

“FOREIGN POLICY OF TAJIKISTAN TOWARD TÜRKİYE: 1992-2022 (ROLE
THEORY AND DATA SETS ANALYSIS)”

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
OF
MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

BY

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IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SCIENCE
IN
THE DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

FEBRUARY 2025

Approval of the thesis:

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(ROLE THEORY AND DATA SETS ANALYSIS)”**

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ABSTRACT

“FOREIGN POLICY OF TAJIKISTAN TOWARD TÜRKİYE: 1992-2022 (ROLE THEORY AND DATA SETS ANALYSIS)”

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February 2025, 118 pages

This study analyzes Tajikistan's foreign policy towards Türkiye from 1992 to 2022 through a dataset analysis and role theory framework. Unlike general studies, it is based on local Tajik sources and provides insights into the diversity and depth of the relationship. The study employs qualitative analysis, using role theory to interpret foreign policy discourse, supported by a quantitative dataset analysis of key diplomatic agreements and events. The findings reveal that Tajikistan's foreign policy towards Türkiye has been largely shaped by economic and security concerns, with a notable emphasis on bilateral trade agreements and regional security cooperation. Furthermore, the study identifies a consistent alignment between discourse and practice in their diplomatic relations. This research contributes to a deeper understanding of Central Asian foreign policy, demonstrating how small states like Tajikistan navigate complex international relationships. It highlights the importance of economic and security considerations in shaping diplomatic ties with larger powers like Türkiye.

Keywords: Tajikistan-Türkiye relations, Tajikistan's foreign policy, Role Theory, Event Data set, Central Asia, Foreign policy.

ÖZ

"TACİKİSTAN'IN TÜRKİYE'YE YÖNELİK DIŞ POLİTİKASI: 1992-2022 (ROL TEORİSİ VE VERİ SETLERİ ANALİZİ)"

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Şubat 2025, 118 sayfa

Bu çalışma, 1992-2022 yılları arasında Tacikistan'ın Türkiye'ye yönelik dış politikasını, veri seti analizi ve rol teorisi çerçevesinde incelemektedir. Genel çalışmalardan farklı olarak, yerel Tacik kaynaklarına dayanmaktadır ve ilişkiyi çeşitliliği ve derinliği açısından analiz etmektedir. Çalışma, rol teorisini kullanarak dış politika söylemini yorumlamakta ve anahtar diplomatik anlaşmalar ve olayların yer aldığı niceliksel bir veri seti analiziyle desteklenmektedir. Bulgular, Tacikistan'ın Türkiye'ye yönelik dış politikasının büyük ölçüde ekonomik ve güvenlik endişeleriyle şekillendiğini, özellikle ikili ticaret anlaşmaları ve bölgesel güvenlik işbirliğine odaklanıldığını ortaya koymaktadır. Ayrıca, çalışma, diplomatik ilişkilerde söylem ile uygulama arasında tutarlı bir uyum olduğunu belirlemektedir. Bu araştırma, Orta Asya dış politikasına dair daha derin bir anlayışa katkıda bulunmakta ve küçük devletlerin, Tacikistan gibi, karmaşık uluslararası ilişkilerde nasıl hareket ettiğini göstermektedir. Çalışma, ekonomik ve güvenlik unsurlarının, Türkiye gibi büyük güçlerle diplomatik ilişkilerin şekillenmesindeki önemini vurgulamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Tacikistan-Türkiye ilişkileri, Tacikistan dış politikası, Rol Teorisi, Veri seti analizi, Orta Asya, Dış politika.

To my family, whose sacrifices have been unwavering

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

When I started my master's at Middle East Technical University, I had little knowledge of the methodology in International Relations. My curiosity about methodology began when my advisor, Işık Kuşçu Bonnenfant, took me on as part of her research project and guided me deeply. Throughout this time, she always made time for me, and with her kind treatment, encouragement, and patience, she was a constant source of help. This work would not have been possible without her. I can never thank her enough.

I am also deeply grateful to Prof. Dr. Pınar Köksal and Prof. Dr. Seriyeye Sezen for their invaluable advice whenever I turned to them. In addition, their insightful comments and contributions during my thesis defense and submission process have been truly precious.

Throughout my life, as with everything else, my family has provided endless support and made countless sacrifices when it came to my education. I sincerely thank each and every one of them from the bottom of my heart. I will always strive to remember every good thing my father has contributed to me on the path of knowledge.

I will always feel indebted to Dr. Ahmet Tetik for the sacrifices he made. Since the moment we met, he has inspired me with his deep love for knowledge and has been a source of guidance both in life and academia with his invaluable advice. I will forever be grateful to him. I would also like to express my deep gratitude to Sefa Sadık Aytekin. In a short period, through every conversation we shared, he not only helped me discover the true essence of the International Relations department but also guided me in seeing matters from a broader and more nuanced perspective.

I would also like to deeply thank Yusuf Halil Calip and Görkem Görmez, who made studying International Relations more enjoyable and with whom I had many valuable conversations.

I would also like to express my sincere thanks to Seda Uysal. She has always been an exceptional person, with her constant helpfulness and kind-heartedness. I also owe special thanks to Sevim Musaođlu and Derya Bařarangil, who have added color to my life with their sincerity and love.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

COPDAB	Conflict and Peace Data Bank
COW	Correlates of War Project
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
FBIS	Foreign Broadcast Information Service
FPA	Foreign Policy Analysis
ICB	International Crisis Behavior Project
IR	International Relations
ICFP	Inter University Comparative Foreign Policy Project
NRC	National Role Conceptions
NKVD	Narodni Komissariat Vnutrennikh Del (People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs)
SSR	Socialist Soviet Republic
UAV	Unmanned Aerial Vehicle
U.S.A.	United States of America
WEIS	World Event/Interaction Survey
WTO	World Trade Organization
YTB	Directorate of Overseas Turk

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Tajikistan, as a Central Asian country, declared its independence from the Soviet Union on September 9, 1991. However, this independence led the country to face internal conflict and political uncertainty. Despite the civil war, which began in 1992 and lasted for five years, Tajikistan continued to shape its foreign policy strategies and worked to gain recognition from foreign countries. During this process, Türkiye was one of the first countries to recognize Tajikistan's independence and send a delegation. Diplomatic relations between the two countries were officially established in 1992, and even during the intense civil war period, Türkiye maintained its embassy activities in Tajikistan. By 2022, the President of Tajikistan mentioned that bilateral relations with Türkiye had developed as stable and friendly over the years.¹

Although Tajikistan shares borders with Turkic states such as Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, it is not a Turkic state itself. This distinction makes Tajikistan's foreign policy toward Türkiye more unique and significant. The purpose of this study is to analyze Tajikistan's foreign policy toward Türkiye, despite not being a Turkic state but sharing borders with the Turkic world. As an independent state for over 30 years, Tajikistan has developed its unique foreign policies and deepened this process in economic, security, and cultural domains. However, understanding the dynamics of these relations requires evaluating Tajikistan's foreign policy toward Türkiye from a local perspective.

¹ Khovar, Президенти Ҷумҳурии Тоҷикистон Эмомалӣ Раҳмон бо Президенти Ҷумҳурии Туркия Речеп Тайип Эрдоган мулоқот намуданд (The President of the Republic of Tajikistan Emomali Rahmon met with the President of the Republic of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdogan), available at: <https://khovar.tj/2021/11/prezidenti-um-urii-to-ikiston-emomal-rahmon-bo-prezidenti-um-urii-turkiya-re-ep-tajip-erdogan-mulo-ot-namudand/> [accessed on June 10, 2024]

The research problem of this study is that Tajikistan's foreign policy toward Türkiye has not been analyzed in depth, particularly from a local perspective. Tajikistan, as a non-Turkic state neighboring the Turkic world, represents an important factor shaping its foreign relations. However, studies on Tajikistan's foreign policy, especially those based on local data, are quite limited. The aim of this study is to address this gap by understanding the internal dynamics of Tajikistan's foreign policy toward Türkiye and creating a local dataset for analysis.

The primary objective of this study is to analyze the relations between Tajikistan and Türkiye between 1992 and 2022 using dataset analysis and the framework of role theory. The study seeks to answer several research questions. First, how has Tajikistan's foreign policy toward Türkiye developed, and what factors have predominantly influenced these relations? Second, how is Türkiye perceived within Tajikistan's foreign policy, and how has this perception evolved over time? Third, what types of parallels can be observed between discourse and practice in Tajikistan's relations with Türkiye?

This research fills a critical gap in understanding the depth and diversity of Tajikistan's relations with Türkiye. First, existing literature predominantly examines Tajikistan's foreign policy from external perspectives, leaving local viewpoints underrepresented. Moreover, most research on Tajikistan focuses on democracy, economics, or nation-state building and dependency concepts. While there are some articles on its relationship with Türkiye, they are either outdated or fail to analyze the diversity of the relationship comprehensively. Given the 30 years of independence and the emerging institutionalization in Tajikistan, this study adopts a novel approach by using a local dataset and drawing upon Persian, Russian, Turkish, and English sources to analyze Tajikistan's foreign policy toward Türkiye.

Additionally, this study not only reveals the diversity and depth of Tajikistan's policy toward Türkiye but also helps predict the future trajectory of their relationship. I also use the MAXQDA application to quantitatively present the methodology, no prior study has examined the relationship between these two countries in such a manner. Furthermore, by employing role theory, the study delves deeper into Tajikistan's leadership and foreign policy. While role theory has been extensively used in Europe, America, and the Middle East, its application to Central Asia, particularly Tajikistan's foreign policy, remains rare. Thus, this study makes a significant

contribution by introducing a new country and region to this theoretical and methodological approach. Understanding how Tajikistan perceives Türkiye, and the depth and scope of these relations, is crucial not only for scholars of Central Asian politics but also for policymakers and organizations seeking to strengthen bilateral ties or enhance regional cooperation in areas like security, trade, and education.

The scope of this study is limited to analyzing Tajikistan's relations with Türkiye between 1992 and 2022. The research involves analyses conducted within the frameworks of dataset analysis and role theory. Since data forms the core of this study, I paid special attention to ensuring no data gaps. For parts where direct access to Tajikistan's data was unavailable, I utilized archives from FBIS and the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. However, given the 30-year timeframe, some data gaps might still exist. Another point is the variety of interpretations. Throughout the 18 months I spent writing this thesis, I had multiple opportunities to reread and add new interpretations. Therefore, it is highly likely that further interpretations could arise in the future.

In the rest of this section, I will first talk about role theory. I will explain when it emerged, what it advocated, how it developed and how it was evaluated within the scope of different studies. Then I will present information about the data set.

In the second chapter, I will try to examine the history of Tajikistan using local and foreign sources. I will evaluate Tajikistan's transformation within the Soviet Union in terms of social, economic and cultural aspects. The historical context of Tajikistan is essential for a comprehensive understanding of the nation and its intricate relationship with Türkiye. By examining Tajikistan's past as a cohesive narrative, readers can gain deeper insights into the cultural, political, and social dynamics that shape contemporary interactions between the two countries. Understanding this historical backdrop allows for a more nuanced appreciation of the complexities of Tajikistan's ties to Türkiye. To understand the post-independent Tajikistan, I will evaluate it within nation-state building, economic and democracy building frameworks.

I will discuss my data analysis in the third chapter. As I mentioned above, I will evaluate the diversity and depth of relations between Tajikistan and Türkiye from 1992, when official relations began, to 2022, within the framework of the data set method and role theory.

1.1. Methodological Framework

1.1.1. Role Theory

In most master's theses, the main introduction consists of the theoretical framework. But since the methodology constitutes the main essence of my thesis, I wanted to start from it first. But methodologies also fall into certain conceptual frameworks within themselves. My methodology, role theory also bears serious similarities and intertwines with one International Relations (IR) theory which is constructivism. I will explain it within the scope of role theory in the following parts.

Broadly speaking, role theory in IR aims to understand foreign policy decision-making processes from the perspective of the decision-maker. It is an approach that seeks to comprehend and explain how decision-makers perceive their state's roles and relationships with other states within the international system.

The role theory has experienced a revival in the last decade. This revival can be related to the consolidation of the individual analysis in the foreign policy analysis.² The origins of role theory continue the work of Holsti, who wanted to study foreign policy from the perspective of decision makers. However, scholars like Wahlike and Davidson analyzed the relationship between roles and behavior in the context of American policy, but Holsti was the first to classify national role conceptions and study it systematically.³

He realized that some International Relations scholars “made references to national roles as possible causal variables” but they do it without naming it specifically.⁴ So he delved into other social sciences fields to study and make role theory appropriate for the IR. His main focus was to explain the essence of the interactions between states in IR. In the article, he looked at how role theory applies to foreign policy and examined ideas about roles based on a survey of foreign policy

² Marijke Breuning, “Role Theory”, in *Routledge Handbook of Foreign Policy Analysis Methods*, ed. Patrick A. Mello and Falk Ostermann, Oxon: Routledge, 2023, p. 187.

³ Naomi Bailin Wish, “Foreign Policy Makers and Their National Role Conceptions”, *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 24, No. 4, 1980, p. 533.

⁴ K. J. Holsti, “National Role Conceptions in the Study of Foreign Policy”, *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 14, No. 3, 1970, p. 234.

statements from seventy-one governments.⁵ For him role is a kind of foreign policy commitments and behaviors that decision makers view proper for their states.⁶ He tried to understand how the outside factors shape national role concepts rather than the domestic factors. As I will explain below, it's possible to say that his works takes cues from the structural role theory.

Role theory takes its foundation from two other social sciences which are sociology and social psychology. Both of them investigate agent-structure problem which seek to find out whether the international environment pushes states and decision makers to pursue specific foreign policies or whether they have the power to shape their state's role in the international arena? While the first thesis underlines the impact of the structure the second underlines the importance of agency.

In sociology and social psychology, this debate is expressed by the interconnected research programs of role theory and symbolic interactionism which originates from the work of George Herbert Mead. In sociology role theory underlines that human agency is constrained by society. In other words, individuals are socialized to act as certain and within the bounds of rules and conventions. But symbolic interactionism argues that individuals have the ability to subvert social convention and shape their role in society and in that process modify the societal structure. Symbolic interactionism suggests that the relation between human and social structure is interactive but put greater weight on human agency. When it comes to the role theory in the foreign policy analysis both symbolic interactionism and role theory in sociology is taken into consideration but the emphasis has changed from time to time. The first generation of role theory scholars' works were mostly connected to the structural interpretation. Holsti, Westerlund, Hollis and Smith are among them. But the second generation is inspired by symbolic interactionism. Breuning, Harnisch, Thies and Wehner are eminent figures in the second generation.⁷

As mentioned above, role theory in Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) can be traced back to Holsti's initial work, who found out that IR scholars use the idea of roles

⁵ Ibid., p. 236.

⁶ Ibid., p. 245.

⁷ Marijke Breuning, "Role Theory", in *Routledge Handbook of Foreign Policy Analysis Methods*, ed. Patrick A. Mello and Falk Ostermann, Oxon: Routledge, 2023, p. 188-189.

metaphorically without mentioning the concept. That's why we can't talk about role theory in FPA before Holsti's contribution. Later Walker and Wish improved the quantitative empirical approach started by Holsti. But scholars like Hollis and Smith⁸ and Shih⁹ utilized case studies. It was Stephen Walker's "Role Theory and Foreign Policy Analysis"¹⁰ work which analyzed how roles are formed, evolved and conflict with other roles.

One of the key elements of role theory is hierarchy, which is best illustrated in Holsti's work. For example, the position of a regional leader refers to a state whose leaders recognize "unique obligations" toward other states within a specific region with which they identify.¹¹ Alternatively, the concept of a "protectee" can be considered. This term describes a situation where leaders view their country as having no specific direction, duties, or responsibilities toward the outside world. Instead, they see their country as lacking power and relying on stronger nations for protection

Holsti questioned whether the concept of "protectee" should be considered a role since roles are not inherently passive. Roles are defined by decision-makers' perceptions of what foreign policy commitments and behaviors are appropriate for their state, rather than whether those roles are passive, active, positive, or negative. For instance, instead of defining their state as a "protected entity," decision-makers might choose the role of "isolate," limiting external interactions. While there is often a connection between a state's position in the international system and its role conception, Holsti does suggest some level of agency in defining these roles. However, early role theory literature in FPA did not emphasize this agency. This lack of focus is understandable given the time period, as International Relations—especially in the United States—was heavily influenced by structural theories. The dominance of

⁸ Martin Hollis and Steeve Smith, "Roles and Reasons in Foreign Policy Decision Making", *Journal of Political Sciences*, Vol. 16, No. 3, 1986, p. 269-285.

⁹ Chih-yu Shih, "National Role Conception as Foreign Policy Motivation: The Psychocultural Bases of Chinese Diplomacy", *Political Psychology*, Vol. 9, No. 4, 1988, p. 599-631.

¹⁰ Stephen Walker, *Role Theory and Foreign Policy Analysis*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1987.

¹¹ K. J. Holsti, "National Role Conceptions in the Study of Foreign Policy", *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 14, No. 3, 1970, p. 261.

system-level analysis in the field at the time also constrained the development and impact of role theory.¹²

The second wave of prominent role theorists made significant contributions to this issue by leveraging two major developments. Initially, there was a renewed focus on the individual level of analysis following the Cold War. Secondly, there was a noticeable rise of constructivism in the field of International Relations.¹³

Role theory bears serious similarities and intertwines with constructivism. Initially, actors define their own interests; second, in order to understand the interests of the actors, scholars need to understand the norms and beliefs of these actors; and thirdly, the agent and structure influence each other. Both approaches emphasize the importance of evaluating foreign policy situations based on the perspectives of the involved actors. Constructivism and role theory acknowledge the concept of bounded rationality, which assumes that in order to understand foreign policy behavior, analysts must comprehend the decision makers' knowledge, objectives, ability to draw inferences from available information, and their problem representation or definition of the situation.¹⁴ In the third place, the impact of constructivism led to a shift away from structural role theory and toward symbolic interactionism. In other words, while the first-generation role theory portrayed the agent as constrained by the international structure, there was now a greater focus on how agents influence the structure. Although the first-generation role theorists like Holsti did acknowledge this possibility, their empirical studies did not specifically address it.

Holsti's definition of role conceptions, while just one part of the broader role theory framework, provides a useful foundation. First, it emphasizes how decision-makers perceive situations, aiming to understand their interpretation of specific contexts. Second, the definition acknowledges that decision-makers may assign multiple roles to their state, much like individuals can simultaneously identify as both a professor and a parent. Third, some of these roles may be tied to specific relationships

¹² Marijke Breuning, "Role Theory", in *Routledge Handbook of Foreign Policy Analysis Methods*, ed. Patrick A. Mello and Falk Ostermann, Oxon: Routledge, 2023, p. 190.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 190.

¹⁴ Herbert Simon, "Human Nature in Politics: The Dialogue of Psychology with Political Science", *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 79, No. 2, 1985, p. 293-304.

or categories of relationships. For example, a state acting as a regional power may also take on the role of a loyal partner to a global power. While Holsti's work laid important groundwork, it was not comprehensive. Later scholars, such as George Herbert Mead, expanded on role theory by exploring other dimensions, including symbolic interactionism.

Mead delved into the connection between the individual and society. In the field of FPA, role theory extends this concept to the relationship between the state and the international arena. According to Mead, the formation of the self, necessitates interaction with others within a society. Essentially, the self is inherently social. By engaging with others from an early age, individuals have the opportunity to adopt various roles, such as emulating adult behaviors in activities like playing the roles of parents, cooks, waiters, teachers, or doctors, and to learn societal norms and behaviors. Mead uses the terms "ego" for self and "alter" for other, and posits that the self develops through imitating and receiving input from others in society.¹⁵

Harnisch interprets Mead's ideas in the context of FPA, stating that the "self" of state A is composed of national role conceptions, which refer to the roles that its decision makers consider proper for their state. The "other" is characterized by role expectations, which are the roles perceived as appropriate for state A by decision makers representing the relevant other state(s).¹⁶

For ease Breuning call the term "others" as B. It's crucial to recognize that A's understanding of its role and B's anticipated role might not align. If state A operates based on its role understanding, its actual foreign policy behavior, known as its role enactment, may or may not match state B's expectations of A. Role socialization concept which refers to the process through which the actions of one state (A) are brought into line with the role expectations of another state (B), become important in this context. Thies argues that more powerful states have the capacity to socialize less powerful ones. This process has been studied in the context of the socialization of new states, although Thies underlines that socialization processes can continue over time

¹⁵ Goerge H. Mead, *Mind, Self, and Society*, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1934, p. 195-200.

¹⁶ Sebastian Harnisch, Cornelia Frank, Hanns W. Maull, *Role Theory in International Relations: Approach and Analysis*, London and New York: Routledge, 2011.

and interactions. He also proposes a socialization game as a theory of role modification that occurs through a series of moves. These moves show the adjustments between emerging state or less powerful A and its socializer(s) B. Throughout the moves, A adopts a role that both itself and the other (B) find appropriate for their relations. Instead of B socializing A into its "correct" role, the game acknowledges that B may modify its role expectations to align more closely with A's role conception.¹⁷

As seen, Thies' explanation is different from Mead's, which assumed that an actor's role conceptions were the result of socializing encounters with others. This formulation is now called as structural role theory. In this version of role theory, social structures take precedence and new actors are expected to be socialized into them. When it is applied to FPA, this implies that state A's role conceptions are primarily determined by what the existing international structure and socializer (the more powerful state) B within it will permit. The issue arising at both the societal and international levels is that this formulation cannot accommodate change. On the other hand, as explained above symbolic interactionism argues that actors can - and do - influence societal structure.¹⁸ Although decision makers are acknowledged to act in the name of the state so far, there has been a slip into state-centric language lastly.

Role theory scholarship in FPA recognized the importance of decision makers' perspective, but also tended to view decision makers as equal with the state. Recent role theory scholarships have started to challenge this perspective. These queries have led to the development of new concepts. Domestic role contestation, which refers to disagreement within the state about the role(s) the state should play on the international stage. Cantir and Kaarbo define this in relation to horizontal and vertical role contestation. Horizontal role contestation is about the state's role(s) among decision makers, both within the government and also between governing and opposition

¹⁷ Cameron Thies, *The United States, Israel, and the Search for International Order: Socializing States*, London: Routledge, 2013, p. 101-103.

Cameron Thies, "International Socialization Processes vs. Israeli National Role Conceptions: Can Role Theory Integrate IR Theory and Foreign Policy Analysis?", *Foreign Policy Analysis*, Vol. 8, No: 1, 2012, p. 25-46.

¹⁸ Marijke Breuning, "Role Theory", in *Routledge Handbook of Foreign Policy Analysis Methods*, ed. Patrick A. Mello and Falk Ostermann, Oxon: Routledge, 2023, p. 192.

segment. Vertical role contestation involves disparities between decision makers and the domestic public regarding the state's roles.¹⁹

In FPA, role theory has its own set of terminology and concepts, along with methodological preferences for its empirical research. During the initial phase of role theory analysis, content analysis was the primary empirical approach. It involved gathering statements from decision makers and/or foreign policy elites to represent the collective national role conception(s) of the state. Holsti and Walker's works can be mentioned as an example. As role theory's concepts evolved, there was a move towards different empirical methods in its second generation. While content analysis remains a part of role theory, recent work is more interested in the prevalence of related or conflicting role conceptions among decision makers. Hansel and Möller's and Breuning works are example of this. In addition to content analysis, scholars now also use narrative analysis, which can trace shifts resulting from interaction. Some scholars also use case study analysis. Other work uses case studies in a more traditional manner, either working inductively or demonstrating the plausibility of theoretical propositions.

In conclusion, each of these empirical strategies has its own benefits and contributes to the advancement of knowledge in specific research questions in role theory. The following section will provide brief examples of the three key empirical strategies employed by role theorists: content analysis, narrative analysis, and case study analysis.

As explained above, Holsti's empirical strategy was focused on content analysis and continues to be a methodological approach that is used in FPA. It is a flexible methodology with many variations. Content analysis traditionally involved human coders which is labor and time intensive, but there are now many computer programs available to assist. Automated content analysis generally uses vocabularies that look for specific words and phrases. It has the advantage of processing large volumes of text quickly and accurately. The validity of its measures depends on a well-

¹⁹ Christian Cantir and Juliet Kaarbo, "Unpacking Ego in Role Theory: Vertical and Horizontal Role Contestation and Foreign Policy", in *Domestic Role Contestation, Foreign Policy, and International Relations*, ed. Christian Cantir and Juliet Kaarbo, New York: Routledge, 2016, p. 9-11.

designed coding scheme, which is also true of manual content analysis. However, human coding gives the chance of evaluating nuances in language and require a more interpretive approach. Well-designed content analysis coding schemes provide precise guidance to facilitate consistent coding decisions and, thus, contribute to reliable measurement. At the same time, the coding scheme must be designed to capture those elements of speech or text that most accurately represent the role concepts. This ensures the validity of the measures.

Another methodological strategy known as narrative analysis has gained popularity within the field of FPA. Narrative analysis, similar to content analysis, utilizes speech and text as its primary sources, but it is more focused on interpretation than content analysis. According to Wehner narrative analysis allows researchers to make strong interpretations of the events that form the basis of foreign policy traditions and dilemmas.²⁰

The first step is to gather information on topic. This source includes official documents, interview with decision makers, primary and secondary sources. After collection of the sources the writer should precise the time, location and main actor. To build a comprehensive narrative other viewpoints domestically and internationally should be considered. Narrative analysis not only constructs events but also help the analyzer to identify role conceptions and enactments in leaders. Wehner uses the term "ruling narratives" to define "stories adopted by decision-making actors to frame their world".²¹ For example, in one of his work, he employed narrative analysis to explore the role expectations of secondary power decision makers in South America regarding Brazil.²² McCourt used a similar approach to examine the Britain's decision to reclaim the Falklands in 1982.²³

²⁰ Leslie E. Wehner, "The Narration of Roles in Foreign Policy Analysis", *Journal of International Relations and Development*, Vol. 23, No. 2, 2020, p. 368.

²¹ Ibid., p. 360.

²² Leslie E. Wehner, "Role Expectation as Foreign Policy: South American Secondary Powers' Expectations of Brazil as a Regional Power", *Foreign Policy Analysis*, Vol. 11, No. 4, 2015, p. 435-455.

²³ David M. McCourt, "Role-Playing and Identity Affirmation in International Politics: Britain's

As a whole, narrative analysis is an interpretive approach that analyze the perspective of the relevant decision makers. However, narrative analysis also bears similarities to case study analysis.

Case studies are a widely used research methodology within role theory scholarship. These are not entirely different from the previous mentioned approaches. Some case study designs involve content analysis or narrative analysis. Research based on case studies can use either a single case or a small number of cases to formulate hypotheses or test a theory. Certain studies explore a single case, while others provide a well-structured and focused comparison of a small number of carefully chosen cases. Guimarães' provides an outstanding illustration of comparative case study analysis.²⁴

As the descriptions indicate, these three types of empirical analyses are distinct and possess different strengths, yet also share commonalities. Each of them provides valuable empirical strategies for role theory research. After examining Tajikistan's foreign policy towards Türkiye in the third chapter, I will evaluate the findings I have obtained in the conclusion section within the appropriate framework explained here.

1.1.2. Event Data

Although most studies focus on specifying national role conceptions, there is a lack of research focusing on how these are put into practice. Therefore, a tool should be developed to measure the extent to which these narratives are pursued in practice. Consequently, in addition to acknowledging the importance of decision makers' perceptions, it is crucial to pay sufficient attention to the practical implementation. Event data can thus help fill the gap in role theory.

An 'event' is simply a formalized observation of a conflictual or cooperative interaction between states. Scholars utilize event data to observe real foreign policy actions of states and identify patterns in foreign policy. Event data is generated by analyzing numerous newspaper reports on the day-to-day interactions of nation-states and assigning a numerical score or categorical code to each interaction. Event data is

Reinvasion of the Falklands, 1982”, *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 37, 2011, p. 1599-1621.

²⁴ Marijke Breuning, “Role Theory”, in *Routledge Handbook of Foreign Policy Analysis Methods*, ed. Patrick A. Mello and Falk Ostermann, Oxon: Routledge, 2023, p. 196.

based on patterns of state behavior. Researchers collect stories, code data, and use quantitative analysis to identify generalizable patterns and predict potential future behavior. The Inter University Comparative Foreign Policy Project (ICFP) was a major project in the United States during the 1960s–1970s. Other projects driven by event data include the World Event/Interaction Survey (WEIS), the Conflict and Peace Data Bank (COPDAB), the International Crisis Behavior Project (ICB), and the Correlates of War Project (COW).²⁵ In the past, human analysts were responsible for collecting news reports and hand-coding each event in datasets like WEIS and COPDAB. However, more recent versions of event data, such as Kansas Event Data System (KEDS)²⁶ and Conflict and Mediation Event Observations (CAMEO), use a software program called Text Analysis by Augmenting Replacement Instructions (TABARI) that is specifically designed for generating event data."²⁷

²⁵ Huiyun Feng and Kai He, “Comparative Foreign Policy”, in *Routledge Handbook of Foreign Policy Analysis Methods*, ed. Patrick A. Mello and Falk Ostermann, Oxon: Routledge, 2023, p. 291-292.

²⁶ Philip A. Schrodt, “Kansas Event Data System (KEDS)”, <https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/EXX5RM>, 2008.

²⁷ Clionadh Raleigh and Roudabeh Kishi, “Conflict Event Data”, in *Routledge Handbook of Foreign Policy Analysis Methods*, ed. Patrick A. Mello and Falk Ostermann, Oxon: Routledge, 2023, p. 553-554.

CHAPTER 2

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The first part of the chapter aims to provide a history of Tajikistan, drawing upon both foreign and local Tajik sources. The discussion will start with focusing on Tajikistan's emergence as a republic in the 1920s, following that I will explain how Tajikistan became a republic within the Soviet Union and its development over the years with focusing on its economy, culture and socio-political situation. In the second part of the chapter, I will briefly examine independent Tajikistan in terms of nation-state, economy, religion, democracy, administration and foreign policy.

2.1. National and Administrative Division of Central Asia

Before the Russian Empire expanded its military presence into Turkestan, three dynasties ruled the region: The Khanates of Qoqand and Khiva, as well as the Bukhara Emirate.²⁸ Although these territories were governed by Uzbeks, the boundaries and identities in Central Asia were constantly in flux.²⁹ In the late 19th century, czarist Russia successfully conquered and established the Governorate-General of Turkestan, incorporating the former Khanate of Qoqand and making Tashkent the administrative center.³⁰ While Bukhara maintained its nominal independence, Khiva became a protectorate administered from Petroaleksandrovsk and was subordinate to Tashkent.

²⁸ Iskhakov F, *Natsionalnaya politika tsarizma v Turkestane (1867-1917) (National policy of a tsarism in Turkestan)*, Tashkent: Agt-Yaekh, 1997, p. 17.

²⁹ Yuri Bregel, *An Historical Atlas of Central Asia*, Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2003, p. 62.

Iskhakov F, *Natsionalnaya politika tsarizma v Turkestane (1867-1917)*, Tashkent: Agt-Yaekh, 1997, p. 16.

³⁰ Dilorom Agzamovna and Edvard Vasil'evich Rtveldzadze, *Ocherki po istorii gosudarstvennosti Uzbekistana (Essays on the History of the State of Uzbekistan)*, Tashkent: Sharq Publishing, 2001, p. 122.

Although Russian forces initially did not intend to establish formal rule over the region, the conquest gradually progressed and redefined borders in the following years. For instance, the Qoqand Khanate was entirely abolished, and all its territories were annexed.³¹

The significant shifts that occurred in the core of the Russian Empire during the early 1900s did not immediately impact its southern protectorates. At first, the Turkestan Committee in Tashkent served as the representative of the Provisional Government in Petrograd. After October 1917, the Tashkent Soviet took over. Over the years that followed, the Khorazmian People's Soviet Republic and Bukharan People's Soviet Republic were established with the aid of the Soviets, marking the end of monarchical despotism and tsarist colonialism.³²

During the Soviet era, Central Asia was divided nationally and administratively three times. For the first time, in 1918-1920, they started trying to divide the Republic of Turkestan into national districts. To realize this goal, they studied many aspects of the division. For example, they studied the issue of the national geography of Turkestan, the determination of the total settlement areas of its nations, the possibilities of these nations to have leading personnel and other issues. During this period, a lot of work was done on the issue of establishing the distribution commissions, its sub-commissions and the formation of public opinion on the issue of national commissions. National commissions were established for most races. In 1921-1923, the political, economic and cultural foundations of national division were prepared.

The initiators of the national-administrative division of Turkestan were the governments of Russia and Turkestan. The beginning of the campaign for national division began with the decision of the Turkestan Commission in January of 1920. In February 1920, people's republics were established in Khiva and in September of the same year in Bukhara, which were also multi-ethnic, and there was a need to carry out national division in these republics. First, Bukhara and Khorazm were people's republics. The diversity of their economic and political structure with the civil war did not allow for distribution. But the Central Committee of the Communist Party started

³¹ Svat Soucek, *A History of Inner Asia*, Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012, p. 198.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 222.

to establish national commissions for the national administrative division of these three republics. Uzbek, Turkmen, Kyrgyz, Karakalpak, even Armenian commissions were established, but the Tajik commission was not established at that stage.

In October of 1924, the Central Executive Committee of the USSR officially approved the territorial delimitation decisions made by regional bodies in Central Asia. This resulted in the formation of three levels of Soviet statehood, with the highest being the Socialist Soviet Republic (SSR) - a union member with full sovereignty and the right to secession. Autonomous republics (ASSR) were also established within a socialist republic and had a degree of autonomy second only to the SSR. Lastly, there were autonomous oblasts, regions, national districts, village soviets, and even collective farms that provided cultural autonomy to ethnic groups within an SSR or ASSR.³³ As a result, three major national units emerged initially: the Kirgiz (Kazakh ASSR in 1920) Autonomous Socialist Republic within the Russian Federation, the Turkmen SSR and the Uzbek SSR, which initially included the territory of Bukhara SSR, western parts of Khorazm SSR (Khiva) and Sirdaryinskaya, Samarkandskaya and Ferganskaya oblasts of the Turkestan ASSR.³⁴

Another thing is that during this period the political, military and economic unity of the republics were started establishing: military unity in the existence of the unified Red Army of the Soviet Union; economic unity was manifested in the existence of a single economic structure in the form of the Supreme Council of People's Economy, and political unity in their Soviet and socialist structure. Even though they were consolidated, hunger, misery and disease had a serious impact on the region. For example, they estimate that nearly 400,000 people died of starvation in the Fergana region in the winter of 1923.³⁵

The governmental and administrative structure of Soviet Tajikistan was created within the of Turkestan and Bukhara. After the establishment of Khorazm and Bukhara, the second stage of national and administrative division began in the whole

³³ Ronald G. Suny and Terry Martin, *A State of Nations: Empire and Nation-Making in the Age of Lenin and Stalin*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001, p. 73.

³⁴ Yuri Bregel, *An historical atlas of Central Asia*, Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2003, p. 94.

³⁵ Paul Bergne, *The Birth of Tajikistan: National Identity and the Origins of the Republic*, London, New York: I.B. Tauris, 2007, p. 21.

of Central Asia, but by the end of 1923 there was no progress in this matter, because Bukhara was surrounded by rings of civil war, and the issue of nationalization was not resolved. In 1924, the issue of partition was raised again, but the Tajik commission had not yet been established.

From February to April 1924, the Central Committee of the Turkestan, Bukhara and Khorazm discussed the issues of the division of Central Asia, made relevant decisions regarding their consent and implementation of the partition, and presented them to the Political Bureau of the Central Committee. On April 5, 1924, the Central Committee of the Communist Party discussed the issue of partition and approved the decisions. On June 12, the Central Committee of the People's Republic of Uzbekistan adopted a decision "On the national division of the Central Asian republics" and also defined the structure of Tajikistan as an Autonomous Region within Uzbekistan.³⁶

On the September of the same year relevant councils gave their consent on the national and administrative division and necessary commissions and committee were established to carry out the decision. Political bureau approved the need to establish the Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic of Tajikistan within Uzbekistan. This indicator became the basis of the decision of October 14, 1924 when regarding the fate of the Tajik people, the following decision was made: On the basis of fulfilling the wishes of the masses of workers and farmers of the Tajik people, the Tajik people should be given the right to leave the Turkestan SSR and establish the Tajikistan Soviet Socialist Republic.³⁷

The Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic of Tajikistan was established on the basis of the present-day districts of Istaravshan, Gonchi, Shahrison, Aini, Maschohi-Kuhi and Panjakent of the Turkestan SSR and Dushanbe (renamed Stalinabad in 1929 and given back its name of Dushanbe in 1961), Kurgonteppa, Kulob and Garm regions of the Eastern Bukhara SSR. The territory of Tajikistan was 135,620 square kilometers and its population was 739,503 people. 135,665 people from Turkestan and 603,858 people from Bukhara joined Tajikistan. The territory of

³⁶ Nozim Hakimov, *Tarixhi Khalqi Tojik (The History of Tajik People)*, Dushanbe: Maorif, 2017, p. 89.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 92.

Turkestan consisted of two regions - Uroteppa and Panjakent, and Bukhara consisted of 4 regions - Dushanbe, Kurgonteppa, Kulob and Garm. Later, in December 1924, the Pamir Basin was added to Tajikistan, and on January 2, 1925, it was transformed into the Badakhshan Mountainous Autonomous Province.³⁸

The regulation in 1924 did not remain constant for the following years. After several meetings among councils in 1929, the decision of the Second Congress of the Councils of the Tajikistan SSR was discussed by the Third Congress of the Councils of the Uzbek SSR, and a decision was made to transfer Khujand okrug (an administrative division which is more or less equivalent to a region) to Tajikistan. On June 13, 1929, the Central Committee of the SSR of Uzbekistan adopted the decision to separate Tajikistan from Uzbekistan and established a special commission for the distribution of property under the leadership of Yuldosh Okhunboboev. On August 11 and 24, 1929, the Presidium of the Central Committee of Tajikistan discussed the same issue of separation from Uzbekistan and inclusion of Tajikistan into the USSR and decided to establish the Soviet Socialist Republic of Tajikistan. The constitution of the Tajik SSR was officially adopted in 1931 during the Fourth Congress of the Republic's Soviets, thereby establishing the Tajik SSR.

The formation of Tajikistan SRR took place from top to bottom rather than from bottom to top. While in the 1920s about 70 percent of the population of Tajikistan was living in the mountains³⁹ there were several reasons for their promotion. The initial cause can be attributed to the Piedmont principle, which emphasizes the advancement of an ethnic group to attract their kin from other countries. This is evident when considering the areas of Afghanistan bordering Tajikistan, which are predominantly Persian-speaking. Therefore, the developed Tajik nation could serve as a demonstration of Soviet power and influence to Persian-speaking neighbors and their allies, which positioned the Tajiks as strategically significant.⁴⁰ Consequently, East Bukhara was rebranded as Tajikistan, and the emergence of Tajikistan should be

³⁸ Ibid., p. 48.

³⁹ Aziz Niyazi, Migration, Demography and Socio-Ecological Processes in Tajikistan, *JCAS Symposium Series*, Vol. 9, 2002, p. 169–71.

⁴⁰ Francine Hirsch, *Empire of Nations: Ethnographic Knowledge and the Making of the Soviet Union*, New York: Cornell University Press, 2005, p. 175.

analyzed within a broader geopolitical framework. Another reason for the elevation of Tajikistan was rooted in class dynamics: the non-tribal Tajiks were depicted as oppressed groups who had been "colonized" by previous Bukharan elites, who were purportedly affiliated with tribal groups. This presented a compelling case for the application of decolonization logic or "anticolonial reparation."⁴¹ Additionally, the Bolsheviks considered a settled way of life to be more progressive than a nomadic one and viewed the agricultural economy as more conducive to the Soviet project, all of which aligned with the circumstances of the Tajiks. Finally, the Turkic tribal groups were seen as posing a greater military threat to the Soviets. On the other hand, Tajik nationalists like historian Rahim Masov attribute the lack of development of their national consciousness and their late development to the influence of pan-Turkism.⁴²

2.2. Tajikistan Under the Soviet Rule

2.2.1. Social and Political Situation

As seen above, the state and government in Tajikistan were formed under the influence of the Socialist Revolution of 1917 and the laws and decisions adopted by it. During the October Revolution, the political power was achieved; but it existed in the form of a declaration because the local and executive power was still in the hands of the old administrative apparatus. The process of gaining political power in Turkestan was not an immediate event. This process began in November 1917 and lasted until the end of 1920s.

While the Soviet were trying to impose their new structure, a serious anti-Soviet movement continued to harm them. One of this war which lasted between 1918-1923 was between the old structure supporters - local feudal lords on the one hand, and the new Soviet system and its supporters on the other. In practice, the former ruling class, whose privileges were removed by the revolution, wanted to return those privileges, and the lower class, for whom the revolution and Soviet power had announced many privileges, approved the new system and chose to protect it.

⁴¹ Terry Martin, "The Origins of Soviet Ethnic Cleansing", *Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 70, No. 4, 1998, p. 828.

⁴² Rahim Masov, *Tadzhiki: Istoria Natsionalnoi Tragedii*, Dushanbe: Irfon, 2008, p. 53.

These wars continued in different regions of Central Asia, and in Tajikistan it mainly continued in Sugh, Khujand, Mastchoh, Panjakent and Pamir. The anti-Soviet movement took a more serious form when Enver Pasha, the former war minister in the Ottomans, managed to organize an army named Basmachi fighters. The anti-Soviet forces now had a headquarters, a quartermaster service (troop regulation), a hospital and infirmary, and a rear guard. Starting from 1922 the All-Union Government discussed and established commission and committee on Turkestan. In the same year they managed to organize an army and declared "war on terrorism" which their main goal was to fight against Enver Pasha. The fight between the Soviet troops and Enver Pasha occurred severely in different parts of Tajikistan where mostly Enver Pasha had to retreat. On July 17-19, 1922, a fierce battle took place in Baljuvan and Enver Pasha was defeated. Enver Pasha with 500 soldiers, retreated to the village of Obdara, and at the same time he was planning his escape to Afghanistan, and on August 4, 1922, he tried to break through the ranks of the Soviet army and pass through Baharak but he could not. Enver Pasha died after being wounded for the fifth time. With this, the activities of insurgency under the leadership of Enver Pasha ended.⁴³ On August 19, 1922, the Central Committee heard the news about Enver Pasha's death and expressed its gratitude to the Red Army. Although the Enver Pasha conflict was over, the civil war was not over. Now the local leader whose name was Ibrahimbek and another Turkish soldier named Sami Pasha entered the political arena. Although the conflict of the leader with the Soviet troops were severe, they share the same fate with Enver Pasha. The re-establishment of the authorities of the Soviet Power in the contemporary Tajikistan continued until the middle of 1930.

To gain control over Tajikistan's land, the Soviet government implemented a variety of approaches. Alongside deploying military forces to suppress any opposition, they also enticed the populace with land grants, allied with influential local leaders, and constructed infrastructure to enable territorial expansion. Furthermore, the Soviet

⁴³ Paul Bergne, *The Birth of Tajikistan: National Identity and the Origins of the Republic*, London, New York: I.B. Tauris, 2007, p. 28-32.

government dispatched expeditions and committees to assess the situation and suggest effective tactics for managing the area.⁴⁴

The years 1924-1929 in international politics included the years of stabilization of socialist structures leading to the process of changing the Soviet power from a declarative nature to a social one, that is, introducing the Soviet Government as a people's government. Not everyone in the USSR accepted the policy of making no concessions to capitalism, ideas such as Bukharinism, Zinovievism and Trotskyism were against it. The result of this struggle was the recognition and acceptance of the ideology of Marxism, the theory of Leninism and Stalinism and their support.⁴⁵ The times did not cultivate alternative ideas. One-party rule, but only the Communist Party and Communist politics established bodies to manage the society. These bodies acted as a party dictatorship in all areas: in the administrations of state and public protection, organization and management of production. In this system, neither the leaders nor sometimes the rank-and-file members could reach their positions without the nomination of the party.

In the 1930s, the Communist Party of Tajikistan was the only political party and was consisted of 7 regional organizations (Gharm, Dushanbe, Kulob, Qurghonteppa, Panjakent, Uroteppa, Khujand). The first founding meeting of the Communist Party of Tajikistan was held on June 6-15, 1930 in Dushanbe and approved the members of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Tajikistan. Mirzo Dovud Huseynov first secretary and Shirinshoh Shohtemur was elected the second secretary.⁴⁶

Other institutions that had an impact on society in the 1930s were the OGPU (obidinyoe gasudarstvenoe politicheskoe upravleniye) / NKVD (narodni komissariat vnutrennikh del), councils and Komsomol (youth organization). OGPU and later NKVD were the political police of the Soviet Union acted in Tajikistan. In the 1930s,

⁴⁴ Botakoz Kassymbekova, *Despite Culture: Early Soviet Rule in Tajikistan*, Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2016, p. 55.

⁴⁵ Peter Kenez, *A History of the Soviet Union from the Beginning to the End*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006, p. 78-79.

⁴⁶ Nozim Hakimov, *Tarikhii Khalqi Tojik (The History of Tajik People)*, Dushanbe: Maorif, 2017, p. 194

the Soviet Union implemented a policy to revive councils and bring them closer to the masses. The policy was successful in activating workers' participation in election campaigns and making elections a popular campaign. However, the councils gradually came under the influence of the Communist Party, with the establishment of party groups of councils. As a result, the councils became a department of the Communist Party as a state authority. When it comes to the Komsomol, they assisted the Communist Party of the Republic of Tajikistan. They were at the forefront of industrialization, rural collectivization, anti-insurgency, and eradication of illiteracy. By the end of 1929, there were more than 400 Komsomol cells in the Tajikistan SSR.⁴⁷ Following the conclusion of the war, the Soviet government implemented a series of measures to enhance the well-being of its citizens. Notably, workers were transitioned to an 8-hour workday and a 6-day work week with restored labor holidays. Between 1946 and 1950, the cost of food and clothing declined significantly on three separate occasions. This period also saw an increase in workers' wages and improved living conditions for rural workers. The state allocated over 3 million Sum towards social and cultural initiatives, and war-disabled individuals received close to 70 million Sum in pension and material assistance by 1950.⁴⁸ Investment in the construction and development of towns and villages also became a top priority. Whereas 418.3 thousand square meters of housing were built between 1946 and 1950, the following decade saw the construction of over 1 million square meters of residential property by 1960.⁴⁹ Another noteworthy issue for Tajikistan in these years was the election of Bobojon Ghafurov as president by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Tajikistan in 1946. The initiative of Bobojon Ghafurov to invite the best specialists and scientists from the brotherly republics, a great positive impact on the progress of the economic and cultural life of Tajikistan was achieved.

Despite notable advancements in the country during the 1970s and early 1980s, there were critical deficiencies present in political, economic, and cultural aspects of life. This era in Soviet history is referred to as the "period of stagnation", characterized

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 195.

⁴⁸ Rohat Nabiyeva and Malika Zikryoev, *Tarixhi Khalqi Tojik (The History of Tajik People)*, Dushanbe: Maorif, 2016, p. 70-75.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 40.

by adverse developments in the political, economic-social, and spiritual domains. From a political perspective, the data looks very systematic and orderly in the 60s and 70s. For example, over the years, the number of party organizations in Tajikistan has steadily risen. By the end of 1980, the Communist Party of Tajikistan had expanded to include four regional committees, 14 city committees, and 35 district party committees. Additionally, the number of party members has shown a similar upward trend. Women have played a significant role in this growth, with their representation in the Communist Party of Tajikistan increasing from 9,651 in 1961 (comprising 18.6 percent of the total) to 23,231 in 1980 (constituting 21.9 percent).⁵⁰ However, the Communist Party had significant deficiencies in its operation. Internal affairs were subject to administrative oversight, party membership was granted based on personal connections and family ties, the implementation of adopted decisions lacked appropriate oversight, and leading party organizations occasionally superseded economic offices and provided inaccurate reports. This was documented at the VII Plenum of the Central Committee of the Republic of Tajikistan on April 11-12, 1961. The plenum highlighted that certain officials of the republic had succumbed to false praise, attempted to conceal their shortcomings and attain an undeserved reputation, and pursued the path of deception by misleading the party, state, and people. In 1961, Tursunbay Uljaboyev, who was the first secretary of the Communist Party of Tajikistan, was dismissed from his position due to a scandal involving local officials who were found to be inflating their reports on cotton production.⁵¹

The failure to carry out the 9-10 five-year plans for key indicators resulted in a crisis situation that impacted economic, social, political, and spiritual aspects of life. The economic crisis was caused by weakened management and control over production enterprises, as well as a lack of timely introduction of new equipment and advanced technology. Additionally, a decrease in labor productivity, insufficient motivation, and non-observance of production discipline contributed to the crisis.⁵²

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 50.

⁵¹ Adeb Khalid, *Central Asia: A New History from the Imperial Conquest to the Present*, Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2021, p. 311.

⁵² Rohat Nabiyeva and Malika Zikryoev, *Tarikhi Khalqi Tojik (The History of Tajik People)*, Dushanbe: Maorif, 2016, p. 90.

Money allocated for construction in Tajikistan was not used effectively, causing public and state property to be neglected and increasing theft. This negatively impacted citizens' standard of living and caused dissatisfaction. The social sphere saw a decrease in citizens' self-activity, social justice violations, and a tendency to take more without working. Crime, bribery, fraud, localism, drunkenness and theft increased. Non-transparent decision-making and non-observance of socialist legality negatively impacted the political structure, leading to increasing opposition forces against the Communist Party, such as the "Rastokhez" movement, the "Rubaru" club, and various new organizations and parties. Lastly, there were serious issues in foreign policy, such as interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan, which damaged the reputation of the Soviet Union in the international arena.⁵³

2.2.2. Economy

As the Soviet Union consolidated their power on regions included in contemporary Tajikistan, they engaged in economic reforms similar to other Soviet regions. With the onslaught of above-mentioned war, the Soviet state switched from the policy of introducing labor control over production and distribution of manufactured products to the immediate nationalization of enterprises that had strategic-military importance. For example, on March 24, 1918, based on the decision of the Khujand District Council, nine cotton ginning factories and soap factories in the north of Tajikistan were nationalized. In September, the leather industry was nationalized, and in May 1919, tanneries, wineries, administrative buildings belonging to banks and offices of the "SANTO" oil field, Sulukta and Shurob coal mines were nationalized. Along with it, since Tajikistan was an agricultural country, committees were established to provide the farmers with land. A total of two thousand acres of land was confiscated.⁵⁴ Later, the confiscation of feudal lands continued within the framework of the "military communism" policy. This was a desperate policy of the Soviet Government for its own protection. Its political basis was the protection of the dictatorship of the proletariat with weapons, and its economic basis was to supply the Red Army and cities with agricultural products. This policy was carried out on the

⁵³ Ibid., p. 92.

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 68.

basis of (forced) food confiscation, that is, the Soviet authorities forcibly removed surplus food products from farmers. Farmers were left with as much grain as would be enough for annual food and future seeds.⁵⁵

After the revolution and civil war, the Soviet state was emerging with a crippled economy, broken enterprises and a destroyed agricultural sector. To solve this issue, they turned to a new free economic policy (NEP). The state could not launch these industrial enterprises on its own. Therefore, it abandoned the policy of nationalization and returned, sold or leased them to their owners or to those who could operate the enterprise under certain conditions. There were no such enterprises in Tajikistan. The new economic policy in Tajikistan initially covered most of the villages.

In 1921, the government of the Republic of Turkestan made decisions on the establishment of agricultural cooperatives. Based on these decisions, 11 agricultural cooperatives were established in northern Tajikistan in 1923-1924, all of which were consumer cooperatives, that is, they received seeds, farm equipment, livestock, even cloth, money, and preferential loans from the state. Thus, the years 1917-1924 were not only an important period of economic and social development of the village, but also the period of bringing Tajik peasants to the Soviets and socialism.

Starting from 1927 cooperatives started to sell the products produced by the farmers and in exchange provide them with necessary consumer goods. In other words, cooperatives moved from consumer activities to supply and sales activities. In the field of industry, Tajikistan's manufacturing industry was not that large. There were only 22 factory-type enterprises. All of them were located in the Khujand which was part of Uzbekistan until 1929. In the southern and central part of the republic, except for a diesel electric station in Dushanbe city, which was built to supply electricity to the radio station of Tajikistan, there was no other factory-type enterprise.⁵⁶

One of the important factors that started to develop in the 1925s and played a role in the development of the country in the coming years is the railways. In 1926-

⁵⁵ Peter Kenez, *A History of the Soviet Union from the Beginning to the End*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006, p. 28-29.

⁵⁶ Nozim Hakimov, *Tarixhi Khalqi Tojik (The History of Tajik People)*, Dushanbe: Maorif, 2017, p. 111.

1929, the Tirmiz-Dushanbe railway was built, which played an extremely important role in the economic life of Tajikistan. This road connected Tajikistan with other republics and facilitated the transportation of industrial goods and passengers. By the end of 1933, the Republic had a total of 12,000 kilometers of roads that were capable of accommodating vehicular traffic. Of those, 4,800 kilometers were specifically designed for automobiles.⁵⁷ These roads did not only provide economic benefit; moreover, it was beneficial in expanding the political power of the Soviet and making it effective.

The construction of industrial enterprises was carried out in the 1930s according to the first (1928-1932), second (1933-1937) and third (1938-1942) five-year state plans. Investments in the industry increased exponentially in those years. For example, in the first five-year period, only 25.2 million Sum were allocated to the industry in 1928, which was 14% of the five-year budget, but in the second five-year period, it was increased to 371.4 million Sum, which was almost 27% of the total amount. The industrial enterprises of Tajikistan produced products in the amount of 51 million Sum in the first five-year period and in the amount of 187 million Sum in the second five-year period. In the third five-year period, the share of funds allocated for industry exceeded 50% of the total amount.⁵⁸ During the industrialization period, many courses were opened to reduce illiteracy among workers in order to connect production with quality workers. In 1929-1932, more than 20,000 workers graduated from schools and courses for the elimination of illiteracy.⁵⁹

It should be underlined that the plan was not just a strategic objective but rather an attempt to replace the law, as it was described as "the expression of the will of a society without class distinctions."⁶⁰ Therefore, the direct responsibility for

⁵⁷ William P. Coates and Zelda K. Coates, *Soviets in Central Asia*, London: Red Star Publishers, 1951, p. 186

⁵⁸ Nozim Hakimov, *Tarikhi Khalqi Tojik (The History of Tajik People)*, Dushanbe: Maorif, 2017, p. 155-156.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 168.

⁶⁰ Harold Berman, *Justice in the U.S.S.R.*, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1963, p. 39.

implementing the plan fell on the justice institutions, with the aim of transforming Soviet society and ensuring its everlasting fairness.

In the field of agriculture, in 1929, the USSR started a compulsory collectivization policy. Tajikistan was not prepared for this policy as land reform was incomplete, and kulaks had a significant impact. The period of collectivization brought with it a great deal of slander, trials, rivalry and unrest. The implementation of collectivization led Soviet officials to carry out extensive mass repressions in the agricultural campaigns. In 1930, the OGPU was tasked with repressing 1,000 kulaks and anyone who opposed collectivization in Tajikistan through expropriation, forced resettlement, and imprisonment. The OGPU not only fulfilled the plan for repressions but exceeded it by repressing 1,224 individuals. In 1931, it repressed 5,840 people and deported 6,000 families from Uzbekistan and Tajikistan to the Caucasus.⁶¹ The agriculture policies, unpaid work conditions, and pressure from the OGPU forced some people to leave for Afghanistan⁶² or seek ways to help the remaining Basmachis.

Local people did not have much idea about the decisions taken by the Soviets at the center. In addition, as mentioned above, the low literacy rate made things even more difficult. To establish new farms, many foreign experts were sent to Tajikistan in 1930,⁶³ and the year was declared as the year of TOZs⁶⁴. By the end of May, there were 526 collective farms in the republic, and more than 500 were TOZs. To accelerate collectivization, campaigns were held in 1931, resulting in 2554 collective farms in

⁶¹ Botakoz Kassymbekova, *Despite Culture: Early Soviet Rule in Tajikistan*, Pittsburg: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2016, p. 88-89

⁶² Ibid. p. 120.

⁶³ Botakoz Kassymbekova and Christian Teichmann, "The Red Man's Burden: Soviet European Official in Central Asia in the 1920s and 1930s", in *Helpless Imperialists: Imperial Failure, Fear and Radicalization*, ed. Maurus Reinkowski and Gregor Thum, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013, p. 170.

⁶⁴ The organization known as TOZ was an abbreviation for the Association for the Joint Cultivation of Land (Tovarishchestvo Po Sovmestnoj Obrabotke Zemli), which was a public land development company. This mutual association of land development operated from 1918 to 1937 and was also a type of collective farming, commonly referred to as kolkhoz.

the republic by 1932. In cotton cultivation, collective farms united 76% of farms and included 84.2% of cultivated areas.⁶⁵

The third period of collectivization is recognized as the era of collective farm construction, which primarily spanned from 1933-1937. During the Soviet era collectivisation period, Tajikistan prioritized cotton cultivation and grain as key industries. The government included plans for the expansion of cotton production in Tajikistan within the first (1928/29-1932/33) and second (1933-1937) five-year plans, with a target of increasing production to 80 thousand tons by the end of the second period. To achieve this goal, the government planned to expand existing irrigation networks and build new ones, including the Vakhsh main canal, which would irrigate 94,000 hectares of land.

While the world was on the brink of World War II, Soviet plans continued to work in Tajikistan and on December 5, 1936 the Constitution of the Victorious Socialism of the Tajikistan was adopted. In February 1939, the Assembly of the of Tajikistan discussed and adopted the third five-year plan. It was aimed at industrial improvements, power stations and expanding the production base of the cotton ginning industry. In the field of culture, the main task of the five-year period was to increase the cultural and spiritual knowledge of workers.⁶⁶

With the beginning of the World War II and with the attack of the Germany toward the East, the Soviet government gave orders to evacuate significant personnel and entire sectors of the economy from the East towards the interior regions. Those who had to be evacuated included political figures, academics, and intellectuals, either as individuals or as parts of research or artistic organizations. Moreover, factories were dismantled and relocated to cities in the Volga-Urals region, Siberia, and Central Asia. That's why the proliferation of the industry didn't stop in the Central Asia during the

⁶⁵ Rahim Masov, *Istoria Tadjikskogo Naroda*, Vol. 5, Dushanbe: Akademia Nauk Respubliki Tadjikistan, 2004, p. 556-560.

⁶⁶ Nozim Hakimov, *Tarikhi Khalqi Tojik (The History of Tajik People)*, Dushanbe: Maorif, 2017, p. 170-172.

Second World War and new heavy industry appeared overnight with huge new investments.⁶⁷

Stalinabad emerged as a significant industrial hub with 44% of the industrial enterprises concentrated in and around it in 1942. The remaining industrial output was primarily produced in Leninabad oblast' (province), accounting for 32%, followed by Vakhsh valley at 14% and Kulab oblast' at 6%. By 1949, Garm oblast' contributed around 2.5% of the republic's total industry while mountainous Badakhshan oblast' (known as Badakhshan-i Kuhi in Tajik and Gorny Badakhshan in Russian) accounted for approximately 1.5%.⁶⁸ But despite it the war leaved its impact on Tajikistan. In particular, the sending of vehicles, horses and technical equipment to the front prevented the continuation of construction plans. In the cities and districts of the republic, the construction of housing, cultural and household institutions, bridges, canalization and the acquisition of idle lands were temporarily stopped.

During the years 1946-1990, the Republic of Tajikistan adopted five-year plans nine times, based on which the economic, social and cultural life was carried out. To jumpstart the national economy, the Supreme Council of the Tajikistan SSR approved the fourth five-year plan (1946-1950) on August 8, 1946. The plan aimed to bring agriculture and industry back to their pre-war levels by increasing industrial and agricultural output, constructing oil factories and hydroelectric power plants, reclaiming abandoned lands, and improving irrigation in the valleys of Vakhsh and Hisar while also increasing cotton cultivation. The plan also called for bolstering the material and technical foundations of agricultural production and prioritizing public education, healthcare, and housing construction. Despite these efforts, there were still challenges in the industry, including a shortage of highly skilled workers, a need for raw materials and spare parts, and low material motivation. Soviets in Tajikistan largely achieved their planned goal in 4 years. In total, 14 new industrial enterprises were launched in five years. The working class increased in number and reached 178,000 people, which was 19 percent more than during the pre-war period, but there

⁶⁷ Adeeb Khalid, *Central Asia: A New History from the Imperial Conquest to the Present*, Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2021, p. 270-271.

⁶⁸ Rohat Nabiyeva and Malika Zikryoev, *Tarikhi Khalqi Tojik (The History of Tajik People)*, Dushanbe: Maorif, 2016, p. 288.

were serious deficiencies in the activity of industrial enterprises. Some enterprises did not fulfill the plan regarding the types of production of products and it was necessary to improve the quality of products.⁶⁹

The agricultural sector of the republic was also impacted by the war, as many farmers and equipment were sent to the war. Consequently, some land remained unplowed and canals uncleaned for years, due to a lack of manpower. In April 1946, the Tajik government rallied rural workers for restoration efforts, emphasizing that expanding cotton cultivation was not only honorable but also vital to improving the well-being of citizens. The appeal was met with enthusiastic support, resulting in the collection of 136 thousand tons of cotton that year. The republic also prioritized the training of highly qualified personnel in agriculture, opening short-term courses, technical colleges, and schools. In 1947, a two-year republican school was established in Dushanbe to train collective farm leaders. By 1950, 2.8 thousand mechanists had been trained in the republic, including 1.9 thousand tractor drivers, who contributed to the growth of agriculture and animal husbandry.⁷⁰ Additionally, science workers played a crucial role in enhancing the country's agriculture. Scientists from the Republic's Agricultural Academy and Agrarian University of Tajikistan completed their research on important topics. For instance, 26 recommendations were published by the employees of the Agrarian University during 1980-1990, and 11 of them were implemented in production. Bobo Sanginov, Academician of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Tajikistan, received the State Award for his contribution to the creation of new types of fine cotton.⁷¹

As mentioned above, each five years plan had its specific tasks. For an instance, the fifth five-year span spanning from 1951 to 1955, along with the sixth and seventh five-year periods from 1959 to 1965, laid a strong groundwork for the economic growth of the republic's populace, with a particular emphasis on industrial expansion and the establishment and management of various plants, factories, and hydropower facilities. Significant efforts were made to develop the southern districts of Tajikistan,

⁶⁹ Rohat Nabiyeva and Malika Zikryoev, *Tarixi Khalqi Tojik (The History of Tajik People)*, Dushanbe: Maorif, 2016, p. 9-10.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 49

which boasted ample raw materials, water resources, and workforce to support the national economic growth. As a result, the government adopted the Program of the Territorial-Production Complex of South Tajikistan, which led to the construction of electrochemical plants and the plan to establish the Rogun hydropower plant.

2.2.3. Culture

In the field of culture, the first years of the Soviet power can be interpreted as the founding period, because the foundations were laid for all fields of culture, and cultural knowledge was introduced in the most fields of public life.

In the 1920's the schools were mostly in the form of mosques and madrasas. Low participation of people to schools, unqualified teachers, lack of an education system and school buildings were the main obstacles. Nonetheless it should be noted that due to weak financial situation of the Soviet government, resistance, war, and overall weakness of the Soviet state, Islamic institutions were not attacked until the late 1920s.⁷²

By the end of 1918, 18 Soviet schools were opened in Khujand which was then part of Uzbekistan. In 1919, their number reached 73. These schools accepted children up to twelve years old. In 1918, teacher training courses were started. The educational system and schools in the north of Tajikistan were managed by the Commissioner of Education of the Republic of Turkestan. In 1921, the People's Commissariat of Education of Eastern Bukhara was established, and the first Soviet schools were opened here in 1923. In the north of Tajikistan, Pamir, Eastern Bukhara, the old schools operated until 1925-1926, but the Soviet government adapted these schools to new requirements and tasks. Starting from 1920, in Khujand and from 1923 in Eastern Bukhara, night schools and schools for the elimination of illiteracy for the age group from 13 to 45 years old were established. Most of the military personnel, Komsomol and literate soldiers taught in these schools.⁷³

⁷² Shoshana Keller, *To Moscow, not Mecca: The Soviet campaign against Islam in Central Asia, 1917-1941*, Westport: Praeger, 2001, p. 39-42.

⁷³ Nozim Hakimov, *Tarikhii Khalqi Tojik (The History of Tajik People)*, Dushanbe: Maorif, 2017, p. 205.

By establishing a new type of schools, the Tajik SSR was able to achieve a 20 percent literacy rate by 1926. The 1927/8 academic year saw 328 primary schools, 4 seven-year schools, 3 secondary schools, and 9 boarding schools already in operation in the republic, with 14,000 children receiving an education.⁷⁴

By the end of the 1930's, education became compulsory and a public campaign was launched to solve the education problem, especially the issue of the lack of buildings. Another issue that has changed in these years is the alphabet. From 1917-1928, Tajikistan used three alphabets: Arabic, Cyrillic, and Latin in their education system to eradicate illiteracy. In 1929, the Tajik Latin alphabet was introduced and used until 1939, when the Cyrillic alphabet became the only alphabet of the republic.

The policy of eradicating illiteracy led to the fact that in 1939, 170 people out of every 1000 people in Tajikistan were educated. Literacy of the population in Tajikistan reached 82.8%.⁷⁵ Additionally, for raising expert, scientific institutions began to establish⁷⁶ such as Dushanbe Pedagogical Institutes (1931), Tajikistan Agricultural Institute (1934), Tajikistan Medical Institute (1937), Khujand Fruit and Vegetable Academy.

Another area which progressed was art. The government of Tajikistan spent a lot of money on the development of art. 627.5 million Sum were allocated for all fields of culture. In the 1930s, three professional theaters, a state philharmonic, a national dance ensemble, a symphony orchestra, a house of people's creativity, an opera and ballet theater operated in Tajikistan. Tajik cinematography was taking its first steps. In the 1930s, the films "Invitation", "Mohajir", "One day on the collective farm", "Khorug", "Sunny Tajikistan", "Living God", "When princes die" were filmed.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ M. Dinorshoev, "Tajikistan", in *History of Civilizations of Central Asia Towards the Contemporary Period: From the mid-Nineteenth to the End of the Twentieth Century*, ed. Madhavan Palat and Anara Tabyshalieva, Vol. VI, Paris: UNESCO Publishing, 2005, p. 294.

⁷⁵ Nozim Hakimov, *Tarikhi Khalqi Tojik (The History of Tajik People)*, Dushanbe: Maorif, 2017, p. 208.

⁷⁶ William P. Coates and Zelda K. Coates, *Soviets in Central Asia*, London: Red Star Publishers, 1951, p. 193

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 194-195.

With the start of the World War II in 1939 up until 1941 there was not observed any serious changes with regard to culture. Since the end of 1941, there has been a decline in the number of students in upper classes due to scarcity of teachers, educational materials, and school uniforms. This was mainly due to high school students supporting the union through field work, industry and participation in war. To accommodate teenagers working in production, night education schools were established starting from the academic year of 1943. These schools also fostered the activity of youth organization for schoolchildren and teachers and provided them with important organizational tasks. To teach the Russian language, the state recruited emigrants from Belarus, Ukraine, and Russia, totaling at least 420 people who fled from the war. Despite the challenges, the state education budget remained relatively stable, with figures of 180.4 million in 1941, 125 million in 1942, 186.1 million in 1944, and 219 million Sum in 1945.⁷⁸

Education played a significant role in Tajikistan's cultural life, with increasing investments made towards its development every year. For instance, if we look back to 1953, 456.2 million Sum were allocated for education in the republic, whereas in 1960, the funding increased to 657.2 million Sum. The focus was also on the construction of school buildings, with the number of general education schools growing from 2,614 in 1959 to over 3,200 by 1980.⁷⁹ In the first years, these schools were constructed using funds from the state budget and collective farms. Additionally, the number of students increased each year, with 433.2 thousand students enrolled in the general education schools of the republic in 1959-60, 721 thousand in 1965-66, and almost 1.2 million children in 1985-86. Another issue that should be mentioned in these years is the opening of Tajikistan University in 1948, which still continues its activities and with the establishment of the Academy of Sciences of Tajikistan (April 14, 1951), scientific work in research institutes and higher institutes developed.⁸⁰

As mentioned before, the productivity of the industry depended on qualified workers. In 1955, 10,000 individuals received training in Tajikistan. By 1985, this

⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 60.

⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 80.

⁸⁰ William P. Coates and Zelda K. Coates, *Soviets in Central Asia*, London: Red Star Publishers, 1951, p. 182-183

number had grown to 154,300 individuals. To optimize the use of labor resources, branches of industrial institutions were established in various districts of the republic. Additionally, by the end of 1983, 10,600 housewives had secured employment in branches and workshops of light industry enterprises. Tajikistan also received significant assistance from the other union republics in the education and training of highly qualified specialists, with institutes in Moscow, Leningrad, Kyiv, Tashkent, and other cities reserving 50 to 100 spots for Tajikistan each year outside of the competition to train such specialists.⁸¹

It is important to acknowledge the sacrifice of the Tajiks during the Second World War. Approximately two thousand officers and soldiers were recognized with Orders and Medals, and seventeen were even granted the title of “Hero of the Soviet Union”.⁸²

2.3. Toward the Dissolution of the Soviet Union

As Gorbachev took office in 1985, he was faced with a number of problems: the Soviet economy had slowed over the past 15 years, competition with the United States was becoming increasingly difficult, and environmental problems were hard to ignore. His initial plan to improve economic growth was to use the slogan of uskorenje (acceleration), but he soon realized that devolving decision-making and promoting openness (glasnost) were necessary for economic reform. Glasnost made it possible to express ideas and attitudes and to relax censorship. By 1987, Gorbachev realized that perestroika (restructuring) was needed to strengthen the Soviet economy.⁸³ Its initial goals were modest, allowing enterprises to set their own production targets and deal directly with foreign partners, and balance their own books without subsidies from the state budget. During the reconstruction process, it was discovered that the political structure of public life did not comply with the law. It was mainly focused on

⁸¹ Rohat Nabiyeva and Malika Zikryoev, *Tarixhi Khalqi Tojik (The History of Tajik People)*, Dushanbe: Maorif, 2016, p. 83.

⁸² William P. Coates and Zelda K. Coates, *Soviets in Central Asia*, London: Red Star Publishers, 1951, p. 207.

⁸³ Robert Service, *A History of Modern Russia: From Tsarism to the Twenty-First Century*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2009, p.448-449.

completing tasks, following orders, and voluntary instructions. The main objective of the reconstruction was to establish a state based on the rule of law to ensure that all aspects of public and state life functioned accordingly. The significant plans prepared in the first five years were not carried out. The productivity and quality of the labor force in the industrial sector did not improve, and some significant projects, such as the construction of the Rogun hydropower plant, were halted. In addition, economic relations, technical assistance, and raw material supplies were disrupted between the union republics by the end of the 1980s. The agricultural sector's plans were also not executed, and the food program, which aimed to produce and distribute food products per citizen, was not implemented. Some republics in the former USSR did not even consider restructuring their socialist structures and opted for non-socialist development.

In Central Asia, Gorbachev aimed to break the hold of the old generation of local elites. He quickly installed a new group of leaders, which shook up the region's political scene.⁸⁴ As the cotton scandal and other corruption and illegality came to light in Central Asia, Russian policymakers and academics began to talk about how the region was a burden on the state and how the subsidies paid to the region had an impoverishing effect on Russia. Riots were becoming more prevalent in Central Asia against the government.

After Gorbachev's reforms, Central Asia's republics began acting more like political entities. They not only claimed the rights guaranteed to them in the Soviet constitution, but also expanded them. Uzbekistan declared its sovereignty on June 20, 1990, followed by Turkmenistan and Tajikistan in August, Kazakhstan in October, and Kyrgyzstan in December. Nonetheless, as the referendum showed, neither the populations nor the native Communist elites wanted complete independence. In June 1990, Russia declared its sovereignty from the Soviet Union, and the dissolution of the Soviet Union began to look inevitable. Gorbachev began talking about

⁸⁴ Olivier Roy, *The New Central Asia: The Creation of Nations*, New York: New York University Press, 2000, p. 128.

reconstituting the Soviet Union as a "renewed federation" based on a new union treaty among the republics.⁸⁵

On August 19, a conservative faction in the Politburo attempted a coup d'etat to restore order and stop the centrifugal forces that had made the country ungovernable. Except the Akayev of Kyrgyzstan, all Central Asian presidents, including Tajikistan's president Makhamov supported the coup because they preferred a restored union. Once the coup failed, they all declared their republics independent. The future was too chaotic to contemplate, and jumping ship was the best option. After Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan declared itself independent on September 9th.⁸⁶

These declarations were not internationally recognized until the end of December because the Soviet Union existed formally until then. It ended as a result of a legal maneuver by the presidents of Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus, the three surviving signatories to the original treaty that had established the Soviet Union in 1922. On December 8th, the presidents met at the Belarus government to dissolve the union. Representatives of 11 republics met in Almaty on December 21st to confirm the accords and establish the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) in place of the Soviet Union.⁸⁷ On December 25th, Gorbachev resigned as president of the Soviet Union, and the country was formally dissolved. The five republics of Central Asia had become sovereign states.

2.4. Civil War

Rebellions with different demands emerged in Central Asia as the authority of the Soviets began to weaken. One such rebellion occurred in Tajikistan. On February 12-14, 1990, Dushanbe, the capital of Tajikistan, witnessed mass protests due to rumors that Armenians who had fled Armenian-Azerbaijani violence in Baku were

⁸⁵ Archie Brown, *The Human Factor: Gorbachev, Reagan, and Thatcher, and the End of the Cold War*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020, p. 343.

⁸⁶ Adeeb Khalid, *Central Asia: A New History from the Imperial Conquest to the Present*, Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2021, p. 416-417.

⁸⁷ Peter Kenez, *A History of the Soviet Union from the Beginning to the End*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006, p. 276.

receiving priority access to housing in the city. Housing was always in short supply, and around 7% of the city's population was on the waiting list for apartments. The rumors, despite being false (as the number of Armenian refugees was insignificant), became a focus of public anger towards the government. The main square of Dushanbe witnessed large crowds demanding the expulsion of Armenian refugees, the resignation of the Tajik government (mainly Kahhor Makhkamov, Goibnazar Pallaev, and Izatullo Hayoev), the removal of the Communist Party from the republic, and the fair distribution of profits from cotton production. The demonstration turned violent, but the death count was between 15 and 25 only.⁸⁸

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the republics gained independence and faced a challenging economic climate. Despite the abundance of natural resources, including cotton and various industries, the loss of economic and cultural ties between the republics and the center, including Tajikistan, resulted in a sudden decline in the welfare of the people. This decline was due to the shutdown of small and large industrial enterprises, leading to a decrease in materials needed by the people, an increase in unemployment rates, and a rise in prices of food products and industrial goods. Additionally, the process of privatizing people's wealth was carried out without proper regulation, which led to serious shortcomings. The leadership of the republic also showed indifference to the people's wealth and failed to protect the property of large industrial objects, resulting in theft, vandalism, and arson.

Subsequently, the political climate of the republic became highly strained. The power struggle and competition between various parties, groups, and individuals, which had been present since the reconstruction period, escalated drastically after the incidents of February 1990. The former ruling Communist Party found themselves in opposition to the united forces of the right field, which included the Democratic Party of Tajikistan, the people's movement "Rastokhez", the Islamic Renaissance Party, the organization "Lolayi Badakhshon", and the Republic's Prosecutor's Office.⁸⁹ As a result, the peaceful transition of the country was slipping away. The Tajik civil war is

⁸⁸ Adeeb Khalid, *Central Asia: A New History From the Imperial Conquest to the Present*, Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2021, p. 409-410.

⁸⁹ Rohat Nabiyeva and Malika Zikryoev, *Tarikhi Khalqi Tojik (The History of Tajik People)*, Dushanbe: Maorif, 2016, p. 110.

commonly depicted as a struggle between secular and religious forces due to the identity of the belligerents. However, the political dynamics involved were far more intricate. Many experts concur that the regional factor played a decisive role. The civil war in Tajikistan can be divided into three distinct periods. The first period saw the groundwork of the conflict being laid. It began with the tragic events of February 1990 and concluded on March 25, 1992, when a group of young people gathered in Shahidon Square and demanded the resignation of the government. The second period marked the direct onset of the war, beginning with the events of May 1992 and lasting until December of the same year. This was undoubtedly the most challenging phase of the conflict, with both sides suffering heavy casualties. The third and final period lasted from January 1993 to June 27, 1997. During this time, the opposition military forces retreated to the Gharm, Tavildara and Pamir districts, and the General Agreement on the establishment of peace and national harmony in Tajikistan was signed.

There were several factors that contributed to the outbreak of the civil war. These included the crisis within the Communist Party, which led to its removal from power, as well as the emergence of a multi-party structure in the republic. Additionally, there was non-observance of public order and violation of laws, along with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the paralysis of the ideological work of the Communist Party. The lowering of the level of political culture among citizens also played a role. In addition to these objective factors, subjective factors also had a certain influence on the occurrence of the civil war. Serious shortcomings were observed in state administration, and there were significant errors in the structure of the party nomenclature. This included the placement of management personnel in incorrect positions and the appointment of incompetent individuals to important state positions, often due to nepotism or localism. The effects of the civil war were numerous, and its effects emerged with different rebellions in the following years. But its most important effect and outcome is a shift of regional power from the northerners (Leninabadis), who had been the dominant force in Soviet-era politics, to the southerners (Kulobis).

In 1990, the Tajikistan SSR adopted a decision that allowed for the formation of parties and organizations. However, many of them failed to contribute to the formation of a democratic society. Some even resorted to unconstitutional means in order to seize power and establish an Islamic state. The "Headquarters for the Rescue

of the Motherland", formed by a coalition of the Democratic Party of Tajikistan, the Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan, the "Laili Badakhshan" organization and the Public Prosecutor's Office, created tension in the capital and laid the foundation for a civil war.

In February 1990, the Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan began political activities after coming out of hiding. From March to May 1992, the party organized a rally in Shahidan Square against the government and in support of Islam. They took members of the government and parliament hostage. In response, a rally was held in Ozodi Square in May 1992 to support the constitutional authority and defend the president.⁹⁰

In March 1992, the Minister of Internal Affairs, Mahmadayoz Navjuvanov, was suggested to be relieved of his duties. This led to an opposition rally in Shahidon Square, lasting almost 50 days, where opposition gunmen took hostages and seized state offices. The commander of the guard of the President, General Rahmonov, supported the opposition. The Speaker of the Parliament was relieved of his duties and replaced by Akbarsho Iskandarov. The opposition took control of major offices in the capital in May 1992, and the legitimate president, Rahmon Nabiev, was taken hostage and unable to fulfill his duties.⁹¹

Starting from May 1992, Tajikistan experienced a civil war between two opposing forces. The war saw the burning of thousands of residential houses and businesses, hostage-taking, and killing of citizens. The peaceful way of solving problems was abandoned, leading to the exodus of thousands of citizens to foreign countries. On December 10, 1992, the People's Front of Tajikistan took control of Dushanbe, the capital of the republic, together with soldiers from the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Security Committee. The 16th session of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Tajikistan held in Khujand marked the beginning of a peaceful life in the republic, and Emomali Rahmon played an important role in this, having been elected at the session.

⁹⁰ H el ene Thibault, *Transforming Tajikistan: State Building and Islam in Post-Soviet Central Asia*, London: I.B. Tauris, 2018, p. 64-65.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 65-67.

In October 1992, the People's Front won the battles and took the strategic military initiative. The republic was threatened by economic chaos and hunger, so the opposition government led by Akbarsho Iskandarov sought ways to negotiate an end to the war. On November 4, 1992, a specific program for ending the civil war in Tajikistan was approved at a meeting of Central Asian republic leaders in Almaty, with the participation of the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Andrey Kozyrev.⁹²

On November 16, 1992, the XVI session of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Tajikistan took place in Khujand, where specific decisions were made to end the war and propose constructive ways forward. The Agenda of the Session included 23 issues, and 193 out of 230 representatives did not participate in the session. During the session, Emomali Rahmon was elected as the Chairman of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Tajikistan, replacing Akbarsho Iskandarov who was released from the position. The new Government of Tajikistan was also formed during the meeting.⁹³

In 1992, the newly elected government of Tajikistan created a national army, dissolved illegal armed groups, and requested that the Commonwealth of Independent States republics send security forces to war zones. The Russian government was also asked to temporarily leave soldiers of the 201st division and border guard units in the republic to protect its integrity. The government's armed units entered Dushanbe without much opposition, and the opposition armed groups retreated to the Afghan border and regions of Karategin and Badakhshan.

Negotiations between Tajiks were held from April 5-19, 1994, in 8 rounds to ensure lasting peace in Tajikistan. An agreement was signed in Tehran on September 17, 1994 for a temporary ceasefire, cessation of other hostile actions on the border between Tajikistan and Afghanistan and inside the country during the negotiation period. In Moscow, on December 23, 1996, the President of the Republic of Tajikistan Emomali Rahmon met with the head of the Union of Tajik Opposition Forces Nuri and signed an agreement to establish the National Reconciliation Commission. On July 4, 1997, the President of the Republic of Tajikistan Emomali Rahmon issued a decree

⁹² Rohat Nabiyeva and Malika Zikryoev, *Tarikhi Khalqi Tojik (The History of Tajik People)*, Dushanbe: Maorif, 2016, p. 115.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 116-117.

to establish the National Reconciliation Commission consisting of 26 people, 13 from both sides, headed by the head of the Union of Tajik Opposition Forces Nuri. The National Reconciliation Commission included government officials, scientists, as well as representatives of the Tajik opposition.⁹⁴

Even though the war was considered officially over, its impact continued to show itself in different periods. For example, from 1996 to 1998, the political life of Tajikistan was complicated by the military commander of the Ministry of Defense, Mahmud Khudoiberdiyev, who attacked administrative offices and attempted to seize power, causing harm to the Sughd region.

2.5. Tajikistan After Independence

2.5.1. Nation State Building

As seen above, during the Soviet era, nation-building policies took various forms in accordance with the policy of the First Secretary of the Communist Party. Following the dissolution of the USSR, nation-building in Tajikistan was shaped by the legacy inherited from the Soviet Union. In the post-Soviet period, new leaders implemented comprehensive reforms to establish a fully sovereign state. However, this was not an easy job in a republic with fragmented clans, a corrupt administration, a small population, heavy dependence on the Soviet Union, and a weak economy. Leaders faced the daunting task of not only building a nation-state, but also creating a market and an independent state. These challenges, along with regional differences and a civil war further hindering nation-state building.⁹⁵ Despite these difficulties, the new president of the independent republic, Emomali Rahmon, made significant decisions to advance Tajik nation-state building, which will be discussed below.

Emomali Rahmon aimed to "de-Sovietize" possible areas in Tajikistan. After the civil war in 1997, he promoted a "state-nationalizing project" to emphasize the country's distinctiveness and roots that date back to the "Aryan" civilization of the

⁹⁴ Rohat Nabiyeva and Malika Zikryoev, *Tarikhi Khalqi Tojik (The History of Tajik People)*, Dushanbe: Maorif, 2016, p. 115.

⁹⁵ Peter Rutland, "Thirty Years of Nation-Building in the Post-Soviet States", *Nationalities Paper*, Vol. 51, No. 1, 2023, pp. 28-29.

ninth and tenth centuries.⁹⁶ Despite facing significant challenges, the government managed to impose a single national language through the school system, while still allowing Russian-language schools to operate. The government also established institutions to develop the Tajik language and encouraged people to speak it.⁹⁷ In 2009, the country's constitution mandated the exclusive use of Tajik language in government offices. Additionally, the Tajik government sought to establish a national identity based on the glorification of the country's past, cultivating national pride through the promotion of national history, heroes, and monuments.⁹⁸ In 1998, all districts and streets were renamed after Tajik heroes. Lenin's Park in Dushanbe was demolished and replaced with Rudaki's Park, named after the first Persian poet, and a grandiose monument of him was established. Another notable decision was the establishment of Boghi Parcham (Flag Park), which featured the longest and tallest flag at the time of installation, costing \$3.5 million and being part of the projects for the 20th anniversary of Tajikistan's independence.⁹⁹ Commemorating past victories is another way of building a nation-state, and Tajikistan celebrates its role in defeating the Nazis every 9th of May.

Tajikistan has encountered various challenges in its efforts towards nation-state building, some of which persist to this day. The government is predominantly composed of individuals from a particular region, resulting in the exclusion of people from other groups from high-level strategic governmental positions. As with many other Central Asian leaders, Emomali Rahmon is cautious of the threat posed by radical Islamist groups within the country. Given its proximity to Afghanistan, coupled

⁹⁶ John Heathershaw and Edmund Herzig, "Introduction: The Sources of Statehood in Tajikistan", *Central Asia Survey*, Vol. 30, No. 1, 2011, pp. 10.

⁹⁷ William Fierman, "Russian in post-Soviet Central Asia: A comparison with the states of the Baltic and South Caucasus", *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 64, No. 6, 2012, p. 1079-1083.

⁹⁸ Scott Levi, "Turks and Tajiks in Central Asia History", in *Everyday Life in Central Asia: Past and Present*, ed. Jeff Sahadeo and Russel Zanca, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007, p. 31.

⁹⁹ Ahramonline, "Tajiks splash out \$210 million on independence pomp", available at: <https://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/3/12/20726/Business/Economy/Tajiks-splash-out-million-on-independence-pomp.aspx> [Accessed on May 12, 2023]

with a low level of education among the populace and the presence of terrorist organizations in neighboring nations, his concerns are certainly justified.

2.5.2. Democracy

A debate that left its mark on Cold War world politics was the victory of liberalism and thus the Central Asian countries would move towards democracy. Although movements towards a democratic state began after gaining independence and overcoming the civil war, Tajikistan still has serious problems in this regard.

While Tajikistan has the framework of a democratic country, there are several reasons they cannot be considered as such. One crucial aspect of a democracy is a fair and transparent election process, with equal representation and accountability. Tajikistan's elections lack these characteristics and are influenced by the government rather than political parties. This has led to what can be considered as "imagined" elections.¹⁰⁰ Additionally, Tajikistan lacks a strong and autonomous bourgeoisie, leaving the political figures with the power to control the system. Moreover, the cultural and historical background of Tajikistan has made it difficult for the people to embrace democracy fully. The cultural and linguistic norms of obedience to a leader are often seen as loyalty, while objecting is considered betrayal. Furthermore, gender equality is a crucial aspect of democracy,¹⁰¹ and while the government tries to provide jobs for females, the traditional gender norms have become central to Tajikistan since the Soviet period.

The legacy of the Soviet Union has also left its mark on Tajikistan's administrative and economic systems, which hinders the development of a democratic society. With weak democratic institutions, hyper-presidentialism, and a lack of strong separation of power, Tajikistan can be considered a post-authoritarian country. Additionally, the lack of mechanisms for real public control and violation of basic

¹⁰⁰ Donnacha Ó Beachain and Rob Kevlihan, "Imagined democracy? Nation-building and elections in Central Asia, *Nationalities Paper*, Vol. 43, No. 3, 2015, p. 496-500.

¹⁰¹ Peter Rutland, "Thirty Years of Nation-Building in the Post-Soviet States", *Nationalities Paper*, Vol. 51, No. 1, 2023, pp. 28-29.

freedoms has prevented the emergence of a civil society.¹⁰² All of these factors contribute to why Tajikistan cannot be classified as a democratic country in the Western sense.

2.5.3. Religion

After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, it was the Islamic ideology that pushed itself to fill the blank which were empty after the fall of the communist ideology. Therefore, in parallel with the rise of the Islamic movement around the world, Central Asia seemed appropriate for that. Islamic revival and strong Islamic political activism had happened in different ways and had internal and external factors. One of the internal factors was the 1994 constitution of the Tajikistan which permitted various Islamic activities. Along with that, the accumulated missing toward the Islam during the Soviet Union helped that revival as well. Huge amounts of events can be explained as the external factors. The Islamic movements born from Israel-Arab conflicts penetrated all over the other geographies. Along with that, the Shia revolution exportation of the Iran toward the Tajikistan, the funding of the Wahabis in Central Asia by the Arab countries, the rise of the Mujahidin and then Taliban in Afghanistan and Islamic movements in post-Soviet Russia all triggered the Islamic activities in Tajikistan. It was in this atmosphere when the emergence of the Islamic political organizations and parties such as Islamic Revival Party (IRP) became widespread in Tajikistan. Islamic Revival Party of Tajikistan gained a strong support and became one of the important oppositions in Tajikistan. Their main goal was the re-Islamization of Tajikistan. The glimpse of the civil war became obvious when the party couldn't agree with the newly elected president Emomali Rahmon.

When Salafism was banned in 2009,¹⁰³ the Ministry of Interior of Tajikistan published documents of agreement and cooperation between the Salafist group in

¹⁰² Anatoly Khazanov, "Authoritarianism and its consequences in ex-Soviet Central Asia", in *Ethnicity, authority, and power in Central Asia*, ed. Robert L. Canfield and Gabriele Rasuly-Paleczek, Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2010, p. 20-23.

¹⁰³ Galym Zhussipbek, Dilshod Achilov and Zhanar Nagayeva, "Some common patterns of Islamic revival in post-Soviet Central Asia and challenges to develop human rights and inclusive society", *Religions*, Vol. 11, No. 11, 2020, p. 6.

Tajikistan and terrorist organizations in Afghanistan. Even though there are no any academic data but from personal observation, it's possible to say that starting from 2010, the impacts of Islamic activism were becoming more obvious. Wearing hijab were becoming more popular among women, students were more willing to skip lessons and attend to prayers at mosques and videos of mullah's advices became widespread among the young generation. These trends continued growing to a level of alarm. In 2015 government started a counter attack. Documents and videos which showed the dishonor of the most mullahs and Islamic activists were leaked, the IRP was closed, and many changes were done with the 2016 constitutional amendments. Article 8 of the new Constitution outlaw "the creation of parties of national and religious character, as well as financing of political parties by foreign states and organizations, foreign legal entities and citizens." which was allowed before.¹⁰⁴ Along with that, many domestic laws restricted religious activities which were seemed excessive. These restrictions are mostly for extreme Islamists and don't address Christians who are less than 2 percent of a country numbering 8.33 million population.¹⁰⁵ It should be underlined that headcovering is not prohibited in Tajikistan. What government forbade is the Arabic way of headcovering which is called (hijob), the government encourage (rumol) headcovering, which is known as Tajik way of covering.

Religion continues to be an important factor in Tajikistan. The government have to tackle the dissatisfaction which is arisen from this matter. Otherwise, guarding the secularism principle strictly with causing unrest among people can lead them toward more radical activisms.

2.5.4. Public Administration

Following the country's independence, a new Constitution was deemed necessary. To accomplish this, a constitutional commission was established, and on February 10, 1992, a working group led by N. Huvaiddulloyev was appointed to draft

¹⁰⁴ Hélène Thibault, *Transforming Tajikistan: State Building and Islam in Post-Soviet Central Asia*, London: I.B. Tauris, 2018, p. 338.

¹⁰⁵ Kathleen Collins, "Faith and Reason: Christian Strategies Under Post-Soviet Repression in Central Asia", *The Review of Faith & International Affairs*, Vol. 15, No. 1, 2017, p. 45.

the new Constitution. This draft was published for discussion in the press in April of that year. The civil war prevented the adoption of this Constitution. However, once the constitutional government was restored in 1994, another working group prepared a new draft for public discussion. This new Constitution was accepted by the citizens, and on November 6, 1994, an overwhelming 87% of the participants supported this document in the national referendum.

The first article of the Constitution declares that "the Republic of Tajikistan is a sovereign, democratic, law-based, secular and unified state." The Constitution states that power in the Republic of Tajikistan belongs to the people, with state power exercised through legislative, executive, and judicial bodies in accordance with article 9 of the Constitution and article 3 of the Declaration of Independence of the Republic of Tajikistan. The Supreme Assembly and the President represent the people, and the state structure of the republic is unitary. In 1999, a constitutional referendum lengthened the presidential term from five to seven years. Additionally, the 2003 amendments expanded the maximum number of terms a Tajik president can serve from one to two seven-year periods. The President of the Republic of Tajikistan currently serves as the Head of State and Executive Power (Government) and has the authority to submit decrees to Majlisi Oli (the highest legislative body) for approval and to appoint the Prime Minister and other members of the Government. To date, three individuals have been elected President of the Republic of Tajikistan through a national referendum: Kahhor Makhkamov (in the Supreme Council), Rahmon Nabiev, and Emomali Rahmon.

The Majlisi Oli is the highest legislative body of Tajikistan. It consists of two houses: Majlisi Milli and Majlisi Namoyandagon. Majlisi Milli has the power to establish and liquidate border and administrative units, select and recall judges, consent to the appointment and dismissal of the Prosecutor General, and implement other powers defined by the Constitution and laws. Currently, the National Assembly of the Supreme Assembly of the Republic of Tajikistan has 33 members. On the other hand, Majlisi Namoyandagon has the power to establish the Central Election and Referendum Commission, approve economic and social programs, confirm state codes, approve state awards, and implement other powers defined by the Constitution

and laws. The House of Representatives of the Majlisi Oli consists of 63 deputies and is permanent and professional.¹⁰⁶

The strength of political parties is not the most important factor in Tajikistan, as parliamentary politics take a back seat. The political system in Tajikistan is best described as super-presidential, with decision-making concentrated at the executive level. Emomali Rahmon has secured and solidified his hold on power through legal means. A law passed in Parliament on December 9, 2015, titled "Law on the Founder of Peace and National Unity – Leader of the Nation," confers Emomali Rahmon with a special lifelong political status. This law allows him to oversee government activities even after his retirement and grants Rahmon and his relatives lifelong immunity from judicial and criminal prosecutions. Additionally, he will maintain ownership of his properties and continue to receive various financial benefits.¹⁰⁷ Legal actions to strengthen authority have been combined with the removal of political adversaries, regardless of whether they pose an actual threat. Among these individuals is Said Zaidov, the previous Industry Minister and a thriving entrepreneur. In December 2013, he was given a 26-year prison sentence, just a few months after declaring his plan to establish a new political party.¹⁰⁸

2.5.5. Economy

The Independent Republic of Tajikistan has faced significant difficulties in implementing economic reforms due to the collapse of Soviet Union's economic, social, and technical ties and the destruction of the republic's economic life during the civil war. In 1990, approximately 22 percent of the population in the USSR was

¹⁰⁶ Interparliamentary Assembly of Member Nations of the Commonwealth of Independent States, available at:

https://iacis.ru/membership/member_parliaments_eng/respublika_tadzhikistan_eng
[accessed on May 25, 2024]

¹⁰⁷ Asia Plus, "Lider Natsii: U Rulya Do Kontsa (Leader of the Nation : At the Wheel Until the End)", available at: <http://news.tj/ru/news/lider-natsii-u-rulya-do-kontsa> [accessed on January 23, 2024]

¹⁰⁸ Eurasianet, "Tajikistan Gags Ex-Minister with Long Prison Term", available at: <https://eurasianet.org/tajikistan-gags-ex-minister-with-long-prison-term> [accessed on May 15, 2024]

unemployed, and about 58.6 percent of the people had income that fell below the poverty line, which was set at 78 rubles per month.¹⁰⁹ The migration of experienced engineers and technicians to other countries and the economic crisis in the early 90s further impacted the country's labor force and import and export plans. Despite these challenges, the country has opportunities to develop its economy, such as its large reserve of electricity production and potential for irrigating barren lands. Tajikistan can leverage its natural resources to develop both light and heavy industry and agriculture, meeting the population's needs and exporting products abroad.

Tajikistan's economy is often referred to as "semi-rentier" or "rentier economic" due to its limited resources and heavy reliance on external rents. Compared to other republics in the former Soviet Union, Tajikistan has a less developed industry and the country's political instability in its early years of independence only exacerbated this issue. Hydroelectric power stations and aluminum production are the main industries in Tajikistan, with half of the country's export earnings coming from the Tursunzoda Aluminum Company. Tajikistan also has plans to develop its high hydropower potential through projects like CASA-100, which aims to export electricity to South Asia, and the Rogun Dam, set to be completed in 2028, which could turn Tajikistan into a net energy exporter.¹¹⁰

The country has various forms of ownership, including personal, collective, and state. From 1991 to 2005, 8.5 thousand state properties were privatized. The strategic goals of the country are to achieve energy security, overcome communication isolation, and ensure food security. The CIS is an important economic basin for the Republic of Tajikistan and plays an active role in the promotion of foreign trade.

It is worth noting that the production of industrial products in the non-state sector has consistently increased over the years. In 1999, the non-state sector industry accounted for 22.8 percent, which has grown to 41.8 percent in 2014. The number of

¹⁰⁹ Saodat Olimova, "Regionalism and Its Perception by Major Political and Social Powers of Tajikistan," in *Tajikistan at a Crossroad: The Politics of Decentralization*, ed. Luigi De Martino, Cimera, 2004, p. 86–119.

¹¹⁰ The Diplomat, "Tajikistan's Rogun Dam Begins Operations", available at: <https://thediplomat.com/2018/11/tajikistans-megadam-rogun-begins-operations/> [accessed on May 10, 2023]

industrial enterprises in the republic has also increased significantly from 900 in the early years of independence to 2041 units in 2015. Additionally, the country has registered 61 domestic and foreign companies as entities in the free economic zones, with the support of developed nations such as Russia, Great Britain, Japan, South Korea, and the Commonwealth of Independent States.¹¹¹

One of the main sources of income in Tajikistan, in addition to the industry and hydropower sectors, is remittances. In fact, remittances accounted for almost one third of the country's GDP in 2019. Additionally, Tajikistan has a high unemployment rate, which has resulted in approximately two million Tajiks working abroad, primarily in Russia. This leaves the country vulnerable to external shocks. Another significant source of income is drug trade, as Tajikistan serves as a transit country. However, drug trade is highly restricted within the country. Tajikistan differs from Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan in that it is a net energy importer. As a result, increases in energy and raw material prices have a negative impact on the country's exports and foreign trade balance. Furthermore, the economy of Tajikistan is uncertain due to factors such as government control of significant economic sectors by the ruler's family and high levels of corruption. While Russia remains Tajikistan's main economic partner, China has also increased its business in the country by investing heavily, holding the majority of Tajikistan's foreign debt, and acquiring stakes in Talco and Tajikistan's telecommunications infrastructure.

To promote the growth of its industrial sector, Tajikistan seeks foreign investment. Between 2007 and 2009, 79 investment projects brought in a staggering \$1.75 billion to the country's economy. With a sound foreign policy, Tajikistan can cultivate opportunities for industrial development, particularly in construction. Russia has already invested heavily in Tajikistan's large-scale enterprises, including hydropower plants in Rogun and Sangtuda, an aluminum plant in Vakhsh Valley, and other chemical, metallurgical, and machinery projects. From 2006 to 2012, both domestic and foreign investors built 430 new enterprises, further bolstering the country's economy. Bribery, corruption and arbitrary business closures were commonplace in Tajikistan's economy. It was a normal situation that Tajikistan's

¹¹¹ Rohat Nabiyeva and Malika Zikryoev, *Tarikhi Khalqi Tojik (The History of Tajik People)*, Dushanbe: Maorif, 2016, p. 120.

economy, which did not have its own bourgeoisie and had a population inexperienced in liberal initiatives, was powerless against even a small foreign entrepreneur. That's why foreign enterprises could suddenly find their companies closed with different excuses. However, the development of industry and industrialization also depends on the functioning of strong institutions. The functioning and strengthening of institutions in Tajikistan has not been easy or quick. Therefore, Tajikistan has still not achieved its potential economic development.

Despite these obstacles, over the past decade (2011-2021), Tajikistan has shown impressive economic growth, with an average growth rate of over 7 percent and a reduction in poverty from 32 percent in 2009 to an estimated 14.6 percent in 2021. With increasing sanctions on Russia, Tajikistan has the opportunity to expand its exports of agricultural products to Russia and textiles, precious metals, and minerals to other countries.¹¹²

2.5.6. Foreign Policy

Independent Tajikistan's first and primary goal was to maintain its independence and territorial integrity. The aim of its foreign policy was to help achieve this goal by using all existing historical, cultural and strategic-economic power, by evaluating any new opportunities that may arise or by reshaping old opportunities in line with current needs. The independence of the Central Asian states created excitement for many countries. It is possible to say that these are especially Türkiye, Iran and China.

Iran has pursued long-term foreign policies towards the region, especially towards Tajikistan. After the failed coup in Soviet Russia, Iran acted quickly to establish contact with the Central Asian countries. On September 3, 1991, under the presidency of Rafsanjani, the National Security Council convened and discussed the Central Asian issue, declaring their readiness to cooperate with these countries.¹¹³ Tajikistan has also remained close to Iran, with which it shares a similar language and

¹¹² World Bank Group, Social Protection for Recovery in 2022, The Public Annual Report, p. 153-155.

¹¹³ Bilal Şimşir, *Azerbaycan ve Orta Asya Cumhuriyetlerine Yapılan Ziyaretler Hakkında Rapor*, Ankara: Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi, 2021, p. 8.

culture.¹¹⁴ On February 6, 1992, when Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani visited Tajikistan, he received a letter from Tajik President Abdulrahman Nabiev thanking Iran for its efforts and focus. In response, the Iranian President promised that Iran would give Tajikistan particular priority.¹¹⁵ The most important issue that prevented Iran from getting closer to Tajikistan was sect. The basic political identity of the Tajikistan state stemmed from ethnicity and language, not from religion, which became a contributing material of the national culture, and efforts were made to maintain the understanding of secularism in the Soviet period. Tajikistan's secular government recognizes the Hanafi school of Sunni Islam, while Iran is a religious government with a Shiite majority. Moreover, the Shiites in Tajikistan are considered seven imamis (Ismaili), and the Iranians' understanding of Shiism with 12 imams is not the same as the Shiites in Tajikistan. Additionally, Ismaili sect is not considered among political sect and does not pursue political goals. Iran, on the contrary, has organized various exhibitions highlighting the Persian past of Tajikistan culture and art, while advancing its subtly Shiite-oriented Islamist policy¹¹⁶, and has established a close relationship, especially with the Islamic Renaissance Party. Although Iran made major investments in independent Tajikistan, such as the Sangtuda hydropower plant and tunnel project which connected its two biggest cities¹¹⁷, but by 2014 the relations had gone downhill. One of the reasons is that Iranian businessman Babak Zanjani's fortune was lost in Tajikistan after he was tried in his country and sentenced to death penalty, and Iran constantly pressures Tajikistan about this. The Tajikistan side claims that these have not been lost and that a Turkish investor bought them. The second was that when the Islamic Renaissance Party was closed in Tajikistan in 2015, its chairman

¹¹⁴ Sayed Hasan Mirfakhrai and Majid Firuzmande Bandpey, دیپلماسی فرهنگی ایران در آسیای مرکزی و قفقاز فرصتها و چالشها (Iran's Cultural Diplomacy in Central Asia and the Caucasus; Opportunities and Challenges), *Mutalaate Uvrasyaye Markazi*, Vol. 10, No. 2, 1396, p. 438.

¹¹⁵ Javad Moinaddini, Iran and Central Asia Republics: Opportunities and Challenges, *Pakistan Horizon*, Vol. 48, No. 1, P. 60.

¹¹⁶ Murtaza Ashrafi, گزارشی از تهدیدها و فرصتهای شیعیان در آسیای مرکزی (A Report on the Threats and Opportunities of Shiites in Central Asia), *Muassesei Ayende Pazhuheshi Jahane Islam*, 2016, p. 3.

¹¹⁷ Eurasianet, "Tajikistan: the tunnel of fear", available at: <https://eurasianet.org/tajikistan-the-tunnel-of-fear> [accessed on May 15, 2024]

was invited to a meeting in Tehran in the same year and was welcomed by Iranian leader Ayatullah Ali Khamenei.¹¹⁸ The third incident occurred in 2017, during which the state television, an apparatus under the control of the Tajik government, alleged that Iran had been involved in and had orchestrated the killings of several prominent individuals between 1997 and 2004.¹¹⁹ In response, Iran rejected Tajikistan's accusation as groundless and lodged a protest. The improvement in relations began in 2021 with the new elected Iranian President Raisi's first foreign trip to Tajikistan. During this meeting, many agreements were signed and it was announced that it was decided to increase the volume of trade, which was 240 million dollars last year, to 500 million dollars. The reason for these close relations can be considered as the regaining control of Taliban in Afghanistan, Tajikistan's need for new defensive tech as drones and Raisi's foreign policy of boosting relation with near countries.¹²⁰

After Tajikistan became independent, United States of America (U.S.A.) officially recognized the country in 1992 and provided a lot of humanitarian aid to help the country through the crisis. In fact, the U.S. embassy in Tajikistan was opened in 1993 but due to the security concerns its operations was conducted from Kazakhstan, and diplomats were traveling to Tajikistan on a temporary basis.¹²¹ For Tajikistan, establishing relations with America was a gate to the world and an opportunity for an effective governance. Nevertheless, the United States' intense

¹¹⁸ Ozodi, "Мақоми тоҷик: "Эрон дар бораи пулҳои Занҷонӣ санаде дорад, пешниҳод кунад (Tajik authority: Iran has a document on Zanjani money, then submit it)", available at: <https://www.ozodi.org/a/zanjani-case/28700362.html> [accessed on May 15, 2024]

¹¹⁹ Ozodi, "Бозбинии парвандаи қатли чанд чехраи саршиноси тоҷик (Review of the case of the murder of several famous Tajik experts)", available at: <https://www.ozodi.org/a/criminal-case-agains-accused-in-killing-some-priminant-tajik-personalities/29149860.html> [accessed on May 15, 2024]

¹²⁰ Iranian Students' News Agency, "Reisi'in Foreign Policies Steps", available at: <https://www.isna.ir/news/1403023122766> [accessed on May 20, 2024]

¹²¹ Eurasianet, "Memoir: A tale of two cities and many mountains", available at: <https://eurasianet.org/memoir-a-tale-of-two-cities-and-many-mountains> [accessed on May 15, 2024]

diplomatic activity in the region commenced after the events of September 11, 2001.¹²² Central Asian countries, united in the fight against terrorism, tried to cooperate more or less with the United States.

When we look back, it is difficult to talk about the intensity of cooperation between the Tajikistan and U.S.A. From the viewpoint of the America the main reasons for these are the level of financial corruption in Tajikistan, slow reforms in the economy, nepotism and the presence of the Russian military base in Tajikistan and deep dependence on the Kremlin both in domestic and foreign policy.¹²³ America's standpoint is also valid, as there have been historical instances that support their argument. For instance, in 2008, the IMF Executive Board found that the Tajik National Bank had provided the international lenders with "inaccurate information" about Tajikistan's cotton sector, which was the country's primary export item and a major source of employment. The bank had also manipulated data related to its international reserves, net domestic assets, and credit policy.¹²⁴

After America withdrew its army from Afghanistan in 2021 and the Taliban took power, America's contacts in the region increased slightly. In 2022, the American ambassador in Dushanbe says that his country will provide 60 million dollars in security assistance to Tajikistan. Within the scope of this assistance, Tajikistan will receive Puma drones or other equipment for border control with Afghanistan. These drones are worth 20 million dollars, and according to the US ambassador, they are intended for border protection and control.¹²⁵ Overall in the last thirty years America,

¹²² Eurasianet, "Memoir: 9/11: The American discovery of Tajikistan ", available at: <https://eurasianet.org/memoir-911-the-american-discovery-of-tajikistan> [accessed on May 15, 2024]

¹²³ Ozodi, "Дӯсти дурдаст. Сӣ соли робитаҳои дипломатии Тоҷикистон ва Амрико (A distant friend. Thirty years of diplomatic relations between Tajikistan and America)", available at: <https://www.ozodi.org/a/31710123.html> [accessed on May 20, 2024]

¹²⁴ Eurasianet, " Tajikistan: IMF Catches Dushanbe in Creative Accounting Scandal", available at: <https://eurasianet.org/tajikistan-imf-catches-dushanbe-in-creative-accounting-scandal> [accessed on June 20, 2024]

¹²⁵ Ozodi, "Сафорати ИМА ба марзбонони тоҷик таҷҳизот кумак кард (The US Embassy helped the Tajik border guards with equipment)", available at: <https://www.ozodi.org/a/31785641.html> [accessed on May 22, 2024]

whose president has never visited Tajikistan, has provided more than 200 million dollars in assistance to Tajikistan to ensure security and in total, this country's aid to Tajikistan since 1992 has been 1.9 billion dollars.¹²⁶ Not only has no U.S. President visited Central Asia, but Vladimir Putin has made 77 visits, and Chinese President Xi Jinping has visited 13 times since coming to power in 2012.¹²⁷

China's influence on Tajikistan is increasing over time. Especially after the Belt and Road Initiative, intensive projects have increased in Tajikistan. For example, in 2003 China implemented programs such as the reconstruction of the Dushanbe-Jirgatal highway, the digging of the Sharshar tunnel, the construction of the Shurabad hydroelectric power plant, and the strengthening of the Qairakum hydroelectric power plant.¹²⁸ In 2012, when Emomali Rahmon went to Beijing, they put forward a plan to increase investments to one billion, and after that, relations became increasingly closer and China's presence became present in almost every sector. In 2022, the level of Chinese investment in Tajikistan has exceeded 3 billion dollars, and the foreign debt of Dushanbe to Beijing is 1 billion 123 million dollars.¹²⁹ In the field of agriculture, Chinese companies such as "Xinjiang Inhai" and "Hai Li" have leased hundreds of hectares of land in the Khatlon region for 50 years and are expanding their agricultural operations. More than 300 Chinese companies and organizations are investing in Tajikistan's economy, particularly in sectors such as mining (gold and coal), chemical industry, cement production, electricity, agriculture, and textile industry. According to the Ministry of Finance of Tajikistan, China holds 34 percent of Tajikistan's foreign

¹²⁶ U.S. Embassy in Tajikistan, "Ambassador Pommersheim Interview with OCA Magazine on U.S.-Tajik Relations and C5+1", available at: <https://tj.usembassy.gov/ambassador-121420/> [accessed on May 22, 2024]

¹²⁷ Responsible Statecraft, "Central Asia: The Blind Spot Trump Can't Afford to Ignore", available at: <https://responsiblestatecraft.org/trump-central-asia/> [accessed on December 18, 2024]

¹²⁸ Ozodi, "Ҳузури Чин дар Тоҷикистон (The presence of China in Tajikistan)", available at: <https://www.ozodi.org/a/604626.html> [accessed on May 22, 2024]

¹²⁹ Ozodi, "Амният, сармоягузорӣ ва қарордодҳои пинҳонӣ. Тоҷикистону Чинро чӣ наздик мекунад? (Security, investment and secret contracts. What brings Tajikistan and China closer?)", available at: <https://www.ozodi.org/a/31888535.html> [accessed on June 12, 2024]

debt, amounting to 1.39 billion dollars. Security cooperation between Dushanbe and Beijing in Tajikistan is a relatively new development, as this arena was previously under Moscow's control. China has also invested in security by building 4 military units and a training center on the Tajik-Afghan border, as well as an "Officer's House" in Dushanbe. The Tajik government refers to China as a "reliable partner".¹³⁰

As for Russia, Tajikistan has always continued to view Moscow in a friendly light because the belief and truth that it has the ability to determine its fate has continued. The relations between Tajikistan and Moscow have continued deep and multifaceted.

The bilateral relations between Russia and Tajikistan are significantly anchored in the latter's military dependency and economic intertwining, notably through the presence of Russian military forces in Tajikistan and the remittances sent by Tajik laborers employed in Russia. This relationship has historical roots extending back to the end of the Tajik Civil War, with Russia actively seeking to reclaim its geopolitical influence in the region. Noteworthy is the appointment of an ethnic Russian, Aleksandr Shishliannikov, as the inaugural post-Soviet defense minister of Tajikistan. In the subsequent years, Russia's involvement has been multifaceted, including the staffing of the Tajik air force exclusively with Russian pilots, the provision of military advisors, and the active support from the Russian 201st Battalion during critical periods.¹³¹

The dynamic between the two countries experienced a tentative shift post-September 11, with Tajikistan appearing to distance itself from Russian influences. However, this trend was somewhat reversed in 2004, following Tajikistan's entry into a strategic agreement with Russia, which partially was to address a debt of \$300

¹³⁰ Ozod, "Равобити Тоҷикистон бо Чин. Наздиктар, беш аз ҳар вақти дигар? (Relations between Tajikistan and China. Closer than ever?)", available at: <https://www.ozodi.org/a/31699511.html> [accessed on June 22, 2024]

¹³¹ Eurasianet, "Russia Military Base in Khujand: Ambition or Necessity?", available at: <https://eurasianet.org/russian-military-base-in-khujand-ambition-or-necessity> [accessed on June 24, 2024]

million owed by Tajikistan to Russia.¹³² This agreement not only facilitated Russia's access to strategic military installations in Tajikistan, such as the Soviet-era military space observation center at Nurek and an Okno anti-missile system but also underscored the complex interdependence between the two nations.

The economic aspect of the relationship, particularly the reliance on remittances from Tajik laborers in Russia, plays a critical role in Tajikistan's economic stability. In 2008, Russian authorities reported the presence of one million Tajik migrant workers within its borders, a figure that unofficial sources suggest might be significantly higher. The dependency is further highlighted by the fact that a substantial portion of the Tajik GDP is derived from remittances sent by its citizens working in Russia, with 98 percent of these remittances emanating from Russia, according to the Asian Development Bank.¹³³ However, this financial inflow experienced a downturn during the Covid-19 pandemic in 2021, with remittances dropping from \$681 million to \$430 million.¹³⁴

The delicate balance of this economic interdependence was exemplified in 2012 when Russia, responding to the trial of two Russian pilots in Tajikistan, threatened to deport Tajik workers. This move underscored the vulnerabilities inherent in Tajikistan's economic reliance on Russia. Additionally, Tajikistan's dependency extends to energy. For example, in 2013 with approximately 95 percent of Tajikistan's gas and oil was imported from Russia.¹³⁵ This multifaceted relationship between

¹³² Eurasianet, "Russia and Tajikistan: Friends Again", available at:

<https://eurasianet.org/russia-and-tajikistan-friends-again> [accessed on June 24, 2024]

¹³³ Eurasianet, "Tajikistan: Dushanbe Braces for Shock, as Remittances Set to Fall Off Cliff", available at: <https://eurasianet.org/tajikistan-dushanbe-braces-for-shock-as-remittances-set-to-fall-off-cliff> [accessed on June 24, 2024]

¹³⁴ Asia-Plus, "Денежные переводы из России в Таджикистан сократились почти на 40% (Money transfers from Russia to Tajikistan have decreased by almost 40%)", available at: <https://asiaplustj.info/ru/news/tajikistan/economic/20200918/denezhnie-perevodi-iz-rossii-v-tadzhikistan-sokratilis-pochti-na-40> [accessed on June 24, 2024]

¹³⁵ Eurasianet, "Tajikistan: Is Dushanbe Setting New Conditions for Russia's Military Presence?", available at: <https://eurasianet.org/tajikistan-is-dushanbe-setting-new-conditions-for-russias-military-presence> [accessed on June 24, 2024]

Russia and Tajikistan illustrates the complex interplay of geopolitical, economic, and military dynamics that characterize post-Soviet regional interactions.

CHAPTER 3

ANALYSIS OF THE BILATERAL RELATIONS USING DATA SET ANALYSIS AND ROLE THEORY

When I began my research, I encountered a lack of readily available data sets, so my initial task was to construct one. I gathered information on the foreign policies of Tajikistan towards Türkiye from more than six media outlets accessible in Tajikistan. Due to Tajikistan's civil unrest, economic challenges, and underdeveloped broadcasting infrastructure, the country lagged behind in online presence. Consequently, obtaining data, particularly pre-2005, was quite challenging. I attempted to bridge this gap by utilizing Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS) reports, archive of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Türkiye and Tajik newspapers I acquired. Subsequently, I organized these news articles by year, removed duplicates, and commenced the translation of my dataset, consisting of approximately 60,430 words, from Tajik to English.

When I organized my data sets, I started coding from 1992, when official relations and also data began up until 2022. I made these codings through the MAXQDA software. It is a professional software used for qualitative and mixed methods data analysis. Researchers from various disciplines use it to systematically analyze and interpret qualitative data such as interviews, focus groups, open-ended survey responses, literature, images, or videos. It also supports quantitative data analysis, making it versatile for mixed-methods research.

After many repetitions and edits, my codes consisted of 3 main codes and 20 sub-codes. I will also give my own comments between each coding. The first of these main codes is the discourse of Tajik officials about Türkiye. In this study, the official refers to the president, ambassador, minister or the special representative designated by the president. I had several goals while coding these discourses. The first is to

determine what role Türkiye plays in the perception and discourse of Tajik officials. So, what do they call Türkiye when describing it? Based on this, to determine which topic the discourses focus on. For example, is it security, economic or cultural? In other words, it gives information about the role of Türkiye in the foreign policy of Tajikistan. The second was to examine how they themselves viewed developing relationships. Are they satisfied, are they not satisfied with the current situation, or are they satisfied but think it is possible to improve further? Third, to determine what the future goals focus on. This will help us predict where the relationship will evolve, based on past developments. While doing all this, we will actually determine how relations have evolved over the years. Conducting content analysis helped us find the reasons for this evolution.

The second of the main codes is the determination of practices. This will help us determine what is actually happening in parallel with the intensity of the discourses. The main essence of these codings consists of agreements, protocols, trainings and collaborations. In other words, I will determine the subject of the signed agreements based on the statements. Even though I made these based on Tajikistan, they actually constitute the nature of mutual relations. Therefore, I will also talk about Türkiye's perspective from time to time when necessary.

The third main code is data that will be very useful in understanding relationships. Coding this data in the content according to its subjects provides us with data on economic, humanitarian aid and education by year. All of this method and study actually provides us with a determination close to clear figures regarding the scope and diversity of the existing relations between Tajikistan and Türkiye.

3.1. The Role of Türkiye in the Foreign Policy of Tajikistan

The independence movement initially began in the Baltic republics, then spread to the Slavic republics, and later continued in other republics. The first to declare independence were Uzbekistan on June 20, 1990, followed by Turkmenistan on June 22, Tajikistan on August 25, Kyrgyzstan on October 12, and Kazakhstan on October 25. As a result of the coup attempt against Gorbachev and the processes he initiated in Moscow on August 19, 1991, the independence movements accelerated, and within 1991, the Central Asian countries consecutively declared their

independence.¹³⁶ In September 1991, as rapid developments unfolded in the Soviet Union, Türkiye formed two delegations. One visited Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, and Armenia, while the second delegation, led by Ambassador Bilâl N. Şimşir, visited Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan from September 12-29, 1991.¹³⁷ Ankara acted with great caution. The reason for this, as explained by the then Undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Özden Sanberk, is: “At this stage, Türkiye is observing developments with a ‘Moscow-focused’ approach. Relations between Ankara and Moscow are more important than those between Ankara and the republics. Türkiye’s caution stems from this.”¹³⁸ However, although Türkiye acted cautiously, it also made sure not to be too late, taking into account the potential influence of Iran and Saudi Arabia. This period of hesitation was not solely caused by Türkiye. Central Asia countries itself initially considered establishing a new order while remaining within the Soviet Union. In other words, the republics were eager to form a new union within the Soviet Union, which initially made Türkiye hesitant.¹³⁹ While Türkiye was indecisive about recognizing the Central Asian countries, it sent delegations there to both gather information and offer moral support. The Turkish delegation’s lead member, Ambassador Bilal Şimşir, faced indecision about whether or not to include Tajikistan in the visit since Tajikistan was not considered ethnically Turkish. However, when they visited on September 22, despite Tajikistan going through a turbulent period, they were warmly welcomed. But due to the intense political tensions at the time, meetings with the President and Prime Minister of Tajikistan could not take place. Türkiye was the first delegation to congratulate Tajikistan on its independence. According to the observations and reports from Ambassador Bilal Şimşir, the head of the delegation, Tajikistan was eager to

¹³⁶ Mustafa Durmuş and Harun Yılmaz, “Son Yirmi Yılda Türkiye'nin Orta Asya'ya Yönelik Dış Politikası ve Bölgedeki Faaliyetleri”, in *Bağımsızlıklarının Yirminci Yılında Orta Asya Cumhuriyetleri: Türk Dili Halklar - Türkiye ile İlişkiler*, ed. Ayşegül Aydınğün and Çiğdem Balım, Ankara: Atatürk Kültür Merkezi, 2012, p. 486.

¹³⁷ Bilal Şimşir, *Azerbaycan ve Orta Asya Cumhuriyetlerine Yapılan Ziyaretler Hakkında Rapor*, Ankara: Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi, 2021, p. IX.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

establish close relations with Türkiye. The main reasons for this were their desire to establish a secular state like Türkiye, viewing Türkiye as a developed and powerful nation, and their desire to avoid the negative influence of Iran and Saudi Arabia. Additionally, Tajikistan felt isolated, lacking a trustworthy neighboring ally, and trusted Türkiye's power in international forums.¹⁴⁰

Another key topic discussed was aid. The Prime Minister of Tajikistan mentioned that Western countries had sent their aid to Moscow, but Moscow had not forwarded it to Tajikistan. Therefore, he requested that, if possible, the aid be provided directly to Tajikistan.¹⁴¹ Taking this into account, steps were taken in the following years in this direction. For example, after the Emergency Aid Conference for the Former Soviet Republics held in Washington on February 8, 1992, the United States launched an aid operation for these republics. As part of the 'Provide Hope' operation, the U.S. government decided that aid to the Central Asian republics would be delivered through Türkiye.¹⁴²

Ambassador Bilal Şimşir also met with Gaffarov, the Chairman of the National Bank of Tajikistan, during which they discussed possible cooperation in banking, textiles, telecommunications, and other fields. This visit was a unique initiative. This meeting and the requests proposed by Tajikistan have ensured the development of the following year's progress. Upon returning to Ankara, the delegation was met with requests for meetings and information from numerous foreign ambassadors, television reporters, and various official institutions. In later official reports, the importance of Tajikistan was emphasized, and it was stated that the country should not be excluded.¹⁴³

When Tajikistan declared its independence, it prepared an application letter for recognition, but it could not be sent because the letter had been drafted by the former Acting President and Chairman of the High Presidium, Aslanov, who had been forced to resign. In Tajikistan, two processes occurred simultaneously. On the one hand, there was the transition from communism to democracy, and on the other, the collapse of

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 43-46.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., p. 47.

¹⁴² Dışişleri Bakanlığı 1992 Tarihçesi, Ankara: Dışişleri Eğitim Merkezi, 1994, p. 194.

¹⁴³ Ibid., p. 58.

the multi-ethnic Russian colonial empire, resulting in the formation of a national state. However, this transition was not instantaneous. Initially, the national states existed only as silhouettes or skeletons and were in urgent need of external assistance. Therefore, Türkiye had a critical role to play.

The end of the Cold War was a strategically important event for Türkiye, which was argued to be of geopolitical importance, especially since it was a neighbor of the Soviets. But the independence of the Central Asian states was an event that would increase Türkiye's strategic value again.¹⁴⁴ President Turgut Özal said: "Now a very important opportunity, a door has opened in front of Türkiye. All presidents of the Turkish Republics, from the Balkans to Central Asia, are coming to Ankara on Republic Day... This is a historical opportunity for us...". As a result of Özal's initiatives, the leaders of the independent Turkic-speaking republics gathered for the first time at the Summit of Heads of State of Turkish-Speaking Countries on October 30, 1992, in Ankara. The president of Tajikistan was also invited to this meeting, but he was unable to attend due to the ongoing civil war in his country.¹⁴⁵

Things have not been easy for Türkiye. First of all, both the Ottoman Empire and the Republic of Türkiye had Western-oriented structures. Therefore, knowledge is shaped accordingly. It is difficult to have interest where there is no information.¹⁴⁶ The opposite is also possible. Where there is no interest, there is no knowledge. The European Union, like the United States, supported Türkiye's activities in the region in the early 1990s, accepting Türkiye as a model of state structure, economic development and democracy for Central Asia. Russia also supported Türkiye's activities in the region in the first years. Because after the defeat which Russia took by Islamist groups in Afghanistan, Russia preferred the existence of Türkiye to Islamic

¹⁴⁴ Işık Kuşçu Bonnenfant and Hayriye Kahveci, "Turkish Foreign Policy Towards Central Asia: An Unfolding of Regionalism and Soft Power", *All Azimuth*, V. 2, N. 2, 2023, p. 196.

¹⁴⁵ Mustafa Durmuş and Harun Yılmaz, "Son Yirmi Yılda Türkiye'nin Orta Asya'ya Yönelik Dış Politikası ve Bölgedeki Faaliyetleri", in *Bağımsızlıklarının Yirminci Yılında Orta Asya Cumhuriyetleri: Türk Dili Halklar - Türkiye ile İlişkiler*, ed. Ayşegül Aydıngün and Çiğdem Balım, Ankara: Atatürk Kültür Merkezi, 2012, p. 488.

¹⁴⁶ Yılmaz Tezkan, "Değişen ve Küreselleşen Dünyada Türkiye ve Kadim Komşu Rusya", in *Kadim Komşumuz Yeni Rusya*, Ankara: Ülke Yayınları, 2001, p. 11.

regime of Iran. An event that both forced Türkiye to take realistic steps at the beginning of the relations and damaged Türkiye's image in the eyes of the Central Asian countries was the overthrow of Elchibey, who was known for his pro-Turkish views in Azerbaijan, despite Türkiye's help, and his replacement by former communist leader Haydar Aliiev and the country's participation in some collective agreements with the Commonwealth of Independent States.¹⁴⁷

Diplomatic relations between Türkiye and Tajikistan were established with the signing of an agreement on January 29, 1992. Later, in March, Türkiye's Minister of Foreign Affairs Hikmet Çetin visited Tajikistan as part of his Central Asia tour and signed a cultural agreement aimed at organizing relations in the fields of culture, science, education, and sports. During this period, the two countries were able to create a favorable atmosphere of trust, the necessary political and legal basis and tools to ensure mutually beneficial cooperation in bilateral relations.

On the other hand, there were difficulties in developing relations for Tajikistan. First, country lacked the institutionalization structure. The development of relations, especially economic relations, is based on trust, and the most important factor that provides this trust is the working institutions. It is very difficult to talk about the soundness of institutions in Tajikistan. Secondly, the five-year civil war in Tajikistan has been a major obstacle to the development of relations. Thirdly, the bribery, corruption and loyalty system that I mentioned in the previous section as the reasons for the collapse of the Soviets continued in the republic of Tajikistan. It is possible to say that Tajikistan has been under the influence of Moscow regarding foreign policy for a long time. Fifth, the lack of sea exits and being far from all major waterways further hindered Tajikistan's development.

The first of the main codes that I mentioned earlier is the role that Türkiye plays in Tajikistan's foreign policy. In order to determine what role Türkiye has from the perspective of Tajik officials, I made a total of 22 codes based on their discourses. Two topics constitute the main theme of these codings. The first is the concept of "Economic Partner", which has been used 14 times.

¹⁴⁷ Kemal Karpat, *Türkiye ve Orta Asya*, Ankara: İmge Yayınları, 2003, p. 331-332.

Table 1 - Role of Türkiye in the Foreign Policy of Tajikistan

Economic Partner	14
Contributor to Peace	8

It is possible to say that the socialization process, the process of the powerful influencing the other, started by Türkiye. At the very beginning in 1995 the President of Türkiye Süleyman Demirel characterized the relationship as follows: Türkiye has no political interests in this Central Asian republic except for economic support for its economic reform and built its relations with it on an equal and mutually advantageous basis and the principle of non-interference in each other's internal affairs."¹⁴⁸ Another reason why Turkish representatives emphasized the desire to develop economic cooperation with Tajikistan is that, since there is no shared identity with Tajikistan and its surrounding states are Turkic countries, they felt the need to clearly underline their intentions in this context.

Although the importance of trade in bilateral relations has been mentioned in older data but the first time Türkiye was called an economic partner was in 2006 by Tajikistan Minister of Economy Halim Soliev. In his statement, he mentions that Tajikistan has a lot to learn from Türkiye, its economic partner, especially in the field of tourism.¹⁴⁹ Later, in 2008, in a similar manner, Tajikistan's Ambassador to Türkiye Shuhrat Sultanov talked about Tajikistan's economic potential and asked their partner Türkiye to benefit from it.¹⁵⁰ Tajikistan recognized the fact that Türkiye was ideologically and strategically a gateway to the future, thanks to Türkiye's connection with the liberal economy, which they needed both for their development needs and as

¹⁴⁸ FBIS, Moscow ITAR-TASS, "Turkish President Demirel Concludes Visit", September 10, 1995.

¹⁴⁹ Ozodi, "Туркия мехоҳад дар Тоҷикистон нирӯгоҳ бунёд кунад (Türkiye wants to build a plant in Tajikistan)", available at: <https://www.ozodi.org/a/604045.html> [accessed on May 25, 2024]

¹⁵⁰ Khovar, "Муҳокимаи Масъалаҳои Ҷалби Сармояи Туркия ба Иқтисодиёти ҶТ (Discussion of the issue of attracting Turkish capital to the economy of the Republic of Tajikistan)", available at: <https://khovar.tj/2008/12/mu-1202-okimai-masala-1202-oi-1206-albi-sarmoyai-turkiya-ba-i-1178-tisodiyoti-1206-t/> [accessed on May 28, 2024]

an antidote to everything Russian and Soviet. Two statements of the President of Tajikistan, one in 1995 and the other in 2009, are examples of this. The first is the statement "We are striving to create a law-based market economy and to increase the prosperity of our people through merging with the world economy"¹⁵¹ in his meeting with the Türkiye President Süleyman Demirel. The second one, in 2009, Tajikistan President Emomali Rahmon said that, considering Türkiye's rich experience, Tajikistan expects help from Türkiye to create a free-market zone and join the World Trade Organization.¹⁵² We can say that Türkiye's view remains similar. President Abdullah Gül, during his visit to Tajikistan in 2009, was accompanied on this trip by more than 100 businessmen and leaders of state and private companies and government institutions.¹⁵³ As a result of the discussions held during this visit, a decision was made to lift the visa requirements for holders of service passports and special passports between the two countries on December 13, 2009.

The discourse that Türkiye is Tajikistan's important economic partner continued in the following years.¹⁵⁴ Between 2010 and 2016, the investment amount of Turkish companies in Tajikistan was recorded as 150 million dollars.¹⁵⁵ By 2021,

¹⁵¹ FBIS, Moscow ITAR-TASS, "Friendship Agreement Signed with Türkiye", July 8, 1993.

¹⁵² Khovar, "Изҳороти матбуоти Президенти Ҷумҳурии Тоҷикистон Эмомалӣ Раҳмон (Press Statement of the President of the Republic of Tajikistan Emomali Rahman)", available at: <https://khover.tj/2009/05/iz-1202-oroti-matbuotii-prezidenti-1206-um-1202-urii-to-1206-ikiston-emomal-1250-ra-1202-mon/> [accessed on May 28, 2024]

¹⁵³ Ozodi, "Раисҷумҳури Туркия ба Душанбе меояд (The President of Türkiye is coming to Dushanbe)", available at: <https://www.ozodi.org/a/1741273.html> [accessed on May 28, 2024]

¹⁵⁴ Khovar, "Муаррифии иқтидорҳои иқтисодии Тоҷикистон ва Туркия (Presentation of the economic potential of Tajikistan and Türkiye)", available at: <https://khover.tj/2016/05/muarrifii-i-tidor-oi-i-tisodii-to-ikiston-va-turkiya/> [accessed on May 28, 2024]

¹⁵⁵ Khovar, "Али Рифат Коксал: «Ширкатҳои туркӣ тӯли 6 соли охир зиёда аз 150 млн доллар ба иқтисодиёти Тоҷикистон сармоягузорӣ кардаанд (Ali Rifat Koksal: "Turkish companies have invested more than 150 million dollars in the economy of Tajikistan over the last 6 years)", available at: <https://khover.tj/2016/11/al-rifat-koksal-sharkat-oi-turk-t-li-6-soli->

developing trade with Türkiye, attracting Turkish investors to the Tajik economy, and trying to benefit from Türkiye's experience in the development of Tajik industry is recorded as the fourth strategy in Tajikistan's strategic document. In 2021 both countries aimed to increase the trade between the two countries to 1 billion dollars.¹⁵⁶

The second one is considered as a country that contributes to peace. I found that this issue was used 8 times in the discourse of Tajik rulers. Türkiye's position as a country contributing to peace has three main pillars. It first started with the intensification of the Afghanistan war. Türkiye, which is a NATO country and has its own influence in Afghanistan, has taken part in Tajikistan's foreign policy as a country contributing to peace. For example, in 2006, Tajikistan President Emomali Rahmon underlined that cooperation between the two countries would provide peace and security to the region, and therefore, he mentioned that it was possible to become a partner on this issue.¹⁵⁷ In the meetings in the following years, the leaders of the two countries discussed to ensure economic development and peace in Afghanistan.¹⁵⁸

ohir-ziyoda-az-150-mln-dollar-ba-i-tisodiyoti-to-ikiston-sarmoyaguzor-kardaand/ [accessed on June 1, 2024]

¹⁵⁶ Khovar, "Тоҷикистон ва Туркия ҳаҷми гардиши савдоро ба 1 миллиард \$ мерасонанд (Tajikistan and Türkiye increase the volume of trade to \$1 billion)", available at: <https://khovar.tj/2021/10/to-ikiston-va-turkiya-a-mi-gardishi-savdoro-ba-1-milliard-merasonand/> [accessed on June 1, 2024]

¹⁵⁷ Ozodi, "Равобити иқтисодии Тоҷикистон ва Туркия (Economic relations between Tajikistan and Türkiye)", available at: <https://www.ozodi.org/a/604227.html> [accessed on June 1, 2024]

¹⁵⁸ Asia-Plus, "Туркия бо истифода аз таҷрибаи ғании худ ба Тоҷикистон дар ташкили минтақаҳои озоди иқтисодӣ ва барои ворид шуданаш ба СҶТ кӯмак мекунад (Using its rich experience, Türkiye is helping Tajikistan to create free economic zones and to join the WTO)", available at: <https://asiaplustj.info/tj/news/tajikistan/power/20090529/turkiya-bo-istifoda-az-ta-ribai-anii-khud-ba-ikiston-dar-tashkili-minta-oi-ozodi-i-tisod-va-bar> [accessed on June 10, 2024]

Asia-Plus, "Дидори вазирони қорҳои хориҷии Тоҷикистону Туркия (Meeting of foreign ministers of Tajikistan and Türkiye)", available at: <https://asiaplustj.info/tj/news/tajikistan/politics/20111104/didori-vazironi-kor-oi-khori-ii-ikistonu-turkiya> [accessed on June 10, 2024]

Another reason for this was the approach of Ahmet Necdet Sezer, who became President in May 2000, as he primarily focused on security and counter-terrorism cooperation in Türkiye's relations with Central Asia. Sezer's firm stance against radical Islamic groups and other terrorist organizations also facilitated Türkiye's engagement with Central Asian countries. In contrast, during his tenure as Prime Minister from June 1996 to June 1997, Necmettin Erbakan did not visit any Central Asian countries. One of the issues that prevented Erbakan from visiting the region was the serious political problems he faced domestically.¹⁵⁹ As mentioned above, the first visit to Tajikistan at the presidential level was made by Süleyman Demirel in 1995. The second visit took place on November 7-8, 2000, when President Ahmet Necdet Sezer visited Tajikistan. During this visit, the "Agreement on Cooperation in the Fight Against International Terrorism, Drug Trafficking, and Organized Crime" was signed.

Secondly, the word contributor to peace was used especially after 2013. The reason for this was that Tajik citizens started joining Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIS) by using Türkiye as a transit line. Türkiye's role has been important in the fight against terrorism, which is included as the first threat in Tajikistan's security strategic document. For example, in 2016, Tajik officials noted that they were satisfied with their cooperation with Türkiye in the fight against terrorism, and that more than a hundred Tajik nationals who wanted to join ISIS were returned by Türkiye in the last three years.¹⁶⁰ In the same year, Emomali Rahmon, in his meeting with Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Çavuşoğlu, talked about the necessity of more constructive plans and cooperation on security and underlined that the fight against terrorism is now

¹⁵⁹ Mustafa Durmuş and Harun Yılmaz, "Son Yirmi Yılda Türkiye'nin Orta Asya'ya Yönelik Dış Politikası ve Bölgedeki Faaliyetleri", in *Bağımsızlıklarının Yirminci Yılında Orta Asya Cumhuriyetleri: Türk Dili Halklar - Türkiye ile İlişkiler*, ed. Ayşegül Aydıngün and Çiğdem Balım, Ankara: Atatürk Kültür Merkezi, 2012, p. 506.

¹⁶⁰ Ozodi, "Вазири хориҷаи Туркия бо сафари расмӣ ба Душанбе меравад (The Turkish Foreign Minister is going to Dushanbe on an official visit)", available at: <https://www.ozodi.org/a/fm-Turkiye-visits-tajikistan-/28065622.html> [accessed on June 10, 2024]

one of the most important principles of bilateral relations.¹⁶¹ In the contacts held in the following years, the importance of cooperation on issues such as the fight against terrorism and smuggling continued to be mentioned.¹⁶²

The third reason why they call Türkiye a country that contributes to peace is the opposition segment that has to flee Tajikistan and is perceived by the government as a security problem. These are especially members of the Islamic Renaissance Party and Group 24. The Islamic Renaissance Party grew stronger after the collapse of the Soviet Union and formed an important side in the Tajik civil war. With the peace treaty signed later, it managed to take part in the administration of the country. As Emomali Rahmon consolidated his power, he fell into conflict with the Islamic Renaissance Party. The party was closed in 2015 and many of its members fled to countries such as Iran and Türkiye. Due to this situation, Tajikistan has occasionally asked Türkiye to extradite the members of this party. Some leaders and members of a similar Group 24 have been to Türkiye. It has been realized that some members of the Group of 24 died and disappeared in Türkiye.¹⁶³ However, there is no clear information about cooperation between the two countries on this issue.

Finally, the border dispute between Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan has been ongoing for a long time. When Türkiye supplied UAVs to countries such as Azerbaijan and Kyrgyzstan, Türkiye was taken more seriously in the region and signed a military agreement with Tajikistan a year later which opens the way for the purchase of military

¹⁶¹ Ozodi, "Даъвати Раҳмон аз Туркия: "Террористонро истирдод кунед (Rahmon's call from Türkiye: "Extradit the terrorists)", available at: <https://www.ozodi.org/a/turkish-fm-in-dushanbe-meets-rahmon-aslov/28065691.html> [accessed on June 10, 2024]

¹⁶² Khovar, "Мавлуд Човушоғлу: Туркия ва Тоҷикистон ҳамкориҳои хуби иқтисодӣ ва сиёсӣ доранд (Mevlut Çavuşoğlu: Türkiye and Tajikistan have good economic and political cooperation)", available at: <https://khover.tj/2021/03/mavlud-chovusho-lu-turkiya-va-to-ikiston-amkorii-hubi-i-tisod-va-siyos-dorand/> [accessed on June 10, 2024]

¹⁶³ Ozodi, "Тақдири норӯшани раҳбарони "Гурӯҳи 24" дар боздоштгоҳи Туркия (The unclear fate of the leaders of "Group 24" in the Turkish detention center)", available at: <https://www.ozodi.org/a/29113430.html> [accessed on June 10, 2024]

Ozodi, "Аз хона баромаду бедарак аст. Ба Насимҷон Шарифов дар Истанбул чӣ шуд? (He left the house and is missing. What happened to Nasimjon Sharifov in Istanbul?)", available at: <https://www.ozodi.org/a/32834359.html> [accessed on June 10, 2024]

equipment from this country. Türkiye, which has become an important actor for both Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, has rolled up its sleeves to resolve the dispute between the two countries. This factor has made Türkiye a contributor to peace country.

3.2. Assessment of Relation with Türkiye by Tajik Officials

In fact, what I did above was to determine Türkiye's role based on the discourse. But here I created codes to determine the nature of the relationship. I will analyze two cases here. The first is to determine how Tajikistan evaluates its relationship with Türkiye as time goes by. So, are they satisfied or not at this point? The second is to determine in which direction they want to develop their future goals. The extent to which these discourses have been realized over the years will be understood in the practices section that I will discuss below. Thus, it will be easier and more consistent to make predictions about the future of the relationship.

When Tajik administrators evaluated their relations with Türkiye, the most important thing I coded in their statements was that they were satisfied with the relationship at this point. While there had not yet been time to evaluate the initial relations, the officials expressed their satisfaction with the visit. For example, Rahimjon Ghafurov, First Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Tajikistan in 1994, stated that he was very pleased with his trip to Türkiye and that this visit would be very beneficial to future relations, especially in the field of economy.¹⁶⁴ Tajik officials started expressing their satisfaction with the relationship more after 2007. In 2007, trade exceeding 500 million dollars for the first time satisfied both parties.¹⁶⁵ Although the bilateral trade volume decreased during the 2008-09 financial and economic crisis, these comments continued and were expressed in the following years. As will be explained in the next section, relations gained further momentum with the signing of very comprehensive agreements in 2012, and in subsequent statements it was mentioned that they (Tajik officials) were satisfied with

¹⁶⁴ FBIS, Dushanbe Radio Tajikistan, "Delegation Returns from Talk in Türkiye", June 7, 1994.

¹⁶⁵ Khovar, "Президенти Туркия ба Тоҷикистон ташриф меорад (The president of Türkiye will visit Tajikistan)", available at: <https://khovar.tj/2009/05/prezidenti-turkiya-ba-to-1206-ikiston-tashrif-meorad/> [accessed on April 25, 2024]

the comprehensive developments. When bilateral trade volume exceeded 650 million dollars in 2013¹⁶⁶, it was considered as the most productive year of bilateral relations. Although the trade volume decreased in the following years, it is possible to say that the relations with Türkiye were satisfied. In 2021, Emomali Rahmon mentioned that "Türkiye now has an important partner in the international arena and relations are thankfully stable."¹⁶⁷

Another statement that leaves its mark on the evaluation of relationships is the sentence that "we (Tajik officials) are satisfied with the relationship at this point, but it is possible to improve it further". For example, in 2005, the Prime Minister of Tajikistan stated that significant progress had been made with Türkiye, but that this did not reflect the real potential. In the following years, it continued to be stated that existing resources and opportunities were not utilized. For example, in 2010, President Emomali Rahmon said that "relations with Türkiye are going well, 53 Turkish-Tajik companies are operating in the country, but there are many more opportunities to develop economic relations."

The Tajik officials' dissatisfaction was only explained four times. However, more specific topics are meant here. For example, in 2005 its mention that despite Türkiye's power, imports from Türkiye to Tajikistan remained very low.¹⁶⁸ In 2021, the minister of Tajikistan expressed his dissatisfaction, saying that although the trade

¹⁶⁶ Khovar, "Тоҷикистон — Туркия: муомилоти мол меафзояд (Tajikistan-Türkiye: trade is increasing)", available at: <https://khovar.tj/2014/11/to-1207-ikiston-turkiya-muomiloti-mol-meafzoyad/> [accessed on May 9, 2024]

¹⁶⁷ Khovar, " Президенти Ҷумҳурии Тоҷикистон Эмомалӣ Раҳмон бо Президенти Ҷумҳурии Туркия Речеп Тайип Эрдоган мулоқот намуданд (The President of the Republic of Tajikistan Emomali Rahmon met with the President of the Republic of Türkiye Recep Tayyip Erdogan)", available at: <https://khovar.tj/2021/11/prezidenti-um-urii-to-ikiston-emomal-ra-mon-bo-prezidenti-um-urii-turkiya-re-ep-tajip-erdogan-mulo-ot-namudand/> [accessed on June 21, 2024]

¹⁶⁸ Ozodi, "Равобити иқтисодии Тоҷикистон ва Туркия (Economic relations between Tajikistan and Türkiye)", available at: <https://www.ozodi.org/a/604227.html> [accessed on June 21, 2024]

volume increased to 391 million dollars, it was actually very small compared to the actual potential.¹⁶⁹

Table 2 - Assessment of Relation with Türkiye by Tajik Officials

Discourse on Future Goal	
Development of Relations in the Field of Economy	29
Development of Relations in the Field of Security	14
Development of Relations in the Field of Energy	7
Development of Relation in the Field of Culture	6
A Look on Past / Satisfied	12
A look on Past / Satisfied but can be better	7
A Look on Past / Dissatisfied	4

Another important issue for this analysis is to determine the future targets from their discourses. While the phrase "developing economic relations" ranks first with a total of 29 codes, cooperation on security comes second with 14 codes. The desire for cooperation in the fields of culture and energy followed after them.

Developing economic relations with Türkiye constitutes the cornerstone of relations, as mentioned above. When the first friendship treaty was signed in 1992, Emomali Rahmon hoped that it would "contribute to the development of our economic relations." In the following years, the sentence "We are ready to develop economic relations" was repeated many times and different agreements and mechanisms were tried to be established to develop economic relations. In the agreements signed to develop relations, trade was generally the first issue addressed, followed by

¹⁶⁹ Asia-Plus, "Тоҷикистону Туркия то соли 2025 меҳоҳанд савдои дучонибаро то 1 млрд доллар расонанд", available at: <https://asiaplustj.info/tj/news/tajikistan/economic/20221111/toikistonu-turkiya-to-soli-2025-mehoand-savdoi-duonibaro-to-1-mlrd-dollar-rasonand> [accessed on May 7, 2024]

agriculture, energy, transportation and tourism. While no definitive predictions have been made for the future in other matters, certain targets have been set in the field of trade to increase the trade volume for the next year. The first example of this was in 2005, when they aimed to increase the trade volume to 250 million for the following year.¹⁷⁰ Later, although their goal was to reach 1 billion in 2017,¹⁷¹ it was not successful and the same goal was brought to the agenda again in 2021.¹⁷²

As exemplified above, when expressing their dissatisfaction with the current state of relations, they clearly refer to them as trade relations. In addition, while explaining the purpose of bilateral talks at the level of prime minister or president, "to promote the development of commercial and economic cooperation"¹⁷³, "discussed various aspects of economic cooperation and development of foreign trade between the two countries"¹⁷⁴, "exchanged opinions on the development of economic relations", "commercial transactions and finding new ways and methods of improving indicators of the flow of interstate foreign trade"¹⁷⁵ and "expansion of economic and

¹⁷⁰ Ozodi, "Туркия мехоҳад дар Тоҷикистон нирӯгоҳ бунёд кунад (Türkiye wants to build a plant in Tajikistan)", available at: <https://www.ozodi.org/a/604045.html> [accessed on April 29, 2024]

¹⁷¹ Ozodi, "Тоҷикистон ва Туркия - аз масоили иқтисодӣ то таҳдидҳои амниятӣ (Tajikistan and Türkiye -- from economic issues to security threats)", available at: <https://www.ozodi.org/a/turkish-and-tajikistan-biletare-cooperation/28315669.html> [accessed on April 12, 2024]

¹⁷² Khovar, "Тоҷикистон ва Туркия ҳаҷми гардиши савдоро ба 1 миллиард \$ мерасонанд (Tajikistan and Türkiye increase the volume of trade to \$1 billion)", available at: <https://khover.tj/2021/10/to-ikiston-va-turkiya-a-mi-gardishi-savdoro-ba-1-milliard-merasonand/> [accessed on June 12, 2024]

¹⁷³ Khovar, "Мулоқоти аҳли тичорати Тоҷикистону Туркия", available at: <https://khover.tj/2013/06/mulo-1179-oti-a-1203-li-ti-1207-orati-to-1207-ikistonu-turkiya/> [accessed on June 13, 2024]

¹⁷⁴ Khovar, "Тоҷикистон — Туркия : муомилоти мол меафзояд (Tajikistan-Türkiye: trade is increasing)", available at: <https://khover.tj/2014/11/to-1207-ikiston-turkiya-muomiloti-mol-meafzoyad/> [accessed on June 20, 2024]

¹⁷⁵ Khovar, "Мулоқоти Пешвои миллат Эмомалӣ Раҳмон бо Президенти Ҷумҳурии Туркия Речеп Тайип Эрдоган", available at: <https://khover.tj/2017/03/mulo-oti-peshvoi-turkiya-recep-tayyip-erdogan/>

trade cooperation between Tajikistan and Türkiye is one of the main goals of the trade conference" are frequently used sentences. Efforts have been made to ensure economic relations not only took place in bilateral relations but also in international organizations and a protocol was signed with Türkiye to help Tajikistan to join the World Trade Organization.¹⁷⁶ The phrase "development in the field of economy" is mentioned in almost all bilateral meetings and visits.

When stating future goals, the second most frequently mentioned issue was security. Cooperation on this issue is in the interest of both parties. Although the Afghanistan war had an impact, we observe that this discourse was used most after 2013. While Tajikistan was expecting help and cooperation from Türkiye to prevent its citizens from going to the Middle East via Türkiye and joining ISIS, and to prevent banned organizations such as Group 24 and the Islamic Renaissance Party from taking shelter in Türkiye, Türkiye was expecting help from Tajikistan in the fight against the Gülen organization. An agreement on combating terrorism and extremism was signed between the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Tajikistan and of Türkiye for the first time in 2015.¹⁷⁷ A year later, the President of Tajikistan stated for the first time that "the fight against terrorism is one of the most important issues of bilateral relations."¹⁷⁸ The word "stability for the region" has always been used for cooperation in this regard. In the following years, military cooperation was also observed with the strengthening of the defense industry in Türkiye. For the first time, a military agreement was signed between the two countries in 2022.

millat-emomal-ra-mon-bo-prezidenti-um-urii-turkiya-re-ep-tajip-erdogan/ [accessed on June 20, 2024]

¹⁷⁶ Khovar, "Туркия аз Тоҷикистон барои даромадан ба СҶТ ҳимоят мекунад (Türkiye supports Tajikistan to join the WTO)", available at: <https://www.ozodi.org/a/24427688.html> [accessed on April 24, 2024]

¹⁷⁷ Khovar, "Тоҷикистону Туркия бар зидди терроризм ва экстремизм (Tajikistan and Türkiye against terrorism and extremism)", available at: <https://khovar.tj/2015/03/to-1207-ikistonu-turkiya-bar-ziddi-terrorizm-va-ekstremizm/> [accessed on May 20, 2024]

¹⁷⁸ Asia-Plus, "Эмомалӣ Раҳмон боздошту истирдоди тоҷикони дар Туркия паноҳбурдари дархост кард (Emomali Rahmon requested the arrest and extradition of Tajiks who took refuge in Türkiye)", available at: <https://asiaplustj.info/tj/news/tajikistan/politics/20161021/232336> [accessed on May 8, 2024]

Tajikistan's great potential in energy is a known fact. Türkiye signed a cooperation agreement in the field of energy in 2000 and made efforts to build hydroelectric power plants in Tajikistan in the following years. Although cooperation in this field was emphasized in the following years, it is difficult to talk about the existence of serious cooperation between the two countries. One reason for this is that, as explained above, Chinese companies are in a stronger position in this field.

Unlike other Central Asian countries, Türkiye did not share a common history, ethnicity or language with Tajikistan. Therefore, although efforts were made to develop cooperation in the field of culture, the obstacles were great. The Tajikistan government gave great importance to Mawlana in order to prevent radicalism and underline the concept of moderation and love, and included Mawlana in their history in order to strengthen their understanding of the nation-state. Türkiye underlined common history by referring to Mawlana. For example, on the official page of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Türkiye, it is stated that "Turkish-Tajik relations are based on a strong cultural heritage with which we share great thinkers such as Mawlana Celaleddin-i Rumi."¹⁷⁹ In addition, it is possible to describe the development of culture as the opening of bilateral fairs¹⁸⁰ and the opening of language courses in Tajikistan. There used to be a total of 6 schools in Tajikistan affiliated with the Gülen movement. But after the failed coup attempts, schools affiliated with them were closed.¹⁸¹

We cannot talk about the existence of structures that will strengthen cultural contacts, as with other Central Asian countries (for example, The Organization of Turkic States). But an important point that should be underlined is the importance of universities in Türkiye for Tajik students. In 1996, an agreement on cooperation in the

¹⁷⁹ T.C. Dışişleri Bakanlığı, Türkiye-Tacikistan Siyasi İlişkileri, available at: <https://www.mfa.gov.tr/turkiye-tacikistan-siyasi-iliskileri.tr.mfa> [accessed on April 20, 2024].

¹⁸⁰ Khovar, "Мусоҳибаи Сафири Туркия: Аз ҳамкорӣ дар бахшҳои гуногун то ба мубориза ба муқобили терроризми байналмилалӣ (Interview with the Turkish Ambassador: From cooperation in various sectors to the fight against international terrorism)", available at: <https://khover.tj/2016/12/muso-ibai-safiri-turkiya-az-amkor-dar-bahsh-oi-gunogun-to-ba-muboriza-ba-mmu-obili-terrorizmi-bajnalmilal/> [accessed on April 24, 2024].

¹⁸¹ Ozodi, "Дар Тоҷикистон охири муассисаи Гулен баста шуд. (The last Gülen institution was closed in Tajikistan)", available at: <https://www.ozodi.org/a/last-gulen-property-shut-down-in-tajikistan-/28003954.html> [accessed on June 13, 2024]

field of education was signed between Türkiye and Tajikistan. In this context, the aim was to facilitate the education of Tajik students in Türkiye.¹⁸² Since then, the number of Tajik students in Türkiye has continued to increase. For example, while in 2006 the amounts of Tajik students in Türkiye were more than 500, in 2011 it increased to more than 600 students.¹⁸³ When it comes to the 2020-2021 academic year, 681 students from Tajikistan were undertaking studies in Türkiye.¹⁸⁴ The importance of the Türkiye Scholarships program, which was established to manage the allocation of higher education scholarships for students from Central Asia and other areas through Directorate of Overseas Turks (YTB), cannot be ignored.

3.3. Practice

Above, we first discussed Türkiye's role in foreign policy in the discourse of Tajik rulers, and then how they evaluated their relations and in which direction they focused. Here, I will discuss how they are transformed into practice according to the density of agreements and data information, that is, whether there is parallelism. We see that the areas where practices are most intense are economy, security and humanitarian or infrastructure aid.

I have coded economic-related agreements and protocols 19 times in my data set. The first trade agreement between the two countries was signed in 1993. It was a very comprehensive agreement, consisted of twelve articles and formed the cornerstone of the agreements to be signed in the following years. With this agreement, the basic principles of the relations that will develop in the following years have been laid by confirming their desire to further strengthen their friendly relations based on the principles of equality of rights, mutual respect and common interest. Moreover, they agreed to give 50 million dollars to Tajikistan through Eximbank, to develop joint banking activities and to establish the Turkish-Tajik Joint Economic Commission.

¹⁸² Dışişleri Bakanlığı 1996 Tarihçesi, Ankara: Dışişleri Eğitim Merkezi, 1996, p. 25.

¹⁸³ Ozodi, "Маориџи Тоҷикистон рӯ ба Туркия меорад (Tajikistan's education is facing Türkiye)", available at: https://www.ozodi.org/a/tajikturkish_shcooll/2313794.html [accessed on June 20, 2024]

¹⁸⁴ Işık Kuşçu Bonnenfant and Hayriye Kahveci, "Turkish Foreign Policy Towards Central Asia: An Unfolding of Regionalism and Soft Power", *All Azimuth*, V. 2, N. 2, 2023, p. 214.

This commission was established to examine the problems arising in the implementation of the agreements and to develop related economic relations, and in the following years, this commission continued to be the pillar of relations. The Commission will consist of representatives of both governments and will meet in Türkiye and Tajikistan respectively, on mutually agreed dates. The issue of providing credit to Tajikistan through Eximbank was actually raised by the Chairman of the National Bank of Tajikistan during Ambassador Bilal Şimşir's visit to Tajikistan in 1991, and this request was fulfilled in 1993.¹⁸⁵ Apart from this, the main agreements signed between Türkiye and Tajikistan in the following years; Agreement on Mutual Promotion and Protection of Investments (1996) and Agreement on Avoiding Double Taxation in Taxes on Income (1996). These two agreements were made with liberal norms and specified the main legal dimension of economic relations.

Until 1995, relations with Tajikistan progressed at a relatively slow pace compared to other countries.¹⁸⁶ The primary reason for this was the civil war in the country. The year 1995 and 1996 is very important between Türkiye and Tajikistan. Between September 10-11, 1995, for the first time at the presidential level, the President of Türkiye visited Tajikistan. During this visit, it was decided to transfer the remains of Enver Pasha, who was martyred in Tajikistan, to Türkiye, as mentioned in the historical section of the thesis. In addition, a joint declaration was signed, and agreements were made in the fields of environment, science and technology, and air transport. A memorandum of understanding regarding the activities of TİKA (Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency) was also signed.¹⁸⁷ In 1996, the President of Tajikistan, Emomali Rahmon, also visited Türkiye. In 1996, detailed agreements were

¹⁸⁵ Bilal Şimşir, *Azerbaycan ve Orta Asya Cumhuriyetlerine Yapılan Ziyaretler Hakkında Rapor*, Ankara: Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi, 2021, p. 45.

¹⁸⁶ Mustafa Durmuş and Harun Yılmaz, “Son Yirmi Yılda Türkiye'nin Orta Asya'ya Yönelik Dış Politikası ve Bölgedeki Faaliyetleri”, in *Bağımsızlıklarının Yirminci Yılında Orta Asya Cumhuriyetleri: Türk Dili Halklar - Türkiye ile İlişkiler*, ed. Ayşegül Aydıngün and Çiğdem Balım, Ankara: Atatürk Kültür Merkezi, 2012, p. 500.

¹⁸⁷ Dışişleri Bakanlığı 1995 Tarihçesi, Ankara: Dışişleri Eğitim Merkezi, 1995, p. 10-11, 121.

signed in areas such as sports, environment, economy, transportation, tourism, culture and health.¹⁸⁸

Table 3- Agreements and Protocols Signed Between Türkiye and Tajikistan

Practice	
Economic Agreement and Protocols	19
Humanitarian / Infrastructure Aid	14
Cooperation on Security	11
Agreement in the Field of Cultural Cooperation	4
Agreement in the Field of Reconstruction	4
Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Agriculture	3
Agreement in the Field of Environment	3
Agreement in the Field of Energy	3
Agreement in the Field of Environment	3
Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Science and Technic	2
Friendship Agreement	2
Agreement in the Field of Military	2
Agreement and Protocol on Cooperation in the Field of Sports	2
Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Tourism	2
International Road Transport Agreement	2
Agreement on Communication Cooperation	1
Protocol on Settlement of Diplomatic Representations	1
Agreement on Legal Assistance in Legal, Commercial and Criminal	1
Agreement on Cooperation in the Fields of Medical Sciences	1
Partnership and Cooperation Agreement	1

As mentioned above, the ongoing civil war in Tajikistan slows down the development of bilateral relations.¹⁸⁹ For example, the Turkish-Tajik Joint

¹⁸⁸ Dışişleri Bakanlığı 1996 Tarihçesi, Ankara: Dışişleri Eğitim Merkezi, 1996, p. 24-25.

¹⁸⁹ Pınar Akçalı, "Tacikistan: 'Türk' Olmayan Kardeş Ülke", in *Bağımsızlıklarının Yirminci Yılında Orta Asya Cumhuriyetleri: Türk Dili Halklar - Türkiye ile İlişkiler*, ed. Ayşegül Aydınğün and Çiğdem Balım, Ankara: Atatürk Kültür Merkezi, 2012, p. 380.

Commission, envisaged in the 1993 agreement, was realized for the first time only in 2000. This commission continued to meet every year, protocols were generally signed as a result of each meeting and formed the main backbone of the development of economic relations. One of the first official visits that Recep Tayyip Erdoğan made to the region was his trip to Tajikistan on June 23-24, 2003. The first meeting of the Turkish-Tajik Business Council, whose protocol was signed by Erdoğan, was held in Dushanbe with the participation of the Prime Minister.

In 2006, an agreement was signed for a long-term commercial and industrial cooperation program. The main importance of this agreement is that the parties agreed on the preparation of the Long-Term Economic Cooperation Program in order to take the necessary measures to increase commercial relations between their countries and to develop economic cooperation on a permanent basis. With this agreement, the activities included in the Execution Plan to be prepared within the framework of the Program will be carried out by the relevant institutions and organizations specified in the Execution Plan, and the Turkish-Tajik Intergovernmental Joint Commission will be responsible for monitoring the implementation of the activities included in the Execution Plan. Other issues agreed upon here are Türkiye's support for Tajikistan's membership in the World Trade Organization (WTO), information sharing in the field of customs, increasing the visits of companies in the country, and supporting the establishment of the "Union of Eurasian Chambers of Commerce and Industry". In addition, this agreement states the principles of cooperation in the fields of agriculture, tourism, technology, transportation and energy. 2012 was a very important year for bilateral relations and similar to 1996, agreements were signed for cooperation in the fields of agriculture, transportation and culture. During Tajikistan President Emomali Rahman's visit to Türkiye on 18 December 2012, "Joint Statement on the Establishment of the Cooperation Council between the Republic of Türkiye and the Republic of Tajikistan" was signed in order to establish an institutional basis for relations. As a result of these agreements, bilateral trade increased and it can be said that the situation was successful, especially for Tajikistan, which aimed to attract investment. Turkish contracting companies became more active in Tajikistan, and the total amount of 49 projects undertaken by Turkish companies in Tajikistan between

1994 and 2018 exceeded 600 million dollars. In 2018, the bilateral trade increased by 10%, approaching 380 million dollars.¹⁹⁰

Technological backwardness is shown as one of the reasons for the collapse of the Soviet Union. Therefore, after Tajikistan gained its autonomy, it found itself with technologies that were too old to compete in the modern neoliberal economic system. One of Emomali Rahmon's goals was to cooperate with foreign countries and renew these areas. Türkiye, on the other hand, undertook the renewal of the airport and telephone line systems with the agreement signed in 1993.¹⁹¹ In the following years, he continued his efforts to renovate schools and hospitals.¹⁹²

The security cooperation agreement was signed in 2001, but the next agreement was signed in 2015. This agreement covers issues such as crime, terrorism, the fight against radicalism and the training of personnel.¹⁹³ Apart from the agreement, I have also codified the security cooperation here. For example, Colonel Gulmurad Halimov, the commander of the Special Task Force of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Tajikistan, was arrested in Türkiye and extradited to Tajikistan.¹⁹⁴ This also includes those who want to join ISIS being caught by Turkish security forces and handed over to Tajikistan. Between 2015 and 2016, more than a hundred Tajik citizens were handed

¹⁹⁰ Хадамоти Гумрукӣ Наҷди Ҳукумати Ҷумҳурии Тоҷикистон. (Customs Service Under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan), available at: <https://gumruk.tj/index.php/2018-06-12-04-34-10/2018-06-14-07-44-16/2018-06-14-07-45-21> [accessed on June 10, 2024]

¹⁹¹ FBIS, Moscow ITAR-TASS, "Friendship Agreement Signed with Türkiye", July 8, 1993.

¹⁹² Asia-Plus, "Ифтитоҳи Маркази мустақили кӯдакони саратоншиносӣ бо дастгирии Туркия (Opening of the Independent Children's Oncology Center with the support of Türkiye)", available at:

<https://asiaplustj.info/tj/news/tajikistan/society/20121011/iftito-i-markazi-musta-ili-k-dakonai-saratonshinos-bo-dastgirii-turkiya> [accessed on June 12, 2024]

¹⁹³ Khovar, "Тоҷикистону Туркия бар зидди терроризм ва экстремизм (Tajikistan and Türkiye against terrorism and extremism)", available at: <https://khovar.tj/2015/03/to-1207-ikistonu-turkiya-bar-ziddi-terrorizm-va-ekstremizm/> [accessed on June 12, 2024]

¹⁹⁴ Asia-Plus, "Боздошти фармондеҳи ОМОН-и Тоҷикистон дар Туркия (The arrest of the commander in Türkiye)", available at: <https://asiaplustj.info/tj/news/tajikistan/laworder/20150519/bozdoshti-farmonde-i-omon-i-ikiston-dar-turkiya> [accessed on June 12, 2024]

over to the state of Tajikistan.¹⁹⁵ By Tajikistan, the activities of the FETO group were banned in the country.¹⁹⁶ In response, Türkiye reached an agreement to ban the activities of "Group 24".¹⁹⁷

There are some areas where it is still possible to talk about cooperation, even though it is low compared to the intensive agreements mentioned above. The first of these is considered cooperation in the field of culture. In the absence of a common identity in bilateral relations, an attempt was made to talk about a common history by highlighting characters such as Mawlana. In addition, educational collaborations also enter into culture. I have also identified four agreements in the field of reconstruction. It is possible that these are actually more. All of these reconstruction agreements were made by Türkiye in Tajikistan. For example, in 2011 some Turkish companies have signed an agreement with Tajikistan for the renovation and reconstruction of the Qairokkum and Varzob hydropower plants and the construction of small power plants. Another Turkish company has decided to establish a joint venture in Tajikistan for the production of pipes for the construction of power plants.¹⁹⁸ The energy field is in a similar situation. Almost all of them were signed after 2011 and are mostly aimed at using the mines and hydropower in Tajikistan. For example, the Ministry of Energy and Industry of the Republic of Tajikistan signed a cooperation protocol on the study

¹⁹⁵ Ozodi, "Вазири хориҷаи Туркия бо сафари расмӣ ба Душанбе меравад (The Turkish Foreign Minister is going to Dushanbe on an official visit)", available at: <https://www.ozodi.org/a/fm-Türkiye-visits-tajikistan-/28065622.html> [accessed on June 12, 2024]

¹⁹⁶ Ozodi, "Дар Тоҷикистон охири муассисаи Гулен баста шуд. (The last Gülen institution was closed in Tajikistan)", available at: <https://www.ozodi.org/a/last-gulen-property-shut-down-in-tajikistan-/28003954.html> [accessed on June 13, 2024]

¹⁹⁷ Asia-Plus, "Туркия узви «Гурӯҳи 24»-ро ба Тоҷикистон истирдод мекунад (Türkiye will extradite a member of the "Group of 24" to Tajikistan)", available at: <https://asiaplustj.info/tj/news/tajikistan/security/20160805/turkiya-uzvi-gur-i-24-ro-ba-ikiston-istirdod-mekunad> [accessed on June 13, 2024]

¹⁹⁸ Khovar, "Соҳибкорони Туркия ба соҳтмони НБО «Роғун» мароқ зоҳир мекунанд. (Turkish entrepreneurs are interested in the construction of Rogun.)", available at: <https://khovar.tj/2010/02/so-1202-ibkoroni-turkiya-ba-sohtmoni-nbo-ro-1170-un-mar-1178-zo-1202-ir-mekunand/> [accessed on June 13, 2024]

of construction and commissioning of hydropower, hydromechanical and electromechanical equipment manufacturing plant in the Republic of Tajikistan."¹⁹⁹

In January 2006, during the visit of Tajikistan President Emomali Rahmon to Türkiye, a series of agreements were signed, including the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, as well as agreements in the areas of trade, tourism, and the activities of TİKA.

The issue of aid has been an important aspect of cooperation since Tajikistan's independence. A total of 14 agreements were signed for delivering humanitarian aid or providing infrastructure assistance. Faced with severe economic difficulties and a refugee influx from Afghanistan, Tajikistan received aid in February and March of 1993. For this purpose, Türkiye provided 14 tons of humanitarian aid materials, including food and medicine, which were shipped to Tajikistan by air. This aid was repeated in June of the same year when Tajikistan was hit by floods.²⁰⁰ Additionally, through the Turkish Red Crescent, a total of \$808,000 in in-kind and cash assistance was transferred to Tajikistan until the 2000s.²⁰¹

There are some agreements that were signed in the first years of relations and were not given much attention, and therefore we cannot say that cooperation in that field is strong. Examples of these include the Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Medical Sciences and Health between the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Türkiye and the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Tajikistan, signed in 1996²⁰²,

¹⁹⁹ Asia-Plus, "Густариши ҳамкориҳои Тоҷикистону Туркия дар бахши истеҳсоли таҷҳизоти барқӣ (Expansion of cooperation between Tajikistan and Türkiye in the field of electrical equipment production)", available at: <https://asiaplustj.info/tj/news/tajikistan/economic/20111209/gustarishi-amkori-oi-ikistonu-turkiya-dar-bakhshi-iste-soli-ta-izoti-bar> [accessed on June 13, 2024]

²⁰⁰ Dışişleri Bakanlığı 1993 Tarihçesi, Ankara: Dışişleri Eğitim Merkezi, 1993, p. 177.

²⁰¹ Mustafa Durmuş and Harun Yılmaz, "Son Yirmi Yılda Türkiye'nin Orta Asya'ya Yönelik Dış Politikası ve Bölgedeki Faaliyetleri", in *Bağımsızlıklarının Yirminci Yılında Orta Asya Cumhuriyetleri: Türk Dili Halklar - Türkiye ile İlişkiler*, ed. Ayşegül Aydıngün and Çiğdem Balım, Ankara: Atatürk Kültür Merkezi, 2012, p. 488.

²⁰² Resmi Gazete, Approval of the attached "Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Medical Sciences and Health between the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Türkiye and the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Tajikistan" signed in Ankara on 6 May 1996.

and cooperation between science and technology. Similarly, although Türkiye has developed in terms of tourism, cooperation on tourism has remained very low, as declared by both parties, and there is only one agreement signed in 1996.²⁰³ Agreements in the fields of environment and sport were similarly signed in 1995-6 and subsequently reviewed only twice. Although plans have been made to develop cooperation on various issues in the bilateral commissions, which have met 10 times until 2022, it is very difficult to determine to what extent these have been implemented.

Although the agreements in the military field are few, we must underline that this is an area that is suitable for development in the future. The Defense industry, which Türkiye came to the conclusion that it needed to be strengthened, especially after the Cyprus incident, and started to establish its infrastructure in the 1990s, started to bear fruit in the 2010s. In this context, it should not be unreasonable to expect that relations with Central Asia and Tajikistan will develop in the military field.

Another issue that I think reflects actions, although it is not actually a treaty, is education and training. Identifying these requires very careful work and intensive research. Education was an important aspect of the relationship from the very beginning. Tajikistan was in the absence or weakness of institutions in the first years of independence. Türkiye also initially undertook the training of personnel of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, pilots and lawyers. In the following years, training of border troops and training in the fight against smuggling continued.²⁰⁴

3.4. Recommendations

Although it is possible to say that relations have not developed perfectly, an undeniable fact is that intense efforts have been made to improve relations. During this period, the damage to the relationship was caused by both Türkiye and Tajikistan. If

²⁰³ Resmi Gazete, Approval of the attached "Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Tourism between the Republic of Türkiye and the Republic of Tajikistan" signed in Ankara on 6 May 1996.

²⁰⁴ Asia-Plus, "Табодули таҷрибаи кормандони пулиси Туркия бо ҳамтоҳои тоҷики худ (Sharing the experience of Turkish police officers with their Tajik counterparts)", available at: <https://asiaplustj.info/tj/news/tajikistan/security/20120911/taboduli-ta-ribai-kormandoni-pulisi-turkiya-bo-amto-oi-iki-khud> [accessed on June 13, 2024]

we examine it from Türkiye's perspective, the first thing that comes first is that Türkiye was wanted to be shown as the "Big Brother" to the independent Central Asian countries, but the Central Asian countries, which suffered greatly from this, were very uncomfortable with this concept. It is obvious that it damages the psychological dimension of relationships. Secondly, some groups operating in the region on behalf of the Turks lack national consciousness and their aim is not to improve relations within the framework of the state, but to pursue other goals. Thirdly, Türkiye's biggest shortcoming is that it lacks knowledgeable, forward-looking and broadly educated leaders. Even though the Republic of Türkiye has very solid foreign policy foundations, this issue affects the country's foreign policy. Fourthly, the Turkish economic dominant powers have a Europe-oriented structure and the new economic segment has new experience.

Turkish administrators should pay attention to a few issues in order to improve relations in the future. Firstly, Türkiye should focus on training a cadre that is progressive, scientific, and well-acquainted with the languages and cultures of the region. The principle that 'if you are Turkish, you are Türkiye'²⁰⁵ still holds true in these regions. Therefore, a well-trained cadre is the first necessity. In other words, the stability of institutions that train statesmen and the stability of the state itself are the most essential. I believe the analysis of the former Turkish President Fahri Korutürk is still waiting to be implemented: "If a visit is to be made to a country, treaties benefiting Türkiye should be the goal. Visits should not be conducted with large delegations. The state budget should be used with a frugal mindset."²⁰⁶

The second is that a Türkiye without Western connections will not be very influential in the region unless it becomes economically and militarily strong enough to apply its goals. As it develops economically or militarily, its influence in the region will also increase. Thirdly, Türkiye is developing multilateral relations with other Turkish states through organizations such as "The Organization of Turkic States". The agreements signed on the basis of the organization should not marginalize Tajikistan,

²⁰⁵ Pınar Akçalı, "Tacikistan:'Türk' Olmayan Kardeş Ülke", in *Bağımsızlıklarının Yirminci Yılında Orta Asya Cumhuriyetleri: Türk Dili Halklar - Türkiye ile İlişkiler*, ed. Ayşegül Aydıngün and Çiğdem Balım, Ankara: Atatürk Kültür Merkezi, 2012, p. 385.

²⁰⁶ Ali Baransel, *Bıçak Sirtında: Çankaya Köşkü Yılları*, İstanbul: Remzi Kitabevi, p. 77.

which is not a member of the organization, in a way that would force it to approach countries such as Iran, and efforts should be made to sign similar agreements with Tajikistan. Fourthly, the economic crisis that Türkiye experienced in 1995 had a bad impact on its activities in Central Asia. Therefore, it is a fact that unless Türkiye establishes long-term sound policies in both public administration and economic terms, its commercial relations in the region will not be able to rise in the long term. For example, during the economic crisis period, the fluctuating trade relations between Türkiye and Tajikistan saw a significant increase after the crisis, starting from 2003. By the end of 2010, exports to Tajikistan, which amounted to 11 million dollars at the end of 2002, had reached 144.1 million dollars.²⁰⁷

Fifthly, Türkiye should continue its success in student exchange programs and Tajik students should be allowed to come and study in Türkiye. There are also similar sports fields in which Türkiye is very developed, such as wrestling. Cooperation among federations should be developed in this field and Türkiye should be set as an example. However, while doing these, attention should be paid to the quality of the people who will deal with them. Türkiye must strongly uphold the principles of the republic. Because true smallness does not come from a lack of land, but from a lack of identity. Mahir Kaynak's analysis should be taken into consideration: “A state organization filled with cadres that have no unique mission and fail to understand the world will never leave the fate of this region to anyone.”²⁰⁸

The recommendations above were focused on Türkiye. If we return to Tajikistan, it is possible to say that a few of the issues we mentioned in the Türkiye section are also valid for Tajikistan. As understood from this entire study, Türkiye has been the active party and Tajikistan has been the passive party in Türkiye-Tajikistan bilateral relations from the very beginning. Tajikistan first began to create a national commercial sector after it emerged from the civil war and peace was established in the

²⁰⁷ Mustafa Durmuş and Harun Yılmaz, “Son Yirmi Yılda Türkiye'nin Orta Asya'ya Yönelik Dış Politikası ve Bölgedeki Faaliyetleri”, in *Bağımsızlıklarının Yirminci Yılında Orta Asya Cumhuriyetleri: Türk Dili Halklar - Türkiye ile İlişkiler*, ed. Ayşegül Aydıngün and Çiğdem Balım, Ankara: Atatürk Kültür Merkezi, 2012, p. 52.

²⁰⁸ Hamit Kılıçkaya, *Âlimler, İdareciler, Dervişler Bozulunca*, Konya: Palet Yayınları, 2024, p. 29.

country. This inexperienced segment is unaware of liberal commercial policies, considering the socialist past. Therefore, foreign investors could easily become dominant in economic markets. On the one hand, there was Tajikistan, which needed investment and was trying to be in a liberal economy, and on the other hand, there were the Tajik commercial segments that were oppressed under this. This was done by filing a lawsuit in a very unfair way and by following other methods, investors' wealth or property could be seized. Now, considering the existence of a sufficiently rich Tajik capital group, Tajikistan must put an end to corruption, bribery and injustice in order to properly attract investment and develop the country. One of the cornerstones of the country's development and trade development is the development and consolidation of institutionalization. The development of trade may also lead to the strengthening of institutionalization, but this is up to the will of the traders. Another issue for Tajikistan is that it needs to consolidate a more effective expert and merit system within its foreign ministry. Thus, its foreign relations not only with Türkiye but also with the whole world will be stronger.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSION

In this study, I aimed to evaluate the diversity and depth of Tajikistan's foreign policy toward Türkiye between 1992 and 2022 within the framework of a dataset and role theory. Considering that it has been 30 years since Tajikistan gained independence from the Soviet Union, I thought it would be useful to assess the situation from Tajikistan's perspective. To achieve this, the most profound analysis was provided by role theory and event dataset analysis.

Role theory, in short, defines the foreign policy behaviors and commitments that decision-makers consider appropriate for their state. It analyzes how these actors define their interests and behaviors in relation to a second structure. This essentially examines the expectations, behaviors, identities, and interactions related to these roles. One of the key elements of role theory is role formation and socialization. Due to historical, cultural, and social interactions, actors and states may adopt certain roles. Both internal and external factors determine this. As they engage in interactions and socialization, concrete formations of these roles begin to emerge. Another element is role expectations. That is, actors are expected to behave in certain ways by other countries and structures, and these expectations can vary depending on norms, alliances, and historical context. Another important element is role identity, which describes how a country perceives itself in the international system. Role conflict arises when actions are taken that contradict the perceived role identity. These elements highlight that roles can evolve over time. For instance, Germany's transformation into Europe's key economy after its defeat in World War II is an example.

Initially, when analyzing how Tajikistan perceives Türkiye based on discourse, two discourses were most frequently coded. The first one is that they seriously view

Türkiye as an economic partner. Considering factors such as Türkiye's trade potential, the absence of shared culture, and Tajikistan's need to revive its economy, it is natural to conclude that Tajikistan sees Türkiye in this way. Additionally, we can see that this role was shaped by Türkiye itself. In the early years of the relationship, Turkish Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel stated that their goal was solely economic. The second discourse coding was "security partner." This coding began especially with the intensification of the Afghan war and maintained its relevance in subsequent years with the emergence of other factors. These factors include the presence of banned party leaders from Tajikistan living in Türkiye, Tajiks traveling to Türkiye to join ISIS, and the issue of closing schools affiliated with the Gülen movement following the failed coup attempt in Türkiye. Given Türkiye's key geopolitical position, I believe this role will continue in the coming years.

Additionally, based on discourse, I developed another coding system called "discourse according to future goals." In other words, I aimed to identify the areas in which Tajik officials most wanted to develop their relations with Türkiye. In line with the previous coding, the most frequent coding was "economic field" (29 times), followed by "security field" (14 times). These two discourses were followed by "energy" and "cultural field." The content of the cultural field, as explained in the third chapter, specifically refers to education.

Finally, based on discourse, I conducted a coding to measure the level of satisfaction of Tajik officials with their relations with Türkiye. In other words, whether they are satisfied, dissatisfied, or satisfied but believe it could be better. The discourse coded as "satisfied" was the most frequently coded (12 times). This was followed by "we are satisfied, but it could be better" (7 times). I encountered 4 instances of the discourse "we are not satisfied," which were particularly on a micro level and not general. For example, they referred to specific areas like the significant progress made in the economic field.

After analyzing the discourses initially, I coded the agreements and relevant data supporting them under practices to measure the parallelism of these discourses in action. In fact, I found that there is a parallelism between the discourses and practices. In total, 16 agreements and protocols were signed in the economic field. Furthermore,

a bilateral commission was established to increase trade. The next two areas were humanitarian and infrastructure aid, and security. A total of 14 agreements were signed for delivering humanitarian aid or providing infrastructure assistance. In the security field, a total of 11 agreements were signed. Agreements in other areas were minimal, as is typical in the nature of all relationships. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a parallel alignment between discourse and practice in Tajikistan's relations with Türkiye. Additionally, the coding of the nature of the relationship that Tajik officials wanted to develop with Türkiye also supports this conclusion.

I concluded that the role formation and socialization between Türkiye and Tajikistan have been three-dimensional. For example, the economic focus of the relations is three-dimensional. Tajikistan approached the relationship economically for development, while Türkiye sought to gain influence by investing in Tajikistan, and the end of the Cold War introduced a wave of liberal economics, which was structural. Thus, a bilateral socialization role began. Similarly, in the security field, the bilateral relationship has continued. Role socialization has aligned with role expectations. It can be said that the roles Tajikistan expected from Türkiye were met, as demonstrated by the parallelism between discourse and action. In terms of role identity, Tajikistan has been the passive side and has assigned a role identity to Türkiye. The most prominent role assigned was that of "economic partner," along with "contributor to peace." In bilateral relations, the roles have not fundamentally changed. Over time, however, new roles have been added as a result of transformations.

While the relations have continued in this trajectory, it is important to emphasize that they have the potential for further development. If Türkiye wishes to develop its relations, it must first and foremost focus on a dynamic, progressive, and scientific approach, without neglecting the training of regional experts. A team well-versed in Tajik and familiar with the structure of Tajikistan will play a highly effective role. Additionally, Türkiye cannot expect to be influential in the region for an extended period without strengthening its internal dynamics. Therefore, it should pay attention to institutionalization and its economy. Similar considerations apply to Tajikistan. For Tajikistan, the first priority should be to strengthen transparency and a sense of justice within the country in a way that ensures the trust of foreign investors. Otherwise, the relations are likely to remain superficial.

This study is significant in the context of International Relations. First, by creating the data based on Tajikistan's local sources, it fills a gap in forming a local perspective. Analyzing this within the framework of role theory adds novelty to the foreign policy analysis methodology, as this theory has not been applied to a Central Asian country in this way before. Moreover, the study not only reveals the diversity and depth of Tajikistan's policy toward Türkiye but also helps in predicting the direction in which it will develop in the future. By using the MAXQDA application to present the methodology more quantitatively, I have not come across any study that investigates the relationship between these two countries in such a way. Therefore, this work might be a pioneering effort. This also adds credibility to the methodology.

Like any study, I acknowledge some limitations in my work. The first limitation is the availability of sources. Since data is the core of my study, I tried to ensure that there were no significant gaps in terms of available data. However, since I am analyzing a 30-year-long relationship, it is possible that some data were inaccessible. This was especially true because I focused on local sources, and some limitations in Tajikistan may have hindered my access to certain information. As in any study, there is always a possibility of differing interpretations when data is presented. Over the past year while writing this thesis, I have constantly revised my analysis and interpretations whenever I reviewed the data. I believe this tendency to reassess my work will likely continue in the future.

For future research, Tajikistan's foreign relations with other countries should also be examined in this context. By doing so, it would be easier to determine how original and unique Tajikistan's foreign policy toward Türkiye is.

In conclusion, this study, based on Tajik data, evaluated the diversity and depth of Tajikistan's foreign policy toward Türkiye within the framework of role theory and event dataset analysis. Despite the challenges of this approach, I believe that it can be applicable to many bilateral relationships and help provide accurate data and interpretations.

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APPENDICES

C. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKGÇE ÖZET

Bu tezin yazım amacı Tacikistan'ın Türkiye'ye yönelik dış politikasını rol teorisi ve veri seti analizi çerçevesinde 1992-2022 yılları arasında analiz etmektir. Tacikistan'ın bir cumhuriyet olarak oluşumu Sovyetler Birliği döneminde gerçekleşmiştir. Sovyetler Birliği'nden önce Buhara Emirliği içinde varlıklarını sürdüren Tacikler 1924 yılında Özbekistan Sovyet Sosyalist Cumhuriyet içinde bir özerk bölgede varlıklarına devam etmiştir. Daha sonra 1929 yılında Özbekistan'dan ayrılarak Sovyetler Birliği'ne bağlı bir Sovyet Sosyalist Cumhuriyeti haline gelmiştir. Tacikistan'ın yükselişi, Sovyetlerin göçebeliğe karşı yerleşik yaşamı desteklemesi, tarıma dayalı ekonomik yapıyı teşvik etmesi ve Türk kabilelerini askeri tehdit olarak görmesiyle bağlantılı sayılmaktadır. Günümüz Tacikistan sınırları içerisinde kalan bölgelerde Sovyet yönetimine karşı ilk yıllar ayaklanma ve savaş gerçekleşmiş fakat sonraki yıllarda sosyalist yapılar başat güç olarak şekillenmiştir. 1930'da Tacikistan Komünist Partisi kurulmuş ve ülke üzerindeki Sovyet kontrolü pekiştirilmiştir. Sonraki dönemler de çeşitli reformlar yapılmış ve birçok alanda ilerleme sağlanmıştır. İkinci Dünya Savaşı'nda birçok açıdan olumsuz etkilenmiş olan Tacikistan sonraki yıllarda tekrar toparlanabilmiştir. 1970'lerden itibaren Sovyet yönetiminde siyasî, ekonomik ve sosyal sorunlar derinleşmiş ve çöküşe yol açmıştır. Tacikistan, Orta Asya'nın Sovyetler Birliği'nden ayrılarak bağımsızlığını kazanan ülkelerinden biri olarak, 1991 yılında siyasî ve ekonomik belirsizliklerle yüzleşmiştir. Bu süreçte, Türkiye'nin Tacikistan'ın bağımsızlığını ilk tanıyan ülkelere biri olması ve 1992'de diplomatik ilişkilerin kurulması, iki ülke arasındaki bağların temellerini atmıştır. Bu çalışmanın araştırma problemi, Tacikistan'ın Türkiye'ye yönelik dış politikasının yerel bir perspektiften derinlemesine analiz edilmemiş olmasıdır.

Bu çalışmada Tacikistan'ın Türkiye'ye yönelik dış politikası rol teorisi çerçevesinde değerlendirilmiştir. Rol teorisi, uluslararası ilişkilerde dış politika karar alma süreçlerini, karar alıcıların perspektifinden anlamayı amaçlayan bir yöntemdir.

Bu yaklaşım, karar alıcıların devletlerinin rollerini ve diğer devletlerle olan ilişkilerini uluslararası sistem içinde nasıl algıladıklarını anlamaya ve açıklamaya çalışır. Bu tezde rol teorisinin üç ana kavramı üzerinde durulmuştur. Birincisi, bir devletin uluslararası sistem veya belli bir devlete karşı olan sorumluluklarını kapsayan ulusal rollerdir. İkincisi, bir devletin kendisini nasıl gördüğü ve nasıl rol oynamasını gerektiğine dair kendi tanımlamalarıdır. Üçüncüsü ise, bir devletin farklı roller üstlenme zorunda kalması ya da bir rolün beklentilerle çelişmesi durumunda ortaya çıkan rol çatışmasıdır.

Çoğu çalışma rol teori çerçevesinde ulusal rol kavramlarını belirlemeye odaklansa da, bunların nasıl uygulamaya konulduğuna odaklanan araştırma eksikliği vardır. Bu nedenle, bu anlatıların pratikte ne ölçüde takip edildiğini ölçmek için veri setleri oluşturulmuştur. Bu veri setlerin çoğu yerel kaynaklardan oluşmaktadır. Veri setleri düzenlendiğinde, kodlamalar resmi ilişkilerin ve verilerin başladığı 1992'den 2022'ye kadar MAXQDA yazılımı aracılığıyla yapılmıştır. Birçok tekrar ve düzenlemeden sonra toplam üç ana kod ve yirmi alt kod oluşturulmuştur. Bu ana kodlardan ilki Tacik yetkililerinin Türkiye hakkındaki söylemidir. Bu çalışmada yetkili, cumhurbaşkanı, büyükelçi, bakan veya cumhurbaşkanı tarafından belirlenen özel temsilciyi ifade etmektedir.

Türkiye'nin Tacikistan yetkililerinin bakış açısından nasıl bir role sahip olduğunu belirlemek için söylemlerine dayanarak toplam yirmi iki kod oluşturulmuştur. Bu kodlamaların ana temasını iki konu oluşturmaktadır. Birincisi on dört kez kullanılan "ekonomik ortak" kavramıdır. Türkiye'nin Tacik yöneticileri gözünde ekonomik ortak olarak algılanmasının birkaç sebebi vardır. Birincisi, Tacikistan kalkınmak için Türkiye gibi ekonomik ortaklara ihtiyacı olmuştur. İkincisi, Tacikistan, Rus ve Sovyet olan her şeye karşı bir panzehir olarak ihtiyaç duydukları liberal ekonomiyle bağlantısı sayesinde, Türkiye'nin ideolojik ve stratejik olarak geleceğe açılan bir kapı olduğunu fark etmiştir. Üçüncüsü, Türkiye ile ortak bir dil ve etnik kimliği bulunmayan Tacikistan, ilişkilerin mahiyetini özellikle ekonomik olarak vurgulamak zorunluluğu hissetmişlerdir. Türkiye'nin Tacikistan'ın önemli ekonomik ortağı olduğu söylemi sonraki yıllarda da devam etmiştir. 2021 yılında her iki ülke de iki ülke arasındaki ticareti 1 milyar dolara çıkarmayı hedeflenmiştir.

Toplam sekiz kez kodlanan ikinci söylem ise, Türkiye'nin "barışa katkıda bulunan bir ülke" olmasıdır. Bu konunun Tacik yöneticilerinin söylemlerinde 8 kez

kullanılmıştır. Türkiye'nin barışa katkıda bulunan bir ülke olarak adlandırılmasının üç ana sebebi vardır. Birincisi, Tacikistan ile sınıra sahip Afganistan'daki savaşın 2001 yılından itibaren şiddetlenmesidir. Daha önce Afgan mültecilerin akımına maruz kalan Tacikistan'a ekonomik yardımlar göndermesi ve bir NATO ülkesi olması bu konuda Türkiye'nin önemini tekrar artırmıştır. Bunun bir diğer nedeni ise Ahmet Necdet Sezer'in yaklaşımı olmuştur. Mayıs 2000'de Cumhurbaşkanı olan Ahmet Necdet Sezer, Türkiye'nin Orta Asya ile ilişkilerinde öncelikli olarak güvenlik ve terörle mücadele işbirliğine odaklanmıştır. İkinci sebep, Irak Şam İslam Devleti'nin (İŞİD) güçlenmesiyle Tacik vatandaşlarının Türkiye üzerinden Suriye'ye giderek bu örgüte katılması olmuştur. Bunun engellenmesi için Türkiye ile Tacikistan işbirliği yapmıştır. Örneğin 2016 yılında Tacik yetkililer, terörle mücadelede Türkiye ile yaptıkları iş birliğinden memnun olduklarını, son üç yılda İŞİD'e katılmak isteyen yüzlerce Tacik vatandaşının Türkiye tarafından geri gönderildiğini belirtmişlerdir. Sonraki yıllarda yapılan temaslarda terörle mücadele ve kaçakçılık gibi konularda iş birliğinin önemi dile getirilmeye devam etmiştir. Türkiye'yi “barışa katkı sağlayan bir ülke” olarak adlandırmalarının üçüncü nedeni ise Tacikistan'dan kaçan ve hükümet tarafından güvenlik sorunu olarak algılanan muhalif kesiminin bazı üyelerinin Türkiye'de ikamet etmeleri olmuştur. Bunlar özellikle İslam Rönesans Partisi ve Grup 24 üyeleridir. İslam Rönesans Partisi 2015 yılında kapatılmış ve üyelerinin çoğu İran ve Türkiye gibi ülkelere kaçmıştır. Bu durum nedeniyle Tacikistan zaman zaman Türkiye'den bu partinin üyelerinin iadesini istemiştir. Son olarak, uzun yıllar Tacikistan ve Kırgızistan arasında devam eden sınır anlaşmazlığında Türkiye'nin arabulucu rolüdür. Bu faktör, Türkiye'yi barışa katkıda bulunan bir ülke haline getirmiştir.

İlişkilerin mahiyetini belirlemek amacıyla iki kod daha oluşturulmuştur. Birincisi, Tacikistan'ın Türkiye ile ilişkisini zaman geçtikçe nasıl değerlendirdiğini belirlemektir. Başka ifade ile, geline nokta ne denli memnun oldukları saptanmaya çalışılmıştır. İkincisi, gelecekteki hedeflerini hangi yönde geliştirmek istediklerini belirlemektir. Tacik yöneticileri Türkiye ile ilişkilerini değerlendirdiklerinde, ifadelerinde en çok geçen husus, şu anki ilişkiden memnun olduklarıdır. Bu ifadeden sonra en çok kullanılan husus “memnun olmakla birlikte daha iyisinin mümkün olduğu” cümlesi olmuştur. Örneğin, 2010 yılında Cumhurbaşkanı Emomali Rahmon "Türkiye ile ilişkiler iyi düzeydedir, ülkede 53 Türk-Tacik şirketi faaliyet gösteriyor, ancak ekonomik ilişkileri geliştirmek için çok daha fazla fırsat var" demiştir. Çok az,

Tacik yöneticilerinin “gelinen noktada ilişkinin tatmin edici olmadığı” açıklamaları olmuştur. Fakat burada spesifik belli konular kastedilmiştir. Örneğin, 2021'de Tacikistanlı bakan, ticaret hacminin 391 milyon dolara çıkmasına rağmen, gerçek potansiyele kıyasla aslında çok küçük olduğunu söyleyerek memnuniyetsizliğini dile getirmiştir. Söylemlerinden yola çıkarak saptanmaya çalışılan bir diğer husus gelecek ilişkilerin seyridir. "Ekonomik ilişkilerin geliştirilmesi" ifadesi toplam 29 kodla ilk sırada yer alırken, güvenlik konusunda işbirliği 14 kodla ikinci sırada yer almaktadır. Bunları kültür ve enerji alanlarında işbirliği isteği takip etmiştir.

Tacik yöneticilerin söyleminde Türkiye'nin dış politikadaki rolünü, ilişkileri nasıl değerlendirdiklerini ve hangi yöne odaklandıkları saptandıktan sonra pratikteki paralellik araştırılmıştır. Bir başka ifade ile, anlaşmaların ve veri bilgilerinin yoğunluğuna göre pratiğe nasıl dönüştüğünü, yani paralellik olup olmadığı tartışılmıştır. Uygulamaların en yoğun olduğu alanların ekonomi, güvenlik ve insani veya altyapı yardımları olmuştur. Veri setinde 19 kez ekonomiyle ilgili anlaşma ve protokolleri kodlanmıştır. 1993 yılında imzalanmış olan on iki maddelik ilk ticaret antlaşması sonraki yıllarda imzalanacak olan antlaşmaların temel taşını oluşturmuştur. Bu anlaşmayla, hak eşitliği, karşılıklı saygı ve ortak çıkar ilkelerine dayanan dostane ilişkilerini daha da güçlendirme istekleri teyit edilerek, sonraki yıllarda gelişecek ilişkilerin temel ilkeleri atılmıştır. Ayrıca, Eximbank aracılığıyla Tacikistan'a 50 milyon dolar verilmesi, ortak bankacılık faaliyetlerini geliştirilmesi ve Türk-Tacik Karma Ekonomik Komisyonu'nu kurulması kabul edilmiştir. 2000'lerde faaliyete geçecek olan Türk-Tacik Karma Ekonomik Komisyonu ikili ilişkilerin geliştirilmesinde çok rol oynamaya başlayacaktır.

Ekonomik antlaşmaları takiben ilk ve altyapı yardımları konusunda 14, güvenlik alanında da 11 kez antlaşma imzalanmıştır. Dolayısıyla söylem ile pratik arasındaki tutarlılıktan bahsetmek mümkündür. Antlaşma sayıları az olmasına rağmen işbirliğinin olduğu diğer konular ise kültür, eğitim ve enerji sayılmaktadır. Antlaşmaların az imzalandığı alanlar ise sağlık, turizm, çevre ve spor olarak ispatlanmıştır.

İkili ilişkilerde söylem ile pratik arasında paralellik saptanmıştır. İlişkilerin mükemmel bir şekilde gelişmediğini söylemek mümkün olsa da, ilişkilerin iyileştirilmesi için yoğun çabalar sarf edildiği yadsınamaz bir gerçektir. İlişkinin geliştirilmesindeki engeller iki tarafta da mevcuttur. Türkiye açısından bakıldığında,

Türkiye'nin bağımsız Orta Asya ülkelerine "Büyük Birader" olarak gösterilmek istenmesidir. Bu olgunun ilişkilerin psikolojik boyutunu zedelediği açıktır. İkincisi, Türkler adına bölgede faaliyet gösteren bazı grupların milli bilinçten yoksun olması ve amaçlarının devlet çerçevesinde ilişkileri iyileştirmek değil, kişisel hedefler peşinde olmalarıdır. Üçüncüsü, Türkiye'nin en büyük eksikliği, bilgili, ileri görüşlü ve geniş eğitimli liderlerden yoksun olması veya böyle yöneticilerin etkin olamamasıdır. Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nin çok sağlam dış politika temelleri olmasına rağmen, bu konu ülkenin dış politikasını etkilemektedir. Dolayısıyla bütün bunlar dikkate alındığında Türkiye açısından ilişkilerin geliştirilmesi donanımlı ve uzman bir kadroya, ülkenin sağlam iç politika dinamiklerine, güçlü ekonomik ve askerî yapılara bağlı olacaktır.

Tacikistan'ın yatırımları etkin bir şekilde çekebilmesi ve ülkenin kalkınmasını sağlayabilmesi için yolsuzluk, rüşvet ve adaletsizliğin ortadan kaldırılması gerekmektedir. Ülkenin ekonomik büyümesi ve ticaretin geliştirilmesinin temel unsurlarından biri, kurumsallaşmanın güçlendirilmesi ve sağlam temellere oturtulmasıdır. Tacikistan için bir diğer önemli mesele, dışişleri bakanlığı bünyesinde daha etkili bir uzmanlık ve liyakat sisteminin tesis edilmesidir. Bu sayede Tacikistan yalnızca Türkiye ile değil, küresel ölçekte tüm ülkelerle daha güçlü ve etkili dış ilişkiler geliştirme imkânına sahip olacaktır.

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“FOREIGN POLICY OF TAJIKISTAN TOWARD TÜRKİYE: 1992-2022 (ROLE THEORY AND DATA SETS ANALYSIS)”/

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