


**Governing Islam and Security in Tajikistan and Beyond:
The Emergence of Transnational Authoritarian Security Governance**

Submitted by Edward James Lemon to the University of Exeter
as a thesis for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Politics
In August 2016

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I certify that all material in this thesis which is not my own work has been identified and that no material has previously been submitted and approved for the award of a degree by this or any other University.

Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E. Lemon', written on a light-colored rectangular background.

Abstract

Since 2002, the government of post-Soviet Tajikistan has deployed its security apparatus outside of the state's territorial borders at least 49 times, intimidating, kidnapping and monitoring its citizens. I use the term *transnational authoritarian security governance* to refer to these border-spanning security practices. Although both secular and religious opponents to the government have been targeted, in this dissertation, I examine how the government of Tajikistan attempts to manage the threat from Islamic 'extremism.' I trace the emergence of the securitisation of Islam back to the Soviet Union, explore its consolidation in the years following independence in 1991, and how it has become operationalised in the form of transnational authoritarian security governance. I argue that the regulation of religious life in Tajikistan is based on an assertive form of secularism, which posits that religion is only safe if it is closely controlled by the state.

In theorising transnational authoritarian security governance, I draw on the work of Michel Foucault. I argue that security governance is interwoven with relations of power. Governing Islamic 'extremism' in Tajikistan does not merely involve repressive life-taking sovereign power, it involves the moulding of obedient, secular subjects through disciplinary power and biopower. But as Foucault argues, where there is power, there is resistance. Those who are made subjects through security governance do have opportunities to resist it. Rather than being transformative and counterhegemonic, however, this resistance is momentary and anti-hegemonic. My findings are based on critical discourse analysis, a database of extraterritorial security incidents, semi-structured interviews, and extensive ethnographic fieldwork conducted between 2013 and 2015 in Tajikistan and Russia.

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Acknowledgements

I could not have completed this thesis without the help and support of a number of people. First, I would like to thank my supervisor, John Heathershaw. His support, mentoring and constructive criticism was essential to shaping the arguments presented in this thesis. Although John encouraged and enabled many of my side projects, he was always there to gently remind me that I had a thesis to write. My wife, Eve has been with my every step of the way, instilling within me the confidence to set my sights on an academic career. Her love and support made writing this thesis one of the most enjoyable experiences of my life. My parents – Mark and Hilarie – and sister, Jenny, developed my sense of adventure and interest in other cultures from a young age. I had the good fortune to marry into a family of academics. Discussing Central Asian history, anthropology and philosophy with my in-laws, Mitchell and Wendy, and brother-in-law Jonathan, helped refine my ideas and sharpen my writing. My uncle, Joseph, has generously given his time to closely reading sections of this thesis, providing thought-provoking criticisms.

My academic journey to Central Asia started as a graduate student at the Institute of Middle East, Central Asia and Caucasus Studies at the University of St Andrews. Sally Cummings' encouragement led me to move to Tajikistan in 2010. My experiences living for two years in Dushanbe, working for an NGO and as a part-time journalist lay the foundations for this thesis. Working at an NGO gave me an insight into the gaps between discourse and reality in contemporary Tajikistan. Jamshed gave me the internship that started my career in Tajikistan. His vast knowledge of Tajik politics and continuing friendship have been of great value. I am thankful to David Trilling for giving me my first journalism gig and teaching me to write effectively. Two years in Tajikistan was quite an education. I learned Russian over far too many vodkas with Bakha and Anvar. My flatmate Umed taught me how to dance like a real Tajik *bacha*. I explored the country with Darragh, Lisa, Christine, Audrey, Ines, Anton, Virginie, James, Helga, Teo and countless others.

My fieldwork in Tajikistan and Russia received supplementary financial support from the Economic and Social Research Council. During my fieldwork in Tajikistan in 2013, I was graciously hosted by Muzzafar, his wife and

daughter in Vanj. Their hospitality and openness gave me a greater understanding of Tajik culture. In Dushanbe, Jamshed helped me to organise a number of interviews with prominent journalists. On my visit to the Rasht valley, Pulat generously introduced me to his family in Gharm. When I visited Moscow in July 2014, I re-orientated my thesis with the help of Jack Farchy, John Round, Vladimir Mukomel and Sergei Abashin. When I returned in January 2015, I benefitted from meetings with Vera Peshkova, Vladimir Pryakhin and Igor Savin. Parviz performed an excellent job as 'fixer' and spent many hours discussing Tajik politics with me. Firuza exceeded the high standards of Tajik hospitality and welcomed me into the diaspora community. I am grateful to Farrukh, Abdulrahmon, Marhabbo and Suhrob for their willingness and openness to be a part of my research.

At Exeter, I was fortunate enough to be part of a community of Central Asianist PhD students and benefitted from discussions with Catherine Owen, Zamira Dildobekova, Kemel Toktomushev, Saipira Furstenberg, Asel Doolot, and Zulfiya Bakhtibekova. I benefited from the questions, comments and regional expertise of David Lewis, Gregorio Bettiza, Gabriel Katz and Jonathan Githens-Mazer. I am fortunate to be part of such a supportive global community of scholars working on Central Asia. I have benefitted and learnt through collaborations with Eric Hamrin, Joe Schottenfeld and Helene Thibault. I am in debt to numerous colleagues who shared resources, research and expertise with me. These include, amongst others, Nick Megoran, Madeleine Reeves, Alex Cooley, David Abramson, Damian Rosset, Steve Swerdlow, Nate Schenkkan, Felix Corley, Bruce Pannier, Tim Epkenhans, Irna Hoffman, Sophie Roche, Negar Behzadi, Juliette Cleuziou, Raff Pantucci, Marlene Laruelle, David Montgomery, Jeff Ratelle, Cerwyn Moore, Patryck Reid, Christian Bleuer, Payam Foroughi and Benjamin Gatling. Nick Megoran provided generous support whilst I prepared my research proposal in 2012. David Montgomery's support was indispensable in securing a postdoctoral position in the United States.

I presented my research at the University of Newcastle, Columbia University, Chatham House, the Royal United Services Institute, University of Exeter, Kings College London, University of Zurich, Stockholm University and SOAS, benefitting a great deal from discussions at these events. Sections of this thesis have also been published in *Central Asian Affairs*, *Caucasus Survey* and

The RUSI Journal. The feedback from anonymous reviewers helped me to clarify and add nuance to the arguments presented in this thesis.

An empirically-driven thesis is only possible due to the willingness of individuals to participate in the research. I am grateful to all of those who consented to be interviewed, and those who allowed me to follow them to prayer meetings and who sat for long hours drinking tea and talking. Unfortunately, since starting this thesis in 2012 the political environment in Tajikistan has become more closed. Many oppositionally-minded acquaintances have now been jailed or exiled. It is to those who strive for a more open system in Tajikistan that I dedicate this thesis.

Note on Transliteration

This thesis contains a large amount of source material in Russian and Tajik, as well as a few Uzbek, Arabic and Persian words. For transliterating Russian sources, I have used the BGN/PCGN Romanisation system. This renders 'я' as 'ya', 'ю' as 'yu' and 'е' as 'ye' after vowels, soft signs and at the beginning of words. To make it easier for those unfamiliar with the Cyrillic alphabet, I have transliterated 'ё' as 'yo.' I have used common anglicised forms of popular Russian names, such as Gorbachev. For the names of interviewees, I have followed their own preferences for transliteration. I have used the more common anglicised words of concepts and publications. So I use *perestroika* rather than *perestroyka*, *glasnost* rather than *glasnost'* and *Komsomolskaya Pravda* rather than *Komsomol'skaya Pravda*.

For Tajik words, I have used the Romanisation system used by John Hayward and Azim Baizoyev in *A Beginners Guide to Tajiki*. This renders 'ғ' as 'gh,' 'ӣ' as 'i,' 'ҷ' as 'j,' 'ҳ' as 'h' and 'қ' as 'q.' In the case of the letter 'ӣ,' I have opted to transliterate it as 'ir' instead of as 'ü' in order to help those who do not read Cyrillic. All of the translations, unless indicated, are my own.

I have marked foreign text in *italics*. In cases of commonly used words – such as hijab, Allah or jihad – I do not use italics. I have not put the foreign names of groups in italics. So Hizb ut-Tahrir not *Hizb ut-Tahrir* and Tablighi Jamaat not *Tablighi Jamaat*. All words are Tajik, except for words accompanied by [Rus.] which are Russian, [Uzb.] which are Uzbek, [Arabic] which are Arabic and [Urdu] which are Urdu.

Note on Sources

This thesis is based on a combination of discourse analysis, ethnography and semi-structured interviews. The transcripts and audio recordings of these interviews in their original language are held by the author for reference purposes. I collected sources for the discourse analysis at the Tajik National Library, Dushanbe, Russian State Newspaper Library, Khimki, and online. I have kept copies of the referenced newspaper articles for reference purposes. A list of textual sources can be found in Appendix III and a list of interviews can be found in Appendix IV.

With a small number of exceptions, informant names have been changed; sometimes at the request of the informant, sometimes at my discretion, on occasions when I feel the way I am using the text might compromise an informant in their community. Those whose names are included gave their consent, and are individuals who have public profiles.

Unless otherwise indicated, all quotations are verbatim. Where indicated in a footnote with 'author interview with...', they are transcribed and translated from recorded interviews. Where conversations and events were recorded in my fieldwork notes, I indicate this with a footnote.

List of Abbreviations

- 9/11 – The September 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Centre and Pentagon
- CCTV – Closed Circuit Television
- CDA – Critical Discourse Analysis
- CRA – State Committee on Religious Affairs
- CSS – Critical Security Studies
- CSTO – Collective Security Treaty Organisation
- ECtHR – European Court of Human Rights
- EU - European Union
- FMS – Federal Migration Service of the Russian Federation
- GBAO – Mountainous Badakhshan Autonomous Region (Rus.: *Gornobadakhshninskaya Avtonomnaya Oblast'*)
- GKNB – State Security Committee (Rus.: *Gosurdarstvennyy Komitet Natsional'noi Bezopasnosti*)
- HuT - Hizb ut-Tahrir (Party of Liberation)
- ICG – International Crisis Group
- IGO – Inter-governmental Organisation
- IMU – Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (Uzb.: *O'zbekiston Islomiy Harakati*)
- IRPT – Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan (Taj.: *Hizbi Nahzati Islomi Tojikiston*)
- ISIS – Islamic Movement of Iraq and al-Sham
- KGB – The State Security Committee (Rus.: *Komitet Gosurdarstvennoi Bezopasnosti*).
- MVD – Ministry of Internal Affairs (Rus.: *Ministerstvo Vnutrinnikh Del*).
- NGO – Non-governmental Organisation
- OMON - Special Purpose Police Unit (Rus.: *Otryad Militsii Osobogo Naznacehniya*)
- OSCE - Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
- PDP – People's Democratic Party (Taj.: *Hizbi Khalki Demokrati*)

PMC – Private Military Company

SADUM – The Spiritual Administration of the Muslims of Central Asia and Kazakhstan (Rus.: *Dukhovnoye Upravleniye Musul'man Sredney Azii I Kazakhstana*)

SCO - Shanghai Cooperation Organisation

SIZO – A detention centre (from the Russian, *sledstvenny izolyator*)

USSR – Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

UN – United Nations

UTO – United Tajik Opposition

Introduction

Savridin Jurayev 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 mullo and member of the opposition Islamic Renaissance Party (IRPT), Sadullo Marupov.² On 3 May 2006, the police detained his teacher and subsequently started targeting his followers.³ Fearing arrest, Jurayev fled to Russia in June 2006. He worked in various low-paid jobs in the suburbs of Moscow. In November 2006, the Prosecutor General's Office in Tajikistan brought criminal proceedings against Jurayev, 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 26 September 2006, despite the fact that he was in Russia at the time.⁴ In November 2009, Russian police arrested him 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 31 October 2011, Jurayev was driving with a friend near Moscow State University. A mini-van blocked their path. Fleeing the scene, Jurayev 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 number plates and driven to Moscow's Domodedovo airport.⁶ The men put him on a plane, foregoing any border and customs formalities. On 30 November 2011, Jurayev stood trial at Sughd regional court

¹ This account is based on court documents from the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR). See Savridin Dzhurayev v. Russia – 71386/10, ECtHR, 25 April 2013, <http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/app/conversion/pdf/?library=ECHR&id=001-119416&filename=001-119416.pdf> The court transliterated Jurayev'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 ECtHR 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*, 18 May 2006, <http://www.tol.org/client/article/17180-president-taking-no-re-election-chances.html>

⁴ It accused Jurayev of breaking Articles 186.2 (participation in an armed group), and 187.2 (participation in a criminal organisation) 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 \$500 per month to members in Tajikistan.

⁶ This detail comes from a letter written by Jurayev. See Amnesty International, 2013.

with 33 others.⁷ The judge sentenced him to 26 years in prison.⁸ This is not an isolated incident.⁹ Since 2002, the government of Tajikistan¹⁰ has attempted to forcibly return citizens residing outside of the country without recourse to the law at least 48 times.¹¹ Members of the opposition in exile have been detained, beaten and threatened by the Tajik authorities; in one case an opposition leader, Umarali Quvvatov, was assassinated.¹²

Tajikistan, a republic of eight million people in former-Soviet Central Asia, constitutes an interesting site for studying transnational security.¹³ With over one million citizens, mostly young men, working as seasonal migrants in Russia, Tajikistan was the most remittance dependent economy in the world in 2014.¹⁴ Remittances equal to an equivalent of 43 per cent GDP.¹⁵ Migration and the transnational links that come with it remain part of everyday life in Tajikistan (Ibanez-Tirado 2013; Mostowlansky 2013; Roche 2014). While Russia is a source of livelihood for many households, for the government it is potentially threatening space where both the ‘secular’ and the ‘religious’ opposition can agitate among the migrant community. In this thesis, I focus on the government’s concerns about religious migrants in particular. With approximately 98 percent of the population professing to be Muslim, the

⁷ Soghd is one of the four regions (*viloyat*, Rus.: *oblast*) in Tajikistan. The others are Khatlon, Regions under Republican Subordination and Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast (GBAO). For a map of the country, see Appendix I.

⁸ In addition to the initial charges, the court charged Jurayev with Article 244 (stealing), 189 (arousing national, racial, local or religious hostility), and 306 (attempting to change the constitutional order) of the Criminal Code of Tajikistan.

⁹ Two others accused of being members of Jurayev’s IMU cell, were also detained by Russian police and later kidnapped and taken to Tajikistan. Suhrob Koziyev and Murodjon Abdulhakov were taken by men in plain clothes in Moscow on 23 August 2011 and flown to Khujand, Tajikistan.

¹⁰ I use the term ‘government of Tajikistan’ interchangeably with ‘regime.’ I do not wish to give the impression that the government is homogeneous, or that all agencies and individuals are equally involved in security governance.

¹¹ This is based on a database that I compiled from open sources, media reports and court documents. For a list of incidents, see Appendix II.

¹² I will return to this case in Chapter Five.

¹³ For an introduction to Tajikistan’s history, see Bleuer and Nourzhanov 2013, for an overview of post-independence politics, see Heathershaw 2009. For an overview of events in 2015, which form the backdrop to my fieldwork, see Lemon 2016.

¹⁴ According to the latest official statistics published by the Federal Migration Service of the Russian Federation (FMS), as of July 2015 there were just under one million Tajiks living in Russia. However, many Tajiks work without official registration. My interviewees differed in their estimates, some saying that over one million Tajiks work illegally, bringing the total figure to two million, or 25 percent of the population.

¹⁵ Farchy, J. Tajikistan and IMF in Talks over Bailout. *Financial Times*, 23 February 2016, <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/3dd384b0-da48-11e5-98fd-06d75973fe09.html>

government is concerned about the danger of Islamic extremism.¹⁶ Although the government promotes ‘good,’ national Islam represented by the official clergy, registered mosques and an Islamic university, it warns against the dangers of ‘bad,’ foreign (*begona*), ‘extremist’ Islam (Epkenhans 2011; Atkin 1994). It has introduced a range of measures to protect the secular state and prevent perceived radicalisation. These include banning children from praying in mosques, forcing men with beards to shave them and prohibiting the study of Islam in foreign madrassas. More recently, as I argue in Chapter Four, the government has linked the issue of citizens joining the Islamic State in Syria and Iraq to the leading opposition party, the Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan (IRPT).¹⁷ This created the conditions for the Supreme Court to ban the party in September 2015. This governance of religion and security stretches beyond state borders; it is transnational. In this thesis, I examine security governance and how this affects people’s lives in two states, Russia and Tajikistan. Instead of comparing how Russia and Tajikistan govern ‘Islamic extremism,’ however, I will examine how the government of Tajikistan manages the perceived threat posed by citizens who adhere to ‘Islamic extremism’ and are living in Russia or Tajikistan. I label the emergence of these border-spanning, authoritarian practices for governing security *transnational authoritarian security governance* (TASG). Unlike the U.S. rendition system, which primarily targeted foreign nationals who posed a threat to the homeland, TASG targets citizens living outside of state borders.¹⁸ While (il)liberal forms of security governance govern through freedom, TASG aims to create docile, loyal

¹⁶ This figure is based on census data. Being ‘Muslim’ in Tajikistan does not necessarily mean actively practising Islam. Regardless of their faith, almost every non-Slavic citizen considers themselves to be ‘Muslim’ by birth. For a discussion of everyday understandings of Islam in Central Asia, see Montgomery 2007.

¹⁷ Formed as an all-USSR party in 1990, the Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan split from this in 1991. Led by Said Abdullo Nuri until his death in 2006, the party drew support from the Rasht Valley (also known as Gharm or Qarotegin) and families forcibly resettled from Rasht to the Vakhsh valley during the 1930s and 1950s (see Kasymbekova 2011). The IRPT formed part of the United Tajik Opposition (UTO) which fought the government in the country’s civil war between 1992 and 1997. Following the peace accord, which allocated one third of government posts to the opposition, the party was legalised in 1998. After the civil war, the party’s leaders distanced themselves from violence and from the desire to establish an Islamic state. For a background on the party, see Olimova and Olimov 2001; Epkenhans 2015; Heathershaw 2009.

¹⁸ The Rendition Project records 130 individuals who were held in CIA “black sites” or rendered back to countrys where torture is widely practised. The list includes one British citizen, Binyam Mohammed, one German, Khaled al-Masri, one Canadian, Maher Arar, and no US citizens. All of those captured who carried ‘western’ passports had dual citizenship. See renditionproject.org.uk/prisoners/search.html

subjects (Dean 2010). Although overlapping in many ways, TASG is qualitatively distinct from more liberal forms of governance.

As Pierre Bourdieu argues, “theory without empirical content is empty, but empirical research without theory is blind” (Bourdieu 1988: 774). This thesis is both theoretically and empirically driven. Rather than setting out a series of hypotheses and then testing them in the field, I adopt an inductivist approach, modifying existing theories to explore the emergence, consolidation and impact of TASG. I examine the following questions in this thesis:

- Where did the discourse linking Islam to violence emerge from? How did it become hegemonic?
- What is TASG? How is TASG different from liberal forms of security governance? How does the emergence of TASG shape our understanding of international security?
- What are the practices that form Tajik exiles as subjects of security? How does TASG shape the lives of the subjects of security (those who need to be protected) and the subjects of securitisation (those deemed a threat)?
- How do security subjects negotiate and resist TASG?

Transnational authoritarian security governance incorporates a range of discourses and practices aimed at governing security threats. I identify three overlapping components of TASG: security as process, practice and subjectification. First, I examine security as *process*, the ways in which actors securitise objects and subjects through discourse, and how the audience of these security discourses respond to this. My approach is premised on the argument that security is ontologically unstable and actors engage in struggles to ‘fix’ the meaning of security, its referent object and what is threatening (Huysmans 1998; Zedner 2009; Dillon 1996). The securitisation of Islam in Tajikistan did not spring forth from nowhere; it has a specific genealogy (Foucault 1977; 1994c). Contemporary discourses on Tajik security developed during the Soviet Union and have been reformulated since Tajikistan gained independence in 1991. I argue that the government discourse rests on the division between ‘good,’ official, moderate Islam and ‘bad,’ unofficial extremist Islam. The state media argues that religion has the potential to be socially

regressive and politically dangerous. The situation in the Middle East serves as a warning of what can happen if religion and politics mix. An assertive form of secularism, in which the government tightly controls religious expression, it argues, is the best means to secure the state and society against this threat (Kuru 2007). But studying discourse alone does not fully explain how TASG operates.

Second, I examine security as *practice*. As William Walters argues, “representational practice has to be studied in terms of its imbrication within a range of practices that are not reducible to the linguistic model” (Walters 2010: 219). Discourse-focused approaches often neglect how threats are managed once they are identified. In other words, they neglect security governance (Hamieri and Jones 2015). Much of the literature on security governance is pre-theoretical, taking security to be an objective fact; functional, focusing on how threats should be governed; and Eurocentric, framing Europe as a best-practice model to be emulated elsewhere (Krahmann 2003; Webber et al 2004; Kirchner and Sperling 2007, cf. Bevir 2013). Instead, I adopt a sociological approach which places importance on the dialectic *between* discourse and practice (Balzacq et al 2010; Bigo and Tsoukala 2008; Williams 2007; Huysmans 2006). Practices are only meaningful in so far as they are situated in discourse. I examine how the government of Tajikistan has responded to the ‘threat’ of radical Islam posed by migrants living in Russia. Such measures include arrests, rendition, close regulation of religion and promotion of secular forms of subjectivity. I argue that these practices contain elements of the “triangle of power” introduced by Michel Foucault: sovereign power, disciplinary power and biopower (Foucault 1981; Dean 2010).¹⁹

Indeed, through the thinking of Michel Foucault, I argue that security governance is a process of *subjectification* undercut by relations of power.²⁰ Power lies at the heart of Foucault’s intellectual project. For him, power “is

¹⁹ Foucault is certainly not the only theorist to conceptualise biopower, sovereign and disciplinary power. In *Homo Sacer* (1998), Giorgio Agamben argues that since ancient times sovereignty has rested on the distinction between *zoe*, ‘bare’ life, stripped of rights and *bios*, ‘qualified’ life. In *Empire* (2000), Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt expand Foucault’s notion of biopolitics to the international system, arguing that a biopolitical order has emerged. Whilst these contributions are important, I think that the ideas of Foucault better reflect the findings from my fieldwork.

²⁰ This study is Foucauldian in the sense that I draw inspiration from some of Foucault’s writings. Rather than taking his entire *oeuvre*, I have selected the texts and ideas which further our understanding of the dynamics of security governance. This approach is in full accordance with Foucault’s own characterisation of his work as a “toolkit” (Foucault 1980: 145).

never localized here or there, never in anybody's hands, never appropriated as a commodity or piece of wealth. Power is employed and exercised through a net-like organization" (Foucault 1994b: 98). Rather than being something that actors possess and wield, according to Foucault, power is a relation between agents. To study power, according to Foucault, we need to examine the "interplay between the terms of the relationship" between different institutions, objects and subjects (Foucault 2003: 168). Power, therefore, is decentred and polyvalent, rather than hierarchical. Power is not always destructive; it can be productive too. Foucault was concerned with uncovering how practices of power produce political subjects.

Whether by executing a criminal for murder or promoting healthy lifestyles that will benefit public health, power is inherently linked to security. It is about securing the ruler, the individual and/or the entire population. As Foucault argues, security practices aim to "achieve an overall equilibrium that protects the security of the whole from internal dangers" (Foucault 2003: 249). Exercising power involves securing the majority of the population against abnormalities in an attempt to prevent "all the possible forms of the irruption of danger" (Castel 1991: 288). As Michael Dillon and Andrew Neal argue in the introduction to *Foucault on Politics, Security and War*, "sorting life requires waging war on behalf of life against life forces that are inimical to life." (Dillon and Neal 2008: 8). This is the central paradox of security: in attempting to achieve security, actors must use violence and thus make others insecure. Indeed, TASG involves the practice of the three forms of power identified by Foucault - sovereign, disciplinary and biopower - which combine to produce political subjects.

Sovereign power, focuses on maintaining the "safety (*sûreté*) of the Prince and his territory' (Foucault 2003: 65). Sovereign power limits, bans and prevents certain behaviours, claiming a monopoly on violence. It is therefore a destructive form of power. Disciplinary power attempts to render visible the spatial distribution of bodies in order to exert control over them. Elites use disciplinary power to define and police the norm; those deviating from the norm – the vagrant, the insane, the homosexual, the extremist - are subject to corrective treatment. Disciplinary power shapes and normalises subjects. According to Foucault, "discipline makes individuals; it is the specific technique of power that regards individuals both as objects and as instruments of its

exercise” (Foucault 1991: 170). The final, and most recent, form of power that Foucault examines is biopower. This involves the management of populations and individual subjects through practices of self-regulation. Whereas disciplinary power isolates, concentrates and is essentially protectionist, by contrast biopower is said to be centrifugally oriented in favour of expansion, circulation and movement. Instead of focusing on the safety of the sovereign, biopower focuses on the security of the population, granting the right to make live and let die. Biopower has two main characteristics (Rabinow and Rose 2006). First, it involves discourses about the vital characteristics of being human (being healthy, productive etc). Second, it involves specific interventions that manage the health and life of the population. Efforts to promote sexual health and healthy lifestyles all constitute forms of biopower. Biopower is “pastoral.” Institutions care for subjects as a shepherd tends his flock. Disciplinary and biopower are unified by their goal: regulating political subjects. Foucault argues, “rather than asking ourselves what the sovereign looks like from on high we should be trying to discover how multiple bodies, forces, energies, matters, desires, thoughts, and so on are gradually and materially constituted as subjects, or the subject” (Foucault 1980: 121). This process of subjectification, and how it relates to security, forms the central focus of this thesis.

The Tajik state narrative on radical Islam contains all three forms of power identified by Michel Foucault. It is *sovereign* as it aims to protect the government and Tajikistan’s territory. But Tajik counter-terrorism is not based on repression and destruction alone. It is productive in so far as it aims, through discourses and practices, to create loyal secular subjects. Ultimately, the Tajik government’s response indicates that efforts to shape consciousness (*shuur*) are more important than repressive measures. Indeed, the Tajik government’s response to radical Islam is *disciplinary* as it calls for the punishment of those who are accused of “extremism,” offering a warning to others who may take this path. And it is *biopolitical* because it involves discourses about the vital characteristics of being human, as well as the management of populations and individual subjects through practices of self-regulation. Indeed, the responsibility to govern extremism does not solely fall on the government; it falls on citizens as well. Citizens are encouraged to work on themselves and monitor others for suspicious behaviour.

But my Foucauldian reading of TASG is not nihilistic; security subjects *do* have opportunities to resist relations of power. Power and resistance are not opposites. Power is not possessed by the elite and resisted by those who do not have it (Foucault 1981). Instead, resistance exists wherever there is power. Power only becomes intelligible when it is resisted. In this thesis, I chart the ways in which Tajik citizens can resist TASG. Whether by growing a beard, continuing to organise illegal prayer groups or using the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) to resist being rendered, Tajiks do resist TASG. This resistance is not counter-hegemonic and transformative, it is anti-hegemonic, decentralised and momentary (Lemon 2014; Cooper 1995).

My thesis supplements the existing literature in security studies in at least four ways. First, security studies, even in its more critical guises, remains biased towards elite discourses and exceptional measures (McDonald 2008). My research attempts to move away from this bias. In this thesis, I bridge the practical and scholarly divide between ‘exceptional’ and ‘everyday’ politics of security (Vaughan-Williams and Stevens 2015; Huysmans and Guillaume 2013; Bigo 2008). In doing so, I offer an interdisciplinary study, drawing on insights from a range of disciplines including international relations, anthropology, sociology and linguistics. Rather than setting the ‘everyday’ and ‘exceptional’ in opposition to one another, I look at how the exception becomes the norm, how discourses and practices of security impact upon the lived realities of those who have been labelled a security threat. Studying security from *both* the top-down and bottom-up, follows Foucault’s argument that power is everywhere (Foucault 1981). By focusing on local perspectives on security, I shift attention away from the top-down production of security threats and the practices this entails, towards the consumption of (in)security in everyday life. Using ethnography, researchers can uncover how the meaning of security and who it is for is just as contested amongst ordinary people as it is among elites (Goldstein 2010). Lastly, through an ethnography of the everyday experiences of (in)security, I offer a “thick description” of how the people I am researching experience being a migrant, being religious and feeling (in)secure, and the relationship between each of these categories of becoming.

By focusing on the ways security subjects are affected by TASG, I also draw attention to the ways in which they can resist the oppressive politics of security. Many studies set power and resistance in opposition to one another;

power is possessed by the elites, and the dispossessed subalterns resist this domination (Balzacq 2014). But a Foucauldian understanding of power and resistance does not set them in opposition to one another. Instead, power and resistance exist in an agonal, mutually-constitutive relationship (Foucault 1981). To paraphrase Foucault, where there are power relations, there are relations of resistance. Unlike other studies that have examined resistance to occupation (Ochs 2011; Ryan 2015), or in liberal democracies (Salter 2011; Balzacq 2014), I examine resistance by emigrants against the practices of their home state.

Indeed, rather than looking at how the receiving state securitises immigrants, I examine how the sending state attempts to control *emigrants*. Although a number of academics have looked at this “transnationalization of state practices,” the ways in which states spilling over borders by reaching out to own people abroad, most of these focus on the ‘positive’ dimensions of this (Ragazzi 2009; Ho 2011; Delano and Gamlen 2014). Instead, I examine how the government of Tajikistan exports its security apparatus abroad, abducting, intimidating and assassinating opponents in exile.

Lastly, a Eurocentric bias exists within security studies (Barkawi and Laffey 2006). Most studies examine security in liberal democracies. Instead, I examine security governance by an authoritarian state which has been ruled by the same president, Emomali Rahmon, since 1992.²¹ Although similarities exist, I argue that authoritarian security governance does differ from liberal security governance. Both liberal and authoritarian systems of rule combine elements of biopower, disciplinary power and sovereign power. Power is exercised with the view to moulding political subjects. But where liberal governance involves governing through freedom, thus allowing for the possibility of critique, authoritarian rule is based on the subject’s complete obedience to political authority (Dean 2010; Sigley 2006). Whereas liberal security governance allows for the existence of counter-narratives from civil society and rival political parties, authoritarian governments attempt to maintain a monopoly on security discourses. Unlike liberal governments who view space as a source of

²¹ Born Emomali Sharipovich Rahmonov in Danghara in southern Tajikistan in 1952, he served in the Soviet navy, worked as an electrician and studies economics at the Tajik National University, before becoming chairman of the Lenin *sovkhos* (collective farm) in his native Danghara in 1987. He became a people’s deputy to the Supreme Soviet in 1990. During the civil war in November 1992, members at the 16th session of the Supreme Soviet Rahmonov as chairman (effectively head of government). He became president following the November 1994 presidential elections. As part of the process of nation-building, he removed the suffix –ov from this name in 2007, becoming Emomali Rahmon.

economic, social and political competition, illiberal regimes see space as a securitized resource that the state must closely control (Cerny 1997; Lewis 2015: 143). My thesis, then, draws attention to the ways in which security is practised in authoritarian states and empirically demonstrates the differences between liberal and authoritarian security governance. Before, I outline the chapters, I will offer an overview of the process by which I chose my object of research, my methodology and the ethics of my study.

Methodology

In analysing TASG, I utilise four methods: discourse analysis, semi-structured interviews, a database of extraterritorial security incidents and ethnography. I conducted a “multi-sited” study, with ten months of fieldwork between 2013 and 2015 in Russia and Tajikistan (Marcus 1995). Before starting my PhD in 2012, I spent two years living in Tajikistan, working for an NGO and as a part-time journalist. These two years allowed me to travel extensively in the country, learn Tajik and Russian, and gain a detailed understanding of Tajik culture. During those two years, I gradually forged relationships with academics, journalists, current and former government employees and members of the opposition. After starting my PhD at Exeter in 2012, I returned to Tajikistan for three months in the summer of 2013, living in the village of Vanj, just a few miles from the border with Afghanistan.²² In Vanj, I improved my Tajik while conducting ethnographic research. I established contact with two people who feature heavily in the later chapters of this thesis – spiritual leader from the Rasht valley Abdulrahmon and young legal clerk Ravshan. I abandoned plans to return to Tajikistan for a long period fieldwork in the summer of 2014 after Alexander Sodiqov, who was working as a research assistant as part of a research project led by my PhD supervisor, was detained by the security services and accused of “spying.”²³ With Tajikistan no longer being an option for safely conducting my fieldwork, I travelled to Moscow in July 2014, spending two weeks establishing contact with informants and meeting with a number of experts.²⁴ My thesis

²² Vanj is a district (nohiya) and town located in a valley. Although located in Gorno-Badakhshan (GBAO), where the majority of people speak Pamiri languages and are Shia Ismailis, the people of Vanj speak Tajik and are Sunni Hanafi. Vanj sided with the opposition during the civil war.

²³ Thankfully, Alex was released in September 2014. For background on his arrest, see: “Authorities Detain Tajik Researcher, Whereabouts Uncertain,” *EurasiaNet*, 17 June 2014, <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/68641>

²⁴ These included a number of journalists, academics and members of the Tajik diaspora.

evolved as a result of this shift in research site; instead of conducting a largely domestic study of how security governance affects Tajiks living in Tajikistan, I switched attention to how *transnational* security governance affects both those living inside the country and those living beyond its borders. At this time, I met Parviz, who later performed the role of a ‘fixer,’ helping me to establish contact with individuals associated with the religious and political opposition. I returned for a longer period of fieldwork in Moscow between January and June 2015. Moscow, with a population of over 12 million, constituted a vastly different research environment to my original intention of conducting fieldwork in a rural mountain valley.²⁵ Establishing contacts, infiltrating networks and travelling to meet with my research subjects all consumed much more time than it did in Vanj in 2013. Despite these logistical challenges, Moscow provided an opportunity to examine transnational, rather than domestic, security governance.

Given the focus of my research, researcher, and research subject, safety were a key concern (Koch 2013).²⁶ I adopted a number of strategies to minimise the risk to both parties. I have used pseudonyms for all those I have profiled. When arranging meetings, I kept conversations brief and did not mention details about my research. Most of our meetings took place in public places, with many conversations taking place whilst walking along Moscow’s streets. In the case of the interviews, in a few cases, the interviewee insisted that I record his or her full name. For my own safety, and that of my respondents, I never complied with these requests. Having outlined my journey as a researcher, I will now discuss the four methods that I adopted in detail.

Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis is both a theory about the importance of language to the construction of social reality and a method for studying this process (Phillips and Jorgensen 2002). A wide range of different approaches to the study of language and power exist and each has its own notion of what the relationship between discourse and social reality is and how to approach this

²⁵ Conducting fieldwork in rural Tajikistan is certainly not easy either. For an illuminating overview of one researcher’s experiences, see the introduction to Jesse Driscoll’s *Warlords and Coalition Politics in Post-Soviet States* (2015).

²⁶ Researcher safety in the former-Soviet Union has become an area of lively scholarly discussion, with a special issue in the journal *Area* in 2013 and a report compiled by the Central Eurasian Studies Society (CESS 2016).

methodologically. These range from content analysis, which involves transforming qualitative, textual data into quantitative, numerical data in order to analyse how language *reflects* reality, to discourse theory which negates that 'reality' exists outside of language (Denscombe 2007; Howarth 2000). In this thesis, I use Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA).²⁷

Critical Discourse Analysis is a critical theory of language that views the use of language as a form of social practice (Wodak and Meyer 2009; Fairclough 2003). For Teun van Dijk, "critical discourse analysis is a type of discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted within text and talk in the social and political context" (Van Dijk 2001: 352). CDA therefore focuses not only on discourses, but also on the social structures that produce and are produced by them. CDA takes interest in the power relations that underpin the ideological, ontological and epistemological assumptions of a given text (Fairclough 1989). As such, power is partly discourse and discourse is partly power. Critical discourse analysts place emphasis on tracing and explaining the process by which certain lexicalisations dominate over alternative narratives. Indeed, as leading proponent Norman Fairclough argues, the aim of CDA is to denaturalise knowledge assumptions that are "taken for granted" (Fairclough 2010). CDA is characterised by a realist social ontology. It regards both abstract phenomena and concrete social events as part of social reality. Discourses that achieve hegemony are those that have a high level of correspondence with the reality they selectively represent.

CDA can best be described as a loose coalition of different theorists rather than a cohesive approach. These approaches range from Van Dijk's cognitive discourse analysis (Van Dijk, 2001) to David Altheide's ethnographic content analysis (Altheide 1987) and Reiner Keller's sociology of knowledge approach (Keller 2005). Each differs in its methodological approach, as well as the way it conceptualises the relationship between discourse and practice. Despite the differences, there are five assumptions common to most researchers who conduct CDA (Wodak and Fairclough 1997):

²⁷ Critical discourse analysis emerged from 'critical linguistics' developed at the University of East Anglia in the 1970s. For an overview of the theory's development and research agenda see Wodak and Meyer 2009.

1. The character of social and cultural processes and structures is partially discursive;
2. Discourse constitutes and is constituted by identities, social relations and meaning;
3. Language should be empirically studied within its social context;
4. Discourse functions ideologically- it reproduces unequal relations of power;
5. CDA is critical- it is not objective, but aims for emancipation of those subjugated by the dominant relations of power.

CDA is particularly influenced by two schools of thought. From Michel Foucault they draw their conceptualisation of the relationship between knowledge and power (Foucault 1998). Second, from the Frankfurt School of Critical Theory, they draw their commitment to the emancipation of those subjugated by these power relations.²⁸ Rather than being a neutral reflection of the social world, “theory is always *for* someone and *for* some purpose” (Cox 1981: 129, emphasis in original). And, according to critical theorists, it is the responsibility of the academic to provide research that helps the political subjects of power become aware of their situation and seek to liberate themselves. CDA follows this tradition blurring the line between academia and activism, and adopting an overtly normative agenda. According to Van Dijk, CDA is always driven by the need to solve socio-political problems and is therefore “ultimately political” (Van Dijk 2001: 253).

In order to utilise CDA as a research method, Fairclough suggests three-step approach (1992: 73). First, researchers need to analyse the *text* itself, focusing on its formal structures such as rhythm, syntax and grammar. Second, at the level of the *discursive practice*, researchers need to examine how the text fits in with the larger discourse of other texts. This refers to the central concept of intertextuality, or the influence of history on a text and a text’s influence on history (Kristeva 1986). Third, at the level of *social practice*, the researcher examines whether the text reproduces or challenges the dominant relations of power.

According to theorists within CDA, discourses are not fixed and natural, discourses are contingent and fluid. Fairclough outlines how discourses evolve

²⁸ The Frankfurt School incorporates a diverse set of thinkers including Jurgen Habermas, Walter Benjamin, Max Horkheimer and Herbert Marcuse.

in four stages over time. They *emerge* from previous discourses, *consolidate* themselves as a dominant way of thinking, *recontextualise* as they disseminate to different settings, and *operationalise* as they shape social practices and subjects. In the empirical chapters of this thesis, I examine all four stages of the evolution of Tajik state discourses on religion and security. In Chapter Three, I examine how the Soviet authorities securitised Islam creating a dichotomy between 'good' and 'bad' forms of religiosity. In Chapter Four, I map how in post-independence Tajikistan this discourse has consolidated itself and been recontextualised by elites as they respond to the changing environment. In the final two chapters, I use ethnography to examine how the government of Tajikistan has operationalised the discourse on religion, shaping security practices in the country and among migrant communities in Russia.

My analysis is based on a range of sources in English, Tajik and Russian. Rather than merely describing the events all of the articles I selected script, spin and frame the situation. In tracing the emergence of a discourse on security and religion during the Soviet Union, I analyse 39 newspaper articles published between 1979 and 1993. I selected these through *BBC Monitoring*, and then found the original articles at the Russian State Newspaper Library in Khimki. To analyse the dynamics of the post-independence hegemonic discourse on religion and security, I conducted discourse analysis of 58 articles about Tajik citizens radicalising and going to fight in Syria and Iraq. I also analysed nine speeches by President Rahmon and four laws relating to radical Islam.²⁹ In order to find the articles, I searched the websites of the President (president.tj), leading state newspaper *Jumhuriyat* (jumuriyat.tj), state news agency Khovar (khovar.tj), and the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (mvd.tj) for a number of keywords.³⁰ I searched for the time period between October 2013, when the Tajik government first acknowledged that its citizens were fighting in the Syrian Civil War, and September 2015, when the government labelled the IRPT a terrorist organisation.³¹ My initial search generated over 300 results, so I conducted purposive sampling to remove those

²⁹ For a full list of sources see Appendix III.

³⁰ The keywords were: Islam (*Islom*), secularism (*dunyavat*), security (*amniyat*), extremism (*ifrotgaroi*) ISIS (*DIISH- Davlati Islomi Iroq al Sham*), terrorism (*terrorizm*), IRPT (*HNIT- Hizbi Nazhdati Islomi Tojikiston*).

³¹ "Tajikistan Confirms Reports of Fighters in Syria," *RFE/RL*, 29 October 2013, <http://www.rferl.org/content/tajik-fighters-syria-government-rebels/25151440.html>.

articles that were factual rather than analytical and those that did not pertain to my topic.

Whereas some theorists have argued that nothing exists outside of discourse, examining language alone remains of limited utility in explaining social relations (Laclau and Mouffe 1985). In essence, discourse analysis remains hermeneutical, an exercise in interpretation; analysts cannot 'get inside' the minds of the authors who produce the discourse. Therefore, by using discourse analysis alone analysts would struggle to identify the reasons a text was written or why an issue was framed in a certain way. A tendency thus arises to overestimate the profoundness of meaning and infer malign interests behind a discourse (when none may be present) (Howarth, 2000). Fairclough argues that CDA is best used as part of a multi-method approach.

Indeed, CDA does not ignore practice either. An understanding of the links between language, power and social practices forms the centre of Fairclough's approach to discourse. For Fairclough, semiosis and practice are linked in at least three ways (Fairclough 1992). First, certain social activities - such as attending a funeral, working as an auctioneer or being a shop assistant - require a particular use of language and entail a certain set of practices. Second, semiosis figures in representations of actors own practices and those of other actors. Last, discourses constitute ways of being and thus ways of behaving in the world. Advocates of CDA argue that it can usefully combined with other methods such as interviews, ethnography or surveys. I use ethnography to examine how political subjects are shaped by the hegemonic discourse and how they try to resist this process of subjectification.

Ethnography

Ethnography involves close, face-to-face contact with people who are being studied. It involves the researcher immersing themselves in their rituals, practices and life-worlds as a participant observer. Sherry Ortner describes ethnography as "the attempt to understand another life world using the self - as much as it is possible – as the instrument of knowing" (Ortner 1995: 173). For Daniel Miller (1997: 16-17) ethnography constitutes a "particular perspective" which requires a researcher:

- 1) To be in the presence of the people you are studying;
- 2) To evaluate people based on what they actually do, and not merely what they say they do;
- 3) To have a long term commitment to an investigation;
- 4) To evaluate behaviour within the social, historical and political context of the research site(s).

Ethnography can involve “learning a local language or dialect; participating in the daily life of the community through ordinary conversations and interactions; observing events (meetings, ceremonies, rituals, elections, protests); examining gossip, jokes, and other informal speech acts for their underlying assumptions; recording data in fieldnotes” (Schatz and Bayard de Volo 2004: 267).

As Raelene Wilding concludes, with globalisation, “conducting research within a geographically bounded social group no longer seems as possible as it once did” (Wilding 2007: 335). To examine transnational flows an ethnographer needs to focus on “being there, and there, and there,” following the process that they are studying as he, she or it crosses borders (Hannerz 2003). George Marcus refers to such a research practice as “multi-sited ethnography” (Marcus 1995). This refers to the situation in which the researcher “moves out from single sites and local situations of conventional ethnographic research designs to examine the circulation of cultural meanings, objects and identities in diffuse time-space” (Marcus 1995: 96). Multi-sited fieldwork allows researchers to examine social networks with nodes in different sites. It facilitates studies that examine how people encounter, experience and perceive mobility, border controls, biometrics and transnationalism (Johnson 2014). Such research has the potential to challenge some of the key binaries of migration studies: place and space; home and homeland; integration and assimilation. Through transnational ethnography, researchers can measure “whether concepts, ideas and understandings are translatable across the sites in a way that is meaningful” (Johnson 2014: 362). It helps challenge the myth that marginalised people are ‘local’ and the ‘global’ is a realm for the elite. Instead, people encounter both the local and the global in their daily lives.

But how does ethnography enrich our understanding of politics and security? As Edward Schatz argues, “person-to-person contact that is attuned to the worldviews of the people we study is invaluable for the science of politics”

(Schatz 2008: 4). Ethnographic methods give researchers an emic perspective on how people understand their existence, social setting and abstract concepts such as 'security.' Ethnography is not only a method (participant observation), it is also a sensibility. It forms a commitment to placing human experiences at the centre of research agendas, recognising that politics is multi-vocal, complex, multi-layered- locally produced. In international relations and security studies, the use of ethnography involves a shift away from the study of the macro-level state system, towards the micro-level of everyday experiences. Through ethnographic methods, researchers can bridge the constructed divide between formal and informal institutions. Ethnography, Jan Kubik argues, "is the best method to study the complex interplay between (formal) social structures and (informal) social organization" (Kubik 2008: 33). Researchers can use ethnography to trace relations between power and meaning in daily practices. For Lisa Wedeen, who has studied resistance to authoritarian regimes in Syria and Yemen, "ethnography also charts the forms of contestation and sources of unbelief that may be particularly difficult to discern in authoritarian regimes" (Wedeen 2008: 85). Indeed, ethnography is a particular useful research tool in more closed research environments where "government statistics are suspect [or inexistent], media outlets are closely controlled by political interests, [free media are also inexistent or strongly repressed] (Schatz and Bayard de Volo 2004: 269). By placing lived experience at the centre of their research agenda, ethnographers give voice and agency to those being studied. Ultimately, ethnography forms a phenomenological encounter that permits research subjects to cease being 'objects of study' and bring to life their individual experience of (in)security. Ethnography offers insights into how people deal with the challenges of everyday life.

My ethnography of the effects of TASG is based on the opinions and experiences of eight people. Most are men, only two are women. They represent a variety of ages (the oldest is 63 and the youngest 22), backgrounds and occupy a variety of positions regarding the current regime. I spent a great deal of time with them, drinking tea, going to the mosque and attending events. While as a white, British, Anglo-Saxon, agnostic, man I was never an 'insider,' I built up a rapport with most of them. Building a relationship of trust takes time and I spent long hours talking about a range of topics that do not pertain to my research interests. After these initial meetings, I managed to start to steer the

conversation towards the topics relating to my research. With my fieldwork coinciding with a period of unprecedented pressure on opposition in Tajikistan and abroad, I found myself transcending the, constructed, researcher/subject divide. I ended up writing opinion pieces supporting the opposition's right to exist, helping Parviz secure funds to register his NGO and offering advice to those seeking political asylum in Europe. Rather than presenting barrier to objective data creation, my position as a researcher and activist helped me to produce valid data. Once the people I was profiling realised that I cared about their plight, and took their safety seriously, they began to become more candid in their responses. I took notes but never recorded our conversations, and followed up our conversations with regular Skype calls after I returned to the UK in September 2015.

In this thesis, I profile eight individuals, six of whom are men, two of whom are women. Three of the individuals in particular – Farrukh, Abdulrahmon and Suhrob – feature extensively in the empirical chapters. Farrukh was born in 1973 in Shahrinav near Dushanbe.³² The son of a school teacher, he had a 'secular' upbringing. He spent large parts of the country's civil war (1992-97) in Russia, moving there permanently in 2003.³³ Following the accession of Muhiddin Kabiri as leader of the Islamic Renaissance Party in 2006, he joined and is now one of its most active members in Moscow. Born in 1988, Abdulrahmon is from a village in Nurobod district in the Rasht Valley, an area associated with opposition to the government.³⁴ As a young boy, he studied at a *hujra*, a non-registered Islamic school in his village. A seasonal migrant, he spends much of the year in Moscow, leaving his wife and two young children back in Tajikistan. He now works selling fruit at a bazaar in Moscow region, using his knowledge of the Quran to lead a small prayer group at the bazaar attended by other Tajik migrants.³⁵ Suhrob, born in 1976 in Vanj, has been

³² Shahrinav is located on the road between Dushanbe and the border with Uzbekistan.

³³ The Tajik Civil War started in May 1992 and ended in June 1997. To simplify an exceedingly complex conflict, it pitted the Popular Front, consisting of the government, supported by people from Khujand (Leninabad) and Kulob against the United Tajik Opposition (UTO), consisting of the IRPT, Democratic Party and supporters from Gharm and the Pamir. For summaries of the conflict, see Heathershaw 2009; Epkenhans 2014; Bleuer and Nourzhanov 2013; Mullojanov 2014; Hall 2002.

³⁴ The United Tajik Opposition drew much of its support from residents in the Rasht Valley, situated in the country's east, and families from the valley who the Soviet government forcibly resettled in the Vakhsh Valley (See Lemon 2013).

³⁵ Moscow region (Rus.: *Moskovskaya Oblast'*), commonly referred to as *podmoskov'ye*, refers to the city of Moscow and surrounding towns. When Russians refer to *podmoskov'ye* they are usually referring to places that are outside of the Moscow city limits.

living in Moscow since 2001.³⁶ 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 Cathedral Mosque in 2012.³⁷ Having been initiated into the movement, Suhrob started preaching amongst the migrant population. The five others whom I profile include Adbujabbor, born in 1962, a former colonel in the GKNB with whom I lived in the summer of 2013 in Vanj. Ravshan was born in 1989 in a village near Vanj, he studied at the Tajik National University, working as a legal clerk before moving to Russia in 2011. Parviz, born in 1977 in Khujand, acted as my 'fixer' but is also a human rights lawyer who was attempting to set up an NGO. Firuza was born in the early 1950s in Khujand. She moved to Moscow in 1976, has lived there ever since and now runs an NGO centred on promoting Tajik culture. Marhabbo, an ethnic Pamiri from Dushanbe, also runs a Moscow-based NGO supporting migrants' rights. Muzaffar, born in 1964 in Nurobod, fought with the opposition during the civil war and now drives a taxi in Gharm. Although discourse analysis and ethnography form the primary methods in this thesis, I used two further methods to link my macro-level discourse analysis to my micro-level ethnography. First, I conducted semi-structured interviews with a range of actors involved in, and affected by, TASG. Second, I compiled a database of known cases in which the government of Tajikistan has deployed its security apparatus beyond its borders.

Extraterritorial Security Incident Database

The database, which contains 49 entries, covers the period between 2002 and June 2016. I created this in collaboration with John Heathershaw, Alexander Cooley and David Lewis, and their research assistants, who have been compiling the "Central Asian Political Exiles Database," due to be released in late 2016.³⁸ My database contains incidents of assassination, attack,

³⁶ Kulob, sometimes transliterated from the Russian spelling as Kulyab, is the fourth largest city in Tajikistan.

³⁷ Founded in 1927 in India, 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.

³⁸ This project emerged from research conducted by David Lewis (2015) and Alex Cooley and John Heathershaw's forthcoming book *Dictators Without Borders: Power and Money in Central Asia*.

arrest/detention, 'voluntary' return, exile, and rendition.³⁹ I compiled the database from Russian, English and Tajik-language media reports, reports from human rights groups and court documents from the 12 cases that have been heard in the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR).⁴⁰ I included three cases where the government is suspected, but has not been proven, to have played an active role. This includes attacks against journalists Bakhtiyor Sattori and Dodojon Atuvullo, and the assassination of opposition leader Umarali Quvvatov in Istanbul in March 2015. The date listed for each incident in Appendix II refers to the most serious incident. For example, if an individual is detained in Russia in 2014 and rendered to Tajikistan in 2015, then I have put the date as 2015. The list of 49 cases is unlikely to be exhaustive; many cases go unreported. The database nonetheless offers a useful complement to my other methods in analysing TASG.

Semi-structured Interviews

During my fieldwork, I conducted 32 interviews with journalists, lawyers, religious leaders and NGO employees.⁴¹ To select interviewees, I relied on personal contacts and snowball sampling. Some of these personal contacts were developed through my ethnography, such as attending events sponsored by NGOs or the Muftiate of European Russia, where I would meet a range of people. I contacted others via email or phone. Generally, having a personal introduction made it more likely that I would secure an interview. With the exception of five interviews in Dushanbe in 2013, where I conducted the interview with the help of an interpreter, I conducted all of the interviews on my own. Where possible I recorded the interviews on a dictaphone. But occasionally interviewees asked me to refrain from recording them and so I had to take written notes during the meetings. Although I tailored my questions for each interview, I tried to allow the conversation to develop as naturally as

³⁹ 'Voluntary' return refers to cases where the individual returned to Tajikistan following threats against family members at home. 'Exile' refers to the case of leader of the Islamic Renaissance Party Muhiddin Kabiri, who has been accused of financial crimes in Tajikistan and exiled to Europe.

⁴⁰ For a list of these cases, see Appendix V.

⁴¹ For a list of interviews, see Appendix IV.

possible.⁴² I took notes throughout the interview, probing the interviewee to elaborate on certain points. I transcribed and translated the interviews myself.

Before outlining the chapters, I would like to mention a few caveats relating to my approach. First, although I adopt a critical approach to the government of Tajikistan's management of security, I do not mean to valorise all members of the political opposition and denigrate government officials en masse. Many of those who oppose the regime seek to replace it with an equally authoritarian government, not all of those in government agree with all of its policies. Second, although I have profiled a range of individuals their views are not necessarily representative of their position as 'women,' 'young people' or 'Muslims.' I do not seek to generalise from my ethnographic analysis to comment broadly on what is happening in Tajikistan. Instead, I explore how power works in specific sites of TASG. Lastly, I do not claim to 'speak' for the Tajik people and emancipate them from unjust power relations. Nonetheless, my study remains an exercise in political critique and I have used my research findings to publish numerous pieces criticising the government for cracking down on Muslims and the IRPT. I worked as a blogger at EurasiaNet.org and Exeter Central Asian Studies Network, written pieces for *OpenDemocracy*, the Jamestown Foundation, *World Politics Review* and *The Diplomat*, covering many of these issues with a critical gaze. I have maintained a dialogue with policy-makers, speaking at Chatham House, Royal United Services Institute, the State Department and Foreign and Commonwealth Office. I have also provided testimony for the asylum case of a Tajik citizen held in Guantanamo Bay. In other words, I do not claim to be an objective, disinterested observer; I am engaged, at least in part, in undermining both the dominant western representations of Central Asia and the excesses of Tajikistan's security governance. To this end, I agree with Judith Butler that studying power forms "the very precondition of a politically engaged critique" (Butler 1995: 39). I have adopted a critical approach to TASG, which should be clear throughout this thesis.

⁴² Conducting interviews in the former Soviet Union can be a tricky business. One interviewee refused to answer any questions on Russian domestic policy to "foreign audiences."

Chapter Outline

My thesis is broken down into six chapters, two of which are theoretical, and four of which are empirical. In Chapter One, I examine three features of TASG: security as process, practice and subjectification. I argue that the current literature on security governance remains largely pre-theoretical, normative and Eurocentric (Krahmann 2003; Webber et al 2004; Kirchner and Sperling 2007, cf. Bevir 2013). Rather than existing independently of human action, I argue that security is socially produced (Zedner 2009; Huysmans 1998; Buzan et al 1998). Studying securitisation – the process by which actors frame subjects and objects as threats – is not sufficient however. Drawing on insights from the sociological approaches within critical security studies, I argue that it is also important to examine the practices through which security is managed (Balzacq et al 2010; Bigo 2002; Huysmans 2006). Having outlined my critical approach to security discourses and practices, I examine how security governance is undercut by relations of power which produce political subjects (Foucault 1981). In the final section of Chapter One, I outline authoritarian security governance, despite overlapping with liberal security governance, differs in important ways. Crucially, although liberal governance seeks to rule through responsible freedom, TASG is posited on the obedience of subjects (Sigley 2006; Dean 2010). I also outline the relationship between security and the transnational, examining the limited literature on state security practices against citizens living abroad (Ragazzi 2009; Shain 1989). Finally, I examine the relationship between security, secularism and religion (Gutkowski 2014; Mavelli 2013). I argue that state-led securitisation of Islam is based on “assertive secularism” which frames religion as backwards, dangerous and in need of state regulation (Kuru 2007).

Having examined security governance from the top-down in Chapter One, in Chapter Two I turn my attention to the ways in which TASG shapes everyday life and the ways in which subjects can resist this. I situate my work within the recent ‘everyday’ turn in security studies and outline an approach to studying how security governance ‘works on the ground’ (Vaughan-Williams and Stevens 2015). Following Foucault, I argue that where there is power, there is resistance (Foucault 1981). Contrary to his critics, Foucault did not argue that subjects of power are necessarily docile (Pickett 1996; Heller 1996; Vinthagen and Lilja 2014). Instead, he developed an approach to the polyvalent, dispersed, anti-hegemonic practices of resistance enacted by political subjects.

Although a handful of studies of resistance against security exist, this literature remains relatively limited at present (Ryan 2015; Balzacq 2014; Guillaume 2011). Resisting TASG involves resisting sovereign, disciplinary and biopower. Resisting sovereign power can involve open acts of defiance, or turning the law against those who are using it against you, for example by using human rights law to prevent being extradited. Resisting disciplinary power involves persisting with 'abnormal' behaviour. Finally resisting biopower involves rejecting the pastoral care of elites.

In Chapter Three, I move on to the study of TASG in Tajikistan. I argue that the contemporary discourse on religion and security in Tajikistan remains post-Soviet in so far as Soviet ways of thinking and doing persist (Khalid 2003). To re-enforce this argument, in Chapter Three I use material from Soviet newspapers to examine the assumptions about the relationship between security and Islam which emerged at this time. Central to this is the government's dichotomisation between 'good,' official, national Islam and 'bad,' unofficial, 'foreign' Islam. According to the hegemonic narrative, this latter form, often labelled as extremist, is backwards, potentially dangerous and backed by foreign powers. Instead of challenging these assumptions, much of the literature written by Sovietologists – Western experts on the USSR – reproduced them.⁴³ I argue that a large degree of intertextuality exists between Soviet and Sovietological writings on Islam and security in the Soviet Union (Saroyan 1997).

In Chapter Four, I bring my analysis of the official discourse on religion and security up to the present. I use a Critical Discourse Analysis of 58 state media reports and nine presidential speeches to map the hegemonic narrative on Tajik citizens joining Islamic State in Syria and Iraq. I argue that this narrative resembles the Soviet discourse, but builds on this in a number of ways. Not only is radical Islam bad, it is foreign (*begona*). This alterity exists on three levels. Spatially, radical Islamists learn their ideas abroad or outside of the state's gaze, whilst studying in 'underground' mosques, working as labour migrants in Russia or studying at madrassas in Pakistan. Morally, those who join radical groups betray their nation and bring shame on their families. Those

⁴³ The term should not be confused with Kremlinology, the study and analysis of the politics Soviet Russia. Sovietology refers to the study of politics of the entire Soviet Union and communist eastern Europe.

who display signs of piety – such as wearing a hijab or beard - are accused of foreigner-worshipping (*begonaparasti*). Temporally, the Tajik government argues that the Tajik people are inherently peace-loving. Memories of the country's civil war serve as a potent reminder of what happens if “alien” religious ideas are allowed to influence politics. This discourse sets the conditions for the emergence of TASG, legitimising the exercise of sovereign, disciplinary and biopower. It distinguishes between normal, ‘good’ Islam and abnormal, ‘bad’ Islam, securitizing the latter and calling for exceptional measures to be taken against individuals who participate in such ‘extremist’ practices. But it is not only destructive; it brings new forms of subjectivity into being, calling for Tajiks to embody secular, national values.

Having examined the emergence and consolidation of the security discourse, in Chapter Five I examine the range of measures used to govern radical Islam. These include examples of sovereign power, such as arresting ‘extremists,’ forcibly returning those detained in Russia and banning certain groups deemed too radical. TASG also involves disciplinary power, the policing of ‘abnormal,’ ‘foreign,’ ‘bad’ Islam. In Tajikistan, the police have forcibly shaved men’s beards and forced women to de-veil. Finally, TASG involves biopower; the state promotes “healthy,” secular lifestyles as a bulwark against radicalisation. The aim is transform citizens into secular subjects who monitor themselves and engage in horizontal surveillance against other members of their community. Using ethnography, I explore how these practices shape everyday life and create insecurity for those subjected by them.

Nonetheless, even though power pervades the system, security subjects do have the opportunity to resist even in authoritarian settings. In Chapter Six, I examine the myriad ways in which pious Tajik migrants can challenge the oppressive politics of TASG. Using ethnography, I examine the ways in which subjects can resist the relations of sovereign, disciplinary and biopower that underpin transnational authoritarian security governance. Rather than being transformational, centralised and counter-hegemonic, I argue that resistance is often opportunistic, momentary, decentralised and anti-hegemonic.

I conclude the thesis with some statements about the implications of my research for studies of Central Asia, international relations and security studies. I suggest questions that arise from the research and explore the potential for further scholarly inquiry into these.

Chapter 1: Dynamics of Transnational Authoritarian Security Governance

In this chapter, I develop an approach to the ways in which elites construct and manage security threats. I examine what security is, the ways in which hegemonic discourses create objects of security that need to be protected: the “people,” “society,” the “state,” and the “nation,” how security is managed and how this shapes political subjects. In other words, I examine security as *process*, security as *practice* and security as *subjectification*. Ontologically, security is essentially contested (Baldwin 1997; Huysmans 1998). Actors disagree over what security is and who, or what, it should protect. Security is an objective state of being, but a subjective *process* of becoming. Threats do not exist outside of the discourses that frame them in the language of security (Campbell 1998). Whilst the ‘Copenhagen School’ of security studies offers a ground-breaking analysis of this process of securitisation, a focus on discourse alone is not sufficient (Buzan, Waever and de Wilde 1998). *Practices* are equally important to the politics of security (Balzacq et al 2010; Neumann 2002). Once a threat has been identified, action must be taken. Governments, NGOs and private companies have developed security governance regimes to address security threats (Krahmann 2003). Many of these governance regimes are transnational, spanning state borders. In approaching security governance, I argue that the sociological approaches outlined by adherents of the ‘Paris School’ offer a way to think through both security discourses and security practices (Bigo 1996; Bigo and Walker 2007; Guzzini, 2000; Huysmans 2006; Adler and Pouillot 2011; Leander 2005; Adler-Nissen 2008). The management of threats is undercut by relations of power. These relations of power divide citizens into those who are threats – the extremists, terrorists and illegal immigrant – and those who are threatened; it *subjectifies* citizens. Security discourses and practices shape the subject-positions of both those labelled a threat – the subjects of securitisation – and those deemed to be threatened – the subjects of security.

The term security governance captures this complex interplay of securitising discourses and security practices, which are undercut by relations of power that create political subjects. Rather than examining how Tajikistan *should* manage the threat posed by radical Islam, an aspiration that would be in keeping with the normative, functionalist agenda set by many traditional

scholars of security governance, I am interested in how Tajik security governance functions and how it is related to regimes of power. In theorising TASG, I draw on the work of Michel Foucault. For Foucault, power was not something that agents possess and wield. Instead, power exists in relations between subjects and objects. Power is not always about destruction; it can be productive too. Foucault theorised three types of power. Sovereign power protects the ruler by seizing life and using violence. Disciplinary power trains, disciplines and forces subjects to conform to the norm. Biopower focuses on promoting the life of the population, making life live (Foucault 1981).⁴⁴ All three forms of power work within TASG.

The chapter unfolds as follows: in the first section, “Approaching Security,” I outline debates surrounding the ontology of security, security as process, security as practice and security as subjectification. I introduce the Foucault’s triangle of power: sovereign, disciplinary and biopower. In the next section, I critique the atheoretical, Eurocentric security governance literature. I outline how, despite similarities, authoritarian security governance differs from its liberal counterpart. Having outlined my approach to the interrelationship of security as discourse, security as practice and security as subjectification, in the second section of the chapter I start to theorise the relationship between security and the other concepts that form the focus of my thesis: the religious/secular and transnationalism. I argue that migration has been securitised and that Muslims have been singled out as a group that resists assimilation and whose values conflict with secular modernity (Croft 2012). This response to religion and religious migrants, I argue, is based on a secularist understanding of security (Mavelli 2013). Before, examining these concepts, I start my analysis by looking at the central theme of this thesis: security.

Approaching Security

The Concept of Security

‘Traditional,’ realist-inspired scholars of security focus on the ways in which rational, self-interested states, existing in an anarchical system, used military force to pursue their political aims, the most important of which was survival

⁴⁴ For an overview of biopower and the ways it has been conceptualised by Foucault and others, see Lemke 2011.

(Waltz 1959; Mearscheimer 2001; Walt 1987).⁴⁵ As a field of inquiry, 'traditional' security studies limits itself to "the study of the threat, use and control of military force" (Walt 1991: 212). According to theorists associated with 'traditional' security studies, the state constitutes the referent object of security and warfare the main threat to the security of the state system (Baldwin 1995). Although liberal theorists have questioned the state's propensity to use restraint rather than force, they retain the state-centric focus on national security (Keohane and Nye 1989; Baldwin 1993). As Robert Keohane and Lisa Martin note, "for better or for worse institutional theory is a half-sibling of neo-realism" (Keohane and Martin 1995: 3). Both liberalism and realism remain rationalist, state-centric, ontologically essentialist and epistemologically positivist. Following these approaches, security can be objectively measured by examining a state's military and economic capabilities.⁴⁶ Actors can precisely define security; it exists objectively of human interaction rather than being a derivative of it.

In recent decades, a number of critical scholars have sought to challenge these assumptions. Critical approaches to security have challenged traditional conceptualisation of the nature and type of security threats, the narrow definition of security centred on survival and the referent object that security measures seek to protect: the state. Influenced by post-structuralist and constructivist thinkers, theorists within critical security studies have argued that, rather than existing independently of social relations, security threats are inter-subjectively constituted within discourses (Ashley 1984; Ashley and Walker 1990; Shapiro and Der Derian 1989; Wendt 1999; Krause and Williams 1997; Waeber et al 1993; Campbell 1998; Weber 1996; Weldes et al. 1999).⁴⁷ Security is a slippery, essentially contested concept (Zedner 2003; 2009; Valverde 2011; Huysmans 1998; Baldwin 1997). Indeed, by looking at the definition and etymology of the word security, the 'traditional' objective reading appears misplaced. Security derives from the Latin *securitas*, meaning freedom

⁴⁵ I use the term 'traditional,' following Columba Peoples and Nick Vaughan-Williams and others, to refer to positivist theories of security, most notably realism and liberalism (Peoples and Vaughan-Williams 2015). The realist literature is vast and diverse. For an overview of different approaches and assumptions within realism, see Donnelly 2000 and Glaser 2009.

⁴⁶ Ashley Tellis, for example, identifies three spheres that, taken together, constitute national power: national resources, national performance and military capability (Tellis 2000).

⁴⁷ Critical Security Studies is a broad field, with a range of different perspectives and approaches some of which I pick up on in subsequent sections. For overviews of the interlectual history of critical approaches to security, and debates within and between approaches, see, Peoples and Vaughan-Williams 2015; Fierke 2015; Williams 2010; Sheehan 2005).

from concern, care or anxiety, and a state of self-assurance or confidence. At its most basic level security involves “being and feeling safe from harm and danger” (Fierke 2015: 7). It is therefore inherently subjective, based on an individual’s lived experiences, feelings and emotions. Security is always site specific; it’s ontology is dependent on local understandings of what security is and who it is for. Nils Bubandt uses the term “vernacular security” to refer to this situatedness of security. Local politics matter, Bubandt argues:

When the global concept of security is contextualized in terms of local political histories, it becomes apparent that ‘security’ as a political problem is neither unchanging nor semantically homogenous. Complex processes of accommodation, rejection and reformulation take place in the interstices between global, national and local representations of security. These processes, in turn, are related to the political history of the local ontological ways in which danger, risk and (in)security are defined (Bubandt 2005: 276).

Bubandt calls for an anthropological approach to security that “does not reduce local ontologies of uncertainty to current political (and political science) conceptualizations of security” (Bubandt 2005: 278).

Security is ontologically unstable; actors can contest what security is, who or what it is being secured and who or what constitutes a threat. Security and insecurity are interlinked terms; “we can never think security without insecurity,” (Dillon 1996: 120). Traditionally, academics have considered security and insecurity as antonyms. Security is defined in negative terms; it is characterised by an *absence* of threat or danger. Insecurity, conversely, is theorised as a lack that can be solved by the provision of security objects (Nye and Lynn-Jones 1988). As such, in its objective form, “security is nothing but the absence of the evil of insecurity” (Wolfers 1962: 488). Rather than considering the relationship between security and insecurity as diametric, I argue that they exist in a relationship of mutual definition, an agonal relationship (Dillon 1996). As Anthony Burke argues, the binary between security and insecurity “breaks down when we consider that because ‘security’ is bound into a dependent relationship with ‘insecurity,’ it can never escape it: it must continue to produce images of ‘insecurity’ in order to retain meaning” (Burke 2002: 20). What emerges is a view that rather than being binary categories, security/insecurity

exist on a semantic continuum (Huysmans 2006). In order to reflect this relationship, Michael Dillon suggests the term “(in)security” (Dillon 1996).

In this thesis, I am interested in the practices of governance which appeal to ‘security.’ I agree with Mariana Valverde that we should not think about security as a “thing, a concept or a condition but rather as an umbrella term under which one can see a multiplicity of governance processes” (Valverde 2011: 5). It is these processes of security governance that I examine in the empirical chapters. In addition to questioning the objective nature of security, scholars have also called for a *broadening* of security studies to include a wider array of threats such as environmental degradation and migration, and a *deepening* of security to incorporate a broader spectrum of actors operating at different levels in the international system, including sub-state groups and supra-state organisations (Krause and Williams 1997). As Ole Waever has argued, the division between ‘traditional’ and ‘critical’ obscures the large amount of internal variation within each approach (Waever 2004). Whilst all critical approaches question the ontological essentialism, epistemological positivism and primacy of the state engendered within traditional studies, a range of divergent intellectual projects exist. Indeed, a number of loosely defined ‘schools’ have emerged in recent years (Waever 2004; C.A.S.E 2006). The ‘Welsh School,’ centred around Ken Booth and Richard Wyn-Jones, has linked the study of security to the goal of human emancipation (Booth 1991). Barry Buzan, Ole Waever and their followers – the ‘Copenhagen School’- have focused on theorising *securitisation*, the process by which political issues become security threats (Buzan, Waever & de Wilde 1998). Scholars from the Paris School have developed a sociologically-inspired approach to the politics of everyday security practices (Huysmans 2006; Bigo 1996). Finally, post-structuralist approaches linked security to power relations and the process by which citizens become political subjects (Dillon 1996; Ashley 1987). The division of critical security studies into schools is a heuristic device.⁴⁸ In reality, such a categorisation “can be misleading if taken too seriously [...] Aberystwyth, Copenhagen and Paris are dispersed locations associated with specific individuals and debates, much more than unitary

⁴⁸ I use the school’s analogy here for heuristic purposes. In reality, there is a great deal of overlap between approaches and many who have been associated with a particular ‘school’ have rejected this categorisation.

schools of thought” (C.A.S.E 2006: 444). In the following section, I introduce three of the facets of security that shape my approach to transnational security governance. First, security is a *process* through which elites frame issues in the language of security. Second, security is a set of *practices* through which elites aim to manage identified threats. Third, security is a process of *subjectification* by which those it seeks to protect, and those it seeks to neutralise, are rendered into political subjects.

Security as Process

Developed in the years following the Cold War, securitisation theorists focus on the *process* by which actors frame phenomena as security threats (Wæver et al 1993; Wæver 1995; Buzan, Wæver & de Wilde 1998; Balzacq 2011).⁴⁹ This process of framing something as a security threat is performative rather than constative. In the words of Barry Buzan and his colleagues, “security is thus a self-referential practice because it is in this practice that the issue becomes a security issue- not necessarily because a real existential threat exists” (Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde 1998: 24). Security threats exist in so far as they are labelled threats by social actors. For example, during the 1980s government agencies in Europe increasingly represented migration as a potential threat to security, emphasising its potential to destabilise public order and erode national culture (Huysmans 2000). Migration control is imbricated in the language of security; migration has become *securitised*. For the ‘Copenhagen School’ theorists, securitisation is based on a “speech act” (Austin 1962). As pioneering securitisation theorist Ole Wæver argues, the word security “is the act [...] by saying it something is done” (Wæver 1995: 55).

According to linguist J.L Austin, certain utterances, such as saying “I do” at a wedding, are performative; by saying something, we do something more than just speaking. For Austin:

Saying something will often, or even normally, produce certain consequential effects upon the feelings, thoughts, or actions of the audience, or of the speaker, or of other persons: and it may be done with the design, intention, or purpose of producing them (Austin 1962: 101).

⁴⁹ For an overview of the development of securitisation theory, see Thierry Balzacq’s introduction to *Securitization Theory* (2011).

Securitisation necessitates a certain response by the relevant actors to remove the threat (Buzan, Waever and de Wilde 1998). By labelling something a threat, it is lifted out of the sphere of criminality or politics and into the sphere of security, thereby allowing for extraordinary measures to be used against its perpetrators. Securitisation involves framing issues “ as a special kind of politics or as above politics’ (Buzan, Waever and de Wilde 1998: 23). This process is neither objective nor subjective, but rather is inter-subjective. Securitisation is only possible when an actor frames an issue as an existential threat and the constituents of the referent object which as threat, in this case the citizens of the state, accept it as such.⁵⁰ Whilst I agree with the Copenhagen theorists that objects become security threats when actors label them as such, a number of gaps exist in their theory.

A number of scholars associated with the ‘second generation’ of securitization theory have criticised, modified and enhanced the ‘Copenhagen School’s’ approach (Stritzel 2005, 2014; Balzacq 2005; 2011; Donnelly 2013; McDonald 2008; Vuori 2008). First, the ‘Copenhagen School’s’ definition of security, which focuses on the Schmittian concept of the ‘politics of exception,’ is too restrictive (Huysmans 1998; Williams 2003).⁵¹ It neglects the importance of the social context in which the speech act takes place and the role of the audience in accepting or rejecting the securitisation move (Bigo 2002; Balzacq 2005; Stritzel 2011; Meyer 2009; Eriksson 1999). Thierry Balzacq (2005) argues that the ‘Copenhagen School’s’ focus on the securitizing speech act itself (the illocutionary act) rather than its effects (the perlocutionary act). In doing so, they neglect the importance of the audience in accepting or contesting securitising. Building on Balzacq’s argument, Holger Stritzel has drawn attention to the ways in which securitisation theory suffers from a fixed, acontextual conceptualisation of the security speech act (Stritzel 2011). Rather, everyday security talk and everyday security practices are “an always (situated and iterative) process of *generating* meaning” (Stritzel 2007: 366, emphasis in original). Second, the ‘Copenhagen School’ fails to fully appreciate the co-constitutive relationship between the speech act and the speaker’s power (Foucault 1994b). Not

⁵⁰ Thierry Balzacq argues that the Copenhagen School neglects the importance of the audience. He argues that “effective securitization is audience-centered” (Balzacq 2005: 171).

⁵¹ Carl Schmitt, a German political theorist, who wrote that politics is centred on the division between friends and enemies. As such, “the sovereign is he who decides on the exception” (Schmitt, 1985: 5).

everyone is in a position within the social structure to label something a security threat. Indeed, the ability to label something as a security threat has specific consequences - it is a “political technology in the hegemonic project of various agents” (Jackson 2007: 421). Indeed, as I will argue later in this chapter, the process which actors seek to fix the meaning of concepts within a discourse is directly related to their hegemony; “discourse is meaning in the service of power” (Fairclough 1992: 4). Lastly, although securitisation theory usefully highlights the process by which actors label security threats and begins to link such labelling to security practices, as Shahar Hamieri and Lee Jones observe, “very little of this literature explores how security problems, once identified, are managed in practice or how the systems established to manage them actually operate. That is, they neglect security *governance*” (Hamieri and Jones 2015: 3). Security does not end with the speech act (CASE 2006). Before turning to governance, I will first introduce security as a practice.

Security as Practice

Although securitisation incorporates practice through its use of speech-act theory and the idea that securitising something leads to measures being taken to counter the threat, practice does not form the centre of the ‘Copenhagen School’s’ approach. Studying discourses of security only provides insights into how objects, or subjects, come to be constructed as threats. It leads to a bias towards studying the elites who construct security discourses (Huysmans and Guillaume 2013; Walters and D’Aoust 2015). In doing so, it neglects the conditions of possibility from which security discourses emerge and the ‘everyday’ practices of agents (Bigo 2002; Balzacq et al 2010). Instead of only studying the contingency, openness and instability of discourses, I am interested in the ways discourses shape the meaning of practices. Discourse and practice are inextricably linked to one another; “practice cannot be thought ‘outside of discourse’ and vice versa (Neumann 2002: 628). Studying security practices allows us to understand what effects the process of securitisation has on the politics of security. In other words, studying practices and discourses allows us to understand how security *operates*.

The turn to practice in security studies reflects a broader ‘practice’ turn social theory associated with thinkers such as Pierre Bourdieu, Ludwig

Wittgenstein and Erving Goffman (Schatzki et al 2000). Emmanuel Adler and Vincent Pouilot, who have applied a practice-centred approach to global politics, define practices as:

Socially meaningful patterns of action, which, in being performed more or less competently, simultaneously embody, act out, and possibly reify background knowledge and discourse in and on the material world” (Adler and Pouilot 2011: 4).

Practices, unlike actions, are repeated to the point that they become naturalised, playing themselves out in often mundane ways as part of everyday life. They exhibit regularities over time and space, allowing other actors to respond in appropriate ways. As such, practices are relational and integrative; they bring actors together in relations of enmity or amity. This relationality contributes to the durability of practice. As Ann Swidler argues, practices “remain stable not only because habit engrains standard ways of doing things, but the need to engage one another forces people to return to common structures” (Swidler 2001: 85). Practices are imbued with symbolism; they are performances (Butler 1990; Goffman 1959). Practice relies on background knowledge, which makes it socially intelligible to those involved. Without discourse, practice would be meaningless and unintelligible. For example, Russian police checking the documents of Central Asian migrants travelling on the Moscow metro constitutes a practice. It is formulaic, often repeated and embedded with meanings. Document checks constitute a display of government power and a performance of the control of migration. Whilst sending signals to passers-by indicating that migration is under control, this conceals the fact that the security officials are heavily invested in the continuation of illegal migration to Russia.

In recent years, scholars within security studies have started to take practices more seriously, placing them at the centre of the research agenda and arguing for “more sociologically sophisticated theories of security” (Williams 2007: 1; Neumann 2002; Balzacq et al 2010). This involves taking emphasis on ‘exceptional’ and ‘everyday’ practices of security. Security practices range from passport checks to urban planning to constructing cities that will be ‘resilient’ to terrorist attacks to using force against enemy combatants. Scholars associated with the ‘Paris School’ of security studies have led the way in theorising security practices (Bigo 1996; Bigo and Walker 2007; Guzzini 2000; Huysmans 2006;

Adler and Pouillot 2011; Leander 2005; Adler-Nissen 2008).⁵² For them, studying securitisation discourses is not sufficient. Instead, “representational practice has to be studied in terms of its imbrication within a range of practices that are not reducible to the linguistic model” (Walters 2010: 219). Academics who adopt sociological approaches to security have placed it within a wider array of practices of citizenship, violence and political agencies. For them, security is as much about the processes of profiling passengers in airports and filling in risk assessments at work, as it is about nuclear weapons control and the balance of power.

The ‘Paris School’ is a loose coalition of critical scholars. Nonetheless, they all adhere to a number of commitments. They move beyond the purely discursive approaches of the ‘Copenhagen School,’ arguing that definitions of security are embedded within complex social relations (Huysmans 2006). Security is a technique of governing danger and as such a key domain of social practice. The key question for researchers becomes: “How does one conceptualize the politics of insecurity as a contested process of framing politics and social relations in security terms?” (Huysmans 2006: 145). According to Jef Huysmans, security and politics are both symbolic and technocratic. What is interesting is “not the threats that are defined in discourses of danger, but the processes through which fragmented practices are woven into domains of insecurity that are defined by the logics of security practice that traverse and connect events, institutional sites, skills, knowledge etc.” (Huysmans 2006: 153). In approaching security, those associated with the ‘Paris School’ have called for an “international political sociology” (IPS) approach (Bigo and Walker 2007).⁵³

Second, ‘Paris School’ theorists have focused on the role of security professionals in shaping what security is and who it is for.⁵⁴ Utilising Pierre Bourdieu’s relational sociology, a range of scholars have attempted to map the security field. Didier Bigo traces the reconfiguration of the “security field” in the post-cold war period. Rather than focusing on culture, Bigo concentrates on the

⁵² The term Paris School was coined by Ole Waever in 2004. It centres around the journal *Cultures et Conflits* and its editor Didier Bigo.

⁵³ A journal of that name was founded in 2007 and has become a platform for critical, sociological research on security. Whilst I realise that the ‘Paris School’ and ‘international political sociology’ are labels rather than fixed categories, and that diversity exists in these approaches, I use them here for the sake of simplicity.

⁵⁴ Leading Paris School thinker Didier Bigo calls these technocrats “professionals in the management of unease” (Bigo 2002).

ways in which uncertainty, danger and unease have proliferated in the discourses of western liberal security professionals. Unease - the inability to cope with everyday life – remains omnipresent. Where traditionally the military dealt with national security and the police protected internal security, this distinction is no longer tenable. Globalisation has led to the weakening of borders, proliferation of ‘common’ threats and, in response, the development of “a field of professionals of the management of unease” (Bigo 2008: 10). Security professionals, the police, military, non-governmental organisations and private security firms populate this field. More recently, Michael C. Williams has examined how this field developed after the end of the cold war. In his book *Culture and Security*, Williams argues that 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” (Williams 2007: 2). According to these analyses, security is not an objective reality, but emerges from discursive struggles and cultural practices.

Lastly, whereas the ‘Copenhagen School’ tends to overlook the role of power, it forms a central dynamic of the politics of security in the ‘Paris School’s’ approach (Stritzel 2007). Sociological theories of security not only incorporate ideas of security as the relational process through which agents produce and respond to dangers, but, following Foucault, excavate the power relations that underpin these processes. Instead of being purely destructive, following Foucault, power is productive; “power resides in neither the actors alone, nor the structure itself, but in the relations between the two” (Williams 2007: 124). The language of security is used to “exclude in the name of protection and [...] discriminate within society” (Bigo 2008: 105). Security professionals attempt to categorise risks, profile groups and evaluate dangers. In doing so, they divide the normal from the abnormal, the ordinary from the exceptional. Security remains a simulacrum of itself; it simultaneously frees and traps us (Bigo 2008). I will explore this central paradox of (in)security in the next section.

Sociological approaches to the study of (in)security entail a number of benefits. Moving beyond the securitisation theory of the Copenhagen School, the Paris School offers a sociologically nuanced account of “who is doing the (in)securitization move, under what conditions, towards who and with what consequences” (Bigo 2008 128). Field analysis, as I outlined above, allows us

to overcome the boundary between state and non-state; this facilitates an approach that reflects the transnational topography of security (Bigo 2001). Field analysis also captures the struggles for power that exist in the 'language games' between security professionals, academics and other actors over what security is and who it is for, in other words "legitimate knowledge on what constitutes a legitimate unease, a real risk." (Bigo 2008: 12). It reflects a reality in which no-one is omnipotent; "no actor can be the master of the game, but in which everyone's knowledge and technological resources produce a hierarchy of threats" (Bigo 2002: 76). The 'Paris School' constitutes an interdisciplinary approach, which incorporates insights from sociology, surveillance studies, police studies amongst others (Bigo 2008). In doing so, it overcomes many of the limitations of traditional approaches to security, which focus solely upon governments, armies and states. It also overcomes some of the shortcomings of purely discursive approaches, which tend to treat discourses as determining and fail to theorise the interplay between discourse and practice. As Bigo notes, "naming is important, but language is part of reality, not all reality" (Bigo 2001: 98). The 'Paris School' helps us to take discursive, visual and embodied security practices more seriously (Adler-Nissen 2012b).

Nevertheless, a number of gaps in the research offered by the 'Paris School' and IPS approaches exist. First, their interrogations into balancing of security and liberty remain largely Eurocentric. In 1997 Mohammed Ayoob observed that security studies remains dominated by Westerners and Western modes of thought (Ayoob 1997). Most studies within the 'Paris School' have focused on the western liberal field of security (Bigo 2008; Huysmans 2006; Williams 2007; Berling 2012). Few academics have taken the Paris School approach beyond the West.⁵⁵ Since Ayoob's critique of the Eurocentric discourse on security from within academia, a number of scholars have begun writing from a "post-colonial" perspective on security (Acharya and Buzan 2007; Vasiliaki 2012; Barkawi and Laffey 2006). Such analyses draw on non-western conceptions of security in theory and practice (Tsygankov and Tsygankov 2010). Second, the Paris School theorists are yet to fully examine the relationship between (in)security, secularism and religion. Although scholars have examined the management of unease related to migration, hooliganism

⁵⁵ While some scholars such as Anna Leander have examined the practices of security agents outside of the 'West,' they still focus primarily on western actors (Leander 2005).

and EU enlargement, few scholars have investigated the ways in which religiosity and secularity can create fear (Tsoukala 2009). I intend to fill this gap. Lastly, the use of discourse analysis and elite interviews by researchers has led to a tendency for analysts to study security from the top-down, focusing almost exclusively on the government's management of fear (Bigo 2006). What is missing is how political subjects respond to these security practices. Here the 'Paris School' would benefit from ethnographic approaches which take the political subject as the focus of enquiry into how government-produced fear shapes subject-positions and the ways in which subjects resist the politics of security.⁵⁶ It is to this relationship between security, power and subjectification that I now turn.

Security as Subjectification

A number of post-structuralist scholars have examined the ways in which security discourses and practices configure the boundaries of subjectivity (Walker 1997; Dillon 1990, 1996; Agathangelou and Ling 2005; Epstein 2011; Shepherd 2007). Subjects are not fixed. Instead, they are produced through discourses and practices.⁵⁷ Practising security involves subjectification, the process by which individuals become political subjects (Dillon 2004; Walker 1997). Be they labelled a 'patriot, a 'terrorist' or a 'radical,' individuals are 'made up' by the social categories that experts and administrators invent to label and organise them (Rose and Miller 1992: 174). This assignment of subjective positions is a process of becoming not being. People are not born as 'terrorists' or 'Islamic extremists,' they become them through processes of labelling and practice that are undercut by relations of power. As Rob Walker succinctly puts it, "modern accounts of security are precisely about subjectivity, subjection and

⁵⁶ I return to the theme of resistance in Chapter 2.

⁵⁷ Following Charlotte Epstein, I take subject, subject-position, subjectivity and subjectification to mean distinct things (Epstein 2011). A subject is an individual who has been shaped by relations of power. Subject-position refers to a subject's position on a discursive and material field, such as 'terrorist' or 'fundamentalist,' and all of the stereotypes and assumptions that underpin these labels. Subjectification refers to the process through which individuals become subjects. Subjectivity is a much more extensive category involving a person's sense of the self, the "ensemble of modes of perception, affect, thought, desire, fear, and so forth that animate acting subjects" (Ortner 2005: 37).

the conditions under which we have been constructed as subjects subject to subjection” (Walker 1997: 72). Defining subject positions involves privileging some forms of being over others; it is therefore inextricably interwoven with relations of power (Foucault 1982).

This exercise of power through subjectification is related to both two processes that are essential to governance: the formation of social identity and the legitimisation of those who govern. Security is essentially about defining the political community against a dangerous, foreign Other (Stern 2006; Campbell 1998; Hansen 2006; Lynn Doty 1998; Smith 2000; Zehfuss 2001). It is about demarcating between secure and insecure subjects. This division rests on the binary between a safe, sovereign inside and an outside characterised by indeterminacy, fear, and anarchy (Campbell 1998). These discourses of danger do not only help construct group identities. By uniting a community against a common enemy, discourses of danger also help to legitimate relations of power (Barker 2007). As Juha Vuori puts it, “security is a strong legitimator” (Vuori 2008: 68). Maintaining order in the face of danger is a central justification for government. In *Making Enemies*, Rodney Barker argues that danger and political legitimacy are inextricably interlinked. As he argues, “without threats and the enemies who pose them, states and government would be unnecessary” (Barker 2007: 8). Providing security is a crucial means through which governments defend their powers.

In theorising the relationship between security, power and subjectivity, I draw on the path-breaking work of Michel Foucault. As Foucault argued, delimiting subject positions is an exercise in power. Whether by executing a criminal for murder or promoting healthy lifestyles that will benefit public health, power is inherently linked to security. It is about securing the ruler, the individual or the entire population. As Foucault argues, security practices aim to “achieve an overall equilibrium that protects the security of the whole from internal dangers” (Foucault 2003: 249). Exercising power involves securing the majority of the population against abnormalities in an attempt to prevent “all the possible forms of the irruption of danger” (Castel, 1991: 288). As Michael Dillon and Andrew Neal argue in the introduction to *Foucault on Politics, Security and War*, “sorting life requires waging war on behalf of life against life forces that are inimical to life.” (Dillon and Neal 2008: 8). This is the central paradox of security:

in attempting to achieve security, actors must use violence and thus make others insecure.

As Jan Selby identifies, scholars have applied Foucault to international relations and security studies in three ways (Selby 2007). First, drawing in particular on Foucault's 'archaeological' writings, academics used Foucault to uncover the power relations that underly the disciplines dominant theory, neorealism (Ashley 1984; Walker 1993; Shapiro and Der Derian 1989).⁵⁸ Second, critical scholars have used Foucault to theorise the liberal world order (Larner and Walters 2004; Dillon and Reid 2001; 2009; Hardt and Negri 2000). For Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, this is a "globalized biopolitical machine" where life is regulated by transnational corporations (Hardt and Negri 2000). Third, less ambitiously, Foucault has been used to examine discreet political sites and technologies of control (Shapiro, Edkins and Pin-Fat 2004; Salter 2007; Bigo 2002). It is this third, more circumspect, Foucauldian approach that I adopt in this thesis.

Power and its relation to subjectification lies at the heart of Foucault's intellectual project.⁵⁹ In his analysis of prisons, schools and hospitals, Foucault demonstrated how relations of power saturate through all levels of human existence. Rather than being something that actors possess and wield, according to Foucault, power is a relation between agents. For him, power "is never localized here or there, never in anybody's hands, never appropriated as a commodity or piece of wealth. Power is employed and exercised through a net-like organization" (Foucault 1994b: 98). To study power, according to Foucault, we need to examine the "interplay between the terms of the relationship" between different institutions, objects and subjects (Foucault 2003: 168). Power, therefore, is decentred and polyvalent, rather than hierarchical. Power is not always destructive; it can be productive too. It produces political subjects. As Foucault argues, "rather than asking ourselves what the sovereign looks like from on high we should be trying to discover how multiple bodies, forces, energies, matters, desires, thoughts, and so on are gradually and materially constituted as subjects, or the subject" (Foucault 1980: 121). Through

⁵⁸ This period includes his books *The Birth of the Clinic* (1963), *The Order of Things* (1966), and *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1969).

⁵⁹ In an interview in the early 1980s, Foucault stated that his principle goal was "to create a history of the different modes by which, in our culture, human beings are made subjects" (Foucault 1982: 208).

power, subjects are “gradually, progressively, really and materially constituted through a multiplicity of organisms, forces, energies, materials, desires, thoughts etc” (Foucault 1994b: 35).

Foucault theorises three types of power. *Sovereign power*, focuses on maintaining the “safety of the Prince and his territory’ (Foucault 2004: 65). *Disciplinary power* attempts to render visible the spatial distribution of bodies in order to exert control over them. Finally, *biopower* takes life itself as its referent object and focuses on the management of populations (Dillon and Neal 2008: 13). Having outlined these key components of the Foucauldian approach to power, in the next section I examine each of these three components of Foucault’s “triangle of power” in turn.⁶⁰

Sovereign Power

Sovereign power constitutes the ability to take life or let live. It is the forbidding power of law, violence and control of territory. This repressive legal-sovereign power stops and limits certain behaviours. As Foucault notes, “power in this instance was effectively the right of seizure: of things, time, bodies, and ultimately life itself; it culminated in the privilege to seize hold of life in order to suppress it” (Foucault 1981: 136). Foucault presents the sovereign power as legislative, prohibitive and censoring; a power that primarily makes use of the law and law-like regulations. In other words, it is “police-like control, a power exercised in a top-down manner through various decrees and administrative measures emanating from the state” (Foucault 2007: 24). It enforces by agents of the state (the police, tax collectors, the army) who enforce the law by exacting penalties for violations. As Michael Dillon and Julian Reid (2000: 128) explain sovereign power seeks to “summon [...] a form of life amenable to its sway” (2000: 128). But sovereign power is not the only form of power that exists in the modern world.

Security is not just about the sovereign question of survival, and the exceptional measures taken to ensure this, but also the management and well-

⁶⁰ In my reading of this triangle of power, I draw on the seminal texts from Foucault’s ‘genealogical’ period, namely the books *Discipline and Punish* (1975), *History of Sexuality, Volume 1* (1976), the essay “The Subject and Power” (1982), and his lecture series at the College de France *Society Must be Defended* (1975-6), *Security, Population, Territory* (1977-8) and *The Birth of Biopolitics* (1978-9).

being of the population. It is not just about the top-down provision of security aimed at protecting the sovereign. As Foucault famously quipped, “we need to cut off the king’s head; in political theory that has still to be done” (Foucault 1991a). In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault examines how in the late eighteenth century a new form of power emerged:

“Deduction” has tended to be no longer the major form of power but merely one element among others, working to incite, reinforce control, monitor, optimize, and organize the forces under it: a power bent on generating forces, making them grow, and ordering them, rather than one dedicated to impeding them, making them submit, or destroying them (Foucault 1977: 136).

Although sovereign power has not been replaced, Foucault also drew attention to the mechanisms of power through which institutions colonise space and influence behaviour. He called this new series of relationships *disciplinary power*.

Disciplinary Power

Unlike sovereign power which is based on the clearly-defined law, disciplinary power is based on the discursively-defined *norm*. As such, “the code they come to define is not that of law but that of normalization” (Foucault 1994b: 44). This “normalizing society” involves the calculated administration of life built on dividing practices that distinguish those who are normal, and those who are abnormal, and potentially risky (Foucault 1983: 208). To enforce the norm, disciplinary power uses an array of techniques including training, examination, the functional organisation of space, the use of timetables, drills, categorisation and detailed surveillance. The ‘abnormal’ is subject to corrective or therapeutic techniques that aim to reform, fix or rehabilitate him or her (Johnston 1991: 149–169). Rather than prohibiting certain behaviours like sovereign power, it aims to encourage individuals to monitor, train and discipline themselves. Instead of only repressing deviant subjects, governments become “managers of life” aiming to “ensure, sustain, and multiply life [and] put this life in order” (Foucault 1981: 138).

Disciplinary power shapes and normalises subjects. According to Foucault, “discipline makes individuals; it is the specific technique of power that

regards individuals both as objects and as instruments of its exercise” (Foucault 1991a: 170). This involves the management of populations and individual subjects through practices of self-regulation. Individuals make and are made by disciplinary power; they are the “objects and instruments of its exercise” (Foucault 1977: 170). Unlike sovereign power, which operates through visible agents of the state, disciplinary power is diffuse in its operation. While sovereign power directly affects a small minority of criminals, disciplinary power affects virtually all aspects of living, subjecting everyone to regulation through institutions such as schools and hospitals. Foucault examined the ways in which institutions divided individuals into those who are deemed normal, and therefore responsible enough to be free to regulate themselves, and those who are deviated from the correct path and needed to be disciplined. Disciplinary power aims to harness the body for the good of society. It targets “the body as a machine: its disciplining, the optimization of its capabilities, the extortion of its forces, the parallel increase in usefulness and its docility, its integration into systems of efficient and economic controls (Foucault 1984: 261).

According to the Foucauldian notion of power relations, “power comes from below; that is, there is no binary and all-encompassing opposition between rulers and ruled at the root of power relations, and serving as a general matrix” (Foucault 1981: 94). Whereas disciplinary power isolates, concentrates and is essentially protectionist, by contrast biopower is said to be centrifugally oriented in favour of expansion, circulation and movement. Instead of focusing on the safety of the sovereign or the disciplining of individual bodies, biopower focuses on the security of the population, granting the right to make live and let die. While disciplinary power is a micro-technology, working on individual bodies, biopower is a macro-technology, working on entire populations (Taylor 2013: 45). Biopower is “part of a new type of governing for which life is a reservoir that must be tapped into rather than subjected to legal or disciplinary strictures” (Wallenstein 2013: 17).

Biopower

Biopower fosters life or disallows it to the point of death (Foucault 1990: 138). It exerts a positive influence on life, insisting on the right of the social body to ensure, maintain, or develop its life. What needs to be secured is no longer the juridical existence of sovereign but the biological survival of the population.

Characteristically, Foucault uses biopower inconsistently and its meaning shifts through his texts (Lemke 2011). When he first introduced biopower in *History of Sexuality, Volume 1*, he used it to describe the historical moment at which point species life began to emerge as a referent of politics and security. In later work, he used biopolitics to refer to the racial politics built on eugenics that led to the genocide of entire populations (Foucault 2003). And he also uses the term to denote the emergence of a form of individual self-governance.

Biopower encompasses the health and 'effectiveness' of the population of a collectivity. Foucault highlights how biopower emerged in the eighteenth century when the authorities "brought life and its mechanisms into the realm of explicit calculations and made knowledge-power an agent of transformation of human life" (Foucault 1981:143). During this period, governments began focusing on the optimisation of the population for economic growth and development through programs aimed to bolster longevity, birth rates, migration, improve public health, and housing.

In the opening lecture of his 1977 to 1978 series at the College de France, *Security, Population, Territory*, Foucault defines biopower as:

A number of phenomena that seem to me to be quite significant, namely, the set of mechanisms through which the basic biological features of the human species became the object of a political strategy, of a general strategy of power, or, in other words, how, starting from the 18th century, modern Western societies took on board the fundamental biological fact that human beings are a species (Foucault 2007: 1).

Biopower has two main characteristics (Rabinow and Rose 2006). First, it involves discourses about the vital characteristics of being human (being healthy, productive etc). Biopower holds life itself as the governing imperative (Rose 2007). It "exerts a positive influence on life, endeavours to administer, optimize and multiply it, subjecting it to precise controls and comprehensive regulations" (Foucault 1981: 137). Second, it involves specific interventions that manage the health and life of the population. Rather than dictating what people do, the government steers the population's general behaviour, governing how life is reproduced, and how productive society is with the goal of advancing the well-being of the population. Biopower therefore focuses on shaping lifestyles (Dean 2010: 99). Foucault likens this exercise of power to a shepherd tending

his flock: “the shepherd’s power is exercised not so much over a fixed territory as over a multitude in movement towards a goal; it has the role of providing the flock with sustenance, watching over it on a daily basis, and ensuring its salvation” (Foucault 2007: 68). Efforts to curtail cigarette smoking, promote sexual health and healthy lifestyles all constitute forms of biopower. Third, like disciplinary power, biopower constitutes political subjects gradually, progressively and materially. As with disciplinary power, the exercise of biopower centres on defining what is normal and what is abnormal. But where disciplinary power targets individual bodies, biopower targets entire populations. In Foucault’s words, “such a power has to qualify, measure, appraise, and hierarchize, rather than display itself in its murderous splendor; it does not have to draw the line that separates the enemies of the sovereign from his obedient subjects; it effects distributions around the norm” (Foucault 1981: 144).

In his lectures at the College de France between 1975 and 1976, *Society Must be Defended*, Foucault draws on the central paradox of security: in providing security for and improving the life of the majority, governments must encroach on the security of the minority. This ranking of social groups remains essential to the maintenance of relations of power. As such, “the death of the bad race, of the inferior race (or the degenerate, or the abnormal) is something that will make life in general healthier: healthier and purer” (Foucault 2003: 255).

Foucault’s Triangle of Power

This ‘triangle’ of power – sovereign, disciplinary and biopower – forms the centre of my analysis of transnational authoritarian security governance (Dean 2010: 122). Two interpretations of the relationship within this triangle of power exist. Foucault himself was never clear on the matter and made numerous contradictory statements regarding the relationship. On the one hand, in *The History of Sexuality, Volume I*, Foucault stated that “the ancient right to take life or let live was replaced by a power to foster life or disallow it to the point of death” (Foucault 1981: 138). In other words, archaic sovereign power was ‘replaced’ by the disciplinary and regulatory functions of biopower and disciplinary power in the early nineteenth century (Dean and Henman 2004: 487). Yet in 1976, the same year that *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1* was

first published, Foucault made a series of statements in his lecture series at the College de France that contradicted this idea of replacement. He argued that sovereign, disciplinary and biopower are simultaneously deployed: “the powers of modern society are exercised through, on the basis of, and by virtue of, this very heterogeneity between a public right of sovereignty and a polymorphous disciplinary mechanism” (1994b: 45). During a lecture in the 1977-8 lecture series, *Security, Population, Territory*, Foucault is even more explicit:

So we should not see things as the replacement of a society of sovereignty by a society of discipline, and then of a society of discipline by a society, say, of government. In fact we have a triangle: sovereignty, discipline, and governmental management, which has the population as its main target and the apparatuses of security as its essential mechanism” (Foucault 2007: 107-8).⁶¹

In Tajikistan, biopower and disciplinary power have not replaced sovereign power. From outlawing ‘extremist’ groups to regulating ‘deviant’ forms of piety and producing resilient secular subjects who will resist extremist messages, transnational authoritarian security governance relies on all three forms of power.

Disciplinary, sovereign and biopower are not discreet forms of power. They can combine together in discourses and practices. For example, as I will discuss in Chapter Four, the Tajik parliament passed a Law on Parental Responsibility in 2011. It involves sovereign power in so far as it prohibits certain activities, such as studying Islam abroad without a license. It incorporates disciplinary power because it calls on parents to monitor and discipline their children. And it involves biopower in so far as it promotes lifestyles that fit with national, secular culture.

A Foucauldian approach to security has a number of advantages. First, it allows us to place relations of power at the centre of the analysis of discourses and practices of security. Second, Foucault leads us to examine how by framing security threats and referent objects, individuals become subjects of security. Third, it allows us to study power from both the bottom-up and the

⁶¹ These words are echoed in a statement in the 1978-9 lecture series at the College de France, *The Birth of Biopolitics*, in which he claimed “I do not mean to say that it is a question of two separate systems, alien systems, incompatible systems, contradictory systems, totally exclusive of each other (Foucault 2004: 43).

top-down, breaking down the dichotomy between 'exceptional' and 'everyday' security practices. As Foucault succinctly argues:

We must eschew the model of the Leviathan in the study of power. We must escape from the limited field of juridical sovereignty and State institutions, and instead base our analysis of power on the study of power on the study of the techniques and tactics of domination (Foucault 1994b: 102).

Fourth, Foucault examines how discourses and practices of security are context-dependent rather than timeless and universal.

Thus far I have argued that security is a contested concept, and that security threats are constructed through discourse. This process of securitisation is not benign. Once an issue has been labelled a threat, elites and security professionals adopt a series of practices to counter the threat. These discursive and non-discursive elements of security governance are undercut by relations of power. Through these relations of power, both those labelled a threat and those who the measures seek to protect become security subjects. Having discussed security in relatively abstract terms, I will now turn to the specific questions which I attempt to answer through my research. I examine the links between security and governance, security and the transnational, and security and religion.

Governing Security

In this thesis, I am primarily concerned with how (in)security is governed through an array of discourses, practices and actors. By looking at security governance, I neither foreground discourse or practice, but look at how these combine in actor's attempts to govern (in)security. With the end of the cold war and globalisation, the international system has shifted from an order characterised by bipolarity and concern over national security to one of transnational threats and multiple centres of power (Mabee 2009; Walters and Larner 2004; Hough 2008; Walker 2009). A qualitative distinction exists between 'traditional' state-based security threats and 'non-traditional' security threats (Hamieri and Jones 2015). Non-traditional threats, like terrorism, organized crime and climate change, defy state borders; they are transnational. This "globalisation of security" has led to sweeping changes in how security is imagined and how it is practiced (Mabee 2009). The emergence of this late

capitalist “liquid modernity” has led to the development of a “world risk society,” characterized by non-traditional, “borderless” security threats (Bauman 2000; Beck 1999). Governments and security professionals construct the idea that we live in “a complex world increasingly in need of management” (Dillon and Reid 2001: 46). To effectively manage these threats, certain people have argued, actors need to develop a holistic, multilateral approach which brings together private and public actors. This approach has been termed “security governance” (Krahmann 2003). Emile Kirchner defines the concept as:

An intentional system of rule that involves the co-ordination, management and regulation of issues by multiple and separate authorities, interventions by both public and private actors, formal and informal arrangements, and purposefully directed towards particular policy outcomes. (2007: 4).

Kirchner’s definition combines the central tenets of security governance. It is polycentric. It involves public and private actors, formal and informal practices, which are all coordinated to manage security threats. Approaches to security governance emerged from a broader literature on governance. In the broadest sense, “governance refers to all processes of governing” that are aimed at “the creation of rule and order in social practices” (Bevir 2013: 1). More specifically, governance can be defined as the “processes and institutions, both formal and informal, that guide and restrain the collective activities of a group” (Keohane 2002: 202). Efficient governance, so the argument goes, is about identifying effective regimes to distribute public goods (Koechlin 2015). Governance can be seen as a more encompassing phenomenon than government because it embraces not only governmental organizations but also informal, non-governmental mechanisms (Rhodes 1996). Whereas traditionally government was hierarchical, governance is decentralized and horizontal (Czempiel and Rosenau 1992). As such, the traditional distinctions between public/private and state/civil society are often blurred in a system of governance.

Governance regimes have also developed at the global level. For James Rosenau, “global governance is conceived to include systems of rule at all levels of human activity—from the family to the international organization—in which the pursuit of goals through the exercise of control has transnational repercussions” (Rosenau 1995). Global governance, then, is concerned with the management of any issue which is transnational in nature (Finkelstein 1995).

This could be capital flows, border disputes, international law or migration. It refers to the development, since World War II, of international rule-making and political coordination, the greater role of non-state actors in global politics and an emergent 'global civil society' (Rosenau 1995; Czempiel and Rosenau 1992; Finkelstein 1995).⁶²

Whilst security governance is part of the broader concept of global governance, it differs from it in a few ways. First, where global governance operates at the supra-state level, security governance can refer to activities at all levels ranging from responding to international terrorism through creating international agreements to policemen monitoring a terrorist cell. Second, the issues they address differ. Global governance deals with a range of economic, political and social issues with transnational dimensions. Security governance is more specific, addressing issues which have been labelled security threats. For Rita Abrahamsen and Michael C. Williams security governance is enacted by "global security assemblages" which are "new security structures and practices that are simultaneously public, private, global and local" (Abrahamsen and Williams 2011: 3). This process has been institutionalised in the transnational security architecture characterised by the growth of organisations such as the European Union (EU), Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). These organisations attempt to address collective threats through coordinated responses. To address asymmetric and transnational threats, governments are increasingly relying not only on these inter-governmental organisations (IGOs) but also non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and private-military companies (PMCs) (Adams 1999). These PMCs have taken on a range of logistical and combat roles in conflicts across the globe. Blackwater, for example, was receiving \$1 billion in federal contracts for the protection of U.S. convoys, aid workers and diplomats by 2006.⁶³ This proliferation of non-state security actors and lack of one central authority amounts to a "fragmentation of security policy making" (Krahmann 2005: 4). These actors, then, are both a cause and consequence of the weakening position of the state as a security actor.

⁶² Early proponent of global governance James Rosenau founded a journal of that name in 1995.

⁶³ Falconer, B. "Making a Killing: A Blackwater Timeline." *Mother Jones*, 9 October 2007, <http://www.motherjones.com/mojo/2007/10/making-killing-blackwater-timeline>

As a subject of inquiry, researchers have treated global governance, and security governance, in two distinct ways (Dingwerth and Pattberg 2006). Some view it as a normative agenda, an ideal way of governing that creates the conditions for collective action, efficiently manages shared risks and creates peace and prosperity for all (Aydilini 2010; Kirchner 2007; Sperling 2014). Others view it as observable phenomenon describing the changing locus of political authority in the globalized post-cold war order (Krahmann 2003; Webber et al 2004).

Whilst the literature on security governance draws attention to how security is managed by a range of state and non-state actors, it contains a number of gaps. First of all, most analysis remains functionalist; it responds to security problems and recommends policy solutions. Some scholars go even further, adopting a normative position that views governance as a natural solution to the complexities and insecurities of a globalized world. It operates on the assumption that “unregulated spaces lead to the growth of instability” (Aydilni 2010: 3). In much of the security governance literature, the European Union is reified as an ideal model to be emulated elsewhere (Sperling and Webber 2014). For these scholars the key question becomes: can western security governance be extended outwards? An assumption that Western states have the knowledge and power to fix ‘failed states,’ non-western states underpins this literature (Chandler 2016). Most of these accounts remain top-down; they examine governance institutions and individuals working at them. While the majority of studies have focused on Europe and North American actors, a recent volume edited by James Gaskarth brought together a number of essays on the ways in which the “Rising Powers” of Brazil, Russia, India and China have engaged with global governance (Gaskarth 2015). But like earlier analyses it retains a top-down, system level focus (Kahler 2013). By treating governance as natural and scientific, analysts have neglected the roles of regimes of power in the emergence, consolidation and dissemination of security governance.

Much of the literature remains blind to questions of ontology and epistemology. As Mark Bevir surmises, “debates about governance are impoverished by a lack of philosophical thought” (Bevir 2013: xi). Recently authors like Bevir, along with critical scholars governmentality studies and post-structuralism, have started to problematize the contingent discourses and

practices of governance (Larner and Walters 2004; Cox 1981).⁶⁴ Some scholars have argued that a form of “global governmentality” has developed in recent years (Larner and Walters 2004). They have started answering questions about how governance shapes political subjects. A handful of researchers have utilised a Foucauldian approach to examine how neo-liberal governance projects attempt to shape local populations in developing countries (Hönke 2013; Li 2007). Others have examined how governments call on populations to be resilient in the face of ecological, security and economic challenges (Vaughan-Williams, Croft and Brassett 2013; Chandler 2014; Reid 2012; Joseph 2013; Zebrowski 2013). This literature on resilience is influenced by Foucault’s notion of biopower. As Chris Zebrowski summarises, the notion of resilience calls on people “to be encouraged, not directed; managed, not controlled” (Zebrowski 2013: 160). Yet much of this critical analysis has focused on the promotion of bottom-up population resilience in neo-liberal settings. Thus far, very little research has been carried out on authoritarian or illiberal governance.⁶⁵ In the next section, I outline my argument and unpack the differences between liberal and authoritarian security governance.

Authoritarian Security Governance

A number of scholars have highlighted the Eurocentric bias within security studies and called for scholars to turn their attention to security-making in non-western societies (Barkawi and Laffey 2006; Bilgin 2010; Acharya and Buzan 2009). With the vast majority of the world’s population living outside of Europe and North America, often living under authoritarian regimes, this call is certainly timely. Security studies needs to take non-western approaches to and experiences of (in)security more seriously. The relationship between authoritarianism and security remains a lacuna within critical security studies. A number of authors associated with critical security studies have highlighted how so-called liberal governments use discourses of exceptionalism to use illiberal measures, such as torture, indefinite detention and racial profiling against

⁶⁴ For a recent critique of ‘critical’ approaches to governance, see Hamieri and Jones 2015.

⁶⁵ Lisa Wedeen’s work on Syria and Yemen (1999; 2008) and Dan Slater’s *Ordering Power Contentious Politics and Authoritarian Leviathans in Southeast Asia* are notable exceptions, offering sophisticated accounts of the emergence and consolidation of authoritarian regimes.

potentially threatening individuals (Neal 2009; Bigo and Tsoukala 2008; Vaughan-Williams 2009; Reid and Dillon 2009; Hönke 2013; Butler 2004). But what about situations where those who are governing make no pretence to be liberal? How does authoritarian governance differ from its liberal cousin? Fewer academics have examined how authoritarian states manage and govern security threats.⁶⁶ Although the boundary between (il)liberal and authoritarian security governance is not fixed, I maintain that there are qualitative differences in the way authoritarian governments manage security.

Authors have used a range of terms to describe non-democratic regimes including “illiberal democracy” (Zakaria 1997), “competitive authoritarian” (Levitsky and Way 2002), and “semi-authoritarian” (Ottaway 2003). In this thesis I use the term *authoritarian* to describe the government of Tajikistan and the way it governs security. I have chosen not to use the term illiberal or non-liberal, because these terms define the system as the *absence* of liberalism. Instead, I argue that authoritarianism involves practices that indicate that it is a *presence* in its own right. Tajikistan displays many of the “family resemblances” of an authoritarian regime, including a limited political pluralism, restrictions on freedom of speech and assembly, widespread use of torture and a president who has ruled for over twenty years (Linz 1964; Wittgenstein 1972).

In recent years, a number of scholars have started to dedicate attention to authoritarian conflict management and the illiberal peace, examining case studies from Sri Lanka, Rwanda, Tajikistan and Angola (Lewis 2010; Piccolino 2015; Smith 2014; Heathershaw 2009). In his study of post-conflict Angola, Ricardo de Oliveira argues that the government of Jose dos Santos, who has been in power since 1979, ensures that there is not a revival of conflict by managing elections, co-opting civil society, controlling the media, implementing “high modernist” infrastructure projects and paying little attention to human rights (de Oliveira 2011). Indeed, authoritarian security governance is more about promoting hegemonic order and stability than about democracy and freedom (Heathershaw 2009). But most of these studies have examined how states achieve stability after a period of civil war. Although Tajikistan did experience a civil war between 1992 and 1997, it is no longer a post-war

⁶⁶ There are a growing number of studies examining how states support ‘authoritarian’ norms in the international system, with much of the literature focusing on Eurasia. See, for example, Ambrosio 2008; Cooley 2015; Gaskarth 2015, Lankina, Libman and Obydenkova 2016.

state.⁶⁷ Rahmon's regime incorporated warlords into the state at first, but has gradually removed them, in a process that Jesse Driscoll calls "coup-proofing" (Driscoll 2015). As such, my thesis concerns security governance rather than peacebuilding. Fewer authors have begun to theorise what authoritarian security governance looks like. In addition, none of the authors above adopt a Foucauldian approach to studying authoritarian governance.

Some have argued that Foucault's ideas are inherently linked to neo-liberal modernity and therefore cannot be effectively used in authoritarian political systems (Joseph 2010; Selby 2007). Jonathan Joseph, for example, questions "whether governmentality, as a set of liberal techniques, really does apply to all parts of the globe" (Joseph 2010: 417). In my opinion, Foucault's approach to power *can* be applied to a range of liberal and authoritarian settings. Although Foucault developed his power with regards to liberal-democratic modern Europe, others have argued that his ideas do have analytical purchase in authoritarian and non-Western settings as well (Dean 2010; Philpott 2000; Death 2011; Jabri 2007; Vrsti 2008). While Foucault did discuss Nazism's relationship to biopolitics, he did not comment on how his theories might be applied to authoritarian systems of rule (Foucault 1981). It is left to Foucauldians – those inspired by his work – to use his ideas to theorise authoritarian governance. I argue that, rather than being a synonym for neoliberalism, Foucault's approach to power is most usefully conceptualised as an approach to the study of regimes of rule, and their relationship with power and subjectivity. If Foucault was interested in how power incites individuals to bind themselves to power spontaneously and voluntarily, then he can be applied to authoritarian systems of rule. As Stephen Collier argues Foucault mapped how different forms of power are combined in a "topology of power" (Collier 2009). He offers a way of making sense of how the world is represented, ordered and governed through relations of power, rather than a particular way of ordering politics. Both authoritarian and liberal systems of rule are built on a complex combination of sovereign, disciplinary and biopower. Both systems seek to govern through the dividing practices subjectification (Dean 2010). In his chapter on "authoritarian governmentality" Mitchell Dean identifies three forms of authoritarian governance: "those non-liberal forms of

⁶⁷ With the banning of the IRPT in 2015, which signalled the formal end to the 1997 peace agreement, Tajikistan can be said to have moved to a post-post-conflict situation.

thought and practice that are a component of liberal rationalities; those non-liberal forms of thought and practice that gain a certain legitimacy within liberal democracies; and non-liberal forms of rule proper” (Dean 2010: 134). Tajikistan is a case of non-liberal, or authoritarian, rule proper. Qualitatively - both in terms of the discourses that legitimate it and the range of practices that it entails – authoritarian security governance diverges from its liberal alternative. I identify three areas in which they differ: discourse, space and practice.

Discourse

On the surface, similarities do exist between discourses of liberal and authoritarian governance. Both liberal and authoritarian security governance portray security threats as ‘foreign,’ proceeding from a dangerous outside (Campbell 1998). Both use this external danger to legitimise power relations and form national identity (Barker 2007). In both systems, leaders call for exceptional measures to be taken to manage identified security threats (Neal 2009; Vaughan-Williams 2009; Agamben 2005). Both emphasise the importance of stability. But whereas liberal security governance allows for the existence of counter-narratives from civil society and rival political parties, authoritarian governments attempt to maintain a monopoly on security discourses. Whereas the audience plays a role in accepting or contesting the securitisation process in democracies, in authoritarian states the audience plays a diminished role (Balzacq 2005). For example, whilst the media in the United Kingdom was able to criticise the government’s handling of the 2011 riots in London, when the independent media in Tajikistan criticised the government’s handling of political violence in Rasht in 2010, the government closed newspapers and blocked websites (Lemon 2014).

Space

Spatially, unlike liberal governments who view space as a source of economic, social and political competition, illiberal regimes see space as a securitized resource that the state must closely control (Cerny 1997; Lewis 2015: 143). This securitisation of space extends to diasporic and exile communities as well (Collyer and King 2015). Authoritarian states monitor and surveil their exile

communities to a degree generally not seen in liberal democracies. As David Lewis argues, “extraterritorial space poses genuine challenges to the domestic regime: it provides the opportunities for opponents to organize, to accumulate resources, to produce new discourses and to attract new members” (Lewis 2015: 144). As Lewis identifies, the authoritarian regime’s discursive production of space is paradoxical. On the one hand, the regimes insist on the sanctity of national borders and the maintenance of stability within them. But on the other hand, their reliance on extraterritorial security practices undermines this sovereignty discourse. In securitising transnational space, authoritarian regimes attempt to legitimise their extraterritorial extension of domestic security policies.

Practice

Both liberal and authoritarian systems of rule combine elements of biopower, disciplinary power and sovereign power. Power is exercised with the view to moulding political subjects. But where liberal governance involves governing through freedom, thus allowing for the possibility of critique, authoritarian rule is based on the subject’s complete obedience to political authority (Dean 2010; Sigley 2006). In other words, authoritarian rulers “do not accept a conception of limited government characterised by the rule of law that would secure the rights of individual citizens” (Dean 2010: 147). Authoritarian governments rule through a complex range of state and civil society institutions. Authoritarian regimes combine a similar mix of formal and informal measures, public and private actors seen in neo-liberal governance. But authoritarian governance is characterised by a lower level of political decentralization; the state remains the most prominent governance provider.

Although authoritarian governance “seeks to operate through obedient rather than free subjects,” this does not prevent them from using all three forms of power identified by Foucault (Dean 2010: 155). At first glance, security governance in liberal and authoritarian states involves similar practices of sovereign power – torture, rendition, arrests. But the scale and scope of these practices differs. In terms of scale, the use of tactics such as torture remains more widespread in authoritarian regimes. Security services often use such

tactics against citizens and are rarely brought to account for this.⁶⁸ The judicial system remains highly politicised. Charges of extremism take on a political nature and are used by the regime to remove opponents. Whilst UK Prime Minister David Cameron has called opposition leader Jeremy Corbyn a “terrorist sympathiser” and a “threat to national security,” he has not called for his arrest, as in the case of President Rahmon and his leading opponent Muhiddin Kabiri.⁶⁹ Those who challenge the abuses of the security services can also see criminal charges brought against them.⁷⁰

Authoritarian regimes are not based on sovereign power, repression and coercion alone. Like its liberal variant, authoritarian governance uses dividing practices based around distinguishing between normal and abnormal political subjects. In other words, it is based on disciplinary power. Surveillance remains widespread and citizens who publically display signs of resistance to the regime may be disciplined. Authoritarian states also rely on biopower. Here Foucauldian studies of “colonial governmentality” are useful (Scott 1995). Colonisers rely on disciplinary and biopower to mould obedient, modern, civilised subjects. In their work on colonial Africa Jean Comaroff and John Comaroff’s refer to this process as the “colonization of consciousness” (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992). Through their analysis of Christian missionaries in the Southern Tswana region of South Africa, they show how “a particular way of being and seeing, colonized their consciousness with the signs and practices, the axioms and aesthetics, of an alien culture” (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992: 235). The missionaries sought to civilize the locals by replacing their backwards superstitions with scientific reason. Closer to my Tajik case study, researchers have examined how Soviet attempts to construct a New Soviet Person constituted a civilising mission that aimed to positively transform everyday lifeworlds and social relations (Massell 1974; Rasanayagam 2011; Collier 2011; Prozorov 2014). Stephen Kotkin examines how the Soviet authorities shaped consciousness in the new town of Maginitogorsk, taking inspiration from

⁶⁸ In contrast, the cases of Guantanamo detainee Binyam Mohammed against the UK government, case against the US government lodged by fellow detainee Emad Abdullah Hassan and the sentencing of US soldiers of the 2004 Abu Ghraib prisoner abuse indicates a greater degree of culpability amongst ‘Western’ military and security services.

⁶⁹ Watt, N. “David Cameron Accuses Jeremy Corbyn of Being ‘Terrorist Sympathiser,’” *The Guardian*, 2 December 2015, <http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2015/dec/01/cameron-accuses-corbyn-of-being-terrorist-sympathiser>

⁷⁰ In this thesis, I use the term security services to refer to the State Committee on National Security (GKNB), Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Internal Affairs.

Foucault's work on subjectification (Kotkin 1995). Kotkin uses the personal diaries of workers to offer an account of the micro-physics of Stalinist power through practices of mutual surveillance and self-identification. In another Foucauldian social history of the Soviet Union, Oleg Kharkhordin traces the development of the *kollektiv* during the Soviet Union (Kharkhordin 1999). Every group of workers in a factory, collective farm, school or office belonged to the same *kollektiv*. Kharkhordin argued that these groups united individuals around the common goal of building a socialist society and shared activities to bring this society about, enhancing group cohesion. Those whose comments or behaviour ran counter to the *kollektiv's* interests could be denounced by members of the group, a process that Kharkhordin identifies as *oblischenie* (the condemnation of an individual's actions). "Practices of mutual surveillance among peers, rather than the hierarchical surveillance of subordinates by superiors" characterised Soviet society (Kharkhordin 1999: 355). These practices were not restricted to the monitoring of others alone; individuals were expected to reflect on their own beliefs and practices. While much of this surveillance remained informal, volunteer-based *druzhina* militias also patrolled urban areas looking for signs of dissent. Kharkhordin traces the origin of these practices to the Orthodox church where the devoted were expected to do penance in public. These acts of *oblischenie* forced individuals to conform to the state-defined norm. Kharkhordin claims that "the ultimate achievement of Soviet individualization [is] a modern subject who constantly readjusts his or her self-concept by staging mini-trials over his or her demonstrated deeds" (Kharkhordin 1999: 251).

These Foucauldian studies of colonial and Soviet system of governance demonstrate how authoritarian governance is not reliant on sovereign power alone. Like liberal governance, authoritarian governance is characterised by bottom-up self-order rather than one solely imposed from the top-down. Authoritarian security governance involves a complex mix of sovereign, disciplinary and biopower which aim to create subjects who are loyal to the regime and therefore do not threaten regime security. Having outlined authoritarian security governance, in the final section of the chapter I turn to the two phenomena that the government of Tajikistan is seeking to govern: transnational space and religion.

Themes

Transnational Security

The 'transnational' refers to a phenomenon in which there are "multiple ties and interactions linking people and institutions across the borders of nation-states" (Vertovec 1999: 447). My study is transnational – examining activities that cross, overlook and intersect state boundaries - on at least two levels. First, it is transnational in so far as I examine how elites frame and respond to movements of people and ideas across borders as a question of security. Second, it is transnational because I study governance regimes that span state borders. In this section, I will examine these two facets in turn. My thesis profiles Tajik migrants living in Russia. Migrants are perhaps the most obvious example of transnational life. Indeed, much of the earliest literature on transnationalism focused on the "social process by which migrants establish social fields that cross geographic, cultural and political borders" (Glick-Schiller et al 1992: ix). A number of approaches to the security-migration nexus exist. Realist-inspired approaches to migration-security are generally state-centric; migration becomes a variable in the calculation of national security (Widgren 1990; Heisburg 1991; Rudolph 2003; Weiner 1992; Koslowski 1998; Rudolph 2006).⁷¹ Migrants, according to realist analysts, present a challenge and migration flows need to be managed by states (Adamson 2006; Rudolph 2003). Security is thus rendered a value to be achieved rather than problematised. Borders need to be secured so that undesirables cannot cross them. Migrants need to be categorised based on the risks that they pose to the security of the receiving state.

Influenced by the 'Copenhagen School,' in the late 1990s, scholars began to challenge the prevalent realist-inspired approaches. Instead of looking at migration as an objective threat to national security, they examine "how international movement of people has been historically constructed as a security concern" (Bourbeau 2011: 6). Much of this analysis has focused on the ways in which migration threatens "societal security" (Buzan et al 1998; Waever

⁷¹ Myron Weiner, for example, lists a number of different ways in which migrants become threats. First, some migrants are dissidents, criminals or terrorists and may seek to cause instability in their country of residence. Second, diasporas can be used by the host country against their state of origin or its rival. Third, migrants can be a cultural threat; they threaten the values, identity and traditions of the majority. Fourth, migrants are an economic threat; by taking jobs from nationals and using welfare they can degrade the state's economy.

et al 1993). Societal security is “about collectivities and their identities” (Buzan et al 1998: 120). In other words, it involves the “security of large scale ‘we’ entities” (Waever et al 1993: 21). The migration of a culturally different group can threaten the identity and thus security of the other social groups. However, even the ‘constructivist’ Copenhagen School views society as homogenous and fixed (McSweeney 1996). It assumes that the boundaries between social groups are clearly demarcated and it is clear who is ‘in’ and who is ‘out.’

Critical scholars associated with the poststructural approaches, the ‘Paris School’ and ‘Critical Migration Studies,’ have begun to examine “how individual movement is framed in different ways” and the policies this leads to (Guild 2009:1; Huysmans 2006; Bigo 2002; Vaughan-Williams 2015; Ceyhan and Tsoukala 2002). Critical scholars have a number of common assumptions. First, the existence of migration as a security threat is not taken-for-granted. Instead, it is constructed through an array of representations and practices which have evolved over time. Governments have long deemed mobility to be both an opportunity and potential security threat. Unlike more traditional approaches, critical studies do not treat the relationship between security and migration as a timeless given. Instead, authors argue that actors transformed migration into a security threat over time through a series of material and representational practices (Huysmans 2006).

Second, migration-security is central to a wider debate on politics, mobility and identity. Security remains a “political technique of framing” (Huysmans 2006: xii). Indeed, migrants have come to be understood through a series of binary oppositions: legal/illegal, voluntary/forced, seasonal/permanent, and economic/political. If a migrant is considered in humanitarian terms they evoke compassion. However, if they are deemed a security threat, then exclusionary measures are required against them. Claudia Aradau, in her study of the representation of human trafficking in Europe, has analysed the ways in which policy-makers represent migration in such contradictory terms (Aradau 2008). Human trafficking is simultaneously represented as a ‘security threat’ whilst the women are ‘victims.’ Whereas ‘victims’ are offered rehabilitation, ‘illegal’ female migrants are detained and deported.

Since 9/11, the focus of public debates on migration and security has shifted towards a focus on Muslim migrant groups (Croft 2012; Huysmans and Buofino 2008; Mavelli 2013; Birt 2006). Scholars have examined the ways in

which politicians (Huysmans and Buofino 2008) and the media (Croft 2010) have securitised Islam. Jonathan Birt examines the way in which the British government, through its counter-terrorism policies, created the boundary between 'good' tolerant, progressive imams and 'bad' divisive ones (Birt 2006). Luca Mavelli examines how European governments have implemented secular policies in order to govern religion. He focuses on the "practice of transnational governmentality that by distinguishing between 'moderate' and 'radical' Islam, contributes to create a category of threatening 'others' which calls for a more 'interventionist' and disciplining state" (Mavelli 2013: 160). This securitisation of Islam, and the way actors tend to contrast religious violence against secular order, led scholars to become interested in the relationship between secularism and security, which I will discuss in the next section (Gutkowski 2012; Mavelli 2013).

Most of the works cited above examine liberal migration regimes and focus on the ways in which elites in host countries securitise immigrants. Indeed, as Francesco Ragazzi argues a bias exists within security studies towards the study of immigration rather than emigration (Ragazzi 2009). In this thesis, I am interested in how a sending state (Tajikistan) presents Muslim emigrants as a threat to their homeland and takes actions beyond its borders to govern this threat. Although a number of academics have looked at this "transnationalization of state practices," the ways in which states spilling over borders by reaching out to own people abroad, most of these focus on the 'positive' dimensions of this (Ragazzi 2009; Ho 2011; Delano and Gamlen 2014).⁷² This includes trying to channel remittance flows, extending voting rights to the diaspora and using it to influence policy in the host country (Baubock 2009). A number of scholars have drawn attention to the darker side of these policies, to the export of the security apparatus to pursue exiles, emigrants and dissidents abroad (Shain 1989). Yossi Shain develops a typology of extraterritorial security practices, including the withdrawal of citizenship, employment of spies, incriminating exiles, exposing supporters at home, kidnapping and political assassination (Shain 1989). Studies have examined Turkish practices against Kurds in exile (Rigoni 2000), the disappearance of Moroccan opposition leader Ben Barka in Paris in 1965 (Gallissot and Kergoat

⁷² The literature on sending state policies is vast. For a review of this literature, see Delano and Gamlen 2014.

1997), the assassination of dissident Bulgarian writer Georgy Markov in London in 1978 (Kostov 1988) and Yugoslav monitoring of guest-workers in West Germany (Bakovic 2014). All of these studies remain descriptive rather than analytical. They do not consider how these extraterritorial security practices shape our understanding of security and its relation to power.

States have reached over their borders not only to respond to the imagined threat emanating from citizens residing abroad, but also to neutralise threats from foreign citizens. A more developed area of transnational security studies focuses on the development of this “global archipelago of exceptionalism” that at the height of the War on Terror in 2005 included 1,300 detention centres or ‘black sites’ stretching from Guantanamo Bay in Cuba to Abu Ghraib in Iraq to Kandahar in Afghanistan and Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean (Neal 2006: 44; Butler 2004; Agamben 2005). Fewer studies have studied the rendition of terrorist suspects. In general terms, rendition refers to the transfer of individuals from one country to another without reference to due juridical process. Unlike extradition, which is the formal process by which a person is surrendered to another country, rendition bypasses the need for treaties with the host country. In the US, ‘Rendition to Justice’ has been a policy since the Reagan administration.⁷³ As part of this program, U.S. agents forcibly transferred an estimated 80 suspected terrorists to stand trial in America before 9/11 (Satterthwaite 2006: 30). After the attacks of 9/11, the U.S. created an unprecedented network of detention centres and secret rendition flights. A 17 September 2001 memo from President Bush to the Director of the CIA approved a system of “clandestine intelligence activity,” allowing the U.S. to detain non-US terror suspects anywhere in the world. Instead of rendering suspected terrorists to stand trial, intelligence gathering became the focus and many of the suspects were transferred to allied countries where torture remains widely used. As an official told the Washington Post shortly after 9/11, “We don’t kick the shit out of them. We send them to other countries so they can kick the shit out of them” (Khalili 2013: 124). Scholars refer to this new form of transfer as ‘extraordinary rendition.’ As Laleh Khalili argues, “the combination of invisibility and deniability make this kind of detention ideal when secret services

⁷³ A 1997 FBI report claims that it has “deep historical roots,” tracing it back to the abduction of John Surratt, accused of the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, in Alexandria in 1866.

wish to perform interrogations that under ordinary circumstances would be illegal” (Khalili 2013: 126).

Human rights organisations and international lawyers have thus far taken the most interest in the issue of rendition, rightly arguing that it is both illegal and immoral. Scholars within international law have examined the myriad of ways that rendition violates conventions and treaties on human rights (Parry 2005; Sadat 2007; Satterthwaite and Fisher 2006; Amnesty International 2006; Open Society Foundation 2013).⁷⁴ Analysts associated with ‘The Rendition Project’ which was formed in 2011, for example, have gathered data on over 130 cases of rendition, thousands of suspicious flights and profiled the companies involved (Raphael et al 2016).⁷⁵ In recent years, studies have shifted the focus away from the U.S. and towards the ways in which other actors, such as Russia and the Central Asian governments, have established their own rendition systems (Hug 2014; Lewis 2015; Amnesty International 2013). While these studies have certainly been useful in meticulously documenting rendition cases, often basing their reports on the testimony of those involved, they remain largely pre-theoretical. Scholars who have theorised rendition – such as Ruth Blakeley and Sam Raphael (both founders of The Rendition Project)- have focused on explaining why those security services involved in rendition have continued to deny this despite the evidence coming to light (Blakeley and Raphael 2014). In her other work, Ruth Blackley has adopted an overtly normative agenda, arguing that scholars working on security and human rights can help emancipate the oppressed through collective social action (Blakeley 2013). While these are certainly interesting and pertinent questions, my interest here is slightly different. A number of other questions emerge from the proliferation of rendition across the globe: How do the creation of transnational networks of rendition impact upon our understanding of international relations? From where did the practice of rendition emerge? How is rendition related to other forms of security governance? What kinds of rationalities underpin it? Have the extraordinary rendition become so commonplace that it is everyday not exceptional? I will attempt to answer these questions through the case of

⁷⁴ For example, Article 9 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights guarantees that “no one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest or detention. No one shall be deprived of his liberty except on such grounds and in accordance with such procedure as established by law.”

⁷⁵ See: <http://www.therenditionproject.org.uk/>. “Globalizing Torture,” a 2013 Open Society Foundation report, implicates 54 governments in the rendition network. The only country from Central Asia listed is Uzbekistan. The report lists 136 documented cases of rendition.

the Tajik government's rendering of dissidents and terror suspects in Chapter Five.

In her book *Time in the Shadows*, Laleh Khalili has begun to answer some of these questions. Khalili examines the role of confinement in counter-insurgency, tracing the history of detention camps, security walls, enclaves, rendition and offshore prisons. Far from emerging in response to the War on Terror, Khalili traces the modern carceral practices of the U.S. and Israel to (post)colonial counter-insurgencies in places as diverse as Malaya, Kenya, Algeria and South Africa. Although occupying militaries may claim to use such practices to 'protect' the people, and counter-insurgency is increasingly imbued with the language of humanitarianism, it is really a form of power predicated on the control of territory, use of disciplinary power and population aggregation (Foucault 2004). Restrictions on movement for non-combatants signify the paradox at the heart of liberal population-centric counterinsurgency: despite claiming to bring freedom and liberty, in practice the opposite is often true. Many of those targeted by these security practices have been accused of 'Islamic extremism.' Indeed, in this thesis I am interested in the ways in which religious emigrants have become the focus of security discourses and practices, in the ways that the government of Tajikistan seeks to maintain the secular order by governing religion.

Governing Religion through Secular Security

This thesis examines the ways in which the government of Tajikistan securitises Islam and governs pious Muslims. As I will argue in the empirical chapters, the governance of religion and security is based secularism. Put simply, secularism is a "public settlement of the relation between politics and religion" (Hurd 2008: 12). Secularism denotes discourses and policies which attempt to construct consensus on the 'proper' relations between state and religion. Often defined against religion, secularism involves a human-centred epistemology, emphasis on scientific reason, the prioritisation of the immanent over transcendent and a morality that lies outside of religion. Secularism is interlinked with modernity: "to be secular means to be modern, and therefore, to be religious means to be somehow not fully modern" (Casanova 2011: 59). When Charles Holyoake coined the term secularism in 1851, he described it as essential to "progress."

Theorists of modernity such as Karl Marx, Max Weber and Emile Durkheim argued that modernization and secularization were mutually supportive processes. As societies progress towards modernity, they argued, religion would gradually disappear from public life. Proponents of secularism, therefore, often place their values above those of religion. For them, “religion is simultaneously conceived as dangerously irrational and as a source of enduring social values” (Gutkowski 2014: 4).

Within the social sciences a presumption prevails which posits that secularism has “no ideological significance of its own, other than as the taken for granted absence or obsolescence of religion” (Calhoun et al 2011: 1). According to this view secularism is an unquestioned and inherent part of modernity. Recently an approach which sees secularism as a legal, moral and ideological presence has emerged (Calhoun et al 2011’ Asad 2003). Scholars have demonstrated how the ‘secular’ and ‘religious’ are not fixed, clearly defined categories; the boundaries between the two fluctuate across space and through time. Maia Carter Hallward outlines a “boundary-focused approach” to secularism and religion which analyses the processes by which “categories of belonging emerge and are sustained” through actors attempt to fix the meaning of the ‘secular’ around certain signifiers (Hallward 2008: 8). As Elizabeth Shakman Hurd states, the key question becomes:

How do processes, institutions, and states come to be understood as religious versus political, or religious versus secular and how might we ascertain the political effects of such as demarcation? (Hurd 2008: 16).

Indeed, following Foucault, by labelling individuals as ‘religious’ and ‘secular’ we subjectify them. Secularity forms a way “thinking about the world, but also ways of being in and relating to the world” (Gutkowski 2014: 12; Hirschkind 2011). It refers to “certain behaviours, knowledges and sensibilities in modern life” (Asad 2003: 25). If secularism is not fixed, then it can take different forms in varying contexts.

Multiple forms of secularism exist. Secularism may involve the absence, control over, equal treatment of or replacement of religions. Through an examination of state-religion relations in Turkey, France and the United States, Ahmed Kuru outlines two forms of secularism: passive and assertive. Where the governments of France and Turkey pursue assertive secularism, attempting to

banish religion from the public sphere, the United States tolerates public religious expressions and therefore adopts passive secularism (Kuru 2007). Assertive secularism is used by a number of authoritarian governments in Central Asia and the Middle East to counter potential forms of religious-based resistance. Tajikistan's government, as I will elaborate upon in later chapters, has pursued an extreme form of assertive secularism. Secularism in general – and assertive secularism in particular - is predicated on the exclusion of opposing religious worldviews (Connolly 1999). Instead of a space for tolerance of other opinions, the secularist “construction of ‘religious fanaticism’ can promote secular rationales for violence” (Cavanagh 2011: 227). The secular can become a site of isolation, violence and exclusion (Mavelli and Petito 2012; Connolly 1999).

Like in other areas of social science, much of the literature within international relations has been informed by an underlying, but often unspoken, commitment to secularism (Hurd 2008). Ever since the wars of religion (1562-98) and Peace of Westphalia (1648), religion, so the myth goes, had been confined to the private sphere (Cavanagh 2009).⁷⁶ An assumption that religion is a potentially divisive and dangerous social force, where secularism is non-violent and thus provides security underlies much of this literature (Asad, 2003). Over the past few years, however, scholars have started to ‘bring’ secularism and religion back in to international relations and security studies (Hurd 2008; Petito and Hatzopoulos 2003). The resurgence in academic interest in secularism in the fields of international relations and security studies is linked to two developments. First, the perceived religious revival, what Peter Berger calls the “de-secularisation of the world,” and its impact on global politics (Berger et al 1999). Second, the increased interest in Islamic extremism since 9/11 has led to a range of studies on how secularism informs responses to terrorism (Gutkowski 2014; Mavelli 2013).

This relationship between security and secularity remains a “nascent area of enquiry” within academia (Gutkowski 2011: 348). Pinar Bilgin's work on Turkey has opened the way for further theorisation in this direction (Bilgin 2007). Bilgin argues that secularism itself has become the referent object of

⁷⁶ The ideological forefathers of realism and idealism, Thomas Hobbes and Immanuel Kant respectively, both advocated for the separation of religion and politics. William Cavanaugh calls this the “myth of religious violence” (2009).

security in modern Turkey. Utilising David Campbell's ideas on the roles of "discourses of danger" in the production of security threats, Bilgin argues that secularism secures the state against domestic and international Islamic threats (Campbell 1998). Bilgin's genealogical approach unveiled "an intimate historical relationship between secularism and security" in which secularism in Kemalist Turkey emerged as a response to Europe's indifferent attitude towards Turkey's "difference" and the insecurities related to this. Stacey Gutkowski has taken Bilgin's analysis further in her analysis of the interrelationships of secularism and risk within the British government's 'Prevent' counter-radicalisation agenda (Gutkowski 2011). She argues that the UK government's concerns over the risk of Islamic radicalisation are rooted in their secular ideology which leads them to frame Islam-inspired violence as "slippery, uncontrollable, mysterious and strange" (Gutkowski 2011: 346). Through his work on Islam in Europe, Luca Mavelli has shown how linking Islam to violence, terrorism and barbarism leads to a range of exceptional measures against Muslims. Mavelli concludes that "the securitization of religion is thus an exceptional measure that removes religion from 'the realm of normal politics' in order to preserve the latter's secular character" (Mavelli 2012: 191). Such exceptional measures are justified because they, allegedly, secure the secular essence of the modern state.

Nonetheless, a number of gaps in the literature on secularism and security exist. The literature remains Eurocentric, focusing on the relationship between western liberal modernity and secularism (Luermann 2011: 3). In her analysis of secularism and international relations Elizabeth Shakman Hurd focuses on two approaches to secularism, both of which are western in origin: laicism and Judeo Christian (2008). For western secularists, "Islam represents the "nonsecular," a religion that is inherently political by its very nature (Hurd 2008: 7). Such exclusionary and exceptionalist discourses construct the image that the separation of religion and politics is a uniquely western phenomenon that stands in contrast with the intertwining of Islam and politics seen outside of the 'West' (Asad 2003). Studies of the non-European context have predominantly focused on India and Turkey (Bubandt and Van Beek 2012). Works focusing on secularity in the post-communist space are scarce (Thibault 2014; Louw 2011; Luermann 2011). One exception is Sonja Luermann's ethnographic account of secularism in the Russian republic of Mari-El

(Luermann 2011). In her analysis of late Soviet secularism, she focuses on the role of what she terms the “didactic public,” professionals such as teachers who managed society and reproduced norms of secularity. Similarly, Helene Thibault examines how the Soviet secularisation project continues to inform discourses, institutions and individuals’ religious practices in Tajikistan (Thibault 2014). Although each of these analyses secularism as a *presence* that is negotiated and contested by individuals, neither of the authors addresses the relationship between secularism and security in post-Soviet discourses and practices.

While authors have highlighted how “insecurity may also be an outcome of the process of secularization,” few people have used ethnography to map how attempts to create secular subjects create insecurity (Mavelli 2012: 170). Existing studies remain top-down, examining how elites, driven by a “secular habitus,” draw the boundary between the ‘sacred’ and the ‘secular.’ Important questions remain: how does secularity shape social interactions for non-elites? How do secular discourses and practices impact upon the lives of religious people? In Chapter Five and Chapter Six, I will answer these questions using evidence from Tajik Muslim migrants in Russia.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have offered an approach to studying security as a process, as a practice and as subjectification. I argued that the meaning of security is contingent and contestable. We therefore need to pay attention to the process by which threats are constructed in discourses. But paying attention to discourses of security alone is insufficient. We need to study how agents use a range of practices to manage threats; that is, we need to examine security governance. This process of governing threats is undercut by relations of power. In approaching TASG, I propose a Foucauldian approach which examines how governance regimes shape political subjects through sovereign, disciplinary and biopower.

Throughout the chapter, I have criticised studies that adopt an essentialist and reductionist approach to the study of security. Even those studies that have adopted an interpretivist approach to security have two key weaknesses. First, they remain Eurocentric, studying security in the liberal tradition. Second, they remain largely focused on top-down, hegemonic discourses created by those in power and the practices of security

professionals. My analysis thus far has been biased towards the top-down production of security discourses and practices. Through Foucault, I have started to explore how power pervades the system and affects people's lives. I have focused on how individuals and phenomena come to be labelled security threats and how security is governed. Such an approach could give the impression that elites take priority over non-elites, reducing non-elites to the position of the passive subject. The focus thus far has been on the manifold ways that those in a dominant position control discourse, delineate space, create boundaries and exercise power. In Chapter Two, however, I examine the quotidian politics of (in)security, examining how discourses and practices of security governance shape everyday life. But, even in authoritarian contexts like the setting of this study, the strategic moves of those in power do not go uncontested. As Foucault argued, resistance exists wherever there is power (Foucault 1981). In the next chapter I will explore the tactics of contestation and resistance to security governance.

Chapter 2: The Quotidian Politics of (In)Security

If there were no possibility of resistance – of violent resistance, of escape, of ruse, of strategies that reverse the situation, there would be no relations of power (Foucault 1994: 12).

Power and resistance remain irrevocably intertwined. Each “embodies the trace of the other” (Balzacq 2014: 12). Our subject status is not fixed; it is always in flux and this provides opportunities to resist and destabilise subjectification. Resistance to subjectivity exists wherever there is subjectivity. Subjectification results in insecurities and resistance to those insecurities. As long as security practices create secure and insecure subjects, then we should expect those made insecure will reject and resist this subject status.

In this chapter, I move beyond the elitist bias that characterises much of the critical security studies literature. If security is experienced and intersubjectively produced, we need to pay attention to citizens’ everyday perceptions, understandings and experiences of security. In this chapter, I examine how the regimes of power entangled in the discourses and practices of security governance shape everyday life. Thus far I have examined the politics of (in)security from the top-down; I have looked at the ways in which actors label objects, or subjects, as security threats, the practices associated with this, and the relationship between power and security governance. As such, the first chapter examined the strategies of domination used by the *producers* of security. In this chapter, I will introduce an approach to the study of the politics of (in)security from the bottom-up, from the perspective of the *consumer*. I will analyse how “securitisation works through everyday technologies, through the effects of power that are continuous rather than exceptional” (Bigo 2002: 63). Whilst in the first chapter I focused on the ways in which structures constrain agents, in this chapter I examine the potential for these agents to be autonomous and resistant. In the previous chapter I argued that security is ontologically unstable. In other words “security is conceptualized and politically practised differently in different places and at different times (Bubandt 2005: 291). Lene Hansen drew attention to ‘the silent security dilemma,’ the notion that the potential subject of (in)security has no, or limited, possibility of speaking its security problems (Hansen 2000; Elbe 2006; Stern 2006; Wilkinson 2007). In foregrounding my analysis in the ‘everyday,’ I am responding to both ‘traditional’

and 'critical' security studies neglect of the everyday lived experiences of (in)security. As Adam Crawford and Steven Hutchinson argue, "the 'everyday' acts as an important counter to a prevailing emphasis upon the 'spectacular' and the 'exceptional', which cast a long shadow over security research" (Crawford and Hutchinson 2015: 5).

In this chapter, I examine the ways in which governance is made and remade by subjects. I examine how subjects of securitisation resist, oppose, disrupt, refuse or transform securitising processes. I argue that rather than being counter-hegemonic, unified and transformative, resistance to power relations is plural, decentralised and anti-hegemonic. Whilst I agree with Richard Wyn-Jones that post-structuralist approaches do not have "the necessary intellectual tools to conceptualize progress, development and emancipation," in the Enlightenment sense of these words, this does not mean that they cannot theorise the politics of resistance (Wyn Jones 1999: 120).

In this chapter I explore the following questions: What does it mean to feel secure? How do different people and groups experience, feel, interpret and respond to different (in)security projects and measures? Is it useful to examine (in)security in 'everyday' settings? What contextual factors affect these experiences of (in)security? How do security measures shape subjectivity? How are different security measures open to interpretation, transformation and resistance? What is the relationship between power and resistance? In outlining my approach to the ethnography of everyday (in)security, I draw on the work of Michel Foucault. Foucault explores how the everyday "micro-physics" of power shape political subjects. Excavating power relations involves searching in both public and hidden places. As David Hoy argues, "a society without resistance would be either a harmless daydream or a terrifying nightmare" (Hoy 2004: 11). Hoy follows many post-structuralist thinkers in arguing that even utopian projects such as communism, when backed by force, can become tyrannical.

The chapter unfolds as follows: I begin by outlining the 'everyday' and some of the literature relating to it. Second, I introduce ethnography as a methodology through which to examine the quotidian politics of (in)security. Next, I examine the relationship between security and everyday life. I then examine some of the existing research on the topic, arguing that ethnography provides a productive way to answer some of the questions that emerge from this body of literature. I argue that (in)security is a lived reality. Individuals are

involved in regulating their own security. In the next section, I discuss the how the concept of Ancient Greek concept of *metis* –practical, experiential and local knowledge- can help people negotiate the insecurities of everyday life (Scott 1998; Vernant and Detienne 1974). Not all agents simply cope with the unease created by security governance, some people contest and resist it. In the final section, I examine the contribution of Michel Foucault studies of resistance. I argue that it constitutes an underused approach to the study of security. My overall argument running through the chapter, and indeed through the thesis, is that ethnography, with its focus on local understandings of hegemonic discourses and the micro-politics of contestation, provides a way the shortcomings of both the ‘linguistic’ and ‘practice’ turns in critical security studies identified in the previous chapter.

Everyday Security

The everyday, Guy Debord writes, “is the measure of all things” (Debord 1962). At the most basic level, the everyday refers to all daily activities. Rita Felski defines the everyday as “the essential, taken-for-granted continuum of mundane activities that frames our forays into more esoteric or exotic worlds” (Felski 1999: 15). For Ian Burkitt, “it is in everyday life that the sum total of relations that make the human – and every human being – a whole takes its shape and form” (Burkitt 2004: 211). It is democratic in the sense that it encompasses the daily lives of all human beings; everyone regardless of who they are, eats, sleeps, drinks, coughs (Felski 1999). Ian Burkitt notes that everyday life is:

rich, complex and multidimensional: it is an experience of diverse and differentially produced and articulated forms, each combining time and space in a unique way [...] What binds these relations into a formation are not institutionalized spaces and codified sets of rules, but human emotions such as loyalty, mutual needs, and interests. (2004: 222).

For Burkitt, far from being simple and unsophisticated, everyday life is multidimensional, involving an array of social fields. It is in the everyday that the ‘unofficial practices’ and articulations of experience, and ‘official’ codified practices come together. Official norms and codes shape everyday life, and

normalised official practices emerge from everyday practices themselves. As Burkitt argues, “the unofficial realm is the living tissue of social life upon which official social life rests” (Burkitt 2004: 214). For Rita Felski, everyday life is centred around three dimensions: temporality, spatiality and modality. Everyday life is *temporal* in so far as it refers to repetition of similar actions over time. It is *spatial* because it is anchored in the home. According to Felski, “both repetition and home address an essential feature of everyday life: its familiarity” (Felski 1999: 26). Indeed, everyday life is *modal* in so far as it is synonymous with routine and habit. Scholars from sociology and cultural studies have placed particular importance on the study of everyday life. From the 24-hour news media reporting on global conflicts to the planning of urban space, security saturates everyday life. It is to the everyday ‘turn’ in security studies that I now turn.

Security has become “*the political vernacular of our time*” (Loader and Walker 2007: 9). From airport checks to risk assessments security saturates everyday life. Yet, relatively few scholars have analysed how security affects everyday life. Security studies and international relations – in both their ‘traditional’ and ‘critical’ guises – tend to analyse events from the top-down, from the perspective of the dominant institutions and elites (McDonald 2008). In doing so, they ignore those at the “margins, silences and bottom rungs” (Enloe 1996).⁷⁷ Ken Booth writes that the study of security “should begin in the experiences, imaginings, analyses and fears of those living with insecurity” (Booth 2007: 152). Ignoring bottom-up perspectives on security runs counter to the ontological arguments made by critical scholars. If security is intersubjectively constructed, then individuals and the public should be a central concern. When RBJ Walker says that “the subject of security is the *subject* of security” (1997: 72, emphasis in original), he was referring to the way in which academics, by focusing on the construction and management of threats, have neglected the ways in which (in)security shapes political subjects (Vaughan-Williams and Stevens 2015). Yet in making this call for a turn to the ‘everyday,’ most of the authors are talking in abstract terms; with the exception of a handful of scholars such as Nick Vaughan-Williams and Daniel Stevens, Marie Gillespie

⁷⁷ Much of the early literature advocating for international relations and security studies to listen to marginalised voices was written from the feminist perspective. See, for example, Lene Hansen’s article “*The Little Mermaid’s Silent Security Dilemma and the Absence of Gender in the Copenhagen School*,” (2000).

and Ben O’Loughlin, Lee Jarvis and Michael Lister, they have not conducted empirical research on ‘everyday’ perceptions of security. In this section, I argue that insights from anthropology and sociology can take us further in answering some of the questions at the centre of the study of (in)security.

Even though scholars within security studies have only started critically engaging with the concept of security in recent years, sociologists and anthropologists have long been concerned with lived experiences of survival, uncertainty and violence (Pedersen and Holbraad 2013: 4). Indeed, anthropologists have long taken an interest in the “everydayness of violence” in the context of civil wars (Feldman 1991; Taussig 1987; Nordstrom and Robben 1995; Nordstrom 1997). Contrary to approaches that take violence as a fixed concept and examine it with a broad lens, they have examined how violence is essentially contested and how it shapes individual subjectivities. Anthropologists and scholars using ethnographic methods but working in other disciplines have examined the emergence of “cultures of insecurity” in late modernity (Weldes et al 1999; Lakoff 2008; Lutz 2001; Low 2003). In this thesis, I respond to Daniel Goldstein’s call for a “critical anthropology of security” (Goldstein 2010). This approach examines “the role that security – as a set of discourses and practices – plays in producing particular kinds of political and legal orders in societies around the world” (Goldstein 2015: 46). Sociologists have long examined how experiences of (in)security affect people’s lives. Anthony Giddens coined the term “ontological security” to refer to security derived from the certainty, order and continuity in people’s daily lives (Giddens 1991). Ulrich Beck examined the development during modernity of a “risk society” which is increasingly focused on measuring and mitigating future hazards (Beck 1992).

This turn to ‘security’ in anthropology and sociology has been mirrored by a turn to the ‘everyday’ in security studies. A number of scholars have called for greater attention to be paid to the ‘everyday’ politics of security (Weber 2008; Rowley and Weldes 2012; Vaughan-Williams and Stevens 2015; Aas et al 2009; Bubandt 2005; Gillespie and O’Loughlin 2009; Jarvis and Lister 2013). Numerous edited volumes, special journal issues and monographs have now been dedicated to topic (Maguire, Frois and Zurawski 2014; Pedersen and Holbraad 2013). Scholars have examined securitised spaces such as airports (Salter 2011, Neyland 2009), mega-events (Coafee and Fussey 2012), cities

(Low 2003), borders (Reeves 2014, Staudt 2011) and checkpoints (Jones 2008). Anthropologists of security have examined topics ranging from public health and biosecurity (Lakoff 2008) to human rights (Goldstein 2012) and homeland security (De Genova 2007).

In a recent article in the *British Journal of Criminology*, Adam Crawford and Steven Hutchinson call on scholars to pay greater attention to everyday security. Whilst studies of the ‘high politics’ securitisation and the practices this entails are certainly useful, they argue, greater attention needs to be paid to how this affects people ‘on the ground.’ For Hutchinson and Crawford, “the ‘everyday’ *enables* rather than constrains new forms of political critique.” (Crawford and Hutchinson 2015: 3) They outline an approach to everyday security that takes into account the lived experiences of security processes and the practices of self-regulation that people engage in (Crawford and Hutchinson 2015). They suggest the term “security experiences” to denote “the lived realities of practical security measures, including the diverse ways in which programmes, strategies and techniques for governing security are experienced, taken up, resisted, and even augmented by different individuals and groups within society” (Crawford and Hutchinson 2015: 2). Indeed, Nick Vaughan-Williams and Daniel Stevens identify separate ‘vernacular’ and ‘everyday’ turns in security studies in recent years. Scholars focusing on the ‘vernacular’ have examined public opinion and threat perception with the view to giving voice to the voiceless (Bubandt 2005; Gillespie and O’Loughlin 2009, Jarvis and Lister 2013). Such literature examines how *particular* individuals and groups articulate their attitudes and understandings of (in)security. Lee Jarvis and Michael Lister adopt such a normative agenda, explicitly stating that their goal is “to speak *for*, rather than *to* (or, perhaps better, *with*) ‘ordinary’ people and the conditions of (in)security they experience, encounter or construct in everyday life” (Jarvis and Lister 2013: 158). Those studying local understandings of security have relied on surveys (Meyer 2009) and focus groups (Vaughan-Williams and Stevens 2015; Gillespie and O’Loughlin 2009; Jarvis and Lister 2013).

Whilst these studies have drawn attention to individuals’ diverse understandings of the ‘international’ and security threats, neither of these data collection methods are appropriate for my study. First, in (semi)authoritarian country’s like Russia and Tajikistan public opinion data is notoriously unreliable. Suspicion towards researchers and the sensitivity of the topic meant that focus

groups lacked feasibility as well. Second, although focus groups offer a snapshot of an individual's opinion of security issues, it is less useful in answering questions relating to how security discourses and practices impact on the routines and bodily practices of everyday life, as well as how people can resist security governance.

Academics associated with the 'everyday' turn identified by Vaughan-Williams and Stevens have are mostly associated with the 'Paris School,' but they have moved beyond the elite bias that characterises much of the work associated with this approach (Guillaume and Huysmans, 2013; Huysmans 2014; Noxolo and Huysmans 2009). They have challenged the way in which those interested in the 'vernacular' have created a dichotomy between the high politics of elites and the low politics of subalterns (Huysmans 2014). The everyday, as argued above, is ambiguous; it brings together the insecuritying moves of elites with the practices of everyday life. Rather than focusing on perceptions alone, they have examined the everyday practices of security and how these shape citizen subjects. Thus far, the arguments put forward by those associated with the everyday turn have been theoretically, rather than analytically, driven (Gillespie and O'Loughlin 2009: 681).

Although everyday approaches have drawn attention to the subjects of security, they have focused on the political subjects as the referent object of security (Stern 2006). In other words, most of the literature has focused on how security measures affect the lives of the people they claim to protect. Less has been written on how security practices impact on the lives of the *subjects of securitisation*, those people who have been deemed a threat (Ryan 2015; Ochs 2011).⁷⁸ The object of my study of everyday security - pious Tajik migrants – form such a group. My approach synthesises aspects of both turns. While I am interested in empirically sophisticated research on the lived realities of security, I reject the 'vernacular' approach's bifurcation of 'high' and 'low' politics. Although I agree that the everyday is ambivalent and a potential space for resistance, I ground my analysis firmly within the empirical study of practice. To answer the questions about the everyday politics of (in)security, ethnography is the most appropriate approach. Studying security from the bottom-up sheds

⁷⁸ In this thesis, I use three terms to refer to those affected by the politics of security. *Subjects of security* are those that security claims to protect, *subjects of securitisation* refers to those who are deemed a threat, and *security subjects* refer to both groups, in other words all those affected by the politics of security.

light on the three features of security governance that I outlined in Chapter One: security as process, practice and subjectification. Ethnographic approaches allow us to examine the ways in which global or transnational issues are negotiated and contested at the local level. Moving beyond analyses that reify formal institutions, a critical anthropology of security draws attention to the ways in which discourses and practices of security, such as the 'War on Terror,' are operative in everyday lives. Studying security from the bottom-up contains a number of advantages.

As I outlined in Chapter 1, (in)security is ontologically unfixed and objects and subjects come to be labelled as a threat through discourses. Whereas top-down approaches can trace the securitising moves of elites, bottom-up approaches examine how audiences receive these moves. They examine security as a situated concept; "notions and practices of security are ultimately cultural and embedded in deeply cherished and often unquestioned value systems" (Kent 2006: 344). Ethnographic approaches allow us to understand the social context of securitisation. Instead of treating security and insecurity as discrete categories, I adopt a dialectical approach to (in)security, arguing that security is reliant on the "constant manufacture of uncertainty," in the absence of which security would become meaningless (Bubandt 2005: 280). As such, bottom-up approaches help us map security's paradox: as societies strive for more security, they simultaneously create insecurity through these efforts (Aas et al 2009).

Approaching security from the bottom-up reveals how security practices work 'on the ground' and how they impact on people's daily lives. Uncertainty, risk, anxiety and danger form central challenges in people's daily lives. Security is therefore a lived social experience revealed as much through the quotidian practice of filling out a visa application form as through the meetings of the United Nations Security Council. As Goldstein notes, a critical anthropology of security "helps to broaden our perspective on what security means, what it includes, and what it excludes in the ordinary and exceptional struggles of everyday life" (Goldstein 2010: 492). Ethnographies of the everyday practices of security have found them to be "far less rational and much more 'messy' than expected" (Aas et al 2009: 8).

Research on everyday security can uncover how power and subjectification operate within security governance regimes. Indeed,

surveillance and other security measures create a tendency towards exclusion and social control (Lomell 2004). In other words, security governance is pervaded by the triangle of power. Approaching security from the everyday perspective, allows us to break down the boundary between the 'exceptional' and the 'everyday,' to examine how the seemingly extraordinary practices of sovereign power become normalised. Security is also dependent on dividing practices and the exercise of disciplinary power. As Lucia Zedner argues, "security is posited as a public good but in fact presumes social exclusion" (Zedner 2003: 166). Vida Bajc has delved further into the ways in which security practices foster social exclusion. In her work, she examines how security has become a central value that orders everyday life, a "security meta-framing" in her words (Bajc 2011). This process is based on a "governmentality of possibilities," a rationale of governing that uses surveillance, statistical probabilities and computer modelling to classify social groups, identify and manage risks to society (Bajc 2011). In terms of biopower, ethnographies of security reveal how subjects respond to efforts to foster and regulate life. Studying security from the bottom-up is in keeping with Foucault's approach to the network of power relations and how these shape subjects.

Crucially, approaching security from the bottom-up allows us to understand the relationship between security as process, practice and subjectification. Bottom-up approaches place emphasis on the interplay between discourses and practices in historicised settings. They study the way (in)security cultures are produced, disseminated and maintained in contemporary societies. According to Goldstein, "ethnography brings to life the often static representations of securitization and social life, putting into motion those processes that might otherwise have been understood as structures" (Goldstein 2015: 60).

Rather than studying how governance regimes are produced, bottom-up perspectives examine how they operate and how they are received by the population. Ethnography therefore allows us to listen to the voices of the 'silent' majority, people who are only heard infrequently in the public debate on security (Williams and D'Aoust 2015). As argued in Chapter One, the literature on security, even the more critical studies of the Paris School, remains Eurocentric. But anthropologists tend to work in non-western settings, drawing attention to the cross-cultural and transnational dimensions of security (Goldstein 2015).

Bottom-up perspectives allow us to understand how the ‘international’ becomes the ‘local’ (Kent 2006). They take vernacular understandings of security seriously (Bubandt 2005 Lemanski 2012; Stern 2006; Ratelle 2013). It has become axiomatic to say that security is essentially contested. But ethnographic approaches to security have shown that it is just as contested by ‘ordinary’ people as by elites (Jarvis and Lister 2013). Indeed, studying security from the bottom-up reveals the complex ways in which security is interrelated with both power and resistance. It is to resistance that I now turn.

Everyday Forms of Resistance

What is resistance? Like the other concepts discussed in this thesis – ‘security,’ ‘extremism,’ ‘secularism’- resistance is an essentially contested concept.⁷⁹ Resistance is often pitted in an oppositional relationship with domination (Thiele 1990). Following this view, power is held by the elite and the masses can resist this domination. Many definitions link resistance to the Enlightenment idea of the emancipation of subaltern groups. Michael Keith and Steven Pile take such a normative approach when defining resistance in *Geographies of Resistance* (1997). They argue that “resistance is the people fighting back in defence of freedom, democracy and humanity” (Keith and Pile 1997: 1). But their definition is too narrow to be useful for at least two reasons. First, not all those resisting domination are fighting in the name of freedom and humanity. The Islamic State in Syria is resisting the Assad regime and other militant groups, but few people would associate them with ideas of humanity, freedom and democracy. The Confederate states went to war in 1861 to resist the North’s attempts to abolish slavery. Second, as a term, resistance does not necessarily distinguish between emancipation and domination (Hoy 2004: 2). Dominant groups can resist pressures placed upon it by the subordinate masses. A broader definition than that forwarded by Pile and Keith is required.

Key definitional debates surround the importance of intent, the practices resistance entails and the goals it strives for. Does resistance have to be intentional? Does oppositional action have to be recognisable as such? Paul Routledge defines resistance as “any action imbued with intent that attempts to

⁷⁹ Scholars have offered many definitions of resistance. I will not dwell on the merits of each definition here. Jocelyn Hollander and Rachel Einwohner provide a useful overview of some of these definitions (Hollander and Einwohner 2004).

challenge, change or retain particular circumstances relating to societal relations, processes and or/institutions, and cannot be separated from practices of domination” (Routledge 1996: 361). According to Routledge, resistance needs to be (1) intentional, (2) can refute or maintain power relations and (3) cannot be separated from domination. Routledge’s definition, however, is too narrow. Based on the literature, I argue that ‘resistance’ has five key features. First, as I will elaborate upon in the later section on Foucault, resistance is *contingent*. It cannot be disentangled from the relations of power from which it emerges. It is “contextually bound to the social and psychological structures that are being resisted” (Hoy 2004: 3). It varies in different social settings. Second, resistance can be both *intentional and unintentional*. Mona Lilja and Stellan Vinthagen argue that resistance does not require consciousness (Lilja and Vinthagen 2007). Instead, it is the consequence, undermining an attempt by another actor to influence behaviour, which matters. Third, resistance is *subjective* in so far as it is open to interpretation by the actors involved. An actor can become ‘resistant’ when they are labelled as such. For example, in Tajikistan those watching the video of a banned cleric or joining a *Facebook* group to discuss politics may not consider themselves as resisting the system, but the authorities could, and often do, consider them as such. Fourth, rather than being destructive, resistance is *productive*. It is a form of agency that produces new power relations. Resistance is about escaping dominant representations and creating something new. Lastly, resistance involves a wide array of *practices*. People can resist domination in a range of different ways. Protests, rebellions and riots are some of the more exceptional forms of resistance. But they are in no means the only ones. Individuals also resist hegemonic power in more subtle, everyday ways. Everyday, or “tactical,” resistance is dispersed, sometimes disguised and seemingly invisible (De Certeau 1984). In this thesis, I focus on these everyday forms of resistance.

Resistance and contestation are not synonymous with one another. Where contestation is counter-hegemonic, “tactical resistance” is anti-hegemonic (de Certeau 1984). Counter-hegemonic politics aspires to build consensus around an emancipatory project and forge “political unity across cultural differences” (Sanbonmatsu 2004: 130). It is organised, openly negates

the hegemonic discourse and seeks a revolutionary change in the status quo.⁸⁰ Examples of counter-hegemonic movements include the Bolshevik party in Russia up to 1917, the Nazi party until 1933 and Indian nationalists up to 1950. In contrast, anti-hegemonic politics is characterised by individuals who “contest and deconstruct the status quo from diverse positionings without putting a single project in its place” (Cooper 1995: 137). Building on a Foucauldian analysis of power, feminist scholar Davinia Cooper argues that opportunities exist for “localized episodes” of progressive social change. Instead of making claims to universality, anti-hegemonic activists argue that knowledge is local. They do not seek to replace one system of domination with another.

James Scott's "Hidden Transcripts"

In studies of resistance the work of James Scott is impossible to avoid. In his works on peasant resistance, Scott aims to explain “how we might more successfully read, interpret, and understand the often fugitive political conduct of subordinate groups” (Scott 1990: 17). Scott distinguishes between “public,” hegemonic transcripts and parallel “hidden” transcripts. The public transcript is “the self-portrait of dominant elites as they would have themselves seen” (Scott 1990: 18). The public transcript calls for the quiescence of the subjugated masses. Although not always based on lies, it is unlikely to give a full picture of power relations. Public displays of deference mask clandestinely avowed feelings of injustice. Scott captures this form of resistance through the concept of the “hidden transcript.” This refers to the “discourse that takes place “offstage,” beyond direct observation by powerholders” (Scott 1990: 4). In this transcript, actors inflect, confirm and contradict the public transcript. This involves both speech acts and practices such as tax evasion, poaching and negligent work. Through the tactics of hidden transcripts, which remain inaccessible to the powerful, subordinates disguise their forms of avoidance of domination. This does not mean that the hidden transcript is always privately enunciated; it is made through veiled public expressions too. Rather, subordinates attempt to hide the underlying meaning of their transcript from elites. Scott’s theory is not universal in its application. Transcripts differ from place to place and time to time. Hidden transcripts are socially contingent; they

⁸⁰ James C. Scott uses the term “real resistance” to refer to such counter-hegemonic projects (Scott 1985: 292).

emerge in different forms depending on the site and actors involved. As Scott argues, “the greater the disparity in power between dominant and subordinate and the more arbitrarily it is exercised, the more the public transcript of subordinates will take on a stereotyped, ritualistic cast” (Scott 1990: 3). This is visible in the mass spectacles of public deference at festivals and parades in the authoritarian states of Central Asia (Adams and Rustemova 2009).

Scott’s work has received a mixed reception by academics (Gutmann 1993). For Charles Tilly, Scott’s insistence that there is a unitary public transcript and a unitary hidden transcript is misplaced. In reality not all members of a social group conform to the same transcript. Tilly notes that “the procedure by which Scott arrives at the distinction of three or four discourses contains a trap: why not ten, twenty, a hundred, as many discourses as subordinates?” (Tilly 1991: 598). Indeed, Sherry Ortner criticises Scott for offering a “thin” theorisation of the politics of subaltern groups. In an article assessing anthropological literature on resistance, she concludes that “the lack of an adequate sense of prior and ongoing politics among subalterns must inevitably contribute to an inadequate analysis of resistance itself” (Ortner 1995: 179). He does not, she argues, take sufficient account of the varying positions taken by individuals and their motivations for doing so.

Despite professing his sympathy towards post-structuralist thought, Scott’s analysis is based on a series of dichotomies: hidden/public, overt/covert, dominant/subordinate, popular/elite. Social reality is not so neatly compartmentalised. Although this is a heuristic device, in doing so he fails to take into account how fuzzy these boundaries can be (Bayat 1997). Scott never defines what public and hidden are. Are these confined to specific spaces or are they defined by who populate them? For example, would a dinner party hosted in a private home but including senior members of the government be hidden or public? Is the policeman manning a roadblock demanding bribes from drivers a subordinate or a member of the elite? Scott does not answer these questions. Instead of being opposites that exist in neatly defined and discrete spaces, public and hidden transcripts exist on a continuum. Responding to *Weapons of the Weak*, Timothy Mitchell accuses Scott of confining his notion of hegemony to the physical realm of coercion and ideas (Mitchell 1990). In doing so, he follows a Cartesian logic, pitting the hegemonic power over the body against the liberating thoughts of the mind. In other words, Scott “relies on the distinction

between a public (and behavioral) acquiescence and a realm of private (and largely mental autonomy)” (Mitchell 1990: 551). People physically behave in a way that fits with the public transcript, while at the same time challenging it in their mind. For Mitchell, such a division between the conforming body and resistant mind is far too simplistic; all subjects operate within relations of hegemonic power. Hegemony operates through a range of dominant cultural institutions including schools, museums, the media and religious organisations.

Mona Lilja and Stellan Vinthagen challenge Scott’s argument that resistance needs to be conscious and intentional (Lilja and Vinthagen 2007). By restricting his analysis to self-aware forms of resistance, they argue, Scott ignores a range of unintentional forms of resistance. Resistance is also a matter of interpretation. Acts of resistance may not be conceived as such by those who produce them, but may be interpreted as resistance by those who they affect. For example, as I will elaborate upon in Chapter Six, Tajiks who wear beards do not always see themselves as rebelling against an assertively secular system. Many see the wearing of a beard as a personal, spiritual preference rather than a political act. However, the government of Tajikistan has securitised the wearing of beards, linking them to extremism and resistance. These beard wearers would not be included in Scott’s analysis, but, in my opinion, they do come under the mantle of resistance. In studying how political subjects resist security governance, then, Scott’s theories remain limited. Instead, I turn to Michel Foucault’s work on resistance. Many have misread Foucault’s analytics of power and some of his more provocative statements about the inescapability of power relations, taking this to mean that subjects are incapable of resisting. As I will show through a careful reading of Foucault and the Foucauldian literature on resistance, this is not the case. Foucault’s thinking provides us with ample tools to approach resistance to security governance.

Foucault on the Subject, Power and Resistance

A plurality of resistances, each of them a special case: resistances that are possible, necessary improbable; others that are spontaneous, savage, solitary, concerted, rampant or violent; still others that are quick to compromise, interested or sacrificial; by definition they can only exist in the strategic field of power relations. But this does not mean that they are only a reaction or a rebound,

forming with respect to the domination an underside that is in the end always passive, doomed to perpetual defeat (Foucault 1981: 95).

Foucault is a leading thinker of everyday life and power. But he is also a theorist of resistance. In his analysis of prisons, schools, hospitals, he demonstrated how relations of power saturate through all levels of human existence. As Patrick Ffrench summarises, “life, insofar as it is normal, everyday, in one sense of that word, is produced, managed and organized by, in and through power” (Ffrench 2004: 297). Foucault examined the politics of power at the level of everyday life. For him, power “is never localized here or there, never in anybody’s hands, never appropriated as a commodity or piece of wealth. Power is employed and exercised through a net-like organization” (Foucault 1994b: 98). As I outlined in the previous chapter, Foucault examines the emergence of three separate, but not discrete, forms of power: sovereign, disciplinary and biopower. Each of these forms of power shape political subjects. Through power, subjects “gradually, progressively, really and materially constituted through a multiplicity of organisms, forces, energies, materials, desires, thoughts etc” (Foucault 1994: 35).

Numerous questions emerge from Foucault’s paradigmatic analysis of power. Can subjects ever escape the constraints of subjectification? What kinds of resistance spring from what kinds of power? His critics have accused him of presenting such a bleak picture of disciplinary society that he paralyses all opportunities for resistance (Habermas 1987; Fraser 1981; Trombadori 1991). In his introduction to the English translation of *Remarks on Marx*, Duccio Trombadori concludes that “Foucault, far from providing a new stimulus to demands for liberation, limits himself to describing a mechanism of pure imprisonment” (Trombadori 1991: 20). According to the orthodox approach to Foucault’s analytics of power, “power is repression; agency is a myth; subjectification is enslavement; resistance to power is futile; freedom is impossible” (Heller 1996: 105). State theorist Nicos Poulantzas argues that power and resistance exist at opposing poles in Foucault’s work. And power ends up being the dominant pole: “power is in the end essentialized and absolutized” (Poulantzas 1978: 150). For Marxist theorist David Harvey, Foucault’s disdain towards counter-hegemonic ideologies such as traditional Marxism leads him to become a nihilistic relativist. According to Harvey’s

reading of Foucault, “no Utopian scheme can ever hope to escape the power-knowledge relation in non-repressive ways” (Harvey 1990: 292).

In the early 1990s, a number of scholars began challenging this reading of Foucault (Pickett 1996; Heller 1996). Foucault’s account of modern power as diffuse, circulating and polycentric certainly makes resistance difficult, but it does not make it impossible. His thinking, they argued, leaves a great deal of space for resistance.⁸¹ Rather than existing as a dialectical relationship, as many have argued, resistance and power exist in an agonal relationship of mutual definition. Power and resistance only become meaningful when they interact with one another. As Foucault declares in his essay ‘The Subject and Power,’ “without the possibility of recalcitrance, power would be equivalent to a physical determination” (Foucault 1982: 221). Foucauldian power is not totalising in the way that Harvey and Poulantzas seem to think. Foucault does not believe that all power relations involve domination. Instead, he conceptualises power as a “transformative capacity,” the ability to modify the actions of others (Heller 1996).

Far from being something that is marginalised to the point of non-existence by power, in ‘The Subject and Power’ Foucault argues that any analysis of power relations should take resistance to those relations as a starting point:

I would like to suggest another way to go further towards a new economy of power relations, a way which is more empirical, more directly related to our present situation, and which implies more relations between theory and practice. It consists of taking the forms of resistance against different forms of power as a starting point. To use another metaphor, it consists of using this resistance as a chemical catalyst so as to bring to light power relations, locate their position, find out their point of application and the methods used. Rather than analyzing power from the point of view of its internal rationality, it consists of analyzing power relations through the antagonism of strategies (Foucault 1982: 210-11).

Without resistance, power would be meaningless. But what does Foucauldian resistance look like? Power relations and resistance are mutually constitutive. It follows then that as power is spread throughout society and not localised in any

⁸¹ Foucault himself seems to have shared this view. In the preface to Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari’s *Anti-Oedipus*, he refers to himself as “a revolutionary militant” (xiii)

particular place, “the struggle against power must also be diffuse” (Pickett 1996: 458). Like power, resistance is not destructive, it is “productive, affirmative and [can] use the techniques of power” (Pickett 1996: 459). Resistance can turn power against itself.

Change is certainly possible in Foucault’s analysis of power. But, for Foucault, social change starts at the local level. The fact that power is everywhere, “means that there are multiple opportunities for resistance” (Pickett 1996: 461). In the *History of Sexuality, Volume I*, he writes that “the swarm of points of resistance traverses social stratifications and individual unities. And it is doubtless strategic codification of these points of resistance which makes a revolution possible” (Foucault 1981: 96). Foucault argues that “power is exercised only over free subjects, and only insofar as they are free” (Foucault 1982: 221). And this potential to escape the relations of power and become truly free subjects never disappears. Small instances of resistance pervade society. Foucault is not interested in replacing one system of knowledge-power with another. Instead, he is interested in a politics where difference not conformity is the ordering principle. Resistance emerges from political subjects themselves. As he notes, “maybe the target nowadays is not to discover what we are, but to refuse what we are” (Foucault 1982: 216). “The conclusion would be that the political, ethical, social, philosophical problem of our days is not to liberate the individual from the state, and the state’s institutions, but to liberate us both from the state and from the type of individualization that is linked to the state,” Foucault continues (1982: 216). He is interested in the ways in which resistance can be a process of “self-creation” or “becoming what one is” in the Nietzschean sense.⁸² Subjectivity, the “structure of feelings,” can form the basis of resistance (Williams 1954). Subjectivity is a person’s consciousness, agency, beliefs and experiences. Whereas subjects are physical beings, subjectivity denotes the sense of the self that subjects have. For Sherry Ortner, “subjectivity is the basis of “agency,” a necessary part of understanding how people (try to) act on the world even as they are acted upon. Agency is not some natural originary will; it takes shape as specific desires and intensions within a matrix of subjectivity- of (culturally constituted) feelings, thoughts or meanings” (Ortner 2005: 34). Through practical engagement it is possible to work upon the self in isolation

⁸² “How One Becomes what One is” was the subtitle to Nietzsche’s autobiographical *Ecce Homo* (1908).

from the politics of power. This can involve creating your own ethics and your own subjectivity through bodily practices and relationships. Foucault was motivated by a desire to ask if we can think differently about life. He wanted to “free thought from what it silently thinks” (Foucault 1984: 9).

Resisting Security

Early research on resistance in international relations examined the counter-hegemonic goals and strategies of social movements (cf Lynch 1999; Keck and Sikkink 1998; Amoore 2005; Bleiker 2000). These studies set a binary opposition between rulers and ruled, those who dominate and those who resist (Balzacq 2014). But, as I outlined above, a Foucauldian understanding of power and resistance does not set them in opposition to one another. Instead, power and resistance exist in an agonal, mutually-constitutive relationship. Taking this more critical stance on resistance and power, a handful of academics have started to investigate the ways in which people can resist the oppressive politics and policies of security (Salter 2011; Marx 2003; Gilliom 2001; Guillaume and Huysmans 2012; Guillaume 2011; Balzacq 2014; Ochs 2011; Ryan 2015; Donnelly 2016; Stritzel and Chang 2015; Amicelle et al 2015). This literature has close links to the literature on ‘everyday’ security, examining how security subjects can resist securitisation and security practices. A number of these studies have also focused on authoritarian contexts, using ethnography to examine how Palestinians resist the Israeli occupation (Ochs 2011; Ryan 2015). These studies have raised important questions about agency, resistance and transformation in securitised sites. Yet the study of resistance to security remains in its infancy, and a range of theoretical and empirical questions remain.

How can subjects resist security as process, practice and subjectification? Resisting security as process, or securitisation, involves counter-securitisation, which involves the subject of securitisation rejecting the label that they are a security threat. Although a number of scholars have mentioned this as a possibility, they have not discussed it at length (Buzan et al. 1998; Vuori 2011; Hansen 2011; Charrett 2009). Holger Stritzel and Sean Chang have developed a more detailed theory of counter-securitisation (Stritzel and Chang 2015). In keeping with the idea that audience matters, Stritzel and

Chang argue that securitisation not be approached so much a “single act of transformation than as a prolonged and fragile political game constituted by moves and counter-moves in a continuous struggle for authority and legitimacy ‘on the ground’” (Stritzel and Chang 2015). Those who are securitised do have the opportunity to reject the label. Nonetheless, counter-securitisation only examines how actors can resist security governance using discourse. This is not the only tactic through which resistance is possible.

Resisting security practices can involve a range of practices including humour and practices of citizenship (Huysmans and Guillaume 2013; Salter 2011; Wedeen 1999; Balzacq 2014). Subjects of securitisation can resist subjectification and the three forms of power which undercut TASG in a range of ways. Indeed, Vinthagen and Lilja (2014) argue that resistance differs depending on the type of power being exercised. Sovereign power limits and prevents certain behaviours, claiming a monopoly on violence. It involves arrests, torture and rendition. More overt forms of resistance to sovereign power involve breaking the law, civic disobedience, protests, rebellions and strikes. More subtle resistance to the practices of sovereign power involves using human rights law to counter-act the states excessive security practices. This could involve taking the perpetrator to court or seeking asylum in another state. As I will show in Chapter Six, a number of Tajik citizens who have been detained in Russia at the request of the government of Tajikistan have used the European Court of Human Rights to resist being rendered home.

Elites use disciplinary power to define and police the norm; those deviating from the norm or seen to be at-risk of doing so – the terrorist, the extremist, the insurgent- are subject to corrective treatment. Disciplinary power shapes and normalises subjects. According to Foucault, “discipline makes individuals; it is the specific technique of power that regards individuals both as objects and as instruments of its exercise” (Foucault 1991a: 170). Faced with the dividing practices of disciplinary power subjects of securitisation can resist in at least two ways. First, they can change the way they present themselves so as to appear less ‘threatening.’ For Muslims whose outward signs of piety lead the authorities to deem them a potential risk, this could involve de-veiling or trimming their beard. But in doing so, disciplinary power is successful; subjects conform to the norm. As such, this form of resistance is more about self-preservation and does not directly take on the legitimacy of the exercise of

disciplinary power itself. A more confrontational form of resistance to disciplinary power involves maintaining 'abnormal' and 'risky' behaviour *despite* securitisation. Contrary to the hiding their religiosity, as in the previous example, this would involve wearing a beard or hijab in spite of state campaigns to securitise religious dress. A degree of overlap exists between resistance to biopower and disciplinary power. Both involve maintaining a 'risky' subjectivity in spite of subjectification.

The final, and most recent, form of power that Foucault examines is biopower. This involves the management of populations and individual subjects through practices of self-regulation. Biopower has two main characteristics (Rabinow and Rose 2006). First, it involves discourses about the vital characteristics of being human (being healthy, productive etc). Second, it involves specific interventions that manage the health and life of the population. Efforts to curtail morbidity, secure species life and efforts to securitise certain 'dangerous' lifestyles all constitute forms of biopower. Biopower is "pastoral." Institutions care for subjects as a shepherd tends his flock. How does one resist biopower? Vinthagen and Lilja argue that resistance involves rejecting the pastoral care of elites (2014). Resisting biopower involves rejecting hegemonic discourses on 'healthy' lifestyles and persevering with 'risky' practices. This involves remaining resilient in the face of security governance's subjectification. In Chapter Six, I will explore how pious Tajiks resist the biopolitics of security governance by continuing to live their lives with dignity and morality.

Conclusion

Thus far, my discussion has been abstract and theoretical rather than empirical. In the first two chapters, I outlined and critiqued the current literature on the top-down politics of security and the everyday, bottom-up politics of (in)security. Using the thinking of Michel Foucault, and some of the scholars inspired by his work, I developed an approach to transnational authoritarian security governance that incorporates elements from both bottom-up and top-down approaches. My approach is premised on the argument that security is ontologically unstable and actors engage in struggles to 'fix' the meaning of security, its referent object and what is threatening. My approach to security governance involves three steps. First, I examine security as process, the ways

in which actors securitise objects and subjects through discourse, and how the audience of these security discourses respond to this. The securitisation of Islam in Tajikistan did not spring forth from nowhere; it has a specific genealogy. Contemporary discourses on Tajik security developed during the Soviet Union and have been reformulated since Tajikistan gained independence in 1991. In Chapter Three, I trace the genealogy of discourses on Islam and (in)security and in Chapter Four I map the features of this discourse in independent Tajikistan. Second, I examine security as practice, how the government of Tajikistan has responded to the 'threat' of radical Islam posed by migrants living in Russia. In Chapter Five, I examine the range of practices that the Tajik government has deployed to police the diaspora. Third, security governance is a process of subjectification undercut by relations of power. Transnational authoritarian security governance involves the practice of sovereign, disciplinary and biopower, which combine to produce political subjects. In Chapter Five, I start to map the ways in which TASG impacts on the daily lives of pious Tajik migrants. As I demonstrated in this chapter, the existence of these power relations is dependent on there being resistance to them. In Chapter Six, I focus on how those Tajik migrants subjected to securitisation can resist TASG.

My Foucauldian approach to TASG takes particular inspiration from Foucault's genealogical writings. My approach to TASG takes the role of history in informing and shaping contemporary modes of governance seriously. Whilst the coming of independence in 1991 certainly shook Tajikistan, contributing to its slide into civil war in 1992, it did not lead to an overnight transformation in governance. Soviet ways of thinking and acting have proved durable. Tajik elites have not engaged in the denigration of the Soviet past that has been seen in other post-colonial states.⁸³ Instead, the contemporary discourse on religion and security contains many of the assumptions of the Soviet discourse. In the next chapter, I begin my analysis of transnational authoritarian security governance in Tajikistan by outlining the Soviet origins of the discourse linking Islam to the potential for violence.

⁸³ A debate exists as to whether post-Soviet Central Asia is post-colonial. See Kandiyoti 2002; Heathershaw 2010; Adams 2008; 2011; Lewis 2011.

Chapter 3: Emergence: Genealogy of Discourses on Religion and (in)Security in Soviet Tajikistan

Inspired by the genealogical approach outlined by Michel Foucault, in this chapter I write a “history of the present” relations between politics and religion in Tajikistan (Foucault 1977: 31). The study of history, for Foucault, constitutes a means through which we can critically engage with and understand the present. Foucault told an interviewer in 1984, “I set out from a problem expressed in the terms current today and I try to work out its genealogy. Genealogy means that I begin my analysis from a question posed in the present” (Kritzman 1988: 262). Genealogy involves delving into the past in order to examine how hegemonic discourses and practices emerge. It involves “working back from our present to the contingencies that have come together to give us our certainties” (Asad 2003: 16). Influenced by Foucault, theorists have examined the genealogy of the foundational concepts of international relations such as “security” (Neocleous 2008), “sovereignty” (Bartelson 1995; Weber 1995) and “the international” (Walker 1993). Examining the genesis of discourses on religion and security fits in with the four stage methodological approach outlined by linguist and leading proponent of Critical Discourse Analysis Norman Fairclough. Influenced by Foucault, Fairclough surmised that “researching the emergence and constitution of [...] discourses requires a genealogical approach which locates these discourses within the field of prior discourses and entails collection of historical series of texts (2006: 54).” Rather than providing a comprehensive genealogy of the emergence of these relationships by tracing them back to their pre-Tsarist and Tsarist antecedents, which would constitute a mammoth task, I will restrict my analysis to the Soviet past.

Tajikistan continues to be post-Soviet. Historian Adeeb Khalid argues that “the way in which Central Asians relate to Islam, what Islam means to them; can only be understood by taking into account seventy years of Soviet rule” (Khalid 2007: 2). During the Soviet period the ways in which Tajiks conceived of and related to Islam fundamentally changed. Soviet rule rendered Islam a key part of identity (Khalid 2003). Islam became a “cultural marker;” religious identity did not entail a set of fixed beliefs (orthodoxy) or practices (orthopraxy). In contemporary Tajikistan, Islamic practice - as well as state religious policy - remains post-Soviet.

In this chapter I make a series of arguments. I argue that both the association of religion with violence, and security with secularism, originated during the Soviet Union. Whilst I offer an overview of Soviet religious policy in Central Asia, I focus on the late-Soviet period in particular.⁸⁴ My reasoning is twofold. Many of politicians, academics and journalists who are currently active in producing discourses on religion and security in Tajikistan received their education during the late-Soviet period. Additionally, as I elaborate below, it was during the late Soviet period that both Sovietologists and Soviet thinkers took a greater interest in political Islam. I draw on both primary and secondary sources in my analysis. In terms of primary sources, I have identified over fifty English and Russian language articles from the late Soviet period using BBC Monitoring. During a trip to Dushanbe in July 2013, I had the opportunity to read some of the original Russian-language articles in the Tajik National Library. On a subsequent trip to Moscow in 2015, I located the rest of the articles at the Russian State Newspaper Library in Khimki. As well as using this archival material, I also draw on a range of academic accounts by Soviet thinkers and western Sovietologists.

Many similarities exist between the way the two dominant approaches to religion in the Soviet Union - the Soviet and the Sovietological – treat the relationship between religion, politics and security (Kristeva 1986). I trace this manifest intertextuality back to the origins of these discourses. Although a number of excellent studies of Islam in Soviet Tajikistan exist, most of the literature - both that produced in western institutions and by the Soviets themselves - remains conceptually, analytically and methodologically flawed (cf. Tett 1994; Khalid 2007; Saroyan 1997; Atkin 1989). Michael Kemper argued that all Sovietological accounts “should be dismissed completely unless their findings can be supported by the testimonies of the Muslim’s themselves” (Kemper 2009: 21). Whilst I agree that the idea that we should not draw conclusions about lived realities of Islam in the Soviet Union from these accounts, they remain interesting in so much as they illustrate the emergence of a western discourse on religion and politics in the former Soviet Union. During the Soviet period, a number of assumptions about the relations between religion, politics and security emerged. These assumptions continue to pervade

⁸⁴ By late Soviet I refer to the leadership of First Secretaries Leonid Brezhnev (1964-1982), Yuri Andropov (1982-4), Konstantin Chernenko (1984-5) and Mikhail Gorbachev (1985-1991).

policy-making and analysis of the region. In this chapter, I identify three such assumptions. These include the idea that Islam is monolithic and opposed to modernity, the rigid dichotomy between official and 'parallel' Islam, and the conclusion that Islam constituted an inevitable threat to the Soviet Union. I am interested in the ways both western and Soviet actors produced and sustained these assumptions about Soviet Central Asia. These ways of thinking, as I will demonstrate in later chapters, continue to form *the* foremost way through which actors interpret political realities in post-Soviet Central Asia.

The chapter unfolds as follows. First, I offer a brief overview on Soviet religious policies and local reactions to these policies. After this, I trace the emergence of a number of dominant assumptions about the relationship between politics and religion. I argue that these assumptions were often shared by both the Soviet regime and western academics. Having outlined these assumptions, I argue that these discourses and practice remain undercut by relations of power, including elements of biopower, sovereign and disciplinary power. In the final section, I illustrate how these discourses shaped the framing of an important political event during the late Soviet period: the Dushanbe riots of 1990.

Islam in the Soviet Union

Between 1917 and 1991 the process of Soviet, state-led modernisation profoundly transformed Tajikistan's economic, societal, cultural and political structures. As part of the Soviet project the economy was industrialised, the education system revolutionised, factories built and healthcare transformed. Religion had played a key part in the regulation of social life in the pre-Soviet Emirate of Bukhara and Kokand Khanate.⁸⁵ The authorities viewed Muslims, who constituted the vast majority of the Central Asian population in 1917, as a feudal society in need of rapid modernisation (Malashenko & Polanskaya 1994).

It is impossible to talk of one Soviet policy on religion; in reality policies diverged during different periods. An ad hoc and accommodating policy towards Islam characterised the years between the October 1917 revolution and the *razmezhevaniye*, or national delimitation, of 1924 (Yemelianova 2002). Under

⁸⁵ Tajikistan in its current form did not exist before 1929. Before the advent of the Soviet Union, the northern part of the country was under the control of the Kokand Khanate, with the countries south and east subjugated to the Emirate of Bukhara.

Josef Stalin, who assumed leadership of the USSR following a power struggle after Lenin's death in 1924, the government attempted to enforce its atheistic worldview on the Tajik population and expunge Islam from the public sphere. This assault included the banning of the hajj (1928), the *hujum* (Uzb: Lit. storming or assault) against the veiling of women, the confiscation of *waqf* (land owned by mosques), closure of mosques and persecution of the *ulema* (religious establishment).⁸⁶ The change in alphabet from Arabic to Latin (1928) and then to Cyrillic (1937-40), cut Central Asian Muslims off from the rest of the *umma* (community of believers). During World War II the party temporarily halted the onslaught and a period of rapprochement followed. In 1943, the government established SADUM (Rus.: *Dukhovnoye Upravleniye Musul'man Sredney Azii I Kazakhstana*) which managed Muslim affairs in Central Asia. SADUM was headed by a dynasty of Muslim clerics; the Babakhans.⁸⁷ In addition to this, the government reopened the Mir-i-Arab madrasa in Bukhara in 1946 and legalised the *hajj* in 1944.⁸⁸ Although these institutions continued to function, Nikita Khrushchev launched a renewed propaganda campaign against the idea of Islam between 1954 and 1958.

During the Brezhnev era of "mature socialism" (Rus.: *zrely sotsializm*) the government reduced its repressive policies and framed Islam as an integral part of the Central Asian republics' identities.⁸⁹ After Mikhail Gorbachev came to power in 1985, new religious freedoms resulting from *perestroika* (Rus.: restructuring) and *glasnost* (Rus.: openness), led to the re-emergence of Islam in the public sphere. By 1988 even the Communist Party itself was admitting that religious believers constituted around 20 per cent of the Soviet Union's population.⁹⁰ As John Anderson states: "by 1990 a de-facto and de-jure freedom of consciousness had emerged in the USSR" (1994: 216). In

⁸⁶ For a detailed analysis of early Soviet religious policy in Central Asia see: Northrop 2004 or Khalid 2007 (Chapter 3) and Khalid 2015.

⁸⁷ The Babakhan family was a prominent Tashkent religious family who had followed the Naqshbandiyya Sufi order. Ishan Babakhan (1861-1957) was mufti, or leader, of SADUM until his death. He was succeeded by his son Ziyauddin (1908-1982), who also led the administration until his death. His son Shamsiddin became mufti in 1982 and led until 1989.

⁸⁸ Founded in the 16th century, the madrasa was a centre of Islamic learning across Central Asia.

⁸⁹ A number of excellent studies of the late Soviet institutionalisation of religion exist. See Tasar 2010; Epkenhans 2009; Dudoignon 2011.

⁹⁰ Achil'diyev, I. "Garantii Svobody," [Guarantees of Freedom], *Nauka i religia*, 11, November 1988, pp. 21-23.

Tajikistan this culminated in the opening of the first madrassas in Tajikistan and formation of the Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan in 1990.⁹¹

According to Marxist-Leninist thought, religion was an ideology in the negative sense, a false consciousness held by the masses which legitimised capitalist domination (Pospielovsky 1987). The entry for Islam in the *Bol'shaya Soviyetskaya Entsiklopediya* (Large Soviet Encyclopaedia) summarised the religion as follows: "Islam is an instrument for the spiritual oppression of the workers [...] and the peoples of the east" (1954: 516). Soviet rule transformed the relations between religion, politics and identity. Local norms were Islamised and Islam was localised. This process of Sovietisation meant that "Islam was rendered synonymous with tradition" (Khalid 2003: 578). During the era of "mature socialism" under Brezhnev (1964-1982), the media portrayed Islam as tantamount to national culture (Yemelianova 2002). As such local *to'y* or festivals were viewed as Islamic, but accompanied by non-Islamic behaviour, such as drinking alcohol. Islam became a crucial "identity marker" which offered a personal function of differentiation between local "self" and Slavic "other" (Khalid 2007). These social transformations generated interest from both Soviet and western scholars. Indeed, after the Second World War a plethora of studies on Islam in the Soviet Union were published in English, Russian and French (Bennigsen and Quelquejay 1967; Bennigsen and Broxup 1983; Rwykin 1990).⁹² Such accounts continue to shape the ways in which the region is understood (DeWeese 2002).

Sovietological Approaches to Islam in Central Asia

Whilst a few excellent studies of Islam in Tajikistan dating back to the Soviet Union exist, most studies of Islam in the Soviet Union conducted by western Sovietologists contain a range of flaws (cf. Tett 1994; Atkin 1989; Rakowska-Harmstone 1970). In 2002, historian Devin DeWeese called for "a serious housecleaning" in the field of research on Islam in the Soviet Union (DeWeese 2002: 300). These words formed part of a review of Yacoov Ro'i's dense book *Islam in the Soviet Union*, a book that DeWeese commends for uncovering archival material, but criticises for the author's lack of critical engagement with

⁹¹ As well as the Islamic Institute in Dushanbe, madrassas were established in Hissar, Khujand, and Qurgon-Teppa.

⁹² For an overview, and critique, of this vast literature, see: Myer's *Islam and Colonialism: Western Perspectives on Soviet Asia* (2002).

his sources. DeWeese views this 800-page work as the culmination of an approach to the study of Islam in the Soviet Union which he labels “Soviet Islamology.” The work of Russian-French émigré scholar Alexandre Bennigsen stands out in this sub-field of Sovietology. Other notable authors included Marie Broxup, Helen Carrere d’Encausse, Michael Rwykin, Martin Wheeler and Enders Wimbush. The key early product of this literature was Bennigsen and Chantal Lemercier Quelquejay’s *Islam in the Soviet Union* (1967). Despite being rife with methodological problems which render their truth claims incredulous, Bennigsen and his disciples have “exerted a stultifying and even pernicious influence on the study of Islam in the Soviet environment” to this day (DeWesse 2002: 299).

Sovietological Islamology remains conceptually, analytically and methodologically flawed. Scholars borrowed more from the theoretical and empirical traditions of Sovietology than from Islamic studies (DeWeese 2002). Political interests dominated and drove the field of Sovietology. Indeed one of the primary journals in which Sovietological literature appeared, *Problems of Communism*, was published by the United States Department of State, International Information Administration, a body charged with projecting U.S. soft power during the Cold War. For Devin DeWeese this came at the expense of contextualising Soviet Islam within the broader Muslim world (2002). Such an analysis would examine how Central Asians themselves understand Islamic theology and practices. Nevertheless, dissenting voices about the shortcomings of this approach began to make themselves heard in the late 1980s (Brill-Olcott 1985; Atkin 1989). Mark Saroyan critiqued the Sovietological discourse, arguing that it did not reflect what was happening so much as shape western perceptions of the region (Saroyan 1997). Saroyan contends that there is a great degree of intertextuality between what the Sovietologists and Soviets said about Islam in Central Asia. Julia Kristeva coined the term intertextuality in 1966. It refers to the influence that one text has upon another. Kristeva referred to texts in terms of two axes. First, a *horizontal axis* connects the author to the reader. Second, a *vertical axis* links the text with other texts. In an oft-quoted phrase, Kristeva argued that “every text is from the outset under the jurisdiction of other discourses which impose a universe on it” (cited in Culler 1981, 105; emphasis in original). Texts do not exist independently of one another; instead they are woven into complex discourses. Indeed, the language, conclusions and

assumptions contained within Soviet and Sovietological writings on Islam in the USSR bear a striking resemblance to one another.⁹³ Saroyan argues that by “directly extrapolating” their arguments and assumptions from the Soviet sources themselves, the Sovietologists reproduced the Soviet discourse on Islam (Saroyan 1993).

In explaining this intertextuality, following Saroyan, I argue that both Soviet and Sovietological authors often based their knowledge claims on similar sources. Given that it was impossible for western academics to access the region for extended fieldwork during the Soviet Union, the Sovietological literature on Islam in the Soviet Union is largely based upon official publications such as books produced by SADUM and journals like the English-language *Muslims of the Soviet East* and *Nauka i Religiya* (Science and Religion). The publications aimed at a non-Soviet audience, such as head of SADUM Ziyauddin Babakhan’s *Islam and Muslims in the Land of the Soviets* portrayed the regime as tolerant of religion arguing that “the Soviet state vigilantly guards the rights of believers” (1980: 52). Authors supplement this periodical literature with anti-religious propaganda from *agitprop* (Department for Agitation and Propaganda). These publications, aimed at an internal audience, framed Islam as dying out in the face of Soviet modernisation and progress.

Sovietologists relied on three main sources: state media, surveys and rare fieldtrips. In their study of “everyday Islam” academics rely upon the survey data generated by Soviet ethnographers. They relied on statistics and indicators to represent the “reality” of Islam in the Soviet Union. These systems of measurement were based on principles of scientific rationalism inherent to Soviet ethnography. As such Central Asians were classified into categories ranging from “firm believer” to “committed atheist.” In 1980, for example, a Soviet survey found that thirty per cent of Central Asians were “believers” (Ro’i 1984). Despite purporting to offer an emic perspective on Central Asian Islam though the self-categorisation of individuals, this approach contains a number of fundamental flaws. First, by imposing categories on respondents and through the use of close-ended questions, the surveys did not allow locals to express how they attributed meaning to their beliefs and practices. Second, the results

⁹³ For the purposes of convenience, I have labelled the two discourses as ‘Soviet’ and ‘Sovietological.’ It is important to note, however, that neither of these discourses is homogenous. Texts within both narratives differed depending on the time at which they were written and individuals who did the writing.

of these surveys are invalid due to the fact that most respondents would have been aware of the surveyors links with the government. As such, most of them did not offer their actual opinions when questioned. For example, after the introduction of a new and relatively liberal Law on Religion in 1990, the number of adherents to Islam skyrocketed from ten to fifty per cent of Central Asians. This indicates the spurious nature of the data generated by Soviet ethnographers.

Occasionally academics bolstered their arguments with the accounts of émigrés from the Soviet Union. Indeed two of the most prominent experts on Islam in the Soviet Union residing in the West, Alexandre Bennigsen and Michael Rwykin, were both émigrés themselves. Sovietologists also rely on the accounts of foreign Muslim delegations who frequently visited Central Asia to attend conferences organised by SADUM. State authorities closely supervised such visits. Some of the best work produced by western analysts emerged at the end of the Soviet Union when *perestroika* offered an opportunity for anthropologists like Gillian Tett and Muriel Atkin to spend long periods of time in the region (Atkin 1989; Tett 1994).

Many Sovietologists recognised the problems associated with the reliability of their sources and thus the validity of their conclusions (Ro'i 2000). Nevertheless, for Bennigsen and Wimbush this problem could be overcome through "great familiarity with the subject, its lexicon (both Soviet and non-Soviet variants) and the analytical spectra within which the sources become meaningful" (Bennigsen and Wimbush 1985: 158). Indeed, Sovietologists often equated quantity with accuracy. Bennigsen and Wimbush argue that "Soviet sources, because of their abundance, can provide a more or less coherent picture of Islam in the Soviet Union" (1985: 162). However as Yaacov Ro'i argues in his useful opening chapter on the use of Soviet archives, "the distortion of truth would seem to be the rule rather than the exception" even among internal communiques (Ro'i 2000: 8). All Soviet sources on Islam are mediated through ideological considerations and can be considered highly subjective in nature. Despite making reference to the overtly ideological nature of these sources, most analysts still relied on them to make their inferences about Soviet Islam. Rather than representing any reality of Islam, these sources simulated an image in which Soviet modernisation had largely removed

Islam as a force within society. The lack of critical reflexivity about the reliability of sources constitutes a key weakness in the Sovietological literature.

In making their truth claims about the Soviet Union the Sovietologists relied heavily upon Soviet sources. This intertextual process, however, was not purely one-way. Numerous Soviet academics demonstrated their awareness of the work on Islam in the USSR being produced by western Sovietologists. One academic from the Turkmen Academy of Sciences dismissed the alarmist work of Sovietologists as “bourgeois propaganda.”⁹⁴ Some academics transcended ideological divides by arguing that their warnings needed to be taken seriously. Igor Belyayev addressed Alexandre Bennigsen’s concerns directly in an editorial published in *Literaturnaya Gazeta* in May 1987, “But both he [Bennigsen] and other Western experts have much to say, too much, even, that is alarming, and that inclines us to study Islam attentively here at home.”⁹⁵ Soviet and Sovietological discourses on religion in Central Asia, then, remain intertwined. As a result of these linkages, both parties perpetuated flawed assumptions about the nature of religion in Tajikistan. It is to these assumptions that I shall now turn.

Underlying Assumptions about Religion and Security

Assumption I: Religion Constitutes a Threat to Security in Central Asia

Both Soviet and Sovietological accounts framed Islam as a threat to national security. For the Soviets, it constituted tool in the hands of enemies (Rus.: *vragi*) of the state- imperialists and capitalists- which could be used to manipulate local populations into threatening the state (Ashirov 1979). Sovietologists separated the Soviet state from Muslim society, pitting the two in opposition to one another. The dominant view held by the Sovietologists contended that “the Muslim community is prepared for the inevitable showdown with its Russian rulers” (Bennigsen and Broxup 1983: 87). Sovietologists viewed Muslims as resistant en-masse to the Soviet efforts at integration, *sbylizheniye* (Rus.: “getting nearer”) and *sliyaniye* (Rus.: merging), which formed the cornerstone of the Soviet nationalities policy (Bennigsen and Wimbush 1985). As such Islam,

⁹⁴ Redzhepova, O. “Antikommunizm” [Anti-Communism], *Turkmenskaya Iskra*, 30 June 1984.

⁹⁵ Belyayev, I, “Islam I Politika” [Islam and Politics], *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, 30 May 1987, pp.13-14.

by its very nature as an alternative identity which separated Russian from non-Russian, formed a threat to the unitary Soviet state (Khalid 2007).

Authors visually captured this “clash of world views” with the image of “red Communists” fighting “green Islamists.”⁹⁶ This was evidenced by the titles of the works themselves, for example Bennigsen’s *The Islamic Threat to the Soviet State* (1983; With Marie Broxup) or Michael Rwykin’s *Moscow’s Muslim Challenge* (1990). For many Sovietologists, “the primary threat to the Soviet state was an Islamically-inspired, Sufi-led led revolt” (Myer 2002: 162). They dedicated entire books, most notably Bennigsen and Wimbush’s *Mystics and Commissars*, to measuring the number of Sufis in the Soviet Union and analysing the nature of the anti-Russian, fanatical Sufi threat (1985).⁹⁷ Many western journalists also bought into the idea that the Sufis formed a clandestine and fundamentalist “parallel” Islamic force.⁹⁸ With hindsight, however, we can see that *Salafi* rather than *Sufi* Islam has played the greater role in shaping the politics of the region (Naumkin 2005).

Given that Tajikistan was the poorest republic in the USSR with a largely rural population, for some officials within the party a stand-off between “Islamic forces” and the secular state seemed inevitable. Outwardly, a contradictory discourse on the “Islamic threat” developed. On the one hand, official religious leaders downplayed any potential conflict between Islamic norms and communist values. In an interview with Hungarian radio, Abdul Abdullayev, the deputy leader of Central Asian Muslims, stated that in the Soviet Union “conditions are favourable for religion [...] No-one interferes in matters of religion.”⁹⁹ In contrast, other commentators stirred up popular fears about the threat posed by religion. An article entitled “Green Tea in a Red Tea House” published in *Komsomolskaya Pravda* stated that “given all this, the danger is that Tajikistan may end up as a poor and aggressive Islamic republic, periodically wracked by civil strife and palace revolutions.”¹⁰⁰ Many western analysts agreed with this conclusion. One journalist wrote that in 1987 that

⁹⁶ Babakhanov, U. “Zeleny Chai v Krasnoi Chaikhana” [Green Tea in a Red Tea House], *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, 16 July 1991, p.2

⁹⁷ Sufism, the mystic-ascetic sect in Islam, has a long history in Central Asia. The Naqshbandiya Tariqa (sect) founded in the fourteenth century by Bahu-ud Sin Naqshband Bukhari who was born in modern day Uzbekistan, retains the largest following in the region.

⁹⁸ See for example: “Marx’s Moslems,” *The Economist*, 8 September 1979, p.54.

⁹⁹ “Interview with Soviet Moslem Leader,” 21 April 1979.

¹⁰⁰ Babakhanov, U. “Zelyenii Chai v Krasnoi Chaikhana” (Green Tea in a Red Tea House), *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, 16 July 1991, p.2

“battle lines are being drawn over a force that threatens the moral fabric of the Soviet atheistic domain - the religion of Islam.”¹⁰¹

Indeed, many Soviet analysts and Sovietologists assumed that a causal link existed between adherence to Islam and resistance to the regime; Islam by its very nature is inherently political and opposed to secularism (Heathershaw and Montgomery 2014). This interpretation pitted *Homo Islamicus*, “united by the bonds of history, culture and tradition,” against *Homo Sovieticus* (Carrere d’Encause 1979). Indeed, the communist party supported this view and frequently referred to the Islamic threat. In January 1986, for example, First Secretary of the Tajik SSR Qahhor Mahkamov referred to the threat as “politically acute.”¹⁰² Many accounts inferred that the persistence of Islam at the local level was indicative of a resistance to Soviet rule amongst Central Asians in general. For Soviet ethnographer Sergei Poliakov “traditionalism has grown too much to be considered a ‘survival,’ for it now behaves like a system opposed to our order” (Poliakov 1992: 173).

Most analysts assumed that any violence in Central Asia must *ipso facto* be religious in nature. Amir Taheri, for example, framed the 1986 protests in Alma-Ata, in which residents protested against the removal of Kazakh Communist Party leader Dinmukhamed Kunayev and his replacement by ethnic-Russian Gennady Kolbin, as being religious in nature (1989). Here his analysis is based on the assumption that political resistance in a majority Muslim republic *must* be Islamic in nature. More recently scholars have argued that these protests were more about ethno-nationalism than religion (Cummings 2005; Akiner 1995). In addition to forging a natural link between Islam and resistance, Sovietologists tended to associate the volume of material produced on an issue with the extent of the threat itself. For example, the increase in volume of published material on “radical Islam” and Sufism which emerged in the Soviet Union after 1980, was seen as proof that such a threat existed (Bennigsen 1982). Myer argues that “the concept of an Islamic threat to Central Asia is in itself a largely Western construct, serving Western interests” (Myer 2002: 3). According to him, with the CIA supporting the Afghan

¹⁰¹ Martin, L. “Battle Lines: Growing Strength of Islam Challenges Soviet Atheism,” *The Globe and Mail*, 7 February 1987.

¹⁰² Hetmanek, A, “The Mullahs vs. Moscow; Armenia May Be Just the Beginning for Gorbachev,” *Washington Post*, 25 September 1988, p.c1.

mujahedeen in their struggle with the Soviet Union, the U.S. was interested in analysing the extent to which the jihad could be exported to the USSR itself.

As well as posing a physical threat to the region's security, Islam also constituted a demographic threat according to some analysts. With falling birth rates in the European Russia and rapid population growth in 'Muslim' republics, the notion of an inevitable showdown between Slav and Muslim existed.¹⁰³ Michael Rwykin dedicates a large section of his *Moscow's Muslim Challenge* to demographic trends. Life expectancy in Central Asia was low; the population surge created a "youth bulge" (Roche 2010). For the authorities, the burgeoning young population constituted a potential security threat. According to one journalist at *Kommunist Tadzhikistana*:

Some of the clerics illegally teach the dogma of Islam to children and young people. Having absorbed the opium of religion, young men refuse to join the Young Pioneers and *Komsomol* and do not take part in social life, and some of them do not wish to take the oath [for military service]. It follows that the above mentioned individuals are not harmless.¹⁰⁴

As the case of the 1990 Dushanbe riots, which I discuss at length in the next section, shows, the framing of young people as a potentially subversive force in need of discipline, helped the government to legitimise a crackdown on potential opposition.

With hindsight, these conclusions appear misguided. Islam did not force the end of the Soviet Union. Despite the prevailing view that "it was in the Muslim republics that most clouds appear on the Soviet horizon," the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 was not driven by factors within Central Asia (Taheri 1989: 272). In fact the Central Asian republics had independence thrust upon them. For most people, Islam and communism did not represent mutually exclusive modes of being. A March 1991 *Komsomolskaya Pravda* article stated that if the people of Tajikistan were asked if they would like to live in an "Islamic Republic" - without specifying exactly what that entailed - the overwhelming majority responded favourably.¹⁰⁵ That same month 97 per cent of population voted in favour of staying in the Soviet Union. Although the ballot was clearly

¹⁰³ See for example: Tkacz, A. "Growing Number of Ethnic Moslems are a New Factor in Soviet Makeup," *United Press International*, 19 November 1983.

¹⁰⁴ Alimov, A, "Biznes Opiuma," [The Business of Opium], *Kommunist Tadzhikistana*, 13 May 1988.

¹⁰⁵ Karasik, T. 1991. "The Crescent Ascends; Tadzhikistan's Muslims Flex Their Political Muscle." *Armenian International Magazine*, 2, (11).

rigged, it remains clear that most Tajiks were in favour of maintaining the Union. Indeed, while Islam remained localised in Tajikistan, the regime framed it as non state-controlled Islamic practices as “foreign,” influenced by external actors.

Assumption II: The Foreign Hand

Soviet officials framed Islam as “foreign,” something that proceeded from the Middle East. Tajikistan’s proximity to Afghanistan and linguistic ties with Iran made it more vulnerable to extremist influences after the Iranian revolution and Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 (Akcali 1998; Myer 2002). The official media- a key source for the Sovietologists - circulated reports of the nefarious influence these “foreign” agents had upon vulnerable Central Asians. Although leader of the Islamic Renaissance Party, Said Abdullah Nuri, founded his first underground youth movement - *Nahzati Islomi* (Revival of Islam) - in southern Tajikistan in 1974, he came to the attention of many Sovietologists only in 1987, when he organised a protest against the war in Afghanistan. Nevertheless, some analysts argued that an “Islamic revolution” was inevitable. Within this discourse of Islamic danger numerous authors argued that the Muslim threat was exogenous, imported to the region after the 1979 revolution in Iran and the USSR’s invasion of Afghanistan. Bennigsen and Wimbush summarise this argument as follows: “We can assume that they [Muslims in the Soviet Army] returned [from Afghanistan] to their native Soviet republics with tales of Muslims who were prepared to resist the Russians with arms” (Bennigsen and Wimbush, 1985: 37). American journalist Keven Klose, for example, after travelling through the region in 1979, concluded that “the subdued, carefully controlled face of Islam betrays barely a flicker of interest in the explosive Moslem revival storming through the nations to the south.”¹⁰⁶

Indeed, a “religious revival” seemed to be gripping Soviet Tajikistan and this constituted a serious threat to social stability. The authorities repeatedly linked it to foreign events: the situations in Afghanistan and Iran. Anti-Soviet propaganda, some of which originated in neighbouring Afghanistan, particularly concerned the authorities.¹⁰⁷ Reading through Soviet newspapers from 1985

¹⁰⁶ Klose, K. “Soviet Moslem Areas Show Little Interest in Islamic Revival,” *The Washington Post*, 5 December 1979, p.A20.

¹⁰⁷ For documented cases in Qurgon-Teppa see: Alimov, A. “Biznes Opiuma” [Business in Opium], *Kommunist Tadzhikistana*, 13 May 1988.

onwards, reports of religious leaders being arrested frequently crop-up. Nematullo Inayatov from Kulob was arrested in 1986 on charges of spreading religious propaganda.¹⁰⁸ Kalandar Sadurdinov, a mullo from Kommunistichesky region, was also reported to be preaching among the local population. Eventually he was arrested and accused of “deliberately spreading fabrications defaming the Soviet state.”¹⁰⁹ On 6 March 1989 Dushanbe resident, Gafur Zaidullayev, was charged with “distributing ideologically detrimental materials [...] with pan-Islamic ideas alien to Soviet reality.”¹¹⁰

Although the population was taking a greater interest in religion, this did not directly translate into political radicalisation (Heathershaw and Montgomery 2014). The late 1980s was a time when Islam and its role in national identity was widely debated by the intelligentsia and rural poor alike. The solutions were not always “radical” or transformative, the actions of religious leaders not always political.¹¹¹ Most of those shaping these debates were Tajiks themselves, not foreigners, and much of the discussion focused on the particularities of Islam in Tajikistan. Nonetheless, through the actions of the Soviet authorities their practices could become securitised, they could be labelled “Wahabbi” and be disciplined by the regime (Atkin 1989; Bleuer and Nourzhanov 2013). Thus far I have discussed the ways in which the Soviet authorities framed those whose practices fell outside of the confines of official Islam as “dangerous” and “foreign.” Now I turn to the representation of Islam as backwards and opposed to socialist modernity.

Assumption III: “Backwards” Central Asia

Analysts of Islam in the Soviet Union often treat Islam as a homogenous and essential phenomenon. Despite being a-theoretical and largely narrative in content, Sovietological Islamologists make a number of unwritten assumptions about the nature of Islam (Khalid 2007). In doing so, they borrow from the conceptual understandings of Islam which developed from the traditions of

¹⁰⁸ Sanginov, A. *Tajikistan-i Sovetii*, 24 November 1986, p.3

¹⁰⁹ Rabiyeu, V. “V Klasse ... s Koranom” [Into the Classroom with a Koran?], *Kommunist Tadjikistana*, 31 January 1986.

¹¹⁰ “In the Tajik Republic State Security Committee,” *Kommunist Tadjikistana*, 10 March 1989, p. 2.

¹¹¹ For an in-depth discussion of some of these debates, see Epkenhans 2014 and Bleuer and Nourzhanov 2013.

nineteenth century Russian Orientalism and informed Soviet thinking on Islam (Kemper and Connerman 2011). Indeed, although both camps came to different conclusions about the extent of Islamic observance in Central Asia, both Soviet and Western studies largely agreed on its nature (Saroyan 1993). Influenced by the ideas of Karl Marx, Emile Durkheim and Max Weber, both Soviet and Sovietological writers argued that modernity and religion oppose one another. This argument is more overtly present in Soviet analyses than in the often a-theoretical Sovietological literature, but the similarities outweigh the differences in their conceptual approaches.

An assumption that modernisation would lead to secularisation informed both the Soviet and Sovietological discourses on religion (Saroyan 1993). The Soviet authorities portrayed Islam as intolerant and as running counter to the doctrine of inter-cultural harmony or *druzhba narodov* (Rus.: Friendship Amongst the Peoples). Islam, according to Marxist-Leninists, would be eliminated by the progress achieved under communism. This ambitious project ultimately failed to eliminate Islam, but it did succeed in transforming it in numerous ways. Soviet ideologues framed Islam as part of the historical identity of the region, as a *perezhitok* (Rus.: remnant), a vestige of a feudal society common to all “eastern people” (Rus.: *vostochny narod*) (Smirnov 1954). According to one Soviet thinker, religion “shrouded the whole region [Central Asia] in a dense fog of superstition.”¹¹² Whereas the Soviet authors argue that Central Asian society was modernised, leaving certain vestiges, the Sovietologist saw the persistence of Islam as a result of the failure of the Soviet modernisation project, in particular their failure to mould forms of consciousness. Most Sovietologists argued that religion retained its, often nefarious, grip on society. For Bennigsen “Islam has in no way been contaminated either by Marxism or secularism [...] Islam in the USSR is the same unadulterated religion it had been before 1917” (1980: 39). A monolithic “community spirit” united Muslims in Central Asia according to Rwykin (1990: 115). Bennigsen argued that all Muslims had an “inborn” sense of *umma* (community), which dictated the way they behaved (1978: 258). Such essentialist arguments reduced explanations of Central Asian politics and society to questions of religion.

¹¹² Tursunov, A. “Voprosy Teorii: Ateizm I Kul'tury” [Questions of Theory: Atheism and Culture], *Pravda*, 16 January 1987, pp. 2-3.

Such Orientalist analyses portrayed Islam as backwards and in opposition to progress (Myer 2002). A quote that typifies such an Orientalist representation comes from Rywkin:

Central Asian Muslims value everyday joys, need no vodka to forget their troubles, are not interested in theoretical problems and remain indifferent to 'isms' of any shape as long as their family lives and daily pleasures remain unaffected (Rywkin 1984: 4).

Here Rywkin's patronising tone indicates that the region's inhabitants are backwards and all united in one, Islamic, mode of thought. Evidence would suggest that this is not the case; multiple subjectivities existed in Soviet Tajikistan. Nonetheless there is a tendency for analysts to make such sweeping generalisations. Much western media coverage took on an Orientalist tone. The opening line to an article on the Armenian riots published in *The Economist* in 1990 stated that "conventional wisdom used to hold that Soviet Central Asia was a bastion of "Asiatic despotism": a corrupt elite, run on clan lines, ruled over primitive masses."¹¹³ Another journalist stated that in 1991, "the Islamic flavour of this relatively backward republic some 3,000 km (1,860 miles) to the southeast is striking and exotic. Bearded Moslem men wearing turbans or dark green "tubiteika" skullcaps hawk fruits and meat at Dushanbe's busy central market. Many are dressed in bright striped coats called *chapans* that reach down to their knees."¹¹⁴ Such orientalist discourses render Central Asia as obscure, exotic and backwards. These myths still pervade western discourses on the region to this day (Heathershaw and Megoran 2011). Another assumption that emerged during the Soviet Union, and persists to this day is the division between 'good,' state-sanctioned Islam and 'bad,' parallel, unofficial Islam.

Assumption IV: The Parallel/Official Dichotomy

Both discourses tend to dichotomise parallel, dangerous Islam with benign, state-controlled Islam. The Soviet policy on religion had not successfully eradicated Islam from society. Instead, according to analysts, Islam had been pushed "underground" where it was represented by Islamic teachers, Sufi

¹¹³ "Blood and Guts," *The Economist*, 17 February 1990, p.52.

¹¹⁴ Trevelyan, M. "Soviet Moslems Rediscover Faith, Traditions In Central Asia," *Reuters*, 1 December 1991.

ishans and “Wahhabi” fanatics (Malashenko and Polonskaya 1994).¹¹⁵ A story relayed in the national newspaper *Kommunist Tadzhikistana* in 1983 typifies the way in which party members often turned a blind eye to religious practices. The author states how he saw a religious poster on a bus with the message “*Tavakaal ba khudo*” (There is no hope, salvation lies with God). He wonders why no-one reported this blatant violation of party ideology, “Do they think that the socialist rules of behaviour can peacefully coexist in public places with antediluvian posters containing reactionary slogans?”¹¹⁶ This parallel Islam appeared everywhere in Central Asia. One party official, writing in *Pravda Vostoka*, commented that:

Some people now show two faces, as it were: a public and political face, when they stand up for our ideals, and an everyday face, when they observe religious ceremonies. They skilfully use the first face on the job, and the other one in the family and at their place of residence.¹¹⁷

Unofficial religious leaders - according to the Communist Party - posed a particular threat to the region’s security. In the 1970s a number of self-styled imams emerged in Tajikistan (Mullojanov 2001). Soviet reports framed these men as uneducated and dangerous.¹¹⁸ According to *Kommunist Tadzhikistana*, all a man had to do to become a mullo was “to grow a beard, tie a turban around their heads, hold prayer beads in their hands, and, to start off, memorize a few verses from the Koran.”¹¹⁹ Future leader of the *Hizbi Nahzati Islomi Tojikiston* (Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan), Said Abdullo Nuri, was one of the most prominent of these emergent leaders. Nuri (nee Abdullo Nuriddinovich Saidov) was born in Sangvor, Tavildara in 1947. His father and

¹¹⁵ Qazi Kalon Turajonzoda estimated that by 1991 at least 1,000 “underground” mosques existed in Tajikistan: “Interview with Hoji Akbar Turajonzoda,” *Narodnaya Gazeta*, 4 October 1991, p.4.

¹¹⁶ Mukhammadiyev, F. “Yesli My ne Sdelayem. Kto Budet?” [If We Do not Do It, Who Will?], *Kommunist Tadzhikistana*, 3 August 1983, p.5.

¹¹⁷ Usmankhodzhayev, I.B. “Zadachi Partinikh Organizatsii Respubliki v Dalnyeishem Sovershestvovanii Effektivnost’ Ideologicheskoi Roboty v Svete Trebovanii 27-Kongress KPSS” [The Tasks of The Republic’s Party Organizations in Further Improving the Effectiveness of Ideological Work in Light of the Demands of the 27th CPSU Congress], *Pravda Vostoka*, 5 October 1987, p.1.

¹¹⁸ “V Klasse ... s Koranom.” [Into the Classroom with a Koran?] *Kommunist Tadzhikistana*, 31 January 1986.

¹¹⁹ RabiyeV, V, “Posle Suda: Nikuda” [After the Trial: Going Nowhere], *Kommunist Tadzhikistana*, 12 February 1986, p. 3.

teacher was Nuriddin Saidov was, a former state farm director. His family was forcibly resettled in the cotton growing region of Vakhsh in southern Tajikistan in 1953. Born into an observant family, he studied under Deobandi scholar Mahmudjon Hindustoni (1892-1989) at his unofficial madrassa in Dushanbe. A driver by occupation, he worked in the Kurgan-Tyube Equipment Inventory-Taking Bureau.

In 1974 he founded *Nahzati Islomi* (Revival of Islam); the organisation aimed to re-educate young people in the ways of Islam. His religious interests swiftly brought him into conflict with the regime. After he petitioned the 27th Party Congress in 1986, calling for the establishment of an Islamic state, the local authorities labelled him “Wahhabi”.¹²⁰ Thus, as one journalist concluded “step by step Saidov slipped into antisocial positions and became socially dangerous.”¹²¹ His home town, the Turkmenistan State Farm in Vakhsh District, was reported to be infested with his ideas. People ignored “secular holidays” and did not watch television. According to *Kommunist Tadzhikistana*:

Like metastases, religious sentiments are creeping through the *kishlak* (village), affecting more and more people, poisoning their minds and fencing them off from reality behind a curtain of false ideals.¹²²

In the aftermath of the incident, KGB chief, Vladimir V. Petkel, stated that Tajikistan was a “fertile ground” for Islamic ideas and groups opposing the Soviet system.¹²³

Sovietologists appropriated the language used by their Soviet counterparts. Bennigsen borrowed the term “parallel,” which he first used in 1980, from Soviet scholar Lusitsian Klimovich who first used the term in 1966 to describe “extra-mosque” activities. By doing so, Sovietologists mistakenly simplified Islam and religious policy by examining them through binaries such

¹²⁰ The label Wahabbi was, and still is, used in Central Asia as a catchall term for Islamic fundamentalists whether they claim to adhere to the teachings of Ibn Abd al-Wahhab or not. Johan Rasanayagam illustrates how the term has become a tool for non-elites to denounce and discredit rivals and opponents (Rasanayagam 2011).

¹²¹ RabiyeV, V, “Posle Suda: Nikuda” [After the Trial: Going Nowhere], *Kommunist Tadzhikistana*, 12 February 1986, p. 3.

¹²² RabiyeV, V, “Posle Suda: Nikuda” [After the Trial: Going Nowhere], *Kommunist Tadzhikistana*, 12 February 1987, p. 3.

¹²³ Taubman, P. “Gorbachev Is Feeling the Heat from the South,” *The New York Times*, 6 March 1988, p.3.

as official/parallel, internal/external, religious/secular. In expressing the division between parallel and official Islam Bennigsen states that Central Asia was:

Torn between two contradictory trends: a modest, cautious modernism represented mainly by the 'official,' religious establishment and an aggressive, militant conservatism advocated by the non-official, Sufi sects (Bennigsen 1977: 274).

For Sovietologists, this parallel Islam was more appealing than the official Islamic institutions (Bennigsen and Broxup 1983). This obscuritanist discourse divides Islam into two mutually exclusive trends. All of the nuances which differentiate believer's individual relations with Islam are lost. Following such a dyadic mode of thinking, Wimbush argues that Central Asians were faced with a zero-sums decision: Islam or Communism (Wimbush 1985).

Upon closer inspection, however, Islam in the Soviet Union appears to be more complex than such reductionist analyses contended. In this view the official/unofficial dichotomy is more of a continuum, upon which actors move with relative fluidity (Kemper et al 2009). Many Soviet citizens did not see Islam and Communism in such mutually exclusive terms. Instead many identified themselves as both Soviet and Muslim (Tett 1994; Khalid 2003). During the Soviet Union governmental policy transformed Islam into a marker of national identity. Therefore "in the Soviet Union it is possible to be an atheist and a 'Muslim,' because to claim to be a Muslim merely means being proud of having a Muslim heritage" (Brill Olcott 1982: 490). The Babakhans, despite being members of the "official" Islamic clergy, interacted with and were influenced by many trends within "parallel" Islam (Naumkin 2005). Analysts of Islam in the Soviet Union, then, need to deconstruct these binary categories in order to arrive at a better understanding of Islam.

To summarise, both Soviet and Sovietological discourses on Islam, politics and security in the USSR contained a number of flawed assumptions. They created a dichotomy between loyal, official Islam, and resistant, 'parallel' Islam. This parallel Islam was backwards, dangerous to the stability of the secular republics of Central Asia, and imposed on the region by actors outside of the region, in the West and the Middle East. This securitisation of Islam pervaded western Sovietological accounts of the region and, as I will demonstrate in the next chapter, continues to shape the discourse on Islam and

security in Tajikistan today. Having outlined these assumptions, I will now explore the ways in which Soviet governance of religion and security displayed elements of the 'triangle of power:' sovereign, disciplinary and biopower. I will demonstrate this through an event that brought the themes of religion, politics and (in)security to the fore: the 1990 Dushanbe riots. Driven by local political grievances, the government framed the riots as the result of irrational hooliganism and Islamic fanaticism perpetrated primarily by young men.

Case Study: Governing the 1990 Riots in Dushanbe

It was then that a call rang out in the tea-houses which had been turned into prayer-houses "Wake up, Muslims! The people are rising up!" Speeches by Islamic fundamentalist leaders were distributed on audio and video tape "It is time to establish an Islamic state!"¹²⁴

The riots that took place in Dushanbe between 12 and 19 February 1990 constitute an interesting case study of the ways in which the Soviet government linked political violence with Islam, as well as the process by which this discourse was reproduced by western journalists. Rumours of a mass influx of Armenian refugees following the pogroms in Sumgait, Azerbaijan in 1988 sparked the violence. As many as 5,000 Armenians would be resettled in Dushanbe according to the rumourmongers (Horowitz 2002; Atkin 1997). Three hundred angry Tajiks marched on the Communist Party Central Committee building in Dushanbe demanding an explanation from the government. The crowd quickly swelled and protestors began to demand the resignation of the First Secretary, Qahhor Mahkamov, himself.¹²⁵ On 12 February protestors started to attack the party offices. Reacting swiftly, the regime declared martial law. After a day of looting, protests and unrest 22 people were left dead and 565 injured. The Dushanbe riots constituted the most serious outbreak of social unrest in the Tajik SSR's 60 year history.

To map the framing of the riots, I analysed 23 articles from state newspapers *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, *Izvestiya*, *Pravda* and *Kommunist Tadzhikistana*. The official framing of the riots blamed events on three groups: Tajik nationalists inspired by the Rastokhez movement, hooligans bent on

¹²⁴ Ponomarev, V, "Kolokola Nadezhdy" [The Bells of Hope], *Pravda*, 11 May 1990, p.5.

¹²⁵ Qahhor Mahkamov, born in Khujand, (1932-2016), was First Secretary of the Communist Party of Tajikistan between 1985 and 1990, becoming First President of Tajikistan in November 1990. He resigned in August 1991 after supporting the failed coup in Moscow.

causing destruction and radical Islamists.¹²⁶ The discourse linking the riots to religion conformed to the assumptions highlighted above. According to the hegemonic narrative, the riots demonstrated the danger that religion could cause, pitting Muslims fanatics against ethnic Russians. In blaming the events, at least in part, on “radical Islam,” the government set a precedent that continues to this day; any political violence in Tajikistan *must* be at least partly religious in nature (Lemon 2014). During the Soviet Union a tendency existed for the authorities to blame any disturbance on “radical Islam” or “Wahabbists” (Atkin 1995). President Mahkamov stated in an interview in *Moskovskiye Novosti* that religion inspired the rioters. Speaking in public for the first time in many years in May 2014, First Secretary Mahkamov, maintained that the riots were organised by religious leaders. He told a conference in Dushanbe, “every evening in mosques mullos told worshippers: ‘Tomorrow you must go to the rally. Those who do not will be given the three *taloq* (divorce) by their wives.’”¹²⁷ He stated that the role of regionalism (Rus.: *mestnichestvo*) had been overplayed:

When I became First Secretary [of the Communist Party], the first deputy that I selected was Chairman of the Council of Ministers Council of Ministers Izatullo Hayev from Kulob.¹²⁸ Nobody raised the issue of regionalism at that time.¹²⁹

Writing in *Pravda*, Viktor Ponomarev condemned the riots in Dushanbe as stemming from “Islamic fundamentalists” and “anti-perestroika” forces.¹³⁰ He castigated the local authorities for “pussyfooting” around. According to the author, “when dialogue unilaterally turns into dictatorial behaviour, blackmail and terrorism, the time for words is past.” Some western commentators bought into this discourse. Any sign of religiosity was taken as evidence that the riots were religious. David Aikman from *Time* magazine reported that he saw one

¹²⁶ Formed by intelligentsia from the Komsomol group Ru ba Ru (Face to Face) in September 1989, the party was banned in following the riots in 1990. During the civil war, Rastokhez participated in the United Tajik Opposition (UTO).

¹²⁷ “Kahhor Mahkamov: «Vpervie Govoru...»” [Kahhor Mahkamov: First speech...], *Asia Plus*, 26 May 2014, <http://www.news.tj/ru/newspaper/article/kakhkhor-makhkamov-vpervye-govoryu>,

¹²⁸ With the vast majority of government posts dominated by officials from Leninabad (modern day Khujand), a tension existed with those from other regions, such as Kulob, Gharm and the Pamirs. Some argue that this regionalism was a major contributing factor to the outbreak of civil war (Roy 2000; Heathershaw 2009).

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Ponomarev, V, “Kolokola Nadezhdy” [The Bells of Hope], *Pravda*, 11 May 1990, p.5. See also: Carley, J. “Massacre Haunts Soviet Moslems of Tajikistan,” *Financial Times*, 15 February 1991, p.8.

mullo take a microphone and sing out the Arabic call to prayer to over 10,000 men.¹³¹ For the author, this proved that the riots had an “Islamic character,” with protestors calling for an Islamic state.¹³² According to the official coverage, events were driven by self-interest rather than grievances. For one journalist the events were an example of power-hungry extremists exploiting “the political awakening (Rus.: *probuzhendiya*) of the masses for selfish reasons (*nebeskorytnikh tseliakh*).”¹³³ A number of articles propagated conspiracy theories about the “hidden hand” driving events.¹³⁴ This framing, however, runs counter to the available evidence on the 1990 riots. What was missed from these accounts, however, was that religious leaders called on the crowds to disperse, thus avoiding further bloodshed.¹³⁵

Indeed, those involved have recently accused the KGB of spreading the rumours that caused the unrest.¹³⁶ Aziz Niyazi, who has written the most comprehensive account of the violence, apportions blame to both sides (Niyazi 1993). A number of scholars have also argued that local economic grievances, rather than religion motivated the violence (Atkin 1997; Collins 2006; Scarborough 2016). It is interesting to note that the protestors demands included the resignation of the government, closure of the aluminium smelter near Dushanbe (TadAz), the release of twenty five prisoners and the equal distribution of the revenues from cotton sales (Bleuer and Nourzhanov 2013). None of these demands was religious in nature. As Christian Bleuer and Kirill Nourzhanov argue, “the conflict did not have anti-Russian and/or pro-Islamic roots. A closer examination reveals that it was a struggle for power” (2013: 185). Indeed, Niyazi still maintains that the events were *not* inspired by religion:

There were a number of causes, some random (*sluchaniye*) and some not. Islamists were not involved. Events were driven by

¹³¹ Karasik, T. 1991. “The Crescent Ascends; Tadjikistan's Muslims Flex Their Political Muscle.” *Armenian International Magazine*, 2, (11).

¹³² Aikman, D, “Karl Marx Makes Room for Muhammad,” *Time*, 12 March 1990, p.44.

¹³³ Dolganov, V. “Politicheskii Dnevnik: Mitingi: Demokratiya ili Ekstremizm?” [Political Diary: Meetings: Democracy or Extremism?], *Izvestiya*, 22 Feb 1990, p.1.

¹³⁴ Prominent journalist Victor Ponomarev accuses Pakistan’s intelligence services of plotting with the CIA to destabilise Soviet Central Asia by supporting radical Islamists. See, Ponomarev, V, “Kolokola Nadezhdy” [The Bells of Hope], *Pravda*, 11 May 1990, p.5.

¹³⁵ Babakhanov, U. “Zelyeny Chai v Krasnoi Chaikhana” [Green Tea in a Red Tea House], *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, 16 July 1991, p.2

¹³⁶ Yuldashev, A. Massive Riots in Dushanbe in February 1990 Masterminded by KGB, Says IRP Deputy Leader. *Asia Plus*, 12 February 2013. <http://news.tj/en/news/massive-riots-dushanbe-february-1990-masterminded-kgb-says-irp-deputy-leader>

nationalism. The government blamed the events on radical Islam. It was convenient (*udobny*) to do so.¹³⁷

Indeed, the framing of the events as religious did prove useful to the Soviet government; it legitimated a crackdown on unofficial Islamic leaders. The riots provide an example of the ways in which the Soviet government governed through security. The way the state framed and governed the riots contains the three forms of power identified by Foucault.

Sovereign Power

By blaming the riots on Islam, the government created conditions to exercise sovereign power by cracking down on those deemed to adhere to “radical” Islam and “Wahabbism.” In August 1990 the authorities brought 102 criminal cases against those accused of planning the February riots (Horowitz 2002: 364). Those arrested included members of the religious and secular opposition. Following the riots, the communist government struck back by arresting six Muslim clerics, including prominent Dushanbe mullo Sokijon Bedimogov. Allegedly, extremists started planning a week before the clashes at the opening of a new mosque in Arbobkhotun in Lenin district (near Dushanbe). According to the authorities, a number of calls for the establishment of an Islamic state could be heard at the meeting.¹³⁸ The riots, then, formed an opportunity for the Soviet regime to further securitise Islam, linking it to violence and legitimating the arrest of religious figures. But the Soviet authorities did not stop at simply arresting those it blamed for inciting the events. In a similar fashion to the practices of the current Tajik government, the authorities paraded the arrestees on national television, where they confessed their wrongdoings.¹³⁹ This symbolic act was a deterrent aimed at encouraging others to regulate their own ‘abnormal’ behaviour and conform to the Soviet-defined norm. In other words, it is an example of disciplinary power.

¹³⁷ Author Interview with Aziz Niyazi, Institute of Oriental Studies, Academy of Sciences, Moscow, May 2015.

¹³⁸ Karpov, A. “Kto Planiroval Tragediyu Fevralya?” [Who Planned the February Tragedy?], *Izvestia*, 27 August 1990, p. 2.

¹³⁹ See the cases documented by Jo Carley after the 1990 riots: Carley, J. “Massacre haunts Soviet Moslems of Tajikistan,” *Financial Times*, 15 February 1991, p.8.

Disciplinary Power

The Soviet authorities did not solely rely on repression and violence to govern Tajikistan. Communism as an ideology is transformative; the government in the USSR aimed to promote “not life as it *was* but life as it must *become*” (Prozorov 2014: 15, emphasis in original). The Communist Party aimed to mould political subjects, the *Novy Sovietskii Chelovek* (New Soviet Person), through the relations of power which enmeshed material technologies with discursive practices within various institutions (schools, political clubs, collective farms). This ideal citizen would follow the principles of communism and scientific atheism, including a commitment to the collective over the individual (Kharkhordin 1999; Gerovitch 2007). A number of scholars have drawn on Foucault to demonstrate the ways in which the Communist party used disciplinary and biopower in their attempts to construct this positive transformation of lives, this New Soviet Person (Prozorov 2014; Collier 2011; Hoffmann 2011; Kharkhordin 1999; Kotkin 1995). It is within this attempt to mould forms of being and modes of consciousness that the Soviet campaign against Islam was located (Shahrani 1993).

The hegemonic narrative framed those participating in the riots as running counter to the principles of Soviet collective ideology. In the pages of *Kommunist Tadzhikistana*, which unlike the other publications was aimed at a Tajik audience specifically, the young men involved were framed as “extremists” who betrayed the nation. Numerous articles used the word “disgrace” (Rus.: *pozorom*) to describe their behaviour.”¹⁴⁰ Another article written by an official imam is entitled “I am Ashamed and Upset” (Rus.: *Mnye Stidno I Bolno*).¹⁴¹ Violent extremists are contrasted with the “kindness” (Rus.: *dobrozhelatel’nost*) and “hospitality” (*gostepriimnost’*) of the Tajik people.¹⁴² As one author states, “we know the Tajik people as human (*gumanii*), friendly (*druzheskii*) and hard-working (*trudolubivii*).”¹⁴³

¹⁴⁰ “Otvodem bedu ot Tadzhikistana!” [Take the trouble from Tajikistan], *Kommunist Tadzhikistana*, 14 Feb 1990, p.1; Holmatov, M. “Vozmushcheni Razgulom” (Angered by the Rampage), *Kommunist Tadzhikistana*, 15 Feb 1990, p.1.

¹⁴¹ “I am Upset and Ashamed” (*Mnye Bolno I Stidno*), *Kommunist Tadzhikistana*, 18 Feb 1990, p.1

¹⁴² Holmatov, M. “Vozmushcheni Razgulom” (Angered by the Rampage), *Kommunist Tadzhikistana*, 15 Feb 1990, p.1.

¹⁴³ Ekstremizmu Nyet! [No to Extremism!], *Kommunist Tadzhikistana*, 21 Feb 1990, p.1

The hegemonic narrative frames the events as running counter to the principle of “friendship of the peoples” (Rus.: *druzhba narodov*) which all citizens should embody. According to this ideology, ethnic groups in the USSR should live in harmony with one another.¹⁴⁴ The implementation of the policy, according to sociologist Igor Savin, was not always successful:

As an idea it was good; it was about building a new society based on friendship. We had one big country with many peoples (Rus.: *narodov*). But in practice, divisions remained. It was ideological of course, but it was also real (*real'nyy*). Between most people there were good relations, there was tolerance (*terpimost'*). But when ethnic relations became political, then there were problems. It [friendship of the peoples], existed and did not exist (*bylo i ne bylo*).¹⁴⁵

As Savin indicates, *druzhba narodov* was not purely epiphenomenal; it shaped the way Soviet subjects related to one another. The state media framed the rioters as selfish people who had forgotten the Soviet principle of collectivism. Whereas ‘real’ Tajiks are tolerant of other nationalities, the rioters were not.¹⁴⁶ Authors called on citizens to reject violence and maintain good relations with their neighbours.¹⁴⁷ As such, the discourse was not just about denigrating the rioters but praising those who remained committed to Soviet life. In other words, it contained elements of the productive form of biopower.

Biopower

Not only did the framing criticise the ‘abnormal’ behaviour of the rioters, it praised those whose resilience symbolised the durability of Soviet modes of subjectivity. Many of the articles contain the notion that the Soviet way of life is the *only* way of life to be lived. The alternative being offered by the rioters was

¹⁴⁴ For an analysis of Soviet nationalities policy, see Slezkine 1994 and Martin 1998.

¹⁴⁵ Author Interview with Igor Savin, Institute of Oriental Studies, Academy of Sciences, Moscow, May 2015.

¹⁴⁶ Semikin, I. “Mi Narkormim Gorod” [We are the People’s Committee of the City], *Kommunist Tadzhikistana*, 16 Feb 1990, p.1; Latipov, L. and Ozun, S. “Dushanbe 15 Fevral” [Dushanbe 15th February], *Kommunist Tadzhikistana*, 16 Feb 1990, p.1; “Plenum TsK Kompartii Tadzhikistana [Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Tajikistan], *Kommunist Tadzhikistana*, 15 Feb 1990, p.1

¹⁴⁷ Holmatov, M. “Vozmushcheni Razgulom” (Angered by the Rampage), *Kommunist Tadzhikistana*, 15 Feb 1990, p.1; Otvedem Bedu ot Tadzhikistana! (Take the Trouble from Tajikistan), *Kommunist Tadzhikistana*, 14 Feb 1990, p.1.

not going to be better than life in the Soviet Union. As political scientist Vladimir Dolganov concludes:

Is this democratisation? No. This unanimity (Rus.: *edinomysliye*) will be replaced by another, an intolerance (*neterpimost'*), a new intolerance.¹⁴⁸

The pages of Soviet newspapers were filled with the 'positive' stories of ordinary citizens going on with their lives, with headlines like "We will Live!" (Rus.: *Budem Zhit'*), and "No to Extremism!" (*Ekstremizmu Nyet!*).¹⁴⁹ These articles called on people to remain "united" (Rus.: *edini*) and committed to the principles of that organised Soviet life: the *kollektiv* and *druzhba narodov*. As I have shown, the 1990 riots form an example of how the late Soviet governance of religion and security worked. To manage radical Islam, the Soviet authorities relied on repressive sovereign power, arresting those accused of extremism. But it did not rely on violence alone. The Soviet government ruled through subjectification, creating subjects that adhered to the principles of *druzhba narodov* and the *kollektiv*, and therefore remained loyal to the regime. Those who refrained from violence and remained committed to the Soviet way of life were praised, whilst those who engaged in it needed to be disciplined. These ways of framing Islam, violence and its relations to subjectivity evolved, yet persisted, in the post-Soviet period.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I offered a genealogy of the securitisation of Islam during the Soviet Union. I traced the origins of the association of religion and violence back to Soviet and Sovietological discourses. Assumptions about religion and (in)security that persist to this day have their roots during the Soviet period. This includes the ideas that religion by its very nature constitutes a security threat, the notion that Central Asia is backwards, the argument that a "foreign hand" lies behind violence in the region and the idea that reactionary religion is opposed to secular modernity. A form of assertive secularism developed; the

¹⁴⁸ Dolganov, V. "Politicheskii Dnevnik: Mitingi: Demokratiya ili Ekstremizm?" [Political Diary: Meetings: Democracy or Extremism?], *Izvestiya*, 22 Feb 1990, p.1.

¹⁴⁹ Alimov, T. and Urunov, S. "Ekstremizmu Nyet!" [No to Extremism!], *Kommunist Tadzhikistana*, 21 Feb 1990, p.1; Budem Zhit! [We will Live!], *Kommunist Tadzhikistana*, 21 Feb 1990, p.2

state could regulate religion, but religion could play no role in the state. By portraying religion as backwards and dangerous, the Communist Party legitimised a crackdown on religious practices that fell outside of state control. This discourse contained elements of sovereign power, taking life from those deemed to be 'extremists,' disciplinary power, dividing between normal, Soviet citizens and anti-Soviet, radical Islamists, and biopower, promoting loyal, secular Soviet modes of subjectivity. The 1990 Dushanbe riots form an example of the way in which the Soviet government took advantage of a locally-driven conflict, framing it as inspired by religion and using this to legitimate a crackdown on religious leaders. This is a pattern that continues in post-independence Tajikistan (Lemon 2014).

Indeed, these assumptions about security and religion continue to shape the ways in which security is governed in Tajikistan. Whereas in this chapter I focused on the emergence of an official discourse on religion and security in the Soviet context, in the next chapter I examine how this discourse has been reformulated since Tajikistan gained independence in 1991. Although the content of this discourse has changed in numerous ways, the form and underlying assumptions remain distinctly post-*Soviet*. This discourse sets the conditions for the emergence of transnational authoritarian security governance, combining elements of the triangle of power that had already been seen during the Soviet Union.

Chapter 4: Consolidation: The Official Discourse on Radical Islam in Tajikistan

In this chapter, I discuss the ways in which the government of Tajikistan frames the radical Islamic threat, using the case of Tajik citizens fighting for the Islamic State (ISIS) to illustrate the main features of the discourse. I argue that the government discourse rests on the division between 'good,' official, moderate Islam and 'bad,' unofficial extremist Islam. The state media argues that religion has the potential to be socially regressive and politically dangerous. The situation in the Middle East serves as a warning of what can happen if religion and politics mix. Secularism, the government argues, is the best means to secure the state and society against this threat.

Not only is radical Islam bad, it is foreign (*begona*). This alterity exists on three levels. Spatially, radical Islamists learn their ideas abroad, whilst labour migrants in Russia or at madrassas in Pakistan, and clandestinely in spaces away from the official gaze. Radical Islam itself is a tool for foreign powers to manipulate the politics of Central Asia and the Middle East for their own selfish, geopolitical aims. Morally, those who join radical groups betray their nation and bring shame on their families. No patriotic, strong Tajik man would ever join an extremist group. Those who display signs of piety – such as wearing a hijab or beard - are accused of foreigner-worshipping (*begonaparasti*).¹⁵⁰ The government opposes civilised, national, secular, yet Muslim, values against backwards, alien, Islamic ideas. Temporally, the Tajik government argues that the Tajik people are inherently peace-loving. Memories of the country's civil war serve as a potent reminder of what happens if "alien" religious ideas are allowed to influence politics (Roche 2013).

The framing of the Islamic State threat to Tajikistan is not benign. It sets the conditions for *transnational authoritarian security governance*, which I will describe in the next chapter. Indeed, official discourses on terrorism are undercut by relations of power. The Tajik state narrative contains all three forms of power identified by Michel Foucault. It is *sovereign* as it aims to protect the government and Tajikistan's territory. But Tajik counter-terrorism is not based on repression and destruction alone. It is productive in so far as it aims, through discourses and practices, to create loyal secular subjects. Ultimately, the Tajik

¹⁵⁰ Instead, the government promotes the *rumol* as befitting of national culture. The *rumol* is a headscarf that covers the hair but not the sides of the face.

government believes that efforts to shape consciousness (*shuur*) are more important than repressive measures. Indeed, the Tajik government's response to radical Islam is *disciplinary* as it calls for the punishment of those who are accused of "extremism," offering a warning to others who may take this path. And it is *biopolitical* because it involves discourses about the vital characteristics of being human, as well as the management of populations and individual subjects through practices of self-regulation. Indeed, the responsibility to govern extremism does not solely fall on the government; it falls on citizens as well. Citizens are encouraged to work on themselves and monitor others for suspicious behaviour.

In both its form and its content, the contemporary state discourse on radical Islam in Tajikistan contains a number of similarities with the Soviet discourses outlined in the previous chapter. With regards to content, the narrative contains elements of all of the four assumptions about religion and politics found in the Soviet discourse. Officials still view religion as backwards, potentially dangerous and in need of discipline. They still create a dichotomy between good, official Islam and bad, parallel Islam. And they still argue that religious extremists are controlled by foreign powers. Perhaps more interestingly, the form that the discourse takes remains remarkably similar. Soviet newspapers were filled with reports from local officials celebrating their achievements spreading atheist propaganda and denouncing religious individuals in their communities. Similarly, many of the texts that I analyse below are written by academics, teachers, members of local government and prosecutors. Like the Soviet examples, these writers praise the government, extol the benefits of a patriotic education and criticise Islamic groups. Citizens have been co-opted in Soviet and post-Soviet Tajikistan to affirm and reproduce the hegemonic narrative.

The state discourse on radical Islam also contains homologies with the liberal approaches to radicalisation. Although they differ in the way they conceptualise the causes of and solutions to extremism, I argue that liberal approaches to extremism overlap with authoritarian ones at a basic level; both aim to create subjects who will be resilient to extremist messaging. Both combine sovereign, disciplinary and biopower. But where liberal approaches aim to create subjects that are free to defend their rights against *both* the

repressive government and extremists, TASG aims to create citizens that are loyal to the regime.

The chapter unfolds as follows: in the first section, I outline and critique the literature on 'radical' Islam in Tajikistan. I outline two approaches that authors have taken, one descriptive and one evaluative. Much of the descriptive literature produced by think tanks and academics is alarmist and based on limited evidence, often reproducing rather than challenging the Tajik state discourse. I argue that evaluative approaches that utilise ethnography and discourse analysis, taking discourses on religion and security to be productive, rather than reflective, of reality, offer the most promise. In the next section, I examine the homologies between TASG and transnational liberal security governance (TLSG). After this, I use a critical discourse analysis to outline the main features of official discourses on Tajiks in ISIS. Having mapped the discourse, I link the discourse to relations of power and introducing the narrative's connections with transnational authoritarian security governance. These discourses produce their objects as having a certain religious-political character. But inconsistencies exist between how the issue is represented and the evidence available publically. I conclude the chapter by discussing the available evidence about Tajik citizens travelling to take part in hostilities in Iraq and Syria. I outline what little is known about who these people are and their pathways to the Islamic State. This evidence points to a more complex picture than the Tajik state discourse and descriptive western accounts construct.

Literature on Radical Islam in Tajikistan

As I demonstrated in the previous chapter, during the Soviet Union western Sovietologists considered Central Asia to be at risk of an Islamic revolution. Following independence in 1991, governments, academics and organizations have continued to frame Tajikistan as a potential haven for Islamic extremists (Rashid, 2001; Brzezinski, 1997; Naumkin 1994; Lubin and Rubin, 1999; Slim 2002; cf. Heathershaw & Megoran, 2011). For these actors, radical Islam constitutes an existential threat to the security of the state and society; the state in Tajikistan could collapse and be replaced by Islamist chaos. In 2010, in the wake of the prison break and conflict in the Rasht valley, journalist Ahmed

Rashid asked if Tajikistan was becoming the “next jihadi stronghold?”¹⁵¹ Rashid concluded that:

Nevertheless both Tajiks and foreigners concede that it would make perfect sense for al-Qaeda and the Taliban to expand their operations and bases into the weak southern hinterland of Central Asia, which includes southern Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. These countries are beset with poverty, unrest, growing devotion to Islamic causes, and anger at their governments’ ineptitude.

For Rashid, the growing piety of the population directly translates into a heightened extremist threat. Undeterred by the fact that his dire predictions did not materialise, in June 2015, Rashid declared Tajikistan to be “jihad’s new frontier” following the defection of paramilitary police (OMON) commander Gulmurod Halimov to the Islamic State.¹⁵² Although Rashid admits that “the extent of radicalization of Tajik youth, however, is in fact still small,” he argues that “their loyalty may be fragile because the country remains the poorest former Soviet republic and has been ruled since 1992 by an authoritarian president, Mr. Rakhmon.” For Brussels-based think tank International Crisis Group, Tajikistan has been on the “road to failure” for a long time (ICG 2009). In their latest report they note that the government’s crackdown on opposition parties raises “the risks of state failure and the potential for Islamist extremists to capitalise” (ICG 2016: 1). Echoing these concerns, Sanderson et al argue that “all three nations [Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan] suffer from a combustible combination of poor governance and potential militancy” (Sanderson et al 2010: 1). Having argued that Central Asian militants may move north following the Pakistani army’s operations in Waziristan in 2009, the authors conclude that this spill-over could “pose a potentially grave threat to regional stability and international security” (Sanderson et al 2010: 2). According to the narrative developed by Rashid, Sanderson et al and International Crisis Group, poverty, the “porous” 1,400 kilometre Afghan-Tajik border, the religious revival, corruption and authoritarianism create the conditions for radicalisation and potential state collapse. A number of academics have challenged this view, arguing that the Tajik state and society

¹⁵¹ Rashid, A. Tajikistan: The Next Jihadi Stronghold? *New York Review of Books*, 29 November 2010, <http://www.nybooks.com/daily/2010/11/29/tajikistan-next-jihadi-stronghold/>
¹⁵² Rashid, A. Jihad’s New Frontier: Tajikistan, *New York Times*, 11 June 2015, http://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/10/opinion/jihads-new-frontier-tajikistan.html?_r=0

have proved more resilient than many have given them credit for (Heathershaw and Megoran 2011; Heathershaw 2013; Heathershaw and Montgomery 2014).

According to Didier Chaudet, “there is only one thing that we are certain about in studies of political Islam in Central Asia; we do not know much” (2006: 119). Before 1991, the region remained closed to academics. Much of the popular literature on radical Islam in Central Asia is sensationalist, journalistic and alarmist.¹⁵³ Much of the academic literature is more nuanced. The literature on radical Islam in Tajikistan has discussed the individuals involved in shaping political Islam in the country (Mullojanov 2001; Epkenhans 2013; Dudoignon 2011; Naumkin 2005; Khalid 2007), the causes of radicalisation (Naumkin 2005; Karagiannis 2010) and attempted to measure the threat posed by radical Islamic groups (Zelkina 1999; Cohen 2003; Chaudet 2006). Like the ICG, academics have argued that poverty, authoritarianism and social inequality push people on the path towards radical groups (Karagiannis 2006; Chaudet 2006; Naumkin 2005; Petros 2004). But they have also argued that ideology of these groups – centred on overcoming social inequality and cleansing local politics – plays a key role in mobilisation (Karagiannis 2006; Chaudet 2006). Others have profiled individual groups such as Hizb-ut-Tahrir (Mihalka 2006; Karagiannis 2006; Baran 2004),¹⁵⁴ the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (Chaudet 2008; Pories 2013)¹⁵⁵ and Jamaat Ansurallah (ICG 2011).¹⁵⁶

Whilst the literature that traces the development of political Islam and profiles the biographies of those involved remains essential to an understanding of the shape of political Islam in post-independence Tajikistan, the literature which seeks to measure the threat posed by radical Islam and make inferences about its causes contains a number of conceptual, methodological and empirical weaknesses. Conceptually, scholars often take the definition of radical

¹⁵³ Lemon, E. Is Tajikistan Really Jihad's Next Frontier? *EXCAS*, 13 June 2015, <http://blogs.exeter.ac.uk/excas/2015/06/13/is-tajikistan-really-jihads-next-frontier/>

¹⁵⁴ Hizb ut-Tahrir, the Party of Liberation, was founded in 1953 and spread to Central Asia in the years after independence. It aims to create an Islamic caliphate, although it distances itself from violence. In 2006 Emmanuel Karagiannis estimated that there were between 2,500 and 3,000 supporters in Tajikistan (Karagiannis 2006).

¹⁵⁵ Founded in 1994 by Uzbek citizens Juma Namangani and Tohir Yuldashev, the IMU fought in the Tajik civil war, were blamed for bombings in Tashkent, Uzbekistan in 1999 and led an armed incursion into Batken, Kyrgyzstan in the same year. Retreating to Afghanistan, they fought against the US-led invasion in 2001, being pushed into Pakistan. In 2015, the group switched allegiance from the Taliban to ISIS.

¹⁵⁶ Formed in around 2010 by ex-UTO warlord Amriddin Tabarov, Jamaat Ansurallah claimed responsibility for a suicide bombing in Khujand in September 2010. The organisation is present on the social media under the name Irshod. The government alleges that it maintains close links to the IMU, the Taliban and ISIS.

Islam as a given; few authors theorise it as a politically-loaded label. For Nick Megoran, the idea of radical Islam “perpetuates political repression in the region and informs the misguided foreign policies of external powers” (Megoran 2007: 141). Like the literature on Islam in the Soviet Union, much of the research on radical Islam in post-independence Tajikistan ignores the specificities of religion in the post-Soviet context. Authors readily generalise about the threat posed by radical Islamic groups without taking into account how 70 years of Soviet rule has shaped local understandings of Islam (Megoran 2007).

Methodologically, analyses of radical Islam in Tajikistan have been based on desk research, elite interviews and social surveys. Each of these methods has its shortcomings. Although surveys on radicalisation in Tajikistan have been conducted, they are severely limited in their explanatory power (Taarnby 2012; Mullajanov 2010). The Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) survey conducted in 2011, for example, had a sample size of 3,502, supplementing this with six focus groups (Taarnby 2012). The survey asked respondents about which country’s religious policy they would like to see emulated in Tajikistan, whether they saw radical Islam as a threat and the role religion plays in their daily life. Nonetheless, the survey contains a number of flaws. First, Islam is both a socially constructed and subjectively lived phenomenon. This complexity makes it difficult to quantify its constituent components as part of a statistical study. Questions about whether someone identifies themselves as ‘Muslim’ remain interesting, but only scratch the surface of what this means for individual and social life. Second, on the practical level, questionnaire layout, wording and lack of clarity can negatively impact the validity of results. The OSCE questionnaire remains dependent on the background knowledge of the respondents. Fifty one per cent of those surveyed, for example, believed that Tajikistan should emulate the government-religion relations of Iran; in other words, that Tajikistan should become a theocracy (Taarnby 2012). Yet in another question, respondents overwhelmingly expressed support for the secular state. Such contradictory viewpoints are the product of a survey that asks people to express opinions on topics that they may have limited knowledge about. Third, a tendency exists to impose academic concepts, such as radicalisation, on local populations. Surveys usually focus on the latent, rather than the manifest meanings that actors ascribe to concepts. Indeed, the closed-ended nature of many of the

survey questions leaves little room for the respondents to discuss their own interpretations of these complex terms.

The other dominant methodology in studying radicalisation, desk studies, is in many ways even less satisfactory. These types of publications usually base their analysis on both open-source government documents and media reports (Cohen 2003; Chaudet 2006; Yemelianova 2010; Petros 2004; Tazmini 2001; Cornell and Spector 2002; Falkenberg 2013). Most of these articles offer a descriptive overview of state-religion relations and Islamic movements, making analytical claims based on limited evidence. Although some authors have exercised critical judgement when dealing with official sources (Bleuer 2012), others have tended to reproduce government narratives. Didier Chaudet, for instance, concludes that “there is, in the long term, an impending Islamist threat in Central Asia (Chaudet 2006: 268). He does not explain how he has reached this conclusion which seems to be based on his reading of local media reports. Similarly, Anna Zelkina offers an overview of Islamic movements in Central Asia concluding that Islam poses a “genuine threat” without backing up this claim with evidence (Zelkina 1999). Some researchers have used elite interviews to complement secondary sources. Most studies tend to rely on elite interviews with religious leaders, officials, NGO workers, journalists and diplomats (ICG 2015; Sanderson et al 2010; Karagiannis 2006; Naumkin 2005). Vitaly Naumkin, for example, bases his study on twenty years of interview data from “top and rank-and-file radical Islamists” (Naumkin 2005). Nonetheless, the accounts of the rank-and-file remain largely absent from his book. In his discussion of Hib-ut-Tahrir in Tajikistan, Emmanuel Karagiannis formulates his argument that ideology is the principal driver of recruitment based on interviews with local experts, using just one conversation with members of the movement itself (Karagiannis 2006). By uncritically repeating the views of western and local experts, these accounts have usually served to re-inforce rather than challenge the hegemonic narrative on radical Islam in Tajikistan (Heathershaw and Montgomery 2014). Rather than simply reproducing the assumptions of the government of Tajikistan, my approach critiques the way in which radical Islam is represented and governed. Two approaches can help researchers overcome this tendency to uncritically reproduce elite discourses of Islamic danger and to better ground their analysis in local politics: ethnography and critical discourse analysis.

Approaching the Governance of ‘Radical’ Islam in Tajikistan

Indeed, only a limited number of academics have actually gone and spoken with individuals who the government has labelled as “radical” (Heathershaw and Roche 2011; Roche 2010; Thibault 2013; Abashin 2006). Ethnographic accounts of Islam and security in Tajikistan highlight the ways in which the discourse on radicalisation obscures struggles that are usually shaped by local politics rather than transnational Islamism (Lemon 2014). In his analysis of a civil war conflict in an ethnic Uzbek village, Sergei Abashin uses Bourdieu’s theories of symbolic capital to argue that the conflict was “not only about theological or ideological differences, but was intimately bound up in local politics, with competition over control over symbolic and material resources, and with the re-distribution of financial resources in a period of crisis and state reconstruction” (Abashin 2006: 268). In her study of “born again” Muslims in northern Tajikistan, Helene Thibault examines how state secular policies shape the religious experiences of pious Muslims. Her study “does not depict the rise of extremism but rather a fragile co-existence of conflicting moralities in tough times” (Thibault 2013: 162). Johan Rasanayagam’s work in neighbouring Uzbekistan shows how Muslims negotiate the state’s division between “good” and “bad” religion, sometimes appropriating the “Wahabbi” label to discredit rivals (Rasanayagam 2011). All these accounts place the human experiences of discourses and practices of state secularism at the centre of their projects. Instead of examining the causes and threat posed by radical Islam, they examine how everyday Muslims in Central Asia experience the discourse of Islamic danger. While they have approached the issue from a bottom-up, actor-centric perspective, other critical scholars have examined the issue from the top-down.

Another fruitful approach to studying radical Islam in Tajikistan examines the ways officials and the media frame, script and spin the threat posed by radical Islam. Scholars associated with this approach examine the discourses of danger surrounding radical Islam and the effects these discourses have on politics (Lemon 2014; Megoran 2008; Heathershaw and Thompson 2005; Heathershaw and Megoran 2011). In an informative essay, Stuart Horsman draws out a number of features of state discourses on terrorism which are

relevant in Tajikistan (Horsman 2005). This included an amorphous definition, speculative assessment of the threat posed, image of a well-co-ordinated terrorist menace, the terrorist as the non-political criminal and the idea that terrorism is extra-regional. Nick Megoran's work on the framing of the 2005 Andijan massacre also influences my analysis of radical Islam in Tajikistan (Megoran 2008). Megoran argues that Karimov's government framed the protestors at Andijan as criminals intent on undermining constitutional order and subverting the government's gradualist approach to reform. In a book dedicated to the massacre, President Islam Karimov framed it as a "law and order operation in reaction to a plot perpetrated by criminals and terrorists of deviant masculinity, religiosity and inauthentic nationality, opposed to the constitutional order and at odds with the scientific laws of states" (Megoran 2008: 28). Responding to the publication of annual alarmist reports on security in Tajikistan by the International Crisis Group, David Montgomery and John Heathershaw challenge many of the assumptions contained in western reports on the security of the region. They outline eight myths of post-Soviet Muslim radicalisation: the idea of a post-Soviet Islamic revival; that to Islamise is to radicalise; that Muslim radicalisation is always anti-state; that authoritarianism and poverty are the main causes of radicalisation; that 'underground' religious groups are radical; that 'underground' groups are networked; that political Islam opposes the state; and that Islam is anti-secular (Heathershaw and Montgomery 2014). Where they focused on western perceptions of religion in Central Asia, I examine how Islam and security are framed by domestic actors. Although many of these myths are shared by western and domestic actors, they do differ in some aspects. For example, the government of Tajikistan does not blame authoritarianism for radicalisation. In addition, as I demonstrate below, the domestic discourse of Islamic danger contains a strong element of nationalism; those who are labelled extremists are "foreign" and anti-Tajik. I will now explore this hegemonic domestic discourse through the example of Tajik citizens fighting with the Islamic State in Syria and Iraq.

State Discourses and the Islamic State

The first reports of Tajik citizens participating in hostilities in Syria emerged in late 2013. While the first reported fighters were linked to Jabhat al-Nusra, subsequently the vast majority of Tajiks who have reportedly travelled to Syria and Iraq have joined the Islamic State.¹⁵⁷ Given that most Tajiks travel to Syria and Iraq via Russia and Turkey, crossing multiple borders, no one can say precisely how many have joined the Islamic State. Whereas one militant has boasted that 2,000 Tajiks are currently based in Iraq and Syria, the interior ministry has given a more circumspect figure of 1,000 for the number of Tajik foreign fighters, including those in Afghanistan, with 156 having been killed and 61 returning home.¹⁵⁸ Taking the government statistic at face value, this means only one in every 8,000 Tajik is fighting with the group. While significant, this is a smaller proportion of the country's Muslim population than in many European and Middle Eastern countries.¹⁵⁹

In recent years, the threat posed by Central Asian citizens who have joined the Islamic State in Syria and Iraq has captured the attention of internal and external analysts. ISIS is now the most frequently invoked radical Islamic group in the region. A number of academics and policy analysts have examined the case of Tajik citizens fighting for the Islamic State (Lemon 2015; Rotar 2015; ICG 2015; Dwyer et al 2015; Tucker 2016). Reports have focused on measuring the threat and what is driving recruitment, highlighting poverty, authoritarianism and state repression of religion as potential drivers of radicalization (ICG 2015; Dwyer et al 2015). Brussels-based think tank the International Crisis Group paints a particularly bleak picture of the threat:

Should a significant portion of these radicalised migrants return, they risk challenging security and stability throughout Central Asia. Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan form a brittle region, sandwiched between Russia and Afghanistan,

¹⁵⁷ "Tajikistan Confirms Reports Of Fighters In Syria," *RFE/RL*, 29 October 2013, <http://www.rferl.org/content/tajik-fighters-syria-government-rebels/25151440.html>

¹⁵⁸ "Nusrat Nazarov Utverzhdaet, Chto Bolee 2000 Tadjikov Bouut za IGIL" [Nusrate Nazarov Claims that There are 2,000 Tajiks Fighting for IS], *Asia Plus*, 29 January 2015, <http://news.tj/ru/news/nusrat-nazarov-utverzhdaet-chto-bolee-2000-tadjikov-voyuyut-za-igil>
"Around 1,000 Tajiks Fighting Alongside Islamic State - Interior Minister," Itar-TASS, 25 January 2016, <http://tass.ru/en/world/851884>

¹⁵⁹ Heathershaw, J. "What Does the Halimov Defection Tell us about Tajikistan?" *EXCAS*, 31 May 2015, <http://blogs.exeter.ac.uk/excas/2015/05/31/halimov/>

Iran and China. Each suffers from poor governance, corruption and crime (ICG 2015: 1).

John Heathershaw and David Montgomery have criticised the International Crisis Group report for its “suggestive impressions masquerading as solid insights.”¹⁶⁰ They question the report’s uncritical use of elite interviews and for “overgeneralizing the threat and making spurious associations between Islamization and radicalization.” Given the paucity of reliable evidence, studies measuring the threat posed by the Islamic State and the causes of militant recruitment remain little more than guess-work. A more feasible and academically-rigorous line of enquiry has focused on state discourses on the Islamic State and how these have shaped the government’s response. Journalist Igor Rotar has examined how the Tajik government’s response to the Islamic State has been part of a broader campaign to de-legitimise the Islamic Renaissance Party (Rotar 2015). Finally, Noah Tucker has analysed the online messaging from Tajik ISIS fighters and how the state frames the issue of foreign fighters (Tucker 2016). In this chapter, I build on Tucker and Rotar’s work, examining how the government frames the foreign fighter problem and how it has responded to it. To illustrate the main features of the official discourse on radical Islam in Tajikistan, in this section I examine the hegemonic narrative on Tajik citizens joining the Islamic State. Although the participation of Tajik citizens in the civil wars in Syria and Iraq, and the state’s response to this, has generated a dynamic discussion in the unofficial and social media, in this section I limit my analysis to how radical Islam is presented in the state media (Tucker 2016).

Rather than examining why Tajiks join the Islamic State or whether they pose a threat to Tajikistan’s security, I am interested in how the regime frames the causes of, nature and solutions to the Islamic extremist threat. Since he began mentioning the Islamic State in his speeches in the summer of 2014, Emomali Rahmon has frequently referred to ISIS as an existential threat to Tajikistan, a “modern plague.” Rahmon has argued that “these young people,

¹⁶⁰ Montgomery, D. and Heathershaw, J. “Who Says Syria’s Calling? Why It Is Sometimes Better to Admit That We Just Do Not Know,” *CEDAR Network*, 17 February 2015, <http://www.cedarnetwork.org/2015/02/17/who-says-syrias-calling-why-it-is-sometimes-better-to-admit-that-we-just-do-not-know-by-john-heathershaw-and-david-w-montgomery/>

when they return home, bring instability to society."¹⁶¹ Tajikistan's response to ISIS is based on legislation that gives the government a great deal of flexibility in labelling groups and individuals as threats, and adopting measures against them.

Amorphous States Definitions of Terrorism and Extremism

Official discourses on security remain state-centric; the state remains the main guarantor of security for its subjects. Terms such as national security (*amniyati milli*), state security (*amniyati davlati*) and societal security (*amniyati jam'iyati*) are used interchangeably. All of them refer to the security of the state, its government, territory and population. Despite this appeal to national security, many of the practices adopted by the government are aimed primarily at securing the position of the regime. As such, it is logical to start my analysis of transnational security governance with a focus on state discourses. Similar to other states in Central Asia, the government of Tajikistan defines terrorism and extremism in broad terms in its legislation.¹⁶² Adopted in 1999, the "Law on the Fight against Terrorism," defines terrorism as:

violence (*zirrovar*) or the threat of violence against individuals or legal entities, and also the destruction (damaging) of or threat to destroy or damage property and the destruction, or threat to destroy, property [...] actions which have socially dangerous (*jam'iyat khavfnok*) consequences and are implemented with a view to violating public security (*amniyat jam'iyati*).¹⁶³

Legislators do not elaborate on what "socially dangerous" or "public security" mean. Similarly, the "Law on the Fight against Extremism," adopted in 2003, lists eleven activities that constitute extremism.¹⁶⁴ These include "forcibly (*majburi*) changing constitutional order," "usurping (*ghasb*) power," "insulting

¹⁶¹ "Rahmon Calls IS a 'Modern Plague,'" *RFE/RL*, 14 December 2014, <http://www.rferl.org/content/tajikistan-islamic-state-threat-/26742846.html>

¹⁶² For a discussion of the vague definitions offered by other Central Asian states, see: Horsman 2005.

¹⁶³ Republic of Tajikistan, "Qonuni Jumhirii Tojikiston Dar Baroi Muboriza bar Ziddi Terrorizm" [Law on the Fight against Terrorism], 1999, <http://mvd.tj/index.php/tj/konun/93-onuni-umkhurii-toikiston-qdar-borai-muboriza-bar-ziddi-terrorizm>

¹⁶⁴ Republic of Tajikistan, "Qonuni Jumhirii Tojikiston "Dar Baroi Muboriza bar Ziddi Ekstremizm (ifrotgaroi)" [Law on the Fight against Extremism], 2003, <http://www.mvd.tj/index.php/tj/konun/92-onuni-umkhurii-toikiston-qdar-borai-muboriza-bar-ziddi-ekstremizm-ifrotgaroi>

national dignity (*sha'ni milli*)” and unsanctioned rallies. With such a fluid definition of extremism, the government can label all manner of forms of resistance and oppositional politics ‘extremism.’ This loose definition of terrorism and extremism sets the conditions for Tajik counter-terrorism.

Good versus Bad Islam

Continuing the practice of the Soviet government, the government of Tajikistan has created a discursive dichotomy between ‘good’ state-regulated, moderate, local Islam and ‘bad’ unregulated, fundamentalist foreign Islam. Whereas ‘good’ Islam is tolerant and peaceful, ‘bad’ Islam is divisive and prone to violence. Rahmon repeatedly claims that the Islamic State “does not have any connection to religion,”¹⁶⁵ and that “terrorism does not have a country, a people or a religion.”¹⁶⁶ But even if the Islamic State does not meet the Tajik government’s definition of ‘good’ Islam, this does not mean it is not religious per se. For the Tajik government, radical Islamic groups like ISIS represent the danger of religion being used as a tool to mobilise young people against the state. Like their Soviet predecessors, the Tajik regime sees unregulated religion as backwards and potentially dangerous.

Religion is only safe, according to the Tajik government, if it is closely monitored and regulated by the state. Whilst the regime accepts officially-sanctioned religious practices, it cautions against any attempt to mix religion with politics. Islam “as a political ideology is against the state and the constitutional order (*muqobili davlati milli va sokhti konstitutsioni*),” the underlying assumption claims.¹⁶⁷ First, when it is politicised Islam has the tendency to cause chaos and instability.¹⁶⁸ According to one author, “in countries where Islamic groups operate, conflict and adversarial relations (*adovatu dushmani*) dominate”.¹⁶⁹ Conflicts in the Middle East form a symbol of what happens when Islamic parties attempt to take power. Rahmon repeatedly references the conflicts in Afghanistan, Libya, Egypt, Syria and Iraq in his

¹⁶⁵ “Sukhanroni ba Munosibati 18-solagii Ruzi Vahdati Milli” [Speech on the 18th Anniversary of National Reconciliation], *President.tj*, 26 June 2015, <http://president.tj/node/9240>

¹⁶⁶ “Payomi Prezidenti Tojikiston Emomali Rahmon ba Majilis Oliy Jumhurii Tojikiston” [Speech of President Rahmon in Parliament], *President.tj*, 23 Jan 2015, <http://president.tj/node/8136>

¹⁶⁷ Atoi, S. “Husdori Islomi Siyosi” [The Danger of Political Islam], *Jumhuriyat*, 28 December 2014, http://www.jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=17002

¹⁶⁸ Niyoz, Y. “Chehrai Rasonaii Muhiddin Kabiri” [The Media Face of Muhiddin Kabiri], *Jumhuriyat*, 20 August 2014, http://jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=15563

¹⁶⁹ “Islamgaroyoni Ifroti Kinaho bar Sinaho Mezenand” [Islamist Extremist’s Fury], *Jumhuriyat*, 24 October 2014, http://www.jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=16362

speeches, framing them as conflicts that are primarily religious in nature. The Arab Spring serves a second purpose: it forms a warning of what can happen when people revolt against their leaders. According to one journalist, “in order to achieve revolutions, thousands have been killed [...] we are against protest (*e’tiroz*)!”¹⁷⁰ Another journalist concludes that, “instead of building a new society, they are killing each other.”¹⁷¹

Second, once combined with politics, religion becomes a tool used for the pursuit of power. For one analyst, “the word Islam in the name [of the Islamic State] is used solely to attract (*jalbi*) people.”¹⁷² Radical Islamists are framed as puppets in the hands of elusive “great powers.” Referring to the Arab Spring, journalist Samariddin Kiyom asks “but is democracy (*demokrati*) the ultimate goal? Of course not. The goal is to render them totally dependent (*dastnigiri*) on outside powers.”¹⁷³ This conspiracy theory making contains stark similarities with the late Soviet discourse, which claimed that the CIA was supporting Islamists in Central Asia (Heathershaw 2012).

Third, the official discourse conflates Islamisation with radicalisation. Islamic parties – most notably the Islamic Renaissance Party – directly contribute to Islamic State recruitment by making people challenge the natural, secular order.¹⁷⁴ “As the events in Syria and Iraq have shown, the first to join the ranks of the Islamic State were people with connections to Islamic movements (*harakoti Islomi*),” one journalist argues.¹⁷⁵ Half of the Tajiks who have joined the Islamic State were members of the IRPT, another claims.¹⁷⁶ By blurring the boundary between moderate parties like the IRPT and terrorist movements like the Islamic State, the regime de-legitimises all forms of faith-based opposition to its rule. As political scientist, Abdulqodir Kalomov argues:

¹⁷⁰ Kiyom, S. “Naqshahoi Pinhonii HNIT” [The IRPT’s Secret Plans], *Jumhuriyat*, 19 August 2014, http://jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=15538

¹⁷¹ Abdulaev, K. “Islomro az Siyosat Chudo Boyad Kard!” [Islam Should be Separated from Politics], *Jumhuriyat*, 23 November 2013, http://www.jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=11994

¹⁷² Kamol, V. “HNIT. Oyo Metavon Onro Chun <Hizbi Jabridida> Paziruft?” IRPT: Are they the “Party of the Victims”?, *Jumhuriyat*, 3 July 2015, http://www.jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=19813

¹⁷³ Kiyom, S. “Naqshahoi Pinhonii HNIT” [The IRPT’s Secret Plans], *Jumhuriyat*, 19 August 2014, http://jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=15538

¹⁷⁴ Nurzoda, N. and Sharifzoda, I. “HNIT az Haft Pushti Dunyaviyat Bezor Ast” [IRPT Has No Desire for Secularism], *Jumhuriyat*, 10 July 2015, http://jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=19887

¹⁷⁵ Kamol, V. “HNIT. Oyo Metavon Onro Chun <Hizbi Jabridida> Paziruft?” IRPT: Are they the “Party of the Victims”?, *Jumhuriyat*, 3 July 2015, http://www.jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=19813

¹⁷⁶ Murodov, A. “HNIT az Bayoniya to Bayoniya” [IRPT from Statetment to Statement], Faraj, 2 August 2014, <http://faraj.tj/security/5928-1202nit-az-baeniya-to-baeniya.html>

People saw a vote for the IRPT as contributing to the influence of the party in society, thus indicating a possible tendency for young people to join the ranks of more terrorist movements.¹⁷⁷

By consistently linking the IRPT to groups like the Islamic State, the government self-legitimised its campaign against the party. On the eve of the March 2015 parliamentary elections, imams read a prepared text during their Friday sermon. It stated that:

Today, there are some people who blacken the name of the [president's ruling PDP] party, who blacken the name of Islam. These statements are nothing more than exaggeration. These words are spoken by those who have usurped Islam for their own selfish purposes and scare people with religion. [...] In neighbouring countries, parties and groups who act in the name of Islam exist, but today on their territory blood has been spilt. These parties are foreign to us, they blow up mosques, destroy people's tranquillity and make children orphans.¹⁷⁸

The party lost its two seats in the Supreme Assembly (*Majilis Oli*) at the elections. When the government blamed the party for planning armed attacks in Dushanbe and Vahdat on 5 September 2015, the pre-existing narrative accusing the group of being linked to terrorism made the government's account of events plausible in the eyes of many Tajiks. Party leader Muhiddin Kabiri stated that the government had been looking for evidence against the party for many years and "tried to provoke (Rus: *provotsirovat'*) us into radical action (Rus: *radikal'niye deistviya*)." The September attacks provided an excuse to complete this long-term ambition to liquidate the party, according to Kabiri.¹⁷⁹ His views were shared by IRPT activist Farrukh:

People accept that we are terrorists because of everything they have heard. The government consistently highlights our apparent links to groups like the Islamic State.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁷ Kalomov, A. "Jaro Mardum ba HNIT Ovoz Nadod?" [Why do People in the IRPT not have a Voice?], *Jumhuriyat*, 17 March 2015, http://jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=18429

¹⁷⁸ Edward Lemon, "Tajikistan's Clergy Urges Support for President's Party in WeekendVote," *EurasiaNet*, 27 February 2015, <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/72311>. EurasiaNet obtained a copy of the original sermon text from a source inside Tajikistan.

¹⁷⁹ Personal communication with Muhiddin Kabiri, Leader of the IRPT, September 2015.

¹⁸⁰ Personal communication with Farrukh, IRPT activist, September 2015.

The linking of the IRPT to ISIS helped create the conditions by which the government could erode the party's legitimacy to the extent that labelling it a terrorist organisation seemed credible. It thus forms an example of how the transnational discourse on terrorism was used by the government to pursue its own domestic policy.

Fourth, officials argue that religious beliefs restrict an individual's ability to think and act freely. As sociologist Yormuhammad Niyozhi states, "compared to the Soviet era (*shirravi shoroitero*), in Tajikistan there are more mosques and religion is practiced freely. But when there is political Islam (*din siyosi*), ideas are not free."¹⁸¹ Behind this framing, lies the Soviet-era belief that religion is backwards and opposed to modernity. For one journalist, while "knowledgeable (*donishmand*) and well-educated people are making progress (*peshrafthoi*) in the fields of nanotechnology and astrophysics, mullos are talking about the length of beards, and the space between people's feet whilst they pray."¹⁸² This contrast between secular progress and religious regression is a central trope of state discourses on Islam. As political scientist Qiyomiddin Hikmatullo summarises:

Despite the fact that humanity has reached new peaks of science (*ilmro*), human life (*zindagi*) becomes better and better with the modern achievements of science and technology, sadly medieval (*asrimiyonagi*) religious conflict still causes the death of innocent (*begunoh*) Muslims in various countries the world.¹⁸³

Not only does the state media argue that religion is backwards, they imply that it is uncivilised. In their discussions of political Islam, state media and officials frequently declare that 'civilised' (*mutamaddin*) countries do not have religious parties.¹⁸⁴ An important aspect of this claim is that secularism is more civilised and modern.

¹⁸¹ Yormuhammad Niyozhi, "Chehrai Rasonaii Muhiddin Kabiri" [The Media Face of Muhiddin Kabiri], *Jumhuriyat*, 20 August 2014, http://jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=15563

¹⁸² Mansuri, A. "Kabiri Rahbari Hamai Musulmonho Shudaniist," [Is Kabiri the Leader of All Muslims?], *Jumhuriyat*, 24 June 2014, http://www.jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=14729

¹⁸³ Hikmatullo, Q. "DIISH- Sarburi va Kirdakkushi" [ISIS- Beheaders and Child-Killers], *Jumhuriyat*, 10 February 2015, http://www.jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=17950

¹⁸⁴ Ten of the sampled media reports and three of Rahmon's speeches make this point. For the most developed version of this argument, see: Jamoliddin Homushi, "Islom Dini Vahdat Ast" [Islam is the Religion of Reconciliation], *Jumhuriyat*, 6 March 2014, http://jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=13266

Defence of the Secular State

Faced with the threat of backwards, irrational, inherently violent religion, the Tajik government advocates the creation of a secular system. Through secularism, it argues, peace, stability and security can be guaranteed. Islamic extremism, according to Rahmon, threatens “national independence (*istiqloliyati davlati*), the democratic, constitutional and secular state (*davlati demokrativu huquqbunyod va dunyavi*), the security of a peaceful life (*hayayoti osoishta*), and the values of civilised (*tamaddunsozi*) people.”¹⁸⁵ Indeed, in 51 speeches between 2008 and 2015 Rahmon repeats the mantra of “democratic, secular, constitutional” (*davlati demokrativu huquqbunyod va dunyavi*) 55 times. Whereas religion is backwards and potentially dangerous, secularism is a progressive ideology. Tajik officials use the term ideology (*mafkurai*) in the positive, unifying Soviet sense.¹⁸⁶ Secularism forms the cornerstone of Tajikistan’s post-independence national ideology. Secularism is required to secure the state against religion and guarantee peace.¹⁸⁷ As such, “in communities where religion is separated from the state (*islomi judoni din az davlat*) an atmosphere of security (*amnu*) and tranquillity (*oromish*) prevails.”¹⁸⁸ The secular system is legitimated through a discourse of exceptionalism. In an article entitled “The Root of Secularism in People’s Minds,” philosopher Kamurattuloh Abdulhaev outlines a position on secularism, religion and security that fits with the government’s policy. Faced with the danger of religious extremism, “secularism is a necessary (*zururri*) policy” to maintain order.¹⁸⁹ In other words, “secularism protects religion (*diniyat*) against foreign (*begonashavii*) influences.”¹⁹⁰ Whereas “some people claim that secularism is

¹⁸⁵ “Payomi Emomali Rahmon, Sarvari Davlati Tojikston, ba Munosibati Solgardi 24-umi Istiqloliyati Davlati, Shahri Dushanbe” [Speech of Emomali Rahmon, Leader of the Republic of Tajikistan, on the 24th Anniversary of Independence], *Jumhuriyat*, 8 September 2015, http://jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=20766

¹⁸⁶ See for example: “Mafkurai Milli Poidevori Manofei Millist” [National Ideology Safeguards Interests], *Jumhuriyat*, 4 September 2015, http://jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=20698

¹⁸⁷ Abduhalil, K. “Dunyaviyat – Kagili Amnu Osoishtagi” [Secularism- the Guarantor of a Stable Peace], *Jumhuriyat*, 17 July 2014, http://www.jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=15090; “Mo Muqobili Islomi Radikali va Ateizm Jangovar Hastem” [We are Against Radical Islam and Militant Atheism], *Harakat.tj*, 10 November 2015, <http://harakat.tj/52-mo-muobili-islomi-radikal-va-ateizmi-angovar-astem.html>

¹⁸⁸ Niyoz, Y. “Chehrai Rasonai Muhiddin Kabiri” [The Media Face of Muhiddin Kabiri], *Jumhuriyat*, 20 August 2014, http://jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=15563

¹⁸⁹ Abdulhaev, K. “Reshai Dunyaviyat dar Zehnhost” [The Root of Secularism is in the People’s Minds], *Jumhuriyat*, 17 October 2014, http://www.jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=16275

¹⁹⁰ Abdulhaev, K. “Reshai Dunyaviyat dar Zehnhost” [The Root of Secularism is in People’s Minds], *Jumhuriyat*, 17 October 2014, http://www.jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=16275

the product of the West (*gharb*) and has nothing to do with Islam,”¹⁹¹ Abdulhaev argues, secularism is universal (*jahoni*) and modern (*muosir*). Instead of denoting the separation of religion and state, the state takes a position above religion; the state can regulate religion, but religion cannot influence the state. As Abdullo Rahnamo argues, “the secular state in post-Soviet space not only acquired the form of a state without religious foundation, but, more likely a state limiting religious activities and completely controlling the religious sphere (Rahnamo 2004: 3). For philosopher Karamatullo Abduhalil, although under normal conditions religion is a private affair, “the state has the right to intervene (*dakholat*) when the rights and freedoms (*ozodihoi*) of citizens are under threat, in order to create a situation of security (*aminyat*).”¹⁹² Not only is radical Islam bad, it is also foreign to the Tajik nation and culture.

Outside Threat

In Tajikistan, the discourse on the “foreign threat” posed by the Islamic State operates on three levels. First, *spatially*, the terrorist menace is said to come from overseas; radicalisation occurs in Russia and terrorist groups are sponsored by foreign powers. Second, *temporally*, the government juxtaposes the terrorists’ call for violence with the population’s desire for peace, which it links to the fear of a return to the violence seen during the civil war. Third, *morally*, the government contrasts the ideal Tajik citizen- masculine, honourable and peaceful- with the terrorist ‘other’- feminine, dishonourable and violent (Lemon 2014).

Moral

Have you come across a person who had a secular (*dunyavi*) lifestyle and served his people (*khalku vatan sofdilona khizmat mekard*), but then came under the influence of another person?¹⁹³

The question, posed by two representatives of the Attorney General’s office, denotes the binary at the centre of state discourses on extremism in Tajikistan.

¹⁹¹ Abdulhaev, K. “Dunyaviyat ba Din Muqobil Nest” [Secularism is Not Opposed to Religion], *Jumhuriyat*, 9 January 2014, http://jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=12422

¹⁹² Abduhalil, K. “Dunyaviyat – Kagili Amnu Osoishtagi” [Secularism- the Guarantor of a Stable Peace], *Jumhuriyat*, 17 July 2014, http://www.jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=15090

¹⁹³ Raufov, F. and Yusufi, M. “Mujohidi Jangi Iroku Shom: Qotil yo Khudkush” [Mujahadeen’s War in Iraq and al-Sham: Murder or Suicide?], *Jumhuriyat*, 13 June 2015, http://www.jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=19614

On the one hand the ideal Tajik person is good, patriotic and embodies secular values. On the other hand the terrorist 'other' is bad, treacherous and a religious fanatic. Indeed, the regime frames Tajiks who have joined the Islamic State as traitors and the enemies of the Tajik nation. Rahmon states that:

We must work together to prevent young people from being tricked (*gumrohro*) into joining extremist movements and allow them to blacken (*doghdor sozand*) the name of the holy and glorious motherland (*muqaddas va pursharafi vatan*), and have brought shame (*badom*) and grief (*ghamu*) to their parents.¹⁹⁴

Tajiks who have joined the Islamic State “blacken” the name of the nation and bring shame on their family.¹⁹⁵ In another article, a journalist describes a visit to the family of a man from Panjikent who has gone to Syria. He frames the situation as a tragedy; his son asks for his father, his parents weep. As one religious scholar concludes, “Tajiks in ISIS should be ashamed (*nang*), what would their mothers think?”¹⁹⁶

Those who join the Islamic State are portrayed by the regime as weak individuals, whose lack of morality made them vulnerable to the false messages of recruiters. According to Dodojon Ruziyev, “emissaries from extremist groups attract young people to its ranks who are gullible (*zudbovar*), and weak both morally and ideologically (*usulhoi zaifi ahloqi va aqidavi*).”¹⁹⁷ Such an argument performs two functions. It denies that those who join the Islamic State are agents with the ability to dictate their actions and freely choose to go to Syria and Iraq. And it distances those who join the Islamic State from national values, rendering them “traitors” to the Tajik nation. But Tajiks who adhere to forms of Islam outside of the government’s control are not merely bringing shame on their families, they have also fallen under the influence of “alien” ideas.

Officials repeatedly call on citizens to beware of “alien” (*begona*) cultures and refrain from “foreigner-worshipping” (*begonaparasti*). *Begonaparasti* is potentially derived from the Iranian concept of *gharbzadegi*, which roughly

¹⁹⁴ “Suhanronii Emomali Rahmon, Prezidenti Jumhurii Tojikiston, dar Amfiateatri Shahri Kulob” [Speech of Emomali Rahmon, President of the Republic of Tajikistan, in the Amphitheatre in Kulob], *Jumhuriyat*, 31 August 2015, http://jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=20641

¹⁹⁵ Safarzoda, G. “Sabaqi Ta’rikh va Khudogohii Milli” [Lesson in History and National Morale], *Jumhuriyat*, 4 June 2015, http://www.jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=19500

¹⁹⁶ Pirmuhammadzoda, I. “Terroristronho Dirzakh Intizor Ast” [Hell Awaits Terrorists], *Jumhuriyat*, 15 April 2015, http://jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=18779

¹⁹⁷ Ruziyev, D. “Tojikiston dar Jabhai Avvali Muboriza bo Terrorizm va Ekstremizmi Dini” [Tajikistan on the Frontline of the Fight Against Terrorism and Religious Extremism], *Jumhuriyat*, 1 December 2015, http://www.jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=22125

translates as “westoxification.”¹⁹⁸ Unlike its Iranian counterpart, however, *begonaparasti* refers to two forms of cultural practice that are alien to Tajik national culture (*farhangi milli*): Western and Islamic. The term appears in 13 of the sampled texts, including four of Emomali Rahmon’s speeches. Officials not only portray *begonaparasti* as a sign of social decay, but also as a danger to national security. In a speech at Kulob in September 2015, Rahmon explicitly links ‘alien’ ideas with national security:

Kulob is an ancient city whose people have pride and great respect for national values. Women should set an example by fighting against the negative impact of alien phenomena and foreigner-worshipping (*begonaparasti*) [...] I would like to warn you that vanity, externalism, foreigner-worshipping and superstition (*zohirparasti, begonaparasti va khurofot*) have terrible consequences for the society and state of the ancient Tajik nation, as these threaten security and stability (*amniyatu suboti*), hinder development (*peshi rohi rushdi*) and cause trouble (*boisi badvahti*).¹⁹⁹

For Rahmon, *begonaparasti* is dangerous, backwards and anti-Tajik. Rector of the Information College, Rahmonali Sharifzoda, takes Rahmon’s words a step further. For Sharifzoda, *begonaparasti* not only runs counter to Tajik culture, it runs counter to Tajik history and tradition. While Rahmon implies that he is speaking about Islamic dress, Sharifzoda explicitly links *begonaparasti* to religion:

Today, alienation (*begonashavi*) and foreigner-worshipping (*begonaparasti*) has emerged in society, particularly among young people, causing them to turn away from national culture (*farhangi milli*), from their ancestors and origins (*az ta’rikhi niyogon va asli khesh megardad*). One of the causes of this is the emergence of youth groups with Islamic names (*garavidani javonon ba raviyahoi gunoguni bo nom Islomi*).²⁰⁰

The use of *begonaparasti* to denounce any practices that do not fall into the state’s definition of what ‘good’ Islam is part of a broader effort to conflate Islamisation with radicalisation (Montgomery and Heathershaw 2014).

¹⁹⁸ Thank you to Benjamin Gatling and Payam Foroughi for raising this point to me.

¹⁹⁹ “Suharonii Emomali Rahmon, Prezidenti Jumhurii Tojikiston, Bakhshida ba Ruzi Donish va 70-solagii Ta’sisi Donishgoi Davlati Kulob ba Nomi Abduabdullohi Rudaki” [Speech of Emomali Rahmon, President of the Republic of Tajikistan, Dedicated to Knowledge Day and the 70th Anniversary of Kulob State University Named After Abduabdullohi Rudaki], *Jumhuriyat*, 1 September 2015, http://jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=20642

²⁰⁰ Sharifzoda, R. “Ulamo: Jihod va Ma’uliyat” [Ulemo: Jihad and Responsibility], *Jumhuriyat*, 16 September 2015, http://www.jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=20862

According to the hegemonic narrative, young people who join terrorist groups are ignorant (*bekhabari*) and lack education (*nadonistan*).²⁰¹ For religious scholar, Hoji Rajabzoda, “people who join extremist groups not only lack awareness of secular knowledge (*donish dunyavi*), but also correct Muslim practice (*adabi musulmoni*).”²⁰² This lack of knowledge makes them vulnerable to being tricked (*gumroh*) and deceived (*fireb*) into joining terrorist groups.²⁰³ Indeed, Rahmon argues that deception due to ignorance constitutes the main reason Tajik citizens travel to Syria and Iraq in five of the sampled speeches. It is the most oft-mentioned explanation, appearing in 28 of the sampled opinion pieces. Rather than being agents who actively choose to join extremist groups, these people are “robots” (*robothoi*) and “puppets” in the hands of foreign powers.²⁰⁴ Terrorists are not only morally repugnant individuals who betray the nation, they are spatially foreign; recruitment takes place outside of the country’s borders.

Spatial

Spatially, the Tajiks fighting for the Islamic State are foreign on at least two levels. First, they are recruited abroad, primarily in Russia. Second, they are directed by undefined “foreign powers.” Indeed, according to publically available sources the majority of Tajiks fighting with the Islamic State are recruited in Russia (Lemon 2015). Tajik officials have highlighted that migrant labourers are most at risk of radicalisation. Far from the support networks and cultural influences of their homeland, they become vulnerable to the messages of outsiders. According to one journalist, “the road (*rohhoi*) to extremism lies abroad, in labour migration, in foreign educational institutions and on the internet.”²⁰⁵ In November 2014, the Deputy Chairman of the Tajik GKNB stated that “in Moscow, on Prospekt Mira, there is a mosque where our young people

²⁰¹ Radjabov, Z. “Gumrohi ba Mard Mebarad” [Error Leading to Death], *Jumhuriyat*, 25 June 2015, http://www.jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=19757

²⁰² Rajabzoda, H. “Terrorist Dirzahist, na Musalmon!,” [Terrorists are not Muslims!], *Jumhuriyat*, 9 January 2015, http://jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=17468

²⁰³ “Sukhanroni Emomali Rahmon, Sarvari Davlari Tojikiston Zimin Vohyori bo Afcaronu Sarbozoni Juz’u Tomhoi Quvvahoi Mussalah va Maqomoti Hifzi Huquq, Shahri Dushanbe” [Speech of Emomali Rahmon, Head of State, During a Meeting with Soldiers of the Armed Forces and Law Enforcement Agencies, Dushanbe], *Jumhuriyat*, 25 September 2015, http://jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=21053

²⁰⁴ Abduhalil, K. “Dunyaviyat – Kagili Amnu Osoishtagi” [Secularism the Guarantor of a Stable Peace], *Jumhuriyat*, 17 July 2014, http://www.jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=15090

²⁰⁵ Sabirov, S. “Islom Terrorizmo Qat’an Mahkum Mekunad” [Judging Islamic Terrorism’s Banners], *Jumhuriyat*, 26 June 2015, http://jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=19762

are recruited for Syria.”²⁰⁶ Recruitment does not only take place outside of Tajikistan, it is also supported by outside groups.

The state media repeatedly claims that Islamic groups – such as the Islamic State, IRPT and Salafi movement – are funded by “foreign powers” (*hojagoni*).²⁰⁷ The state discourse on radical Islam forms part of a broader narrative on the nature of security and international relations. Tajik officials ascribe to many of the central tenets of a realist worldview. According to the hegemonic narrative, the international system is anarchic and filled with instability (*noustuvor*).²⁰⁸ States compete with one another to secure their geopolitical interests (*manfiathoi geopolitiki*).²⁰⁹ The world is characterised by disparities of power and developing regions such as Central Asia form a chessboard upon which great powers compete for their material interests. Central Asia is experiencing a new “Great Game” (*bozi bozurg*), in which China, Russia and the United States vie for power in the region.²¹⁰ This dangerous externality is rife with modern threats that are transnational (*transmilli, faromilli*) and global (*globali*).²¹¹ In his speeches, Rahmon frequently mentions the fight against organized crime, drug trafficking and extremism.²¹² Such transnational threats, he argues, require a collective response.²¹³

In a paper on Tajik state discourses on ISIS, Noah Tucker argues that “the state’s overall message in response is that Tajiks are lured into joining ISIS as part of a grand conspiracy to undermine Tajikistan” (Tucker 2016: 1). Radical

²⁰⁶ “Zamglavy Spetssluzhb Tadzhiqistana Nazval Mechet’ Moskvyy Mestom Verbovki” [Chief of Tajik Special Forces Called Mosque in Moscow a Site for Recruitment], *IslamNews*, 22 November 2014, <http://www.islamnews.ru/news-441412.html>

²⁰⁷ See, for example: Huseini Loiq, “Digar Jonii Shubha Nest” [Another Place Not Shaken], *Jumhuriyat*, 14 August 2015, http://jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=20355

²⁰⁸ Odinaev, H. “Tojikiston va Khatarhoi Jahoni” [Tajikistan and Global Risks], *Jumhuriyat*, 4 June 2015, http://jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=19501

²⁰⁹ Yatimov, S. “Shuuri Jam’iyati va Amniyati Jam’iyati (Shuuri Muqaqari)” [Social Consciousness and Societal Security], *Jumhuriyat*, 17 December 2015, http://www.jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=22409

²¹⁰ Odinaev, H. “Tojikiston va Khatarhoi Jahoni” [Tajikistan and Global Risks], *Jumhuriyat*, 4 June 2015, http://jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=19501

²¹¹ Rahmon, E. “Sukhanroni ba Munosibati 18-solagii Ruzi Vahdati Milli” [Speech on the 18th Anniversary of National Reconciliation], *President.tj*, 26 June 2015, <http://president.tj/node/9240>

²¹² See for example: “Suhanonii Emomali Rahmon, Prezidenti Jumhurii Tojikiston, ba Munosibati 20-umin Solgardi Ta’sisyobi Gvardiyai Milli Jumhurii Tojikiston, Shahri Dush, instability (*nooromiu besuboti*) broke out in the republics, some of world and regional powers tried in this country to secure their own geopolitical interests (*manfiathoi geopolitikii*).”²¹² “anbe” [Speech of Emomali Rahmon, President of the Republic of Tajikistan, at the 20th Anniversary of the National Guard], *Jumhuriyat*, 4 September 2015, http://www.jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=20732

²¹³ “Payomi Prezidenti Tojikiston Emomali Rahmon ba Majilis Oliy Jumhurii Tojikiston” [Speech of President Rahmon in Parliament], *President.tj*, 23 Jan 2015, <http://president.tj/node/8136>

Islam, for Tajik officials, emerges from this anarchical system. Conspiracy theories remain central to the way many Tajiks view domestic and world politics (Heathershaw 2012). Mysterious powers lie behind most events and secretly dictate what happens. In keeping with the primacy of geopolitical conspiracy theories within their worldview, extremists are pawns in the hands of oft-mentioned, but never explicitly defined, external powers. These foreign powers have been active in the republic ever since it achieved independence in 1991. According to political scientist Kormon Aslov, “after the collapse of the Soviet Union, instability (*nooromiu besuboti*) broke out in the republics, some world and regional powers tried in this country to secure their own geopolitical interests (*manfiathoi geopolitiki*).”²¹⁴ Radical Islamic ideology becomes a tool to mobilise support against the status quo and create chaos in regions like the Middle East. Extremists seek to divide (*tafrika andozand*) the Muslim world and denigrate the name of Islam. But ultimately they are power-seeking, self-interested groups who use terrorism to secure their geopolitical goals (*ahdofi geopolitiki*).²¹⁵ Farrukh remains convinced that the Islamic State was created by the USA and their Israeli allies:

When the USA invaded Iraq in 2003, they aimed to create instability (*noorom sozand*) in the whole region. Why? Because they wanted to render Middle Eastern countries dependent (*dastnigiri*) on the United States and to extract the region’s resources. The United States released Baghdadi and other terrorists from prison, knowing that they would cause chaos. They gave them money and Mossad trained them. They wanted to use IS to overthrow Assad.²¹⁶

Most state media reports argue that “foreign powers” lie behind ISIS. But rarely do they name any countries. A number of articles do name America as a country that purposefully stirs trouble in the Middle East.²¹⁷ Isomiddin Sharifov from the Academy of Sciences argues that the United States, influenced by Samuel Huntingdon’s theory of the “clash of civilisations,” politicises Islam in order to

²¹⁴ Aslov, K. “HNIT <Pisari Ugai> yo Gumoshtai Pohgum” [IRPT <Stepmother’s Son> or a Confused Guardian], *Jumhuriyat*, 29 July 2015, http://jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=20148

²¹⁵ “Salafiya – Islomi Avomfireb” [Salafism – Islam Mised], *IslamNews*, 14 May 2015, <http://islamnews.tj/taj/analitic/434-salafiya-islomi-avomfireb.html>

²¹⁶ Fieldwork notes, Moscow, March 2015.

²¹⁷ See, for example: Samariddin Kiyom, “Naqshahoi Pinhonii HNIT” [The IRPT’s Secret Plans], *Jumhuriyat*, 19 August 2014, http://jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=15538

cause conflicts between Muslims.²¹⁸ To summarise, the hegemonic narrative frames Tajik citizens who fight for the Islamic State as spatial Others; they are recruited abroad and supported by foreign powers. But the discourse of alterity also has a temporal dimension; those fighting for the Islamic State want to drag Tajikistan back into civil war.

Temporal

For Tajikistan, which has experienced Islamic political war (*islomi siyosi jangovarro*), people have seen with their eyes how the nation state passed through a river of blood (*daryo khunu*) and the flames of a civil war (*alangai otashi jangi shahrvandi guzashtaast*), this phenomenon [Tajiks fighting in IS] is very alarming (*khatar meboshad*).²¹⁹

During the civil war, the government tended to refer to the opposition coalition as simply “Islamic.” This framing “blurred the distinctions among the constituent parts and facilitated the stigmatization of the opposition’s main members as dangerous Islamic extremists” (Atkin 1995: 255). According to this narrative the war broke out in 1992 when Islamic extremists, camped out on the Shahidon (Martyr’s) Square in Dushanbe, attempted to overthrow the legitimate, secular order (Atkin 1994: 211).

The regime argues that young people (*javonon*), who have no memory of the civil war, are most likely to fall victim to the lure of the Islamic State. Indeed, the vast majority of recorded Tajik fighters in Syria and Iraq are under 30 years old (Lemon 2015). In Tajik culture, youth – defined as the period before a man turns 35 years old– is a time of immaturity and vulnerability (Roche 2010; Stephan 2007). To prevent young people from forgetting the war, state-controlled media and educational institutions frequently remind them about its horrors. Since the signing of the 1997 peace accord, the regime has invested “in rewriting history, performing authority and celebrating Tajikistan’s emergent sovereignty” (Heathershaw 2009: 1316). The civil war itself is rarely discussed in any detail publically. At the new national museum, for example, after a description and photos from the Twelfth Congress of the Supreme Council of Tajikistan, which voted for independence in September 1991, the narrative

²¹⁸ Sharifov, I. “Islomi Siyosi ba Manfiati Kishvar Nest” [Political Islam is not in the Interest of the Country], *Jumhuriyat*, 28 January 2015, http://www.jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=17771

²¹⁹ “Gumrohshudagon, ba Vatan Bargarded!” [Mislead People, Return to the Homeland!], *Khovar*, 28 December 2015, <http://khovar.tj/2015/12/gumro-shudagon-ba-vatan-bargarded-2/>

skips the civil war and moves straight to the national reconciliation (*vahdati milli*) process.²²⁰ History textbooks briefly discuss the conflict, framing it as being driven by “foreign forces.” But they dedicate more space to discussing Rahmon’s role in uniting the nation and bringing peace (Blakkisrud and Nozimova 2010).

The memory of the “fratricidal war” (*jangi khudkushi*) performs a function: it serves as a reminder of what happens when religion is mixed with politics. For Saidmurod Fattohzoda, first deputy chairman of the ruling People’s Democratic Party, the civil war was “a war between two ideologies (*jangi du ideologia*): Communism and Islam”²²¹ The current government had to intervene to offer an alternative to these opposing values. Rahmon invoked the memory of the civil war in six of the nine sampled speeches. His words in Kulob in September 2015 typify his logic:

The people of Tajikistan have not forgotten the tragedies (*oghozi*) of the 1990s and therefore value peace (*sulkh*) and security (*aminyat*). We must remind young people to be thankful for nationhood (*sohibvatanu*) and statehood (*sohibdavlati*), and peace, stability and national reconciliation (*sulhu subot va vahdati milli*).²²²

The official narrative creates a binary division between state-led stability and the dangers of the foreign-backed, democratic and radical Islamist forces which threaten that stability. Oppositional politics is presented as synonymous with the chaos, instability and violence that the country experienced during the civil war. State media bombard citizens with images of conflict in the Middle East, a warning of what happens when foreign-backed revolutionaries espousing democratic values attempt to seize power. In contrast, the government, according to officials, values peace (*sulh*), stability (*subot*) and national reconciliation (*vahdati milli*) above all else. Posters praising Rahmon for bringing peace festoon public buildings across the republic. Educational institutions and the state media extol his achievements in bringing peace to the nation. In

²²⁰ Lemon, E. “Narrating Tajik History at the National Museum,” *EXCAS*, 24 July 2013,

<http://blogs.exeter.ac.uk/excas/2013/07/24/narrating-tajik-history-in-the-national-museum/>

²²¹ “Mo Muqobili Islomi Radikali va Ateizm Jangovar Hastem” [We are Against Radical Islam and Militant Atheism], *Harakat.tj*, 10 November 2015, <http://harakat.tj/52-mo-muobili-islomi-radikal-va-ateizmi-angovar-astem.html>

²²² “Suhanronii Emomali Rahmon, Prezidenti Jumhurii Tojikiston, Bakhshida ba Ruzi Donish va 70-solagii Ta’sisi Donishgohi Davlati Kulob ba Nomi Abduabdullohi Rudaki” [Speech of Emomali Rahmon, President of the Republic of Tajikistan, Dedicated to Knowledge Day and the 70th Anniversary of Kulob State University Named After Abduabdullohi Rudaki], *Jumhuriyat*, 1 September 2015, http://jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=20642

December 2015, changes to the Constitution declared Rahmon to be the “leader of nation” and “originator of peace and national reconciliation” (*asosguzori sulhu vahdati milli*).²²³ This codified his position a symbol of peace in the nation. So far, I have argued that the Tajik government creates a division between ‘good,’ state-controlled, moderate Islam and ‘bad,’ unofficial, extremist Islam. For the government, without government regulation religion is socially backwards and politically dangerous. Faced with this threat, the government has created a secular system. Morally, spatially and temporally, the terrorist threat proceeds from the outside. The framing of the Islamic State threat to Tajikistan is not benign. It sets the conditions for *transnational authoritarian security governance*, which I will describe in the next chapter. Indeed, state terrorism discourses are undercut by relations of power. It is to these relations that I now turn.

State Discourses on Terrorism and Relations of Power

The Tajik state narrative contains all three forms of power identified by Michel Foucault. It is *sovereign* as it aims to protect the government and Tajikistan’s territory. It is *disciplinary* as it calls for the punishment of those who are accused of “extremism,” offering a warning to others who may take this path. And it involves *biopower* because it involves discourses about the vital characteristics of being human, as well as the management of populations and individual subjects through practices of self-regulation.

Sovereign Power

Sovereign power, focuses on maintaining the “safety (*sûreté*) of the Prince and his territory” (Foucault 2003: 65). Sovereign power limits, bans and prevents certain behaviours, claiming a monopoly on violence. By framing those who join the Islamic State as criminals and traitors who threaten national security, the government legitimates exceptional (*zururri*) measures against them. Such measures are justified because they protect the state, its government, territory and population. The authorities have used existing state laws, particularly the Law on the Fight Against Terrorism (1999), Law on the Fight Against Extremism (2003), Law on Parental Responsibility (2011) and Law on Religion (2009), to

²²³ In May 2016, a referendum approved these changes to the Constitution. See: “Tajikistan: Leader of the Nation Law Cements Autocratic Path,” *EurasiaNet*, 11 December 2015, <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/76521>

prohibit and restrict “extremist” actions. Where the legislation failed to cover the activities of Tajiks joining the Islamic State, the government amended existing legislation and introduced new laws. In the face of rising recruitment, the government classified ISIS as a terrorist group in May 2015. In July 2015, the government passed amendments to its citizenship law prohibiting its citizens from fighting in foreign conflicts in, stripping them of their citizenship if they do so.²²⁴ But the government has not only framed the actions of those accused of ‘extremism’ as illegal, it also frames their actions as deviant and abnormal, legitimating the use of disciplinary power against them.

Disciplinary power

Disciplinary power attempts to render visible the spatial distribution of bodies in order to exert control over them. Elites use disciplinary power to define and police the norm; those deviating from the norm – the vagrant, the insane, the homosexual, the extremist - are subject to corrective treatment. Disciplinary power shapes and normalises subjects. According to Foucault, “discipline makes individuals; it is the specific technique of power that regards individuals both as objects and as instruments of its exercise” (Foucault 1991: 170).

The Tajik government’s exercise of disciplinary power is based on its division between what is “good,” acceptable Islam and what is “bad,” deviant Islam. Those who adhere to “bad” Islam become the objects of discipline. In order to be normal, secular subjects, men with beards need to be shaved; women with hijabs need to de-veil; mosques need to be tightly regulated; Islamic education must be restricted. Disciplinary power dictates what subjects should not be, aiming to restrict deviant behaviour. By blurring the distinction between being pious and being a terrorist, the government of Tajikistan has waged a campaign against unsanctioned forms of religious expression. In 2015, police in the southern region of Khatlon shaved 13,000 men with beards. When qori Abdulrahmon, who I mentioned in the introduction, travelled back to Tajikistan in 2015 he was detained by police. His beard formed the subject of a lengthy exchange with his interrogators. “Are you a *vovchik* (slang for Islamic extremist)?” they asked him. “Real Tajik men do not grow beards. They are alien (*begona*) to our culture and a sign that someone is on the path to

²²⁴ “President Emomali Rahmon Signed a Number of Laws,” *Khovar*, 8 August 2015, <http://www.khovar.tj/eng/content/president-country-emomali-rahmon-signed-number-laws>

extremism.” Abdulrahmon had his beard forcibly shaved. But the Tajik government’s counter-terrorism strategy does not stop there; it promotes “healthy (*solim*) and moral (*akhloqi*) lifestyles (*tarsi hayoti*).”²²⁵ In doing so, it uses power to mould political subjects, engaging in a project that is inherently biopolitical in nature.

Biopower

The final, and most recent, form of power that Foucault examines is biopower. This involves the management of populations and individual subjects through practices of self-regulation. . Whereas disciplinary power isolates, concentrates and is essentially protectionist, by contrast biopower is said to be centrifugally oriented in favour of expansion, circulation and movement. In fighting terrorism, Tajik officials not only rely on arrests, blocking websites and shaving beards, they also place importance on shaping public consciousness (*shuur*) through education. Ultimately, the Tajik government is trying to create political subjects that are loyal, secular and therefore unlikely to join radical Islamic groups in the first place. As I outlined above, the Tajik government argues that secularism (*dunyavi*) is the only way to guarantee national security in the face of Islamic extremism. Leading academic Khudoberdi Kholiqnazar argues that effective counter-terrorism rests on educational activities.²²⁶ Through the building of schools, libraries and youth clubs, the state should promote and build a secular (*dunyavi*) national culture. Educational activities train young people in the “spirit of patriotism” (*rirhiyai vatandirsti*). For Haidar Odinayev, the best way to fight extremism is through the “formation of a scientific world outlook (*jahonbinii ilmi*) and political vigilance (*zirakii siyosi*) amongst young people.”²²⁷

Indeed, it is important that our compatriots (*hamvatononi*), and in particular teenagers and young people (*javonon*), especially in the context of the modern world’s most sensitive dangers (*nooromu hassosi*) have the ability to separate truth (*haqro*) from falsehood.

²²⁵ “Suhanronii Emomali Rahmon, Prezidenti Jumhurii Tojikiston, Bakhshida ba Ruzi Donish va 70-solagii Ta’sisi Donishgoi Davlati Kulob ba Nomi Abduabdullohi Rudaki” [Speech of Emomali Rahmon, President of the Republic of Tajikistan, Dedicated to Knowledge Day and the 70th Anniversary of Kulob State University Named After Abduabdullohi Rudaki], *Jumhuriyat*, 1 September 2015, http://jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=20642

²²⁶ Ruziyev, D. “Tojikiston dar Jabhai Avvali Muboriza bo Terrorizm va Ekstremizmi Dini” [Tajikistan on the Frontline of the Fight Against Terrorism and Religious Extremism], *Jumhuriyat*, 1 December 2015, http://www.jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=22125

²²⁷ Odinayev, H. “Tojikiston va Khatarhoi Jahoni” [Tajikistan and Global Risks], *Jumhuriyat*, 4 June 2015, http://jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=19501

They must always be vigilant (*zirak boshand*), take the right path of life (*rohi durusti zindagi*), to study science try to educate themselves, and to refrain from any harmful (*ziyonovar*) acts.²²⁸

In an article entitled “Social Consciousness and Societal Security (*amniyati jam’iyati*),” Head of the State Security Committee Saymumin Yatimov, presents education as a battle between foreign and national influences. The consciousness (*shuur*) of Tajik citizens is at stake. “In structuring everyday consciousness (*shuuri rirzmarra*), foreign (*begona*) powers are playing a greater role than ever,” Yatimov opens.²²⁹ Drawing on Hegel’s arguments about the nature of consciousness, in particular the influence of climate on ways of thinking, Yatimov argues that a “secure public consciousness (*amniyati shuuri muqarrari*), is the most important component for public safety (*amniyati jam’iyati*).”²³⁰

State institutions – such as schools, universities, the media – play a role in shaping and regulating political subjects. But citizens themselves also share this responsibility. Officials repeatedly call on citizens to monitor other community members and to consciously work on themselves. Not only do Tajik citizens have to think about their own beliefs and behaviour, they also need to monitor those around them. As the Prosecutor General from Rudaki district states, “it is every citizens patriotic duty (*fardi vatandirsti*) to guide the young people towards a democratic society (*demokrativu huquqbunyod hidoyat*), so that they contribute to the stability of their national state.”²³¹ The Committee on National Security (GKNB) employs informants to infiltrate and report on migrant groups.²³² And it also relies on loyal citizens to report suspicious behaviour. The Tajik state is not a panopticon; it also relies on horizontal surveillance between citizens. It contains similarities with the Soviet system. Oleg Kharkhordin argues that the Soviet authorities governed through the notion of mutual responsibility (Rus.: *krugovaia poruka*), in which citizens monitored one another and reported

²²⁸ “Payomi Tabriki ba Munosibati Idi Saidi Fitr” [Congratulatory Speech on the Occasion of Ramadan], *President.tj*, 16 July 2015, <http://president.tj/node/9428>

²²⁹ Yatimov, S. “Shuuri Jam’iyati va Amniyati Jam’iyati (Shuuri Muqaqari)” [Social Consciousness and Societal Security], *Jumhuriyat*, 17 December 2015, http://www.jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=22409

²³⁰ Yatimov, S. “Shuuri Jam’iyati va Amniyati Jam’iyati (Shuuri Muqaqari)” [Social Consciousness and Societal Security], *Jumhuriyat*, 17 December 2015, http://www.jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=22409

²³¹ Shaidullozoda, M. “Terrorizm va Javononi Firebkhirra” [Terrorism and the Deception of Youth], *Jumhuriyat*, 28 July 2015, http://jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=20134

²³² Interview with a Tajik diaspora leader, Moscow, May 2, 2015.

counter-revolutionary behaviour. As Kharkhordin concludes, “in Russia, there is no single Big Brother, but there are many bigger brothers” (1999: 122). This combination of sovereign, disciplinary and biopower is not unique to TASG. Although it differs from TASG in a number of ways, transnational liberal security governance also involves this triangle of power. Liberal approaches often reproduce rather than challenge the foundational assumptions of Tajikistan’s counter-terrorism policy.

Liberal Approaches to Governing Violent Extremism

Many of the policy-oriented analyses of extremism in Tajikistan remain functionalist, offering policies to countering violent extremism in Central Asia.²³³ Although they overlap in a number of interesting ways, this *Transnational Liberal Security Governance* (TLSG) differs from TASG in a number of ways.²³⁴ Countering extremism is a priority for a number of external actors, including the United States, United Kingdom, Germany, European Union, United Nations and OSCE, each of which has funded projects addressing the phenomenon. I identify common features relating to the causes, nature and solutions to Islamic extremism. My analysis is based on documents relating to six projects led by the OSCE, Eurasia Foundation of Central Asia, International Alert, State Department, United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and UN between 2010 and 2016.²³⁵

Whilst recognising that terms like ‘extremism’ and ‘radicalisation’ are contested and approaches need to be context-dependent, many western actors maintain that these concepts can be objectively defined, measured and addressed. Although the government of Tajikistan blames radicalisation on greed, a lack of education and treason, western actors have tended to apportion some of the responsibility to the government itself (Lemon 2015). USAID, for example, lists weak governance, corruption, social marginalisation, poverty and

²³³ Each government and agency adopts its own acronym for Islamic extremism. For the OSCE it is Violent Extremism and Radicalisation Leading to Terrorism (VERLT). The US government uses the term Countering Violent Extremism (CVE).

²³⁴ There is not one homogenous approach to liberal security governance that is shared by all actors. Instead, I describe some of the assumptions and practices that are shared by the majority of projects.

²³⁵ To fully disclose, I worked as Development and Evaluation Manager at the Eurasia Foundation of Central Asia- Tajikistan, between 2010 and 2012, working directly on the “Reducing Youth Radicalization Project.”

human rights abuses as major “drivers” behind violent extremism (USAID 2011). TLSG posits policy solutions to radical Islam that resemble TASG. Both combine elements of sovereign, disciplinary and biopower. In terms of sovereign power, western states support Tajikistan’s security services through training and material. Despite criticism from diplomats and government agencies over the deteriorating human rights situation in Tajikistan, with the ISAF withdrawal from Afghanistan, military support has been strengthened.²³⁶ Since 2005, the US government has provided \$130 million to support border security, counter-terrorism and counter-narcotics in Tajikistan.²³⁷ Between 2016 and 2017 the U.S. Department of Defense plans to spend a further \$50 million countering terrorism in Central Asia, with the majority of funds going to “key partner nation in the region” Tajikistan.²³⁸ In 2014, the US subsidised 29% of Tajikistan’s military budget. The European Union’s BOMCA (Border Management in Central Asia) project, implemented between 2003 and 2014 allocated a further \$50 million in assistance to Central Asian security services.²³⁹

Whereas defence agencies have focused on building the capacity of security services and the military to exercise sovereign power, development agencies have promoted community-led solutions to extremism, combining both disciplinary and biopower. The strategies for combating extremism that have been developed by these agencies inform the approach they have taken in Tajikistan. For example, USAID’s “The Development Response to Combating Violent Extremism and Insurgency” from September 2011 places importance on governing through “institutions, actors, and processes relevant to at-risk populations.” These “can be sources of resilience against the influence of violent extremist narratives and provide youth, in particular, with a positive role and voice in community governance” (USAID 2011: 5). These solutions work to

²³⁶ The EU was “deeply concerned” by the arrest of IRPT members in September 2015, the US Mission to the OSCE labelled them “politically-motivated arrests.” In April 2016, the State Department labelled Tajikistan a “Country of Particular Concern” under the International Religious Freedom Act. Despite providing mechanisms for sanctions, the United States decided to waive this “following determinations that the important national interest of the United States required” it.

²³⁷ “Tajikistan: Security Assistance and a Political Crackdown,” *EurasiaNet*, 8 October 2015, <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/75471>

²³⁸ Kucera, J. “Pentagon Proposes \$50 million Program to Help Tajikistan Fight Terrorists,” *EurasiaNet*, 16 February 2016, <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/77366>

²³⁹ “The European Unions Border Management Program in Central Asia,” *Ministry of Foreign Affairs*, <http://mfa.tj/en/border-issues/bomca.html>

provide bottom-up solutions to counter extremism centred on the logic of resilience (Chandler 2014; Reid and Evans 2014).

Both liberal and authoritarian approaches to extremism are based on a secular understanding of politics; religion is only safe if it is monitored by the state (Gutkowski 2011). Like the state discourse on religion in Tajikistan, transnational liberal security governance is based on the division between promoting ‘good,’ moderate Islam, and combating ‘bad,’ extremist Islam (Birt 2006). Whereas “moderate” voices are to be promoted as a bulwark against extremism, those who are deemed “extremist” require disciplining.²⁴⁰ Similar to TASG, the solutions provided by liberal security governance are not purely state-centric; they involve civil society and citizens. Ultimately, they aim to create resilient citizens who both defend religious freedoms and monitor themselves, and others, for signs of radicalisation. A call for proposals issued by the United States Department of State in March 2016 entitled “Supporting Human Rights and Civic Education, and Building Community Resilience in Tajikistan” contains a summary of the TLSG approach, calling on NGOs to design projects focused on:

Training local civil society organizations on building community awareness about universal human rights, including religious freedom, that the Government of Tajikistan has committed to; credible and secure documentation of religious freedom abuses, and successful communication with and advocacy toward, mechanisms that are already in place to address human rights abuses, such as the Human Rights Ombudsman and the Detention Working Group; engagement opportunities with youth to promote community activism, for example through community engagement clubs that create a network of civically minded Tajik youth and empower the local community; town halls, community theater, and other grassroots activities, can be used to open a dialogue with local governments to address political and legal protections to religious groups; activities utilizing the role of women in building community resilience and serving as gatekeepers for preventing radicalization in their families and social networks; and international advocacy activities.²⁴¹

²⁴⁰ See, for example, the RAND Corporation’s “Building Moderate Muslim Networks” (2007). For a critical overview of ‘moderate’ Islam, see Khan 2007.

²⁴¹ United States Department of State Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor (DRL), “Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO): Supporting Human Rights and Civic Education, and Building Community Resilience in Tajikistan,” March 2016.

The State Department's calls for projects that address the 'radicalisation' of young people in particular. It envisages projects that focus on civic education, "grassroots" activities, and utilise women to monitor citizens for signs of extremism. In other words, it looks to create communities that are resilient to both the abuses of the government, and radicalisation. A similar project, "Parents against Terrorism" was implemented by the OSCE from 2014 to 2015. It aimed to create an "early warning system" by training women to monitor for the signs of radicalisation amongst groups deemed to be most at-risk: women, young people and migrants. Projects implemented by the Eurasia Foundation and International Alert between 2010 and 2012 had a similar focus on civic education, youth and community resilience.²⁴²

To summarise, liberal approaches, despite differing from TASG in important ways, continue to overlap with it in numerous areas. As I have argued throughout this thesis, the government of Tajikistan has mediated the issue of foreign fighters, taking advantage of the threat to bolster regime security through its governance regimes. To re-inforce my claim that the government is scripting and spinning the security discourse, I will now examine the available evidence relating to Tajik citizens fighting in Syria and Iraq.

What does the Available Evidence Indicate?

Scant information about the biographies of Tajik militants exists in the public sphere. A few common characteristics exist among those who have a public profile. Most Tajiks known to be fighting (or to have fought) with ISIS are young males aged 18 to 40; few have received formal religious education and the majority spent time in Russia before going to Syria or Iraq. While this basic profile fits many of those who have travelled to Syria and Iraq, it does not fit all of them. Some are highly educated and have university degrees.²⁴³ Self-styled spokesman of Tajik jihad Abu Mohammed al-Tojiki, for example, studied at the Tajik-Slavonic University in Dushanbe.²⁴⁴ Others worked for the government.

²⁴² A UN sponsored expert meeting held in June 2016 in Dushanbe also focused on issues of resilience and community-led solutions to extremism.

²⁴³ "18 Tajik Students Fight alongside ISIS Militants in Syria, says Tajik President," *Asia Plus*, 26 June 2015, <http://news.tj/en/news/18-tajik-students-fight-alongside-isis-militants-syria-says-tajik-president>

²⁴⁴ Lemon, E. "A Brief Glimpse of Tajik Militants Fighting in the Ranks of the Islamic State," *Militant Leadership Monitor*, February 2015.

Former head of the Tajik paramilitary police (OMON) Gulmurod Halimov, who defected to ISIS in May 2015, is perhaps the most prominent example of this.²⁴⁵ Not all of them are employed as soldiers. They are also involved in police work, driving and training other recruits. Olim Yusuf, for example, who was arrested crossing the Iraqi-Syrian border in 2014, claimed he worked as a driver for ISIS.²⁴⁶ A few women have also travelled to Syria and Iraq.²⁴⁷ As such, the militaristic term ‘foreign fighter’ obscures the range of different roles that Tajiks perform in the Islamic State. Framing them as “transnational activists” rather than foreign fighters, better represents this heterogeneity (Moore 2015). With such a range of backgrounds among transnational activists, generalising about the causes of radicalization or single, linear pathways to Syria and Iraq remains too simplistic. In reality, each transnational activist’s path to Syria and Iraq is individual. Farrukh, an IRPT leader in Moscow, summarises what the available evidence about Tajik fighters suggests:

ISIS recruitment is driven by issues of social justice (*adolat*). For example, a young person graduates from a university in Tajikistan. But there are no jobs. He has family problems. He cannot get married. So he leaves for Russia. But he sees injustice here too. He is educated but has to work on a building site (Rus.: *stroika*). He has problems with his documents. He has to pay 25,000 roubles for a patent (work permit). This is more than one month’s wages. Social factors are more important than others. They are told you will have a good life, a good future and *rai* (paradise) if you become a martyr (*shahid*).²⁴⁸

Rather than being driven purely by material gain, transnational activists seem to be influenced by a mixture of ‘push’ factors associated with social injustice and state secular policies, and ‘pull’ factors linked to the idea that paradise is being created with their Muslim brothers, and sisters, in Iraq and Syria. I will now illustrate this with three example biographies of Tajiks who have gone to

²⁴⁵ Putz, C. “Missing Tajik Commander Shows Up in ISIS Video,” *The Diplomat*, 28 May 2015, <http://thediplomat.com/2015/05/missing-tajik-commander-shows-up-in-isis-video/>

²⁴⁶ Lemon, E. “Profiling Tajik Fighters in Syria,” *EXCAS*, 15 September 2014, <http://blogs.exeter.ac.uk/excas/2014/09/15/profiling-tajik-fighters-in-syria/>

²⁴⁷ “Tajikistan Says Detained Woman Who Planned To Join IS In Syria,” RFE/RL, 11 March 2015, <http://www.rferl.org/content/tajikistan-says-detained-woman-who-planned-to-join-is-in-syria/26893638.html>

²⁴⁸ Fieldwork notes, Moscow, June 2015.

fight in Syria and Iraq: Gulmurod Halimov, Abu Mohammed al-Tojiki and Abu Holid Kulob.²⁴⁹

Gulmurod Halimov

The defection of Gulmurod Halimov, the former commander of the Tajik paramilitary police (OMON), attracted a great deal of attention from the global media.²⁵⁰ Born in 1965 in Varzob, just north of Dushanbe, Halimov was revered as an accomplished sniper. He joined OMON in 1996, fighting in the Rasht valley between 2009 and 2011.²⁵¹ He was promoted to command OMON in September 2012 following the operation in Khorog that summer.²⁵² He received counter-terrorism training in the U.S. on at least five occasions between 2003 and 2007.²⁵³ Raised during the Soviet Union, he started praying regularly in 2001. Halimov disappeared on 23 April 2015, telling his family he was leaving for a short business trip. His brother told *Radio Ozodi* that his phone was switched off, but that his personal items, including his passport, were left as if he departed in a hurry.²⁵⁴ He flew to Russia on 1 May and was seen in Moscow's Sheremetyevo airport the next day. On 28 May, a ten-minute video featuring Halimov was published by *Furat Media*, the Islamic State's Russian-language media service. Halimov was clear why he had left Tajikistan, saying that the government "does not permit people to pray and wear Islamic hijabs."²⁵⁵

²⁴⁹ The choice of these three individuals is based on the amount of information publically available about them, rather than a desire to offer 'representative' biographies that reflect different categories of Tajik transnational activist. This section is an amended version of an article entitled "A Brief Glimpse of Tajik Militants Fighting in the Ranks of the Islamic State" that was published in the *Militant Leadership Monitor* in February 2015.

²⁵⁰ The story was covered by *Fox News*, *CNN*, *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Al-Jazeera*, *BBC* and others. Such widespread attention is rare in Tajikistan.

²⁵¹ This conflict pitted government forces against a series of local commanders associated with the civil war-era opposition, including Mirzokhuja Ahmadov, Mirzo Ziyoyev and Mullo Abdullo. For background, see Lemon 2014; Lemon and Hamrin 2015.

²⁵² Violence flared in Khorog, the centre of Tajikistan's Pamir region (GBAO) in July 2012 after the government blamed local warlord Tolib Ayombekov for the murder of State Committee on National Security (GKNB) regional head Abdullo Nazarov. For a nuanced take on events, see Ismail-Beben, Z. Framing the Conflict in Khorog, *Registan*, 27 July 2012, <http://registan.net/2012/07/27/framing-the-conflict-in-khorog/>

²⁵³ Lemon, E. "Tajikistan Police Commander Says He's Joined Islamic State," *EurasiaNet*, 28 May 2015, <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/73626>

²⁵⁴ "Polkovnik Gulmurod Halimov 'Na Tri Dnya Ushel po Delam' I Propal" [Colonel Gulmurod Halimov Went on a Three-day Business Trip and Dissappeared], *Radio Ozodi*, 12 May 2015, <http://rus.ozodi.mobi/a/27011841.html>

²⁵⁵ CATV News, "Podrobno! O Prostupke Komandira Tadzhijskogo OMONa" [Urgent! Of the Misconduct of the Commander of Tajik OMON], *YouTube*, 28 May 2015, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MaUyp6-sn_8

He also accused the security services paying prostitutes \$10 each to appear in hijabs in a video that state media had used to discredit Islam. According to Halimov, “you [the government] passed a law prohibiting prayer on the streets. But God says you can pray anywhere.” Halimov has appeared in at least two ISIS videos since then.

Abu Mohammed al-Tojiki

Born Alan Chekranov in 1993, al-Tajiki grew up in Sharituz district in Khatlon, located on the border with Afghanistan.²⁵⁶ His father is an ethnic Tajik while his mother is an ethnic Ossetian.²⁵⁷ A keen sportsman, Chekranov won three wrestling competitions at the national level.²⁵⁸ In 2010, he graduated from high school and enrolled at the prestigious Tajik-Slavonic University in Dushanbe. Two years later, the university expelled him for missing too many classes. He travelled to Russia soon after. One year later, he returned to Tajikistan a changed man, according to his friends.²⁵⁹ He wore a beard, only spoke of the need for jihad and said he had been socialising with Caucasians in Russia. In 2013, he travelled to Syria via Turkey. He became one of the most active Tajik fighters on social media, appearing in at least 15 videos that sympathizers posted on *YouTube* and *Odnoklassniki*.²⁶⁰ The videos depict Chekranov socializing with other Tajik militants, burning a Shi’a flag and calling on his fellow countrymen to join the jihad. As well as producing videos, he engaged actively in the Islamic State’s war with the Syrian government and Kurdish forces. He was killed fighting Kurdish *peshmurga* forces near Kirkuk, Iraq on 10 February 2015.²⁶¹

²⁵⁶ “Kem Byl Abu Mukhamad At-Tojiki?” [Who Was Abu Muhammed At-Tojiki], Radio Ozodi, 14 February 2015, <http://rus.ozodi.org/a/26849696.html>

²⁵⁷ During World War II, Soviet authorities deported over 6,000 Ossetians from their home in the Caucasus to Central Asia.

²⁵⁸ Lekarkin, I. “Pobezhdayut Sil’nishiye” [The Strongest Win], Asia Plus, 8 December 2011, <http://news.tj/ru/newspaper/article/pobezhdayut-silneishie>

²⁵⁹ Pochemu Tadzhiiskii Chempion po Boyam Bez Pravil Pogiz za IGIL” {Why did a Tajik MMA Champion Die for ISIS?}, Radio Ozodi, 24 February 2015, <http://rus.azattyq.org/a/tadzhiik-student-champion-pogib-za-ig-irake/26865539.html>

²⁶⁰ Lemon, E. “Tajiks Fighters in Iraq: What do the Latest Series of Videos Tell us?” *EXCAS*, 5 January 2015, <http://blogs.exeter.ac.uk/excas/2015/01/05/tajiks-fighters-in-iraq-what-do-the-latest-series-of-videos-tell-us/>

²⁶¹ Paraszczuk, J. “Why Did A Tajik Student & Mixed Martial-Arts Champ Die For IS In Iraq?,” *RFE/RL*, 23 February 2015, <http://www.rferl.org/content/tajik-isis-fighter/26864323.html>

Nusratullo Nazarov, (a.k.a. Abu Kholidi Kulobi and Firkoni Falastin) was born in 1976 in Charmgaroni Poyon *mahalla* in the southern city of Kulob.²⁶² He commanded the Islamic State's Tajik fighters in Raqqa, but allegedly did not take part in hostilities himself.²⁶³ Nazarov stated that he was interested in jihad from a young age. He is married with three children. Originally, Nazarov worked in a currency exchange office at the bazaar in Kulob, but he later became a drug addict and dealer. To pay his debts, he sold his father's house and moved to Russia in 2012. In the summer of 2013, he travelled to Syria. Originally, Nazarov fought alongside Jabhat al-Nusra, al-Qaeda's Syrian affiliate. But he soon became disillusioned, stating that "after I learned about their cooperation with the West, I quit their ranks".²⁶⁴ After joining the Islamic State in 2014, he became a vocal advocate for jihad. In January 2015, Nazarov threatened to bomb the offices of a local newspaper in Kulob over the paper's negative coverage of Tajik militants.²⁶⁵ A few days later, Nazarov's brother, a taxi driver in Kulob, appeared on state television condemning Nazarov and called on him to return home to his family.²⁶⁶ Nazarov was killed in July 2015 on the Turkish-Syrian border.

These three individuals do not fit neatly within the government's framing of foreign fighters as irrational, greedy traitors (Lemon 2015). Rather than being poor, rural, uneducated young people who were pushed into joining Islamic State by greed, they are educated, professional individuals who seem to have joined due, in part, to ideological convictions. None of them was forced to join ISIS due to their circumstance; joining ISIS, it seems, was a choice for

²⁶² "Abu Kholidi Kulobi Ubit v Syrii" [Abu Kholidi Kulobi Killed in Syria], *Radio Ozodi*, 9 July 2015, <http://rus.ozodi.org/a/27117725.html>

²⁶³ "Nusrat Nazarov Utverzhdaet, Chto Bolee 2000 Tadzhiikov Boyuyut za IGIL," [Nusrat Nazarov Claims that More than 2,000 Tajiks Fight for ISIS], *Asia Plus*, 29 January 2015, <http://news.tj/ru/news/nusrat-nazarov-utverzhdaet-chto-bolee-2000-tadzhiikov-voyuyut-za-igil>

²⁶⁴ "Khitobi "Abu Kholidi Kulob" va Nazari Sherkhon Salimzodaiyu Ramazon Rahimzoda" [Message of Abu Kholidi Kulobi to Sherkhon Salimzoda and Ramazon Rahimzoda], *Ozodagon*, 19 June 2014, <http://www.ozodagon.com/page,1,2,16777-hitobi-abu-holid-va-nazari-salimzodayu-ramimzoda-ba-zarharidon.html>

²⁶⁵ "Tahdidi Terrorist ba Zhurnalisti Tojik" [Terrorist Threat Against Tajik Journalist], *Jumhuriyat*, 7 July 2014, http://www.jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=17475

²⁶⁶ The appearance of family members of accused extremists condemning their behaviour on television is commonplace. "Rodnye Tadzhiika – Uchastnika Boyevykh Deistvii v Sirii Prizyvayut ego Vernut'sya Domo," [Brother of Tajik – Participant in War in Syria Calls him to Come Home], *IslamNews*, 7 July 2014, <http://islamnews.tj/tajikistan/909-rodnye-tadzhiika-uchastnika-boevykh-deystviy-v-sirii-prizyvayut-ego-vernutsya-domoy.html>

these individuals. The variety of biographic characteristics seen in these three examples indicates that generalising from the individual to the population remains spurious. For example, many analysts concluded that Halimov's defection represented a wider split within the government; more members of the security services would follow in his footsteps (ICG 2015). But this did not turn out to be the case and Halimov is better understood as an isolated example of a regime insider who joined the Islamic State due in part to what he saw the government do. Furthermore, none of them have any formal religious education or came from a religious family. This challenges the assumption that Islamisation begets radicalisation. Nonetheless, all of them mention the government's secular policies as a reason that they joined militant groups in Syria and Iraq. As such, they point towards the potential for counter-productive outcomes emerging from TASG.

Conclusion

State discourses on the Islamic State create the conditions of possibility for the governance of the threat. By framing the issue as it does, the Tajik government legitimates transnational authoritarian security governance. The framing brings into being three key features of this phenomenon. First, the state needs to intervene to maintain the natural, secular order by banning practices and arresting extremists (sovereign power), disciplining forms of religious expression deemed dangerous (disciplinary power) and shaping resilient secular citizen subjects with 'healthy' lifestyles (biopower). Second, it is not solely the government's responsibility to prevent radicalisation. Patriotic Tajiks need to monitor one another and self-regulate so that they conform to the government-defined "national culture" and become loyal subjects. Transnational authoritarian security governance, then, involves a mixture of public and private actors, individuals and institutions, who work together to protect national security. Third, by framing the radical Islamic threat as transnational, something that emanates from outside the country's borders, the government legitimates the use of security practices amongst migrant communities in Russia and Turkey. Having discussed the discursive underpinnings of Tajikistan's security governance, in the next chapter I turn to the security practices themselves.

Chapter 5: Operationalisation: Policing the Diaspora: Governing Islam and Security

In governing security, the government of Tajikistan relies on a combination of sovereign power, disciplinary power and biopower. But these governance regimes do not end at the state's borders. Increasingly, Tajikistan is deploying security practices extraterritorially, outside of its territorial boundaries, in migrant communities in Russia and Turkey where over a million Tajik citizens live. Despite the fact that they are acting in another jurisdiction, the security services use the same tactics – arrests, surveillance, intimidation – often in collusion with the Russian and Turkish authorities. Although they cannot act with the same impunity as they do in Tajikistan itself, in recent years the security services have become bolder, kidnapping citizens, attempting to kill them and threatening their families. In this chapter, I examine how the Tajik authorities govern the 'extremist' threat both in Tajikistan and beyond its borders. I base my analysis on 49 recorded cases of exceptional extraterritorial security measures since 2002, which I compiled based on publicly-available sources.²⁶⁷ I supplement this with media reports and ethnographic data collected in Moscow and Tajikistan between 2012 and 2015.

In analysing the transnational authoritarian security governance, I draw on the "triangle of power" developed by Michel Foucault (Dean 2010: 122). In the chapter, I discuss these three forms of power in turn, drawing on examples from within Tajikistan and practices carried out in Tajikistan and amongst migrant communities. Transnational authoritarian security governance relies on sovereign power. Tajikistan's authorities have created a legal framework that has outlawed groups classified as "extremist," ranging from Islamic State to Salafis, Tablighi Jamoat and the Islamic Renaissance Party. It has also introduced laws to tightly regulate mosques, religious groups and banned under 18s from praying in mosques. Transnational authoritarian security governance also draws on disciplinary power. Tajik authorities have drawn the distinction between "good," official, moderate Islam and "bad," unofficial, extremist Islam. Those who are classified as potential extremists – those who have studied Islam outside of the country, who wear a beard or hijab – are classified as abnormals in need of correction. Police in the country have taken it on themselves to enforce this norm, shaving men with beards and "encouraging"

²⁶⁷ For a list of cases, see Appendix II.

women to de-veil. Finally, transnational authoritarian security governance is biopolitical. Through state-controlled education and civil society, the government promotes a secular subject-position that is intended to form a bulwark against extremism.

In the chapter, utilising court documents, media reports, interviews and ethnography, I discuss these three forms of power in turn. I begin by discussing the juridical system established to govern Islamic extremism and the exercises of sovereign power, the arrests, renditions, intimidation, executions and closures through which the government enforces this both in Tajikistan and beyond its territorial borders. Next, I examine how the government of Tajikistan has disciplined adherents of abnormal, bad forms of Islam. I focus specifically on the policing of beards, hijabs and the establishment of an official clergy. Finally, I examine the ways in which the government of Tajikistan has deployed biopower through education and civil society, aiming to create secular subjects who remain resilient to extremist messaging.

Sovereign Power

Bans, Closures, Arrests

By conflating Islamisation with radicalisation, the government has securitised all forms of unsanctioned religious activity. Before moving against individuals and organisations labelled extremist, the Tajik government has established the necessary legal system to do so. The government classifies at least 15 groups as “extremist.”²⁶⁸ These groups can be divided into four types. First, the government has outlawed secular opposition movements, such as Group 24 and Vatandor.²⁶⁹ Second, there are religious groups with questionable links to violence, such as the Salafi movement and Tablighi Jamaat. Third, there are political Islamic groups like the IRPT, Muslim Brotherhood and Hizb ut Tahrir. Finally, organisations with who have engaged in acts of terrorism, such as the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, Jabhat al-Nusra, ISIS, the Taliban and

²⁶⁸ The Ministry of Justice does not publish a list of these groups. I compiled this figure from Taarby (2012) and from groups that the government has publically outlawed since the report was published, such as the IRPT, Group 24 and ISIS.

²⁶⁹ Vatandor (Patriot), is a political movement founded by exiled opposition journalist Dodojon Atuvullo in 2007.

Jamoat Ansarullah.²⁷⁰ Membership of any of these organisations is now punishable under Article 307 of the Criminal Code (membership of an extremist or criminal organisation). The trials of suspected extremists are opaque, usually taking place behind closed doors. If convicted, individuals usually have to serve upwards of 17 years in a penal colony. The government has not just outlawed groups, it has now outlawed fighting outside of Tajikistan. In the face of a rising number of citizens fighting in Syria and Iraq, the government passed amendments to its citizenship law prohibiting its citizens from fighting in foreign conflicts in July 2015, stripping them of their citizenship if they travel abroad to fight.²⁷¹

With so many groups and activities banned, the security services have been able to detain and arrest hundreds of people. The Ministry of Justice charged 309 people for extremism and terrorism offenses in 2014. These figures include 74 Islamic State sympathizers.²⁷² The government also imprisoned 85 members of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, 64 members of Jamaat Ansurallah, 3 members of the Taliban, 35 Salafis, 14 members of Tablighi Jamoat and 11 members of Hizb ut-Tahrir. Although the Ministry of Internal Affairs is yet to release statistics for 2015, the arrest figures have undoubtedly increased. After the IRPT was banned in September 2015, police arrested over 200 members of the party. Police arrested the leader of the Salafi movement Muhammadi Rahmatullo in February 2016.²⁷³ Whilst IMU arrests have fallen, the number of Tajiks charged with membership of ISIS has increased.

Mosques have also been targeted by the government. In early 2016, there were 3,390 officially registered mosques in Tajikistan.²⁷⁴ The 2009 Law on Freedom of Conscience and Religious Association established a system of three types of mosque: central congregational mosques, congregational

²⁷⁰ Formed in 2010 and led by former opposition commander Amriddin Tabarov (until his death in 2015), Jamaat Ansarullah claimed responsibility for the 2010 suicide bombing against a Ministry of Internal Affairs building in Khujand (See Lemon 2014).

²⁷¹ "President Emomali Rahmon Signed a Number of Laws," *Khovar*, 8 August 2015, <http://www.khovar.tj/eng/content/president-country-emomali-rahmon-signed-number-laws>

²⁷² Lemon, E. "Tajik Government Hypes the Islamic State Threat, Uses it to Control Population," *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, 1 May 2015, <http://bit.ly/1UMQoqZ>

²⁷³ "Tajikistan: Ultra-Conservative Muslim Leader Reportedly Arrested," *EurasiaNet*, 11 February 2016, <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/77276>

²⁷⁴ "E.Rahmon Masjido Internetro Joi Ifrotishavii Javonon" [E.Rahmon: Internet Mosques Places for the Radicalisation of Youth], *Ozodagon*, 22 January 2016, <http://www.ozodagon.com/24963-eramon-masidu-internetro-oi-ifrotishavii-avonon-hond.html>

mosques (*masjidi jome'i*) and five-time (*masjidi panjvaqt*) mosques, for communities of fewer than 1,000 people.²⁷⁵ Only one congregational mosque is permitted in each area of 15,000 or more people. At least 50,000 signatures need to be collected to build a new mosque. Mosques need to register with the State Committee on Religious Affairs. Since the new law was introduced in 2009, unregistered mosques have faced closure. In late January 2016, for example, the Tajik government announced it is demolishing 39 mosques for breaking the rules, with a further 145 being reviewed in the courts.²⁷⁶

Although the government has created a legal framework to allow it to detain “extremists,” the security services frequently operate outside of the law, relying on informal, extra-judicial security practices. These include kidnapping suspects living outside of Tajikistan’s jurisdiction, the use of torture as a means to extract confessions, extra-judicial executions, and intimidation against the families of suspects. As such, the law in Tajikistan is selectively used by the government. Whilst opposition members can fall foul of the country’s fluid counter-extremism and religious policy, government officials themselves act with impunity.

Rendition

In the pursuit of national security, the government has taken the fight outside of state borders. Whereas within Tajikistan itself the government has created a legal framework to outlaw “extremist” groups and practices, outside of its jurisdiction these laws obviously do not apply. Outside of Tajikistan the government has deployed a range of informal security practices. Rendition, or the transfer of people or property from one jurisdiction to another, remains the most frequently used exceptional measure deployed by the Tajik regime (Amnesty International 2013; Hug 2014). Like other governments in Central Asia, Tajikistan has attempted to return dissidents to face charges at home. Since 2002, I have found 49 cases of exceptional extraterritorial security

²⁷⁵ “Qonuni Jumhurii Tojikistoni dar Boroii Ozodii Vijdon va Ittihodiyahoi Dini” [Law of the Republic of Tajikistan on Freedom of Conscience and Religious Association], *Jumhuriyat*, 12 March 2009, http://www.jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=1813

²⁷⁶ “Tadzhikistan: Vlasti Zakryvayut Molelnye Doma” [Tajikistan: Authorities Close Prayer House], *CA-Today*, 26 February, <http://catoday.org/centrasia/25217-tadzhikistan-vlasti-zakryvayut-molelnye-doma.html>

measures carried out by the Tajik authorities.²⁷⁷ The vast majority (36) of the incidents took place in Russia. A smaller number of incidents took place in Turkey (5), Ukraine (3), Belarus (2), Moldova (1), Spain (1) and Finland (1). While those detained outside of the Russia and Turkey managed to secure their release, sometimes after a lengthy period in detention, the Russian and Turkish authorities allowed, and in some cases cooperated with, the Tajik security services to render individuals back to Tajikistan. In total, 48 of the surveyed cases involved attempted extraditions or renditions to Tajikistan.²⁷⁸ Of these cases, 17 individuals were forcibly rendered to Tajikistan, one was assassinated after a failed extradition attempt.

I have identified four categories of target: members of the secular opposition,²⁷⁹ civil war-era activists,²⁸⁰ Islamic extremists,²⁸¹ and former regime insiders.²⁸² Of the cases that I uncovered, 26 individuals were accused of affiliation with secular opposition movements, most prominently Group 24 and Youth for the Revival of Tajikistan. Fifteen individuals accused of Islamic extremism were the target of extraterritorial security practices. Finally, the government targeted five individuals accused of civil war era crimes and three former regime insiders. The number of incidents has increased in recent years. Where six cases were recorded between 2002 and 2009, since 2010 there have been 43 incidents, with 36 of these occurring since 2014.

Transnational authoritarian security governances operates in two distinct levels of the transnational: the regional and the extra-regional. Whilst within the authoritarian states of Central Asia, Russia and Turkey, the government of Tajikistan has managed to deploy its security apparatus with the acceptance of local regimes, outside of this region it has achieved no 'successes.' Outside of the region it has attempted to use Interpol Red Notices to formally extradite opponents. Those detained outside of Russia have managed to secure their release. Acting on an Interpol all-points-bulletin, a so-called red notice, the

²⁷⁷ Given the informal nature of rendition, it is likely that some cases have gone unreported in the media. I compiled the database from media and human rights group reports in English, Tajik and Russian. Thank you to John Heathershaw, David Lewis, Alex Cooley and their research assistants for helping me to compile the list.

²⁷⁸ Bakhtiyor Sattori was attacked on the street in Russia and not subject to an extradition request.

²⁷⁹ Members of Group 24, Vatandor, and Youth for the Revival of Tajikistan.

²⁸⁰ Mostly associated with the UTO and Democratic Party of Tajikistan (DPT).

²⁸¹ Members of HuT, Jamaat Ansurallah, ISIS and the IMU.

²⁸² Two individuals in the database – former presidential candidate Abdumalik Abdullojanov and former deputy of Sughd *majlis* (parliament) Nizomkhon Juraev – fit into this category.

Finnish authorities detained 31-year-old Sulaimon Davlatov on 20 February 2015. A long-time resident of St Petersburg, Russia, 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.²⁸³ In July 2015, another Group 24 activist Shabnam Khodoydodova was arrested in Belarus. Held for eight months, she was released in February 2016.²⁸⁴ Spanish authorities detained and then released Group 24 member Sharofiddin Gadoyev in July 2014.²⁸⁵ Sobir Valiev, a group 24 leader and deputy head of the newly formed Congress of Constructive Forces of Tajikistan,²⁸⁶ was detained in 2015 by Moldovan migration police at the request of the Tajik government.²⁸⁷ Later released, his family have come under pressure from the authorities due to his activities.

Inside the former Soviet Union, due to the Minsk Convention - which governs cooperation amongst post-Soviet countries in criminal cases - fighting extradition is more difficult.²⁸⁸ Although the Minsk Convention does mention human rights, extradition in criminal matters takes precedence over these concerns. While sixteen citizens remain in pre-trial detention in Russia, fifteen have been forcibly returned, either abducted or pressured into returning home through threats against their family members. A pattern emerges from the 35 cases of Tajiks whom the government has attempted to bring back from Russia. Following their arrest on a warrant issued by the Tajik authorities, the extradition process begins. Most of those with access to lawyers fight this with Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights which states that individuals cannot be extradited to countries where torture and prisoner abuse is documented.

²⁸³ “V Finlandii Zaderzhali Chlena Zapreshchenoi Ekstremistkoi Gruppy 24” [In Finland, a Member of the Banned Extremist Group 24 was Detained], *Sadoi Tojikiston*, 25 February 2015, <http://www.sadoitajikon.tj/tajnews/236-v-finlyandiyu-zaderzhali-chlena-zapreschenoy-ekstremistskoy-gruppy-24.html>

²⁸⁴ “Tajik Opposition Activist Released from Custody in Belarus,” *RFE/RL*, 23 February 2016, <http://www.rferl.org/content/belarus-frees-tajik-opposition-activist/27569284.html>

²⁸⁵ “AHRCA Asks Spain not to Extradite the Group 24 Activist to Tajikistan,” *Asia Plus*, 13 July 2014, <http://news.tj/en/news/ahrca-asks-spain-not-extradite-group-24-activist-tajikistan>

²⁸⁶ The congress is a coalition between Group 24 and Maksud Ibragimov’s Youth for the Revival of Tajikistan.

²⁸⁷ “Moldova: Activist Faces Extradition to Tajikistan,” *HRW*, 17 August 2015, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2015/08/17/moldova-activist-faces-extradition-tajikistan>

²⁸⁸ The Minsk Convention (Convention on Legal Assistance and Legal Relations with Respect to Civil, Family and Criminal Matters) was signed by members of the Commonwealth of Independent States, a group bringing together nine post-Soviet countries including Russia and Tajikistan, in January 1993, and came into force in May 1994.

Whereas some remain in detention in Russia, ten have been released and swiftly abducted by the Tajik security services (Amnesty International 2013).

Not all of those rendered have been formally detained in Russia. 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.²⁸⁹

In two of the documented cases, the Tajik authorities have actually admitted to going into Turkish and Russian territory to remove wanted criminals.²⁹⁰ Officers from the Tajik Ministry of Internal Affairs arrested medical student Shahnoza Bozorzoda in Istanbul in March 2015.²⁹¹ 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 Russian social networking site *Odnoklassniki* (Classmates). After she phoned a friend telling him of her intention to join the Islamic State, the Ministry of Internal Affairs sent officers to Turkey to detain her and render her back to Tajikistan. Operating across national boundaries and in another jurisdiction, the Tajik government violated international law. More surprisingly, they openly admitted doing so on national television. In the second case, officers from the Ministry of Interior of Tajikistan, in collaboration with the Russian police, arrested a 45 year old man from Istaravshan man accused of membership of the terrorist organisation Jamaat Ansurallah in St Petersburg in

²⁸⁹ Nadejda Atayeva, "Tajikistan Officially Reported that Maksud Ibragimov is Sentenced to 17 Years of Imprisonment," 26 July 2015, <http://nadejda-atayeva-en.blogspot.com/2015/07/tajikistan-officially-reported-that.html>

²⁹⁰ Thank you to Eric Hamrin for alerting me to these two cases.

²⁹¹ "MVD Tadzhiqistana Soobshchaet o Zaderzhanii Molodoi Zhenshchinyna Puti Siriu" [The Ministry of Internal Affairs Reports Arrest of Young Woman on the Way to Syria], *Avesta*, 11 March 2015, <http://www.avesta.tj/security/31237-mvd-tadzhiqistana-soobshchaet-o-zaderzhanii-molodoy-zhenshchiny-na-puti-v-siriyu.html>

June 2014.²⁹² Rendered to Tajikistan, he was sentenced to nine years in prison. The informal dimensions of TASG are not limited to extraordinary rendition, the security services have also engaged in assassinations and intimidation.

Extrajudicial Executions

Although Tajikistan outlawed executions in 2004, extrajudicial executions remain a tool for removing those people the security services deem to be a threat to national security. During the conflict in the Rasht valley in 2011, state television showed images of low-level civil war-era commander Ali Bedaki, whom the security services claimed to have killed in an operation (Sodiqov 2011).²⁹³ The bodies of the seven dead militants went missing from a local mortuary soon after, leaving questions about the nature of their deaths. The Interior Ministry claimed that they had the right to keep the bodies of “terrorists” under article 19 of the “Law on Combating Terrorism.” One month later a four minute video, filmed on a mobile phone, began circulating on the internet.²⁹⁴ It showed a half-naked Bedaki, a gun pointing at him, being interrogated in the back of a car. During the conflict in Khorog in 2012 another former commander suffered the same fate. Imom Imomnazarov was murdered on 22 August 2012. Although the Ministry of Internal Affairs denied involvement,²⁹⁵ his supporters claim that the security services murdered him.²⁹⁶ These cases involve sovereign power in the purest sense, pertaining to the taking of life. Extrajudicial execution, along with the kidnapping discussed in the previous section, point to the informal practices through which the government exercises security. Whilst the examples discussed so far are all cases of removing opponents in domestic settings, the security services have also started using similar tactics extraterritorially, in Russia and Turkey.

²⁹² “9 Sol Hukmi Yak Uzvi “Anzorulloh” dar Khujand” [Ansurallah Member Setnenced to Nine Years in Khujand], *Radio Ozodi*, 4 Marhc 2015, <http://www.ozodi.org/a/26881479.html>

²⁹³ “pressatj2.avi,” *YouTube*, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fTYU_LLgmFs

²⁹⁴ “Ali Bedaki Alive,” *YouTube*, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ayjEzf-2lr0>

²⁹⁵ “MVD Tadzhiqistana Otritsaet Svoiu Prichastnost’ k Ubiistvu Imomnazarova” [The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Tajikistan Denies Involvement in Death of Imomnazarov], *Radio Ozodi*, 13 August 2012, <http://rus.ozodi.org/content/article/24685426.html>

²⁹⁶ “Tajikistan: Thousands Demand Government Troops Out of Restive East,” *EurasiaNet*, 23 August 2012, <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/65816>

A number of Tajik opposition members have been attacked whilst in Russia and Turkey.²⁹⁷ On March 6, 2015 former regime insider turned leader of Group 24, Umarali Quvvatov, was poisoned and then shot dead at his Istanbul home.²⁹⁸ After leaving Tajikistan in 2011, Quvvatov released files linking state officials to corruption and called for protests in Dushanbe in October 2014. The Tajik authorities issued an Interpol red notice on embezzlement charges and Quvvatov was detained in Dubai in December 2012. Released in August 2013, he moved to Istanbul. In December 2014, Turkish police acting at Dushanbe's behest arrested Quvvatov in his Istanbul home.²⁹⁹ Though Turkish police later released Quvvatov, Tajikistan's Interior Ministry sought his extradition at the time of his murder.³⁰⁰ Turkish police arrested Suleiman Kayumov, a close confidant of Quvvatov who had been dining with him the night of his assassination, and charged him with murder. Given that the murder took place after so many failed attempts by the Tajik government to render Quvvatov back to Tajikistan, analysts have linked the security services to the murder.³⁰¹ The emergent pattern of the use of extrajudicial executions to protect national security also suggests that this link is plausible. Thus far, I have discussed the paradox at the centre of the government of Tajikistan's use of sovereign power. On the one hand, the government has created a legal system that allows it to ban movements, arrest individuals and close places of worship. But whilst the law is central to this process, the government has transcended the law, kidnapping and executing opponents. This blend of formal and informal measures is central to TASG. In the next section, I discuss another example of informal security practice, the intimidation of subjects of securitisation and their families.

²⁹⁷ My database contains three examples. Opposition journalist Dodojon Atuvullo was stabbed in Moscow in 2012. One year later, academic Bakhtiyor Sattori suffered the same fate.

²⁹⁸ "Tajik Opposition Leader Kuvatov Shot Dead in Turkey," *BBC*, 6 March 2015, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-31760810>

²⁹⁹ Rickleton, C. "Tajikistan: Opposition Leader Detained in Turkey," *EurasiaNet*, 22 December 2014, <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/71441>

³⁰⁰ Yuldashev, A. "Tajikistan Seeks Extradition of Umarali Quvvatov from Turkey," *Asia Plus*, 16 January 2015, <http://news.tj/en/news/tajikistan-seeks-extradition-umarali-quvvatov-turkey>

³⁰¹ Heathershaw, J. "Who Killed Tajik Opposition Leader Umarali Kuvatov and Why?," *EXCAS*, 6 March 2015, <http://blogs.exeter.ac.uk/excas/2015/03/06/kuvatov/>; "Tajik Dissident's Murder Rattles Opposition," *IWPR*, 10 March 2015, <https://iwpr.net/global-voices/tajik-dissidents-murder-rattles-opposition>

Intimidation

The security services use fear and intimidation to secure the regime. To put pressure on those accused of affiliation with the Islamic State and other extremist groups, the government targets the family members of those suspected of being radical Islamists (Human Rights Watch 2016). Suhrob is a follower of the Tablighi Jamaat movement from a village near Vanj, Tajikistan. Like many pious Muslims from Tajikistan, he moved to Russia to escape state-led persecution at home.³⁰² He set up a shop selling perfume at a bazaar in Moscow region, dedicating much of his time to proselytizing among the Central Asian migrant community and setting up a prayer group with around twenty followers. 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 the Islamic State. The next day the Russian police visited him to check his documents. And a week later 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. "Tajikistan may be 4,000 kilometres 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.³⁰³

In this case, the security services used intimidation to secure their objective by forcing Suhrob to cease his 'threatening' behaviour. Of the 49 cases in the database, two form examples of where the security services used intimidation and threats against opposition activists, and their families, to implore them to

³⁰² The Tajik government banned the movement in 2006 and the Russian Supreme Court banned *Tablighi* in 2009.

³⁰³ Fieldwork notes, Moscow, June 2015.

'voluntarily' return from abroad.³⁰⁴ The objective of such practices are not only political, they are also economic.

An entire political economy of militant arrests has emerged in Tajikistan and Russia. Police detain those suspected of extremism and only release them once their family pay a bribe. For example, after Islamic State recruiters persuaded 24 year old Abdusami into travelling to Turkey by offers of work and forced him to cross into Syria, he escaped and returned to Moscow. But when his brother returned to Tajikistan from Russia he was detained by police, tortured and only released after the family paid a \$3,000 bribe.³⁰⁵ Abdusami has not returned to Tajikistan fearing being arrested should he do so. Whether implemented for political purposes or for self-enrichment, the effect of intimidation remains the same; it instils fear in pious Muslims and their families. According to Suhrob:

I know I am being watched. I will never be free (*ozod*) from them [the security services]. I fear for my future and for my family.

Suhrob has become an object of the securitisation of Islam. This discourse that is intended to provide security has the opposite effect on him, making his feel insecure.

In its exercise of transnational authoritarian security governance the Tajik government does not rely on sovereign power alone. Indeed, Foucault made a distinction between the repressive legal sovereign power, on the one hand, and the productive, normalising disciplinary power on the other. For Foucault, "the powers of modern society are exercised through, on the basis of, and by virtue of, this very heterogeneity between a public right of sovereignty and a polymorphous disciplinary mechanism" (Foucault 2001: 74). In the next section, I examine how the Tajik government's exercises control through disciplinary power.

³⁰⁴ Umedjon Solihov and Sherzod Komilov returned to Tajikistan in early 2015 following threats against their families. See Ataeva, N. "Arrests of the Tajik Activists. In Moscow, Maksud Ibragimov is Missing," 27 January 2015, <http://nadejda-atayeva-en.blogspot.ca/2015/01/arrests-of-tajik-activists-in-moscow.html>

³⁰⁵ Balmforth, T. "After Fleeing IS Recruiters, A Precarious Limbo In Moscow," *RFE/RL*, 23 December 2015, <http://www.rferl.org/content/russia-tajik-in-limbo-after-tricked-syria-islamic-state/27445161.html>

Disciplinary Power

Policing Displays of Piety

The Tajik government's exercise of disciplinary power is based on its division between what makes a 'good' Tajik and what makes a 'bad' Tajik citizen and thus what is 'good,' acceptable Islam and what is 'bad,' deviant Islam.³⁰⁶ Those who adhere to 'bad' Islam become the objects of discipline. In order to be normal, secular subjects, men with beards need to be shaved; women with hijabs need to de-veil; mosques need to be tightly regulated; Islamic education must be restricted. Disciplinary power dictates what subjects should not be, aiming to correct deviant behaviour. By blurring the distinction between being pious and being a 'terrorist,' the government of Tajikistan has waged campaign against unsanctioned forms of religious expression. The government of Tajikistan has attempted to police abnormal, 'bad' Islam through a series of practices. Disciplinary power works through institutions and the disciplining of the body. In the first section, I discuss the ways in which the government attempts to discipline individual bodies. I focus on three examples: names, beards and hijabs. In the second section, I shift my attention to how the state disciplines citizens through educational and religious institutions.

Echoing Soviet concerns for the growing popularity of Islamic names like Mohammed and Fatima, the government has created an unclear division between Tajik and non-Tajik names. The 2011 Law on Parental Responsibility called on parents to give their children names which fit "national values." In 2016, lawmakers went a step further, banning Arabic-sounding names such as those ending with 'mullah,' 'khalifa,' 'shaikh,' 'amir,' and 'sufi.'³⁰⁷ The State Committee for Language and Terminology at the Academy of Sciences published a list of 4,000 appropriate names.³⁰⁸ The speaker of the lower house, Shukurjon Zuhurov, stressed that the list is not mandatory, but called on parents

³⁰⁶ Radical Islam does not form the only Other against which Tajik identity is formed. Neighbouring Uzbekistan forms a rival which 'robbed' Tajikistan of the 'Tajik' cities of Bukhara and Samarkand during the Soviet border delimitation process in the 1920s. See Suyarkulova 2011; Bergne 2007.

³⁰⁷ In early 2016, officials suggested banning Russian names as well, replacing suffixes 'ov,' 'ev,' 'ova' and 'eva' with Tajik endings such as 'zoda,' 'zod,' 'on,' 'yon,' 'ien,' 'yor,' 'niyo' or 'far.' After Russian government opposition to this, they quickly backed down.

³⁰⁸ "Tajikistan Moves to Ban Arabic Names, Marriages Between Cousins," *RFE/RL*, 13 January 2016, <http://www.rferl.org/content/tajikistan-ban-arabic-names-marriage-between-cousins/27486012.html>

to pick names that are “compatible with Tajik culture.” To further this goal, the list has been distributed to registry offices across the country. The name list is simultaneously about disciplining alien Islamic practices, and promoting Tajik national culture. It thus straddles the boundary between disciplinary power and the promotion of certain forms of life through biopower. This campaign to discipline religiosity has also focused on the visual signs of piety: beards and veils.

For Tajik officials, wearing a beard signifies that someone is a potential extremist. Officials often deny that they are engaging in a campaign against beards. They frequently claim that they shave people so that their appearance matches their passport.³⁰⁹ Yet, many documented examples of this practice exist and in some cases police have openly admitted to doing so.³¹⁰ In 2015, police in the southern region of Khatlon shaved 13,000 men with beards.³¹¹ When qori Abdulrahmon travelled back to Tajikistan in February 2015 he was detained by police. His beard formed the subject of a lengthy exchange with his interrogators:

Are you a *vovchik* (slang for Islamic extremist)?³¹² [...] Real Tajik men do not grow beards. They are alien (*begona*) to our culture and a sign that someone is on the path to extremism.

Abdulrahmon had his beard forcibly shaved. The words spoken by his interrogators reflect the strong nationalist current that underlies discourses on security and religion in Tajikistan outlined in the previous chapter. Wearing a beard is an example of *begonaparasti* (foreigner-worshipping); young men who wear beards are not true Tajiks.³¹³ In fact, they are potentially traitors whose beliefs run counter to “national culture” (*farhangi milli*). This discourse of alienness extends to the hijab also.

³⁰⁹ “Tajikistan: From Beards to Mosques, Dushanbe Cracking Down on Suspected Radicals,” *EurasiaNet*, 24 January 2011, <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/62758>

³¹⁰ Shafiev, A. “Tajik Authorities Hunt the Hijab and Battle the Beard,” *Global Voices*, 15 April 2015, <https://globalvoices.org/2015/04/15/tajik-authorities-hunt-the-hijab-and-battle-the-bearded/>

³¹¹ “Tajikistan Forces 13,000 to Shave Off Beards, Shuts Shops Selling Hijab,” *Dawn*, 24 January 2016, <http://www.dawn.com/news/1234918>. Given that Khatlon’s population is 2.6 million, or 36% of the country’s population, and that beard-shavings have been reported in other regions, the total figure is likely well over 30,000 people.

³¹² *Vovchik* derives from the Russian word for Wahabbi (*vakhabist*) and the diminutive (*chik*)

³¹³ That said, wearing a beard is acceptable for older men (sometimes known as *muisafed*, or “white beards”).

In recent years, the government of Tajikistan has organised a campaign against women wearing the hijab in public. It resembles the Soviet assault (*hujum*) against the cotton and horsehair *paranja* in the 1930s (Kamp 2006; Northrop 2004).³¹⁴ In 2005, the minister of education issued a statement banning hijab in schools, and in 2007 it instituted a mandatory dress code that reinforced the ban. Police have forced women who appear in public wearing the hijab to remove it (Thibault 2013). Since 2009, officials have legitimated these practices by arguing that wearing the hijab is “alien” (*begona*) to Tajik national culture and a sign of societal regression. Eshoni Saidjon, the imam-khatib of a mosque in Khatlon and deputy at the fatwa-issuing council, the *Shuroi Ulema*, stated in 2014 that the hijab “is not a Tajik item (*tojikon nest*) and is taken from the culture of other nations, especially Arab, so wearing it does not correspond to the Tajik women’s dignity.”³¹⁵ As Marintha Miles argues, “similar to the Soviets before them, for the Tajik elite, hijabi women are seen as the antithesis to modernity” (Miles 2015: 376). But hijabs are not only viewed as threatening progress, but national security as well. On Mother’s Day in 2015, Rahmon accused “strangers” of using Islamic clothes “to promote obtrusive ideas and want to create another new extremist trend in our country.”³¹⁶ Farrukh’s wife also had problems when she returned to Tajikistan in 2014:

My wife went to visit her family in Tursunzoda in September 2014.³¹⁷ When she landed at Dushanbe airport, the passport control people asked her why she was wearing a hijab, claiming they could not identify her. After a few questions about her intentions, they let her through (*ijozat dodan*).³¹⁸

The hijab ban is not official; the government relies on citizens to police their neighbours and themselves. In March 2015, teachers at kindergartens in Dushanbe told parents that they must not drop off their children while wearing a hijab. Although hijabs are banned at schools, government offices and universities in the country, police have also stopped students outside of school grounds. In 2015, in Khatlon province alone, authorities “persuaded” 1,700

³¹⁴ Known as *farangi* in Tajik.

³¹⁵ “Mulloho Guftand, Ki Zanho Digar Libosi Tang Napushand” [Mullahs Said that Women Should not Wear Tight Clothes], *Radio Ozodi*, 29 July 2014, <http://www.ozodi.org/content/tajik-national-dress-propaganda-in-tajikistan-mosque/25473550.html>

³¹⁶ “Islam-Fearing Tajikistan Says Hijab Is for Prostitutes,” *EurasiaNet*, 1 April 2015, <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/72816>

³¹⁷ Tursunzoda is a town located west of Dushanbe, on the border with Uzbekistan.

³¹⁸ Fieldwork notes, Moscow, February 2015.

women to remove their veils and closed down 162 shops selling Islamic clothing.³¹⁹

Three features link these forms of disciplinary power. First, they are all undercut by a discourse that contrasts national Islam with foreign Islam. Beards, Arabic-sounding names and hijabs are all framed as “alien” (*begona*) to Tajik cultural identity. Second, none of these policies is evenly or formally enforced. Adopting a “national” name, shaving your beard and removing the hijab in favour of the Tajik *rumol*, is framed as the obligation of loyal citizens. The government thus aims to create subjects who self-regulate and conform to their notion of what a citizen should be. When the government does enforce these policies, it does so informally, without reference to the law. This fits within a broader pattern of informality that I discussed in the previous section. Third, as I will discuss in greater detail in Chapter Six, these exercises in disciplinary power are somewhat superficial. Forcing someone to shave will change their outward appearance, but may have less impact on their thoughts, feelings and opinions. Thus far, I have discussed how the government promotes certain forms of ‘good’ national subjectivity by policing the bodily signs of piety. I will now switch my discussion to the ways in which it uses educational and religious institutions to regulate Muslims.

Censoring Literature, Restricting Education

Disciplining religion involves restricting ‘bad’ practices, but also promoting ‘good’ ones. The government regulates accepted Islamic knowledge and practice through the Committee on Religious Affairs and the Council of Ulema (*Shuroi Ulema*).³²⁰ These organisations censor Islamic literature, regulate education and issue rulings on correct religious practice. Essentially, these practices are aimed at policing the boundaries of acceptable religious behaviour.

Up until 2010, approximately 2,500 young Tajik citizens were studying Islam in Egypt, Syria, Yemen, Pakistan and elsewhere (Abramson 2010). But in

³¹⁹ “Tajikistan Forces 13,000 to Shave Off Beards, Shuts Shops Selling Hijab,” *Dawn*, 24 January 2016, <http://www.dawn.com/news/1234918>.

³²⁰ The State Committee on Religious Affairs was re-formed in May 2010. It took over responsibilities undertaken by the Ministry of Culture from 2006, and a previous incarnation of the CRA before.

August 2010, President Rahmon made a speech accusing foreign madrassas of training “terrorists” (Lemon 2014). Following this securitising move, Rahmon called on parents to bring back the young Tajiks studying Islam abroad. A year later, the Committee on Religious Affairs claimed that 1,950 of these students had returned home, with just 129 of them continuing their religious education.³²¹ The 2011 Law on Parental Responsibility codified the restrictions on studying Islam abroad.³²² According to the law, those wishing to study Islam abroad need to obtain permission from the CRA before starting their studies. These moves left a large group of young people interested in studying Islam, but with limited opportunities to do so. For *qori* Abdulrahmon, Islamic education is lacking in Tajikistan:

There are not enough places to study religion in Tajikistan. After the Soviet Union (*vaqti Shuravi*), Tajikistan experienced an Islamic revival (*nahzati*). Young people (*javonon*) especially became interested in Islam. But instead of giving people opportunities to study Islam, the government did the opposite. After 2009, it began closing schools and mosques. I returned from Lahore in 2011. I thought I might have a place in the Islamic University [in Dushanbe]. But there was none. So I left for Russia after a few months.³²³

Abdulrahmon was not alone in his disappointment in Islamic education provision in Tajikistan. Citizens interested in pursuing religious training in Tajikistan need to rely on official institutions there. Religious education provision is limited in Tajikistan. Tajiks interested in studying religion can study at one registered madrassa or enrol in the Islamic University in Dushanbe, which has places for just 900 students.³²⁴ The number of madrassas in the country has fallen dramatically in recent years. In 2002, 44 registered Islamic schools existed in the country (Akbarzadeh 2010: 239). But after Rahmon made a speech accusing domestic madrassas of training “terrorists” in 2013 most lost their registration. Now there is just one madrassa in the country. In June 2015, the government announced that the last madrassa would “temporarily suspend” its

³²¹ Tursunzoda, M. “1,950 Tajik Students Have Returned Home from Islamic Schools Abroad,” Asia Plus, 29 September 2011, <http://www.news.tj/en/news/1950-tajik-students-have-returned-home-islamic-schools-abroad>

³²² “Qonuni Jumhurii Tojikiston dar Boroi Mas’uliyati Podaru Modar Tarbiyai Farzand,” [Law on Parental Responsibility], 22 August 2011, www.aot.tj/public/userfiles/Sentory/Қонуни1.do

³²³ Fieldwork notes, Moscow, March 2015.

³²⁴ “V Tadjikistane Postroyat Sovremeny Islamskii Universitet,” *Radio Ozodi*, 12 July 2015, <http://rus.ozodi.org/content/article/27123040.html>

activities, as the building is not fit for its purpose.³²⁵ The restrictions on Islamic education constitute an attempt by the government to monopolise what Tajiks can learn about religion. Indeed, for Abdulrahmon, the government's move against religious education, in his opinion, is rooted in a fear (*tars*) of religion that is not under its control. But madrassas are not the only place where Tajik citizens can learn about religion, the government has also taken interest in books and the internet.

As well as restricting access to education, the government censors religious literature and blocks Islamic websites. The government maintains close control over the production and distribution of religious literature. Article 22 of the 2009 Law on Freedom of Conscience and Religious Associations stipulates that only registered religious organisations can produce, distribute, import or export religious literature. All texts must be reviewed by the State Committee on Religious Affairs. Although the 2009 law did not outline punishment for those who break this law, Article 474.1 of the Code of Administrative Offences, introduced in January 2011, stated that those who break the law can be fined up to 3,500 somoni (\$450).³²⁶ Organisations can be fined up to 7,000 somoni (\$900). Since it was introduced, the police have enforced the law, fining members of the IRPT, Baptists and Jehovah's Witnesses for violating the rules.³²⁷ But increasingly young people are accessing information about religion online. In recent years, the internet has replaced print literature as the primary concern of the government of Tajikistan.

With over 30 per cent of the population, particularly young people, going online regularly, the government has become increasingly concerned with online radicalisation.³²⁸ In a March 2012 speech, Rahmon accused the media of engaging in "informational warfare" (*jangi ittilooti*). He stated that:

I remind you that the media should not abuse their professional authority. They must not allow the emergence of material instigating

³²⁵ "V Sogde Mecheti Prevrashchayut v Kul'turnnye Tsetnry I Detskiye Sady" [In Sughd, Mosques Converted to Cultural Centres and Kindergartens], *TojNews*, 24 July 2015 <http://www.tojnews.org/ru/news/v-sogde-mecheti-prevrashchayut-v-kulturnye-centry-i-detskie-sady>

³²⁶ Bayram, M. "Tajikistan: "Why Should I ask the Government What Books I Can Read?,"" *Forum 18*, 11 January 2011, http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=1528

³²⁷ Bayram, M. "Tajikistan: "The Law Demands that all Religious Literature be Checked by the State,"" *Forum 18*, 18 November 2013, http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=1897

³²⁸ "Tajikistan: Data Gateway Deals Blow to Internet Freedom," *EurasiaNet*, 16 February 2016, <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/77346>

and inciting hate (*nizo'angezivu tafriqaandozi*), inattention to national values and interests (*manfiathoi milli*), insults and slander in relation to distinguished persons, and the promotion of immoral behavior.³²⁹

Whilst he was not focusing exclusively on radical Islam, but on the criticism of government agencies by the independent media also, his words constitute a warning. He is firmly placing the government over the media, re-inforcing its right to censor freedom of speech. Concerned by fears of online radicalisation, the State Communications Agency regularly blocks “extremist” websites, including *YouTube*, *Facebook* and *Odnoklassniki*. Such blockages have usually come after events that the government views as a threat to social stability. When the independent media criticised the government’s handling of the 2010 prison break and subsequent conflict in the Rasht valley, the government blocked websites and prevented the publication of leading newspapers *Faraj* and *Nigoh*. After websites challenged the government’s narrative on violence in Khorog in August 2012, the government blocked sites once more.³³⁰ More recently, the government blocked sites after Group 24 called for protests in Dushanbe in October 2014 and when former OMON commander defected to ISIS and appeared in a propaganda video in May 2015.³³¹ In August 2015, for example, it ordered the country’s largest internet provider TCell to block *Nahzat.tj* (the IRPT’s website) and *Turajon.org*, a website run by the prominent Islamic scholars, the Turajonzoda brothers. Until it closed down, *Turajon.org* formed a platform for debating religious issues and seeking guidance from the brothers (Epkenhans and Nozimova 2013). Although Islamic groups are relocating to social networking sites like *Facebook*, *Odnoklassniki*, *YouTube* and *Vkontakte*, the State Communication Committee has taken to blocking these sites also. In January 2016, President Rahmon signed a new law establishing a central state-controlled hub through which all internet traffic will flow. The move will make it easier to monitor citizens and restrict access to

³²⁹ “Suharoni dar Majlisi Tantanavi Bakhshida ba 100-Solagii Matbuoti Tojik” [Speech at the Meeting Dedicated to the 100th Anniversary of the Press], President.tj, 10 March 2013, <http://president.tj/node/222>

³³⁰ “Tajikistan Blocks YouTube, BBC, Russian Websites after Violence,” *RT*, 30 July 2012, <https://www.rt.com/news/tajikistan-blocks-youtube-bbc-436/>

³³¹ Najibullah, F. “Websites Blocked After New Video Shows Tajik Commander Who Defected To IS,” *RFE/RL*, 19 June 2015, <http://www.rferl.org/content/tajikistan-websites-blocked-video-halimov-islamic-state/27081770.html>

websites.³³² The government's inability to completely monopolise the production of information in an age of mobility drives its moves to regulate the internet.

My interviews with senior independent journalists in 2013 reveal that government censorship emerges from officials feeling insecure. As the editor of a leading independent newspaper told me:

Every day on different television channels we are told: 'You have peace! You have stability! You must endure, endure, endure (Rus: *terpit*) [...] They [the authorities] are scared. They are scared of people offering a contradictory opinion.'³³³

Another prominent journalist expressed a similar opinion. According to him, the government views the independent media as a potential challenge to their narrative. "The potential of the media is more than that of the authorities (Rus: *gosstruktura*). They are scared of its potential," he said.³³⁴ By blocking websites and stymying debate, the government makes it difficult for journalists to obtain reliable information. As a third journalist stated that, "we [the media] only have information from one side (Rus: *strana*), on the other side we do not have information."³³⁵ Ultimately, these moves are an attempt to monopolise the production of information and prevent the development of an alternative narrative to that forwarded by the government.

Indeed, this tightening of control over the internet constitutes a "networked authoritarianism" (Shafiev and Miles 2015). According to Abdulfattoh Shafiev and Marintha Miles, "in the course of just three years, from 2012 to 2014, Tajikistan's authorities evolved from maintaining a purely passive approach to imposing an assertive 'networked authoritarianism' that sought to repress the new freedoms the Internet provided" (Shafiev and Miles 2015: 298). This networked authoritarianism forms part of TASG; the internet forms a space for the deployment of state disciplinary and biopower, and resistance to this. My discussion of disciplinary power so far has focused on the ways in which the government disciplines 'bad' Muslims. As I have shown in this section, the government restricts access what citizens can read in newspapers and see

³³² "Tajik Authorities Seek Tighter Control Over Internet Traffic," *RFE/RL*, 26 January 2016, <http://www.rferl.org/content/tajikistan-internet-control-new-nexus/27511665.html>

³³³ Author interview with the editor of a Tajik newspaper, Dushanbe, June 2013.

³³⁴ Author interview with prominent Tajik journalist, Dushanbe, June 2013.

³³⁵ Author interview with independent Tajik journalist, Dushanbe, June 2013.

online. But it also promotes national Islam through the official clergy. I will now turn to this more 'productive' aspect of state religious policy.

Loyal Imams

Official religious leaders in Tajikistan remain firmly under the government's control; they form a crucial institution through which the state controls religion. The Committee on Religious Affairs (CRA) controls religious leaders in a number of ways. First, it appoints imam-khatibs directly.³³⁶ Second, since 2014 it has paid them a salary.³³⁷ Third, each imam-khatib is obliged to re-register with the CRA annually and to take courses on Islam run by the Committee. Not only does the CRA control who can become an imam-khatib, it also controls and regulates what they can say. In 2011, the CRA began publishing an annual list of appropriate sermon topics for Friday prayer.³³⁸ Whilst those imams who are loyal stand a better chance maintaining their position, the government has not refrained from removing those who resist. Indeed, the announcement of the sermon list proved controversial, with a number of official clerics protesting the move.³³⁹ Their public dissent provided the Committee on Religious Affairs with an excuse to remove them. This purge created a cadre of religious leaders who have demonstrated loyalty to the regime. But despite the 2012 purge, the authorities have periodically removed potentially 'disloyal' imam-khatibs. In March 2016, the security services detained six imam-khatibs from the northern region of Sughd. All of those arrested studied at the Islamic University at Medina in Saudi Arabia in the 1990s. The authorities accuse them of being members of the banned Muslim Brotherhood.³⁴⁰ Whether they were members of the Muslim Brotherhood or not, the incident shows that the government remains concerned over any imam whose loyalty may be in question.

³³⁶ I use the term imam, or imam-khatib, to refer to a state-appointed religious leader.

Elsewhere, I use the term *mullo*, to refer to informal, non-state appointed religious leaders.

³³⁷ "Imam-khatibs in Tajikistan Expected to Receive Salaries Starting from this Year," *Asia Plus*, 3 January 2014, <http://news.tj/en/news/imam-khatibs-tajikistan-expected-receive-salaries-starting-year>

³³⁸ Majidov, S. "Tajikistan Seeks to Restrain Islamization," *CACI-Analyst*, 16 February 2011, <http://old.cacianalyst.org/?q=node/5499/print>

³³⁹ Hamdullo Rahimzoda, imam of Dushanbe's Mavluno Yaqubi Charkhi Mosque (the country's largest), was replaced after criticising the move. Two prominent casualties were popular cleric Mirzo Ibronov (known more commonly as Hoji Mirzo) who lost his position as imam-khatib of Hiloli Ahmar mosque in Kulob in June 2012 and Eshoni Nurridinjon Turajonzoda of the Imom Turkobod mosque in Vahdat. Other imams who lost their jobs included Mullo Abdurahim (Rahim Nazarov) from the Qazaqon mosque in Dushanbe and Dormullo Abdumaliq of the Khoja Bahouddin Naqshband mosque in Dushanbe.

³⁴⁰ The Ministry of Justice banned the Muslim Brotherhood in 2006.

Imams are expected to create loyal subjects by reproducing the government discourse. These moves have made official religious leaders reproducers of the governmental narrative on Islam, security and politics. Imams played a crucial role in discrediting the IRPT, calling on believers not to support them in the March 2015 elections and supporting the government's ban on the party. In one sermon, imams declared "let there be only one effective party in Tajikistan." The sermon was signed by Abdulrahmon Mavlanov, a CRA employee.³⁴¹ According to Farrukh, few people respect official religious leaders:

These people are in the pocket (*dar kisa*) of the government. They do their bidding. They tell people to blindly follow orders and obey the authorities. Many of them are not knowledgeable (*bekhabar*) about Islam and few people respect them.³⁴²

As Farrukh concludes, loyalty rather than religious knowledge is more important to maintaining a position as an imam in Tajikistan. The official clergy has become a central institution through which the government can promote national Islam and discredit foreign Islam. Concerned by the threat posed by radical Islam, the Tajik government have securitised mosques, creating an infrastructure to closely monitor worshippers. Imams are also responsible for monitoring their congregations for the signs of radicalisation. In recent years, the government has started to use technology to help them with this task.

Vertical Surveillance

Mosques in Tajikistan remain securitised spaces in which worshippers are constantly watched. In Gharm, to help them with this task, the newly built central mosque, which opened in 2013, is fitted with CCTV cameras. Walking around the mosque with Abdulrahmon, who used to attend *juma namaz* (Friday prayer) at the mosque, he pointed out the cameras, concealed high in the ceiling.

The cameras allow the government to watch people who attend the mosque, making sure no extremists hold meetings there. They show that the government does not fully trust the imam-khatib. The KGB do

³⁴¹ Bayram, M. "Tajikistan: Hijab Ban and State-written Sermons "Only a Recommendation"?" *Forum 18*, 1 April 2015, http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2053

³⁴² Fieldwork notes, Moscow, April 2015.

not only use cameras, they send agents to the mosque to monitor people as well.

Having first installed cameras in the opposition stronghold of the Rasht valley, the government has now stated its intention to install cameras in Dushanbe's Central Mosque. In July 2015, police colonel Barotali Hamidzoda, who represents the Ministry of Internal Affairs task force on religious extremism, warned those praying at Dushanbe's central mosque that anyone who left early would be arrested. He argued that the Ministry of Internal Affairs remains committed to "ensuring order and discipline during *namaz* in all the country's mosques and will spare no effort for the sake of peace and security of believers during prayers."³⁴³ Although framed in the pastoral language of protecting worshippers, the move betrays the government's lack of trust in those who attend prayer. Indeed, the surveillance of risky populations is a cornerstone of the Tajik government's exercise of transnational authoritarian security governance, but it is not the only place where mosques are subject to surveillance.

Attending Friday prayer at Moscow's mosque at Prospekt Mira this is panopticism is clearly visible. As those going to prayer approach the mosque, they are confronted with airport-style security: metal detectors, security guards and bag searches. Once through, believers are confronted with riot police vans and rows of officers from Russia's paramilitary police (OMON). CCTV monitors those praying at the mosque. Deputy Chairman of the Russian Muslim's Religious Directorate for European Regions, Damir Mukhitdinov, stated that these measures were aimed at ensuring "public safety" (Rus.: *obshchestvennaya bezopasnost'*):

They are aimed at preventing any hate crimes (Rus.: *prestupleniye na pochve nenavisti*) against Muslims and so that we can monitor the infiltration of radical groups into the mosque.³⁴⁴

But, far from creating a sense of safety for those praying, the measures create a sense of insecurity for those attending Friday prayer. During my weekly trips to

³⁴³ Bayram, M. "Tajikistan: Teaching Religion Unlawfully in a Private Flat," *Forum 18*, 29 July 2015, http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2085

³⁴⁴ Interview with Damir Mukhitdinov, Deputy Chairman of the Russian Muslim's Religious Directorate for European Regions, Moscow, April 2015.

the mosque, the atmosphere was occasionally tense, with the police pushing the sprawling crowds of Muslims back. In September 2014, believers confronted police after they detained a man without explanation.³⁴⁵ Farrukh explained his feelings whilst attending prayer as follows:

Do you see riot police at Orthodox services? No, of course not. We are Muslims. And therefore we are dangerous (*khatarnok*). That is what the Russian government thinks. We are all potential terrorists and extremists. We need to be watched (*nazorat kardan*).³⁴⁶

This policy may be leading to the development of the very ‘underground’ groups that both Russia and Tajikistan are seeking to counteract. For Abdulrahmon, part of the reason he established his own prayer circle was because of the atmosphere in the Prospekt Mira mosque:

When I first came to Russia in 2007, I used to pray at the Olympic mosque [the one near Prospekt Mira]. But I stopped going two years later. The sermons were in Russian and Tatar. I speak Russian, but do not speak Tatar. The police are always watching. How can I pray (*namoz*) and become closer to Allah, peace be upon him, in such an atmosphere? This is why I decided to establish my own circle.

Not only are those praying watched by the Russian police, but the group of Tajiks with whom I attended prayer said that agents from the Tajik Embassy in Moscow also monitor Friday prayer.

The monitoring of mosques in Tajikistan and Russia is an example of vertical surveillance, of the government checking for signs of “radical” behaviour. There are two targets of this surveillance: worshippers and imams. Like the internet and madrassas, mosques form spaces where the government is seeking to monopolise what is talked about and prevent any subversive narrative from developing. This exercise of disciplinary power involves categorising people as ‘normal’ and ‘abnormal.’ But the Tajik government’s counter-terrorism strategy does not stop with monitoring and disciplining subjects; it also promotes “healthy (*solim*) and moral (*akhloqi*) lifestyles (*tarsi*

³⁴⁵ “Stychka Musul'man s OMONom u Mecheti na Bol'shoi Tatarskoi Ulitse v Moskve” [Muslims Fight with Riot Police at the Mosque on Bolshaya Tatarskaya Street, Moscow], *YouTube*, 28 September 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wkcezXUIYIQ>

³⁴⁶ Fieldwork notes, Moscow, April 2015.

hayoti)." ³⁴⁷ In doing so, it uses power to mould political subjects, engaging in a project that is inherently biopolitical in nature. Whilst disciplinary power involves the regulation and optimisation of individual bodies, biopower involves the management of entire populations, their birth rates, life expectancy and public health.

Biopower

In its exercise of transnational authoritarian security governance, the government of Tajikistan uses biopower. Islam is a way of life; adherence to Islam involves certain bodily practices (circumcision, wearing a beard) and lifestyle choices (eating halal). In their study of reproductive politics in Gilgit-Baltistan, Silvia de Zordo and Milena Marchesi draw a distinction between types of population governance and health regulation (*biopolitics*) that their impetus from religion, and those that are based on secular values (De Zordo and Marchesi 2016). Where secular development programs call on women to use birth control, Islamic values implore women to reproduce as this is the duty of a 'good' wife. By attempting to regulate aspects of Islamic life, whilst promoting secular lifestyles, the government of Tajikistan is engaged in a biopolitical struggle over how Tajik citizens should live their lives.

Biopower works in two stages. First, state media and educational institutions instil secular values within citizens. Second, once they have internalised these ways of thinking and being, these secular Tajik subjects monitor one another, and monitor themselves, for signs of deviance. Transnational authoritarian security governance, therefore, perpetuates itself; citizens become simultaneously the objects through which the polity is secured at the same time as being potential threats to that system. Secular biopolitics in Tajikistan centres on four spheres: education, civil society, voluntary censorship and horizontal surveillance.

Educating Secular Subjects

³⁴⁷ "Suhanonii Emomali Rahmon, Prezidenti Jumhurii Tojikiston, Bakhshida ba Ruzi Donish va 70-solagii Ta'sisi Donishgohi Davlati Kulob ba Nomi Abduabdullohi Rudaki" [Speech of Emomali Rahmon, President of the Republic of Tajikistan, Dedicated to Knowledge Day and the 70th Anniversary of Kulob State University Named After Abduabdullohi Rudaki], *Jumhuriyat*, 1 September 2015, http://jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=20642

As I illustrated in the previous chapter, the government of Tajikistan argues that Tajiks should live their lives according to secular values. Addressing young people in Kulob, President Rahmon told them to “study science, culture and professional skills, so that you live a life worthy (*sazovori*) of this nation (*vatan*).”³⁴⁸ Officials repeatedly claim that they are creating “decent living conditions” (*sharoiti zindagi shoistaro*) necessary for a “peaceful life” (*zindagi oromu*).³⁴⁹ State discourses on national development place a great deal of importance on biopolitical concerns. President Rahmon stated in 2015 that:

Educational measures taken by the government (*hukumat*), lead to an improvement in living standards (*sathi zindagi*), education, life expectancy and the progress (*peshravii*) of society, improving societies mind-set (*zehniyati*) and making a life worthy (*sazovori*) of the population.³⁵⁰

In keeping with the hegemonic narrative on religion, security and national identity outlined in Chapter Four, officials argue that the proper Tajik should live their life in a secular, rather than a religious way. As Rahmon contended in a speech in late 2015:

Existing experience in the modern world today has proved once again that the choice of the secular state is the correct (*durust*) and far-sighted (*durbinona*) choice, and this idea has become one of the main prerequisites for a peaceful life (*hayoti osoishtai*).³⁵¹

According to this narrative, secularism is a prerequisite for citizens living long, happy lives and for society to progress. Rahmon frequently states that citizens should be “patriotic” (*vatanparasti*) and “secular.” The state education system forms a key institution through which biopower operates.

³⁴⁸ “Suhanronii Emomali Rahmon, Prezidenti Jumhurii Tojikiston, dar Amfiateatri Shahri Kulob” [Speech of Emomali Rahmon, President of the Republic of Tajikistan, in the Amphitheatre in Kulob], *Jumhuriyat*, 31 August 2015, http://jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=20641

³⁴⁹ “Payomi Prezidenti Tojikiston Emomali Rahmon ba Majillis Oliy Jumhurii Tojikiston” [Speech of President Rahmon in Parliament], *President.tj*, 23 Jan 2015, <http://president.tj/node/8136>

³⁵⁰ “Suhanronii Emomali Rahmon, Prezidenti Jumhurii Tojikiston, Bakhshida ba Ruzi Donish va 70-solagii Ta’sisi Donishgoi Davlati Kulob ba Nomi Abduabdullohi Rudaki” [Speech of Emomali Rahmon, President of the Republic of Tajikistan, Dedicated to Knowledge Day and the 70th Anniversary of Kulob State University Named After Abduabdullohi Rudaki], *Jumhuriyat*, 1 September 2015, http://jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=20642

³⁵¹ “Payomi Emomali Rahmon, Sarvari Davlati Tojikiston, ba Munosibati Solgardi 24-umi Istiqloliyati Davlati, Shahri Dushanbe” [Speech of Emomali Rahmon, Leader of the Republic of Tajikistan, on the 24th Anniversary of Independence], *Jumhuriyat*, 8 September 2015, http://jumhuriyat.tj/index.php?art_id=20766

Secular rather than religious values are instilled in pupils at Tajik schools. Although the Ministry of Education briefly introduced a course on “Knowledge of Islam” (*Ma’rifati Islom*) in 2009, religion is largely absent from the classroom.³⁵² According to Helge Blakkisrud and Shahnoza Nozimova, “Islam is either described in quite negative terms or is simply ignored in the history textbooks” (Blakkisrud and Nozimova 2010: 177). References to Islam frame Mohammed, not Allah, as the originator of the religion. Where Zoroastrianism is seen as peaceful and forms a connection between Tajiks and their Aryan heritage, Islam is portrayed as an external religion enforced on the region by Arab invaders.³⁵³ As one textbook explains, “they [the Arabs] took away the religion of our forefathers and forced us to accept their religion called Islam,”³⁵⁴ Many people turned to religion for material gain. The textbook alleges that Arab commander Qutaibah bin Muslim “gave the order that whoever reads namaz on Friday in the mosque should be given two dirhams [...] The impoverished population turned to Islam to make money.”³⁵⁵ Religious leaders have also criticised the teaching of religion in school. They argue that the textbooks used to teach religion misrepresent it. In 2008, former Deputy Prime Minister and *qazi* (supreme religious leader) Hoji Akbar Turajonzoda raised a debate over the issue when in an open letter to the Minister of Education he declared that the history textbook authors had taken an “unprofessional, irrational, and sometimes insulting and offensive stance” toward Islam and Islamic values. In criticisms carried by *Radio Free Europe*, Turajonzoda stated that “even Soviet-era textbooks, which were openly atheistic, didn’t deny historical facts like our current authors do.”³⁵⁶ For Abdulrahmon it is clear that the government is trying to denigrate religion:

In our history lessons at school we learnt that religion is a bad thing. Islam is foreign (*begona*) and religion is the cause of conflict (*talosh*).

³⁵² Najibullah, F. “Islam Becomes Mandatory Study in Secular Tajik Schools,” *RFE/RL*, 31 August 2009 http://www.rferl.org/content/Islam_Becomes_Mandatory_Study_in_Secular_Tajik_Schools/1811693.html The government replaced the class with “History of the Tajik Nation” in 2011.

³⁵³ The Persian-speaking people who inhabited pre-Islamic Central Asia were Zoroastrians. In the years following independence, the state drew on Zoroastrianism as a potential alternative national identity marker to Islam (Laruelle 2007).

³⁵⁴ From the 2001 textbook, *Ta’rikhi Khalqi Tojik* (History of the Tajik People), written by Yusufshoh Yaqubov, (cited in Blakkisrud and Nozimova 2010: 185).

³⁵⁵ Qutaibah bin Muslim (669-715) was a military commander who incorporated Transoxiana (modern day Central Asia) into the Umayyad Caliphate between 705 and 710.

³⁵⁶ Najibullah, F. “Tajik Imam Says Textbooks Misinterpret Islam,” *EurasiaNet*, 19 December 2008, <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/pp122008.shtml>

I remember that I stood up and questioned the teacher: “but Islam is part of who we are as Tajiks, how can it be foreign?” The teacher told me to sit down.³⁵⁷

Through compulsory and higher education, the government of Tajikistan tries to shape resilient secular subjects who do not draw solely on Islam as a source of moral guidance and identity. Civil society, in particular non-governmental organisations, also play a role in security governance through re-inforcing national identity and managing potential conflict.

The Role of Civil Society

State-sponsored NGOs (also known as Governmental Non-governmental Organisations or GONGOs) and diaspora groups hold regular events to celebrate national culture. These groups forward a Soviet-influenced account of the secular, national, internationally-active Tajik subject. In doing so, they contrast this with the Western-backed, anti-Tajik Islamist vision for Tajikistan. The Moscow-based Tajik Cultural Centre regularly hold events celebrating Tajik culture and relations with Russia. At one such gala evening, celebrating the poetry of former Soviet minister, Buri Karimov, the speakers frequently invoked the Soviet-era notion of “friendship of the peoples” (Rus.: *druzhba narodov*). Ninety one year old Igor, who spent the first 57 years of his life in Tajikistan, extolled the hospitality of the Tajik people. Hostess for the evening, Firuza, who teaches philology at the Moscow State Technical University concluded the evening by saying:

Some people think that after the collapse of the Soviet Union, friendship of the people ended. But we have proven here tonight that it is alive and well!³⁵⁸

As she explained to me in a subsequent conversation, “it was an ideology, but a healthy (*zdoroviya*) ideology. After the fall of the Soviet Union, people said that friendship of the peoples was a myth. But I think there was friendship of the people.”³⁵⁹ For Firuza, friendship of the people involved people speaking to and

³⁵⁷ Fieldwork notes, Gharm, September 2013.

³⁵⁸ Fieldwork notes, Moscow, February 2015.

³⁵⁹ Author Interview with Firuza, Moscow, May 2015

understanding one another. It centred on a common concept of humanity (*chelovestvo*). This utopian, secular vision draws on a human-centred epistemology to solve conflict. It is based on the logic that humans naturally have common interests and values that bring them together. Firuza states that it is this belief (*vera*) in human good, rather than organised religion, that should unify the Tajik nation, and the global population.

Two further events drew on this secular notion of unity. At another event supported by the Russian World Fund different minorities living in Russia celebrated their culture.³⁶⁰ The festival, given the name “Russia – For All” (Rus.: *Rossiya – Dlya Vsekh*), feted the tolerance that minorities experience. According to the director, the project aims to spread “propaganda about peaceful (Rus.: *bezkonfliktnii*) life in Russia between representatives of different nationalities, cultures and religions.”³⁶¹ Once again speakers invoked the Soviet legacy of *druzhba narodov*. This impression was on display once more at a training event for imams organised by the Spiritual Board of Muslims in Russia in April 2015. In his opening speech, Grand Mufti Ravil Gainutdin mentioned the existence of “friendship between peoples and religions in Russia” (Rus.: *druzhba mezhdunarodov i religii*). To reflect this harmony, the event was attended by a senior rabbi and Orthodox priest. When I interviewed Grand Mufti Gainutdin, he elaborated on his views:

We live in a multi-ethnic country (Rus.: *mnogoetnicheskaya strana*).
We need a politics based on peace (*mir*) and agreement (*soglasiye*).
The government represents this politics, our politics (*nasha politika*);
it supports us as Muslims.³⁶²

Whilst the Grand Mufti’s feelings may be sincere, civil society in Russia and Tajikistan remains highly politicised. As Igor Savin argues, “the authorities think that if there are cultural festivals, then it indicates everything is fine (*vsyo*

³⁶⁰ The project involved Crimean Tatars, Dagestanis, Tajiks, Kyrgyz, Kazakhs, Armenians, Azeris, Chechens and Circassians.

³⁶¹ Author interview with Rafik Amirov, Editor of Internet Portal “Russia for all,” Moscow, April 2015. Note that the Russian word propaganda does not have the negative connotations that the English word does.

³⁶² Author interview with Grand Mufti of European Russia Ravil Gainutdin, Moscow, April 2015.

normalno).³⁶³ One Russian human rights activist described these cultural events as “propaganda”

They propagate the mythology (Rus: *mifologiya*) that there is harmony in Russia. It is a true democracy, where religions and ethnic groups live in peace. These events are highly political. They do not mention hate crimes. They do not mention the situation in Dagestan. It is all just propaganda.

This sanitised version of relations between seasonal migrants and Russian citizens centres on the notion of friendship and harmony. For Parviz, the activities of these GONGOs are part of the Russian and Tajik state’s efforts to control public perceptions:

These events give the impression that Russia is a paradise for Tajiks. And that they have no problems living here. You can only open an NGO if you have government permission.³⁶⁴

During my time in Moscow, Parviz struggled to register his own organisation. He had previously been involved in Nur, a political organisation run by the IRPT. He had also been an active member of a political discussion club run by leader of Tajik Youth in Russia Izzat Amon. But Amon stopped holding meetings after Russian police raided his office in June 2014. Parviz explained his idea of a debate club to me:

I want to organise a club where Tajik young people can meet and talk about politics. At the moment there is little opportunity to do so. Regionalism (Rus.: *mestnichestvo*) and religious extremism exist. But there is no-where to talk about them. I want to set up a club where secular and religious youth from across the country can talk openly. It will not be an anti-government group (Rus.: *antipravitelstvennoi grupp*a). Through dialogue, we can solve our problems.³⁶⁵

Although Parviz found the necessary 120,000 roubles (\$1,900) to register his group with the Ministry of Justice, it repeatedly blocked his attempts to register the organisation. He believes that this is due to the group’s political nature. To be able to form an NGO working with migrants in Russia, then, you need to

³⁶³ Author Interview with Igor Savin, Institute of Oriental Studies, Academy of Sciences, Moscow, May 2015.

³⁶⁴ Fieldwork notes, Moscow, July 2014.

³⁶⁵ Ibid.

have political connections and the tacit approval of the government of Tajikistan. Parviz, with his links to the opposition, did not meet these criteria. This example illustrates how biopower in Russia and Tajikistan remains exclusionary. Only those individuals and organisations who promote the forms of life deemed worth living by the government receive support. Those who promote 'abnormal' forms of life need to be disciplined. Parviz's problems registering his organisation demonstrate how these forms of biopower and disciplinary power work together to shape subjects to fit the narrow confines of the hegemonic narrative. Thus far, I have discussed how biopower is deployed through two institutions – education and civil society. These institutions promote certain secular ways of being. But biopower is also reliant on subjects monitoring themselves and others, thus reproducing relations of power. In the final section I discuss this horizontal surveillance through a few examples.

Horizontal Surveillance

Intra-community monitoring is a central means through relations of power are maintained in Tajikistan. This horizontal surveillance ensures that citizens remain loyal to regime, but also maintains patriarchal relations through which women are subjugated (Tett 1994; Harris 2004). Muzzaffar, whom I lived with in Vanj in the summer of 2013, summarised the logic:

In the village, people always look at one another. If a man's wife behaves in a way that is dishonourable (*badnomus*), then her neighbours will report it to him and he can punish her as he chooses.³⁶⁶

This reflects what Gillian Tett found in her study of a Tajik village in the last years of the Soviet Union. Tett illustrated how men used the "honour and shame" system to control women (Tett 1994). A woman's behaviour - both before and after marriage – reflects on the honour (*nomus*) of her family. Women must regulate their behaviour so as to avoid bringing shame (*ayb*) on their household and family. As Collette Harris argues, "almost anything can be, and frequently is, labelled shameful and the fear of attracting this stigma acts as

³⁶⁶ Fieldwork notes, Vanj, August 2013.

a strong restraint” (Harris 2011: 100). With the encouragement of the government and certain international organisations, as argued in the previous chapter, this monitoring extends to those whose behaviour is deemed to be “extremist” or “Wahabbi” (Rasanayagam 2011). Parents, teachers and religious leaders are expected to monitor the young people of the community for signs that they have radicalised. This surveillance does not stop within communities themselves, it has also extended to the internet.

As I discussed in the previous section, the government of Tajikistan tightly regulates internet access and monitors the activities of citizens online. Internet governance relies on biopower as well as disciplinary power. Internet governance is not purely top-down; the government has enlisted the support of “volunteers” in its mission to police the web. In an interview with *Radio Ozodi* in November 2012, Beg Zuhurov, head of the State Communications Service, denied that the state employs people to police the internet:

These are people who have lost their loved ones - parents, brothers and sisters - during the civil war. And they believe that the media is to blame for what happened. I tell them, go and contact Ozodi or Asia-Plus and express your dissatisfaction to them. And they say, "No, the government should control everything."³⁶⁷

For Zuhurov, the people demand hegemonic control of the internet, they rely on the pastoral care of those in government. But according to Ravshan, this is not the case. Whereas not all those who troll the opposition and speak out in favour of the government via the social media are government employees, many are encouraged to engage in these activities by the government. Ravshan relayed the following account of an incident that occurred whilst he was a student in 2010:

When I was studying at the Law school at the [Tajik] National University, we were told to attend a meeting hosted by *Sazandagani Vatan* (the youth wing of the ruling People’s Democratic Party) ahead of the 2010 [parliamentary] elections. At the meeting they were recruiting volunteers for their informational (*ittilooti*) campaign. I did not volunteer. But my friend did. He said they instructed him to make

³⁶⁷ Beg Zuhurov: Dobvol'tsy ne Pozvol'yayut Otkryt' Dostup k Facebook” [Beg Zuhurov: Volunteers do not Allow Access to Facebook], *Radio Ozodi*, 29 November 2012, <http://rus.ozodi.org/content/interview-beg-zuhurov-facebook/24785172.html>

positive comments about the PDP on Odnoklassniki and Asia Plus, and to report people criticising the government.³⁶⁸

The Tajik National University, which has become a primary training ground for new officials, is the ideal place to recruit these volunteers. As Zuhurov's comment and this case indicate, the government self-representation of its legitimacy remains dependent on demonstrating that the majority of people support authoritarian rule as a bulwark against a range of secular and religious enemies. But for Ravshan citizens join such campaigns less because of their ideological commitment to the party and hatred of its enemies, and more due to self-interest:

Like in Communist times when people joined the Komsomol (Communist Youth League), young people who want to be employed in the government usually join *Sazandagani Vatan*. If they uphold the party line, then they can hope to find a position [in the government].

Through such activities, citizens reproduce the relations of power which underpin TASG. By reproducing the content and form of the discourse, the hegemonic narrative is becoming formalized, standardized and replicated from one context to another to the extent that it creates a sense of a monolithic, strong state. Yet, because not all of them truly believe what they are saying the discourse remains unstable and the attempt to secure the regime will always remain an unfinished project.

Community monitoring is not always nefarious. Being so far from familial and social networks, young Tajik men can be more vulnerable to extremist messaging. As Parviz explained:

Tajiks in Russia are a long way from their homeland (Rus.: *daleko ot Rodina*). They have no one to guide them. Extremists tell them everyone is against you (*vse protiv tebya*). Both the Russians and the Tajik government are infidels (*kufir*). And sometimes they believe it.³⁶⁹

³⁶⁸ Fieldwork notes, Vanj, August 2013

³⁶⁹ Fieldwork notes, Moscow, July 2014.

The case of Umed, a twenty-seven year old Tajik from Khujand working on a Moscow construction site, typifies this.³⁷⁰ Umed became more interested in Islam when living in Russia in 2011 and started attending the Park Pobeda mosque in Moscow. Soon after, he was approached by a group of Dagestanis after Friday prayer. They invited him to a ‘prayer meeting,’ in which the leader talked about the need for jihad against non-believers. Quickly, Umed started associating with his old friends less, and began talking of the need for jihad. Noticing the change, his friends spoke with him and brought a Tajik mullah from his home town to see him. Through a concerted effort, they managed to bring him back to the community. Such stories of community-led de-radicalisation are not uncommon in Russia.³⁷¹

To summarise, the Tajik state deploys biopower to promote secular forms of life. This works through institutions – state education and civil society – which aim to create docile secular subjects who are loyal to the regime. Ultimately, the government hopes to create subjects who regulate themselves and monitor others; this renders TASG a self-perpetuating system which is not only enforced from the top-down, but sustained from the bottom-up.

Concluding Remarks: The Paradox of Life under Transnational Authoritarian Security Governance

In this chapter, I have examined the ways in which the government of Tajikistan has deployed a range of border-spanning practices to govern the threat posed by ‘radical’ Islam. I discussed the ways in which this involves both repressive sovereign power, and the moulding of loyal subjects through disciplinary and biopower. It is this governance through obedience rather than through freedom that separates authoritarian forms of governance from liberal ones. Although I examined how the government has created subjects of security, those who the government claims to protect, I placed emphasis on the experiences of the subjects of securitisation, those who are deemed a threat, such as pious Tajik Muslims. For pious Tajik Muslims living in Russia life is paradoxical. On the one hand, they have greater freedom to practice their faith. As Farrukh puts it:

³⁷⁰ This story is drawn from conversations with Umed and some of his friends in Moscow in July 2014 and March 2015.

³⁷¹ Author Interview with Tajik mullo, Moscow, 21 March 2015. The mullah gave me five examples of the community led de-radicalisation of Tajik citizens.

The situation in Russia is a lot better than Tajikistan. I am not saying that it is all just (*adolat*), but it is better than Tajikistan. There is freedom (*ozodi*). You can pray. Islam is not seen as a threat (*tahdid*).³⁷²

But on the other hand, they are subject to the security practices of two states: Russia and Tajikistan. According to Farrukh, “the Soviet legacy remains. The Tajik and Russian security services are like fingers on the same hand.” Rather than being a source of protection and welfare, these institutions are a source of insecurity. Like other labour migrants in Russia, Tajiks face police harassment, extortion and the difficulties of negotiating cumbersome migration regulations. At the same time, they also face surveillance and monitoring from the Tajik state institutions.

Efforts to secure the regime and its concept of society create insecurity for many citizens. Despite having moved abroad, the Tajik opposition members are far from secure. They would often talk to me about their unease (Taj.: *noorom*) and the uncertainty surrounding their future. Exceptional extraterritorial security practices heightened this sense of insecurity. Assassinations and abductions are not purely about removing an immediate threat, these practices have important symbolic deterrence effects. IRPT member Farrukh feels a keen sense of insecurity. After the arrest of ten Group 24 members and murder of Quvvatov, Farrukh stated that “we are all scared now. Any of us could be next. The government is trying to intimidate us and it is working.”³⁷³ Farrukh had the appearance of someone who was visibly nervous. Our meetings were always in public, usually whilst walking along. He would frequently look over our shoulder to see whether we were being followed.

Through transnational authoritarian security governance, the Tajik government is attempting to create model citizen subjects. These subjects are secular rather than religious, apolitical rather than politically active, and ultimately loyal to the current regime. But this attempt to mould subjects has not been fully successful. Far from being docile recipients of the hegemonic narrative, many Tajiks reject the government’s exercise of sovereign power, disciplinary power and biopower. In the next chapter, I will examine how

³⁷² Fieldwork notes, Moscow, May 2015.

³⁷³ Fieldwork notes, Moscow, March 2015.

religious, and secular, Tajiks negotiate and sometimes resist the government's religious policy and security practices.

Chapter 6: Resisting Transnational Authoritarian Security Governance

How successful is transnational authoritarian security governance in moulding obedient secular subjects? If, as Foucault argues, where there is power there is resistance, in what ways do individuals and groups negotiate and resist security discourses and practices? In this chapter, I will explore how transnational authoritarian security governance is received by Tajik citizens. Faced with transnational authoritarian security governance citizens have at least two options. First, they can negotiate, cope with and, at least tacitly, accept the hegemonic narrative and become secular subjects. Second, they can resist transnational authoritarian security governance.

Acceptance involves affirming the government's assertive secular policies, accepting them as the best way to manage state-religion relations. Most Tajik citizens publically conform to the hegemonic narrative. As I argued in Chapter Four, many citizens – particularly teachers, lawyers and journalists – play an active role in producing and affirming the state discourse on religion and security. Others are involved as 'volunteers' policing the social media or are engaged in horizontal surveillance, monitoring their neighbours for signs of 'extremism.' Rather than instilling these policies with positive legitimacy, arguing that it is *the* optimal situation, I contend that most Tajiks see the situation as the best it can be. Many come to terms with the present by comparing it *temporally* to the traumas of the past (the Civil War and Soviet Union) and *spatially* to what is going on in the Middle East and the West.

Resistance involves refuting sovereign, disciplinary and biopower. Arguments and acts against sovereign power can be grouped into three interlinked groups. First, some people use *liberal human rights* based arguments to label the government's actions as illegal. Second, some use political Islamic arguments to call the government "secular extremists." Third, those affiliated with terrorist groups call for the replacement of the infidel government with an Islamic state. Many of those detained outside of Tajikistan have used the law to successfully resist being rendered to Tajikistan. Resisting disciplinary power involves rejecting the government's division between "good" and "bad" Islam. In some cases, people openly defy government attempts to regulate religion, wearing beards and hijabs. These acts, as Marintha Miles argues, "although not deliberately political [...] [involve] acts of resistance within

the cultural hegemony that create a social climate fertile for political Islamism” (Miles 2015: 372). Resistance to biopower involves defying government attempts to produce secular subjects. I argue that this involves the concept of *toqat*, a Tajik word meaning “patience” and “steadfastness.” By being consciously resilient to government attempts to shape subjectivity, many pious Muslims find ways to continue to live their lives with morality and dignity. Just surviving becomes a way to resist transnational authoritarian security governance.

As I argued in a 2014 article focusing on the conflict in the Rasht valley, resistance to the government’s attempt to monopolise the production of truth about security and religion does exist in Tajikistan (Lemon 2014). In this chapter, I make two overriding arguments about these relations of resistance and acceptance. First, these relations of resistance and acceptance are both hidden and public. But unlike James Scott, who creates a dichotomy between public deference and hidden resistance, I do not create a binary between hidden/public (Scott 1990). With the horizontal surveillance described in the last section of the previous chapter, this distinction has been broken down. Even speaking in front of an audience in private settings, such as the home, could potentially result in comments being reported to the local government. Not everyone resists TASG privately, whilst conforming to it publically. Some publically resist, others privately conform.

Second, these acts of resistance are dispersed and anti-hegemonic. As I reveal in greater detail in this chapter, while those resisting the system are united in their rejection of it, they do not agree on why it is wrong, what strategies to adopt to change it, and what system to replace it with. This chapter contains the views of human rights activists dedicated to the maintenance of a liberal secular system, political Islamists calling for religion to play a greater role in politics, and terrorists calling for the violent removal of those in power. Through a mixture of political ethnography and discourse analysis, I will show the dispersed nature of these public and hidden acts of resistance.

The chapter unfolds as follows: I start by examining how subjects can resist sovereign power. I argue that those who have *metis*, or a sense of the game, are more likely to negotiate the dangers of TASG and resist sovereign power. Those who have been subjected to sovereign power – outlawed, arrested, rendered - do have opportunities to resist this. I explore how

individuals have used the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) to resist TASG. In the next section, I explore the ways in which subjects can negotiate and resist disciplinary power, by questioning being labelled deviant and continuing these practices. Having discussed examples of resistance to disciplinary power, I examine the often subconscious ways in which subjects resist the management of life through biopower. They do so by living their lives following their own religious concepts of morality *in spite* of the government of Tajikistan's promotion of secular forms of life. I conclude the empirical section of this thesis by demonstrating the ways in which TASG shapes subjects and how they can resist this through the example of Tablighi Jamaat follower Suhrob's prayer group.

Relations of Resistance and Acceptance

Resistance to security in Tajikistan is anti-hegemonic; those criticising the regime do not agree on why what it is doing is wrong and what the government should be doing instead. This fits with Foucault's idea that discourses are fluid and manifold. According to Foucault:

We must not imagine a world of discourse divided between accepted discourse and excluded discourse, or between the dominant discourse and the dominated one; but as a multiplicity of discursive elements that can come into play in various strategies (Foucault 1981: 100).

Public criticism of the government's stance towards religion and security takes on at least three forms. First, activists have appropriated the language of *liberal* human rights organisations, arguing that Tajikistan is not upholding freedoms and civil liberties. Second, *accommodational* Islamists have rejected the basis of the government's ban on groups and practices based on the religious arguments. Third, some *confrontational* Islamists totally reject the status quo, arguing that the government is the enemy of Islam. Three visions of state-religious relations emerge from these critiques. While the *liberal* position envisions a secular system based on respect for religious and secular values, *accommodational* arguments call for Islam to be given a privileged role in government and society, whilst maintaining the secular state. Those associated with the *confrontational* position call for the removal of the current regime and the establishment of state based on *sharia*. The boundaries between these

positions are not fixed and many individuals straddle the border between them. Muhiddin Kabiri, the leader of the IRPT, for example, draws on accommodational political Islam and western liberal discourses in defending his party's right to exist and criticising the government's religious policy. Individuals associated with all three of these categories – liberal, confrontational and accommodational – are actively engaged in resisting TASG and the three types of power that underpin it.

Sovereign Power

While resistance to sovereign power rarely manifests itself in obvious ways – such as people breaking the law, civic disobedience, protests, rebellions and strikes – it nonetheless exists. Most public resistance takes the form of comments to the media, articles, blogposts and social media activity. Resisting sovereign power involves criticising the repressive legal framework that the government has established to regulate religion. Authors associated with all three groupings identified above have criticised the government in this area. Political activists and human rights defenders have criticised the government for its assertively secular policies.

A number of Tajik human rights organisations have criticised the government for not upholding the rights of those detained on extremism charges, highlighting how trials are not open to the public and criticising the security services for using torture to extract confessions.³⁷⁴ They have highlighted how the government's action violates the Constitution, domestic legislation and international treaties, such as the "International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights" which Tajikistan ratified in 1999. Activists have also argued that laws regulating religion, such as the 2009 Law on Religious Associations and 2011 Law on Parental Responsibility, violate previous legislation that guarantees freedom of association and belief. Activists highlighted how the Law on Parental Responsibility, which banned under 18s from praying in mosques, violated Article 26 of the Constitution, which guarantees the right to worship freely. The IRPT appropriated the language of human rights in their criticism of the law. Spokesman Hikmatullo Sayfullozoda stated that "this ban violates the rights of children to a religious education and to

³⁷⁴ See, for example, the coalition of NGOs Notorture.tj, the Bureau of Human Rights and Rule of Law (bhr.tj) and Perspektiva.

participation in religious rituals. A child is also a person, and has rights."³⁷⁵ Human rights based arguments essentially focus on the ways in which the government breaks the law. They argue that a secular system should exist, but that the government should uphold its legal obligations to protect religious and non-religious communities alike. Arguments based on political Islam go further and accuse the government of acting illegally, but also of behaving immorally. Accommodational Islamists who the government have labelled 'extremist,' such as members of the Islamic Renaissance Party and the Turajonzoda brothers, have turned the government's discourse against it, accusing the authorities of extremism. This forms an example of what Foucault identified as "reverse discourse," using the categories and vocabularies of the dominating force in order to contest it (Foucault 1981: 101).³⁷⁶ One term frequently used to describe these repressive practices is "secular extremism" (Rus.: *svetskii ekstremizm*) or "radical secularism" (*rodikalhoi dunyavi*). Opposition activists have pointed to the ways in which the state's assertive secularism creates, rather than prevents, the conditions for Islamic radicalisation (Kuru 2007). The leadership of the IRPT has frequently used this term to criticise state religious policies³⁷⁷. According to Muhiddin Kabiri, "when we talk about extremism, we should not forget that, in part, religious extremism emerges from radical secularism (*rodikalhoi dunyavi*)."³⁷⁸ Deputy Chairman of the IRPT Muhamadali Hait has made the same claim.³⁷⁹ Hoji Akbar Turajonzoda has argued that the government fears (Rus.: *pugayet*) Islam and criticised the government-enforced anti-Islamic campaign (Rus.: *antiislamskaya borba*) which is tantamount to "secular

³⁷⁵ Corley, F. "Tajikistan: "Religious Activity is only Banned up to the Age of 18," *Forum 18*, 21 July 2011, http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=1595&layout_type=mobile

³⁷⁶ Foucault gave the example of homosexuality. In the nineteenth century having been accused of unnaturalness and perversity, "homosexuality began to speak in its own behalf, to demand that its legitimacy or "naturalness" be acknowledged, often in the same vocabulary, using the same categories by which it was medically disqualified" (Foucault 1981: 101).

³⁷⁷ Yuldashev, A. "Vozrastayushchi Svetkii Radikalizm Mozhet Sposobstvovat' Aktivizatsii Religioznogo Radikalizma v Tadjikistane – Lider PIVT" [Secular Radicalism May Contribute to the Activation of Religious Radicalism in Tajikistan- leader of the IRPT], *Asia Plus*, 3 November 2010, <http://news.tj/ru/news/voztayushchii-svetskii-radikalizm-mozhet-sposobstvovat-aktivizatsii-religioznogo-radikalizma>

³⁷⁸ "Kabiri: Radikalhoi Dunyavi Javononro ba Samti Ifrotgaroi Mebarad" [Kabiri: Radical Secularism Pushes Youth Towards Extremism], *Ozodagon*, 5 September 2014, <http://www.ozodagon.com/17929-kabir-rodikaloi-dunyav-avononro-ba-samti-ifrotgaro-sav-mediand.html>

³⁷⁹ Choshanбиеv, P. "MVD RT: Mullo Mavlavi Abdukakhhor Azderzhan iz-za Administrativni'kh Pravonarushenii" (Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan: Mullah Mavlavi Abdukakhhor Detained for Administrative Violations), *Asia Plus*, 3 August 2010, <http://news.tj/ru/news/mvd-rt-mullo-mavlavi-abdukakhhor-zaderzhan-iz-za-administrativnykh-pravonarushenii>

radicalism” (Rus.: *svetskaya radikalizatsiya*).³⁸⁰ In an interview with independent news agency *Asia Plus* in March 2014, Turajonzoda elaborated on his position:

Islam in our country is under pressure from the so-called "secular" radicalism (Rus.: *svetskii radikalizm*). And it's not just empty words (Rus.: *pustiye slova*). Just remember all the policies and decisions by the authorities in recent years, aimed at harming believers. What kind of radicalization can we talk about when only 5 percent of people go to the mosque?

Yes, we are advocates of an Islamic society, where everyone can freely perform their religious needs, but we do not intend to forcibly impose its values and ideas of others. Let it be the free choice of each person.³⁸¹

Turajonzoda envisages a secular system in which religion can be practised freely, but not enforced upon people. IRPT activist Farrukh agrees with Turajonzoda and Kabiri. For him:

Secular radicalism is a lot stronger than Islamic radicalism. The authorities search for those who are religious. They see them as a threat.³⁸²

Farrukh questions the government's portrayal of Islam as inherently threatening to society. Farrukh argues that far from being a threat, pious people contribute positively to society. According to Farrukh, "religious people can be religious without being a threat. Employers like religious people. They do not drink vodka."³⁸³ These debates surround the role of religion in Tajik society, whether it constitutes a threat or an integral part of social life. Accommodational Islamists have criticised the government for being too secular. The people I have discussed thus far call for the government to allow Islam to play a larger role in society, yet they maintain committed to the secular system. Not all of those who resist are so accommodational. Confrontational Islamists have called for the government to be removed and replaced with a state based on *sharia*.

Confrontational Islamists remain committed to revolutionary change in Tajikistan. *Domestic* groups have limited their ambitions to the current territory

³⁸⁰ "Mi Zhdaem Peremen'..." (We are Waiting for Change), *Asia Plus*, 2 Sept 2010, p.3.

³⁸¹ "Turadzhonzoda: Mi' Khoteli Reform, no Tol'ko Mirni'm Putem" [Turajonzoda: We Want Reform, but Only Through Peaceful Means], *Asia Plus*, 6 March 2014, <http://news.tj/ru/node/184951>

³⁸² Fieldwork notes, Moscow, March 2015.

³⁸³ Fieldwork notes, Moscow, May 2015.

of Tajikistan. These groups include those associated with “local” jihadist groups such as the Jamaat Ansurallah and groups of civil war era fighters.³⁸⁴ The Tajik citizens who are members of *transnational* jihadist movements such as Islamic State, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and Hizb-ut-Tahrir have also criticised the government’s stance on religion, calling for Tajikistan to be incorporated into an Islamic caliphate. After the death of opposition warlord Mullo Abdullo in April 2011,³⁸⁵ a group calling itself the “Mujahedeen of Tajikistan” released a statement criticising the government’s secular policies.

He banned our sisters, daughters and mothers to wear the hijab, because, being a servant of Satan, he hates the hijab.

In his efforts to build a “civilized” state based on Western model, he decided to force Muslim women to undress. This monster believes that openness and accessibility of Muslim women is a sign of “civilization and progress.”

The devil's whispers led to a decision by the tyrant Emomali to ban children aged less than 18 years to attend the mosques. They allegedly skip school lessons because of the prayers. Although, the only prayer time that coincides with school classes is the Zuhur prayer, held when they all have lunch.³⁸⁶

Rather than focusing on transnational Islamist issues, such as western military presence in the Middle East or the need for a caliphate, the statement focuses on local issues, primarily the campaign against hijabs and the 2011 Law on Parental Responsibility. This points to the way in which assertively secular policies can produce counter-productive results, lending legitimacy to extremist messages. Another case, that of former commander of OMON, Gulmurod Halimov who defected to the Islamic State in May 2015, illustrates this potential for backlash against the assertive secularism of TASG. In a video announcing his defection posted on the social media, Halimov stated that the government:

³⁸⁴ Led by former UTO commander Amriddin Tabarov, Jamaat Ansurallah claimed responsibility for a suicide bombing in the northern city of Khujand in September 2010. Subsequently, the government of Tajikistan has arrested scores of supporters and claimed to have foiled a number of “terrorist plots” by the organisation.

³⁸⁵ Mullo Abdullo, born Abdullo Rahimov, was a minor Tajik commander who fought with the opposition in the Rasht valley. He did not accept the 1997 peace accord and fled to Afghanistan in 2000. Reports of his return to Tajikistan began circulating in May 2009. Following a conflict between insurgents linked to Abdullo and the government, he was killed in April 2011. For more information, see Lemon 2014.

³⁸⁶ Lemon, E. “The Clear Banner: Tajik Fighters in Iraq and Syria,” *Jihadology*, 20 January 2015, <http://jihadology.net/category/countries/tajikistan/>

Does not permit people to pray and wear Islamic hijabs [...] The government passed a law prohibiting prayer on the streets. But God says you can pray anywhere.³⁸⁷

Halimov, a former regime insider, is in a good position to comment on state religious policy. In another part of the video, he discusses how Minister of Interior Ramazon Rahimzoda ordered a hijab ban in Dushanbe and paid prostitutes \$10 to appear in hijabs on national television in March 2015.³⁸⁸ Halimov is using the repressive practices of TASG as a tool to recruit like-minded individuals into the Islamic State. Indeed, rather than offering money, as the hegemonic state narrative discussed in Chapter Four argues, Tajik fighters promote the caliphate as a brotherhood, where a new society is being built.³⁸⁹ Many of the videos produced by Tajik fighters in Syria and Iraq also criticise the infidel (*kufr*) regime of Emomali Rahmon. Abu Muhammad Tojiki, who I introduced in Chapter Four, was a vocal critic of the government's secular policies. He not only targets the government, but all those who conform to the status quo. Appearing in seven videos, he calls all his countrymen, especially those working in Russia, *kufr* (non-believers):

How can you not pray five times a day and call yourselves Muslim?
Join your brothers in the Islamic State!³⁹⁰

Like other confrontational Islamists, Tojiki calls for the violent overthrow of the current secular government of Emomali Rahmon and the establishment of an Islamic state in its place. Having outlined the ways in which actors associated with the three categories I identified have responded to the sovereign power of TASG, I will now explore this further through cases of subjects of securitisation who have been targeted by the government. I examine how they resist being arrested and rendered back to Tajikistan.

³⁸⁷ "Podrobno! O Prostupke Komandira Tadzhijskogo OMONa" [Extra! On the Defection of the Commander of Tajik OMON], *YouTube*, 28 May 2015, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MaUyp6-sn_8

³⁸⁸ Islam-Fearing Tajikistan Says Hijab is for Prostitutes," *EurasiaNet*, 1 April 2015, <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/72816>

³⁸⁹ Lemon, E., "Tajiks Fighters in Iraq: What do the Latest Series of Videos Tell us?" *EXCAS Blog*, 5 January 2015, <http://blogs.exeter.ac.uk/excas/2015/01/05/tajiks-fighters-in-iraq-what-do-the-latest-series-of-videos-tell-us/>

³⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

Resisting Arrest and Rendition

Resisting sovereign power involves resisting being charged, and in some cases extradited, for breaking Tajikistan's laws on security and religion. Those arrested in Tajikistan itself stand a limited chance of successfully defending against the charges. Trials of extremists usually take place without external observers and bribery is commonplace.³⁹¹ Although a few human rights lawyers have defended suspected extremists, with the system rigged towards prosecution almost every suspect is charged. In this section, I discuss two strategies of resistance: avoiding being arrested in the first place, and, if arrested, using human rights legislation to attempt to secure release.

Indeed, religious leaders, journalists and opposition activists can adopt strategies to prevent themselves being arrested in the first place. Practising religion and being active in oppositional politics in Tajikistan requires *mêtis* (Vernant and Detienne 1974). In other words, it requires that you know the "rules of the game," what you can and cannot do. *Mêtis*, a term which descends from Ancient Greece, denotes knowledge that is gained from practical experience and can be contrasted with formal epistemic knowledge. Marcel Detienne and Jean-Pierre Vernant, in *Cunning Intelligence in Greek Culture and Society*, re-introduced *mêtis* to a modern social scientific audience. Although it is often translated as 'cunning,' this translation is insufficient. Detienne and Vernant define *mêtis* as:

A type of intelligence and of thought, a way of knowing; it implies a complex but very coherent body of mental attitudes and intellectual behaviour which combines flair, wisdom, forethought, subtlety of mind, deception, resourcefulness, vigilance, opportunism, various skills, and experience acquired over the years. It is applied in situations that are transient, shifting, disconcerting and ambiguous, situations that do not lend themselves to precise measurement, exact calculation or rigorous logic (Detienne and Vernant 1991: 4).

Mêtis can only be attained through practice, in this case by practising politics in Tajikistan. As the editor of an independent newspaper told me:

³⁹¹ "Tajikistan Human Rights Report 2014," *State Department*, <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/236864.pdf>

As a journalist, you need to know the boundaries (Rus.: *granitsi*). What you can say, and what you cannot say. There are forbidden (*zapreshenno*) areas. You can criticise low level officials, but cannot criticise those linked to the President's family. You cannot question the government's security policy.³⁹²

In my conversations with journalists between 2010 and 2015, it became clear that most practised self-censorship as a means of self-preservation. As the above quote shows, the rules of the game include a variety of possible and risky practices. While criticising lower level bureaucrats is possible, criticising ministers and members of the presidential family is informally forbidden. Certain topics – such as security policy and the Rogun hydroelectric dam – cannot be openly debated.³⁹³ Calling for protests against the government or forming new political parties is also dangerous. Those who have – such as leader of Group 24 Umarali Quvvatov, former Minister of Industry Zayd Saidov,³⁹⁴ and leader of Youth for the Revival of Tajikistan, Maksud Ibragimov – have been assassinated or arrested.³⁹⁵ Those who are involved in oppositional politics need to have a *krysha* – a Russian term literally translated as roof. This refers to paying protection money to officials, or having personal contacts in ministries who can ensure your safety. Failure in the political game can stem from two sources. First, those who are not skilled players of the political game can fall foul of it. Second, changes in the rules can lead players to break them. I will discuss this through the examples of Maksud Ibragimov and IRPT leader Muhiddin Kabiri.

As I discussed in Chapter Five, Maksud Ibragimov established a new political movement 'Youth for the Revival of Tajikistan' in 2014. He toured Russia criticising the government of Tajikistan and interacting with Tajik labour migrants. His activities resulted in him being stabbed in December 2014 and then kidnapped and transferred to Tajikistan in January 2015. According to Parviz, who knew Maksud Ibragimov before his rendition, he was naïve (Rus.: *naivnii*) and uneducated (Rus.: *negramotnii*):

³⁹² Author Interview with editor of an independent newspaper, Dushanbe, July 2013.

³⁹³ Construction on the dam across the Vakhsh river started in 1976. Projected to be one of the tallest dams in the world, the project is a key component of the regime's economic and political policy. It has caused tensions with downstream Uzbekistan, which argues that it will negatively impact on irrigation. See Menga 2015.

³⁹⁴ Minister of Industry between 2002 and 2007, Saidov announced his intention to form a new political party 'New Tajikistan' in April 2013. He was arrested in May 2013 and sentenced to 26 years in prison for financial fraud, polygamy, and sexual relations with a minor.

³⁹⁵ Quvvatov was assassinated in Istanbul in March 2015, Ibragimov was rendered to Tajikistan in January 2015 and Saidov was jailed in December 2013.

There are certain things you do not do. If you are sensible, there are lines you do not cross. Ibragimov was naïve (Rus.: *naivnii*). He was not a good politician or player of the game (Rus.: *igra*). He did not understand the risk he was taking.³⁹⁶

According to Parviz, Ibragimov is a man of principle who genuinely wants to see democratic change in Tajikistan. But he did not have the necessary *metis* to negotiate the dangers of Tajik politics. He did not have a *krysha* in Russia, he directly criticised the government and called for the overthrow of the government. Parviz argues that he did not really understand the risks he was taking. Ultimately, this ended with his rendition to Tajikistan. But even skilled players of the game can fall foul of TASG. The informality of the rules of the political game mean that they are in constant flux.

Muhiddin Kabiri, who led the IRPT after the death of first leader Said Abdullo Nuri in 2006, subtly rather than openly criticised the government. After the party gained 8.2 percent of the vote in the 2010 parliamentary elections Kabiri criticised the poll, but restrained voices in the party who called for public protests.³⁹⁷ Ultimately, he accepted the status quo, two seats in the 63-seat chamber. As pressure grew on the party in the years following 2010, he continued to call for restraint and engagement with the government (Epkenhans 2015). Despite playing the game, Kabiri and the IRPT saw the space for the opposition recede. The party lost its two seats in parliament in March 2015, the Prosecutor General accused Kabiri of fraud in June 2015 and banned the party in August 2015.³⁹⁸ Kabiri remains in political exile in Europe. The party's downfall demonstrates the personalised and unpredictable nature of TASG. Despite forming an accommodational opposition that played by the rules, the IRPT was banned due to shifts in the rules of politics and security in Tajikistan. Players, such as the IRPT, are determined by, rather than determine, these rules. In this case, a decision was made by those in government to remove the party, and no calls for moderation from the IRPT could prevent this from happening. These examples reflect how actors can use *metis*, a sense of the game, to negotiate the politics of TASG. In other words, I focused on how they use their personal skills and cunning. But individuals can also rely on institutions

³⁹⁶ Personal conversation with Parviz, Moscow, February 2015.

³⁹⁷ "Tajik Opposition Threatens Protests After Poll," *RFE/RL*, 3 March 2010, http://www.rferl.org/content/Tajik_Opposition_Threatens_Protests_After_Poll/1973551.html

³⁹⁸ Trilling, D. "Tajikistan Drives Top Opposition Leader into Exile," *EurasiaNet*, 18 June 2015, <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/73931>

to resist sovereign power. Using transnational and domestic human rights legislation, individuals have resisted being rendered back to Tajikistan. These incidences form examples of how the transnational enables resistance not just governance.

Indeed, those detained on arrest warrants outside of Tajikistan, where domestic law no longer applies, have more opportunities to resist sovereign power. The government of Tajikistan has been successful in rendering 16 of the 49 people it has targeted outside of the country's borders.³⁹⁹ This means that two thirds of those targeted have managed to resist the government's efforts. Those detained awaiting extradition to Tajikistan have used two principal tools to resist sovereign power: domestic law in the country where they were detained and international law. As I mentioned in the previous chapter, the majority of cases have involved people being detained in Russia. Once they have received notification from the Prosecutor General of the Russian Federation that it has decided to extradite them to Tajikistan, detainees can lodge an appeal against this 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 this decision, often with the help of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Most of those detained were held on a one year arrest warrant. If they have not yet been extradited when this expires, they are released.

Thirteen of those detained on arrest warrants outside of Tajikistan have lodged complaints against the governments of Russia and Tajikistan to the ECtHR, of which Russia is a member.⁴⁰⁰ While seven of these cases were lodged by those who had already been illegally transferred to Tajikistan, six individuals have used the ECtHR to successfully resist Tajikistan's attempts to render them back to the country.⁴⁰¹ Those fighting extradition used the European Convention on Human Rights, which Russia ratified in 1999. All six individuals used Article 3 of the Convention, which states that "no one shall be subjected to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment," to appeal against extradition to Tajikistan. In some cases, applicants complained under Article 5 § 1 (right to liberty and security) and Article 5 § 4 (right to have

³⁹⁹ Although I have listed 44 cases in Appendix II, Bakhtiyor Sattori, who was attacked in Moscow, has never been subject to a formal extradition request, unlike the others.

⁴⁰⁰ For a list of cases, see Appendix V.

⁴⁰¹ The six individuals are Gaforov, Mr Sidikov and Mrs Sidikov, Khodjaev and Nasrulloev.

lawfulness of detention decided speedily by a court) because they were held after the expiration of the extradition detention order. Whilst cases are under review at the ECtHR, the court usually issued an interim measure under Article 39 of the Rules of Court to prevent the individual being extradited before the ECtHR made its judgement.⁴⁰²

Apart from Russia, Tajikistan has only successfully rendered citizens from Turkey. Outside of Russia 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 pressurised governments into releasing those detained on international arrest warrants. Pressure from human rights organisations helped secure Quvvatov's release from detention in Dubai in August 2013. He later applied for asylum in Turkey through UNHCR. Shabnam Khodoydodova was released from detention in Belarus in February 2016, after successfully gaining refugee status. Sharofiddin Gadoyev, Quvvatov's cousin and successor as leader of Group 24, was also released in June 2014 after a Madrid court ruled that sending him back would violate the UN Convention against Torture.⁴⁰³ So the chances of resisting sovereign power are much higher in countries where the Tajik security services have fewer links. But this factor alone does not explain the boundaries of TASG.

This failure of the government of Tajikistan to secure its objectives outside of a limited region points to the limits of TASG. Material connections between security services alone do not explain this. Deeper connections, or disjunctions, between cultures of security determine the boundaries of TASG. The government of Tajikistan has managed to deploy its security apparatus in Turkey and Russia because these states share a discourse that uses the language of security to discredit opponents, and have a culture of security where authoritarian practices such as torture, assassination and kidnapping. This makes the authorities in these countries more likely to accept the sovereign power of TASG. Outside of Russia and Turkey the government has

⁴⁰² "Rules of Court," *ECtHR*, 1 January 2016, http://www.echr.coe.int/Documents/Rules_Court_ENG.pdf

⁴⁰³ "Vopros Ekstraditsii Gadoyeva Sud Rassmotrit v Ponedel'nik" [The Question of Gadoyev's Extradition Will be Decided by the Court on Monday], *Radio Ozodi*, 11 July 2014, <http://rus.ozodi.mobi/a/25454043.html>

been less successful. While the differences between the culture of security in Tajikistan and liberal EU-member states such as Spain and Lithuania are clearer, the failures that have occurred in Dubai, Moldova, Ukraine and Belarus are more difficult to explain. Why was Savriddin Jurayev, who I introduced this thesis with, released and kidnapped in Russia in 2013, while Shabnam Khudoydodova was released by the Belarussian authorities in 2015 and allowed to go free? Both Belarus and Russia are post-Soviet, authoritarian states whose and security cultures contain a number of similarities. The explanation could lie in the actions of those being targeted. Where Jurayev stayed in Moscow after his release, Khudoydodova left for Poland where she has applied for political asylum. I will return to this question of the limits of TASG in the conclusion.

To summarise, in this section I examined how three categories of critic – western liberal, accommodational Islamist and confrontational Islamist – discursively refute the claims of TASG. I then explored examples of the ways in which actors engaged in oppositional politics use metis, a sense of the game, to negotiate TASG. Finally, I examined how subjects of securitisation have used the transnational to resist the sovereign power of TASG. Throughout I argued that subjects of securitisation do have opportunities to resist. In the next section, I continue my discussion of acceptance and resistance by looking at disciplinary power.

Disciplinary Power

As Foucauldian academic Amy Allen succinctly states, “since there is no outside to power, freedom always involves strategically reworking the power relations to which we are subjected” (Allen 2011: 51). Resistance to disciplinary power involves refusing to conform to the dominant subject-positions and continuing ‘deviant’ practices. Actors have resisted the discourse of disciplinary power in three ways. First, human rights activists have highlighted how shaving beards, restricting prayers and forcing women to de-veil violates individual religious freedoms as provided for in the Constitution and other legislation.⁴⁰⁴ These arguments are based on a clear notion of what is right and what is wrong. Second, some academics have gone further and forwarded *philosophical* arguments that question the government’s creation of a simplistic binary

⁴⁰⁴ “Tajikistan: Fashion at the Heart of the Anti-Islamic Culture War,” EurasiaNet, 11 April 2016, <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/78241>

between 'good' and 'bad' Islam, arguing that the reality is much more incoherent and complex. Third, accommodational Islamists and confrontational Islamists have forwarded *theological* arguments, arguing that policing the signs of piety runs counter to the teachings of Islam. I will examine these philosophical and theological approaches to resistance in this section.

Indeed, *philosophical* resistance to disciplinary power involves actors uncovering the spuriousness of the dividing practices upon which its exercise is based. As migration expert Sergei Ryazantsev argues, attempts to categorise people will inevitably result in a degree of arbitrariness:

It is difficult to divide (*razdelit'*) people – in the statistics, research methods and in life. Is someone who has lived here for ten years temporary or permanent? Is someone who prays five times a day religious? Is someone who looks at extremist videos an extremist?⁴⁰⁵

TASG is reliant on the objective categorisation of individuals as a means to govern them. But Ryazantsev argues against the ability of actors to neatly define concepts and classify people. Building on this, a number of academics have questioned the simplicity of the foundational dichotomy between 'good and 'bad' Islam which forms the basis of the disciplinary power of TASG. Parviz Mullojanov, a scholar known for his nuanced critiques of Tajik government policy told the *Institute of War and Peace Reporting* in May 2015 that beards are not the surest way to tell who is an extremist:

There are many moderate believers who dress strictly according to Islamic standards, yet they have a negative view of radicals. On the other hand, members of clandestine extremist organisations have learnt to disguise themselves really well. These days, most of them, especially the leaders, don't have an Islamic appearance as they don't want to catch the law enforcement agencies' eye.⁴⁰⁶

Mullojanov's point raises the question of whether these categories are entirely arbitrary or whether visual appearance is used consistently by the security services to identify extremism. Rather than reflecting a bottom-up security policy by which police use beards as markers of extremism, while those in the ministries can clearly distinguish the 'real' extremists from those who are not, the implementation of TASG is a lot more inexact and arbitrary. The use of

⁴⁰⁵ Author Interview with Sergei Ryazantsev, Russian Academy of Sciences, April 2015.

⁴⁰⁶ "In Battle With Radical Islam, Tajik Police Attack Beards," *IWPR*, 1 May 2015, <https://iwpr.net/global-voices/battle-radical-islam-tajik-police-attack>

visual markers such as beards to detect ‘extremists’ speaks to the lack of sophistication in Tajik counter-terrorism strategy. Nonetheless, this strategy has real effects; by blurring the boundaries between extremism and piety, this makes thousands of individuals potential subjects of securitisation. Some academics have resisted this trend. In earlier comments made during a discussion in *Asia Plus* about the so-called “Islamic triangle” in the country’s north and east,⁴⁰⁷ Mullojanov questioned the government’s conflation of Islamisation and radicalisation:

It is not necessary to mix the concepts “religiousness” and “extremism”. If a person is religious and strictly observes Shariah canons it does not mean that he becomes a member of the extremist organization tomorrow.⁴⁰⁸

Mullojanov rightly points out that being pious does not directly translate to being an extremist. Therefore, the government policy of policing signs of piety will remain potentially counterproductive. Mullojanov and Ryazantsev are academics, who work to shape the discourse on migration, security and Islam. Nonetheless, they are not direct objects of this discourse. Those who have been securitised, labelled ‘extremists’ are also engaged in resisting this. Resisting disciplinary power involves rejecting the label of being ‘abnormal’ and ‘bad,’ and sometimes continuing ‘deviant’ practices. For Farrukh, the process by which the IRPT came to be labelled a terrorist group was highly politicised:

I reject the label that we are terrorists. We are not trying to establish an Islamic state (*davlati Islomi*). We just want to raise awareness of Islam and build a society where people live moral (*man’avi*) lifestyles.

The GKNB need to occupy themselves with providing genuine security (*amniyati haqiqi*), rather than pursuing the opposition. Every country has opposition. It is crucial to the development of the country.⁴⁰⁹

For Farrukh, the IRPT is involved in Islamising rather than radicalising the population. These are two distinct processes; where Islamisation is positive for Farrukh, radicalisation is negative. Farrukh argues that security discourses are

⁴⁰⁷ The “Islamic triangle” consists of the districts of Isfara, Kuhistoni Mastchoh and the Rasht valley.

⁴⁰⁸ “Tajikistan’s Islamic Triangle: Acute or Obtuse Analysis?” *Registan*, 25 February 2010, <http://registan.net/2010/02/25/tajikistan%E2%80%99s-islamic-triangle-acute-or-obtuse-analysis/>

⁴⁰⁹ Fieldwork notes, April 2015.

instrumentalised by the government to pursue its political objectives, in this case removing the leading opposition party. This politicisation is not limited to the discrediting of the IRPT. Referring to the threat posed by ISIS, Farrukh also believes that the security services have politicised the issue for its own gain:

In principal, it is only a small number [Tajiks who went to fight in Syria and Iraq]. It is not a large threat (*tahdid*). Few will return. Many are being killed. They [the government] use Islamic extremists to pursue their own goals. Their policy is counter-productive; they will only radicalise young people. The government want to link us to this group, to blacken our name.⁴¹⁰

For Farrukh, the government is using the threat posed by ISIS to pursue its domestic objectives. Farrukh's critique of TASG runs deeper than the interests of the party. He also rejects the government's policies to closely regulate religious beliefs and practices. Farrukh frequently expressed his frustration with the situation in Tajikistan. As he stated:

There are two main points where I disagree with the government. The first is that we are told where to pray. But according to our school (*mahzab*) we can pray anywhere. There are people who pray at bus stops. They are fined. There are people who have prayed for a long time in mosques, but they are not registered. They are fined [...] The second law that we are opposed to is the law on parental responsibility, which says children up to 18 years of age cannot pray in mosques. We represent the voice of the people (*ovozi milli*) who are opposed to these laws.⁴¹¹

The management (*idora*) of religion in Tajikistan comes from the government. The government decides what you can and cannot do. But it is not the business of the government. That is a job for Allah. They [the government] are doing non-understandable (*ne fahmidan*) acts, forcing men to shave, filming prostitutes in hijabs. People see that those who pay prostitutes to wear hijabs are against us (*bar ziddi mo*).

Farrukh's comments raise a question that remains central to the politics of secularism and religion in Tajikistan. Who has the authority to regulate religion? Where the government argues that it has this right, accommodational and confrontational Islamists have argued that only God has this authority. Indeed, much of the resistance to the disciplinary power is based on *theological*

⁴¹⁰ Fieldwork notes, Moscow, June 2015.

⁴¹¹ Fieldwork notes, Moscow, April 2015.

arguments that centre on the notion that campaigns against the hijab, beard and prayer run counter to the teachings of Islam.

Eshoni Nurridinjon, a popular preacher and the younger brother of Hoji Akbar Turajonzoda, made a sermon criticising the Committee on Religious Affairs and Council of Ulema.⁴¹² He declared that:

A beard was worn by Mohammed, peace be upon him [...]. And I say to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, only God (*hudo*) can decide who wears a beard. [...] They say that terrorists wear beards. But Mohammed was not a terrorist! I am not, praise be to God, a terrorist. The Committee on Religious Affairs has renounced (*bezor*) [Islam].⁴¹³

Nurridinjon argues that styling oneself as a Muslim is a matter of personal, spiritual preference. He contends that only God, not the government, has the authority to dictate the rules concerning morality. Religious texts are not just words on a page, they are examples of the constitutive power of discourse and how it shapes social practices. Continuing Islamic bodily practices forms an example of what Foucault terms “techniques of the self,” practices through which subjects constitute themselves within and through systems of power. Whereas these practices cannot be separated from power and often reproduce domination, they can also be used to resist domination (Burkitt 2002; Thompson 2003). They can be used to achieve what Amy Allen terms ‘autonomy’ or “the twin capacities to reflect critically upon the power-knowledge relations that have constituted one’s subjectivity and to engage in practices of self-transformation” (Allen 2011: 44). Individuals are able to modify their subjectivity as a means to resist the subjectifying forces of power through alternative modes of self-making. The continuance of securitised bodily practices, such as wearing a beard fits into this category. Indeed, many pious Muslims continue ‘bad’ Islamic practices, arguing that they are merely expressing their faith. Abdulrahmon, for example, stated that he would grow his beard again after it was forcibly shaved by police:

I will grow my beard again. Am I displaying my opposition (*muqobil*) to the government? Maybe. But I am also following the teaching

⁴¹² "Paymon I Eshoni Nuriddinjon ba Emomali Rahmon" [Message from Eshoni Nuriddinjon to Emomali Rahmon], *Radio Ozodi*, 25 May 2014, <http://www.ozodi.org/content/famous-cleric-turajonzoda-criticised-religious-restrictions-in-tjk/25397667.html>

⁴¹³ "Eshoni Nuriddinjon/Khokimon Taroshidani Rishro Moda Kardand" [Eshoni Nuriddinjon/ Government Obsessed with Beards], YouTube, 17 November 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EVM-w-Vd7vY>

(*Sunnah*) of the Prophet, peace be upon him. The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, beard was thick. For me, it is a matter of living according to my faith (*din*).⁴¹⁴

His wife also wears a veil in an act that also defies the government's policies.

She should wear the hijab. It is written in the holy Quran: O Prophet! Say to your wives, your daughters that they should let down upon themselves their *jalabib*.⁴¹⁵ It is Allah, not the government (*hukumat*) which is the ultimate source of truth (*haqiqat*).⁴¹⁶

For Abdulrahmon, wearing a beard and his wife wearing a hijab is more of a personal, spiritual choice, rather than a political act of defiance. It is about living a moral life in the face of adversity. Nonetheless, he still recognises that his actions could be interpreted as resistance by the government. Indeed, visible displays of piety in a country where the government has waged a campaign against them, regardless of their intention, remain acts of resistance (Lilja and Vinthagen 2007).

Others have highlighted how the Tajik government's attempts to discipline Islam could backfire and produce discontent. Shortly after the defection of OMON commander Gulmurod Halimov to ISIS, Izzat Amon wrote on Facebook:⁴¹⁷

I do not justify the actions of the OMON commander, but I understand him. When corruption, regionalism (*mestnichestvo*), and nepotism is rampant in the country and everybody lies, then there is not another choice. This is the result of the politics of the ruling group for the last 25 years. If it continues this way, then even ministers will deliver video-messages from ISIS territory. Dear officials, continue your fight against the hijab, the beard, Azan and other Islamic attributes. But it will certainly come back to you like a boomerang (*obernetsya vam bumerangom*).⁴¹⁸

Indeed, much of the messaging of groups such as Islamic State focuses on the government's regulation of religion (Lemon 2015). Extremists label such

⁴¹⁴ Fieldwork notes, Moscow, April 2015.

⁴¹⁵ Arabic word meaning "outer garment"

⁴¹⁶ Fieldwork notes, Moscow, April 2015

⁴¹⁷ Izzat Amon is a Moscow-based a lawyer, diaspora leader and frequent critic of the regime on the social and traditional media.

⁴¹⁸ "The Boomerang Effect: Why Would Tajikistan's Special Forces Chief Join ISIS?," *Global Voices Online*, 28 May 2015, <https://globalvoices.org/2015/05/28/the-boomerang-effect-why-would-tajikistans-special-forces-chief-join-isis/>

practices as anti-Islamic and call for believers to wage a violent jihad against the secular regime.

So far I have discussed how actors can resist the simplicity of the *philosophical* basis of disciplinary power and use *theological* arguments to counter its logic. Rejecting the divide between ‘good’ and ‘bad’ Islam, growing a beard, wearing a hijab and looking at “extremist” videos all form acts of resistance to disciplinary power. But not all Tajik citizens are engaged in resisting TASG. Many find ways to accommodate themselves and negotiate the repressive politics of transnational authoritarian security governance.

At least three arguments to justify the government’s disciplining of ‘bad’ Muslims exist. First, many people value ‘authority’ (*maqomi*, Rus.: *avtoritet*) and ‘stability’ (*ustuvor*, Rus.: *stabilnost’*) above democracy and ‘liberty’ (*ozodi*, Rus.: *svoboda*) (Heathershaw 2009). According to an academic from the Tajik Academy of Sciences:

Our government saw that people were going abroad to Arab countries and becoming radicals. So they stopped them. For what, does Tajikistan need those kind of people? The Tajik people are peaceful.⁴¹⁹

Using the analogy of shepherd and flock, he explained to me that the government knows what is best for its people: order and discipline. His views are shared by director of a Moscow-based migrant rights NGO Marhabbo. She staunchly defends Tajikistan’s “national Islam” (Rus.: *natsionalnii Islam*) arguing that it prevents conflicts. For Marhabbo, religion is a potentially destabilising force that requires disciplining. Marhabbo believes that autocracies not democracies are the best political system for guaranteeing stability:

In some countries, like the UK, women go around with their faces covered [motions to her face, indicating a slit across her eyes]. But I am not democrat. If the result of democracy is the murder (*ubistvo*) of people, I cannot agree with it. Religion needs to be controlled.⁴²⁰

Marhabbo associates religious tolerance with instability, arguing that a “strong (Rus.: *zhostkii*) secular system” is the best way for a government to provide security for its citizens. This reverence for authoritarian stability is based on perceptions of the alternative: anarchy and instability.

⁴¹⁹ Author Interview with Tajik migration expert, Tajik Academy of Sciences, April 2015.

⁴²⁰ Fieldwork notes, Moscow, June 2015.

Second, a tendency exists for people to form their opinion of the current political system based on the alternatives to that system. There are two principal ways that Tajik citizens come to terms with what is happening through difference: temporal and spatial. Temporally, justifying the current policies involves comparing perceived traumas of the past unfavourably with the present. Two events stand out: the Tajik Civil War and Soviet period. Sipping tea in the *havli* (courtyard) of his home near the district centre of Gharm,⁴²¹ taxi driver from Nurobod, Abdujabbor recounted his own experience of the war:

We experimented with democracy in 1992. And look where that got us. Thousands died. The country destroyed. My brother was killed in the war. He fought on the side of the *mujahedeen* [the United Tajik Opposition]. He was a respected fighter with Mullo Quyomuddin's group. I was in the same group. He was killed fighting the government in 1994 in Komsolobod.⁴²² I had my leg blown off.⁴²³

For someone whose brother was killed by government forces, to now support the government appears puzzling. But as Abdujabbor explains, his experiences fighting made him place greater value on leading a peaceful life:

We [Tajiks] are tired of war (*az jang monda shudaand*). I fought the government, yes. But I support Rahmon. He is a rock (*sangin*). He provides peace (*sulh*). We value that above all else.⁴²⁴

Turning to state religious policy, Abdujabbor also qualifies the government's repressive policy by comparing it to the Soviet Union:

I am Muslim. I pray. I keep the fast. I grew up in the Soviet Union. *Namaz* was banned. Times are better. Now I can pray. I am free to live my life in peace.⁴²⁵

Abdujabbor has experienced a great deal of trauma and the memory of this makes him accept the status quo. While some people look to the past to justify the present, others look to other countries, concluding that the situation in Tajikistan is better.

Spatially, individuals contrast the stability that Tajikistan has experienced with chaos elsewhere. Where in the quote above Marhabbo comes to terms

⁴²¹ Whereas between 1929 and 1955, the Soviet authorities created a Gharm *viloyat* (region), here I refer to the town of Gharm, now the centre of Rasht *nohiya* (district).

⁴²² Komsolobod, the Soviet name for the *jamoat*, was renamed Darband in 2000.

⁴²³ Fieldwork notes, Gharm, September 2015.

⁴²⁴ Ibid.

⁴²⁵ Ibid.

with the current system by positively contrasting it against what she sees as an overly tolerant West, others look to the chaos of the Middle East. Muzaffar, the former GKNB colonel with whom I lived in Vanj, justifies the government's heavy-handed policies through the violence experienced in Egypt, Libya and Syria:

They had so-called popular protests in these countries. But there were powerful forces behind this. And look what happened: Islamists took over and caused bloodshed (*khun*). We do not need this in Tajikistan.⁴²⁶

Many Tajiks are internalising the hegemonic narrative that links Islam and democracy to the conflict in the Middle East. They conclude that for Tajikistan to remain stable it needs to reject these foreign (*begona*) influences. As I have demonstrated so far, Tajiks both resist and negotiate TASG. I have examined how actors use philosophical and theological arguments to undermine TASG, and how some Tajik citizens accommodate themselves with it by contrasting authoritarian stability with the anarchy of the Middle East and civil war era.

Criticisms of transnational authoritarian security governance are not restricted to disciplinary and sovereign power. Biopower constitutes the subject gradually, progressively and materially. It is a semi or unconscious process meaning that those who resist it do not identify what they are resisting. As Stellan Vinthagen and Mona Lilja argue “biopower is an advanced form of power and poses particular challenges upon resistance” (Lilja and Vinthagen 2014: 119). But this does not mean that resistance is impossible. Instead, resistance involves rejecting control over every aspect of life, and resisting “the managing of population policies and institutions by acting differently, in subcultures, and by cultivating a different set of values, practices and institutions” (Lilja and Vinthagen 2014: 121) In the next section, I discuss how some pious Muslims are resisting the government of Tajikistan's exercise of biopower, the “taking charge of life” (Foucault 1981: 143).

Biopower

Resisting biopower involves rejecting the forms of subjectivity engendered by the pastoral care of elites and the horizontal surveillance of citizens. Given the

⁴²⁶ Fieldwork notes, Vanj, August 2015.

often unconscious process through which biopower constitutes subjects, those resisting it are unlikely to do so consciously. Resistance is dispersed and anti-hegemonic; those resisting biopower do not have the ability to replace it with a new logic of power. Whereas subjects cannot fully escape the relations of power in which they live, they can resist specific aspects of biopower, creating spaces in which they can live life on their own terms. The subjects of securitisation of TASG subtly resist its biopower by continuing to live their life with dignity and morality. Referring to their lives, many of my research subjects used the Tajik word *toqat*. An adjective denoting “patience,” “endurance” and “perseverance,” the word roughly equates to the Russian term *terpet,*’ to endure, put up with and suffer, which Tajiks also use. *Toqat* denotes a life lived with honour and dignity in the face of adversity. For pious Muslims, their Islamic faith is a source of this endurance. Islam offers a spiritual and moral sanctuary for those who adhere to it. First, it places *transcendence* over immanence, allowing the believer to focus on the hereafter. Second, *internally*, it allows believers to focus on an inner struggle within themselves. Third, *externally*, it provides a moral guide for living in and coping with the secular world. By focusing on what comes after life, many pious Muslims find solace in their current conditions. According to Suhrob:

Life in Tajikistan is tough (*mushqil*). We do not live. We endure! (*toqat kardan*). First of all, I am interested in Allah, peace be upon him, becoming a good Muslim and guiding others. I am less interested in the human world, than in what comes after.⁴²⁷

By placing transcendence over immanence, Suhrob consciously withdraws from the secular world and its problems. Like many pious Muslims in Tajikistan, Suhrob finds sanctuary in religion; it is through religion that he negotiates the hardship of life as a subject of securitisation through TASG. Farrukh also eschews confrontation with the government:

We [the IRPT] are faced with constant government attacks on our honour (*nomus*). We could insult (*tahshir*) the government in return. But we do not. I tell my friends in Tajikistan. If a policeman insults you in the street, do not respond to this provocation (Rus.: *provokatsiya*). Just walk away. The government may have all the

⁴²⁷ Fieldwork notes, Moscow, April 2015.

money and power. But they have no honour. We live our lives to glorify Allah, and not our material desires.⁴²⁸

Farrukh preaches moderation, forgiveness and dignity. Through their faith, pious Muslims can separate themselves morally from the government. Indeed, for Farrukh being resilient to government policies is not sufficient; Muslims also have to fight an inner struggle within themselves. When discussing this process of self-reflection and working on the self, Farrukh uses the term *jihad*:

No person is united (*muttahir*). We all have a mixture of feelings and impulses. A struggle (*jihad*) takes place within us of good versus evil. I choose to live my life as a Muslim. A religious society is a healthy society. Islam guides us in our daily life. But the regime misrepresents religion as dangerous and backwards. Our fight against injustice in Tajikistan is also *jihad*.⁴²⁹

So for Farrukh two types of *jihad* exist. The first is endogenous to the political subject. The second is exogenous and centres on resisting the government's assertively secular policies. For Abdulrahmon *toqat* refers to being patient; it offers a way to cope with the secular world:

We have a saying: Little by little will become a lot, drop by drop (*qarta qarta*) will become a downpour. We must not become obsessed with the present, but think to the future. If we are patient (*toqat*), then over time things will change (*taghiir*) for the better. We cannot expect revolutionary (*inqilob*) change. People do not change their ways of thinking (*fikr*) quickly. Change must be gradual (*ohista*).

The security services have threatened me. And they have tried to make life difficult for me. But I am still here! I live. I work. I have my opinions (Rus.: *mneniya*) And they [the government] will not be able to take (*zakhvatit'*) those away from me. So long as I endure (*terpet'*) through it all, I will win (*pobedit'*).⁴³⁰

Religion forms a way for Tajiks to cope with the harshness of their existence. By living a religious life, they resist government attempts to mould them into secular citizen-subjects.

For many young Tajiks religion forms a moral framework through which to guide them through the difficulties of everyday life. Farrukh, who describes his

⁴²⁸ Fieldwork notes, Moscow, June 2015

⁴²⁹ Fieldwork notes, Moscow, May 2015.

⁴³⁰ Fieldwork notes, Moscow, May 2015.

upbringing as “secular,” described to me how he ‘returned’ to religion in his thirties:⁴³¹

I grew up in Shahrinav. My father was a teacher in the middle school. My mother worked in a textile mill. We had a secular family, none of us were religious. We had no religious education. I began to think about God when I came to Russia in 2003. I went to pray with friends. When Kabiri became leader [of the IRPT] in 2007, he reformed the party. Young people came. I had a friend, also a young man. I used to visit his house regularly. I became acquainted with the program of the IRPT and liked it.⁴³²

Farrukh told me how Islam is part of his “self” and forms a crucial guide on how to live his life. But being religious is not a fixed part of the self, it is a process of becoming. “When people think of jihad, they think of war (*jang*). But no- jihad takes place inside each person. It is your personal battle with desire (*khohish*).” Farrukh told me about how he used to be unfaithful to his wife, but since embracing religion he has remained true to her.

Abdulrahmon expressed a similar view. For him, religion is about being in the world and learning about yourself and your relationship with God:

In school we learned about science, history and mathematics. It helped my mind (*aqf*) but I did not help my soul. Religion was absent from the classroom. So I, like many young boys in my village, studied religion after school in a *hujra* [unregistered religious school]. My teacher had studied in a madrassa in Syria. He was knowledgeable (*bosavod*) about the Quran and *hadith* and spoke Arabic. With him, I learned the quran. I learned to live my life for the glory of Allah.⁴³³

Rather than actively resisting biopower, many Tajiks simply learn to negotiate it on its own terms. As I have argued throughout this thesis, disciplinary, sovereign and biopower are not discrete forms of power; they combine in varying ways to produce political subjects. To demonstrate how TASG shapes subjects and how they can negotiate and resist this, I will conclude with the example of a prayer group led by Tablighi Jamaat member Suhrob.

⁴³¹ Despite not practising as a young man, Farrukh always considered himself to be ‘Muslim,’ by virtue of his identity as a Tajik. As such, he ‘returned’ to Islam in his thirties.

⁴³² Fieldwork notes, Moscow, March 2015

⁴³³ Fieldwork notes, Gharm, September 2013.

In lieu of a Conclusion: Responding to TASG: Suhrob's Prayer Group

After becoming a follower of Tablighi Jamaat in 2012, Suhrob spent two years learning from his peers and devoting himself to becoming a 'good,' practicing Muslim in his own personal lives. Having learnt more about Islam, Suhrob began to share his religious knowledge with others and started prosteletysing in the bazaar in Moscow region where he worked as a perfume seller. Tablighi Jamaat members, according to Suhrob, are expected to dedicate two hours each day to the movement. His activities focused on *dawah*, promoting the revival of the Islamic faith and calling his fellow Muslims back to orthodox Islam. Despite having no official registration – Tablighi Jamaat has been banned in Russia since 2009 - Suhrob held his prayer group three times a week in a small storage room in the market. In Suhrob's words, the group primarily focused on "enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong," teaching members about Islamic morality and how to become better Muslims.⁴³⁴ His meetings were attended by between ten and fifteen migrants each time. Their ages ranged from 18 to 45 years old. Lasting for around two hours and usually held in the afternoons, at the meetings students read the *Fazail-e-Amal*, the main book of Tablighi Jamaat.⁴³⁵ The meetings focused on religious knowledge and religious practice. Everyone, even Suhrob, sat at the same level as a symbol of their equality as Muslims. Tajik migrants, especially those from Suhrob's native Vanj, found the group attractive. First, with only a brief break during prayer time, they did not have time to travel to one of Moscow's four mosques, which would take them over three hours in total.⁴³⁶ Second, more comfortable speaking Tajik, the attendees preferred the sermons given by Suhrob to the Russian and Tatar language ones given at local mosques. Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, the prayer group was interactive, giving them opportunities to discuss moral and spiritual issues with Suhrob.

⁴³⁴ The concept of "enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong" comes from *Sura 3, Ayah 104* of the Quran. It is one of the most important *sura* for members of Tablighi Jamaat.

⁴³⁵ *Fazail-e-Amal* is a compilation of hadith and commentaries on the Quran written by Muhammad Zakaryya (1898-1982), the nephew of the movement's founder Muhammad Ilyas and main ideologue of the movement.

⁴³⁶ Moscow has a 'Muslim' population of over two million, but only has four mosques. These are the Cathedral mosque at Prospekt Mira (Rus.: *Sobornaya mechet'*), the Old Mosque (*Istoricheskaya Mechet'*) in Zamoskvorechye, the Memorial Mosque at Park Pobeda and the Inam Mosque in Otryadnoye. In September 2015, a new structure at Prospekt Mira was opened. It can accommodate up to 10,000 worshippers.

Nonetheless, Suhrob's links to Tablighi Jamaat, an organisation banned in Russia and Tajikistan, attracted the attention of the Tajik security services. Two men came to visit Suhrob, accusing him of "extremism," and telling him they knew what he was doing and he should stop doing it. After threatening Suhrob and his family in Vanj, the security services forced him to cease his activities. Although he does not see himself as engaged in a political struggle, he nonetheless became an object of security, with the authorities deeming him to be a threat and closing down his prayer group. Like the example of Savriddin Jurayev, the young Muslim from Isfara whose story I opened this thesis with, Suhrob's local activities became the target of transnational authoritarian security governance. His case provides the basis for a discussion of the main themes of this thesis: how the forms of power underlying TASG work to govern 'radical Islam,' how these subjectify those they target and how subjects of securitisation can resist this.

Despite living in Russia, like many of the individuals described in this thesis Suhrob was targeted by the Tajik security services. With his affiliation to the outlawed Tablighi Jamoat, Suhrob became a subject of sovereign power. As a member of a banned group, the security services could threaten Suhrob with detention, rendition and imprisonment in Tajikistan. These threats are supported by the government's policies. Since banning the group in 2006, the government has arrested scores of suspected followers of the movement, sentencing them to up to five years in prison. Suhrob's family received visits from local government officials who suggested they 'encourage' him to stop preaching or he would face jail. But the Tajik government's management of the problem of 'radical' Islam as presented by Suhrob's group went further than this reliance on the deterrent power of the repressive juridical-legal system. Despite styling his own activities as apolitical - focusing on morality rather than worldly (*dunyo*) politics – Suhrob's group existed outside of the state-sanctioned religious system and thus constituted part of the "parallel Islam" that is the target of disciplinary power. Suhrob's white robes, skull-cap and beard gave him the appearance of a devout Muslim, separating him from the 'normal' Tajik migrant workers who wear 'western' clothes. Suhrob is thus a deviant Muslim who needs disciplining. This framing of his activities as 'bad,' deviant and anti-Tajik became clear when Suhrob received a visit from the Tajik security services in June 2015. Suhrob recounts the visit as follows:

Two men came to my stall. They said, “are you Suhrob Tojiddinov from Sayyod village in Vanj?”⁴³⁷ I asked them who they were. They declined to answer. “We know what you are doing here. You want to create an Islamic state (*davlati Islomi*), you want to betray your motherland (*vatan*), you want to allow us to be ruled by foreign powers (*dasti horiji*). What you are doing boy (*bacha*), will be very dangerous (*khatarnok*) for you.”⁴³⁸

This interaction indicates that the hegemonic narrative, which frames radical Islam as ‘bad,’ foreign and anti-Tajik is being reproduced at the local level. The two men who visited Suhrob framed his actions as a betrayal of the nation, justifying any punitive measures taken against him. Due to his actions, Suhrob loses his subject status as a loyal citizen and becomes an exiled traitor. He is not living a form of life that the Tajik government deems is worth living. Indeed, transnational authoritarian security governance shapes Suhrob’s life in a number of ways.

Surveillance forces groups to operate more clandestinely, and thus appearing more threatening than they actually are. Due to fear of being discovered by the local authorities or infiltrated by the Tajik security services, Suhrob changed meeting locations on a weekly basis, using online communications app Viber to confirm the location of each meeting on the day itself. It thus became an ‘underground’ group. But such practices only feed the security services concerns over the dangers posed by “parallel Islam.” By operating so clandestinely, like a terrorist cell, the government accusations were given greater legitimacy. Other than stopping his activities, this securitisation left Suhrob with no safe options. The alternative to operating ‘underground’ was to openly declare that his group was Tablighi and admit to breaking the law. Ultimately, this dilemma created by government security practices forced him to abandon the group. Ceasing his activities did not result in Surhob becoming a docile, obedient citizen; he continues to resist TASG.

Indeed, transnational authoritarian security governance does not go uncontested. As the discourse analysis and ethnography in this chapter has shown, subjects of securitisation, and some subjects of security, have found ways to publically and privately contest government narratives and practices.

⁴³⁷ I have changed the name of the village.

⁴³⁸ Fieldwork notes, Moscow, June 2015.

Such acts of resistance come from a range of subjugated people and are based on an array of secular and religious, liberal and illiberal rationales. Many people find ways to live their lives with morality and dignity when faced with securitisation and security practices. Suhrob is an example of this kind of resistance to TASG. He continues to live his life according to the laws followed by Tablighi Jamaat; he prays, continues to wear a beard and Islamic clothing, and continues his internal jihad against evil:

Why are we called terrorists? We reject violence as a means of spreading the faith (*dawah*). We call upon Muslims to search inside themselves and wage *jihad* against evil. We do not concern ourselves with politics (*sisoyat*).⁴³⁹

Unlike confrontational Islamists, who wage jihad against others, for Suhrob jihad is a personal process of becoming a good Muslim; it is about how to live life. Indeed, whilst the government of Tajikistan is engaged in a struggle over what should be like, attempting to promote healthy, secular lifestyles through the exercise of biopower, Suhrob's activities are also focused on how people should live their lives.

For the government of Tajikistan, life is about making money (*pul*), accumulating power and other worldly (*dunyo*) matters. But, for me life is about being a Muslim first, and living a life that satisfies Allah. When the government threatens me, I am not scared (*ne metarsam*), for I know that I will be in paradise (Arab: *Jannah*).⁴⁴⁰

Suhrob's words point to yet another paradox of the Tajik government's attempts to govern the threat posed by 'radical' Islam. The government views certain forms of religion as foreign, abnormal and potentially dangerous. It intervenes to manage the risk posed by such Islamic practices. Yet for those that it targets – the subjects of securitisation – it is this very Islamic faith that gives them the fortitude to negotiate and the inspiration to resist TASG. The belief that what they are doing is morally right, regardless of how the government labels their practices, gives them confidence that ultimately they will emerge on top.

⁴³⁹ Fieldwork notes, Moscow, June 2015.

⁴⁴⁰ Fieldwork notes, Moscow, July 2014.

Conclusion

A serious study of cultural practices and their ethical and moral referents, both structured and structuring through the agents' habitus is still a work in progress. This would engage the "statonational" obsession of IR literature, where "national identities" are conceived as objectifiable elements of territorially bound societies. Moreover, it should provide an occasion to test the tools developed by critical approaches to security outside the "Western" world and to abandon euro- and amerocentric agendas of (in)security (CASE 2006: 470).

Ten years ago a group of critically-inclined scholars – the C.A.S.E collective - assembled to write a manifesto setting a critical agenda for the study of security (CASE 2006). As well as giving an overview of critical scholarship to that date, the manifesto highlighted a range of potential avenues for future research. In this thesis, I have used the case of Tajikistan's transnational campaign against 'radical' Islam to develop a number of arguments that address the issues raised in the quote above. I have made arguments about three phenomena and how these relate to (in)security: the transnational, the authoritarian and the secular.

Transnational Security

I have worked towards addressing the relative absence of reflection on diasporas and transnationalism in security studies (Ragazzi 2009). Rather than looking at how receiving states securitise immigrants, or how diasporas shape the policy their home state, I have examined how the government of Tajikistan governs its security by policing emigrants. These practices have an impact on the way we understand transnational security and its relationship to one of the foundational concepts of international relations: sovereignty. In his 2009 article "Governing Diasporas," Francesco Ragazzi raises a question that is central to our understanding of the relationship between transnational security governance and international relations: "How does the theory of the international account for practices of sovereignty that go beyond the territorial borders that legitimize them?" Ragazzi highlights how transnational security practices create a paradox for sovereignty. The "increasing claims by governments to monopolies of violence, allocation of resources and "national identity" outside of the very border that entitle them to legitimately do so," pose a fundamental challenge to the Weberian state defined by the monopoly of violence in a delimited territory (Ragazzi 2009: 383). Of course Ragazzi is not

the first to make this claim; much of the critical scholarship in international relations has targeted the objective, essentialist definition of the state (Agnew 1994; Walker 1993; Weber 1994; Bartelson 1995; Onuf 1991). So, how can we move beyond the “territorial trap” (Agnew 1994) and develop new topologies of the transnational?

My Foucauldian analysis of transnational authoritarian security governance has captured the multiple *levels* at which security operates. It is both transnational, domestic and everyday. Transnational authoritarian security governance is ultimately *domestic* in so far as it is about securing the continued existence of the current regime. Through an analysis of the hegemonic discourse on security and religion, I have shown the way in which elites frame these issues and how this shape *transnational* governance regimes. I have examined these practices through my database of 49 extraterritorial security incidents and through semi-structured interviews. But my analysis does not stop with a top-down analysis of how security governance emerged, how it is framed and how it operates. I also examined *local*, everyday understandings of security, from the perspective of those deemed threatening – the subjects of securitisation. Through ethnography, I have demonstrated how the transnational politics of security is translated into local settings and shapes people’s everyday lives. Indeed, these levels are not discreet; citizens do not purely inhabit the local, and elites the transnational. The exercise of power through TASG targets individual bodies and the entire population. As such it overcomes the sovereign territorial divide, incorporating any Tajik citizen or émigré regardless of where he or she lives as its subjects. The transnational has become a site for the practice of sovereign, disciplinary and biopower, all of which aim to neutralise potential threats to political stability in Tajikistan. The transnational, however, is also a space for resistance. In Chapter Six, I showed the ways in which subjects of securitisation used the internet and transnational institutions, such as the European Court of Human Rights (ECTHR) to resist TASG.

Savridin Jurayev’s case illustrates these points. He started as the *local* target of the security services in Isfara for his links to mullo Saidullo Marupov. But after he fled to Russia, he became the *transnational* target of TASG. What became an issue of local politics relating to the imam of a local mosque, became a transnational incident that was heard at the European Court of Human Rights. His case demonstrates how the transnational and the local are

sites of power and resistance, and how the security practices of TASG span and challenge the divisions between the local, domestic and transnational. My analysis of security governance highlighted the ways in which it is transnational, but also explored the ways in which it is authoritarian.

Authoritarian Security

More needs to be done to shift the focus of critical security studies away from its origins in Europe and North America, and to examine how concepts and approaches ‘travel’ to different political settings (Ayooob 1997; Wilkinson 2007; Bilgin 2010). Indeed, the literature associated with the “post-colonial,” “practice,” “governance,” and “everyday” turns in security studies, is yet to engage directly with authoritarianism. Given that approximately one third of the world’s population live in authoritarian states, this lacuna in critical security studies certainly warrants greater attention.⁴⁴¹ Although a few studies exist that focus on security discourses (Vuori 2011; Lewis 2015), peacebuilding (de Oliveira 2011; Lewis 2010; Heathershaw 2009), experiences of occupation (Ryan 2015; Ochs 2011), and conflict management (Piccolino 2015; Smith 2014), my thesis has examined how authoritarian security governance operates and what everyday life is like for those targeted by it.

Although overlaps certainly exist between liberal and authoritarian security governance, I argue that they differ in important ways. The security culture in Tajikistan – whose president has ruled since 1992, where elections are rigged, freedom of speech is severely curtailed, where torture is routinised, and opposition parties outlawed – certainly differs from that of say, Great Britain.⁴⁴² Liberal governments certainly engage in illiberal practices, but it is a matter of scale; torture, extrajudicial executions, intimidation, extortion by security services are more commonplace in authoritarian states. Authoritarian security governance involves monopolising control over space and discourse. Ultimately, it involves governing through obedience rather than through freedom (Dean 2010). Yet, this obedience is not enforced on the population by repression alone, my thesis has demonstrated the ways in which security is governed by self-regulating citizens who monitor themselves and others for

⁴⁴¹ “Freedom in the World 2016,” *Freedom House*,
https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/FH_FITW_Report_2016.pdf

⁴⁴² Although as I write this in the aftermath of Brexit, it seems as though the differences may narrow.

signs of 'extremism.' By becoming loyal, secular subjects, these individuals become a bulwark against extremism. Indeed, secularism is central to TASG and it is to the links between the secular and security that I now turn.

Secular Security

In this thesis, I have argued that security governance in Tajikistan is based on a secular logic; if religion is tightly regulated by the state, then the state can manage the threat posed by Islamic 'extremism.' Where religion is backwards, potentially dangerous, secularism is progressive and provides stability (Gutkowski 2014; Mavelli 2012; Bilgin 2007). Rather than providing for freedom of religion, the secular becomes a site of exclusion and control (Connolly 1999). My thesis has traced the *emergence* of this association between secularism and security back to the Soviet Union and examined how elites have *consolidated* and *recontextualised* this discourse since independence. I looked at the dialectic between discourses and practices, examining how secularism is *operationalised*, shaping policies to manage religion and provide security. Finally, I have looked at how pious Muslims respond to attempts to manage religion, examining how faith itself is a source of negotiating the hegemonically-imposed notion that life should be lived secularly. As such, my analysis has captured the top-down imposition of secularism, but also how secularism shapes everyday life and vernacular understandings of security.

I have therefore made a case for enjoining insights from a range of approaches within critical security studies. From the 'Copenhagen School' and post-structural critiques of traditional security studies, I conceptualised security as process, how what security is and who it is for is contested by different actors. Drawing on insights from the sociologically-inspired 'Paris School,' I examined security as practice, how discourses shape security practices. Security governance, is a concept that links both discourse and practice, drawing attention to how security is managed. Rather than being benign, security governance is undercut by relations of power. Utilising a Foucauldian approach, I conceptualised security as subjectification, how actors govern through security by shaping political subjects. Foucault provides the conceptual tools to bridge the divide between discourse and practice, the transnational and the local. At the beginning of his lecture series at the College de France,

Security, Territory, Population, Michel Foucault observed “that the general economy of power in our societies is becoming a domain of security” (Foucault 2007: 10). Power and security are not wielded by elites. They cannot be monopolised or controlled, even in authoritarian settings. Instead, there is a perpetual struggle over security; there is always resistance to security and this impacts on people’s daily lives in important ways. Having situated my findings within the academic literature, I will now examine its relevance to policy.

Developing Policies to Govern Security

Studying transnational authoritarian security governance has never been more pertinent; extraterritorial security incidents are occurring more frequently. Of the 49 cases I found, 36 have taken place since 2014. As I revise the final draft of this thesis in June 2016, another two cases involving three individuals have occurred. In one case, two Tajik citizens were detained on an Interpol Red Notice in Kharkiv airport in Ukraine on 24 June 2016. They were both carrying “extremist literature” and are suspected of being involved with the Islamic State. A Kharkiv court ordered that they be temporarily detained for 40 days on 6 July.⁴⁴³ In the second case Amriddin Vatanov travelled to Turkey in May 2016 after he grew suspicious that his son Furkat would cross the border into Syria.⁴⁴⁴ 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 the Tajik law enforcement officers in Istanbul, who rendered him to Tajikistan to stand trial on charges under Article 401 of the Criminal Code (illegal participation of citizens in armed conflicts in the territory of other countries). With continued international interest in the security situation in Tajikistan, donors will continue to support projects targeting youth radicalisation, border security and counter-terrorism. Although this thesis has largely focused on the practices of the government of Tajikistan and its agents, in Chapter Four I drew comparisons with neo-liberal attempts to support security governance in Tajikistan. I will now briefly outline some of the ways the international community could reformulate its support for Tajikistan.

⁴⁴³ “In Kharkov Court Arrested Two Wanted by Interpol Tajik Mercenaries Involved in ISIS,” Reporter.ua, 5 July 2016, <http://en.reporter-ua.ru/in-kharkov-court-arrested-two-wanted-by-interpol-tajik-mercenaries-involved-in-isis.html>

⁴⁴⁴ “Amriddin: Tyur’ma Dlya Moego Syna Luchshe, Chem Voina V Sirii” [Amriddin: Jail is Better for my Son than The War in Syria], *Radio Ozodi*, 11 June 2016, <http://rus.ozodi.org/a/27791708.html>

Security studies is interlinked with security policymaking; there is no clear boundary between theorising security and practising security (CASE 2006). As I stated in the introduction, during the process of writing this thesis I have not been an objective observer of the events I describe; I have been actively involved in the production of a critically-inclined discourse towards what is happening in Tajikistan, writing opinion pieces, giving interviews to journalists and presenting to policy-makers. A rigorous debate over the usability of the knowledge produced by critical security studies scholars has developed (Chandler and Hynek 2013). Critical security studies developed from a need to provide emancipatory alternatives to the current politics of security (Booth 1991). As leading proponent Ken Booth concludes:

For those who believe that we live in a humanly constituted world, the distinction between theory and practice dissolves: theory is a form of practice, and practice is a form of theory [...] it is important for critical security studies to engage with the real by suggesting policies, agents, and sites of change (Booth 1997: 114).

Such an account of security should start by examining the (in)security of “the poor, the disadvantaged, the voiceless, the unrepresented, the powerless” (Bellamy and Williams 2007: 7). But for Matt McDonald and Chris Browning, CSS has “generally fallen short of providing us with a sophisticated, convincing account of either the politics or the ethics of security” (Browning and McDonald 2013). Becoming “policy-relevant” has become a pejorative term; many of those who endeavour to be policy relevant, to co-produce knowledge with policy-makers, with specific problems in mind, can fall into the traps of essentialism and functionalism, re-inforcing taken for granted assumptions. But this need not be the case. Becoming critical is about challenging taken for granted assumptions and encouraging policy-makers to question the objectivity of social categories and reflect on their own positionality. My research highlights the “many ways in which Foucault’s rich and diverse writings could inform a search for emancipatory alternatives” (Chandler and Hynek 2013: 55). My thesis is not aimed directly at policy-makers; it does not suggest ‘quick-fix’ solutions to the complex challenges of security governance. Nonetheless, a few suggestions on how actors, both external and internal, emerge from the findings of this thesis. I will briefly discuss them here.

Avoid Simplistic Understandings of Security, Religion and Radicalisation

Recruitment into extremist organisations is a complex, multi-factor, non-linear process. If there is no single pathway into extremism, then there is no single solution to the problem. Fundamentally, there is a lack of sufficient evidence to give actors a full picture of what is going on. Narratives produced by the government and confrontational Islamist groups are highly politicised. As I have shown in this thesis, the threat posed by 'extremism' forms a rationale that lies at the centre of authoritarian governance in Tajikistan. Unfortunately, a tendency exists for analysts to reproduce these, concluding that Islamic extremism poses a serious threat to Central Asia (Heathershaw and Montgomery 2014; Heathershaw and Megoran 2011). Ultimately, there is a need for actors to be more humble, to admit that there are still more questions than answers when it comes to understanding extremist recruitment. Countering terrorism will always be an incomplete project and actors need to be circumspect when evaluating what can be achieved.

Avoid Securitising Young People

According to the hegemonic discourse, young people are particularly vulnerable to extremist messaging and recruitment. Indeed, the available evidence does suggest that this is accurate. But the number of young people who have joined extremist groups is relatively small. If 1,000 Tajik citizens have travelled to Syria and Iraq as the government claims, then this is just one in every 8,000 citizens. Yet, the discourse of vulnerability to extremism is a crucial prism through which young people in Tajikistan are represented (Roche 2010). This link between young people and extremism is also present in development discourses. In recent years, a number of projects supported by development agencies have targeted 'youth radicalization.' Nonetheless, by labelling young people as "at-risk" leads to further feelings of marginalisation among young people themselves. In 2011, I attended one of the numerous Western donor-sponsored roundtables focusing on youth radicalisation in Tajikistan. After a lengthy discussion about the risk that young people join radical Islamist groups, a student from Shurobod stood up. "Why are we framing the issue as we are? Why not have more events on positive themes like youth and hope for the future?" the student asked. As I have argued throughout this thesis, framing

matters; discourses are constitutive of social reality. By framing projects in a more positive way, giving young people opportunities to gain employment, become involved in their community, extremism can be countered in a more indirect way that does not make young people feel stigmatised.

Strengthening Security Institutions Does not Always Strengthen Security

Concerned with stability in Tajikistan, which has a 1,344 kilometre border with Afghanistan, external actors have spent hundreds of millions of dollars supporting the military and security services of the country. Not only has the US, EU and OSCE provided support, but Russia and China, with the Collective Security Treaty Organisation and Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, have as well (Cooley 2012). Military aid remains a major source of rent for the regime. Instead of being used to counter terrorism, weapons and training have been put to use against civilians, most notably in Khorog in 2012. Despite being used primarily to secure the regime, and not the people, military assistance has continued. As Farrukh states:

Outside powers see that there is no reform in the country, but they still support the government. They may criticise the government for its human rights record. But they still send millions of dollars to Tajikistan.⁴⁴⁵

Whilst the crackdown on opposition in recent years suggests that the state is growing stronger not weaker, the security situation for citizens is deteriorating. More individuals are becoming the targets of TASG. As long as external actors continue to support the security services, whilst occasionally criticising them, then this situation will not improve.

Final Remarks: Three Paradoxes

This thesis has been replete with seeming contradictions and paradoxes, so it seems fitting that I end my discussion by drawing attention to three of them. Both have been present, if under the surface, throughout this thesis. As I highlighted at the beginning of Chapter One, security and insecurity are not opposites; they exist in an agonal relationship. The production of security inevitably produces insecurity for some. Through an analysis of the forms of power underlying TASG, I have shown the ways in which the security practices

⁴⁴⁵ Fieldwork notes, Moscow, May 2015.

of the Tajik state create a great deal of insecurity for those they subjectify. From being arrested, rendered, intimidated, beaten, surveilled and assassinated, the subjects of securitisation live a life fraught with insecurity and fear. The transnational politics of security affects almost every aspect of their daily lives.

Recently, a journalist emailed me with questions about my research on transnational security. For him, it seemed counterintuitive that Tajikistan, the weakest state in Central Asia, a state that is barely able to keep order in its own borders, is capable of deploying its security apparatus abroad. Indeed, Tajikistan is often described as a state that, if not yet failed, is at least “on the road to failure,” or at best a “weak” state (ICG 2009; ICG 2016; cf. Heathershaw 2009; Heathershaw 2012). This state weakness constitutes a key regional security concern. In its latest report, published in January 2016, Brussels-based think tank International Crisis Group argues that:

Under the weight of economic crisis and political stagnation, the state may continue weakening, perhaps with little impact beyond its borders, but its internal and external fragility might also lead to instability that would resonate in the broader region (ICG 2016: 2).

The assumed weakness of the Tajik state, whose government cannot keep control of its own borders, runs counter to the finding of this thesis. The banning of the IRPT, campaign against Group 24 and the government’s assertively secular policies are not symptoms of weakness, but indications that the regime of Emomali Rahmon is growing stronger. Contrary to ICG’s conclusion that Rahmon is not in a stronger position, “his political and security apparatus is fragile,” the emergence and increasing occurrence of extraterritorial security incidents indicates that authoritarianism in Tajikistan is becoming stronger. Indeed, the emergence and consolidation of TASG is vital to our understanding of regime consolidation in Tajikistan. As my Foucauldian analysis of security governance in Tajikistan has shown, the state does not rely on repressive sovereign power alone; ultimately, it aims to create political subjects that are loyal to the regime and therefore keep it secure. Although resistance is always possible where there is power, it remains anti-hegemonic, momentary and decentralised. The space for resistance in Tajikistan has dwindled since 2010

when I first moved to Tajikistan. When authoritarian governments take rights away from citizens they rarely give them back.⁴⁴⁶

Rather than ending on this negative resignation, I will end with a quote from one of the people most affected by TASG, Suhrob. His endurance, faith in God and determination to persevere in the face of the oppressive politics of (in)security

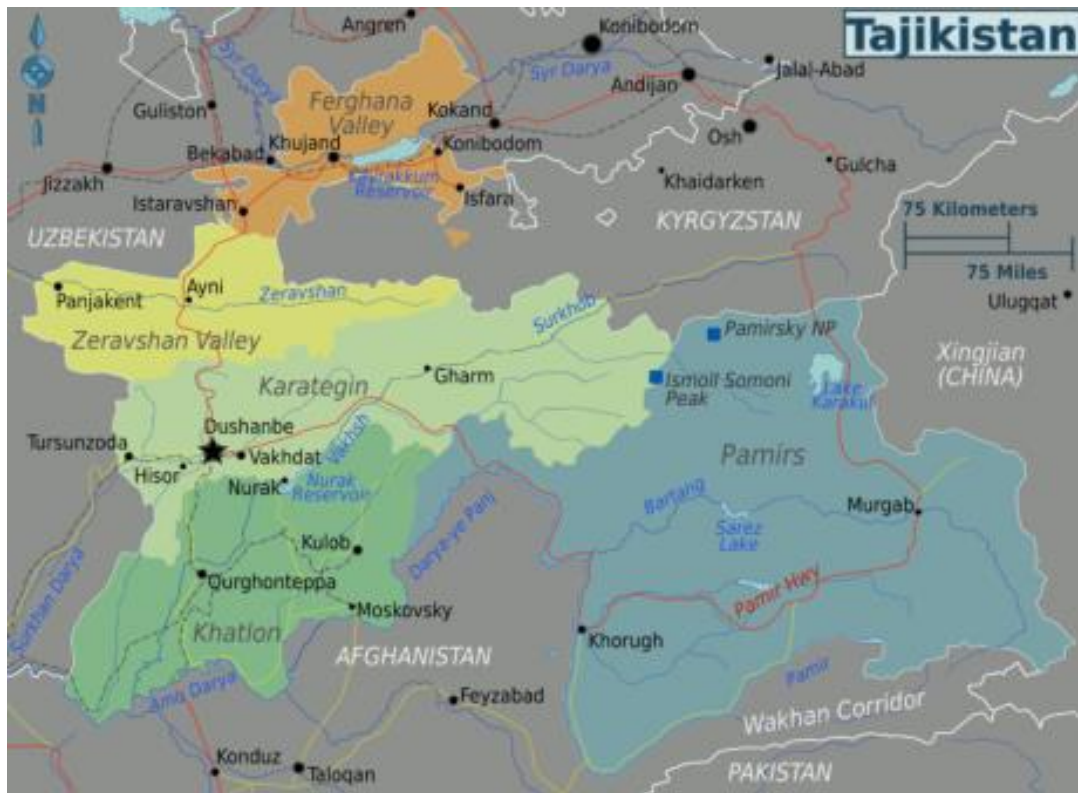
Aki (brother) Edward, when you go back to England, do not just write bad things about the situation. For those of us who have faith (*din*), have hope (*umed*). There is no might nor power except in Allah.⁴⁴⁷ With him, I am strong.

Thus we come to the final paradox: it is faith in God that makes many the target of TASG. But it is this same faith that gives them strength to cope with and resist the politics of transnational authoritarian security governance.

⁴⁴⁶ There are exceptions, such as Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Nigeria and Tunisia.

⁴⁴⁷ This statement is known as the *hawqala*. Power, translated from the Arabic *hawla*, denotes transformation and change.

Appendix I: Map of Tajikistan



Appendix II: Table of Extraterritorial Security Incidents

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
Firuz, Loic	Group 24	Russia	2015	Arrest / Detention
Gadoev, Sharofiddin	Group 24	Spain	2015	Arrest/Detention
Gaforov, Abdurazok	HuT	Russia	2008	Arrest/Detention
Gilyayev, Oyatullo	Youth for Revival of Tajikistan	Russia	2014	Arrest/Detention
Ibragimov, Maksud	Youth for the Revival of Tajikistan	Russia	2015	Rendition
Iskandarov, Mahmadrusi	DPT	Russia	2005	Rendition
Jabirov, Suleiman	Youth for Revival of Tajikistan	Russia	2014	Arrest/Detention
Juraev, Nizomkhon	Former insider	Russia	2012	Rendition
Juraev, Savriddin	IMU	Russia	2011	Rendition

Kabiri, Muhiddin	IRPT	Russia/Turkey	2015	Exile
Khaydarov, Mahmadjon	UTO	Russia	2008	Arrest/Detention
Khojaye, 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
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	Arrest / Detention
Latipov, Abdulvosi	UTO	Russia	2012	Rendition
Mahmadiyev, Tagoymurod	Group 24	Russia	2015	Arrest / Detention
Nasrulloev	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 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
Vosiyev, Abdurahim	Group 24	Russia	2014	Arrest/Detention

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Appendix IV: List of Interviews

1. Leading member of the IRPT, Dushanbe, 18/07/2013
2. Former-OMON sergeant, Dushanbe, 19/07/2013.
3. Local analyst, Dushanbe, 20/07/2013.
4. Editor-in-chief of an independent newspaper, Dushanbe, 29/07/2013.
5. Prominent journalist, Dushanbe, 24/07/2013.
6. Media consultant, Dushanbe, 26/07/2013.
7. Former editor of an independent newspaper, Dushanbe, 29/07/2013.
8. Independent journalist, Dushanbe, 29/07/2013.
9. Sergei Abashin, European University of St Petersburg, 12/07/2014
10. Vladimir Mukomel, Head of Department, Institute of Sociology, 18/07/2014
11. Vera Peshkova, Institute of Sociology, 23/01/2015
12. Vladimir Pryakhin, Professor at the Russian State University for the Humanities, Moscow, 27/01/2015
13. Project Manager, IOM, Moscow, 26/02/2015
14. Lawyer, IOM, Moscow, 26/02/2015
15. Director, Migrant-focused NGO, Moscow, 26/02/2015
16. Researcher at the Higher School of Economics, Moscow, 06/03/2015
17. Dmitry Poletaev, Director, Centre for Migration Research, Moscow, 06/03/2015
18. Human rights activist, Moscow, 07/03/2015
19. Lawyer at the Muftiate, lawyer, 27/04/2015
20. Damir Mukhtidinov, Deputy Chairman of the Muftiate of European Russia, 27/04/2015
21. Yevgeny Satanovsky, Director of the Middle East Institute, Moscow, 26/04/2015
22. Migrant rights activist, Moscow, 12/03/2015
23. Legal monitor, Moscow, 13/05/2015
24. Sergei Ryantsev, RAN, Moscow, 15/05/2015
25. Tajik academic, RAN, Moscow, 15/05/2015
26. Igor Savin, Institute of Orientology, 20/05/2015
27. Aziz Niyazi, Institute of Orientology, 03/06/2015
28. Employee, FMS, Moscow, 01/06/2015
29. Tajik mullah, Moscow, 02/06/2015
30. Director, Migration-focused NGO, Moscow, 09/06/2015
31. Former Tajik presidential candidate, 12/06/2015

Appendix V: List of Cases Brought to the European Court of Human Rights by Tajik Citizens

1. *Nasrulloev v. Russia*, no 656/06, 11.10.2007
2. *Khodjaev v. Russia*, no. 52466/08, 12.05.2010
3. *Iskandarov v. Russia*, no. 17185/05, 23.09.2010
4. *Khaydarov v. Russia*, no. 21055/09, 04.10.2010
5. *Koziyev v. Russia*, no. 58221/10, 08.10.2010.
6. *Gaforov v Russia*, no. 25404/09, 21.10.2010.
7. *Abdulkhakov v. Russia*, no. 14743/11, 02.10.2012⁴⁴⁸
8. *Azimov v. Russia*, no. 67474/11, 18.04.2013
9. *Savridin Dzhurayev v. Russia*, no. 71386/10, 25.04.2013
10. *Sidikovy v. Russia*, 73455/11, 20.06.2013
11. *Nizomkhon Dzhurayev v. Russia*, no. 31890/11, 03.10.2013
12. *Latipov v. Russia*, no. 77658/11, 12.12.2013

⁴⁴⁸ Note that Abdulkhakov is an Uzbek citizen, but was extradited from Russia to Tajikistan in August 2011.

Glossary

Amniyat – ‘security’ or ‘safety’

Avlod – extended family

Begonaparasti – ‘foreigner-worshipping.’ A word used by the government of Tajikistan to discredit those who adhere to Islamic and western values.

Choihona – ‘tea house’ (Rus.: *chaikhana*)

Eid al-Fitr [Arabic] - Festival of Breaking the Fast at the end of Ramadan

Hajj [Arabic] – annual Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca

Halal [Arabic] – an object or an action which is permissible to use or engage in, according to Sharia.

Haram [Arabic] – ‘forbidden,’ acts that are forbidden by Allah.

Hizb-ut Tahrir [Arabic] – Party of Liberation

Hoji – honorific title for someone who has been on the hajj.

Hujum [Uzb.] – ‘attack.’ The anti-veil campaign in the early Soviet Union.

Hukumat – ‘administrative organ,’ government

Imam [Arabic] – state-appointed religious leader

Ishan or *Eshon* – form of address for Sufi leaders

Jamaat Ansurallah [Arabic] – Society of Allah's Soldiers

Jangsollor – ‘warlord,’ ‘commander’

Kalon – ‘large,’ ‘great’

Krysha [Rus.] – ‘roof,’ used to denote cover or protection against punishment

Kufr [Arabic] – ‘denial of truth,’ a person who rejects or disbelieves in God

Madrasa [Arabic] – religious school

Mahalgaroi – ‘regionalism’

Majlisi Oli – Tajik parliament

Maktabi Hanafi - school of Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh), the largest in the Sunni school.

Masjid – ‘mosque’

Muallim – ‘teacher’

Mufti – ‘supreme Islamic leader’

Mullo – a religious leader

Namaz – Persian-derived term for prayer (*Salat* in Arabic).

Niqoh – religious wedding ceremony

Qazi – a judge with superior knowledge of Islam

Qishloq - ‘village’, ‘settlement’

Qori – a Quran reader, someone who has memorised large parts, or all, of the Quran.

Rais – ‘head’ or ‘chief’

Salafi [Arabic] – ‘pious ancestors,’ fundamentalist movement, emulating the Prophet Muhammed and his followers.

Satr – Tajik word for the *hijab*, the veil that covers the head and neck

Shahid [Arabic] - martyr

Sharia [Arabic] – the religious legal system governing the members of the Islamic faith

Shuroi Ulemo – Council of Ulemo,

Sunnah [Arabic] – verbally transmitted record of the sayings, teachings and deeds of the Prophet Muhammed.

Tablighi Jamaat [Urdu] – Society for Spreading Faith

Ustod – ‘respected master’ or ‘teacher’

Vlast [Rus.] – ‘power,’ ‘authorities’

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