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AN INTRODUCTORY HISTORY OF SOVIET UZBEK ACADEMICS 1924-1960

INTRODUCTION

It took approximately 36 years (from 1924 to 1960) to establish from scratch the Soviet Central Asian academics in Uzbekistan. The investment, organization and political commitment shown by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU, est. 1925) in the predominately Muslim region of Central Asia resulted in a highly literate and educated local population. Indeed, by the 1960s, education provision in Soviet Central Asia surpassed that found in most of the socialist and non-socialist 'Muslim majority' countries of Asia, Africa, the Middle East and Europe.[i] In this paper I will clarify the story of the local academics in the Central Asian republic with the largest population: the Soviet Socialist Republic of Uzbekistan (est. 1924). I will describe the origins of the Soviet academics and explain how they were educated, groomed and promoted by the CPSU for specific ideological, economic and cultural purposes between 1924 and 1960.[1] During the historical period covered by this paper most academics employed in Uzbekistan were ethnic Slavs, Tatars or Jews. However, I will focus upon the emergence, development and integration of ethnic Uzbek academics into the higher education system during Stalin's rule (a period when dissenting voices were purged from society) and in the decade following his death in 1953.

I feel a study of the Soviet Central Asian academics is necessary because in Western literature there are some grey areas in the knowledge about the creation of local academic cadres from 'working class' origins in Soviet Central Asia. I also think that the historical debate about the promotion of academics from amongst a labour reserve of Muslim men and women should be brought to the attention of

[1] Due to the word limit I will not be examining the acts of everyday resistance or criticism by individuals or groups of academics. In fact this would make a worthwhile research paper for a scholar with access to the archives at Moscow and Tashkent. For analysis of post-Soviet re-evaluation concerning the lived reality of the Uzbek masses see Dadabaev (2010).

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contemporary scholars. Even if some people in the West today care little for the higher education model of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR, est. 1922), nonetheless it is interesting that a significant number of students and academics in contemporary Great Britain are concerned by the fusion of ideology (neo-liberal), higher education and employment options. So I ask, what happened in an alternative model where the working masses, regardless of ethnicity, benefited from education, positive discrimination policies and meritocratic principles. I am not arguing that the Soviet academic model was utopian or flawless; I will investigate the recent past of former Soviet Uzbekistan and consider this ideologically infused education model from a planning and implementation perspective. A literature review of Soviet Uzbek academics includes D. Carlisle (1976), M. Shorish (1973), M. Rywkin (1989), E. Sievers (2003), S. Keller (2007). I have used Cold War and contemporary English language sources in this paper; I do this to synthesize the ideas from the English language sources.

My paper is structured in two parts. In part one I will outline the social and ideological context that produced the academics within the USSR. This will involve explaining the nature of the Soviet nation-state building project and how it shaped the construction of Central Asian higher education institutions. In the second part I will discuss the history of the Uzbek academics as a social phenomenon and explore the issues of state toleration of the pre-1917 bourgeois academics, the political purges of 1937-38, the emergence of Uzbek academics circa 1960, and the function of the new universities (*vuzy*) in this process. Below 'activism' (*aktivnost*) refers to the actions and behaviour of citizens who struggled in the interests of the CPSU. Proactive citizens (*aktiv*) were encouraged to participate in collective community projects and political engagement.

Conceptualizing the Soviet academics

'Soviet academics' (*akademik*, also known in Sovietology as the 'red professors')[2] refers to university educators with doctorate qualifications and compliant to the social

[2] In Soviet terminology the 'red professors' were the first group of higher education personnel to work alongside the Bolsheviks. The aim was to train and prepare postgraduates for employment in government, scholars, and researchers. They were located at the Institute of Red Professors, Moscow (*Institut Krasnoy Professury,* IKP; the

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interventionist policies of the CPSU. Their Soviet upbringing included the internalization of Marxism-Leninism and Soviet civic identification (although admittedly, this would vary between individual academics accordingly to their lived reality, private observations and social context) (Collias 1990: 84). The Soviet era academic had two core roles; firstly, they were employed as scholars and teachers of knowledge and learning at institutions of higher education and advanced research. Secondly, they had a duty to actively foster state-civic identity and values amongst graduates and postgraduates. In brief they were expected to be ideological activists for the CPSU. Clearly, their prescribed social role differs from the role of the Western academics. Western academics might, through their work, question the political and social status quo of their society, but otherwise they are generally not encouraged by the government to be proactive disseminators of the dominant state ideology (at least in theory). In contrast, Soviet academics, as state employees, actively promoted Marxism-Leninism and its values and norms. I admit here that this was the ideal and that at times dissenting voices and criticism of the regime were evident – and notably so during *perestroika* (post 1986 economic and political restructuring policies). For example, the sociologist Tatiana Zaslavskaya was critical of the condition of Soviet society even in the pre-*perestroika* era, and post-1986 she was consulted in decision-making by Gorbachev (Brown 2009: 509).

PART ONE: NATION-STATE BUILDING AND HIGHER EDUCATION

The Soviet academics operated within an ideological and social context, and I will outline this reality below. The aim of the CPSU was to radically transform society and the consciousness of citizens. This they planned to achieve by changing and then controlling the social and ideological environments that influenced thought, speech and actions. Having taken control of the territory of Central Asia in the early 1920s, subordinated dissenting voices and offered a new vision to the locals (including a multicultural paradigm that accommodated cultural sensitivities), the CPSU implemented radical social intervention policies. On the road to building the collective workers' utopia and the 'Soviet people', the physical, social, emotional, and

institution operated between 1921 and 1938), and thereafter they were absorbed into the federal higher education system. (See Katz, 1956.)

psychological world of all Soviet citizens would change. New cultural institutions (at both national and federal levels) were constructed and intended to marginalize traditional institutions.[3] Traditional Eastern societies and cultures were perceived as ‘backward’ by the Bolsheviks (Martin 2001: 56).[4] Hence, Western-style modernity arrived in the form of new institutions and social values and norms imported from Russia and transplanted onto the peripheral regions (like Uzbekistan). The locals were unprepared and too disorganized to resist. A new infrastructure was built consisting of cultural centres, roads, hospitals, factories and government buildings and staffed (Hiro 1994: 21). Furthermore, Soviet citizens were kept in line through constant surveillance, but equally through mass civic education and indoctrination. A detailed programme of civic-values incorporating socialist ideals was propagated. Partnering the building of the new socialist society were the new state education institutions, such as schools, colleges and universities. In these places ‘Soviet upbringing’ (*vospitanie*) took place. This involved general education (acquisition of knowledge), vocational skills training and education for citizenship (‘moral and political education’, or *grazhdanin*) (Akyildiz 2011; Avis 1987: preface).

Modern mass higher education institutions were a new social phenomenon within Central Asia during the 1920s and 1930s. From the 1920s onwards, the CPSU felt it vital to educate a new generation of ideological graduates to help them manage the economy. From this pool of talent the local academics would emerge. University tutors were specifically employed to educate, discuss and inculcate Marxism-Leninism. Indeed, throughout Soviet society graduates became the most ‘ideologized stratum…their education and in most cases their career imposed the ideology constantly on them, even if only as external ritual whose inner meaning they rejected…’ (Hosking 1992: 404). This last point about disillusionment is important, but as I have mentioned already I am more interested in explaining the establishment of a new group of educators during the early decades of Soviet rule. In

[3] These were elements of *sblizhenie* (the ‘coming together’ of all the Soviet ethnic groups and nations). The long-term aim was *sliyanie* (the ‘merger’ of all these nationalities into a new cultural phenomenon); such a society and a merger of the nations into a federal union was part of ‘full communism’; this union of nations was the so-called Soviet People.

[4] Soviet Uzbek historiography lauded the 9th century CE Muslim scholars born in Samarkand and Khorezm as progressive thinkers: Ibn Sina, Al-Khorezmi and Al-Biruni.

the process of establishing local ideological control, the CPSU built a network of higher education institutions staffed by loyal cadres and preferably CPSU members too.

In the newly built physical spaces of higher education, social interaction occurred between students and tutors and the state. Educational institutions were public spaces of ideological people-building. To emphasize the revolutionary aspect of Soviet higher education policies, and the incremental growth in student numbers – and to differentiate Soviet radical social transformation from the British colonial model in Africa and India – we need to recall that in Siberia, Central Asia, and the Far East during 1917 just four higher education institutions were operational. By 1968 there were 200 institutions in Siberia, Central Asia and the Far East, educating nearly a quarter of the country's graduates. Images A and B of the Tashkent State Pedagogical University are evidence of the Soviet urban structures built to support the creation of the socialist people at local centres (see below).The USSR had approximately 400,000 successful graduates in 1965 (Grant 1968: 109).

In Uzbekistan, seven universities were open by 1930, increasing to 16 institutions by 1934 (Carlisle 1976: 253). Universities within Uzbekistan continued to operate throughout Second World War (The Great Patriotic War).[5] Higher education institutions were managed by the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialized Education in Moscow (with a partner ministry in Tashkent) (Grant 1968: 30-35). By 1979-80 the number of higher education and research institutions within Uzbekistan was 43, and their student body (both Uzbek and non-Uzbek) was nearly 272,900 in total (Akiner 1983: 280-82). Clearly, what is noticeable about these figures on the built environment is the degree of investment and political will shown by the CPSU. The built environment of higher education is evidence of the commitment to higher education, and belief that education and indoctrination was necessary to reengineer society. At the local level, the elite educators given the task of assisting the CPSU were fostered from a small minority of suitable personnel in the early 1920s.

[5] An Academy of Sciences (Tashkent) was founded in 1943. The Academy of Sciences developed theoretical and applied sciences and trained scientific and research workers (Goslitizdat, Publishing, 1958: 151-2).

Image A Tashkent State Pedagogical University (Socialist Realism Statue – Side view).

(Photograph: Sevket Akyildiz. 13th April 2009. Statue(s) Depicting Progress via Soviet Education outside Tashkent State Pedagogical University, est 1935. Tashkent, Uzbekistan. Fieldwork project).

Image B: Tashkent State Pedagogical University (Socialist Realism – Statue – Front).

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(Photograph: Sevket Akyildiz. 13th April 2009. Statue Depicting Progress via Soviet Education outside Tashkent State Pedagogical University est. 1935. Tashkent, Uzbekistan. Fieldwork project).

PART TWO: A HISTORY OF UZBEK ACADEMICS 1924-1960

I will present my analysis below, focusing on two historical eras: (i) the history of the local academics between 1917 and 1938, and (ii) the growth of ethnic Uzbek academics between 1939 and 1960. The distinguishing marker between these eras was the purging of suspect academics and political undesirables during 1937 and 1938.

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Establishing the academics 1917-1938

In the building of the socialist utopia, Stalin and the CPSU encouraged working class men and women to access all forms of mass education. A core aim was to advance social mobility amongst the working masses and promote social justice and equal citizenship, regardless of ethnicity and gender. During the 1920s and 1930s most Uzbeks were peasants; however, the numbers of working class citizens (namely, citizens with basic literacy and employed in factories or working on mechanized farms) gradually increased within Uzbekistan (Medlin et al. 1971: 63-91). Opportunities in employment were promised for graduates and postdoctoral scholars from all ethnic backgrounds. Indigenization (*korenizatsiya*) and positive discrimination policies were implemented to enable the training and recruitment of the Uzbeks within Uzbekistan, and encouraged them to apply for positions of responsibility and authority in local government and society (Martin 2001: 126). In brief, this was designed to create a truly egalitarian society in the local sphere, stifle Russian nationalism, and curb Western criticism that labelled Stalin's USSR a new type of 'colonial' polity. However, in the 1920s as the CPSU was trying to achieve a level of competence in literacy and equality amongst state employees, it suspected their political loyalties and ambitions (regardless of ethnic background). For instance, the intellectual class employed before the 1917 era were suspected by the CPSU of harbouring bourgeois sympathies. In contrast, the uneducated native 'toiling masses' were 'trusted' and encouraged to integrate into society. Moscow had to wait until a new generation of academic staff and local cadres were educated, indoctrinated, and trained. Thereafter, a new class of compliant state employees would be placed into suitable positions, thus advancing the interests of the CPSU at the local level. In return for their allegiance, these new employees and cadres were permitted to help govern their home republic. Once the first generation of indigenous academic staff had been educated into believing in socialist values, the intention was get them to inculcate these values in the minds of their students and thus create a sustainable process of education and indoctrination. Due to the limited amount of industrialization and negligible class consciousness in Central Asia during the 1920s and 1930s there was a shortage of suitably qualified native personnel in all sectors. Accordingly the CPSU tolerated (until 1937-38) a number of university tutors,

lecturers, and intellectuals from the pre-1917 era with connections, real or not, to the recent bourgeois past (see below).

Ethnic Uzbek recruitment into higher education (the preparatory stage before they could become academic staff) was a gradual process. For example, in 1927-28 the University of Tashkent had just 350 indigenous students from a total student body of 5,000. At this time, the majority of students were Russians, Tatars and other non-indigenous nationals living within Uzbekistan (D'Encausse 1992: 189). Soviet sources detail the number of Uzbeks enrolled at university and reveal that how expansion of the university sector in Uzbekistan was on-going during the 1930s; the number of undergraduate students increased from 2,900 in 1930 to 8,700 in 1934. Uzbek undergraduates constituted 42 per cent of all medicine and education graduates in 1934 (Carlisle 1976: 253). Carlisle reports that Uzbek university students (presumably both undergraduates and postgraduates) constituted almost 47 per cent of the new intake in 1934. The smaller Russian community formed 20 per cent of new graduates. (Still, between 1931 and 1934 stories were reported of some Russians labelling Uzbek students as 'lazy' and 'stupid'. These reports show how imperative political and moral education was in a multicultural society still partly influenced by pre-socialist values and attitudes) (Carlisle 1976: 253-55). Rywkin writes that Uzbek students constituted almost 32.5 per cent of the total number of students at the University of Central Asia in Tashkent in 1940 (Rywkin 1990: 103). Medlin observes that in the 1920s and 1930s the number of Uzbeks in higher education was low. However, between 1936 and 1951, 35 per cent of 567 doctorate degrees (union-wide) went to indigenous scholars (85 degrees in the humanities and social sciences and 114 in the technical sciences) (Medlin et al. 1971: 131).

Soviet sources (translated into English) complicate our understanding of the matter, for example, in 1937 Moscow declared that 10,869 specialists (with higher education qualifications) had been created in Uzbekistan, but we need to be cautious of this information. Is this a case of Soviet propaganda? (This is an example of the need to access the archives at Tashkent and Moscow and research further the Soviet era documents and statistics.) Carlisle reports that Soviet sources do not provide an ethnic breakdown of these specialists. For instance, ethnic Uzbeks constituted 33.7 per cent of students at the Samarkand Agricultural Institute in 1937, and at a similar

institution in Tashkent, ethnic Uzbeks constituted just 13.2 per cent of all students. Furthermore, of the 1,113 students graduating from Samarkand University in 1938, just 35 were ethnic Uzbeks (Carlisle 1976: 256). If these figures seem relatively low, we need to reflect upon what had been achieved in terms of educational development between 1924 and 1938. Despite the predominately rural nature of Uzbek society (approximately 70 per cent of the Uzbek population) we could just as well argue that some notable progress had been achieved and a plan was being implemented with strengths in some areas and a more gradual development in other areas. I will examine some of the social factors associated with the drive to increase the number of ethnic Uzbeks studying at the higher education in part two below, but, first I want to highlight a key event in the early Soviet period that significantly changed the local political and social landscape: the socio-political purges of 1937-38.

The purges of 1937-38 happened at a time when the CPSU felt secure enough that it had the personnel to replace the talent it would lose by such a harsh action, and equally at a time when the CPSU feared ideological contamination from well-positioned local elites of the pre-1917 era. For example, before 1937 indigenous academics and elite Uzbek politicians such as Faizullah Khodzhaev (b.1896-d.1937) and Akmal Ikramov (b.1898-d.1938) were tolerated. However, once the new local institutions and new political and pedagogical cadres were established the toleration shown to the pre-1917 social elites ceased (Fierman 1991a: 94).

In the case of higher education, the purges occurred at a time when the Academy of Sciences (Moscow)[6] and other universities across the USSR were being Sovietized (transformed into institutions supportive of the CPSU and employing people with similar goals). Following the 1937-38 purges of the older generation of university educators in Uzbekistan, it was decided to supplement the limited number of new indigenous tutors and lecturers (and other state employees) with suitably qualified Russian and Ukrainian settlers, many of whom already had received a better quality of education than the locals (Fierman 1991b: 22-3). We have seen above how Soviet nationalist policies actively supported indigenization; nevertheless, during the 1930s it was common for educated Russians to be employed as managers and educators

[6] Before 1917 this institution had the prefix 'Imperial'.

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within Uzbekistan. The social transformation of Uzbekistan during the 1930s was radical and progressive, but in the case of higher education any change in the ethnic make-up of academic staff was gradual. Still, between 1939 and 1960 universities, technical institutes and vocational colleges educated and trained increasing numbers of indigenous students (Carlisle 1976: 255). Evidence to support this claim is the focus of the study (circa 1939-1960) below.

Soviet Uzbek academics 1939 to 1960

In the following analysis of higher education I will examine the themes of interpretation of policy at local level, Russian language issues, the Great Patriotic War, the post-war era, and Uzbek women.

If nothing else, the purges of 1937 and 1938 had imparted some confidence in Stalin, and once the new employees were placed in position, a new and more 'trusting', relationship was possible. Post-1938 the newly Sovietized academics (including local intelligentsia) were welcomed into the CPSU fold. In fact, collaboration was Moscow's preferred option, connecting the Soviet academics (and intelligentsia) with the CPSU. The aim was the synchronization of operations and policies at the metropolis with those of the periphery and local academics (Carlisle 1976: 261). Indeed, by 1941 approximately 53 per cent of members of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan were classified as 'employees'; in Soviet terminology, 'employees' included white-collar workers (and academics). So what we are seeing here is not just a new generation of academics and managers, but a newly constructed social category of skilled employees intimately connected to the workings of the CPSU and state (Carlisle 1976: 260). Yet, contemporary revisionist historians question the view that Moscow dictated orders for compliant locals to simply act upon them. At the local level, cultural producers and officials were required to disseminate CPSU policies, and this could result in problems of interpretation of policy. (Much later Gorbachev would urge educators to improve youth upbringing processes and practices). Hoffman says that the CPSU elite of the 1930s monopolized political power, but local institutions of the state, such as universities, had a duty to foster and disseminate Soviet ideology, culture and values. (The Ministry of Higher Education in Moscow constructed socialist civic

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values and norms with the help of others, including research institutes.) How such policies were implemented at the peripheral regions is another matter (Hoffmann 2003: 5).

Stalin and the CPSU actively promoted integration of the Soviet nations such as the Uzbeks into the socialist society, but these non-Slavic people had the double-burden of having to learn academic knowledge and the Russian language (the language of federal inter-ethnic communication). The Russian language learning requirement was a notable factor that hindered the creation of ethnic Uzbek academics. By this I mean that an Uzbek with a desire to access higher education facilities had to learn to speak and write in advanced Russian.[7] Equally, when the Uzbek national script was changed from Arabic to Latin to Cyrillic it hindered temporarily the learning of spoken Russian amongst the Uzbeks; on the 1 May 1940 the Supreme Soviet of Uzbekistan passed the resolution that made Cyrillic the official script for Uzbek (Akiner 1989: 107). How did this effect enrolment at universities? Their insufficient language Russian skills and a preference shown for native culture resulted in Central Asians studying social sciences and humanities instead of technical disciplines (the latter required advanced Russian to study) (Shorish 1973: 93). Consequently, job opportunities were curtailed for the indigenous graduates and it was not until the 1980s that Uzbeks and Central Asians began to increasingly enrol and graduate in the technical disciplines (Lubin 1984: 15). (The learning of the Cyrillic script and Russian was part of the Russification of Soviet culture.)

The Great Patriotic War (1 June 1940 – 1945) had a significant impact on the Soviet nation-state building project. Indeed, a paradox of the war against the Nazis was that it was an opportunity for the CPSU to test the viability of its international education provision on the frontline and the home front. The mobilization of the Soviet military-industrial complex and its pivotal role in the defeat of Nazi Germany also assisted in the cementing of domestic Soviet identity amongst ethnic diversity in the USSR. Despite social problems associated with a society at war, the experience bonded Soviet nations psychologically and socially at a pace and intensity that peacetime state-civic socialization would have taken decades to achieve (Hiro 1994: 31-32). For

[7] University entrance was by competitive examination; grants were modest; many courses lasted five years and graduates were directed to a job by the state. (See Brown, 1994: 477.)

security reasons a number of key research institutes were relocated to Uzbekistan during the Great Patriotic War, along with the reallocation of factories. A large number of Slavic technicians and workers arrived to work and help train the locals. Furthermore, between 1940 and 1952 approximately 44,345 'specialists' of all types were trained in Uzbekistan. Kari-Niazov does not mention the ethnicity and employment status of these 'specialists', for instance, whether they were academics, researchers or scientists (Niazov-Kari 1958: 25).[8] Official Soviet rhetoric is euphoric: 'scientific research met war-time requirements more and more fully,' and research workers, engineers and technicians worked diligently to solve defence related problems (Niazov-Kari 1958: 24-5). Even if the majority of these specialist workers were Slavic and other non-Uzbeks, these new institutions would have impacted on the neighbouring communities of Uzbeks and others in multiple ways, for example, by the employment of local auxiliary staff. These specialist professions created the prospect of new and exciting career opportunities for the children of the local auxiliary staff and local undergraduates.

In the post-Great Patriotic War era, the funding of education and rebuilding of society was prioritized. By 1940-41 ethnic Uzbeks constituted 4.6 per cent of the *total* university student body; by 1956 the Uzbeks constituted about 31.3 per cent of the *total* higher education students within Uzbekistan, and this rose to 47.2 per cent in 1960 (and 54 per cent of all full-time day students).[9] As noted above, by 1951 35 per cent of 567 doctorate degrees went to indigenous people. The emergence of ethnic Uzbek academics post-1950 was a consequence of the growth in indigenous doctorate students. Yet, most professors, deans, head of chairs and research scientists within Uzbekistan during the 1920s-1930s were Russian. Uzbeks attained the lesser posts and assistant positions. Ethnic differentiation in employment changed in the 1940s, but even then, just 12 per cent of lower academic posts were held by Uzbeks. However, by the 1950s the employment situation in this sector began to favour Uzbek academics – and by 1960 Central Asians emerged to fill

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[8] Hall (1941: 218-22) writes that Soviet 'Central Asian intellectuals, academics, teachers, and artists amounted to 200,000 in the early 1940s and exceeded the number of university students found in India (with a population of 450,000,000).'

[9] Karakhanov, 1957, *NKh UzSSSR*, p. 204, in Medlin, (1971: 115).

about half the teaching posts at the local urban universities (Medlin et al. 1971: 131-32).

The outcome of the investment in the Central Asians is shown by the increase in the number of both graduates. For example, in 1939 this figure was approximately four per 1,000 of the total population, and in 1970 it rose to 35 per thousand in 1970. Lubin comments that by the early 1980s more than 80 per cent of the students at Central Asian higher education institutes were Central Asians (Lubin 1984: 15). Shorish writes that between the 1930s and 1970s the number of Central Asian and Slavic students enrolled in higher education surpassed similar Western efforts. The figures are impressive.[10] The number of workers in Uzbekistan with secondary or higher education per 10,000 of the labour force increased from 610 (1939) to 6,610 (1970) (and during the same timescale from 1,230 to 6,530 in Russia) (Shorish 1973: 90-95). Furthermore, ethnic differentiation in higher education had significantly decreased. Indeed, throughout the 1980s the number of 'Muslim university and institute graduates grew from year to year,' and the Central Asians increasingly competed with local Russian graduates for the better paid local management and professional jobs. Still, during CPSU rule the Uzbeks were disproportionally employed in agriculture and in the service sector - with both rural and urban educated Uzbek women faring worse than Uzbek men (Rywkin 1990: 117; Tishkov 1995: 293-94).

Aminova remarked that in 1954 almost 400 Uzbek women were employed as medical physicians. In 1954 13 female academic doctors of science existed and approximately 400 women were studying science at higher education in Uzbekistan (she does not make clear in all instances if these examples refer solely to Uzbek women) (Aminova 1977: 215-16). Nonetheless, due to 'traditional cultural factors' and competition for employment, by 1979 only a third as many rural women as men had completed their advanced education (Olcott 1991: 247). Female postgraduates with aspirations and determination were able to gain professional and technical employment (Corcoran-Nantes 2005: 74-75). Sievers states that Soviet Central

[10] Two factors having an effect upon the enrolment figures in higher education were the gradual but increasing migration of ethnic Slavs from Uzbekistan during the 1980s, and the population growth of the ethnic Uzbeks from the 1960s onwards. (See Shorish, 1972: 96-98.)

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Asian women failed to attain posts as institute directors or academy presidents, but in the realms of employment and educational attainment they 'exceed those of their peers in the United States' (Sievers 2003: 61).[11] Furthermore, the model of Soviet higher education gave rise to a number of problems associated with gender, the rural/urban differential, corruption and the suitability of the existing model in face of changing social realities. Due to the word limit of this paper I will not discuss them here, but they can be read in the relevant literature and my bibliography provides sources for further reading.[12]

CONCLUSION

As part of the social transformation of Muslim Central Asia the CPSU built universities and sought to populate them with ideological activist academics. Indeed, under Stalin's leadership Central Asia was a crucible of radical cultural experimentation. From the early 1920s onwards academics educated students and propagated Marxism-Leninism too. Following the purges of 1937-38 the CPSU leadership felt increasingly confident that Soviet culture and values would both influence and be reflected in higher education. In this paper I have shown that local Uzbeks, prior to employment as academics, had first to undertake education at graduate level and beyond, and not until about 1960 did their numbers begin to increase noticeably. By the 1980s the numbers of Uzbek undergraduates mirrored their percentage of the total population. At this time, Uzbek academics formed an increasing percentage of the total number of academics employed locally. I have shown in this paper that Soviet higher education was not perfect, nevertheless, the Uzbeks benefited from the Soviet policies of indigenization and positive discrimination, gender inclusiveness, and the project to integrate all ethnic groups into the Soviet multicultural society. Indeed, these policies proved popular and the

[11] The higher education system in the USSR by the 1980s employed nearly half a million lecturers and full-time research scientists. However, they received just 10 per cent of the total Soviet research and development funding (Brown, A., Kaser, M. & Smith, G. S. (eds.) 1994: 293).

[12] During *perestroika* and in response to economic recession and postgraduate unemployment, higher education matriculation across the USSR declined (Sievers 2003: 6). Furthermore, higher education policies in 1987 were redesigned to foster independent thinking amongst graduates and address the wastage of graduates who did not pursue careers related their qualifications. (See Lane, 1992: 300-03.)

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Uzbeks integrated into the new institutions and benefited from Soviet social mobility programmes. I have introduced the history of Soviet Uzbek academics and synthesized the core findings available in the English language; the next stage will require a researcher to visit the archives at Tashkent and Moscow; a core research theme must be a study of the perceptions of Soviet Uzbek academics and those academics that, in minor ways, resisted elements of Moscow's diktat.

POSTSCRIPT

An investigation into the condition of post-Soviet mass education and higher education in Uzbekistan is made by Kissane (2009: 226-48) and Sievers (2003: 50-69). Issues are numerous and include reduced governmental investment in mass education; low morale amongst tutors because of inadequate salary remuneration; access to higher education and ethnicity; corruption and the buying of examination grades; the enrolment of students from wealthier Uzbek families into local Western universities and abroad; the rural/urban differential in higher education funding; and the (re-)emergence of class and gender inequality issues and general economic exclusion from university education. In addition, from almost universal literacy under CPSU rule there has been a reported decline in the post-1991 era. Sievers reports that in 1991 university standards found in Central Asia, and the number of scientists and engineers in employment mirrored those found in economically wealthier Western countries (Sievers 2003: 50). However, a number of scientists and engineers have migrated from the region since the early 1990s due to a reduction in state funding of academic research and low salaries (2003: 197). The emphasis of Western non-governmental organizations upon economic and legal changes was at the cost of investment education and research (amongst other sectors) (2003: 65). Collectively these educational issues will have a negative impact on the viability of the Uzbek national economy and on the career opportunities of doctorate candidates. The Soviet past - when central government offered quality free or subsidized universal education, postgraduate education and academic employment opportunities – seems, paradoxically, like a utopian vision for some contemporary Central Asian citizens.

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[i] Uzbekistan is situated within Central Asia, and stretches south-east from the Aral Sea towards foothills of the Alai Range, and is bordered with Afghanistan (137km), Kazakhstan (2,203km), Kyrgyzstan (1,099km), Tajikistan (1,161km), and Turkmenistan (1,621 km). Uzbekistan's source of natural water the Amu Darya (Oxus) River flows north-west towards the Aral Sea. The climate of Uzbekistan is continental, with hot summers and cold winters. The Uzbeks are a Turkic-speaking people largely Turkic by decent - and predominately Sunni (Hanafi) Muslim. Ethnic Tajiks form significant native populations in both Samarkand and Bukhara. Between 1917 and 1985 the population of Uzbekistan rose from approximately 5 million to 18 million people. Today the population is approximately 28 million people. During Soviet rule the percentage of the population that was ethnic Uzbek in Uzbekistan was approximately 70 per cent. Consequently, Uzbekistan was from its creation in 1924 a multicultural society. During the 1970s more than a 1.5 million Slavic settlers resided in Uzbekistan; other ethnic groups include Karakalpaks, Kazakhs, Tajiks, Tatars (Kozlov 1988: 38; Allaby 1998: 1384; CIA 2011) and several of Stalin's deported peoples.

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