TAJIKISTAN ON THE MOVE

STATEBUILDING AND SOCIETAL TRANSFORMATIONS

EDITED BY MARLENE LARUELLE

Tajikistan on the Move

CONTEMPORARY CENTRAL ASIA: SOCIETIES, POLITICS, AND CULTURES

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Acronyms

ACM–Authoritarian Conflict Management
AIDS–acquired immunodeficiency syndrome
AKDN–Aga Khan Development Network
ARV–antiretroviral therapy
CIS–Commonwealth of Independent States
CNR–Commission on National Reconciliation
CPC–Country of Particular Concern
CSTO–Collective Security Treaty Organisation
DFID–Department for International Development
DPT–Democratic Party of Tajikistan
EAEC–Eurasian Economic Community
EEU–Eurasian Economic Union
FMS–Federal Migration Service
FPE–foreign policy executive
FPI–foreign policy intellectual
G24–Group 24
GBAO–Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region
GDP–gross domestic product
GKNB–State Committee of National Security
GNP–gross national product
HDI–Human Development Implementation
HDIM–Human Development Implementation Meeting
HIV–human immunodeficiency virus
IDU–injection drug use
IMF–International Monetary Fund
IMU–Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan
IRPT–Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan

ISIS–Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
LGBT–lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender
MDG–Millennium Development Goal
MFP–multi-vector foreign policy
MPI–Multidimensional Poverty Indicator
MVD–Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation
NATO–North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO– non-governmental organizations
OECD–Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OMON–special police units of Federal Police within the National Guard of
  Russia
OSCE–Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PFT–Popular Front for Tajikistan
PTSD–posttraumatic stress disorder
QCA–Qualitative Comparative Analysis
SDG–Sustainable Development Goals
TALCO–Tajik Aluminum Company
TB–tuberculosis
TNU–Tajik National University
UN–United Nations
UNAIDS–United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNDP–United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR–United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNODCP–United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNTOP–United Nations Tajikistan Observation Mission
US–United States–also Washington
USAID–U.S. Agency for International Development
USSR–Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
UTO–United Tajik Opposition
WUA– Water User Association

Political map of Tajikistan (2001).
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Introduction

Marlene Laruelle

The southernmost and poorest state of the Eurasian space, Tajikistan collapsed immediately upon the fall of the Soviet Union and plunged into a bloody five-year civil war (1992–1997) that left more than 50,000 people dead and more than half a million displaced. After the 1997 Peace Agreements, Tajikistan stood out for being the only post-Soviet country to recognize an Islamic party, the Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan (IRPT), a key actor in the civil war but also in post-war reconstruction and democratization. The Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan was unique to the region in that it was a democratic Islamic party that accepted the secular nature of the state and parliamentary representation. However, this recognition was short-lived: in 2015, the authorities accelerated the authoritarian move that had been set in motion several years earlier and decided to ban the Islamic Party on the—false—pretext of its links with the Islamic State in Syria and Iraq. The IRPT ban raised little domestic backlash from Tajik society, confirming very low levels of social mobilization in favor of political actors.

Tajikistan's political stability has always been precarious. In the restive Rasht Valley and the autonomous region of Gorno-Badashkhan, situated in the Pamirs, tensions have regularly flared between local elites and Dushanbe. Labeled "Islamist" insurgencies by the authorities so as to receive international support and strengthen the government's domestic legitimacy, these insurgencies have involved several conflicts of interest within the shadow economy (mostly around the trafficking of drugs and cigarettes), as well as the rebalancing of influence between former warlords and central Dushanbe. As such, scholars continue to debate whether these events suggest state weakness or, on the contrary, success in recentralizing the polity around Rahmon, who has removed presidential term limits and looks set to establish a multigenerational dynasty by promoting his son Rustam Emomali as his successor.

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Tajikistan's linguistic and cultural proximity to Iran notwithstanding, the balance of external powers over the country remains fairly typical of Central Asia, with Russia as the major security provider—the Dushanbe military base is one of Russia's main bases abroad—and primary migration destination, while China is its principal investor—two-thirds of Tajikistan's public debt is now owned by Beijing. Thanks to its 1,400-kilometer (870-mile) border with Afghanistan, Tajikistan has been the subject of the international community's scrutiny and the recipient of support from many international programs—European, American, and Russian—designed to help the Tajik state reinforce its border, train its border guards and army, and fight against drug trafficking from Afghanistan. Nevertheless, Tajikistan, like many Central American states, can be described as a narco-state, in the sense that a large part of its GDP is built on drug trafficking and the main criminal groups in charge of drug transportation are protected by the central authorities, including by members of the presidential family itself. In a unique regional context where Russia, China, Iran, and the United States meet, the inability of the international community to turn the Dushanbe regime against drug trafficking demonstrates the limits of foreign interference and the high resilience of local regimes.

Another specificity of Tajikistan is its massive labor migration flows toward Russia. The civil war displaced hundreds of thousands of people and triggered new forms of population mobility that rapidly transitioned from flows of refugees to flows of migrants looking for jobs and a better life. In the early 2000s, Tajik migrants became the first to arrive on the Russian job market; within a few years, they were followed by Kyrgyz and Uzbeks. Today, out of a population of 8 million, about one million work abroad seasonally—one of the highest rates of departure in the world. Migration trends have impacted Tajikistan's economy and rent mechanisms: half of the country's GDP comes from migrant remittances, a higher share than anywhere else in the world. Yet the Tajik diaspora remains politically quite disorganized; no genuine and legitimate "opposition in exile" has emerged thus far. However, it is in the societal and cultural realms that migration has had the most transformative effect. In some regions of the country, the majority of working-age men stay abroad for several months a year, or for several years in a row, which dramatically impacts family structure, gender relations, youth education and schooling, and the relationship between the older and younger generations. Migrants' cultural and societal identities are on the move, with a growing role given to Islam as a normative tool for regulating the cultural shock of migration.

Tajikistan's evolution is therefore unique in the Central Asian region and has attracted the attention of the scholarly community. From the end of the

civil war to around 2013, the country opened up to international scholars and to partnerships between Western and local institutions. This enabled several research projects, making Tajik society one of the most studied in Central Asia, especially with regard to gender, the evolving place of Islam, and the transformation of agricultural regions into launch pads for labor migration. This openness came under threat from early 2010 and dramatically deteriorated in 2013–2014. Several local scholars were threatened; a Tajikistan-born PhD student at the University of Toronto was arrested for "spying" for Western countries and detained for several months. Since then, as in Karimov's Uzbekistan, many scholars have had to discontinue their research on the ground. Some have re-oriented their work toward studying Tajiks in migration, instead of at home, as a way to compensate for the closure of the country. The most innovative research on the country now comes in the field of migration study or in terms of developments among the Tajik diaspora.

Several books have been devoted to Tajikistan. In the field of political science, both John Heathershaw's classic work about the end of civil war in Tajikistan, *Post-Conflict Tajikistan: The Politics of Peace-Building and the Emergence of Legitimate Order* (London: Routledge, 2009), and his edited volume, along with Edmund Herzig, *The Transformation of Tajikistan* (London: Routledge, 2012), address the sources of Tajikistan's statehood. Tim Epkenhans's *The Origins of the Civil War in Tajikistan: Nationalism, Islamism, and Violent Conflict in Post-Soviet Space* (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2016) offers a unique in-depth study of this turning point in Tajikistan's history. Lawrence Markowitz compared elites in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan in *State Erosion: Unlootable Resources and Unruly Elites in Central Asia* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2013) and Jesse Driscoll the Tajik and Georgian elites in *Warlords & Coalition Politics in Post-Soviet States* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

In the field of anthropology, Sophie Roche's *Domesticating Youth: The Dynamics of Youth Bulge in Tajikistan* (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2014) explores the crucial issue of the country's youth and its future. Several scholars, including Michele Commercio, Kathleen Collins, Olivier Ferrando, Sophie Hohmann, and Alisher Latypov, have published articles devoted to transformations of the social fabric, as well as to issues concerning youth, women, and health. Another body of literature is devoted to agricultural transformations, in particular the failure of the privatization process to empower farmers, alleviate rural poverty, or counter the dominance of cotton production (Brent Hierman and Hafiz Boboyorov). An associated body of literature is devoted to labor migration to Russia and the corresponding deep social, cultural, and religious changes (Sophie Roche, Manja Stefan-Emmrich, and Saodat Olimova, among others).

The first section of this volume investigates the critical question of the nature of the regime, its stability, legitimacy mechanisms, and patterns of centralization. Declared "founder of peace" and "leader of the nation," Rahmon has succeeded in making himself and his family the focal point of political power. In the first chapter, Jesse Driscoll advances the notion of *Hobbesian Neopatrimonialism* to illuminate the roots of the broad-based social legitimacy Rahmon enjoys. Warlords, both rebel militia and pro-regime paramilitary commanders, progressively built a "warlord state" based on patronal mechanisms (the only pathway to economic security) that relied on kinship and regional rural identities. In the second chapter, John Heathershaw and Parviz Mullojonov question the dire predictions that Tajikistan will collapse into new chaos. They demonstrate that, on the contrary, the country's "authoritarian conflict management" has succeeded quite well in dealing with regional outbreaks of violence. Management of tensions in the Rasht Valley, as well as in the Gorno-Badakhshan autonomous region, showed complex dynamics of bargaining, coercion, escalation, or accommodation by central authorities and regional insurgent leaders—all of whom were already *within* the state. Even if a growing trend toward hegemonic authoritarian practices and discourses was challenged by the 2012 Khorugh riots, Tajikistan remains an example of inclusive authoritarian power-sharing achieving some forms of regime durability.

The Tajik regime cannot be understood without being linked to its regional environment. In Chapter 3, Edward Lemon builds upon the notion of extraterritorial authoritarian security governance to discuss how Tajikistan manages opposition not only at home but also abroad, developing transborder security practices to protect itself. Since its main neighbors and migration destination countries share the same authoritarian security culture, Tajikistan has been able to target several categories of opponents living abroad, mostly in Russia and Turkey. It has, for instance, put 1,600 of its citizens on the Interpol wanted list. Its security organs have developed new transborder security practices, ranging from delegitimization, surveillance, and intimidation to detention, extraordinary rendition, and political killing. This opens a discussion on the partially *surrogate* nature of Tajikistan's regime and authoritarianism; even its security apparatus is powerful enough to track opponents. In the fourth chapter, Kirill Nourzhanov focuses on Tajikistan's foreign policy, a paradoxically understudied topic, stating that Rahmon's open-door drive has been compromised by Tajikistan's continued reliance on Russia for security and economic stability. China's massive investment presence is not enough to dethrone Russia, while Iran's role remains hampered by Tehran's complex international status and Afghanistan has not become the regional hub that U.S. pundits were hoping for at the end of the 2000s. Though Tajikistan has

yet to enter the Eurasian Economic Union, it will probably do so soon, a move that will likely be accelerated by the withdrawal of the U.S. presence from Central Asia—economic cooperation was always scant, and strategic rents from supplying NATO troops have now dried up—and the rise of anti-Western sentiment.

In the volume's second part, we move away from studying the state to delve into the societal fabric of Tajikistan, shaped by local rural specificities and social vulnerabilities. In Chapter 5, Brent Hierman examines the outcomes of land reform policies for rural life, stating that farm reorganization has been perverted by information and power asymmetries that empowered local authorities at the expense of farmers. Even the revalorization of food crops in the name of food security has not been enough to counterbalance the strategic preeminence of cotton, which has contributed to maintaining top-down dictates that do not take into account local contexts or conditions. Collective farm managers have become critical actors in the sector, since they are able to access needed inputs for agricultural production, while women have been the main losers from the transformation—female-headed farms still have lower levels of access to irrigation systems and are less likely to be able to purchase high-quality cotton seeds than are male-headed farms. In the following chapter, Suzanne Levi-Sanchez analyzes the structures that govern everyday rural life: lands and household plots are critical in determining a family's destiny, while the *mahalla* and powerful figures such as the mother-in-law, the *aksaqals*, and the *mulloh* structure social links. Villagers' access to their leaders often depends on family standing, gender, and leadership style/*mahalla* type, meaning that power relationships vary in important ways depending on local conditions.

The Tajik social fabric has been deeply affected both by the violence of the civil war and by mass poverty. In 2013, the share of citizens living below the national poverty line rose to 68 percent, with 49 percent of the population below the US$2 line. Health care has been one of the most disturbed sectors: a large share of the population is no longer provided with basic vaccines nor has access to medical professionals. In Chapter 7, Sophie Hohmann studies the rise of injectable drug use, which constitutes one of the main risk factors for the transmission of HIV/AIDS and hepatitis C infection. She discusses the ideological gaps between international donors and local actors in managing "rehabilitation centers" for drug users, confirming that the two lack a common perception of the problem, hampering donors' ability to capture local realities and interpretations.

Another major social evolution is the reorganization of gender relationships and the retraditionalization of the role attributed to women. In her chapter, Michele Commercio offers a unique analysis of the rise of polygamy

(polygyny), which is on its way to becoming a major feature of Tajik society, especially in rural areas and among elites, and is increasingly socially accepted. She looks at the agency of women who accept polygamy as a way to achieve marriage and motherhood, securing for themselves a certain social status and respectability as well as material stability.

The third section of the volume is devoted to identity narratives and changes. While the Tajik regime works hard to control the national narrative and the interpretation of the civil war, society is literally and figuratively on the move, as migration profoundly reshapes societal structures and cultural values. In Chapter 9, Tim Epkenhans addresses the state memory process of oblivion and the ambivalence of historical erasure around the perestroika years and the civil war, analyzing the various dynamics at work in the struggle over memory between the Rahmon regime and its main opponents (warlords as well as the IRPT). Yet much more than the civil war is at stake—this struggle is about the relevance of political Islamic activism that took shape against the Soviet regime as early as the 1970s and, therefore, the significance of Hanafi Sunni Islam in defining morality and collective identity.

This quite rigid reading of modern Tajikistan is unable to take into consideration the transformative dynamics at work in Tajik society through the migration process. The last two articles delve into a critical and forward-looking study of societal evolutions linked to migration. In his chapter, Hafiz Boboyorov addresses the question of securityscapes, i.e. socio-cognitive spaces that people build for existential security. Maintaining contacts with the homeland, the village of origin, and the *mahalla*, as well as pursuing life-crisis rituals and creating labor teams, are all foundational elements of this securitization process while in migration. Another is the in-group support that migrants develop while in Russia, protecting each other from undesired encounters, sharing information, and using trusted mediators. Yet Islam, and especially a globalized fundamentalist pietist movement, appears as the rising element of Tajik migrants' securityscape: it regulates both physical and moral security in workplace and other settings and brings migrants together to make their interactions meaningful and socio-politically relevant. It offers a new social prestige to those who work in an environment seen as threatening their identity.

Sophie Roche follows by offering us a fascinating study of Islamic piety among Tajik migrants at Moscow's Cherkiz bazaar. While working in a bazaar is not a prestigious job, it allows for wealth accumulation. Low status and the feeling of insecurity in a chaotic environment such as the bazaar—where the border between state-initiated activities, legal measures, and criminal opportunities is difficult to delineate—is compensated for with Islamic piety. Migrants who die in Russia during migration are increasingly

considered martyrs (*shahid*). As Tajiks occupy the lowest rung on Russia's ethnic hierarchy, turning to Islam to exhibit religious maturity and therefore gain social respect among both Tajiks and Russians has emerged as a critical fundament of today's Tajik society.

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Part I

STATE DYNAMICS, POLITICS, THEIR ACTORS, AND THEIR SPACES

Chapter One

Hobbesian Neopatrimonialism

Jesse Driscoll

He is Judge of what is necessary for Peace; and Judge of Doctrines: He is Sole Legislator; and Supreme Judge of Controversies; and of the Times, and Occasions of Warre, and Peace: to him it belongeth to choose Magistrates, Counsellours, Commanders, and all other Officers, and Ministers; and to determine the Rewards, and Punishments, Honour, and Order.

—Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Part 2, Chapter XX (1651)

In May 2016, a referendum approved 41 changes to Tajikistan's constitution. Voter turnout was reported to be 94.5 percent. Ninety-two percent of voters supported the referendum. It is impossible to misunderstand the intent of the alterations: to make a single family the focal point of political power and legally institutionalize a cult of personality around Emomali Rahmon, who was ceremonially declared "founder of peace" and "leader of the nation."[1] Though the constitution had already been altered once to allow Rahmon to continue ruling until 2020, new changes allow the 64-year-old to serve as president indefinitely. The age limit for running for president was also altered, presumably so that if Rahmon were to perish unexpectedly, the mantle of the presidency could pass smoothly to his son. This imitates the kind of traditional legitimacy associated with dynastic monarchies. Since these changes were passed via an institutionalized, formal, and participatory process, the new measures to centralize personalist power can be said to represent the popular will of the citizens of Tajikistan. On the other hand, perhaps many people turned out because they knew they were expected to watch each other vote.

It is difficult to interpret high levels of participation in voting exercises in authoritarian settings.[2] Samuel Huntington, writing in the 1960s, would probably have recognized the political equilibrium in Tajikistan as a *contained*

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society: a highly institutionalized polity with very low levels of social mobilization and limited popular participation in government.[3] Political order is provided by a kind of hybridization of institutions, blending traditional authority (loyalty to a monarch, "father figure," or *khan*) with the bureaucratic authority of a modern state. Contemporary political scientists might code Tajikistan as a "single party" or "hegemonic party" system, one of many polities where formal processes of contestation exist, but where politics are dominated by "safe districts" so that formally democratic processes predictably reproduce the interests of an incumbent party. Rather than flog Tajiks for failing to live up to an idealized democratic standard, this chapter attempts to locate the basis of Rahmon's political legitimacy in the lived experience of Tajiks.[4]

The thesis of this chapter is that the most important variable that distinguishes Tajikistan from the other post-Soviet Central Asian republics is the Tajik Civil War. Existing in the shadow of endemic violence, Tajikistan is one of the best examples in Central Asia of what North, Wallis, and Weingast call a "closed access society" or "the natural state"[5]:

> The natural state reduces the problem of endemic violence through the formation of a dominant coalition whose members possess special privileges. The logic of the natural state follows from how it solves the problem of violence. Elites—members of the dominant coalition—agree to respect each other's privileges, including property rights and access to resources and activities. By limiting access to these privileges to members of the dominant coalition, elites create credible incentives to cooperate rather than fight among themselves. Because elites know that violence will reduce their own rents, they have incentives not to fight.

North, Wallis, and Weingast employ an analytic approach that essentially bifurcates the world into "open access order" and "closed access order" societies. Open access orders are fully-consolidated democracies that extend elite privileges to all citizens in the form of protected citizen rights. Historically, they have been very rare. Closed access orders have been the dominant form of human social organization for most of recorded history.

The authors emphasize that transition to an open access order is highly contingent and difficult to predict, but identify what they call three "doorstep conditions": social characteristics that have historically been present when a country transitioned from closed access to open access. They are: 1) rule of law for elites; 2) perpetually lived organizations in the public and private spheres; and 3) consolidated control of the military.[6]

This chapter is organized around analyzing these three doorstep conditions in Tajikistan. I conclude that conditions are unfavorable for Tajikistan to transmogrify into an open access society. State legitimacy in Tajikistan rests

on the very old argument that a relatively benign personalist authoritarianism centered on a focal leader is preferable to a violent anarchic alternative. The logic—which has an element of explicit extortion—is that even were there broad consensus among Tajiks that an open access order was achievable and desirable, which there emphatically is not, the risk of extreme violence in the transition away from the closed order arrangement is too great at this time. To the extent that this is correct, Tajiks themselves may intuitively understand that authoritarian social order in Tajikistan is over-determined. Accepting authoritarianism as the natural order of things is internally coherent and, viewed from the rural periphery of Tajikistan, makes a certain kind of normative sense. *Hobbesian Neopatrimonialism* is the best way to understand the roots of the broad-based social legitimacy that Rahmon enjoys.

What is meant by *Hobbesian Neopatrimonialism*? The component parts of the term should be defined sequentially. The reference to *Hobbesian* denotes a widespread social perception by citizens that violent anarchy is a real possibility. Tajiks are not permitted to forget that their national history includes a war of unusual brutality with terrible human costs. Patrimonialism, as originally conceptualized by Max Weber, is a traditional form of government with a single "big man" (almost always a male) at the top of the power pyramid. It is a model of a nation-state as a kind of tribe. An actual person must sit at the desk however: the figurehead, the terminal enforcer of property rights, the final judge above which there can be no appeal.[7] Hale defines *patronal politics* as:

> politics in societies where individuals organize their political and economic pursuits primarily around personalized exchange of concrete rewards and punishments through chains of actual acquaintance, and not primarily around abstract, impersonal principles such as ideological belief or categorization like economic class that include many people one has not actually met in person.[8]

The prefix *neo* (new) is here meant to indicate that patrimonial government systems in the modern world system (post–World War II, post-decolonization) are constrained by a set of global norms that locate sovereignty with the people of a state and define legitimacy as the consent of the governed. A defining feature of today's neopatrimonialist regimes is that while all of the property on a sovereign state's territory may be, de facto, the property of the political sovereign, his family, and a small circle of elites, a variety of de jure institutions give the impression that political power is checked. Neopatrimonial practices can, and do, exist alongside constitutions, elections, parliaments, or lip service to the rule of law.[9]

This chapter proceeds in sections loosely organized around analysis of the doorstep conditions laid out in North, Wallis, and Weingast. The first

summarizes the state of the literature on the causes of Tajikistan's civil war. The war, rooted in structural inequalities inherited from the Soviet period, was at its root a struggle for control over the only perpetually-lived organization—the state apparatus itself. The second section argues that the processes of civil war settlement were effective because of, not in spite of, the absence of the rule of law. The third section observes that there are hardly any perpetually-lived corporate organizations that operate independently of the state. Distributional politics are organized around *avlod* blood ties, which reinforces the dominance of Rahmon's family. The main exceptions to this rule are foreign-seeded groups funded by foreign charities, which cannot really substitute for an indigenous middle class. Since Tajikistan's per capita GDP is one of the lowest in the region, it is difficult to imagine autonomous social institutions developing in the future. The fourth section argues that consolidated control of Tajikistan's small military should be acknowledged as the centerpiece of Rahmon's political legacy—it is a stunning achievement, and the awe he enjoys stems from social awareness of this fact. A close examination of the personalist mechanisms of centralization, however, suggests that they depend heavily on leveraging foreign aid and a benign interstate threat environment. It is fairly clear that Rahmon has coup-proofed his regime. It is less clear that centralized control of Tajikistan's military has yielded the kind of professional military capable of conducting high-quality counterinsurgency if faced with a sustained domestic challenge. Absent such a challenge, the current order will likely hold.

WHY WAS THERE A CIVIL WAR IN TAJIKISTAN AFTER INDEPENDENCE?

Emomali Rahmonov, as he was called at the time, was *not* a typical Party Secretary with a lot of friends in Moscow who happened at the right place at the right time. He was elevated from below by indigenous Tajik social forces during a brutal civil war. He was not himself a field commander, but he ascended with the assistance of a variety of Tajik field commanders.

Why did Tajikistan fall prey to civil war? The permissive cause was the disintegration of the Soviet Union, which created a sudden window of state weakness.[10] The new government inherited a discredited, bankrupt, and weak security apparatus. State agents could not credibly commit to enforcing political bargains in the future.[11] As the tide of Russian power receded, Tajikistan was suddenly cast adrift in a very difficult neighborhood. Some, though not all, of the overlapping formal and informal institutional layers that organized politics in Central Asia were clearly going to be overturned. No one really

knew which institutions would survive and which would be discarded, nor what the relative distribution of social benefits between social forces would be.[12] Agendas for radical redistribution of property rights and the geopolitical realignment of the region were openly discussed for the first time in living memory.

Since the same is true of neighboring Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan, all of which managed the transition to independence peacefully, reliance on this kind of macro-structural analysis is ultimately unsatisfying. What was the proximate cause of the war? What was threatening about the new actors and ideas that entered Tajik politics? What were the specific social demands articulated by new entrants into politics that pitted conservatives against new social forces? Consensus on these details is much more difficult to achieve, and these issues will likely remain controversial long into the future.[13] Writing at the height of the violence, however, Akiner provided an outstanding summary that will probably stand the test of time:

> Ultimately, the turmoil in Tajikistan hinged on two essential issues. One was the attempt to end the monopoly of political power by the cliques which had been favored by the Soviet system. How accepted or participatory any challengers to that system might have become was never tested, nor was the challengers' competence in wielding political power. Their only chance was a limited one, as part of a coalition government that ruled for a few months in 1992 amidst the widening chaos of a civil war. The other essential issue was the role Islam would play in this predominantly Muslim country. The call simply for freedom to practice religion after decades of Soviet repression was widespread but beyond that there was much disagreement. However, the stereotype which equated interest in Islam with extremism, intolerance, and violence was a powerful weapon in the politics of independent Tajikistan. This provided the rationale for the suppression of the opposition as a whole.[14]

Most accounts of the war's outbreak emphasize three processes: deeply-embedded regional divisions within Tajik society; the relatively sudden mobilization of Tajiks around high-stakes political questions (such as the role of Islam, the artificiality of borders inherited from the Soviet era, and the plasticity of property rights in the Soviet-constructed authoritarian institutions); and broad awareness that the post-independence state lacked the repressive capacity to either coerce or discipline unruly populations. It is perhaps not surprising that face-to-face social institutions—kolkhoz and *avlod* structures, which provided a convenient heuristic for whom one could expect to trust in the future—contributed the social capital for various political factions to contest these matters forcefully. Once radical members realized that no one would make arrests, mass rallies in Dushanbe attempted to push various social agendas via street politics.

The speed of social change terrified conservatives. Collins presents a range of data demonstrating that cadres from Khudjand (then Leninobod) had monopolized state positions and reported directly to either Tashkent or Moscow for decades.[15] A few prominent families had grown wealthy by monopolizing political connections and possibilities for advancement within the Party, but the entire region was heavily subsidized by transfers from the Union. In the less well-off parts of the country, as Markowitz documents, embattled cotton-producing elites joined forces with rural criminal networks and local strongmen as the state fragmented.[16] Voluntary village defense forces quickly assembled into loose armies. The Popular Front for Tajikistan (PFT) emerged as a coalition of social conservatives from the Khudjandi rust belt, Uzbek-backed militias, and southern agricultural interests from Kulob. A counter-coalition, which eventually became known as the United Tajik Opposition (UTO), had representation among Pamiris in Gorno-Badakhshan and Gharmis, as well as significant support among the non-Khudjandi intelligentsia. Throughout 1992, 1993, and much of 1994, militias roved the countryside.

Emomali Rahmonov came to power in 1992 against the backdrop of this violence.[17] He became the face of the franchise as PFT militias recaptured Dushanbe in the months that followed. A few months later, an election was organized to legitimate his authority. Social participation was reportedly high, even in the eastern parts of the country, which had de facto seceded. The day after the election, in which 99.5 percent of the inhabitants of Khatlon were reported to have voted for Rahmonov, the Yeltsin government supported the results with a statement declaring Tajikistan's elections "free and fair." Moscow sent fifteen billion rubles to Dushanbe to pay government salaries for the first time since independence. Popular Front forces, now in control of the state, followed decisive military victories with the annihilation of civilian networks that had backed the opposition coalition. The brutality of the final phase of the war prompted an observer to note: "Neither side distinguished itself by humanitarian conduct in the war; ultimately, the side that won committed more atrocities."[18]

The final phase was largely concluded by December 1994. Russia, acting through the Commonwealth of Independent States, was authorized under UNSC Resolution 968 to lead in conflict resolution. Russian President Yeltsin, having already declared that the Tajik-Afghan border was, "in effect, Russia's," extended a security umbrella over the region that cauterized the violence. Grinding counterinsurgency continued for years. There is consensus in the official records of most states that Tajikistan's Civil War ended with the 1997 Russian-led peace process.

Why did Russia, which was experiencing its own kind of state failure at the time, spend resources and political capital securing Tajikistan (and, by exten-

sion, shoring up Rahmonov's regime)? The short answer is that involvement in this civil war settlement was deemed necessary to secure Russia's new southern frontier.

Since Western security analysts cannot escape their own geographic point of view, there is a tendency to forget not only how far east the Soviet Union went, but also how far *south* it went—sharing land borders with Pakistan, Iran, and Afghanistan. The risk was that a long-running Islamicized or ethnicized civil war in Tajikistan may have had no natural borders. The potential for irregular infantry units to filter north across the Panj River and infect other Central Asian states with toxic ideologies was terrifying.[19] Another escalation scenario—without the bogeyman of radical Islam—was that secular nationalist Tajiks living in Bukhara and Samarkand might "awaken" to a national identity and be ready to serve as fifth-columnists pushing for secession from Uzbekistan. At some point, the Uzbek government might opt to unilaterally redraw the map of Central Asia by incorporating the Tajik region of Khudjand—or perhaps the entire Ferghana Valley. Revisiting borders in this way would have had unpredictable domino effects: Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan noted that their abundant oil and gas reserves could be targeted. In any case, if millions of refugees tried to board trains and head west all at once, it would be very destabilizing. Russia asserted leadership over Tajikistan's peace process to prevent Uzbekistan or the United Nations Security Council from doing so. With the security of the entire region potentially at stake, Russia took action. As a result, Tajikistan was not permitted to slide completely into Somalia-style state failure.

Russia did not try to do much in the way of social engineering, however. Tajikistan was independent, after all. A number of Russian military professionals seem to have reached the sobering conclusion that they would be written as villains in Tajikistan's war of independence by nationalist historians no matter what they did, so opted to do little in the way of liberal peace-building (which they anyway could not have afforded). With the benefit of hindsight, two aspects of the civil war settlement in Tajikistan have become clearer than they would have been to analysts at the time.

For one thing, Russia never paid much more than lip service to the idea of post-war democratization. The "order-first" framework made most European embassies, and all members of the Tajik elite, de facto junior partners in an absolutist government centered on Rahmonov. The result was a Tajik state apparatus that was, for a time, saturated with former war criminals and unsavory characters. Russian policy tolerated the consolidation of a personalist authoritarian order because it seemed the best of the unsavory options.

For another, Russian military interventions were never actually intended to provide a framework for secure disarmament. Informally, rebel militia

commanders and pro-regime paramilitary commanders were treated in largely the same way: invited to merge members of their militias into the state without much pretense of disarmament; provided with amnesty and an ability to use their position to loot the state from within with impunity; and given a probabilistic chance that, over time, they would either be quietly killed or asked to take their wealth and leave the country. Few informed observers were surprised when the formal security guarantees in the 1997 Peace Accords—such as the promise that one of the three "power ministries" (defense, interior, or state security) would be headed by a representative of the United Tajik Opposition—were never implemented.

WHY NO RULE OF LAW FOR TAJIK ELITES?

Returning to North, Wallis, and Weingast, their first doorstep condition for an open access order is rule of law for elites. One important legacy of the Tajik civil war is that it guaranteed that most members of the non-Tajik Soviet middle class fled, never to return. Their exodus removed the members of the nation most likely to support the rule of law.[20]

In the wake of this exodus, the great powers wanted to contain the chaos but needed a local partner capable of providing order. They got it in the form of Rahmonov, who offered them a local conservative client and "face of the franchise" so long as they were willing to be realistic and allow some liberal charity to disappear as side-payments and bribes. The great powers were more or less indifferent to the distributional particulars of the arrangement, and could not really follow the money anyway.[21] Rahmonov was bolstered by unambiguous and largely unconditional support from patrons in Moscow. Conditional support from the European capitals, the United States, the OSCE, and associated regional actors was forthcoming as well.

He gradually trimmed the inner circle of the ruling coalition. The first to go were Hissori warlords and members of the security services seen as being too close to Uzbekistan, then the various Khudjandi clan networks associated with Abdulmalik Abdullojonov. After that, one at a time, anyone else who demonstrated excessive ambition was removed. This process of whittling down representatives of the various social forces that might have served as a check on Rahmonov did not happen all at once. Gradual maneuvering within the shifting bounds of coalition politics, walking a tightrope to avoid a coup, took years. More than once, the fragile coalition seemed on the verge of violent fragmentation. There was also a great deal of intra-coalitional violence, often centered on the downtown of the capital city, as a brutally violent

tournament played out between different social groups over the right to be a violence sub-contractor for the state and enforce the law.[22] Importantly, what kept Tajikistan politically stable through this process was not respect for the rule of law, but shared appreciation of the fact that Rahmonov's promises to warlords were credible because they knew that if he reneged, they could remove him in a coup. A number of high-profile appointments of war criminals made it clear that the warlords were using Rahmon as a kind of "front man" or hostage in the mid-1990s. But gradually, by playing one warlord off against another, the insecure and coup-prone Rahmonov cemented his power, reflected in his name change: he dropped the Russified suffix on his family name and transformed himself into the purer Persian "Rahmon."

How did this happen, as a practical matter? Broadly speaking, the arrangement was that the president's "favor economy" centered on the capital city, Dushanbe, which was the largest city in the country, the home of government, and the obvious logistical choke point for aid and investment. Though most of the population of Tajikistan resides in rural areas, most of the political elites reside in the capital. Control of this city was obviously the prize in the civil war. Some elites in Gorno-Badakhshan pushed for independence during the civil war, and there were occassional rumblings from Khudjand and the Ferghana Valley. Without external patronage, however these secessionist murmurings essentially disappeared by the late 1990s.

Part of the process of yoking these regions to the capital city was bribery and autonomy: allowing local strongmen to shave their beards and don uniforms, as well as maintain control of the rents from a territory, so long as they made formal nods to the capital's authority and ensured that their districts delivered votes when necessary (more on this below). There were many would-be warlords who wanted in on this game. Deciding who would ascend into the government and who would return to rural squalor required what amounted to an extremely violent urban gang war. Many warlords died in intra-coalitional squabbles *within the faction that won the civil war*; the winners of this violent tournament went on to participate in a shadowy competition for Rahmon's favor.

In the end, there emerged a faction of warlords capable of using violence to limit entry into the arena of real political power.[23] In exchange for supporting the president, they were permitted to draw a salary and a pension, make a bit of money on the side, and wear uniforms. Another important legacy of the disintegration of the Tajik state was the introduction of new elites into Tajik politics. Many were field commanders, whom I elsewhere call warlords: celebrity social actors defined by a demonstrated ability to shape and control large-scale violence.

In the process of settling the war, the inherited Soviet state apparatus was cannibalized. In this bargain, ministries were turned over to warlords, who colluded with one another to guarantee social order while keeping the violence off-camera and out of sight. Tajik warlords from different social backgrounds understood that the breakdown of the state created the possibility for them to rise above their station. Gradually yoking these warlords to the state required that Rahmonov maneuver carefully, exploiting frictions that emerged as warlords competed against each other in a complex game of coalition formation akin to musical chairs. The manipulation of personal networks and a variety of opaque deals were all, in the end, only as good as the word of one person: Emomali Rahmonov.

From the perspective of most Russians, one Tajik warlord was interchangeable with another.[24] As long as warlord politics were intra-ethnic, related to distributional politics and the selective enforcement of property rights, and contained within the space on the map that had been designated for their nation, keeping track of complex details was just too much trouble. This is not to say that the warlords were interchangeable *to each other,* of course. The regional divisions cemented by blood and marriage had calcified into a highly-striated social system, but many of these striations were, and are, invisible to non-Tajiks.

What emerged in Tajikistan, then, is an object lesson in "R before D": the reintegration of armed groups into society with only very cosmetic disarmament.[25] Over the next decade, the processes that played out were analogous to a costly lottery (with the costs of entry paid in the lives of young men) that occurred alongside a coalition formation game (played by potential lottery winners). Terminal payoffs for lucky warlords took the form of jobs for their followers, non-prosecution for past war crimes for themselves, and downtown real estate from which they could draw rents as the capital recovered (buoyed by the salaries of foreign aid workers). All of these payoffs were ultimately guaranteed by Rahmonov. Behind the scenes, warlords continued to maim and kill each other for the privilege of looting the state apparatus with impunity. Some lucky warlords managed to do this for years, or even decades, before being selectively purged or disappeared. Others remain in the state apparatus to this day. Unlucky or incapable warlords exited the game much more quickly.

Warlords kept their guns so that they could threaten to remove Rahmon in a coup if he did not allow them to loot the state. For the most part, the violence of the war cowed Rahmon's political competitors, as did the nature of the post-war order. Politics was, and continues to be, a dangerous profession in Tajikistan. The most naked political violence took place around the 1998 parliamentary and 1999 presidential elections.

If criminals became too ambitious, Rahmon could renege on promises of amnesty and non-prosecution. Rahmonov gradually transformed himself from a puppet of various warlords to an unchecked executive. Rahmon's political strategy was guided by three broad principles: he went after warlords one at a time; he transferred losing warlords' wealth to other warlords as side-payments for their loyalty rather than centralizing power in his own hands; and he established a reputation as a man of his word. Consider this observation about his governance style by a then-member of the United Nations Tajikistan Observation Mission (UNTOP), from an interview conducted in 2007: "Rahmonov always gave a warning before he went after you. He'd warn once, twice . . . he'd wait for months or years, giving people a chance to remove themselves from politics once they were becoming too threatening. He always gave everyone opportunities to get away."[26]

The processes of civil war settlement brought personal benefits to Rahmon. For one thing, selective integration of former combatants allowed Rahmon to assemble a military apparatus that could police the interior hinterlands of Tajikistan quickly and at a modest cost. When Mahmud Khudoiberdiyev unilaterally declared the establishment of an autonomous region in 1998 and called for foreign support from Uzbekistan, the state military that drove him from the country included a quickly-assembled coalition of rehabilitated rebel field commanders and their battle-hardened troops, including some individuals who had been "Islamic terrorists" and "criminal insurgents" just weeks earlier. What the soldiers were offered in exchange for their service was often modest: a promise of amnesty; an opportunity to demonstrate competence and loyalty (and thus increase the probability of promotion in the future); a promise of a pension someday; and perhaps a small one-time payment.

The fact that bribes of this kind were so efficacious revealed that much of the warlords' ideologically pure anti-statist rhetoric was what economists call "cheap talk." They were rhetorically powerful speeches based on powerful ideas, and they were (empirically) well-calibrated to entice young men to fight and die, but they were often just empty words. Despite endless rhetoric about solidarity across the *Umma* to build a pan-Islamic state, or about never compromising with one's enemies, it turned out that almost no one actually wanted to see the disintegration of the Tajik state, and everyone wanted a small fiefdom within it. Even in one of the poorest republics in the former Soviet Union, the inherited state security infrastructure was sufficiently vast for a variety of people, many of whom had no great ability, to establish patchwork fiefdoms in what amounted to a giant racketeering operation. Shared social expectations of the permanence of Tajik state institutions were important:

the permanence created a futures market, giving Rahmon something material and tangible with which to cement transactions. The process of buying peace dulled the power of ideology. The banality of violence cheapened the stakes of the violent political theater.

Another advantage to Rahmon of integrating the warlords—one that the warlords did not initially foresee—was that Rahmon gradually gained social legitimacy among Tajik civilians as he purged warlords from the state. For all the violence and horror of war, and despite the flight of the Russian-speaking middle class, Dushanbe remained a city of basically civilized people who believed it was morally unnatural for rapists and murderers to hold positions of social power. For sociopaths to enjoy respect, legal immunity, and institutionalized protection was an inversion of the natural moral order. Once the worst periods of violence had passed and normalcy returned, thinly-veiled political purges occurred.[27] As president, Rahmon could control the timing of cabinet reshuffles and criminal prosecutions to take advantage of shifts in the public mood. He rode successive waves of popular opinion and doled out punishment in humiliating show trials. Based on dozens of conversations in a variety of contexts over the course of my research, many Tajiks thought the show trials delivered justice and that these terrible men were getting exactly what they deserved.

Voilence specialist come cheap. Purchasing the loyalty of entire regionally-backed family networks of the old Khudjandi elites had required negotiating in currencies involving educational curricula, language quotas, and positions of real power (such as governorships or control of industrial bottlenecks) that came with hundreds of guaranteed jobs as side-payments. Once the gun overtly entered politics, and the primary actors were often warlords from urban slums or rural areas, loyalty could sometimes be purchased with one-time payments. Details would include promises of autonomy allowing them to do as well as they had managed to do in the war, which often amounted to a few tens of thousands of dollars a year. These were quite often people whose idea of "the good life" was running a neighborhood racketeering operation, numbing the days with lots of street drugs, and keeping three girlfriends in gaudy jewelry. As foreign charity trickled into the Tajik economy, the value of downtown real estate was inflated by Western salaries pegged to the standard of living in Western capitals, which provided a pool of rents more than sufficient for this purpose.[28]

From the perspective of international law and jurisprudence, Tajik sovereignty resides with the Tajik people in the impersonal organization of the Tajik state. Inside the borders of Tajikistan, in both a formal (legal) and real (practical) sense, Emomali Rahmon is seen as the source of all law. The transcripts of Rahmon's public speeches are littered with references to *huquqi*

(legal) and *consitutoni* (constitutional) norms, but these concepts have been invoked primarily to justify anti-corruption prosecutions meant to punish Rahmon's political enemies.[29] There is no social expectation that the law will constrain his family or his power in any way. Emomali Rahmon is just the kind of sovereign that was familiar to Thomas Hobbes. He is the law.

WHY ARE THERE SO FEW PERPETUALLY-LIVED TAJIK ORGANIZATIONS?

North, Wallis, and Weingast identify impersonal perpetually-lived organizations as a second doorstep condition.[30] These entities provide a theoretical platform for elite bargaining. Perpetually-lived organizations that are external from, and thus potentially competitive with, the ruler highlight the potential for the grasping hand of the executive to be checked. Perpetually-lived organizations also create space for symbolic performances of opposition to state power.

The authors define a perpetually-lived organization as one that has a legal existence independent of the identity of any specific individual members, such as trade unions, religious institutions, or modern corporations.[31] Without these independent institutions, states can—and do—manipulate individual people, even powerful people, either with positive incentives (e.g. "buying them off" with prestigious jobs and social recognition) or with negative incentives (e.g. deterring them from entering the political arena by threats of violence against family members).

Tajikistan is notable for the near-total absence of indigenously funded, perpetually-lived, autonomous civil society groups capable of mobilizing large financial resources and incentivizing long-term behaviors. Most social spheres are touched by the state. Few indigenous civil society organizations are capable of challenging the state and winning, even symbolically, and those few that might have been able to do so have been co-opted. Mosque networks are organized around charismatic imams, but sooner or later they have to deal with the state. There are family and *avlod* networks, which provided the social capital for militia formation and warlordism in the 1990s and pool resources to send promising children to school in the hopes of them joining the *nomenklatura* bureaucracy. Business networks are almost always based around families.

What is observed instead? The institutional inheritance of Tajikistan is hard-wired for what Hale observes across Eurasia as "patronal politics," patronage-based authoritarianism organized around loyalty to a patriarchal father figure who acts as the sole focal point for political order, with a variety

of bureaucratized hierarchies of sub-patrons (and sub-sub-patrons, and so on) to organize political life in the polity.[32] Levels of personalism vary, but at the extreme ends of the spectrum, like Tajikistan, we find leaders empowered to dole out life opportunities on a whim.[33] Political success in this setting often requires that an entrepreneur make himself noticed and then get himself co-opted by the president's machine. There is very little room at the top; it is a steep and usually irreversible fall for those who lose favor.[34] In this social order, what Weber would call "traditional authority" and "bureaucratic authority" sit comfortably nested atop one another.[35] This machinery has been successful at coopting or eliminating competitors, and it is hard to separate the creation of this personalist network from processes of civil war settlement.

Since these practices are observed elsewhere in the region, including neighboring countries that did not experience civil war upon independence, the war cannot be the whole story.[36] A deeper cultural logic is almost certainly at work. Arguments from historical path-dependence tend to either emphasize ancient subordination to authority (the Khan) or the fact that most Central Asian citizens were cowed by the Soviet experience and internalized, in the words of Jones Luong, "a social contract in which society offered the state political quiescence in exchange for cradle-to-grave welfare."[37] These cultural habits seem to have persisted, despite the manifest absence of social services in post-independence Tajikistan.

Quiescence has always been easiest to observe in rural areas, where 70 percent of Tajikistan's population resides. The caricature of a tightly-controlled Tajik-language media environment, in which the state monitors and shapes the content of all Tajik-language news and television programming, is largely inaccurate. It would be more accurate to say that today, especially in rural parts of the country, many Tajiks are either illiterate or a-literate and simply do not dirty themselves with politics.[38] To the extent that rural people engage with national news stories, they do so via television, usually either Russian satellite television or the state-controlled television channels that broadcast nationwide. I recall being in the rural village of Kalikhum in 2008 when the lights were turned on for the first time in months, in celebration of the springtime *Navruz* holiday. The television had just one channel, which played patriotic songs and songs of peace. Rahmon's face kept appearing on the screen. I remember knowing with certainty that if it were not for Rahmon, the lights would still be off. I am certain that the family I was living with understood this fact in the same way.

Every few years, popular voting exercises—with very limited competition—reinforce the legitimacy of the order-producing party in a manner that could hardly be better designed to demonstrate quiescence. The spectacle has been described as a "ritual of consent."[39] Elections have never served to keep

Rahmon accountable. Since the mid-1990s, everyone has been well aware that no challenger will be allowed to remove him from power. Many suspect that some results are entirely fabricated. Still, evidence of compliant rural voting on a massive scale allows Rahmon to plausibly claim to be the choice of his people.[40]

From whence, then, might perpetually-lived non-state institutions emerge that might be capable of competing with Rahmon and his single-party regime? It is discouragingly difficult to speculate an answer to this question.

New indigenous economic elites are unlikely to form perpetually-lived corporations to challenge the state from below in the foreseeable future. Long-term development prospects are bleak. Except for a small border with China, Tajikistan is landlocked by other landlocked countries. Half of its domestic agricultural labor force is seasonally employed in cotton, and it is likely that these Tajiks will be poorer a generation from now than they are today.[41] At the time of this writing, Tajikistan's per capita GDP is approximately equal to that of Yemen.

Since kolkhoz structures are the central social unit of Tajik rural life in Khatlon, and since a few buyers control the sale of cotton—a cash crop too labor-intensive to cultivate without mass mobilization of the rural poor and too bulky to hide or smuggle—on the global market, the cultivation of patrons within the state apparatus is the only viable pathway to economic security, even for the most well-off.[42] A centralized economy, with a logistics and distribution network that has bottlenecks at a few railroad stations, has co-evolved with single-party rule. Personal connections with an authority somewhere within the state bureaucracy—a cotton sales broker or a political "roof" to make sure that gray-market transactions are not prosecuted according to poorly-written laws—is a practical necessity in the absence of rule of law. As such, an indigenous middle class capable of forming corporations that could make demands on the state is very distant.

Foreign charity and remittances are probably more vital to the Tajik economy than they are to any other post-Soviet state. The Tajik diaspora provides an important social safety-valve. Given the lack of economic freedom and the overall dearth of social opportunities in Tajikistan, as well as the fact that high-prestige educational attainment requires leaving the country, brain drain of the most privileged children of the most privileged families will continue. Young Tajik men who might otherwise be hanging around Dushanbe, marginally employed and potentially susceptible to thoughts of revolution, are absent from the social milieu. The diaspora seems unlikely to spawn perpetually-lived organizations to challenge Rahmon, however. The notion of an organized "opposition in exile" seems more fanciful with each passing year. Russia, Kazakhstan, and, to a lesser extent, Uzbekistan are the

most popular destinations for working-class Tajik males seeking economic migration. All three have shown a willingness to extradite criminals, dissidents, and terrorists back to Tajikistan. There is no reason to imagine that intellectuals would be spared this treatment if they were thought to be party organizers.[43] Since much of this immigration is illegal, the Uzbek or Russian state can credibly threaten to legally deport troublemakers—or their friends and girlfriends—back to Tajikistan. So long as the most productive members of the Tajik economy are working off the books (e.g., driving taxis in the suburbs of St. Petersburg or working for untaxed daily wages on construction sites), it is difficult to picture the kinds of social value transformations occurring that are the drivers of modernization theory.[44]

One potential check on Rahmon's power might be factionalism within the Tajik state. However absolutist a figurehead leader like Rahmon might appear, he is ultimately accountable to men with guns and forced to operate in the shadow of a coup.[45] The various security ministries of the Tajik state operate with greater autonomy than other ministries, such as education or foreign affairs. Outside of the armed forces, various semi-private banking and brokerage companies that manage the virtual state monopoly on cotton production cooperate with, but exist independently of, the party apparatus.

In a sense, all of these are good examples of perpetually-lived organizations. It is possible, in theory, for them to function autonomously of each other.[46] Hale, while employing the master-metaphor of a pyramid, emphasizes the possibility of states with multiple pyramids.[47] Different cadres sometimes control functionally autonomous ministries, supported by different social groups with different agendas, which serve as a check on each other's ambitions. In the post-Soviet republics that have evolved toward open access orders, the process of getting there is messy and has involved years of government gridlock, dominated by bureaucratic turf wars and inter-service rivalry. These are not the autonomous civil society groups that North, Wallis, and Weingast had in mind, though in a weak personalist state like Tajikistan they may be the closest available substitute.[48] The obvious limitation is that Rahmon could selectively dismiss anyone from his post at any time, leaving no mechanism for the aggrieved party to redress the harm.

Another potential source of opposition to the state could be a mass political party with deep social roots and ties to religious institutions. The Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan (IRPT) has tried to serve as this kind of focal point for opposition to Rahmon. It has not succeeded. Since the 1997 General Peace Accord, the party has strategically subordinated its religious message to a broader focus on socioeconomic development and adherence to democratic principles, but has nevertheless been unable to shed its association with the civil war (and so-called "Wahhabism"). As such, the IRPT has

been marginalized in contemporary Tajik politics. It is not unreasonable to suggest that a future party could succeed where the IRPT has failed, mobilizing support from a broad constituency outside Rahmon's patronage network. This kind of institution is much more in line with the historical processes that inform North, Wallis, and Weingast's analysis.[49] In Tajikistan, a great deal of missionary work is conducted by Christian and Islamic groups. A variety of practitioners dedicated to shaping the ground "beneath" and "around" the state (through, for example, the social provision of literacy) will continue to ply their trade.

In the best-case scenario, this charity will contribute to processes of development and democratization. In the worst case, sermonizing could generate disruptive behaviors that threaten Tajik social order. This threat is taken seriously by military representatives of Russia and NATO member countries.[50] Technical assistance for various tasks associated with threat assessment—such as scrutinizing the writings of roving transnational clerics using sophisticated computer-enabled tools—will probably continue.[51]

What about NGOs and other familiar faces of civil society? Many in the West imagine themselves to be allies of Tajik civil society. They—we?—earnestly hope to chart a path to peaceful social change. The structural constraints that are likely to inhibit democratic movements within Tajikistan are daunting, to be sure, and it is easy to be cynical. Still, a potential check on Rahmon's power could emerge from the social milieu of Tajiks who work in concert with the Western development community. Western charitable assistance has grown exponentially since the mid-1990s, when the United Nations Mission first opened its doors. As an empirical matter, subcontractors drawing European salaries create much of the demand for high-end services in Dushanbe.[52] Many important kinds of social work are conducted only with generous charity by non-Tajiks, administered through groups such as the Aga Khan Development Foundation. Their offices employ much of what passes for the Tajik middle class.

At the time of this writing, the few thousand English-speaking Tajiks who have managed to engage in this economy are much better off than most of their counterparts who have not. As a sociological phenomenon, there is no question that a self-funded part of Tajik society exists, in day-to-day practice, without much interference from the state, independent of the state. The constant turnover of personnel in the NGO community, in combination with the consistent messaging and programming of a liberal agenda by Western embassies, suggests that this community may be a seed-bed of perpetually-lived organizations. Tajiks have been relatively marginal actors within the community thus far, but when one counts all the embassy drivers, the fixers, the people who have drifted from one project to another, and then add all of

the alpha-students that hang around these embassy communities to pad their resumes, a substantial portion of the indigenous Dushanbe economy is sustained by a source of wealth largely external to the government.[53]

The main problem is that the Tajik state still has a clear comparative advantage in the production of violence. There is no mechanism of constraint or redress for Tajik citizens accused of espionage, and that is a risk inherent in hitching one's future to a foreign-funded community.[54] Coercive power is effectively monopolized by agents of the Tajik state.[55]

IS TAJIK MILITARY CENTRALIZATION REAL OR ILLUSORY?

The Soviet Union was an exceptional example of a closed access order that achieved full control over its professional military.[56] It bequeathed to its successor states, including Tajikistan, a respected military hierarchy and many other institutions that could be resuscitated. Though the previous section documents a number of ways in which Tajikistan's Soviet inheritance may impede the country from transitioning toward open access, there is no denying that the Soviet Union built a hierarchically-organized "segment state" in pre-independence Tajikistan.[57] Tajiks are a self-regarding political community, and that community was "born strong" in important respects: it was institutionalized with maps, censuses, museums, elementary school curricula, ministries of interior and defense, and so on. Even if the state in Tajikistan today does not enjoy a full Weberian monopoly on violence, Tajikistan is closer to this doorstep condition than it is to the other two.[58]

This is remarkable. The utter disintegration of the Tajik state in the early 1990s, and the fact that so many armed groups integrated into the Tajik state without first disarming in the late 1990s, did not augur well for a consolidated military apparatus twenty-five years after independence. If the constitution of Tajikistan is understood not as words on a piece of paper, but more as a set of well-understood "rules of Rahmon's game," then violence within the borders of Tajikistan is as monopolized as anyone could reasonably hope for a mountainous state in a destitute neighborhood.[59]

People mean different things when they invoke the concept of "state strength." Many military policy professionals have come to understand the term as a state's demonstrated ability to achieve efficacious counterinsurgency outcomes (measured by a high probability of killing terrorists, or deterring/foiling terrorist attacks without collateral civilian damage) per unit of foreign aid invested in a country. This has something to do with military professionalism and something to do with an ability to extract granular targeting information from compromised civilian populations. By this measure,

Tajikistan has a great deal more state capacity than other countries facing Muslim insurgencies with the same per-capita level of GDP. Other than historical inheritance, where did Tajik state capacity come from?

The answer to this question, asked in this way, has already been alluded to: much of what passes for post-independence state capacity in Tajikistan was probably initially *surrogate* state capacity. Russian, Uzbek, and American special forces sit behind the throne, albeit at some distance and with plenty of plausible deniability. The Tajik state's comparative advantage in domestic intelligence collection over places like Yemen comes from the fact that Tajikistan, unlike many post-colonial states that experienced civil war, was never permitted to fully fail by the great powers. Having observed the Popular Front for Tajikistan's capacity to impose its military will on the country, Moscow intervened after domestic processes gave the Kremlin a local agent that shielded Moscow from terminal liability. Propping up the state apparatus provided a kind of carcass that the warlords could feed upon; the gradual introduction of humanitarian assistance from the West put more meat on that carcass. Selective assassinations and training for border patrols kept the Panj river as a symbolic border between the CIS security community and parts of Asia that Russia was leaving behind as it shed the messianism of Soviet foreign policy.

Though the civil war has formally been settled for two decades at the time of this writing, Tajikistan's military continues to receive security assistance to deal with potential internal uprisings. Virtually all of the residual violence that has taken place since the early 1990s —Khudoiberdiyev's multiple attempts to destabilize the polity in the mid-late 1990s, the abortive Rasht Valley insurgency, the Nazarzoda uprising—has had domestic origins. The military must be strong enough to put these rebellions down. The most dangerous kind of rebellion would probably come from within the military itself. Like other personalist rulers, Rahmon is probably more concerned about the possibility of a Tajik military that is too strong, with the capacity and confidence to execute a military coup, than he is about a weak Tajik military incapable of securing its own borders.[60] Rahmon has proven himself to be an adept survivor, with sophisticated instincts for managing divide-and-rule strategies.

The state security apparatus also needs to be capable of tagging and tracking members of the Tajik underclass who are young, naive, ideological, or crazy enough to consider revolution viable and/or flirt with confrontational forms of violent activism. This task is not very expensive. Tajikistan will continue to have the support of outside powers to achieve, especially if there is credible evidence of an Islamic ideological backbone to the oppositional activist projects. ISIS, al-Qaeda, Iran: these are all "power words" when it comes to attracting a certain kind of international aid. Indeed, under such

circumstances, "state weakness" may not even be a bad thing from the perspective of the small circle of elites that surround Rahmon, *even if* it engenders social distress that provides a core of grievance that feeds insurgency (which can, perversely, bring more Salafists to social prominence, creating more evidence of the need for foreign aid, etc.). Rahmon's family and inner circle are well-positioned to take a first cut of foreign aid as it flows in and best-positioned to profit from foreign-assisted processes of economic liberalization.[61]

With this in mind, it is worth taking seriously the possibility that military centralization is somewhat theatrical. The Tajik military is no more a bastion of professionalism than is any other state military in the region, and this is not exactly a neighborhood distinguished by janissary competence. It may be a mistake to pretend that foreign analysts have more knowledge of Tajikistan's state security services than they actually do, and to overstate the efficacy of "capacity building assistance" aimed at linking donor constituencies in Western embassies to members of the Tajik state security services.[62] As long as the great powers worry about Tajik terrorists or refugees, aid flows to Tajikistan in large quantities.[63] When they see Tajikistan as a man-made humanitarian disaster and drug trafficking route, aid slows to a trickle.

With those caveats clearly stated, this doorstep condition appears to be much closer to practical fulfillment than the other two. One out of three is better than zero out of three. The possibility of militarized political fragmentation in Tajikistan will not be discounted by the great powers, especially Russia, since Tajikistan's history suggests that social order could unravel with great speed. If foreign support is critical to propping up Tajik military centralization, and there is a shared understanding that state disintegration would impose real costs on the great powers (in the form of refugee flows, Salafi terrorist pockets threatening to Russia, and the like), it can create an extortion dynamic. Tajik leaders can hover on the brink of political disintegration and then beg for assistance to put down rebellion. This may be the reason that many Russian security service personnel, when talking about the Tajik military, become visibly disgusted and spontaneously describe them as "thieves."

HOBBESIAN NEOPATRIMONIALISM

Thomas Hobbes was a naturalist. A casual reading of *Leviathan* reveals a keen observer of human psychology. The central empirical claim in *Leviathan* is that the state of nature—violent anarchy in which death is a real and ever-present possibility—is not only frightening, but that it *ought* to be *more*

frightening than life in an orderly state, even if that state is authoritarian and arbitrary in its exercise of power.[64]

The thesis of this chapter is that Hobbes's observations are relevant to understanding the roots of political legitimacy in contemporary Tajikistan. The legitimacy of Rahmon's personalist regime is difficult to untangle from his role in settling the war. All Tajik citizens are expected to feel grateful to him, personally, that the war is over. And perhaps—just perhaps—a plurality of Tajiks *are* authentically grateful. Perhaps Hobbes accurately described a typical psychological response to violent civil war. A variety of internal mechanisms could explain why exposure to violence could keep populations politically docile for decades after the guns go quiet.

More than any other country in the region, the legitimacy of Tajikistan's regime rests quite explicitly on the claim that the alternative to Rahmon's personalist rule is violent civil war. Viewpoints are coalescing around a particular hegemonic interpretation of Tajik social history: the war was a failed attempt by radicals from traditionally under-represented groups to seize the state, and this attempt was defeated militarily by Russian-backed conservatives, who have since used the war as cover to kill their political enemies by branding them as Islamic terrorists. Most people living in Tajikistan cannot help but be aware that Emomali Rahmon—the "founder of peace"—was personally involved in the violent processes of war termination.[65] Today, a handful of families dominate senior posts in government and control state-owned enterprises; all owe their positions to Rahmon personally. Little effort is made to deny or whitewash this fact. Indeed, it is not clear that it would be safe for a member of Tajikistan's Academy of Sciences to articulate a counter-hegemonic interpretation of the Tajik Civil War, since the version that reinforces the Hobbesian legitimacy of the regime is so politically useful.

There is also not really an offshore constituency within the academic or policy communities of the great powers that might attempt to "re-imagine" the Tajik Civil War as a violent power-grab by Kulobis at the expense of other social groups. Indeed, to the extent that it undermines "order first" policies, this kind of critical approach is recognized to be counterproductive. It is difficult, by extension, to credibly threaten to make foreign aid conditional—and certainly not conditional on "good governance" reforms that might democratize politics, empower opposition voices to call for redistribution and accountability, or the like. Russian and American policy professionals cannot agree on very much, but when it comes to Tajikistan there is a great deal of interest convergence: *"Better the devil we know . . ."*

Hobbes's insights may provide the most parsimonious answer to the puzzle of why so many of these powerless subjects seem willing to tolerate what amounts to a kind of emergent monarchism: *Hobbesian Neopatrimonialism*.

It is a kind of authority that rests on the claim that life without a sovereign is horrible beyond imagination, a claim that has face validity for many Tajiks. This provides an anchor of legitimacy which is subsequently buttressed by the post-Soviet institutional inheritance. For those citizens of Tajikistan old enough to have had direct experience of the violence of the war, the Hobbesian vision of the state of nature is surely credible. Those who are too young to have experienced it are bombarded with reminders of the violence in schools and on state media. It does not take much, then, for the creation of a sovereign to make the situation much better. Moreover, the worse citizens expect the state of nature to be, the less likely they are to consider rebellion. And the less a sovereign fears rebellion, the more he will feel empowered to enrich himself at the expense of his citizens.[66] In principle, as Wagner (2007) notes, the sovereign has as much to fear from rebellion as the citizens, since he would be plunged into the state of nature along with everyone else.[67] This is the basis for Hobbes's persistent insistence that "the passions that incline men to peace" are as binding on a reasoning sovereign as they are on his subjects. In practice, with conquest by foreign armies hard to imagine in contemporary Central Asia, there are few discernable disadvantages to rigging the electoral game in favor of Rahmon's personal network, looting the state, and selectively distributing money and life opportunities to buy off potential opponents.[68]

And this is indeed what we observe. Rahmon has learned that he can survive politically by weakening the state and centralizing power around himself. To the great frustration of foreign intelligence analysts, academics, and World Bank auditors, he has learned that the best way to avoid a coup is to make himself indispensable. One way to do this is to keep important details in his head rather than in institutions. It is easy to blame the face of the franchise when things do not go well. But it is not clear that a different leader would have been able to create rule of law by fiat, nor that a change in the overall system, or the personality at the top, would lift more Tajiks out of poverty faster. Daily life in Tajikistan is relatively orderly and institutionalized. Power over daily life is vested in bureaucracies and social mobilization that might challenge the power pyramid is not tolerated.

Rahmon has wrapped himself in the blanket of nationalism. Whatever his character flaws, Tajiks understand that he is fundamentally *one of them*, not an agent of the Uzbeks, the Russians, or anyone else. His particular management style is not good for the rule of law, nor is it likely to produce perpetually-lived opposition organizations that might challenge the state. Yet there is scant evidence that Rahmon weighs any of this against his core value: social order.

The reason that closed access orders are such an enduring form of government is that the fundamentals do not change very much, which allows every-

one to go about their daily lives in a predictable way. So long as Rahmon's health holds, I would be surprised if the observations in this chapter became obsolete anytime soon. Things don't change much in Tajikistan.

NOTES

1. In November, the parliament also approved changes to the penal code that made it a crime punishable by 5 years in prison to insult the "Leader of the Nation."

2. See Lisa Wedeen, *Ambiguities of Domination: Politics, Rhetoric, and Symbols in Contemporary Syria* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999). The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) did not monitor the May 2016 referendum. Though various observers have reported widespread fraud and manipulation of voter tallies in Tajik elections since independence, I am not aware of any study that convincingly quantifies the extent to which Tajiks themselves believe the vote totals in Tajik electoral exercises.

3. Samuel Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1965), 408–9.

4. John Heathershaw, "Post-Conflict Tajikistan: The Politics of Peacebuilding and the Emergence of Legitimate Order," *Central Asian Studies* 1 (May 2009). This exercise inevitably involves making psychological suppositions about others based on extended personal observation. A self-assessment of the kinds of biases that permeated my observations can be found in Jesse Driscoll, *Warlords and Coalition Politics in Post-Soviet States* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 15–23. For useful discussions of how ethnographic methods contribute to the study of political legitimacy and democratic practices in semi-authoritarian settings, see Katherine Cramer Walsh, "Scholars as Citizens: Studying Public Opinion through Ethnography," in *Political Ethnography: What Immersion Contributes to the Study of Power,* ed. Edward Schatz (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), especially 177–80, and Lisa Wedeen, "Ethnography as Interpretive Enterprise," in *Political Ethnography: What Immersion Contributes to the Study of Power,* ed. Edward Schatz (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 87–90.

5. Douglass C. North, John Joseph Wallis, and Barry R. Weingast, *Violence and Social Orders: A Conceptual Framework for Interpreting Recorded Human History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 13.

6. North, Wallis, and Weingast, *Violence and Social Orders*, 151. Note that the transition to an open access order is not guaranteed, even if all three conditions obtain; many closed access orders persevere for long periods of time on the doorstep. England arguably achieved all three doorstep conditions centuries before authentic political inclusion took place in the middle of the 19th century.

7. Max Weber, *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1953).

8. Henry E. Hale, *Patronal Politics: Eurasian Regime Dynamics in Comparative Perspective*, *Problems of International Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 9–10.

9. Alisher Ilkhamov, "Neopatrimonialism, Interest Groups and Patronage Networks: The Impasses of the Governance System in Uzbekistan," *Central Asian Survey* 26, no. 1 (March 2006): 65–84.

10. Fearon and Laitin note: "The political and military technology of insurgency will be favored, and thus civil war made more likely, when potential rebels face . . . [a] newly independent state, which suddenly loses the coercive backing of the former imperial power and whose military capabilities are new and untested." James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin, "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War," *American Political Science Review* 97, no. 1 (2003): 81. See also 79–82 generally.

11. A formalization of this logic can be found in James D. Fearon, "Why Do Some Civil Wars Last So Much Longer than Others?" *Journal of Peace Research* 41, no. 3 (May 2004): 275–301.

12. At least 40 percent of Tajikistan's state budget (often more) had been filled by subsidies from Moscow—so how would the country adjust? Would Tajikistan continue to be ruled by cadres from Leninobod or would southerners or mountain elites be permitted to rotate into positions of real power? What would become of the complex borders of the Ferghana Valley, which were obviously never meant to be interstate chokepoints? Would Bukhara and Samarkand resume their traditional role as Tajik cultural poles? Might borders be redrawn (perhaps peacefully, as in Czechoslovakia) to make it so?

13. Epkenhans presents what is probably the most rigorously researched microstudy of the processes that produced the war, adding vital individuated empirical data to complement previous sweeping macro-analyses of ideology and institutions provided by Dudoignon (1997) and Roy (2000). See Tim Epkenhans, *The Origins of the Civil War in Tajikistan: Nationalism, Islamism, and Violent Conflict in Post-Soviet Space* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2016); Stéphane Dudoignon, "Political Parties and Forces in Tajikistan, 1989–1993," in *Tajikistan: The Trials of Independence* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 52–85; Olivier Roy, *The New Central Asia: Geopolitics and the Birth of Nations* (New York: New York University Press, 2000).

14. Shirin Akiner, Mohammad-Reza Djalili, and Frédéric Gare, *Tajikistan: The Trials of Independence* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 622.

15. Kathleen Collins, *Clan Politics and Regime Transition in Central Asia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

16. Lawrence Markowitz, *State Erosion: Unlootable Resources and Unruly Elites in Central Asia* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2013).

17. In mid-November 1992, through a process that self-consciously re-appropriated the institutional and electoral machinery that Tajiks inherited from Soviet times, Rahmonov was hand-picked by fellow Kulobi "Baba" Sangak Safarov, a prominent member of the PFT, to represent their home district of Dangara. After three different national rulers had been forced to flee the capital city amidst state collapse, the 16th session of the Supreme Soviet convened in the unusual location of Arbob Kolkhoz, a collective farm on the outskirts of Leninobod. Security at the meeting was guaranteed by Safarov. Socially conservative deputies from the northern region of Khudjand and the southern region of Kulob were over-represented at the meeting, but there was a quorum. On November 18, 1992, 186 of the 193 deputies present elected Emomali

Rahmonov as Chairman of the Supreme Soviet. See Epkenhans, *Origins of the Civil War*, 342.

18. Quoted in Driscoll, *Warlords and Coalition Politics,* 76 (footnote 84).

19. In the mid-1990s, the Afghan warlord Shah Massoud was probably the most famous and popular Tajik alive, and the risk that he could bring the Afghan civil war to Tajikistan by relocating his soldiers to the city of Dushanbe and declaring himself president was real. If Iranian- or Afghan-backed guerillas had been able to use the impenetrable Pamiri Mountains as a base to spread war into Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, perhaps by stirring ethnic hatred in the Ferghana Valley, the human costs might have been massive.

20. According to Nakaya, World Bank and IMF professionals estimate that the per capita gross domestic product of Tajikistan today is a small fraction—perhaps as low as one-tenth—of what it was in the late Soviet period. Sumie Nakaya, "Aid and Transition from a War Economy to an Oligarchy in Post-War Tajikistan," *Central Asian Survey* 28, no. 3 (December 2009): 259–73.

21. If one asked whether warlords with Islamic sympathies should be allowed to manage the Ministry of Defense, the answer from Moscow or Washington would probably be "absolutely not." If one asked which warlord should be allowed to be the "silent partner" in a certain hotel-casino investment, provide bazaar security, or control rural drug transit rents through Eastern Badakhshan, the answer from even extremely well educated elites in Moscow or Washington in the mid-1990s would probably have been "Who cares—and where is this 'Eastern Badakhshan,' anyway?"

22. Statistical analysis of warlord biographies suggests that the winners in this tournament were not all Kulobis, nor were they commanders with hundreds of men under arms, nor were they more likely to be PFT representatives than incorporated rebel commanders that had merged their forces with security services. Having a background in the Soviet security services was one of the most statistically-robust predictors of the length of time a warlord "survived" in the Tajik state.

23. The phrase "used violence to limit entry into the area of real political power" is perhaps too antiseptic for the processes being described, which, in plain speech, often involved the murder and/or mutilation of the innocent family members of political aspirants.

24. The popular perception in Moscow was—and remains—that all the leaders in this part of the world were basically gangsters: small-time criminals, bandits, war criminals, or terrorists. The notion that some of these unsavory characters might reinvent themselves as agents of the regime could be tolerated as a matter of brokering peace, but only because Tajiks rank at (or near) the bottom of the ethnic hierarchy (with Slavs at the top). Distance in social status and casual racism should not be discounted as causal factors in Russian policy.

25. See Stina Torjensen and S. Neil MacFarlane, "R Before D: The Case of Post Conflict Reintegration in Tajikistan," *Conflict, Security & Development* 7, no. 2 (May 2007): 311–32. In Driscoll, *Warlords and Coalition Politics*, the process these authors describe is modeled formally as a two-stage game. In the first stage, warlords fought one another for the right to install a president. In the second stage, once a figurehead president had been installed, a Russian-led peace process concentrated

all the fragmented violent social capital in the state security forces, without really disarming anyone.

26. Then-member of the United Nations Tajikistan Observation Mission (UN-TOP), interview by Jesse Driscoll, Tajikistan, July 22, 2007.

27. First, the perceived Uzbek clients were liquidated, followed by the worst offenders with portfolios tied to discredited Soviet patronage structures. Then the obvious sociopaths found themselves out on the street or "disappeared." Along the way, almost anyone who tried to challenge Rahmon directly was purged.

28. After Ghaffor Mirzoyev fell out of favor in 2005 and his assets were seized, it was revealed that he was the owner of over 30 apartments and buildings in downtown neighborhoods, a bank, a casino, and more. He was a rich man compared to most Tajiks, to be sure. That being said, his total assets—which his family has not retained, since they were expropriated—pale in comparison to the hundreds of millions of dollars, all liquid and hard to trace, documented by Cooley and Heathershaw in what they call Rahmon's "slush fund." Alexander Cooley and John Heathershaw, *Dictators Without Borders: Power and Money in Central Asia* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2017), 101.

29. Collins traces the punitive use of anti-corruption drives through Soviet history, emphasizing that Tajikistan was largely spared the Brezhnev-era purges in the early 1980s (Collins, *Clan Politics*). The first and most prominent political prosecution for corruption was that of Abdulmalik Abdullojonov after he was defeated by Rahmon at the ballot box in the 1994 election. More recently, Zaid Saidov, a former minister of industry who attempted to establish a political party, was arrested and sentenced to 51 years in prison.

30. North, Wallis, and Weingast, *Violence and Social Orders*.

31. Partnerships between businessmen, whether the partnership is based on spot contracts or long-term investments, are not perpetually lived in the same way, nor are non-institutionalized religious ministries organized around the charismatic authority of an individual person.

32. Hale, *Patronal Politics*.

33. See, for instance, the ethnographic observations of behaviors consistent with "father knows best" beliefs documented by Liu. The states of post-Soviet Eurasia cluster at the bottom of cross-national indices of democratic quality. Morgan Y. Liu, "Recognizing the Khan: Authority, Space, and Political Imagination Among Uzbek Men in Post-Soviet Osh, Kyrgyzstan" (PhD diss., University of Michigan, 2002), Chapter 4, 147–202; Morgan Y. Liu, *Under Solomon's Throne* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2012), Chapter 6, 159–65 and 190–96.

34. For a more in-depth formal treatment see Driscoll, *Warlords and Coalition Politics*, Chapter 2, especially 36–37, as well as the formal propositions in Appendix 2.

35. Weber, *From Max Weber*.

36. None of the states of Central Asia are consolidated democracies. Exposure to large-scale Hobbesian anarchy was not part of the formative experience of post-independence Kyrgyz, Uzbeks, Kazakhs, or Turkmen in the same way that it has

been for Tajiks. Episodic violence such as the Osh riots, the Tulip Revolution, or the Andijan events do not remotely compare in scope or scale to Tajikistan's civil war.

37. Pauline Jones Luong, *Institutional Change and Political Continuity in Post-Soviet Central Asia: Power, Perceptions and Pacts*, Cambridge Studies in Comparative Politics (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 2.

38. The Tajik government seems to have ambitions to do more when it comes to media control but lacks capacity. Broad ambitions to curtail the freedom of information have been articulated. As state capacity grows and "best practices" evolve in its authoritarian neighbors, especially China and Uzbekistan, Tajikistan will likely model those practices. Since it is a crime to "slander" the President or insult officials, self-censorship is required by journalists. The Nations in Transit 2016 report includes mention of a law requiring all internet providers to "provide their services to clients via the government-controlled Single Communications Nexus . . . [allowing] the government to monitor all communications." Freedom House, "Nations in Transit 2016," https://freedomhouse.org/report/nations-transit/nations-transit-2016.

39. John Heathershaw, "Peacebuilding as Practice: Discourses from Post-Conflict Tajikistan," *International Peacekeeping* 14, no. 2 (2007): 219–36. I see elections as a kind of competitive tournament for the benefit of Rahmon and other regime elites, observing which local party officials are most capable of turning out the vote. For non-elites, they are a kind of national festival of participating in the will of the ruler. Everyone sees everyone else voting. Votes may not be counted, but a lot of people vote, which may somehow substitute for authentic contestation in terms of providing social order.

40. The voting numbers from the first paragraph of this essay are meant to impress *you*, dear reader.

41. Markowitz, *State Erosion*, 18–19.

42. Since the political economy of cotton in the Uzbek and Tajik states function in much the same way, Markowitz uses the comparison cases to hold many structural variables constant. Uzbekistan has sufficient concentrations of wealth to lubricate the system such that rent-seeking has a more "open" feel, with co-optation of rural elites by the center. A nearly identical system in relatively resource-poor post-independence Tajikistan led to unstable competition for scarce state resources and, ultimately, war.

43. See Edward Lemon's chapter in this volume. While there are diaspora opposition groups such as G24, Vatandor, and the IRPT, they are rotating dissident personality platforms and tend to be divided. None of them articulate clear alternatives to Rahmon, since a challenge would require a focal figurehead spearheading opposition within the territory of Tajikistan—a dangerous proposition.

44. On the transformation of social values, see, for instance, Carles Boix, "Democracy, Development, and the International System," *American Political Science Review* 105, no. 4 (November 2011).

45. Driscoll, *Warlords and Coalition Politics,* Chapter 2 and 6.

46. I base this speculation on the following thought experiment: If Rahmon were to die unexpectedly and suddenly in his sleep, would these organizations disintegrate? Surely not. Despite the very tight centralization of power in the office of the execu-

tive and the obvious importance of blood ties to managing real politics, the peaceful experiences of both Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan after the deaths of the head of state suggest that the metaphor of monarchy is just a metaphor.

47. Hale, *Patronal Politics*, 64–65.

48. North, Wallis, and Weingast, *Violence and Social Orders*, 2–18.

49. North, Wallis, and Weingast, *Violence and Social Orders*, 62–69.

50. There is a crude complementarity between Russian and American interests when it comes to Tajikistan, since the great powers want, above all, for Salafi Jihadists not to gain a foothold anywhere in the region.

51. The decision in 2016 to require all mosques in Dushanbe to install surveillance cameras is just one of many reminders to Tajik citizens that the state takes an active interest in controlling the content of religious ideology. My speculation is that in the medium to long term, the extent to which the spread of "opposition Islam" in Tajikistan is seen by Western analysts as an existential threat will depend a great deal on diplomatic relations between Iran and the West.

52. Between roughly 1996 and 2004, the amount of foreign assistance that flowed into Tajikistan was larger—often much larger—than the operating budget of the Tajik state. At the time of this writing, foreign aid flows have diminished relative to the state budget, but the bank accounts of foreign charity workers still inject a /lot/ of money into Tajikistan relative to indigenous sources of wealth. In addition to the embassies themselves, there are dozens of NGO grant subcontractors and literally hundreds of full-time Western staff—mostly drawing Western salaries on two to three year contracts—who occupy a high social position in Dushanbe.

53. The rhetoric that comes from this community hews to the idea that peaceful social change must come from the next generation of Tajik civil society. But is it likely that these kinds of institutions will "seed" social change? It is difficult to say. Optimists can recite well-rehearsed scripts drawing on the experience of the Rose Revolution in Georgia. Pessimists can recite equally well-rehearsed scripts based on the discouraging experience of neighboring Kyrgyzstan, Afghanistan, or Tajikistan itself.

54. The Law on Public Associations was amended in 2015 to require all NGOs receiving any foreign funding to document the amount and source to the Ministry of Justice in order to "prevent foreign grants from supporting terrorists and extremists." Freedom House, "Nations in Transition," 7 (footnote 17).

55. One might caricature the liberal attitudes of Western development professionals as utopian, but my experience suggests most are conservative realists who understand this. Violent social change is not the mission. Democracy may be a good long-term outcome, but no one wants to be responsible for encouraging their Tajik employees or subcontractors to engage in behaviors that might risk their safety. There is a deep appreciation that their Tajik friends are like hostages.

56. North, Wallis, and Weingast, *Violence and Social Orders*, 153.

57. Roeder, *Where Nation-States Come From*, 12–13.

58. Weber, *From Max Weber*.

59. Weber's monopoly is an ideal unattainable in reality. Even in very well-governed OECD countries, this ideal is violated by the existence of criminal fraternities, martial arts academies, and veterans' associations.

60. This has been a common pattern since the Second World War, as documented in James Quinlivan, "Coup-Proofing: Its Practice and Consequences in the Middle East," *International Security* 24, no. 2 (Fall 1999): 131–65.

61. For evidence consistent with this theory, see Cooley and Heathershaw, *Dictators Without Borders*, especially p.11 and Chapter 3.

62. I am not sure that anyone can credibly claim to know what incentives drive decision-making by regional authorities in the Pamiri Mountains—not Rahmon, not the Russian Embassy, and certainly not British or American academics, even if they make time to visit Dushanbe once or twice a year.

63. It is beyond the scope of this chapter to review all the kinds of security assistance from Russian, European, and American sources. Suffice it to say that the war on terror is unlikely to be a passing phase. There is an ever-evolving frontier of best practices associated with the cat-and-mouse games of electronic surveillance (in an effort to triangulate actionable facts). I would not want to be responsible for sorting the "good guys" from the "bad apples" in the Tajik security sector. Fearon and Laitin ("Neotrusteeship and the Problem of Weak States," *International Security* 28, no. 4 (Spring 2004): 5–43) describe consensus among the great powers, and especially the Permanent Five members of the United Nations Security Council that the negative externalities of state failure in weak states can threaten their interests.

64. Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 260.

65. Epkenhans, *Origins of the Civil War*, 354–55.

66. This is exactly why Hobbes's most famous critics, Locke and Rousseau, devoted so much attention to the narrow empirical question whether the lived experience of the state of nature (among tribal peoples residing in North America, for instance) might not be more benign than Hobbes asserts that it is.

67. R. Harrison Wagner, *War and the State: The Theory of International Politics* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2006), 72.

68. Charles Tilly is famous for his aphorism that "war makes the state and the state makes war" (Charles Tilly, *Coercion, Capital, and European States, AD 990–1992* (Massachusetts: Basil Blackwell, 1991)). Tilly's argument is that selection effects in the international system—essentially well-founded fears of conquest—produced the modern states of Europe. This authority to tax and conscript citizens has been much, much harder to sustain since the Second World War, since sovereign states almost never disappear today. See Tanisha Fazal, *State Death: The Politics and Geography of Conquest, Occupation, and Annexation* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011).

Chapter Two

Rebels without a Cause?

Authoritarian Conflict Management in Tajikistan, 2008–2015

John Heathershaw and Parviz Mullojonov

The great puzzle of post-Soviet political violence[1] is why the region's armed conflicts are shorter—and its outbreaks of violence more minor—than those of other world regions.[2] The Central Asian republics, in particular, have belied dire predictions of turmoil, chaos, and violence. Since the de-escalation of the Tajik civil war in the mid-1990s, the region has seen no inter-state wars or civil wars, and only a few minor armed conflicts. According to the Uppsala Conflict Database, these minor armed conflicts include both recognized incidents of armed conflict, with 25 or more battle-related deaths in a given year, and one-off or recurrent incidents of political violence, with fewer recorded casualties. They may take the form of sub-national, national, or international struggles. These episodes include intra-ethnic conflict and militancy and insurgency against the state. In the Central Asian cases, however, the protagonists in the struggle may also be the managers of these conflicts.

In this paper, we address the puzzle of why armed conflict has been limited in post-Soviet space,[3] and offer the concept of Authoritarian Conflict Management (ACM) as a framework to be explored in Tajikistan's multiple cases of violence and armed conflict between 2008 and 2015. ACM denotes the strategies of multiple actors to establish: 1) a single-pyramid economy of rents; 2) the centralization of political space; and 3) a stable discourse about politics in general and the conflict in particular.[4] On this view, conflict management in the newly independent states is not derivative of a top-down strategy of statebuilding, but a product of governance and resistance at the national and sub-national scales.[5] However, our research demonstrates this with greater spatial and temporal variation than has been acknowledged in most recent accounts. In particular, Tajikistan's regional conflicts differ. Moreover, the logic of coup-proofing, where rebels are resisted, has been succeeded by a logic of conflict management, where rivals are purged.[6]

Tajikistan has experienced numerous outbreaks of political violence over the 20 years since the de-escalation of its civil war (see table 2.1). It is often described by policy analysts as being on the brink of state failure or at the mercy of growing Islamist insurgency.[7] It provides a particular weak-state context for ACM. Rather than being built from the top down by a guiding elite and external assistance, Tajikistan is a state formed from the bottom up by militia reintegration, which has been indirectly supported, both materially and symbolically, by foreign aid. As Driscoll argues, in the 1990s and 2000s, "warlords *became* the state."[8] The incorporation of militias into the state brought with it a warlord politics of rivalry among factions and, most importantly, between factions and the civilian government. This has created an unstable polity that has seen repeated violent incidents—framed by the government as "rebellions"—but also has the state power to repress armed conflict.

This chapter draws on initial analysis of field data gathered under a large research project directed by Heathershaw and several smaller projects undertaken over many years by Mullojonov. We make our argument in three sections. First, we adapt and develop the conceptual framework on authoritarian

Table 2.1. Minor Armed Conflicts Concerning Tajikistan, 1995–2015

Scale	Armed Conflict[a]	Incidents of Political Violence[b]
Sub-national	Rasht conflict (2010) Khorugh conflict (2012)	Rasht kidnappings and operation against Sanginov (2001) Operation against Ahmadov (2008) Operation against Langariev (2008) "Operation Poppy"/death of Ziyoev (2009) Violence in Khorugh (2014)
National	Tajik civil war (1995) Tajik civil war (1996) Khudoiberdiev revolt (1998)	Civil war / post-conflict violence (1997–2001) Election violence (2000) Mirzoev purge/revolt (2004) Khudjand police station bomb (2010)[c] Nazarzoda purge/revolt (2015)
International		IMU attacks in Ferghana Valley (1999–2000) Border violence in Ferghana Valley (occasional) Afghan border violence (occasional)

[a] According to the Uppsala conflict database, an armed conflict is one where there are 25 or more battle-related deaths in a given year. See Uppsala Conflict Data Program, http://ucdp.uu.se/.

[b] This includes confirmed incidents of political violence recognized by local reporters and observers and not all acts of "terrorism" recorded in the Global Terrorism Database (GTD), many of which are unconfirmed and may be incidents of violence due to organized crime.

[c] Attributed to the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan by the government of Tajikistan. Recorded by GTD as "Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (suspected)." See Global Terrorism Database, https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/IncidentSummary.aspx?gtdid=201009030016.

conflict management.[9] Second, we introduce and summarize two regional cases of armed conflict which Tajikistan has faced in the 2008–2015 period—Rasht and Khorugh—using this framework, drawing on data from fieldwork and other authors' studies conducted from 2012 to 2015. We trace practices across episodes from each case[10] and note variations in the effectiveness of conflict management in suppressing violence. Finally, as a way of presenting interim findings, we use a set-theoretic approach from Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) to tabulate the findings from 2008–2015 in the longer-term context of all notable cases of political violence in Tajikistan since 1995. We deploy our three variables and eight possible types in a data table (2x2x2) of authoritarian conflict management in Tajikistan.[11]

Contrary to those who argue that recent outbreaks of violence suggest state weakness,[12] we argue that conflict management between 2008 and 2015 was relatively successful, particularly when compared to the earlier period (from 1995–2004). No significant incidents of political violence were recorded in the period 2004–2008. Since 2008, the management of armed conflict has taken place in a consolidated single-pyramid economy and an increasingly centralized political space where even peaceful opponents are more often extra-territorial; it has also been partially effective in achieving a stable security-based discourse about conflict and governance. "Rebels," moreover, are actually current or former state military commanders who are purged from power. They appear not to act strategically to launch coups d'état, but merely react when their position in the state is less secure. In so doing, they face a Hobson's choice between annihilation or reincorporation into the strengthening state under terms set by the regime.

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN AUTHORITARIAN STATES

A significant share of the historical examples of—and academic literature on—civil war are found outside the post-Soviet region, with particular attention being paid to conflicts in Africa and the Middle East. It is not just that post-Soviet space experiences fewer and less violent civil wars (a matter of quantity), but that this minor armed conflict and conflict management is of a different and peculiarly statist kind (a matter of quality). Minor armed conflicts are different in that, though they cause significant instability, they are temporary and rarely involve credible, sustained challenges to the integrity of the state. They take place within and beyond the bounds of the state but in a context where the state remains the collective subjective of distributive politics, discourse, and space. The enduring "shadow states"[13] and "war-time political orders"[14] found in Africa, both of which involve highly autonomous

non-state groups, are not found in post-Soviet space. Where new territorially-
based polities have emerged, they have evolved from Soviet institutions—
particularly autonomous republic and regions—and have taken on new
sovereign (and largely civilian) state forms.[15] It is therefore incumbent on us
to develop new conceptual tools to make sense of how conflict is managed in
these low-violence, statist, and authoritarian contexts. Three literatures have
engaged this question of conflict management; each has been deployed in the
Tajik case.

First, following the end of the Cold War, the dominant theme of the lit-
erature on conflict management was that of international intervention for
peacebuilding and statebuilding. The story of the perils and pitfalls of the
liberal peace agenda is now familiar. Tajikistan, with low levels of interna-
tional assistance and an increasingly authoritarian political context, provided
an extreme example of the follies, both intellectual and practical, of this
discourse.[16] Moreover, an early literature highlighted the occasional acts of
external powers—primarily Russia and Uzbekistan, but also Iran—to pursue
interventions that would support the re-emergence of a consolidated and illib-
eral regime.[17] A later literature, based on fieldwork, highlighted authoritarian-
ism, informal institutionalization, the predominance of local actors, and the
inadvertent effects of Western assistance, which empowered local autocrats
at the expense of civil society and political opposition.[18] Some of this work
contributed to theoretical debates which sought to overcome "liberal peace"
models. However, this debate has struggled to get beyond basic descriptive
concepts. European debates about "liberal-local hybridity," the "everyday,"
and "post-liberalism" in the practice of peacebuilding often skirt questions of
the content of either the "local" or the "illiberal."[19]

A second approach, present in the literature on civil wars, eschews exces-
sive attention to the international scale, focusing instead on the formation of
newly independent states under conditions of armed conflict or significant
political violence.[20] To use the political science terminology, state forma-
tion accounts bring the level of analysis down one notch from the place
of international assistance and intervention to the production of Leviathan.
The works of Tuncer Kilavuz, Collins, and Jones Luong all focus on regime
construction as a proxy for state formation in Tajikistan/Central Asia under
conditions of political violence.[21] The outstanding works of Zurcher, Hierman
and Nekbakhtshoev, Epkenhans, Markowitz, Nourzhanov, and Nourzhanov
and Bleuer highlight the extant place of rural elites and civil war commanders
in composing the state in Tajikistan.[22] One volume brought together much of
this work on Tajikistan under an historical-sociological approach to explain
the sources of statehood in terms of gender, economy, ethnicity, and secu-
rity.[23] However, such state formation accounts are famously broad and thus

operate at a high level of generality. They also tend to over-state the role of identity politics in non-democratic regimes suffering from political violence.

Dan Slater's *Ordering Power*, a study of durable authoritarianism in Southeast Asia, overcomes many of these weaknesses.[24] Slater identifies the sources of authoritarian state formation and durability as a single political economy of extraction combined with a shared discourse of threat. His "protection pacts" are "broad elite coalitions unified by shared perceptions of endemic and unmanageable mass threat."[25] On this account, authoritarian consolidation is intra-elite and thereby crosses major identity cleavages. "In sum," Slater writes, "the most durable authoritarian Leviathans are not simply cohesive; they reliably order power from elites towards themselves. Their resultant power advantages help them avoid challenges and crises, not just survive them."[26]

Tajikistan's recent rebellions appear to bear out Slater's conclusions. For example, when Gulmurod Halimov left his position as head of Tajikistan's OMON Special Forces to join ISIS in May 2015, he departed alone and recruited his soldiers using networks of young laborers from Tajikistan and other post-Soviet states working in Russia. He did not have a "private" militia. This was not, therefore, a moment of insurgency or non-state terrorism, but of very limited state fracture. For would-be rebels, the collective action problem remains considerable and usually insurmountable.

A third approach addresses the problematic of conflict management in Tajikistan from the perspective of former combatants and potential rebels. This approach is exemplified by two outstanding frames: Paul Staniland's "wartime political orders"[27] and Jesse Driscoll's "militia politics."[28] As Staniland observes, in the context of civil wars in South and Southeast Asia, "the pre-war networks in which insurgent leaders are embedded determine the nature of the organizations they can build when a war begins."[29] Driscoll similarly addresses re-consolidation and state formation amid conflict in Georgia and Tajikistan. "A local puppet president," he narrates, in a summary of his Tajik case study,

> served as a placeholder for opaque coalition politics. Many warlords became violence subcontractors for the regime. Some did not. Complicated bargaining followed. Back-room deals were struck. A great deal of property changed hands. Peace emerged as local criminals developed techniques to hold civilians hostage and re-write local history to their advantage. In other words, the warlords became the state.[30]

On Driscoll's account, economic, discursive, and spatial factors converge. A bottom-up process culminates in the creation of a "top"—a regime that can dictate terms and manage conflict in a broadly authoritarian manner.

In Staniland's Asian contexts beyond the post-Soviet space, such hege-mony has rarely been achieved, due to the retention of autonomous space by insurgent groups. His focus is the forms of collaboration, cooperation, and collusion between apparently opposing forces. In this sense, "war-time politi-cal order"—or, in our phrase, "conflict management"—is not a strategy but a process. Staniland summarizes:

> There are differences between patterns of state formation and insurgency—no-tably in scale and timeline—but the core dynamics of bargaining, coercion and coalition share basic similarities. We should observe uneven, heterogeneous landscapes of authority and control, with pockets of government-insurgent collusion inter-mixed with areas of conflict, shifts in political relationships between rebels and counter-insurgents triggering escalation or accommoda-tion, and diverse state-insurgent arrangements about how lethality is (or is not) controlled. The logic of violence *management* often dominates that of violence *monopolization*.[31]

Staniland's six-part typology of wartime political orders identifies variables of cooperation (visible in political discourse and economy) and "distribution of control" (which he understands in territorial terms).[32]

This brief meander through the area studies/political science literature unsurprisingly suggests that the state—whether internationally built, nation-ally centralized, or variously decentralized—remains at the heart of any understanding of conflict management. More importantly, three further con-siderations are apposite. Firstly, the very processes which shape conflict also shape how it is managed. Intra-state factions may fall out over the distribution of rents, but redistribution that follows conflict is unlikely to look much dif-ferent to that which caused it. Secondly, the boundaries between governments and rebels are highly porous; conflict and conflict management are less about competition between clearly defined groups than they are about collusion between loose coalitions. Thirdly, scale remains hugely important in conflict management, from the sub-national to the national to the international. Con-flict management takes place across all these levels, often simultaneously. While simple bottom-up and top-down models are unconvincing, identifying the interaction between management processes at different levels remains crucial.

These three lessons must be borne in mind as we develop a concept of Authoritarian Conflict Management (ACM) in the context of post-Soviet minor armed conflicts. Lewis, Heathershaw, and Megoran identify three factors which explain how and how effectively authoritarian states manage armed conflict, both minor and major.[33] "Authoritarian conflict manage-ment," they argue, "aims to prevent, de-escalate or terminate violent conflict

within a state through the hegemonic control of public discourse, space, and economic resources."[34] In ACM, one or more parties to the conflict are also conflict managers. The work of Driscoll and Staniland suggests that this is not just about governments targeting "rebels" and potential rebels, but rebels colluding with governments. Such rebels are often state-persons (*siloviki, chinovniki*), who lose their stateness after—not before—they rebel.

Following Lewis, Heathershaw, and Megoran's basic conceptualization, we adopt a stylized model of ACM with three variables.

Firstly, economic access and distribution often provide the most durable structures of conflict management. The aim of insurgency and rebellion is not necessarily to overthrow or to capture the state, but to extract a greater proportion of state-derived rents, whether in the form of public offices, international aid, a share of the illicit market (in drugs, for example), or state-funded infrastructure projects.[35] In some cases, the use of militias has given rise to what scholars have termed a "political marketplace."[36] In this context, patrons must bid for the loyalty of militias, who auction their services to the highest bidder. Militias use violence and the threat of rebellion to extract a higher price from potential patrons. However, this is not a case of state failure. Violence is understd by all parties as a bargaining technique; the political marketplace exists to allow patrons, especially those of the state, to channel material and logistical support to clients in exchange for order and stability.[37] Patronal political economy is neither inherently violent nor necessarily factional. According to Hale, it is "the *norm* throughout all recorded human history."[38] "Patronal politics" refers to "societies where individuals organize their political and economic pursuits primarily around the personalised exchange of concrete rewards and punishments through chains of actual acquaintance."[39] Corruption may be intrinsic to post-war settlements and help glue the peace together;[40] it is also part of the normal state of authoritarian and patronal politics. With Hale, we assess whether the net-effect of these processes is *a single-pyramid or a multi-pyramid* order. Established autocracies have a single pyramid of patronal politics and are sustained by the pervasive expectation that this network will endure.[41] "War-time political orders" are often multi-pyramidal.[42] In post-conflict environments, that order may still be in formation towards a "protection pact" under a single hegemon,[43] although the emergence of single-pyramid authoritarian orders may take place transnationally through liberal democracies.

Secondly, the variable of spatial politics refers to the *centralized or decentralized* quality of political space. This approach is not to rehash "levels of analysis" or compare bottom-up and top-down, but to focus on spatial linkages across scales—for example, flows between local and global economies, or online media shared by minority groups and their diaspora. The city is a

crucial site of armed conflict, colonial control, and, in some cases, spectacular showcases of imperial modernity,[44] but urban planning as a tool of conflict management has not been explored. Qualitative studies will explore how city planners act as political actors, mediating between the abstract visions of state ideologues and local struggles for material, financial, and labor resources in managing factional conflicts.[45] These spaces of conflict management are not merely local but at various scales. Transborder groups, by contrast, lack such autonomy and political representation. This raises questions which are more about political space than ethno-territorial structure. Is spatial politics relatively *centralized* and homogeneous or has a *decentralized* and heterogeneous spatial politics emerged with significant pockets of diasporic, trans-border or local space which lie beyond central control? Even where single-pyramid orders are combined with relatively homogenous spatial politics in a conflict zone, public resistance may be found beyond the acts of violent rebellion themselves.

Thirdly, we assess the stability or instability of the discursive environment. These are most obviously visible in discursive politics. Hegemonic discourses about war and peace are integral to authoritarian control in post-conflict environments. Where these discourses are subject to cynical reason, conspiracy theories, and subversive hidden transcripts, this control may begin to break down.[46] Actors in conflict management—central and local governments, ethnically-based communities, international organizations, and foreign governments—discursively render "conflict" and "peace" in quite different ways.[47] These different conceptions, emerging from various linguistic contexts, are freighted with very different visions of how social difference should be accommodated and expressed in public space, and how power should be exercised. Is coercive information control through intimidation of the media effective? Has a hegemonic narrative been established across different scales and in different-language media? Or are alternative counter-narratives commonplace in popular, elite, and/or international narratives about the conflict? Perhaps more importantly, are conspiracy theories, rumor, and hearsay breaking down a single narrative (without replacing it with a unitary alternative)? These questions of causal process lead us to assess whether the discursive order of ACM is *stable* (hegemonic) or *unstable* (anti-hegemonic).

Variations in economy, space, and discourse lead us to different types of ACM. In tables 2.2 and 2.3, some possible types are summarized in a model for hypothetical eight-part (2 × 2 × 2) typological analysis using QCA, with comparisons made to the typology of Staniland's "war-time political orders." For clarity, we have labeled the oppositional positions within the two tables, giving us four named types of conflict management: *non-hegemonic disorder* (similar to Staniland's "guerilla disorder"), where there is a multi-pyramid

Table 2.2.   Variables and Modes of Authoritarian Conflict Management: Multi-Pyramid Order ("War-Time Political Orders" [Staniland])

	Discursive politics	
	Unstable	*Stable*
Spatial politics		
Decentralized	NON-HEGEMONIC DISORDER ("Guerrilla disorder")	("Collusion")
Centralized	("Clashing monopolies")	HEGEMONIC ORDER ("Shared sovereignty")

economic order, spatially decentralized politics, and discursive instability between rival factions; *hegemonic order* (Staniland's "shared sovereignty"), where rival factions are economically independent but exist within the same centralized space and share a common discourse; *non-hegemonic pact,* where there is a single economic order, but spatial heterogeneity and discursive contestation indicate a degree of freedom and autonomy for factions; and *hegemonic pact*, where a consolidated authoritarian system has emerged, with little freedom for spatial variation and discursive difference. The latter two are equivalent to types of "protection pact" identified by Slater; where authoritarian conflict management is effective, we should be able to observe conflict management practices which are consistent with the existence of such a pact. But tracing such processes—without falling victim to confirmation bias—requires attention to intra-country variation, micro-level case study research, and discourse analysis of vernacular narratives.[48] These methodological choices allow us to probe the fragmentation of hegemonic narratives in the face of conspiracy theory and subaltern "hidden transcripts." They enable us to see where single-pyramid orders are beginning to break down or where cross-border or diasporic spaces are opening up. In short, we must consider whether practices can be traced from one episode of violence to another, and whether outcomes are consistent with these practices.

Table 2.3.   Variables and Modes of Authoritarian Conflict Management: Single-Pyramid Order ("Protection Pact" [Slater])

	Discursive politics	
	Unstable order	*Stable order*
Spatial politics		
Decentralized order	NON-HEGEMONIC PACT	
Centralized order		HEGEMONIC PACT

TAJIKISTAN'S MINOR ARMED CONFLICTS, 2008–2015

Tajikistan's authoritarian conflict management presents its own puzzles. On the one hand, repeated mismanagement within a highly-personalized order makes the reduction of violence since the late 1990s surprising. On the other hand, many observers find it difficult to explain why any of the supposed insurgents rebelled at all, given that the odds were stacked heavily in favor of the regime. Although Tajikistan has suffered recurrent political violence in the twenty years since the end of its 1992–1997 civil war, this violence has not escalated to the point of plunging the country back into civil war. Violence was much reduced after 1994, even before a formal peace agreement was signed in 1997 between the government of President Rahmon[49] and the United Tajik Opposition (UTO), which had Said Abdullo Nuri as its figurehead. Driscoll's research demonstrates that the pacts between independent commanders and the Rahmon regime were instrumental in this process in the 1990s.[50] But the reasons why conflict has not recurred—despite high rates of recidivism in recent armed conflicts—is an empirical puzzle that is not well explained by theory.

   After the low-level post-conflict fighting died down in 2001, and notwithstanding the alleged rebellion of Ghaffor Mirzoyev in 2004, there was little or no political violence in Tajikistan until the 2008 shoot-out in Gharm between OMON commander Oleg Zakharchenko and police chief and former independent commander Mirzokhuja Ahmadov.[51] The few minor armed conflicts which have taken place since then continue to reflect the legacies of the civil war. Unlike the handful of ethnic conflicts, popular rebellions, and labor riots found elsewhere in Central Asia, Tajikistan has seen repeated uprisings by alleged rebel commanders—often in the regions, sometimes in the capital. These are certainly post-conflict in form, as they invariably involve former commanders and are concentrated in regions which were on the losing side and saw much of the later violence during the civil war (particularly the Rasht Valley). These are episodes of armed conflict which seem to indicate the risk of escalation and the return to civil war. Our analysis considers what has happened in conflict management and how the recurrence of widespread armed conflict has been avoided.

Rasht Valley, 2008–2011: Toward a Hegemonic Pact

Rasht (formerly Karategin) Valley was the region of Tajikistan in which the civil war lasted longest. Though it was the Gharm Protocol ceasefire of 1996 that was instrumental in leading to the general agreement of 1997, in reality violent incidents continued until the early 2000s, including the killing of four

UN monitors in 1998, and the kidnapping of around 20 Western aid workers in 2001. In the late 1990s, a multi-pyramid order with territories outside central government control and the lack of a dominant official discourse made for "guerrilla disorder"[52] or, in the language of ACM, *non-hegemonic disorder*. Since that time, authoritarian conflict management has begun to take place, with the eventual emergence of a hegemonic pact.

The shift in conflict dynamics was economic, spatial, and eventually discursive. Several commanders hailing from the region were given posts in the central state apparatus, including Mirzokhuja Nizomov (Customs Committee/ Border Protection Committee), Mirzo Ziyoev (Minister of Emergency Situations), Mahmadruzi Iskandarov (State Energy Company Tojikgaz), Mirzokhuja Ahmadov (MVD–Gharm), and Nemat Azizov (Ministry of Emergency Situations–Tavildara). This bringing of commanders under a single patron was fragile and was succeeded by the eventual expulsion or eradication of many from Tajik political space and the closing-down of their territorial enclaves and state offices. Discursive stability was also tenuous, and the environment lacked the saturation of official discourse that would come later. In 2003–2005, Rasht provided some of the strongest evidence of "hidden transcript" against the official narrative of stability.[53]

Subsequent violence has reflected this shift towards a hegemonic pact, in that it has been sporadic and limited. The Rasht Valley saw at least three discrete incidents of political violence across a period of less than three years (2008–2011). In February 2008, OMON commander Oleg Zakharchenko was killed by one of Ahmadov's men while apparently trying to arrest the Gharm MVD officer; the OMON retreated and a presidential pardon from Rahmon himself was required to resolve the conflict.[54] In 2009, the government launched an operation to tackle several former officers alleged to have regrouped with Islamist commander Mullo Abdullo, who was himself said to have returned from Afghanistan to the Tavildara district.[55] Most seriously and recently, the September–December 2010 conflict in the Kamarob gorge resulted in the deaths of between 60 and 80 persons, many of them government troops.[56] The three incidents are related. The 2010 violence was precipitated by a Dushanbe prison break-out freeing the prisoners who had been convicted after the 2009 violence. Ahmadov, the prime mover in 2008, was attacked by government troops before being once again reintegrated into the state.[57] Despite the fact that a very small militant force inflicted significant casualties on Tajikistan's poorly trained armed forces, the 2010 conflict did not see any sustained calls for international intervention. By January 2011, the isolated militant group of Alovuddin Davlatov had been wiped out and its commander summarily executed. Mullo Abdullo was killed in April 2011 and other prisoners were caught later in the year. But it was not only the (rather inefficient

use of) violence that managed the conflict, but also the ACM processes of economy, space, and discourse.

Firstly, the regime has been successful in seizing economic control of the region and integrating it into President Rahmon's single pyramid. The direct cause of the 2008 conflict was probably the dispute over a coal mine, Nazar-Ailok, located above the town of Gharm and north of the village of Hoit. The Nazar-Ailok mine is considered one of the most attractive investment enterprises of the Rasht region, with potential deposit reserves amounting to around 400 metric tons.[58] Since the end of the 1990s, it has been controlled by a group of former UTO field commanders and fighters reportedly affiliated with Mirzokhuja Ahmadov and Shoh Iskandar.[59]

The coal mine is included in the national development plan as a potential energy supplier for the Tajik Aluminum Company (TALCO), the country's largest industrial asset and a consumer of vast quantities of electricity. The government was planning to attract at least US$70 million of additional investment to construct a coal processing factory in the province. The initial investor in the coal mine was British firm Saddleback Ltd. Company; in 2007, Tajik-Chinese-Kazakh Joint Company KiTaKa entered into negotiations with TALCO concerning the "latter using the mine coal."[60] In 2007, the Ismaili Somoni Company, owned by Hasan Asadullozoda, the President's brother-in-law, attempted to seize control over the coal mine, but Ahmadov and his group actively resisted. In August 2007, a group of armed men attacked vehicles and personnel belonging to KiTaKa (the Tajik Ministry of Interior later accused Ahmadov and his men of organizing the attack).[61] In response, Assadullozoda's group allegedly promoted a forcible solution of the conflict by Dushanbe, which led to the unsuccessful attempt to arrest Ahmadov in 2008 and eradicate his group (resulting in the death of Zakharchenko, outlined above). The dispute over the coal mine triggered a large-scale confrontation between the central government and former UTO commanders, as well as a series of military operations in the Rasht and Tavildara districts in 2008–2011. Nazar-Ailok eventually passed into Asadullozoda's control, but a compromise was apparently found: according to informal sources, the government designated a share of the coal mine to Ahmadov in order to maintain stability in the region.[62] However, the agreement was broken in 2010 and resistance remained at the fringes. Thus, in 2013, a group of unknown gunmen executed the mine director appointed by Assadullozoda and the authorities.[63]

Secondly, the re-centralization of political space has also been a turbulent but largely successful process in Rasht. Particularly notable is that centralized space proved fragile as villages in Gharm, Tavildara, and Kamarob provided places of retreat in 2008, 2009, and 2010. This fracturing of space was visible in pockets that ex-commanders sought to carve out in the Gharm MVD, in

remote Tavildara and the Kamarob gorge. The goal of conflict management was to stabilize and re-center this pact by controlling the discourse on the conflict, and either eradicate or reincorporate autonomous state commanders into the state spaces of the central regime. Importantly, this process was not merely at the dictate of central government, but required side-switching by potential and actual rebels during a bout of political violence. This is most clear in Ahmadov's behavior between 2008 and 2010, during which he publicly reoriented his loyalty on three occasions.[64]

It should be stressed that former opposition commanders did not rebel purely because central authorities threatened their economic interests. According to Ahmadov and his subordinates, the main reason for the uprising was concern for their security and safety, as since the conclusion of the Peace Treaty a considerable number of former UTO members had faced repression and prosecution. The majority of local field commanders and informal leaders, starting with Mirzo Ziyoev, former UTO chief commander and former Minister of Emergency of the Republic of Tajikistan, were liquidated or arrested by the security services. In several interviews, Ahmadov stated that UTO members increasingly felt themselves under threat, which drove them to take up arms once again. Due to government pressure over several months in 2010, more than 30 former opposition fighters and their relatives left their homes to take refuge in the mountains.[65] The rebels accused the Tajik security agencies of intentionally provoking uprisings in Rasht with the aim of wiping out the remnants of Tajik opposition in the region.[66]

Thirdly, the authoritarian state has sought to control the political discourse about the region and keep many of the aspects summarized above hidden from view. Edward Lemon has detailed the effectiveness of this hegemonic discursive environment, achieved by excluding and coercing journalists and propagating a consistent terrorism narrative.[67] For example, Defense Minister Sherali Khayrulloyev, justifying the government's military response, remarked on September 25, 2010: "At a time like this, they're [the media] calling for dialogue (*mukoloma*) and negotiations (*gushtshunid*). One would like to ask, dialogue with whom? With terrorists and murderers, or with leaders of political parties?"[68]

Many Rasht Valley leaders succumbed to this narrative and agreed to fully recognize government domination. They proved their loyalty by directly participating in the government police operations in Rasht and GBAO, fighting against their former comrades. In 2010, Mirzokhuja Ahmadov and Shoh Iskandar were involved in the liquidation of anti-government groups in Rasht Valley;[69] in July 2012, Shoh Iskandar and his men participated in the government military operation in Khorugh.[70] Both commanders actively supported the candidacy of Emomali Rahmon in the 2013 presidential elections and—

according to informal sources—backed the government decision to ban the Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan (IRPT) in 2015.[71]

In sum, conflict management passed from a *non-hegemonic* to a *hegemonic* approach in the decade between 2000 and 2010.[72] This was a dramatic shift brought about by parallel moves across all three variables: the incorporation of most spaces of independent economic activity into the emerging single-pyramid system; the closure of most of the autonomous state spaces of former commanders; and the control of the discourse with the invocation of nation-state-building across all modes of public discourse. In return for their loyalty, Dushanbe offered loyal field commanders the chance to participate in the "hegemonic pact" and reintegrated them into state structures. Under such an informal arrangement, field commanders are supposed to assist Dushanbe in ensuring the stability and loyalty of the Rasht Valley population, brokering the state's access to the territory.

Khorugh 2012: A Non-Hegemonic Pact?

Khorugh is the provincial capital of Tajikistan's Gorno-Badakhshan Autono-mous Region (known as GBAO), home to the Pamiri, peoples of Eastern Ira-nian origin who practice Ismaili Shi'a Islam, as well as to a significant Kyrgyz minority. During the civil war, Pamiris formed militias that fought against the government; they temporarily joined the formal opposition, before concluding an unofficial non-aggression pact with the Rahmon government in 1993. The informal and unstated dimension of this arrangement was with respect to the divvying-up of drug trafficking among factions.[73] More recently, however, this arrangement has begun to break down. In July 2012, a group led by Tolib Ayombekov and composed of former civil war fighters and youths were in-volved in a dispute with a senior general visiting from Dushanbe, who was slain in the altercation, leading to a large-scale military response by the government of Tajikistan. Dozens were killed. Rahmon canceled his trip to the London 2012 Olympics, and 4,000 troops were sent to quell the violence. The inter-national response was muted, though diplomatic channels were employed.[74] However, it took mediation by local civil society leaders, the killing of dozens of fighters (including the prominent commander Imomnazarov), and the rein-corporation of Ayombekov to restore relative calm to Khorugh.[75] Moreover, order remained precarious. In May 2014, violence broke out again; fighting between the security services and "narco-traffickers" led to the death of one of the alleged criminal leaders and, in response, the burning of several government buildings and the death of one policeman.[76]

In terms of our variables, it is easy to see why the Khorugh events caused so much concern: they involved the largest military and paramilitary de-

ployment in Tajikistan since 1998 and a personal visit by the President to the region. Some of the units deployed had received Western security assistance, particularly from the United States. Khorugh is incorporated into the single-pyramid order under Rahmon, and it may be assumed to be similar in character to Rasht. But GBAO is far from being a spatially centralized and discursively stable environment. The Pamiri diaspora and its spiritual leader, the Aga Khan, provide public goods through the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN). In addition, cross-border trafficking links with Afghanistan and GBAO's formal but diminished political autonomy mean that space is fractured. The region also presented a very different discursive environment before and during the conflict, one which remains much more open and non-hegemonic. Pamiri civil society mobilized in local protests and diaspora demonstrations at Tajik embassies overseas.[77] A human rights campaign led to a detailed and widely-publicized report.[78] A coalition of NGOs wrote directly to the President, and a group of mediators (Group 20) formed to represent regional interests and demand negotiations.[79] According to the model, Khorugh was a conflict which was managed on the model of a *non-hegemonic pact*, where significant resistance was maintained for some time. Eventually, a new class of local leaders, appointed by and subordinate to the President, were able to assert their authority.[80]

Our three dimensions—economic, spatial, and discursive—intertwine in the Khorugh story, but suggest an overall picture of economic hegemony regained in a place which remains far from being spatially centralized and discursively stable. Official propaganda described the Khorugh events as a result of the activities of local extremist and criminal groups and the destabilizing interference of the "third powers."[81] However, there is a set of alternative explanations, widely disseminated among independent experts and by an absolute majority of Badakhshan respondents. According to these interpretations, it was criminal-business elites in Dushanbe who lobbied for the use of force against state actors, who served as criminal bosses overseeing trafficking. In Badakhshan, many think the conflict related to control over the transit of tobacco from Afghanistan through GBAO territory; Khorugh residents therefore nicknamed this special operation the "Tobacco War."[82] Public opinion is partly based on an interview of Imomnazarov that appeared in the Tajik media. He stated:

> General [Nazarov] had some joint business with Tolib [Ayombekov]. Tolib brought a batch of cigarettes from Afghanistan, but after that the goods were stopped in Kulyab. It seems he paid all duties, but nevertheless the goods were held up. General [Nazarov] requested Tolib to pay $10,000 or otherwise not receive his goods. Tolib refused to pay this amount, and Nazarov began to

threaten him. Tolib told [Nazarov] if he needed money he could give him less, but Nazarov did not agree, and on these grounds the conflict arose.[83]

It is impossible to verify the political-economic details of this account, but the fact that it is widely believed is of interest in terms of what it tells us about the discursive environment.

In another variant of this conspiracy narrative, a direct goal of the military operation was the liquidation of a network of Badakhshani informal leaders and state security commanders involved in legal and illegal business in the region. According to this counter-narrative, the violence was intended to establish total control over trade with Afghanistan (principally tobacco goods and the extraction of precious stones) by replacing former field commanders and security officers of uncertain loyalty with representatives appointed by Dushanbe. Along these lines, one independent journalist writing for a Russian news agency suggested that:

> In reality, the purpose of the operation was to establish central governmental control over transit flows between China, Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, and the remaining part of Tajikistan. In the Tajik press, it was reported that a terminal in Tang gorge near Khorugh—where heavy-load trucks from China and Kyrgyzstan come—was previously acquired by members of one influential family in the country.[84]

This counter-narrative continues by suggesting that having acquired the right to seek rent at the border, this family faced local opposition and therefore pressed for a military response from Dushanbe, during which Nazarov was slain. While conspiracy theories surrounding the 2010 violence in Rasht also abound, none have been so widely circulated.

If these counter-narratives are (even partially) correct, they provide evidence of a multi-pyramid economic order in Badakhshan until 2012.[85] In themselves, insofar as they are widely believed by regional elites and citizens, they demonstrate the center's failure to achieve discursive hegemony over Badakhshan both before and after 2012. This reflects the decentralized political space of Badakhshan, as well as the complicated and tense relations between Dushanbe, regional officials, AKDN representatives, and local informal leaders. In particular, over the course of the preceding years, the Pamiri field commanders were involved in a series of violent incidents with police and security authorities. The conflicts resulted in a series of public protests and meetings in Khorugh in the period from 2008 to 2011.[86] The authorities warned that, in the future, former field commanders could either act as an independent political force or be used by internal opposition to their own ends (implausibly, since IRPT has little support in Badakhshan), perhaps

supported by a foreign power—the infamous "third force" of official conspiracy narratives.[87] In an interview prior to his death, Imomnazarov fanned the flames around this version of events. He stated that former GBAO field commanders were offered US$7 million if they agreed to act against the government, but they refused.[88] In addition, the Russian press reported plans to construct a toll highway through the Pamirs similar to the road that connects Dushanbe and Khudjand, the fees from which are funnelled to an offshore company under elite control.[89] Despite some uncertainty as to the events, the intertwined dimensions of economy, space, and discourse demonstrate a weaker and less certain mode of ACM in the Khorugh case.

While it is tempting to attribute the course of the conflict to inter-elite dynamics, the reason that Khorugh's conflict management practices fall short of achieving a hegemonic pact over the Badakhshan region has to do with the popular response. The government attempt to establish a hegemonic pact in GBAO failed because of the unexpected reaction of the Khorugh population. Initially, the Tajik authorities expected the local population to stand aside and remain indifferent to the liquidation of the field commanders, as had been the case in Rasht. However, a significant number of the city's residents, especially young people, perceived the military action as an operation against the entire population of Badakhshan. As a result, the action to neutralize field commanders almost immediately developed into a large-scale confrontation with local residents, who repeatedly protested in the days following the start of the military operation and the apparent assassination of Imomnazarov. This forced the Tajik authorities to cease military action on the second day and agree to certain compromises with the informal leaders.

TRENDS AND IMPLICATIONS
OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT, 1995–2015

In both regional cases, it is clear that minor armed conflict took place *within* the state between individuals who were current or recent middle- or senior-ranking military or police officers. There is little evidence to support the notion that these rebellions were insurgencies or coups d'état against the regime. They are better understood as intra-state struggles between the Dushanbe regime around Rahmon and former commanders, both former pro-government and former UTO, who have been *fully or partly integrated into the security services* but have fallen out of favor. While the details of the incidents are murky, and we only know part of the story, it seems likely that the Dushanbe regime is the first mover in most "rebellions." In all six recorded cases of prominent commanders supposedly rising against the state in the period from

2008 to 2015, the "rebel" either died in battle (Ziyoev in 2009; Nazarzoda in 2015), was summarily executed or assassinated (Davlatov in 2010–11; Imomnazarov in 2012), or was reintegrated into the security services under strict terms of non-disclosure (Ahmadov in 2008; Ayombekov in 2012).

The early findings summarized above therefore suggest that rather than being understood as anti-state, violence should be seen as emerging from within the state in response to the attempt to establish a single-patron pact and consolidated authoritarian regime. In both cases, rebels raised arms not against Rahmon or the government but for their own survival and to protect economic assets which were under threat from actors more closely linked to the authoritarian regime. Some authors dismiss the "official" status of former oppositionists brought into the state as nominal and therefore continue to describe them as "rebels" or "warlords." However, we argue that this is a mistake as, in so doing, such scholars miss the role of state formation in both conflict and conflict management. It *is* largely the case in the weak Central Asian states of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan that the state retains the monopoly of legitimate violence, although this monopoly is dispersed across actors who sometimes fight among themselves. The complexity is found in the fact that because the state is not unified, neither is the violence.

Therefore, it is also important to explain how the two regional cases and their associated episodes vary. The two cases constitute "more successful" and "less successful" examples of authoritarian conflict management. In Rasht, violence took the form of localized conflicts between power-brokers, which were ultimately successful in asserting the legitimacy of the single-pyramid economic order, centralized state space, and the official discourse. In Slater's term, an effective "protection pact" was achieved as potential rebels switched sides. While the recent episode of violence in Rasht is popularly understood in terms of the alleged Islamist rebellion by Davlatov and his followers in September 2010, our research suggests that it should be seen as part of the narrowing of the post-war pact to exclude Rasht Valley commanders and prevent the entry of new actors into the region's political economy. However, in Khorugh, the civil war and the autonomy agreement dating back to 1993 continue to exert significant influence over elite and popular expectations. The authoritarian regime faced more significant resistance, both elite and popular, in its attempt to impose hegemonic order. The murky evidence suggests that a single-pyramid order was imposed, but the resistance to this order demonstrates that Khorugh remains a decentralized space with an unstable discursive environment.

The most recent case of significant political violence in Tajikistan bears witness to these trends and suggests that ACM, rather than being simply a crisis management strategy, is a basket of practices for purging the state

of those who compete with the authoritarian regime. For many observers, and in the government of Tajikistan's official discourse, the recent events involving the apparent rebellion of Deputy Defence Minister Abduhalim Nazarzoda ("Hoji Halim") are consistent with the pattern of the Rasht conflict: former opposition and Islamist civil war commanders being purged from the state into which they had reintegrated. In the days following the September 4, 2015 violence in Vahdat and Dushanbe, some observers feared it was a greater challenge to stability because it took place in the capital and the supposed rebellion was led by a senior official.[90] In actuality, Nazarzoda and his followers met a predictable, expedited, and bloody end in the Romit gorge, to which they had retreated following the initial clashes. According to the official narrative, Nazarzoda was planning a coup d'état on behalf of the IRPT and its leader Muhiddin Kabiri.[91] This had been five years in the planning, dating back to the 2010 Rasht violence. The party, which had been subject to a defamation campaign and various measures of repression and violence since 2010, was finally banned and declared a terrorist organization.[92] The entire leadership of the party—with the exception of the exiled Kabiri—was arrested and subject to a relentless defamation campaign in the national press.[93] Defense lawyers were subsequently arrested and journalists who attempted to cover the case intimidated.[94] Even the deceased and widely respected Said Abdullo Nuri, who signed the peace accord with Rahmon in 1997, has been defamed and recast as villainous,[95] a particularly obvious case of the discursive processes of ACM.

In terms of the model, this is a straightforward case of a hegemonic pact. Nazarzoda's economic assets were part of the national single-pyramid order which he had joined in 1997, and he was promoted to Deputy Defence Minister in 2012.[96] He formally remained in post until two days after his "rebellion" and had little or no opportunity to carve out space for himself in the regions or within the state. Moreover, he presented little public discourse against the official hegemonic narrative and lacked a public profile prior to the violence. Even the leadership of the IRPT, which was spuriously accused of allying with Nazarzoda, retained a moderately critical public discourse that remained marginal in Tajik society in 2015.[97] ACM therefore took place under the conditions of a single-pyramid order, centralized space, and discursive stability. A major international football match—the World Cup qualifying game against Australia—was even able to take place concurrently with the operation.

In the period from 1995 to 2015, a shift in patterns of conflict management toward a single-pyramid, more stable, and more centralized type of ACM can be observed (see tables 2.4 and 2.5). The "guerilla disorder" of the wartime political order began to shift as the ceasefire of late 1996 and the 1997 peace

accord brought discursive stability. Subsequent violence—including violence later in the war, the incursion into the northern province of Khujand by renegade colonel Mahmud Khudoberdiev, the violence around the first post-conflict parliamentary elections, and the kidnappings of foreigners in the Rasht Valley—was reasonably and convincingly portrayed as a betrayal of these great acts of national reconciliation.[98] But the existence of alternative patrons and marginal spaces of resistance meant that, in each case, the violence was more difficult to manage. However, attacks on city centers, violence around elections, and kidnappings had all stopped by 2004. With the exception of Khorugh, in the past 20 years, Tajikistan has shifted from non-hegemonic or "guerilla" disorder to a stable, centralized, and single-pyramid pact.

The purge of General Ghaffor Mirzoyev in 2004 seems to be a seminal moment in the consolidation of the authoritarian regime and its *hegemonic pact*. Information about the purge is sketchy, but it was widely understood in the national and international discourse that Mirzoyev had been planning a coup d'état.[99] Despite being the head of the presidential guard, Mirzoyev was, surprisingly, unable to mobilize a detachment of forces loyal to him against his enemies within the regime. His state spaces were less under his personal control than many supposed. Finally, and most importantly, in the aftermath of the purge, the Rahmon regime was able to wrest control of TALCO, the country's biggest industrial facility and export earner, by removing its management and creating a new offshore arrangement in the British Virgin Islands.[100] It subsequently fought an inconclusive and extremely expensive court case to protect its seizure of TALCO from the previous managers and foreign partners, who had seen their contracts arbitrarily cancelled. A single-pyramid pact could now be established.

Taken together, the aggregation and disaggregation of these Tajikistani cases allows us to make some limited theoretical conclusions appropriate to a

Table 2.4.   Tajikistan's Minor Armed Conflicts in Terms of ACM, 1995–2015: Multi-Pyramid Order

	Discursive politics	
	Unstable	*Stable*
Spatial politics		
Decentralized	NON-HEGEMONIC DISORDER	Tajik civil war (1997)
	Tajik civil war (1995)	Khudoiberdiev revolt (1998)
	Tajik civil war (1996)	Election violence (2000)
		Rasht kidnappings (2002)
Centralized		HEGEMONIC ORDER
		Mirzoyev purge/revolt (2004)

Table 2.5. Tajikistan's Minor Armed Conflicts in Terms of ACM, 1995–2015: Single-Pyramid Pact

	Discursive politics	
	Unstable	Stable
Spatial politics		
Decentralized	NON-HEGEMONIC PACT Khorugh conflict (2012, 2014)	Ahmadov purge (2008)
Centralized		HEGEMONIC PACT Nazarzoda purge (2015) "Operation Poppy"/Ziyoev (2009) Rasht conflict / Ali Bedaki (2010)

limited proof-of-concept study. In the vein of micro-level approaches,[101] but as a partial corrective to some of the best work on Tajikistan,[102] it is important to tell the stories of conflict management as particular and differentiated processes of spatial variation and temporal periodization. Economic, spatial, and discursive orders vary across locales—and these variations matter. There is no single order, pact, or deal which is made and maintained over the whole period from 1995 to 2015. Deals are constantly remade, and their remaking reflects different types of ACM. That being said, these pacts—all made under a single patron—bear family resemblances. Our evidence suggests that in every case, these pacts served as both a cause of conflict and a mode of conflict management. The clear distinction between the means of conflict and that of conflict management is lost when we recognize both as being locally-driven processes with minimal external influence. Conflict takes place and is managed without either a malfeasant "third force" or a benign "third party" setting the terms.

CONCLUSIONS

This chapter offers no more than the first steps toward concept formation and testing. Three variables of Authoritarian Conflict Management have been developed from Lewis et al. and deployed in accordance with a set-theoretic approach for the purpose of inductively analyzing data arising from a recent research project on conflict management in Central Asia.[103] A single-pyramid economy of rents, spatial re-centralization, and discursive stability are central features of the strongest types of ACM. The pacts and orders of authoritarian conflict management have been developed into a typology that draws on the work of Staniland[104] and Slater;[105] this is deployed in the Tajik context. Colleagues' research on southern Kyrgyzstan has found ACM practices at

a very local level where intra-elite pacts and spatial dynamics help explain why violence spread to some areas and not others.[106] However, these are early findings, prior to the cross-national comparative analysis that is necessary before general trends are identified in the management of minor armed conflict in post-Soviet space.

With regard to Tajikistan in 2008–2015, we can speak with greater certainty. As tables 2.4 and 2.5 demonstrate, conflict management has progressed from disorder to a pact-based system, either hegemonic (Rasht) or non-hegemonic (Khorugh), in the outlying regions. Since the 1990s, the general trend has been towards hegemony. "Coup-proofing" is a fair way of characterizing this process in its early stages: the 1990s and early 2000s.[107] However, since 2004, each incidence of violence has involved the eradication of reintegrated commanders, rather than an external threat to the center financed by a rival patron and undertaken from a secure rebel base. Under the conditions of a hegemonic pact, the Rahmon regime largely picks its battles, rather than its battles choosing it.

These findings regarding the short-term efficaciousness of ACM in Tajikistan extend neither to long-term prediction nor normative judgment. Whereas liberal conflict management is presumed to be a good, no such assumptions can be made with regard to ACM. Other modes of managing conflict may well be more just and more effective in the long term. The Tajik authorities' actions are ad hoc rather than institutional, and may be described as a continuous effort to uproot any signs of potential resistance, destroy any space for public mobilization, and retain control of all opportunities for significant wealth creation. Former field commanders, as well as all other influential groups and informal leaders, are essentially required to pass a loyalty test and adhere to a hegemonic pact designed and proposed by the authorities. Those who fail the test or do not accept the hegemonic pact's provisions are accused of anti-government activities, and prosecuted or destroyed. However, the stability these practices seek is never fully attained. With rival business and family groups allied to the Rahmon regime competing for power, the hegemonic pact's provisions are too often revised arbitrarily. This approach also serves to intensify the ongoing deterioration of the social and economic situation in the country, with high levels of migration and a rent-seeking economy. Instead of implementing reforms, the Tajik government prefers to further enhance its hegemony and grip on society.

There is therefore good reason to doubt the long-term durability of Tajikistan's ACM. In the long-term, our findings suggest hypertrophy, for three reasons. First of all, a major external shock may eventually combine with economic and social polarization between elites and masses to cause a crisis in the country. In the meantime, there is no sign of the authorities develop-

ing a realistic crisis response strategy. Secondly, the Tajik authorities have failed to modify the power-sharing system in the country following the civil war and to ensure that new entrants from outside the ruling circle have an opportunity to join the patronal system. Recent research suggests that inclusive authoritarian power-sharing—not an oxymoron, but a single pyramid in the form of a grand coalition of elites—is the most effective means of achieving regime durability in non-democratic contexts.[108] In Tajikistan, this has not happened; all the conflict-generating factors that drove the country to civil war in the beginning of the 1990s are still in place. Thirdly, the recurrence of violence suggests that the Tajik government is only partly successful in controlling the activities of the "interest groups" formed around the ruling family. These sub-factions have already distributed the vast majority of the country's resources among themselves, both at the national level and in Dushanbe. As they look for new forms of income, they encroach on the peripheral regions, where they face resistance from local factions, as shown in the cases of the Rasht coal mine and Khorugh trafficking routes. In the majority of recent conflicts, existing informal agreements and pacts were first violated by the government on behalf of an interest group within the regime, and this provoked resistance from regional incumbents.

This should lead us to question the characterization of the minor armed conflicts of 2008–2015 as rebellions,[109] while recognizing that Tajikistan has yet to attain the authoritarian stability of many of its neighbors. The "rebels" (officers of the state security services), such as Ahmadov, Ayombekov, and Nazarzoda, had their own reasons for taking up arms against the regime rather than merely succumbing to the consolidated authoritarian system. These may have been narrowly economic, personal, or honor-based. Most likely, other potential rebels responded differently to this Hobson's choice; these non-cases remain empirically unobservable. But to make sense of these "rebellions" and non-rebellions, we should not find *cause* simply in their personal and individual motives. Nor are the causes of conflict and conflict management a matter of state failure and autonomous factional groups. Rather, they are found in authoritarian state consolidation itself and its political-economic, spatial, and discursive processes. It is the state which makes these rebels. In this sense, they are rebels without a cause.

NOTES

2. Most global mapping efforts show post-Soviet space as having comparatively shorter and less violent conflicts. See, for example, Center for Systemic Peace, "Major Episodes of Political Violence, 1946–2016," http://www.systemicpeace.org/inscrdata.html.

3. Examples of political violence are more numerous and include numerous alleged terrorist attacks and violence associated with organized crime. However, Central Asia experiences relatively few incidents and casualties from terrorist violence compared to other regions, including comparatively democratic or advanced regions such as the EU and South-East Asia. See the University of Maryland global terrorism dataset: Global Terrorism Database, https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/.

4. David Lewis, John Heathershaw, and Nick Megoran, "'Illiberal Peace?': Authoritarian Approaches to Conflict Management," *Cooperation and Conflict* (forthcoming).

5. Jesse Driscoll, *Warlords and Coalition Politics in Post-Soviet States*, Cambridge Studies in Comparative Politics (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015); Lawrence P. Markowitz, *State Erosion: Unlootable Resources and Unruly Elites in Central Asia* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2013); Suzanne Levi-Sanchez, *The Afghan–Central Asia Borderland: The State and Local Leaders* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016).

6. Cf. Driscoll, *Warlords and Coalition Politics.*

7. "Tajikistan: On the Road to Failure," International Crisis Group (ICG), Dushanbe/Brussels, February 12, 2009; "Tajikistan Early Warning: Internal Pressures, External Threats," International Crisis Group (ICG), January 11, 2016, https://www.crisisgroup.org/europe-central-asia/central-asia/tajikistan/tajikistan-early-warning-internal-pressures-external-threats.

8. Driscoll, *Warlords and Coalition Politics,* 2.

9. See Lewis et al., "Illiberal Peace?"

10. Vincent Pouliot, "Practice Tracing," in *Process Tracing: From Metaphor to Analytical Tool*, ed. Andrew Bennett and Jeffrey T. Checkel (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

11. Benoît Rihoux and Axel Marx, "Qualitative Comparative Analysis at 25: State of Play and Agenda," *Political Research Quarterly* 66, no. 1 (2013): 167–235.

12. "Tajikistan: On the Road," ICG; "Tajikistan Early Warning," ICG.

13. William Reno, *Warlord Politics and African States* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1998); Kimberly Marten, *Warlords: Strong-Arm Brokers in Weak States* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2012).

14. Paul Staniland, *Networks of Rebellion: Explaining Insurgent Cohesion and Collapse* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2014).

15. Julie George, "Expecting Ethnic Conflict: The Soviet Legacy and Ethnic Politics in the Caucasus and Central Asia," in *The Politics of Transition in Central Asia and the Caucasus*, ed. Amanda Wooden and Christoph Stefes (Abingdon: Routledge, 2009), 75–102.

16. John Heathershaw, *Post-Conflict Tajikistan: The Politics of Peacebuilding and the Emergence of Legitimate Order* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2009).

17. Barnett R. Rubin, "Russian Hegemony and State Breakdown in the Periphery," in *Post-Soviet Political Order; Conflict and State Building,* ed. Barnett R. Rubin and Jack Snyder (New York: Routledge, 1998), 128–61; Dov Lynch, "The Tajik Civil War and Peace Process," *Civil Wars* 4, no. 4 (2001): 49–72; Stuart Horsman, "Uzbekistan's Involvement in the Tajik Civil War 1992–97: Domestic Consideration," *Central Asian Survey* 18, no. 1 (1999): 37–48.

18. Heathershaw, *Post-Conflict Tajikistan;* Sumie Nakaya, "A Paradox of Peacebuilding Aid: Institutionalized Exclusion and Violence in Post-Conflict States" (PhD diss., City University of New York, 2009).

19. Roger MacGinty, *International Peacebuilding and Local Resistance: Hybrid Forms of Peace* (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave-MacMillan, 2012); Oliver P. Richmond, *A Post-Liberal Peace* (London: Routledge, 2011).

20. James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin, "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War," *American Political Science Review* 97, no. 1 (2003): 75–90.

21. Idil Tuncer Kilavuz, *Power, Networks and Violent Conflict in Central Asia* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2013); Kathleen Collins, *Clan Politics and Regime Transition in Central Asia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Pauline Jones-Luong, *Institutional Change and Political Continuity in Post-Soviet Central Asia: Power, Perceptions, and Pacts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

22. Christoph Zürcher, *Analysis of Peace and Conflict Potential in Rasht Valley* (Shuraobad District and GBAO, Berlin: Analysis Research Consulting, March 2004); Brent Hierman and Navruz Nekbakhtshoev, "Whose Land Is It?: Land Reform, Minorities, and the Titular 'Nation' in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan," *Nationalities Papers: The Journal of Nationalism and Ethnicity* 42, no. 2 (March 2014): 336–54; Tim Epkenhans, *The Origins of the Civil War in Tajikistan: Nationalism, Islamism and Violent Conflict in the Post-Soviet Space* (Boulder, CO: Lexington Books, 2016); Markowitz, *State Erosion;* Kirill Nourzhanov, "Saviours of the Nation or Robber Barons? Warlord Politics in Tajikistan," *Central Asian Survey* 24, no. 2 (2005): 109–30; Kirill Nourzhanov and Christian Bleuer, *Tajikistan: A Political and Social History* (Canberra: ANU Press, 2013).

23. John Heathershaw and Edmund Herzig, *The Transformation of Tajikistan: The Sources of Statehood* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2012).

24. Dan Slater, *Ordering Power: Contentious Politics and Authoritarian Leviathans in South-East Asia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

25. Ibid., 385.

26. Ibid.

27. Staniland, *Networks of Rebellion.*

28. Driscoll, *Warlords and Coalition Politics.*

29. Staniland, *Networks of Rebellion*, 1–2.

30. Driscoll, *Warlords and Coalition Politics*, 2.

31. Staniland, *Networks of Rebellion*, 247.

32. This framework partially maps on to our multi-pyramid model, where levels of violence tend to be higher. It is to be expected that it would be less relevant for the single-pyramid model, where violence tends to be less. See tables 2.2a and 2.2b.

33. Lewis et al., "Illiberal Peace?"

34. Ibid., 7.

35. Christopher Cramer, *Civil War is Not a Stupid Thing: Accounting for Violence in Developing Countries* (London: Hurst, 2006).

36. Alex De Waal, *The Political Marketplace: Analyzing Political Entrepreneurs and Political Bargaining with a Business Lens* (Seminar Memo, Tufts University World Peace Foundation, October 17, 2014), http://sites.tufts.edu/reinventing-peace/files/2014/10/Political-Marketplace_de-Waal.pdf.

37. Reno, *Warlord Politics*; Christopher Vaughan, "'Demonstrating the Machine Guns': Rebellion, Violence and State Formation in Early Darfur," *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 42, no. 2 (2014): 286–307.

38. Henry Hale, *Patronal Politics: Eurasian Regime Dynamics in Comparative Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 28.

39. Hale, *Patronal Politics,* 9–10.

40. Reinoud Leenders*, Spoils of Truce: Corruption and State-Building in Postwar Lebanon* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2012); Dominik Zaum and Christine Cheng, eds., *Corruption and Post-Conflict Peacebuilding: Selling the Peace?* (London: Routledge, 2011).

41. Hale, *Patronal Politics,* 36–37.

42. Staniland, *Networks of Rebellion*.

43. Slater, *Ordering Power.*

44. Stephen Legg, *Spaces of Colonialism: Delhi's Urban Governmentalities* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2007).

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Chapter Three

From Moscow to Madrid: Governing Security Threats beyond Tajikistan's Borders

Edward Lemon

Savriddin Juraev was born in 1985 in the village of Navgilem, near the city of Isfara in northern Tajikistan.[1] Between 2002 and 2005, he attended a mosque, studying the Quran under the guidance of mullah Sadullo Marupov, a member of the opposition Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan (IRPT).[2] The police detained Marupov on May 3, 2006, and subsequently started targeting his followers.[3] Fearing arrest, Juraev fled to Russia in June 2006, working in various low-paid jobs in the suburbs of Moscow. In November 2006, the Prosecutor General's Office in Tajikistan brought criminal proceedings against Juraev, accusing him of having been a member of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) since 1992 (when he was just seven years old) and participating in an attack on three members of the regional parliament on September 26, 2006, despite the fact that he was in Russia at the time.[4] In November 2009, Russian police arrested Juraev based on a warrant issued by the Tajik Prosecutor General.[5] The Russian Federal Migration Service (FMS) granted him temporary asylum in September 2011, and he was released from pre-trial detention.

On the evening of October 31, 2011, Juraev was driving with a friend near Moscow State University. A minivan blocked their path. Fleeing the scene, Juraev was chased by four armed Tajik-speaking men, who bundled him into the van. They beat and tortured him for a day. He was then forced into a car with Russian government plates and driven to Moscow's Domodedovo airport.[6] The men put him on a plane, forgoing any border and customs formalities. On November 30, 2011, Juraev stood trial at Sughd regional court alongside 33 others. The judge sentenced him to 26 years in prison.[7]

In an even more dramatic incident, Umarali Quvvatov, leader of the opposition movement Group 24, was assassinated in Istanbul in March 2015. A former businessman, Quvvatov fled Tajikistan in 2012 after he fell out with

his business partner, President Rahmon's son-in-law. After founding Group 24, he released a series of videos demonstrating high-level corruption in the country. No longer safe in Russia, Quvvatov left for Dubai in December 2012 but was detained upon arrival based on an international arrest warrant accusing him of embezzling US$1.2 million.[8] Upon his release nine months later, he moved to Turkey. When he called for protests against the government of Tajikistan in October 2014, the Supreme Court classified his organization as an "extremist" group, making membership punishable by up to 23 years in jail. Having been targeted by the government for three years, Quvvatov's luck ran out in March 2015. One evening, he was dining with a friend, Suleiman Kayumov, when he complained of stomach pains. He stepped out onto the street and was shot in the head. Kayumov, who had tried to poison him, was sentenced to life in prison; the Tajik government was never directly implicated.[9]

These are not isolated examples. Since 2002, the government of Tajikistan has targeted at least 58 of its citizens living abroad, subjecting them to harassment, intimidation, attack, detention, kidnapping, and assassination.[10] At least 25 cases of successful extraordinary rendition, or the forcible transfer of individuals across state borders without recourse to the law, have occurred since 2002. The majority of cases—40 in total—occurred in Russia, with seven further incidents taking place in Turkey.[11] These figures, which are based on publicly available sources, are likely to be just the tip of the iceberg; there are indications that the scale of this campaign against exiled critics is much larger. In September 2016, Minister of Interior Ramazon Rahimzoda announced that since 2015, 151 "extremists," including 133 members of Islamic State, had been rendered to Tajikistan, of whom 75 returned "voluntarily."[12] There are currently 1,600 citizens of Tajikistan on the Interpol wanted list; 1,400 of these stand accused of terrorism and extremism.[13]

As these examples and this chapter illustrate, Tajikistan's political struggles are increasingly taking place "offshore," in spaces outside the country's territorial borders.[14] Far from being an isolated backwater in the global economy, Tajikistan is well integrated into transnational capital and labor flows. Over a million people have left Tajikistan to work abroad, primarily in Russia. Tajikistan has become one of the most migrant-dependent economies in the world.[15] A smaller group of individuals have left the country for political reasons. Exiled former regime insiders, opposition members, religious leaders, journalists, and human rights activists have established diaspora communities, most notably in Russia, Poland, Dubai, Germany, and Turkey. For the government, these exile communities constitute a potential threat to the regime.[16] To understand politics in Tajikistan, it is increasingly necessary to examine what is happening beyond the country's borders. I use the term

transnational authoritarian security governance to refer to the development of transborder security practices that aim to secure the regime against potential threats.[17] Transnational authoritarian security governance includes not only practices within Tajikistan's state borders, but also extraterritorial practices, where the state extends its formal jurisdiction or effective control to cover individuals, activities, or zones beyond its borders.[18] Transnational authoritarian security governance involves a range of public and private actors, incorporating a diverse array of formal and informal measures. Paradoxically, although these actions are implemented extraterritorially, they are driven by internal concerns, primarily regime security.

The government of Tajikistan has targeted six types of opponents living abroad. First, it has targeted members of *terrorist* organizations that seek to violently replace the government, such as the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), Jamaat Ansurallah, and Islamic State.[19] Second, it has targeted *revolutionary* Islamic movements, such as Hizb ut-Tahrir, whose members seek to transform the status quo while denying they will use violence to do so. Third, the government has targeted members of the *accommodational* Islamic opposition party, the Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan (IRPT), which remains committed to the secular state. Fourth, the government has taken measures against *secular* opposition movements such as Group 24 and Youth for the Revival of Tajikistan. Fifth, it has taken aim at former regime *insiders* and commanders who sided with the opposition during the country's civil war. Sixth, it has targeted *journalists* and *activists*, many of whom have criticized the government's poor human rights record.[20]

In short, this chapter is concerned with emigrants who have left Tajikistan for political reasons. In an era of globalization, a "nation's people may live anywhere in the world and still not live outside the state."[21] As Michel Laguerre argues, once a migrant has emigrated, their home state does not entirely lose interest in them. A state that sends migrants abroad

> cannot—and in fact does not—disengage itself from the welfare of its citizens (who remain its citizens until they foreswear their citizenship) and it has no way of preventing emigrants from maintaining contacts with the homeland. . . . In other words, the obligations of the sending state vis-à-vis its citizens do not end with their emigration.[22]

David Fitzgerald has named this process of continual obligation "extraterritorial citizenship." Fitzgerald defines extraterritorial citizenship as "citizenship in a territorially bounded political community without residence in the community."[23] Other have used such terms as "the extra-territorial nation,"[24] "external citizenship,"[25] "emigration state,"[26] and "trans-nations"[27] to describe the state's claims to jurisdiction over citizens living abroad. Such practices

reproduce the perception by individuals or social groups of the presence of a state, or what Timothy Mitchell terms "the state effect," far beyond their physical boundaries.[28]

Although a number of academics have looked at this "transnationalization of state practices," most studies focus on the "positive" dimensions of the process, such as the way states try to capitalize on remittances or political parties attempt to secure votes.[29] As Nir Cohen argues, this process is not unidirectional: "citizenship loyalty under conditions of extra-territoriality requires subjects to prove their uncompromised commitment through material displays of identification and active participation in events supporting and valorising the homeland."[30] What happens when citizens living abroad do not fulfill this duty and instead oppose their home government? Few studies examine how sending states respond to exiles and political opposition living outside the country.[31] This chapter addresses these questions within the context of government-opposition politics in Tajikistan.

In this chapter, I answer three questions: 1) Why has transnational authoritarian security governance emerged in Tajikistan?; 2) How has the government targeted opponents living abroad?; and 3) What are the limits of the government's reach? Although much of what is presented in this chapter is based on publicly reported cases of those targeted by the government of Tajikistan outside its territorial borders, I also draw on insights from ethnographic fieldwork conducted in Moscow over the course of seven months in 2014 and 2015. I have supplemented this with preliminary findings from a short research trip to Warsaw in May 2017, where I spoke with Tajik political refugees. During this ongoing research, I have thus far spoken with 18 members of the opposition-in-exile and collected evidence of how the government has targeted opponents abroad.

THE TRANSNATIONALIZATION OF TAJIK SECURITY

In their book *Dictators Without Borders*, John Heathershaw and Alexander Cooley define extraterritorial security as "the practice of internal security within the territory of a foreign state."[32] Given that extraterritorial practices targeting citizens living abroad are driven primarily by domestic concerns, as the dynamics of authoritarian politics have changed, a shift has taken place in the type of individual being targeted by extraterritorial security practices. When Emomali Rahmon was elected chairman of the Supreme Soviet in 1992—making him the de facto head of state—his position of weakness, in view of the state's collapse during the civil war, forced him to rely on the support of a series of warlord patrons from the Popular Front.[33] Rahmon in-

corporated many of these individuals into the state structure. With the Peace Accord of 1997, the government integrated opposition commanders into the regime, allocating 30 percent of posts to its former opponents. But as Rahmon strengthened his position, he gradually purged these warlords. While most were detained or killed, some fled the country. Many early targets, such as former Minister of Internal Affairs Yaqub Salimov and leader of the Democratic Party of Tajikistan Mahmadruzi Iskandarov, were former regime insiders. Accused of being involved in renegade Colonel Khudoiberdiyev's coup attempt in 1997, Salimov left Tajikistan in 1997, moving between Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Turkey, and Russia. The government quickly sent a request to the Russian government to extradite Salimov. Salimov traveled to Russia a number of times before being picked up by police during a document check in June 2003. Rahmon dispatched several top-ranking officials, including Prosecutor General Bobokhon Bobokhonov, Minister of Interior Khumdin Sharifov, and Tajikistan's representative to the UN, Rashid Olimov, to Moscow to push for the extradition of Salimov.[34] On the evening of February 24, 2004, the Russian authorities placed Salimov in the custody of Tajik law enforcement officers, who escorted him back to Tajikistan.

By 2011, the government had removed most of the former commanders and reasserted control over areas that had remained out of its de facto control, such as the Rasht Valley.[35] Despite having consolidated its position, the government has continued to target members of the political opposition and those whose behavior they deem to be deviant, such as those accused of "extremism." In recent years, the majority of the exiles who have been targeted have been linked to the IRPT, Group 24, and Islamic State. Two developments in the domestic politics of Tajikistan help explain these parallel trends. Firstly, as the regime has consolidated its position in recent years, it has moved against secular and religious opponents. Secondly, the government has responded to the recruitment of Tajik citizens by Islamic State, the majority of which is occurring beyond its borders. As a result of these parallel developments, extraterritorial security incidents have become more frequent. Whereas just nine incidents took place before 2010, there have been 41 recorded incidents since 2014.

Most of those targeted since 2014—a total of 24 individuals—are linked to Group 24 and the IRPT. Although the state media led a defamation campaign against the IRPT, accusing their leaders of sexual impropriety, corruption, links to violent extremism, and foreign patrons, the party retained two seats in the Assembly of Representatives until 2015.[36] The fact of these two seats was an important component of the politics of "virtual peace" in Tajikistan.[37] But in the March 2015 parliamentary elections, the party lost its two seats after failing to clear the five percent threshold needed to win parliamentary seats.

Thereafter, the government began to dismantle the final vestiges of the peace accord. During the summer of 2015, Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan deputies began "voluntarily" resigning and closing the party's local offices. A June article in the state newspaper *Jumhuriyat* accused party leader Muhiddin Kabiri, who had left the country following the party's election defeat, of illegally purchasing property in 1999, effectively rendering it impossible for him to return without facing charges.[38] The government banned the IRPT in August 2015, citing its lack of support. A few days after the ban was imposed, the government blamed the party for organizing a "coup" led by former deputy defense minister Abduhalim Nazarzoda. Following the coup, an estimated 200 senior members of the party were detained.[39]

With the space for independent media, religious practice, and oppositional politics shrinking, many activists have now left the country. In 2015, hundreds of IRPT members left Tajikistan, heading to Russia, Turkey, Iran, and the European Union. One party official has estimated that as many as 5,000 members permanently left the country in 2015, with 2,000 of these individuals seeking asylum in the European Union.[40] For example, cases of Tajik citizens applying for asylum in Poland were almost unheard of before 2014. In 2014, 105 Tajik citizens submitted asylum applications. This number jumped to 527 in 2015 and hit 661 in the first half of 2016 alone.[41]

The story of Qiyomiddin, an editor at the IRPT website Nahzat.org, typifies the experience of many exiles. During the 2015 election, when Qiyomiddin ran in his district, his cousin, who served as an intermediary with the security services, frequently warned him to cease his activities. Shortly thereafter, his Facebook and Odnoklassniki accounts were hacked and pro-government news articles posted to them. Two weeks prior to the election, three local shops were robbed. Two men who were working on Qiyomiddin's campaign were detained by police and beaten for hours in efforts to extract confessions from them; they refused to confess. One day after the election, having once again been detained by the security services, Qiyomiddin decided to leave the country and relocate to Turkey. But he continued to face harassing phone calls from the Tajik security services and visits by the Turkish police to his apartment building. As a result, he decided to move to an EU country and seek asylum there.

Almost all activists from Group 24 and the IRPT eschew violence as a means of resistance. A comparatively small group of Tajik citizens have joined terrorist organizations and called for the violent overthrow of the government. Meanwhile, since 2014, an increasing number of Tajik citizens have been recruited to the conflict in Syria and Iraq, with most joining Islamic State. Officials estimate that 1,100 citizens have travelled to Iraq and Syria since 2013.[42] The available evidence indicates that the majority of those who

have journeyed there were recruited while working in Russia.[43] From Russia, most recruits travel to Turkey, where they cross the border. In other words, radicalization is occurring offshore, in extraterritorial spaces. In response to this phenomenon, numerous Tajik agencies have sent operatives into Turkey and Russia to forcibly return potential recruits to Tajikistan. Since 2014, at least 13 suspected recruits have been intercepted in this way. In March 2015, for example, officers from the Tajik Ministry of Internal Affairs arrested medical student Shahnoza Bozorzoda in Istanbul.[44] Born in the southern city of Kulob in 1990, Bozorzoda stated on national television that she was encouraged to join ISIS and abandon her studies at the Tajik Medical University by a man she met on the Russian social networking site Odnoklassniki (Classmates). After she phoned a friend telling him of her intention to join Islamic State, the Ministry of Internal Affairs sent officers to Turkey to detain her and extradite her to Tajikistan. By operating across national boundaries and in another jurisdiction, the Tajik government violated international law. More surprisingly, it openly admitted to doing so on national television.

In a similar case, Amriddin Vatanov traveled to Turkey in May 2016 after he grew suspicious that his son Furkat would cross the border into Syria.[45] Having reported the incident to the Turkish counter-terrorism police, he lost confidence in them and found his son himself. He handed Furkat over to Tajik law enforcement officers in Istanbul, who returned him to Tajikistan.

With so much political activity involving Tajik citizens happening overseas, the government has begun to deploy its security apparatus abroad with increasing regularity. As the examples discussed so far show, the government has used a range of tactics to pursue opponents abroad. Ultimately, these practices aim to prevent exiles from carrying out political activities. They combine formal and informal measures, state and non-state actors.

CATEGORIZING SECURITY PRACTICES BEYOND BORDERS

Delegitimization

Although most members of Group 24 and the IRPT have either been detained or fled the country, the state's delegitimizing discourse targeting opponents living in exile has continued. In the state media, political activists are portrayed as cowardly individuals beholden to foreign sponsors. As an opinion piece written by three university professors claims: "In fact, those who took refuge outside of the country have continued to provide a medicine (*doru*) that no side wants. They are just a few people who are supported by foreigners. Fish love to swim in dirty water (*obro loi mekunandu mohi medorand*)."[46]

This securitization of the diaspora continues many of the themes that emerged in the state media while activists were still living in Tajikistan. Rather than being legitimate political actors, the opposition are framed as "saboteurs" (*kharobkor*) who are attempting to cause instability in Tajikistan.[47] Not only have they sought shelter outside the country, but they are actively supported by "foreign sympathizers" (*homoniyoni horijiashon*).[48] Accounts in the state media frame opponents abroad as cowards who fled their homeland and live in shame. Sharaf Kurbon writes in *Javonon* (Youth) that "the party has not escaped shame (*sharm*): its leaders are in jail and those who escaped are living in fear."[49] The very act of fleeing and seeking shelter outside the country is framed as a shameful act. "If the opposition is innocent, why not stand trial?" the logic goes. Instead, the hegemonic narrative frames the opposition as manipulators who have misrepresented the situation to gain the support of foreign sympathizers.

The criticism of opponents abroad intensified when Group 24 and IRPT members staged a silent protest at the Human Development Implementation Meeting (HDIM) of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in September 2016. The incident triggered counter-protests in Tajikistan. Students in Dushanbe burned a flag with the effigy of IRPT leader Muhiddin Kabiri on it. State media highlighted the national scale of the protests, which took place in town centers and on university campuses across the country. Villagers in Bohtar marched through the streets with signs declaring, "No to the Enemies of the Tajik People!" In a statement, teachers in the southern district of Panj affirmed that, "We will never allow traitors (*hononi*) to live amongst us. We condemn them." As one journalist stated, "The behaviour of these so-called 'political refugees' (*panohandagoni siyosi*), or a small group of extremists, is unacceptable and dangerous. They put themselves on display as victims (*kurbonii*) to gain better conditions and foreign protection."[50]

The government has labeled as "extremists" individuals who only adopt a peaceful appearance to gain international sympathy. These state discourses constitute an attempt to de-legitimize the political opposition in exile, portraying it as a threat to national security and thereby legitimating measures against opposition members.

Surveillance and Intimidation

Many of those who have left the country remain under surveillance by the security services, which recruit informants from within opposition circles and place agents from the State Committee on National Security in local embassies. Rather than remaining covert, the security services make their pres-

ence felt: multiple exiled activists report that they have received threatening phone calls from unknown callers. Occasionally, government agents appear to have acted on these threats. At least three citizens—academic Bakhtiyor Sartori, opposition leader Maksud Ibragimov, and journalist Dodojon Atuvullo—have been attacked by unknown assailants in Russia. Not only has the government intimidated exiles themselves, but it has targeted their families back in Tajikistan. Indeed, all 18 exiles whom I interviewed and with whom I interacted had seen their families in Tajikistan abused by the security services.[51] Many relatives have been detained by the security services; some report being beaten and told to stop their exiled relative from continuing their actions. Others have lost their jobs in the state apparatus. To prevent them joining their families abroad, the government has started seizing relatives' passports. Such behavior by state agents is designed to deter those in exile from continuing their political activities. Two examples illustrate the dynamics of this intimidation.

Journalists working for Payom.net, an Istanbul-based news agency founded in September 2015 by exiles with links to the IRPT, have received threatening phone calls from the intelligence services. In early December 2016, for example, the government targeted the father of Payom journalist Shukhrati Rahmatullo. Rajab Rahmatullo, a member of the IRPT's supreme council, was sentenced to 28 years in prison for alleged involvement in the September 2015 "coup." Due to his son's activities, the prison authorities placed him in solitary confinement and beat him, telling him, "If your son stays quiet, we will stop."[52] Not content with this, the security services also detained his mother and likewise put pressure on her to stop her son. Payom.net was hacked in November 2016 and an alternative website, Payomi.net was launched, with pro-government stories being posted to it. When the news agency attempted to organize an event for the Tajik diaspora at its Istanbul office in December 2016, Turkish police barred the entrance to the office, telling journalists it would remain closed until the "political issue with the Tajik government had been resolved." Payom.net did not manage to register in Turkey as a media organization and none of its journalists received official accreditation. Although it continues to operate under the auspices of the Tajik-Turkish Cultural Center, without accreditation its reporting activities are limited. Many of its journalists fled the country, continuing to post material to the website from their new locations.

Like the journalists at Payom.net, Tajik migrant and Tablighi Jamaat member Suhrob has also faced intimidation from the security services as a result of his actions. Suhrob, born in 1976 in Vanj, has been living in Moscow since 2001.[53] He works as a perfume seller in a market. Interested in religion from a young age, Suhrob was drawn to the proselytizing movement Tablighi

Jamaat after meeting its members after Friday prayer at the Moscow Ca-
thedral Mosque in 2012.[54] His position at the bazaar, where he came into
frequent contact with fellow Tajiks, allowed him to practice *dawah,* spread-
ing the faith among Central Asian migrants. To introduce others to the ideas
of Tablighi Jamaat, Suhrob established a prayer group with around twenty
members. In June 2015, some Tajik-speaking men visited Suhrob's perfume
stall and told him to cease his activities or his family back in Tajikistan would
suffer the consequences. They accused him of being a follower (*pairav*) of
Islamic State. The next day, the Russian police visited him to check his docu-
ments. A week after that, he received a call from his parents saying that they
had been visited by the village's *rais* (chief), who told them that their son was
spreading "extremist" views. Suhrob no longer holds his prayer meetings, but
maintains links with Tablighi Jamaat. "Tajikistan may be 4,000 kilometers
away, but I can still feel its hand!" Suhrob stated shortly after the incident.

It was the threats against Suhrob's family back in Tajikistan that led him
to take a step back from Tablighi Jamaat: "When the police started harassing
my family, I knew I had to re-think my actions. It is okay to put myself in
danger, but not to put my parents at risk."[55] In this case, the security services
used intimidation to achieve their objective, effectively forcing Suhrob to
cease his "threatening" behavior.

While some exiled activists, like Suhrob, have re-evaluated their activities
in light of threats, many have vowed to continue despite the potential danger
to their families. Firuza, an activist who fled to Russia after being accused
of "extremism" for posting critical comments about the regime on Facebook,
has seen her daughter—who is still in Tajikistan—denied medical attention
and prohibited from joining her. Despite this pressure, she is determined
to continue criticizing the government and raising awareness of the human
rights situation: "They [the government of Tajikistan] are terrorists. They rule
through fear and intimidation. If I give in to them and stop, they will have
won. I will never stop standing up for humanity."[56]

By targeting the relatives of those who have fled Tajikistan, the govern-
ment has vastly increased the number of those affected by transnational au-
thoritarian security governance. But the available evidence indicates that this
form of repression is far from effective as a means of deterring activists from
continuing their campaigns against the government.

Detention and Extraordinary Rendition

Ultimately, delegitimization, intimidation, and the harassment of exiles'
families are all designed to force those outside the country to return. To ac-
complish this, the government of Tajikistan has issued arrest requests to for-

eign governments: sometimes through international structures such as Interpol or the Commonwealth of Independent States, sometimes bilaterally. All but one of the 58 exiles who have been targeted have been detained by law enforcement outside Tajikistan; 25 of the 55 individuals detained have been successfully repatriated to Tajikistan. Rather than following the legal extradition process, all the recorded cases of exiles being returned are examples of extraordinary rendition, the transfer of individuals between jurisdictions without following the legal process. In other words, there is a strong informal dynamic at work in the government of Tajikistan's efforts to target opponents abroad. The targeting involves at least four types of actor. First, it involves government agencies from Tajikistan, such as the local embassy and Ministry of Internal Affairs. Second, it relies on government agencies in the host country, such as the migration service, local police, and Prosecutor General. Third, the government has worked through international organizations, such as Interpol, to share information with partner agencies. Finally, the government has targeted opponents using non-state agents such as informants, organized criminal groups, and fake civil society activists. The case of Maksud Ibragimov illustrates this combination of formal and informal dynamics.

An unknown assailant stabbed Maksud Ibragimov, leader of the opposition movement Youth for the Revival of Tajikistan, in Moscow in November 2014. Officers from the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation arrested Ibragimov in January 2015. They took him to the local Prosecutor's Office but did not formally charge him. When he left the building, he was detained by unidentified men who took him to the airport and put him in the baggage hold of a plane. Although he renounced his Tajik citizenship in 2004 and became a Russian citizen thereafter, he was still rendered back to Tajikistan. The Tajik government did not acknowledge that Ibragimov was back in Tajikistan until June 2015, when he was sentenced to 17 years in prison on a host of charges, including extremism.[57]

Implementing Transnational Authoritarian Security Governance

As the examples given above have illustrated, the government of Tajikistan is not acting alone when it targets opponents living in exile. It operates *with* and *through* foreign governmental agencies and international institutions. On the surface, the fact that most of those targeted by the Tajik government have been in Russia is unsurprising: Russia is home to over one million Tajik citizens and has traditionally hosted the largest diaspora community. But significantly, Russia, Iran, and Turkey share Tajikistan's authoritarian security culture. Assessments of security threats and the appropriate way to govern them do not exist independently of the cultures that produce them.

Michael C. Williams argues that a "cultural field of security" determines the way actors think about and manage security threats.[58] Williams contends that since the end of the Cold War there has been a reconfiguration of the "field of security, where military and material power, while remaining significant, were repositioned within what might be called a cultural field of security that privileged cultural and symbolic forms of power."[59]

Whereas Williams traces the emergence of this "liberal sensibility" to early modern Europe, an authoritarian sensibility has also developed across the globe. Referring to post-Soviet space, David Lewis argues that a "Moscow Consensus" has emerged with a "remarkably unified set of ideas about the world, the state, and about politics and society, that resonate among elites."[60] Narrowing the focus to security, Mark Galeotti describes the growth of a Repressintern since the Soviet Union; Russia has developed "a strong commitment to . . . mutually-supportive intelligence-sharing understandings that also extend to direct 'active measures' intended to maintain friendly authoritarian regimes in its so-called 'near abroad.'"[61] This authoritarian cultural field has both formal and informal dimensions. It involves formal intelligence, technology sharing, and training support through bilateral arrangements, as well as the Collective Security Treaty Organisation and Shanghai Cooperation Organizations.[62] The 1993 CIS Convention on Legal Assistance and Legal Relations in Civil, Family and Criminal Matters (known as the Minsk Convention) provides the legal basis for extradition requests to be swiftly dealt with by member states. Beyond these formal institutional relationships, informal networks between senior personnel and shared understandings of security help to drive collaboration. With such strong linkages and the presence of the largest Tajik diaspora on its territory, Russia has been the site of the majority of Tajik transnational authoritarian security governance incidents. Once outside of this authoritarian cultural field, by contrast, opposition activists can rely on various legal measures to protect their status.

Though the government has actively worked with the governments of Turkey, Iran, and Russia to forcibly return exiles, it has also taken advantage of Interpol to make the lives of exiles more difficult. Interpol, founded in 1923, is a platform for the exchange of information between 190 police forces worldwide. Interpol does not issue arrest warrants itself, but distributes arrest requests, or Red Notices, issued by member states. Theoretically, Interpol remains politically neutral, committed to working "in the spirit of the 'Universal Declaration of Human Rights.'" Article 3 of the Interpol Constitution states that member states are "strictly prohibited" from using the system to pursue criminals facing charges of a "political character."[63] On its website, the organization explains that those against whom Red Notices are issued

"are suspected of committing a crime but have not yet been prosecuted and so should be considered innocent until proven guilty."[64]

A number of weaknesses leave Interpol open to abuse by authoritarian governments, however. Not all member states can guarantee a fair trial for those extradited through the Interpol system. Yet Interpol does not distinguish between Red Notices issued by authoritarian regimes and those issued by liberal democracies. Interpol does not adequately review applications from requesting governments before issuing a Red Notice. Although checks exist, the process is largely based on faith in the good intentions of the requesting country.

The government of Tajikistan has used Interpol to pursue government critics at least six times. Many of those targeted have been high-profile individuals. A Red Notice was issued against Muhiddin Kabiri, the leader of Tajikistan's leading opposition party, the IPRT, in September 2016.[65] The government has accused Kabiri of fraud, organizing a criminal group, and being a terrorist. The charges are clearly politically motivated. Former Prime Minister Abdumalik Abdullojonov was detained upon arrival at Kiev's Boryspil airport on February 6, 2013.[66] The government linked Abdullojonov, who has lived in the United States since 1994, to an attempted coup by renegade Colonel Makhmud Khudoberdiyev in 1998. After the United Nations urged the Ukrainian authorities to release him on the grounds that the US had granted him refugee status, he was released from custody on April 5.

The Tajik government has also targeted other leading opponents living in exile. Police in Dubai arrested Umarali Quvvatov, the leader of Group 24, in December 2012. After nine months in detention, he was eventually released. In August 2013, opposition journalist Dodojon Atuvullo was detained for three days upon arrival in Tbilisi before being freed.

Not all of those detained have been public figures. Acting on a Red Notice, the Finnish authorities detained 31-year-old Sulaimon Davlatov on February 20, 2015. A long-time resident of St. Petersburg, Davlatov was travelling to Lithuania when he was seized. The Tajik authorities accused Davlatov of being a member of the outlawed Group 24 and—without publicly presenting evidence—of sending citizens to fight in Syria.[67]

Tajikistan has never managed to successfully extradite a political opponent detained on a Red Notice. Given this failure, why does the government bother to issue international arrest requests against critics? Manipulating the Interpol system serves both a *punitive* and a *symbolic* function. Although Tajikistan has only succeeded in having six individuals detained, some 1,400 others are still subject to international arrest requests. Red Notices constitute a form of revenge against opponents. Past experience indicates that those subject to Red Notices have been stopped at border crossings and detained—without

trial and without evidence being brought against them—for up to 9 months.
Nor has their release signaled an end to these problems. A Red Notice re-
stricts the ability of the accused to open a bank account, find employment,
or travel. Many refugees remain on Interpol wanted lists long after they have
been granted refugee or asylum status. Although Interpol is gradually reform-
ing, it often takes years to get one's name off the Interpol list.

Adding a political opponent to the Interpol list also has an important sym-
bolic dimension for authoritarian governments: it lends legitimacy to the idea
that these people are criminals.

RESISTING TRANSNATIONAL
AUTHORITARIAN SECURITY GOVERNANCE

Although incidents have occurred more frequently since 2014, transnational
authoritarian security governance remains limited in a number of ways. The
government of Tajikistan cannot operate with impunity across state borders.
Even within this authoritarian cultural field, those targeted have the ability to
resist. After they receive notification from the Prosecutor General of the Rus-
sian Federation that it has decided to extradite them to Tajikistan, detainees
can appeal the decision. When this is invariably dismissed by the court, they
can apply for political asylum with the Federal Migration Service (FMS). If
denied asylum, they can once again appeal the decision, often with the help
of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). This ap-
peals process often allows detainees to wind down the clock: most are held on
one-year arrest warrants, and if they have not been extradited by the time the
warrant expires, they are released. At the time of writing, therefore, over half
of those targeted have managed to either escape or remain in detention out-
side Tajikistan. But as I note above, this does not mean they are safe. Many
have been kidnapped, often with the help of the Russian intelligence services.

Another alternative for detainees is international law. Thirteen Tajik citi-
zens, all detained in Russia, have taken their case to the European Court of
Human Rights. While seven of these cases were lodged by individuals who
had already been illegally transferred to Tajikistan, six people have used
the ECHR to successfully resist Tajikistan's attempts to forcibly repatriate
them.[68] All six used Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights,
which Russia ratified in 1999, to fight their extradition. The article states that
"no one shall be subjected to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment
or punishment." In some cases, applicants also brought suit under Article 5
§ 1 (right to liberty and security) and Article 5 § 4 (right to have lawfulness
of detention decided speedily by a court) because they were held after the

expiration of the extradition detention order. While cases are under review at the ECHR, the Court usually issues an interim measure under Article 39 of the Rules of Court to prevent the individual from being extradited before a judgment is made.[69]

With the exceptions of Russia, Iran, and Turkey, governments have been unwilling or unable to send suspects back to Tajikistan, partly because of fears that they will be tortured. Human rights organizations such as Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, and the Norwegian Helsinki Committee have pressured governments into releasing those detained on international arrest warrants. Pressure from human rights organizations helped to secure Quvvatov's release from detention in Dubai in August 2013. He later applied for asylum in Turkey through UNHCR. Sharofiddin Gadoyev, Quvvatov's cousin and successor as leader of Group 24, was released from detention in Spain in June 2014 after a Madrid court ruled that sending him back would violate the UN Convention against Torture.[70]

Many seek to leave the former Soviet Union for the relative safety of countries in the European Union. Speaking to Tajik refugees in Warsaw in May 2017, all agreed that Russia and Turkey are no longer safe for exiles, pointing to prominent cases like the assassination of Umarali Quvvatov in March 2015 and the kidnapping of Maksud Ibragimov in January 2015. Many have crossed the border from Russia into Estonia or Latvia; others have headed to Belarus and tried to cross into Poland. Shabnam Khodoydodova was arrested and accused of Group 24 membership in Brest, Belarus in July 2015. Although she was released in February 2016, many exiles now choose to transit through Ukraine to reach the European Union instead of going via Belarus. Whereas the government has successfully rendered 20 citizens back to Tajikistan and jailed hundreds of opposition members in the country itself since 2014, an estimated 2,000 to 3,000 journalists, opposition members, and human rights activists have left Tajikistan for the relative safety of the European Union. In other words, transnational authoritarian security governance remains limited.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Since the end of the country's brutal civil war in 1997, the Rahmon government has slowly consolidated its power, detaining, killing, and exiling opponents. As the space for opposition to the regime within Tajikistan's borders has slowly disappeared, politics has moved to other spaces. From the recruitment of citizens to join Islamic State to the establishment of political opposition movements based outside the country, political struggles are increasingly

taking place outside the state's territorial borders. Measures targeting the Tajik opposition-in-exile transcend the boundaries between global/local and public/private. In other words, they force us to rethink our understanding of relations between the state, security, and politics in Tajikistan. Far from being an isolated backwater, the state of Tajikistan has been transformed by globalization.[71] As in advanced neo-liberal states, globalization has "shifted the character of [Tajik] statehood to such an extent that 'we can no longer speak of 'the' state, and hence of 'the' national state versus 'the' global order.'"[72] Rather than treating the Tajik state as a unitary entity with clearly identified boundaries separating it from the population and from other states, it is more fruitful to study how the state is performed, imagined, and invoked in everyday encounters in places as diverse as Navgilem, Moscow, and Warsaw.[73]

Yet borders still matter. The government cannot act with impunity beyond its borders, leaving it open to contestation. At the same time, transnational authoritarian security governance remains geographically and legally limited. Though the government has been able to target opponents in authoritarian states such as Iran, Russia, and Turkey, it has had less success with those residing in the European Union. Those targeted are not passive victims. They exercise agency and have resisted government practices through a range of tactics, including voicing concern through human rights organizations, seeking asylum beyond the government's reach, and lodging formal complaints with international courts.

With many exiles remaining defiantly determined to continue the struggle against Rahmon's government from afar, we can expect political contestation in Tajikistan to remain offshore. Most realize that the status quo will not change and have no expectation of returning to their homeland in the near future. Like other groups, the IRPT is struggling to redefine itself given its new status as an exiled party. The party has moderated its aims: it lobbies international actors to pressure the government of Tajikistan into releasing political prisoners, and helps those still in Russia and Turkey to escape to EU countries. Merely continuing their political activities in the face of adversity is enough for many of these activists. One young IRPT activist summarized this view: "If we are silent, who will speak out against injustice (*beadolat*) in our country? We cannot let the family regime (*hukumati oilavi*) win by making us surrender. As long as I am breathing, I will continue the struggle for our people."[74]

Although many opposition activists have now fled to the European Union, where it is more difficult for the government of Tajikistan to target them, political struggles will continue to occur outside Tajikistan. Government attempts to silence opposition activists by defaming the political opposition in the state media and targeting their family members do not seem to be deterring them.

Table 3.1. List of Cases

Name	Affiliation	Location of Incident	Date of Incident	Type of Event
Abdulkhakov, Murodjon	IMU	Russia	2011	Rendition
Abdullojonov, Abdumalik	Former opposition leader	Ukraine	2013	Arrest/Detention
Abdunazarov, Sohibnazar	Youth for the Revival of Tajikistan	Russia	2015	Arrest/Detention
Abdurahmonova, Rosiya	Group 24	Russia	2014	Arrest/Detention
Akhadov, Muhammad	UTO	Russia	2007	Rendition
Atuvullo, Dodojon	Vatandor	Russia	2012	Attack
Azimov, Ismon	IMU	Russia	2013	Rendition
Bafoev, Nuriddin	Youth for the Revival of Tajikistan	Russia	2014	Arrest/Detention
Bozorzoda, Shahnoza	ISIS	Turkey	2015	Rendition
Davlatov, Sulaiman	Group 24/ ISIS	Finland	2015	Arrest/Detention
Fazilov, Hurshedin	ISIS	Russia	2016	Rendition
Gadoev, Sharofiddin	Group 24	Spain	2015	Arrest/Detention
Gaforov, Abdurazok	HuT	Russia	2008	Arrest/Detention
Gilyayev, Oyatullo	Youth for the Revival of Tajikistan	Russia	2014	Arrest/Detention
Ibragimov, Maksud	Youth for the Revival of Tajikistan	Russia	2015	Rendition
Iskandarov, Mahmadruzi	DPT	Russia	2005	Rendition
Ismonov, Umedjon	ISIS	Russia (South Ossetia)	2016	Detention
Jabirov, Suleiman	Youth for the Revival of Tajikistan	Russia	2014	Arrest/Detention
Juraev, Nizomkhon	Former insider	Russia	2012	Rendition
Juraev, Savriddin	IMU	Russia	2011	Rendition
Kabiri, Muhiddin	IRPT	Turkey	2015	Exile
Khamidov, Abdurashid	Group 24	Turkey	2016	Arrest/Detention
Khaydarov, Mahmadjon	UTO	Russia	2008	Arrest/Detention
Khojayev, Zikrullokhon	UTO	Russia	2002	Arrest/Detention
Kholov, Ismoil	Group 24	Russia	2015	Arrest/Detention
Kholov, Suhrob	UTO	Russia	2015	Arrest/Detention
Khudoydodova, Shabnam	Group 24	Belarus	2015	Arrest/Detention

(continued)

Table 3.1. (continued)

Khushvakhtov, Nasim	ISIS		Turkey	2016	Rendition
Komilov, Sherzod	Group 24		Russia	2015	"Voluntary" return
Koziyev, Suhrob	IMU		Russia	2011	Rendition
Kurbonov, Nematullo	Group 24		Russia	2014	"Voluntary return"
Latipov, Abdulvosi	UTO		Russia	2012	Rendition
Loic, Firuz	Group 24		Russia	2015	Arrest/Detention
Mahmadiev, Tagoymurod	Group 24		Russia	2015	Arrest/Detention
Mirzoyev, Umar	ISIS		Russia	2016	Detention
Muhiddinov, Firdavs	Group 24		Russia	2015	Detention
Nasrulloyev, Habib	UTO		Russia	2007	Arrest/Detention
Obidov, Karim	Group 24		Russia	2014	Arrest/Detention
Odinaev, Ehson	Youth for the Revival of Tajikistan		Russia	2015	Rendition
Quvvatov, Umarali	Group 24		Turkey	2015	Assassination
Salimov, Yaqub	Former insider		Russia	2003	Rendition
Sattarov, Mehrobon	Youth for the Revival of Tajikistan		Russia	2014	Arrest/Detention
Sattori, Bakhtiyor	Training Club of Tajikistan's Future Government		Russia	2013	Attack
Sharifov, Sulton	Group 24		Russia	2016	Arrest/Detention
Sidiqov, Mr	HuT		Russia	2010	Arrest/Detention
Sidiqov, Mrs	HuT		Russia	2010	Arrest/Detention
Solihov, Umedjon	Group 24		Russia	2015	"Voluntary" Return
U.R.	Jamaat Ansurallah		Russia	2014	Rendition
Unnamed Tajik 1	ISIS		Ukraine	2016	Detention
Unnamed Tajik 2	ISIS		Ukraine	2016	Detention
Valiev, Sobir	Group 24		Belarus	2015	Arrest/Detention
Vatanov, Furkat	ISIS		Turkey	2016	Rendition
Vazirov, Abdulfayz	ISIS		Iran	2017	Rendition
Salimova, Mohira	ISIS		Iran	2017	Rendition
Child 1	ISIS		Iran	2017	Rendition
Child 2	ISIS		Iran	2017	Rendition
Child 3	ISIS		Iran	2017	Rendition
Vosiyev, Abdurahim	Group 24		Russia	2014	Arrest/Detention

NOTES

1. This account is based on court documents from the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR). See Savriddin Dzhurayev v. Russia—71386/10, ECHR, April 25, 2013, http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/app/conversion/pdf/?library=ECHR&id=001–119416&filename=001–119416.pdf. The court transliterated Juraev's name as Dzhurayev. This is based on the Russian spelling of his name. In order to be consistent with other translations, I have opted to transliterate it from the Tajik.

2. The ECHR documents refer to him as Marufov, but local news reports call him Marupov.

3. Marupov died one day after his arrest. Initially, authorities claimed that Marupov committed suicide by jumping from the third floor of the local Ministry of Internal Affairs building. The IRPT claims he was murdered by the police. See "President Taking No Re-election Chances," *Transitions Online*, May 18, 2006, http://www.tol.org/client/article/17180-president-taking-no-re-election-chances.html.

4. It accused Juraev of breaking Articles 186.2 (participation in an armed group) and 187.2 (participation in a criminal organization) of the Criminal Code of Tajikistan.

5. The Deputy Prosecutor General of Russia also accused him of founding an IMU cell in Russia and transferring US$500 to members in Tajikistan every month.

6. This detail comes from a letter written by Juraev. See *Return to Torture: Extradition, Forcible Returns and Removals to Central Asia* (London: Amnesty International, 2013).

7. In addition to the initial charges, the court charged Juraev with Articles 244 (stealing), 189 (arousing national, racial, local, or religious hostility), and 306 (attempting to change the constitutional order) of the Criminal Code of Tajikistan.

8. "Umarali Quvvatov Reportedly Freed from Dubai Detention Facility," *Asia Plus*, September 26, 2013, https://news.tj/en/news/umarali-quvvatov-reportedly-freed-dubai-detention-facility.

9. "Sulaimon Kaiumov baroi katli Umarali Kuvvatov ba khabsi abad makhkum shud," *Radio Ozodi*, February 26, 2016, https://www.ozodi.org/a/umarali-quvvatovs-killer-sentenced-to-life-term-prison/27575897.html.

10. For a list of these 57 cases, see Table 3.1. This figure is compiled from publicly-available sources in Tajik, Russian, and English. It builds on the Central Asian Political Exiles database compiled by John Heathershaw and his research assistants at the University of Exeter. See "About the CAPE Database," Exeter Central Asian Studies Network, http://www.excas.net/exiles-project/about-cape/.

11. Other incidents have taken place in Ukraine, Dubai, Lithuania, Spain, Finland, Moldova, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan.

12. "MVD: V Tadzhikistan vozvrashcheny bolee 150 grazhdan, obviniaemykh v terrorizme i ekstremizme," *Asia Plus*, September 20, 2016, http://news.tj/ru/news/tajikistan/security/20160920/mvd-v-tadzhikistan-vozvratsheni-bolee-150-grazhdan-obvinyaemih-v-terrorizme-i-ekstremizme.

13. Just 160 of these names are listed on the Interpol website. See "MVD: Interpol ishchet Kabiri," *Radio Ozodi*, July 22, 2016, http://rus.ozodi.org/a/kabiri-is-in-interpol-list-/27873105.html.

14. Alexander Cooley and John Heathershaw, *Dictators Without Borders: Power and Money in Central Asia* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2017).

15. According to the latest figures from the Federal Migration Service (July 2016), there are 870,000 Tajik citizens residing in Russia. However, the real number is likely higher, as many Tajiks live there illegally. On remittances, see David Trilling, "Tajikistan: Migrant Remittances Now Exceed Half of GDP," *EurasiaNet*, April 15, 2014, http://www.eurasianet.org/node/68272.

16. David Lewis, "'Illiberal Spaces': Uzbekistan's Extraterritorial Security Practices and the Spatial Politics of Contemporary Authoritarianism," *Nationalities Papers* 43, no. 1 (2015): 140–59.

17. For a more comprehensive discussion of the term, see Edward Lemon, "Governing Islam and Security in Tajikistan and Beyond" (PhD diss., University of Exeter, 2016), 22–26.

18. In the first case, extraterritorial arrangements could either exclude or exempt an individual or a group of people from the territorial jurisdiction in which they were physically located; in the second, such arrangements could exempt or exclude a space from the territorial jurisdiction by which it was surrounded.

19. Formed in around 2010 by ex-opposition warlord Amriddin Tabarov, Jamaat Ansurallah claimed responsibility for a suicide bombing in Khujand in September 2010. The organization is present on social media under the name Irshod. The government alleges that it maintains close links to the IMU, the Taliban, and ISIS.

20. This typology builds on Heathershaw et al., which named: 1) regime insiders; 2) members of opposition parties; 3) banned clerics and religious movements; and 4) journalists and activists. See John Heathershaw, Eve Bishop, and Rosa Brown, "Practices and Patterns of Extraterritorial Security: Introducing the Central Asian Political Exiles (CAPE) Database," in *No Shelter: The Harassment of Activists Abroad by Intelligence Services from the Former Soviet Union*, ed. Adam Hug (London: Foreign Policy Centre, 2016), 20–24.

21. Linda Basch, Nina Glick Schiller, and Cristina Szanton Blanc, *Nations Unbound: Transnational Projects, Postcolonial Predicaments, and Deterritorialized Nation-States* (London: Routledge, 1994), 269.

22. Michel S. Laguerre, *Diasporic Citizenship: Haitian Americans in Transnational America* (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1998), 12.

23. David Fitzgerald, *Negotiating Extra-Territorial Citizenship: Mexican Migration and the Transnational Politics of Community* (La Jolla, CA: Center for Comparative Immigration Studies, University of California-San Diego, 2000), 4.

24. Stephane Dufoix, *Diasporas*, trans. William Rodamor (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2008).

25. Rainer Bauböck, "The Rights and Duties of External Citizenship," *Citizenship Studies* 13, no. 5 (2009): 475–99.

26. Alan Gamlen, "The Emigration State and the Modern Geopolitical Imagination," *Political Geography* 27, no. 8 (2008): 840–56.

27. Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996).

28. Timothy Mitchell, "The Limits of the State: Beyond Statist Approaches and Their Critics," *The American Political Science Review* 85, no. 1 (1991): 77–96.

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33. Kirill Nourzhanov, "Saviours of the Nation or Robber Barons? Warlord Politics in Tajikistan," *Central Asian Survey* 24, no. 2 (2005): 109–31; Jesse Driscoll, *Warlords and Coalition Politics in Post-Soviet States* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

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37. John Heathershaw, "Tajikistan's Virtual Politics of Peace," *Europe-Asia Studies* 61, no.7 (2009): 1315–36.

38. "Asrori Pushti Pardan Tichorati Kabiri," *Jumhuriyat*, June 16, 2015, http://jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=19633.

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46. Nasrullo Ubaidulloyev, "Ighbogaron Boz Chi Mehohand?" *Jumhuriyat*, September 30, 2016, http://jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=26257.

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49. "Qahramoni Khudistoi Nest," *Javonon*, September 30, 2016, http://javonon.tj/news/politics/a-ramon-khudsito-nest-/.

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51. For descriptions of a number of cases, see "Tajikistan: Abuse of Dissidents' Families: US, EU Should Consider Sanctions," Human Rights Watch, December 20, 2016, https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/12/20/tajikistan-abuse-dissidents-families.

52. "Tajikistan: Abuse of Dissidents' Families," Human Rights Watch.

53. Kulob, sometimes transliterated from the Russian spelling as Kulyab, is the fourth largest city in Tajikistan.

54. Founded in India in 1927, Tablighi Jamaat is a Sunni Islamic proselytizing and revivalist movement. Originally formed as an offshoot of the Deobandi movement, which itself was formed in response to the failure of the Indian Rebellion of 1867, it now claims millions of followers worldwide. Leaders of the movement have distanced themselves from politics and the use of violence. The Prosecutor General of Tajikistan banned the group in 2006.

55. Suhrob, discussion with the author, Moscow, June 2015.

56. Firuza, discussion with the author, May 2017.

57. Nadejda Atayeva, "Tajikistan Officially Reported that Maksud Ibragimov is Sentenced to 17 Years of Imprisonment," *Nadejda Atayeva's personal blog*, July 26, 2015, http://nadejda-atayeva-en.blogspot.com/2015/07/tajikistan-officially-reported-that.html.

58. Michael Williams, *Culture and Security: Symbolic Power and the Politics of International Security* (London: Routledge, 2007).

59. Ibid., 2.

60. David Lewis, "The Moscow Consensus: Constructing Autocracy in Post-Soviet Eurasia," Open Democracy, May 25, 2016, https://www.opendemocracy.net/od-russia/david-lewis/moscow-consensus-constructing-autocracy-in-post-soviet-eurasia.

61. Mark Galeotti, "'Repressintern:' Russian Security Cooperation with Fellow Authoritarians," in *No Shelter: The Harassment of Activists Abroad by Intelligence Services from the Former Soviet Union*, ed. Adam Hug (London: Foreign Policy Centre, 2016), 12.

62. Alexander Cooley, *Great Games, Local Rules: The New Great Power Contest in Central Asia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

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69. "Rules of Court," ECHR, January 2016, http://www.echr.coe.int/Documents/Rules_Court_ENG.pdf.

70. "Vopros ekstraditsii Gadoeva sud rassmotrit v ponedel'nik," *Radio Ozodi*, July 11, 2014, http://rus.ozodi.mobi/a/25454043.html.

71. John Heathershaw, "Tajikistan Amidst Globalization: State Failure or State Transformation?" *Central Asian Survey* 30, no. 1 (2011): 147–68.

72. Saskia Sassen, "Neither Global nor National: Novel Assemblages of Territory, Authority and Rights," *Ethics & Global Politics* 1, no. 2 (2008): 72.

73. Madeleine Reeves, Johan Rasanayagam, and Judith Beyer, eds. *Ethnographies of the State in Central Asia: Performing Politics* (Bloomington, IN: University of Indiana Press, 2013), 6.

74. Izatullo, discussion with the author, Warsaw, May 2017.

Chapter Four

Tajikistan's Multi-Vector Foreign Policy

Constructing Relations with Russia, China, and the United States

Kirill Nourzhanov

Tajikistan was the last of the Central Asian republics to commit to multi-vector foreign policy (MFP) and move away from Russia's orbit. In September 2002, President Emomali Rahmon signed the country's first ever Foreign Policy Concept, which had taken nine years to elaborate and championed interaction with external actors on the basis of pragmatism and the pursuit of national interest. In December 2002, during Rahmon's official visit to the US, he and George W. Bush issued a joint statement on the development of strategic partnership between Tajikistan and the US "based on our common goal of promoting peace, security, economic development, and democracy in the Republic of Tajikistan."[1] On the last day of 2002, in a televised address to the nation, Rahmon announced the shift to an open-door foreign policy, which he used as a synonym for MFP.[2] Finally, in April 2003, Rahmon delivered a programmatic speech to both chambers of Tajik parliament where he explained in some detail his normative vision for the country's long-term progress. He praised the benefits of globalization, prioritized the adoption of Western democratic and free market values, and described post–World War II Germany and Japan as role models for Tajikistan's reconstruction and eventual prosperity.[3] Russia was not mentioned once in this speech.

The pivot to MFP quickly entered official historiography as a momentous occasion in the country's post-Soviet existence: it constituted "a breakthrough in Tajikistan's relations with the outside world. As a result . . . our republic, alongside with developing the mutually beneficial relations with traditional partners, has actively incorporated other states into its orbit of interactions filling the ranks of its friends and partners."[4] As one of Rahmon's close advisors later recounted, the torrent of conceptual documents, speech acts, and policy actions was timed and coordinated; it signaled to domestic and foreign

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audiences that Tajikistan's leaders were finally shrugging off "unjustified euphoria" over their Russia-centric vision of the world. He added:

> In practice, the multi-vector character of Tajikistan's foreign policy was manifested in the diversification of its international relations, demonopolization of its trade and economic priorities, and attraction of foreign investment and military-technical assistance from countries external to EurAsEC and the CSTO. At the same time, Tajikistan fully retained its geopolitical and military-political priorities extant before December 2002.[5]

Foreign observers concurred that Rahmon's MFP was the real deal and had staying power. Jonson wrote in 2006:

> The present choice in favour of Western partners for cooperation seems to be a pragmatic choice that is helping Tajikistan to reach out to the world and develop. This policy will most probably continue. . . . An orientation towards Russia will remain, although it is inevitable that this direction will no longer be a priority for Tajikistan.[6]

Such assessments may have been overly optimistic. In his study of Kazakhstan, Hanks argued persuasively that successful multi-vectorism demanded that "the character of government and internal policies of potential partners, and their geopolitical relationship with other states, are not variables that direct or even inform the multi-vector approach."[7] Rahmon's open-door drive was compromised by Tajikistan's residual geopolitical orientation toward Russia, on the one hand, and its stated commitment to social learning and normative transfer from the West, on the other. Its ability to deliver the necessary security and economic goods was questionable from the outset.

Taking stock of the first decade of MFP, one local analyst referred to it as "ten years of defeats," indicating that foreign partners—such as Russia, the US, China, and Muslim states—not only ignored Tajikistan's national interests (particularly its quest for energy security), but also presented a threat to the country's sovereignty and stability.[8] Rahmon took a different view, declaring MFP a success on the grounds that "the absolute majority of the country's residents support the peaceful, pragmatic, transparent, clear, predictable, and balanced foreign policy of their state," though he added that the time was ripe for a thorough reassessment of the "open doors" strategy, ostensibly to infuse it with even more "realism and balance."[9] The President's injunction set in motion an internal debate on Tajikistan's place in the international political system—and its alignment and alliance-making practices— that continued throughout 2015 and 2016.

Hansen has argued that foreign policy debate should be viewed as being constituted by a number of discourses, "analytical constructions—not em

pirical objects—through which the construction and linking of identity and policy can be studied."[10] This chapter seeks to examine the current debate on MFP in Tajikistan by focusing on one of its main storylines or "generative narratives,"[11] namely its relations with Russia, China, and the US. This selection is informed by the fact that local readings of international relations are dominated by a system-level geopolitical approach that puts a premium on great power rivalry.[12]

DECONSTRUCTING THE MFP

The chapter uses Hansen's intertextual research model of foreign policy analysis,[13] amended for and adapted to the case of Tajikistan (see table 4.1). It examines three discursive streams pertinent to the country's extant MFP. Stream 1 features official narrations and utterances that frame foreign policy as the only possible and legitimate course of action. In contrast to an extensive list of actors contributing to the articulation of official policy in a Western country, in Tajikistan it is generated by the narrow "foreign policy executive" (FPE), defined by Lobell as personnel in charge of "devising grand strategy and maximising national security."[14] These include the President, his Administration, and high-ranking officials in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the cabinet, and the defense and security establishment.

Stream 2 would normally include institutionalized opposition parties and parliamentary discussion, scrutiny, and oversight. In the wake of the March 2015 parliamentary elections, which extended the domination of the legislature by the President's People's Democratic Party, the extent of this institution's contribution to the discursive construction of foreign policy appears to have been limited. On the other hand, the very weakness of political opposition voices increases the importance of a tightly knit coterie of analysts and commentators who enjoy privileged access to the (still) reasonably free media on the strength of their self-ascribed "expertise," "professionalism," and access to a "scientific" understanding of the world that is generally unavailable to non-initiates. They are coded as "foreign policy intellectuals" (FPIs), a close analog of the term "security intellectuals," which is widely used in critical geopolitics.[15] Media platforms associated with privately owned national newspapers such as *Asia-Plus*, *Faraj*, *Millat*, and *Avesta* serve as particularly important vehicles for foreign policy debate.

Stream 3 comprises agents and sites of cultural production that are not overtly political. They are, however, responsible for the construction of widely disseminated identities which help legitimize or delegitimize the MFP. As Campbell demonstrated, framing foreign policy in terms that link

Table 4.1.   Intertextual Research Model of Foreign Policy Analysis

	Stream 1	Stream 2	Stream 3
Analytical Focus	Official discourse: FPE	Wider political discourse: FPI and the media	Cultural discourse
Object of Analysis	Official texts and speech acts	Expert opinion Editorials Opposition voices	Public opinion Social media Literary and artistic works
Goal of Analysis	Identification of the hegemonic narrative	Mapping out validation of, and resistance to, the hegemonic narrative	Articulations of national identity feeding into foreign policy debate

Source: Author's own table

it to national identity is a prevalent and powerful political maneuver.[16] In Tajikistan, debating foreign policy often entails arguing about the nation's myths, values, and history. Literary figures, journalists, and social media help shape the cultural milieu in which foreign policy operates.

The texts analyzed in this chapter meet three basic criteria: recent provenance (2013 to present); clear articulation of policies and identities pertinent to MFP; and wide circulation and readership.[17] The source material is drawn from open sources in three languages—Tajik, Russian, and English.

OFFICIAL MFP DISCOURSE

On January 27, 2015, President Emomali Rahmon signed into law the Concept of the Foreign Policy of the Republic of Tajikistan. The Concept is "a political act, which determines and regulates major principles, objectives, obligations and priority directions of the foreign policy of the Republic of Tajikistan based on the long-term national interests of the country."[18] As such, it provides a perfect starting point for a discussion of how the Tajik government handles its external relations. It took Tajikistan's foreign policy executive nearly two years to come up with a coherent text that has the entire nation as its target audience and fulfills all five "performative actions," to use Balzacq's term—declarative, assertive, commissive, expressive, and directive.[19] The previous Concept (adopted in 2002) lacked most of these attributes; it was a classified document with which even many of the country's diplomats had no acquaintance.

The 2015 Concept identifies seven categories of national interests in the field of foreign policy:

- Protection and strengthening of Tajikistan's independence and national security; establishment of a security belt and good neighborliness along the borders of the country;
- Enhancement of relations of confidence, friendship, and cooperation with countries all over the world, based on mutual interests;
- Creation of favorable conditions for economic, social and cultural development; gradual improvement of living standards and reinforcement of the country's economic security;
- Promotion of Tajikistan's energy independence and food security; break-up of the country's communications deadlock;
- Protection of the rights, freedoms, dignity, and interests of citizens of Tajikistan, both at home and abroad;
- Reinforcement of the positive image of Tajikistan in the world as a democratic, secular, and legal state; and
- Provision of assistance to constructive and legitimate activities conducted by Tajik societies and associations of compatriots in other countries.

These interests are to be protected via "an independent multi-vector foreign policy . . . aiming at building friendly and mutually beneficial relations with other countries based on unconditional respect for international law."[20]

In describing the current system of international relations and Tajikistan's place in it, the Concept departs from the rhapsodic vision of the world presented by the discourses of globalization and liberal values that prevailed in the 2000s. The post–Cold War domination by the US is giving way to multipolarity, as a result of which "deep political and economic changes emerge . . . that are fraught with the transformation of international relations."[21] The Concept uses the idiom of classical Mackinderian geopolitics, where Tajikistan's landlocked geographic location determines its policy options, and broods darkly about the "threats and challenges" of globalization, including "pressure on the national and cultural values" of the people.

Particularly relevant to the MFP is the Concept's take on Tajikistan's bilateral diplomacy priorities. It conveys a clear sense of hierarchy in dealing with great powers. Russia is at the top of the list: "Traditionally friendly relations and strategic partnership with this country are of particular importance for the Republic of Tajikistan."[22] China comes next, with relations with Beijing described as among "the most important dimensions of the foreign policy of the Republic of Tajikistan in the Asian sector."[23] These relations have only recently reached the level of "strategic partnership," and there is room for

further progress "in political, security, military-technical, trade, economic and cultural areas."[24] Ties with the US do not carry the same significance or immediacy, though they do still matter, thanks to America's "enormous authority" in global politics and economy. The relationship is therefore characterized as "strong" rather than "strategic" partnership.

The Concept reinforces the president's exclusive constitutional prerogative to determine the country's foreign policy. Members of Tajikistan's FPE routinely proclaim their fidelity to Rahmon's course, often resorting to rather extraordinary hyperbole in the process. A recent book published by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs proclaims that Tajikistan's transformation into one of the most open, respected, stable, and efficient actors in the global arena is the result of "immaculate planning, consistent endeavor and sterling service by the heroic son of the nation, Emomali Rahmon."[25] In 2016, Foreign Minister Sirojiddin Aslov proposed that Rahmon be officially recognized as "The Creator of a New School of International Relations" to complement his already legislated honorifics "The Leader of the Nation" and "The Founder of Peace and Unity."[26]

Tajikistan's identity and foreign policy are textually constructed in the Concept in a way that makes the two appear consistent with one another. The country is independent, secular, and peace-loving; it is also poor, with many Tajiks eking out an existence abroad. The geopolitical shift from unipolarity to multipolarity threatens the nation's immanent characteristics, while at the same time offering new opportunities for economic development not necessarily linked to the liberal variant of globalization. This, coupled with Tajikistan's continental interiority, warrants privileged relations with Russia and China at the expense of the US. The president has constitutional authority to pursue this policy and is also morally sanctioned to do so as the custodian of independence, secularism, and national unity in Tajikistan.

With the hegemonic narrative outlined, a closer look at speech acts by responsible officials will reveal in greater detail how multi-vectorism is constructed and legitimized in Tajikistan. There appear to be distinct interest groups whose articulation of national interest favors closer engagement with a particular great power.

Russia

The camp of cheerleaders for Moscow is dominated by representatives of the security bloc in the government. Top brass in the Ministry of Defense and the State Committee of National Security (GKNB) have traditionally had exceptionally close links with Russia, which provides the bulk of training, equipment, and advisory support for the uniformed services in Tajikistan. Even during the heyday of Dushanbe's rapprochement with the US in the early to

mid-2000s, Tajik generals' vision of the international security situation did not differ, in principle, from that of Moscow. The GKNB actively lobbied Rahmon to take steps against US-sponsored NGOs in the country and warned him about the American desire to project power north from Afghanistan.[27] The Defense Minister, meanwhile, spoke about the need to contain NATO as a matter of inexorable "historical dialectic."[28]

In recent years, the deteriorating situation in Afghanistan (which shares a 1,400-kilometer border with Tajikistan), growing concerns about Islamic radicalism, and ongoing problems with the central government's control over remote regions have strengthened the image of Russia as an indispensable military and security ally. Rahmon's senior foreign affairs advisor has postulated the existence of a "unified geopolitical and geostrategic space" between Russia and Tajikistan where the former guarantees the security, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of the latter.[29] Tajikistan is an active member of the Russia-led Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO), which it regards as a bastion against "international terrorism, religious extremism, illegal narcotics and arms trafficking" and a guarantor of its "peace, stability . . . territorial integrity and independence."[30]

The key elements of Moscow's contribution to Tajikistan's conventional military security include the presence of Russian servicemen on Tajik soil (the 201st Military Base, independent air force and special forces units, and border guard advisors); extensive training (both on the ground and in Russia); and an ambitious program of supplying weapons to the Tajik army, which was estimated at RUB 70 billion (US$1.5 billion) when it was announced in 2015.[31] In the words of Tajikistan's Defense Minister, this army must demonstrate to the peoples of Tajikistan *and* Russia that their "security is duly safeguarded."[32]

In the official Russo-centric security discourse, the views of the GKNB chief, Colonel-General Saimumin Yatimov, are particularly noteworthy. Since his appointment in 2010, he has appeared in the national media with a regularity that is unusual for any head of secret police. Yatimov, who holds a PhD in history and international relations, is a strong believer in a geopolitical conspiracy by the US and its allies to establish hegemony over Tajikistan. Yatimov has accused the West of orchestrating the Arab Spring and other "colored revolutions" in order to destabilize societies blessed with authentic national values. The two Trojan horses of liberal democracy and jihadi Islam ("Wahhabism, Salafism, Tahrirism, Talibism and other –isms") have been planted by the West in countries like Tajikistan via fifth columnists among the intelligentsia and misguided youths, with the goal of destroying the national ideology and government.[33] All threats to regime security are externally induced: "Terrorism, extremism, other forms of subversive activity . . . are but a continuation of foreign policy by certain countries through other means."[34]

Yatimov referred to the security crises of 2015—which included a mutiny by the Deputy Defense Minister, the influx of Tajik Muslims into ISIS, and the advancement of the Taliban to the borders of the country—as moves in the same geopolitical chess game played by the West.[35] Russia is a natural ally of Tajikistan in parrying these threats. Yatimov's position is a mirror image of his Russian colleagues' worldview, and his view that Tajikistan serves as a security buffer zone for Russia[36] is unequivocally shared by Moscow.

Since 2000, Russia has been gradually losing its dominant position in Tajikistan's economy. By 2015, China had replaced it as Tajikistan's leading source of investment and main trading partner. The exit of large Russian companies such as Gazprom and Beeline from the Tajik market in 2016 has further contributed to a perception among the local governing elite that orienting the country's foreign economic policy toward Moscow might not be a wise choice. This is most clearly reflected in Dushanbe's reluctance to join the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU), a regional economic bloc sponsored by Russia of which two other Central Asian states, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, are members. The EEU is not mentioned at all in the National Development Strategy of the Republic of Tajikistan until 2030, adopted by the government in 2016; as the Deputy Minister of Economy and Trade commented, "We don't believe that if we stay outside this Union our development will suffer."[37]

On the other hand, remittances from hundreds of thousands of Tajik migrant workers, which generated between a third and a half of Tajikistan's GDP over the past decade, continue to be more critical to the country's economic security than foreign direct investment, development assistance, and export revenues combined.[38] Russia's role as the main destination for Tajikistan's labor migrants—and hence the source of sustenance for many families in the country—is recognized in official documents such as the 2011 National Strategy on Labour Migration. The speaker of the lower house of Tajikistan's parliament admitted in 2016 that the question of labor migration was "particularly sensitive" as far as MFP was concerned and dominated bilateral talks with Moscow "at all levels."[39] The Kremlin's decision to grant amnesty to up to 250,000 migrant workers who had been deported from Russia or stayed there illegally—announced during Vladimir Putin's official visit to Dushanbe in early 2017—supplied further evidence of "deepening strategic partnership and alliance between the two states," according to Rahmon.[40]

China

In 2016, a government think tank published a paper analyzing external funding coming to Tajikistan. It spoke about the disappointing volume and effectiveness of international aid, insufficient foreign private investment, and

reduced remittances from a Russia crippled by Western sanctions. The only ray of sunshine was soft credits from the People's Republic of China, "which have proved rather effective, from the socio-economic point of view, in the resolution of strategically important issues in the energy and transport sectors."[41] The image of Beijing as a generous provider of financial resources and technical expertise to meet Tajikistan's developmental needs dominates the portrayal of China in the official MFP discourse. This image fits seamlessly with the vision of Russia as a conventional security provider. The director of the aforementioned think tank spoke about a consensual and harmonious division of labor between Tajikistan's two strategic partners, who "do not do anything against each other's interests."[42]

The Sino-Tajik Declaration on Strategic Partnership was signed when Rahmon visited Beijing in 2013. The return visit by President Xi Jinping in 2014 resulted in the initialling of 16 bilateral treaties, including agreements on the construction of a gas pipeline through Tajik territory, hydrocarbon exploration, and the expansion of Tajikistan's power generation capacity. Rahmon's administration went into celebration mode, putting out a press release titled "Grandiose plans of two neighboring countries and the possibility of the infusion of US$6 billion into Tajikistan"[43] that was duly disseminated by the state-controlled media.

The progress of many of the announced initiatives has not been entirely smooth, particularly in the case of the all-important gas pipeline. Nonetheless, the pro-China lobby in the Tajik government's economic bloc is hopeful that Beijing will underwrite much of the US$118 billion expenditure envisaged by the National Development Strategy-2030. In 2016, the Ministry of Finance noted approvingly that the share of low-interest loans from Chinese government entities had reached 88 percent of Tajikistan's bilateral credit portfolio, accounting for 48.4 percent of its total foreign debt; 40 percent of all development projects in the country were financed by these loans. Furthermore, the Ministry foresaw no serious problems with servicing these loans in future.[44]

One of the most vocal advocates for close relations with China is Rashid Alimov. A career diplomat who served as Rahmon's first Foreign Minister in 1992, he was appointed Tajikistan's ambassador to China in 2005 and became Secretary-General of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) in 2016. Alimov's programmatic article, published in 2014, advanced the following theses:[45]

- China, unlike Russia, has the material resources and a clear-cut strategy to stabilize Tajikistan's economic development as part of its Silk Road Economic Belt (SREB) initiative. China's "peaceful rise" in Central Asia is benign and not threatening to Tajikistan's sovereignty;

- SREB is not compatible with U.S. plans for a New Silk Road but is congruent with the Russian EEU project. Tajikistan ought not to participate in any other geopolitical scheme because "without China and Russia it will be doomed to failure";
- Tajik society "has formed a firm opinion that China's words and deeds are never apart"; and
- The only factor that prevents even greater Sino-Tajik strategic engagement is a "colossal cultural chasm," which will gradually be overcome through increased educational exchange and people-to-people contacts.

Alimov's views are shared by a growing number of FPE constituents, including members of the president's family, who personally benefit from expanding economic ties with China.[46] Nonetheless, compared to the pro-Russia networks, the Sinophilic faction has a much smaller footprint in the public sphere when articulating its distinct position. Apprehension about popular backlash plays a role in this reticence, as will be discussed below.

The United States

The era of special relations between Tajikistan and the US promulgated by Bush and Rahmon in 2002 ended a decade later. By 2012, though the Tajik foreign minister, Hamrohkhon Zarifi, continued to use the words "strategic partnership" to describe interactions between the two countries,[47] his was a lone voice in the wilderness. A few months later, Zarifi, who had served as the ambassador to the US before becoming minister in 2006, lost his job. A smear campaign by the Russian media—which portrayed Zarifi as an American stooge plotting against Rahmon[48] may have contributed to the sacking, yet Zarifi's departure clearly signaled the Tajik FPE's disappointment with the results of bilateral cooperation.

The government of Tajikistan had inflated expectations about U.S. assistance in its ambitious plans to boost hydropower generation, construct roads, and modernize the armed forces.[49] The realization that Washington's strategy of engaging Tajikistan was a mere "adjunct to Afghan stabilization efforts rather than a priority in and of itself"[50] hit Dushanbe hard following Obama's 2011 decision to withdraw the bulk of NATO's troops from Afghanistan. In a context where large-scale U.S. investment never materialized, bilateral trade remained appallingly scant, strategic rents from supplying NATO troops dried up, and threats from Afghanistan proliferated, it was inevitable that the United States' position in the MFP would be downgraded.

The flag of US-Tajik friendship is flying rather low at present in the official MFP discourse. Unlike Russia and China, the US does not even have

a dedicated section on the President of Tajikistan's web portal. State-run information agencies do not broadcast speeches explaining the centrality of Washington to the attainment of Tajikistan's national interests. One exception is the CASA-1000 high voltage transmission line, which would, if completed, enable Tajikistan to export up to three billion kWt of electricity per year to Afghanistan and Pakistan. The project, in gestation since 2006, has been hailed by Rahmon as an essential element of the country's energy security and a major export earner.[51] Visiting Dushanbe in 2015, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry confirmed, "We talked about the five-year prospect of Tajikistan being able to supply all of the energy of Afghanistan as well as its own people."[52] Washington expedited the allocation of World Bank funds and made a small direct contribution to cover the Tajik segment of CASA-1000. In May 2016, Rahmon inaugurated the project at a ceremony in Dushanbe attended by officials from Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Kyrgyzstan; it is expected to be finished in 2020. The project's implementation has, however, been hampered by political, technical, and financial problems which could yet prove insurmountable without continuous US support.

While Tajik ministers and senior bureaucrats are cautious about praising closer ties with the US, they are equally reluctant to criticize the global superpower, which reacquired a taste for the promotion of human rights and democracy in Tajikistan after the country's utility in the global war on terrorism decreased. The hatchet jobs are delegated to lower-level commentators in the state-run media. An outstanding example was a 2014 article in *Jumhuriyyat* entitled "The Hidden Plans of the IRPT [the Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan]," which accused the US of bankrolling the IRPT alongside other "sickos" and "political prostitutes" opposing Rahmon.[53] In the wake of the official banning of the IRPT in October 2015 and large-scale persecution of its members, Washington designated Tajikistan a "Country of Particular Concern" (CPC) under the US International Religious Freedom Act of 1998, putting it in the same category as Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. This led to a further outburst of indignation in the media. Rahmon's party newspaper explained to its readers that America did not give two hoots about civic rights and was using the pretext of protecting oppressed Muslims in order to achieve its sinister geopolitical objectives.[54]

FOREIGN POLICY INTELLECTUALS
AND ALTERNATIVE MFP DISCOURSES

Writing on the role of policy intellectuals in the West, with its free, competitive and well-endowed "marketplace of ideas," James Allen Smith observed

that even there, "the expert rarely contributes the flash of insight that quickly and fundamentally transforms national policy or inspires an innovative law."[55] In Tajikistan, the ability of independent experts who do not belong to the exclusive circle of presidential advisors to have direct policy input is even further circumscribed. Indirectly, however, they do perform a valuable function in the process of communicative discourse: "These additional political actors are able to interpret, influence and modify the ideas presented to them [by the government] and communicate these changes back to the sender in a circular ideational exchange."[56] Through critical engagement with the government discourse, the FPIs enable—and on occasion compel—the FPE to do a better job of convincing the general public of the legitimacy and necessity of MFP.

Tajikistan's expert foreign policy analysis community is rather small. There is only one think tank that conforms to the Western definition of the term: the Center for Strategic Studies (CSS). The CSS operates under the aegis of the president, providing expert advice to his administration; it is also used by the latter to test public opinion on controversial issues. Small teams of scholars at the Academy of Sciences and the Russian-Tajik Slavic University work more or less constantly on Tajikistan's international relations and contribute to the public debate. Local NGOs and analytical groups such as the Central Asian Expert Club "Eurasian Development" and the Sharq Sociological Center, which have close ties to Russia and the West, respectively, are often commissioned by external patrons to conduct research and comment on specific aspects of Tajikistan's foreign policy.[57]

The largest cohort within the FPI community (though it still numbers just several dozen people) comprises independent experts who are not regularly involved in government service or scholarly or applied research. Coming from very diverse backgrounds, these "media professors" and "quote doctors," known as *siyosatshinoson* ("political scientists," although few of them have a degree in this discipline), enjoy a special relationship with journalists and editors, and feature prominently in interviews, op-eds, and broadcasts about Tajikistan's international relations.

In addition to a handful of independent newspapers and radio stations, three multimedia platforms provide the FPIs with a channel for communicating their views to the public: *News.tj*, operated by privately-owned national news agency *Asia-Plus*; the Tajik service of the US-funded Radio Free Europe (*Radioi Ozodi*); and *Sputnik-Tajikistan*, an offshoot of the Russia Today media group. A peculiar feature of Tajikistan's expert community is its aversion to the blogosphere. Even on social media they tend to confine themselves to the role of interviewees, rather than chief narrators.[58]

In April 2015, *News.tj* published an editorial titled "Multi-Vectorism or Diffidence of Tajik Diplomacy?" which brought together expert opinion on Tajikistan's MFP.[59] Only the deputy head of the CSS praised it as entirely successful, citing "good relations" with Russia, China, and the US as evidence. Others were critical, commenting that an "open door policy" by definition implies a lack of principles and abrogation of the national interest to placate foreign partners, and listing specific instances of what they perceived as policy failure, e.g. cession of territory to China and poor protection of Tajik citizens' rights in Russia. The article concluded that, "Tajikistan's problems in foreign affairs have a systemic character, including the dearth of professional cadres and strong dependence on the government which hampers Tajik diplomats' capacity to implement a successful foreign policy." The foreign ministry reacted immediately, publishing a rebuttal claiming that it was doing the best job possible, "taking into account the realities of Tajikistan's geopolitical location," and suggesting that the journalist behind the article, Humairo Bakhtiyor, was not a Tajikistani patriot or else she would not have presented "our foreign policy doctrine in a negative light to suit the interests of other countries."[60] Bakhtiyor was eventually forced to leave Tajikistan, but public debate on the issues raised in her piece has continued unabated.

Fleshing out the notion of a difficult geopolitical environment affecting the MFP, a CSS expert wrote:

> The pressure and expectations of global powers have severely limited opportunities for multi-vector policy or the policy of "open doors" and are forcing them [Central Asian republics] to choose in clearer terms their "strategic partners." *Thus, the "golden age" of Central Asian geopolitics, which commenced upon the dissolution of the Soviet Union, is gradually coming to an end.*[61] [emphasis original]

In their quest for "greater clarity," local Eurasianists demanded an end to flirtation with the West and a return to Moscow's embrace: "Tajikistan doesn't have a choice. The multi-vector policy has exhausted its capacity and today a choice has to be made—with whom to move forward."[62] The leader of the Tajik communists pushed for China as *the* global superpower, opining that his country ought to be grateful to Beijing for taking just 3.5 percent of disputed territory from Tajikistan in the name of deterring the US and NATO.[63] Reprising the logic of classical realism, a prominent expert pushed for closer ties with Washington to balance against the growing strength of America's rivals.[64]

The FPIs regularly question the themes and tropes of the official discourse, which legitimize the government's stance vis-à-vis a particular great power.

Russia's image as a security provider is tarnished by the suspicion that it deliberately exaggerates external and internal threats to Tajikistan in order to justify its military presence there.[65] As Moscow's ally, Tajikistan might be dragged into Putin's "Machiavellian" schemes in places such as Syria and Ukraine.[66] Joining the EEU would not only fail to bring tangible economic benefits—it would deprive Tajikistan of its independence.[67]

For many critics, Beijing's munificence has a dark side, jeopardizing Tajiks' future. It is acquiring strategic control of Tajikistan's mineral wealth, and Chinese business ventures discriminate against the locals, preferring to employ Han workers instead.[68] Experts have warned the government to maintain the strict visa regime with China and migration quotas because canceling them "would be a deadly threat" with the potential to turn Tajikistan into a Chinese village.[69] The increasing acreage of agricultural land leased to Chinese farmers, the dubious environmental practices of Chinese entrepreneurs, and China's further territorial claims in the Pamirs are often present in the FPI counternarrative on strategic partnership with the giant neighbor to the east.[70]

In a rare display of idealism, Tajik author and scriptwriter Muhib Qurbon argued that US involvement in Tajikistan had nothing to do with geopolitics or jockeying for influence with Russia: "America's primary objective is the spread of democracy, civil liberties, and preservation of peace and stability."[71] An editorial in *Faraj* enjoined its audience to think of the Americans as peace-loving and friendly people, just like the Russians and the Chinese. The problem was, it argued, that every single US leader who strove for global peace and justice was either killed (John Kennedy), forced to resign (Richard Nixon), or ignored by the power-hungry elite (Henry Kissinger).[72]

Despite growing pressure on independent media and experts since 2010,[73] the FPIs in Tajikistan do a reasonable job of contesting the official discourse. Widely read and quoted, they remain the only agents of public analysis of the MFP. They engage directly and pointedly with official texts, concepts, and catchphrases, problematizing everything from the theoretical basis of multi-vectorism to specific aspects of relations with Russia, China, and the US. They are unlikely to effect a dramatic policy shift, yet their output provides a good indication of how the official story might change subtly through discursive adjustment.

CULTURAL CONTEXT AND
POPULAR PERCEPTIONS OF GREAT POWERS

Hansen notes that it might not always be easy to determine whether popular culture reproduces or contests conventional representations of official policy

discourse.[74] The relationship between the two is mutually constitutive. However, it would be "extremely unlikely—and politically unsavvy—for politicians to articulate foreign policy without any concern for the representations found within the wider public sphere."[75]

A sociological survey conducted in 2016 examined popular attitudes toward foreign countries in the former Soviet republics.[76] Tajikistan was revealed to be the most Russophilic nation in post-Soviet space; its composite "index of mutual attraction" vis-à-vis Russia (based on 12 political, economic, and cultural variables) eclipsed even that of Kazakhstan, long regarded as Moscow's staunchest ally in Central Asia. The public perception of Russia as a preferred source of investment slipped 7 percent compared to 2015, while China gained 8 percent; nevertheless, even on this indicator, Russia continued to outdo the second-placed China (56 percent to 23 percent). In the cultural sphere, Russia retained a huge lead over China and the US. Around half of those surveyed identified Russia as a country where they would like to study or send their children to study; the US came in second place (12 percent) while China took third (11 percent). When asked about the preferred source for cultural imports (including books, films, and music), 53 percent chose Russia, 32 percent mentioned India, and 20 percent selected Uzbekistan. The US and China did not register high on Tajiks' cultural horizon.

Some have attempted to explain the phenomenon of Russophilia in modern Tajik culture through the lens of nostalgia for the Soviet days and disappointment with the reformist decade of the 1990s,[77] as well as the residual but evanescent prestige of the Russian language.[78] Such analyses and concomitant expectations about Moscow's receding soft power are misplaced. Tajik youths born shortly before or after independence and with a diminished command of Russian are ardent supporters of closer ties with Russia, which they associate with progress, modernity, and economic opportunity (see Table 4.2).

Table 4.2. "Should Tajikistan have better relations with these countries; more distant; or the same as now?" (2016 poll, percent, respondents aged 14–29)

Country	Better	More Distant	The Same	Don't Know	No Answer
Russia	89.7	1.8	6.1	1.3	1.1
China	58.7	5.8	29.7	2.4	3.4
US	26.5	31.6	32.5	3.7	5.7

Source: Adapted from Muzaffar Olimov and Shavkat Sahibov, *Molodezh' Tsentral'noi Azii. Tadzhikistan: na osnove sotsiologicheskogo oprosa* (Almaty: Predstavitelstvo Fonda im. Fridrikha Eberta v Kazakhstane, 2017), 301.

The Kremlin's investment in normative promotion via media campaigns, especially since 2014, has played a significant role in shaping Central Asian public opinion on foreign policy and worldview issues,[79] yet Moscow's pro-active conduct is just part of the battle for hearts and minds in the information space. Tajikistan's Generation X feels more comfortable connecting on Russian social media platforms such as Odnoklassniki and VKontakte than via Facebook or YouTube; the same is true of the country's dissidents and opposition leaders.[80] News stories, entertainment programs, and comedy shows originating in Russia are more relevant and intelligible to local audiences than anything China or the West can offer.

The story of Bozor Sobir, one of Tajikistan's most famous poets, provides an interesting insight into the evolving discourse on national identity in the cultural domain. Born in 1938, he became a standard-bearer for the Tajik nationalist intelligentsia during perestroika and one of the leaders of the Democratic Party. His party was on the losing side in the civil war, and in 1992 he went into exile in Russia and then America. After 19 years in the US, where he became a citizen and where his family continues to live, he returned to Tajikistan in 2013.

Sobir's poems from the early 1990s referred to Tajikistan as Russia's slave, likening the relationship between the two to a "friendship between a bloodthirsty wolf and a sheep" and arguing that Russia stands for "colonialism, wars, nationalism, and alcoholism."[81] A decade later, he publicly atoned for his "intellectual naïveté" and wrote about his preference for "honest" and "compassionate" Russians, who had brought modernity to Tajikistan, over an imaginary affinity with backward and fatuous Afghans and Iranians.[82] Another ten years passed, and the Russians progressed in his literary output to the position of having unique psychological compatibility with the Tajiks on account of sharing transcendental Aryan roots.[83] Sobir is now cynical about "illusory" U.S. democracy and its relevance to the Tajik national spirit and, while grateful to China for its contribution to the economic development of Tajikistan, doubts its ability to equal Russia in terms of cultural input.[84]

Not everyone agrees with Sobir's assessment, of course. Tajik media outlets constantly criticize Russia and the Russians for rampant xenophobia and racism. Headlines such as "What is the difference between Russian fascists and German fascists?" are common in the local press.[85] It is the Chinese, however, who routinely find themselves on the receiving end of racial prejudice in Tajik newspapers, usually in the context of local women getting hitched to Chinese workers: "Dating men from other nations—well, OK, but why marry the Chinese? Could a Tajik girl really stoop so low as to marry a Chinese?"[86]

CONCLUSION

At present, Tajikistan has a consistent and well-documented strategy of multivector foreign policy, with a clear hierarchy of relations with great powers at its core. Discourse analysis shows a high degree of congruence between policy and identity construction, underpinning the 2013 move to a new MFP.

The hegemonic narrative enshrined in the foreign policy Concept positions Russia and China as Tajikistan's strategic partners, providing for its security and developmental needs, respectively. The relationship between these two powers is complementary and non-conflictual; in effect, a Sino-Russian condominium in Tajikistan's external relations is recognized. The role of the US is downgraded to that of a powerful yet remote actor whose relevance to the country's national interests is intermittent.

Oppositional political discourse is largely absent in Tajikistan. Its functions are taken on by foreign policy intellectuals, who criticize the government line from the margins. They usefully indicate the limits of engagement with external patrons that the authorities will find difficult to cross: EEU membership in the case of Russia; freedom of movement and sale of land in the case of China; and outright condemnation of the US for interference in the domestic affairs of Tajikistan.

Tajikistan's public opinion and cultural disposition, particularly recrudescent Russophilia, are important constraints on the government's ability to introduce radical change to its strategic vision. A local commentator succinctly summarized the status quo: "The elites are increasingly looking toward China, the population supports Russia and many, egged on by the Russian media, treat the US as a personal enemy."[87] Barring dramatic external developments such as US involvement in large-scale military action in Afghanistan or Iran, and assuming that the incumbent regime remains in power, the current MFP is likely to persist over the medium term.

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Part II

TAJIK SOCIETY:
LOCAL DEVELOPMENTS
AND SOCIAL VULNERABILITIES

Chapter Five

Dushanbe Is Quite Far

Deconcentrated Agrarian Reform in Rural Tajikistan

Brent Hierman

One cannot fully understand the contemporary political dynamics of Tajikistan without appreciating the development and transformation of its agricultural sector. Under the Soviet Union, driven by the state's desire to become self-sufficient in cotton production, the republic's agricultural sector was designed to maximize the production of this crop. To this end, throughout the lowland regions of the republic, collective farmers were tasked with planting, tending, and harvesting raw cotton, which was then sent to manufacturing centers in the north. Since independence, due in part to international pressures, Tajikistan has enacted a series of reforms that formally aim to restructure the state's agricultural sector. Among the stated goals of these reforms are the individualization of agriculture; the liberalization of financing and credit for needed inputs; and the development of alternative markets (to encourage a break with the cotton monoculture). Most observers agree that the success of these reforms in achieving their stated goals has been mixed. To take one example, farm individualization has been quite successful in some districts, whereas farms remain predominantly collectivized in others.

The sweeping nature of these reforms, coupled with their incomplete implementation, has led Hofman and Visser to label contemporary Tajikistan "a laboratory of agrarian change."[1] This is a fitting designation, since the agricultural reforms have produced divergent outcomes in different regional contexts and among distinct populations within the state. In this chapter, I explore some of the reasons behind these divergent outcomes. An understanding of how agricultural reform policies—crafted in Dushanbe with the assistance of external agents—have resulted in a range of outcomes illuminates local political dynamics across rural Tajikistan. The primary argument of this chapter is that although the national land reform policies are designed to empower farmers to choose whether or not to withdraw a land share while

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minimizing the decision-making capacity of local authorities, in practice the opposite has often occurred. In many locations, the de facto process of farm reorganization has been perverted by information and power asymmetries, empowering local authorities at the expense of farmers. Thus, similar to Allina-Pisano's analyses of land reform failure in Ukraine, local authorities, in many cases, have been able to undermine the formal intentions of the reforms and preserve the status quo.[2] However, a major difference between the cases of Ukraine and Tajikistan is that in the latter, the process has been gendered; gender inequality in Tajikistan has served to slow and subvert land reform efforts.

BACKGROUND ON AGRARIAN REFORM

Tajikistan's geographic conditions place significant constraints on its agricultural sector. More than 90 percent of the country's territory is mountainous, and around 50 percent of the land is at an elevation greater than 3,000 meters. As a result, only about 6 percent of total land is arable. Despite the small amount of land suitable for agriculture, the country's population is predominantly agrarian and rural; over 60 percent of the domestic labor force is employed in agriculture, and this sector of the economy generates nearly a quarter of the state's GDP. During the Soviet era, raw cotton represented Tajikistan's primary contribution to the all-Union economy, and to this day, cotton is a vital export. Due to its importance to the state economy, cotton was officially considered a strategic crop for a number of years; despite its redesignation in 2014 (in order to emphasize the importance of food crops, such as wheat, in improving the state's food security), it is widely reported that local officials in lowland areas continue to pressure farmers to designate certain portions of land to the crop.[3]

The persistent importance of cotton production notwithstanding, agriculture has taken some modest steps toward diversification since independence. Figure 5.1 depicts the declining amount of land devoted to cotton production since 1990 alongside the calendar year average of the Cotlook "A" index, the approximation of the average global price of raw cotton. As this graph shows, since 1990, the amount of agricultural land devoted to cotton has declined by 50.6 percent. This figure also demonstrates that this decline cannot be fully accounted for by fluctuations in the global price of cotton. For instance, though the price of cotton increased from 2005 to 2010, a declining number of hectares were devoted to the crop in Tajikistan. Figure 5.2 illustrates that although textile fabrics remain the state's most important agricultural export, the relative value of fruits and vegetable exports has increased significantly
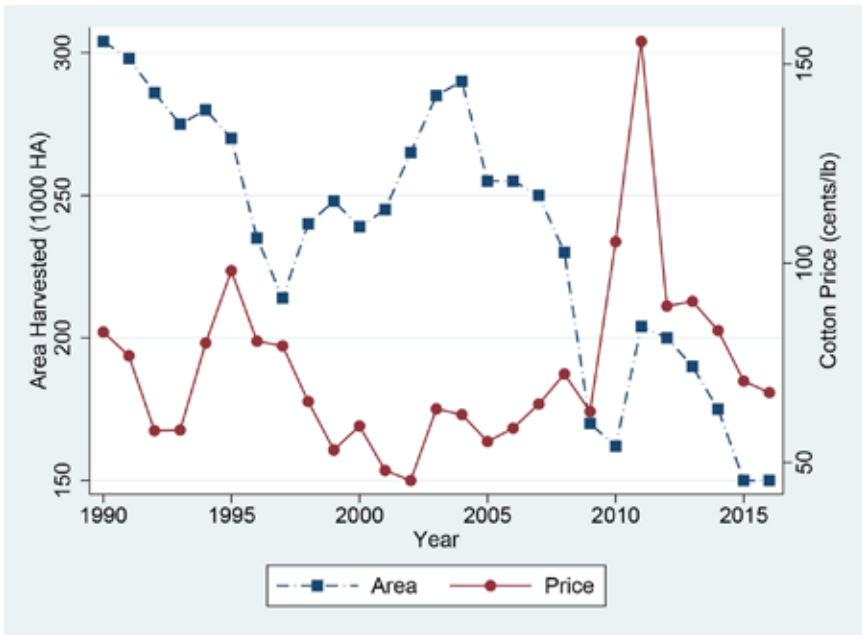
Figure 5.1. Changes to area devoted to cotton production and the price of cotton since independence.

since 1992. Twice, in 2007 and 2009, fruits and vegetables represented more than 50 percent of agricultural exports and therefore surpassed even cotton in terms of export value.[4]

In addition to modest movement away from cotton monoculture, the legal foundation of Tajikistani agriculture has been transformed since independence. As in other post-communist states, over the past 25 years, the government of Tajikistan has announced a series of reforms aimed at restructuring the country's agricultural sector and establishing a legal basis for farm individualization. These reforms have (formally, at least) sought to encourage the dissolution of large state and collective farms in favor of individual farms. Their design and implementation have been heavily influenced by external donors. For instance, as a condition for receiving assistance, the International Monetary Fund forced the government to end state financing of agriculture, specifically cotton, in the mid-1990s.[5] The World Bank has also been quite engaged with the agricultural sector, launching two large-scale projects promoting farm individualization. In 1999, it initiated the multi-year Farm Privatization Support Project, which aimed to develop a replicable model for privatizing state and collective farms across the country.[6] This initial project
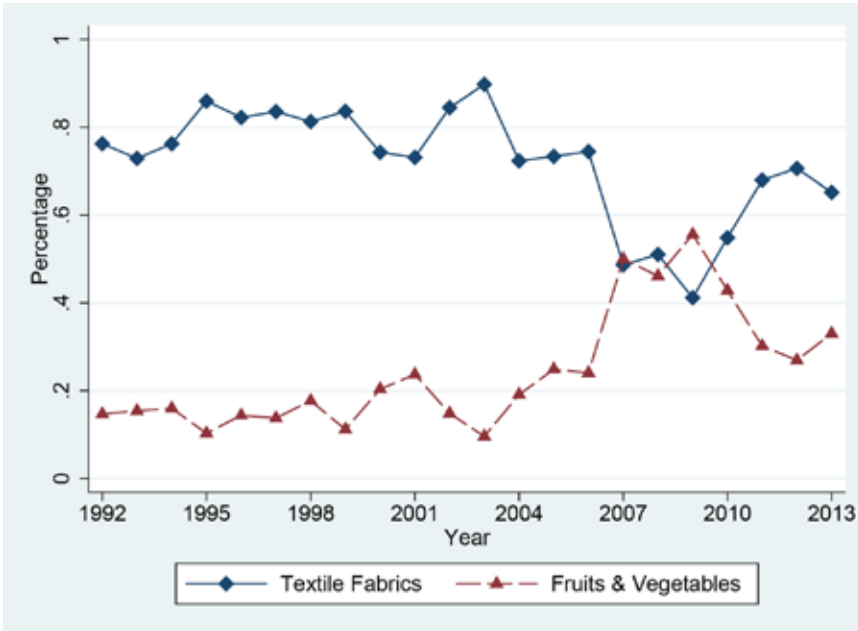
Figure 5.2.   Change in agricultural exports over time.

laid the foundation for the World Bank's second major initiative, the Land Registration and Cadastre System for Sustainable Agriculture Project. This project, initiated in 2005, provides cadastral surveys for interested farmers; it is designed to reduce the barriers faced by farmers who want to receive their land certificates.[7] In addition to international organizations, development agencies from Western states, such as the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), have also assisted in developing the language of reforms and propagating information about land tenure rights to farmers.[8]

Western efforts to encourage the individualization of farmland have been somewhat complicated by Tajikistan's constitutional design. Although property, including private property, is recognized and protected in the Tajikistani constitution (Articles 12 and 32), Article 13 establishes that "[t]he land, its resources, water, airspace, fauna and flora, and other natural resources are exclusively the property of the State, and the State guarantees their effective use in the interests of the people." While agricultural land cannot be privately owned, individuals, families, and groups can hold heritable usufruct rights. Under this system, rights holders are able to use and enjoy the fruits of their farmland while excluding others from doing likewise, but they are unable to alter or sell the land.[9]

Even with the prohibition on full legal ownership of land, the Tajikistani government has enacted a gradualist set of reforms designed to institution-alize individualized agriculture. Formally, the laws governing land tenure reform have all emanated from Dushanbe, in a series of presidential decrees and legislative acts. Since 1992, citizens have had the right to establish their own *dehqan* (peasant) farm; until 1996, however, the land for *dehqan* farms was intended to be sourced from poor-quality land administrative reserve funds.[10] In 1996, the president issued a decree "on the Reorganization of Ag-ricultural Enterprises and Organizations," which established that individual members of collective and state farms had the unilateral right to withdraw a land share from the collective. Not only did this decree broaden the type of land available for establishing a *dehqan* farm, it also formally established that individual farmers were autonomous in determining whether or not they wished to withdraw their land shares and start their own farms.[11]

Since 2006, the legal process by which a farmer can withdraw a land share from a collective enterprise has involved the farmer's local District Land Committee. These local administrative committees are responsible for surveying the land, drawing up the documents, and registering the land cer-tificates for any farmer who wishes to exercise his/her legal right to withdraw a land share and establish his/her own farm.[12]

Figure 5.3 is a simplified model which depicts the formal implementation process for land reform policies in the state. This process can be seen as a chain that connects decisions made in Dushanbe to farmers in rural areas across Tajikistan. As this figure indicates, the process officially begins with Presidential Decrees and Legislation.[13] These acts legally determine which social groups have access to which land sources. Following the declaration of formal laws regarding farm reorganization, local state representatives are responsible for their implementation. Specifically, local authorities are responsible for ensuring that farmers are informed of their right to withdraw land shares from collective enterprises and are made aware of the process of withdrawing their shares from the enterprise. District land committees are then tasked with arranging the paperwork required for the legal establishment of an individual or family *dehqan* farm.

Although local officials are responsible for mediating and managing the implementation of reforms that emanate from the center, they are not in-tended to have decision-making authority. In contrast to a devolved system, in which local authorities are empowered to make the decisions best suited to specific contexts, in Tajikistan, central authority has been formally decon-centrated. In other words, local authorities are responsible for implementing central dictates without reference to local contexts or conditions.[14] Formally, decision-making power rests with the central authorities (who craft the
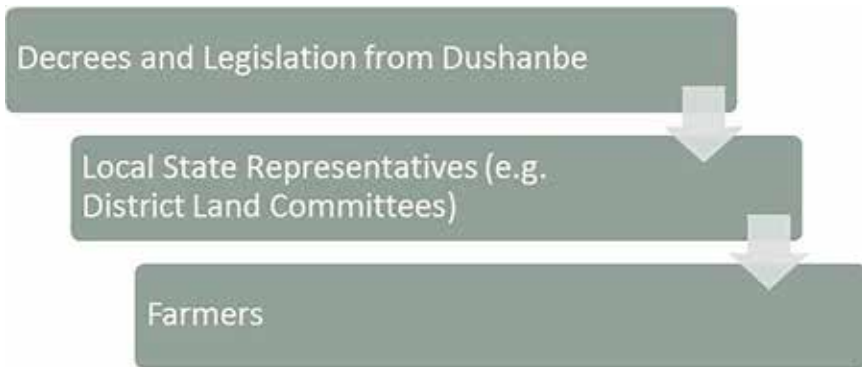
Figure 5.3.   Simplified model of land reform policy implementation process.

legislation) and the farmers (who, once informed of their rights, determine whether or not to withdraw their shares). The legal process should empower rural farmers, since they are granted the agency to weigh their options and (if they so choose) establish their own *dehqan* farm. However, in practice, there are decision-makers at many levels of the chain who, at least, influence the decision-making of farmers and, at most, eliminate farmers' agency.

The rest of this chapter is devoted to examining the informal limitations placed on some farmers' decisions to withdraw land and establish an individual farm. I argue that local elites, particularly successful collective farm managers—a group not depicted in figure 5.3—have a sizable influence in shaping the reorganization process and resisting land reform in many rural areas. Many non-elites in rural areas perceive that their ability to access needed inputs for agricultural production is shaped by their proximity to local elites; this perception has been instrumentalized by farm managers as a means to alter farmers' calculations of the costs associated with establishing an individual farm. Female agricultural workers are particularly vulnerable to dependency relationships with local farm managers. In Tajikistan, the gender imbalance in agriculture, due to the massive level of male labor migration, has seemingly been exploited by farm managers, further slowing and limiting formal reform objectives. Although I argue that local elites have, in many cases, acquired the capacity to alter the process of farm individualization in Tajikistan, this should not be taken to indicate that these actions *necessarily* undermine the interests of all national-level elites. Rather, through efforts to sustain the old agricultural system, local elites may in fact be benefiting national-level beneficiaries as well.

EVALUATING SPATIAL
VARIATION IN FARM REORGANIZATION

To appreciate how Tajikistan's national-level farm reorganization policies have been refracted by local power conditions, it is useful to examine rates of farm individualization across geographic space. Robinson et al. observe that farm individualization patterns vary between regions of the state.[15] At the time of their analysis, their data showed that in Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region (GBAO) nearly 100 percent of families had access to farm land either by holding a land share or through rental arrangements. Similarly, they found that the mountainous areas of Khatlon also had high rates of agricultural land holdings, whereas in the cotton-growing regions of Khatlon, only a little more than 10 percent of families had access to land other than household plots.[16] The authors see these variances as reflecting geographic differences in the quality of land, level of irrigation, and accessibility of markets. In mountainous regions, the quality of land is low, farmers often rely on rainfed irrigation, and markets are distant, whereas in lowland cotton-growing regions, farms are more valuable due to the higher quality of land, as well as greater access to irrigation networks and markets. The authors argue that in the latter, "vested interests" are strong enough to resist pressure to individualize collective enterprises.[17]

By emphasizing how geographic conditions shape distinct local political economies across Tajikistan, Hofman and Visser provide some context for the "vested interests" that Robinson et al. identify.[18] For instance, prior to farm reorganization, highland region farms were smaller in scale and more fragmented than those of lowland regions, which were connected to intricate and lengthy value chains.[19] Thus, unlike in the lowland regions, farm individualization in the highland regions did little to directly alter basic political economic dynamics. The authors argue that because of the higher relative value of agricultural output in the lowland areas, rural elites have greater leverage to resist the pressure to reform than do farmers in highland regions.

Robinson et al.'s and Hofman and Visser's emphasis on the distinction between highland and lowland conditions and context is quite valuable, in that it elucidates the uneven dynamics of rural power, which are exacerbated by the deconcentrated reform process. However, the specific nature of the power relations which shape the processes of individualization is not fully drawn out. Furthermore, by comparing differences between topographic zones (e.g. highland versus lowland political economies), data exposing differences *within* zones is lost. Using data from a World Bank, DFID, and USAID farmer-level survey conducted in 2011, figure 5.4 exposes some of the intrazone variation in farm individualization.[20] In this survey, 1,800 farmers were

interviewed about their knowledge, attitudes, and agricultural practices. In concurrence with the findings of Robinson et al. and Hofman and Visser, this figure shows that as of 2011 rates of individualization were starkly unequal across Tajikistan.[21] For instance, in the districts of Vanj (located in GBAO) and Nurobod (located in the Districts of Republican Subordination—RRP), every farmer surveyed worked for a family or individual *dehqan* farm. Both districts are non-cotton producing, highland regions and thus conform to the arguments of the previous authors. The fact that some cotton-growing regions, such as Sughd's Jabbor Rasulov, have experienced very limited individualization is also in agreement with the aforementioned argument. As useful as the distinction between highland and lowland regions is, the strict delineation cannot account for all the variation in the figure, however. Certain lowland cotton-growing districts, such as Zafarabod (in Sughd) and Shaartuz (in Khatlon), have also experienced relatively high levels of farm individual-ization (although less than either Vanj or Nurobod).

In a previous study co-authored by this author, analyses of cotton-produc-ing districts revealed that for districts far from the capital (and hence further away from markets), low yield rates were a necessary condition for high rates of farm individualization.[22] In other words, districts with productive farms were better able to resist pressure to reorganize than those with less
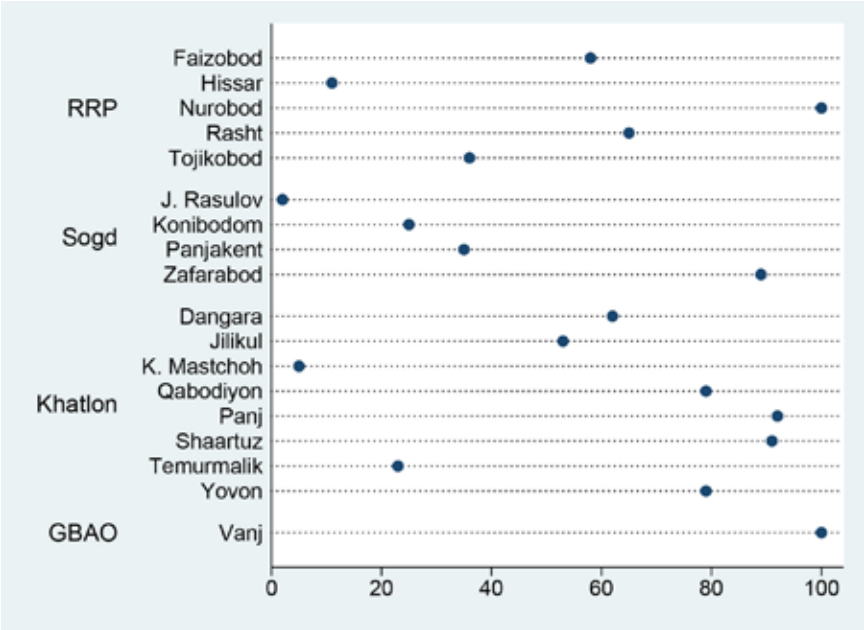
Figure 5.4.   Farm individualization by district and region.

productive farms. Further analysis by Nekbakhtshoev at the farm level has revealed that access to irrigation networks is strongly correlated with a lower probability of farm individualization.[23] Although these collective findings are generally in keeping with the logics highlighted by Robinson et al. and Hoffman and Visser that vested interests are more capable of resisting reform in some districts than others, they also offer insight into the relative power bases of various elites. Collective farm managers with access to productive farms and intact irrigation networks were structurally advantaged over elites with less productive lands or lower-quality irrigation networks.

Overall, these findings underscore the importance of local elites—in many cases farm managers—in determining whether or not it is profitable to resist reorganization. In other words, rather than being driven by farmers' relative land hunger, the process of reorganization has been driven by profit calculations made by managers and other local elites. For this reason, my co-author and I described the process of individualization as "land reform by default."[24] It is important to note that productive farms do not regularly share their profits with farm laborers; in many cases, farmworkers rely on in-kind payments, such as cotton stalks, for their labor.[25]

Of course, as Hoffman and Visser argue, these managers are operating within a specific local political economy. In many cases, their decisions cannot be understood in isolation from the networks of elites at other steps along the value chain—for example, the owners of cotton gins, who benefit from a farm manager's resistance to individualization. The importance of elite networks is perhaps most easily seen in the dynamics surrounding cotton financing and debt. In response to incentives from the IMF, the government officially ceased subsidizing agriculture and established a "private" system of financing cotton crops whereby investors (the "futurists") would offer credit to farms for the purchase of inputs in exchange for the future crop. The development of this system enabled the cotton monoculture to persist by ensuring farms would continue to produce cotton crops. Farmers were unable to shop around for the best deals or rates; rather, the relationship between a futurist and a farm was designated by state officials.[26] According to Van Atta, the futurists were not expected to front their own money for the credit they extended; instead, they served as intermediaries for the state's Agroinvestbank.[27] Even as large numbers of cotton farms, unable to produce the yield required by the futures contract, fell deep into debt, the futurist system enriched well-connected elites who controlled cotton gins and foreign export.[28] Although the futurist system was formally disbanded in 2007, the legacy of the system continues in many locations in the form of persistent debts on the land itself.[29] Even though these debts are often fictitious,[30] farm managers sometimes attempt to dissuade would-be independent farmers from pulling a

land share out of a collective farm by reminding them of the debt burden their independent farm would inherit.[31]

SATISFACTION WITH FARM REORGANIZATION

In the preceding discussion highlighting the role of local elites, including farm managers, in ably resisting the process of farm individualization, it was largely assumed that common farmers wanted their own independent farms. But is this a fair assumption? The long tradition of the moral economy perspective asserts that rural farmers are naturally conservative, risk averse, and resistant to change.[32] In the Tajikistani context, a risk-averse farmer may rationally seek to avoid gaining a land title in order to escape the burdens and hazards associated with independent farming.

One manner of evaluating whether common farmers actively desire to obtain their own land and establish independent farms is to inquire about their level of satisfaction with their ability to access land. In 2014, I conducted a small survey (n=81) of farmers in 10 randomly selected villages in the region of Khatlon and in the Districts of Republican Subordination. Given the limited size of the sample, these data are clearly not representative of the national population; however, they provide useful insight into how some segments of rural Tajikistan perceive the process of farm individualization. In the survey, respondents were asked about their level of satisfaction with their ability to access land, as well as their level of satisfaction with a number of other goods and services provided by the state (including access to drinking water, quality of roads, provision of sanitation, and policing). Of course, it is possible that some respondents who expressed dissatisfaction with their ability to access land did not want the responsibility of individually managing their own farms. However, informal follow-up discussions with many respondents revealed that many did in fact hope to run their own farm or were already doing so.

My survey results indicate that the process of farm individualization was not overly satisfying for a large number of rural respondents; fewer respondents (3.66 percent) indicated that they were fully satisfied with their ability to access land than with any other goods or services that they were asked about. Revealingly, the other good associated with agriculture—access to agricultural water—had the second lowest percentage of respondents fully satisfied (10.98 percent). To put these numbers in context, 15.85 percent of respondents indicated that they were fully satisfied with the police, a force widely recognized as being engaged in corrupt behavior.[33]

The startling continuity in the importance of household plots for agricultural production helps to situate these attitudes. Since the Soviet era, house-

hold plots have not only met subsistence needs but also supplemented rural income through the sale of produce in bazaars.[34] As figure 5.5 shows, as of 2014, household plots continued to contribute significantly to agricultural production, outpacing all other farm types in terms of both crop production and livestock production. Thus, despite formal laws enabling the development of individual farms, garden plots continue to play an outsized role in rural welfare. It is very plausible that respondents to my survey question perceived that their household's welfare would increase with greater access to land and agricultural water and were frustrated that they were unable to obtain these goods.

Furthermore, there is a perception that not all rural residents have equal access to land. In the same survey, I asked respondents about who would get a bigger land share if a wealthy businessman and a common farmer applied at the same time. An overwhelming majority of respondents (73.17 percent) indicated that a wealthy businessman would receive the larger share, while only 6.1 percent of respondents believed that a common farmer would receive a larger share.[35] The response to this question reflects a tangible fear, found in the discourse about land reform, that the informal process of farm reorganization is dispossessing average farmers of their land in order to benefit wealthy
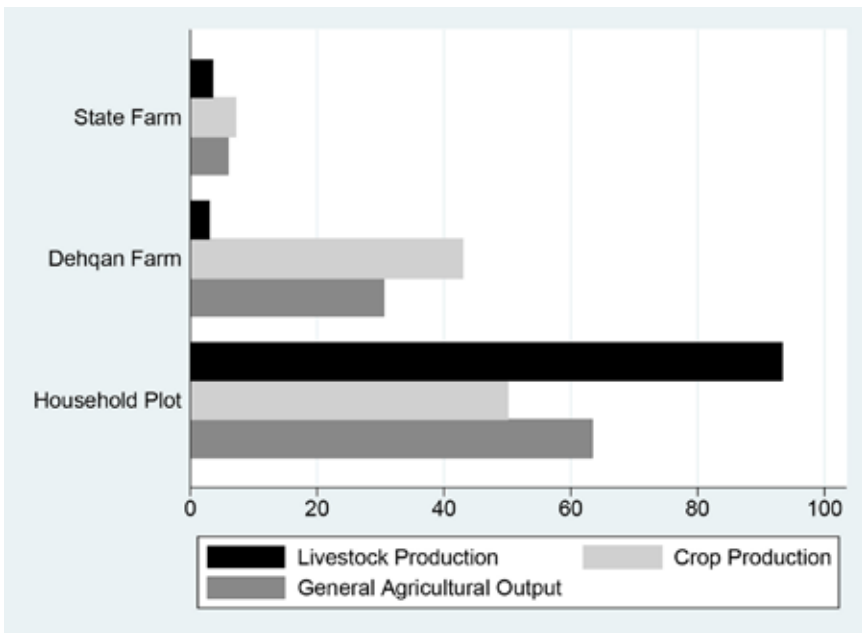
Figure 5.5. Agricultural production by farm type.

and well-connected agricultural elites.[36] If the perceptions reflected in these responses—that wealth determines the size and quality of land—are correct, inequality is likely to be deepened, since farmers with more and better land are more likely to have successful farms than farmers who end up with lower-quality or smaller shares.[37]

Of course, these responses do not demonstrate that there are no risk-averse farmers in Tajikistan. Despite the low material payoffs they receive for their labor, some cotton farmers have remained in collective farms out of concern that they would not be able to successfully manage their own farms. Among the concerns commonly raised by farmers who remain employed within collective enterprises are doubts about their ability to access needed agricultural water; to utilize farming equipment, such as tractors; to marshal enough labor; to have enough capital to pay for inputs (such as seeds and fertilizers); to have enough savings to weather a bad season; to manage the taxes and paperwork associated with independent farming; and, finally, to pay off the debt on an indebted field. Each of these concerns reinforces the powerful position of the farm manager, and some managers no doubt play on these fears to dissuade would-be independent farmers from withdrawing their shares and establishing individual farms.

In addition, it is possible that in some parts of Tajikistan, farmers remain collectivized because of the informal benefits they may receive from the collective farm. In other post-communist settings, scholars have found evidence that a symbiotic relationship develops in which some farmers focus the bulk of their energy on their own field while formally remaining collectivized in order to access free inputs from the collective enterprise.[38] Ultimately, the reasons for a farmer to continue to work on a collective farm are heavily contextualized. Their perception of risk, and therefore their desire for land, is likely heavily shaped by their current circumstances; should these circumstance change (for instance, by increased access to funds), a farmer might be more willing to take on the risk associated with private farming.

GENDER DYNAMICS AND FARM REORGANIZATION

Since the end of the civil war, Tajikistan's economy has grown dependent on massive levels of unskilled labor migration. Due to the weakness of the local labor market, roughly 40 percent of Tajikistan's working-age population has worked abroad at some point.[39] The vast majority of these labor migrants are male, and many leave behind wives and children. Due to the inadequacy and inconsistency of remittance payments, a large number of the female heads of household that migrants have left behind across rural Tajikistan are

forced to seek wage labor.[40] In many cases, the only work available to them is in farming. This has resulted in the feminization of agriculture across the country; approximately 70 percent of all agricultural workers in Tajikistan are female.[41] As Levi-Sanchez documents, women involved in agriculture are incredibly overscheduled; they are often responsible for managing household or presidential agricultural plots and working land in *dehqan* farms, on top of their numerous domestic responsibilities. Furthermore, their schedules are dramatically impacted by inconsistent access to electricity in rural areas.[42]

Despite the emergence of female-headed households across the state and the dependence of the agricultural sector on female labor, female access to land is quite insecure.[43] Formally, the law is not explicitly discriminatory against women: according to the law on land tenure, there are no explicit gender requirements for receiving a land share or for establishing a *dehqan* farm.[44] Furthermore, over the past decade, under pressure from international observers, the state has issued decrees which positively assert women's rights to land. Most conspicuously, in 2006, President Rahmon issued Decree No. 1775, which established vulnerable women's right to access land. However, several observers have noted that because this decree refers to categories such as "widows" and "single women," but *does not* explicitly define who fits in these classifications, the decree has created ambiguity about which women qualify as vulnerable.[45]

Although women and men enjoy formal equality under the law in terms of their access to land, the percentage of *dehqan* farms headed by females is consistently dwarfed by the percentage of farms headed by males. Figure 5.6 displays both the drastic increase in the number of *dehqan* farms in Tajikistan between 2009 and 2014 (an average of 14,015 new farms a year since 2009), as well as the percentage of those farms headed by males and females, respectively. An important caveat regarding these official statistics is that they do not disaggregate collective *dehqan* farms from family or individual *dehqan* farms. In 2009, only 11.2 percent of *dehqan* farms were headed by females; by 2014, this percentage had only slightly improved, to 13 percent, even as the total number of *dehqan* farms increased by more than 70,000. Not only is there a stark discrepancy between the percentages of male and female heads of *dehqan* farms, data suggest that the average amount of land cultivated by female-headed *dehqan* farms is less than the average amount of land cultivated by male-headed *dehqan* farms. In 2014, only 6.3 percent of the total farmland cultivated in Tajikistan was cultivated by female-headed *dehqan* farms; on average, a male headed *dehqan* farm cultivated more than twice the amount of cropland as did a female-headed *dehqan* farm (5.07 hectares versus 2.32 hectares).[46] Furthermore, female-headed farms have lower levels of access to irrigation systems[47] and are less likely to be able to purchase high-quality cotton seeds than are male-headed farms.[48]
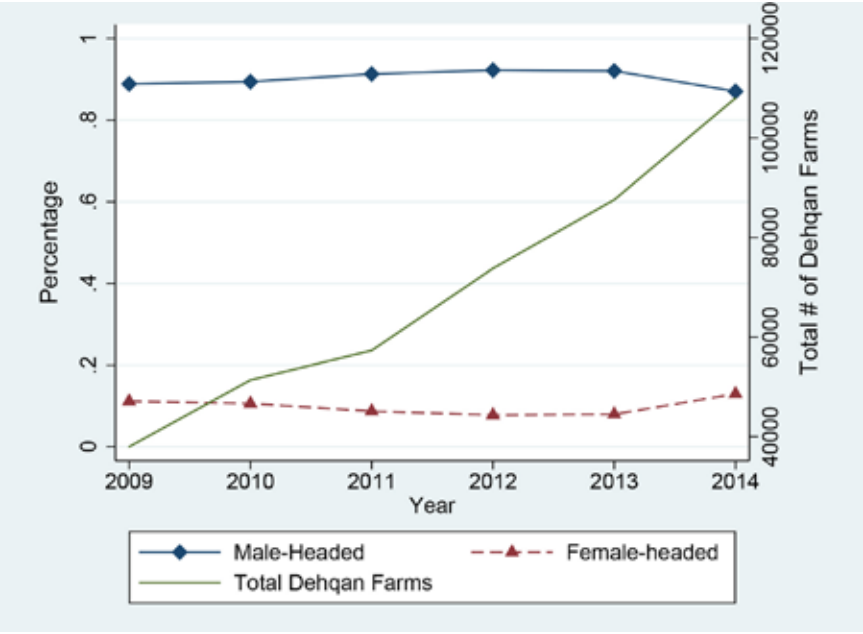
Figure 5.6. Male-headed *dehqan* farms and female-headed *dehqan* farms compared.

Taken together, these data reveal significant gender inequality in Ta-jikistan's agricultural sector. Although women represent the majority of farm workers, their de facto ability to profitably run their own farm is severely limited. In conversations with female agriculture workers who continue to work on collective farms, it is quite common to hear them express doubts about whether, as women, they would be able to manage all of the duties as-sociated with running their own farm. Many female farmers whose male adult relatives do not live at home have indicated that it is easier for them to remain in the collective farm, where the manager is responsible for arranging access to inputs, paying taxes, and coordinating the sales of outputs, than to take on the risk of individualized farming. Without a doubt, these concerns are exac-erbated by biophysical realities related to access to irrigation, since remaining in a collective can alleviate concerns over water access.[49] In her fieldwork, Levi-Sanchez further found that in communities that lacked strong female leadership and were centered on a teahouse located in a mosque, women were literally cut off from public discussion of agriculture issues (as well as other issues) since they were unable to enter the mosque.[50]

While I do not have the data to elucidate the specific root causes of agricul-tural gender inequality in Tajikistan, it is safe to say that these patterns em-

power local farm managers. Those managers who have access to high-quality land and functioning irrigation systems can increase their profit margins by relying on low-cost female agricultural labor without considerable concern that their laborers will seek to withdraw their respective land shares in the immediate future.

CONCLUSION

Decisions made in Dushanbe about the farm reorganization process were intended to empower farmers to determine the best course of action for themselves with regard to establishing an independent farm. According to the model of reform, local officials are the executors of state policy and, as such, are not expected to have the capacity to independently influence the process. This chapter has demonstrated that local power inequities have disrupted and altered this formal process of farm reorganization. Rather than being a universal process that affects all farmers equally, the farm individualization process has been honeycombed with privileged actors. As it unfolded, some farmers, such as wealthy male farmers, were shown to be better equipped to access their rights than others, particularly female farmers.

Why has this been the case? For land reform such as farm reorganization to be successfully enacted, national-level elites need both an incentive to enact reform and the capacity to pass and implement it.[51] As an authoritarian regime, the Tajikistani government clearly has the administrative capacity to pass laws dictating the reorganization of farm land. As a relatively closed system, the governing apparatus does not need to overcome the objections of numerous veto players.[52] However, as an incredibly weak and fractured state, Tajikistan lacks the infrastructural power to enforce its own decisions across the country, enabling local power brokers to capture the process.[53]

From this perspective, the dynamics of land reform could be depicted as a standard principal-agent problem whereby the principal (the central government) is unable to successfully monitor the behavior of the agents (local officials/farm managers).[54] The foundation of the principal-agent problem is that principals and agents have distinct interests, but it is worth questioning how safely we can assume that to be the case between Dushanbe and local officials with regard to land reform. Although it is true that the central government passed laws to encourage farm reorganization, this does not necessarily mean that they did so out of any deep conviction that reform would satisfy their interests. Rather, as has been argued by others, these formal reforms came in reaction to international pressures—and, in many cases, the *appearance* of reform was deemed to be *good enough*, regardless of the reality on the ground.[55]

Furthermore, the uneven process of farm reorganization enabled the centrality of cotton to the state's export sector to persist, financially benefiting many within the regime. Although local actors may have had private incentives to resist reform, in so doing, they enabled the continuity of the cotton sector, thus satisfying important elite interests. To paraphrase the language associated with software design since its earliest days, the issues of land access that developed through the deconcentrated nature of land reform may not be "bugs," but rather features of the process.[56]

NOTES

1. Irna Hofman and Oane Visser, "Geographies of Transition. The Political and Ecological Factors of Agrarian Change in Tajikistan," *Leibniz Institute of Agricultural Development in Transition Economies Discussion Paper* No. 151 (2014): 5.

2. Jessica Allina-Pisano, "Sub Rosa Resistance and the Politics of Economic Reform: Land Redistribution in Post-Soviet Ukraine," *World Politics* 56, no. 4 (2004): 554–81.

3. Navruz Nekbakhtshoev, "Institutions and Property Rights Reform: Explaining Variation in Outcomes of Land Tenure Reform in Cotton-Producing Areas of Tajikistan" (PhD diss., Indiana University, 2016).

4. Although specific agricultural data from Tajikistan can be suspect, the presentation of these data is intended to show general trends.

5. Don Van Atta, "'White Gold' or Fool's Gold?: The Political Economy of Cotton in Tajikistan," *Problems of Post-Communism* 56 (2009): 19.

6. *Tajikistan—Farm Privatization Support Project* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2008), http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/469051468173952244/Tajikistan-Farm-Privatization-Support-Project; Hofman and Visser, "Geographies of Transition."

7. *Tajikistan—Land Registration and Cadastre System for Sustainable Agriculture Project* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2005), http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/638891468118492350/Tajikistan-Land-Registration-and-Cadastre-System-for-Sustainable-Agriculture-Project; Nekbakhtshoev, "Institutions and Property Rights."

8. "Land Reform and Farm Reorganization in Tajikistan," Policy Issues Paper, USAID (Burlington, VT: Associates in Rural Development, Inc., 2004), http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/Pnadd469.pdf.

9. The fact that land cannot be privately owned but farms can be established with usufruct rights has made the language surrounding projects encouraging the privatization of farms confusing, forcing the World Bank to use the term "farm restructuring" throughout its report on the Farm Privatization Support Project (*Tajikistan—Farm Privatization Support Project,* World Bank).

10. Van Atta, "'White Gold' or Fool's Gold"; *Country Profiles on the Housing Sector: Tajikistan* (New York and Geneva: United Nations, UNECE: 2011), 51, https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/documents/Publications/cp.tajikistan.e.pdf.

11. *Country Profiles*; Nekbakhtshoev, "Institutions and Property Rights."

12. Nekbakhtshoev, "Institutions and Property Rights."

13. As it is a simplified model, this figure does not include the influence of external actors in shaping and designing these formal laws.

14. John W. Bruce and Anna Knox, "Structures and Stratagems: Making Decentralization of Authority over Land in Africa Cost-Effective," *World Development* 37, no. 8 (2009): 1360–69.

15. Sarah Robinson, Ian Higginbotham, Tanya Guenther, and Andree Germain, "Land Reform in Tajikistan: Consequences for Tenure Security, Productivity, and Land Management Practices: Consequences of Land Reform in Tajikistan," in *The Socio-Economic Causes and Consequences of Desertification in Central Asia*, ed. Roy Behnke, NATO Science for Peace and Security Series C: Environmental Security (New York: Springer, 2008).

16. Robinson et al., "Land Reform in Tajikistan," 179.

17. Ibid., 186.

18. Hofman and Visser, "Geographies of Transition."

19. Ibid., "Geographies of Transition," 11.

20. World Bank, DFID and USAID farmer-level survey: "Farmer and Farm Worker Perceptions of Land Reform and Sustainable Agriculture in Tajikistan" (Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 2012).

21. This figure resembles but does not duplicate the figure found in Hierman and Nekbakhtshoev, which presented data from 2005. (Brent Hierman and Navruz Nekbakhtshoev, "Land Reform by Default: Uncovering Patterns of Agricultural Decollectivization in Tajikistan," *The Journal of Peasant Studies* (January 2017): 1–22.)

22. Hierman and Nekbakhtshoev, "Land Reform by Default."

23. Nekbakhtshoev, "Institutions and Property Rights."

24. Hierman and Nekbakhtshoev, "Land Reform by Default."

25. This observation is based upon fieldwork conducted by the author in 2008, 2012, and 2014.

26. Van Atta, "'White Gold' or Fool's Gold," 21.

27. Ibid., 23.

28. Van Atta, "'White Gold' or Fool's Gold"; Hofman and Visser, "Geographies of Transition."

29. Suzanne Levi-Sanchez, "Social, Economic, and Gender Dynamics in the Districts of Khatlon Province, Tajikistan, Where the US 'Feed the Future' Program Operates," Report for the Farmer Advisory Services in Tajikistan Project, USAID, 2015.

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Chapter Six

Local Governance
in Khatlon, Tajikistan

Suzanne Levi-Sanchez

Mahalla governance[1] blends bottom-up local systems or customary norms with a top-down overarching governmental arm of control within the *mahalla* leadership and the associated mosque. Given their lengthy history in the region, they have morphed into a complex mix of past and present administrative vehicles. As one interviewee eloquently put it, "They are essentially a mélange of traditional titles, Soviet administrative functions, and post-independence state-building efforts." *Mahallas* in Tajikistan mediate resources, reside at the intersection of local governance and state intervention, and bear the brunt of increasingly limited access to agricultural inputs and other basic resources, such as water, electricity, and food. The scant recent research on Tajik *mahallas* provides a limited picture of how they function in diverse locations, how information is shared, the impact of different kinship networks (and ethnic groups), and the ways in which access (or lack of access) to different resources and inputs influences the dynamics of the overall *mahalla* system. This chapter adds to this literature, outlining the background of the *mahalla*, the ways in which they intersect with the state, the leadership structure, gender issues, and the importance of kinship ties.

Prior research on *mahallas* has examined kinship networks and security,[2] informal justice systems and women's rights,[3] and Uzbek *mahallas*.[4] There are also a few studies from the Soviet Union and pre-Soviet historians. Boboyarov offers a clear description of the Tajik *mahalla* leadership structure, writing that a "Mahalla Committee (hereinafter *mahalla*) is a semi-official political structure in the rural settlements and urban neighborhoods of Tajikistan. The structure represents local notables and state elites who mediate to stabilize contested political and economic relations."[5] He also points out that while the concept of local governance and civil society in the Western

sense assumes power-sharing and increasing democracy, the opposite is true of authoritarian governments like Tajikistan (and Uzbekistan).[6]

According to Ranjbar, "Although *mahallahs*, jamoats, and hukumats are created for the purpose of serving the needs of the entire community, women and youth's access to local governance institutions is restricted due to various social barriers. Participation in these governance bodies at present is far from inclusive. Local committees are dominated by older men and are largely closed off to women and youth."[7] If development projects hope to train and educate in various ways and thereby share information through existing networks, the challenge is to avoid allowing that same information to reinforce the power of already-dominant elites and increase village inequality.

Abramson writes, "In contemporary usage, *mahalla* has three general meanings. First, it is a territorially based neighborhood. The second definition of *mahalla* is as a social institution, a tight network of social relations and interactions. Thirdly, it is a political-administrative subunit within the state structure. These three definitions have emerged historically and coexist contextually."[8] Goziev, meanwhile, writes extensively on *mahallas* as a traditional (and pre-Soviet) institution.[9]

BRIEF BACKGROUND ON THE *MAHALLA*

Before being subsumed into the Soviet sphere, the mosque delineated physical territory in many of the settled (non-nomadic) areas of Central Asia. The kinship network (synonymous with clan or sub-ethnic group) was linked with a particular mosque that served the households living within its boundaries. In Khudjand, the northern part of the country, there were approximately fifty households, led by one man in each sub-division. These households also centered on a mosque. The *Imom* (religious leader) played a prominent role in village life and social control/influence. At that time, the leader was referred to using the Uzbek term *Elik Boshe* (local leader),[10] since the majority of the people were ethnically Uzbek. Village development depended on the location of available land. The direction of the sun informed the development of settlements and building placement. Streets were kept narrow so that as much land as possible could be used for agricultural purposes.[11]

The tsars used the *Elik Boshe* as intermediaries for their sprawling empire in Central Asia. These local leaders served primarily as tax collectors. The newly forming Soviet Union repurposed these leaders into *Domkom* (house or apartment committees) and refashioned the *mahalla* system into Soviet administrative units, retaining some of the basic *mahalla* structures while purging them of their norms and customary laws. The Soviets destroyed the ma-

jority of mosques, reimagining the local system of governance as a complex array of administrative units tied to land production and a planned economy. The Brigadiers replaced the *Elik Boshe* and sometimes also served as unofficial *Imoms*. Social organization shifted from *mahallas* organized around mosques and local agricultural production to housing and village planning based on large-scale agricultural output and serving the needs of the Soviet Union. Villages were built or relocated to provide labor for newly-irrigated areas and cotton plantations. Houses—or more precisely residential compounds—were built around land that the family groups farmed intensively. This included small household plots as well as cooperative farms spanning hundreds of acres. Massive forced relocation occurred.

Having been comprehensively restructured during the Soviet period, village life underwent another upheaval after the fall of the Soviet Union, when the massive planned economy that had formed around agricultural production was left without a structure. For decades, all of these systems had been focused on a single goal: serving the needs of the larger Soviet Union. Now, villages had to figure out how to allocate resources based on a local economy and develop markets for the exchange of goods. The jockeying for control of the state administration turned bloody in 1992, leading to a five-year civil war that ripped apart the social fabric and destabilized the nascent Tajik state.

The pre-Soviet form of the *mahalla* reemerged after the Tajik Civil War and the end of the Soviet Union, due to a collapse of state authority. The government proved unable to provide basic services, and people gathered in their neighborhoods to survive, sharing food and other basic resources. After the Civil War, this system evolved into formalized *mahallas*, though these remained non-state administered institutions. Each *mahalla* elected a leader; the *mahalla* committee was in charge of lobbying for resources from the government of Tajikistan and making sure the youth were engaged and the neighborhood kept clean and safe. Forced volunteerism called *sobotnik* or *Shanbagi*—meaning community "volunteer" work on Saturdays, a holdover from the Soviet Union—provided the labor force for these neighborhood activities.

TODAY'S RURAL TAJIK *MAHALLA*

Today, most *mahallas* in Khatlon (and in Tajikistan at large) organize around family, ethnicity, and/or locality of origin, as well as a mosque or religious building within the territory of the *mahalla*. In some places, the terms "*mahalla*" and "village" are used interchangeably; in others, *mahallas* are sub-sections of villages; in still others, villages are subsections of *mahal-*

las. Street leaders (primarily heads of family groups) oversee subsections of the *mahalla*. Overall, *mahalla* governance systems exist in all districts and remain an important informal system for local social welfare and economic organization, although they are rapidly transforming into a key avenue for state intervention and oppression.

In Khatlon, agriculture continues to be the main means for social organization. The difference between the former Soviet system and the present is that today the land is split into various sub-categories of land stewardship (actual ownership of land belongs solely to the government of Tajikistan). Some of the larger land holdings belong to powerful elites and are run similarly to Soviet collective farms. These lands are large plantation-style systems where households organize around the growing and production of cotton. The collective farm (kolkhoz) has been passed from Soviet elites to local elites, but today's collective farmers no longer receive the benefits of food, healthcare, education, and inputs for household farms provided under the Soviet Union. The newly minted local elites control these large swaths of farmland, providing almost no monetary payments to the workers. Many of the women who live in Khatlon reported that they are not paid an actual wage but paid in kind with cotton stalks, which they use for heat in the winter and for cooking. Out of necessity, the children of these women often begin working on the cotton lands as early as eight years old.

In many parts of Khatlon, larger land holdings have been subdivided among the people into small privately-run plots called *dehqan* farms. The creation of these smaller farms was intended to break up the state monopoly of agricultural production that existed during the Soviet era. Instead of redistributing land holdings by breaking up larger systems, which would give these farmers the tools to successfully function, smallholders struggle and often live under the shadow of their creditors. Debt burdens, farming systems, and limited access to resources combine to create a hostile environment for *dehqan* farms.

In the Soviet system, inputs such as seeds, fertilizer, pesticides, and necessary equipment (tractors, for example) were provided by the state. People used inputs from the kolkhozes (collective farms) for their own "personal subsidiary farms" (now called "household farms," since the state and collective farms to which they used to be "subsidiary" no longer exist). Without state support in the form of these inputs, today's household and *dehqan* farms find themselves indebted to various lenders, particularly Agroinvestbank and "futurist" firms that provide inputs in the form of loans paid through agricultural production. Ongoing and increasing problems with irrigation, drainage, and electricity mean farmers have limited access to these resources and are consequently unable to produce at optimum levels. The high interest rates and

unsustainable yearly crop yields that would be required to pay off the debts have created a system akin to the sharecropping model in the United States. A small percentage of these *dehqan* farmers are women, who are caught up in this cycle much as men are but often have even less access to inputs. Moreover, the majority of women farmers work both in the cotton fields and on their household plots, along with farming their allocated presidential lands (discussed below). This creates a vicious cycle of debt burdens and waning production, which in many cases forces the smallholders to surrender their land to larger farms.

In addition to the *dehqan* farms, in the late 1990s, each household was given a strip of land taken from the former collective and state farms for growing wheat or corn. These "presidential lands," as they are known, were allocated to the household farms to reduce hunger and allow people to grow their own wheat and, in some cases, corn. This has worked better in some places than in others due to issues related to water, electricity, distance, and the cost of inputs (seeds, fertilizer, water, and electricity). For some households, these lands have decreased food insecurity, while in other places, either the land is too far away or the inputs are too expensive, meaning households are unable to capitalize on the presidential lands.

Most families also have household plots—the land within their house compound, separate from the presidential lands. The same problem exists for these plots. Some are able to exploit the land by successfully growing a diverse array of fruit, vegetables, and grains, while many lack the income to buy seeds and other inputs, or else lack access to water or electricity, hence they leave the land unused. In the villages I visited, household plots are at the heart of *mahalla* economies, as are the presidential lands.

AGRICULTURE AND THE *MAHALLA*

The resources necessary for successful agricultural production—such as irrigation, electricity, and drainage—are decided at the *raion* (district) or provincial level. They are then mediated through the *jamoat* (sub-district) level, which distributes resources to the *mahallas*. There are sharp variations between urban and rural economies, as well as in civil society (education, political participation, and access to the central government). Since economic activity in Khatlon primarily revolves around local agricultural production and commerce, the role of local leaders as intermediaries for access to resources is vital to the success of village economies.

Khatlon holds a primary position in the country's economy and its central authorities, being the birthplace of both the President of Tajikistan and the

cotton belt. Cotton was Tajikistan's primary crop during the Soviet era, and although the land allocated to growing it has declined substantially since 1991, cotton remains a key crop. Today, the cotton economy is controlled primarily by a few large-scale corporate farm holders, who have informal ties to central government authorities and the president's family as well as holding official positions within the administration. Many of the *mahallas* near the larger cotton farms still organize similarly to the way in which the kolkhozes (collective farms) in Soviet planned housing areas did. The kolkhoz was a large collective farm in which residents lived in houses surrounding the cotton fields. The collective farms had Brigadiers who answered to the central authorities, who in turn reported to the Soviet party elite about the ongoing production and output of the cotton farms. Pressures to increase production led officials to fabricate numbers over time to "show" that production was continually increasing. Increases in production pleased Moscow, which would reward local communities for their success by bestowing extra resources on them.[12] A majority of the large cotton farms still organize and operate under Soviet-style hierarchical power structures that form the basis for the cotton production cycle.

Many of the women interviewed still referred to their local leaders as Brigadiers, and most belonged to farms controlled by large corporate entities. Brigadiers are mainly men. Female laborers are not paid in cash, but in cotton stalks used as firewood for heating and cooking. The cotton stalks allow the women to bake bread in their ovens, a necessary element for basic sustenance in the *mahallas* without which many would be unable to eat. Although Tajik law prohibits child labor, many children start working alongside their mothers in the cotton fields at the age of eight. Fieldwork observations suggested that young girls are more frequently put to work in the cotton fields than young boys. Rural families are also "encouraged" to raise silkworms at home, another activity that amounts to forced labor by women. As a female Rais Raion (head of the district) told us, the women raise silkworms as a public service to the President of Tajikistan. The government pays for the heat required to incubate the worms, and the women do it as "proud volunteers."

Women make up the majority of the agricultural and household labor force. The ongoing exclusion of the majority of women from the actual production cycle, their comparatively lower access to resources and knowledge, and fewer benefits from the work (whether monetary or in the form of seeds and other necessities) has created a class of female and child laborers who are little more than indentured servants. Agricultural production—and therefore the local economy of the *mahalla*—revolves around cotton, the *dehqan* farms, and the household plots, which have an almost entirely female labor force.

The unpaid/forced labor in the current system creates overwhelming disincentives for women to seek knowledge about farming on the commercial (*dehqan* or state) farms. This lack of incentives also diminishes women's understanding of their land, as it is controlled by and mediated through corporate entities. This results in women not having a basic comprehension of the necessary inputs for farming: where the water comes from, why a pump might not be working, what seeds are good or ineffective, or how to find innovative ways to fertilize the soil. This is even more important given the limited resources and farmland available.

RESOURCES AND THE *MAHALLA*

Resource allocation—such as water, electricity, working infrastructure, inputs (seeds, fertilizer, and soil), equipment (tractors, backhoes, etc.), and land—defines the lives of villagers. Lack of access to water or electricity can plunge an already strapped family group into endemic hunger and malnutrition. The importance of these resources for survival in the *mahalla* also makes them pawns through which local stakeholders wield power. In the Tajik *mahallas* throughout the nine districts in Khatlon, there are significant barriers to resources.

In some *mahallas*, a significant lack of drainage makes crop production difficult and/or impossible. In other *mahallas*, water is scant or non-existent. One *mahalla* I visited had not had water for nine years. The parched land had rows of dead pomegranate trees, planted as part of one of the many development projects. The villagers said that the President of Tajikistan had visited the village after the planting to celebrate the coming prosperity. At that time, he promised to fix the broken irrigation canals so the trees would prosper. That was three years ago, and all of the trees have died, wasting hundreds of thousands of dollars from international development aid funding. At present, the Raisi Mahalla transports water in a tank to serve the basic needs of the villagers. He sells the water from his house. In other villages, due to the rationing of electricity, water pumps only work part of the time, limiting villagers' ability to water their household plots. Increased electricity rationing makes subsistence farming even less tenable.

Other villages I observed did not have the money for fertilizers and seeds to cultivate their household plots or presidential land, and had therefore surrendered their land allocations to other smallholders. Their household plots remained barren due to a lack of basic inputs. Throughout the nine districts, many irrigation canals and drainage pipes were broken, creating another significant barrier to agricultural production.

A new innovation designed to improve water distribution and access is Water Users Associations (WUAs). In some places, this has worked, while in others the WUAs have provided a new avenue for local elites to extract rents without improving the lives of villagers. In a few villages with limited or no access to water, *mahalla* members complained that the WUAs required them to pay taxes but did not use these funds to develop water infrastructure or help them access water. Some villagers said WUA leaders were just taking the money and using it for their own purposes; other WUA members reported that because their WUA leader did not have access to higher-level elites close to the upper level of the government, the WUA remained largely ineffective. This is an area that requires further investigation.

As it stands, one of the major barriers to successful agricultural production in Khatlon—and, therefore, *mahalla* well-being—is access to basic resources for the cultivation of land and crops. Lack of water, electricity, seeds, and fertilizers are the main sources of food insecurity. Access or non-access is closely tied to local leaders' ability to gain support from the kinship network of the central government authorities. Presidential lands, combined with household plots, make up the majority of the subsistence farming in the *mahallas* and are largely the domain of women. Women—more specifically, mothers-in-law—are also in charge of social events in the *mahallas,* which are the main congregating points for families and kinship networks.

GENDER NORMS AND THE *MAHALLA* ECONOMY

The Soviet Union's planned economy attempted to homogenize the citizenry and purge it of ethnic and gender stereotypes. But even after decades of living under Soviet institutions, the roles of men and women in Tajikistan remain largely bound by customs and traditions. Much of the agricultural production cycle is supported by unpaid labor. The unpaid labor force is almost exclusively women and their children. Unpaid labor encompasses forced labor in the cotton fields, silkworm production, and household work.

The average woman in a rural *mahalla* wakes up at 5 am and goes to sleep around 11 pm. She begins her day by praying (if she is religious). After that, she prepares breakfast and feeds any farm animals they own. It is at this time, every few days, that she prepares the bread dough. After that, she works in the family's household plots and possibly on their presidential lands, on the silk worms, or in the cotton fields. If she can, she also does other household chores, such as washing, planting, and cleaning, in between. In the afternoon, she prepares lunch for the family; every couple of days, she bakes bread. After lunch, she either returns to the cotton fields or works in the household

plot or on the presidential lands. After working the land, she returns home and prepares dinner. She feeds the farm animals again, helps with her children's schoolwork, washes the dishes, finishes any other household chores, assists the elders in the home, prays, prepares the sleeping areas for the rest of the family, and then goes to sleep.[13]

In most Tajik households, the mother-in-law is in charge. The mother-in-law is the order-keeper and rule-maker; she serves as a role model for the younger women in the household. A kind and generous mother-in-law is revered, while an abusive one is reviled and feared. Most husbands will not get involved in this domain of the household, and leave it up to the women to work out issues among themselves.

The more *qaleens* (daughters-in-law) a mother-in-law has, the more power she has within both the household and the *mahalla*. The daughters-in-law are her labor force. Her *qaleens* must obey her. Domestic violence by the mother-in-law against the *qaleen* is common. This unpaid labor translates into an informal currency of legitimacy and authority. The household work done by *qaleens* not only increases a mother-in-law's influence but also allows her broader access to the economy. The more she is able to control them, train them, and make them productive within the household, the more respected she is.

Control by the mother-in-law is also key to the daughter-in-law's quality of life. The *qaleen* is controlled by this intricate imposed structure based on customary norms. If she steps outside of these norms without the express permission of the family, she will be cast out and spurned by the entire kinship network. The moment a woman gets married, she is no longer a part of her own family but that of her in-laws and their larger clan network. (That being said, in some families there are still ties to the original family, depending on how powerful the daughter-in-law's family is.) For the daughter-in-law, whether living with a benevolent or repressive mother-in-law, the day is long and fraught with duty and obligation. As one person explained,

> There are a lot of evil mothers-in-law in Central Asia. The value of a woman is based on her status in the community. If she has gone through the hazing of her mother-in-law, which is the equivalent to the Soviet/post-Soviet army, except that young men get through in 1–2 years but women go through the hazing process for close to a decade. There is a huge amount of psychological strain that a *qaleen* has to go through in order to pass through to acceptance by the mother-in-law (if that ever happens) or by the time she becomes a mother-in-law herself. So what is a woman in Central Asia today when a group of women sit together? Having been a *qaleen* [or having *qaleens* oneself] is a defining element of becoming a grown woman.[14]

The difficult work lives of women, particularly socio-economically disadvantaged women, impact their ability to obtain an education. Young children who are forced to work in the field carry this cycle of burden forward, contributing to deteriorating educational levels across the country as a whole.

Women who have risen to a leadership position are expected to mentor other women, provide informal healthcare (midwifery and access to clinics) and religious advice, and bake bread for weddings and funerals. In some rural areas, women are informally elected based on their skills in these areas. Both official and unofficial female leaders use their status as a broader currency for political and public participation and access.

Many women indicated that a woman's skills—including bread-baking, cooking, and mothering/childrearing—were the most important factor in choosing a female leader. The ability to bake bread was the most important of these skills.[15] When asked why this was the case, they pointed out the importance of bread at funerals and weddings and the mosque. At the beginning and end of family life are weddings and funerals. Many important negotiations happen in informal ways at weddings and funerals and at the mosque. The best bread-baker is the one responsible for providing the majority of the bread for these occasions. This leads to a currency of authority for the bread-bakers, as well as an informal currency in the form of barter and exchange.

Women from different ethnic groups specialize in different types of bread and dishes. Wakhoyochi/Gharmi/Khoiti women are considered the best at chapatti, *girdacha* (round bread), and *otalai oshi* (soup with noodles); Kulobi women are famous for their *kulcha* (small round bread) and *shurbo* (soup); and Uzbek women are known for their *kalamafatir* (puff bread), *sambusa* (Tajik pastry with meat), *mastoba* (soup with rice), and *osh* (*plov*).

The bread-baking process starts before the sun rises. Flour, water, and yeast are the basis of all the different kinds of bread. After mixing and kneading the dough, the women lay it out on cotton cloth to rise. When the dough has risen, they punch it down into large round, thin discs on a floured wooden board. After punching, pressing, and stretching the dough, the women put it on a round, handmade cotton pad *(rafida* in Tajik) about eighteen inches in diameter. This pad is used to put the dough into the hot oven; embers and flames often lick the baker's hands as the dough is slapped onto the side of the oven.

Bread is the primary foodstuff and source of life. The symbolism of beautifully presented and baked bread, which represents women's authority, is profound. The female leader wields power and influence through her ability to provide for and feed the village at these seminal events. Other celebrations in which bread holds an important place, such as *Eidi Ghorbon* and *Nowruz* (which have traditionally been celebrated throughout Central Asia), are also becoming increasingly significant in Tajikistan.

Alongside the traditional celebrations, bread-making and bread-baking competitions occur among village women. They pick the best bread makers to represent the *mahalla*, then *jamoat*, then district, then province. While the government forces women to participate in these events, they are nevertheless important status-builders: the women who win these festival competitions rise in status among their fellow *mahalla* members.

In some villages, bread represents women's influence within a system that has few avenues for female participation in the political sphere. Bread, bread-making, flour production, growing wheat, and seed production (access and producing/buying/selling) all feed into the household economy in Khatlon. The baking of bread not only represents daily sustenance and survival, but it is also the staple of every meal and the symbol of abundance at weddings, funerals, and at the mosque. Throwing away bread is a sin.[16]

The necessary inputs for growing wheat—including seeds, fertilizer, water, land, electricity, and grinding—cannot always be obtained. In some villages, the land is too far away for women to be able to grow the wheat (as has also been observed in a few Turkmen villages). Broken water pumps, blocked irrigation canals and/or drainage mechanisms, a lack of electricity for the water pumps, and limited access to water in general encumber wheat production.

In some villages, women serve as religious leaders, shamans (spiritual healers), and/or midwives.[17] These traditional roles both empower women in the community (by giving them legitimate authority) and create space for women to meet informally, but they are limited due to the overwhelming workload of household and cotton farming.

Women also play a key role in planning and holding *mahalla* social events, such as weddings and funerals. These gatherings make up the majority of interactions in daily village life and are the customary venue for major decision-making. Over the past few years, the government has regulated weddings, funerals, religious functions, and other holidays much more than in the past. This regulation has led to a deterioration of these forms of informal leadership for women. Since women's groups are often used as the main entry points for development projects, identifying the leaders who have legitimate authority to aid in the dissemination of information and grant permission remains key. In view of ongoing and increasing government control over social projects in the *mahallas*—which is changing who the leaders are—knowing who leads what in a given *mahalla* is challenging, but it remains vital for development.[18]

The impact of the developing market economy on the household economy and, in particular, women's influence within civil society came to light in a series of discussions with women in one *mahalla*. In this particular *mahalla*, the women were more a council of elders, with a cooperative body of women

instead of one main leader. They worked together for the community and had a number of *qaleens*. They were all the most skilled at baking bread in their village. The women said that in the past being the best bread-baker and the best seamstress was a key factor of their authority in the *mahalla*. But with bread increasingly being sold in the bazaars and cheap Chinese clothing flooding the markets, their skills have become less important. Consequently, informal gatherings of women, where they would sew and bake together, have also decreased.

This decline in women congregating informally has had an impact on these women's ability to make group decisions and provide advice for female members of the civil society. The women also contend that it has affected the strength of the family. They worried that it would change the social fabric that undergirded the community.

The *mahalla* to which these women belonged was close to the city of Qurghonteppa. This problem, which will likely grow over time, is currently more acute in villages closer to more developed markets and commercial production. The erosion of informal gatherings, which are the primary way women gain access to local decision-making processes and assert influence within the *mahalla*, has the potential to significantly impact the structure and stability of the civil society in the area.

In all *mahallas*, mothers-in-law hold leadership positions in the home. Therefore, mothers-in-law are key influencers on most *mahalla* economies and on socio-political issues. As informal leaders, they are de facto channels of communication that help a village gain access to resources. Where women have limited access to the economy and resources, food security and a family's prosperity are jeopardized. This access also profoundly impacts the *mahalla* and village economy; the focal point of access is through local leaders and their connections through kinship ties to the central government.

Another means of access is through the Rais Mahalla. In the current system, given the overall shortage of resources, local leaders and their kinship ties remain the most important factors determining a *mahalla*'s access to resources, the central government, and necessary inputs. Leadership varies based upon access to powerful networks and most of this is based on kinship.

KINSHIP IN THE TAJIK *MAHALLA*

Given that the most important aspect of *mahalla* governance in the region is still the family and associated kinship network, and that this is a sensitive issue for the Tajik government and access to public census information about

Table 6.1. Ethnic, Sub-Ethnic, and Sub-Sub-Ethnic Groups in Qurghonteppa. (Ethnic group at top, sub-ethnic group underneath, sub-sub-ethnic group in italics)

Tajik	*Uzbek*	*Pamiri*	*Other Ethnic*
Gharmi *Wakhiyachi* *Rashti*	Lokai *Marqa*	Shughnoni	**Turkmen** (in Jilikul)
Kulobi	Batosh	Darwazi	Qaramon
Sughdi	Toz	Vanji	Khujamozi
Istafarshani	Qungorod	Ishkashemi	Okdire
Farghani	Qataran (from Balkh)	Wakhi	Arisori
Romiti	Qataghan	Roshani	**Arab**
Noraki	Qum-e Oini	Yazgholami	
Hoiti	Qalugh		
Ghozimaliki	Fazghanachi Qashilik		

Source: Author's own table

sub-ethnic groups is forbidden, the data for this section was collected village by village or *mahalla* by *mahalla*.

The ethnic groups in the table above—namely Uzbek, Tajik, Pamiri, Turkmen, and Arab—also have sub-ethnic groups (see table 6.1). These subgroups have two types. In the first case, they are based on place of origin (such as Rashti, Romiti, Wakhi, Roshani, and so on). These names came from the places of origin from periods of forced relocation in the mid-1900s. A second group of names combine their place of origin and their family/clan name, such as Qume-Oini, though this is less common. Forced relocation began a mode of self-segregation by ethnicity and locality that has persisted for decades and shaped the way in which people access resources, government support, and land.

Many *mahallas* are broken up by street. Often, depending on the *mahalla*, a family leader will head a street. Clans or family groups often associate with a smaller mosque in the *mahalla*. As such, many *mahallas* have smaller mosques for each division within the *mahalla* and a larger Friday prayer mosque for the entire *mahalla*.[19] Each *mahalla* has a different set of leaders who inform the community. In some more conservative *mahallas*, women have little or no access to decision-making processes.

Some of the Uzbek and Gharmi villages I visited were like this. Other villages, both Tajik and Uzbek (depending on the location and sub-ethnic group), had women who participated in local governance and advocated for resources at the level of the *jamoat* and even *raion*.

Table 6.2. Words for Kinship Relationship. (This is a partial list)

Ethnic Group	*Tajik*	*Uzbek*	*Pamiri*	*Turkmen*
Clan/Family	Qawm	Qawm	Tabor	Tire
	Zot (ancestors)	Qabilah	Heshu	(Patrilineal)
		Awlod	Qum	Awlod
		Awol	Zot	Qum
Leader/Elders	Muhe Sefid	Aqsaqal	Kolonsol	
Street Leaders	Rais Kuche	Awol	Raisi Kuche	Awol
Female Religious Leaders	Mullo-Mama	Bibi-otun		
		Mullo-Mama		
Male Religious Leaders	*Mullo*	*Mullo*	*Khalife*	

Quite often, ethnic groups approach land and agricultural production in different ways. Ethnicity is based on both ethnic/blood kinship ties and locality of origin. This can be quite confusing since the groups associate themselves with both interchangeably. The easiest way to think about it is as a self-identified kinship network based on some combination of the two.

The words for kinship relationships summarized in table 6.2 highlight two things. Firstly, across ethnic groups there are many names that embody similar positions within the villages. Secondly, the importance of kinship is not only evident in the villages but is also linguistically significant. In daily practice, these words hold powerful meanings and importance. For the majority of families, the *awlod*/*qawm*/*zot* to which a family belongs determines their access to resources, education, information, and social welfare programs. Without such a distribution system, the information, skills, or inputs provided by donors may stay within the most powerful kinship network or family. The leader to whom a family is connected is even more significant in dictating resource allocation.

KEY LEADERS

The styles of key leaders vary by *mahalla*, based on ethnicity, location, resources, and religious adherence. Villagers' access to their leaders often depends on family standing, gender, and leadership style/*mahalla* type. Additionally, the role of women in the community (whether they are included or not included) also influences the interaction between the household, the *mahalla*, and, ultimately, the *jamoat*/*raion*/central authorities.

In some *mahallas*, the Mullo serves as an informal mediator. In others, it is the *aqsaqals* or *kolonsols* (elders) or heads of family groups. Sometimes the *aqsaqal* is also the Mullo and Rais Mahalla. In many *mahallas*, people have raised money to support a *choikhona* (tea house) primarily for men to meet

and gather. This *choikhona* is within the mosque building. The men gather and talk, though typically not about personal issues or challenges within the households themselves. Women are not allowed to go to the mosque. This forces the women to bring their issues to the male heads of household. In rural areas, women are allowed into the mosque if there are social/public events (seminars conducted by NGOs or meetings that involve the whole *mahalla*). For these events, the mosque is treated as a gathering place for everyone.

The religiosity of the *mahalla* influences the way the *mahalla* approaches sharing information. The more religiously adherent the *mahalla*, the more influence the Mullos have over it. This was the case in some Uzbek Gharmi *mahallas* I studied, though the phenomenon merits further study.

Many men work as migrant laborers in Russia, making it even more challenging for women to communicate problems with land, water, electricity, or other concerns (such as health or family welfare) to local leaders. In other *mahallas*, where women have more of a role—whether chairing a *mahalla*, serving on a *mahalla* committee, or being informally elected by the women in the *mahalla*—they are able to engage with the leadership and, ultimately, with the *Jamoat*.[20]

The Rais Mahalla is a volunteer position. Volunteerism is a highly respected part of local custom. Being a *mahalla* leader or an "active woman" raises a woman's social standing, increasing her access to resources, justice systems, and other social benefits. The influence of these informal leaders is the currency on which they count.

Other leaders, such as wealthy landholders or business owners, have much greater influence and operate informally, although they sometimes have positions in the government as well. Many people spoke about going to these elites for help with mediating property disputes or financial issues. These leaders mediate between the government and the citizens and often lobby for basic services, including electricity, water, and equipment such as tractors, pumps, and irrigation/drainage assistance, from the state. If the *mahalla* was not connected to a member of the elite to whom they could go for assistance, their problems persisted, preventing them from producing and, consequently, from participating in the economy.

CONCLUSION

The Tajik *mahalla*, though gradually transforming into a tool of social control in an increasingly authoritarian central government, still underpins the daily lives of the majority of citizens in rural Tajikistan. These local systems of governance—whose leaders have been the main interlocutors of the Russian

tsars, Soviet officials, and the Tajik central authorities—vary based on kinship networks, ethnicity, religious adherence, and location. This makes them difficult to study as a whole and renders it almost impossible to categorize them in a way that is coherent.

Kinship networks in *mahallas* vary significantly depending on several factors, including: 1) who the family is connected to beyond the *mahalla*; 2) how traditional the families in the *mahalla* are; and 3) how they approach the role of women (whether women are able to participate in *mahalla* governance or not).

The proximity of the *mahalla* to urban centers is a key factor in daily life. Urban centers provide resources that *mahallas* in more remote areas do not have, such as greater access to water, electricity, inputs, and the bazaar. At the same time, however, access to these resources sometimes decreases the informal networks and interactions between women, potentially making it more difficult to create sustainable working groups. (This is not universally true, however, and more research on the topic is needed.)

Ultimately, the Tajik government is controlled by one very powerful clan/family, and the relationship of a given *mahalla* to this powerful and influential family impacts daily life in the *mahalla*. Women's ordinary lives are less burdensome in villages with high-level patrons or family members of the President living in the *mahalla*. Access to the President or his family can bring benefits like more water, land, electricity, agricultural inputs, and education. By contrast, a lack of access can leave a village without water, facing parched land, endemic hunger, forced labor, and limited access to education. Running throughout these resource inequalities is the *mahalla* and its leadership, which is a primary system for lobbying the central government for more resources or access to development funding. This chapter aimed to provide a window into the functioning of these local governance bodies, which are so important to the daily lives of rural Tajiks.

NOTES

2. Hafiz Boboyorov, "The Ontological Sources of Political Stability and Economy: Mahalla Mediation in the Rural Communities of Southern Tajikistan," *Crossroads Asia Working Paper Series* No. 13 (2013).

3. Azita Ranjbar, "Informal Justice in Tajikistan" (report for the Government of Finland and the Eurasia Foundation, 2012).

4. Rustamjon Urinboyev, "Law, Social Norms and Welfare as Means of Public Administration: Case Study of Mahalla Institutions in Uzbekistan," *NISPAcee Journal of Public Administration and Policy* 4, no. 1 (Summer 2011); David M. Abramson, "From Soviet to Mahalla" (PhD diss., University of Indiana, 1998).

5. Boboyorov, "Ontological Sources," 7.

6. Boboyorov, "Ontological Sources."

7. Ranjbar, "Informal Justice," 4.

8. Abramson, "From Soviet to Mahalla," 30.

9. Saidbek Goziev, *Mahalla: Traditional Institution in Tajikistan* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2015).

10. Professor M. Fayzullaev, Khudjand State University, interviewed by Suzanne Levi-Sanchez, Khudjand, April 6, 2014.

11. Professor M. Fayzullaev, Khudjand State University, interviewed by Suzanne Levi-Sanchez, Khudjand, April 6, 2014. See also M. Fayzullaev, *Formation of Modern Urban Quarters—Mahallas in Tajikistan* (Khujand: Khujand State University, 1992) and A. E. Madji, "The History of Feudal Khodjent," in *Materials about the History of Tajiks and Tajikistan, First Collection* (Stalinabad: State Publishing House of the Tajik SSR, 1927).

12. A former US ambassador who served in a Central Asian country in the early 1990s reported the details of this process to the author. The ambassador wished to remain anonymous.

13. In Uzbek villages, animal husbandry often (but not always) plays the primary role, whereas in Tajik and Tajik Gharmi villages the cultivation of the land takes precedence. This means that agricultural extension and development would need to fit the context of each village. The villages that cultivate land on a more ongoing and successful basis are more agriculturally advanced than the villages that have neglected their land. Additionally, some of the villages (often Uzbek and Pamiri) had not had water for years by the time of my visit, meaning the land was parched and the household farms non-existent.

14. During my fieldwork, a workshop for preventing domestic violence against women and girls took place. During this workshop, men were asked what should be done if a daughter-in-law misbehaved. Many of the men said that it was necessary to beat her if she failed to obey her mother-in-law. Since the meeting was in the mosque, the leaders of the workshop then asked the mullo what he thought should be done. The mullo said that while issues within the family are personal and up to the family, he believed that beating was not the right thing to do, though the *qaleen* should not misbehave and rebel in the first place. This interaction highlighted two issues: (1) the daughter-in-law has very little say in her life; and (2) domestic violence is still both common and considered to be a private matter to be worked out within the family and not with outsiders.

15. This does not include female religious leaders (*bibi-otuns* or mullah mamas), of which there are few. The process for choosing these leaders is quite different and varies widely among villages in Qurghonteppa.

16. In many villages, white flour is considered to be of higher value and associated with higher status. Locals produce whole wheat flour; they purchase the majority of white flour from Kazakhstan. They use the latter for special occasions, often mixing it with locally produced whole wheat flour.

17. According to Habiba Fathi, female religious leaders "oversee the religious life of children (both girls and boys) and of other adult women and are gradually called upon by families who are not necessarily practicing Muslims themselves to officiate at the celebration of household life circle rituals such as childbirth, marriage, mourning rites . . . a female mullah is also invited into the women's interior space, which is closed, to read the same prayers. In exchange for these religious services, both receive gifts (such as food, money, or cloth) whose value depends on the family's social situation." See Habiba Fathi, "Gender, Islam, and Social Change in Uzbekistan," *Central Asia Survey* 25, no. 3 (2006): 306.

18. In some *mahallas*, people have disregarded the constraints the government has placed on weddings, funerals, and other activities within the last year. This leads to a dynamic of hiding who the traditional and legitimate authorities are in the *mahalla*.

19. While the Rais Mahalla is a good entry point into the *mahalla*, involving the elders (*aqsaqals, muhe sefids, kolonsols,* etc.)—who are the leaders of the families—is also important.

20. Additionally, in a number of districts and *Jamoats,* the deputies are women; some are even *Jamoat* and/or district leaders.

Development Practices, Insecurity, and Risks

Injectable Drug Users in Gorno-Badakhshan

Sophie Hohmann

Research within the field of *post-colonial studies* and investigations of inflections in the notion of the "South"[1]—whether new Souths or even other Souths[2]—show just how contrasted post-Soviet realities are, and call for reasoning using terms other than the restricted one of "line," of "border," applied as a fracture between two ensembles whose constitution pertains almost exclusively to normative indicators. Approaches could take more transversal stances and draw on universal colonial and post-colonial experiences. They could also engage in a micro-history that would remove reflection on an overly broad and frozen notion, instead emphasizing singular points or points of comparison to other colonial examples, such as, for example, the circulation of ideas and medical practices in Russian Turkestan.[3] Each of these propositions is interesting in itself, as it shows that the field of this key region is open and non-regulated.

Placed in the category of "the South," Tajikistan[4]—like all of Central Asia and the South Caucasus—would come to "benefit" from international aid and measures to implement reforms in several sectors, notably in public health. Interpretive prisms that strove to grasp the question of development using composite indicators, such as HDI,[5] came to be based on measures of poverty that, depending on their method of calculation, either reflected only one part of the problem or amplified the measure. The government's strategy determines everything here: does it seek to acquire international loans, attract international backers, or present a picture far removed from the actual reality? (Uzbekistan, for instance, does not publish national poverty rates in order to deny the existence of such poverty and keep up appearances that serve its ideology.) Governments' choices to prefer one approach, one measure, over another—in accordance with the recommendations of international bodies, and notably the Millennium Development Goals[6] (MDGs) operated by the

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UNDP—are evidently not devoid of geopolitical stakes.[7] Lastly, it is worth underlining that in the former USSR the notion of development does not have the same resonance or meaning as is commonly put forward by international backers and agencies.[8]

POST-9/11 MUTATIONS:
WHAT ARE THE REPERCUSSIONS FOR TAJIK SOCIETY?

In Tajikistan, the regional and infra-ethnic tensions that erupted at the end of the 1980s—a time of protest and rising nationalisms nearly everywhere in the USSR—transformed into a veritable civil war between 1992 and 1997.[9] This conflict unquestionably opened a breach that was propitious to the establishment of international initiatives, with Dushanbe becoming a burgeoning capital for international agencies. Tajikistan, a country on a lifeline, had few other options available to it at the time. The end of the USSR had ruptured the economic ties with Moscow on which this very poor and landlocked country without major resources had depended. At a time when no regulations were in place, international agencies seized on the space created by the collapse of Russian financing to embed themselves in the country. International aid was clearly essential after the chaos of the civil war, as Moscow no longer guaranteed political, economic, or social patronage. Moreover, the war had claimed 100,000 victims and internally displaced more than 700,000, generating waves of refugees. It also catalyzed the departure of some 200,000 Slavs and ethnic Russians, some of whom represented the elite in various sectors. On top of all that, the war wreaked havoc on the country's infrastructure (transport, irrigation, railways, etc.).[10]

Nevertheless, it must be emphasized that the geopolitical order did not change completely, since the links between Russia and Tajikistan were rewoven after the war and into the 2000s. Moscow kept its military base near Dushanbe (where three garrisons of the 201st tank division had been deployed since 1989, following the Soviet Union's withdrawal from Afghanistan) and signed an agreement with the government that will keep Russian bases in Tajikistan until 2042.[11] In addition, Tajikistan is a candidate for integration into the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU).[12] Lastly, the massive flow of migrants workers from Tajikistan, most of whom head to Russia, has obliged Moscow to implement a migration policy.[13] Tajikistan is highly dependent on Russian laws, particularly where the visa regime is concerned.[14] Work migration and remittances, which represent more than half of Tajikistan's GDP, ensure relative social peace[15] and economic resources for the large minority of the population with practically no other alternatives to fall back on. As

such, Moscow's political orientations are of considerable importance to the Tajikistani government.

In the 2000s, as the war became more distant, rebuilding appeared to be proceeding well, but extreme poverty remained, and international campaigns (often poorly coordinated) had no tangible effect on social issues. In 2013, per capita GDP was estimated at US$1,036. The share of citizens living below the national poverty line rose to 68 percent; the Multidimensional Poverty Index[16] (MPI) was 17 percent, and the monetary measure of < US$2 a day was 49 percent. The way in which poverty is presented is therefore very complex, and depends upon the indicators and governmental strategies used to obtain development aid.[17]

Despite the passing of more than 20 years since the collapse of the USSR, international organizations' perspectives and policies remain fixed. Applying international norms such as the Millennium Development Goals amounts to imposing schemas without asking whether these schemas are relevant to a specific historical, social, or political context. Certainly, adhering to the bevy of international norms, climbing up the international rankings and various indexes, and fulfilling the criteria laid out by international agencies are also tokens of insertion in international programs (be it the fight against poverty, maternal mortality, infant mortality, or so on); it is essential for governments that want to lay claim to international aid.

In Tajikistan, as in many vulnerable countries from the "South," international action is combined with programs as numerous as they are varied. In this paper, I will dwell on the components of aid that are particularly salient and are tied to programs for fighting against drugs and drug addictions, illustrating the issue through my participant observations, which I carried out in the framework of localized humanitarian action in Gorno-Badakhshan in 2010 and 2014.

THE SCOURGE OF DRUG ADDICTION: AN ALTERNATIVE RESPONSE TO THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC QUANDARY

In Tajikistan, as in all of Central Asia, opium addiction has a long history. Ancient practices of using opiates, hanka, hashish, and opium in other forms, such as *kuknar,* for example, have transformed with the course of historical, political, and socio-economic events. From the earliest days of the USSR, the Soviet authorities classified these practices on the register of "deviance." The Drug Dispensers, created in the 1920s as entities independent of psychiatric hospitals, quickly found themselves re-integrated into the latter at the beginning of the 1930s, in accordance with a mechanist and organicist approach

to addiction (right at the moment when social hygiene, or public health,[18] was established) in order to protect society from users, who were considered "parasites." The Soviet authorities' medical construction of *narkomaniia* (drug addiction) also took aim at traditional therapeutic actors, the *tabib*, who used opiates in a secular fashion but always according to a very precise nosographic grid.[19] The paradigm change under Stalin consisted in classifying *narkomany* as antisocial, abnormal, and unproductive. The Second World War would impose a shift of representations on Soviet power, since opiates would be used by soldiers on a vast scale.

From Tsarist times, prohibitions were decreed but failed to achieve any convincing results, and ultimately the Soviets were unable to do any better in fighting drug addiction. One might ponder, incidentally, the contrast between Soviet discursive claims to have eradicated addiction and the failure of measures to do so. The war against opium waged by the Soviets in Pamir ended with the Stalinist repressions of the years of terror. The biomedical response established in Gorno-Badakhshan in the 1930s remained embryonic, and the economy of health and war in the 1940s shifted budgetary and political priorities concerning health and fighting social illnesses onto other pathologies, namely those impeding the development of *Homo Sovieticus* through work.

To understand the actual processes in terms of drug addictions in Tajikistan and the former USSR, it is necessary to be aware of the history of administration of addiction and its ideological relation to the user, who, more than two decades after the end of the USSR, is still perceived as an unproductive social parasite and is confronted with the intolerance of these post-Soviet societies and with actions still akin to what Lefort called "social prophylaxis."[20]

The break-up of the USSR not only created strong inequalities and multidimensional socio-economic vulnerabilities among post-Soviet populations, but it also participated in reconfiguring drug trafficking. For the most part, drugs had previously traveled along southern routes from the Golden Triangle and the Golden Crescent, but the trafficking quickly redirected through Central Asia as it headed for Russia and Europe. The opening of bridges with Afghanistan has had major consequences for drug trafficking. Its repercussions on the local market and on the use of injectable drugs in this region, which is deeply affected by heroin addiction, quickly became visible, if only near the markets. Since the events of 2001, the war in Afghanistan has considerably aggravated the problem, and in a fragile socio-political context drug trafficking necessarily entails major health and security risks. Heroin production has never been as high as it was during the second war in Afghanistan, with total revenues from heroin production in Afghanistan between 2002 and 2008 reaching more than US$4 billion.[21]

What's more, this occurred despite discourses and actions seeking to eradicate poppy production and control drug trafficking in the region. Ultimately, no system of accountability was set up to dismantle the production of Afghan drugs, which are far more profitable than other local agricultural crops. This drug trafficking fuels local conflicts (one example being the events of Osh, Kyrgyzstan in 2010) and destabilizes the entire region. In the context of the war and the complexity of allegiances between disrupted systems of loyalty, trafficking considerably expanded. Tajikistan shares a 1344 km-long border with Afghanistan, and the porosity of that border is exacerbated by corruption at all levels, including the police services, which profit from the financial windfall from trafficking at the micro- and regional level. In recent years, the largest seizures of heroin have been effected in the Khatlon region of Tajikistan, the region adjacent to Afghanistan. Khatlon accounted for 60 percent of all seizures in the country in 2013.[22]

In addition, injectable drug use, which accounts for the majority of drug addiction in Tajikistan, constitutes one of the main risk factors for the transmission of HIV/AIDS and hepatitis C infection. The growth of cases of HIV/AIDS in this region is faster than anywhere in the world; it has become a veritable epidemic in the Russian Federation, with more than 1 percent of the general population infected. (One percent is the critical point indicating the presence of an epidemic.)

Even if the epidemiological threshold of 1 percent has not officially been reached in Tajikistan (in 2012, the prevalence was officially 0.3 percent),[23] HIV/AIDS is growing quickly, as it is in other Central Asian countries. Taking all the major risks—injectable drug use; work migration accounting for more than 10 percent of the population; deterioration of the public health system and of the health of women; mother and child health protection; sexually-transmitted diseases; prostitution; and disinformation—together, this allows us to predict a veritable AIDS epidemic in the future if the governments themselves cannot impose effective measures and raise the necessary awareness.

Official figures scarcely reflect the realities, so in a context of multiple risks, it is necessary to remain cautious. Concerning injectable drug use, the most widespread of drug-use practices in Tajikistan, official statistics list 7,000 injectable drug users, though a regional study found that the figure is closer to 25,000 nationwide,[24] and local NGOs working in the field among IDUs in different regions of the country consider even this an underestimation.[25] A dose of heroin is very inexpensive at the Afghan border and in GBAO.[26] According to my interviews and observations among heroin addicts encountered in Khorugh, the daily dose was about US$2 (US$10 a gram) as of May 2014; prices vary in accordance with the quality and the purity of the

drug. Incidentally, if the heroin is pure, users use it once per day; if it is not—as is becoming the tendency, according to heroin addicts interviewed by the NGO Volonter—then users use it several times a day and also take dimidrol, hashish, and amphetamines, which come from China via the South route. Thus far, however, they do not seem to be using *krokodil,*[27] which "happily" has not yet come to Tajikistan.[28]

THE GAP BETWEEN LOCAL REALITIES AND THE APPLICATION OF INTERNATIONAL NORMS: ILLUSTRATIONS FROM PARTICIPANT OBSERVATIONS IN GORNO-BADAKHSHAN

International aid agencies are present in Gorno-Badakhshan,[29] and of these, the Aga Khan Foundation[30] is the most prominent. Such aid plays a key role in socio-economic, agricultural, food, and health development in both Tajik and Afghan Badakhshan. In addition to international aid, we will see that the initiatives of individuals, health personnel, and doctors are not to be underestimated.

The public health organizations devised for drug addicts essentially provide detoxification treatments. These treatments bear a strong resemblance to the repressive system of Soviet detoxification that was first set up for alcoholics: *lechebno-trudovye profilaktiki* (LTP) in the 1960s and an independent narcology service in the 1970s. An institution of this sort exists in Khorog, where the doctors employ the same methods as prevailed during Soviet times. The stigma of drug use remains strong, as does the lack of comprehension of new approaches, notably supplying disposable syringes. Alongside these measures, local NGOs—such as Volonter[31]—in Khorugh do remarkable work despite their meager means in a context of socio-economic dead-end and the almost total absence of prospects for the generations who lived through the civil war and its upheavals, as well as for those who were born during it. These "bottom-up" initiatives, most often spearheaded by former drug addicts, many of whom have lost family members or loved ones to drugs, are veritable pillars of the community at a micro level; they enable drug addicts to find themselves, get nourishment, obtain basic and regular health care, and be referred to hospital if need be. Volonter's drop-in center is located on the first floor of a small house bordering the Pjandj River; conditions are very basic, and there are few means to contend with the lack of capability and the state's manifest lack of will to react. The center offers some leaflets and posts preventative and explanatory posters about hygiene, the consequences of drug addiction on the body, and overdoses. There is a meet-

ing room for discussion groups; a room for consultations and help with access to HIV screening; a toilet; a small bathroom; bins for disposable syringes; and a small kitchen for making tea and perhaps something to eat (for those with no social network in a country in which parenting and family structures have an essential place). A representative of the NGO highlights that "disposable syringes are distributed by The Global Fund, as many as three syringes per day and per UDI, however the protocol of The Global Fund is far from meeting the reality and here (in the center) the daily and per person needs are higher if the aim is to effectively fight injectable drug use only a few hundred meters from the Afghan border."[32]

PILOT PROGRAMS FOR OPIOID SUBSTITUTES: TOWARD THE APPLICATION OF OTHER PUBLIC HEALTH NORMS?

A substitution therapy pilot program using methadone[33] was introduced to Khorugh in late 2009 and early 2010. (The program was also implemented in Dushanbe, Khudjand, and Qurghonteppa.) Substitution pilot programs likewise exist in Kyrgyzstan—which became, in 2002, the first country to inaugurate this opioid substitute therapy experiment—and in Kazakhstan.[34] Nevertheless, these substitute therapies require a solid system and training for doctors and health personnel (notably to increase knowledge about dosing, which is something they themselves admit to needing). During the winter of 2010, in the context of fieldwork with an international humanitarian organization that has been in Tajikistan since the civil war, a representative of the GBAO Health Ministry in Khorugh raised his concerns about this pilot project, indicating that the absence of follow-up was producing downward spirals among drug addicts, who are easily able to obtain methadone and adjust to it by combining it in some manner with heroin. She further emphasized that the IDUs were not reducing the daily dose, going directly from heroin (which is costlier) to methadone without reducing the shots, an approach that has generated a visible increase in overdoses in the city. Along with this, a *prikaz* (directive) from the health ministry of Tajikistan from February 12, 2015 put methadone on the list of essential medications (in line with WHO recommendations), an additional step toward risk reduction. The current issue concerns the provisions that may follow, and above all the stakes associated with this decision in terms of international aid.[35]

Other organizations work in consultation with local NGOs, as in Porchinev, a small village located 10 km north of Khorugh, where there has been a drug prevention center for drug addicts since Soviet times.[36] In 2005, it became a "*punkt doveriia*" (literally "point of trust"), a meetingplace and venue for

medico-social prevention. The orderly who runs the center, Djamila, displays great optimism in the face of the difficult situation; she is very invested in her job despite the meager salary of 200 somoni (30 euros in 2010), paid on an irregular basis. (For comparison, a bag of flour costs 105 somoni.) The center has instituted an exchange program supported by The Global Fund to provide sterile syringes for drug addicts in order to decrease the spread of infection through shared syringes.

Djamila lives in the very short term; she explains that the prevention centers in Shughnon and Rushon were closed down because the program initiated by The Global Fund ended and nothing has been devised as a follow-up. She fears this situation and mentions the major problems of coordination and continuity over the long term between public services and international aid; the organization and operation of the latter appear irrational to many people and local NGOs.

In 2010, the average age of drug addicts who turned to the center for help was 32. The youngest among them was only 19 years of age. There was only a single woman. An average of 100 persons a month turn to the Porchinev center for help.

"The majority of drug addicts lie to obtain their daily doses (between 3–5 hits). Very many users travel from Khorugh seeking disposable syringes here at the center," Djamila explains. "They take syringes with disinfectant and a sterile dose after having thrown the old syringe in a special container, then the used syringes are burnt. The current concern is the lack of disinfectant—I don't know when I will get more of it. The same goes for the compresses."

Every drug user is listed in the center's register, using a code for anonymity. The number of daily doses is noted in the register, and the name of the *kishlak* (settlement) from which the patient comes is also listed there. Djamila mentions that though the addicts at the center remain very dependent, she has recorded a drop in the number of daily shots, a small positive that gives her reason for hope. That being said, a drop can also lead to overdoses.

Psychological aid ought to be introduced—users who lived through the war, are PTSD victims, and go hungry in trying to obtain their daily dose have a profound need for such services. For the moment, however, Djamila complains, no such measures are in place. In the absence of formal psychological care, Djamila watches television shows with patients, speaks to them, and builds relations of trust.

Djamila also explains that the center has worked with the local militia for the last 3 to 4 years. The militia men understand the situation and will help with the drug addicts, not arrest them. If militia men come across drug addicts, they are supposed to take them to the prevention center for needle exchange. She highlights that the militia men know that drug addiction may

very easily affect their own children and families. They are aware of the danger that surrounds them daily, incentivizing them to engage with the program. Interviews conducted with local NGOs in May 2014 reported increasing awareness among militia men, whose families are increasingly affected by the drug problem. A bottom-up paradigm shift is underway, even if no change in the level of awareness can be noted among the highest-level authorities.

According to local NGOs in Khorugh and the medico-social personnel with whom I met in May 2014, the dynamics of infection for HIV are extremely concerning. At the end of 2013 (the year in which Khorugh's Center of Struggle against AIDS was founded), 367 cases were allegedly recorded in Khorugh, of which 268 were IDUs. Of these cases, 63 percent were infected by hepatitis C.[37] For the month of March 2014, the figures are as follows: 389 cases of HIV were recorded, of which 279 were IDUs—that is, 71 percent (322 men and 67 women, and 40 cases of TB). 173 people are on ARV, while about 20 do not follow the therapy, whether because they never took it or have stopped doing so (the side effects require special aftercare for drug-addict populations). Social workers and the NGO Volonter estimate that about 1,500 of the IDUs are in Khorugh (including three women, one on methadone). Concerning HIV, the interviews carried out in 2010 and in 2014 are mutually reinforcing: there are many programs to fight AIDS, but a major lack of coordination among them, since

> everyone works as they wish without reasoning through the programs with partners. Questions of governance and of the management of funds and therapies have become ever pressing; there is no regular follow-up of protocols or therapies, and the problem of managing the distribution of medication and medical equipment is a constant one (notably devices for counting CD4 and PCR), as well as the lack of any local laboratory in Gorno-Badakhshan that would make it possible to conduct quality testing on the spot without having to send the samples by road to Dushanbe! It is absolutely necessary to work upstream on questions related to representations and to the psychology of the populations concerned.[38]

An IMG representative explained,

> The problem of treatments is a major stumbling block as the Global Fund will soon carry out its 8th round and there have been scarcely any pronounced advances concerning therapy. Such advances do exist, even if they are few, but the problem resides in the screening and counting of T4: for these procedures, specialized devices are required and Tajikistan only has three of them (in Dushanbe, Khujand, and Khatlon), which does not allow for systematic testing and analysis of T4. Now, without these analyses and T4 counts, therapies cannot be undertaken![39]

It is interesting to note here that local actors—doctors and health administrators—have identified which measures to put into action. For example, in 2010, I participated in a meeting in Khorugh with the main actors in the fight against drug addiction and AIDS. A dozen people (including the director of the Center of Struggle against AIDS, the director of the blood transfusion service, the deputy director of drug addicts' services, representatives from the GBAO health ministry, doctors working with drug addicts, and so on) gathered to discuss questions concerning the implementation of preventative measures. During this meeting, the medical actors in particular asked that a testing system be established in the airports: this topic is a recurrent one in all discussions about prevention, including in Dushanbe, yet by 2014 nothing had been set up. The problem of tuberculosis is also becoming pressing, and the actors present at such meetings ask for anonymous tests to be undertaken upon departure and upon arrival: the director of the Center of Struggle against HIV says, "people infected with tuberculosis most of the time get it in GBAO. Migrants who stay in Russia for longer than three years may get contaminated while there, but the majority of tuberculosis infections occur in GBAO."[40]

Local actors are very committed, even if, in the eyes of international organizations, their actions and initiatives remain open to criticism because they are deemed unconventional. Work migrations, as I have already pointed out, are sizable, and the monitoring of the epidemiology and health of populations, which was automatic in Soviet times, has completely deteriorated. This state of affairs concerns doctors, who are striving to control epidemics through other measures (entry and departure points, etc.), and to adapt in some fashion to the new contingencies. In this context of multiple risks and substantial short-term migration (according to estimates, between 800,000 and more than 1.2 million migrants from Tajikistan work in Russia), I will cite one example to illustrate the surreal character of the normative approaches of international bodies: since 2013, the new coding system set up by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS no longer considers migrants a risk group, and therefore prevents them from taking advantage of screening in Tajikistan prior to their departure,[41] although they remain a de facto risk group and migration presents major challenges to Tajikistani society in public health terms.

Another example illustrates the interest of local actors and embryonic civil society in questions of drug addiction. In March 2010, a roundtable[42] was organized for the presentation of the first issue of a GBAO regional newspaper for prevention called *Khaët* (*Life*),[43] which was still being published as of 2014. The paper enables a marginal group of GBAO inhabitants to receive information about sensitive questions, whereas the creation of such a newspaper in the Soviet press would have been impossible.

RISK REDUCTION VERSUS
REHABILITATION IN A POST-SOVIET SOCIETY

Another humanitarian with a French organization working on questions of risk minimization led me to perform several inquiries in the same field. This mission (carried out in May 2014) was intended to reflect on the implementation of target actions among risk groups—including drug addicts, as well as LGBT populations—in Tajikistan, by meeting with local actors (associations, doctors, etc.), international actors (international organizations and agencies working on these issues in Tajikistan), and the persons concerned, i.e. those said to be "at risk." The framework for risk minimization among these populations intrigued me, especially given that Tajikistan is not the most open to changing its outlook after more than 70 years of the Soviet system and that social science research has shown the complexity of the unresolved drug problem in the region neighboring Afghanistan, not to mention a prevailing policy against drugs and trafficking that favors law enforcement[44] to the detriment of targeted public health measures. All of this means subjecting users to the Soviet legacy of coercive legislation. The critical methodology followed by this NGO (methodology compiled by researchers and doctors, who underline a critical and interesting approach to the concept of risk reduction) is part of the kaleidoscope of established international norms, norms associated with quantification (concerning maternal and infant mortality, but also poverty, malnutrition, access to potable water, and so on).

From one country to another, from one history to another, the existing measures are clearly not the same, nor are the mentalities. In Central Asia, as across the USSR, the end of the Soviet Union and the independent countries that emerged from it did not yield countries devoid of structures—empty shells, as it were. There is no comparison with Africa's process of decolonization, since the Soviet system created structures and infrastructure even in the most remote and unlikely places. The Soviet health system unquestionably proved its worth and its efficacy. The irreducible contradiction of this system came to light at the end of the 1970s and the early 1980s, starting the process of deterioration of the system and the decline of health indicators, although it is necessary to underscore the differentiated levels and rhythms of this process across the various Soviet republics.[45]

During this mission in GBAO (and in part in Dushanbe), ideological and semantic splits often dominated discussions between French actors and local actors trying to establish measures for aid and for disposable needle exchanges in drop-in centers that were basically impossible to find without a guide. In the jargon of NGOs and international organizations, the USSR's commonly accepted term of "rehabilitation" (*reabilitatsiia*) runs counter to

the logic of minimization; in the eyes of these foreign organizations, the ideological connotations of this terminology of rehabilitation appear nonsensical. The binary relation between emic and etic is eloquently expressed through a consideration of this sort. However, I have often wondered whether the issue could actually be situated at this level of understanding in the field. The so-called "rehabilitation centers" that I visited (not to generalize my remarks to all such centers) included notions specific to the policy of risk minimization, such as sterile syringes, exchange and prevention meetings, discussion meetings between peers and users, etc. It therefore seemed to me that the label— the signifier—was of little importance here, since the main stake was at the level of palpable, concrete results among users. The signifier "rehabilitation" has changed meaning for those who were confronted with "Soviet-style" detoxification and have since become aware of risk reduction practices. It is thus important not to pin so-called "universal" labels to places where these labels themselves are no longer admitted or understood as such. The associations, peers, and medico-social staff that work in local associations use these terms not as part of a repressive logic, but instead as part of a long-established framework that they themselves are capable of criticizing. The desire to alter labels is perceived locally as a desire to import a Western and often imperialist model, which is, for locals, part of a neo-colonialist division that they have sought to challenge. It is thus crucial not to clash head-on with the various actors. Moreover, it is evident that things may change beyond semantics. In a transversal manner, North-South relations are also expressed through these norms, which are moreover subject to critique from local actors, who argue, for example, that "Tajikistan is not Africa." This type of assertion resonates in many countries of the former USSR.

In addition, at issue with the sensitive question of drug addictions is the register in which we find ourselves: therapeutic or penal? As it happens, we have two registers of intervention here. Instead of pronouncing judgements on practices (by rejecting, for example, the term "rehabilitation"), it would be more effective to bring the two registers together in order to find elements of regulation that do not enter into direct contradiction with deeply rooted modes of functioning. The aim would be to go beyond a prohibitionist model by establishing levels of reflection that re-humanize the user, though without directly imposing normative schemas that do not correspond to local and historical realities, even if such schemas have (in part) been tested in the West.

The Soviet concept of "social prophylaxis" as an expression of rejection of the user ought to be understood and seen by international organizations, humanitarians, and other actors on the issue as a reality that has enduringly stamped the minds and perceptions of the populations—one that will not, unfortunately, simply disappear upon the mere invocation of international agencies.

Concerning the penal register, in Tajikistan drug use without a medical prescription is forbidden by law (Article 15 of the 1999 law "On narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances, and precursors"), but no specific penalties are laid down. Tajikistan's criminal code was amended in 2004 to increase the minimum threshold of the quantity subject to penal sanction. For example, the minimum dose of heroin subject to sanction rose from 0.015–0.15 g in the Criminal Code of 1998 (punishable by 5 to 10 years in prison and confiscation of property) to 0.5–10g (punishable by 5 years of prison). According to the UNODCP, Tajikistani drug law is the most liberal of all the countries of Central Asia.[46] Despite this seeming progressiveness on paper, the reality is rather different; arrests for personal possession and use of heroin are rarely based on the quantity of the drug possessed. Tajik legislation's criminalization of drug possession (including for personal use) is a form of structural violence that hinders the implementation of policies and measures of risk reduction by the public authorities and impedes addicts from getting care, receiving treatment, and accessing replacement therapy without fear. No real consensus exists between government, international, and local actors; instead, work is done in parallel.

DISCUSSION

I found the gap between the policies formulated in Western countries at a well-identified moment—namely that of the AIDS epidemic, when observers became aware of the need for risk reduction (others prefer the term harm minimization)[47]—and local realities in the countries of the former Soviet Union, the frameworks of which are specific to a society that for 70 years adopted a highly ideological and repressive model for dealing with drug addictions and what the authorities labeled "deviants," glaringly obvious. It is not that I did not subscribe to the register of regulation of risk and/or harm management that we know well, notably in France, with all the highly topical questions and experiences raised by shoot rooms, for example, but because I found myself facing a dialectic without a bridge enabling a logical link to be made between two sets of norms, between two differentiated, rival registers, which have not followed the same stages and do not have the same basic principles, nor the same rationales. In the Soviet register and the one that followed it, the sole aim is the eradication of the problem, without a list of priorities that might aim to reduce risks and the consequences of these risks.

Recourse to the notion of risk, however, makes it possible to justify state-operated regulations as part of a growing concern for security and the protection of individual freedoms. Some regulation of human conduct flows

indisputably from this; the concept of minimizing risks or harmful effects serves this goal in Western societies. Theoretically, the harm minimization approach does not immediately seek to reduce or eliminate drug use. It does not aim at total abstinence from all substances; instead, it promotes a series of prioritized goals, aiming first to manage the most urgent problems (for example, stabilizing the user's health, finding housing, etc.). The most vulnerable persons can be reached in this way and a relation of trust built with them that can make all the difference. Nevertheless, it is difficult to put such schemes to the test in a society that was long oriented toward the repression of users and continues to be stifling for those who wish to seek care. How can this concept of minimizing risks or harmful effects be applied when politicians have no interest in it? When incomprehension reigns between discourses informed by contradictory rationales?

What questions need to be asked prior to introducing health/RDR policies, and above all, why not implement participative approaches by leaning on local organizations, peers, health personnel, and local/locally-established social workers instead? It has been only a quarter-century since the end of the Soviet Union, and a paradigm change from such a monolithic system cannot be effected in one fell swoop. Things change, but at their own rhythm; the indicators and norms advocated by international bodies ought not to be presented as truths on which a ranking can be assigned, since these rankings ultimately say very little about local realities and the intertwining of multiple situations. Above all, these societies' tolerance of drug addictions is far from the same as ours and the processes are not comparable. It is necessary to take this fundamental parameter into account. Other measures of vast scope are necessary to change relations of power and understanding at all levels in a positive direction. However, the socio-economic and political context of this small, landlocked, and corrupt country considerably hampers any concern being taken for populations that we would readily call "vulnerable" or "at risk," but that are most often seen from a local perspective as "unproductive deviants." International organizations and NGOs should depart further from their schemas of action and revise their principles in light of greater and longer-term knowledge of these societies. In addition, their adoption of a highly critical attitude toward the Soviet health system—which is sometimes displayed openly in front of local public health actors, most of whom were educated during the Soviet era—constitutes a stumbling block to further inquiry into different modes of operation and effective international aid perspectives that seek not to replace the existing system but to draw on what that system offers in order to improve it in a shared direction.

CONCLUSION: QUESTIONING MASCULINITY

I will end with the personal impression that these different experiences among injectable drug users provoked in me, one that deepened my reflection on the question of the collapse of masculinity among large minorities in post-Soviet societies.[48] Among the injectable drug users encountered in the case related here, this notion is tangible. It attests to a profound upheaval of equilibria that held firm as late as the 1980s. The combination of negative or even destructive experiences—such as drug addiction, violence, unemployment, the absence of future prospects, dispossession of identity, loss of work, loss of property, and corruption—all participated in the process of emasculation. The loss of security and denuding of social function that occurred in a society in which man was an integral part of Soviet-era production, the loss of "social" status, and removal of a sense of responsibility within a system built around verticality all contributed to the collapse of masculinity. The heroin addicts I encountered show the extent to which social suffering and exclusion are tied to their feelings of powerlessness. Among the predominantly masculine forms of violence, we find drug addiction, but also alcoholism, domestic violence, and so on; the topic of masculinity/masculine identity has become one of great suffering and social misery.[49]

In societies that we could qualify as "post-heroic," the instrumentalization of masculinity, in a context of poverty and humiliation, is manifest in the mutilation of bodies, which acts as a mirror of male anxieties and insecurities, but also of a form of power.[50] These men perform a form of self-destruction by re-appropriating the principle of masculinity as force—as self-inflicted violence. Emotional wounds, discrimination, and depression fuel and amplify the suffering. These men discover themselves somehow unaffiliated from society and in a certain sense re-infantilized, having no future prospects in a society in which the construction of masculinity is nonetheless a crucial stage in gaining access to matrimonial, economic, and symbolic resources and acquiring social status.

NOTES

1. It was Willy Brandt, the former German Chancellor, who in 1980 released the report of the Independent Commission on Problems of International Development, *North-South: A Programme for Survival*. The notion of *South* came to replace the concept of *Third World*, which had been coined by French demographer Alfred Sauvy at the start of the 1950s and was adopted by intellectuals worldwide in the colonial period. See Alfred Sauvy, "Trois mondes, une planète," *L'Observateur*, August 14, 1952. On development, see also Georges Balandier, "Le 'Tiers Monde':

sous-développement et développement," *Population* 11, no. 4 (1956): 737–41. On the concept of the line marking the border between North and South, see Laurent Carroué, *La mondialisation en débat,* Documentation photographique 8037 (Paris: La Documentation Française, 2004).

2. Sophie Hohmann, Claire Mouradian, Silvia Serrano, and Julien Thorez, eds., *Development in Central Asia and the Caucasus: Migration, Democratisation and Inequality in the Post-Soviet Era* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2014).

3. Sophie Hohmann, "La médecine moderne au Turkestan russe: un outil au service de la politique coloniale," in *Une colonie pas comme les autres*?, ed. S. Gorshenina and S. Abashin, Cahiers d'Asie centrale de l'IFEAC (Paris: Editions Complexes, 2010), 319–51.

4. Tajikistan had 6,127,493 inhabitants as of the 2000 census. The last census was carried out in 2010 and recorded a population of 7,564,502 inhabitants. See *Naselenie Respubliki Tadzhikistan po polu, vozrastu i sostoianiiu v brake*, Vol. II (Dushanbe: Agentstvo po statistike pri Prezidente Respubliki Tadzhikistan, 2012), 50.

5. In 2013, Tajikistan's HDI of 0.607 was close to that of India and Cambodia. Russia's HDI is 0.778; Kyrgyzstan's 0.628; Uzbekistan's 0.661; and Kazakhstan's 0.757. These levels are ranked as average HDIs, though the measure is open to serious criticism and considerable variations between the countries it features. In composite indexes (including the HDI), the very high rate of literacy and schooling in these countries elevates them in the rankings. However, a large part of these countries' populations is affected by poverty, and they were further impacted by the major economic crisis that followed the break-up of the USSR. These countries are thus struggling to find a mode of development that is advantageous to the population. Inequalities are strongly compounded, social expenditures very low, the quality of education has fallen, and access to social services—previously a focus of the Soviet regime—is undermined.

6. One of the aims of the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (target 1.A) is to reduce by half the proportion of the population with an income below one dollar a day between 1990 and 2015. See "Goal 1: Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger," Millennium Development Goals and Beyond 2015, http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/poverty.shtml.

For the period between 2015 and 2030, the MDGs have been replaced by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which list 107 targets for results and 43 targets for means. In contrast to the MDGs, the SDGs have a universal agenda; differences in agenda will be generated depending upon the respective specificities of the countries (the least advanced countries, vulnerable countries, etc.). See Matthieu Doussichas and Vincent Nossek, "État des lieux statistiques des Objectifs du Développement Durable dans les PMA et les autres pays vulnérables," *Working Paper* No. 114 (October 2014). In the SDG framework, Tajikistan is listed under the categories "landlocked developing countries eligible for ODA" and "Other Low Income Countries with a GDP threshold of US$1005 per capita" (along with Kyrgyzstan, Kenya, Zimbabwe, and the Democratic Republic of Korea).

7. Sophie Hohmann and Cécile Lefèvre, "Measures of Poverty in the Caucasus and Central Asia: International Approaches and Specificities of Southern Countries of the

Former Soviet Union," in *Development in Central Asia and the Caucasus: Migration, Democratisation and Inequality in the Post-Soviet Era,* ed. Sophie Hohmann, Claire Mouradian, Silvia Serrano, and Julien Thorez (London: I.B. Tauris, 2014), 183–214.

8. Hohmann et al., *Development in Central Asia*; Charles Buxton, *Russia and Development: Capitalism, Civil Society and the State* (London: Zed Books, 2014).

9. Nevertheless, as of 2000, considerable tensions still existed in some parts of the country, notably in Karateguin.

10. Cf. Sophie Hohmann, "Socio-Economic Migrations and Health Issues Resulting from the Tajik Civil War," in *Migration and Social Upheaval as the Face of Globalization in Central Asia*, ed. Marlène Laruelle (Boston: Brill, 2013), 149–66.

11. Richard Rousseau, "La Russie renforce sa présence militaire en Asie centrale," *Global Brief,* http://globalbrief.ca/richardrousseau/2012/10/28/la-russie-renforce-sa-presence-militaire-en-asie-centrale/.

12. The EEU was created by the treaty of May 29, 2014 by Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Russia. Armenia signed the membership treaty on October 9, 2014. The Eurasian Economic Community (EAEC), which includes Belarus, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan, was dissolved on October 10, 2014, giving way to the EEU.

13. Igor Bosc and Saodat Olimova, "Labour migration from Tajikistan" (Dushanbe: IOM, 2003), http://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/labour_migration_tajikistan.pdf; Hohmann, "Socio-Economic Migrations."

14. The new law of the Russian Federation entered into force on January 1, 2015, introducing the obligation to buy a patent, as well as other requirements, such as sitting a Russian language and civilization test. These strictures risk exacerbating informal work among migrants even as the law officially aims to prevent it. See Federal Law No. 357-FZ "On the Modifications of the Federal Law on the Legal Status of Foreigners on the Territory of the Russian Federation and Other Legislative Acts of the Russian Federation" of November 24, 2014.

15. The observed return of migrants to Tajikistan (as well as other states in Central Asian and the Caucasus), due to the economic crisis affecting Russia, threatens this balance, and governments are not shy in showing their concern.

16. At the end of the 2000s, UNDP decided to adopt a new composite index: the MPI (Multidimensional Poverty Indicator), which builds on the HDI's three-dimensional approach: health, education, and living standards. The MPI also singles out 10 sub-indicators:

- Health: infantile mortality, nutrition.
- Education: years of schooling, school leavers under the age of 8.
- Standard of living: access to electricity, potable water, type of sanitation, house flooring, amenities, heating.

17. Hohmann and Lefèvre, "Measures of Poverty."

18. Notably with the creation of a State Institute of Social Hygiene in 1923 and its responsibility for the study of alcoholism and the so-called social illnesses (*sotsial'nye bolezni*), as well as the power relations between "hygienists" and "narcologists." See Susan Gross Solomon, "Social Hygiene and Soviet Public Health, 1921–1930," in *Health and Society in Revolutionary Russia*, ed. S. G. Solomon and J. F. Hutchinson

(Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1990), 175–99; Susan Gross Solomon, "David and Goliath in Soviet Public Health: The Rivalry of Social Hygienists and Psychiatrists for Authority over the *Bytovoi* Alcoholic," *Soviet Studies* 41, no. 2 (1989): 254–75.

19. On the history of "narcomania" in Central Asia; of traditional pharmacopeia; of the relations of power with doctors in the colonial era and then in the Soviet era; and on the administrative construction of the fight against drug addiction, as well as its paradoxes, the reader may consult the excellent works of Alisher Latypov: Alisher Latypov, "The Soviet Doctor and the Treatment of Drug Addiction: A Difficult and Most Ungracious Task," *Harm Reduction Journal* 8, no. 32 (2011), http://www.harmreductionjournal.com/content/8/1/32; Alisher Latypov, "Healers and Psychiatrists: The Transformation of Mental Health Care in Tajikistan," *Transcultural Psychiatry* 47, no. 3 (July 2010): 419–51; Alisher Latypov, *The Administration of Addiction: The Politics of Medicine and Opiate Use in Soviet Tajikistan, 1924–1958* (PhD diss., University College London, 2011).

20. Claude Lefort, *L'invention démocratique* (Paris: Fayard, 2008).

21. Sophie Hohmann, "La drogue en Russie: dimension sanitaire et sécuritaire," in *Russie 2013-Regards de l'Observatoire franco-russe* (Paris: Cherche-midi, 2013), 172–75.

22. "Report on the Drug Situation in the Republic of Tajikistan for 2013" (Dushanbe: The Drug Control Agency under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan, 2014).

23. At the end of 2012, the Centre of Struggle Against AIDS in Tajikistan recorded 4,674 cases of HIV (which is a rate of 50.7 per 100,000): 3,486 men and 1,188 women. Among them, 50.1 percent of people infected by HIV were injectable drug users using unclean syringes.

24. Tomas Zabransky et al., "Post-Soviet Central Asia: A Summary of the Drug Situation," *International Journal of Drug Policy* 25 (2014): 1186–94.

25. Representative of the NGO Volonter. Interviewed by Sophie Hohmann, Khorugh, May 2014.

26. In the 2010 census, GBAO (created as an administrative entity in 1925) had 205,949 inhabitants; the population of this autonomous region dropped from the previous census in 2000, which recorded 206,004 inhabitants. GBAO is the only region of Tajikistan to have recorded a drop in its population. The population of Khorugh was 28,098 inhabitants in 2010. See Agentsvo po statistike pri Prezidente Respubliki Tadjikistan, *Naselenie republiki Tadzhikistan*, 50.

27. Alisher Latypov, "Illicit Drugs in Central Asia: What We Know, What We Don't Know and What We Need to Know," *International Journal of Drug Policy* 25 (2014): 1155–62; Hohmann, "La drogue en Russie."

28. Vice-Director of the NGO Volonter, interviewed by Sophie Hohmann, Khorugh, May 2014.

29. International humanitarian aid has been provided in Khorugh since the civil war, GBAO having been cut off from the rest of the country and notably the capital, Dushanbe. The bridges and the only road to the west and center of the country are unusable, there are antipersonnel mines, and infrastructure is destroyed. Khorugh has

become a distribution point for food and health aid, the only usable road being the one from the south that passes through Murghab. This passage was the only means of getting supplies (via Kyrgyzstan) during the war. (Local and international humanitarian actors who worked in the GBAO during the civil war, interviewed by Sophie Hohmann, Dushanbe, March 2010.)

30. In this region, Ismaeli Shiites are in the majority; their spiritual guide is Aga Khan. AKDN, the Aga Khan Development Network, has been working in Tajikistan since 1992.

31. The local NGO Volonter was established in Khorugh in 1998 with the main goal of aiding drug addicts without distinguishing uses (users of injectable drugs or otherwise). In 2001/2002, with support of the Soros Foundation, Volonter opened its first needle exchange and a drop-in center. I met with and interviewed the staff of this NGO, as well as users at the drop-in center, in 2010 and in 2014.

32. Representative of the NGO Volonter, interviewed by Sophie Hohmann, Khorugh, May 3, 2014.

33. On the history of advocacy, the implementation of pilot projects in Central Asia, and the obstacles encountered, see: Danielle Parsons, Dave Burrows, and Aisuluu Bolotbaeva, "Advocating for Opioid Substitution Therapy in Central Asia: Much Still to be Done," *International Journal of Drug Policy* 25 (2014): 1174–77.

34. In Uzbekistan, a pilot experiment was performed on 142 patients in the 2000s, but it was stopped in 2009, just as the time had come to offer replacement therapy on a wider scale. In addition, it is worth noting that methadone remains prohibited in Russia, as does buprenorphine, even though the WHO added these therapies to the list of authorized and recommended treatments in 2005.

35. I thank Alisher Latypov for bringing this recent *prikaz* to my attention.

36. Fieldwork observation and interviews with heroin addicts undertaken by the author at Porchinev in March 2010 and in Khorugh in May 2014.

37. Screening tests for hepatitis C are centralized in Dushanbe, and there is only one laboratory in the capital that is able to read these tests, according to a representative from UNAIDS interviewed in Dushanbe in May 2014. The rates mentioned here were from the tests sent from Khorugh to the capital by road. Treatments are not available and the medicines remain very costly and out of reach for infected persons. A single pilot experiment was recently performed in Tajikistan, but the results are not yet known. The problem also arises in other post-Soviet countries, notably in Georgia, where thinking is advancing on the question of treatments for hepatitis C, with consultation meetings at the ministerial level between Tbilisi and Paris in order to find less expensive solutions (making generics, granting a voluntary license to countries with intermediate revenues, etc.), though the pharmaceutical lobbies are obstructing the process. For the moment, only pilot projects with small samples seem to work. (Humanitarian staff from Médecins du Monde, which has worked on these questions in Georgia for several years, interviewed by Sophie Hohmann, Paris, January 2014.)

38. Medical administrator working at the International Federation of the Red Cross, interviewed by Sophie Hohmann, Dushanbe, March 2010.

39. IMG representative, interviewed by Sophie Hohmann, Dushanbe, 2010. Interviews carried out four years later—with local NGOs such as Volonter, Kalam in GBAO, or Spin + in Dushanbe—flagged up the same problems.

40. Director of the Centre of Struggle against HIV, interviewed by Sophie Hohmann, Dushanbe, March 2010.

41. UNAIDS representative, Dushanbe, May 2014.

42. This round table included several local NGOs from Tajikistan; the representatives of these NGOs came from Dushanbe, as well as the Khatlon Oblast, to work together and share ideas on this sensitive topic.

43. This newspaper discusses questions such as drug addictions, alcoholism, and AIDS prevention. The Dutch Fund for the Fight against AIDS East-West (AFEW) supported the launch of this paper, which was a part of the project "Pamir Against AIDS" launched in 2005. (Round table discussion at the Venerology Institute, Khorugh, March 2010.)

44. The official directives tend toward a fight against drug trafficking, with the training of specialized border guards under the auspices of the OSCE, for example. (Instructors for training missions, interviewed by Sophie Hohmann, Dushanbe, 2010.)

45. Alain Blum, *Naître, vivre et mourir en URSS (1917–1991)* (Paris: Plon, 1994); Sophie Hohmann, "Démographie et enjeux de santé publique," in *Eclats d'empires, Asie centrale, Caucase, Afghanistan*, ed. Marlène Laruelle and Sébastien Peyrouse, Collection CERI/Sciences Po (Paris: Fayard, 2013), 183–93.

46. "Accessibility of HIV Prevention, Treatment and Care Services for People who use Drugs and Incarcerated People in Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan," Legislative and Policy Analysis and Recommendations for Reform, UNODC, 2010.

47. Harm minimization tied to drugs is an approach centered on pragmatism and humanism. It is currently applied in several areas of health and social services, and by community bodies working among persons who use drugs. This approach aims at diminishing the harmful consequences of the use of both licit drugs (alcohol, medication, etc.) and illicit ones (marijuana, cocaine, etc.). Harmful effects include impacts not only on the person concerned but also on the person's social circle and the wider community. The harm minimization approach therefore tries to attenuate the negative repercussions associated with consumption. It does not give a green light to drug consumption, but instead helps to manage it better when the person involved is not considering stopping. See Pierre Brisson, "L'approche de réduction des méfaits: sources, situations, pratiques*"* (Montréal: Comité permanent de la lutte à la toxicomanie, 1997), http://www.cqld.ca/publications/politiques-sociales-partenariat/lapproche-de-reduction-mefaits-sources-situation-pratiques/; Patricia G. Erickson, Diane M. Riley, Yuet W. Cheung, and Pat A. O'Hare, *Harm Reduction: A New Direction for Drug Policies and Programs* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997).

48. Martin Demant Frederiksen, "Good Hearts or Big Bellies—*Dzmak'atsoba* and Images of Masculinity in the Republic of Georgia," in *Young Men in Uncertain Times*, ed. Vered Amid and Noel Dyck (New York: Berghahn Books, 2011); Arturas Tereskinas, "Social Suffering, Post-Soviet Masculinities and Working-Class Men,"

Socialiniai Mokslai 64, no. 2 (2009): 79–86; Raewyn Connell, *Masculinities* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2005).

49. Arthur Kleinman, *Social Suffering* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1997).

50. Tereskinas, "Social Suffering."

Chapter Eight

"A Woman without a Man is a *Kazan* without a Lid"

Polygyny in Tajikistan

Michele E. Commercio

"A Woman without a Man is a *Kazan* [cauldron] without a Lid," a Tajik proverb suggesting that an unmarried woman is vulnerable, summarizes a widely shared sentiment in Tajik society that motivates some women to agree to second-wife status in Tajikistan.[1] Polygynous marriages, or unions between a husband and multiple wives, are no longer considered perverted vestiges of the past, as they were during the Soviet era.[2] Despite the fact that these marriages are increasingly common in various post-Soviet states with majority Muslim populations like Tajikistan, there is a dearth of scholarship addressing causes and consequences of polygyny. The following case-study analysis of a country witnessing a wave of polygynous marriages in a legal context that renders such unions unlawful aims to address this gap in the literature.

I argue that polygyny, explored here solely in terms of women who agree to become second wives in Tajikistan, is rooted in local understandings of gender relations and contemporary economic conditions. In terms of the first factor, the desire—if not the social pressure—to get married and have children motivates women to agree to second-wife status. In terms of the second factor, the outmigration of Tajik men between the ages of 18 and 59 has generated two pools of potential second wives: 1) women, whose migrant husbands have abandoned them from abroad; and 2) women who confront a dismal marriage market in Tajikistan that is defined by a shortage of *eligible* bachelors. Women in both scenarios may agree to second-wife status. Though some experts link polygyny in Central Asia to Islamic revivalism,[3] a more precise assessment of the relationship between these variables is that the religion provides an institutional mechanism (*nikoh*—the Islamic wedding ceremony) that facilitates the practice.

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This analysis, like many accounts of scholars of gender politics in Central Asia, takes women's agency into account. I thus focus on second rather than first wives in order to explore the context in which a woman exercises agency in the process of the formation of a polygynous marriage. Though there are exceptions to the rule, Central Asian men generally do not consult their official (first) wife before taking an unofficial (second) wife and—in neglecting to do so—deprive the first wife of agency at this point in her marital story.[4] While they *may* consult their parents and/or other relatives, Central Asian men tend to avoid conversations with their first wife concerning their desire to acquire an additional spouse. In contrast to first wives, women in Tajikistan who agree to second-wife status *do* have agency, although—and this is an important caveat—this choice may be the least attractive option available.[5] And, though these women are not the focus here, it is important to note that there are women in Central Asia who did not know that they were entering a polygynous union when they agreed to marry. For example, after Malika Davronzade was married via *nikoh*, she found out that her husband already had a first *and* second family.[6] Leaving the caveat mentioned above and cases like Malika's aside, research suggests that a polygynous union can serve the interests of a woman who consents to second-wife status. As Eleonora Fayzullaeva points out, even fairly independent women in the region "are ready to enter into polygamy as a route to gender respectability."[7] In the following pages, I probe the extent to which this assertion applies to the Tajik case.

There are very few scholarly publications concerning polygyny as practiced in Central Asia since the collapse of the Soviet Union. As a result, this is a fairly new area of scholarly inquiry. The qualitative data informing my analysis are derived from four sources: 1) interviews I conducted in Dushanbe in 2007 and 2008 with representatives of the Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan and the government's Department of Religion; 2) a 2008 survey of students enrolled in Tajik National University and the Islamic Institute conducted by a local research firm on my behalf; 3) online Russian language newspaper articles concerning polygyny in the region; and 4) academic accounts of polygyny as practiced in Central Asia during the Soviet and post-Soviet eras.

POLYGYNY IN PRE-SOVIET AND SOVIET CENTRAL ASIA

Though local understandings of gender relations in Tajikistan vary slightly from region to region, there is a shared understanding throughout the country that although a girl may eventually pursue higher education, her central purpose is to have and care for a family. Women's rights activist Gul'chekhra

Mirzoeva argues that mentality and traditions in Tajik society are based on the assumption that a girl's main calling is to build and nurture families: "Many girls from the age of 14–15 dream only about rich, young, handsome husbands. Education for them stands in the last place. They think about this [education] only when they are left with children, but without money or an apartment." [8]

Data from a survey I hired the El-Pikir Center for Public Opinion Study to conduct in Tajikistan in 2008 supports this general conclusion, and underscores a counterintuitive finding: female students attending religious *and* secular institutions of higher education tend to agree on this subject.[9] For example, 61 percent of the respondents attending Tajik National University (TNU) and 64 percent of those attending the Islamic Institute (II) agreed with the statement "I prefer to manage the home and raise children, rather than work." Similarly, 49 percent of respondents attending TNU and 58 percent of those attending the II agreed with the statement "It's better if women keep house and raise children, while men work." In terms of Islam's teachings on the subject, 59 percent of respondents attending TNU and 58 percent of those attending II agreed with the statement "Islam justifies the need for women to raise children, rather than work." More than half of the respondents at each university (53 percent of those at TNU; 65 percent of those at II) agreed with the statement "It's important that my [future] husband understands that, as Islam says, women must raise children so that I can stay home rather than work."[10]

Though polygynous unions represent one route to marriage and motherhood in contemporary Central Asia, the path is not new. In fact, polygyny was practiced prior to and during the Soviet era. *Adat*, or customary law, permitted a widow to remarry only the closest relatives of her deceased husband, who most often were his brothers (the levirate custom); in some cases, *adat* imposed this on the widow.[11] During the pre-Soviet era, both the levirate custom and the tendency of wealthy men to take young second wives after their first wives reached a certain age encouraged the practice of polygyny.[12] The very fact that the Jadids criticized polygyny in their writings—they considered it detrimental to a stable family, which they viewed as the backbone of the nation—indicates that polygyny was practiced in the region prior to the Russian Revolution.[13]

The slew of legislation banning polygyny passed by the authorities after the Revolution provides further evidence of the practice. Adrienne Edgar argues that new laws permitting women to initiate divorce and banning bride wealth, child marriage, and polygyny were as important as the unveiling campaign in terms of the government's determination to emancipate Muslim women.[14] Following the 1919 family code guaranteeing women's legal rights,

a 1921 decree rendered 16 the minimum age of marriage, banned *kalym* (bride price) and polygyny, defined legal marriage as being contracted by mutual consent, and required the official registration of all marriages with the state.[15] Polygyny was punishable by one to five years' incarceration. In 1925, Soviet authorities launched a campaign to eliminate customary law in everyday life and judicial practice: men with multiple wives were prosecuted and compelled to select one wife and divorce the others.[16] The *hujum*, a central pillar of the campaign to emancipate Central Asian women, was launched in 1927 as an "assault against the 'moldy old ways' of female seclusion and inequality," and sought to eliminate the hijab from the public sphere.[17] In 1928, Moscow implemented a unified code of laws for non-European minorities within the Russian republic—*On Crimes Constituting the Relics of the Tribal Order*—that proscribed, among other tribal remnants, polygyny.[18] Its standards were later implemented in the Central Asian republics, where additional stipulations were added, including one that prohibited unregistered marriages precisely because they facilitated polygynous unions.

But legislation pertaining to such marriages was not effectively enforced. Douglas Northrop argues that, "Nearly all Soviet legislators agreed that the practice was harmful to women and should not be permitted anywhere in the Soviet Union. Such agreement, however, was not by itself enough to create effective laws, since loopholes, flaws, and shortcomings quickly appeared in every effort the party made to end the practice."[19] Similarly, Marianne Kamp asserts that Soviet laws dedicated to female liberation, including the one banning polygyny, were "widely ignored" and that "most people were unaware of new laws, and even when they became aware of them there was no enforcement."[20] Indeed, newly-illegal aspects of *adat* "continued unofficially in hidden forms," in large part because this was preferable—both to polygamists *and* to the wives they were forced to divorce—than the punitive consequences with which these aspects of *adat* were now associated.[21]

Marfua Tokhtakhodjaeva argues that although polygyny was illegal, it was particularly prevalent in rural areas, "where a man, officially married to one wife, enters into practical married relations with another . . . [he] differs from an ordinary adulterer in that he takes responsibility for the children from both marriages, providing equitable maintenance to the wives and support for the children. Such marriages, especially the second marriage, are solemnised through a Muslim ceremony."[22] Sergei P. Poliakov, who also focuses on rural Central Asia, agrees: "It can also happen that a husband will introduce a second wife into the home. When this occurs, the first marriage is not annulled, and the second one is Islamic, not registered in the proper state offices. Public opinion (in the *mahalla*) regards such situations as wholly normal."[23] Colette

Harris finds that rural women in Tajikistan were "relatively untouched by Soviet concepts," and thus continued to practice various customs designated crimes by the Soviet government, including forced and child marriage, *kalym*, polygyny, and female exclusion.[24] Writing in the 1960s, Elizabeth E. Bacon argued that, "The levirate, and polygamy in general, have not disappeared . . . to judge from complaints in Soviet newspapers, the practice is comparatively widespread. . . . Kolkhoz presidents, some of them Party members, are said to be the worst offenders . . . one kolkhoz in the Frunze oblast of Kirgizia was said to have eighteen men with two wives each."[25] Yvonne Corcoran-Nantes concurs, arguing that during the Soviet era, Central Asians continued to practice traditions associated with marriage, including *kalym*, bride kidnapping, seclusion, and polygyny.[26]

Contrary to Alla Kuvatova's description of polygyny as "a new phenomenon in Tajikistan," evidence suggests that polygyny, though not nearly as widespread as it is today, *was* practiced in the Central Asian republics—including the Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic—during the Soviet era.[27] For example, journalist Oksana Kotnika published an article in *Nezavisimaia gazeta* featuring Sultan, a 49-year-old who was born in the Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic and grew up in a polygynous household. He describes his situation as follows: "My father had two wives. They lived well, in one house, he was a shepherd. I called them both Mama. From his first wife he had 4 children, and from his second 5; I was the youngest."[28]

Despite attempts by the authorities to eradicate various vestiges of the past, Central Asians managed by duplicity to continue practices of child marriage, polygyny, and the payment of bride-price, although to a lesser extent than during pre-Soviet times.[29] Sometimes the Communist Party cracked down. In her article, Kotnika also features Ali, a 62-year-old who was born in a village in the Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic in 1953. Ali took a second wife 10 years after marrying his first wife, with whom he had 6 daughters. From Ali's perspective, this was the gravest mistake of his life: his first wife, factory co-workers, and parents condemned his decision, while the Party made sure that he could not find satisfactory work.[30]

The Communist Party discouraged polygyny as part of its emphasis on the importance of building a proper Soviet family. It attached serious consequences to what it deemed immoral and unscrupulous behavior: if caught, a man with multiple wives would be fired and subsequently find himself unable to obtain a respectable position in his field. This was Ali's fate. Fear of these consequences prevented polygyny from becoming a widespread practice during the Soviet era. In line with Party rhetoric, public opinion opposed polygyny; most people considered second wives nothing more than prostitutes.

POLYGYNY IN POST-SOVIET CENTRAL ASIA

Like the Soviet Union, the independent states of Central Asia prohibit polygyny. The criminal code of post-Soviet Tajikistan defines bigamy/polygamy as cohabitation with two or more wives, and punishes these practices with a fine, correctional labor for a maximum of two years, detention for three to six months, or incarceration for a maximum of five years.[31] Yet as I argue below, polygyny persists, in part because women in the region continue to struggle economically. Scholars agree that women in Central Asia have suffered disproportionately from the shrinking labor market as a result of state impulses to eliminate structural support for female employment established during the Soviet era.[32] World Bank data indicate that the official female labor force participation rate has been significantly lower than the official male labor force participation rate in Tajikistan since the country became independent (see table 8.1).[33] The sudden lack of a welfare state in Tajikistan—due to the Soviet Union's collapse—created a situation in which women lost benefits that greatly facilitated their participation in the labor market.

The five-year civil war also contributed to the rise of polygyny in Tajikistan. During the 1990s, the practice became more widespread as young widows became second wives in order to acquire protection.[34] Sophie Roche and Sophie Hohmann emphasize that parents' anxiety regarding the security of their young, unmarried daughters caused them to give their daughters in marriage "so as to delegate the duty of protection to the younger, more able generation."[35] Yet the war cannot be considered the sole cause of polygyny, because the practice persists in all five Central Asian states, while only one of those states has experienced civil war.

A famous Kyrgyz singer—Roza Shakirova—is a second wife. A woman who leads a secular life and was thus not religiously motivated to acquire this status, she explains her decision in terms of obtaining financial security and growing the Kyrgyz nation: "The main thing is that I have a husband, who is Kyrgyz. He supports me. We have a son. . . . It's better to be the 10th wife of

Table 8.1.   Labor Force Participation Rate (Percent of Male/Female Population Ages 15+)

	1990	1993	1996	1999	2002	2005	2008	2011	2014	2016
Male population	76	76	76	75	75	75	76	77	77	78
Female population	58	58	58	58	58	58	58	59	59	60

Source: World Bank Indicators (http://data.worldbank.org/indicator)

a Kyrgyz than to marry a foreigner. We need to increase the number of Kyrgyz because there are so few of us." [36] Former Mufti Chubak azhy Zhalilov has utilized social media sites and videos to ask politicians to take two or three wives; this plea, he claims, is a response to Kyrgyz girls marrying men of other nationalities. Prior to the October 2015 parliamentary elections, he suggested that men with one wife should not be able to become deputies.[37] According to a representative of the non-governmental organization Adilet, famous men who work in Kyrgyzstan's political and economic arenas have several wives.[38] Most notorious is former President Bakiev, whose second wife is 30 years his junior.[39] Chief among the reasons Central Asian men take a second wife is the desire to display affluence and power, attributes of prominent businessmen, bureaucrats, and parliamentary deputies.[40]

Women in Kyrgyzstan do agree to second-wife status. As psychologist Nazira Kubanychbek put it: "Women agree, and therefore men take this step."[41] Though they tend to oppose polygyny, human rights activists in Kyrgyzstan ask society to consider the rights of women who *want* to be second or third wives.[42] According to journalist A. Mamariaimov, women who agree to second, third, fourth, or even fifth wife status do so in response to socioeconomic vulnerabilities, a fear of being alone, the desire to have children, and need to satisfy physiological needs.[43] Professor Zainidina Kurmanova, by contrast, identifies the Islamization of society as the primary driver behind polygyny in Kyrgyzstan: "many men, in order to have several wives, with ease become 'faithful Muslims,' and register [their marriages] via *nikah*."[44] Pointing to economic causes of the phenomenon, spiritual leader Dil'murat khadzhi Orozov (former head of the Jalalabad Muftiate) doubts that the official ban on polygyny will eradicate the practice. What is needed, he asserts, is a resolution of the country's socioeconomic problems, because this, unlike changes in the law, will alter the situation of women who are prepared to do anything to improve their existence.[45]

Polygyny persists in Kazakhstan as well. Although Kazakhs upheld the levirate custom for centuries in order to provide for widows and their children, in reality the *tokal* ("second wife" in Kazakh) was never a widespread institution.[46] Yet today it is easy to find Kazakh men with several wives.[47] For example, 45-year-old Kairat, a married man with two children, asked 24-year-old Aigul to become his second wife when she got pregnant. Although Kairat earned good money at an oil company in Akmolinsk oblast, he was unable to buy Aigul a separate dwelling. As a result, the two wives and their children lived with Kairat under one roof. The situation proved intolerable, causing the wives to leave. Kairat eventually made peace with Aigul, with whom he lives today. Nothing is known about the fate of his first wife.[48]

While Kazakhstan decriminalized polygyny in 1998, there have been failed attempts to amend the Law on Marriage and the Family in order to render the practice punishable by law. The main arguments advanced by Kazakh deputies for continued decriminalization are: 1) polygyny is a means to increase the country's birthrate; and 2) many *oralmans*, or Kazakhs who return to their historic homeland, arrive with multiple wives.[49] A former minister of agriculture argues that the gender imbalance characterizing Kazakh society, defined by a shortage of men, means that "many women aren't finding their second half and are forced to remain alone, which results in unhappiness."[50] According to practicing psychologist Sana Zhumabekova, who sees first and second wives, the latter agree to polygynous marriages because there are fewer women than men, and "every woman wants to get married and have children, this is a normal desire." Touching on male motivations for polygyny, Zhumabekova highlights the Kazakh proverb "When an Uzbek gets rich he builds a house, but when a Kazakh gets rich he takes a new wife," linking the rise of polygyny to prosperity.[51]

Some affluent men in Uzbekistan prefer to take a house. Polygyny is illegal in Uzbekistan, but socially acceptable and on the rise because of lax law enforcement.[52] Consider two women in Uzbekistan: Nainahon, whose husband took a second wife in 2011 in order to have more children; and Jahon, who is in a monogamous marriage with a man whose five closest friends each have two wives.[53] According to the Uzbek publication *Ozodlik*, polygyny is widespread in Uzbekistan, where it is motivated by a tradition according to which members of certain classes cannot give their daughters for marriage to men outside their circle, as well as a socioeconomic environment in which taking a second wife has become an indicator of wealth. In Uzbekistan, as in neighboring Central Asian states, officials and labor migrants who acquire wealth in Russia openly take second wives.[54] Economic circumstances render the good life accessible only to bureaucrats and prominent businessmen; the rest are forced to "muddle through": while men go abroad for work, women search for wealthy lovers or become second wives.[55] Larisa, an ethnic Russian who earned kopecks at a grocery store, agreed to second-wife status for financial reasons. She sees her Uzbek husband two or three times a week. He spends the rest of the week with his official wife, who does not know about his second family.[56]

Polygyny is practiced in Turkmenistan as well, where, according to journalist Esen Aman, it has "become a more and more ordinary phenomenon" among wealthy men—successful businessmen and high-ranking bureaucrats.[57] Drug addiction, which generally affects young and middle-aged men, contributes to the shortage of eligible bachelors in Turkmenistan. Aman claims that the main reason women agree to second-wife status is to realize

themselves as women—in other words, to get married, have children, and care for a home. Aman's article features Gul'rukh, who is 28 and pregnant by a married man. She divorced her first husband, with whom she has a 7-year-old son, because he is a drug addict. Here is Gul'rukh's opinion on the matter:

> To marry a second time at my age with a child—to an unmarried man—is simply unrealistic, and so what is left to do: be alone, grow old alone? I don't want that. The man with whom I live now is 13 years older than me; he has a wife and four children, but he also has the desire and financial ability to support another family. Why shouldn't I become a second wife? I'm not proud, but this role suits me. By the way, I don't need money because I have my own business. I simply need a man next to me and I need to have his children; I simply want to realize myself as a woman, as a mother.[58]

This chapter focuses on women like Gul'rukh who make autonomous decisions that serve self-identified purposes.

POLYGYNOUS MARRIAGES IN POST-SOVIET TAJIKISTAN: A SOURCE OF ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, AND REPRODUCTIVE ASSETS

Colette Harris describes a situation that emerged in 1994, when in a neighborhood on the outskirts of Dushanbe a divorced woman became the second wife of a man whose first wife lived nearby. Neighborhood women and men condemned this marriage, blaming the woman for agreeing to become a second wife and the man for flagrantly taking a second wife.[59] The scandal stemmed primarily from the fact that the first and second wives lived close to each other. But this was the early 1990s, and Tajik society's reaction to polygyny has changed; it is now generally at least tolerant of the practice. Harris asserts that while polygyny was practiced covertly during the Soviet era, unchanged gender ideals privileging male dominance and providing elders with decision-making power over their children's future have permitted polygyny to continue since independence in an increasingly overt manner.[60]

Although there are no statistics on the rate of polygynous marriages in Tajikistan, a fairly recent survey conducted by the Strategic Research Center under the President of Tajikistan found that one-third of respondents accept polygyny as the norm.[61] A different survey conducted a few years ago by the same research center found that 1 in 10 Tajik men had more than one wife.[62] Indeed, polygyny is prevalent in post-Soviet Tajikistan. Despite the fact that it is banned, the number of men who would like to take a second wife is not minimal.[63] As one journalist explains, society "turns a blind eye to 'pranks'

of men, including polygyny," which has become a widespread phenomenon since the civil war.[64] Another journalist describes polygyny as an ordinary phenomenon, particularly for "new Tajiks" who build private mansions for themselves and install a second wife in each.[65] Juliette Cleuziou concurs:

> Taking a second wife [in Tajikistan] is the act of a grown-up man who has his own house and who is an accomplished person; it is something that models his status, perhaps alongside his wealth, his desire for a son or his religious piety. For men, polygyny is an oft-used way to exhibit one's wealth and to assert one's prestige . . . [66]

State bureaucrats are among the "new Tajiks" who take a second wife. According to the League of Women Lawyers of Tajikistan, which provides legal consultation to women in crisis situations, polygyny *is* widespread. Generally, second wives visit the League to find out if they can get alimony from a husband with whom they have an unregistered marriage. Often, these women are wives of high-ranking bureaucrats.[67] A deputy of a regional council of the People's Deputies asserts, "The country listens when high-level bureaucrats discuss polygyny. And almost all of them have a minimum of two wives."[68]

Some unofficial wives of state bureaucrats fare well. For example, 24-year-old Karomat married a state bureaucrat with a high salary and a family that, according to her, knows about his second marriage. She explains her decision to become a second wife as follows: "I worked, but my small salary wasn't enough to live well. . . . Now he has bought me a new apartment; I don't work, yet I live very well."[69] Other unofficial wives of state bureaucrats do not fare well: one bureaucrat abandoned his second wife when his first wife found out about the marriage and threatened to submit a complaint to law enforcement. Gul'chekhra's parents, who hail from the Rasht Valley, married their daughter off at a young age. When her husband was killed during the war, she became a widow with two children. Gul'chekra did not have any work experience or expertise. She soon agreed to become a second wife:

> Naturally there was no official registration . . . the marriage became for me a possibility to gain a strong shoulder and financial assistance. I needed money . . . My husband was in a very important state position, and was therefore forced to leave us [after his legal wife's threat]. Since our marriage wasn't officially registered, I have no right to alimony. Sometimes he helps with groceries.[70]

It is not only bureaucrats who practice polygyny; businessmen, religious figures, and "even longshoremen" have two wives.[71] The main motivation for Tajik men to take a second wife is status, as doing so may raise their societal prestige.[72] Perhaps most revealing in terms of the political economy

of marriages in the Tajikistan are the results of a survey conducted in 2011 by Russian-Tajik Slavonic University Professor Zarina Dinorshoeva, who asked female high school seniors two questions. The first was "Who wants to continue their education?" Of 21 respondents, 1 answered affirmatively; the rest said they wanted to get married and hoped to marry a rich, handsome man. The second question was "Would you agree to become a second or third wife?" All of the 17 or 18-year-old respondents answered affirmatively.[73]

It is difficult to sort out the many plausible causes of polygyny advanced by competent observers of post-Soviet Tajikistan. Emphasizing the fact that the civil war, economic turbulence, and ongoing poverty render life particularly arduous for a woman raising children alone, Zulaikho Usmanova identifies "the reappearance of traditions of early marriage and polygamy" as consequences of such stresses.[74] Similarly, journalist Irina Umarova argues that four factors explain the rise of polygynous marriages in Tajikistan: firstly, the civil war widowed many women, causing a gender imbalance characterized by a shortage of men; secondly, labor migration renders the single young man with prospects a rare commodity in Tajikistan; thirdly, adequately paid work is scarce; and fourthly, "to have a child without a husband in our Muslim society is considered a disgrace."[75] Payam Foroughi argues that, "gender imbalance, poverty, and cultural susceptibility have led to the revival of the pre-Soviet norm of polygamy."[76] Alla Kuvatova contends that polygyny "has become an everyday fact" that results from: 1) the prevailing stereotype that a woman should be protected by a man; 2) the revival of Islam; and 3) the deteriorating economic status of women.[77] Depending on how we code these variables, this paragraph identifies at least five distinct causes of polygyny in Tajikistan.

I argue that while Islam facilitates polygynous marriages through *nikoh*, which is the institutional mechanism enabling the consecration of such unions, it is the potential acquisition of economic, reproductive, and/or social assets that causes women to agree to second-wife status in Central Asia in general and in Tajikistan in particular. While contemporary economic conditions drive women to seek economic resources, local understandings of gender relations produce the overwhelming desire on the part of women to obtain reproductive and social resources. When thinking about polygyny in post-Soviet Tajikistan, we need to remember that the motivations of men who take second wives differ from the motivations of women who agree to become second wives, which differ from the motivations of women who remain married after their husbands take second wives. Cleuziou points out that motivations for polygyny in Tajikistan *are* gender-specific, and rightly claims that polygyny is not a sign of religiosity for either genders. She argues that for women agreeing to second-wife status, the practice is a matrimonial

strategy permitting access to otherwise unavailable or exceedingly difficult to acquire economic and symbolic resources.[78] Social status is a significant symbolic resource in Tajikistan; as one of the women Cleuziou interviewed put it, "If you don't have a husband here, you are nothing, really nothing."[79] One of Cleuziou's informants, Shahnoza, became economically self-sufficient after her first husband rejected her but agreed to become a second wife simply to obtain married-woman status. Similarly, Saodat—a lawyer—became a second wife via *nikoh* for marital status: "I knew that he was married to a first wife, but what can we do—there are few men and many women. In our society, there is prejudice against those who don't have a husband."[80] Sofia Kasymova concurs, arguing that because the post-Soviet economic transition propelled many Tajik women into the labor market, there is now a small group of economically independent women who may nevertheless agree to second-wife status because they think happiness is unfulfilled without a legitimate husband, and because marriage—even to a married man—is a necessary attribute of social status.[81]

Cleuziou finds that access to economic resources drives young, uneducated, or minimally educated women with few options to agree to second-wife status.[82] It also motivates widowed, abandoned, or divorced women with children. Shakhlo Azimova's husband died in 2005; raising two children on a teacher's salary proved problematic. According to her, "In the fact that women are becoming second wives there is nothing good. But it's necessary to live, to raise children. In our time, it is very difficult to survive independently as a single woman with children."[83] This is particularly true if the single woman in question is a teacher, like Shakhlo Azimova, because salaries are now near the poverty level and the profession is no longer a coveted occupation.[84] But the argument that women agree to become second wives for mercantile reasons, such as financial security for themselves and their children, cannot be fully understood unless it is couched in the context of labor migration.

The connection between migration and polygyny is twofold. First, some married men who leave Tajikistan to find work abroad, mostly in Russia, abandon their wives back home. As Hélène Thibault points out, "Long stays abroad lead to an increase in divorces, and therefore a demographic imbalance in the number of marriageable men and women living in Tajikistan."[85] The overwhelming majority of women in this position struggle to feed their children. The out-migration of men contributes to a growing number of divorces accomplished via a husband's repudiation (*talaq*) of his wife by telephone.[86] Zebo Sharifova, a lawyer in Tajikistan, describes the phenomenon as follows:

> Many men working abroad forget about their wives here. There, they start new families and then they divorce their wives. . . . By telephone, they say "*talaq*"

three times and are divorced; sometimes they simply send messages. A woman with children is then left, in practice, on the street. She's not needed in her husband's home and not accepted in her parents' home . . . where can she go?[87]

The woman left on the street may enter a polygynous union. For example, Sudoba is a Dushanbe resident with one child who became a second wife after her husband declared *talaq* from Russia, where he had gone to work. Unemployment and condemnation from neighbors influenced her decision to agree to second-wife status. Sudoba's new husband does not live with her on a permanent basis, but he does support her financially.[88] Ruzigul', a 29-year-old Dushanbe resident whose first husband vanished in Russia, thought she was becoming a second wife but accidentally ended up becoming a third wife. Unable to support her two children and pay the rent with a meager waitress salary, she agreed to become a second wife via *nikoh*. Though she knew her future husband was legally married, she did not know that he also had a second wife. Her husband, with whom she now has two children, visits once a week and does not bring meat or kopecks on a regular basis. Nevertheless, she does not consider divorce a viable option because it would be difficult for her to marry again, and because the *nikoh* marriage provides her with married-woman status.[89]

The second connection between migration and polygyny concerns the recurrent argument that the combination of male deaths caused by the civil war in the 20th century and male absences caused by labor migration in the 21st century created a gender imbalance that is defined by a shortage of eligible bachelors in Tajikistan. An independent journalist summarizes this claim:

One of the main factors for the growth in the number of polygynous marriages is gender imbalance, observable in Tajikistan since 1991. First there was the civil war from 1992 to 1997, when many young men were killed. Then massive outmigration of men began and [they went] to find work in Russia and other countries. Many of them send part of their earnings home, but others remain in these countries and get married again, leaving their families to their fate.[90]

Presumably, the civil war killed more men than women, and although one can find a variety of statistics, it killed between 40,000 and 100,000 people.[91] It is generally assumed that the war widowed approximately 50,000 women.[92] A representative of the now-banned Islamic Renaissance Party explains the connection between the war and polygyny in these terms: "After the war, many widows and unmarried women were left. Many of them were already far from 30. What can a single woman do if there aren't enough single men? What's left is only to become a second wife."[93] Human rights activist Oinikhol Bobonazarova argues that two factors contribute to polygyny in Tajikistan: 1) the civil war, which killed 50–100,000 people, mainly men; and 2) labor

migration.[94] Fatima is a 36-year-old woman who was widowed in 2009. For a while, she and her two children lived with relatives, but in order to avoid permanent dependence on them she became a second wife: "His first wife knows about me. It seems to me that no one condemns [this]. Such women like me—there are many. This person provides for my family."[95]

An article published in 2011 identifies the most significant aspect of the labor migration argument, which I italicize here: every year, more than one million *able-bodied* people leave Tajikistan for work in neighboring countries.[96] Although women participate in the labor migration movement, for the most part it is men who migrate. While 40 percent of migrants between the ages of 18 and 59 leaving Tajikistan for work in other countries in 2009 were female, this figure was 10 percent in 2010, 15 percent in 2011, 11 percent in 2012, and 12 percent in 2013.[97] A real or perceived gender imbalance contributes to polygyny in Tajikistan because women want married-woman status and children. Anara Tabyshalieva's argument regarding the fertility cult in Central Asia is relevant here. She argues that the widespread fertility cult is based on the shared view that children are a blessing and pleasing to God, and the common desire to produce more sons. Tabyshalileva explains that even during the Soviet era, when child mortality was drastically reduced, "tradition steadfastly continued to identify a woman's good fortune with having many children." Writing in the late 1990s, she further points out that "even today, women who have not borne children can be treated with scorn."[98] Alan J. DeYoung concurs, arguing that "marriage and having children are the primary goals for virtually every woman" in Tajikistan.[99] In the interviews he conducted with university students, he found that family and motherhood were more significant to young Tajik women than career opportunities.

Cleuziou finds that access to reproductive resources motivates older, well-educated, financially stable women who want to get married and have children.[100] Unmarried women in their 20s may consider themselves "old maids," or may be considered "old maids" by others. Tobon Osmoni, a woman with higher education, became a second wife at the age of 24 in order to have children:

> I consciously, voluntarily became a second wife of one rather young man. When I got married, I knew of course that he had a wife and children. However, I was forced to do this: I was 24, and my peers already had two or more children. Everyone around me shook their finger and said "*pirdukhtar*," or "old maid." I decided to become a mother—and chose this person. He's educated, I'm interested in talking with him, and he's nice. Now I have three children. My husband also has three children from his first marriage.[101]

According to Mavdzhuda Mirpochchoeva, a representative of the Sogdiiski oblast Commission for Well-Organized Traditions, Festivities, and Ceremonies: "It happens that girls under 30 years old are waiting to marry. Since there are almost no single young men, women are forced to start families another way; after all, they also want to have children."[102] The Director of the League of Women Lawyers in Tajikistan explains polygyny in terms of the gender imbalance as well, asserting that the number of women is almost double that of men: "These women have a hopeless situation, not least because the status of a married woman plays a role, but also because it's necessary to give birth in the reproductive age."[103] The marital story of 29-year-old Zarina illustrates this argument: "Almost all young men go to Russia for work. Many of them marry there . . . how can I become a mother if I'm not married? Relatives and people from my village condemned me, so therefore I became a second wife."[104]

POLYGYNY: A PATH TO GENDER RESPECTABILITY

I have argued that women agree to second-wife status in order to acquire economic, reproductive, and/or social assets, and that Islam merely provides a mechanism for the consecration of polygynous marriages. This is not to say, however, that the region in general and Tajikistan in particular have not experienced an Islamic renaissance in the post-communist era. In Dushanbe, demand for private religious lessons has generated "a rapidly increasing religious service sector, which accommodates the growing interest of the Muslim urban population in the basic principles of Islam, supports parents in achieving their educational tasks and enables young Muslims to participate in public life and to express their religious identity."[105] According to Muhiddin Kabiri, former head of the Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan (IRPT):

> The population wants to study Islam, to know more about its religion. Parents want their children to know more about religion. . . . This phenomenon, people seeking knowledge about their religion, began during the Soviet era after perestroika. Then it subsided a bit during the civil war, but now it's again appearing—the population itself is in search of its identity. We don't have communism or democracy. People are looking for their place in society. The only answer right now is religion. Therefore, people are going in the direction of religion.[106]

Women and girls are among those turning to religion in the ideological vacuum created by the collapse of the Soviet Union. Though it has become more challenging over the years, women continue to teach Islam privately in their homes. Kabiri claims there is a need for this, that many people desire this. A

high-ranking female member of the IRPT concurs: "There are women who take girls into their home, maybe 4 or 5 girls, and they study with the permission of their parents. These women teach them Islam."[107] Even a former Chief of the Department of Religion reluctantly admitted that, "We have no official data [on the number of women who teach Islam privately], but apparently there is a sufficient number in large cities."[108] Moreover, in the mid-2000s, the IRPT mosque acquired a separate section for women. Party and non-party women flocked to the mosque on Fridays prior to its closure. According to Kabiri, around 400 women showed up every Friday.[109]

It is tempting, given the ongoing Islamic renaissance in Tajikistan and Islam's stance on polygyny, to attribute the practice's prevalence to religion. Yet the causes of this phenomenon have little to do with Islam. Instead, while men appear to acquire second wives in order to enhance their image and first wives remain in polygynous unions for practical reasons, women agree to second-wife status in order to access economic, reproductive, and social resources. Though the fates of second wives certainly differ, we might consider polygyny in Central Asia as one of a few paths to gender respectability. This conclusion, which suggests that we should not assume that women who agree to second-wife status lack agency or autonomy, coincides with Shahnoza Nozimova's conclusion regarding the functional aspect of the hijab in Tajikistan. She argues that what has become a controversial article of clothing in Tajikistan must be understood contextually, because "for some women the decision on hijab can still be a product of her autonomy and agency, no matter how limited under certain circumstances."[110]

The argument that polygyny represents one possible route to gender respectability for women contradicts mainstream assertions made by scholars studying Islamic fundamentalism. For example, Lisa Blaydes and Drew A. Linzer capture the division between "individuals who believe in equality between the sexes" and individuals "who favor traditionalist roles, often transmitted via religious channels and associated with the people who claim the right to speak in the name of puritanical Islam," in part via analysis of World Values Survey questions that ask if wearing a veil in public places is an important trait for a woman, whether men should have more rights to a job than women when jobs are scarce, if a woman must have children in order to be fulfilled, and whether polygyny is acceptable.[111]

Rather than assess the extent to which the individual answering these questions is an "Islamic fundamentalist," these questions may reveal the degree to which the individual answering them is pious and/or simply practical. In the Central Asian context, some women view polygyny as an acceptable, practical route to accessing social, financial, and reproductive assets. These women do not necessarily enter polygynous unions from a position of weak-

ness. The same is true of women who don the hijab—as Nozimova states, "It would be erroneous to conclude that women have accepted *hijab* from a position of weakness. Instead, often we find women are exactly the ones who mastermind the change to hijab and often men merely serve as mediums to 'voice' the need for a new norm of dress . . . we should allow for the possibility that women also use those codes [of normative behavior] to further their interests."[112] The point is, Central Asian women who don the hijab and/or consent to second-wife status may be making autonomous decisions that serve self-identified purposes.

NOTES

1. Oksana Kotnika, "Sportsmenka, komsomolka i prosto vtoraia zhena," *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, May 20, 2015, http://www.ng.ru/facts/2015–05–20/6_east.html.

2. Kristina Ubaidullaeva, "Kak byt' nam, sultanam? Mnogozhenstvo v Kyrgyzstane—prestuplenie bez nakazaniia," *Moskovskii komsomolets—Azia,* April 6, 2012, http://www.centrasia.ru/newsA.php?st=1333689960.

3. Zhibek Begalieva, "Mnogozhenstvo v Kyrgyzstane," *Nastoiashchee vremia*, September 11, 2015, http://www.currenttime.tv/content/article/27242535.html.

4. An exception to the rule is the story of 27-year-old Aisha, who fell in love with a man 8 years her senior when she was 17. She pursued education and a profession and remained single; he got married. When they ran into each other years later, he suggested she become his second wife because his wife was unable to have more children. His first wife agreed to the second marriage. Gul'mira Kamzieva, "Zhenskii vzgliad na mnogozhenstvo v Kazakhstane," *Zakon.kz*, August 13, 2015, http://www.zakon.kz/4735193-zhenskijj-vzgljad-na-mnogozhenstvo-v.html.

5. There is no doubt that second wives are vulnerable, as they are not legally married in the eyes of the state and thus lack rights to their husband's property, jointly acquired property, alimony, child support, and any inheritance.

6. Sukhrob Sadulloev, "Nesmotria na ofitsial'nyi zapret, v Tadzhikistane mnogozhenstvo—rasprostranennoe iavlenie," *Pervyi kanal,* February 18, 2013, https://www.1tv.ru/news/2013/02/18/77599-nesmotrya_na_ofitsialnyy_zapret_v_tadzhikistane_mnogozhenstvo_rasprostranennoe_yavlenie.

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18. Gregory J. Massell, *The Surrogate Proletariat: Moslem Women and Revolutionary Strategies in Soviet Central Asia: 1919–1929* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1974), 206–7.

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on a more substantive meaning of powerlessness. The Kyrgyz contextual understanding of the word is "sheep without horns." Representative of *Sezim* Crisis Center, interview by Michele E. Commercio, Bishkek, July 13, 2015.

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108. Former Chief of the Department of Religion, interview by Michele Commercio, Dushanbe, July 28, 2008.

109. Muhiddin Kabiri, former head of the Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan, interview by Michele E. Commercio, Dushanbe, July 22, 2008.

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Part III

STATE MEMORY
AND MOVING IDENTITIES

Chapter Nine

Oblivion, Ambivalence, and Historical Erasure: Remembering the Civil War in Tajikistan

Tim Epkenhans

Optima civilis belli defensio oblivio est.[1]
Seneca the Elder, *Controversiae* 10,3,5

Tajikistan's authoritarian President Rahmon considers history and historical commemoration—organized and monitored by the state—to be integral parts of the state's political legitimation and the imagination of Tajik nationhood and identity.[2] Rahmon himself has written extensively on Tajik history shaping the political narrative of contemporary Tajik historiography.[3] Central elements of this historiography are based on earlier Soviet-Tajik works defining (Soviet-)Tajik history since the 1940s along Soviet paradigms of history: Rahmon and his clique stress the ethnic origins of the Tajiks as "Aryans" (often with an anti-Uzbek sentiment) and early Tajik statehood under the Somonid dynasty in the 10th century CE.[4] Initially, Rahmon suppressed the Islamic tradition in his imagination of "authentic" Tajikness, but since the late 2000s, a narrow interpretation of "traditional Tajik Islam" has been integrated into government narratives on history and collective identity.[5] Not only is the glorious pre-modern history of the Tajik people remembered and mystified, but the history of Soviet Tajikistan and the USSR as such is also presented without any post-colonial bias. For example, the 2006 history textbook for the 11th grade remembers the October Revolution in the following terms:

> The October Revolution gave hope (*umed*) and existence (*umr*) to our people. A thousand years after the end of the Somonid dynasty, the Tajik people finally regained their independence. The Revolution gave the Tajiks [state] borders (*sohibi hudud kard*) and liberated them from the oppression of those who wished only evil for them (*badkhohonash*). But this time was also difficult for the people—for instance, workplaces and activities were assigned to them. But gradually they managed to re-cultivate the barren valleys and remote mountains

(*vodihoi noobod va kuhistonhoi durdast*) and to revitalize the villages and cities. Schools and education were quickly established and science and culture rediscovered.[6]

This quote highlights some of the underlying paradigms of Tajik historiography, namely the continuous deception of the Tajiks by their malicious neighbors (the Uzbeks[7]) and the ingenuity as well as resilience of the Tajiks, who are portrayed as industrious, cultured, peaceful, and settled people. Official historical narratives usually omit the complexities of Soviet-Tajik history, such as the controversial etymology of the term "Tajik" or the invention of

Figure 9.1.   Special issue stamps by the Tajik post office commemorating the 65th anniversary of Victory Day in 2010.

the Soviet Republic of Tajikistan in 1924–1929.[8] Instead, official historiography presents Tajikistan as a *pari passu* Union republic whose population proudly contributed to the achievements of the Soviet Union. The commemoration of the Great Patriotic War is a good example of official commemoration practice. As in other parts of the former Soviet Union, the war and the victory over Nazi Germany are commemorated on May 9, Victory Day (Rus.: *den' pobedy*, Taj.: *ruzi ghalaba*).

On this day, Rahmon and the Minister of Defence take the salute of Tajikistan's Armed Forces and address the dwindling number of decorated veterans and officials in the spacious Victory Park (*Boghi ghalaba*), located in the hilly part of eastern Dushanbe. Entering the amphitheater-shaped memorial ground, the visitor reads Olga Bergholz's famous line "No one is forgotten, nothing is forgotten" from her poem *Here lie Leningraders* (*Zdes' lezhat leningradtsy*), which appears both in Tajik (*hech kas va hech chiz faromush nashudaast*) and in Russian (*Nikto ne zabyt nishto ne zabyto*). Nor is it only Tajikistan's contribution to the Great Patriotic War that is remembered with pride. The official memory culture similarly presents the social and economic transformations of Soviet Tajikistan since the 1950s as constituent elements of Tajikistan's national history, for instance the "successes" in cotton cultivation or the construction of the Norak hydroelectric power station (1961–1980). The later Soviet period—including the years of perestroika, glasnost, and independence—are cast in darker colors, however, not only in official narratives but also in the retrospection of the creative class, such as intellectuals, journalists, and artists. The acherontic augury of the civil war casts its shadow over the final years of the Soviet Union; Independence Day on September 9 was for a long time commemorated with bias. Rahmon, as well as substantial segments of the Tajik population, perceives perestroika and glasnost first and foremost as the prelude to the violence of the civil war. In this light, the political aspirations of glasnost reformers, politicians, and intellectuals are frequently portrayed as self-deceptive, naïve, and destructive, since their activism and beliefs facilitated the outbreak of the civil war in May 1992.[9]

Unsurprisingly, there is a suspicious public silence about the civil war itself. Although the government ostensibly commemorates "peace" and "unity" on June 27, the Day of National Unity (Taj.: *Ruzi vahdati milli*), there is no official memorial place, no museum or commemoration day, that remembers the conflict, the enormous suffering by the civilian population, and the approximately 40,000 to 100,000 victims of the violence.[10] The National Museum of Tajikistan (*Osorkhonai milii Tojikiston*), opened in 2013, a pivotal building in Rahmon's architectural makeover of Dushanbe, informs visitors in detail about Tajikistan's history and provides a vivid example

of how the elite imagines "authentic" Tajik history and culture. The entire civil war, however, is omitted. In the exhibition hall for modern history, the visitor reads the declaration of independence (signed by Qadriddin Aslonov on September 9, 1991), immediately followed by a short text on the importance of the 16th Session of the Supreme Soviet in November/December 1992. Only the attentive visitor discovers a small plate that in Tajik reads "National Unity" (*vahdati milli*), but "National Reconciliation" in Russian (*natsional'noe primirenie*):

> With the intention of bringing peace (*sulh*) and national unity (*vahdati milli*) to Tajikistan, talks among the Tajiks began in April 1994. Negotiations between the government of the Republic of Tajikistan and the United Tajik Opposition took place many times. . . . The Tajik President Emomali Rahmon played a significant role in the negotiations and in establishing peace for the nation. The talks between the Tajiks took 40 months and were held in 9 rounds. On June 27, 1997, the Peace Agreement was signed in Moscow by the President of the Republic of Tajikistan, Emomali Rahmon, and the leader of the opposition, S. A. Nuri, in the presence of representatives of the guarantor states [Iran and Russia], which brought the civil war (*jangi shahrvandi*) in Tajikistan to an end.[11]

Remarkably, the exhibition does not explain *why* the civil war erupted and reconciliation was necessary. The tumultuous events before (the February 1990 riots) and after independence (the demonstration in October 1991 and the political confrontation since March 1992), including the entire civil war, simply did not happen in the official version of Tajikistan's contemporary history. Arguably, many Tajiks—including Rahmon's government—prefer oblivion and collective amnesia with regard to the civil war.[12]

In this paper, I argue that despite the apparent preference for oblivion, the Tajik government has manipulated the commemoration of the civil war and its origins since 1993. This paper depicts the ambivalent government strategy of producing a hegemonic memory culture on the conflict and explores how the media, civil society, and opposition have responded to official narratives. The memory culture in Tajikistan did not evolve evenly but was embedded in the societal and political post-conflict transformation. In this context, I have identified three periods of memory culture in Tajikistan: firstly, the period of oblivion (until 2005); secondly, the period of contested commemoration (2005–2015); and finally, the period of authoritarian monopolization and historical erasure. Tajikistan's political elite initially followed the strategy of selective or ambivalent oblivion, discouraging any form of collective or public commemoration. Instead, the government operated with insinuations and suspicions on the origins and the course of the civil war to intimidate and silence opponents. Officially, the government—in complicity with the civil

society and political opposition—promoted the (albeit vague) idea of peace-building and the reestablishment of Tajik statehood.[13]

The post-conflict transformation and the integration of Tajikistan into global political trajectories following the terrorist attacks on 9/11 changed the environment for the production of historical memory. In retrospect, the decade between (roughly) 2003 and 2014 marks a time of relative political and societal plurality—at least by the standards of Tajikistan. While the government continued (at times unevenly) its process of authoritarian consolidation and expansion of its regulatory capacity, urban civil society and the media experienced a brief period of domestic détente. The government's memory culture was challenged by the production of historical narratives on the civil war by peripheral actors at the local level, such as independent journalists, politicians, intellectuals, and civil society activists. These narratives deviated considerably from the government's master narratives and offered alternative explanations for the origins and course of the conflict. Importantly, the opposition—chiefly the Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan (IRPT), which had supported the government's oblivion strategy for several years—also began to formulate its own counter-memory. With the parliamentary elections in March 2015 and the ban of the IRPT in September of that year, Rahmon suspended this decade of relative plurality and shifted to a hard-authoritarian regime, monopolizing the memory culture in Tajikistan. This chapter surveys this transformation of the memory culture in Tajikistan. Given the scope of this paper, I focus on selected themes and topics only. I will not discuss what Maurice Halbwachs and Jan Assmann have called "collective memory,"[14] that is, how the people of Tajikistan, the recipients of the official historiography, remember the civil war. Although random discussions with Tajik respondents, friends, and colleagues indicate a complex reciprocity between official narratives and local variations, more empirical research needs to be conducted here.

HEGEMONIC NARRATIVE:
OBLIVION AND SELECTIVE COMMEMORATION

In the midst of the civil war, at the 16th Session of the Supreme Soviet in November 1992 in the northern city of Khujand, Emomali Rahmon[ov], a former kolkhoz director, deputy of the Supreme Soviet in its 12th Convocation and, for the prior few weeks, Chairman of the Kulob Ispolkom, was elected Chairman of the Supreme Soviet, then the highest political office in Tajikistan. One hundred eighty-two out of 193 remaining deputies of the Supreme Soviet voted for Rahmon in a session facilitated by Russian and Uzbek dip-

lomats and intelligence officers. The mastermind behind Rahmon's meteoric rise to power, however, was not a representative of the former Soviet elite or *nomenklatura*, but the ex-convict and field commander Sangak Safarov, who had just personally executed Rahmon's predecessor, Jahonkhon Rizoev, and installed the hitherto inconspicuous Rahmon. Thus, Rahmon came to power not as *primus inter pares*, but as the civilian face of a political project by a violent non-state actor commanding the so-called Popular Front militia (Taj.: *Fronti khalqi*, Rus.: *Narodnyi front*), which was then presented as the "government's" armed forces.

The background of Rahmon's rise to power severely tainted the legitimacy of his government. As such, Rahmon made significant efforts to present the 16th Session as a return to the rule of law and constitutional government.[15] In November 1992, his residual government did not yet control the capital, Dushanbe, and the influence of erratic field commanders of the Popular Front—mostly former criminals and dubious local strongmen such as Safarov, Fayzali Saidov, Usmon Murchaev, or Yaqub Salimov—overshadowed the political transition.[16] In his inaugural speech, Rahmon cryptically remarked, "If we want to establish peace and stability (*sulhu saloh*), we should not remember the past (*ba guzashta salavot*). The people know very well who was essentially responsible for the outbreak of the fratricide."[17] The insinuation that "people know very well . . ." what happened and who bore the responsibility for the civil war emerged as a popular phrase, particularly for defaming groups and individuals, since its vagueness and proximity to conspiracy theories allow for a broad application (see below). A few weeks later, in his first New Year's address (December 31, 1992), after the Popular Front captured Dushanbe and pushed the opposition back to the remote mountainous east, Rahmon—apparently more confident in his office—was less ready to forgive and forget. Instead, he offered an ambivalent narrative of revenge:

> The year that is now ending was not an ordinary year. It was a year of serious challenges for our people. Extremist forces, which used democratic slogans but acted with coercion and force, brought our young homeland to the edge of existence. . . . Many local associations emerged, such as "Laʿli Badakhshon," "Hamdilon" . . . and others, who acted only in their self-interest and did not respect the indivisibleness of our beloved Homeland. Eventually, the most powerful force—fundamentalist clerics (*ruhoniyoni bunyodgaroe*), who could not act in public before—emerged and got involved in criminal activities. . . . The democratic circles were slowly infiltrated by the clerics. . . . The Islamic Revival Party, which had its abiding nest in the republican *qoziyot*, was financed with help of foreign dollars and the blessing of radical mosques and clerics . . . weapons and other military equipment. This went so far that mosques and the office of the *qoziyot* transformed from places of worship to places of anti-government propaganda. This was the reason why a senseless and fratricidal

war broke out in our country. . . . But we should say that history will never pardon people's sins, and those who have brought guilt on themselves must be brought to justice.[18]

There are several key points in Rahmon's narrative, which was to shape the official historiography for years to come: a) the glasnost civil associations and democratic politicians did not fully understand the meaning of "democracy," were manipulative, and acted out of self-interest; b) foreign forces had a hidden hand in the events; c) "radical" mullos of the IRPT and the *qoziyot* (then under the leadership of Hoji Akbar Turajonzoda[19]) provoked the political polarization and were responsible for the outbreak of violence in 1992; and d) the war was "senseless" (a statement he repeated in his *Tajiks in the Mirror of History*[20]), an evaluation which rejects ideological, social and political cleavages as causative for the outbreak of the war and depicts the civil war as a contingent development largely triggered by ominous foreign forces. Furthermore, Rahmon and his government frequently operated (and operate) by means of insinuations, maintaining that Tajiks know all about the events and their background and that there is therefore no need for a detailed recapitulation of the events.[21]

Strategic Commemoration: The Popular Front

Rahmon's relationship with the field commanders of the Popular Front remained contentious for years to come, overshadowing the consolidation of his regime. Without a power base of his own, Rahmon had to negotiate "security" with rival field commanders. Most of these field commanders, however, were responsible for the extreme violence during the fighting in 1992–1993. Extreme violence delegitimizes, and field commanders in civil wars often struggle to find a political narrative that re-legitimizes their position.[22] Thus, Rahmon was confronted with the difficult task of sufficiently distancing himself and his political project from the violence of the civil war without alienating key field commanders who provided "security" for his government. The capture of Dushanbe by Popular Front militias in December 1992 demonstrated Rahmon's powerlessness: Yaqub Salimov, a henchman of Rauf Saliev, Dushanbe's most influential criminal authority in the later Soviet period, had just been appointed by Rahmon to the position of Minister of Interior. His criminal group, now official representatives of the MVD, imposed a brutal regime in the capital, executing dozens of alleged opposition sympathizers, most of whom came from Tajikistan's eastern Badakhshan region. Pressured by AFP correspondents, Rahmon conceded that his government "is not in control of the situation . . . armed groups have infiltrated the interior ministry and are terrorizing the city."[23]

Until 2004, rival field commanders repeatedly challenged Rahmon, who only gradually consolidated his authoritarian hold on the country. As Jesse Driscoll demonstrates, the process of co-option, marginalization, and obliteration of competitors was often a convoluted affair.[24] The intricate political economy of Tajikistan between 1992 and 2004 decisively influenced the memory culture. Many seemed to prefer collective oblivion, but selective and ambivalent commemoration became increasingly important for particular groups, who gradually lost influence on the conflict transformation and post-conflict order, such as the combatants in the Popular Front militias from Kulob. Arguably, Rahmon had an early stroke of luck facilitating his political survival and the consolidation of his power: between October 1992 and March 1993, three of the key field commanders from the south, who reluctantly coordinated their operations as the Popular Front—Langari Langariev, Fayzali Saidov and Sangak Safarov (who "made" Rahmon Chairman of the Supreme Soviet in November 1992)—were killed.[25] The sudden demise of Safarov, freed Rahmon from being obliged to incorporate the erratic individual into his government. Unsurprisingly, the circumstances of Safarov's death continue to fuel conspiracy theories to this day.[26]

Rahmon used the memory of his deceased mentor cautiously. He named Tajikistan's Military Academy, then a rather symbolic institution, after Safarov, and mentioned him in a few speeches. The government in Dushanbe did not interfere in local practices commemorating former Popular Front commanders and combatants. For instance, businessmen (and former combatants) from the south financed a small memorial complex in Qurghonteppa's Lomonossov district remembering Langariev, Safarov, Saidov, and (Usmon) Murchaev, as well as commissioning the publication, under the ambiguous title *Nomus* (Honor), of an obituary of Kulobi combatants killed in action.[27] At the time, the government did not have the coercive capacity to silence such commemoration narratives, which ruptured the general oblivion. For about a decade after the civil war, selective oblivion was therefore the memory culture the government *nolens volens* had to tolerate. Simultaneously, Rahmon used (and uses) a form of ambivalent commemoration as a threat against opponents and an implicit disciplinary action against the population as such: on the one hand, the regime supports public oblivion; on the other hand, Rahmon insinuates that *he knows*—in fact, *we all know*—about the origins of the conflict and that his regime might have to act in order to prevent another civil war. Similarly, there have been intimidating overtones of revenge. For instance, the MVD's weekly magazine *Qonun va jomea* uses a variation of Bergholz's poem commemorating the MVD personnel who were killed during the Civil War and warns the reader that "they will not be forgotten!" (*Onho faromush nameshavand!*).[28]

National Reconciliation, "Peace," and Regime Consolidation

There is no room here to discuss the intricate dynamics of the later years of the civil war, the regional dimension (the rise of the Taliban in Afghanistan), and the peace negotiations that were finally concluded with the General Peace Accord on June 27, 1997.[29] The swift negotiations and low-threshold provisions qualify the Tajik accord as a minimal peace (in contrast to more complex agreements); issues such as continuous reconciliation and commemoration were—unsurprisingly—not on the agenda of the negotiation.[30] However, in February 1997, during one of the final rounds of negotiations in Mashhad, both parties agreed on the statutes of the Commission on National Reconciliation (CNR), which should monitor the implementation of the accord until the first parliamentary elections in 2000. According to these statutes, the CNR should address "the wide range of problems associated with national reconciliation [. . .] to promote the creation of an atmosphere of trust and mutual forgiveness to institute a broad dialogue among the various political forces in the country with a view to restoring and strengthening civil accord in Tajikistan."[31]

Furthermore, the document contained procedural specifications on the return of refugees, the preparations for elections and the inclusion of the opposition in the government. The CNR had no mandate to inquire into the causes and course of the conflict. Instead, the negotiators agreed on a general "forgiveness" and, importantly, the Reciprocal Pardon Act and Amnesty Act,[32] legally impeding any forensic ramifications of the crimes committed during the civil war. Despite conflicts over the implementation of the General Peace Agreement, particularly on the eve of the parliamentary and presidential elections in 1999 and 2000, Rahmon and Nuri (IRPT) adopted a similar attitude toward commemorating the conflict. Together with urban civil society, they preferred to conjure "peace (*tinj/i*) and stability (*subot*)" while presenting Tajikistan as a role model for conflict resolution and post-conflict rehabilitation in the region and beyond.[33] Remarkably, government, opposition, and civil society agreed on the narrative that ominous foreigners imposed (*tahmil*) the war on the Tajik people.[34]

In 2001, the government commissioned a history textbook for the 9th grade covering Tajikistan's history from 1945 to the present. The authors, veteran Soviet academics Rohat Nabieva and Farkhod Zikriyoyev, also commented on the civil war. According to their narrative, the conflict broke out due to the crisis and eventual collapse of the USSR, with the Tajiks playing a rather passive role:

> The tragic events in the Republic of the early 1990s enter as dark pages in the history of the Tajik people. In periodicals, books and articles, these events are

known by such names as "fratricidal war (*jangi barodarkush*)," "regional war (*jangi mintaqavi*)," etc. The war that broke out had objective and subjective reasons. First, during perestroika economic difficulties increased, both on a Union-wide level and in the Republic of Tajikistan. . . . Thus, the bases for the tragic events were prepared, and only a flame was needed to ignite the conflict. During the process of the democratization of society and [the granting of] freedom of expression, new political parties came into being, including the Democratic Party and the Islamic Renaissance Party, that took advantage of existing dissatisfaction and wanted to implement their programs. It is no secret that a group of external powers also had a hand in this and made their own contributions to the outbreak of the civil war.[35]

For several years, this short paragraph was one of the few official narratives on the origins of the civil war.[36] Here, the IRPT and Democratic Party of Tajikistan are portrayed as political groups without genuine agency that merely responded to the economic and political crisis that followed the collapse of the USSR and were drawn into the conflict by chance. Arguably, this account reflects the idea of reconciliation and forgiveness embodied in the 1997 General Peace Accord.

By 2006, the government perspective had changed: the same authors now explicitly blamed the IRPT and the DPT for the outbreak of the conflict. Furthermore, with the political marginalization of Kulob and expanding government capacity to interfere in the local political economy since the mid-2000s, Dushanbe has started to restrict local forms of commemoration and even imposed a *damnatio memoriae* on Safarov and other field commanders. The disciplining of historiography has become a vital element in Rahmon's regime legitimation reconfiguring "collective identities,"[37] next to the reintegration and reorganization of Islam. This reconfiguration intends to depoliticize the public space and represent the "authentic" Tajik citizen as obedient, accepting the political and social hierarchies within Tajikistan, including the outstanding personality of the president as "leader of the nation and guarantor of peace and unity" (Rahmon's official title).

CONTESTED AND ALTERNATIVE COMMEMORATION

The commencement of the Enduring Freedom Campaign in Afghanistan increased international—and, in particular, Western—engagement with Tajikistan's political field and civil society. From 2002, government officials, civil society activists, and opposition representatives were increasingly exposed to international discourses on judicial reform, democratization, community-driven development, inter-religious dialogue, and so forth.[38] Arguably, the

stronger integration of Tajikistan's political elite, opposition, and (urban) civil society resulted in a modest domestic political détente. This détente gradually widened the public space and influenced the public memory culture on the civil war.

The Tajik independent media, in particular, benefited from this brief period of political relaxation. Media outlets started to challenge the public silence surrounding the civil war. The Tajik print media expanded, with periodicals such as *Faraj, SSSR, Ozodagan, Nigoh, Tojikiston, Ruzgor* and *Millat* (next to the Russian speaking *Asia Plus*). Concomitantly, the internet experienced a period of rapid growth and diversification. News agencies and periodicals offered online supplements and many journalists, intellectuals, authors, and (would-be) historians started blogs discussing the trials and tribulations of independent Tajikistan. International media outlets—above all, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Tajik service, *Radioi Ozodi*—contributed to the increased commemoration by addressing memories too contentious for the domestic media in Tajikistan.[39] The gradual rehabilitation of the media in Tajikistan was an important development during the period of détente, since public perception implicated journalists and their media outlets in the outbreak of the civil war.[40] In this context, Nourzhanov concludes that Olga Tutubalina's article "Death with the Seal 'Top-Secret'" (*smert' pod grifom 'sekretno'*) in *Asia Plus* on the deaths of Popular Front commanders Safarov and Saidov was a turning point in the commemoration of the civil war and the role of the Popular Front.[41] Indeed, from 2005 on, the number of relevant articles in Tajikistan's media increased, particularly on the eve of important anniversaries, such as the February 1990 events, independence in September 1991, and the demonstrations in October 1991 and March/April 1992, respectively. In a rather unsystematic survey of the media, four topics recur frequently: 1) the role of notorious field commanders such as Safarov, Salimov, Langariev, or Saidov, and their fate; 2) the course of central events, such as the February Riots of 1990, the coup d'état against Gorbachev in August 1991, independence in September 1991, or the 16th Session of the Supreme Soviet in November 1992; 3) the rehabilitation of politicians and former Soviet cadres; and 4) the suffering of the civilian population.

Tutubalina's article is to some extent symptomatic of the media's approach to the civil war and its commemoration. First, the coverage tries to reconstruct the sequence of events without much political or societal contextualization, expecting the reader to already "know" the background of the events described. Second, journalists often deploy insinuations (such as the trope of "we all know . . .") and conspiracy theories, hinting at a hidden "truth" behind the events. These insinuations implicitly support prevalent narratives that the civil war was imposed by foreign forces and Tajiks had no agency in the outbreak of conflict.[42]

Nonetheless, the media's reporting on the political events between the February Riots, independence, and the outbreak of the civil war broke the public silence on the civil war and suddenly highlighted local agency in the commemoration. For a short period, civil society in Dushanbe provided the sounding board for the media's memory culture. In February 2013, Ibrohim Usmonov, a former advisor to Rahmon and one of the principal negotiators in the peace talks, established the "Dialogue of Civilizations" forum, where invited speakers, such as Talbak Nazarov (former foreign minister), Akbarsho Iskandarov (acting Chairman of the Supreme Soviet in 1992), Davlat Usmon (former IRPT activist), Qahhor Mahkamov (first president of Tajikistan in 1990–1991), Buri Karim (Gosplan Chairman), and others presented their reading of the events between perestroika, independence, and the civil war. Usmonov belonged to a small circle of (former) government officials, such as Suhrob Sharipov (1963–2015), who carefully supported reconciliation and dialogue with the opposition. The government tolerated these activities to a limited extent, but Usmonov and Sharipov were eventually sidelined. Simultaneously, the government applied increasing pressure to the independent media and launched sordid defamation campaigns against individual protagonists, notably the former *qozi-kalon*, vice-prime minister, and senator Hoji Akbar Turajonzoda.[43] The contested commemoration broke the silence around the civil war, revealed some of the most contentious issues, and identified righteous historical protagonists struggling for their interpretation of the civil war's legacy. Paradoxically, this process generated public knowledge that facilitated the government response.

Culture and Arts

Tajikistan's cultural field—writers, artists, and movie directors—has only carefully addressed the civil war. This stands in contrast to, say, Lebanon, where commemoration of the civil war (1975–1990) has a significant impact on cultural production.[44] In most cases, representatives of Tajikistan's creative class follow a strategy of insinuations and implicit references. To my knowledge, there is no published political prose or poetry work commemorating the civil war as such. Acclaimed poets such as Bozor Sobir and Gulrukhsor Safieva had a significant influence on nationalist debates in the late 1980s, but have hesitated to address the civil war as such.[45] Notably, a few movies carefully address the civil war: one of the first Tajik movie directors, Bakhtyar Khudozhnazarov (1965–2015), referred to the conflict in his *Kosh ba Kosh* (*Odds and Evens*, 1993).[46] *Kosh ba Kosh* uses the actual fighting of the Civil War in and around Dushanbe as a surreal setting for the romance between the two protagonists, Mira and Daler, but does not address

the conflict as such. The movie hauntingly depicts the USSR's disintegration and the crestfallen aspirations of youth on the periphery of the former empire. The protagonists are phlegmatic in their response to the violence in the city, such as the corpses floating down the Varzob River or the militias patrolling in tanks. Ultimately, the conflict provides background noise for the systemic break. Six years later, in 1999, Khudojnazarov changed the perspective in his critically acclaimed *Luna Papa*, a surreal tragicomedy set in northern Tajikistan on the shores of the Kayrakkum Reservoir, close to Khudjand.[47] In contrast to *Kosh ba Kosh*, the main protagonist is no longer a captive of the lost Soviet society; Mamlakat (played by Chulpan Khamatova) rebels against the post-Soviet societal order. In *Luna Papa*, the civil war is unmentioned history, which only bursts open in extreme situations when the fragile post-conflict "peace" is suddenly disrupted. For Mamlakat and her family (her father and brother), this occurs in an agonizing scene where she is captured by a marauding militia group in an APC that prowls around intimidating the local population. Using few words, the short scene illustrates the abysmal horrors of the civil war and sexual violence against women without addressing the conflict as such. I encountered this unspoken horror in many of my conversations across Tajikistan. The acclaimed works by Djamshed Usmonov, *Angel on the Right* (*Farishtai kifti rost*, 2002) and *To Get to Heaven First You Have to Die* (*Bihisht faqat baroi murdagon*, 2006) do not address the civil war per se but portray a deeply traumatized society in which gender roles are undermined by the conflict and post-conflict transformation.[48] However, these movies belong to the genre of *films d'auteur*, critically acclaimed at international film festivals but without an audience in Tajikistan.

Counter-Narrative: The IRPT

In 1997, Abdullo Nuri, the Chairman of the United Tajik Opposition and *éminence grise* of the IRPT,[49] faced a similar dilemma to Rahmon: many of the combatants and field commanders in the UTO had a criminal background (like Safarov, Saidov, or Salimov) and were responsible for violent atrocities during the civil war. Mullo Abdurahim, Mullo Abdughaffur, and Rizvon did not subordinate their militias and in the early months of the civil war, Muhammadsharif Himmatzoda, then the IRPT's chairman, conceded that the IRPT's Presidium had no control over those militias that claimed affiliation with the Islamic party.[50] The UTO consisted of not only the IRPT, but also the Rastokhez movement, the Democratic Party of Tajikistan (DPT), and La'li Badakhshon—an increasingly fraught alliance with little political accordance. One of the founding members of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, Jumaboy Khojiev (Juma Namangani), fought in the militia of

Mirzo "Jaga" Ziyoyev (1960–2009) and the IRPT purchased weapons and ammunition from Gulbuddin Hekmatyar's *Ḥezb-e eslami*. These contacts with militant Islamists became a burden for the IRPT's leadership after 2001, when the US media reported about alleged contacts between the IRPT and al-Qaeda.[51] Some of the UTO field commanders did not support the General Peace Accord and broke with Nuri and the IRPT. Thus, Nuri's UTO (and IRPT) were, like Rahmon's government, continually challenged by renegade warlords. Therefore, after 1997 Nuri and the IRPT shared some of the general assumptions Rahmon had expressed concerning the origins of the civil war.

The IRPT's continuous political marginalization, however, induced the party to formulate a counter memory culture on the civil war and the IRPT's role in the political transformations since the late 1980s. In April 2003, Nuri wrote for the IRPT weekly *Najot* an editorial in which he appealed to Rahmon's government to honor the terms of the peace agreement and the constructive role of the IRPT in post-conflict Tajikistan.[52]

Simultaneously, the IRPT consolidated its own process of "inventing traditions" (to use Eric Hobsbawm's phrase) by celebrating the 30th anniversary of the party. Formally, the IRPT registered in December 1991 after independence and during the popular mobilization of the perestroika/glasnost opposition against then-interim President Nabiev, but in order to provide the party with historical panache (predating Rahmon's political project) beyond independence and the calamitous civil war, the IRPT identified 1973 as its founding year. Back then, on April 20, 1973, Nuri and four of his confidants privately met in Qurghonteppa with the intention of proliferating their idea of Islamic normativity in Soviet Tajikistan. The group slowly merged into an informal movement that only much later became the proto-IRPT. On the occasion of its anniversary, the party published an edited volume containing interviews with key representatives of the IRPT.[53] The IRPT's narrative focused on four themes: 1) in contrast to the government, the IRPT portrayed perestroika and glasnost in positive terms, as a time of liberation and rediscovery of authentic culture and history in Central Asia and Tajikistan; 2) the political opposition parties in 1991–1992, i.e. the IRPT, DPT, Rastokhez, and La'li Badakhshon, were genuinely committed to democratic reform and nationalist revival; 3) the Islamist project does not contradict democratic principles and is embedded within the Tajik-Central Asian tradition (not external to it); and 4) Abdullo Nuri—representing the IRPT—could claim an equal share of praise for the success of the peace process to Rahmon.

The early deaths of Abdullo Nuri in 2006 and his closest confidant Muhammadsharif Himmatzoda in 2009 marked a caesura for the IRPT. Although Nuri's successor, Muhiddin Kabiri (b. 1965), heralded generational change and a stronger orientation toward a post-Islamist agenda, the central elements

of the party's memory culture remained the same—though Nuri became
more and more sanctified as the IRPT's founder, spiritual leader, and pivotal
religious authority.[54] Despite the party's political marginalization, the IRPT
contributed to the contested commemoration from 2005. The IRPT's most
important media outlets in this respect were its homepage (www.nahzat.tj)
and the weekly newspaper *Najot*, which had since 2008 featured a column
called "Historic Walk (*sayri tarikhi*)" that reflected on the party's history;
the political transformation during perestroika, glasnost, and independence;
and IRPT's contribution to the peace negotiations and post-conflict political
order. *Najot* accentuated the role of Nuri and Himmatzoda as authentic na-
tionalist politicians who continuously campaigned for democracy, peace, and
religious morality. Between 2009 and 2015 (when, with the ban of the IRPT,
Najot also ceased to exist), almost every other issue opened with a photo of
Nuri and/or Himmatzoda and a reminder of their outstanding contribution
to peace and stability in Tajikistan. Remarkably, *Najot* published several
substantive historical accounts in the form of a series of articles over several
months. For instance, the veteran Islamist activist and early IRPT member
Zubaydullo Roziq published his memoirs in *Najot* between 2008 and 2009.[55]
In succession, the paper published accounts on the February 1990 Riots, the
following elections to the Supreme Soviet, the August 1991 coup against
Gorbachev, and independence. In the last series of substantive articles, the
journalist and IRPT activist Talabshoh Salom wrote a detailed account of the
16th Session of the Supreme Soviet, which, as already mentioned, is of pivotal
importance to Rahmon's legitimation narrative.[56]

   These accounts do not refute government narratives as such, but often of-
fer a more nuanced and alternative history. In his account of the 16th Session,
Salom analyzes in detail the controversial political context, for instance the
failure of the Government of National Reconciliation, the fate of Safarali
Kenjaev, and the ongoing fighting in the south. Unsurprisingly, IRPT repre-
sentatives are portrayed in an acutely positive way, but compared to prevalent
government versions, the IRPT accounts impress with contextualization, at-
tention to detail, and a certain balance. Notably, the IRPT focused on political
history in an attempt to counter the de-politicization of the public sphere pur-
sued by the regime. The violence and confusing fighting in the civil war is not
depicted in these accounts, with a few exceptions. For instance, in the 2015
election campaign, the IRPT circulated a campaign video explicitly referring
to the civil war and the party's martyrs (*shahidon*), such as Muhammadloiq
Fazilov, the IRPT activist who gave safe passage to the protestors from
Kulob in May 1992 after the establishment of the Government of National
Reconciliation and who was later executed.[57] The IRPT's commemoration
culminated in its 40th anniversary in April 2013. Abduqayum Qayumzod,

a journalist sympathetic to the IRPT, published a selection of his reports on the IRPT since the 1990s.[58] The IRPT commissioned a second volume of interviews and several veteran activists, such as Zubaydullo Roziq, Saidumar Husayni, and Sultan Samad, published their memoirs with the IRPT's publishing house Muattar.[59] Again, these contributions focused on the political history of Tajikistan since the late 1970s and the emergence of political Islamic activism, rather than the civil war as such. Thus, the IRPT emphasized the legitimacy of its political struggle against the Soviet system as well as the authenticity and relevance of Hanafi Sunni Islam for morality and collective identity in Tajikistan.[60] This perspective re-evaluates the political and cultural significance of perestroika and glasnost, which Rahmon usually portrays as a time of decline, instability, and disorder ultimately facilitating the rise of forces responsible for the outbreak of the civil war.

MONOPOLIZATION AND HISTORICAL ERASURE

While the government continued the political marginalization of the IRPT, including criminal persecution of various IRPT members, the government did not devise a counter-narrative as such. The government press, such as *Jumhuriyat*, the PDPT's *Minbari Khalq*, the youth magazine *Javonon*, ministerial periodicals such as *Qonun va jomea* (MVD), and regional outlets like *Khatlon*, *Sohil*, and *Haqiqati Sughd*, did not even actively contribute to the contested commemoration and largely abided by the earlier (ambivalent) memory culture stressing Rahmon's contribution to the restoration of the rule of law, peace, and stability. However, the government adopted more subtle forms of representing the civil war and the role of selected key actors throughout these years.

Firstly, the official government narrative unambiguously calls the opposition to account for the outbreak of the civil war and presents Rahmon as the one who single-handedly restored peace, stability, and statehood. The government gradually abandoned the idea that the opposition had no agency in 1991 and that the outbreak of the civil war was to some extent contingent and instigated by ominous external forces. The civil war chapter in the senior year (11th grade) history textbook, commissioned by the Ministry of Education in 2006, indicates this shift. It was once again Nabieva and Zikriyoyev who commented on the civil war, though now in much greater detail and with less ambiguity. Over 17 pages, the authors cover the origins of the civil war, the course of the events, and the peace negotiations. While the introductory narrative still resembles the one in the 9th grade textbook (reproduced above), Nabieva and Zikriyoyev are now much more explicit about those responsible

for the conflict. They concede agency to the opposition and eventually hold them responsible for the civil war:

> Perestroika facilitated the establishment of a multi-party system and within a short period of time, various associations, clubs and movements emerged . . . [S]ome of these associations and parties acted against the constitution and tried to seize governmental power with force in order to establish an Islamic state (*davlati islomi*). Hence, the DPT, IRPT, the association Laʿli Badakhshon and the republican *qoziyot* agreed on a coalition and established the "Staff for the Salvation of the Homeland" under the leadership of Shodmon Yusuf, which destabilized the situation in Dushanbe and prepared the ground for the Civil War. In order to counter the activities of the revolutionaries (*tabaddulotchiyon*) in Dushanbe, advocates of a constitutional system established the people's movement (*harakati mardumi*) in the provinces of Kulob, Qurghonteppa, Hisor and Leninobod. Sangak Safarov, Safarali Kenjaev, Rustam Abdurahimov, Fayzullo Abdulloev, Langari Langariev, Fayzali Saidov, and other field commanders led this movement. In the Popular Front, all ethnic groups (*millatho*) of Tajikistan—Tajiks, Uzbeks, Russians, and others—were represented. . . . On March 26, 1992, the opposition organized demonstrations on Shahidon Square, which lasted for approximately 50 days. After some time, armed opposition demonstrators abducted deputies of the Supreme Soviet and government representatives; later, they occupied the TV station, the railway station, the airport square and various other government premises. . . . The legal President Rahmon Nabiev was abducted by the opposition and was not able to fulfil his duties. . . . Our beloved Republic, Tajikistan, was dragged into the abyss of war by the crimes of political parties and groups. Some individuals wanted to come to power in an undemocratic and violent way. Their abominable deeds resulted in the merciless slaughter of their own people (*khalqi khesh*), their fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters and children.[61]

The earlier (9th grade) textbook did not yet emphasize the importance of the 16th Session and depicted the General Peace Accord as a joint effort by Rahmon and the leader of the opposition, Abdullo Nuri. In the 2006 version, Nuri's contribution to the Peace Accord is not even mentioned; instead, Rahmon is portrayed as the gargantuan leader who not only established peace and restored constitutional order, but also preserved Tajik statehood as such:

> As it is remarked in the book *Foundations of a New Statehood* [written by Rahmon], "Now it was necessary to have an experienced and able political leadership which took over the responsibility to draft a new constitution and lead the struggle." Such a leadership, which accepted the responsibility for the political situation and order, was elected democratically and according to the constitution during the 16th Session of the Supreme Soviet in the city of Khujand. [This leadership] played a great historical role in the elimination of the deep political

and structural crisis of Tajikistan, which threatened the existence of the national government of the Tajiks.[62]

Thus, the 16th Session became a signifier for Rahmon's claim to have single-handedly established peace, and Nuri gradually disappeared from official accounts.

Secondly, Rahmon and his clique not only held the opposition responsible for the civil war and marginalized its contribution to the peace process, but they also initiated a *damnatio memoriae* of field commanders and combatants who tainted Rahmon's narrative. Sangak Safarov was the first Popular Front commander sanctioned with a *damnatio memoriae*. In 2006, Nabieva and Zikriyoyev still portrayed him as a "naturally veracious (*haqiqatparast*) person, who was arrested by the Soviet authorities for undisclosed 'objectionable activities.' As leader of Tajikistan's Popular Front, he gained a high reputation (*obrui kalon*) among the people. Unfortunately, he was killed by an unknown person on March 30, 1993."[63]

Since then, Safarov's name has silently disappeared from Tajikistan's military academy and official publications, local histories, and encyclopedias. Even the monument in Qurghonteppa was removed.[64] The *Encyclopedia of Kulob* lists the "Sangak Safarov Road" in Kulob, but provides no explanation of *who* this Sangak Safarov was.[65] The Rahmon government's selective *damnatio memoriae* follows the logic of the continuous transition of the regime's legitimation since 1997. Former field commanders were marginalized or eliminated and since Rahmon was not an active field commander, he could frame himself as a guarantor of peace and stability in Tajikistan—a *man of order*.[66] Safarov, the ex-convict and savage warlord who was responsible for immeasurable agony and extreme violence in the first months of the conflict but who also "made" Rahmon chairman of the Supreme Soviet, had been the conspicuous blemish on Rahmon's orchestration of the post-conflict political order. As regime consolidation progressed, Rahmon was able to marginalize his former allies and gradually erase the memory of his inconvenient master. For some time, the media contrasted the official *damnatio memoriae* with eyewitness accounts or interviews with former combatants in the Popular Front, but since 2015 the independent media has been silenced and even *Radioi Ozodi* has been hesitant to address controversial topics.

Thirdly, although the government media did not contribute to the commemoration of the civil war, it has been conducting a long-term defamation campaign against the IRPT since the mid-2000s, an effort that gained momentum in the years before the party's ban in 2015. The campaign targets the IRPT on four levels: 1) the government media depicts the IRPT as a duplicitous radical and extremist group with ties to (unnamed) foreign powers, which endanger peace and stability in Tajikistan, with allusions to the

unrest in Arabic countries after 2011; 2) the government has restructured the administration of Islam and integrated a narrow understanding of the Islamic tradition into their idea of the Tajik nation, restricting the IRPT's influence in the religious field; 3) individual representatives of the IRPT, particularly Kabiri, have been targeted on a personal level, insinuating illicit businesses, moral misconduct such as extramarital affairs, and close contacts with hostile foreign powers (often the duplicitous "West"); and finally 4) the history of the IRPT has been rewritten and the role of Nuri marginalized. Former members of the IRPT, in particular, have contributed to this rewriting and posthumous defamation of Nuri. For instance, *mavlavi* Abdurahim Karim, the IRPT commander who led the infamous attack on Border Post 13 that left 25 Russian border guards dead in 1993, started a campaign against the party after he gave up his membership in 2011. After the IRPT was banned in September 2015, he condemned the party's alleged terrorist activities and hideous, unmanly (*nojavonmard*) betrayal in the government media. He claimed to have finally realized that the

> IRPT and its misled followers are a source of war and violence. At no time in history has the religion of Islam needed—nor will it need—a party or movement. . . . From the first days since the establishment of the IRPT it has become obvious that the regionalism (*mahalbozi*) and favoritism of this party was divisive; it was only the struggle for a position and an appointment, the pursuit of their own rotten objectives. . . . It is obvious that only the upright manliness (*javonmardi bevosita*) of the head of the state, the President of the Republic of Tajikistan, His Excellency, the venerable Emomali Rahmon, ensured the security of the society and saved the lives of citizens.[67]

Similar narratives were already in circulation prior to the ban, illustrating the regime's strategy for dealing with the contested commemoration of the civil war since 2005. Instead of contributing to a public debate on the past, the regime has undermined the credibility of any alternative voice and restored an ambivalent oblivion to the conflict by monopolizing Tajikistan's (manly) memory culture.

CONCLUSION

On September 29, 2015, the Supreme Court of the Republic of Tajikistan declared the IRPT a terrorist organization and banned its activities in the Central Asian Republic. The ban of the IRPT marks a caesura for Tajikistan's post-civil war history, the end of the peace process, and the monopolization of power in the hands of Rahmon and the dominant elite affiliated with him. Intimidating libel laws, severe restrictions on civil society, and merciless

persecution of any form of political or social dissent have simultaneously silenced the media, civil society, and remaining opposition. In the end, the Rahmon regime has monopolized not only political power, but also the commemoration of the civil war and historiography as such. On June 27, 2017, the 20th Anniversary of the General Peace Accord, Rahmon addressed his subjects in a remarkably short speech hinting at the transformation of the official memory culture in Tajikistan. The civil war and the Day of National Unity have been reduced in their historic importance to mere episodes in the (mostly glorious) *longue durée* history of the Tajiks and their statehood. Even the 16th Session has gradually lost its importance for Rahmon, since there is no one left to challenge his legitimation narrative. Instead, September 9 (Independence Day) has been redeemed from the dark augury of the civil war and is now celebrated as the pivotal commemoration day in Tajikistan, as last year's expensive ceremony suggests.[68]

Official historiography and memory culture—including the significance of commemorating historical events—have evolved unevenly in Tajikistan since independence. In recent years, the regime has expanded its regulatory capacity and made contentious public spheres "legible"[69] by restricting their autonomy (for instance, by increasing regulatory and institutional control over Islam). Consequently, historiography, memory culture, and commemoration of Tajikistan's recent past have been subjected to this process of legibility in an authoritarian political context.[70] From the perspective of Rahmon's regime, the improved legibility is an indication that Tajik history has "normalized" and is no longer defined by the terrors of the civil war.[71] The de-politicization of history finally allows historians to return to the authentic qualities of the Tajiks as peaceful, sedentary, cultured, industrious, and—importantly—obedient people, accepting their position in society and showing respect to the ruler.[72] At the same time, Rahmon is apparently aware that in the collective memory of the population, the civil war has never been forgotten, and still refers to the conflict in an alarming tone. In his speech on June 27, 2017, Rahmon reaffirmed this official narrative on the civil war:

> Resentful forces and doomed individuals with their foreign plans and orders, who wanted to impose (against the interests of the Tajiks) their alien culture and religion on our people and even wanted to establish an Islamic state, they dragged Tajikistan into the maelstrom of the fratricidal war. Unfortunately, back then, the newly established parties and associations in our newly independent Tajikistan did not realize the perfidious schemes of the IRPT. The imposed civil war (*jangi tahmilii shahravandi*) lasted five years, but set back development for more than ten years and almost annihilated the independence of our homeland . . . Not long after this catastrophe, we have—like other established and powerful states—re-established our sovereignty and strengthened the fundamentals of

our young statehood, and in order to reach out to the world, we have agreed on national symbols of our independent statehood.[73]

The Othering of the IRPT in Rahmon's speech, its exclusion from the body politic of the Tajik nation, reminds the careful reader of the political polarization between 1990 and 1992, when populist politicians adopted a similar strategy that eventually contributed to the outbreak of civil war. Rahmon considers the process of authoritarian consolidation (both on the domestic as well as the regional/international level) as concluded. This allowed Rahmon to terminate the terms and informal conventions of the General Peace Accord and eventually to silence alternative narratives on Tajikistan's contemporary history. The "normalization" of Tajik history (as a source for regime legitimation) should therefore be seen as part of the authoritarian de-politicization of the public sphere in Tajikistan. The imposition of a hegemonic historical narrative apparently reassures Rahmon as "leader of the nation," but simultaneously (and despite the alleged "normalization" and de-politicization) enhances the relevance and importance of history and historical commemoration as such. The government's narrow narrative on the civil war severely contradicts local narratives and experiences from the civil war, which are difficult to control and contain. Thus, for disfranchised and marginalized communities, including members and supporters of the banned IRPT, alternative historical narratives remain a source of identity, self-assertion, legitimacy, and—finally—protest and discontent.

NOTES

1. "The best defense in the case of civil war is forgetfulness."

2. For the concepts and categories used here, see: David Armitage, *Civil Wars: A History of Ideas* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2017); Reinhart Koselleck, *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004); Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 2006); Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence O. Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

3. Emomalī Rahmonov, *Tojikon dar oinai ta'rikh: Az Oriyon to Somoniyon*, 3 vols. (London/Dushanbe: Irfon, 2002–2008). Reportedly, Rahmon's impressive oeuvre was ghost-written by members of his entourage (for instance Qurbon Vose'). Importantly, however, all works cited here are explicitly published in the name of the president and therefore reflect the official political narrative in contemporary Tajikistan.

4. The genesis of Tajik historiography is associated with Bobozhan G. Gafurov's *Istoriia tadzhikskogo naroda* (Moscow: Gosudarstv. izdat. polit. literatury, 1949). See

Lisa Yountchi, "The Politics of Scholarship and the Scholarship of Politics: Imperial, Soviet, and Post-Soviet Scholars Studying Tajikistan," in *The Heritage of Soviet Oriental Studies*, ed. Michael Kemper and Stephan Conermann (New York: Routledge, 2011), 217–40.

5. In 2006, the government celebrated the "Year of Aryan Civilization." See Marlene Laruelle, "The Return of the Aryan Myth: Tajikistan in Search of a Secularized National Ideology," *Nationalities Papers* 35, no. 1 (2007): 51–70. With the 2009 celebration of the "Year of Imomi A'zam" (i.e. the founder of the Hanafi Law School Abu Hanifa), the government began to integrate Islam in its narrative of Tajik historical identity. See Tim Epkenhans, "The Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan: Episodes of Islamic Activism, Postconflict Accommodation, and Political Marginalization," *Central Asian Affairs* 2 (2015): 321–46.

6. Rohat Nabieva and Farkhod Zikriyoev, *Taʿrikhi khalqi Tojik. Kitobi darsi baroi sinfi 11* (Dushanbe: Sobirijon, 2006), 67–68.

7. For anti-Uzbek sentiment, see Rakhim Masov, *Istoriia topornogo razdeleniia* (Dushanbe: Irfon, 1991). Masov, the long-term chairman of the history department in Tajikistan's Academy of Sciences, narrates the border-demarcation in Central Asia as an Uzbek conspiracy designed to deprive the Tajiks of their statehood and sovereignty.

8. See John Perry, "Tajik. I. The Ethnonym: Origins and Application," *Encyclopedia Iranica*, online edition, 2012, http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/tajik-i-the-ethnonym-origins-and-application.

9. See Emomali Rahmon[ov], *Istiqloliyati Tojikiston va ehyoi Millat* 1 (Dushanbe: Nodir, 2002), 19. Cf. Michel Hammer, "Perestroika as Seen by Some Tajik Historians," in *Tajikistan: The Trials of Independence*, ed. Mohammad-Reza Djalili, Frederic Grare, and Shirin Akiner (Richmond, UK: Curzon Press, 1998), 45–51.

10. On the civil war, see Tim Epkenhans, *The Origins of the Civil War in Tajikistan: Nationalism, Islamism, and Violent Conflict in Post-Soviet Space* (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2016).

11. Translation from the Tajik version. Plate in the National Museum in Tajik, Russian, and English.

12. See Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 187–206; Christian Meier, *Das Gebot zu vergessen und die Unabweisbarkeit des Erinnerns: Vom öffentlichen Umgang mit schlimmer Vergangenheit* (Munich: Siedler, 2010).

13. See John Heathershaw, *Post-Conflict Tajikistan: The Politics of Peacebuilding and the Emergence of Legitimate Order* (London: Routledge, 2009).

14. Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992); Jan Assmann, *Cultural Memory and Early Civilization: Writing, Remembrance, and Political Imagination* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

15. For the importance of the 16th Session, see Ibrohim Usmonov, *Ta'rikhi siyosii Tojikistoni sohibistiqlol* (Khujand: Nuri ma'rifat, 2003); Qurbon Vose', *Az qasri Arbob to kokhi Vahdat* (Dushanbe: Devashtich, 2004).

16. Cf. Epkenhans, *Origins of the Civil War*, 263–72, 339–50; Kirill Nourzhanov, "Saviours of the Nation or Robber Barons? Warlord Politics in Tajikistan," *Central Asian Survey* 24, no. 2 (2005): 109–30.

17. Quoted in Hikmatullo Nasriddinov, *Tarkish* (Dushanbe: Afsona, 1995), 217.

18. Rahmon[ov], *Istiqloliyati*, 18–21.

19. Hoji Akbar Turajonzoda emerged as an independent charismatic Islamic scholar and politician who enhanced the political and religious relevance of the *qoziyot* before he became member of the opposition (see Tim Epkenhans, "Islam, Religious Elites, and the State in Post-Civil War Tajikistan," in *Islam, Society and Politics in Central* Asia, ed. Pauline Jones Luong [Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh University Press, 2017], 173–98).

20. Rahmonov, *Tojikon*, vol. 1, 8.

21. Epkenhans, *Origins of the Civil War*, 122–27.

22. Cf. Alex Veit and Klaus Schlichte, "Zur Legitimierung bewaffneter Gruppen," in *Bürgerkriege erzählen: Zum Verlauf unziviler Konflikte*, ed. Sabina Ferhadbegović and Brigitte Weiffen (Paderborn: Konstanz University Press, 2011), 153–76; Benedikt Korf and Timothy Raeymaekers, "Geographie der Gewalt," *Geographische Rundschau* 64, no. 2 (2012): 4–11.

23. FBIS-SOV-92–247 (December 23, 1992), 73.

24. Jesse Driscoll, *Warlords and Coalition Politics in Post-Soviet States* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

25. Langari Langariev, arguably one of the most charismatic field commanders in the early civil war, was mortally wounded in an ambush close to Norak on October 23/24, 1992 and flown to Khudjand, where he succumbed to his injuries on January 9, 1993. In early 1993, the rivalry between Safarov and Saidov intensified and the two met in the southern Bokhtar district, close to Qurghonteppa, to settle their many differences. Apparently, their dispute over the return of refugees escalated into a bloody shoot-out that killed both. See Epkenhans, *Origins of the Civil War*, 263–72, 347.

26. See, for instance, D. Salimov, "Rozi yak shabi bahor: Fayzali va Sangakro ki kusht?" *Faraj,* 28 August 2015.

27. Rajab Munki and Amirshoh Khatloni, *Nomus* (Dushanbe: Paik, 1995). See the analysis of the obituary in Kirill Nourzhanov, "From Hero Worship to Organized Oblivion: Representations of the People's Front in Tajikistan's National Memory," *Nationalities Papers* 45, no.1 (2015): 140–57. *Nomus* conveys a particular idea of male honor—see Epkenhans, *Origins of the Civil War*, 254–57.

28. *Qonun va jomea* features a column called *darsi mardonagi* (lesson in masculinity) for obituaries of militia men killed between 1992 and 1997. See, for instance, Nosir Nazarzoda, "Onho faromush nameshavand!" *Qonun va jomea* 50, December 24, 2015, 13. Similar articles can be found in the official youth paper *Javonon*.

29. For an analytical perspective, see Driscoll, *Warlords and Coalition Politics*; Dov Lynch, "The Tajik Civil War and Peace Process," *Civil Wars* 4, no. 4 (2001): 49–72; Heathershaw, *Post-Conflict Tajikistan*.

30. Cf. Donna Pankhurst, "Issues of Justice and Reconciliation in Complex Political Emergencies: Conceptualising Reconciliation, Justice and Peace," *Third World Quarterly* 20, no. 1 (1999): 239–56. Arguably, the low-threshold provisions allowed the integration (or coalition-building) of a very heterogeneous group of field commanders.

31. See the "General Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and National Accord in Tajikistan, signed in Moscow on 27 June 1997," United Nation Security Council, A/52/219 and UN Security Council S/1997/169, 2.

32. UN Security Council, S/1997/56, 12.

33. See Jean-Nicolas Bitter, ed., *From Confidence Building towards Co-operative Co-existence: The Tajik Experiment of Islamic-Secular Dialogue* (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2005). In 2010, IRPT Chairman Muhiddin Kabiri still maintained that Tajik peace-building and reconciliation could serve as a model for Kyrgyzstan after the violence in Osh—see Muhiddin Kabiri, "Sulhi Tojik ulgu baroi Qirghiz ast," *Najot* 26, July 1, 2010, 1.

34. See, for instance, Abduqayum Qayumzod, *40 soli muboriza, muqovimat va taloshho* (Dushanbe: Bakht, 2013), 37; Rahmonov, *Tojikon*, vol. 1, 8; Hoji Akbar Turajonzoda, "Ivazshavii hokim naboyad nishonai noamni boshad," *Nigoh* 16, July 10, 2013, 8–9 and 12–13; and Shadman Yusuf, *Tajikistan. Baha-ye azadi* (Tehran: Daftar-e nashr-e farhang-e eslami, 1373hsh = 1994/1995), 9–10.

35. Rohat Nabieva and Farkhod Zikriyoev, *Ta'rikhi khalqi Tojik. Kitobi darsi baroi sinfi 9* (Krasnoyarsk: Ofset, 2001), 117.

36. Perhaps with the exception of autobiographical accounts by former cadres of the Soviet system or perestroika/glasnost activists, for instance Buri Karim, *Faryodi solho. Hujjat, dalel, tabsira, khulosa* (Moscow: Intisoroti Transdornauka, 1997) or Asliddin Sohibnazar, *Subhi sitorakush. Kitobi avval. Nazare ba ruydodhoi okhiri Tojikiston* (Dushanbe: Donish, 1997). For details on the autobiographical texts, see Epkenhans, *Origins of the Civil War*, 12–20. See also the three-volume chronicle of Tajikistan between 1991 and 1993: Davlat Nazriev and Igor Sattarov, *Respublika Tadzhikistan: istoriia nezavisimosti god 1991-i* . Vol. 1 (Dushanbe: AK-94, 2002); Davlat Nazriev and Igor Sattarov, *Respublika Tadzhikistan: istoriia nezavisimosti god 1992-i.* Vol. 2 (Dushanbe: Nur-2003, 2005); Davlat Nazriev and Igor Sattarov, *Respublika Tadzhikistan: istoriia nezavisimosti god 1993-i.* Vol. 1 (Dushanbe: Irfon, 2006). The publication was financed by the German Friedrich Ebert Foundation. However, after the collapse of book production and distribution in the 1990s, these titles rarely found an audience beyond private circles and were never discussed and evaluated in Tajikistan's public sphere.

37. On collective identities, see Shmuel N. Eisenstadt and Bernhard Giesen, "The Construction of Collective Identity," *European Journal of Sociology* 36, no. 1 (1995): 72–102.

38. For the international perspective, see Martha Brill Olcott, *Tajikistan's Difficult Development Path* (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for Peace, 2012) and her earlier work *Central Asia's Second Chance* (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for Peace, 2005). For a Tajik perspective, see Buri Karim, *Tojikiston: Durnamoi rushd (Kitobi safedu sabz)* (Moscow: ITDN, 2004).

39. Between 2005 and 2015, I surveyed 40 blogs and 29 webpages of media outlets and 19 webpages related to Islam in Tajikistan. Throughout these years, many blogs and webpages disappeared or were not stable; since 2015, many of the webpages sur-veyed closed down. (For more on the Islamic internet, see Shahnoza Nozimova and Tim Epkenhans, "Negotiating Islam in Emerging Public Spheres in Contemporary Tajikistan," *Asiatische Studien/Études Asiatiques* 67, no. 3 (2013): 965–90.)

40. See Oleg Panfilov, *Tadzhikistan: Zhurnalisty na grazhdanskoi voine (1992–1997)* (Moscow: Izd-vo Prava cheloveka, 2003). Many accounts identify Dodojon

Atovulloev, the editor of *Charoghi ruz* in 1991–1992, as a particularly controversial and defamatory figure who contributed to the political polarization of the early 1990s.

41. Nourzhanov, "Hero Worship," 14. The article appeared on March 31, 2005 on the website of Asia Plus but was later removed. See also "Dva golovoreza za narod . . ." *Kievskii telegraf* (undated), http://telegrafua.com/world/14211.

42. My survey is based on 239 articles published since 2005 in *Faraj*, *SSSR*, *Ozodagan*, *Nigoh*, *Tojikiston*, *Ruzgor*, *Millat*, *Asia Plus*, and *Radioi Ozodi*. Here, I have not included the government media and the IRPT's weekly paper *Najot* (see below). I am well aware that my survey is not exhaustive. The role of individual field commanders is discussed by Nurali Davalt, "'Hamesha zinda'-e, ki faramush shud," *Nigoh* 41, no. 372, January 8, 2014, 11; *Nigoh* 42, no. 373, January 15, 2014, 11; *Nigoh* 43, no. 374, January 22, 2014, 11; *Nigoh* 44, no. 375, January 29, 2014, 7 and 10. The political trials and tribulations of independence are discussed by Nuralī Davlat, "Istiqloliyate ki onro khudi deputatho dark nakardand," *Faraj* 38, September 18, 2013. The suffering of the local population is depicted by A. Sherkhond, "Vaqte dar Kulob sabus nameyoftand. . . . Turajonzodaro gunahkor medonistand," *Millat* 27, July 7, 2012. The fate of Safarov is frequently discussed—see S. Khaliliyon, "Se khatoi Sangak Safarov. Musohiba bo sobiq komandiri gordi millii Kulob Ismoil Ibrohimov," *Faraj* 34, August 22, 2011. For the rehabilitation of former Soviet politicians, see Abuali Nekruzov, "Qahhor Mahkamov: 'Boz nagued, in chi khel president bud'," *Nigoh* 13, June 18, 2014, 7.

43. See Epkenhans, "Islam, Religious Elites and the State."

44. Cf. Sune Haugbolle, "The (Little) Militia Man: Memory and Militarized Masculinity in Lebanon," *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies* 8, no. 1 (2012): 115–39.

45. See, for instance, Gulrukhsor Safieva, "Yak Ruzi Khudshinosi" in *Darsi kheshtanshinosi*, ed. A. Mahmadnazar (Dushanbe: Irfon, 1989), 129–38; Gulrukhsor Safieva, "Panj soli khudshinosi," *Adabiyot va San'at* 15, April 9, 1992, 12–13. Bozor Sobir wrote several poems reflecting on the violence in February 1990 and the demonstrations in 1991–1992, such as *Imsol* (This Year) and *Maydoni ozodi* (Freedom Square).

46. *Kosh ba Kosh*. Director: Bakhtyar Khudojnazarov. Trigon-Film, 1994.

47. *Luna Papa*. Director: Bakhtyar Khudojnazarov. Art-House, 2000.

48. *Angel on the Right*. Director: Jamshed Usmonov. Tartan 2002; *To get to Heaven, first you have to die*. Director: Jamshed Usmonov. Global Film Initiative 2009.

49. Nuri did not assume the position of IRPT chairman until 1997. Throughout the years of political struggle, there was a division of labor: Himmatzoda was appointed chairman enforcing party discipline, Usmon was the public politician, and Nuri remained in the background as the spiritual-scholarly authority—a strategy designed to reduce the risk of discrediting the Islamist political project in case of political failure.

50. Abduqayum Qayumzod, "Khudo bo most, piruzi niz," *Charoghi ruz* 45, no. 24, 1992, 3.

51. In December 2001, The *New York Times* reported that Osama bin Laden tried to forge an alliance with Iran in 1996 and that Abdullo Nuri was bin Laden's

negotiator with Iranian intelligence: James Risen, "A Nation Challenged: Qaeda Diplomacy; Bin Laden Sought Iran as an Ally, U.S. Intelligence Documents Say," *The New York Times*, December 31, 2001. Though Nuri and the IRPT decidedly rejected the article and contacts with bin Laden, Tajik government representatives (and some international terrorism "experts") often referred to the article in order to insinuate a "hidden Islamist agenda" and question the IRPT's commitment to peace and stability in Tajikistan.

52. Abdullo Nuri, "Vahdati milli az e'timodi hamdigari sar-chashmo megirad," *Najot* 27, April 7, 2003, 1–3.

53. Epkenhans, *Origins of the Civil War*, 143–180. The IRPT commemorated its history in its weekly *Najot* and in an edited volume of interviews by Qiyomiddin Sattori, ed., *HNIT—Zodai ormoni mardum* (Dushanbe: ShKOS HNIT, 2003).

54. After Nuri's death, the IRPT published an obituary elevating him to the position of "renovator of the age," a title bestowed on Muslim scholars who advanced the scholarly tradition in Islam. See Muhiddin Kabiri, ed., *Mujaddidi asr* (Dushanbe: ShKOS HNIT, 2007).

55. Zubaydulloh Roziq, "HNIT dar masiri ta'rikh," *Najot* 16, April 17, 2008, 8–9. The series continued until November 2009, comprising one of the most detailed personal accounts on the IRPT's history. In 2013, on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the IRPT, Roziq published the first volume of his memoirs under the same title (Dushanbe: Muattar, 2013).

56. Talabšoh Salom, "Ijlosi XVI: Sokhtanhovu sukhtanho," *Najot* 44, November 1, 2012, 8–9. The series continued until the end of December 2012 (no. 52).

57. The video had been uploaded to the IRPT's homepage (www.nahzat.tj), which was suspended after the party's ban. The author has a copy of the video.

58. Abduqayum Qayumzod, *40 soli*.

59. Sulton Hamad, *Dar payrahai nur* (Dushanbe: Muattar, 2013); Saidumar Husayni, *Khotiraho az naxust oshnoiyam ba Harakati Islomii Tojikiston to rasmiyati on* (Dushanbe: Muattar, 2013); Muhammad Orzu, ed., *40 soli Nahzat. Khotira, andesha, didgoh* (Dushanbe: Muattar, 2013).

60. Since 2009, the government has integrated a narrow interpretation of the Hanafi Sunni tradition into its nationalist imagination poaching in the IRPT's intellectual territory. Cf. Epkenhans, "The Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan."

61. Nabieva and Zikriyoyev, *Taʿrikhi* 11, 93–95.

62. Ibid., 95.

63. Ibid., 94 (footnote to the text).

64. See Nosirjon Ma'murzoda, "Paykarahoi Sangaku Langari bardoshta meshavad," *Radioi Ozodi*, July 2, 2009, http://www.ozodi.org/content/article/1767734.html.

65. Y. Ya'qubov, ed., *Kulob. Ensiklopediya* (Dushanbe: Sarredaksiiai ilmii ensiklopediyai millii tojik, 2006), 72–73, 268, 435. Similarly, Rustam Abdurahimov, the chief ideologist of Kūlob and Safarov's (short-lived) cooperation, who was killed during a failed attack on Dushanbe in October 1992, is mentioned in the *Encyclopedia of Kulob* only as a popular poet, calligrapher, and folk singer. Langari Langariev is vaguely introduced as a commander of the National Guard who contributed to the reestablishment of the constitutional government in Tajikistan. Other important actors

from Kulob, such as Mullo Haydar Sharifov or Fayzali Saidov, are altogether omitted from the otherwise extensive biographical section.

66. See Driscoll, *Warlords and Coalition Politics*; Heathershaw, *Post-Conflict Tajikistan*. The most notorious field commanders of the Civil War either fled the country (Mahmud Khudoberdiev), have been killed (Mirzo Ziyoyev, Fayzali Saidov, Sangak Safarov, Langari Langariev, Rizvon Sodirov), have been arrested (Yaqub Salimov, Mahmadruzi Iskandarov, Ghaffur Mirzoev), or have silently withdrawn from public life (Suhrob Qosimov until his death in 2016).

67. Abdurahim Karim, "Khiyonati navbatii HNIT dar simoi Hoji Halim va hammaslakoni u," *Faraj* 40, September 30, 2015, 4.

68. The regime celebrated the 25th anniversary of independence with unparalleled expenditure, which reminded observers of Soviet celebrations on May Day or November 7. The Tajik armed forces showed off its three service branches in the largest military parade since independence, while schools and university students and workers and employees of state combines marched in front of the political *nomenklatura*, with parade floats exhibiting the achievements of independent Tajikistan. Rahmon concluded the celebration in Dushanbe's Stadium with a lavish performance characteristic of autocratic regimes. See "Tantanahoi farhangii markazi ba iftikhori 25-umin solgardi istiqloliyati davlatii Jumhurii Tojikiston," President.tj, September 9, 2016, http://www.president.tj/node/12961.

69. James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998).

70. Reportedly, the Ministry of Education has commissioned entirely new history textbooks. The dismissal of the veteran (Soviet) historian Rahim Masov already heralded stronger government interference into Tajikistan's historical science.

71. I recently had a conversation with a Tajik colleague on my account on the origins of the civil war. In the discussion, the historian remarked that "thankfully, Tajik history has become normal (*oddi*) again and we can concentrate on the important contributions of the Tajiks to humanity."

72. See, for instance, Emomali Rahmon, "Imomi A'zam va akhloqi umumiisoni," *Jumhuriyat*, July 9, 2009.

73. Emomali Rahmon, "Sukhanroni ba iftikhori 25-solagii istiqloloyati davlatii Jumhurii Tojikiston," *Jumhuriyat* 134/135, July 28, 2017.

Chapter Ten

Translocal Securityscapes of Tajik Labor Migrants and the Families and Communities They Leave Behind

Hafiz Boboyorov

The discussion of labor migration presented in this chapter is based on the conceptual framework of securityscapes, which seeks to explain both individual behaviors and networking strategies of labor migrants in sending and receiving countries—Tajikistan and the Russian Federation, respectively.[1] Securityscapes are socio-cognitive spaces that people shape and maintain through everyday practices in response to their concerns about and demands for existential security. In the social sciences, the notion of existential security explains human beings' fundamental demands for both physical and sociocultural security, and thus defines their behaviors. Giddens's notion of ontological security "refers to the confidence that most human beings have in the continuity of their self-identity and in the constancy of the surrounding social and material environments of action."[2] The social-psychological findings also assert that in a world with increasingly fragile security, existential risks determine the individual and collective behaviors of human beings.[3] Ordinary people percive existential insecurities differently and thus acquire different and ambivalent identities and networks to respond to these insecurities. The identities and networks serve "as an anxiety-controlling mechanism reinforcing a sense of trust, predictability, and control in reaction to disruptive change."[4] Individuals and groups attach themselves to certain identities and networks insofar as they provide security and protection in their everyday lives. These collective boundaries can represent their kinship network, geographical affiliation, religious attachment, or state border, which combine to shape their multilayered securityscapes.

The everyday security practices of individuals or groups thereby shape their securityscapes, and adapt or transform their identities and networks. Securityscapes are context-relevant, which means that each one provides security and protection in certain settings and situations. Thus, an individual

has multiple securityscapes, the majority of which he or she shares with other individuals in the form of materialized structures and socio-cognitive boundaries, such as identities and networks. This article emphasizes both of these categories of securityscapes, which shape spaces and channels of interaction and exchange for labor migrants, the families they leave behind, and their communities, as well as their employers in the host country.

From this perspective, labor migration involves a set of everyday practices that seek to reduce perceived and experienced existential insecurities and uncertainties, both for labor migrants themselves and for the families and communities they leave behind. As other scholars of migration have observed, these practices include routines, rituals, and rites of passage or life-crisis rituals and ceremonies.[5] They maintain translocal networks of family members, mediators, friends, religious fellows, and ethnic communities that serve as securityscapes of migrants and their families across state borders.

The most relevant practices that maintain these securityscapes are "life-crisis" rituals. These rituals cannot be meaningful and endure if they do not reflect the security concerns of the people involved. The notion of "life-crisis" also stresses this aspect of rituals.[6] From the perspective of securityscapes, translocal labor migration itself is a set of "life-crisis" practices and rituals performed by both communities of origin and communities of destination. Some scholars further assert that migration itself is a rite of passage, a movement from one's "home" to an Other place—not simply a physical journey, but also one of mind and imagination.[7]

The framework of securityscapes also reflects upon other prominent concepts, such as translocalism, which assess the role of existential security in shaping labor migrants' translocal interactions. Scholars of translocalism observe that kinship, friendship, and ethnic identities and networks persist only where they provide protection and security. Levitt observes how labor migrants to the US from Miraflores, a small village in the Dominican Republic, readjusted their reference frames, the "better to meet the challenges and constraints of migrant life."[8] Driven by their need for protection and security, migrants change and transform their identities, behaviors, beliefs, ceremonies, and social relations—and increase their range of choices. Levitt refers to Soysal's concept of the "transnational public sphere," suggesting that this explains the vital role of Miraflores's Boston-Dominican religious collectivity.[9] This religious collectivity—or transnational public sphere—provides protection and security for its members across borders, thereby influencing their roles and identities.

The concept of securityscapes also explains spatial transgression, due to the need for existential security in everyday life which cannot be reduced to a single locality. Today, a significant percentage of the world population—

including nomadic groups, business and development workers, refugees and stateless persons, and labor migrants—live in translocal environments.[10] Migration is a form of cross-border networking between labor migrants and their families, as well as their employers and religious fellows in the host country.[11] This networking serves to provide existential security for the people involved: physical and occupational security for labor migrants, and material and social security for the families they leave behind. Labor migrants' security concerns and practices also influence their reaction to detachment from their community and assimilation into the dominant culture in the receiving country. The increase in perceived and imagined insecurity as a result of migration expedites the formation and enhances the endurance of "ethnic enclaves" in the receiving country. Scholars of migration have explored some of these aspects,[12] criticizing assumptions that reduce this process to social class or represent it "as temporary and a one-time event."[13] Rather, the concept proposed in this chapter follows Harney and Baldassar in considering migration a set of "processes, patterns, and relations that connect people or projects in different places in the world."[14] This translocal process replaces the term "transnationalism," since the latter overemphasizes the state's role in crossborder networking. People need to move and network across borders in order to provide each other with security and protection.

From the securityscapes perspective, "translocal" mobility also includes "those transgressions where, for instance, cultural and linguistic boundaries may matter more than national borders."[15] The concept differs from the classical anthropology's theory of space (such as Geertz's account of proximity and culture), which refers to geographically bounded groups and communities.[16] Translocalism and its associated concepts (e.g., "migration circuits," "social fields," "transnational communities," and "binational societies")[17] see space as having both physical and socio-cognitive boundaries, including networks and identities. These boundaries are important to connecting people and shaping their collectivities across geographical spaces, including state borders. In addition, networks and identities are social and cultural tools to connect the physical spaces of communities of origin and of destination. People live a life of constant border-crossing, both physically and cognitively.[18] Social remittances, including financial transfers by labor migrants, are necessary to provide security and protection across borders; as such, they transform the perception and practice of place and space. Thus, socio-cognitive interactions become "more important than physical presence in establishing and maintaining relations."[19]

The securityscapes framework attempts to highlight the discussion—implicit in translocalism—of security and protection practices provided as a result of labor migration.[20] Kinship, ethnic, and religious identities and networks

matter due to their role in maintaining these practices.[21] These practices explain the behavior of labor migrants, which is not simply a function of cultural structures and economic incentives. Other scholars have attempted to overcome the overemphasis placed on objective incentives by offering the "migration system perspective."[22] This model implicitly discusses the role of translocal kinship and friendship networks in providing security and protection. The perspective asserts that receiving security and protection through family, communal, religious, and ethnic networks is a common feature of many migrating communities: Italian migrants in Australia,[23] Mexican communities in the US,[24] post-guest worker migration to European countries,[25] and Turkish migrants in Sweden.[26] These networks provide resources in the form of information and instrumental assistance; they facilitate migration, interpret its securitizing role, and decide who should migrate. Migrants rely on their kinship, friendship, and ethnic ties in their countries of destination.[27]

The securityscapes perspective also allows for a discussion of marriage migration as an important means of providing security and protection by linking origin and destination communities. Often, labor migration paves the way for translocal marriage, family migration, and ethnic enclaves. In comparative context, this is observed with Turkish and Pakistani migrants in Western Europe.[28] Such migration practices preserve the extended family and a gendered division of labor. In part, translocal marriage serves as a securityscape for migrant daughters, who are often married off by strict Islamic rules to trusted relatives, "preferring the perceived security offered by kin marriage."[29] The family members left behind, especially grandparents, take care of children when both men and women migrate. In an era of translocal mobility, women in the origin and destination communities are often responsible for activities in the domestic sphere.[30] Their maternal role is sacralized in order to secure family relations, including the gendered division of labor. As Dreby points out, "American scholars describe this culturally specific version of maternity as *marianismo*. According to this ideal, women should be self-negating and martyrs for their children because they are spiritually and morally superior to men (Melhuus 1996; Stevens 1973)."[31] The security element is so important that family roles of not only women, but also men are linked to honor rather than to morality. Male migrants' moral misconduct is not questioned; their status remains intact as long as they provide their families with economic and social security.[32] Thus, translocal fathers fail when they do not send money; translocal mothers fail when their emotional attentions are diverted away from the domestic sphere.

Below, I discuss securityscapes that secure the movements, interactions, and exchanges of Tajik labor migrants and the families and communities they leave behind. Part One focuses on the network of mediators, which serves as

a securityscape for migrants in the highly uncertain and insecure environment of the receiving country. Part Two depicts migrants' wider securityscapes, which are embedded in their regional, ethnic, and religious affiliations. Part Three discusses how transnational family interactions shape labor migration, both as a survival strategy of families in the home community and the multiple securityscapes of migrating family members in the receiving country.

THE NETWORK OF
MEDIATORS IN THE RECEIVING COUNTRY

Studies on labor migration show that uncertainties and insecurities are inherent to labor migration in various destinations, including the US, Greece, Israel, and the Russian Federation.[33] The latter is a destination for more than 8 million citizens of the former Soviet Union, making Russia "second only to the United States in terms of the migrants it absorbs."[34] Despite increasingly complicated legal procedures and economic crisis, Russia hosts the vast majority of Tajik labor migrants.[35]

Estimates vary, but somewhere between 600,000 and 1 million of Tajikistan's 8.2 million people work abroad;[36] these labor migrants are often young and middle-aged men from rural areas. The 1992–1997 Civil War and resultant social and economic instabilities have made Tajikistan heavily dependent on remittances from labor carried out abroad. Indeed, migrants' "remittances amount up to 35% of Tajikistan's GNP (making it the most remittance-dependent country in the world . . .)."[37] By contrast, the Russian Federation—which hosts 97 percent of Tajikistan's migrant workers—is relatively stable, although total remittances have sharply decreased since 2014. According to recent data from the Central Bank of Russian Federation, the transfer of remittances to Tajikistan in 2015 amounted to only US$1.28 billion, compared to US$3.8 billion in 2014 and US$4.16 billion in 2013. This is a consequence of economic crisis, devaluation of the Russian ruble, and (above all) the deportation of more than 250,000 Tajik migrants in 2015.[38] Nevertheless, the World Food Program reports that remittances remain the main source of income for 55 percent of Tajikistan's rural households, and 81 percent of these funds are spent on family nutrition.[39]

For a deeper anthropological inquiry, the present study focuses on the southwestern agricultural lowland—Shahritus district and its rural community of Sayyod village. I conducted field research within the framework of my doctoral study in 2007–2008 and added to it with other field visits in 2012–2013. Additionally, in March 2016, I paid a two-month visit to labor migrant communities in St. Petersburg and Moscow to explore how they

experience and deal with uncertainties and insecurities in their everyday life. The initial goal of writing this article was to understand the ways in which both labor migrants and the families and communities they leave behind adapt their identities and networks.

As in other rural communities, village labor migration began in Sayyod during the Civil War in the 1990s, in order to help families survive at a time when a few powerful men monopolized agricultural enterprises and land resources. In this community, almost each family sends one or more young males to do hard seasonal work in Russian cities, mainly Moscow and St. Petersburg. Moscow alone absorbs more than 1 million illegal and undocumented workers from different countries, including half of all Tajik migrants.[40]

Migrants' illegal or undocumented status not only increases the threat of detention and deportation, but also limits their access to the social services of the receiving country. As Laruelle asserts, "only 10 percent of the foreign workers in Russia have the appropriate documents and registration with the proper authorities."[41] Most of the estimated 7–8 million migrants work illegally.[42] As such, employers do not need labor migrants' educational and professional background, stripping migrants of what status they had attained in their countries of origin. Additionally, employers categorize all labor migrants from Central Asian countries as *Sredneaziaty* (a Russian term meaning "Central Asians"), a designation that stigmatizes and stereotypes the migrants as unqualified and unprofessional.

Tajik migrants find themselves in hard, low-paid jobs: unprofessional construction work, street cleaning, and "black work" in the industrial and service sectors. The working day exceeds 12 hours, and migrants do not receive medical insurance or a social investment package. Some labor migrants find themselves in unpredictable and insecure *polozheniia* (situations) in their workplaces and on the street: slavery, hostage work, deportation, sickness, and "anti-migrant xenophobia."[43] Others are disabled by physical injuries or infectious diseases resulting from their work situations. To get treatment, undocumented migrants must return to Tajikistan; Russian hospitals do not accept or treat them, since they typically do not have medical insurance.

Most migrants from Sayyod village struggle to secure their "black" jobs under extremely uncertain and unpredictable conditions in Russia. They migrate seasonally or for up to three years (until they collect a decent amount of cash). Some men do not return home for more than two or three years, and only rarely send money to their families. Certain migrants have married Russian women or lost their ties to their home communities. And while men are gone, women and small children must find a way to maintain family and communal life in the village.

For experienced migrants, knowledge of the Russian language and friendship with Russian mediators and employers are crucial to cope with "situations," since they help reduce the uncertainties of residence registration and work permits.[44] Experienced migrants told me that to acquire such an acquaintance, they have to stay in the destination country for several years and work for a local mediator from time to time. The mediators are police officers, state employees, and powerful bosses who influence the highly personalized bureaucratic machine. Otherwise, the risk of slavery, hostage work, detention, and deportation (which entails losing one's registration and work permit in the Russian Federation for five years) is much higher. Migrants rely on their Russian mediators to get proper legal registration and work permits, without which they find themselves in permanent hiding or compelled to pay exhaustive and frequent bribes to the police and immigration officers. Mediators also offer various services, such as new and better jobs and secured life and work. As has been documented elsewhere, migrants prefer to work for private employers, isolating themselves in houses and enterprises that secure their everyday life against police checks and racist assaults.[45] These isolated environments serve as securityscapes for the migrants.

The other "situation," which also forces the migrants to seclude themselves in these securityscapes, is police officers' discrimination against labor migrants on the streets. As such, migrants who have no personal guarantee of escaping such discrimination do not appear on the streets. Even bribes cannot always solve problems for labor migrants who lack the support of powerful Russian mediators. During the day, they stay at work or at home, where they are often not officially registered. If their workplace is located in a different part of the city, they avoid certain squares and stations where police and migration officers conduct raids. Mobile connection is very important in informing their fellow migrants about such places, and being informed themselves. The other avoidance strategy is commuting as a group between home and work in a private car registered to a local mediator.

Another security practice is related to residence and work registrations done by mediators. Not only the price, but also the authenticity of registration documents depends on a migrant's personal relations with mediators. These mediators can be mediating companies, workplace bosses, police or migration officers, hotel administration staff, and other Russian citizens who have legal rights and indirect (illegal) influences on employers and accommodation properties. They formally register labor migrants in different places, such as state-provided communal houses, private homes, hotels, and so on. However, in most cases labor migrants live in private houses or in their workplaces and lack proper living conditions. In such cases, senior family and community members help their juniors to get residence registration and work permits.

Residence registration, in particular, helps them hide from the authorities and thus avoid certain problems, including slavery, detention, and deportation.

Often, employers are not taxpayers; they offer only illegal jobs, which are negotiated personally rather than arranged formally and in written form. Many new migrants seek the support of their senior relatives or other experienced migrants from their community with personal relations; relatives and mediators agree on working conditions and payment terms in advance.

THE WIDER NETWORKS OF FELLOWS

Tajik labor migrants extend their securityscapes to the network of their regional, ethnic, and religious fellows in order to protect against unpredictable "situations" in workplaces and on the streets. Mutual support and protection is widely practiced among migrants from the same community and region when they face "situations" relating to health, residence, job losses, or lack of financial means to survive in the receiving country. They share hints on cultural and legal ways of reducing and navigating insecurities and uncertainties.

In the early 2000s, the experienced and educated migrants of Sayyod village established a "villagers' training center," which checked and adjusted the behavior of juniors, taught them local manners and language, and offered them temporary jobs.[46] Similar networking or securityscape-making practices have been observed in other contexts.[47] The "community" of Urdu and Punjabi migrants in England switches from one level to another ("all Pakistanis," a particular region, a village community), each of which provides protection and security in different contexts.[48] The network of Georgian labor migrants in Greece, Israel, and the US serves as "insurance." They support each other by paying debts, giving loans, sharing accommodations, and finding jobs. They also create community by regularly gathering in churches to provide psychological and religious support and solidarity that helps them cope with homesickness.[49]

The regional affiliation of labor migrants from Sayyod is based mainly on networks of family friends and colleagues. Migrants from the same region protect each other from undesired encounters with the legal authorities of the receiving country, including police and migration officers. They provide protection in the form of information-sharing about how to avoid such encounters and pay bribes if any member of the community is threatened with detention and deportation. All migrants should have some money in their pockets in order to pay immediately for a detained fellow. They believe that no one is insured against "situations," including detention and deportation; reciprocal protection is the solution. Mutual support with securing jobs and protection for juniors and women in the receiving country are also extensions

of reciprocal practices in the sending country. For instance, migrants from the same region invited and provided a job for an electrician, who offered his reciprocal services to their families in the home community and district.

Support among the regional and ethnic fellows of Sayyod migrants is practiced mainly through two larger teams, each of around 50 members, in Moscow. They provide security and protection when labor migrants face "situations," whereas in everyday life only extended family members support each other. The regional and ethnic fellows are less concerned with securing registrations and jobs, or teaching experience and language, than family members are. Only a handful of experienced migrants volunteer to provide security and protection for their regional and ethnic fellows. Moreover, the network of regional and ethnic fellows is reduced to male migrants; female migrants are protected by men in their family (brothers and husbands). Female divorcées and women without a family escort cannot expect any protection from their regional male fellows and networks. Rather, as observed in other patriarchal societies (such as a Turkish enclave in Sweden), divorcées are perceived as a threat to social order because they do not have related men who can provide them with protection.[50] These women rely on the circle of female migrants in similar "situations" to cope with insecurities and uncertainties in their everyday life.

Both in workplaces and in other settings—such as streets, mosques, and religious holidays and ceremonies—labor migrants interact with their religious fellows from other regions of Tajikistan, as well as from the other Central Asian republics and the Russian Federation. In such cases, globalized versions of Islam (including religious fundamentalism) are a bridge to bring them together and make their interactions meaningful and socio-politically relevant. A few migrants—those who are economically self-sufficient and thus have more opportunity to expand their personal network with Muslims of other cultures—perform daily religious practices in public spaces such as mosques. These so-called "new mullahs" often lead both the religious and the economic activities of their family or community team in the receiving country. They have better positions in the workplace, since they are either senior family members or experienced migrants with personal ties to mediators. Some of them interact with Islamic fundamentalist activists through their everyday religious practices and teach their junior migrants about fundamentalist notions as well.

Multiple ethnic groups with shared judicial and mystical traditions of Hanafi Sunni and Naqshbandiyya Sufism adapted to various local practices of Islam reside in the Russian Federation. The fundamentalist versions of Islam are mainly penetrating these groups, which seek to globalize and integrate their communities into unified political bodies.

For most labor migrants, however, the social role of Islamic fundamentalism is more important than its political mobilization function. It serves especially as a securityscape for the juniors: the "new mullahs" propagate a fundamentalist version of Islam among labor migrants to strictly regulate their juniors' everyday life—particularly their interactions with people other than their family members and ethnic fellows—in the public space of the receiving country. This aspect has recently been discussed in the anthropological literature, which emphasizes the "extended family-like roles" of regional and religious affiliations.[51] Migration "trust networks"[52] have shaped voluntary clubs and associations, which not only provide economic support but also perform the role of extended family by providing security and protection. They organize translocal ceremonies, share information, and spread gossip, with the goal of restricting to the maximum possible extent the everyday lives of their juniors and women.

TRANSLOCAL FAMILY BONDS AND NETWORKS

As frequently observed in the global context, family or household plays the central role in "production, reproduction, consumption and socialization" of translocal social bonds and networks.[53] At the same time, scholars admit that the concept of "household" is now complicated and blurry, due to its increasingly "amorphous structure made up of conjugal and nuclear units, as well as consanguineous segments that spread across national boundaries."[54] This has likewise been acknowledged, or at least discussed, in the case of Tajikistan and other Central Asian societies.[55] "Remittances" or "social remittances" are typically considered an important element of translocal family bonds and networks, serving as a means of financial, material, and immaterial protection for labor migrants and the family members they leave behind.[56]

In Sayyod, social remittances are families' main source of economic income and social life. They address the chronic food shortage faced by the majority of families, who have limited access to agricultural resources, including land. For other families, land is secondary to remittances as a livelihood source. There are only a few families who do not need income from labor migration; they have privileged access to agricultural and other public resources. Additionally, labor migration secures family life by providing financial and material savings to hedge against future uncertainties and by providing the financial means to take care of the sick, disabled, widowed, and elderly family members. In one case, labor migrants took the son of a widow from their extended family and paid his monthly living and school costs in St. Petersburg. Students also rely on remittances from family members to

cover their living costs and university fees, which are otherwise unaffordable. Wealthier migrants provide the financial means for the poorer, left-behind members of their extended families to observe holidays and ceremonies.

In other contexts, scholars likewise observe that most remittances are used for families' daily consumption, housing and land,[57] rather than "productive investment that would contribute to long-run development."[58] A few people also use labor migration to sustain or improve their productive economic activities in their community.[59] Some scholars discuss the development impact of remittances as a poverty-reduction strategy that stimulates families' economic growth and relieves the burden of unemployment in the country of origin.[60] At the same time, these scholars rule out the possibility that labor migrants and their left-behind families and communities make a conscious choice to mobilize remittances for communal development. Koc and Onan discuss the role of remittances in the economic and social development of Turkey. The Turkish government established more than 600 joint companies to invest remittances in the less-developed regions. However, these state-initiated cooperatives failed because labor migrants did not trust and invest in them.[61] Efforts to manage how remittances are used or invested fail primarily because labor migrants and their communities do not trust state institutions to provide security and protection in their everyday lives.

The maintenance of family relations is an important security practice for labor migrants. Maintenance practices include labor teams and collective life based on family, communal, and regional ties in the host country, traditional patterns of labor division, marriage practices, and religious ceremonies of families in the home community. To take the example of labor teams in the host country, migrants from Sayyod village often organize construction teams in Moscow based on their family, communal, and regional ties. The teams are primarily composed of extended family members in the same community; if a workplace needs more workers, they accept a wider circle of kin from other communities. Extended family networks secure jobs for their members and take care of juniors and women. Members either work in the same workplaces or call and visit "to see each other"—that is, to monitor the juniors on a daily basis. Experienced and well-established migrants help their juniors to migrate, secure registrations and jobs, and be responsible for their behavior and achievements. Family members left behind perceive that juniors can only be safe with their senior migrants. Informants regard mutual support as a direct religious debt among extended family members, especially between fathers and sons and between brothers.

The labor migrants claim that they are working in "the land of God" but unbelievers (non-Muslim employers) are increasingly besieging these "God-giving favors." In their view, Muslims have to work in a "dark" (dangerous)

environment, and therefore family members must carefully protect each other within the circle of "God-given favors." Labor migrants and their families perceive that Russian culture threatens Muslims' morals and way of life. This powerful perception shapes labor migrants' attitudes and behaviors toward Russians, isolating them from the broader society and confining them to family and community circles in the receiving country. There is a sense that juniors, who are migrating for the first time and have therefore not yet demonstrated their trustworthiness, need special care. Parents send their juniors to close relatives who have worked for several years and have demonstrated their trustworthiness and commitment to their families. The family members left behind demand that senior labor migrants "protect" younger migrants in everyday life. Collective life and work in their receiving country are the basic conditions to meet these demands. As pliant creatures, their behavior depends on "with whom they sit": they easily get drunk with Russian men and get lost with Russian women.

Collective life and work by family and community members in the receiving country provides a securityscape for both male juniors and women. Women are considered most vulnerable to perceived dark and dangerous "situations" in the receiving country. The women themselves admit that "situations" in the receiving country are more harmful to their bodies and minds than to those of men. They believe that face-to-face interactions with Others do not spoil men, but destroy "female nature." As Akpinar observes in the case of Turkish migrants in Sweden, ". . . social intercourse between men and women is considered almost the same as sexual intercourse."[62] Female bodies are perceived as "diffuse, without boundaries,"[63] in contrast to the boundaries that symbolize men's "space."[64] Controlling female sexuality is the collective task of extended family; they are bound by the code of honor and shame to protect this space from Others' intrusion. Men therefore keep their women in "immigrant enclaves" and use gossip, stigma, and other social tools to both control and punish those "who deviate from the norms."[65]

The other means of securing family relations is to organize labor migration according to a traditional division of labor. Ideally, family men should earn an income sufficient to prevent their women from having to undertake not only labor migration but also any independent economic activity. Wives, and sometimes sisters and daughters, can migrate to Russia if they share jobs with male migrants or live in the same place in order to have daily interactions with their family members. The migrating family members are typically sons and husbands. However, there is an increasing trend of family migration by young couples from Sayyod village. Rarely do widowed women migrate to Russia without male escort and without proper protection from migrant communities. According to my 2013 survey in Sayyod, of 292 registered

migrants, 161 were sons, 98 husbands, 27 couples, 5 single daughters, and 1 divorced woman.

Laruelle observed a similar division of labor, noting that "young married male[s]" represented 90 percent of all migrants.[66] Olimova conducted a survey of 200 households in Khatlon, Badakhshan, Sughd provinces and the Districts of Republican Subordination of Tajikistan. According to her survey, of the 93 percent of labor migrants who are men, 62 percent identified themselves as sons and 26 percent as fathers or husbands.[67] The survey also suggests that "traditional patriarchal organization of society and consequently traditional gender ideology" in the sending community is important both in deciding who should migrate and how labor should be divided among migrants in the receiving country.[68] Accordingly, men are exclusively committed to material and financial provision for their families. During men's long absence, women are expected to maintain everyday economic activities in the household, along with performing their sacralized role of caring for children and elders. This gendered labor division in the era of translocal mobility has also been observed in other contexts.[69]

In return, those wives who join their migrating husbands sustain the family circle as a mutual securityscape in the receiving country. The presence of women both secures the cash income of young labor migrants and prevents undesirable marriage with Russians and other female migrants. Mainly for this security reason, the family elders agree to send their daughters-in-law to their husbands and themselves take care of the children who are left behind. Increasingly, young couples migrate while their extended family members take care for their children and households. This trend is also relevant to many other places in the world, such as Mexico and Georgia, that send female migrants to the US and other Western societies. The phenomenon of "transnational motherhood"[70] discussed in the literature increases migrating women's remote participation in the everyday lives of their family members in the country of origin.

Marriage, which is financed mainly by labor migration, also serves to sustain the family circle as a securityscape for young migrants in particular. Early marriage is preferred not only for post-conflict and left-behind daughters,[71] but also for sons, in order that they not be lost in the "dangerous" host country. Such ties also give male migrants an incentive to return home, even if they do not have regular contact with their families in the home community. To secure the ideal marriage, it is thus important to marry off sons to women who have a good family and religious reputation in the community or region of origin. The family and religious reputation of women refers to their moral and social standing, which is perceived to secure the economic success of their husbands-to-be. The demand made on wives is to obey their husbands,

maintain a household, and give birth to children. It is a common perception that only "proper Muslim" and "fertile" women remain faithful to their men when they are ill and old.

To find wives, labor migrants rely on their left-behind family members or hire respected women to gossip about the moral and social standing of nominated brides. Some other scholars also discuss this important translocal security practice and social control through gender construction.[72] Religious clothes (such as hijab) and performances (such as praying five times a day) become the means of making judgments. This reduces so-called "youth agency," reinforcing "kinship paternalism" rather than emancipating labor migrants from it. (However, Schröder and Stephan-Emmrich observe contrasting examples in Osh and Dushanbe.)[73] These patterns must not assert the classical concept of "socialization"[74] or "cultural paradigm"[75] that labor migration is driven exclusively by the cultural dimensions of the communities of origin, especially childhood socialization and gender roles. Similarly, the Central Asian version of Islam is not a dominant tradition in shaping the ideology and practices of marriage and gender division.[76] Rather, family members' concern about migrants' security, especially that of male juniors and women, is the driving force shaping translocal kinship networks, gendered division of labor, and religious ideology.

This is one reason that non-Muslim women are regarded as "not for life," although family members and community elders often advise male migrants to marry them for the purpose of getting Russian citizenship and other privileges in the receiving country. In Sayyod village, at least two "successful" labor migrants did not register the marriage with their local wives in favor of their Russian wives. Through the latter they obtained Russian citizenship, thus simplifying and securing their residence registrations, work permits, and everyday life in the receiving country.

Family seniors sometimes try to detach their migrants from the receiving country but at the same time seek other links. A father prevented his younger son from marrying a Russian woman, and married off him once he returned from labor migration. The father was concerned that "this son is a proper Muslim and I trust him more than his older brother to take care for us [parents] when we are old. I do not want him to marry a Russian woman and disappear from the life. I do not believe that my older son will take care of us."[77] However, the father did not forget about the Russian woman and encouraged the older son to marry her in order to access the associated benefits.

The sending community also maintains the securityscape of the labor migrants by organizing translocal interactions via phone, Skype, and local religious ceremonies. The first question that community members left at home ask each other after they meet and greet is about "their *Rassiyans*" (Russians,

i.e. labor migrants): "Are they calling or not?" If they are calling, "Do they send money or not?" Those community members who are left behind perceive that there is an abundance of work in Russia and labor migrants must simply exert themselves to take advantage of it. They believe that there are only two ways to spend the money earned in Russia: either to carefully collect it and send it to their families (wives or parents) or to carelessly spend it there. This is the clearest way in which people categorize labor migrants. Those who send cash on a regular basis are praised as being "on the proper way of God." Others, who do not send or rarely send cash, are discredited as "naughty." To prevent such communal stigma and ostracism, labor migrants frequently communicate with their family members and tell them about their "situations," whether slavery, hostage work, unpaid work, unemployment, dismissal from jobs, sickness, or registration problems.

In the translocal context, the discourses that divide the labor migrants into hierarchical categories of *Rassiyan* ("belonged to Russia") and *mardikor* ("black worker") refer to the importance of secured labor activities. The category of *Rassiyan* connotes a more secure and thus prestigious status, while *mardikor* refers to "unsuccessful" migrants. The "black workers" are considered those with unprivileged relations with their employers in the receiving country and weak ties with their families and home communities. "Black workers" are also those who are unable to regularly provide remittances for their left-behind family members. Therefore, they are perceived as the victims of "situations," whereas *Rassiyans* are acknowledged as "successful" labor migrants due to the support and protection they provide both for family juniors in the receiving country and for family members left behind in the community of origin.

Notably, here the emic notion of "successful" is not about either migrants "detached" from their local communities[78] or "returning migrants," as defined by so-called "new economic theory."[79] Rather, migrants and their family and community members consider "successful" those migrants with secure positions, in part due to translocal networks. They have both maintained dense ties with their family and community members at home and developed personal relations with mediators in the receiving country. Due to this translocal positioning, successful migrants achieve a combination of subjective well-being or security for themselves and material wealth for their family members.[80]

Religious ceremonies organized in the home communities are important cultural means of maintaining family relations. Thus, the lion's share of remittances is contributed to not only material household maintenance (as described above) but also religious rituals and ceremonies, including pilgrimage. Although pilgrimage is a once-in-a-lifetime event for each family member, it doubles labor migrants' expenses. The economic costs of the

ceremonies are not considered prohibitive as long as they provide emotional and social protection for labor migrants and the family members they have left behind. In particular, scholars have discussed this strategic distribution of remittances for organizing rite-of-passage ceremonies.[81]

Migrants and those they leave behind invest remittances in the fields that reduce perceived and experienced uncertainties and insecurities.[82] For this reason, most of them invest in "the ideas, behaviours, identities, and social capital that flow from receiving- to sending-country communities," as likewise observed in the case of the transnational community of Miraflores.[83] Social remittances maintain securityscapes in the forms of translocal identities and networks of labor migrants, their families, and communities. Baldassar defines this function of social remittances as "economies of kinship" or "transnational care-giving."[84] Remittances are often filtered out to maintain "ideal" and "just" translocal ties and obligations of families and communities. The emic reference to the notions of "ideal" and "just" implies security-making practices rather than normative standards. In particular, remittances maintain the practice of so-called "transnational caring," which compensates for the lack of institutional (state-provided) care for old, sick, widowed, and disabled family members left behind in the country of origin. The vast majority of remittances provide financial and emotional support through telephone calls, gifts, and visits between labor migrants and their family members at home.[85]

The labor migrants organize rituals and ceremonies that maintain securityscapes, again via family and other communal ties. As my 2013 survey in Sayyod village shows, individual nuclear families spend US$600 annually for different rituals and ceremonies, including *khatm* for leaving and returning migrants and family charities during religious fests (Ramadan, Kurban, family visit, and gift giving). Where migrants can afford it, the expenses of individual nuclear families or individual extended families may rise to US$3,000 (for circumcisions, weddings, communal charity, and material construction of households).

Communal ceremonies organized by migrant families serve to display their material wealth and maintain their subjective well-being. Through the anthropological lens, movement from one "home" to the Other place—as well as the return therefrom—is a rite of passage whereby the migrant enters a new phase of socialization.[86] In this phase, family members who are left behind perceive a threat of losing their migrants. Thus, the ceremonies—attended by family members, community seniors and religious notables—necessarily demonstrate their trustworthiness and loyalty to their families and communities of origin. The role of religious ceremonies is prominent, although it has been under-researched.[87] To fill this gap, Gardner and Grillo coined the con-

cept of "transnational division of ritual space," which suggests that migrants cannot claim ongoing membership in their communities of origin if they do not perform life-crisis ceremonies.[88]

In Tajikistan, *khatm* (literally "reading," a religious ceremony that involves dedicating the rite of reading the Koran to someone) is among these important life-crisis ceremonies. It celebrates and reinitiates migrants on their return or blesses departing migrants. It prescribes religious significance and thus a strong moral commitment by labor migrants to their families and communities of origin. The more ritually performed the *khatm*, the more demonstrated the moral commitment of migrants. *Khatm* routinely starts with the religious component and ends with an intimate family party, implying that family is central to the lives of labor migrants.

The *khatm* is especially important for returning labor migrants, since the ritual re-initiates them into their home families and communities. Schröder and Stephan-Emmrich also highlight the importance of reunification with extended family and kinship groups. These scholars rightly observe that the public debate in the sending community and country blames labor migration to a non-Muslim country for the increase in divorce rates and "the erosion of the traditional intergenerational contract, which, for instance, expects the youngest son of a family to reside with his parents and care for them in their old age."[89] The unification celebration ensures that migrants are loyal to the traditional way of life, which includes care for wives, children, and elders.

During a collective return of labor migrants in November–December 2012, an experienced migrant returned from Russia and organized a *khatm*. People, particularly elders of other extended families from the same community, gathered for his reinitiation. The first part of the ceremony brought Islamic notions and practices into play. A mullah from the extended family performed the *khatm* and begged for blessing from the sacred souls, including the Islamic Prophet and local saints. The religious blessing also called upon the sacred souls of the descendants, especially deceased (grand)parents, begging them for the "success" of the *khatm* organizer, as well as other migrants. The next stage of the *khatm* combined a meal and talking about labor migrants' religion-based commitment to their families. The more experienced *Rassiyans* also shared their experiences about coping strategies in the receiving country, including the "Islamic" way of life and family protection. The discussion tackled the challenges facing labor migrants and suggested how to use the networks of mediators, family and community members—as well as religious networks—to solve them. The elders struggled to awaken the migrants' family, and religious honor, encouraging them to support one another when they face "situations." In the end, the mullah closed the religious part of the ceremony and let the invited men leave.

Besides *khatm*, the labor migrants organize other family and religious ceremonies, including Ramadan and Kurban holidays, *sadaqa* (literally "charity," which involves endowing local shrines and sacred sites), weddings, and funerals. The remittances are used to organize these ceremonies, which again demonstrate and celebrate family honor, expressed in the moral integrity and commitment of labor migrants. On February 26, 2013, I witnessed and attended a family's charity event; they shared food with the community in the Khoja Mashhad shrine (the central sacred site of Sayyod village). Around a hundred men and women gathered to beg a sacred blessing for the organizer's descendants and offspring. At the beginning of the ceremony, a family elder asked the religious notables and community elders to bless his sons, who are searching for his brother who was lost 7–8 years ago in Russia.

Besides the rites of passage, remittances are also spent on materialized securityscapes for families. For this purpose, labor migrants invest in cement walls and iron gates that fence in their family households and plots. This practice has also been observed in other contexts.[90] The proper maintenance of houses, high walls, and iron gates not only demonstrates labor migrants' economic commitment to their families, but also protects them from any "bad eye" due to the absence of male members. Gossips and ceremonies that collect community members in families serve to monitor and value migrants' families' materialized securityscapes.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

In this article, I have discussed labor migration as an everyday practice that reduces perceived and experienced existential insecurities in a translocal context. The everyday practices of labor migrants include routines, rituals, and life-crisis ceremonies that shape the securityscapes of both migrants and the families and communities they leave behind. As defined here, securityscapes are socio-cognitive spaces—such as materialized structures, identities, and networks—that people shape and maintain to secure their everyday life, movement, and interaction. Securityscapes are context-relevant; each provides security and protection in certain settings and situations. Thus, an individual has multiple securityscapes, most of which are shared with others.

The empirical sections have demonstrated that the securityscapes of labor migrants in the receiving country include mediation networks; regional, ethnic, and religious affiliations; and, chiefly, family bonds. The existential insecurities of labor migration are inherent to many parts of the world,

including the Russian Federation, which absorbs the majority of Tajik migrants. Migrants' illegal and undocumented status increases the threats of slavery, hostage, sickness, xenophobia, detention, and deportation. In most cases, it limits labor migrants' access to social and medical services in the host country.

In such unpredictable situations, personal relations with Russian employers and mediators are important for securing labor migrants' everyday life, in part to reduce the uncertainties of residence registration and work permits in the destination country. The mediators—who can be workplace bosses, police officers, and other powerful men—also offer the possibility of better life and work conditions.

Labor migrants need to extend their securityscapes to the networks of their regional, ethnic, and religious fellows. The fellows protect each other in "situations": when they lose their job, residence, health, or financial means of surviving in the receiving country. The literature indicates that regional, ethnic, and religious networks also perform such an "insurance" function in other receiving countries. In the case of Tajik labor migrants, the networks involve mainly family members and friends from the country of origin. They provide information and financial means to protect each other from the uncertainties of residence and work, as well as from encounters with the legal authorities in the receiving country. These networks also take care of labor migrants, especially juniors and women, in their everyday life, although this is not their direct responsibility.

Labor migrants spend their remittances on ensuring family wealth and wellbeing in the community of origin. The lion's share of remittances is invested in organizing ceremonies dedicated to the maintenance of the translocal securityscapes of labor migrants and the family members they leave behind.

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Chapter Eleven

Illegal Migrants and Pious Muslims

The Paradox of
Bazaar Workers from Tajikistan

Sophie Roche

The role of bazaars in promoting Islam has been discussed in other parts of the world, confirming that Central Asia is not an exception. Whereas in Iran the revolution found a solid base among *bazaarchi*, in Central Asia, Islam is a means of promoting legal justice in a highly corrupt economic environment. Traders indicate that Islam stipulates simple and clear rules for trade that everybody can access and that resist the arbitrariness of politics—all qualities that contemporary legal conditions lack. I have therefore heard Tajik traders praise the Taliban period in Afghanistan, when the regime imposed strict religious rules. Cheating, postponing trade agreements, and breaking negotiations were no longer possible, explained a trader who turned to the Taliban after being cheated by his Afghan partner—one day later he received his money! The trader did not question the methods the Taliban had implemented, nor the political context; he simply assumed that Islam provided a context for trade with reduced risk. Islam spread fastest among traders in Central Asia: bazaars began to host religious groups like the Salafi and are well connected with the economic centers of Dubai.[1] While these groups do not advocate political activism and even claim to support the state, they consider economic activity the key to a religious society. In recent years, the Salafi even established their own bazaar in the capital, Dushanbe, and infiltrated political structures before once again being criminalized by the state in 2016.

Since independence, young Central Asians have started to move northward to Russia. This trend, which has developed since the turn of the century in particular, has become massive in scale. Bazaars and construction work have been major destinations for Tajik labor migrants. The former Cherkiz bazaar in Moscow was headed by the Turkish businessman Tel'man Ismailov, but it was primarily run by migrants, including Tajik migrant workers. Indeed, Tajik porters (*arobakash*) served traders and their clients; guards and security

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staff (*okhrana*) included Tajik migrants; and many Tajiks became successful traders and religious practitioners. Most importantly, Tajik porters financed the chronically underpaid Russian police patrolling the doors of the bazaar—the police would take Tajiks to the nearby forest and empty their pockets before selling them back to their friends and relatives. In short, Cherkiz was considerably dependent on the Tajik workforce at all levels. The bazaar had a mosque, supplied beds in containers, and offered showers, as well as featuring prostitutes and halal cafes.

The bazaar was closed in 2009, for various reasons, and new bazaars opened further to the south of Moscow. The bazaars Sadovod and Lublino were two of the main *torgovye tsentry* (shopping centers) that took over the trade. I have been visiting both bazaars every year since 2010, following traders and *arobakash* workers, talking to security staff, and observing the bazaars' development. One of my main interests was understanding the role Islam was playing in the lives of the traders, porters, and security staff. While migrants' motivation was clearly economic, many young men became religious practitioners in Russia. The ethnographic material presented in this chapter comes from field work in the Rasht Valley of Tajikistan (2002–2006), in the bazaars of Dushanbe (2010) and Khujand (2013), and most importantly from Moscow's bazaars. I will begin with a short overview of the existing research and then turn to the bazaars in Russia. The dynamics of bazaars allowed, firstly, the social and economic space to react to political circumstances; secondly, the integration of values such as religion into the everyday life; and, thirdly, the creation of fertile ground for criminal structures. Bringing these three aspects together, I argue that the bazaar in Moscow is a social fabric in which ethnic hierarchies were shaped through economic niches with a lasting effect and that Islam became a way to counter ethno-economic hierarchies and establish a mode of communication across ethnic identities. We may look at this development as a paradox of Tajik migration in Russia, made possible through the interplay between economic activities, religious values, and criminal structures under political conditions in post-Soviet Russia.

Rather than creating categories, however, the ethnographic description describes the complexities and interdependencies within which Tajik migrants work. This constitutes the precondition for understanding religious motivations, practices, and opinions in relation to economic, criminal, and social activities. In bazaars, economic activities predominate; hence, religion is not necessarily visible, but rather a part of the everyday routine, a means of communication and the basis of solidarity networks. Therefore, most of the descriptions incorporate religious practices along with other activities, avoiding elevating religion to the status of a dominant issue. While Islam is indeed omnipresent and imagined by many Tajik traders to be the best system for organizing trade, it is not always visible and placed at the forefront.

The literature on migration from Central Asia has increased as the phenomenon spreads. It is beyond the scope of this paper to provide a full overview of this rich literature, which captures economic transfers, legal conditions in Russia, and social relationships. Most Tajiks, who are the core of this paper, arrived as migrants sometime after 1990, but many have since acquired Russian passports in order to end the constant insecurity that the unclear and constantly changing laws have produced. While some have not left Russia for more than five years, others are seasonal migrants who return to Tajikistan every winter. Classifying these migrants by passport or length of stay is problematic, as this often changes over time, beginning with a rather long period at the beginning in order to accumulate capital for marriage or to boost the family situation in Tajikistan. This may change during the second stay, depending on many factors, including a migrant's marital situation, his or her job opportunities and skills, the visa regime, kinship networks, and so on.

Though no exact figures exist, the number of migrants from Tajikistan is estimated at between 800,000 and 2 million (out of a population of 8 million). In other words, there is no family in Tajikistan today that is not affected by migration. In the beginning, migrants from Tajikistan were largely men, but this has changed, with women now making up a considerable part of the migrants, as Nafisa Khusenova[2] observed in her study. Women work as traders at the bazaar, as workers in restaurants, and as cleaning staff. As such, they do not work in competition with Tajik men, but are complementary to them, occupying positions that cater to males: distributing tea, producing homemade baked goods, and cleaning toilets (while men sit at the entrance to collect the money).

POST-SOVIET BAZAARS

The Bazaar as Post-Soviet Economy

An impressive amount of research has been conducted on bazaars in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. For some migrant groups, such as the Vietnamese in Germany, bazaars became an economic niche as early as the 1980s.[3] Besides their economic importance, bazaars have been described as important social spaces for various migrant groups that have found themselves forgotten in the macro-political changes that accompanied the independence of the post-Soviet states.

The literature about bazaars in Central Asia contains primarily economic approaches. Master's and PhD theses have provided insights into open market activities, though many of them remain unpublished.[4] Most researchers were interested in bazaars as a transition economy after the Soviet Union,

but they also discuss social dimensions, Soviet history on bazaars, and the dynamics that bazaars have generated. Bazaars are a socio-economic context that even the Soviet regime did not want to abolish completely. Even if bazaar work has "no prestige," as the ethnographer Emil Nasritdinov[5] contends in the case of Kyrgyzstan, it offers the opportunity to accumulate wealth. Compensation for low status may be one reason why Islam has turned into such an important issue among traders in Central Asia. As Boris Nieswand[6] has shown with regard to Ghanaian migrants in Germany, religion can play a major role in imbuing low-status work with prestige, garnering migrants respect back home. Over the last twenty years, bazaars have become centers for pious life, a phenomenon that is by no means restricted to Central Asia.

Among the researchers who have worked on bazaars in Central Asia, Emil Nasritdinov[7] uses the institutional approach to describe the economic and social dimensions of bazaars in Kyrgyzstan. Regine Amy Spector[8] wrote her dissertation on six bazaars in Kyrgyzstan, focusing on property problems, while Rano Turaeva[9] foregrounded trust networks among Uzbek traders in Tashkent. By contrast, Gül Berna Özcan[10] produced a comparative study in which she uncovered the political struggle for power and income that played out through economic conflicts over bazaar revenues. Saulesh Yessenova[11] examined the Barakholka bazaar in Zarya Vostoka, on the outskirts of Almaty, as a specific form of bazaar that is not so much a result of transition from a Soviet state-controlled economy to a free market, but rather represents a central place to circulate services and goods at private profit (though with high levels of risk and uncertainty). Her study is interesting for its estimation of the value of such a bazaar,[12] namely that political elites often profit directly from the income of bazaars and therefore have an interest in maintaining them, despite bazaars' low level of prestige. Since the bazaar has traditionally been seen as a transition economy, a "development of the undeveloped,"[13] or simply a survival strategy, it has remained outside theoretical treatment, Yessenova observes.[14] The complexity and context of bazaars in Central Asia has been repeatedly emphasized, suggesting a move beyond considering the bazaar as in opposition to the market economy and toward study of how they integrated.

Invention of a New Trade Culture

In the Russian context, the emergence of bazaars after the fall of the Soviet Union has been interpreted somewhat differently. Caroline Humphrey[15] offers a fine-grained study on the various modes of economic activities developing in Siberian towns. She considers that,

> Russians seem surprised by what is happening with their trade. In comparison
> with China, Russian trade is atraditional, in the sense that it is inventing its

own new culture as it goes. It is doing this, however, not in a blank field but in an economic terrain inhabited by the disintegrating and unwieldy former state enterprises, as well as by local governments desperate to keep at least some of those enterprises alive.[16]

This invention of a new culture as it goes along has not only led to various forms of trade, many of them described by Humphrey, but has also allowed for the invention of new trading jobs, such as the broker, porter, and other service-oriented jobs. Bazaars in Russia and Eastern Europe have also been associated with problematic political engagement in the shadow economy and the production of insecurity, which favors organized crime structures.

The insecurity that citizens experienced after the Soviet period—and the economic wilderness from which various groups profited—provided the foundation for theoretical works by numerous authors who speak of "Grey Zones in Eastern Europe,"[17] the "Potential of Disorder,"[18] and the dynamics of informality. Informal networks, grey zones, and disorder create spaces of informal negotiations and systems that provide the context for ordinary citizens to cope with arbitrary state actors and unstable economies.[19] At times referred to as chaos (*bardak/bespredel*),[20] this situation has allowed "thieves in law" to establish parallel and interrelated power structures.[21] The informality that may appear threatening is, however, also considered advantageous by some migrants working in lower-service sectors, my informants indicated, because of the flexibility and mobility it offers. This attitude changes once they are deported by the police and blocked for the next three or five years, and even more so as migrants grow older and the lack of stability becomes a burden. Migrants, who live between Central Asia and Russia, also demonstrate high mobility within Russia. They invest first in their families and possible futures in Central Asia; much later, some of them invest in a life in Russia.

The Cherkiz bazaar in Moscow, which will be discussed further below, allowed migrants to participate in Russia's economy without necessarily having to engage directly with the legal system. The Cherkiz bazaar had its own security hierarchy, well interlinked with the state. Selling socks officially, for instance, was perfectly compatible with selling caviar illegally or offering paid services to other migrants; goods stolen from one end of the bazaar could be sold freely at the other end. This practice is by no means restricted to any national group, and migrants profited from it to increase their meager incomes and establish themselves in Russia. "One needs to act like Russians if one wants to survive," was the philosophy of my informants, who considered integration into Russia as going hand-in-hand with multiple economic activities—both official and illegal—and integration into protection networks (*krysha*). Yet while multiple levels of economic activity are considered "normal" for Russians, the same activities would be deemed illegal and criminal for migrants.[22]

While most studies consider the bazaar to be a central space for economic activities, we should not forget that trade is only one part of the whole institution. Indeed, trade may only be a temporary job for many youths in Dushanbe, who "pass time" at the bazaar earning pocket money but do not plan on developing trade as their main activity. Beyond traders, security staff and porters play a central role in the bazaar economy, particularly in the Russian bazaars that are my focus in this paper. For the *arobakash* (porter), the bazaar is a place to accumulate wealth with minimal interference from the Russian state. Some have even remained within the bazaar for several years, leaving it only to leave the country. They work, eat, sleep, pray, fast, and live entirely at the bazaar, communicating with the outside world via mobile phone. In such a context, we need to analyze religious activities in close relation to migrants' daily life, which is shaped by their economic activities. Here, the literature on both Russia and Central Asia has remained thin. Gertrud Hüwelmeier has, however, provided a detailed study on the role of religion among Vietnamese migrants working in bazaars in Germany. "Markets and religions have long existed symbiotically,"[23] she states, yet the transformation of religion varies with migratory flows.

Central Asian migrants avoid transporting religious items when they leave in search of a job. The reason they give is political: if a migrant is caught with religious items or books, he or she might be suspected of extremism and religious activism, which is associated with anti-governmental activities. In order not to draw attention, migrants prefer to abstain from transporting religious items. Nevertheless, those I spoke with told me that they did take with them certain religious items: mobile phones containing religious movies or talks; talismans; prayer carpets or prayer beads; and chaplets. Migrants abroad will also call home to consult Tajik religious authorities.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the bazaar became an economic bridge, helping hundreds of thousands of former Soviet citizens through difficult periods in Russia, Eastern Europe, and Central Asia. However, bazaars were not solely a phenomenon of transition; they became an inherent part of the post-Soviet economy as it adapted to changing political, social, and global economic conditions. In Central Asia today, the center of each *raion* features several bazaars that are open weekly or daily. Going to the bazaar in Tajikistan has become a Sunday event, a leisure activity, and an enjoyable part of life, even for those who cannot afford to buy more than an ice cream. Even the word "Sunday" reflects this trend: it has become *ruzi bozor* ("bazaar day") in colloquial Tajik. The bazaar is the event of the week, the place to meet friends or a secret lover, solve issues with an enemy, buy and sell, engage in games and bets, negotiate, and show off one's new outfit. For young people, in particular, the bazaar has become the place where events happen that will be told and retold as stories throughout the week.

Though bazaars were associated with market liberalization, their capacity to exert control seems to have eluded the attention of researchers. During and long after the Tajik civil war of the 1990s, bazaars in the Rasht Valley were controlled by *mujaheds*. Besides forbidding the sale of certain goods (alcohol or cigarettes), this was also a way of controlling the local population's religious conformity and educating them about "improper" behavior. At the same time, such involvement was a way to reintegrate former fighters into civil life as productive members of society. This was important for the families of many *mujaheds*, who had no other means of re-integrating their fighting members.[24] Over the years, the *mujaheds'* power gradually declined until they were ordinary traders who were tolerated by the population.

To summarize, bazaars have played a central role in post-Soviet countries, and continue to be important for migrants and settled people from Central Asia. Described as places of disorder, chaos, and danger, bazaars nevertheless appear to migrants as spaces of flexibility and relative security in a legally volatile country. In what follows, I will be less interested in the transnational dimension of the bazaars in Moscow than in looking at the bazaar as a space of relative flexibility and security due to interdependencies, strict hierarchies, and options to leave.[25]

For reasons of space, I have concentrated on bazaars' economic activities. This paper concentrates on interdependencies, hierarchies, and opportunities in relation to the individual condition and capacities of migrants. Rather than developing categories, this chapter outlines interdependencies and relationalities in selected bazaars and the role Islam plays in this context.

TORGOVYE TSENTRY AND BAZAARS IN MOSCOW

Many rural migrants from Central Asia have moved to Russia in search of work. Particularly since the beginning of the 2000s, the number of such migrants has increased considerably. Besides construction and public services, a large number of migrants work in bazaars. In Russia, the large bazaars on the outskirts of big cities such as Moscow and St. Petersburg have developed into something like micro-empires, in the sense that they have their own hierarchy, security apparatus, housing, supply system, etc. Central Asians do not own bazaars, but work at all levels within them, as OMON, traders, security staff, religious personnel, and service staff. The latter often live at the bazaar and do not leave for many months, perhaps even years, at a time. The bazaar is a fast-changing-world; it adapts to political changes, economic opportunities and disruptions, and migration regimes and dynamics. The aim of this section is not, therefore, to describe a static picture of a bazaar in Russia. Instead, I wish to present the complexity, interdependency, and opportunity that

bazaar life opens to migrants from Central Asia. For reasons of space, I will have to omit details on changing visa regimes, the politics of migration, and economic transfers to Central Asia. More attention will be paid to the various workers, their relationships, and religious practices. In other words, I take an ethnographic approach to the topic and follow phenomenological suggestions displaying knowledge as "thick" descriptions. The chapter is based on ethnographic research collected during regular fieldwork in Moscow between June 2010 and November 2016 (a total of about 6 months).

Cherkiz

Until 2010, the largest bazaar in Moscow was Cherkiz. This bazaar emerged in the beginning of the 1990s and expanded until it was closed down in June 2009. A container bazaar,[26] Cherkiz covered an area of more than 200 square kilometers and had an annual turnover of between US$10 billion and US$25 billion, making it Russia's largest bazaar in terms of space and capital. More than 100,000 people worked there; the Federal Migration Service estimated that Chinese migrants made up the largest groups of traders, about 60 percent of the total. About 45 percent of Muscovites shopped regularly at this bazaar, contributing to the one million visitors daily.[27]

In fact, Cherkiz was not one bazaar but many bazaars, each with its own territory and administration. Each bazaar was surrounded by a wall, with a few doors connecting one bazaar to the next. The workers referred to these bazaars as "territories." Within the territories, sections were often accorded ethnic references if a group of traders was dominant. Terms like the "Georgian bazaar," "Chinese bazaar," "Arab bazaar," "Afghan bazaar," "Jewish bazaar," etc. were known to the people. Though the traders within these bazaars were never a homogenized group, each ethnicity dominated a specific kind of goods: Chinese were known to run the shoe market, Afghans specialized in cashmere jumpers and stone items, and Vietnamese dominated the cheap clothing market. Each territory was headed by an administration that had its office at the entrance to the specific bazaar. The administration was responsible for addressing all issues, including illegal negotiations with the police, trading issues, security, and cleaning.

The bazaar was a space for illegal activities for which the Chinese were later blamed. One of the main routes for smuggled goods was through the Balkans.[28] Newspaper reports in 2009 were mainly interested in the traders' activities and smuggling, and established the main narrative that Cherkiz was a problem because of illegal activities that made Russia lose millions of dollars every year. The main owner of the bazaar was an Azerbaijani-born mountain Jew, Tel'man Ismailov, who had both Russian and Turkish citi-

zenship.[29] It is said that Putin disliked that Ismailov invested outside Russia rather than supporting the Russian economy. Shortly before Cherkiz was closed, Ismailov had just opened a new hotel and organized a lavish party in Turkey. The official reasons for the shutting-down, however, were the bazaar's illegal activities, Chinese smuggling of clothing via the Balkan route, and the trading of dangerous substances from China. Criminal activities were also highlighted, as well as the diversion of taxes affecting the national government (at local level, Moscow mayor Yuri Mikhailovich Luzhkov had good relations with Ismailov and obviously received enough income to allow the bazaar to operate for almost twenty years). Thus, the personal story behind the closing-down of the bazaar remained open to rumors and press speculation but was never officially spelled out.

During its closure, a number of high-profile legal cases were opened, though no systematic procedure was implemented. According to a bazaar worker, for several nights criminal gangs (he called them "Georgian gangs") came and emptied containers, pretending that they had to confiscate the goods because of tax problems. The next day, this part of the bazaar would be empty and the authorities would decide to tear the stands down. The closure was carried out through bizarre practices and criminal activities, and in view of political interests; it led to rumors that produced insecurity and fear. It was—and remains—impossible to clearly delineate between state-initiated activities, legal measures, and criminal opportunities.[30]

The Russian traders were the most vocal in their protests, while the many other nationalities that made up the bazaar were less represented. Media articles concentrated on the traders and their activities and problems, as well as their resulting unemployment from the closure of Cherkiz and the possibility of allowing new bazaars to open. Migration was considered to fuel such problems, yet there was no evidence that groups like the Tajiks were keeping the bazaar running. The reason for this is that not only were their activities outside any legal framework, but they were also at the lowest level of providing income to the security apparatus, and most importantly the chronically underpaid Moscow police.

In the following I will convey the words of a Tajik worker who was employed as a porter in the bazaar. His description is not necessarily representative of the many individual experiences, but reflects the reasoning of an ordinary worker who received his information from within the bazaar. The informant—let's call him Murod—came to Moscow in search of work in the early 1990s and joined friends from his village who had found work in Cherkiz. (Murod was the first of his extended family to leave Tajikistan.) Tajiks from his region, Gharm, had already secured a part of the bazaar through a brigadier, so Murod was easily integrated into that economic niche. (The

bazaar had been distributed among the different brigadiers and again among Tajiks from different regions.) Gharmi worked together and shared one sleeping container; Tajiks from other regions had separate containers: *Vakhshi*, *novobodi*, *badaghshani*, etc. Tajiks formed solidarity groups that allowed only their own people to work on their territory.

Murod joined the Gharmi sharing the 200 beds in the container located above the containers of the Georgian bazaar. Other Tajiks settled in the large cellars through which passed the heating tubes. In between these tubes they had erected beds and quasi-dormitories. Fathers and their sons, mothers and their children all lived within the bazaar. Any accommodation in the bazaar was better than outside, as leaving the bazaar would mean passing the security ring of Russian militia that surrounded the bazaar and separated it from the rest of Russia. Cherkiz provided all the facilities a migrant would need, from bureaucracy to accommodation. The bazaar's infrastructure included restaurants, toilets, showers, prostitutes, and prayer rooms.[31] Tajiks working as porters usually did not leave the bazaar once they entered and only worked to accumulate money. According to Murod, it was the focus on money that kept the system alive. Many young boys had never seen so much money before and accepted all kinds of treatment in pursuit of cash.

Porters (*arobakash*) were subordinated to the brigadier, who was directly responsible to the administration. Thus, the workers were completely dependent on the moods of this brigadier. He employed helpers (*yordamchi*) to exert direct control over the porters, from whom it was the easiest to extract money:

> For instance, Kyrgyz brought a truck of goods for which ten people were needed to empty it. For instance, to empty this truck and bring the goods to the storage container would cost the owner 20,000 [RUB]—often they came by night. Each kind of good, each load, had its own price, for instance 15,000 or 20,000 or 30,000, whatever. We would discuss among us who would go to take the job and empty the truck. The brigadier himself would not work. He had another brigadier, his helper. He himself would sleep. However, if ten of us worked together, then the salary was divided into 11 portions, as the brigadier would receive the same amount as we did. If each of us made 500 RUB, he would also receive 500. And another 500 would go to his helper:[32] that is, the amount would be cut into 12 portions even if only ten people worked. The brigadier would call us if a truck had to be emptied and he supervised the workers, shouting and beating us if somebody did not work as he wished. The brigadier in our area used sticks to beat us. The brigadier had been a boy who had suffered hunger in his village and had seen a lot of pain. Somehow, he had managed to be taken by the Jews, who employed him as a brigadier, and he became very rich. He came during the night with water that he threw on us and would yell, "You came to work, get up and work!" He caused us a lot of pain. Later, he was shot in the leg in Tajikistan. He

fled, but he cannot go back to Tajikistan now because they would kill him—he really caused the Tajiks a lot of pain. In the middle of the night, he would wake us up and beat us with a stick. You could do nothing even if you were much stronger than him—he could simply denounce you to the police, who would take you—we could do nothing.[33]

Some groups, Murod explained, were more close-knit and would close ranks if any of them were beaten. They would gather and beat the responsible person, whether brigadier or someone else. In one instance, the *vakhshi* group even turned a bus upside down. As such, not all brigadiers had the power of the one Murod had to bear.

My informants who worked in Cherkiz reported many stories about how they tried to find ways to send their savings back to Tajikistan. It was impossible to simply walk out of the bazaar with money in their pockets, as the militia[34] was waiting at the gate and would simply take them into the nearby forest to rob them. The more vulnerable groups—the porters, hence the Tajiks—bore the brunt of this; it was more difficult to arrest the traders (though it still happened). As soon as a porter came out, he was taken by

Figure 11.1.   Tajik porter taking a rest.
Provided by Sophie Roche.

the militia, brought to a waiting car on the main road, and taken away. After robbing the victim, they would beat him if they considered it appropriate. In this condition, the porter was then taken to the police station, where he had to call for relatives or friends to bring money to release him. "This was their bread," Murod explained. The militia made their living by robbing Tajik porters and Vietnamese traders (the two main groups). Tajiks became sophisticated at hiding their money, netting it into their trousers, hiding it in toothpaste tubes, or concealing it inside their passports. They used any means possible to get their money out of the bazaar. Inside the bazaar, porters kept their money with a trusted trader, so as to not leave anything within the dormitory container. Porters depend on a patron-client relationship with a trader who can move freely, and takes responsibility for the porter's money and documents.

Later, Murod explained, a person turned up who worked as a bank for the Tajiks. Iskandar was a businessman who had a container selling cloth, run by a friend. His main business, however, was collecting Tajiks' money: he would hand it over to a pilot, who in Dushanbe would hand the money to another person, who brought it to the villages and households. This banking network cost the client 150 somoni per 100 dollars. While this was a high price for the migrants to pay, it was the only safe means of sending money home without the militia taking it on the way, either in Russia or in Uzbekistan.

If we look at Cherkiz from the Tajik point of view, we see that the bazaar's infrastructure and services were almost completely provided by unskilled Tajik male labor. These workers held the most vulnerable positions, but were also the most independent, as they could leave at any time without debt, since all wages were paid by the day. However, their position as illegal workers promoted the view that Tajiks were illegal, half-criminal workers doing the lowest form of work without complaint. If a porter was killed in the bazaar, no police would ever investigate. The file would be closed with the note "killed by a car," or so Murod remembered. The affair would be solved at the administrative office and the Tajik community would collect money to send the dead body back to Tajikistan. The life of a porter had no value, and did not even legally exist in Russia, informants stated.

While many porters remained in such positions throughout their stay in Russia, professional mobility was possible. One would, however, need a larger budget to acquire a container. The father of a Tajik trader climbed the ranks in this way. He started with a few items and finally rented a whole container that his son took over; since the closure of Cherkiz, the son has continued to work in Sadovod. One way to increase the income a porter earned was to divert goods while transporting them from one place to another within the bazaar and sell the stolen goods in another part of the bazaar.

The Cherkiz bazaar reflects what Humphrey has called the atraditional dynamic—that is, the invention of culture as it goes. Its inner dynamic, negotiations, and structure are not rooted in any tradition; it is an example of making a society within a space controlled not by state laws and regulations, but by individual state actors who use their power to generate income. Inside the bazaar, a society emerged that was organized around a strong hierarchy and group interdependency. Ethnic groups were some of the social groups to emerge in this context. We need to think of ethnic groups as being open economic groups (i.e. porters becoming traders), but social solidarity groups. If a Tajik died, for instance, Tajiks would collect money in order to get him transported back to his native village. Any Tajik would contribute whatever he could spare, a practice that all Tajiks remember well. It comforted them that if they were to die, their compatriots would take care of them, independent of the life they lived. This practice created solidarity among the migrants in Cherkiz and in Russia more generally; it was rooted in the religious belief that a body should be buried not only according to Muslim rules, but specifically in one's native village. The difficult conditions in Russia motivated imams in Tajikistan to consider deceased migrants as martyrs (*shahid*) if they had lived a pious life throughout their stay. Although this does not happen often, religiously rooted solidarity in the case of death has continued to exist throughout both economic and political turmoil.

Violence as means of control was an established practice throughout Cherkiz. During my fieldwork on Sadovod, which developed out of Cherkiz, I observed similar situations to those described by my informants. The brigadier's assistants would beat up the porters and collect part of their income. The violence that developed vis-à-vis Tajik service providers cannot be explained in terms of historical relationships; racial prejudices against Tajiks are not the cause but rather a consequence of Cherkiz. Based on the many references to Cherkiz as a place of ethnic status groups, I consider Cherkiz one of the original fabrics of social relationships that set the main categories of racial perceptions in Moscow today. By this I mean that in Cherkiz, economic and ethnic niches developed and fixed the status of groups in society. These were experienced first-hand by clients who came to shop and reproduced on television when the bazaar was closed down. Tajiks came to be portrayed as a poor, submissive, even dull group of migrants, a perception that has been promoted in the humiliating TV show *Nasha Rossiia* (Our Russia), which portrays two *Gastarbeiter*, Jamshud and Ravshan, as Tajik migrants unable to perform even the easiest tasks. Despite the fact that Tajiks—like all Central Asians—are actually found in all economic echelons, from lawyers and doctors to unlearned construction workers, public perception has not changed and Tajiks remain the lowest of all migrant groups. One informant illustrated

this by explaining that his nine-year old daughter (an Uzbek born in Russia) was warned in school by her Russian girlfriend that if she did not learn properly she would become "Tajik," suggesting not that she would change her ethnicity but that she would become an unskilled worker with low status. The racial hierarchy established by the Russian media has been nourished by experiences such as Cherkiz.[35] If the statistics are to be believed, about half of Muscovites shopped at the bazaar regularly and hence experienced the ethnic hierarchy first hand. While they may not have been able to differentiate all ethnic groups (since this was not relevant knowledge), they retained memories of the linkages between economic niches and ethnic groups, such as the Tajik porters. In conversation, Muscovites would portray Tajiks as street cleaners, illegal service workers, and construction workers.

More importantly, however, the social-ethnic hierarchy established in Cherkiz set the parameters for relationships between various ethnic minorities, particularly those from the Caucasus and Central Asia. For them, the ethnic niches were relevant to solving everyday issues (where and with whom to eat, sleep, or pray). Thus, the social fabric of Cherkiz continued far beyond the bazaar, setting the rules for hierarchical relationships among Muslim minorities in Russia.

TORGOVYI KOMPLEKS SADOVOD AND *TORGOVYI TSENTR* MOSKVA

When Cherkiz was closed down, new bazaars were opened on the outskirts of Moscow, now called shopping centers (*torgovyi kompleks* or *torgovyi tsentr*). Both TK Sadovod and TTs Mosvka developed after Cherkiz. In this section, I will focus on Sadovod, but include details from Moskva (colloquially called Lublino). I have conducted fieldwork on both bazaars since 2010, but spent more time in Sadovod, since workers in the Moskva trade center are subject to stronger control. (This control has increased year by year.) While Tajiks make up the majority of the porters and a considerable portion of the taxi drivers at both bazaars, they do not have a place to stay in Lublino but live elsewhere and come in the morning to work. Sadovod is bigger than Lublino with regard to its area, and hosts open and closed trading halls. Lublino is made of one main covered hall and a few smaller halls, hosting mostly Vietnamese and Chinese traders, who make the bazaar a very busy place.

On Sadovod's Internet presentation, they claim to have existed for twenty years on 40 hectares, with 8,000 "trade pavilions" (container selling spaces), space for 9,500 cars and buses, and 36,500,000 visitors annually. Reportedly, "The TK Sadovod offers products of representatives from factories and

industries in Russia, Belarus, Turkey, Poland, Kyrgyzstan and China."[36] A list of the restaurants that provide mostly Central Asian food includes names like Kabul, Central Asia, Caravan, Azeri, Chaikhana, and Bishkek City. In fact, most restaurants are run by Uzbeks, Kyrgyz, and Tajiks, but Uzbekistan and Tajikistan do not seem to be attractive labels, whereas the designations "Bishkek" or "Kyrgyzstan" appear to be good for marketing. Even if Sadovod opened twenty years ago, it became populated only after the closure of Cherkiz. Like Cherkiz, Tajiks can live in the bazaar, as containers are reserved for them in the storage area.

During my fieldwork, the bazaar was repeatedly visited by police operations, each time with a specific target. They came to hunt for illegal migrants, clamp down on illegal sales of music, criticize hygiene matters in kitchens, etc. Traders alone were never targeted by the raids. Every time, the bazaar leader was able to warn the group concerned, which would not appear at work that day. The workers' general attitude toward the bazaar leader was rather positive, since he protected his little empire. Traders who were cheated could apply for help and the leadership would do anything possible to defend them.

The organization of security staff, porters, and cleaners was organized by Tajiks. Hence, this leadership position was a strongly desired role for migrant Tajiks and their gangs. The leader continues to use the hierarchy to extract the maximum income from the porters, whereas the security staff manage their lives by and large with less interference. One of the means to hassle porters was to force them to buy certain clothing for work. Whereas at Cherkiz porters had no uniform, in Sadovod and Lublino the porters wear uniforms to make them easily identifiable. This uniform was changed from a green one to a blue one, from a summer to a winter uniform, and at times they were even forced to buy specific shoes (cheap sport shoes that they had to buy for double the market price) to match the uniform. Porters are forced to buy new uniforms every time new designs are introduced. They also pay a daily rental fee for their carrier, for which they remain responsible whether they are ill or working.

In 2016, the leader was replaced by another Tajik, Hoji Abdujabbor (whom most Tajiks in Moscow call Hoji Jabbor), who, according to workers, is less brutal. The press reports that Abdujabbor (Hoji Jabbor) is a leader in the criminal world of Moscow and a friend of another important leader, Nurullo, who helped him get this position. However, the men later turned on each other and clashed violently, leaving Nurullo in the hospital:

> Moscow authorities have expressed concern about the conflict between criminal groups, "Rosbalt" was informed. This information comes from sources in law enforcement agencies saying that conflict erupted between mafia groups in Moscow. In relation to this, "Rosbalt" wrote that "Hoji Abdujabbor and Nu-

Figure 11.2.   Uzbek porter from Tajikistan with a load.
Provided by Sophie Roche

rullo, who are two influential people of the underworld of the Russian capital and that maintained 'friendly relationships,' are now divided by a trench." Hoji Abdujabbor, thanks to Nurullo—the latter being a former commander of special units in Tajikistan—enjoyed support from Moscow authorities and managed to gain influence in the criminal world, paying Nurullo his share. However, he distanced himself from the practices of his partner, which was the cause of the outbreak of this conflict. This was illustrated recently by an attempt to kill Nurullo, which, according to "Rosbalt," bears the signature of the criminal group run by Hoji Abdujabbor. He created a special group containing sportsmen with the aim of ending—by force—obedience to Nurullo, the source writes. Nurullo, seriously injured, is in hospital for treatment in secret and has claimed that, once recovered, he will give an appropriate answer to the "Hoji," which will demand a lot of sacrifice. The event at the graveyard "Khovansk" is child's play compared to the war to come. It should be mentioned that in Khovansk, Hoji Abdujabbor's boys [followers] were recently attacked, said "Rosbalt."[37]

Whereas the press saw this clash as a fight among the mafia, the workers at Sadovod considered it a rivalry over a lucrative position that could only be defended through violence. The relationship between trading activities and criminal activities, including violent gang protection, has been elaborated by

Humphrey: "No one seems to consider calling the police; most common is the appeal to higher power—in other words, to protection. Here it is interesting that Russians refer to both patrons in the legitimate power structure and to racketeers by the same term, *krysha*, meaning roof."[38]

While "traders in Sadovod do not need the protection of gangs anymore"[39] (this has changed since Putin has harshly taken control of the police, my informants explained), the position of leader of security and service staff continues to be part of what Humphrey would call a mafia structure. Since this economic niche at the bazaar is occupied by Tajiks, they form the main gangs. Tajik traders told me that some time ago a group of armed Tajik entered the bazaar and challenged the leader, Hoji Jabbor; thus, they were now expecting an answer. The fight that took place on November 14, 2016 was therefore the actual struggle for power over this position, won by Hoji Jabbor, whose group seriously wounded his opponent. The conflict is not limited to this single event; in May, boys under the protection of Hoji Jabbor were attacked at the graveyard Khovansk.[40] Three of them were killed and 30 injured. In this graveyard, as in Sadovod, there had been a leadership change shortly beforehand, bringing with it rivalries and mobilizing criminal groups against one another. In this context, the former leader Yuri Jabuev was arrested and blamed for having distributed weapons and organizing the attack. The graveyard is believed to be a lucrative place to make money, and since Tajik workers provide services there, they are considered rich. The influence of leaders like Hoji Jabbor is not limited to one economic domain but follows opportunities and expands as possibilities emerge. These episodes demonstrate that criminality continues for Tajik migrants in bazaars, making life even more difficult and their job riskier than Russian law already makes it.[41]

News agencies' descriptions of Hoji Jabbor differ from the way workers talk about him. The news agency AsiaPlus tells the story that he is just a businessman and was not involved in any criminal activity, nor in the conflict at the graveyard. Hoji Jabbor is respected because of his several visits to the holy lands (*hajj*). Being called a criminal in Tajik state media thus conflicts with his status. As such, he decided to begin charity work, which means contributing to the regular donation calls that the migrant community puts out to help Tajiks in need. This charity, which should be linked to his name and status (*hoji*), fits into the migrants' expectation that a leader who claims religious respect should invest his wealth in good causes. To what degree this initiative will translate into political power is as yet unclear. Rumors assert that the fights between gangs in Russia link back to the government in Tajikistan, which has economic and power interests among Tajiks in Russia. While I have no proof of such interaction, the excellent research of Gül Berna Özcan[42] on bazaars in Central Asia underscores that such interlinkages

are possible. Whereas during the first decade after independence bazaars developed as dynamic, innovative marketplaces, ruling families and criminal groups have increasingly brought the bazaar economy under their control.[43] Key positions on the main bazaars in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan were given to close members of these ruling families, provoking increasing anger on the part of traders. A clash between political mafia groups and traders can be seen in the revolutions of 2005 and 2010 in Kyrgyzstan and in 2005 in Andijan, where the businessmen organized themselves in opposition to the state. Hence, ordinary people's claim that gang fights in Moscow are also of a political nature is plausible, though it remains uncertain. After all, traders have become the vanguard of Islam in Central Asia, as well as in Russia. To be sure, migrants—and, more importantly, those who remain in Tajikistan— do not question sources of wealth; it is accepted that surviving as a leader in Russia requires physical struggle and the protection of criminal networks.

Thus, the lines between criminality, politics, and work relations are blurred; life in Moscow moves between legal, semi-legal, illegal, criminal, trustworthy, and religious activities that often do not oppose each other. Support, charity, and help do not exclude criminal participation. In recent years, Tajik migrants have discovered sport clubs as a way to raise "Tajik self-consciousness" and respond to "Russian humiliation," as migrants have phrased it. Sport clubs have become popular among Moscow's Muslim youth, as they keep "the body and mind fit," informants explain. Martial arts are the most popular discipline among these young men.[44] As a young informant explained, "we [Tajiks] are getting stronger, more and more train in sports and can defend themselves." For my interlocutors, physical conditioning became an appropriate way to respond to humiliation and competition between ethnic minorities. Tajiks have learned from Chechens, whom they consider the strongest of the Muslim ethnic groups. Hence, they have become part of a Chechen network of sportsmen that enjoys respect and favor, and by which they are protected. This development goes along with strengthening religiosity—physical strength, religious practice, and leading a healthy life (no alcohol or cigarettes) are bound up with economic success.

Independent of these Tajik gang conflicts, Russian militias continue to pay attention to these bazaars. Sadovod is regularly raided by the militia in search of illegal migrants. Nevertheless, traders consider Sadovod a safer place than Cherkiz, and appreciate the leaders' defense of their traders. The leaders usually inform the migrants or the section targeted by officials and the militia, and that day they do not show up at work or close down the relevant areas (music-selling places, food stores, etc.). Such raids target the service sector, not trade, which has since 2007 been run entirely by traders holding Russian passports. In 2011, there seemed to be tensions between the bazaar leadership

and the city of Moscow, as the bazaar was completely closed time and again. Workers were permanently afraid that the bazaar would not reopen and that the story of Cherkiz would be repeated. The Tajik workers were constantly insecure and ready to leave for other jobs.

Compounding the bazaar's decreasing economic success, a new market area has developed on the other side of the motorway. An area even bigger than Sadovod has been dedicated to European shopping malls, including stores like IKEA, Obi, Media Markt, and Auchan, to say nothing of the hundreds of small shops. Spacious parking areas offer easy access to the various shopping centers. Even if the quality of the goods and the prices differ, trade in Sadovod has decreased to the extent that many traders have difficulties surviving. One of my key informants found himself obliged to send his wife and children back to Tajikistan and take other Tajik men into the flat to share costs and store up enough savings. The man and his younger brother care for their parents and three other brothers with families and children, which is increasingly difficult.

Hierarchies and Dependencies

The hierarchy of the bazaar is a pyramid, atop which stands the bazaar owner. Often Tajiks refer to him as a "Jew," an identity they link to anti-Islamic law and keeping Muslims economically dependent. The "Jew," as the "new Russian imperialist," refers less to a religious conviction than to a distinction between Muslims and non-Muslims in terms of economic success. The owner of the bazaar is, however, also a "fair person," my informants explained, as he is very keen to provide a secure space for traders. Any robbery or cheating is taken seriously by the bazaar leadership and punished immediately. Still, robbery happens regularly, not only on a small scale, but also by large criminal groups that take whole containers of goods, resell them cheaply, and then retreat until the situation cools down. For many years, a Tajik criminal group consisting of members of one small village in Tajikistan specialized in large-scale robbery in Russia. Upon completing their operations in Russia, they retreated to their village for a couple of months, making it impossible for police to catch them. The income generated from such large-scale robbery is sufficient to lead a comfortable life in Tajikistan for many months. Crossing the border increases profit margins by changing rubles into Central Asian currencies and transforms humiliating experiences in Russia into honor back home by organizing lavish feasts or buying luxury items. Moreover, Central Asian security systems are arbitrary and more interested in controlling political dissidents than in prosecuting ordinary criminals.

Figure 11.3 provides an idea of the hierarchy as described by Tajiks. This clarification is important—the hierarchy may appear different if recounted by a Russian trader, for whom services at the bazaar would simply be one category. For my informants, the leader of the security staff and the services appeared to be the most powerful; they emphasized the hierarchy that affected their own lives. A porter (*arobakash*), for instance, pays 300 RUB a day to rent the carrier from the brigadier, and 350 RUB a day for bed and food. Workers are provided with food, but it is so bad that many prefer to eat at the bazaar.[45] Since they are responsible for their carrier whether they work or not and there is no place to store them, they depend on a trader who al-

bazaar owner

8 administration staff

security

security (unarmed, two per line)

TRADERS

brigadier

helper

porter, social service staff

cleaning staff
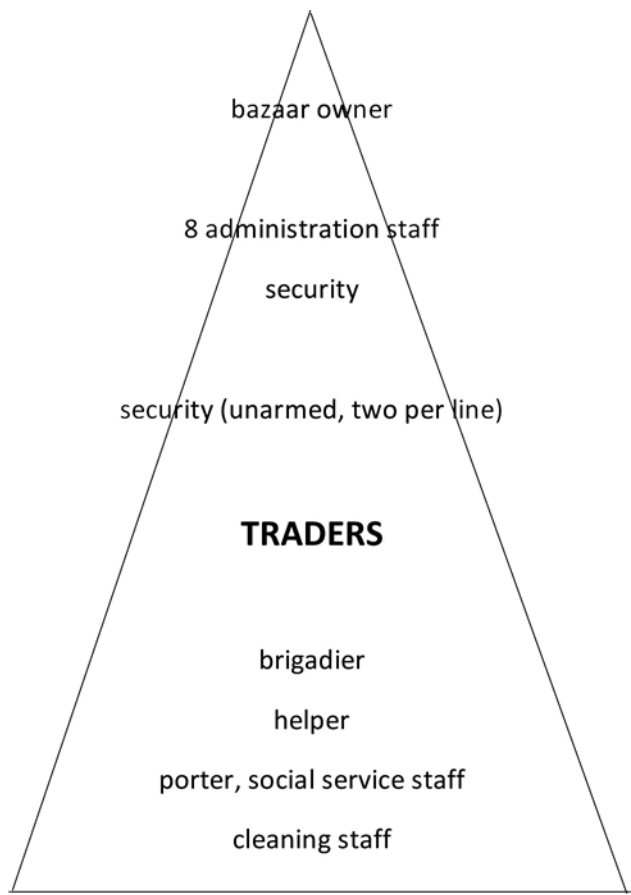
Figure 11.3. Hierarchy of the bazaar from a migrant's perspective

lows them to lock it into a container overnight. Porters' wages depend on the amount of goods they transport. There is a fixed price of 100 RUB per bolt of cloth; 50 RUB per transport goes to the brigadier's helpers. As of 2010, the security staff received a fixed salary of 25,000 RUB per month.[46] Traders earn according to their own capacity, yet container rentals cost more or less the same, somewhere around US$800 per month in 2010, and rising to more than US$1,000 in 2014. Corner shops cost half as much to rent, but require the goods to be stored in someone else's container overnight.

The security pyramid is rather long, reflecting the reality that Russia is an insecure place. Eight militias patrol the bazaar throughout the day; they are armed and Russian-Slavic in appearance. They come from a security company rather than from state militias. If any conflict erupts, they are called immediately. Beneath them are Russian security personnel *(okhrana)* who patrol the bazaar and Tajiks who regulate the traffic and outside area: one shift works during the day and the other during the night.

The bazaars are organized in rows (*liniia*) and then into sections headed by brigadiers. While kinship is not a precondition for getting a brigadier job, several brigadiers recall being asked by a relative to replace them, in order to keep the position within the extended family. In principle, everyone can apply to the head of the brigadiers for the job. Most brigadiers are *hojis*: that is, they have undertaken the hajj to Mecca. However, this is a result of how lucrative the job is, not a precondition for getting it. This is also true for brigadiers in the construction sector. Being *hoji* gives them authority over the many porters and construction workers who do not have the financial capacity to go on the hajj. It also allows the brigadiers to position themselves at the front when the workers pray together, even if workers do not believe that being *hoji* makes the brigadiers better people. *Hoji* is more than a religious status; it is a justification of economic success, leadership, and religious superiority. As mentioned above in the case of Hoji Jabbor, being *hoji* does not even exclude one from being a part of criminal structures, as it functions as a status reference. Like religious practices that help translate humiliation in Russia into respect in Tajikistan, the *hoji* status translates ruthless economic success into leadership and provides the justification for this success. This link was made possible because after the Soviet Union not everybody could afford to go on the hajj. Consequently, those who went to Mecca gained uncontested respect. Today, the situation has normalized and most Central Asians who want to go on the hajj can manage to do so. Hence, in order to be considered a moral leader, more than *hoji* status is needed. As such, charity has developed into an activity particularly linked to *hojis* in Tajikistan. This fact provides the background for Hoji Jabbor's effort to increase his popularity through charitable donations.[47]

These brigadiers have their *pomochniki* or *yordamchi* (assistants), who organize the porters and are meant to avoid a client being overrun by porters looking for jobs. Porters are allowed to accept goods only within their assigned spaces (one or two lines). In front of a trader, the brigadier pretends to manage the chaos and organize the safe transport of goods. However, this is only for show, to justify their portion of the money and hide the strict hierarchy under which the workers are subordinated. Since it is the porter that is paid, the brigadier's assistant then demands 50 RUB for each transport. Asked why the *pomochniki* were so young, the brigadier told me that they had less moral objections about beating up older men; after all, a *hoji* is not supposed to use violence. In other words, the brigadier uses the aggression of youth to collect money from the migrants. The production of chaos that the brigadier's assistants then claimed to control in front of clients was a performance as part of a hierarchical system—which nevertheless contributes to negative perceptions of migrant workers.

Since the vast majority of porters in both bazaars under research are Tajiks, the brigadiers are also Tajiks, making it impossible for Russian-speaking traders to understand their conversations. The porters *(arobakash)* are the lowest in the social hierarchy. Many of them left Tajikistan before finishing school or because farming no longer covers daily costs. I have even met a frightening number of young Tajik *arobakash* who were illiterate. They carve out livelihoods by taking any opportunities that arise, including flexible jobs. Some stay in the bazaar as *arobakash*, while others move between factory work, construction, and the bazaar during their stay in Russia. According to some porters, the job can be lucrative if undertaken seriously and strategically rather than opportunistically. One informant, for instance, has forged close contacts with traders who trust him and call him when goods need to be transported, which gives him an advantage over the other porters on his rows. His money and private documents (passport) stay with one trader with whom he has a close relation of trust in order to avoid being robbed in the bazaar's dormitory. Although he was offered the position of trader (offered goods on credit to start), he rejected it because he wanted to remain flexible and independent. Porters are paid on the spot; hence, they can leave any time. This flexibility is one of the markers of the post-Soviet economic context in Russia and sets it apart from migration in Europe, which is based on pre-set contracts that bind *Gastarbeiter* to their employer for a fixed period. Young men who come to Russia for the first time, often straight from school, look for opportunities that allow flexibility and mobility. They often have no idea where they will work, but simply join relatives or friends in Russia. Though this does not apply to all migrants, the approach is characteristic of many young men's opportunistic strategies.

Traders are independent of the brigadier and porter, as they are the ones who keep the bazaar running. They either own a container or engage with an owner to whom they pay rent. In 2010, traders were enthusiastic; the brothers I was working with even considered upgrading their business by renting more expensive containers. However, the following year saw a reversal of economic conditions, and rather than upgrading, many businessmen closed their shops completely. The reasons were not so much global economic conditions (often bazaar trade deals with small sums) as they were political harassment. For instance, Sadovod was supposed to provide only covered places for selling, and the rent increased, thus reducing the profit margin. By 2012, Sadovod was half-empty and the other half was increasingly taken over by Vietnamese. Most container owners are Russians, while the traders are mostly non-Slavic Russians, many of them former migrants. A new law in 2006 made it impossible for foreigners to work as traders, which motivated many Tajiks—including some of my informants—to fictively marry a Russian girl in order to obtain citizenship. Corner shops without containers pay their rent directly to the bazaar and are cheaper. Here we find religious items in the form of CDROM with the disc sellers or special shops that only

Figure 11.4.   Tajik vendors at the bazaar.
Provided by Sophie Roche.

sell religious items (books, drugs, perfume, toothbrushes, technologies for prayer, etc.).

The business of selling discs was run by a Tajik, who had an office where he reproduced many popular movies and religious lectures by the main religious authorities in Tajikistan, such as Eshon Nuriddinjon and Hoji Mirzo. He received the original material directly from migrants and copied it for sale. One could ask for almost any material via the shop sellers. In addition to this material, which was produced for particular migrant groups, such as the Tajiks and Uzbeks, he also sold regular discs; he played Russian music to attract buyers. The disc seller functioned almost like a family enterprise, as relatives and co-villagers were the main employees. By 2016, the number of these shops had seriously diminished, to the point of disappearance in Lublino. One reason for this is mobile phones, which allow young people to directly download religious lectures.

Religious shops have remained exceptions throughout the six years of my research. While between 2010 and 2014 there were several of them, by 2016 they had been banned from the main market. Only in the side hall, the bird market, were a man and his son allowed to sell religious items. The reason for this, he explained, is that the bird market belongs to the city of Moscow, whereas the rest of the bazaar is owned by "the Jew," who has banned shops selling religious items. Over a period of four years, a Mullah came once or twice a week with a bag of religious items and gifts from the main mosque to the bazaars. The boys knew him, and even if they laughed about him, they welcomed his visits and the apples or other little gifts he brought. He then sold what was fashionable and brought the books, creams, medicine, or other items that had been ordered the week before. In this way, he functioned as a mobile seller, providing access to any kind of religious goods that could be purchased at the Cathedral Mosque at Prospekt Mira. Traders and porters trusted him and he was able to make a living from this business for many years. His business relied on personal relationships, trust, and gifts. Most porters and even traders were unable to go to one of Moscow's four mosques, either due to lack of time or, more often, because they feared being stopped by the police, who would take money from them whether their documents were correct or not. Since most of the services are run by Tajiks and other Muslim groups, enough food sold in restaurants or by women going through the bazaar is halal, and toilets offer the possibility for ablution. Traders, in particular, are eager to pray on time. The bazaar *Torgovyi Tsentr* Moskva also allowed male workers to pray in a stockroom. On Fridays, they would meet for the collective prayer under the lead of an Arab imam.

CONCLUSION

Bazaars have played an important role in the economic transition from the Soviet Union to independent states. Indeed, bazaars have absorbed a considerable mass of people from diverse backgrounds whose jobs were devalued or who lost their employment when the Soviet Union collapsed. In times of crisis, teachers sold their books, factory workers the products they had accumulated over time, and opportunists the goods they purchased in one place to sell in another. Indeed, "entire regional governments (for example, Kalmykia in 1992) were involved in the turning of state (that is, 'no one's') property into marketable commodities."[48] Later, bazaars in Dushanbe came to provide students with job opportunities, and served as a means to bridge difficult periods of one's career. Russian bazaars became important avenues of employment, operating to a large degree outside of state control and the regulations imposed on migrants. Some became successful businessmen or rich people, while others saw bazaars as an opportunity to accumulate a bit of wealth for personal independence. The shipping container bazaars have repeatedly been painted in a negative light and the modernization of the new bazaars has done little to change the overall perception. Thus, it is no exaggeration to state that Cherkiz was a center for the forging of racial hierarchies, which the media turned into the blueprint for the ethnic hierarchy that shapes many people's perceptions today. While migrants from Central Asia and the Caucasus may be collapsed into one category ("the blacks") in the media, among the various ethnic groups the hierarchy continues to exist and be economically exploited. Though the Tajiks emerged as the lowest group from this Cherkiz socio-economic development, they have developed various strategies for improving their status among Muslim minorities: firstly, by emphasizing their religiosity and, along with it, a moral claim; secondly, by diversifying their jobs and activities; thirdly, by establishing and expanding criminal networks; and fourthly, by entering the sport club scene, which enjoys high recognition across ethnic groups.

Whereas Humphrey emphasizes that international trade creates "both the most desire and the most anxiety,"[49] and creates fear of disorder (*bezporiadok*), migrants' perspectives suggest another conclusion. Disorder means insecurity within the Russian state, and a deep mistrust that migrants encounter for years after acquiring Russian citizenship, but it also opens safe niches in which economic activities are possible, such as the bazaar. My informants appreciated working in the bazaar because of its flexibility and relative invisibility from state law (which comes only in the form of occasional raids). *Arobakashho* are organized and managed by Tajiks and hence do not need

to deal with Russian bureaucracy. Once they have enough money, or an important event takes place, they simply leave the country.[50] This is different for traders, who have been integrated into the Russian tax system through the so-called "patent" they have to purchase each month.

Cherkiz attracted migrant groups from all over the Soviet Union, who organized themselves into ethnic niches and ethnic-interdependent jobs. Between economic opportunities, bazaar structures and militia, Tajiks are involved with almost all levels and jobs. They have long been overrepresented in the service sector of the bazaar, however, a dominance they have maintained in the new bazaars that were established after Cherkiz was closed in 2009.

The ethnic lens I have applied in this paper was not meant to blend away other groups or relationships; in fact, I did not check systematically whether a person was Tajik by passport or by nationality. Instead, whoever called himself or herself a Tajik was taken as such and the talks and interviews conducted primarily in the Tajik language. Tajiks therefore served as my point of departure into a complex and interrelated social, economic, and religious lifeworld. Tajiks do not form a diaspora in the sense of shared memory of home or ritualized activities such as Tajik-language newspapers, celebrations, etc. Although such initiatives exist, my informants emphasized that they do not participate in them because they are suspicious of anyone they do not know personally. One reason for this is the reluctance of the Tajik embassy to defend migrants, as well as the extended political arm of the government, which kidnaps individuals for political reasons. The most radical turn in trust I personally experienced came between June 2010 and November 2010. In that period, a conflict had fueled discussion of terrorism, leading to severe restriction on religious practices. The result was an increase in suspicion toward and fear about one another. Conflicts in Central Asia have a direct impact on migrants. Many of my interlocutors even favored cooperation with non-Tajiks over kin networks (even if they often cannot withdraw completely from the latter); the mullah of the Cathedral Mosque in Moscow observed that Tajiks are the group that most often chooses partners from other ethnic groups than their own.

While the literature tends to emphasize kinship as the main bond of trust, my informants equally perceived kinship as a burden that does not guarantee trust in all cases. For one of my key informants, kinship led to constant problems, either because his brother took their money and got into debt or because an uncle stole goods and hid them in his flat, which the informant considered to be against Islam. In fact, when his wife returned to Tajikistan, my informant had begun to welcome men from different regions in Tajikistan and avoid hosting kin; his criteria for choosing these men were religious dedication and moral attitude more than regional, ethnic, or kinship relations.

While kinship remains an important relationship, particularly for the wives of migrants, it has to be seen in a larger context of economic, social, political, and religious factors.

Within this disorder and insecurity, Islam has developed as a mode of communication, an alternative path to increasing social status, a way to structure daily routines, a means to distance oneself from the Christian-Russian way of life by imposing clear distinctions in food consumption and worldview, and a source of dignity in a context where humiliation is a daily experience. Beyond economic differences and job opportunities sharply distinct from those in Tajikistan (teachers, religious specialists, and doctors work as small traders, porters, or even rubbish collectors, whereas former orphans and poor men have made a career in bazaars by becoming successful traders or criminals), Islam remains the most important reference for social relations. The former religious leader turned rubbish collector may be poor, but he is treated with respect. And as is so often the case, the young boy who left school in order to become rich actually becomes disillusioned upon his arrival; finally, he turns to Islam to convert his failure to become rich into a path of religious maturity.

Islam has also become a collective resource to which my Tajik interlocutors refer. This appears even more important now, as Tajiks occupy the lowest ranks in the hierarchy of post-Soviet groups in Moscow, even among Central Asian migrants. Religious dedication and high moral status (which they claim for themselves) are their main resources as an ethnic group. Being a good Muslim means abstaining from alcohol and working hard, two values much appreciated by Russian employers. Even if the Russian media has created a negative picture of Tajiks and migrants from Central Asia more generally, individual relationships are often positive and many of my informants have stories of friendly relationships with Russians that helped at a certain point. I have not explored this paradox between individual experience and general attitudes—which is not specific to Tajiks but applies to migration and refugees more generally—and have instead tried to show the niches that Tajiks have found in the bazaars and trading centers, the relationships and interdependencies on which they depend, and the way Islam is integrated in this lifeworld, the primary goal of which is economic.

The trading centers that have been the subject of this paper uncover the diverse and complex interrelations between traders, security staff, porters, and criminal groups. Ethnicity can be a source of solidarity: for instance, when somebody dies, the collection of money does not follow religious morality but rather ethnic solidarity. However, ethnicity can also be a target. The hierarchy among Tajiks makes it easy to exploit ethnicity as a way to extract cash with considerable success, as wealthy leaders exemplify. But Tajik porters

can also profit from ethnic solidarity when they bond with a trader in order to protect their salaries and documents and secure regular work. In order to escape this hierarchy, a considerable share of my interlocutors therefore bonded with other Muslims or Christian Russians. For economic purposes, this appears to be an acceptable strategy, whereas marriage with a "Russian" (even a Muslim Russian) continues to be seen as a step out of the family enterprise and meets resistance from kin.

Interestingly, even Islam has created only limited solidarity beyond ethnic groups, despite the fact that Moscow hosts Muslims from the entire former Soviet Union. As much as Tajiks are given a low social status by Russians, they have also been able to establish themselves as strong Muslims. Tajik migrants consider themselves "the strongest believers," not only because "Tajikistan used to be far from Moscow" but because of their moral lives. Since 2010, I have witnessed among my informants a constant tendency toward a conscious and pious life constructed in opposition to a "Russian lifestyle." This successful status conversion—from low social status to high religious status—reflects the importance of thinking in many dimensions when researching migrants in Russia. Even Russian converts who spoke about Central Asian migrants, particularly Tajiks, expressed the same paradox between describing "the Tajik migrant" as low, illegal, and dangerous and emphasizing that "Tajiks are among the strongest Muslims who train their spirit and body."

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

NOTES

1. Manja Stephan-Emmrich and Abdullah Mirzoev, "The Manufacturing of Islamic Lifestyles in Tajikistan through the Prism of Dushanbe's Bazaars," *Central Asian Survey* 35 no.2 (2016): 157–77.

2. Nafisa Khusenova, "La féminisation des migrants de travail tadjikes en Russie," in *Dynamiques migratoires et changements sociétaux*, ed. Marlene Laruelle (Paris: Pétra, 2011), 278–96. In 2002, about 85 percent of migrants were male, the researchers Olimova and Bosc estimate (Saodat Olimova and Igor Bosc, "Labour Migration from Tajikistan," International Organization for Migration in Cooperation with the Sharq Scientific Research Center, 2003).

3. Gertrud Hüwelmeier, "Postsocialist Bazaars: Diversity, Solidarity, and Conflict in the Marketplace," *Laboratorium* 5, no. 1 (2013): 52–72.

4. Many social anthropologists working in Central Asia have written about bazaars at some point. Their importance in the lives of Central Asian populations is hard to overstate.

5. Emil Nasritdinov, "Regional Change in Kyrgyzstan: Bazaars, Open-Air Markets and Social Networks" (PhD diss., University of Melbourne, 2006).

6. Boris Nieswand, *Theorising Transnational Migration: The Status Paradox of Migration* (London: Routledge, 2011).

7. Nasritdinov, "Regional Change in Kyrgyzstan."

8. Regine Amy Spector, "Protecting Property: The Politics of Bazaars in Kyrgyzstan" (PhD diss., University of California-Berkeley, 2009).

9. Rano Turaeva, "Post-Soviet Uncertainties: Micro-Order of Central Asian Migrants in Russia," *Inner Asia* 15, no. 2 (2013): 273–92.

10. Gül Berna Özcan, "Heiß umkämpft—Der neue Kapitalismus der Basare in Zentralasien," *Zentralsien-Analysen* 38 (2011): 2–11.

11. Saulesh Yessenova, "Hawkers and Containers in Zarya Vostoka: How 'Bizarre' is the Post-Soviet Bazaar?" in *Markets and Market Liberalization: Ethnographic Reflections,* ed. Norbert Dannhaeuser and Cynthia Werner (Amsterdam et al.: Elsevier, 2006), 37–61.

12. When a part of the bazaar in Almaty was sold for US$1 million, it took the new owner only about 14 weeks to see returns on their investment (Yessenova, "Hawkers and Containers," 51). For an approximate evaluation of other major bazaars of Central Asia, see Özcan, "Heiß umkämpft," 7.

13. Geertz 1979, quoted in Yessenova, "Hawkers and Containers," 40.

14. She refers here to the many studies that engage with the market and post-Soviet economy such as Caroline Humphrey, "Traders, 'Disorder,' and Citizenship Regimes in Provincial Russia," in *Uncertain Transition: Ethnographies of Change in the Postsocialist World,* ed. Michael Burawoy and Katherine Verdery (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1999), 19–52; Francis Pine, "Retreat to the Household? Gendered Domains in Postsocialist Poland," in *Postsocialism: Ideals, Ideologies and Practices in Eurasia*, ed. C. M. Hann (New York: Routledge, 2002), 95–113; Michael Burawoy and Katherine Verdery, eds., *Uncertain Transition: Ethnographies of Change in the Postsocialist World* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1999); Denis Kandiyoti, "Modernization without the Market," *Economy and Society* 5, no. 4 (1996): 529–42.

15. Caroline Humphrey and Vera Skvirskaja, "Trading Places: Post-Socialist Container Markets and the City," *Focaal—European Journal of Anthropology* 55 (2009): 61–73.

16. Humphrey and Skvirskaja, "Trading Places," 71.

17. Ida H. Knudsen and Martin Demant Frederiksen, eds., *Ethnographies of Grey Zones in Eastern Europe: Relations, Border and Invisibilities* (London: Anthem Press, 2015).

18. Christoph Zürcher and Jan Köhler, *Potential of Disorder: Explaining Conflict and Stability in the Caucasus and the Former Yugoslavia* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2003); Keebet van Benda-Beckmann, and Fernanda Pirie, *Order and Disorder: Anthropological Perspectives* (Oxford: Berghahn, 2007).

19. Most illuminating are the works by Ledeneva about how informality intertwines with formal rules—how negotiations and blat exchange solve everyday needs. Alena Ledeneva, *Russia's Economy of Favours: Blat, Networking, and Informal Exchange* (Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Alena Ledeneva, *How Russia Really Works: Informal Practices in the 1990s* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006); Alena Ledeneva, *Can Russia Modernize? Sistema, Power Networks and Informal Governance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

20. Joma Nazpary, *Post-Soviet Chaos: Violence and Dispossession in Kazakhstan* (London: Pluto Press, 2002); Turaeva, "Post-Soviet Uncertainties," 278.

21. Caroline Humphrey, *The Unmaking of Soviet Life: Everyday Economies after Socialism* (Ithaca, NY and London: Cornell University Press, 2002).

22. I suggest that this is one way mimicry works in post-colonial/post-Soviet relationships. Homi Bhabha has investigated the power of mimicry as "[t]he 'desire' of mimicry, which is Freud's 'striking feature' that reveals so little but makes such a big difference, is not merely that impossibility of the Other which repeatedly resists signification. The desire of colonial mimicry—an interdictory desire—may not have an object, but it has strategic objectives which I shall call the *metonymy of presence*." Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994) (version from 2004). Migration in Russia has to be seen in such a relationship, which links Russians and migrants in a tense and conflictual way and allows migrants to play within the rules that are meant to exclude them.

23. Gertrud Hüwelmeier and Kristine Krause, "Introduction," in *Traveling Spirits: Migrants, Markets and Mobilities*, ed. Gertrud Hüwelmeier and Kristine Krause (New York: Routledge, 2010), 6.

24. Some people managed to acquire resources such as land and gardens during the war and became managers of those places. However, the Rasht Valley has few resources and hence many *mujaheds* had to be reintegrated through other jobs.

25. Though the Syrian conflict developed in parallel with my research, the bazaar did not become a center for recruiting unskilled workers. Traders and worker leaders emphasized religious status and invested in hajj, but did not promote the cause of the Islamic groups fighting in Syria. While recruitment cells have developed along professional lines (e.g. taxi drivers), ethnic economic niches have not turned into recruitment cells but have remained individual initiatives.

26. Humphrey and Skvirskaja identify the shipping container bazaars as spaces where routes intersect and that have certain features in common with medieval trade fairs (Humphrey and Skvirskaja, "Trading Places").

27. "Cherkizovskii rynok v gorode Moskve," *RIA Novosti*, June 29, 2014, https://ria.ru/spravka/20140629/1013883647.html.

28. "Cherkizovskii rynok: milliardy kontrabandy," *Interfax*, June 8, 2006, http://www.interfax.ru/russia/83927.

29. For Ismailov's biography, see "Tel'man Ismailov, biografiia, novosti, foto-uznai vse!" Uznai Vse, http://www.uznayvse.ru/znamenitosti/biografiya-telman-ismailov.html.

30. Online reports confirm the chaotic way Cherkizon was closed down, producing rumors and xenophobic paroles that migrants had been developing illegal and criminal activities. See "Cherkizovskii rynok," *RIA Novosti.*

31. One Tajik informant mentioned that a mosque existed. However, this information was not shared by enough people to identify the nature of this mosque. Rather, praying could take place in containers or spaces dedicated to prayer such as changing rooms.

32. They called him *buz* (goat), a pejorative term to designate a person who does what other people order him to do.

33. Porter, interview by Sophie Roche, Moscow, November 6, 2016.

34. They were called dogs (*sag* in Tajik) in order to have another term that everybody would understand.

35. A study on the systemic establishment of a negative picture of migrants from Central Asia has been provided by Sayyora Mukhamedova, "Central Asian Migrant Workers in the Russian Federation: Do Migrant Workers Threaten the National Identity of a Local Population?" (MA thesis, University of Heidelberg, 2015).

36. "O TK Sadovod," Sadovod website, November 17, 2016, http://sadovodtk.ru/shopping_malls/ Download.

37. "Nigaronii makomot az oghosi jang miyoni 'mafiyai tojik' dar Maskav," *TojNews*, November 14, 2016, http://www.tojnews.org/tj/news/nigaronii-makomot-az-ogozi-chang-miyoni-mafiyai-tochik-dar-maskav. This article appeared when the war was taking place. However, Rosbalt had announced the war one day earlier. This created insecurity among the Tajik community, who wondered why they had been informed earlier: "Siloviki obespokoeny nachavsheisia v Moskve voinoi tadzhikskikh mafiozi," *Rosbalt,* November 13, 2016, http://www.rosbalt.ru/moscow/2016/11/13/1566445.html.

38. Humphrey, *The Unmaking of Soviet Life*, 78–79.

39. Informant, interview by Sophie Roche, Moscow, 2016.

40. "Bozdoshti gumonbari asosi dar qaziyai khunini qabristoni 'Khovansk'," *TojNews*, May 17, 2016, http://tojnews.org/tj/news/video-bozdoshti-gumonbari-asosi-dar-kaziyai-hunini-kabristoni-hovansk.

41. I will not elaborate on the legal procedures a migrant faces when entering the country, as this has changed almost every year over the last six years. In 2016, migrants from Tajikistan could still enter Russia without a visa if they left every three months and entered anew. They had to register and get a stamp that cost between 15,000 and 20,000 RUB, as well as pay monthly taxes of 4,500 RUB in the Moscow region. Some years ago, the so-called *propiska* was the most difficult problem, as this turned into a main document that was most of the time faked. The police arrested

migrants arbitrarily on suspicion of fake *propiska*, and tens of thousands of migrants were deported. Deportation continues, but with new categories being created, migrants are often not aware of having broken the law and learn this only when they are at the airport.

42. Özcan, "Heiß umkämpft."

43. Ibid., 3.

44. Guzel Sabirova and Alexey Zinoviev have conducted research on migrants in sport clubs and found that migrant youths are still underrepresented. Sport clubs do not act as integrator but reproduce racial discrimination, the authors found. My informants did not even expect to become integrated through sport clubs but rather used them to achieve their goal—namely, to get the necessary physical training to become a respected person within one's peer group or social group. Parents told me proudly about their sons holding a respected position in class due to their physical ability to apply martial arts, whereas before they had been treated as vulnerable, low-status migrant children. Another father explained that he maintained good contacts with Chechens in his town because of physical assault by other groups and hence trained his sons to become able to protect him and their own family in the future. Guzel Sabirova and Alexey Zinoviev, "Urban Local Sport Clubs, Migrant Children and Youth in Russia," *Community Development Journal* (2015): 1–17.

45. 350 RUB equaled about 8 Euro in 2012, and 4 Euro in 2015.

46. In 2010, the security staff in the parking spaces were exclusively Pamir Tajiks.

47. Since this was a new development in 2016, I cannot say to what degree this has become a successful practice.

48. Humphrey, *The Unmaking of Soviet Life*, 74.

49. Ibid., 72.

50. This has become more difficult in recent years with deportation practices that ban migrants from re-entering the country.

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