TRADITIONAL COMMUNITIES AND BUREAUCRACY IN CENTRAL ASIA:
RELATIONSHIP AND MUTUAL INFLUENCE

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ABSTRACT

The role of informal networks in Central Asia has increased in the last decades. This tendency was a response to decline of state and its institutions. To an extent communities have filled the gaps when the state failed to fulfill its responsibilities. At the same time, very frequently communities and state bureaucracy are abstracted in political literature as strictly absolute and ideal forms of social organization. Such an approach polarizes both institutions and misses important points of convergence and mutual influence between the two. Anthropologists, on the other hand, argue that traditional and modern institutions are never the same today as they were yesterday. This thesis explores how valid is this idea with respect to traditional communities and bureaucracy in Central Asia. By surveying their nature, mutual influence and points of intersection, the research confirms the anthropological theory.
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Chapter 1

Introduction

In the last two decades Central Asian societies have experienced economical, social and political crises. The reason for that was a sudden acquirement of independence after the fall of the Soviet Union when the extensive assistance and management directives from Moscow have stopped. In the context of the complete inexperience in self-governance, independence has become a burden for these societies.

Dramatic decline in standards of living, ethnic tensions that frequently escalated into bloody conflicts and even civil war, highly ineffective governance in most of these countries are only few of the problems that people faced with independence. It is of no surprise, then, that many scholars have described them as the failed states.

At the same time, people continue to survive, live and, at times, prosper in these highly unfavorable conditions. A part of an answer to such a situation can be in a unique character of their culture and institutions that these people have inherited from the past. Central Asian societies have it all – modern state institutions with an advanced bureaucracy and centuries-old communities, which successfully coexist together. Interestingly, this coexistence does not result in conflicts because in a quite peculiar way these organizations have accommodated each other.

Traditional informal networks are one of the examples of the oldest institutions that still render a profound influence on the society as a whole. It is not a secret that these networks provide services for people when the state fails to fulfill its responsibilities.
These networks help to maintain the status quo in the region because satisfaction of the very basic needs diverts attention from the common problems in these states such as pervasive corruption and ineffectiveness of state institutions.

Despite the fact that their comprehensive role is not questioned, these networks, however, are perceived as pre-modern forms of social organization, which basically preceded the state as regulative and social entities. In most researches their primordial character is mostly taken for granted without much study devoted to their contemporary forms. Such an attitude prevents an objective and value-free analysis of the region’s situation. Even the very word ‘traditional’ that people attach to informal networks has an air of backward, ineffective and irrational forms of social organization.

On the other side of the aisle are the formal state institutions inherited from the Soviet system. They are considered as strictly modern organizations because they are assumed to be more rational, objective and effective. In reality, though, they do not always validate this reputation and, in fact, are less effective than the informal networks. International observers, for example, often criticize the highly ineffective and corrupt bureaucratic agencies. Despite these problems the formal institutions continue to exist and function successfully along with the informal ones.

To some extent, this can be explained by the fact that the picture of modern and traditional institutions in this region may be less distinct and clear. Both types of organizations may have rendered profound influence on the nature of each other. As such, traditional institutions may not be quite traditional in terms of their characteristics and ‘modern’ ones are not that new and original as they are usually perceived. This
phenomenon has long been noticed by the anthropologists (Eickelman, 2002) while political scientists and international practitioners have either dismissed or never considered this possibility.

In this study I want to explore whether the traditional communities have been transformed by modernization processes and whether the modern institution – bureaucracy – has also been influenced by the local traditions and institutions. While doing so I will also review the relationship and mutual influence of informal social networks and bureaucracy in Central Asia. I hope to contribute to the ongoing debate on dynamics of state and society interaction in the light of anthropological, sociological and political findings, in general, and with relation to the region, in particular. In addition, the study will shed light on social and bureaucratic relations and how they are perceived by Central Asians through analysis of their everyday life and interaction.

I believe that these two different types of institutions do influence and transform each other and, for this reason, adapt, survive and remain effective in a constantly changing world. This will be the main hypothesis that I will test. As mentioned above, this belief is based on Eickelman’s (2002) finding that pre-modern forms of social organization, which still exist today, are as much influenced and transformed by modern institutions and modernization processes as they themselves influence the latter. In particular, Central Asian clans, mahallas and tribes, which survived the strong state domination during the Soviet Union, are no longer the pre-soviet communities that designed and controlled social relations in a stateless society. These communities and their single members – individuals – have been transformed and modernized by bureaucratic relations to include the formal and administrative elements in their daily interaction.
By the same token, Central Asian bureaucracy was as much communitized and personalized by this core organization of society. The implications of comprehension and acceptance of this change will result in modification of (i) such labels as ‘primordialist’ forms of organization – tribes and clans, which currently stress their pre-modern nature and by this miss their modern attributes and transformations and (ii) in contrast to a popular argument that clan-based societies are old and ineffective forms that will be replaced by modern state structures (Weber 1978), this shows that informal social networks are flexible, adaptive and responsive to current trends and developments.

**Methodology and Structure**

The research will be empirical and literature-based. The central strategy of this study is a review of ideal and real forms of both types of institutions. The difference between ideal and local forms of bureaucracy will allow me to track how the local conditions have influenced and shaped this modern institution. The same will be done with the informal networks. However, the task will not be as easy and straightforward as with bureaucracy because unlike the modern institutions it is rather practice that comes first and only then a theory.

For this, I will, first, review the sociological and political literature on the nature of ideal bureaucracy and the main characteristics that define it. Max Weber’s discourse on this topic will be a main point of departure. In addition, its particular case – Soviet bureaucracy – will be considered and compared with the ideal. The critique of the ideal form of bureaucracy will also be reviewed with a purpose to examine further how its faults are dealt with in the local bureaucracies.
Furthermore, I will survey the anthropological accounts on the nature and inner logic of social relations in Central Asia as well as perceptions of individual actors while they engage in these activities. Since the notions of tribe, clans, communities and other similar informal networks are thoroughly studied with regards to other regions of the world such as the Middle East and Africa, I will overview these concepts in general with an aim to illuminate the underlying logic of this form of social organization. Then, I will consider the particular cases of communities in Central Asia to assess how much they differ from the described ‘ideals’. My task here will be to research whether the Central Asian instances deviate as much from the previously studied cases of tribalism and localism.

In the process, I will discuss the focal points of differences and similarities between communities and bureaucracy in theory and reality. First, I will survey which needs of people both forms of organization fulfill in theory, how they fulfill them and what values they pursue while doing so. Then, I will examine how successful they were in implementing their purposes in practice. By comparing their main traits in theory and reality I will be able to track their mutual influences and transformations.

The problem with the current research on this topic is that it is pursued from the perspective of a single discipline only – either political-sociological or anthropological, which makes it rather limited and one-sided. Very rarely the different disciplines are combined for a better understanding of the social dynamics and development. Anthropological findings are particularly useful from this point as they illuminate the inner mechanisms and logic of social interaction and perceptions. Thus, I will combine different approaches in reviewing the old and new forms of human organization. Together with the psychological insights this combination will shed a new light on the
old political and sociological notions of state, society, its members and various scenarios of their relations.

**Literature Review**

The literature discussing both forms of organizations at the same time is limited. Most of the research explores either bureaucracy or informal networks. Moreover, these social organizations are largely studied by scholars from different fields. The few works that review both phenomena together perceive them as two mutually exclusive forms of political and social organization. The authors argue that the former will necessarily replace the latter. One of them was Weber who believed that communities as pre-modern social arrangements will be weakened and further eradicated with the development of the state and bureaucracy. Since reality proves to be different at least in Central Asia it is important to survey literature not only on ideal representations of different social and political models, but also its real-life variants. This section will provide an overview of the main accounts on bureaucracy and informal social networks in the Middle East and Central Asia.

**Bureaucracy**

There is an extensive research and analytical work done on the phenomenon of bureaucracy. Some of these works praise its rationality and objectivity, while others condemn its impersonality, amorality and inefficiency (P. du Gay, 2000). For the purposes of this study it would be sufficient to outline the major theories on ideal bureaucracy, its nature and the Soviet variant. Theoretical underpinnings of bureaucracy originate from Weber’s work on rational construction of this institution. Although Weber
was not the first thinker to articulate the concept and nature of state and bureaucracy, he was the first one who emphasized its rational aspect. He has also justified approaching state as an entity – a tradition long held by legal and historical discourses in Wilhelmine Germany (Poggi, 106). His justification, however, required the fulfillment of certain prerequisites, without which the existence and effectiveness of the state as such would not be possible.

While there is hardly anything that could be ideal and ‘pure’, different forms of bureaucracy exist that resemble more or less the perfect type. It is a comparison that highlights differences and allows to specify the cultural particularities. Weber’s analysis (1978) of bureaucracy is rather positive and emphasizes it impersonality, objectivity and effectiveness. He particularly praised the existence of official rules and duties as means to restrict the authority of administrators. At the same time, he recognized that he described the ideal type of bureaucracy, which in reality will not be as efficient and objective. The six principles that every public official must meet to be a true bureaucrat are easily violated and misused in reality. In addition, the devotion to public service that he requires from each official is not something that every human can offer.

Michael Crozier (1964), for example, has criticized the Weberian form of bureaucracy as a phenomenon that disregards the irrational and emotional aspects of human nature and his social constructs. He specifically addressed ‘the maladaptations, the inadequacies and the dysfunctions, which necessarily develop within human organizations’ (162). Namely, the bureaucratic organizations are not as objective and effective, but are driven by the internal power struggles within organization. As a result, the rational and impersonal nature of bureaucratic entity designed initially is compromised by these power struggles.
Karl Ryavec explores deviations from Weberian ideal bureaucracy as they appear in the Soviet-Russian case. He argues, first of all, that the very definition of bureaucracy is an arena for debates and disagreements because Weber’s definition does not address many deviations from ideal type, which however, do not make them less bureaucratic.

He also argues that sometimes informalism – culture – can come to be more important than formally specified regulations and law – and can also be illegal (25). Soviet bureaucracy had its own culture, attitudes, values, and procedures. It may even have had its own goals and interests different from the state. Procedure and documentation mattered much more than any sort of Weberian rationality in guiding the behavior of policy-makers. For its ‘vast, large, huge bureaucracies’ the country was described as the ‘USSR, Incorporated’ (29).

Despite that many Russians as well as Central Asians viewed bureaucracy as something to be gotten around and rarely followed to. It is partly caused by the faults of the real bureaucracy (64) such as a disproportionate power granted to bureaucrats, which resulted in personalized decision-making, unpredictability and arbitrariness. This, in turn, undermined the legitimacy of bureaucracy and trust in it. Bureaucratic machinery became a ‘quasi-religious, sacred aspect’ (65) of the government and, as such, was rarely questioned. Even Weber noted on continuity of bureaucracy that these structures are the hardest to destroy.

Michael Urban (1982) provides yet another brilliant analysis of bureaucracy as an administrative ideology. The term ‘ideology’ is critical here as it entirely changes the discourse. It is no longer a rational and effective enterprise in the long run as Weber
believed, but an institution that implicitly carries certain special interests and ideas. Administrative agency essentially is a result of a class struggle on two levels – it is created and controlled by the dominant class, on one hand, and its very structure presumes class struggle within administration, on the other (19).

He argues that internal contradiction of bureaucratic institution is solved by its special variants in practice. To show this he provides two different forms of administration in the American and Soviet cases. The overview of both variants is particularly relevant for this thesis since the Soviet form of bureaucracy has influenced greatly the modern Central Asian bureaucratic organizations. Urban notes, first of all, that both cases do not differ greatly, but only in details. In case of the Soviet Union the difference is in labor, which was less disciplined because the problem of unemployment practically did not exist in the country governed by the strong state. However, the labor was controlled in different ways such as tracking and recording the workers’ behavior and creating incentives for good performance.

Furthermore, Urban reinstates Marx’s point that the main features of bureaucracy – differentiation - necessarily causes labor alienation and lack of motivation. He then provides examples of how these problems are solved on the ground. In one case the top administrator expands his control over and above what was prescribed by the rules of an organization. Despite being a clear violation of the rules it is, however, legitimated by a number of arguments such as intellectual and moral superiority of administrators and the phenomenon of leadership. While this practice is encountered everywhere, in the Soviet Union it was somewhat more common.
In the West the creation of human relations sector was an attempt to solve this problem. The negative aspect of this was that the workers were initially considered as not the ones who are able to think for themselves and be rational, while the administrative authority was rational. As a result, it was irrational to complain about something that was clearly as rational as bureaucracy (68).

Thus, there is no unanimous agreement on theoretical foundations of bureaucracy. Weber’s elegant and simple model has many positive aspects, which are designed to serve the public as effectively and fairly as possible. However, there are many issues that undermine its integrity and functionality. On one hand, it disregards emotional needs of bureaucrats and, on the other, their cultural background. Practically, these problems are solved differently depending on the culture, history and socio-economic state of people.

**Informal Social Networks**

Communities are largely viewed from two different perspectives – political and anthropological. Political literature tends to assess the external manifestations of informal social relations and their mostly negative influence on such modern political ideals as transparency, free and fair elections, accountability and effectiveness. While it appears to be true on the surface, in reality traditional communities are much more complex organizations. In fact, they successfully serve different needs of people when the formal institutions fail to do so. This feature is very well recognized by anthropologists who admire the inner coherence, effectiveness and sophistication of informal social networks.

In general, it can be argued that the political view on communities is largely primordialist and, thus, they are perceived as fixed organizations, which never change.
Anthropological view, on the other hand, is rather constructivist, which means that social identities and relations are contingent on current situations and are never complete. Accordingly, I will mostly concentrate my study on the anthropological literature with short excurse to political discussions.

By connecting Middle Eastern and Central Asian social experiences, the anthropologist Dale Eickelman (2002) analyzes the inner dynamics of tribal and clan relations in these regions. His main point of departure is that understanding of kinship and tribal nature is dependent on the historical context and developments (116). He sees a major challenge in capturing and deconstructing the taken-for-granted attitudes and beliefs, which shape social actions and are so common that ‘flow automatically’ in everyday life. However, even in this case individuals are free in their choice of interpretations and resultant symbolic representations (217).

Lawrence Krader (1971) has researched the norms, rules and social organization of these societies. He, too, believes that their history can explain the current structure. For example, the nomadic societies of Central Asia were similar to concentric circles, with each circle being a relatively independent confederation that dealt with other communities upon the need. These communities known as clans consisted of extended families. The extended family in contrast to the nuclear one did not end with the death of a member of a generation – it was perpetual. This explains, to some extent, the durability of communities and their independence from the higher authorities. The situation has not changed much since times described by Krader. People still rely heavily either on their families in case of urban organizations or on communities in rural areas.
Descriptive and analytical approaches on communities are combined in Eric Sievers’ work (2002-03) on mahallas – a major type of communities in Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and parts of Kyrgyzstan. He argues that the success of communities point at substantial social capital in these countries. Thanks to this social capacity, people are able to withstand the crises, turmoils and inefficiency of the formal government institutions. It is classified as the bonding and bridging capital. The bonding social capital is a basic form of social organization that involves relatives and the closest friends. The bridging capital, on the other hand, is a more complex organization that transcends the union based on kinship. While both forms are important only the bridging social capital leads to a strong civil society that would participate in political decision-making. He demonstrates that the bonding social capital is strongly developed and prevalent in Central Asia and the bridging has a good potential to be developed.

Morgan Lui further elaborates on local communities in Uzbekistan and shows why the communal residencies are prefered to the contemporary buildings. The social and economic benefits that these networks offer outweigh the costs of living with them. The costs are usually the conformance with the traditional lifestyles and values. Because of that, however, certain groups - victims of traditional values - find these costs unbearable. There is, therefore, an inner resistance to communities, which will at least modify them over time.

The literature on nomadic communities supplements the one on traditional ones. It is critical to understand nomads as they made up the significant part of Central Asian population. Their lifestyle and culture, has, therefore, profoundly influenced the structure of modern communities in Kazakhstan, parts of Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan.
Khazanov, apparently, is the most respected scholar whose seminal works on Central Asian nomads are still most widely referred to. In three biggest of his publications on nomads he provided important insights and made arguments that challenged the well-known stereotypes about them. These arguments emphasize the dynamic nature of nomadic societies and, as such, always reflect the current trends in the world.

While in general nomads are known for their wandering lifestyle, anthropologists use this concept to denote anyone who ‘moves in pursuit of livelihood’ (Khazanov, 1998, 24). Since it is related only to the fact of movement, being nomadic does not necessarily imply being pastoralist or tribal, although they may coincide at times. He, then, distinguishes between different types of nomadism such as ‘herdsman husbandry’, ‘pastoral nomadism’ and semi-nomadism, which was especially widespread in Eurasian steppes. Although these types are not critical for this study, it is important to note how deeply they challenge our established beliefs of who the nomads are. They also point to their close relation with the settled societies.

Further, despite the importance ascribed to kinship and descent the essence of nomadic communities lies in production and neighborliness. In this they are similar to sedentary communities because survival overshadows all other considerations. Therefore, the private ownership of livestock and independent production by households define the economic bases of nomadic communities and shape their particular forms (135).

Lancasters (1998) and Khazanov also emphasize the flexible nature of nomadic communities. They argue that ‘change is inevitable, continual and expected… it is part and parcel of the environment and nomadism, in its various forms, is one way of coping
with it’ (27). At the same time, changes in the outside world, including developments in
technology, governments and markets, among others, can be accepted as long as the
moral core of nomads - individual autonomy - is not violated. Furthermore, the fact that
nomads were always connected to sedentary groups through mutual fulfilling of
economic, social and political needs has also contributed to their flexible nature (26).

Lancasters (1998) ask what nomads do in a world of changing priorities and demand for
technical and administrative professionals… They answer that while nomads look
positively at government as something that rules and found ways to cooperate with it,
they do not welcome the state in a sense of a nation-state ‘vis-à-vis other nation-states’,
also as the state as a bureaucracy, which takes over the responsibilities that were formerly
those of individuals. ‘Dowlat’, the state, imposes new conditions for participation. Thus,
nomads used to rely either on themselves and or communities for the services that the
modern state tries to overtake.

They argue that the most ‘irritants to the nomadic lifestyles come from bureaucratic
impositions… land regulations, etc.’ Many Middle Eastern nomads viewed it as
opportunities for exploitation in one or another way. For Arab nomads, the association of
material possessions with immorality is of a critical importance. Their own socio-
economic system, on the other hand, is based on the maintenance of social relationships,
which, in turn, builds the ‘reputation of the good man’, a value of a far greater
significance than wealth. Consequently, they did not believe that the state systems are
sustainable because they are based on material possessions while their own socio-
economic system is based on a ‘strict morality’ (31). Thus, nomads do not view the state
as legitimate as the sedentary groups view it.
Despite these contradictions between modern systems and nomadic lifestyle, nomads continue to survive and flourish exactly because their flexible system is adapted to changes. This is possible as far as they can rely on vast networks of information, which are supplied by the broad ‘domestic groups’ or social relationships based on a ‘strict moral code’. In contrast, Kazakh nomads adapted to the modern lifestyle and have changed their views on their life strategies. Still, the reliance on local networks has not been fully replaced and they are still utilized today, when the official mechanisms fail to fulfill their roles.

Thus, there are two different approaches – political and anthropological – to the study of traditional communities. Political research tends to view them in the context of modern state institutions without paying much attention to all complexities of their inner structure. Anthropological literature, on the other hand, explores the nature of nomadic and sedentary communities without comparing it to anything modern. It also emphasizes the dynamic and flexible nature of informal networks and because of that it is more pertinent for this study.
Chapter 2

In this chapter I will review the theoretical bases of bureaucratic institution and communities. These will mostly be ideal forms, which usually do not resemble the factual variants. The criticism of theoretical form of bureaucracy will also be examined in the process. Although there is no literature that describes a general model of traditional communities, most of the texts define certain features that appear to be common across different networks. This will be a basis for a theoretical form that I will build upon. In the last section I will compare the main features of bureaucratic and informal organizations and identify their similarities and differences.

The argument of this chapter is that while both forms of social organizations serve the same public needs, theoretically, they are substantially different in their nature. The analysis of their main features will demonstrate this. The bureaucratic process is deemed to be superior to the informal ways of doing things. At the same time, this superiority comes at a certain cost. For example, such strong aspects of bureaucracy as objectiveness, rationality and high functionality breed inequality, alienation and disregard of irrational aspects of human nature. More importantly, the artificial nature of bureaucratic power in contrast to authenticity of communal values constitutes the main underlying difference between them.

I ideological Foundations of Bureaucracy and Communities

Bureaucracy and communities are two different forms of social organization, which, however, have similar functions. One of their major ‘tasks’ is to keep an order in a certain
society. This is partly achieved through their backbone - social values and meanings, which define and connect members of a society. In this study these social models are perceived and analyzed as ideologies. This term is used by many social scientists to describe different phenomena including bureaucratic systems and communities. Employment of such an approach deprives any single system of being perceived as given and absolute, or, more precisely, puts it on the same footing with other systems being compared.

To put it roughly, ideology is a system of myths, but functional myths, which satisfy certain social needs. Sometimes it does so at the expense of single individuals. By means of its symbolic currents, ideology creates a meaning of otherwise neutral events and experiences (Urban 1982, 8). In this exactly way bureaucratic and communal ideologies are a system of social rules and ideas that frequently benefit the public or certain groups at the expense of other groups or individuals. While ideology as a concept has a negative connotation, it is a very important and irreducible component of any cultural formation (Eickelman 2002, 135).

Ideology keeps people together on sociopolitical and cultural levels and symbolically substantiates their interaction and social activities. M. M. Lewis (1998), for example, talks about ideology as a ‘group mind’, which is a ‘group behavior mediated by group symbols’ (p. 194). Eickelman (2002) compares the concept with ‘worldview’, but at the same time attributes more meaning and role to ideology. In his understanding, worldview is collective symbolic representations on the character of the social world, which, in turn, demonstrates the significance of the term. He further coins a new phrase - ‘practical ideologies’ – systems of beliefs that are based on ‘implicit shared assumptions’ with
regards to such elements of the social order as ‘notions of tribe, kinship, family, person, sexuality, nation, religion and worldview’ (136). Consequently, Eickelman sees a challenge for scholars in deciphering the ideological representations that express themselves as ‘taken-for-granted attitudes and values’, which are ingrained so deeply that they ‘flow almost automatically’ (215).

Bureaucratic administration and traditional communities are similar ideological formations, which serve and fulfill the similar needs and perform identical roles in different ways. The difference in means and methods comes from the difference of values placed on each system and technological difference, which originates from historical developments that preceded each system. The value of bureaucracy to compare with its predecessors is seen in its rationality, objectiveness, efficiency and even some morality. Communities, in turn, are viewed as informal, less efficient and rational, at times even irrational forms of organization characteristic of the pre-modern times, which are certainly unable to serve the needs of the modern society with its increasing demands.

At the same time, due to its claims for objectivity and rationality ideological character of bureaucratic form is much more implicit than that of communities. On surface, it looks as if it serves the public needs in an ethical way without intentionally sacrificing any individual or group. The closer scrutiny of this agency and review of analytical literature below will, however, illustrate that the rational character of bureaucratic forms is not indisputable and certain special interests are implicitly stipulated in its very organization and philosophy. It is suffice to note here that even Weber (1978), the great theoretic and admirer of a bureaucratic system, admitted its dubious foundation:
“In principle, a system of rationally debatable “reasons” stands behind every act of bureaucratic administration, namely, either subsumption under norms, or a weighing of ends and means”(979).

It is possible, therefore, to view the two forms as historical developments with the one preceding the other and eventually replacing it. The traditional communities are perceived as pre-modern organizational forms of the past, which are still survived in some less developed societies. Bureaucratic apparatus, on the other hand, is predominantly characteristic of modern societies which expect that certain values will be maintained in the process of serving the needs of the public. With this in mind, it is useful to view the ideal types of both forms of social organization.

**Ideal Bureaucracy**

**Moral and technical superiority of bureaucratic form**

First thing that occurs while thinking about bureaucracy is that it is an official agency meant to serve the public, on the one hand, and be a mediator between the state and citizens, on the other. Though both aspects of administration will be reviewed in this chapter, the former will a subject of a closer inspection.

Weber’s (1978) theoretical description of the nature of bureaucracy is the basis for analysis in this section. Although he understands that the state and its apparatus – bureaucracy - cannot be treated as entities with their own qualities, he, nevertheless, justifies such a treatment with certain reservations. He argues that in order for a state to be considered as a unified entity, people who constitute the state must behave in a certain
common way that will result in a predictable and certain arrangement. In other words, in order for these forms of political organization to become truly rational and objective, its subjects – people - must conform to certain behaviors and follow the official rules. In case when this condition is not fulfilled, the very purpose - rationality - and, therefore, security of the state and bureaucracy will be questionable and unpredictable.

At the same time, there must be certain incentives for people to act in a predictable way and obey rules. Generally, people must be confident that their compliance with the rules will yield, in fact, tangible collective benefits. This confidence comes from trust that the created rules are fair and objective, on one hand, and public employees and politicians are loyal to their commitments, on the other. When bureaucracy fulfills the first condition, it legitimates itself even if the public officials may not be fully loyal. In fact, the second condition is more problematical even in the developed countries with advanced bureaucracies. However, accordingly to path dependency principle, compliance can be a natural way of behaving in societies that have a long history of advanced bureaucracies even if they stopped to be efficient, objective and rational.

The main characteristics of Weberian bureaucracy pertinent to this study can be classified as moral and technical. Since bureaucratic apparatus is one of the ways to regulate and direct power relations (Urban, 1982), it is structured in a way as to minimize as much as possible potential immoral and irrational outcomes of bureaucratic actions performed by humans. This problem is solved through creation of extensive sets of rules and regulations, which constitute the moral value of bureaucracy. Technical value, on the other hand, is defined by aspiration to maximize effectiveness of administrative procedures. Such features of bureaucracy as formality and objectivity relate to its moral
aspect, while rationality and standardization of procedures are its technical characteristics. Frequently, moral features overlap with the technical ones as in order to achieve a moral goal to provide an equal treatment for all customers, one has to develop highly efficient technical rules and regulations.

Ironically, the moral value of bureaucracy is realized through its utmost ‘dehumanization’ – complete elimination of the irrational aspects of human nature, which ‘escape calculation’ (Weber, 980) and may undermine rational performance of functions. This includes complete formalization and rationalization of the office environment and human interaction, a division between private and public spheres, implementation of advanced mechanisms of appeal and control and extreme specialization, which deprives any single bureaucrat of a privilege to be fully in charge of a business.

What is more, the very idea of bureaucracy goes against democratic values. Hierarchy, complete obedience to rules and disproportionate concentration of power are alien to the idea of self-governance implied by democracy. However, it is also known that there are no pure democracies in the world, but only representational, which already result in disproportionate allocation of power in hands of a few elected. Weber acknowledges that there is a tension between the two, but still argues that they ‘go’ hand in hand together and even ‘need’ each other for an effective attainment of goals. For this, though, one cannot apply the ‘loose’ definition of democracy, which is indeed contradictory to the phenomenon of bureaucracy since the purpose of the demos is to minimize as much as possible the power of the governing. Active bureaucratization is possible mainly with passive democratization, which will actively contribute to its effectiveness by leveling the governing, but not minimizing their power (984).
Bureaucratic governance is possible, therefore only when a disproportionate concentration of power is justified and agreed upon. Weber believes that this justification comes from technical superiority of bureaucrats, who are specifically trained for management work. The principles of regulated and limited power relations, which are structured in bureaucratic hierarchy, add up to its legitimacy.

The key features that fulfill the moral superiority of bureaucracy over other forms of social organization are its formal nature, division between the private and public spheres, specialization and differentiation in their highest forms, mechanisms of control to ensure conscientious performance of bureaucrats, delimitation of authority by rules and regulations and planned meritocracy.

Weber, importantly, emphasizes the formal nature of an agency to compare with many other forms of social organization. Formal in this case means that a manner, with which a public official communicates with an individual is conducted in a strictly detached style with no emotions and personal interests involved whatsoever. An ideal bureaucrat will not involve his personal sympathies and allegiances while performing his duties. In addition to that, he is not intended to be creative and initiating in his performance – he must strictly follow the rules and regulations in the most meticulous way. The purpose of this is to attain the highest objectivity as possible by treating all ‘clients’ equally no matter what their status is. The equal treatment, therefore, is a moral purpose of modern administration. As evident from experience, however, this aspect of bureaucracy is questionable as to how much it is attainable in reality. But it will be a question to explore in the following sections.
Division between the private and the public is certainly a novel feature, which only became possible in a modern bureaucracy. In essence, it is a physical division of the private belongings and space from the public ones and development of mechanisms to prevent a misuse of the latter’s, which will be a misuse of the public funds and assets. Weber believes that this division splits even further the formal nature of bureaucracy by delineating strictly and clearly the borders of the two. Even financial compensation of bureaucrats in the form of salaries discourages them from mixing up the two spheres. The financial compensation is possible only in the developed money economy, which is a prerequisite for a modern type of bureaucracy. Specifically trained to work in such an environment, where nothing belongs to them and paid for their work from sources not related to their immediate duties and office, bureaucrats are expected to be professional, objective and law-abiding, which, in turn, contributes to the moral requirement of equal treatment.

The mechanisms of appeal and control and easy access to them serve the same purpose of ensuring the ‘ethical’ performance by administrators and upholding the interests of the public. These features have a common problem of disregarding the irrational aspects of human beings as well as their fairly rational aspirations, which may go against the ‘rational’ establishment. These problems are not only identified abstractly by administrative theorists, but are experienced in the real-life situations and will be discussed below.

The utmost differentiation, another important characteristic of modern bureaucracy, is one of those features, which while contributes to the moral goal of administration deepens even further the mentioned problems. By differentiation, it is implied that
administrative tasks are ‘functionally divided’ in such a way that not a single person is fully responsible for any single business, but performs only a part of it, for which she also acquires a specialized training. Weber believes that this division as well as the increased intensity of work in an organization distinguishes it from earlier forms of social association. The differentiation inevitably leads to hierarchical structure (or the other way round) and an increased need for technical expertise. Hierarchy and differentiation imply that bureaucrats are subjects to even closer scrutiny by their supervisors and the public has more means to control them. This by itself is designed to level up their authority, which eventually leads to a better and more objective performance. It is true also that these features also contribute to a technical advantage of bureaucracy over other forms and as such serve dual purposes of effectiveness and supposed goodness.

The necessity of hierarchy is particularly emphasized by the fact that since an official must be appointed by someone who is in a higher position then an appointee is already dependent on her despite the presence of official rules (960). Furthermore, another interesting point in Weber’s argument that it is normal for appointed officials to be loyal to certain parties in power since their appointment depends on them as it happened frequently in monarchies. However, it implies that certain partisanship of a bureaucrat is accepted and encouraged, which already undermines the notion of objectiveness and rationality of a public official.

Finally, the rules and regulations are absolutely necessary for a modern bureaucracy to exist. Simultaneously, Weber notes that ‘painstaking obedience’ is even more important than a fact of the rules itself (988). In this respect there is much less difference between the earlier forms of social organization and bureaucracy as the integrity and existence of
both are fully dependent on their subjects’ obedience. At the same time, this exactly requirement is violated much more frequently in bureaucratic structures rather than traditional communities and not always the rules are taken seriously by the bureaucrats and the public. The level of obedience to rules also distinguishes in different societies. Germans, for example, tend to be more law- and rule-abiding than Italians and Russians.

The mentioned qualities of modern bureaucracy have the moral imperative of treating everyone equally regardless her background, status, belongingness to a certain clique or a group, financial situation and other factors. Besides of the differentiation/hierarchy, technical superiority of administration is also achieved through other features: rationality, standardization/monotony, ‘quantitative extension of administrative tasks’, intensity, and the written character, on which all the work is based (987).

The rational character of administration is one frequently cited as the best achievement of modern management practice. And while everybody seems to understand what is being talked about, not many people can provide a clear definition of what is rationality and even when it is defined, it often fails to satisfy all. For Weber, rationality means means-ends calculation, presence of rules and matter-of-factness of day-to-day bureaucratic actions (1002). At the same time, Urban argues that ‘rationally chosen ends’ do not mean ‘an objective, selected by reason and valued for its own sake’. For Urban (1982) rationality is rather about means, not ends and even an irrational objective will be rational as far as the means for its attainment are rational (21).

Other administrative scholars defined effectiveness and efficiency as another term for means-ends calculation. For an organization to be rational these attributes must be
maximized as much as possible. Efficiency can be achieved within confines of an organization – ‘a relationship between the organizational outputs and the costs of those outputs’ (Urban, 39). Effectiveness, in turn, is organization’s relations with the outside world. In this respect, rationality is a purely technical aspect of modern bureaucracy.

Many other technical features listed by Weber relate to efficiency - an internal quality of organization. For example, ‘intensity’, ‘speed’, ‘precision’, ‘quantitative increase of tasks’, as well as standardization are achieved within confines of planning aimed to increase efficiency. Standardization, at the same time, is closely associated with differentiation and hierarchy, when less and less is dependent on a single person only and the work of a middle-range bureaucrat becomes a routine. In general, this creates a demand for highly qualified experts to manage the bureaucratic machines at top levels (Urban, 1982). As a result, meritocracy and governance by the trained and informed is justified as a necessary condition for survival and prosperity.

The institutionalization of file writing process deserves a special attention as it has certainly changed the way people communicate and do business. By storing documents, agreements and creating dossiers filing has become a new tool to control people and make them keep their promises and commitments. On the other hand, it has reduced the reliance on personal qualities such as honesty, reputation and informal agreements that prevailed and worked so well in pre-bureaucratic times. It is well known that unity and functioning of nomadic communities in Central Asia and Middle East, for example, relied heavily on such personal qualities and informal rules. Now, however, the very structure of traditional communities has evolved to incorporate modern habits of writing and recording in many cases.
To sum up, ‘pure’ modern bureaucracy is a form of organization, which serves different purposes, one of the crucial of which is serving the public. In pre-modern times its functions were performed by earlier forms of bureaucracy in societies with centralized power like Chinese and Mongolian (Ryavec, 2003) or, more frequently, by self-sufficient communities in relatively decentralized nomadic societies. Weber has analyzed the modern administration in the context of traditional forms of organization and described the key features that define its superiority. These features can broadly be classified as the ones that fulfill the moral requirements and others that serve technical purposes only. The critical among them are the following qualities: division between the private and public spheres, differentiation, rationality, objectiveness, formality, hierarchy, technical expertise of bureaucrats and filing. Some of the features - hierarchy and differentiation, for example - satisfy both requirements at the same time.

**Criticism of bureaucracy**

Theory of modern bureaucracy being highly idealistic and even somewhat abstract (Khazanov, 1998) has been criticized by many thinkers. It is useful to note that since the ‘pure’ types do not exist in reality, it is the real-life deviations from ideal that are rife with flaws and problems. However, what it says about theory, if it largely fails to address the real situations and neglects the potential problems that may arise in the process of implementation?

Criticism can, at the same time, be classified as a critique of moral and technical aspects of bureaucracy. The ‘moral’ critique of bureaucracy is generally discusses its detrimental influence on bureaucrats only, not the public. The disregard of irrational sides as well as
other needs of people affects bureaucratic apparatus in such a way that it leads to problems of a technical character. Technical problems, in turn, affect the general public.

Specifically, there is a major problem of a moral character, which results in technical ineffectiveness. Such features of bureaucracy as impersonality, ‘control imperative’, differentiation and standardization were associated with alienation of a bureaucratic worker (Matheson, 2007). Alienation leads to such problems as inefficiency, low productivity and lack of motivation. The idea of alienation was discussed by many scholars including Marx and Weber. Although they viewed the problem somewhat differently, both of them agreed that it is a separation of an individual from his product and means of production that causes alienation (2). With that, it is no surprise that many bureaucratic workers are not motivated and interested in results of their work.

From a broader perspective, the objective character of bureaucracy was criticized as well. Bureaucratic institution is rational and neutral on the surface only while in reality it carries the interests of the current ruling class (Urban, 1982). It happens on two levels – external and internal. On the external level, it is basically controlled by the dominant class, and on the internal – hierarchal structure of administration leads to a class struggle within the organization (19). As such, bureaucratic entity appears to be not only amoral, but virtually immoral.

Further, Urban also questions impeccability and objectivity of the very term ‘rationality’ and argues that it is not immune from myths and influenced by certain contextual developments. The modern emphasis on rationality of means rather than ends or values conceals the real power relations in the society. Thus, it is not rationality in essence, but
rather a technical rationality of means, which, in turn, presumes that ends can be immoral and irrational as much as the means are effective and efficient (39). This in itself challenges the neutral nature of bureaucratic machine and proves once again its ideological and even predatory towards working people character.

He also deals with the problem of alienation, which he describes as the internal contradiction of administrative ideology. In essence, the structure of administrative work is such that it alienates working people from their product, which decreases their motivation and interest in the process itself. The lack of motivation decreases effectiveness and efficiency of the overall administrative practice and by this undermines the overall rationality and technical superiority of an agency.

In a word, the highly praised bureaucratic machine is yet another manifestation of power relations in a modern society. Although it is structured more effectively to compare with earlier forms of social organization, it is not intended to improve the social well-being of people per se. It serves consumerism and capitalism, but psychological and moral well-being of people was not the main consideration in the process of its development. The well-known frustration, lack of motivation and hatred that many administrators of middle and lower levels of management experience about their work are an evidence of this. The real intentions of the dominant class were concealed by the logic of ‘technical necessity’ of such organizations (26).

On the other hand, the rational and impersonal attributes of bureaucracy are attacked from a different perspective. Poggi (2006) argues that ‘the choice of rationality as the standard and the guide of action is not in itself rational’ (111). Furthermore, this choice
bears certain costs since many undesirable human features and values are being suppressed and marginalized, which leads to many other problems. Finally, both Poggi and Crozier (1964) point out to the fact that since (i) ‘the political sphere revolves around a particular form of power, grounded in violence’ (111) and (ii) people can be irrational and ambitious (162), the rational and objective nature of bureaucratic organization is undermined by ‘internal power struggles’ and irrational outcomes.

Its objectivity is further undermined by the fact that while some political leaders of parties do live ‘for politics’, their bureaucratic machinery is built and run by people who live ‘from politics’ (Poggi 2006). Bureaucrats, who pursue their own economic and career interests within this administration, prioritize, therefore, continuation of this very machinery above its official goals.

The technical problems of bureaucracy are, for the most part, the results of the above-mentioned ‘moral’ problem. As Urban points out, all prior researches on the phenomenon of administration addressed only the problems of motivation and initiative and accepted the very system as given, rational and just, while its major problem is in the very structure and attributes of bureaucratic institution.

The major problems, therefore, are related to such attributes of bureaucracy as rationality, objectivity, hierarchy, differentiation – the very qualities that were supposed to define its moral and technical superiority over more traditional forms of organization.
The nature and logic of traditional communities

It is impossible to fit communities in all their varieties and forms into one model. Khazanov (1983) warns, for example, about the danger of creating a fixed model of nomadic societies while they are highly flexible and complex (121). With that, some common features across different societies can still be singled out and on the basis of them I will create a basic model of communities by defining their main core features. In doing so, I will focus on Central Asian communities more than any others. Also, the features that particularly resonate or contrast with the bureaucratic ones will especially be emphasized.

Despite a recently increased interest in Central Asia, the region is less explored than other parts of the world such as the Middle East and North Africa. Considering this, many scholars have drawn links between these regions. D. Eickelman (2001), for example, incorporated his anthropological research of both areas in one book with the description of differences and similarities.

First of all, he argues that the ‘popular image’ of Central Asia as a region of steppe nomads is misleading as ‘agriculture is important’ and large population in Central Asia was sedentary and derived its livelihood from agriculture (11) due to fact that “it is a region of arid and semi-arid grasslands and mountains interspersed with fertile valleys”. In addition, the old division into nomads and agriculturalists is not quite accurate because (i) their lines are more blurred in Eurasian steppes than in any other places, (ii) the semi-nomads were also widespread in these areas (Khazanov, 1984)
In all nomadic and peasant societies there were two universal institutions – ‘communities and families’. Contrary to the popular belief, families for the most part were nuclear (126). In both of the societies, communities have emerged as a response for a need of mutual help in economic production as nuclear families were too small to sustain it on their own (131).

Communities are of different types and structures across different societies. With respect to nomadic, Khazanov identifies three levels of kin groups with the first level being the strongest by virtue of having a common ancestor. It is important to note, however, that a common ancestor is by far not the only quality that unites families across Central Asian societies. Very frequently, common or close residence and economic production play a greater role than a common ancestor (135). In both, the peasant and nomadic societies ‘a general configuration of societies is defined only to a certain degree by kinship, while considerable freedom is left for specific forms of sociopolitical organization’ (139).

Similarly, Eickelman argues that previous limiting kinship and family ties to ‘blood’ ties with respect to Middle East and Central Asia was not accurate as that reflected the Western cultural understanding. He placed more importance on the notions of neighborliness and friendships than to the notions of ‘clan’ and ‘tribe’. (142).

Nevertheless, the idea of kinship is important one in order to understand the particular character of communities in this region. Its definition, however, may be different from the one understood widely in the West. Anthropologists usually define ‘kinship’ as an ‘experience-distant’ concept as opposed to ‘experience-near’ concepts. Experience-near concepts are the ones that are ‘naturally and effortlessly’ understood when applied to others – for example, people in Western societies understand the closeness based on
blood like family members relationships. Experience-distant concepts are used by observers to understand and compare different social occurrences, which may not be common in their society (Geertz, 1975, Eickelman 2001).

The concept of ‘kinship’ is experience-distant because as Lindholm points out it is not simply a ‘logical apparatus consisting of complicated rules for terminology and marriage; it is instead a way of apprehending and ordering the world, replete with implications for the evolution and organization of political life’ (Lindholm, 1986).

The basics of communities are subjectively held notions of kinship, responsibility, and trust, which manifest themselves in customs, traditions and other symbolic actions (Eickelman, 2001). They are practical as far as they are shared by all members of communities. Further, he provides a following definition for a kinship:

Used comparatively as a first-order, experience-distant approximation, ‘kinship’ serves as a useful framework for comparing experience-near concepts from different parts of the Middle East and Central Asia that can be glossed as ‘kin’- Afghan “qawm”, which refers to a socially united and territorially contiguous group of people who speak of themselves as if they were also linked by agnatic kinship, although such a group includes affines, neighbors and others. The term does not apply to persons or households that do not cooperate with other members of the qawm, in spite of close agnic or affinal ties (144).
Importantly, he notes that a qawm is ideally ‘a territorially and socially integrated group joined together through ties of kinship, political action, and religious belief and ritual’ (144).

Also, members of a qawm do not have to be related by the attributes of descent only – neighborliness and occupation substitute it fairly well; the most important is their ‘ability to act successfully as a collectivity’ (148). At the same time, kinship does not necessarily incite cooperation. Cooperation occurs, if other social links or economic factors come to play (Lindholm, 1986).

The following features define communities as a unique form of social organization: informal codes and rules, reciprocity and redistribution, the importance of social relationships, flexibility and adaptability, nature of differentiation, and interdependence.

Informal rules form a backbone of communities. But it is not enough just to have the rules and traditions; it is critical to obey the rules. Weber, too, mentioned obedience as an important prerequisite for the rules to work and, in this, bureaucracy is no more different than earlier forms of organization. However, the rules are rooted deeper and are even stronger than bureaucratic principles because (i) they are usually acquired from the very early age and as such are rooted in deep realms of unconsciousness and, therefore, are taken for granted (Eickelman, 136) while bureaucracy is mostly justified as a rational enterprise only; (ii) despite being pervasive, they leave a wide leeway for an individual to accommodate her own personal needs because in many situations she still has a choice of how to interpret the social events (136). Rosen (1984), for example, also notes the changing nature of social reality: ‘Both the cultural assumptions concerning reality and
their articulation in practical social circumstances are subject to redefinition or ‘negotiation’ (38-39). It is further demonstrated by Eickelman in his description of status of Muslim women, where despite the tight social constraints they actually experience a great deal of freedom (191). This individual freedom to a certain extent discourages questioning these rules.

On the other hand, people conform to these rules mainly because maintenance of social relationships, on which ‘the reputation of a good man’ depends, means much more to them than individual interests and wealth (173). The issues of honor, trust, loyalty and a good name are critical in nomadic and peasant societies. They also help to maintain social and economic order in the absence of modern western institutions (318). Such phenomena can also be described as experience-distant to Westerners because they do not have a formalized and explicit character.

Importantly, informal rules in many cases are based on principles of reciprocity, mutual responsibility and mutual aid (Khazanov, 1983). In principle, a nomadic society will survive only if public needs and interests are put over individual ones (161). In these circumstances despite the non-egalitarian nature of some communities, the system of redistribution balances out the inequalities that arise from time to time. As it will be shown below, economic factors here are as critical as cultural values.

Another interesting feature is the flexibility and adaptability of communities with respect to the outside developments. While the peasant societies are less flexible, the nomadic ones are described as fairly accommodating ones as a result of their mobility and frequent encounters with the agricultural societies (Lancaster, 1998, 24). Lancaster and Lancaster
identify the factors that make up nomads, which, in turn, make them more flexible, resilient and dynamic in the world of changing factors such as markets, technology and social structures (25).

However, the adaptability is constrained by other important factors such as ‘the moral values of the group’ as they can lead to a loss of identity, which are critical for the existence of nomadic societies (Khazanov, 1984). Eickelman also demonstrates that sedentary ‘communities that might initially appear isolated are always linked to communities elsewhere’, and this, in turn, has made them more flexible and accommodating. (Eickelman, 45). Apparently, besides of mobility, the less restrictive nature of social rules cited above contributes as well into their flexible character.

In addition, interdependence has also contributed to the dynamic nature of communities. Although interdependence is mostly of an economical character, it also unites families and smaller groups socially and culturally. This defines the local or internal dependence within communities. More importantly Khazanov (1984) emphasizes the anti-autarkic economy of nomadic societies, which, in turn, defines their external dependence from agricultural societies. Sedentary societies, too, benefited from their relationships with nomads. Yet, the nature of relations was complex and ranged from the mutual aid to harassment by the stronger parts. Nevertheless, that demonstrates that communities were never isolated and fixed groups. Continuous interaction with the outside world has made them flexible and accommodating (Khazanov, 1984).

Finally, the level of differentiation is another important quality of communities. Naturally, differentiation and hierarchy are closely related to each other; hierarchy or,
‘social inequality and stratification’ (152), leads to differentiation; sometimes the other way round. Peasant societies were more differentiated and, therefore, unequal than nomadic ones (Khazanov, 1998). Central Asian societies, however, are known for the hierarchy based on seniority, which, as some scholars argue, made them more conservative. At the same time, in nomadic societies the source of differentiation is a position of leadership and ‘private ownership of livestock’ (Khazanov, 1984, 152). That indicates that economic and political factors have played an important role in social stratification.

To compare with the Arab nomads, Eurasian are viewed as ‘non-violent, non-restrictive, non-egalitarian, and non-changing although there are certainly the opposites can be traced’ (Szynekiewicz, 1998). At the same time, the non-egalitarian character is not as pervasive as it usually encountered in European societies – Khazanov (1984) notes that in both- agricultural and nomadic communities,

despite unlimited increase in numbers of livestock, demands of cooperation and mutual aid, the necessity for which is dictated by both – productive and social needs, favor the development of a more or less clearly defined tendency towards limiting differences if not in the ownership of livestock, then in the way in which animals and their products are utilized; otherwise nomadic society is in trouble (157).

To sum up, traditional communities are diverse and multidimensional and, for this reason, it is difficult to fit them into one model. However, in all their variety, they still have certain features, which can be singled out as common. The most important of them
are informal rules, principle of reciprocity, maintenance of social status and relations, flexibility and interdependence. These qualities help to maintain social and economic order in the absence of state and its apparatus –bureaucracy.

**Main differences between bureaucracy and communities**

The very notion of communities as ‘subjectively held notions of kinship, responsibility, and trust’ (Eickelman, 2001) is opposing to that of bureaucracy, which is objectively imposed system of power relations. The subjectively held communal notions and rules are imposed as well, but since they are learned as part of a culture, they seem to be more natural for community members than bureaucratic principles. It is natural, therefore, to expect that people in communities will behave in favor of public interests since they do not feel that they are being forced to comply. As such, it is of no surprise that traditional communities have survived over centuries despite major economic, social and political transformations in developing countries.

Formality and informality of rules are another key difference between the both. That is how both maintain social control and order. It is also important to note that explicitness and apparent rationality of rules legitimates bureaucratic control, which otherwise is unable to derive its authority from implicit cultural principles as tradition does. Once the alleged principle of functionality is undermined, it would be difficult for administration to justify its existence in democratic societies, which by definition are supposed to minimize the centralization of power.
Communities, on the other hand, derive their legitimacy from culture and tradition. Yet, they do serve certain economic, social and even political interests and are, in fact, effective social organizations. They may not be as technically efficient and objective, but, nonetheless, their end goals are as rational and even more so as in bureaucratic structures.

Furthermore, the level of differentiation also serves as a contrasting feature. In administration, severe and utmost differentiation is important for effectiveness and efficiency. This necessarily breeds hierarchy, which is oxygen of bureaucracy. Hierarchy, in turn, signifies inequality. In such conditions it is impossible to avoid internal power struggles and some form of exploitation. In communities, however, relative equality in economic status is critical for the survival of its members. While striving for efficiency bureaucratic ideology neglects for the most part human needs of bureaucrats, communities leave its members with much freedom in interpretation of respective situations. The more a system is differentiated the more effective it is in terms of inputs and outputs, but, importantly, the less humane it is towards its agents. Relationships of community members, therefore, are less effective and prescribed, but more humane and sporadic than that of bureaucrats.

Consequently, while obedience is a vital requirement for both structures to be functional, it is less of a problem in communities than in bureaucracy. The reasons are that informal rules of communities derive their legitimacy from culture and, therefore, from established habits of community members and are less restrictive in their nature than formal administrative rules.
Finally, communities could be more flexible and dynamic with respect to the outside transformations because recognition and implementation of a change does not require compliance with long and tedious bureaucratic procedures. This is also one of the reasons why they survived over centuries. On the other hand, certain beliefs and values could be even more rigid in communities than they are in bureaucracies because they partly form identities of community members.

In sum, naturalness of informal rules of communities as opposed to artificiality of formal rules of bureaucracy constitutes one of the critical differences between the both. The apparent authenticity of rules makes communities effective, when state is weak or absent. It is a culture of cooperation and mutual aid, which saves in tough times. Formality of administration is another feature that makes it distant and even unfriendly to human nature and while the public certainly benefits from such a structure, bureaucrats experience on themselves its inhumane routine and restraint. Strict differentiation adds up to negative sides of bureaucracy by furthering and institutionalizing inequality.
Chapter 3

In this chapter I will examine the real-life variants of both organizations. The Soviet and Central Asian forms will be the factual cases to explore. I will review the main types of communities and their characteristics. In the process, the critical features that define both organizations will be singled out. The purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate that in reality these institutions do not differ that much as it is claimed in theory. In conjunction with the information presented in Chapter 2, this Chapter will lead to the main argument, which will be presented and discussed in Chapter 3.

Bureaucracy and Communities in Reality

It is of no surprise that theoretical models rarely exist in reality. Bureaucracy and communities are no exceptions to the rule. The analysis of their particular variants below may suggest that quite unexpectedly the two systems are not that contradictory to each other and can successfully co-exist in some societies. In fact, they borrowed certain features from each other and by this smoothed over their negative aspects.

Central Asian societies fully inherited their bureaucratic systems from the Soviet system. On the surface, Central Asian bureaucracies do not differ much from their Russian counterpart since both of them did not change after the breakup of the Soviet Union. One strong argument in support of this is that the relative peacefulness and bloodlessness of the Soviet Union break-up did not fundamentally change the main organizational structure and lifestyle there (Sievers, 2003). Sievers states, for example that, ‘this bureaucratic account in Central Asia, symbolized in the resistance of the region to rule of
law reforms, this ‘old vodka in new bottles’, is one of the regions enduring causes of unsustainable development’ (83).

It is, therefore, an informal side of administration that betrays a local influence on the Soviet bureaucracy. The particular informal aspect of administration in Central Asia is a factor that distinguishes it from its Russian counterpart. Informal networks were not something new brought by independence and freedom in these states, but they existed fairly successfully before and during the Soviet Union. Although the Soviet administration was also saturated by the informal networks of its own kind, the communal character of the Central Asian networks was rather alien to the Russian bureaucracy.

It is reasonable then to base the study of Central Asian administration on Soviet variant with further clarification of the local particularities.

**Soviet Bureaucracy**

The Western scholarship on the Soviet bureaucracy is largely gloomy because it usually assesses it in the context of Weberian or western bureaucracy - traditionally a more efficient and more objective ideal. However, the Soviet administration is still viewed as a form of modern bureaucracy with its own flaws and problems.

On one hand, it Urban (1982) argues that the Soviet bureaucracy has been profoundly modified by adaptation of the Taylor management theory, which has largely influenced the Western administration in the beginning of the XX-th century. As such, Soviet and American administrations differed only in detail. The only notable difference is that
Soviet labor was not disciplined by unemployment as full employment was guaranteed by the state. But the hierarchical structure of organization and the basic work plan processes were fairly similar in both cases (Urban, 1982). These accounts address mostly the formal structure and functionality, while neglecting informal aspect of administration in the Soviet Union.

On the other hand, other scholars consider the informal side of the Soviet bureaucracy as critical for understanding the system. By itself, the Russian bureaucracy does not fulfill the requirements of Weberian bureaucracy. Ryavec (2005) describes it as ‘highly informalistic, personalistic, and with a tendency toward corrupt and self-aggrandizing behavior by bureaucrats’ (6). One of the most remarkable features of informalism in the Soviet bureaucracy was intensive utilization of personal contacts ‘to get things done’. Many Soviets viewed bureaucracy as something that needs to be circumvented and not followed to (50). Informalism has led bureaucracy to the point that it acquired its own goals and interests different from the state. In other words, the Soviet administration has developed culture, attitudes, beliefs and procedures different from those specified formally.

Informalism is believed to be even more important than official regulations and law. Ledeneva (1998) argues that informalism in Russian terms means achieving things through informal networks also defined as ‘blat’. Blat represented a distinctive form of non-monetary exchange based on connections, which reflected the extent of one’s patron-client network (Ledeneva, 1998). Although they sound similar to Central Asian communal networks, they differ fundamentally in their nature and extent. The notion of ‘patron-client’ relationships is critical here because it represents selfish ‘favor-for-favor’
relationships without concern for survival and well-being of people, who were favored. Reciprocity of Central Asian communities, in contrast, is driven first and foremost by the public interest, tradition and group identity. At the same time, it should be noted that because of multidimensional and diverse character of Central Asian communities, they include the ‘blat’ type of networks as well.

Nevertheless, informal networks were quite widespread and were utilized where money did not help; namely, ‘in the Soviet planned economy characterized by scarcity when things were achieved by mutual support’ (Ledeneva, 1998). Blat had a very wide scope in terms of resolving issues from obtaining scarce products to finding a job. Although blat mostly described patron-client relationship, it also denoted small favors and services. But because of that it became widespread so deeply that people took it as a part of their social lives (Ledeneva, 1998). It is of no surprise, therefore, that bureaucratic structures were deeply penetrated by blat-type relationships. Some bureaucrats, for example, were willing to perform their work duties in two cases: if they were paid directly by the customer, who needed their services or when the blat was utilized.

In addition to this, Soviet bureaucracy in Russia was heavy-handed yet ineffective, unduly powerful yet incompetent (Ryavec 2005, 13). However, these characteristics relate to bureaucrats’ style of working rather than to the overall structure of administration. Administrative workforce was capricious in its everyday life to such an extent that it seemed it was another ruling class and not just a state apparatus (14). Public servants were known for self-aggrandizement and exaggeration of work they do, which inevitably led to ‘paper fetishism’ (66) with unnecessary accent on importance of written
word, stamps and signatures. The value of procedure and documentation was inflated to such an extent that Weber’s technical rationality did not fit there (27).

Self-aggrandizement of bureaucrats can, partially, be explained by their lack of specialized training. ‘A marked rejection of legal training’ (50) inherited from tsarist bureaucracy was another critical violation of principles of ideal bureaucracy. Weber placed much emphasis on extensive preparation of administrative specialists because as he argued their exceptional expertise was a justification of the power granted to them. In absence of extensive training, Soviet bureaucrats could justify their existence and work only through overstatement of the procedure and paperwork.

Corruption is yet another interesting feature of the Soviet bureaucracy. During the Soviet Union it was not as widespread and acute as it is now because the state still controlled it and provided administrators with compensation that was adequate to living expenses. Those were small ‘presents’ or modest sums that meant to thank bureaucrats for all their hard work (Ledeneva, 1998). The problem, however, existed and ‘tipping’ administrators was a normal and accepted practice.

Therefore, in its structure and design the Soviet bureaucracy was no different from the Weberian, but its informal aspect and lack of trust have undermined the initial values that the creation of administration intended to fulfill in the first place. In assessment of this particular case it is pertinent to use the classification made in previous chapter on moral and technical characteristics of bureaucracy. While moral features related to presence of extensive set of rules and regulations were upheld, technical ones on rationality and standardization of procedures were grossly violated. It is possible to say that
formalization, a moral feature, not only was not violated, but worshipped to such an absurd extent that it betrayed the principles of technical rationality. It is one of the cases when exaggeration of even positive things leads to negative outcomes. In the end, this dramatization coupled with the informal aspect of bureaucracy, betrayed its moral goals.

Such a nature of the Soviet bureaucracy is not something unusual. In fact, it originates from the pre-revolutionary tsarist bureaucracy (Ryavec 2005). Interestingly, Hosking (2001) states that the latter was influenced by the Mongol-Byzantine tsarism. He says on Russian Empire that ‘in its administrative structures, it has been an Asian empire, building upon or adapting the practices of China and the ancient steppe empires’. Kozyrev, Russian foreign minister in 1992 claimed, ‘our traditions come mostly, if not altogether, from Asia’ (Ryavec 2005). Hingley (1977) further states that the ‘Muscovite grand princes continued to rule on principles absorbed from Tatars’. Halperin (1982) also concludes that the ‘Mongols had a profound effect on Russian social and political institutions’ and that ‘the Russians absorbed many features of Mongol government… fiscal, military, diplomatic and administrative institutions.’

**Central Asian Bureaucracies**

The Central Asian bureaucracies are very much like the Soviet model with one exception – all described features are even more intense here – they are more capricious and arrogant, more corrupt and incompetent. However, there are important features that are characteristic to local administrations only.

The informal side of administration is more extensive and deeper in Central Asia because of the role played by communities. The following occurrence demonstrates the difference
between informal networks in Russia and communities in Central Asia. Since in Russia, informalism was a response to the scarcity of planned economy, when money could not resolve all issues, the breakup of the Soviet Union, which also brought the market economy, where money are more important, the role and pervasiveness of blat has diminished, if not completely disappeared (Ledeneva, 1998). Central Asian communities, on the other hand, have only strengthened with independence and ensuing weakness of the state.

Central Asian informalism in administration, therefore, is complicated by the involvement of traditional communities. Thus, the bureaucratic issues could be resolved not only through money and Russian-style blat, but also through regional, kinship or clan groups. This, however, does not diminish the power of bribes in stimulating bureaucrats to do their work. At the same time, belongingness to a certain group can be helpful in solving one’s problems. For example, some Ministries in Tajikistan are controlled by Pamiri regional groups, while others are in hands of Kulyabis and Dangaris (Davlatshoev, 2006). If a member of a different regional group will have to encounter with one of these Ministries, he will either have to find a person that will patronage him there or pay a ‘fee’ for bureaucratic services, while a person from the same group that controls the agency will normally have an easier time solving his issues.

The depth with which informalism penetrated formal structures is related to a more fundamental problem – lack of rule of law in Central Asia (Sievers 2003, 86). The rules and laws are not taken seriously by anyone and everybody knows how to circumvent them. Ironically however, the power of stamps and paper is beyond any questions and
people are ready to pay a ‘price’ to get them. The ‘price’ is usually everything, but the formal ways of doing things.

It is important to remember that the communities do not have to be regional or kinship groups only. Sometimes neighborhood or other ties also qualify for communal support and assistance. For example, if a person does not belong to the ruling community, but is a neighbor to and in good relations with an administrator of an agency, he will be assisted as if he belonged to the group.

Furthermore, bureaucrats are rarely questioned and complained about due (i) to non-argumentative and pragmatic habits of local population and (ii) patronage of bureaucrats by their higher-ups, who belong to the same groups. This adds to their impunity and capriciousness and makes the whole administration extremely ineffective, if the informal mechanisms are not employed. As an example, American visitors who had to deal with the Central Asian bureaucracies personally lamented, ‘When you DIY (Do it Yourself) bureaucracy manage, you’ll receive the full thrust of the process and begin to appreciate the ability of these governments to make tourists – and often their own citizens – feel like unworthy insects… It’s equally sad how scant both respect and courtesy are in Central Asia’s bureaucratic offices’ (Noll, 2008).

To conclude, Central Asian states have inherited their bureaucracies from the Soviet system with all its ills and problems. What is worse, they have carried some of its negative sides to the point of absurdity. Such features of bureaucracy as its formal character and documentation are frequently considered as more important than the goal of the activity itself. Besides of that the only qualitative difference is that the informal
aspect of bureaucracy here is more complicated due to involvement of traditional communities into the administrative process.

**Modern Communities in Central Asia**

**The importance of communities and their unique character**

The communities in this region have drawn attention of scholars in recent years due to their increased role and influence. Because of them the predicted collapse and bankruptcy did not happen, the almost failed states did not fail and people do not seem to be dying from hunger and diseases. Ernest Gellner (1981) called them as ‘weak states with a strong culture’ (55). Communities are effective in saving people from the political, social and economic disasters because they enjoy something that other formal structures and the state itself lacks – trust of people.

First, it is important to make a distinction between Central Asian communities and communities elsewhere including Africa despite many similarities that they share. This difference comes from the fact that Central Asian states are not the post-colonial states as the African were. Central Asians and other non-Russians have played a far more involved role in the Soviet governance than it was possible with the colonial states – for example, some top leaders including Joseph Stalin were non-Russians (Sievers, 2003). The fact that these republics benefited from heavy subsidies from Moscow and were constituents of a federal state illustrates further that they were not colonial republics (Sievers, 2003).

This is the reason why Central Asian communities can no longer be considered as the same traditional communities as they were known before. The Soviet experience and the
market economy have left their own imprint on them. As a result, there is a difference in
the level of influence the communities can render on individuals and families depending
on a number of factors. These factors are the type of settlements – rural and urban
traditional or urban modern, social and economic statuses, age, education and even
gender. These factors also identify to some extent the characteristics of communities.

But before discussing the common traits of communities, it is useful to review their
different types. The types, which are quite diverse in their nature, profoundly influence
the selection of the members in these networks, what kind of services do they offer and
what commitments do they expect from members. These include extended families or
kinship networks, clans and regional networks and, finally, mahalla communities.

**Extended Families and Kinship Networks**

These are the basic forms of communities that are common in many traditional societies.
They are still fairly functional in Central Asia, although they do not constitute a single
and let alone major type of networking. However, they are, probably, the strongest
networks as family and nearest kinship remain to be almost ‘sacred’ forms of relationship
among people (Eickelman, 2002). As a result, such features of communities as trust,
reciprocity and mutual aid are even deeper between family members and closest relatives
than they are in any other types. At the same time, it should be noted that the term
‘extended’ is used to indicate close non-nuclear relatives helping each other, while they
do not live under the same roof. Families in Central Asia are predominantly nuclear
(Khazanov, 1998) with only the youngest son and his family living with his old parents.
Then, as it happens in many modern societies, the levels of trust and mutual support decrease with the degree of blood-relatedness. Normally, members of an immediate family share resources and earnings unreservedly especially with elderly parents. In these patriarchal societies, for example, it is not unusual for an adult son to prioritize the needs of his parents to that of his spouse and children. Interestingly, this does not happen with adult daughters, for whom their children are more important than their parents. If a family member gets wealthy or finds a well-paid job, all members in his immediate family can expect to be assisted and promoted. Uncles and aunts as well as cousins while can rely on their nephews and brothers for diverse assistance including financial do not have such a wide access to their economic resources. The same logic applies to kinship groups, which being even more distant than family members and close relatives are much less prioritized and granted an access to finances and other resources. However, they still can count on, at times considerable, support and aid.

**Clans and regional networks**

The less people are related to each other, the more their relationships are functional and economic in their nature. As such, the factor of reciprocity becomes more decisive in defining the nature and purpose of networking. Such relationships are not, therefore, based only on tradition and informal codes, but more so they can be classified as promotion of loyal supporters, who can be relied upon. The support is a pragmatic response to political and economic uncertainty, scarcity or resources and an overwhelming distrust to members of other groups while authentically clan-based policy
will suggest adherence to traditions, identity politics and social and cultural rather than economic sources of such a behavior (Roberts S. 2006).

A difference between clans and regional networks is that clans formed in nomadic societies of Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan, while regional networks are characteristic of sedentary societies of Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. While kinship origin is important in clans, regional networks do not have this ‘requirement’. Being from a certain region and speaking with a particular dialect is normally sufficient to be entitled for a support from other fellow-regionmen. The fact that they do not have to be related by blood demonstrates once again the functional nature of such a reciprocity even if it were based on the subconscious level. One of the most notable examples, apparently, is a civil war in Tajikistan in 1992-97. While on the surface it was a war between regional networks, as Kilavuz argues (2009), it was not about clan or regional politics as much as it was a struggle for power to access scarce resources within the narrow circle of political elites, who were able to mobilize non-elites by using ethnic, religious and ideological sentiments.

In addition, clans usually are smaller in size than the regional networks. The number of clans could reach 20,000 (Collins, 2006) people while the Tajik regional networks, for example, consist of more than 100,000 people. At the same time, it is argued widely that modern clans are different from traditional ones in placing much less value on blood ties. Many the so-called clans include people who belong to the same neighborhoods, valleys or villages (Kilavuz 2009).
Mahallas

Mahallas are even more pervasive and influential forms of communities in Central Asia. Approximately, half of Central Asians live in Residential Community Organizations (RCAs) or mahallas (Sievers 2003). Interestingly, a definition of mahalla provided by Yalcin (2002) describes the very services and functions characteristic of bureaucracy:

Mahalla exist as a territorial unification of people within the framework of which many social problems, in relation to people or the state are solved collectively… The mahalla had a double function: on one hand it was an important tool for implementing state policy, regulation, and controlling the masses’ frames of mind; on the other the mahalla community was an intermediate link between the government and individuals, and functioned as a restraining factor (141).

Originally village communities, where they existed for economic reasons, mahallas were formed as city communities (Yalcin, 2002) and as such they are the most famous communities of the cities. Since mahallas have been a key source of social services for residents (Sievers, 2002) during the Soviet rule their role and influence has decreased as a result of social welfare policies. This has lead to division of town and city population into Soviet-type apartment buildings and traditional mahallas similar to village houses (Sievers, 2002) with courtyards. The Soviet-type settlements have slowly eradicated a close, face-to-face contact that is necessary for effective functioning of communal networks. Residents of such buildings resemble Western urban inhabitants in many aspects.
Although mahalla-type settlements were considered as inefficient utilization of space by Soviet planners a large portion of city populace has chosen to live in them because of the social benefits associated with them. When interviewed on why people prefer mahallas to apartments, Uzbek mahalla residents of Osh city answered that, ‘So you’re stepping out with a T-shirt? [That’s OK] It’s your own hovli [courtyard]. You’re watching the kids? Yelling at the kids? It’s your own hovli. Now in the apartment building, two apartments may be next to each other, but you live by yourself… On your own land, you live under your own conditions, in your own hovli – a free life’ (Liu 2007). The interesting contradiction that was noted about life in both types of settlements is that being private, mahalla houses are also fairly social, while apartments are crowded and alienating at the same time (Liu 2007).

There are substantial benefits for mahalla members who remain loyal to its informal rules and traditions. Since independence the mahallas have attained their almost pre-Soviet role and influence. Their benefits are deemed particularly important during crises, which were frequent and deep at this time (Sievers, 2002). The benefits are of a very diverse character and include, for example, baby-sitting with neighbors’ children, providing support to elders and financial assistance to poor families, pressing wealthy residents to share some of their resources (112). They even mediate the cases of domestic abuse and frequently prevent divorces.

More importantly, mahallas became a source of economic activities in the time of high unemployment after the break-up of the Soviet Union, when the state was no longer able to provide the basic services for people. Sievers (2003) defines it thusly,
with the collapse of the state’s ability to provide even subsistence employment, the economic significance of mahalla has shifted from being a vehicle through which to amass additional wealth to a vehicle for survival. Much of Uzbekistan’s foreign trade has been conducted by mahalla-based group of traders… few weddings, emergency medical operations, university matriculations, house repairs, or funerals take place in the life of the average mahalla resident without some community financial support (113).

Furthermore, Sukhareva in her field research of Bukhara mahallas describes that mahalla members had the right to use all social institutions in their mahalla from mosques, water supplies, tools for different social events and large cooking areas (Sukhareva as cited in Sievers, 113, 2003).

Although mahalla was not abolished during the Soviet Union, its ‘physical and social makeup’ has profoundly changed during that time. The Soviet administration has turned traditional mahallas into rooms that looked like Soviet offices – it has created mahalla committees with formal functions, and appointed mahalla chairperson (Liu 2007) who were symbolically elected and controlled by party members. That was a point, when residents did not distinguish between formal bureaucratic and informal traditional features of mahalla (Sievers 2002). For example, while fulfilling the administrative functions as the head of mahalla and representing the community before government, he was not provided with coercive power to rule and manage the members fulfill their function, but relied on tradition to do so (43). Finally, the major transformation of
mahallas was that they stopped to be a major source of public services and people were ‘conditioned’ to rely on state for all major services (119).

Further formalization of mahallas has occurred in Uzbekistan in the post-independence time. The formal laws now regulate and standardize mahallas to perform some of the functions of the state, which previously were fulfilled by some state agencies (121). By the law now a mahalla committee is composed in part from non-resident representatives of the state. Despite the fact that the laws simply formalize the informal rules of mahalla, Sievers believes that this distances mahallas even further from its ‘roots in social norms’ (121). He argues that such an extreme intrusion of the state into social life of communities will greatly undermine the integrity and the very nature of mahallas.

For example, the heavy formalization of mahallas has increased cases of corruption among community members who are now in charge of welfare distribution for local poor families. One woman, when asked whether she will ask the local mahalla committee for help, answered, ‘If you want to talk about mahalla board, is a chairman a leader? He never issues a single paper without money; he will ask money for it. Instead of helping you, he is looking for a bribe.’ (M. Kamp, 2007). Akin concludes that, ‘without options, alternatives, and safeguards, an exchange of central control for local control may simply be an exchange of central authoritarianism for authoritarianism with a local face, or of centralized corruption for local corruption’ (Akin et al., 2001; Feng et al., 1999).

Finally, since mahallas base their authority and character on tradition and informal rules, they appear to be more conservative and religious than the other type of settlements. They strictly follow all social codes and mores and celebrate traditional and Muslim
holidays. It is of no surprise then that there are some members who do not ‘wish to conform to generally conservative moral codes it promotes’ (Waite, 1997). Because tradition is based on patriarchal culture and Islam it discriminates against women. As a result, women together with the Russian-educated, the poor and the young think that mahalla is oppressive (Liu 2007).

In sum, mahallas are ones of the vital forms of communities that are not based on kinship, clan or other ties. They are purely defined on the basis of residence. As such, they challenge the old idea that the real support in traditional societies is mostly realized through kinship groups. Mahallas provide cushion during economic and social hardships for mahalla members and as such, they are in a more advantageous position than residents of apartment complexes. At the same time, it is also argued that the process of heavy formalization of mahallas in Uzbekistan will undermine their value and effectiveness over the long term. Also, there are certain groups who feel oppressed by the rules of mahalla.

The features of modern communities

The main features of modern networks resemble the ones of traditional communities with some differences. Below I will discuss some of them, which include: trust, reciprocity, and ‘transformed’ informality, nature of interdependence, gerontocracy and patriarchy, among others.

Anthropologists have long noted and emphasized the value of trust for successful social organizations. Trust makes it easier for people to predict behavior of others and by this it reduces transaction costs (Sievers 2003) of different social and economic activities.
However, in order for this to work, members of an organization must have enough incentives to cooperate and not to defect. The size of an organization and the level of familiarity between members influence these possibilities. In smaller organizations, people almost always know other members and how reliable they are because they have already dealt with them in a number of situations. Iteration of interactions, therefore, is a factor that promotes cooperative behavior (92). In addition, community members are frequently related to each other by blood, kinship and other ties, which make trust and ensuing predictability much more likely in such groups.

From this perspective, the neat Weberian systems are not the only possible forms that organize people effectively. Any social organization that enjoys trust of most of its members can be successful in the most daring of its endeavors. The success of communities in Central Asia, then, can partially be ascribed to the level of trust that they have had.

Villages as small settlements are the habitat for communities because ‘reputation and frequent iteration are central elements of life’ (Sievers 2002). However, even the highly modernized urban residents also engage in extensive networking. Sievers, for example, who conducted a fieldwork in Central Asia on communities described it as ‘the generalized norm of trust that penetrates very deeply into the community’ (92). It is notable not only because that is how all communities work, but also because to the contrary of the game theory, people in Central Asia do not defect even if there is no threat to their reputation and the ‘game’ would not be iterated (94). It is also important to note that this description is related to cases within the Central Asian societies since people here have different attitudes and relations to foreigners (95).
Economically effective strategy of treating every countryman reciprocally has evolved into culture and tradition (95). Specifically, Sivers demonstrates this through two examples of social life in Tashkent: riding in private cabs and waiting in lines. They were identified as expressive of hidden cultural norms and practices (97).

The first example reflects the level of trust that exists between people. In all Central Asian countries besides Kyrgyzstan, people are used to take private cars as taxis although there are a sufficient number of formal taxis. By doing so ‘strangers pick up other strangers’ without worrying that there could be negative consequences. This points at certain level of trust. Even more so, the fares are not negotiated in advance and rare disagreements on them upon arrival almost always are resolved peacefully or, as Sievers notes, they are controlled by a set of informal rules. Sometimes a passenger may leave on errand and ask a driver to wait for him without securing him by paying in advance. This practice is rarely being abused by any of participants. This stays in a sharp contrast with a similar case in Moscow, where even relatives do not trust each other let alone the taxi drivers and passengers (Sievers 2003).

Furthermore, despite the notorious reputation of chaotic lines in Central Asia – the Soviet legacy - he has noticed that an extensive set of rules guides the behavior of line-waiters. Because many of them usually know three-four people in back or in front of them, should the transgression of rules happen, it is quickly identified and disciplined. The most interesting is that contrary to the rational choice theory the ones who are in front feel equally indignant about violation despite the fact that they would not gain anything from disciplining the transgressor. The opinion of people in the front lines is considered authoritative in resolving potential disputes in restoring the order. The active involvement
of impartial participants – anterior line-waiters – demonstrates a strong example of reciprocity. The Soviet legacy is also expressed in the fact that there are people who are allowed to proceed without waiting – pensioners, mothers with babies or veterans of WWII (97).

Robert Kaplan (2006) also praises this order that distinguishes Central Asian communities from African ones – these levels of trust in similar transactions do not exist in Africa.

There is, however, a difference between the nature of reciprocity in traditional pre-soviet communities and modern ones although both are implicitly based on economic considerations and social norms. The former still ‘aimed’ to balance the economic differences in the society towards equality (Sievers, 2003), and the latter ‘does’ not have such high goals. Reciprocity today is a continuation of social norms, on one hand, and an expression of purely pragmatic and calculating thinking, on the other. It does not purport to reduce income inequalities in the societies in a considerable way.

Another distinctive quality of communities is a thorough knowledge of people who are a part of these networks. It is equally true about big cities such as Tashkent. It does not, however, mean that everyone knows indeed everyone. Rather a broad knowledge of a great number of people as well as one’s close and distant relatives and ancestors makes it easier for strangers to find a person, a place or an activity that unites them. It is especially true in relation to traditional settlements like mahallas in urban areas or rural areas. When a person from one village meets another from a different village, they usually always find
a person whom the other whom one will certainly know and this will serve as a basis for networking. Sievers compares this to the western world,

Whereas in the English speaking, it is a popular myth that the lives of any two people are separated by no more than six other people, in no Central Asian city is that true. Three degrees of separation are all that separate most people in even the largest cities; most people know by name and face a thousand or more of their urban compatriots. In such an environment, anonymity is more apparent than actual and the boundaries of community membership are greatly expanded (98).

This familiarity makes it even more likely that people will not defect and cheat since information about them and their reputation can rarely be concealed.

One important observation that Sievers made about nature of reciprocity and honesty in people is that in ‘low-stake transactions’ within communities and societies, in general, people tend to be honest and cooperative. But when it comes to high-stake transactions and when they involve foreigners, they exhibit less of these qualities. High stakes in business communities turn them into low-trust environment with higher risk of defection (2003).

Furthermore, the nature of interdependence has also been transformed. People are somewhat less dependent on each other because due to the role of the Soviet state and further globalization they acquired more means for economic sustenance and personal expressions. For example, some of the groups mentioned above find the mahalla rules as oppressive. And while in the pre-Soviet times they could not escape them because there
were no outlets besides of their immediate communities, now women and the young have more opportunities to dependent less on communities. They can, for instance, move to other neighborhoods or even cities, divorce, if they find their family lives particularly oppressive and become financially independent. At the same time, it should be noted that with the resurgence of tradition and religion traditional roles of women as house-keepers have reemerged and this, in turn, has increased their dependence on communities and their families (Kamp, 2004). The situation with women, however, is complex in order to fit it into a single model.

The reason why women and the young find some forms of communities particularly oppressive is because patriarchy and gerontocracy remain to be essential features of Central Asian societies. Men still have considerably higher status than women and boys are preferred as children to girls. Women carry unbearable burden of household activities, which are even heavier in mahallas. Besides of that they also work and take care of children and frequently of their parents-in-law. With all that, however, their work is not considered as significant and arduous.

In addition, the increased role of mahallas in Uzbekistan and their recognition by the state as local governing bodies has aggravated the situation for women. First of all, mahallas were entrusted to distribute welfare for families in need. They were also appointed to select those families. However, these communities are not objective executors of the will of state; they are ruled by patriarchal traditions and frequently religion, which does not favor women as well. One of the main traditions that mahallas value is an aspiration to preserve marriage at all costs no matter how hard it hits women. As a result, mahallas
frequently close their eyes at domestic violence and sufferings of women, but compel them not to divorce, if they want their share of the public assistance (Kamp, 2004).

In the same way, the senior enjoy the general respect from all members of communities and possess almost unquestionable authority over the young and other non-senior members. This perpetuates conservative attitudes and values and leaves little choice for the young to choose their own lives. On one hand, it leads to the stronger communal relations and mutual assistance. On the other, it does not allow young people to pursue their own goals and independent lives.

Finally, one of the notable innovations in traditional communities was an adoption of documentation and paperwork. This has started during the Soviet rule, when the mahallas were preserved, but turned into official offices with all ensuing consequences (Sievers, 2003). This has led to exaggeration of the power of written word and a blind belief in it. Interestingly, this is true not only about mahallas, but also many other forms of communities, when people are not trusted in the high–stake transactions.

In sum, modern communities have been profoundly transformed by the strong state policies and modernization processes during the Soviet Union. Consequently, their main features have also undergone some changes although the core features remained intact. Trust still continues to be a necessary ingredient for successful social activities. Communities in Central Asia benefit from trust of their members, who belong to them either by virtue of birth, neighborhood or other factors. Trust makes reciprocity, another important aspect, much more likely. Although reciprocity still constitutes one of the main features, it has been undermined by market economy and is no longer as absolute and
extensive. At the same time, reciprocity and honesty are much more probable in low-stake transactions, when participants live in the same area. The high-stake transactions, on the other hand, are more risky as people, especially foreigners, do not enjoy the same levels of trust. Additionally, high degree of familiarity characteristic of many Central Asians is another critical feature that defines modern communities. Finally, patriarchy and gerontocracy while contribute to the preservation of traditions and norms in mahallas, appear oppressive to such groups as women, the young and the poor.
Chapter 4

This is a concluding chapter, which will analyze the information presented in previous chapters. In doing so, I will be guided by the argument that the modern forms of traditional communities and bureaucratic institutions were influenced and transformed by each other and other modernization processes to such an extent that today they are not as different in nature as the theory describes them to be.

Discussion

Modern social and political structure in Central Asia represents a complex web of formal Soviet-type and informal institutions. On the surface, the states have modern political and administrative institutions with developed infrastructure and administrative processes inherited from the Soviet Union. However, the formal institutions continue to function only because the informal ones maintain them (Eickelman 2002). It is this invisible force that keeps people together and the state functioning. But as the previous chapter has shown those invisible institutions have undergone profound changes as a result of modernization, which allowed them to survive and prosper, on one hand, and to give up some of their essential values, on the other. Such a blend of traditional and modern institutions has resulted in an interesting penetration of both traditional and modern forms into both institutions. But to what an extent this synthesis could be ascribed to culture and tradition or modernization and not be a simple coincidence caused by the contingent necessities of everyday life of economic and political characters? This question will be discussed in this chapter.
Bureaucracy: Traditionalization or Contingent Adaptation?

In order to answer this question I will review the unique features of Central Asian bureaucracies, which deviate from the Weberian ideal. Then, I will analyze the nature of these features and how much they are influenced by culture and/or pure economic or political developments.

Central Asian bureaucracies deviate from the Weberian ideal because they are influenced by the Soviet experience, on one hand, and the local traditions, on the other. While exploring these deviations, I will distinguish between the Russian and local influences, where they are critical. In the previous chapter the following features of administration were identified as diviant features of the local bureaucracies:

- Informalism
- Corruption
- Self-aggrandizement of bureaucrats
  - Overformalization
  - Capriciousness, arrogance
  - Lack of accountability and transparency
  - Exaggeration of importance of documentation and formal procedure

I deliberately placed the last four features under the ‘self-aggrandizement’ because they are, for the most part, caused by the above quality. ‘Lack of accountability and transparency’ is exclusion among these four since it rather causes self-aggrandizement, not the other way round. Nevertheless, due to the mutual influence and relation, they can be discussed as one feature.
Therefore, the three main characteristics– corruption, informalism, self-aggrandizement - are sufficient to discuss the nature of the local bureaucracies.

Corruption is an interesting and complex phenomenon, which is not characteristic of traditional and developing societies only; it is also encountered in many industrialized countries. The only difference is the degree of its penetration, which, in turn, depends on many factors such as the rule of law, economic situation, social tolerance and even individual morality. However, the pervasiveness of corruption points at its universal causes – economic factors and a tendency to rationally maximize one’s resources (Teets, J., 2004). Indeed, it does not surprise anyone that people need to survive and if the state does not provide its people with the means for this, they will look for their own ways to make the ends meet. Abuse of bureaucratic power is one of these methods. At the same time, when the question of survival is not acute and corruption persists, it is rather caused by greed, which can also be labeled as a rational utility maximization. Nevertheless, both have an economic character and, as such, can be treated similarly.

In addition, the decentralized form of government, where local agents enjoy greater power and less accountability is prone to be more corrupt than the centralized form (Teets, J., 2004). In such states, local officials being endogenous to law-making institutions are able to influence and change the official rules on the ground in their interests so that even the most sweeping anti-corruption laws will fail to be effective (Teets, J., 2004). Although it explains why the modern local mahallas granted with the right to distribute welfare in Uzbekistan could easily become corrupt, it does not explain why it should be ascribed to tradition and informal networking rather than other reasons.
From this perspective, corrupt nature of Central Asian bureaucracies can rather be defined as a response to contingent economic needs and not tradition. However, when combined with informal networking it attains a particular local tinge. While all forms of corruption are informal, not all informalism is corrupt. Some may argue with this statement depending on the definition of both. At the same time, when corruption occurs within confines of informal networks or through their permission characteristic of Central Asian societies it stops having an economic character only and attains a traditional character. For example, a Tajik bureaucrat frequently favors some clients over others only because they belong to his network or community (Davlatshoev, 2006).

Furthermore, corruption is related to informal networking due to the almost annihilated accountability that the latter causes. For instance, since certain regional groups overtake some government agencies, they bring ‘their’ people to these agencies. These people, in turn, are protected from prosecution for bribery or other economic crimes by virtue of belonging to the network, which governs the agency. This increases the opportunities for officials to commit corruption. In exchange for this protection, they remain loyal to their boss. Although this reminds a patron-client relationship, there is a difference because it usually happens within regional networks, kinship groups or clans, where loyalties are based not only on material benefits, but also social, cultural or geographical commonness.

At the same time, purely pragmatic and economic nature of corruption should not be confused with tradition, with which it only overlaps in certain areas. As it is discussed above traditional practices can only aggravate and increase the levels of corruption, but by itself do not create it. For example, while belongingness to a certain informal group
may help a person to attain some of his bureaucratic goals, it is by far not the only way to do so. Money can help as effectively and sometimes even more so when there are no connections. It is an accepted and uncomplicated practice for an unconnected person to find someone in an agency who will deal with his issues for an informal and almost standardized fee. To an extent this simplifies and accelerates the procedure even when it has to be processed by several offices. Thus, corruption can rather be classified as a relatively modern phenomenon and a side effect of the money economy than a reflection of a tradition.

Informalism, another aspect of Central Asian bureaucracies, is probably the only feature, which is so explicitly connected to traditional practices. As it was discussed above, there is a difference between informal networks in Russia and Central Asia. They are more extensive here due to the role played by communities. Different regional groups control agencies succeeding each other after power struggles, civil conflicts or other transformations. In Tajikistan this was even true during the Soviet rule and the northern regional group known as Leninabadi controlled the administration and other resources. During the civil war of 1992-97 the power has shifted to the Southern groups such as Kulobi, Dangara and even Pamiri, which have less in common with all other groups in the Republic.

It should be noted also that just like in the Soviet case informal groups in administration represent a complex blend of diverse networks, which also include the Soviet-type ‘blat networks’. The latter are a response to economic exigencies and as such have less in common with the traditional communal networks. However, even the formation of such purely functional networks requires a good amount of social capital (Sievers, 2003),
which is possible only if members of a society have had a history of mutual cooperation and assistance. Overall, an ability of successful networking in a society signifies its good potential to form many other organizations and institutions or, in other words, serves as a good basis for development (Sievers, 2003).

In his anthropological inquiry, for example, Eickelman (2002) emphasizes the importance of understanding of informal nature of formal institutions,

because kinship forms and the personalization of social relationships permeate even bureaucratic and industrial settings, often in an effort to make such relationships more reliable. It’s not unusual to find the key offices of government in Middle East composed of close relations… because kinship ties are assumed to be a guarantee of loyalty… Many businesses are also organized along the lines of family and religion (143).

Interestingly, penetration of bureaucratic agencies with informal networks does not undermine formal procedure and functioning of administration. No matter who is in power, all groups strictly follow the officially prescribed ways of doing bureaucratic business or at least try to leave an impression of loyal guardians of the rules. They uphold them for two reasons: to legitimize their power and ‘right' to charge fees for their services and to maintain superficially impeccable reputation in the environment of competing networks. However, it is quite superficial and does not prevent them from being corrupt, ineffective and arrogant. In fact, the last two traits serve definite purposes, which will be discussed below.
Thus, the communal relationships and informal codes have deeply been implanted into modern administration. As such they shaped the unique nature of Central Asian bureaucracy and serve as a sure sign of its traditionalization.

The third feature – self-aggrandizement – is also relatively an Asian feature, which, however, is not so straightforward to trace. First of all, power-holders are naturally respected and feared by many Central Asians. They are rarely openly challenged and confronted by the ruled. As a result, many people strive for power or at least try to control everything within narrow spheres of their influence. Frequently, even unnecessary exercise of power seems legitimate to the ruled, when it is based on a bureaucratic position or socio-economic status (Fursov, 2005).

The sources of such a regard to power could be ascribed, on one hand, to the notorious Eastern despotism, which traditionally was based on the full obedience of the ruled. However, Fursov (2005) has challenged this idea by noting that the form of governance in Russia and Central Eurasia has had its own unique nature. He defined it as the ‘Central Eurasian Power Model’. In Russia it was inherited from the Mongol power known as Golden Horde, which effectively controlled its Russian principalities from the distance. The Mongols were the greatest steppe power, which essentially was a ‘military machine based on combination of violence and consent’ (31). He distinguishes this form from the Eastern despotism and the Western absolutism because the last two were highly institutionalized and limited and as such had much more common with each other than with the Russian autocracy (34).

The main features of this form of governance that are pertinent to this study are:
- The primacy of control over population above control over land and, further, over property
- Extragality

The first feature is explained by the fact that since the nomads controlled the vast areas of steppes, control over population was much more important than control over land (34). The other feature – extralegality – is manifested in a way that the dominant power did not allow any other group or organization to become a real and strong competing power. Fursov (2005) describes it in the following way:

It tried to be (and it was) free from society, from population, from any dominant groups which acted as its functions or organs; that is why it was free to be extra-revolutionary (be it Peter the Great, the ‘extreme socialists’ of 1917 or the ‘extreme liberals’ of the 1990s) in performing even reactionary acts (35).

He further argues that exactly because of these features, communism has found a fertile soil in Russia and Central Asia (35). While this connection can be questioned, their influence on human relations and on interaction between the state and people or bureaucracy cannot be underestimated. It explains to an extent why the state tended to be autocratic here whether those were tsars, khans or even modern presidents.

The first feature explains also why controlling hearts and minds of the ruled was more important than controlling resources. In a way the Soviet and modern Central Asian bureaucracies reflect this kind of relations between bureaucrats and clients. Frequently, bureaucrats, as agents of the state, are more interested in the possibility to affirm their
power than to gain financial rewards. No wonder, humiliation and psychological torture of clients are unavoidable and, to an extent, justified.

This normalization, undoubtedly, contributes to capriciousness and self-centeredness of bureaucrats. At the same time, one should not ascribe it to culture and tradition only. The notorious inefficiency inherited from the Soviet bureaucracy coupled with the current lack of accountability leave an ample room for bureaucrats to act on their own discretion while interpreting and executing the laws and procedures. In addition, the lack of technical training only adds up to their desire to complicate and overemphasize their otherwise simple tasks. Moreover, this freedom and inefficiency are tacitly accepted by the state and society.

The final picture of bureaucratic capriciousness, therefore, looks as follows. Personal desire of administrators to assert their power and, therefore, importance is backed up by the culture and tradition. This is not precluded by the system of checks and balances, which either does not exist or highly ineffective in the post-soviet societies. The technical incompetence of bureaucrats only increases overformalization and excessive documentation as they need to legitimate their behavior and existence by presenting their work as complex and important. Finally, although the economic gains in form of bribes do influence the behavior of administrators, their capriciousness and arrogance is mostly explained by psychological gains sanctioned by tradition and ineffective modern system.

Thus, the three ‘deviant’ features of Central Asian bureaucracies have traditional, economic and psychological roots. As much as it is mistaken to ascribe them to tradition only, it is as misleading to overlook the cultural influences on this deliberately formal and
highly technical form of human relations. Undoubtedly these influences undermine the integrity and effectiveness of bureaucracy. It is no longer rational, objective and even moral. On a closer scrutiny, however, one will realize that things are not that simple.

Ironically enough, the wickedness of bureaucracy has its own positive aspects. These ‘localized’ features solve some inherent problems of ideal bureaucracy, which were listed in the second chapter. From a moral standpoint, the three features diminish the problem of professional alienation that causes lack of motivation and low productivity. As a result, they somewhat contribute to technical efficiency.

First of all, informalism and relative freedom alleviate the problem of impersonality and high standardization albeit at the expense of the public interests. Chester Barnard (1938) notes on this that ‘informalism allows a bureaucrat to feel that he or she is not just a “cog” but still a human being with the power of choice’. Furthermore, small bribes keep bureaucrats personally interested in the outcomes of their everyday work. Francis Lui (1985) argues, for example, that ‘bribing strategies... minimize the average value of the time costs of the queue... [and the official] ...could choose to speed up the service when bribery is allowed.’ Finally, self-aggrandizement fulfills the psychological needs of administrative workers. Thus, despite clear negative outcomes for the clients, these features reduce the inhumane aspect of heavy differentiation and hierarchical structure of bureaucracy.

These factors, however, do not improve other criticized aspects of this institution; they do, in fact, aggravate them. For example, when a bureaucracy is a manifestation of power relations in a society, informal networks within it only reinforce the formed power
configuration. It happens because the dominant network brings its own people to all governmental agencies, who will be interested in and support the status quo.

These local features—corruption, informalism, self-aggrandizement—are, then, caused by diverse factors of economic, cultural and psychological characters. Interestingly, each feature is also influenced by all these factors. However, usually one of the factors is dominant in each case. Corruption is mostly caused, for example, by economic reasons although traditional informalism contributes to it. At the same time, informalism in bureaucracy is directly linked to culture and tradition although economic factors also reinforce it. Bureaucratic arrogance, in turn, has psychological, cultural and systemic origins. All these factors shape bureaucratic institution in a particular way, which allows it to adapt to local conditions and survive when other official institutions fail to be functional.

Modernized Communities

Traditional communities have also undergone changes in pace with other social institutions. In this section I will explore certain aspects that were transformed or have emerged as a result of modernization and will look at their sources. Among transformed features, regionalism and bureaucratization of mahallas are clear examples of modern transformations. The main sources of change were the interaction with the strong Soviet state, money economy and globalization.

As was discussed above regionalism is a distinguished feature in formerly settled societies of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. While informal networks never relied on kinship ties only, but included a wide range of communities, regional networks are a modern
phenomenon created by the Soviet state. Pauline Luong (2004) argues, for example, that ‘regionally based power relations were initiated and strengthened by the Soviet policies… in contrast to either clan or nationality’ (13). In the pre-soviet times, however, there were no such things as regional communities as the Republics did not have this administrative-territorial division. The Soviets divided the whole area into republics and regions – rayons. Despite their much greater size, regional communities are as effective as their smaller counterparts – mahallas. Regional networks, therefore, are a clear example of the successful state influence on traditional networks.

Bureaucratization of mahallas is another transformed aspect initiated by the state. The Soviets not only saw the benefits of leaving mahallas as they are (Sievers, 2002), but also provided them with the offices and developed procedures with ensuing paperwork. Such a policy has acquired even greater extent in the post-soviet Uzbekistan, when mahallas have been almost turned into organs of local administration. Although they are not funded as public offices usually are, they are granted much freedom and trust in performing traditionally state functions.

Such an artificial transformation of communities by the state was notable for implantation of the formalized culture into traditional mahallas. For example, documentation and filing have become a part of life in communities; while informal ways of doing things are still dominant, there are cases when community members adopt secure bureaucratic methods, when they no longer trust each other. Paperwork, stamps and informalization of previously formal rules have thoroughly penetrated and transformed the nature of Central Asian societies. One of the instances is an adoption and institutionalization of the Soviet rules governing the waiting lines mentioned above (Sievers, 2003).
Many of these factors that transformed communities can be labeled also as the modernization processes. Modernization is a fuzzy phenomenon to discuss here because it overlaps with and, in fact, include the development of money economy and the state intervention factors. For example, literacy and urbanization of Central Asia were largely influenced by the government policies. Furthermore, massive movement to other countries is considered as a feature of modernization or globalization and a by-product of capitalism, all together.

Nevertheless, modernization processes are often considered as independent factors that happen regardless of government policies or other single factors (Lerner, 1958). In a sense, as historical processes they transcend the state factor, which can only slow down or accelerate them. Urbanization and globalization appeared to be one of the most influential factors as they, too, offered the alternative worldviews and ways of life.

The Soviet state has started urbanization with the building of the apartment complexes, which replaced the considerable part of mahallas (Sievers, 2002). The apartments isolated people from each other and compelled them to be more independent from traditional communities. As a result, city dwellers are less communitarian, but, with that, more vulnerable during economic and social crises. A part of population has been russified and westernized to an extent. The groups oppressed by communal culture were particularly willing to accept alternative Soviet values (Liu, 2007).

The second factor - the market economy – has, at the same time, more profoundly influenced communities than others. On one hand, they weakened their core of interdependence, kinship ties and relative egalitarianism traditionally achieved through
redistribution in nomadic societies (Khazanov, 1983). On the other, the increased importance of money has strengthened ties of more intimate communities like families. This factor, therefore, has undermined the collective nature of societies in favor of individualism or, more precisely, tighter communalism.

Development of financial relations and markets created yet another opportunity for people to earn for living outside of the communities. This has considerably reduced interdependence and undermined the value of social relations. Gellner (1981) argues, for example, that in many societies ‘these processes have meant that a patron-client model has successfully replaced an earlier relatively symmetrical and 'brotherly' or 'cousinly' one, in which a man’s security lay not in patron[s], but in his kinsmen’ (70). In Central Asia, however, the new informal networks known as ‘blat’ did not replace the traditional ones, but have successfully co-existed with them. It is true, simultaneously, that this coexistence has challenged the role of traditional networks. For example, in pre-modern times, it was difficult for an individual to survive on his own without community services. Nowadays, if the state is weak and unstable, money help to survive even without any community involved whatsoever.

The result was a relative devaluation of social relations and traditions, which had positive and negative impact simultaneously. The positive side was that the groups that feel the most oppressed by the communal traditions – women and young people – got additional means to evade the community life and its responsibilities. It is also important to note that the scenario of women liberation was different in case of Central Asia. It was the support of the strong Soviet state and socialist ideology that freed women and young people from tight grips of traditions in the first place. Money economy has played only secondary role
in this. However, with the decline of the state after the USSR breakup and reemergence of the role of communities, religion and conservatism, financial independence became a major if not the only tool for emancipation from the communal ties. There are, for example, many financially independent women in Central Asia who do not rely on mahallas and consequently do not have to perform all the hard work.

The negative impact was a reduction of a sense of community and trust among members. Cooperation is being gradually replaced by competition. Wealth and material possessions can now solve many problems that were in the domain of the communities or state only. As Sievers has argued, big money can serve as a lure for defection from communal values of reciprocity, support and trust (Sievers, 2003). With smaller money, however, trust and reciprocity are still functional.

The weakening of community ties has led, at the same time, to the strengthening of other ties - family, close relatives and good friends. The decline of communal values and economic difficulties has caused people to look for security and reliance within tighter circles of family. This was especially true in urban areas not influenced by traditional mahallas. Family today is a source of material and emotional support and as such it takes a much higher position than any other forms of communities. In pre-modern times, however, a family was less autonomous and its boundaries with other communities were less distinct.

Finally, recent effect of globalization – economic tourism – has further challenged the role of communities. In absence of the government support and massive unemployment young people were drawn to Russia and other countries over the world. This was
particularly notable in Tajikistan. Importantly, most of the economic migrants are from villages, the most communitized areas in Central Asia. While social and cultural meaning of communities seems to be unaffected by this migration, their value as an economically unifying force is yet to be explored. It is possible to predict, at the same time, that this will further undermine communities in this respect and the value of families will only increase.

Therefore, communities are not dormant and fixed, but actively changing and adapting form of social organization. This partly explains their longevity in a constantly changing world. It is true, however, that certain aspects of networks have been challenged while others only gained as a result of these transformations. For example, money economy has undermined relatively egalitarian nature of networks, but strengthened tighter communities – families. These changes had positive and negative impact at different groups. Women and poor young people have only benefited from alternative values and lifestyles that modernization has offered them. At the same time, the role of communities as unifying economic force has weakened. Social and cultural aspects of networks have also been transformed although their meaning has not been challenged significantly.
Chapter 5

Conclusion

In sum, this thesis has shown at least that the phenomenon of communities is not as simple and straightforward as it is usually perceived in a popular political researches and articles. Bureaucracy, too, is not an institution that is rigidly ideal, objective and true to its initial purposes. These two social organizations, products of different epochs and societies, were profoundly influenced by each other and other factors. Communities are no longer as effective, egalitarian and fully reliable as they used to be before the modernization processes and money economy have transformed them. But due to their flexible nature they have been able to adapt and survive the strong state domination and its further abandonment. What is more the informal networks have deeply penetrated the state institutions and shaped them in a particular way. The bureaucratic structures, in turn, are surviving in conditions of almost failed states only because they are backed up by the local communities.

It is another question how long such a union will last and how effective it will be in the long run. Will the centuries-old communities persist and adjust to constantly changing rules in today’s globalized world or will they outlive themselves? Will the bureaucracy continue bending the principles it was built on and still be labeled as bureaucracy? It is difficult to predict now and it is a topic to explore for future researches.

However, the thesis has validated the hypothesis that the social institutions cannot be viewed as fixed and rigid phenomena no matter how old they are. They need to be
analyzed in the context of historical and recent developments considering the influence of very different factors. The examples in this thesis have also shown that the human aspiration to abstract, compartmentalize and simplify complex social phenomena has its own limits and should be approached suspiciously. Not everything that looks elegant and logical in theory does justify itself in real life. This modest study was an attempt to disentangle the complex aspects of communities and bureaucracy and demonstrate that the old is not quite old and the new may not be as new. However, this analysis was in itself another human attempt to categorize and label and, as such, should be viewed critically as well.

Besides of that due to its theoretical nature this thesis is quite limited in scope and applicability. The field research exploring the people’s attitudes and beliefs on these issues would substantially improve the abstract analysis. At the same time, the study can serve as a useful methodology on how to look at things without being guided by old beliefs and theories.
Bibliography


