ALL INSTITUTIONALIZATION IS LOCAL:

BORDER (IN) SECURITY AND THE CASE OF TAJIK/AFGHAN BADAKHSHAN

By

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

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Dissertation Director:
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In my dissertation I posit a simple question: *What is the importance of local leaders and local identity groups to the stability of a state's border and ultimately, the stability of the state?* In order to answer this question I conducted ethnographic fieldwork in the borderlands of Afghan/Tajik Badakhshan. As part of my fieldwork, I lived with families, worked with NGOs and IGOs and studied local foundational narratives. As a framework for my analysis, I define three main concepts: borders, institutions, and identity. The interaction of these concepts with the data collected during my fieldwork led me to three main findings. First, when the state increases authority through formalization of institutional infrastructure at the border, then local leaders will be marginalized and the local population will be alienated from the state and this will decrease overall stability. Moreover, national identity will weaken while (some) local identities will strengthen. Second, if the state works to monopolize power at the border, the stability in the border region decreases as local groups assert alternative forms of identity as a form of silent protest. Third, if local leaders and organizations are given semi-autonomy in coordination with state border forces, then the borderlands will be more stable and national identity will be more broadly accepted.

Acknowledgments

"Philosophy is a battle against the bewitchment of our intelligence by means of language."
-Ludwig Wittgenstein

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Chapter One

Introduction

Borders hold the periphery of the places they mark. They are the beginning, the end, and the point of transition. Borders delineate territory physically, symbolically, culturally, and economically, and they serve as markers to order our world. They provide us a context within which to make and enforce our laws. The state would not exist without its borders and neither would the symbol of each nation.

On the other hand, as much as we might want our borders to order our world, many borderlands are anything but clear lands of delineation, instead often are rife with smuggling, illegal crossings, safe havens, and areas of resistance for groups living at the margins of their country. Asserting a country's territorial integrity through border institutions as well as symbols of nationhood has been commonplace for centuries. How well this has worked within the framework of a more globalized community is becoming less and less clear. In fact, attempting to secure a state through its borders and the institutions that control the border may do more harm than good.

In particular, along a porous border in which a country on one side has a state that has a marginal rule of law to begin with, increasing the institutional infrastructure might indeed have the potential to increase instability since it institutionalizes laws ill-matched for the context in which they are to be enforced. Moreover, either law enforcement personnel who lack the ability/authority to enforce the new laws will enforce these new laws (and rules) or they choose not to for reasons of personal security or economic incentives by illicit trade groups. In this way, "securing" a border, may accomplish just

the opposite by instead providing avenues for informal networks to cooperate more easily as well as creating institutional systems that are doomed to fail from the start. This only further marginalizes the people and their local leaders who live at the border by creating a more distinct and entrenched disconnect from the country they live. When it is clear to those citizens of a country living at the border that the institutions they understand to be a part of the state security apparatus are anything but making them secure, they look to other avenues for protection, community, and justice. This appears to be the case in Badakhshan, on both the Tajik and the Afghan sides. My dissertation describes how local organizations and leaders, institutions, and informal networks at the border contribute to the deepening of informal networks of cooperation and at the same time, contribute to a disconnect from the formal state to which the border belongs. While this instability may not always be directly in relation the border, the negative externalities of the reaction by local leaders and organizations on both sides of the border to outsider pressure, whether that be domestic or international, contributes to both border and state instability.

Main Puzzle

My dissertation posits a simple question: *What is the importance of local leaders and local identity groups to the stability of a state's border and ultimately, the stability of the state?* Moreover, how does formalizing security institutions along a border that connects two weak states impact security and cooperation along that border? More simply put: Does increasing security along an impossible to control border increase negative or positive cooperation at that border? How does this negative and/or positive cooperation impact the borderlands of that state, which is an inherently weak part of any

nation-state?   Ultimately, does this cooperation impact the stability of the nation-state? These questions cut across a number of areas theoretically and conceptually.

The question of border formalization and its consequences, while perhaps simple to ask, is not simple to answer. There are a series of puzzles that intersect the study of any border involving: definitions of the border itself, identity and the border, and institutions/organizations and local leaders. (1) How do local and domestic identity(ies) interact with the border institutions and the laws the border personnel are tasked to enforce? (2) This likely is the most important as well as understudied puzzle - what is the role is of local leaders and local organizations are within the context of the border and their impact on border stability? (3) Since the border is inherently at the beginning and end of the nation-state, how do local, domestic, and international actors both conceptualize the border itself both physically and symbolically as well as within the context of the institutions that secure or control it? For example, if there are tensions or disagreements about what the border means symbolically between the local and domestic leaders, how does this impact the stability of the border? (4) How are the border and the border institutions operating in situ as opposed to what the state and/or international community are asserting is going on at the border? The dissonance between the goals versus the actual application is primary to the study of any border but most research analyzes what programs are hoping to do as opposed to what they actually have accomplished.   (5) Lastly, how do border formalization schemes within a specific context impact local and state stability? This series of questions is not comprehensive but it does present the complexity and multi-faceted nature of the study of borders and borderlands.

In order to answer the question of the consequences of institutional formalization in a place inherently difficult to formalize, I chose the border between Afghanistan and Tajikistan in Badakhshan. This location provided a natural Petri dish of the impact of border formalization on border stability due to its being a porous border in a remote, mountainous region and also it is located between two weak states and, at the time of the fieldwork, there were over thirty projects at various stages of implementation along this border. Additionally, along these borderlands there is a high level of illicit trade and illegal activity along this border since Afghanistan produces about 80% or more of the of the world's opioids and 20% of it crosses over the border between Afghanistan and Tajikistan.[12] Additionally, human, weapon, and gemstone trafficking are endemic to this border. Therefore, given the saturation of illicit activity coupled with the high level of attempted formalization in these borderlands, it seemed a natural place to study how formalization impacts local and state stability in a particular context.

Importance of the Research

The debate about the impact of institutional formalization and its relationship both to the nation-state and the transborder jurisdictions is not a new one. In fact, these issues can be traced back to the Treaty of Westphalia and the Congress of Vienna. This may seem like a conceptual and theoretical leap but it is not. The Treaty of Westphalia took a

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[1] http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/WDR2011/The_opium-heroin_market.pdf
http://www.unodc.org/documents/crop-monitoring/Afghanistan/ORAS_report_2012.pdf
[2] In UNODC, reports from 2011 and 2012, in 2007 Afghanistan produced 72% of the world's opium supply but as of 2009 it was 88% and 2010 it had dropped to 74%. But, as of 2011 production had increased by almost 7% in Afghanistan (from 123,000ha to 131,000ha) and was set to increase in 9 out of 34 provinces even more in 2012 and 2013 due to ongoing security challenges and economic insecurity (UNODC, 2011: 17; 2012: 31-33). It could be extrapolated from this data that the increase to Afghan opium production could go from 131,000 to 150,000 by the end of 2013 if it follows current and UNODC predicted trends. This would mean that it would rise once again to more than 4/5ths of the global opiate supply.

system that had random and informal boundaries, and attempted to formalize it – through recognition of official borders. This recognition ultimately formed our modern state system. Through conceptualizing borders as both geographical and legal locations of boundaries – the idea of a sovereign state with its own autonomous legal system and singular legitimate authority became the defining moment for the modern nation-state. Granted, this was largely a Western construction, but it had ramifications that have resonated throughout the world ever since.

A few hundred years later, the Congress of Vienna created a regional system that recognized some laws spanned borders and indeed, needed a structure for working out issues that arose within these areas that had no official legitimate authority. From this time onwards, various international governmental organizations (IGO), non-governmental organizations (NGO), multi-national corporations (MNC), and even nefarious and illicit international groups have worked in and around these trans-boundary areas within the global community.

Looking at it a different way, my main question ultimately asks the more general question of how much and what kind of control is needed to positively impact a particular situation and when does that control become negative or begin to have negative consequences. On the other hand, it addresses one of the key issues in the field of international relations, cooperation under anarchy. The debate about how much control or constraints versus freedoms in institutional systems occurs in a number of other areas including: establishing successful illegal drug policies, gun control, immigration, various justice systems, and, after 9/11, issues of surveillance. The assertion that a secure border will make a territory safer, in today's terms means that a state with secure borders will

decrease illegal activity and become safer. This assumption operates along the border of Mexico, Canada, the EU, Iran, Azerbaijan, and a myriad of other countries around the world. Moreover, the argument goes, when borders are brought into some measure of control, the state is, de facto, more stable.

The debate about the impact of the periphery of the state on the center, both in anthropology and political science, also is nothing new. In the past, key scholars asserted that by developing the periphery, the citizens of a state will be more secure and therefore will have passed through an important phase of development which will then allow people to march one step closer to some kind of idealized vision of society.[3] Hegel, Marx, Weber and others, all presume that modernization, or more specifically, development of states is somehow bound to phases of development as opposed to contextualized mechanisms and practices specific to each terrain and/or state. As Nils Gilman points out, while "modernization theory" might be dead, it has not been purged from most development programs, economic and programmatic policy decisions, and funding by donors. He says that most development occurs with the basic assumption that if certain parts of a state are developed: (1) the state will become more stable and (2) the state will become more economically prosperous.[4]

Border institutions are often part of these formative institutions assumed to be necessary for the development of a stable state or even region. In fact, after the fall of the Soviet Union, state formation largely has been studied with the assumption that formal institutionalization of the rule of law including "free and fair" elections, border controls and institutions, and legitimate security forces (army and police). This same assumption

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[3] Gellner (1980); Periods of history literature and modernization theory is also pertinent here.
[4] Modernization theory has an extensive literature and given time and space limitations, I will not discuss here.

holds true for the periphery of the state and its borders. In fact, border development projects that are funded and implemented by the international community, IGOs, and NGOs, are currently in the billions of dollars, and hundreds of millions in Afghanistan alone. This development is designed, funded, and implemented around the organizing principle that a secure border will create a secure state or, more precisely, that by holding steady the periphery, the center will become stronger. The question that arises is: Does securing the border of a state automatically mean the state will become more stable? Is this a necessary component of a "developed" country? Alternatively, in some cases, does the formalization of the border and its institutions result in less stability and, at least in some areas, less security, and finally, less state stability in the long-term? How does developing border institutions impact legal and illegal cross-border cooperation? This query directly confronts the assumption that border development systematically improves state stability and asks to what extent the increased infrastructure at the border aids or hinders the development of networks of cooperation and which types, namely, licit or illicit. This complex set of questions requires several layers of analysis and a careful historical review of different narratives about border delimitation and development (in the context of local and scholarly perceptions). My research focuses on one border in the middle of large-scale transition and bisecting two countries, one at war with a barely functioning government, and one with an authoritarian dictatorship: this is the border in Afghan/Tajik Badakhshan.

Before going to the field, I interviewed a number of experts, academics, government officials, and NGO/IGO workers to find out how I might go about conducting my research. Additionally, I read papers, books, and articles about the people

of Badakhshan, the issue of drug trafficking, drug policy debates, and the historical

lineages of the region. Due to the lack of available information about my area of interest,

it became clear that I would have to do my own fieldwork and gather what data I could

from existing sources while in Tajikistan and Afghanistan. This chapter is an outline of

how I viewed the border as I entered the field, namely, what I had garnered from my

preliminary research.

The Frontier lands: Two Narratives

After doing my preliminary research, I came away with an overarching sense that

there existed two main competing views on border development. One based on the idea

that if we develop the region both in terms of social programs as well as security

apparatuses, it would then become a better place for all to live. This narrative included

the depiction of diligent aid-workers who were working in earnest to provide the locals

with best practices with which to better their lives including to training, modern

equipment, and international expertise.

The other over-arching narrative framed the situation quite differently. This

narrative, came from a combination of locals, foreign nationals, ex-special forces from

the U.S. and the UK, and scholars. They pointed to graft, corruption, and a lack of local

knowledge. They also said that the influx of foreign aid was skewing power structures

and making things worse. Projects that were envisioned in one way, but implemented in

ways that could not possibly achieve what they set out to accomplish. Many pointed to

skewed and downright fabricated monitoring and evaluation assessments. Many with

years of experience in development said that consultants wrote these reports with the

express goal of gaining funding for the next project. The reports lauded the success of the prior project or projects had been whether or not this was true.[5]

The two scenarios both assumed that development, if done correctly, would de facto lead to better lives of the benefactors through a more secure territory. Only once did a well-seasoned development worker point out confidentially that, at least in part, the goals of development, were "biased and lacked insights about what people actually needed was causing increased tensions, and in some places increased oppression and corruption." This bold statement gave me pause, and I wondered if there might be a nugget of truth in the allegation being leveled at the development community. Since I had very little experience in the enterprise, I was the quintessential "wide-eyed" and bushy-tailed green-horn embarking on a journey to lands, as of yet, unexplored by me.

A second statement came from an U.S. ex-Special Forces Officer, warned me the day before I left on my first round of fieldwork, "Susi, don't drink the Kool-Aid. Don't drink the Kool-Aid that all the internationals and those working for USG will feed you. Just go in there and look. Go there and see what you see, take notes, and write about it. Don't get lost in the BS as I have seen happen over and over. You are a fresh pair of eyes witnessing the frontier lands."

On the plane ride to the "frontier lands," I thought about all that I had read and heard over the past year and the echoes of the two competing narratives that were at such odds with each other. One, the story of altruism and good intentions, largely blamed local corruption and incompetence, while the second story, one of greed and self-serving contractors, largely blamed the internationals for corruption and incompetence. Again, the competing explanations both agreed that there was a dearth of successful

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[5] See Chandrasekaran (2013)

development in the region. Moreover, given all of the resources and energy being given by the international community was somewhat surprising. In the end, I had no idea what I would find in the field.

My understanding of the institutions in Afghanistan and Tajikistan stemmed from this basic assumption – that these institutions were the structures by which people organized their interactions with the officials of the state to gain access to resources owned and administrated by the state and its officials. These institutions are the primary official vehicle for Afghanistan and Tajikistan to mediate with other nation-states, the UN, EU, US, and the other IGOs, NGOs, as well as the citizens of their own countries. The institutions tasked with controlling access and distributing resources in a way that provides the people of these countries with a better life or, the institutions that are being "developed" with the express goal of helping to create a more efficient and equitable distribution of the resources, economic and social, of the state. This is important for two reasons. It provides a framework for my ethnographic fieldwork in that it highlights what my understanding of these countries was when I entered the terrain of my fieldwork, and allows me to juxtapose these ideas with what I discovered and experienced while I was in the field as experienced through the stories I heard and the people with whom I interacted.

Tajikistan and Afghanistan "Officially"

Thus far, I have proffered three main ideas through which to weave the argumentation in my dissertation:

1) Institutions are most-often assumed to be the primary form of mediation of social, political, and economic resources of the state – in simpler terms - - institutions redistribute power (and access to power) among the citizens of a state. Therefore, understanding what the formal or formalizing institutions (or mechanisms) for this redistribution is important. The challenge comes when these institutions indeed, do not redistribute resources, but informal agreements and mechanisms within the state administration and apart from it, control resource redistribution and security.

2) There are competing versions among development professions about institutionalization. On side claims that that by developing the institutions of a state it will naturally become more stable and secure and therefore, aiding in the development of strong and legitimate (not corrupt) institutions of the state is key to long-term success of a nation-state. The other claims that development is eroding the state, increasing corruption, and skewing informal power structures.

3) Studying local groups and leaders at the border in context is primary to understanding the underlying mechanisms of legal and illegal cooperation and its impact on border stability. In order to do this, living at the border was essential to my dissertation research.

Methodology and Methods

The original goal of the fieldwork conducted in Badakhshan was to understand how increasing border controls in the borderlands of Badakhshan (Tajikistan/Afghanistan) impacted cross-border cooperation. The fieldwork included participation in customs and border guard training with the Organization for Security and

Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and fieldwork on both sides of the Tajik/Afghan border in Badakhshan. OSCE conducted the customs agent training while IOM and the United States Department of State conducted the border guard workshop. I also assessed the European Union's Border Management Program for Badakhshan, Afghanistan (EUBOMBAF) for the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). For the Agha Khan Foundation I assessed and helped redesign the drug demand reduction program (DDRP) for Badakhshan, Afghanistan. Both of these assessments entailed both unstructured interviewing, focus discussion groups, and ethnographic fieldwork.   I interviewed numerous officials on both sides of the border, local stakeholders, illicit traders, and local, domestic, and international leaders.

While living with local families and in guesthouses, I participated in many social events with locals, border guards, customs guards, government officials, and gemstone and drug traffickers. Interview and discussion topics included legal and illegal trade, border institutions, the bazaars, access to healthcare, women's issues, human trafficking, government accountability (or lack thereof), security, economic development, and addiction. The Agha Khan Foundation[6] provided some logistical support on the Afghan side of the border in both Shughnan and Ishkashim. The UN and OSCE provided some support on the Tajik side. Apart from the assistance from the UN, OSCE, and AKF, I conducted the research independently (which was a majority of my time in the field). I lived in and around the area on both sides of the border for eleven months. Methodologically, my dissertation uses extended case-analysis for two cases and

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[6] The Agha Khan Foundation (AKF) is a religious organization that helps Ismaili Shi'a worldwide. They are the main organization working in Badakhshan at this time and without their support, it is difficult to accomplish anything in the area.

ethnography including political ethnography and auto-ethnography, and the methods of participant-observation, unstructured interviews, and surveys.

The Borderlands of Badakhshan

Badakhshan's rich history presents itself at every turn. The traditional Pamiri houses merge Zoroastrian symbols with Shi'a Ismailism. Many of the people are quick to share their history, culture, and religion, which is a key unifying factor in the community. Ironically, although there is a strong sense of unity, there are divisions between neighboring areas such as Khorog and Ishkashim and even streets, clans, and sections of the city of Khorog itself. That being said, there is still a cohesive sense of community in terms of protecting other Ismailis from outsiders and protecting the integrity of the Pamiri people, language, and culture. This is important because the unity in the community provides the potential for leverage against outsiders, more nefarious groups, and higher-level drug traffickers, particularly in the area of human trafficking. For example, many in the community told me that they view the bodies of local women as belonging to the community. Therefore, when a woman is kidnapped or sold across the border for a drug debt, it is not only an issue for her family; it is an issue for the whole community. The majority of the Pamiris do not believe in marrying "outsiders." This means people outside their religion, clan, ethnicity, and even section of Badakhshan. Many locals explained that a woman's body belongs to the community in that the children she produces are the spawn of the people. When she is kidnapped marries outside of her community (her clan on the Afghan side), she is exiled not only from her family but also from the whole community.

Trafficking in the community intersects with many other aspects of the community, namely, power, money, and identity. The illicit trade allows the border guards and customs agents to generate income, assert authority and cooperate with local cross-border networks. Drugs are a primary source of income generation and addiction is going up due to the increase in the availability of drugs. Both trafficking and addiction impact border stability and cross-border networks of cooperation.

The question is how does one study this most effectively and find a way to understand how borders might become more stable? One way is to study the mechanisms of influence at the border through the formal institutions of the state on the informal institutions, local organizations, and local leaders. Since many of these mechanisms are hidden and/or embedded in identity and local, domestic, and international networks. My dissertation sheds light on some of these mechanisms.

Framework of the Dissertation

The following pages work to unpack the puzzle of the importance of local leaders and their organizational ties to border stability and ultimately, state security along the borderlands of Badakhshan. In chapter two, I provide the conceptual framework. Chapter three focuses on my theory, methodology, and methods which underpin my dissertation. Chapter four outlines the historical context which influences the group dynamics in Badakhshan. I do this through a synthesis of locals' perceptions and narratives about the history, scholarly materials, and other primary sources. Chapter five discusses local foundational myths largely through the context of my fieldwork but also through other primary and secondary materials. The case-studies in chapter six, seven,

and eight highlight the mechanisms operating within and around the local leaders and their intersection with various aspects of the border. The first case analyzes the social organization of Khorog.   The second case examines border infrastructure development and the local community. The third studies key questions through the cross-border bazaars and local trade networks. In chapter eight I recap the dissertation, provide implications, findings, and suggestions for future avenues of research. The next chapter outlines my conceptualization and theoretical framework.

Chapter Two

Conceptualization and Theoretical Framework

Introduction

It was a late afternoon. I sat with Sher, one of my informants,[7] eating lunch in our

usual spot. The dimly lit dining hall in the *chai khana* (tea house) had curtains on each

booth for privacy and a well-worn appearance. It was sort of a Tajik version of a greasy

spoon. Across from Sher and me sat a Tajik security official in uniform eating with a

local businessman known to be involved in what my friends referred to as "fishy"

business. They were getting louder as the bottles of vodka stacked up. My informant

eyed them and closed the curtains. He was trying to hide his concern. I knew something

was going on but wasn't sure yet what. The late-in-the-day somewhat stale bread came

along with the green tea with lemon and sugar came. The sweet tea on the cold days in

Badakhshan had become a measure of comfort for me bringing me back to my childhood

days of warm liquid on freezing days working in the garden. I waited in anticipation, my

anxiety building up. Sher poured me tea. "The KGB came yesterday. They asked me

about you and your work. They wanted to know my relationship with you." The Tajik

KGB became the GKNB after the fall of the Soviet Union but none of the locals refer to

them as the GKNB except for foreigners. By this time, Sher had been a friend for a

couple of years. I had spent time with his wife and most of his close friends. His

immediate circle, the one he worked with and spent most of his time with, was part of an

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[7] All names are proxy names in order to protect the people who worked with me and to maintain their anonymity.

academic program in Khorog, the capital city of Badakhshan. I had grown close to all of the academics in his circle.

The conversation that followed said more to me about the underlying relationships and networks and in doing so, solidified some of my earlier observations. Namely, that on the one hand, this circle trusted each other with intimate details, religious beliefs, and other aspects of their lives and identities. But, at the same time, none of the people in this close-knit circle of academics trusted each other. Moreover, most of them suspected the others of informing on them. Little did I know that the disconnect was just the tip of the many rifts between groups in the community, state, international community, and the immense distrust and conversely, trust, that was endemic to all of these informal organizations. In particular, this lunch with Sher highlighted the fluidity of identity in terms of what face a person shows to a certain group and how that face or identity changes depending on the group one is associating with at a particular time strategically. Layers upon layers of trust and distrust operated beneath the surface of people's everyday lives.

Later in the dissertation, I will describe the people in Sher's inner-circle, the institutions they worked within, and their relationships they have with some of the local organizations and networks in the area. For now, suffice it to say, during our lunch it became clear that Sher trusted no one in his inner-circle completely but relied on them in order to survive. As Tilly describes it, trust networks consist of, "strong ties within which people set valued, consequential, long-term resources and enterprises at risk to the malfeasance, mistakes, and failures of others" (2005: 12) Sher had to take risks with people he did not altogether trust as a means of survival. His marginal trust took

precedence over the distrust since were many other groups and informal organizations
that posed a larger threat. He weighed the threat of an individual and their networks and
then decided how much he would trust their linkages, actions, and transactions as a
means to limit his own risk and decrease the exposure of threat to himself and his family.
These networks had various linkages to people operating inside the Tajik government, the
local institutions, the NGOs, and the IGOs.

The above vignette provides a window through which to view the complexity and
the blurred nature of the networks of trust and distrust. It also highlights the context in
which cooperation with the state occurs, despite an underlying distrust and conversely, a
lack of cooperation with the state, due to local organizational allegiances or duties such
as clan, family, neighborhood, geographical ties, and security needs. The nature of the
local, domestic, and international organizations and their networks were complicated; it
quickly became clear to me that my analysis could not overlook local leaders and
organizations and their role in border (in)stability. Moreover, the impact of local
organizations and leaders on international and state border development and control
schemes. The following is a set of questions my doctoral dissertation answers to varying
degrees.

The main puzzle I aim to solve is:

**What is the importance of local leaders and local identity groups to the
stability of a state's border and ultimately, the stability of the state?**

Three main sub-questions underscore my primary query:

- How does formal institutionalization of the border in Badakhshan influence
  (negatively or positively) cooperation within local organizations and cross-
  border networks at that border? Why?

- How will the local leaders and organizations receive an attempted monopolization over power by the state at the border?

- Will assertion of local identity increase when informal agreements are broken or changed in a place like Badakhshan, which historically has insisted on, and been granted, autonomy?

In order to answer these questions I explore how formal arrangements intersect with informal institutions, local organizations and leaders, and their associated networks along the borderlands in Badakhshan. *Within this research agenda, I explain how assertion of different forms of identity in borderlands, where local populations self-identify ethnically and religiously as different from the majority group that controls the central apparatus of the state, impacts institutional development (formal and informal) and non-state networks of cooperation.* In the following three sections I: define my concepts and explain why they are important to the research and develop two hypotheses based on my conceptualization.

Conceptualization - Key Concepts

In order to provide an answer to my main question, or more importantly, develop hypotheses, I first must define my concepts).[8] Chandra says that one might be able to do research without first defining the concepts, but it would be much less efficient (Chandra, 2009: 9). I disagree. My concepts were born out of my fieldwork as is the case with interpretivist methodologies. That being said, I agree that the ensuing extended case-

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[8] For detailed discussions on concept-formation see: Chandra, 2012; Goertz, 2005; Sartori, 1970. Goertz pioneering examination of the layers within a proper conceptualization of a research project, (which builds on Sartori's earlier ground-breaking scholarship) provided the clearest foundation on which I could build my own concept-formation. As I defined my concepts I kept Goertz's explanation of the levels of abstraction, along with my Adviser, Jan Kubik's constant reminders about the importance of clearly defined concepts, constantly in the front of my mind.

analysis, derived from my ethnographic fieldwork, would be inefficient without first developing my conceptual framework.

There are three concepts primary for my analysis, namely: borders, formal/informal institutions, and identity. First, I conceptualize borders and how the local context and local versus state authority influences border stability. Borders create boundaries both symbolically and physically. I discuss this difference and then conceptualize how these two different ideas intersect with my analysis. Second, I define formal/informal institutions, organizations, and networks that operate at the border. Third, I define identity. In Badakhshan, religious, territorial, national, and ethnic and sub-ethnic identities, as asserted by the locals, are key categories of identity and a primary influence on the way informal institutions and organizations operate.

To stay close to the gathered empirical material I define my three key concepts (borders, institutions – formal and informal, and ethnic identity) in relationship to the concept of local leadership. This relationship is critical given my main question: What is the importance of local leaders and informal institutions (or local organizations) they partake in for the stability along the borderlands? These concepts provide the framework for analyzing my questions. The next section defines my first key concept: borders.

Borders

I conceptualize borders as places that are important in two ways: symbolically and physically. Symbolically because the local population has to accept that they are not only part of the state, but the state apparatus asserts the importance of the border in numerous ways – both rhetorically and instrumentally. Second, the physical and institutional

formalization process has an impact on the local community and therefore plays an important role in border stability. Ultimately, formalizing state-run institutions along the border has the potential to increase cooperation among local cross-border; non-state networks and therefore decreases state authority at the border.

The literature on borders is diverse and rather disparate. The following discussion is meant to provide a broad discussion about current veins of research on borders. There is a paucity of research on the importance of local leaders and their importance to border stability. Moreover, the distinction between the symbolic importance of a border and the physical assertion of the border is understudied. Both of these aspects of border stability are integral to my study: the symbolic importance of the border (and its relationship to the physical border) and the impact of local leaders and their associated organizations on border stability. The following outline is meant to provide a window into the complexity of the study of borders, not a comprehensive or cohesive discussion about my two main issues since the literature on these specific issues remains thin.

One of the most common arguments in the literature asserts that borders are more stable when they are either controlled or hardened and clearly delineated by walls, fences, or infrastructure. The design and implementation of numerous border control projects throughout the globe based on this assumption provides further evidence for this prevalent view.[9] This may be true in countries with a well-established rule-of-law, but not necessarily in borderlands that have marginalized groups that do not self-identify ethnically, culturally, religiously, or linguistically with the state. In the end, physically tightening a border may not even be the most important aspect of border control. Thus in

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[9] See UNDP, AKDN, OSCE, IOM, US Customs Agency, EU border management program, et al.

this study, I focus on the symbolic aspects of the border and how the assertion of identity

by the locals and local leaders and as imposed by outsiders impacts the stability at the

border.

Peter Andreas emphasizes an important yet understudied dimension of borders.

He argues that the symbolic assertion of a border's importance is more significant than

the physical border.[10] As he puts it: "The popularity of the border as a political stage is

based as much on the 'expressive role' of law enforcement (reaffirming moral

boundaries) as it is on the 'instrumental goal' of law enforcement (effective defense of

physical boundaries)" (Andreas, 2000: 11). Essentially, Andreas is referring to the

symbolic construction of demarcations between states. The inability to control borders

creates a legitimacy problem on actual, geographical borders; it forces policymakers to

increase rhetoric about the symbolic border (Andreas, 2006).[11] It also forces lawmakers

to increase criminal costs for violations but this deepens criminal networks by forcing

them to be more innovative and further decreases border security and stability.[12] In other

words, if people don't buy into the idea of "their" border, and at the same time the state is

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[10] Joel Migdal (2004) says that borderlands are rarely clear and rather, the actual territorial demarcation embodies accepted norms of practice and symbolic delineation as opposed to an official, delimited physical boundary.

[11] Benedict Anderson's influential treatise, *Imagined Communities* (Anderson, 1983) while primarily a study of nationalism, bears some importance for my project in that, without some sort of buy-in, or accepted understanding of a coherent semblance of a group, asserting institutional rules, laws, and even, state boundaries of the state, is at best, difficult, at worst, impossible. Specifically, according to Anderson, nations gain legitimacy through imagined or socially constructed ideas of the state or a collective national imagination of what constitutes belonging to that nation. According to Anderson, the nation "is an imagined political community - as imagined as both limited and sovereign" as opposed to the physical and delimited boundaries demarcated on the land or in a map. Anderson goes on to say, "communities are to be distinguished, not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined." Anderson argues that Gellner takes this idea too far in that he asserts that nations are not only imagined but the product of "'falsity' and 'fabrication' rather than [sic] 'imagining' and 'creation'" (1990: 6).

[12] According to Peter Andreas (2000), "Criminalizing activities for which high market demand exists inflates their profitability and encourages new market entrants… Indeed, the illicit global economy is defined by and depends on the state exercising meta-political authority to criminalize without the full capacity to effectively enforce its criminal laws."

physically increasing its institutional presence at the border, there will be perverse

effects. Namely, there will be increased cooperation, (negative cooperation – meaning

among criminal networks) between people capitalizing on the lack of buy-in, and the

actuality of the border institution will hinder positive cooperation, causing even further

discounting of the border by locals.

While studying the legitimacy of a polity, we may want to also focus on how

people perceive that polity's borders. Borders, as delineating the boundaries of a state are

not only imagined in the mind but also created on maps. Moreover, given that most

people do not live near the border of their state in Tajikistan due to its being one of the

poorest countries in the world, the majority of the people have never even seen their

borders. When discussing their country, the topic of both their state and national identity

is often invoked. Additionally, the difference between their state and neighboring states is

brought up often highlighting resource competition or levels of development (who is less

developed and who is more, etc).   In this way, many citizens in Tajikistan I spent time

with accepted both the state (and its borders) they belonged to even if they felt it should

have been created differently. In other words, for the most part, it appeared that the

people accepted their borders as an important and legitimate marker of their own state,

and, in the case of many post-Soviet countries, as a delimitation of their national identity.

This is the consequence of the way in which the USSR divided its territory. (Hughes,

Sasse, 2002: 2-5).[13] But, in Badakhshan (and a few other areas such as the Fergana

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[13] Thomas Hylland Erickson (2001) provides a succinct summary of some of the issues regarding nations
and states: "While Gellner holds nations to be ethnic groups who either control a state or who have leaders
who wish to do so, Anderson (1983) sees no necessary link between the abstract "imagined community" of
the nation and particular ethnic groups; indeed, several of the main examples in his famous book on
"imagined communities", including The Philipphines and Indonesia, are multiethnic countries. Yet others
have distinguished between ethnic nations and "civic" ones (Smith 1991). There is nonetheless general
agreement that nations are by definition linked with states, whether they are based on a common ethnic

Valley), the areas were given a semi-autonomy both during the Soviet Period and pre-Soviet which the locals have had until quite recently.

In some borderlands a broadly accepted self-identity (ethnic or religious or combination of native-described traits) is present. Importantly, it is often different from the identity promoted by the state apparatuses and centers of power. Much of the local population might self-identify as different from the center of the state and therefore, see itself not only as existing at the periphery of the state geographically, but also being different religiously, ethnically, socially, and/or linguistically. If people do not perceive the nation that the state demarcates as being important to their well-being or as a community to which they belong, a state's borders are difficult to control and the legitimacy of the state is weakened. As Andreas says, "State power is based on physical capabilities and coercion, but is also fundamentally based on legitimacy and its symbolic representation" (2009: 143).

George Gavrilas, focusing primarily on control of the physical aspect of the border, proposes that border stability would increase if cross-border security were conducted less by the state and more by state/local-constructed/controlled "border regimes." He suggests that cross-border cooperation and coordination should be put in the hands of the local institutional actors controlling and patrolling the border (2008: 8-11). He adds that the local institutions should be developed based on the particular state's institutional, geographic, and security characteristics,[14] arguing that, "no paths of

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identity or not." In Chapter "Ethnic identity, national identity and intergroup conflict: The significance of personal experiences" (2001: 45) Citation: Thomas Hylland Eriksen in Ashmore, Jussim, Wilder (eds.): *Social identity, intergroup conflict, and conflict reduction*, pp. 42-70. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001. See also: Gellner, Ernest and Anthony D. Smith. "The nation: real or imagined?: The Warwick Debates on Nationalism." Nations and Nationalism 2, no. 3 (1996): 357-370.

[14] "This variation in state-building strategies, consequently, should explain the variation in how states perceive their borders and intervene in them" (Gavrilis, 2008: 6).

state formation are exactly alike. As work on state formation demonstrates, state leaders

practice a wide array of combinations of extraction, co-option, coercion, and legitimation

to enable rule and ensure compliance…" (2008, page).[15] While my analysis confirms the

argument that the institutions at the border should play an important role, I go further,

arguing that not only do the local institutions need autonomy, but also that in some cases,

the autonomy of the local organizations, depending on the context, also serve as

independent arbiters of state security at the periphery. And, more importantly, when the

state-constructed institutions ignore the local context in which they are operating, there is

potential for local organizations to cooperate across the border and outside of the state's

purview, thus destabilizing the borderlands and deteriorating the legitimacy of the state.

Additionally, this will limit perceived legitimacy of the border and degrade symbolic

acceptance of the border. This is particularly applicable to borderlands that divide

ethnically, religiously, or linguistic connected territories, as is the case in Badakhshan.

John Williams adds to Gavrilis' argument asserting that local communities are an

important component of border and state security.[16] He explains that in the past borders

were places to be controlled or built up, but in the increasingly globalized community,

borders now assert or reflect a state's "social cohesion."[17] This is due to transnational

communication, global trade networks, and other ways in which borders are more easily

transcended then they could be in the past. Additionally, he asserts that the exclusion or

marginalization of the local communities is at the peril of the state and these types of

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[15] Gavrilis supports this assertion citing, "Ardant 1972; Hirschman 1978; Levi 1988; Tilly 1992; Herbst 2000; Migdal 2001; Boone 2003; Thies 2004; Hui 2005."

[16] Peter Andreas says that borders are essentially political stages and the symbolic assertion of their importance trumps the actual border itself. Many borders, as they exist geographically, are uncontrollable and sometimes attempts at control actually cause negative elements to increase cooperation and thereby decrease state stability (Andreas, 2000, 2009).

[17] The Ethics of Territorial Borders: Drawing Lines in the Shifting Sand. By John Williams. Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2006.

borders could become breeding grounds for transnational terrorism (Williams, 2006). This appears to be true in the case of Badakhshan since the central authority marginalizes the local population in the state that is made almost exclusively of ethnic Tajiks (as opposed to Pamiri) and Sunnis (as opposed to Ismaili-Shi'a). Similar cases of a border that divides an ethnically cohesive territory, a marginalized population, and increased assertion of state authority, are some of the hottest and most insecure places in the world.[18] Research on border control often overlooks the impact of local leaders on the stability of the border as is the case with Williams' study.[19] Both Williams and Gavirilas analyze the importance of the local community and context of the local culture at the border, which is one aspect of my study, but they do not include local leaders in their research or the importance of the symbolic dimension of the border.

Key to my study is what role local leaders/organizations have in aiding or hindering legal and illegal trade. Where there is legal trade, illegal trade is never far behind. Many states currently include in their border development schemes routes to cross-border cooperation and trade. The goal is to provide easier means of exchanging goods for both local populations as well as international traders. There is no doubt the dilemma of increasing state reach through border security, while simultaneously decreasing state control through trade openness, provides a rather challenging puzzle to researchers particularly if illicit networks are endemic.[20] Andreas points out that illicit

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[18] This includes Kurdistan, Baluchistan, Kashmir, FATA, Fergana Valley, and the North Caucasus.
[19] Midgal also says that the seeking of local power both at the border or boundaries of a state at the central authority by "strongmen" causes and increases the fragmentation of the state (1998: 256-7). The question is – what happens when a strongman is the head of the state and other strongmen who consider themselves to belong to a different ethnic and religious group, are trying to control their territory?
[20] Andreas explains that, "The dynamics of the illicit global economy provide a new and powerful, if rather unconventional, lens through which to examine core issues of concern to international relations scholars: the changing nature of states and the sources of cooperation and conflict between and among states and non-state actors" (Andreas, 1999: 17).

trade networks in post-war economies, which have had several years of war to cement these networks, make them almost impossible to change. If this is true, Afghanistan, which has had thirty years of almost non-stop war, must have almost no other networks in place. Moreover, increasing physical infrastructure while potentially decreasing symbolic buy-in, clearly allows for illicit networks to find more fluid pathways over the border. Locals do not view the state border institutions as including them so they find other places to be included.

The types and nature of the various illicit trade networks provide anther puzzle. There exists criminal and terrorist or, in other words, pragmatic and ideological networks. Usually, criminal networks do not like partnering with terrorist networks.[21] The traders do not like the potential complications the terrorists might cause as well as their diverging goals. This appears not to be the case in Northern Afghanistan where pragmatism often trumps ideology when it comes to illicit trade. Uzbek traders partner with Tajiks who partner with Ismailis who partner with others.[22] These traders not only control much of the illicit trade, they also have a hand in the legal trade. Increased instability in the area, given the common interest of the monetary rewards from the drug trafficking, is more likely if the local leaders and organizations begin to feel they are being locked out of their illicit businesses. Currently, this appears to be the case in the borderlands of Badakhshan where state and international forces are working to assert authority more and more.

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[21] "Terrorists are driven by God; illicit traders are driven by greed" (Naim, 2009).
[22] During my fieldwork at the border I witnessed a number of illicit transactions including Tajiks and Chinese working together; Uzbeks and Tajiks; Ismailis and Tajiks. I also interviewed many people working in trafficking who said they partnered with who they needed to and a number of the traffickers were involved in international illicit networks. (Specifically, I had discussions with two drug lords, two gemstone traffickers, a Drug Control Agency official, OSCE Tajik Border Management personnel, UNDP Border personnel, Afghan border police, and Tajik Customs officials as well as numerous local businessmen.)

Economic inequality between bordering states also has been found to cause border instability. In a cross-sectional statistical analysis, Paul Poast and David Carter (2012) used the "erection of a barrier" as their key indicator of border instability. They focus on the physical side of the border as opposed to the symbolic. In their research they found that barriers were constructed most often along borders of states with economic inequality. Andreas (2000; 2009) points out, at the border of Mexico and California border, a strong and a weak state, strengthening measures have caused even more instability.

Along most of the borders I have studied including Pakistan/Afghanistan, Afghanistan/Tajikistan, Tajikistan/Kyrgyzstan, Iran/Azerbaijan, and the Baluch and Kurdish areas, economic inequality is not present but they all have socio-economically disadvantaged communities on both sides of the border. They also have numerous border development projects in process. As numerous border infrastructure projects and more formalized access points are being implemented and designed, due to the hostile terrain, barriers along the border cannot be erected. In many of these areas barriers would have been erected if the geography had permitted. It is hard to imagine how tightening the border at specific crossing points could create more stability. In either case, tightening of a border between two states with equally weak economies or between states with unequal economies appears to increase instability. Paradoxically, increased border infrastructural development or the erection of barriers does not improve stability. It is because while the physical border is being built up, there is eroding local acceptance of the state institutions enforcing the borders, and therefore the symbolic significance of the border diminishes.

Along with the negative impact of increased border infrastructure on border stability, there is the issue of two bordering countries that lack an entrenched rule of law and have porous borders due to hostile terrain. In these cases increasing the institutional infrastructure has the potential for causing even more instability. This is particularly true if it institutionalizes laws enforced by non-local law enforcement personnel. In this context, "securing" a border, may accomplish just the opposite. By further marginalizing the people who live at the border, the central authorities cause an increased disconnect from the state. In fact, formal institutionalization at the border without local buy-in has the potential to increase cooperation between informal networks. When it is clear to the citizens living at the border that the state institutions meant to provide security are anything but making them secure, they look elsewhere for protection and justice such as local leaders and their associated organizations. More importantly, in much of the world, the rule of law as asserted by the state is anything but entrenched. In these areas accepted unwritten agreements enforced by clans, neighborhoods, kinship networks, dynastic groups, and religious groups, enhancing the non-existent rule of law serves to do anything but that. At the border, when local groups are marginalized by the state, these networks will find other groups to work with, particularly if their income comes in large part from illicit activity.

For example, if the national organizations and institutions, supported by the international community, are in competition for resources, control, or authority with the local leaders, organizations, and/or informal institutions located at the border, these groups will have different imaginaries of the role of the border and border personnel. Additionally, local leadership and their associated networks, given they have a different

imaginary or conception of the land, might perceive a presence by outsiders as a threat to their local community at the border. These local leaders and their groups may deepen their networks in opposition to the domestic and international organizations implementing border development projects at the border.   It is not difficult to ascertain that this will cause tension at the border. In fact, one could even go so far as to say that people living in borderlands, which historically have been excluded from the central authority or state power structure and therefore resistant to outside intrusion, control, or colonization, deepen and broaden their local networks in reaction to state or international intervention particularly if outside interventions are perceived as counter to the locals economic prosperity or social order. n the following section I define how I conceptualize networks, groups, organizations, and institutions.

This is even truer in a territory or cross-border region with a distinct and insular community ethnically, religiously, and/or culturally but has had a border cut through it by outsiders or non-locals. In this case, isolating local organizations and leaders might indeed have a deleterious effect on both the stability of that border and the state. Cases that include some of these parameters: divided territory, marginalized population, increased assertion of state authority, are some of the hottest and most insecure places in the world. This includes Kurdistan, Baluchistan, Kashmir, FATA, Fergana Valley, and the North Caucasus. While some of these areas have territorial disputes and others do not, they all have populations that are marginal from the point of view of the central state authority; borders that cut between distinct social, cultural, and/or religious groups, and are subject to either domestic and/or international intervention and/or assertion of control.

As Williams, Anderson, and others highlight in various ways, even if the border is erected by legitimate state institutions, cross-border security cooperation is developed, and a community that lives there is coherent, the borderlands will remain hotspots open to trafficking, criminal activities, and subversion of the state, if that "border" community is marginalized by the state or does not imagine the state as belonging to them for whatever reason. More recently, cross-border cooperation projects, which include joint-security training for border commanders, guards, and troops, and customs official and agents, have focused on what Gavrilis terms, "border regimes." This type of development assumes that: (1) cooperation among state security apparatuses at the border will decrease border disputes; (2) this type of cooperation will decrease trafficking because the local institutions will be empowered with asserting the rule of law within theses "regimes" as trans-border teams of security institutions. These assumptions, which argue that cross-border cooperation and local autonomy of border institutions are important to the security of the state, exclude the impact of the local culture, the context, and the borderlands as they relate to the central authority as well as the symbolic importance of the border.

In my discussion on borders I highlighted a number of authors who focus on diverse and sometimes intersecting challenges. Andreas points out the importance of border symbolism for border stability. He also suggests that increasing border security increases cooperation between illicit networks thereby having the opposite effect of the intended goals. Gavrilis and Williams highlight that the state needs to take into account the local context, as well as include local stakeholders in border development in order to successfully implement border infrastructure projects. Poast and Carter explore

economic inequality between two countries sharing a common border as a factor of

border instability. Their research is a cross-sectional statistical study that highlights the

impact of the on the erection of barriers on border stability. While all of these studies

focus on different and important aspects of border stability, they do not include the

impact of local leaders and/or the symbolic importance of a border to a local population

and ultimately to border and state stability. In my research I hope to begin to fill this gap

in the research. In order to begin to explore these gaps in the literature, I have to define

my next set of concepts: local organizations, networks of cooperation, and local and

domestic institutions (both formal and informal). Institutions are central to any border.

They also are primary to my thesis about borders. Therefore, the next section

conceptualizes formal and informal institutions, as well as organizations and networks.

Formal and Informal Institutions and Organizations

Extensive scholarship exists on institutions not only in comparative politics but

also in international relations, sociology, anthropology, economics, and other fields. For

the purposes of my dissertation I am going to build on Douglas North's definition. North

says that institutions are "any form of constraint on human action" (Hughes and

Gwendolyn 2002: 25; North, 1990: 4). There are formal and informal institutions.

Helmke and Levitsky define informal institutions as "enforced outside of officially

sanctioned channels" whereas formal ones are "enforced through channels widely

accepted as official" (2004: 726). Moreover, informal institutions operate within a given

set of accepted norms, customs, and/or rules including any group or collective behavior such as hospitality, family life, and extrajudicial practices (Barth, 1969: 120).[23]

Formal and informal local organizations differ from formal and informal institutions (Helmke and Levitsky, 2004: 724-7; Collins, 2004: 231). As Collins (2004) asserts, "Informal organizations are social (non-state created) groups that have a corporate character; specific informal unwritten agreements shape individuals' expectations and behavior within the group." Essentially, organizations are the groups structured around a set of written or unwritten constraints. Organizations sustain themselves around a set of common goals, beliefs, or other self/group identified categories, traits, or features. Informal/local organizations mediate through, and are constrained by, the unwritten agreements, customary norms of the informal institutions.

For the most part, my dissertation analyzes informal networks, local organizations, and local leaders and the unwritten agreements at the border as they interact with the state-run official institutions at the border. The reason for this focus is that in Tajikistan and Afghanistan informal networks, groups, and non-state run institutions; including clans,[24] sub-ethnic groups,[25] and even neighborhoods, often trump

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[23]See also: (North, 1990: 4; Helmke and Levitsky, 2004: 726; see also Kubik, date?; Loung, 2002; Collins; 2004) Additionally, Helmke and Levitsky suggest this conception of informal institutions: "We employ a fourth approach. We define informal institutions as *socially shared rules, usually unwritten, that are created, communicated, and enforced outside of officially sanctioned channels*.56 By contrast, *formal* institutions are rules and procedures that are created, communicated, and enforced through channels widely accepted as official. This includes state institutions (courts, legislatures, bureaucracies) and state-enforced rules (constitutions, laws, regulations), but also what Robert C. Ellickson calls "organization rules," or the \ official rules that govern organizations such as corporations, political parties, and interest groups.57 fn 56: This definition borrows from Brinks 2003a and is consistent with North 1990; O'Donnell 1996; Carey 2000; and Lauth 2000. We treat informal institutions and norms synonymously. However, norms have been defined in a variety of ways, and some conceptualizations do not include external enforcement. See Elster 1989. "(Helmke and Levitsky, 2004: 726) Informal Institutions and Comparative Politics: A Research Agenda Perspectives in Politics V.2 No. 4

[24] I will define what I mean by clan in Chapter Six.

[25] In the next section I define ethnic identity and assert that sub-ethnic groups and clans belong within this concept.

state-run institutions.[26] North noted that informal institutions "defy, for the most part,

neat specification, and it is extremely difficult to develop unambiguous tests of their

significance, they are important…formal rules in even the most developed economy,

make up a small (although very important) part of the sum of constraints that shape

choices; a moment's reflection should suggest to us the pervasiveness of informal

constraints" (1990: 36-7). Moreover, these unwritten rules and informal constraints make

up the majority of locally accepted and legitimate interactions at the border. This makes

these non-state sanctioned institutions that are unrecognized and in some cases, not

permitted by the state, the more legitimate institutions and in many ways more formalized

for the area. Moreover, for the local organizations and institutions the

adherents/members often must operate within, around and outside of the state run and

sanctioned institutions and organizations. What I mean by legitimate here is that the

unwritten agreements are forms of accepted behavior as understood by the people

actually living, working, and crossing the border. Moreover, when these unwritten rules

are broken there are negative consequences for the people breaking them and metered out

by members of different groups and networks operating along the borderlands.[27]

There are other forms of informal groups of groups or "umbrella"[28] groups, which

transcend the boundaries of self-identified ethnic, sub-ethnic groups, or other identity

groups. Some of these are networks engaging in drug, weapons, human, and gemstone

trafficking, medical and agricultural exchange, and religious groups. I term these

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[26] (Hughes and Gwendolyn, 2002: 29; Collins, 2004; Schatz, 2004; Guistiozzi, 2009, 2011; Braithwaite, 2011).

[27] Based on interviews with border guards and Customs agents from 2010-2011 and observed while participating in workshops with OSCE and IOM.

[28] This term is used by Collins to describe clans that are linked together to form larger networks. She calls these groups "umbrella clans." (Collins, 2004)

networks - networks of cooperation. This concept builds on Charles Tilly's (2005) formative work on "trust networks." As he explains, "trust networks [are] strong ties within which people set valued, consequential, long-term resources and enterprises at risk to the malfeasance, mistakes, and failures of other." These networks transcend boundaries that the commonly accepted formal and informal institutions and local arrangements work to maintain.

For example, drug-trafficking groups, networks, or cartels, often cooperate as a network even though they may have other tensions, such as clan or tribe-based rivalries, spatial/territorial disagreements, or ethnically-derived conflicts. Some local leaders and their associated organizations may cooperate with some state officials and institutions. Moreover, not only might these networks operate within intrastate boundaries, but also inter-state and internationally. This forms a larger network of cooperation such as the gray market economy, which is a mix of legal and illegal businesses or licit and illicit trade groups. For example, international criminal organizations may cooperate with other transnational groups that are involved in legitimate trade or other forms of economic activity.[29] How they cooperate and to what degree this impacts stability at the border and/or the state is unclear but important to answer. Sometimes local power balances and their relationship with the central authorities shift according to state intervention schemes or local alliances with local leaders and groups across the border which shifts the commonly accepted "rules of the game" for these networks of cooperation.

The question then becomes, from where do these unwritten rules, constraints, norms, customs, and practices come? How did they become widely accepted? Who buys in and why? One way to explain this is through a study of identity. I categorize four

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[29] Moises Naim refers to this as the "gray market" (2010).

types of identity as important to my analysis: ethnic, religious, territorial, and national. In my dissertation, identity is the aspect of informal institutions and organizations I explore most. Particularly, how different identity groups interact with the institutions at the border and how they determine what delineates their group from others. Therefore it is important to understand how the different groups define their own identity. For example, are they based on territory, religion, descent, or fictive descent? How are the boundaries for their identity maintained and/or transcended? In all cases a self-defined boundary plays a central role. People have to identify with something in order to create a boundary and define what constitutes what is outside of that boundary. Or, sometimes they belong within one boundary and sometimes another depending on what is most beneficial to them in the moment. In order to understand how these boundaries are maintained and/or created I must first conceptualize identity which is what the next section defines.

Identity

Decades ago, Frederik Barth wandered into the Swat Valley which was part of the newly-formed nation-state of Pakistan. Swat Valley had been off-limits under the British Protectorate from 1947-1954.[30] It was 1954 and Barth was the first person allowed into the area to conduct research. During his fieldwork, he spent eight months living in Swat, observing people and participating in their lives. What he came out with ended up being his dissertation on the Swat Pathans (now referred to by most as Swat Pakhtuns).

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[30] And before this period as far back as the early 1800s when it was being used as a buffer zone by the British. (Tomsen, 2011).

Barth reconceptualized ethnicity and identity. Once thought of as primordial, he asserted that instead, identity is based on groups defining themselves based on what they were not. He defined ethnic-group as having "a membership which identifies itself, and is identified by others, as constituting a category distinguishable from other categories of the same order."[31] This was a radical notion at the time since the assumption had been that identity, and ethnic identity in particular, was based on "discrete groups of people" and should be studied as a single unit of analysis. Barth's definition suggested something quite different: ethnic identity is what people make of it.

Many scholars consider him the founding father of constructivism because he suggested that identity was anything but immutable.[32] Instead, according to Barth, it was mutable and based on "boundary maintenance." He offered a "common set of concepts" for scholars to use when studying ethnic-identity:

1. Give primary emphasis to the fact that ethnic groups are categories of ascription and identification by the actors themselves, and thus have the characteristic of organizing interaction between people.

2. Apply a generative viewpoint to the analysis: rather than working through a typology of forms of ethnic groups and relations, we attempt to explore different processes that seem to be involved in generating and maintaining ethnic groups.

3. To observe these processes we shift the focus of the investigation from internal constitution and history of separate groups to ethnic boundaries and boundary maintenance.[33]

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[31] Barth, 1969: 10-11
[32] Some people contend that "Barth pioneered what later became known as 'constructivism': the claim that ethnicity is the product of a social process rather than a cultural given, made and remade rather than taken for granted, chosen depending on circumstances rather than ascribed through birth" (Wimmer, 2008: 971). See also: Green (2005); Bjorn (2005); Yeros (1999).
[33] Ibid

In Barth's later work, he made an important addition to his original conceptualization of identity. He asserted that there is an overall "social system" with many nested groups within the larger social organization and that each group may have a different identity (even ethnic) (1969; 1973). In an earlier work he referred to this as "frameworks of organization" (1959:12). He defines this type of social organization as *segmented identity*. Specifically, he says that "Pathans (Pashtuns, Pakhtuns, Afghans) constitute a large, highly self-aware ethnic group inhabiting adjoining areas of Afghanistan and West Pakistan, generally organized in segmentary, replicating social system without centralized institutions" (1969: 117). He analyzed the "process of boundary maintenance in different sectors of Pathan territory."[34] Barth explains that people belong to various self-identified ethnic identities within the social organization and that they use different identities strategically.

For example, in one social setting belonging to one segment of an identity might provide more status in a given circumstance. Moreover, Barth describes how the Pakhtunwali (or non-written ethical and traditional code of behavior) is quite different among the Pakhtuns of Afghanistan as opposed to the Pakhtuns from Pakistan. I also have observed this difference among the Afghan and Pakistani Pakhtuns (and Pashtuns) during my fieldwork. Additionally, these groups self-identify by differently pronounced names in their own dialects and often point out how they are different from the other group through highlighting the different pronunciations.

In Southern Afghanistan and Kabul the "sh" is used whereas in the Tribal areas along the border the "kh" is used. Additionally, in the Afghan tribal areas a soft "kh" is used and on the Pakistan side a hard "kh" is used. People writing about them subsume

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[34] ibid

them all under one name but the rivalries between these groups are long and bloody

(Marsden and Hopkins, 2012).[35] In Afghanistan this still is a topic that occupies debates

daily in the streets and the newspapers.

Similar to the way FATA has both long-standing divisions between geo-located

groups as well as an over-arching ethnic affiliation in the region, Badakhshan maintains

boundaries in segments as well. Within each asserted boundary there are sub-groups that

belong to the bigger social organization as well as different informal institutions that

belong to each segment as well as the whole. Who belongs, and more importantly, does

not belong to each group, is frequently debated in the area.[36]

Kanchan Chandra says, "All individuals have a 'repertoire' of nominal ethnic-

identity categories. This consists of all the meaningful membership rules which can be

fashioned from an individual's given set of descent-based attributes, with each rule

corresponding to a nominal category. The ethnic identity an individual actually activates

is chosen from this repertoire" (2009: 11). Essentially, according to Chandra, ethnic

identity is based on descent constraints, or in other words, rules.[37] Constraints imposed

by both themselves and others. Barth also asserts that identity is maintained through

constraints and/or rules and offers a very broad definition of descent groups. As Barth

says, "We are faced with an increasing number of types of descent systems in which the

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[35] Marsden and Hopkins, both noted scholars of FATA and Swat, explain that, "…naming has come to be central to the ways in which states have sought to map the Fontier…and that such processes reflect the power disparities between different actors; the power to name is indeed a considerable one" (2012: 9). They include in their analysis, linguistic differences, ethnic names, and pronunciations.

[36] It was my experience, that in every household I entered and lived in on both sides of the border, the discussion of who belonged and who did not belong came up without prompting. Perhaps because I am an outsider and therefore this inspired certain discussions, but it was even the topic of many discussions I had with people who were from Badakhshan in London, the U.S., India, and Kyrgyzstan.

[37] "The existence of this baseline constraint on change in activated ethnic identities is the fundamental distinction between ethnic and non-ethnic identities, on average." (Chandra, 2012: 17) Although, as I show later in my dissertation, I do not agree that the baseline constraint is descent, at least as it pertains to my research which includes ethno-religious identification, spatial identification, and ethno linguistic self-identification.

very concept of descent can imply a range of different things" (1969: 4).[38] What Barth is saying is important here. If different groups conceptualize descent in different ways, then the rules depend on the context they are asserted within. Chandra and Barth focus on the individual choices thus treat identity as a resource to be used strategically and underplay identity as a set of constraints which limit individual choice. They focus less on the ways in which norms and other unwritten agreements which underline people's daily lives inform identity and group identification.

Laitin (1986) suggests a useful way to categorize the difference between identity as "constraint and resource" (Laitin, 1986). This analytical pair is related to two categories Aronoff and Kubik (2013) call homo economicus (resources) and homo sociologicus (constraints). Homo economicus views identity (and for that matter, institutions) as a matter of strategic choices by individuals as a means for maximizing gain (profits broadly understood). For Homo sociologicus identity is based on constraints, norms, and unwritten rules. In reality, it is some combination of the two. The question is how do we either assume one or the other and maintain the integrity of our analysis or accept that the two different conceptions are irreconcilable and move on? For my dissertation, I simply accept that I use both conceptualizations of identity and boundary maintenance without attempting to solve this rich and challenging debate in the field of comparative politics.

What I do assert is that both constraints (or fixed aspects of identity) and changing or more fluid aspects of identity are equally important to my study. In order to understand the combination of fixed (external constraints) of identity as well as the changing (more individual aspects or internal), we have to study empirically the reasons

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[38] See also, Barth (1971) in *The Character of Kinship*; Schatz, 2004; Collins, 2004; Adams, 2011

why certain aspects of identity are mutable and other aspects are immutable (Brubaker and Cooper, 2000). Identity clearly is a complex intertwining of the two.

Kubik provides a solution for studying boundary maintenance and the mutability and immutability of identity although in his research he applies it to traditions as opposed to identity. I am taking his idea and translating it into a useful approach for studying the boundary maintenance of identities. Kubik refers to traditions as invented, saying that, "In general, I have come to share Hobsbawm and Ranger's view that all traditions and values are constantly 'invented.' [But], there exists perceptible differences of intensity, of degree or, perhaps even of kind, between various types of 'inventions and they are all worth noting'" (1994: 259). This idea of differences of intensity applies to boundary maintenance of both individual and group identity. What is important to note, is that not only are there different degrees of assertion but also different identities. Moreover, as stated previously, some aspects of identity are immutable and some are mutable. To parrot Kubik, "If I am a large Polish man, I certainly can't suddenly change into a small Chinese woman no matter how much I say it is so." This idea is similar to Chilton's (2004) discussion of the impact of language on how we shape reality. He says that while many things change depending on perception, there is also something to the fact that a red chair is a red chair (even though there are many different types) and as much as we might rename it, it is still a chair. Some aspects of identity are simply what they are and other aspects are in the eye of the beholder. Identity is an intertwining of degrees of assertion of mutable aspects of identity and unconscious acceptance and daily practices defined by the immutable factors.

When different forms of pressure from "outsiders" occur, the boundary maintenance assertions may go up or down depending on the situation but certain aspect of the boundary are fixed such as the territory, the place of birth, or the socio-economic status. In the case of Badakhshan, boundary maintenance depends on how groups decide to adopt different categorizations. Essentially, many in Badakhshan assert identity partially on their own terms and partially because of norms, customs, and unwritten rules. For example, in public they may profess to be a nationalist and a Tajik but in private they may assert that they hate Tajiks. In either forum, they may be doing it because they have decided to strategically assert their identity for a practical purpose or because they simply are following the accepted norms of behavior in the given place.

For example, when the state threatens local identity groups or attempts to control the border without local input, local identity groups become more hidden out of fears of repercussion from the state but in private the assertions of belonging to certain groups become more intense and even involve discussions of separatism and mobilization. When pressure occurs certain identity groups and their self-ascribed boundaries are "activated" which can cause mobilization (Tilly, 2005: 134-5; Chandra, 2012: 18). What I mean by activation is both in the homo economicus and homo sociologicus sense. Some use other segments of their identity as a resource, for example as a means of protest. Others go along with the different forms of assertion due to norms, unwritten agreements or family, economic, and/or social obligations but ultimately would prefer to be able to have a nation to which they belong.

As noted previously, North conceived institutions as "the rules of the game" or, in other words, as a set of constraints. If one defines institutions as North does, as mutable

within a set of constraints (immutability), then informal institutions become performed in similar ways to identity. In fact, informal institutions often are associated with identities. Therefore, for the purposes of my analysis, I conceptualize group's identity at the border. To rephrase this: an informal institution can become a vehicle for identities to be asserted. Moreover, boundary-maintenance and transcendence by groups inside and outside the boundaries make up the common rules/customs/norms of both the identities and the informal institutions.[39]

My dissertation focuses on the different forms of identities people are either empowered or constrained by or some combination of the two, how they change under different pressures, and how this impacts stability at the border. Additionally, I work to identify and describe the key mechanisms for both boundary maintenance and how this interacts with border institutions.[40] I do this by building on three main concepts: Barth's conceptualization of identity boundary maintenance, North's definition of informal institutions, and Kubik's idea of studying the degrees of assertion of the boundary. My analysis, based on these concepts, allows me to propose several hypotheses.

Hypotheses

Having defined the three concepts, borders, institutions, and identity, I will now explain how they can help us to understand the importance of local leaders and local identity groups to the stability of a state's border and ultimately, the stability of the state. The following brief discussion highlights the interaction between three elements within

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[39] Chilton, Paul (2004) *Analysing Political Discourse: Theory and Practice*, London, Routledge
[40] According to Schatz, "Groupness does not survive merely by definition; rather it survives (if and when it does) because of identifiable mechanisms of identity reproduction. Consequently, if such mechanisms are disrupted or changed, we can expect concurrent changes in the shape and meaning, and salience of group identities." (Schatz, 2004: xx)

my conceptual framework: (1) identity, (2), constraints, and (3) degrees of assertion. The

interaction of the three elements helps provide a context for the linkage between my

concepts and hypotheses of which I have three.

As different outside pressures (for example: institutional constraints, outsider

presence, state security build-up in the territory) are imposed on an identity group, they

react to the outside pressures/newly imposed constraints to varying degrees. I am

dividing local identity groups into four main categories: ethnic; national; territorial; and

religious. Each of these categories has different leaders and different definitions of the

meaning of outsides. Therefore, different groups (and leaders) have varying reactions to

how pressure impacts their boundary maintenance and/or transcendence. Clearly, there

are many different combinations that could occur at any one particular time. When

formalization of border institutions is a project of the state and the international

community, ignoring input from the local community could have deleterious effects. In

fact, the local community might assert its group identity in reaction to the outside

pressures and mobilizes support from informal networks in opposition to the formal

institutions being asserted on their territory.

For example, when outside trainers came to Khorog to conduct workshops in

training the local customs agents on how to catch traffickers at the border, the training

included a lesson in Sunni religious ethics. The problem was, the locals were all Ismaili

Shi'a and they found this to be quite offensive. Additionally, the trainers, who were all

from Dushanbe, also were all known to be involved in the drug trade which all of the

locals knew. So, not only were outsiders telling them how to run their border through the

formal institutional structures, they were also known transgressors of these formal

institutions and, even worse, they were insulting the locals religious practices at the same time. This is just one example of many which highlights how locals react to state assertion of authority at the border. This leads me to my first hypothesis:

> Hypothesis 1: If the state increases authority through formalization of institutional infrastructure at the border, then local leaders will be marginalized and the local population will be alienated from the state and this will decrease overall stability in the long run. Moreover, national identity will weaken while (some) local identities will strengthen.

In other words, with a slightly different focus:

> If the state works to monopolize power at the border, the stability in the border region (Badakhshan) decreases as local groups assert alternative forms of identity and local control as a means of rejecting the imposition by the state and as a form of silent protest.

Second, if outside pressure decreases and local organizations and associated leaders are given partial autonomy in local decision-making and security, then we will observe decreased frequency and intensity of assertion of insider identity categories – ethnic, religious, territorial – as well as an increase of the assertion of national identity or the maintenance of the "national" status quo. For example, when locals felt that "terrorists" from the Afghan side were going to impact state stability, the local and

domestic security organizations collaborated quite well. Moreover, the domestic

organizations gave the locals working within the security apparatus some autonomy

because they had more access to networks on the other side of the border. This, in turn,

led to decreased tensions along the border and more stability. This leads me to my

second hypothesis:

> Hypothesis 2: If local leaders and organizations are given semi-autonomy in
>
> coordination with state border forces, then the borderlands in Badakhshan will be
>
> more stable and national identity will be more broadly accepted.

The preceding two hypotheses will aid in the development of the rest of the analysis in

my dissertation. They provide an overarching window into what I found during my

during my time in the field and in the resultant analysis afterwards.

Conclusion

This chapter outlines my main questions, suggests why they are important,

introduces the concepts needed for my analysis, and then offers three hypothetical

answers to my questions. My main question is: *What is the importance of local leaders*

and local identity groups to the stability of a state's border and ultimately, the stability of

the state? I define three key concepts I use in trying to answer my questions: borders,

institutions, and identity. After I characterize these concepts, I provide two hypotheses

based on my concepts, questions, and data. In the next chapter I discuss my methodology

and methods. After that, the rest of my dissertation is about answering my questions

through providing a historical context and a discussion of the foundation myths

(compiled from a combination of the fieldwork and other primary sources as well as

scholarly materials and other secondary sources. After the chapters on myth and history,

I provide two extended case analyses as developed from analysis of my ethnographic

fieldwork in the context of my concepts, questions, and proposed hypotheses.

Chapter Three

Methodology and Methods: Interpretivism, Extended Case-Analysis, and Ethnography

Introduction

When I made my first trip to the Tajikistan in 2009, my initial fieldwork revealed certain critical aspects of how development of the border was impacting border and state stability. Therefore, early in this first round of fieldwork I decided to study the border between Tajikistan and Afghanistan and in particular, in Badakhshan. Three main factors compelled me to study the borderlands in this remote mountainous region: (1) Due to the military interventions in Afghanistan and the tribal areas of Pakistan, hundreds of millions of dollars poured (and continue to be invested) into border development between Afghanistan and Tajikistan. (2) In Afghan and Tajik Badakhshan, the border cut through an area that had common religious and self-identified ethnic and sub-ethnic groups, which, on both sides of the border, differed from that of the central authorities of the state. (3) These particularities were similar to the Tribal Areas on the border of Afghanistan and Pakistan. The difference being that the Af/Pak border was too more deeply entrenched in violent conflicts, is largely inaccessible to outsiders (due to government control) and is too dangerous to conduct fieldwork in. Conversely, the border between Afghanistan and Tajikistan was calm enough for fieldwork. Therefore, I picked my locality based on issues of access and safety as well as on the central idea that this was an important border which cut through a group that spanned a border but which had little power at the state level on both sides of that border.

My preliminary research on the topic of border security and cooperation made it clear that there was a paucity of reliable data. This made it difficult for me to gather statistical data and/or other forms of available data about cross-border activity either before or during the subsequent trips to the field. Even gathering data through surveys or structured interviews proved unreliable (more on this later). Given the lack of available data, I went to the field unsure if my first question, *what happens to legal and illegal cross-border cooperation when border security increases,* would be answerable. In the end, in order to understand the impact of increasing border security on the stability of the border and the state, I had to go and see for myself what was going on at the border.[41]

Each of my cases involves the borderlands in Badakhshan and explores to what degree the particular case answers my questions and supports my hypotheses. I provide descriptive vignettes as emblematic of what I observed. Then, I discuss how it is relevant to my questions. In order to develop my case-studies, the ethnographic methods I employ are three-fold. I use ethnography for my, "data-collection, modeling of social reality, and genre of writing" (Aronoff and Kubik, 2012: 28). These methods support an interpretive methodological approach. For the data collection I primarily used the ethnographic method of participant-observation although I supplemented with unstructured interviewing and focus discussion groups (FDGs).

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[41] Note on the IRB process: For any ethnographer, particularly one doing research in a sensitive or dangerous location, which mine is both, getting approval is challenging. Before I left for the second round of fieldwork, I had to submit my proposal to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for approval. Due to the sensitive nature of my subject and challenging location, I knew it might be challenging. In the end, in order to get my research proposal approved by the IRB in 2010, due to the potential dangers to my research participants, it was agreed upon that both people and precise locations would remain anonymous. After getting approval from the IRB, I went to the field with two case studies in mind using extended case-analysis as my approach.

Using these methods while I was in the field meant that I ended up gathering a myriad of data from living and working in and around the border on and off from mid-2009 to the end of 2011. Therefore, after I returned to the field and finalized the conceptual framework and research design, I used an interpretive methodology for the analysis. Schwartz-Shea and Yanow refer to the three components of an interpretive research design as "fieldwork, deskwork, and textwork" (2012: 7). This is precisely the research design I used for my dissertation.

Essentially, I am a constructivist (ontologically) who uses an interpretive methodology (epistemology), an extended case-analysis approach, and primarily ethnographic methods. Now that certainly is a mouthful of jargon. The definitions I use for each of these terms spawn from a long line of scholars, which, for the sake of brevity, I only briefly highlight here.[42] I situate myself between a few specific sub-categories within these ontological and epistemological worldviews/frameworks. In the following sections, I briefly discuss interpretivism, extended case-analysis, ethnography and ethnographic methods, my fieldwork, and the relevance of each of these to my research.

Interpretive Methodology

Interpretivism is cogently described by Kubik who suggests three components for studying "semiotic/communicative interpretation and its components." First, "identify the intended meanings." Second, "analyze the meaning of the message." Third, "the interpretation of the message by the intended audience" (2009: 14-15). Namely, I took

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[42] For a detailed discussion of constructivism and some of the methodologies used within constructivism please see: Levi-Sanchez, Suzanne. "Myth Objectives: The Social Construct of Narrative Influence in Iran" *Paper presented at the annual meeting of the ISA's 49th ANNUAL CONVENTION, BRIDGING MULTIPLE DIVIDES, Hilton San Francisco, SAN FRANCISCO, CA, USA*, Mar 26, 2008 http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p253836_index.html See also: Levi-Sanchez (2008: 1-40; 150-165)

all of the data collected, primarily through participant-observation, but also through

interviews and focus group discussions (FDGs), and analyzed them to provide over-

arching answers to the main questions. Then, I use direct examples from my data, such

as vignettes and descriptions from the fieldwork, to identify how the data helps to answer

my main questions and support my hypotheses. This type of analysis is discussed in the

literature on research that uses "deeper" forms of data-gathering as opposed to "broader"[1]

methods. My dissertation is a synthesis of all my gathered data using an interpretive

methodology.[43]

For this type of analysis there is a reliance on the ethnographer/field researcher to

provide an interpretation that takes into account all of the stakeholders in a balanced

manner, there are benefits to this approach which counter-balance what some view as a

risk because of the potential for researcher bias or a lack of a methodical and "scientific"

process. Kubik points out that interpretation meets all four criteria of "scientific"

research" as defined by King, Koehane, and Verba:

(1) It relies on inference to connect observed phenomena (signifying elements)
    with the (unobserved) meanings (signified elements)
(2) Its procedures are (at least are supposed to be) public and repeatable
(3) Its results are provisional (uncertain) and always subject to verification and
    updating
(4) Its content can be construed as method (2012: 15-16)

I adhere to the guiding principles of an interpretive methodology. As Kubik

(2013) points out, the only theoretical framework appropriate for an interpretive

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[43] See Qualitative and Multi-Method Research, "Symposium: Teaching Interpretive Methods," Spring, 2009, Vol. 7, No. 1; Schwartz-Shea and Yanow (2012) Interpretive Research Design: Concepts and Processes, Routledge; and a pathway for interpretive phenomenology. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 2*(3). Article 4; "When we talk about experience interpretive phenomenological analysis research, we are talking about 'something that matters to the participant' and something of which they have some understanding – we seek to understand their perspective on it." Also, Conroy, S. A. (2003). Also: http://prezi.com/dnprvc2nohjt/interpretative-phenomenological-analysis introduction/?auth_key=3d2c098e0db0a31ea05f2d9f60148ed5144e6d06

methodology is constructivism.[44] I agree with Kubik. Therefore my ontology and

epistemology are interrelated. Meaning, my theory and methodology, at least as it

pertains to my research, are symbiotic. The question is, how does one define

constructivism?

Myron Aronoff and Jan Kubik define constructivism through three formative

authors: Anthony Giddens's "theory of structuration," Pierre Bourdieu's "theory of

practice," and through sociologist, Andrew Abbott. They say that "Abbott (2001a: 61)

argues that constructivism [sic] is characterized by idealism (attention to how reality is

mediated by interpretation), diachronism (attention to process), and interactionism

(attention to social interaction as constitutive). It seems that any investigation guided by

Abbott's idealism, diachronism, and interactionism is more likely to succeed when the

researcher privileges a micro- (over macro-) approach, as actual people need to be

observed in real-life situations" (2012: 8). This is precisely the approach I take in my

research. I study micro-processes of co-constitutive interactions.   In my analysis and

research, I am guided by the principle I am not separate from my research subjects and

they are not separate from each other. "'Objects' of study do not exist out there, in an

'objective reality,' ready to be 'discovered'; rather, they are co-constituted by the two (or

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[44] As Kubik points out, "The ontology of constructivism is antinaturalist (the social world is different from the natural world); thus the methodology consistent with this position requires interpretation. Scholars who agree with an (antinaturalist) assumption that the signifying process through which people build models of the world, particularly of the social and political world, has political relevance, proceed to study how such models are constructed, transmitted, maintained, and received, and how this whole machinery of cultural construction influences, and is influenced by, political and economic transformations. While the utility of interpretivist approaches is taken for granted in anthropology, sociology, cultural studies, or feminism, it is far from obvious to many practitioners of political science. The reasons for this may be complex, but they seem to be rooted in the predominantly naturalistic tenor of the discipline" (2013, 54).

more) participants in a research interaction" (Kubik and Aronoff, 2012: 26).[45] We are all

mutually interacting, reacting, and acting, which all combines together to co-constitute

the context and data I am gathering from the field.

Kubik and Aronoff also point to Bourdieu's "theory of practice" as emblematic of

constructivism. For my research, Bourdieu's concepts of "symbolic capital" and

"symbolic power" provide useful definitions of aspects of constructivism. Bourdieu says

that, "*Symbolic capital,* [sic] – in whatever form – insofar as it is represented, i.e.,

apprehended symbolically, in a relationship of knowledge or, more precisely, of

misrecognition and recognition, presupposes the intervention of the *habitus*, as a socially

constituted cognitive capacity" (1984: 56).[46] I interpret this somewhat murky definition

of symbolic capital in a specific way for the purposes of my research. Namely, that it is

an intricate structural web of symbols and accepted signs which accumulate in the aquifer

beneath the other forms of capital feeding and concentrating in insidious ways.

Moreover, symbolic power through the use of symbolic capital, particularly as it pertains

to the border, is hidden and embedded in the everyday practices, interactions, and

unwritten agreements among the different groups. The underlying power structures are

constructed through signs and symbols that are hidden or taken for granted – or what

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[45] In a nutshell, Giddens's theory of structuration argues that, "The basic domain of study of the social sciences, according to the theory of structuration, is neither the experience of the individual actor, nor the existence of any form of social totality, but social practices ordered across space and time. Human social activities, like some self-reproducing items in nature, are recursive. That is to say, they are not brought into being by social actors but continually recreated by them via the very means whereby they express themselves *as* actors. In and through their activities agents reproduce the conditions that make these activities possible"(1984: 2)".[45] Quote from http://uregina.ca/~gingrich/s319.htm

[46] A good example of symbolic power, as described by Bourdieu is in "Social Space and Symbolic Power" *Sociological Theory*, Vol. 7, No. 1. (Spring, 1989), pp. 14-25.

Bourdieu refers to as part of local and domestic understandings of what is "common sense."[47]

Bourdieu (1975) provides a clear example of his concept of symbolic power through his research on professor/student relationships. He shows that the construction of students' capabilities by professors can spread in sometimes perilous ways throughout the faculty and student body creating images of the students through the eyes of a single professor (which can either enable their success or destroy their future careers.)[48] This example is particularly relevant to the borderlands of Badakhshan. The underlying co-opting, contesting, and/or creating of individual, group, or institutional legitimacy, authority, and/or capability often is metered out through both symbolic capital and symbolic power. They are asserted through figures and groups instilling them with the authority to label or endow with legitimacy. Additionally, on the border, these practices are embedded in the language used by different legitimate authorities, networks of cooperation, border institutions, border personnel, local organizations and local leaders.[49]

What all of these scholars have in common, as I highlighted explicitly through Bourdieu's scholarship, is a rejection of the belief that there is an 'objective reality' out there. The interactions between subjects, the hidden structures of power, legitimacy, and

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[47] Bourdieu says that, "In the symbolic struggle for the production of common sense or, more precisely, for the monopoly over legitimate naming, agents put into action the symbolic capital that they have acquired in previous struggles." He adds, "In the struggle for the production and imposition of the legitimate vision of the social world, the holders of bureaucratic authority never establish an absolute monopoly" (1989: 21-22).

[48] Specifically, Bourdieu says that, "Likewise, in another study entitled "The Categories of Professorial Judgment" (Bourdieu and de Saint Martin 1975). we tried to analyze the genesis and functioning of the categories of perception and appreciation through which professors construct an image of their students, of their performance and of their value, and (re)produce, through practices of cooptation guided by the same categories, the very group of their colleagues and the faculty" (1989: 16).

[49] As Bourdieu puts it, "In fact, *there are always, in any society, conflicts between symbolic powers that aim at imposing the vision of legitimate divisions* (author's emphasis*), that is, at constructing groups. Symbolic power, in this sense, is a power of 'worldmaking'" (1989: 22).

the relational nature of these hidden structures bears considerable weight in certain studies within the social sciences. I assume the same.[50]

Through my analysis I aim to uncover hidden mechanisms of identity production and the ways in which various networks of cooperation contest, produce, and reproduce identity. Moreover, I follow in the footsteps of those who believe that the line between signifier and signified is blurred. As Kubik says, "if we agree with an (anti-naturalist) assumption that the signifying process through which people build models of the world, has political relevance, then the study of how such models are constructed, transmitted, maintained, and received becomes of interest to us. The study of such issues is inconceivable without interpretation" (2009: 11). The way different actors formulate, transmit, or define the group they belong to and their identities is more important than any "true" definition of what that identity might or might not be. Instead it is how and why their identity(ies) are talked about and asserted or contested. My fieldwork and resultant analysis focuses on various forms of identity production in a challenging (and sometimes dangerous) location.

An important part of an interpretive research design includes allowing key concepts to emerge from the fieldwork.[51] My research design worked to develop a

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[50] Constructivism has a long history in a number of fields. Many of the underlying assumptions which are at the heart of Abbot, Giddens, Bourdieu, Aronoff, Kubik, and others transcend fields and communities of scholars. (Jan Kubik and Amy Linch, eds. forthcoming. Postcommunism from Within: Social Justice, Mobilization, and Hegemony. New York: SSRC/NYU Press).

" The ontology of constructivism is antinaturalist (the social world is different from the natural world); thus the methodology consistent with this position requires interpretation. Scholars who agree with an (antinaturalist) assumption that the signifying process through which people build models of the world, particularly of the social and political world, has political relevance, proceed to study how such models are constructed, transmitted, maintained, and received, and how this whole machinery of cultural construction influences, and is influenced by, political and economic transformations. While the utility of interpretivist approaches is taken for granted in anthropology, sociology, cultural studies, or feminism, it is far from obvious to many practitioners of political science. The reasons for this may be complex, but they seem to be rooted in the predominantly naturalistic tenor of the discipline" (Kubik 2013, 54).

[51] Schwartz-Shea and Yanow (2012)

framework for future studies about the importance of local leaders and their importance

to borders using the components of for an interpretive study as developed above by

Kubik.[52] In the preceding chapter I make hypothetical assertions which my fieldwork

supports to varying degrees.[53] In order to make these claims, I first define three concepts:

borders, institutions/organizations, and ethnic identity. As opposed to having defined my

concepts before my fieldwork, I formulated them during each trip to Badakhshan and

afterwards during my deskwork. As Peregrine Schwartz-Shea and Dvora Yanow

cogently explain:

> Concepts emerge [sic] from the field in a bottom-up fashion – concept
> development, rather than a priori concept formation (which) clearly demarcates
> interpretive from positivist research designs. (and that) at a more philosophical
> level, this discussion points to the interrelationships among 'facts,' 'concepts,'
> and 'theories." Whereas 'theory' is often understood as conjectural, 'fact' is taken
> to have the opposite meaning – as certain, real, truthful, proven. But 'facts' can
> be understood as crystallized concepts – areas of lived experience that have
> produced widespread intersubjective agreement such that only a historical (or
> ethnographic – my addition) excavation can reveal their constructedness (2012:
> 39-40).

This type of excavation is what I attempted in my fieldwork, albeit, given time

and resource limitations, the topic I studied deserves another decade of study, but only

received four years of my time. The point here is that in order to study a complex issue

in an area that is difficult to gain access to, it takes time spent living in the area and close

observation through participation.

Ed Schatz (2004) says that in order to study the "mechanisms by which identities

are produced" one must observe them in the field since most of them are performed in

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[52] One caveat: At this time, due to the recent military action in my area of study and the potential risks to
my research subjects, my dissertation will be embargoed for five years.

situations that require close observations.[54] In Badakhshan this is particularly true in that

some aspects of the local self-identified ethnic identity are hidden and even against the

law and dangerous for the locals to admit or show. These include some civil society

groups, local neighborhood organizations and groups, and locally elected leaders.[55] By

observing all of these groups, living with the people participating in them, and engaging

in their lives, I was able to develop a picture of how increasing border infrastructure and

security impacts people's lives. Moreover, the importance of local leaders to the stability

of the border emerged as a key issue during my time in the field as an ethnographer. This

leads me to the primary method I chose to use for my fieldwork -- ethnography.

Ethnography

Most ethnographic fieldwork is based on 'deep hanging out' and 'situated

knowledge'. Moreover, at least as it pertains to my research, I am as much a part of the

research as my research participants. Gathering data from the area I chose to conduct my

fieldwork, was not only difficult to collect but also sometimes dangerous even to observe.

Therefore, participant observation and lived experience was the most effective, and in

fact, the only way to gather data in the area. Additionally, since my subject of study is

focused on hidden mechanisms of identity production and reproduction, I observed

interactions, not to find the "truth" but to uncover the ways in which people assert

belonging and conversely, not belonging to different groups, organizations, and networks.

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[54]See also: Aronoff and Kubik, 2012; Schatz, 2009; Greenhouse, Mertz, and Warren, 2002; O'Reilly, 2009; Fabeitti, 2011; Joseph, Mahler, Auyero, 2007

[55] I use elected loosely here. Most local leaders are chosen by the men in a neighborhood, street, or district through consensus during a gathering or several gathering of men.

This requires living and observing in situ which is at the heart of what it means to do ethnography. Kubik and Aronoff define ethnography (quoting Wacquant) as:

> 'social research based on the close-up, on-the-ground observation of people and institutions real time and space, in which the investigator embeds herself near (or within) the phenomenon so as to detect how and why agents on the scene act, think, and feel the way they do' (2012: 25).

A working group at Yale University which focuses on comparative ethnic identities poses the question, "Where ethnographic research is required, how might we design such research to support generalizable conclusions?" The person in the working group who is in charge of ethnography describes surveys as the primary method to aid in this process. I disagree.

Kubik and Aronoff provide a useful table of different definitions of ethnography in which they categorize ethnography into two types of research techniques and two types of ontological/epistemological standpoints. The two types of research techniques include "participant observation" and "non-participant observation." The two types of standpoints include "meaningful/interpretivist" and "natural/positive/non-interpretivist." They also argue, making an important assertion – that "ethnography is more than a method of research" (2012: 28). They go on to say that, "The term ethnography refers to at least three overlapping yet sufficiently distinct types of intellectual activity and research practice: (1) data collecting, (2) modeling of social reality, and (3) genre of writing." They then provide five types of ethnography.[56] By their definition, my work falls in-between interpretive and postmodern although they make a distinction between them with the former being, "a 'web of meanings' i.e., a (relatively coherent) semiotic system" versus a "mosaic of various dimensions of semiotic reality" (2012: 28-29). They

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[56] (2012: 29)

also describe the different writing styles between interpretive and postmodern as, "interpretive essay" (former) and "collage (sometimes poetic) 'messy' text, polyvocal text." If I accept their definition as a cogent appraisal of what ethnography currently is, then in my research I collect data, work to model social reality, and write my fieldwork as an interpretive/post-modern ethnographer.

For the data collection I used both reflexive and non-reflexive "participant observation of semiotic practices" (2012: 28-29). Robert Adcock defines reflexivity as researchers who reflect " Upon their own knowledge-producing activities with the same tools and critical distance they apply when analyzing the activities of others" (2009: 6). Given the complexity of my topic and the sensitive nature of the location, I had to constantly take stock of the impact my presence was having on my research participants and their daily lives. The way in which I used self-reflection in my fieldwork is evident less in the writing and more in my mode of participant-observation. Namely, I constantly evaluated my own role within my lived experiences and in the lives of those I am living with. As an approach for my data collection, namely to give my ethnographic fieldwork a framework, I used extended case analysis. The next section explains approach or what could be termed as an umbrella method (or approach) in that it really is a set of methods which brings together a number of ethnographic methods under one method.

Extended Case Analysis

Essentially, extended case-analysis includes three main components:

(1) Situational analysis (the Manchester School)
(2) Approach to social change that takes actors' own cultural perspectives seriously (Victor Turner)

(3) Sensitivity to the fact that data fathering via ethnography is based on a dialogue between the "researcher" and "respondent" Michael Burawoys reflexivity) (Aronoff and Kubik, 2012: 57)

Extended case-analysis uses a variety of ethnographic methods which is why I am terming it an approach or umbrella method instead of a single method. This approach provided me with the means to dig into my coffers of data and then interpret what I experienced and observed on the border and how those experiences aided in answering my research questions. I also consulted historical materials, other open source data, museums, and literature. This was either to further understand what was told to me in by the locals or to gain insights into if the context of their narratives such as were they framed in a particular way as a form of protest against the central government or outside forces or to assert their own local political legitimacy.

In my case-study chapters, I write interpretive essays but also allow for a messier, "polyvocal"[57] text on an ad-hoc basis. By using ethnographic methods and an interpretive methodology for the different phases of my research, I was able to engage in a more flexible and abductive[58] form for the data-gathering, concept development, analysis, and writing. This is partially due to the fact that the fieldwork for my dissertation was conducted under very fluid, constantly changing circumstances but also because of the types of data I chose to observe. Access was sometimes difficult and/or spontaneous. I had to choose the method or means of data-gathering in the moment. The next section describes how and where I conducted my field investigations.

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[57] Ibid

[58] Abduction: " Peirce gives this example of abduction: Imagine that upon entering a room, I see a table with a handful of white beans on it, and next to it, a bag of beans. I observe that this bag contains only white beans. I then formulate the hypothesis that the beans on the table came from this bag. Abduction is an argument that appeals to firstness in order to formulate the rule (it is a hypothesis, and therefore a possible rule), whereas induction is based on secondness (the rule follows from repeated observation of actual, contingent facts), and deduction falls exclusively under thirdness (as a rule, it justifies itself)." http://www.signosemio.com/peirce/semiotics.asp

Location: The Borderlands of Badakhshan[59]

The choice to study the border in Badakhshan was four-fold. First, it is a border that bisects a religiously and ethnically connected region. Second, the religious and ethnic identity of the locals along the border differs from the officials and governmental elite in control of the state. Three, most of the areas in the world which meet these same three criteria are too dangerous or challenging to study.[60] Fourth, as I stated previously, the borderlands of Badakhshan are in the midst of many transitions and therefore serve as a site which is in the middle of state intervention into an area which is marginalized from the state.   Projects by the state to control the border in a terrain somewhat hostile to assertion of power by outsiders are difficult at best and cause tension or even conflict at worst. Paradoxically, this is the exact opposite outcome of the goals of institutional development at the border.

The border between Tajikistan and Afghanistan in Badakhshan is impossible to control due to its location – meaning hostile mountainous terrain and porous nature. Basically, various outside forces (British, Soviet, and others) created the border based on what they viewed as a natural geographic division – the Panj River. This division began a bisection of a cultural, religiously, and ethnically cohesive territory which has lasted centuries but is still being quietly contested. On one side of the border then there is a

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[59] In this messy area of research, it is easy to imagine why very little research has been conducted on border security and its intersection with the licit/illicit economy.   Andreas, who has spent his career studying this area, asserts that in order to understand the issue of borders and the illicit economy, a multi-method, interdisciplinary approach is required[59]. He goes on to say that, he blends area studies with anthropology, history, economics, geography and a few others. [59]I will not take as broad of an interdisciplinary approach due to the relative scope of my work, but I will attempt to bridge both theoretical divides and policy divides in my analysis.

[60] These areas include Baluchistan, Kurdistan, and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas in Pakistan which border the tribal areas in Afghanistan.

state in the midst of a combination of a war and a civil war of sorts, and on the other side is a tenuous at best state, with an authoritarian dictatorship and one of the lowest GDPs in the world as well as one of the highest levels of socio-economically disadvantaged citizens who are living in abject poverty. In order to better understand why this border is relevant to my study, it is first necessary to understand a bit of the geography, history, and current dynamics of the region.

One of the many challenges surrounding this region is that there is a rich history that spans both sides of this river both ethnically and linguistically. Trade and development of borders between people, territory, languages, and cultures also have many layers from the past and in the present. This history goes all the way back to when it was called the Oxus River during the time of Alexander the Great. Since much of the history is still transmitted orally, some village communities in the mountains have memorized back twenty generations in order to preserve their history.[61]

As early as three thousand years ago, the idea of controlling or legitimizing international trade (in the part of the world that includes these territories) resulted in the first written language – Cuneiform. Cuneiform formed out of a token system some assert began over eight thousand years ago. While transcending boundaries was not about distinctly defined sovereign nation-states, it certainly was about territories, transactions, and even identities and symbolic acceptance of legitimate authorities of territory and

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[61] Sadly this oral tradition is waning and much of the history will soon be lost. This is particularly true in the areas that have one of the seven unwritten languages. Unwritten languages include: Shughni, Ishkashimi, Reni, Wakhi, Roshani, and a few more. Currently, the Agha Khan Foundation's Trust for Culture has documented some of these oral histories and has ongoing projects with the goal of preserving the culture, languages, and history of the region which is largely held within an oral and unwritten tradition (Institute for Ismaili Studies, Khorog, Tajikistan)

tribes/clans. The token system began as an early accounting system. It evolved into a system beyond coins, leading to imprints of amounts and types of items.

As early as 3500 bce in Sumer (and later spreading throughout the region), Cuneiform developed out of a need to catalogue agricultural and manufactured goods and transactions among trading partners in a more structured and organized manner so that traders from different areas would know that what they were buying had not been pirated or stolen along the way.[62] Conversely, sellers could prove that they had either bought from, or sold their goods to, a particular trader in a specific place. The Cuneiform stamps developed specific symbols for location, time, person, and property. Later, it had images of kings and symbols of territory or identity group denoting both the power of particular leaders by the breadth of his coinage and the territories from which the coins originated.

Essentially, the first written language was born out of a necessity to formalize and legitimize trade among territories beginning in the 8th millennium bce. Today there are many ways for international traders, both legal and illegal, to document their exchanges, including most notably, international banking, western union, credit cards, and hawaldars. Even with all of these modes of legitimate and legal exchanges of goods and services as well as the ability to document these exchanges, some economists say that by 2020 the illicit economy will be only second in size to the economy of the United States – over 10 trillion dollars. With all of the formal legal and financial structures that have formed over the past ten thousand years, we have less control and more informal, undocumented trading activity then when traders were wandering around dirt roads on donkeys and horses. This paradox is something this dissertation highlights through the

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[62] From primary materials at the British Museum in London and the Islamic Art Exhibit at the New York Metropolitan Museum in New York City. A simple discussion on Cuneiform can be found here: http://www.ancientscripts.com/cuneiform.html

microcosm of the border crossings in the remote region of Badakhshan, which oddly enough, was part of the Silk Road and a place in which Cuneiform was used all those millennia ago.

Thousands of years later, the Soviet Union constructed the country of Tajikistan in 1929, with its Southern border demarcated by the Amu Darya River, creating hardships and artificial divides between the once cohesive area. Right now there are numerous projects in the region attempting to unify the region economically and socially. Most of these projects are driven by local organizations, not by either nation-state.

The UNODC has developed a "rules and regulations" program for the border guards, the border outposts, and the analysts working with the UNODC and Drug Control Agency in Tajikistan, but with limited success. The area is rife with corruption, very young, underpaid border guards, and illicit networks of drug traffickers. Many locals as well as members of NGOs and other groups said that at least one in three people in Khorog, the main city in Badakhshan, are allegedly involved in the drug trade. This appeared to be common knowledge in the community. More security on this border might seem like the logical thing to do given that twenty percent of Afghan heroin flows through its neighbor to the North, but with increased violence against innocents and decreased violence against those who have the money to bribe, the outcome may be increased instability.[63]

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[63] In order to find this out, I lived in various villages along both sides of the border, spoke to many people, and interviewed officials in charge of the border.

The international community and a number of IGOs based in Central Asia collaborate on developing infrastructure along many thousands of miles of borders.[64] Many people cite the research of UNODC in their reports, as I do in my dissertation because they have extensive and ongoing border infrastructure projects in process, but local development experts and workers told me many times that the actual fieldwork was based on extrapolated numbers and not real information from the border. The Drug Control Agency (DCA) in Tajikistan works closely with UNODC. They are tasked with gathering intelligence along the border, increasing border security and seizing drugs along the border and throughout Tajikistan. They also collaborate with the European Union's Border Management Programme in Central Asia (BOMCA), Afghanistan (BOMBAF),[65] and U.S. Depart of State's (DoS) international narcotics and law enforcement (INL) section. A number of government officials as well as officials from the U.S., and other foreign governments pointed out that DCA may have the job of enforcing drug laws, but that the President of Tajikistan, Imomali Rahmon, does not allow them the authority to do so. All of these same officials were quick to point out that the reason for this is, that this is because President Rahmon is allegedly involved in the trade himself and therefore is not willing to allow higher level traffickers to be caught since it will interrupt his own business interests.

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[64] Some of the groups working on border development include: IOM, AKF, AKDN, OSCE, EU, NATO, UNDP, and GIZ to name a few. Additionally, the US, France, Germany, Italy, UK, and Russia all have border projects in process.

[65] BOMCA's "Project 5: *Assisting Tajikistan in Securing the Tajik-Afghan Border in Gorno-Badakhsan* The major activities within this project include:

1. Construction of and provision of equipment for three Border Outposts (BOs) at the Tajik-Afghan border: Sokhcharv, Shidz and Pastkhuv;

2. Repair work at the Dashty Yazgulam Border Outpost, Tajikistan;

3. Improvement of facilities at three Border Outposts (Nulvand; Daraisang; Porschenev)." (http://bomca.eu-bomca.kg/)

As of 2011, the ratio of conscripts to officers is 9:1 and the pay for conscripts working on the border is about $7.50 a month (corrected number) and for officers between $30-$220 a month. The official number of guards is 8,000 (on the payroll), but there are really only about 6500 working (unofficially). They have several machines for precursor detection. These machines are some of the most advanced available, but again, there are only a few machines for over 20,000 kilometers of terrain and most of the border guards I spoke with did not know how to use them. In fact, I saw many of the machines and computers sitting idle, unplugged, and even in some cases, covered with cloth and decorated with vases and other items.

According to several UNODC officials and an ex-DEA agent who had worked in the region for a number of years, as of 2011, approximately 350 kilograms of opiates cross over the Tajik/Afghan border daily. The seizure rate is estimated to be only around 2% of the total amount trafficked.[66] The UNODC started their border security and counternarcotics strategy in 1999 and implemented it in 2001.[67] All of the other IGOs, NGOs, and country agencies began their projects after UNODC.

Intelligence collection is limited because of the corruption and misinformation which is a severe and on-going problem although various surveillance systems recently have been installed at the border. The challenge with these systems is the border guards have created elaborate systems of communication with each other to bypass the systems put in place by various outside groups. Since various groups have had to find creative ways in various contexts to communicate in the past, the current systems are just another

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[66] UNODC

[67] They have a somewhat developed canine unit. After several explosives detonated in Dushanbe not far from where I was staying, the next day the street was crawling with bomb-sniffing dogs.

system they have had to learn to work around. The more elaborate the systems, the more intricate and coordinated the cooperation by subversive groups.

There are monthly or bi-monthly meetings between various agencies, some of which I attended, about their border control, infrastructure projects with the goal increasing coordination and cross-border cooperation. These meetings have been marginally useful, if at all. Officials from a number of IGOs said they did not want to share their plans because of the competition for external funding and this also is what I experienced when I attended the meetings. Others said outright, that the whole effort was a waste of time and that nobody was taking it seriously.

Another set of challenges occurred in the actual workshops and personnel training programs. While the goals were clear and well-conceived, the implementation often fell short. For example, the meetings I attended had very little mixing of Afghans and Tajiks outside of the classroom. Men from each country chose to self-segregate at lunchtime, tea breaks, and outside the classroom. The Tajiks I spoke with viewed the Afghans as less than them and the Afghans I spoke with felt the Tajiks often treated them with disrespect. The larger goal of increasing cooperation is an important one and likely through increasing interactions like these, the groups will grow more accustomed to each other and more cooperation could occur. Moreover, a number of local border and customs personnel told me that the training on how to catch the traffickers really taught them how to avoid getting caught.

Heroin is the primary illegal commodity moving across the border, although human, gemstone, cigarettes and other commodities, and weapons trafficking are also major problems. This activity has been moving increasingly north into Tajikistan as increased

crackdowns of labs in Afghanistan has disrupted production. According to U.S. DoS

Foreign-Operations Report:

> … for the first time since 2001, seizures of precursor chemicals have been carried out by Afghanistan's neighbors including: 156 kilos of acetic anhydride seized in Tajikistan (one case); 1.6 tons of acetic acid in Uzbekistan (one case); and six tons of sulphuric acid in the Kyrgyz Republic (four cases). Follow-up investigations were launched in each of the cases and a trafficking group operating in the Republic of Korea has been identified and dismantled, and prosecutions are underway (2008).

An increasing amount of precursors also enter Tajikistan via China and through

Tajik Badakhshan. From there it goes to labs in Afghanistan and various Central Asian

countries. Not only does this seizure illustrate the well-developed illicit networks of

cooperation among and between states, it also shows that labs are as adaptable as the

criminals running them are.

Heroin production is actually a five stage process -- poppy to opium/opium to

morphine/morphine to brown heroin (processed with Acetyl Anhydride)/brown heroin to

white heroin (with hydrochloric acid or acetone)[68]. The white heroin, primarily, exits

through the North and on to "developed countries" while the brown heroin usually exits

through the South.[69] The disruption of production within Afghanistan requires traffickers

to coordinate laboratory and processing efforts from as far south as Qandahar to as far

North as Dushanbe and even, in some cases, Osh in Kyrgyzstan.

In order to increase these networks, many players have to cooperate in between.

If positive cross-border cooperation decreases due to the unsafe conditions at the border

but safety of these networks increases to financial incentives, the flow of Afghan heroin

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[68] There is a German report which outlines this process clearly in case further research is desired U. Zerell, B. Ahrens and P. Gerz* "Documentation of a heroin manufacturing process in Afghanistan" *Federal Criminal Police Office, Wiesbaden, Germany, 2005*
[69]

to Europe and Russia through Tajikistan will only increase and indeed, has. This increase will exponentially affect the overall security of Tajikistan and Afghanistan as well as the region.

At the same time as the illicit trade in drugs, weapons, gemstones, and humans, the border also has had three cross-border bazaars open. It also has had numerous other projects developing cross-border trade, medical exchange, humanitarian aid, and other forms of cooperation. Ultimately, the combination of the high level of illicit activity and the numerous economic and security border development projects provided a perfect location for me to study how state intervention impacts border and state stability.

Fieldwork

As a means for data collection, I chose primarily participant-observation, because it allowed me to stay close to the empirical material and the subject. The research for my dissertation took place in Tajikistan and Afghanistan. In Tajikistan, the fieldwork focused on the cities of Dushanbe, Khorog, Ishkashim, and Murghab.). Dushanbe is the capital city of Tajikistan and it is where both the government as well as the majority of the international organizations are located. Khorog, Ishkashim, and Murghab are located along the borders and in the autonomous region of Gorno-Badakhshan. Khorog is the capital of the province of Gorno-Badakhshan. In Afghanistan, the fieldwork was conducted in three districts of Badakhshan, Afghanistan – Shughnan, Ishkashim, and the upper, middle, and lower Wakhan Corridor. I also visited Faizabad and Kabul. Faizabad is the capital of Badakhshan province in Afghanistan and Kabul is the capital of the country. I spent as much of my time on the border of Badakhshan as possible.

The original goal of the fieldwork conducted in Badakhshan was to understand how increasing border controls in the borderlands of Badakhshan (Tajikistan/Afghanistan) impacted cross-border cooperation. As I spent time in the field, I came to understand that how I answered that question involved understanding the way ethnic identity was asserted within the formal and informal institutions. I spent time participating and observing both inter-governmental organizations (IGOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) operating at the border. This included the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), European Commission (EU), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and the Agha Khan Foundation (AKF), the Agha Khan Development Network (AKDN), the Agha Health Services Program AKHS), the Mountain Societies Development Support Program (MSDSP), and Khorog State English Program (KEPP). The fieldwork included participation in customs and border guard training with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), Tajik and Afghan border guard training with International Organization for Migration (IOM). For UNDP assessed the EU Border Management Program in Badakhshan, Afghanistan (EUBOMBAF). I also assessed AKF's Drug Demand Reduction Program (DDRP) in three districts in Badakhshan, Afghanistan.

Since the AKF DDRP assessment was a separate part of my fieldwork and used a slightly different methodology it deserves a more detailed explanation. For the assessment I visited seven village clusters and within each village interviewed community members, local and regional leaders, government officials, and healthcare workers regarding the DDRP. I conducted thirty-seven unstructured and semi-structured FDGs and sixty-seven unstructured interviews. For all of the interviews and FDGs prior

consent was given by participants and a full explanation of what the data was being used

for as well as the fact that everything would remain anonymous. Criteria for research

participants were based on staff recommendations and availability of research

participants given that these programs have only been implemented in certain locations.

Additionally, for some interviews categories overlapped (leaders who had already been

through detoxification) or did not fall directly into one of the categories (such as people

who had detoxed without treatment) defined in the original work plan. Therefore, if while

in the field, others came forward who were willing to be interviewed, they were given the

opportunity to share their experiences on an adhoc basis.

The goal of the unstructured interviews for the AKF DDRP assessment,

particularly since it is not only a challenging location but also on a sensitive topic, was to

provide the interviewee with a safe and relaxed space in which to explore their

experiences and share them without feeling too vulnerable or confined by certain

questions or pre-conceived ideas about the topic. In sensitive situations that may involve

drug use (many of the research participants were addicted to opioids), which is formally a

criminal activity according to the law of Afghanistan, women, especially, need to feel

safe in order to share what they have experienced. This is the same for their families and

extended relatives. Semi-structured FDGs, also allowed the groups to explore a topic

together in a more fluid style and in this way they are able to share common perceptions

as well as things they disagree about informally with the goal of producing a safe place

for mutual understanding of a sensitive issue. I also spent time in the villages doing

ethnographic fieldwork in addition to the interviewing throughout the time in the field.

Being involved with all of these NGOs and IGOs helped me to gain access the border as

an institution and into sensitive locations I would not have been able to if I had been

alone during the entirety of my fieldwork. Additionally, many of these institutions

provided some logistical and financial support for my independent fieldwork. In the end,

the fieldwork that garnered the most insight was the participant observation on both sides

of the Tajik/Afghan border in Badakhshan. I lived in and around the area on both sides

of the border for eleven months.

Conclusion

In sum, my theoretical framework is constructivist using three main concepts:

borders, institutions, and identity. I answer my questions by abductively analyzing the

data through an interpretive methodology. My approach uses extended case analysis.

Ethnography is my primary method supplemented by interviews, FDGs, and primary and

secondary materials.

In my dissertation, I have two case-studies. The extended case-analyses for these

cases are based on the sites in which I conducted my fieldwork. I decided on the topic of

the two cases after my first trip to the field. The subsequent three trips to Afghanistan

and Tajikistan were made with my case-studies in mind. The first case is an extended

case analysis of two cross-border bazaars located in Ishkashim and Khorog/Shughnan.

They are both on the border of Tajikistan and Afghanistan in the province of Gorno-

Badakhshan and Badakhshan. The second case is on the development of the border

infrastructure in Khorog/Shughnan. Both cases highlight the role of identity and local

leaders on these cross-border activities. Namely, I solved my initial puzzle after I had

finished my 'fieldwork' afterwards during the 'deskwork' and 'textwork' phases. The

following two chapters encompass my two extended case analyses.

Chapter Four

Historical Narratives of Border Development? Ruling the Unruly or Unruling the Rulers?

Introduction

In this chapter I provide an overview of the complexity of the development of the border areas of Tajik and Afghan Badakhshan. The recorded history of the border in Tajik/Afghan Badakhshan pre-predates the formation of the countries of Tajikistan and Afghanistan by several millennia as is the case with the name, Badakhshan. The area was permeated with khanates, emirates, empires, and rivalries – local and international. The institutions at the ever-evolving boundaries developed long before the actual border institutions were created by the outsiders. Within the matrix of local boundaries between different Emirs and Khans a complex array of local institutions developed. Ultimately, the border institutions, formal and, more importantly, local, are older than the states they delineate.

What people shared with me in the field about their own understanding of their history provided me with the underpinning of this chapter. As Ian Lustick points out, history in the context I am using it, is not for telling a true or definitive history. It is presented as a guide for understanding how competing history(ies) have been used to shape identities. My discussion of history basically, was a conversation among my research subjects, the scholarly materials, and my own interpretation of it. My accounting is told through the lens of what the locals told me (as interpreted by me) and further detailed through other sources.   I did not look for deeper understanding from

outside sources to try to find some kind of historical "truth." I simply wanted to understand where some of the ideas shared with me may have originated.

Both Barth (1981) and Schatz (2004; 2009) suggest the use of history provides a means to understanding how groups use it to assert identity boundaries in the modern context.[70] Such historical narratives (Marsden and Hopkins, 2012) come from within and without, and both serve to influence ethnic boundary maintenance. Briefly highlighting the historical lineages, including informal networks of cooperation, formal delimitation and demarcation agreements imposed by outsiders, and infrastructure as it developed over time, provides insight into the continuity of local organizations and their associated leaders at this border. The imposition of borders constructed by outsiders only increased the need to assert insider identities all the more -partly to maintain and clarify what constituted local understandings of their own lands and organizations but also, to resist control by outsiders who did not belong there.

As Bregel points out, "…the most important concern of Central Asian historians (from the former Soviet Union): [sic] was that, in order to provide historical legitimization to their new nations, it was not enough to project into the past the modern borders of their territories; since a nation was defined first of all in terms of ethnicity, it became necessary to provide the ethnic continuity of the titular nation…" (1996: 15). Other scholars from the time claimed that this form of nationalism was a victory for the complex feuds between ethnic groups which had been going on for centuries.[71] There

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[70] Barth asserts that, "We must struggle to ascertain the dynamics of cultures and societies in time as ongoing systems and through time as emergent sequences." (1981: 7)

[71] "This act," boasts a Soviet geographer, "has had no parallel in history, and has been made possible only in the land of the Soviets, where all nationalities have equal rights and where in perfect conformity with the great principles of the Soviet Government each people is allowed to determine its own destiny" (Kunitz, 2008: 165) (Dawn Over Samarqand).

are even two treaties, one by the British and one by the Soviets, naming the area a free

land (one according to Stalin's decree and one according to the British Foreign office)[72]

(Roy, 1920; Kunitz, 2008). In the end, the construction and reconstruction of history and

identity was like a war of legitimacy. This lens through which I am entering the history

of border development, helps to clarify how institutionalization, in the current context, is

a complex mix of institutions of the past, present conditions, and future goals of

development of the border.

In this chapter I examine the histories both from the data I gathered while I was in

the field as well as from written and/or documented histories of the border delimitation

and scholar's works. I do this with the express understanding, that the histories, in the

context in which I am studying them, are anything but free from political viewpoints and,

in fact, was often used as such by the Russians, the British, domestic forces, locals, and

other inside and outside groups attempting to influence local dynamics and politics. I

also, freely admit, that there is no way for me to be free from some biases, whether

conscious or unconscious, and write this chapter with the caveat that, there is no "real"

history, there are just narratives upon narratives from which I draw and attempt to

construct a picture, as imperfect as that may be. For this reason, my discussion includes a

variety of sources, including local discussions, historical accounts, museums, and primary

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[72] A British Treaty from December, 1922: "(12) The Government of Bokhara will leave up to a certain time, to the plenipotentiaries of England, all ministerial institutions for the carrying out of order inside and outside the country. (13) The Government of Bokhara undertakes the obligation to receive no representative of Russia or any other European power or of other governments in general, without the permission of England." (Roy, 1920) The USSR Treaty (and the one that was upheld) from two Years later in September, 1924: "(1) The supreme will of the peoples of Bokhara the Uzbeks and Tadjiks is the creation by them, together with the Uzbeks of Turkestan and Khorezm, of the Uzbek Socialist Soviet Republic, a part of which is formed by the Autonomous Region of Tadjiks. (2) Fraternal agreement on the entering of the Turkoman people of Bokhara into the composition of the Turkoman Socialist Soviet Republic. (3) States the absolute necessity for Socialist Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan to join the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics for the purpose of socialist construction, protection against imperialism, and in virtue of international fraternity of the laboring masses" (Kunitz, 2008: 162).

sources. What I hope to accomplish by presenting these competing histories and accounts of foundational myths, is to establish a context for how various assertions of identity (ethnic, religious, and some combination of the two) have been constructed and narrated by the local, domestic, and international communities. For my analysis I use all of these sources to abductively develop a history of the border albeit, as interpreted from these sources by me. And, more importantly, how, when, and why these assertions occur and what impact they have on stability and development projects at the border.

Short History(ies) of the Development of the Borderlands of Badakhshan

Central to the development of this border over the past three centuries, has been the assumption that controlling the border was essential to the stability and the governability of the adjacent area. There is evidence as far back as 2500 B.C., that the empires based near the Southern border of what is now Iran, referred to the people in the north as not only dangerous and wild nomads that need to be kept out. Historical documents from the time show that there was a ring of Khans at the border areas to the mountains. Some scholars content that this was to keep the Nomads from the mountainous areas, including Badakhshan, out of the more "civilized" areas.[73] Artifacts, texts, poetry and historical analysis assert that the Afghans (from the South), the Tajiks, the Soviets/Russians, the British, the Americans, the Chinese, the Indians/British Indians, the Iranians/Persians, and the Mughals, all shared this belief. Whether this is true or not is not the point rather that many texts from different periods, over time, carry this narrative forward. Moreover, the importance of local leaders, how they gained and

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[73] From material I studied and viewed in June, 2012, held within the "Oxus River Collection" at the British Museum in London. The tablets, coins, stamps, and other objects were collected by Archaeologists and British explorers from the region are the most extensive collection of these materials in the world.

negotiated power, and most importantly, how they dealt with rivals and land disputes

(where were really border disputes) is a primary discussion throughout the literature.

For centuries "local leaders," a term with which I am using loosely here, mediated

all issues related to trade and security. Starting at the beginning of the Islamic period

"*Dihkan*" - meaning village leader (Persian origin: دهخان) - ruled the land as demarcated

by their associated territories and agreements with other *Dihkans* (Bartold, 1918: 41).

Later, mirs and khans (Turkic origin) and their associated emirates, khanates delineated

territory in much the same way.[74] All had unclear borders and often conflicts occurred in

these more fluid territories. Moreover, when khans wanted to expand, they did so by

absorbing other khanates which often began in territories that were along the areas where

the two khans met[75]. As a Khan absorbed more and more land eventually he would

control an empire and become a Shah or other form of king.[76] Bartold points out that in

the thirteenth century stamped coins began to be made in two metals: brass and silver.

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[74]My use of Khan is not to be confused with the bloodline links to Genghis Khan (which some still assert today) or a khan in the sense of a supreme leader. Khan in the Turkic sense and khan in the sense I am using it are two different words. In Badakhshan khan is similar to the older Persian meaning of Dihqan: "Dihqan and khan are two very different words. As noted earlier, dihqan is Iranian and referred to a class of landowning nobles (the extent of their power varied). Khan (old Turkic qaghan, and qan, both terms for supreme leader, emperor, appear to have had a slight distinction between the two in the earliest Turkic inscriptions - but that is still in dispute. Qaghan is not of Turkic origin. Indeed, its etymology is unknown. Recent attempts have been made to construct an etymology for it in Kettic (a Yeniseic language, spoken now by a handful of people). It is first attested in 265 CE as the title used by a Xianbei ruler. The Xianbei, successors of the Xiongnu (Asian Huns) as the nomadic power in Mongolia, were a tribal union that seems to have largely consisted of speakers of early Mongolic, along with Xiongnu (whose language affiliation is still uncertain) and some Turkic peoples. Qaghan becomes the standard term in Old Turkic. Also used in Mongol in which it undergoes the sound changes Qaghan > Qa'an > khan. I would guess that in Shughnan and Wakhan they are using Khan as a title of high respect and standing. In the aftermath of the Mongol Empire, only Chinggisids (descendants of Genghis Khan) could take this title. Among Turkic peoples this remained true. Chinggisids (I know some) may still use it. Among the Pamir Iranian peoples et al. it does not have this sense, but simply indicates higher social/political status. Just as your research has shown. Be careful not to confuse it with dihqan, which has, as I noted, undergone a certain devaluation in some parts of the Iranian world." Email discussion with Peter Golden (Jan 30, 2013)
[75] Bartold, Elphinstone, Marsden, Ahmed
[76] From primary research at the British Museum which outlines the maps and wars waged over the area during this time period. It also highlights the development of trade routes and associated agreements with local Khans, traders, and local groups. See also: Cobbold (1900); Habberton (1937); Neolle (1997); Vogelsang (2002); Barry (class materials) (2010); Philips (editor) (1951); Schurman (1962); Golden (2011)

The brass ones were for "local" use within the boundaries of a khanate or emirate and the silver ones for outside trade purposes (1918: 58). This highlights that even many centuries ago domestic currency began to be differentiated from non-domestic currency. This highlights that even many centuries ago; institutions were formalized, including economic, trade, security, and borders. Later, during the Soviet period, a concerted effort was made to erase these existing institutions and systems of governance.

According to Yuri Bregel (1996), the project of the Soviets to re-make the history and myths of origin and identity, particularly ethnic, was a purposeful and planned method of nation-building. The goal was to build a nation by asserting how certain groups belonged together due to their history and ethnic origin. As Bregel explains:

> …the most important concern of Central Asian historians (from the former Soviet Union): it was clear to them that, in order to provide historical legitimization to their new nations, it was not enough to project into the past the modern borders of their territories; since a nation was defined first of all in terms of ethnicity, it became necessary to provide the ethnic continuity of the titular nation on the territory of its republic during the entire period covered by their newly written histories – that is, since the Paleolithic times. There is an interesting similarity between the approach of "modern" Central Asian historians and that of their "pre-modern" predecessors: the latter created genealogical myths to provide legitimacy to their royal patrons, while the "modern" ones created historical myths in order to provide legitimacy to their nations (1996: 12).

Even more interesting is, as Bregel goes on to say, the natives of Central Asia did not accept their remade histories and soon began to question it. For example, the Tajiks did not want to be connected to the Persians, as scholars had proposed. They wanted their own ethnic identity and even separate and distinct identities from the different groups with the Tajiks such as "Pamir Tajiks[77]" (1996: 14-15). The reconstruction of this

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[77] "The concern of the Tajik historians was somewhat different: they had no problem with proving the uninterrupted presence of the Tajiks on the same territory throughout the Islamic period, but they did not want them to be counted, as Persian scholars and writers tend to do, as just another group of Persians with a language that was a dialect of Persians and a culture that was a dialect of Persian and a culture that was an

identity, which encompasses many debates about pre-Soviet, Soviet, and post-Soviet historiographies, as well as oral histories, is still a common topic for local debate and discussion.[78] Schatz says that history informs continuity and/or persistence of identity and borrows from historical institutionalism (2004: *xx*). In this case, a complex mix of attempts at remaking identity by outsiders and insiders debating how it was made and remade has created a myriad of histories for the area.

According to numerous discussions during my fieldwork with border experts, local scholars, and elders, the formal institutions imposed by outsiders and the proxy-leaders and partnerships attempted to install outside systems of governance and institutional structures, the local arrangements and their associated leaders continued albeit disrupted, ruptured, and/or hidden.[79] Moreover, these local organizations and their associated leaders still play an important role in Badakhshan today, as they did prior and during the British, Russian, and Persian influences, occupations, and colonization. Living under constant oppression, the clans, tribes, khanates have been forced to operate in hidden forms, including religious and civil society groups. It is a complex region, full of intricate webs of languages, clans, political parties, religions, and cultural practices and local leaders are a key aspect of the region. While I will not go into all of the details from the many eras in Badakhshan, in the following sections I will highlight key

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extension of the great Persian culture. To counter this, the Tajik scholars not only stressed linguistic and cultural distinctiveness and separateness of the Tajiks from the Persians, but also promoted a theory, which held that the modern Persian language originated in Mavarannahr and from there spread to Persia, not vice versa. In another respect the Tajiks did the same as the Uzbeks; they did not admit the existence of other Iranian ethnic groups in Tajikistan, with separate histories and separate identities, namely, the small peoples of the Pamirs, who are quite distinct from the Tajiks both linguistically and historically, and classified as "Pamir Tajiks" (Bregel, 1996: 15).

[78] Bregel (1996: 15)

[79] The history of the tensions between local leaders and outsiders is important but in the interest of space, their power has ebbed and flowed but always remained essential to security and stability in the area given the nature of the terrain and the difficulty by even the Amir of Bukhara to control the area.

historical narratives I encountered during my fieldwork that contribute to the main narratives used in boundary-making by ethnic groups as a means to assert their identity on both sides of the border during four periods: (1) Russian/British period (pre-Soviet Union) (2) Soviet (3) Post-communist and (4) present.

Russian/British Period (Pre-Soviet Union)

Before the Soviet Union, there was no "Tajikistan" just loosely affiliated groups self-identified ethnic groups (often inter-married): Tajiks, Uzbeks, Kyrgyz (all consisting of many groups and sub-groups), and the myriad of groups in Badakhshan.[80] These assemblages bonded through clans, local leaders, and through geography, language, and ethnicity. During the Great Game outside countries often found the most powerful leaders – Amirs, Khans, Shahs, and forced them to either accept arms and money or be attacked. Clearly, the local populations were excluded from most of the decision-making.[81] In Badakhshan, the difficult to traverse terrain limited outside control, even from the local mirs and khans who under the purview of their geographical territory. This allowed the local khans, clan leaders, and Khalifas (religious leaders) authority in most matters. This is true today, although it is hidden from the public due to the potential for retribution by the central authority in Dushanbe.[82]

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[80] Badakhshan was always subject to bigger powers, like the different Persianate Empires, Genghis Khan Tamerlane, and others. The Mughals moved to Kabul in early 16 century when Babur lost his parental land in Central Asia.

[81] Postnikov, Grombchevski, and archives (inaccessible to me) in the Russian military headquarters held in Uzbekistan provide important insights into the history of the Great Game.

[82] The recent raid on Gorno-Badakhshan by 3000 soldiers due to a local dispute against the head of the KGB in the area is evidence of the level of oppression under which the citizens of Gorno-Badakhshan currently are living.

According to many local scholars and scholarly texts,[83] the intellectual centers [and history] emanated from Bokhara and Samarqand and spread throughout the region, crossing the border into Afghanistan and spreading to the border of China and Pakistan. Moreover, the Tajiks and Uzbeks, labeled such by Russian ethnographers, who also asserted that the Tajiks being more closely linked to the Persians and the Uzbeks more closely linked to the Mughals (or Turks) in reality were intermixed and even inter-married throughout the region and while there existed clan conflicts, resource competition, and poverty, the nomadic people, the villagers, and the others were not warring for reasons of being Uzbek or Tajik (Bregel, 1996: 4-8) Moreover, ethnicity was more about what a family said they were as opposed to actual lineage or blood-line. In this way it was and is a form of "fictive" ethnicity.[84]

After centuries of developing through empires, emirates, and khanates, the area had settled into one of a partial nomadic, partial village-driven econo-geography with power emanating from different centers of control sprinkled throughout the region. Given the mountainous terrain and the harsh climate and geography, the people had developed in distinct sections, each area – often created through a charismatic khan, shah, amir, or clan, had its own practices, customs, local laws, and economic systems. Most often, the institutions also were loosely held arrangements between clans, emirates, khanates, and elites (Fredholm, 2005; Barry, 2010).[85]

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[83]Bregel, 1996; Bergne, 2007

[84] For example, Ustad Atta, a prominent leader in the North of Afghanistan, ethnically identifies as Tajik but his mother is actually Uzbek as is one of his wives. Moreover, President Rahmon of Tajikistan is alleged to be ethnically Uzbek while the President of Uzbekistan is Tajik.

[85] Michael Barry's (2010) four volume set of primary documents from these period which have nearly every border agreement, border or otherwise, from the time period has been an invaluable resource underpinning some of the narratives told to me in the field.

Boundaries between khanates and emirates were important areas for both institution-building and formation of local arrangements through ongoing negotiated settlements between local leaders. Occasionally, as early as 1771, the leaders in Afghanistan including the tribal chiefs and kings convened *Loya Jirgas* (National Tribal Assembly) although they only included Pashtuns.[86] The *Loya Jirga* is a traditional form of negotiating disagreements and making decisions about territory, water, other resources, and familial disputes, was and still is a an important local institution and well-respected form of dispute-resolution and decision-making.

Recently, it has been violated and become less and less legitimate likely because some leaders in the Pashtun community, particularly those loyal to various Taliban-related groups, do not feel it has lost its prior authenticity due to outsiders involvement, hence the suicide bombings and other attacks during the last major *Loya Jirga* in Kabul in Nov, 2011 (Peter, 2011)[87] as well as the disruption of other assemblies between 2005-2012. The erosion of a local legal system partially due to attempted consolidation and formalization by outsiders has negatively impacted the ability for Afghanistan to negotiate its conflicts, at least in the Southern areas. But, this attempted formalization has not affected the informal institutionalization and increased cooperation of the illicit trade networks, many of whom oppose this kind of centralized institutional consolidation.

The British had created loose border delimitation[88] between Afghanistan and Central Asia along the river Panj (which refers to the connection to "five waterways"). was referred to as the Oxus River or the Amu Darya (great river or uncle river) by

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[86]86 The *Loya Jirgas* included non-Pashtuns after 2001.
[87]http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Asia-South-Central/2011/1115/Loya-jirga-Afghans-question-Karzai-s-motives-in-calling-the-meeting
[88] I will use "delimitation" to describe written agreements and "demarcation" to describe written agreements that also include decisions or actions to construct or somehow physically mark the territory.

outsiders. The locals referred to the Panj and believed it to be a spawn of the Amu

Darya. The Russians called it *Piandzh* which is the Russified version of the Dari name.

This body of water bisects the two areas and flows [from] East to West with the glacier

melts contributing to its ebb and flow. [89]

According to local accounts and scholars, the border only made sense to the

foreigners who created it since, for them, it was a natural geographical marker. Even for

the Amirs of Afghanistan and Bokhara, Badakhshan was a remote area inhabited by

nomads and Kafirs (unbelievers). Moreover, the Bokharan Amir had just lost most of his

territory to the Russians during the Bokharan War of 1868 making him a Vassal of the

Russians. Prior to the Bokharan War, the Russians attempted to make the Amir Muzafar

a vassal. The Mullahs, local merchants, and other local leaders organized against the

Amir after he first became a vassal of the Russian state. They formed the Bokharan War

Party or Bokharan Revolutionary Part. They forced him to temporarily flee the area.

After his return and reconciliation with the Bokharans, the Amir refused to work with the

Russians. Consequently, the Russians sent in their military and took most of the land

surrounding Bokhara in 1868. By 1873 Bokhara formally became a Protectorate of

Russia which included Russian control over trade (Habberton, 1937: 60-62). The dislike

of the outsiders by the local religious groups, traders, and clan leaders remained as did

the local networks of cooperation which had been there for centuries prior to Russian

annexation.

According to British primary documents of written formal agreements, in 1873,

soon after Russia declared the Bokharan Emirate as a Protectorate, the British and the

Russians drafted a Demarcation Agreement ceding certain parts to the Afghans/British

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[89] According to a local scholar.

and other sections to the Russians/Turkestanis. The Agreement left parts of Wakhan, Shughnan, Darwaz, and Ishkashim, Badakhshan with unclear delimitation[90] (Habberton, 1937). The land in Badakhshan was easy to divide up because for the Amirs, Badakhshan was such a distant and remote area inhabited by *Kafirs* (non-believers – who in reality were *Panj Tani* Muslims). Moreover, giving a swath of land here and a swath of land there to placate the British and the Russians made sense particularly if it would them favor, economic gains, and placate their thirst for more conquests in the region. But, for the locals, dividing their land, culture, identity, and political systems was, in the words of a local, "like cutting a body into pieces." Essentially, the newly devised border divided the people of Badakhshan with a long history and common identity into an incoherent babble of geographic divisions which had been mutually agreed upon Khanates (Habberton, 1937: 58-67). This is a common narrative and even the source of an important but somewhat secret/hidden project supported by AKDN called the Badakhshan-Badakhshan Project (BBP).[91]

Prior to Soviet and British colonization and intervention, the people of Badakhshan were divided into at least seven ethno-linguistic groupings that organized physical space, cultural norms, and pooling of economic resources. These groups included Shughni, Sanglechi-Ishkashimi (includes dialects of Ishkashimi [also Eshkashemi], Reni, and Zeboki), (Bartold, 1906; Grierson, 1920) Munji (now mostly in Chitral, Pakistan), Wakhi (which subdivides into three dialects – upper, mid, and lower Wakhi), Yazgholami, Roshani, Vanji, Darwazi, Munji, Khowari, Balti, and Zeboki

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[90] Elnazarov and Aksaqolov, chapter three, Editor: Farhad Daftari *A Modern History of the Ismailis* 2011: IB Taurus. See also Postnikov and Kharyukov for a more detailed history.

[91] The BBP came up in numerous interviews with locals who worked for AKF/AKDN as well as local leaders.

(Abaeva, 1964).[92] There are various contending histories about how and why these many

groups formed in the ways they did. It is difficult to distinguish which are simply

dialects of languages but are not distinct ethnic groups as asserted by local groups and

natives in the past. There is considerable debate in the early Russian ethnographic

scholarship[93]. What is clear is that whether during the period in history when the area

was referred to as part of Turkestan, a somewhat Russian constructed grouping, which

actually, at least as it pertained to Badakhshan, was an area encompassing three main

Khanates: Shughnan, Wakhan, and Darwaz. For centuries prior to the designation of the

territory as Turkestan by outsiders, the area was divided among Khurasan, Tokharistan

(also known as Bactria and Balkh – Hellenized version), Soghdia, and Transoxiana

(Habberton, 1937). The area held the origins of Zoroastrianism from as far back as 2500

BC and later, sections that were part of the ancient Buddhist culture and religion. The

area began to convert to Islam in the Seventh century. The influence of the Shi'a branch

known as the Nizaris quickly spread throughout the area through the Fatimid Empire in

the Ninth century. In the Tenth century, Nasiri Khusrow claimed much of the remaining

Zoroastrian areas under the Ismaili-Shi'a religion although it was called Panj-Tani (five

bodies) (Deweese, 1967; Hunsberger, 2000; Gross, 2013). The latter one refers to the

"five bodies" of the Prophet Muhammad's family but also links to an important aspect in

Zoroastrianism which is the importance of the spiritual connection to nature. These two

aspects of the people in this area of Badakhshan/Pamirs have been important to their

identity for over centuries (with the connection to nature and the five bodies which link to

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[92] This is a complex and often contested subject which I am only touching on briefly. The best research on the ethno-religious division of the region is by Kushkeki in *Rahnama-I Badakhshan* and *Qataghan*. Likewise, Abaeva's work *Ocherki Istorii Badakhshana*. Also, see Grierson (1920)

[93] Edel'man, Yusufbekov, Zarubin, and Mongarova, and local scholars, Karamshoev, Yusufbekov and others.

the 2500 year old Zoroastrian religion and tradition).[94]   Moreover, this conceptualization

of nature, namely that it is an integral part of their spiritual traditions and practices, is a

commonly offered narrative in regular conversation (Gross, 2013). [95]

The people in this area divided themselves by territory, ethno-linguistic and

religious identities. Prior to the Anglo-Russian Agreement (or Protocol) in 1885 which

enforced the border along the Panj River (Habberton, 1937);[96] the area had not

consolidated into a sovereign state in the Westphalian sense although it had been moving

in that direction. Additionally, while many of the Northern areas were subsumed into the

Pashtun South during the Durrani period in the 1800s, creating the precursor for the

formation of Afghanistan, Badakhshan escaped control by the south (Noelle, 1997: 271;

see also Barry, 2010; Dalrymple, 2013).   The Russians and Chinese had been actively

involved in the North and South since the early 1600s and the British since the early

1700s. They all stoked divisions causing the massacre of more than sixty percent of the

Hazara population in 1867 (Curzon, 1896).

During this period, the borders were fluid agreements between khans/mirs[97] who

controlled various swaths of land and who, most often, adopted allied partnerships with

various outside countries as opportunistic arrangements – some successful and some not

– much like today. By mid-eighteen hundreds the Amir of Afghanistan had consolidated

power and controlled much of what is today's Afghanistan. In an attempt to integrate the

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[94] Maiskiy. Sledy drevnykh verovanniy v pamirskom ismailizme. 1935.

[95] I also heard this repeatedly in my fieldwork from many people on both sides of the border.

[96] "Since 1823 tributary to the Khanate of Kunduz. The Anglo-Russian agreement of 1884 which delineated the southern border of the Russian Empire in 1884 split Badakhshan in half. In 1895 the Russian Empire formally annexed the Pamir Region (Gorno-Badakhshan); in 1888 the Khanate of Kunduz was absorbed into Afghanistan, in the 1890es Afghanistan established control over Afghan Badakhshan. In 1893, the Durand Line established the border between Afghanistan and British India."
http://www.zum.de/whkmla/region/centrasia/xbadakhshan.html

many warring ethnic groups and tribes, he moved part of the Pashtun Ghilzais to various

districts in the North: Qunduz, Jalalabad, Parwan, Loghar, (most of the areas that are the

most unstable today). He also divided land evenly among families in Afghanistan. These

land tenure agreements are still the operating principles today (and property rights

institutions) that the families in Shughnan, Ishkashim, and the Wakhan use as the basis

for settling disputes and for honoring legitimate ownership.[98] Over a period of several

centuries, unwritten agreements about shared resources, governance, and even settlement,

had been forming. The people were consolidating power and creating institutions,

sometimes in more violent ways than others.

What outsiders viewed as haphazard forms of governance were indeed, organic

and long-held agreements on boundaries made by varying degrees of consensus. During

the period immediately preceding the beginning of British/Russian colonization, these

groups were part of three primary Khanates[99] Shughnan, Wakhan, and Darwaz (although

Darwaz had two sections). According to scholars in Khorog and numerous scholarly

materials, the Amir (Islamic leader) of Afghanistan controlled Shughnan, the Wakhan,

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[98] Data from numerous interviews and living with families about land tenure agreements from 2009-2011. There are limited sources on this issue so most of the information is from my fieldwork.

[99] "The Khanates also were referred to as Mirgari or Shahigari – translated as Princedom and principality. The titles of Mirs versus Amirs, versus Khans versus Shahs are one that deserves more discussion, but in the interest of space, I will refer to them as Khans, Mirs, and/or Amirs for the rest of the chapter. In some areas they were referred to as one and other places another name." (Nourmahmad, 2013) Noted scholar, Peter Golden explained that, "Historically, these are different terms: dihqân in medieval Persian meant "local nobleman/landholder." Today in Tajikistan it means "peasant." Khan is from Turkic (I won't go into all the philological details). It originally denoted the supreme ruler. It continued to have this sense into the 19th century. But, it was also subject to a certain devaluation, especially in Tajik or other non-Turkic-speaking areas. It just became a polite term, "mister," if you like. Amîr is Arabic for "commander" originally. Then, was used for higher-ranking officials and in more modern times has even been (mis-)translated as "prince." In the areas you are working in (not overly familiar to me in their modern setting - I am a medievalist), Amir would be well above dihqân." (Golden, 2013) What is unknown to most, is that Mir was used to denote a local leader, like a prince, in Shughnan, Ishkashim, and the Wakhan and, today there are still two khans in the area who are considered important leaders and to be from important bloodlines. Villagers have to kiss their hands when they encounter them. (Observed during my fieldwork in 2011).

and the part of Darwaz now referred to as Roshan, (his great grandfather originating from Samarqand), while the Amir of Bokhara held sway over Darwaz and the area to the West of Darwaz, and the Khan of Khiva controlled territory west of this (now largely in Uzbekistan). Although the Amirs and Khans were the recognized leaders of these areas by the Russians and British and the primary leaders with whom these countries sought to control and influence, parts of Badakhshan (and the surrounding mountainous areas) had their own local leaders (mirs, khans, salars, etc).[100] During the Great Game the Russians, Iranians, and Indians were working to seduce the various leaders into their "spheres of influence." The Russians referred to the area in Central Asia as Turkestan which was largely controlled by the Amirs in Bokhara (a Russian vassal)[101] and Samarqand (both ironically Uzbek but Tajik speakers (one of the Persian languages in the region and not one of the many with Turkic influence) (Bergne, 2007).

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[100] I discuss the names of leaders in various dialects – and in the current context in chapter seven – Local Leaders and the Borderlands of Badakhshan.

[101] The following text is written by Evelyn Roy, a scholar/Marxist in 1924. It has obvious biases but still shows how outsiders sought to control local leaders: "The Bokharan Revolutionary movement had existed since the end of the nineteenth century, as a natural result of the intolerable conditions which prevailed under the combined oppression of the Russian and Bokharan autocracies. Open rebellion had been prevented by the armies of the Tsar, which were placed at the disposal of the Amir. The government of the latter, nominally independent, was in reality a protectorate of Russia, which kept a Resident Agent there to exercise control. Railways and telegraphs, built by the Tsar's government, were entirely controlled by the latter and Russian garrisons maintained respect for the real power behind the Amir's throne. This theocratic potentate, regarded by the Moslems of Central Asia and neighboring countries as the embodiment of powers not only earthly, but divine, was held in superstitious veneration by the Moslem world, and the fame of Bokhara el Sharif as a centre of Islamic culture attracted pilgrims and students from all the Mussulman countries. Such international prestige in no way lightened the burden which official robbery, corruption and vice imposed upon the Amir's immediate subjects. This despot regarded Bokhara as his own personal estate, and the government income, wrung from the labor of the people, as his pocket-money. Over one-half the national income was given over forthwith to himself and the Mullahs and Begs (clergy and nobles). The wealth extracted from the miserable populace was squandered in the licentious pleasures of the court and harem, and in maintaining the dignity of the Amir in neighboring capitals. One of his pleasure-palaces in the Russian Caucasus has now been turned into a rest-house for convalescent workers, who to-day enjoy the luxury which was wrung from the sweat and blood of the Bokharan peasant and handicraftsman. It is one of the minor conquests of the Russian Revolution." *Labour Monthly*, Vol. 6, July 1924, No. 7, pp. 403-410. (From the archives of Evelyn Roy).

Since the Tsarist Russians had been exploring and influencing the area since the 1600s, they built up various allies (as well as enemies) on either side of the border. In 1873, a loose arrangement about the region was made between the British and the Russians. Due to what a British Officer referred to as a "cantankerous" Amir, the Brits and Russians felt it best to keep the borders in the area somewhat fluid so that this particular Amir would agree to the terms (Habberton, 137: 64-67). In 1891 the Russians arrested a British Intelligence officer by the name of Younghusband in the Wakhan (Habberton, 1937). The created a rift in the détente between the British and Russians and it was at this time that the delimitation and demarcation of the region began to be negotiated and more clearly defined.[102] In 1895, Russia formally annexed their side of the Pamirs subsuming the area into their quickly consolidating territories, which would become the United Soviet Socialist Republic, further hardening a border which was ill-conceived and imposed by outsiders from its inception (Schurmann, 1962). Moreover, according to numerous local scholars, elders, and officials on both sides of the border, the Afghan side wanted to join the Tajik side even at this early time due to the harsh treatment of the Ismailis.[103] They expressed this during the Shughnan Rebellion of 1925 when they formally petitioned the Soviet leaders in Khorog and Dushanbe, asking to join the newly-formed Tajikistan. Ultimately, they were rejected and stayed a part of Afghanistan (see appendix one).[104] Although, there is evidence that there was discrimination against the Shi'a minority religious sects on both sides of the border (Roy,

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[102] Prior to this, as a number of scholars of the time make reference to, that area of Afghanistan and Turkestan was considered so remote and unruly, it seemed like "a natural border" and "barrier" to encroachment (Schumann, 1962 and others CITATIONS).

[103] Mastibekov (PhD Dissertation) – look this up!

[104] The Russian Center for Preservation and Exploration of Documents of Recent History, Collection 62, list 2, file 243, pp. .53 - 55, 61. (access to this document provided by the Institute for Ismaili Studies in London).

1920) [105] but, what is interesting about this is the fact that this persecution on the other side of the border, was never brought up by any locals to me during any of my trips to the field.

Soviet Period

Tajik-Badakhshan (or Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast [GBAO])

The Soviets continued the geographic and cultural project of dividing what they referred to as Turkestan (what is now Central Asia), by ethnic majorities which were studied meticulously by Soviet ethnographers (Bergne, 2007). These researchers went to the field and categorized and counted each person. They separated them into categories of Tajiks, Uzbeks, Kazakhs, Kyrgyz, and Turkmen and divided the land by the majority of ethnic group who inhabited the land. They named the countries in this same way so the land with the most "Tajiks" became Tajikistan; majority of Uzbeks became Uzbekistan, etc... (Bregel, 1997; Bergne, 2007). Additionally, as Bregel explains, they rewrote histories and foundation myths for each of the newly-created Central Asian republics basing them on "autochthonous" and ethnically-based narratives (Bregel, 1996: 8).

But, they also cut many of the countries off from their intellectual centers as a means to homogenize the population hence the center of the Tajik elite became the center of Uzbekistan and the Pamirs, which had virtually no ethnic Tajiks, became a province of Tajikistan (Gorno-Badakhshan Oblast or GBAO for short). Not only did the Soviet

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[105] "The Shiahite massacre of 1909, directed against the Bokharan Government for giving the biggest posts to the Shiah sect of Moslems, and repressed by the Tsarist troops, was organised by another priest, Mullah Bachi. But the real centre of discontent lay in the exploited peasant masses, whom exorbitant taxation has reduced to the direst poverty. Not a year passed by without its peasant riot or rebellion, put down with the utmost cruelty" (Roy, 1920).

leaders create borders and satellite states based on majorities of ethnicities but also with a strict ideology in mind which was one of the citizens that is one without sub-ethnic, religious, and cultural attachment. The goal was to turn all of the Central Asians into citizens of the Soviet Union with a carefully planned strategy of homogenized identity. Divide the people up into groups based on ethnicity but divide these groups from their intellectual centers and create borders that are not logical or coherent in terms of the long-standing local social frameworks.[106]

Border between Tajik SSR and Afghanistan in Badakhshan

After the USSR officially declared Turkestan an Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (ASSR) in 1921 of which Tajikistan was a part, they developed plans for further demarcation of the region in SSRs based on majority ethnic affiliations (Bergne, 2007). Following this plan, in 1924 the Uzbek SSR was created largely borne out of the Bokharan revolutionary movement. Bokhara, the recognized center of authority for the area referred to as Turkestan, had a diverse population of Uzbeks, Tajiks, Pamiris (what the Soviets referred to as "Mountain Tadjiks"), Sunni Muslims, Jews, and Hindus) (Mongarova, 1969). The Bokharan Revolutionary Movement had allied early on with the Soviet Union (against the Tsarist Russians and the Bokharan Amir) and therefore became the center of power during the initial phase of annexation and SSR formation in Turkestan (Togan, 1969). Tajikistan was an ASSR of the Uzbek SSR until it was

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[106] Tajiks fought in the early stages to become a full republic instead of an annex of Uzbekistan and finally were granted SSR status. This began a long history of resource competition between Uzbekistan and Tajikistan which still is present today. (Bergne, 2007) These borders are still being negotiated today. Within the past year the Kazakh/Kyrgyz, Tajik/Chinese, Kyrgyz/Tajik, Tajik/Uzbek, and Uzbek/Kyrgyz have all been negotiated and/or re-negotiated or have been once again in contention. I know this from my fieldwork, work with OSCE, UNDP, and daily reading of the press.

formally made into the Tajik SSR in 1926 which it remained as until 1991. Referral to the region as Turkestan, which the Soviet Union formally moved away from in 1924, is found in the literature on the region as late as the mid-1960s including maps, books, and ethnographies (albeit by British researchers). In this sense, the area, even with the incoherent borders cut through it, was still being studied by the majority of Western academics in ways that recognized the informal and clan-based groupings and power structures that had been there and, in various ways continued to exist in the region, long after the Soviet annexation and wiping of the name Turkestan from its maps. Additionally, the Pamir region in Badakhshan, since it was labeled "autonomous" and was far removed from "Mother Russia" or even Dushanbe, the capital of Tajikistan. For the most part, the area was left alone with the exception of Soviet and British explorers[107] who build alliances over time, at least until Tajikistan became a formal SSR.

One oft-repeated narrative about the formation of Tajikistan I heard while I was in the field asserted that the Soviets cut Tajikistan off from its intellectual centers, Samarqand and Bokhara, and therefore it has been difficult for Tajikistan to fully realize its full potential as a nation. Some (either in jest or seriously) suggest that these two main cities of Uzbekistan should be returned to Tajikistan. Moreover, they point out that the majority of locals in these two cities speak Tajik and not Uzbek. They also point out that this separation of the countries from their "hearts" has created lasting strife throughout Central Asia. In some ways, according to a number of elders I spoke with, the formation of the countries as it pertained to Badakhshan happened a bit more gradually.[108]

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[107] With the exception of Soviet and British "explorers" most prominently on the Afghan side of the border (Habberton, 1937; Shurmann, 1962; Interviews conducted by the author – 2009-2011)

[108] There were others from the area who disputed this but they were younger. The elders were fairly consistent in their assertion of the border hardening over time and not right away.

According to a number of elders and local leaders and scholars, who currently live in Shughnan, Khorog, the Wakhan, and Ishkashim (both sides of the border), until the 1950s, the border between Tajikistan and Afghanistan remained largely open to the clans on either side of the border including medical, agricultural, and other types of exchanges and trades. Moreover, people crossed fairly easily back and forth and even swam in the river. As the Cold War heated up the Soviet Union began to more aggressively control this border.   In fact, they had a rather complex intelligence network on the Afghan side of the border which they cultivated quite aggressively as early as the late 1700s which they used for their invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. This network is still in place although has taken on a different form, in the districts I conducted my fieldwork in: Shughnan, Ishkashim, and the Wakhan.[109] A number of the local leaders have been educated in Moscow and still spoke often about the Soviet Union and Russia today.

Additionally, the elders and local scholars told me that the Russians moved in Russian border troops (guards), appointed local leaders as functionaries of the USSR (apparatchiks), and increased their intelligence network along the borderlands. They had loyal informants in all of the areas in Badakhshan as well as enemies (which comes with the territory – one begets the other). As the area became populated with Russian troops and informants for the USSR, the border Protocol agreed on in 1873, 1885-1895 were revised. The new border re-demarcation agreements signed by the USSR and Afghanistan in 1946, 1948, and 1950 both defined the demarcation much more thoroughly as well as defined the role of the border guards on either sides of the border.

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[109] I conducted additional fieldwork – participant-observation, interviews, and focus discussion groups - in Dushanbe, Darwaz, Murghab, Tajikistan; Kabul, Faizabad, Zebok, Nusai, Afghanistan; Osh and Bishkek, Kyrgystan; and Baku, Lankaran, and the Talysh region of Azerbaijan.

The agreement in 1950 included an agreement on yearly joint trainings and "monitoring of border marks" (Agreement between USSR and Afghanistan, 1946; 1948).[110]

The border tightened significantly after this last agreement was signed with the Soviet border troops severely punishing any illegal crossings. After the early 1950s anyone caught swimming in the river was shot and crossing the border was not allowed. Numerous families talked about creative ways in which they would trade goods and help the needy on either side of the border. In particular, Shughnan, on the Afghan side of the border and Roshan, on the Tajik side of the border, are extremely isolated districts and when an inclement winter or an exiguous harvest, without help from other districts or from the other side of the border (since there were almost no roads) many people would die at various times. Addiction to opium was commonplace simply because it was the most accessible form of medical treatment for pain, stomach ailments, labor. It is still used in most places and addiction to opiates remains high and a contributing factor to instability in the region (more on this later).

It is important to note, that while illegal drug use was punished harshly in the Tajik SSR, it is commonly held knowledge that the Soviet border troops were heavily involved in the illicit flow of opiates, gemstones, and other legal and illegal commodities and controlled the black market economy throughout the region. Once the Soviet troops left in 2005, the bounty from this illicit market was split among several war/drug lords and is largely controlled by the current president of Tajikistan and his clan.[111]

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[110]Protocol Number 354 and Agreement Number 855: "Agreement between the Government of USSR and Royal Government of Afghanistan on the Status of the Soviet-Afghan State Border," original Protocol (1921), revised Protocol (1950), and Re-Demarcation Agreement (1946, 1948) obtained from the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe in September, 2009.

[111] Information obtained from informal interviews with officials in Dushanbe and Khorog between March, 2010 and October, 2011. Moreover, this appeared to be common knowledge in that every person I spoke with, in an informal setting or after they decided I could be trusted, confirmed this.

Essentially, while the border was controlled through the umbrella of the Soviet "iron curtain" on one level, for social and legal exchanges and trade, it had a rather open-door policy when it came to illegal trade and illicit flows. The networks of cooperation at this time included Soviet troops, Tajik SSR apparatchiks (local functionaries), Tajik clan leaders, and Afghan drug lords, clan leaders, and khans. It is unclear how the religious leadership fits into this equation although this issue, according to local leaders and families I spoke with, said that they have become more involved today. I will discuss this more later in the dissertation.

Afghan-Badakhshan – Soviet Intelligence, Mujahedeen, and Party Politics

An important principle of Marxist ideology/doctrine as interpreted by the USSR included controlling the boundary of a state and subsuming the citizens in the borderlands as much as possible into the state (Gellner, 1980: 66).[112] The logic held that the ability for a state to pass through the proper "stages of historical development" and eventually into a some kind of utopian peace, included both proper demarcation of the territory but also cultural and economic control and homogeneity within that territory (Gellner, Semenov, 1980). And, once the border and state was properly controlled, then expansion of that territory was possible. As a means for expanding the territory, gaining support and control of the borderlands around a territory was primary. With this ideology in mind, Soviet intelligence spread propaganda along the borderlands of Badakhshan along

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[112] "However, though Marxism as conventionally interpreted, clearly allows and requires diffusion at two points at least, and does not exclude it elsewhere; nevertheless it stresses it much less than is the case in Semenov's version, where diffusion features very conspicuously. [sic] There is a further extremely important point: on occasion, not only is the centre an essential precondition of the attainment of the next state, but so is the periphery. The periphery becomes, at least on occasion, quite indispensable." (Gellner, 1980: 66) He goes on to discuss this in great detail in his chapter "A Russian Marxist Philosophy of History" (Gellner, 1980: 59-82).

with paying informants and creating networks of cooperation prior to the highly planned

invasion of Afghanistan in 1979.[113] This included stories about how developed the Tajik

side was, gaining support from various local leaders (Bregel, 1996). These stories had

been circulating since prior to the Shughnan Rebellion of 1925. [114]

Prior to 1979, Russia had to contend with the Chinese, the British, the Indians,

and Iranians. After the British decolonization and then the Iranian Revolution, the

Russians saw a moment in which they could expand their borders beyond Central Asia.

Many along the border in the Ismaili-dominated districts in Afghan Badakhshan said that

they agreed with the Soviet ideology as provided by Soviet agents, in-line with what they

believed and, moreover, witnessed rapid development across the border and wanted the

same for themselves.[115] Specifically, in the districts of Shughnan, Ishkashim, and the

Wakhan, this adherence to some precepts of communism (as they interpreted it) was

prevalent, and still is today[116] although the interpretation of the ideology caused some

rifts, sometimes violent ones. The main divisions during the Soviet/Afghan period were

between political parties spawned out of clan/tribal networks and/or disagreements about

communist ideology. (Braithwaite, 2011) Even the Mujahedeen in the beginning, mostly

before the Soviet invasion in 1979, were communist in ideology. Later they came to

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[113] A number of informants/elders in Badakhshan on both sides of this border talked about this in casual conversations and in interviews.

[114] In fact, According to Bregel that this had been the Russian plan/strategy since the early 1600s when the Russians were negotiating borders in the region with the Chinese. , albeit in different forms due to different political ideologies (Tsarist versus Communist). The Russians just had to wait until the right moment in history.

[115] This was brought up in many conversations and debates with locals, leaders, and officials during my fieldwork in 2009-2011. A number of Afghans pointed out that the Afghan Parliament as of 2011) was 70% Communist. One of my informants brought me to numerous houses which belonged to the Sazaye party in Badakhshan. This is a communist-linked party. I spoke to a number of local leaders who also confirmed that there was and still is a strong allegiance to communist ideology.

[116] Ibid

abhor it as many did. By 1988, even many of the Soviet soldiers stationed in Afghanistan.[117]

At first there were two main Pro-Communist parties (although some say three), seven Mujahedeen parties, and several Taliban-linked parties, including parties allied with Pakistan, the Arabs, and/or just Afghanistan. The main parties operating in the three districts I am focusing on were the Khalqi, Parchami, Sazaye, and Jamayati parties. All of these parties spawned around 1968 when the constitution of Afghanistan lifted the ban on political parties although they remained secretly active until the Constitution was formally recognized this change in 1973. Prior to this, Afghanistan was ruled under a single-party system and opposing parties were not allowed. In fact, the first real parties that formed in and around 1968 were adherents of various forms of communism (Braithwaite, 2011).

Of the main parties which formed, the Khalqis and the Parchamis garnered the most support from Moscow and, consequently, control and power. Both of these parties were factions within the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA). PDPA remained in power until 1992. President Najibullah was the last leader from this group of parties, and throughout Afghanistan, but particularly in Badakhshan and in the districts of Shughnan, the Wakhan, and Ishkashim, he is still considered a hero with many homes adorning the walls with framed pictures of him. Many people asked me why the U.S. assassinated him and angrily said it was a big mistake and was a catalyst in the current state of ruin in Afghanistan.

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[117] Based on two interviews with two Special Forces soldiers in 2012 and 2013 who worked with Hekmatyar and Massoud from 1982-1988 in Afghanistan.

During the period of Soviet influence but prior to the Soviet invasion the various

parties competed for control of the government and curried favor of the Soviet party

leadership in Moscow. In 1977-8, immediately prior to the Soviet invasion, Taraki, the

leader of the Khalqis, along with his party members, slaughtered some of the Parchami

leadership and attempted to assassinate Amin, their leader. Amin escaped and turned

around and, with the blessing of Moscow, assassinated Taraki, the leader of the

Khalqis.[118] At the time there was a growing rebellion against the Leninist property and

education policies Taraki had implemented and enforced. Many Afghans felt that their

customs and religious practices were being disrespected and violated. For the Soviets,

the hope was that if Amin replaced Taraki and implemented the communist education

and property reforms more slowly, things would calm down. But, Taraki's assassination

did not quell this uprising and, in fact, increased the fighting between the Khalqis and

Parchamis.[119] As pockets of rebellion increased, Soviet troops invaded Afghanistan with

the hopes of stabilizing things. As had always been the case in Afghanistan – outsiders

on their soil only meant more blood was to be spilled.[120] In fact, even Jamayati-Islami

and Hezbi-Islami which were the primary parties of the Mujahideen largely supported

communism prior to the Soviet invasion. In the end, the Mujahideen and Jamayat-I

Islami waged a successful asymmetrical war against the Soviets with the help of the U.S..

Ahmed Shah Massoud and Gulbuddin Hekmatyar were their leaders (Dupee, 2012).[121]

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[118] Many Khalqis I spoke with in Shughnan are still bitter about this.

[119] Rashid, 2000, 2009; Tanner, 2002; Hoover Institution paper, 1982; interviews and discussions by the author with local elites in Shughnan, the Wakhan, and Ishkashim, 2010, 2011, 2012.

[120] Ibid

[121] Additionally, "Following the rise of the Taliban movement in 1994 and their seizure of state power in 1996, anti-Taliban militias came to unite under the umbrella group the United Islamic Front [led by Massoud]. The United Islamic Front continued to engage in precious stone extraction and trafficking in the Panjshir Valley, Takhar, and Badakhshan, allegedly earning between $60 and $200 million per year from the trade.[9] These anti-Taliban militias led by Ahmad Shah Massoud would eventually acquire weapons,

Many of the political parties formed during this period still exist in Afghanistan although they have lost considerable influence.

This is important in that this far Northeastern border area was the area the Soviets had been cultivating through their intelligence networks and Tajik informants for over a century with the first formal alliance formed in the area in the 1880s and it has kept the most entrenched networks of communist parties in Afghanistan. A number of the elites during the Soviet period were educated in Moscow and the USSR paid for courtesy of the Soviet government. In Shughnan [Shughnan] and Ishkashim I met a few and spent time talking to them about their education, allegiances, and political beliefs. I also met a few elites in the area who expressed deep support for Iran, some had spent time there while others had simply heard about Iran, the people, and the linkages to their own culture.

These allegiances to past invaders and empires deserves some discussion since the historical linkages to outsiders is continually discussed by people in the region in both negative and positive ways. The linkages contribute to ideological divisions based on threads of agreement and disagreement with different forms of outside influence. In this way, the informal institutionalization/local organizations and arrangements developed through both overt and covert forms of resistance to various political impositions over centuries of invasions. These divisions run deeply throughout Shughnan, the Wakhan, and Ishkashim, and in parallel to already established rifts between clans, religious beliefs, and even, trade networks and cooperation. The continuous nation-building, development, political reformation, alliance formation, and outside control/influence, have created a

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ammunition, and even helicopters to fight against the Taliban from legendary black market arms dealer Viktor Bout—exchanging emeralds and other precious stones for weapons under a "commodity for commodity" agreement" (Dupee, 2012). It was during this time that Massoud and Hekmatyar became enemies.

complex and often stultifying array of factions which overlay on the clans and trade networks as ready-made tools for local power-brokers. Consequently, whether one is asserting or resisting control, the narratives of protest and legitimacy from various eras of outside disruption, are there. This is a central thematic vein that highlights how my conception of local ethnic boundary maintenance is borne out of a dialogue between the negative and positive view of other/outsider. I analyze this more thoroughly in my case studies.

Post-Communist Period in the Borderlands of Badakhshan: The Ismailis, the Tajik Civil War, and the Taliban/Mujahideen

According to locals, both sides of the border in Badakhshan had high hopes for the freedoms they might gain. On the Afghan side, they thought the Mujahideen would be quelled and Najibullah would begin to rebuild the Afghan nation in accordance with the goals of some of the kings of the past. His assassination shattered this hope, leaving the area with extreme, unrelenting poverty, religious and cultural oppression, and increased addiction to opiates, forced enslavement of their children, property loss, and, in the case of Shughnan, a short but extremely violent civil insurrection by the Mujahideen fighters. After this period of fighting in Shughnan, an odd alliance was formed between some of the Mujahideen fighters and the Afghan Shughnis and Tajik Khorogis. A number of safe-havens for the Mujahideen fighters were installed on the Tajik side of the border in Khorog. The main one being in a village area near Khorog called Porshniev . In that area there was an ex-Soviet military installation which was taken over by the Mujahideen during the Tajik Civil War. They used it for weapons storage and training.

In exchange for the encampment, they provided the people in Khorog with much-needed supplies and weapons for defending themselves against rival Tajik groups from entering their territory. The Tajiks were never able to get past Darwaz, the beginning of Badakhshan, and the Pamir warlords, who were known for their fierce fighting abilities, made it clear that they would be slaughtered if they tried to enter their territory.

On the Tajik side of the border of Badakhshan, the poverty, violence, and oppression began in early 1992 lasting until 1997 with the bloody Tajik Civil War. Many locals and local scholars told violence spawned from clan divisions, religious and ethnic identities, and a fight for power over the country as a whole which had been subjugated by Soviet governmental planning. Both the Gharmis and the Pamiris assert that there was a genocide which was covered up. For a short time the Pamiris helped the Gharmis during the Civil War but the Gharmis turned on them since they were not Ismaili and today, they are no longer allied with each other. A number of Pamiris gave me locations of mass graves filled with the bodies of Ismailis who they believe were ethnically-cleansed because of their religious beliefs (Ismaili-Shi'ism) and their ethnicity (Pamiri not Tajik).   They urged me to investigate the mass-killing and expose it to the international community. Other locals told me that it was no worse than other ethnic massacres during the civil war and the number was not as high as other locals contended. OSCE told me that they had looked into it and did not feel that the number of deaths (being under 10,000)[122] warranted being called a genocide. A local scholar let me listen to stories of women from Gorno-Badakhshan who had been raped during the civil war. OSCE commissioned numerous oral histories from this time. Indeed, there were many

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[122] Emelianova, Nadezhda *Darwaz: Religioznaia I Kulturnaia Zhizn' Tadzhiko-afganskogo prigranich'ia,* (2007) Moskva

horrific recordings of ethnically-based rape in the archives. Much of the violence

occurred in the Southwest of Tajikistan in Qhorganteppa and in and around its capital,

Dushanbe.

Aside from the mass bloodshed and ethnically-based raping, starvation spread

throughout Badakhshan due to its remote and isolated location and hostile terrain. It was

not until the Aga Khan, sent aid to Gorno-Badakhshan in the form of food and medical

supplies to the region in 1994 that the people found a reprieve from the steady onslaught

of famine and war. The war embodied the same struggles that had been going on in the

region for centuries: Consolidating power through force and clan/ethnic warfare,

eventually created a leader.

The main groups struggling for power included the Kulabis (largely coming from

Danghara) in the South, the Khujandis from the North, and the Gharmi/Pamiris. As

stated earlier, during the Soviet period, the Gharmis controlled trade, the Kulabis

controlled the police, the Pamiris controlled the KGB, and at the district level, the leaders

in most areas were Khujandis with the second in command in most districts being

Russians.[123] The Northerners largely remained allied with the ex-Soviet factions and the

Kulabis engaged the Gharmis/Pamiris and the Khujandis in a battle against each other by

waging a message campaign and creating fear among the Khujandis that the Gharmis or

Pamiris would seize all the power. One side, the Khujandis and Pamiris were in support

of reform, while the Gharmis were anti-reformist. As the Khujandis weakened due to

fighting the Pamiris and the Gharmis, the Kulabis, who had been in charge of the police

during Soviet times, began to quietly organize around the country. There is an old

Russian saying a Tajik friend of mine told me, which he pointed out describes the

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[123] Information obtained from several informants in Dushanbe and Khorog from 2010-2011.

political game the Kulabis played quite well. The saying is "with cake and lash,"

meaning, with one had they feed them sweets and with the other, they whip them.

During the Civil War, the Kulabis acted sweet on one side with the Khujandis

providing them with information about the rival factions (which made the Khujandis

direct attention away from the Kulabis and in the direction of the other rival groups. The

Kulabis began to form alliances and slowly gained control in Dushanbe by being the

reasonable one and the group seeking reconciliation (although a Pamiri briefly served as

President in 1991 and was a key voice for reconciliation as well). Finally, the rival

groups offered to work with the Khujandis, the group that had been at the top of the

power structure during the Soviet period. But, the Khujandis appointed other Khujandis

to all of the key positions in the new/transitional government. This angered the rival

groups and ended up in a vote to abolish the position of President for Tajikistan.

Ironically, this devolvement of the truce between the groups ended up making the current

president of Tajikistan, Rahmon, a farmer and agriculturalist (citation), the defacto head

of state since there was no position for president anymore and Rahmon was the Prime

Minister.

In time, Rahmon was "elected" president and, in the process, agreed to give the

Khujandis (and a very few from other rival groups) a few key positions and some

autonomy over their regions. As is often the case, once a leader has won over rival

groups, which was the case for the Khans, the Amirs, and the Shahs, they and/or their

family/clan stay in power for a long time. Imomali Rahmon is no exception. He is still

in power today even though there have been a number of elections, all of dubious

authenticity. What also has long been the case in Central Asia is that the key positions

are populated with clan members of the President, Khan, Amir, Shah, and even, in a modern-day context, the directors of the NGOs/IGOs.

Present

Some have argued that historically, border crossings, including feudal and khanate lands, have been points of natural development due to the importance of building local relationships to accommodate transit and secure passage. In this way, whether the Silk Road or other famous trade routes throughout history, have become central to empires and development. As such, borders which provide access to trade and often provide crossings along economically and socially important routes of exchange, remain important points of power-concentration even today. In communities where this point of concentrated power is amidst a marginalized group of the state, this becomes a point of concentrated oppositional power and/or force undermining state legitimacy.

More importantly, in Badakhshan, the rule of law as asserted by the state, is anything but entrenched or widely accepted and other forms unwritten agreements, not sanctioned by the state, are the norm. These networks of cooperation include local organizations, civil society groups, sub-ethnic groups, and religious groups. Even worse, if one group is in charge of the border crossing/border and different competing group or network or networks operate along the borderlands, there is cause for concern. This is the case in Badakhshan.

To return to my central question about the impact of local leaders on border and state stability, this narrative history I provide, that if the domestic institutions (supported by the international community) are in competition for resources, control, or authority

with the local organizations and networks residing along the border, a deepening of local

trust networks in opposition to the domestic and international structures/organizations

will cause tension at the border. Additionally, if there is cognitive dissonance between

the foundation myths told by locals versus outsiders (whether Russia/USSR or EU/US),

this will add to the perceived necessity for locals to assert not only their own history but

their own myths of origin. In fact, one could even go so far as to say that borderlands

which have been historically marginally a part of any central authority or state power

structure and resistant to outside intrusion, control, or colonization, are even more likely

for trust networks to deepen and broaden in reaction to state or international intervention

that is perceived as counter to the locals economic prosperity or social order.

Today, borderlands that include a divided territory, a marginalized population,

increased assertion of state authority, are some of the hottest and most insecure places in

the world. A partial list includes: Kurdistan, Balochistan, Kashmir, FATA, Fergana

Valley, and the North Caucasus. The borderlands I chose to study in my dissertation in

Badakhshan, are far less known but equally as important and have all the characteristics

of some of the most contentious borderlands in the world today.

Each case I list above has unique issues related to the relationship between the

international/domestic/local organizational structures, and the geography, tribal/clan

makeup, and the way in which the border has divided. Additionally, they are all more or

less autonomous regions as is the case with Badakhshan. The Federally Administered

Tribal Areas in Pakistan (FATA- actually rather close geographically to Badakhshan),

provides a cogent example of an area with all of these features but which has developed

quite differently from Badakhshan and has different outside incursions, interventions, and development support than Badakhshan.

FATA has numerous local divisions but is united in the desire for autonomy. The borders cut through the area, largely based on the British delineations which are a mix between the formation of the state of Pakistan in 1947 and the alliances with various outsiders who used the tribal lands as vehicles for access to the area over several centuries. During the 19th century, in order to gain safe passage to areas throughout India, and as a natural dividing line or control, the British allied with different groups in the FATA which had distinct political systems and, as Akbar Ahmad describes it, some had vertical power structures based on honor and hierarchical authority, and other groups had horizontal authority based on tax-based division of resources. The British largely partnered with the vertically-based power structures and, in some areas, these power structures were actually considered to be outsiders since many of this group had come from the West in what is now called Afghanistan. This is important because the locals, which have been disinclined to be a part of Pakistan have also had to contend with the Taliban and Al Qaeda who they also view as invaders to their territory.

The fact that an artificial line was cut through these mountainous regions, which also include a part of the Southern tip of Badakhshan (which spans Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and China), has made it so that the local leaders and the locals, who are powerless for the most part, have partnered with a number of different state-opposed networks and trafficking in weapons and drugs is rampant. Even after the incessant droning of these territories, the fights between various groups for legitimate authority continues and the more the state of Pakistan and the international community

tries to assert its institutions, whether educational, security, or even medical infrastructural development, the opposition finds ways of eroding or destroying these vehicles for formalized state formation.

The difference between FATA and Badakhshan, is that in Badakhshan there has been a measure of stability over long periods of time. In Badakhshan the state central authorities traditionally have mediated through the local leaders and organizations. This also has been the case during the time of the British/Afghan/Bokharan period and when various khanates and emirates held sway. Even during the Soviet era the local leaders controlled a number of the social and political aspects of the community. Moreover, until the late 1950s the border remained open and exchange occurred freely between both sides.[124] It has been only very recently that the international and domestic community aggressively asserted official authority through security institutions in Tajik Badakhshan.

There was a period of relative stability in FATA which mirrors the periods of relative autonomy in Badakhshan. Noted Pakistani scholar, Akbar S. Ahmed points out that in 1947, immediately after the creation of Pakistan, the new Prime Minister of Pakistan, Mohammad Ali Jinnah, "ordered all troops posted in the formidable chain of forts," previously established by the British as a natural barrier to Soviet intrusion, "to be vacated."(Ahmed, 1977, p. 8) Ahmed points out that this mandate to end military occupation of the area was the contributing factor which ended the Waziri and Afridi raids and established the local leaders as the arbiters of local power, mediating between the tribes and the state. Ahmed asserts that the local tribes began to cooperate with the government of Pakistan not only in their area but also in their dispute over Kashmir with the newly minted country of India. He says that due to an acceptance of the fact "that as

there were no alien or imperial masters to rule him he had no need for military fences to contain him and no cause to with the government." He goes on to explain that over the next two decades of relative peace in the region, "the tribesman came down to Pakistan but rarely did Pakistan go up to him" (Ahmed, 1977: 9). Essentially, Ahmed asserts that the accepted autonomy of the Tribal Areas by the government of Pakistan, aided in bringing relative calm to the region as well as collaboration with the foundling state. It was not until other outside groups, including the Taliban and Al-Qaeda, came to the area and started the cycle of instability and raids again. This is the condition today and is only getting more chaotic as outside groups warring with each other use the region as a battle ground for their disputes.

Supporting Ahmed's research, Karen Barkey says that the success of the far-reaching rule of the Ottoman Empire included their strategy of "negotiation by inclusion" and that "this form of state development was clearly distinct from western models" (1994: 12-13). She argues that "the process of state development is diverse" and that the Ottoman period is an example that highlights how "Bandits and Bureaucrats" worked together in both dialectal and collaborative ways, to consolidate the previously chaotic region the Ottoman came to control. The important aspect to her research, as well as Ahmed's is that both demonstrate how taking the importance of local leadership seriously in both state-development and state stability, aided in state-formation and state security.

Here is where James Scott (2009) is particularly relevant in his pioneering analysis of resistance to development and state-formation efforts by mountainous and agrarian communities. Scott asserts, "Formal schemes of order are untenable without some elements of the practical knowledge they tend to dismiss." The "practical

knowledge" Scott refers to is not only for agrarian schemes but also knowledge about

unwritten agreements, local organizational structures, and the context in which the border

operates. For most of its history, Badakhshan had a measure of autonomy and most

outsiders remained blind to the inner-machinations of the local community. The intrinsic

political system, conflict mediation processes, and socio-economic agreements, still

remain primary to the people in Badakhshan.[125]

The assertion that one of the key factors of the stability of the nation-state is a

monopoly over power, including its military and security institutions, is widely held in

political science. Scott explains that:

> Most tragic episodes of state-initiated social engineering originate in a pernicious
> combination of four elements...(1) administrative ordering of native and
> society…(2) high modernist ideology…(3) muscle-bound version of self-
> confidence about scientific and technical progress…(4) and, above all, the rational
> design of social order commensurate with the scientific understanding of natural
> laws (2009: 4).

What does Scott mean by this set of observations? First, that trying to bring local

populations which have been operating under distinct and often complex norms causes

unknown and often tragic outcomes. Second, that this sort of development is often done

under the guise of universal principles and laws which have nothing to do with the local

context of the population they are being imposed on. Third, the underlying assumption of

progress through scientific and technical progress is aggressively enforced and imposed

on those who are considered to be backward or needing of development within this

matrix even if it is detrimental to local stability and security. And, lastly, that there is a

certain natural order to things and whatever is deemed to be outside of this or not in line

with this "rational design of social order," must be brought under control or developed to meet such standards.

As Andreas points out, the Mexico/California border is an example of a place that must be "brought under control" through ordered development and technologically advanced equipment. Ironically, even with a state as developed as the U.S., hardening the border has enhanced the ability for local marginalized actors to enhance their ability to do business. Namely, the drug cartels of Mexico and the drug gangs in California have increased and formalized their cooperation. Moreover, they have managed to gain a foothold as far North as Monterey, which is many hundreds of miles from the Southern border of California and Northern border of Mexico.

An important case of a failed development scheme Tajikistan which ignored "practical knowledge" is exemplified by water infrastructural development in Tajik Badakhshan during Soviet times. The same development schemes did not occur on the Afghan side of Badakhshan which makes comparing the two forms of development rather easy[126]. In Badakhshan, which has about 3% arable land and which relies on glacier and snow melts and a few springs for its main water sources, the Soviets put in formal systems of water through pipelines and outdoor faucets and sinks. Some houses, but few, acquired indoor sinks and/or plumbing but even today, this is not the norm in most of the villages. But, even the limited infrastructure installed during the Soviet times has caused a skewed distribution of water in many villages and as the glacier and snow melts decrease (which is commonly attributed to global warming), water scarcity has increased. From what an expert told me, the distribution of water in the formalized structures installed by the Soviets has caused scarcity in similar geographic terrain on the Afghan

side, are not there. The Soviet system funneled all the water in pipes to be distributed to houses along those pipelines but this infrastructure relies on there being enough water for the water to flow all the way down to household at the bottom of various hills in the villages. Due to the decrease in water, the households at the top are using up all the water and the ones at the bottom have none. In some villages, local agreements have been made for water-sharing but in other areas this has not been the case and has caused tension among villagers and health risks associated with water scarcity.

Conversely, on the Afghan side, still today there are ancient canals throughout the villages which use complex systems of water division in the open air and, while the current drought has caused depleted crops and rock slides, it has not caused local tensions and has spread the scarcity among all of the locals and therefore, while it has hurt some more than others, the majority of the challenges due to decrease in water supply has been borne by the entire community. Interestingly, the narrative on both sides of the border is that the Soviet Union developed the region and that the Tajik side is far more "civilized" than the Afghan side. Additionally, the narrative among Tajiks and internationals which I heard over and over was that, "if you want to go see Tajikistan two hundred years ago, just go to the Afghan side. They are stuck in time." [127] This is a case where development has had a perverse effect on the local resources. [128]

The question is, at least for the case of Badakhshan, how have developing the security institutions at the border impacted stability today. While the international community and the domestic authority work to "develop" the border institutions and provide technical progress, guidance, and "laws," the locals continue to operate in the

[128] Data regarding the water infrastructure came from a official of GIZ who had worked on water infrastructure and management in Badakhshan for three years.

way they have been. The more that is disrupted, the more the locals unite against those

who are invading their status quo. The difference between the rather detrimental water

projects during the Soviet period and today's development of the border institutions is

that the water projects did not attempt to control the local fabric of everyday political

existence, which the development of the security institutions, at least in some measure,

are attempting.[129]

The ripple effects of the current military actions in Badakhshan, on both sides of

the border, by state and international authorities are currently unknown. Given the

importance of the unwritten agreements and modes of cooperation, my research aims to

uncover some of these hidden systems and networks of cooperation in order to better

understand the effects on development projects and state assertion of authority at the

border. It is important to note that the corruption of state officials and throughout state

institutions is common knowledge to both internationals and locals, so developing formal

state institutions on either side of the border is a bit of an oxymoron at first glance. That

being said, the institutions at the border do exist, the international community is assuming

that they need to function, and the various trust networks and international/domestic/local

organizations are operating within and around the rather broken but extant state

institutions. For this reason, understanding the networks and their associated leaders that

operate at the border, and in particular, how the local leaders intersect with state

institutions and local organizations are not only critically important for policymakers, but

also add to the literature on how borders and local organizations intersection with state

institutions.

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[129] Elinor Ostrom's research (2005, 2006, 2010) for which she won the Nobel Peace prize in 2009 winning research on development is pertinent here.

Chapter Five

Competing Foundational Myths of Badakhshan

Introduction

  In this chapter I am going to explain, for the most part, how the people of the

region described their own myths and histories to me. As stated previously, I assume

people assert ethnic identity and therefore it changes continually (as opposed to static and

unchanging). The question is, how identity(ies) is asserted and through what mechanisms

they operate within local groups.   In Badakhshan it is common for ethnic identity to be

asserted through different foundational myths and histories created by different groups

for different purposes. These myths and histories vary greatly depending on the group or

person doing the asserting, often in contention.   The histories and myths I present here,

while far from comprehensive, represent the main myths and histories I encountered

during my fieldwork and textual research. It is a discussion about how identity is

"performed" and asserted by the locals as well as how it is conceived and/or imposed by

non-locals. By understanding the competing conceptions of identity, I reveal some of the

mechanisms underlying boundary maintenance and transcendence in Badakhshan.   The

accounts of foundational myths and histories are an important mode of the performance

and/or production of identity.[130]

  The local sub-ethnic groups (self-identified) and their associated leaders in

Badakhshan maintain their boundaries of identity, particularly the boundaries they assert

which separate them from the state, as a means of maintaining or increasing local

authority and power. Therefore, assertion of ethnic identity is used to increase legitimate

authority by local leaders and groups and as a means of resistance to the state. At the same time, these boundaries are often transcended for strategic or pragmatic purposes. Ed Schatz suggests, scholarship on identity needs to "account equally for stasis and persistence as for fluidity and change" (2004: *xx*).[131] These assertions of ethnic identity help to understand not only why the local identities persist, but also why they are transcended. Identities exist concurrently in a state of continuity and change through strategic usage of foundational myths and histories.

The literature on historical narratives and myth-making is extensive and diverse.[132] In the end, as I stated in the previous chapter, I do not consider the asserted or written histories or myths to be the "truth" but rather a form of identity assertion which is constructed through the lens of various groups. In my case, different competing groups, including local groups which agree and/or disagree as well as domestic and international groups who agree and/or disagree. Scholarship on historical narratives also has an extensive literature including work by Laitin, Levy, Bates, Greif, Weingast, and Giddens. I build on the group of scholars who assume that the narratives are continually made and remade as opposed to clearly delineated within a group, institution, or other collective arrangement. Therefore, tracing the mechanisms by which the narratives are used, at least within the context of my analysis, helps to develop how the stories impact boundary maintenance as opposed to following the particular narrative in time to trace the ways in which the particular narrative impacts or changes an institution or group. Namely, there

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[131] Again, as stated earlier, Schatz explains that, "Groupness does not survive merely by definition; rather it survives (if and when it does) because of identifiable mechanisms of identity reproduction. Consequently, if such mechanisms are disrupted or changed, we can expect concurrent changes in the shape and meaning, and salience of group identities." (Schatz, 2004: *xx*) Charles Tilly is the first one to define different forms of groupness in 1977.

[132] See: Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983); Stuart Kaufman (2001); Victor Turner (1981, 1982); Bronislaw Malinowski (1926, 1948, 13), Ernst Cassirer (1946, 1950) Judith Butler (1997, 2007), Richard Schechner (1976, 1985), Peter Chelkowski (1979, 2010), Louis Althusser (1976); and John Searle (1969m 2004).

is not one narrative nor is there even many narratives which main continuous, there are

narratives which are made and remade depending on the context and strategic use and

therefore understanding which groups use them how, and how they are "performed," in

my context, is more useful then tracing the process of the narrative itself.

Throughout my fieldwork, the myths of origin, language as a marker of identity,

and the "real" history, often were the topic of heated discussions and debates. To re-

state, the main question my dissertation asks is: *What is the importance of local leaders*

and local sub ethnic groups to the stability of a state's border and ultimately, the stability

of the state? How these three areas of identity assertion relate to my main question, as

well to the case studies I present in the following three chapters, is two-fold:

    a. How are the assertions of ethnic identity used by insiders and outsiders[133]

    b. Who uses what myths to assert legitimacy and why: Local, domestic,

       international

It is within the context of these questions that I develop a deeper understanding of how

local leaders and their associated local networks interact with outside intervention and

influence[134]. The mechanisms uncovered through various forms of identity performance,

highlight both the importance of boundary maintenance and transcendence to local and

state stability, as well as the ways outside development schemes impact asserted ethnic

boundary maintenance and transcendence. The question is, what are the myths and

histories used for the performance and/or transcendence of identity (both by locals and

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[133] Marsden and Hopkin's work how various uses of history and foundational myths from within the community and from outside both domestically and internationally, impact the ways in which identity is asserted. Specifically, they say, "The Frontiers' multiple spaces are inhabited by and nurture the existence of multiple histories, communities, and lifeworlds; what we refer to as 'fragments'" (2012: 4).

[134] As Ed Schatz suggests, "Just as historical institutionalists contend that change and stasis in institutions can be traced to mechanisms that underlie the institutions themselves, the same can be argued for collective identities" (Schatz, 2004: *xx*).

outsiders). Hence, the following aims to provide a map of some of these foundational myths and histories[135].

This chapter is divided into two sections entitled: (1) Foundational Myths; and (2) Names of the Region. For the section on myths, I highlight the myths I heard in the field, how they help set identity boundaries, and how they are used to legitimize claims to power (by insiders and outsiders). The myths I explore largely are culled from stories told to me by locals and outsiders and supplemented with some of the scholarly material. The section on names is explored through local narratives, scholarly works, museums, and other sources.

Foundational Myths

Myths, and more importantly, myth-making has a rich literature. For the purposes of my dissertation, I am not concerned with the precise myths as documented, but more, which myths are used by people today and for what purposes and, more specifically, myths of geographical and territorial origin.[136] Additionally, this section does not provide a comprehensive accounting of every myth locals and outsiders told me, it simply provides the most prevalent and seemingly weighted myths of origin.

In Badakhshan, there are a number of foundational myths, both in the literature and as described by locals, about how the people found their way into the isolated Pamir mountain range. People even debate the origin of the names: *Badakhshan, Khurasan,*

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[135] Marsden and Hopkin's (2012) provide a useful basis for using a combination of history and ethnography to provide analysis for the assertion of what they term a "fluid identity" which forms and reforms through various historical paradigms and is asserted by local domestic, and international players which all contribute to a continuous construction and reconstruction of identity.

[136] The literature on myths (including their associated symbols, theatrical expressions, and rituals – semiotic and hermeneutic) and folktales crosses many disciplines but in terms of myths as political tools, including Goffman, 1956; Althusser, 1970; Searle, 1969, 2004; Beeman, 2005; Aronoff, 1976; 1983; 2000; 2013; Kubik, 1994, 2012; Kertzer, 1988; Malinowsky, 1926, 1948; Schechner and Turner.

and Pamir which I will discuss more in the next section. The locals I spent time with often discussed which name is intrinsic to the area and which names (and often associated borders) were ascribed by outsiders. Or, what locals have said are colonialist-constructed myths of origin.[137] There were three main myths of origin which were oft-repeated which I have given the titles of: (1) Alexander the Great (2) Zoroastrians escaping oppression (3) Pashtuns and a Spell of bad weather

Alexander the Great

Even before I arrived in Dushanbe I had heard the Alexander the Great myth. During a few conversations with people in Washington, DC, the myth of the beautiful people who are mixed with the blood of the Persians and the ancient Greeks filled my head. This first myth which was told to me primarily by outsiders, held that when Alexander the Great conquered the area, he left his spawn throughout the region, and according to this myth, the diverse mix of light and dark skin, blond, brown, and black hair, and blue, green, hazel, and brown eyes came from the genes of Alexander the Great (Iskandar). I heard this myth in just about every interview I had before I went to Badakhshan with foreign and local non-Pamiri elites in Tajikistan – in DC, Khorog, and Dushanbe including officials from the US Embassy in Dushanbe, the UN, OSCE, and Tajik officials and citizens. Sitting at a party in a mansion in Dushanbe (many of the expatriate contractors and embassy officials had enormous houses in upscale areas of Dushanbe), very few people had visiting Gorno-Badakhshan but all seemed to know

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[137] Moreover, the "true" myths of origin also included which of the three "ethnic" groups, the Persians, the Pashtuns, and the Turks, were the basis for the people in the region and/or the names.

about the myth of Alexander and the spread of his seed and blue/green eyes throughout

the Pamirs.

The majority of locals told me they disagreed with this version of their myth of

origin.[138] Many told me that this myth was just outsiders or colonialists attempting to

co-opt the roots of the beauty of their people and attribute to the West.[139] Sitting after

dinner outside in a garden in Khorog…outside under the stars…I chatted with a local

scholar. We had spent quite a bit of time together. We spoke for hours about how,

according to him, the outsiders tried to co-opt their ancestry and heritage with myths such

as the Alexander one. He asked me – do you really think one man could spread himself

throughout an entire region? Does that make any sense? Or is it the typical way of

colonizing an area: through the wombs of the women. He said at another time that the

body of the women in the Pamirs belongs to the community and angrily talked about a

local woman who had almost married a Russian. He called her a whore and said he hated

her for betraying her own people and allowing an outsider to contaminate her body. "She

doesn't deserve to live." It was clear that he viewed that the spawn of outsiders mixed

with locals lowered the culprit to that of an apostate (of a different sort). The myth of

Alexander was just the tip of the insider/outsider iceberg..so to speak. He told me that

the people had likely come from the Turks and the Zoroastrians and that the many

Zoroastrian ruins and traditions supported that view. He pointed out that he had Turkish

features as did many of his family members while others had a more indigenous make up

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[138] Between 2010-2012 I heard this in Dushanbe, Khorog, and in on-line chats and phone interviews.
[139] Many people from Ishkashim and Khorog talked about this during my fieldwork in 2010-2011. Two
local scholars brought this point up repeatedly, and the more they drunk the angrier they would become. At
times, I became the object of their bitter resentment toward the many outsiders who had used their land and
people for personal gains.

(although I am not sure what that means.) This leads me to the second foundation myth I heard – the Zoroastrians.

Zoroastrians escaping oppression

This second myth, told to me by mostly local scholars as opposed to non-locals, asserted that groups of Zoroastrians (likely marginalized tribes/clans) escaping oppression in the South and West of the region of Persia and found their way to the mountains and formed villages. Recent scholarship even asserts that Zoroaster originated from somewhere in Afghanistan somewhat West of Badakhshan. According to the myth, in order to protect themselves from outsiders, this group of persecuted Zoroastrians altered the language into secret or hidden forms so that no one could understand them when they spoke among themselves (in the event that they were caught).

There is much evidence that Zoroastrianism[140] was prevalent in the area prior to Islam and Ismailism and many contend that the elements from Zoroastrianism were brought into Ismaili religious rituals and traditions (Bekhradania, 1994: 114).[141] Zartusht spread Zoroastrianism a couple of hundred years before Alexander (Dhalla, 1938). Some

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[140] There are ancient Zoroastrian fire temples, fortes, and other ruins in the Wakhan (both sides of the border), outside Khorog, and in Ishkashim.

[141] "The Wakhi and Shughni members of the Society hold that many of their local traditions are derived from Zoroastrianism, and are sure indicators of a not-too distant Zoroastrian past. The religion of the Badakhshanis was traditionally Ismaili, and some argue that this sect has a direct connection with Zoroastrianism since the founder Ismail was a descendant of the union of the prophet's great grand-nephew with the Zoroastrian princess Shahrbanu, daughter of the last Zoroastrian king of Iran. This king, Yazdegerd, is known to have fled the Arabs and headed for China, and it is suggested that he may have sought refuge in the region of the Pamirs. A photocopied nineteenth-century manuscript copy of the History of Shughnan by Heydar Shah contains several contemporary references to fire worshippers and infidels, terms usually reserved exclusively for Zoroastrians by Muslim writers in Persian. Informants also say that they have a hazy collective memory, based on oral history, of their forefathers having had a different religion. It is of course possible that much of this may merely be wishful thinking. There are, however, the independent writings of European travelers throughout the nineteenth century in which references are made to the inhabitants of the Pamirs, and in the most widely known of these, Through the Unknown Pamirs, written in the late nineteenth century, the author singles out the Wakhis as people whose customs manifest what he believes to be aspects of Zoroastrianism." (Bakhradnia, 1994: 113-4)

people said that the Zoroastrians escaping persecution by other Zoroastrians escaped to the hills. Others say they were escaping to the hills due to persecution by Muslims. In the former story, the Mardaki minority within the Zoroastrian religion, were massacred.[142] This group, followers of Mardak, some say may have escaped to the hills and changed their languages to hide their origins. The latter story, one I heard much more often, said that due to the forced conversions of Persian Zoroastrians by the Arabs and Muslims, they fled to the hills and created hidden language to hide their Persian Zoroastrian origins. I heard this story a lot. Bakhradnia cites sources from the late nineteenth century which singles out the Wakhi people "as people whose customs manifest what he believes to be aspects of Zoroastrianism" (1994: 113-14). Interestingly enough there are indeed fire temples and Zoroastrian fortes throughout this area on both sides of the border. Recently, Jo-Ann Gross wrote about the links between Zoroastrianism, Ismailism, and the cultural roots of Badakhshan. She studies this through the Sufi shrines in the area. Indeed, she finds many linkages between Zoroastrianism, Ismailism, and the people of the area today. It is hard to say if she discovered these linkages through a lens influenced by the shrines or the locals with whom she spoke. Oddly, when I read her book, many of the narratives she developed were quite familiar to me from my time in the field and from the many stories I heard from the locals.

Pashtuns and a spell of bad weather

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[142]Dhalla (1938) *History of Zoroastrianism*, part V

A third myth people on both sides of the border told me was that the people from the South, namely the Pashtuns (or Pakhtuns), who were nomadic, had a particularly bad spell of inclement weather. They ended up going further to the North than usual after finding it more hospitable than in the South, they stayed. The locals who told me this third myth said that evidence for this version was the greenness of the land, the many springs, and the pasture lands. Others still, say that some groups escaped from the Persian Empire for a variety of reasons finding a safe-haven in the mountains.

One friend of mine in the area pointed out that the Shughni language (which is the language in the districts of Khorog, Tajikistan and Shughnan, Afghanistan, has the same grammar as the Pashtun language. He said that this pointed to the fact that the people were really originally ethnically Pashtun. He then laughed and said that this was something no one wanted to acknowledge since most of the locals viewed the Pashtuns as primitive and not something they wanted to acknowledge was associated with them.[143]

Political Implications: Why these myths and not others?

I can only speculate as to why these myths gained more weight than others. What is interesting about some of the older documents is that the people in the South, at least on tablets and other forms of documentation from the time, referred to the people in the North as wild and uncontrollable which mirrors stories I heard from people while I was in the field. After hearing about the wild people in the mountains over and over, I decided to study this a bit more. While I in no way am asserting that I am writing history, what I

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[143] Another myth about the Turkish roots of the area came up a few times but was far less discussed than the others I have discussed.

am doing, is looking at similar themes of depicting insiders and outsiders in the past and today. The myths I was told always encompassed some aspect of this issue.

It appears that there are aspects to all of these myths which are based in written documents, linguistic features, historical artifacts, and archaeological findings.[144] Numerous ring stamps and stone tablets dating back to circa 2000 B.C. feature symbols from the people in the mountainous regions in and around Badakhshan.[145] These include a particular type of endangered Mountain Yak, a sun in a particular form, and ring stamps which belonged to traders and leaders in the mountainous areas. The ring stamps were used for trade to mark the origin of something (as Cuneiform as developed as an accounting system helping to develop the first written language). The symbols on the ring stamps codified how the particular geographic area – whether a khanate or another type of grouping. Even in the limited amount of documents from the time, was the tension between insiders and outsiders (and Southerners and Northerners) present and depicted in a number of ways. Perhaps, as the locals were trying to piece together their own history, they relied not only on their own oral histories and artifacts but also the various colonialists and outsiders – from Persians to Greeks to Russians to British scholars and explorers. As Marsden and Hopkins (2012) point out, the many versions of their histories by both insiders and outsiders, creates a mirage of myths of origin, too elusive to see yet always within the grasp of attempted understanding.

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144 Citations include: British Museum, Islamic Collection at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Dodikhudoeva; "The Tajik Language and the Socio-Linguistic Situation in the Mountainous Badakhshan," *Iran & the Caucasus*,
(8)2 (2004: 281-88); Unpublished archives of the Institute for Ismaili Studies, Khorog, Tajikistan; Interviews and discussions with numerous people living in and originating from the region. Additionally, there have been a number of epigraphic studies published in Russian. These studies as well as detailed ethnographic, cartographic, and geological studies were conducted prior to the formation of the Soviet republics in Central Asia.
145 Oxus collection at the British Museum, including my photographs from my visit to the museum in 2012.

According to the tablets and finds from archaeologist, the southern tribes attempted to build a perimeter to protect themselves from the Northerners and delineate which territories belonged to the Persian Empire. Even though the tablets from the time assert that the Northern areas were nomadic and uncontrollable, it appears that these areas and Badakhshan in particular, were rich in precious minerals and stones. Moreover, much of the finest and most intricate metal work came from the region. Archaeologists have found the most refined of objects from that period was culled and forged by local craftspeople from in and around the Northern mountainous areas. The narrative of the wild mountain people on the Tajik side of the border remains a story I heard from many Tajiks in Dushanbe. Even Kipling referred to the North in terms of "trouble":

> *Listen in the North, my boys, there's trouble in the wind.*
> *Tramp, O Cossacks, troop in front, grey greatcoats behind.*
> *Trouble on the Frontier of the most amazin' kind,*
> *Trouble on the waters o' the Oxus.* - Rudyard Kipling[146]

This referral to the people as primitive or uncivilized goes both ways. Many of the locals expressed to me that they view the central governments as being occupied by uncivilized, uneducated, and corrupt crooks who have sold themselves and their country to the highest bidder.[147] Conversely, I heard numerous times while in Dushanbe that "the people of the Pamirs are wild and uncivilized." I also witnessed debates between the two groups about the country's history, the Hanafi versus Ismaili religious practices, and family social practices. On the Afghan side there were different forms of delineating insider versus outsider.

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[146] Quoted from Cobbold, (1900: 251)
[147] I had numerous discussions between 2009-2012, on the Tajik and Afghan sides of Badakhshan as well as with people from Dushanbe and Kabul (in government positions, working for IGOs and NGOs, and local traders.

All of these myths are used in different ways to assert local identity by both insiders and outsiders. And who is an insider and an outsider varies according to the myth being shared. Both sides had a vision of what they were not – either corrupt and without morals or uncivilized and dangerous. It appears these assertions, embodied in the myths I outline above, have roots in numerous places as well as fluid permutations framed within the context of ethnic-identity or outsider/insider. This assertion of identity through different foundation myths also surfaced in disputes over the "real" name of the region. The next section explores some of the names I discovered while I was in the field and the texts.

Names of the Region: Khurasan, Pamir, Badakhshan, and Afghan

In earlier literature, scholars separated the Tajiks into some version "mainland" versus "mountain" Tajiks[148] (Curzon, 1896, Bartold, 1925; 1968; Mongarova, 1969). Most of the people from Badakhshan with whom I spent time, not only rejected being Tajik in origin, they asserted that they were Pamiri, Khorogi, Shughni, Ishkashimi, Wakhi, Badakhshi, and even sometimes, on the Afghan side, the people of the land of Khurasan. Who groups belonged to and/or did not belong to was a frequent topic of discussion on both sides of the border often centering on myths of origin and/or "true" histories. The challenge is, as Marsden and Hopkin explain, there are many histories and all as true as the next.[149] Names (and naming) is one of these areas which intersections both debates about the foundational myths and the history(ies). The subject of the name

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[148] Mongarova, "Sem'ya i semeynyi byt," in G. P. Vasil'eva and B. Kh. Karmysheva, eds., *Etnograficheskie ocherki Uzbekskogo sel'skogo naseleniya*, Moscow (1969: 193-243).
[149] "The Frontier's multiple spaces are inhabited by, and nurture the existence of, multiple histories, communities, and lifeworlds: what we refer to as 'fragments.'" (Marsden and Hopkin, 2011: 4)

of the area – and what is the authentic name or "real" name is a common topic of debate,

including which was the oldest name for the region, including: Pamirs, Badakhshan,

Khurasan, and Afghanistan (and Afghan). The next section briefly highlights some of the

debates names.

Pamir

Local scholars told me that the name Pamir, since it was constructed by outsiders,

did not belong to them. Additionally, some of these scholars who had access to oral

histories of elders in the community, many of whom had passed away, asserted this as

well.[150] According to many, they pointed out that the ethnonym, Pamir, really belonged

to the area and the people in Murghab, which is a Kyrgyz-Sunni section of in the northern

part of Badakhshan. They said that the Russians came to area, and that since they had

spent time in the northern areas known as the Pamiri mountains (as far back as the 1600s

when they were fighting with the Chinese), they decided to name the area Pamir and the

people Pamiri. These locals contended that the Soviets constructed this name as a means

to reinvent the foundations of their people (similar to what Bregel (1996) writes.

In the scholarly material on the name Pamir, Pa means foot in old and modern

Persian (Bliss, 2010; Olufson, 2001). Due to the height of the mountains in the region

and the belief that this meant that the people living there were closer to Mithra, the Sun

God, the name Pa (foot) and Mithra (sun) likely became Pamir, or at the foot of the sun.

Mir also means king or chief or leader or commander, so it could mean that due to the

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[150] Shokhumorov, Sidorov, Agakhaniant; Gafarov: on the origin and topography of the Pamirs; Bayhaqi, Bartold, and Bosworth on origin of Khurasan; " Pamirs" Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition. Brill Online , 2013. Reference. Rutgers University. 25 January 2013
<http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-2/pamirs-SIM_6067>

mountains proximity to the sun, it was at the foot of the king (Mithra). Others refer to it as meaning the "roof of the world" since it is the closest point in the world to the sun or to god. Still, others say that it means foot of the mountain since in various languages throughout the region in KPK, FATA, Kashmir, and FANA, mir means mountain and pa means foot. There is some evidence for this because Pamir, as a geographical term, means a plain or flat land in between the mountain peaks.[151] Prior to the Russian nation-building projects, the name Pamir was associated with the Kyrgyz people in the Northern areas of Badakhshan now called Murghab according to maps. Many locals refer to the area as Badakhshan, dismissing the name Pamir altogether.

Badakhshan

The most common name I heard on both sides of the border was Badakhshan. Oddly though, in Shughnan the term Badakhshi is used to denote anyone from outside Shughnan. Additionally, it often is meant in the pejorative or to describe a person who is

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[151] Robert Middleton outlines various versions of the etymology of Pamir:
"Sanskrit:
'upa'-'mery' – the country behind the bank of the river;
'upa'-'meru' – the country above Mount Meru (legendary holy mountain of Hindu
mythology, abode of the gods and centre of the universe)
Old Persian:
'poye'-'mehr' – the land at the foot of the sun;
'pa-i-mikhr' – pedestal of Mitra, the sun god;
'bom'-'ir' – land of the Aryans;
'pai'-'mir' – foot of the mountain peaks;
'pa-e-Mir' – foot of the Mir (Hazrat Ali)
'fan'-'mir' or ('famir') – the lake country of the *Fani*, who according to Strabo founded Balkh
– here 'mir' is etymologically identical with Indo-European words for sea or lake, as in the
name 'Kashmir' and modern German 'Meer'.
Turkic:
a desert; or
a plateau" (Middleton, 2005, 2008: 515-519) Middleton also cites a number of sources (which I also have consulted): See also: Shokhumurov *Pamir - the land of Aryans*, Dushanbe (1997: 31-32); Iskandarov, *История Памира* (*History of the Pamirs*) Khorog (1996: 11); Curzon, "ThePamirs and the Source of the Oxus", in *The Geographical Journal*, 8(1), (1896: 29-30; and *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society* 14(1) (1892: 34).

dangerous or to be avoided. The women told me they were not allowed to go the bazaars because of the Badakhshis. The fathers and husbands forbade them because they were scared the Badakhshis would hurt their women. Or, at least, this was the story they told the women as their reason for not allowing them to go out. The men and women from Shughnan also told me that the "Badakhshis" in the bazaar hung around at night and sold drugs to their children and families causing the rise in addiction and overdoses in the area.

Other than this negative connotation, Badakhshan seemed to be the most unifying name and most accepted by the locals. In fact, according to many locals there currently a secret project spearheaded by the Aga Khan Foundation called the Badakhshan-Badakhshan Project (BBP). The project's main goal is to unify the Afghan and Tajik sides through increased trade, medical and cultural exchanges.   They even proposed an open customs and trade area spanning both sides of districts of Ishkashim.

Chinese sources from as early as the seventh century AD refers to the area surrounding today's Xing Xiang as Badakhshan.[152] Balas translated from medieval Arabic means ruby. There is still a mountain in the area named *Koh-e Lal* (ruby mountain). Nasiri Khusraw, the famous writer from the 11th century who most attribute with bringing Ismailism to Badakhshan, is called the Ruby of Badakhshan in the title of a well-known book by Alice Hunsberger (2006). The area was an important trade route during the period of the Silk Road, and was known for its rubies even then, hence the

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[152] "Badakhshan, sometimes spelled "Badakshan", was known by medieval Arab and European writers as "Balascian"; the name "balas" ruby, mentioned by Marco Polo, is still found in gemmology and defines the "lale badakhshan" that was then considered the finest form of ruby (technically spinel) and is still mined in Gorno-Badakhshan." Zamonov (2007-2010), accessed 2013-01-29: http://www.freewebs.com/beep-sino/badakhshanpamir.htm "Afghanistan" Encyclopedia of Islam, Brill Online , 2013

name (Hunsberger, 2006). Along with Badakhshan, another name that came up many times in conversation was Khurasan. The next section discusses this name.

Khurasan

It was a cold day. My guide and I walked through a village in a remote part of the Wakhan corridor. We had just come from a secret opium den in which a local man addicted to opium had shown us where the locals go to smoke. My guide talked about how the Sunni traders (he was Ismaili) forced the locals to buy opium and oppressed them. He asked me if I had heard of Khurasan. At first I did not understand his pronunciation so I told him no. He looked hurt and shocked. He asked me how I could be conducting research on Badakhshan without knowing this important part of the history. He said to me that he is not Afghan. That his land does not belong to that name and that Afghan meant the whining or screaming people while Khurasan meant the land of the sun. He felt like as long as the Afghans controlled his land his people would be in misery.

The name of Khurasan came up during my fieldwork, both on the Afghan side and on the Tajik side, many times. On the Afghan side it is currently being used as a means of resistance in the North against the Pashtun power elite in Kabul. There are numerous groups with the name of Khurasan who are from Afghanistan. These groups are on Facebook and other forms of social media. Many Afghans in Badakhshan said they do not belong to this Afghanistan. They belong to Khurasan. One scholar from Badakhshan asked me to write a book on Khurasan with him.

Historically, the name Khurasan has important meanings even today. According to many sources, it was likely during the time of the Zoroastrians that the name of Khurasan came into existence since the craftspeople and the people living in the area were Zoroastrian. Mithra is the name for the Sun God which is of great importance in the Zoroastrian religion.[153] Khur means sun and asan to come (from) – essentially, the place of the sun-worshippers, which is what is a pseudonym for the Zoroastrians.

Interestingly enough, the area belonged to Khurasan as well which translates to "land where the sun rises" in middle Persian from the third century[154]. According to historical sources and maps, Khurasan also existed during the Safavid Empire in the early Islamic period in 750 C.E. and is included in the historical maps as late as the early seventeen hundreds[155]. Moreover, there are still three districts in Iran which are under the umbrella of the province of Khurosan. Additionally, the language spoken in parts of Chitral in Pakistan is Khowar which is a holdover from when it was the land of Khurasan. In Middle Persian, sun translated into Khur or Khow and the area was also referred to as Khowarasan.[156]

The symbol of the sun figured prominently in many of the trading stamps, cuneiform tablets and stamps, and artifacts from these periods. This name and historical lineage is more prevalent in the foundational myths on the Afghan side of the border and currently is being used by a number of resistance groups in Northern Afghanistan who feel that they are being oppressed by the Pashtuns (Durranis and Ghilzais) and that the

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[153] See also on Khurasan: Bartold (1966); Shaban in "Khurasan at the TIme of the Arab Conquest,' in *Iran and Islam in Memory of Vladimir Minorsky,* Edinburgh University (1971: 479-490); and Noelle-Karimi (2008) "Khurasan and its Limits."

[154] From: Bowen (1747) *A complete system of geography,* Library of Congress Geography and Map Division; See also Bartold and Bayhaqi.

[156] Ibid

current administration in Kabul is not a legitimate government.[157] Therefore, according

to some groups in the North, they would prefer to be part of Khurasan or to be divided

from the Southern Afghanistan and remapped into the state of Khurasan. Some, and this

is not an uncommon assertion, say that the word Afghan means crazy people or whiners

and that they are not part of those people from the South[158]. They are Khurasani and the

Afghans are the crazy ones.[159] I also heard many Northerners (not just from Badakhshan)

refer to the Afghans as jungle people or animals.

Afghans

 Numerous people in Badakhshan told me that the name Afghan was synonymous

whining. Renowned scholar of Afghanistan and Islamic antiquities gives several

definitions regarding from where the name Afghan spawned from. One is from the

Mughal Empire which was known to have referred to the Pashtun tribesman's territory as

"Yaghestan" translated as the "the land of insolence" (Barry, 2011: 41). He points out,

however, that there are a number of alternative stories on its inception dating as far back

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[157] Map of tribes in Afghanistan:
http://www.nps.edu/programs/ccs/Docs/PDF%20Maps/RCSouthTribalmap07.pdf
Map of Tribes and associated leaders in power in Afghanistan since 1747:
http://www.nytimes.com/imagepages/2010/01/31/weekinreview/13rohde-grfk-1.html?ref=weekinreview

[159] "'Afghan' is a Persian word which means "to shout" or "to whine" and it has been referred to one of the original ethnic groups of our country. History shows that the word "Afghan" referred to only one ethnic group not only before Ahmad Shah Abdali, but even during his kingdom. To prove this, we can refer to Ahmad Shah's letter to Ottoman Emperor, Sultan Mustafa the third. The original letter is still preserved in the Istanbul Archive and its contents were first published under the title "Ahmad Shah Baba's letter to Mustafa the third" with notes from Ghulam Jilani Jalali (father of Ali Ahmad Jalali, Karzai's former home minister) and an introductory note by Abdulhai Habibi in the year 1346. It was later republished in 1383 AH in Qisa Khwani bazzar, Peshawar by Danish Book Publishing. In this letter, Ahmad Shah speaks about Nadir Afshar: "He has captured Khurasan, Iraq, Persia (Fars), Azerbaijan, all of Iran, India and Turkistan and he is oppressing the great Afghan tribe…"Pages 16 and 17. In above sentence we see that Ahmad Shah Baba has mentioned a great tribe called "Afghan". These two words are also repeated again and again in this letter:" …leaders and heads of the great Afghan tribe have researched and concluded that the country of India is bigger than all other countries in the world."" (Ansari, 2009) accessed 2013-01-29, "The Crisis of National Identity in Afghanistan," http://www.bashiransari.com/en/?art=show_articles&id=42

as the Kushan Dynasty (which ruled from Bactria to northwest India) of 50 B.C. as well as the Graeco-Buddhic civilization, the Sasanian Empire, and the Ghaznavids. The word varied from those times as widely as "horse-people," or belonging to a list of Sasanian tributary kings, or during the Ghaznavid age meaning "Limits of the World" (2010: 81). The most common story holds that the name of the Afghans originally was formed under Ahmad Shah Durrani in 1837 and encompassed the combined forces of the Durrani and the Ghilzai tribes both Pashtun from the South of the country (Tanner, 2002).

Many in the North, including the self-identified Tajiks, Persians, Qizalbash, Uzbeks, or other ethnic groups, said they do not feel a part of this country name Afghanistan. They say it does not belong to the people in the North because historically, it has been attributed to the Pashtuns/Pakhtuns. Even worse, they contend, this is a name given to the Pashtuns by outsiders and that the Pashtuns collaborated with outsiders, taking bribes and selling themselves out to the highest bidder. This includes, according to many I spoke with, the leaders of Afghanistan since its inception since they have come from the powerful Pashtun Durrani tribe including its current President, Hamid Karzai. They also point out that most of these leaders gained their positions with the help of outsiders. This has made many in the North of the country weary of these leaders and intervention and/or help from outsiders.[160] Suffice it to say, the contention over territory and names/labels of territory, has a long and sometimes violent history.

Conclusion

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[160] This argument was made by numerous locals while I was in the field from 2009-2011. It also is in current analysis in Dari language newspapers and other web-based materials,

Once again, this highlights the depth of the dislike of the presence of outsiders, whether attempting to control, partner, or even live in the area. The question is – what constitutes an "insider"? It appears that this is defined in so many ways. If even the name of the country of Afghanistan, the name of the mountains as Pamir, and the myths of origin are in contention, how does one ever resolve who an insider and outsider really is? Well, the answer is: It depends on what one is trying to be inside or outside of…and this is important.

The issue of the "outsider" as oppressor is important here given that the idea of developing the formal institutions at the border as a means to increasing state stability may indeed be not only difficult but detrimental if the formal institutions are either primarily developed and implemented by various "outsiders." Additionally, if these outsiders ignore the networks that are already in place, assuming that by providing the formal laws and physical structures, these local organizations and groups will fall away, they are doing so at they own peril. Meaning, these informal/local networks will institutionalize and the formal ones will simply provide a shroud under which they can hide their activities. And, this shroud acts as a cover for their increasing cooperation and a necessary shadow under which to hide an ever-increasing array of shadow-related activities operating and institutionalizing throughout the sub-structure of the outsiders structure.

It is this sub-structure and its meanderings in-between, underneath, and throughout the formal institutions I explore next.[161] Moreover, my ethnographic case studies build on both the foundational myths and the narrative histories as told to me by

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[161] My fieldwork for this part of my dissertation occurred within a two year period of visiting the Saturday bazaars numerous times at Tem and in Ishkashim.

the local scholars and historians as well and primary texts and images I have written about in this chapter. Periods of time which are still embedded in the fabric of the oft-asserted ethnic identities in Badakhshan. The following three chapters describe the ways in which people living at the border maintain and transcend their ethnic identity within the framework of the local organizations and border institutions and how this interaction not only impacts the border as a formal institution but also stability at the border.

Chapter Six

The Social Organization[162] of Borderlands of Badakhshan

Introduction

      During my fieldwork, the importance of the underlying informal organizations in the region for the assertion of identity became apparent. Not only did the groups people associated with define what they supported politically, the groups they chose not to associate with in other situations, defined their position on a particular issue. The local organizations and the overall social organization underpin the mechanisms by which identity shapes behavior within local organizations and institutions. As previously discussed, in my research I focus on four identities: territorial, religious, ethnic, and national. These identities are all relevant to the social organization of the borderlands of Badakhshan. The mechanisms of identity-production, involving ethnic, religious, and territorial identity, influence how local networks react to outside pressure at the border.

      Originally, I went to the field having done minimal prior research on the history and background of Tajik/Afghan Badakhshan. I did this to limit any preconceived

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[162] In chapter three of Frederik Barth's monograph (which was based on his dissertation), *Political Leadership Among Swat Pathans*, he provides an analysis of their social organization in his chapter entitled, "Underlying Framework of Organization" (1959: 12). It is this concept I build on to provide a description of the local organizations, their leaders, and the influence they have on security/stability in their areas.
To restate what I said in my second chapter:
In Barth's later work, he made an important addition to his original conceptualization of identity. He asserted that there is an overall "social system" with many nested groups within the larger social organization and that each group may have a different identity (even ethnic) (1969; 1973). In an earlier work he referred to this as "frameworks of organization" (1959:12). He defines this type of social organization as *segmented identity*. Specifically, he says that "Pathans (Pashtuns, Pakhtuns, Afghans) constitute a large, highly self-aware ethnic group inhabiting adjoining areas of Afghanistan and West Pakistan, generally organized in segmentary, replicating social system without centralized institutions" (1969: 117). He analyzed the "process of boundary maintenance in different sectors of Pathan territory."[162] Barth explains that people belong to various self-identified ethnic identities within the social organization and that they use different identities strategically.

notions about what I might or might not find. As I explained in Chapter Four, I took the

stories I was told while in the field and only after I returned, did I study them further in

the scholarly materials. As Barth so aptly puts it, while in the field, I "looked to the

social life that surrounded me as my only reality and authority" (1993: 25). Moreover,

my case studies reflect what I experienced, observed, heard, through my participation

within the local community and different events and organizations, including IGOs and

NGOs, both formal and informal. As Barth explains, "The theoretical focus of my study

developed and expanded with time, in ways that responded to the data I collected and

progressively guided the further collecting" (1993: 24).[163] As I uncovered the networks

of cooperation and the mechanisms influencing these networks (as highlighted by my

research participants), I adjusted my research.

In Badakhshan, I uncovered many borders.[164] These different borders and

informal organizations make up a larger social organization in the borderlands.   For my

main question, how increasing institutional development of the border impacts local

organizations and leaders, this chapter examines local leaders and organizations.

Understanding boundaries of different identity groups, local organizations, and varying

modes of inter-group cooperation, is necessary for uncovering the mechanisms via which

the institutional development of the border shapes local identity groups.

In my conceptual framework I build on several of Barth's concepts. I want to

return to them briefly for the purposes of clarifying the analysis in the following sections.

In his study of Swat Pakhtuns, Barth conceptualized the make-up of the people's daily

lives in Swat by developing their "underlying frameworks of organization" (1959: 13).

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[163] "…our emphasis [is] on understanding the actor's subjective point of view as our point of departure" (Barth, 1981: 23).
[164] The borders to which I refer include: familial/sub-ethnic, local, domestic, regional, and international.

He describes identities as "nested" and/or "segmented"[165] and then develops how people use their different sub-identities within their identity, strategically. I build on Barth's conceptualization in order to develop how different informal organizations and their leaders impact border stability. At the same time, I highlight some of the constraints under which people are living and how they react to the pressures of outside constraints in particular.

In the next chapters, I focus on the underlying social organization[166] primarily in Khorog, Tajikistan. The impact of outside pressure on a key area directly along the border between Afghanistan and Tajikistan highlights the way in which the local communities living on both sides of the border impact border and state stability. Even if these communities and their interactions are not directly associated with the actual border in this case, the increase of local identity groups and decrease of national identity, given that these districts are located directly on the border, impacts border and state stability.

As Carter and Poast (2012) point out that the "negative externalities" of changes along the borderlands (which can spark increased militarization by the state, and indeed has in Khorog, Tajikistan), decreases stability at the border due to tension between the local population and the state administration.[167] This aspect of border instability, which I am addressing in this chapter, directly pertains to my hypotheses. The impact of outside pressure on local organizations along the **borderlands** helps to answer my main question: *How do local leaders and organizations impact stability at the border and the state?* I

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[165] Although in Barth's work on he refers to the "nested" and "segmented" aspects of ethnic identity in particular. As stated earlier, I have four categories of identity: National, ethnic, territorial, and religious.
[166] As stated in Chapter Two, I build on Barth's "Frameworks of Organization" (1959: 13).
[167] Barth also analyzes the social organization as a means to better understanding the impact on local boundary maintenance and transcendence. While his main objective in his study was to understand identity assertion, he also uncovered the underlying tensions and therefore the potential for this identity assertion to impact local and area stability. I am focusing more directly on how outside pressures on these various forms of identity along the borderlands impact stability.

provide a series of vignettes both of local leaders and organizations and explain their pertinence to my hypotheses.

The following sections in this chapter proceed thusly: First, I define what I mean by social organization in the context of my extended case-analyses. Second, I briefly discuss the meanings of clans – first in the scholarly literature and then in the local vernacular. Third, I describe the social organization of Khorog, the capital of Gorno-Badakhshan. Fourth, I provide an examination of how I uncovered the social organization in Khorog. Namely, through a series of vignettes about local leaders and organizations. In conclusion, I briefly summarize the vignettes and their relevance to my main questions and accompanying hypotheses.

Social Organization: The City of Khorog in the Province of Gorno-Badakhshan, Tajikistan

To return to Collins' (2004) definition, "Informal organizations are social (non-state created) groups that have a corporate character; specific informal unwritten agreements shape individuals' expectations and behavior within the group." The social organization encompasses a broader terrain in that it works to define how a community or particular area organizes itself socially. Barth says that the social organization is defined by different self-defined groupings (both nested and segmented) within a given area, namely, how a community defines different sorts of boundaries in a given area. One clear way to do this is through an exploration of the social organization in both the provinces of Tajik-Gorno-Badakhshan and Afghan Badakhshan.

The social organization (and/or networks of cooperation) of the provinces of Gorno-Badakhshan and Badakhshan have been studied very little in the recent past. Prior

to Soviet expansion into the region, the Russians and the British conducted extensive ethnographic studies but they primarily focused on ethnicity not the overall social organization which encompasses much broader, multi-faceted dimensions of identity. Moreover, since these studies were completed between seventy-five and a hundred and fifty years ago, they have very little to do with the area today.

In the past decade the majority of scholarship conducted through fieldwork, examines different aspects of religious identity. Some recent works include: a study of the Sufi shrines (Gross, 2012), Zoroastrianism in Badakhshan (Gross, 2013), the influence of Nasiri Khusraw (Steinberg, 2011), folk medicine (Akobirshoeva, 2012), religion and the state (Mostowlansky, 2010), ethnomusicology and Sufism (Koen, 2003; 2005) Pamiri recipes (Haider, forthcoming), and of course Frank Bliss' (2006) rather broad overview of the area, of social and economic change from the Soviet period to the early 2000s. A report conducted for the World Bank in 2004 has a chapter by Saodat Olimova, which details some of the complexities of ethnic self-identification in Gorno-Badakhshan. But, this report is limited to the "viability of regionalism" and a decentralized authority in Tajikistan and not the underlying mechanisms or impact different factors have on border and/or state stability.[168]

All of these studies either do not address or lack a clear discussion of the social make-up and organization and its importance to stability in the two provinces. Therefore, out of necessity, my outline of the social organization is drawn almost entirely from the

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[168] Alimova sums up succinctly the many identities people assert in different situations "Usually, the self-identification of original people of Tajikistan has a complex nature. For example, in Porshnyov village of Shughnon (GBAO) people distinguish themselves by their mother village i.e., Tishori, Pashori, Midenshori, etc. At Khorog level they call themselves Porshinyovi, meantime, further out they prefer to call themselves Shughnoni. Finally in Dushanbe they are Pomiri. Out of Tajikistan they are comfortable to be Tajiks in accordance with passport" (2004: 87).

data I collected during my ethnographic fieldwork. **169** I offer the caveat that my

understanding of the local social organization has the limits any research does when there

is an absence of other relevant sources with which to corroborate or debate the data.

Hopefully, my depiction, as drawn from what the locals expressed to me, will do justice

to the people of Badakhshan. While there are four aspects of identity on which I focus on

in my dissertation (which I will discuss at various times), this chapter focuses largely on

sub-ethnic/clan/familial identity.

Sub-ethnic identity, familial ties, and clan affiliation, are particularly important to

the social organization in Tajik/Afghan Badakhshan. Divisions go as far down (micro) as

street level (and family rivalries) but can be also found at the (macro) state and regional

levels. People transcend and assert these borders as part of their daily practices.[170] How

controversial the terms ethnic identity and sub-ethnic identity are cannot be overstated

but, even though they are shunned in many circles, including in Badakhshan,

nevertheless, ethnicity and familial affiliation such as clan in particular are the topic of

frequent debates and discussions. In Badakhshan assertion of boundaries of different

identity groups depended on from where outside pressure came.

Given the importance of local familial and sub-ethnic networks and affiliations to

the make-up of the social organization in Gorno-Badakhshan, in the next section I

highlight the work of a few scholars who have conducted research in Central Asia on

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[169] I use both Collins and Barth's definition of social organization keeping in mind that in defining the borders in this community, the "critical feature (is) [sic] the characteristic of self-ascription and ascription by others" (Barth, 1969: 13). Although I do not take self or outsider ascription to be the only defining feature of social organization.

[170] In this chapter I focus on underlying frameworks of organization including: *(1) what the different borders are between different parts of the larger community, (2) how people identify with the group they assert they belong to, (3) How they understand who belongs to what group and who does not.* My discussion of social organization develops two main categories as Barth suggests: "self-ascription and ascription by others" of boundaries

clans, tribes, and sub-ethnic groups. After that, I provide different definitions in the local vernacular.

Clans, Tribes, and Sub-Ethnic Groups

There are many definitions of clans and warlords in the post-communist Central Asia. Moreover, these same words in a number of dialects focus the word and associated meaning(s) through different lenses depending on with which group, dialect, or alliance the person is associated with. In my research I found that even local residents living in the same neighborhood or district had different words and different definitions for what are often referred to as clan, tribe, and druglord. Therefore, the translated meaning into English may mean something completely different from one person to the next or one dialect to the next.[171]

Recent scholarship on clans, clan politics, and clan rivalries highlights the importance of informal ties to state stability and governance in both Tajikistan and Afghanistan. In Collins' words, "Simply put, a clan is an informal organization comprising a network of individuals linked by kin-based bonds. Affective ties of kinship are its essence, constituting identity and bonds of its organization." (Collins, 2004: 231). Additionally, Collins asserts in her research that clan-based politics remained pervasive not only in pre-Soviet times but during the Soviet period as well. Essentially, she argues, sub-ethnic political rivalries are primary for understanding how the political process works in Tajikistan.

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[171] For research based on surveys, structured interviews, and other forms of more formalized data-gathering, this is important to understand.

Collins (2004) and others say that there are kinship ties in clans that come in two forms: "fictive" and "blood." In the former, ties are built upon the ruling elites and the central power structures and the latter is based on a combination of blood ties and ethnic group identification. Collins' definition explains that the system of informal cooperation simply shifted from in-group/out-groups during pre-Soviet, to Soviet, to post-Soviet periods. What I mean is that the networks of cooperation simply shifted from "blood" clan (pre-Soviet), to "fictive" clan (Soviet), to a combination of the two (post-Soviet). In fact, clans have been there in every form of governance in the region. They are a key informal institution and political organization which people take as legitimate.

In Schatz's (2004) political ethnographic study of clan politics in Kazakhstan, he highlights the complexity of both the definitions and "the pejorative ways misunderstood meanings of clans" are used by politicians and scholars.[172] In particular, many people assume that tribes and clans are pre-modern "primitive" groups and are therefore in opposition to state-formation or development schemes. Schatz says that, "from a

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[172] Ed Schatz (2004) says that constructivism adequately describes change in studies of collective identity but falls short in explaining continuity. Other scholars argue that constructivism explains both continuity and change. For example, Norton describes constructivism in studies of continuity and change and says, "The dissemination of power is attended by the dissemination of resistance." This means that when outside pressure increases, then outside resistance increases (change) and conversely, when outside pressure remains the same, resistance remains the same as well (continuity). In Norton's explanation, constructivism can provide a better way to understand change AND continuity for studies of collective identity (Norton, 2004: 39). Barth's notion that boundaries define ethnic groups as opposed to cultural traits predates and provides a basis for constructivism in that a group's assertion of identity in combination with how outsiders assert their identity, is what constructs the group's identity. Barth, Alker[172], and Norton argue that the boundaries of groups are constituted by the both themselves and others. Therefore group identity is based on both on what they are NOT, as much as what they assert they ARE. Both outside and inside assertions make the group cohere. In my research I assert that the opposition, which comes from quiet resistance or oppression, contributes to the entrenchment of group identity. Moreover, as outside pressure either increases or decreases, this in turn, may contribute to increases and decreases in the power and influence of local leadership which then decreases border and state stability.

teleological perspective of presumptive developmental end points, to invoke the term "tribe" is to make a normative claim" (2004: 25).[173]

Dagi Dagiev[174] discusses what he believes to be a fallacy in Colllins' thesis. He contends that during the Soviet period things were based on Soviet institutions that the clan-based politics fell to wayside. I have spoken to many people in Tajikistan about this issue.[175] Many say that the clans/sub-ethnic groups divided by the Soviets, still relied heavily on their family networks to get things done although less so than now. It is important to note that in Tajikistan, Soviet institutions were partitioned by different ethnically-identified groups. They broke up clans into different sectors of the governing bodies so that no one clan had too much power over everything. They even did this at the local level making a local apparatchik from one clan while his deputy would be from a different clan. This included forced relocation of sections of the population in Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast.

According to a local informant who told me that, the "Political system of Soviet Union in Tajikistan used specific scheme here, when the first person in district or in country level was tajik (from north) the second person was always Russian and then, head of police from Kulyab, head of KGB mostly from Pamir, local trading system was under control of Garmies it was political division of regions in order to keep them silent." He (and others I spoke with) argued that this division of labor by different Soviet-defined ethnic groups, helped maintain order and limited inter-clan tensions during this period.[176]

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[173] Ed Schatz (2004) often refers to them as "sub-ethnic groups."
[174] Cited with permission of author from his dissertation and forthcoming book with Oxford University Press.
[175] I spoke with locals in Khorog and Dushanbe as well as officials, and international development/security workers.
[176] (See also Hughes and Sasse, 2002: 2-9)

Schatz (2004) and others assert that Soviet institutions were based on underlying informal social agreements, particularly as they pertained to distributing resources. Since one definition of institutions is that they provide a means for the redistribution of wealth and resources, during Soviet times other forms of informal cooperative networks operated within the Soviet institutions but also, as Dagiev contends, outside of the clan networks. Meaning, informal networks were prevalent and somewere clan-based and some were non clan-based.

The challenge with the categorization of the clan and/or sub-ethnic group as the primary identity through which people operate is that in many places, particularly in Gorno-Badakhshan, clan has less to do with ethnicity and more to do with territory, family, and religion all bound up together. In fact, when I used the term clan or tribe with locals in Khorog, many became offended. They said that they were not primitive like that and that I was mixing them up with the Afghan side of the border. They wanted to make clear that the divisions were more based on territory and/or religion and not clans or tribes, which they understood as primitive groups based on family blood-lines. They also asserted that they were a pre-Soviet form of social organization and one from which they have evolved. On the Afghan side of the border a combination of blood-based/familial clan networks, territory, and religious identity were drivers behind local networks of cooperation.[177]

The former title of Khanate or Emirate is more apt a synonym for tribes as they are understood in some parts of the world. They define a territory, often with a clan/tribe residing within its boundaries, led by one leader who often either has allies along his

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[177] The Afghans I spoke with in Badakhshan agreed completely that many of the local divisions/borders were clan-based although territorial and religious also exist.

borders or conflicts. But, the territory also often included a cohesive religious identity, linguistic identity, and common practices and customs.

Collins refers to these larger networks of cooperation as "umbrella clans." Tribe, khan, umbrella clan, trust network, clientalist networks, and even political parties, have similar mechanisms for identity production and inclusion/exclusion. They all provide boundaries with which to assert, transcend, or use identity. The title of Khan or Emirate embodied a much broader definition of the bounds of a common identity than current terms such as clans, sub-ethnic groups, umbrella clans, provinces although is no longer in use (except for certain informal leaders on the Afghan side of the border which people refer to as local Khans based on blood-lineage of past khans in the area). As was the case in the past, the boundaries of these khanates/emirates were the greatest sources of both stability and instability. When local groups and leaders fight over control of the territory at the boundaries of these territorial divisions, while asserting more authority over the margins of their lands, instability increases both at the boundaries but also within the khanates/emirates connected to the boundaries. The same is true today. The borders are areas of potential resistance and when outside pressure increases, it is likely resistance will increase, which causes instability at the border.

While this might belabor the obvious, emic views of sub-ethnic groups and clans are different from etic views. This makes them inherently more difficult to define and study but all the more necessary. Whether "blood" or "fictive" ties, the ties of self-asserted ethnic-identity are fluid and based on many things at once. As Schatz puts it, "by pinpointing the mechanisms that underlie group affiliation, we better identify changes to the character of those affiliations and, therefore, what impact they have on

politics." (Schatz, 2004, p. xxi).[178] In working to pinpoint the mechanisms, I wanted to understand the words for clan, village, tribe, and various informal leaders in the local vernacular. The list of definitions in the next section shows that the meanings vary from person to person. In many areas tribe and clan, at least in the local languages, are used interchangeably, as are the terms for the leaders of these groups. The list is only partial as I am sure I missed many of the nuances in the dialects particularly on the Afghan side of the border where the dialects and sub-dialects can vary from village cluster to village cluster.

Vernaculars of Leaders and Groups in Badakhshan and Gorno-Badakhshan

The following set of terms/definitions is of primary importance not only to my dissertation but also to the budding field which studies these informal groups and their associated leaders in the context of state stability and development.[179] Subsequent to the definitions, I briefly discuss the different types of leaders operating at the border.[180] [181]

I spoke to many people, some local scholars, some villagers/community members, sellers in the bazaar, and some development workers, from Khorog and Ishkashim, Tajikistan and Shughnan, Ishkashem, the Wakhan Corridor and even Balkh, Afghanistan often about how they conceptualized the meanings of the many words for leaders and

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[178] "I propose that a stronger theory of identity politics identifies the mechanisms by which identities are reproduced." (Schatz, 2004)
[179] The main behind-the-scenes strategy right now in Afghanistan is to empower local leaders and their associated groups in order to increase stability.
[180] Barth's (1959) early work on the political leadership of Swat Pathans in Pakistan and Schatz's (2004) work on clan politics both develop social organization and associated leaders as a means to understanding the mechanisms for social/political change and or continuity in an area. I build on this idea in that I define how locals understand their leaders and local organizations and then highlight how they might influence the area, or have influenced the area, when outside pressure arises.
[181] The terms and definitions of local leaders and groups in the region deserve a much more comprehensive study than what I provide here and certainly an area for future research.

local networks. Even people from local groups who worked closely together, including academics working in the same local university, provided different words and different definitions of those words.

What is clear from my fieldwork is that whether village, village cluster, neighborhood, district, province, or region, the meaning of the term shifted based on context, person, and group. As an outsider to the area, I provide the meanings and explanations shared with me by the local population as well as scholars with this disclaimer: This is only a partial picture of how local leaders are defined in the local dialects and context. The many words and their associated definitions highlight how terms for leaders and local organizations/groups change from person to person, village cluster to village cluster, district to district, and so on. Here are the definitions of local leaders and local organizations provided by five different people:

Local terms for leaders and local informal sub-ethnic identity groups
    Sher (Khorog):
        Group:
            Tribe: *Qabila*
            Clan: *Qawm*
            Neighborhood: *Mahalla*
        Leader:
            Neighborhood leader: *Mahallah Lideren*
            Streetleader: *Rahbar*
            Warlord: *Commandon/Jange Salar*
            Drug lord: *Narcobaron/Qachaqbar*
            Spiritual Leader: *Khalifa.*[182]
    Jamshed (Khorog):
        Group:
            Clan: *Qawm, Zot, Qabila*;
        Leader:
            Leader: *Rahbar*
            War lord: *boevik* (post soviet, russian)

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[182] According to Sher, "khalifas can't take this responsibility [for true spiritual leadership] because they are controlled by ITREC which in turn is controlled by KGB."

>> Drug lord: *Narkobaron* (post soviet, russian)
>> Spiritual leader: *Rahbari ruhoni*.
> **Sohrab (Shughnan, Afghanistan):**
>> Leader:
>>> Clan leader: *Khaydar/Rahbari*
>>> Clan leader: *Qawm/Awlode Rohbar* (Tajik/Dari)
> **Nilofar (Shugnan):**
>> Leader:
>>> Clan leader: *Malik* (Dari)
>>> Clan leader: *Aqsaqal* (Tajik/Uzbek)
>>> Clan leader: *Qabilah Rahbar* (Dari/Farsi)
>>> Druglord: *Qachaq bar/Qachaq che* (Shughni and Dari)
>>> Warlord: *Thed Talabi* (Shughni)
> **Ahmed (Balkh, Afghanistan, all in Dari):**
>> Group:
>>> Clan: *Qawm or Khanawada*;
>> Leader:
>>> Clan Leader: *Kalantar Khana*
>>> Drug Lord: *Hashafurush*
>>> Warlord: *Ustad*
>>> Warlord*: Genural*
>>> Warlord: *Jange Salar*
>>> Warlord: *Mujahed*

The list above only encompasses informal leaders and local informal organizations, and territorial/familial/ethnic groups (and partially at that). It does not include the names for official leaders – both local and domestic. The definitions capture not only the importance of local leaders and social groups, but also that they hold many different positions. Moreover, perceptions of whom and what they are and/or mean in the community shift regularly.

For example, in Khorog all of the druglords are warlords. Conversely, only three of the warlords are druglords. The warlord who is not a druglord traffics in other illicit trade. The term *Mahallah* and *Mahallah Lideren* (neighborhood and neighborhood

leader) is quite important on the Tajik side of the border since the partitioning of physical territory holds more significance than clans.

On the Afghan side neighborhoods in Badakhshan do not really exist. Instead village clusters and/or villages and districts determine territory. *Qeshlaq* is the common term for village. But, *Qawm* which translates to clan, holds much more significance. For example a friend of mine who lives in the beginning of the Wakhan Corridor on the Afghan side, explained to me that if families did not show up to help build the house of a newly wedded couple in their clan, or to help with other communal duties, they were outcast or what he termed – *Bevafa* – which literally means, unfaithful. This sort of clan obligation exists on the Tajik side but varies depending on where one lives and who one is connected to.

In Afghan, Badakhshan, there is not always a distinction between a druglord and a clan leader because the two types of leaders are so intertwined. In fact, there are almost no powerful leaders who are not trafficking in drugs at the same time. Some of the druglords even are called *Ustad* – which really means a learned person and/or respected teacher. But other druglords are simply *Qachaqbar* which, if the words are taken in their literal sense, loosely translates to "full of corruption or illegality." A druglord also could be referred to as *Hashafrush*, which literally means, hash seller (usually actually meaning they are selling *Taryak* [Opium]). The title of the druglord often delineates his influence or status as well as how much people perceive he has helped his community. It also defines the penetration of his influence over a given territory. The same holds true on the Tajik side.

The different meanings of leaders and social groups highlight that the definitions of informal local leaders indeed are different in the local vernacular and usage than in the way scholars use the words to describe these same groups. In the vernacular the terms have nuance and more aptly describe the actual position or standing of the informal leader within the community. More importantly, local leaders' status or breadth of acceptance changes depending on two things: the perceived amount of public service they have done for their community coupled with their ability to be physically strong and hold territory/ground as a means to project their power. Another aspect important for the acceptance and respect of an informal leader by the community is his intellect.[183] This has a long history in the region but has resurfaced particularly on the Tajik side. *What remains constant about what makes a leader credible is his contribution to the community and his ability to protect, serve, hold influence, and provide for his territory.*

The following series of vignettes, which are part of a larger story, provides a window in to the complexity of the different identities and how outside pressure on the area has the potential to mobilize local informal leaders and associated organizations either for increased or status quo national identity or increased local identities – including religious, territorial, and ethnic.

The Social Organization of Khorog

The Province of Gorno-Badakhshan, Tajikistan

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[183] I spoke with many people on both sides of the border about what they thought defined a good leader. Interpretations were pretty constant about the features of a good leader but who represented that type of person varied widely.

The Province of Gorno-Badakhshan is made up of eight districts, which are split along sub-ethnic and ethno-linguistic groups (self-identified).[184] Each district divides in many ways including by clan (sub-ethnic groups), sector, neighborhood, and street. During the majority of my fieldwork, I lived in Khorog which is the capital of the district of Shughnan and the Province of Gorno-Badakhshan. For this reason in the following sections, I focus on Khorog, even though I did spend time in the Tajik districts of Ishkashim and Murghab.

Khorog

Khorog has numerous divisions in and of itself, some with ongoing tensions which rise to the level of physical conflict but often remain simmering and hidden from view, particularly to people from outside of the area. I did not learn of these tensions, even from people I considered to be close friends, until my third trip to the area. Prior to this round of fieldwork, I knew that Khorog divided into neighborhoods, but I did not know the extent to which these divisions also created borders for access to security, economic opportunities (and access to certain sectors and markets), and competition for resources in both licit and illicit trade. Divisions along lines of educational level and family standing also exist. These divisions impact both the relationship with the state of Tajikistan as well as the cross-border networks of cooperation, particularly as outside pressures increase from institutional development of the border, which is the main focus of my analysis.

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[184] Only seven are officially listed: Vanj, Roshan, Roshtqal'a, Darwaz, Shughnan, Ishkashim, Murghab while the Wakhan Corridor is a district with important historical heritage but is not listed. Each district has its own language, some having more than one.

At the time of this research, Khorog divided into nine main sub-districts. Each sub-district has an informal leader. On top of the informal leader of each sub-district, there were four higher level leaders, locally referred to as warlords/druglords with their own security force. Within each sub-district, each street has a leader and a small security force. In addition to these leaders, there are leaders for a number of groups, including civil society organizations, religious groups, business, academia, and development workers. Some of the leaders of the different groups have more than one position of authority.

In the following case-study I provide an example of a local business leader who is working on the unification of Afghan/Tajik Badakhshan (as opposed to two separate provinces with border projects attempting to increase the physical separation between them). This is important because it highlights how the attempted hardening of this border dividing a community with similar religious, linguistic, ethnic, and territorial identities impacts the acceptance and/or non-acceptance of national identity as I stated in my conceptualization and hypotheses. I also briefly touch on the importance of the territory within the regional and international trade community and the relevance of economic independence to the potential push for more autonomy by the provinces.

A point of entry into the machinations of the social organization in Khorog is through the portal of one case of human-trafficking. In this section I focus largely on the internal divisions and associated organizations and identities. There are a plethora of territorial divisions locally, domestically, regionally, and internationally. The example is through the story of Gulya, a local citizen of Bar-Khorog, a sub-section of Khorog.

Bar-Khorog, Gulya, Lutifya, and Commander Nurali

Gulya, is a young woman who belongs to an impoverished family living at the margins of her community. Her story, the story of her life, her body, and what she symbolizes, as both a human being taken across the border against her will and as a symbol of the community, helps to highlight some of the tensions in the area. Since the majority of the people in Khorog (and Gorno-Badakhshan) do not trust the security apparatuses, increasing their presence contributes to instability, as opposed to making the areas more secure or even maintaining the status quo. Far from looking to state institutions to ensure security, local residents seek other avenues for protection, community, and justice. This is the case in Badakhshan – both on the Tajik and the Afghan side. Gulya's story highlights the growth of informal networks that have contributed to a disconnect from the formal state as well as the ways in which these informal networks, within the larger social organization, overshadow the formal government.

For several months I tracked Gulya, who had been kidnapped from Khorog by two local drug-dealers and used to pay off a drug debt to an Afghan drug lord. Originally, two girls had been kidnapped but one escaped. It is through these two sixteen year-old women that I traversed the different borders which, as a whole, make up the complex social organization of Khorog. As the capital of Gorno-Badakhshan and situated directly on the border of Afghanistan, I also gained a better understanding of how the cross-border networks of cooperation (and non-cooperation) worked and the importance of local leaders to the local community as a mediator and protector.

I first heard about the case of a girl kidnapped from Khorog while I was[185] in Dushanbe, the capital of Tajikistan. Someone from an NGO working on human trafficking told me two girls had been kidnapped from Khorog in late January, 2010 and that one escaped but the other one still remained missing. As I asked around Dushanbe about this young woman, it became clear that human trafficking had increased along the border between Tajikistan and Afghanistan but how much and the reasons for the trafficking in humans were not clear. Most people, even those working on the issue had very little information.

People from the community in Badakhshan who were living in Dushanbe started reaching out to me. They offered me assistance in the form of free translators, research partners, transportation, and lodging for the fieldwork in Badakhshan, Afghanistan. They wanted me to find her. From the outpouring of offers it was clear many people wanted to know what had happened to this girl, the reason(s) for her kidnapping, and why human trafficking had moved east along the border recently. Little did I know, I was about to step into a maze of stories about this girl that would become increasingly impossible to sort out and even dangerous to be involved in.

After I spoke with numerous people in Dushanbe about human trafficking and its links to drug trafficking, I packed my backpack and headed once again to Khorog, the site where the girl was last seen. By this time I discovered that human trafficking was on the rise.[186] I also knew that many drug dealers in Badakhshan were in debt to the Afghan

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[185] Pseudonym

[186] Interviews in Feb-March, 2011 with officials from the Drug Control Agency of Tajikistan, Border Management Project for Central Asia, Girls Support Services, the Children's Legal Centre, and International Organization for Migration. Fieldwork from June –July, 2009; May- August, 2010; Feb – May 2011; and Sept – Nov, 2011 as well as constant dialogue over social media frameworks including Skype, Facebook, and Gchat during the times in-between.

druglords and were using young women as ransom to pay off their debts. When the money could be found to buy the hostage back, they would pay off their debt and the person would be returned to their side of the border. This was a legitimate way to deal with an unpaid debt to a drug lord. This mode of debt-relief also appeared to be on the rise. How much, how often, this occurred and why the drug dealers in Tajikistan were in debt to their Afghan counterparts remained unclear.

This research highlights the complexity of the border through one woman's story which intersects the land, the people, the economy, and the symbols[187] in the borderlands of Afghan/Tajik Badakhshan. IT also highlights how mechanisms of resistance which are "activiated" when outside pressure increases, causes decreased national identity assertion and increased local identity production. This ultimately causes instability at the border due to an increase of resistance to the central government and increased cooperation across the border with other local identity groups. The following is an overview of the social organization I gleaned from my ethnographic fieldwork and how each group intersected with the domestic presence in Khorog and the Afghan side of the border (if/when that information was available).

Gulya's Story

Soon after I arrived in Khorog, I again heard about Gulya, the kidnapped girl. Over lunch with a friend who is a scholar at a local university, I heard the whole story as understood by many of the locals. Ali, an official from the Tajik Drug Control Agency

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[187] For some in Khorog, the women's body belongs to the community both for religious reasons and to keep the Pamiri ethnicity from being mixed with outsiders. More than once men told me of women who had either married or had sexual relations with people from outside the area and that they should be punished. Some even said they should be put to death, but that was an uncommon view and on the extreme end.

(DCA) ate with us. He worked with my friend's brother. He told me he had spoken with Gulya's family and with the girl who had escaped from the kidnappers. He offered to take me to visit both families. I agreed.

Ali told me that human trafficking was increasing in Gorno-Badakhshan and that organs could fetch up to twenty thousand dollars.[188] He also said that the increase in addiction in the area had caused rising debt in the area to the Afghan drug dealers and lords. Apparently, the Tajik drug dealers lacked skills in business and often ended up in debt to their Afghan counterparts. Paying off debts with humans as hostages (until the actual debt is paid in full) has been a common practice in the area for centuries.[189]

One solution many people thought would help lessen the impact from the rise in addiction was the development of drug prevention, education, and drug demand reduction programs. But, local drug demand reduction programs were limited and not taken seriously. Many still believed it was more of a religious issue and lack of belief in god or will (strengthened with the help of god) as opposed to a disease needing treatment. Drug treatment centers were ill-equipped and under-funded and methadone treatment was not allowed according to locals working on drug treatment in the area. Out of nine of the needle exchange programs in the area and that only one was open on a regular basis.

[188] While I verified that organs can fetch upwards of $20,000, I was unable to verify that this was happening to hostages of kidnapping victims in Afghanistan (although many locals believed this to be true, which of course is important) because it highlights the level of fear people felt about the kidnappings in the area. Although, I did hear about this same issue from two Afghan border commanders, one in Nusai and the other in Shughnan.

[189] During my fieldwork in the Wakhan Corridor in June-July, 2010 and Sept-October, 2011, many of the families told me that one of the goals of AKF's DDRP is to reduce the need to pay off debt incurred from addiction to opiates by providing treatment, education, and jobs training. Prior to the program, selling of children, property, trees, and animals was endemic throughout the region. Many of the families are still in debt today to the local drug traders and struggle to keep up with the debts which they have to pay back in bits each time the traders pass their villages. Numerous families complained about their enormous debt burden and lack of food and other necessities due to the burden. Selling of children and property, due to the rules created by the DDRP, was significantly reduced after 2006 but still occurs. Due to the shame surrounding selling children or property, it is done in secret – or kept from the assessment personnel and employees of the AKF and AKDN.

Moreover, a large part of the local economy was driven by the illicit trade although the rise in addiction was relatively new, particularly the use of heroin and needles. Meetings about the issue had taken place throughout the community but a solution to the growing crisis had not been found.

The tension between local informal security groups, the community, and the state security forces, became clear through Gulya, a sixteen year-old girl being used as a pawn in a greater game. Ali told me he wanted to explain the issue with me through her story. Ali, and many in the community, wanted to stop this from happening but did not know what to do. They could not turn to the state security forces, since they believed them to be involved in the drug trade and even worse, people were scared of them due to stories about torture and mistreatment of local women.

Many people expressed fear about the state security personnel. They often said that the state security forces tortured numerous people if they did not pay proper bribes, argued with them, or for various other reasons. I spoke with one local father of a family whose son was in prison. He said his son had been arrested after he fought with a drunk policeman from Dushanbe over a young woman he was harassing. The man in prison was a local street leader and considered an important person because of his community service to the young people and his neighborhood.[190] Also, in Khorog, street leaders and their local security forces protect the community. When one of the local members or a leader of the street security forces is no longer present it is perceived as increasing the vulnerability of that area. Many people on that street complained bitterly about the

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[190] The family told me they were keeping quiet because a presidential amnesty day for prisoners occurs once a year and they were hoping that their son might be released.

incident. I heard many stories about the tension between the local informal security

organizations and the state security forces.[191]

What is important to note about Ali is that while he is a DCA official, he also is

an Ismaili and a citizen of Khorog – and lives in Bar-Khorog – the same neighborhood

where Gulya's family lives. Ali brought me to the families in secret, not on official

business. He acted on his own and against the directives of his employer – the Tajik

government. He told me, as did many others, that the girls had been kidnapped to pay off

a debt incurred by drug dealers working for the President of Tajikistan's son who had a

job in the Tajik Customs Agency at the time. The two drug dealers/kidnappers were

caught and put in the local jail and soon after were released without a proper trial.

After their release, locals staged two protests. During this period a number of

local leaders threatened to do worse than just protest when I was speaking with them.

Some local leaders talked to me about a separatist movement saying that they were tired

of the local security forces and other members of the state government forcing them to

pay bribes for everything and harassing their women. All of this appeared to be common

knowledge in Khorog. Once people knew that I had been entrusted with the issues in the

community that many hid from public view, local citizens sought me out to speak with

me and share their stories (and word spreads quickly). Speaking with the families' of the

girls involved in the kidnapping was extremely sensitive partially because it was without

the government of Tajikistan's knowledge and because the family was vulnerable.

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[191] Last year OSCE and the US Department of State investigated the alleged torture in the Tajik prisons and found that indeed, it was going on and it was not uncommon. An NGO named, Freedom From Torture, was set up in 2012 to address this issue. Currently, they have sixteen partner NGOs working with them on the issue. Here is their website: http://notorture.tj/en/civil-society-strategy-torture-prevention-tajikistan
On March 13, 2013, "According to the Radio Ozodi (the local office of "Radio Liberty") Relatives of the prisoners, victims of torture demanded for the resignation of the Deputy Minister of Justice, Head of the Main Directorate for Punishment Implementation Izzatullo Sharipov" due to his involvement in Torture: http://notorture.tj/en/news/head-tajik-prisons-was-demanded-resign-torture

Gulya's Family

The next morning we went to visit Gulya's family. The adobe house had one room. The family moved there from another village outside of the district of Shughnan due to poverty. They lived in Bar Khorog – a section of Khorog. "*Bar*" means upper, and indeed, the area is located in the Northern section and on a hill above the main part of the city. Because the family did not have deep ties within the local community in Khorog, they had little protection from the local leader in her section of the city. I found out that the local leaders for each section of the city provide security/protection to the people in their section of the city (as opposed to the domestic security forces). The larger your family is and the longer you have resided in the area, the more power and protection the members of your family have. Gulya and the other young woman who was kidnapped both belonged to families who did not have a lot of power although Gulya's family lived more on the margins due to being newer to the area and their socio-economic disadvantaged status.

I ended up visiting Gulya's family two times and spending a considerable amount of time with her uncle. Her father worked in Russia in order to support the family and they lived with the uncle and his family. The uncle wanted to go to Afghanistan to get his niece. When I spoke with the family they said that the Gulya and her friend were taken as they walked home from school in November. They said that the girls were not addicted to drugs and not involved in that life. It turned out that there were many rumors in Khorog about the girls' involvement in the drug trade and even in prostitution.

Many people blamed the girls for what happened to them. The family said that even if she was rescued, because of these rumors, she would not be safe to return to Bar-Khorog because people would view her as tainted and "spoiled" since her virginity would no longer be intact. This was a very serious issue. They showed me a picture of her. She was uncommonly beautiful with large greenish-blue eyes, very dark brown hair, and large, beautiful features. The uncle said if he could get her in secret from Afghanistan – buying her back – he could sneak her to Russia where her father was and she could recover and remain there. At that point they had no leads as to where she was in Afghanistan and were not even sure if she were alive. They suspected that an Afghan drug lord had her and either had her as a sex slave or had taken her as one of his wives since this had been common practice in the past. Ali, the DCA official, suggested we speak with the girl who had escaped during the kidnapping.

Before I discuss Lutfiya, the young woman who escaped the kidnappers, I want to highlight Ali's role in the local organizations and networks of cooperation. Ali, who worked for the government was part of a number of local organizations. First, he was close to Daler, a Tajik civil society organization which was based in Bar Khorog and allied with Khorog. The leader of this group not only worked on a number of local projects such as youth sports, drug demand reduction and education, and local informal politics, he also talked a lot about wanting an independent Gorno-Badakhshan.

I spoke with Daler a number of times at length about his civil society organization. I also visited a number of buildings associated with his organization. According to many locals, during the search for Gulya by the locals representatives of the Tajik government threatened to shut down one of the buildings which housed recreational

programming for local youth. The government of Tajikistan owned the building and allegedly did not like the refusal to stop searching for Gulya by the local community. The civil society organization Daler directed also was involved heavily in local (non-state sanctioned, and hidden) politics. He said his organization was trying to consolidate some of the sub-sections (and associated street leaders) within the larger sections into larger groupings so that issues could be negotiated more easily between groups and there would be less competition at the micro-level for control and power. He drew a map of how this might happen but, as it happened, Ali, the most powerful warlord/druglord did not agree with many of the plans this civil society group was attempting to implement. The civil society group said it was because they were close to Nurali, his rival on the opposite side of the city.[192]

As an aside, during the process of searching for Gulya, it came out that there a significant rivalry existed among the districts in the area, in particular Khorog, Roshan, and Ishkashim. When the some of the men in Khorog found out that the two drug dealers were not only from Roshan, but that Gulya had been taken over the border from a village in Roshan, there was talk (which I observed) about fighting against or going in and attacking Roshan. This did not occur and the anger faded in a matter of weeks.

Relevance

These informal forms of security and leadership were an important and completely acknowledged aspect of local governance although hidden from outsiders and the government of Tajikistan. Even the majority of the citizens of Khorog who worked

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[192] In July, 2012, when the Tajik military raided Khorog, Daler fled to Russia and is still there and Ali was assassinated.

for the government of Tajikistan or supported a more consolidated Tajik nation-state, took part and followed the *informal rule of law* which mediated and structured so much of the legitimate authority and power in Khorog. This includes the unwritten agreements levied by local leaders, religious authorities, and civil society leaders.

For example, Ali was allied with Daler because Daler worked closely with Nurali. Moreover, as an Ismaili, Ali was searching for a local Ismaili woman which was both a religious obligation and his duty to his community. Ali, as an agent of the state, also had networks on the Afghan side of the border he had gained through his job as a DCA official. But, in the end, Ali chose to work directly against the will of the state security apparatus and in particular the local KGB[193] at his own peril and in secret and continue searching for Gulya. Ali, as many others, felt that the state security forces were not there to protect them and therefore they had to take the law into their own hands which undermined the stability of the state by creating alternative security networks, and decreasing the state monopoly over power at the border.

Lutfiya

The next day we visited Lutfiya, the girl who had escaped. Her family lived in a village area far above Khorog and Bar-Khorog. The remote area looked like something out of a fairytale. The ground had green moss-like grass covering it, farm animals contained in hand-made wooden fences carved from branches of trees and used as property lines. Female dogs, descendents of indigenous wolves, nursed puppies that scampered around under the spring sun. The air had a fresh smell which comes with

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[193] A note on the Tajik KGB: In Tajikistan the State Committee on National Security or GKNB was formerly known as the KGB during Soviet times. All of the locals I have met in Tajikistan still refer to it as the KGB hence I am using that in my analysis as well.

spring and the snow melts. Villagers spoke about the water shortage due to the shrinking glaciers and how they worked together to share the limited but vital natural resource in the remote section of outer-Khorog.

Lutfiya, the young woman I spoke with, also came from a socio-economically disadvantaged family. She looked scared, terrified, when we sat down. She kept glancing at the DCA official. I assured her that she had no obligation to speak with me and I offered to leave or just stay for tea. She nodded her head. Her father told me they were worried for their safety because the local KGB had threatened her. I suggested that we just talk about their family and Lutifya's life instead of the trauma she had been through. Lutifya said she had been outcast since her escape and could not leave her house. She was being blamed by the community for what happened and she did not feel safe. She said that many people were involved in the kidnapping. Her story was unclear. She spoke of a young man who had been involved in the kidnapping who might want to speak with me. She said the men who kidnapped her were from Roshan and that the Gulya was still in a village on the Tajik side of Roshan. This was news she had not told anyone and, in the end, turned out to be true, in part. Gulya had indeed been there, but in February had been taken over the border into Afghanistan across the river next to the district of Roshan where the village Lutifya spoke of was located. It was March when I spoke with Lutfiya and she did not know that Gulya had been taken across the border a few weeks earlier. Lutfiya said that the KGB had threatened her and told her not to talk about the issue. When she told me this, I said that it would be best if we did not speak about it anymore. When we left, the DCA official assured me that she was being

protected by locals[194] and would not be harmed. She was under the protection of local

informal security forces.

Relevance

       This part of Gulya's story highlights a few important issues pertaining to my

hypotheses. First, the DCA official, who is paid by the state to work on counter-narcotics

trafficking, in order to investigate Gulya's kidnapping for a drug-related debt, must hide

what he was doing from state security personnel, and the KGB in particular. Second, the

majority of the locals I spoke with about this, or who spoke with me, asserted that the two

drug dealers were associated with the President of Tajikistan's son and therefore would

not be punished for their crimes. They also assumed that if they wanted proper justice

they would have to enforce it themselves. In fact, while I was there four meetings took

place locally about this particular issue between: street leaders, civil society groups and

their leaders, the druglords/warlords, and the religious leaders. I think all of the leaders

from the different groups met together as well but I could not confirm this. All of these

meetings were hidden from the state and for the planning of how to find justice for Gulya

and to plan what to do in the future to make sure this does not happen again.

       Additionally, the Ismaili Tariqah and Religious Education Committee (ITREC)[195]

which has an office in Khorog, had a number of meetings locally and with officials

(including the KGB) in Dushanbe. Many locals felt that ITREC cooperated or was

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[194] This means she was being protected by the local security group operating in Bar-Khorog and the surrounding area.

[195] "Ismaili Tariqah and Religious Education Committee is one of the educational and cultural projects launched by the Institute of Ismaili Studies (London) years ago. The main objective of the project is to educate the Jamati members and learning constituencies about the heritage, history and cultures of Muslim peoples, in general, and, of the Shi'a Ismailis, in particular, as well as to facilitate the implementation of Ta'lim (an international educational program) within the Ismaili community." Quoted from an educational pamphlet distributed among Ismailis.

infiltrated by the KGB[196] and did not trust them. Locals told me that the meetings ITREC

had with the KGB and officials in Dushanbe had not gone well. In fact, they told me that

they had been told to stop looking into the issue and that the circumstances surrounding

Gulya's kidnapping had all been fabricated. When locals did not believe the story about

fabrication, people told me that ITREC came up with a new story. This time they

allegedly said that she likely was now happily married to the druglord in Afghanistan and

therefore it was no use trying to rescue her. One other story which spread through the

community at the time was that the girl had jumped into the river and committed suicide.

None of the locals I spoke with believed these stories and it made a number of them not

only more suspicious of any part of the state security apparatus but also, ITREC, the local

official Ismaili religious organization. The next section discusses the continued search

for Gulya despite the stories put out by ITREC.

. Pressure from ITREC and state security personnel only increased the

cooperation between local networks both within Khorog and cross-border networks.

Moreover, threats by state security forces about the search for Gulya, only increased

distrust of the state. Finally, locals took the law into their own hands and not only looked

for Gulya locally but also through networks along the Afghan side of the border.

Essentially, locals considered the presence of state security forces as a threat and not as

being there for their protection and safety. Therefore, they had to find security through

informal and local means, including owning their own weapons, increasing networks of

cooperation across the border, and creating their own informal security organizations.

The more they react to outside pressure, the more they rely on these local organizations

which, ultimately, decreases stability at the border and at the state level.

The District of Roshan and Gulya's Location

Roshan is district west of Shughnan (and Khorog). The Afghan side of Roshan is known to be one of the most poverty-stricken and opiate-addicted in the area.[197] While I was in Shughnan, Afghanistan, both leaders from the Shurra Councils and local informal leaders talked to me about the addiction problem in their district and neighboring districts. They also pointed out that in a number of villages in Roshan, entire communities were addicted to heroin and wasting away. Later I met with a group of female Afghan Shurra Council leaders from Afghan Shughnan and Roshan who also said that addiction indeed was a growing problem. One of the female leaders from Roshan said she had been working on helping the community with drug treatment programs. She said that the programs had been more successful in Shughnan than they had been in Roshan.

I asked the female leaders if any of them had heard of a young woman from the Tajik side who had been taken over the border into Afghanistan. One of the women, the President of the Shurra Council in Roshan, said she had heard about a young Tajik woman who had been taken across the river the preceding February. She heard that she was given to an Afghan drug lord as a hostage for a drug debt. She was taken to a village near Faizabad. The dates matched what I had heard (and she could not have known the information I already had gathered since I had not talked about it there).

A few days later I crossed the border back into Khorog, Tajikistan, and told Sher and Ali about what I had heard. Ali had a friend near who lived near Faizabad who acted as an informant. He called him. Later in the week Ali confirmed the rumors about the

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[197] According to AKF staff members and Shurra Council Leaders from Roshan and the surrounding districts.

girl with his informant. People in the community began mobilizing to rescue her. Again, here is a case of the community circumnavigating the state security forces and mobilizing local networks of cooperation including within border personnel and the local governments. One of the local leaders, the one in charge of Bar Khorog, called Gulya's uncle and requested a meeting with me. The next day I met with him. I also met with a number of local leaders. The following section highlights these meetings, observations, and discussions involving the local leaders.

Commander Nurali – Local Leader of Bar-Khorog

Prior to meeting Commander Nurali, Ali and Sher told me about him and how I must act around him. They said he had a large following even beyond Bar-Khorog and that the majority of locals respected him and viewed him as a protector and true leader of the people in Khorog, and even much of Gorno-Badakhshan. They also warned me that he hated the Tajiks to such an extent that I had better not speak Tajik or Persian around him because he might get offended and throw me out.

As I drove into Commander Nurali's territory, a small number of men lined the side of the street. We met in a local community building. The cement single story structure had an open plot of land with a large area in front with trees and plants, a few men waited for us. Sher asked me if I was prepared to speak with the Commander. He said it was a rather big deal that he had requested my presence. I did not fully comprehend yet what Nurali's position was in Khorog or Bar-Khorog other than that he had been a formidable foe to his enemies (who were now in charge in Dushanbe) during the Tajik Civil War and that the people respected him and his leadership. They called

him a warlord and not a drug lord. Many people said that Nurali had support from the majority[198] of the local population and that they would take up arms against outsiders at Nurali's command. It was alleged that he had organized and designed the strategy to fight off and keep the Tajiks out of the area by forming a perimeter along a mountain pass which was impenetrable. Many felt he (along with a few other local leaders) had saved their area from being invaded or penetrated by the Tajiks. This also meant he had helped maintain local autonomy, protected local women from being raped, and kept the land safe. After talking about Nurali with Ali and Sher, they drove me to meet him in Bar Khorog.

On the mountain overlooking Bar-Khorog painted on the landscape, sits a large green and gold symbol. This was Nurali's symbol – the symbol for Bar-Khorog. In the past these symbols were for clans but after the Soviet era, on the Tajik side of the border, neighborhoods were associated with these symbols more than clans. Although belonging to an "original" family from Khorog meant a certain special status. According to people I spoke with both in Dushanbe and Khorog, there are nine original families (now clans), from Khorog which above and beyond all else in the area have the most status and therefore are the most secure from kidnapping, pressure from outside, and economically.

All men who guarded the street while I met with Nurali had weapons. They were his militia. I was told that about three-quarters of the residents from Bar-Khorog owned weapons. Since they were illegal many of them hid them by burying them in their yard or other places. At the end of our meeting, Nurali opened his jacket and showed me a

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[198] Many people said that about seventy percent of the population supported Nurali but there was no way to verify this information since any formal discussion about his leadership (meaning consistent, on-the-record acknowledgement) was unavailable due to local fears of retribution by government officials.

cache of weapons in holsters and pockets throughout the inside of his coat including two hand grenades, a Kalashnikov, a handgun, and a knife.

Nurali clearly was ready, as were his men, for a fight. Nurali explained to me that he hated the Tajik government. He even reviled the Tajik language and said he was ready for the "*Chakhts*" (expletive commonly used to refer to non-Pamiri-Tajiks locally) to invade his territory. He was prepared to fight them.

Nurali talked to me for over an hour about the rising addiction in the area and the fact that the drug lords were enlisting young locals into their business and putting them in harm's way. He asked me if I could help him set up a proper drug treatment center. He explained that they had one in Bar-Khorog but it had little funding and was tasked with treating not only people addicted to heroin but also people with HIV. He said that the EU had promised to open one but it had been sitting unfinished for over a year.

Nurali took me to visit the drug/HIV treatment center. The HIV treatment center had one well-trained doctor who was the director. They had over two dozen patients in treatment (with very few women). The doctor said there were likely many more in Khorog who had HIV and who were addicted to heroin but were too scared to come forward. He also said he had run out of the pain medication used to treat people during the painful process of withdrawing from heroin. The old single-story rather decrepit cement building had a small yard. Nurali then took me to another building which he owned. He wanted to use it for a drug treatment center and drug prevention and education program for youth but he had been unable to find funding. He asked me if we could co-author a proposal to fund such a program in the area. He felt it was the only way to help his community and protect them from the adverse effects of the drug trade

and poverty. I told him I did not have access to such funding but later I did bring up the lack of programming to US government embassy employees from INL and to officials from OSCE, the EU, IOM, and the UN.

I even met with the head of the International Committee for the Red Cross for the region. He had come in late one evening to Khorog. He insisted that they had needle-exchange programs funded by the ICRC in the area. I asked him if he had visited them. He assured me he had. He left early the next morning on a helicopter, never having checked out the programming which locals insisted were not available. The majority of the people living in Bar Khorog looked to Nurali for assistance with their problems including mediation, monetary assistance, and security/protection. The same was true for the other three leaders in Khorog. Rather than relying on the state, locals relied on local leaders to administer and enforce local unwritten agreements.

Nurali represented many things. He stood for legitimate leadership in that he took personal responsibility for the safety and well-being of the locals much like a mayor does in the U.S. or the U.K.. He mediated land, marriage, monetary, business, and resources (such as water), disputes. He had a security force and, at least in part, shared his wealth among the members of his very large clan. Nurali and his associated organizations had more legitimate authority than President Rahmon, the Governor of Badakhshan, and the state security forces, particularly, as it pertained to mediating local disputes and providing protection and security. When the locals felt threatened by the state security forces, they were forced to seek protection from local informal security groups. This in turn, decreased national identity assertion, which decreased state and border stability by further marginalizing groups living directly along the border.

Nurali told me that since Gulya was from his area he felt personally responsible for her family and for finding her. He also told me that how grateful he was for my humanitarian work in trying to understand where she was and what happened to her. At the end of our meeting, he stuck out his hand and told me that I was now under his protection and therefore I would remain safe and no one would bother me. He made true on his promise for the duration of my time in Khorog, even on the Afghan side of the border.

During my search for Gulya I spoke with numerous local leaders of organizations, both girls' families, officials from the Tajik DCA, local academics, a family of a man who had been tortured, the head of the KGB for Badakhshan, and a number of local religious organizations. I also met with many concerned citizens and talked to the French, American, and Russian Ambassadors. Most importantly, once people knew I was researching human trafficking in the area, and the girl in particular, locals started talking to me not only about the issue with her, but other issues they had as well. One of those people was Alinazarov, the alleged main drug-lord in Khorog.[199]

Local Leader from UPD

At the time I conducted the fieldwork for my dissertation,[200] the city of Khorog, the capital of the Tajik province of Gorno-Badakhshan, had four main

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[199] Ali as he was commonly known, was assassinated in July, 2012 during a raid by 3000 Tajik soldiers into Khorog over the assassination of the local KGB head for Badakhshan. Many contend it was over drug-trafficking lanes in the area, and my research supports this conviction. Overview of what happened: http://www.neweurasia.net/tajikistan/qa-with-man-nistam-what-really-happened-in-gorno-badakhshan/

[200] The assassination of Ali, the attack of Oyambekov, and the assassination of General Nazarov, Head of the GKNB for Badakhshan, all happened after I finished my fieldwork.

During the raid by the Tajik military and for two months afterwards, I was in touch with citizens of Gorno-Badakhshan and Badakhshan on a daily basis. They expressed constant fear. The Tajik government posted a "black list" of pictures in the local airport in Khorog. These enlarged photographs

warlords/druglords. Not all of the warlords are truly drug lords but all of the drug lords

are warlords. Each warlord controls a section of the city. Within each section there are

subsections which break all the way down to street leaders within the sections. Each

leader had dominion over different territories and each leader had a different following

and form of legitimate authority.

When Ali was assassinated in August, 2012, over three thousand people held vigil

over his body, which they brought to the main square in Khorog. They also protested his

assassination.[201] In many ways, Ali embodied the most respected and legitimate type of

informal leader. He was considered by locals to be smart (or clever), brave, powerful,

and somewhat egalitarian. His death is still being talked about today. When he died,

friends of mine who attended his vigil told me that the people chanted his name. Ali had

been paralyzed in the Tajik Civil War and for years, had been in a wheel chair. After his

death, I heard that local men were in meetings to elect another local informal leader.

I heard about Ali long before I met him. In some ways, in my mind, he had

become a mythical presence which many people had brought up in various discussions,

dinners, meetings, chats, and gossip. Locally, Ali epitomized what a hero should be

because of his bravery and leadership during the Tajik Civil War and his service to his

people, citizens of Khorog and Ismailis. Ali controlled a section of Khorog called OPD.

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represented anyone who protested or who the government viewed as a threat. Their criteria for inclusion in this list remain unclear. Friends of mine fled to Russia to avoid being caught and tortured or killed. The people who fled – at least the ones who are my friends – included a civil society leader and two local academics. The academics have returned but the civil society leader remains in Russia, struggling to find work and living on meager means.

The motive and killers of both of these men have remained unclear but were likely due to issues related to drug-trafficking and power struggles. Also, the leader of the Islamic Revival Party (IRP) for the Badakhshan region was assassinated, and another one of the drug lords was shot and severely wounded. Additionally, a number of informal deputy leaders were killed. The leader of the IRP recently was attacked as well.

[201] Protest: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PpclU16mP0k
Vigil: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=660fsBhbDuU

This area sat on a hill located directly across the river from Bar-Khorog. In a neighboring sub-section of Khorog there was a "bread factory." This "bread factory" was really a local drug lab. Essentially, the area was known to be controlled and mediated by these local leaders (who were also druglords and warlords).

Sohrab (who has since fled from Khorog during the raid), a local who had worked for Ali, told me about when he took Ali to Switzerland for an operation needed for his injuries during the civil war. My friend said that Ali's connections went far beyond Gorno-Badakhshan. He said that he was hired to escort Ali and make sure everything was taken care of during his trip. Sohrab said that from Uzbekistan to Switzerland, and everywhere in-between, they were met with dignitaries of the governments and escorted as a celebrity wherever he went. This included in Switzerland and other EU countries. Sohrab said this was due to his vast international business network.

I met with Ali. He requested I have tea one day. When I met him he told me that if I wanted to come back into the country and/or be granted another visa, I would have to accept that Gulya had jumped into the river and that that was the end of the story. In the middle of the afternoon green tea, *General* Abdullo Nazarov, "the head of the provincial branch of the State Committee on National Security"[202] (GKNB/KGB) for Badakhshan came and sat with us. They talked about their sons' soccer playing and families. They clearly knew each other pretty well. After General Nazarov left, I asked Ali if he collaborated with him. He said that when things were getting tense or there were security issues, he informed the General and that they had a good working relationship. Ali made it clear that not only was he a leader in his community, that he also believed in a strong a secure Tajikistan.

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[202] Alexander Sodiqov: http://old.cacianalyst.org/?q=node/5831

In July 2012, what sparked the raid by the Tajik army into Gorno-Badakhshan, was the assassination of General Nazarov. Many told me that Ali and General Nazarov collaborated on drug-trafficking and were the main representatives and conduit through Gorno-Badakhshan for President Rahmon. This appeared to be common knowledge and widely accepted. I have a map drawn for me by a local which shows where each "drug lord," "warlord," "drug dealer," and "drug lab" are located. Ali's house is shown in the map and he is a drug lord. Many locals told me that General Nazarov was assassinated because he had increased his percentage of the local trafficking profits in Ishkashim, so locals from the district of Ishkashim had killed him. But others alleged that General Nazarov had increased the rents and that the president was angry at him and had him killed but made it look like locals did it so he would have an excuse to raid Gorno-Badakhshan.

Relevance

There were many other stories about the reasons for and by whom General Nazarov and Ali were assassinated. In either case, both General Nazarov and Ali were working for the central authorities in Tajikistan – General Nazarov officially and Ali unofficially. Once they were gone, the state's ability to engage the region via a relatively well-institutionalized and locally legitimate channel was diminished. Moreover, since Ali represented the most respected form of leadership locally as well as the one with the most power and legitimacy, assassinating him increased the already present rift with the state. Many locals told me that they would not forgive or forget what the Tajik government had done to their community and their local leaders. After October, there has

been communication blackout which I had been warned might happen. Locals were being threatened by the state authorities.

In the end, Ali mediated between the state and the locals. Ali was a leader of the territory, a member of their asserted ethnic group, and a respected Ismaili. Killing him has only alienated the locals further. By further alienating the locals from the state, instability at the border increased because locals felt an increased distrust of the state. This increased local unification through more reliance on local security, increased resistance to oppression by the state, and a decrease in national identity assertion; or, a desire to fundamentally change the character of national identity from a Dangara-controlled one[203] (where the president's family is from) to a more cohesive and inclusive one. Being that many locals feel this currently is not possible, local networks of cooperation are perceived as being all the more necessary which, as a negative externality, decreases state stability.

Therefore, an increase in outside pressure by the government, when perceived as a threat to any of these identity networks, mobilized their members, united the groups, and increased assertion of their self-identification. But, when the domestic or outside pressures decreased, these local networks competed more amongst themselves, and the national/country identity (Tajik versus Afghan), as a potentially relevant form of "external" identity on both sides of the border, became less of a topic of discussion. This form of local identity assertion became more apparent when the border workshops, training (which I discuss in the following chapter), and the President of Tajikistan visited Gorno-Badakhshan in June of 2010. In preparation of his visit, President Rahmon forced the locals to put up posters, propaganda, and national symbols, and take down the

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[203] http://www.maplandia.com/tajikistan/khatlon/dangara/

symbols of the Aga Khan. The next section discusses this visit to the province of Gorno-Badakhshan and the city of Khorog by President Rahmon and its impact on national identity.

President Rahmon's Visit to Khorog and Gorno-Badakhshan

The first time I attempted to cross the border into Afghanistan ended up being closed for ten days (after the day I planned to cross) due to *Ruz-e Vahdat* (Unity Day), a major Tajik holiday, commemorating the end of the Tajik Civil War in 1997. I am grateful for this closure which serendipitously left me in Khorog for the President of Tajikistan's visit.

The city of Khorog had been revamped for his visit as was the custom of President Rahmon. Every Reconciliation Day he visited one city in Tajikistan. For the particular province he chose to visit, he overhauled the buildings and infrastructure as a gesture of kindness and a symbol of reconciliation (although only the parts of the province he was going to visit). Locals often joked that it was like a Potemkin village and only there to help him pretend he was being a good leader.

Along with these cursory renovations and local upgrades, President Rahmon also inundated the city and surrounding areas with posters and propaganda (slogans) about reconciliation, his great leadership, the great country of Tajikistan, and whatever pet projects he was promoting at the time. In this case it happened to be "Roghan" which is a major hydro-electric power station being planned on the border between Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. For this project, which has been in the works for a couple of years, President Rahmon required all citizens to pay a 10% tax toward its completion. The project is

reported by many to be impossible in that it would be the largest and highest dam ever

constructed in the world and is located on land that is unstable due to erosion and

earthquakes. But, as the many slogans said, according to President Rahmon, "will ensure

a strong and prosperous future for Tajikistan" and is therefore necessary and

inevitable.[204]

The forced decorations of the province with posters of the Tajik President and the

removing of some of the symbols of the Aga Khan actually incited groups to begin to

organize an uprising. HHAK had to step in to stop the uprising, through the Ismaili

Council. He personally requested that they support President Rahmon and not protest

against the President of Tajikistan's command to take down his symbols and replace

them with his own. The locals, since they believe the Aga Khan to be their true leader,

obeyed his request, and stopped their protests.

Relevance

The visit by the Tajik President did two things simultaneously. It forced the

locals to disrespect their religious leader, which in the Ismaili religion and Islam in

general, is their true legitimate leader who provides guidance, love, and protection.

Thereby forcing to acknowledge their own questioning of what the Tajik government

does to protect them and make them safe. Second, while many locals expressed gratitude

for what the President of Tajikistan had done for them, they also expressed how the KGB

was swarming the place and that the Tajiks were taking over. Many said they did not like

this. Moreover, many of the citizens I spoke with (at least the ones who I was closer

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[204] See Appendix One of translated slogans from the President's posters of himself posted throughout Khorog for his visit on *Ruz-e Vahdat*.

with) mocked the posters and the president saying that he is an oppressive leader and a narcissist. This has echoes of Lisa Wedeen's (1999) scholarship on President Assad of Syria. The locals privately mocked the overwhelmingly false and abundant rhetoric glorifying Assad, while publicly they pretended to agree with it. In Khorog, locals who I did not know (or when they thought they were being listened to by security services), would speak highly of the president but privately they often made fun of both him and the propaganda and posters being spread throughout the city.

Indeed, the increase in rhetoric certainly asserted that President Rahmon was in charge. But, at the same time, it also illuminated the ways in which his leadership was one that was not fulfilling the needs of those in Khorog. Ironically, the goal of Reconciliation Day is to bring the citizens of the country closer together and create a more unified Tajikistan, but instead, at least in Khorog, it highlighted the ways in which many of the locals do not trust their government and have to rely on local nfetworks to protect and provide for them.

The lack of trust in their state government, once again, showed how much they had to rely on local networks of cooperation, leaders, and organizations. This reliance on local authorities over state authorities had the negative impact of further marginalizing the borderlands from the state. Then, as the locals asserted a desire for more autonomy in reaction to increased state presence, the state viewed the local leaders and organizations as more of a threat, and in turn, increased militarization of the border. This quid pro quo ultimately decreased both border and state stability in the form of a military raid by the government of Tajikistan and the killing of two local leaders by the Tajik government in July, 2012. The raid by the three thousand Tajik soldiers still is a cause for increased

local identity assertion and a deep distrust of the Tajik government and state security

forces. It is hard to say what is going on within local organizations and groups at the

moment, but what is clear is that they feel even more strongly about the importance of

local informal networks of cooperation as a means to their own safety and prosperity.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I examined a number of aspects of the social organization in

Khorog. I began by discussing how I conceptualizing social organization (and

frameworks of organization). Then I examined recent scholarship on clans and sub-

ethnic groups and politics in Central Asia and provided some relevant definitions. Next,

I briefly discussed these terms in the local vernacular. After that, through a series of

detailed case studies (vignettes), I depicted the ways in which the local social

organization of Khorog and associated identity groups interacted with national identity as

well as reacted to outside interventions and pressure. To sum up the importance of these

descriptions, which I also did throughout the chapter, I showed that: 1. Outside pressure

increased the assertion of local identity through the BBP project, the local security groups

and distrust in state security (particularly KGB), and the support of the local informal

leaders over the state government. 2. Local identity assertion increased when outside

presence increased, which occurred during President Rahmon's visit and the increase in

symbols of the nation on posters during that period. 3. The fact that the state security,

instead of aiding in finding the kidnapped girl, locals viewed them as hindering their

search, including the local religious organizations, which in turn, once again made them

turn to local networks for assistance. 5. I showed how negative externalities caused by

increased outside pressure locally, decreased trust by locals in the state, which in turn, increased militarization of the border by the state, which ended in a military raid by the government of Tajikistan. This action/reaction cycle decreased both stability at the border (as it increased local networks of cooperation) and state stability, in that the Tajik military felt it necessary to raid part of its own territory and kill a number of locals as a means to "stabilize" the country. Of course, it did anything but that. 4. I also highlighted the roles of different leaders and their associated organizations while analyzing the activities of the local leaders.

Through describing their roles in the community and the ways in which local networks and associated organizations viewed them as legitimate authorities and leaders, I showed how these local leaders and their organizations embodied territorial, religious, and ethnic identities. I also demonstrated that the salience of these different local and regional identities increased as a result of distrust generating pressures and assertions of presence/power by the central Tajik government. The negative consequences of this distrust being a decrease in national identity (as it currently is framed) and an increase in cooperation between local networks which then decreased border and state stability.

In the following two chapters I discuss the development of the border institutions themselves, including the training of personnel, the infrastructure, and the cross-border bazaars.

Chapter Seven

Personnel Training and Infrastructural Development at the Border

Introduction

For centuries rulers/leaders have built walls, constructed fences, set up patrols, guard towers, and any measure of physical implantation to "control" a particular territory. But, border infrastructure is really the assertion of an idea and not a geographically-fixed and temporally specific place that is "controlled." As James, a British border project manager of a major IGO in Dushanbe with decades of field experience, explained, "Border 'control' is an oxymoron. There is no such thing as controlling a border. People say that, but its bullocks." In reality, border security, as James pointed out, is really about influence – the symbolic border. Individuals, entities, institutions, and governments can influence the way a border is conceived, securitized, or institutionalized. "Borders are about influence. If a state has influence over the border, they can compel adherence to the rules."[205] The assumption driving many border projects is that through development and "securing a border" it will become more stable. But the opposite is often the case.

Borders are inherently places which are in a constant state of flux. On a daily basis they are transcended, enforced, breeched, and traversed, and the best any country

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[205] James added that, in his view, while developing the infrastructure is important, getting buy-in from citizens and border personnel is even more important. For James, the symbolic border trumped the physical border when it came to "control" and/or "influence." Moreover, according to him, for any border to develop, it should be considered a long-term project. The reverse is also true. When development is forced or sped up beyond its capacity, negative consequences occur such as resistance by locals to encroachment by outsiders particularly if these changes are viewed as violating local unwritten agreements, customs, or norms. I worked for and with James for four months in 2011. His name is changed to keep his identity anonymous. He was one of six border management directors I worked/participated with during my time in the field.

can do is create institutions which influence the people on both sides of the border to believe the borders are there and belong to a particular place and a particular set of state-sanctioned rules. The case of the border between Afghanistan and Tajikistan in Badakhshan is no different but, ironically, there are over thirty border projects, major infrastructural development, surveillance, and other forms of border control and security projects currently being implemented. These are largely for reasons of "security" but also for trade and humanitarian purposes.

Just to revisit the issue of formal versus local organizations. Formal institutions are state-run or IGO-run institutions at the border. Local organizations are (unofficial) non-state controlled groups that mediate through unwritten agreements and intersect with the formal institutions. Whether sanctioned by the laws of the state or the IGOs developing the border infrastructure, these underlying agreements make up the majority of legitimate interactions and actions at the border.[206] An analysis of the split between these unwritten agreements, formal institutions, and the relationship between assertions of certain forms of identity and the unwritten agreements is central to answering my main question: *What is the importance of local leaders and local identity groups to the stability of a state's border and ultimately, the stability of the state?*

This case-study focuses on the interplay between the newly developing border institutions and the people (and the networks of cooperation) who function within, among, and around them while the border institutions, by necessity, are operational and in use as the development projects are being implemented. The following sections reflect

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[206] Legitimate refers to the unwritten agreements which are considered forms of acceptable behavior as understood by the people actually living, working, and crossing the border.

my time in the field working with several IGOs and NGOs including: 1) training of

border personnel and (2) infrastructural development.

Border Institution Development Projects

Badakhshan is a microcosm representing the overall challenges for development

in Tajikistan and Afghanistan; the overarching problem being that *local organizations,*

networks of cooperation, and unwritten agreements, trump formal state institutions at the

border.[207] North points out that even with well-developed formal institutions this often is

the case.

Infrastructure development along the border of Badakhshan includes buildings,

training for border and customs guards, trade agreements, rules, regulations, and methods

of enforcement, surveillance equipment, and delineation of crossing points, informal

points for crossing and inaccessible areas.   There is a goal of control but influence, as

James said, is the closest a country can come to control.   The question then becomes:

whose influence does developing infrastructure increase? Does it increase the influence

of informal networks through local leaders who wield power in dual roles as official

commanding officers as well as powerful informal leaders at the border? In my

fieldwork I found that it did.

Essentially, in Badakhshan, every law that is written has an equal or more

powerful informal norm or agreement to which law enforcement officials adhere. This

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[207] For example, an Afghan border commander working for the government likely is also a powerful clan leader and drug lord. The networks he belongs to are empowered by his official and unofficial positions at the border. But, the official appointment by the state enhances his unofficial position.   Barth's concept of "segmented identities" is particularly relevant here in that both the traders and the customs and security officials at the border express/perform different facets of their identity as needed in a given context in which they are operating.

includes legal and illegal trade, human flows, and visa issues. Moreover, the customs and border guards on both sides of the Af/Taj belong to both formal and informal networks of power. Currently, most infrastructure development schemes focus on the formalization of border institutions but the majority of the interactions and transactions continue to occur in the underlying informal agreements.

My ethnography for this section included living near the borders in which the infrastructure was being built and the institutional development projects were in the process of being implemented. Additionally, I assessed the infrastructure – including buildings, bridges, personnel training, and security equipment, participated in workshops training Afghan and Tajik customs agents and border guards, and living in the area. Participating in development projects with these organizations helped highlight the roles the actors, local, national, and international, play along the border and in particular how local and informal agreements trump formal institutions and rules.

Customs and Border Guard Training: Laws *(Qanun) versus* Customs *(Sonat)*

I had the unique opportunity of participating in border development projects and programs with five organizations. For the UN I assessed their Border Management Project for Badakhshan, Afghanistan (EUBOMBAF). With the OSCE, I provided situational awareness and video documentation of their training of Tajik customs agents and commanders. For AKF, I assessed their Drug Demand Reduction Program (DDRP) in three districts in Badakhshan, Afghanistan. For *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ*) I provided training and a workshop for experts working on cross-border trade development in Badakhshan (and worked with their staff

on documenting successes and failures of the three cross-border bazaars in Badakhshan).

Lastly, I observed the training of Afghan and Tajik border guards by the International

Organization for Migration (IOM) at the military compound in Khorog, Gorno-

Badakhshan.[208] The border formalization projects and the people participating in them

provide a useful context for depicting the dissonance between formal institutionalization

and the informal networks of cooperation, local organizations, and local leaders.

For example, after participating in the training, it became clear that many of the

border workshops and counter-trafficking simulations were, in part, opportunities for

developing more entrenched networks of cooperation among traffickers and other illicit

trade networks. Namely, they taught border guards and others employed by the state not

only to protect the border but also methods on how to avoid getting caught themselves.

According to locals, most of the customs and border guards and officials are involved in

the drug trade,[209] so the more they learn about how to catch traffickers, the more they

learn how to avoid being caught themselves. This awareness helps them to "play the part"

of the good customs agents for international donors, while at the same time cooperating

with the criminal networks in practice.

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[208] For the UNDP I wrote a 42-page report on the border infrastructure built in 2010 in Badakhshan, Afghanistan. For the Agha Khan Foundation, I wrote a 70-page report assessing and offering recommendations for a redesign of the DDRP in Ishkashim, the Wakhan Corridor, and Zebok, Afghanistan. Currently, this project has received more funding and is expanding (or is in the planning stages). UNDP said they were going to fix the many problems I found, but the last time I was in Ishkashim and Shughnan, Afghanistan in late 2011 (and according to staff at UNDP in 2012), the recommendations in my report had not been addressed much to the dismay of the local Afghan border personnel. GIZ, after talking to me, revised their policy designs for the border since they had been basing their projects and planning on a report which had fabricated all of its data related to cross-border trade. IOM blocked my access to training after I observed the workshops. From what I understand, The U.S. Embassy was not happy with some of the fieldwork I conducted at the border. Even with all of this access, the majority of my observations came from living with local families and spending time living in the area.

[209] Based on interviews with Customs agents, border guard officials, and traders from Tajikistan and Afghanistan, as well as officials from UNDP, UNODC, and OSCE between May, 2009 and Jan, 2012. Additionally, observations by the researcher along the border and at the cross-border bazaar supported these assertions.

What was independently corroborated by numerous sources was the fact that almost all of the customs agents and officials work as mediators between traffickers and officials involved in trafficking. The positions within customs allegedly garnered the highest pay due to the level of money made through informal payments (bribes). Not all of the customs agents and border guards are involved in illicit trade or eschewing the law, but certainly the majority, either out of necessity or peer pressure.[210] [211]

The workshops and trainings of the border and customs agents also provided a window into various persona the border and customs personnel had to present on an ongoing basis including: their role as an instrument of the state; their role as a member of their community; their role in the criminal networks; and their role as a religious person. The border peronnel's group affiliations intertwined with his/her own individual, family, and particularly, in Gorno-Badakhshan, community's security. The borders of the state were just the beginning of the many borders people had to traverse. The symbolic borders of delineation encompassed far more than just the border between nation-states including: territory, religious, economic, and ethnic. Therefore, as state and international

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[210] The border guards all participated in the formal institutions at certain times—when that role was required of them. When the role of the enforcer of the informal institutions including community norms, customary law, or the informal economy was the role required of them, they played that (for the most part).

[211] In some situations, not adhering to the informal institutional norms such as bribing was considered offensive and even a cause for casting out or the loss of a job. A number of border and customs guards, as well as family members, discussed how people they knew who would not take bribes lost their jobs or even worse such as being framed for a crime they did not commit.

This did not occur only at the border. I talked to many people who either accepted bribes or did not and paid the price of refusal. For example, one of my research participants had been an obstetric surgeon in Yemen and Saudi Arabia and even as head surgeon in a few hospitals. She was the first wife of a man who had taken a second wife and barely lived with his first family. This woman lived in poverty because she refused to accept bribes from those needing medical attention. In the hospital she worked in Dushanbe she had been demoted from Chief of Obstetric Surgery to the lowest paying position as a doctor in the hospital. This amounted to about thirty-five USD a month. Rent-seeking is endemic. It occurs in all of the schools, to varying degrees as well. In order to receive a good grade, teachers have to be bribed either by individuals or families. These forms of bribing, which many referred to as "rents" or "informal taxation," were common knowledge among most of the international development community. This was no different with the border training consultants and border personnel I spoke with while participating in the workshops.

institutions asserted influence (and national identity) through training, workshops, infrastructure, and newly implemented rules, local identity groups, networks of cooperation, and organizations, reacted in turn. Sometimes more and sometimes less. The first of these observations is described in the following case-study.

At the Beginning - Dushanbe: The Director of Border Management for OSCE and the Expatriate Party

Before going to the border, I spent a few weeks in Dushanbe talking to development workers about the ongoing border projects. In one of these meetings I was invited to a dinner party. It was the first glimpse into the world of the local expatriate nightlife I would have in Dushanbe.

Shortly after I arrived at the party, I sat down at a table in a courtyard of a large mansion which belonged to the President of the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC). He had a half of a full wheel of Gruyere and melted it slowly under fire preparing traditional Swiss fondue.[212] The President of the SDC lived in an elite area of Dushanbe. He had invited small group of EU development officials over for a fondue and photo party. The photographs were taken by an ice climber who had gone to remote mountainous areas (in Badakhshan) and climbed ice cliffs considered nearly impossible to get to.

The decadence of the mansions in which the majority of the expat community lived, stood in stark contrast to the villagers and the lives of the majority of the citizens of

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[212] . In a country where food scarcity is a primary issue, this was an uncommon luxury. A common meal of many Tajik villagers in many parts of Tajikistan is sheer choi. This is a salty tea made with powdered fake milk (and sometimes real milk) with chunks of flat bread in it and perhaps butter or some kind of fat. Many locals eat this meal three times a day, particularly in the winter, due to the food scarcity and extreme poverty.

one of the poorest countries in the world. The word opulent came to mind. This was

something I had only read about – and heard about from locals. Foreigners living like

royalty, often making ten and even twenty times the pay as a local working alongside the

foreigner in the same or similar position. The locals also often told me that they were

treated with disrespect or just plain ignorance by many of the internationals. Indeed, I

saw a number of internationals treat locals with disrespect. The division between insider

and outsider couldn't have been more evident. In this case insider was a local and

outsider an international. The definition of insider/outsider shifted continuously

depending on which networks interacted. Sometimes it meant borders between districts,

sometimes neighborhoods, and sometimes families/kinship networks.

All of the people attending the party worked for development organizations or

embassies with the primary goal of doing humanitarian work in the country. Many

worked specifically on border development and security projects. Even the locals at the

parties I went to, soon felt comfortable enough to make comments to me in Tajik when

they thought no one could understand. One woman said to me, "When you come to our

country and don't learn our language, get rich, and never talk to us, how can you expect

us to respect you?" (translated from Tajik). She said this in front of a group of well-paid

ex-pats whom she was working for and who did not speak Tajik. She said it to me

smiling the whole time and acting as if she were saying something else. A native of

Gorno-Badakhshan and an Ismaili, this woman ended up introducing me to many people

from Khorog.

At the party of the President of the SDC, I met two Tajik women who worked for

OSCE. I spoke Tajik with them for a bit, although they preferred Iranian Persian, and

they asked me what I was doing there. I told them I was doing fieldwork for my dissertation on cross-border security and cooperation. They giggled and said, "Have you spoken with Pierre yet?" "Who is that?" "Oh, you must speak with him! Come, we will introduce you." It was at this party, my second week in Dushanbe and prior to going to Badakhshan, that quite by accident, I met the Director of Border Management for OSCE, Pierre.[213]

In the corner of the large patio was a small non-descript Frenchman with a rather unruly mass of gray hair. He had a gorgeous young woman next to him (as I later found out, he always did wherever he went), and he looked at me dubiously. Pierre said he had heard about a PhD student "sniffing around about borders." We then began a rather animated conversation about drug-trafficking and the borders in the region. He told me that he suspected precursor chemicals were being shipped via North Korea through China and into Tajikistan and from there, splitting between Tajikistan and Afghanistan. I had heard the same thing from two other people. I asked him if labs for drug-processing were moving over the border into Tajikistan. Pierre said that some were there and some were in Afghanistan. But that in Tajikistan, most of the officials were involved in the drug trade. I asked him about all of the new buildings that had sprouted up in and around Dushanbe. He laughed and said, "What do you think? They certainly aren't getting the money for this from other businesses."

The main job of this expert on borders was to train customs agents and border guards and commanders on both sides of the Af/Taj border in interdiction and counter-trafficking/counter-narcotics methods. But, the very people he trained were the self-same

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[213] Pierre introduced me to many key people in the beginning of my fieldwork. He also provided logistical assistance on and off during my entire time in the field.

that trafficked. Pierre, similar to James, expressed to me that if one or two of those

trained moved up in ranks into a position of power at some point in the future, then

perhaps policy could be implemented to begin to change things through these people.

After talking to Pierre for over an hour, he invited me to participate in a border training

seminar.

Relevance

At this party, a mix of people from EU member countries (I was the only

American) along with Tajiks, primarily from elite families or young beautiful Tajik

women, intermingled. All of the internationals had good salaries, posh living quarters,

and drivers. Some visited and went hiking in the villages and mountains in and around

Dushanbe. Very few had been to Gorno-Badakhshan, which occupied fifty percent of the

land of Tajikistan, and where many of the cross-border development projects were

occurring (which many of the people at the party were tasked to oversee).

Policy was developed and implemented by these international and local elites

with scant input from the locals which the policy ultimately would impact. This

disconnect not only occurred in the nightlife of the expatriate community in Dushanbe,

but also in Kabul, and, most importantly, along the border in Badakhshan. Many in the

local community expressed that they did not understand why outsiders were enforcing

laws on their territory.

The following sections are from the part of my fieldwork in which I worked with,

around, and/or observed, implementation, planning, and training of border personnel by

IGOs. The seminars and workshops took place along the border in Khorog,

Tajikistan/Shughnan, Afghanistan in Badakhshan and on the border of Tajikistan and

China in Gorno-Badakhshan. The border personnel training Pierre allowed me to attend

reflected not only the dissonance between project planning and implementation, but also

the discord among local, domestic, and international staff.   The stories give insight into

how the development of border infrastructure both on the personnel level and the

physical, structural level, impact stability at the border and the state. It also underscores

the role of local leaders, organizations, and the community in both project

implementation and overall development of the border institutions in Badakhshan. I

visited the border many times during my fieldwork. The following case-study was the

first time.

OSCE Training: Murghab and Khorog

In July 2010, OSCE provided training to customs officers and agents in Khorog,

the district of Murghab, and at the Chinese border of Tajikistan. The training included

search procedures of people and vehicles attempting to smuggle and traffic illicit

materials across the border such as drugs, weapons, chemicals, and nuclear materials.

Two retired senior customs officers, one from the UK and one from the US, taught the

seminars. The OSCE Program Manager was French. They taught physical search

techniques, psychological profiling and methods, and document inspection. A few of the

customs officers appeared to be truly interested in the training but many clearly viewed it

as a formality they had to go through for both the internationals and the Tajik

government.

In the room in where the training took place a large poster of President Rahmon hung on the wall. Because of the president's impending visit for *Ruz-e Vahdat* (discussed in the previous chapter), local government workers hung a large banner outside of the Customs headquarters in Khorog while the workshop was taking place. A number of locals who took part in the training mocked the images and even took down the framed poster of President Rahmon and faced it toward the wall.

During the seminar the customs agents formed teams of four (there were about 20 attendees) and were asked to pretend they were smugglers. Some pretended they were illegally crossing the border; others were tasked with smuggling goods in a truck or plane. The last group had to pretend to use false documents to get into the country illegally. The Tajik customs personnel was creative in their problem-solving and clearly knew exactly how drugs, weapons, and other items were smuggled across the borders.

When the agents were asked if smuggling and trafficking was a common occurrence at the border they said that it was not so much of an issue. But, when they were asked how they might smuggle goods (and drugs in particular) themselves, they had many useful ideas. The trainers asked them how they knew all of these methods; they said they had a lot of experience with them. There was a tacit acknowledgment among the trainers and trainees regarding the smuggling. The agents could not admit that the illicit activity was endemic because then the low seizure rates would come into question exposing their own complicity in the trafficking. Everybody knew it was going on so if they could show what they knew, without overtly saying it, that appeared to be okay.

Relevance

This workshop showed how well the customs agents already knew their jobs both officially and unofficially, and how disconnected the two were. I mentioned this to the trainers from the U.S. and U.K., the general comment was, "we don't care if the customary norms contradict the laws they are being asked to enforce. They simply have to enforce the law." What was clear is that the locals enforced the law only when it would not harm them, their family, or their immediate community. Otherwise, the informal institutional norms/unwritten agreements were their guiding principle.

When outsiders such as non-Pamiri Tajiks, state officials, and/or internationals worked to monopolize power at the border through formalization of the border crossings and customs, the locals not only hid the fact that illicit trade was endemic at the border but they also mocked the visual presence of their president in the room. The illicit trade was something both the locals and the non-Pamiri Tajiks from outside participated in.

The internationals, domestics, and locals each had their own networks of cooperation but the network of the internationals, at least those involved with the customs training for OSCE, interacted more with the locals and their associated organizations. One man even married one of the interpreters from Khorog the following year. For the locals, the presence of outsiders (non-Pamiri Tajiks) was not a welcome one, and they largely remained separate during the training seminars. The internationals became friends with the locals for the most part. It appeared by their actions that they knew influence at the border not only included the official institutions of the state but also the locals and their associated groups. And while they were in Khorog, they respected and cooperated with the locals. The tension between the local and non-local Tajiks revealed

itself in many ways. The following two case-studies highlight the religious tensions in particular.

OSCE Training in Murghab: The Islamic Psychologist and the Customs Agents and Commanders

The underlying dislike between the customs agents and their local trainers bubbled to the service during a OSCE workshop I observed on interdiction and counternarcotics methods. I observed the workshops in Murghab ("river of birds"[214]) a district in Gorno-Badakhshan that borders Kyrgyzstan and China, in the most northeastern corner of Tajikistan and primarily inhabited by Kyrgyz. The harsh climate makes living there difficult since it is above the tree line and the elevation ranges from eleven thousand feet to close to fifteen thousand feet.   Water, arable land, and food are scarce and it is bitterly cold and windy. During the training two of OSCEs staff, an interpreter from Ishkashim and a doctor and program deputy from Dushanbe became ill. The doctor had to leave and the interpreter went to the hospital and did not recover until a week after we returned to Khorog. The overall challenging living conditions made certain tensions more apparent since workshop participants had altitude sickness, limited food and water, and consumed large amounts of vodka.

For the workshop, OSCE hired two Tajik "psychological profiling" experts to lead the seminars. One was the Deputy Head of Customs and the other was an "Islamic religious psychologist." The Islamic psychologist was studying at the Islamic University in Dushanbe. The majority of the attendees were Ismaili Shi'a from the district of Shughnan in Gorno-Badakhshan although a few Kyrgyz-Tajiks from the district of

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[214] Literally translated as: Chicken river.

Murghab. The Deputy Head of Customs wanted to introduce the critical role of Sunni

Islam for the study of interdiction and profiling at the border.

One Ismaili Shi'a participant pointed out that the training was offensive since it

was entirely based around Hanafi Sunnism. The Ismailis in the workshops complained

that the trainer (the "Islamic psychologist") had a very low-level of education and spoke a

"street Tajik" and could not speak Russian or English. All of the Ismailis attending the

seminar were fluent in Russian, Tajik, and Shughni and many of them could also speak

English. [215] [216]

The customs personnel from Gorno-Badakhshan with whom I spoke expressed a

pride in being Tajik (as opposed to being from Afghanistan or China or Kyrgyzstan, etc).

But, the training, which forced them to listen to doctrine that directly contradicted their

core religious/philosophical beliefs and religious identity, pushed them into increasing

assertion of their difference from the Sunni Tajiks. This included beliefs regarding

differences in ethnicity, education level, women's rights, familial practices, and other

indigenous customs.

Also, forcing the Pamiri/Ismaili customs agents to pray, which they did at each

communal meal, and train in traditional Sunni philosophical tenets put them in a position

in which they had to be submissive in terms of their core beliefs and their positions as

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[215] There are various sects within both Sunni and Shi'a Islam – some more conservative than others. Hanafism is one of the least conservative of the Sunni sects. The majority of the residents of Tajik and Afghan Badakhshan are Ismaili Shi'a while the majority of the people in power in both countries are Sunni. In Tajikistan the majority of Sunnis are Hanafi and almost all Shi'as are Ismaili. Iran is primarily Shi'a as well but the majority of the people belong to the Twelver Shi'a sect as opposed the Ismaili one. The difference between Ismailism and Twelver Shi'ism is the former believes that Aga Khan is the living prophet and a direct descendent of Muhammad/God while the Shi'a believe that there is a hidden prophet and he will reveal himself at some time in the future.

[216] The fact that they would advocate a "proper religious way of life" and provide psychological profiling individuals to the customs guards through Hanafi Sunnism appeared to contradicted President Rahmon's new mandates for both increasing religious inclusion and dampening religion within institutions. I was unable to reconcile this disconnect during my fieldwork and resultant analysis but know that is important and deserves further study.

Tajik citizens who belong to a doctrinally secular state. By framing the workshop around

Hanafi Sunnism with the majority of participants being Ismaili Shi'a, the Tajik

government de facto excluded the Ismailis from a key developing state institution at the

border.

A week after the training ended one of the customs agents told me that three of

the customs commanders had been fired, all of them Ismaili. One was the deputy head of

counter-narcotics, another was a well-regarded local general, and the third was well-

respected within his community. I was told that there had been a dispute between the

local Ismaili commanders and the customs officials from Dushanbe (all Hanafi Sunni)

during the training. I asked what the dispute was about but the customs agent did not

know.

According to the locals, the positions of the customs agents and commanders

were the most lucrative government positions due to the ability to get the most in

informal rents (bribes). Most extended family networks share salaries and income

among the group. Thereore, by taking three luctrative jobs away from the local economy

many more than just the immediate families of these three men were impacted negatively.

Many locals told me that they felt the officials in Dushanbe were corrupt and increasingly

pilfered scarce resources from their local economy without providing anything in return.

The loss of the positions by local elites was just one more example of this.

Relevance

Ultimately, while the customs agents participated in the seminars and were taught

useful and practical skills to better perform their jobs, the underlying difficulties caused

by rampant bribing, trafficking, and oppressive, hierarchical governmental power structures made it an impossible task for most, if not all, of these customs agents to implement or properly utilize the Western-style skills and tools they were taught. Moreover, forcing outside cultural and religious practices on local border and customs personnel by non-Pamiri Tajiks only amplified the rift between the local and central authorities.

This previous example was not the only time I witnessed tension between locals working on border projects in Gorno-Badakhshan/Badakhshan. The next case study highlights some of the deeper roots of the tensions between religious identities in Tajikistan. During a drive from Dushanbe to Khorog with a small team working with me on the assessment of the border of Afghan Badakhshan, two members of the team had a debate. Before providing the case-study, I briefly discuss the religious background and related issues in the current context of Tajikistan.

Drive with UNDP to Khorog and more on religious identity

I witnessed numerous debates about religion in Tajikistan, ranging from the policies regarding religious freedom to the philosophical, even mystical, underpinnings of Islam. Some of these discussions included the importance of religious freedom as a means of avoiding radicalism or conversely, developing governmental policies to quash religious freedom in order to stave off extremism. [217]

In 2011, I spent time with an informal leader in Dushanbe close to the president of Tajikistan while he drafted a legislative proposal on religious freedom/regulation.

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[217] The underlying tension between the majority Hanafi Sunnis and the other minority religious groups, in particular the Ismaili-Shi'a, who inhabit much of the province of Gorno-Badakhshan often came up in conversation.

President Rahmon had just banned children under seven from attending the mosque and practicing Islam. The Tajik administration was monitoring the mosques and mosque leaders and had compiled a list that contained cell phones, addresses, and close associates of all religious leaders in the country.[218] This included "shadow" or underground mosques. The government crackdown on Shi'a mosques had forced many to congregate in secret.

At the other end of the Islamic religious spectrum, Salafists from Saudi Arabia distributed DVDs to locals (mainly youths). Both the Tajik central government and the international community were concerned about these recent developments. These DVDs had been confiscated from a few mosques in Dushanbe. Some experts speculated, since education had rapidly deteriorated (due to corruption and low pay) and the Tajik youth lacked productive activities in their off-time in Dushanbe and more attended the religious meetings funded by Saudi Arabia. The goal, as the DVDs showed, was to convert the young traditionally Hanafi Tajiks to the more conservative Salafi sect. The Iranians also were attempting to influence religious identity inside Tajikistan thorugh the underground Shi'a mosques. They donated a large sum of money in support of the Tajik school system.[219]

During the Soviet period in Tajikistan and much of Central Asia religious practices were left up to the people as long as they kept it private. After the fall of the Soviet Union, when religious freedoms increased, people still primarily practiced religion

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[218] This list was shared with me by one of my research participants.

[219] In return, the Tajik government added the study of Islam to its core educational curriculum which had previous not been a part of it. Many in Dushanbe talked about how some of their friends began praying five times a day, wearing a hijab, and adhering much more closely to Sunni Islam. In my immediate circle, one of my friend's mothers began praying five times a day and attending the mosque frequently. She was in her forties and always had been secular. The increase in religious activity fueled the fear of the Tajik administration, which cracked down further. These were unexpected developments.

in private although the tension among different sects of Islam increased during the Tajik

Civil War (1992-7).   The factional feuds turned into a bloody battle among territorial,

sub-ethnic, and religious identity groups. The Ismailis from Gorno-Badakhshan and the

Gharmis suffered the majority of the bloodshed.[220]

One friend of mine told me that her entire family nearly starved to death. She

took my hand one night and said, "We had one carrot left. My father held it and started

crying. He said he was so sorry we couldn't eat it. He had to save it for planting." She

also said they had one pair of shoes to share during that winter. Many in Tajikistan

suffered like this during the civil war, not just those in Gorno-Badakhshan.

One informant let me hear a series of tapes made by OSCE [221]The tapes were

interviews of hundreds of women who had been raped during the civil war. Since women

who are raped are often viewed as "spoiled" the stories of these women had to remain

anonymous. Many young women had been taken from their families and repeatedly

violated during the war. Some women told stories of sisters dying. There was a

community of Pamiris living in and around Dushanbe whose experiences were

particularly horrific, including mass killings and rapes.[222]

In 1994, the Aga Khan, sent humanitarian aid in the form of food and other

supplies and began implemented numerous development projects. Since the Aga Khan, as

explained earlier, is consider the living prophet of the Ismailis, his support of the

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[220] These two groups allied for a short time, but according to locals, their differences, in part religious, separated them rather quickly. The Gharmis are somewhat conservative Sunnis while the people of Badakhshan are largely adherent Ismaili-Shi'a. During the civil war, due to the isolation from the outside community there was mass hunger and near starvation among the people of Gorno-Badakhshan.
[221] These tapes currently are held in Germany and not available to the public.
[222] http://www.csmonitor.com/1993/0126/26061.html
http://reliefweb.int/report/tajikistan/tajikistan-humanitarian-situation-report-april-may-1998
Drobizheva, Leokadia; Gottemoeller, Rose; Kelleher, Catherine McArdle; and Walker, Lee (Editors) (1996) *Ethnic Conflic in the Post-Soviet World: Case Studies and Analysis* M.E. Sharpe p. 269-270

community in their time of desperation not only saved many lives, it also had deep symbolic religious significance which has not been forgotten. Many felt hes their true leader. This led to tension between the Sunni religious majority in Dushanbe and the Ismaili minority in Gorno-Badakhshan. In fact, just about every resident I met from Gorno-Badakhshan I met mentioned the Aga Khan and his humanitarian aid to the community. Several large crowns symbolizing the Aga Khan are painted on key mountainsides in Gorno-Badakhshan. People frequently pointed them out to me.

Many times, from both sides of the religious spectrum, I heard disparaging remarks - one side referring to the other as animals or ignorant or primitive. Two specific interactions characterize what I heard which are the following two case-studies. The first one, a rather unexpected interaction on an eighteen hour drive from Dushanbe to Khorog, transpired between Akbar, a Tajik Sunni Hanafi interpreter from the UN, who had recently been on Haj to Saudi Arabia and Nur, a Pamiri Ismaili who was a teacher and scholar (and had studied Islam, all sects, quite intensely for a number of years.)

Akbar and Nur

In Darwaz, a primarily Sunni section of Gorno-Badakhshan, we stopped and Akbar and I spoke to some border guards and a border commander for about an hour. When we came back to the car, Nur was holding a religious pamphlet in Tajik that a local had given to him. It spoke of why people should practice Hanafi Sunnism above all else. It provided a short history of Hanafism and its founder. It left out that Hanafi was alleged

to be a disciple of a well-respected and well-known Shi'a religious leader, Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq.[223] The pamphlet was in Tajik.

During the rest of the ride to Khorog (about six hours), Nur urged me to read sections from the pamphlet out loud as fodder for debate with Akbar (who was nicknamed Haji because of his Haj from the year before). Nur had wanted to find a way to engage Akbar in a religious discussion since the beginning of the journey for two reasons. First, Akbar prayed five times a day, as many adherent Sunnis do so. Each time Akbar prayed we remained quiet out of respect. Nur found this to be an imposition and quietly expressed his annoyance. Second, when we stopped to relieve ourselves along the side of the road (since there are no toilets), Akbar pointed out to Nur that he should urinate in the direction of Qiblah (or Qaaba/Mecca). When Nur urinated in the opposite direction, Akbar pointed out that what he was doing was *haram* (sin). From this moment forward, Nur wanted to explore religion with Akbar. The pamphlet provided a perfect entry-point.

After I had read a few sections of the pamphlet out loud, Nur asked if Akbar knew the history of Hanafism. Akbar said that he did not, but that he knew the principles of Islam and that is what was important, not its history. Nur asked Akbar if he knew that the origins of Sunni Hanafism were in Shi'ism. Akbar denied this and became rather angry. In fact, he remained upset on and off for the remainder of the trip.

The debate between Akbar and Nur led to a debate about who the founder of the Persian language was another subject Nur was well-versed in from his graduate studies.

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[223] Daftary, Farhad (2005) *Ismailis in Medieval Muslim Societies* Ismaili Heritage Series, 12, I.B Taurus: London

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This topic cuts to the heart of the Tajik national symbol created by the former Soviet Union. As I discussed in chapter four, at the inception of Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic (SSR) the Soviets rewrote the history of the origin of the Tajik language to separate the people from their Persian (and Iranian) heritage.

When Nur asked Akbar about this, Akbar, predictably said that Rudaki (Abu Abdollah Jafar ibn Mohammad Rudaki) was the founder of the Persian language because he was the first author to write explicitly in Persian. In one sense this is true. Rudaki is a key figure, a symbol at the heart of the Tajik Nation (and was bolstered during the Soviet period) in that he was from the area and many historians assert that he was the first poet to write in the newly transliterated Persian alphabet. The newly created alphabet used Arabic script, adding three specifically Persian characters and transliterated from the Pahlavi (middle Persian) alphabet. So, Rudaki did help crystallize the Persian alphabet. Ferdowsi, however, helped preserve and codify the Persian language.

Ferdowsi, who came after Rudaki, decided that the Arabization of the Persian language was happening so quickly that he had to find a way to preserve it. The Arabs invaded the region in the middle of the seventh century and at that time Islam began to replace the prevalent Zoroastrian religion in the area.[224] For thirty years, Ferdowsi drafted the *Shanameh* which is written in what he hoped was "pure" Persian. It also preserved many of foundational myths of Zoroastrianism Ferdowsi is more relevant to Nur given he is from Gorno-Badakhshan, a territory with deep roots to Zoroastrianism and with many archeological sites from Zoroastrian times.

The debate between Nur and Akbar really was comparing apples to oranges. One referred to the Persian alphabet, the other its language. Both are important and relevant

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[224] Gross, 2013

in their own right. Nur knew he was chiding Akbar in a way that would make him angry.

The debate between Nur and Akbar, while seemingly academic, similar to the debate on

the origin of Hanafi Sunnism, was steeped in the roots of conflict between some in

Badakhshan and some in other parts of Tajikistan. It embodied differences asserted

repeatedly; in numerous ways (the above are just two examples of an endless stream of

narratives about who has the "purest" roots in the region or who is practicing the proper

form of religion or has a superior culture.

Four days after our drive, Akbar brought up the issue of Ismailis and the Pamiris

with me. We were with another non-Pamiri Tajik from Dushanbe. They asked me what I

thought of the traditional Pamiri houses. I said I thought they were beautiful and

connected to ancient roots in the area, including Zoroastrianism.[225]

Akbar shook his head and said that the way they lived was *haram* and disgusting.

They are primitive. "They all sleep together like a pack of animals. They even have sex

right in front of their children. This is like molesting them. It is disgusting. And they are

not proper Muslims." Soheil, the other non-Pamiri Tajik, nodded his head in agreement.

I asked them if perhaps they just had different customs than other Tajiks and that the

Pamiri house is a key part of their culture and religion. They just shook their heads and

said that it was disgusting. I had heard this many times before, but in more guarded

ways. Akbar's outburst over dinner, revealed a prejudice and dislike on a very deep

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[225] The Pamiri House usually is made from a tree which is planted when a male child is born. By the time they grow up, the tree is cut down and a house is created. The floor plan is open with a sunken square center in the middle of the large room. There also is a fire pit. The whole family sleeps together in the room on the elevated parts. Every Friday the Ismailis meet in different people's homes and practice their religion which involves smoking the house from the fire pit. Above the fire pit in every Pamiri house is a sky light which opens and closes to let in air and let out smoke. Another feature of Pamiri houses is that they are build with five posts. Each post signifies a different member of the prophet's family. Other beams in the ceiling signify the four elements of nature, earth, water, air, and fire (the same elements which were important in the Zoroastrian religion).

level. It also showed how much he felt (and Soheil as well) that the Pamiris were not the same as them and not safe to be around.

Relevance

The tension between Nur and Akbar is only one example of something I witnessed countless times. It is important for the verification of my hypotheses because it shows the tension between insiders and outsiders in relation to Gorno-Badakhshan. It also highlights how locals react to state, and officials from the state when they enforce laws, increase institutionalization of border and use outsiders to train locals in their border development workshops. The tension between people belonging to different religious sects, while somewhat under the radar, permeated many interactions in subtle and not so subtle ways.

The UNDP EUBOMBAF Assessment of Border Infrastructure in Badakhshan, Afghanistan

I crossed the border three times for the United Nations European Union Border Management for Badakhshan Afghanistan Program (BOMBAF). My job was to assess the infrastructure that BOMBAF had designed and built over the past five years. I interviewed the border commanders, documented problems and successes, and provide analysis on what needed to be fixed and/or revised. For this assessment I crossed the border into Afghanistan in Darwaz/Nusai, Khorog/Shughnan, and Ishkashim/Ishkashem.[226]

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[226] im = Tajik side/ em = Afghan side

As our vehicle descended into the valley between the high peaks surrounding Darwaz on the Tajik side of the border, the haunting beauty of the mountains sank in once again. At the same time I was reminded me of the many challenges people faced in Tajikistan and in Gorno-Badakhshnan due to this striking terrain. Its lack of arable land, the harsh winters, the geographic isolation, and the dislocation from the central government, and yet, driving down the main strip, children played soccer, groups of men chatted in animation, and cell phone stores, a new gym, and a number of businesses lined the streets. While waiting for one of the UN staff members, several groups invited me for tea and a group of young boys took me over to the newly built gym where all of them took wrestling classes three days a week. I took a tour of the gymnasium from the group of boys and then went to a craft store run by a group of local women. They shared the local cultural roots of the various items in their store – embroidered coverings (called *Suzani – Suzan* means needle), dolls, purses, and spreads from the area. Our small team then crossed the border into Afghanistan for our first visit to the border outpost, border command and military base in Nusai. I interviewed the Commanders of the Border Police as well as the Military Bases at the three crossing points in Badakhshan -- Nusai, Shughnan, and Ishkashim. My job included monitoring and evaluation for the BOMBAF project.

Crossing the border for the infrastructure assessment embodied all of the procedure, formality, and rules of the institutions the development projects and training of personnel aimed to formalize. Therefore, the border guards wanted to show the assessment team from the UN that they were following procedures to the letter. They followed many of the procedures they had learned during the border and customs training

by the UN and OSCE in which I participated. Our re-entry into Tajik Ishkashim from

Afghan Ishkashem was markedly less formal. [227]

During my previous fieldwork, I had made friends with a number of the border

guards and commanders. Moreover, the local leader, which I spoke about in the chapter

six, knew me. I had worked with his daughter at OSCE and visited his house. She was

an interpreter for customs training workshops. This leader was there at the border with

many others.[228] In fact, oddly enough, on this particular day, all of the border guards who

held positions of authority in Ishkashim as well as a number of the local informal leaders

were at the border when we arrived. They were in an animated discussion.

A rickety old truck filled with goods from Afghanistan was being inspected at the

border station. The border commander was arguing with the truck driver and his partner.

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[227] Before I discuss what I encountered during the BOMBAF assessment, I want to provide one example of
the procedures I went through at the border crossings while working on the BOMBAF assessment. This
outline helps to clarify what the "official" procedures were (at least in our entrance into Afghanistan during
this crossing. During our return, the procedures were somewhat less formal). The example below is from
the border of Ishkashim/Ishkashem:
  Tajik Side
  1) We drove our SUV up to the gate.
  2) They asked for proper identification.
  3) They made us wait while they verified with their bosses.
  4) The gate was opened.
  5) We drove to the Tajik crossing station and they asked for our passports.
  6) They searched our vehicle.
  7) Our passports were analyzed by Customs and once they passed inspection with Customs they were
     given to the Border station office for registration and stamping.
  8) In the border station office I was asked a number of questions about the many stamps in my
     passport and my position with the UN.
  9) They searched my backpack and the suitcases of my driver and translator.
  10) They then stamped our passports and opened the gate for the bridge to Afghanistan. We drove
     across the bridge and went through similar procedures on the Afghan side.
  Afghan Side
  1) They asked for our passports
  2) Then they searched our vehicle and belongings as they had on the Tajik side
  3) They asked us what we were doing and why.
  4) Then they registered our names and stamped our passports.
Additional information on this in the Appendices.
[228] The local Tajik elites (who controlled the border) in Ishkashim included both the border commander,
some of his deputies, and this informal leader. I am sure there are others which I failed to see during my
time at the border in Ishkashim. On the Afghan side, the elites at the border included a mixture of border
commanders and their deputies, traffickers, and the leaders in the networks they belonged to.

The driver threw a pile of the goods from the truck was thrown down on the ground. The fact that the informal leader(s) and the border guards allowed me to witness all of this surprised me.[229] In the end, the fact that they smuggled and negotiated bribes (informal rents for crossing the border with illicit goods) with impunity in front of me said that the procedures they "performed" for me were exactly that, a performance so that I could document that they were doing their jobs properly.

Infrastructure and the BOMBAF assessment

The border infrastructure that I assessed in Badakhshan Afghanistan was from one-three years old. I first encountered the infrastructure during me second round of fieldwork. The following discussion regarding the infrastructure is based on both rounds of fieldwork. The actual assessment took place during my third trip to the area. My job was to assess the new buildings, including the plumbing, electricity, and technical equipment (computers, generators, etc) on the Afghan side of the border in Shughnan, Iskhaskhem, and Nusai. I documented a number of areas in the newly constructed buildings which were rapidly degrading or already had fallen apart.

It was clear that the BOMBAF project had contributed to the institutionalization of the border commands through the construction of buildings, personnel training, and newly installed equipment. The border commanders (both police and military)[230] showed me their vehicles, sleeping quarters, and surrounding areas, and introduced me to their personnel. They briefed me quite openly about the challenges they were facing and their

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[229] One of the accusations against Ali and Oyambekov, when the Tajik military raided Khorog, was that they were involved in the trafficking of cigarettes. Ironically, what I witnessed involved different local leaders and officials in Ishkashim who escaped accusation in July, 2012. They are still operating with full immunity at the border as are all of the other commanders and leaders.

[230] See: Guistozzi (2013) on police versus military in Afghanistan.

attempts to address these challenges. They all said that they worked in a difficult part of the world, inherently encumbered encumbered by mixed signals (official rules versus unofficial, but relentless powerful unwritten agreements). Nevertheless, they said that establishing a command post for enforcement of border laws within an official institutional construct at least marginally contributed to formalization of their positions within the greater scheme of Afghan governance.

Conversely, it also gave the border commanders an official position and place to wield unofficial leadership positions from which to control the flow of illicit trade. There existed an inherent conflict between formalizing the border institutions in order to reduce graft and the fact that the formalization process provided new avenues for illicit trade. For example, the newly-built infrastructure was riddled with engineering and technical problems. The border guards expressed to me that they found the faulty construction simultaneously offensive and puzzling.

For example, in every border station I visited there were computers and scanners which would have been great if any of the border guards understood what they were for or how they worked. Moreover, the intermittent access to electricity caused by malfunctioning electrical lines installed by BOMBAF made proper use of this equipment difficult at best but often impossible. Most of the computers in the buildings had cloth covering them and other decorations adorning them. None of them were being used. The scanners for goods and luggage sat unplugged and covered in dust. The windows for the passport inspection booths in two of the border stations were coming apart at the frame and taped together with scotch tape. The border guards pointed out these problem and said that the buildings were so cheaply made that after one year they had started to

disintegrate and a lot of the equipment was inoperable including almost all of the Polaris off-road vehicles.

The border commanders said that the architects and construction contractors neglected to take the terrain and context of the area into account during the planning phase They said that the local engineers bought sub-standard materials from China. They also designed various systems that in the local terrain had little likelihood of functioning properly. This included the wrong kind of iron for the pipes which had cracked due because they were not rated for the extreme weather conditions in the area.

In all three locations, Nusai, Shughnan, and Ishkashim the greatest disrepair was caused by the low-grade materials and poor engineering, were the electrical and plumbing. There were faulty electrical lines throughout the building and most of the generators, if not broken already, lacked the proper fuel needed for operation. Some of the commanders said that people poached the fuel once it arrived. Others said it never made it to the border stations. It was impossible to know what was going on except that the generators and electricity, for the most part, were not being used.

The plumbing also had major challenges. First, most of the border guards did not use the indoor showers and toilets. They used these rooms as storage facilities or just abandoned the space altogether. In one of the buildings, the roof had leaked and seeped into the second floor and had damaged the boarding facilities which made sleeping in these rooms unbearable – according to the border personnel. In two of the locations they had to shut off the plumbing lines due to the cracked pipes.

In Shughnan there were more problems with faulty construction materials than in Nusai. The main issues in Shughnan included ongoing water leakage in the main

building (and flooding during parts of the year), cheap construction materials which caused broken door handles, buckling ceilings, peeling floors, and the like. Additionally, there had been no water line installed in the border police barracks, so the functionaries had to wash themselves outside in the winter. Also, the installation of the solar panels was incomplete.

Ishkashim had the most problems out of all the BOMBAF border crossing projects. In Ishkashim the Border Commander had no kind words to say whatsoever and berated me about the bad construction and lack of follow-through on the project for over an hour. His anger was palpable. He also asked why the United Nations building in Qunduz had a guard tower and he did not. He questioned why the international border posts or command posts should be more secure than the ones for Afghans. Oddly, a week later locals attacked the guard tower in the UN command post in Qunduz and burned it down.[231]

The commander in Ishkashem said that on more than one occasion random electrical surges caused all of the light bulbs to explode. He felt that the walls of the barracks were too thin and did not provide protection or enough insulation from noise and the cold for the soldiers as compared to his international counterparts. He added that numerous door handles are broken, two out of the three generators were broken at the military post and they fixed the third one but did not have fuel for them. The boiler did not work because they do not have any diesel fuel for it either and therefore the radiators for heating in the winter did not work in any of the barracks. The commander pointed out that coal would have been a better choice. He added that even though BOMBAF did not

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[231] There was some speculation regarding the timing of the attack on the UN guard tower and the border commanders comments by friends at the UN and others but I I could not corroborate or even look into whether there was a connection at the time.

promise fuel for the generators or other equipment, they had none. In his opinion, this issue should have been addressed in the planning stages. He also said that the staff never received a demonstration on how to operate the boilers and therefore they remained unused.

I saw that the cement sidewalks were crumbling, the toilets did not work, and that there was no water and no drinking water in the headquarters. The border personnel had to bring water from river. The border commander asserted that money was not spent on the project but was stolen instead.[232] He also said that the UN had ignored the local environment when they designed the buildings. He then took me into his office and brought up the guard tower once again, getting even more irate. He then told me that the office was too small and therefore, as he put it, was a sign of disrespect to his command.

All of the commanders implored me to pass on to the UN that they needed a guest house for VIPs. They all said that this was necessary for the proper functioning of the border posts. Each had picked out the piece of land at the border crossing on which the guest house could be built. Why was a guesthouse so important for the commanders? In the area, the ability to properly host guests is a sign of power and status and has been for centuries. It also can be used in exchange for favors. Ultimately, it is a sign of legitimate authority and without it, the command posts – given the local cultural framing are seen as lacking status.

Conclusion

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[232] James negated this and said that the border commanders were complicit with the stealing. It was hard to know what was really going on except that the money was not spent entirely as the development project had budgeted it to be spent.

The border commanders alleged that the reason such low-quality materials were purchased - from cement to door handles to generators - was because the local construction companies and the engineers skimmed funding off the top. The problems with the electricity and plumbing clearly made some of police force operations difficult. The cheap materials and faulty engineering led to crumbling infrastructure which diminished legitimacy of this key state institution. As the infrastructure became less and less useable, it is easy to extrapolate that the local border and customs personnel will revert to traditional practices.

In the final analysis, what happens after ten years when international forces and IGOs have largely left the region? If the stations are already falling apart, how are the border guards supposed to uphold official rules, regulations, and security? They lack the basic equipment, the skills to operate it, proper pay for their jobs, and decent living quarters.

While it is clear that installing the infrastructure in order to institutionalize the Afghan Border Command in Badakhshan had achieved this goal, it was also clear that the poor engineering, implementation, and cheap construction materials greatly diminished the overall sustainability and long-term success of this goal. Also, since the local commanders used the stations as a means to garner informal power locally (hence the desire for the VIP guest houses) the development of the border stations institutionalize informal networks of power.

As the infrastructure continues to crumble, and the western-style systems go largely unused (such as computers and scanners which lack electricity or properly trained operators), the actual legitimacy of the border crossings as well as the personnel tasked to

control them were diminished This denigration of a key institution of the state at its periphery, impacts both border and state stability. This, in turn, has allowed for easier trafficking flows as was highlighted by the illicit activity I witnessed being coordinated at the crossings. Moreover, as the infrastructure deteriorates, the local commanders seek the ability to influence in other ways such as through the illicit networks operating along the trafficking routes which cross the border in Badakhshan. In reaction to the illicit trade, militarization of the border by the Tajik side has increased (largely at the behest of the international community), and in turn, the illicit networks to cooperate more since they have to work harder to coordinate the illicit trade. This cycle, once started, has the capability to rapidly increase and therefore the potential to cause instability not only at the border, but at the state, and even the region. Currently, we are seeing the beginnings of this trend.

The final ethnographic chapter highlights my ethnographic research from the cross-border bazaars, a different but nevertheless a key newly-developing institution at the border. Three cross-border bazaars were installed and still in the process of being implemented and developed at the time of my fieldwork.

Chapter Eight

Cross-Border Bazaars: Trading, Traders, (In) Formal Institutions, and Networks of Cooperation

Introduction

I observed activities of the cross-border bazaars in Badakhshan during three of my periods in the field. I highlight three areas in which the surface and sub-surface interactions embody how informal institutionalization holds sway over the formal institutions in the bazaar. First I provide a brief outline of the development of the cross-border bazaars then provide a few case studies of specific interactions. The study of the cross-border bazaars could be a book or a dissertation in and of itself. In the interest of time and space I only provide a few key cases from my fieldwork.

The cross-border bazaars are newly-forming institutions with official rules and regulations including procedures for entering and exiting, stall rental fees, cross-border trade agreements, and times of operation.   Each bazaar has a different set of procedures and a different framework within which it operates. In the cross-border bazaars, I was able to observe how informal institutionalization and informal networks interact within and around the formal institutions. They occur as daily practices and often, not only as quiet protests against the formal structures that are viewed as illogical, impractical, or as tools of oppression by the state, but also as an easier means to an end.   The official procedures often impeded transactions and unofficial, unwritten agreements were part of common practice and therefore easier to traverse. These transactions, often illicit, were hidden from international donors and/or outsiders by those working or conducting

business in the bazaar. Often the illicit activities were embedded within the legal trade
and business of the bazaar.

Informal institutional practices in the cross-border bazaar are both overt and
covert, embedded in the legal and illegal transactions. By practices, I mean the taken-for-
granted, common-sense behavior that is a part of every interaction at the border. The
exchanges can be between people of equal standing, unequal standing, a person with
official position, unofficial position, or just a passerby. I witnessed these overt and covert
informal practices by both participating and observing the cross-border bazaar.

Some refer to the covert informal practices as an unwritten language, "secret
handshake," or a "code of conduct." Others refer to it as a norm or a custom. In reality,
it is just another language which exists in the sub-strata of written or spoken
language…in the silence or the unspoken understanding. This is the language in which
our senses, our bodies, our beings, react and respond, and, within those reactions, we
support or protest another's cultural script. Sometimes it is defined or couched within
language and words, but much of the time, it is unspoken. This layer of interaction is
potent and aids in the institutionalization of the informal since the informal is often
covert or unseen by outsiders of all types but overt to insiders.[233]

Not only is there the insider and the outsider, there is also the in-betweener. This
is the insider who transcends their own boundaries and the outsider, who penetrates the
boundary. Victor Turner describes this as a place of transition and at the same time a

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[233] Appadurai, Arjun (1990) "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy":
http://www.intcul.tohoku.ac.jp/~holden/MediatedSociety/Readings/2003_04/Appadurai.html
The idea of "other," related to such dichotomies as insider/outsider or emic/etic, has a rich literature in both
political science and anthropology. Some scholars also have written about the "third space" or the
"ethnoscape" of the border. This is particularly relevant here. "Ethnoscape" refers to groups of people
who transcend boundaries as a group creating a landscape of connected groups.

bridge between otherwise separate places (1964: 47).[234] The networks of cooperation

along the border are largely the in-betweeners.

These networks are fluid. Groups and people operate in complex ways that defy

clear demarcations of who they are and to which groups they belong. For each group

and/or sub-group, there are often taken-for-granted unwritten agreements which defines

who belongs to a particular group/sub-group and who does not. But, also how the

decision is made to allow an outsider into a group or granting an outsider temporary

access.

Many people I met in Gorno-Badakhshan and Badakhshan were hyper-vigilant in

their suspicion of outsiders. Outsiders included even people from within the same city

but from a different section of the city or clan network. In the context of Afghan/Tajik

Badakhshan, the term "outsider" or "other" needs to be carefully defined because the

reality it refers to and its semantic field are extremely complex, fluid, and contextualized,

depending, for example, on a number of categories in use (as often is the case with

identity in general). The difference here is that the people in Badakhshan are keenly

aware that over many centuries have been treated like outsiders by neighboring regions

and khans (and this is something local academics often talk about). Moreover, people

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[234] http://www2.fiu.edu/~ereserve/010010095-1.pdf: "Betwixt and Between: The Liminal Period" in *Rites de Passage In Reader in Comparative Religion: An Anthropological Approach*, (1967) 234-243 by Victor Turner edited by William A. Lessa, Evon Z. Vogt Turners concept of the betwixt and between, while not about geographic and territorial borders pursay, is about that space in which people transcend who they are and, while they are either in the process of spanning two spaces of identity, being, status, they are also, at the same time, bridging the two spaces. In bridging the two things (and in my case territories) they at the same time, equalize or neutralize the differences between the two. This concept aptly describes what I am trying to explain when I use the term "in-betweener."

within Badakhshan have a long history of rivalry between larger groups (ethnicities) as well as within them (sub-ethnic group).[235]

It is this diffuse organizational network and transmutable identity groups through which people live. This makes defining insider/outsider all the more difficult and the importance of the in-betweener even more relevant. For example, one person might be an insider in the province of Gorno-Badakhshan because they are Ismaili but, as a person from Khorog, they are an outsider in Ishkashim. Moreover, as a person from Bar-Khorog, they are an outsider in the UPD section of Khorog on the other side of the river. And, while this same person may belong to the same academic institution located in Khorog, they may be suspicious of their co-worker since he/she belongs to UPD which is led by a different warlord and/or has a different set of territorial and familial networks. Most people have a number of sub-identity groups to which they belong and – importantly – most of the business is conducted through these sub-networks. So, if outsiders attempt to co-opt these networks, the local networks mobilize and coalesce around the united dislike of the outsider's incursion into their territory, whether institutional or physical, and transcend local rivalries.

In Afghan/Tajik Badakhshan, the quiet protestation against control or incursion by foreign elements, whether from another country, central authorities, or another clan, is constant and pervasive. Unruling the rulers is an apt phrase here. Since, as far back as our documented history of the area goes, the people in Badakhshan have either been kept out of neighboring empires through barriers and/or force as was the case during the Persian Empire, they have developed a complex set of cultural scripts that allow people

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[235] Barth's conceptualization is helpful here. In his concept of "segmented" or "nested" identities, an "insider" in a larger group, might be seen as an "insider" by the members of his own sub-group, but as an "outsider" by the members of other sub-groups but as an insider to the larger grouping.

access to certain levels or layers of insider knowledge including the many languages and dialects which belong to specific districts and even sections of disctricts. The area also has been used as fodder and/or as a bargaining chip in fights between empires over territory as was the case during the colonization periods of the British, the Russians, and the USSR. The unusually challenging mountainous terrain has helped limit outsider's access to a degree.[236] [237]

The question is – what constitutes an "insider"? It appears that this is defined in so many ways. If even the name of the country of Afghanistan, the name of the mountains as Pamir, and the myths of origin are in contention, how does one ever resolve who an insider and outsider really is? Well, the answer is: It depends on what one is trying to be inside or outside of, as was clearly described in the previous chapter on the social organization of Khorog. For this chapter, the questions are: first, how are these cross-border bazaars being developed as formal institutions at the border; second, how are the local leaders, organizations, and community operating within these newly-forming institutions (or reacting to them).

Building of bridges and the development of the cross-border bazaars

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[236] For about six months a year, the inclement weather of the mountainous terrain surrounding the borderlands of Badakhshan blocks access to outsiders although slightly less now that the roads are more developed. Until 2005, much of the area had no electricity and in many areas, Pamir Energy is still building infrastructure for electricity. There are even some villages in which they do not have plans to build as of yet. These areas are isolated and rarely see anyone from outside of their village. For centuries the region was left largely unexplored by outsiders (Cobbold, 1900; Habberton, 1937; Tanner, 2002, Rashid, 2000). Most of the historical maps do not include the region and when they do, it is shown as a remote area and ill-defined. See James Scott (2010: 256) on radical constructionism of "tribe." My fieldwork for this part of my dissertation occurred within a two year period of visiting the Saturday bazaars numerous times at Tem and in Ishkashem.

The building of bridges and the cross-border bazaars was spearheaded primarily by AKF and AKDN but also aided with funding from the EU and the U.S. The first bridge at Tem, connected Khorog and Shughnan. This increased the ease of access to medical care, food supplies, appliances, and the outside world for the people in Shughnan, Afghanistan in particular. This district in Afghanistan is remote and extremely isolated due to a lack of roads into Afghanistan and the high mountains surrounding it. In fact, until recently there were no formal roads in or out so, therefore, the winters were often not only treacherous but deadly as well. People in Shughnan told me that in 2005 when Pamir energy started supplying them with electricity it was the first time they had ever had proper light in the evening and that the electric ovens had shaved hours of work off the days of the women in the villages. They also said that having heat in the winter had saved a lot of lives.

Having access to goods and services (including medical, engineering, humanitarian, energy, and other natural resources) from their neighbors across the border as well as positively impacted the lives of most of the people living in the district of Shughnan. Prior to 2002, much of the cross-border activities in Badakhshan were informal and much of the trade traversed across the treacherous currents of the Panj. As of 2002, the first of four bridges opened in these borderlands of Badakhshan. The fourth bridge opened in 2011. A fifth bridge is under construction, as are negotiations for a free-trade zone spanning the border of Ishkashem. As the bridges developed, so did the cross-border bazaars.

In 2006, the Afghans were allowed to cross and shop in the Tajik bazaar on the other side of the river in Darwaz. Five years later, two more cross-border bazaars began

operation in Ishkashim and Tem (Shughnan). While the bulk of the goods in these bazaars comes from China and to a lesser degree, Pakistan, the bazaars do provide the locals with access to goods such as watermelons for the Afghan side and cheaper and better rice for the Tajik side, which has helped diversify the products available on both sides of the border. On the other hand, it also has increased the price of some goods on either side of the border due to an increase in demand for certain products which has caused some hardship on the Tajik side regarding certain goods such as honey and potatoes.

Data I was given by AKF highlighted the fact that the cross-border markets have a small but significant positive impact on the Tajik side of the border and a growing economic contribution to the Afghan side. Some on the Tajik side, as well as AKF, complained that the bazaar caused a price spike of honey and a few other commodities on the Tajik side, which was hurting the balance of the local economy. The numbers do not really support this claim but it remains to be seen if there is a longer-term impact on local goods and their prices.

On the Afghan side, many Afghans in Shughnan said that the bazaar had positively impacted their lives. A number of men bought mini-ovens at the bazaar. Women said these ovens transformed their lives. Shughnan had had almost no electricity for twenty years until the recent sharing of energy by Pamir Energy, which, in fact, enabled them to use their ovens. Many Shughnis also said that the watermelons they could now get from the bazaar were much cheaper than before and many were buying them wholesale from the bazaar and selling them in local bazaars throughout Shughnan.

Although, on the Afghan side, most of the traders are from Pakistan or Kabul and not part of the local economy, on the Tajik side the traders are largely local.

It is clear from the table below that increasing trade is occurring between the two sides and will likely continue into the near future. This could aid in positively developing not only the Afghan side of the border but also the Tajik side. Implementation of a local business model or incentive for local entrepreneurs might aid communities on both sides of the border to better capitalize on potential business opportunities. A fourth cross-border bazaar is about to open in Vanj, which is much needed due to the isolated geography on the Afghan side of this part of Badakhshan.

*Trade Volumes at Darwaz/Nusai Cross-Border Bazaar (*Source AKF/MSRDP)*

Monthly Totals USD	December 2009	January 2010	February 2010	March 2010	April 2010	May 2010
Afghan Customers	6,136	5,435	26,862	27,797	18,406	26,620
Tajik Customers	23,533	16,877	52,194	42,812	47,208	56,489

Prior to the construction of the bridges and cross-border bazaars, food, medical, expertise, education, and other types of trade and exchanges had to funnel through informal networks and agreements. The bridge formalized these exchanges. But the formalization also made some humanitarian exchanges which in the past had mediated through informal arrangements, more difficult for the local citizens on both sides of the border, particularly the Afghans. Many Afghans did not and do not have the financial ability to get a passport let alone a visa. Therefore crossing the border for medical help,

which was done through informal channels in the past, suddenly required a passport and visa making it impossible for the impoverished and sick in Shughnan. Moreover, other ways in which the people used to cross the border for foodstuffs during particularly difficult periods and supplies now required a visa and passport more often making it again prohibitive to cross for those in need of these items. During each of these visits the border guards and border commanders all enforced the laws to their utmost and, in fact, went so far as to show me the rules they had to enforce if I wanted to cross the border. Additionally, I received a copy of the customs manual for the border guards and the handbook they were to follow. The manual was convoluted and the customs agents did not appear to take many of the rules into account. Although, they did have a set of rules with which they operated at the border posts (both official and unofficial).

Of course, what came with legal trade and exchange of services was the illegal flow of goods. Although the illicit trade did not start with the building of the bridges, they did make it easier. In a nutshell, the bridges and the cross-border bazaars created opportunities for increased cooperation between illicit networks through formal institutional development at the border. A small survey I conducted in Khorog supported the idea that there is relatively little drug trafficking or illicit activity at this border crossing, particularly during the Saturday cross-border bazaar.[238] In private these same locals said that the bazaar was used for coordination of illicit trade and that many parts of the criminal networks met at the bazaar weekly. Moreover, it was a commonly held belief

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[238] I had an assistant conduct the survey and she made the mistake of putting the names of all the respondents on the answer forms. The surveys were supposed to be collected and recorded anonymously. If documentation exists in my computer or my assistants with identifiers, the IRB disallows the entire survey and therefore can not be officially used in my dissertation. This meant I had to discard the surveys because I knew almost all the respondents personally by the time the survey was completed. The survey ended up being quite useful nonetheless because it showed the disconnect between what the people I knew told me and what they said in a formal survey.

that most of the customs officials and a majority of the border guards were involved in various aspects of the informal economy and the illicit trade networks.

The fact that the locals presented a different interpretation (in part) even to a trusted local, a fellow Ismaili from Khorog who conducted the survey, highlights the common practice of feigning ignorance about informal and/or illicit activities. The survey was about the cross-border bazaars and included questions about the occurrence of illicit trade and drug trafficking. While the people surveyed clearly had knowledge about the illicit activity since they had told me in private discussions about it, that if they viewed the survey as official, they would not disclose what they knew even if it was supposed to be anonymous.

Privately, in parties, dinners, walks, and other social events, the more I partook, the more the layers of knowledge came out. What became clear was that everyone knew everything about each other—period. There were no secrets among community members, whether a village or group of villages or a city on both sides of the border. One day at the bazaar, a local (who worked for the Tajik government) pointed out a white SUV to me. In the SUV, with unmarked plates, was the main drug lord from Khorog sitting with the Afghan Border Police Commander. This type of activity is commonplace at the bazaar and during my many visits to the bazaar I witnessed many unlikely pairs and groupings chatting seriously with no shame – for all to see.

In reality, for a fee just about anything can happen. The newly implanted rules and laws governing the border inadvertently aided informal networks of cooperation to more effectively control the illicit flows along the border while making legal flows more

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challenging. In other words, what once was easy, i.e. medical care from the Tajik side of the border now required a visa, passport, and the money to obtain these required items.

For drugs this was also true. In the past, most of the drugs came across on tires, and in the stomachs of animals, and on other flotation devices. Now they flow freely in trucks and other vehicles. Only small traders who are trying to smuggle little amounts cross the rivers with their illicit goods sometimes at their own peril, both from the strong currents or from border guards needing to prove they are doing their jobs.

For the border guards, since they are not allowed to catch the "larger fish" as the locals refer to the higher level drug traffickers, they focus on the smaller, inconsequential, traders. This satisfies the international funding agencies such as UNODC and legitimizes the efforts of the Tajik Drug Control Agency (DCA) and the entire border security infrastructure being built and developed in the area. The larger shipments, controlled by the "larger fish," are just part of a complex web of informal cooperative networks which span the roads and bridges from China and Russia to Pakistan by way of Afghanistan and Tajikistan. Moreover, these are just a fraction of the links in a very long chain of networks of cooperation which has financial remuneration as the primary goal for inter-group agreements and collaboration.   The government of Tajikistan is not going to dissuade these traders from doing their business since, according to numerous officials and locals, they are gaining a profit. Some referred to this profit as a "cash cow" for the government and one they were not likely to part with even with intense international pressure to do so. I spoke with locals, officials,

international development workers, NGO and IGO officials (both locals and internationals) who all talked about the narco-economy.[239]

The formalization process delegitimized a key state institution at the border by increasing cooperation among informal networks of power and creating obstacles for legal trade and humanitarian exchanges. Basically, it increased the cost for a necessary and almost non-existent resource, medical aid, for the neediest and at the same time aided the clan elite to both use the resource as another form of oppression as well as a commodity accessible to only a certain few either within their clans or with the financial means. Here is the logic of the informal institutionalization and increased cooperation between informal networks aided and increased by the development of formal institutions:

1. Informal institution and network is in place. While it is "informal" to outsiders, it is the way things have been negotiated and have operated for decades (and sometimes centuries).

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[239] Letizia Paoli, Irina Rabkov, Victoria A. Greenfield and Peter Reuter "Tajikistan: The Rise of the Narco-State" *Journal of Drug Issues* 2007 37: 951 "Tajikistan has become a key transit country for Afghan opiates bound north- and westwards, at the same time as it has witnessed a rapid growth of domestic heroin use. Tajikistan now rivals Afghanistan for the unenviable title of the country most dependent on the illicit drug industry, with the opiate industry adding at least 30% to the recorded gross domestic product. The opiate trade is so important economically that it corrupts the whole political system. This article therefore argues that since the mid-1990s Tajikistan has become a narco-state, in which leaders of the most powerful trafficking groups occupy high-ranking government positions and misuse state structures for their own illicit businesses"" (2007: 951). See also: http://www.economist.com/node/21553092
"Foreign donors have spent hundreds of millions of dollars on border security and counter-narcotics projects designed to cut trafficking and boost Tajikistan's legal economy. Instead, these initiatives help to control the trafficking by helping officials take out rivals. Donors subsidise basic government functions, including the drugs agency, while watching Mr Rakhmon construct flamboyant new palaces and the world's tallest flagpole. Foreign officials admit to having little incentive to challenge the authorities' hold on drug smuggling. Besides, taking a large amount of cash out of the economy could plunge the country into chaos. The real mission, says a Western diplomat, is keeping the government happy to assist the NATO war effort in Afghanistan. Every American soldier deploying to Afghanistan flies over Tajikistan, he says. "Are we going to jeopardise that? No way." "Drugs in Tajikistan - Addicted: Heroin stabilises a poor country" April 21, 2012

2. Outsiders enter and decide that this informal institution is not a proper and official arm of the state and therefore must be "developed." And, by developing this institution it will not only aid the local population it will also increase the stability of the state.

3. The locals accept the formal institution and are grateful for the funding for various things like uniforms, buildings, equipment, and titles/jobs. But, they find it hard to incorporate these new institutions into a network of their own institutions they have developed over centuries and, moreover, they are being implemented and enforced by outsiders. While taking the money from the outsiders is fine, submitting to their institutions is not.

4. As the operation of the formal institution flows along on the surface, beneath the waters are complex networks of informal institutional modes of operation. Since the informal networks have to both work harder to navigate the mine-field the outsiders have set along the river's edges, they also have to hide from the funders/outsiders in order to continue the ways in which they have been cooperating, engaging, and operating for centuries. This not only internally enmeshes these groups within these informal institutions (institutionalizing them) it also unifies them against the formal perceived incoherence of the outsiders' formal institutions (which to them are really the informal in that they make little sense within the context of their work and region.

5. Conversely, the formal institutions allow for the informal networks to control various aspects of what crosses the border with a veil of legitimacy in the form of a set of official by-laws. Again, this veneer of legitimacy allows those operating within the formal umbrella to enforce higher rents (or bribes) for access. Should people refuse the 'rents,' they now have a set of by-laws from the customs manual to "consult" and find a reason to deny access. Moreover, the cost of getting caught (as an official) has gotten higher because the "outsiders" or "foreigners" might pull their funding or take other punitive action if the officials are caught not following the rules, or the formal institutions. The Ccstoms manual and formal procedures provide an umbrella to hide under should someone complain about being forced to bribe or being denied access.

All of these examples of unwritten agreements across informal networks of cooperation take different forms at different times, but what was clear during my fieldwork, was that if one does not know the "secret handshake" or what is commonly held as acceptable behavior within a group, one is not going to be included in that groups activities or knowledge-generation. This includes all types of cooperative networks from

illicit trade to access to the border crossings. One way to think about the unwritten agreements is through the idea of "cultural scripts" (Swidler, 1986; Wierzbicka, 1969; 1985; see also Goddard and Wierzbicka, 2004).[240] Although "cultural scripts" refer to the constraints daily language puts on people's communication; similarly, unwritten agreements mediate the silences as a set of unspoken rules through which one is expected to navigate. When the silent web of rules is breached, the sound (within the silence) reverberates and walls emerge as suddenly as they might disappear once the rules are adhered to once again.

As I became more familiar with the people and they became more familiar with me, I was permitted to be included in various otherwise private activities and the bazaar was no exception. Essentially, over time I became more and more of an "insider" and my experience and understanding of the bazaar shifted. The following vignettes at the cross-border bazaar which highlight the interplay between the formal and the informal, the insider/outsider, and the unwritten agreements in different contexts.

Bazaar at Tem (in Khorog/Shughnan)

The first time I entered the cross-border bazaar at Tem I saw that it was not the sprawling sort of bazaar I had experienced in many other parts of the world. It was a

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[240] "… *cultural scripts, cultural repertoires*, and *cultural schemas* can be used interchangeably, since the literature does not provide very clear differentiations between them. Borrowing from Pawan Dhingra (2004), I use the terms to refer to "…people's mental image of a setting's expected mode of behavior" (:7)[2] - ways of thinking about what one can/cannot do or say. Cultural scripts or repertoires limit or enhance the available range of strategies of action a person can draw from and are deployed selectively according to the situation. We see two important applications of cultural scripts in our work in organizations: 1) cultural scripts reflect the confluence or simultaneity of multiple identities in complex ways, and 2) cultural scripts can empower individuals by enabling them to access cultural scripts learned from different settings to negotiate and deploy "hybrid" or complex identities in particular situations" (Holvino, 2011). http://www.chaosmanagement.com/blog/73-cultural-scripts-cultural-repertoires-and-globalization

small patch of land with a dusty dirt floor and a rickety structure covering some of the merchants. The rest of the merchants had plastic ground cloths or bits of plastic on which they spread their various and sundry wares: cheap plastic shoes, bracelets, chachkis and clothes from China and Pakistan. They even had slippers, or a Chinese copycat version, of the Bulgarian house shoes (slippers) traditionally worn by local women, only they were also made in China.

Many of the local bazaaris thought they were selling stuff from Faizabad or Kabul but, in reality, that is just where they picked the stuff up. Most of it was actually from much farther away. Other merchants were selling local crafts (not many), clothing, and semi-precious stones. Foodstuff ranged from milk, rice, flour, a few spices, and a few other things. Soap, cell phones, and dishware was also available, all from China and Pakistan. Some of the women sold,[241] which is a local stone (and in Islam has religious significance and is believed to have healing properties throughout South Asia and the Middle East). It is used for eye make-up by both men and women (although in the borderlands only Afghan men, not Tajik men use it). The word surma literally means to spread.

Women in the Bazaar: Roles and Rules

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[241] Review: Kohl (Surma): "Retrospect and prospect " Pak. J. Pharm. Sci., Vol.22, No.1, January 2009, pp.107-122:   "Kohl (surma) may be defined as an eye preparation in ultra fine form of specially processed "Kohl Stone" (galena) incorporated with some other therapeutically active ingredients from marine, mineral and herbal origin for the protection and treatment of various eye ailments. The other ingredients blended to develop special Kohl formulation may include Kohl adjuvant, (e.g., zinc oxide, silver leaves, gold leaves), gemstone (e.g., ruby and emerald etc.), marine coelenterates (e.g., coral, coral reef and pearls etc.) and herbs (e.g., neem, saffron, mumeera and fennel extract etc.)" (Mahmood, Zoha, Usmanghani, Mohtasheemul, Ali, Jahan, Saeed, Zaihd, Zubair, 2009: 109).
http://www.hashmisurma.com/images/kohl%20article%20by%20KU.pdf

Contending versions of the roles of Afghan women and the rules governing them in the bazaar were hotly debated among the men and women (in separate groups) as well as the internationals working in the area. Many of the men believed there were clear laws governing women in the bazaar, but each group seemed to have their own "clear" version of these laws. I had one heated discussion with an Afghan man named Farid in Shughnan (actually, I had many, but I am writing about one in particular here).

I asked Farid why women were not allowed in the cross-border bazaar. He said that I had an ill-conceived U.S.-centric view of the Afghans. I told him that I had been spending time with different groups of women in Ishkashem and Shughnan and they all had told me that they were not allowed to go to the bazaar. Two women even confided to me that they had snuck out and gone to the bazaar against the will of their husbands. They said they were just so curious to see what it was like. Farid said that I must have misunderstood them, because this just was not true.

I asked many other women, all of them categorically said they were not allowed to go to the bazaar. Finally, I asked them who it was that forbade them. The Afghan men all said the same thing: the male head of the household would not allow them. They were scared they would be kidnapped by the Tajik men or something would happen to them and they would be "ruined" and vis versa.

According to locals in Shughnan, when I was there, Kabul had appointed a leader who was Sunni. This leader had implemented a new law banning women from going to the bazaar. It was unclear whether this was true or not. There were so many versions of what was allowed for women and what was not. What appeared to be a common practice was that regardless of the laws, the men in the family, namely the father or husband made

the family rules, and for the most part, that meant not being allowed to go to the bazaar. This discrepancy between law and practice, seemed also to follow the leaders in that some leaders believed that women should be allowed and others were against it. This became clear after speaking to many people about this issue and likely was a contributing factor to the confusion about the issue among the locals and internationals.

Relevance

In Afghan Shughnan, Ishkashem, and the Wakhan Corridor, family customs, local practices, norms within village cluster, trumped any official laws of the state. In fact, each village cluster even had different rules pertaining to leaders. The village or village cluster often set the rules based on both the local practices of that village cluster as well as the local leaders' acceptance and ability to govern in the area. Moreover, different networks had different systems in which they accepted leadership. For example, in the villages in which I conducted my fieldwork, much of the legitimate authority split between the local religious leaders and the Shurra Council leaders.

By contrast, in the Panjsher, the networks mediated through the local militias and associated leaders and had a less communal form of local governance.[242] It was difficult to ascertain if the central government had any real influence or control over the districts I studied The unwritten agreements were diffuse and non-uniform across territories and at the same time deeply embedded and enmeshed within small groups of people such as clans and village clusters. What was very clear was that the locals complained bitterly, when they felt safe to, about the appointment by the administration in Kabul of outsiders

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[242] This interpretation of the different styles of governance came from a international civil servant who has spent decades in the region.

to official positions in their districts. They felt the government was stealing local authority, disregarding local customs, and forcing informal taxation from outside, all of which was the opposite of what they wanted their government to do for them.

Surma and the Afghan Female Bazaaris

At the entrance to the bazaar to my right was a group of older Afghan women, mostly older, since it is more acceptable for them to be at the bazaar as opposed to younger women who are either unmarried or taking care of their children. These women, four in all, kneeled on the ground, displayed an array of local handicrafts, the aforementioned, silver-colored rocks (surma), and semi-precious stones carved into beads (only sometimes). They asked me in Dari if I would like to buy some of their merchandise. I had seen the dark lines under the eyes of many of the local women on both sides of the border and even some of them men. They explained to me that the make-up from the sumac was good for the eyes. A friend of mine, the previous week, had said the same. She had said she wanted to buy a stone and stone pen applicator for me. I ended up buying five of the rocks and associated stone pens from these women thinking I would give them to my friend and my daughters. The friend who I went to the bazaar with, who I will refer to as Nilofar, smiled and helped negotiate the purchase of these items. [243]

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[243] We chatted it up a bit with the woman. One of them had five sons, which in Shughnan means that she was likely extremely poor due to the traditional property laws on the other side of the border in Badakhshan. Property is divided up among sons at the time of their marriage. This means that over time, families who have had a lot of sons have gotten more and more land poor unless they have other forms of income, such as money from drug and other forms of trafficking.I also bought three bead bracelets and two necklaces for my daughters. The bead work had geometric patterns common to local craftwork and was a deep red, indigo, gold, and yellow, green, and red together. The beads were tiny and the string was white cotton holding them together in a delicate web, parts almost like lace.

After Nilofar and I left the bazaar, we went to the house of our friend, Malika. It was then, much to my surprise that the truth about the surma came out. The surma I had bought from the bazaar was not surma at all. It was simply rocks collected from wherever and dipped in battery acid, which makes the stones look silvery. My friends said that they felt that the Afghans did it on purpose, to blind the Tajik women. And that they could not be trusted since they did not care about the well-being of the Pamiris on the Tajik side of the border. Malika and Nilofar told me that the surma was considered to be a stone with almost magical healing properties and they felt the Afghan women were polluting it and blinding their Tajik sisters with the very stone that was supposed to heal the eyes. This is when they brought up the kidnapping of Tajik women which is why Malika's husband had forbidden her from going to the bazaar. Afghan men, according to my friends, liked the women from the Tajik side because they are so beautiful so, as the story went, a few had been taken as brides.[244]

Later I heard that the Surma was not as abundant as in the past and it was now in difficult to reach locations so the local Afghan women had discovered the battery acid since some of them did not have access to the actual mineral-laden rocks. It did not appear that they understood the depth of the toxicity of the battery-acid. Due to the shortage of the stone, it was an economic choice, at least according to the women and men in Afghanistan I spoke to about this practice. But, the characterization of the Afghans by the Tajiks, as uncivilized or backwards, certainly became more deeply entrenched on the Tajik side of the border through the practice of lacing eye make-up with battery acid and kidnapping of the women.

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[244] This practice might be considered a very old custom – not that common in this region – called bride-knapping. Although, ironically Malika had been bride-knapped by her husband. But, according to Malika, he was saving her from a horrible man she was slated to marry through an arranged marriage by her family.

Relevance

Both the rule disallowing Afghan women from the cross-border bazaars and the rumors for the reasons the Afghan women had coated the stones with battery acid, show a distrust of their counterparts across the border. While I often heard locals from both sides of the border talk about how the area belonged as one and they were all Ismailis and mountain people, the assertion that the other side was not safe or to be trusted also existed. There were clear contradictions, which I am unable to make clear here. In one context, the border very much existed, was not in contestation, and delineated and protected one side from the unknown of the other side. At other times, the locals on either side of the border felt a kinship and a desire to be unified. Both feelings co-existed.

This may seem dissonant, but in the borderlands it makes perfect sense. In one context, the networks cooperate with each other to do business, provide humanitarian aid, and have the same ethnic, linguistic, territorial, and religious identities. Conversely, they do not believe that they are always safe with those on the other side as is evidenced by the human trafficking. They were both united and divided by identities, nationality, and most importantly, networks of cooperation (which were both negative and positive). The positive unification increased when outside pressure or penetration, such as state monopolization of power at the border, and divergence occurred more when the informal networks of cooperation were perceived as harming the locals.

The Border Guard and the Milk Trader

At the bazaar this particular day, my friend was showing me around and introducing me to the local women when I noticed a Tajik border guard taking two cases of cream from a local bazaari. This cream is the more expensive and difficult type in Badakhshan. Moreover, it was the good kind…the kind from Iran, which was even harder to get.

A few weeks later in the Bazaar at Tem in Khorog, I was asked to accompany the Third-Secretary from the Afghan Consulate in Khorog and his wife and children to the bazaar and to have lunch afterwards. They had asked me to come and live with them so that I could teach the family English. I was in the process of deciding whether to move my stuff to their apartment or not. The gentleman from the Afghan consulate introduced me to the official "Manager" of the bazaar and to a number of border guards from both sides of the border. It was during one of these introductions that I noticed something I had seen before only this time it was much clearer because a small disagreement resulted from the interaction. It involved the Iranian cream once again.

The Tajik border guard had a case of Iranian milk/cream under his arm. The Tajik bazaar was angry. The cream had real value both because milk products were scarce in general and more so in the winter when it was difficult to import to the area. Also, the other cream made by Nestle mixed dairy with hydrogenated vegetable oil making it taste synthetic instead of like the pure Iranian type. It was clear the Bazaari was upset by having to give up a whole case of his product and it was also clear by his language that he had not been paid for his product.

I later asked a friend/local if this was a form of bribery and she said that it was and added that while the official fees were rather small amount, often the border guards

and other government workers took various products and items as informal forms of payment. The informal system of payment in this case is emblematic of an informal system, for the most part, agreed upon by both the informal and formal authorities. In this case, the activity was overt, done in the light of day, for all to see. It was business as usual.

Relevance

The types of activities, such as the informal 'rents' and the coordination and negotiation of illicit trade, were common place at the bazaar. During my weekly visits to the cross-border bazaar, I witnessed many unlikely pairs and groups in negotiations. These interactions highlight the interplay between informal networks, formal institutions, and different forms of local leaders. It also highlights the interplay between the legal and illegal trade. The bulk of the business in the bazaar being the illicit trade - meaning the majority of the money was made in the weekly negotiations about the logistics of the following weeks trafficking.

Bazaar in Ishkashim and the Local Informal Leader

I witnessed a similar case of rent-seeking at the bazaar at Ishkashem between the informal Tajik leader and the traders. When I first arrived this leader kept his rent-seeking covert but as he got to know me and I became more of an "insider" he grew comfortable engaging in his informal rent-seeking overtly. I had met the gentleman before when I had crossed the border when it was closed. He had made the crossing while it was closed, possible.

As I got to know the local border guards and commanders on the Tajik and Afghan sides, I increasingly was allowed to cross at will (with the help of the informal leaders. This informal leader had been Governor of the area and a key Soviet Apparatchik during Soviet times. He still was a leader but did not have a formal position. Most of the time he wore a white suit and a bowler hat with patent leather shoes, which was clearly a demonstration of his position among the group. He often had a group of younger men who were part of the Tajik border command in Ishkashem around him. Many of them wore sunglasses and clearly had power over the place in that what crossed or did not cross was mediated through these men.

At first, I just witnessed this leader leaving the bazaar with bags of goods which seemed unlikely to have been bought in bulk such as soap, milk, fruit, and other necessary and sometimes difficult to get items in his location. I wondered if he received payment or other forms of remuneration for his cooperation or assistance to the traders through commodities. I would not have thought he was doing this except for the fact that he often had two or three bags of items one would never buy twenty or thirty of such as nice soap, crème, and similar items. He always left the bazaar with something like this.

My confirmation as to the true nature of his role in the cross-border bazaar came a bit later. When I crossed the border with the UN, I witnessed him, as I briefly discussed earlier, and his group of men negotiating a cigarette smuggling deal (which they thought I could not understand because they were speaking in a thick dialect next to me). A driver with a truck full of cigarette cartons was trying to cross the border. The border guards stopped to truck and began negotiating with the Afghan driver. They dumped a pile of around a hundred cigarette cartons on the ground to the back of the truck (and cigarettes

are worth quite a bit of money). Then, the group of men and the informal leader began haggling about whether it was enough or not. Finally, they decided that it was enough. Interestingly enough, the Tajik informal leader decided when the negotiation ended. This informal leader, who was dressed in a white suit, a bowler hat, and patent leather shoes said to the commander and his deputy – "*bechara*" and nodded. *Bechara* means poor or pathetic. He told the other men that they had taken enough because it was clear the Afghan trader was impoverished and struggling. This was the way the negotiation by the cigarette smuggler was concluded. The pile they had left at the border was enough and the informal leader let him go because he recognized the truck driver's desperation.

During this transaction, it was clear that the border commanders, the cigarette smugglers, and the informal leader, were not concerned about the fact that they were negotiating an illegal transaction which included smuggling and trafficking in goods. It became clear that as the border guards and informal leaders accepted me more and more, they began to engage in activity which was the "usual" way in which things were done, the norm. In other words, their informal exchanges which included bribing and other forms of back-room deals as means to accessing the border crossing, the bazaar stalls, and the trafficking of illegal goods, all came with a measure of an informal "rent" or payment.

Relevance

This form of taxation occurred in several ways: first, a sanctioned official leader, whether an insider or an outsider, one could levy rents for access; second, often the informal leaders on the Tajik had as much if not more authority to charge rents than the

formal authorities while on the Afghan side, the clan leaders/drug lord/official arbiter of the border were often wrapped into one. In Ishkashim, Tajikistan, the informal leader had the most power at that border crossing while at the crossing at Shughnan, Tajikistan, shared power between three local leaders and the border command depending on the commodity or service desired or requested; third, and most important, the issue of insider/outsider, which I began the section on cross-border bazaars with, infused every interaction.

Whether a trader from Bar-Khorog who was dealing with a drug lord from UPD or a border commander from Dushanbe and not the Pamirs who interacted with the Bazaar keepers or the informal leaders.   The clan/neighborhood/network one belonged to mattered. If a border guard belonged to the same neighborhood on the Tajik side as a drug lord or a bazaar keeper did, that relationship mattered more than any other one including the official position of the person, whether trader or commander.

Conclusion

In the end, the bazaar appeared to work like every other institution at the border, meaning the modus operandi was to leverage legitimate authority, whether formally or informally sanctioned, against a form of informal taxation for access to markets or the border crossing or medical care, etc.. These informal rents and agreements usually trumped the formal mechanisms in place for doing business and crossing the border. Indeed, while in the beginning of my time in the area, most of the transactions I was involved with at the border were formal as most people came to know that I was studying

cross-border activity. As I became more accepted, they engaged in their informal

exchanges and modes of interaction around me more overtly.

As noted earlier, Carter and Poast (2012) ascertain that border stability is not only

about whether a border is disputed or not. It also includes if the locals accept the border

as a legitimate marker of their nation and state. When they don't, then the state increases

security of the border, which in turn, the locals react to. This creates a situation similar to

the concept of the "security dilemma."

Peter Andreas (2012) points out something similar specifically about the border

between Mexico and California. I take the idea of border stability one step further. I

assert that even if the locals accept the border as legitimate AND there are no current

disputes at the border, if the locals at the border, do accept the state as legitimate or the

outside security forces of the state in the local areas along the border, this will also cause

border instability and likely state instability. While this is at the far end of the potential

problems caused by deterioration of the infrastructure, it is not out of the realm of

possibility.

James said repeatedly that development is slow and, "if one border guard or two

decides that the rule of law is something he wants to support," and then, over time, that

same border guard moves up into a position of power, perhaps, in some small measure,

things change. Paul and Rod, two trainers working for OSCE, both said the same, only

each at different times. They all said we need to think not in five year or even twenty

year terms, but in a hundred or hundred and fifty year terms. "Just as England took a

hundred and fifty years to settle down, why should we expect differently of others?"

But, as he said, we never do see the long-term. We expect things to rapidly change and

not only set ourselves up for failure but those we are trying to help sometimes end up worse than when we started. James' insights into the actual development process versus the goals and/or implementation of the development projects highlighted what I also observed at the border. Projects were conceived with a particular context in mind but that context was not the one that existed at the border. The disconnect between the temporal goals within each project and the actual temporality in which both formal and, more importantly informal institutions and local organizations change or transform, were eons apart.

The process of rapid formal institutionalization did two things: (1) It increased cooperation between informal networks and illicit trade groups both locally and regionally. Networks which span the territorial and clan divisions and even borders of states throughout the region. (2) It decreased the ability of the locals to gain access to basic necessities such as medical care, food, and other commodities. This created the perverse effect of institutionalizing the informal, decreasing formal institutionalization, and then, paradoxically, decreasing border stability.

Rapid formalization increased the cooperation between aforementioned informal networks. The informal institutionalization occurring in and around the formal institutions tends to entrench and legitimize informal networks by having something to counter or oppose. Through this opposition, the identity and "norms" of the networks become more defined and institutionalized.

At the border this is exactly what is going on, although it is not becoming a "formal" institution, the process is causing deeper entrenchment of informal institutions. It could be argued that this is indeed turning the informal into formal through:

"authorization" which came through officials at the border (not from the state); unwritten agreements became more clearly defined; the networks of cooperation were not only legitimate at the border, the main trafficking networks were also legitimate at the state level; and finally, as the formal institutionalization process increased, the locals at the border mobilized within their networks.[245] The former increased the latter. But, the informal remained just that, informal. Namely, all of the funding from the IGOs and international community would dry up if the informal institutions became official/formal because the endemic illicit trade and narco-trafficking. Therefore, as institutionalized as the informal becomes, it will never be an official part of the state apparatus.

The formal institutions installed by various "outsiders," domestically or international, implants a pannier of legitimacy and formal state intervention and control at the border crossings and cross-border bazaars. At the same time this pannier of formal institutional infrastructure provides a system through which the informal channels hide, divert, and coordinate, making the informal networks of cooperation have to work harder to attain access to each other. Because it is more work, they also become stronger in their opposition, paradoxically systematizing these informal networks

By examining how the informal institutions interact with the formal institutions, including the border guards, the bazaar itself, and the formal leaders, a picture of the underlying mechanisms of influence and control as mediated by informal networks of cooperation was highlighted. This was done with the goal of providing a deeper understanding of how the formalization of the institutions at the border has deepened and

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[245] Kubik defines institutionalization through four criteria: "authorization," "procedures," "legitimacy," and "disruptiveness/mobilization" (Year?: 135).

strengthened the informal institutions, thereby institutionalizing the informal networks which live and function within and without the formal rules and institutions.

The next chapter concludes my dissertation. I provide an overview of what I have discussed. Then provide my major findings and how they support my hypotheses. Finally, I provide a few recommendations for improving border stability in the borderlands of Badakhshan.

Chapter Nine

Conclusion

Overview

My fieldwork, research, and analysis were driven by several main questions. As explained in my introduction I set out to answer these questions by first providing an historical background and discussion of the foundational myths of the borderlands of Badakhshan through local narratives. Then I supported my hypotheses with three ethnographic chapters based on my own fieldwork. In my descriptions and explanations I used an interpretive analysis, usually in the form of extended case analyses (Aronoff, Kubik, 2013, 49-57). In the following sections I briefly describe the importance of each chapter for answering my questions and supporting my hypotheses. I then present my findings, and in conclusion make a few recommendations and suggest some areas for further research. The following is a brief chapter outline to show how each chapter supported my hypotheses and answered my main question.

Chapter one provides a broad overview of the relevance of borders to the study of comparative politics and international relations. The periphery of nation-states are the places of transition often rife with illicit activity but also often areas in the process of constant institutional and infrastructural development. The paradox is that often the increased institutionalization at the periphery actually has perverse effects by decreasing rather than increasing border and state stability. This is the basic assertion my dissertation explores.

To study this paradox, I found a border in the process of intense development that was accessible to me for my fieldwork. In my particular area little to no research had

been conducted on the impact of developing border institutions on local and state stability. Therefore, in order to answer my main question I had to go and observe (and participate) in border development projects and the local community. In doing so, I discovered that the border development projects contributed to increased coordination of informal networks of cooperation, which in turn aided powerful illicit traders while legal traders and local humanitarian efforts were encountering more obstacles. At the heart of my research was an effort to understand how these networks cooperated, what role local leaders and organizations played in these networks, and how local identities (as opposed to the national identity) reacted to pressure from outsiders.

Chapter two provided the main questions, concepts, and hypotheses which embody the heart of my dissertation research. I have one main question, three sub-questions, three concepts, and two hypotheses. Below is a short recap.

The main puzzle my dissertation aimed to solve was:

What is the importance of local leaders and local identity groups to the stability of a state's border and ultimately, the stability of the state?

As a means to answering my main question, my analytical framework consists of three main concepts: (1) borders (2) institutions/organizations (formal/informal) and (3) identity (national, ethnic, religious, and territorial). These concepts are used to formulate my main hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1:
> **An increase in formal institutionalization at the border will increase illicit cross-border cooperation (abbreviated).[246]**

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[246] Hypothesis 1a: If the state increases authority through formalization of institutional infrastructure at the border, then local leaders will be marginalized and the local population will be alienated from the state and this will decrease overall stability in the long run. Moreover, national identity will weaken while (some) local identities will strengthen.

Hypothesis 2:

>**Marginalization of local leaders and organizations at the border decreases border and state stability and increases illicit cross-border cooperation (abbreviated).** [247]

The rest of my dissertation worked to answer my main question and serves to support my hypotheses.

Chapter Three explains why I used the particular methodology, methods, and theoretical foundation for my "fieldwork, deskwork, and text work." Theoretically, I am a constructivist and believe the world is fundamentally built upon social interactions (action/reaction/action and so on) via which we transact meanings (but also resources and power) and thus assume that we need to study the ways in which these interactions shape our understanding of the world. Structure and agency, two sides of this interactive process, are in a constant conversation, one constraining and/or changing the other – a never-ending and evolutionary process of forever becoming and never arriving.

Because of this underlying ontological assumption, my fieldwork employed ethnographic participant-observation as well as unstructured interviews and focus group discussions as a means to study people's interactions. This helped me to not only observe, but participate in the daily lives and practices of the area I studied, namely, the borderlands of Badakhshan.

My deskwork and text work used an interpretive methodology based on extended case-analyses. With the large amount of data I gathered from my fieldwork, the fact that I

Hypothesis 1b: If the state works to monopolize power at the border, the stability in the border region (Badakhshan) decreases as local groups assert alternative forms of identity and local control as a means of rejecting the imposition by the state and as a form of silent protest.

[247] Hypothesis 2: If local leaders and organizations are given semi-autonomy in coordination with state border forces, then the borderlands in Badakhshan will be more stable and national identity will be more broadly accepted.

lived with people for a significant amount of time, coupled with my assumption that

structure and agency are bound intricately together, using an interpretive methodology

(which I define in detail in chapter three) to analyze my data helped me to stay true (to

the best of my ability) to my research participants and empirical material.

Answering the questions, supporting the hypotheses

The analyses in each of my subsequent chapters support the main assertion of my

hypotheses – an increase in border development will decrease border and state security if

local leaders and organizations are not included. The following discusses how the data

analyzed in each chapter was used to test my hypotheses and answer my main questions.

Chapter Four outlines the historical narratives of border development in

Badakhshan primarily over the past few centuries but also, gives a brief outline of the

area in the pre-Islamic/Zoroastrian period. I highlight the different histories pertaining

not only to border development but also the pivotal role of local leaders and the relative

autonomy of the region. I traced the changing definitions of the borders by the Russian

Empire (1721-1917), the British Empire (c. 1500-mid-1900s) , and the Soviet Union

(1922-1991).

The primary point of the chapter is that the local leaders negotiated terms of

territorial delineation in the form of khans, mirs, and pirs for centuries prior to the

formalization of the border. As the border formalized (through the terms imposed by

outsiders) the locals did two things. They maintained their autonomy through negotiated

agreements with the outside governments while allowing the areas to be subsumed into

formal empires or later independent nation-states. Second, they resisted attempts by outsiders to formalize their local organizations and thereby resisted control by outsiders.

For the most part, the area has kept informal networks of power, built around religious, territorial, and familial leaders. They have trumped state authorities in a number of ways. For example, most territorial, familial, and resource disputes are mediated by local informal leaders. The religious authorities mediate larger conflicts and disputes related to religious traditions and customs (although these days they are allegedly in cooperation with the security wing of the Tajik government).

The state security forces (those not from Badakhshan) are viewed as, being part, corrupt and causing insecurity instead of security. Local street leaders and security groups provide security and protection to neighborhoods while leaders of larger sub-sections of the district provide security for their areas. Also they work together with the other main leaders (four of them at the time of the fieldwork) to provide protection and mediate larger problems within the community, including finding assistance for people who are hungry, needing medical attention, and who are addicted to drugs. It is unclear how evenly distributed or accessible the help of the local leaders and organizations actually is. What is clear, is that they are the main authorities people turn to when they are in need of help.

In the historical chapter, I highlight how narratives of development locally and from outside, underpin the locals resistance to being co-opted by outside forces, whether domestic or international. Moreover, how they increase informal networks of cooperation (including local organizations, illicit trade, reliance on local leaders) as outsider pressures increase. This directly supports my hypotheses (and is a precursor for

the current context) in that it shows how presence by outsiders increases assertion of local identity networks (territorial, ethnic, and religious) and thereby decreases assertion of national identity in the area. This in turn has led to increased conflict along the border in the past and currently, which has decreased border and state stability.

The chapter on the historical narratives of border development helps support my hypotheses by showing that: (1) informal networks of cooperation have persisted over time and continue to be an important factor in local authority and governance; (2) formalization of the border has increased cooperation between informal networks, forced locals to seek their "true" historical origins (in order to prove outsider versions wrong and take ownership of their own past), and thus has increased assertion of local identity by various groups and their leaders. (3) This, in turn, has decreased assertion of national identity and contributed to overall border and state instability. As George Orwell said in his novel, *1984*: *"Those who control the present control the past and those who control the past control* the *future."*

Chapter Five examines disputes about the foundational myths of settlement, culture, language, ethnicity, and naming. Moreover, I show how narratives of origin among locals, domestics, and internationals compete for legitimacy and in doing so frame the area in very different ways. Specifically, I examine how insiders and outsiders use the assertions of ethnic identity and who uses what myths to assert legitimacy locally, domestically, and internationally.

I conclude that the competing foundational myths and naming underlie the tensions between locals and outsiders. Outsiders try to control the history, names, and foundational myths of the area and the locals continue to point out how they are wrong.

Moreover, the encroachment by outsiders, as the locals point out, is even in the remaking and trying to control their foundational myths and history.

The chapter supports my main hypotheses through highlighting that even before the border was formalized, locals strongly resisted outside presence through asserting their own names for the region and holding on to what they believe are the actual foundation myths. The debates about the myths and names going on today only serve as reminders of earlier disputes of who belongs and who does not, and who is a true insider and who is not. The more outsiders try to create the history and identity for a group of people, the harder the insiders work to find out the actual history of their territory and people. This, in turn, makes them assert their separate identities more (territorial, ethnic, and religious) and decrease assertion of the more recently formed national identity.

Chapter Six provides a detailed study of the social organization of Khorog, Tajikistan. It is an extended case study of the kidnapping of a girl named Gulya. The social organization of Khorog (and associated areas) encompasses territorial, religious, ethnic, and familial (kinship) borders. The chapter highlights how these different boundaries shift under pressure from or presence of non-locals. It also describes the networks of cooperation, the rivalries between areas, and the importance of local leaders and organizations for local economic, physical, and social security.

In the chapter I describe how during my fieldwork I observed patterns of local resistance to outside presence and interference. Whether that presence was in the form of the state security services or the institutional formalization of the border, the local leaders and organizations were the primary sources of security and assistance the locals sought out in during crises.

The case study of Gulya's kidnapping is at the center of my analysis but it also led me to other cases, the release of the kidnappers without a proper trial, including the arrest and torture of a local street leader, and the informal trafficking and trade networks of cooperation across the border. These cases also highlight how the assertion of local identities increased as outside/state presence increased, whether in the form of the intensified military presence, border police interventions, or within the locally-based religious institutions.

While the chapter does not directly relate to the institutions that are being developed at the border, it helps to frame my analysis of how outside presence in the area mobilizes and further legitimizes local forms of political and social organization, and – as a result – increases the legitimate authority of the local leaders. My hypotheses suggest that increasing institutional formalization decreases local and state stability and that marginalizing local organizations and leader's further decreases stability. Therefore, understanding the social organization of a key city directly on the border with Afghanistan is vital to my argument. This detailed description of the complexities and intricacies of local leadership and organizations provides a rich context for the next two chapters which are directly about the development of the border institutions.

As locals seek help for their problems, such as the kidnapping of a local girl, through local leaders and organizations instead of the state security forces, they are not only resisting state institutions but also concentrating power in local non-state-sanctioned organizations and associated leaders. The state security apparatus reacts to this increase in local governance by putting more pressure and increasing presence in the area. The locals begin to assert the "local" identity of their groups more and, as a consequence,

weaken the hold national identity has among the region's populace. This action/reaction
between local leaders and organizations and the state security forces, creates instability
(through increased tension) along the border as well as in the state. Being that Khorog is
right on the border of Afghanistan, this decreased stability not only impacts the Tajik
side, it also impacts the border area and ultimately spills over to Afghan side of the
border (as happened last July, 2012).

Chapter Seven delves into the actual institutions operating along the border,
including the border stations, border and customs personnel, and the physical
infrastructure. In this chapter I describe how the faulty infrastructure has aided in
delegitimizing the border stations and personnel. I also highlight how tensions between
locals and outsiders developed during training of customs agents.

These tensions influence religious, territorial, ethnic, and cultural identities. In
reaction to the training of local border and customs agents by outsiders, the locals
increase assertion of their local ethnic, religious, and territorial identity. Specifically, as I
stated in chapter seven, when outside trainers came to Khorog to conduct workshops in
training the local customs agents on how to catch traffickers at the border, the training
included a lesson in Sunni religious ethics. The problem was, the locals were all Ismaili
Shi'a and they found this offensive.

Finally, I highlight how the actual crossing of the border, while quite formalized,
actually operated with a complex set of unwritten agreements aided by informal networks
of power. These informal networks transcend the border as well as the region and
ultimately undermine state authority. Conversely, if they are threatened or attacked, they
increase their cooperation which further erodes the legitimacy of the state institutions at

the border. But, if the state brings the local leaders into the institutionalization process as has been done in the recent past, the local leaders and organizations cooperate and the area remains relatively stable.

Chapter Eight describes aspects of another newly-forming institution at the border – the cross-border bazaars. Like chapter seven, it shows how the bazaars are a place for local informal networks of cooperation to coordinate their activity. It also highlights how unwritten agreements trump official rules and regulations. Additionally, how locals react to outsiders and how complicated the definition of an "outsider" really is in the context of Badakhshan.

This chapter supports my hypotheses in three ways. First, it shows how the development of the border infrastructure, whose goal was to help to institutionalize the border, actually decreased overall institutionalization and helped to energize informal networks of cooperation. There were many problems, including the use of cheap materials and faulty engineering. Second, the training caused increased tensions between state officials/trainers and local border personnel which in turn, led to the firing of three local border command officials, intensified assertion of local identity, and decreased assertion of nationalism. Third, the border stations, which remain places for local leaders and informal networks of cooperation to wield power, highlight how the training (which taught the border guards counter-trafficking techniques) and the infrastructural development aided in increasing their local informal authority.

Findings

First, the increase in border controls has made locals not only frustrated, since they feel the increased presence of the state in their "autonomous region," but also has made them increasingly willing to work with entities or individuals within criminal networks who are willing to pay them money which will feed their family. This is also true of the border personnel who are underpaid. Although the border guards have to operate within the official institutions at the border, their participation in and need for the informal institutions is not diminished by this "formality."   In fact, it is likely increased. Both the guards and people in the community need to take informal rents to feed their families which does not bode well for decreasing illicit trade along that border.

 Second, since trafficking functions through local kinship groups and networks of cooperation, increasing security raises economic costs for doing business, which deepens already established illicit networks due to the increased challenges of doing business. Therefore, the reality at the border is that the traffickers (at the higher level) do not have a problem getting across the border either by bribing the border guards or through complex coordination of surveillance and logistics to which both the guards and others turn a blind eye. As the obstacles increased, so did the coordination in circumventing them.

Third, increased presence of outsiders, especially state security forces (meaning Tajiks who are not from Badakhshan) is viewed by locals as a threat to their security. This could be attributed in part to the limited development of roads (which isolated the region for many centuries) coupled with ancient trade routes that traverse the region along these roads (which enhanced their autonomy). Since the allegiance to local identity groups and networks deepens when locals are threatened either socially or economically and their assertions of belonging to a "nation" are less pronounced internalized the

effectiveness of the newly-implemented development (and security) projects decreases, thereby decreasing the overall security in the region.

Fourth, increasing border security increases the price differentials across the border, which increases the gains from successful smuggling. From some of the preliminary unpublished data I received from UNODC, this appears to be true. Last, I found that assertion of national identity decreased on both sides of the border, including weakened loyalty to the central authority, which decreased overall territorial integrity.

Finally, to sum up, my research illuminated the multi-layered and complex ways in which identity and statehood are implemented and asserted through the actions of local leaders and organizations that are often involved in border development projects along the borderlands of Badakhshan. I found that the informal institutions – territorial networks, religious identity, kinship networks, criminal networks, and other forms of informal connections, very much trumped the formal institutions there. On the other hand, what was also true was that the formal institutions, laws, and procedures, were very much enforced in a kind of theatrical way to show the need for increased control, funding, and necessity of the "state" institution. They both existed together but with the tacit understanding by those working at the border that the unwritten agreements are the law of the land.

Conclusion, Recommendations, and Future Research

As I assert in the beginning of my dissertation, borders are the beginning and the end of every state and the state would not exist without them and neither would the symbolic delineation of each nation. Even in the increasingly connected world, the

borders of the state, whether in our minds or as experienced by our bodies, remain primary to ordering our world. Illicit and licit trade cross these borders both physically and virtually. The informal networks of cooperation that connect different types of groups throughout the world, whether physically located, operating in virtual spaces, or constituted as "thought-groups" or "idea-spaces," span the "external" political boundaries but also maintain their local identity and thus reside within the "internal" cultural boundaries.

In the context of the borders of nation-states, pressure at the periphery from those at the center increases cooperation between the informal cross-border networks of cooperation operating at the periphery. The strengthening of these cross-border networks if for example reflected in the increased cooperation within transnational illicit organizations which, in turn, strengthens the local networks. Eventually, those living on the margins, after increasingly asserting local identity as separate from national identity (because outside pressure has caused them to do so) move to separate and create their own identity that may be increasingly framed as a new "national" identity, at least by some actors. I am not saying this will happen in Badakhshan, but it has happened in many places around the world. Currently, for example the Baloch are waging a battle, the Kurds are in process, and we can think of many other places on the periphery in the midst of conflicts.

Outside pressure (or pressure from the state) on the periphery, since it increases assertion of local identity, has the ability to fracture larger communities and states. These states, perhaps not fully formed (according to some international standards), have entered into "social contracts" with each other to accept the boundaries that demarcate the states

and help to symbolize nations. If the borders of nation-states become ever more fractured by separatist movements at the periphery and transnational illicit economies operating out of the bounds of the state, the borders that order our world will become increasingly convoluted and diffuse.

In the extreme, this ultimately could erode the written rule of law and the institutions that mediate them and allow for unwritten, informal agreements to concentrate power in potentially perverse and dangerous ways. If indeed it is a possibility, namely, that increased pressure by outsiders, and marginalization of local leaders and organizations, coupled with formal institutionalization of the border, causes decreased border and state stability and can lead to increased fracturing of the nation-state system, my hypotheses should be taken seriously.

Recommendations

My recommendations are three-fold. First, include local leaders and organizations, if possible, in the development of border institutions. While designing the infrastructure and personnel training, talk to the locals, the commanders, and the local leaders and take the context and terrain in which they live into consideration. This means understanding what the local identity and political-social networks are, what tensions exist with the ruling elites, and how that is to be managed at the border, particularly if the region in question has at least some degree of autonomy.

Second, international organizations that fund border development projects should require a preliminary scouting mission as a pre-condition of the funding. The findings of such preliminary field research would be part of the proposed work plan including how

the IGO or NGO plans to navigate the local context and terrain. The "universal" logic often applied in development projects needs to be contextualized and tailored to local conditions, particularly in challenging mountainous terrain or in at the periphery of the state that has different ethnic, religious, or territorial groups whose identities differ from the "national" identity projects routinely advanced by the centers of power.

Third, developing the border for reasons of security and stability must include developing certain aspects of the local community, access to medical care, and food and water security, and treatment for addiction. This will decrease the need for the local community to look outside of the state apparatus for money to feed their family, treat medical conditions, or buy drugs. If the local community is both marginalized from the process and lacking in basic needs, it will look elsewhere for social and economic support.

In the final analysis, developing institutions at the border is a tricky business and one that is mired in assumptions that are unfounded, such as the assumption that increasing border controls will under all circumstances increase border and state security. My dissertation shows that this is not necessarily the case and that it is even less the case when the local context is not included in the development process.

Further Research

There are several veins of research which deserve further exploration. One vein would be to study any border that has similar conditions to the borderlands of Badakhshan such as marginalized religious and ethnic groups and a history of being autonomous. The question would be if border development has caused the same types of

issues or if the border development projects are being approached differently and therefore, different issues have occurred.

Studying different border development projects which have taken into account the local context as well as including the local leaders and organizations in the process in order to see if these have indeed been more sustainable and stable over time, could be a second vein of study. As for my future research, I plan to continue studying the social organization of the areas in the borderlands of Badakhshan. I plan to conduct in-depth research (in order to add to my already completed fieldwork) about the role of the local leaders and local organizations to border stability in the borderlands of Badakhshan and I plan to continue studying the relationship between the state institutions, the local organizations, and the places in-between, which the locals accept as the state to which they belong but still mediate around.

Appendices

Appendix One

Shughnan Rebellion of 1925

On behalf of the residents of Afghan Shughnan to comrades staying in power at Dushanbe

Petition.

Because our oppression, offences, and violence by Afghans overstepped the limits we can bear, and at the moment, when our brothers in Tajik Soviet Republic may live quietly and forwardly, yet last year we had petitioned to comrades staying in command at Dushanbe, to accept all of us to Soviet citizenship so as to save us from oppression and violations by Afghans. Our petition to Khorog Soviet authorities didn't have any consequences. Orally we were assumed: just start the struggle against Afghans, and then we lend a helping hand. This year Afghan oppression had been strengthened. Many from our ranks were killed. In the force of this we, in all about 8 thousands men, women and kids, left our places and are seeking protection by Tajik Soviet republic... and again we receive the same reply: let start the struggle against Afghans, and then we support you. Being not satisfied with the given reply by Khorog comrades, we approach you, comrades, with the request to liberate us from Afghan chains, and to accept in USSR as equal citizens. We haven't anymore forces to endure the Afghan oppression. Precisely two months ago we came in to this side of Amy and stay at this mountain area, where only grass is growing. And there aren't any reply to our petition. Addressing the given written petition to you, comrades in command at Dushanbe, we are still awaiting, that you'll help us to be liberated from Afghan oppression and permit us to live in USSR as

your brothers and citizens. We also expect that you get back our lands, so as we'll work safely as equal citizens. ... By the moment the modest supplies we brought with us, already finished, the majority of us are aksakals and kids; - all of the men between the ages of 14 - 30 were forcefully conscripted to Afghan army. ... So, we are totally depending now from your good will, - to accept or reject our request and given petition. 1304 hijra, 19 ashura.

Signatures are followed.

Entrust/Verdict

We, undersigned, the residents of Afghan Shughnan, the area located between Qala-e-Bashar, from one side, and Chansoor - Rushan, from another side, being reduced to despair by Afghan oppression, decided to seek for Soviet protection. For fulfilling this mission we decided to put our written petition to our aksakal Mahram Bek and direct him as our warrant person, to Dushanbe to comrades in command at TASR for delivering it and holding all necessary negotiations. Everything, that the mentioned Mahram Bek will report and make on behalf of us, is right, and not arguable by us. 1304, 19 ashura.

Aksakal Insara - a stamp

Dowlet Bek ibn Alef Bek, etc.

The Russian Center for Preservation and Exploration of Documents of Recent History, Collection 62, list 2, file 243, pp. .53 - 55, 61. Both these texts, Petition and Entrust/Verdict, a translation from Persian into Russian, were attached to Soviet diplomatic correspondence.

(The above appendices is a re-translation from Russian into English by Vladimir Boyko courtesy of the Institute of Ismaili Studies in London, England).

Appendix Two: Border Stations and Border Crossings: Law (Qanun) versus Custom (Sonat)

I crossed the border between Khorog, Tajikistan and Shughnan, Afghanistan many times. For the purposes of the dissertation, I have chosen five times that characterize the way in which the informal practices were embedded in the formal procedures (or transactions).

- Second Crossing: Independent Researcher
- Third Crossing: UNDP BOMBAF
- Fourth Crossing: Independent Researcher
- Fifth Crossing: AKF-DDRP

In order to outline the depth of the networks/spheres of influence at play, below is a list of people involved in the crossing along with an analysis of their networks and connections, and how their networks intersected with our experience at the border.

- *Ambassador and his wife*
  This Ambassador is connected to a country which provides a large amount of funding to Badakhshan for a number of projects. Additionally, this Ambassador had been a high-level official in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and his own country's Defense Ministry. The Third-Secretary at the Afghan Consulate in Tajikistan knew this and therefore had us followed by a local woman who was close to the Third Secretary but was also my friend. I was told later by my friend, that the call from the Third Secretary at dinner, inviting me to a party, was precisely because the Third Secretary knew I was with the Ambassador already and he wanted to meet him.

- *First Secretary of the Afghan Consulate in Tajikistan*
  The First Secretary of the Afghan Consulate had a close relationship with both the informal Tajik leader and the Afghan border commander in that they were from

the same place in Afghanistan. This generally means that their clans were connected.

- *Third Secretary of the AF-Cons in TAJ*
  The Third Secretary was good friends with the border commander and the head of the Afghan Border Police. He also was close to the informal Tajik leader and his wife is Director of the Agha Khan Health Services program for Afghan Badakhshan. This meant, that on the Afghan side, she had an influential position since the Agha Khan Foundation and the Agha Khan Development Network provides most of the institutional infrastructure in Afghan, Badakhshan. Additionally, the leaders within AKF and AKDN are regarded as informal power-brokers in the region and are considered to be important figures of authority within the area.

- *Border Commander of Northern Border of Afghanistan* (Acting)
  Friends with Third Secretary of AF Consulate and from same area as former border commander and head of Border Police

- *Afghan Border Station Commander*
  Good friends with the Tajik gemstone trafficking network which is tied to Panjsher Valley and Former Commander Massoud's sphere of influence

- *Tajik Border Station Commander*
  Old friend of informal Tajik leader and former Soviet Apparatchik (leader)

- *Tajik Border Guard* (who made the phone call)
  Cooperates with informal Tajik leader and is close to his family.

- *Afghan Border Guard* (who registered and stamped our passports)
  From same area as Border Commander and part of his clan.

- *Informal Tajik Leader*
  Was Governor and leader of the area during Soviet times. Has retained authority in the area even though it is informally given and administered through his connection and position in AKF.

Appendix Three: Border Projects and Personnel [248]

Institutions and countries involved in border infrastructure projects the

borderlands of Badakhshan:

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[248] http://news.tj/en/news/we-will-help-tajik-border-guards-says-russian-border-service-head

UNDP, OSCE, IOM, EU, USAID, US DoS/DoD, Russia, Japan, Germany, AKF,

Mercy Corps, Other NGOs, and other countries

Security Forces Operating at the Tajik/Afghan Border

Afghan and Tajik Security Forces:

- The border commanders
  - In charge of 33 mobile units
- The border commissars
  - In charge of 135 companies at the border stations
- Border station commanders
  - In charge of one border station
- Customs agent commander
- Commander of provinces and districts
- Customs agents
- Tajik Drug Control Agency agents/officials/officers
- Afghan counter-narcotics task force members
- The border police
- The border guards
- Afghan intelligence
- Tajik GKNB (intelligence)

Internationals:

- United Nations advisors and funding
- OSCE border command advisers and funding
- Surveillance
- Interpol
- US (DoS/DEA/CIA/DIA/NSA/others) advisors, military, and funding
- EU advisors and funding
- NATO/ISAF
- Various embassies
- Russian advisors, military, and funding
- Other countries – to name a few:
  - France
  - Netherlands
  - China
  - Japan
  - Switzerland
  - Germany

- Italy
- Other IGOs
- Other NGOs

Appendix Four: Heirarchy of Power at the Border

Groups influencing institutions at the Tajik border

International Groups	National Groups	Informal Groups
IGOs	President	Drug lords
NGOs	Ministers	Warlords
Foreign Governments	Border Guards	Drug and Warlord
Foreign Intelligence Surveillance	Customs agents	Clans and Clan Leaders
Int'l Trade Alliances	Security/Intel Groups	Street leaders and Security
MNCs	Civil Society Organizations	Families
Financial Institutions	Businesses/Markets	People with influence

Hierarchy of Influence on Tajik Border

TOP-LEVEL	
President of Tajikistan	Border Commanders
Heads of IGOs and NGOs	Clan Leaders
War/Drug lords	Foreign Governments
MID-LEVEL	
Ministers	Street Leaders
Civil Society Leaders	Border/Customs agents
People With Influence Businesses/Markets/MNCs	
BASE-LEVEL	
Clans	Families
Street Security	Financial Institutions

Groups influencing institutions at the Afghan border

International Groups	National Groups	Informal Groups
IGOs	President	Drug lords
NGOs	Ministers	Warlords
Foreign Governments	Border Guards	Drug and Warlord
Foreign Intelligence Surveillance	Customs agents	Clans and Clan Leaders
Int'l Trade Alliances	Security/Intel Groups	Shurra & religious leaders
MNCs	Civil Society Organizations	Families
Financial Institutions	Businesses/Markets	People with influence

Hierarchy of Influence at the Afghan Border

TOP-LEVEL	
President of Afghanistan	Border Commanders
Heads of IGOs and NGOs	Clan Leaders
War/Drug lords	Foreign Governments
MID-LEVEL	
Ministers	Shurra/Religious Leaders
Civil Society Leaders	Border/Customs agents
People With Influence	Businesses/Markets/MNCs
BASE-LEVEL	
Clans	Families
Street Security	Financial Institutions

Appendix Five:

As an example of the complexity of the networks, I highlight one of my research

participants. Sher, belonged to numerous networks. Some he hid and some were

apparent. Below is list of the networks he belonged to:

- Member of elite and "original long-term Khorog family
- Related to informal leader of Bar-Khorog
- Scholar – part of small community of local scholars with strong local
  influence

- Ismaili – local
- Ismail – international
- Shughnani – member of Shughnan (as opposed to district of Ishkashem, Roshan, Darwaz.
- Shoshkala – neighborhood lives in
- Tajik – Gorno-Badakhshan – as opposed to any other province or territorial affiliation
- Badakhshan – both sides of the border
- Tajik – as opposed to Afghan, Uzbek, etc
- Central Asia – as opposed to South or East Asian
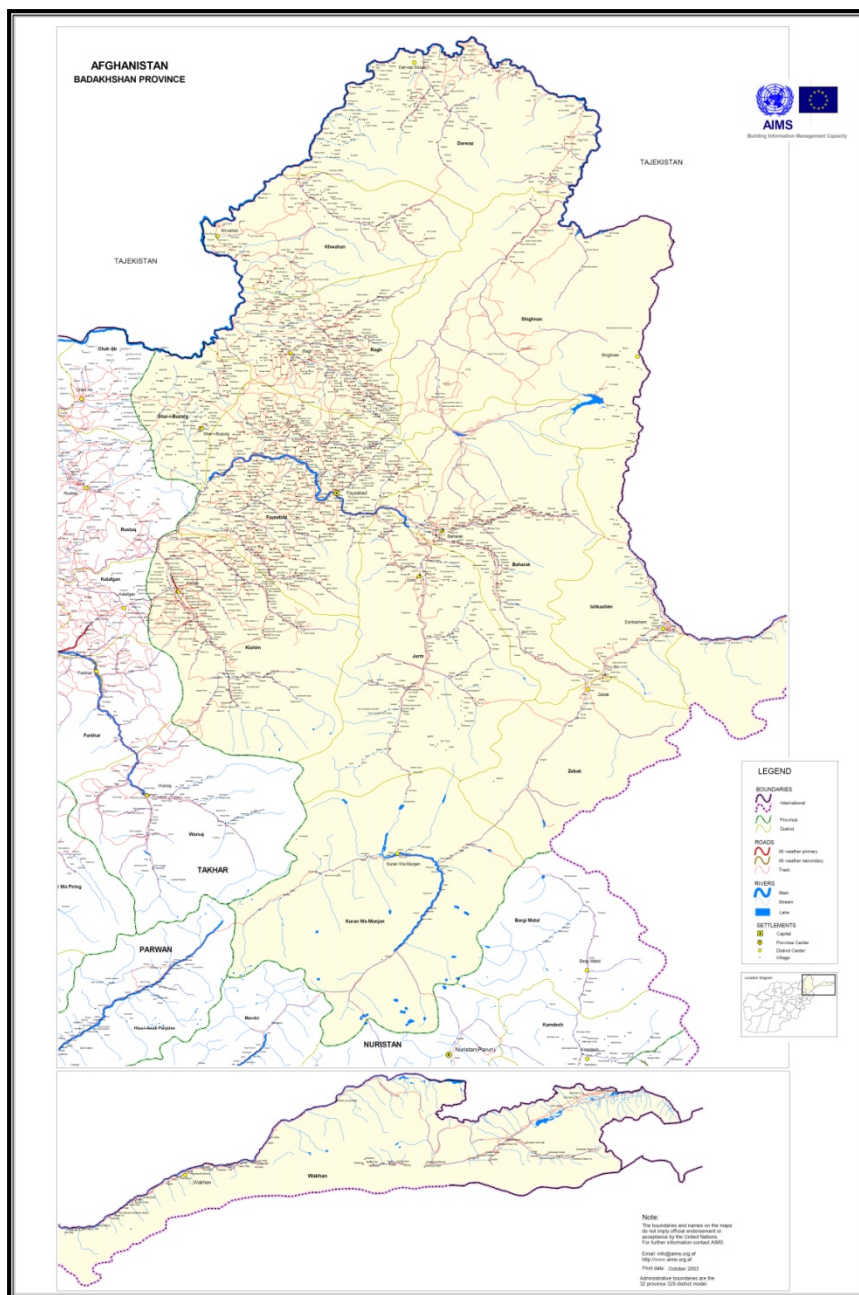- Non-Western – not EU or U.S.

Appendix Six: Interviewees

1. Doctor and Local Leader in Ishkashem, Afghanistan (AFG)

2. Warlord One, Tajikistan (TJ)

3. Warlord/Druglord Two, TJ

4. Local Academic, AFG

5. UNDP AFG Official

6. UNDP AFG Employee

7. UNDP AFG Employee

8. UNDP AFG Official

9. Local Religious Leader TJ

10. AKDN TJ Employee

11. Uzbek Ambassador

12. Afghan Ambassador

13. French Ambassador

14. Director of Border Programs, UNODC, AFG & TJ

15. BOMCA Director

16. DRC Employee

17. Fulbright scholar, TJ

18. Dir INL TJ

19. DAI Director TJ

20. DAI Acting Director TJ

21. OSCE Director of Border Programs AFG/TJ

22. EU Analyst

23. EU Analyst 2

24. Director of AI

25. Ecorys Employee

26. Pres SDC TJ

27. Family1

28. Family2

29. Family3

30. Family4

31. DEA1

32. DEA2

33. German Embassy Official

34. EU Ambassador

35. UNODC Director1

36. UNODC Director2

37. Expert on drug trafficking - US

38. US Expert 1

39. US Expert 2

40. US Expert 3

41. US Expert 4

42. US Department of State (DoS) Official 1

43. US DoS Official 2

44. US DoS Official 3

45. US DoS Official 4

46. HIDTA Director and Staff

47. Local Academic

48. Darwaz Commander AFG

49. Darwaz Commander TJ

50. Shughnan Commander AFG

51. Khorog Commander TJ

52. Ishkashem Commander AFG

53. Ishkashim Commander TJ

54. Murghab Commander TJ Customs

55. Murghab DCA Director

56. Murghab Border Commander

57. Dep. Dir Customs TAJ

58. DCA official

59. Dep Dir. Min of Comm TAJ

60. Scholar TJ (Dir. Center on Dialogue)

61. Dir Girls Int'l NGO

62. Dir INL2 Dushanbe

63. Border Police TJ

64. DCA Officer Khorog

65. Border Police AFG

66. Member of AF Parliament

67. Local Development Worker

68. UK Customs agent

69. ex-US Customs agent

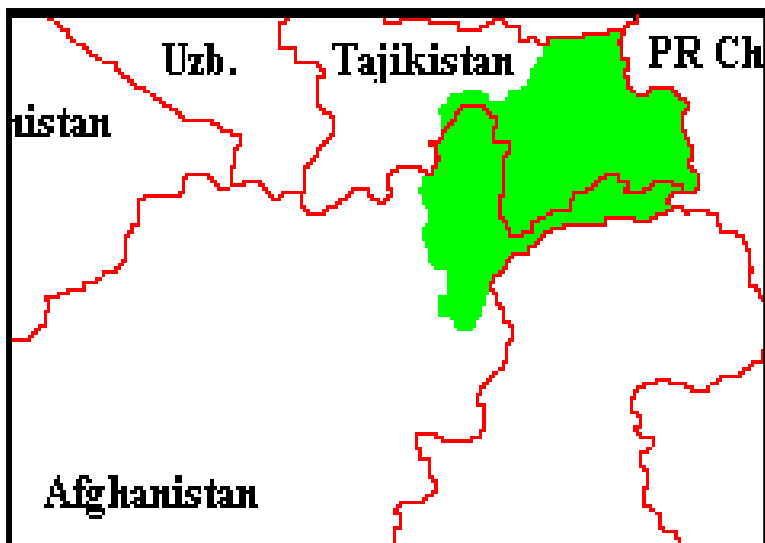70. AKDN Education worker AF

71. AKDN Logistics worker AF

72. AKHS healthcare worker AF

73. AKHS Director TAJ

74. ICG Official

75. Iranian Woman TJ

76. Tajik Scholar 1

77. Tajik Scholar 2

78. Tajik Scholar 3

79. Driver1 local NGO

80. Driver2 local NGO

81. Trader

82. Trader with lawsuit

83. Gemstone Trafficker 1

84. Gemstone Trafficker 2

85. British ex-Specia Air Service (SAS) Officer 1

86. British ex-SAS Officer 2

87. US ex-Special Forces Officer 1

88. US ex-SF Officer 2

89. US ex-SF Officer 3

90. Ex-KGB Colonel

91. US Department of Defense (DoD) Official 1

92. US DoD Offical 2

93. US DoD Official 3

94. CSIS Official

95. Former Director of the NSC AFG

96. Parliamentarian 1 AFG

97. Parliamentarian 2 AFG

98. Local Leader, AFG

99. Shurra Council Leaders (numerous) AFG

100. Religious Leaders (numerous) AFG

101. Healthcare Workers (numerous) AFG & TJ

102. People addicted to opium and heroin (numerous) AFG

Appendix Seven: Historical Maps of the Borderlands of Badakhshan

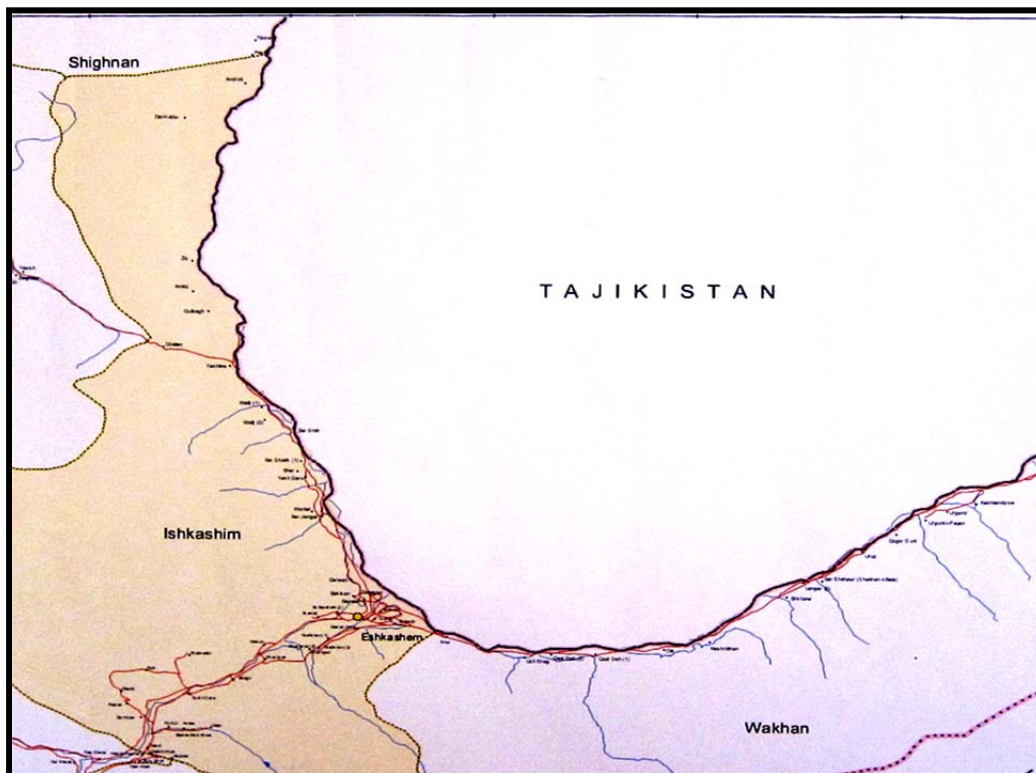**Map One: Badakhshan, Afghanistan Source: EU and AIMS.org**

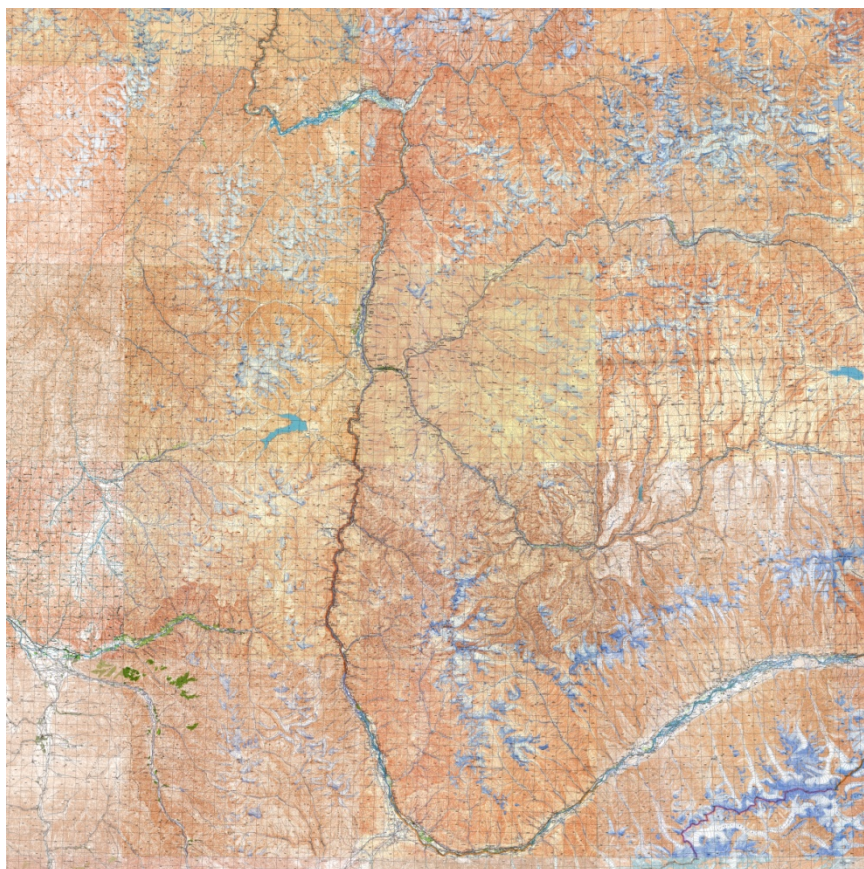**Map Two: Historical Badakhshan** - Source: www.zum.de

Map Three: Districts of Shughnan, Ishkashem, and the Wakhan, Afghanistan

Source: Aga Khan Foundation, Ishkashem Office, Afghanistan (Author's photograph of unpublished map)

Map Four: Soviet Period in Tajikistan Source: UNDP (via Russian military)

Map Five: Topographic map of Khorog Source: UNDP (via the Russian military)

Appendix Eight

Examples of slogans from the streets of Khorog during the visit of the President of Tajikistan to Gorno-Badakhshan (Translation by local Khorogi) (June, 2010)
(Most of these slogans were accompanied by huge banners of President Rahmon)

1. Вахдати халк бакои миллату давлат аст
   The sustainability of our nation and country is in the unity of our people

2. Кишвари оворадорам зинда бод Ифтихорам зинда Бод
   Long live my independent country, Long live my pride

3. Вахдати ягонаги парчами пирузихои мост
   Unity is the flag of our victories

4. Баракати зиндаги аз танзим аст
   The blessings of life is in order

5. Забон омили асосии рушди миллат аст. Ин аст ки забон ва давлату миллат дар панохи якдигаранд.
   Language is the main foundation of national development. Language, state, and nation, therefore, strengthen each other.

6. Истиклолият рамзи сохибдавлати ва ватандории миллати сарбаланду мутамаддини точик аст.
   Independence is the symbol of strong government and patriotism of the proud and civilized Tajik nation

7. Рогунро якчоя месозем
   We will build Roghun together (this slogan was one of the most prevailant)

8. Истиклолияти вокеи доштан ва сохибдавлату сохибватан будан барои инсон бузургтарин неъмат ва волотарин ормонии зиндаги аст
   To have true independence and to have a state is the greatest richness and highest dream of life.

9. Вахдат камоли хирадмандист
   Unity is the perfection of wisdom

10. Биё ки туи ба хар хонаи бадахшон аст, ту ахли хонаву ахли пазмон аст
    Join us in every house of Badakhshan for the celebration (Happiness)
    You are a member of the family and the Family misses you

11. гояи сиёсиву мафкуравии мо вахдат, ягонаги, хурсандиву худогохии милли тахкими давлатдори ва ободии ватани азизамон мебошад

Perfection of our policy and intellect is in our unity, oneness, national consciousnes, statesmanship and development of our dear motherland.

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