent idea of the state among its populations nor a governing power strong enough to impose unity. An 'ordinary weak state' is one that has a governing unit strong enough to enforce at least nominal loyalty toward a state identity, and override, though

<sup>32</sup> Buzan, *People, States and Fear: An Agenda*, 60.

<sup>33</sup> Reproduced from Buzan, *People, States and Fear: An Agenda*, 65.

<sup>34</sup> Buzan, *People, States and Fear: An Agenda*, 63.

not unite, competing tribal, religious or political loyalties.<sup>35</sup> In terms of Figure 2.2, an ordinary weak state is better able to compensate for weaknesses in its shared idea by strengthening its institutions and territorial control. However, it is its ideation weakness that is the source of its vulnerabilities and provides openings for threats to produce insecurities. Further, this weakness makes it more difficult for states to find the capacity to respond to perceived threats in timely or effective fashion. Buzan notes that a weak state can be identified as holding some or all of the following characteristics:

- High level of political violence
- Major recent changes in the structure of political institutions
- Conspicuous use of force in domestic political life
- Conspicuous role for political police
- Major political conflict over what ideology to use
- Lack of coherent national identity or presence of competing identities
- Lack of clear and observed hierarchy of political authority
- A high degree of state control over the media
- Proportionately small middle class<sup>36</sup>

For most analysts, the process of de-colonialisation is the main source for the variables that led to the weak idea of the state. This holds equally true for the post-Soviet states of Central Asia and the Caucasus as it does for Asian and African countries that gained independence in the 1960s. Jackson believes that the problems are rooted in post-colonial states' being granted juridical statehood upon independence without having gained empirical statehood. This means that the newly independent former colonies have been assigned the same external rights and responsibilities as other states in the international system but lack the domestic legitimacy and empowerment to functionally

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<sup>35</sup> Barry Buzan, "People, States and Fear: The National Security Problem in the Third World." in Edward E. Azar and Chung-in Moon (eds.), National Security in the Third World The Management of Internal and External Threats. (Aldershot: Center for International Development and Conflict, 1988), 19. Hereafter referred to as "People, States and Fear: Third World."

<sup>36</sup> Buzan, "People, States and Fear: Third World", 20-21

employ the institutional features normally associated with sovereign states.<sup>37</sup> Both Western and Russian colonialism tended to impose a system of rule upon territories with populations that were composites of multiple ethnic or religious identities.<sup>38</sup> Moreover, colonial institutions were rarely directed toward internal consolidation of the territory; instead, they mainly sought to support the economic and strategic desires of the colonial masters. Indigenous independence movements utilised western concepts of the nation and nationalism to define representative national expressions although they often represented a dozen or more peoples that were without unifying traits beyond a desire for independence.<sup>39</sup> Therefore, independence movements often carried the seeds of their own political fragmentation; new 'nations' were quickly discovered in post-independence to justify even smaller secessionist units.<sup>40</sup>

The subsequent battles for political control between rival tribal, clan, religious or ideological factions forced beleaguered leaderships into protecting their hold on power rather than diversifying political and institutional power. As a result, often the idea of the state is held only by the leadership, and remains in flux or non-existent outside of the centre. Consequently, many post-colonial states lack the legitimacy produced in other sovereign states after enduring a long, state-building process. Strong states have both vertical and horizontal legitimacy that supports the government's position and defines the structure of society. Vertical legitimacy is about authority and consent. In a strong state, the government's right to issue commands is based on its society's belief in the legitimate

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<sup>37</sup> Jackson, 21. Jackson labels states that are affected by this problem as quasi-states.

<sup>38</sup> Kalevi Holsti, The State, War and the State of War, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 67.

<sup>39</sup> Holsti, The State, 69-70.

<sup>40</sup> Holsti, The State, 71.

and moral authority of the state rather than the self-interest of its leaders.<sup>41</sup> Horizontal legitimacy concerns the community ruled, and refers to the attitudes and practices of individuals and groups toward each other and, ultimately, toward the state.<sup>42</sup> In weak states, neither of these structures is evident in communities fragmented by various competing identities, including tribe, religion and ethnicity.<sup>43</sup> If adequate 'stateness' is defined as a balance of coercive capacity, infrastructural power and unconditional legitimacy, in weak states the lack of this balance prevents leaderships from imposing political order and makes them vulnerable to internal and external threats.<sup>44</sup> Moreover, the state is often personified by the leader in power and directed toward a leader's interest in his or her position of power and/or personal wealth. The security of the state as an entity is therefore interrelated with its leadership, and insecurity increases as that leader loses his or her capability to exert effective coercive force.

As argued earlier, security can be considered as a question of capacity. Most weak states do not have the capacity to react to a perceived threat in such a way as to offset insecurity. Weak states are no different from any other in terms of their position in the international system, and must always be wary of external challenges to their survival. It might be argued that they are in a worse position in this regard, as they often do not have the effective network of interlocking international political and security arrangements found among western states. Moreover, the weak attachment to the idea of the state also adversely affects their position because multiple and divergent notions of the nation threaten the security of the state as an entity. Buzan notes that the weaker the state, the

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<sup>41</sup> Holsti, *The State*, 87.

<sup>42</sup> Holsti, *The State*, 87.

<sup>43</sup> Holsti, *The State*, 105-106.

more difficult it is to find referent objects of national security because the “primary external orientation of the concept gives way to an increasingly domestic agenda of threats.”<sup>45</sup> This is especially true when a government’s rule is based more on power than on consensus and when security is determined by the continuation of a specific leader that personifies the state. In either of these cases, most of the socio-political meaning drains from the concept of national security.<sup>46</sup> In a strong state the referent objects of security can be determined to be the three corners of Figure 2.2: the idea of the state, its physical base and its institutional expression. Buzan argues that in a weak state, however, the concept of *national* security is nonsense because the state itself defines the conditions of insecurity for most of its citizens.<sup>47</sup> For him, the best answer to this theoretical problem is not to apply the concept of national security until such time as strong states are developed. Instead, he believes that security complexes provide a window into the ‘third world security problematic’. As we will see in the next section, the theory highlights the patterns of regional security relations and defines the patterns of hostility among states in regions, providing an entry for penetration by external powers.

#### **2.4 Security Complex Theory 1983-1998**

Buzan posits the existence of security complexes as a method of theoretically filling what he perceives to be a gap in the security theory literature. The purpose of SCT is to link the systemic and state levels of analysis of security by providing a framework that isolates regional security dynamics and thus facilitates the comparative analysis

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<sup>44</sup> Mohammed Ayoob, The Third World Security Predicament: State Making, Regional Conflict and the International System, (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1995), 4.

<sup>45</sup> Buzan, “People, States and Fear: Third World”, 23.

<sup>46</sup> Buzan, “People, States and Fear: Third World”, 23.

<sup>47</sup> Buzan, “People, States and Fear: Third World”, 40.

among identified regions. Moreover, its introduction coincided with a period of time when security academics were engaged in a dialogue concerning the advent of 'new' international threats such as terrorism. The important question of this dialogue was whether the field required widening to include the study of other factors along with generally accepted political and military threats.<sup>48</sup> Because security is a relational phenomenon, individual state security cannot be properly considered in isolation from the environment where it is situated. Systemic security, though useful for the study of great powers, is unreliable as a framework for the study of security on the periphery.<sup>49</sup> SCT, therefore, seeks to fill this gap in the level of analysis and to accommodate at least some of the threats advocating by scholars of the widening agenda. The original conception of a security complex is defined as follows:

a group of states whose primary security concerns link together sufficiently closely that their national security cannot realistically be considered apart from one another.<sup>50</sup>

The two essential components of a security complex are the patterns of amity and enmity and the distribution of power among the states. Amity is friendly relations or, at very least, expectations of protection and support between states, whereas enmity is relationships of suspicion and fear.<sup>51</sup> Patterns of amity and enmity are generated by a variety of sources including border disputes, ethnically related populations, ideology and historical links.<sup>52</sup> The isolation of coherent and significant relational patterns among states in a geographically limited territory is essential for the analyst to be able to discern

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<sup>48</sup> Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, *Security*, 2-5 and 11.

<sup>49</sup> Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, *Security*, 11 and Buzan, *People, States and Fear: An Agenda*, 189.

<sup>50</sup> Buzan, *People, States and Fear: The National Security Problem*, 106 and Buzan, *People, States and Fear: An Agenda*, 190.

<sup>51</sup> Buzan, *People, States and Fear: An Agenda*, 189-190.

<sup>52</sup> Buzan, *People, States and Fear: An Agenda*, 190.

security complexes from the 'white noise' of the global security environment. This environment can be pictured as a seamless web linking the security of all nations to all others, whereas regional security relations are internally focused. The existence of a complex will be indicated by the security rhetoric of states toward each other, by their military deployments and by their record of conflicts.<sup>53</sup> Between the extremes of amity and enmity lies a broad band of relational indifference or neutrality. The theory suggests that when relations between neighbouring states fall in this middle section of the spectrum, the analyst finds the borders of the complex in question. As Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde note in an endnote to their first chapter, complexes are not objective in the sense of being independent actors (like the western bloc) but are the product of the behaviour of their actors. One cannot quantify relational patterns but must analyse comparatively sets of relations to discern where the patterns approach the extremes of the spectrum. Therefore, security complexes will often not be objectively recognised by their members, who may even consider themselves to be part of an entirely separate regional formation.

The distribution of power among members of a security complex is the component that shapes the possibilities for intra-complex alignment. As in the global system, the balance of power will define the pattern of hostility among major regional powers. Buzan points to the difference between bipolar structures such as in South Asia and complexes with three or more centres of power such as the Middle East.<sup>54</sup> In the former, "there is only room for one major dispute and therefore a change in the pattern of

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<sup>53</sup> Buzan, People, States and Fear: An Agenda, 194.

<sup>54</sup> See Buzan's Figure 5.1 for those complexes identified by the author. Buzan, People, States and Fear: An Agenda, 210.

hostility can only come from some sort of resolution between India and Pakistan.”<sup>55</sup> However, in a tri or multipolar situation, the pattern of hostility has a much more dynamic character where significant bilateral resolutions can occur without affecting the overall pattern of hostility in the complex.<sup>56</sup> Reflecting back to Buzan’s differential between ordinary weak and very weak states, his example of South Asia points to the important role for the weak state in security complex theory. Very weak states will have little impact on the structure of the complex, as their security is “intimately bound up in the pattern of the larger states”.<sup>57</sup> Even so, by virtue of the impact of their alignments on the relations among larger states, they may be a source of threat or act as buffers within local security dynamics.<sup>58</sup> Ordinary weak states, however, can play an essential role in security relations. Based on the criteria laid out by Buzan in 1988, Pakistan falls into the category of ordinary weak state because its government has the capability to maintain order, though it lacks a binding idea of the state among the population.<sup>59</sup> In the South Asian security complex, Pakistan is one of the two centres of power defining the pattern of hostility with a relationship that predates India and Pakistan’s development of nuclear weapons. As we will see in the next chapter, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan have a similar, though less hostile, bipolar arrangement.

Security complexes are a durable pattern of security relations among states situated between national and global security. As such, both layers above and below have important effects on regional security dynamics. The most important influence from the global or higher security complex is the smothering affect of overlay. Defined

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<sup>55</sup> Buzan, *People, States and Fear: An Agenda*, 213.

<sup>56</sup> Buzan, *People, States and Fear: An Agenda*, 214.

<sup>57</sup> Buzan, *People, States and Fear: An Agenda*, 195.

<sup>58</sup> Buzan, *People, States and Fear: An Agenda*, 195-196.

as the direct presence of an outside power or powers in a region, overlay has the consequence of suppressing the normal operation of security relations among local powers.<sup>60</sup> The conditions for its probable influence are relatively easy to spot and include the extensive stationing of armed forces in the overlain area and great power intervention into local affairs that subordinates local security dynamics to the larger pattern of major power rivalries.<sup>61</sup> Historical examples of this condition include European colonialism in Africa and Asia, and Europe during the Cold War. This concept will be particularly important in defining the existence of a Central Asian complex in the next chapter. Given the recent independence of Central Asia from the former Soviet Union, there remains a Russian military presence in all Central Asian states except Uzbekistan. However, it is questionable whether the Russian Federation should still be considered a great power whose role continues to define the international security environment, and whether residual Russian intervention dampens local security dynamics.

One of the key questions in the concept of security is what threats to include in the study. Buzan's conception of SCT was also an attempt to bridge the gulf between the two sides of this discourse by emphasising that "security is about the pursuit of freedom from threat" and "about the ability of states and societies to maintain their identity and their functional integrity."<sup>62</sup> The bottom line then is the survival of the basic political unit. Military actions can "threaten damage deep down through the layers of social and individual interest which underlie . . . the state's superstructures".<sup>63</sup> Moreover, because military actions can induce major changes very swiftly, they have traditionally been

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<sup>59</sup> Buzan, "People, States and Fear: Third World," 19 identifies it as such.

<sup>60</sup> Buzan, *People, States and Fear: An Agenda*, 198.

<sup>61</sup> Buzan, *People, States and Fear: An Agenda*, 198.

<sup>62</sup> Buzan, *People, States and Fear: An Agenda*, 19.

considered to be the primary consideration of security.<sup>64</sup> Buzan's framework, though maintaining the primacy of military threats, considers it as one of five interrelated sectors of security study. As he puts it:

The security of human collectivities is affected by factors in five major sectors: military, political, economic, societal and environmental. Generally speaking, military security concerns the two-level interplay of the armed offensive and defensive capabilities of the states, and states' perceptions of each other's intentions. Political security concerns the organizational stability of states, systems of government and the ideologies that give them legitimacy. Economic security concerns access to resources, finance and markets necessary to sustain acceptable levels of welfare and state power. Societal security concerns the sustainability, within acceptable conditions for evolution, of traditional patterns of language, culture and religious and national identity and custom. Environmental security concerns the maintenance of the local and the planetary biosphere as the essential support system on which all other human enterprises depend.<sup>65</sup>

It is important to emphasise that security analysis by sector is only a tool to confine the scope and complexity of security analysis to more manageable proportions. It disaggregates the whole of security by selecting some of the distinctive patterns of interaction, although these patterns, individually, lack an independent existence.<sup>66</sup> A complete picture of security thus requires the analysis of specific sectors to be reaggregated back to a comprehensive whole. Since the focus of this thesis is the specific security questions relating to societal security in a Central Asia context, that sector will be detailed in the next chapter. Due to its close interrelationship with the political sector, Chapter 3 will also have a brief survey of the links between the two. The military, economic and environmental sectors will be discussed only as they relate to the societal and political sectors in the case studies. It is not necessary to go into further detail here

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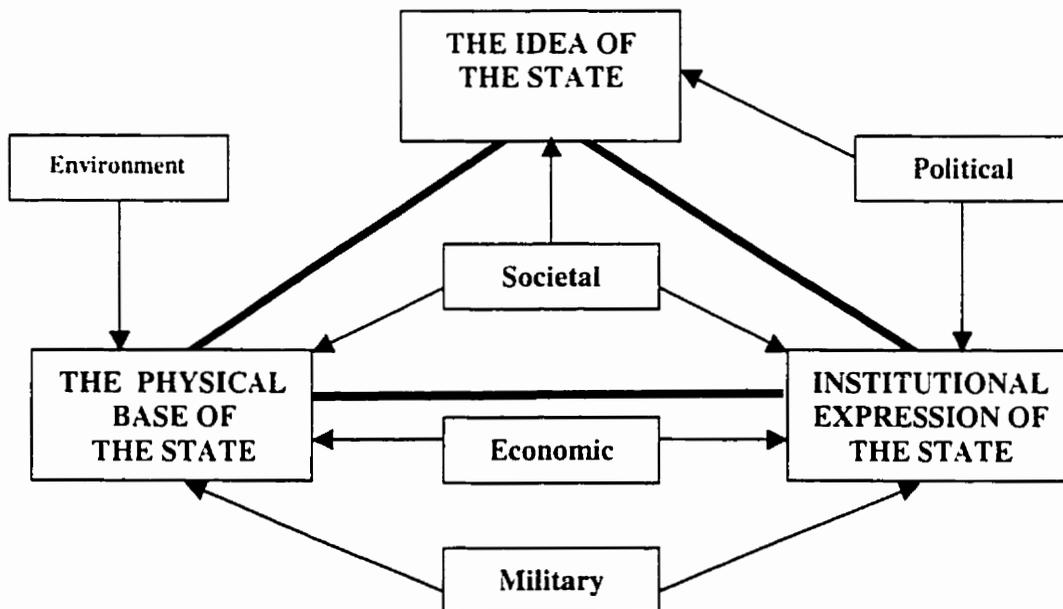
<sup>63</sup> Buzan, *People, States and Fear: An Agenda*, 117.

<sup>64</sup> Buzan, *People, States and Fear: An Agenda*, 117.

<sup>65</sup> Buzan, *People, States and Fear: An Agenda*, 19-20.

about these five sectors; however, it is important to note that the sectors are closely interrelated through the components of the state shown in Figure 2.2. Figure 2.3 is a visualisation of how sector analysis is related to the state component to which it most affects. Buzan notes of his component model (Figure 2.2) that “there is no suggestion that the three components stand separately, for they are obviously interlinked in myriad ways.”<sup>67</sup> His model suggests that the components are distinguishable enough from one another to be discussed individually as objects of security.<sup>68</sup>

**Figure 2.3: Sectors and the Component Parts of the State**



By the same token, Figure 2.3 does not suggest that specific sectors affect only those components toward which I have them directed: instead I highlight which component the sector is most likely to threaten, and therefore where threats from that sector would be most observable. For example, the military sector is considered as having its greatest

<sup>66</sup> Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, *Security*, 8.

<sup>67</sup> Buzan, *People, States and Fear: An Agenda*, 65.

<sup>68</sup> Buzan, *People, States and Fear: An Agenda*, 65.

effect on the territorial and institutional components of states through which it also indirectly challenges the idea of state. In the Second World War, the German military quickly overran many of Germany's smaller neighbours and often replaced ruling governments of those conquered states with ones more compliant to Berlin. Germany was successful in compromising Poland's territorial and institutional expressions, but the idea of a Polish state was held by the Government-in-Exile and Polish partisans. However, because the territorial and institutional expressions of the Polish State were badly compromised in World War II, its idea emerged from the war years so vulnerable that it was unable to effectively defend itself from a contending idea backed by the Soviet Union.

In comparison to the other sectors included in SCT, societal security is closely related to the political sector and rather unique in that the sources of these security problems are located within a specific state. Societal insecurities undermine the legitimacy of the idea of the state- fragment the population and impair the state's territorial control -and lessen the effectiveness of the institutions supporting the state apparatus. Societal security directly affects all three components of the state and is endemic to weak states. As Buzan points out, societal security cannot really fall within the auspices of national security because it generally is an internal affair. However, if security is considered as a regional phenomenon, these security problems can be externalised in regions inhabited by weak states through refugee flows, rebel incursions, insurgency or general instability. As we will see in the next chapter, societal security problems may serve as the catalyst to destabilise neighbouring states and possibly produce regional zones of instability.

The latest version of SCT was developed as a result of an ongoing effort by the Copenhagen Research Group to challenge the assumptions of traditional security. It proves to be the synthesis between SCT, as envisioned by Buzan, and Wæver's conception of security as a quality injected into issues by actors.<sup>69</sup> As such, Wæver's ideas outlined in his article "Securitization and Desecuritization" have become integral aspects of SCT. The framework has been redefined as follows:

a set of units whose major processes of securitization and desecuritization, or both are so interlinked that their security problems cannot reasonably be analyzed or resolved apart from one another.<sup>70</sup>

SCT was seen as strong foundation because it already embedded social constructivist concepts such as patterns of amity and enmity defining relations between states. The sector approach is crucial to the new framework because it maintains a strong link with tradition; it reflects how scholars are approaching the widening agenda and as such, it is a means of understanding the different qualities of security. Thus the new definition of SCT moved the framework away from its state-centricity and the favoured position for military-political threats and inserts a greater emphasis on perception and the processes of securitization/desecuritization. Whether this has produced a framework better to deal with the problem of security in a weak state as compared with the original conception will be considered in more detail in the next chapter.

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<sup>69</sup> Buzan, People, States and Fear: An Agenda, 204. As the authors note in the preface, this conception of SCT was the product of collaboration within the Copenhagen Research Group on various projects between 1990 and the 1998 publication of Security: A new Framework for Analysis.

<sup>70</sup> Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, 201

### **3 Societal Security and the Central Asian Security Complex**

The first section of this chapter will look more closely at the societal and political sectors of SCT by considering the relevant objects and actors as well as the threats and vulnerabilities that these sectors encompass. Again we turn to the Copenhagen Research Group for the majority of the theoretical work in societal security. The concept was expanded from Buzan's introduction in People, States and Fear to a full-length book on the subject in 1993 that provided the framework for Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde's more succinct application in 1998. This section will be general in its scope, leaving the particular case of Central Asia to more comprehensive analysis in Chapters 4 and 5 where the most relevant competing identities in the Central Asian societal security concerns will be the focus. Therefore, some of the other 'contested concepts' such as nation, society and identity will be discussed only in the terms of the generalised model presented.

The second section of this chapter will complete the analysis of the levels of analysis problem in security complex theory introduced in the last chapter. This section is particularly important because it provides the theoretical basis for some of the decisions made in the third section when detailing the boundaries of the Central Asian security complex (CASC). Specifically, the level of analysis approach allows for a better understanding of the roles of China and, more importantly, Russia by sorting crosscutting security interdependence so as to separate local dynamics from higher level interactions. Because the variables that pronounce the existence of a security complex are not wholly quantifiable, the CASC that I postulate will be based on a mixture of evidence, judgement

and some speculation. I have attempted to make obvious the points where the evidence becomes hazier.

### 3.1 Societal Security

In the previous chapter, societal security was briefly noted to concern the sustainability of tradition, culture and language for relevant collectivities that are generally not synonymous with the state. The referent of societal security is a shared identity whereby a group has a point of reference to differentiate itself from other groups. Societies<sup>1</sup> are what enables a group of people to refer to themselves as 'we,' and distinguishes 'us' from 'them.'<sup>2</sup> This 'we-ness' can vary in size from the family and neighbourhood to a nation, civilisation or religion, each having social and moral structures which inform implicit calculations of utility among members passed down through generations.<sup>3</sup> The keys to an identity-based community are those ideas and practices that identify individuals as members who have made a political and personal choice to emphasise those traits that differ from other possible identities.<sup>4</sup> Wæver argues that the nation is a special case of this formulation with a territorial attachment and an understanding of its place as part of the broader global society.<sup>5</sup>

Security for these units is undermined by anything that threatens the cohesiveness, unity or capacity of a society to continue as a viable entity into the future: that is, anything that should threaten those key ideas and practices that differentiate one society

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<sup>1</sup> I have used "societies" and "identity-based communities" interchangeably.

<sup>2</sup> Barry Buzan, "Introduction: The Changing Security Agenda in Europe," in Ole Wæver *et al.*, Identity, Migration and the New Security Agenda in Europe, (London, Pinter Publishers, 1993), 5-6.

<sup>3</sup> Ole Wæver, "Societal Security: The Concept," in Ole Wæver *et al.*, Identity, Migration and the New Security Agenda in Europe, (London, Pinter Publishers, 1993), 17-18.

<sup>4</sup> Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, Security, 119-120.

<sup>5</sup> Ole Wæver, "Societal Security", 21.

from another. Again perception is essential. In what Buzan calls the “societal security dilemma,” perceptions of the other have everything to do with relations among states.

To the extent that tensions over migration, identity and territory occur between societies, we might by analogy with international politics talk about a ‘societal security dilemma’. This would imply that societies can experience processes in which perceptions of ‘the others’ develop into mutually reinforcing ‘enemy-pictures’ leading to the same kind of negative dialectics as with the security dilemma between states<sup>6</sup>

Social formations are dynamic: thus not all change will be considered a threat.

However, the source of the change and the history of interaction that exists between that source and the affected state will help determine how a society will react. An action by one ‘other’ may induce a response that is completely different from a response to the same action by a third group. Identification of a threat is the function of the society in question and the securitizing actors will be representatives of that community.<sup>7</sup> In the first comprehensive application of societal security by Wæver *et al.*, issues of identity and migration are the driving forces that underlie perceptions of threat and vulnerability.<sup>8</sup> In Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, these forces are conceptualised in terms of how they produce (or affect existing) inter-identity competitions for societal dominance. Competition can occur horizontally when an identity is forced to change because of overriding cultural and linguistic influence of a competing identity or because of demographic change. This sort of competition would include the Americanisation of global culture and the ‘Hispanisation’ of the Southern American States by Spanish immigrants. A second, vertical, competition occurs as a result of actions such as

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<sup>6</sup> Buzan. “Societal Security, State Security and Internationalism.” in Ole Wæver *et al.*, Identity, Migration and the New Security Agenda in Europe, (London, Pinter Publishers, 1993), 46.

<sup>7</sup> Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, Security, 124. If the society closely corresponds to the state, the securitizing actor will be the state’s leader. However, in the more likely case when a state and society do not conform, the securitizing actor will be drawn from the society.

<sup>8</sup> Barry Buzan, “Introduction: The Changing Security Agenda,” 5.

integration or secession that pull an identity toward a narrower or wider conception.<sup>9</sup>

This latter threat would include Russia's attempt to create the 'new Soviet man' in Central Asia with controlled education, language, religion and national policies.

Societal threats can have internal and external dimensions, or a mixture of each. Internally, the state apparatus can threaten societies by suppressing their expression and by interfering or repressing their ability to reproduce. These policies would prevent the transmission of an identity to the next generation.<sup>10</sup> How a society responds to this threat can move the issue to an internal-external problem if it is forced to express opposition in protest, insurgency, enlistment of aid from an external third party, or some combination thereof. As we will see, examples of all of these are extant in Central Asia. External threats in this sector concern the dilution of local populations by the large-scale migration of peoples whose identities differ from those defining the local community. This is especially true for migrants who compete for territory, threaten to disrupt the local cultural reproduction, or threaten a specific component of the local identity including language, religion or tradition.<sup>11</sup>

In each of these dimensions, the interrelationship between societal, political and military sectors of study is clearly shown. If a state's suppression of an internal community results in an external response, the state may be forced to respond to outside military action aimed at liberating the beleaguered community from its government, or at overthrowing the government itself.<sup>12</sup> A second scenario includes paramilitary or terrorist actions against the state in an effort to reduce state pressure on a communal

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<sup>9</sup> Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, *Security*, 121.

<sup>10</sup> Barry Buzan, "Societal Security, State Security," 43.

<sup>11</sup> Buzan, "Societal Security, State Security," 44.

<sup>12</sup> Buzan, "Societal Security, State Security," 46.

identity. If these actions should occur from a neighbouring country, political and/or military responses from the state may be required. It is exactly this scenario that is outlined in Chapter 5 concerning the IMU. Similarly, societal security problems may induce political insecurities. These are threats aimed at the organisational structure and stability of the state apparatus.<sup>13</sup> Political security is about the legitimacy and recognition of either the political units or the essential structures, processes or institutions among them. Thus, there is a relationship between political and societal security. Choosing to identify oneself with a particular community is necessarily a political act and reacting to perceived threats can be organised in the political sector. If organisational stability is supported by policies that seek to subvert or dislocate competing identities within its population, responses by the aggrieved society could include having the issue placed on the state agenda, attempting to control the existing government, or seeking secession or independence.<sup>14</sup> It is this cross-over with the political sector that makes it difficult to analyse the societal on its own.<sup>15</sup>

### **3.2 Further Theoretical Considerations**

Attempting to observe and then define the boundaries of a specific security complex is an arduous task of analysing the security discourse, actions and reactions of various states existing in a defined territory. It is not the simple matter of selecting a region and applying security complex theory to the relationship between those states within that region. Some regions, such as the Middle East, might have several observable complexes. Therefore, it is a process of defining the orientation of each state within a

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<sup>13</sup> Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, *Security*, 142.

<sup>14</sup> Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, *Security*, 122-123.

<sup>15</sup> Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, *Security*, 122.

particular security dynamic. As stated in the last chapter, whether a state is inside or outside a complex depends on the condition of its relations with other local states: if it is indifference, then that state is outside the complex. This does not mean that a state outside of one complex is immediately a member of a second complex. Some are equally ambivalent to other neighbouring states and can be considered to be insulator or buffer states between two complexes. Afghanistan played this role between the Sino-Soviet and the South Asian complexes at least until 1979.<sup>16</sup> Yet, even with an analyst's best efforts, "it [remains] an empirical question whether the relative strength of different lines of security interdependence is sufficient to establish the location of boundaries that distinguish one security complex from another".<sup>17</sup>

Helpfully, Buzan has conceptualised security complexes in terms of the levels of analysis as extended from the first conception by Kenneth Waltz in 1959.<sup>18</sup> Waltz's original thesis had the individual, the state and systemic levels as a means to compartmentalise political action. Buzan's conception has multiple, mutually interdependent levels of security ranging from the individual person to the global system, with three intermediate stages (see Figure 3.1). The highest security complex is defined by global competition among the great powers. In the cold war, this was the east-west competition between the Soviet Union and the United States. In the post-cold war

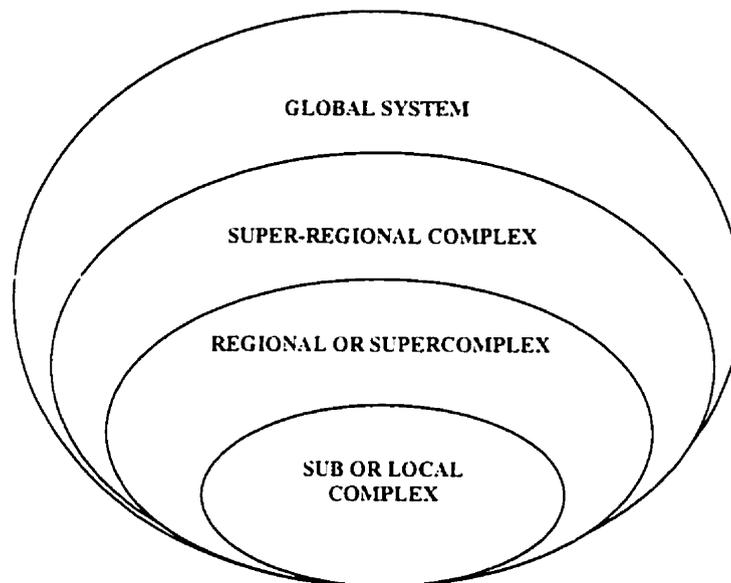
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<sup>16</sup> See for example Gowher Rizvi's analysis in, "The Role of the Smaller States in the South Asian Complex." in Barry Buzan and Gowher Rizvi, South Asian Insecurity and the Great Powers, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1986), 149-151.

<sup>17</sup> Buzan, People, States and Fear: An Agenda, 197.

<sup>18</sup> See Kenneth Waltz, Man, The State and War: A Theoretical Analysis, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959) and Kenneth Waltz, The Theory of International Politics, (Reading MA: Addison-Wesley, 1979).

**Figure 3.1 Levels of Security Complexes<sup>19</sup>**



setting, the competition has not yet been clearly defined by theory and ranges from American unipolarity to a multipolar competition among the United States and various other powers. Huntington adds a complex synthesis called the uni-multipolar system as a third possible formulation with the US overseeing a great power competition below.<sup>20</sup> This higher level of analysis has been more dominant in the security perceptions of Britain and the United States who have been conditioned by their positions as 'top dog' in power structures.<sup>21</sup>

As can be seen from Figure 3.1, Buzan has two levels of analysis between the global (systemic) and the local or lowest level of security complexes. Unlike the United States and Britain, security conceptions in Russia, Germany, Greece and Iran, for

<sup>19</sup> The individual and state levels lie below this visualisation of Buzan's levels of analysis and define sub-complex dynamics. In lessening degrees, their effects can reverberate up the chain and affect all other levels of analysis. More importantly, however, insecurity at the state level and below will provide openings for higher level external influences to intrude into local dynamics and possibly lead to an overlay scenario.

<sup>20</sup> The last is a unique, but equally probable, perspective forwarded by Samuel Huntington's "The Lonely Superpower." *Foreign Affairs*, 78:2, 1999, 35-49.

<sup>21</sup> Buzan, *People, States and Fear: The National Security*, 112.

example, have been “sharply conditioned by inescapable pressures from intense local security complexes.”<sup>22</sup> As we have seen, the local complex is distinctive with an internally directed orientation in states that have little or no influence on other neighbouring complexes. Generally, this limitation is a function of a lack of aggregated regional power, and because dynamics within the complex force member states to project internally the majority of what power they have. It is logical to assume that periodically some of the internal security dynamics overflow into neighbouring regions and complexes. In 1986, Buzan noted that “although there is a local dynamic of security which is largely self-contained within each complex, there is often some interaction across the boundaries, especially between the higher level and lower level complexes.”<sup>23</sup> *Supercomplexes* are defined as an accumulation of local complexes within an analytically defined area that share a common heritage or history. Buzan’s example of a supercomplex is the Middle East (Iran to Morocco), where he identifies three lower complexes including the Horn of Africa (Sudan, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Sudan), the Gulf (Iran, Iraq and Saudi Arabia) and the Maghreb complex (Morocco, Algeria and Libya). While each local complex is internally directed, all three are “linked together within the broader framework of Arab and Islamic politics”<sup>24</sup> and centred on the enmity between the Arab world and Israel.<sup>25</sup> The difference between the supercomplex and the *super-regional complex* is while the latter is a relationship between complexes resulting from

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<sup>22</sup> Buzan, *People, States and Fear: The National Security*, 112.

<sup>23</sup> Barry Buzan, “A Framework for Regional Security Analysis,” in Barry Buzan and Gowher Rizvi, *South Asian Insecurity and the Great Powers*, (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1986), 15.

<sup>24</sup> Buzan, “A Framework,” 11.

<sup>25</sup> Barry Buzan and B. A. Roberson, “Europe and the Middle East: Drifting Towards Societal Cold War?” in Ole Wæver, *et al.*, *Identity, Migration and the New Security Agenda in Europe*, 136. I assume from this that the effect flowing from the higher complex is a function of the distance from the loci of that interaction, Israel. Therefore, one would expect higher level effects on the Gulf complex to be greater than those on the Maghreb complex.

only proximity, supercomplexes have both adjacency and some shared historical or cultural similarity that transcends what one would expect from adjacency. Essentially, the commonality introduces forces into the local complex directing it toward a higher level competition (e.g. Arab-Israel) that adjacency without the similarity would not do. One aspect of this is what Samuel Huntington would consider a civilisational force in his Clash of Civilization thesis.

A super-regional complex has a more disparate effect on individual complexes. It does not have the commonality that allows the dynamic of the local complex to be penetrated from abroad. Therefore, the actual effect is dependent on the specifics of the interrelationship between neighbouring complexes. For example, Buzan noted that the South Asian complex interacted with (at the time of his writing) the Sino-Soviet, the Southeast Asian (Laos, Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam) and the Gulf and Greater Middle East complexes.<sup>26</sup> In his example, interaction between the South and the South-eastern complexes was minimised by Burma (Myanmar) that acted as a buffer, whereas South-Gulf interaction tended to be more important because of the Iran's "expansive regional ambition" (threatening India's self-perception), and the differing views of Islam in Iran and Pakistan (threatening Pakistan and thus, supporting India).<sup>27</sup> Therefore, how one security dynamic supports or weakens the states within that dynamic can have consequences in the security dynamics of other complexes.

Given the complexity of this example, it is easy to see why Buzan chooses to make the distinction among the levels of analysis. First, it allows the analyst to differentiate among overlapping security relations. Secondly, it explains situations where

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<sup>26</sup> Buzan, "A Framework", 15.

<sup>27</sup> Buzan, "A Framework," 15-17.

there are asymmetric security links between major local states. For example, China is a serious security concern for India, but the relationship is not reciprocated by China which considers India to be a relatively minor security concern.<sup>28</sup> Generally super-regional interactions tend to be relatively negligible, but it is clear that in both the supercomplex and global levels there is the potential of modifying the dynamics of security at the local level that will have to be isolated. A final reason, particular to this thesis, is that the level of analysis approach will provide the key for unlocking the varying security dynamics in the Central Asia region in the next section.

### **3.3 The Borders of the Central Asian Security Complex**

At this writing, there have been two other attempts to apply SCT to Central Asia. One, by Hooman Peimani, used Buzan's theory to postulate the present Central Asian security complex as an intermediate stage between Russian/Soviet overlay to some future domination by one of Russia, Iran or Turkey.<sup>29</sup> He argued that SCT was the most appropriate framework for Central Asian security analysis because it "goes beyond the limited understanding of regionalism offered by most existing approaches."<sup>30</sup> That said, he was not always clear in how he used Buzan's framework. In his conclusion, Peimani argued that based on his comprehensive analysis of the military, societal and economic sectors of Central Asia security relations, the CASC would exist for as long as the

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<sup>28</sup> Buzan and Roberson, "Europe and the Middle East," 194.

<sup>29</sup> Hooman Peimani, Regional Security and the Future of Central Asia: The Competition of Iran, Turkey, and Russia, (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 1998). Peimani mistakenly referred to the Russian Empire and Soviet domination of Central Asia as being security complexes (pg. 129). However, these periods, by definition, were conditions of overlay where Russian and then Soviet leaders stationed extensive military resources in the region. Moreover, Moscow actively suppressed traditional regional security dynamics, replacing them with new patterns of amity and enmity that resulted from the reconstruction of Central Asian borders under Stalin's nationalising programs.

<sup>30</sup> Peimani, Regional Security, 17-18.

Russian, Turkish and Iranian 'security complexes' were limited by internal disorder and weakness.<sup>31</sup> Given that, Peimani believed that one of two possible outcomes would occur. The first had the CASC falling under Russian overlay if Russia could free itself from its internal weakness. If Iran became the dominant power, Peimani foresaw the rise of a West-Asian complex that would include Iran, Afghanistan, the Caucasus and Central Asia.<sup>32</sup> In the first case, SCT would no longer apply; in the second the CASC would be subsumed into a broader complex. Conceptually, a return to overlay would be quite possible if Russia quickly recouped its lost strength. However an Iranian-centred complex as vast as Peimani proposed does not seem to be realistic unless there is a major shift in the Gulf complex (an entity he omitted entirely in his analysis), in the Middle East supercomplex *and* at the global level. Furthermore, he argued that the "conclusion of energy agreements between Iran and Turkmenistan, despite US economic sanctions on Iran, indicates the importance of Iran for the Central Asians."<sup>33</sup> This is a gross oversimplification of the extent of regional contact with Iran. Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, though cordial when necessary, have kept Tehran at arm's length for the first decade of independence due to their fear of radical Islamic influences and a desire to remain on good terms with the United States. Peimani, in an effort to apply Great Game logic under the rubric of security complex theory, produced conceptually and theoretically confused results that 'overlay' his more valuable security analysis in previous chapters.

In the other major work, Mehdi Mozaffari again considered the CASC as a temporary condition that would shift as Russia regained its strength. Unlike Peimani, he

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<sup>31</sup> Peimani, *Regional Security*, 130 and 133.

<sup>32</sup> Peimani, *Regional Security*, 132-133. The author correctly notes that by the time of his analysis, Turkey had already been marginalised as a viable competitor because of the failure of its economic and cultural penetration in the region.

saw Central Asia as possibly moving toward a security system, a unit of analysis defined as "an institutionalized cooperation network between a group of states for the purpose of reducing threats against its members to a minimum and providing the maximum possible freedom of choice for them."<sup>34</sup> This system would link the Central Asia and the Caucasian complexes. A security system is a drastically different concept because it is an intentionally negotiated entity, unlike the complex that naturally evolves due to regional proximity and historical contact.<sup>35</sup> Thus, this post-Soviet security system would be an antithesis to the complex, and, would closely resemble overlay. Russia would be the final guarantor of security (like the United States in NATO) and regional security sensitivities would be reduced through negotiation.<sup>36</sup> Mozaffari's approach only considered the military sector; thus, its full application is handicapped by his not considering the other sectors. Like Peimani's, however, it did provide some useful analysis of regional security dynamics and patterns of amity and enmity.

In both of the above attempts, the question of who is in and who is out of the complex remained obscure. This is particularly true when one considers why some states were left outside. Peimani's security complex was limited to the five states of Central Asia- a decision based firstly on the states' long common history, cultural similarities and ethnic ties and secondly on a shared fear of political instability and military/security issues.<sup>37</sup> Mozaffari's decision making was similar. He further noted that Central Asia is separate from the Caucasus because of geographical and cultural differences, their

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<sup>33</sup> Peimani, Regional Security, 131.

<sup>34</sup> Mehdi Mozaffari, "The CIS' Southern Belt: A New Security System," in Mehdi Mozaffari (ed.), Security Politics in the Commonwealth of Independent States: The Southern Belt, (Great Britain, MacMillan Press, 1997), 17.

<sup>35</sup> Mozaffari, "The CIS' Southern Belt," 18.

<sup>36</sup> Mozaffari, "The CIS' Southern Belt," 30.

<sup>37</sup> Peimani, Regional Security, 2.

different orientations (Central Asia to the East, the Caucasus to the Balkans) and the natural barrier provided by the Caspian Sea.<sup>38</sup> In each case the authors' decisions were sound; however, both left out some important aspects along the way. Though the states of Central Asia have shared subjugation by many different civilisations and empires over time, this is not a sufficient condition for the limitation of the CASC to the five post-Soviet states. The same pattern of subjugation is shared with the five states by Afghanistan, the Xinjiang (variously Chinese Turkistan and Sinkiang) Province of China and parts of south central Russia. Although Sinkiang and Afghanistan were not absorbed into the Russian Empire in the late 1800s, Russia's control and the subsequent Soviet period are relatively ephemeral to the long history of the peoples of the region.<sup>39</sup> Culturally, Turkic ethnicity connects post-Soviet Central Asia to the Uighurs in Sinkiang, some clans in Afghanistan, and parts of Azerbaijan. Persian culture links Iran to Tajikistan. As we will see below, a closer examination of the conditions of security in Central Asia produces some interesting modifications to the Peimani and Mozaffari security complexes and, more importantly, some analytical dilemmas to sort out.

### **3.4 Defining the Boundaries of the CASC**

The possible problem with both conceptions of CASC is that they were proposed too early in the region's independence, when the dynamics of security were shifting at a greater rate than at present. Buzan and Roberson warned in 1993 that "the new pattern of security relations in [Transcaucasia and Central Asia] is not yet clear" and that there is an "insufficient independent security dynamic in the region to call this a security

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<sup>38</sup> Mozaffari, "The CIS' Southern Belt," 8.

<sup>39</sup> Although Afghanistan was never fully controlled by any of the Great Powers, near the end of the Ch'ing (Manchu) Dynasty, Russia was able to force entry into Kashgar, an oasis city in Sinkiang, China. There,

complex.”<sup>40</sup> In 1998, the warning was raised again by Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde who noted that “it is still too early to say what kinds of security relations will emerge from the political-societal-military conflicts in Central Asia and the Caucasus”.<sup>41</sup> However, they also note that “minority problems, water disputes and awkward boundaries offer ample scope for the new states to drift into the classical form of a local complex.”<sup>42</sup> The clearest evidence of the premature application of SCT in Peimani’s study is how he dealt with China. He noted that, in the long run, other states may become part of the CASC and points to China as one prominent possibility.<sup>43</sup> However, he disregarded it as either an internal or possibly dominating entity in his study because its impact had not been felt on the whole region.<sup>44</sup> Since the time of his writing, Beijing has become increasingly involved in the region. This is particularly true because of the political instability in the Chinese province of Sinkiang and the belief that Uighur activists are using Central Asia as a base for their actions against Chinese authority in that province. Having the benefit of several extra years of evidence, I have calculated the membership of the CASC to be different than the ones developed by Peimani and Mozaffari.

Like Buzan’s conception of the Middle East, southern post-Soviet space can be considered to be a supercomplex that includes several localised complexes linked by a shared history of Russian and Soviet domination and their continuing relationship with the Russian Federation. These include a Caucasian complex, one possibly centred on the Caspian Basin and a third in Central Asia. Linking each is a historical association with

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Russians, under Nicholas Petrovsky, became the “behind-the-scenes master of Chinese Turkistan” between 1882 and 1903. See Meyer and Brysac, Tournament of Shadows, 317.

<sup>40</sup> Buzan and Roberson, “Europe and the Middle East,” 137-138.

<sup>41</sup> Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, Security, 136-137.

<sup>42</sup> Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, Security, 137.

<sup>43</sup> Peimani, Regional Security, 35.

<sup>44</sup> Peimani, Regional Security, 4

Russia whose continuing influence includes supporting the Abkhazian secessionist groups against Georgia, arming Armenia in its war against Azerbaijan and intervening in Tajikistan. However, it would be a mistake to limit analysis on security dynamics to ready-made formulae provided by the former Soviet Union. In the decade since the collapse of the USSR, many states have had their security refocused away from Russia. Eastern Europe and the Baltic States have turned toward the West while Bulgaria and Rumania are moving toward the Balkan complex. For Central Asia, there remains a question of how extensively Soviet penetration modified the natural patterns of amity and enmity in the region. In the following section I will consider the security relations of various states in and around post-Soviet Central Asia. Though the reasons for my decisions are offered here, more comprehensive evidence will be provided in the next chapter.

### The Core

There is no question that in Central Asia, the securities of Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan come the closest to embodying Buzan's vision of a security complex. The survival of any one of these states requires each to remain politically and socially stable and for any upheaval to remain localised. The locus of this security triangle is the Ferghana Valley, a small, densely populated and shared territory that acts as a conduit for the externalisation of local unrest. The security linkage has been accentuated by the Tajik civil war where the primary focus of Uzbek security has been to limit the externalisation of conflict from the borders of Tajikistan. More recently, the radicalisation of Islamic organisations responding to Uzbek President Karimov's repression of domestic opposition has created what one analyst has termed to be possibly

“the most serious threat to the stability in CIS Central Asia today.”<sup>45</sup> Finally, the security interdependence among these core states is firmly entrenched through Uzbekistan’s desire to dominate the policies and politics of its smaller neighbours. In terms of amity and enmity, the Kyrgyz and Tajiks are deeply suspicious of Uzbek motives, and enmity, generally, dominates relations.

### Kazakhstan

Samuel Huntington has identified states having populations representing two or more civilisations as cleft states that risk division by the forces of competing civilisations.<sup>46</sup> Similarly, but without Huntington’s dire outcome, Kazakhstan lies on the border of possibly three security complexes with its security focus gravitating toward each. The net result for Kazakh leaders is a razor’s edge of competing orientations. Over 35% of its population are ethnic Russians who mostly populate the northern oblasts bordering on Russia (see Figure 3.2 in Appendix). This situation draws Russia deeply into Kazakhstan’s internal and external affairs, always with an impending threat of intervention if there is a perceived depreciation of the Slavic community’s standing. Mozaffari went as far as saying that Kazakhstan could be “considered semi-Russian because any threat to it, whether societal or external, directly jeopardises the security of Russians.”<sup>47</sup> In economic terms, Kazakhstan, with Russia, can be considered a member of a possible fledgling Caspian Basin sub-complex (Iran, Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan, Russia and Kazakhstan), or possibly as the easternmost extension of the Caucasian complex. In these two complexes, the first would revolve around access to and the

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<sup>45</sup> Bruce Pannier, “Puzzling Out the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan: A View From Kyrgyzstan,” *Turkistan Newsletter* 4:42 (February 16, 2000).

<sup>46</sup> Samuel Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations: Remaking the World Order*, (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1997), 137-138.

ability to exploit the vast quantities of oil and gas beneath the Caspian Sea. To gain the majority share (or in Russia's case, some share at all) would mean increased and sustained levels of foreign investment and export capital that would prove to be the salvation for Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan and most likely be considered a threat by Russia and Iran. With the extension of pipelines through Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia and Turkey, Kazakh wellbeing would be tied to the maintenance of peace in the Caucasus to ensure the security of its lifeline to the west. At the same time, Kazakhstan has closer ethnic and historical ties with its Central Asian neighbours and it maintains a long border with China. Furthermore, it is susceptible to the overflow of ethnic unrest from Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan and is interested in combating the spread of instability from Afghanistan and Tajikistan. Kazakhstan serves as one of the two poles in my bipolar conception of the CASC as it is the only regional state that has the economic and military assets to counter Uzbekistan. In his comparative analysis of potential Uzbek and Kazakh regional pre-eminence, diplomat Dmitry Trofimov argues that at present, neither state has sufficient economic and political potential to establish a leadership position. Instead, the region as a whole would "retain its bipolar nature in the future".<sup>48</sup> Moreover, he argues, "the rivalry between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan will mainly center on the division and redistribution of spheres of influence."<sup>49</sup> I believe that, until such time as the western pipeline is built, Kazakhstan will remain primarily focused on the CASC.

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<sup>47</sup> Mozaffari, "The CIS' Southern Belt," 11.

<sup>48</sup> Dmitry Trofimov, "Regional Preeminence in Central Asia," *Jamestown Foundation Prism*, VI:2 part 4, (February 18, 2000).

<sup>49</sup> Trofimov, "Regional Preeminence."

## **Turkmenistan and Iran**

By virtue of gaining independence at the same time as the other states of Central Asia, Turkmenistan is generally included in any regional analysis. However, there is little evidence to suggest that it has a great degree of security interdependence with its eastern neighbours. This is partly a function of Turkmenistan's avowed and internationally recognised neutrality that, in effect, isolates it from security relations with most of its neighbours. The exceptions to this are its bilateral military agreements with Russia and contracts for resource exploitation and transportation. Although it is generally suspicious of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan (evidence of enmity), Turkmenistan's most intense security relations have been with Russia, which provides border security and protection of transport links to Iran.<sup>50</sup>

At this time, Turkmenistan's security position is more characteristic of an insulating state, trapped between the CASC and the Gulf security complex, than it is of an active participant in the CASC. Considering the Turkmen case as such allows Iran to be removed from the calculation of the CASC as its influences move wholly to the super-regional level. While some or all of the states of the CASC may consider Iran's influence a concern, its security interactions are directed toward the Gulf complex with Saudi Arabia and Iraq. This is not to say that it is not a factor in the security issues arising in Central Asia. As we will see in Chapter 5, the IMU-Iran connection was clearly in evidence by the IMU's use of Iranian radio to announce its resistance to the Uzbek Government. However, there is nothing to suggest that Iran has entered into the internal dynamics of the CASC beyond what would be considered a super-regional affect.

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<sup>50</sup> R. Freitag-Wirminhaus. "Turkmenistan's Place in Central Asia and the World," in Mehdi Mozaffari (ed.), Security Politics in the Commonwealth of Independent States: The Southern Belt, 74-76.

## Afghanistan

In a very short contribution to Mozaffari's book, Anthony Hyman highlighted some of the most important reasons to include Afghanistan within the CASC. Although the article was finished before the Taliban successfully took control of the Afghan 'state', some of his factors remain salient at this writing. Hyman argued that members of all five post-Soviet states are represented in the Afghan population, and that the Tajiks, Uzbeks and Turkmen of Afghanistan are of the same ethnic stock as those in the northern states.<sup>51</sup> Moreover, the "north-east of Afghanistan and the south of Tajikistan can [be] considered as one single and vast entity, which ethnic politics and socio-economic evolution have made evolve differently on either side of the frontier."<sup>52</sup> Secondly, Afghanistan has not been aloof from involvement in post-Soviet security affairs and was reportedly providing financial, logistic and military aid, safe havens and insurgency bases to the various sides of the Tajik Civil War.<sup>53</sup>

Hyman's other factors, such as increasing economic ties and potential clan/ethnic rivalry in Afghan politics, have been set aside temporarily by the advent of Taliban control of Kabul. Even so, Afghanistan is a defining example of what Buzan envisioned in very weak states. The Taliban, as yet, have been unsuccessful in extending their control into the northern provinces of Afghanistan.<sup>54</sup> Since the cooling of the Tajik Civil

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<sup>51</sup> Anthony Hyman, "Afghanistan and Central Asia" in Mehdi Mozaffari, "The CIS' Southern Belt: A New Security System" in Mehdi Mozaffari (ed.), Security Politics in the Commonwealth of Independent States: The Southern Belt, 122. He noted that Afghanistan was the destination of migrating families from the Ferghana and other regions as late as the 1920s and 1930s but since the beginning of the Afghan civil war in 1978, the Kazakh and Kyrgyz populations have all but vanished.

<sup>52</sup> P. Centlivres and M. Centlivres-Demont, "Tadjikistan et Afghanistan," in M. R. Djalili and F. Grare, Le Tadjikistan à l'épreuve de L'indépendance, (Geneva: Institute des Hautes Etudes Internationales, 1995), 17-27. Translation quoted in Hyman, "Afghanistan and Central Asia," 122.

<sup>53</sup> Hyman, "Afghanistan and Central Asia," 124.

<sup>54</sup> The Military Balance states in its 1999-2000 edition that the Taliban controls two-thirds of Afghanistan but faces the 60,000 strong Islamic Society opposition force made up of ethnic Uzbek, Tajik and Turkmen

War, and especially since 1999, Afghanistan has been increasingly involved in the security dynamic of the core of the CASC. In early 2000, a high level meeting of Uzbek, Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Tajik and Russian representatives securitised Afghan safe havens and 'terrorist training bases' by considering them to be a justifiable targets of Uzbek and Russian air strikes in response to 'terrorist actions'.<sup>55</sup> Whether Afghanistan was 'in or out' before the Taliban succession is academic, as with this securitising act it has been pulled within the CASC. Therefore, the north of Afghanistan can be considered a multifaceted and independent sub-state actor in the CASC. This opens an interesting theoretical dilemma of whether a complex can include only part of a very weak or ordinary weak state: this will be covered in more detail in the following discussion of China.

### **China**

Like Afghanistan, China cannot be fully considered within the CASC, and its interactions with Central Asia have to be carefully sorted among the levels of analysis. It is necessary then to place some conditions on its application within the CASC. Firstly, it is included in the list of great states that compete at the systemic level of analysis and among those that compete super-regionally for Central Asian influence. Therefore, many of the Chinese influences have to be considered as intervening dynamics flowing from higher level interaction. Second, Chinese activities in the economic realm have been quite limited and its military deployments remain directed toward its East Asian neighbours. However, in terms of ethnicity and identity one of its most troubling

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fighters and located in the northern provinces. International Institute for Strategic Studies, The Military Balance 1999-2000, (London: Oxford University Press, 2000), 159.

provinces is Xinjiang, bordering on Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, which has a large Uighur minority that is related to other Central Asian ethnic groups. As it relates to the Xinjiang, China's societal security is interdependent with the ethnic and political stability in post-Soviet Central Asia. Moving China to higher level of analysis, as I have done with Russia below, may not be useful because of the interrelated nature of the societal sector relative and the other sectors. Uighur secessionist forces that seek to detach at least part of the province (called Uighuristan by some) supported by brethren located in great numbers in Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, threaten Chinese authority in Xinjiang. Therefore, inclusion of at least this sub-unit, packaged with Chinese clout from Beijing, reflects two levels of interaction. Firstly there is the state-state security dialogue between Chinese representatives from Beijing and the states of Central Asia. Secondly, there is the Uighur minority-Central Asian State dynamics that may prove as threatening at the societal level. In Kyrgyzstan, for example, some Uighur activists have been arrested and killed in recent years.<sup>56</sup> Prolonged action of this sort may elicit a minority response that could undermine Kyrgyz stability. China would seem to sit in a hazy middle ground between, at least, the super-regional and the local security complex with the latter only more obvious in the societal sector. The particular Chinese-Kazakh and Chinese-Kyrgyz security dynamics will be covered in more detail in the later chapters; however, suffice it to say here that in terms of societal and political security, Xinjiang, China is within the CASC.

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<sup>55</sup> Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty have been reporting on the rising tensions on the Uzbek-Afghan border since the beginning of 2000. One of the latest reports is Bruce Pannier. "Uzbekistan: Tensions Rising on Afghan Border." *RFE/RL Weekday Magazine*. June 2, 2000.

## Russia

The final state for consideration is possibly the most difficult state to nail down. Similar to the Chinese and Afghan cases, Russia cannot be considered wholly outside the CASC, and like China, its effect can flow from various levels of analysis. Yet it differs in that its interaction holds some of the characteristics of its traditional overlay position. For the CASC to exist as an independent unit, Russia must not have armed forces extensively stationed in the region nor subordinate the local security dynamics in favour of a higher level complex's competition.<sup>57</sup> The 201st Motorized Rifle Division that was stationed in Dushanbe, Tajikistan during the Soviet era was maintained as the primary component of the 25,000 strong peacekeeping force established early in the Tajik civil war. In 1996, Russia had stationed officer contingents to train Tajik conscript border troops and, at its peak in 1998, the 201<sup>st</sup> was 6000 strong.<sup>58</sup> The extent of Russia's presence in Tajikistan is not reflected in the other states in the region and with the advent of the second Chechen War in 1999, Russian military assets have been severely taxed. Although the Russian military has played, and will continue to play, a large role in internal conflicts in the Tajikistan, there is no clear evidence that indigenous regional security dynamics have been subordinated to great power competition between the United States, China, Russia, Turkey and Iran. Even so, it has been asked in to support regional actions against security problems including, most recently, the agreement to conduct air strikes on supposed terrorist bases. Outside of the peculiar case of Tajikistan, Russian-Central Asian security relations do not reflect a condition of overlay.

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<sup>56</sup> "Krygyz Security Hits Two Ideological Birds with One Stone," *Jamestown Foundation Monitor* 4:86 (May 5, 1998).

<sup>57</sup> Buzan, *People, States and Fear: An Agenda*, 198.

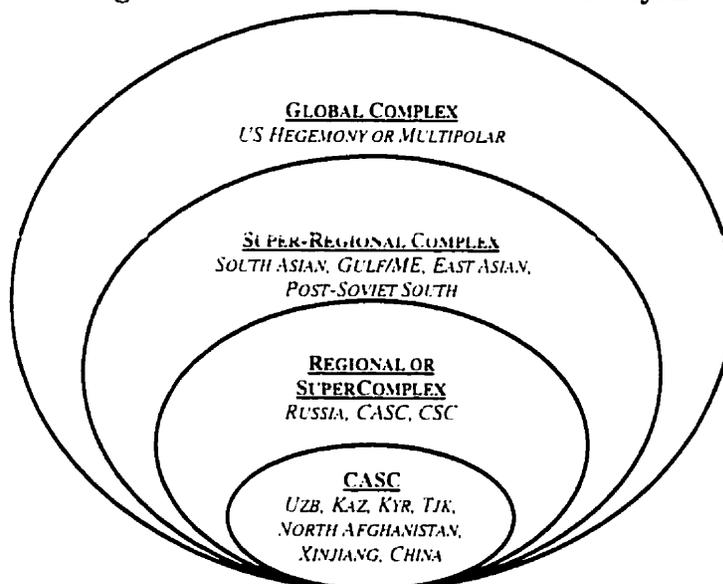
The levels of analysis point to what would best explain Russia's position vis-à-vis the CASC. The Soviet Union had the effect of creating several distinct security complexes through its artificial internal borders and its active undermining of what it perceived to be Pan-Turkic or Pan-Islamic unity movements in various Autonomous Regions and Oblasts. Although this will be covered in more detail in the next chapter, it is important to note two of the more important activities in this vein. One was placing internal borders in such a way as to create large non-titular minorities, thereby undermining the nationalising program of the majority; the second was to forcefully 'encourage' internal Slavic and European migration to Moslem regions. Each was instrumental in creating conditions of enmity among the ethnicities of the various newly independent states and ensuring continued Russian interest in these new regions. Though the Caucasian security complex (CSC) is relatively independent from the CASC in security terms, both remain interconnected by their relations to Moscow. In effect, this relationship would reflect a supercomplex that connects, through Russia, the vast post-Soviet space, but sits below and is greatly influenced by higher level competition between Russia, China, Iran, Turkey and the United States. The relative difference between Russian-Caucasian and Russian-Central Asian relations is that the extent of Russian intervention is more evident in the former than the latter.

Thus, the order of security complex levels of analysis that I postulate to exist in Central Asia can be visualised as follows:

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<sup>58</sup> Roy Allison, "The Military and Political Security Landscape in Russia and the South:" in Rajan Menon, Yuri E. Fedorov and Ghia Nodia (eds.), Russia, the Caucasus and Central Asia: The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Security

**Figure 3.3: Central Asian Levels of Analysis**



From this perspective the next chapter will attempt to locate the most relevant identities in the CASC. This task is made more difficult by the arbitrary nature of the ethnic identifications, particularly Uzbek and Tajik. As ethnographers have noted in the past, Soviet-era titular nationalities bear little resemblance to those that existed before the advent of Stalin's nationalizing program. This is particularly true for differentiating between Uzbeks and Tajiks. Recent surveys have highlighted the difficulty of defining these states' societies along ethnic lines. I intend to show that ethnicity is not a particularly good evaluator for locating the identities required to decipher the security dynamics within the societal sector. Rather I will consider the spectrum of possible, and relevant, identities from the *mahalla* to clan to region and show how each has contributed to domestic and regional security. Moreover, I will evaluate Islam and radical Islam in

contrast to state-sponsored nationalizing programs to see if there is sufficient evidence of larger societal communities.

#### **4 Identities of Central Asia and the Problem of Ethnicity**

The purpose of this chapter is to develop in detail the identities extant in contemporary Central Asia, and to analyse specifically whether they provide a sufficient basis for effective securitization. Whether a societal security problem exists depends on whether a society has defined an issue to be an existential threat to its survival. The approach taken in this chapter will consider specific levels of identity (sub-state, national and supra national) in isolation from other, possibly interrelated, levels. However, societal groups do not generally correlate directly with specific regional, national or religious identities but are often composites of each. As we will see in the next chapter the Pamir society has a culture defined by its Iranian heritage and its Ismai'li religious practices, different from and threatened by the identity propagated in Dushanbe. Therefore, while securitization can occur at all levels of identity, it is more likely that aspects of different levels of identity are threatened. The societal security situation, its relation to political insecurity and possible military action and, as such, its effect on the CASC as a whole is more crosscutting than simply ascribing Islam or ethnicity as sources of security problems.

Until now, Central Asia research that has focused on the societal security issues has divided almost equally between ethnic and Islamic groups as likely securitizing identities. Ethnically based research concentrates on insecurities resulting from the proximity of opposing *titular* ethnic groups within a specific state or within a shared territory such as the Ferghana Valley. Generally, these studies are based on comparative national and regional population statistics and/or the existence of oppressive anti-minority state policies that may push minority communities to violence. This approach is generally

premised on the assumption that each of these minorities constitutes a coherent entity with the state that bears its name (for example, Uzbek minorities of Kazakhstan being inherently the same as those found in Uzbekistan).<sup>1</sup> Thus, they assess the danger of ethnic conflict by the relative size of the minority population and predict behaviour from generalisations from the entire ethnic group.<sup>2</sup> The second approach considers Islam or radical (often called fundamentalist) Islam as a competing social identity to the secular state. Western media and academia were particularly concerned by the possibility of “five additional fundamentalist Irans” in the early days of Central Asia’s independence.<sup>3</sup> Though the threat of radical Islam exists in Central Asia, evidence suggests that there are deep divisions in this community that belie the coherence assumed by western observers. As will be shown here and in the next chapter, unity among Islamic groups has become more of an issue due to the inadvertent cultivation of a united opposition in Uzbekistan that has transcended the tradition official, public and radical divisions that have existed in the past.

Expanding upon these two popular approaches, there are other levels of identity that provide securitizing identities. The broad conceptions of titular nationalities encompass competing identities among traditional neighbourhood entities called the *mahalla* and the regional or district organisation (*raion*) that consists of a council of ‘grey beards’ (*aksakal*) representing the *mahalla*. More broadly in scope, some analysts have postulated securitizing identities centred on clans, tribes and regional identity-collectives. Above the state level, and usually used in conjunction with considerations of Uzbek

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<sup>1</sup> John Schoeberlein-Engel, “Conflict in Tajikistan and Central Asia: The Myth of Ethnic Animosity,” *Harvard Middle East and Islamic Review*, 1:2 (1994), 12.

<sup>2</sup> Schoeberlein-Engel, “Conflict in Tajikistan and Central Asia,” 12.

hegemony, the Pan-Turkic (or Pan-Uzbek) identity has been a recurring theme in security dialogues between Central Asian states.

This chapter will review some of the literature of ethnic and identity analysis focused on Central Asia. I have chosen to consider five different entities that can be organised into three overarching categories including sub-state, national and supra-national conceptions. In each section, I will seek to develop the scope of the particular entity, the extent to which it holds members' loyalty and whether it should be considered to be a securitizing agent. Beyond explaining what identities are relevant in Central Asia, this chapter's purpose will be to focus on those identities that are most useful in security analysis providing the backdrop to the case studies in Chapter 5.

#### **4.1 Sub-State Units<sup>3</sup>**

As I have stated previously, Central Asia has little tradition of statehood and has only begun to develop the foundations of statehood since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. As outlined in Chapter 2, a collectively shared conception of the existence and legitimacy of the state is an essential component of a strong state. In Central Asia, state structures have been grafted onto regional structures that previously organised smaller, localised entities. This section will consider two different localised identity-collectives that are the result of different patterns of historical development. The first are the identities that are commonly found in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan and defined by one's

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<sup>3</sup> Allen Kagedan and William Millward, "Central Asians: Recruits for Revolutionary Islam?" *Commentary* (Canadian Security and Information Service), No. 27 (1992), 1.

<sup>4</sup> In Section 3.2 I will deal specifically with the difficult nature of ethnicity in Central Asia. In this section, ethnic identifiers such as Uzbek, Tajik, Kazakh and Kyrgyz will be considered as coherent entities as defined by Soviet ethnographers. A second conceptual concern will be the use of 'region' as meaning a territorial subsection of a state identity and 'region' meaning, as it did in Chapter 1 and 2, a geopolitical

location. The second are clan hierarchies based on ancestry and found, to some degree, in all states of the CASC. Both forms have proven to be regional forces that counteract nationalising programs.

Nancy Lubin's 1995 survey of Central Asian Islamic identity has provided greater detail for the study of identities deemed to be important to citizens of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan. In the survey results, the responses to two particular questions emphasise the role of local institutions and the extent of loyalty that they attract. The first question asked respondents to choose those identity-groups to which they felt they most belonged. On whole, the results show that, in the majority of cases, respondents identified more closely to their community than to broader categories such as "people of my belief".<sup>5</sup> The top four identities that people chose were their family (66%), their neighbours (40%), their *mahalla* (36%), and their relatives (35%).<sup>6</sup> This information proves more telling when combined with a second question concerning how respondents believe political power to be distributed among institutions. It asked respondents to rank the level of power held by specific individuals or institutions on a scale of one to nine (nine being unlimited power).<sup>7</sup> Ratings of seven and above imply that the individual held significant power. Uzbeks, overwhelmingly, chose President Karimov (96%) but also noted oblast leaders (70%) and *raion* (district) and city leaders (60%) as significant power holders.<sup>8</sup> Although a small sample size and relatively large margin of error (6-7%)

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region encompassing several states. To increase clarity in this chapter, I will specify 'Central Asian Region' for the latter definition. Otherwise 'region' will be used in terms of a sub-state entity.

<sup>5</sup> Nancy Lubin, "Islam and Ethnic Identity in Central Asia: A View from Below," in Yaacov Ro'i (ed.), *Muslim Eurasia: Conflicting Legacies*, 56. "People of my belief" was the category that Lubin was most interested in as she sought to find evidence of Islamic awareness.

<sup>6</sup> Lubin, "Islam and Ethnic Identity," 56.

<sup>7</sup> Lubin, "Islam and Ethnic Identity", 59.

<sup>8</sup> Lubin, "Islam and Ethnic Identity". 59.

hamper Lubin's survey, it provides some of the first evidence of the strength of sub-state identities in Central Asia.<sup>9</sup>

If a generalisation can be made from Lubin's survey, it would be that people identify with and believe power is centred on those identities that were closest to them. For Uzbeks, these results should not be unexpected. Historically, Uzbeks and Tajiks were sedentary oasis dwellers and merchants who, more so than the Kazakhs and Kyrgyz (who come from nomadic stock), identify more readily with their location than with ancestry.<sup>10</sup> The *mahalla* forms the basis of the traditional power structure, organises political and social life, and provides for the social needs of its citizens.<sup>11</sup> Islam Karimov, the President of Uzbekistan, has referred to these entities as being "created with regard to the historical traditions and 'mentality' of the people, for whom the significance [as] an important social self-governing agency has always been great."<sup>12</sup> The *mahalla* system of territorial rule dates back several centuries and incorporates several dozen families held together by kinship or profession and grouped around a neighbourhood mosque.<sup>13</sup> In the Soviet era the *raion* or district level of government was introduced, incorporating several *mahallas* and providing the basis for the regional political élite. This second structure is a replica of the pre-Bolshevik feudal system and Demian Vaisman argues that the "principle of 'democratic centralism,' the theoretical basis of Bolshevik rule, was

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<sup>9</sup> Lubin notes that her sample size was 2000 and her error term as 6-7% (p. 54). Moreover she also highlights that responses are influenced by the fear (following the 1992 *Adolat* crackdown in Ferghana) and the desire to give both the 'right' or the most 'politically correct' answer (p. 54-55).

<sup>10</sup> Daria Fane, "Ethnicity and Regionalism in Uzbekistan: Maintaining Stability Through Authoritarian Control," in Leokadia Drobizheva *et al.*, *Ethnic Conflict in the Post-Soviet World: Cases and Analysis*, (Armonck: M.E. Sharpe & Co., 1996), 278.

<sup>11</sup> Demian Vaisman, "Regionalism and Clan Loyalty in the Political Life of Uzbekistan," in Yaacov Ro'i (ed.), *Muslim Eurasia: Conflicting Legacies*, 106.

<sup>12</sup> Islam Karimov, *Uzbekistan on the Threshold of the Twenty-First Century*, (London: Curzon Press, 1997), 97.

<sup>13</sup> Vaisman, "Regionalism," 106.

integrated completely into the feudal system of power, contributing to its preservation and consolidation.”<sup>14</sup> The importance of this regional entity is not in question. In the Soviet era the *raion*'s secretary (usually the most powerful of the *aksakal* ) would surround himself with his kinsmen and other members of his community and recruitment was based largely on who was related to whom.<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, the system of familial and community ties took on a regional aspect with political favouritism, and therefore regional control, extended with intermarriage.<sup>16</sup> As such, localism and friendship ties was not contained at the local level, extending up into the highest tiers of government.

Tribes and clans remain important identifiers in all of the states of Central Asia. In Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan they define an individual's identity and social position. The Kazakhs are divided into *zhuz* or hordes and Kyrgyz into two tribal federations, where each is a more important identifier than the local institutions found in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. Both the hordes and the federations are conglomerates of smaller tribal and entities that are not necessarily from a common origin.<sup>17</sup> In Kazakhstan, identification with a specific *zhuz* (Greater, Middle and Lesser Hordes) will define one's position in the political hierarchy. Nursultan Nazarbaev, the current President, is a member of the aptly named Greater *Zhuz*, who are the historic holders of the territory's most influential posts.<sup>18</sup> The Kazakh Hordes essentially divide the state into three. The Greater Horde controls the eastern and south eastern section, the Middle Horde is in the north, central and south, and the Lesser Horde controls the west. Similarly, Kyrgyzstan is socially divided into two tribal federations called the *Otuuz Uul* (of the northern section) and the

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<sup>14</sup> Vaisman, "Regionalism," 107.

<sup>15</sup> John Glenn, *The Soviet Legacy in Central Asia*, (Great Britain: MacMillan Press Ltd., 1999), 97.

<sup>16</sup> Glenn, *The Soviet Legacy*, 119-120.

*Ich Kilik* (in the South) separated by the Tien Shan mountain range. Tribal affiliations are also extant in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan though to a more limited degree and generally only in the rural districts. Historically, Uzbek and Kyrgyz clans were important factors in social organisation; however, with the settlement of major centres such as Bukhara, Samarkand and Ferghana, tribal relations have all but disappeared.<sup>19</sup> In Tajikistan, tribal relations are closely interrelated with ethnic differences that will be covered in more detail in Section 3.2 and 4.1 below.

Whether location-based or ancestor-based sub-state entities, the role of these identities is generally social and political, and there remains some question as to whether they can have a securitizing role. Schoeberlein-Engel argues that the relative strength of these organisations must not be over-emphasised, although analysts assume that loyalties toward clans, regions or ethnic groups often eclipse any politics of real issues and interests.<sup>20</sup> Though sub-state leaders are considered to hold significant power in Lubin's survey, this does not mean that they would command immediate loyalty from the population. Rather, they only have the opportunity to gain loyalty, if their actions reflect their population's interests or if the leader is successful in manipulating identity-based loyalties with the skilful use of political symbols.<sup>21</sup> To some extent, this sort of manipulation was in evidence in uprisings in the Ferghana Valley region before independence. There has been suggested that the 1989 anti-Meskhetian Turk riot and the 1990 Osh uprising were not spontaneous in origin but subject to manipulation "from

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<sup>17</sup> Glenn, *The Soviet Legacy*, 59. He notes that the Middle Horde, for example, includes tribes representing Mongol, Turkic and turkified Mongol origins.

<sup>18</sup> Glenn, *The Soviet Legacy*, 113.

<sup>19</sup> Glenn, *The Soviet Legacy*, 119.

<sup>20</sup> Schoeberlein-Engel, "Conflict in Tajikistan and Central Asia," 4.

<sup>21</sup> Schoeberlein-Engel, "Conflict in Tajikistan and Central Asia," 4.

above<sup>22</sup> although from what level the encouragement was issued remains a matter of speculation.<sup>23</sup> It is not unwarranted to conclude that the local level is able to instigate reactions; however, since local level politics is closely related to regional structures, the latter will prove to be a much more likely centre of securitizing actions than neighbourhoods. The local level is simply too small to effectively respond to perceived insecurities and will more likely respond through regional structures such as the *raion*, *shuz* or federation. Acting from a regional level, the leadership of the *raion* grouping would have a large enough power base to securitize a situation and muster an effective response.

Regional competition for position and power exists across the CASC. As yet, Tajikistan and Xinjiang are the only situations where regional identities have sought to redress perceived insecurities through securitizing actions (see Chapter 5). More commonly, regional identities will politicise issues and seek recourse through available political institutions. With its large Russian population, Kazakhstan has been very aware of the problems associated with regional-based identities and has sought to carefully orchestrate interregional relations at a political level. Kyrgyzstan has made bolder steps toward a democracy, providing a political outlet to address issues affecting the northern and southern regions. In Uzbekistan, the opposite situation has occurred: power has been centralised under Karimov. As we will see in the next chapter, this authoritarian control has forced peoples to express their dissent outside of their regional identity.

In Tajikistan, the collapse of the government's authority soon after independence was partly the result of a widespread, localised identity that is closely interrelated with

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<sup>22</sup> Yaacov Ro'i, "Central Asian Riots and Disturbances, 1989-1990: Causes and Context," *Central Asian Survey*, 10:3 (1991), 21.

religion and ethnicity. The particular case of the Gorno Badakhshan (Pamir) region of Southern Tajikistan will be one of the focuses of the next chapter. It has been described as a:

region [with] a population which is 95 percent Ismai`li Muslim . . . This is in sharp contrast to the rest of the nation where the inhabitants are Sunni Muslim, or atheist. The Badakhshan region was an autonomous oblast under the Soviet Union, and has retained this status in the new nation of Tajikistan.<sup>24</sup>

In effect, Tajik topography has been the key influence in developing this regional identification: Gorno Badakhshan is separated from the rest of Tajikistan by the Pamir Mountain range with passes that are closed in the winter.<sup>25</sup> According to the Tajik scholar and Pamir activist, Davlat Khudinazar, localism was institutionalised in the Soviet political structure in the 1940s that modified the national self-consciousness toward regional identifications.<sup>26</sup> Embedded regionalism produced a division of economic and political labour among regions and allowed the dominant Khujand (Leninabad) centre to redistribute wealth and prestige unequally toward its own region. A popular saying in Tajikistan is "Leninabad governs, Gharm does business, Kulob guards, Pamir dances, Qurghonteppa ploughs."<sup>27</sup> As we will see in the next chapter, the collapse of central authority had the effect of reinforcing the regional sense of identity as a security object in the civil war that followed.

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<sup>23</sup> Schoeberlein-Engel, "Conflict in Tajikistan and Central Asia," 14-18.

<sup>24</sup> William O. Beeman, "The Struggle for Identity in Post-Soviet Tajikistan," *Middle East Review of International Affairs*, 3:4 (1999) available from <http://www.biu.ac.il/SOC/besa/merial/index.html> (Dec. 17, 1999).

<sup>25</sup> Sergei Gretskey "Civil War in Tajikistan: Causes, Developments and Prospects for Peace," in Roald Z. Sagdeev and Susan Eisenhower, *Central Asia: Conflict, Resolution and Change*, (New York: The Center for Political and Strategic Studies, 1995), 219.

<sup>26</sup> Davlat Khudonazar, "The Conflict in Tajikistan: Questions of Regionalism," in Roald Z. Sagdeev and Susan Eisenhower, *Central Asia: Conflict, Resolution and Change*, 250.

<sup>27</sup> Gretskey, "Civil War in Tajikistan," 220.

## 4.2 Ethnicity

When analysts discuss ethnic groups in Central Asia they generally restrict their analysis to the titular nationalities, the Kazakhs, Kyrgyz, Tajiks, Uzbeks and Turkmen, as well as disparate Russian communities spread across Central Asia. To this list we can add the Uighur populations found in Xinjiang, the Karakalpak of Western Uzbekistan and, possibly, the Pamiris of Tajikistan. Other populations, such as the deported peoples of the Soviet Era, that include the Volga Germans, Koreans, Tatars and the Meskhetian Turks, have also been studied. These populations tend to be very small and will receive only brief mention in the discussion that follows. The ethnic-based approach often results in security literature that suggests that Central Asia is a smouldering cauldron ready to explode into a Balkan-like ethnic war.<sup>28</sup> Generally, security concerns are evidenced by comparative ethnic population statistics that zero in on areas where the majority population is different from titular population or where the numbers nearly balance. Figure 4.1 (see Appendix) is one example of how, *prima facie*, this approach seems valid.

As yet, predictions of the imminent collapse of ethnic harmony in Central Asia have not been borne out. As one scholar has remarked, "relations between Central Asia's many ethnic groups have been marked by a striking absence of ethnic and religious violence."<sup>29</sup> In 1994, Schoeberlein-Engel called the 'ethnicity as a security concern' approach the "myth of clan, ethnic and religious antagonisms" where political analysts.

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<sup>28</sup> Barry Posen's theoretical application of ethnic conflict would imply this. See Barry R. Posen, "The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict," *Survival* 35:1 (1993). Schoeberlein-Engel criticises (pg. 2-3) one of the most flagrant examples of this approach, Carey Goldberg, "Warriors and Refugees Rattle Border Guards in Central Asia," *Los Angeles Times*, January 19, 1993. See also Kagedan and Millward, "Central Asians," 2.

“relying on unexamined assumptions about the determinacy of culture, [avoid] the essential task of explaining actual political dynamics which lead to conflict.”<sup>30</sup>

Moreover, “the experience of Central Asia does not sustain explanations that attribute conflict to intrinsic group antagonisms or deeply historical enmities.”<sup>31</sup> Schoeberlein-Engel’s premise has remained true: there has yet to be a case where either intra-national or international conflict was the result of a clash of cultures. Will this condition continue to be absent? As we will see below, the lack of ethnic-based conflict is partly due to the avoidance of ethno-nationalising projects in Central Asian states and to the factors that were hidden by Soviet ethnic construction that came to the fore following independence.

The perception of an ethnic kaleidoscope as represented by Figure 4.1 intrinsically relates to the states’ Soviet origins and Stalin’s nationalisation program of the early years of Bolshevik rule. This process was entirely arbitrary, as shown by “an examination of the tribal listings for the Uzbek, Kazakh and Kyrgyz ethnic groups [that] illustrates the common origins of the Kazakhs and Uzbeks and the later integration of some of those tribes into the Kyrgyz ethnic group.”<sup>32</sup> Much of the modern ethnic definition reflects the divisions used by Russian and other European explorers when they categorised the tribal groups they met. At the outset of Tsarist rule in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Kyrgyz and Kazakh groups had already been identified as collective identities under their present ethnic labels. Their identities had everything to do with their geographic position and lifestyle. The Kazakhs were those people who lived a nomadic existence on the great Central Asian steppe, whereas the Kyrgyz were nomads that moved among the sheltered valleys

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<sup>29</sup> Martha Brill Olcott, “Ethnic Violence in Central Asia: Perceptions and Misperceptions,” in Roald Z. Sagdeev and Susan Eisenhower, Central Asia: Conflict, Resolution and Change, 116.

<sup>30</sup> Schoeberlein-Engel, “Conflict in Tajikistan and Central Asia,” 2.

<sup>31</sup> Schoeberlein-Engel, “Conflict in Tajikistan and Central Asia,” 7.

of the Tien Shan and Pamir Mountains. The term 'Uzbek' has been traced back to the period following the Shaybanid conquest in the 16<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>33</sup> Also called 'Taze ('pure') Uzbeks', they were related to the ruling class, to conquering soldiers, or to those subject to the Shaybandi's dynasty.<sup>34</sup> A second group of Uzbeks finds its origins among Turkic or Mongol nomads or semi-nomads referred to as the *Chagatais*.<sup>35</sup> The third was one that was generally referred to, indigenously, as *Sarts*- a title referring to their sedentary agricultural and trading existence. Neither 'Uzbek' nor 'Tajik' was recognised as an ethnic or cultural label. Modern usage of the term has much to do with the early western identification of 'Uzbek' as a cultural referent. For example, in his travels in Afghanistan in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, British East India employee William Moorcroft recognised the plundering tribes on the Oxus River in northern Afghanistan as being of the "Oozbuck" who roamed the region between Kabul, Afghanistan and Bukhara.<sup>36</sup> Thus, by the establishment of the Soviet Uzbekistan, it may have become habitual to refer to the peoples of the Bukhara Region as 'Uzbek'.

Indigenously, 'Uzbek' was applied without consideration for language (Turkic or Tajik), lifestyle, or tribal affiliation and was devoid of national identity.<sup>37</sup> By the same token, the origin of the name 'Tajik' is found to be a sociological term meaning 'settled.'

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<sup>32</sup> Glenn, *The Soviet Legacy*, 61.

<sup>33</sup> The Shaybanid Dynasty of Bukhara held power until conquered by the Russians in the late 1800s.

<sup>34</sup> Ronald Grigor Suny, "Southern Tears: Dangerous Opportunities in the Caucasus and Central Asia," in Rajan Menon, Yuri E. Fedorov and Ghia Nodia (eds.), *Russia, the Caucasus and Central Asia: The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Security Environment*, 162. Suny's discussion on the Uzbek identity draws extensively from John Schoeberlein-Engel. "The Prospects for Uzbek National Identity," *Central Asian Monitor*, No. 2 (1996) and John Schoeberlein-Engel, *Identity in Central Asia: Construction and Contention in the Conceptions of 'Özbek,' 'Tâjik,' 'Muslim,' 'Samarqandi' and Other Groups*, (unpublished Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1994).

<sup>35</sup> Glenn, *The Soviet Legacy*, 61.

<sup>36</sup> Meyer and Blair Brysac, *Tournament of Shadows*, 46-47.

<sup>37</sup> Suny, "Southern Tears," 162.

again referred to a lifestyle choice rather than a particular identity.<sup>38</sup> It was with the advent of the Bolshevik nationalist program that the 'ethnicity' of these titles found their origin. The program first redefined the boundaries of the Tsarist territorial entities of the region, and then named its new creations after a particular dominant ethnic group (see Figures 4.2 and 1.1 in Appendix). The *Sart* identity was broken into two where 'Uzbek' referred to those who spoke a Turkic tongue and 'Tajik' to those speaking a form of Persian.<sup>39</sup> This was a unique means of dividing ethnicities because there is little evidence to suggest that language played a large role in separating the various ethnic groups from each other.<sup>40</sup> A second possible exception to this may be the Pamiris of Gorno-Badakhshan, Tajikistan who speak an eastern Iranian language (as opposed to Tajik which is related to the western Iranian language group) and often only speak Tajik as a third language. Although their territory was melded into Tajikistan, Pamiris believe themselves to be an entirely different people from Tajiks.<sup>41</sup>

Throughout Soviet Central Asia, the construction of new nations cut across social lines and united different populations under a national title. Borders were not inserted on the basis of ethnographic or sociological reasoning, but were superimposed on territories where Central Asian peoples traditionally intermingled, creating large minority populations within each of the new Republics. In effect, this served the contradictory purposes of creating and, at the same time, undermining the Republics' nationalising programs by providing the titular nationality with enough internal minorities to make national consolidation difficult. The Soviets had various motives for introducing

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<sup>38</sup> Olcott, "Ethnic Violence in Central Asia," 115.

<sup>39</sup> Suny, "Southern Tears," 162.

<sup>40</sup> Glenn, *The Soviet Legacy*, 57.

<sup>41</sup> Glenn, *The Soviet Legacy*, 125.

'nations' to Central Asia. Partly it was seen as a method to increase the efficiency of Bolshevik political consolidation by dividing the vast Central Asian territory into smaller administrative units and training a local cadre for important, albeit limited, positions of power.<sup>42</sup> Secondly, it was seen as a way to offset potential pan-Islamic or pan-Turkic identities that were politically popular in the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. In this respect, Soviet policy was heavily influenced by *realpolitik* and *divide et impera* with nationalism considered the lesser evil compared to supra-national movements.<sup>43</sup> As such, "the introduction of nation-building to the Central Asia region was regarded as part of a progressive dialectical process which would eventually result in the dissolution of nationalities" in favour of *Sovietskii narod* (a Soviet people).<sup>44</sup> As a result, ethnicity was further confused. In an effort to gain access to economic and political rewards, non-titular minorities had incentives to take on the titular nationality. In the context of Uzbekistan, Touraj Atabaki has stated:

A process of nativization began which meant that Uzbeks, or those claiming to be Uzbeks, came to have access to high positions in the local administration. Whereas it was possible for the so-called 'recognized ethnic minorities' to enjoy 'cultural freedom,' it soon became clear that if one wished to advance one's career, it was necessary to adopt a certain degree of overt Uzbekness . . . The Soviet policy of nationality registration in the internal passport in Uzbekistan tended to encourage non-Uzbek ethnic groups, in particular the Tajiks, to declare themselves Uzbeks in official documents for the sake of advancement in the government apparatus.<sup>45</sup>

This effect is most clear in the Tajik and Uzbek cases because, with their similar origins, peoples could pass themselves off as one or another when necessary. Analysts have

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<sup>42</sup> James Crichtlow, Nationalism in Uzbekistan: A Soviet Republic's Road to Sovereignty, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1991), 12.

<sup>43</sup> Glenn, The Soviet Legacy, 49 and 73.

<sup>44</sup> Glenn, The Soviet Legacy, 49.

noted that it is impossible to determine the number of individuals who consider themselves members of the Tajik minority in Uzbekistan and, due to the high levels of mixed marriages, group identities are amorphous.<sup>46</sup> As a whole, this means that most ethnographic data dealing with these two groups is questionable. Solodovnik notes that, officially, "there are some 700,000 Tajiks living in [Uzbekistan] . . . Tajik ethnographers, on the other hand, maintain that this number may be as high as 3 million, depending on how Uzbeks are distinguished from Tajiks."<sup>47</sup>

In Central Asia, ethnicity is a very difficult identity to utilise in the study of security. Certainly in the case of Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and to some extent Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, the Soviet nationalising program reified titular ethnicity and their homelands. Even so, as we will see below, this does not make it impossible for ethno-centric entrepreneurs to take advantage of minor differences to create ethnic strife. In the 70 years since its inception, the titular nationality with the development of national myths and unique histories is in the process of building what Benedict Anderson has called 'imagined community.' The next section will look more closely at Central Asian nationality as a potential collective identity. As I will show, the leaders of the Central Asian states have attempted to steer clear of chauvinistic styles of ethno-nationalism in favour of civic nationality, although some continue to develop an underlying 'ethnification' of state identity.

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<sup>45</sup> Touraj Atabaki, "The Impediments to the Development of Civil Societies in Central Asia," in Touraj Atabaki and John O'Kane (eds.), Post Soviet Central Asia, (London: Tauris Academic Studies, 1998), 39-40.

<sup>46</sup> Graham Smith *et al.*, Nation-Building in the Post-Soviet Borderlands: The Politics of National Identities, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 212-213.

<sup>47</sup> Sergei Solodovnik "The Tajikistan Conflict as a Regional Security Dilemma," in Roy Allison and Christopher Bluth (eds.), Security Dilemmas in Russia and Eurasia, (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1998), 231.

### **4.3 Nationalism**

In all of the post-Soviet Central Asian states, traditional local and regional identities have made it difficult for nationalism to become a force at the state level. In Kazakhstan, opposition groups have used nationalist rhetoric to gain publicity, though most do not have specific programmes of action.<sup>48</sup> All states have enacted nationalising processes as a means to consolidate power in the early years of independence. Specifically, the de-Russification of education, language and religion, and the creating of national histories that justify the existence of the state have led this process. In most cases, these new histories have been part fact and part fabrication. A detailed analysis of the simultaneous process in all of the new states of Central Asia is beyond the scope of this work, but some generalisations can be made. With the exception of Kyrgyzstan, former members of the Communist élite lead all the post-Soviet states. Nationalism has been used as a means to provide for a stable transition from Soviet Republic to independent state and to build a sufficient basis to ensure the leaders' position of power. As such, each leader is careful to enact nationalist policies that will not lead to the destabilisation of society and threaten their position. They have also engaged in "nationalisation by stealth" where certain programs "intended to secure the cultural and political resurgence of the titular nation have been openly promoted," and others have been introduced as "informal practices carried out in accordance with the unwritten rules of the game."<sup>49</sup> In both, the desire is to promote the pre-eminence of the titular nationality without heightening threat perceptions in minority communities. This is

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<sup>48</sup> Shirin Akiner, The Formation of Kazakh Identity: From Tribe to Nation-State, (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1995), 80.

<sup>49</sup> Smith *et al.*, Nation Building, 142.

particularly evident in the policies of the Kazakh and Uzbek governments. The former has sought to avoid alienating the Russian populations in the northern oblasts and possibly inducing intervention by Russia itself. In the latter, Karimov has restrained the more chauvinistic policies that would encourage the emigration of skilled Russians who are necessary components of the Uzbek economy.<sup>50</sup>

This desire for stability is pervasive in Central Asian societies as well. Following the Osh and Ferghana riots of the late Soviet period and the Tajik Civil War, there has been a "persistent fear of the consequences of ethnic disorder, amounting almost to a 'cult of stability' at nearly any price."<sup>51</sup> Olcott believes that this is one of the key reasons as to why ethnically based rhetoric has not found resonance with the populations of Central Asia. She also finds a second and equally believable sociological reason. The older generations of Central Asians (those 40 and above) were products of the Sovietisation of Central Asian society and have a sense of dual identity: some consciousness of their own national identity and some sense of being part of something larger.<sup>52</sup> What we will find in the next chapter is that the state has had a difficult time defining security on the basis of threats to the nation or to a nationality ethnicity. Rather, Karimov and others have appealed to threats to stability that often use societal infrastructure as referent objects. As such, nationalism as yet has not proven to be a strong identifying force for security.

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<sup>50</sup> Ronald Grigor Suny, "Provisional Stabilities: The Politics of Identities in Post-Soviet Eurasia," *International Security* 24:3 (1999), 170.

<sup>51</sup> Olcott, "Ethnic Violence in Central Asia," 118.

<sup>52</sup> Olcott, "Ethnic Violence in Central Asia," 120.

#### 4.4 Islam

Broadly speaking Islam can be considered to be the one identity that is held in common among most of the indigenous populations of Central Asia. From the perspective of at least one Muslim leader it provides one possible way to resolve regional conflicts and disputes.<sup>53</sup> First introduced in the seventh century with the Arab invasions, and supported by the Silk Road trading route connecting the Middle East to China, by the 19<sup>th</sup> century Islam had spread throughout the region.<sup>54</sup> Because the Silk Road passed through the oasis centres of Bukhara, Samarkand and Khorezm, Islam had its most profound effect on the southern half of the region and penetrated most deeply into the societies of the Uzbeks and Sarts. It was only in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries that it spread to the northern Kazakh and Kyrgyz tribes.<sup>55</sup> Though threatened by the atheist indoctrination of the Soviet Era, the Muslim identity was never eradicated in the region, and by independence, one observer has noted that it remained the primary identification of local populations.<sup>56</sup> Obviously then, when the leaders of the independent Central Asian states began planning their post-Soviet nationalising agendas, it was recognised that Islam was a force to be harnessed, not excluded. Since 1991, Islam and nationalism have had a tumultuous relationship that has produced three different Islamic identities: official, public and radical.

Central Asian Islam is not a monolithic identity. It is divided horizontally between Sunni, Shiite and Sufi sects and vertically between radical, public and official practices.

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<sup>53</sup> Uzbek SADUM *Mufti* Muhammed Sadyq Mama Yusupov quoted in Valery Tishkov, Ethnicity, Nationalism and Conflict in and After the Soviet Union: The Mind Aflame, (London: United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, 1997), 107.

<sup>54</sup> Glenn, The Soviet Legacy, 64.

<sup>55</sup> Glenn, The Soviet Legacy, 64.

<sup>56</sup> Martha Brill Olcott, "Islam and Fundamentalism in Independent Central Asia," in Yaacov Ro'i (ed.), Muslim Eurasia: Conflicting Legacies, 21.

The extent of the vertical separation differs depending on the state in question. Generally, it is associated with the degree of politicisation that the organisation of public or radical Islamic forces is allowed (this will be covered in more detail in section 5.2). Moreover, this vertical separation is not a new situation. Modern 'official Islam' has much in common with the system introduced to accommodate Islam in the Soviet era. The Soviets, in an effort to accommodate and control the Muslim religion, introduced the Central Asian Spiritual Directorate of Muslims (SADUM). The Directorate "sharply limited access to religious education, training and worship, and also painstakingly worked out a limited practice of Islam which was compatible with Soviet citizenship."<sup>57</sup> Though 'official' Islam was essentially "reduced to performing a number of rites and rituals," the Soviet Union was not successful in eradicating "true" Muslim worship or teaching that continued behind closed doors throughout the region.<sup>58</sup> With independence, Central Asian nationalising programs were enacted concurrently with an Islamic revival. Official Islam was extended to include all secular rites and teachings as long as they did not produce a political component. As such, the number of mosques and *madrasas* (Islamic schools) was expanded almost exponentially. In general, state leaders chose to embrace Islam as an inherent component of their indigenous cultural expression. Karimov chose to make symbolic gestures of fealty to Islam by swearing the presidential oath of office on the Koran and introducing religious dimensions to public ceremonies.<sup>59</sup> Mehrdad Haghayeghi has argued that the melding of Islam and nationalism came more easily than expected by western observers because it had been refined to suit the unique

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<sup>57</sup> Olcott, "Islam and Fundamentalism," 23.

<sup>58</sup> Qadi Akbar Turajonzoda, "Religion: The Pillar of Society," in Roald Z. Sagdeev and Susan Eisenhower, Central Asia: Conflict, resolution and Change, 268.

<sup>59</sup> Olcott, "Islam and Fundamentalism," 22.

ethnic and tribal peculiarities of Central Asian society long before the advent of Soviet rule. Rather than a creed with organised political objectives, Islam's lasting imprint on Central Asian society was as a way of life and it evolved into a relatively mild variety compared to those found in the Middle East.<sup>60</sup>

Although Islam was included as one aspect of the nationalist agenda, regional governments have remained suspicious of its political and societal role. This is clearly exemplified by the often antagonistic relationship between Karimov and Uzbekistan's Islamic organisations. This situation will be considered in more depth in the next chapter when Uzbekistan's securitization of radical Islam is studied more closely. Here, the relationship is useful in introducing radical or 'fundamentalist' Islam in the region. Unlike his more secularised relative, a radical Muslim is one who reorders his life to comply fully with Islam's teachings and would prefer to see a return of society to the 'true path of Islam.'<sup>61</sup> However, especially in Uzbekistan, governmental pronouncements refer to any Islamic organisation that threatens the state apparatus as either radical or fundamentalist. Often, the major reason for this approach is to gain Russian and Western support for, or acquiescence toward, Karimov's authoritarian control as the only means to offset Islamicisation of Central Asia.<sup>62</sup> Because it has been used as a political ploy with much governmental and journalistic fabrication, it is very difficult to get a true picture of the extent of radicalisation in Central Asia. However, radical elements of the Islamic opposition were identified as active participants of the Tajik civil war and with the recent actions of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan

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<sup>60</sup> Mehrdad Haghayeghi, "Islamic Revival in the Central Asian Republics," *Central Asian Survey*, 13:2 (1994), 251.

<sup>61</sup> Olcott, "Islam and Fundamentalism," 32.

(IMU). As such then, they are a growing addition to the selection of identities in Central Asia, and one that has the potential to grow further.

#### **4.5 Conclusion**

As this chapter has shown, Central Asian identity is a much more complex concept than expected by the early observers who emphasised the potential for ethnic or Islamic groups to be the source of regional security problems. Given the sub-state and intra-Islamic divisions that exist today, it is incorrect to assume that ethno-nationalists have the ability to appeal to age-old grievances, or that radical Islamic groups have ready-made armies at their disposal. Rather, the societal security problems, and the groups affected, are much more complex situations and include many different factors than originally assumed by security analysts. These complexities will become clearer in the next chapter when the cases of Pamir regionalism and IMU opposition are considered in detail. A second point that this chapter has made abundantly clear is that Central Asia remains in a transition stage. This means that a shift toward ethno-nationalist or radical Islamic identity remains a possibility if certain conditions are satisfied. As the IMU case will show, inappropriate or badly timed policy initiatives made by the authoritarian regimes of the region may prove so divisive that the only route for mass opposition is to express their grievances through specific identities. At this point ethno-entrepreneurs could redirect social unrest toward minority groups, or fundamentalist groups could utilise the promise of stability with the establishment of theocratic governments. In most cases, Central Asian governments have been conscious of this possibility and have sought less

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<sup>62</sup> Robert O. Freeman, "Radical Islam and the Struggle for Influence in Central Asia," in Bruce Maddy-Weitzman and Efraim Inbar (eds.), Religious Radicalism in the Greater Middle East, (London: Frank Cass.

intrusive means to build their own political strength and nationalising programs.

However, the systematic repression of a specific identity group in an effort to support 'stability' may prove to produce the exact opposite effect.

## **5 The IMU and Pamir Cases as Societal Security Issues**

The 'societal' is a particularly difficult sector to isolate analytically because it is so closely interrelated with the 'political' sector. Partially, this has to do with how an identity-group moves an issue from the political to the security realm. The state is in general the most likely source of threats to sub-national and super-national identity communities, and this fact is exacerbated by the authoritarian nature of the Central Asian political systems. Here, the state will necessarily attempt to control most, if not all, societal expressions that do not coincide with the official societal vision. The only clear difference between the present political system and the Soviet system it replaced is in terms of ideology; therefore, political life remains top-down and political power centralised. As such, societies' vulnerabilities that are extant today are generally not new and, with only slight modification, the situation remains business as usual. This brings to the fore a theoretical conundrum. Securitization takes place when an issue is deemed to be so threatening that responses are taken outside the normal channels of politics. For sub-state societies excluded from a political presence and for Islamic organisations that are pushed underground, *their vulnerabilities are the normal conditions of their political existence*. Theoretically, Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde have dealt with this problem when they argue that "if a given type of threat is persistent or recurrent, it is no surprise to find that the response and sense of urgency become institutionalized."<sup>1</sup> They note, however, that this does not "reduce security to a species of normal politics" because the urgency of the problem and the priority it receives is not reduced.<sup>2</sup> By implication, legitimate authorities observe the existence of the security problem, and securitize when conditions

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<sup>1</sup> Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, Security, 27.

shift and increase the urgency of a response. If chronic societal threats are the norm of a collective's existence, then securitization will occur when the securitizing agent recognises that the structural conditions have changed such that a window of opportunity for redress is presented, or the nature of the threat is enhanced. Therefore, the analyst needs to differentiate between situations that are a securitized response to a new threat or the result of changes in the structural conditions of an old vulnerability.

A second consideration is that the securitizing response need not include violence or war. In Central Asia, protection of collective interests of sub-state and Islamic identities has often resulted in the creation of political parties that represent identity-group interests in the state political apparatus. This was particularly true in Tajikistan where the Islamic Renaissance Party and La'li Badakhshan (a Pamir regional party) were both politically active in the early post-independence years. When political representatives have been able to co-exist with the official party of the state, violence is generally avoided. However, when the political representation has been outlawed, as it was in Tajikistan and in Uzbekistan, identity groups may be forced to respond in violent fashion. The two case studies that will be covered in this chapter fall under the latter scenario. One of the essential contributing factors for Pamir involvement in the Tajik civil war and the rise of the IMU in the Ferghana region was that political representation was unable to effectively respond to, or ameliorate perceived societal vulnerabilities.

Finally, analysis of these cases cannot be confined to one particular identity. The methodology of isolating identities in the last chapter was misleading as it implied that Central Asian identities could be easily placed in boxes marked 'regional,' 'national,'

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<sup>2</sup> Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, *Security*, 28.

'ethnic,' or 'Islamic'. However, multiple and overlapping categories of identities are generally extant in the securitizing collective. Consider ethnicity defined as being:

a social group whose members share a sense of common origins, claim a common distinctive history and destiny, possess one or more distinctive characteristics and feel a sense of collective uniqueness and solidarity.<sup>3</sup>

An identity characterised in this fashion can encompass as much or as little as "distinctive characteristics" would allow. The cases of the Pamiris and the Uighurs (who will not be dealt with here due to space limitations) include aspects of regional, ethnic and religious identifications. The cases of the aforementioned Ferghana riots and the IMU also have overlapping identity categories, specifically regional and ethnic in the first and regional and religious in the second. This does not change the analytical approach to be taken in analysing the security problems; however, it does highlight the aspects of the macro-identity that could be identified as being threatened.

### **5.1 Pamir Regionalism in the Tajik Civil War (1991-1994)**

A societal threat is anything that threatens the cohesiveness, unity or capacity of a society in such a way as to reduce its ability to continue as a viable entity. It must be perceived as such by a legitimate authority within a society. A security problem is something that can rapidly undercut the political order within a unit, deprive it of the capacity to manage itself and, thereby "alter the premises for all other questions."<sup>4</sup> The problem is securitized when a legitimate societal authority identifies an issue as a threat, receives support from its society, and responds in a fashion that eliminates the perceived insecurity. At the local and regional level, the clearest danger to identity is the state that

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<sup>3</sup> Glenn (50) cites this definition from Anthony Smith, *The Ethnic Revival*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 66.

<sup>4</sup> Wæver, "Securitization," 52, 54 and 63.

has the ability to propagate a competing national identity or act to undermine regional difference. In Central Asia, this possibility has been most clearly recognised by the Kazakh authorities who have attempted to mollify regions populated by Russians and other non-Kazakhs, with policies that avoid creating regional or local insecurities that might lead to 'expressions' of security. The official Kazakh nationalist policy has been one of civic nationalism defined in terms of citizenship rather than ethnic or religious identity. In one speech President Nazarbaev said:

We should not close our eyes to the fact that very many people start to think about leaving the country at the moment when they begin to feel psychological discomfort. This feeling of theirs is caused by a number of factors, first and foremost related to excesses and an unreasonable speed in the implementation of complex socio-cultural programmes.<sup>5</sup>

This deliberate approach in official nationalising policies has led to the absence of large-scale civil strife in Kazakhstan and, more importantly, alleviated the threat of Russian intervention.

On the other hand, the problem was most clearly not recognised after independence by the Tajik administration. The Tajik civil war provides the first post-Soviet example of how state leaders can induce sub-state security concerns with actions that are intended to promote continuance of its rule. In what was essentially a battle for political control, the civil war pitted ex-communists, and their sympathisers against a loosely organised opposition coalition. The latter was an unlikely coalition between the Islamic Renaissance Party, the Pamir-based La"li Badakhshan, the Democratic Party and

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<sup>5</sup> Quoted in Pål Kolstø, "Anticipating Demographic Superiority: Kazakh Thinking on Integration and Nation Building," *Europe-Asia Studies*, 50:1 (1998), 57.

nationalist *Rastokhez* (rebirth) party.<sup>6</sup> What brought these parties together was a shared desire for popular sovereignty, civil liberty and a goal to end the Communist party's monopoly on power.<sup>7</sup> The political division was more deeply entrenched as each side had a regional component (see Figure 5.1 in Appendix). The traditional élite of the Khojand region, with its allies in Kulob, sought to maintain the status quo by supporting the communist regime. The Gharm Valley and Gorno Badakhshan, historically excluded from positions of power in Tajikistan, backed the parties of the United Tajik Opposition (UTO). The impending confrontation, *prima facie*, could be considered nothing more than a challenge for political supremacy following a structural change. However, when the societal construct of the Pamir ethnic identity is included into the mix, the analysis turns to societal security. As Barnett Rubin aptly concluded "an insecure population increasingly fell back on whatever resources it could find for collective action and self-defence, namely armed struggle based on ethnic and clan affiliations."<sup>8</sup>

### **Background**

Linguistically and religiously, the Pamiris believe themselves to be substantially different from 'normal' Tajiks inhabiting other regions of Tajikistan. Muriel Atkins argues that this perceived difference is most strongly held by the older members of the society whereas the younger Pamiris tend to view themselves as Tajik even though they are critical of the way Dushanbe had exploited their region. The rest of Tajikistan tended

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<sup>6</sup> This United Tajik Opposition was essentially working at cross-purposes. The *Rastokhez* party sought to replace regional loyalties with an all-Tajik identity; the IRP sought a more Islamic, though not theocratic, Tajik Government; and the La'li Badakhshan sought greater autonomy for the Pamir region.

<sup>7</sup> Muriel Atkin, "Thwarted Democratization in Tajikistan," in Karen Dawisha and Bruce Parrott (eds.), *Conflict, Cleavage, and Change in Central Asia and the Caucasus*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 283-285.

<sup>8</sup> Barnett R. Rubin, "The Fragmentation of Tajikistan," *Survival* 35:4 (1993-94), 71.

to consider the Pamiris to be “alien” and “non-Muslim.”<sup>9</sup> Gorno Badakhshan is geographically separated from the rest of Tajikistan by the Pamir Mountains with its only major transportation links closed between November and April.<sup>10</sup> Due to its isolation, and although there is evidence of unexplored mineral and precious stone deposits, the region was the poorest part of what was the poorest Republic of the Soviet Union.<sup>11</sup>

La“li Badakhshan was the political arm of the Gorno Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast. Formed in the perestroika years of the late-1980s and legalised in 1991, its aim was to establish greater regional autonomy as a means to gain eventual independence from Tajikistan.<sup>12</sup> La“li Badakhshan was an active participant in the 1991 presidential elections that saw former Communists retain power in the first of a succession of fraudulent elections. Davlat Khudonazar, the candidate backed by the opposition, has claimed that as much as 90% of the Pamir and Gharm populations opposed the re-election of Rakhmon Nabiev of Khojand in 1991.<sup>13</sup> Nabiev’s re-election extended what was already a Khojand stranglehold on Tajik political power that had existed since 1946. Successive leaders had used this position to redirect political and economic benefits toward its and its allies’ regions.<sup>14</sup> Independence was not considered to be the cause for change in what had become routine political organisation for the Khojand<sup>15</sup> élite.

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<sup>9</sup> Atkins, “Thwarted Democratization,” 294.

<sup>10</sup> Nassim Jawad and Shahrbanou Tadjbakhsh, “Tajikistan: A Forgotten Civil War,” *Minority Rights Group International Report*, 94:6 (1995), 8.

<sup>11</sup> Brown, “Whither Tajikistan?” 7; Jawad and Tadjbakhsh, 8.

<sup>12</sup> Bess Brown, “Whither Tajikistan?” *RFE/RL Research Report*, 1:24 (June 12, 1992), 2.

<sup>13</sup> Khudonazar, “The Conflict in Tajikistan,” 259.

<sup>14</sup> Keith Martin, “Tajikistan: Civil War without End?” *RFE/RL Research Report*, 2:33 (August 20, 1993), 18.

<sup>15</sup> The Tajik names for regions and oblasts have been modified several times in its first decade of independence. For reasons of clarity I will use Khojand when referring to the northern oblast (formerly Leninabad) and I will ignore the brief union of Khotlon in favour of the separate entities of Kurgan-Teppe and Kulob.

### Securitizing Actions

The sub-state, regional security problem faced by the Pamiris was not a new phenomenon. However, structural conditions that produced the identified threat had changed enough that regional leaders realised that there was a possibility of neutralising the insecurity. The Pamir sought to redress the inequitable economic and political distribution through its political arm the La'li Badakhshan. As a member of the UTO, it sought to use mass demonstrations as a means to pressure the Nabiev government for change and as a forum to propound its views to the people that gathered.<sup>16</sup> In an attempt to counter the demonstrations, Nabiev established a National Guard by distributing 1800 automatic rifles to Kulobi demonstrators. These weapons were then used against the UTO demonstrators on May 5, 1992 setting off the first violent clash since independence.<sup>17</sup> The majority of the civil war was fought in the extreme southern regions of Tajikistan, in both Kurgan-Teppe and western Gorno Badakhshan. In Kurgan-Teppe fighting occurred between traditional inhabitants of the region (mostly Uzbek) and people of Gharm and Pamir descent who had been forcefully transferred to the region in the early post-World War II years help cotton development.<sup>18</sup>

Evidence from September 1992 to the peace agreement of March 1993, suggests that systematic actions were taken against those whose internal passports listed their birth in Pamir or Gharm. The original National Guard had reformed into an impromptu Kulob army under the name 'Popular Front' and carried out random arrests of opposition and

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<sup>16</sup> This latter point was particularly important in Atkin's estimation (pp. 288-289) because peasants populated demonstrations, and for many, it was their first exposure to the ideas of popular sovereignty and civil liberty.

<sup>17</sup> Jawad and Tadjbakhsh, "Tajikistan," 15; Martin, "Tajikistan," 20; Schoeberlein-Engel, "Conflict in Tajikistan," 38. At this point, the UTO opposition had also armed themselves by taking weapons from police stations in Dushanbe.

<sup>18</sup> Martin, "Tajikistan," 19.

minority group members.<sup>19</sup> A December 1992, Helsinki Watch Report stated that Pamiris and Gharmis were “killed or simply taken away and never heard from again.”<sup>20</sup> Schoeberlein-Engel has stated that, “while there were many Gharmi and Pamiri among the opposition activists, mere affiliation with these regional groups became sufficient grounds for mass slaughter by the Kolabi forces.”<sup>21</sup> It is reasonable to assume that the Gorno Badakhshan leadership would have determined that their society was at risk when a passport birth listing was one of the main bases from which pro-Communist forces determined citizens’ loyalty. They realised that the structural conditions had shifted after May 1992, from systematic economic and political inequality to retribution bordering on extermination, including the arrest, torture and murder on the basis of Pamir ethnicity. The clearest evidence we have of the securitizing action was that during the conflict, the majority of opposition military forces were drawn from the Gharm and Pamir regions and that, by March 1993, there existed a Pamir Self Defence Force that fought invading Government troops.<sup>22</sup> However, there does not seem to be any available source that cites a Pamir leader actually speaking security between 1992 and 1993.

### **Regionalizing Dynamics**

The 1992-1993 conflict had an effect on the CASC that is still reverberating today. Because the Pamir action was encompassed within the greater conflict that included Islamic, nationalist, democratic, regional and communist forces, it is not possible to isolate its actual effect. However, the Tajik civil war has come to epitomise what all regional leaders are seeking to avoid, and its effect can be seen in three ways. The first is

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<sup>19</sup> Schoeberlein-Engel, . “Conflict in Tajikistan,” 38-39.

<sup>20</sup> Quoted in Jawad and Tadjbakhsh, “Tajikistan,” 18-19.

<sup>21</sup> Schoeberlein-Engel, . “Conflict in Tajikistan,” 39.

<sup>22</sup> Jawad and Tadjbakhsh, “Tajikistan,” 13 and 17.

the aforementioned 'cult of stability' that Olcott has observed to exist in Uzbek society. Secondly, the Tajik civil war had the direct effect of creating a very large number of refugees in a very short period of time between 1991 and 1993. These include most of the pre-war Russian population, 70,000 others who fled to Afghanistan and another half a million (or one tenth of the pre-war population) who were displaced at some time during the civil war.<sup>23</sup> These refugees were spread across Central Asia straining the weak economies of the host countries. It was not until 1998 that the UNHCR reported that the majority of refugees and internally displaced persons had been repatriated leaving only approximately 60,000 refugees in other CIS countries.<sup>24</sup>

The third ramification is the most important. Before the cease-fire was signed, the Tajik civil war had involved almost the entirety of the CASC. Northern Afghanistan became the refuge, supply depot, and the military and religious training centre for the opposition forces that were forced to retreat across the border. Due to the intervention of a CIS peacekeeping force formed by Russia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, the conflict was mostly contained within the Tajik borders. Russia had not completely withdrawn its Soviet-era troops from Tajikistan at the time of the civil war and the 201<sup>st</sup> Motorized Rifles became immediately involved in and around the capital, Dushanbe. A large number of Uzbeks and small groups of Kazakh and Kyrgyz troops augmented the 201<sup>st</sup> as part of a joint CIS peacekeeping contingent. Evidence suggests that Karimov and the Boris Yeltsin (or his military commanders) had their own interests in the matter, supporting the status quo in favour of the opposition. Be that as it may, the intervention

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<sup>23</sup> Iver B. Neumann and Sergei Solodovnik. "The Case of Tajikistan." in Lena Jonson. Peacekeeping and the Role of Russia in Eurasia, (United States: Westview, 1996), 83.

was one of the key factors that brought about the 1993 cease-fire and the 1995 coalition government. Moreover, it was an indication of the extent that other regional actors perceived their security to be related to their neighbours. Islam Karimov has stated that:

special attention should be paid to the development of [regional conflicts] as the deliberate or involuntary expansion of armed or other undermining activity on the territory of neighboring states. . . . Due to the level of ethnic heterogeneity of each of the Central Asian states any aggravation of the crisis can only undermine civic harmony and stability in neighboring countries. The attempts of certain subversive groups to fan the flames of conflict and carry the crisis across to neighboring countries by appealing to the national feelings of ethnic population groups living in those countries can only cause alarm.<sup>25</sup>

Since 1992, there has been an increased awareness of the regional nature and the possible externalisation of local conflict to neighbouring states. Karimov, himself, is learning this lesson as his internal policies have possibly made the IMU the first truly regional security problem threatening almost the entirety of the CASC.

## **5.2 Karimov's Authoritarianism and the IMU**

It goes almost without saying that the essential securitizing actor at the state level is the government; however, in Central Asia this statement immediately raises theoretical concerns for the analyst. Since none of the states is democratic, the essential securitizing actor will always be the President who, more often than not, will define a security problem as that which undermines Presidential authority. Yet this leader may have questionable legitimacy beyond that granted by oppression and fear. Moreover, a festering societal or political problem may provide an avenue for regional, minority and/or opposition leaders to expand their own power. Identified threats will often be

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<sup>24</sup> See [http://www.unhcr.ch/statist/98oview/tab1\\_2.htm](http://www.unhcr.ch/statist/98oview/tab1_2.htm) and <http://www.unhcr.ch/world/asia/tajikist.htm>

organisations or identities that have the capability of amassing popular support, even if they do not overtly threaten national, ethnic or secular identity structures. They are identified as a threat simply because they may produce an end to the established order.

In Uzbekistan, Islam Karimov has recognised that without a coherent and commonly accepted nationalist identity, calling an issue a 'threat to Uzbek nationality' or a 'threat to the Uzbek identity' lacks popular appeal when the source of that threat is something that is integral to the Uzbek identity. If Karimov were to securitize Russian influence in Uzbekistan as a societal threat, he would be far more likely to gain the necessary support than if he were to make the same securitizing move against Islam. Instead, Karimov has used the referent 'stability' as the major object to be secured. By playing on what Olcott observed to be a prevailing 'cult of stability' he seeks the necessary national and international support for his responses. In so doing he can mask the true referent of their securitizing action- the maintenance of presidential power.

### **Background**

Like the Pamir case above, the Islamic threat to Uzbek political power is not a new situation that was brought about by the IMU. Instead, it has been a continual theme of the first decade of Uzbek statehood. The general approach to Islam in Uzbekistan by western scholars and journalists was to emphasise its potential as a unifying force leading to the assumption that Central Asia was "ripe to fall under the influence of militant Islam."<sup>26</sup> Because of Uzbekistan's historical association with Islam, and because it has some of the most influential Central Asian Islamic centres (specifically Samarkand and Bukhara), it was perceived to be the strategic beachhead that must be overtaken for Islam

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(July 25, 2000).

<sup>25</sup> Islam Karimov, Uzbekistan on the Threshold, 15.

to be successful.<sup>27</sup> This perception gave Karimov the diplomatic capital he needed to sell his authoritarian policies externally as the necessary means to respond to the Islamic threat. After 1992, Karimov was given virtually a free hand to institute oppressive measures against Islam and other opposition groups without undue political or economic cost from Western states.<sup>28</sup>

The early western perception of Central Asian Islam was premised on the belief that Islam in Central Asia was a coherent and commonly held identity. However, Robert Kangas has identified three different 'faces' of Islam in Uzbekistan that are differentiated by the extent to which they are active on the political level. Radical Islam seeks to change or redirect the essential structure and identity of the state away from western forms of modernisation, so as to maintain commitment to the teachings of Islam though not necessarily to replicate Iran's style of theocracy.<sup>29</sup> Also referred to as militant and fundamentalist Islam, this segment is considered to be preparing to use violence to unseat existing government. Some have argued that radical Islam groups "reject the idea of pluralism, political or otherwise, and decry democracy as non-Islamic, and repress ethnic, linguistic and religious minorities."<sup>30</sup> Kangas' second 'face' is public Islam or what he considers to be Islam as a religious belief and the ability to publicly practice the rituals that had been outlawed in the Soviet period. This facet has included the opening of

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<sup>26</sup> Lowell Bezanis, "Exploiting the Fear of Militant Islam," *Transition* 1:24 (December 29, 1995), 6.

<sup>27</sup> Bezanis, "Exploiting the Fear," 6.

<sup>28</sup> This is not to say that the west has overlooked the oppressive Karimov regime either. Indeed, human rights remains high on the US' desires for the region. However, until this point it seems that human rights has been overshadowed by the strategic reality of possible regional instability and the possibility of it spreading. See the transcript of the speech by John Beryle, the Deputy to the Ambassador-at-large of the CIS and special advisor to the Secretary of State in February 2000 reprinted in *Turkistan Newsletter* 4:40, February 14, 2000. The transcripts of US Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright's visit to the region in April, 2000 available from [http://secretary.state.gov/www/travels/2000/000414trip\\_remarks.html](http://secretary.state.gov/www/travels/2000/000414trip_remarks.html) (July, 27<sup>th</sup>, 2000) provide a great deal of insight in US policy goals for the region.

<sup>29</sup> Robert Kangas, "The Three Faces of Islam in Uzbekistan," *Transition* 1:24 (December 29, 1995), 20.

hundreds of mosques, a return to Islamic dress, availability of religious materials and religious schools.<sup>31</sup> Lubin's survey, for example, displays that there is a market for public Islam in Uzbekistan that is generally larger than for its political and radical sibling. Her results show that the understanding of the basic tenets of Islam remains limited and distorted, and that it tends to be viewed in cultural rather than religious terms, although interest in it continues to grow rapidly.<sup>32</sup> The third form of Islam closely resembles how the Soviet Union dealt with religion in Central Asia. Official Islam is endorsed by and compliant with the political authorities in Uzbekistan and is in evidence across Central Asia. Karimov has recognised the role of religion in Uzbekistan as a factor that "strengthens people's faith, purifies and elevates, and makes them stronger in overcoming the trials of human existence;" however he also states that:

Any religious system of itself is not able to make any recommendations on the settlement of social and economic problems. No religious system contains concrete measures corresponding to the modern level of world development . . .<sup>33</sup>

In Karimov's perspective, official Islam reflects the centuries-old experience of the Uzbek people and is a process vindicated by "the decision not to 'import' Islam from outside, not to politicize Islam and not to Islamicize politics."<sup>34</sup> The content of official Islam is anything related to the religion that is allowed by the government and subject to change if the President deems change necessary. This approach has sought to reduce

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<sup>30</sup> William Millward, "The Rising Tide of Islamic Fundamentalism (I)," *Commentary* (Canadian Security and Information Service), No. 30 (1993), 3.

<sup>31</sup> Kangas, 18.

<sup>32</sup> Lubin, "Islam and Ethnic Identity," 56.

<sup>33</sup> Karimov, *Uzbekistan on the Threshold*, 20-22.

<sup>34</sup> Karimov, *Uzbekistan on the Threshold*, 89.

Islam to focusing on family relations and physical rituals, and always to rework the message of Islam to suit the government's needs.<sup>35</sup>

### Securitizing Actions

Where this issue becomes a societal security problem is in how Karimov and his government have sought to forcefully impose the official Islamic canon on populations whose beliefs are directed toward the public or radical messages. In effect, he has initiated a government offensive against an aspect of the localised identity of Ferghana residents. Ferghana is a densely populated, economically impoverished region shared by Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. More importantly, it has the highest concentration of practising Muslims in all of Central Asia, centred in the cities of Andijan and Namangan.<sup>36</sup> Adherents to each of the three faces of Islam can be found here and Karimov has been particularly interested in supplanting any unofficial movement in order to prevent the emergence of an effective opposition. This was particularly true in his swift, albeit bumbling, efforts to eradicate Islamic organisations and political groups in the Ferghana Valley after 1992. Igor Rotar believes that the Islamic problems that are extant in Uzbekistan today are linked to actions taken by Karimov against the *Adolat* movement in Namangan in 1992.<sup>37</sup> In essence, the *Adolat* movement was a manifestation of public Islam with a membership that wore green armbands to signify its affiliation to Islam. Their major effort to capture and punish local criminals was so successful that crime in Namangan was virtually eliminated. Rotar argues that the arrest and jailing of *Adolat* membership was the result of Karimov's perception that popular loyalty had

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<sup>35</sup> Nancy Lubin, *et al.*, Calming the Ferghana Valley: Development and Dialogue in the Heart of Central Asia, (New York: Century Foundation Press, 1999), 102.

<sup>36</sup> Lubin, *et al.*, Calming the Ferghana Valley, 100.

shifted from himself to *Adolat*.<sup>37</sup> However, because he failed to recognise that the actions he was taking against public Islamic movements hardened its opposition and possibly radicalised some of its adherents, Karimov's actions have been met with increasingly violent counteractions that have led to the creation of the region's first, home-grown, terrorist organisation.

The Namangan events of 1997-1998 provide the backdrop for the latest, and most serious, round of securitization of Islam in Uzbekistan. Wahhabis were accused of precipitating these events by assassinating several police officers, including one case where a victim's head was prominently displayed on the gates of his headquarters.<sup>39</sup> A 1999 *RFE/RL* report said that Ferghana regional governments had long blamed the IMU for anti-government violence that began in late 1997.<sup>40</sup> Karimov's reaction was to impose a harsh rule on the Ferghana Valley that included an estimated 1000, mostly arbitrary, arrests.<sup>41</sup> Uzbek specialist Annette Bohr is quoted as saying, "since the beginning of 1999, there have been highly visible signs that certain segments of Uzbekistan's Islamic opposition have abandoned moderate, non-violent tactics in favor of more radical strategies to achieve their aims."<sup>42</sup>

On the part of the government, the following address by Karimov to the Uzbek Parliament provides the most comprehensive statement of Uzbek securitizing actions against the radical Islamic element. In May 1998 it was reported that according to Karimov:

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<sup>37</sup> Igor Rotar, "Enlightened Islam, Uzbek-Style: Islam Karimov is Getting Rid of His Most Dangerous Rival," *Jamestown Foundation Prism*, 4:13 (June 26, 1998).

<sup>38</sup> Igor Rotar, "Enlightened Islam."

<sup>39</sup> Lubin *et al.*, *Calming the Ferghana Valley*, 53.

<sup>40</sup> Pannier, "Puzzling Out"

<sup>41</sup> Lubin, *et al.*, *Calming the Ferghana Valley*, 53.

the Wahhabis sought “a replay of events which pushed Tajikistan decades back. . . .” [Where] the Wahhabi plan included “killing officials, destruction of food factories, water reservoirs, power stations and other strategic installations . . . such people must be shot in the head. If necessary, I’ll shoot them myself, if you lack the resolve.”<sup>43</sup>

Speaking to the Parliament following the mass arrests in Namangan, this single quote has all of the essential elements of the Uzbek securitization of radical Islam. Moreover, it has been enacted on the basis of a threat of stability that will lead to a threat to society. By emphasising Tajikistan and the loss of essential structures of societal well being (food, water, power and, law and order) he has served notice that radical Islam threatens the survival of the Uzbek society. By linking Wahhabis to situations that might cause a disruption in the Uzbek stability, he strikes at the very heart of the Uzbek ‘cult of stability’ knowing that he would most likely receive strong support for any responses to this threat. Most importantly he applied the label Wahhabi which, in Uzbek political ‘speak,’ means imported radical and fundamentalist Islam ideas. As Nancy Lubin *et al.* have stated, the term is a “derogatory reference to the puritanical version of Islam enforced in Saudi Arabia . . . [used to imply] both that their views are extreme and opposed to Central Asian traditions and that they receive foreign support.”<sup>44</sup> The decision to use this term was strategic as it labels a specific segment of the population, but not government sponsored Islam, as being the source of threat. Karimov has produced an effective scapegoat so as to allow tighter controls on societal conduct, and more specifically, political opposition. Moreover, because the term is ill defined, it allows any trait, such as beards on young men, to be an identifier of Wahhabism.

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<sup>42</sup> Quoted in Adolat Najimova, “Uzbekistan: Repression has Helped Radicalize Opposition,” *RFE/RL Weekday Magazine*, February 16, 2000.

<sup>43</sup> Bruce Pannier, “Uzbekistan: Head of State Agree to Combat Central Asian ‘Fundamentalists,’” *RFE/RL Weekday Magazine*, May 6, 1998, <http://www.rferl.org/nca/features/1998/05/F.RU.980506121345.html>.

The origins of the IMU remain relatively unknown.”<sup>45</sup> Evidence would suggest that its formation had everything to do with the Uzbek Government’s approach that assumes Islam to be inherently dangerous phenomenon that can be rooted out with force.<sup>46</sup> A search of the online archives of the *Jamestown Foundation Monitor*, *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty* and the *Soros Foundation* did not produce any mention of the IMU before March 1999.<sup>47</sup> On March 26<sup>th</sup>, the *Jamestown Foundation Monitor* included a report of a radio broadcast (dated March 19) by “a group calling itself the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan” that amounted to a “virtual declaration of belligerence against the secular authority and pro-Western orientation” of Karimov and his government.<sup>48</sup> It revealed that it was intent on introducing Islamic law and order in the “personal and family life, in public life . . . and in jurisprudence” and the release of Islamic political prisoners from Uzbek prisons.<sup>49</sup> The demand for the release of Islamic prisoners would imply that the IMU was a participant in, or one result of, the Namangan events. The statement also called the Karimov regime “criminal” and threatened future terrorist actions if Karimov did not step down from his position as President.<sup>50</sup>

The lag of almost a year between Karimov’s securitization of Wahhabis in May 1998 and the IMU’s first statement in March 1999 can be accounted for as a period of consolidation following the mass arrests in Namangan. One month before the IMU’s first

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<sup>44</sup> Lubin, *et al.*, *Calming the Ferghana Valley*, 101.

<sup>45</sup> Bruce Pannier, “Puzzling Out the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan: A View From Kyrgyzstan” *Turkistan Newsletter* 4/42, February 16, 2000.

<sup>46</sup> Najimova, “Uzbekistan: Repression.”

<sup>47</sup> RFE/RL and the Soros Foundation archives can be found at <http://www.rferl.org> and <http://www.soros.org>, respectively.

<sup>48</sup> “Militant Islamic Group Serves Ultimatum on Uzbekistan From Iran,” *Jamestown Foundation Monitor*, 5:60 (March 26, 1999).

<sup>49</sup> “Militant Islamic Group.”

<sup>50</sup> “Militant Islamic Group.”

radio broadcast on the Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran.<sup>51</sup> six car bombs were detonated in Tashkent in an apparent attempt to assassinate Karimov.<sup>52</sup> In its statement the IMU reportedly said that the Uzbek government should expect further “unpleasant events similar to the recent explosions in Tashkent” if they did not comply with the IMU’s demands.<sup>53</sup> It is difficult to ascertain whether the IMU securitization was framed in societal terms, because of its specific demands are political and, outside of their incrimination of Karimov, the portion of their statement available does not mention societal causes. Although it seems logical that the Uzbek actions against Ferghana’s Islamic community has hardened and radicalised opposition, it does not necessarily mean that previous adherents of public or official Islam desired the imposition of an Islamic state. The IMU’s response strikes directly at the political structure of the state and seeks to impose a different, possibly, equally threatening societal identity on the population of Uzbekistan. As such, while the IMU may have been born from a government-induced societal threat against Islam, the direction of its effort may not reflect the will of the threatened populations.

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<sup>51</sup> The involvement of VIRI is an important yet almost completely ignored aspect of the rise of the IMU. As was pointed out to me by Stephen Page, the fact that the IMU was granted airtime on Iranian radio is evidence of at least some government support for the Uzbek movement. However, this point cannot be over-emphasised as there is no other available evidence of Iranian involvement in the IMU affair. Though this increases the extent of the regionalisation of the IMU issue, it does not necessarily mean that Iran has begun to move within the CASC as predicted by Peimani.

<sup>52</sup> See “Heavy Sentences in Tashkent Trial of Islamic Terrorists,” *Jamestown Foundation Monitor* 5:128 (July 2, 1999); and Lubin *et al.*, *Calming the Ferghana Valley*, 54. Evidence of whether the IMU was responsible for the bombing attack remains elusive although the Uzbek government is convinced of this fact, but their case includes “numerous inconsistencies.” See Najimova, “Uzbekistan: Repression.”

<sup>53</sup> “Militant Islamic Group Serves Ultimatum.”

### Regional Dynamics

Prior to the advent of the IMU, the imposition of Tashkent's authority over the Ferghana region had already been externalised due to the arbitrary division of the valley during the Soviet Era. As Lubin *et al.* point out, the economic and social structure of the Uzbek, Tajik and Kyrgyz sections of the valley were deeply integrated. Trade had always been carried out across what are now state borders, vital transportation links between different regions of the same republic often passed through the territory of the others, and societal and family ties straddled present borders.<sup>54</sup> Border closures that accompanied Karimov's actions against Ferghana opposition groups had an immediate effect on the Kyrgyz and Tajik economies in the region and the once tradition cross-border ties have increasingly become a source of competition and strife.<sup>55</sup>

Bruce Pannier was not exaggerating when he wrote that the IMU constituted possibly "the most serious threat to stability in CIS Central Asia today."<sup>56</sup> IMU actions, though directed against the Tashkent government and its installations in the Ferghana Valley, have been initiated from Kyrgyz and Tajik territories. Uzbek aircraft along with the Kyrgyz army conducted attacks on the supposed Kyrgyz hideouts of the IMU in August 1999.<sup>57</sup> By April 2000, the inability to quell insurgency actions led to a mini-summit involving Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Russia, in which the leaders considered whether to initiate "preventive operations" against terrorist bases

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<sup>54</sup> Lubin *et al.*, Calming the Ferghana Valley,36-38.

<sup>55</sup> Lubin *et al.*, Calming the Ferghana Valley,38.

<sup>56</sup> Pannier, "Puzzling Out."

<sup>57</sup> "Violence Breaks out in Three Countries," *Jamestown Foundation Monitor* 5:154 (August 24, 1999).

in central Tajikistan and northern Afghanistan.<sup>58</sup> The decision to include Afghanistan on its target list was telling. It means that the IMU has been able to freely travel between the Ferghana Valley and Northern Afghanistan, implying that they have found support from some Tajik regional leaders. It also points to possible links between the IMU, the Taliban and former Tajik and Afghan *mujahedin* warriors. At this writing, the situation remains unresolved. Afghan Taliban leader Mulla Mohammad Omar is quoted as saying that "there will be serious consequences for Uzbekistan and it will be made to pay a heavy price for aggression."<sup>59</sup> Russia has become increasingly involved under the new, proactive administration of Vladimir Putin, who said on May 19, 2000:

It's no secret for anyone anymore that recently, criminal attempts have been made through terrorist means to divide up post-Soviet space. And if we don't halt this aggression attempt, together with our Uzbek friends here in the south, we will encounter it at home.<sup>60</sup>

The escalation and externalisation of what was originally an internal societal security matter relating to the question of Islam in Uzbekistan has led to a situation along the Uzbek-Afghan and Tajik-Afghan border that may lead to the exact situation Karimov was attempting to avoid, the destabilisation of Central Asia.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

The Pamir case showed how a perceived societal threat can be in existence for a long period of time prior to its being securitized. This displays the usefulness of thinking of security in terms of an act rather than in terms of a quality to attain. The Pamiris chose to

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<sup>58</sup> "Preventive Strikes Against "Terrorist Bases" Considered," *Jamestown Foundation Monitor* 6:88. (May 4, 2000).

<sup>59</sup> "Omar Warns Uzbekistan Against Attack," *Jang (The News International, Pakistan)*, May 28, 2000 reprinted in *Turkistan Newsletter* 4:117 (June 6, 2000).

<sup>60</sup> Quoted in Bruce Pannier, "Uzbekistan: Tensions Rising on Afghan Border," RFE/RL Weekday Report, June 2, 2000.

politicise the issue of their region's economic and political inequality at a time when they thought the situation would most likely be reversed. They then securitized when it became clear that their very existence came under threat. Securitization, however, was only enacted after the political alliance with democratic and Islamic parties failed to achieve the redistribution of political power, and only after the state chose to act against the opposition with force.

The IMU case is possibly the clearest example of why Central Asian security should be considered in regional rather than state-centric terms. The weakness of the post-Soviet Central Asian state has produced a situation where actions to combat perceived threats at the local level can be transmitted into a region-wide insecurity situation. This indicates the stark reality that Central Asia, and the CASC, is a region where national securities are inseparable, as required by security complex theory. Clearly, these cases have shown that the security of one state cannot be considered in isolation of the securities of the other states and the patterns of relations among them.

## **6 Conclusion**

In the introduction, two related analytical approaches to the study of Central Asian security were presented. Each was premised on Central Asia as being the subject of security interactions among the great and middle powers. Neither focussed on Central Asian security as object of analysis in its own right. The 'New Great Game' and 'European Balkanisation' approaches are products of the realist paradigm where systemic and state-orientated analysis among Central Asian states and between the region and its external environment are the primary foci. In effect, both approaches analyse how external interaction with regional actors can produce specific intra-regional dynamics that are not necessarily the natural outcome of indigenous security relations. However, as Chapter 1 showed, the realist conception of security cannot be appropriately applied to the case of weak and very weak states. The subsequent chapters reinforced this point and, moreover, highlight those aspects of Central Asian security that would be left out of these approaches.

As a competing approach, SCT provides a means to analyse the particular dynamics of regional security in a framework that isolates external interaction and, in so doing, reveals the 'natural' dynamic of regional security. Through the analysis of patterns of amity and enmity based upon historical interaction, SCT provides a clearer picture of what security problems may develop among states of the region. Moreover it is a window into the third world problematic because it accommodates weak states such as Pakistan and Uzbekistan as essential components of security analysis. Viewing security as an intentional act proved to be particularly useful because, instead of searching for the existence of the nebulous quality 'security,' the analyst can identify it as relations that are

perceived to be a threat due to historical interaction and perception of intent. Security is produced when a particular legitimate authority recognises a problem as an existential threat to some referent object and responds to it effectively. By redefining 'security' as a process, the analyst is better able to understand when a security problem exists, why it has been identified as such, what threats are created by the security problem and how the entity responds to that threat's existence.

Central Asia proved to be an interesting case for the application of SCT. By definition, a security complex is a set of security relations that are so closely interrelated that analysis of individual national securities problems cannot be analysed apart from one another. Evidence from the case studies suggests that the dynamics relating to identity are particularly apt for the application of SCT. In both cases, the horizontal and vertical competitions produced by competing identities in the region resulted in the identification of security problems at the sub-state regional and state levels (and super-regional in the case of Russia's involvement). Clearly, the basis for each security problem was at the state level. In Tajikistan, communist authorities sought to perpetuate the regional imbalance that had existed since the formation of the Tajik entity in the early Soviet era. The Pamir leadership first politicised the issue in an attempt to reconstruct the Tajik state and balance political and economic power among regions. However, they were forced to securitize the issue when it became clear that the government's response to political opposition was to repress opposition on the basis of regional identity. By considering security as a process, analysis in the Pamir case was centralised to the period between May 1992 and March 1993. In so doing, it was revealed that there was a shift in the structural conditions of Pamir insecurity so as to force recognition of an existential threat.

Similarly, the IMU case shows that the improper securitization of the Islamic threat by the Karimov government during the Namangan events actually accentuated the state's security problem. The failure to effectively respond to the perceived threat strengthened opposition and externalised it into a regional security problem in 1999.

Although the study of securitization and societal security need not entail the application of SCT, it provided the most appropriate method to isolate the various levels of analysis and categorise various security relations so as to isolate the ones particular to the region. This is particularly true for the case of Russia. Its position vis-à-vis the CASC determines whether the complex exists and will continue to exist. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia has been forced to restructure its political and economic system- a process that has been particularly hard on its collective 'ego'. It has the arduous task of re-conceptualising its position in the society of states thus affecting the coherence of its external orientation and conduct.<sup>1</sup> As such, the key barrier to the analytical construction of the CASC is the level of influence that Russia seeks to gain in Central Asia. Although Russia played a role in both the Pamir and IMU cases, its actions were not consistent with what one expected of a position of overlay. Russia's security relations in the region have reinforced the natural patterns of amity and enmity that exist among states, although, as shown by its support of the Kulob region in the Tajik civil war, it may have interfered with those found between regions with the state. However, Vladimir Putin's statement with respect to the IMU situation (see page 99) may be indicative of what we may expect of Russia's approach to future relations with Central

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<sup>1</sup> This was most clearly in evidence during the Boris Yeltsin regime when instability in Russian's policy making community undermined the coherence of its foreign policy. See the chapters by Rajan Menon and Leon Aron in Michael Mandelbaum (ed.), The New Russian Foreign Policy. (Washington: Council on Foreign Relations, 1998).

Asia. If regional actions fail to stymie instability Putin has sent the message that Russia itself is threatened. Like the cult of stability in Uzbekistan that was partially the result of the events in Tajikistan, the Islamic actions in Chechnya and Dagestan have produced similar feelings among the Russian population. In that case, if Russia is capable of rebuilding its economy and can quell its own regional dissent, it may seek to recreate its Soviet era overlay position if only to prevent the transmission of instability.

Analysis of Central Asian ethnicity revealed that neither ethnic nor nationalist identifications find particular resonance among populations as yet. Lubin's survey and evidence since 1995 suggest that populations continue to identify more closely with regional or local identity-collectives. This is not to say that ethno-centric identities will not come to the fore in the future. Lubin's survey provides some evidence of ethnic animosities that prevail across classes. When questions were asked that concerned those closest to the respondent- whom would you want as your child's spouse, your neighbour, or your colleague -the majority chose those of their own ethnic identification.<sup>2</sup> Olcott warns that this feeling is strongest among the younger generation that was born and raised under perestroika and independence. They may yet prove to be the purveyors of ethno-nationalist sentiment. Raised in a culture that encourages competition without the Soviet conception of community, the young may be more willing to believe, or be manipulated into believing, ethnically chauvinistic arguments.<sup>3</sup> Compounding this problem is the economic distress that has been endemic since independence and has disproportionately affected the young. A new mass of urban unemployed and underemployed has been created that will be far more likely to be a volatile and easily

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<sup>2</sup> Lubin, "Islam and Ethnic Identity," 63-64.

<sup>3</sup> Olcott, "Ethnic Violence in Central Asia," 120.

radicalised group than older, more conservative poor.<sup>4</sup> Can rising ethno-nationalism be considered in societal security terms? Systemic impoverishment of, say, Uzbek youth, could be considered a threat to the capability of a society to reproduce and induce presumptions of collective insecurity. This classic case would only require that a convenient ethnic minority to be identified by an individual or group that has built sufficient authority to command legitimacy. As yet, only the latter component has not been in evidence.

Although this study has been successful in identifying those identities that find sufficient basis to produce securitising actions, a complete application of SCT will require the expansion of analysis to the other four sectors. The interrelationship between the societal, political and military sectors has already been introduced and the case studies suggested that societal security problems can quickly transform in political and military security problems. The threat by Karimov and Putin to order airstrikes against Afghan 'terrorist' bases has produced a situation that has "thousands of soldiers along the Uzbek-Afghan and Tajik-Afghan borders eyeing each other suspiciously."<sup>5</sup> What had initially been a societal security problem may influence the beginning of a regional war if the Taliban gains effective control over northern Afghanistan. As was shown in Figure 2.3, the five sectors identified by Buzan are interrelated through their joint effect on the components of the state. A complete evaluation of the security dynamics in Central Asia will require the aggregate analysis of all five sectors and their interrelationship.

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<sup>4</sup> Olcott, "Ethnic Violence in Central Asia." 122.

<sup>5</sup> Pannier, "Uzbekistan: Tensions."

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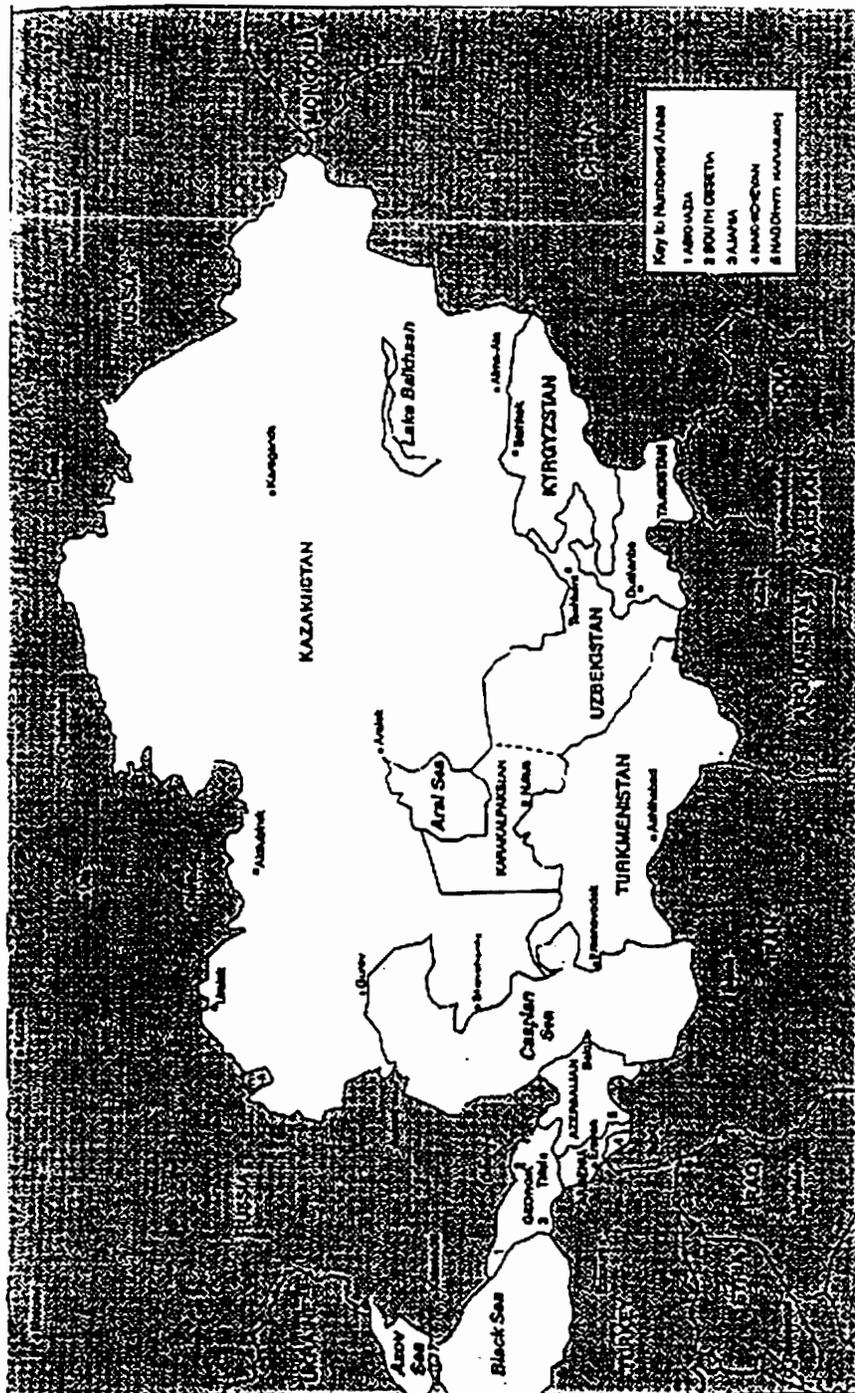
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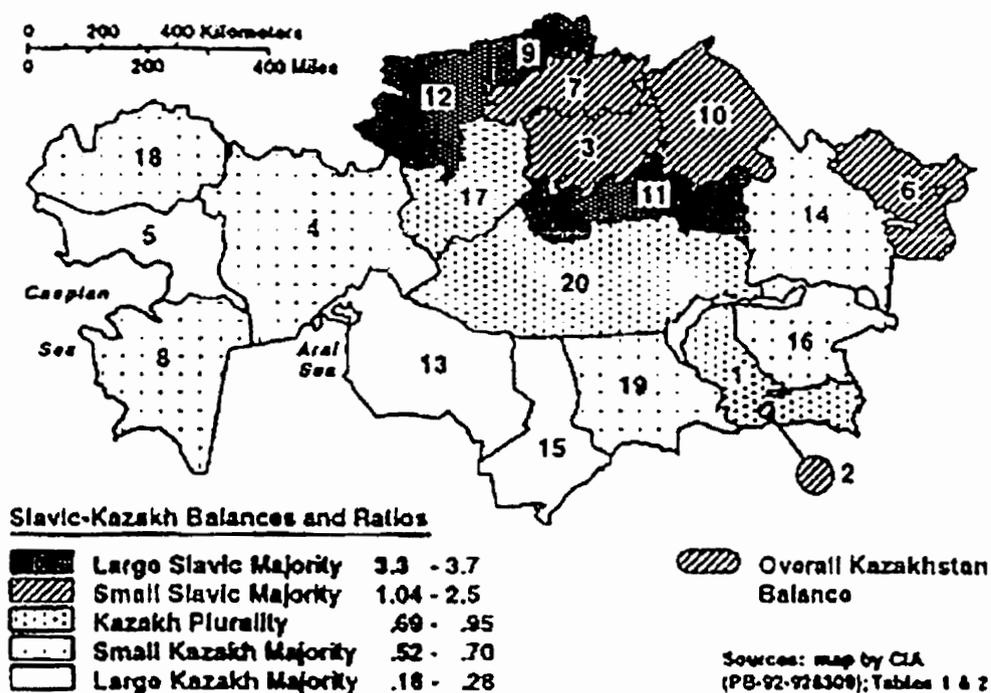
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Figure 1.1 Central Asia

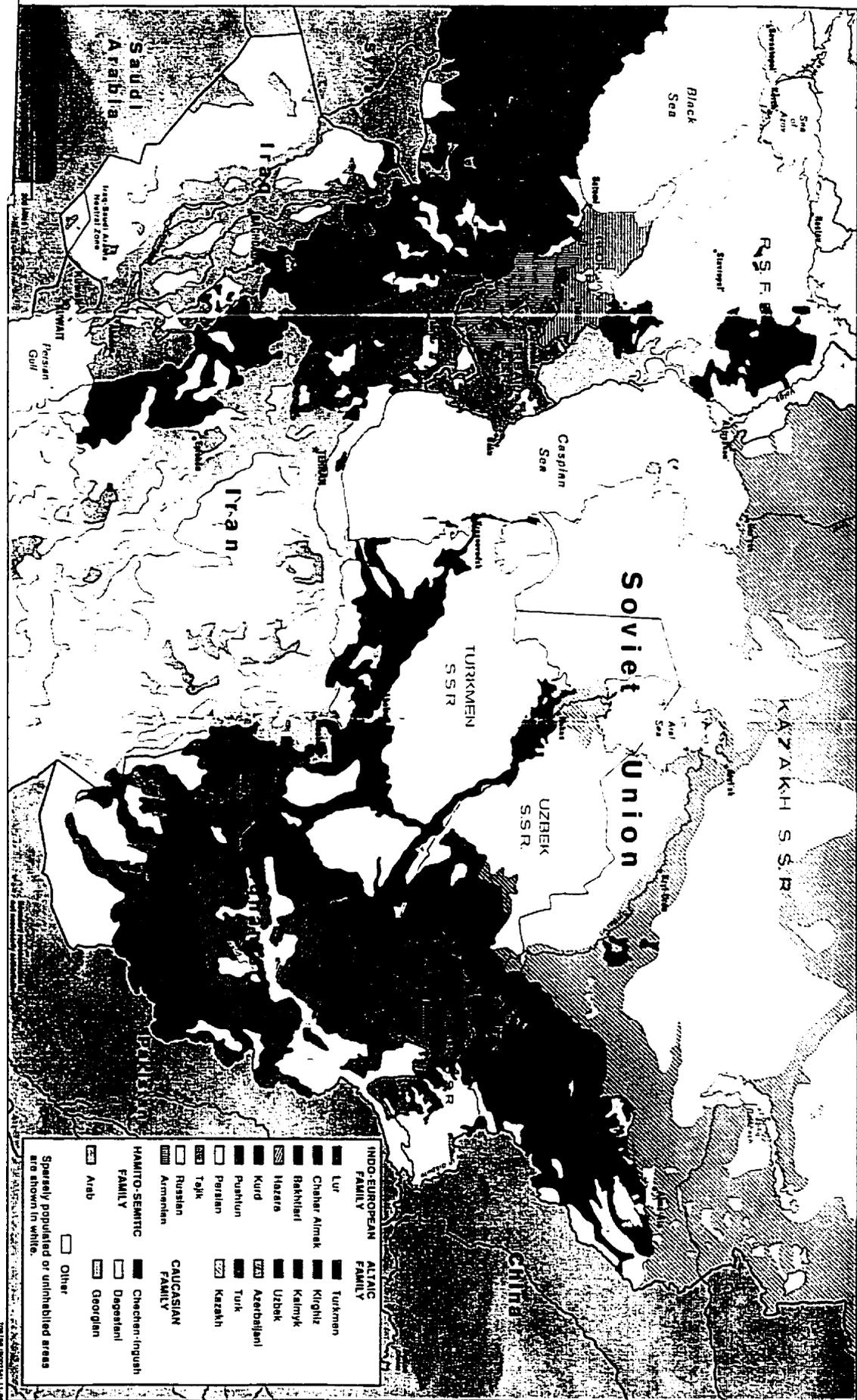
Source: Leokadia Drobizheva, *et al.*, Ethnic Conflict in the Post-Soviet World: Cases and Analysis, (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe & Co., 1996).

Figure 3.2 Russians in KazakhstanKey to Oblasts

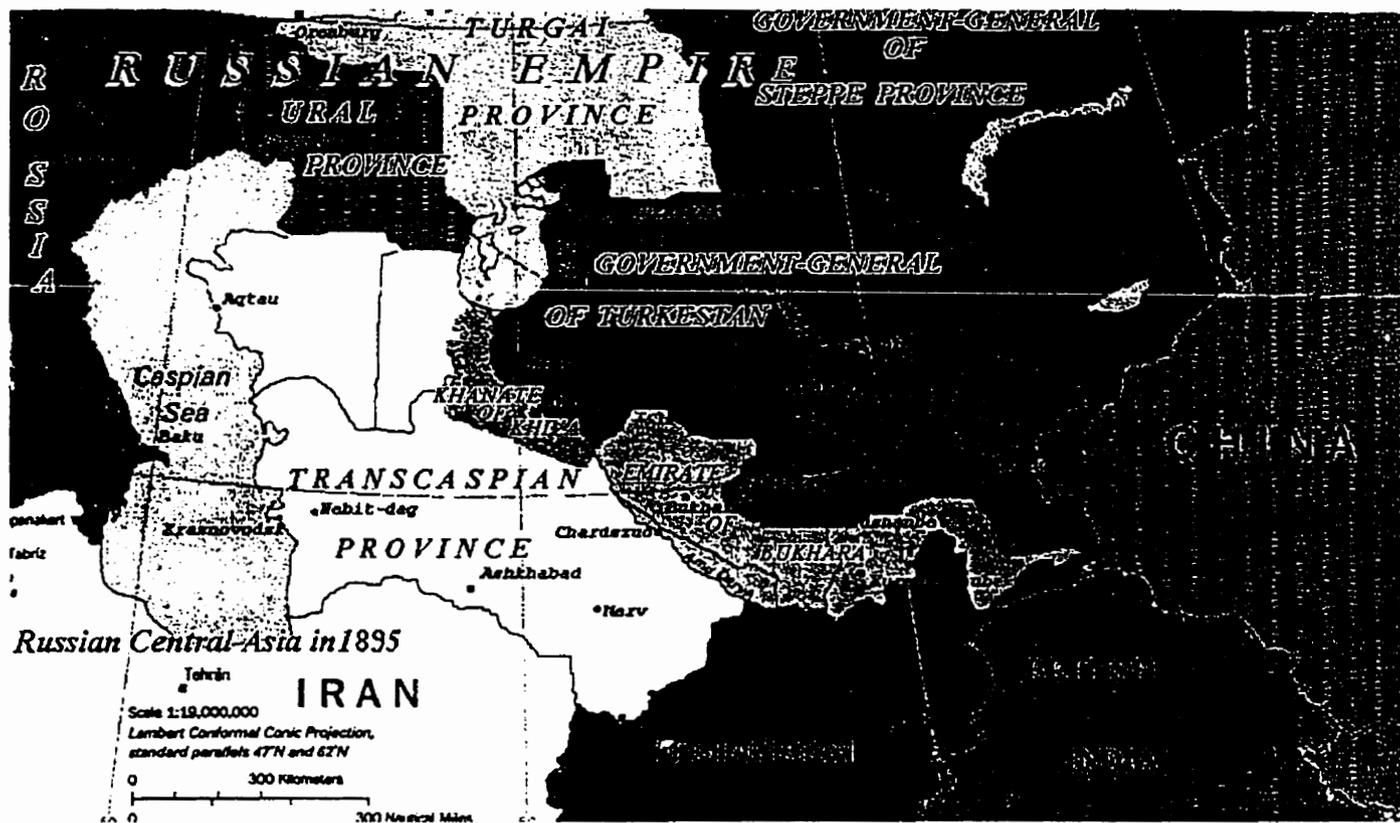
- |                             |                     |                      |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Alma-Ata [Oblys]         | 8. Mangghystau      | 15. South Kazakhstan |
| 2. Almaty (Alma-Ata) [City] | 9. North Kazakhstan | 16. Taldyqorghen     |
| 3. Aqmola                   | 10. Pavlodar        | 17. Torg'ay          |
| 4. Aqtöbe                   | 11. Qaraghandy      | 18. West Kazakhstan  |
| 5. Atyrau                   | 12. Oostanay        | 19. Zhambyl          |
| 6. East Kazakhstan          | 13. Qyzylorda       | 20. Zherqazghan      |
| 7. Kökshetau                | 14. Semey           |                      |

Source: Central Intelligence Agency, "Kazakhstan," PB-92-928309 (Washington, D.C. 1992), reproduced and revised in Philip S. Gillette, "Ethnic Balance and Imbalance in Kazakhstan's Regions," Central Asia Monitor, No.3 (1993), 23.

Ethnic Groups in Southern Soviet Union and Neighboring Middle Eastern Countries

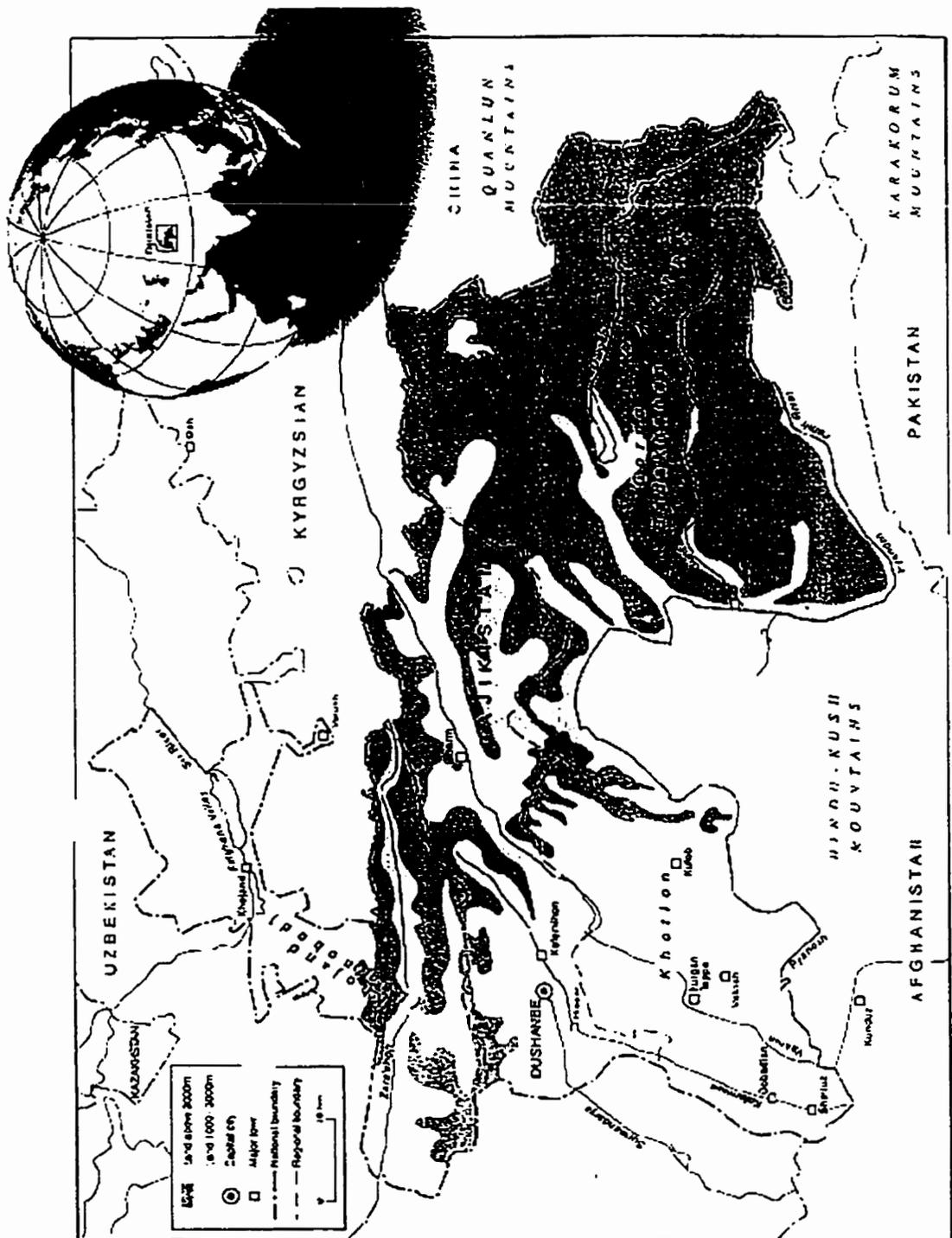


Source: [http://www.lib.utexas.edu/Libs/PC/L/Map\\_collection/commonwealth/Comp\\_Ethnic\\_Soviet.jpg](http://www.lib.utexas.edu/Libs/PC/L/Map_collection/commonwealth/Comp_Ethnic_Soviet.jpg) (August 22, 2000).

Figure 4.2 Tsarist Central Asia

Source: <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/5246/Cas1895.jpg> (May 4, 2000).

Figure 5.1 Regional View of Tajikistan



Source: Nassim Jawad and Shahrbanou Tadjbakhsh, "Tajikistan: A Forgotten Civil War." *Minority Rights Group International Report*, 94:6 (1995).

Figure 5.2 Uzbekistan and The Ferghana Valley



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Source: <http://as.orientation.com/eg/country/uz/mapbig.html> (August 23, 2000)