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Unpacking Andijan:
A Critical Synthesis of Reports Dealing with the Events of 13 May 2005

Master Thesis

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Content

Abstract

This thesis offers a revaluation of the role played by *Akramiya* and Islam in the events of 13 May 2005 in Andijan. Using Scott's concept of the hidden transcript coupled with a Marxist analysis of the Uzbek state, this thesis suggests that the insistence on public conformity demanded by the state's secular nationalist project, in the context of a political economy of exploitation, creates dissonance with regards to the meaning of Islam among popular classes. *Akramiya* proposed a vision of Islam in tune with notions of moral economy. The protest constituted the public affirmation of an emerging intersection between class-based and religious identities. The temerity of the protestors when faced with increasing levels of violence was a reaction to the psychological effects of domination and the emotions associated with participation in an open act of defiance within the context of oppressive authoritarian rule.

Résumé

Cette thèse propose une réévaluation du rôle joué par *Akramiya* et l'Islam lors des événements du 13 Mai 2005 à Andijan. En utilisant le concept *hidden transcript* développé par Scott de concert avec une analyse marxiste de l'état ouzbek, cette thèse suggère que la conformité au projet nationaliste laïque exigée par l'état, dans le contexte d'une économie politique d'exploitation, crée une dissonance en ce qui concerne le sens de l'islam parmi les classes populaires. *Akramiya* propose une vision de l'islam en harmonie avec des notions d'économie morale. La manifestation constitue l'affirmation publique d'une nouvelle intersection entre une identité religieuse et une identité de classe. La fermeté des manifestants face à l'aggravation de la violence doit être interprétée comme une réaction aux effets psychologiques de la domination et des émotions associés à la participation à un acte de défiance dans le contexte d'un régime autoritaire répressif.

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Introduction and Background

On 17 May 1898, an illiterate Sufi *ishan* named Madali, member of the *Naqshbandiyya* order, led more then 2,000 people in an attack against the Russian garrison in Andijan. Madali was a popular local religious figure, active in organizing charity work for the poor.[1] For Soviet historians, the 1898 Andijan rebellion was the result of religious fanaticism.[2] This interpretation was strongly rejected during the glasnost thaw, when an emerging Uzbek nationalist school of history reinterpreted the 1898 uprising as an anti-colonial struggle against the oppressiveness and injustices of tsarist rule.[3] Recently, some historians have suggested that the violence of 1898 was neither the result of religious fanaticism nor oppressive tsarist rule, but rather can be better understood as emerging from within the local political culture remnant of the Kokand khanate.[4]

Fast-forward a hundred years to 13 May 2005. In the same Uzbek city, thousands gathered in the town square. Andijan, which lies on the eastern fringes of the Ferghana Valley in Uzbekistan's cotton belt, had in recent years been the center of an intense religious revival. Such a massive outpouring of people onto the streets was unprecedented in the contemporary history of Uzbekistan. The protest was the largest in a series of manifestations that originated within the relatives of a group of 23 local businessmen accused of promoting religious extremism in relation to their membership in the organization Akramiya. The preceding night, armed men attacked the city jail, freeing most of the prisoners. Government troops quickly moved to suppress the unrest, killing

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[1] Beatrice Forbes Manz, "Central Asian Uprisings in the Nineteenth Century: Ferghana under the Russians," *Russian Review* 46, no.3 (July 1987): 276.

[2] James Critchlow, *Nationalism in Uzbekistan: a Soviet Republic's Road to Sovereignty* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1991), 121.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Forbes Manz, "Central Asian Uprisings in the Nineteenth Century," 281.

civilians in the process. Similarly to 1898, a series of contesting interpretations were put forth.

On one side of the debate, commentators were quick to define the unrest as the work of Islamist terrorists trained outside the country and part of an international *jihadi* network dead set on establishing an Islamic caliphate in Central Asia. The deaths of innocent civilians were blamed on the actions of the insurgents who had engaged with the Uzbek security forces in their attempt to topple the legitimate, and secular, government of Uzbekistan. This interpretation was put forth by the Uzbek government[5] and vigorously defended by Shirin Akiner[6], a Western academic.

A second reading points to the governance structure of Uzbekistan and links the events to "clan" struggles. In the context of a highly corrupt system of governance, a new governor put in place by Tashkent had confiscated the businesses of the 23 entrepreneurs and thrown them in jail. It was this type of corrupt practice, endemic in the country, which triggered the protest and explains its violent suppression.

For Human Right Watch (HRW)[7] and the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR)[8], what happened in Andijan was nothing short of a calculated butchery committed by the Uzbek authorities. The two organizations published reports that, although not offering a specific interpretation, present the unfolding of events as the violent suppression of an largely peaceful demonstration. The people gathered in the square were unarmed civilians protesting a series of oppressive measures enacted by their

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[5] Embassy of the Republic of Uzbekistan in Israel, *Prosecutor's Office Presents Report on Andijan to Parliament Commission, 7 September 2005* (released 7 September 2005), http://www.embuzisr.mfa.uz/modules.php?op=modload&name=News&file=article&sid=838 (accessed 3 June 2008).

[6] Shirin Akiner. *Violence in Andijan, 13 May 2005: An Independent Assessment* (Washington, DC: John Hopkins University, Central Asia-Caucasus Institute, Silk Road Paper, 2005), http://www.silkroadstudies.org/new/inside/publications/0507Akiner.pdf (accessed 29 September 2007).

[7] Human Right Watch, *Bullets Were Falling Like Rain: The Andijan Massacre, May 13, 2005* (Report 17, no. 5, 2005), http://hrw.org/reports/2005/uzbekistan0605/ (accessed 11 September 2007).

[8] Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, *Preliminary findings on the events in Andijan, Uzbekistan, 13 May* (Warsaw: 20 June 2005), http://www.osce.org/documents/odihr/2005/06/15233_en.pdf (accessed 11 September 2007).

government; in other words the protestors were not religious fanatics. In line with this account, International Crisis Group (ICG)[9] paints the picture of a protest in which the government suppressed the initial stages of an "uprising." But was this the case? And although the protestors were not "fanatics," does this still mean that Islam, as a message or organizationally, played no role in the event?

What really happened in Andijan on 13 May 2005? More importantly, why did it happen? Why were people protesting and why did the government resort to lethal force to disperse this protest? Why did people remain in the square after it became clear that the government was using live ammunition? Although all three interpretations point towards elements that merit further investigation, each reading falls short of offering a complete assessment.

The government of Uzbekistan has consistently refused to allow an independent fact-finding mission that would look into the events. Despite this fact, it remains possible to unpack these three divergent perspectives in order to produce a historically and theoretically grounded synthesis that will help us build a more complete understanding of the events in Andijan.

Brief Country Profile

Uzbekistan, a country of 23 million people, is the most populous and militarily powerful state in Central Asia.[10] Uzbeks, who account for about 17 million individuals, are the dominant ethnic group in the country followed by the Tajik, Russian and Kazakh

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[9] International Crisis Group, *Uzbekistan: The Andijon Uprising* (Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan: Asia Briefing, no.38, 25 May 2005), http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=3469 (accessed 12 May 2007).
[10] Neil Melvin, *Uzbekistan: Transition to Authoritarianism on the New Silk Road* (Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Press, 2000), 92-93.

minorities. Each of these minority groups account for roughly 1 million citizens.[11] Decision-making is highly centralized in the capital Tashkent, a metropolis of more than 4 million people.

The economy of Uzbekistan is primarily dependant on the monoculture of cotton. Uzbekistan is energy self-sufficient and has significant reserves of oil and natural gas. It is also a major world exporter of gold, the export of which accounts for one fifth of its foreign exchange revenues.[12] While part of the USSR, industry in Uzbekistan was concentrated in the production of farm equipment and fertilizers. However, independence brought about the collapse of much of Uzbekistan's manufacturing base. The breakup of the USSR and the end of transfer payments from Moscow forced Tashkent to import large quantities of foodstuff, consumer products and manufactured goods.

The productive sectors of the economy are still overwhelmingly controlled by the state. Islam Karimov, the president of Uzbekistan for the past two decades, was trained as a Soviet economist. In contrast to the developments in most former Soviet republics, Karimov refused to fully liberalize the Uzbek economy. Consequently, the regime in Tashkent kept a distance from reform packages proposed by the IMF and other lending institutions. For that reason, the state in Uzbekistan, by maintaining much of its regulative apparatus, sheltered the economy from the growing pains of shifting towards capitalism. Immediately following independence, the Uzbek economy suffered the least amount of economic contraction among the Soviet successor states.[13] While this may have been positive at the beginning of independence, the country is now the least reformed and least liberalized of all of the Soviet successor states.

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[11] Melvin, *Uzbekistan: Transition to Authoritarianism on the New Silk Road,* 48.
[12] Sheila C. Dow, Dipak Ghosh and Kobil Ruziev, "The Uzbek Puzzle Revisited: an Analysis of Economic Performance in Uzbekistan since 1991," *Central Asian Survey* 26, no. 1 (2007): 10.
[13] Melvin, *Uzbekistan: Transition to Authoritarianism on the New Silk Road,* 61-89.

Commentators portray Islam Karimov's rule over Uzbekistan as being authoritarian. At the outset of independence, Karimov based his power on the continuation of Soviet-style welfare programs.[14] This strategy is becoming less and less viable as countries in Central Asia can no longer afford to give such extensive provisions to their population. Male life expectancy in Central Asia fell from 75 years in 1991 to a current average of 60 years.[15] A growing number of citizens of Uzbekistan feel that the government no longer responds to their needs, as opposed to the Soviet era, which is remembered nostalgically by a significant percentage of the population.[16]

A Note on Method

Quite different, yet equally compelling interpretations of what happened in Andijan have been put forth and vigorously defended. When looking at all of these contradictory interpretations, one is left to wonder: Are all these writings describing the same event? Every interpretation put forward to date emphasizes one element in the story, while glossing over others. Only a limited number of documents are to be found dealing directly with the subject of the event in Andijan of 13 May 2005. A closer look and comparison of these competing interpretations will point towards a more nuanced and complete synthesis. This thesis is derived primarily from secondary research focused on theoretical and comparative bodies of literature. This thesis will offer a critical synthesis using the methods of mixing and anchoring.

By anchoring, I mean the historical and theoretical unpacking of the different

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[14] Kelly M. McMann, "The Shrinking of the Welfare State: Central Asians' Assessments of Soviet and Post-Soviet Governance," in *Everyday Life in Central Asia: Past and Present,* ed. Jeff Sahadep and Russell Zanca (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2007), 240.

[15] International Crisis Group, *Youth in Central Asia: Losing the New Generation* (Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan: Asia Report no. 66, 31 October 2003), 1, http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=2342&l=1 (accessed 12 May 2008).

[16] McMann, "The Shrinking of the Welfare State," 240.

elements put forward in the competing interpretations. For example, what exactly are clans, both conceptually and practically, and how can a better understanding of clans shed light on the "clan based" interpretation of events? Will such an investigation help us in understanding other important elements in the story of that day? In the same vein, what are the source, context and logic of the Uzbekistani government's drive to control the meaning of Islam in the public sphere, and how will such a deeper understanding help us in adjudicating between the different interpretations put forth so far?

In the realm of *Djing*, mixing refers to the process of sequencing existing sounds taken from pre-recorded music and applying transformative effects. The range and combination of effects are vast. Mixing supposes the pre-existence of sounds and songs, but seeks to arrange these pre-existing elements into a wholly different experience. The encounter of sounds and effects resembles the meeting of testimonies, interpretations and theories that will be done in the course of this research. Documents dealing with the event in Andijan are rare. Access to the participants in the events has become impossible. What is proposed is a theoretical re-arrangement of a "set" of testimonies and interpretations "lifted out" of pre-existing investigations. Such an exercise will highlight the faults and strengths of each interpretation. This will be done in an effort to put forward a more theoretically and historically compelling synthesis.

With regards to the events in Andijan, the presentation and articulation of a series of key aspects found in each interpretation (the system of government, the nature of state-Islam relation) will open a line of investigation into constitutive elements that shaped the meaning-context in which the event took place. For Weber, "a "motive" is a context of meaning in which the actor's action become intelligible and which can be shown to the observer to be a significant ground for an intended behavior."[17] The description of the

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[17] Max Weber, *Basic Concepts of Sociology* [book on-line] under "Chapter I, Section 3, iii: Methodological Foundations, Valid Interpretation, Adequacy of Meaning,"

meaning-context will be anchored in a theoretical and historical analysis of the elements constitutive of the varying interpretations put forth, and will permit an "imaginative reconstruction" of the motivations behind the government's choice to use violence to suppress dissent as well the protestor's willingness to face up to such violence.

As will become clear when looking at the sequencing of chapters, the underlying assumptions of this research are in line with notions of historical materialism as first introduced by Karl Marx in which the economic infrastructure of a state determines the ideological/juridical superstructure that then serves to reinforce it. Briefly, the economic infrastructure of Uzbekistan, which relies on exclusionary and exploitative modes of productions, can only be sustained through the propagation and apparent public acceptance by the population of the state's ideological nationalist project. The ideological project of nationalism plays the role of maintaining and developing the dominant position of the ruling class. In reaction to this hegemonic project, the protest and its dynamics can be understood as a popular inscription of self; a form of subaltern class agency not in line with the ruling elites' conformist and quietist ideological message which exalts stability at all costs.

Theoretical Orientation and Structure of Argument

Seeing that the protest originated in connection with the arrest and imprisonment of members of a small economic elite, what explains that thousands of apparently ordinary Uzbeks took part in this unprecedented show of popular discontent? And more importantly, what can account for the resolve of the protestors to stay in the square even when faced with an increasing level of violence by the state? Can an understanding of the government's nation-building agenda help to make sense of it's willingness to use

http://www.ne.jp/asahi/moriyuki/abukuma/weber/method/basic/basic_concept_frame.html (accessed 2 December 2007).

indiscriminate violence? A focus on the production of cultural framing of grievances within the employment networks set up by the organization *Akramiya* in terms of moral economy will better help us understand the cause and consequence of popular discontent in Andijan represented by this protest. Theoretical frameworks useful in understanding the events in Andijan also include state building institutional perspectives.

The first chapter will provide a review of the government's explanation of the unrest in Andijan, followed by an examination of Shirin Akiner's *Violence in Andijan, 13 May 2005: An Independent Assessment*. These two accounts will be contrasted to an analysis of the versions put forward by HRW and the ODIHR. I will apply these two perspectives to a closer empirical analysis of the protest, trying to show that the former explanation fails to take into consideration key aspects of what went on that day, while also containing logical inconsistencies, hence pointing to its weaknesses. The later version does not suffer from such flaws, thus justifying its tentative acceptance.

In chapter two, I will situate the protest within the structures of governance of contemporary Uzbekistan. This section will not only seek to draw a clearer picture of the hardship of economic life for ordinary citizens living under the Karimov regime, but will also ground this description in a broader theoretical discussion regarding the sources and dynamics of authoritarian governance in general, and Karimov's Uzbekistan in particular. Armed with a clear understanding of the power dynamics inherent to the system of governance in Uzbekistan, the end of this chapter will afford a critical reassessment of the "clan" theory with regards to the events in Andijan. The chapter will conclude that a political economy of exploitation and exclusion is present in Uzbekistan which can only be sustained through, on one side repression, but more importantly through an active cultivation of compliance by way of the state's nationalistic ideological project.

Once established that a protest did take place, and that the government did violently suppress it, how can theories of nation building dealing with the use of ideology in constructing political legitimacy under authoritarian regimes shed light on Karimov's willingness to use violence when faced with a population whose actions were perceived as undermining such legitimacy? In the third chapter, I will provide an overview of the nation building before and after the end of the Soviet era paying special attention to the relationship between Islam and state/society relations. This chapter will provide a full description of both "official" and "underground" Islam and their relationship in laying the groundwork for both compliance and resistance. I will focus on the construction of legitimacy and the use of symbolic meaning on the part of the state in order to bring into perspective its philosophy which exalts stability at all cost and the associated propensity to view in all forms of dissent expressions of religious extremism. In essence, the status quo represented by the political economy of exploitation and exclusion in Uzbekistan is justified by the active promulgation of a discourse of fear and exterior threats in which a monolithic and uncompromising vision of Islam is put forth. Here, I will make use of state dominated discourse as found in the writings of president Karimov and also review secondary sources dealing with this subject.

The protest in Andijan should not be represented as a popular uprising against national level grievances as the report by the ICG would suggest. A better line of investigation lies in exploring the symbolic tensions that result from the state's nation-building project and the space it opens for the continuation of practices associated with underground Islam, that although not to begin with confrontational, nevertheless encourages alternative meaning of faith more in tune with the experience of exploitation as lived by ordinary Uzbeks. In the final chapter, I will reevaluate the place of the organization *Akramiya* as a facilitator of the protest in light of social movement theory

dealing with the role of networks in propagating frames of meaning within self-help initiatives in tune with a moral economy perspective. This will be coupled with a return to the idea of meaning-context, Weber's notion of empathic understanding and the role of emotions in protests, pointing towards an explanation as to why ordinary Uzbeks joined in and were committed to the protest initiated by the actions of members of *Akramiya*.

CHAPTER ONE: Contested Facts

In this chapter, I will compare and contrast the official government's interpretation of the events and Shirin Akiner's controversial report, which largely supports it, to the version found in reports by HRW and the ODIHR. All these sources are primarily descriptive in nature. By setting one against the other, the aim of this chapter is to get closer to answering the question of what exactly happened on the day of 13 May 2005 in Andijan; was it a protest or a successful counter-insurgency operation? The contrast between the two versions is stark and irreconcilable. One version therefore must be closer to the truth then the other.

The comparison will be set against a video released by the Carnegie Foundation more then a year after the publication of all of these reports that tends to corroborate the version put forth by HRW and the ODIHR. The aim of this comparison is threefold: First, this chapter will establish that there was an element of popular participation in the protest and therefore the official version of events that seeks to portray what happened as a limited anti-terror operation is inaccurate. Second, by looking at the sources used by HRW and ODIHR, and comparing them to Akiner's method of investigation, it will be concluded that Akiner's account relied too heavily on government supervised interviews which did not afford a critical stance towards the Uzbek version of events, a version intimately tied to the government's interest in portraying the unrest as instigated by Islamic terrorists, and not a massacre. Finally, by showing that the HRW and ODIHR reports are more closely attuned with the facts, the decision to use them as a source of firsthand accounts will be vindicated.

The Official Version of Events

The Uzbek government quickly moved to give an authoritative interpretation of what happened in Andijan, for both foreign and domestic consumption. For the government, troops in Andijan had been involved in fighting Islamic militants. This operation resulted in the death of no more then 169 people, including 32 Uzbek troops.[18] According to the government, a coup d'état had been thwarted. Inspired by the events in the nearby Kyrgyz republic, Islamic fundamentalist supported by a network of foreign extremists[19] had attempted to overthrow the established constitutional order:

The investigation has concluded that the acts in Andijan were a carefully planned action, organized by outside destructive forces and aimed against Uzbekistan's independent policy and national interests, changing (of the) present constitutional order and creation of an Islamic state meeting their geopolitical demands.[20]

At a press conference on 15 May 2005[21], Karimov asserted that there had been no shooting of peaceful citizens protesting against poverty and mass repression. As a matter of fact, according to the Uzbek government, the protest had been "engineered" by the aforementioned terrorists:

False 'peaceful' demonstrations of citizens were planned in parallel with terrorist acts. For this, organizers of the acts wanted to draw as many people as possible in the streets, to create conditions and opportunities for criminal elements, mainly freed dangerous criminals, to riot in the streets of Andijan, carrying out pogroms, arsons, destructions and

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[18] C. J. Chivers, "Toe Tags Offer Clues to Uzbeks' Uprising," *New York Times*, 23 May 2005, http://www.nytimes.com/2005/05/23/international/asia/23uzbek.html (accessed 11 March 2008).

[19] "The Blood-Red Revolution," *The Economist*, 21 May 2005, 43-44. The Russian and Chinese government also quickly put forward statements in support of the actions of the Uzbek government and its version of events. Links within the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, a regional intergovernmental security association, were reinforced, thus improving cooperation on security issues in the region.

[20] Embassy of the Republic of Uzbekistan in Israel, *Prosecutor's Office Presents Report on Andijan to Parliament Commission, 7 September 2005.*

[21] Andrey Kudriashov, "No News is Bad News: The Uzbek Government Fails to Suppress News on the Killings in Andijan," *Index on Censorship* 34, no. 3 (November 2005): 10, http://find.galegroup.com/itx/infomark.do?contentSet=IAC-Documents&docType=IAC&type=retrieve&tabID=T003&prodId=EAIM&docId=A142256101&userGroupName=crepuq_mcgill&version=1.0&searchType=BasicSearchForm&source=gale (accessed 3 June 2008).

robbing.[22]

For the government, there was no link between the arrest of the 23 businessmen and the ensuing protest.[23] Rather, the images released of people rallying in Babur Square were the result of "specially trained groups of women, children and senior citizens (relatives and friends of the terrorists) supposed to act out anti-government demonstrations of civilians."[24]

The security forces had therefore carried out a successful operation against Islamic terrorists. Accordingly, the death of civilians was not the result of "excessive use of force, including chaotic and intentional shooting at civilians by Security Forces,"[25] but resulted from the violent actions of a terrorist group directed from abroad: "In the night of 12 May, more than 60 trained and armed militants (Kyrgyz citizens) intruded the territory of Uzbekistan and took an active part in the terrorist acts."[26] Innocent people were killed in the crossfire. This was a tragic but unavoidable outcome. The sovereign government of Uzbekistan needed to respond to a threat to its very existence.

Karimov also put the blame for the events in Andijan on the shoulders of Western reformists: "Attempts to artificially implant democratic processes in Uzbekistan can lead to third forces making use of the situation. These third forces are Islamic fundamentalists." [27] The foreign press was duped into participating in "a broad

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[22] Ibid.

[23] Republic of Uzbekistan, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Comments on the Report Prepared by the ODIHR on Monitoring the Legal Trial in Uzbekistan, September-October 2005, Against 15 Active Participant of the Andijan Events in May 2005* (Tashkent, Uzbekistan: 19 April 2006), 1, http://www.osce.org/odihr/documents.html?lsi=true&limit=10&grp=358 (accessed 3 June 2008).

[24] Ibid., 3.

[25] Ibid., 4.

[26] Embassy of the Republic of Uzbekistan in Israel, *Prosecutor's Office Presents Report on Andijan to Parliament Commission, 7 September 2005.*

[27] Quoted in Andrew Gardner, "A Valley Runs with Blood," *Transitions Online,* 16 May 2005, http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=aph&AN=17183149&site=ehost-live (accessed 3 June 2008). This accusation suggests that, even before May 13th, the government was apprehensive about the possibility of a "color" revolution, such as the ones that had previously engulfed the regimes in Georgia (2003), Ukraine (2004-05) and Kyrgyzstan (2005), taking hold in Uzbekistan.

informational-propagandistic activity against Uzbekistan."[28] After months of negative press in the West concerning Andjian, the government went even further, suggesting that Western NGOs were in effect co-conspirators who had actively participated in the planning of disturbances in Andijan:

With this purpose (being witness to the staged protest), representatives of a number of foreign human rights organizations, media and foreign charity societies, which were informed beforehand, started gathering in the territories adjacent to Andijan – Osh, Aravan, Karasu and Jalalabad – before the events, starting from 9-10 May. Being present in this region, they were waiting for the start of the action, in order to capture the explosion in Andijan and spread the slander about the actions of the organs of authority and law-enforcement.[29]

These accusations are understandable when considering the highly negative coverage which the Uzbek government received in the aftermath of the events. Still, what the government fails to explain is the reason why Western NGOs, which are referred to as "so-called humanitarian charity international organizations"[30] and press organs would want to "slander" the Uzbek government. What would be their motivation? The government presents the events in Andijan as part of an all-encompassing plot involving international Islamists, Western NGOs and the foreign press, without supplying any evidence to back up such accusations. All this implies that the government was provoked, and that its reaction was proportional and sensible.[31]

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[28] Republic of Uzbekistan, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Comments on the Report Prepared by the ODIHR on Monitoring the Legal Trial in Uzbekistan, September-October 2005, Against 15 Active Participant of the Andijan events in May 2005*, 4.
[29] Embassy of the Republic of Uzbekistan in Israel, *Prosecutor's Office Presents Report on Andijan to Parliament Commission*, 7 September 2005.
[30] Ibid.
[31] There is an unmistakable air of paranoia in the formulation of these accusations and the vocabulary used is reminiscent of Soviet rhetoric.

Violence in Andijan: A Reassessment

Shirin Akiner, a lecturer in Central Asian Studies at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, and an Associate Fellow of the Royal Institute of International Affairs, produced a document, *Violence in Andijan, 13th May 2005: An Independent Assessment*, largely supportive of the Uzbek government's conclusions that the events in Andijan were the result of an attempted coup.[32] Similarly to the Uzbek government, she denies that the protest, indeed if there was one, had anything to do with popular grievances. Instead, Akiner claims that the attack on the jail and the liberation of the 23 imprisoned businessmen, along with all the other detainees, was the result of political calculation: "I did not find indications that the action was driven by religious or socioeconomic demands. It seems likely that the motive was political, intended as the opening phase of a *coup d'état*, on the lines of the Kyrgyz model."[33]

According to Akiner, the attack on the jail was planned by an insurgent group that used the pretext of the trial of the 23 businessmen in order that "they could rally popular support by linking their actions to a religious cause."[34] Her report gives a highly tactical account of the events surrounding the attack on the jail, speaking in terms of phases. Following an assault on a police patrol post where the insurgents seized weapons and ammunition, the city jail was attacked in the early hours of the night; this was to be the opening phase in a series of violent confrontations between the insurgents and the authorities that lasted until the morning.[35] Akiner alleges that many of the prisoners were not freed, but rather were taken as hostages and used as human shields. The hostages

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[32] However, Akiner does not believe that the instigators were motivated by an Islamist agenda.
[33] Akiner, *Violence in Andijan*, I. It is telling that Akiner describes what happened in Kyrgyzstan in 2005 as a "coup d'état", a position shared by Uzbek authorities. The much wider consensus, both in the academic field and in the international arena, is that the change in government in Kyrgyzstan was a popular revolution, hence the term tulip revolution.
[34] Ibid. Akiner does not explain why the arrest of the businessmen would be a religious cause.
[35] Ibid., 12-13.

were "surrounded by the insurgents and forcibly marched down the main road."[36] After

an unsuccessful attempt at overpowering the National Security Service offices, the

insurgents marched with their prisoners and successively took over the governor's office,

setting in passage the cinema and theatre on fire.[37] Afterwards, the insurgents coalesced

in Babur Square. There they were met by a growing number of reportedly befuddled

onlookers[38] who for the most part did not heed the insurgents' calls to join in the protest.

The insurgents inflicted a series of violence unto their captives, including slicing their

ears and poking their eyes out, apparently in plain view of all who had come and gathered

in the square.[39]

According to Akiner, "I could not find anyone who heard slogans or protests of a

religious nature. Equally, no one appears to have heard any economic or political

protests."[40] Apparently, after they realized that they would not be successful in rallying

support for their cause, most of the insurgents simply started to leave and escaped.[41]

After warning the crowd to evacuate the square by means of loudspeakers, government

troops stormed the governor's office and engaged in combat with the insurgents, killing

those that had lingered there.[42] Akiner claims that while many of the people present in the

square remained, she suggests that this could have been involuntary: "I do not know if

they were coerced into this by armed insurgents within the crowd, but this, too, requires

further investigation."[43] In the following days, most of the freed prisoners "returned

voluntarily to captivity."[44]

There are many inconsistencies and revealing silences present in Akiner's version

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[36] Ibid., 14.
[37] Ibid., 14-15.
[38] Ibid., 15.
[39] Ibid., 16.
[40] Ibid., 15.
[41] Ibid., 16.
[42] Ibid., 16.
[43] Ibid., 33.
[44] Ibid., 16.

of events. First of all, while claiming that the attacks on the jail is to be understood as the first stage of an attempted coup, her account portrays the "insurgents" as irrational fanatics, indiscriminately murdering people in front of the crowd. The impression left leads the reader to believe that the men involved in the attacks were cruel savages. The suggestion is made that people in the crowd were in some instances dumbstruck passive observers of this violence or in others captives of the insurgents. As the opening act of a *coup d'état*, this public display of senseless violence would consist of an odd way indeed to capture the hearts and minds of the local population.

On top of this, Akiner maintains that many of the insurgents were from outside the Andijan region, including some foreigners. She claims that she is "inclined to believe" that the insurgents were externally funded.[45] If this were so, one is entitled to wonder why a group of men trained and prepared for several months, risked their lives, with the only apparent aim of sowing chaos in the streets of Andijan. What's more, if the attack on the jail was intended as the opening phase of an externally funded *coup d'état*, why would exterior actors become involved and fund such a poorly thought out and botched plan? Furthermore, why have we not been presented with any conclusive proof of foreign involvement more then three years after the event? Why is she "inclined to believe" exterior founding was instrumental to the attack on the jail?

In addition, her account completely glosses over the preceding protests in relation to the arrested businessmen. According to Akiner, "This was not a spontaneous demonstration but a carefully prepared attack,"[46] and "this was not a demonstration mounted by peaceful civilians."[47] Yet, according to an article published on Radio Free Europe's website on 12 May 2005, that is to say the day immediately preceding the events under study, "defendants' relatives and their former employees have been holding

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[45] Ibid., 31.
[46] Ibid., 30.
[47] Ibid., 30.

demonstrations to protest the charges...the strength of yesterday's protest grew as hundreds of people assembled outside the court building to await the court's ruling on the case."[48] The fact that there was mounting protest in the preceding days is important, because it suggests that at least some people in the square where there of their own accord. Also, if the preceding days witnessed protests related to the arrest of the 23 businessmen, her statement that she could find no one who heard protests or slogans on 13 May becomes highly suspect.

A closer look at the sources used by Akiner in order to construct her account can point to the reasons behind these inconsistencies. Akiner relies on "informal conversations"[49] that she had with a number of people living in Andijan on the 25th and 26th of May 2005, almost two weeks after the events. The problem is that these interviews were conducted for the most part under government supervision, either directly through the presence during the interviews of officials, or indirectly, because as she remarks herself, she gave a list to the local governor of all the people and places she wished to visit prior to the commencement of the interviews.[50] Considering that during those days the Uzbek government was denying access to the region to almost every foreigner begs the question as to why would she be the only outsider permitted such access.

When speaking about her conversation with an inmate, she states: "It may well be that this was all a fabrication."[51] She discounts this by claiming that details recounted by the prisoner matched what other people had told her. But this means very little. Indeed, domestically, a complete blackout of foreign coverage on the event in Andijan was put

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[48] Gulnoza Saidazimova, "Uzbekistan: Extremists Trial Postponed, Charges Reduced Amid Protests," *Radio Free Europe Radio Liberty*, 12 May 2005, http://www.rferl.org/content/article/1058848.html (accessed 3 June 2008).
[49] Akiner, *Violence in Andijan*, 18.
[50] Ibid., 46.
[51] Ibid., 25.

into effect in the Uzbek media.[52] The four channels of Uzbek state television began to report events in Andijan only after Karimov's press conference on May 15.[53] Reports also indicate that internet access was severely limited in the days following the events.[54] Further, the authorities organized public showing of Karimov's speech pertaining to the event in public institutions and encouraged viewing during work hours.[55] A concerted effort to control the meaning and nature of public discourse relating to the event was clearly aimed at regulating its symbolic significance. It is reasonable to expect that this drive towards the control of the meaning of the Andijan events was most aggressive in Andijan itself. Needless to say that by the time Akiner visited the city two weeks later and conducted her interviews that everyone knew the general outline of the government's narrative of the events. In this sense, it is not surprising, given the nature of state/society relations in Uzbekistan that we will explore later, that when presented by the governor with a foreign academic asking questions about the protest, people in essence repeated the broad lines as hammered constantly in the Uzbek media for more then two weeks.

The final nail in the coffin of the version defended by the Uzbekistani government and Akiner consists of a video[56] released by the Carnegie Institute more then a year after the protest. The video is made up of a series of clips that show the protest in Babur Square during the afternoon of 13 May 2005. Consequently, the video does not give us any clue as to what led up to the protest. Also, it cuts off minutes before the actual government intervention. Although the video gives us at the very best a highly circumscribed picture of what took place that day, it will still be useful to perform a

[52] Kudriashov, "No News is Bad News," 10.
[53] Ibid., 10.
[54] Gardner, "A Valley Runs With Blood"
[55] Kudriashov, "No News is Bad News," 12.
[56] "Video of the Prelude to the Massacre," Carnegie Foundation, 22 June 2006, http://carnegieendowment.org/publications/index.cfm?fa=view&id=18453&prog=zru (accessed 25 September2007). The video came to the attention of a researcher working for the Carnegie Institute, Martha Brill Olcott, who had obtained it from Bakhtiyar Babadjanov, an academic working at the Institute of Oriental Studies at the Uzbek Academy of Sciences. The edited video was released by the Uzbek authorities in effort to prove their version of the story.

content analysis. Significant empirical elements that can be gleaned from viewing the video are in contradiction with both Akiner's and the government's account.

First of all, the video clearly shows an expanding group of people coalescing in Babur Square. In the video you can see hundreds of mostly unarmed people, including many women and children. The claim made by the Uzbek authorities that only Islamic radicals participated in the protest is refuted by the video. Since a protest clearly took place, why do both Akiner and the Uzbek government go to great lengths to deny it? Many claims found in Akiner's report and the government's version, such as for example that there was no public airing of grievances, are disputed by the video.

The video shows a loudspeaker set up at the front of the protest. The focus of the video is on a series of speakers that come and address the crowd. The different people making speeches are in essence denouncing economic hardship and unfair government practices. Indicative of the general nature of the statements being made, one of the speakers addressing the crowd claims: "We came here to protect our rights."[57] You can hear the people openly responding to this by yelling out in unison "*Azadlik!*" (freedom!) as well as "*Allahu Akbar!*" (God is great!).[58]

At first glance, it becomes increasingly clear that the form of the protest is akin to a chaotic outburst or a spontaneous public town hall meeting. It does not have the trappings of a conventional Islamist inspired protest, such as flag burning, anti-American rhetoric or other outward signs that could be construed as expressions of fanatical religiosity. As a matter of fact, people are applauding and smiling; mothers stroll through the protest, their children nonchalantly following them.

If the protest is to be understood in the logic of an attempted coup, and if it

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[57] Carnegie Foundation, "Video of the prelude to the Massacre"
[58] C.J. Chivers, "Video of ill-Fated Uzbek Rising Offers Haunting, Complex View," *New York Times*, 22 June 2006, http://www.nytimes.com/2006/06/22/world/asia/22andijon_web.html (accessed 11 March 2008).

resulted from a well-planned and coordinated action by a group of determined extremists, then should we not expect a leader to emerge that would address the crowd with a set of thought out and ideologically formulated slogans and calls to action? In fact, it seems that everybody could address the crowd, and that the whole affair was an open-mike session for disgruntled citizens. The content of the speeches made that day do not resemble anything remotely attuned to a revolutionary platform.

Reports by HRW and the ODIHR

If the government's and Akiner's version of what happened prove to be largely inaccurate and incomplete, then where does the truth lie? According to both to HRW and the ODIHR, on the morning of 13 May 2005, citizens of Andijan woke up to find a burgeoning mass protest in the centre of the city. As the day went on, the rally grew from a small number of protestors to a crowd reaching approximately ten thousand people.[59] Undoubtedly, a few armed men were mixed in with ordinary citizens. Nonetheless, according to these two accounts, the overwhelming majority of participants were unarmed civilians.

HRW gives a completely different version of the attacks that occurred during the night preceding the protest from the one defended by Akiner and the government: "It appears that the attackers managed to surprise the weakly guarded police and military units, and that only limited fighting took place during both attacks."[60] It is only after this that the men were able to seize "a significant number of weapons"[61] and headed towards the prison. According to HRW, the attack on the jail was not the result of the infiltration of foreign terrorists, but rather, on the evening of 12 May 2005, a group of friends and

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[59] Human Right Watch, *Bullets Were Falling Like Rain,* 20.
[60] Ibid., 9.
[61] Ibid., 10.

family of the businessmen "decided to try to get their friends and family out of detention."[62] This would be supported by the Radio Free Europe article mentioned earlier in which relatives of the accused told the reporter that they were planning to change tactics and consider non-peaceful action if the state did not release the imprisoned businessmen.[63]

In their report, HRW claims that the prisoners "were given the choice of joining a downtown protest, or going home."[64] This is in clear opposition with Akiner's version which suggests that not only government officials, but also ordinary prisoners were taken hostage. By early morning, the armed men and some of the liberated prisoners, including the 23 freed businessmen, were occupying Babur Square. They were soon joined by an increasingly large crowd.[65] By late afternoon, the crowd in the square had grown to more then ten thousand participants.[66]

According to HRW and the ODIHR, the protest of 13 May was only the latest in a series of public demonstrations. On 10 May, approximately 700-1000 people protested outside the city court.[67] The following day, 2000-4000 people showed up to protest.[68] According to HRW and the ODIHR, the demonstrations centered on the arrest of 23 local businessman.[69] Who were these businessmen? According to the ODIHR and HRW, the 23 businessmen were all successful entrepreneurs who had contributed to the emergence of a small scale and privately owned manufacturing sector in Andijan. The defendants

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[62] Ibid., 12.
[63] Gulnoza Saidazimova, "Uzbekistan: Extremism Trial Postponed, Charges Reduced Amid Protests"
[64] Human Right Watch, *Bullets Were Falling Like Rain*, 13.
[65] Ibid., 16.
[66] Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, *Preliminary Findings on the Events in Andijan, Uzbekistan, 13 May*, 15.
[67] Human Right Watch, *Bullets Were Falling Like Rain*, 12.
[68] Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, *Preliminary Findings on the Events in Andijan, Uzbekistan, 13 May*, 10.
[69] According to HRW: "Twenty-three defendants faced charges of organizing a criminal group, attempt to overthrow the constitutional order of Uzbekistan, membership in an illegal religious organization and possession or distribution of literature containing a threat to public safety" Human Right Watch, *Bullets Were Falling Like Rain*, 10.

had been active in areas pertaining to the production of goods for domestic consumption.[70] The arrest of the businessman and the freezing of their assets had thus caused a sharp rise in unemployment in the city: "The defendants' businesses employed thousands of people in impoverished Andijan." [71] This created a situation where thousands of people were suddenly plunged into economic uncertainty.[72]

Beginning at six o'clock in the morning, security forces "started firing with automatic weapons directly into the crowd."[73] Reports and testimonies from participants collected by HRW and the ODIHR indicate that all throughout the day security forces unsuccessfully attempted to disperse the crowd by sporadically spraying it with automated fire.[74] Snipers were also used to pick off perceived leaders of the protest: "One of the witnesses said the snipers deployed around the square were systematically shooting people who had just finished speaking at the podium."[75] Snipers were also reported to have shot people that were merely attending the protest.[76] According to HRW, all throughout the day, "means of restoring order or dispersing the crowd short of lethal force do not appear to have been used."[77] If all of this is accurate, then why did the protestors remain in the square when faced with such escalating violence?

By four o'clock, all the roads leading in and out of Babur Square were effectively sealed off.[78] A little after five o'clock, a systematic attack on all those remaining in the square began. Sustained machine gun fire and sniper attacks mowed down protesters

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[70] Human Right Watch, *Bullets Were Falling Like Rain,* 7. According to HRW, the defendants had developed such industries as furniture factories, business supply companies, bakeries, tailoring firms, construction companies and transportation firms.
[71] Ibid., 12.
[72] Human Right Watch, *Bullets Were Falling Like Rain,* 11.
[73] Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, *Preliminary findings on the events in Andijan, Uzbekistan, 13 May,* 12.
[74] Human Right Watch, *Bullets Were Falling Like Rain,* 23.
[75] Ibid., 25.
[76] Ibid., 23.
[77] Ibid., 21.
[78] Ibid., 28.

from all sides, effectively encircling the crowd of people with a barrage of bullets.[79]

According to the ODIHR: "The crowd begged the security forces not to shoot. Women who waved white cloths to show that they were not armed were shot. There are also several accounts describing how people were being shot at even though they were lying down."[80] The ODIHR and HRW reports also indicate that some of the people wounded were systematically executed.[81] The rest of both reports give a graphic description, using testimonies of participants, which would suggest that the Uzbek troops committed a massacre.[82] About 500 refugees were able to reach the Kyrgyz border.[83] Although exact figures of the number of people killed are impossible to establish, the ODIHR concludes that a minimum of 300-500 people were killed as a direct result of the government intervention.[84] In sum, the reports by the ODIHR and HRW paint a dramatically different portrait from the one proposed by the Uzbek government and Akiner.

Evaluation of the Reports by the ODIHR and HRW

Contrary to the accounts put forth by both Akiner and the Uzbek government, the reports of the ODIHR and HRW are consistent with the information that can be gathered through an analysis of the video made available by the Carnegie Foundation. The video clearly shows a mass of people, including unarmed women and children, gathered in

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[79] Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, *Preliminary Findings on the Events in Andijan, Uzbekistan, 13 May*, 17.
[80] Ibid., 19.
[81] Human Right Watch, *Bullets Were Falling Like Rain*, 37.
[82] According to the ODIHR: "There are no indications that the security forces made any effort to avoid shooting unarmed civilians in this attack; rather it appears that the attacks were conducted in an indiscriminate manner." Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, *Preliminary Findings on the Events in Andijan, Uzbekistan, 13 May*, 17. HRW states: "The scale of this killing was so extensive, and its nature was so indiscriminate and disproportionate, that it can best be described as a massacre." Human Right Watch, *Bullets Were Falling Like Rain*, 2.
[83] Human Right Watch, *Bullets Were Falling Like Rain*, 36.
[84] Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, *Preliminary Findings on the Events in Andijan, Uzbekistan, 13 May*, 8.

Babur Square. The reports by ODIHR and HRW, although published more then a year

prior to the release of the video, concord with this.

More tangentially, the fact that the ODIHR and HRW did not have any interest in

favoring one account over the other is also important. As much cannot be said to be true

about the Uzbek government, who had a clear incentive in describing the events as the

result of the infiltration of foreign extremist, as this is consistent with its official

legitimizing discourse. Also, contrary to Akniner, both the ODIHR and HRW relied on

the testimonies taken from participants in the events. These testimonies were not taken

under the supervision of the Uzbek authorities, and therefore it is fair to assume that they

were for the most part conducted free of pressures. Moreover, the description of events

put forward by Akiner and the Uzbek government does not take into account the more

then 500 refugees that crossed into Kyrgyzstan. Yet, these refuges exist, and have been

relocated to different Western countries.[85] It is fair to assume that if the events followed

the course suggested by the government and Akiner, and that in fact the attackers were

not supported by the population and that the population remained either passive, or was a

victim of these attackers, then the presence of such a significant number of civilians

fleeing to Kyrgyzstan would simply make no sense.[86]

And finally, it is fair to speculate as to the reasons why Western governments

unanimously condemned what happened in Andijan if all that took place there was a

normal counter-insurgency operation.[87] This would make sense if the regime was treated

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[85] Yusuf Rasulov, "A Massacre Becomes Folklore," *Transitions Online*, 26 June 2006,
http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=aph&AN=29434510&site=ehost-live (accessed 3
June 2008). Most of these refugees were granted political asylum in the United States, Canada, Finland,
Sweden, the Netherlands, Australia, Germany, and the Czech Republic.
[86] According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan, "most of the Uzbek citizens
who crossed the state border left Andijan under the compulsion and deceit. They were kept under the
constant psychological pressure by the criminals, and intimidated of assumed repressions if they return
home." Republic of Uzbekistan, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Comments on the Report Prepared by the
ODIHR on Monitoring the Legal Trial in Uzbekistan, September-October 2005, Against 15 Active
Participant of the Andijan Events in May 2005*, 5.
[87] Western officials almost unanimously condemned the Uzbek government for the events in Andijan. The

as a pariah prior to the event. Yet nothing is further from the truth. In fact, the US government, for example, invested heavily in its relationship with the Karimov presidency.[88] As a secular government bordering Afghanistan, the Uzbek regime was touted by the Bush administration as a bulwark against the spread of Islamic extremism. Yet, as a consequence of the US criticism of the Uzbek government's handling of the protest, the Karshi-Khanabad American airbase in southern Uzbekistan, which was used up to this time as a refueling base for operations in Afghanistan, was closed. If the events in Andijan were the result of an attempted Islamist insurgency, then it is reasonable to expect, in the context of the War on Terror, that the US government would support the Uzbek version. The fact that the American government was ready to risk their relationship with the Uzbek government is circumstantial evidence that point towards the accuracy of the version defended by HRW and ODIHR.

In sum, the account given by the Uzbek government and Akiner try to cast the unfolding of events as the result of international terrorism, thus completely silencing the local dynamics at play that day by submerging them within a monolithic vision of transnational Islamism.[89] Although logically coherent, this portrayal simply does not sit well with the facts, as can be demonstrated by analyzing the video of the led-up to the government intervention released one year later by the Carnegie Foundation. The version

EU placed an embargo on arms exports, suspended work on its partnership agreement with Uzbekistan and announced visa restrictions on high level Uzbek officials. See: Andrew Stroehlein, "Beyond Sanctions," *Transitions Online*, 27 November 2006, http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=aph&AN=23397133&site=ehost-live (accessed 15 May 2008). The American government also issued statements condemning the Uzbek government's use of "unwarranted force" and headed calls for an international investigation into the events. All this prompted the Uzbek government to revaluate its diplomatic relations with the West and to realign itself with China and Russia. See: "Evicted" *The Economist*, 8 June 2005, http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=aph&AN=17865299&site=ehost-live (accessed 15 May 2008).

[88] For more on the subject of US-Uzbek relations prior to the Andijan event, see: Shahram Akbarzadeh, *Uzbekistan and the United States: Authoritarianism, Islamism and Washington's Security Agenda* (New York, NY: Zed Books, 2005).

[89] Most analysis of religion and politics in Uzbekistan focus on fringe Islamist groups and are oriented within the broader counter-terrorism and security literature. The disproportional attention given to these groups, especially when one considers their relatively marginal status vis-à-vis the state and their very limited appeal within the broader population begs the question of a prejudice in selecting such a paradigm to analyze the events in Andijan.

defended by HRW and the ODIHR, on the other hand, does concur with the video. The many inconsistencies and faults inherent to the first version of events would indicate that the truth lies closer to the version defended by HRW and the ODIHR. This will be the working assumption for the remainder of this thesis. That being said, this does not mean that their account is perfect. The version defended by HRW and the ODIHR also leaves important questions unanswered.

The temerity of people when faced with the escalating nature of the assault by the government is difficulty reconcilable with the image of simple protestors motivated by economic and political grievances. According to the ODIHR: "Despite the violence and shooting at the square, more and more people joined the crowd during the day."[90] These concerns will be returned to and addressed by a closer look at *Akramiya* as both an organization and a message in chapter 5. But first, an exploration of the claims made by the "clan" theory will better help us understand the dynamics of economic and political exclusion which lay the context for the success of *Akramiya* in gaining appeal among a wide spectrum of the population of Andijan.

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[90] Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, *Preliminary Findings on the Events in Andijan, Uzbekistan, 13 May*, 14.

CHAPTER TWO: Clans, Cotton and Exclusion

According to the "clan" theory, the arrest of the 23 businessmen resulted from the firing in 2004 of Kobiljon Obidov, the governor of Andijan province and a prominent member of the Ferghana clan, and his subsequent replacement by Saydullo Begaliyev, an outsider with close links to the central government.[91] Refusing to pay bribes to the new governor[92], the businessmen, former patrons of Obidov, were thus the victims of administrative reshuffling. The clan politics approach situates the protest within local power struggles and links them to national political dynamics.

Rien Müllerson supports this reading and links the event in Andijan to the "endemic nepotism" present at the local level.[93] For Müllerson, the periodic shuffling of regional governor is a common practice in Uzbekistan. This is done in order to prevent any governor from setting down deep roots in one region. The 23 arrested businessmen "were those who had done well under the previous *Hokim* (governor)."[94] The appointment of a new governor habitually entails "a new round of redistribution of property, posts and other favours."[95] In the Ferghana Valley, the easiest way to seize these lucrative businesses was to accuse the 23 businessmen of Islamist extremism.[96]

The focus of this chapter will revolve around giving a description of the political structure of the contemporary Uzbek state and the economic arrangements that sustain it. This will not only address the clan base interpretation but will also show that the exclusionary economic arrangement in Uzbekistan created the general preconditions for

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[91] EurasiaNet, "Andijan Massacre Linked to Local Power Struggle," Civil Society Forum, entry posted 29 September 2005, http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav092905.shtml (accessed 15 May 2008).
[92] C. J. CHIVERS. "Toe Tags Offer Clues to Uzbeks' Uprising"
[93] Rien Müllerson, "The Andijan Tragedy: Trying to Make Sense," in *Central Asia: a Chessboard and Player in the New Great Game,* ed. Rien Mullerson (New York, NY: Kegan Paul, 2007), 273.
[94] Ibid., 272.
[95] Ibid., 273.
[96] Ibid.

the rising of *Akramiya* as a movement in Andijan. In order to secure resources, the state can sidestep, among others, two categories of the population relevant to the understanding of the dynamics of the protest, that is to say the urban poor who do not participate in the cultivation of cotton and local business elites who are not dependent on state patronage.

Towards Sultanism?

What type of political regime is in place today in Uzbekistan and how does it support itself economically? Literature on regime typologies identifies two broad families of governance: the democratic and the non-democratic. A defining characteristic of the democratic type of governance is the belief that the foundation of legitimate political power rests in a system by which those in power hold their office in virtue of being appointed, through a variety of electoral methods, by the people they serve. In contrast, non-democratic regimes are the result of power being acquired and maintained independently of any recourse to democratic processes. In a way, then, an authoritarian regime is defined by what it lacks.

It is almost axiomatic that when we look at non-democratic regimes, it is necessary to pay special attention to questions of leadership. More specifically, it is important to identify the trajectory that led the leaders of a specific country to hold the reigns of power. Brooker speaks of the Central Asian authoritarian model of power acquisition. The Central Asian model was for the incumbent president:

1) to have once been the territory's Communist Party boss
2) to have established a more repressive personalist rule than Yeltsin's
3) to have installed the former Communist Party (in a new, nationalist and
   supposedly democratic guise) as effectively the official party

4) to have had his tenure in the presidency extended to the year 2000 or beyond by an overwhelmingly supportive referendum held in the mid-1990s.[97]

All these characteristic are present in the case of the presidency of Islam Karimov. Two features of the Central Asian model of power acquisition merit a closer look. The regimes are bureaucratic in origin and were initially structured around a one-party system. Linz claims that this combination of traits is present in a specific subtype of authoritarian regimes, bureaucratic authoritarianism. [98] The bureaucratic type of authoritarian leadership seeks high-modernization and tends towards an exclusion of the popular sector. [99] In Uzbekistan, regime rhetoric is infused with developmental vocabulary that seeks to justify the current state of affairs, in which the population does not participate in decision-making processes, by positing it as a necessary step towards a transition to a better tomorrow. Strong leadership is necessary to face the challenges of independence and lead Uzbekistan towards a future of peace and plenty.

In parallel, authoritarian regimes that have an origin in one-party rule also tend to become exclusionary overtime and suppress or restrict the political activity of subordinate sections of society.[100] A one party system can degenerate and foster an exclusionary political culture when the initial ideological foundation of the party organization withers away. For Linz, bureaucratic authoritarian states can "operate without the existence of any parties, but more frequent is the creation of an official government-sponsored single party, which, rather than aiming at a controlled mobilization of the population, tends to reduce its participation in political life."[101] In the case of Uzbekistan, the fall of the Soviet Union sapped at the ideological legitimacy of

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[97] Paul Brooker, *Non-Democratic Regimes: Theory, Government and Politics* (New York, NY: St. Martin`s Press, 2000), 255.

[98] Juan Linz, *Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes,* (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2000), 184.

[99] Brooker, *Non-Democratic Regimes,* 41.

[100] Ibid.

[101] Linz, *Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes,* 184.

the ruling communist elite. The regime could no longer count on the ideological appeal of Marxist-Leninist thought. The communist party of Uzbekistan was re-labeled after independence the People's Democratic Party of Uzbekistan. Yet, as all political parties in Uzbekistan, the People's Democratic Party offers a very limited and supervised form of political participation.[102] It is centered on the personality of president Karimov, its ranks are closed off to ordinary citizens and has no general ideological appeal.

The Central Asian model differs from most other cases of authoritarian rule in the developing world due to the fact that the ruling elite does not stem out of the ranks of colonial resisters or heroes of independence. As a matter of fact, independence was forced upon the states of Central Asia. This means that the ruling elite cannot look back at a myth of origin centered on an anti-colonial struggle to justify their rule. In Central Asia, "rulers are political bureaucrats, not generals, revolutionaries or demagogues."[103] In summary, the exogenous shock of independence realigned regimes in Central Asia towards an exclusionary and ideologically void one-party regime which inherited the bureaucratic structures and prejudices of Soviet times.

A bureaucratic type of authoritarian leadership is conducive to the solidification of what can be termed the dictatorship of the expert. This tendency of the managerial class in power to believe that it always knows best is strengthened in the context of the technocratic origin of the ruling class. This reality situates why policy and state monitoring tends to be over regulative and far-reaching in Uzbekistan. Moreover, because the power of the regime rests on the control and maintenance of an extensive bureaucracy, it can less easily initiate reforms:

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[102] Paul Kubicek, "Authoritarianism in Central Asia: Curse or Cure?," *Third World Quarterly* 19, no. 1 (March 1998): 31, http://www.jstor.org/stable/3993112?seq=3&Search=yes&term=kubicek&list= hide&searchUri=%2Faction%2FdoBasicSearch%3FQuery%3Dkubicek%26dc%3DAll%2BDisciplines&ite m=3&ttl=800&returnArticleService=showArticle (accessed 4 October 2007).
[103] Courtney Mills, "The Propagation of Personal Rule in Contemporary Turkmenistan," (PH.D. dissertation, University of St. Andrews, 2007), 181. http://research-repository.st-andrews.ac.uk/handle/10023/345 (accessed 4 October 2007).

The bureaucratic machine that was developed during the Soviet period, and that has changed little since, is fundamentally at odds with attempts to reform ... There has probably been less change in bureaucratic personnel in Uzbekistan than in any other Central Asian state.[104]

The post-independence political landscape in Central Asia, the domain of bureaucratic elites installed by the former communist system, grew out of the authoritarian characteristics inherent to Soviet rule. As with other post-colonial regimes that are born out of a peaceful forfeiting of power by the colonial administration, "the foreign power leaves behind a partially modernized administrative and especially military apparatus that enables the ruler to concentrate power in his hands."[105] These two characteristics, a one-party rule facade and bureaucratic origins of leadership, present in contemporary Uzbekistan, reinforce and foster exclusionary tendencies.

Authoritarian regimes that become exclusionary tend overtime to retreat into isolation from the world community and become more repressive.[106] Such conditions forces the regime to rely more and more on repression to attain the compliance of the population. In such conditions, an authoritarian regime can start to exemplify the characteristics of personalist rule. Personalist rule is a type of governance that is situated at the extremes of non-democratic regimes. There is a multiplicity of paths leading from authoritarian governance to personalist rule.[107] The example of Uzbekistan points to one possible path: the emergence of bureaucratic authoritarianism in the context of an ideologically decaying one-party state supported, as we shall soon see, by an extractive rentier economy.

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[104] International Crisis Group, *Uzbekistan's Reform Program: Illusion or Reality?* (Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan: Asia Report, no.46, 18 February 2003), 25, http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=1446&l=1 (accessed 12 May 2008).
[105] H.E. Chehabi and Juan Linz, *Sultanistic Regimes* (Baltimore, MA: John Hopkins University Press, 1998), 32.
[106] Brooker, *Non-Democratic Regimes,* 52.
[107] Brooker, *Non-Democratic Regimes,* 151.

Let us take a closer look at the concept of sultanism and its relevance to the discussion of the regime of Islam Karimov. Sultanism refers to an authoritarian regime exemplifying an extremely high degree of personalism. Sultanism can be described as:

The ideal type of a contemporary sultanistic regime can be constructed as follows: it is based on personal rulership, but loyalty to the ruler is motivated not by his embodying or articulating an ideology, nor by a unique personal mission, nor by any charismatic qualities, but by a *mixture of fear and rewards to his collaborators.*[108]

This is compounded to the absence of procedural predictability inherent in a burgeoning sultanistic regime that impedes the freedom of private enterprise.[109] In such a heavily regulated type of governance:

Individual entrepreneur's opportunities in the market are distorted by the ruler's intervention in economic life: he has the power to deny access, he can allocate public funds to private enterprises linked with himself or with his cronies, and he can eliminate from the market competitors not ready to abide by his demands.[110]

As we will see in the following section, the ruling elites in Uzbekistan are not only capable of intervening in the economy, their fundamental economic interest lies in undermining private economic development.

The Economic Underpinnings of Authoritarian Rule: The Cotton Monoculture

Many commentators of contemporary Uzbekistan have blamed the recent upsurge of protest in the country on the exploitative nature of the Uzbek economy, the fact that while a tiny elite gets richer by the day, the vast majority of the population lives in a state of worsening poverty. To make sense of the willingness of the economic and political elites to undermine their countries economic development, it is necessary to understand

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[108] Chehabi and Linz, *Sultanistic Regimes,* 7.
[109] Chehabi and Linz, *Sultanistic Regimes,* 23.
[110] Chehabi and Linz, *Sultanistic Regimes* ,22.

the workings of the Uzbek economy, and the distributive system put in place that gives the freedom to the elites to operate independently of popular participation. How can such a system survive? What are the sources of incomes that permit elites to effectively bypass the population? How is the economy structured in order to sustain the authoritarian regime in Uzbekistan? The answer lies in the continuation of the centrally planned economic system primarily based on the monoculture of cotton.

Agriculture still employs around sixty percent[111] of the Uzbek labor force while cotton remains the main crop under cultivation. At around 1.33 million hectares, Uzbekistan has the fifth highest acreage under cotton cultivation in the world.[112] The cotton monoculture expanded throughout the Soviet era and is still today at the center of Uzbek politics and economy. Like the majority of other sectors of the Uzbek economy, agriculture is dominated by the state. There is no private ownership of land; farmers still live in what can essentially be described as a continuation of the *kolkhoz* system. Farmers do not have the freedom to choose their crop and must sell all their production to a state-controlled association, *Uzpakhtasanoat*, [113] which regulates prices and sets yearly production plans, a continuation of the methods employed under the Soviet model of a centrally planned economy. Resistance to the state mandated quota, or failure to meet the desired level of output, can lead to confiscation of farm equipment and even arrest. Making officially less then 6,000 Uzbek *sums* a month[114], farmers are often in heavy debt: "Since the government holds a virtual monopoly on inputs and a true monopoly on ginning, it can price inputs and processing as it likes. The costs tend to eat up any

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[111] International Crisis Group, *Uzbekistan's Reform Program: Illusion or Reality?*, 14.
[112] International Crisis Group, *The Curse of Cotton: Central Asia's Destructive Monoculture* (Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan: Asia Report no.93, 28 February 2005), 2, http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=3294 (accessed 12 May 2007).
[113] Ibid., 3.
[114] Ibid., 5. According to the ICG, 6,000 sums equal around 6 US dollars.

potential profit."[115] Most of the cotton is handpicked, usually by children and university students, who are shipped in from urban areas during the fall harvesting season.[116] Schools and universities are closed during this period; refusal to participate can lead to expulsion. Students who participate in the cotton harvesting as part of their "patriotic duty" receive no salary and must pay for their meals, often returning home in debt.[117]

Farmers are required to apply for an internal visa in order to travel outside of their immediate place of residence; these visas are in reality seldom given and remain out of the reach of the vast majority of farmers.[118] This situation has been described as a modern form of feudalism, or "neo-feudalism", in which "many farmers are in effect indentured servants to local administrations."[119]

Once *Uzpakhtanasoat* has bought all the cotton and transformed it in state controlled ginning industries, it transfers the production to export enterprises approved and controlled by the Agency for External Economic Relations, which then sells the production abroad. The administration of the Agency for External Economic Relations is controlled by the National Security Service (NSS), the successor to the Soviet KGB.[120] In effect, the NSS is in control of the key sector of the Uzbek economy.

The only other meaningful sector of the economy is the exploitation of the country's mineral wealth, primarily in the form of massive gold deposits. Uzbekistan is among the world's biggest gold producer. It is reported that Gulnora Karimova, the president's daughter, in effect controls the gold industry.[121] All of these elements point to

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[115] Ibid., 3-4.
[116] Ibid., 18.
[117] Ibid.
[118] Craig Murray, *Murder in Samarkand* (London, UK: Mainstream Publishing, 2006), 27.
[119] International Crisis Group, *Uzbekistan: The Andijon Uprising*, 13.
[120] Ibid., 5. As will be explain, the patronage system in Uzbekistan follows the logic of clan politics. President Karimov is from Samarqand, and it is reported that members of the Samarqand clan control both *Uzpakhtanasoat* and the National Security Service.
[121] International Crisis Group, *Uzbekistan: Stagnation and Uncertainty* (Bishkek, Tajikistan: Asia Briefing No. 67, 22 August 2007), 2, http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?l=1&id=5027 (accessed 11 September 2007).

the fact that Uzbekistan's economy can be defined as a rentier economy, which permits

the exclusionary tendencies of the state's political system. Dunderstadt defines rentier

economies as follows:

Rentier economies are societies in which a large proportion of income is the result of rents rather than of work and innovation in the form of wages and profits. More specifically, a large part of government revenue consists of rents rather than taxes on wages and profits.[122]

In the traditional rentier model, rents come in the form of revenues taken from the control

by the elites of easily extractable sources of revenues, often in the form of mineral wealth

or the control of foreign aid.[123] A rentier economy fosters patronage and corruption, and

further more, limits the incentives to develop a capitalist economy:

When societies are based on the logic of extraction, they tend not to build the institutions necessary for capitalist development. (...) It is likely that *the logic of hierarchy and power* will remain inherent to the economy which remains therefore a rentier economy and a rentier state.[124]

In the case of Uzbekistan, the differential between what is paid to the farmers and

what the state is able to reap from selling the entire cotton harvest abroad are enormous.

Cotton accounts for the majority of income in foreign currency. This creates a situation

where the state does not require economic activity other then cotton production in order

to financially support itself. The economy in Uzbekistan is therefore in essence an

extractive export driven economy, where there is little incentive for the political elite to

develop and foster indigenous industry or to permit the emergence of a private sector.

Although the concept of rentier economy is traditionally applied to countries that

rely on extractive industries that are not labor intensive, such as mineral extraction that

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[122] Michael Dauderstadt and Arne Schildberg, *Dead Ends of Transitions: Rentier Economies and Protectorates* (New York: Campus Verlag, 2006), 10.
[123] Dauderstadt & Schildberg, *Dead Ends of Transitions*, 10.
[124] Ibid., 21. Emphasis mine.

can generate massive amount of cash revenue for the regime with minimal participation of the population, Uzbekistan's economy can be characterized as a rentier economy because, although over sixty percent of the population works in the cotton fields, they are not free participants in the economy, but rather are more akin to a tied labor force: "In short, most of the workers in Uzbekistan are cotton slaves, just as surely as Negroes were in the nineteenth-century United States."[125] Being essentially deprived of their freedoms, they are treated not as economic actors, but rather as economic assets.

Another characteristic that is often present in rentier economies is the predatory nature of the state. For Evans: "Some states may extract such large amounts of otherwise investable surplus and provide so little in the way of collective goods in return that they do indeed impede economic transformation. It seems reasonable to call these states predatory."[126] Following independence, assets became concentrated in the hands of a few former communist administrators.[127] The extractive nature of the Uzbek economy requires for its proper functioning a limited number of actors. For all the wheels to keep on turning right, the regime needs to control a managerial class that administrates key economic sectors: "The central government is interested only in the development of industries involved in the extraction of natural resources. Oil, gas and cotton enrich the ruling elite of Uzbekistan. They care little about the medium or small businesses. These are given to local *hokims* (governors) and procurators."[128] The state in Uzbekistan is predatory because it concentrates all the wealth produced from the cotton monoculture and the mining of gold in the hands of a few privileged regime supporters.

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[125] Murray, *Murder in Samarqand*, 46.
[126] Peter Evans, "Predatory, Developmental and other Apparatuses: A Comparative Political Economy Perspective on the Third World State," *Sociological Forum* 4, (1987): 562.
[127] Ronald Grigor Suny, "The Politics of Identities in Post-Soviet Eurasia," *International Security* 24, no.3, (Winter 1999-2000): 152.
[128] Müllerson, "The Andijan Tragedy: Trying to Make Sense," 274.

Post-colonial economies of an extractive nature do not require the broad participation of the population in economic activities. As we have seen, cotton, the main source of foreign exchange in Uzbekistan, must go through industrial transformation, the process of which the state controls. It must also be sold on the international market, access to which the state controls not only through the Agency for External Economic Relations, but also by way of its heavily monitored border.[129]

Neopatrimonial Rule, Clans and the Logic of Corruption in Uzbek Society

According to Freedom House, "Corruption in Uzbekistan is widespread and financial disclosure and conflict-of-interest laws are underdeveloped."[130] In discussions of state-society relations in Central Asia, two concepts are often used in order to explain the inefficiencies of the administrative apparatus and the prevailing corruption of the political system: neopatrimonialism and clan-based politics. What are the possible conceptual connections between what is understood by "neopatrimonialism" and what is referred to as "clan-based politics" and how can they help shed light on the nature of corruption and nepotism in Uzbekistan today?

For Erdmann and Engel, "Neopatrimonialism is a mixture of two, partly interwoven, types of domination that co-exist: namely, patrimonial and legal-rational bureaucratic domination."[131] The shortcomings inherent to neopatrimonialism are to be understood as resulting from the tension of these two competing norms of rule cohabitating within the same state:

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[129] Stroehlein, "Beyond Sanctions"

[130] Freedom House. "Nations in Transit: Uzbekistan," 5, http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/NISPAcee/UNPAN017054.pdf (accessed 24 June 2008).

[131] Ulf Engel and Gero Erdmann, *Neopatrimonialism Revisited –Beyond a Catch-All Concept* (Hamburg: German Institute of Global and Area Studies, Working Paper no. 16, 2006), 18, http://www.giga-hamburg.de/dl/download.php?d=/content/publikationen/pdf/wp16_erdmann-engel.pdf (accessed 11 September 2007).

Neopatrimonial rule takes place within the framework of, and with the claim to, legal-rational bureaucracy or "modern" stateness. Formal structures and rules do exist, although in practice, the separation of the private and public sphere is not always observed. In other words, two systems exist next to each other, the patrimonial of the personal relations, and the legal rational of the bureaucracy.[132]

A system of neopatrimonial rule is characterized by the "challenges and invasion from above and below"[133] of the formal bureaucratic apparatus by informal relationships. Neopatrimonial governance is thus a strictly modern phenomenon, and results from patrimonial practices exerting parasitic pressures unto the modern state apparatus and thus undermining attempts at maintaining the norms of a legal-rational bureaucracy. After a certain period of time, the result of such an arrangement is a type of "institutionalized informality."[134]

Beyond such general understandings, what are the particular mechanisms of power devolution within the context of neopatrimonial rule, and how does neopatrimonialism work? A neopatrimonial distribution of power and privilege, or what Ilhamov refers to as a "power control regime," occurs when an "asymmetric relationship of favoritism"[135] is established between the state and local patron's concomitant with the reproduction of such links at the local level between the patrons and his clients.[136]

For Erdmann and Engel, neopatrimonial rule depends on the establishment, by the ruler, of an extensive patronage network.[137] Patronage is part of both high-level and low-level politics; it is the establishment of networks of resource allocation from the state towards local leaders.[138] These local leaders are the intermediary between the central government and local concerns. They hold their position because of their loyalty to the

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[132] Engel and Erdmann, *Neopatrimonialism Revisited*, 18.
[133] Ibid., 19.
[134] Ibid., 20.
[135] Alisher Ilkhamov, "Neopatrimonialism, Interest Groups and Patronage Networks: the Impasses of the Governance System in Uzbekistan," *Central Asian Survey* 26, no. 1 (2007): 72.
[136] Ibid., 72.
[137] Erdmann and Engel, *Neopatrimonialism Revisited*, 21.
[138] Ibid.

central government, not their constituents.

Nowadays, similar patterns of power relations are employed in Central Asia: "The President acts as a suzerain/patron towards local governors who appear to be his clients, while the latter, in their turn, run their own patronage networks comprised of local clients."[139] The structure of power distribution is therefore pyramidal and leads back to the authority of a single figure, in the case of Uzbekistan, president Karimov. The dependency of local leaders on state patronage is accentuated if local elites cannot generate sufficient funds locally. There is therefore an incentive for the national leadership to undermine local sources of revenues at the level of the governor, in order to maintain the unidirectional nature of resource allocation.[140]

Neopatrimonial rule therefore flourishes within the context of a rent-seeking economy.[141] This could result from the central government's monopoly of a lucrative resource. This system relies on a pronounced ethic of personal loyalty required of all subordinates. People attain levels of responsibilities by establishing a network of trust, by showing that they are good at implementing policy directed from above.[142] Subordinates in effect trade in personal, economic and political freedom in exchange for social protection and entitlement.[143]

As a concept, neopatrimonialism attempts to make sense of corruption by presenting it as a top-down strategy of allocation of power and privileges by the state in order to secure the loyalty of subordinates. It is prevalent within the context of post-colonial societies and is characterized by a pattern of rent-seeking by regional elites.

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[139] Ilkhamov, "Neopatrimonialism, Interest Groups and Patronage Networks," 74.
[140] This reality can point towards an interesting possibility with regards to the cause of the arrest of the 23 businessmen. If the 23 businessmen were patrons of the old governor, and yet were independently wealthy, it is imaginable that the governor was not replaced only as a result of sporadic reshuffling, but because in essence the patron-client relationship was being redirected from the bottom-up in Andijan. Of course, this can only remain speculation.
[141] Engel and Erdmann, *Neopatrimonialism Revisited*, 28.
[142] Deniz Kandiyoti, "Post-Soviet Institutional Design and the Paradoxes of the Uzbek Path," *Central Asian Survey* 26, no. 1 (2007): 43.
[143] Ibid.,, 44.

Under certain conditions, it is successful in perpetuating stability and a sense of social consensus. It relies on one-on-one contact and the maintenance of a network of personal loyalty. In sum, neopatrimonialism is a concept that tries to get at the mechanism and logic behind a system of state-sanctioned patronage and corruption within the context of an authoritarian state that serves to buttress the stability of the regime. In that sense, a neopatrimonial power arrangement is clearly present in Uzbek politics.

Yet, what are the historical roots of this arrangement? In discussions of Central Asian politics and the phenomenon of corruption prevalent in the region, one is quickly confronted with the concept of "clan." This concept speaks to issues similar to neopatrimonialism, yet the concept has only been applied to the specific case of Central Asia. Recently, authors such as Kathleen Collins, Kevin Starr, Edward Schatz and Olivier Roy have attempted to formulate definitions of clan based politics.

It is true that the common usage of the term, with reference to Central Asia, conjures up images of a pre-modern and archaic political organization. Yet, the use of the word "clan" in contemporary political science should not induce the reader to make unwarranted mental references to groups of marauding nomads. In the context of contemporary political science analysis, the concept of "clan-based politics" refers to something quite specific that is not captured if we limit ourselves to this basic essentialist meaning.

Roughly speaking, all the authors mentioned above minimally agree that clans are involved in a bottom-up process by which people organize along kinship lines in order to attain their goals with regards to the modern state. Clans are seen as major actors in the contemporary politics of the region. Starr, for example, claims that clans "have placed leaders in power for over forty years (in Central Asia) and define the nature of politics

today."[144]

Collins gives the most conceptually grounded definition of clans. She defines clans as "informal identity organizations with a kinship basis."[145] Let us unpack the four constitutive elements of this definition, that is to say "informal," "identity," "organization" and "kinship." First of all, clans are informal in that they act behind the scene. They exert pressures on the formal institutions of power while remaining themselves outside of the legitimate decision-making process. Second of all, clans are organizations; they direct member's activity and exhibit goal-seeking behaviors. As Collins explains, clans have an agenda: "Clans narrowly pursue their own economic and political interests."[146] In a state where the regime controls access to major economic resources, such as the USSR but also in many aspects contemporary Uzbekistan, clan leaders seek to put people loyal to them in levels of responsibilities within the government. Moreover, clans are identity organizations. A set of normative claims is thus a constitutive element of clan organization and bounds the personality of clan members around notions of correct behavior and proper attitudes. Finally, kinship affiliation, or blood ties, is central to the selection of clan members. It acts to ensure a code of conduct and secure trust. Membership within a clan is therefore determined by birth; trust is assured with reference to familial and/or regional relations.

For Lindholm, the traditional lineage structure of Central Asia is of a "peculiar type" that favors the advent of political hierarchy and social stratification.[147] Beyond mere logical rules regarding marriage, kinship construction in Central Asia consists of a

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[144] Frederick Starr, *Clans, Authoritarian Rulers and Parliaments in Central Asia* (Washington, DC: John Hopkins University, Central Asia-Caucasus Institute, Silk Road Paper, 2006), 6, http://www.silkroadstudies.org /new/docs/Silkroadpapers/0605Starr_Clans.pdf (accessed 29 September 2007).
[145] Kathleen Collins, *The Logic of Clan Politics in Central Asia: Its Impact on Regime Transformation* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 24.
[146] Ibid., 35.
[147] Charles Lindholm, "Kinship Structure and Political Authority: The Middle East and Central Asia," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 28, no. 2 (April 1986): 338.

way of apprehending and ordering the world which has implications for the evolution and organization of political life.[148] Clans embody indigenous social patterns organizing kin group initiatives which were able to adjust to Soviet policies. Clan politics is to be understood as exemplifying patterns of social organization existing prior to the formation of the modern state that were transformed through their interaction with the modern state.[149] In the context of a command economy, kin group initiatives were set in motion in order to secure access to resources from the state.

For Collins, the clan serves a transactional purpose by assuring the solvability of its members through the reinforcement of constraining norms and identities.[150] People can be trusted to follow through with contract responsibilities because of the normative pressure associated with clan affiliation: "Clan organizations generate clear rules by which members interact, thus lowering transaction costs for the in-group."[151] Clan based organization serves as a regulator and enforcer of commitments and obligations between individuals. These rules stem out of the practice of "day-to-day interaction based in deep seated feelings of trust and loyalty."[152]

Soviet authorities did try to eliminate the conditions that made it possible for clan logic to dominate. Massive population displacement and the liquidation of traditional elites represented attempts at undermining the salience of clans. The fostering of national institutions and the promotion of civic nationalism was to replace kinship-based loyalty. But clans remained important in the daily struggles of ordinary Central Asians because kinship connections helped people advance their material goals. Such things as placement in a university program, a job for a family member or a permit to renovate a house, in the

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[148] Ibid., 337.
[149] Collins, *The Logic of Clan Politics in Central Asia,* 235.
[150] Ibid., 30.
[151] Edward Schatz, *Modern Clan Politics: The Power of "Blood" in Kazakhstan and Beyond* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2004), 8.
[152] Ibid., 12.

context of a heavily bureaucratic and inefficient state, would be secured by activating kinship connections.

Clan logic operates in the day to day struggles of ordinary people, but it is also central to national-level politics in that people in positions of power also operate within the logic of the clan. In the elite spheres, the practices of clan politics in Central Asia were born out of the historical dynamic between local level administrators, national leaders and the Soviet center:

The centralized structure of the Communist Party, which gave great powers to a small number of ruling elites, helped consolidate regionally-based networks of elites who were free to promote their "loyal kinsmen." With the disposal of all resources at the hand of local officials, people in decision-making positions used the opportunity to benefit themselves and their friends, families, and others in a position to provide reciprocal benefits. Regional leaders used their positions to build loyalty and support in the oblasts.[153]

For Schatz, the process of state-led modernization by the Soviet authorities actually strengthened the logic of clan-based association in the politics of Central Asia.[154] The prevalence of dominant clans in contemporary politics traces its roots to the political economy of shortages brought upon by the centrally-planned socialist modernization project: "Shortage of goods, services, and access to power that were endemic to the state socialist economy encouraged access networks to proliferate. Across the southern-tier regions, these access networks often followed kinship lines."[155] By pushing clans underground while creating the economic incentives for their continuation, the Soviet experience transformed a corporate body into an instrument for securing access to distribution networks ordered along genealogical lines.[156]

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[153] Idil Tuncer Kilavuz, "Understanding Violent Conflict: A Comparative Study of Tajikistan and Uzbekistan" (PH.D. dissertation, Indiana University, 2007), 42.
[154] Schatz, *Modern Clan Politics*, 7.
[155] Ibid., 17.
[156] Ibid., 85.

For Roy, in the context of the scarcity of resources and state monopoly of trade, clans had to "pursue a strategy of entrism in relation to the political power system."[157] During the Soviet era, clans would advance their agendas by trying to place clan members in the state administration or in the communist party. Some clans were more successful in using this strategy and eventually became dominant. As Schatz explains, the command economy produced access networks across the USSR. In Central Asia, this culminated in the establishment of powerful regional groupings, or power centers, controlling access to resources and thus exerting considerable leverage within the national economy.[158] In Uzbekistan during Soviet times, clan network from the Ferghana Valley dominated politics as Moscow chose its national level administrators from this cotton producing area, while members of the Samarqand and Tashkent clans were also in positions of power.[159] According to Tuncer Kilavuz "These networks are still valid, although Ferghana elites have recently been losing ground relative to the others."[160] The firing of the governor of Andijan could also be in line with the concentration of power among members of the Samarqand and Tashkent clan.

In essence, these elites functioned as local notables and acted as such: "If the new elites tented to function in ways that were traditional, this was because kinship and clan networks were recomposed on the basis of the territorial and administrative structures put in place by the Soviets."[161] The stability of the Khrushchev and Brezhnev period made possible the appearance of these regionally based "elite clans" that consolidated into a system of interrelated local power brokers. As long as cotton quotas were filled and order

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[157] Olivier, Roy, *The New Central Asia: the Creation of Nations* (New York, NY: New York University Press, 2000), xii.
[158] Schatz, *Modern Clan Politics*, 61.
[159] Tuncer Kilavuz, "Understanding Violent Conflict," 96-97. According to an interviewee speaking with Tuncer Kilavuz, one possible reason that Ferghana, Samarkand and Tashkent became dominant is that they were each the seat of the three khanates that historically ruled the region, making them especially suitable for the recruitment of local cadres in the early days of Soviet rule.
[160] Ibid., 97.
[161] Roy, *The New Central Asia*, 85.

kept, local level administrators had considerable freedom within their domain. This gave them the opportunity to secure and control access networks to resources: "Whether by using their position to steal resources from the collective to support kinsmen or by penetrating the hugely profitable cotton sector, clan elites redirected massive amounts of Soviet assets to their networks."[162] Since upward mobility beyond the republic level was severely limited for Central Asian cadres, they often remained for their entire career within the same region. A state-wide political equilibrium emerged that holds to this day. It functions by balancing the interest of regionally based "invisible power brokers."[163]

These elite clans were the best equipped to take advantage of the pseudo-liberalization of the economy. After independence and the nominal privatization of state assets, kinship groups came to dominate whole sectors of the economy, such as cotton, power, mineral extraction, construction or transport.[164] Today, these clan leaders effectively, as they did during the late Soviet period, control much of the political space within the Central Asian republics: "Thus, it is the power brokers, clan leaders, and magnates who launched presidents Akaev, Nazarbayev, and Karimov, rather than vice versa."[165] Yet, apart from the minority that belongs to these elite clans, ordinary citizens in Uzbekistan have, for the most part, absolutely no access to any lucrative employment.

What becomes clear when we place next to each other the concepts of neopatrimonialism and clan-based politics is that they both attempt to get at the same underlying reality. They are equally concerned with explaining why resources of the state are channeled through informal networks towards groups in society. These networks serve as a mechanism by which equilibrium is established between an authoritarian state and regional elites. However, the two concepts diverge in how they characterize the

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[162] Collins, *The Logic of Clan Politics in Central Asia,* 239.
[163] Starr, *Clans, Authoritarian Rulers and Parliaments in Central Asia,* 6.
[164] Ibid., 8.
[165] Ibid., 9.

direction of the relationship between these two sets of actors. Whose interest do these networks serve, and who initiated them?

On the one hand, the concept of neopatrimonialism sees the authoritarian regime as the source of this arrangement. It is the regime that gives the impetus to create such a network of patronage. The regime initiates a pact between itself and local elites in order to maintain its stability. These elites are subordinate actors within a strategy of regime survival. The neopatrimonial arrangement is here portrayed in terms of regime types and is the result of a reflexive strategy of the regime to create a network of loyal individuals whose privileges are dependant on the continuation of the regime. Here, politics determines society.

On the other hand, the concept of clan-based politics explicates this situation in terms of the historical transformation of a cultural practice into a politically salient phenomenon. In the context of Central Asia, networks of distribution are the result of a creeping appropriation by local elites of the resources monopolized by the state. Presidents are selected according to clan interests. The national leader is dependant on local elites, not the other way around. Thus, the regime does not dictate the rules of the game, but instead the clans, in essence society, determine politics.

A possible resolution of this contradiction would be to see the origins of these networks as a result of the interpenetration of both types of actors, neither being completely passive in the structuring of the arrangement. The relationship is more akin to a self-perpetrating symbiosis. In the specific case of Uzbekistan, clans are the necessary channels through which patronage is distributed, while clans are also active in playing the game of rent-seeking. The continuation of these networks can be seen as proof that, irregardless of what caused their advent, they serve the interest of both local and national elites. Here, corruption in Uzbekistan is not a parasite that eats away at the resources of

the state; rather corruption and patronage constitute the institutional framework in which resources are allocated within society in order to buttress the state.

To summarize, in Uzbekistan, the majority of the workforce is constituted of a tied labor force working in the cultivation of cotton. The state, in effect the domain of a restricted circle of elite clans, reaps all the profits from this arrangement. The remainder of the population depends on the state, either through menial and underpaid employment in the massive public sector, or through the provision of limited welfare benefits, such as subsidized heating and food. This arrangement is maintained through force[166] and encourages economic dependence of a significant amount of the urban population towards the state. This means that only a minority of private entrepreneurs and small traders, and the people they employ, are in effect outside of this system of patronage.

A closer look at the "clan" theory sheds light on the origins of the political economy of exclusion in Uzbekistan. It also anchors the arrest of the 23 businessman within the logic of the corrupt practices of governance that are widespread in the country. Unfortunately, the "clan" theory has limited explicative powers. It does not explain the violence of the state's response, nor does it shed light on the behavior of the protestors when faced with increasing levels of violence. It only points towards a possible explanation as to why the 23 businessmen were taken into custody.

As we will see in the next chapter, such a political economy of exclusion and exploitation is only viable through the maintenance of a monopoly over public meaning in order to solicit compliance from the population. For Gramsci, the idea of the "state" does not limit itself to institutions and forms of rule, but also consists of "the entire

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[166] One exception to the low pay is employment in the security organs, where an ordinary citizen can find decently paid employment, which can help in contextualizing the loyalty of the security organs assured through this form of preferential treatment: "Kyrgyz intelligence officers are impressed, however, by the equipment, pay and discipline of the Uzbek security and military structures, which, one said, have everything to lose if Karimov goes, so are unlikely to revolt against him." International Crisis Group, *Political Murder in Central Asia* (Bishkek, Tajikistan: Asia Briefing no.76, 14 February 2008), 4, http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=5293 (accessed 11 September 2007).

complex of practical and theoretical activities with which the ruling class not only justifies and maintains its dominance, but manages to win the active consent of those over whom it rules."[167] More then repression, the imposition of a nationalist discourse justifies the status quo in ideological language and serves to elicit consent from the population. This is what constitutes hegemony, which Morton defines as "the articulation and justification of a particular set of interests as general interests." [168] As we will now turn too, through its nationalist discourse, the governing elites in Uzbekistan are able to impose their hegemony over the population.

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[167] Antonio Gramsci, quoted in Adam David Morton, *Unravelling Gramsci: Hegemony and Passive Revolution in the Global Economy* (London, UK: Pluto Press, 2007), 120.
[168] Morton, *Unravelling Gramsci,* 113.

CHAPTER THREE: Nation, State and Islam

This chapter will explain the specific manifestations of the Uzbek government's drive at legitimizing its hold on power through an aggressive top-down nation-building project. As we have explored in the preceding chapter, the political landscape in Uzbekistan can be characterized as the crystallization of sultanistic rule based on a political economy of exploitation and exclusion. As Mills suggests, "Sultanistic leaders tend to create so-called "pseudo-ideologies" after their rise to power, to give the appearance of a mission."[169] Sultanistic leaders often publish a number of volumes of poetry or philosophy. As we will explore further, Karimov published a variety of tomes that could loosely be described as policy papers with a political economy twist. Characteristic of a pseudo ideology is the recourse to "othering" mechanism. Pseudo-ideologies often contain "persistent attacks on particular enemies, whether internal opposition or general threats..."[170] In Uzbekistan, the government propagates nationalistic notions of Uzbek exclusiveness based on the Uzbek way, the Uzbek path or the Uzbek national character and set these in opposition to ever-looming exterior threats.

Following Gellner's definition of nationalism as a "theory of political legitimacy"[171] nationalism will be defined as a project of identity construction where the state uses a "manipulation of meaning"[172] in order to secure control over society: "Just as dominant classes control the means of physical production, Gramsci argues, so do they control the means of symbolic production."[173] More specifically, Gellner claims that nationalism results from the emergence of "market relations forging networks of

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[169] Mills, "The Propagation of Personal Rule in Contemporary Turkmenistan," 13.
[170] Mills, "The Propagation of Personal Rule in Contemporary Turkmenistan," 193.
[171] Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, 2nd ed. (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 1.
[172] Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, 34.
[173] James C.Scott, "Hegemony and the Peasantry," in *Revolution: Critical Concept in Political Science*, ed. Rosemary O'Kane (New York, NY: Routledge Press, 1999), 474.

trade."[174] Modernization brings about the need for a more educated and trainable workforce while the arrival of print capitalism fosters the entrenchment of national vernacular language. The state is the only organ capable of organizing networks of education, resulting in a top-down imposition of high culture. In essence, the arrival of capitalism necessitates cultural homogeneity, which can only be implemented by the state. Although Gellner was primarily interested in the origins of nationalism and inscribed his analysis in the specific historical trajectory of Western Europe, linking it to the advent of modernity and the economic imperatives associated with it, his insights that the forms which nationalism ends up taking in specific countries result form the "external manifestation of deep adjustment in the relationship between polity and culture"[175] holds to be true in the case of Uzbekistan. The logic of nation-building in Uzbekistan needs to be understood within the dynamics of the transition to independence, in which the elite that came to head the independent republic were extremely conservative communists who needed to reformulate legitimizing notions in which to couch their power away from socialist doctrine. The drive towards homogenizing national identity in Uzbekistan today, and the use of state institutions, is in line with Gellner's story of nationalism.

Yet Gellner's definition does not capture all of the complexities of the nation-building project in contemporary Uzbekistan and is limited in scope because of its family resemblance with modernization theory. Uzbekistan was already modern, and the form that nationalism took in the early days of independence cannot be explained in terms of modernization. Anthony Marx claims that "consolidating institutional state power is always contingent upon building popular cohesion and loyalty."[176] Nationalism needs to be "constructed" and reflects the interests of elites in the success of such a project.

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[174] Anthony Marx, *Faith in Nation: Exclusionary Origins of Nationalism,* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2003), 17.
[175] Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, 35.
[176] Marx, *Faith in Nation,* 14.

Contrary to Anderson, Anthony Marx therefore refutes the claim that nationalism is an "imagined community" in which individuals recognizing their similarities and imagining those similarities as reflecting national *apartenance* constitutes the driving force behind national consolidation.[177] It is not the nation that seeks the state, but rather the state that creates the nation. For Anthony Marx, nationalism results from the fact that elites have an interest in disseminating attachment and loyalty to the state.

For Anthony Marx, the project of consolidation of authority and legitimacy through the fostering of nationalism comes at a cost, the creation of scapegoats: "victimization is central to the process of forging cohesion."[178] Nationalism can only develop in accordance with the logic of exclusionary cohesion, where elites purposefully exclude some members under their jurisdiction from recognition of membership within the nation: "These processes were necessarily bounded and exclusionary, with states playing a leading role in demarcating whom was included."[179]

As we will see, by trying to control what it means to be Muslim and by enforcing what are the proper ways in which to practice Islam, the Uzbek government is by ricochet creating a class of worshipers whose vision and practice of their faith excludes them from full membership in the nation. Either by design or by accident, Karimov is setting in opposition the russified, secular and technocratic urban elites of Tashkent to the more conservative, entrepreneurial and religious populations living in the bordering areas of the Ferghana valley. Speaking of the history of race relations in the United States, Anthony Marx explains that during the course of nation building, blacks served as the quintessential other against which the American nation was defined. In the consolidation of the nation building process, Marx suggests that "official boundaries purposefully

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[177] See Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflection on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (New York, NY: Verso, 2006)
[178] Marx, *Faith in Nation,* 200.
[179] Marx, *Faith in Nation,* 20.

define and enforce who was imagined as part of the nation and who was not."[180] Such "othering" processes are a constituent part of many nation-building endeavors. In contemporary Uzbekistan, the other is not racial or ethnic; rather, he is defined according to the practice of his faith. These othering processes are instrumental in developing hegemony:

But such omissions and exclusions may not be mere lags but instead purposeful, with exclusion of some "other" not as accidents but instead crucially employed in an attempt to solder core coalitions among those included... nationalism is often exclusive, with such exclusion emerging in fits and starts but encouraged or enforced to serve the explicit requirements for solidifying core loyalty to the nation.[181]

The national elites in Uzbekistan are engaged in a process of consolidation of state power through the propagation of nationalism and the exclusion of a category of citizens according to religious criteria. This thesis will therefore treat nationalism according to the definitions proposed by Anthony Marx and examine its position within the logic of the state building institutional perspective of independent Uzbekistan.

Nationalism and Ideology in Contemporary Uzbekistan

Uzbekistan emerged in its present form as a modern nation-state under Soviet tutelage in 1924. In effect, Uzbekistan was created as an administrative category of the USSR and was not intended in its inception to become a fully independent state. As the other Central Asian states, its boundaries were carved out of Russian Turkestan, the name of the Tsarist colony in Central Asia, and did not correspond to any pre-existing political entity.[182] The creation of the five Central Asian states constituted the first appearance of

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[180] Anthony Marx, *Making Race and Nation: a Comparison of South Africa, the United States, and Brazil* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 5.
[181] Marx, *Faith in Nation*, 21.
[182] Suny, "The Politics of Identities in Post-Soviet Eurasia," 168.

what can be termed a "modern state" in the region.[183]

Following the demarcation of Uzbekistan's borders, Uzbek leadership embarked

on a nation-building project based on Soviet conceptions of identity.[184] This resulted in a

top-down approach to nation-building in which the ideological resources of the state were

put to the task of promoting national attachment to the newly constituted territorial unit.

Soviet attitudes towards nationalist aspirations in Uzbekistan, and Central Asia as a

whole, was one of instrumental use rather then eradication: "The aim of Soviet policies

was not to root out nationalism, but, instead to dominate it and to monopolize the

hegemony within nationalist discourses."[185] Further, the writing and celebration of a

national history was at the forefront of this nation-building project.[186] As Khalid remarks,

this process of fostering a national identity was actively supported through the

educational system of the Soviet state:

The elaboration of national identities was made possible by large, well-funded humanities
intelligentsia by the regime itself (...) The Central Asian academy came to acquire a
division of labor, with Russians and other Europeans dominating the technical fields and
Central Asians monopolizing the humanities. [187]

Perestroika permitted the effervesce of nationalistically formulated grievances

with regards to the degradation of the environment and the treatment of Uzbek recruits

preparing or serving in the Afghan conflict while opening the space for a public criticism

of Soviet national historiography among an increasingly assertive Uzbek intelligentsia.[188]

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[183] For a full account of the border-making process and the state of Uzbek national consciousness during
this period, see Anita Sengupta, *The Formation of the Uzbek Nation-State* (Toronto, Canada: Lexington
Books, 2003).
[184] Adeeb Khalid, *Islam after Communism: Religion and Politics in Central Asia* (Berkeley, CA: University
of California Press, 2007), 17.
[185] Bert Fragner, "Soviet Nationalism: an Ideological Legacy to the Independent Republics of Central
Asia," in *Identity Politics in Central Asia and the Muslim World: Nationalism, Ethnicity and Labor in the
Twentieth Century*, ed. Willem Van Schendel (New York, NY: Tauris Publishers, 2001), 18.
[186] Khalid, *Islam after Communism*, 97.
[187] Khalid, *Islam after Communism*, 95-96.
[188] For a more detailed account of the contributing factors of the rise of nationalism in Uzbekistan during
the 1980's see James Critchlow, *Nationalism in Uzbekistan*.

Although not questioning the underlying structures of nationalism in Uzbekistan and the role of the state in sustaining it, this movement sought to put pressure on the Uzbek state to reshape the nationalist message away from official Soviet themes and historiography.

While at first trying to undermine this movement, the Uzbek communist elite quickly came to realize its potential in building an ideological legitimacy independent of the Soviet center. Since the fall of the USSR, the regime of Islam Karimov is in a position to recuperate the technologies of power established during the Soviet era, including the methods of formulation and propagation of ideology: "In the post-Soviet era, nation building and state building go hand in hand, as there is now an attempt to build an independent state that derives its legitimacy and support from the nation."[189]

The regime of Islam Karimov is in a process of active self-legitimization using the vocabulary of nationalism and is articulating uniform notions of Uzbek identity and history: "The newly independent states cannot find a better vindication of their existence then in surviving Soviet nationalism."[190] For Sengupta, the current regime is involved in an active campaign to rewrite history into a "single linear story of heroism"[191] that silences certain aspects of the historical narrative to the detriment of historic episodes and personalities that represent values of conformity and national authenticity which are in line with the state's legitimizing project and nationalizing goals. Only a select group of "safe heroes" are treated by historians who are closely monitored to ensure that their work is limited to officially sanctioned themes.[192]

The fall of the USSR gave way to a form of authoritarian regime in Uzbekistan that uses the state apparatus to control the media, intellectual and academic life, turning

[189] Pinar Akcali, "Nation-State Building in Central Asia: A lost Case?," in *Central Eurasia in Global Politics: Conflict, Security and Development*, ed. Mehdi Parvizi Amineh and Henk Houweling (Boston, MA: Brill Press, 2005), 96.
[190] Fragner, "Soviet Nationalism," 30.
[191] Sengupta, *The Formation of the Uzbek Nation-State*, XXI.
[192] Edward Allworth, Annette Bohr, Vivien Law, Graham Smith and Andrew Wilson, *Nation-Building in the Post-Soviet Borderlands: the Politics of National Identities* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 71.

these into "producers and propagandists of official ideology."[193] Media and academia in

Uzbekistan is permeated with references to a "loosely defined nationalist discourse."[194]

As Kangas shows in *Uzbekistan: the Karimov presidency - Amir Timur revisited* and

Adams in *Cultural Elites in Uzbekistan*, the regime in Uzbekistan puts pressure on

cultural and academic elites to produce works that exalts the nation's ancient glories. At

the center of this historiography is the elevation of the figure of Amir Timur to the status

of national hero and the central figure of "official nationalism."[195]

Timur has been identified as the ideal `just ruler` and state builder, with his policies and methods providing historical justifications for the policies and methods of the current Uzbek regime. Parallels have frequently been drawn between Karimov and Timur in the Uzbekistani press.[196]

Official history is purposefully used in order to buttress regime policies. The linkage of

Timur with Karimov is in line with a burgeoning cult of personality centered on the

person of the president. All this point to the fact that the Karimov regime is actively

involved in a totalizing nation-building project increasingly centered on devotion to his

person.

As was mentioned, Sultanistic rulers tend to portray themselves as intellectuals.[197]

This is the case for Islam Karimov who is presented in the media as the most prominent

intellectual of the country.[198] It is necessary for students to pass exams on the writings of

Karimov.[199] The building of grandiloquent monuments to the president, the constant

attention given to his daily routine during the nightly newscast and the creation of

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[193] Laura Adams, "Cultural Elites in Uzbekistan," in *The Transformation of Central Asia: States and Societies from Soviet Rule to Independence*, ed. Pauline Jones Luong (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004), 100.

[194] Roger Kangas, "Uzbekistan: the Karimov Presidency - Amir Timur Revisited" in *Power and Change in Central Asia*, ed. Sally N. Cummings (New York, NY: Routledge, 2002), 139.

[195] Melvin, *Uzbekistan: Transition to Authoritarianism on the New Silk Road,* 44.

[196] Melvin, *Uzbekistan: Transition to Authoritarianism on the New Silk Road,* 46.

[197] Mills, "The Propagation of Personal Rule in Contemporary Turkmenistan," 13.

[198] Allworth, *Nation-Building in the Post-Soviet Borderlands,* 77.

[199] Robert Rand, *Tamerlane`s Children: Dispatches from Contemporary Uzbekistan*, (Oxford, UK: Oneworld, 2006), 193.

programs of study of his works in universities all point to an attempt to shape a burgeoning cult of personality. As we will see, Karimov's reluctance to liberalize Uzbek society reflects his desire to isolate it in order to propagate a uniform notion of Uzbek identity and nationalism independent of outside influence, especially that of fundamental Islam. With that said, Islam is nevertheless a constitutive part of the Uzbek identity. As a consequence, the Uzbek government needs to give an authoritative place to Islam within its official nationalist discourse.

The Faithful and the State in Soviet Uzbekistan

The extensive destruction of Islamic institutions during the Soviet era had a profound impact on the religious identity of ordinary Uzbeks. Soviet rule created a legacy of "underground" Islam set in opposition to the state-sponsored clergy. The early years of independence saw the emergence of a pervasive religious revival throughout the country, but most intensively in the Ferghana Valley, which the government in place quickly sought to recuperate within its nation-building agenda. Today, large segments of the population seek religious knowledge outside of the official clerical establishment. Although violent terrorist groups such as the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU)[200] have emerged, resistance to state interference in religious matters is primarily expressed in the personal realm through a continuation of everyday practices associated with forms of "underground" Islam that took shape and survived under Soviet rule. Such practices include participation in private prayer circles, attending unofficial mosques and support for a network of unregistered Islamic preachers. This section will explain the relationship

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[200] For a complete account of the IMU and other radical Islamic groups active in Uzbekistan, see Vitaly Naumkin, *Radical Islam in Central Asia: Between Pen and Rifle* (Lanham ,MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005). and Rashid Ahmed, *Jihad: the Rise of Militant Islam in Central Asia* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002).

between state and Islam in contemporary Uzbekistan by looking at its origins in the Soviet Union's project of nation building.

The attitude of the current regime towards Islam traces its roots to Soviet policy. In the early years of Soviet rule, the encouragement of a sense of national community was of prime importance to the Soviet regime and was initiated in order to counteract the perceived threat of pan-Islamism: "The Soviet regime tried to change the way its citizens identify themselves; in Central Asia it introduced and fostered a sense of national community to replace the Muslim identity."[201]

In the initial stage of the nation building project, prior to the Second World War, the Soviet state attempted to completely eradicate all manifestation of Islam, whether public or private, in order to construct a purely nationalist and secular Soviet identity in Central Asia. Soviet leadership undertook an anti-religious campaign which resulted in the purging, execution or exile of members of the *ulema*, the banning of religious activity, the nationalization of *waqfs* properties, the closure of the system of Islamic courts and the imposition of an aggressive drive at atheist indoctrination which replaced the traditionally religious curriculum of the *madrasas*.[202]

Following the Second World War, during which time Stalin reversed his position towards all creeds as he saw the potential of religion to act as a mobilizing force in the war effort, Soviet leadership relaxed its repression, revised its approach and decided to co-opt Islam through the establishment of an official clerical hierarchy.[203] It is in this context that the Spiritual Directorate of the Muslims of Central Asia was founded in 1943.[204] The Spiritual Directorate was directly under the supervision of the Council for

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[201] Shahram Akbarzadeh, "Islamic Clerical Establishment in Central Asia," *Journal of South Asian Studies* 20, no.2 (1997): 77.
[202] Tuncer Kilavuz, "Understanding Violent Conflict," 42.
[203] Vitaly Naumkin, "Islam in the States of the Former USSR," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 524 (1992): 132.
[204] Yaacov Roi, *Islam in the Soviet Union* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2000), 104.

the Affairs of Religious Cults, an organ of the central government. The directorate's personnel were in essence implementers of policy that was formulated in Moscow and had little, if any, independent leverage.[205] The *Mufti* of Tashkent was at the head of the Spiritual Directorate. The Soviet organized the *Muftiate* into a "clear-cut top-down structure of narrowing religious authority"[206] that was responsible for the appointment of imams and the promulgation of *fatwas* and other religious pronouncements. In essence, the religious establishment was incorporated within the structures of state patronage and authority. This hierarchical organization was intended to assist Soviet oversight:

The place of the former stratum of theologians and sheikhs was occupied by official clergy institutionalized and integrated into the system of power and controlled with the help of Councils for Religious Affairs, which, in turn, were controlled by the Party bodies and the KGB.[207]

The end result was a limited number of compliant clergy that were not in daily contact with the masses of believers and acted more like religious functionaries responsible for the promulgation of official discourse: "Throughout the Soviet period the *Mufti* in Tashkent was occupied with blessing Soviet policies, hosting foreign dignitaries from Muslim states and presenting the Muslims of Soviet Central Asia as free and content communities to the world."[208] Furthermore, the official clerics often published statements that were contrary to Islamic orthodoxy, such as claiming that fasting during the month of Ramadan and the five daily prayers were not essential aspects of Muslim faith.[209] In fact, more often then not, the content of *fatwas* and sermons reflected "explicit instruction on the part of the authorities."[210] Another important mission of the *Muftiate* was to combat unofficial Islam and hence to seek to restrict all expression of Islamic faith within its

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[205] Roi, *Islam in the Soviet Union,* 104.
[206] Akbarzadeh, "Islamic clerical establishment in Central Asia," 82.
[207] Naumkin, "Islam in the States of the Former USSR," 133.
[208] Akbarzadeh, "Islamic clerical establishment in Central Asia," 83.
[209] Roi, *Islam in the Soviet Union,* 146.
[210] Roi, *Islam in the Soviet Union,* 151.

oversight.

It is important to note that this regulatory model of Islamic hierarchy, which seeks to impose a single proper vision of Islam, is completely in contradiction with the *Hanafi* tradition of Islamic jurisprudence as traditionally practiced in Central Asia: "According to the doctrine, a verbal admission of faith and internal accord, or an understanding with one's heart of Allah's truth, scriptures and the messenger are sufficient for a person to be a believing Muslim."[211] The monolithic top-down dissemination of "proper" faith is not an indigenous type of state-Islam relation in Central Asia. Central Asian Islam was never, prior to Soviet colonialism, organized within a hierarchical clerical establishment subservient to the state.

Official Islam represented no more then 1% of Islamic activity in the Soviet Union.[212] The end result was a limited number of compliant clergy that were not in daily contact with the masses of believers and acted more like religious functionaries responsible for the promulgation of official discourse. This does not mean, however, that the demand for religious officials diminished in the population. The limited number of officially recognized *mullahs* being trained coupled with the continuing demand for their services with regards to life-cycle ceremonies created a market for "self-proclaimed" imams.[213] "Self-reliance in religious affairs meant that anyone with a scant knowledge of the Quran or the Arabic language, often passed down from one's father, would be respected and honored as a pious man."[214] In Central Asia, piousness is therefore defined in popular circles in opposition to the vision espoused by the state and the religious hierarchy. The numerical insufficiency of the state-sponsored clergy and their apparent detachment from the daily concerns of ordinary people was combined with a sense within

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[211] Svetlana Peshkova, "Otinchalar in the Ferghana Valley: Islam, Gender and Power" (PH.D. dissertation, Syracuse University, 2006), 97.
[212] Roi, *Islam in the Soviet Union,* 287.
[213] Akbarzadeh, "Islamic clerical establishment in Central Asia," 76.
[214] Ibid.

the population that the official religious establishment was nothing more than a mouth-piece to the regime and hence was unable or unwilling to fight for the rights of ordinary Muslims to practice their religion freely.[215] In essence, the official clergy was popularly discredited.

Evading the regulatory gaze of the office of the *Mufti* permitted unofficial imams to express unauthorized views that were more in tune with the sentiment of the religious population or at the very least did not explicitly contradict the basic tenets of Islam, making them more influential and legitimate.[216] Unofficial Islam also expressed itself in the practice of distributing handwritten religious literature, chain letters and cassettes, and maintenance of underground print shops.[217] Surviving underground Sufi societies (*tariquas*) expended under the radar of state supervision and were supported by a growing number of "self-proclaimed" imams.[218]

The Sufi secret societies, or *tariquas*, contributed enormously to the survival of Islam during this period, and itinerant preachers did much to increase Sufi numbers and popularity. The well-organized Sufi sects clandestinely published religious literature, which was widely circulated (...) similar to the writings produced by Soviet dissidents.[219]

The area of the Soviet Union that saw the largest amount of activity of these Sufi groups was the Ferghana Valley. Beginning in the early 70's, the valley was host to a network of clandestine religious schools. The re-islamization of society in the Ferghana Valley was a "spontaneous grassroots revival with no external links"[220]. Because they were illegal, these schools remained independent of the official religious structure. They

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[215] James Thrower, *The Religious History of Central Asia from the Earliest Times to the Present Day* (Lewiston, NY: The Edwing Mellen Press, 2004), 200.
[216] Akbarzadeh, "Islamic clerical establishment in Central Asia," 77.
[217] Roi, *Islam in the Soviet Union,* 360.
[218] Tom Everett-Heath, "Instability and Identity in the Post-Soviet World: Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan," in *Central Asia: Aspect of transition,* ed. Tom Everett-Heath (New York, NY: Routledge Curzon, 2003), 221.
[219] Rashid Ahmed, *Jihad: the Rise of Militant Islam in Central Asia,* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002), 40-41.
[220] Resul Yalcin, *The Rebirth of Uzbekistan: Politics, Economy and Society in the Post-Soviet Era* (Reading, UK: Ithaca Press, 2002), 98.

were therefore afforded the space to create their own readings of Islam. It is important, however, to note that these groups remained peaceful throughout the Soviet period.

The Soviet authorities' action in trying to recuperate the legitimizing force of Islam in the mid to late Soviet era had a profound impact on the religious identity of ordinary Uzbeks. One non-negligible aspect of this was a prevalent distrust of the official clerical class among ordinary people for whom Islam had remained an important part of their life.

Islam and Nation-Building Initiatives in Independent Uzbekistan

Loving one's homeland is a commitment to one's faith.[221]

'But they tortured me!' said the old man. 'They tortured my grandson before my eyes. They beat his testicles and put electrodes on his body. They put a mask on him to stop him breathing. They raped him with a bottle. Then they brought my granddaughter and said they would rape her. All the time they said, "Osama bin Laden, Osama bin Laden. We are poor farmers from Andijan. We are good Muslims, but what doe we know of Osama bin Laden?[222]

Following independence, the Uzbek government has recuperated the Soviet structures of official Islam and seeks to confine religion to a peripheral role in society.[223] A focus on the state dominated discourse with regards to the nation-building project of the Uzbek state will point to the construction of legitimacy based on the symbolic meaning of Islam on the part of the state to generate compliance.

An interesting example of the state's will to determine the public discourse with regards to religion is its attempt to create a form of state-sponsored Sufism as presented

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[221] Uzbek Government billboard, quoted in Yalcin, *The Rebirth of Uzbekistan*, 95.
[222] Quoted in Murray, *Murder in Samarqand*, 23.
[223] Rand, *Tamerlane's Children*, 56.

in Alexander Papas' article *The Sufi and the President*. In this article, Papas explains that

the biographies of famous Sufi leaders, such as the 15th century poet Alisher Navoi, are

reconstructed in order to show that they were loyal supporters of the state during their

lives:

> This official discourse on Sufism remains silent on instances of subversive, oppositional,
> and autonomous activities of the Sufi leaders and their following throughout history.
> Indeed, authorized historiographies often encourage a complete (religious, social, as well
> as political) Sufi model of loyal citizenship.[224]

In a society where access to printing presses is restricted, the state distributes such

treatises widely. They are similar in form to traditional Sufi texts, but exalt a message of

obedience to authority and quietist spirituality which seeks to inculcate a "conformist

model of citizenship."[225] As in the academic field, we see the willingness of the

Uzbekistani state to distort historical memory in order to produce and impose a

monolithic and uncompromising vision of a key component of the Uzbek nation, Islam:

"Clearly, by obscuring facts and features of religious history, the state's aim is to

encourage through mystical Islam society's submissiveness to the state. Here, Sufism

appears as an artificial Islam, and the Sufi as a creature of the President."[226] The Uzbek

state is clearly intent on building on the legacies of Soviet rule when it comes to

advancing a vision of proper Islam through the cooption of segments of the Islamic

community.

For Linz, the term political religion signifies the attempt at complete subjugation

of religion by a state, almost always authoritarian in nature, in which the religious

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[224] Alexander Papas, "The Sufi and the President in Post-Soviet Uzbekistan," *International Institute for the Study of Islam In the Modern World*, Review 16 (2005): 38,
http://www.isim.nl/files/Review_16/Review_16-38.pdf (Accessed: 1 April 2008).
[225] Papas, "The Sufi and the President in Post-Soviet Uzbekistan," 39.
[226] Ibid.

establishment must marshal total support for a specific political regime and its policies.[227]

Initiated by a political leader that is in the process of creating a new vision of the nation, "political religion implies the destruction of the dualism between religion and politics, the fusion of the political and spiritual meaning defining authority."[228] From the evidence put forth in the section, it is clear that the regime of Islam Karimov seeks to shape a public discourse on religion that is in line with the preservation of the interests of power holders:

> Thus, to government officials, religion is often seen not as the expression of beliefs, values, and practices related to the divine, but as an instrument for social control; it is less a right to be protected by a constitutional order than an activity to be supervised by the state.[229]

Yet, the state does not only seek to propagate a proper vision of religion, it also seeks to eliminate all forms of Islam that does not conform to it. What are the constraints on the free practice of Islam in Uzbekistan today? Khalid remarks: "The jailing of 'independent Muslims' and the closing of mosques are more common in Uzbekistan today than during the Brezhnev years."[230] Registered mosques must present every Friday an official sermon approved by the state.[231] The 1998 *Law on Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations* severely circumscribes religious practice in Uzbekistan.[232] Wearing religious attire in public can spell trouble and displaying what is perceived by the authority as an ostentatious show of piety can lead to imprisonment.[233] An illustration of the tighter control the regime imposes on religious practice can be seen in the

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[227] Juan Linz, "The Religious Use of Politics and/or the Political Use of Religion: Ersatz Ideology Versus Ersatz Religion," in *Totalitarianism and Political Religions,* ed. Hans Maier (New York, NY: Routledge, 2004), 107.

[228] Linz, "The Religious Use of Politics and/or the Political Use of Religion: Ersatz Ideology Versus Ersatz Religion," 108.

[229] Jeremy Gunn, "Shaping an Islamic Identity: Religion, Islamism, and the State in Central Asia," *Sociology of Religion* 64, no. 3 (2003): 403.

[230] Khalid, *Islam after Communism,* 170.

[231] Eric McGlinchey, "Divided Faith: Trapped between State and Islam in Uzbekistan," in *Everyday life in Central Asia: past and present,* ed. Jeff Sahadeo and Russell Zanca (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2007), 306.

[232] Khalid, *Islam after Communism,* 175.

[233] McGlinchey, "Divided Faith," 308.

government's closure of many mosques and other place of worship.[234] The teaching of religion is highly regulated. For example, in November 2000, 15 men were given sentences ranging from six to nineteen years for "attending private classes on the Koran."[235] According to the US bureau of democracy, human rights and labour, "the government restricted religious activity, treating virtually all religious observance outside state sanctioned structures as a crime."[236]

There is unquestionably strong empirical evidence to show that the Uzbek regime seeks to regulate the practice of Islam within Uzbekistan in an effort to distinguish between proper and improper observance. Such regulation implies the distinction of two categories of Islamic devotion, one that is proper and another that is to be condemned and punished. A content analysis of Karimov's *Uzbekistan on the threshold of the 21st century* will serve to articulate the regime's vision of the proper place of religion in society. By looking at how Karimov defines proper Islam and deviant Islam, we start seeing that the role of Islam in society is dependent on it being in line with the objectives and the self-image of the regime.

Karimov portrays Uzbekistan as an island of stability in a region rife with danger. Security and stability are the two values that are constantly being expounded by Karimov:

The sustainable growth of the Republic of Uzbekistan depends decisively on how accurately and how deeply we understand the nature of the existing dangers, how promptly we detect their sources and connections, and identify appropriate methods in order to achieve stability in society.[237]

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[234] Khalid, *Islam after Communism*, 178.
[235] Ibid.
[236] U.S. Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, *Uzbekistan: Country Reports on Human Rights Practices - 2006* (released 6 March 2007), http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2006/78848.htm (accessed 4 June 2008).
[237] Islam Karimov, *Uzbekistan on the Threshold of the Twenty-First Century: Challenges to Stability and Progress* (New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 1998), 5.

By casting Uzbekistan as a besieged island of stability in a sea of uncertain dangers, Karimov gives ideological credence and geopolitical depth to his espousal of an ethics of stasis. Stability is intrinsically linked with security. The status quo becomes legitimate in this logic of perpetual danger: "Uzbekistan wholly supports one of the basic principles of the indivisibility of security, that security implies a permanent process and has no limits."[238] Society must remain stable in order for Uzbekistan to step up and face the many dangers that have their sources outside of the republic's borders. Foreign Islamic terrorism is at the forefront of the list of menaces emanating from the outside. Security is a constituent and indivisible part of the Uzbek reality and state of mind. In this vision, to undermine national security by participating in destabilizing political contestations in any way linked to religious motivations is a great sin. The search for security is unending and becomes the leitmotiv behind regime policy.

The dichotomy between interior stability and exterior threats is transposed to the discussion of proper religious practices. In the mind of Karimov, proper religious observance is centered on individual devotion. It is a personal and reflexive act involving purely spiritual matters.[239] In Karimov's writing, Islam is positively portrayed primarily when it is spoken as a cultural heritage of the Uzbek nation. Louw speaks about the "museumfication"[240] of Islam in Uzbekistan, a term used to describe the fact that Islam is co-opted by the regime through such devices as the diffusion on national television of lavish religious ceremonies or the recuperation of pilgrimage shrines and their effective transformation into historical museums. Spirituality becomes an act associated with attachment to the nation. Limits are imposed on official state-sponsored clergy and religious writings scrutinized in order to maintain the purity of Uzbekistani Islam as a

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[238] Ibid., 5.

[239] Ibid., 24.

[240] Maria Elisabeth Louw, *Everyday Islam in Post-Soviet Central Asia* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2005), 57.

cultural heritage. Islam is therefore subordinate to a project of historical revision and nation building:

We regard the revival of spiritual values, the return to the spiritual sources of the nation, to its roots, as a natural process in the growth of national self-awareness (...) Historical memory, the restoration of an objective and truthful history of the nation and its territory is given an extremely important place in the revival and growth of national self-consciousness and national pride.[241]

As the association of Amir Timur to the Uzbek president serves to give historical legitimacy to such values as authority and personal devotion to the person of the president, the insistence that Islam is traditionally apolitical also serves the interests of the current regime. For Karimov, the authenticity of Islam in Uzbekistan must be maintained in the face of "spiritual ideas and values alien to our nation."[242] The imposition of an authoritative account of Uzbek history and the place of Islam within it helps in discrediting more politically or socially inclined interpretations of Islam by associating them to exterior threats: "However, the process of the revival of the national traditions of Islam and culture has been a vindication of the decision not to 'import' Islam from outside, not to politicize and not to Islamize our society."[243] For the regime, authentic Islam is seen as a form of quiet and peaceful spirituality that must limit itself to the private sphere and never make any claims or indeed motivate action in the public space.[244]

For Karimov, two visions of Islam oppose each other in a competition for the hearts and minds of the Uzbek populace. One is pure, authentic and national. The other is fanatic, dangerous and foreign. Limitation to the free practice of religion is justified by the recourse to a discourse of fear and the exaltation of authenticity. An ethos of stability

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[241] Karimov, *Uzbekistan on the Threshold of the Twenty-First Century,* 85.
[242] Ibid., 16.
[243] Ibid., 89.
[244] Ibid., 19.

at all cost finds its logical justification in rhetoric of authenticity and exterior threats. This logic seeks to differentiate what is interior and good from what is exterior and bad. Islam does not escape this logic:

Islam is able to perform two very contradictory functions: On the one hand, the *cultural values* of Islam, its traditions and its huge spiritual heritage greatly contribute not only to the historical evolution of our region, but also to the qualitative shaping of its new image. On the other hand, as an *instrument in the political struggle for power and influence over the political mind of the masses,* Islam is able to play the role of a banner under which forces unite that do not pursue definite program objectives, but are guided by only one goal - that is the struggle for power.[245]

It is the state that imposes a dichotomy between good and bad Islam. In essence, what is being stated is that good Islam is defined as compliant to the nationalist objectives of the state, while all other forms of Islam are cast as "instruments," as illegitimate tools in the pursuit of power. Therefore, Islamic devotion that is independent of the control and supervision of the state menaces the power of the state. This logic casts all practices of Islam that are not in line with the discourse of the regime as dangerous and deviant.

It is within this logic that we can understand the portrayal of the protest as resulting from religious extremism, because within the governing ideology, all forms of Islam that are independent are seen as menacing the security of the state. On one level, the event in Andijan can be seen as embodying key legacies with regards to patterns of legitimating power through the symbolic control of Islam. In this regard, the legacies of state control of religious meaning set the stage for the accusations of religious extremism, both with regards to the arrest of the 23 businessmen and the ensuing protest. It also created the psychological inclination in the top sphere of Uzbek leadership to see in the protest a menace to its power.

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[245] Ibid., 23. emphasis mine.

By coming out and supporting the arrested businessmen, the protestors were committing, in the eyes of the government, a traitorous act. By publicly airing out grievances, and demanding change, the protestors publicly put the lie to the regime's claims that the status quo was acceptable to all. The hegemony of the values of stability and security was being challenged by calls for change and progress. For the government, the people rallying in the center of Andijan were participating in destabilizing activities, supporting dangerous individuals accused of religious extremism and were thus undermining the security of the Uzbek state. The protest in the streets of Andijan was an unprecedented show of discontent in a highly regulated society. If it were to spread, the agitation would threaten to undermine the subtle legitimizing balancing act of the Uzbek government. For the government, the actions and symbolism of the protestors' rally directly disputed the state's project of political legitimacy. For Karimov, and the people under him tied through patronage, a demonstration of popular discontent was read as an overt challenge to the authority and stability of the regime. In the context of recent successful "color" revolutions in Ukraine, Georgia and Kyrgyzstan, Karimov's authoritarian regime saw the use of violence as essential to its survival. In this context, the violent repression of the protest was a logical response to a perceived challenge to the legitimacy of an authoritarian state.

But the state's effort at total control of religious meaning invites, as in Soviet times, the questioning from below of the homogenizing nation-building project of the Uzbek state. By continuing the top-down ideological engineering strategies inherited from the Soviet era in the social and religious sphere, the Uzbek government accentuates the continuation of a struggle between its vision of proper faith and all others that may present themselves in the population at large. By demanding political legitimacy from the

ulema, the Uzbek government in effect transforms Islam into a "contested territory."[246]

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[246] Shahrem Akbarzadeh and Abdullah Saeed, *Islam and Political Legitimacy* (New York, NY: Routledge Curzon, 2003), 10.

Appropriation is, after all, largely the purpose of domination. The very process of appropriation, however, unavoidably entails systematic social relations of subordination that impose indignities of one kind or another on the weak.[247]

The ICG qualifies the events as a "popular uprising."[248] Is this an accurate interpretation of the protest in Andijan? For the ICG: "The uprising comes after a period of rising tensions throughout Uzbekistan. Protests have taken place across the country in the past six months..."[249] For the ICG, the "uprising" reflected the "rising anger against the government."[250] In the context of the report, the term "popular uprising" would suggest that the protest was not organized, but rather reflected a spontaneous boiling over of anger. Yet, is this completely accurate? As we have seen, there were undeniably a high level of organization with regard to the attack on the jail and the initial staging of the protest prior to popular participation from ordinary citizens.

The report by the ICG spends very little space on detailing the dynamics of the day of the protest, and remains largely silent with regard to the attack of the jail. Rather, it explores a series of sources of grievances under the rubric "Background to the protest."[251] The ICG report shows how a series of policies initiated by the Uzbek government negatively affected the lives of ordinary Uzbek citizens in the months preceding the protest. These include: human rights violation with regards to the practice of Islam,[252] anti-trade measures directed at bazaars,[253] gas and power shortages,[254]

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[247] James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1990), 11.
[248] International Crisis Group, *Uzbekistan: The Andijon Uprising*, 1.
[249] Ibid., 1.
[250] Ibid.
[251] Ibid., 7.
[252] Ibid., 7-8.
[253] Ibid., 8.
[254] Ibid., 11.

irregularities in banking practices[255] and new restrictive border policies.[256] Therefore, according to the ICG report: "What occurred in Andijan was not an anomaly, but the latest, albeit most deadly, manifestation of the growing dissent and instability within Uzbekistan."[257]

Be that as it may, this explanation focuses too exclusively on repression and points to a mechanistic cause-to-effect relation that ties levels of repressions and grievances to protest. Repression, be it political, economic or religious in nature, and also poverty, have been widespread in Uzbekistan for more then a decade. Furthermore, the anti-trade measures affected all regions of the country, not only Andijan. Why was Andijan so deadly? The account presented by the ICG overstates the role of national level grievances in precipitating the event, giving a somewhat deterministic explanation while leaving out in the process specificities proper to the context of Andijan, specifically the role of *Akramiya* in the initial phases of mobilization and action.

Simply put, the ICG presents the events in Andijan in such a fashion that one is left with the impression that a pro-democracy or pro-reform protest had been suppressed. But does this depiction truly get at the heart of Andijan? Why was "the anger and frustration" which are "tangible throughout the country"[258] result in such a large manifestation in Andijan, and not elsewhere? Why did the government suppress this protest in such a violent fashion, and not the preceding ones? Furthermore, the normative implication associated with the term "popular uprising" fits uneasily with testimonies which suggest that the protest was not initially anti-governmental. Finally, the accounts given by the ICG, but also HRW and the ODIHR portray the 23 businessmen as simply "pious" thus downplaying the role played by *Akramiya* in organizing the initial protest. A

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[255] Ibid., 12.
[256] Ibid., 12-13.
[257] Ibid., 16.
[258] Ibid., 17.

revisit of the dynamics of the protest, using the framework of moral economy and social movement theory, will point towards an alternative explanation which takes into account all of the aforementioned elements.

The Origins and Message of *Akramiya*

How did the trial become such a symbolic focal point? Why did so many people stay even when it became clear that the government troops were moving in, shooting randomly into the crowd? Were people ready to die simply to protest the lost of a job and the imprisonment of their boss? According to the ODIHR, "despite the violence and shooting at the square, more and more people joined the crowd during the day, including after the end of prayer in the nearby mosque."[259] What can motivate and explain the high risk behavior of the protestors? In order to understand the dynamics of the protest and explain the determination of the protestors to remain in the square independently of the escalating violence inflicted by the security forces, it is essential to differentiate between two groups that were present during the course of the day, that is to say a core of *Akramiya* activists whose actions instigated the protest and who organized its manifestations, such as for example the setting up of loudspeakers, and the vast majority of people that came out to attend and participate in the protest who were not necessarily members of *Akramiya*, but who still chose to remain in the square. First of all, let us look at the origin and message of *Akramiya* and then let us turn our attention to a tentative explanation of the possible motivations of "ordinary" protestors.

More then a simple association of pious businessmen, evidence indicates that *Akramiya* was an active religious organization which proposed a frame of meaning that

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[259] Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, *Preliminary Findings on the Events in Andijan, Uzbekistan, 13 May*, 14.

resonated within a segment of the population of Andijan seeking to overcome its poverty. The term *Akramiya* refers to a group of adherents to the religious and economic teachings of a former math professor native of Andijan, Akram Yo'ldoshev, who wrote a pamphlet, *The Path to Faith,* in 1992, shortly after the end of the USSR. The organizational model of *Akramiya* is in line with the practices of *Ishanism. Ishanism* is an offshoot of Sufism unique to the historical experience of Central Asia. By the beginnings of the 20th century, the different Sufi orders present in Central Asia were developing in relative isolation from their counterparts in the rest of the Muslim world.[260] This isolation was accentuated under the Soviet regime. The different Sufi *tariquas* in essence "degenerated" into a vast amount of localized groups, in which "each *ishan* of repute became the founder of a separate order."[261] Although organized along the same teacher/disciple structure proper to traditional Sufism and still influenced to varying degrees by popularize conceptions taken from the repertoire of once dominant *tariquas*, the teachings of these *ishan* circles were no longer strictly speaking tied to formal Sufi doctrine.

During the Soviet period, *Ishanism* had a strong presence in the Ferghana Valley where each *ishan* elaborated his interpretation of Islamic doctrine. In the private sphere, *ishans* fostered in their adherents the need to develop a sense of community with their "own moral and legal code, (their) own leadership and hierarchy, and own source of income."[262] The *ishan* and his followers did not in effect directly confront the existing structures of power. However, they strived to organize their private lives as independently of state interference as possible. According to Roi: "The *ishans* in C.A. were an inalienable part of the local social structure and they and their followers became part of an unofficial underground Islam following the outlawing of the *tariquas* and the

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[260] Roi, *Islam in the Soviet Union,* 386.
[261] Ibid.
[262] Ibid., 415.

mass persecution of the clergy as a class in the late 1920's and 1930's."[263]

Parallels can be made between *Ishanism* and *Akramiya*. Yo'ldoshev encouraged in his writings the establishment of "community centers as well as humanitarian and social projects that would benefit the whole community."[264] Evidence suggests that *Akramiya* did become active in providing social provision and welfare in Andijan. In view of these practices, we can see in the actions of *Akramiya* a resemblance to practices associated with a more traditional form of Sufism once predominant in Central Asia, that is to say the *Naqshbandiyya tariqua*.[265]

Yo'ldoshev did not receive any formal Islamic education, and criticisms of *Akramiya* have been formulated in line with the fact that Yo'ldoshev's sayings do not conform to formal Islamic doctrine.[266] But, as we have seen, this means very little on the ground in Central Asia, as formal Islamic learning is often associated in the minds of many to the widely discredited official Islam. Consequently, the emergence of Yo'ldoshev as a credible voice in articulating a vision of Islam and the organization of *Akramiya* along patterns similar to *Ishanism* is an example of the continuation in contemporary Uzbekistan of legacies associated with the practice of underground Islam that took shape under Soviet tutelage.

The Path to Faith is written in very abstruse language, but a closer reading of the tract helps to understand the philosophy behind *Akramiya*. According to Yo'ldoshev, a person's quest to achieve the satisfaction of his material needs is an essential first step in the attainment of Muslim spiritual values.[267] (See also Appendix I)

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[263] Ibid., 393.
[264] Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, *Preliminary Findings on the Events in Andijan, Uzbekistan, 13 May*, 9.
[265] According to Louw: "*Naqshbandiyya* is a *tariqua* that does not forsake this world but, on the contrary, teaches that this world is important and demands of its adepts that they participate in the normal life of society, work for a living, take care of the family and serve their local community and country. Central importance is given to the value of labor." Louw, 118.
[266] Akiner, *Violence in Andijan*, 28.
[267] Yo'ldoshev, *The Path to Faith* (1992). This work appears only in Russian. Thanks are due to Larissa

Aspiring to improve one's life is innate in human nature; this is the *purpose of life.* (...) If one looks more attentively, one will see people who assert that overcoming difficulties and insufficiencies of this life depends on one's material-financial condition. And therefore it is natural that all their actions would be directed towards the escalation of material riches.[268]

Securing material well-being is necessary in order to strengthen "moral relations"[269] between family and friends, which leads to the possibility of fulfilling spiritual needs, the root of happiness. The actions undertaken in order to satisfy needs constitute "a way of life."[270] God created needs in men, and has molded the universe in order that men can satisfy these needs. Although there is to be found "gifts in suffering," men should always be free to employ their reason to improve their condition.[271] Religion is "neither a fairytale nor a legend, nor mere rituals held during certain times."[272] It is a message that shows the path towards reaching happiness in this world:

Naturally, the question arises as to how to reach such happiness? This path begins with belief in the Great and Uniform Allah, and then the strengthening of this belief. One's belief cannot be strengthened only through words. The words that are spoken must be proved true in practice.[273]

Using the same template as official Sufism, but contrary to the quietist Islam proposed by the state, *The Path to Faith* places the individual's reason and self-reliance at the centre of religious devotion, questions notions that exalt submissiveness in the face of suffering and visions of Islam that limit the role of religion to the ceremonial. It is clear that *Akramiya* is not an outgrowth of any "imported" foreign conception of Islam, but rather its organization and message would suggest that it is in line with the recent religious and economic history of the region.

Smith for its translation. The Russian original can be found at:
http://www.centrasia.ru/newsA.php4?st=1093410660 (accessed 12 October 2007).
[268]Yo'ldoshev, Appendix I, 102.
[269] Ibid., 103.
[270] Ibid., 110.
[271] Ibid., 111.
[272] Ibid., 105.
[273] Ibid., 105.

As it is becoming increasingly evident, many elements espoused within this vision of Islam are in contradiction with the ideology imposed by the state. Most importantly, this vision proposes an active role for faith in the public sphere. In effect, it constructs a message of economic self-empowerment that is contrary to the interest of the ruling elite. Yet, this message is in line with the propensity of the poor to want to better their lot and conceptualize their daily struggles in moral and religious terms.

Moral Economy under an Exclusionary State

Strictly speaking, Thompson's notion of moral economy stems out of his study of eighteen century English food riots. Writing in the 1930's, the term "moral economy" referred to the fact that pre-market feudal economies in England had established a series of checks and balances in order for basic foodstuff to be always available for the poor. The poor perceived the right to subsistence assured by these practices as moral. The introduction of a market economy disrupted this morally sanctioned arrangement by imposing "market prices" for grains. The new market economy was accompanied by periods of dearth at which time bread became too expensive for the poor to afford. The poor articulated their grievances "within a popular consensus as to what were legitimate and what were illegitimate practices in marketing, milling, baking."[274] Thompson claims that behind these crowd actions laid a "legitimizing notion."[275] It was not absolute levels of poverty that explained 18th century food riots, but rather "an outrage to these moral assumptions, quite as much as actual deprivation, was the usual occasion for direct action."[276] Participating in food riots was extremely dangerous, as it could result in the

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[274] E.P Thompson, "The Moral Economy of the English Crowd," in *The essential E.P. Thompson,* ed. Dorothy Thompson (New York: New Press, 2001), 318.
[275] Ibid.
[276] Ibid.

imprisonment and even hanging of the participant. The consensus around the fact that their actions were morally justified "overrode motives of fear and deference"[277] of the rioters which might have inhibited widespread participation in the riot. In Thompson's analysis, an emotion, moral outrage, explains high risk behavior in protestors. The source of the moral outrage that drives the food rioters is therefore brought upon by actions of the state which challenge accepted notions of justice and morality that are tied to the right to subsistence.

According to the moral economy perspective, some economies, similarly to one present in pre-capitalist England, are "embedded" within a "moral universe in which justice is central."[278] For Thompson, a moral economy is conceived as "a popular consensus about what distinguishes legitimate from illegitimate practices, a consensus rooted in the past and capable of inspiring action."[279] Yet, as Clay Arnold suggests: "The prevailing conception of moral economy reduces to the unduly narrow claim that economic incorporation of a non-market people is the basis for the moral indignation that leads to resistance and rebellion."[280] As Clay Arnold proposes by examining contention over water rights in the American West, the salience of notions of moral economy are not necessarily limited to transitions form pre-market to market economies. Neither does the "embedded" character of the economy need always to be "rooted in the past." For that reason, moral economies can emerge out of innovations. All told, the important lesson to remember is that local historical conditions can bring about the advent of a new moral economy.

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[277] Ibid.

[278] William James Booth , "On the Idea of the Moral Economy," *The American Political Science Review* 88, no. 3 (September, 1994): 654.

[279] Thomas Clay Arnold, "Rethinking Moral Economy," *The American Political Science Review* 95, no.1 (March, 2001): 85.

[280] Ibid.

Following the collapse of the centrally planned economic model, members of *Akramiya* and entrepreneurs inspired by the writings of Yo'ldoshev introduced concepts of an "embedded" moral economy in the area of Andijan. As an association, *Akramiya* was organized around "production and distribution communities"[281] which channeled aid and distributed funds according to the needs of its members.[282] The economic philosophy of the group is characterized as "a combination of Islam and Communism, something in between."[283] Overall, it can best be described as a ground-up initiative resembling a religiously inspired cooperative.[284]

The fact that *Akramiya* defended notions of an economy embedded in ideas of charity, community development and collective self-reliance and framed such notions within Islamic language earned them respect in the community of Andijan:

The defendants were well known for their role as community leaders. They established a minimum wage that exceeded the meager government-mandated wage, paid employees' medical expenses and sick leave, and provided free meals to staff. They also financially supported a local hospital and orphanage and made donations to local schools and *mahalla,* or local neighborhood, committees.[285]

Members of Akramiya established new business initiatives adjusted to local conditions that were not regulated by the state apparatus. These businesses paid their employees well. What's more, the insistence of the group on redistributing a share of profits to the wider community coupled with their charity work reflected a vision of the economy as morally imbedded along a specific conception of Islam. As a result, the respect afforded to them in the community can be understood as a constitutive element of an emerging

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[281] Ronald Sandee, *The Role of the Akramiya in the May 13, 2005 Unrest in Andijan* (Washington, DC: Hudson Institute, Occasional Research Paper presented to the Center for Eurasian Policy, series I, no.3), 2, http://se2.isn.ch/serviceengine/FileContent?serviceID=10&fileid=EED6F516-1E79-F837-9D51-CE78199AABB4&lng=en (accessed 11 May 2008).

[282] Sandee, *The Role of the Akramiya in the May 13, 2005 Unrest in Andijan,* 2.

[283] Sanobar Shermatova, *They Call themselves the Birodars. Akramians: a Look from Outside* (Moscow: Ferghana.ru information agency, 14 March 2007), http://enews.ferghana.ru/article.php?id=1874 (accessed 11 May 2008).

[284] International Crisis Group, *Uzbekistan: The Andijon Uprising,* 2.

[285] Human Right Watch, *Bullets Were Falling Like Rain: The Andijan Massacre, May 13, 2005,* 10.

popular consensus anchored in the language of moral economy. Furthermore, the consolidation of this respect was only possible in the context of a state which failed to provide such services, a situation reminiscent of other charitable associations in the developing world that fill the vacuum left by an absent state: "But these associations' success in responding to grass-root needs can only be seen as an admonition to centralized regimes that have failed to earn popular trust."[286]

Shared Meaning through Association: Framing and Networks

In recent years, the field of study of Islamic politics has witnessed an interest in pursuing the application of social movement theory to the analysis of Islamic mobilization.[287] *Akramiya* was both a network of businesses and charities as well as a religious organization actively propagating a spiritual message. Two tools used within the social movement approach will be applied in the following analysis: resource and mobilizing structures, i.e. networks, and cultural framing. Resource and mobilizing structures refer to how groups organize themselves, how they rationally distribute, mobilize and gather resources. Different contexts and resource availability create different structures that shape the subsequent actions of social movement activists. Fundamentally, the theory deals with formal and informal networks as facilitating agents for mobilization. On the other hand, cultural framing processes help to show the importance of ideational factors in "how individuals conceptualize themselves as a collectivity."[288] Frames create "intersubjective meaning"[289] where the problems of

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[286] Jonathan Benthall, *The Charitable Crescent: Politics of Aid in the Muslim World* (New York, NY: Tauris Publishers, 2003), 2.

[287] Quinton Wictorowicz, *Islamic Activism: A social movement approach* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2004), 4.

[288] Ibid., 15.

[289] Ibid., 15.

society are identified and solutions proposed, thus creating a "rationale to motivate action."[290] Framing theory focuses on "the power of ideas and cultural resources" in the process of mobilization. The two concepts are mutually reinforcing: frames are disseminated through networks while at the same time the setting up of networks is justified according to the message of the frame.

The writings of Yo'ldoshev inspired in Andijan a group of entrepreneurs to establish a network of businesses and charities. These became very successful and came to employ a significant number of people in Andijan: "The organization comprised dozens of businesses. The Brothers – thousands and thousands of them - pooled efforts to solve their social and economic problems." [291] The establishment of networks of employment and charity opened up in the process a space where these initiatives could be framed as being the expression of proper Islamic faith. In some cases, interest might have been the sole motivator for an individual to join *Akramiya*. This said, within the *Akramiya* movement, employment was tied to the participation in training courses where the writings of Yu'ldoshev would be studied.[292] In essence, access to employment networks was dependent on the espousal of the organization's frame of meaning. This process of exposition to the ideas of the group coupled with the financial privileges associated with membership can result in a "transvaluation of values"[293] in which the individual develops a sense of moral obligation and selfless dedication towards the organization and its message.

Through employment and charity, *Akramiya* pursued self-reliance strategies, creating in the process a network of liked-minded people who now depended for their livelihoods on the businesses set up by the organization. Faith was tied to economic

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[290] Ibid., 16.
[291] Shermatova, *They Call themselves the Birodars.*
[292] Ibid.
[293] Carrie Wickham, *Mobilizing Islam: Religion, Activism and Political Change in Egypt* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2002), 239.

interest. The improvement in financial conditions was constantly associated with the acceptance of a vision of Islam. In this sense, the organization, a network of businesses, reflected the frame, religiously motivated self-reliance. The network was the message, the solution. But people who assented to the message of *Akramiya* were not simply passive recipient of frames. This framing "resonated" within its membership because it channeled pre-existing ground-up impulses for self-improvement among the poor. In sum, there was an adequacy of meaning between the top-down frame and the bottom-up emerging acceptance of practices justified in terms of a moral economy. While the state offered a top-down nationalist vision of faith, *Akramiya* proposed a more resonant model of empowerment inspired by religious conceptions tied to notions of a moral economy.

Bayat claims that "a fully autonomous life renders the state irrelevant."[294] In Bayat's analysis of the appropriation of abandoned land by the disenfranchised poor of Teheran in the 1980's, the claim is put forth that actions and strategies of the poor that help in alleviating their paucity become politically meaningful because they create a space where a sense of pride in overcoming hardship combines with popular notions of justice and morality. This creates a communal thought-world where the very act of encroachment is moralized.

For Bayat, the social mobilization of the poor can be traced back to their concrete and everyday efforts or actions to ameliorate their daily living conditions and are not the result of knee-jerk reactions to levels of grievances. "Driven by the force of necessity"[295] the poor, in the context of a state which does not service them or help them with their needs, in essence a predatory state, are in a self-perpetuating struggle to ameliorate their existence, slowly but surely creating not only a physical, but more importantly, a social

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[294] Asef Bayat, *Street politics: Poor People's Movements in Iran* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1997), 15.
[295] Ibid., 8.

and psychological space that is outside of the state's reach.[296] The everyday atomized actions of the poor are done for their own sake, yet, when their gains become menaced, the defense of the new "self-regulating and autonomous local life"[297] is collective in nature. For Bayat, individuals become aware of their common positions and interest in reaction to actions of the state that puts into questions their strategies of survival: "Once these atomized individuals are confronted by a threat to their gains, their passive networks spontaneously turns into an active network and collective action."[298] In Andijan, such a space was opened up by the daily interaction of bosses, employees and their relatives, and also between active members of *Akramiya* who organized charity and the general citizen of Andijan that benefited directly or vicariously from these charitable works. Although Bayat speaks about passive networks of street merchants, his insight can be applied to the case of Andijan.

When we consider all of this, it becomes clearer that the arrest of the 23 businessmen can be seen as a symbolic focal point which triggered mobilization and eventual radicalization within the membership of *Akramiya*. The message became clear: We will not help you and we will stop you from helping yourself. As long as people belonging to *Akramiya* perceived that their economic problems were surmountable through hard work, that it was possible to improve their lot, they suffered more or less in silence. Yet the actions of the state undermined this core value, the possibility to secure livelihood through labor and also showed that the state was ready to plunge hundreds of people into poverty. In the case of Andijan, the arrest of the 23 businessmen menaced the gains of a significant section of the poor, which gave the impetus for social mobilization, first as a series of mounting protest which culminated on the night of 12 May 2005 on the

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[296] Ibid. 8.
[297] Ibid. 9.
[298] Ibid. 17.

attack on the city jail, understood here as a "collective political act."[299] The network set-up by *Akramiya* presented the ideal organizational structures through which such actions as the storming of the jail and the setting-up of microphones in Babur Square were formulated, organized and initiated. What drove the storming of the jail and the initial protest in the center of town was not a will to overthrow the government; it was rather a desire to see the rehabilitation of a group of people that had previously helped members of *Akramiya* in securing a livelihood.

Akramiya succeeded in creating a loyal base of supporters because it not only organizationally helped the poor, but also because it framed a message that was appealing to the poor people's drive for self-reliance. In essence, it proposed a vision of a moral economy that resonated within its membership. More importantly, *Akramiya* framed its initiatives within a religiously inspired message of self-reliance. The 23 businessmen's arrest not only undermined *Akramiya* as a network, but also as a message, thus bringing about a "moral shock"[300] that crystallized opposition within its membership. It is the experience of a moral outrage that can explain the high risk behavior associated with the storming of the jail and the liberation of the imprisoned businessmen. Yet, these actions acted as a trigger for further mobilization in the wider population.

Domination and Defiance

If the high risk behavior of the core instigators of the protest becomes more understandable in light of the preceding arguments, why then did simple citizens, not members of *Akramiya*, were also willing to risk their lives and remain in the square

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[299] Ibid., 16.

[300] Deborah Gould, "Passionate Political Processes: Bringing Emotions Back into the Study of Social Movements," in Rethinking Social Movements: Structure, Meaning and Emotion, ed. Jeff Goodwin and James Jasper (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2004), 166.

throughout the day? What can explain the apparent joy expressed within the protest, its festive mood? To understand the high risk behavior of ordinary protestors, it is necessary to explore the "social psychology of domination"[301] inherent in the system of power in place in contemporary Uzbekistan. This will highlight the ensuing collective emotional effect brought out by the symbolism of defiance represented by the jailbreak and the initial assembly in Babur Square. Or, put more succinctly: "What we have yet to explain is how an initial act of defiance that may originate in bravado, anger or gestures can occasionally bring on an *avalanche of defiance*."[302]

At the center of Scott's analysis of the causes of protest under exploitative political systems is the role played by emotions in mobilizing ordinary people in high risk behavior:

The first step in understanding such moments is to place *the tone and mood* experienced by those who are speaking defiantly for the first time near the center of our analysis. Insofar as their excitement and energy are part of what impels events they are as much a part of the situation as structural variables. They are, furthermore, an essential force in political breakthroughs – a force that resource mobilization theories of social movements, let alone rational choice theory, cannot remotely hope to capture.[303]

But how is it possible to understand the role of emotions in the development of events when sufficient testimonies are lacking? For Weber, social science is by nature interpretative. An interpretative methodology is a "methodology using 'imaginative reconstructions' to identify the values, motivations and meanings which shaped the actions of social actors."[304] For Weber, the social scientist must try to put himself in the place of the actors, to develop sensitivity to their reality, and hence permit the construction of empathic understanding:

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[301] Scott, *Hidden Transcript*, 213.
[302] Ibid., 220.
[303] Ibid., 203.
[304] John Hughes, Peter Martin and Wes Sharrock, *Understanding Classical Sociology: Marx, Weber and Durkheim* (London: Sage Publication, 2003), 144.

Even when such *emotions* are completely inexperienced by the observer, he or she can still have a significant degree of empathic understanding of their meaning and can interpret intellectually their effects on the course of action and the selection of means.[305]

Contentious politics is therefore fully understandable only if one delves into the emotional state of the participant. Of course, such explanation can never have the assuredness associated with positivist scholarship; it therefore remains by default suggestive. Nevertheless, even if it is impossible to claim a direct ontological connection between observer and participant, such an interpretative methodology is essential in order to grasp the humanness behind the participation in high-risk protest under authoritarian rule. Weber claims that an empathic understanding of the motives and emotions behind social action is possible, even in the case of second hand analysis, if the researcher looks at the meaning-context of that action. As Weber explains:

All these actions are understandable in terms of meaning-context, which we can understand through the explanation of the actual course of action. Thus for a science of the subjective meaning of action, "explanation" requires a grasp of the meaning-context of a directly understandable action according to its subjective meaning.[306]

The actual course of action itself, which is observable, anchored within an understanding of the meaning-context of action, sheds light on the emotional state of participants. As we have seen, the economic and political system in Uzbekistan is highly exclusionary. Only a privileged few have access to decent living standards, which are secured through the maintenance of an economy of exploitation. This context shapes and directs the formulation of meaning within the lower classes which suffer from exploitation and exclusion. Singerman argues that "the sense of being disadvantaged or

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[305] Max Weber, *Basic concepts of sociology* [book on-line] under "Chapter I, Section 1, iv: Methodological Foundations, Definition of Sociology, Interpretation," http://www.ne.jp/asahi/moriyuki/abukuma/weber/method/basic/basic_concept_frame.html (accessed 2 December 2007).
[306] Weber, *Basic concepts of sociology* [book on-line] under "Chapter I, Section 2, ii: Methodological Foundations, Understanding, Direct and explanatory Understanding," http://www.ne.jp/asahi/moriyuki/abukuma/weber/method/basic/basic_concept_frame.html (accessed 2 December 2007).

that other groups in society are in some way 'privileged' forms a basis for distinctive popular cultures and common experiences."[307] This is what she refers to as a communal philosophy. Within the new "distinctive popular culture," or communal philosophy, alternative articulations of the meanings of right and wrong are disseminated: "while a national revival did take place, popular perceptions of fairness have been significantly violated, and a sentiment of social injustice has started to replace ethno-national feelings."[308] The legitimizing nation-building project of the Uzbek state, once embraced by a wide spectrum of the population, is increasingly being questioned in the face of accelerating inequities.

In accordance with this, Scott claims that there exist universal patterns of inner narration of lived exploitation. It is in the act of exploitation and the inevitable social relations that it engenders that the seeds of high risk action are sown: "resistance, then, originates not simply from material appropriation but from the pattern of personal humiliations that characterize that exploitation."[309] Exploitation and exclusion inevitably impacts how ordinary people conceptualize their position in society. When members of a subaltern class feel disenfranchised and start believing that the system does not give them a fair chance at improving their lot, then the set is staged for the emergence and inner repetition of ideas and stories that put into question the dogmas of official ideology. This is what Scott calls the "hidden transcript." The hidden transcript represents the private questioning of the status quo within the interior monologue of individuals suffering from oppression under authoritarian rule. In the context of a highly authoritarian state that is in an active project of homogenizing and controlling public meaning, it can be dangerous to speak ones mind. But this does not mean that a person does not elaborate an interior

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[307] Diane Singerman, *Avenues of Participation: Family, Politics, and Networks in Urban Quarters of Cairo* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995), 14.
[308] Anna Matveeda, "Democratization, Legitimacy and Political Change in Central Asia," *International Affairs* 75, no. 1 (January 1999): 38.
[309] Scott, *Hidden Transcript*, 111-112.

monologue that questions power. Domination and exploitation generate a universal affront to human dignity, indignation, which is in turn formulated according to the cultural resources specific to the time and place in which the person under exploitation lives.[310] Exploitation fosters within the exploited a universal interior rejection. Although the hidden transcript is not formally "shared," i.e. it is not spoken or written, the commonality of experience of exploitation and the shared cultural horizon within a specific class results in the development of similar patterns of interior stories.

For Scott, "the necessity of "acting a mask" in the presence of power produces, almost by the strain engendered by its un-authenticity, a countervailing pressure that cannot be contained indefinitely."[311] In the context of an authoritarian regime, protesting becomes a collective and spontaneous assertion of self in the face of domination and results in a feeling of reasserted human dignity.[312] For Scott "the public declaration of the hidden transcript, because it supplies a part of a person's character that had earlier been kept safely out of sight, seems also to restore a sense of self-respect and personhood."[313] The storming of the jail, the liberation of the businessmen, the gathering in Babur Square and the setting up of microphones constituted an effective rebuttal to the regime's developmental rhetoric. These initial actions of defiance initiated by members of *Akramiya* produced the pre-conditions for the emergence of the public transcript: "The successful public breaking of a taboo imposed by the dominant is an extremely efficient means of encouraging a *conflagration of defiance.*"[314] By creating the conditions for people to come and speak their minds in the center of the square, members of *Akramiya* permitted ordinary people to become aware of the communality of their experience of domination. A pamphlet written and distributed by members of *Akramiya* during the

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[310] Scott, *Hidden Transcript*, 7.
[311] Scott, *Hidden Transcript*, 9.
[312] Scott, *Hidden Transcript*, 209.
[313] Scott, *Hidden Transcript*, 210.
[314] Scott, *Hidden Transcript*, 215.

beginning of the protest emphasized this communality of experience:

The problems that affect you trouble us as well. If you have a government job, your salary is not enough to live on. If you earn a living by yourself, they start envying you and putting obstacles in your way. If you talk about your pain, *no one will listen*. If you demand your rights, they will criminalize you. Dear Andijanis! Let us defend our rights. Let the region's governor come, and representatives of the President too, and *hear* our pain. When we make demands together, the authorities should *hear* us.[315]

While to begin with the pamphlet focuses on a series of grievances, these are not enumerated in order to convince the population that radical change, along the lines of establishing an Islamic caliphate, is the solution to these problems. What is demanded is not an overthrow of authority, but rather that representatives of authority come and *listen* to the protestors. The pamphlet speaks in the language of rights; however these rights are still seen as tightly dependent on them being recognized by the authorities. When microphones were set up in order for people to speak, people expressed their desire to meet the authorities, to discuss with them their problems. If we are to look closely at the different testimonies collected by HRW and ODIHR, it becomes evident that the protestors were not attempting to provoke a confrontation with the authorities. Rather, they wanted them to acknowledge their errors and redress the situation. Yet, the growing numbers of protestors was a message in itself. It clearly showed an emerging popular consensus that the status quo needed to be changed, that the authorities had a duty to listen to the population. By firing directly into an unarmed crowd, the government signaled that it was not ready to listen, that it would remain deft to the demands of the protestors. This did not discourage people; it rather reinforced their determination to speak and be listened to. The growing crowd showed each individual protestor that they were not alone in feeling the way they did, while the violence perpetrated by the organs of power towards unarmed civilians reinforced the legitimacy of the actions of the

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[315] Quoted in Human Right Watch, *Bullets Were Falling Like Rain*, 15.

protestors while exposing the regime's willingness to murder innocents in order to prevent people from speaking. It was the decision to fire into the crowd that delegitimized the government, not the initial protest.

By giving voice to ordinary people, the speeches in Babur square symbolized the first appearance of the hidden transcript unto the public stage. According to article published by the Associated Press, one of the initial speakers addressing the crowd said: "You have a chance now to say what you've wanted to speak openly about all these years. Come on and talk."[316] For Scott, the original public revelation of the hidden transcript results in a "crystallization of public action that is astonishingly rapid."[317] The festive, quasi *carnivalesque* mood of the protest resulted from a collective rejection of the "mask" of submission. Emotions explain the temerity of the protestors: "The sense of personal release, satisfaction, pride, and elation – *despite the actual risks often run* – is an unmistakable part of how this first open declaration is experienced."[318] According to one of the protestors:

Why did we stay in the square? People had *waited* for this moment for so long. When we were shot at, we came back... The people had become scared because of the repression of the regime, and they had no opportunity to *express* their problems because of it. That is why the people were so *happy* the crowd was so big. Finally, after all this time, they could *express* their problems. The whole population had been *waiting* for this moment.[319]

Testimony after testimony reflect similar emotions. People remained in the square, in spite of the increasing violence, because of the apparently intoxicating emotion associated with "finally" being able to publicly express long suppressed emotions of discontent, to no longer have to hide true feelings. It is not simple levels of grievances

[316] Bagila Bukharbayeva, "Sense of Freedom, Then Gunfire," *The Associated Press*, 16 May 2005, Issue 3166, 4.
[317] Scott, *Hidden Transcript*, 223.
[318] Ibid., 208.
[319] Human Right Watch, *Bullets Were Falling Like Rain*, 22.

that can explain the high risk behaviour of the protestors; rather, it must be situated within the constant psychological strains associated with the continuous demand for public conformity in the face of oppression demanded of the population from the Uzbek regime, and the conflagration of defiance that resulted from the appearance of the public transcript unto the public stage and the attempt by the authorities to suppress it.

CONCLUSION

Evils which are patiently endured when they seem inevitable become intolerable
when once the idea of escape from them is suggested.[320]

The usual suspects, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and Hizb-Ut-Tahrir,
were conspicuously absent from this investigation. The reason is simple: they played no
role in the unfolding of events. *Akramiya* is not an Islamist organization; it is inspired by
Islam. It grew out of the specific history of the Ferghana Valley, where practices inherent
to underground Islam continued to flourish after the end of the USSR. In Uzbekistan,
state dominated discourse fails to capture the hearts and minds of ordinary people.
Yo'ldoshev's writings were in tune with the drive of the poor towards economic self-
empowerment. Through a network of businesses and employment, *Akramiya* gave the
means for the poor to empower themselves. Most importantly, through these networks a
frame of meaning based on Islamic teachings in line with conceptions of moral economy
was transmitted and enforced.

A new governor appointed by Tashkent decided to terminate these enterprises.
But of course, this is understandable, as these ground-up initiatives did not inscribe
themselves within the logic of the neopatrimonial patronage system. This alone could
have been perceived as a threat to the state's monopoly over ordinary people's means to
secure a livelihood. But on top of it all, these initiatives were articulated around notions
of Islam independent of the state's official discourse. Islam was acting in the public
sphere, channeling popular initiatives. Contrary to the quietist official Islam, it was active
in the public sphere, growing in importance as the business ventures prospered and
expended.

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[320] Alexis de Tocqueville, *The Old Regime and the Revolution* [book on-line] (New York, NY: Harpers and
Brothers, 1856), 214,
http://books.google.ca/books?id=N50aibeL8BAC&dq (accessed 12 July 2008).

Under Karimov's increasingly personalist rule, it is easy to understand why the authorities would fire on protestors, especially when the protest was triggered by a jailbreak. Authority had been attacked, stability was being undermined. In the context of the recent successful color revolutions, all indications lead to believe that the suppression of dissent was not an error in judgment or some form of police slippage, nor was it the legitimate response of a state being threaten by Islamic terrorists, but rather a calculated act that was intended to send a message to the population: Not here, not now.

But for members of *Akramiya*, the arrest of the businessmen and the closure of their businesses did not only create tensions because of the lost of revenues and employment opportunities, it created dissonance in meaning. The state was accusing people known for their piety and charity of *religious extremism*. This simply did not make any sense. Why was this happening? Relatives and former employees of the imprisoned businessmen must have asked themselves. The state had never helped them. And now the state was imprisoning the only people who did. Their new means of securing a livelihood was being destroyed, the vision of their faith that had structured their initiatives towards self-sufficiency and empowerment was being criminalized, and for what? Because former employers, who were obviously not terrorists, were being jailed on charges of religious extremism. People had lifted themselves out of misery through faith and collective initiatives. The former employees, and their supporters, felt that they had a moral right to their earnings, fruits of their labor and devotion. What was happening was immoral. Members of *Akramiya* armed themselves and stormed the city jail not out of commitment to jihad, but rather because through its actions the state had undermined an idea that had pushed them out of destitution and given religious signification to this. They took to the streets and demanded reparation, not Islamic revolution.

But why did ordinary people join in the protest? There exist in contemporary Uzbekistan a political economy of exploitation based on an extractive and export-driven rentier economy. The authoritarian organization and distribution of power within the country can be explained as necessary for the continuation of the practices of economic exclusion which reflect the interest of a class of privileged local barons organized along clan lines. On an ideological level, the economic infrastructure of exploitation present in Uzbekistan, in which an overwhelming majority of the population remains in a permanent state of poverty, is justified through an exclusionary nationalist discourse which exalts the status quo and presents all criticism as resulting from external threats, especially Islamic radicalism. In essence, the economic infrastructure determines the ideological/juridical superstructure that then acts to strengthen the economic arrangement through the hegemonic production and dissemination of a legitimizing nationalist discourse, in which a secular vision of Islam, understood as national heritage, holds a predominant position.

The nature of the authoritarian political system demands complete ideological compliance from the population. Public conformity to the nationalist discourse is required of every citizen. Yet, at the local and individual level, this drive at complete submission and conformity is resisted through the continuation of practices associated with parallel Islam. The state's goal at establishing total control over religious meaning in society creates an opening for religious groups, who propose a more satisfying and activist message in tune with the class position of the poor, to take root at the local level. The activism of *Akramiya* not only undermined the ideological foundation of the Uzbek state, but more importantly, created an economic space independent of the networks of state patronage. The spread of such development; the emerging intersection between class-based and religious forms of identities, would threaten the economic and ideological

basis of the system of rule in Uzbekistan. The combination of religious and economic activism was tantamount to a full-fledged public denial of the state's project of political legitimacy. The actions of the state to violently suppress the protest need to be understood as the defensive manoeuvring of a dominant class in order to maintain its privileged position. The actions of ordinary protestors, their seemingly joyful defiance when faced with increasing levels of violence is to be understood as a reaction to the psychological effects of domination and the emotions associated with the first participation in an open act of defiance in the context of authoritarian rule.

What are the legacies of Andijan at the popular level? Did the state succeed in imposing its vision of events on the population? Anecdotal evidence points to the fact that official interpretation is resisted, in a process of grass-roots counter-memory. For example, Transition Online published excerpts from poems written by refugees who fled to Kyrgyzstan. One reads: "Karim shot from white and black guns/He humiliated and betrayed his own people/He responded with bullets to the people's demands for their rights/He made kebabs from the dead bodies."[321] But poems about the events in Andijan are not only written by refugees. Songs have been recorded and have been widely distributed, played on the airs of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty. Possession of these songs is now a crime.[322] Opposition leaders, popular singers and poets have been put on trial and accused of "propagating revolt."[323] It is important to note that these songs are produced by the secular cultural elites of the country, pointing towards the fact that the events in Andijan has also help to shape secular dissent. Intellectuals are now willing to publicly put into question official history, and face the consequences.

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[321] Yusuf Rasulov, "A Massacre Becomes Folklore," *Transitions Online*, 26 June 2006, http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=aph&AN=29434510&site=ehost-live (accessed 3 June 2008).
[322] Ibid.
[323] Ibid.

Will these sentiments affect the outcome of the inevitable power struggle that will ensue after the parting of Karimov from the political scene? In the beginning of Gabriel Garcia Marquez's novel *The Fall of the Patriarch*, advisors gather at the bedside of the dead dictator, remaining silent, unable to continue without the patriarch's directing hand. Will this happen once Karimov falls, or will the transfer of power go smoothly, as was the case in Turkmenistan, where all but the name of the leader remains unchanged? In effect, will a new patriarch replace the old one, changing little in the process? Perhaps the state's continuing drive to suppress the emergence at the popular level of counter-memory associated with songs and poems will prove counterproductive, legitimizing their message through the criminalization of the messenger. The memory of Andijan may well shape the repertoire of future claims to power.

Iymonga Jul (THE PATH TO FAITH)
Akram Yo'ldoshev, 1992, Andijan.

1. People all over the world try to improve their lives. A person
struggles with life's burdons to ensure that everything today is
better than it was yesterday. Aspiring to improve one's life is
innate in human nature; this is the purpose of life. However, it is
interesting that everyone strives to do this in his/her own way. If
one looks more attentively, one will see people who assert that
overcoming difficulties and insufficiencies of this life depends on
one's material-financial condition. And therefore it is natural that
all their actions would be directed towards the escalation of material
riches.

Yes, riches really play a role in the improvement of one's life
because, for a high quality lifestyle, a person requires such material
posessions as a house, clothes, household goods etc.

Without these necessary things, a person cannot live a peaceful life.
Just imagine a person without anything: hungry, cold, without a roof
over his head, and without clothes. That is why many people engage in
business, farming, factory work etc. in order to satisfy their
material-physical needs.

In conclusion, it is possible to tell that without necessary material
things, a person cannot live comfortably and happily. But also it is
impossible to think that happiness can be reached only through
material well-being. In addition to material possessions, moral
relations are also essential. Moral relations are the mutual relations
between people. For example: paternity, friendship, love,
relationships with relatives, the neighborhood etc.

Although the basis of material well-being of a person is capital, this
is not the foundation of moral relations. There are many examples of this.
If you are rejected by your parents, if your friends leave you, or if
your life companion cheats on you, in these situations your sufferings
cannot be ameliorated by any sum of money or any other material
acquisitions. Here it is appropriate to remember examples from
history. After all, the most powerful and richest emperors also
suffered, and many of them left this world with unresolved moral
problems.

Upon analyzing this, we can be convinced that conflicts and problems
arising from moral questions are impossible to solve by means of
financial resources, but rather need a solution based on morals.

A person's behavior in different situations depends on his/her moral principles. Let us turn to the example of relations between a son and his parents. If the son has good relations with them, it testifies to his moral cleanliness. On the other hand, bad, unsatisfactory behavior shows the low level of his morals, or their mere absence. Morality also includes the material. A person who has already overcome moral difficulties, will also easily overcome material difficulties. For example: for the most enhanced development of his child, a father will naturally satisfy all of his/her material needs. And consequently, today, in order to improve life, people strike up acquaintances within various spheres of a society and occupy various posts, maximizing their ability to reach authority and prestige.

It is apparent that everything one does is directed at overcoming material and moral difficulties. Certainly every person wishes to carry out the most sincere of moral relations. But this dream is not the reality. If everyone's dreams came true, then there wouldn't be anyone on earth dissatisfied with their life. But the reality is as one tries to improve one's life, it, on the contrary, only worsens day by day.

In such a condition, people recollect the past with delight, and indignantly speak about the present, and simply omit thoughts about the future. Is it possible to think of the future, if today's problems give rise to uncertainty tomorrow? Certainly, all attempts not topped with success to improve life, will drive any person to despair. But it does not mean that a happy future does not exist, it is only the evidence that it is necessary to change all actions related to the purpose of life. That is to say, it is necessary to change the approach to the problem and to make it so that actions yield positive results to improve the life of the people day by day. In order to achieve such results, it is necessary to consider one more kind of personal relationship.

2. If we look at life more carefully, it is possible to garner that there are both laws which are dependent upon and independent of a person. Those laws which are independent of a person cannot be changed or bypassed in any way. Consequently, one should appropriately locate themselves within the context of the laws. For example: a year consists of four seasons, order and existence of which is in anybody's ability to change. Therefore, a person is compelled to live according to the requirements of each season. There are many cases like that in life. After all by nature, one who is helpless requires a lot for preservation to survive. One cannot do anything against such cataclysms of nature such as earthquakes, volcanoes, flooding, death and illnesses. In such helpless situations one, naturally, searches for a powerful force which is capable of helping him/her. This force is called the divine force. And each person thoughtfully or thoughtlessly idolizes someone or something. The relationship between a person and this divine force is called the spiritual relationship.

It also is the third kind of life relationship which one cannot avoid.

Having considered these relationships, it is possible to draw the following conclusions. Material relations are relations with things which, under all circumstances, are subordinated to the person. Moral relations are relations that include material relations and relations between people, that is, potentially identical forces. The spiritual relations include material and moral relations and are relations of a person with a powerful force.

From this it follows that well-being of our material and moral relations depend on our spiritual situation. If one constructs a correct and appropriate spiritual relationship, material and moral relations will be improved automatically. Today, when people suffer from unresolved material and moral problems that surmount every day, it is first of all necessary for them to construct their righteous spiritual relationship. Only such an approach to problems can result in resolution, improving today and guiding us to a better future. In order to correctly construct these spiritual relations, we should correctly define the powerful force and obey it.

But having looked at the surrounding world, itself a cover to our reason, it is possible to be convinced that what we see round us exists in dependence upon each other. And the owner of the divine force should be independent from anything. Yes, one cannot find the owner of the divine force in the surrounding world. But this does not prove that this force does not exist. After all not a single person nor the results of any science today can deny the existence of a reality which is out of one's consciousness. It is necessary to search for the owner of the divine force in this reality, whose essence is inaccessible to our reason, but whose existence is not denied. The human mind is helpless before this problem and it is left only to imagine, to dream and to put forward only unreasonable hypotheses, which in turn cause disagreements and conversations which themselves do not have any basis. As a result, a person finds himself at a dead end, as he is not in a condition to solve these problems. And at this time, when lives of people were consumed by sufferings, inspiration and favor came from heavens, that is to say, there was a communication with the inaccessible earlier sphere of reason. This communication "There is no God, except Allah", has resolved the big problem of mankind. Communication, which is based on existence and unity of Allah, is the big favor given to mankind.

In times when material and moral sufferings have absorbed a person, the Merciful Allah has shown the road which leads to happiness and to correct solutions to the problems of this life. This road is called religion. Religion has existed since the beginning of mankind, and today, Islam is the religion of truth. This perfect religion will resolve all problems which will arise before Doomsday.

"Today I have completed your religion for you and have presented you with the Favour which was satisfied for you with Islam as a religion".
(5-sura) Moida ("Моида" 3 аят.)

These words of Allah are a bright acknowledgement of the aforesaid. All of Allah's instructions to mankind are collected in one book - the Koran - and only this book is a true guide to life. It is said in the Koran:

"This book – without a doubt - is a guide to those who are afraid of God ".
(2) Bakara ("Бакара" 2.)

As you see, religion is neither a fairy tale nor a legend, nor mere rituals held during certain times. Religion is a path ordained by Allah which will result in happiness in this life and the thereafter in resurrection. Whether to take this path or not is up to every person to decide. The one who does not wish to take this path is considered a non-believer and is doomed to spend his life in material and moral sufferings, and in the future to suffer in hell. In the Koran it is said:

"Perhaps those non-believers will wish to become Muslim. (Hey, Mohammed) leave them, let them eat, enjoy, and let hope distract them. They will learn after".
(15) Hidjra ("Хиджра" 2-3.)

The one who wishes to take this path is considered a Muslim and the best gifts in life and the afterlife are prepared for him. In the Koran it is said:

"Those who believed and were pious, - for them there is a joyful message in the nearest life and in the future. There is no change to the words of Allah, it is a great success".
(10) Junus ("Юнус" 63-64.)

3. Naturally, the question arises as to how to reach such happiness? This path begins with belief in the Great and Uniform Allah, and then the strengthening of this belief. One's belief cannot be strengthened only through words. The words that are spoken must be proved true in practice. And this is not an easy business. This is why the words of our ancestors have remained until now: "Easier said than done."

Belief is the basis of Islam and all a person's actions relating to Allah's commands depend on his belief - the honesty and power of his belief. In order to completely follow all instructions and interdictions of Allah, a person should have a strong belief in that which has reached perfection. Merciful Allah has shown us a way to achieve this belief. In the Koran it is said:

"Read! In the name of the Lord, your founder (of all that is real). He has created all from a blood clot. Read! As your Generous Lord has taught a person to write, the pencil has taught a person that which he does not know. "
(96) Alak ("Алак", 1-5.)

"The present life is only a game, entertainment for those scared of God. Life in the future is better. Ponder it. Really, in the creations of the heavens and earth, in the changing of night and day – these are signs for those who posses a mind."
(3) "Oli-Imron" 190.

From the above citation from the Ayatollah calling man to believe, it is clear that to achieve true belief, one must study, think, and utilize the mind. However, not every doctrine will lead man to true belief. Even if a person studies the correct doctrine, but does not observe certain sequences, only his speech will be enriched. As a result, this person falls victim to moral and material whims. Such a regrettable condition is spoken about in the hadith of Kudsi (Хадисе Кудси):

"Hey, son of a person! If you constantly spend time on delights of this life, when will you search for expiations to the boundless desires?! You wish for eternal pleasure with good small deeds. You speak cleverly and piously, and yet you act like a hypocrite".

For this reason, in religion it is important to study what is important today. In Kudsi's hadith it is written:

"Hey, son of a person! Today, I do not demand tomorrow's generation from you, and you in turn do not demand from today the share of tomorrow."

And the one who does not wish to be an idle talker, and wishes to worship Allah with one's soul, should study information on religion in strict sequence, that is to say, to work on current problems of today while these problems are not completely resolved. In the Koran it has been said:

"Those who do not believe also have said, 'Why is the Koran not granted all at once?!' It is so - to strengthen your heart, and we read it one after another."
(25) Furkon ("Фуркон" 2.)

As seen from the previous discussion on belief, it is important to know what is necessary to study in order to strengthen one's belief. The first message granted by Allah's good fortune, truth and perfection of the religion of Islam were the ayatollahs:

"Read! In the name of the Lord your founder (of all that is real). He has created man from a blood clot."

(96) Alak ("Алак" 1-2.)

These ayatollahs teach people to believe that everything was created by the Creator. Man's study of all that is created is particularly stressed. Really, the one who learns the essence and life of a person will certainly find and acknowledge the Lord. According to Ayshi legend – the mother of the believer, let ALLAH be happy with her, and he asked Prophet Mohammed "Let Allah welcome him."

"When will a person learn of his Lord"? This is how the Prophet has answered: "He who learns himself will learn the Lord."
(Al-Movardi) "Adab-ud-dune vad-dynes", 231 p.

Therefore, if anyone, aware of his own weak belief, wishes to strengthen it by following the path of truth specified by Mercy and Merciful Allah, first of all, he should study himself and his place in life, namely the meaning of his soul.

4. Undoubtedly, man in this Universe is above all. However, by differing with any superiority in a small society, he clearly feels this superiority. But at the same time, he does not feel the superiority over a great generality which was created by Allah. The reason for this is ignorance of that which gives this superiority. If the person was aware of it, then by all means he/she would feel superior and would live as the true owner of this Universe. It can be understood through the following example: a person who has reached superiority over a small society by means of riches, or knowledge, clearly feels superiority over them. And, of course, he very much aspires to develop the "tool" of his superiority by living as a tsar in this society with members of this society admiring him.

Therefore, the comprehension of this "tool" of superiority over all created is a necessary condition for high living of a human being.

From the material point of view, the person does not differ from other creations of Allah, i.e. the human flesh obeys the same laws of all material creations. For example: burns, freezes, sinks in water, etc.

From a natural point of view a human does not differ from flora and fauna, that is to say, he obeys the general laws of life. For example: he satisfies thirst and hunger, grows, and dies.

However the ability to reason and to think is inherent only to man. That is how man differs from all that is real, and that itself is the tool of superiority. And even if the person satisfies the requirements as an animal and vegetation, he/she does it reasonably!

A person achieves perfection in this life by using the mind and one's ability to reason. And praise to the Mercy and Merciful Allah for presenting such a life to us.

Concluding, it is possible to say that the mind is a person's tool that carries out his/her
vital needs. A person can use this "tool"
correctly, or incorrectly. If misused it is possible to fall even
below the level of animals. And if used correctly it is possible to
achieve perfection in this life. Therefore, it is very important to
know how to use the mind correctly. It depends on how well we know what the mind is
and its purpose. For example: If you have a car and you do not know
its purpose, its functions, then you will not be able to
correctly use your car or, simply speaking, the car will not execute
its functions. And although you are the owner of the car, you cannot become its master.
However, if you acquire the knowledge about
the purpose and the functions of the car and the skills to manage it,
your car will carry out its functions, and you, in turn, will be its
master. Human mind is similar to this example with the car. However,
the difference here is that failure of the mind to perform is main function leads to misery.
And the primary goal of mind is acknowledgement of Allah.
Only with reason can a person realize the Founder. And although every person has a
mind, those who do not know what it is and what its
functions are cannot make use of it and be reasonable. Such a person
is similar to a blind man, living in the realm of whims, unable to acknowledge the
Creator.

One who learns the charm of the human mind becomes its true owner. His mind will
carry out its duty, namely it will acknowledge the Founder. This, in turn, will lead to
perfection of one's belief. And the life of such a person will consist of instructions and
interdictions of the Allah, which will become the expected way of life.In the Koran it has
been said:

"(Hey, Mohammed.) Is the one who knows what the Lord grants to you really similar to
the one who is blind? After all, only those possessing reason listen attentively, they truly
carry out the precepts of Allah and do not break the promise."
(13) Ra'd ("Раъд" 19-20.)

Summing up, it is possible to say that he who wishes to devote his
life to Islam, first of all, should become the master of his mind since
only a reasonable person can recognize the Founder in any vital
situation. In the Koran it has been said:

"Really, in the creations of heavens and the earth, in change of night
and day, in the ship which floats on the sea carrying useful posessions for people through
the water , ALLAH has brought from the sky and has
revived with it the earth after her death and has disseminated to it
the animals, the change of winds, and the clouds subordinated
between the sky and the earth - these are signs to people reasonable".
(2) Bakara ("Бакара" 164.)

5. In order to correctly use the mind, first of all, it is necessary
to study of what it in general it consists. It is generally accepted to call the work of the
mind thinking. Thinking is a consequence of elements

working together as a group. Therefore, correct use of the mind begins with defining of its composite elements.

Undoubtedly, presence of a brain and sensory organs is necessary for thinking to occur. The brain is the control organ which puts together arriving information to form a conclusion. It is obvious that the brain is one of the elements necessary for thinking.

Sensory organs supply the brain with information. A person has five senses: sight, hearing, sense of smell, touch and taste. It is by means of these senses that information arrives in the brain. Information received by the brain is thus called a sensation.

The sensation of material things is an obvious reality as even a child can feel matter. Engaging of one of the sensory organs is sufficient for sensation of material things to be felt.

However in order to understand moral and spiritual relations, one must possess sufficient knowledge about them. Otherwise, a person cannot experience these relationships. For example, if you are watching a movie about true friendship with great interest, and in the mean time your child is sitting next to you and is not paying attention to the film, but rather carelessly playing with his toys, his disinterest is a consequence of the fact that your child does not possess sufficient knowledge about what friendship as a moral relationship is. A broader knowledge is necessary in order to experience true spiritual mutual relationships. For example, when someone, having realized their insufficiencies and having felt the inadequacy of their beliefs, prays to Allah asking for the perfection and strengthening of their beliefs, others do not pay attention to the man's insufficiencies and rather consideres his beliefs in Allah to be perfect. This example demonstrates that without sufficient understanding and ability to see what one lacks, another person does not feel the complete force of true belief.

In conclusion, it is possible to say that the sensation of material things is a natural sensation, and force of these sensations depends on knowledge of the nature of these things. The sensation of moral and spiritual mutual relations is an intellectual sensation which is based on acquired concepts, and if there is a lack of understanding, then thinking processes will not take place. It then follows that sensory organs, as well as the brain, are necessary in the thinking process.

6. Having learned that sensory organs deliver information to the brain, it is important to know from where this information comes. Without a source of information, no information will be delivered to the brain, and consequently no thinking will take place.

If one pays close attention to a person's life, it is possible to see clearly that each person aspires to something. Aspiration is inherent to all mankind. After all, each person aspires something, because aspiration is inseparably linked with the essence of a person. In other words, it is the nature of the human mind, it is that internal push which compels a person

to aspire to something. Human flesh by virtue of its very creation demands various things.

Aspiration to or propensity for something is inseparably linked with the body's needs. The natural needs of a person are first of all to deliver information to the brain according to what the brain feels is necessary for the person. And although it seems to us that a person may have many requirements, there are only four cornerstones to them.

The first need is the one that forces a person to have relations with material things and thus is called a material need. A person's material needs make him want to construct a house, buy a car, dress nicely, etc.

The second need forces a person to seek fulfillment in relationships with others and hence is called a moral need.
Because of the existence of moral needs, a person yearns for fatherly, friendly and other types of relationships. The sexual inclination of man to woman and women to man is also one of the kinds of moral needs that a person has.

The third need forces a person to seek a relationship with the Founder and thus is called a spiritual need. Therefore given that man has spiritual needs, he wishes to worship eulogies and submit himself to the Founder.

The fourth need represents the natural-physical needs of an organism. Because of these needs, a person sleeps, eats, withstands strong cold or heat etc.

Presence of these four requirements constantly forces a person towards aspiration and action. Therefore, aspirations are an integral part and feature of human life.

Regarding triggering actions, the needs of nature sharply differ from the other three. In order for the natural need to cause actions, it is enough for the brain to merely feel this need. For example, a person starting to feel thirsty is signal enough to search for water. But, for material, moral and spiritual needs, one must first know about the particular need. For example, in order for a person to aspire to purchase a car, the brain should possess information about a car in addition to feeling the basic material need for it. If the person does not know what a car is and has never seen one, then there is no desire or will to buy the car, even though there is a material need.

Summing up, it is possible to say that man lives to satisfy his needs. Man's actions in pursuit of satisfaction of his needs is called a way of life. If a person is without needs, then he will have nothing to think about. Therefore, the needs of a person are also necessary for the thinking process, as are the brain and sensory organs.

7. The Mercy and Merciful Allah, having created these needs for man, has made this Universe a place for satisfaction of these needs. In the Koran it is said:

"(Allah) Who has made the earth and the sky a dwelling for you and has
produced water from the sky and has made fruit for your livelihood.
Knowing this, do not equate others with Allah".
(2) Bakara ("Бакара" 22.)

As seen from this quotation of the Ayatollah, this world is a dwelling for man
where he can satisfy all his needs. But if he does not possess
reason, then satisfaction of material and moral necessities will seem
beautiful to him. In the Koran has been said:

"The love of passions is shown seductively to people: to women and
children, and loaded with gold and silver chests, horses, cattle and
crops. Though, (it is all) temporary in life and (only) Allah has a
good refuge - paradise"
(3) "Oli-Imron" 14.

Here it is necessary to turn our attention to an important question. Many
people whose main basic actions are driven to satisfy moral and
material needs instead of suffering, calm themselves with the words "Allah too speaks:
gifts are in sufferings." Nobody challenges that
there are gifts in sufferings, but here it is necessary to pay
attention to the result of these sufferings. In the Koran it is said:

"Those who sow crops for the future we will increase their
crop, and those who wish crops for the present - we will give it
to them, but there is no destiny in the latter".
(42) Shuyro ("Шуъро" 20.)

And so each person, first of all, should be interested in the
consequences of his actions. As a result, each person who wishes to
correctly satisfy his/her needs should have appropriate understandings about the
world in order to distinguish his/her spiritual needs from
moral and material needs.

The reality surrounding us in the human sense can be divided into different types:

1st type: This is openly felt reality, that is, material things and subjects.
For example: the earth, the sky, the car, gold, silver etc.

2nd type: This is the reality felt by means of influence. A person cannot
feel the reality but feels the signs proving its presence - for
example, the needs of a person. You love your son, but you cannot
feel the moral need forcing you to love him. You can only feel the
influence which it has on you.

3rd type: This is the unknown reality. We call the unknown reality the reality,
essence, and influence of that which is not felt by man, but the
existence of which is described in authentic sources. For example,
paradise, angels, hell, whose existence is described in Koran. Later
we will discuss these three kinds of a reality which surround us in

detail.

Let's come back to the basic theme. If a person thinks, he
necessarily thinks about one of these three kinds of realities and if
there is no reality, then there won't be an object to think about, and hence, there will be
no thinking. Therefore, reality, just like the
brain, sensory organs and the needs of man, are necessary for thought
processes.

8. Man feels what is necessary for him from his surrounding reality. But merely feeling
this necessity does not satisfy it. This can be understood from the following examples.

If you fell ill and were advised to buy effective medicine, you would
find the medicine. However, without instructions or a
doctor's consultation, you cannot correctly use this medicine.

Your material need has amplified, and as such you have bought furniture. To
enjoy the beauty of this furniture, you need to assemble it using the instructions
manual or the directions of an expert.

Your material need has grown, and you wish your child to be
well-rounded. But without instructions on how to educate your child, your wish will not
come true.

Your spiritual needs have increased, and you wish to live each instant
according to the commands of Allah, but without the instruction of the Koran and Hadith,
your desires will remain a dream.

Simply speaking, to satisfy your needs correctly one should, in addition to an experienced
reality, have correct information on his
surrounding reality. If there is no truthful information on the
surrounding reality, then there will be no thinking.

Therefore, in addition to the brain and sensory organs, the information corresponding to
reality is also needed.
Needs and reality are necessary elements for formation of thoughts.

And so, we have learned what is necessary in order to think - the five components of
constitute the mind. Now, the major problem is to
learn how reason operates. The Importance of the problem lies in the fact that if a person
correctly reasons, then he will correctly satisfy his
needs. With each correct achieved satisfaction, the needs of the person will
amplify, and the person will need something additional and more important. And the
most important need in life is the satisfaction of one's spiritual needs as
allowed by Allah, the founder of man and all that is real.

Such an ordered development of a person's needs can be seen in the
example of the growth of a child. A child is born only with natural needs. As the child
grows, material needs also arise. It becomes
visible how he starts to demand various toys. As development progresses, the

child starts to demand that somebody should play with him/her, starts to avoid strangers, and reaches to his/her relatives.

These are signs that a child has started to have moral needs. Having further matured, the child starts having spiritual needs. This can be defined by conversations with the child in which he/she argues who is the strongest, most clever and most powerful.

The development of a child's spiritual needs begins with the achievement of a certain level of maturity. According to Islamic manuals, girls are considered to reach maturity at the age of nine if signs of virginity are visible. The age of maturity for boys is twelve if his manly signs are visible. If these signs are not present, boys and girls reach maturity by the age of fifteen. In such a beautiful world order, man, by developing needs and pursuing their appropriate satisfaction, obeys only the united Allah and becomes owner of this Universe. But many doubt this. These doubts do not surprise Muslims because even angels doubted it.
In the Koran has been said:

"Remember (Hey Mohammed) as your Lord has told the angels:" I will establish deputies on Earth ." They have said:"Will you establish on Earth the one who will act unfairly and shed blood? Will we praise You and consider You sacred? "He said:" Truthfully, I know what you do not know ".
(2) Bakara ("Бакара" 30.)

Apparently a person who has personified such beautiful laws is consciously created. As with any other things on Earth that have a mission, so too does man have the responsibility to be the obedient slave to Allah and to his deputies. And actions in contradiction to this primary goal are consequences of the incorrect satisfaction of needs. In Khadis Kudsi it is said:

"Hey, my creations, know that I have not created you in vain, I did not create you without a purpose and I am not ignorant of your actions".

In short, it is possible to say that a person's eminence in life is a great deal connected to one's correct satisfaction of needs. And the correct satisfaction of needs depends on the right management of reason.

9. In order to know how to operate the mind correctly, one must know what elements of the mind can be changed. Certainly, there is no sense in talking about affairs that a person cannot change.

Having closely analyzed the situation, we understand that one cannot change the brain or the way it works. One does not have capabilities to increase the number of sensory organs or to change their functions. Also one cannot destroy their needs or force them to demand something else. It is also impossible for a man to change this Universe, which itself is in movement under invariable laws. It means that all of this is out of human

control.

And what information on reality should one listen to? This question is up to
each person's will to solve on their own. To enrich one's knowledge
with facts that prove that "the Founder of this Universe exists" or to
study data about "the fact that matter exists on its own" is a matter of will.
Acceptance of one of these tenets or pieces of information which is chosen by a person of
his own free will, is a matter of human reason. And if the
person receives the correct information about reality, his/her mind
will think about the problem and solve it, along with other problems that face him/her.
But if incorrect information is garnered, then the mind will not carry out its proper
function. As a result of these unresolved problems, infinite
sufferings will befall the person. Therefore, it is necessary for a
person to study only authoritative information on reality.

If argued superficially it would seem to a person that his/her
purpose in life is very simple, and that his/her purpose is only to receive
correct information. And his/her other actions will be based on the consequent
created concepts. However, there is so much information available in life about things
which we need, that verification of the correctness of this information
has become an important basic problem of today. The importance lies in
the fact that a person receiving incorrect or inappropriate information can
get into an extremely difficult situation and can be greatly deceived, as he/she
asserts the words "I am right" without considering the truth. And
if such "self-deception" occurs in questions on belief or in questions
connected to it, it becomes very dangerous, and may Allah save us from the
consequences that might arise. In the Koran it has been said:

"And among the people, some say, 'we believe in Allah and in the last
day.' But they do not believe. They try to deceive Allah and those
who believe, and deceive only themselves and do not even know it."
(2) Bakara ("Бакара" 8-9.)

Therefore, one who wishes to avoid incorrect ways of thinking should understand the
process of thinking and the development of thought. As thinking is a process of
communication of received information in the brain, one must remember that not just any
communication of information creates thoughts/concepts or is of use to a person. In the
brain there can be communications whose results will misdirect a person away from the
true path towards the
path of ignorance.

10. Communication of information in the brain is called a way of thinking; these
thoughts/concepts can direct a person to the correct path. It is known, that the brain
senses three different types of information, which are differently communicated.

The first communication is the communication of two pieces of
information, sensed by means of needs and reality. We already know
that the brain senses by means of that which is necessary to the person and finds reality in
these needs. As a result of communication of
these two pieces of information a person distinguishes that

which he needs. However, he does not think about the essense of the distinguished entity but rather the distinction of the thing itself which he needs. As a result of this communication, a sensual distinction rather than a concept is formed. However, a person cannot sufficiently satisfy his needs with sensual distinctions. For example: If you are walking in an unfamiliar city and feel hungry, among various buildings and constructions you might precisely distinguish a cantina where it is possible to stop for a bite to eat. But without knowing key rules of restaurant dining, you cannot correctly take advantage of this cantina.

It therefore seems that as a result of sensory distinctions, it is possible to distinguish only between objects which can satisfy needs in the surrounding reality. And if the person thus wishes to satisfy needs in this way, irresponsible actions are formed. Sensory distinctions become obvious in cases when a person needs to choose between two things he/she does not understand. Not knowing the truth about these things the person can only guess at what is correct. But why it is correct he himself does not know. Therefore actions in situations like that are automatic and unthoughtful, but natural actions. As a consequence of thinking, these such actions will be diminished and reasonable, conscious actions take their place. For example: Not yet understanding the truth behind religion, but, having felt its fidelity, some people, indulging in their feelings, start to call everyone to religion in their own way. These are natural, ordinary cases which we often meet in life.

That is why, if you still have not clearly understood the correctness of decisions being made, you should take into account that although your actions seem correct to you, they might actually be incorrect. After all, a person by his very nature can hate that which is actually good for him and can grow fond of that which is bad. In the Koran it has been said:

"... And it may be, you hate something, but for you it is sacred, and it may be you love something and but it is bad for you, but really, Allah knows, and you do not know".
(2) Bakara ("Бакара" 216.)

We can conclude that sensory distinction is a natural process occurring to everyone, and that the action resulting from this process is an irresponsible one. In affairs whose results have no value, actions undertaken only through sensory distinctions are not too dangerous. Especially today, when many say to themselves, " Our way is the way of Allah and his Prophet," it is necessary to study impartially and without bias each path, and then choose among them a correct, true way. Because it is the unique path to becoming one of Allah's true servants that can lead us to the true path. But if someone draws an incorrect conclusion and does not dare to question his understanding or argue with what he knows, he can end up following the nasty devil instead of obeying the merciful Allah. In the Koran it is said:

"And those who escaped the idols, refusing to bow down to them, have addressed Allah and, for them there is a joyful message. (Hey, Mohammed). Please, my slaves, who listen to one word and follow the best of them! these are the ones who were led by Allah, and they are owners of their minds."

(39) Zumar ("Зумар" 17-18.)

Finishing our conversation about sensory distinctions, we wish to
particularly emphasize that it is not necessary to be afflict people who are unable to find
truth and who unknowingly commit mistakes, but it is necessary only to try to bring the
true data to them. After all, today's environment requires correct and true data as our
surroundings are rich with false data and information.

The appendix: Animals too satisfy their vital needs with actions that
are formed on the basis of sensory distinction.

11. The second connection is the connection of information received in the brain that has
been sensed based on needs from an unperceived reality. In order for the mind to carry
out its functions within this second type of connection, a person, who first communicates
information based on reality, must sense this reality. To receive data and information on
reality is up to the individual, but one cannot feel just any needed reality.

For example: a person can receive information about any sensed
reality, occurring in moral or spiritual realms. However, not
having any concept of these realities, a person cannot actually feel them, although he will
receive information both from and about them. As demonstrated, the second type of
communication corresponding to personal relations is communication of information
which does not form correct behavior, people, or thoughts. To puzzle over the
information where there is no thought is a business with dangerous consequences.

When there is a question about belief, it is extremely harmful to receive or give
information which is above human reason. As wise
Ali said (may Allah be happy with him):

"Tell the people only that that they are able to understand. After all
you do not wish to deny Allah and his Prophet".

And really such communication, which transforms the truth into lies,
is logical communication. As a result of this communication a logical
conclusion is formed about the sensed reality. The logical conclusion
obviously contradicts reality. After all, how can a person make a
correct decision about an unclear, unfelt reality?

And so, if anyone makes a decision, his decision will be wrong, and he
himself will appear as a rejector of truths. But as they say "the
truth cannot be broken." The time will come when inappropriate information
will find its place, and when man will feel this very reality, realizing the truth, and will
repent because of his actions.

The harm in logic can be clearly seen in faithless people. Let us
remember the history of Islam, as adherents of polytheism who lived in
Mecca (where Prophet Mohammed himself lived), not feeling the
veracity of their beliefs in arguing in their own logical way, have
considered the Koran to be a lie. They could not understand the truth of
Koran. In the Koran it is said:

"And your people have considered it [the Koran] a lie, while it
is the truth. Say, "I am not a guarantor for you. Each message has an established place,
and you learn."
(6) Annom "Анъом" 66-67.

It is apparent that logic causes obvious harm not only non-believers, but also to
Muslims since to believe in the Koran does not mean to feel all of its truth. In order to
feel all of the truth of the Koran, one must believe in perfection. In the Koran it is
written:

"About to people, from your Lord and healing because, that (the
admonition has come to you) souls, both a direct way and favour
believer" to you.
(10) Junus "Юнус" 57.

Also in order to sit down and improve one's believe, it is necessary to use the scripture.
The Koran was granted over the course
of twenty three years. This is proof of that improving and carrying out all of the
instructions and interdictions of the Koran for one day or one year is impossible. And
the times are such that we should be careful of logical conclusions and the harm that they
can bring.

The question remains: how should Muslims form logic? There is a true,
uniform system of actions, and only by means of this system is it
possible to perfect one's belief and to correctly practice Islam.
This system is based on indications of Allah's Prophet Mohammed
Rasulullah Sallalahu Alaihi Wasallam. Who dares to act contrary
to this system, as in this way, facing the danger of logic is inevitable. Because puzzling
over inappropriate information is not actually meant for
today; there is a process of logical reasoning. Eventually, a believer can limit the
possibilities within religion.

Mohammed Rasulullah Sallalahu Alaihi Wasallam has told to the person by
name of Muaz (Myaз) (yes, Allah will be happy with it) who at one time lived with him:

"He who does not equate anyone with Allah will be rewarded with paradise."

Muaz asked: "It is up to me to spread this joyful message to the people?"

"It is not the time, " the Prophet answered, "I am afraid that they will strongly hope and
incorrectly interpret that this means that non-equation of Allah to others is sufficient to
enter paradise."

As a result of a logical reasoning of future affairs, a person could
thoughtlessly say, "There would be my will, and I necessarily will make
it ..." And such business is filled with disdain. In the Koran it is said:

"About you who has believed: Why do you speak of not hating Allah, for that speech of
not doing" is great.(61) Saf "Саф". 2-3.

"Unless you did not hear what I have said: Keep your hands to yourself, stand idle, pray and give verification," - and when these words were offered to them, were they not part of the fears, the same fear of Allah, the big fear? They also have told us: "My God is ours!" Why have you ordered
us to battle? Have you posted us to close the terms?" In response, "Using one's ordinary life - short and lasting - for this purpose is better for those who are afraid, so you will not be offended on the day of reckoning. ."
(4) Niso "Нисо" 77.

There are such extremely dangerous cases occurring because of logical conclusions, such that believers always need to be cautious. In order to remember such causes, we suggest you to read Sura Khudjrot. (суру "Хужурот".) (49-sura)

Reasoning over inappropriate information will bring only torture to all logicians. The biggest harm is caused when the believer uses Islamic statutes to form his arguements. This is especially relevent today as representatives of one religion were divided into different groups. One group keeps track of the mosque's laws, the second strongly insists on laws of the state,
the third group pushes forward laws of science, and some are limited only to prayer lessons. Yes, each group asserts that it is on the true path.
Certainly, they do not bear responsibility for any mistakes. After all, a friend is a friend, but truth is uniform.

After all, didn't Allah order believers to be brothers?! And if this is so let's think carefully about what is actually basic and primary: belief or execution of decisions? Undoubtedly, belief is primary. If each action occurs on the basis of a person's beliefs, then why should we search amongst the same actions which we are powerless to make today?

After all, fulfillment of actions is artificial. Even those which contradict their purposes, will they appear as temporarily perfect actions? Actions should be natural, formed from a person's beliefs. Therefore, first of all, it is necessary to reach a state of perfection of beliefs, and with the achievement of this perfection, actions which seemed difficult to us will become easy and simple. After all, each new action occurs with the blessing of Allah, which in turn is based on our belief. In the Koran it is written:

"Really, those who believe and who created goodwill - the Lord will lead them to the path to belief; the rivers in the gardens of fortune will begin to flow under them.
(10) Junus ("Юнус" 9.)

As we have seen, the question which both depends on and concerns us is one of belief. All other affairs will be carried out in their own time.

And so dear Muslim brothers, let's not argue and be separated, and let's unite. Then the Islam that will reach perfection will be restored. There is one difference between our time and the time when Prophet Mohammed lived. In those days Ayatollahs of the Koran were commenting on each real event as it happened. And today we have the ability to completely familiarize ourselves with the Koran. And if we use this opportunity incorrectly, because of logic/reasoning, we limit ourselves to certain notions about Islam. Therefore dear brothers Muslim, (allocation C.3.) isn't it better for us to think about

today's problems and intentions which we wish to enact, and emplore Allah so that he will take away our rage that we feel towards one another? And today's challenge is the disposal of harm from logical reasoning. Let Allah strengthen the belief of all Muslims, amen!

Now let us return to the subject at hand. As we have seen, logic is obviously harmful not only to non-believers, but also to Muslims. However, nothing is created by Allah in vain. The ability of a person to logically argue has its own, unique role. If logical reasoning correctly solves a problem, then it becomes useful in a person's actions as he goes along the true path. But the question remains: for what is logical reasoning useful? In the Koran it has been spoken:

"Has the story about the covering reached you? That day, humiliated people (non-believers, humiliation from weight of chains and shackles), suffering, burning in the fire's flames, are forced to drink a boiling liquid. They don't have food except for dari (dari - it is a poisonous, smelly and prickly plant), it doesn't fatten and does not relieve hunger. The faces [of those who believe] in that kind day are happy, aspirating to the noble garden. In it [this garden] you will not hear gossip. There is a flowing spring, there are seats constructed, bowls have been placed about, and pillows and carpets are spread out. (88) Goshiya ("Гошия" 1-16.)

The above is the ayatollah's description of infernal tortures which non-believers will witness and about paradise's pleasures which will be the rewarded to believers. There are many other accounts from ayatollahs about the unknown reality, in which descriptions of good messages for Muslims and caution to non-believers are included. A person cannot feel the unknown reality. And because of this, when logically arguing about infernal tortures, he will ask Allah to protect him from these tortures and in quest of paradise's pleasures, he will ask Allah to pardon him. Apparently, the usefulness of logical reasoning is to reason about the unknown reality which, in turn, can bring good to a person.

Finishing our conversation about logic, we wish to say that as a result of logical reasoning, a person forms opinions on future affairs. And if someone logically argues about the reality that he feels within his lifetime, then each of his actions becomes a basis for his following actions. And if one argues about the unknown reality, then each of his actions becomes the basis of future opportunities to reach Allah's mercy. In the Koran it said:

"One who is afraid of God and who gives away his dignity will be removed from it [hell]. There is no mercy or reward for anyone whose actions do not aspire to Lord the Great. And he will soon be happy."
(92) "Val-ail " [I swear to God] 17-21.

12. We have familiarized ourselves with two versions of communication which occur in the brain. First, communication, naturally occurs to all people. Therefore, via the senses, it is possible to distingtinguish an event happening in a person's life through natural processes. These natural processes occur differently to differently people living within one environment. Because, each person requires different things at different times, each person has different requirements. For example: people with such different requirements, upon seeing the same film, will have especially concentrated their attention on different

things during the viewing. A person whose material requirements are strong will pay attention to the expensive cars, high, beautiful palaces etc in the film. A person whose moral requirements remain strong may see episodes of love and friendship in the film. And a person with strong [moral] requirements will especially turn their attention to those parts of the film which are connected to religion.

This existing difference of needs is connected to one's acquired conception of life. In other words, as a person's perception of life changes, so too will his needs. It's important to note here that people have conceptions about things too. These views can strengthen one's need or, on the contrary, weaken them, but they cannot change one's needs.

The second type of communication is an unnatural form of communication, because nobody forces the person to acquire data and information of the as of yet unfelt reality. That is why logical reasoning is harmful - consequences occur due to information received about the unfelt reality. Actually, a person should gather information about reality as a result of natural processes.

And if the person receives enough truthful information about reality from natural processes, he will experience a third type of communication. The process of participation of all elements composing the mind is called the mind's work. As a result of this work a conception is formed, and by correctly satisfying the person's needs, it achieves that which he wished.

As seen, a person can carry out the second and third forms of communication upon his own free will. So if a consequence of harmful logic reasoning is evil, then the person reaches goodness by the mind's work. Therefore, he will live happily and quietly only when will he thinks and does not argue logically. In the Koran it is said:

"That which you have comprehended from good is from Allah and that which you have understood that is bad is from yourself..."

Rasulullah Sallalahu Alaihi Wasallam has told the believers:

"I left two things for you. And if you hold on tightly to them then you will never go astray, one - the Book of Allah (i.e. The Koran) the other is the Sunni of the Prophet (i.e. the recorded ways and interdictions of the Koran.)" (Imam Malik).

From ayatollahs and the Hadith it is possible to understand that a person who does not wish to go astray from the path of truth to the path of ignorance should always keep to the Book of Allah and Sunnis of the Prophet. To strongly adhere to the Koran and the Hadith means to mull over the ayatollahs and Hadith, where the reality that a person garners via natural processes is expressed.

Secondly, the received information should be from Koran and Sunna of the Envoy. If we think in such a way, the process will be called a way of thinking. And when a person seizes a sufficient number of conceptionss then he will feel the reality at a high spiritual level.

As a result of thinking, a person's conceptions are formed.

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