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The Politicisation of Islam in Postsoviet Central Asia*

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In the late 1980s most Central Asians were still deeply secular in outlook, a legacy of 70 years of communist rule. Yet from the bottom up, as well as from the top down, there was an impetus for enhancing the role of Islam in society. In the 1990s, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, these pressures increased, stimulated by internal as well as external developments. The mobilisation of factions with different political agendas, and different visions of Islam, set in motion a complex dynamic of action and reaction. Increasingly, as the Central Asian states became integrated into the international community, so their responses to Islam began to resemble those that are found in other parts of the world, particularly in the Middle East. Common features include the cooptation and control of Islam by ruling elites, and opposition to such regimes by radical Islamist groups. A similar model is being created in Central Asia today, where competition between these forces – government and Muslim opposition – has resulted in proliferating outbreaks of confrontation. This has led to fears that Central Asia will become a new centre of terrorism and that militant Islamists from abroad will find a ready welcome here. Consequently, Islam – or more precisely, the contestation of Islam – has come to be regarded as a security issue. This paper traces the emergence of these tensions.

Soviet Background

During the Soviet era Islam was severely persecuted and its infrastructure almost totally destroyed. During the Second World War a small, state-controlled, Muslim hierarchy was reestablished and some of the formal elements of religious observance were permitted to reappear. Yet there was no abatement of the campaign to secularise society and to replace religious belief by 'scientific atheism'. The result was that by the 1980s Islam had become more a marker of cultural and ethnic identity than an active spiritual commitment for most Central Asians. The chief manifestations of allegiance to the faith at this period were the celebration of religious ceremonies connected with rites of passage, such as (male) circumcision, marriage and burial. Also, there was widespread observance of folk traditions, such as pilgrimages to the graves of holy men and the performance of associated rituals to secure divine

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assistance and protection. In popular understanding such practices were considered to be in keeping with Muslim belief, but in fact were syncretic accretions. Knowledge of Islamic doctrine, of prayers, and even of the basic Muslim profession of faith ('There is no God but God and Muhammed is His Prophet') was limited to a small number of predominantly elderly individuals (Ro'i, 2000; Akiner, 1996, pp. 107–16).

In the 1980s, however, there was an Islamic resurgence. The impetus for this came from two directions. One was a revivalist movement. Located mainly in rural areas of Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, particularly the Fergana valley, it mostly took the form of clandestine circles of disciples who congregated around a local teacher respected for his piety and Muslim learning. Such groups were characterised by scholastic conservatism. They were harassed and spasmodically punished by the state authorities. The most prominent figure in this movement was the renowned scholar Muhammad Hindustani Rustamov (Haji Domla). Born in Kokand in about 1892, he began his religious education at an early age; during the First World War he went to Afghanistan and later to India. He returned to Uzbekistan in 1929 and thereafter endured several years of persecution. In 1947 he moved to Dushanbe, where he died in 1989. His many disciples included clerics from the official Muslim establishment (Muminov, 1999, pp. 77–83). In the 1970s some of his younger followers began to call for an active struggle to cleanse society of its 'impurities' (including such heretical practices as pilgrimages to the saints of holy men). The most influential representatives of this tendency were Rahmatulla Qari Allama and Abduvali Qari Mirzoyev (both from the Fergana valley). A bitter schism opened up between the 'purists' (known as *mujaddidiyya* ('renewers')) and the conservatives (Babadjanov and Kamilov, 2001, pp. 195–216). The former were dubbed 'Wahhabis', first by their opponents and then more generally in the Soviet press, thereby insinuating that there was a treasonous link to a foreign power (a link which was not proven and almost certainly did not exist at this period).¹ It is difficult to judge the impact of these revivalist groups, whether purist or conservative in orientation, on society at large. They are said to have attracted 'masses' of followers, but whether this indicates hundreds or thousands of believers is not clear. Yet the very fact that they existed was in itself significant. Only the initiated would have been able to follow the intricacies of their doctrinal disputes, but they did generate a new interest in Islamic thought.

Parallel to this development was the change in official policy towards Islam. During the period of *perestroika* (the second half of the 1980s) the government began to adopt a conciliatory attitude towards the religious establishment in response to two quite different concerns.

One concern was the need to manage the nascent 'Islamic threat'. The perception of Islam as a potential menace was to some extent inspired by the writings of western scholars, who frequently stressed that the rapid demographic growth of the Soviet Muslim population would endanger the stability of the Soviet Union and might even bring about its dissolution.² The threat perception was fuelled, too, by apprehension that 'fundamentalist' movements might be imported into Central Asia from Iran and Afghanistan. The Soviet government's strategy for dealing with this situation in the 1980s was very different from what it might have been in an earlier period: now, instead of increased repression, there was a concerted effort to work with the official Muslim institutions to promote 'Central Asian' orthodoxy. Much emphasis was placed on the historic tradition of Islam in the region, as witnessed by the works of great medieval scholars such as al-Bukhari and at-Tirmizi. The explicit message was that Central Asians should be proud of their own form of Islam. They did not need to imitate others: on the contrary, they could act as exemplars for Muslims in other

countries.³

The other concern for the Soviet authorities at this time was the urgent need to improve economic performance. The state was suffering a systemic crisis, but the full scale of the problems had not yet become apparent and blame was largely laid on human failings, particularly on corruption, fraud and other malpractices. In an attempt to change the moral climate, religious leaders were coopted to help fight these social ills. In Central Asia, as part of this policy, Islam began to be presented in a positive light, with much emphasis on its ethical values. To help spread this message, many mosques were opened (more in 1989–91 than at any time in the previous seven decades) and there was a dramatic rise in the availability of religious literature and facilities for the study of the Quran. The result of this overt government support gave the Muslim official hierarchy greater public visibility, as well as increased influence in society.

This policy of accommodation towards Islam was marked by the promotion of younger men (several in their early thirties) to leading positions in the official Muslim institutions. These included Muhammad Sadyk Muhammad Yusuf Hoja-ogli (known less formally as Muhammad Sadyk or Mamayusupov) to head the Muslim Spiritual Directorate for Central Asia and Kazakhstan, Akbar Turajonzade to head the Tajik branch of the administration, Ratbek Nysanbai-uly to head the Kazakh branch and Nasrullah ibn Ibadullah to head the Turkmen branch. Such men had received a thorough training in Islamic scholarship in Soviet madrassahs, and in religious institutions abroad. Products of the postwar period, they were loyal Soviet citizens, but also devout Muslims. They were firmly committed to the twin aims of increasing knowledge and practice of Islam among the population at large, and also to giving the faith a greater public role in society. This generation of Muslim leaders did not see (or were not prepared to discuss) a possible contradiction between their goals and those of the secular authorities. Rather, they seized the opportunity to appropriate the space that had been opened up by the change in official attitudes in order to pursue their own agendas. Some of these new clerics (for example, Muhammad Sadyk) were disciples of so-called 'Wahhabi' teachers (Muminov, 1999, pp. 77–83). Moreover, like the 'Wahhabis', one of their priorities was the promotion of 'purist', orthodox Islam, cleansed of the superstition and syncretic accretions that characterised the religious practice of the majority of the population. Thus, the interests of members of the official Muslim hierarchy and of the unofficial 'Wahhabis' converged. Working in different spheres, within different organisational frameworks, their efforts were often complementary. Yet any form of collaboration was still of necessity surreptitious, since the government regarded the 'Wahhabis' with suspicion and hostility.⁴

It must be stressed that the developments outlined above – the change in government policy, the growing influence of official and unofficial Muslim organisations – were very tentative and lasted little more than a couple of years, from the late 1980s to the collapse of the Soviet Union at the end of 1991. They were generally welcomed by the public at large, but there was too little time for any real transformation to take place. By the end of the Soviet era there was widespread consensus that Islam must play a greater role in society, but there was no real concept as to what that role should be. There was also no debate as to how Islamic precepts should be interpreted and implemented in contemporary conditions. In fact, for the overwhelming majority of the population, Islam was still primarily understood (and observed) in terms of tradition and symbol (Akiner, 1996).

Only in Tajikistan was the picture somewhat different. The head of the official Muslim administration, Qazi Turajonzade, made an energetic attempt to reintroduce a

Muslim discourse into public life. His aim was not to create an Islamic state (on more than one occasion he stressed that that was not a realistic goal, since so few Tajiks had any real knowledge of the faith). Rather, his mission was to train the teachers and clerics who could educate the masses. Working within the framework of Soviet law, he founded an Islamic Institute in Dushanbe (1990); he also succeeded in publishing numerous booklets on Islam and opening over a hundred community mosques (Akiner, 2001, pp. 28–33). It was, too, in Tajikistan that the first (and to date only) Islamic political party was established in Central Asia. This was the Islamic Rebirth Party (IRP) of Tajikistan. It began as an offshoot of the all-Union Islamic Rebirth Party, which was founded in Astrakhan' (on the Volga) in June 1990. However, the Tajik party soon began to follow an independent course; it was formally registered by the Tajik authorities in October 1991. Thus, on the eve of the collapse of the Soviet Union, in this one republic Islam was not only beginning to play a significant role in public life, but was also operating with a degree of autonomy that was not to be found elsewhere in the region.

Postsoviet Islam

When the Central Asian states gained independence at the end of 1991 there was much speculation, within the region and abroad, as to the possible impact of the 'Islamic factor' on politics and society. In Tajikistan the government and the Islamist faction, led by the IRP, were soon locked in conflict, triggering the outbreak of civil war in mid-1992. This seemed to many to be proof positive that a wave of rampant 'Islamic fundamentalism' had been unleashed in the region. This, however, was an oversimplification. Islam was undoubtedly a factor in the conflict, but by no means the sole cause. Rather, it was an aggravating feature in the struggle for national supremacy that broke out between the different regional groupings as soon as Moscow's grip weakened. The conflict continued sporadically for five years. It was formally brought to a close in June 1997, when a peace treaty was signed by the warring factions. Despite the shortcomings of this agreement, and the imperfect manner in which it was implemented, nevertheless up to the present it has remained in force. This has permitted a certain amount of political and economic restructuring to take place; some independent political parties have (re-)gained registration, including the Islamic Rebirth Party (Abdullaev and Barnes, 2001; Akiner, 2001, pp. 51–62).

Fears that the Tajik conflict might spread to neighbouring states have not been realised. Nevertheless, the theory that the 'Islamic factor' is the key to the politics of Central Asia is still widely held. Yet any serious debate of the issue is greatly impeded by the fact that very little concrete information is available. In the few instances where field research has been carried out, it has been based on relatively small samples. There are huge regional variations in the historical experience of Islam, as well as in contemporary socio-economic indicators (for example, levels of urbanisation, rates of demographic increase, educational standards, geographic mobility and ethnic heterogeneity). Consequently it would be misleading to make sweeping generalisations on the basis of such a narrow range of evidence.

To complicate matters further, researchers who have worked in the same area, at approximately the same period, often come to very different conclusions. Given these problems, it is virtually impossible to gain a comprehensive overview of the situation. Nevertheless, some common trends can be identified, though they vary in scope and intensity from state to state, and also from area to area within a single state. They represent an evolution of the tendencies that emerged in the 1980s, but in a more

intense and segmented form. They fall into three main categories; these can be described as 'traditional' Islam, 'government-sponsored' Islam and 'radical' Islam.

Traditional Islam

The term 'traditional' Islam is used here to describe the conservative, overall rather passive attitude to religion that continues to characterise the outlook of the great majority of Central Asian Muslims. As most observers would agree (including fellow Muslims from abroad), Islam here is still perceived more as an ethnic definition than as a religious allegiance. There is a strong sense of obligation 'to maintain the traditions of our forefathers'. This may be expressed in a variety of ways, encompassing different degrees of religious observance. For a few, it involves a strict performance of the prescribed rituals, but most tend to affirm their Islamic identity in a more cursory, symbolic fashion. Moreover, there is still great attachment to popular practices which, though understood as being Islamic, are contrary to orthodox teachings. Yet whatever the level or form of active participation in religion, the emphasis tends to be on preserving continuity rather than searching for enlightenment, or for a deeper understanding of the faith. Actual knowledge of the religion, with few exceptions, remains limited.

This situation may be changing, albeit slowly. In the immediate aftermath of independence there was a great upsurge of enthusiasm for mosque construction. In Kyrgyzstan, for example, there were only 34 mosques open for worship in 1987, but almost 1000 in 1994; in Uzbekistan in the same period the number rose from 87 to some 3000.⁵ The same phenomenon was to be observed in the other Central Asian states. Moreover, many Muslim schools and madrassahs were opened and courses were provided for children and adults in the study of Arabic, the Quran and related religious topics (Akiner, 1996; Trofimov, 1996).

The physical closeness of places of worship encouraged people to attend services on a regular basis and in the early 1990s mosque congregations grew rapidly. By about 1994, however, the novelty was beginning to wear off and a marked drop in attendance was to be observed throughout the region. Since then, there appears to have been a gradual recovery, particularly in the south (notably the Fergana valley and southern Kazakhstan). Some researchers claim that this is happening mainly in villages, among males in the 17–25 year-old age group. Others insist that it is more typical of traders and businessmen in urban areas – that is, the emerging entrepreneurial class. University students are also said to be showing an interest in the faith (Olimova, 1999; Zhorobekova, 2000; Tabyshalieva, 2001). There are no corroborated statistics available on this trend, so it is impossible to judge how strong or how widespread it is, but that there is some shift in this direction seems to be beyond dispute.

Government-Sponsored Islam

'Government-sponsored' Islam in postsoviet Central Asia is a continuation of the attempt to coopt religion to serve the needs of the state that marked official policies towards Islam in the late 1980s. Today the Constitutions of all the Central Asian countries enshrine the principle of the division of religion and state. Yet throughout the region Islam has been elevated to a status akin to that of a state ideology. This seems to have been prompted by the conviction that unless urgent action was taken to fill the ideological vacuum left by the discrediting of Marxism-Leninism (which

possibly had more support in Central Asia than elsewhere in the Soviet Union), anarchy would follow. Consequently, in all the Central Asian states an immediate campaign was set in motion to emphasise the role of Islam as an integral component of the national heritage, and likewise of the ethical foundation of the state. This message was conveyed through the teachings of Muslim clerics, as well as through the pronouncements of senior political figures and editorial and documentary features in the mass media. In Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan this dual ethical-national significance was made explicit when the presidents swore their respective oaths of office on both the Constitution and the Quran.

On a personal level, the heads of state (all former Communist Party members who came to power under Soviet rule) have been at pains to establish Muslim credentials. This has included fulfilling the 'lesser' (*umrah*) pilgrimage to Mecca.⁶ President Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan at first eschewed an emphatic endorsement of Islam. However, he too eventually began to adopt an overtly pro-Islamic stance. One indication of this is the inscription on the imposing new mosque in Almaty (former capital of Kazakhstan) proclaiming that the construction was undertaken 'on the initiative and with the personal support of the president of the Republic of Kazakhstan'. More forthrightly still, in an interview in 1999 he explained 'We are Sunni Muslims and must follow this path'. As one Kazakh commentator pointed out, when the head of state makes such a pronouncement it takes on the force of a political directive – a violation of the principle of freedom of conscience that is guaranteed in the Constitution.⁷

Since independence, new laws on religion and on religious associations have been passed in the Central Asian states. The law adopted in Uzbekistan in 1998 is regarded as the most restrictive. However, the draft amendments that are currently under consideration in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan propose measures that are almost equally severe. Political parties of a religious orientation are proscribed everywhere except in Tajikistan, where in mid-1999, in the run-up to parliamentary elections, the Islamic Rebirth Party, outlawed in 1993, was again legalised. In all five states, religious communities must be officially registered by the authorities. If not, they are likely to be prosecuted, and to suffer personal harassment as well as the confiscation or destruction of community property. Most of the so-called 'nontraditional' faiths (meaning those that have only recently been introduced into the region) have experienced great difficulties in securing registration; insofar as they operate at all, their activities are regarded as illegal, and therefore criminal.

The form of Islam favoured by the Central Asian governments of today is based on the teachings of orthodox Sunni Islam of the Hanafi school of jurisprudence. However, the sphere of application is strictly limited. There is little question, for example, of introducing elements of shariah law (Muslim canon law) into the legal framework of these states. The main concern, at government level, is to promote 'good' Islam, which, it is implied, is beneficial to the development of the state; and to banish 'bad' Islam, which represents a threat to stability. To underline this last point, frequent reference is made to Tajikistan and Afghanistan where, it is alleged, the spread of 'bad' Islam has brought misery and suffering.

Yet there is no public debate in any of the Central Asian countries as to where, and on what basis, the dividing line should be drawn between the acceptable and the unacceptable. Thus men who grow beards (a traditional Muslim sign of piety) are regarded with suspicion, particularly in Uzbekistan (where they run the risk of summary arrest). Why these manifestations, which are in keeping with orthodox Muslim practice, should be labelled 'extremist', while other aspects of Islamic

behaviour should be encouraged, is not discussed. In Uzbekistan it is President Karimov who has taken the lead in defining Islam, thus subsuming the role of religious authority.⁸ Elsewhere the situation is more nebulous. Superficially there appears to be scope for public discussion of such issues in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. However, media outlets in these states are governed by a strong element of self-censorship, which ensures that such coverage as there is of religious issues will reinforce 'acceptable' interpretations of Islam.⁹

The institutional control of Islamic activities in Central Asia today largely follows the Soviet model. However, whereas under Soviet rule there had been a unified, overarching administration for all the Muslims of the region (the Muslim Spiritual Directorate of Central Asia and Kazakhstan), separate national administrations, each headed by a mufti, were established in the early 1990s.¹⁰ The Muftiate is responsible for administering Muslim affairs within the state, and maintaining formal contacts with Muslims abroad. The work of the Muftiate is closely monitored by a Committee or Council for Religious Affairs, a body that serves as the interface between the government and the religious communities (yet another Soviet-era survival). The interests of Muslims as well as of adherents of the other established faiths – chiefly Orthodox Christianity and Judaism – are officially represented in this body. The 'nontraditional' faiths such as Baha'is, Pentecostals, Jehovah's Witnesses, are regarded with suspicion and given little opportunity for official representation. In Turkmenistan the Muftiate and the Committee have virtually merged into a single entity, as the chairman of the latter body is the deputy mufti, while the mufti is deputy chairman of the Committee.

The Muftiate is responsible, amongst a number of other functions, for the formal examination and registration of Muslim clerics. Unregistered preachers are liable to criminal prosecution. The ostensible aim of registration is to disbar unqualified individuals from holding religious posts. This is indeed a serious issue. In Kyrgyzstan, for example, it was estimated that a third of all those who applied for registration in 1999 lacked the most basic level of religious training. At the same time, however, registration also enables the state authorities to keep a close check on the ideological orientation of the religious establishment. Clerics who hold views that do not conform to the official line, or who are felt to be lacking in loyalty to the government, can be excluded from the system. This is a common occurrence in Uzbekistan (the registration test there includes questions on President Karimov's works).

The most extreme example of government control over the Muslim establishment is in Uzbekistan. The last mufti of the Soviet era, Muhammad Sadyk, who initially enjoyed wide popular support, was forced from office in the wake of accusations of 'Wahhabi' sympathies, as well as of financial improprieties. In 1993 he went into voluntary exile. Since then, the official Muslim hierarchy has been relegated to a subordinate role, remarkable chiefly for its unquestioning support of government policies. Elsewhere in the region state control of the religious establishment is also increasing, though it is still well below the Uzbek level. In Kazakhstan, for example, in June 2000 President Nazarbayev played an influential, albeit indirect, role in the choice of the new mufti. The former mufti, Ratbek Nisanbai-uly (1990–2000), was removed from his post following persistent allegations of venality and incompetence. Whatever shortcomings he may have had in this direction (and it is a matter that is open to question) he had at least received some degree of training in Islamic scholarship. By contrast, the new mufti, Absattar Derbesaliyev, has had little formal religious education. A graduate in Kazakh language and literature, he studied Arabic for a few

years at the Oriental Institute in Moscow; thereafter he followed an academic career in Almaty until his appointment as counsellor in the Kazakh embassy in Saudi Arabia. Not all Kazakh Muslims are happy with this degree of state intervention.¹¹ However, in some circles in Kazakhstan, as also in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, there are signs that the relinking of religious and secular authority is coming to be regarded as an acceptable arrangement.¹²

Kyrgyzstan has, to date, shown a fairly consistent commitment to maintaining the independence of the religious establishment. This appeared to falter in December 1996 when covert government pressure resulted in the ousting of Mufti Kimsanbai-aji Abdurahman uulu (elected in 1993), a cleric who had a large following within the Muslim community, but was suspected by some of 'Wahhabi' leanings. He was replaced by Abdysatar-aji, an older, less independent-minded figure. Unexpectedly, Kimsanbai-aji was suddenly reinstated as mufti on 6 April 2000, following rumours that his successor's son had been involved in 'fundamentalist' activities in southern Kyrgyzstan. In retrospect it would appear that the role of the government in these manoeuvrings was not so much (or at least not only) a matter of policy on religious affairs, but rather of factional in-fighting. Senior clerics are supported by informal networks of regional and ethnic elements, which are in turn linked to cliques within the government. Thus changes of personnel in the religious hierarchy often reflect the ascendancy/eclipse of a particular faction in the wider political arena.

Radical Islam

The third trend in Central Asian Islam, here categorised as 'radical',¹³ embraces a loose grouping of activists who want to purge Islam of the distortions that have been introduced over time. They are collectively referred to as 'Wahhabis', a term that today, as during the Soviet era, is a generic expression of abuse rather than a literal description of religious affiliation. The purging of radical elements from the state-controlled Muslim bodies (notably in Uzbekistan) has broken the tacit alliance that existed at the end of the Soviet period between the 'purists' and the official religious hierarchy. This has left the former in a very vulnerable, isolated position. They have reacted by adopting a stance that is aggressively antagonistic, their ire targeted equally against debased folk interpretations of Islam as well as compromised government-sponsored Islam. For its part, the official hierarchy is now implacably ranged against the radicals. By contrast, the traditionalists are regarded with greater equanimity. Thus, since independence there has been a tactical realignment amongst the Muslims, with the traditionalists and the representatives of government institutions reaching a degree of accommodation, united by their opposition to the radicals.

From the early 1990s onwards the radical trend has been gaining ground. In Tajikistan, as mentioned above, it was one of the factors that led to the outbreak of the civil war. Elsewhere in the region the main expression of radical Islam has been the emergence of clandestine groups, based in Uzbekistan and adjacent areas of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. There are no reports of Islamist movements in Turkmenistan, which could either mean that they do not exist, or that they are suppressed more effectively than elsewhere.

It is impossible to set a figure either to the number of individuals who are involved, or to the number of separate groups. Names of some of these groups have appeared in various sources from time to time, but with almost no background information.¹⁴ Where it is possible to trace the biographies of the leaders, likewise the genealogy of

their ideas, it is obvious that they emanate from Soviet-era revivalist circles. The first such group to acquire wide notoriety was the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan. It was formed around 1996 under the leadership of Tahir Yoldashev and Jumabai Khojjiyev.¹⁵ It appears to have had greater coherence and sense of purpose than any previous formations (and it may indeed have attracted members from some of the earlier groups). It was based predominantly in the Fergana valley, and the great majority of its members were Uzbeks. The movement was also active in southern Kyrgyzstan and southern Kazakhstan, where it was said to find support among local Uzbek minorities. From the outset it seems to have accepted the need for armed conflict in order to attain its objectives. Government counter-terrorist operations caused many of its members to flee the country in the late 1990s (see the section 'Terrorism and Repression' below). They thereupon established camps in Afghanistan and, allegedly, Tajikistan (though the Tajik authorities deny this). In 2001 there was apparently a move to rename the party the Islamic Movement of Turkestan, but this does not appear to have been implemented.

Likewise in the mid-1990s a very different, and potentially far more powerful, radical element appeared. This was *Hizb ut-Tahrir* (transliterated in various forms and usually translated as the Liberation Party). A transnational Islamist organisation, it was created in 1953 in Jerusalem;¹⁶ it soon attracted a substantial following in Jordan and spread to other countries in the Middle East, North Africa and eventually South-East Asia. However, in several countries it was banned as a dangerously subversive organisation and its members were imprisoned.¹⁷ The current headquarters of the movement are not known, though it is credibly suggested that they are based in the United Kingdom. It is not known how it is funded, but it appears to have a highly developed infrastructure. It produces numerous publications and has an impressive internet presence. According to statements on the official website 'Hizb ut-Tahrir is a political party whose ideology is Islam'. Its aim is to bring the worldwide Muslim community back to an Islamic way of life, in an Islamic society administered according to the shariah rules, under the umbrella of the Khilafah State (that is, the Caliphate). Membership of the party is open to men and women, 'Arab or non-Arab, white or coloured, since it is a party for all Muslims'. It calls for an intellectual as well as a political struggle 'against the *Kufr* [disbelieving – S.A.] colonialist states which have domination and influence on the Islamic countries' and likewise 'against the rulers in the Arab and Muslim countries, by exposing them, taking them to task ... whenever they disagreed with the rules of Islam, and acting also to remove their regimes so as to establish the Islamic rule in its place' (Hizb ut-Tahrir, 2003).

The first Hizb ut-Tahrir leaflets reportedly appeared in Tashkent in 1992–93, but the movement does not seem to have established a definite presence in the city until 1995 (Ponomarev, 1999, p. 5). Thereafter it used its established strategy to progress 'from only approaching individuals to ... the culturing of individuals in circles to build the body of the Party and increase its members, and produce Islamic personalities that are capable of conveying the *da'wah* [invitation to Islam – S.A.] and rushing forward into the intellectual and political struggle'. The Hizb ut-Tahrir interpretation of the thoughts and rules of Islam are disseminated 'through lessons, lectures, and talks in the mosques, centres and common gathering places, and through the press, books and leaflets' (Hizb ut-Tahrir, 2003). The first emissaries of Hizb ut-Tahrir in Central Asia seem to have been of Jordanian origin (Ponomarev, 1999, pp. 4–5), but anecdotal evidence suggests that there were also several Pakistanis. Uzbekistan has, to date, been the primary focus of their activities. This is evidenced not only by their energetic missionary work and concomitant success in attracting

adherents (by some estimates, now numbering around 80,000), but also by the attention paid to Uzbekistan on the official Hizb ut-Tahrir website. Several of the documents posted there contain excoriating attacks on the Uzbek government and in particular on President Karimov, who is depicted as an arch-enemy of Islam.¹⁸ According to information supplied by the Uzbek law enforcement agencies the organisational structure of Hizb ut-Tahrir in Uzbekistan consists of seven levels, starting from the novice and progressing upwards to the leader; the nuclear cell consists of up to five people (Ponomarev, 1999, p. 5). Since 2001 the Hizb ut-Tahrir website has referred to Uzbekistan as a *wilaya* (province), presumably of an imagined worldwide Islamic state.

It is impossible, given the dearth of reliable information, to establish whether or not Hizb ut-Tahrir and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan are in any way linked. Initially they were quite separate organisations, but in the late 1990s there were rumours to suggest that some degree of rapprochement had taken place. This would not be surprising, since their goals are similar. Both movements believe that the governments and the government-sponsored Muslim administrations are corrupt and spiritually bankrupt. They believe that society as a whole is in need of moral regeneration and that this can be achieved only by a full and genuine return to Muslim values within the framework of an Islamic state. This has prompted accusations that they are plotting to overthrow by force the government and the constitutional system of the country. Consequently they are regarded as terrorists and enemies of the state. In Uzbekistan this has led to mass arrests of those who are suspected of belonging to, or sympathising with, either Hizb ut-Tahrir or the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan. There have also been widespread reports of assault and torture of those in custody; several Muslim clerics, among them the imams (religious leaders) of some of the major mosques in Tashkent and other cities, have disappeared without explanation. In Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, and to a lesser extent in Kazakhstan, there has been a similar trend of increased repression of alleged 'Islamic fundamentalists' (Amnesty International, 2001).

It is difficult to judge the validity of the allegations of terrorist plots to overthrow the government, since statements from official sources, likewise reports in the mass media, are heavily biased against any expression of dissident opinion. Representatives of human rights organisations (local and international) insist that many of those who have been arrested are not guilty of any crime. They point out that although Hizb ut-Tahrir publications advocate an Islamic system of government, this is to be achieved by nonviolent means; theoretically, this could be said to fall within the constitutionally permitted limits of freedom of expression in each of the Central Asian states. However, this argument cannot be advanced in defence of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, since the available evidence indicates that this is a militant organisation that is prepared to use force to seize power.

Terrorism and Repression

The geographic centre of Islamist activity in Uzbekistan is Namangan, a densely populated Uzbek *oblast'* in the Fergana valley with a reputation, even during the Soviet period, for being a bastion of Islam. A party of Islamic activists called *Adolat* (Justice) was created in 1991, chiefly (it is alleged) with the aim of combating crime. During the presidential elections of at the end of that year it staged demonstrations calling for the establishment of an Islamic state. The party apparently received some support from the authorities and there were even reports that President Karimov

himself was not unsympathetic to their views.¹⁹ Within a few months, however, the main ringleaders had been arrested and put on trial. Most were given substantial jail sentences.

In 1996 and 1998 there were renewed rounds of arrests in Namangan (well over a hundred cases have been documented). These followed the murders of police officers and a senior administrator. Namangan is on one of the main transit routes for the narcotics trade from Afghanistan and it is not inconceivable that these crimes were the work of drug traffickers. However, many of those who were detained and subsequently punished were leading members of mosques and religious organisations. Relatives, male and female, of Muslim activists were also arrested. Some of the evidence used to convict the prisoners (narcotics, weapons, illegal literature) was, according to human rights observers, planted on them by the security forces. There have been multiple arrests in other parts of Uzbekistan during these years, but nowhere on such a scale as in Namangan (Informatsionny, 1998; Human Rights Watch, 1999).

On 16 February 1999 there was an attempt on the life of President Karimov in Tashkent, the capital of Uzbekistan. Within hours of the incident 'Islamic fundamentalists' were being blamed for the outrage. This triggered a renewed onslaught on Muslims who were perceived to be over-zealous in their pious devotions, particularly those who were suspected of belonging to Hizb ut-Tahrir. This time, however, accusations of plotting to kill the president were also levelled at the leaders, now living in exile abroad, of *Erk* (Freedom) and *Birlik* (Unity), opposition parties espousing democratic platforms that were founded in the late 1980s. There were many puzzling aspects to the February episode. Official explanations, including a bizarre documentary film of the incident made in Tashkent (presumably with the intention of justifying the actions of the Uzbek government) only increased suspicions that much was being concealed.²⁰ The ensuing show trials further heightened this impression.

The possibility that the terrorists who carried out the attack were fired by a desire to establish an Islamic state in Uzbekistan should not be ruled out. However, on the basis of the evidence presented so far this does not seem to be a wholly convincing explanation. Moreover, whoever the perpetrators were, the incident has been used as an excuse to conduct a witch-hunt against all shades of dissident opinion. According to reports from numerous sources, 'tens of thousands of people have been arrested'. It is difficult to verify this estimate, but certainly the fear of reprisals has caused many Uzbeks to flee across the border into neighbouring states. In private, some Central Asians admit that such ruthless repression is forging a militant opposition and leading to the very instability that everyone fears. However, in public the governments of the other Central Asian states have supported Uzbekistan and have in some cases extradited suspects.

The most serious armed clash to date was in the summer of 1999. Armed fighters crossed into Kyrgyzstan in August of that year, with the aim, according to official sources, of invading Uzbekistan 'in order to establish an Islamic state'. Estimates of the size of this troop vary greatly, but it seems likely to have numbered some 500 men. When the guerrillas reached the border they found Uzbek troops blocking their route; they thereupon retreated into the Kyrgyz mountains, taking with them a number of hostages (including four Japanese geologists). The Kyrgyz army was unable to dislodge them for over two months. The Uzbek government, meanwhile, took a unilateral decision to bomb the guerrillas' suspected stronghold. The aircraft misjudged their target and innocent Kyrgyz villagers were killed. Tajik villages were

also bombed. The hostages were eventually released in October 1999, reputedly after the Japanese government had paid a large ransom. There were similar armed clashes in the same area in mid-2000, though on a smaller scale.

The August 1999 insurgency was a new departure, a ratcheting up of pressure from isolated acts of terrorism to a sustained, relatively large-scale operation. There is no information as to why such an attack was launched at precisely this juncture. Ostensibly, the action was prompted by the Tajik government's decision to expel some 700–1000 Uzbek guerrillas, allegedly members of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, from bases that they had established in Tajikistan. It may, too, have been retaliation for the repression that followed the February bombing in Tashkent. The possibility that field commanders and/or foreign sponsors (international terrorist organisations?) judged that the men had reached a sufficient level of combat readiness for it to be feasible to mount such an operation should also not be excluded. By some accounts, the combatants were armed with sophisticated modern weapons.²¹ There are several other questions that as yet remain unanswered. Thus, it is far from clear whether the insurgents were indeed seeking to establish an Islamic state, or whether they were local mafia barons fighting for control of lucrative narcotic-trafficking routes – or whether these motives were intertwined. There may also be an element of local nationalism, since there have been reports that some of the insurgents carried banners calling for a restoration of the Khanate of Kokand.²² International opinion, at least at government level, is increasingly convinced that these militants represent a genuine threat to regional, and possibly global, security. Accordingly in September 2000 the US State Department placed the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan on its list of international terrorist organisations to which US citizens are forbidden to give assistance, and whose members are denied entry to the USA.

External Influences

It has sometimes been suggested that the Islamic revival in the Central Asian states is inspired and supported by Muslims in other countries. There is some element of truth in this. Some of the finance for the building of mosques and madrassahs, as also for the restoration of Islamic monuments, has come from abroad, from private sources, as well as from government funds. Students from Central Asia have gone in quite large numbers (a few hundred a year) to study in countries such as Turkey, Egypt and Pakistan. Since independence many thousands of Central Asians have performed the pilgrimage to Mecca, some already two or three times. In the early 1990s the travel expenses of several thousand pilgrims were covered by the Saudi monarch, and again in 1999. All the Central Asian states have now joined the Organisation for Islamic Conference (OIC), and hence there are also institutional links with the Muslim world.

The main foreign influence, however, has come from missionaries. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union they flocked to Central Asia from many parts of the Muslim world to preach and to open schools. At first they were warmly welcomed. Gradually, though, the mood in the region began to change. On the one hand, the 'traditionalists' – the mass of ordinary believers – objected to being told that some of their most respected customs (for example, those connected with burials) were not authentic and should be replaced by more orthodox procedures. On the other hand, the state authorities also became uneasy that the missionaries were encouraging independent Islamic thought. Uzbekistan was the first to impose restrictions on Muslim missionaries from abroad. In 1992–93 some 50 Saudi preachers were expelled. Other expulsions followed and since then the activities of foreign Muslims

have been very carefully monitored. A similar tendency is to be observed in the other states.

Foreign commentators initially expected that Iran would play the lead role in the re-Islamisation of Central Asia. In fact, Iranian clerics have been conspicuous largely by their absence. After the collapse of the Soviet Union delegations from Iran began to visit the Central Asian states and to acquire firsthand familiarity with the region. They soon realised that an Islamic revolution along the lines of the Iranian model was not a realistic prospect; this was partly because of the very low level of knowledge of Islam among the population at large, but also, and very importantly, because of the lack of a trained, independent-minded ulama (body of trained Muslim scholars). The fact that the Iranians represent the Shia tradition also placed them at a disadvantage. By contrast, Sunni Muslim missionaries were active from the first years of independence. Turkish Muslims have played the most prominent role. Proportionately, they are more numerous than any other ethnic group. In Kyrgyzstan, for example, in 1999, according to official statistics, they numbered 55, a third of all the foreign Muslim missionaries in the country; missionaries from Pakistan, the second largest group, accounted for fewer than 40.²³

The great majority of the Turkish missionaries are Nurcus, followers of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi (1876–1960), and of his disciple Fethullah Gülen.²⁴ The Nurcus opened hundreds of schools and commercial enterprises in all the Central Asian states.²⁵ They appeared to be propagating a moderate, modernised version of Islam. Their teaching programmes concentrated on scientific subjects and technical skills. However, on a more informal level, through extracurricular contacts and through the distribution of translations into the local languages of the *Risale-i Nur (The Epistle of Light)*, the corpus of teachings of Said Nursi, they seem to have been disseminating a more radical message. There are increasing concerns that their ultimate political project is the creation of an Islamic state. They are also accused by some of having a panturkic agenda. Because of such suspicions, their newspaper *Zaman* was banned in Uzbekistan in 1994; several teachers were expelled at about the same time. In other Central Asian states a similar sense of unease is emerging regarding the activities of this group and consequently their work is now being more closely monitored.

Another way in which Turkish influence has been significant is in the revival of Sufism. Great Sufi orders such as the Naqshbandiyya and Qadiriyya were influential in Central Asia in the past, but even before the Soviet era they had for the most part been reduced to the level of 'ishanism', a syncretic, popular form of mysticism, centred on local, often hereditary, spiritual leaders.²⁶ In the twentieth century this form of worship continued to attract adherents, but was far removed from the esoteric doctrines and practices of classical Sufism. In the early 1990s adepts from Turkey began to reintroduce Sufism into the region, focusing their efforts mainly on Uzbekistan and southern Kazakhstan. Initially this was welcomed by the secular authorities in Uzbekistan, who professed admiration for Sufi philosophy. An indication of official approval was that when President Karimov made his first post-independence visit to Turkey, Mukhtarkhan Abdullayev, a self-avowed Sufi, was included in his entourage; Abdullayev, who was subsequently appointed mufti (1993–97), was formally inducted into the Naqshbandi order on this occasion (Zarcone, 1998, pp. 53–71).²⁷ Later, however, the Uzbek government's attitude towards Sufism changed. It continued to be revered as a historical and cultural phenomenon, but attempts to revive Sufi brotherhoods were firmly repressed; the movement has now been driven underground.

Fears that foreign Muslims are fomenting religious extremism and militancy in

Central Asia continue to grow. The enthusiasm for sending students to Islamic institutions in Turkey, Egypt and other Muslim countries is now being tempered with concerns that once abroad, they will be exposed to 'radical' ideas. The Uzbek authorities were the first to react to this perceived threat, going so far as to accuse Turkish Islamists of using these students as a fifth column. It was alleged that while in Turkey several of these students underwent 'terrorist training'. On their return home, so it was claimed, they set up cells of activists in villages and towns.²⁸ Thereafter, other governments in the region also became suspicious of the education offered by foreign Muslims. In October 2000 President Nazarbayev ordered the recall of all Kazakh students studying in Islamic institutions abroad.²⁹ Tajik President Rakhmonov followed suit in March 2001.

When trying to assess the vitality of Islamic movements in postsoviet Central Asia it is important to consider the extent to which there is a competition of ideas and influences. Certainly, these states are no longer as isolated as they once were. Improved communications and information technologies, as well as opportunities to work and study in other countries, are broadening horizons, particularly for the younger generation. Moreover, a diversity of faiths and denominations are now represented in the region. These include organisations such as the Aga Khan Development Network, which among its various projects provides training for Ismaili Muslims (traditionally based in Badakhshan), as well as nonsectarian educational opportunities for the wider Central Asian population. On a smaller scale, Ahmadiyya groups seek converts to their version of Islam (which orthodox Muslims regard as heretical).

There are also many dynamic Christian missions; several of the evangelical Protestant sects are financially well endowed. In Kyrgyzstan in 1999, for example, there were 402 registered Christian missionaries, over twice the total number of Muslim missionaries; well over half the Christians were from Korea.³⁰ Ethnic Central Asians, particularly Kyrgyz and Kazakhs, are converting to these sects in substantial numbers. New faiths such as Hare Krishnism, Scientology and the cults of various Indian gurus (Say Baba, for example) are also attracting followers. Thus there is today a greater degree of religious heterogeneity than was the case a decade ago. Yet Islam in Central Asia is not only a religion, it is also a cultural and social identity; hence, at the popular level, apostasy is often greeted with anger and bewilderment. The state authorities, too, are suspicious of foreign proselytisers, regarding their activities as akin to a threat to national security. Consequently in Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, and more recently in Kazakhstan, missionary communities are coming under increasing pressure; Protestant denominations (especially Baptists and Pentecostals) have been singled out for harshly repressive treatment.³¹ In such an environment, it is not surprising that 'mainstream' Islam, as approved and supported by the incumbent regimes, should continue to be the dominant, largely unchallenged, influence.

Wider Trends

Attitudes and responses to Islam in postsoviet Central Asia have been shaped by a traumatic history of fracture and rupture, beginning with the introduction of tsarist colonial rule in the nineteenth century, followed by 70 years of Soviet rule (and intensive secularisation) in the twentieth century, and culminating in sudden independence on the eve of the twenty-first century. These experiences have created a complex pattern of cultural and social transformations. In some ways this legacy is

unique. Yet when they are considered within the context of the larger Islamic world, it emerges that many of the dilemmas that face Central Asians today are by no means unfamiliar elsewhere. It is beyond the scope of this paper to make detailed comparisons between the Central Asian states and states with Muslim majorities in other parts of the world. However, there are points of similarity that are worth noting.

One such feature is the cooptation of Islam by incumbent ruling elites. This is common practice in many member states of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC). It is manifested in various ways, including close government control over Islamic institutions (including appointments to senior posts and the monitoring of community activities). Moreover, in several of these states the leaders consciously draw on Islamic rhetoric and symbolism to validate their regimes. Thus regime manipulation of Islam, far from being a Central Asian phenomenon, is by no means untypical of the modern Islamic world.

Another similarity is that the fiercest opposition to incumbent regimes in OIC states comes from dissident Islamic movements. In some countries governments have been prepared to accommodate a degree of dialogue with such organisations (for example, in Jordan and Malaysia). However, successful examples of power sharing within the Islamic world are few. In most places the response has been one of harsh repression (as, for example, in Egypt and Algeria). The Central Asian governments, faced with similar threats from nascent opposition groups, have likewise chosen to oppose them with force. Whether or not this uncompromising stance will bring peace and stability to the region is debatable, but in the context of the Islamic world such a policy tends to be the norm rather than the exception.

A third, and related, point of similarity is the emergence of sharply divergent interpretations of Islam. Within the spectrum of contemporary Islamic thought there are two main strands: the reformists,³² who believe that Islamic values and principles need to be reinterpreted so as to be relevant to modern life; and the radicals, who insist on a full and literal implementation of the precepts of the Quran and the Traditions of the Prophet. In Central Asia, as discussed above, the radical strand is represented by Hizb ut-Tahrir and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan. They conform to a pattern of behaviour that is typical for radical Islamist groups. This is characterised by the rejection of a society that they regard as decadent and ignorant of Islam (*jahiliyya*), and by the waging of a 'righteous struggle' (*jihad*) against those whom they regard as 'religious hypocrites' (*munafiqun*) and 'unbelievers' (*kafirun*), identified collectively as the present ruling elites.

The reformist strand is as yet scarcely perceptible.³³ The most serious and consistent proponent of reformist thinking today is President Karimov. His efforts to fashion 'good' Islam may seem mere hubris, devoid of religious credibility. Yet, in however crude and superficial a manner, he is conscious of a need to preserve the fundamental values of Islam, while modernising the practical implementation of specific precepts. His lack of a formal religious training is evident in the fragmentary nature of his comments on Islam. In his book *Uzbekistan on the Threshold of the Twenty-First Century* (Karimov, 1997, pp. 85–94) he sketches out his thoughts on 'The revival of spiritual values and national self-awareness'. His short tract *Olloh qalbimizda, yuraghimizda* (*Allah is in Our Souls, Our Hearts*) (Karimov, 1999) reveals a more personal commitment to the faith.

A more concrete manifestation of his policy to shape society's understanding of Islam is the generous support that is provided for cultural-educational institutions that disseminate a 'modernised' approach to religion. An interesting example of this trend is the Islamic University in Tashkent; founded in 1999, it operates under the

patronage of the Cabinet of Ministers. The syllabus covers secular and religious subjects including International Law and Information Technology as well as Islamic Philosophy and Law. The original aim of this institution was to train civil servants to work effectively in and with Muslim countries. The emphasis now appears to be on preparing teachers who will go to the provinces and teach Islamic history, culture and ethics. The students are highly motivated by a personal desire to study Islam;³⁴ there is already fierce competition for entry. The Foundation al-Bukhari is another new Islamic organisation aimed at promoting an understanding of Islam that will refute the interpretation advanced by 'fundamentalists'. Dynamic and well funded, it produces popular as well as learned works on Islam. It also undertakes such outreach activities as the organisation of lectures and conferences on religious topics. There are several other Islamic educational institutions in Uzbekistan, including the Islamic Institute in Tashkent, that work under the supervision of the Muftiate. As during the late Soviet period, one of the messages that these bodies constantly reiterate is the authenticity and legitimacy of the Central Asian tradition of Islamic jurisprudence. They contrast their own allegiance to the 'reasonable' Hanafi school of law with the fanaticism, which they claim is engendered by the teachings of other sects (notably the Hanbali doctrine of the 'Wahhabis'). In particular, they stress the importance of the work of Abu Mansur al-Maturidi (d. 944), the tenth-century Samarkandi scholar who was one of the leading exegetists of Hanafi thought.

Islamic Literature

The question that naturally arises is the extent to which Central Asian Muslims, whether of a reformist or a radical inclination, have been influenced by Muslim thinkers abroad. Curiously perhaps, one of the most striking features of Islam in postsoviet Central Asia is the lack of any discernible intellectual engagement with religious issues. For the overwhelming majority, Islam is sacred and immutable, not to be subjected to rational inquiry or argument. There are as yet no home-grown Muslim thinkers expounding a coherent vision of Islam. Equally, there is virtually no awareness of the existence of contemporary thought in other parts of the Islamic world. The writings of Mohammed Arkoun, Rachid al-Ghannouchi, Taha Husayn, Abul Ala Mawdudi, Sayyid Qutb, Fazlur Rahman, Zia Sardar and Ali Shariati, to mention but a handful, are unknown to all but a few scholars and devotees. Admittedly, such works are not readily available in libraries or bookshops in Central Asia; also, for many there would be a language barrier, as very little of this material (in Arabic, English, French and Persian) has been translated into Russian, still less into any Central Asian language. It is, however, noteworthy that even educated Muslims show an almost total absence of curiosity regarding modern debates on Islam.

The literature that is available (though how widely is a moot point) is that which is produced by Hizb ut-Tahrir. The state authorities in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan report that large consignments of the party's journal *Al-Wai*, as well as leaflets and books, have been circulated in recent years. Titles of confiscated material include *Islom nizomi (The Islamic Order)*, *Hizbut-Tahrir tushunchalari (Concepts of Hizb ut-Tahrir)* and *Siyosat va khalqaro siyosat (Politics and International Politics)*; these texts are sometimes in Arabic, sometimes in competent Kyrgyz or Uzbek translations. Several underground printing presses have been discovered. Local editions of such works are said to have been produced in print runs of 1000 or so. Distribution of these tracts is mostly covert: typically, copies are scattered in public places under cover of

night, or handed out by casual hired labour (Ponomarev, 1999, p. 8; Botobekov, 2001; Warning, 2001). The Central Asian governments, especially the Uzbek, are deeply concerned about the effect that this literature might have. Anyone who is found in possession of such material runs the risk of arrest and persecution, and consequently most people are afraid to handle it. Thus it is very difficult to judge how much of it is actually read by the population at large.

The 'Islamic Threat'

The brief comparison given above of trends in the Islamic world indicates that although the Central Asian situation has particular characteristics, it is not unique. The fundamental challenge for Muslims here, as elsewhere, is how to reconcile Islam with modernity – a modernity that is rooted in a nonislamic philosophy, and overwhelmingly dominated by the achievements, needs and ambitions of western powers.³⁵ It is a challenge that today is made all the more immediate by such pressures as the globalisation of economic interdependence, the internationalisation of concepts of good governance and the ubiquitous reach of a popular 'junk' culture that undermines traditional values. Yet it is not a new phenomenon: for well over a century Muslim thinkers have been seeking to resolve this dilemma. Some have tried to overcome the perceived weakness and backwardness of Muslim societies by advocating a limited synthesis of Islamic and western norms in such fields as education and law. Others have sought to generate a more comprehensive 'transformation of an intellectual tradition' (Rahman, 1982), to create a Muslim equivalent of Western Europe's historic experience of Reformation and Enlightenment.

Whatever successes this accommodating and assimilatory approach might have had, it did not significantly improve conditions for large sections of the population. There was continuing social and economic underdevelopment, with widespread poverty, corruption, injustice and lack of access to basic social services. By the mid-twentieth century some Muslims, disillusioned by what they regarded as 'westoxification' – the poisonous effects of western influence – began to seek salvation in an idealised, ahistoric vision of 'authentic' Islam. This gave birth to the 'radicalism' mentioned above. The Central Asians were isolated from this trend at that time. Now they too are facing these same issues. The process is all the more painful here, in that during the Soviet period they achieved a level of development that was significantly higher than in most other parts of Asia. Since then they have seen standards of living plummet; indicators of human development are now approaching those of the poorest countries in the world. This, added to the sudden loss of an entire ideological system, has created a deep sense of disorientation. The high hopes of the first years of independence have for the most part not been fulfilled. This has created a 'blow-back' of disappointment and frustration. In these conditions it is not surprising that people crave guidance, certainty, and above all a faith that holds out the promise of a better future.

Much of the commentary on Islam in Central Asia today focuses on the security implications of the emergence of a radical movement: might this be a threat to stability? Have particular governments exaggerated, or alternatively, underestimated the seriousness of the situation? Is there a nascent 'arc of conflict' from China to the Black Sea? Such questions concentrate attention on individual events, but the lack of reliable information makes it impossible to gauge the importance of such incidents with any degree of assurance. Meanwhile there is little attempt to identify underlying trends. Yet it is these trends that are shaping the future. One of the most significant

developments of the 1990s has been the intensifying politicisation of Islam. This is not solely as a result of the activities of radical groups: governments, too, especially that of Uzbekistan, have engaged in the contestation of Islamic legitimacy. This has placed Islam in the centre of the political arena. The discourse of opposition is now cast in doctrinal terms. Consequently virtually all forms of political disaffection are subsumed under the umbrella of 'radical' Islam. It might have been supposed that this would lead to a dilution of the purely religious content of the agenda. On the contrary, religion appears to be assuming an ever more powerful role. Likewise, the (alleged) involvement of criminal elements in the radical Islamist groups does not appear to be mitigating the fervour of the 'righteous struggle'.

The internal dynamics of the situation point to the likelihood of increasing instability, with an escalation of conflict between government and opposition forces. It is difficult to see how this might be averted. Government resort to the tactics of war is mirrored in the growing militarisation of the opposition. This creates an atmosphere of fear, but also of anger; it creates victims, but also martyrs. This cycle of violence will surely lead to a hardening of attitudes on both sides. A more productive approach, it might be supposed, would be a process of dialogue, peace building and ultimately inclusion in government. This is the strategy that is favoured by concerned international observers. However, as indicated above, attempts at power sharing have had little success elsewhere in the Islamic world and would probably not succeed here. This is, after all, not simply a power struggle: basic principles of belief and salvation are at issue, hence there is little room for compromise.

Conflict is not, of course, an inevitable outcome. There are factors that might, in the longer term, influence the course of events in a constructive way. Economic recovery would undoubtedly help to alleviate some of the tensions. However, this cannot happen overnight. Moreover, it will certainly not be a miracle panacea. It could well lead to greater inequalities in standards of living, greater societal fragmentation; this would surely deepen the crisis. Likewise, political liberalisation might provide a peaceful outlet for the expression of dissident views. Yet the cultural and social traditions of the region, as shaped by both Soviet and presoviet experiences, exhibit strongly authoritarian, repressive tendencies. Even the Central Asians who currently regard themselves as democrats show little understanding of the principles of liberal democracy. Thus despite the fact that much lip service is paid to the need for democratisation in reality there seems little hope that such a transformation will be achieved in the near future.

A benign momentum might possibly be fostered by the training that is being provided through international aid and development programmes. Such schemes do make a positive contribution to the creation of more open, tolerant societies. Yet they cannot be expected to make a significant impact in the near future. Such programmes are mostly small in scope, duration and catchment area. Thus it will take some considerable time for them to achieve critical mass. It will also take time for graduates of such schemes to reach positions of sufficient seniority to enable them to influence policy-making. Another factor that could eventually contribute to regional stability and recovery is the support provided by international organisations for projects on conflict prevention and conflict resolution. However, such undertakings have so far proved to be of limited value. They tend to be poorly funded and are often hampered by problems on the ground (notably obstructive bureaucrats). Moreover, they are not always well designed, revealing scant knowledge of local conditions.

Given such constraints, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that, at least in the short term, the Central Asian states will continue to experience severe societal stress.

Economic collapse is triggering a process of demodernisation and deskilling, especially in rural areas (where the great majority of the indigenous population still live). The re-Islamisation of the region is taking place against this background of trauma and loss. It is not surprising that in these circumstances people increasingly seek the comfort and reassurance of religious faith. Nevertheless, it is important to keep the dimensions of this process in perspective. The great majority of the population continues to espouse a passive, traditionalist approach to Islam. They largely accept the authority and guidance of the official religious hierarchy.

The radical Muslims are still very much a minority, both numerically and in terms of geographic spread. Moreover, they are fragmented into different groups and trends. Since the late 1990s they have been fanning out from their original base in eastern Uzbekistan (the Fergana valley) and now have a sizeable presence in the adjacent regions of the other states. This process may well continue, but it will nevertheless be difficult for the radicals to win over a substantial mass of the population. The militant element involves even smaller numbers of individuals (probably hundreds rather than thousands), operating seasonally within a fairly narrow corridor from the Afghan border to eastern Uzbekistan. Doubtless they could expand their activities, especially if they are funded by drug trafficking and are receiving logistical and ideological support from extremist movements in Afghanistan, Pakistan and other parts of the Islamic world. However, there would be no easy victories for the insurgents. The incidence of violence might increase, but given the strength of the security and military forces that are ranged against the radical groups it is unlikely that the present balance of power would be significantly altered in the foreseeable future.³⁶

The Impact of September 2001

In September 2001 fears about terrorism were realised with unexpected intensity.³⁷ On 11 September terrorist air attacks masterminded by al-Qaeda were mounted against the USA, causing the deaths of thousands of civilians. In early October a US-led coalition retaliated by launching the 'War on Terrorism'. Military operations were commenced against Taliban and al-Qaeda bases in Afghanistan. By the end of November most of the fighting was over and on 5 December the leaders of the various Afghan factions met in Bonn to sign an agreement whereby an interim administration was created. This was later succeeded by a more representative government, which, with UN assistance, was charged with the gigantic task of reconstruction of the country.

The Central Asian leaders were prompt in confirming their willingness to support the 'War on Terrorism'. Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan soon emerged as key partners in this enterprise. In October 2001 US troops began arriving at Khanabad, a former Soviet air base in Uzbekistan, located near the Afghan border. It was announced that the US military was preparing to spend some US \$5 million on refurbishing this base; by mid- 2002 it was host to an estimated 1800 US troops (Christian, 2002). Another base was established in Kyrgyzstan, at Manas, formerly the international civilian airport (close to the capital, Bishkek). Within a few months just under 2000 troops, mainly from the USA but also units from other western allies, were assembled there.

In Central Asia there was little discernible popular reaction to these momentous events. One reason for this was the paucity of media coverage, which meant that people had little up-to-date knowledge of developments. Another reason was anxiety that the region itself would be engulfed in war. The new Afghan administration was by no means fully in control of the situation; a regional/factional power struggle was

still in progress and the possibility remained that this might spread to one or more of the neighbouring states. Also drug smuggling, which had diminished significantly in 2000–2001, was again on the rise. Soon optimism was replaced by the general perception that the situation on the ground had not, in fact, changed very greatly.

Nevertheless, there were some immediate impacts. One was a humanitarian crisis, as a million or more refugees fled from Afghanistan in the autumn of 2001. Most tried to enter Pakistan or Iran, but tens of thousands headed northwards, to Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan; some also tried to reach Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. There were fears that, concealed among the legitimate asylum seekers, militant Islamists, terrorists and drug-traffickers would come flooding into these countries. In the event, however, the influx of refugees was not as great as had been anticipated. Rather, traffic was in the opposite direction, as the neighbouring states became transit routes for delivering aid to Afghanistan.

Another impact was the destruction of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan's bases in Afghanistan. Many of the Central Asian guerrillas who were fighting alongside the Taliban and al-Qaeda appear to have been killed. There were rumours that Juma Namangani, leader of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, had also been killed. However, a year after his supposed death there was still no confirmation of this and there was a growing suspicion that he was still alive, though possibly abroad (in Pakistan?). Whatever the truth of the matter, the group was quiescent throughout 2002; there were no reports of its members being involved in any clashes with the authorities.

A third impact, and one that had the most direct effect on society in the Central Asian states, was the intensifying of the campaign against suspected 'religious extremists'. Many human rights activists had hoped that closer western engagement with the region would make it easier to bring pressure to bear on the Central Asian governments to strengthen civil liberties, particularly with regard to religious freedoms. That did not happen. On the contrary, in 2002 there was a steep rise in the arrests of believers in Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. The main targets were members of Hizb ut-Tahrir. Little credible evidence of criminal activity was produced against them; most were detained merely for the possession of Hizb ut-Tahrir leaflets. It would seem that Hizb ut-Tahrir adherents are regarded as a threat not so much because of the possibility that they might carry out terrorist attacks but because the strength of their conviction and their devotion to the cause represent a more potent danger to the incumbent regimes than any overt form of militancy. Many were reportedly subjected to physical and psychological torture.³⁸ In Uzbekistan and Tajikistan prison sentences of 18 years or more were handed down to the accused. The Tajik authorities ordered the closure of several mosques and dismissed numerous local clerics (Human Rights Watch, 2003). These measures were particularly directed at Sogd *oblast'* (northern Tajikistan). Radical tendencies are entrenched here; Hizb ut-Tahrir and the Islamic Rebirth Party have attracted many followers in recent years (three Tajiks from Sogd are currently held in the camp at Guantanamo Bay). However, this is also an area where there is a large Uzbek minority; in the past it has shown separatist tendencies and it is possible that the radical activity might have been driven in some degree by opposition to the central government. Equally, one of the government's aims in introducing these curbs might have been to stamp out incipient disaffection.

Outlook: Towards a Central Asian Islamic State?

Discussions of Islam in postsoviet Central Asia inevitably focus on Uzbekistan. There are several reasons for this. Apart from long historic links with Islam, there is its sheer demographic weight: with over 25 million people, it accounts for nearly half the total population of the region; there are also substantial ethnic Uzbek minorities in the neighbouring states. Then there is the centrality of location: it shares common borders with Afghanistan, and also with the other four Central Asian states. Finally, the epicentre of the struggle for and against radical Islam is Uzbekistan. Thus developments here have a pivotal significance. If Uzbekistan were to become the core of a strong regional grouping, then its policy towards Islam would quite possibly be mirrored in the neighbouring states. If it was unable to consolidate such a position, then Islam might be used as a differentiating instrument, enabling other Central Asian states to establish distance from Uzbekistan by adopting contrasting policies on the role of religion in society.

It is generally assumed that an Islamic state in Uzbekistan could come about only as a result of a *coup d'état* by groups such as Hizb ut-Tahrir and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan. On the surface, the Uzbek government appears to be in the vanguard of the fight to protect secularist values. To this end, it is using the full panoply of security, defence and law enforcement organs to suppress the radicals. Yet in reality the ideological contest is far from clear cut. As discussed above, the government – or more specifically, the president – has coopted Islam to help legitimise and consolidate the postsoviet regime. Consequently the contest cannot be portrayed in terms of an assault on Islam, but must be presented as ‘good’ Islam versus ‘bad’ Islam. Punitive repression alone is not sufficient to convey such a message. It requires a ‘hearts and minds’ campaign to mobilise public sentiment. This is now being orchestrated on many levels, particularly through mosques, the media and local neighbourhood organisations.³⁹

As a result of such actions, awareness of Islam as an issue of vital public concern has been greatly enhanced. Furthermore, by assuming a decisive role in the adjudication of belief, the government has taken a significant step towards the formal institution of an established faith. If this trend were to be taken to its logical conclusion, it would eventually lead to the declaration of an Islamic state in Uzbekistan (as happened, in somewhat analogous circumstances, in Pakistan). Thus it would be a ruling elite that had run out of ideological options that would be responsible for the very outcome it had initially sought to oppose.

Even if this drift towards government-sponsored Islamisation in Uzbekistan (and to a lesser extent elsewhere in the region) were to be halted, it is difficult to envisage a return to a secular ideal, with a genuine separation of state and religion. It is clear that Islam has become an active political force. The struggle for ‘ownership’ of the faith – for control of its interpretation and implementation – has now become part of the broader struggle for domination of the state. The situation is not only volatile, but also highly unpredictable. Any number of events – from natural disasters to mass influxes of refugees – could precipitate chain reactions that might accelerate or, alternatively, retard the process. The western-led campaign against the Taliban and al-Qaeda might have acted as a catalyst, but in fact, as discussed above, it did not. Rather, there was a sense of anticlimax, as neither hopes nor fears were realised in any significant degree. Yet there was also a heightened sense of suspense, as people waited to see what the longer-term effects would be. The Central Asian governments, particularly in Uzbekistan, swiftly adopted yet more repressive measures to combat the supposed

threat from 'Islamic fundamentalists'; whether or not as a result of such actions, there were no instances of civil disturbance of any size.

At the same time, however, official attempts to promote the 're-Islamisation' of Uzbekistan were boosted. This was evidenced not so much by public pronouncements but, more importantly and effectively, by the activities of such institutions as the Islamic University and the al-Bukhari Foundation. In their different ways, and reaching out to different circles, these bodies promote the role of Islam in society, albeit in accordance with a particular vision of the faith. Better knowledge of the faith allows the lines of demarcation to be more clearly set. Yet at the same time, such knowledge heightens sensitivities and critical awareness, as a result of which it might well become more difficult to control the responses of believers. Thus it is that doctrinal orthodoxy and legitimacy rather than armed conflict is becoming the chief site of struggle between the proponents of radical Islam and 'official' Islam. The indications are that, openly or covertly, with or without external help, this contestation of Islam is surely set to intensify.

Notes

- ¹ Hindustani himself used the term 'Wahhabi' to express his disapproval of clerics (including some of his former students) who introduced innovations in ritual and doctrine that he regarded as abhorrent. The use of this term is revealing, since in origin it is a European usage, derived from the name Muhammad ibn Abdul-Wahhab, the eighteenth-century founder of a puritanical sect; the self-designation of his followers is *muwahhidun* (Believers in the Oneness of God). The teachings of Abdul Wahhab fit within a trend that Muslims today generally refer to as Salafism. The chief feature of Salafism is the call for a return to the 'pure' faith and practice of the early Islamic period, as understood through a literal interpretation of the Quran and the Sunna (practice of the Prophet Muhammed).
- ² For example, works by Alexandre Bennigsen, Enders Wimbush, H  l  ne Carr  re d'Encausse and Michael Rywkin. Western media broadcasts to Central Asia capitalised on these fears by devoting much of their programme content to Islam – a transparent attempt to arouse religious fervour and thereby trigger resistance to the Soviet system. According to one estimate, 90 per cent of the Central Asian language broadcasting of Radio Liberty, Radio Free Europe and Voice of America were devoted to this subject (Belyayev, 1988, p. 118). The use of Islam to combat communism was not new: a similar tactic had been employed (mainly by regional governments) in the 1950s and 1960s in the Arab Middle East (Al-Azmeh, 1993, p. 55).
- ³ Personal interviews with Mufti Muhammad Sadyk in 1989 and 1990. This message was often reiterated in various forms in the public statements of senior clerics during these years.
- ⁴ The opinions expressed here are based on personal interviews conducted in all the Central Asian states in the period 1989–91 with clerics, active members of mosques, sympathetic but non-active believers and other members of society with views on religion. This was of course an incomplete and random selection of informants and should be treated as partial evidence. Nevertheless, the conclusions are largely in line with those of other researchers in the field at the time.
- ⁵ By 2000 the number of mosques in Uzbekistan had fallen to 1700 (communication by the deputy mufti of Uzbekistan, Vienna, 2000). However, all these estimates are approximate and should be treated with caution.
- ⁶ It involves fewer rituals and can be undertaken at any time of the year apart from the days reserved for *haj* (the main pilgrimage).
- ⁷ The original interview with President Nazarbayev was given on 4 May 1999 (reported in *Vremya po Grinvichu/The Globe*, 37, 355, 14 May 1999). K. Togizbayev published his response in the opposition newspaper *451° po Farengaitu*, 9 July 1999.

- ⁸ 'Islam in Uzbekistan will be what the president wants it to be', according to A. Abduazizov, dean of the Faculty of Foreign Languages of Tashkent State University, quoted by Usmanov, 1994.
- ⁹ For a detailed description of the media environment in these states, see McCormack, 1999, under relevant country entries.
- ¹⁰ In Tajikistan the office of mufti was abolished in 1996, following the murder of Mufti Fathullokhon Sharifzoda; the work of the Muftiate was also reorganised at that time. The chief Muslim authority is now the chairman of the Council of Ulama (currently Qari Amanulloh Nematzade).
- ¹¹ Some Kazakh Muslims agitated for his removal from office on these very grounds. See the report by Sharipzhan, 2001.
- ¹² This point has been made to the author on a number of occasions in recent years. For example, in informal conversations in Almaty in October 2000 (following a Round Table on Religion, Stability and Security, organised by the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities), when the issue of presidential involvement in religious affairs was raised the general opinion was that the president ought to assume a 'role akin to that of caliph, as there should be only one power in the land'. William Fierman (Indiana University) later confirmed that similar sentiments are to be found in the contemporary Kazakh-language press. In Uzbekistan, too, the need for a 'single power' was voiced at various times in 1999–2000 in private discussions with local acquaintances. In Turkmenistan the linkage between secular and religious authority seems to have official approval. See, for example, the newspaper headline referring to President Niyazov as 'The Vice-regent on Earth of the One, Great, All-Powerful God' (*Neitral'ny Turkmenistan*, 12 August 2000). By 2001 the Turkmen media were according him the title of 'prophet' (though the president was said to object to this usage).
- ¹³ There is great terminological confusion over the designation of contemporary trends in Islam, based on widely differing analyses. One of the most lucid discussions is provided by Choueiri, 1997. As a matter of convenience, his definitions are taken as a guideline for usage in this paper. He defines Islamic radicalism as 'a politico-cultural movement that postulates a qualitative contradiction between Western civilisation and the religion of Islam' (p. 122).
- ¹⁴ These include the *Akromiya* (named after their founder, Akrom Yuldashev), also known as the *Iimonchilar* (Believers) or *Khalifatchilar* (Caliphate Supporters), the *Tawba* (Repentance) movement, and *Islom lashkarlari* (Soldiers of Islam).
- ¹⁵ Usually called Juma Namangani or 'Tajibai'. Born in 1969, in the Namangan *oblast'* of Uzbekistan, he served with the Soviet army in Afghanistan in 1988–89; on his return to Uzbekistan he became an active member of the Islamist movement. He fought in the Tajik civil war, undergoing a brief spell of military training in northern Afghanistan, then in Pakistan; he also visited Saudi Arabia.
- ¹⁶ The founder, Sheikh Taki ad-din Nabhani (1909–78), was a prominent Palestinian, a graduate of Al-Azhar University in Cairo and a member of the Muslim Brotherhood. In 1977 leadership of the movement passed to Abdul Qadir Zallum.
- ¹⁷ It was proscribed in Germany and the Russian Federation in early 2003.
- ¹⁸ On the website, for example, there are such statements as: 'Karimov is not one of our own – though he may claim to be. His mother is a Jew and his father is not known. It is likely that he is a Jew like his mother. He has selected rulers who hate Islam and Muslims. They are a mixture of Russians, Jews, Chinese, Armenian, and some Uzbeks who apostatised from Islam in the days of the communist rule. Thus, the political control in the country is not in the hands of the Muslim Uzbek people.' (<http://www.hizb-ut-tahrir.org>)
- ¹⁹ Whatever President Karimov's opinion might have been at the time, he later described these events in Namangan thus: 'drugged religious extremists captured the building of the regional administration and demanded the change of constitutional regime in Uzbekistan. ... As time goes by, the evil intent behind these actions is becoming even more evident' (Karimov, 2002, p. 5).

- ²⁰ A book on this incident by Israeli (émigré Uzbek) journalist Yakubov, 2000, subtitled a 'political detective story', is in a similarly sensational vein.
- ²¹ Personal communications to the author by Uzbek and Kyrgyz military-security personnel at a conference held in Tashkent, May 2000, under the auspices of the George C. Marshall Center for European Security and the Uzbek Ministry of Defence.
- ²² The Khanate of Kokand was one of the three main states of the southern tier in the pre-colonial period; in the early nineteenth century it encompassed eastern Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and, intermittently, adjacent areas of Afghanistan and China. The Khanate was abolished, and its territory annexed by the tsarist empire, in 1876. During the Soviet period it was one of the centres of underground Islamic activity.
- ²³ Personal communication by N. Shadrova, deputy chairman of the Kyrgyz State Committee on Religious Affairs, Bishkek, September 1999.
- ²⁴ Said Nursi and Fethullah Gülen have played an ambiguous role in Turkish politics. They and their followers have had close links with some Turkish politicians, but have been regarded with suspicion by others; they have, on occasion, been prosecuted. For a study of Nursi's life and teachings, see Mardin, 1989.
- ²⁵ See the article by Bayram Balci in this issue of *RSS*, pp. 151–78.
- ²⁶ See further Akiner (1996), p. 95. There were individual exceptions; some six original Sufi lines (*silsilah*) are said to have survived up to the present day.
- ²⁷ Abdullayev has since taken little active part in promoting Sufi activities and some see his original claim to be a Sufi as stemming more from opportunism than conviction.
- ²⁸ For an indication of the way in which this view is evolving, see the article by Shukhrat Khurammov, 'Not losing their religion' (9 March 2001, distributed by email by Transitions Online), where it is stated that the Nurcus want to establish an Islamic republic in Uzbekistan so that it can be incorporated into the 'Osmanian (Turkish) empire'.
- ²⁹ According to a press statement by the deputy mufti of Kazakhstan, Serik Oraz, there were at this time about 100 students in Turkey, 80 in Egypt and 25 in Pakistan; these had been sent under the aegis of the Muftiate. Additionally, several students had gone abroad under other, private, schemes.
- ³⁰ Personal communication by N. Shadrova, deputy chairman of the Kyrgyz State Committee on Religious Affairs, Bishkek, September 1999.
- ³¹ See reports from Keston Institute in the *Keston News Service* (<http://www.keston.org>).
- ³² The definition of Islamic reformism used here draws on the work of Choueiri, who defines it as 'a modern movement which came into being in the wake of European supremacy and expansion', its main operative concepts including a rejection of medieval Islam and a reinterpretation of Islam as a code of modern laws (Choueiri, 1997, p. 19).
- ³³ There was an embryonic reform (*Jadid*) movement in Central Asia in the period from the late nineteenth to the early twentieth centuries; however, its development was arrested with the imposition of Soviet rule.
- ³⁴ On a visit to this university in mid-2002 the author noted that several of the students displayed a degree of Muslim fervour that in other settings might have caused them to be regarded as 'extremists'; a number of the female students were observing Muslim dress code, including wearing the *hijab* (Muslim headscarf), which, a few years earlier, would have been unthinkable in a state-sponsored institution (compare Frantz, 2000, p. 6, who refers to the banning of the *hijab* in such places).
- ³⁵ Sadiq al-Mehdi, a former prime minister of Sudan, summed it up thus: 'The modernisation which we witness today is called Western, yet its genesis involves an important contribution from the World of Islam. In the process of that evolution the phenomenon lost all or most of its spiritual and moral bearings. Today, backward and deprived, we face an economic and military giant with the moral and spiritual scruples of a flea. It is not a pleasant encounter' (Gauhar, 1978, p. 119).
- ³⁶ The Central Asian states have received military assistance for the reorganisation of their armed forces from several sources, including the NATO Partnership for Peace programme, of which they are all members, and also bilateral aid from China, Russia, Turkey and

several western states.

- ³⁷ This section draws upon Akiner (2003 forthcoming).
- ³⁸ Ill-treatment of Hizb ut-Tahrir members in Uzbek prisons allegedly includes such abuses as the following: 'They have absolutely no right to fulfill prayer and other religious duties. If anyone is caught performing a prayer he is ruthlessly beaten and tortured ... Members of Hizbut Tahrir experience severe shortage of food, often starved for extended periods of time, even food brought by relatives is not given to them. In many prisons Muslims are incarcerated with prisoners infected with tuberculosis and hepatitis' (Hizb ut-Tahrir, 2003).
- ³⁹ One aspect of this is a spate of abusive public demonstrations against the 'enemy within', as described to the author by eyewitnesses from Uzbekistan in early 2001. Similar 'hate rallies' have been reported in southern Kyrgyzstan, though here there are ethnic overtones, as the radicals tend to be identified with the Uzbek minority. See also 'Memorandum to the US Government Regarding Religious Persecution in Uzbekistan' (Human Rights Watch, 2001).

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