



CARNEGIE ENDOWMENT
for International Peace

THE ROOTS OF RADICAL ISLAM IN CENTRAL ASIA

Martha Brill Olcott

Table of Content

- A. Introduction (p.3)
- B. Understanding Radical Islam in Central Asia (p.2)
- C. The Beginning of Radicalization of “Reformist” Islam in Uzbekistan 1920s-1960s (p.12)
- D. The Radicalization of “Reformist Islam” – 1970’s-mid 1980’s (p.16)
 - 1. Hindustani and Hanafi “Traditionalism” (p.17)
 - 2. Hakimjon qari and the “Young Wahhabis” (p.22)
- E. Radical Islam in the Late 1980s through early 1990s (p.32)
 - 1. Andijan (p.32)
 - 2. Namangan (p.36)
- F. Radical Islam in the Mid-1990s (p.52)
- G. The Late 1990s-2001: Tahir Yuldashev, the IMU and Jihad (p.54)
- H. Conclusion (p.72)

A. Introduction

The history of the development of Islamic radicalism in Uzbekistan, and in Central Asia more generally, is a potentially contentious one. There is very little agreement either within the policy community in the U.S. or in these countries themselves, as to what Islamic radicalism is, and who among devout Muslims should be considered as posing a threat to the secular regime.

This paper will provide some answers to this question. It offers an in-depth look at a number of prominent clerics from Uzbekistan who have been labeled either “fundamentalist” or “Wahhabis,” who were instrumental in the development of radical Islam in Uzbekistan. It looks at their teachings, their teachers, and their influence on political and social behavior in Uzbekistan.

Central Asia’s Muslims have traditionally practiced Islam as it is interpreted by the Hanafi School of Islamic jurisprudence, which is known for its liberalness and respect for personal freedom.¹ Although there have been Salafi Muslims in the area, those who reject all four schools of Islamic jurisprudence, historically they have not played a strong role in the region. This creates an up-hill battle for modern day proponents of a return to the “Caliphate.”

There have, however, over the centuries been many critics of how traditional Hanafi Islam is practiced in Central Asia, and many of these can, and were, viewed as “fundamentalists” and even as “Wahhabis” by the clerical establishment that they sought to transform.

B. Understanding Radical Islam in Central Asia

For over five centuries, Sunni Islam in Central Asia in general and in Uzbekistan in particular has been dominated by a formal religious hierarchy appointed or sponsored by a “secular” ruler.

One potentially useful approach would be to consider any Muslim activist or cleric who rejects the leadership of the official religious establishment in Central Asia to be a “radical” Muslim. As the state appoints the official religious establishment, to reject its leadership is to question the authority and the legitimacy of the state.

The Islamic Administration (or Board) of Uzbekistan is headed by a Mufti, Mufti Abdurashid qari Bakhromov (1995-). The Mufti is appointed by the State Committee on Religion, and is the senior religious leader for the whole country. The Mufti is responsible for the appointment of senior clerics and for the supervision of mosques and religious schools. Bakhromov is the third Mufti to hold this post, having been preceded by Muhammad-Sodiq Mamayusupov (1989-1993) ---now more commonly known as Muhammad-Sodiq Muhammad-Yusuf--- and Muhtarjon Abdullaev (1993-1995).

The current structure is directly analogous to the structure that was in place during the Soviet era, from the time of the formation of the Muslim Spiritual Administration of Central Asia in 1943. The first three muftis all came from the same family, Ishan Babakhan bin Abdul Majid khan (1943-1957); his son Ziyauddin khan Ishan Babakhan (1957-1982); and the latter’s son Shamsuddin khan Babakhan (1982-1989). Shamsuddin was ousted, largely by pressure from within Uzbekistan’s Islamic elite, and replaced by Muhammad-Sodiq Muhammad-Yusuf. The Soviet-era figures were all appointed by the U.S.S.R. State Committee on Religion.

¹ For a brief discussion of this school of law see Abdulaziz Sachedina, “Sunni Schools of Law, in John L. Esposito, ed. *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press,

The Soviet-era structure was a modified version of a system introduced during Russian colonial rule. The first Muslim Spiritual Administration was established in Kazan at the end of the eighteenth century. It served as a prototype for regulating the affairs of Muslims throughout the empire. The Central Asians, who lived under direct Russian rule, were subject to the Muslim Spiritual Administration in Orenburg, and the local Qadi-kalan, the senior judge. Unlike during the Soviet period, when Shari'at law was completely banned, the Muslims of the Russian Empire were free to apply Shari'at law to regulate family and other social relations.

Most of Central Asia's Muslims subscribe to the teachings of the Hanafi theological-juridical school (*mazhab*). Mawara'an-nahr or Transoxiana (as that part of Central Asia which lies between the Syr-darya and Amu-darya rivers was then known) was a major center of Islamic learning at the time of the Abbasids. As early as the writing of "*al-'Aqa'id*" (Dogmatics) by Najm ad-Din Abu Khafs 'Umar an-Nasafi (1068-1142),² Hanafi-Maturidi theologians in Central Asia accepted the idea that Muslims could be ruled by someone who was either a non-believer (*ghayr-i din*) or an infidel (*kafir*), so long as he did not close the mosques and madrasa, allowed Muslims to observe their rituals, and allowed Muslims to be judged by Shari'at law.³ While the Hanafi School was the predominant one in the region, the Shafi'i school dominated in Tashkent, and it too allowed a large role for customary and ritual (*salat-namaz*) practice.

While Islam came to most of the territory of Uzbekistan at the time of the Arab conquests in the eighth century, many of the attitudes toward the relationship between church and state date from the time of Timur (1336-1405; ruled 1370-1405). Timur sought

1995) pp. 456-464.

² See: J. Paul. *The Histories of Samarqand* // *Studia Iranica*, 1993, XXII, 69-92.

³ The clerics of the Selcuk dynasty introduced Shafi'ia law in the region, which continued to be practiced in Turkmenistan even after their decline, and in the city of Tashkent many Shafi'ia customs continued through

to use religion as a critical part of the ideological glue that held his disparate empire together. He also took definitive steps to begin institutionalizing Islam, and in so doing, he subjugated it to the control of what was effectively temporal power. While Timur ruled as Sultan *zul Allah* (the shadow of Allah on earth) he also created the institution of Sheykh ul-Islam, head cleric, who named the Qadi-kalan, the imams of the main mosques and madrasa, and even the heads of the Sufi tariqats, whether or not he himself was a Sufi. The institution of Sheykh ul-Islam was preserved until the time of Soviet rule.

The establishment of the Islamic Spiritual Administration, first by the Russians and then by the Soviets, was in part an effort to redefine the institution of Sheykh ul-Islam, and make it serve the needs of a non-Muslim (and in the case of the Soviets, an anti-Muslim) state. This created tension with Muslim religious leaders, who had to be convinced that their acceptance of rule by a *kafir* was still consistent with their religious obligations.

The religious administrative structure introduced by the Russians was much easier for Central Asian clerics to accept than the later Soviet version, as it left a large role for Shari'at law. As a result, the majority of Hanafi clerics, known as traditionalists or conservatives, in the region accepted Russian rule as legitimate. So too did the "modernists," including the Jadid (new method) reformers. For them, the focus was on innovation in religious education and theocratic thought to stretch the adaptive capacity of the faith and enable Muslims to successfully compete with others in the empire.

Religious ferment was also present in those parts of Central Asia that were not directly subject and those not directly subject to Russian rule. The Emirate of Bukhara and the Khanate of Khiva were both reorganized as protectorates of Russia in 1868 and 1873

the end of Russian colonial rule. However, Shafi'ya interpretation on questions of rule by *ghayr-i din* and *kafir* were not dissimilar from those of the Hanafi rulers.

respectively, so in fact Islam's principal religious center, Bukhara, was still formally self-governing and still headed by the Sheykh ul-Islam. However it was no less a target of criticism from other Muslims than the religious establishment found in the Russian ruled cities, which was headed by the Qadi-kalan and Sheykh ul-Islam based in Tashkent.

In addition to the criticisms of the modernists, Central Asia's religious establishment was subject to attacks by "fundamentalists," who objected to the religious leadership for its lack of purity, and deviation from the "true path" of Islam. Some of these critics were Salafi Muslims who rejected the four schools of Islamic jurisprudence, and accepted only the teachings of Islam that dated from the time of the first four Caliphs and early Muslim society. There were always Salafi clerics present in the region, but the Salafi movement had never played a major role in shaping the religious life of the majority of believers or clerics in Central Asia.

The more serious criticism that the religious establishment faced always came from within the Hanafi community, sometimes from adepts of Sufi tariqats, and other-times not. As early as the first decade of the twentieth century the critics of the establishment were sometimes termed "Wahhabi." Sometimes this term was used "correctly," to denote people who were in fact advocating a "Salafi reformation," people who like the original followers of 'Abd al-Wahhab (1703-1791) in Arabia, sought to return Islam to "the single Islam of the Prophet's time."

The term was also used (somewhat incorrectly) to refer to local theologians who criticized the "excesses" or "corruption" around local practices, such as "saint worship," which was prevalent at a number of shrines in Central Asia. So much of the practice of Islam in Central Asia was a fusion of pre-Islamic and Islamic practices, which local jurisprudence had come to justify as acceptable over the preceding five hundred years.

This kind of tension ---between conservatives and “fundamentalists”---those who argued for going back to the strict adherence to one’s own mazhab--- was a normal feature of life in a Muslim society. And increasingly in Central Asia, from the late 19th century on, the demands of reformist elements were also added into this mixture.⁴ The tension between these forces would likely have remained a feature of Central Asian religious life as long as Shari’at law served as a basis of jurisprudence, even if its scope in society continued to be reduced.

But the situation in Central Asia changed dramatically in the 1920’s. As part of their consolidation of power the Bolsheviks eliminated any formal and public role for religion. Shari’at law was banned as a basis of jurisprudence in the early 1920’s, all the madrasa were eliminated, and only a handful of mosques were allowed to remain open. Literally thousands of mosques were destroyed or worse yet used for some kind of sacrilegious purpose. For example, the Jome’ (Gumbaz) mosque in Namangan was made into a wine factory. In the immediate aftermath of the Civil War in Central Asia untold thousands of believers fled, made *hijra*, fleeing their homes in what was now Dar al-harb (territory of the war with the non-believers), in order to live in Dar al-Islam, the world of Islam. Their path took them through China, Afghanistan, or often times on to Turkey, and although few succeeded, the goal of many was to get to all the way to Saudi Arabia.

The majority of believers, though, remained in Central Asia and during the late 1920’s and throughout the 1930’s untold tens of thousands went through the machinery of Stalin’s purge. For all intents and purposes, Islam effectively disappeared, although the possibility of religious continuity was insured through the survival of a handful of people with religious education and the internal disposition to be spiritual leaders. And hundreds

⁴ For a detailed portrait see Adeeb Khalid [The Politics of Muslim Cultural Reform](#) (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1998)

of Uzbeks did make it there, adding to the small community of Central Asians that managed *vaqf* property in or near the holy cities.

Soviet authorities permitted the reestablishment of Islamic institutions in 1943, with the creation of SADUM (The Spiritual Administration of the Muslims of Central Asia) which eventually established 10 mosques and two institutions of Muslim Education (the Mir-I' Arab Madrasa in Bukhara in 1945, and the Higher Islamic Institution in the name of Imam al-Bukhari in Tashkent in 1971).

This created a religious life that reproduced in a reduced scale the kinds of complexities that existed in most other Islamic communities. The number of religious institutions in the region was a small fraction of those that had been in place prior to the Soviet rule, when in Bukhara alone there were several hundred madrasa. Similarly, the *fatvas* issued by the official religious hierarchy were scrutinized by ideological workers in the state and communist party apparatuses, in order to insure that they were not potentially seditious in content. Islamic clerics were prohibited from delivering sermons or anything else that might be construed as performing missionary work among the population. The clerical establishment also included individuals with close ties to state security, both informers and actual employees of the security services.

At the same time, SADUM was an instrument of religious enlightenment, albeit on a highly restricted stage. The two madrasa were authentic religious institutions, staffed by clerics with religious education, including with time, increasing numbers of individuals with foreign training. Their existence restored traditional Hanafi religious education in the region. The interpretative tilt of these years was that of accommodation to the secular (and in the case of the Soviets, atheistic) rulers who served as Central Asia's overlords. However, in the context of Islam, the atheism of the Soviet authorities was not of doctrinal interest, no more than that of any unbelievers would have been. Rather the focus was on

what the attitude of the state was to Islam, and that was much improved over the decades of the 1920s and 1930s.

Nikita Khrushchev's anti-religious policies did make it harder for the Central Asian's to practice what some have called "every-day" or "household" Islam, religious rituals that surround the life cycle---birth, circumcision, marriage and death---but at the same time he opened the door for more linkages between SADUM and the greater Muslim world, as well as more informal contacts between Central Asian Muslims and their brethren in the Middle East in particular.

There was also another side to Khrushchev's policies toward religion. For despite his belief that religion was antithetical to communism, Khrushchev also believed that there were already no competitors for Soviet ideology, that it had won decisively, and that religion, as a spiritual competitor, was not dangerous to Soviet rule. It was already referred to as a "survival of the past" (a comment made in his speech to the 21st Party Congress). But this pronouncement served to reduce the pressure on religion in the U.S.S.R. and in some ways managed to facilitate its renaissance. One reflection of this was the decision to allow SADUM and other religious organizations to open new mosques, churches, etc. Some 70 new mosques were opened in Central Asia (bringing their total number to 112 in 1962).

At the same time, very little came of Khrushchev's efforts to reinvigorate ideological education, especially in the area of anti-religious propaganda, which was received as little more than empty rhetoric. And in its place, especially in Central Asia, the spiritual content of sacred texts offered a fresh view of the world.

The spread of such texts was also inadvertently stimulated by Khrushchev's opening to the "peoples of Asia and Africa". Delegations from the Middle East, including clerics in their number were invited to the Soviet Union, with stops in Central Asia. And

the Saudis in particular donated literature to the libraries of SADUM on all of their visits, literature which seems to have been freely available to all those with access to this library.

This literature seems to have had some impact on the thinking of Soviet era clerics. *Fatvas* issued by Ziyauddin Babakhan, bear some influence of Saudi writing, as he appears to have grown less tolerant of Hanafi acceptance of local (adapt) customs over time. These *fatvas* have been rather problematic to interpret because, at casual glance, they appear to reiterate the Soviet state's position opposing the perpetuation of religious practice regarding life-cycle rituals. But the *fatvas* were also consistent with a more conservative (or fundamentalist) strain in Hanafi law that was historically less frequently encountered in Central Asia that eschewed such practices as being in violation of Shari'at law (if they were practiced by people who otherwise had no formal ties to the faith).

Similarly, Khrushchev's foreign policies brought with them opportunities to study in the seminaries of the Middle East for those tied to SADUM, and some even were able to make a pilgrimage. The Soviet students and clerics who went to study abroad were viewed as "authentic" by their coreligionists, and were not seen as having been compromised by their potential or alleged association with the organs of state security (something that made these same clerics the object of potential distrust by some of the believers in their home republics).

The Soviet era clerics that received foreign training, especially those who went abroad during the Brezhnev years and later) were exposed to the intellectual (or fundamentalist—Salafi) ferment going on in Islamic seminaries of the Middle East, as well as to the teachings of the other traditional schools of Islamic jurisprudence, all of which were more conservative than Central Asia's own Hanafi tradition. While they could not put these teachings into practice upon their return to the U.S.S.R., these ideas clearly had

an influence on figures like Muhammad-Sodiq Muhammad-Yusuf (and Akbar Turajonzoda, the Tajik cleric and Civil War figure) which became apparent in later years.

Other Central Asians, most particularly those presumed to be secular with Arabic language skills, also began coming to the Middle East in order to improve their language skills to better serve the Soviet state (in diplomacy, trade, and security organizations). Many of these were exposed to the same intellectual and religious ferment and brought back books from their time abroad, including the works of Sayyid Qutb (1906-1966) and those of Sayyid Abu-l-'Ala Maududi (1903-1979).

And some of this literature began to circulate, going from the hands of secular individuals to those who sought these books because their interest in religious themes was being reawakened. The same opening that brought Soviets to the Middle East also brought limited numbers of foreign students and technical specialists to the U.S.S.R., including to Central Asia. At least one fundamentalist study group was set up at Tashkent University in the late 1970s to read the works of brethren Muslim writers.

Taken in total, the Soviet experience with Islam was sufficient to produce the preconditions necessary for an Islamic revival, even though this of course was not its intended effect. The current leaders of Islam in Central Asia, those advocating traditionalist as well as those advocating fundamentalist solutions all had their training in the Soviet period and they are advancing both causes in a vocabulary that is fully consistent with a comprehensible to a global Islamic audience.

C. The Beginning of Radicalization of “Reformist” Islam in Uzbekistan 1920s-1960s

Despite the best efforts of Stalin’s terror machine and Soviet anti-religious propagandists illegal -- *hujra* -- schools continued to survive throughout the Soviet period, in Tashkent and in even larger numbers in the Ferghana Valley. These schools continued to

educate people in a curriculum that compared favorably in thoroughness with what was eventually introduced in the two madrasas run by SADUM.

The bulk of instruction in these underground schools was in traditional Hanafi Islam, as had been practiced in Central Asia since the Middle Ages. But the teachers in these schools perpetuated the debate over “religious purification”, as well as the need for reform that had been going on in Islamic circles in Central Asia in the decades before the Russian Revolution.

Western and local post-Soviet scholars have focused on the more Western oriented of these reformers, those associated with the Jadids movement. But the very Western orientation of the Jadid intellectuals led to their doom in the first years of Soviet rule, for both they and the Bolshevik regime viewed one and other as potentially able to be co-opted. Obviously the Bolsheviks were not interested in being co-opted and physically destroyed most of the Jadid movement.

Ironically, it turned out to be easier for the Islamic “purists” to stay below the Soviet “radar screen,” even though they too faced a great deal of persecution: they were under little illusion about the definitional danger that Bolshevism posed for them. They too, like most “fundamentalists”, see themselves as reformers, viewing the return to the doctrinal purity of the period of Islam’s founding as giving it the strength to respond to external challenges. They see themselves as no less “spiritual enlighteners” than do the reformers who seek to “modernize” Islam.

Throughout the Soviet period there were underground schools that pressed for the “purification” of locally practices Hanafi Islam, both through reemphasizing neglected texts, or by rejected the Hanafi School of law in its entirety. Such “fundamentalist” teachings were also propagated by a series of small groups of Islamic thinkers whose

activities fed on one another and became increasingly more politicized in the late 1940's and early 1950's.

The first of these groups was radical groups was formed by a cleric who was known as Shami domullah (Sa'id ibn Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Bakhid ibn 'Ali al-'Asali at-Tarablusi). Shami domullah was born in Tarabluse (Libya) around 1867-1870, and died in 1932 in Khorezm, following his arrest. Before coming to Central Asia, Shami domullah spent 15-20 years in Eastern (Chinese) Turkestan where he was a strong proponent of Salafi Islam, trying to replace local practice which was heavily influenced by the teachings of the hadiths. Shami domullah first came to Tashkent from Beijing, in February 1919, in large part because of the good auspices of the Russian counsel in Kashkar. Shami domullah quickly established himself as one of the leading religious authorities in Tashkent by besting the leading local cleric (Shakh-Maksud-qari) in a theological dispute. As a result of this he was able to go from a second-tier religious post (in the mahalla "Uzbek" mosque to the Dasturkhanchi madrasa in the "Old town" of Tashkent).

The substance of his writings focused on the lack of (or poor) doctrinal bases for most religious practices in the region – pilgrimages to holy sites, wedding and funerary rites, etc. --- which he claimed were supported by Sufi clerics or proponents of traditional Hanafi jurisprudence. The only solution, according to Shami domullah was to base religious practice on the Qur'an and those hadiths that could reliably be linked directly to the Prophet.

For this reason Shami domullah's followers were known as "Ahl-i Hadith" movement, and they included many of the most influential clerics of Soviet Uzbekistan during the decades just before and after World War II. Included in their number were Jamal Khodzha Ishan (killed 1937), Said Abu Nasr Mubashshir at-Tarazi (1896-1977), Mullah Yunus Khakimdjanov (1983-1994), 'Abd al-Kadir Muradov (1893-1976), Ibrahim-

qari Iskhakov (Shaikhim qari), Shakh-Ikram Shakh-Islamov, Mullah ‘Abd as-Samad (killed in 1937, at age 26), Zain ad-din qari (died 1983) and for present purposes most importantly, Ziyauddin Babakhan (1908-1982), who first served as deputy and then mufti of SADUM (1957-1982).

It is quite clear that Shami domullah’s teachings, which emphasized the irrelevance or danger of the traditional schools of Islam for the proper worship of the faith, fit in well with the mission of SADUM. It made the mission of SADUM consistent with that of the Soviet state, trying to reduce or eliminate the use of traditional “religious” rituals at life cycle events. But whereas the Soviets saw this as promoting atheism, some in SADUM at least saw it as promoting the “true” faith of Islam.

In the 1920s and 1930s, some of the Ahl-i Hadith members split off to create another fundamentalist group, the Ahl al-Qur’an. Sabircha-domullah, saw Ahl-i Hadith as too accepting of Soviet rule, and its clerics as too complicit in it.

Sabircha-domullah had been a student of Mullah ‘Abd as-Samad, Baduh-hazrat and also of Hasan-hazrat. The latter (whose full name was Hasan-hazrat Akhmadajanovch Ponomarev al-Kizil-djari, was a Tatar from Petropavlovsk [Kizil-djar] in northern Kazakhstan who had been a student of the Tatar Jadid Shihab ad-din Marjani (1818-1889). Hasan-hazrat was exiled to Tashkent in 1933, and died in the prison hospital there in 1937, but in this short period he managed to have an impact on Uzbek fundamentalist thinking.

Nonetheless, Sabircha-domullah became convinced that the Ahl-i Hadith clerics were putting too much faith in the validity of the Hadiths, and advocated exclusive reliance on the Qur’an. But most of the members of this group (in distinction to those in Ahl-i Hadith) had poor Arabic, and were pushing reliance on the Uzbek language translation of the Qur’an. This was a rather unusual phenomenon for fundamentalists, most of whom advocated the use of the vernacular Qur’an solely for self-education. They also advocated

the reciting of namaz⁵ twice a day, rather than the prescribed five times daily, and this was also one of the characteristics of the Ma‘rifatchilar, or Akramiya movement.

As already noted, the Ahl-i Hadith movement remained the more influential of the two, and it was spread not only in Tashkent but also in the Ferghana Valley. Shakh Rahim qari Shaikh Kamalov, who returned to his native Kokand after studying with Shami domullah, played a major role in the dissemination of these ideas. Yunus qari (who died in the mid 1970s) was another cleric in the Ferghana Valley. Both of these men served as teachers for Hakimjon qari Vasiev, who was the formative influence in the young fundamentalists who were trained in the 1970s. At the time of writing, Hakimjon qari was still alive, said to be 106, and still an important symbolic figure of the fundamentalists in the Ferghana Valley.

D. The Radicalization of “Reformist Islam” – 1970’s-mid 1980’s

It is impossible to understand the evolution of radical Islam in contemporary Central Asia, without knowing something about the way that it developed in the late 1970’s.

Parallel to the very limited number of formal institutions of Islamic learning, there were a growing number of underground religious circles that influenced the religious thinking in the Central Asian region, in particular in the Ferghana Valley.

Two of these efforts are worthy of particular attention, the study circles surrounding Muhammadjan Hindustani,⁶ in Dushanbe, and those around Hakimjon qari Vosiev in Marghilan (Ferghana Oblast, Uzbekistan).

⁵ Namaz – one of the daily prayers required by Islamic tradition

⁶ For an in-depth account of Muhammad Hindustan’s life and works see Bakhtiyar Babajanov and Muzaffar Kamilov “ Muhammadjan Hindustani and the Beginning of the ‘Great Schism’ among Muslims of Uzbekistan,” in Stephan Doudiangion and Hisao Komatzu, editors, *Politics and Islam in Russian and Central Asia* (London, New York, Bahrain, 2001), pp. 195-220

1. Hindustani and Hanafi “Traditionalism”

Without question, Muhammadjan Hindustani was the more profound of the two men, in terms of the depth of his religious knowledge and the sheer legacy of religious writings that he produced. He also produced more students over the course of his lifetime than did Hakimjon qari. Both were critics of the Soviet religious establishment and both enjoyed a degree of local protection which allowed them to continue their work. But the criticism offered by the two men were rather different, that of Hindustani was much more within the Hanafi tradition, while Hakimjon qari seems to have been much more shaped by the ideas of Ibn Taymmiya, making him more of a disciple of the Salafi tradition.⁷

Hindustani had a great deal of formal religious education and was very unusual in that he both survived the purge and was able to provide students with illegal religious instruction. He was without question the best educated of all the “underground” teachers in Central Asia, with a degree of formal Islamic education that was almost unheard of in the context of the Stalin years.

Hindustani was able to use his position at the Institute of Oriental Studies as a “krysha” (place of protection) as he sought to educate a new generation of Islamic theologians in Central Asia. For these extensive efforts Hindustani received a number of honorific titles, and is known as Domulla Hindustani, Hindi domla, Hajji domla, Mawlavi, and to his students Hajji dada. His full name was Muhammadjan Hajji-domullah Rustamov. He was born in 1892, in the village of Chorbog, not far from Kokand. At age 8 his father Rustam Hajji Kokandi (who taught at madrasa in Kokand and Samarkand) sent his son to study. For four years Muhammadjan studied with two well-known local clerics (Muhammad Amin and Toshbolta domullah) and then he went to Kokand (in 1904) to

⁷ Hakimjon qari’s library included Arabic language editions of works by Ibn Tayymiya, Iban al-Kasir and Hassana al-Banna. He also had writings by Mawdiudi.

study Qur'an syntax and Arabic grammar and syntax (*sarf va nahu*) with Zikriye-qari and Mullah Eshonqul. He then pursued formal religious education at the Ming-ayim madrasa in Kokand and the Khanakah Eshon Sayakhshin madrasa in Bukhara, where he was studying when World War I broke out, causing him to flee the country to avoid being drafted into labor detachments of the Russian Army.

Hindustani was one of a number of students who left Bukhara for Balkh, in Afghanistan, where he studied with Hazret Muhammad Gavs Said-zade, studying a wide variety of disciplines included Islamic law (*fiqh*) and the mystical poetry of Rumi, Hafiz, and Bedil. But the deteriorating political situation in Afghanistan led Hindustani to return (with his teacher) to Bukhara in 1916, and both then went on to Tashkent, where the latter began teaching at the Kukaldosh madrasa. The two left Tashkent for Jalal-abad, Afghanistan shortly after the October Revolution, and in 1919, Muahhad Ghaws, now Qadi of Jalalabad, sent Hindustani to India to complete his studies, in the 'Usmaniya madrasa in Kashmir, hence the reason for the appellation "Hindustani." While in India, Hindustani is said to have mastered both Hindi and Urdu, and also went on hajj to Mecca (with his father, who died during the pilgrimage).

Hindustani then returned to his home village of Chorbog in 1929, allegedly as part of a promise to his dying father, and then settled in Kokand, at the height of the Stalinist repression. His effort to evade arrest through hiding out in a small village (Abligh, in Akhangaran region), proved fruitless and he was arrested in 1933, sentenced to two years of forced labor. Later he was arrested again while living in a settlement outside of Tashkent, in 1937, and sentenced to three years in Siberia. He returned to Kokand in 1940, working in an oil processing factory for three years until he was drafted and sent to the front. Severely wounded in battle, he was not sent home until 1947, when he moved to Dushanbe to take up an appointment as imam-*khatib* of the Mawlana Ya'qub Charkhy

mosque in Dushanbe. He was arrested after just over a year at this post, spent four and a half years in prison, but was fully rehabilitated after Stalin's death in March 1953.

After his release, Hindustani took up a post in the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Academy of Sciences in Dushanbe, teaching Urdu and producing annotated manuscripts of Arabic language texts. It was at this point that Hindustani began offering illegal religious instruction in a *hujra* school (named for the cells in which madrasa students used to live), with the tacit approval of some local authorities. The existence of Hindustani's "school" was a well-known secret, and no one denied its existence when I began asking about it during my first trip to Dushanbe in 1984. At the same time, my local interlocutors refused to introduce me to Hindustani, less the presence of a westerner put his enterprise at risk.

Unlike many of the illegal religious schools that were organized in Central Asia, that of Hindustani followed a formal and extensive curriculum, quite similar to that which might be offered at a normal madrasa. Dozens, and possibly hundreds, of young men studied with Hindustani.

It is possible to reconstruct the course of instruction both because of interviews with his former students and because of colleagues' access to Hindustani's library.

Hindustani's better students spent several years in study with him, receiving lectures on Qur'an, studying the Hadith, learning about Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*), the doctrinal system of Islam (Fiqh al-akbar, "Aqida an-Nasafiy"), ethics (*adab*), oratory (*nutq*), Islamic cosmology and narrative history, Islamic medicine, astrology, astronomy, and of course advanced Arabic grammar, syntax and morphology. This course of study was designed to parallel what students would have received in a madrasa. While for some it was their only religious education, for others it was a form of preparation for other more formal instruction.

Moreover, Hindustani provided the first exposure to Islamic teachings for many of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan's most prominent religious figures, both those who can be considered "fundamentalist" or "radical" because of their desire to reinterpret or break with traditional Hanafi Islam, and those who accept the primacy of Hanafi religious continuity.

Among his first generation of pupils was Hakimjon qari, who broke with Hindustani, over questions of the relationship of Islam and politics, although the two maintained a polemical dialogue for much of the former's life.

Hindustani's pupils also included several prominent students of Hakimjon qari, Rahmatullah-alloma, 'Abduhvali qari, as well as Said Abdullah Nuri, leader of the Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan, and Hikmat-zade, of the same organization. All of these individuals eventually rejected what they saw as Hindustani's excessively conciliatory attitude toward secular authorities.

Even more significant are the clerics that Hindustani trained, who both continue to exemplify Central Asia's Hanafi tradition, and seek to extend it. These include Isma'il qari Kokandi, the imam of a major mosque in Kokand, whose opposition to the "Wahhabis" in 1992 was so strong that they held him captive. Isma'il qari Kokandi is currently writing his memoirs about his study with Hindustani.

They also include Muhammad-Sodiq Kasym(ov) Andijani, known as the last student of Hindustani, who is the Imam of the major mosque in Andijan. Muhammad-Sodiq Kasym Andijani is currently staking claim to be the major Hanafi figure in the country, and has pitted his religious learning against that of Muhammad-Sodiq Muhammad-Yusuf. Muhammad-Sodiq Kasym Andijani's elder brother, Abdulatif Kasym Andijani, who was a very vocal opponent of 'Abduhvali qari, also studied with Hindustani. Abdulatif Kasym Andijani, who lost his position as Imam, about five years ago, has remained active in the struggle against "Wahhabis" in Uzbekistan, as well as the Hizb ut-

Tahrir movement, mostly through his writings. He also wrote a short memoir about his time of study with Hindustani.

Abdulkhay domullah, who is currently the Imam in charge of the Gumbaz madrasa in Namangan, the former center of “Wahhabi” movement in Namangan (during the early 1990s), which was then restored to Hanafi tradition, is also a former student of Hindustani. Although Abdulkhay domullah only studied with Hindustani for 6 months, the Namangan cleric considers Hindustani to have been his spiritual leader.

Kimsanbai-azhi, currently the imam of the main mosque in Shymkent (Kazakhstan), was also a student of Hindustani, with whom he studied for a year. Kimsanbai-azhi previously served as the main spiritual leader of Kazakhstan, having been appointed to that post by Muhammad-Sodiq Muhammad-Yusuf.

And of course, Hindustani also had a number of students from Tajikistan, who accepted his Hanafi teachings. They included Hikmatullo qari, who is an imam of a mosque in Dushanbe, and is an important ally of Turajon-zade (and major opponent of Said Abdullah Nuri).

For this group of Hanafi clerics in particular, Hindustani’s writings remain a source of inspiration. His best know theological writings are his extensive commentaries (tafsir), and translation of the Qur’an into Uzbek (6 volumes in all), which he completed in 1984, as well as his series of philosophic essays (Isharat as-Sabba’a, Pand-nama-iy Hazrat Mawlavi), and various religious translations and commentaries.

Hindustani’s students maintain that their mentor’s writings belong to the larger Hanafi tradition of seeking to balance the teachings of Shari’at law with traditional local practices. By contrast his religious critics argue that Hindustani was an artifact of the peculiar conditions of Soviet rule, when the need for the preservation of the faith created

an atmosphere of obsequiousness, and caused the subordination of religious teachings to an unlawful secular state.

2. Hakimjon qari and the “Young Wahhabis”

In fact, Hindustani’s own writings give us the best introduction to the ideology of the fundamentalists who opposed him. We find this in a series of audiocassettes of debates between Hindustani, ‘Abduhvali qari, and Rahmatullah-alloma that occurred in 1980 and are preserved in our personal library, as well as in his “Letters in response to those who are introducing inadmissible innovations into religion,” in which he is answering “unknown” critics (likely written in stages during the period of 1984-1989).⁸

Both Rahmatullah-alloma and ‘Abduhvali qari, who both lived in Kokand, studied with both Hakimjon qari and Hindustani, and each of these men went on to form their own *hujra* (‘Abduhvali qari’s in Andijan), in which dozens of men from throughout Uzbekistan, and even other parts of Central Asia were trained.

As already mentioned, Mullah Hakimjon qari Marghilani, born 1898, ran a *hujra* school, just down from the main market in Marghilan (at a site well known by everyone, so well known, that two separate local informants gave me precise directions to it, and even telephone numbers for it).⁹

As already noted, Hakimjon qari studied with local clerics associated with Ahl-i Hadith movement, but his primary religious instruction came from his father Abduvosiy qari, who was also an adherent of this movement. Both he and his father had fled Marghilan (going to Uzgent) to avoid arrest, and only returned to the Ferghana valley after World War II. In 1959-1960 he went to study with Hindustani; however, the two did not get along. While Hindustani maintained that he threw Hakimjon qari out, the latter claimed

⁸ Some students of Hindustani maintain that these answers were to letters of complaint sent to Hindustani by former pupils of the late Rahmatullah-alloma.

that he left of his own accord because he rejected Hindustani's conformist tendencies.

"Mullah Muhammadjan is like a poplar in the field," Hakimjon qari is reported as saying, "He blows in the direction of the wind."

By this point in time the religious life in the region was changing and normalizing, making the doctrinal differences between traditional Hanafi religious thinkers and their fundamentalist critics of greater consequence. A battle for defining Islam was enjoined, and the competition was heightened because now both groups had greater (albeit limited) contact with a larger Muslim world.

For example Hakimjon qari began to ask those going on hajj---admittedly a small group---to take advantage of being in the "holy land" to bring him back religious literature in Arabic. Over a period of 7-10 years he slowly collected a substantial library, including multi-volume works of Ibn Taymiyya and the fundamentalist commentary of the Qur'an written by Ibn al-Kathir.

The course of instruction for students at Hakimjon qari's *hujra* appears to have been less systematic than that of Hindustani. Given that Hakimjon qari is still alive, and his former pupils largely representative of an "oppositionary" trend in Islam, he has not yet been a subject of the same systematic study that Hindustani has. The former has become an almost cult figure in Dushanbe and, with his heirs, has been coveting and occasionally granting access to his library.

As a living, but revered figure, Hakimjon qari is still more remote. One trusted informant, who met with Hakimjon qari on two occasions, was not granted full access to the latter's library, but they noticed Ibn-Taymiyya's writings on the shelf, which the by then nearly deaf cleric was willing to confirm him as his primary religious inspiration. This would establish Hakimjon qari as a "classic" fundamentalist.

⁹ Babadjanov and Kamilov, (p.8)

By the late 1970's, some of Hakimjon qari's pupils were beginning to break with him, claiming that he was not being sufficiently political in his orientation and that he was not willing to urge direct engagement with the authorities in defense of the faith. This seems to have been the major reason that Rahmatullah-alloma (1950-1981), 'Abduhvali-qari (b. 1952 in Andijan and presumed to have died in 1995, after disappearing during an airline journey to Moscow) parted company with the Marghilan cleric. Both men seem to have been especially influenced by the writings of 'Abd Al-Wahhab's "*at-Tawhid*", Sayyid Qutb's "*Fi Zilali Qur'an*" and Maududi's writings, which were being studied in the underground schools in the Andijan region in the late 1970's. In fact, both 'Abduhvali qari and Rahmatullah-alloma seem to have participated in an "underground" study group run by Egyptian exchange students in Tashkent in the late 1970's, traveling to the republic capital on a regular basis.¹⁰ Hakimjon qari's students in this period also included Radzhab'Ali Kokandi, who sparred with Ismail-qari Kokandi for influence in Kokand (taking the latter captive in 1992), and who subsequently received a lengthy prison sentence.

In addition to Arabic language texts (which would have been inaccessible to most young Central Asians), there were also 'samizdat' Russian language versions of the writings of Qutb and Maududi, which were found in the library of Rahmatullah-alloma. While the Russian language translations of these works were crude, they nonetheless would have made the ideas of these men accessible to a much wider group of readers.

Rahmatullah-alloma, 'Abduvali qari, and their pupils had been socialized in very different era than either Hakimjon qari or Muhammad Hindustani, and for that reason had

¹⁰ Although in 1977-1978 the KGB in Tashkent forbade foreign students from Muslim countries to associate with local Muslims or to go into local mosques, making it harder for these study groups to exist.

trouble understanding the caution of their elders (although their disagreements with Hindustani were theological as well).

As a student of Rahmatullah-alloma later reflected:

“Allah aided Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab in his work because Wahhab set before himself the task that God wished: to cleanse Islam by any means necessary of intolerable innovations and the domination of unbelievers”¹¹

For Hakimjon qari, the point of contention was not the need to cleanse Islam, but the injunction to do so “by any means necessary.” It was this argument that eventually led disciples of ‘Abduvali (Rahmantullah-alloma having died in 1981 before the collapse of Soviet rule) to eventually advocate the use of force.

For these young disciples, Islam could only be present in its “pure form” if it was a state religion, something which was impossible under Soviet rule, turning the Soviets into their enemy.

We learn a lot about the point of view of the fundamentalists from the record that was kept of Hindustani’s debates with them. In one of the surviving audiotapes of his debates from 1980 with Rahmatullah-alloma and ‘Abduhvali qari, Hindustani accuses them of trying to “cleanse Islam from innovation.”¹² And for Hindustani, as for so many Hanafi theologians Islam’s strength was its capacity for innovation.

That is why he considered his young critics to be so dangerous, speaking of the “alienness” of the “school (*mashrab*) of those who have strayed, those who have lost the true path”. He too considered them as Wahhabi who risked dividing the community of believers and who thus should be considered an enemy of Islam. This was a term that

¹¹ Bakhtiyar Bajanov and Muzaffar Kaimilov “ Muhammadjan Hindustani and the Beginning of the ‘Great Schism’ among Muslims of Uzbekistan,” in Stephan Doudiangion and Hisao Komatzu, editors, *Politics and Islam in Russian and Central Asia* (London, New York, Bahrain, 2001), p.200

¹² Babajianov and Muminov, p. 8

‘Abduhvali qari or Rahmatullah-alloma never used as a description for themselves, but it largely stuck after Hindustani made this accusation.¹³

Above all, Hindustani feared the impact “Wahhabi” demands and proposals would have on the local Islamic way of life and Hanafi daily customs, which they complained were in direct violation of the “true” way that the early Arabic texts that they had been reading said that these rituals should be performed. Hindustani strongly opposed changing the ritual surrounding the offering of prayer (namaz) among local Hanafi Muslims: the placement of the hands during Takbir (*rafi’ al-yadayn*) and Qiyam; the pronunciation of “Amin” to oneself (*mahfi*), rather than aloud (*jahr*) as the young fundamentalists preferred. Hindustani was also sharply critical of his opponents’ attempts to pronounce the following customs and rituals “un-Islamic” or “heretical:” the recitation of certain *ayats* from the Qur’an at funerals and for healing sick people—or even animals; the widespread practice among believers of worshipping “saints” (*vali, avliya*), treating their gravesites as shrines or holy places, and the local practice of accepting payment for recitation of the Qur’an.

The war in Afghanistan was another area of disagreement between the Hanafi School around Hindustani and those who studied with Hakimjon qari. Hindustani’s take on the war was characteristic of that of the Hanafi clerics more generally.

“You praise the Afghan mujahid, believing that they are waging a true jihad. But their jihad is the destruction of Muslim mosques, the murder of those who pray the confiscation of people’s property, the murder of women and children. Is this truly jihad? This is nothing other than the destruction of holy places and the annihilation of sacred things. In particular, an ancient robe of Allah’s Prophet was preserved in Kandahar---may

¹³ Hindustani was well versed in the doctrinal divisions that separated Wahhabis from those who accepted the traditional Islamic schools of jurisprudence, from the time of his hajj in 1929. He had earlier (in the 1950s) complained of the Wahhabi tendencies of Abdurazzak-qari, the *imam-khatib* of the Friday mosque in Khujand, when the latter accepted non-Hanafi interpretations of several questions of ritual and doctrine.

Allah bless and preserve it! And they burned it! Is this really holy jihad? No, not by any means! Why did they not accept Najibullah's peace proposals?¹⁴ Indeed, in the Qur'an it is written: 'But if they incline toward peace, make peace with them.'* [Qur'an, 8:61] That is, in this *ayat* addressed to [the Prophet] Muhammad, it is said that if the unbelievers are inclined toward peace, then you should work for peace. So, even if you claim that those who live in Afghanistan are unfaithful, the [above-mentioned] command remains unchanged!"¹⁵

For the elder generation, even of fundamentalists, the war in Afghanistan was but another pebble put into the shoes of believers by the Soviets. Even the younger generation of fundamentalists saw it as a further argument for jihad but not as a reason for a call to immediate action. Its eventual impact would be quite profound, not only because it strongly influencing the thinking of certain people (like Juma Namangani who served with the Soviet troops in Afghanistan), but also because of the way in which the Civil War in Tajikistan played out.

Moreover, as Hindustani's "Answers to those who are introducing inadmissible innovations" also makes clear, these young Wahhabis attacked anyone who didn't accept their position as a collaborator, a charge which Hindustani vigorously objects to claiming:

"It is a shame that you do not know our biography; if you knew, you would be more discriminating and just. In my life, I have been deprived of my freedom three times on the charge that I was inciting the people against the Soviet government. The first time I was sentenced to a year in prison, the second time to three years, and the third time---to 25

¹⁴ Najibullah became the leader of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan in May, 1986. At his initiative, a Supreme Extraordinary Commission on National Reconciliation was created at the beginning of 1997, at which 300 representatives of the warring factions attempted to work toward the normalization of the situation in the country. The Commission developed peace proposals, which for a variety of reasons were rejected by the leaders of the *mujahid*. (Haqiqat-e inqilab-e saur, 12 (67), X.) Judging from Hindustani's comments, he was able to follow developments through sources other than Soviet mass media

¹⁵ As quoted by Babadjanov and Muminov, see appendix.

years. I suffered such deprivations for this anti-government activity! And yet you call on me to take up the jihad. You admonish me, as if I were lost in ignorance (*jahl*). But I have searched for 25 years to find knowledge. How long have you studied to call me ignorant? Shame on you and on those who taught you!”¹⁶

For Hindustani both emotion and dogma were at issue. He believed that the young fundamentalists took no heed of the distance that the country had come over the past twenty years, as believers were now able to recite salat-namaz and offer janaza (prayer for the departed) without fearing arrest. For him, it was impermissible----according to the teachings of the faith---for believers to be pressed toward jihad when there was no prospect other than slaughter before them for their efforts. He chastised his young critics for extolling Duchi Ishan (Muhammad ‘Ali), a well-known Sufi leader who led a jihad in 1898, when 2000 poorly armed men attacked the Tsarist garrison in Andijan, resulting in the execution of all the leaders and the exile of hundreds of their followers. But his criticism was also doctrinal, for according to local Hanafi interpretation, Muslims could tolerate a non-Islamic ruler that tolerated Islam, and modifications of Soviet policy toward religion led some to be optimistic that further improvements in the treatment of believers were possible.

Moreover, there was a core doctrinal question at issue, which was how to understand the obligation of jihad. As Hindustani wrote:

“Do you know how many parts the jihad for the faith consists of? If one part is the jihad against unbelievers on the field of battle, then another is to cleanse oneself of evil thoughts and deliver oneself from ignorance. The Lord Prophet of Allah called this second

¹⁶ As quoted in the translation of this text which appears in an appendix in Bakhtiyar Badjanov and Muzaffar Kamilov “ Muhammadjan Hindustran and the Beginning of the ‘Great Schism’ among Muslims of Uzbekistan,” in Stephan Doudiangion and Hisao Komatzu, editors, *Politics and Islam in Russian and Central Asia* (London, New York, Bahrain, 2001), pp. 205.

part jihad-i Akbar, the greatest jihad. I, praise be to Allah, have also waged the ‘jihad of the tongue,’ and for this have been deprived of my freedom many times. And I have also imparted [religious] knowledge to so many people, delivering them from ignorance and turning them away from evil behavior.”¹⁷

But, as Soviet rule decayed under Brezhnev, the younger generation of fundamentalists grew bolder in their efforts to propagate the faith, and both Rahmatullah-alloma and ‘Abduhvali set up study groups of their own in Andijan. And for all the complaints that they had over the “compromises” made by their elders, each of these men did seem to enjoy a degree of local protection.

It is not possible to know at what price this protection was purchased, and whether it came from local KGB, or republic security forces, or even the KGB headquarters in Moscow. Certainly, there have been rumors that Hindustani was not adverse to “dropping in at the local KGB” and sharing at least some information with them about his students.

Interestingly enough, although the Uzbek KGB were obviously aware of the activities of Hakimjon qari, Rahmatullah-alloma and ‘Abduhvali, they do not seem to have been aware of, or particularly concerned about Hindustani. His activities were the concern of Moscow, and the neighboring republic’s KGB, with the former to pick up the pieces if the latter lost control.¹⁸

The local Tajik KGB was certainly aware of Hindustani’s activities, and likely even knew the identities of his pupils, but he undoubtedly enjoyed a lot of local protection, probably going back to former Tajik Communist Party First Secretary Babajan Gafurov, who was retired to the Tajik Academy of Sciences Institute of Oriental Studies, where

¹⁷ See Babadjanov and Kamilov, appendix.

¹⁸ I argue this because I am acquainted with someone who had some responsibility for keeping track of Islamic activists for the Uzbek KGB in the late Soviet period, and this person was well aware of the activities of the aforementioned people, but knew little about and showed no concern with those of Muhammadjan Hindustani or interest in identifying his pupils.

Hindustani was employed. Certainly, everyone with ties to the Institute, in both Tajikistan and in Moscow, was well aware of Hindustani's existence.¹⁹ Like so many other clerics he undoubtedly justified a certain degree of friendliness with those who worked for the organs as state security as a way to continue his religious activities, but there has been no credible evidence that he was an active collaborator or employee of state security.

It is less clear that this was the case with 'Abduhvali. There have been persistent rumors that 'Abduhvali cooperated with the KGB in the late Soviet period, as part of an effort to split the growing number of Islamic activists. It certainly would have been in keeping with the tactics of the KGB at the time to try and recruit him, and 'Abduhvali was a complex enough figure that he might have believed that he could outwit the KGB by collaborating with them.²⁰ There are even rumors (rather not credible) that the KGB disappeared 'Abduhvali qari in the fashion of extracting an agent, rather than beating him to (or near) death as is the more common explanation.

And, as the writings of Hindustani make clear, it would be a mistake to minimize the anger that the Hanafi Muslims bore to these men.

As Hindustani wrote:

"I have cursed no one²¹, except Rahmatullah-alloma. For his discourteousness, like yours, was beyond the patience of God. He died young. Now I hope that your²² affairs are

¹⁹ I tried to meet Hindustani on two separate occasions in the mid-1980s, but the head of the section of the Institute in which he worked was not willing to arrange such a meeting, arguing that it would not be in Hindustani's interest. Quite likely part of his agreement with the local authorities was that he would not have contact with foreigners (and all Soviet citizens were supposed to report all contacts with foreigners to state security during these years).

²⁰ I do know that 'Abduhvali did meet with the same KGB specialist referred to in the earlier note, but this does not mean that he was a KGB collaborator.

²¹ Here, literally, "recite *du'a-yi bad*," that is pronounce anathema.

²² For the only time anywhere in this essay, Hindustani uses the second person plural (*shumo*), which is often used in Tajik to refer to two or more people, in addressing his opponents

resolved for the better. “Allah indeed is mighty, and capable of retribution!”* [Qur’an, 5:95] And may Allah help us!”²³

E. Radical Islam in the Late 1980s through early 1990s

1. Andijan

‘Abduhvali qari and Rahmatullah-alloma also began to distance themselves from Hakimjon qari, whose teachings they continued to accept. But they grew impatient with his complacency and that he was unwilling to move toward public demonstrations of his Islamic faith. Rahmatullah’s open criticism of Hakimjon qari in 1979 was a display of that very rudeness that Hindustani accused him of.

Rahmatullah-alloma and ‘Abduhvali qari argued that Islam would not be preserved in Central Asia unless the proponents of the faith were more aggressive. Rather than hiding themselves, they had to actively seek new supporters through the printing and distribution of religious literature, which they would conceal behind covers that featured pro-regime titles.²⁴ They also advocated believers returning to external demeanor of the religiously devout, *hijab* for women, long hair, beards and no ties for men, even if this made them stick out in secular schools.

The loosening of Soviet control—first through the growing “grey economy in Uzbekistan” and then in the mid-1980’s by the introduction of limited cooperative based trade and private enterprise—did provide the opportunity for these groups to make the money needed to support their activities. It also gave them the ability to use corrupted Soviet institutions for their own purposes. For example, local Institutes of Atheism (which, in 1989, became Institutes of Religion) were amenable to allowing their printing presses to be used for producing religious literature for a price.

²³ See Babajianov and Muminov

However it required enormous changes in the Soviet Union—the fracturing of authority and its collapse from within—to seriously politicize Islam. And when this political void was perceived to be forming, both the Hanafi clerics and their fundamentalist rivals became politicized in an effort to define how it would be filled.

Andijan and Namangan both developed a strong politicized Islamic presence. In Andijan it centered on ‘Abduhvali qari, and the “Wahhabis,” but in Namangan both Wahhabi and radical (but doctrinally more traditional) Hanafi and Sufi clerics played the more critical role. And in Namangan, in particular, for much of 1991 the Islamists posed a real threat to secular authority. But it is unlikely that this politicization would ever have occurred if Soviet rule had not collapsed, or if there had been a strong secular alternative to these Islamic groups in the Ferghana Valley. Even “Adolat”, “Islom adolati”, the Islamic paramilitary groups which was active in Namangan, and to a lesser extent in Andijan, seemed to fold when the threat of an effective use of force was shown.

The rise of Islamic activism in this period speaks more to the collapse of Soviet institutions and the weakness of “Birlik” and “Erk” (the two secular opposition parties) and the initial failure of the Uzbek Communist Party to fill this gap, than it does to the strength of Islam.

The spiritual leader for the Andijan Islamists was ‘Abduhvali, who secured control of his own mosque in Andijan in 1990, and preached in it through part of 1994. During his period he recorded some 87 audio cassettes with his lectures (Ma’ruzalar) that include commentaries on the Qur’an and on several hadiths. Some of these “lessons” have been posted on Salafi supported websites (although with considerable editing to make ‘Abduhvali qari appear closer to a classic Salafi interpretation). Collections of his sermons

²⁴ Abdujabar Abduvahitov writes of seeing a copy of Maududi’s books bound in the cover of “Materials of the XXVth Conference of the CPSU,” see his “Islamic Revivalism in Uzbekistan,” p. 83

have also published in book and audio form in Central Asia and are sold clandestinely in Uzbekistan and openly in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. Finally, in 2002 a shortened version of these “lessons” was issued on a CD by his son (Ibn ‘Abduhvali qari). All of these efforts are presumed to have been underwritten by the Uzbeks of Saudi Arabia.

‘Abduhvali’s Qur’an interpretations in particular drew heavily on the interpretation of the Qur’an offered by Sayyid Qutb’ (*Fi zilali-l-Qur’an*), and he called it *Fi Zilali ‘az-Zilal*— a play on the title of Sayyid Qutb’s commentary.²⁵ Many of the discussions also offer critiques of the various “innovative” local interpretations of Islam, including those practiced by local Sufi’s. As ‘Abduhvali qari complains in cassette 44, those who identify with Islam in this way are unlikely to engage in the political struggle necessary for its proper status to be restored:

“Some of our brethren, brothers and sisters....have made pilgrimage to the graves of our ancestors, who they consider to be “holy,” offering sacrifices and praying for them to intercede in their problems.... In their celebrations (*toi*) they permit every sort of innovation (*bid‘at*) and prohibited practices (*haram*). Among these coreligionists, who without self-consciousness perform customs and rituals of the world of customary law (‘urf va ‘odat). We cannot expect active participation in the rebirth of the political status of Islam. We can only expect such active participation from young people, who have still not been poisoned by practicing customs and rituals that are forbidden by Islam.”

His major rival in Andijan in the late 1980s and early 1990s was the newly appointed Mufti, Muhammad-Sodiq Muhammad-Yusuf, whose activities during this period are described at great length in an accompanying paper. While Muhammad-Sodiq clearly favored political Islam—Islamic values and institutions filling the growing void left

²⁵ Sayyid Qutb’s commentary translates as “In the Shadow of the Qur’an,” and ‘Abduhvali titled his “In the Shadow of the Shadow.”

by the collapse of Soviet institutions— he wanted to do this in a way that maintained his personal control of SADUM (which through 1991 supervised religious activities in all five Central Asian republics) an institution that was growing in importance irrespective of the political collapse that was going on throughout the Soviet Union. The political liberalization of the late Gorbachev years created new opportunities for religious believers of all faiths to reclaim the running of the state-sponsored religious institutions, as well as the perceived freedom to try and establish religious institutions that were fully independent of the state.

As head of SADUM Muhammad-Sodiq had “his people” in place in all the principal cities of the Ferghana Valley, but the nature of the times was such that their domination of the religious scene was far from assured.

‘Abduhvali qari also had the ambition to become the Mufti himself, and sought to gain the post by destabilizing Muhammad-Sodiq Muhammad-Yusuf. As such, he was one of the people who were the key to the accusations of corruption made against Muhammad-Sodiq (bolstering the accusations made by former Mufti Shamsuddin khan Babakhan, who also saw Muhammad-Sodiq’s ouster as a means of securing his own return to his former post. The joint actions helped bring together the “Wahhabis” of Andijan and Namangan with the disaffected part of the Tashkent religious elite; the former were vying for the mantle of spiritual religious leadership, while the latter were angered by the various financial machinations of Muhammad-Sodiq, most especially the way that he had carried out the sale of Qur’ans supplied by Saudi Arabia.²⁶

In Namangan the Hanafi Muslims were far the more politicized than those in Andijan, although the latter city really was something of a radical Islamic spiritual center (given the presence of the madrasa of ‘Abduhvali qari). Nonetheless, ‘Abduhvali did have

numerous opponents, including most prominently of course Muhammad-Sodiq Muhammad-Yusuf, but also local clerics such as Abulatif Kasym Andijani.

2. Namangan

The situation in Namangan was much more complex than that of Andijan, with several powerful personalities (representing different strains in Islam, as well as enormous egos and personal ambition) vied for control.

Muhammad-Sodiq exerted control over the religious situation in Namangan through his various close associates. These included ‘Umar-khon domulla, the Qadi in Namangan. ‘Umar-khon domulla was also responsible for providing a personal security force for Muhammad-Sodiq, of some 20 people, with Karate black-belts. These individuals were not dissimilar from those who gathered around Tahir Yuldashev, serving as his “fighters.”

‘Umar-khon domulla²⁷ had only limited secular education, but very extensive religious training. He had four years of religious instruction in a *hujra* school run by his relatives in Namangan, and then with Hakimjon qari in Margilan, where he was reputed to have been one of the top students in the *hujra*. He then went on to study with Zokirjon domla in Tashkent for nearly two years (until 1982), a well known Hanafi theologian, who also served as a teacher for Obid-khon qari.²⁸ Zokirjon domla urged ‘Umar-khon domulla to “forget the Wahhabi lessons he received from Hakimjon qari, and tried to prepare ‘Umar-khon domulla for admission to the Mir-i ‘Arab Madrasa in Bukhara, but the latter

²⁶ See Martha Brill Olcott, “The Financing of Islamic Groups in Central Asia,” unpublished paper.

²⁷ ‘Umar-khon domulla was born in Namangan in 1950, and finished 8 grades of education (middle schools), claiming that he was always more interested in religious education than receiving secular training.

²⁸ Zokirjon domla had served for a while as imam on the mosque in his native northeastern district of Tashkent (Chuqursay), but left the post after a fight with Shamsuddin khan Babakhan. His theological position had always been critical of both the SADUM clerics and their opponents. He maintained his religious school, which generally had about 10 students through disusing it as a workshop that made traditional caps (*tilpaks*). He appears to have been questioned regularly by Uzbek state security in 1994, but then suffered a stroke and died in 1994 at age 53 or 54, which those who attended his funeral maintained was brought on by an interrogation which he received.

failed to pass the secular subjects of dictation and history. ‘Umar-khon domulla’s failing grade in history may well have been the result of his theocratic world view, that history is sacral, and is preserved among believers in oral form.

Despite this ‘Umar-khon domulla was able to establish himself as a figure of considerable religious presence in Namangan. Failing to gain admission to Mir-i ‘Arab he worked there as a handyman for a year and a half, satisfying himself in his own words, that he “knew more than any graduate.”²⁹

He then went on to work as a baker, and to run his own small enterprise, which expanded at the time of perestroika. This was his primary occupation until 1986 when he became imam of a mosque in Namangan. But throughout his years as a baker he ran his own *hujra* school, providing young children and adolescents with basic instruction in Islam (of the Hanafi School).

He began to substantially increase the scope of his religious activities in 1990, at the very same time that Wahhabi groups were expanding their activities around the Gumbaz mosque in Namangan. Subsequently, he began organizing training in karate and Kung Fu for young men studying in his mosque, in large part to make them capable of defending themselves against the group that developed around Abduhakim (Hakimjon) Sattimov, who was the founder of Adolat³⁰ and against Tahir Yuldashev’s people. But there was a somewhat disingenuous quality to this argument, because until the time that he fled Uzbekistan Tahir Yuldashev’s people seem to have been controlled in part by ‘Umar-khon domulla himself.

²⁹ My Uzbek interlocutor was able to interview him after ‘Umar-khon domulla’s release from prison.

³⁰ “Adolat” was formed in 1988 on the fundament of the old “druzhniki” (the voluntary public order squad), to help protect local merchants and traders from local racketeers. By 1990 the group had come under the strong influence of Tahir Yuldashev, and by 1991 it had transformed itself into “Islom Adolati”, or the “Islam lashkarlar” (fighters).

‘Umar-khon domulla was obviously a person of great importance in the religious world of Namangan, and it was for this reason that Muhammad-Sodiq made him Qady (his representative) in Namangan after assuming the post of Mufti.

‘Umar-khon domulla’s closest followers called him “*Shir*” (Tiger, or brave one), because in 1986 he demanded that the first secretary of the regional party communist party return the former main mosque of Namangan city (then used as a winery) to the community of believers, and eventually it was returned.

Beginning in 1990 he organized a debating club in his mosque which each Saturday held a forum in which his radical Hanafi supporters debated religious questions with those youths termed “Wahhabis.” Those who attended these meetings maintain that Tahir Yuldashev was a frequent participant in them, and that he often took ‘Umar-khon domulla’s part in the argument. And ‘Umar-khon domulla is said to have been a strong influence on the evolution of “Adolat” (from its early incarnation as a self-defense group, into “Islom Adolati”, which inflicted punishment on small-scale criminals and racketeers according to Shari’at law. After this shift occurred ‘Umar-khon domulla is said to have even written some of the verdicts that were pinned to the bodies of those who received punishment in public places by “Islom Adolati.”

We obviously don’t have access to Tahir Yuldashev’s version of their relationship, but ‘Umar-khon domulla maintains that he always viewed Tahir Yuldashev as having “excessive ambition and love of authority,” and that he only wrote these verdicts at Tahir Yuldashev’s insistence. Others however maintain that ‘Umar-khon domulla was a strong presence behind and that Tahir Yuldashev was merely doing his bidding by putting Islamic law into practice. In fact, at least one of the regular participants in these Saturday meetings maintains that the very idea of pressing for the establishment of an Islamic state came to Tahir Yuldashev from ‘Umar-khon domulla at one of these sessions.

There is a great deal of controversy surrounding the relationship of the various religious parties in Namangan, which included Muhammad-Sodiq, ‘Umar-khon domulla, Dowud-khon, and the grouping of young soldiers around Tahir Yuldashev. This is discussed in greater detail below.

A lot of what we know about the various actors plays out around the seizure of the regional committee building in Namangan that had been occupied by Tahir Yuldashev’s soldiers (*Lashkarlar*). While under occupation this building was the site of an election meeting with president Islam Karimov on December 19, 1991. In addition to the film (and transcript) of Karimov’s meeting there we also have interviews with eyewitnesses to the event.

This meeting, as well as Karimov’s December 1991 visit to Namangan is worth studying in depth in order to understand the evolution of Islam Karimov’s policies towards Islam, and the different forces which acted upon him. This topic, too, is one which could be explored by the current author.

While some claimed Karimov’s antipathy to the Islamic radicals was a result of their having humbled him in Namangan, it may simply be that Karimov came away from Namangan with a new appreciation of the strength of those committed to radical Islamic causes.

Certainly in his public presentation, Karimov sought to characterize himself as very supportive of Islam, promising to be sworn in as president on the Qur’an (which he was) and to allow his presidency to be blessed with prayers. At the meeting, he even opened the door to the creation of an Islamic Republic of Uzbekistan, as long as that is what the country’s elected officials (and the reference here is clearly to parliamentarians who would be elected after the current parliament was disbanded) called for. But for Karimov, the

first step was clearly to sustain Uzbekistan's sovereignty, which could only be accomplished through his election.

Obviously, Karimov had no intention of establishing an Islamic republic in Uzbekistan, but took away from this meeting a strong sense of how strong support for this idea was among those assembled. It is important to try and ascertain who really was responsible for the creation of this impression: those in the room, of whom Tahir Yuldashev was most vocal, or those who seem to have been active behind the scenes.

We have eyewitness accounts of a meeting held between 'Umar-khon domulla and Muhammad-Sodiq in Namangan shortly before the December 19 meeting, at which Muhammad-Sodiq is said to have displayed nervousness about Tahir Yuldashev and his followers, warning 'Umar-khon domulla that Tahir Yuldashev could lead to the Islamic establishment being discredited before the authorities. He is said to have said:

“...I am telling you that we are still weak, but they [meaning the secular authorities-MBO] are still strong and tomorrow they can break your horns. So be careful. Understand that right now our main task is to learn to be more skillful, in order to be able to return Islam to its true home. Forceful actions on your part can discredit us, making them [the authorities-MBO] afraid of us. Islam must be introduced quietly.”³¹

But 'Umar-khon domulla nonetheless decided to attend the December 19, 1991 meeting with Karimov, which may well have led to his having later been targeted for arrest. 'Umar-khon domulla was arrested in November 1993, for abuse of official position, and released in November 2002.³² He now is formally employed as a farmhand, but in

³¹ This quote comes from an interview of my Uzbek interlocutor with 'Umar-khon domulla, and was substantiated as basically accurate by Muhammad-Sodiq. These interviews were held in 2004 in Tashkent and in Namangan.

³² My Uzbek interlocutor met with him at his home two days after his release from prison, and noted that 'Umar-khon domulla was quite fat, and his hands were soft, showing no signs of physical labor, giving some substance to the charges that he expropriated large amounts of money in his official position, because obtaining a soft perch in jail is very costly.

reality is very much a gentleman-farmer-cleric, with followers and students working his land. He still seems to enjoy a great deal of respect from devout Hanafi Muslims in the Namangan region. Ironically, ‘Umar-khon domulla served in the same prison as Abdulahat, the Wahhabi leader, and upon his release the former commented that only in prison did the two come to understand that the split between them had worked against the interests of Islam.

Rahimjon Akramov,³³ who then served as the provincial monitor on religious questions seems to have arrived at the meeting between ‘Umar-khon domulla and Muhammad-Sodiq shortly after this discussion about strategy in the face of the forthcoming meeting. ‘Obid-khon qari, also native to Namangan, was also present (although as he is still in exile we have not been able to corroborate his version of the discussion which he witnessed).

But while ‘Umar-khon domulla and Muhammad-Sodiq seem to have been silenced by Akramov’s arrival, ‘Obid-khon qari was willing to continue the discussion. And according to Akramov, ‘Obid-khon qari broke the silence by saying that “I think, that we shouldn’t be afraid to show them our strength.”

This was sufficient for Akramov to pick up the thread of the preceding conversation, and he then asked Muhammad-Sodiq directly, “Do you think that it is right for you [meaning the religious elite, and not just Muhammad-Sodiq] to interfere in politics at a time when the country is going through difficult times.”

Everyone apparently turned to Muhammad-Sodiq awaiting his answer, and he said “no, better to refrain from politics.” But Akramov maintains that the startled look on everyone’s faces was proof enough for him that Muhammad-Sodiq had offered the

³³ Rahimjon Akramov was born in 1942 in Namangan, and graduated from the Pedagogical Institute in Tashkent. He worked as a history teacher, and then served as deputy and finally as director of a local school.

opposite conclusion prior to his arrival in the room. Moreover, Akramov continues to believe that despite Muhammad-Sodiq's absence from the December 19 Namangan meeting, the Mufti was nonetheless a main force behind the scenes.

Akramov argues that Muhammad-Sodiq's absence was because he didn't want to do anything that would undermine his primary goal, which was the unification of all the Islamic groups in the region (including the Wahhabis) "in order to create a united force."

But Muhammad-Sodiq's public position at this time was that if the Uzbek government bodies would stop interfering with him, and accusing him of intrigues and various measures designed to instigate the Muslims against the regime he would be able to do a lot to "pacify the Muslims." This quote comes from a conversation held by my Uzbek interlocutor with Burgutali Rafikov, who served as secretary of the communist party of Pap region (Namangan) from 1985-1991.³⁴

Rafikov is a rather unusual figure, someone who describes himself as having had "communism in his head and Islam in his heart." In 1990-1991 he sponsored the opening of a mosque that held 4000-5000 people in his home district of Pap, and used funds from the regional budget for its construction as well as income from local state enterprises, kolkhozes and donations from individuals. At the time of the ground-breaking of the mosque, in August 1990, he was invited by the local mullah to read the first namaz along with him. Rafikov demurred, claiming he was unable to do so, and so a group of local elders and local party officials³⁵ went off into a room on the side to provide some rapid religious instruction and work out a solution that allowed the party official to participate as a leader in the religious service.

In 1989 he was appointed to the Namangan Oblast department on religious cults attached to the Oblast Executive Committee, and then moved to the Namangan Hokimiyat in 1991.

³⁴ My Uzbek interlocutor held a series of interviews with Burgutali Rafikov in 1994, the year before his death.

³⁵ Including Akramov, who provided independent testimony of these events

Abdurauf-khon Gafurov was another important actor in the religious life of Namangan during this period, and was a close associate of Muhammad-Sodiq, serving as the formal representative of SADUM in Namangan during much of this period. The two began their association in 1986. Gafurov was born in 1947 in Namangan, and grew up in a religious family. His secular education was in the field of trade and finance, and he held the post of director of a wood shop and wood storage facility. This was a very desirable job during the Soviet period, as it provided access to deficit materials that could be sold privately to enterprises throughout the oblast, enabling them to meet state quotas. As a result at the time of the collapse of Soviet rule Gafurov had become one of Namangan's "underground" millionaires.

Gafurov was a member of the Communist Party, something that was definitional in the post that he held, and until 1985 he also served as a member of the Soviet executive committee in Namangan. He was a close associate and supporter of Shahrulla Mirsaidov, who served as Prime Minister of Uzbekistan in the early 1990s, and was one of the intermediaries between Mirsaidov and the group around Muhammad- Sodiq. Gafurov was also on good terms with Burgutali Rafikov, the Hakim of Namangan. Gafurov used these ties to build a light industry empire for himself in the late 1980s and early 1990s with businesses in furniture building, textiles and sweets.

It was financial might rather than his religious training (which was minimal) that brought him into contact and association with Muhammad-Sodiq, and from 1989 he was given a post of financial responsibility in SADUM. In 1989 he was named Qady of the Ferghana Valley (which included all three oblasts).

He was said to have received this post for a series of reasons: his knowledge of business and finance, his ties to the local power structure as well as to the power structure in Tashkent. He was also on good terms with the various Hanafi and Wahhabi leaders in

the region, and tried unsuccessfully to bring together a number of key Hanafi religious figures-----'Umar-khon domulla, Abdulatif Kasym (of Andijan), Ibrahim qari (of Kokand) --with 'Abduhvali qari, but with little success.

Effectively Gafurov served as the chief financial officer for the region. The full flow of donations from local mosques—both regular tithe plus additional donations at the time of personal and religious festivals—passed through his hands, and the bulk of funds for SADUM came from the Ferghana Valley. In addition Gafurov had the responsibility for compiling the list of those who would make pilgrimage to Mecca and also for collecting their fees, which came close to mirroring the actual cost of the pilgrimage (although technically all pilgrims from Uzbekistan from 1989-1991 were guests of the King of Saudi Arabia). Plus all the bribes paid to get on this list—and these were the first years that pilgrimage was widely available to ordinary citizens—were considerable.

In fact, Gafurov accumulated so much money that he was able to rent a Tu-154 to take his own family on hajj. In 1990-1991 he also paid for the construction of a vast mosque in the Namangan suburb of Nurabad, said to have cost equal to two annual budgets of the Namangan region to build, and it was to speak at the opening of this mosque that Karimov originally consented to come to Namangan in December 1991. Karimov used his speech at the mosque to address issues that were at the heart of concerns of the local businessmen—the issue of expropriation—and he tried to convince them that the regime that he headed would be entrepreneur friendly. Karimov's address must have been viewed with sympathy by Gafurov, as he is rumored to have supported anyone who promised the protection of private property.

Through much of 1990 this included the various Islamist groups in Namangan, but by 1991 Gafurov seems to have understood that the communist elite provided a better

chance for the protection of private assets. He is also rumored to have argued with Muhammad-Sodiq over the need to give strong guarantees to private property holders

Gafurov is said to have also used his resources to have deferred much of the cost of Tahir Yuldashev's «Islom Adolati» patrols, although allegedly at the advice of Muhammad-Sodiq he is said to have transferred these funds through the use of middlemen.

But Gafurov seems initially to have been concerned that Muhammad-Sodiq was not willing to offer sufficient guarantees for private property. In fact Gafurov's hesitations seem to have been similar to those of entrepreneurs in Namangan, Marghilan, Kokand, and even Tashkent, as they seem to have really tried to vacillate between support of the Hanafi SADUM and the Wahhabi teachings represented by 'Abduhvali qari, who seemed to have enjoyed very widespread support from the business community of Andijan. But eventually Gafurov decided that the ideas of 'Abduhvali qari were too close to those of the Bolsheviks, and what seems to have convinced him was a Friday sermon by 'Abduhvali qari in which he preached that the Bolsheviks stole their equalitarian ideas from the teachings of Islam.

Gafurov was jailed in the mid-1990s on charges of financial machinations, and served six years of a three year term in prison. He was released early for "exemplary behavior" and probably also because of payment of a large bribe. Today he lives rather quietly in Namangan, having lost his largest holdings (a textile factory that was run as a joint venture with Turkish investors) in the aftermath of legal proceedings against him.

Namangan was also the home of 'Abdulahad Barnayev, the imam of the Wahhabi Gumbaz mosque from the time of its opening to his arrest in 1993. 'Abdulahad was born in 1959, in Namangan, and graduated from secondary school in 1976. He was described by his classmates as a bad student who was both physically weak but with aspirations to be a leader, and as a result he was someone with very frustrated ambitions. He seems to have

tried to advance his leadership claims by trying to play the leaders of various groups against each other, and seems to have earned regular beatings for his trouble.

‘Abdulahad seems to have turned to religion for comfort,³⁶ with his initial religious education being provided by his grandfather. After service in the Red Army (1977-1979), ‘Abdulahad returned home and went to work in a local automotive repair shop, remaining there until he went to Andijan in 1985 to study with ‘Abduhvali. After two years in Andijan he returned home to open his own *hujra* school, which received financial support from ‘Abduhvali qari, a fact supported by eyewitness accounts which we received.

In 1988 ‘Abdulahad and his students were instrumental in the successful attempt to gain control of the Gumbaz mosque in Namangan (which ‘Umar-khon domulla had requested be returned to believers in 1986), and so it came under Wahhabi control rather than that of SADUM, with armed supporters of ‘Abdulahad physically barring supporters of ‘Umar-khon domulla from taking control of the property. And the Wahhabi were able to use the central location of this mosque to gain physical control of much of downtown Namangan, but there is reason to question whether the youth associated with Adolat (with Abduhakim (Hakimjon) Sattimov and Tahir Yuldashev) were directly supported by ‘Abdulahad, or whether the latter were quasi-independent actors who enjoyed easy access to the Gumbaz mosque.

While ‘Abdulahad and his supporters were directly involved in the large demonstration in front of the Namangan regional committee building in 1990, when the goal was to have the city legalize the wearing of *hijab* and forbid employment of women, it is less likely that ‘Abdulahad and his supporters were directly responsible for the seizure of the regional committee building in Namangan in December 1991.

³⁶ Material on ‘Abdulahad was provided to my Uzbek interlocutor by Adulahad’s sister.

Certainly ‘Abdulahad was not an immediate target of arrest by the authorities (which gives credence to the above version). He was not arrested until 1997, when he received 17 years in a maximum security prison. He lost control of the Gumbaz mosque shortly after the disappearance of ‘Abduhvali qari in 1995, when it was returned to the Uzbek ecclesiastical administration.

At least some local informants argue that the lack of direct engagement between ‘Abdulahad and the youth mobilized by Tahir Yuldashev and Sattimov was a question of perception rather than reality. This version claims that ‘Abduhvali qari urged ‘Abdulahad to preserve the seeming independence of the Gumbaz mosque and madrasa so that the large basements in the building that they occupied before 1989 (when they moved completely into the former winery) could be used for paramilitary training of youth. It is possible that the facilities were used for the training of the first group of “Tawba,” the paramilitary arm of the Uzbek branch of the Islamic Renaissance Party, but regardless, eventually the Uzbek branch of the IRP came under the direction of Abdullah Utayev, another former student of ‘Abduhvali qari and their activities were largely centered in Tashkent.

‘Abdulahad seems to have completely gone over to the support of the Uzbek authorities while in prison, and obtained an early release, serving only about two years in all. While his trial was depicted in near hagiographic terms in one of the training films of the IMU that is in my possession, in reality ‘Abdulahad seems to have collapsed almost immediately after incarceration. His sister reports that he screamed out pleading for mercy when he heard of his sentence, yelling “I am guilty of nothing. Muslims take pity on me! Take pity on my old mother!” He seems to have gone so hysterical that he had to be carried out of the courtroom, and then fell unconscious with a severe nosebleed. He now

runs a small shop that makes and sells halvah. He seems to be virtually shunned by believers, and is never greeted when he enters his local mosque.

Dowud-khon Ortikov was another very prominent cleric of Namangan, and he is the only one of the clerics who were active in the Ferghana Valley during that period that came from a Stalin-era generation, having been born in 1931. He is a supporter of Hanafi teachings, but no less radical in his world view than many Wahhabi. He is a supporter of Sufi teachings of the Qadiri order, and maintains that he is the descendant of the well-known *hoja* from Kashkar, Affak-hoja, who lived in the 17th century. He is also the descendant of two famous Soviet era Sufi figures, Mawlon-khon tura, his grandfather, and Eshon-khon tura, his father. The latter was exiled in the 1930s to Omsk, then transferred to Orenburg, and then sent to Kokand prison, where he was released in 1933 only to be released and then rearrested in 1937 and executed. This led Dowud-khon to have a deep seated hostility both to the Bolsheviks and to communism.

Dowud-khon's madrasa 'Aziz Hoja Ishan, became a well-known meeting place for opposition figures (I ran into a group of young «Islom Adolati» supporters, including quite probably Juma Namangani, during my visit to Dowud-khon in 1992). The mosque and madrasa were restored through collections taken throughout the city, including a lot of strong-arming of neighbors from adjoining courtyards and buildings, who had been settled in what had originally been *vaqf* (clerical) property by Soviet authorities, and who were pressed into returning property in an effort to create an Islamic republic in Uzbekistan. The mosque was reopened in 1990.

Dowud-khon quite quickly established his mosque as a highly politicized place, using his Friday sermons to press his congregation to rid themselves of Communist rule and claiming that the time of Islam had returned. He was also a frequent visitor to 'Umar-khon domulla's mosque. He was reported to have demonstrably invited Tahir Yuldashev to

come forward during these Friday services and sit with the elders and authoritative ‘ulama.’

According to Rahimjon Akramov, Dowud-khon supported the 1991 seizure of the regional committee building and was an active supporter of the creation of an “Islamic region” complete with its own army.

Throughout the period of the early 1990s he was arrested, and released, numerous times, and in 1994 he was held in jail for 3 months, but has not been jailed since. Some claim this is because he was willing to provide evidence in cases against other clerics from Namangan. He claims³⁷ that shortly before this last arrest the authorities came to him and tried to get him to immigrate to Turkey, but he refused, because, as he said, all of his ancestors are buried in Central Asia.

Dowud-khon now expresses confusion and some remorse about his political activities during the period 1990-1991, claiming that it was partly the product of the times:

“Then we were all fighting roosters. We tried to finally remove Communists from everywhere, as we thought that the time of Islam had arrived. But I did not understand anything, although clever people warned me that all our rash steps and actions would end badly.”

The reference here is to his teacher (and uncle) Abdalboki-khon turah, who had warned Dowud-khon that “I tell you this. They [the authorities-MBO] will fertilize you with saltpeter, and then when you grow, they will cut you under the root.”

Dowud-khon’s current position is that he should have listened to his teacher, and this position is quite consistent with his current age and relative frailty. As a result, despite his dissatisfaction with the current situation regarding Islam substantially limits his potential for being a mobilizing force in the future.

At the same time, Dowud-khon has not fully repudiated his commitment to Islam playing a political role in Uzbekistan. When asked whether Sufism should be occupied with political activity and concern itself generally with world matters, he answered that “Sufis are obligated to be concerned with Shari’at law and press for Shari’at to be the law of the country.” This he maintains and believes should be done by working with rulers and pointing them on the way to the Shari’at, much like Hoja Akhrar, “who was advisor to many *padishahs* (Sheikhs), and even Timur listened to him.”³⁸ But he is not optimistic that the current rulers will pay attention, as he complains that they don’t go to mosque, even on holidays.

F. Radical Islam in the Mid-1990s

Much has been written on the Tajik revolution, and that is not the focus of the current project. But at least a brief foray into it is necessary, because of its deep connections with the development of radical Islam in Uzbekistan

Uzbekistan’s Islamists – the circle around ‘Abduhvali – certainly did sympathize with the Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan, and did see their battle as a form of jihad. The anarchy surrounding the collapse of the Soviet Union created a sense of timeliness for this jihad. Moreover, going over to Tajikistan gave them the opportunity to be part of an armed struggle for Islam, an opportunity that would be denied them in Uzbekistan.

Muhammad-Sodiq, who continued to serve as Mufti until February 1993 based on our interviewing, also seems to have had strong ties to the IRP, based in part on his friendship with Turajon-zade, but also based on a sincere conviction that a victory by the Tajik Islamists would serve as an important precedent for Uzbekistan, prodding that country’s much stronger secular leadership into some sort of power sharing relationship

³⁷ In an interview with my Uzbek interlocutor, held in 2004

³⁸ In reality Timur died in 1405, before Hoja Akhrar was born.

with Muhammad-Sodiq and other “moderate” Islamists. Eyewitnesses in Namangan argue that Muhammad-Sodiq organized the collection of money, food, and other durables to be sent to “the aid of the Tajik brother Muslims,” through the auspices of ‘Umar-khon domulla. At least one eyewitness, Rahimjon Akramov, who served in the local administration in these years, maintains that guns were included in these shipments. Muhammad-Sodiq’s involvement with the IRP at the time of the civil war in Tajikistan was also reaffirmed in an interview with Saifullo Dalilov, who worked as a prosecutor in the Siab region of Dushanbe between 1981 and 1992. Dalilov was taken hostage by Turajon-zade in 1992, as punishment for the former’s role in arresting and beating Islamist demonstrators (something Dalilov admits with pride).

According to his account, after having been captured Dalilov was put into a small, home-made iron cell, denied food and water, beaten, cauterized, and tortured in other ways to get him to agree to publicly acknowledge that he used illegal methods in his interrogations of arrested Islamists (something that Dalilov reported that he refused to do). A week into his captivity, Dalilov reported that Turajon-zade arrived with Muhammad-Sodiq, who Dalilov knew because Muhammad-Sodiq had lived in Dalilov’s parents’ apartment during part of Muhammad-Sodiq’s residence in Bukhara while he taught at Mir-i Arab Madrasa. Apparently Dalilov sweepingly asked that Muhammad-Sodiq secure his release, to which Dalilov reports Muhammad-Sodiq responded: “...the punishment of people like you [i.e. those who abused believers---MBO] historically was and will continue to such as this. And when we win, those of your ilk will simply be hung or shot.” Although, despite these harsh words Muhammad-Sodiq did apparently press Turajon-zade to release Dalilov, who was given 24 hours to flee Tajikistan. Dalilov, who now lives in Bukhara, showed my local interlocutor his wounds, as evidence of the torture that he received.

But, one should be very careful in reviewing Muhammad-Sodiq's actions and statements during the Tajik Civil War to not take them out of context. His seeming support for the IRP should not be confused with an endorsement of the IMU. It was the attack on Tajikistan's Islamic establishment, as represented by Akbar Turajon-zade, that made Muhammad-Sodiq believe that the use of force was likely justified. This was a defense of Islam, a defensive jihad, not a jihad that was effectively expansionist—such as the IMU's call for the creation of an Islamic republic.

Of course there has been a great deal written about the participation of both Juma Namangani³⁹ and Tahir Yuldashev, as an Uzbekistan detachment in the army of the Tajik Islamic Renaissance Party and their troops were based largely upon the foundation of “Adolat” and “Islom Adolati”. But their numbers were augmented by other young Islamists.

Dowud-khon mentions being present at a meeting organized by ‘Umar-khon domulla at his mosque, at the time of ‘Id al-Qurban, at a meeting that included many prominent theologians in the Ferghana Valley, including the well known Sufi leader Odil-khon Andijani. The goals of the meeting was to collect money, food and weapons for the Muslims of Tajikistan, and Odil-khon Andijani promised that he personally would raise 500 mujahids from among his students. This caused others to get up and promise that they too would raise 50, 100, or more fighters from their students as well. But the actual number of seminarians sent from Uzbekistan to Tajikistan is not documented, and the motivation of the seminarians clearly varied.

G. The Late 1990s-2001: Tahir Yuldashev, the IMU and Jihad

³⁹In 1993 Namangani went to study in the madrasa of Sayiid ‘Abdullo Nuri, on the advice of ‘Abduhvali.

The goal of this paper is to look at the roots of radical Islam, and not to provide a description of life in the IMU camps or a detailed description of this movement, both of which this author is prepared to do in a later paper, should that project be of interest.

In addition to films, documents seized from the camps by U.S. journalists, documents secured through contacts within Uzbek security forces, the author also has material from in-depth interviews held with six former members of the IMU who returned to Uzbekistan through the amnesty program, and these former members of the IMU span the time period of 1994-2003 in their participation. The author also had brief contacts with several “Adolat” fighters (including Juma Namangani) at the very beginning of that movement.

But the goal of this paper is to provide some background into the ideological role that was played by the IMU in the development of Islamic radicalism in Uzbekistan, so as to be able to speculate on whether it is likely to have any intellectual influence in the future. It does not address the lasting organizational or operational influence of the IMU in the evolving environment of Uzbekistan, or its relationship to Hizb ut-Tahrir, both themes that could be explored in subsequent papers by this author.

From the mid-1990’s until late 1999 or early 2000, radical Islam was basically either forced underground or to leave the country. The retreat of well-established radical groups in the Ferghana Valley created the vacuum in which Hizb ut-Tahrir was able to spread, and in turn the spread of Hizb ut-Tahrir (as well as the growing strength and international terrorist support for the IMU) led to the decision of the Uzbek government to reach out to “good Muslims”; those elements of the suppressed religious establishment from the Ferghana Valley that the regime in Tashkent believed that they could deal effectively with. And so Muhammad-Sodiq was allowed to return and preach again in Tashkent, several prominent figures from the Ferghana Valley clerical establishment were

allowed to return home from jail, some received shortened terms, and others simply did not receive new terms.

The ideology of the IMU evolved from the mid - 1990's through early 2001, but never at any time did it offer the kind of intellectual or doctrinal weight provided by clerics from the Ferghana Valley, such as 'Obid-khon qari or 'Abduhvali qari.

The nature of the structure of the IMU was little suited to ideological innovation, and despite Tahir Yuldashev's theological pretensions, it was a group of fighters not clerics.

The ideology of the movement in Tajikistan was heavily influenced by the atmosphere of politicization of the late Soviet years and the first years of independence.

Despite the fact that some of the IMU fighters attended madrasa in Pakistan in the mid-1990s, their understanding of jihad was still rather simplistic. It was a kind of cross between jihad and Soviet guerilla war handbooks.

Beginning in the mid - 1990's the IMU started propagating their lessons on jihad throughout the Ferghana Valley. We were able to find two types of handwritten documents, a computer printout, and two audio tapes containing only four of the "lessons" (starting approximately from the middle of the second Lesson).¹ Based on our information there existed up to ten of these types of "Lessons," which local informants argue were alternatively prepared by Tahir Yuldashev or by Juma Namangani. It is in fact possible that both men had a hand in authoring them, Juma writing the military lessons and Tahir Yuldashev the religious lessons. But regardless of the identity of the author, who is termed "the lecturer" in this analysis, there is little question that these "lessons" were distributed by the IMU and represent their thinking.

¹ The work was conducted by Carnegie Endowment..

The almost complete similarity of all versions available to us suggests the thought that originally the "Lessons" were distributed in the form of audio cassettes, in hand-written versions and in a Microsoft Word Uzbek language variant, which by the diacritical markings used helps date the lessons as prior to 1999. These materials were collected by my Uzbek interlocutor, and analyzed by us together.

The lectures contain an enormous number of grammatical and stylistic errors. It is possible that the speech was simplified and said in a colloquial manner to match the type of thought and level of education of the potential audience--i.e., not fully literate young people. But it is also possible that the author of the lessons was not able to produce a more polished piece. Furthermore, in the text they are encountered many slang terms, words, nonliterary neologisms (borrowed predominantly from Russian slang), and phrases which are intelligible only to a limited circle of the dedicated persons, i.e., to the members of the organization. The language of the text on the audio-cassettes is the spoken language of an Uzbek who grew in the Ferghana Valley, and some from the Ferghana Valley who have listened to our tapes have even claimed that Juma Namangani himself is reading the lessons.

From the text it is evident that *da'va* "involvement in the Islamic community of new people," does not necessarily embrace the propaganda of Islam or Islamic values.

We see that the "lecturer" understands this term in an exceptionally new way, as it has begun to be used by Islamic political parties of recent times. Although *da'va* in our "lecturer" bears an even more political message—this is factually the first (almost the most basic) stage of jihad against the government. Not by chance therefore, both concepts "politics and of *da'va*" - are united into the same paragraph and explained together.

The propaganda is directed mainly at villagers. The "lecturer" himself explains this focus by stating that they "are distant from the luxurious life and the parasitism, and their hearts demand justice."

The target audience for these lessons is those who consider themselves Muslims, but are actually so "only formally" (of course from the point of view of lesson's author). The intention is to re-educate them in the spirit of "pure Islam", and those who do not want this are simply to be destroyed. The same lot awaits the "temporary allies" - Christians or Jews: after the victory of the mujahid, they are also to be destroyed.

After winning authority (as the "champion of justice") among the people, the author of the "Lessons" thinks that the time will be ripe for more active actions against government. This fight assumes the continuation (and even strengthening) of propaganda with active disinformation of the population (through mobile radio stations, newspapers and leaflets). Such misinformation extends to terrorist acts against members of government, organization of explosions at power stations, factories, among other targets. The "lecturer" does not hide the main purpose of similar diversions: to try in this way to blow up the economy of state, to contribute even more to the worsening of the lives of the common people, from whom thus increased dissatisfaction with the state is expected.

The text makes it possible to note the unique self-identification of the "lecturer" and his followers. From one side, it is noticeable that the members of IMU draw a distinction between themselves (calling themselves "*oila*" - "family") and other Muslims of the region, especially with those without political aspirations, and they include in this number Muhammad-Sodiq Muhammad-Yusuf. And it is because they argue this criteria--- supporters of political Islam and those who oppose them as their criteria for dividing the community of believers that the leaders of the IMU consider themselves to be Hanafi Muslims, and not Salafi, although in these lessons---unlike in some of their later writings--

-it is obvious that they have a clear grievance with the Hanafi school of law, presenting themselves as something of simplistic Salafis, or even better, something of “school-free” Muslims.

For example, while arguing that work among believers must be sensitive toward the school of law which they embrace, the author of the text says:

“Everything must be based only on the Koran and the hadiths. If everything is not explained by the Qur’an and the hadiths then many will be lost and they can make many errors.”

But nonetheless, no guidance is provided on by whose authority the hadiths should be read or interpreted. Nevertheless, the writings on Jihad do closely resemble those of Salafi advocates of Jihad, for the Hanafi tradition is much more prudent with regard to its advocacy.

But overall, as the following lengthy excerpts show, there is very little religious knowledge displayed by the author of the text, who seek to mimic the style traditionally offered in religious commentary, but who make absolutely no reference is made to the classic texts on jihad, which makes the Uzbek text a much more primitive example of “*Jihadist*” literature than many contemporaneous Arab works:

“- Commentary: The sole purpose of Muslims is for Allah to be happy with us. This means - to carry out all commands of Allah, to fight to make the word of Allah above all, so that everything is managed, as directs Islam, in order to realize the command of Allah throughout the whole world.

-Idea: Any command, except the commands of Allah - is oppression, independent of its forms. We will fight until they disappear completely.

-Slogan: It is necessary to build a political and military system that would never change so that would never come to agreement with the unbelievers, rejecting their political system, their culture, removing them from all posts of authority to establish only an Islamic order. This is our slogan: "There is no God, besides Allah, and Muhammad is his Prophet).

-Commentary: There must be no exceptions! Be it the television, the radio, the market, even the church. Even if everything becomes expensive! The slogan must be realized, regardless of all else! All foreign connections are broken and constructed only based on the Islamic order. Will there be a bank? It will exist only in the order established by Islam. In the Islamic state there will not be any Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Everything will be liquidated.

-The establishment at the work sites of special organizations, which will have to be reared in the spirit of the truth faith and ideology. Commentary: Many people understand Islam, but they do not understand the final goals. They do not understand that Islam - this is life, this is the thing (*narsa*), which revives man. They think that this only one of the parts of their life and, following directions, they depart from life. There is no such nation as "infidel." Allah created all his creatures so that they would worship him. The [unbelievers] we will call to accept Islam. If they do not accept - it is necessary to kill them, to convert them into the slaves, to value them not more than cattle! Israelites, Christians and Polytheists - they will all become things [for sale]. They will be divided [among the believers] as things. Man must have an understanding of the true. One ought not to treat them leniently, saying: "they [unbelievers] are indeed also people." No, since they are untrue to Allah!

It is necessary to know accurately – the regulations of Islam, what are its goals, what are the unbelievers preparing against Islam, or what they do in general? All this

must be known. For this we need people with the correct interpretation of things. It is now necessary to know how to offer *ijtihad*.³⁸

As to the form of government:

In the country there must be one [supreme] Amir, also in each city. There must be one Amir for every 10 to 5 people. They must be selected by a specific association, which can also replace him. However, the Supreme Amir cannot assign [junior] Amirs to the subordinated to him cities. Commentary: We cannot, for example, remove the Amir of a group of 10 people, this is even unwise. Since we indeed do not know all the members of these ten, do not know how they have developed their relations between themselves and with others. Such willfulness can again revive the system of the unbelievers, i.e., to lead to a dictatorship and then the joint association will disunite.”

And then the text continues a few paragraphs later:

“Election Conditions for Amirs

1. It is necessary to possess both religious and secular knowledge.

Commentary: Is not compulsory to be only a qari, a Shaikh-ul Islam, or to have only a college education. In other words, being a religious person, one ought not to remain without secular knowledge, while having mastered secular knowledge; one ought not to be in ignorance of matters of faith. There are, for example, such theologians, who say that nothing special is happening, even if the interests of Muslims are being hurt. They do not know and do not understand about the events proceeding [in the world] and they know nothing about the jihad. Let Allah show them mercy, who knew peace,

³⁸ *Ijtihad* – a theologian’s study of various questions on which he delivers verdicts. It is considered that with the addition of *mashabs* "the door of *ijtihad* were shut" and it is possible to deliver verdicts on small

got to know Allah! In other words, he carried out the commands of Allah in this world. Many theologians, if you ask from them a *fatva*, give it, basing it on the positions of the times of Islamic caliphate. [Others], being in the government of unbelievers, preach in the mosque, citing hadiths of the Prophets envoy who indicated that he was ready to burn the houses of those, who do not go to the mosque. This proceeds from their ignorance.

2. [The Amir] must be in Islam not less than 10 years and serve Islam, possessing righteous concepts. Commentary: The period can be smaller - 5-7 years. But he must conduct a righteous life, he must be subject to tests after he entered Islam. He must improve with each day. For if he is not improving, then the people surrounding him will not improve in the knowledge or in matters. He must have the drive to master military knowledge.

For example, the knowledge of Abduhvali qari grew with each day and he reached the knowledge of questions of jihad. Fazil qari⁵¹ did not grow this far. The unbelievers love such people who do not improve. Therefore [the Amir] must be demanding of himself and demanding of others.

3. [The Amir] must be approximately 30-40- years old. Commentary: The fact is that [an amir] who is too young does not have an experience of life, although he can possess good knowledge.

Also, the Amir must know about the family status of his subordinates, monitor their behavior, conversations and manners.

4. In Shari'a there exist other methods of checking people. It is necessary to use these methods to test them. For example, we recognize Muhammad-Sodiq Muhammad-

questions. However, some theologians of the present consider that it is necessary again "to open the doors of *ijtihad*" in order to reexamine the positions of Islam from the point of view of the contemporary situation.

Yusuf to be a really faithful person. But if any good theologian meets with him and have academic conversations with him, he can prove his [Muhammad-Sodiq's] weakness of knowledge, his adherence [to Hanafi mazhab] and so on. Thus, his knowledge is checked by true knowledge. Indeed the envoy of Allah - peace to him! - said: "if someone is glad when they oppress Muslims - he is a hypocrite".

It is necessary for the theologians of our state to be respected people. They must participate in management of the state, even if with them (or between them) are small disagreements on insignificant questions. Commentary: These theologians cannot be removed from matters. However, in the matter of propaganda, if one theologian will give a decision on a specific question, another theologian must not contradict him.

Disputes on small question are ceased. These questions must be discussed only in the Councils [of Amirs] and be solved based on Islamic laws. And if these theologians will not remind all about [the laws] of the religion of Allah, then we will not differ in any way from simple hooligans.

Theologians must be at their place, god gave knowledge to them and it is necessary to use this. In all mosques it is necessary to conduct propaganda from the point of view of the Qur'an and Sunna. And from the parishioners, after thorough checking, some of them will be selected for our association. Commentary: The principle of our school lies in selecting from the simple workers necessary people and joining them with us. As how to check such a person - everything depends on his individuality."

This lengthy excerpt from the IMU's lessons gives clear evidence of their relatively low level of religious learning. This same low level of learning is also found in the various

⁵¹ Fazil qari Sodiqov was imam of the *Yangi* mosque in Tashkent until February 1999, and then went on to chair the committee on religious cults with the Council of Ministers of republic of Uzbekistan.

movies that the IMU produced while living in camps in Afghanistan, when the movement had already integrated a clerical presence into its daily life. This clerical presence came from the madrasa, which were opened in the camps to train the fighters and their families.

The IMU fighters that I have interviewed did attest to the fact that the sermons in the films were characteristic of life in the camps in Afghanistan, that Tahir Yuldashev spent lots of time preaching

Here, much more explicitly than in the “lessons on jihad”, Tahir Yuldashev argues that he is a true Hanafi Muslim. However, he tries to derive his legitimacy from the teachings of ‘Abduhvali qari and ‘Obid qari, neither of whom can be considered to be closely associated with Hanafi teachings.

Many of his inspirational movies brought together film excerpts of their sermons with Tahir Yuldashev’s sermons, and in one of films, the director uses film overlay to have the picture of ‘Abduhvali qari merge into that of Tahir Yuldashev, as the latter considers the former to be his spiritual inspiration.

But much like the “notes” on jihad, the sermons offered by Tahir Yuldashev (as opposed to the excerpts provided to sermons by ‘Obid qari and ‘Abduhvali qari) contained in the movies that I have in my possession, also are very primitive in terms of the treatment of religious themes.

Take for example excerpts from the movie “*Ular*” (Them), which is an attack on the Karimov government for its treatment of religious believers and its policies toward religion more generally. In his defense of his decision to make *hijrat*, to flee the land ruled by unbelievers, Tahir Yuldashev offers the following defense:

“They say that we used religion for the sake of our own interests. No, it is you who concealed your goals through religion! We are here⁴⁰ because we want religion to rule over everything! (the voices of listeners: “Allah the great (*akbar*)!”). They are those who sell their religion and accuse us of using religion to cover our goals. No!! We have taken this path to make religion dominant in our souls and then in the whole world! Mushriklar (those who believe in many gods) and those faithless (*kafirs*) claim we came here to earn dollars. We are here to find paradise (in the future world).⁴¹ We are here hoping our God will be content with us. And our salary cannot be measured with dollars! Never will anybody sell a part of his/her body even for a lot of money.

For example, you are told “give me your eyes. I will give you a million dollars for your eyes.” Will you give your eyes away? Hi, you nuts!⁴² We are ready to sacrifice our lives for this \$700, which you are talking about. The regime of this disloyal Karimov claims that we get \$700 a month. Could anybody sacrifice his life for \$700? No!! We won’t turn off this road until we are in paradise (voices of the listeners: “Insha’ Allah! God Willing”).

We will continue on this path because we took this road responding to the call of theologians, on the basis of Islam theology, on the basis of our concepts, and on the basis of our belief. We did not choose this way blindfolded! These disloyal men say we are left homeless and hungry! No! Among us there are those who are rich and satisfied like Musaab ibn ‘Umar. When he went along the streets of Mecca all women whom he cast a glance immediately fell in love with him. And after he walked down a street, there would be a pleasant smell left for several days because

⁴⁰ i.e. in immigration, and in point of fact in Afghanistan.

⁴¹ My Allah! Is there another way to “find paradise”?

he wore so much perfume. There were dozens of his slaves and servants around him. But then he got to know the true belief. The day he was killed in battle in Badr by the mountain Ukhud,⁴³ he could not find himself enough cloth to make a *kafn*⁴⁴ for him. When people covered his head, his legs were seen. But if they covered his legs, his head was seen. So he was buried with his head being covered with his own clothes.⁴⁵ We have people like Musaab ibn ‘Umar among us. They sacrificed all their property on their way to Allah. Oh, no! You faithless, remember we are not looking for dollars. We here are not looking for Russian rubles. We are not thinking how to take away the power from a faithless figure. We chose this way and devoted all our life to it because it is the way which the Prophet, his faithful caliphs and companions devoted their lives.”

In fact, former IMU fighters who I interviewed and who had been in the camps in Afghanistan during 2000-2001 did confirm that they were promised \$700-\$1000 dollars a month (the sum varied) when they signed up, but all said that they never received the money (although former commanders with whom I met did say that Tahir Yuldashev was receiving grants for each fighter he recruited). But the same fighters did remark on how Tahir Yuldashev loved giving sermons, and having them filmed, hence the lengthy sermons that appear on the videotapes in my possession.

⁴² This is a reference to Karimov who mentioned in one of his interviews that members of military opposition fight not on religious ground but rather because they get paid \$700 a month.

⁴³ Yuldash is confusing the two different battles. The Badr battle was in the year 624. The Ukhud battle, when Musaab ibn ‘Umar was killed, was in 625.

⁴⁴ *Kafn* is a white cloth in which the deceased are wrapped.

⁴⁵ This is a famous story from the early Muslim “*agiographia*.” “On his way to Allah,” Musaab ibn ‘Umar gave his treasures to Muslims and became a martyr, finding the treasures of a different world.

But by 2001 the IMU leaders in general, and Tahir Yuldashev in particular, began to incorporate current global strains in jihad literature into their movement. We have found two examples of this.

The first is a film, “The Martyr Abu Dujon,” which was filmed to commemorate the life and death of the first Uzbek “martyr” (*shahid*) in Afghanistan, a young man from Bukhara who accidentally stepped on a mine in the camp near Mazar-i Sharif in which he was living.

The film closely resembles other accounts done in the Arab world,⁴⁶ in which the life of a dead fighter is described in wholly spiritual terms. Abu Dujon (the pseudonym this young man took, the name of one of the Prophet’s companions) was remembered by his colleagues as having been an unusually spiritual person, and that in the days before his death he was full of premonitions of meeting hour is in heaven.

Although the film was an obvious reconstruction, edited and put together sometime after the subject’s death, Abu Dujon’s final hours were videotaped—including the attempted surgery to repair his torn limbs---meaning that someone in the camp was quick to respond to the media moment that his fatal accident provided.

Parenthetically, the film seems to have been a wholly fictitious representation of Abu Dujon, who a former IMU fighter who knew him from the camps described him as rather a cut-up, and not at all spiritual.

In 2003 we also managed to procure a copy of a notebook with the second half of a translation of Ibn al-Nahhas (d. 1411), entitled *Mashari` al-ashwaq ila masari` al-`ushshaq wa-muthir al-gharam ila Dar al-salam*, or *Market-place Roads to the Struggling-points of Lovers, and the Inciter of Desire for the House of Peace*, a classic work on Jihad.

⁴⁶ This is the opinion of both Professor David Cook of Rice University, who viewed the film in its entirety with me, and Hussain Haqqani of the Carnegie Endowment, who saw excerpts of the film.

It was completed on March 26, 2001, in Mazar-i Sharif, as this indicated in the text. It is a fair assumption that the first half of this vast book was also translated, but it is less certain whether the translation was ever published by the IMU, as we have never encountered a published version of it. Given the way we obtained this material, it is likely that the author returned to Uzbekistan and was either arrested or received amnesty. Either way, the notebook seems to have come into the hands of the local authorities.

We were able to identify the text with the help of Professor David Cook, of Rice University, who offers the following explanation of the importance of this text, in unpublished materials that he prepared for me:

“There is a rich heritage of *jihad* literature in Islam. Starting from the comparatively small (pamphlet-size) work of `Abdallah b. al-Mubarak (d. 797), *Kitab al-jihad*, it includes at least several hundred works describing the manner in which *jihad* should be fought, the spiritual benefits of the fighter and the rewards due to him in heaven. Frequently this type of literature will contain inspirational stories from the time of the Prophet Muhammad and his immediate Companions, from the great Islamic conquests (634-732) and from the continual warfare that occurred along the borders with the Byzantine Empire, the Turks and other groups.

Of these works, that of Ahmad b. Ibrahim b. Muhammad al-Dimashqi al-Dumyati, usually known as Ibn al-Nahhas (d. 1411), entitled *Mashari` al-ashwaq ila masari` al-`ushshaq wa-muthir al-gharam ila Dar al-salam*, or *Market-place Roads to the Struggling-points of Lovers, and the Inciter of Desire for the House of Peace* (as is common with classical Arabic texts, the title is rhymed and gives little indication of what the true content of the book is) stands out. We know little about the life of the author, only that he was in Syria between 1388-1400, and left at the time of Timur’s attack on Damascus in 1400, at a time when Syria was still

recovering from the two centuries long war with the Crusaders (expelled in 1291), and the conflict with the Mongol Il-Khan rulers of Iraq and Persia. He went to the port city of Dumyat (Damietta), in Egypt where he died during a Crusader raid in 1414.

Ibn al-Nahhas was a product of this milieu, and felt keenly that *jihad* against the infidels was an important component of Muslim life. Ibn al-Nahhas is that he was identified as having been both a Hanafi and then a Shafi`i, indicating that he switched *madhhabs* (the Muslim schools of law).

In many ways Ibn al-Nahhas was the culmination of the seven centuries of *jihad* writing that preceded him. His book is easily divided into thirty-three different parts, with a two-part finale that is something of a summary of the total, together with an abstract of the different strategies and tactics available for the mujahid.

The text that has been gathered from Uzbekistan starts on p. 727 of the printed edition and thus about 40% of the text is extant, from the middle of the twenty-eighth part. The first part of the published book progresses predictably from chapters on the necessity of *jihad*, to the merit of *jihad*, to encouraging *jihad*, joining it early and making haste to be a part of it, dealing with specific traditions—the “going out and coming in” tradition, the “dust on the feet” tradition—to the merit of sea-fighting, to spending money on *jihad*, equipping a fighter, and helping him.

Then the text continues speaking of the auxiliaries of warfare: the merit of horses, those that take care of horses, before switching back to discussing the actions of a guard (*murabit*) and his spiritual merit, the merits of guarding, and the merit of fearing God. Then specific tactics are described: the line (Qur'an 61:4),

casting projectiles at the enemy, the merit of swords, the merit of being wounded, the merit of killing an infidel, and the merit of a single courageous man or a small group attacking a larger infidel one. Then the sin of one who flees from the battlefield (Qur'an 8:16) is described, together with the fact that the reward of *jihad* will not be realized until the fighter's intentions are pure. Next there is the assurance that one who goes out with the intention of fighting and dies before he reaches the battlefield is indeed a martyr, and a section encouraging the Muslim to ask for martyrdom in his prayers (28). The last sections, extant in the Uzbek translation, deal with the rewards of a martyr in heaven, the forbidding of illegal pillaging after battle (a severe problem in pre-modern armies), redemption of the Muslim prisoners from the enemy, a semi-historical account of the Prophet Muhammad's battles, and a section on the praise of courage and the condemnation of cowardice.

There are good reasons for contemporary radical Muslims to translate Ibn al-Nahhas. As the latter writes in his introduction to the *Mashari`*, he wrote the book because *jihad* had died out during his time—a considerable exaggeration—and he wanted to gather all of the laws and ordinances of *jihad* together so that fighters could be encouraged by them. This is precisely how contemporary radical Muslims feel about the status of *jihad* during the present time. So, although this is a classical book, it has a good deal of power to speak to the right audiences.

In translating this text, Uzbek radical Muslims have antecedents among other radical Muslims. For the past decade there have been periodic citations of *Mashari`* by radical Muslims; for example, the website dedicated to the memory and legacy of `Abdallah `Azzam (assassinated 1989), the mentor of Osama bin Laden, and the exemplar for global radical Muslim movements, has a link to the

full Arabic text of the book. This link was to the site of aloswa.org (taking its name from Qur'an 60:4, which is one of the most polarizing texts used by radical Muslims), and is no longer extant. However, for example we find that the radical Islamic news site azzam.com translated a section of the *Mashari`* into English as "An Advice [sic!] to Those who Abstain from Fighting in the Cause of Allah" (10 pages) at azzam/html/articlesabstain.htm (accessed 11/30/01)."

H. Conclusion

The goal of this paper is to describe the roots of radical Islam, and demonstrates that evolution of radical Islam in the years just prior to and immediately following the collapse of Soviet rule have their roots in earlier decades, and represent both a battle between Islam and outside forces which seek to transform its socio-political role and doctrinal disputes within Islam that have been characteristic of the practice and teaching of the faith for over five hundred years.

Throughout Central Asia's history there have been decisive events that triggered a regrouping of forces, within the Islamic community. The Russian conquest was one, the Bolshevik Revolution, another, Stalin's purges in the 1930s yet another.

In this paper we have seen how various momentous events in contemporary history have also played their role.

As we have seen in this paper, the "stagnation" of the late Brezhnev period served as a catalyst for the development of a new vitality among Central Asia's religious leaders and a new daringness on the part of their most prominent pupils.

That young generation----some in their presence, others through the continued popularity of their teachings---continue to play a role in Central Asia, and especially in Uzbekistan. While a younger generation of clerics have emerged---and some of these are discussed in the soon to be available accompanying paper that looks more closely at the

teachings and role being played by Muhammad-Sodiq Muhammad-Yusuf----none of these men have been able to eclipse either Muhammad-Yusuf or the (presumably) posthumous role still being played by ‘Abduhvali qari.

The tensions today are relatively unchanged from the late 1980’s and the key questions are still the same. How can the community of believers (and the clerics that seek to direct them) make the state more responsive to the teachings of Islam? And how should the community of believers treat a state that is both largely unresponsive and run almost entirely by those who themselves reject the teachings of Islam?

Those clerics whose views are shaped by the main body of Hanafi legal interpretation tend to be most accommodating toward the regime, but even Hanafi clerics (like Muhammad-Sodiq, and those shaped by his teachings) seek ways to reinterpret the dominant Hanafi literature (sometimes through the use of less conformist Hanafi authors) so that it increases their ability to engage in independent political action. This makes their attitude toward the relationship of the state to religion oftentimes far closer to Salafi thinkers than to their own Hanafi brothers.

The question of the relationship between Islamic believers and that state is a critical one, as depending upon how it is resolved it either encourages, permits, or discourages the use of violence in the name of Islam.

In the period of the mid-1990s, during the Tajik Civil War, most of the most prominent Uzbek religious thinkers were willing to condone (and even encourage) the use of violence against those forces in Tajikistan seeking to defeat the fighters of the Islamic Renaissance Party. Their attitude toward the use of force in Uzbekistan proper was far more ambiguous, and none of those clerics (and I don’t consider Tahir Yuldashev to be a cleric) cited in this paper ever openly called for the use of force in Uzbekistan, although many took up arms in the name of the teachings of ‘Abduhvali qari in particular.

Since September 11, 2001, the situation has grown even more complicated, and their impact on the development of radical, or neo-Islamic trends in Uzbekistan, and the Central Asian Islam, is a separate problem for analysis. However, an elaboration of these trends would clearly show their roots in the periods described in this paper.