

The Democratic Development Of New Uzbekistan and Transformations in Ethnic Consciousness

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ABSTRACT

Objective: This study examines Uzbekistan's political modernization during its current phase of democratic transformation under President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, with a focus on its impact on national consciousness, ethnic identity, and democratic values. **Method:** A qualitative analysis was conducted to evaluate Uzbekistan's unique approach to modernization, emphasizing the interplay of Eastern gradualism and Western democratic ideals. The study explores governance reforms, public accountability, and the integration of democratic principles into societal structures. **Results:** The findings indicate that Uzbekistan's democratic transformation is characterized by gradual, socially attuned reforms rather than abrupt systemic changes. This approach fosters a strengthened sense of national identity rooted in peace, cooperation, and open governance, while addressing ethnic consciousness and aligning governance with democratic ideals. **Novelty:** This research offers a fresh perspective on Uzbekistan's modernization by showcasing its blend of Eastern evolutionary reform and Western democratic principles. It highlights an emerging socio-political consciousness that could serve as a model for political transformation in other post-autocratic societies, emphasizing institutional reform, public accountability, and the practical integration of democratic values.

INTRODUCTION

Political and Social Life Assessment: Challenges and Reflections

Assessing political and social life has always been a complex endeavor, often hindered by inherent contradictions and the instability present in social consciousness and thought. As the ancient Greek philosopher Heraclitus once said, "One cannot step into the same river twice," symbolizing the constant flux and subjectivity in evaluating political and social phenomena. This viewpoint resonates with the English philosopher Bertrand Russell, who noted that the dynamism of social reality significantly influences social consciousness and thought, leading to the conclusion that all human knowledge is fluid and relative [1, p. 596].

Despite this, human consciousness inherently seeks to understand and objectively assess events, regardless of their era or nation. The drive for knowledge, characterized by a stable, ongoing curiosity, often transcends generations as a source of cultural wealth and values, preserved and transmitted as life experience. These epistemological pursuits not only reflect personal interests but also emerge from social interactions, impacting individuals' relationships with society.

RESEARCH METHOD

The paper evaluates Uzbekistan's political modernization and democratic transition processes utilizing a qualitative research approach with a content analysis focus. The study gathers information about the sociopolitical processes and changes in national consciousness under President Shavkat Mirziyoyev's leadership by looking at official speeches, official papers, and public policies. The paper examines topics of ethnic identity, democratic values, and modernization tactics through the qualitative interpretation of these resources, paying attention to both historical context and contemporary policies. A more complex understanding of Uzbekistan's political modernization process and its effects on ethnic consciousness is made possible by this method.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Political Modernization and Democratic Transformation

Linking political modernization with democratic transformation is a natural process. Researchers frequently analyze modernization through the lens of democratic reforms. Establishing democratic values and transforming national consciousness, ethnic thought, and worldviews are foundational aspects of modernization. As political scientist Professor V. Kuchkarov emphasizes, "democratic changes involve not only reforming the socio-political system, its institutions, and management methods, but also fundamentally transforming people's consciousness and thinking" [2, p. 128].

However, changes in consciousness and thinking are often challenging, influenced by various sociopsychological factors. These challenges include the conservative nature of consciousness, resistance to abandoning outdated perspectives, and the difficulty of integrating true democratic values into citizens' lifestyles, which the Uzbek people only achieved after independence. It is vital for democracy to fully take root in a society where individuals perceive themselves as both economically and morally free, safeguarded by legal institutions [3, pp. 129-131].

Modernization in Post-Autocratic Societies: Uzbekistan's Experience

In his initial speeches, President Shavkat Mirziyoyev identified gaps in prior political and social reforms, underlining the need to synchronize with the concerns of the people and life's realities. His campaign message emphasized the importance of constructive societal development: "The upcoming election is significant not only for determining our nation's future trajectory but for establishing the life and future of our children, our families, and all our people" [4, pp. 5-6].

The "Action Strategy for Further Development of the Republic of Uzbekistan 2017-2021" formally outlined political modernization efforts, prioritizing improvements in public and societal structures, reinforcing the role of parliament and political parties, and reforming public management systems. The objective is not just institutional development but also democratizing and opening governance to public oversight, encouraging the genuine integration of democratic values into the daily lives of citizens.

A Balanced Approach: Eastern Evolutionary Perspective in Reforms

The democratic renewal of society, while inspired by Western principles, aligns more with Eastern evolutionary approaches under Mirziyoyev's leadership. This involves progressive improvements rather than radical changes, seen in priorities such as enhancing the role of the parliament, ensuring legislative initiatives address ongoing social and political reforms, and fostering a healthy competitive environment among political parties [5, p. 10].

CONCLUSION

Fundamental Finding : Uzbekistan's modernization of political thought and consciousness underscores the nation's evolving identity, characterized by its emphasis on peace, cooperation, and openness. President Mirziyoyev's reforms prioritize the integration of advanced political-legal systems into national governance, highlighting a commitment to global engagement and people-centered governance. **Implication :** The study reveals that these reforms not only reshape governance structures but also foster a national ethos of accountability and service. This approach serves as a model for other nations undergoing democratic transformations, showcasing the potential for aligning institutional reforms with societal needs. **Limitation :** While the analysis focuses on Uzbekistan's context, the lack of comparative examination limits broader applicability. Further research is needed to evaluate whether similar reform models could succeed in other transitional societies. **Future Research :** Future studies should investigate the long-term societal and institutional impacts of Uzbekistan's political reforms. Comparative analyses with other post-autocratic states could provide deeper insights into the factors influencing successful democratic transitions and the sustainability of such models.

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