CHAPTER VII

AN OVERVIEW

We now proceed to investigate the impact of Soviet policy of secularisation of politics in Uzbekistan, as of the close of the year 1938, on the basis of the above stated criteria, namely, (i) Uzbek economy and social structure, (ii) political participation and processes vis-à-vis the natives, and (iii) the emerging pattern of culture in Uzbekistan. 1

1. Whereas the data for this chapter is mainly drawn from the available Soviet source materials, we have also relied upon our own personal observation and interviews undertaken by the researcher in the USSR during the field study from December 1976 to November 1977. The major part of the field study was spent in the Uzbek Republic. Besides in the capital of the Republic, Tashkent, the researcher visited and conducted unstructured interviews (for obvious reasons), in Samarkand, Bukhara, Khorezm (Urgench) and a few rural areas. During the course of the field study, 120 interviews were recorded. Of these, 100 were of natives and 20 of the Russians. Fifty per cent of the persons interviewed belonged to the age group of 45 to 75 years; 30 per cent to the age group of 30 to 44 years and 20 per cent to 18 to 29 years. Twenty five informants were females, of which 19 were Muslims, 2 Jews, 4 Russians. Thirty five per cent of the informants belonged to the social group of soviet intelligentsia, 40 per cent to the workers, 10 per cent to the peasants and the rest 15 per cent to others including those engaged in minor clandestine trade and business. Besides the interviews the researcher frequently visited eight native families to observe the way of life of the natives. Four of the families visited belonged to the University teachers (1 Professor's, 1 Assistant Professor's - dotsent - and 2 of lecturers - prepodavatel'); two of the families were from the Party and government officials and the rest two were of workers'. The researcher also attended two marriage parties and a hundred years' birthday celebration of a native. Lastly, the researcher visited some musoleums, mosques, churches and graveyards to find out changes, if any, in the pattern Islamic prayers and rituals performed at the time of burials of the dead.
(1) Uzbek Economy and Social Structure

(a) Economy

We have earlier discussed the changes in Uzbek economy and social structure. Here we only propose to present an over-all view of these changes during the period under study.

(i) Agriculture

Transforming a backward, pre-capitalist economy seemed a difficult problem. The Soviets moved cautiously and began with the agricultural sector. Soon after coming to power, the Bolsheviks managed to attract nomadic population to land settlements through their programme of distribution of lands. Thus, gradually nomadic population began to abandon their traditional mode of life and settle down to cultivation of newly acquired land. Simultaneously land and water reforms were introduced which resulted in the confiscation of fertile land in possession of Russian settlers and the native landlords. These lands were redistributed among the landless natives. These reforms not only changed the productive relations in the Uzbek countryside but also resulted in the

2. See Chapter II "Historical Legacy".

3. See, A Leap Through the Centuries, Moscow, 1968, p.201, See also, V.I. Kozlov, Natsional'nosti SSSR (Nationalities of the USSR), Moscow, 1975, Kozlov's book contains useful data on the demographic, ethnic and linguistic aspects of Soviet society; see also Narody Srednei Azii i Kazakhstana (Peoples of Central Asia and Kazakhstan), Vols. I & II, Moscow, 1963.
creation of the strata of land-holding native farmers. 4

The second phase of land reforms began towards the mid-twenties which resulted in the nationalisation of all lands paving the way for collectivisation of lands (1929-1932) and uprooting the native kulaks.

In a predominantly agriculture-based economy, the collectivization of agriculture proved to be a crucial measure. Besides pooling the agricultural resources, the collectivisation of lands in Uzbekistan, as elsewhere in Soviet Russia, was directed to bringing about requisite changes in the traditional production relations, and consequently in the social structure of rural areas. After initial measures to make way for the collectivisation, the Bolsheviks embarked upon their programme of collectivisation in Uzbekistan by bringing poor, small and middle peasants into collective farms. Thus, in 1929-30, the average membership of a collective farm of about 60 hectares, was merely 16 peasants. By 1932, the average membership of a collective farm increased to 65 peasants, and its average size to 220 hectares. 5


The Bolsheviks, however, faced great difficulties in making the programme of collectivisation a success. This is true of Soviet Russia in general. But in Uzbekistan as well as in other parts of Central Asia, these difficulties had acquired specific dimensions. For instance, the uprooting of the traditional land-holding system and the liquidation of traditional land-owners, such as, Bais and Beks, was indeed an uphill task, which generated an upheaval in the countryside. However, by 1935, the collectivisation began to move ahead. As a result, the native kulaks were subdued and the peasantry assumed a crucial role in agriculture.

Alongwith these measures, the Soviets had to make provisions for technical inputs in modernizing the agriculture. However, scarcity of resources limited the scope of the steps to be undertaken. During the first decade of Soviet power, the Soviets were largely concerned with the repair and development of irrigation system. The development of cotton was given special attention so much so that during the period 1920-1927, increase in cotton cultivation led to a fall in

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/ Experience 1929-1937, New Delhi, 1978
the production of cereal crops. However, in the long run, the policy proved to be successful as the modernisation of cotton cultivation led to the development of Uzbek textile industry and thus cotton cultivation and textile industry became the largest source of Uzbek national income.7

The Soviets also paid special attention to the revival and development of traditional handicrafts. Arrangements were made for the training of artisans and craftsmen and the handicrafts industry was organised under cooperatives. By the end of the First Five Year Plan the average output per cooperative member had reached 3,915 rubles, and by 1938 to 10,892 rubles.8

Thus, the Soviet claim that by 1938 various land reforms and collectivisation had led to high yields, particularly in cotton production and contributed to industrialisation in Uzbekistan seems quite true.9 Moreover, the production relations in agricultural sector had been completely

7. See Gregory, James, S. Russian Land Soviet People, London, 1968, pp.804-51, 820. Gregory writes that "the cotton harvest doubled between 1934-1938. By that year Uzbekistan had more tractors and combine harvesters in use than Germany, and some of the farms obtained yields per acre that were among the highest in the world... By 1939 Uzbek industrial output alone exceeded that of the three nearest Islamic nations together (Turkey, Iran and Afghanistan) although the population of Turkey alone is three times that of the Uzbek Republic." p.820.

8. A Leap Through the Centuries, no.3, p.169.

transformed, consolidating Soviet power in the countryside. However, it is doubtful if the production in agriculture, particularly of cereal crops matched the rising demand. The fall in the production of cereal crops and the outflow of scarce resources from countryside during the first two Five Year Plans indicate a marginal level of prosperity. But such was the case all over the USSR and Soviet Uzbekistan was no exception. However, as compared to the pre-1917 level, the quality of material life in rural Uzbekistan had considerably improved as social benefits like education, medical care, and above all, the increasing political participation (e.g. in local rural Soviets) became accessible to peasantry.

(ii) Industry

In the field of industry there was much to be done as the existing industries, few as they were, had either been destroyed or dislocated by the Civil War and the Basmachi movement against the Bolsheviks. The first task before the Soviets was to make them operational. Consequently, there had been no significant change in the industrial structure of Uzbekistan till 1927. In fact, the gross industrial output in 1928 in Uzbekistan was just at the level of 1913. Moreover, percentage of urban population had declined from 24 per cent in 1913 to 18.3 per cent in 1926.  


11. Kozlov, no.3, pp.77, 84.
Serious attention to the industrialization of Uzbek economy was devoted in 1928-29, the year when the First Five Year Plan was launched. Since then, industrialization of Uzbek economy was relatively rapid. A huge amount of 1265 million rubles was earmarked for the development of industry during the Plan period.\textsuperscript{12} By the end of the First Plan period, there had been considerable changes in the structure of industry in Uzbekistan as shown below.\textsuperscript{13}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Share (in percentage)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1927-28</td>
<td>1932</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heavy Industry</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light Industry</td>
<td>74.8 (sic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumer goods industry</td>
<td>21.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus, during the First Plan period the development of heavy industry received considerable resources and its percentage increased from 3.3 to 8.9 per cent while the percentage of light industry slightly declined from 74.8 to 69.3 per cent. There was only a marginal increase in the share of consumer goods industry. A huge textile plant had been set up during the First Plan period at Tashkent and a solid foundation was laid for the development of metallurgical and chemical industry in Uzbekistan.

\textsuperscript{12} I.M. Muminova, \textit{Istoriia rabochego klassa Sovetskogo Uzbekistana (The History of Working Class of Soviet Uzbekistan)}, Tashkent, 1974, p.118.

\textsuperscript{13} \textit{Ibid.}, p.119.
Further strides in the sphere of industrialisation of Uzbek economy were made during the Second Five Year Plan period (1933-1937). Expenditure on the development of capital goods industry increased from 264.2 million rubles spent during the First Plan period to 906.8 million roubles. 14 A growth rate of 4.7 (base 1913) of gross industrial output was recorded during the Second Plan period. 15 For a relatively backward region, such as Uzbekistan, it was really a massive dose of industrialisation and its impact was seen on the substantial increase in the national income of Uzbekistan that rose from 837.8 million rubles at the end of the First Five Year Plan to 2,045 million rubles in 1939. 16

The Soviets paid particular attention to the diversification of the industrial production during the period under study. Before the October Revolution, whatever, meagre industrial development had taken place, it was in the fields of cotton processing, cotton ginning and transportation. During the first two Plans Soviets devoted massive resources for the development of heavy industry including metallurgical, 14 K.N. Bedrintsev, et al. Promyshlennost' Uzbekistana za 30 let (Industry of Uzbekistan over 30 years), Tashkent, 1955, p.16.
16. Muminova, no.12, p.130.
chemical and mineral extraction industries. In place of small cotton processing enterprises, Soviets created large textile combines. It must, however, be recorded that the largest resources were channeled to the development of cotton-textile industry in Uzbekistan. ¹⁷

Thus, it appears that the Soviets paid special attention to the industrialisation of Soviet Uzbekistan, perhaps more than of any other region of Soviet Central Asia. This is confirmed by the fact of comparatively heavier capital investment and inflow of skilled Russian technicians and workers for the industrialisation of the Republic. The industrialisation pattern, however, indicated a preference for heavy industries, particularly, suited to resource utilisation of Uzbekistan (as for example, cotton textile, mineral-extractive industries). Likewise, it showed priorities for rapid industrial development of traditional urban areas resulting in regional disparities. For instance, Bukhara and Kashka-Darya regions by and large remained outside the purview of industrialisation, leading to imbalances in social development of Uzbek society as a whole. The development of Uzbek economy, both in agriculture and industrial sectors, was by all accounts a reality. For example, as compared with the pre-revolution period when industrial production in the region of Soviet Uzbekistan was only about

2 per cent of total production, it rose to nearly 38 per cent. By the close of the year 1938, such an achievement obviously brought about fundamental restructuring of socio-economic relations in Uzbek society.

(b) Social Structure

The changes in the economic structure of Uzbek society brought about significant changes in the social structure as well. First of all, the working class which on the eve of the Bolshevik revolution constituted a microscopic segment of population of Central Asia was rapidly growing. At the end of the Second Five Year Plan, the total number of industrial workers was 1,12,860. However, the share of native industrial workers remained low. It was only 17.2 per cent of the total industrial workers at the end of the Second Five Year Plan period. Approximately 70 per cent of the native population remained engaged in agricultural sector at the end of the Second Five Year Plan (1937-38).

A remarkable feature of the emerging social structure was the initiation of native women into production

18. Muminova, no.12, pp.126-7, whereas Muminova puts the working population in Uzbekistan at 20,095 in 1932 and 1,12,860 in 1937, another Soviet source maintains that the number of workers in 1940 was 1,07,300. Certainly, the number of workers in Uzbekistan was on the increase. There is, therefore, some discrepancy in these figures.
activities. For example, in 1938, of the total industrial workers, 24.2 per cent were women. Moreover, a large number of native women had also taken to the new professions - engineers, skilled workers, doctors, teachers and office employees. 19

An interesting aspect of social changes in Uzbekistan was the process of urbanisation. Although, the Uzbek society still remained a predominantly agricultural one, growth of new industries accelerated the process of urbanisation. Initially, the percentage of population declined from 24 per cent in 1913 to 18.3 per cent in 1926. 20 The decline in urban population can be ascribed to various factors like the destruction during the revolution and civil war, widespread famine conditions in early twenties and internal migration to neighbouring regions.

But from 1926, the growth of urban population assumed an upward trend and by 1939 it had reached about 23 per cent of the total population. The obvious reason was the pace of industrialisation which had picked up after 1927. Moreover, the large influx of Russians, mainly skilled workers, employed in industry was another significant factor. For example, the share of Russians in the total population

19. Ibid., p. 127.
20. Kozlov, no. 3, pp. 77, 84.
sharply increased from 5.4 per cent in 1926 to 11.5 per cent in 1939 while in urban areas it registered a rise from 19.2 per cent in 1926 to nearly 28 per cent in 1939.21

Significantly, the impact of rapid changes in Uzbek economy was felt in a decline, though a marginal one, in the share of Uzbek population. From 74.2 per cent in 1926 it declined to 64.4 per cent in 1939.22 Obviously, the influx of large number of Russians was crucial and it was felt more in their share of urbanisation process. It was no surprise therefore that the share of natives in the total urban population also registered a decline, again a marginal one, from 80.81 in 1926 to nearly 72 per cent in 1939.23 Notwithstanding the marginal decline in the share of urban population, the structure of Uzbek society had been considerably transformed. A substantial increase in the number of native workers along with a new generation of peasants organised in collective farms comprised the new social milieu which consolidated the process of socio-cultural changes. Likewise, the emergence of native intelligentsia, though numerically small, was another significant development.

21. Ibid., pp.86, 111; the percentage of the Russian urban population in Uzbekistan in 1939 is based on our own calculation.

22. Ibid., p.111.

23. This trend obviously continued and was stabilised by 1955.
Moreover, the socio-economic impact of the development of Uzbek economy was also felt in the improvement of the quality of material life, particularly in urban areas, and in wide-ranging spread of education. For example, 115 million rubles were spent on medical services in the First Five Year Plan and 623 million rubles in the Second Five Year Plan.\(^{24}\) As a result, there was a 6 per cent increase in the number of doctors in 1939-40, a large number of them being natives, over the figures of 1913.\(^{25}\) These developments led to a sharp decline in the rate of mortality, particularly, infant mortality.\(^{26}\) Moreover, by 1937, 4.2 per cent of Uzbek population had acquired incomplete secondary education, and by 1940, 37.9 thousand persons had completed higher education.\(^{27}\) The rate of general literacy during the period under study registered a sharp growth, that is to say, by 1939 the percentage of literates in Uzbekistan rose to nearly 67.8 per cent from a low 6.3 per cent before the revolution.\(^{28}\) The creation of a wide network of educational institutions all

\(^{24}\) Ocherki Istoriia, no.5, p.345.

\(^{25}\) Alec Nove, J.A. Newth, no.10, pp.87-88.

\(^{26}\) Kozlov, no.3, p.163.

\(^{27}\) Alec Nove, J.A. Newth, no.10, pp.70, 76.

\(^{28}\) Although, the figures on the growth of literacy in Uzbekistan are slightly confusing, perhaps because of reorganisation of Soviet Central Asia, there is no doubt that the growth of literacy was very rapid, See A Leap Through the Centuries, no.3, p.284, Cf. V. Solodovnikov, no.4; p.41.
over Uzbekistan, particularly in rural areas proved to be an important factor in accelerating the process of social change and the evolution of a new social structure.

II. Political Participation and Processes vis-à-vis the natives

The problem of consolidation and development of Soviet political system in Uzbekistan was, indeed, enormous. Right after the revolution, the Soviet leaders were generally unanimous that the problem must be resolved within their own conceptual framework, keeping in view the specific conditions of non-Russian regions of Soviet Russia. We have already attempted to encompass various socio-economic processes, mainly guided by the manifestly difficult exercise of striking a balance between the general and the specific, relevant to Uzbekistan. Suffice here to focus our attention on two main problems that were specifics in Uzbekistan, namely the nativisation of political apparatus and encouragement of native participation in political processes, and the problem of creating favourable socio-economic conditions.

As far as the participation of natives in political processes and the nativisation of political apparatus were concerned, the relationship between the Russians and non-Russians nationalities was one of the main hurdles. As far back as in 1920, Lenin had advised that the Russians had to abandon their privileged position to accommodate the nationalities. He laid down:
"Internationalism on the part of the oppressors or 'great nations' as they are called (though they are great only in their violence, only great as bullies) must consist not only in the absence of the formal equality of nation, but even in an inequality of the oppressor nation, that must make up for the inequality which obtain in actual practice. Anybody who does not understand this has not grasped the real proletarian attitude to the national question, he is still essentially petty bourgeois in his point of view... In one way or another by one's attitude or by concessions, it is necessary to compensate the non-Russians, for the lack of trust, for the suspicion and the insults to which the government of the dominant nation subjected them in the past."29

Contemporary Soviet authors generally claim that these lofty aims and objectives have always, notwithstanding mistakes and errors, guided the Soviet policy-makers in resolving all social disputes, conflicts and problems which the new Soviet system had inherited from the past.30 In other words, the objective of transformation of a utopia into social reality is lyrically described by Soviet authors. For instance, the authors of a widely circulated and acclaimed book in the Soviet academic circles asserted that despite the stupendity of the task of cultural transformation in Uzbekistan the Communist Party successfully realised the objective of final liquidation of pre-capitalistic, feudal-patriarchal relations and their ideology, thus enabling the people of Central Asia

to pass to the stage of socialism. They further claimed that the weakening of the influence of Islam from the Central Asian society helped in the formation and development of socialist consciousness, bringing the Russians and the natives closer. For the realisation of this gigantic social and attitudinal change, the Soviet authors point out the self-less help rendered by the Russian working masses in accordance with Lenin's advice for the solution of national discord. It is further claimed that the nationalities problem, in essence, was resolved by the mid-thirties. On the other hand, the Western Sovietologists trying to establish a continuity in the Russian and Soviet policy towards non-Russians assert that despite the decline of influence of religion there has been little rapport between the Russians and non-Russians in Central Asia. The natives of Central Asia, continue to harbour ill-will towards the Russians and vice-versa.

31. Soviet literature on this theme is enormous. See for instance, Torzhestvo Leninskikh idei kulturnoi revoliutsii v Uzbekistane (Triumph of Lenin's Ideas of cultural revolution in Uzbekistan), Tashkent, 1970, pp. 152, 160. (Hereafter TLIKRU); A Leap Through the Centuries, no. 3; R. Tuzmuhammedov, How the National Question was solved in Soviet Central Asia, Moscow, 1973.

At this stage, it is worthwhile for us to turn to our own investigation. It is, indeed, noted that on account of rapid expansion of Soviet educational system and the Bolsheviks objective of liquidation of illiteracy and traditional patterns of socialisation, the socio-cultural scenario of Uzbekistan was experiencing thorough-going changes, and these deeply affected the political attitudes and behavioural pattern of Uzbek society. Widespread illiteracy, influence of religion and the colonial exploitation of the native masses were most important factors that had separated the natives and Russians before the October Revolution. After the revolution, removal of illiteracy and the declining influence of religion made deep impact on the relations among different national groups in Uzbekistan.\footnote{33 For instance, before the revolution the percentage of literacy in the territory of contemporary Uzbekistan, was recorded 3.6 per cent. By 1926, the Soviets were able to raise this percentage to 11.6 per cent, and by 1939 to 67.8 per cent. However, in secondary and higher education the native nationalities still lagged far behind. By 1939, 4.2 per cent of the population of Uzbekistan had acquired at least incomplete secondary education; the percentage of Uzbek population that had acquired secondary education was only 1.5 per cent. By 1933 the number of persons who had acquired higher education was 16.8 thousands; it rose to large majority of persons who had acquired higher education were non-natives. Slow growth of higher education among the natives and thereby slow process of nativisation was an issue which was a source of considerable stress and strain for the Soviet polity during these days.}
Moreover, the form and content of Soviet education was such that it significantly precluded non-conducive political attitude. On the contrary they went a long way in equipping the natives for playing an increasingly curcial role in political system and processes. Indeed, these far-reaching changes contributed to the relative political stability in Soviet Central Asia.

No less important development which remarkably demarcated the Soviet socio-political life from the traditional pattern of life in Central Asia was the changing role of native women in Uzbek society. Keeping in view that in the traditional Uzbek society the social status of women was very low and that they lived a secluded life, there had been a fundamental change in their role in Uzbekistan during the period under study. Not only that the women were granted equal rights, the Soviets saw to it that more and more native women played an active role in the socio-cultural and political life. As mentioned earlier, by the late thirties, the traditional veil had been discarded. Hujum (offensive campaigns) and the movement for emancipation of women of the East made deep and widespread effect on the role of women. Not only that a large number of native women worked shoulder to shoulder with the male workers, engineers and

teachers, but also that they by 1938, actively participated in the trade unions, party and governmental organs.

Spread of universal compulsory education with a strong anti-religious content had considerably weakened the hold of religion, particularly, in urban areas. Non-availability of religious scriptures, change of scripts of Uzbek language, like those of other native languages, decline in the number of Muslim priests (mullahs) coupled with the vigorous anti-religious campaigns forcing the closure of places of worship had completely undermined the influence of Islam. However, during the thirties widespread anti-religious campaigns were creating serious problems of law and order. In rural areas these were causing considerable social tensions. Even some of the top native leaders of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan were opposed to the methods employed by the Society of Militant Atheists. Transmission of religious teachings, both by the native family and the traditional schools (maktabs) (which had been totally liquidated by 1938) had been effectively curbed. Likewise, the role of Ishans and dervishes in the process of socialisation had been completely liquidated. In fact, the institution of religious hierarchy that played an all-pervasive role before the revolution, had been completely liquidated and in its place had emerged a new and widespread network of Soviets and various organs of the Communist Party encompassing the
socio-cultural life in Uzbekistan.\textsuperscript{35} Hence, it is logical to suggest that the nature of relationship between the Russians and non-Russians had qualitatively changed. The old exploitative relationship was being abandoned, and gradually more and more natives derived benefits from the opportunities and privileges that were created after the Bolshevik Revolution. However, the presence of large number of Russians, 11.5 per cent of the total population in 1939, mostly skilled and trained workers, remained a source of friction in Uzbek society. For example, even the native communists kept on reiterating the theme of more and more opportunities for the participation of the natives in political life as well as increasing their share in other spheres.\textsuperscript{36}

The fact that the official policy was directed towards the consolidation and development of Soviet political system by bringing in more and more natives can be seen by various measures that the Soviet leadership had adopted during the period under study. The other problem referred to earlier, namely, creation of favourable socio-economic conditions, has been dealt with in the preceding pages.\textsuperscript{37}

\textsuperscript{35} In view of complete liquidation of traditional patterns socialisation, the native communist leadership argued that there was no need for the continuance of anti-religious propaganda, as it was unnecessarily causing tensions in rural areas.

\textsuperscript{36} On the basis of our own interviews.

\textsuperscript{37} See Section I of this Chapter.
At this stage it is necessary to bring into focus the Constitutional development of Soviet political system in so far as they are relevant to the institutionalised political role of constituent republics including the Uzbek SSR. A marked common trend noticed here is, gradual, often faltering, enlargement of the qualitative as well as quantitative participation of the constituent republics in Soviet political system. The first Constitution of the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic, adopted in July 1918, had granted Turkestan the status of an 'Autonomous Socialist Soviet Republic.' Article 2, Section 11 (Chapter V) of the Constitution laid down that "the Soviets of those regions which differentiate themselves by a special form of existence and national character may unite in autonomous regional unions, ruled by the local congress of the soviets, and their executive organs." It further provided that "these autonomous regional unions participate in the Russian Socialist Federated Soviets upon a Federal basis." Notwithstanding this federal clause, officially claimed to have been based on Leninist concept of multi-national socialist state, there were no clear-cut division of power between the Union government and the republican governments. Instead, article 3, Section 31 (Chapter VII) laid down that "the All-Russian

Central Executive Committee is the Supreme legislative executive and controlling organs of the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic." In 1923 amendments were incorporated in the first Constitution so as to lay down the nature and scope of the powers of constituent republics of the Union. However, the trend was decisively in favour of Centralisation, and not autonomy, as promised at the outset in November, 1917, by the adoption of Declaration of Rights of Nations to self-determination. In February 1925, that is, after the reorganisation of Soviet Central Asia on the basis of Bolshevik policy of national self-determination as remoulded by the 10th Party Congress (1921), the Uzbek SSR was granted full status of a Union Republic. The new Uzbek SSR adopted its own first constitution in 1927.

Against this background of achievements and failures of the turbulent experience of the revolution and reconstruction, second Constitution of the U.S.S.R., adopted in 1936, redefined the function and authority of the Union as well as its constituent republics. Article 14 and 15 defined the jurisdiction of the Union and the constituent republics. Almost all the major areas of economic and political activities fell within the jurisdiction of the Union, while only the relevant implementation part of policies

40. For details, see Zafar Imam, Colonialism in East-West Relations, New Delhi, 1969, pp.2-48.
and programmes, decided by the Party, was left with each Union republic. Legally, each Union republic was, however, granted sovereign status subject to the provision laid down in article 14.41 The 1936 Constitution maintained, in

41. Article 14 listed the jurisdiction of the Union as under: (a) representation of the Union in international relations, conclusions and ratification of treaties with other states; (b) question of war and peace; (c) admission of new republics into the USSR; (d) supervision over the observance of the Constitution of the USSR and ensuring that the Constitution of the Union Republics conform with the Constitution of the USSR; (e) ratification of alteration of boundaries between Union Republics; (f) ratification of the formation of new Territories and Regions and also of new Autonomous Republics within the Union Republics; (g) organisation of the defence of the USSR and the direction of all the armed forces of the USSR; (h) foreign trade on the basis of state monopoly; (i) safeguarding the security of the state; (j) determining the plans of national economy of the USSR; (k) approbation of the unified state budget of the USSR as well as of the taxes and revenues which go to form the Union, Republican and local budgets; (l) administration of the banks, industrial and agricultural establishments and enterprises and trading enterprises of all-Union importance; (m) administration of transport and communication; (n) direction of the monetary and credit system, (o) organisation of state insurance; (p) contracting and granting loans; (q) determining the basic principles of land tenure and tenure of mineral deposits, forests and waters; (r) determining the basic principles in the spheres of educational public health; (s) organisation of a uniform system of national economic accounting; (t) determining the principles of labour legislation; (u) legislation governing the judicial system and judicial procedures, (and) criminal and civil codes; (v) laws governing citizenship of the Union; laws governing the rights of foreigners; and (w) passing of amnesty acts for the entire Union.
essence the principles of hierarchical control system, based on Party organisations and State organs and their interwoven relationship, as well of horizontal and vertical 'democratic centralism'. on which the entire Soviet Political system is claimed to have been based. Thus, article 87 laid down that "the Union Republic People's Commissariats direct the branches of the state administration entrusted to them, and are subordinate both to the Council of People's Commissars of the Union Republics and to the corresponding Union Republic People's Commissariats of the USSR."

Moreover, such provisions as the right of constituent republics to veto changes in territorial boundaries, to have their own flags and court of arms, etc., as well as the right to secede, did appear to be portent. However, the Party and the political system were not yet geared to decentralise. Suffice here to point out that the 1936 Constitution did, in fact, enlarge the scope of the authority and functions of the constituent republics, as compared to the earlier constitution of the Soviet Russia.

These constitutional developments coupled with the emergence of a new generation of Soviet Uzbek intelligentsia, led to an increasing political participation of the natives in the institutionalised political processes in

42. See, V.M. Chkhivadze, no.39.
Soviet Uzbekistan. For instance, by 1937, the percentage of natives in the Communist Party of Uzbekistan reached 63 per cent; of these, only the Uzbeks were as many as 52 per cent.\textsuperscript{43} Indeed, the percentage of native members of the Party at one time had risen as high as 74 per cent in 1933. It declined to 6 per cent in 1937 as a result of large scale purges of the native communists during the intervening period.

Such an upward trend of the political participation was not confined to the Party alone. By the thirties, the natives had shown considerable involvement in various state and political organs. For instance, in the Trade Unions of Uzbekistan the representation of the natives showed a significant growth during the period 1927-1932 and thereafter. In 1927, the natives constituted only 54.64 per cent of the total members of the Trade Unions in Uzbekistan, by 1932 it increased to 70.55 per cent.\textsuperscript{44}

We have earlier discussed that in local Soviets, if urban and rural Soviets are taken together, the natives had already by the early thirties constituted an overwhelmingly large majority and that only at the republican and

\textsuperscript{43} See Table I in Chapter III.

\textsuperscript{44} K. Fazylkhojaev, Profsiuzy Uzbekistana i borba za Vypolnenie Plana vtoroi piatiletki (1933-1937 gg). (Trade Unions of Uzbekistan and the struggle for the accomplishment of the Second Five Year Plan (1933-1937), Tashkent, 1960, p.22.
regional levels of administration their representation was still not proportionate to their population. However, there was an increasing demand for the rapid nativisation of the state apparatus at all levels. The fact that these demands were symbolic of the transformation of Uzbek society can be understood by an increasingly upward trend of native participation in the political processes so much so that in the elections for the first Supreme Soviet of Uzbek SSR, held in 1938, more than 90 per cent of the eligible voters cast votes for electing the deputies to Supreme Soviet. Moreover, the social background of the elected deputies to the first Supreme Soviet of Uzbek SSR was as under:

114 workers, 153 collective farmers and 82 intellectuals, while a large majority of these deputies were of natives.45

It is, thus, seen that by the close of the year 1938 the natives consisting of different nationalities, mainly the Uzbeks, had begun to exercise wide-ranging influence in the political system and political processes in Uzbekistan. A qualitative change in the nature of politics had come into being as well as to stay; politics had not only become secular but also it began to be primarily determined by the participation of the masses in the management of the socio-economic and cultural life and political system,
in general. The debate whether the ideals and objectives, which Lenin had set before the Party and government were fully translated into practice or not, need not entirely be relevant here for us. The process continued even after 1938, while against the background of the enormity of problems these achievements, by the year 1938, were no less significant. The facts that by 1938, the political system in Uzbekistan was strengthened and consolidated, and the nature of politics qualitatively transformed and these cannot be disputed by an objective study.

III. Emerging Pattern of Culture in Uzbekistan

A number of manifestly contradictory notions about the socio-cultural life in Soviet Central Asia, including Uzbekistan are prevalent outside the Soviet Union. The one which has been widely propagated by Western scholars, is that of Russification of the native culture and regimentation in political processes.46 The term Russification is generally

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46. Jindrich Kucera, "Soviet Nationality Policy, the Linguistic Controversy", Problems of Communism, Vol. VIII, No. 2 (1954), p. 24. The author writes: "In many concepts such as 'Soviet culture' or 'Soviet superiority', the epithet 'Soviet' became a mere identification for 'Russian'." See also Mary Matossian, "Two Marxist Approaches to Nationalism", American Slavic and East European Review, Vol. XVI (December, 1957), p. 499, Mary Matossian observes that "in the Soviet cultural amalgam which has emerged, Russian culture is the dominant element which and to a certain extent the cultures of the ethnic minorities have been Russified. Likewise, Geoffrey Wheeler maintains that the October Revolution hastened the process of modernisation and Westernisation which had begun with the coming of the Russians to Central Continued...
used interchangeably with the concept of Westernisation in a pejorative sense. The protagonists of this notion of Russification consider that liquidation of religion and Islamic culture was pursued to Russify the natives. Furthermore, the spread of Soviet system of education was directed to propagating the Russian culture. In this programme of Russification, it is believed, there has been a continuity from the Tsarist attitude towards the natives of Central Asia. However, the notion of Russification or even the concept of Westernisation does not fully explain the emerging pattern of culture in Uzbekistan, even transitory, as a part of well defined programmatic objective of building up a multi-national socialist society. Hence historical legacies of the past, e.g., Russification were relevant, though they were not determining factors. They only underline the complexity of the process of change in Central Asia. It is, therefore, not surprising that even by the end of the thirties, the Uzbeks continued to exhibit a marked degree of social conservatism. Particularly, this was the case in respect of food habits, clothing, the pattern of decoration of houses and the attitude towards marriage and the elders.

46. (from pre-page) Asia by introducing there that version of the modern which is peculiar to the Soviets. See Central Asian Review, Vol.VII, No.2, p.109; Richard Pipes also uses the concept of Russification and Westernisation interchangeably. See Richard Pipes, no.32.
The other notion about the emerging pattern of native culture is based on the continuity of the traditional Islamic culture. In other words, the impact of the Soviet policy of cultural change is considered to have been largely marginal. The adherents of this view believe that the native masses stubbornly resisted and defied Soviet policy; so much so that the native masses remain guided by the traditional Islamic consciousness and Islamic internationalism and brotherhood. Thus, according to Philip Mosley, this trend may in future lead the natives to revolt against the Russians in the event of neighbouring Middle East countries turning to Communism. However, such wild predictions are no more than wishful thinking. The emerging native culture had no significant relationship with the Islamic culture and Islamic Shariah. As we have shown in the preceding pages, the hold of religion on the native masses and its role in the socio-cultural and political processes was, already by 1938, rapidly on the wane.

47. See Olaf Kirpatrick Carce, Soviet Empires: The Turks of Central Asia and Stalinism, London, 1953, p.240. The author observes that under Bolshevik pressure religious institutions have forever lost their old meaning and force in Turkestan... Yet Islam, cleaned of its theocratic accretions, lives as a spiritual possession in the hearts of the natives."

Lastly, there is the notion of development of proletarian internationalism and a completely new socialist culture; this view is held by the Soviet authors.⁴⁹ Although many changes, radical in nature, such as the considerable decline of the influence of religion, the emancipation of native women took place, it is doubtful whether these had created desired favourable conditions for the development of a proletarian international culture. There were still considerable weighty issues on which there were sharp differences between the nationalities and the Russians.

We believe that these views on the native culture are misconceived. In fact, in the thirties the Soviet authors themselves were sharply divided in two groups on the basis of their understanding of the pattern of native culture that was taking shape in Soviet Central Asia. While, one group felt that the native culture was still replete with traditional Islamic values and rituals,⁵⁰ the other group of Soviet authors was of the view that the traditional culture had been effectively liquidated and in its place a new international proletarian culture was emerging.⁵¹ Both these assessments of the

⁴⁹ TLIKRU, no.31; See also R. Tuzmuhamedov, How the National Question was solved in Soviet Central Asia, Moscow, 1973; A Leap Through the Centuries, no.3; V. Solodovnikov and V. Bogoslavsky, no.4.

⁵⁰ "Literatura Uzbekistana" (Uzbek Literature) in Revoliutisiiia i Natsionalnosti No.11 (1934), p.75.

social reality were partial which led to certain avoidable political mistakes that the later generation of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union had to regret.52

Our analysis suggests that a syncretic culture with a strong content of secular and material values was emerging in Uzbekistan. While religious rituals and some of the traditional customs were suffering atrophy, others had been totally liquidated. Simultaneously a secular this-worldly material world outlook was gradually replacing the traditional religious-other-worldly attitude of resignation towards life. The Uzbek and Russian literature of the period is full of such themes as apportioning blame for the deterioration of Uzbek society during the pre-revolutionary period, above all, to the strong and deep hold of religion; stalling of ancient and medieval national heroes who supposedly achieved distinctions in the field of science, medicine, history and culture; and the acclamation of Marxism-Leninism which once again opened up new vistas for the natives of Central Asia.

Spread of general and scientific education had, in some ways, also contributed to a sort of revivalism of the

great national tribal traditions. The Soviet Uzbek intellectuals traced the roots of secular scientific and literary traditions in the works of ancient and medieval native scholars of world fame, as al-Farabi, Ibn-Sina (Avicena), al-Biruni, Ulug Beg and Ali Sher Novoi. Even Tamerlane and Zahiruddin Babur were being popularised as national heroes. The young Uzbek children learnt about the achievements of these national tribal heroes from their parents and elders. Moreover, a large number of books, novels and stories were written in the Uzbek language which highlighted the greatness of Uzbek society and its national cultural traditions. Both the Uzbek and other Turkic languages were projected to be the one of the best languages capable of absorbing the international terms and expressing simple as well as complex ideas suited to technical and higher education. The natives preferred to speak in their own language. A sense of pride in national cultural traditions and history was widely felt.

A large number of the natives believed that the religious intolerance was the primary cause for drying up the streams of their great national-tribal traditions. They believed that the Islamic dogmatism crushed the spirit of rational enquiry to unfathom the mysteries of nature and life. In this connection assassination of Ulug Beg at the hands of a religious fanatic was widely propagated. It was believed that had Ulug Beg and other medieval native intellectuals and scientists of his time been able to complete their work
and mission, their society perhaps would not have suffered deterioration as it did.

Considered as a national genius Ulug Beg's incomplete astronomical observatory in Samarkand was renovated and preserved, whereas the other ancient and medieval structures, particularly, the mosques and madrassehs were left to the vagaries of nature and had since lost their earlier majestic solemnity. The forts and residential palaces of the former Khans and emirs received better care and attention than the religious places in Samarkand, Bukhara and Khiva. Hundreds of thousands of natives continued to visit these national monuments and memorials. Turned into historical monuments some old gigantic structures of mosques and traditional schools had, however, been preserved for their architectural and masonry beauty; some of these with modification had been converted into national museums or put to some other temporal use. Similar had been the fate of thousands of smaller mosques situated in almost every locality (makhalla) before the revolution. Most of these had been converted into primary schools, libraries or clubs. The traditional chai-khanas had, however, fared well and prospered. Located in every locality some of them were renovated and modernised.

A large number of natives particularly in rural areas and in oblasts of Bukhara and Khiva retained their traditional costumes. Even the natives intellectuals were reported to prefer traditional costumes to European dress.
However, an important change in the mode of dress was the costume for bride. In urban areas the traditional bridal costume was gradually being replaced by the Russian white, long dress with white scarf. In rural areas, however, the traditional costume continued to be worn by the brides. Generally, the native women resisted the adoption of European dress and Russian style of living; only a small fragment of Uzbek population adopted them.

Revivalism of the great national tribal traditions or the preference to native style of life did not, however, generate anti-Russian or anti-Socialist feelings. Moreover, natives began to learn and use Russian language as well. In fact, since the early thirties when the process of nativisation of Soviet apparatus received momentum, the anti-Soviet and anti-Russian feelings were progressively on the decline. The idea of superiority of socialist soviet system over the feudal and capitalist systems had by and large become very widespread. The immediate material gains and general improvement in public services had considerably strengthened the conviction of the natives about the relative superiority of their socialist system. All this had resulted in improving relations between the Russians and the natives. A large majority of the natives no more considered the Russians as alien enemies. Their contribution to the development of economy and socio-cultural change was duly appreciated by the native communists and Uzbek
scholars. Although the natives were still averse to inter-racial marriages, particularly between the native girls and the Russian boys, the areas of social contact and channels of communication between the native masses and the Russians had tremendously increased. By 1938, these began to provide opportunities for the members of different nationalities to understand the cultural ethos of others and to communicate with them.

The process of cultural transformation had, however, even now, not led to a total cohesion and complete fusion of the natives with Russians or even among various regional national Uzbek groups. One obvious reason for the continuing differences among the various native regional groups emanated from regional disparities as a result of relatively slow economic development and socio-cultural transformation in such regions as Khorezm, Bukhara and Kashka Darya, etc.

The preceding pages have shown the level and content of changes in the nature of politics in Uzbekistan and how these proved crucial in the process of secularisation of politics within a given period. Far-reaching changes in the base and superstructure had been affected, although it is obvious that the superstructural changes continued to lag behind the changes in the base. Such problems as the role of Russians in Uzbekistan, regional socio-economic disparities and over preoccupation with some aspects of historical
traditions of native society can be well understood. However, liquidation of all-pervasive role of religion, a specific characteristic of Uzbekistan and other regions of Central Asia, was of primary importance. Once this was achieved by a programmatic use of political power, the transformation of base and superstructure of Uzbek society on the eve of the Second World War, made the secularisation of politics a logical reality in Uzbekistan. This reality was created within the conceptual framework of the post-1917 Soviet leadership against the background of historical legacies and complexities of Soviet Uzbekistan.