

The Influence of Internal Threats on Foreign Policy in Authoritarian States: Central Asia

by Bakar Jikia

Supervisor: Matteo Fumagalli

Submitted to Central European University

Department of Political Science

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts

Budapest, Hungary

2010

Abstract

The importance of the Caspian region is difficult to overestimate. Vast hydrocarbon resources located in less developed Central Asian states represent an excellent lure for interests of world powers. The collapse of the Soviet Union attracted wide international interest transforming the region into an object of rivalry between world powers, the rivalry which is becoming more and more intense every year. Difficulty of successful navigation in this competitive environment hitches weak states of the region towards alliances with greater powers. Using intensive case study the paper researches the influence of Domestic political developments on foreign policy outputs of Central Asian states, particularly their political orientation in relation to internal threats. It argues that domestic challenges, faced by authoritarian regimes in Central Asia determine foreign policy outputs of their states.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my coordinator professor Matteo Fumagalli who assisted me on this tricky and unfamiliar path. I am also grateful to all participants of the Thesis Writing Workshop for their comments and suggestions: Professor Attila Folsz, fellow MA students Jakub Parusinski, Daniela Srinic, Matej Kurian, Pavol Hardos and others.

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1 Introduction

Although patterns of state behavior in foreign policy vary, still there are significant similarities in actions of states belonging to the same group according to their relative strength. Trying to achieve their goals weaker entities implement different strategies compared to strong ones.

It is widely accepted that the main goal for any government is basically to retain power. However it is accomplished differently in different countries primarily depending on the type of the regime and governing methods largely affected by state's relative strength. Democracies run elections and choose governments for the limited period of time while the transfer of power from in autocracies is usually characterized by revolts, coups, falsified and controversial elections as well as other forms of government capture.

The objective of this thesis is to establish the link between two dispositions: internal threats and foreign policy outputs of particular states, specifically in choosing a strong ally. I expect the relation between the two as I find the foreign policy to be considered a tool of ruling elite for achieving domestic goals, namely regime survival.

A large amount of research has been conducted on weak autocratic states and foreign policy behavior of their respective leaders in historically non-democratic regions of the world such as Africa (Marschall 2005) or Latin America (Lehoucq 2009). However less attention had been paid to Central Asian countries as they became subjects of international law only after the fall of the Soviet Union while many states of other regions mentioned above were actively engaged in cold war era power politics. The thesis

discloses domestic interests of Central Asian leaders as main determinants of their foreign policy behavior.

Following the fall of the Soviet Union the emergence of independent states in the region with vast resources has attracted worldwide interest and the competition for influence began involving such key players as the United States, the EU, China and recently resurgent Russia.¹ Increased interest provided leaders of new independent entities with the range of alternatives in terms of their foreign policy orientation which most of them have successfully used for their own benefit.

For the given research I have selected three cases from Central Asia: Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. I consider Central Asia a perfect area for conducting research on authoritarian regimes as all five entities located in the region had the same starting point (the fall of the USSR) in terms of state formation and development. As far as countries themselves are concerned, the selection was made according to criteria set by omnibalancing, which will be used as a theoretical framework of the study: weakness of the state, authoritarian nature of the government, lack or low level of domestic legitimacy and monopoly on means of violence. Additionally, for the purposes of the research, a clear shift in foreign policy orientation has to be observed which makes Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan well suited for this purpose. Although being even more authoritarian and brutal, Turkmen regime has not conducted a policy shift and is included as a test case for increased explanatory power of the paper if my assumptions are correct. All three post-

¹ For more information on rivalry in Central Asia see the article in the Journal of Foreign Studies by Constantine Arvanitopoulos, professor of International Politics at the Panteion University and head of planning at Institute of International Relations, available at <http://www.hri.org/MFA/thesis/winter98/geopolitics.html>

soviet countries much like others in the region are not well known for the democratic nature of their respective governments, but can definitely provide a solid record of crackdowns on opposition, grave human rights violations and controversial elections. They have emerged as independent states following the dissolve of the Soviet Union without having the experience of democratic governance or even proper statehood before. Despite the fact of getting away with different starts, all have developed into autocracies with repressive regimes not enjoying legitimacy within the population. The research covers the time period beginning from their independence after the collapse of the USSR to the year 2009.

After acquiring independence in 1991, Uzbekistan has developed an extremely repressive and authoritarian regime with harsh governing methods. In terms of foreign policy orientation the country has been bouncing back and forth for the first two decades of its existence: In the beginning of 90s Uzbek government accepted Russian dominance, entering the "Collective Security Treaty" in 1992, president Islam Karimov proclaiming Russia as essential for maintaining peace and stability in the region (Pikulina 1999: p.10). A Clear sign of the first shift in Uzbek foreign policy has appeared when the country joined GUAM anti-Russian block in 1999 and became the US ally in war on terror in 2001, stationing American troops on its territory. US-Uzbek relations started to deteriorate gradually and effectively came to an end in 2005 following Karimov's crackdown on opposition² demonstration in the city of Andijon resulting in ousting of the US base from

² Hundreds of peaceful civilians were killed during the protest when the security forces surrounded them in armored vehicles and opened fire into the crowd (Cooley 2008).

Uzbek territory. Later same year Karimov again signed a treaty with Russia giving the new start to relations between two states.

Unlike Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan has kicked off in attempts to build a democratic state pushing for cooperation with both east and west. On one hand president Akayev was promoting his country as “Switzerland of Asia” (Pomfret 1995 106-18), underlining the importance of democracy and development while flirting with Russia on the other hand by giving his support to the “Collective Security Treaty” and the “Friendship and Cooperation Treaty” in the beginning of 90s. His public desire and commitment to build a liberal democracy in the heart of Asia drew major western attention. Membership of several financial institutions gave Kyrgyz government the access to western money and attracted other funds designated for financial support of democratic reforms. However in the middle of 90s relations with west have worsened. Akayev backed off from his reformist ways and transformed the country into a superpresidential state. Much like Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan rediscovered western interest with the war on terror, becoming one of the main US allies in Afghan campaign. However in 2003 the president signed an agreement with Russia allowing its air force base on Kyrgyz territory. In February 2009 US forces were asked to leave Kyrgyzstan.

Turkmen president Saparmurat Niyazov has never conducted a serious policy shift even though his country had much in common with two cases mentioned above in terms of low legitimacy and non-democratic government. Moreover, authoritarian rule in Turkmenistan, based also on a cult of individual was unprecedented even compared to others in the region. However unlike Uzbek and Kyrgyz leaders, Niyazov never really sought

superpower patronage. The state declared “Positive Neutrality” later emphasized in the United Nations declaration on the country and remained that way until president’s death.

From the perspective of foreign policy orientation alone, Uzbek and Kyrgyz behavior seems irrational. The question that the thesis will answer concerning foreign policy behavior of these three cases is the following: Which independent variable is responsible for the consistency of Turkmen foreign policy and inconsistency of Kyrgyz and Uzbek governments when all three states had the same starting point in terms of independence, belong to the same region and have developed the same, authoritarian methods of government?

To answer these questions I find it necessary to look beyond the systemic paradigm and draw attention to internal variables, particularly internal threats. The reason I want to take a look at a given issue is my belief that observation of international developments alone is unable to provide an explanation to variation observed in above cases. The reason to this is the conceptual understanding of the state in the eyes of Waltz, Walt and later scholars of the field. For them the international system is anarchic with states as unitary actors without significant domestic constraints. However the nature of third world states is such that their internal structure almost always reassembles the disorder of the international system with strong domestic challenges (minorities, rebels, radical opposition etc) and often with an actual government as one of the factions fighting for power. As costs of losing power in such states are extremely high, domestic challenges become a priority for their respective rulers and all their efforts are directed towards maintaining power (David 1991, Job 1992). Consequently the rationale behind decision making in the third world state differs from perceptions of systemic scholars.

In the thesis, I will focus on detection of internal threats to the regime and their links with foreign policy behavior using intensive case study, as I believe that while choosing their orientation in foreign policy, weak authoritarian states similar to ones included in the paper, primarily act according to concerns over survival of their regimes by elimination of internal threats which they consider as primary. Therefore the country gets an ally which is essential for the power of the ruling elite rather than for state interests generally, assimilating later with regime security. Transforming state security into regime security is not of my making. The “Insecurity Dilemma” developed by Brian Job in “The Insecurity Dilemma: National Security in Third World States” in 1992 thoroughly explains this phenomenon. Unlike the classical security dilemma, the insecurity dilemma is internally oriented, focusing on threats emerging from domestic paradigm and arguing that the weakness of the state and inability to establish peace and order creates insecurity which redirects all efforts towards maintaining power. Classical definition of security including all elements of the state becomes irrelevant and state security is transformed into regime security (Job 1992).

Trying to achieve their goals, elites of such countries implement various strategies. Such strategies can be sorted into two main groups: internal and external. Internally governments have the ability to manipulate ethnic minorities, democratic processes and more commonly, develop a strong repressive apparatus and military forces. Externally, weak regimes mostly try to align with powerful states from which they expect significant contribution in their struggle for security. Powerful actors have played significant role in keeping the regimes in power in Central Asia as well. During the Tajik civil war the

president of the country, Rahmon Nabiyev managed to maintain his position largely thanks to intervention from the Russian military.³

As I am looking for an explanation of alliance decisions in selected Central Asian states, I will use omnibalancing by Steven David, developed in 1991, as a theoretical framework of the thesis. Although David's work was published one year earlier compared to Job's, it correspondingly places emphasis on importance of intrastate developments and considers them as primary inducements of foreign policy conduct in third world states challenging original realist theories which try to explain the same behavior purely by systemic variables. I find omnibalancing a better applicable framework for this particular study however, as it focuses purely on alliance politics, the dependent variable of the research. Applying David's theory to selected cases is more relevant as it was originally designed for weak states of the third world, meeting assumptions of insecurity dilemma, which can be introduced as a triggering factor for omnibalancing. David asserts that the decision on alignment or realignment made by a third world country represents a "rational calculation of Third World leaders as to which outside power is most likely to do what is necessary to keep them in power"(David 1991: p.235). As we see the phenomenon of threat remains however much more weight is given to a threat not to the state as a unitary actor, but to the ruling regime. In this disposition Third World leaders chose to resist the most dangerous, internal threat and balance against it by an alliance with an external actor (David 1991).

³ Tajik civil war – 1992-1997 was fought between government forces of President Rahman Nabiyev and the "United Tajik Opposition" composed of both liberal democratic reformists and Islamists. It has ended by the peace agreement sponsored by the United Nations.

My thesis will be structured in the following order: The first chapter is an introduction. It briefly covers the content of the research. The first section of the second chapter will review classical approaches to aligning in international relations and define the security dilemma as a conceptual part of realist perceptions. The second part of the chapter will introduce contemporary approaches to security and the new, insecurity dilemma as a conceptual feature of the contemporary world. The chapter will also introduce Steven David's Omnibalancing as a theoretical framework of the thesis explaining its relevancy and ability to answer questions concerning foreign policy orientation. The third chapter will cover justification of methods and research design as well as case selection, arguing why they are applicable and how they aid in achieving thesis objectives. The following three chapters will cover empirical data reviewing international developments in selected states since independence in relation to internal threats. The conclusion will summarize the results, emphasize findings, and set objectives for further research.

2 Alignments in International Relations

The chapter first reviews the literature on aligning in international relations, its incentives, types and possible consequences. The first part will review realist literature, display its evolution from rather simplistic to more complicated explanations of state behavior in alliance politics and explain the definition of the security dilemma as a fundamental concept in the realist world. The second part will introduce a contemporary understanding of security and focus on the new, insecurity dilemma. The third part will review Steven David's Omnibalancing which is used as a theoretical framework of the thesis. Omnibalancing is in accordance with contemporary approaches to state behavior and focuses on aligning in third world regimes.

Systemic Approach and the Security Dilemma

The systemic approach in international relations and in particular alliance politics is based on ideas of early realist scholars such as Kenneth Waltz and later Stephen Walt. The approach perceives the international system as anarchy while considering a state as a unitary actor without significant constraints domestically (Waltz 1979; Walt 1987).

Alliances are undividable parts of international relations. When the resources are limited and each state tries to maximize its security, successful alliance provides a powerful tool significantly increasing state's chances on success. In realist paradigm Kenneth Waltz was the first to develop ideas concerning motives of states in relation to alliances. In his work "Theory of International Politics" published in 1979 Waltz has developed main incentives of alliances, their types and possible outcomes. For him the absence of central authority is

the ordering principle of the international system. The international system is anarchic, it does not have a governing body with the monopoly on means of violence. This implies that war is always an alternative to conflict resolution. To Waltz states are unitary actors. Such assessment connotes that the government is not constrained in decision making and acts voluntarily according to its perceptions on steps necessary for success. The success is at minimum security and at maximum universal domination (Waltz 1979). Methods, according to Waltz represent either internal or external balancing. The former implies the development of economic or military power, while later assumes alliances with other actors on international arena. Waltz's "Balance of Power" suggests that when choosing sides, the state allies with the weaker out of two strong entities to balance against the stronger power, as it is the later which threatens it. He makes a distinction between bi-polar and multi-polar systems according to the number of powers present and defines differences in balancing types being specific to each system. A classic bi-polar world was present during the cold war when the U.S. and USSR where engaged in a continuous competition for dominance. The collapse of the Soviet Union has put an end to the bi-polar system and gave a birth to the new world order, with more players actively engaged in global politics. Waltz asserts that balancing in bi-polar system is internally oriented insinuating that two superpowers while competing for dominance, make efforts to maximize their own economic and military capabilities primarily. Indeed, one of the main characteristics of the cold war was an arms race between the U.S. and the USSR. Multi-polar system on the other hand encourages external balancing. Such system implies the presence of more influential regional players where each has its own interests necessary to be dealt with. The disposition suggests that strong military power and economy alone are unable to

guarantee survival. Therefore states seek cooperation and form alliances to increase their relative strength and gain more influence. The case of Central Asia can also be considered as an attempt of external balancing by world powers. As it is eminent in terms of energy resources and geopolitics, dominant players seek common ground with states of the region to increase their presence enhancing their relative strength. Although arguments presented by Waltz were vastly criticized by later authors, the theory was largely influential.

Stephen Walt in “Origins of Alliances” (1987) challenges original ideas of K. Waltz. Tying to answer questions concerning, alliance formation and its determinants, Walt comes up with an assumption which he considers as an improvement to Waltz’s original idea. He goes beyond the evaluation of pure capabilities of states being balanced, arguing that the force itself is neutral and can be used to harm as well as to aid (Walt 1987). Walt shifts the focus towards the phenomenon of threat and argues that threat and not power is the main causal factor of choices in alliance politics. “Balance of Threat” divides the sole variable of power into four components: overall capabilities, proximity, offensive capability and perceived intentions. Walt introduces proximity as one of the determinants of alliance choices denoting that the power located closer is more threatening than the one which is far away (Walt 1987: p5). Distinction of offensive and defensive capabilities is also crucial as a powerful actor armed primarily with defensive arms is less threatening than a relatively weaker one possessing significant offensive potential. Finally, states with aggressive intentions are obviously more impending as well. According to the theory, increase in each of above components will encourage other entities to seek alliances and balance against such threatening force. In Walt’s view two types of state behavior,

balancing and bandwagoning are archetype in alliance politics. He also draws a distinction between bandwagoning and *détente*. Difference between the two is the nature of the exchange in the alliance. Bandwagoning on one hand is based on unequal exchange. In a given case a vulnerable state allies with the strong one accepting the subordinate role. Walt asserts that bandwagoning is more risky as it requires trust in allied power that it will be loyal and benevolent since withdraw will not be an option in case of the contrary, because of increased risks. The incentive for such alliance can be the desire to benefit from the victory of the dominant power and get the hands on a share of benefits. *Détente* on the other hand implies equal exchange. States engage in alliance on relatively balanced terms and risks in such relations are considerably lower. In case if the dominant power attempts to exploit the relationship, alliance may break up, damaging both actors and leaving them more exposed to external hazards. Another significant argument is that Walt gives little to no value to ideological variables in alliance politics. According to him states can align with the power of any ideology to balance against the threatening force.

Randall Schweller (1994) acknowledges the importance of previous contributions in expanding the realist paradigm however argues against ideas of Walt and his predecessor Waltz. Schweller points out that if the main goal of states is the maintenance of the status quo and all are satisfied with what they possess, how can we explain war and conflict? In contrary he introduces the concept of “balance of interests” and accepts the fact that some states are revisionist. Moreover, this *status quo* bias in structural realist analysis leads to the narrow interpretation of bandwagoning as the opposite behavior of balancing. Both are supposedly motivated by the struggle for security, but bandwagoning is seen as a strategy for achieving it by giving in to threats rather than deterring them. Against this, Schweller

argues that “the aim of balancing is self-preservation of values already possessed, while the goal of bandwagoning is usually self-extension: to obtain values coveted” (Schweller 1994: p.74). He also defines four main groups of states naming them after animals according to prices they are willing to pay either to secure what they possess or to increase what they value:

- Lions are satisfied powers. They will pay high costs to maintain what they possess but only a small price to increase what they value. Lions are status quo players and great powers.
- Lambs are weakest of the whole group. They are willing to pay only low costs both for maintaining status quo or increasing their possession
- Jackals are ready to pay high costs to defend themselves but are ready to pay even more to extend.
- Wolves are predators, they value what they covet much more than what they possess. This approach makes wolves extremely dangerous.

Therefore balancing in international relations according to Schweller is balancing of interests, not powers or threats.

As we have reviewed it in the chapter, systemic approaches to alliance formation had been changing from relatively simple explanations of foreign policy behavior defined by Waltz to more complicated ones introduced by Schweller. However all of above scholars agree on three main points: a) International system is anarchic; b) States are unitary actors without meaningful domestic constraints; c) The main goal of each state is security. These points entail that actors will try to maximize their security as much as possible.

But attempts to maximize it might eventually lead to its deterioration and can even cause a conflict. By being fearful for their security and trying to improve it, actors become threats to others. As a response, other players, if capable, similarly try to do the same or form alliances entering an endless competition with the possibility of transformation into a violent conflict or *détente*. Therefore a situation when a country, trying to enhance security, actually reduces it by causing counter actions is called a security dilemma. John Herz in his work "Political Realism and Political Idealism" originally identified the process as a "chain reaction in security and power accumulation caused by anarchic environment" (Herz 1950; p260). Jervis also emphasized that state's attempts to minimize perils in anarchy transform it into an increased concern for other players (Jervis 1976; p.76). Outbreak of the First World War is considered by many scholars as a consequence of the security dilemma. Supporters of this view argue that powers involved in WWI were forced into the war by feelings of insecurity by alliances of their neighbors. Accelerated mobilization schedule required for Russia with its relatively undeveloped railway infrastructure, put pressure on other states to mobilize as well (Tuchman 1962). Although above arguments in reference to the outbreak of the First World War were widely criticized, the definition of the security dilemma remained as the central concept of the realist world.

Domestic Anarchy and the Insecurity Dilemma

As we have reviewed above, the main precondition for the emergence of the security dilemma is an attempt of the state to increase its security and protect itself from other threatening members of the system. The end of the Cold War followed shortly by the dissolve of the Soviet Union largely altered the understanding of international relations and security in particular. Bi-polar system transformed into multi-polar with more globalized interdependent world where regional powers gained more weight making the system itself much more complicated. Contemporary understanding of international relations and security studies developed a different approach towards central actors of the anarchic world. It became obvious that early realist perceptions of states as unitary players lacked power to predict or explain their behavior in a newly emerged world order.

Unlike great powers of the Cold War, for weak states of the third world challenges originating from internal dimension became far more dangerous than threats from the systemic level. Simplistic understanding of a state was unable to control for internal challenges often being more threatening for third world regimes considering their relative weakness for following reasons:

Firstly, the development of stronger interstate organizations as well as increasing respect for international law made military interventions into other countries less likely. Since the end of the WWII wars between states have been largely outnumbered by wars within states majority of which took place in developing countries of the third world. Secondly, coercive changes of power became more common in the third world where overwhelming majority of rulers were overthrown by domestic adversaries, not by external interventions.

Coup d'état is arguably the most baleful internal hazard for any regime. African continent in the period of 1946-2004 has experienced 286 successful or unsuccessful coups or attempts of such, where many states like Uganda, Nigeria and Togo have experienced over 10 violent regime changes in the above mentioned period.⁴

Ethnic conflicts represent another issue. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, emergence of weak post-soviet republics encouraged minorities to seek improved status for their respective territories. Nagorno Karabakh, Abkhazia, South Ossetia and Transnistria represent examples of still unresolved conflicts on ethnic origins. Although commonly the aim of minorities is not the collapse of central authority but the establishment of their own, independent state, successful secessionist movement can undermine the grip on power of the ruling regime.

Religious extremism is a major concern in many third world states. Other than the well known example of 1979 Islamist revolution in Iran, religious extremism has been a forbidding challenge in Central Asia as well. Armed opposition in Ferghana valley in Uzbekistan openly called for overthrow of president Karimov's regime and for establishment of the Islamist state (Komash 2005; p.5).

In the given disposition the empirical experience and concerns for their own wellbeing encourage third world leaders to alter domestic threats primarily, in contrary to state interests in myraid cases. More governing elites try to bolster their grip on power however, the more they provoke resistance from powerful domestic actors. Classical definition of

⁴ For coups in Africa see Monty G. Marschall – "Conflict Trends in Africa a Macro-Comparative Perspective". (2005). For the complete list of coups see Annex 2b <http://www.systemicpeace.org/africa/ACPPAnnex2b.pdf>

security in such cases becomes irrelevant and is transformed purely into regime security. The emergence of these new dilemmas is explained in 1992 collection of essays “The Insecurity Dilemma: National Security in Third World States” edited by Brian Job. Authors consider a rethink of traditional realist perceptions of states, security, threat and war. They assert that the possibility of a full scale interstate war leading to a collapse became extremely low and third world leaders redirected all their efforts towards balancing against internal threats.

By defining the state as a unitary actor the security dilemma fails to control for internal variables emphasized above. Consequently its simplistic understanding of state and threat is flawed both in relation to origins of threats, as well as their objectives. The insecurity dilemma agrees with the classical security dilemma in the part which identifies attempts of boosting security as determinants of its deterioration. Unlike the classical security dilemma however, the insecurity dilemma is internally oriented, focusing on threats emerging from domestic paradigm and introducing a ruling regime, not the state in general as the unit of analysis. It argues that the weakness of the state and inability of the government to establish peace and order creates insecurity which encourages the regime to direct all resources towards maintaining power.

The Theoretical Framework: Omnibalancing

Steven R. David’s theory omnibalancing was introduced in 1991 in the article “Explaining Third World Alignments” and later developed in a book “Choosing Sides: Alignment and

Realignment in the Third World". The theory is in accordance with assumptions of the insecurity dilemma but unlike Job's work it focuses primarily on alliances in the third world.

David goes beyond systemic variables and explores intrastate relations as casual factors of foreign policy output, in particular alliance choices. Although he accedes with neo-realists confirming that states balance against their biggest threat, David asserts that original ideas developed by Waltz and Walt are not sufficient to interpret the behavior of the third world leader who experiences significant threats also on internal paradigm which according to the author he considers as most pressing.

As David asserts, the balance of power is unable to explain third world alignments and realignments. By viewing a state as a unitary actor, balance of power theory and other later amendments fail to control for the strength of regimes in such states in relation to domestic adversaries. For realists the anarchy on international level is caused by the absence of the central authority. David suggests that because of weakness, many regimes in the third world fail to play a regulatory role in their respective states making the domestic level as anarchic as international. The author implies that in given circumstances the most powerful determinant of the third world leader behavior is his rational calculation as to which outside power is more likely to do what it takes to keep him in power (David 1991: p.235).

The author suggests three amendments to the original balance of power in order to make it applicable for the third world: Firstly he finds it necessary to emphasize that all leaders, no matter third world or not, will try to balance against their primary threats and in doing so may align with a secondary threat. David uses the example of the Soviet Union, Great

Britain and US alliance against Nazi Germany during the WWII to reinforce his arguments. Secondly he assumes that the nature of the Third World politics often implies the presence of strong internal challenges as well. Therefore the leaders may align with their adversaries from abroad to deal with their domestic ones. A given action might look like bandwagoning but contradicts the later by placing emphasis on the elimination of the internal threat and not the desire to “share the spoils of victory” on a systemic level. Thirdly David focuses on the primary goal of any third world leader: a strong will to stay in power. Such rulers are ready to sacrifice state interests in exchange for prolongation of their regime which makes them unique, requiring relevant scientific approach. These characteristics are not considered by the balance of power theory and they should be added to make it applicable to the Third World. Omnibalancing is a modified version also in sense that it accepts main realist assumptions, acknowledging that international politics focuses on power, interests and rationality; It also accepts that the world is characterized by anarchy where interests are bound to conflict and use of force is always an option to conflict resolution; accedes that for each state there exists a clear hierarchy of issues with survival being the most crucial. It also assumes that politics is governed by laws of human nature, the survival of the Third World leader in this case. Balance of Power assumes that leaders act according to national interests therefore when evaluating alliance opportunities according to this approach the leader of the state asks a question: “How does this policy affect the power of the state?” However by Omnibalancing the leader asks “how does this policy affect the probability of my remaining in power?” (David 1991: p.238) In concordance to these questions the decision makers have varying approaches to aligning. If the Balance of Power predicts that the leader will ask, “Which outside power is most

likely to protect my state from the threats caused by other states”, Omnibalancing predicts that the question will be put the other way: “Which outside power is most likely to protect me from internal and external threats that I face.” By placing the emphasis on the leader or the ruling elite, David’s theory contradicts one of the fundamentals of Waltz and Morgentau’s arguments concerning states being unitary actors and their policies serving national interests. Additional variables introduced by Omnibalancing complicate the theory compared to more simple explanatory tools of Morgentau and Waltz but it gains much more explanatory power taken specificities of the Third World in mind (David 1991).

The author also places an emphasis on the fact that, only several Third World leaders have been overthrown by direct interventions from outside. All others fell to internal adversaries such as coups, military revolts etc. According to David most of Third World states since 1945 have experienced the successful or nearly successful attempt of coercive regime change and wars within states have significantly outnumbered conflicts between them.

Necessity of dealing primarily with internal perils is caused by specificities of Third World States. These specificities are defined by the author as following:

First is the colonial heritage. Most of Third World states have been created where none have existed before, therefore the accordance of their political borders with borders of social groups they contain on a given territory is not always there. Such arbitrary nature of the territory unifies people that lack social consciousness and common idea of the state. Instead of uniting around the central authority, they unite around the interests of their respective groups splitting the country in various factions competing for domestic

dominance.⁵ In this predicament the central government often becomes one of such factions holding the power in the capital.

Another specific feature is that the Third World leaders come to power with coups, revolutions or controversial elections. Therefore their legitimacy in the eyes of the citizens is low, making them in most cases unwelcomed rulers of the country. Such leaders acquire significant wealth, much more than other societal groups in the state making their position attractive for strong internal actors. As a consequence the desire of the later to come to power by all means, an equally strong will of de facto leaders to remain in charge and protect what they have acquired implies that stakes are extremely high. The loss of power for the Third World leader means the loss of all privileges, wealth and often life which makes them more aggressive in their actions against domestic adversaries and challenges.

This line of argument leads us to the type of the regime. Absolute majority of countries belonging to the group are ruled by authoritarian regimes. Political participation and involvement of the society in the political life is low. Decision making in foreign policy is carried out by an individual singlehandedly or by a narrow elite. Isolation of regular citizens from the decision making in such state makes rules and laws forceful impositions on its society.

Moreover, weakness of such entities encourages competing groups to seek support from outside adversaries. In contrary, the suppressing group also seeks help elsewhere to

⁵ Such groups can be based on religious, ethnic, linguistic or other identities, mobilizing around their ideas to challenge the authority of the state and demanding beneficial treatment.

maintain power and keep domestic challengers at bay. Outside actors try to influence the outcomes of domestic challenges supporting the side which will guarantee the satisfaction of their interests within the country.

Finally David asserts that one of the main characteristics of the Third World states is their self-identification as such. He refers to Stephen Kranser arguing that the countries belonging to this group support decisions on international arena, not according to their political or economic interests but according to interests and goals of their respective regimes.

David does not assume that all these characteristics should be present to identify the state as belonging to the Third World. Neither does he assert that these weaknesses are observed only in the Third World either. Combinations vary but what makes the state the part to the group mentioned above in the focus of the theory is the perception of the domestic threat as primary by the leader.

The author also explains why generalizations on the Third World set above support his theory. First, he challenges the main argument of the balance of power in relation to the Third World: the anarchy of the international system and the order of domestic politics. Balance of power theorists assume that the anarchy is caused by the absence of central government mediating relations between its constituents and resolving conflicts. However the characteristics identified above indicate that in many cases in the Third World, the state and the government are so weak that they lack the ability to play the same mediating role within the state becoming just one of the players. Therefore the order of domestic

politics is distorted by the strength of domestic interest groups and the weakness of the central government. Such disposition very much reassembles the international disorder.

Second he argues against the state as a principle unit of analysis in the Third World. As the balance of power assumes, the state is a coherent unit with clearly defined borders, central authority, able to operate autonomously and with strict hierarchical internal politics. These assumptions are also flawed when it comes to the Third World as many of such entities are unable to establish peace and order, resolve conflicts on their territory and find consensus within the state. Identification of such state as a principle unit of analysis will not provide us with the tool capable of explaining aligning. The shift of focus towards from state to the regime is important as the policy of the regime may in some cases contradict the interests of the state as a whole and the contradiction will not affect on the output.

The third challenge to the balance of power comes from its assumption that states will seek to expand their power as much as they can to provide a margin of safety for their survival. This goal is viewed differently as far as the Third World is concerned. The need of survival remains, however the object trying to survive is not the state itself but the regime ruling it. As David asserts, omnibalancing shares ideas of neo-realism in this part, in particular the assumption that elites have their own interests, with power as a dominant. Neo-realism however agrees with the balance of power in the part of threats, focusing on an external danger as the object of balancing. The uniqueness and accuracy of omnibalancing in relation to the Third World lays in its emphasis on internal threats and their as most pressing ones. Omnibalancing assumes that Third World leaders will try to balance against such threats primarily as due to characteristics of their respective states, in their hierarchy of issues, their own survival is on the top of the list.

Answering the research question I will examine if Omnibalancing is able to explain the foreign policy output of states selected for the study. I assume that it is better suited to the case than traditional approaches set by Morgentau, Waltz and Walt which ignore domestic variables. I expect that the efforts of balancing against the outside power or against the threat caused by the outside power approach cannot account for policy shifts that have occurred in the region. One of the concepts of traditional approaches developed by Waltz hypothesizes that when other variables being equal, the power that is far away is less threatening than the power which is close and ideological issues have nothing to do with the way the states align or realign (Waltz 1979; p.5). This is a controversial assumption keeping Central Asia in mind. Unlike omnibalancing it fails to explain why would Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan seeking alliances with the west (which is consistent according to their location and their traditional belonging to spheres of influence), retreat from their respective policies and realign with Russia. Consequently I find cases relevant in terms of fitting the concept of a state where omnibalancing usually occurs.

Targeted region of my research cannot be labeled as democratic by any means. Authoritarian regimes, suppressive governments, low level of political participation and constant human rights issues are common here. For the goals of the research I will apply generalizations regarding third world set by David to cases selected for the research and argue that three countries which I am focusing on in the paper do carry most of the features necessary for omnibalancing to occur.

In reference to theory, one of the key features of the third world state is the anarchy on national level and the lack of sufficient conflict resolving power. Central Asia in this respect is a coherent example. Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan are believed to be the weakest states of

the region. Both troubled by the lack of natural resources and sufficient incomes for development. One has experienced a tragic civil war and another had serious issues with powerful domestic constituents.

Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan turned out to be stronger in this respect. Uzbek dictator Islam Karimov had faced a significant challenge in his state. Ferghana valley, the most densely populated area of the region became the target of Islamist militants with the goal of overturning Karimov and establishing the Islamist state. Turkmenistan was free from considerable domestic challenges. Although struggling with poverty and underdevelopment, the regime has established itself as a stable autocracy without significant domestic constraints.

The important emphasis on influence of regime security on foreign policy orientation in Uzbekistan is placed in the article “Alignments and Realignment in Central Asia: The Rationale and Implications of Uzbekistan’s Rapprochement with Russia” by Matteo Fumagalli, published in International Political Science Review in 2007. In the article Fumagalli applies Steven David’s approach reviewed above, to explain Tashkent’s alignments and realignments in post-soviet era. Reviewing Uzbekistans path to independence and subsequent developments, the article points out that concerns over the maintenance of power caused by domestic tensions encouraged the regime to concentrate on its security and seek the ally on international arena accordingly.

Fumagalli asserts that increasing threat from Islamist opposition convinced Uzbek authorities that domestic objectives could have been achieved more easily with meaningful external help. According to the author, 9/11 events and the subsequent war on terror provided official Tashkent the ability to crush Islamist opposition and consolidate its grip on

power. However, the conditionality imposed on Uzbek allies by the U.S. government was also perceived as a threat by Karimov, who suggested that opening up the political system according to U.S. demands, could have undermined his position. The lack of support from the American side in brutal crackdown on opposition in Andijon in May 2005 and subsequent refugee crisis has effectively brought the alliance to an end.

As the author concludes, “it is only by paying attention to how domestic and systemic factors are entangled, that we can gain a full understanding of how countries seek to escape entrapment” (Fumagalli 2007; p.266).

3 Methodology

In this chapter I will focus on methodological part of the thesis. First I will discuss the research question briefly and explain the rationale behind case selection subsequently. Afterwards I will review my research strategy and cover data selection: Identify sources and type of data I am looking for. Finally, I will touch upon limitations which may reduce the explanatory power of the thesis.

Research Question

As I have reviewed in the introduction, the goal of the thesis is to find the link between the independent variable, internal insecurity and threats and a dependent variable, foreign policy orientation of the state. The idea behind this is my belief that threats, posed by powerful internal actors force authoritarian state leaders to seek assistance from an external actor to balance against internal challenges, considered by them as most threatening. States, selected in my case are characterized by the same type of regime, belong to the same region and have the same, brief history of independence. However their pattern of behavior on a systemic level varies. Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan have experienced one or more policy shifts while Turkmenistan managed to develop a steady and consistent foreign policy based on “positive neutrality”. The research question I am trying to answer lies in determinants of variation in foreign policy observed in these three states.

Research Strategy

The goal of the thesis is to carefully analyze domestic developments in the state and find a logical link with its behavior on international arena.

Basing my decision on the fact that I have to carefully observe empirical data on both international and internal developments in selected states, I have decided that a case study is an appropriate strategy for my research. Case study provides the opportunity of in depth analysis of empirics and relies on foundations of interpretativism. By using this strategy I will be able to detect important developments on intrastate arena, identify threats to the regime and relate them to activities on interstate level. If my assumptions are correct, a challenge to the ruling regime will push it towards cooperation with an external actor capable of providing sufficient aid for maintaining power. Therefore, the absence of the domestic motivator for a foreign policy shift will be an indication of an incorrect assumption.

Case Selection

There are several reasons why I have selected Central Asia as a proper case for my thesis. First and most important is the fact that all three entities selected have the same historical background and had the same starting point after the fall of the Soviet Union.

Second, it is important to emphasize that David's theory is based on a rivalry between powers. Particularly it is essential that strong interests of powers towards the country or a region do exist. When arguing for this we should keep in mind the main question that the

leader of a Third World country has to answer: “Which outside power is more likely to do a better job in prolonging my rule”? In this reference, if we are observing a situation where a weak state does not have an alternative in terms of aligning, we are unable to argue for the significance of the influence of different variables on alliance choices. In this case the state does not have another option but to internalize the existing threat by aligning with the only power available on compromised bases. Central Asia in this respect is a proper case. The weight of the region in terms of geopolitics is high. It has historically been the point of tensions between empires. It was a subject of a rivalry, of the “great game”⁶ between Britain and Russia in the 19th century and became a new platform for superpower competition as soon as the Soviet Union fell apart.

The third reason for selection is the authoritarian nature of all regimes of the region without exception and their belonging to the Third World. Once again, omnibalancing was developed because of author’s belief that specificities of the Third World could not be evaluated by the balance of power and a successful explanation of foreign policy in such states required an in depth observation of intrastate relations (David 1991).

Therefore above explanations mean that the cases selected for the research have to satisfy the following criteria: a) Governments have to be authoritarian, lacking democratic legitimacy domestically; b) without the monopoly on means of violence; c) with strong interest groups challenging the regime; d) with the significant interest coming from world powers, providing opportunity for alliance.

⁶ The original great game was a rivalry between Russian and British empires in 19th century. The new rivalry of world powers for the influence on the region is often referred as the “new great game”.

Kyrgyzstan is an extremely weak state. The legitimacy of the government is low, it is unable to establish the monopoly on means of violence, is exposed to threats from both systemic and domestic levels and has even used its territory as a bargaining tool to resolve its foreign policy issues (Huskey 2008; p.15).

Uzbekistan is believed to be stronger in this respect. It has developed one of the longest lasting regimes. Although Uzbek government is not as powerful and does not hold the country in its hands as strongly as it often proclaims, it has managed to develop a repression-based state mechanism and maintain its grip on power (Wlachovska 2008; p.57).

Although three countries are included in the research I do not expect same conclusions from all three. The thesis aims at finding determinants of foreign policy variations in selected states, assuming that they lay in domestic threats which are being balanced out by insecure regimes. Turkmenistan has not conducted a significant policy shift and has not sought superpower patronage, therefore it is included as a test case, which will provide increased explanatory power if my assumptions are right. If David's theory and my assumptions on its applicability are correct, the determinant of Turkmenistan's neutrality is the lack or insignificance of domestic threats to the regime.

Research Methods

The methodology used for the research is mainly determined by the research strategy and a research question. I will describe the event taking place in the country as a threat to the regime and link it with the particular action on international arena. As a particular conduct of the regime on international arena has to be interpreted as orientation in foreign policy, I define my techniques of data analysis as interpretative. It is important to emphasize that the event taking place in the country does not necessarily needs to be significantly challenging to its ruling elite but it should be perceived as a threat by the later (Fumagalli 2008; p.255). This definition is crucial as leaders tend to judge, conceptualize and act according to their perception of facts. They do not have the ability to foresee future developments of events and evaluate the level of threat from that perspective. Experiencing insecurity dilemma and fully realizing costs of losing power, authoritarian leaders are more careful and try to safeguard themselves from even minor challenges to their power.

As my thesis uses a case study and relies on interpretation of international developments in relation to domestic threats particularly on finding a logical link between the two, I define my research as inductive.

Data

The choice of data is restricted due to only limited number of previous research available on the region and the lack of proper datasets. The collection of the data has to be started by careful observation of intrastate and international developments involving selected

states. Another factor limiting the access to data is the nature of governments in these countries. For unbiased data independent observation of events is necessary⁷. For this purpose I will focus on regional news web-pages and news portals which are designed or funded in cooperation with international organizations and therefore provide more accurate coverage. Such web pages belong to the 'Institute of War and Peace Reporting' (iwpr.net), eurasianet.org funded by the Open Society Foundation, web page of 'Radio Free Europe'. After going through the sources and obtaining as much data as possible, I have to sort them according to two categories: domestic and international. On domestic level I will look for events which might pose a threat to the regime. Such events in the region usually are protests, militants of different ideology, various minorities, strong domestic opposition and active independent media. On international level I will look for events which find reflection in documents signed by key state authorities. Such documents are agreements on strategic cooperation, participation in international organizations influenced by interests of a particular power or oriented against these interests; participation in global economic projects together with strong states and other forms of cooperation which increase the involvement of a particular power with the selected state or reduces it, altering the geopolitical balance in the country. According to these documents I will be able to detect the international orientation of the state as well as shifts in the foreign policy in a particular period of time. For instance signing of a bilateral agreement on strategic partnership with Russia will be interpreted as an indication that the case we are observing is oriented

⁷ National media is avoided as it is usually heavily influenced by their respective governments and the data available from them can be biased with the share of state propaganda.

towards this particular power, while the agreement on granting basing rights to the U.S. military will obviously be viewed as a step towards more western orientation.

Limitations

A typical limitation, reducing the explanatory power of the thesis is the region I have selected as a target area of the work. Only limited number of previous research has been conducted on this matter. Specificity of the region requires that the work on data selection must be started from zero as there are no significant datasets available for the issue I am looking at.

The issue associated with the case study is that it is constantly evolving. It cannot be properly replicated and there is always a chance that it will change, which might distort the whole research.

The thesis also lacks the data on international as well as regional organizations and their influence on policy outputs of selected states.

4 Uzbekistan: Strengthening Karimov's Dictatorial Grip

Uzbekistan became the subject of international law in 1991 following the dissolve of the Soviet Union. The forces which came to power were far from democratic. Islam Karimov, the President of the Uzbek Soviet Socialistic Republic and a former secretary of the communist party became the leader of an independent state. Maintenance and wellbeing of his clan and regime became his main concern.

First years of independence were far from easy for Uzbekistan. Social architecture of the country was more relying on a clan structure. Although the lack of clearly defined, strong identity groups have significantly reduced the probability of ethnic conflicts observed in South Caucasus (Collins 2003), activities of Islamist opposition openly calling for turning down Karimov's regime have rapidly pushed the newly established state towards authoritarianism (Fumagalli 2007; p.255) External signs of democracy were maintained, however they only served as a façade for the iron rule of Islam Karimov.⁸

Civil war in Tajikistan further increased the fears of Uzbek authorities as the chaos could have easily spilled over from the neighboring country. Encountering increasing threats to its existence, Karimov's regime joined a Collective Security Treaty in May 1992. 30th of May, same year Uzbekistan and Russia signed a bilateral agreement: 'The Treaty on the Fundamental Principles of Interstate Relations, Friendship, and Cooperation between the Russian Federation and the Republic of Uzbekistan', focusing on military alliance. Karimov has officially declared that Russia was essential for maintaining peace and stability in the region (Pikulina 1999; p.10).

⁸ Elections were held however their freedom and fairness were highly doubted.

The civil war in Tajikistan has ended with the defeat of Islamist opposition after the intervention from Russian military in 1997. Feeling more secure, Uzbek regime decided to distance itself from Russia. These attempts are evaluated in various researches. Eberhardt (2004) argues that Karimov's main step away from Moscow was manifested in the refusal to prolong the participation in the Collective Security Treaty. There were other anti-Russian activities as well: Karimov did not hesitate to openly criticize CIS for inactivity, resisting the growth of its role and functions (Bohr 1998). The country joined GUAM in April 1999 which became GUUAM.⁹

Further distancing from Russia was stimulated by Islamist attacks in 99 and 2000. Few months following Uzbekistan's decision to withdraw from the Collective Security Treaty, armed militants entered Kirgizstan from Tajikistan to attack the Ferghana Valley. The threat came back in august 2000 the same forces invaded southern Uzbek villages. The IMU (Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan) was blamed in both cases. Passivity of Russian forces located in Uzbekistan, who did nothing to prevent the invasion, gave a push start to speculations regarding Russian interest in undermining Karimov's regime (Eberhardt 2004; p. 202).

The fear of losing power encouraged the president to search for the aid from further abroad. Inactivity of Russian forces in the face of a threat to Uzbek regime was a clear signal for the president that he could no longer rely on Russia as a guarantor of his rule. As Fumagalli (2007) asserts, Uzbekistan realized that it may have benefited from external

⁹ The main goal of GUAM the organization founded in 1996 by Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldova was the reduction of the influence of Russia in a post-Soviet space.

help regardless of where it came from. The 9/11 events came just in time for the country. War on terror gave Karimov the opportunity to justify his own war against Islamist opposition and crush it under the mask of fighting terrorism. Increasing American interest in the region also presented him the chance to finally find some common ground with U.S. as well.

In early 90s after the collapse of the Soviet Union the United States did not show any particular interest towards Central Asia. Partly because US officials viewed Uzbekistan as a distant country, still under heavy Russian influence with significant human rights problems (Berdikeeva 2005; p.1).

US-Uzbek relations went uphill swiftly after 9/11 events. For Uzbek regime the war on terror was an opportunity to increase its international credibility by becoming the ally of one of the world powers, justify its fight against Islamist opposition, associating it with terrorists and blaming in connections with Taliban. As Cooley rightfully asserts “Allying with the United States presented a major opportunity for Karimov to crush the IMU with Western blessings and justify his regime’s crackdown against opposition movements within the country” (Cooley 2008: p.72).

For the United States Uzbekistan was of strategic importance. The landlocked country in the heart of Central Asia borders Afghanistan, representing a perfect location for logistic purposes. The regime was the most stable out of all its neighbors and it’s relatively developed military infrastructure could have provided an excellent place for U.S. presence.

The agreement signed in October 2001 gave the right to the United States military to set up a base in Karsi-Khanabad, located about 150 kilometers away from Afghan border to

support its operations against Taliban. According to mutual agreement signed by both sides, US forces had the possibility to intervene in case of a direct threat to Uzbekistan's security and territorial integrity (Berdikeeva 2005; p.1). The U.S. military were granted a right to station up to 1500 troops in the base. Uzbek government insisted that combat aircraft should not be deployed on the airfield but the use of the base should be limited to supply and rescue missions only (Cooley 2008; p73).

U.S. government has agreed to target IMU members in Afghanistan who were fighting alongside Taliban (Bedikeeva 2005, Cooley 2008). Uzbek government received significant economic benefits as well as expensive military equipment.

In 2001 the rate of U.S. support to Uzbekistan equaled USD 43 million. The number increased up to 130 million in 2002¹⁰. Uzbek security forces and army received special advanced equipment worth \$82 and \$120 million respectively as well as \$15 million for base-related operating expenses (Cooley 2008; p.72).

The Declaration on Strategic Partnership signed in March 2002, was basically focusing on military alliance against terrorism. U.S. government took responsibility to protect the security and territorial integrity of Uzbekistan in case of necessity while Karimov vowed to conduct reforms, take active steps towards the protection of human rights and promotion of political pluralism.

Warm relations between new allies did not last long however. As stressed above, Uzbekistan basically viewed the United States as a tool for achieving its domestic goals:

¹⁰ US Department of State www.state.gov

elimination of IMU and justification of its oppression of any kind of political opposition left, instantly linking it with Islamist threat. The necessity of reforms, encouragement of political participation, respect to human rights and other democratic values demanded by the U.S. were never viewed by Uzbek authorities as an option. As Martha Brill Olcott concludes, “Karimov, a figure whose political consciousness dates from the years of the Cold War between the U.S. and U.S.S.R., sought to do this in a very “old-style” way, by offering the U.S. a strategic partnership that focused on shared foreign policy goals rather than on shared values in the domestic political agendas of the two countries” (Oclott 2007: p.1). Such divergent views on cooperation would certainly undermine the alliance and negative consequences did not take long to come.

In January 2002 the term of presidency in Uzbekistan was extended to seven years as a result of an extremely controversial referendum¹¹. Dual chamber legislative body was also introduced which further increased power of an executive branch (Ilkhamov 2002; p.223).

Karimov’s crimes became more obvious later in 2002 when the security forces arrested hundreds of suspects accusing them in supporting terrorism (Cooley 2008; p.73). On May 11, 2005 government forces cracked down on a demonstration, protesting the arrest of 23 businessmen, accused of ties with terrorists. The Security in armed vehicles surrounded protesters and opened fire into the crowd. The numbers of killed and injured vary depending on the source. According to Uzbek government under 200 had died and all of them were armed militants. However independent international organization the Human

¹¹ Many international observers refused to work in Uzbekistani referendum acknowledging in advance that it will not be democratic. For more information see Controlable Democracy in Uzbekistan - Alisher Ilkhamov, *Middle East Report*, No. 222 (Spring, 2002), pp. 8-10.

Rights Watch reported between 700 and 800 dead.¹² Such brutal response by the president can be explained by the fact that the demonstrations were held only two months after the regime in neighboring Kyrgyzstan had collapsed. Tulip Revolution frightened the authoritarian ruler of Uzbekistan who feared that revolutionary waves could reach his country as well.

Andijon events have shocked the world. The United States under Bush were active promoters of democracy and liberalism worldwide, an alliance with the discredited regime would have undermined the image of the US on one hand. On the other hand however there were no real alternatives to Uzbekistan in terms of support in Afghan campaign. Sticks and carrots tactics might not have worked. America could have isolated Karimov's regime but the question was whether Russia and China would do the same (Mckivergan 2005)?

The opinions have diverged in Washington. Military wing led by the department of defense was reluctant on turning critical on Uzbek regime as it would lead to a loss of an access to an extremely important base. Others argued that silence would have damaged the credibility of president's policy of promoting democracy worldwide (Mckivergan 2005; p.1). Washington's silence lasted for several weeks. U.S. even resisted an international investigation by UN first, however later the Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice backed the initiative of investigation regarding the use of U.S. issued equipment by Uzbek security forces during the crackdown. In response Uzbek government restricted night flights from

¹² Human Rights report with testimonies of eyewitnesses available at http://www.hrw.org/reports/2005/uzbekistan0605/5.htm#_Toc105632750

the base. In contrast to U.S. position Russia and China backed Karimov's actions during crack down, officially stating that the people killed were in fact armed militants resisting security forces.

Around 500 refugees from Andijon fled to Kyrgyzstan. Uzbek authorities demanded on the return of refugees for interrogations. The United States supported the decision of the United Nations to transport these people to European countries who were ready to grant them political asylum. The day after this decision was announced Uzbek authorities officially notified U.S. that they are activating the contract termination clause according to which the decision regarding withdraw from the base agreement should be notified to another party 180 days prior (Cooley 2008; p.77). In November 2005 after last American soldier left the country, Uzbekistan and Russia signed a new treaty on Allied Relations giving a start to a new level of cooperation between these two countries in post-soviet era.

From the point of view of Neo-realist approach Uzbekistan's attraction towards the U.S. in the late 90s can be explained by balancing. In a given layout it can be argued that Karimov, as uncontested decision maker considered Russia as a threat for his country. He tried to distance from this threat and balanced against Russia aligning with an alternative power when the chance had occurred. However Neo-Realist approach cannot explain the rationale behind Karimov's drop back from developing closer ties with the States. In this regard his decision looks irrational as he has removed the balance against Russia he had sought for so long. Omnibalancing however, bringing domestic variables into the picture provides an explanatory power for such behavior. Karimov's main goal for his entire career as a president was the maintenance of power. He aligned with the U.S. not because he was concerned about Russian re-intervention but because he sought additional legitimacy

to crush the IMU which he accomplished perfectly as a result. As soon as America became a constraint for his rule, he cut the ties, realigning with Russia who was ready to back his regime under less demanding conditions.

5 Kyrgyzstan: Failed Multivectorism

In this chapter I will emphasize difficulties which Kyrgyzstan has inherited after the collapse of the Soviet Union as well as threats that the government has encountered. Afterwards I will cover the history following independence and evaluate how internal issues and tensions have shaped the foreign policy of the country.

Generally foreign policy of Kyrgyzstan was viewed as multivectorism (Huskey 2008; p.9), a policy, which lacks clear orientation and tries to make superpowers compete against each other. Kyrgyzstan remains the only country who had offered basing rights for both United States and Russian military forces.

Much like other Central Asian States, the democratic legitimacy of the leader was low in Kyrgyzstan. The president, Askar Akayev came to power in quite a strange way. First elections for a newly introduced post of the president of the republic were held in the country by the Supreme Soviet of Kyrgyz SSR on October 15th 1990. Two candidates ran the elections and strangely enough Akayev was none of them. Candidates were the First Secretary of the Communist Party of Kyrgyz SSR Absamat Amaliyev and President of Council of Ministers of Kirghiz SSR Apas Jumagulov, however none of these two were able to receive the necessary majority of votes. Instead of running the second round, both rivals were banned according to Kyrgyz constitution and two days later the new candidate, Askar Akayev the deputy of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR was nominated. In October 1991 he ran unchallenged and became the president of the state.

Enjoying legitimacy and popularity in the beginning of 90s, the president tried to find the balance between east and west which was on par with his rhetoric regarding the historical role of Kyrgyzstan as the center of Eurasia.

In terms of cooperation with west, first years of independence looked promising for Kyrgyzstan: Despite of being located in a rather dictatorial neighborhood, president Akayev marked his country as a model of political and economic liberalism in the region, promoting it as the “Switzerland of Asia”. These verbal commitments and some democratic initiatives attracted many western states and international organizations who were expressing the desire to aid the emerging Central Asian democracy. As a result Kyrgyz government was granted an access to large loans aimed at coping with its underperforming economy, development of infrastructure and boosting of the transition process.

The country became the member of the United Nations in March 1992 and in 1993 the permanent mission of the United Nations was opened in Bishkek. It also joined financial institutions, particularly World Bank and International Monetary Fund in 1992.

Kyrgyzstan became actively involved in regional as well as post-soviet politics: Russian and Kyrgyz presidents signed a Friendship and Cooperation Treaty in 1992. Akayev gave his support to CIS Collective Security Treaty, obliging members to provide mutual military support in case if one of them is being attacked. Kyrgyzstan also signed a customs union agreement together with Kazakhstan, Belarus and Russia, with Tajikistan joining in

1998¹³; in 1994 the country became the member of the “Central Asian Economic Community”, an organization running its own bank, mutual military guarantees and even a peacekeeping battalion.

Akayev’s divergence from the west started in mid 1990s. In 1995 he satisfied Russian president Boris Yeltsin’s request to review the constitution according to which Kyrgyz was the only official language of the state. Constitutional amendments of 1996 introduced Russian as a second language of the republic. In February, same year the country joined Russian dominated Customs Union also including Kazakhstan and Belarus. As Cooley rightfully notes, late 90s saw Kyrgyzstan move further away from west and towards Russia. The model of governance closer reassembled the one of its neighbors and although the regime was not as brutal and repressive as Karimov’s it was certain that it had backed off from reformist policies and granted privileges to his extended family and closest allies (Cooley 2008; p.70). Huskey asserts that by becoming more and more authoritarian “more comfortable its leadership felt in the company of those like Russia and China, which understood the values of order and stability to be in conflict with those of contestation and openness” (Huskey 2008: p.10).

Kyrgyzstan rediscovered western interest in 2001 as the war on terror started. Strategically non-important country with no significant natural resources suddenly found itself in the center of Interest of the United States. The U.S. military fighting Taliban in Afghanistan needed a supply route and a forward deployment installation for their forces.

¹³ More information on Customs Union, now called the ‘Eurasian Economic Community’ available in the foundation agreement at <http://www.worldtradelaw.net/fta/agreements/eaecfta.pdf>

The other ally in war on terror, Uzbekistan has formally allowed only rescue and supply operations from its territory, forbidding the deployment of any military aircraft, therefore Kyrgyzstan served as an alternative choice for the United States. The Manas airbase was opened in December 2001. U.S. military were represented by U.S. Air Forces F-15Es and U.S. Marine Corps F-18 fighters which could not be deployed on Uzbek territory.

Despite the beneficial nature of U.S-Kyrgyz relations, Akayev started to move away from American partnership once again. The agreement with Russia regarding basing rights was achieved in 2003 and Russian air force units were deployed at Kant air base, east of Bishkek.

Mass protests in the country started with accusations in falsification of parliamentary election results held on February 27 and March 13. Fears were that the president could a puppet parliament to extend his presence in power or transform the country into a parliamentary republic with him as a speaker of the parliament.¹⁴ On March 24 2005 when the protests reached Bishkek, Akayev fled the country and his regime was toppled by what was later called the tulip revolution, the third one in the list of “colored revolutions” in the post soviet space.

Former prime minister, opposition leader and the new president Kurmanbek Bakiyev was elected in July 10th with 89% of votes. The fate of the Manas air base was put on scales soon after. On July 11 2005 president Bakiyev announced that the purpose of the U.S. base should be reexamined and the country should pursue more independent policy. In a year following this statement the agreement with the U.S. authorities was reached but only

¹⁴ Martha Brill Oclott Interview with Bernard Gwertzman; March 25, 2005

on improved financial conditions for Kyrgyzstan. In February 2009 Kyrgyz president, while making a public statement after meeting with Russian colleague Medvedev, announced that Kyrgyz government is terminating the contract with the United States and that the base should be closed within the time indicated in the contract. Unsurprisingly the party, taking the responsibility to cover the costs of ousting was Russia.

As the first part of the chapter reviews, during first two decades of its existence, the foreign policy of Kyrgyzstan was far from consistent. The state was mainly in disarray, altering foreign policy orientation several times. Such erratic behavior cannot be thoroughly explained by the systemic approach. Divergence from western support in mid to late 90s, then realignment during the war on terror and further distancing couple of years later is not what the realist perception would have predicted. Observation of threats from internal dimension however can give a cleaner picture and provide rationale behind Kyrgyz foreign policy conduct.

Although on the level of rhetoric the legitimacy behind the multivectorism was the historical role of Kyrgyzstan as the heart of Eurasia, the real underlying conditions of such policy were inherited weaknesses and inability of the state to cope with domestic issues on its own. Internally Kyrgyz regime had several significant challenges. Arguably the most threatening was the domestic opposition. Akayev's rhetoric and democratic initiatives in the beginning of 90s have encouraged political participation and the emergence of free media turning into a significant threat for the elite later.

Huskey (2008) defines further disadvantages which have impelled the country to seek aid from abroad. First, the state was one of the weakest in the post soviet space basically

carrying on thanks to subsidies from the center. Second was the geography of Kyrgyzstan: the state is landlocked in the middle of the Eurasian continent with the nearest sea port over 3000 kilometers away from the capital. Such disadvantageous location prevents it from being a hub for movement of goods in the region. In addition, the border lines of the country are drawn in an extremely complicated way making them difficult to control. Third, Kyrgyzstan lacks significant natural resources besides small amount of gold. After the collapse of the Soviet Union the subsidies from the center were gone, and the country was not able to address domestic issues without meaningful external support.

Kyrgyzstan's divergence from the west started in mid 1990s when it became obvious that Akayev's behavior did not match his democratic rhetoric. For instance the media which enjoyed unprecedented freedom during first years of independence, had started to encounter serious oppression since 1993. According to some reports such change of attitude towards the free speech, and attacks on journalists were caused by their activity in covering the "gold scandal" involving the president and his closest surrounding. It became a common practice for state authorities to sue on journalists. Some were imprisoned, some had died. For instance one popular commentator was killed after being struck in the head.¹⁵ The critical point for the leadership of the country was the attempt of the parliament to hold the president accountable for the gold scandal. Such accusations were considered by the leader as a threat to his rule, his wellbeing and probably freedom. In response, Akayev simply dissolved the legislative body and transformed the state into a super-presidential system.

¹⁵ Human Rights Watch report on freedom of speech in Kyrgyzstan can be found at <http://www.hrw.org/legacy/press/2002/09/kyrgyzstan-factsheet.htm>

By the time of the 9/11 events and announcement of the war on terror Kyrgyzstan was already a fully established autocracy and the regime was not encountering any significant threats from the domestic paradigm. The Afghan campaign however provided an excellent opportunity to further increase the grip on power and get the hands on significant economic benefits. Other than being strategically substantial, the U.S. base was the source of income as well. It contributed \$40 million a year into the Kyrgyz economy and employed around 500 local citizens. The biggest benefit for Akayev and his surrounding however came from the lease agreement on the base which was officially operating as a private company partly owned by president's son Aydar. Aydar managed to collect \$2 million annually and receive additional \$7000 for each take off from the airfield (Cooley 2008; p.74). Kyrgyz elite also viewed alliance with the U.S. as an opportunity for strengthening the grip on power and dealing with domestic opposition. The Human Rights Watch factsheet discussed increased HR violations and proposed that Kyrgyzstan's new relationship with the U.S. may have emboldened it, allowing the regime to suppress political opposition leaders without fear of diplomatic consequence.¹⁶

Kyrgyzstan today has serious human rights problems. The Akaev government has shown marked intolerance for political opposition, lodging politically motivated criminal charges against its rivals and critics. The right to freedom of assembly has been violated repeatedly, most dramatically in March 2002, when police opened fire on protesters, killing at least five people. In the meantime, Kyrgyzstan's aggressive stance against independent Islam began increasingly to resemble that of neighboring

¹⁶ For more information on human rights record in Kyrgyzstan see Human Rights Watch Factsheet on Kyrgyzstan at <http://www.hrw.org/legacy/press/2002/09/kyrgyzstan-factsheet.htm>

Uzbekistan, as dozens of non-violent Muslim believers have been rounded up, physically mistreated, and thrown into Kyrgyz jails (Human Rights Watch 2002: p.1)

Violence in 2002 was the beginning of the end for Akayev's regime. Mass protest resulted into a violent crackdown from the security forces. Several peaceful protesters have died as a result. Loss of civilian lives deprived the president of any legitimacy left in the eyes of the population. Lack of public support, must have further encouraged him to align with the power which could provide a better support for his discredited regime. The agreement with Russia regarding basing rights was achieved in less than a year following 2002 protests. Martha Brill Oclott, one of the leading scholars in Central Asian Studies pointed out in her interview that "As the president became less democratic, he sought security guarantees for his regime, and Russia seemed a more likely place to get security guarantees for nondemocratic regimes than America".¹⁷

Much like Uzbek counterpart, Kyrgyz regime realigned several times according to its interests of survival. Changes in foreign policy orientation were noticeable and have always served the interests of autocratic rulers.

¹⁷ Martha Brill Oclott Interview with Bernard Gwertzman; March 25, 2005

6 Turkmenistan's Positive Neutrality: How it Became Possible

In this chapter we shall review links between Turkmenistan's foreign policy and domestic developments following independence and argue that the neutrality announced by the president of the country became possible largely due to the ability of the state to maintain stability and neutralize internal threats such as political opposition and radical Islam. Niyazov's long lasting regime was founded on an extreme authoritarianism and the cult of individual. The president even proclaimed himself "Turkmenbashi" (the father of all Turkmen). The opposition was weak and suppressed, the regime lacked democratic legitimacy and the main orientation in foreign policy was almost a complete lack of such. Although things have changed a little following an unexpected death of the leader and a rise to power of Berdimukhamedov, when the country became more active on international arena, a substantial change has not come yet (Anceschi 2008).

Much like other Central Asian states, Turkmenistan did not have the experience of statehood before early 20th century. The republic was the creation of the Soviet system. As the area was an important crossroad, invasions throughout history were frequent. In its history Turkmen lands have seen Turks, Persians, Genghis Khan and Tamerlane hordes. Russia had been the last conqueror of the country so far. The state of Turkmenistan as a political entity came to life in Stalin era, in 1924.

After obtaining independence Turkmenistan has developed absolutely unprecedented form of authoritarianism. The rise to power, dictatorial method of governance, attitude towards the state, law and citizens was on a completely different level even compared to other countries of the authoritarian region.

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union Turkmenistan under Niyazov rule declared independence on 26th October 1991. Much like in the rest of the region the dissolve of the superpower was not met with great delight by Turkmen elites (Al-Bassam 1997; p.391). Earlier same year the population went to vote for keeping the Union intact with 98% of votes. Another referendum in October 91 yielded completely different outcome: 94% of Turkmen voted for independence and the country carried on alone.

The president lacks any kind of democratic legitimacy. He became the chief of the communist party of Turkmenistan in 1985. In 1990 as a result of reforms first elections of the president in post-soviet space were held in the republic. Niyazov ran unchallenged, “winning” and becoming the first president during the Soviet rule. Elections held in following year, already in an independent country, brought him another “victory”. He ran unchallenged again, taking 99.5% of votes.

Foreign policy of the country was defined as positive neutrality.¹⁸ This status was emphasized in United Nations declaration on the country and remained the same way until president’s death. Turkmenistan joined the Commonwealth of Independent States in December 1991. The following year saw the country become the member of such organizations as the United Nations, International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the Economic Cooperation Organization. Despite the fact that Turkmenistan became a member of number of

18 For more information on Turkmenistan's positive neutrality see Boris O. Shikmuradov – deputy prime minister and minister of foreign affairs of Turkmenistan

<http://www.sam.gov.tr/perceptions/Volume2/June-August1997/volII2POSITIVENEUTRALITYASTHEBASISOFTHEFOREIGNPOLICYOFTURKMENISTAN.pdf>

international bodies the main goal of the government was to minimize foreign influence. This continuous quest for nonintervention brought the country to almost complete international isolation. Turkmenbashi made sure that none of his international commitments were restricting his domestic activities, therefore the only international body he was truly involved in was the United Nations as this organization does not make any attempts to influence domestic policies of its member states (Pomfret 2008; p.166).

While Border tensions, ethnic and religious minorities, ecological issues and fears of Russian re-intervention pushed other Central Asian states towards cooperation, Turkmenistan demonstratively stayed aside, resisting any kind of regional integration since the beginning of 90s (Kuru 2002; p.60). Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan signed an agreement creating a common economic space in 1994. Later that year Kyrgyzstan joined them, resulting the creation of Central Asian Economic Union (CAEU) which was later joined by Tajikistan as well. Turkmenistan officially declined the offer of membership in 1998 at the summit of Central Asian states.

The only organization where the country was more or less active was the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) however Turkmenistan did not join the Collective Security Treaty which was a Russia dominated military agreement. On the other hand Turkmenistan did not join GUUAM as well, an international organization aiming to reduce Russian influence in the region. Moreover, the country reduced its role in CIS down to the associated member in 1995.

The government was more active when it came to global economic projects, such as the railway line and a gas pipeline between Turkmenistan and Iran. Turkmenistan-Iran-Turkey-

Bulgaria pipeline project which would have covered 2 500 miles was announced in 1995 however the opposition from the United States killed the project off. U.S. oil companies were forbidden to have any business with Iran by their government, therefore Turkmenistan-Iran pipeline was just a part which has been salvaged from then larger project (Hancock 2006; p.74).¹⁹

2006 effort with China was a different story: China was already one of the largest gas consumers in the world and Turkmenistan's vast resources were an excellent lure for its energy hunger. The preliminary agreement was reached and in May 2007, in less than a year after Trkmenbashi's death, the construction of a pipeline connecting Turkmenistan and China has started. In July same year China agreed to purchase 30 billion cubic meters of gas per year at the price of 195 USD per thousand cubic meters²⁰.

Turkmenistan's foreign policy behavior represents the typical example of balancing. After gaining independence Turkmenbashi was consistently trying to move away from Russia and diversify its gas customer market. Iran and Bulgaria were an option however the position of the U.S. government left Turkmenistan with only a small part of a larger project. Niyazov was not in a hurry though: he managed to negotiate a beneficial deal with china and balance against opportunistic Russia. The reason, why Niyazov has not used same tactics, as other two leaders included in this paper, is an uncontested character of his rule. As I will review below, low level of threat to his power and relatively high incomes from gas

¹⁹ U.S. Energy Information Administration, U.S. Department of Energy:

<http://eia.doe.gov/cabs/Iran/Background.html>

²⁰ Although the preliminary agreement was reached in May 2007, the price was announced in 2008

prices and cotton export provided him with funds required to keep the poor country on track.

Ahmet Kuru (2002) also researches isolationist foreign policy of Turkmenbashi. He applies the rentier state model to Turkmenistan trying to explain its regional policy being contrary for instance to Uzbekistan which also sought nation building in 90s but was very positive when it came to regional cooperation. The explanatory power of the rentier state model however concentrates more on economic determinants while understanding of a broader range of variables is necessary to account for Turkmenistan's isolationist behavior. Surprisingly however, while referring to David Nissman's work, Kuru in his conclusion, emphasizes that the state managed to eliminate threats and maintain stability without meaningful internal tension (Nissman 2004). As I have underlined above the lack of significant threat for the regime is the key towards explaining Turkmenistan's "positive neutrality", disregarding whether the threat comes from ethnic or religious tensions, economic shortfall or radical political opposition. Therefore below I will review domestic policy of Turkmenistan on presence of threats and evaluate their significance.

Niyazov has formed as many argue, one of the most repressive and authoritarian regimes in the world (Bohr 2006). He re-named the Communist Party of Turkmenistan a Democratic Party of Turkmenistan, managed to maintain power where many other communist leaders of former soviet republics lost it and as Kareem Al-Bassam (1997) rightfully notes, "Niyazov's history up to 1991 clearly proved that the new president of Turkmenistan was a survivor who would use any means at his disposal to retain his position of power" (Al-Bassam 1997: p.392)

Threat coming from the political opposition was low as it was traditionally weak in the republic. Roots of this issue go back to communist times when the effects of “glasnost” in the country were weaker than in other soviet states (Al-Bassam 1997; p.392). Opposition activists were mainly united in the “Agzybirlik” the party which translates into English as Unity. Encountering continuous oppression, the party was officially banned in 1990. After independence Niyazov was not hiding intentions in bringing the state under his dictatorial control. As he had stated himself he has not destroyed the structure of soviet style governance in order to avoid vacuum and more than that, he had openly confessed that the government has resolutely suppressed attempts to pursue destructive notions on the crest of the wave of pseudo-reform and Glasnost. According to him “human rights are inextricably linked with national interests and are their essential components” (Panico 93; p.8). Opposition of any kind is not tolerated in the country, activists have either fled, have ceased activity or were imprisoned. Some of them had died. Koshali Garaev was arrested in Uzbekistan back in 1994 and charged for treason and an attempt to murder the president. He passed away in extremely suspicious circumstances in 1999 in prison.

After around a year following Garaev’s arrest, protest against the regime in 1995 counted around 1000 people. They accused the leader of making the citizens beggars while building palaces for himself. Security forces dissolved the manifestation in an hour and the suppression of opposition had strengthened (Al-Bassam 1997; p.401).

As far as freedom of religion is concerned only Sunni Muslims and Russian orthodoxies are allowed to legally conduct religious rituals in the country. Repression of minorities had been obvious as well. Turkmenistan remains the only country where religious rights have been openly violated by the state. To openly exercise such rights the religion itself has to

be registered and at least 500 followers are required for successful registration. A Hari Krishna temple and the Seventh Day Adventist Church in Ashgabat were destroyed in 1999, making Turkmenistan the only country in the former Soviet Union where places of worship have been demolished by the authorities. In many cases even privately held religious activities have been disrupted by, participants arrested and interrogated.²¹

Despite such oppression of religious minorities radical Islamist movements did not quite find support in the country. Swati Parashar (2004) researches this phenomenon, quite unusual for the rest of the region where religious extremism has been quite a concern ever since the collapse of the Soviet Union. He defines several variables determining the lack of such threat: First, Turkmen tribes historically do not define their identity according to religion as in other Central Asian states. Second, Niyazov himself did not encourage radical Islam against his country staying away from anti-terrorist coalition led by US. He only offered flyover rights and continuously warned the coalition to avoid civilian casualties in Afghanistan. Third, characteristic of the landscape does not quite favor insurgent activities. The president also made it clear that he does not want to see any refugees from Afghanistan thus avoiding the inflow of Islamist militants as well. And lastly while unemployment of youth in Uzbekistan's problematic region of Farghana valley attracts radical Islamist movements,

21 For more information on violation of religious rights see US Department of State report: <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2006/78845.htm>

The forced conscription in Turkmenistan keeps the youth engaged every year in a range of activities like road construction and maintenance, cotton harvesting and providing emergency services. This is not to say that the rate of productive employment is very high in Turkmenistan or that forced conscription of Muslim youth could be an answer to the growing influence of radical Islamists. But with a large number of youth engaged in non-religious activities of benefit to their community prescribed by the authoritarian state and with strong cultural and ethnic socialization and orientation, there has so far been little fertile ground for the terrorists and Islamists to expand their network in 'Turkmenbashi's' domain (Parshar 2004: p.1).

The country is the owner of significant oil and 5th largest gas resources in the world. Despite this inherited advantage the level of economic development is the lowest in the region and one of the lowest in the world. Such a shortfall is not a consequence of president's isolationist international policy only but a heritage of soviet rule which was mostly based on exploitation of these lands and people (Al-Bassam 1997; p.386). Turkmenistan was basically used for oil and gas supplies. The only industry apart from hydrocarbons was cotton production which drastically increased in soviet Turkmenistan in 50s and 60s following the construction of the Karakum Canal and development of irrigation systems. In early 1990s the state was the 6th largest producer of cotton in the world which equaled to 1.4 million tons of cotton per year. Despite this turkmenistan had the simplest, smallest and poorest economy of all Soviet successor states (Pomfret 2008; p.167).

Problems emerged in late 90s when cotton prices started to decline and negligence of maintenance of irrigation channels shrunk the production significantly. As a consequence, revenues from cotton import fell drastically from USD791 million in 1999 to USD84 million in 1997. Increased prices on hydrocarbons came for rescue however, making losses in

cotton export non significant, but with that the dependence on Russia became a concern. Turkmenistan is almost completely dependent on Russia when it comes to exporting gas.

In this regard Niyazov's agreement with China to is a classical case of balancing against Russia: Orienting on a power which is further away and has less influence on the country. But as we have emphasized above, balancing became possible due to lack of domestic threats for Turkmenbashi's rule and uncontested character of his regime. Thus the reason why Turkmenistan has never sought superpower patronage and omnibalancing has not occurred in the country, is the unchallenged character of his regime. Such disposition made Turkmen model more appropriate for Neo-realist balance of power with domestic tensions and interests not being present as variables any more.

7 Conclusions

The thesis has observed internal developments in three states of Central Asia in relation to international activities of governments of those states. The assumption of the paper was that the main concern for authoritarian leaders is the security of their regimes. The thesis has used Steven David's omnibalancing as a theoretical framework which provides the ability to observe intrastate relations on presence of threats to the regime and explain its foreign policy behavior as balancing against domestic threats. Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan represent clear cases of omnibalancing. They have both experienced significant domestic issues representing direct threat to their respective leaders. In case of Kyrgyzstan it was the opposition, encouraged by relative freedom in the beginning of 90s. The economic shortfall in the beginning of independence was challenged by Akayev with western cooperation. As soon as he directly experienced the consequences of the conditionality imposed in return for western financial aid, he realigned with Russia, which could provide enough material support and at the same time be less demanding concerning domestic activities of the regime.

Uzbekistan was stronger in terms of coercive force. Despite the fact that it lacked industrial power, Uzbek regime managed to outbalance internal resistance thanks to successful maneuvering in terms of alliance politics.

Turkmenistan has never developed a pattern similar to two above cases. Niyazov's foreign policy was passive and neutral. The lack of significant concerns on the domestic level made such approach to foreign policy possible.

The table below briefly covers the key developments and their motivations in selected cases during the targeted time period of the research. The first column names the regime; the second one identifies major threats to them; the third one defines the power, chosen as an ally to outbalance it and the agreement legalizing relations; the fourth column defines a the point of tension, the behavior which did not help the regime in accomplishing its primary goal, addressing domestic threat; the following columns continue with realignments and motivations with the same pattern.

The Regime	The threat	Balancing with:	Dissatisfaction with:	Realigning with:	Dissatisfaction with:	Realigning with:
Uzbekistan (Karimov)	Islamist movement in Ferghana valley (IMU) since independence	Russia (Treaty on Military Partnership, membership of CST) 1992	Inactivity of Russian forces during Islamist invasion 99-2000	United States (Treaty on Strategic Partnership during the war on terror)- 2001	Andijon massacre. US organized flight for Andijon refugees - 2005	Russia (The new treaty on allied relations) - 2005
Kyrgyzstan (Akayev)	Parliamentary efforts to put the president to custody	Russia (Introduction of Russian as a second language, membership of Customs Union) - 1996	no political tension; the will to deal with the opposition under the cover of U.S. Support	United States (agreement on basing rights to J.S. air force) - 2001	strengthening opposition, increasing number of protests, criticism for worsening HR record - 2002	Russia (agreement on basing rights to Russian air force) - 2003
Turkmenistan (Niyazov)	no domestic threat ; concern over dependence on Russia regarding oil export – since independence	Failed Turkmenistan-Iran-Turkey-Bulgaria pipeline project - 1995	-	-	-	China Pipeline project - 2006

Table 1

As we see on the table the picture on Uzbekistan is very clear. There are certain threats, followed by alignments and realignments in accordance. In case of Uzbekistan, Karimov's behavior fully supports David's theory.

Turkmenistan is a completely different case. Significant domestic threats were absent, which allowed Niyazov to manage the foreign policy according to his liking. The only concern for him was his dependence on Russia in terms of oil export which he had successfully outbalanced in the last year of his rule and life. Omnibalancing has definitely not occurred in Turkmenistan, however the lack of domestic threats and the high level of regime security in the state have eliminated the key assumption of the theory. Therefore Turkmen case also confirms David's work as being relevant only when the survival of the regime is a concern.

The matrix on Kyrgyzstan is also complete. In terms of Akayev's realignment with the U.S however, I have not found a particular point of tension, a particular case where Russia had not provided sufficient support to Kyrgyz regime. In this regard, the case confirms omnibalancing only partially, as a significant threat to the regime was not present but there was an opportunity to crush the opposition under the cover of American support. Kyrgyz rapprochement with the U.S. can also be explained by economic motives. Kyrgyzstan was the weakest state of the region, heavily relying on central subsidies during the Soviet rule and was simply unable to carry on alone. American interest towards the country was viewed by the regime also as an opportunity to acquire additional sources of income. Kirgiz case showcases that David's theory does not control effectively for economic variables. Omnibalancing focuses purely on political threats overlooking economic benefits as one of determinants of regime security. Moreover, the case indicates that not only threats (domestic) affect the foreign policy in third world states, but interests (domestically oriented) concerning regime security as well. Such interests can imply economic benefits for factions of the ruling clan, supporting the regime's grip on power, or additional

justification for further repressions. Much like in realist theories, approaches to foreign policy in third world, set by Job and David should move away from definitions of threats alone. In addition further research has to be conducted on Kyrgyzstan's economic conditions and monetary interests of different clans in the perspective of the regime security to define whether realignment with the U.S. was viewed by Kyrgyz authorities as a beneficial step in terms of maintaining power.

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