

# GLOBALISATION AND CENTRAL ASIAN SPACE COSTS & BENEFITS

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## Abstract:

Globalisation defines a trend of transformation from local and regional to the global phenomenon, and characterizes the coexistence of a relationship based on surplus, trade, market and capital. Such a trend was, however, stalled by unlimited state control, excessive taxes and traditional means of transportation and communication during medieval times<sup>1</sup> besides two great wars and their corresponding anti-imperial 'nationalist' interlude in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. These unhealthy factors contributed to plummeting the foreign trade and capital investment in the developed and the developing countries. Nonetheless, the said trend picked up as a sequence of unprecedented technological advancement and the pro-activism of several leading trans-national financial corporation's (hereafter TNFCs) but suffered again in 1970s as a sequence of low returns of TNFCs. To tide over the crisis, the TNFCs mandated privatization of state enterprise, liberalization of imports, equitable resource sharing, soft borders, hassle free trade, regional and global infrastructural development, etc. A unified and flexible economic order based on the integration of national, regional (pan European, pan-Asian, pan-Arabic and pan-American) and world economies towards *laissez faire* and neo-liberalism, was the natural concomitant of above initiative of the TNFCs.<sup>2</sup> Consequently, indicators of socio-economic development progressed to an appreciable extent despite the belief of the "Cultural Imperialists" that "Globalisation is the reincarnation of the Western imperialism/colonialism"; hence, aimed at benefitting the developed rather than the developing countries across the world.<sup>3</sup> The Central Asian space was no exception to above global phenomenon. Though the region registered unprecedented progress, it was juxtaposed subject to several complications. In fact, the present article seeks to examine the costs and benefits of globalisation to the Central Asian countries, and it is based on both historical and empirical studies.

## Keywords:

Globalisation, Central Asian Republics, Japan, US, India, Korea, China, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, WTO, UNDP, ADB, Churchill, Marx, Huntington.

## Introduction:

Globalisation made its effect felt in Korea, Japan, China, India and Central Asian Republics (hereafter CARs): courtesy huge foreign capital

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<sup>1</sup> Mushtaq A.Kaw, "Trade & Commerce in Chinese Central Asia", *Central Asia: Introspection*, Eds., Mushtaq A. Kaw & Aijaz A Bandey, CCAS, University of Kashmir, 2006. pp. 47-61.

<sup>2</sup> Jeremy Breacher and Tim Costello, Eds., *Global Village or Global Pillage: Economic Reconstruction from the Bottom Up*, South End Press, 1994, pp. 1-9.

<sup>3</sup> Prof. T. K. Oomen, Keynote address, National Seminar on "Globalisation & Social Sustainability", Department of Sociology, University of Kashmir, Srinagar, October 12-13, 2008.

investment in the CARs by the world famous companies on banking, trade, construction, hydropower generation and hydrocarbon exploration and transportation. These included *Chevron Corporation*(US), *Agip* (Italy), *Gazprom* (Russia), *Unocal* (US), *Mobil* (France), *British Petroleum and British Enterprise Oil*, *Anglo-Dutch Royal Dutch/Shell*, *Statoil* (Norway), *Repsol* (Spain), *National Company of China* (NCC), *Mitsui* (Japan), *Petrons* (Malaysian), *Merhav* (Israel) and *INDC* (Iran) etc. While Swiss and Turkish corporations invested on oil and gas exploration in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, *Daimler-Benz* of Germany, *Daewoo* of South Korea on car industry, the *BAT* of United Kingdom made investment on cigarette making and tool manufacturing. Turkey launched Eurasia Television Network from Ankara to Central Asia to popularize her cultural influence in spoken Turkish language.<sup>4</sup> So did other Eurasian firms on mining, energy and telecommunication industries.<sup>5</sup> Korean and Uzbek firms, the *UzDaewoo Auto Joint-Stock Company* and the *General Motors-Daewoo Auto and Technology*, cooperated to manufacture auto spare parts through *UzDaewoo Auto Company* in Asaka in the Eastern Andijan region. Chinese consortiums sponsored projects on road building, oil and gas transportation, hydropower generation and power lines from and across Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan<sup>6</sup> and Tajikistan.<sup>7</sup> The Russian companies, *RusAI* and *Oleg Deripaska*, financed projects on hydropower generation and aluminum processing at Rogun and Turzunzade respectively in Tajikistan. Indian firms, *ONGC Mittal Energy Ltd* and *Nuclear Power Corporation of India*, invested on energy explorations in Kazakhstan and hydropower generation in Tajikistan. In addition, the transcontinental funding agencies, the *Asian Development Bank* (ADB), *World Trade Organisation*(WTO), *European Union*(EU)<sup>8</sup> etc. floated loans and funds

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<sup>4</sup> “Turkey Pushing Eastward-By Satellite”, *Washington Post*, March 22, 1992.

<sup>5</sup> Shirin Akiner, “ Politics of Energy in the Caspian Sea Region”, *Regional Survey of the World: East Europe, Russia and Central Asia*, Third edition, UK, 2003, n. 27, pp.11, 215-17; Murat Kenisarin, “The Energy Sector of Uzbekistan: Present State & Problems”, *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, no’s. 2(26) and 34, 2004, pp.126, 128; Turkmenistan Natural Resources, Library of Congress: Cf. <http://www.countrystudies.us/Turkmenistan/20.htm>

<sup>6</sup> Robert G.Sutter, *China’s Rise in Asia: Promises & Pearls*, Lanham, 2005, pp.26-30, 108-09; James C. Moltz, “China’s political and economic relations with Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan”, *Central Asian Survey*, Vol. 17, No.2, 1998, pp. 231-35.

<sup>7</sup> *International Monetary Fund*: Republic of Tajikistan, March 8, 2007.

<sup>8</sup> Fouskas K. Vassilis, *Zones of Conflict: US Foreign Policy in Central Asia: Structural Reform and Political Change*, London, 2003, p. 22; Bruno Coppieters, “Central Asia Region in a New International Environment”, *NATO Review*, Vol.44, No. 5, September 1996, pp. 26-31.

for infrastructural development and energy generation and transportation from CARs to international markets.

### **Costs & Benefits of CARs:**

As a natural concomitant of above investments, the CARs particularly Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan followed by Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan experienced the emergence of mammoth business houses, banks, industrial set ups, construction plants, hydropower and hydrocarbon projects and telecommunication systems. These are changing the entire façade of CARs and capacitating them to huge foreign exchanges, strengthen national currencies, generate jobs, raise life standard and open up vistas of social sustainability and economic restructuring. Such benefits are steadily percolating down to villages which are gradually changing their face and transforming them into leading urban hubs pointing thereby to a horizontal and vertical growth in the CARs including Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, the two poor economies, with lesser resources and distant location from the established world markets, marine and transportation hubs. By all means, however, Kazakhstan offers the best model of socio-economic development following large scale multinational companies and massive foreign investments. The UNDP reports,<sup>9</sup> field experiences of the present investigator and the search findings of the eminent Kazakh economists like Bolat Tatibekov, are altogether supportive of marked improvement in the life standard of the Kazakhs over the last several years. While the country is not devoid of the poverty, its level is substantially diminishing compared to her counterparts. The below poverty level which had increased till 1998, dipped from 34.6% to 9.8% during 1999-2005. Likewise, the purchasing power in terms of foodstuffs, goods and services improved almost at the same level. The number of people whose income was below food basket cost declined from 16.2% to 1.6% during 1998-2005, a ten times recovery.<sup>10</sup> In a way, average monthly income of Kazakh men increased from 14034 *tengis* in 1999 to 34648 *tengis* in 2004: that of the women also improved from 9485 to 21445 *tengis* during the same period.<sup>11</sup> The literacy rate recovered at all levels<sup>12</sup> and so did the rate of child mortality from 35 to 20.1 per thousand births between 1991 and

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<sup>9</sup> First Report on *UN Millennium Development Goals in Kazakhstan*, UNDP, Kazakhstan, 2002.

<sup>10</sup> "Population Living Standards in Kazakhstan", *Statistic Yearbook*. Agency on Statistics of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Almaty, 2004.

<sup>11</sup> Females and Males of Kazakhstan", *Short Statistic Bulletin*, Agency on Statistics of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Almaty, 2004.

<sup>12</sup> *First Report on UN Millennium Development Goals in Kazakhstan*, UNDP in Kazakhstan, 2002; *Short Statistical Yearbook of Kazakhstan*, Agency on Statistics of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Almaty, 2006.

2003<sup>13</sup>: indeed all because of Kazakhstan's abundant hydrocarbon resources, volatile trade, immense exposure to and cooperation with foreign countries, multinational companies, firms and consortiums for mutual benefits. Such type of growth is traceable in Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and other Central Asian states of course with varying degrees.

Politically, globalisation smoothed inter and intra-state conflicts among the CARs probably in tone with John Stuart Mill's belief that "integration would prove an instrument of conflict management in domestic situations." For economic and other benefits, the contending parties would prefer peace, dialogue and settlement to conflict and war. The political realist, Winston Churchill, also upholds Mills' views on the multiple advantages due to follow from the merger of the nation states<sup>14</sup> and resolution of a wide variety of those conflicts that characterized the "writings of Herodotus, the father of history, Karl Marx, the proponent have-nots, Samuel Huntington, the advocate of Western civilization."<sup>15</sup> Quite precisely, globalisation sought to neutralize, if not out rightly eliminate, an assortment of ethno-national, religio-cultural and economic conflicts among the CARs. Even their border disputes with Russia and China, were relatively settled for mutual benefits emanating from the global trade.<sup>16</sup> This sort of conflict management spontaneously forged a sense of mutual co-existence among the CARs, though it juxtaposed them to popular indignation for the restoration of fundamental and democratic rights. The intermittent popular outbursts in Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and trans-Caucasian states against the authoritarian regimes explain the extraneous influences that globalisation brought forth during economic amalgamation. Indeed, it exposed the hitherto landlocked and stereotyped peoples of Central Asian to the progressing world communities, which eventually, sought to widen their political horizon and socio-economic and cultural make up. Such an awakening was the

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<sup>13</sup> "Population Living Standards in Kazakhstan", *Statistic Yearbook*. Agency on Statistics of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Almaty, 2004.

<sup>14</sup> Winston S. Churchill, "Foreword", *An Idea Conquers the World*, Ed., R.N.Koudenhove-Kalergi, London, Macmillan, 1953, p. X.

<sup>15</sup> *The Economic Times*, New Delhi, July 25, 2008.

<sup>16</sup> Witt Raczka, "Xinjiang and its Central Asian Borderlands", *Central Asian Survey*, Vol. 17, No.3, Oxford, 1998, p. 384; Guangcheng Xing, "Security Issues in China's relations with Central Asian States", (eds.) Y.Zhang & R.Azizian, *Ethnic Challenges Beyond Borders*, London, 1998, n. 1, pp.65,209; *China's Policy Priorities*, Lanham, 2000, p. 65; K.Warikoo, "Central Asia and China : The geopolitical Imperatives", (ed.), Shams-ud Din, *Geopolitics and Energy Resources in Central Asia and Caspian Sea Region*, New Delhi, 2000, p. 260; Yasmin Melet, "China's Political and Economic Relations with Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan", *Central Asian Survey*, No. 31, p. 245.

offshoot of the educational integration of CARs with the reputed institutions in US, Turkey, Korea, India, Japan, Russia and China which the Central Asian youth visit for the pursuit of the degrees in engineering, medical, MPhil, PhD, etc. True educational reforms in CARs had the nation-building agenda to which indigenization of native languages was a specific feature. But these were simultaneously aimed at (i) marginalizing Soviet educational system, (ii) building up foundation for a quality-based education, (iii) and creating comparable educational institutions with Europe.<sup>17</sup> Under the circumstances, learning English language and education across the Seas ceased to be a taboo as both are the potential mediums of earning job and education within the global framework. Little wonder to observe Central Asian youth taking Western education in Europe and Asia and the level of illiteracy instantly declining in CARs. Kazakhstan, for one, substantially reduced illiteracy and the gender disparity as is vindicated by almost the same percentage of the Kazakh boys and girls at the primary and secondary levels. The women's participation in the legislative bodies of the country also swelled due to educational priorities of the Kazakhs: 7.7% by 2004 in the Senate comprising 39 members and 10.4% in the country's Parliament or *Majlis* of 77 members. To recall, the said rate had immediately contracted after the Soviet demise.

Culturally, globalisation facilitated the rural-urban movement, a phenomenon unheard of Central Asia till recent past as the region was known for "... the low rate of movement of the population from their local rural environment to urban centres ... each inhabitant's loyalty remained at the local level", the village and its local customs, traditions and kinship ties.<sup>18</sup> The globalisation brought them out of the Arcadian life and boosted their large scale migration from the socially isolated and economically backward to quite advanced and richer zones housed by peoples of divergent ethno-national and ethno-regional backgrounds. There they jointly work in multinational companies and business houses and share their thought and harmonious tradition of "cultural pluralism" which finds support from Laura Adams's writings: "Globalisation is a process that contributes to international integration and homogenization" and stimulates "diversity by providing venues for the propagation of new

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<sup>17</sup> Henri Fruchet, "The use of history: the Soviet historiography of Khan Kenesary Kasimov" and Robert Lowe, "Nation building and identity in the Kyrgyz Republic", *Central Asia: Aspects of transition*, (ed.) Tom Everett-Heath, London/New York, 2003, pp. 106-32.

<sup>18</sup> John Glenn, *The Soviet Legacy in Central Asia*, Macmillan & St. Martin Press, London & New York, 1999, pp. 91-96.

ideas about local identities”.<sup>19</sup> The points in reference are the nascent metropolitans of Central Asian states, which symbolize quite integrative educational, economic and cultural centres. The same is true of the population in Eastern Turkistan or Xinjiang where, for instance, the restaurants represent a real blend of distinct tastes and ethnic identities, the Chinese owner, Uighur receptionist, Kyrgyz cook, Kazakh server and Tajik customer. Even the higher educational institutions in CARs characterise the blend of Indian, Chinese, Russian, Pakistan and Japanese students through mutual influences in food, dress and culture, which eventually leads to the formation of the “cultural entropy”. Such a phenomenon is especially publicized by those young Uzbek, Kazakh, Turkmen, Kyrgyz and Tajik girls and boys who visit developed European and Asian countries, USA, Japan, Turkey, China, India etc., for education, job and trade. They return back home with new experiences about alien culture, individual behaviour and collective attitudes, which they later transmit to their native conditions. Many of them take up job in multinational companies, shopping malls, business houses, cafes, bars, restaurants and quietly conducted night clubs in the important metropolitans of the CARs. During an informal chat, a Kazakh national from Almaty, maintained that “Globalisation does not distance but unifies cultures which is a blessing to pool together human energy, diverse ethno-national and geographical identities notwithstanding varying materialistic ends and interests”. This kind of universal brotherhood is, therefore, based on the principle of “each for all and all for each” as it effectively swamps rigid ethno-cultural structures. Having diversified sources of income, globalisation empowered the Central Asians to formalize a wide variety of customs and rituals related to the human belief, birth, death and marriages, the hallmark of Central Asian history and culture from early times. With flow of money, they organize such ceremonies with great deal of extravaganza and entertain visitors, mourners and guests alike with quite a wide variety of food, juices, tea, drinks, etc.

However, it would be simply naïve to consider globalisation as an absolute programme of human development. Together with advantages, it brought the Central Asians face to face with complexities of life. This is perhaps why the ongoing global recession is making its impact on CARs also. Some experts opine that had there been no globalisation, the spillover of recession would have been localized. More so, they believe that globalisation, exceptions apart, failed to produce a genuine middle

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<sup>19</sup> Laura Adams, “Globalization in Central Asia: Notes on Centrality and Marginalization,” *Journal of Central Asian Studies*, Vol. VI, no. 2, p.6.

class in Central Asia. The neo-rich class mostly comprises the political and the educational elite which are, by and large, disinclined to ameliorate social inequality and rural-urban void. The official data is fudged by the CARs to present a rosy picture of the growth and development, they further believe. Hence, poverty, unemployment and low life standard reign supreme especially in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, which together perpetuate crimes, endemic corruption and a stressful society<sup>20</sup> to avoid which, the Tajiks often take recourse to arms smuggling and drug trafficking as short-cut means of social survival and elevation. Of the six routes originating from Afghanistan, three routes traverse Khorog, Panj and Moskovsky in Tajikistan.<sup>21</sup> The Khorog-Oash-Aandijan route, the “Opium Highway”, is treaded by the Tajik youth to smuggle opium from Afghanistan to European markets across Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Russian. In fact, opium smuggling absorbs a lot of poverty-stricken and unemployed youth in the whole Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast (hereafter GBAO) on two counts: one, it remains the dominant source of their survival in the rugged terrain and second, it is fairly lucrative as can be easily gauged from the report of Andrey Nikolayev, the former Director of the Russian Federal Border Service: “A certain amount of heroin costs \$100 in Badakhshan province in Afghanistan. Once it is smuggled across the River Panj into the GBAO in Tajikistan its value increases to \$ 1000. As it is taken through Oash in Kyrgyzstan it increases to \$ 10,000, when it reaches Europe it costs \$ 100,000”.<sup>22</sup> Interestingly, the Tajik women contribute a great deal to its trade in the Pamir region despite heavy penalties. They also engage in the “suit case” or small international trade. Thus from Alamy Kazakhstan, the heroin consignments are afforded by different gender ethnic groups including the children to Russia and thence to Europe due to soft borders and free global trade .

Likewise, trafficking in women is facilitated by the phenomenon of world transforming into a “global home”. Eminent sociologists like Marfua Tokhtakhodjaeva from Uzbekiatn<sup>23</sup> and Sofia Kasymova from

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<sup>20</sup> Emomali Rakhmanov, *Tajikistan in the Mirror of History*, Vol. 1-2, River Editions Ltd., London, 2006, p. 1.

<sup>21</sup> *International Crisis Group*, “Recent Violence: Causes and Consequences”, Central Asia Briefing, October 18, 2000.

<sup>22</sup> Roger N McDermott, “Border Security in Tajikistan: Countering the Narcotics Trade?”, *Conflict Studies Research Centre*, October 2002, p. 36.

<sup>23</sup> “Trafficking of Women: The Case of Uzbekistan”, Paper presented in the International Seminar on *Globalisation and Eurasia*, Centre for Russian & Central Asian Studies, School of International Studies , Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, November 9-12, 2008.

Tajikistan<sup>24</sup>, have expatiated upon the underlying factors of prostitution and flesh trade in the countryside of CARs.<sup>25</sup> Field studies also reveal that a large number of innocent girls, lured by job and business, are transported across in groups to perform illicit and immoral acts. Similarly, for making a living, a large number of Central Asian work forces annually migrate to Russia and other foreign countries. During their out-stay, they make new marriages which contributes to alarming social tensions in their home land. In sequence thereof, they either divorce their actual spouses or leave them half way to live by themselves: attend the family and small farms or else migrate to urban areas for job, which at times, pushes them into the web of the prostitution and flesh trade. This type of transitory or perennial out migration, the offshoot of population explosion, scarce resources, uneven growth rate, varying wage scales, unemployment, etc, also find support from the immense opportunities thrown open by globalisation, the soft borders, flexible visa regimes, boom of the multinationals and foreign capital. Quite exactly, scores of Central Asians annually migrate to Russia, China, Korea, Japan, India, Turkey, USA, etc for education and career building. In fact, the said trend had set in immediately with the Soviet demise in 1991. The new-born Soviet Central Asian states, under transition, failed to address the immediate challenges. For the fear of ethnic cleansing or for earning employment, a large proportion of non-Turkic and non-Iranian ethnic groups migrated from the CARs<sup>26</sup> though it was correspondingly reciprocated by the inflow of equal and even more number of Kyrgyz, Uzbek, Tajik, Kazakh, Turk, Uigur and Dungans into CARs at their embryonic stage. The net result was that the titular population swelled from 62.3% to 79.9% in Kazakhstan during 1989-2000 ; 71.4% to 77.6% in Uzbekistan during 1989-2002 ; 40.1% to 53.4% in Kazakhstan during 1989-1999 ; 52.4 % to 65.7 % in Kyrgyzstan during 1989-2001 and from

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<sup>24</sup> “Labour Market Globalisation & Status of Women in Post-Soviet Tajikistan”, Paper presented in the International Seminar on *Globalisation and Eurasia*, Centre for Russian & Central Asian Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, November 9-12, 2008.

<sup>25</sup> “Labour Market Globalisation & Status of Women in Post-Soviet Tajikistan”, Paper presented in the International Seminar on *Globalisation and Eurasia*, Centre for Russian & Central Asian Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, November 9-12, 2008.

<sup>26</sup> 16,199,154 to 14,953,131 Ukrainians, Germans, Tatars, Byelorussians, Azerbaijanis, Poles, Chechens, Bashkirs, Moldovans, Mordovans, Armenians and Greeks migrated from Kazakhstan and 50,000 to 90,000 Germans, Crimean Tatars, Jews, Turks-Meskhetians and others migrated from Uzbekistan during 80s and 90s: the similar was the proportion of out migration in Kyrgyzstan , Tajikistan and Turkmenistan.

72%-91% in Turkmenistan during 1989-2001.<sup>27</sup> The further expansion of the Turkic groups in CARs would precipitate marginalizing the ethnic minorities and lead to what Karl Deutsch terms as the “obliteration of unity of nation states in all such situations whose populations are already separated into social groups with different languages or cultures of necessary way of living”.<sup>28</sup> It would be equally fraught with serious consequences for the migrant Central Asians in all such situations “where there is migration and where groups of people who lived earlier in isolation, become ethnocentric to accommodate in heterogeneous conditions”.<sup>29</sup>

Nevertheless, it should not be presumed that out migration of Central Asians stopped after 2000. It continues unabatedly as tens and thousands of unemployment and poverty-affected Tajiks, Kyrgyz and Uzbeks to Russia and Kazakhstan are driven to out migration for employment and better wages. Fairly speaking, it has become the only source of living to many Tajik and Kyrgyz families leave apart the accruing remittances to the respective nation states of Central Asia. The remittances amount to \$260 millions in Tajikistan and \$160 millions in Kyrgyzstan (only via Western Union). Reportedly, the money transferred by Kyrgyz migrants makes the half of the national budget. This is excluding the contribution of unregistered remittances and hand-to-hand transfers. Another obvious benefit of out migration is that it absorbs surplus work force by 10-15% in Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. However, one should not lose sight of the fact that the phenomenon of out migration contributed to the youth drain in CARs. Migration of highly qualified specialists is a very big loss to the CARs as hoards of the workers, qualified and educated youth, from Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan emigrate to Canada, UK, USA, Japan, Turkey, etc for high-paying jobs.<sup>30</sup> In the process, the respective countries lose the services of a potential human resource otherwise necessary for the growth and development of the respective countries especially when they are going through transition from central to market economy, to which effect, as was desired by the

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<sup>27</sup> Valeriy S. Khan, “The State Ideologies in Post-Soviet Central Asia: The Ethnic Dimension”, *Central Asia in Retrospect and Prospect*, Ed. Mushtaq A Kaw, Readworthy, New Delhi, 2010, pp. 11-28.

<sup>28</sup> “Social Mobilisation and Political Development”, *American Political Science Review*, No.55, 1961, pp. 493-514.

<sup>29</sup> “What is an ethnic Group”, *The Ethnicity Reader: Nationalism, Multiculturalism and Migration*, Eds., Montserrat Guibernau & John Rex, Oxford & Malden, 1997, p.21.

<sup>30</sup> Stephen Dalziel, “London’s Russian’s”, *BBC World Service on Assignments* (July 10, 2000); Saskia Sassan, *Globalisation and its Discontents*, p. 8.

transcontinental funding agencies, they enforced measures to promote privatization of all means and forces of production and encourage real competition and genuine labour and trade market. It is a different thing that the full form of private proprietorship on the analogy of Transcaucasian states is yet to grow in agricultural and industrial sector of the CARs. The Soviet state units of agricultural production, the *kolkhoze*, still exist with a different name of *shirkat*. The peasant's right to land ownership, free production and marketing is yet regulated.<sup>31</sup>

Educationally, globalisation is blamed to affect radical change in the priorities of the CARs, from education to business, which experts attribute to 30% slash in the literacy rate, for instance, in Kazakhstan during nineties and to the equal proportions in other Central Asian states. The number of first year university students reduced to only 3340 in Turkmenistan in 2000.<sup>32</sup> The option of the subjects for studies also changed because of the emphasis of globalisation on international relations and business administration. The premier subjects of math, physics, biology, known in Soviet times, took a back seat which is exemplified by the 50% contraction in the percentage of physicists, mathematicians, biologists in Kazakhstan around 1990-96. Geology and sciences declined by 40% while number of *littérateurs* increased by 7%, veterinarians by 14% and lawyers by 50% during the same period.<sup>33</sup> However, history and languages continued to have a space in the educational set up under the nation-building agenda. During the process of educational restructuring the native languages were recognized as the official languages and Russian was simply accorded the status of a *de facto* language for administrative, academic and political performance<sup>34</sup> which genuinely frustrated the regional intelligentsia of different language and cultural backgrounds for the fear of losing promotions and privileges.<sup>35</sup> Thus the Russian language and its text in school libraries were gradually substituted by the native literature.<sup>36</sup> In Kazakhstan, by

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<sup>31</sup> Mushtaq A. Kaw, "Changing Land Tenures, Agrarian Reforms and Peasantry in Central Asian Republics (CARs)", *International Journal of Central Asian Studies*, Vol. XI, Institute of Asian Culture & Development, Seoul, Korea, 2006.

<sup>32</sup> Eric W. Sievers, *The Post-Soviet Decline of Central Asia: Sustainable Development and Comprehensive Capital*, London/ New York, 2003, p. 54.

<sup>33</sup> *The Post-Soviet Decline of Central Asia: Sustainable Development and Comprehensive Capital*, p. 66.

<sup>34</sup> G.Tett, "Soviet Mullahs Who Threaten Gorbachev", *Financial Times*, 17 August, 1991.

<sup>35</sup> Gelner Ernest, *Nations and Nationalism*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1983, pp. 162-66.

<sup>36</sup> Катагощина И. Т. *Кризис идентичности как фактор миграционных процессов на постсоветском Востоке*, 2001, № 6, с. 79.

2000, the number of Russian training schools reduced by 60% and in Turkmenistan by 71%.<sup>37</sup> In Tajikistan, the textbooks at Russian-speaking schools were not updated for more than 10 years for the same reason.<sup>38</sup> That the officialisation of the native languages was a big “language shock” to multi-ethnic Russian speaking social groups, it deprived them of a common medium of communication and employment in industries, management, science, etc.<sup>39</sup> The rich content and unifying spirit of the Russian language<sup>40</sup> was, therefore, cut across partly by the language policy of titular nations and partly by the gradual inroads of the English rather the globalised language in the Soviet space.

That most productive belts are converted into industrial zones by the multinational companies thereby causing health, ecological and environmental hazards, is indeed there. The globalisation is juxtaposed to leave dreadful impact on the cultural ethos of the CARs. True it combined divergent ethnic groups in the above explained cases, but in others, it is proving a predator. A Kyrgyz scholar rightly opines that “with economic unification, the nomadic life style is experiencing a potent threat of extinction”, a fact which is exactly in tone with the opinion of the “cultural imperialists” that “global cultural and technological influences eat up indigenous identities by displacing local values and practices antedating pre-historic times.” On its account, a substantial percentage of rural population is in the process of shift from rural to urban areas at the cost of the age old cultural ethos. A point in reference is the break down of the joint family tradition and the weakening of community and fellow feeling so characteristic of Central Asia villages since early times. During an informal chat a Chinese scholar from the Chinese part of Central Asia (Xinjiang) forth right termed globalisation as a “double-edge sword: on the one hand, it enriches traditional Chinese culture and instills new vigour in it, one the other, it expunges some of its valued elements.” Historically speaking, the given trend of the destruction of traditional values and customs set in with the Soviet occupation of Central Asia and their corresponding development programmes on the Socialist pattern though Glenn radically differs with it: “... The creation of state and collective farms (*Sovkhozy* and *Kolkhozy*) has tended to be based on local villages and have

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<sup>37</sup> Независимая газета. 2000. 30.09.

<sup>38</sup> *Тенденции бедности и благосостояния в Таджикистане в 90-х годах.* Аналитический доклад. Душанбе, 2002, UNICEF, с. 27.

<sup>39</sup> Саралаев У. К. *Роль языка в международном общении.* - Диалог цивилизаций на Великом шелковом пути. Материалы международной конференции. – Бишкек, 2002. – С. 449.

<sup>40</sup> Байтенова Н. *Межэтническая интеграция.* – Алматы, 1998. – С. 129.

therefore resulted in a syncretic fusion of the tribal/clanic structure and the agricultural production unit”.<sup>41</sup> He is supported by Barnett who argue that “the groups were relocated to new areas ... they generally moved *en masse* so that the kinship structure was retained ... the state and collective farms ...were ethnically mixed” and so were the ethnic groups and the kinship units kept in tact.<sup>42</sup> Contrarily, however, the rural-urban mobility in the wake of Sovietisation damaged village communities and their allied values for the simple reason that, on movement from the basic village to the *Sovkhozy*, the peasantry was subjected to altogether different conditions: from individual and self-sufficient units to state regulated farms, from choice of free peasant production to a centrally controlled cropping pattern, from a relatively independent to a choked atmosphere of communes where everything was governed by the Soviet state. Therefore, by dislodging peasantry from their native villages,<sup>43</sup> the Soviets undid the very basis of villages and their age long customs based on kinship, family, primordial and ethno-tribal ties.<sup>44</sup> The simple reason was that the Soviets wanted to make socialism as the “the only source of guidance”. The further setback to the Central Asian cultural ethos is underway due to industrialization, urbanization, rural-urban mobility, new market forces enshrined in the entire edifice of globalisation. During educational and material pursuits within the integrated economic framework, the migrant rural folk, the young boys and girls, are caught up in a peculiar type of conflict between legacy and modernity and in the process, they are distanced from their family, village, land, customs, traditions, taboos, practices and in fact from the whole treasure of generations bequeathed heritage. They experience a change in every walk of life and from a simple life pattern to a globalised culture of jeans, cafes, restaurants, bars and liquor shops, etc. They are overwhelmingly absorbed by the Western movies, literature and music at the cost of the most enthralling and scintillating classical *Sufiyana* music. The traditional musical instruments, the *tabla*, *santoor*, *rabab*, *sittar*, etc are nearing extinction in the train of the pop music videos, a practically unknown medium in pre-independent Central Asia, are frequently used to explain glorious past and national identities of the CARs. The popular Uzbek singers, like Sevara Nazarkhan and the trio “Setora,” produced such songs and videos which are broadcasted on the

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<sup>41</sup> *The Soviet Legacy in Central Asia*, pp. 91-96.

<sup>42</sup> Rubin Barnett, “The Fragmentation of Tajikistan”, *Survival*, 35/4, Winter 1993-94, p. 76.

<sup>43</sup> R. A. Pierce, *Central Asia, 1867-1917*, Berkeley, 1960, p. 70.

<sup>44</sup> Geoffery Wheeler, *The Peoples of Soviet Central Asia*, London, 1966, p. 71.

youth television channel, *Yoshlar* (Young People), on weekly basis indicating a great deal of global cultural influence .

The social customs and practices related to marriages, the hallmark of Central Asian culture, have also undergone new experiences due to the inflow of extra money in the region. Because of which the people have got into wasteful resource cult as they organize the marriage ceremonies with great deal of extravaganza and immense expenditure on entertaining the guests with an intricate variety of meals. They doll out huge quantum of dowry to the groom in cash and in the form of cars, televisions, refrigerators, washing machines, and other electronic goods. On the day of marriage contract, the newly married couple is held out in Benz, Mercedes and other spacious cars of the foreign make. Similarly, the rituals regarding death and burial are extravagantly performed symbolic of a social obligation than a sacred and holy act of attaining peace unto the deceased. Consequently, such ceremonies have become ritualistic both in form and content as these are organized to replenish the coffers of the priestly communities and entertain the visitors/mourners with the belief that it would augur well for the life of the deceased in the world here and hereafter. Therefore, the rehearsal of such ceremonies, lasting for days, months and years together, are facilitated by the additional sources of revenue stemming from the globalisation in Central Asian villages, towns and cities. While the affluent sections of the society manage them conveniently, the poor just afford them by begging and borrowing. In a way, the globalisation has hastened the cultural void among three broad social segments: (i) those who dwell in villages, follow customs, traditions, beliefs, taboos, rituals, practices, etc in letter and spirit, (ii) those who combine the Western culture with their traditional cultural survivals, and (iii) those who terminate the traditional customs and practices as obsolete in the face of the Western culture. In these circumstances, globalisation, leave apart its monetary dividends, is contributing to social tensions which, at times, are compounded by the generation gap and the conflicting perceptions of the older and younger generations about life and its nuances.

### **Sum Up:**

To wrap up, globalisation represents a coin with two faces, one bright and another dark: one symbol of economic prosperity and another social conflicts and contradictions in Central Asian context. No doubt it is exposing the peoples of the region to the new trends of scientific and technological temperament and improving their quality of life and social sustainability. But such benefits are, more or less, specific to particular strata of the society whereas the larger segments, especially in villages, are devoid of them. This is why the villages do not indicate a worthwhile

improvement and they relatively wear a medieval look despite the enforcement of numerous schemes of economic restructuring as warranted under the norms of globalisation. In addition, globalisation is contributing to environmental and ecological disaster as huge firms, factories, business houses, occupy the spaces that were actually meant for agriculture operation. These release carbon monoxide and other industrial pollutants to the great detriment of the health and ecology as a whole. On top of it is the threatening to the rich cultural ethos. Since globalisation offers ample scope of human growth and development, rural-urban shift is, as such, becoming inevitable leading thereby to the disintegration of the otherwise joint families based on compact kinship ties and primordial values. Their spontaneous extinction is giving way to a new space rooted in money and material than peace and solace. In view of this, there is a great need of preserving the Central Asian culture from the onslaught of globalisation. Let us not be averse to change for onward march to civilization but let it not be at the cost of the rich heritage of the nation states of Central Asia. Last but not the least; Central Asia is since known as a home to a cluster of multi-ethnic and multi-national groups, who have been always at war with one another for regional leadership, power, resource and territorial sharing. One does foresee the role of globalisation in neutralizing such inbuilt inter and intra-state conflicts but one can't really guarantee their final settlement unless the Soviet fallacies are set to right through the intervention of some apex global and regional organizations.