

UDC 316.334:37 (574)

A. Suleymanov

Uskudar University, Turkey, Istanbul

E-mail: asuleymanov@yahoo.com

### **The sociological analysis of Turkic communities of Central Asia in days of independence**

**Abstract.** In the beginning of 1990s, globalization was not beyond a mere phenomenon. Today, it turned out to be a reality of the 21<sup>st</sup> century world system. Not only states, state mechanisms and international political institutions but also economic networks, companies, factories, enjoyments, perceptions, and different multicultural human identities are becoming parts of a global network. The monopolized world is getting fragmented within the multifaceted globalization; while differences get globalized dimension, they also dissolve in more globalized values. This article underscores the aforementioned dimensions, discusses values of globalization (e.g. information, individual, democracy, human rights, free market economy, rule of law) and explores their impacts on the Turkic world and Turkic societies in days of independence.

**Keywords:** globalization, Turkic world, Turkic societies

#### **Introduction**

Globalization which remained as a phenomenon until 90s was transmitted into reality by making its way into the world system of XXI century. Not only the states, state mechanisms, international political institutions but also economic networks, companies, factories, entertainments, conceptions, and even human types of different and multi-identities are becoming parts of global network at present. The world which is becoming one under the same roof falls into smaller units, identities, conceptions on the ground given the polysemy recognized by globalization and while differences gain global dimension yet it vanishes within global values [1, p. 119].

Now thinkers, sociologists, politicians and experts from other areas touch issues of global value system, global societal conceptions and global social integration more and more. In this way small local problems gain global character whereas global values are shared by local forces. Because of newly emerging situation every nation strives to determine its own place in our modern world where globalization achieved its highest point in each and every field. Activities are carried out for improving certain strategies in the direction of their own aims and strategies.

The world which experienced globalization in 90s faced new political surprise. It was the silent collapse of Soviet Union which was previously accepted as an obsolete power of 90s. The destruction of gigantic Communist network made way for the revival of power which was last talked of in XIX century. This power is called Turkic World. Several Turkic republics located in the east of Turkey which was representing the only independent Turkic identity created opportunity for emergence of new world.

#### **Inter-cultural Competition and Nation-building Process**

After independence, nation-building process has become one of the major areas of state policy in the countries of the region. The main goal of this policy is to fill the identity and ideology gap that came about after the collapse of the Soviet Union and to maintain national cohesion and homogeneity. Improving national language, writing national history, resurrecting national values by using education and other propaganda tools are concrete examples of the nation-building process. But this period has not been so smooth. As a matter of fact, nation building process has been subjected to influences of various cul-

tures because of three main factors. First, the region is located at the intersection of Russian, Turkish and Islamic cultures. Second, the countries in the region have become vulnerable to influences of these cultures due to identity crisis and cultural gap which led to the demise of communism. Lastly, globalization increased the intercultural communication and interaction especially through rapidly developing and unlimited communication technologies. It is necessary to point out that rising intercultural competition during this period has been a considerable aspect of power struggles in Central Asia. Indeed, this is important as the Great Game which is based on oil and natural gas resources of the region [2. p.73].

### **The consequences of Transition to Market Economy in Central Asian Countries**

Since the beginning of 1990s, Central Asian countries have been working on transforming their economy from long lasted centrally planned and closed model into open model in which free market economy is dominant. It would be beneficial to handle the issue of transformation in these countries from the other transition economies in a different way at some points. These countries suffered from the forced togetherness with Soviet Union during the formation years especially in social, cultural and religious spheres. Moreover, because of the imposition of cultural alienation during the history of USSR, they had to deal with different difficulties after the dissolution of the Union from other transition countries. On the other hand, while being rich in terms of natural resources i.e. oil and natural gas was a burden during the emergence of USSR, it turned out to be partly both an advantage and disadvantage for the countries of the region. The effects of being rich in terms of natural resources on national and administrative levels must be taken into consideration in the assessment and interpretation of the indicators of both social and political restructuring [3. p.160].

In this respect, after independence, Central Asian countries have completed only minor part of the road to maintain their struggle. They put into practice a series of remarkable reforms in order to release their economy from centrally planned model, to establish international connections, and to diversify the products subjected to manufacture and commerce. (Güngör 2001) However, when it is compared to other transition countries they still need time to perform all reforms for the transformation to

free market economy. Particularly, the inherited inequalities in redistribution from socialist times have appeared more clearly in new order. The experience of mixed economy including removing customs and other trials in free market model resulted in many problems [4. p.75]. The share of private sector is still less than half of the national economic activities. Banking sector is mostly controlled by the state. The foreign investment per capita is still below the average rate of all countries in the world. Furthermore, since Central Asian countries do not have coast, the costs of transportation is considerably high. Increasing costs in both production and transportation has influenced drastically the economic performances of the countries mentioned [5. p.1].

### **The Hardships of Cultural Transformation Process**

Transition to free market economy deeply influenced the social and cultural structure of Turkic societies. Furthermore it radically caused changes in peoples' understanding and interpretation of life, along with basic institutional transformations led by global changes. In other words, everyday life of people has been transformed drastically from the way of life during Soviet times with the structuration of socio-economic sphere. Forming personalities which are compatible with the new values system by putting more emphasis on money and commodity fetishism and internalized the economic values of the new society requires a long time. Thus, the values of society and the perception of these have been subjected to changes according to demands of the new era. Family is the most vulnerable institution in this period.

In summary, changing processes at global level have intervened in the life world of modern family via different channels such as television, cinema, and internet and this resulted in transformation in the system of family values. Family has the central location which makes it open to any influence resulting from social transition and change. The boundaries of local social structures show the same flexibility in view of global values and pressures. Indicator for alteration can be that despite pressure from Soviet period Turkic family structure experienced harsh change after independence and this change is observed to be more rapid compared to the one observed in Soviet period. The conception of modeled individual pushes pop culture traditional Turkic societal char-

acteristics towards differentiation and even stimulates a conflict between the generations. Though it was priority for Turkic individuals to care for family in 80s yet individual concerns prevailed family values in the beginning of XXI century. Alongside with the increase of divorces it is observed that given external influences these divorces become permanent in the life of Turkic societies.

It is necessary to underline that all changing processes reflect themselves in different domains. The problematic areas of modern Turkish family are the basic value system with a special focus on its economic feature and social status. There have been significant changes in the family structure and its value system. All these changes reflect itself negatively in family as a social institution via increasing numbers of divorce rates, number of extra matrimonial births and deterioration of cultural values in almost all Turkic societies. To study the transformation in the structure of families in Turkic societies show the dynamics of transition from old to new regarding the battle of modernity and traditionalism.

Similar problems have been observed in youth issues as well. As a matter of fact one of the most important problems of these countries is the socialization of young population. Many young people today idealize the occupations which bring fame and money in short time such as being a pop singer. This desire hinders the time for the development of their skills and capabilities. Thus, it might be argued that this understanding and living style would be a significant threat for both families and societies in the near future. Therefore, there need to be new social projects for young people to facilitate their adaptation to new values system and new forms of everyday life that come along with the transition.

The world we are considering which has lived 20 years after the collapse of Soviet Union is the part of global sytem. Countries of Turkic World which globalize values appropriate to their geographical structures within global system contain strict political, economic and strategical connections. Though closeness in language, sharing joint identity and history, cultural closeness even sameness, unity in religion and in belief made it easier to perceive the conception of Turkic World still several activities were required for mentioned facts to achieve functuality within global system. These activities are being realized incrementally. Despite the fact that these republics contain obstacles derived from government

inherited from Past Soviet structure which was exposed to destruction, preponderant economic reality of the new world solves the mentioned difficulties given unbelievable power of global capital.

Political scientists mention formation of multi-polar world which was shaped during the first 10 years of XXI century. Given the fact that these poles are not politically clear yet, it means that we are living in the shaping process into which we have recently entered. "Turk" is the name of one of these poles and it should not be surprising. This world which is located on strategically important geography, with its power of affecting world economy, with its rich underground resources and the most important with its human resources from China to Mediterranean in Central Asia has just started looking for internal unity.

In this respect, the restructuring of Turkic World after 1990s which was progressive not repressive has close connection to economic and technical as well as political and cultural relations. For this reason alongside with the exchange of information and technology among the states representing Turkic World the transition of joint characteristics of their history and culture onto a new level fulfills the role of connecting link between these countries and a locomotive.

The countries composing Turkic world are traditional and closed societies mainly based on family-organizing [6. p.23]. It is unavoidable reality that this structuring is facing some societal difficulties caused by alteration since alteration brings various values and conceptions to each and every period. New societal structure constructed given functions of individual skills and talents which is differentiated from protectionist structure of closed societies is being re-shaped given new values. However like in all the cases observed within the plan of country and civilizations this societal changing process is not being an easy transition in Turkic World as well. Processes seeming to be individual cause important changes within all basic institutions of the society starting from family to political organizations. Within this frame activities, consumption, location, communication, style and habits of all the countries are exposed to changes.

The effects of globalization experienced in every field as a system of influence can be seen in internal structure of Turkic societies together with material life. The prevention of this influence leads to the formation of repressive character of political

forces in some Turkic countries yet technological development weakens the resistance of mentioned political forces. Globalization while uniting the world under technology, communication and information meanwhile spreads dominant norms and conceptions as well. These conceptions which bring forward human feelings function as a product of certain ideas and governmental formations. In this case it is unavoidable that local feelings, conceptions fall behind global knowledge values. Failure in developing the conceptions of local knowledge perceived as important problem of Turkic world can be seen as deficiency for Turkic identity within globalization. For this reason it is necessary to create regional global definitions and knowledge conceptions among Turkic societies.

On the other hand, since individuals' feelings and senses became determinant it leads to better protection of social rights resulting positive effect. Globalization negatively affects social structure of traditional family yet it produces positive effects such as individuals' joint social space.

Of course it cannot be claimed that all Turkic societies react to globalization in the same way. Compared to Turks from Central Asia, Caucasus and Anatolia, Siberian Turkic communities behave and approach differently when it comes to perceive, access and resist globalization. It is observed in the political influence which mentioned countries bring to the world. Different perceptions and conceptions are found within Turkic societies.

### Conclusion

With the failure of socialist ideology and the transformation to free market economy, the new era has started in every sphere of economic and social life in Central Asian countries. The radical rupture from socialist way of life which was shaped according to characteristics of soviet period led to new perception of life and worldview and this affected the culture and social structure in Turkic societies. The painful transformation to free market economy and the change in social infrastructure and state ideology led to dramatic change in demographic dynamics of the countries.

In this context, identifying problems and finding solutions very much depend on the development of new techniques and methods of study, especially, taking into account every particular social sphere as the study object in Central Asian countries that celebrate their 20<sup>th</sup> year of independence. This will bring more daring and effective formula to cope with not only the social and economic consequences of transition to market economy, but also, to adapt to the effects of globalization in the region. Furthermore, assessing these problems would be only possible by strengthening civil society through new solidarity groups where Turkic communities have easy access to participation and have the freedom of their self-expression.

### References

1. Dayı, Hüseyin, *Türkler ve "Öteki" leştirdiklerimiz* (Turks and Our People Who We Did Others), TİMAS publishers, İstanbul 2008.
2. Kuru, Ahmet T. *Between the state and cultural zones: Nation-building in Turkmenistan // Central Asian Survey. – Vol 21. – No 1. 2002.*
3. Demir, Musa, *Kazakistan'da Geçiş Ekonomisi Uygulamaları Ve Piyasa Ekonomisine Geçiş Süreci*, "The transition to a market economy practices and economies in transition in Kazakhstan" DİŞ TİCARET DERGİSİ, Sayı: ÖZEL SAYI, 158-179, (2002).  
[www.dtm.gov.tr/ead/DTDERGI/ocakozel2002/piyasa.htm](http://www.dtm.gov.tr/ead/DTDERGI/ocakozel2002/piyasa.htm)
4. Erkal, Mustafa, *Ana Binanın Penceresinden* (Through Window of Central Building). – İstanbul, Derin publisher, 2003.
5. Mackellar, Landis, Wörgötter, Andreas, Wörz, Julia., "Economic Development Problems of Landlocked Countries", *Transition Economies Series*, No.14, Institute For Advanced Studies, Vienna, January 2000.
6. Doğan, İsmail , *Türk Dünyası ve Küresel Değerler*, (Global Values and Turks World), Third Congress of The Union of Turkish World Sociologists, Bishkek, 2010.

А. Сулейманов

**Социологический анализ тюркских сообществ Средней Азии в годы независимости**

Глобальность, будучи явлением начала 90-х годов, стала действительностью современного периода и превратилась в мировую систему XXI века. Сегодня не только государства, государственные механизмы, международные политические организации, но в то же время экономические сети, компании, фабрики, формы развлечений, категории, даже различные многоидентичные типы людей стали частью глобальной сети. Мир, превращаясь в единый организм на вершине, в основе делится на множество единиц, идентичностей и категорий (понятий). В рамках сформированной глобальностью многозначности различия, с одной стороны, обретают глобальное измерение, а с другой – растворяются в среде более глобальных ценностей.

В данной статье рассматриваются вышеуказанные измерения глобальности, расцениваются воздействие и последствия глобальных ценностей (знание, личность, демократия, права человека, рыночная экономика, верховенство права и др.) на тюркский мир и тюркские сообщества в годы независимости.

**Ключевые слова:** глобализация, тюркский мир, тюркские сообщества.

А. Сулейманов

**Тәуелсіздік жылдарындағы Орта Азияның түрік қауымдастықтарына социологиялық талдау**

90-жылдарға тән құбылыс ретінде жаһандылық бүгінгі күннің шынайылығы ретінде болуда және 21 ғасырдың әлемдік жүйесіне айналды. Бүгінгі таңда тек мемлекеттер, мемлекеттік механизмдер, халықаралық саяси ұйымдар ғана емес, сонымен қатар экономикалық желілер, компаниялар, фабрикалар мен категориялар, тіпті адамдар да жаһандық желінің мүшесіне айналды. Қалыптасқан жаһандылықтың аясында бірі жаһандық өлшемге айналса, екінші жағынан басқа да жаһандық құндылықтар арасында кеңінен таралуда.

Аталған мақалада жаһандылықтың жоғарыда көрсетілген өлшемдері, жаһандық құндылықтардың (білім, тұлға, демократия, адам құқығы, нарықтық экономика, жоғары билік және т.б.) тәуелсіздік жылдарындағы түрік әлеміне және түрік қауымдастығына әсері мен нәтижелері қарастырылған.

**Түйін сөздер:** жаһандану, түрік әлемі, түрік қауымдастықтары.