

Will there be revolution in Central Asia?

Mark N. Katz*

Public & International Affairs, George Mason University, MSN 3F4 Fairfax, VA 22030, USA
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Abstract

Will revolution, either of the democratic or the Islamic fundamentalist variety, spread throughout Central Asia? Such a question cannot be answered definitively. I will address this question by examining what is going on in Central Asia in light of different theories of revolution, including the ones focusing on relative deprivation, regime type, state breakdown, external factors, democratic revolution theory, and the role of the military. This study will show that several theoretical approaches suggest that the ingredients for revolution in Central Asia are either there now or will be in the not too distant future.

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Following on Georgia's "Rose Revolution" in 2003 and Ukraine's "Orange Revolution" in 2004, Kyrgyzstan's "Tulip Revolution" in early 2005 has raised the possibility that democratic revolutions might occur elsewhere in Central Asia (as well as other former Soviet republics). But Islamic revolutionary movements such as the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and *Hizb ut-Tahrir* are also active in Central Asia, and Islamic revolution could occur there too.

* Tel.: +1 703 993 1420; fax: +1 703 993 1399.

E-mail address: mkatz@gmu.edu

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Will revolution, either of the democratic or the Islamic fundamentalist variety, spread throughout Central Asia? Obviously, such a question cannot be answered definitively.

What I propose to do is address this question by examining what is going on in Central Asia in light of different theories of revolution. An exercise such as this is also useful for elucidating the strengths and weaknesses of these various theories. For these theories are usually retrospective: after articulating his or her theory, the scholar applies it to cases which, lo and behold, "prove" his or her point. Attempting to apply them prospectively, though, is much, much harder. The relevant indicators that appear so clearly present or absent in retrospect are much more difficult to assess looking forward: the indicators may appear partially present and partially absent. Worse still, they appear to be changing constantly.

With these caveats in mind, I believe a study like this is useful. The farther along the path toward revolution a country is on a given theory's set of indicators ought to be a cause for concern. The farther along it is on multiple theories' sets of indicators, the more cause for concern there ought to be (provided, of course, that our theories really are different from each other and not just slightly different ways of saying the same thing). Locating where these countries are in terms of these different theories may also suggest ways in which revolution might be encouraged in the democratic direction and away from the non-democratic Islamic one.

For make no mistake: non-democratic revolution, of whatever variety, is a terrible thing. While whatever regime it ousts is usually awful, what it replaces it with is usually worse. And as Stephen Walt (1996, 32-43), Fred Halliday (1999, 234-260), and others have observed, revolution in one country is often accompanied by war between it and others. If we can help the countries of Central Asia overcome their problems while avoiding non-democratic revolution, we will have accomplished something good.

So what do theories of revolution tell us about the prospects for it occurring in Central Asia?

Relative deprivation

In his book *Why Men Rebel* (1970), Ted Robert Gurr identified "relative deprivation" as the motive that could lead to revolution. Gurr defined relative deprivation as "a perceived discrepancy between men's value expectations and their value capabilities" (Gurr, 1970, 13)—value expectations being what people thought they were entitled to, and value capabilities being what they thought they could actually achieve in their circumstances. As Gurr put it: "Societal conditions that increase the average level or intensity of expectations without increasing capabilities increase the intensity of discontent" (1970, 13).

While not without its critics, the relative deprivation concept is useful because it provides an explanation for the apparent paradox that revolution does not usually occur in the very poorest countries, but in ones that have achieved a certain degree of economic growth instead. Having no expectations that they could improve their

miserable circumstances, people in the poorest countries have tended not to carry out revolutions. On the other hand, people whose circumstances are improving but whose expectations are growing at an even faster pace have become frustrated and have launched revolutions against regimes that could not or would not satisfy their desires. Gurr identified a period of "decline following a prolonged period of improvement" (1970, 101) as being especially likely to cause a sense of relative deprivation.

Gurr acknowledged that there could be several different types of relative deprivation, but regarded economic relative deprivation as being the most salient: "the intensity of relative deprivation is greatest with respect to discrepancy affecting economic values" (1970, 361). How, then, do the five Central Asian states rank in terms of economic improvement which Gurr argues can contribute to relative deprivation?

In 2005, GDP per capita (as measured on a purchasing power parity basis) ranged from \$1200 in Tajikistan, \$1800 in Uzbekistan, and \$2100 in Kyrgyzstan to \$8000 in Turkmenistan and \$8200 in Kazakhstan (CIA, 2006). According to the CIA, the percentage of the population living below the poverty line was 19% in Kazakhstan, 28% in Uzbekistan, 40% in Kyrgyzstan, 58% in Turkmenistan, and 64% in Tajikistan (CIA, 2005: 2003 estimate for Turkmenistan; 2004 estimates for all others). These figures, though, are based on "national estimates" which may understate the true picture.

Gurr's relative deprivation theory would suggest that the two countries with the highest GDP in the region, Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan (in both of which a substantial percentage of the population lives in poverty) would be the best candidates for revolution. There has, however, been little sign of revolutionary activity in either of these two countries so far. Instead, what revolutionary activity that has taken place recently has occurred in two of the three poorer countries: Kyrgyzstan (where such activity was successful) and Uzbekistan (where it was not). Does this imply that the relative deprivation theory does not apply in Central Asia?

Not necessarily. High petroleum prices have especially benefited oil rich Kazakhstan and natural gas rich Turkmenistan. A downturn in petroleum prices could bring about the "decline following a prolonged period of improvement" in these countries which Gurr foresaw as leading to revolution. More importantly, while Gurr did not put much emphasis on it, political relative deprivation may be more salient than economic relative deprivation in analyzing the prospects for revolution in Central Asia.

One way to measure political relative deprivation might be to use the Freedom House annual comparative measures of freedom indices, which rate countries on a 1 - 7 scale for political rights and civil liberties (with 1 being the most free and 7 the least free). In the "Freedom in the World 2005" chart (published at the end of 2004—on the eve of the Tulip Revolution), Kyrgyzstan was ranked 6, 5 (not free), as was Kazakhstan and Tajikistan; Uzbekistan was ranked an even grimmer 7, 6, while Turkmenistan earned the grimmest rank of 7, 7 (Freedom House, 2005). Kyrgyzstan, though, differed from the other Central Asian republics in that in 1994, its Freedom House score had been much better (4, 3; partly free) but had steadily declined since then. Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, by contrast,

have basically remained at the same level for the past decade (1994 scores: Kazakhstan 6, 5; Turkmenistan 7, 7; and Uzbekistan 7, 7), while Tajikistan (which experienced civil war from 1992 to 1997) has subsequently improved from its 1994 ranking of 7, 7 (Freedom House, 2006b). "Freedom in the World 2006" upgraded post-Tulip Revolution Kyrgyzstan to 5, 4, and downgraded post-Andijon Uzbekistan to 7, 7; all others kept their rankings from the previous year (Freedom House, 2006a).

Kyrgyzstan, then, is the one Central Asian republic which experienced (to partly rephrase Gurr) a prolonged period of political decline following a period of improvement. From the vantage point of the political relative deprivation model, it should not be surprising that it was Kyrgyzstan—where people had enjoyed some democratic freedoms but then lost them—which experienced a "color revolution" whereas the other Central Asian republics have not.

Type of regime

In *No Other Way Out*, Jeff Goodwin sees the political structure of the state as a key indicator of whether a revolutionary movement will rise up against it and of how successful such a movement will be. According to him, the political structure of a state can be measured along three dimensions: (1) type of state organization (bureaucratic/rational or patrimonial/clientelistic); (2) type of political regime (liberal/inclusive or exclusive/repressive); and (3) infrastructural power (strong or weak).

Goodwin theorized that a regime that is exclusive/repressive as well as infrastructurally weak serves to incubate revolution in both bureaucratic/rational and patrimonial/clientelistic regimes. Revolutions, though, are more likely to succeed against patrimonial/clientelistic regimes than against bureaucratic/rational ones. This is because:

patrimonial states do not easily allow for the implementation of the type of initiatives that can successfully counter a popular revolutionary movement. Patrimonial states cannot easily jettison unpopular leaders, incorporate new groups into decision-making processes (or state offices), or prosecute a counter-revolutionary war rationally or efficiently (Goodwin, 2001, 30).

What distinguishes a bureaucratic/rational regime from a patrimonial/clientelistic one is the system of appointments. Following Max Weber, Goodwin describes appointments in the former as being "based upon achievement in a course of appropriately specialized training to positions ... with clearly defined responsibilities" (2001, 11), while those in the latter are made "on the basis of political loyalty to a leader or party, kinship, ethnicity, and/or some other characteristic . . . that has no specific connection to the responsibilities of office" (Goodwin, 2001, 11—12). Not only are bureaucratic states more efficient than patrimonial ones, but the latter unwittingly strengthen revolutionary movements through weakening other counter-revolutionary elites whom they see as their "chief foes" (2001, 50). Goodwin lists as examples of patrimonial regimes those of Diaz (Mexico), Chiang (China), Batista (Cuba), the Shah (Iran), Somoza (Nicaragua), and Ceausescu (Romania).

It is, of course, easy to say in retrospect that if a dictatorship succumbed to revolution it must have been patrimonial/clientelistic whereas if it succeeded in suppressing its opponents it must have been bureaucratic/rational. Looking at Central Asia before the Tulip Revolution, it was clear that all the regimes there were dictatorships, but Kyrgyzstan (along with Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan) appeared to be somewhat more bureaucratic/rational in the sense that the top leader appeared to enjoy the support of relevant elites in the military, security services, bureaucracy, and so on. Clearly, though, Akayev had lost this support in Kyrgyzstan by the beginning of 2005. Turkmenistan, on the other hand, is definitely a patrimonial/clientelistic regime dominated by one man who constantly turned against top people in his own apparatus. Turkmenbashi, though, managed to survive in power until his death in December 2006. Goodwin's theory would suggest that the Turkmen regime is vulnerable, but it has managed the transition to a new leader, Gurbanguly Berdimukammedov, remarkably smoothly so far. Goodwin's theory would suggest, however, that the Turkmen regime is vulnerable. Tajikistan is a bit harder to classify in Goodwin's system: the 1992—1997 civil war was, among other things, a struggle between rival elites from different regions of the country. The 1997 accord ending the conflict set up a "power sharing" system, but what had been granted to the opposition then has been steadily eroded. (It is not clear what Goodwin would say about this.)

On the other hand, an argument could be made that none of the Central Asian republics is bureaucratic/rational, but that all of them are clientelistic/patrimonial (albeit to varying degrees) since appointments in all of them appear to be made, as Goodwin put it, "on the basis of political loyalty to a leader ... and/or some other characteristic ... that has no specific connection to the responsibilities of office." If this viewpoint is valid, then revolution can be expected to occur throughout Central Asia. Kyrgyzstan just happened to experience it first.

State breakdown

The most influential perspective on revolution over the past quarter century has been theorization focusing on the process of "state breakdown." According to this perspective, examining why opposition movements become strong is less important than analyzing why the power of the state declines. According to Theda Skocpol (one of the pioneers of the state breakdown theory of revolution), potential revolutionaries are always present. They are not able to achieve much, though, when the state they seek to overthrow is strong. It is only when the state is gravely weakened that it becomes vulnerable to overthrow by revolutionary movements. Skocpol further emphasizes that it is not the activity of revolutionary movements that leads to the weakening of the state; they are not sufficiently strong on their own to accomplish this. State breakdown results, instead, because of problems that are far more difficult for a regime to deal with effectively than the suppression of opposition movements. The breakdown of the state, then, is something revolutionaries do not cause themselves but take advantage of when it occurs (Skocpol, 1979,14-18).

While Marxist analysis claims that the state is the instrument of the predominant social class, Skocpol observed that on the one hand, the individuals running the state indeed were drawn from a predominant social class, but on the other hand, the state itself had interests separate from that class. It is when the interests of the state and the elite diverge sufficiently sharply, Skocpol argued, that state breakdown can occur (1979, 24-33). Skocpol herself saw this process occurring in predominantly traditional, agrarian societies, and thus not as something likely to occur in more modern, urban ones (1994, 213-239). Other scholars, though, have analyzed how this process occurs in urban settings (Ahmad, 1982; Simon, 1989; Farhi, 1990).

Skocpol saw one possible cause of a sharp divergence between the state and the social class it was drawn from as an attempt to make socioeconomic reforms and increase taxes on the wealthy which would strengthen the state but weaken the ruling class (1979, 31). Attempting to eliminate, or just reduce, corruption would have the same effect. Elites resenting such moves attempt to resist them. As the situation deteriorates, disaffected elites might attempt to thwart the ruler or seize power themselves through exploiting the long-standing grievances of non-elite segments of society. This appears to be an accurate description of Kyrgyzstan's Tulip Revolution. Disaffected elites, though, have not always been able to retain control over the non-elite population (or "the mob") once it has been aroused. This is clearly a possibility for Central Asia too.

Another state breakdown theory of revolution was articulated by Jack Goldstone. According to Goldstone, revolution is most likely to occur in countries experiencing rapid, prolonged population growth that are unable to adequately respond to the challenges this poses due to decline in state capacity, elite conflicts, and mass mobilization potential (Goldstone, 1997). According to Goldstone, it was this combination of circumstances that led to revolution in early modern Europe and in many countries of the contemporary developing world (Goldstone, 1991, 1-39; 1997).

According to projections by the Population Reference Bureau, between now and 2050 Kazakhstan's population will shrink by 1%, but Turkmenistan's will grow by 38%, Uzbekistan's by 43%, and Tajikistan's and Kyrgyzstan's by 58% each (PRB, 2006). Goldstone, though, would caution that rapid population growth is not necessarily accompanied by increased financial incapacity.

With its relatively high per capita income and stable population trajectory, Goldstone's theory indicates that Kazakhstan would appear well positioned to avoid revolution both now and well into the future. Turkmenistan's population is growing rapidly, but its natural gas riches may be sufficient to support its growing population—if only its government would utilize them for this purpose. But unless they experience miraculous economic development in the non-oil sector, the low per capita income and lack of petroleum resources in Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan suggest that these three countries will not have the resources to support their growing populations.

Further, Uzbekistan also has the largest population (26.2 million now, projected to grow to 37.5 million by 2050) (PRB, 2006). Revolution in Uzbekistan, then, would undoubtedly have profound consequences for its smaller neighbors even if they, like Kyrgyzstan, may have had their own democratic revolutions or transformations.

External factors

Many theories of revolution focus primarily, or even exclusively, on a country's internal factors. But external factors also play a role. In any given revolutionary situation, there are external forces which can aid the revolutionaries and there are external forces which can aid the governments trying to suppress them. Sometimes these external forces act effectively. And sometimes, as is well known, they do not.

Why is external support for either the regime or the revolutionaries effective in some instances and either ineffective or actually counterproductive in others? In his comparative study of several revolutionary struggles, Timothy Lomperis concluded that the most important factor determining whether external involvement succeeds or fails is the effect of that external involvement on the legitimacy of both a country's regime and revolutionary opposition. Both the French and American interventions in Vietnam, for example, served to undermine the legitimacy of the regimes they sought to defend and to burnish the nationalist credentials of the Vietnamese communists. In Malaya, by contrast, the fact that the revolutionary opposition was drawn from an ethnic minority (the Chinese), the close ties this minority was believed to have with a hostile external power (Communist China), and the promise of independence London made all served to legitimize Britain's much smaller military intervention with the Muslim Malay majority (Lomperis, 1996, 265-287).

What complicates matters for external actors seeking to affect the politics of Central Asia is that there are three possible outcomes for the region, not two: continued ex-communist authoritarian rule, democratic revolution, and Islamic revolution. External actors (especially the US and the EU) that prefer democratization to ex-communist authoritarianism also prefer ex-communist authoritarianism to Islamic revolution. Up to now, they have avoided pushing for democratization for fear that weakening ex-communist authoritarian regimes could backfire and bring about Islamic instead of democratic revolution. This phenomenon, combined with the fact that key neighboring countries (Russia and China) prefer the authoritarian status quo have produced an environment where the policies of external actors toward the region have been more supportive of continued ex-communist authoritarianism in the region than any other alternative. Clearly, though, this "consensus" was not strong enough to prevent democratic revolution in Kyrgyzstan, which those external actors preferring this alternative supported enthusiastically, and which even those preferring a continuation of the ex-communist status quo prefer to Islamic revolution (Kagarlitsky, 2005; Skosyrev, 2005).

The US government's close ties to Akayev did not appear to hurt its influence in Kyrgyzstan after he was ousted (though the subsequent Kyrgyz-American dispute over how much Washington pays Bishkek for base rights may). Similarly, close Russian ties to Akayev did not hurt Moscow either as Moscow quickly established good relations with the new government (unlike Moscow's performance during the democratic revolutions in Georgia and Ukraine). Kyrgyzstan, though, may have been an exception. It may be that close American ties with authoritarian regimes in Kazakhstan and Tajikistan might allow Islamist groups to argue that the US opposes

democratization in these countries, and thus strengthen their own legitimacy. The mid-2005 deterioration in Uzbek-American relations, by contrast, might allow the US to escape being closely associated with the Karimov regime.

The Islamists, though, are also vulnerable to charges of foreign connections: the two principal Islamic revolutionary movements in the region, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and *Hizb ut-Tahrir*, are widely seen as being dominated by Uzbeks (Rashid, 2002, 125; Baran, 2004, 78). Non-Uzbeks, then, have reason to fear that the victory of these movements would lead to Uzbek domination of all Central Asia.

Aside from which internal group an external power may support, its economic impact can also affect the prospects for revolutionary change. As an International Crisis Group study noted: "The exodus of hundreds of thousands of otherwise unemployed men to Russia acts as a stabilizing factor, a kind of social safety valve" (ICG, 2005a, 26). Those who are away in Russia are obviously not causing revolt at home. But how long will this situation last? The high price of oil has led to an economic boom in Russia. If oil prices collapse, Central Asians may no longer be able to work there in large numbers. This is a scenario, however, that does not seem likely at present.

Democratic vs. non-democratic revolution

Jeff Goodwin has argued, it was noted earlier, that patrimonial/clientelistic dictatorships are the ones that tend to be overthrown by revolution. Even assuming that all the remaining authoritarian regimes in Central Asia belong to this category, it is evident that violent revolution is not the only means by which dictatorships have been overthrown. Some have been transformed via a fairly orderly democratization process, while others—such as Kyrgyzstan—have succumbed to non-violent democratic revolution.

None of the remaining authoritarian regimes in Central Asia seems interested in initiating a democratization process. Indeed, they appear to be stepping up their efforts to prevent democratization in the wake of the 2005 Tulip Revolution. Is it possible, though, that any or all of them might succumb to democratic revolution the way Kyrgyzstan did (or, at least, appeared to do)?

Jeane Kirkpatrick asserted over a quarter of a century ago that democratization could not occur when a regime is fighting for survival against "totalitarian" opponents (Kirkpatrick, 1979, 44). Robert Pastor, though, has shown that the democratic transformation of an unpopular dictatorship can occur even when non-democratic revolutionary forces seeking to overthrow it have grown quite powerful. He has also shown, however, that democratization efforts under these circumstances can fail (Pastor, 1991).

The crucial factor, according to Pastor, is not American foreign policy. American administrations, whether Democratic or Republican, all encourage democratization when dictatorships they previously supported face mounting internal opposition. The crucial factor, according to Pastor, is the reaction of the middle classes to these

democratization efforts. If the middle classes embrace them, then democratic revolution can occur and non-democratic revolution can be averted. If, however, the middle classes reject such efforts and choose to ally with an anti-Western, non-democratic revolutionary opposition instead, then the prospects for a democratic revolution are poor and those for non-democratic revolution are good (Pastor, 1991).

It may seem counterintuitive that the middle class would ever embrace the non-democratic opposition, seemingly in contrast to both its interests as well as the expectations that outside observers might have of it. Pastor, though, cites the presence of a number of factors that have been associated with this occurring in previous cases: regime resistance to democratization, middle class mistrust of American support for democratization after years of US support for dictatorship, and perhaps most importantly, a naive faith on the part of the middle class leaders that if they ally with the non-democratic revolutionary opposition to get rid of the *ancien* regime, they will be able to co-opt the non-democratic opposition and dominate the new regime afterwards (Pastor, 1991,77-79).

The fact that a self-proclaimed democratic revolution took place in Kyrgyzstan suggests that middle class elements elsewhere in Central Asia would support democratization if this option were possible. The brutal suppression of largely unarmed demonstrators by the Uzbek government in May 2005, though, raises the question of what the middle class will do if it believes that democratic revolution is not possible or that the US does not support democratization in their country.

The internal military factor

A country's military may not be able to prevent revolutionary activity from breaking out. However, its actions—or lack thereof—play a crucial role in determining whether or not revolutionary activity succeeds. In his classic book, *The Anatomy of Revolution*, Crane Brinton argued this point forcefully: "No government has ever fallen before attackers," concluded Brinton, "until it has lost control over its armed forces or lost the ability to use them effectively—or, of course, lost such control of force because of interference by a more powerful foreign force ... and conversely ... no revolutions have ever succeeded until they have got a predominance of effective armed force on their side" (Brinton, 1965, 89).

Timothy Wickham-Crowley advanced a similar argument in his study of Latin American insurgencies. He pointed out that established militaries are stronger than the guerrillas fighting against them in terms of manpower, weaponry, and overall resources. This superiority, however, will not prevent revolution unless the military remains loyal: "Loyalty to the government is the most critical qualitative characteristic of armed forces, for the outcomes of rebellions and revolutionary wars hinge on that loyalty." (Wickham-Crowley, 1992, 64). He went on to describe how foreign assistance to a regime's military does not enhance its ability to prevent revolution if the military (or key elements of it) are disloyal. Foreign arms transfers intended to strengthen the government side, for example, can be either diverted to

the revolutionaries or used by the army against the government. Wickham-Crowley also cited instances of Latin American officers who had received US military training later defecting to rebel forces and putting their training to effective use for them (Wickham-Crowley, 1992,68-80).

Consistent with the accounts of both Brinton and Wickham-Crowley, the Akayev government did not use deadly force against its opponents during the Tulip Revolution in early 2005. It threatened to do so. It even sent riot police to beat up—but not fire on—the demonstrators in front of the presidential palace (a move that backfired since it provoked the much larger crowd of demonstrators to respond in kind and to seize the palace) (ICG, 2005b,6-9). But Akayev did not use deadly force on this occasion—something which he himself proudly acknowledged shortly after he fled Kyrgyzstan (Peuch, 2005).

Whatever the reason why Akayev did not use deadly force against his opponents in March 2005, it is highly doubtful that the rulers of Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, or Tajikistan would show similar restraint. Indeed, the Uzbek government did use deadly force to suppress opposition activity in Andijon in May 2005 (ICG, 2005c). The Kazakh government has generally attempted to appear more civilized by co-opting opponents if it can or detaining them through the state-controlled judicial system if it cannot (Blua, 2005; Pala, 2005). It seems likely, however, that the Nazarbayev regime would order the use of force against its opponents—especially after it saw what happened to the Akayev regime in neighboring Kyrgyzstan which did not take this step (Kharlamov, 2005).

If indeed the other Central Asian rulers are willing and able to use force against their opponents, this alone should enable them to prevent opposition forces from rising up or (unlike Akayev) to crush them should they somehow manage to do so.

It must be emphasized, however, that a dictator's willingness to use force against his opponents does not guarantee that force will be used against them effectively. The crucial moment in revolutions elsewhere has been the defection of elements from the regime's security forces to the opposition. The reason why even a small-scale defection from the security services to the opposition can be so crucial is that it confronts the security services as a whole with a difficult problem. Before a defection from the security services to the opposition, the suppression of the regime's opponents merely entails cracking down on less well armed, or even unarmed, opponents. After such a defection, however, the security services are confronted with the task of firing upon armed men such as themselves. And if even a small defection to the opposition cannot be nipped in the bud immediately, more and more defections might occur and a real fight may become necessary in order to stop them. The command to fire upon defectors from the security services might lead to further defections in order to avoid such a fight. In such a situation, the security services can quickly become immobilized.

Crucial defections from the security services to the democratic opposition played a key role in the success of democratic revolution in several countries (Katz, 2004). By the same token, defections from the security services to the non-democratic opposition can help it come to power (as Brinton and Wickham-Crowley suggested). The refusal of Kyrgyz forces to fire on demonstrators indicates

that the former were at least sympathetic to democratization. In Uzbekistan, Ahmed Rashid wrote, "HT [*Hizb ut-Tahrir*] leaders are confident that they are winning support from within Karimov's inner circle, and they do have sympathizers in the army, the intelligence services, and the upper echelons of the bureaucracy" (Rashid, 2002, 124).

It is not clear, of course, whether or to what extent either democratic or Islamic revolutionary sympathies have infiltrated Central Asian armed forces, or whether they remain completely loyal to the regimes they serve. It should be noted, though, that the entire army does not have to defect to the opposition in order for revolution to succeed. A partial defection can have a cascading effect. Just the refusal of the armed forces to fire upon the opposition—for whatever reason—may assure its victory.

Conclusion

Several theoretical approaches suggest that the ingredients for revolution in Central Asia are either there now or will be in the not too distant future. This does not mean, however, that revolution is destined to occur there—even in theory since some other theoretical approaches suggest either that revolution will not occur or will not succeed if it is attempted.

David Kowalewski's macro-analysis of revolutions in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries demonstrated that while the outbreak of revolutionary activity has occurred frequently, "successes are rare and show no 'megatrend' corresponding to activity" (Kowalewski, 1991, 92). Jack Goldstone has argued that "state resource failures, elite alienation and divisions, and popular mass mobilization potential" are the three key factors that lead to revolution. The presence of just one or even two of these factors would cause problems for any government, but would probably not lead to its overthrow: "Yet only when all these conditions come together do they have sufficient force to shatter existing institutions and create a revolution" (Goldstone, 2000, 14). Finally, John Foran has argued that revolution is most likely to occur when five factors are present: (1) dependent development; (2) "a repressive, exclusionary, personalist state;" (3) a powerful culture of resistance; (4) an economic downturn; and (5) "a world-systemic opening" (Foran, 1997, 228). According to Foran, the absence of any two of these factors is highly likely to prevent revolution from succeeding. Indeed, even the absence of one of them may be enough to thwart it (Foran, 1997, 259-261).

It is by no means inevitable, then, that revolution will succeed in Central Asia. It seems naive to think, though, that a serious attempt at it can be avoided.

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