

CURRENT TRENDS in Islamist Ideology

VOLUME 15

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 - ISLAMISM AND THE PAKISTANI STATE / *Husain Haqqani*
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HUDSON INSTITUTE
*Center on Islam, Democracy, and
the Future of the Muslim World*

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Victory or Death: The Brotherhood in the Trenches

By Samuel Tadros

MORE THAN TWO YEARS AGO THE WORLD WATCHED IN AWE AS young Egyptians took to the streets of their capital and brought down their dictator. Taken completely by surprise by the unfolding events, the Obama administration sought an explanation in historical precedents. According to the *New York Times*, President Obama asked his staff to study transitions in more than 50 countries around the world in order to understand and predict where Egypt and other countries in the Middle East might be heading. After extensive study, his staffers predicted “that Egypt is analogous to South Korea, the Philippines and Chile.”¹ Months later, the administration was still confident in its assessment. While aware of the obstacles that were on the way during the desired transition to democracy, Benjamin Rhodes, a deputy national security advisor was adamant that, “The trajectory of change is in the right direction.”²

A lot of water has since flowed under the bridges over the Nile and Potomac Rivers and the wave of optimism and escape from history soon met the test of reality and crumbled underneath. The promises and dreams of a revolution that would usher in a new era, when Islamism would no longer be the dominating phenomenon of the region and when fears of Islamists were merely irrational,³ soon gave way to an Islamist tsunami that prevailed at every electoral contest held in the past two and a half years. Those confident in the Brotherhood’s disinterest in government power⁴ were soon mugged by the reality of their power grab. Those certain of the Brotherhood’s

moderation and commitment to “standard reform stuff”⁵ watched in bewilderment as the Brotherhood abandoned any perceived moderation and moved in a clearly authoritarian direction. Those hopeful that anti-Americanism would not continue being the rallying cry of the country’s politicians were shocked to discover not only the endurance of that mode of politics, but more importantly its broadening appeal even to those considered natural allies of the United States.

Today, hardly anyone commenting on Egypt would claim that it is heading in the right direction. Instead of imagining a Chile or South Korea on the Nile, observers are throwing in the names of failed or failing states from Pakistan to Somalia. After what has been described as the worst transition in world history, the political crisis in Cairo is moving from bad to worse. Zero-sum politics as practiced by the ruling Muslim Brotherhood have left the non-Islamist opposition with little else but to call for the fall of the regime and ally themselves with a military institution that never felt comfortable with the idea of civilian control. A complete lack of trust of the other side is perhaps the only remaining glue that ties Egypt’s political class together, Islamist and non-Islamist alike, besides their ever-more imaginative conspiracy theories. Dreams of democracy have turned into Islamist domination, which in turn has led to a military coup. Hopes of institutional reforms of the police have become Islamist attempts at controlling those institutions and subsequently the full return of the unreformed police, only this time with the acclaim of the masses. Brotherhood leaders have moved quickly from prisons to the Egyptian presidency and are now heading back to those same prisons. A cynical observer may rightly wonder whether anything has actually happened in Egypt in the past two and a half years.

At the center of Egypt’s turmoil stands the Muslim Brotherhood. Its behavior in the past two and a half years has left some of its closest observers baffled. Enthusiasts of the Brotherhood expected it to approach the experience of governance well-prepared. As the largest opposition movement in the country, with an impressive organizational structure and hundreds of thousands of cadres from all walks of life, the organization was surely the best equipped to deal with the enormous challenges Egypt was facing, from a failing economy, to a deteriorating security situation, to the political crisis. Instead the Muslim Brotherhood showed complete incompetence and failed miserably in actual governance.

Furthermore, experts on the Muslim Brotherhood, who for years had put their trust in its promises of being an inclusive organization, had expected the Brotherhood to reach out to its opponents and attempt to build a national consensus to sail the turbulent waters into which Egypt was heading. Given that the Muslim Brotherhood did not win an outright majority in parliamentary elections and that its presidential candidate won a very tight victory, and given the historical fears that many in Egypt

and the West have held over Islamism and the Brotherhood specifically, it was natural to expect the Brotherhood to attempt to be as conciliatory as possible. If the Muslim Brotherhood was not already a moderate organization, as some argued, its very participation in the democratic process would moderate it or, in the worst circumstances, it would be forced to moderate due to the burdens of governance and a failing economy. Instead, observers have been taken aback by the Muslim Brotherhood's increasingly dictatorial manner, ignoring its critics and failing to reach out to other Egyptians, even alienating its traditional allies. Observers were treated to an unabashed power grab that left no room for the very pragmatism the Brotherhood was famous for.

Lastly, the Brotherhood's loss of popular support took many by surprise. While the hatreds and fears that opponents of the Islamist project held were hardly surprising, massive demonstrations in traditional strongholds of the Brotherhood in the Delta that turned violent and seemed driven by complete hatred of the Gama'a were another matter. While no elections have been held to determine the extent of the Brotherhood's loss of support, no observer could deny that the movement had lost its glamour in the eyes of many Egyptians who were not initially predisposed against it.

Those three questions—why the Brotherhood was completely incompetent at governance, why it abandoned its famed pragmatism and step-by-step approach and sought to take the reins of the state as fast as possible, and how and why it lost a significant part of its popular support—continue to be debated. To understand the Muslim Brotherhood's behavior in power, it is necessary to journey to the trenches in which it stationed itself.

Where is the Nahda?

BROTHERHOOD LEADERS ARE QUICK TO COMPLAIN THAT THEY WERE GIVEN A VERY bad hand upon assuming power. Their complaints are fair. The Egyptian economy's state of free fall can be traced to the January revolution. Egypt's foreign currency reserves had already plummeted and revenue from tourism had declined together with investor confidence in the country's economy and hence foreign investments. The Egyptian police had taken a heavy blow on the 28th of January 2011 and never recovered. Egypt's streets were in a state of lawlessness with citizens taking the law into their own hands. But if a bad hand was conferred upon the Brotherhood, the Gama'a did its best to make matters worse.

Even before its assumption of the presidency, the Brotherhood proclaimed to both

foreign observers and the Egyptian population that it had elaborate plans for governing Egypt. The word on everyone's lips was the Nahda Project and the man at the center of the spotlight was the Brotherhood's Deputy General Guide and strongman, Khairat al-Shater. The Muslim Brotherhood confirmed that, "this project and program is the result of a tremendous effort and hard work that lasted well over fifteen years"⁶ and that it was supported by the "talents and experience of more than 80 years."⁷ If implemented, the project would uplift Egypt in four years.⁸

Both the project and the man were raised to mythical status. In late 2011, a foreign observer sympathetic to the Brotherhood was shown what he described as "comprehensive, detailed plans for economic development and institutional reform."⁹ The admiration was shared by the *New York Times*, which in a laudatory profile of Khairat al-Shater reported that, "he was grooming 500 future officials to form a government in waiting," as well as "overseeing the blueprint for the new Egypt," and "devising the economic policies the Brotherhood hopes will revive Egypt's moribund economy."¹⁰ Even seasoned American politicians such as Senator Lindsey Graham were very impressed by the man.

But What Exactly Was That Nahda Project?

WELL, NO ONE REALLY KNEW. SHATER PROCLAIMED IT STARTED WITH BUILDING A democratic system and strong political institutions. The Freedom and Justice Party's Women's Committee claimed women had a role in it. Ali Fateh al-Bab declared it aimed primarily at the elimination of poverty and unemployment and at a press conference said there was a "Nahda-based education campaign." Presidential candidate Morsi promised Sinai was the priority of the Nahda project and one week later, declared tourism as the priority of the project. Finally, Morsi said the project was based on empowering the people and placing their destinies in their own hands."¹⁷

In reality of course, there was nothing resembling a detailed plan. For all the hype that surrounded the Nahda project, it was, as a reporter commented early on, "more rhetoric than substance."¹⁸ A very early indication of the complete absence of any coherent plan came from the mouth of the man most associated with it, Khairat al-Shater. Less than two months after his release from prison, Shater gave a speech to the Brotherhood's cadres in Alexandria. For the careful observer the speech contains an apparent contradiction. While arguably the most important articulation by a

Brotherhood leader as to what the Gama'a is and is not and its own understanding of itself and its history, the speech falls short in its main target, to which the last third of it is devoted: to explain what the Nahda project is. After going in circles about the importance of the Nahda, the greatness of the Nahda and the complexity of the Nahda, Shater admits that, "the project does not exist on the level of planning or formulation." He then adds, "this means that efforts are demanded of us to organize and think about what developing the Ummah's Nahda on the basis of Islam means."¹⁹

The contradiction is striking. Shater has obviously not only memorized the vision that Banna outlined but absorbed it as well. If the vision could be transformed into an actual plan, he was certainly the most suited to do so with his long organizational history as well as business experience. His failure and the larger Brotherhood failure lead one to question the possibility of such a transformation from vision to reality in the first place. For many years, observers of the Brotherhood assumed that, "the existence of ambiguities in the MB's positions on key issues was intentional and reflected a strategy of confusing the message."²⁰ Such observations were quite true in regards to those controversial issues on which the Brotherhood was careful to assuage Western fears, but behind that curtain of lies lay the bare truth of the emptiness of the vision itself.

Partly, that emptiness was the natural result of the lack of any actual conception of government. For all its claims to be the only political representation of Islam, the Brotherhood was in reality a quite modern phenomenon with very thin connections, if any, to Islamic history and system of government. Moreover, the historical experiences the Brotherhood insisted on proclaiming as its natural heritage, from the early Caliphs to Salah al-Din, shared a common thread that exposed the Brotherhood's deficiency in political thinking: they were all pre-modern. Whatever political tracts the Brotherhood produced, and these became scarcer to find as time passed, seemed unaware that a key break in human history had occurred and that pre-modern notions of governance had little relevance to how the modern state operated.

But the problem was not only a theoretical one. For all its long history, the Muslim Brotherhood lacked any experience in actual governance. They were, as Edmund Burke had described those similar to them 200 years earlier, "men who never have seen the state as much as in a picture."²¹ True, its members had run and won seats in parliament and for a while controlled professional syndicates; they had run charity campaigns and built an impressive electoral machine. But that hardly offered any preparation for running a massive state apparatus such as Egypt. In fact, the Brotherhood's long history in opposition seems to have had a reverse effect on its understanding of governance. Being accustomed to opposing the state, the Brotherhood fell victim to its own rhetoric and accusations against the Egyptian regime. It reduced the question of governance to that of corruption, with good governance becoming

little more than lack of corruption. Such notions were hardly helpful when it suddenly became responsible for solving tremendous economic problems. As Burke once reflected, “the science of constructing a commonwealth, or renovating it, or reforming it, is, like every other experimental science, not to be taught *a priori*.”²²

To make matters worse, the Brotherhood’s rise to power came all of a sudden, shocking not only outside observers but the Brotherhood itself. While the Brotherhood had maintained its commitment to a revolutionary vision and a goal of a complete transformation of society, Banna’s six-stage process which the Gama’a followed had made the movement extremely conservative in approach. Revolutionary goals combined with conservative means had turned the movement itself into a contradiction. The Gama’a dreamed and truly believed it would transform not only Egypt, but the whole Muslim world and achieve Banna’s eminence among nations, yet its very approach to politics under Mubarak’s regime was a cautious one, working within the framework of what was allowed. At no point prior to the 25th of January, 2011 did the Brotherhood believe that the Egyptian regime was about to fall, and hence at no point did it actually explore what a post-Mubarak Egypt would look like. It is no surprise then that the Brotherhood would describe the revolution as the work of God²³—who else could be responsible for taking them from prison cells to presidential palaces?

A State of Mediocrity

THE BROTHERHOOD’S PROBLEMS HOWEVER WERE NOT LIMITED TO THEORETICAL OR practical experiences. More profound was the quality of its cadres or more precisely the lack thereof. At the center of that problem was the Brotherhood’s greatest asset, its membership structure.

The membership structure of the Muslim Brotherhood is not a new invention. Richard Mitchell, in his detailed account of the movement’s founding,²⁴ writes that the movement’s 3rd General Conference in 1935 divided membership into four levels: assistant, related, active and finally a select category of struggler. He gives the year 1943 for the founding of the *usra* (family) structure. Clearly visible by that time were the geographical divisions of families, branches, districts, and administrative offices. Also stressed from the founding moment of the Gama’a was the member’s expected commitment to obedience, confidence in leadership, and after a period of testing giving the *baya* (oath of allegiance).²⁵ The testing process, the atmosphere of secrecy, and the oath-giving ceremony were all intended to ensure full membership

loyalty and absolute commitment not only to the cause, but perhaps more importantly to the leadership.

The basic structure of the Muslim Brotherhood underwent little change throughout its eighty-year history. If anything, the structure grew more complex. Eric Trager in a detailed look at the movement's organizational structure identifies five stages of membership: lover, supporter, affiliate, organizer, and finally working brother. He writes, "becoming a full-fledged Muslim Brother is a five- to eight-year process, during which aspiring members are closely watched for their loyalty to the cause and are indoctrinated in the Brotherhood's curriculum."²⁶

As Khairat al-Shater explains, the structure of the Gama'a is no coincidence. He attributes Banna's methodology and the structure he invented to the Prophet himself. He quotes the Caliph Omar as saying, "there is no religion without a Gama'a and no Gama'a without an Imam, and no Imam without obedience," and then explains, "this means officials, structure and groups; a particular structure, not just a matter of circumstances. This structure also needs to be obeyed and committed to." He stresses the point further by arguing that, "not any gathering is a Gama'a, even if it was a group of good people who are committed to Islam; they are not a Gama'a as such without their structures and officials, no system, commitment, and obedience."

Why this stress on a structure and obedience? Shater quotes Banna's warning "of the pious unorganized man or he who always breaks ranks." He then adds, "one of the fundamental prerequisites to develop the Brother within the Gama'a is to realize that you are on the right path and that you must not be on a path other than this one." Banna's warning and Shater's addition shed light on the rationale behind the complex structure, the extensive examination and the emphasis on obedience. The Brotherhood is continuously challenged and has been since its inception not only by alternative ideologies but more profoundly by alternative currents within Islamism. At certain moments the challenge was in the form of Jihadi organizations luring young members; recently Salafism has become the major competitor. In order to keep the organization intact throughout the years and maintain membership cohesion, uniformity was enforced.

Any collective uniformity enforced on a body of people does not come however without a major flaw. Stressing uniformity limits innovation, enforcing obedience diminishes free thinking, and upholding discipline and rigid structures destroys the possibility of self-reflection, criticism and reform. When Abdel Moneim Aboul Fetouh decided to run for President, disobeying the Brotherhood's Guidance Council, his decision was not merely described as a betrayal. As Mohamed Badei, the current General Guide, put it, he "violated his covenant with God."²⁷

The Brotherhood's former Deputy General Guide, Mohamed Habib, explained to

Eric Trager the advancement criteria: “it is about your knowledge, thinking, commitment to duties, and how much ability you have to execute the orders given to you, like participating in demonstrations or conferences.” Nowhere is it stressed that a member can challenge his superiors, reflect on the movement’s weaknesses and innovate according to circumstances. A movement started by a young revolutionary does not produce today anything resembling its founder. It produces mediocre cadres of the Erian and Katatny mold, not towering figures of the Banna or Qutb variant.

The Brotherhood’s organizational structure and rigid obedience served it well as an opposition organization often attacked by the regime’s security forces. It made it, as Eric Trager stated, unbreakable. Other opposition parties were infiltrated and weakened by Mubarak’s state security; the Brotherhood on the other hand not only survived but grew stronger. What proved a strong point in opposition was the reverse in governance. The Brotherhood lacked innovative members capable of learning from their mistakes and correcting them. It lacked a young pool of recruits that could challenge their elders and push them to adapt to changing circumstances. It lacked a leadership that could be held accountable by a vibrant base.

Lastly, the Brotherhood’s brief experience in government and in the spotlight showed another serious flaw in the group’s competence. Given the chance to finally reach power after many years in opposition and lacking qualified cadres, the Brotherhood’s top leaders often depended on young assistants whose only qualifications seemed to be their ability to speak English and their family connections. Given the organizational structure of the movement, an intentional and unbreakable sense of brotherhood is created amongst its members. Those bonds are not merely organizational but often grow into both social bonds via marriage and finances as well. Sons and daughters of top leaders are often married to each other, creating a new ruling class within the movement who is often educated abroad or in foreign language schools, detached from the movement’s base and lacking any qualifications besides a powerful last name.

The Conspiracy

“IT WAS NATURAL THAT THE CALL OF THE MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD, THE CALL TO WHAT is right, strength and freedom, would be faced with all the evil powers, domestic and foreign.”²⁸ Thus wrote the Muslim Brotherhood General Guide, Mohamed Badei, in his weekly letter last March. Those domestic evil powers were identified a couple of

lines later as “those who changed their lives, traditions, and ideas in order to be in line with those of rapist colonialists.” “The West is playing in the region,” Khairat al-Shater had warned two years earlier.²⁹ Such conspiratorial language is a constant feature of the Brotherhood’s Arabic website, its official statements and its messages to members. Sometimes the conspiracy is directed against Egypt or its glorious revolution, at other times it is against Islam. The parties behind such conspiracies range from the counter-revolution, to a corrupt media, remnants of the old regime, the country’s elite, foreign agents and enemies of the revolution and gangs.³⁰

The Muslim Brotherhood’s insistence on blaming all of its failures in governance and its opponents’ criticisms on a grand conspiracy against the Brotherhood, the Islamic project in general or both seems confusing to scholars. For a while those enchanted with Turkey were willing to follow the Brotherhood’s lead in attributing actions to a deep state in Egypt. The Supreme Court’s decision to dissolve parliament due to the unconstitutionality of the election law—which every political actor in Egypt knew was legally sound, based on precedent, and expected—continues to provide Islamists and those echoing their arguments the necessary ammunition.³¹ Nevertheless with the mounting failures of the Brotherhood, their blaming everything on a grand conspiracy has become less convincing.

The belief in the existence of a grand conspiracy against the Brotherhood is hardly a new phenomenon amongst its members. Those who have delved into the Brotherhood’s history can easily recognize the victimization narrative that the autobiographies and testimonies of the early generations of Brotherhood members and leaders have presented. The *mihna* (ordeal) is the word often used to describe the Brotherhood’s suffering at the hands of Nasser after 1954, though it can also be understood more broadly as describing the various crackdowns the Brotherhood has endured from the time of Nukrashi Pasha until Mubarak. 1954 certainly looms large in the minds of the Brotherhood, as does the Algeria scenario.

The narrative has had devastating effects on the Brotherhood’s behavior. While, as Khalil al-Anani argues, this narrative “helped the MB to accommodate regimes’ repression and avoid any internal substantive fissures or schism over the past decades,”³² it has also had its downside. The need to protect the organization and its members from imagined conspiracies and the necessity of working under the threat of real repression by the regime has meant an emphasis on secrecy. Such secrecy was helpful as an opposition group but hurt the Brotherhood in power, as it allowed its adversaries to rightly portray it as a secret organization with clandestine operations. It also limited the Brotherhood’s ability to open up to the rest of society and incorporate some of the traditional elements of Egyptian politics into its governing structure. Fearing infiltration and not trusting anyone but its members, the Brotherhood was forced to rely

only on its cadres, limiting its recruitment options and any possible broader appeal.

Some attribute the continuation and domination of the conspiracy discourse to the benefits it provides to the Brotherhood leadership. Khalil al-Anani states that it “significantly benefits the MB and plays in favor of its conservative leadership.” The Brotherhood leadership has certainly benefited from it as it has proven effective in maintaining group loyalty and cohesion in the face of brutal assaults, as well as limiting any questioning of the leadership’s behavior. However, the relationship between Islamism as an ideology and the conspiracy theory is not a matter of coincidence or of convenience. While blaming a grand conspiracy for their failures might be helpful for the leadership of the Brotherhood in maintaining the base’s support and averting criticism, the conspiracy theory is at the heart of the Islamists’ worldview and inseparable from the very premises and foundations of Islamism as an ideology.

Islamism was born as an attempt to resolve the crisis that the Muslim world faced in the decline of Islam both in the form of the decay of Islamic rituals, symbols and practices in the daily lives of Muslims, and in the worldly fortunes of Islamic states. The Muslim world is viewed as subject to two forms of assault: one in the form of European colonialism and the direct occupation of Muslim land, and the other in the form of an invasion of Western practices, ideologies and life styles. This dual invasion creates the crisis that Islamism aims to resolve with the simple solution being a return to an earlier period of time when the Islamic world was not in decline but in ascendance by returning Islam to its all-encompassing meaning. Khairat al-Shater defines the Brotherhood’s mission as “to empower God’s religion on earth, to organize our life and the lives of people on the basis of Islam, to establish the Nahda of the Umma on the basis of Islam.”³³

The most important question of course is how the state of Islam reached such a miserable condition as to allow the occupation of Muslim lands and their infiltration by what are inferior Western practices. While some mistakes are acknowledged at the hands of Muslims, even those mistakes are often tied to a conspiracy against Islam. The existence of a conspiracy that aims to subvert Islam and deny it its rightful place in the world is the only way to explain such conditions. Those familiar with Islamic history can find earlier versions of such arguments in attempts by later generations of Muslims to deal with the traumatizing episode of *Al Fitna Al Kubra* and the fights among the companions and family of Prophet Mohamed in the form of the invented character of Abdullah Ibn Saba and his role as a Jew in dividing Islam and creating Shiism.

Banna’s warnings of the animosity the Brotherhood would face and its future plight ring true today to its members and leadership just as they did to generations before them. As Shater explains, the media misrepresentation of the Brotherhood is merely

a continuation of the assault on the Brotherhood, only this time not in the form of security attacks and oppressive procedures, but in the form of media distortion.³⁴

Now is the Time

CONSPIRACY THEORIES AND THEIR AFFECT ON BEHAVIOR, NO MATTER HOW PREVALENT and deeply rooted in the mindset of the Brotherhood, are not enough to explain the movement's behavior. In fact, such belief and obsession in the amalgam of many forces against the movement and its project should have driven the movement in the exact opposite direction. Under threat of a grand coalition against it by a combination of internal and external enemies, the Brotherhood should have followed a policy of reaching out to some of its adversaries and accommodating their concerns in order to divide its enemies. No rational entity which truly believes, and there is no doubt that the Brotherhood believes, in the existence of a conspiracy against it, would seek to take all those enemies at once. The Brotherhood's famed pragmatism, which some misunderstood as moderation, was born of such need. In fact, the Brotherhood's behavior in the first year after the 25th of January was driven by precisely such a policy of never being alone and making sure that a union between its historical enemies did not take place.³⁵

The effect of the belief in conspiracy theories is mitigated and balanced by another consideration that has driven the Brotherhood to abandon all caution and push for a quick power grab. That consideration is the Brotherhood's reading of the historical moment that the 25th of January revolution has created. When Mohamed Morsi won Egypt's presidency, the feeling of euphoria and vindication was best exemplified by Khaled Abdel Kader Ouda, who after 58 years finally accepted condolences for the death of his father, Abdel Kader Ouda, whom Nasser killed.³⁶ In his above-mentioned speech, Khairat al-Shater repeats this notion no less than seven times and emphasizes its importance. He calls it a "major transformation," "historical moment," "new stage of freedom," "major historical stage," and "major fundamental transformative stage." This moment provides the Brotherhood with a golden opportunity and "it is imperative that we, take advantage of this revolution which took place in Egypt and continues in the countries surrounding us" and "we must take advantage of this opportunity to develop our Gama'a and push it to the furthest level possible to contribute to Egypt's salvation." The repeated stress deserves some explanation.

Khalil al-Anani is on the mark when he notes that, "a quick comparison between

Brotherhood rhetoric and conduct before and after the revolution reveals that oppression, not inclusion, was the motivation for developing the group's intellectual discourse and maturity and rationality of its political conduct."³⁷ The Brotherhood's behavior under the Mubarak regime and its surrender of power after losing professional syndicates elections occurred because it could not do otherwise, and not because it had embraced democracy, as some have argued.³⁸ Shater himself singled out that very oppression and its demise when he explained what the historical stage was: "Mubarak and a large part of his regime are gone, and we hope that what remains of the regime is removed and God willing never returns. The Ummah has embarked on a new stage of freedom unknown for long times, having tied the hands of the security institution to a great extent up until now." He adds, "The obstacle has now been removed."

According to Shater, the Muslim Brotherhood was preparing for that stage in the early 90s and some ideas were being formulated before they were abruptly stopped by the beginning of an extensive crackdown that Mubarak unleashed. Shater attributes Mubarak's change of policy towards the Brotherhood, from toleration to crackdown, to the effect of events in Algeria on him. Those initial plans are of course what became known as the Salsabil case, which exposed Brotherhood plans to take control of Egypt. Israel Elad Altman examined those documents and explained³⁹ that they identified "influential institutions" such as the military and the police that should be neutralized as well as used once in power as they "would constitute an important reinforcement of its effectiveness in bringing about change." He stresses that "The international threat, emanating from the hostile forces—the U.S. and the West—should according to the document be confronted in the first stage by a policy of coexistence, achieved by persuading those forces that it is in their interest to work with the forces that really represent the peoples of the region, and that the MB is a stable and disciplined force."

The Salsabil case with its initial plans and ideas formed the blueprint of a Brotherhood ready to embark on a new stage. For Shater and his colleagues, that stage was delayed for 20 years, but it had finally arrived, and that stage was Islamic government. Banna, according to Shater, "went back to the method of the Prophet and studied his jurisprudence or his way of instituting religion, and thus extracted his way, explained it and outlined it to us in what is known as the method of the Muslim Brotherhood. Therefore, the Muslim Brotherhood's method is that of the Prophet." Banna outlined six stages in order to achieve the movement's overall mission: the Muslim individual, the Muslim family, the Muslim society, the Islamic government, the global Islamic state and reaching the status of Ustathiya (eminence among nations).

Shater rhetorically asks at which stage the Brotherhood is along and answers, "we

are preparing for the stage of Islamic government after this because it is what follows the stage of society.” “Now, the obstacles have been removed, and so we return to the origin; to our natural objective; to our main mission,” he emphasizes. This means that the Brotherhood’s prior caution and pragmatism is abandoned and a drive for complete domination is sought, as a new stage means a new strategy. The reasons are many; historical moments do not come that often, after all, and once missed the Brotherhood may not get such an opportunity again. There is also a human element at play. For the Brotherhood’s rank and file, not only has the movement been denied the possibility of achieving its objectives, but they themselves have been denied many worldly successes. Members were often detained and sometimes imprisoned for long sentences. They were often denied promotions due to security concerns and sometimes had their money and businesses confiscated. Finally the oppressor had fallen, and it was only human that they would be extremely hungry for power after generations of drought.

More important was the human factor affecting the top echelons. For people like Khairat al-Shater and Mahmoud Ezzat, who had devoted more than 30 years of their lives to the movement, paid a heavy price for that commitment, and became old men along the road, the dream was finally within reach. They, and not their sons or grandsons would be the ones who transformed the Brotherhood and put it on the road to Ustathiya. They would be the ones who would make the dreams of Banna and hundreds of thousands after him into a reality. Who could ever resist such a temptation?

A Gama’a is Not a Party

“We are not a political party although politics in accordance with Islam is deeply rooted in our ideas; and we are not a welfare organization nor a sports team, although welfare and sports are part of our method; we are not any of these because these are all forms, techniques or means designed for specific objectives and for a limited period of time. We are, however, an idea and a creed, a system and a syllabus, which is why we are not bounded by a place or a group of people and can never be until the Day of Judgment, because we are the system of Allah and the way of His Prophet ..., which is why we are a mercy for mankind.”⁴⁰

THOSE EXPECTING THE MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD TO GOVERN IN AN INCLUSIVE MANNER and to be affected by public opinion were basing their expectations on the notion that the very inclusion of the Brotherhood was supposed to make its rhetoric and

action more rational and moderate.⁴¹ Behind such notions was a dangerous premise: that the Muslim Brotherhood was a political party and hence that it would react to questions of governance and declining popularity as any rational politician would, by attempting to move to the center.⁴² As some reasoned, the problems of governance would eclipse ideology and force moderation.

What is most striking of such a premise is its adoption and perseverance despite the Brotherhood's tireless attempts to proclaim that it was not a political party and would not act as such. Khairat al-Shater states quite explicitly, "The primary instrument for implementing this project is the Gama'a, not the Party or any other means."⁴³ Why, might one ask? Because, "the party, as an instrument, means, or vessel, is not born of the Islamic idea, rather, it is one of the various products of Western civilization." And why should that matter? Because, "It is an instrument or a vessel for the deliberation of power in the political space, an instrument for engaging in the conflict for the sake of obtaining power. The Gama'a, on the other hand, is not an instrument of conflict or competition. The Gama'a is an instrument of integration and rallying of the entire Ummah in order to build its Nahda on the basis of Islam." Could the Brotherhood at a certain moment become a party not a Gama'a? No, Shater insists: "it would not be possible if someone says 'the Gama'a should become a party,' or 'forget about the society and let's establish a party or two or three,' because the party is a vessel born of the Western idea which has a particular nature within particular limitations; it is designed and conceived, as manifested by everything from its philosophy to its methods, for the political process which is only one part of the greater Nahda project in politics, economy, society, education, morals, values, behavior, children, women, the elderly, the young. Every aspect of life is to be Islamized and the primary instrument for this is the Gama'a." But why then did the Muslim Brotherhood establish a political party? Does this not show a sign of a change in thought? No, "The Gama'a may establish a party, an association, schools, and many other means for some of the secondary tasks; but the Gama'a is to remain the instrument which establishes an entire life for the Ummah on the basis of Islamic reference or the basis of the Islamic method."

Shater's articulation leaves little doubt as to what the Brotherhood is and what it is not. Shater's rejection of political parties is not merely because they are Western, but more importantly because they are limited to politics and competition. The Brotherhood however is much wider; its scope is not merely politics, but life itself, which it seeks to Islamize. As Shater states, "everywhere, the Ikhwan are working to restore Islam in its all-encompassing conception to the lives of people, and they believe that this will only come about through the strong Gama'a." The strong conviction that it is only through a Gama'a that the mission could be achieved is also not accidental.

“The primary instrument for implementing this project is the Gama’a, because whoever studies the jurisprudence of instituting religion as established by our master the prophet will find that the instrument which he used was the Gama’a.” The attribution of not only the overall mission, but the very means to achieve it to the Prophet is of vital importance to the Brotherhood. It links it not only to Islam’s history and political experience but to the very founding of that religion by the Prophet and God’s guidance, making it not a mere political organization within the world of Islam, but the only political manifestation of that religion. It immunizes the Brotherhood’s method from criticism by other Islamists and convinces its members that no matter what obstacles they face, they are on the right path. As Shater emphasizes, “One of the fundamental prerequisites to develop the Brother within the Gama’a is to realize that you are on the right path and that you must not be on a path other than this one.” It is hence no surprise that the Brotherhood’s methods and not only its mission would be declared as constants that are not up to discussion or change.

But as Shater explains, “not any existing gathering is a Gama’a, even if it were a group of good people who are committed to Islam.” “The Gama’a has two primary prerequisites that must be on hand.” The first prerequisite pertains to the quality of its members; “every individual in the Gama’a should be an Islam, a walking Quran.” The second prerequisite is a strong organizational structure: “this means officials, structures and groups; a particular structure, not just a matter of circumstance. This structure also needs to be obeyed and committed to.” Those two prerequisites are what distinguish the Brotherhood from any gathering of people. That is what gives it its “Shar’i definition.”

Hence lay the core problem in the Brotherhood’s governance. The Brotherhood could not make the transformation from an opposition movement into a governing party. The Brotherhood closed its doors to hundreds of thousands of Egyptians who would have been willing to serve the new regime and join its ranks. It could not open its ranks to new members without passing them through its complex and long membership process in order to test their loyalty and commitment to the ideology. It alienated the traditional family networks that had shaped local politics in Egypt for generations and which had served every Egyptian regime, and excluded them from governance, turning them into sworn enemies of the Brotherhood dedicated to its demise. If many Egyptians grew to view the Brotherhood as a cult, the Brotherhood certainly did its best to strengthen that sentiment.

Two Future Paths

THE BROTHERHOOD'S TRIUMPHANT MOMENT LASTED MUCH SHORTER THAN IT envisioned. One year after its victorious entry into Egypt's presidential palace and its assumption of the commanding heights of the state, it finds itself back in prison cells, and in public squares demonstrating the injustice that has befallen it, with the further threat of even the latter being denied to it. A new government has been formed and not a single Islamist serves among its ministers. To make matters worse, while Egypt's generals were ultimately responsible for ending the Brotherhood's dream, the moment did not arrive without a significant portion of the population cheering along. As Brotherhood members get rounded up, leaders thrown into prisons without charges, Islamist channels closed and Brotherhood demonstrations attacked, the majority of the population is quite indifferent with many gloating and asking for more. The Brotherhood's future participation in politics remains an open question with calls for banning Brotherhood members from running being floated.

Today the Brotherhood is still dealing with daily developments and attempting to outline a strategy to deal with the assault. In the face of unfolding events, it proclaims its confidence that President Morsi will soon be reinstated by the power of the people as Chavez had been in 2002. Such bravado should not blind one however to the reality of the situation and the actual balance of forces on the ground. No matter how good a fight the Brotherhood puts, it has lost this battle to its enemy, the military. In due time, the occupation with daily developments will give way to long-term considerations and the Brotherhood will look back at its one year in power, start the process of self-reflection, and attempt to find answers for essential questions. What did we do wrong? Could we have avoided this scenario? How can we reach power once again and maintain it?

Occupying the horizon ahead of the Brotherhood will lay two paths. The first is that of Erdogan and his Justice and Development Party. Learning from their mistake, the Brotherhood as a whole or some significant portion of it may realize that they need to change their ways, give up their organizational structure, open up to society, moderate their discourse and develop actual governance plans. An Erdogan may rise from the ranks of the second-tier leadership of the Gama'a or in the person of a previous leader of the Brotherhood who was kicked out of its ranks, such as Abdel Moneim Aboul Fetouh, with the ability to capture the Brotherhood's constituency and expand it.

But another path also dominates the horizon: that of Said Qutb. The characterization

of the events that led to Morsi's ouster as part of a conspiracy against Islam or the Islamist project, and which involves the military, seculars and the West, may lead to positions hardening instead of softening. It can also lead to a questioning of the whole methodology of the Gama'a. The ballot box will be questioned as the preferable route and the bullet will provide a tempting alternative. "We told you so," is the message Jihadis are already screaming at the Brotherhood and it is sounding more persuasive than ever. Abandon the roads of democracy and of man and return to the road of Jihad and of God.

Which path will the Brotherhood take? Erdogan or Qutb? The question remains unanswered, but the Brotherhood will not approach it in a vacuum. Two issues will shape how the Brotherhood answers the questions of today as it aims to come up with the answers of tomorrow: what room its enemies will allow it to play in the country's political sphere and how its own historical experience will shape how it views things. Rationality, after all, is not value free.

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Islamism and the Pakistani State

By Husain Haqqani

UNLIKE MOST MUSLIM-MAJORITY COUNTRIES, THE STATE OF PAKISTAN has consistently tolerated and even maintained positive relations with Islamist groups. Pakistan's approach to Islamism differed greatly from the policies of other Muslim countries, which were led to independence in the twentieth century by secular elites. Islamists were deemed by these elites as an obstruction to their modernizing aspirations. The state apparatus was used either to suppress Islamism (Iran under the Shah, Turkey, and Tunisia) or to coopt it within a secular framework (Indonesia and Malaysia). Although Pakistan's founding elites were also secular, their call for partition of British India along religious lines made it necessary for them to adopt Islamist ideas as part of their nation-building effort.

At a time when the newly-written constitutions of other Muslim countries emphasized the secular character of their states, Pakistan's first Constituent Assembly adopted the 'Objectives Resolution' in 1949, declaring the purpose of the state to be to enable Muslims "to order their lives in the individual and collective spheres in accordance with the teachings and requirements of Islam as set out in the Holy Quran and the Sunna."

Although the functionaries of the Pakistani state remained largely secular until the 1980s, the state helped create a Pakistani sense of self as the citadel of Islam, which in turn enabled Islamists greater freedom of organization and movement than in other countries.

Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, Pakistan remained the center of Pan-Islamist activity. Leaders of the Arab Muslim Brotherhood, including Said Ramadan, travelled

to Pakistan for conferences proclaiming the unity of the Muslim Ummah. The Grand Mufti of Palestine, Amin al-Husseini, led the Motamar al-Alam al-Islami (World Muslim Congress), which maintained its headquarters in the then-Pakistani capital, Karachi. Abul Ala Maududi's Jamaat-e-Islami evolved as a cadre-based organization that proclaimed itself the vanguard of the global Islamic revolution.

By the time General Zia ul-Haq seized power in a military coup in 1977, Pakistan's constitution and laws already had elements of Islamic law grafted on to the British institutions of Westminster-style parliamentary democracy and an Anglo-Saxon legal system. Zia went farther than other Pakistani leaders in flaunting his own piety and initiated deeper Islamization of the educational, the legal and even the financial systems. The Islamists, who had repeatedly failed to win votes from Pakistan's masses, were able to influence the state without fully controlling it.

Relatively weak efforts, by Pakistan's secular politicians elected to office after Zia's death in 1988, to modify or roll-back Zia's Islamization have not succeeded partly because of the rise in militant Islamism resulting from Pakistan's role as the staging ground for the anti-Soviet jihad in Afghanistan (1979-1989). In addition to the political Islamists using agit-prop to advance their cause, Pakistan has now become home to tens of thousands of armed men, initially trained as guerilla fighters to face the Soviets. After the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, Pakistan Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) continued Pakistan's own jihad in Indian-controlled Jammu and Kashmir as well as in Afghanistan.

The jihadis have, since 1989, been an instrument of Pakistani policy for regional influence. Pakistan, under the leadership of military dictator General Pervez Musharraf, joined the U.S.-led global war against terrorism in the aftermath of 9/11, complicating the Pakistani state's relationship with the jihadis. At least some jihadi groups declared war on the Pakistani state because of its selective cooperation with the United States.

Pakistan's status as an ideological state has resulted in the proliferation of Islamic political groups of all kinds. Several of them have received state patronage or at least tolerance at one time or another. Others have operated independently or with the support of fellow Islamist groups outside the country. Now, Pakistan's Islamists are divided not only by their varied theological approaches but also by their views of and attitudes toward the Pakistani state.

Pakistan's Islamists can now be categorized into three broad groupings: 1) Islamist groups working with the Pakistani state; 2) Islamist groups trying to take over the state through political means; and 3) Islamist groups fighting the state.

Working with the State

EVEN AFTER PAKISTAN'S POST-9/11 PARTNERSHIP WITH THE UNITED STATES, SEVERAL Islamist groups continue to enjoy close ties with the state apparatus. This includes Deobandi Ulema of the Jamiat Ulema Islam (JUI) who participate in electoral politics while also describing jihad as a sacred right and obligation. The Deobandis have encouraged students of madrasas toward militancy. The Afghan Taliban, students of Deobandi madrasas in Pakistan who held power in Afghanistan before 9/11, are still seen as allies by Pakistan's military and the ISI. But a new generation of the Taliban has emerged that is not willing to work within the complex confines of Pakistani realpolitik, which requires modification of the jihadist ideology with occasional compromise.

Maulana Fazlur Rahman, head of the JUI, has tried to manage a balancing act by remaining active in parliamentary politics, alternately aligning himself with various political factions and claiming that he is the only one capable of dealing with the Taliban. According to American journalist Nicholas Schmidle, who interviewed him for the *New York Times*, "Rehman doesn't pretend to be a liberal; he wants to see Pakistan become a truly Islamic state. But the moral vigilantism and the proliferation of Taliban-inspired militias along the border with Afghanistan is not how he saw it happening."¹

Rehman claims that the Taliban have been driven to extremism "because of America's policies" and insists that he is trying to bring them back into the mainstream. Thus, he and others in the JUI do not see as inherently wrong the Taliban's policies against women and religious minorities or Shia Muslims. Their objection seems to be to their decision to continue fighting while the Pakistani state needs to protect itself by working with the world's sole superpower, the United States.

As a result, the JUI has become an influential political player with only a handful of seats in Pakistan's parliament. It was a coalition partner of the Islamist Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA), which ruled Pakistan's northwest Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province from 2002-2008 and of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), which governed from 2008-2013. It contested the 2013 elections on the promise of "stabilizing the Islamic system in the country in accordance with the constitution."² After the election, it opted to join the government led by Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif even though Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League (PML-N) has a clear majority in parliament and does not require coalition partners.³

A trickier ally of the Pakistani state among Islamist groups is the Wahhabi Lashkar-e-Taiba (The Army of the Pure) founded in 1989 by Hafiz Muhammad Saeed. Backed by Saudi money and protected by Pakistani intelligence services, Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT)

became the military wing of Markaz al-Dawa wal-Irshad (Center for the Call to Righteousness) and has been officially banned for several years. The United States froze the organization's assets, saying that it had been involved in several acts of international terrorism. The November 2008 terrorist attacks in Mumbai, India were also attributed to LeT.

Saeed now heads his organization with the name Jamaat-ud-Dawa (the Society for Preaching) from a large campus and training facility at Muridke, outside the Pakistan city of Lahore. Pakistani authorities have repeatedly refused to move against either Lashkar, which continues to operate in Kashmir, or Jamaat-ud-Dawa, which operates freely in Pakistan. In return, Saeed has urged Islamists to defend the Pakistani state and to spare it from terrorist attacks even if the state's policies appear to contradict the global Islamist agenda. LeT and Jamaat-ud-Dawa's policy seems to be to secure the support of the Pakistani state for organizational survival while limiting criticism of Pakistan.

The result is calibrated support for armed jihad, focused on fighting battles outside Pakistan first. In a recent speech, Saeed said that, "the Muslim Ummah is in a big problem right now with India, Israel and America using all their technological advancements against us and they are attacking Pakistan. The Muslim Ummah needs to reduce all the conspiracies of the disbelievers to dust. The problems in Burma, Kashmir, Palestine, and Afghanistan can only be resolved by making sacrifices in the battlefield."⁴

In January 2012, Jamaat-ud-Dawa joined several Islamist formations in the Difa-e-Pakistan Council (DPC, or the Defense of Pakistan Council), which was also joined by former ISI chief, Lt. General (ret.) Hamid Gul. The Council described its purpose as defending Pakistan against "Zionist" conspiracies. "It's the US desire to leave India in a position where it can dominate the region and serve the interests of Zionist Controlled world,"⁵ the DPC declared. It expressed support for Pakistan's armed forces and its hardline stance against India mirrored the views of the Pakistan deep state and the ISI.

Soon after the U.S. government posted a \$10 million reward in April 2012 for information leading to his successful prosecution, Saeed called on the people of Pakistan "to wage Jihad against America in order to save Pakistan and Islam. "Come to us. We will teach you the meaning of jihad... The time to fight has come." In a sermon ahead of Friday prayers in Lahore, he said that jihad had "caused the USSR to break and now America is failing because of it."⁶ But by June 2013, Saeed was focusing on his fatwa that described "extremist activities within Pakistan" as not being jihad. "Militant activities in Pakistan do not fall in the category of Jihad," he argued, appealing to "all jihadi organizations not to carry out attacks inside Pakistan." He claimed that America and India were benefiting from terrorist activities inside Pakistan. But he insisted that Muslims would have to "continue Jihad to maintain their freedom."⁷

These declarations of support for the Pakistani state have been accompanied by a hardline theological vision that rejects inter-faith dialogue and religious toleration and emphasizes Islamic exclusivity. In his speeches, Saeed continues to exhort Muslims to understand that Muslims must maintain a strict distinction from unbelievers. “It is the faith that distinguishes a Muslim from a Kafir [infidel],” he explains. “The real fault is that today’s Muslims, despite believing in Allah, commit the same errors that a Jew will commit, that a Christian will commit; the lacuna which exists in the faith of Hindus will be reflected among today’s Muslims too,” Saeed lamented.

The Jamaat-ud-Dawa leader recommends that Muslims “cut off from the Hindu, the Jew, the Crusader” so that “after the end of Jew-ism, after the end of Christianity, after the End of Obscenity... Islam will Rule the World.” Saeed reserves his greatest criticism for Hindus and advocates jihad against India. This makes him an ally of the Pakistani state, which for years has portrayed Hindu-majority India as an existential threat to Islamic Pakistan. According to Saeed, the Prophet Muhammad said those waging jihad in Hind (India) were “superior” to all other jihadists and “among the greatest martyrs.”

Like Jamaat-ud-Dawa, Afghan Taliban groups operating out of Pakistan have also been often at pains to draw distinctions between attacking Pakistan and targeting foreigners or unbelievers. The network of Afghan jihadis led by Jalaluddin Haqqani and his son Siraj Haqqani are considered deadly enemies by the United States because of their frequent attacks on U.S. forces in Afghanistan. But the group maintains good ties with the Pakistani state. At one point, it went so far as to publicly demand that Pakistani Taliban should support peace deals in Pakistan’s tribal areas backed by Pakistani authorities.¹⁰

The main formation of Afghan Taliban, led by Mullah Mohammad Omar, also announced plans to oppose jihadi groups that attacked Pakistan’s military.¹¹ But the complex dynamic among jihadi groups resulted in multiple clarifications and denials that eventually led to the replacement of the Pakistani Taliban’s public face, spokesperson Ehsanullah Ehsan.¹² Pakistan’s government continues to work on arranging direct talks between the United States and the Afghan Taliban based in Pakistan.

Trying to Take Over the State

WHILE GROUPS SUCH AS JUI, JAMAAT-UD-DAWA/LASHKAR-E-TAIBA AND THE AFGHAN Taliban continue to work alongside the Pakistani state, other Islamists adhere to the original Islamist goal of incrementally capturing state power. Pakistan’s Jamaat-e-

Islami (Islamic Society) is closest in ideology and organizational methods to the Arab Muslim Brotherhood, with which it maintains ideological and cooperative links. Established by Abul Ala Maududi in 1947, it has operated over the decades as a political party, a social welfare organization, a pan-Islamic network and a sponsor of militant groups fighting in Afghanistan and Kashmir.

Jamaat-e-Islami received significant amounts of Saudi assistance until its leaders refused to support the Kingdom in the 1991 Gulf War. Jamaat-e-Islami leaders have since repaired their relations with the Saudis and support from private Saudi individuals continues to flow in to the group. But the Saudis have diverted support from Jamaat-e-Islami toward other Deobandi and Wahhabi groups since the 1990s, which reduced the Jamaat-e-Islami's standing as the dominant Islamist group in South Asia.

The Jamaat-e-Islami states its objective to be the establishment of "a Divine Government," which it defines as "that universal revolution in the individual and collective life of man which Islam calls for."¹³ Although it engages in politics it refuses to be identified solely as a political party. Jamaat-e-Islami's manifesto insists that it will "try to bring revolution and reformation through constitutional ways." It emphasizes molding of public opinion and categorically declares that it "will not implement its manifesto through underground movements; instead, it will do everything openly."¹⁴

The Jamaat-e-Islami has not always lived up to its claim of engaging in an open, constitutional struggle for an Islamic government replicating the Rashidun caliphate. It was accused in the Pakistani Supreme Court of receiving money from the ISI for its campaign for the 1990 elections, which the Court said had been influenced by the intelligence agency to block the PPP from winning. The Jamaat-e-Islami denied the charge even though former ISI officials confirmed the allegation.¹⁵ The covert funding did not improve the Jamaat-e-Islami's electoral performance significantly. The party's vote bank has remained consistently stagnant and it has never been able to win more than a handful of seats in parliament.

In recent years, Jamaat-e-Islami has aligned itself with other religious and political parties to secure a share in power in the northwest Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province. It has taken a staunchly anti-American stance even though it was one of the major conduits of CIA funding for the Afghan Mujahideen during the 1980s. The group's strategy seems to be to increase its influence within Pakistani society by aligning with hyper-nationalists. Some of its members have gained influential positions within Sharif's PML-N and the Pakistan Tehrike-Insaf (Movement for Justice, PTI) of cricketer-turned-politician Imran Khan.

Jamaat-e-Islami now acts as the unofficial arbiter of Pakistan's status as a nation founded on the grounds of its Islamic identity. The party's current Amir or President, Syed Munawwar Hasan, represents the second generation of Jamaat-e-Islamic cadres,

having joined it in the 1960s through its student wing, Islami Jamiat-e-Talaba. Hasan was once a communist and his early training is reflected in his “United Front” approach that characterizes the movement’s recent strategies. Jamaat-e-Islami leaders now speak of threats to Pakistan from the United States, Israel and India and call for the unity of “patriotic and religious parties.”¹⁶

Jamaat-e-Islami contested the May 2013 election with the scales of justice as its election symbol and with calls for re-establishing a state similar to the one led by the Prophet Muhammad in Medina.¹⁷ Its slogan, “Change of System is the hope of the nation,” was remarkably similar to that of Khan’s PTI. Jamaat-e-Islami’s manifesto claimed that it would end “US slavery to restore Pakistan’s independence and sovereignty,”¹⁸ and promised self-reliance against western-led globalization.

Jamaat-e-Islami’s tie-up with Khan has enabled it to translate its organizational capability into serious political influence, without actually having to win votes. Although Khan is portrayed in the west as an Oxford-educated former cricketer, in Pakistan he articulates views clearly influenced by Jamaat-e-Islami. During the election campaign, he spoke of jihad as “war for my freedom” and said that “Sharia is what makes us human.”¹⁹ According to Khan, “Sharia brings justice and humanity in society” and “it is the name of a welfare state.”²⁰ Khan’s PTI and Jamaat-e-Islami formed a coalition government in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa after the elections, enabling the Jamaat-e-Islami to put its “United Front” strategy into practice in government.

While the Jamaat-e-Islami seeks to take over the state through constitutional means and political stratagems, Hizb ut-Tahrir (Party of Islamic Liberation, HT) has an exactly opposite approach for establishing the caliphate. The movement, founded in 1953 by Palestinian Taqi-ud-Din Nabhani is legally banned in Pakistan but its members have been active in their covert struggle to transform Pakistan into the starting point for a global caliphate.²¹

According to HT’s ideology, “The Islamic countries are Muslim Lands that were divided by the agents of Kafir colonialists, as part of their plan to abolish the Khilafah. According to Sharia unifying them into one state is obligatory.”²² The movement targets Pakistan as a country that is particularly ripe for its vision of global Islamic revival. Its anti-western rhetoric and calls for abrogation of military cooperation with western powers have resonated with the harder-line anti-western sections within Pakistan’s military and intelligence services.

Hizb ut-Tahrir operates clandestinely and has been involved in several coup plots in other Muslim countries. In 2011, Pakistani authorities arrested Brigadier Ali Khan and four other officers for working with HT to establish an Islamic caliphate in Pakistan. Pakistani officials believe that HT is “often overlooked because it is not always visible and does not conform to stereotypes” and were surprised by its ability

to attract senior officers within the military.²³ HT was once linked to a plot to assassinate Pakistan's then-President, General Pervez Musharraf, and "has been persistently targeting Pakistan Army officials for enlisting" as members. It has made at least three known attempts to penetrate the Pakistani army.²⁴

Fighting the Pakistani State

JUST AS THE PAKISTANI STATE'S DICHOTOMOUS STANCE TOWARDS ISLAMIST GROUPS has resulted in its sponsorship and support of some groups, there are other Islamists who consider Pakistan's state apparatus as their principal target. While Americans see Pakistan's efforts against jihadi groups as inadequate, Al-Qaeda in Pakistan sees them as too much. According to Al-Qaeda's spokesperson for Pakistan, Ustad Ahmad Farooq, "If [there is] a force that is fundamentally responsible for throwing this entire region into bloodshed and war, it is the Pakistani army."²⁵

In an interview released by Al-Qaeda's media wing Al-Sahab, Farooq argued that the wars in Afghanistan and Pakistan were "inseparable." According to him, the division between Afghanistan and Pakistan was not natural and those who can understand jihad in Afghanistan against the Americans "should also be able to understand the jihad in Pakistan."

Al-Qaeda and its associated groups, including Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and the virulently anti-Shia Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ) have been responsible for several terrorist attacks inside Pakistan, including those on Pakistani army headquarters, several ISI buildings, the Mehran naval air station in Karachi and the Kamra Air Force base. It has been reported that former ISI functionary, Ilyas Kashmiri, leads what he calls the 313 Brigade as the operational arm of al-Qaeda.²⁶ He is often able to tap into Islamist sentiments within Pakistan's military and intelligence services for information that enables him to plan and conduct attacks on well-protected military facilities.

After the killing of Osama bin Laden by U.S. Navy SEALs in the Pakistani garrison city of Abbottabad, Al-Qaeda issued a video urging rebellion in the Pakistani army.²⁷

The video showed four TTP members recording their statements before their suicide attack in May 2011 on the Mehran Naval base in Karachi and described it as revenge for the killing of Osama bin Laden. One of the militants in the video said, "Everyone knows that the Pakistani Army was alongside the American army in the operation in which Sheikh Osama was martyred."

Although Al-Qaeda and its associated groups have been unequivocal in their opposition to the Pakistani state, the state has responded to their threat with equivocation. Pakistan's media often plays down attacks by these groups, especially the LeJ, as "sectarian terrorism," and every attack is followed by conspiracy theories linking attacks within Pakistan to Pakistan's external enemies. "Pakistan has been seemingly trying not to fight the terrorists attached to al Qaeda for various reasons and has been relying on other national hate objects like the US, India and Israel, to deflect attention,"²⁸ observed an editorial in the liberal *Express-Tribune* newspaper.

The Pakistani state's embrace of some extremist Islamists makes it difficult to create national consensus or even discipline within the military and intelligence services about fighting the terrorists. It is difficult for many Pakistanis to understand why Hafiz Saeed, who advocates terrorist attacks in the name of Islam, is a hero, while Osama bin Laden or Hakeemullah Mehsud, leader of the TTP, is not. Pakistan's national discourse encourages Islamists to wield influence disproportionate to their numbers. It also allows militant groups to organize, recruit, train and fight from Pakistani soil.

The Pakistani state lacks clarity in its approach to militant Islamism; Pakistan's politicians are often part of expedient political alignments with Islamist groups; and Pakistan's media allows Islamist views, including conspiracy theories, to prevail without allowing arguments against their beliefs to be amplified. As a result, Islamists with different strategies for acquiring political power continue to flourish in Pakistan while the writ of the state continues to weaken.

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The Next Decade of Jihadism in Pakistan

By Tufail Ahmad

IN THE RUN-UP TO THE U.S. TROOP WITHDRAWAL FROM AFGHANISTAN IN 2014, two trends within Islamism in South Asia are likely to have far-reaching implications for regional politics and security. First, jihadist movements in Pakistan and its neighborhood are increasingly emboldened; their leaderships and core organizations remain largely intact, and their expectations for greater power are rising amid the emerging security vacuum. Second, jihadist movements and the Islamists sympathetic to their goals are increasingly seeking to use political means, including negotiations and elections, to capture power and impose Sharia rule.

Islamism may be described as an ideological orientation which seeks to reshape society and politics through the imposition of a radical understanding of Islam. In the wake of the Arab Spring, Islamists in South Asia have increasingly sought to use not just armed struggle but political means to advance their cause. In Afghanistan, the Taliban appear inclined to accept elections and referendum as a means to capture power and rewrite the country's constitution. In Pakistan, the success of Egyptian Islamists inspired Dr. Tahirul Qadri, the religious scholar, to end his self-imposed exile in Canada and threaten to unseat the Pakistani government through staging a Tahrir Square-like mass uprising in Islamabad in January 2013.¹ The Islamists' current turn towards politics does not mean that they have embraced democratic principles or the rule of law. What it does indicate, however, is the Islamist movement's increasing cohesiveness, mobilization capacity, and desire to achieve power.

This paper examines the essential ideological unity of jihadist groups in Pakistan and its neighborhood. These movements include the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan

and the Haqqani Network, the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan (SSP), Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM) and Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT). Moreover, it examines how the forthcoming U.S. troop withdrawal has emboldened jihadist commanders, who hope to expand their Islamist struggle to a wider region, including to Kashmir, India and Bangladesh, and possibly also to the Middle East and the United States.

Jihadism's Essential Unity

AFGHAN TALIBAN FIGHTERS WORK UNDER THE ISLAMIC EMIRATE OF AFGHANISTAN (IEA) headed by Mullah Mohammad Omar. The Pakistani Taliban militants are united under the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), led by Hakimullah Mehsud. Almost all reports in the Western media describe these organizations as separate and ideologically different; and, there has been widespread expectation in Western capitals that some of them could be persuaded to work against others. In 2010 or 2011, the White House secretly contacted the Haqqani Network to convince them to hold peace talks.² In October 2011, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton also warned of military action against the Haqqani Network in a bid to force it to negotiate.³ When attempts for peace talks did not materialize, the U.S. sought to create a wedge between the Haqqani Network and the Mullah Omar-led IEA. The fact that Western media reports began describing the Haqqani Network as aligned with al-Qaeda and “operationally independent” of the Taliban led by Mullah Omar indicates how US policy changed.⁴

Although these groups are active in different operational domains, they work for the same ideological objectives. Furthermore, they also share their resources and capabilities in planning and conducting operations. As individual movements, they work to impose Sharia rule in their respective domains, but with the expectation that their Sharia state will ultimately form part of a larger caliphate. As such, they consider themselves to be different parts of the same struggle. Generally, jihadist groups in the Middle East also consider Mullah Omar as Emir-ul-Momineen, or the leader of the faithful, leading the supposed global Islamic caliphate. Even the slain al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden had offered *bayah* (oath of allegiance) to Mullah Omar. The TTP's letterhead shows Mullah Omar as the Emir-ul-Momineen and Baitullah Mehsud as its founder.

In a January 2013 video, the TTP Emir Hakimullah Mehsud clarified the distinction between the Afghan and Pakistani Taliban. He responded, “As regards the Afghani Taliban, Emir-ul-Momineen is our Emir too, is Emir of the Afghan Taliban, and is Emir

of al-Qaeda too.... He is Emir of all Muslims. And all praise be to Allah, we have accepted him as Emir with a true heart. There is no question of relations regarding this.”⁵ He explained the Taliban’s relationship with al-Qaeda: “We are waging jihad under the command of only one Emir. Similarly, al-Qaeda men are our brothers. And we are ready to offer any type of sacrifice with them. They are our *muhajireen* [immigrants] brothers and we are their *ansar* [supporters].⁶... When respected Emir Sheikh Osama bin Laden was martyred in Pakistan, our first emotion was that we will take his revenge, and we took it and we will continue to do so in future.”⁷

The IEA has published statements reiterating that the Haqqani Network is part of the Taliban. In 2011, Sirajuddin Haqqani released an audio interview to counter propaganda that his group was not functioning under Mullah Omar, stating, “The respected Emir-ul-Momineen Mullah Muhammad Omar Mujahid is our supreme leader. We follow his directives. We are representing a particular area under the umbrella of the Islamic Emirate and act accordingly. We follow directives of the *shura* in planning and financial matters. In such a situation, there is no question of running a separate organization, group, or entity.”⁸ In mid-2012, Haqqani reiterated, “The stance of the Islamic Emirate never changes, and, we follow the Emir-ul-Momineen in the framework of Islam, without seeking status or material gain. This is enough to assure the world that our organizational affairs are completely controlled and run by the Islamic Emirate.”⁹ He also told the Taliban magazine *Shariat*, “I am known by the name of Khalifa among mujahideen. I am the governor of Khost province in accordance with the thought, suggestion and order of Emir-ul-Momineen.”¹⁰

The 2009 bombing of the CIA base in Khost province is evidence of the unity of the Taliban and al-Qaeda. Abu Dajana, a triple agent who had been working for al-Qaeda as well as for the Jordanian and U.S. intelligence agencies, carried out the attack. Dajana coordinated the bombing with TTP chief Hakimullah Mehsud and the Haqqani Network. Afterwards, a video appeared on the Internet in which Abu Dajana sits alongside Mehsud to record a statement before the attack.¹¹ A January 7, 2010 statement from al-Qaeda also noted that the CIA’s Khost base was attacked “to avenge the death of Baitullah Mehsud” in a U.S. drone attack.¹² A November 2012 Taliban video noted that Hakimullah Mehsud and Omar Al-Britani, a British militant also known as Abbas, were involved in planning the Khost attack.¹³ In November 2012, a U.S. State Department statement on the Haqqani Network’s chief of suicide operations Qari Zakir noted that he was involved in the Khost attack.¹⁴ These pieces of evidence strongly suggest that the Afghan Taliban, the Haqqani Network, Pakistani Taliban and al-Qaeda were involved in the Khost attack.

The Punjab Hub

THERE ARE THREE FORMIDABLE ORGANIZATIONS IN PAKISTAN THAT HAVE WORKED BOTH separately and together to advance the jihadist objectives: Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT a.k.a. Jamaatud Dawa or JuD), Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM) and the Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan (SSP), which also functions as Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ) and Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamaat (ASWJ). The LeT and JeM are focused on India, especially on liberating Kashmir, while the SSP/LeJ/ASWJ conglomerate aims to eliminate Shiism by systematically killing Shiites. All these groups enjoy some form of support from the Pakistani military intelligence.

Though these organizations have a presence in all areas of Pakistan, their respective leaderships are all based in Punjab province. Punjab has emerged as a major jihadist hub where at least 170 madrassas were involved in militant activities in 2010.¹⁵ In southern Punjab, Pakistani intelligence reported the presence of 29 al-Qaeda-linked terror groups in 2010.¹⁶ Like al-Qaeda and the Taliban, these groups believe that Shiites are infidels. Furthermore, they share al-Qaeda's and the Taliban's objectives against America, Israel, and India.

Some other formidable groups banned by Pakistan include Harkatul Mujahideen, Harkat ul-Jihad al-Islami, Hizb ut-Tahrir, and two which have been active in the Khyber region, Lashkar-e-Islam and Ansarul Islam.¹⁷ Over the past 12 years, Pakistan has banned 48 organizations for their role in militancy and sectarianism, while in 2007 it also put the Bareilvi organization Sunni Tehreek on watch.¹⁸ Roughly speaking, about four dozen jihadist organizations are active across Pakistan, with varying capabilities in teaching and training Pakistani youth in jihadist objectives, in planning terrorism and providing a supply chain for the Taliban and al-Qaeda. The three main organizations likely to have a long-term presence in Pakistani society—Jaish-e-Muhammad, Sipah-e-Sahaba, and Lashkar-e-Taiba—are examined below.

Jaish-e-Muhammad

Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM) is led by Maulana Masood Azhar, a militant released by India in exchange for the passengers of a plane hijacked to Kandahar in 1999. From its headquarters in the town of Bahawalpur, JeM leads a Pakistan-wide network of organizational units managed by militant clerics. When addressing students in 2010, JeM cleric Maulana Mufti Abdur Rauf Asghar criticized secular trends in Pakistani society that teach students how to use computers and mobile phones while forgetting to teach how to use the “arrows and swords” of Islam.¹⁹

In a lecture available on YouTube, Azhar explains a saying of Prophet Muhammad on Ghazwa-e-Hind, the Battle of India. (Pakistani groups widely cite the prophet's saying on Ghazwa-e-Hind.) Azhar claims that mujahideen will one day rise from India and arrive in present-day Israel to fight alongside Jesus against the non-Muslims. He explains,

The Lord the Benefactor has chosen the Muslims of Kashmir for a very big fortune/blessing. I haven't come to tell you a lie. I cite a hadith of the Prophet [Muhammad]. The Prophet of Allah had promised to his companions that 'a group of my Ummah will wage jihad in Hindustan [i.e. India]'.... The prophet said, 'for the two groups of my Ummah, Allah has decreed salvation from Hell: one that will arrive alongside Jesus and will wage jihad alongside Jesus, and one [i.e. the second group] that will wage jihad in Hindustan.'²⁰

In recent years, the JeM has organized lectures on the "jihadist verses" of the Quran. In 2010, operating under its charitable arm Al-Rehmat Trust, JeM organized these lessons in towns across Pakistan in which clerics, including Maulana Masood Azhar, justified jihad and *qital* (battle). Over 13,000 people and 2,060 students took lessons in jihad.²¹ These lectures were held in Karachi, Bahawalpur, Faisalabad, Gujranwala, Mirpur, Sukkur, Haveli Lakha Okara, Peshawar, Wah Cantonment, Rawalpindi, Swabi, Nawabshah, Quetta, Mansehra, Bannu, Tando Allahyar, Kohat, Sargodha and Khyber Agency. The location of these towns show that JeM's outreach has sought to encompass the length and breadth of Pakistan. According to a report, "common people participated in these meetings regularly and [were instructed in] lessons that taught translation and interpretation of more than 558 verses on jihad."²² The lectures on "jihadist verses" are annual events.

The JeM organized such lectures in 2011 and 2012. In 2011, it held 21 sessions. At one event, the militant cleric Maulana Talha Al-Saif eulogized Taliban leader Mullah Omar, stating, "Tell me—is it possible to separate the concept of jihad and qital and Islamic dignity when we see the life of Emir-ul-Momineen Mullah Muhammad Omar? Is it possible that the name of Maulana Muhammad Masood Azhar is called somewhere, and the very concept of jihad does not come to our minds?"²³ In 2012, JeM organized a 40-day course. A report about an event in Bahawalpur noted, "It is perhaps the incident of the Thursday night [in March or April 2012], when there was a transaction of billions of dollars in the entire world to wipe out jihad. Millions of soldiers with lethal weapons were at the borders to wipe out the Muslim Ummah. Thousands of TVs, nets, and radio channels were speaking against jihad. At that time, the Masjid

Usman-o-Ali [mosque] in Bahawalpur was resounding with persuasion to jihad. There was a speech contest on the topic ‘History of Jihad.’ There were thirty-six speakers representing Sindh, Punjab, Baluchistan, NWFP [now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa], and unoccupied [Pakistani] Kashmir.”²⁴

Of all Pakistan’s jihadist groups, JeM is most active in preaching jihad among students of school-going age. It regularly publishes such content on its websites—alqalamonline.com, fathuljawwad.com, rangonoor.com, musalmanbachay.com—as well as in its print magazine *Haftroza Al-Qalam* and other booklets. It is also using mobile phones to deliver MP3 messages on jihad to youth.²⁵ After a decade of relative peace in Kashmir, it was reported in 2011 that JeM has revived its terror plots in India.²⁶

Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan/Lashkar-e-Jhangvi

Over the past few decades, Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan (SSP) has been known for its murderous campaign against Shiite Muslims across Pakistan. Its members have been working alongside the Taliban and al-Qaeda. After the Pakistani government banned the SSP and its military arm Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ), it began operating as Millat-e-Islamia Pakistan, which was subsequently also banned. Currently it operates as Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamaat (ASWJ), and is headed by Maulana Ahmad Ludhianvi. The militant leaders of SSP/ASWJ have enjoyed some form of financial and political support from the provincial government of Punjab under Chief Minister Shahbaz Sharif.

In 2011, Punjab Law Minister Rana Sanaullah admitted that the government gave financial aid to the family of LeJ commander Malik Ishaq, who was involved in scores of murders.²⁷ He allegedly masterminded the 2009 attack on a Sri Lankan cricket team in Lahore.²⁸ In 2010, Punjab’s liberal governor Salman Taseer was so skeptical about the government’s protection of ASWJ leaders that he asked the chief minister to make it clear whether he was in favor of or against terrorist organizations. Taseer also pointed out that Law Minister Sanaullah shared a car with the militant leader.²⁹ In an editorial, the *Dawn* newspaper slammed the Sharif government for its “ideological affinity” with militants.³⁰ Under the Sharif government, the SSP/ASWJ fighters burned Christian localities in Gojra and Lahore and killed Christians and Ahmadi and Shiite Muslims in scores after implicating them on fake blasphemy charges.³¹

More recently, SSP militants have engaged in pulling passengers from buses, checking their identity cards to verify their Shiism, and then shooting them to death. SSP has also targeted and beheaded prominent Shiite Pakistanis and bombed Shiite congregations. In August 2012, at least 20 Shiite Muslims were pulled out of a bus at Babusar Top, 100 kilometers from Islamabad, and killed.³² Earlier that year, on February 28, 18

Shiite Muslims were pulled out of a bus and shot dead on the Karakoram Highway in Mansehra district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province,³³ while on April 3 another nine Shiites were dragged out of a bus by a mob and killed in Chilas, near Gilgit.³⁴ On February 16, 2013, a bomb ripped through a Shiite Hazara neighborhood of Quetta, killing over 80 people.³⁵ The attack was claimed by Lashkar-e-Jhangvi.³⁶ Fears are now emerging that the Islamist killers of minorities in Pakistan are aspiring to commit genocide.³⁷

In March 2013, Pakistani Interior Minister Rehman Malik stated that the LeJ is involved in attacks “throughout the country” and is using Punjab as a hideout.³⁸ A review of the social media accounts of the SSP/LeJ indicates that though the SSP is banned, it holds regular events and elections in Pakistani towns to elect leaders. A review of the movement’s publications via Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and other websites reveals that it is inculcating among Sunni youth hateful doctrinal interpretations such as, “The Shiite is a *nasl* [race/offspring] of Jews;” “The Sipah-e-Sahaba calls the Shiite a bigger infidel than the Jew;” “Shiites are the killers of Sunnis;” “Sunnis, have respect; end friendship with Shiites.”³⁹ In 2013, the SSP/LeJ combine appears more powerful in its countrywide presence than the TTP. In March 2013, it took a giant step by publishing an English-language magazine, endorsing al-Qaeda’s jihad and revealing its intent to take its fight globally.⁴⁰

Lashkar-e-Taiba/Jamaatud Dawa

Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) is a fearsome jihadist organization founded by Hafiz Muhammad Saeed. The movement’s members are located in Afghanistan, India, Iraq and the United States. Following a Pakistani government ban, LeT renamed itself as Jamaatud Dawa (JuD) to work as a charity. The LeT and JuD were banned by the UN Security Council after the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks. After the ban, the group emerged as the Falah-i-Insaniyat Foundation (FIF). However, the cadres and leaders of these organizations use the JuD flag. The FIF, too, was designated as a terrorist organization in 2010 by the United States.⁴¹ Hafiz Saeed, along with several other militant commanders, is wanted by India.⁴²

Following the UN Security Council ban, the Pakistani government came under international pressure and shut down the group’s websites and publications. However, the group began using Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. The JuD launched a website in mid-2012, releasing a video in which Hafiz Saeed observed, “Media is a two-sided sword. Instead of it having an impact on us, we want to use it in an effective way. Allah willing, [we] want to convey our message of *Dawah* [Invitation to Islam] and jihad to the people through it...”⁴³

The LeT/JuD/FIF conglomerate has organizational units across Pakistan. In recent years, it has used every opportunity to preach jihad, including at flood relief camps. In August 2010, Rajiv Shah, the chief of the U.S. Agency for International Development, visited one such relief camp and sparked a controversy.⁴⁴ At another relief camp in 2011 Saeed stated, “The Pakistani press has aligned itself with foreign intelligence agencies and is promoting anti-jihad sentiments among the youth of this country... Jihad is the only chance for Pakistan’s survival.”⁴⁵

Hafiz Saeed is an ideologue of jihad, and carries a U.S. reward of \$10 million for anyone who could provide information leading to his prosecution. In speeches and articles, he has warned India, “One Mumbai [terror attack of 2008 is] not enough;” “Jihad is the only option left, as India will never let go of Kashmir;” “Islam is a religion of peace and security, jihad in the path of Allah is an important part of it.”⁴⁶ In 2011, Jamaatud Dawa leaders addressing a rally in Lahore demanded that the Pakistani government establish a “ministry of jihad” and offered that the “budget for the ministry of jihad will be provided by Jamaatud Dawa,” which “will provide one million trained fighters.”⁴⁷ Of all the groups, LeT/JuD enjoys the most comprehensive support of the Pakistani military.

The Next Decade

DESPITE 12 YEARS OF THE U.S.-LED WAR AGAINST TERRORISM, THE JIHADIST ORGANIZATIONS in Pakistan and Afghanistan remain intact, with their organizational and leadership capabilities flourishing. Ahead of the U.S. withdrawal in 2014, these groups sense a new opportunity, viewing the exit as America’s defeat. The strengthening of jihadist organizations creates not only a dangerous long-term situation for Afghanistan and Pakistan, but also expands the jihadist threat for Kashmir, India and Bangladesh.

Recently, two leading jihadist commanders have re-emerged after a decade of hiding, possibly at the behest of the Pakistani military’s Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). In March 2013, Mushtaq Ahmed Zargar, chief of Al-Umar Mujahideen and one of the three militants released by India in the 1999 Kandahar hijacking case, emerged from a decade of hiding. In an interview, Zargar indicated U.S. troop withdrawal was a source of inspiration, stating that, “India must remember that the U.S. has been defeated in Afghanistan. It’s a success for Al-Umar Mujahideen, too. In four months’ time, India will see what we are capable of... We have been going wherever Muslims face oppression, and we will continue to go there. We are fighting in the name of Allah. After Kashmir, we will fight in Chechnya and Palestine.”⁴⁸ He also noted, “We

still run [terror] training centers on both sides of the LoC [Line of Control that divides Kashmir between India and Pakistan]. Nothing has changed on the ground.”⁴⁹

On March 23, 2010, Abdul Wahid Kashmiri, who took over as the Lashkar-e-Taiba chief from Hafiz Saeed after it was banned in 2002, emerged from nearly a decade of hiding, addressing a rally with jihadist commander Syed Salahuddin at Kotli in Pakistani Kashmir. These militant commanders cannot be operating above ground without the ISI’s support. At the rally, Wahid Kashmiri warned of a global fight: “It is the right of mujahideen to fight the invaders and oppressors across the world. The mujahideen who are fighting the occupation forces in Iraq, Afghanistan, Palestine, and Kashmir are fully justified in doing so under religious obligations... The secret of success and freedom from the oppressor lies in jihad and not at the negotiating tables.”⁵⁰

In all likelihood, Mushtaq Ahmed Zargar will focus his energy on Kashmir and India, with support from like-minded organizations such as the LeT, the JeM and the ISI. Abdul Wahid Kashmiri and Syed Salahuddin, the Supreme Commander of Kashmir-focused Hizbul Mujahideen, are likely to work together with Mushtaq Ahmed Zargar, Hafiz Saeed and Maulana Masood Azhar. Sheikh Jamilur Rehman, the Emir of Tehreek-ul-Mujahideen, warned in November 2012, “The day the U.S. forces withdraw from Afghanistan, India must leave Kashmir in humiliation.”⁵¹ Syed Salahuddin advocates jihad against America, stating explicitly, “In the prevailing situation, jihad has become mandatory for every Muslim. Political and religious parties of Pakistan should jointly launch jihad against the U.S.”⁵² All these jihadist organizations have survived because the Pakistani military chooses to fight against some militants, like some TTP commanders and al-Qaeda’s Arab fighters, while allowing others like the LeT/JuD, JeM and the SSP/LeJ to operate freely.

While the SSP has retained its focus on killing Shiites, in March 2013, it revealed its intention to wage global jihad by launching an English-language magazine, *Al-Rashideen*, for an international audience. In an editorial, it indicated that the magazine is also intended for youth in the West whose first language is English, noting, “We present you this first issue of *Al-Rashideen*. We hope this to be a platform where relevant issues facing the Ummah are studied/analyzed upon by students of colleges and universities, and Muslim youngsters whose first or second language is English.”⁵³ In endorsing al-Qaeda’s global jihad, it stated, “[The] only good news... is the rise of the mujahideen movements and their resilience and courage to move on despite heavy odds. And what is driving them? One reason is the spirit of jihad and shahadat [martyrdom] which is expressly present [and permitted] in the Koran and Sunnah [deeds and sayings of Prophet Muhammad].”⁵⁴ In 2013, the group’s leader, Maulana Muhammad Ahmad Ludhianvi, was contesting parliamentary elections for two seats in Jhang, an SSP stronghold.⁵⁵

The three movements—LeT/JuD, the SSP/LeJ and JeM—have acquired a permanent presence in Pakistani society through their countrywide networks and organizational units. It is difficult to imagine how the Pakistani state will have the capacity or the will to curb these three groups anytime soon. Indeed, there are now fears that these groups could join hands and eventually come to influence the Pakistani state the way Hezbollah and Hamas have done so respectively in Lebanon and Gaza. Speaking about the long-term role of Lashkar-e-Taiba, U.S. National Intelligence Director James R. Clapper told a March 12, 2013 hearing of the U.S. Senate’s Select Committee on Intelligence that the LeT “will continue to be the most multifaceted and problematic of the Pakistani militant groups. The group has the long-term potential to evolve into a permanent and even HAMAS/Hezbollah-like presence in Pakistan.”⁵⁶

Speaking about the U.S. troop withdrawal and the Arab Spring, Hafiz Saeed spoke about post-2014: “As the U.S. flees Iraq and Afghanistan, we will get Kashmir...If people took to the streets as they did in Egypt, the governments in India and Pakistan too would have to go.”⁵⁷ At a rally in Lahore, he also warned of a global jihad against America, stating, “Atomic Pakistan will shine on the map of the world, Allah willing, and those who try to wipe Pakistan out will be wiped out.”⁵⁸

In a January 2013 video, TTP Emir Hakimullah Mehsud spoke about the Taliban’s post-2014 objectives: “I would like to say that in 2014 when the American forces withdraw from Afghanistan, after that, Mullah Mohammad Omar Mujahid, who is our Emir, who is our mir today and [will take over Afghanistan and] will be our Emir in future too.... Whatever will be the policy of Emir-ul-Momineen Mullah Mohammad Omar Mujahid, we will pursue that policy. Even today, we support his policies, and even after that [i.e., after 2014] his policy will be our policy....”⁵⁹ In a sign of global jihadist ambitions, Mehsud also described the TTP as an international organization in the same video.⁶⁰ In January 2013, Mehsud and his deputy Maulana Waliur Rehman appeared on another jihadist video and vowed to fight for enforcing a Sharia-based system in India and in Kashmir.⁶¹ The TTP and al-Qaeda have also warned of a jihadist response to the killings of Muslim minorities in Myanmar and in Assam, India.⁶² For example, in 2012, Ustad Ahmad Farooq, the chief of al-Qaeda’s Media and Preaching Department for Pakistan, warned New Delhi that:

after [the killings of Muslims in] Kashmir, Gujarat, and Ahmadabad [also in Gujarat], if you wish you may add to the long list of your evil deeds Assam as well, but don’t forget that taking revenge for every single oppressed Muslim living under your subjugation is a trust on our shoulders. These arrogant actions of yours only provide impetus for us to hasten our advance towards Delhi.⁶³

He added:

I would like to request the scholars and people of Bangladesh to step forward and help the oppressed Muslims living in their neighborhood and increase pressure on their heedless government to open its borders for Burmese Muslims and stop its oppressive actions that only make life more difficult for the oppressed Muslims of Burma and Assam.⁶⁴

More recently, a Pakistani official confirmed the Taliban's growing international reach, noting that the TTP has successfully recruited fighters from as far as Fiji.⁶⁵ In 2012, after the shootings in Toulouse, France by Mohamed Merah, there were also reports of white jihadists receiving training in Miranshah, Mir Ali and the Datta Khel areas of North Waziristan.⁶⁶

The TTP has a demonstrated ability to orchestrate attacks in the United States: it was the organization which had recruited and financed the activities of Faisal Shahzad, who perpetrated the failed bombing on May 1, 2010 in New York's Times Square. Evidently, the attack was planned to coincide with a video statement of TTP Emir Hakimullah Mehsud in a bid to rebut Western media reports at the time that he had been killed in a drone strike in Pakistan.⁶⁷ In his January 2013 video, Hakimullah Mehsud pledged to send fighters to the Arab Spring countries, stating, "we are ready for every type of assistance so that the democratic and secular system [in Arab nations] comes to an end; the *kufri* [infidel] system ends, and an Islamic system is established."⁶⁸ Locally, the TTP and non-Taliban militant group Lashkar-e-Islam (LeI) united in April 2013, appointing LeI chief Mangal Bagh as their joint head for Khyber Agency.⁶⁹ In 2012, Tehreek-e-Taliban Punjab—a mixture of Harkat ul-Jihad al-Islami, JeM and Harkat-ul-Mujahideen—vowed to re-launch the Kashmir jihad.⁷⁰ The TTP also works alongside the anti-People's Republic of China East Turkistan Islamic Movement (ETIM).⁷¹

While the TTP is positioning for a global fight, the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA) is focused on capturing power in Afghanistan in 2014. In 2011, an identified Pakistani security official, speaking about the strength of the IEA's Haqqani Network, stated, "There are no signs of it getting weaker. In fact, its strength is growing." The group has "between 15,000 and 25,000" fighters and sympathizers.⁷² The Western assessments in 2010 indicated that the Afghan Taliban constitute about 20,000-30,000 fighters, with 10 percent loss of fighters in U.S. military operations.⁷³ In April 2012, Indian media reported that the Haqqani Network has 4,000 hardcore fighters.⁷⁴ After IEA, the second largest militant group in Afghanistan is Hizb-e-Islami of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, who has sought to capture power both through negotiations and fighting while working alongside the Taliban and al-Qaeda.

Ahead of the U.S. exit, the IEA has begun describing Afghanistan as an Islamic Emirate. Key militant organizations have held talks to agree on a power-sharing deal in 2014. According to the Urdu daily *Roznama Ummat*, Taliban commander Sirajuddin Haqqani and Kashmir Khan, representing Hekmatyar, attended a conference somewhere in Afghanistan in mid-2011.⁷⁵ Some points agreed upon included the following: permanent U.S. military bases in Afghanistan are unacceptable, and jihadist organizations will boycott talks and increase resistance if the United States insists on maintaining bases; jihadist groups reject the U.S. offers of excluding Mullah Omar or Jalaluddin Haqqani from a future setup in Kabul; all Afghan militias will be abandoned; all NGOs and those preaching Christianity will be banned; all foreign security agencies will be banned; local people will be involved in the formation of government; and neighboring countries will be asked to stop interference in Afghanistan.⁷⁶

Over the next decade, the Afghanistan, Pakistan and Bangladesh-based branches of Hizb ut-Tahrir—which works to establish the Islamic caliphate—will pose a unique threat. In South Asia, the movement advocates for jihad in Kashmir, stating, “Kashmir can only be liberated through organized jihad.”⁷⁷ Despite the ban on the movement, it has held public rallies in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Hizb ut-Tahrir is ideologically similar to the Taliban, the Punjab-based jihadist organizations and al-Qaeda, although there are clear differences among these groups on matters of tactics. It is difficult to assess the size of Hizb ut-Tahrir’s membership, its small events and reliance on press statements indicate that its members number in the hundreds, not thousands. Nonetheless, Hizb ut-Tahrir specializes in recruiting military officers with the goal of launching a revolutionary coup and imposing Islamic rule. Its members have been arrested in Bangladesh for plotting military coups.⁷⁸ Recently, top Pakistani military officers have been arrested for their links with Hizb ut-Tahrir.⁷⁹ In recent years, al-Qaeda, too, has penetrated the Pakistani military, with some ex-officers working for al-Qaeda while some jihadist organizations in Pakistan are working as extensions of the Pakistani military.⁸⁰

Conclusion

THE GENERAL STRENGTHENING OF JIHADISM IN SOUTH ASIA AHEAD OF THE 2014 NATO withdrawal from Afghanistan combined with the prospect of Islamist groups using elections and referendums to capture power in Kabul are now working in favor of the Taliban in Afghanistan. Over the next decade, these trends and the Taliban’s potential success will also strengthen Pakistan-based Islamist movements. After 2014, the above-discussed jihadist organizations will be left with substantial organizational

capabilities to conduct attacks and, more importantly, with the strength and prestige to influence populations across the region. Inspired by the Arab Spring, these movements have increasingly looked to political means to capture power and impose an Islamist order. Taken together, these trends will have far-reaching implications for the South Asian Islamist landscape. Mainstream religious organizations such as the Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan are known for their ideological sympathies for the Taliban and al-Qaeda. In the past, however, the Jamaat-e-Islami has been opposed to the encroachment of such armed jihadist organizations because the latter's reliance on violence has threatened to destroy Pakistan itself. For the nationalistic Jamaat-e-Islami, such an outcome would not be acceptable. However, if the aforementioned jihadist movements were to cease violence even as a tactic and commit to politics, nationalist groups like Jamaat-e-Islami will mostly welcome such a move, and especially if a coalition among them would generate greater political power for Islamists. In coming years, if the LeT, JeM, SSP and the Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan were to join hands for an electoral bid, they could likely acquire the tacit support of the TTP, and Pakistan could well emerge as a jihadist state and transform the face of South Asia. Such a development would be in keeping with the popular Islamist narrative holding that Pakistan will become the "Madina-e-Saani"—or the "Second Madina," after the first Islamic State founded by the Prophet Muhammad.

During 2007 and 2008, British diplomats made the first attempts for talks with the Taliban through the mediation of Saudi Arabia. After the Taliban captured U.S. soldier Bowe Bergdahl in 2009, a series of contacts between the Afghan Taliban and the United States began, with a political office being set up in Qatar. However, the Taliban saw the contacts as tactical moves that offered them diplomatic and political legitimacy. They described the talks first as contacts for the exchange of Bergdahl for Taliban prisoners from Guantanamo Bay, and later called them a diplomatic front in addition to the Taliban's military front.⁸¹ At times, the United States appeared willing to hand over three Afghan provinces to the Haqqanis for a peace agreement.⁸²

Toward the end of 2012, it appeared that the Taliban would consider participating in elections under an interim government in Kabul in 2014 if such a government setup were to result from the talks involving the Taliban, the U.S., the Karzai government, and Hizb-e-Islami of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar. At a December 20-21, 2012 conference in Chantilly, near Paris, the Taliban adopted some positions that appeared to have been influenced by the electoral success of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. Taliban representatives Mawlawi Shahabuddin Dilawar and Dr. Muhammad Naeem gave a presentation indicating that Mullah Omar does not intend to monopolize power, and that Afghanistan's constitution should be Islam-compliant and should receive the approval of the people, possibly through a referendum.⁸³ In March 2013,

Mullah Agha Jan Mutasim, a confidant of Mullah Omar, said the Taliban may launch a political party, adding, "The Taliban leaders whose names have been removed from the U.N. black list will play an important role in the political process."⁸⁴ Sensing that a political vacuum could emerge in 2014, some anti-Karzai politicians are also maneuvering for talks with the Taliban.⁸⁵ Pakistan, too, has freed over two-dozen Taliban prisoners believing that this will strengthen Islamabad's influence in Kabul.⁸⁶

Taking a cue from the Afghan Taliban, the TTP was reportedly in contact with Pakistani officials throughout 2011, although these contacts produced little or were intended as tactical moves.⁸⁷ Ahead of the May 2013 elections in Pakistan, however, the TTP and some Pakistani leaders were more inclined to negotiate. In December 2012, the TTP offered a conditional ceasefire provided Pakistan re-wrote its constitution to make it more Islamic and ceased its role in the war on terror.⁸⁸ In all likelihood, the Islamist victories in the Middle East in the wake of the Arab Spring influenced the Taliban's new willingness to negotiate. At the same time, their primary objective is not entering into a democratic political process, but the imposition of Sharia rule. TTP spokesman Ihsanullah Ihsan noted that "a few clauses" do not make the Pakistani constitution Islamic.⁸⁹ Afghan Taliban, too, adopted a similar stance. Syed Muhammad Akbar Agha, the chief of Jaish-ul-Muslimeen, a faction of the Afghan Taliban, said in February 2013 that the Taliban's demand for enforcement of Sharia rule in Afghanistan is "non-negotiable."⁹⁰ In the jihadist organizations' reckoning, referendums and elections are merely a means to capture power to impose Islamist rule. This quintessentially Islamist understanding of elections and democracy as a means and tactic to capture power in order to impose Islamic rule was best articulated by Tayyip Erdogan, the Prime Minister of Turkey, when he stated: "Democracy [is] a train from which you get off once you reach the station."⁹¹

Over the next decade, jihadism's prospects in South Asia will be shaped to a large extent by the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) that backs them. The ISI's role in creating and nurturing jihadism in South Asia was irrefutably made clear by Adnan Rasheed, a former Pakistan Air Force commando and now a top-ranking Taliban commander, in a May 2013 interview with the Taliban magazine *Azan*. Rasheed had been imprisoned following an assassination attempt on Pakistani military ruler General Pervez Musharraf; however, Taliban militants freed him in a daring jailbreak in April 2012. In the interview, Rasheed described how he came to the realization that the terrorist group Jaish-e-Muhammad was a sub-unit of ISI. As he stated: "[It] was revealed to me that neither [JeM chief] Masood Azhar nor [militant commander] Haji Abul Jabbar was officially appointed Emir for Pakistan [by Mullah Omar, as Adnan Rasheed was led to believe while in the PAF]; they were working under the ISI. So, I went to my Emir of Idara[t-ul-Pakistan, a jihadi unit in PAF], Dr. Y and told him that, 'Brother,

we are wronged! There is no difference between us and Jaish-e-Muhammad. We are soldiers in uniform and they are soldiers without uniform. How strange it is that we follow them and they take instruction from our institutions—the ISI!”⁹²

Jihadism’s appeal runs deep in the Pakistani military. The Afghan jihad of the 1980s, the Kashmir jihad of the 1990s, and the jihad of the post-9/11 era have all had an immeasurable impact on recruitment into the Pakistani military. In the wake of the anti-Soviet war, anti-Western Pakistani sentiment rose to its zenith. Many of the soldiers recruited during these past three decades were exposed to and deeply influenced by jihadist ideology. Their continued rise to senior positions in the military will likely strengthen the hands of already serving pro-jihadist officers wielding considerable influence on the country’s foreign policies.⁹³

The ISI has demonstrated that it is unwilling to repeal its support for jihadist organizations; in fact, in 2010, when U.S. drones began targeting the Haqqani Network in North Waziristan, the ISI shifted the network to a new base of operations.⁹⁴ Almost all leading Pakistani newspapers have called for holding the ISI accountable for terrorist activities in the region.⁹⁵ The ISI regards itself as the guardian of the Islamic State of Pakistan. As a result, in the next decade, it is unlikely that the ISI, will either stop supporting jihadism or obstructing the efforts of Pakistani officials from fostering good ties with India. The machinations of the ISI and pervasiveness of political Islamism that will inevitably follow will prove to be an enormous obstacle to prosperity and democracy in Pakistan.

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Cleansing Pakistan of Minorities

By Farahnaz Ispahani

PAKISTAN'S RELIGIOUS MINORITIES ARE WIDELY VIEWED AS EMBATTLED OR under attack. This paper undertakes a comprehensive analysis of Pakistan's policies towards its religious minority populations, both Muslim as well as non-Muslim. It is not only Pakistan where Muslim as well as non-Muslim minorities are under attack. Rather, this is a phenomenon which is prevalent in a number of Muslim-majority countries. In the context of a Muslim world comprising 1.4 billion people, with an extremely young population, not only is it important to recognize how Pakistan treats its minority populations but it is equally critical to note the role of stateless actors or extremist groups in all Muslim countries.

When Pakistan was founded in 1947, its secular founding fathers wanted to create a homeland for South Asia's Muslims, not an Islamic state. Mohammad Ali Jinnah, recognized as Pakistan's Quaid-e-Azam (Great Leader), clearly declared that non-Muslims would be equal citizens in the new country. But Pakistan's trajectory after independence has been very different.

At the time of partition in 1947, almost 23 percent of Pakistan's population was comprised of non-Muslim citizens. Today, the proportion of non-Muslims has declined to approximately 3 percent. The distinctions among Muslim denominations have also become far more accentuated over the years. Muslim groups such as the Shias who account for approximately 20-25 percent of Pakistan's Muslim population, Ahmadis who have been declared non-Muslim by the writ of the state, and non-Muslim minorities such as Christians, Hindus and Sikhs have been the targets of suicide bomb attacks on their neighborhoods, had community members converted to Islam against

their will, and had their houses of worship attacked and bombed even while they were inhabited by worshipers.

Even the graveyards of Christians and Ahmadis have not been spared. Regular reports of graves being excavated and vandalized appear in the press and via community reports. In Sindh and Balochistan provinces, well-to-do Hindus have been the primary targets of the ransom kidnappings. The numbers of minority Muslims and non-Muslims subjected to these purposeful attacks have increased significantly and the crimes committed have become more heinous. Those accused of “blasphemy” have sometimes been burnt alive outside police stations with no culprits identified or punished.

The origins of Pakistan were different. Reflecting his secular views, Mr. Jinnah nominated a Hindu, several Shias (of whom he was one) and an Ahmadi to Pakistan’s first cabinet. Now, however, non-Muslim representation at the Cabinet level is limited to symbolic appointments while Shias and Ahmadis face smear campaigns from Sunni Muslims that declare them non-Muslims.

Mr. Jinnah’s secular views were demonstrated not only during the struggle for independence but in his famous speech of August 11, 1947, in which he stated that in order to make Pakistan “happy and prosperous,” every person living in the country was a citizen “first, second and last,” irrespective of his or her community, caste, color or creed. His speech advanced the case for a secular, albeit Muslim-majority, Pakistan:

I cannot emphasize it too much. We should begin to work in that spirit and in course of time all these angularities of the majority and minority communities, the Hindu community and the Muslim community, because even as regards Muslims you have Pathans, Punjabis, Shias, Sunnis and so on, and among the Hindus you have Brahmins, Vashnavas, Khattris, also Bengalis, Madrasis and so on, will vanish ... You are free; you are free to go to your temples, you are free to go to your mosques or to any other place or worship in this State of Pakistan. You may belong to any religion or caste or creed—that has nothing to do with the business of the State ... We are starting in the days where there is no discrimination, no distinction between one community and another, no discrimination between one caste or creed and another. We are starting with this fundamental principle that we are all citizens and equal citizens of one State ... Now I think we should keep that in front of us as our ideal and you will find that in course of time Hindus would cease to be Hindus and Muslims would cease to be Muslims, not in the

religious sense, because that is the personal faith of each individual, but in the political sense as citizens of the State.¹

As originally conceived, Pakistan was at the very least not intended to discriminate among various Muslim denominations, and non-Muslim minorities too were assured of equal rights as citizens. However, things have changed over the last several decades.

Despite the fact that Pakistan's founding fathers were modern and liberal in their personal views, Islamism still took hold. The use of Islamic slogans and Islam during the 1946 elections preceding independence and in defining Pakistani nationhood immediately after independence resulted in a situation where slowly they conceded space to the Islamists.

The debates in Pakistan's Constituent Assembly during the 1950s, prior to the finalizing of the country's first Constitution of 1956, focused a great deal on the demand by the Islamists in the Assembly to pronounce Pakistan an Islamic state. There were *ulema* (Islamic scholars or clerics) both within and outside the government who championed this demand. Within the government, the clamor for an Islamic state was led by Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani, President of the Jamiat Ulema Islam (JUI) and *pir* of Manki Sharif from the North West Frontier Province (now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa), and Maulana Akram Khan, President of the East Pakistan Provincial Muslim League.

The blueprint and arguments for the steps required to transform Pakistan into an Islamic State came from Abul Ala Maududi, founder of the Jamaat-e-Islami (JI), the South Asian analogue of the Arab Muslim Brotherhood. According to Maududi, the future constitution of Pakistan had to be based on the underlying assumption that sovereignty rested with Allah and that the state's function was solely to administer the country. According to him, Sharia was the law of the land and no man-made law could contravene the Sharia.

The extent of Maududi's influence became visible as early as 1949, when the Objectives Resolution, defining the foundational principle for Pakistan's Constitution was passed by the Constituent Assembly. The resolution stated,

Sovereignty belongs to Allah alone but He has delegated it to the State of Pakistan through its people for being exercised within the limits prescribed by Him as a sacred trust.

The State shall exercise its powers and authority through the chosen representatives of the people.

Muslims shall be enabled to order their lives in the individual and

collective spheres in accordance with the teachings of Islam as set out in the Quran and Sunnah.

The principles of democracy, freedom, equality, tolerance and social justice, as enunciated by Islam, shall be fully observed.

Adequate provision shall be made for the minorities to freely profess and practice their religions and develop their cultures.

Pakistan shall be a federation.

Fundamental rights shall be guaranteed.

The judiciary shall be independent.

Non-Muslim politicians objected to the notion of making state policy subservient to “the teachings and requirements of Islam,” which they rightly pointed out were subject to debate and variation. Bhupendra Kumar Dutta, a Hindu politician from East Bengal, warned that the resolution would lead to discrimination against non-Muslims and to internecine battles among Muslims. Politics, Dutta argued,

comes within the sphere of reason while religion within that of faith. If religion and politics are intermingled then there is a risk of subjecting religion to criticism, which will rightly be presented as sacrilegious and it would also cripple reason and curb criticism as far as the state policies are concerned.²

In response to objections, Liaquat Ali Khan, the mover of the resolution and Prime Minister, stated that “Pakistan was founded because Muslims of this subcontinent wanted to build up their lives in accordance with the teachings and traditions of Islam.”³ The Prime Minister, a secular individual, described the passing of the resolution, “as the most important occasion in the life of this country, next in importance only to the achievement of independence.”

Once Pakistan’s *raison d’être* had been defined in religious terms, the Islamist demands could not be held at bay. Maududi and his fellow Islamists said that citizenship in an Islamic state was open to any Muslim, born anywhere in the world, even if he was not born in the country. However, non-Muslims had to enter into a covenant with the Islamic state.

From Maududi's point of view, Non-Muslim culture had a negative impact on Muslim life. "It destroys its inner vitality, blurs its vision, befogs its critical faculties, breeds inferiority complexes, and gradually but assuredly saps all the springs of culture and sounds its death-knell," he wrote. According to him, "the Holy Prophet has positively and forcefully forbidden the Muslims to assume the culture and mode of life of the non-Muslims."⁴

Over the years, the Islamist rejection of "non-Muslim" culture took the form of attempts to define a limited "Muslim" culture and limiting the freedom of non-Muslims and Muslims alike to embrace diversity. While non-Muslims were easily defined as "the other," a struggle also started to determine who among Muslims were pure Muslims and who had allowed Persian or Indian culture and practices to taint their faith.

Similarly, Pakistan's constitution has been amended to designate Ahmadis as non-Muslims. A similar drive, influenced by Salafi ideology from Saudi Arabia, has been undertaken by Deobandi groups against the Shias. A terrorist offshoot of the Deobandi movement (*Takfiris*—those who declare some Muslims as *kafirs* or unbelievers) has been escalating atrocities against Shias in an effort to drive them out of the country or to force them to accept a lowered status in an Islamized Pakistan. Their targets have included men, women and children.

Pakistan's non-Muslim minorities, particularly Sikhs and Hindus, were "cleansed" during the partition riots at the time of independence in 1947. Attacks against Muslim minorities started as early as the 1950s when anti-Ahmadi demonstrations and riots took place. The rise of contemporary sectarianism, however, dates back to the 1980s.

Top-Down Islamization

ACCORDING TO MUHAMMAD QASIM ZAMAN, SECTARIANISM IN PAKISTAN STARTED out as an "urban phenomenon."⁵ However, over the years it has transformed into much more than that. A combination of socio-economic factors, state-led Islamization and international events (like the Islamic Revolution in Iran) have played their role in the rise of Shia-Sunni tensions.

General Zia ul Haq, Pakistan's third military ruler who ruled from 1977-88, imposed a policy of state-led Islamization. Till the time of Zia, most Islamists believed, like Maududi, that given the opportunity any good Muslim would vote an Islamist party into power and set up an Islamic state. By the 1970s it was evident that given the choice Pakistanis, like others, voted for political parties which promised them *roti*,

kapra, makan (food, clothing, housing). This led to what Vali Nasr refers to as the phenomenon of “top-down Islamization” in countries like Malaysia and Pakistan.

As part of this Islamization process General Zia brought in rules and regulations which were supposed to bring Pakistani law more in tune with the Sharia, or at least the Sharia as interpreted by him and his cohorts. These laws, which included the infamous blasphemy law, had a long-term impact on Pakistan’s minorities.

In an attempt to organize the country around one version of Islam, General Zia’s policies targeted the Shias. In 1979 General Zia attempted to impose a policy under which *zakat* (charity) would be collected directly by the state from each Muslim citizen. Under protests from Shia groups, Zia changed the policy so that only Sunnis would pay it. This led to the rise of Sunni radical organizations and their militant offshoots and, in response, Shia militant outfits.

Pakistan’s Shias belong to different ethnic and linguistic groups and different tribes. They are spread all over the country. A number of leading Pakistani political figures, professionals, academics and media personalities are from the Shia community. Yet this community not only has faced discrimination but has been targeted and attacked by radical Islamist groups of all hues. The one thing that unifies them in the eyes of the anti-Shia Sunni-led militant groups is their religious belief.

The anti-Shia militants roam with impunity, appear on prime-time talk shows on television and hold political rallies where they declare Shias as unbelievers and *Wajib-ul-Qatal* (deserving of death). These anti-Shia groups have ties to political parties that afford them both political influence and protection. They are rarely arrested, even after they proudly and publicly announce their deeds—like in the repeated massacres in 2013 of Hazara Shias in Quetta. When they are arrested, these terrorists have access to mobile phones in prison, receive visitors openly and are often released swiftly on their own recognizance. The few who have been tried have always been acquitted by Pakistan’s judiciary on the grounds of “lack of evidence.”

The anti-Soviet Afghan jihad of the 1980s not only helped the groups in Afghanistan, it had a massive blowback on Pakistan. Money from Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries poured in for madrassas all over Pakistan, bringing curricular changes, a Wahhabi (or as it is referred to in South Asia, *Ahl-e-Hadith*) version of Islam and its views of both Muslim as well as non-Muslim minorities.

The curricular changes were not only in the religious schools but also the secular ones. An entire generation of Pakistanis studying in public (and secular) schools has grown up viewing not only non-Muslim minorities but also Muslim minorities as “the other,” as “unpatriotic,” and as “not Muslim enough.”

These Islamist groups have also been used by the coercive apparatus of the state for their own foreign and security policy agendas. In 1971, the East Pakistan wing of

the Jamaat-e-Islami aligned with the Pakistani military to crack down on its fellow citizens, both Muslim and non-Muslim. Bengali Muslims were often portrayed as “too Hindu” to be true Muslims. The Islamist groups in both India and Afghanistan, supported by the Pakistani military-intelligence complex, believed in the same ideological goals as their sectarian brethren.

There has been a steady decline in religious tolerance in Pakistan over the last 65 years. At the time of Pakistan’s birth and the partition of India in 1947, non-Muslim minorities comprised twenty-five percent of the new country’s population, whereas today they only comprise five percent. According to the last census in Pakistan which collected such data, conducted in 1998, Christians constitute 1.59 percent and Hindus 1.60 percent of Pakistan’s population. While much of the “cleansing of the population” took place in major events (partition, around the 1965 and 1971 wars), there has also been a steady rise in incidents involving attacks on both Christians and Hindus in the last decade.

The small and ever-decreasing Hindu minority has faced a steady barrage of forced conversions and kidnappings, often for ransom. In the last few years there has been an increase in the number of Hindu families migrating or seeking asylum in neighboring India.

One incident of forced conversion of a young Hindu woman that garnered a lot of media coverage was that of Rinkel Kumari. She was abducted with the help of a ruling-party lawmaker and forced to marry and convert to Islam. This is just one case of abduction and forced religious conversion in Pakistan, with around 20-25 kidnappings and forced conversions of Hindu girls in Sindh every month according to a report by the Asian Human Rights Watch.

Discriminatory laws implemented during the 1980s and violence against religious minorities continues to remain of serious concern. Pakistan’s infamous “Blasphemy Law” has targeted religious minorities on a regular basis. Asia Bibi, a poor Christian woman from Punjab, was the first woman in Pakistan’s history to be charged with blasphemy and sentenced to death. In early 2012 a young Pakistani Christian girl, Rimsha Masih, was accused of blasphemy though fortunately the case was dismissed in November 2012. In spite of the case’s dismissal by the court, Rimsha Masih and her family had to be kept in a safe house in Pakistan to prevent vigilante actions against her. Rimsha and her family now live in Canada.

In August 2010, in the town of Gojra in Punjab, seven Christians were burnt alive, 18 others injured and at least 50 houses set on fire by a mob that accused the victims of blasphemy. As a member of parliament, I recall vividly the calls for help from Gojra’s Christians and the effort that had to be made to get the Punjab provincial government and the army to go in and defend the population from bloodthirsty zealots.

Among Muslim-majority countries, Pakistan has the strictest anti-blasphemy laws. Although the law against blasphemy goes back to the days of the British Raj in the sub-continent, the new strictures were introduced during the military regime of General Zia ul Haq. The key section of Pakistan's Penal code relating to Blasphemy is Section 295. "Damaging or defiling a place of worship or a sacred object," and "defaming the Holy Prophet of Islam" are among the crimes under these laws with penalties ranging from a fine to death. What is of concern is the fact that according to these laws, "intent of a person to commit blasphemy" is all that is required for conviction. The law is generally not applied to Muslims defiling non-Muslim places of worship.

During the British era, blasphemy laws were used infrequently and were reserved for prosecution of clerics, authors and preachers who caused inter-communal violence by attacking other faiths. But since 1982, any individual can be charged with blasphemy, leading to vigilantism and frivolous accusations against Pakistan's minorities, especially Christians. Before 1986, only 14 cases of blasphemy had ever been reported under this law, whereas between 1986 and 2010 1,274 people had been charged.⁶

Islamic parties have strongly and often violently resisted acts that they deem blasphemous, but what is worrying is that today even mainstream and relatively socially liberal parties are maintaining a strong "anti-blasphemy" stance. Prominent political figures like Salmaan Taseer, the former governor of Punjab province, and my colleague in parliament Shahbaz Bhatti, former Federal Minister for Minorities, were assassinated in 2011 for their opposition to the blasphemy laws. Although neither said anything even remotely blasphemous, extremist clerics took the position that opposing laws against blasphemy construed promotion of blasphemy, rendering the two politicians liable to punishment by death.

The first stated purpose of the blasphemy laws is to protect Islamic authority. By Article 2 of the Constitution, Islam is the official state religion. Article 31 states that it is the Pakistani government's duty to foster an Islamic way of life. Article 33 states that is the country's duty to discourage parochial, racial, tribal, sectarian, and provincial prejudices among the citizens. Unfortunately, Article 33 of the Constitution has never been utilized to protect the Muslim and non-Muslim minorities in Pakistan in a serious, disciplined method.

Along with the non-Muslim minorities, Ahmadis, who deem themselves a sect within Islam but Orthodox Muslims consider heretics, are targeted for prosecutions under various provisions of the blasphemy laws. Radical Sunni Islamist groups frequently target Ahmadis for attacks, both at their mosques as well as in public places. The Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan periodically issues statements "congratulating" Pakistanis for these attacks, referring to the Ahmadiyya and Shia communities as "the enemies of Islam and the common people." After each act of violence against religious

minorities, the Taliban, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi or Sipah-e-Sahaba proudly take responsibility without fear of punishment.

In early March 2013, in Lahore, the capital of Pakistan's largest province, Punjab, a mob attacked and burned down more than 40 houses belonging to Christians while the police stood by. The attacks on Christians followed a rising tide of attacks on Pakistan's Shia Muslims and were often mischaracterized in the media as the products of sectarian conflict. In reality, these increasingly ferocious attacks reflect the ambitious project of Islamists to purify Pakistan, making it a bastion of a narrow version of Takfiri Islam. Pakistan literally translates as "the land of the pure." However, what started in an imperceptible way as early as the 1940s and picked up momentum in the 1990s is a drive to transform Pakistan into a land of religious purification.

Will Pakistan Survive?

THE RISING RADICALIZATION OF PAKISTANI SOCIETY REFLECTS WILLFUL DISREGARD for the rights of its minority populations and also unwillingness among many politicians and bureaucrats to confront the Islamist extremists. The policy of Pakistan's security services to use religious extremists in regional battlegrounds such as Kashmir and Afghanistan also contributes to their impunity.

In the May 2013 elections in Pakistan, Zia's Islamization legacy came back to haunt Pakistan. While the nomination papers of moderate and liberal civilian politicians were often rejected on the grounds that they did not pass the litmus test of religiosity and commitment to Pakistan's ideology, militant and terrorist leaders faced no such problem. It was a clear signal that the State wanted to acknowledge violent extremists as part of the national political mainstream.

A process of society-wide Islamization, begun under Zia ul-Haq, has now reached its full bloom with the wide presence of radical Islamist groups who eliminate any opposition and a greater society that is too stunned to react. Over the last few years there has also been a steady elimination of anyone who opposes this Islamist narrative, including Benazir Bhutto, Salmaan Taseer, Shahbaz Bhatti and others.

The purification of Pakistan started soon after partition from India and was then institutionalized and legalized by military dictator Muhammad Zia ul-Haq. The Islamists are prevailing in the battle of ideas. Secular voices have been either physically eliminated or removed from the mainstream by judicial means. Therefore, it is in the interest of Pakistan's neighbors and the international community to support the

minority communities in Pakistan and to support the voices of those Pakistanis who refuse to give up the idea of a pluralist society.

NOTES

1. M. A. Jinnah's speech, August 11, 1947.
2. Constituent Assembly of Pakistan, Debates, Volume V, March 7-12, 1949, p. 7.
3. Constituent Assembly of Pakistan, Debates, Volume V, March 12, 1949, pp. 2-5.
4. Maulana Maududi, *Towards Understanding Islam*, p. 131.
5. Muhammad Qasim Zaman, "Sectarianism in Pakistan: The Radicalization of Shi'i and Sunni Identities," *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 32, No. 3 (July 1998), p. 705.
6. "Timeline: Accused under the Blasphemy Law," *Dawn*, September 19, 2012.

On the Eve of 2014: Islamism in Central Asia

By Jacob Zenn

IN 1991, AFTER MORE THAN 70 YEARS UNDER SOVIET RULE, THE FIVE CENTRAL Asian Soviet Socialist Republics of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan became independent countries for the first time in their histories. To the north of these five countries, the Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republics (ASSRs) of Tatarstan and Bashkortostan became sovereign states, but remained within the Russian Federation that succeeded the Soviet Union. To the east of these new countries, in China's Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region, there were demands for greater linguistic, cultural and religious autonomy for the Uighurs and, in one town near Kashgar, the creation of a separate Islamic State, but Xinjiang continued as an officially autonomous province of China with no administrative changes.¹

These eight geographic entities—Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Tatarstan, Bashkortostan and Xinjiang—are situated at the core of the Asian landmass, with Kashgar nearly equidistant to mainland Asia's westernmost city, Istanbul, Turkey, and easternmost city, Busan, South Korea.² These entities have common Turkic ethnic and linguistic roots, with the exception of Tajikistan, whose ethnic and linguistic roots are shared with the Persians of Iran and the Dari-speaking Tajiks of Afghanistan. All eight entities also have a common religious heritage, with the majority of people practicing Sunni Islam. There are, however, also significant minorities in Central Asia who migrated to the region in large numbers in the twentieth century: the Han Chinese of Xinjiang, who mostly adhere to Confucian traditions and speak Mandarin Chinese; and the ethnic Russians of Tatarstan, Bashkortostan and the five Central Asian countries, who mostly practice Orthodox Christianity.

The heartland of Central Asia is the Fergana Valley, where the borders of Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan meet and twenty percent of Central Asia's 70 million people live. The last enduring Islamic state in Central Asia, the Kokand Khanate, was based in the city of Kokand in the Fergana Valley and covered parts of present-day Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. The khanate was home to sedentary Uzbeks and Tajiks, nomadic Kazakhs and Kyrgyzs, as well as Uighurs, Persians, Indians, Turks, Arabs, Jews, Chinese and Tatars. The khanate was abolished by Czarist Russia in 1876, and replaced by the Russian Governor-Generalship of Turkistan, which means "Land of the Turkic Peoples."³

Since the end of the Kokand Khanate, the subsequent states in the Fergana Valley—including Czarist Russia, the Soviet Union, and the independent Central Asian republics—have sought to limit the role of Islam in government and society. However, the two major political transitions in the region—from Czarist rule to Soviet rule in 1917, and from Soviet rule to independence in 1991—saw resurgences of Islamist movements calling for the restoration of Islam in government and society. These movements included the *Basmachis* in 1917 and the Islamist Movement of Uzbekistan and other revivalist groups in the early 1990s.

In the next ten years, political transition will likely take place in several Central Asian countries and power will shift from the first generation of post-Soviet leaders to a new generation. It is unclear whether this transition will be sudden or gradual, whether it will be brought about by state collapse or by uprisings, or whether it will be facilitated by elections, presidential appointment, or internal consensus. What is clear is that political Islam will be a factor in this transition. The growing tide and attraction of Islamism emanating from the Middle East and the resurgence of Islamist movements in nearby Afghanistan and Pakistan will invariably embolden and strengthen Central Asia's Islamists in their efforts to restore the role of Islam in government and society.

This article reviews the political history of Central Asia since 1991 and shows how the region's leadership is still closely connected to the Soviet-era past. The article then analyzes the Islamist-nationalist groups that arose in Central Asia when the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, and how these groups have evolved into internationally oriented groups in exile. It examines the appeal of Central Asia's most widespread Islamist group, Hizb ut-Tahrir, as well as how the historical religious fault-lines in Central Asia affect each country's susceptibility to Islamist influence. The article concludes with an assessment of how ongoing Arab uprisings may impact Islamism's future in Central Asia.

The Soviet Legacy

THREE OF CENTRAL ASIA'S FIVE LEADERS, NURSULTAN NAZARBAYEV, ISLAM KARIMOV and Emomali Rahmon, are the same leaders who were in power in their countries after obtaining independence more than twenty years ago. Nazarbayev is the president of Central Asia's economically strongest country, Kazakhstan; he won Kazakhstan's last presidential election in 2011 with 96 percent of the vote. Karimov is the president of the most populous and most militarily formidable country in Central Asia, Uzbekistan. He won Uzbekistan's last presidential election in 2007, with 91 percent of the vote. Both presidents were in power when their countries gained independence in 1991.

Emomali Rahmon has led Tajikistan since 1992. His rule has withstood the country's civil war from 1992 to 1997, in which up to 100,000 people were killed, an assassination attempt in 1997, and two coup attempts in 1997 and 1998. He won the presidential election in Tajikistan in 1999 with 97 percent of the vote. After a referendum in 2003 allowed him to run for two more seven-year terms, he won the 2006 presidential election with 79 percent of the vote.

The president of Turkmenistan, Gurbanguly Berdimuhammedov, succeeded Saparmurat Niyazov, or "Turkmenbashi (Leader of the Turkmen)," after Niyazov died of a heart attack in 2006.⁴ Niyazov was Turkmenistan's president at independence in 1991, won the country's presidential election in 1992 uncontested, and in 1999 changed the Constitution such that it made him President for life. Six years after Berdimuhammedov succeeded the late Niyazov, Berdimuhammedov ran in Turkmenistan's presidential election in 2012 and won with 97 percent of the vote. Although Berdimuhammedov was not in power at the time of Turkmenistan's independence, his centralized and demagogic leadership style is a continuation of the system of his predecessor, Niyazov.

Askar Akayev was President of Kyrgyzstan from independence in 1991 until his overthrow in the 2005 Tulip Revolution, which was driven by rising public resentment over government corruption and nepotism.⁵ Akayev's successor, Kurmanbek Bakiyev, was overthrown and fled to Belarus after protests against his rule turned deadly in 2010. Kyrgyzstan's interim president, Roza Otunabayeva, guided the country from a presidential system to a parliamentary system from 2010 until she stepped down in 2011. Almazbek Atambayev won Kyrgyzstan's presidential election in 2011 with 63 percent of the vote and remains Kyrgyzstan's president today. Kyrgyzstan, therefore, is the only Central Asian country to have experienced a major political transition since independence.

In contrast to the five Central Asian countries, the People's Republic of China (PRC)

since 1991 has seen two peaceful transfers of political power: from Jiang Zemin, who became General Secretary of the Communist Party in 1989, to Hu Jintao in 2002; and from Hu Jintao to Xi Jinping in 2012. However, the Communist Party has ruled virtually uncontested since 1949. It survived a major crisis to its legitimacy in 1989, when hundreds of pro-democracy protestors were killed by National Guard troops in Tiananmen Square.

After the turbulent 1990s saw Russia's economy and international power weaken, Russian politics since 2000 have been dominated by Vladimir Putin, whose political style, if not ideology, resembles the one-party state of the Soviet era. Therefore, the dramatic changes that have occurred in Central Asia since the collapse of the Soviet Union notwithstanding, their governments still strongly resemble those of the Cold War era.

Central Asia's centralized governments and lack of political dynamism reflect the enduring legacy of the Soviet Union, in which political opposition and elections were not allowed to exist, and civil society was restricted. The region's post-Soviet leaders have continued to suppress challenges to their rule, including, most of all, the challenges posed by political Islam. Indeed, the experience of the early 1990s, when Islamists in the Fergana Valley tried to seize political power in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, instilled in the region's leaders the belief that politicized Islam would threaten national governments and undermine economic and social progress. Today, the opposition ideology that Central Asia's leaders have sought to contain more than any other ideology is Islamism, which they believe undermines their countries' indigenous religious moderation, secular politics, and generally pro-Western orientations. As Uzbekistan's President Islam Karimov said in 1998:

We will never admit religious slogans to be used in the struggle for power, or as the pretext for intervention in politics, economy and legislation, because in this we see a serious potential threat to stability and security for the Uzbek state.⁶

Since the 1990s, Central Asia's Muslims have generally been allowed to practice their faith privately, but their governments have resisted religious influences perceived to come from outside the region, as well as most expressions of religion in social life and politics. It is in this context that Central Asia's Islamist movements have emerged. They have developed and gathered strength either clandestinely or while in exile outside the region, awaiting their opportunity to resurface and to refashion the post-Soviet regional order into an Islamist one.

Declining Nationalism, Rising Internationalism

Adolat and the IMU

MANY OF THE FIRST ISLAMIST MOVEMENTS TO ARISE IN CENTRAL ASIA AFTER 1991 CAN be traced to the competition that emerged in Uzbekistan between, on the one hand, the secular government of Islam Karimov and pro-government clerics and, on the other, an opposing movement of *mujadidiya* (reformist) Islamic scholars.⁷ The *mujadidiya* scholars' goals since the 1970s were to re-Islamize Central Asian society, reverse the influence of sixty years of Soviet secularism, and establish an Islamic State in Central Asia called "Musilmonabad," or "Land of the Muslims."⁸ They also advocated for a stricter interpretation of the *Quran*, *hadiths*, and *Sunna*, and rejected the traditional form of the *Hanafi* school of Islamic jurisprudence, which was practiced by most Central Asians, as well as the "pre-Islamic rituals" that were accepted by mainstream Hanafi scholars.⁹

There were also two events that unfolded in the late 1970s and early 1980s that strengthened the morale and influence of the *mujadidiya* scholars: first, the Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979, and second, the resistance of the Afghan *mujahidin* to the Soviet Union in Afghanistan from 1980 to 1989. These events, in which Islamists successfully overthrew an ally of the West and secular monarch in Iran, and expelled the Soviet Union from Afghanistan, enabled the *mujadidiya* scholars to envision Central Asia for the first time as a unified Islamic State, no matter the odds against them.¹⁰

However, even as the *mujadidiya* scholars hoped for the end of the Soviet Union, their interests also converged with the Soviet authorities in Central Asia. Like the atheist Soviet authorities, the *mujadidiya* scholars wanted to reduce the influence of their ideological rivals—the mainstream and politically restive Hanafi scholars. As a result, the Soviet authorities allowed the *mujadidiya* scholars access to officially censored Islamist works, such as the writings of the Egyptian Muslim Brothers Muhammad Qutb and Said Qutb, as well as other scholars influenced by Wahhabism. Armed with the works of these Islamists, the Soviet authorities believed the *mujadidiya* scholars could more effectively oppose the Hanafi scholars in the public sphere and their indigenous practices of "polytheism," "saint worship" and pilgrimages to holy sites, which contravened Soviet atheism.¹¹

During the final years of the Soviet Union, as *perestroika* created greater political opening in Central Asia, the *mujadidiya* scholars began speaking out more aggressively

against the Hanafi scholars, especially in the Fergana Valley. When the Soviet Union ended in 1991, the mujadidiya scholars became active politically, and their young followers provided security and law enforcement in towns where the Soviet retreat left a power vacuum. In cities such as Namangan, these young followers formed vigilante groups, the most prominent of which was called “*Adolat Uyushmasi*,” or Justice Union. Adolat would later evolve into the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU).

Adolat’s spiritual leader, Tahir Yuldash, and its military leader, Juma Namangani, were neither Islamic scholars nor formally affiliated with the mujadidiya movement. In fact, these two leaders identified themselves as Hanafi as late as 1999. Nonetheless, they were welcomed by the mujadidiya scholars, and in the early 1990s, one of the leading mujadidiya clerics, Obidxon Qori Nazarov, described Yuldash as “one of our deputies.”¹² In 1991, Yuldash gained prominence when on national television he held a meeting with President Karimov in Namangan and berated the president while demanding that Karimov implement Sharia law in Uzbekistan. On the defensive, Karimov responded to Yuldash saying that introducing Islamic law would not be within his Constitutional powers.¹³

Over the course of the 1990s, President Karimov cracked down on political opponents, especially Adolat and Islamist groups, using laws which allowed the government to prohibit “unsanctioned” religious activity.¹⁴ By 1998, Adolat, which by then became known as the IMU and incorporated other vigilante movements, had cells in the Fergana Valley capable of carrying out attacks, including the bombings of the U.S. and Israeli embassies and government facilities in 2004 and the attempted assassination of President Karimov in Tashkent in 1999. Nonetheless, by 2001 most IMU members had fled the Fergana Valley to northern Afghanistan, where they set up bases out of Karimov’s reach under the protection of the Taliban. The Islamists who remained in Uzbekistan were either silenced or imprisoned, while in neighboring Tajikistan, the Islamists from the country’s civil war were incorporated into the government and eventually lost influence. This left the IMU as the main surviving indigenous Central Asian Islamist group, albeit one primarily in exile.

While in exile, the IMU gained notoriety for the militant operations that its cells carried out in the Fergana Valley and Uzbekistan. At the same time, the movement adapted its ideology to reflect its new circumstances. The IMU’s goals of implementing Sharia law in Uzbekistan and overthrowing the Karimov government began to merge with the broader internationalist goals of the IMU’s hosts in Afghanistan, the Taliban and al-Qaeda. From 1999 to 2001, IMU radio broadcasts from northern Afghanistan as well as the *Islom Ummati (Community of Islam)* publication that it distributed to new recruits showed that the movement’s ideology came to emphasize six main themes, including martyrdom (*shahidlik*); the need for armed *jihād* to overthrow the

government of Uzbekistan; the Western and Jewish oppression of Muslims around the world; the incompatibility of democracy with Islam; empathy with Islamist militants in the Russian North Caucasus, particularly Chechnya and Ichkeria; and the IMU's roots in Uzbekistan.¹⁵

In October 2001, the IMU was driven further into exile when it relocated from northern Afghanistan to Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) after the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan. Over the next decade, the IMU's ideological focus continued to evolve as the movement's approximately 5,000 fighters blended with militants from other countries. These ideological changes within the movement were reinforced as the IMU became more dependent on the Pakistani Taliban and al-Qaeda, and as most of the rising generation of IMU leaders were not Uzbeks who remembered the movement's founding in Uzbekistan.

While in Pakistan, the IMU recruited members from different countries, including Pakistan, Tajikistan, Russia, Turkey, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, China, as well as Uzbekistan.¹⁶ Uzbeks from Uzbekistan became the minority of IMU members, a fact which became apparent in their operations. In 2011, of the 87 "martyrs" that the IMU listed on its website, *alfurqon.com*, only four were Uzbeks, while 64 were from Afghanistan, 10 from Tajikistan, six from Kyrgyzstan, and one each from Tatarstan, Germany and Pakistan. The biographies of the "martyrs" included descriptions of their attacks on U.S. and NATO forces in Afghanistan and the Pakistani and Afghan armies, while operations in Uzbekistan were not mentioned at all.

As the IMU became allied with the Pakistani Taliban, the main threat to its existence was no longer Uzbekistan, but rather the Pakistani army and the U.S. and NATO forces operating in Afghanistan. As a result, IMU leader Tahir Yuldash further reduced the IMU's focus on fighting for Sharia law in Uzbekistan in order to support the internationalist goals of the Taliban and al-Qaeda in Pakistan.¹⁷ As early as 2003, Yuldash announced to his followers that the IMU would shift its focus to fighting Pakistan and its allies in the U.S. and NATO.¹⁸ Accordingly, in Pakistan, the IMU's propaganda and statements were centered on four main themes: justification of suicide-bombings;¹⁹ *bayaan* (allegiance) to the Taliban, which Yuldash gave in-person to Mullah Omar; war against the "infidels;" and the prioritization of jihad against NATO and the U.S. over jihad in Central Asia.²⁰

Yuldash's death in a U.S. drone strike in Pakistan in 2009 enabled the new generation of IMU leaders to take center stage within the organization. This generation's memory of the IMU's formation in Uzbekistan is minimal, if it existed at all, and it was reflected in the movement's post-Yuldash ideology. The IMU's mufti since 2011, Abu Zar al-Burmi, a Pakistani national of Burmese Rohingya descent, incorporated the Taliban's vendettas as well as his personal grievances with the People's Republic of

China into the movement's ideology. He condemned the PRC for supporting the Burmese government's treatment of its minority Muslim Rohingya population and also warned Pakistan to cut relations with Burma or risk attacks.²¹ The IMU had previously never focused on South Asia before al-Burmi's rise.

At the same time, new European commanders became prominent in the IMU. These men included Abu Ibrahim al-Almani (a.k.a Yassin Chouka), a German national of Moroccan descent, who further enmeshed the IMU with the Pakistani Taliban. In February 2013, al-Almani issued joint statements sponsored by IMU's Jundullah media wing and the Pakistani Taliban's Umar media wing. One such video featured Yassin Chouka, Abdul Hakim, a Russian IMU commander, and Adnan Rashid, a Taliban commander who was rescued from death row in Bannu prison for conspiring to assassinate former Pakistani president Pervez Musharraf in a Chouka-led operation. In the video, the three militants announced the creation of a special unit called "Ansar al-Asir" (Supporters of Prisoners), whose aim was to free more militants imprisoned in Pakistan and to target Pakistani intelligence agents, army personnel and prison staff.²²

Currently, the IMU's dependence on the Pakistani Taliban compels the movement to focus on operations in Pakistan and Afghanistan to support its hosts. However, after the withdrawal of U.S. and NATO troops from Afghanistan, there will be less pressure on the Taliban in the Afghanistan-Pakistan border region, and the IMU will be most useful for the Taliban in northern Afghanistan or Central Asia. As a result, the IMU is beginning to shift its operations to northern Afghanistan. In the first five months of 2013, the International Security Assistance Forces (ISAF) conducted more than 30 operations against IMU fighters in northern Afghanistan, which is more than the total number of anti-IMU operations in all of 2012.²³ In a post-2013 security environment, when the U.S. and NATO forces will have mostly withdrawn from Afghanistan, the IMU and its Uzbek members will likely continue to play a key role in helping the ethnic southern Afghanistan- and Pashtun-dominated Taliban to assert control over northern Afghanistan, and possibly lead the effort to extend Islamist influence into Central Asia either on the Taliban's order or independent of the Taliban.²⁴

As the IMU said after six of its members, including two from Uzbekistan and one from Kyrgyzstan, carried out a suicide operation on the governor's office in Panjshir, Afghanistan, on May 31, 2013, "The IMU is continuing its jihadi activities in the Khorasan region [the ancient name for Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Iran] which started 12 years ago...and we hope from Allah that future conquests are very near in the Mawarounnahr region [the ancient name for modern-day Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan]."²⁵ If the IMU realizes this goal, the movement may well come full circle and return its ideological and operational focus to the movement's homeland in Uzbekistan.

The Struggle for Xinjiang

LIKE THE IMU, A NUMBER OF OTHER NATIONALISTIC CENTRAL ASIAN ISLAMIST GROUPS have also become more internationally focused since the end of the Soviet era. The East Turkistan Islamic Movement (ETIM) is such an example.²⁶ ETIM's development has mirrored the IMU in three main ways. First, when ETIM was formed in the early 1990s, it advocated a greater social and political role for Islam in the movement's national homeland, the PRC-ruled province of Xinjiang, which ETIM refers to as "East Turkistan." Second, China's crackdown on the group's activities drove ETIM's members out of their homeland and into Taliban-controlled Afghanistan. Third, following the 2001 U.S.-led invasion of Afghanistan, ETIM's members fled to Pakistan's tribal areas where they increasingly blended with militants from other countries. During ETIM's exile in Pakistan, the movement's ideology has become observably more internationalist; although it has retained as its ultimate goal "liberating" Xinjiang from its "Communist Chinese oppressors."²⁷

ETIM's early evolution was shaped by an uprising that took place in the township of Baren, Kashgar prefecture, in Xinjiang in 1990. With the fall of the Soviet Union, ETIM's members became emboldened. They demanded greater autonomy in Xinjiang, and aspired to establish a fully independent East Turkistan like the five new Central Asian countries to the PRC's West. Similar uprisings in other cities in Xinjiang followed the uprising in Baren, such as Yining, Aksu and Hotan. Although these uprisings were small in scale, they did threaten Chinese rule at a time when pro-democracy protests in Tiananmen Square in Beijing were undermining the legitimacy of the Communist Party. As a result, the PRC launched a "strike hard" campaign beginning in 1996 to root out what it would later term the "three evils" of "terrorism, separatism and religious extremism."²⁸

One prominent ETIM leader, Hasan Mehsum, served time in prison in Xinjiang for his role in the Baren uprising, and then twice more in the 1990s. By 1998, Mehsum and other ETIM leaders fled to Afghanistan after traveling to Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan, where they attempted but failed to solicit support from the Uighur diaspora and other Muslim groups to launch an insurgency against China.²⁹ Under the protection of the Taliban, however, Mehsum set up a base for Uighur exiles in Kabul, as well as several other poorly equipped training camps in other Afghan towns and in the Tora Bora region along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. Mehsum pledged bayaat to the Taliban leader Mullah Omar and ultimately became dependent on the Taliban and al-Qaeda. Yet, he said in an interview in 2002 that ETIM did not have "any organizational

contact or relations with al-Qaeda or the Taliban.... Maybe some individuals fought alongside them on their own.”³⁰ The Uighurs who participated in the ETIM trainings camps before American forces captured them in Pakistan and sent them to Guantanamo Bay also alleged that Mehsum’s focus was on China, even if the organization itself and some of its members were affiliated with al-Qaeda and the Taliban.

Mehsum was killed in a Pakistani army raid on an al-Qaeda compound in South Waziristan in 2003.³¹ His successor, Abdul Haq al-Turkistani—who, according to Uighurs—is detained at Guantanamo Bay, ran some of Mehsum’s camps in Afghanistan—adopted a comparatively more internationalist ideology.³² Abdul Haq wrote in *Islamic Turkistan*, the Arabic-language print and online magazine produced by the Turkistan Islamic Party (TIP), that Taliban leader Mullah Omar designated the IMU to be the umbrella group for Uighur “immigrants” in Afghanistan in 2001.³³ However, under Abdul Haq’s leadership, the Uighur militants formalized themselves as the TIP, which was distinct from the IMU. In 2006, the TIP began promoting “jihad in East Turkistan” through a propaganda campaign that involved the publication of dozens of Arabic, Turkish, Russian and Chinese videos through its media wing, *Islom Awazi* (Voice of Islam) and *Islamic Turkistan*. Through this outreach, the TIP introduced its Islamist struggle in East Turkistan to the internationalist jihadist community and attempted to solicit funding and support from abroad.³⁴

The TIP first released *Islamic Turkistan* in July 2008; the al-Fajr online forum confirmed it as “legitimate” in 2009 (as opposed to a Chinese government fabrication, which some jihadists suspected).³⁵ The magazine covered themes ranging from Salafist doctrine to appeal to funders from the Arab World to articles about “The Responsibility of the Ulema to Defend East Turkistan” as the Ulema [Islamic legal scholars] have other Islamist groups against “infidel” powers. However, a number of other articles and video statements focus on issues which pertain exclusively to Xinjiang. In October 2011, for example, one of the TIP’s leaders, Abdul Shakoor al-Turkistani, highlighted Uighur grievances about Xinjiang in a TIP video, which also showed evidence of TIP involvement in attacks in Kashgar and Hotan in July 2011. These grievances included: mandatory education, which he says has caused the apostasy of Muslims from their religion; the policy of enforced bilingual education (Mandarin Chinese is required for Uighurs); the exodus of Muslim females from Xinjiang to the “Chinese region;” the policy of birth control; Chinese “immigrants” to Xinjiang who are “marginalizing” the province’s Muslim population; China’s “looting” of Turkistan’s resources by “night and day;” and the testing of nuclear weapons in Xinjiang.³⁶

Like the IMU, however, the non-Uighur members of the TIP and the group’s deepening involvement with the Pakistani Taliban shifted the TIP’s ideology towards international issues beyond Xinjiang. For example, in February 2013, a leading Turk-

ish member of the TIP, Nuruddin, offered “advice to the Muslim Brothers in East Turkistan” in a TIP video in which he called for Uighurs and Turks to raise “Islamic flags at the White House and Beijing’s Tiananmen Square,” and for the TIP “to return the honor of the days when the Muslims ruled in Central Asia.”³⁷ The following month, in March, Nuruddin carried out a suicide attack on U.S. forces in Afghanistan, becoming the sixth Turkish TIP operative to carry out a “martyrdom” operation.³⁸

Similarly, in a separate video, Usman Batir, an ethnic Kazakh TIP member, threatened revenge against Kazakhstan for supporting the U.S. and NATO forces in Afghanistan. He also highlighted how TIP rejects the concept of nationality:

There is a line personally drawn by the infidel in between us—saying you are Kazakhstan, you are Turkistan, you are Uzbekistan and you are Kyrgyzstan—there is a line drawn personally by the infidel, my brothers... The religion never came only to Kazakhs, it did not come only to Uighurs, and it did not come only to Arabs... Do not separate. Allah said, you do not separate and say that ‘you are Kazakhstan, you are Turkistan and you are Uzbekistan.’³⁹

Nuruddin and Batir furthermore both stressed that their ultimate goal was the creation of a unified Islamic State in Central Asia, as opposed to Xinjiang.

After basing itself in Pakistan, the TIP, like the IMU, has become more deeply entangled with the Pakistani Taliban’s networks, ideology and operations. The TIP leader, Abdul Haq, for example, was killed in a U.S. drone strike in North Waziristan in a vehicle with Taliban militants in 2010. Abdul Haq’s successor, Abdul Shakoor al-Turkistani, who was also al-Qaeda’s leader in FATA, was killed in 2012 in a U.S. drone strike on a Taliban training camp in North Waziristan.⁴⁰

More recently, the TIP has also become entangled ideologically with the IMU and other international groups. The IMU’s German member, Yassin Chouka, issued a video statement through the TIP’s *Islom Awazi* media wing that praised two leaders of the proscribed German Salafist group, *Millatu Ibrahim*, including, Denis Mamadou Cuspert (Abu Talha al-Almani), who was reportedly killed or arrested by Bashar al-Assad’s forces on the Turkish-Syrian border in March 2013.⁴¹ The TIP also praised the “jihadists” in Syria, and responded directly to Chinese accusations that the TIP is sending fighters to Syria with the help of Turkey-based Uighur human rights organizations. In the twelfth edition of *Islamic Turkistan*, for example, the TIP wrote, “If China has the right to support Bashar al-Assad in Syria, we have the full right to support our proud Muslim Syrian people.”⁴² Although the Chinese Muslims fighting in Syria, including Uighurs, appear to be independent of the TIP, their operations with other Central Asians

and Caucasians in the “*Muhajirin* [Immigrant] Battalions” in Syria will likely further enmesh Xinjiang in the international jihad.⁴³

There are signs that the TIP’s strategy to promote its cause is working; al-Qaeda has taken increased notice of the TIP’s appeals since 2009. Leaders such as Khalid Al-Husaynan and Abu Yahya al-Libi, for example, have recorded speeches for the TIP comparing the need for patience and the inevitability of victory in waging jihad against a more powerful enemy like China to the Afghan mujahidin’s twelve-year war in Afghanistan against the U.S. and before that against the Soviet Union in the 1980s.⁴⁴ Moreover, militants from other Central Asian groups appear to be adopting the TIP’s cause, such as one North Caucasian and one Uzbek in the IMU, who the Pakistani authorities arrested in North Waziristan while plotting attacks in Xinjiang or against Chinese interests in Pakistan.⁴⁵

All in all, the TIP places greater emphasis on its Islamist struggle in Xinjiang than the IMU does on the fight in Uzbekistan. A likely explanation for this is that the IMU’s cooperation with the Taliban and al-Qaeda in Pakistan has been deeper and more substantial than the TIP’s. Furthermore, the TIP has managed to preserve its distinctively Uighur character as Uighurs are still the majority in their ranks. Nonetheless, the TIP’s connections to international jihadism have clearly grown, and it now represents the primary militant group representing the Islamist struggle to liberate Xinjiang from the People’s Republic of China.

The TIP is, however, one of many Uighur groups, most of which are non-violent and secular, that seek independence, or at least greater autonomy, for Xinjiang. There are no established links between the TIP and any other group; but it is possible that the TIP could function as the militant wing and other organizations in Turkey as the political wing of the Xinjiang independence movement. In 2003, this is what Turkey-based East Turkistan Liberation Organization (ETLO) leader, Mehmet Amin Hazret, predicted when, amid pressure from Turkey and the U.S.-led Global War on Terror, he announced that the ETLO, which carried out attacks on Chinese diplomats and businessmen in Turkey and Kyrgyzstan in the late 1990s, would lay down its arms. He said the ETLO would “seek to achieve independence for East Turkistan by peaceful means,” but that the creation of a military wing was “inevitable.”

Jund al-Khilafah

IN AUGUST 2011, A NEW KAZAKH-LED MILITANT ISLAMIST MOVEMENT, JUND AL-KHILAFAH (JaK, Army of the Caliphate), emerged with ties to Afghanistan and Pakistan. Before

the group's appearance, Kazakh Islamists were often organized into lesser-known militant groups, such as the North Caucasus-based Ansar al-Din (Supporters of the Faith). Other Kazakh Islamists remained formally unaffiliated or referred to themselves simply as the "Kazakh mujahidin" in the North Caucasus, where Kazakhs (possibly including ethnic Chechens) formed the largest contingent of fighters from Central Asia.⁴⁶ In Afghanistan, Kazakhs have been known to operate with the IMU and its offshoot, the Islamic Jihad Union (IJU), which is notorious for carrying out attacks against Western forces in Afghanistan and Central Asia, Russian forces in the North Caucasus, and recruitment in Germany and Turkey.⁴⁷ Kazakhs have also joined the Taliban, IMU and TIP. In a December 2011 video called "Appeal of the Kazakh Mujahedin to the Muslims of Kazakhstan," a Kazakh member of the IJU pointed out that the fighters in the Caucasus Emirate are from different republics and ethnic groups, but that they are united ideologically. He then lamented that, "the mujahidin of Central Asia have not been able to do the same." This suggests that the formation of JaK may have represented an attempt by Kazakh Islamists to forge greater linkages with other Central Asian regional movements around the common ideological agenda of creating a unitary Islamic State, or "Caliphate," in Central Asia with the Caucasus Emirate as their model.⁴⁸

The founders of JaK include three Kazakhs inspired by Said Buryatsky (a.k.a. Aleksandr Tikhomirov). Buryatsky was a Russian-born convert to Islam who became a jihadi ideologue in the North Caucasus; a Russian special forces operation killed him in 2010. The JaK announced its formation in September and October 2011, when it released two videos of its members attacking U.S. forces in Afghanistan. These videos emerged seven months after a leading Mauritanian al-Qaeda ideologue, Shaykh Abu Mundhir al-Shinkiti, issued a *fatwa* saying that it is legal to attack police and fight jihad in Kazakhstan even though "the Muslims there are weak and small in number," and four months after the Taliban issued a statement to Kazakhstan's government accusing it of supporting Western efforts "to eliminate Islam."⁴⁹ It is therefore possible that JaK's formation is tied to a broader Taliban- and al-Qaeda-directed effort to cultivate a group focused on starting a jihad in Kazakhstan.

Unlike the IMU and ETIM/TIP, JaK did not emerge from a nationally-oriented Islamist movement focused on the liberation of its homeland. Rather, JaK's founders fled Kazakhstan in 2010 or 2011 to Pakistan's tribal areas and established the group there, while maintaining connections to Salafists in Kazakhstan and the North Caucasus.⁵⁰ According to one report, one of the founders intended to study Islam in Saudi Arabia; however, the Kazakh government prohibited him from doing so and he decided to take up arms against the country as a result. However, like the IMU and TIP, JaK's leaders became immersed in the international jihadist milieu of Pakistan's tribal areas. As they mixed with militants from around the world, the Kazakhs soon began

focusing on international jihadist issues and on forming new collaborative ties with other Central Asian militants who ultimately joined the JaK.⁵¹

At first, JaK's propaganda was focused mostly on overthrowing the Government of Kazakhstan, and the movement used its resources to carry out at least three attacks in Kazakhstan between October and December 2011. In a Russian-language video released on October 26, 2011—five days prior to JaK's first attempted bombing in Atyrau—JaK threatened to attack the Kazakh government if it did not repeal laws that JaK alleged forbid prayer in public institutions and the wearing of headscarves.⁵² JaK's next statement appeared on the Ansar al-Mujahideen Islamic Forum on November 17, 2011. Its focus was also on Kazakhstan, alleging that the government was closing down mosques, showing subservience to Russia, engaging in corrupt activities, and torturing Muslims in prisons.⁵³

On December 18, 2011, JaK issued yet another video statement about Kazakhstan called "Overthrow the Tyrant." The video concerned a labor protest in Zhanaozen a day earlier in which more than a dozen protestors were killed. JaK said, "From the massacre that happened in Zhanaozen where dozens in the general public were killed, it appears to us that the regime of Nazarbayev does not fight the mujahidin only, but rather he fights the whole Kazakh people.... We won't let this event pass quietly. We call you to continue your revolt against the regime of Nazarbayev."⁵⁴ This statement showed that JaK differed from other Kazakh Salafist groups, who did not exploit the unrest in Zhanaozen for political purposes or issue statements of any kind about what was ultimately an issue between the state and laborers—not Islamists.

While clearly focused on inciting a rebellion in Kazakhstan, JaK has also shown that it identifies ideologically with the global Islamist movement. In a November 10, 2011 statement, JaK said, "Know that the policy that you [President Nazarbayev] are following is the same that was applied in Tunisia, Libya and Egypt; however, as you have seen, it only caused suffering to those who implemented them."⁵⁵ Moreover, in explaining the reason for the name Jund al-Khilafa, one of JaK's leaders, Rawil Kusaynuv of the Zahir Baibars Battalion (named after the legendary Kazakh, Baibars, who became the Sultan of Egypt in the 13th thirteenth century), said,

This name reminds Muslims of their duty to revive the Islamic Caliphate as a system.... It is the system of Shariah-based governance that must prevail in every Muslim country from the east to the west.... We believe that the region of Central Asia, in addition to the Islamic Maghreb and Yemen, are candidates to be the nucleus for the return of the Caliphate State in the future.⁵⁶

One of the likely reasons for JaK's internationalist orientation was its trainer and *emir* Moez Garsallaoui, an al-Qaeda member and Tunisian-born Swiss citizen. In October and December 2011, Garsallaoui (who was not yet known to be JaK's *emir*) issued statements online criticizing the democratic transition in his native Tunisia and praising JaK for its three attacks in Kazakhstan in late 2011. Then, in March 2012, JaK unexpectedly issued a statement claiming responsibility for the attacks of the French citizen of Algerian descent, Mohammed Merah, in southwest France, in which he killed 3 Jews and 4 French paratroopers.⁵⁷ Garsallaoui followed the JaK statements with his own statement under the pseudonym Abu Qaqa al-Andalusi (a common pseudonym for North Africans), in which he claimed to have known Merah "up close" and to have "sat with him on many occasions and for a short time guided him."⁵⁸ Western intelligence sources later corroborated these statements after al-Qaeda eulogized Garsallaoui's death in October 2012 as JaK's "emir, who trained Kazakh militants in explosives so they could return home to wage jihad."⁵⁹

Since Garsallaoui's death, JaK has not issued any statements or claimed any attacks. However, Kazakhs in Afghanistan and Pakistan continue to operate with the Taliban and Central Asian groups and have been involved in major operations, including an attack on a checkpoint in Bannu in February 2013.⁶⁰ Kazakhs also continue to operate with fellow Russian-speakers in the Caucasus Emirate in the North Caucasus, including the former Kazakh vice emir of the Khavsayurt Wilayat in Dagestan, who was killed by Russian Special Forces in November 2012.⁶¹ With reports of more than 100 Kazakhs in Afghanistan and Pakistan, many of whom were recruited by North Caucasians but initially radicalized in the western provinces of Atyrau and Aktobe, there is growing concern in Kazakhstan about their return to Central Asia. They might re-connect with underground Salafist brotherhoods in Atyrau and Aktobe, the North Caucasus, or Tatarstan, Bashkortostan and other Russian republics in the Urals where the Caucasus Emirate seeks to expand.⁶² These Salafist brotherhoods first emerged in Kazakhstan in the late 1990s, particularly in areas near the Uzbek border, and became hardened when they interacted with other Salafists from the North Caucasus and now are believed to have several thousand youth followers, including the founders of JaK.

In recounting JaK's rise, the group likely represented but one of the several Kazakh Islamist groups in Afghanistan and Pakistan, the North Caucasus, and Kazakhstan. What distinguished JaK from these other Salafist groups, however, is that it operated closely with al-Qaeda. Nonetheless, the goal of JaK and many other Kazakh Islamists is to achieve "victory" in Afghanistan and then engage in jihad in Kazakhstan—similar to the short- and long-term objectives of the IMU and TIP.⁶³

The Contrarian Case of Hizb ut-Tahrir

WHILE THE IMU, TIP AND JAK WERE BORN IN CENTRAL ASIA BUT ARE NOW BASED OUTSIDE OF THE REGION, Hizb ut-Tahrir (HuT), which means “Party of Liberation” in Arabic, has made deep inroads in Central Asia since its first proselytizers entered the region after the end of the Soviet Union. In contrast to the IMU, TIP and JaK, HuT was formed outside of Central Asia, yet has been able to thrive within the region largely due to the success of its clandestine recruiting operations and small cell structure. HuT is also effective at using the Internet for propaganda purposes and recruiting; formerly it specialized in door-to-door pamphlet drops.

HuT focuses its recruiting activities in rural districts where police presence is minimal and on women. Women are seen as the center of the family and thus the key to converting husbands, siblings and children, and whom the police are less likely to suspect of being members of HuT.⁶⁴ HuT recruitment of those is targeted especially at women whose husbands have been arrested for their religious activities; in turn, they often receive financial support during their husbands’ detainment.⁶⁵ HuT requires that new members cut ties with non-members and implements various forms of psychological, economic and social pressure to prevent them from leaving.⁶⁶

HuT differs from the IMU, TIP and JaK in that it professes to be non-violent and has a more clearly articulated ideology. In the words of a HuT leader, “the aims of Hizb ut-Tahrir and the IMU are for the Caliphate in Central Asia, but the ways to achieve a Caliphate are different just as one doctor might use surgery while another uses herbs.”⁶⁷ Despite these differences, all four groups—HuT, IMU, TIP and JaK—are united in the ultimate goal of establishing an Islamic Caliphate in Central Asia and overturning what they consider to be the Western-dominated world order across the Muslim World.

Founded by diaspora Palestinians in the Middle East in 1952, HuT believes it is obligatory for every Muslim to work toward the reestablishment of the Islamic Caliphate; that no other system of law but Sharia is permissible; and that it is *haram* (forbidden) for Muslim states to seek protection from America or other *kufir* (non-Islamic) states.⁶⁸ HuT spread to Uzbekistan and the Fergana Valley in the 1990s, but has since been suppressed to near extinction in Uzbekistan, as well as in neighboring Kazakhstan. However, HuT has reemerged with an estimated more than 20,000 members in Kyrgyzstan, and its membership has increased in the country since the ethnic riots between Uzbeks and Kyrgyzs in Osh and Jalalabad in 2010.⁶⁹ In Kyrgyzstan, HuT has largely

evolved into a political opposition movement, styling itself as the Islamic alternative to governmental corruption. Ideologically, however, HuT declared that its goal is “the restoration of the Islamic way of life and dissemination of the call (*da’vat*) to Islam in the world.”⁷⁰

One of the main paradoxes with respect to HuT ideology is its resemblance to Soviet Communism by the ways that it attracts Central Asians. For instance, for Central Asians dissatisfied with land reform, particularly in Tajikistan, HuT’s envisioned state would limit ownership rights, with goods, services and resources that serve the interests of society, such as utilities, public transport, health care, energy resources and unused farm land owned by the state. For the unemployed, HuT’s envisioned state would, according to a sample Constitution written by a HuT leader, “guarantee employment for all citizens,” “provide free health care for all,” and “restrict by the permission of Shari’a... capitalist companies, cooperatives, and all other illegal transactions such as *Riba* [usury].”⁷¹

For Central Asia’s “born-again Muslims,” who have rekindled their faith in the post-Soviet era, the vision of an all-powerful Islamic state is an ideal replacement for the former powerful Soviet State and with the same enemy—the U.S. and the West—as during Soviet times. HuT argues that, like the Soviet Union, “the geographic area of distribution of Islam has the necessary geostrategic position, the natural resources, the economic and industrial potential, the military strength, the demographic share, and the common ideological framework to become a superpower in the ‘new world order’ that shall emerge” from what the organization perceives as the “ongoing decline of the long-dominant West”⁷²

For the ethnic Uzbeks of Kyrgyzstan, who suffered the most displacement after the ethnic clashes in Osh and Jalalabad in 2010, HuT offers a vision of a society that does not emphasize ethnicity and promotes Muslim solidarity, as well as the prospect of a single Islamic state in Central Asia that would amalgamate Kyrgyzstan’s Uzbeks with their compatriots in Uzbekistan and make Uzbeks the plurality in that state. Meanwhile, for all Central Asians, HuT’s call for the elimination of Central Asia’s artificially created borders would allow all people in the region to travel and move freely throughout the region, as during Soviet times.

At the same time, HuT ideology is vastly different from Soviet ideology. Whereas the Soviet Union portrayed religion as an evil, HuT portrays the social and economic problems in Central Asia as a result of secularism, widespread corruption, and Western cultural influence and “Jewish domination.” A strong universal Islamic State that applied Sharia law, according to HuT, would eliminate all problems. Furthermore, HuT’s record of not resorting to violence has won it supporters among Central Asians who feel alienated by the violent tendencies of other groups, such as the IMU.⁷³ For

the religiously devout in Central Asia, with few options to choose from outside of monitored government channels, HuT, or other similar Islamist organizations, such as the South Asian-inspired Tablighi Jamaat, is often their most reliable option.⁷⁴

State Susceptibility to Islamism

OF ALL THE EXILED CENTRAL ASIAN GROUPS, THE IMU NOW APPEARS MOST LIKELY TO rapidly regain influence in Central Asia because with the Taliban's support it has already established bases bordering the region in northern Afghanistan. The TIP and JaK, in contrast, are primarily based in Pakistan's FATA, distant from their homelands. While there are signs that Kazakh Islamists are beginning to return to Central Asia, the TIP appears to be gaining traction in Afghanistan and Pakistan. There, it could emerge as the premier group representing the unitary Islamic State in Central Asia. As such, the TIP could become similar to the "Islamic Movement of Turkistan," as was expected of the IMU in the early 2000s, before it became situated in Pakistan and enmeshed with al-Qaeda in the tribal areas.⁷⁵

The IMU is capable of infiltrating Central Asia directly or, more likely, through connections with affiliate groups like Jamaat Ansarullah in Tajikistan.⁷⁶ However, the IMU has largely lost its focus on Uzbekistan and Central Asia in its ideology; thus, it is questionable whether it can still appeal to people in the country. Moreover, the IMU's violent ways mean it will likely not win support from Central Asians, who have witnessed the violence and instability of Afghanistan to the south. In the early 1990s, it was Yuldash's demands for justice, economic equality and an end to corruption that resonated with people in the Fergana Valley—similar themes to those HuT espouses today. Whether or not the IMU is capable of finding a new leader with Yuldash's charisma and capable of appealing to Uzbeks, will be a key question for the group; but, this will be difficult given the movement's leadership and ideological changes.

The ability of the IMU—as well as the TIP and JaK—to influence Central Asia will also likely depend on whether the Taliban consolidates control of northern Afghanistan after the U.S. and NATO withdraw from the region in 2014. The Taliban could then free up these three groups to focus on Central Asia instead of using their resources to combat the Afghan army. As the former Russian Interior Minister, Army General Anatoly Kulikov, argued in February 2013, "The Islamists' principal forces have been occupied with Afghanistan and Pakistan for the past 10-15 years, where they suffered great losses. After 2014, they might look at the surrounding territories and provide

support to people living there who share their views.”⁷⁷ Even if the Taliban seeks to limit the Central Asian groups’ activities to Afghanistan, it is unclear if the IMU will oblige. Turkmen authorities have reported “special units” of the Taliban comprised of IMU members with an “independent political program” to infiltrate the country from Afghanistan’s Faryab province even while the Taliban concerns itself with internal issues in Afghanistan.⁷⁸

In contrast to the IMU, TIP and JaK, HuT is already based in Central Asia, with most of its members in Kyrgyzstan, but also with networks throughout the region. While some Central Asians support HuT simply as an alternative to their current governments, HuT’s general policy of non-violence is attractive. One of HuT’s challenges, however, is overcoming the fact that the region’s governments blame it for violent incidents, whether or not there is proof of HuT involvement. If HuT is to continue to extend its influence into Central Asia, it will likely have to not only be perceived as non-violent, but also benefit from ineffectual governance or unstable political transitions.

The extent to which HuT, the IMU, JaK, and the TIP have an ideological impact in Central Asia also depends as much on their own agendas as on their homelands’ traditional and historical religious practices. The Arabs introduced Islam into Central Asia in the seventh century; however, among the nomadic tribes in the region, Islam developed into a more tolerant and mystical faith. Such was the case among the Kazakhs, Kyrgyzs, and Turkmen. A more institutionalized Islam developed in settled urban communities, like those in Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kashgar, Xinjiang. The nomadic way of life was less conducive to established institutions, doctrines and clergy, but was suited to Sufi spiritualism. As a result, the doctrines of Islamism have historically resonated less in Kazakhstan, northern Kyrgyzstan, and Turkmenistan than in the Fergana Valley, including parts of Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and southern Kyrgyzstan, as well as Kashgar. It is therefore perhaps not surprising that the region’s first Islamist movements in the post-Soviet era, the IMU and ETIM, emerged from the Fergana Valley and Kashgar.

The Uzbeks and Tajiks received Islam in the 10th century from the Arab as well as the Persian world, and in the 21st century they are liable to draw from both influences. The nomadic people of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, however, received Islam mostly through the work of Tatar missionaries in the 17th and 18th centuries and therefore may not feel a need to look towards the Arab world for spiritual guidance. Since 2010, Tatarstan has come under increasing pressure from Islamists as new groups affiliated with the Caucasus Emirate and HuT have made inroads into the region. However, the religious authorities there have been quick to prevent the Salafist influences from the Caucasus of diluting “Tatar Islam” even as more Caucasians migrate to Tatarstan from the North Caucasus.⁷⁹

The question remains, however, whether the traditions of nomadic Islam in an increasingly urbanized and less nomadic Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan can withstand the pressures of Islamism. Western Kazakhstan's proximity to the North Caucasus and southern Kyrgyzstan's disaffection with the government in Bishkek have permitted the Islamist influence of JaK and HuT to gain traction in recent years, while the Arab uprisings in the Middle East have helped to make the politicized Islam that Central Asian governments have rejected a mainstream phenomenon.

Conclusion

ISLAMISM IN CENTRAL ASIA HAS BECOME INCREASINGLY LINKED TO BROADER INTERNATIONALIST trends. After the NATO withdrawal from Afghanistan, some of these movements may begin to return to their earlier nationalist orientations. This would involve a shift in their ideologies away from their fight against the U.S. and NATO and back towards their initial goals of "liberating" the governments in their homelands for the purpose of establishing an Islamic State in Central Asia.

The main competing ideologies in Central Asia are democracy, nationalism, and Islamism. The first and third are diametrically opposed, while the second is dangerous, too. Given that the governments are yet to take significant measures towards instituting democracy—and the U.S. may withdraw from the region—it appears that the chances for democracy in the region are minimal. The status quo with the current governments, however, is unlikely to last not only because the region's first generation of post-Soviet leaders are aging, but also because the idea of centralized leadership and intra-family power transfers has become increasingly delegitimized, including by the Arab uprisings in the Middle East.

Central Asia is now surrounded by Islamic governments like the ones in Iran and (presumably) in Afghanistan and Pakistan, by Islamist insurgencies like the one in the North Caucasus, and by post-Communist centralized governments like the ones in China and Russia. The lack of better political options for Central Asia's youth does not mean Islamist movements will necessarily come to power, but it does make it easier for their ideologies to find followers. Movements like HuT and other Salafist groups may very well be paving the way for Islamism to gain grassroots acceptance. However, it remains to be seen whether Islamism will seek to shape the next political order through the ballot box, by inspiring mass movements in the streets, or by imposing itself on the population through force. The latter becomes more likely should exiled Islamist militants return home after 2013.

NOTES

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A Clash of Islamic Models

By Aylin Ünver Noi

IN THE EMERGING ORDER OF THE POST-ARAB SPRING MIDDLE EAST, COMPETING Islamist ideologies and models for organizing political life are shaping diplomacy between states as well as the political struggles within them. Well before the 2011 Arab uprisings, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Saudi Arabia were in competition with each other in exporting their respective models of Shiite and Wahhabi Islamism. At the time, however, the political alignments of countries and subnational groups across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) were shaped not just by sectarian differences, but by their political stance towards the West, including Israel, and toward Palestine. As such, analysts wrote about a “New Arab Cold War,” between the Iranian-led regional alignment “Resistance Camp” composed of Syria, Hamas, Hezbollah, and Qatar, and the Saudi-led “Pro-Western Camp” aligned with the U.S. and composed of Egypt, Jordan, and the Gulf states.¹

When Turkey was ruled by a secular and Western-oriented government, it was effectively a “non-actor” in the MENA and never directly involved itself in the intra-regional rivalry between Saudi Arabia and Iran. However, since the Islamic-rooted Justice and Development Party (AKP) came to power in 2002, Turkey’s orientation and involvements in the MENA have begun to change. By espousing a foreign policy based on the principle of “zero problems with its neighbors,” Turkey has sought to normalize and then improve its relations with the countries of the MENA region. Moreover, in what some analysts have described as “neo-Ottomanism,” Ankara has sought to regain the influence in the MENA that it had lost over a century ago. These new policies have perforce involved Turkey in the intra-regional rivalry between competing

Islamic models. It has also raised deep questions about Turkey's relations with the West and its place in the emerging regional order.

The first part of the article examines three models of Islamic politics—Saudi Arabia's, Iran's and Turkey's—and analyzes them within the evolving context of the Sunni-Shiite rivalry and Turkey's role in MENA. In the second part, the new wave of political Islam now emerging in the post-Arab Spring countries are evaluated in terms of the shifting regional alignments. This sheds light on how sectarian factors are shaping relations between and within states in this newly emerging MENA.

The Iranian Model

IN THE IRANIAN MODEL OF ISLAMIC POLITICS, THE STATE DERIVES ITS LEGITIMACY FROM its application of Islamic principles and from the rule of the Supreme Religious Leader (*Vali-e Faqih*): the final arbiter of both what these Islamic principles are and how they should be implemented.² Therefore, in the Khomeinist concept of Islamic government, the people are forced to submit to the superior authority of the clergy.³ The people's role in the choice of their representatives consists of candidates that the Guardian Council has pre approved after the vetting process of the Executive and Supervisory Board of Election. Besides this, the institutions of the *Velayat-e-Faqih* constrain the powers of the president.⁴

The Constitution of Islamic Republic gives the Supreme Leader unlimited powers. It empowers him to command the armed forces and Revolutionary Guard, dismiss any elected official, counter certain parliamentary legislation, and declare war and peace. He is subject neither to elections nor the scrutiny of elected institutions or the public; nonetheless, he oversees all national affairs.⁵ The Iranian people thus delegated their sovereignty to their Supreme Leader and to the Guardian Council.⁶ The constitution allows the Islamic Consultative Assembly to pass laws that are not contrary to Islam.⁷

Since the 1979 revolution, Iran's foreign policy and outreach in the MENA has been based on the revolutionary vision of Ayatollah Khomeini. He believed that Western countries had been conspiring to undermine the unity of Islam and the Muslim world through the dismantling of the Ottoman Empire and the subsequent sectarian rivalry between Sunni-led states and Iran. The Zionist movement and the State of Israel were part of this foreign plan.⁸ For Khomeini, the existing borders of the MENA region nation-states were created by Islam's enemies. He attributed the Muslim countries' acceptance of these borders and their self-interested behavior to their

adherence to “American Islam” and lack of commitment to true Islam, which was embodied in the Islamic government of Iran.⁹

The Khomeinist revolutionaries have sought to reorganize the international order in the image and spirit of their own revolution. The rulers of the Islamic Republic have thus appointed themselves the defenders of Muslim rights, and liberating the Muslim oppressed through an export of their revolutionary ideals has been their major aim.¹⁰ In this, the Khomeinist rhetoric and vision for creating a new, Islam-centric order in the Middle East was deeply shaped by that of Ali Shariati, who sought to infuse Islam with the revolutionary spirit of various “Third-Worldist” thinkers.¹¹ Since 1979, this Iranian rhetoric has acquired considerable traction and influence in the region, and perhaps most especially among Shiites. Insofar as Iran has managed to portray its leadership and outreach as truly pan-Islamic, and not as Shiite or Persian nationalist, it has also acquired influence among Sunni populations. Even though Shiites are a minority within Islam, the Islamic Republic has thus emerged as a serious contender for leadership of the Islamic Movement. In response, Sunni powers such as Saudi Arabia have sought to stress the Shiite and Persian character of Iranian outreach. This sectarian competition between Iran and Saudi Arabia began in the Persian Gulf, Pakistan and Afghanistan, and has since expanded to many other parts of the Islamic world.¹²

The Saudi Model

SAUDI ARABIA’S ISLAMIC ORDER COMBINES A MONARCHY WITH AN ULTRACONSERVATIVE implementation of *Sharia* law rooted in Wahhabi teachings. Under this regime, an act of protest against the monarchy is sinful; Wahhabi doctrine requires that Muslims submit to their rulers.¹³ As Saudi Arabia’s dominant faith, Wahhabi Islam stands for the revival of practices from the early period of Islam and for the authority of revivalists like Muhammad Abd al-Wahhab as the sole qualified interpreters of Islamic scripture. These revivalists oppose what they perceive as the historical and “local” deviations from Islam as it was originally revealed.¹⁴ The Wahhabis claim that they are the true believers and champions of Islam; they perceive Orthodox Sunni Muslims, including those represented by the four schools of Islamic jurisprudence (*Hanafi*, *Shafi’i*, *Maliki* and *Hanbali*) as living in a state of pre-Islamic paganism (*jahiliyya*).¹⁵ Wahhabism’s first adherents thus accused Orthodox Sunni Muslims who were living under the Ottoman Caliphate of *bid’a* (innovation) and *kufir* (nonbelief). All Shiites were also branded as *kufir* and *rafida* (rejectionists) by Abd al-Wahhab.¹⁶

The Saudi monarchy sustains its domestic legitimacy by portraying itself as the leader of the Islamic faithful. The survival of the House of Saud, or “Al-Saud,” thus depends on successfully balancing competing Islamic forces within Saudi Arabia as well as its capacity to outmaneuver competing Islamic trends in the region.¹⁷

After Ayatollah Khomeini’s revolution in Iran in 1979, Wahhabi clerics in Saudi Arabia demanded greater power and influence over the kingdom’s domestic and external affairs. The monarchy eventually responded by granting religious leaders wide sway over every aspect of Saudi life. Moreover, in order to thwart the regional spread of Iranian influence and revolutionary Shiite Islamism, the Saudi King began to aggressively export Wahhabi Islamism around the Islamic world through Islamic colleges, centers, mosques, and schools, and international organizations such as the Muslim World League, the World Assembly of Muslim Youth, the International Islamic Relief Organization, and various royal charities such as the Popular Committee for Assisting the Palestinian Mujahedeen.¹⁸

The *fatwas* issued by Saudi-aligned and neo-Salafist scholars generally reflect Wahhabism’s well-known puritanism and intolerance as well as its opposition to revolution, popular government and elections. They also reflect deep hostility to Iran and to Shiism. Taken together, they reveal what Al-Saud most wants, that is, to protect its monarchical rule and to increase its sphere of influence around the MENA against alternative Islamic models.

However, the Saudi-backed Wahhabi Islamist universe has served as the ideological background out of which the salafi-jihadist movement has emerged.¹⁹ As a result of this, the Saudi regime has faced a basic tension between its need to counter Iranian influence in the region and its need to counter the jihadist threat. The Saudi regime’s promotion of Wahhabi Islamism has also created conflict between it and the United States, which is the monarchy’s principal protector. Moreover, the U.S. has also pressured Saudi Arabia to require Palestinian organizations to make peace with Israel. But this has been difficult for the monarchy to do both because of strong domestic support for the anti-Israel struggle and also because of the monarchy’s felt-need to compete with Iran, which is widely perceived as a champion of Palestinian aspirations.²⁰

The neo-Salafist movement poses a threat not only to Iran and to the West but also to mainstream Islamic movements and competing Sunni Islamist movements, such as the Muslim Brotherhood. Neo-Salafist scholars have stridently opposed what they see as the spread of “Western democracy” in the MENA, and the rise to power of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and Tunisia via elections has created enormous controversy within the movement. It has given rise to a new form of “political Salafism” which has sought to compete with the Muslim Brotherhood and to effectively “Salafize” and coopt it.

Meanwhile, the Brotherhood's now decades-old feud with salafist-jihadism has also been exacerbated.²¹ The Muslim Brotherhood is condemned as "corrupt sellouts that place temporal power and comfort over the call of God" by the Salafi-jihadists whereas Salafi-jihadists are described as "extremist fanatics that commit atrocities against fellow Muslims and irrationally condemn the society around them" by the Muslim Brotherhood.²²

The Turkish Model

MUSTAFA KEMAL ATATURK, THE FOUNDER OF THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY, TRANSFORMED post-Ottoman Turkey into a modern, Western and secular state that rejected what it perceived as its backward and repressive Islamic past.²³ With the abolition of the Caliphate in Turkey in 1924, the position of nominal spiritual leader of the whole Sunni Muslim world was eliminated.²⁴ Ataturk and his supporters saw Westernization as a form of modernization and self-strengthening, and not as a form of cultural emulation.²⁵ Alawites in Turkey supported Ataturk's secularist ideology because they believed sectarian discrimination against them would be minimized under a secular political system that did not establish Sunni Islam as the state religion.²⁶

While the Kemalist state outlawed traditional Sufi orders, they have nonetheless survived as important religious networks. The Naksibendi and the Kadiri orders (*tarikats*) that are most active today have acquired influence through business and political networks.²⁷ The first Islamic parties of Turkey—the National Order Party (*Milli Nizam Partisi*) and the National Salvation Party (*Milli Selamet Partisi*)—were established through support of the master of the Naksibendi Khalidi *tarikat*, Sheikh Mehmet Zahit Kotku. Many Naksibendi also joined the Motherland Party of Turgut Ozal. During Ozal's administration (1983-1989), various Naksibendi religious orders, the political National View (*Milli Gorus*) movement of Necmettin Erbakan, and the Hizmet movement inspired by the teachings of Fethullah Gulen all contended with one another over the proper role of Islam in society.²⁸

During this period (1983-1993), the influence of the reformist Hizmet movement, which has its roots in the Nurculuk movement of Said Nursi (1873-1960), grew considerably. The founding father of Hizmet, Fethullah Gulen, teaches that the time of the "jihad of the sword" is now over. Now is the era of the "jihad of the word," which calls for the reconciliation of science and rationalism with Islam.²⁹ Gulen's teachings attach great importance to Muslim involvement in public life, in business, and on using Islamic networks to promote harmony among Islam, Christianity, and Judaism.³⁰

The Hizmet movement's worldview thus contrasts sharply with Wahhabism, and the former does not divide the world into *dar al-harb* (abode of war) and *dar-al Islam* (abode of Islam). Instead, Gulen teaches that one must serve the world continually because it is *dar al-Hizmet*, or an abode of service to humanity for the sake of God.³¹

Two of Turkey's traditionalist Islamic parties, the Welfare Party and Virtue Party of National View (*Milli Gorus*), were banned respectively in 1998 and 2001. A group of traditionalists from these parties led by Necmettin Erbakan and Recai Kutan opposed any serious change in the approach or policy of Turkish political Islam.³² Many reformists, including Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Abdullah Gul, argued that the party needed to rethink its approach to democracy, human rights and relations with the West.³³ This latter camp also opposed Erbakan's authoritarian leadership, and called for greater inner-party democracy.³⁴ The resulting need for a reformist-dominated Islamic party that would bring together both some "traditionalist" and "reformist" Muslim orientations ultimately led to the establishment of the AKP.³⁵

While Kemalists have eyed the Hizmet movement with deep suspicion, Hizmet members argue their movement does not seek to overturn Turkey's secular order. Instead, they emphasize what they see as the "Ottoman model" of pluralism, and the importance of developing democracy and commerce.³⁶ Many have argued that the Hizmet movement and the AKP seek to replace the Kemalist model of secularism with a new one that would make more room for religion and democracy without establishing an Islamic state.³⁷

This perhaps helps to explain Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan's statement in Cairo after the uprisings: "I hope there will be a secular state in Egypt."³⁸ When Erdogan called on Egyptians to adopt a secular constitution and a secular state, he was urging them to adopt "Islamic secularism." Erdogan, rejects defining AKP in religious terms and calls the AKP agenda "conservative democracy." The AKP's electoral success and its "conservative democracy" are the result of a pious "Muslim bourgeoisie" in Anatolia who is "more concerned about maximizing profits, creating access to international currency markets, and ensuring political stability than about introducing Islamic law or creating a theocracy."³⁹ According to the scholar Hakan Yavuz, this is the product of a blend of Islamic traditionalism and European Union norms, including democracy, fundamental freedoms, human rights, and the rule of law.⁴⁰

Since AKP came to power in 2002, Turkey has been cultivating ties with pan-Islamic Muslim Brotherhood groups, including the Egypt-based Muslim Brotherhood.⁴¹ For example, Turkish businessmen, under the Independent Industrialists and Businessmen's Association (MUSIAD), have provided financial support to the Muslim Brotherhood. Moreover, the Turkish charity IHH (The Foundation for Human Rights and Freedoms and Humanitarian Relief) has also networked extensively with Muslim Brotherhood

representatives.⁴² Erdogan called for intra-Muslim solidarity at a speech he made at the MUSIAD International Fair and 16th International Business Forum on October 11, 2012.⁴³ In this venue, the prime minister emphasized the importance of foreign aid and humanitarian aid provided by Turkey to Muslims around the world.⁴⁴ Erdogan also stated that

we should take into consideration the advice that says Muslims are stones of a building that supports each other. This advice indicates to us that protecting poor Muslims all around the world as well as establishing a solidarity among Muslims in all fields primarily on trade is needed.

This new “pan-Islamic” AKP foreign policy has involved establishing and/or increasing ties with Muslim countries through trade agreements and humanitarian aid. Moreover, a number of initiatives that Turkish business and charity networks have undertaken have been complementary to this stated policy.⁴⁵

As Turkey’s outreach into the MENA has deepened, claims that the AKP is not committed to democracy have proliferated. In contrast to the AKP’s first two terms, the AKP has increasingly demonstrated less interest in promoting freedom and human rights. Now, during Erdogan’s third term—what the prime minister calls his “master” term—many have accused the AKP’s agenda of outright authoritarianism. An increasing number of people have been arrested and jailed apparently for political reasons and laws which infringe on personal freedoms have been enacted. This has led to increasing criticism of the AKP. Indeed, some analysts have said “the more power Erdogan won at the elections, the less interested he appeared in taking steps toward freedom of expression and human rights.”⁴⁶ Moreover, because of the party’s authoritarian direction, there now appears to be increasing disagreement within the AKP itself.

Intra-Islamist Rivalry Before 2011

THE PRESENT-DAY HOSTILITY BETWEEN IRAN AND SAUDI ARABIA IS BASED MAINLY ON ethnic and sectarian differences that go back centuries.⁴⁷ The Iranian revolution, however, exacerbated the rivalry as it took the initiative in exporting its revolution to other Muslim countries. Iran’s aspirations to regional hegemony posed a direct threat to Saudi Arabia’s domestic stability and its regional influence.⁴⁸ Despite the fact that Iran’s government has a clear Persian and Shiite character to it, Sunni Arab Muslims

who want to see their own governments stand up more boldly to the West have discovered much to admire in Iran’s foreign policy and its defiance of the West.⁴⁹ And since the 1979 Revolution ended the monarchy in Iran, it also led to the deterioration of Iran’s relations with those Muslim countries still ruled by monarchies. In addition to this, the Islamic government’s support for Shiites in the Middle East poses a threat to those Sunni-dominated countries that have sought to suppress Shiites.⁵⁰

TABLE 1.1. COUNTRIES WITH MORE THAN 100,000 SHIA MUSLIMS

Country	Estimated 2009 Shia Population	Approximate Percentage of Muslim Population that is Shia
Iran	66-70 million	90-95%
Iraq	19-22 million	65-70%
Turkey	7-11 million	10-15%
Yemen	8-10 million	35-40%
Afghanistan	3-4 million	10-15%
Syria	3-4 million	15-20%
Saudi Arabia	2-4 million	10-15%
Lebanon	1-2 million	45-55%
Kuwait	500,000-700,000	20-25%
Bahrain	400,000-500,000	65-75%
UAE	300,000-400,000	10%
Oman	100,000-300,000	5-10%
Qatar	100,000	10%
World Total	154-200 million	10-13%

Source: Shias include Twelvers (Ithna Asharis), Ismailis, Zaydis, Alevis and Alawites.⁵¹

Although the rivalry between Saudi Arabia and Iran declined during the relatively more “pragmatic” presidencies of Rafsanjani and Khatami, Iran’s foreign policy during the Ahmadinejad era and its nationalistic claims to be the preeminent regional power have reinvigorated it. Moreover, Iran’s aggressively pro-Islamist agenda

has appealed to Palestinian and Arab opposition forces that have struggled against the U.S. and Israel. This has further adversely affected Iranian relations with U.S. allies in the Persian Gulf.⁵²

The Islamic Republic's revolutionary activism has also strained Iranian-Arab relations since Tehran's policy has increased Iranian influence over Shiite minority populations in Arab countries. Rising Iranian influence over these populations concerns Arab leaders⁵³ since "most of the Shiites in this region are loyal to Iran, and not to the countries they are living in."⁵⁴ Iran's nuclear program is also contributing to its deterioration in relations with Arab countries as it threatens to disrupt the existing balance of power in the Middle East.⁵⁵

Economic dysfunction, political autocracy, and a general sense of "humiliation" at the hands of Western nations has contributed to a general resurgence of political Islam in the MENA resulting in the increased popularity of Iran and its leaders.⁵⁶ Ahmadinejad's anti-imperialist and anti-Western discourses, and his tirades against Jerusalem during the Israeli war on Lebanon in 2006, made him more popular among ordinary Arabs than among his own people.⁵⁷ This is especially significant provided the latent hostility between Sunni Arab states and Iran's Shiite theocracy.

Iran's efforts to extend its influence into the Arab world through creating what's been described as a "Shiite Crescent" in the very heart of the Sunni world has escalated the region's sectarian rivalry. Sunni countries such as the Gulf States, Egypt, and Jordan took their places in the Saudi-led regional alignment, or the "pro-West" camp. These states were willing to work in various forms of strategic partnership with the U.S. and also to come to terms with Israel.

Meanwhile, other Sunni countries and forces, such as Syria, Qatar, and Hamas, had various motivations in joining the axis of Shiite Iran, the "Resistance Camp." These states are unwilling to accept U.S. hegemony over the region and are anti-Western in their foreign policies.⁵⁸ Syria, with its pretensions as the cradle of Arab civilization and of pan-Arab ideology, saw the Iranian-led axis as a framework for enhancing its regional status. In addition, the Damascus regime was motivated by considerations of political survival, and hoped that its alliance with Iran would provide it with some protection against the international tribunal for the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister al-Hariri. Hamas, which had a few friends in the Arab world, received increasing support from Iran. Qatar also aligned itself with the Iranian-led Resistance Bloc and played a crucial role by initiating the pro-Iranian and anti-Saudi oriented 2009 Doha Summit to the dismay of Saudi Arabia and Egypt. Qatar invited Ahmadinejad to the Summit against the will of several Arab Countries. It also called on Egypt to revoke its peace agreement with Israel and on Saudi Arabia to withdraw its initiative for peace with Israel.⁵⁹

Turkey Enters the Fray

EVER SINCE THE AKP OFFICIALLY ABANDONED TURKEY'S "NON-ACTOR" STATUS IN THE Middle East, the question of Turkey's place in the emerging regional order has generated heated discussions. Ankara's new approach, called "zero problems with its neighbors," has aimed at normalizing and improving Turkey's relations with Syria, Iran, and Iraq, as well as with Hamas.⁶⁰ Unsurprisingly, the new policy caused a deterioration in Turkey's relations with its former strategic ally Israel. The breakdown in Turkish-Israeli relations began with Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan's heated exchange with President Shimon Peres at Davos over Turkey's support of the Palestinians following the 2008 Gaza War. It continued with the so-called "low chair crisis" and reached its highest point with the Israeli raid on the Gaza flotilla.⁶¹ These events contributed to the growing perception of many around the region that Turkey had joined the Iranian-led Resistance Bloc.

Turkey intended to play a constructive role in the region primarily through the exercise of its "soft power." Several factors contributed to making Turkey a "force of attraction," including the country's soaring economic take off and pop culture, such as glamorous Turkish soap operas. Turkish Islamic movements have also established schools and built business networks throughout the region that have facilitated Turkey's cultural infiltration in the Arab world.⁶²

For instance, the Hizmet movement has established schools across the Middle East. Their activities are especially noteworthy in the Kurdish regions of northeastern Iraq where they have opened fifteen schools and a university with the aim of "spreading the concept of dialogue, democracy and pluralism in Kurdish communities."⁶³ On the Hizmet principle that "education is a force for reducing inter-group conflict,"⁶⁴ the movement's schools may be seen as a complement to AKP's efforts to improve relations with the Kurdish Regional Government (KRG). This "rapprochement" is part of a larger attempt to resolve Turkey's now decades-old conflict with the Kurdistan Worker's Party (PKK).⁶⁵ The movement's schools are also located in all the Muslim countries of the Middle East except, however, for Iran and Saudi Arabia. Yavuz ascribes this, and, the fact that Hizmet engages in very little *intra*-religious dialogue with other Islamic movements, to Turkish Islam's Ottoman past.⁶⁶ As such, the Ottoman legacy including its rivalry with the Safavids helps to explain the Hizmet movement's distance from Shia and also from those Arab societies with a strong Salafist presence.⁶⁷

Ankara's new policies in the MENA since 2002 amount to an "axis shift" and represent a break from the Western-centric policies that it pursued in the Cold War era.⁶⁸

With its new foreign policy orientation, Turkey has attempted to develop a new set of relations with all MENA states. It shifted its foreign policy toward the Middle East and North Africa while maintaining its ties with the West. As a result of this policy, Turkey has played a leading role for facilitating interactions among the people of this region by removing visa requirements, allowing purchase of real estate and establishing free trade areas and so forth. It has also attempted to play a leadership role in mediating role in solving crises in the MENA. Thus, despite the perception that Turkey was an emerging party in the Iran-led regional alignment, its increasing involvements in MENA affairs has been an indication of its intention to become a regional power in its own right. Such “neo-Ottoman” ambitions have prevented Turkey from becoming a part of the Resistance Camp led by Shiite Iran.

After the Uprisings

THE ARAB SPRING HAS TRANSFORMED POLITICAL DYNAMICS ACROSS THE MENA REGION, including the rivalry between Iran and Saudi Arabia. The Islamic Republic, for its part, actively supported the Arab uprisings, and described them as an “Islamic Awakening” that was inspired by the Iranian revolution and the country’s long-standing defiance of the West. While diplomatic relations between Tehran and Cairo had broken off with the 1979 Khomeinist Revolution, Iran’s early support for the Egyptian uprising provided it with an opportunity to re-establish relations with the country’s newly elected Muslim Brotherhood-dominated government. Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia opposed the uprisings fearing spillover could lead to instability in the kingdom and possibly even topple the monarchy. Subsequently, Cairo began to distance itself from Saudi Arabia due to the kingdom’s counterrevolutionary and pro-Mubarak stance.⁶⁹

As a consequence of these developments, it seemed to some that the Muslim Brotherhood’s rise to power would destabilize or even bring to an end the pro-Western regional alignment that had existed between Egypt and Saudi Arabia. For this reason, Saudis began counterbalancing the Muslim Brotherhood by providing financial support to their Islamist rivals, the Salafists, who see the Sufi-oriented Brotherhood as religiously too syncretic and idolatrous. Many have also claimed that Saudi Arabia and the UAE support Salafist opponents of the Muslim Brotherhood in Tunisia.⁷⁰

As Iran rekindled relations with an Islamist-dominated Egypt, it appeared to some that the two countries would form the basis for a new regional alignment.⁷¹ Such speculations seemed increasingly unlikely, however, as Iran’s principal ally, Syria,

disintegrated into civil war. From August 26-31, 2012, Egyptian President Mohammed Morsi participated in the 16th Non-Aligned Movement summit convened in Tehran. At this meeting, Morsi voiced Egypt's solidarity with the Syrian people "against an oppressive regime that has lost its legitimacy is an ethical duty and a strategic necessity." Morsi's remarks and his failure to meet with Ayatollah Ali Khamenei during his visit to Iran showed the limits of the emerging relationship between Egypt and Iran.⁷² Moreover Egypt's Sunni and Shiite leaders made statements during Ahmadinejad's February 5, 2013 visit to Cairo that clearly indicated that any attempt by Iran to spread its form of Shiite Islamism in Egypt would be unacceptable. A spokesperson for Shiites in Egypt, Bahaa Anwar, said that, "Egyptian Shiites are not calling for a religious state and they reject the Iranian oppression of the Sunni minority in Iran." The words of Hassan El-Shafi'i, advisor to Ahmed el-Tayeb, the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar, are also important in this respect: "Al-Azhar would not tolerate any attempts to spread Shiism in Egypt."⁷³

Furthermore, President Morsi's official visit to Saudi Arabia on July 10, 2012 indicated that his government sought to balance its relations with both Iran and Saudi Arabia.⁷⁴ As Riyadh and Tehran jockey with one another for influence in Egypt, Cairo might seek to use this to its advantage and aid its economic recovery.⁷⁵

Meanwhile, the ongoing uprisings in majority-Shiite Bahrain have further escalated tensions between Iran and Saudi Arabia. Popular demonstrations in Bahrain demanded reform of the Sunni-dominated and Saudi-backed ruling regime. They also called for Sunni-Shiite unity as well as an end to inequality in the enforcement of laws governing naturalization.⁷⁶ The Bahraini government, in turn, portrayed the demonstrators as Shiite radicals backed by Iran who aimed to overthrow the regime. The government then called on its GCC allies to help suppress the protest movement.⁷⁷ Saudi Arabia and the Gulf countries have since accused Iran of interfering with Bahrain's internal affairs by trying to stir-up Shiite unrest there. On March 14, 2011, Saudi Arabia even sent at least 1,000 troops to Bahrain to help drive out protesters.⁷⁸ In response, one of the leading clerics of Iran, Ayatollah Ahmad Khatami, accused Saudi Arabia of having committed "savage crimes" against the people of Bahrain, and demanded that the monarchy withdraw its forces from the country.⁷⁹

When the uprisings in Yemen began in January 2011, the country soon became another theater for Saudi-Iranian rivalry. Iran condemned the Saudi-backed government's crackdown on protesters. On February 27, 2012, revolution brought the thirty-three period of rule by Ali Abdallah Saleh to an end. Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi, who served as vice president under Saleh, became Yemen's new president in the February 2012 Yemeni elections. Hadi had the support of Saudi Arabia and the US, as well as the leading Islamic party, al-Islah (the Yemeni branch of the Muslim Brotherhood which Saudi Arabia had helped to establish as an opposition party and counterweight to Saleh's

power.)⁸⁰ Many see Hadi's election as a continuation of the *status quo*: he has not won the support of the Houthi, Southern Yemenis, and regional tribal and religious factions affiliated with al-Qaeda.⁸¹

Iran, meanwhile, has sought "to use Yemen as a pressure point against Saudi Arabia and all the countries in the Arab Gulf," by simultaneously supporting both Sunni and Shiite activists.⁸² For example, Iran increased its influence over Yemeni activists including the supporters of the southern separatist movement Herak. There are also claims that Iran supports the Houthis, who practice a quasi-Shiite form of Islam, against the existing government in order to weaken the position of Saudi Arabia in Yemen. However, a Houthi spokesman, Yahya Al-Houthi has denied these claims.⁸³

The situation in Yemen shows that the Saudi-Iranian rivalry is not strictly sectarian. Indeed, Iran has demonstrated a capacity to reach across religious divides to work with Sunni groups that share an anti-Saudi or anti-US agenda. According to Saudi claims, Iran is providing covert financial support to the Sunni-Wahhabi group Ansar Al-Sharia, an al-Qaeda affiliated militant group in Yemen. This is occurring despite the divergent ideological agendas of the Iranian regime and the Sunni group. Tehran's aim has been to encourage Ansar Al-Sharia to kidnap more Saudi diplomats to force the monarchy to comply with their demands.⁸⁴ Likewise, Iran has provided support to the Taliban in Afghanistan. It has additionally provided sanctuary to al-Qaeda's most senior leaders, such as Yasin al-Suri, Saif al-Adel and Abu Muhammad al-Masri.⁸⁵ Not surprisingly, Iran's connections with the salafi-jihadist movement have evolved as the once cooperative relations between al-Qaeda and Saudi Arabia have become increasingly hostile.

When the Arab uprisings spread to Syria, Saudi Arabia changed its earlier counter-revolutionary position and strongly supported regime change in Damascus.⁸⁶ If the Assad regime falls, Iran would lose not only its major Arab ally, but its connection to Hezbollah in Lebanon. As a result of its support for anti-regime opposition groups in Syria, Turkey became a part of this rivalry between Iran and Saudi Arabia.

A Third Pole?

THE SECTARIAN RIVALRY AND POLITICAL UPHEAVAL ACROSS THE MENA REGION HAS also produced a new alignment of states with Turkey as its leader. As a majority Sunni and democratic country, Turkey has attempted to use its "soft power" to become a role model for post-revolutionary Arab Spring countries, particularly for Egypt and Tunisia. This emerging alignment is therefore composed of elected Sunni Islamist governments.

If it lasts, this new grouping of states could increasingly become known as the “Sunni Resistance Camp” because of their generally anti-Israeli and pro-Palestinian stances as well as the AKP government’s increasingly independent policy in the MENA.

Moreover, Turkey’s Islamic model, described as “conservative democracy” or “Islamic secularism,” and the AKP government’s new efforts to influence the region has made Turkey a rival of both the Saudi model of Sunni Islam and the Iranian model of Shiite Islam. This is evident in Turkey’s new foreign policy stances. In Syria, for example, Turkey supports Sunni Arabs against the Alawite Assad regime. Ankara has also developed close relations with the Kurdish Regional Government (which is mostly Sunni) while having disputes with the Shiite-dominated government in Baghdad, including by protecting fugitive Sunni Iraqi Vice President Tariq al-Hashimi. Moreover, Turkey has deepened its relations with Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhoods in the Arab countries, while marginalizing the Salafis.

Turkish officials have sought to downplay this new alignment and its role in it. For example, Turkish Foreign Minister Davutoglu has stated, “Turkey is against all polarization, in the political sense of Iranian-Arab tension or in the sense of forming an apparent axis.” Nonetheless, many in the region consider Turkey to be a leader in this emerging camp of states.⁸⁷

Rashid al-Ghannouchi, the leader of the al-Nahda party in Tunisia, promoted this view of Turkey during the election campaigns of 2011. He promised voters that if his party won then Tunisia could imitate the AKP model in Turkey and experience a similar economic boom. He has also said that the Tunisian people consider the Turkish experience with democracy a model for post-revolutionary Tunisia.⁸⁸ Whether or not Tunisia could successfully implement the AKP’s model remain to be seen. In Egypt, however, Turkey’s role as a model is highly doubtful. A 2012 Gallup survey showed that eleven percent of Egyptians view Turkey as a political model for Egypt, and, that most Egyptians express skepticism toward external “models.”⁸⁹ Moreover, Turkey’s AKP government has faced strong criticism for its own democratic shortcomings. If Turkey’s internal circumstances worsen, it may also adversely affect Turkey’s appeal as a model.⁹⁰

The sectarian rivalry and shifting alignments with the MENA have exacerbated Iraq’s sectarian divisions. This has compelled the KRG to form better relationships with Iraq’s non-Arab neighbors.⁹¹ Iraq’s changing internal dynamics in part explain the growing cooperation between Turkey and the KRG.⁹² Prime Minister Erdogan, however, has demonstrated the limits of this cooperation when he said that Turkey supported the territorial integrity of Syria and opposed any changes made for or by the Kurds. This occurred after KRG leader Masoud Barzani made an effort to bridge the differences between Syrian Kurdish groups, unite them against the Assad regime

and enable them to pursue more autonomy in the post-Assad era. Turkey's reaction is best understood as a function of Ankara's close ties with the Syrian National Council, particularly the Muslim Brotherhood of Syria, and its worries over the autonomy of Syrian Kurdistan.

The AKP launched its "Kurdish opening" initiative in 2009 in an effort to find a political settlement to Turkey's longstanding internal conflict with Kurds. The Naksibendi Sufi order, the most influential and best organized Islamic group in the Kurdish Region of Turkey, has been quite active and played an important role in enabling the AKP to increase its votes in eastern and southern cities that traditionally voted for pro-Kurdish parties (AKP won 54 percent in 2007 vs. 27.29 percent in 2002). This Sufi Islamic outreach thus helped to prepare the ground for Ankara's policy shift.⁹³ Moreover, adherents of the Hizmet Movement have supported the idea of a new constitution in Turkey based on citizenship that is granted on the grounds of *jus soli* rather than *jus sanguinis* and relies on shared values, specifically Islam, rather than ethnic origin.⁹⁴ As such, these Islamic groups' approaches to the Kurdish issue have played an important role in shaping the AKP's policy toward Kurds.

The AKP has accelerated its Kurdish opening through negotiations with the PKK. Furthermore, the Kurdish opening also serves the purpose of preventing the domino effects of a territorial disintegration of Syria. Ankara inaugurated the Imrali Negotiation Process on January 3, 2013. The KRG has since supported the effort, whereas Iran and Iraq's central governments have few reasons to embrace it. Although Iran officially supports the process, some analysts claim the contrary. In a piece published in the *Jomhuri-e Eslami* newspaper on April 29, 2013, Ali Rezakam (who is considered to be close to Ali Khamenei) accused Prime Minister Erdogan of supporting the creation of an independent Kurdish government in Iraq, in order to benefit from the KRG's energy resources, and to use the PKK card against both Syria and Iran.⁹⁵ As such, since the outbreak of the Arab Spring, AKP Turkey's original policy of "zero problems" and "developing relations with all Muslim states" has seemed to shift toward a policy more focused on developing relations with mostly Sunni Muslim states and Sunni subnational actors like the Kurds.

Conclusion

ISLAMISM HAS BECOME A MAINSTREAM POLITICAL FORCE IN THE MENA REGION.⁹⁶ IN this new and increasingly Islamic political atmosphere, sectarian differences have become powerful instruments that have the capacity to alter regional alignments and

shape the relations that states have with one another. Traditional rivals frequently exploit these differences with the understanding that “my enemy’s enemy is my friend” often for geopolitical purposes.⁹⁷ The emerging picture of the MENA region in the post-Arab Spring era indicates that changing ideological orientations that shape regional alliances in this region are mostly the result of sectarian differences.

Turkey’s changing relations with the greater Middle East seems to be one of the most important determining factors in the emerging order. However, the prospects of Turkey’s “Islamic secularism” and “conservative democracy” serving as a model for other states remains to be seen.⁹⁸ The Turkey model faces stiff competition both from Salafists and from Iran. The Muslim Brotherhood’s tactical alliances with Salafists in Egypt and in Tunisia on certain major political issues contribute to the perception that the Muslim Brotherhood is becoming Salafitized.⁹⁹ Meanwhile, Iran has continued its outreach and support to the Resistance Camp, as well as to the weak government in Baghdad. This competition among the region’s powers to advance their own Islamic models will have enormous bearing on the future politics of the region.

NOTES

1. It is called “New Arab Cold War” since the ideologies and actors of the term “Arab Cold War,” which was coined by Malcolm Kerr to describe inter-Arab rivalry, have changed. The latest form of Arab Cold War resurfaced as a result of the US invasion of Iraq in 2003 and was exacerbated by the 2006 Lebanon War. Malcolm Kerr, *The Arab Cold War: Gamal ‘Abd al-Nasir, 1958-1970* (London: Oxford University Press, 1971).
2. Shireen T. Hunter, *Iran’s Foreign Policy in the Post-Soviet Era: Resisting the New International Order* (Santa Barbara: Praeger, 2010), 23.
3. Ray Takeyh, *Hidden Iran: Paradox and Power in the Islamic Republic* (New York: Holt/Sham, “Religio-Constitutional Institutions of Iran in the 20th Century: Relevance and Viability for the Future” in *Iran and the World: Some Contemporary Developments*, ed. Bahram Navazeni (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2010), 34. In the absence of the Mahdi (Twelfth Imam), Twelver Shiites (Ithna Asharis) believe that clerics can substitute for his authority. Khomeini transformed this religious power to Iran’s system of governance. Juan Cole, “Iran and Islam,” <http://iranprimer.usip.org/resource/iran-and-islam> (March 20, 2013).
7. Valentine M. Moghadam, “Women in the Islamic Republic of Iran: Legal Status, Social Positions and Collective Action,” 2004, <http://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/ValentineMoghadamFinal.pdf> (November 29, 2012), 1.
8. Shireen T. Hunter, *Iran’s Foreign Policy in the Post-Soviet Era: Resisting the New International Order*, 26.

9. Shireen T. Hunter, *Iran's Foreign Policy in the Post-Soviet Era: Resisting the New International Order*, 27.
10. Ali M. Ansari, *Confronting Iran: The Failure of American Foreign Policy and the Next Great Crisis in the Middle East* (New York: Basic Books, 2006), 71.
11. Ray Takeyh, *Hidden Iran: Paradox and Power in the Islamic Republic*, 14.
12. Shireen T. Hunter, *Iran's Foreign Policy in the Post-Soviet Era: Resisting the New International Order*, 191, 192. Hajj pilgrimage has been used by Iran to spread its form of Islam and to attack "American Islam," and to propagate its anti-US and anti-Israeli views. Lionel Beehner, "Arab Views of a Nuclear Iran," April 20, 2006, <http://www.cfr.org/publication/10491/> (March 21, 2010).
13. This explains why Salafists did not actively take part in the Arab uprisings. However, they actively took a role in the post-revolution period despite the fact that Salafis regard an Islamic state as unnecessary. Ahmad Moussalli, "Wahhabism, Salafism and Islamism: Who Is the Enemy?" January 2009, <http://conflictsforum.org/briefings/Wahhabism-Salafism-and-Islamism.pdf> (March 5, 2013). Some Salafist parties behaved like al Nour Party of Egypt, which became one of the leading parties by winning about 25 percent of the votes. Karen Elliott House, *On Saudi Arabia: Its People, Past, Religion, Fault Lines—and Future* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2012), 27.
14. Richard Penaskovic, "Gulen on Healing the Rift between Islam and the West" in *Islam and Peacebuilding: Gulen Movement Initiatives*, eds. John L. Esposito and Ihsan Yilmaz (New York: Blue Dome Press, 2010), 127, 128.
15. Although this approach started to change towards Orthodox Sunnis in the 1950s, it remained as disapproving towards Shiites. W. Andrew Terill, "The Saudi-Iranian Rivalry and the Future of Middle East Security," 2011, <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdffiles/PUB1094.pdf> (February 20, 2013).
16. Moussalli, "Wahhabism, Salafism and Islamism: Who Is the Enemy?" 5, 6.
17. House, *On Saudi Arabia: Its People, Past, Religion, Fault Lines—and Future*, 230.
18. House, *On Saudi Arabia: Its People, Past, Religion, Fault Lines—and Future*, 29, 30, 234.
19. All Wahhabis are Salafists, but not all Salafists are Wahhabis. Wahhabis and Salafists merged together and created neo-salafism and *takfiri* jihadism after the 9/11 terror attacks against the US and the invasion of Iraq. For Salafists, the world is divided into infidels and believers. According to this view of Salafists, they are hostile to the West, which lies in the latter category. Salafists associate jihad with *da'wa* (spreading of the faith) and argue that jihad constitutes a form of Islamic propagation to build an ideal alternative society free from Western cultural influence and control. Moussalli, "Wahhabism, Salafism and Islamism: Who Is the Enemy?" 3, 21. The Saudi government financially aids jihadists fighting in Afghanistan, Chechnya, and Bosnia, but these jihadists carried their attacks into Saudi Arabia itself against Al Saud. House, *On Saudi Arabia: Its People, Past, Religion, Fault Lines—and Future*, 29, 30, 233; Trevor Stanley, "Understanding the Origins of Wahhabism and Salafism," July 15, 2005, http://www.jamestown.org/programs/gta/single/?tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=528&tx_ttnews%5BbackPid%5D=180&no_cache=1 (March 3, 2013).
20. House, *On Saudi Arabia: Its People, Past, Religion, Fault Lines—and Future*, 29, 30, 233.
21. Moussalli, "Wahhabism, Salafism and Islamism: Who Is the Enemy?" 21.
22. Marc Lynch, *The Arab Uprisings: The Unfinished Revolutions of the New Middle East* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2012), 211.

23. Angel Rabasa and F. Stephen Larrabee, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey* (Pittsburgh: RAND Corporation, 2008), 32, 33. During the First World War, Arab revolts with British support defeated the Ottoman Empire that ruled the Arab world for nearly four centuries. The revolts by the Arabs that embraced Arab nationalism were interpreted by the Turks as “the empire’s Arab population stabbing Turkey in the back by siding with the English and French.” Graham E. Fuller, *The New Turkish Republic: Turkey as a Pivotal State in the Muslim World* (Washington DC: United States Institute of Peace, 2010), 14, 21.
24. Graham E. Fuller, *The Future of Political Islam*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 18.
25. Graham E. Fuller, *The New Turkish Republic: Turkey as a Pivotal State in the Muslim World*, 15.
26. The AKP is not a popular party among Alawites in Turkey, who mostly support the Kemalists in the CHP opposition party, and who have kept their distance from the ruling AKP owing to the fear that the AKP has a hidden agenda, namely, to create a Sunni Islamist state in Turkey. Matthew Cassel, “Syria Strife Tests Turkish Alawites,” October 22, 2012. <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2012/10/201210217225938535.html> *Al Jazeera* (November 2, 2012). Angel Rabasa and Stephen Larrabee, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey*, 21.
27. Angel Rabasa and F. Stephen Larrabee, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey*, 15, 34. The Naksibendi were at the root of political Islam in Turkey.
28. Angel Rabasa and F. Stephen Larrabee, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey*, 15.
29. Angel Rabasa and F. Stephen Larrabee, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey*, 15.
30. Angel Rabasa and F. Stephen Larrabee, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey*, 17.
31. John Esposito and Ihsan Yilmaz, “Gulen’s Ideas on Freedom of Thought, Pluralism, Secularism, State, Politics, Civil Society and Democracy,” in *Islam and Peacebuilding: Gulen Movement Initiatives*, eds. John L. Esposito and Ihsan Yilmaz (New York: Blue Dome Press, 2010), 25, 26.
32. The traditionalists of *Milli Görüş* movement was focused on establishing a society based on traditional Islamic values. It was reluctant to make compromise with the secular establishment to expand their political support. The Movement was also anti-Western and regarded Islam as incompatible with Western values. Its opposition to Turkish membership to the EU and its willingness to intensify ties with Muslim world can be explained within this framework. Angel Rabasa and F. Stephen Larrabee, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey*, 46.
33. Angel Rabasa and F. Stephen Larrabee, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey*, 45.
34. Angel Rabasa and F. Stephen Larrabee, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey*, 45.
35. Graham E. Fuller, *The Future of Political Islam*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 130. The Reformist of *Milli Görüş* which led to the establishment of the AKP were open to cooperation with secular establishments and prefer to develop its ties with all states. The AKP sees the Western agenda overlapping with its own. Contrary to the traditionalists, the AKP saw the EU membership as a means of reducing the influence of military and establishing a political framework that will expand religious tolerance and ensure its political survival. The AKP also promoted liberal market policies and abandoned anti-globalization discourse of Traditionalists. Angel Rabasa and F. Stephen Larrabee, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey*, 47.
36. Prime Minister, Recep Tayyip Erdogan said “I hope there will be a secular state in Egypt” in a speech he made in Cairo following the Arab Spring.
37. Angel Rabasa and F. Stephen Larrabee, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey*, 18.

38. Sabah, "Basbakan Erdogan'dan Laiklik Acilimi," September 15, 2011, <http://www.sabah.com.tr/Gundem/2011/09/15/basbakan-erdogandan-laiklik-acilimi> (February 28, 2013).
39. Omer Taspinar, "Turkey: The New Model?" 128; Marc Lynch, *The Arab Uprising: The Unfinished Revolutions of the New Middle East*, 211.
40. Hakan M. Yavuz, *Secularism and Muslim Democracy in Turkey* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 14.
41. Atul Aneja, "Iran and the Arab Spring," July 5, 2011, <http://www.irandiplomacywatch.com/2011/07/iran-and-arab-spring.html> (November 4, 2011).
42. Atul Aneja, "Iran and the Arab Spring."
43. Turkiye, "Alan Eldik, Veren El Olduk," October 11, 2012, <http://www.turkiyegazetesi.com.tr/haberdetay.aspx?newsid=24759> (June 3, 2013).
44. Turkiye, "Alan Eldik, Veren El Olduk," October 11, 2012, <http://www.turkiyegazetesi.com.tr/haberdetay.aspx?newsid=24759> (June 3, 2013).
45. Hakan M. Yavuz, *Secularism and Muslim Democracy in Turkey*, 36.
46. Omer Taspinar, "Turkey: The New Model?" 135.
47. Shireen T. Hunter, *Iran's Foreign Policy in the Post-Soviet Era: Resisting the New International Order*, 185, 190.
48. Yigal Carmon, Y. Yehoshua, A. Savyon, and H. Migron, "An Escalating Regional Cold War—Part I: The 2009 Gaza War," February 2, 2009, <http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/3281.htm> (October 4, 2010).
49. Graham E. Fuller, *The New Turkish Republic: Turkey as a Pivotal State in the Muslim World*, 105; Ali M. Ansari, *Confronting Iran: The Failure of American Foreign Policy and the Next Great Crisis in the Middle East*, 179.
50. Lionel Beehner, "Arab Views of a Nuclear Iran."
51. The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, "Mapping the Global Muslim Population: A Report on the Size and Distribution of the World's Muslim Population," October 2009, <http://www.pewforum.org/newassets/images/reports/muslimpopulation/muslimpopulation.pdf> (March 20, 2013), 9, 10.
52. Yigal Carmon, Y. Yehoshua, A. Savyon, and H. Migron, "An Escalating Regional Cold War—Part I: The 2009 Gaza War;" Shireen T. Hunter, *Iran's Foreign Policy in the Post-Soviet Era: Resisting the New International Order*, 199; Ray Takeyh, *Guardians of the Revolution: Iran and the World in the Age of the Ayatollahs* (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 237.
53. Iran supported a plot to overthrow the Bahraini Government in 1981. Khomeini expressed support for Shiited who bombed Western embassies in Kuwait in 1983. Iranian pilgrims rioted during the hajj in Mecca, Saudi Arabia. Iranian officials were involved in both training and assisting Saudi Hizballah operatives in executing the 1996 terrorist bombing of the US military housing facility at Khobar Towers near Dhahran, Saudi Arabia. Lionel Beehner, "Arab Views of a Nuclear Iran."
54. Barry Rubin, "Iran: The Rise of a Regional Power," *The Middle East Review of International Affairs* 10, no. 3, <http://www.gloria-center.org/2006/09/rubin-2006-09-10/> (February 22, 2011).
55. Lionel Beehner, "Arab Views of a Nuclear Iran."

56. Ray Takeyh, *Guardians of the Revolution: Iran and the World in the Age of the Ayatollahs*, 21.
57. Shireen T. Hunter, *Iran's Foreign Policy in the Post-Soviet Era: Resisting the New International Order*, 200.
58. Joshua Landis, "End of Arab Cold War Makes Syria Man in the Middle," *Syria Comment*, December 25, 2009, <http://www.joshualandis.com/blog/?p=4895> (September 25, 2010).
59. Yigal Carmon, Y. Yehoshua, A. Savyon, and H. Migron, "An Escalating Regional Cold War—Part I: The 2009 Gaza War."
60. Graham E. Fuller, *The New Turkish Republic: Turkey as a Pivotal State in the Muslim World*, 166.
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65. Aylin Unver Noi, "The Arab Spring: Should Turkey Coordinate Its Foreign Policy with the European Union?" 67.
66. It much more focuses on *interreligious* dialogue. Hakan M. Yavuz, *Toward An Islamic Enlightenment: The Gulen Movement* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 194.
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90. By 2012, the AKP government had been criticized due to democratic shortcomings. The more power Erdogan won at the elections, the less interested he appeared in taking steps toward freedom of expression and human rights. Omer Taspinar, "Turkey: The New Model?" 135.
91. Ray Takeyh, *Guardians of the Revolution: Iran and the World in the Age of the Ayatollahs*, 253.
92. Most Kurds are orthodox Sunni Muslims (Shafi'i), which distinguishes them from the majority of Turks and Arabs, who are Hanafi Sunnis, and the majority of Iranians, who are Shiites. Yet, not all the Kurds are Shafi'i Sunnis. The majority of Kurds living in Iran are Shiites (Twelver Imam). There are also Alevi, Yezidi, *Ahle Haqq (Kakai)* Kurds living in Turkey, Iraq and Iran. Martin Van Bruinessen, *Aga, Seyh, Devlet (Agha, Shaikh and State: The Social and Political Structures of Kurdistan)* (Istanbul: Iletisim Yayıncılık, 2006), 43-45.
93. Angel Rabasa and F. Stephen Larrabee, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey*, 67.
94. Risale Haber, "Kürt Sorunu Çözümünde Akla Said Nursi Gelmeli," 16 April 2011, <http://www.risalehaber.com/kurt-sorunu-cozumunde-akla-said-nursi-gelmeli-104765h.htm> (10 June 2013). This idea reflects the "Constitutional Patriotism" of Jürgen Habermas in which citizenship relies on a shared sense of values rather than a common history or ethnic origin.
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96. Marc Lynch, *The Arab Uprisings: The Unfinished Revolutions of the New Middle East*, 212.
97. Qatar's Prime Minister and Foreign Minister proposed for the establishment of an organization composed of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) member states and Iran. This act of Qatar has been interpreted as Qatari support for the Muslim Brotherhood in Syria in order to counterbalance Saudi Arabian support for radical powers in Syria. Interview with Dr. Masood Assadollahi, "Qatar Using Iran's Initiative to its Advantage." During the March 2010 Iraqi national election, the Saudis clearly favored secular Shi'ite leader Dr. Ayad Alawi, who complained that Iran interfered

- quite heavily in the political negotiations. W. Andrew Terill, "The Saudi-Iranian Rivalry and the Future of Middle East Security," 53.
98. Aylin Unver Noi, "The Arab Spring: Should Turkey Coordinate Its Foreign Policy with the European Union?" 78. The peaceful protests began on 28 May, 2013 over plans to redevelop Gezi park in Taksim, Istanbul has spread to other cities of Turkey owing to "excessive use of force" by police and Prime Minister's speeches. The Protestors accuse Turkish government of becoming increasingly authoritarian. Imposition of conservative Islamic values through several bans which infringe personal freedoms also become catalysts of these demonstrations. The more power Erdogan won at the elections, the less interest he appeared in taking steps toward freedom of expression and human rights, which are *sine qua non* of functioning democracy. Omer Taspinar, "Turkey: The New Model?" 135.
99. Ammar Ali Hassan, "Muslim Brothers and Salafis," *Al-Ahram Weekly*, December 6, 2012, <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/News/502/32/Muslim%20Brothers%20and%20Salafis.aspx> (March 15, 2013).

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