Scottie Buehler
The University of Texas at Austin
Scottie@texas.net

Abstract

Since independence there has been a push to lower fertility rates through the use of modern contraceptives in Uzbekistan. The control of women's sexuality is central to national and ethnic processes (Kandioyoti 1994). The family planning program provides the means and opportunity for state intervention into the sexual and reproductive lives of women and men, family planning programs contribute to the formation of national identity. This paper asks "how has the family planning program in Uzbekistan shaped national identity?" Through the rhetoric and practices of the family planning program there has been a shift in patriarchies, from a more traditional kin-based patriarchy to a state sponsored patriarchy. The family planning program also shapes how individuals define what is authentically Uzbek, with an emphasis on the distinction between Soviet and Uzbek. The research question was answered through a systematic review of relevant literature from international organizations, academics, and the state.

Planning the Nation:

National Identity and the Family Planning Program in Uzbekistan

Nationalism has been believed to be the natural product of such conditions as language, race, or religion (Chatterjee 1993). This historic understanding was altered by Benedict Anderson in1983 when he argued that nations are imagined into existence and that different nations are imagined differently. Uzbekistan achieved its independence from the Soviet Union late (1991), considering the worldwide wave of nationalist

movements that swept many countries in the mid twentieth century. The family planning program was instituted soon after independence and gave the state the perfect opportunity to shape how the new nation would be imagined.

Globalization has altered the function and structure of modern nation-states. Identities have become trans-national and many individual subjectivities are no longer primarily grounded in the territory of their nation-state and, therefore, the ties between a nation-state and its citizens have weakened. Some theorists have even argued that nationalist movements may no longer exist (Appadurai 1996). Within this context it is more important than ever to study the ways that nation-states are responding to these changes and attempting to regain lost status.

In discussing globalization, Bergeron (2001) argues that globalization is not the natural outcome of capitalism, but a culturally constructed phenomenon. In this spirit, the spread of contraception can be seen as one of the many facets of globalization because, through the program, technologies and ideologies from other parts of the world are brought in. This spread of technologies is always accompanied by the spread of ideas and ideologies.

This paper explores the norms that are promulgated by the family planning program along with the importation of modern contraceptive methods and ideology. Nationalisms affect women in different ways than men, and often the position of women and the obligations specific to them as such, can override their reproductive “rights” (Yuval-Davis 1996). This task was accomplished with a systematic review of the relevant

literature, information from USAID and other international organizations, and current western academic work on contraception and the state.

Much of the previous literature on contraception or gender in non-western nations has been dominated by themes of "progress" or has been colored by a need to elaborate on the shortcomings of non-western countries' attempt at liberalism/ modernism. This paper will explore the relationship between national identity and women's sexuality while proffering a critique of these discourses. The failure of liberalism is becoming better accepted and it is vital that, as theorists, we move to search for alternatives ways of organizing society. Though this paper offers no alternatives, the first step in that direction is to understand the ways that nation-states in formation deal with the complex nature of globalization, its relationship to emerging nationalisms, and the diminishing power of liberalism.

Women's Bodies and Nationalism

In order to proceed with our discussion of the relationship between family planning and national identity, we must first understand the importance of gender, reproduction, and contraception for the creation of a national identity. Many feminists argue that women are alternately viewed as the protectors of tradition and as agents of change in nationalist discourse (e.g. Deniz Kandioyoti 1998; Omnia Shakry 1998). As a result of these contradictory positions, women's bodies are often the site of the struggle for power between the patriarchal family and the state (Kandioyoti 1994). More importantly, for this paper, women's sexualities define the boundaries between different ethnic groups through the specific understandings of women's honor (Anthias et al. 1989). In Uzbekistan, the family planning program is at the center of this battle over

women's reproductive labors. This program was not the result of a feminist or women's movement but an opportunity for state intervention into the private. Despite the fact that many feminists view reproductive rights as central to the empowerment of women, the promotion of women's rights by the state is not always the product of a sense of justice, but the result of an attempt to shift allegiance from traditional power sources such as the family to the state (Charrad 2001). If the state implements family planning programs without a commitment to women's rights, often the result is the formation of a new type of patriarchy and not the elimination of gender discrimination.

Reproduction, and thus contraception, is central to national identity because with whom people choose to reproduce and how often they do so reveal social boundaries. The state shapes national identity through the construction of a common historical path, utilizing civic myths, which explain how a political community is formed (Smith 1997 cited in Joseph 2000). Anyone who does not identify with these civic myths is considered an outsider. There are often competing civic myths in a society and these tensions are reflected in opposing national narratives (Joseph 2000). These myths and the boundaries that they form are not always passively accepted by the populace; there are complex ways that individuals engage with such myths. In summary, the family planning program gives the state the ability to interact with and shape its citizens sexuality. Through defining "proper" reproductive practices, the state constructs an understanding of what it means to be Uzbek.

Historical Background

Central Asia in general and Uzbekistan in particular are key regions for the study of national identity building and its effect on reproductive well being. Uzbekistan's

recent independence from the Soviet Union means that its national identity is being shaped right now. The repressive government has sent strong, though sometimes conflicting, messages concerning contraception and national identity. In addition, the long history of gender awareness found in post-Soviet countries (because of their communist past) means that women often experienced a decrease in autonomy after independence from the Soviet Union (Corcoran-Nantes 2005). This decrease in autonomy post-independence is due to the Soviet Union's rhetorical interest in women's rights. This commitment is seen in the history of the Soviet Union's policy towards women.

On November 18, 1920 the Soviet Union became the first country in the world to legalize abortion during the first trimester upon a woman's request. The state provided these abortions without charge but had to be performed by a licensed physician in a state hospital (David 1999). This promotion of women's reproductive rights was the result of an attempt to put Marxist theory into practice by attempting to give women equal rights. In addition, the state was also motivated to legalize abortion because abortion was a cheap form of fertility control, much cheaper than providing other forms of contraception that were available at the time. The assumption was that once the state could take on the burden of childrearing, there would be no more unwanted pregnancies. There was a lack of any reliable alternative to abortion for women who wished to control their fertility; and there was a general lack of knowledge or education about contraception (David 1999; Buckley 2006; Kon 1995). This lead to what is referred to in scholarship on the topic as the "abortion culture" of the ex-Soviet Republics. In 1921 there were 190 abortions per 1000 births. By 1934 that number had risen to an astonishing 2,710 abortions per 1000 births (David 1999). With the Soviet national identity being grounded in communism and

Marxist theory, part of this identity focused on improving women's status in society. Even after a shift in the state's stance on reproductive rights, there was still a rhetorical loyalty to women's issues and discussions of "the woman question" continued.

In 1936 there was a shift in the Soviet position on abortion. When birth rates began to drop, Stalin made abortion illegal and began a pronatalist campaign (Kon 1995; David 1999). It was not until after the death of Stalin that abortions became legal again in 1955. To hide the fact that the government still did not promote or even offer any alternatives to abortion, the Soviet government stopped publishing statistical data on these matters (Kon 1995). The government actively worked to discredit hormonal contraceptives by advertising a connection between the pill and cancer (Kon 1995) and this perception still exists today in Uzbekistan (Buckley 2006).

Despite the popular rhetoric in Uzbekistan and Russia today, discussions of women's reproductive rights and their position in society began before the October revolution. The Muslim modernists known as the *Jadids*, were concerned with the rights of women during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century in Central Asia (Khalid 1998; Human Rights Watch 2006; Alimova et al. 2000). The *Jadids* were a group of intellectuals whose aim was to reconcile Islam with modernity and, as part of this campaign, to improve the status of women (Kon 1995; Human Rights Watch 2006).

Soon after independence, half of the Uzbek population was below the poverty line (Ubaidullaeva cited in Buckley 2006). As is true in many countries, during this economically difficult time women bore most of the emotional and financial burden (Kamp 2005). This holds true around the world because women are often the primary recipients of state aid. In times of economic crisis, they are forced into the workforce to

supplement their husband's income, while continuing their domestic duties (Vikers 1991 cited in Bergeron 2001). It was during this economic turmoil that Islam Karimov, the President of Uzbekistan[1], began to promote limiting reproduction. He supported this by emphasizing quality of life over quantity of children. He argued for a "healthy generation" by linking a family's physical and financial health with low reproduction (Buckley 2006). In addition to contraception this campaign also promoted maternal and child health while emphasizing that family size was a decision for parents alone (Buckley 2004). Historically, Central Asia was made up of different nomadic tribal groups based on kin, perceived or real, and decisions such as family size involved many of the extended kin. With the elimination of the role of extended kin in the decision making process, Karimov attempted to promote nuclear family structures and thereby encourage reliance on the state for resources and economic support. The programs that were created to improve maternal and child health and to limit fertility are aimed exclusively at married women. Adolescents and unmarried women are assumed to have no need for information concerning contraception and sexually transmitted infections (STIs) (Buckley 2006; Barrett et al. 2004).

Data and Methods

Feminist theoretical approaches provide a valuable framework for a discussion of the effects of contraception and family planning programs on national identity and citizenship because they offer a unique perspective on the position of women in society

[1] Islam Karimov took power as President soon after independence and a referendum in 1995 extended his term to 2000. On January 9, 2000 the first Presidential elections were held and Karimov won overwhelming support. Many human rights groups characterize Karimov as one of the worst violators of civil liberties and as having the most oppressive regime among the ex-Soviet countries (Alaolmolki 2001). His absolute control of the media and civil society gives Karimov almost absolute control over the construction of a national identity because he is able to eliminate any competing ideologies.

and how nationality affects them in a gendered way. This approach is combined with the emphasis in post-colonial theory on subaltern voices and is, therefore, better able to understand how the family planning program affects women and men in different positions in society. It is from post-colonial theory that we get an in-depth analysis of national identity building and citizenship. These are topics that feminist have also covered, but their analysis has, historically, extended only to women, and often only specific women. On the other hand, post-colonial studies theorize at the hybrid zones of race, gender, class, and nationality. Feminist theory is well-known for its belief in controlled reproduction as a woman's natural right as an individual. This belief is problematic because even where contraceptives are available, not all women have the same freedom of choice and our notion of rights is defined by liberalism, which is culturally specific to the West. Combined, these two approaches contribute to an understanding of the nuanced ways that nationalism and citizenship affect women's identities through the family planning program.

In order to best explore how the contraception program of Uzbekistan has shaped national identity, I conducted a systematic review of the relevant literature from three genres of scholarly literature examining the contraception and gender: 1) organizational reports and documents from international organizations working in Uzbekistan; 2) academic investigations relating to issues of reproductive health and women's health assessments in Uzbekistan; and 3) literature from the state pertaining to contraception, women, and development. Triangulating these three bodies of work enables me to highlight the processes through which national identity is formed. This method allows me to deconstruct the international and state ideologies promoted in the family planning

program—that is, how they overlap or contradict, and how the programs, developed both locally and internationally influence women's subjectivities.

The way that western academics study and talk about contraception, and women in general, affects the discourse of international organizations, the state, and, of course, other academics. This happens because western academics make up a portion of the staff and consultants for international organizations and these organizations look to western academics for information. An influence on the state's views of contraception comes from the international organizations. At times, they can have significant sway over states through the funding that they can provide or deny at will, and other times, states resist their influence. But in the case of Uzbekistan, Karimov is interested in being seen as Western and modern and this can motivate him to at least appear to be cooperating with international organizations. The state is the primary shaper of national identity and so the literature that it produces is also important to this study. It is important to remember that Karimov has control of all of the media in Uzbekistan and has worked to silence any dissent. This limits the number of competing ideologies and identities vying for power. However, he is still susceptible to influence by NGOs and academics when he feels that it is politically beneficial. The government of Uzbekistan has the most direct control over the everyday lives of Uzbek women, but insofar as the government is influenced by the international community, so are the women.

In the review of the literature I examined the social and political framing of modern contraception; that is, how contraception is talked about, what terminology is used, and the inherent assumptions involved across the three bodies of literature identified above. I chose to look at the framing of contraception because surrounding the

rhetoric and arguments for or against the program are inherent assumptions about women's bodies and their place in society (e.g. Ali; Buckley; Gal et al.). In order to understand the state's position on contraception I turn to Islam Karimov as the official voice. The literature from academics and international organizations came from groups and individuals that are working on contraception in Uzbekistan. The organizations whose literature I chose are United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), Population Services International (PSI), and the World Health Organization (WHO). These organizations represent a broad spectrum of organizations that stand for the most powerful players on the global stage. I examined the most current literature on the region from these organizations.

The State, Nationalism, and Gender: Definitions

Karimov relies partly upon the family planning program of Uzbekistan to define proper citizenship and thereby national identity. In order to understand this process there are three terms that need defining; the state, nationalism, and citizenship. This section will provide definitions and, in the process, situate these definitions and theories in the larger body of literature on national identity formation.

Fredrick Engels contends in *The Origin of the Family: Private Property and the State* that monogamy came into being for the purpose of producing offspring whose paternity is undisputable, in order to clarify issues of inheritance. He points out that men do not have to be sexually faithful but the wife must, in order to ensure paternity. He argues that with the inception of monogamous relationships the first division of labor emerged and this subjugated women to men. For Engels it is an economic concern that

drives the state's obsession with women's bodies. But for many feminist there are other factors that contribute to the state's interest in its citizen's sexuality.

Many feminist and post-colonial theorists see women's bodies as the field on which national identity is forged. The control of women's sexuality is central to nation building because it reproduces divisions in society (Kandiyoti 1994; Anthias et al. 1989; Gal et al. 2000). The primary way that a state can regulate reproduction is through the promotion of a family planning program. Women's sexualities are, in cultural discourse, a significant threat to tradition should they deviate from the status quo of childbearing in monogamous heterosexual marriages. As mothers, women are in a unique position to conserve tradition by passing it on to their children. Thus, women become both the protectors of tradition and the most significant threat to it (Shakry 1998). Anthias and Yuval-Davis (1989) sum up the relationship between women and the state in saying "…central dimensions of the relationships between collectivities and the state are constituted around the roles of women"(1989:1). In other words, the relationship between the state and the different groups (demographic, political, or other) is defined by the role of women.

Nationalism is gendered (McClintock 1993). Anthias and Yuval-Davis (1989) list the five ways that women are involved in nationalism: 1) as biological reproducers of the members of collectivities; 2) as reproducers of the boundaries of groups; 3) as active transmitters and producers of national culture; 4) as symbolic signifiers of national difference; and 5) as active participants in national struggles. There is a two-step movement involved in all in nationalisms: a nostalgia for the past and a break from the past. This tension is reconciled by the symbolic association of women with the past and

an authentic culture, and men with modernity and progress (McClintock 1993). This is problematic for women because modernity is privileged over tradition and this dichotomy of modern/ traditional structures the public/ private divide.

In Gal and Kligman's (2000) study of gender after socialism, they argue that reproductive discourses and practices play a significant role in constructing the relationship between the state and its citizens and in defining who is and who is not a true member of the state. It is important to remember that the state does not interact with all women within its territory in the same way. The power dynamics between women also shape the state's specific interest in their reproduction and bodies. Michel Foucault (1991) argues that with the shift from the art of government to the *governmentalization* of the state, the population problem emerged. Since family is considered an internal element of population, the population problem justified state intervention into the realm of the private (Foucault 1991). Partha Chatterjee also explores the notion of population and finds that the creation of a population "make[s] available for governmental functions…a set of rationally manipulable instruments for reaching large sections of the inhabitants of a country as the targets of policy" (Chatterjee 1998:62). Foucault and Chatterjee posit that populations are constructed and are the product of the state's need to order and control its citizenry. Technology plays a key role in the construction of a population. Kandiyoti (1998) points out that the state's obsession with sexuality, and female sexuality in particular, emerges along with new governmental technologies that define its citizens as a population that must be studied and categorized. This issue of technology brings up the very interesting work of Timothy Mitchell.

In his monograph *Rule of Experts* Mitchell (2002) explores the role of the western development agencies in bringing techno-science to Egypt and its effects. He contends that the politics of development and economic growth have created a rule of experts. Through many different mechanisms, such as mapping and demography, developmentalists organizations (e.g. USAID) cast themselves as the experts that have transcended nature through their knowledge of technology and science. These experts, and their technology, are the instruments by which Egypt is saved from the "ills of nature", such as unfettered reproduction. Kamran Ali adds to this discussion a study of the ways that the family planning program in Egypt has altered subjectivities. Ali argues that the family planning program in Egypt propagates the construction of a modern and medically normalized woman's body and modern subjectivities among the population. He discusses the ways that the study of contraception by academics and international organizations has helped to promote the construction of modern subjectivities through their rhetoric and framing of the issues. Therefore, in addition to the state, the international community also plays an important role in the control of women's sexualities.

In their article on gender and citizenship in Iraq, Jacqeline and Shreen Ismael (2000) argue that the term patriarchy, defined as the "polarized relations of power and dependence", can be applied to the relationship between different nation-states. Poorer countries occupy the feminine role of dependent while the wealthier countries are the masculine authoritarian force (2000). International donor agencies help to maintain this hierarchy of dependence. The creation and upkeep of this hierarchy is not done with money alone. There are many aspects of this relationship of dependence that rely on

ideological and cultural systems in addition to financial. The family planning program, through its technology and the ideologies that accompany it, also contributes to the maintenance of the international hierarchy of nations. Mitchell adds to this:

> From the opening of the twentieth century to its close, the politics of national development and economic growth was a politics of techno-science, which claimed to bring the expertise of modern engineering, technologies, and social science to improve the defects of nature, to transform peasant agriculture, to repair the social ills of society and to fix the economy (Mitchell 2002:15).

As seen in this quote, there is a binary between modernity (embodied in rational science and technology) and nature. Nature, in the form of unfettered reproduction, must be controlled and it is only modern societies that have the technology and knowledge to do so. Insofar as nature is an antithesis of modernity, so is tradition. This is problematic for women because of their symbolic association with tradition (and nature) and their role in the passing on of traditions. Through the binary of modernity and tradition found in the family planning program and international rhetoric, women become, metaphorically, something to be conquered by the technology of modernity[2].

Here we can see how expertise, as used by Mitchell, is a key component of development discourse but the international organizations (the "experts") are unable to simply institute policies as they wish (Mitchell 2002); they must interact with both the state and the citizens of the countries where they work and so they have to make compromises.

The State and Feminism

[2] In eco-feminism there is a similar argument that is often made. Men's domination and exploitation of nature is implicated in the oppression of women.

The classic sociological definition of the state comes from Max Weber. He defines that state as having a monopoly on the legitimate use of force (Mills and Gerth 1958). For Ernest Renan (1990) the defining aspect of a state is the fusion of its populations. Deniz Kandiyoti (1994) adds to Renan's theory of the state the mechanisms that create this fusion of difference in the population. This creation of a homogenous population occurs through the virtue of citizenship, formal equality before the law, and socialization through the media and mass education. In defining the state other theorists have emphasized the necessity for control of the population. Yuval-Davis and Floya Anthias (1989) define the state as "centrally organized around the intentionality of control with a given apparatus of enforcement at its command and basis." They also point out that the boundaries that are usually used to define the state, such as territory, nationality, and population, shift and change often. For the purposes of this paper, the state is a set of institutions that through the use of force, the virtue of citizenship, formal equality, and socialization, symbolically constructs a population. This symbolic construction is nationalism.

It is in feminist theory that you find an interesting body of literature that pertains to the state and its role in shaping gender identity. Most notorious for their scathing critiques of the state are Catherine MacKinnon and Carole Pateman. MacKinnon is known for her belief that states are an expression of male interests (Mackinnon 1989). Pateman adds to MacKinnon's theory that the shift from the traditional to the modern is characterized by a shift from paternal patriarchy to fraternal patriarchy (Pateman 1989). Paternal patriarchy is patriarchy of the father, based in the home. While fraternal patriarchy is of the brothers and refers to the public sphere and the state's role in the

subjugation of all women on behalf of all men. Both Mackinnon and Pateman state that civil society and citizenship (the public sphere) refer exclusively to males (MacKinnon 1989; Pateman 1989). This leads, in the modern state, to a battle between the individual male and the state over women and their bodies. Kandiyoti (1994) and Yuval-Davis (1991) point out that Pateman's (and other feminists') definitions of the public and private spheres are culturally specific to the West. The state often structures and reinforce this divide. One way that this divide is reinforced and maintained is through the regulation of citizen's fertility and reproduction in family planning programs.

Citizenship and Nationality

Citizenship is the defining relationship between the individual, the state, and society (Anthias et al. 1989; Kandiyoti 1994). This feminist understanding of citizenship diverges from the traditional, liberal notion of citizenship, in which all citizens occupy the same position in regards to the state. Many feminists have questioned the benefits of equality before the law (e.g. Mackinnon 1989; Pateman; Yuval-Davis 1991) by arguing that equality before the law assumes that all individuals hold equal positions within society. Bryan S. Turner defines citizenship as "a set of practices which define a person as a component member of society, and which as a consequence shape the flow of resources to persons and social groups" (Turner 1993:2). Nationality is distinct from, but related to, citizenship. "Nationality is a top-down concept that refers to an identity and a set of entitlements conferred by states on persons according to bureaucratic rules" (Al-Mughni et al. 2000:243). Hence, nationality and citizenship inform and reinforce each other. Marnia Lazgreg in her article, *Citizenship and Gender in Algeria*, adds to our definition of citizenship three different types: civil, political, and social citizenship.

Political citizenship consists of the right to exercise political power, including but not limited to voting and running for office. Civil citizenship is necessary for individual freedom. It includes the right to free speech, thought, and faith. Social citizenship is the right to "share to the full in the social heritage" (T.H. Marshall 1950 quoted in Lister 1997 quoted in Lazreg 2000). Therefore, there is a difference between citizenship as a status and as a practice (Lazreg 2006). The relationship between an individual, society, and the state as embodied in citizenship is a tenuous one. The state has the power to revoke the citizen status and, in so doing, the rights and resources that accompany the status (Lazreg 2006).

The state is the creator of citizenship rights, but the creation of citizenship laws and right is not as straightforward as some have believed. The laws that the state creates to govern citizenship and the rhetoric used all shape understandings of proper citizenship. Joseph (2002) argues that civic myths both create and are created by citizenship laws. As national identity is being created there is a look to the past to find an authentic culture. This "authentic" culture is constructed but nevertheless vital to the formation of subjectivities. The maintenance of national identity relies upon three institutions: secular education, the nuclear family, and the military (Ertürk 2006). Each of these institutions provides a means for the state to structure and control society. It is from this search for an authentic culture that civic myths arise and from them the notion of what constitutes proper citizenship. The cultural knowledge of how a nation came into being shapes a society's understanding of who is a member and who is not. In addition, it also shapes a societies understanding of different members' positions and responsibilities within that

community. After citizenship laws are formed, influenced by the civic myths, they in turn continue to reinforce the civic myths propagated by the state.

Yuval-Davis (1996) argues that there are three major types of discourse that can be found in nationalist policies of population control. She calls them "people as power", Eugenistic discourse, and the Mlthusian discourse. "People as power" is the rhetoric that supports population growth on the basis that the future of the nation depends on a growing population (e.g. in Japan). This rhetoric has also been called pronatalist and would describe the discourse of the Soviet period during Stalin's rule. The Eugenistic discourse is concerned with the quality of the population and not the size. This discourse invokes notions of blood purity. Finally, the Malthusian discourse is often touted by international reproductive agencies such as USAID and is primarily aimed at reducing population growth overall. This is supported by arguments against unfettered reproduction and is almost exclusively aimed at Third World nations. In Uzbekistan, there is an interesting blending of these theories. On one hand, there is social pressure for women to have children but, on the other hand, Karimov has promoted the limiting of the number of children, a quality over quantity debate.

Planning the Nation: A Rhetorical Analysis

The formation of national identity is, first and foremost, a looking to the past in order to construct an authentic culture. The state interacts with different groups in the population differently, at times offering different national identities. As discussed previously, women play an important role in this process but in addition to being constituted through the state they are also frequently resist hegemonic discourse and ideology (Anthias et al. 1989). This is as true in Uzbekistan as elsewhere in the world.

This section is dedicated to discussing the specific role of the family planning program in shaping social boundaries and identities through controlling women's sexualities.

Development and the International Community

Many governments and international organizations have become very concerned about the issue of contraception. In fact, the acceptance of contraception has become linked, in international developmentalist discourse, to being more modernized and thus Western. Karimov has shown great interest in Uzbekistan being seen as both modern and Western (Gal and Kligman 2000), giving the state an incentive to appear to promote reproductive rights. The association between family planning and western modernity creates a strict hierarchy of power with western culture, beliefs, and technology at the top and non-Western countries, like Uzbekistan, at the bottom. To clarify, there is no one form of modernism, but a multiplicity of modernisms (Taylor 2002). Though not all modernisms are western in origin, in cultural discourse and understanding, the modern is associated with the West.

Since independence in 1991, there has been great pressure from the state and the international community to control fertility rates in Uzbekistan. This pressure has taken the form of monies received from the international community and, on the state level, advertising campaigns, and investments in clinics and the purchase of contraception. In other countries one of the central arguments for promoting fertility control is to curb the harmful effects of a large population. In contrast, the argument in Uzbekistan, from the international community, has centered on a discussion of women's rights and the promotion of gender equality. Central to the argument supporting the family planning program is a rhetoric of progress. Progress implies a linear time line in which each step of

the way there are improvements (McClintock 1994, 1995). This modern and western notion is embodied in the United Nations and their Millennium Development Goals (MDG) but often the term used is development. In the forward of the Millennium Development Goals Report for 2006 it states "Yet we also know that disparities in progress, both among and within counties, are vast, and that the poorest among us, mostly those in remote rural areas, are being left behind" (Millennium Development Goals Report 2006:3). Some nations are betrayed as "behind" and ultimately "lacking" in progress. Development has become a synonym for progress but how development is defined is often culturally specific. Many theorists have pointed out how ethnocentric and disempowering this western conceptualization of development can be (e.g. Chatterjee et al. 2001; Ali 2002). There is an assumption that the progression from developed to developing is inevitable, unidirectional, and always positive (Chatterjee et al. 2001).

This notion of development discussed above is present in a vast amount of the literature on contraception and in the philosophies of international development agencies. In a United Nations Population Fund and PATH Report entitled "Meeting the Need" (2006) a connection is made between gender equality and smaller families, later pregnancies, women's education, and work.

> Family planning also has the potential to advance gender equality (USAID IGWG and WHO 2005). It can increase women's educational, work and life opportunities by preventing early pregnancies…and by letting women have smaller, healthier families… (2006:10)

The causal connection that this statement seems to be implying between gender equality and work, education, and small families is very problematic for non-western women.

Many times working outside the home, getting an education, or having a small family can lead to a women being further disempowered due to alienation or geographic space from traditional kin networks. These same networks are, at times, the most important protector of these women. In this quote, a fulfilling life is defined in western terms.

As can be seen from the quote above, what is defined as "progress" in the international arena is very western. For example, it is only the use of modern contraceptives that constitute development in reproductive freedom. Furthermore, what constitutes women's empowerment and gender equality is often defined in very western terms. The veil and female genital cutting are "bad" for women while working outside the home is "good". The issues are presented in polarized ways (good vs. bad) with no discussion of the cultural context of these phenomena. This underlying binary of "good" and "bad" is linked with other binaries. There is an association of tradition with gender disparity and modernization with gender equality. Therefore, the developmentalist rhetoric that pervades the literature on family planning can be seen as imposing specifically western binaries and cultural understandings of gender and reproduction.

Development has become an unchallengeable concept that goes without interrogation in many places. This gives the concept power to shape and change ideology at many levels. All states that wish to be seen as western or modern have adopted this rhetoric and it is present in the family planning program in Uzbekistan.

The Uzbek State

As with any newly independent state, the leaders and the people have looked to the past to find a traditional culture from which to develop an independent cultural identity. The defining aspect in the case of Uzbekistan is the commitment to an

identity that is first and foremost distinct from the Soviets. This rejection of anything Soviet is sticky for Uzbekistan because the Soviet Union created the territorial boundaries that are recognized as Uzbekistan today, codified the language, wrote histories, and "liberated" Uzbek women. Many of the key political players in the Uzbek government are ex-communists, including Karimov (Human Rights Watch 2006). The Soviet Union was by no means a feminist state, but as Uzbekistan tries to distance itself from the Soviet Union it also distances itself from the Soviet rhetorical and, at times, real commitment to women. A Human Right Watch report states that, "Uzbekistan's government has exploited the rhetoric of women's rights as proof of the nation's modernity in the process of forging a new national identity" (2006). The family planning program not only attempts to construct identities that are non-Soviet and uniquely Uzbek but that can also be seen as modern and western by the international community. This quest for an authentic cultural heritage hardly ever bodes well for women.

To further this public/ private divide and subjugate the private to the public, the state literature discusses women almost exclusive in terms of their role as mothers. The stated purpose of many of the programs that the state has instituted to help women emphasizes the protection of the family, childhood, and motherhood[3]. Dilbar Gulamova, the Deputy Prime-Minister Chairperson of Women's Committee of Uzbekistan, addressed the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing on September 12, 1995 and in her speech she reinforces this association by saying, "Traditions and customs of Uzbek people such as respect to family, love and respect to mothers and sisters-home-

[3] e.g. "On Measures on the Increase of Women's Role in the State and Social Building of the Republic of Uzbekistan" issued March 2, 1995, "On Additional Measures of Supporting the Activity of the Women's Committee of Uzbekistan" May 2004, "Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper" 2005 written under pressure from the IMF and World Bank, and "For a Healthy Generation"

keepers are the fundamental of our society." She speaks of women only in their role within the family and home. This limiting of women to their role as mothers and wives relegates them to the private realm. The form of the family that the state discusses is not the traditional kin-based structures but the western and modern construct of the nuclear family. This is one example of how through the rhetoric of women's rights a shift occurs from a traditional patriarchy, based in the extended family, to a new patriarchy that includes nuclear family structures.

In addition to their definition of patriarchy that includes the relations between nations, Ismael and Ismael (2000) also argue that in traditionally kin-based societies, such as Uzbekistan, social relations were organized based on the kin/ non-kin dichotomy with the public subordinated to the private. It is only with the imposition of the western model of social organization that the private is subjugated to the public. Though they are studying Iraq, this same argument can be applied to Uzbekistan with slight modification. With independence there has been a renewed attempt to dismantle kin-based networks in Uzbekistan. Through the family planning program, the Uzbek state attempts to shift allegiances from the kin-based networks to the state itself. This is accomplished primarily through a strengthening of the public/private divide and subjugating the private to the public. The program's focus on women in their policies and rhetoric relegates women to the private realm of reproduction. At the same time the literature from the state and international community cast men as the decision makers and the main threat to the success of the program. This reaffirms men's patriarchal power by assuming that they are the decision makers. This not only strengthens the division of the public/ private divide but subjugates the private to the public (Ali 2002).

As part of the cultural heritage of Uzbekistan, the *mahallas* have played an important role in the construction of gender and national identity. The *mahalla* is a community center and neighborhood organization. It helps structure the daily social lives of individuals; organize ideological campaigns, lectures, training seminars, and, in general, socializes people (Shaktanber et al. 2000). The *mahallas* also disseminate information about contraception and sex education (Buckley 2004). The head of the *mahalla* is the *oqsoqol* (literally "white beard") and there is a *mahalla* committee that assists him. Though today the *oqsoqol* and committee are elected by the *mahalla* members, during the soviet period they were appointed by the regional party committee. Under the Soviets, the *mahalla* symbolized civil society but since independence the *mahalla* has come to signify what is national, independent, and sovereign about Uzbekistan (Shaktanber et al. 2000). A statement made by Karimov personified this transition of the *mahalla* from the civic to the national in saying "*mahalla* is the mirror of our socio-political life. Our people's most valuable traditions, customs, and solidarity in both good and bad times are clearly seen in *mahalla* life" (Mirolimov 1994: 3 cited in Shaktanber 2000). This association of the *mahalla* with what is uniquely Uzbek is especially interesting when we consider that it is used by the state to disseminate the very modern ideology of the family planning program.

During the late 1990's the Red Apple program was created to spread family planning awareness. The program relied heavily upon the *mahallas* to disseminate information and materials (Buckley 2004). The *mahalla* is controlled by the older members of the community who also tend to be the most conservative. This organizational structure makes it extremely difficult for young or unmarried people to get

access to contraception information because it is assumed that they do not need it. The leaders of the *mahallas* were active in the shaping of national identity by controlling the information and resources distributed to the people. In a focus group conducted by Buckley (2006), a Russian woman added to our discussion of a quest for a national identity separate from Russia. She commented that for her to obtain anything from the *mahalla* she must dress in the traditional Uzbek dress. In order to gain access to state resources she had to cloth herself in the physical symbols of what it means to be Uzbek. This is one example of how national identity interacts with women differently according to marital status, age, ethnicity, and other factors.

In the early 1990's Karimov instituted the Healthy Generation program. This program concentrates on family planning, education for girls and women, and general health improvement in women and children (Buckley 2006; Alimova et al. 2000; Gulamova 1995). This is just one of many programs aimed at women and children instituted by the state since independence. Karimov encourages all families to only have the number of children that they can afford to feed and educate. But for many families this would mean having no children because of the poor economic situation in Uzbekistan (Buckley 2006). An Uzbek professional woman with three children attests,

> It is another world now. My mother had six children, but that is a fantasy now. I can barely feed the children I have; education and clothing them is beyond my resources. We have no help with families. I had an abortion and finally was sterilized. I had no choice (quoted in Buckley 2006).

This woman's experience makes it clear that a woman's position economically and within society is a persuasive force in her decisions pertaining to reproduction. She is a

professional woman, probably better off financially than most, yet she still has no reproductive choice. Reproductive freedom, choice, and health are important to women but without basic life needs they mean little to individual women. This is something that is all too frequently overlooked by white western feminists and the international community.

Conclusion

The Uzbek modernist project is, on one hand, an embracing of Western values, yet, there is also a rejection of many Western values. For many non-western nations there is the ability, at certain historical moments, to pick and choose what aspects of western modernism to incorporate. Many wish to hold on to the traditions that make them unique, while at the same time embracing rational science and modern technology. Uzbekistan has attempted to balance tradition with modernity[4]. This causes a shift in patriarchal forms which creates what Chatterjee (1993) refers to as the "new woman." This new woman is expected to be both "modern" and "traditional", use modern contraception but only within a heterosexual marriage. This hybridity can be a potentially emancipating phenomenon but is just as likely disempowering for women . Its emancipitory potential lies in its ability to give women the ability to shape their lives, to choose how they want their lives structured. But it is hardly ever the women themselves that have the power to choose and the result is only a shift in patriarchies.

[4] For another example see Partha Chatterjee's *The Nation and its Fragments.* He discusses the ways that Indian nationalists divided the social world into the material, which is dominated by the West, and the spiritual, which is dominated by the East. These segments also corresponded to the public and the private domains. This is interesting for feminists because women are the symbols of the private-what is unique to the East.

The international community has supported this specific, constructed national identity by focusing solely on women as the consumers of the family planning rhetoric and devices. The programs that they institute around the world can be disempowering through their emphasis on the role of institutions in providing services. The effect of this emphasis is treating all women as if they have the same needs and concerns. These organizations subscribe to the theory and praxis that all women want and need the same thing from the family planning program.

The state and the international community have altered the ways that women and men think about themselves and their bodies. This was accomplished through a re-structuring of the family from a kin-based to a nuclear family, reinforcing the public/private divide and subjugating the private to the public, instituting western models of reproduction, and maintaining oppressive gender roles. In short, the family planning program has promoted the creation of modern subjectivities amongst the populace. The family planning program has promoted change since its inception but these changes often protect and even reinforce gender hierarchies and the hierarchies found between nations. But this is not the end, everyday women and men in Uzbekistan make choices in their lives that shape and change the nature of these hierarchies.

Bibliography

Agadjanian, Victor. 2002. "Is "Abortion Culture" Fading in the Former Soviet Union? Views About Abortion and Contraception in Kazakhstan." *Studies in Family Planning* 33:237-248.

Alaolmolki, Nozar. 2001. *Life After Socialism*. Albany: State University of New York.

Ali, Kamran Asdar. 1997. "Modernization and Family Planning Programs in Egypt." *Middle East Repoprt*:40-44.

—.2002. *Planning the Family in Egypt*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Al-Mughni, Haya and Mary Ann Tetrault. 2000. "Citizenship, Gender, and the Politics of Quasi States." in *Gender and Citizenship in the Middle East*, edited by S. Joseph. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press.

Analytical and Information Center, Ministry of Health, State Department of Statistics, Ministry of Macroeconomics and Statistics, Republic of Uzbekistan, and ORC Macro. 2004. "Uzbekistan Demographic and Health Survey 2002." <http://www.measuredhs.com/pubs/pub_details.cfm?ID=457&PgName=country&ctry_id=45> Accessed 20 January 2006. Calveton: Macro International.

Anthias, Floya and Nira Yuval-Davis. 1989. "Introduction." in *Woman, Nation, State*. New York: St. Martin's Press.

Appardurai, Arjun. 1996. "Patriotism and its Futures." in *Modernity at Large*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Azimova, Nodira and Dilarom Alimova. 2000. "Women's Position in Uzbekistan Before and After Independence." Pp. 293-304 in *Gender and Identity Construction: Women of Central Asia, the Caucasus, and Turkey*, edited by Feride Acar and Ayse Gunes-Ayata. Leiden: Brill.

Barbier , Magali, Alain Blum, Elena Dolkigh, and Amon Ergashev. 1996. "Nuptiality, Fertility, Use of Contraception, and Family Policies in Uzbekistan." *Population Studies*:69-88.

Barrett, Jennifer and Cynthia Buckley. Unpublished Manuscript. "Constrained Contraceptive Choice: IUD Prevalence in Uzbekistan."

Berer, Marge. 1999. "Access to Reproductive Health: A Question of Distributive Justice." *Reproductive Health Matters* 7:8-13.

Bergeron, Suzanne. 2001. "Political Economy Discourses of Globalization and Feminist Politics." *Signs* 26:983-1006.

Best, Kim. "IUDs Not Recommended for Increased STD Risk." vol. 2006: Family Health International.

Buckley, Cynthia, Jennifer Barrett and Yakov P. Asminkin. 2004. "Reproductive and Sexual Health Among Young Adults in Uzbekistan." *Studies in Family Planning* 35.

Buckley, Cynthia. 2006. "Challenges to Integrating Sexual Health Issues into Reproductive Health Programs in Uzbekistan." *Studies in Family Planning* 37:155-168.

Charrad, Mounira M. 2001. *States and Women's Rights: The Making of Postcolonial Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Chatterjee, Nilanjana and Nancy E. Riley. 2001. "Planning an Indian Modernity: The Gendered Politics of Fertility Control." *Signs* 26:811-845.

Chatterjee, Partha. 1993. *The Nation and it's Fragments: Colonial and Post-Colonial Histories*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

—.1998. "Beyond the Nation or Within?" *Social Text* 56:56-69.

Corcoran-Nantes, Yvonne. 2005. *Lost Voices: Central Asian Women Confronting Transition*. London: Zed Books.

Daley, Daniel. 1994. "Reproductive Health and AIDS-Related Services for Women: How Well are they Integrated/." *Family Planning Perspectives* 26:264-269.

David, Henry P. 1999. *From Abortion to Contraception*. Westport: Greenwood Press.

Engles, Frederick. 2001. *The Origin of the Family: Private Property and the State*. Honolulu: University Press of the Pacific.

Ertürk, Yakin. 2006. "Turkey's Modern Paradoxes: Identity Politics, Women's Agency, and Universal Human Rights." in *Global Feminism*, edited by Myra Marx Ferree and Aili Mari Tripp. New York: New York University Press.

Foucault, Michel. 1991. "Governmentality." in *The Foucault Effect*, edited by Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon, and Peter Miller. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Gal, Susan and Gail Kligman. 2000. *The Politics of Gender after Socialism*. Princeton: University of Princeton Press.

Gulamova, Dilbar. 1995. "Delegation of the Republic of Uzbekistan's Address to the Fourth World Conference on Women." vol. 2006. Beijing.

Institute of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Ministry of Health of the Republic of Uzbekistan, and ORC Macro. 1997. "Uzbekistan Demographic and Health Survey 1996." <http://www.measuredhs.com/pubs/pub_details.cfm?ID=%20126&ctry_id=45&SrchTp=ctry&flag=sur> Accessed 20 January 2006. Calveton: Macro International.

Ismael, Jacqeline S. and Shreen T. Ismael. 2000. "Gender and State in Iraq." in *Gender and Citizenship in the Middle East*, edited by S. Joseph. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press.

Joseph, Suad. 2000. "Civic Myths, Citizenship, and Gender in Lebanon." in *Gender and Citizenship in the Middle East*, edited by S. Joseph. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press.

Kandiyoti, Deniz. 1994. "Identity and its Discontents: Women and the Nation." in *Colonial Discourse and Post-colonial Theory*.

—. 1998. "Some Awkward Questions on Women and Modernity in Turkey." in *Remaking Women: Feminism and Modernity in the Middle East*, edited by L. Abu-Lughod. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Khalid, Adeeb. 1998. *The Politics of Muslim Cultural Reform: Jadidism in Central Asia*. Berkely: University of California Press.

Kon, Igor S. 1995. *The Sexual Revolution in Russia: From the Age of Czars to Today*. New York: The Free Press.

Lazreg, Marnia. 2000. "Citizenship and Gender in Algeria." in *Gender and Citizenship in the Middle East*, edited by S. Joseph. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press.

MacKinnon, Catherine. 1989. "The Liberal State." in *Toward a Feminist Theory of the State*, edited by C. Mackinnon. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

McClintock, Anne. 1993. "Family Feuds: Gender, Nationalism, and the Family." *Feminist Review*:61-80.

—. 1994. "The Angel of Progress: Pitfalls of the term 'Post-colonialism'." in *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory*, edited by Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman. New York: Colombia University Press.

—. 1995. *Imperial Leather*. Routledge: Routledge.

Mills, C.W. and Hans Gerth. 1958. "From Max Weber." Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Mitchell, Timothy. 2002. *Rule of Experts*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Renan, Ernest. 1990. "What is a Nation?" in *Nation and Narration*, edited by H. Bhabha. London: Routledge.

Ross, John and John Stover. 2001. "The Family Planning Program Effort Index: 1999 Cycle." *International Family Planning Perspectives* 27.

Saktanber, Ayşe and Asli Özataş-Baykal. 2000. "Homeland Within Homeland: Women and the Formation of Uzbek National Identity." Pp. 229-248 in *Gender and Identity Construction: Women of Central Asia, the Caucasus, and Turkey*, edited by F. A. a. A. Gunes-Ayata. Leiden: Brill.

Sengupta, Anita. 2003. *The Formation of the Uzbek Nation-State: A Study in Transition*. Lanham: Lexington Books.

Shakry, Omania. 1998. "Schooled Mothers and Structured Play: Child-rearing in Turn of the Century Egypt." in *Remaking Women: Feminism and Modernity in the Middle East*, edited by L. Abu-Lughod. Princeton: University of Princeton Press.

Taylor, Charles. 2002. "Modern Social Imaginaries." *Public Culture* 14:91-124.

Tripp, Aili Mari. 2006B. "Challenges in Transnational Feminist Mobilization." in *Global Feminism*, edited by Myra Marx Ferree and Aili Mari Tripp. New York: New York University Press.

—. 2006A. "The Evolution of Transnational Feminisms: Consensus, Conflict, and New Dynamics." in *Global Feminism*, edited by Myra Marx Ferree and Aili Mari Tripp. New York: New York University Press.

Turner, Bryan S. 1993. "Contemporary Problems in the Theory of Citizenship." in *Citizenship and Social Theory*, edited by Bryan S. Turner. London: Sage Publications.

United Nations. 2006. "Millennium Development Goals Report." <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/mdg/Resources/Static/Products/Progress2006/MDGReport2006.pdf> Accessed 15 January 2007.

UNFPA and PATH. 2006. "Meeting the Need: Strengthening Family Planning Programs." < http://www.unfpa.org/publications/detail.cfm?ID=309> Accessed 29 October 2006.

Watch, Human Rights. 2006. "Background: Women and Uzbek Nationhood." http://www.hrw.org/reports/2001/uzbekistan/Uzbek0701-01.htm Accessed 29 October 2006.

Yuval-Davis, Nira. 1991. "The Citizenship Debate: Women, Ethnic Processes, and the State." *Feminist Review* 39:58-68.

—. 1997. "Women, Citizenship, and Difference." *Feminist Review* 57:4-27.
—. 1996. "Women and the Biological Reproduction of "The Nation"." *Women's Studies International Forum* 19:17-24.