

Local Institutions as a Component of the State-Building Process in Tajikistan

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Research Proposal for a PhD Thesis

“Accounting for State-Building, Stability & Violent Conflict: The Institutional Framework of Caucasian and Central Asian Transitional Societies”

The Setting of the Problem

State-building in Tajikistan is marked by the ambiguity that on the one hand it was created during the Soviet period, but on the other hand achieved its independence in opposition to that period.¹ This questions the continuity and stability of institutions and their influence on the process of stabilization and state-building.² **Do local institutions have a positive influence on the overall state-building process?**

In Tajikistan the state-building process occurs in the shadow of the former occupier which for the most part denies the legitimacy of the collapse of its past state-building projects, seeks to extend its influence in Central Asia, and even openly seeks to re-integrate the newly independent states under its lead. The collapse of the USSR was to a large extent an “unfinished revolution”, one that altered the forms of legitimation and in some cases pushed aside old structures, but left many embedded relationships intact.³

It will be my task to examine what the local administrative level is *de jure* foreseen to look like and then to find out how the intended system functions in reality. How do the local level and other levels up to the national level interact? What issues (for instance divorces, conflicts with heritage, crimes, ownership etc.) are covered by which institutions?

My assumption is that we have two state-building processes in Tajikistan today which work counter-productively. The dominant one is the one coming from above. It is hierarchically structured and does not have any democratic features because representatives are not elected to their posts, but seconded.

The other state-building process is the one coming from down below, out of structures of local self-governance. This state-building process incorporates democratic elements as the *pauci mahalla* (head of the *mahalla*) is elected by the members of each *mahalla*. But it will also be my task to find out whether the *mahalla* is the only or dominating institution of self-

¹ see: Roy, Olivier: The New Central Asia. Creation of Nations, London 2000, p. 161

² cp.: Atkin, Muriel: Thwarted democratization in Tajikistan, in: Dawisha, Karen and Parrott, Bruce: Conflict, cleavage, and change in Central Asia and the Caucasus, Cambridge University Press 1997

³ Beissinger, Mark B.: State Building in the Shadow of an Empire State. The Soviet Legacy in Post-Soviet Politics; in: Dawisha, Karen and Parrott, Bruce: The End of Empire? The Transformation of the USSR in Comparative Perspective, New York 1997

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governance on the local level or whether in particular regions *авлод* (the extended family) or the *kolkhoz* play a more important role. I will analyze these local institutions according to the functions which they fulfil in the society and examine what is the glue that keeps these institutions together.

There are at least three weaknesses of local self-government which have a destabilizing impact on the state-building process from down below: leadership, representation and participation. Competencies are often times undefined and there is an immense lack of financial resources.⁴

The main question is: **Do these two state-building processes meet, if so where and if not how could these two state-building processes be brought together and eventually bring about sustainable stability?**

I will also examine what impact the constant shifts of population have on the local institutions in the history of the Tajik SSR and what consequences does this have for the nation-building project and for stability in general. Were solidarity groups destroyed when populations shifted or did people move with their solidarity groups? What impact does today's work migration have on local solidarity groups and people's identity?

In case of conflict many citizens in Tajikistan first approach the *mahalla* chair, then the *jamoat* and if necessary then the police or court.⁵ I will have to find the breakpoint between formal state administration and local self-government.

The *majlisi jamoat* which is the lowest level of the formal state administration has the following functions: to pass the program of activities and budget of the *jamoat*, hear the annual reports presented by the chairman, monitor spending, organize public activities to addresses issues of local importance (, but it has very few legal powers to do that), de facto it deals a lot with citizens' complaints, registers them and takes measures, solves group (over water, land and waste) and personal disputes/conflicts (marriage, divorce, neighborly quarrels), collects revenue which takes most of the time.⁶

Legally institutions of local self-government are not part of the country's governing structures. The question is, should they be legalized and made part of the official

⁴ Freizer, Sabine: Tajikistan local self-governance and civil society (CARN submission)

⁵ Freizer: 2002

⁶ Freizer: 2002?

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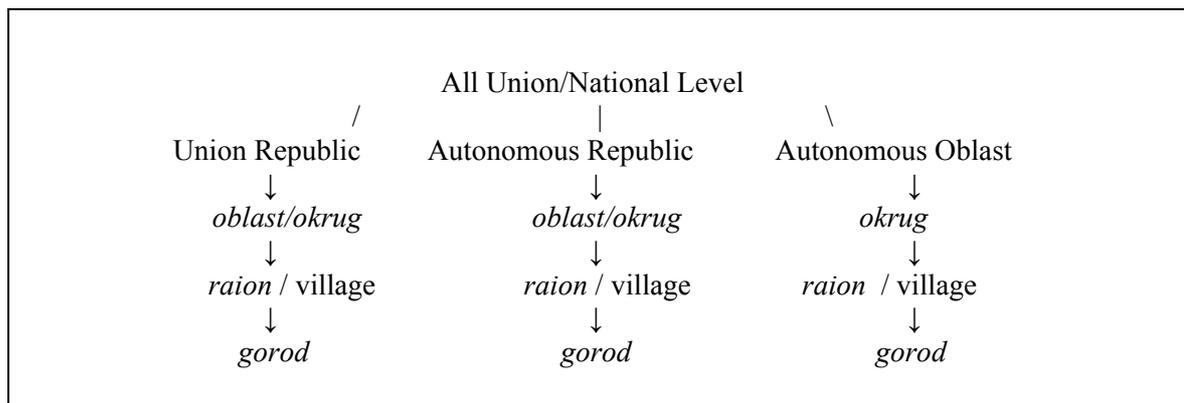
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administrative structures? What implications would this have for the overall state-building process and process of stabilization?

I argue that in Tajikistan we-groups are built on three elements⁷: 1) **economic incentives**, search for 2) **moral/religious foothold** and 3) as a **reaction to (external) threats**. In detail such we-groups are for example the *mahalla*, *kolkhoz*, *dehqan farms* etc. To what extent are the three elements named above constitutive for those local institutions?⁸

The period since the demise of the Soviet Union is long enough in order to imply tendencies, potentially give prospects of further developments and show patterns of interaction on the communal level. In this context the post-war period should always be taken as a potential pre-war period and strategies of sustainable stabilization in regard to state-building should be examined.

Soviet administrative-territorial divisions:



During Soviet times the creation of regional administrative units **institutionalized a pivotal leader** –the **oblast party committee (*obkom*)** first secretary. He replaced local party and government personnel in both political and economic spheres and also checked their performance. The *obkom* first secretaries had access to the scarce resources that local leaders and factory managers needed to fulfill their directives from Moscow and the average citizen needed to survive. In Central Asia the *obkom* first secretary had the unique effect of supplanting the authority of tribal and local leaders. As a consequence existing **clan- and tribal based patronage** networks were redefined. The *obkom* first

⁷ A model developed by Elwert which can be applied to Tajikistan (Elwert 1989: 29).

⁸ see: Mesbahi, Mohiaddin: Central Asia and the Caucasus after the Soviet Union. Domestic and International Dynamics, University Press of Florida, Gainesville 1994, p. 35

⁹ Luong, Pauline Jones: Institutional Change and Political Continuity in Post-Soviet Central Asia. Power, Perceptions, and Pacts, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2002, p. 66

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secretary became the primary dispenser of **political and economic resources** at the regional and local level, and skillfully used this position to **built loyalty and support** throughout his oblast.¹⁰

What are further key elements of the pre-communist historical legacy concerning institutions? Did Tajikistan have any pre-communist experience of self-governance on the local level? How did Soviet legacies affect the developments since the breakdown of the Soviet Union?

The general population and elites had mutually reinforcing incentives to attach their political identities to their region. **Collective farms** were characteristically formed from a single kinship group and would lend their political support as a single unit to a particular regional official as they once did to a particular tribal leader. Collectivization in Central Asia disempowered traditional leaders by giving ‘control’ over the sue and distribution of land to *kolkhoz* chairmen.

Considering all the changes concerning the institutional set since the breakdown of the SU, meaning the re-defining of the rules of the game, I would like to find out whether local institutions have a stabilizing or de-stabilizing impact on the state in process?

I will start out with the following institutions:

- The *махалла*¹¹ (*mahalla*) is an institutionalized quarter of a town (*mikroraion*): its main elements are region of heritage and religion, but not necessarily marriage, language or ethnicity.¹² It is an institution which solves conflicts on the communal level, is an effective example of Tajik local self-governance, brings people together on a voluntary basis, along interest lines based on profession or good neighborliness, it defines values, rules of behavior, common interests, through which group interests are protected (identitätsstiftend) and structures everyday life. The choichona is the meeting point of the mahalla, during Soviet times mahallas had limited powers to oppose

¹⁰ Luong, Pauline Jones: Institutional Change and Political Continuity in Post-Soviet Central Asia. Power, Perceptions, and Pacts, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2002, p. 66/67

¹¹ Geiss, Paul G.: Mahallah and Kinship Relations. A study on residential communal commitment structures in Central Asia of the Nineteenth Century. Central Asian Survey(CAS), 2000/1, vol.20

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themselves to state decisions, it is mainly an urban phenomenon, uniting a quarter of a town.

- **Авлод** = an extended family relating themselves to one common (real or mystical) ancestor. When marrying, women do not become members of their husbands' *avlod*. Children belong to their fathers' *avlod*. It is expected that one should be able to remember seven generations of his *avlod*, though only very few members of the younger generation know their *avlod* in this degree of detail, functions as a solidarity group, it is mainly found in the south of Tajikistan
- **Qawm**¹³ = partilineal kinship, it is based on a linguistic or tribal identity, persons who mutually assist each other and share goods, not all of whom are always close kinsmen, = 'solidarity unit', united by agnatic kinship; through marriage people can associate and assimilate, therefore diff. ethnic groups can be united in one qawm; ideally they are a territorially, and socially integrated group, joined together through ties of kinship, political action, and religious believe and ritual; "...before being an ethnic group it is a solidarity group which protects its members from encroachments from the state and other qawm, but which also is the scene of inside competition between contenders for local supremacy, people with the same mind
- **Village organizations:** are initiated by the Mountain Societies Development Support Programme (MSDSP) which is a partner-implementing organisation by the Aga Khan Foundation; "the philosophy underpinning the Village Organisation Programme is that rural economic development is best catalysed and sustained through village level institutions that are autonomous and transparent, contributing to democratic norms of behaviour and to growth of civil society. Through this initiative, villagers are learning self-reliance, and village organisations are facilitating the mobilisation of human, physical and financial resources to empower local villagers, give them greater ownership pf development activities and generate wealth"; these Village Organisations are *de jure* informal, voluntary ad-hoc organisations; MSDSP expects at least 80% of all households of a village to take part in the Village Organisations. It

¹² **Mesbahi** 1994: 42; In the *mahalla*-context I will also analyze the role of the *jamoat* which is the next level within the Tadjik *semi-state administrative structure* (half state, half non-governmental) where representatives of all the *mahallas* meet once a year.

¹³ **Sievers**, Eric W.: The Post-Soviet Decline of Central Asia. Sustainable Development and comprehensive capital, Routledge Curzon, New York 2003

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expects that the chairman and the manager are elected, and that the vice-chairman, the accountant and the chairwoman of the women's committee are approved by the Village Organisation. The Village Organisation then may decide to pay a salary to their management. The resource would come from the VO own budget, which stems from membership fees and donations.

- *колхоз (kolkhoz)*: functions as a systemic framework for economic exchange, as a former state institution it is important on the local level, it is the expression of a rural solidarity group. As a systemic framework for economic exchange, it helps people protect themselves socially as well as politically against the state and other competing entities. It embodies also rural people's access to politicians and creates a system of stable guaranteed rights for peasants. The *dehqan (sharecropper) farm* is an institution which links landowners by a relationship that goes beyond the economic aspect. It functions as a form of **patron-client network** within the framework of a solidarity group.¹⁴
- *kishlachny sovet*: unite four or five villages into one structure (is mentioned in the constitution)

I would like to analyze those **informal institutions** concerning **functions** which are usually fulfilled by the state: Do these informal institutions protect the citizens from the state or other external threats, do they collect taxes and do they enforce law?¹⁵ Do informal institutions on the local level distribute resources and how do they do that? "How far are they capable of processing conflicts in a peaceful way?"¹⁶ Are they capable of creating incentives for violence? What mechanisms of self-help are created by those institutions? Do they provide social security? Do these institutions organize community mobilization (i.e. *hashar* etc.) and internal policing? How do institutions on the local level channel and mediate the newly-found freedom?

Institutions usually perform three functions which are relevant for the organisation of **stability** and **violence**: institutions are accepted, trained and sometimes enforced patterns of

¹⁴ Roy 2000: 188

¹⁵ Volkov, Vadim: Who Is Strong Whent the State is Weak? Violent Entrepreneurship in Russia's Emerging Markets; in: Beissinger, Mark; Young, Crawford: Beyond State Crisis, Woodrow Wilson Center Press, Washington 2002, p.84

¹⁶ Elwert, Georg: Intervention in Markets of Violence; in: Kohler, Jan; Zuercher, Christoph: Potentials of Dis/Order. Explaining Violence in the Caucasus and in the Former Yugoslavia, Manchester University Press, Manchester 2003, p.357 (in the Reader)

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interaction which ‘embed’ conflict. Institutions process competing interests: they offer rules and procedures for the articulation of interests, they provide for a flow of information between actors, and they offer binding procedures for determining the outcome of interaction. Institutions further create incentive structures for actors.¹⁷ At what points (in what sectors) do the functions of the state and informal institutions on the local level intersect?

To some extent my definition of institution is close to Weiligmann’s understanding of networks in which people interact in order to solve shared problems. Furthermore it is a structure of ties between actors in a system, their ties may be based on conversation, economic exchange, authority, information exchange, or anything else that can form the basis of a relationship. Members in a network interact in a two-way-relationship. The time frame concerning institutions in comparison to networks is different though. Institutions are less flexible and therefore are maintained for much longer periods than networks and not just until a particular aim is achieved. Networks as well as institutions (can) contain **competitive, cooperative, and hierarchical elements** in different proportions.¹⁸ Trust is the glue that holds networks and institutions together. Two main categories of trust exist: the trust in persons and the trust in the continuation of learnt and experienced routines. In a world with complete information, trust would have lost its function.¹⁹

The danger is that institutional sets can emerge which can be characterized by the term “**sustainable instability**” Paradoxically, “sustainable instability” often tends to provoke an **economic stability** (for instance shadow economy or markets of violence), which is an obstacle to the **constitutionalization of a profound social and political stability**. Another factor which has a negative impact on the state-building process and process of stabilization is the “mentality” of “the winner takes all” or the perception of a prevalent zero-sum-game²⁰. This makes it hard to share resources.

Even though my main work will only consider the time span from 1997 until 2004, the twelve years since the achievement of independence, it will also be necessary to look at how those institutions developed during the Soviet period. Some experts argue that institution-building

¹⁷ Koehler Jan; Zuercher, Christoph: Institutions and the organisation of stability and violence, in: Koehler, Jan; Zuercher, Christoph (ed.s): Potentials of (Dis)Order. Explaining Violence in the Caucasus and in the Balkan, Manchester (Manchester University Press 2003, forthcoming), p. 248/249

¹⁸ Weiligmann, Bärbel: Information Exchange in Networks. Analysis of Individual Communication Behaviour and Communication Structure Wissenschaftsverlag VAUK Kiel KG, 1999, p.6-8

¹⁹ Weiligmann 1999: 30/31

²⁰ Kreikemeyer, Anna; Seifert, Arne C. (eds.): Zur Vereinbarkeit von politischem Islam und Sicherheit im OSZE-Raum. Dokumente eines islamisch-säkularen Dialogs in Tadschikistan, Nomos, Verlagsgesellschaft Baden-Baden 2002/2003

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in Tajikistan is weak.²¹ I would like to argue that the **institutional set on the local level is quite strong**, but some of these institutions have a **destabilizing impact on the state-building process** due to the competitiveness created by them. Solidarity groups only choose to compete with each other if they see the prospect of achieving benefits, i.e. according to **rational choices**. In the context of my thesis I would like to examine what **benefits**²² the solidarity groups are eager to achieve.

The Role of Women

Following the institutional remake after the breakdown of the Soviet Union the identity of women in Tajikistan in the post-Soviet period has been changing, women claim the ‘ideal’ traditional identities as part of their strategy for self-protection and high self-esteem. When I am talking about identity in this context, I define it the following way: identity is “...socially constructed in response to surrounding influences rather than biologically determined, neither static nor monolithic, multifaceted and continually evolving. Ethnicity, nationality, class, religion, age, and sex play major roles in identity formation.”²³

Ayşe Saktanber and Asli Ösatas-Baykal have analyzed the role of women in the process of nation- and state-building in Uzbekistan and have asked the question: “...how women operate as a linkage between micro and macro practices of power that are exercised to maintain the new national order.” I would like to use this approach for Tajikistan and see what role women play there in the state-building process.²⁴ With the introduction of market economy in the former Soviet Union republics, the need for labor was reduced and this had a great impact onto women’s lives, women became the first to lose the jobs and the last to be re-employed. What impact did this have onto the women’s status and roles in the local communities.²⁵

“Obviously, in clear reaction to Soviet colonialism, nation-building efforts in these societies also entail a rejection of the Sovietized identity...post-Soviet societies are undergoing in search of the ‘indigenous’ and the ‘native’ particularly with respect to women’s

²¹ Akiner 2001: 2

²² To what extent do players make decisions according to **rational choice**? In what institutional sets is violence profitable for **entrepreneurs of violence** and when do **markets of violence** emerge?

²³ Harris, Colette: The Changing Identity of Women in Tajikistan in the Post-Soviet Period, in: Acar, Feride; Günes-Ayata, Ayşe: **Gender** and Identity Construction. Women of Central Asia, the Caucasus and Turkey, Leiden/Boston/Koeln, Brill, 1999, p. 205

²⁴ Acar, Feride; Günes-Ayata, Ayşe: About the Book, in: Acar, Feride; Günes-Ayata, Ayşe: Gender and Identity Construction. Women of Central Asia, the Caucasus and Turkey, Leiden/Boston/Koeln, Brill, 1999, p. xvi & xvii

²⁵ Günes-Ayata, Ayşe; Acar, Feride: Conclusion, in: Acar, Feride; Günes-Ayata, Ayşe: Gender and Identity Construction. Women of Central Asia, the Caucasus and Turkey, Leiden/Boston/Koeln, Brill, 1999, p.334

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identities...As the family and the small neighborhood communities are considered to be the institutions least infiltrated by the Soviet regime, in its aftermath many political movements have searched for the essence of ‘national’ identities in these institutions...It is also the case that often these new nation-states, in dealing with the fundamental question of defining the ‘native’, the ‘national’ and the ‘indigenous’, and in searching for cultural continuity, become involved in ‘construction’ and ‘invention’ of tradition. Women, often are key facilitators of such construction for the society...women play a pivotal role in ‘inventing traditions’ in ceremonies and in disseminating religion in the communities.”²⁶

In Central Asia tradition, religion and community are increasingly being emphasized as the foundation for the state-building process.²⁷ “...the attempts at social engineering in the early days of the Soviet regime in Tajikistan were deliberate attempts to emasculate men and defeminize women in order to penetrate Tajik society and make it subservient to the Russo-Soviet system, as well as to liberate women from their relegation to purely private space in order to make use of them in economic development and to force the modernization of Tajik culture (Harris n.d.).”²⁸ What is left of this and what impact does it have on state-building in Tajikistan today?

“...both women and men experience tensions between their different personae. Such tensions amount almost to conflict –between “correct” ways of dressing, of behavior in relation to members of the opposite sex, and so on, and these conflicts are increasing in the post-Soviet period.”²⁹ “Many women now for the first time find themselves heads of households. In some cases, this is due to the death or exile of their husbands. In others, this is a temporary circumstance owing to their husbands’ migration for work purposes, usually to Russia.”³⁰ Now with the chance of the new state-building process Tajik women “...will only be able to negotiate within certain, probably quite narrow margins. But the margins themselves may also be negotiable.”³¹

“The discourses and norms which refer to gender are not central only to the self-definition of social groups. Gender also affects state origins, access to state, and state resource allocation...

²⁶ Günes-Ayata & Acar, Feride 1999: 339/340

²⁷ Günes-Ayata & Acar, Feride 1999: 341

²⁸ Harris, Colette 1999: 207

²⁹ Harris, Colette 1999: 210

³⁰ Harris, Colette 1999: 218

³¹ Harris, Colette 1999: 227

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Similarly, in the nation-building process, gender plays an important role insofar as it is central to the self-definition of social groups.”³²

I would especially like to trace the functions of women in local communities in Tajikistan. Women are biological reproducers of members of ethnic collectivities, reproducers of boundaries of ethnic/national groups, central actors in regard to ideological reproduction and transmitters of culture.³³ Consequently, they have a significant impact on the process of stabilization and the state-building process.

“Whereas in the Soviet system there was a one-way relationship between the state and the *mahalla*, an attempt is being made to establish a two-way relationship between the two in the new order. According to Article 105 of the Constitution, *mahallas* are defined as the institutions through which Uzbek citizens govern themselves...The new Uzbek nation-state allows the Uzbek people to articulate their actual demands and problems to the upper levels of the state through the communicative mechanisms of the *mahalla*, hence appropriating it as an effective intermediary social institution as well as a prototype for a civil society.”³⁴

Is the situation in Tajikistan similar? How could a two-way relationship between the *mahalla* and other levels of Tajik administration be established and the *mahalla* be turned into the foundation of a civil society?

Theoretical Framework

Transitions create strategic openings by threatening the preceding status quo. During my work on this topic I will have to define when I consider a state-building process as completed, that means have to determine the desirable outcome of the state-building process, which in my case is sustainable stability.

Talking about stability concerning Tajikistan, one always has to bare in mind the question why Tajikistan is so instable in comparison to Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. Luong explains it by the following: “In contrast to the experience of its neighbors, Tajikistan’s independence coincided with the emergence of an alternative set of elites with broad popular support, who

³² Saktanber, Ayse; Özatas-Baykal, Asli: Homeland Within Homeland. Women and the Formation of Uzbek National Identity, in: Acar, Feride; Günes-Ayata, Ayse: Gender and Identity Construction. Women of Central Asia, the Caucasus and Turkey, Leiden/Boston/Koeln, Brill, 1999, p. 229

³³ Yuval-Davis & Anthias 1989: 7-10

³⁴ Saktanber 1999: 232/233

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viewed the transition as an opportunity to challenge the regional **power-sharing system institutionalized under Soviet rule.**³⁵

The general problem with transition is that at its beginning the endpoint of the transition and the way to achieve this endpoint are unclear. Actors are literally forced to access a moving target, without complete and reliable information about the degree to and direction in which it is moving. Therefore they must rely on their own perceptions of the changes occurring around them rather than purely objective indicators. “Those overseeing the transition, moreover are forced to both enact policy changes and gauge their impact as the transition unfolds, without complete and reliable information about either how other actors will perceive these policy changes or what their actual effect will be.”³⁶ People mainly act according to their expectations. Systemic transition increases the risk of violence, when the state loses its sanction capacity, the costs for breaking the rules and organizing violence falls, while the booty is fattened; the risk for socially “dis-embedded”, violent competition increases.³⁷ p.245:

It is especially adequate to apply institutionalism to Tajikistan because it helps to measure **path-dependencies** in an area where traditional and Soviet institutions to a large extent have melted into one. Within the framework of **institution** and **regime change** I would like to use a combination of **structural, agency-based** approaches and approaches emphasizing **elite perceptions of relative power shifts.**

The structural approach focuses more on structural conditions and the agency-based approach on the contingent choices of individual agents to explain regime change. Structural approaches further emphasize the strength of institutional legacies and their role as formidable constraints on human behavior.³⁸ The structural approach includes specific domestic institutions that constitute the arrangements of governance and structure state-societal relation. Agency-based approaches are dominated by explanations that emphasize “the interests, values, and actions of political leaders.”³⁹ This approach is based on the premise that “through strategic interaction, individuals play a deliberate and direct causal role in determining the pace and form of institutional and regimes change...they have a strong tendency to presume who these individuals are, their preferences over institutional outcomes,

³⁵ Luong, Pauline Jones: Institutional Change and Political Continuity in Post-Soviet Central Asia. Power, Perceptions, and Pacts, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2002, p. 273

³⁶ Luong 2002: 104/105

³⁷ Koehler Jan; Zuercher, Christoph: Institutions and the organisation of stability and violence, in: Koehler, Jan; Zuercher, Christoph (ed.s): Potentials of (Dis)Order. Explaining Violence in the Caucasus and in the Balkan, Manchester (Manchester University Press 2003, forthcoming), p. 245

³⁸ Luong 2002: 255/256

³⁹ Luong 2002: 271

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their relative bargaining strength *ex ante* – that is, without sufficient consideration of the broader institutional context.”

Last but not least, I would like to add an approach that emphasizes *elite perceptions of relative power shifts* and which is a more compelling explanation for both institutional design and regime change. The combination of those three will provide a good tool for explanation for ongoing state-building processes in Tajikistan today.

My main focus will be on groups, and not individuals, which are mainly responsible for social order and social change.⁴⁰ In the context of my work I will define **state** as the main rule-setting agency which has the monopoly of the legitimate use of violence and possesses a certain amount of infrastructural power in order to fulfil certain functions. Methods have to be created in order to determine when a state is defined as stable and its state-building process as concluded.

Report on the Literature

In general it seems that Tajikistan has been the Central Asian country which has relatively little been mentioned in literature. Most of the literature about Tajikistan has been written on the civil war, but not on institutions and stabilization and their impact on the overall process of state-building. I would like to fill this gap, go deeper and analyze the problem from down below: Many works have been concentrating on the role of élites, but I would like to approach the issue from the bottom.

Fieldwork

My Russian is fluent and by the time I will head out to Tajikistan for fieldwork my Tadjik will probably be good enough to also conduct interviews in Tadjik, which will be extremely important due to the fact that people talk differently about political issues when they speak their native language. Therefore I find it necessary to use Tadjik for interviews. I am planning on doing extensive fieldwork in terms of **qualitative interviews** with key figures in those village communities (*raisi mahalla, aksakal, kodbonu*, etc.) (**Does this make sense?**) in different regions in Tadjikistan. I would like to analyze three different examples of local institutions on the village level (**entry points??**) in **Karategin (Garm) and Chatlon**

⁴⁰ Hechter, Michael: Rational choice theory and the study of race and ethnic relations, in: Mason, D.; Rex, J.: Theory of Race and Ethnic Relations, Cambridge UP, Cambridge 1986, Ch.12, p.266

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(Kulob/Kurgan-Tybe) and **Sogd**. I chose these regions in order to grasp Tajikistan's regional diversity. I am planning to conduct approximately 10 months of fieldwork.

Fieldwork Research Plan:

- departure from Berlin 23 August 03
- arrival in Dushanbe 30 August 03
- September 03: intensive language course in **Dushanbe**
- October & November 03: fieldwork period in **Garm**
- December 03, January, February 04: fieldwork in **Dushanbe** in order to analyze the formal institutions (state-building process from above)
- March, April, May 04: fieldwork period in **Chatlon**
(two weeks vacation in March)
- June & July 04: return to **Garm**

I would even like to concentrate only on two regions because it will take me quite a long time to build trust in a community, therefore I would like to stay for two months and then later on come back for a month. For this purpose I would probably prefer to work on Garm and Chatlon and leave out Sogd. The chapter about the role of the women seems to be quite important because I know that my access to women will be much better than to men and according to what I have heard, there is really a lack of men in the local communities, especially in Garm, due to the war and work migration.

Expectations of the Project

The overall project adds a cross-country and cross-regional dimension to my work. Work has been done on single case studies in the region, but little has been done concerning comparative analysis between regions and this will be something new, especially in the sphere of conflictology.

List of Literature

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