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**RADICAL ISLAMIC PARTIES
AND MOVEMENTS IN UZBEKISTAN
1990–2012**

Keywords: modern Uzbekistan, political parties and movements, Islamist parties, radical Islam.

ABSTRACT: Uzbekistan, so as other Central Asian Republics, turned into turbulent times in the beginning of 1990's. After collapsing USSR, 5 Republics gained its independence. The whole region was very well-known from its religiosity. However, besides the fact that Islamist movements and parties were banned on any political activity and had no right to act as an opposition within the system of Uzbekistan, they have emerged subsequently especially in this country.

The modern history of Uzbekistan is full of radical Islamic political and social movements. From the very beginning of the Republic, Islam Karimov, its first and the only one till now president, rules though and solidly. He was the biggest opponent of any Islamic initiative which showed up and tried to damp it down immediately.

The aim of this study is to explore all the Islamist parties and movements which have been raised in Uzbekistan between 1990 and 2012. Which of them were and still remaining crucial and have the impact on Uzbek political and social life. The Author is trying to investigate the reasons and circumstances that led Islamist movements to arise and effectively influence on Uzbekistan political arena.

Even though it is possible to date back the past of the Islamic parties in Central Asia to the foundation of Islamic Revival Party in Astrakhan in 1990 that became system conform only in Tajikistan and played an important role in the break out of civil war in 1992. In other Central Asian countries – except for a few attempts in Kazakhstan – emergence of the Islamist parties could be brought back to the period prior to 1990 only in

Uzbekistan¹. However, since the Islamist parties here are not granted the right to act as an opposition within the system, radical Islamist parties or movements emerged subsequently. The reasons for this circumstances can be stressed as follows: Lack of exact institutionalization of the democratic institutions in the Central Asian countries; emergence of the small and ineffective parties due to the weakness of in-party opposition; alliance between the democratic parties and Islamist forces through informal ways in the countries such as Uzbekistan and Tajikistan; ideological differences between the democratic political parties and nationalistic organizations; establishment of the pseudo parties by the Central Asian leaders, which are under their own control, and the limited opportunities of the political parties for constituting their own organization on financial grounds². Moreover, using unbalanced force and rude methods by the current regimes have a big impact on the radicalization of the Islamist organizations in Central Asia. Most important thing is the inability to draw a clear line between proper Muslims and radical Islamists and terrorists. This situation, as Martha Brill Olcott states, causes the marginalisation of people that considers the religious values over the secular practices and they could be considered very easily as an “enemy of the state.” According to the reports of the human rights organizations, the fact is that in

¹ The first party was the “Uzbekistani Islamic and Democratic Party” (UIDP) that held its foundation congress on September 28th 1988 in Almaty. This party planned to extend its influence to the entire Central Asia, what remained however within the borders of Uzbekistan limited to rural areas. According to the Almas Estekov, its founder, the objective of this party is to lead people behave in a good manner in terms of immaterial grounds and to make propaganda for the democratic values presented in Quran. UIDP especially demonstrated for the removal of Mufti Babahan of Central Asia and Kazakhstan from office due to his behaviours that were against Islamic values. The majority of the supporters of this party were from provinces such as Andijan, Bukhara, and Samarkand. The figures of its members were estimated 2.500 in 1989. However, this party merged with other organizations in 1990 that was keen on similar ideologies (M. Haghayegli, *Islam and Politics in Central Asia*, New York, 1995, p. 85). In this regard, another organization was “Democratic Party of Islam” (DPI) that advocated of a theocratic regime of Persian style. According to Dadakhan Hassan, one of its leaders, this party was in favour of peaceful means for gaining power. The impact of DPI was limited to Namangan whose primary target was to unite all the Muslims (Ibidem. pp. 85–86).

² Ibidem, p. 102.

Uzbekistan, 7.000 people³ have been sued due to religious reasons (wearing Islamic clothes, having beard, protesting the imprisonment of their friends or relatives) demonstrates the harsh conditions of the situation.

In this study, primarily Mujaddidiyya and Wahhabism will be explored that build the intellectual background of the extremist movements such as Hizb ut-Tahrir, Akromija, and Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) emerged in late Soviet period. Subsequently, Islamist political parties in Uzbekistan (Islamic Revival Party of Uzbekistan, Adolat, Hezbollah, Islamic People Movement of Turkestan) will be analysed, some of which are the precursor of the IMU. Finally, Hizb ut-Tahrir, Akromija, and IMU will be examined. Especially by analysing the content of the brochures of Hizb ut-Tahrir and IMU, it will be attempted to explain the objectives of these movements in a more expressive way.

NEW ISLAMIC UNDERSTANDING

During the USSR period, the Islamic understanding that formed on the basis of the separation of official and parallel Islam started to follow a rather different path especially after the inauguration of a madrasa by Mullah Muhammad Rustamov Hindustani. Subsequently, Sayed Abdullah Nuri and Muhammad Sharif Himmatzoda who acted as leaders of Islamic Revival Party of Tajikistan, gained their religious education in this madrasa⁴. In this manner, the class of new scholars led by Hindustani that is not involved in politics and that challenged the widespread Hanafi mazhab's (theological-juridical school) understanding was emerged in the end of the 1970s and they were called Mujaddids, which meant "reformers" or "innovators." Actually, this symbolizes the challenge to the current Hanafi understanding of Islam. Historian Ashirbekh Muminov separates

³ N. Rao, *Religious Extremism in Central Asia: Towards a Conceptualization*, in: N. Rao, M.M. Alam (Eds.), *Central Asia: Present Challenges and Future Prospects*, New Delhi 2005, p. 115.

⁴ P. Akçalı, *Orta Asya'da İslami Uyanış, Radikal İslami Hareketler ve Bu Hareketlerin Bölge Politikasına Etkileri*, in: E. Efeğil, P. Akçalı (Eds.), *Orta Asya'nın Sosyo-kültürel Sorunları: Kimlik, İslam, Milliyet ve Etnisite*, İstanbul 2003, p. 152.

Hindustani's disciples who shaped the Mujaddidiyya movement in Central Asia into two groups. One of them is "Ahl al-Hadith" that underlines the superiority of hadiths against the Hanafi belief and the other is "Ahl al-Quran" that does not accept the existence of any sect and that advocates the necessity of referring directly to the sources of Islam. Abdulkhakim Qori Margilani and Abduvali Qori Mirzayev were the supporters of Ahl al-Hadith. Margilani was reputed in the region as the father of the Wahhabi movement. Another disciple of Hindustani is the person called Rahmatollah Alloma (1950–1981) who separated his way from that of his teacher. Alloma's another students is Abidjan Qori Nazarov. On the other hand Mominov qualifies a person called Tolkin Qori as the member of Ahl al-Quran and this person worked as an imam in Sahabes (companions of Prophet Mohammed) Mosque⁵.

Mujaddidiyya scholars emphasized that it was necessary to reinterpret Islam and rebuild the Muslim society in Central Asia, especially, re-Islamize the society and relinquish from secular government, and the purification of the beliefs of Muslims from superstitions; for instance, going to the tombs of saints must be prohibited. These groups especially wanted to ban the pre-Islamic habits, what supported by Mufti Ziyavuddin Babahanov. In fact, the success of the Islamic Revolution in Iran and the resistances of the Afghan fighters strengthen the Mujaddidiya movement. In this context, the Mujaddidiya supporters asserted that the Soviet Muslims should be on side of Afghan fighters. This situation was not easy for Hindustani and other Hanafi scholars. Since the young scholars who were in favour of these thoughts did not experience the terror of the Stalin's era like Hindustani. They did not know what it meant to challenge the Soviet power politically. On the other hand, it was possible to talk about the existence of an alliance between the Mujaddidiya imams and the government of USSR. Both parties were, for instance, against visiting the tombs

⁵ A. Frank, J. Mamatov, *Uzbek Islamic Debates Texts, Translations and Commentary*, Springfield 2006, p. xi. For radicalization of reformist Islam from 1970s to mid-1980 in Central Asia see futher M. Olcott, *Roots of Radical Islam in Central Asia*, "Carnegie Papers" 2007, No. 77, pp. 1–39,

http://carnegieendowment.org/files/cp_77_olcott_roots_final.pdf, (accessed: 11.04.2013).

of the saints and following Sufism. For Mujaddidiya, such practices and rituals were nothing more than treating against the will of Allah⁶.

Thus, in the period of collapse of the USSR the supporters of Hindustani and Mujaddidiya disputed with each other over religious issues. As a result of these discussions the Mujaddidiya supporters declared that Hanafism did not concern themselves and Hindustani and his followers stigmatized this group as “Wahhabis” although Saudi Arabian Wahhabism is only one dimension of their theological approach. Subsequently, the concept of Wahhabism started to be used to describe all the Islamists in Central Asia without any difference. On the other hand, Mujaddidiya imams, as Abduvali Qori used in his sermons frequently, defined the Hanafis as polytheists.

Since, after the disintegration of the USSR, every state started to constitute its own religious approach, the authority of the “Central Asia and Kazakhstan Muslims Religious Administration” (*Sredneya-Aziatskoe Duhovleniye Upravleniye Musulman*) (SADUM) established in the era of Stalin, diminished and became an institution limited only to Uzbekistan⁷. Mohammed Sodiq Mohammed Yusuf attempted to appease the quarrel between Mujaddidiya and Hanafis elected as successor of Mufti Shamsuddin Babahanov in 1989, what worsened the situation even further. On the other hand, since Islam Karimov Regime was threatened by the Islamist groups throughout the 1990s, he tried to use SADUM as a balancing factor within these theological disputes. Hence, Mohammed Yusuf was replaced by Muhtarjon Abdullaev in 1993. However, quarrels occurred between the Mujaddidiya imams and the Hanafi imams living in the Fergana region following the independence led the situation to be more chronic and complex. In this period, apart from the Mujaddidiya imams, new movements that challenged the Hanafi School emerged as well.

Other Hanafi groups emerged as well. One of them is the organization called *Islam Lashkarlary* that concentrated on Namangan, based in *Atavelihan Tora Mosque*, of which imam was one of Alloma’s students. As these groups became politically active and started to be influential in

⁶ *Ibidem*, p. xii.

⁷ P. Akçalı, *op.cit.*, p. 134.

Uzbekistan, SADUM, which had been transformed to an ideological device in the hands of Karimov, qualified them as Wahhabis and alleged that they received ideological and material support from Saudi Arabia. Moreover, the statements of the supporters of Mujaddidiya that were gradually politicized became harsher and harsher. For example, Abdulvali Qori was able to consider Uzbekistani regime as Jewish, atheist, and enemies of Islam in his speech delivered in 1991 in Andijan⁸.

WAHHABI MOVEMENT

In addition to the Mujaddidiya imams indicated above, there was a Wahhabi Movement that expanded among the Uzbeks in Fergana Valley. The Wahhabis, known as Puritans of Islam, believe that Islam must influence in every field of the social and political sphere as practised in the time of Prophet Mohammad. Emergence of the Wahhabi sect penetrating Central Asia from India can be dated back to earlier periods⁹. The person who Sayed Ahmad brought Wahhabism from India to Central Asia in 1822 whom was introduced this sect during his hajj (pilgrimage to Mecca) duty. Ahmad who started to propagate for Wahhabi thought in the north-India fuelled a jihad lasting four years against the Sikhs in Peshaver in 1826. Despite the slowdown in the strength of this movement subsequent to his death, his followers continued to propagate for this movement in Afghanistan's Herat and Balkh regions. It must be pointed out that in the 1890s,

⁸ A. Frank, J. Mamatov, *op.cit.*, p. xii.

⁹ This sect was founded by Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab (1691–1765), who was raised by his father according to the rules of Hanbali sect. From his youth onwards Abd al-Wahhab opposed to the glorification of saints that was incorporated into Islam subsequently and to extravagancy among the Muslims as well. All these practices seemed to him as deviation from real Islam. So he thought that the Muslims should live according to the Quran and Hadith in order to find the right path to the real life, how they had practised in the era of prophet Muhammad in its authentic and puritanical form. By the time of death of Muhammad, Wahhabi sect was very influential within the Arabian Peninsula. It was founded even a Wahhabi administration in Eastern Arabia in 1830 (M. Haghayegli, *op.cit.*, pp. 92–93).

many Central Asian Muslims went to India in order to learn the core consumption of this movement, and then they returned back to their country. The fact is that in Central Asia, most reputed Wahhabi leader of that period is Hindustani who went to India during the October Revolution in Russia. Although the teachings of Hindustani who returned to Andijan after his education were strictly in connection with the principles of the Wahhabi sect, he opposed the politicization of religion. However, unlike Hindustani, the influential leaders such as Abdulvali Qori and Rahmatullah have politicized Wahhabism. The Wahhabi movement in Central Asia receives significant amount of financial aid from Saudi Arabia for building mosques and supplying religious education to children and young people¹⁰.

In Uzbekistan, Wahhabis did not hesitate to cooperate with the other Islamist organizations. For instance, they occupied together with the formations like Islamic Revival Party, Tauba, and Adolat the communist party building on December 8–9th 1991 in order to establish an Islamic centre in Namangan. However, this protest was transformed in a short time into an attempt to establish alternative Islamic government under the leadership of Tohir Yuldashev and some of Wahhabi imams. Protesters demanded that the laws of the sharia should be enacted and Islam should be proclaimed as the state religion. In fact, the activities for establishing a parallel government in the region can be dated back to Karimov's visit to Namangan during his election campaign. As Karimov did not feel himself powerful enough to defeat Islamists in that period, Muslim opponents succeeded in establishing an Islamic administration parallel to the government in Tashkent. Under this circumstances Karimov was obliged to recognize this movement supported by approximately 50.000 persons and its autonomous government. However, as soon as Karimov felt himself powerful enough, he let the Uzbek security forces overthrow this parallel government and 71 persons were arrested.

¹⁰ M. Haghayegli, *op.cit.*, pp. 92–94.

ISLAMIST POLITICAL PARTIES

As indicated above that Islamist movements gained strength between the years of 1989 and 1992 in Uzbekistan. Mufti Muhammad Sadık Muhammad Yosuf said that he was opposed to a secular state in the Turkish style. For him, such system is unacceptable for Uzbekistan. Some radical Islamists advocated that a so-called Muslim state “Islamistan” must be established. Islamist groups in Uzbekistan concentrated especially on the provinces of Fergana Valley such as Namangan, Fergana, and Andijan. These groups located in different cities brought their forces together in order to reopen the mosques which were closed prior to 1989, to construct new mosques, and to publish religious books¹¹.

Karimov who states that there were fifteen different religious movements in Uzbekistan believes that a substantial part of them is contrary to the Uzbeks’ traditional understanding of Islam. As Karimov underlined Uzbek people must have moral and immaterial values. According to the Uzbek leader, religion and holy values must not be instrumentalised for the power struggle. Karimov considers the utilization of religion for political aims as a serious handicap for Uzbekistan’s security and stability¹². At the same time, favouring a good dialogue between the ethnic groups living in Central Asia, Karimov gave birth to “our home Turkestan” that he considered as a peaceful and constructive movement. According to Karimov, this movement aims at ensuring an international solidarity within the region. Karimov points out the importance of this movement for Central Asia due to the following words: “No doubt, this policy (our home Turkestan) is completely in accordance with the fundamental strategies and national interests of all the Central Asian states. The term “Turkestan” consist of here all population of a particular country in the region, not merely the Turkic peoples”¹³.

¹¹ V. Babak, D. Vaisman, *Political Organization in Central Asia and Azerbaijan. Sources and Documents*, London, Portland 2004, p. 385.

¹² For the thoughts of Karimov about religious radicalism and fundamentalism, see I. Karimov, *21. Yüzyılın Eşiğinde Özbekistan*, Ankara 1997, pp. 36–49.

¹³ *Ibidem*, p. 74.

ISLAMIC REVIVAL PARTY OF UZBEKISTAN

Islamic Revival Party of Soviet Union was founded in Astrakhan in June 1989. Although this party's objective was to form an international structure, it soon withdrew behind the local and national borders. This party's intention was to resurrect the people of Central Asia within the framework of Islamic rules. However, it should be stressed that the Islamic understanding here was an understatement far from fundamentalism. By the way of emulating this formation in Soviet Union, political parties that adopted the Islamic principles as their guides were founded in the other union countries under the same or similar names. Islamic Revival Party Uzbekistan (IRPU) was founded on January 26th 1991 in Tashkent and Abdullah Utayev was assigned as leader of it after long debates. In the 1994s, IRPU had about 3.000 members. This party's primary objective was to found an Islamic Republic in Uzbekistan. In order to reach this aim, this party had to prepare for an Islamic revolution¹⁴.

IRPU's program also stipulates a general religious enlightenment. In addition, in the party program, there were some points such as fight against ethnic and racial discrimination, reanimation of the customs and traditions, struggle against crime and drugs, strengthening Islamic brotherhood, cooperation with the other party and organizations, support for the poor people, protection of family, and determinative role of the Islamic norms in the economic and social life. Being in good terms with the other parties in the beginning, IRPU isolated itself from them as they emphasized secularism more and more. IRPU used the facilities of the Unity Party in the Fergana Valley, which can be shown as an example of the IRPU's relation with the other parties¹⁵.

IRPU was repressed by the government's forces since its foundation because Uzbek laws prohibit the establishment of religion-based political parties. Even though IRPU brought together 3.000 signatures necessary for the registration of the party in 1992 and made the application for its

¹⁴ I. Trutanow, *Zwischen Koran und Coca Cola*, Berlin, 1994, pp. 164–166.

¹⁵ U. Halbach, *Politische Entwicklungen im nachsowjetischen Mittelasien: Usbekistan*, Köln 1994, No. 50, pp. 30–31.

official registration, Uzbek security forces did not delay starting to operate against this party. Firstly the party's Kokand Group was scattered and then the administrators of its Namangan branch were arrested in March 1992 by the Uzbek security forces. Accordingly, other members convened in August of the same year and resolved that IRPU would continue its activities in underground. Subsequent to these developments, A. Utayev, the leader of the party, was imprisoned and he took place among the lost persons in the report published by Amnesty International in 1994.

ADOLAT

Adolat (Justice) cannot be characterized entirely as a political party. It was established in summer 1991, by the youth of the neighbourhood¹⁶ in the regions such as Namangan, Andijan, and Fergana Valley, where the Islamic renaissance was in its peak in that time. Adolat as a youth organization established on the basis of mahalla (city district) was against illegality, theft; concisely, and all the activities prohibited by sharia. Having endeavoured to establish equality and justice within the society through its own initiative and efforts, "The Society of Afghanistan War Veterans" has taken its place within the structure of Adolat. Adolat groups were managed by the Elder's Committee in the neighbourhood. Adolat supporters tried to prevent the immoral behaviours. For instance, they kept watch in the streets at night in order to prevent possible events of theft and attacks. This actually meant the constitution of the pillars of a parallel Islamic state. Adolat collected alms for supporting poor people. As the first step for establishing an Islamic government in Namangan, an organization

¹⁶ "Mahalla" (city district) plays a crucial part in the social structure of Uzbekistan, which can be regarded as the traditional settlement areas. In other words each mahalla – regarded as the smallest unit of the political organization – managed by a board of elders. The Uzbek government considers mahalla essential for the formation of the non-governmental organizations. Hence, the mahallas work as an executive organ in line with the orders and decisions of main executive power (J. Eckert, *Konfliktregulierung in ethnisch heterogenen Staaten: Das Beispiel Usbekistan*, (unveröffentlichte Diplomarbeit) Freie Universitaet, Berlin 1993, p. 28).

called “Islamic Centre” was constituted in November 1991. Being on the eve of the elections, Karimov did not object to this and he even had the Namangan Communist Party building vacated and assigned to the Adolat supporters. In March 1992, after having his back to the wall, he hit Adolat like a ton of bricks¹⁷. The Uzbek law enforcement officers arrested 70 of the Adolat supporters in March 1993 in Namangan. Six of them were sentenced to imprisonment for 8 years, by allegation for establishing of a paramilitary organization¹⁸. According to Abdulmanob Polat 27 Adolat supporters were behind the bars in 1992¹⁹.

Adolat groups consist averagely of 100 to 200 persons. The core of each group is made up of smaller 20-person sub-groups, who were able to do Far Eastern sports such as carate. The fact is that more than 60 Adolat groups were active in Eastern Uzbekistan in 1992. Although Adolat was a youth organization, it did not neglect to integrate the committee of elderly and local leaders into its structure. These activities of the Adolat groups within the mahalla posed inconvenience on the government²⁰.

In fact, the objective of Adolat that was working hand in hand with the groups such as Tauba (Repentance) and Islam Lashkarlary (Fighters for Islam)²¹ was to prevent the illegal activities by the way of cooperating with the local bodies. Numerous members of this organization acted as quasi volunteer polices, which is in analogy to the “Neighbourhood Watch” practice in the USA. Since it was able to prevent theft and other illegal

¹⁷ Y. Ro'i, *Islam in the FSU – An Inevitable Impediment to Democracy*, in: Y. Ro'i (Ed.), *Democracy and Pluralism in Muslim Eurasia*, London New York 2004, p. 109. And siehe Y. Kulchik. A. Fadin., V. Sergeev, *Central Asia after the Empire*, London Chicago 1996, p. 35.

¹⁸ I. Trutanow, op.cit., pp. 164–165.

¹⁹ A. Polat, *Political Prisoners in Uzbekistan: Five Pardoned, Eight on Trial*, “Central Asia Monitor” 1992, No. 6, p. 13.

²⁰ U. Halbach, op.cit., pp. 31–32.

²¹ This term can be translated into Turkish as the “Islam ordulari”. Islam Lashkarlary was actually a name, which was given to the Basmatschi groups during the War of Independence in Turkestan (1917–1932) against the Russians or Bolsheviks. However, the Islam Lashkarlary emerged in 1990 was not prone to violence. In the first half of the 1990s, no military activity was connected with the Islam Lashkarlary.

activities, Adolat gained the support of the public in a short time. However, sometimes they beat even the suspects²².

HEZBOLLAH

Another Islamist and fundamentalist party in Uzbekistan was Hezbollah. Its founder is Tulkun Ergashev. The number of the members of Hezbollah that was founded in Tashkent in the 1980s was about 200. Hezbollah's intention was to bring Uzbekistan back to the age of umma (religious community). This party that carried out its activities underground showed its existence through the statements it occasionally distributed²³. Ergashev stated in an interview to a Western journalist in the 1990s that he proclaimed war against Republic of Uzbekistan and its godless regime. This party was, as it can be understood from its name, more radical and rather inclined to the use of violence compared to IRPU²⁴.

TURKESTAN ISLAMIC PEOPLE'S MOVEMENT

This movement that emerged in Kokand in 1989 and stemmed from a group entitled "Humanity and Pity" had a big impact on the Fergana Valley. As its name would suggest, this movement is a Panturanian (Pan-Turkic) movement. This formation is distinguished from other movements because of its emphasis on the importance of religion. The objective of this movement is to establish a Turkestan dominated by Islam. As this movement contained two ideologies such as Pan-Turkism and Pan-Islamism, it is considered as an enemy by the Karimov Regime. For this reason Tashkent imprisoned the notable leaders of the movement in 1991.

²² A. Polat, *the Islamic Revival in Uzbekistan: A Threat to Stability*, in: R. Sagdeev, S. Eisenhower (Eds.), *Islam and Central Asia. An Enduring Legacy or An Evolving Threat?*, Washington 2000, p. 45.

²³ I. Trutanow, *op.cit.*, p. 165.

²⁴ U. Halbach, *op.cit.*, p. 32.

One year later, the number of the supporters of this movement reached approximately 1.000 people²⁵.

Another Pan-Turanian party that must be highlighted in this regard is the party called “Turkistan Islam Democracy Party.” This party was founded on August 3rd 1990 in Namangan. Its founder is an Uzbek singer, Dadakhan Hassanov. According to him, the objective of his party was to establish a sharia-led state that controls its own economy and culture and that covers all the Central Asian Muslims. However, this party, in trying to pursue its aims, would struggle absolutely through democratic methods, and by no means use any violence²⁶. Having been subject to a strict prosecution of the government as of its inception, this party was, thus unable to establish a structure that was able to stand on its own feet.

HIZB UT-TAHRIR AL ISLAMI

“Hizb ut-Tahrir al Islami” (Islamic Salvation Party), shortly known as Hizb ut-Tahrir, was founded by Taqiuddin an-Nabhani (1909–1979) in 1953 in Jordan. The intention of this party that had a Sunni understanding was to combine all the Muslims politically within a Muslim state that would be governed by the caliph. Regarding Central Asia, the fact is that such caliphate would cover all the countries of the region such as Muslim parts of Russia, China and North Caucasia. However, Hizb ut-Tahrir would reach this objective without using violence; that is, in the words of its Central Asian leaders by means of a “peaceful jihad”²⁷. In this regard, it does not resemble the organization called Tablighi Jamaat that is active in India. This party that created cell-structure propagate for its views through the distributing brochures. Considering both secular and non-secular Muslim nation states as its enemies, Hizb ut-Tahrir thinks that

²⁵ Ibidem.

²⁶ M. Atkin, *Islamic Assertiveness and the Waning of the old Soviet Order*, “Nationalities Papers”, Volume 20, Number 1, Spring 1992, pp. 64–65 and A. Rashid, *Orta Asya'nın Dirilişi, İslam mı Milliyetçilik mi?* (Translated by) Osman Deniztekin, Cep Kitapları, İstanbul, 1996, p. 121.

²⁷ N. Rao, op.cit., p. 108.

these states prevent the establishment of caliphate. Therefore, secular Muslim countries perceive this party's activities as a security problem for their own regimes. In addition, it should be pointed out that the party brochures had an anti-Jews content. Hizb ut-Tahrir, just like the other radical Islamist organizations, shows Israel and the USA as implacable enemy of Islam²⁸.

Continuing its activities nowadays as a London-based organization, Hizb ut-Tahrir started to settle down in Central Asia since the middle of 1990s. Endeavouring to carry out its activities in Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kazakhstan, the organization attaches a particular importance to Kyrgyzstan²⁹. As there is a state suppression in Central Asia, it is a very difficult to demonstrate whether Hizb ut-Tahrir or IMU enjoy more support for their politics by the people. Hizb ut-Tahrir and IMU's joint objective is the revival of caliphate in Central Asia. However, the methods they follow for reaching this aim and objective are very different from each other. This situation can be regarded as a treatment of the same patient by a doctor by the way of an operation and by an another one using medication³⁰. On the other hand, Hizb ut-Tahrir brings forward the issue of the foundation of an Islamic state through a three-stage program: Firstly, it is necessary to warm up people for the party ideology. This is important because the party's thoughts would be communicated to other people by those people. Secondly, it should be established relations with the various Jamaats (Islamic congregation) and encourage them to work for the Islamic project, and ensure that they live in line with Islamic principles. Thirdly, the state will be completely seized, Islam will be rendered dominant in the societal and state lives, and in this regard a message will be given to the world³¹.

As the current regimes of Central Asian countries consider Hizb ut-Tahrir to be more dangerous than the other Islamic organizations, there

²⁸ A. Frank, J. Mamatov, *op.cit.*, p. 239.

²⁹ B. Thamm, *Der Dschihad in Asien. Die Islamistische Gefahr in Russland und China*, München, 2008, pp. 45–46.

³⁰ For Origin, structure, and Beliefs of the Hizb ut-Tahrir see. A. Rashid, *Jihad: The Rise of Militant Islam in Central Asia*, New York 2003, pp. 116–124.

³¹ N. Rao, *op.cit.*, p. 108.

are thousands of Hizb ut-Tahrir members sitting in the prisons of these countries. For instance, distribution of the 7.600 political arrestees in Uzbekistan as Hizb ut-Tahrir (5.100), IMU (1.600), and other (1.000) exhibit the fear of the regime in this country³². As concentrated specifically in the regions where the Uzbeks live, Hizb ut-Tahrir gradually appeared to be an alternative to the governing elite compared with the IMU that is identified with violence by the people³³. In other words, reduction of the impact of the IMU caused the increase of Hizb ut-Tahrir's influence. Apart from Uzbekistan, Hizb ut-Tahrir was very influential in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan's part of Fergana Valley where overwhelmingly the Uzbek ethnic groups live³⁴.

It can be pointed out that the first brochures published by Hizb ut-Tahrir after the oppressive measure of Karimov regime on the Mujaddidiya scholars, at the end of the 1990s. Karimov administration, especially since 1999, arrested thousands of persons for being the members of Hizb ut-Tahrir³⁵. Sherfigullo Nazirov, the leader of Hizb ut-Tahrir, was even arrested in March 2000 and sentenced to 20 years of imprisonment. In 2001 the figure of the members of this organization was estimated to be approximately 10.000 in Uzbekistan³⁶. According to the Uzbek opposition, Karimov uses the "Hizb ut-Tahrir" condemning the opposition and dismaying his potential competitors. However, Hizb ut-Tahrir protects the arrestees regardless of their identity or ideology.

When the brochures of Hizb ut-Tahrir are scrutinized, it is obviously that these written texts provide reliable information regarding to the general policies of the organization. In the brochures where extreme anti-Semitism draws attentions, one can see that the Jews are the grand enemy of the Muslims of Uzbekistan and that there is an alliance between the Jews

³² M. Kort, *Central Asian Republics*, New York 2004, p. 129.

³³ N. Rao, op.cit., p. 110.

³⁴ U. Halbach, *Zentralasien in Bedraengis. Problematische Reaktionen auf regionale Schicherheitskrisen*, „Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik“ 2001, p. 17.

http://www.swp-berlin.org/fileadmin/contents/products/studien/S2001_35_hlb.pdf (accessed: 26.03.2013).

³⁵ A. Frank, J. Mamatov, op.cit., p. 240.

³⁶ U. Halbach, op.cit., p.17.

and the Westerners against the Muslims. Hence, Muslims are to be summoned to revive caliphate in order to defeat the mentioned enemies. In the brochures dealt issues dedicated to Uzbekistan, the problems of the Uzbek Muslims are brought in line with the general objectives of Hizb ut-Tahrir and some basic problems are taken into account. For instance, these brochures indicates that the Karimov regime is corrupt and has an anti-Islamic attitude, and Karimov was a Jew like Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. Because of this fact Karimow acts against the interests of the Uzbek Muslims³⁷.

Table 1. Content Analysis of the Hizb ut-Tahrir Brochures

Word	Brochure I 17.2.2003	Brochure II 24.4.2000	Brochure III 23.4.2000	Brochure IV 30.12.1999	Total
Karimov	16	8	14	12	50
Caliph(ate)	3	2	4	4	13
Uzbekistan	25	13	6	8	52
Muslim(s)/Islam	16	23	40	41	120
Jew(s)/ Israel	2	-	4	30	36
Christian(s)	1	-	-	2	3
Ataturk	2	-	-	2	4
East Turkestan	-	1	-	1	2
Central Asia (states)	7	5	3	-	15
Kazakhstan	5	2	-	-	7
Kyrgyzstan	2	1	-	-	3
Tajikistan	1	-	-	-	1
Turkmenistan	-	-	-	-	-
The USA	5	7	6	-	18
West(ern)	4	-	3	-	7
USSR	2	-	-	-	2
Russia	-	-	-	2	2
China	-	4	-	4	8

Source: Uzbekistandagi siyasi-iktisodi vaziyat: muammolar va echimlar, 7 Fevral 2003 Uzbekiston prezidenti uzining fikri jihatdan ojisligiga ikrar bulmokda, 24 Aprel 2000, Uzbekiston prezidenti Karimov Musulmonlarga kanday akida tikistryapti, 23 Aprel 2000, Musulmonlarga yahudi hokimlik kilişi haromdir, 30 Dekabir 1999 (A. Frank, J. Mamatov, op.cit., pp. 243–278).

³⁷ A. Frank, J. Mamatov, op.cit., p. 240.

In the Table 1, if we bypass the frequency of repetition of the words “Muslim/s” and “Uzbekistan” due to understandable reasons, we can see first of all that the word Karimov is repeated totally 50 times. This is followed by the words of Jew(s)/Israel (36), the USA (18), Central Asia/states (15), and caliph(ate) (13). As these figures exhibit, on Hizb ut-Tahrir brochures, there is an obvious anti Jew(s)/Israel and anti-American attitudes. Regarding domestic issues they criticize Karimov’s policies and make a mudd propaganda that he is a Jew. Another word correlated with the term of “Jew” is Ataturk. Karimov and Ataturk are accused of being Jewish, which is a discourse adopted by the radical Islamists. Another concept linked with Ataturk’s name is caliph(ate) that is repeated totally 13 times. The reason for this is the accusation of Ataturk because of his abolishment of caliphate in 1924. In terms of the super powers, the USA (18) is the mostly criticized country. This is followed by China (8) and Russia (2). China is referred mainly in the context of the atrocity it inflicted on the Muslims in East Turkestan. Another important point in the brochures is that “Central Asia,” which is specifically an integrating concept, was preferred instead of the country names such as Kazakstan, Usbakistan and etc. (see Table 1).

AKROMIJA MOVEMENT

Launched by Akram Yuldashev, a businessman of Andijan, Akromija Movement gained more reputation subsequent to the massacre that took place in May 2005 in Andijan. Yuldashev wrote a pamphlet with the title “the road to the faith” in 1992 and was sentenced for six-month imprisonment in March 1998 but released because of general amnesty after a short while. However, on February 17st 1999, under the pretext of bombing in Tashkent and the pamphlet he wrote, he was punished for 17-year imprisonment. This essay was considered to be as a work with political content and deemed to be an attempt for demolishing the current government and establishing caliphate. The government tried to push the events in Andijan off on the supporters of Yuldashev. In a news that published in May 2005 in a newspaper called “Halk Sözü” (the words of people) they alleged that

Akromija is a more radical branch of Hizb ut-Tahrir and that this movement did not even recognize Muhammad as a prophet. In fact, official bodies consider the Islamist groups such as Akromija, Hizb ut-Tahrir, and Mujaddidiya (Wahhabism) as the radical movements that are interconnected with each other in Fergana Valley³⁸. On the other hand, Saidjahan Zaynabitdinov indicated that the allegations of the government were deceptions and warped. When the version of the essay published by Zeynabitdinov is scrutinized, it would be indicated that the above mentioned pamphlet cannot be qualified as political in its content. In this pamphlet, which is a philosophical text, attentions are drawn to the distinction between the Hanafis and Wahhabis in the Fergana region in the 1990s and Muslims are called for unity.

ISLAMIC MOVEMENT OF UZBEKISTAN

Foundations of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) that is established 1999 in order to overthrow the Karimov regime by armed force and to constitute an Islamic regime in Uzbekistan can be dated back to the time of the Islam Lashkarlary founded by Tohir Abdouhalilovitch Yuldashev³⁹ (political leader) and Jumaboi Ahmadzhanovitch Khojaev⁴⁰

³⁸ A. Frank, J. Mamatov, op.cit., pp. 319–320.

³⁹ Yuldashev was born in 1967 who was not able to complete his high school education. He developed his religious knowledge underground and became a leader of political Islam. Being a brilliant orator Yoldashev was a perfect organizer as well (A. Rashid, *Jihad...*, op.cit., p. 137).

⁴⁰ Namangani was born in 1969 in Namangan/Uzbekistan served in the para-troops by the soviet Army deployed to Afghanistan between 1987 and 1989 after he finished Vocational High School for Agriculture. Coming to his hometown after Afghanistan war, Namangani joined Tauba, a militant Islamist group, in Fargana Valley. However, thereafter due to the accusation of crime and resurgence against the regime, he had to go to Tajikistan in 1992 and participated in civil war by the side of the Islamist opposition in Tajikistan. He tried there to compose armed troops by the Uzbeks in the Karategin region, the stronghold of opponents. Due to his failure, Namangani fled to Afghanistan in 1993 and he was allowed to maintain his troops in the Jirga Valley even after the agreement of a peace treaty between the United Tajik Opposition and Emomali Rahkman, from where he launched armed attacks to Kyrgyzstan's Batken region. Some sources state that

“Juma Namangani” (military wing leader) subsequent to the decline of USSR in Namangan. This organization was only one of the organizations founded in the Fergana region against corruption and injustice. Even though since its foundation IMU has attributed itself as a Hanafi organization, neither Yuldashev nor Namangani had anything to do with being an Islamic scholar. Thus, they had never taken part in the Islamic discussions mentioned above. Another characteristic of IMU was the fact that it was not related to Wahhabism as well⁴¹. Information regarding the IMU’s military power differs from some hundred warriors to some thousand warriors. However, Rashid estimates the manpower of the IMU fighters in 2001 especially in Mazar-i Sharif and Kunduz regions/North Afghanistan as 3.000⁴². First of all the aims of IMU is to establish a sharia state in Fergana Valley and then to expand it throughout the Central Asia and East Turkestan as well.

In fact, the IMU’s history can be considered as a history of a revolt and exile. After Yuldashev’s protest of Karimov in his visit to Namangan in 1992 by shouting at him Uzbekistani leader did not hesitate to attack Yuldashev and his supporters as soon as he felt himself stronger. Hence, Yuldashev and Namangani fled to Tajikistan and fought in the civil war by the side of the Islamist opponents; then they settled down in Afghanistan and founded there the IMU in 1999. The IMU published a journal called “Umma of Islam.” However, this journal was published only three issues in 1999. There is no information that the journal was subsequently published. Anti-Semitism and the necessity to launch an armed struggle against the Kerimov regime were the attention drawing issues in the IMU journal⁴³. Yuldashev, in his interview with “Voice of America” in September 2000, explained the IMU’s aims and objectives as follows: “We want

the regiments under the command of Namangani went back to Afghanistan in May 2000 (K. Abdullaev, S. Akbarzadeh, *Asian/Oceanian Historical Dictionaries*, No. 38, Historical Dictionary of Tajikistan, The Scarecrow Press Inc, Lanham, Maryland and London 2002, p. 151 and for Namangani’s activities, see also: R. Johnson, *Oil, Islam and Conflict, Central Asia since 1945*, London 2007. pp. 119–124).

⁴¹ A. Frank, J. Mamatov, op.cit., p. 381.

⁴² U. Halbach, op.cit., p. 14.

⁴³ A. Frank, J. Mamatov, op.cit., p. 381.

to make an end to the tyranny. This is the basic reason why our movement declared jihad. This movement emerged against tyranny, corruption, and the injustice that are taking place in our country. Our intention is to rescue thousands of Muslims from prison, for whom we sacrifice our lives. This is our prime objective. The issue of establishing an Islamic government will be on the agenda later on [...] ⁴⁴.

On the other hand the external aid had a big impact on the IMU's partial success in its fight against the Karimov regime. For instance, while Taliban regime provided the IMU with military bases, El-Qaeda supported the organization financially. The number of the IMU's armed militants in Afghanistan was about 1.500 persons as the organization reached to the peak of its power. Being powerful especially in Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan, IMU conducted military operations in 2000 in Batken region of Kyrgyzstan and in Uzbekistan by accessing about 100 kilometres of proximity to Tashkent. After the 9/11 2001, the war against Taliban regime in Afghanistan resulted in losing IMU's foreign support to a substantial extent. Even there have been news that Namangani, military leader of the organization, was killed in an operation conducted by American armed forces in November 2001. Having suffered heavy casualties during this operation, IMU drew its operation base from north and central Afghanistan to the border region of Afghanistan and Pakistan. Nowadays, it carries out its operations mainly from the Southern-Waziristan/Pakistan. As a result IMU started to lose its influence since 2002 ⁴⁵. The most important reason for this was the ideological disputes within the organization. A split group not agreeing with IMU's concentration only on Uzbekistan and overthrowing Karimov regime started to support the El-Qaeda's policy on global jihad and they left the IMU and established another organization called "Islamic Jihad Union" (IJU) in 2002. However, there is close cooperation between both organizations ⁴⁶.

⁴⁴ A radio Interview with Tohir Yuldashev, Leader of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, October 2000.

⁴⁵ M. Kort, op.cit., p. 128.

⁴⁶ For detailed information for this subject, see G. Steinberg, *Die Islamische Jihad-Union. Zur Internationalisierung des usbekischen Jihadismus*, „Stiftung Wissenschaft und

Table 2. Content Analysis of the Second Issue of the Journal of “Umma of Islam”

Words	Repetition Frequency
Islamic law	11
Islam's enemies	4
Islamic community	5
Islamic state	2
Jihad	8
Mujahedin	8
Caliph(ate)	2
Jew(s)	13
Tyranny	3
Despotic regime	2
Pharaoh	2

Source: Umma of Islam, Issue 2, 05.07.1999, A. Frank, J. Mamatov, *op.cit.*, pp. 383–427.

In Table 2, it is obvious that the Islamic law is emphasized. On the other hand the importance of the armed struggle is clearly understood from the frequent repetition of the concepts of “jihad” and “mujahedin”. Karimov regime is qualified with the concepts such as “tyranny” and “despotic regime” and he is referred to be as a “pharaoh.” In Yuldashev’s words, such concepts are mentioned as well. With 23 times repetition frequency the word “Jew/s” demonstrates the anti-Jews attitude of the IMU.

When Table 1 and Table 2 are compared with each other, an interesting constellation appears. In Table 1, which contains the statements of Hizb ut-Tahrir, caliphate (with 13 times of repetition frequency) is stressed in a very expressive manner, while in Table 2; in the IMU’s statements, caliphate is used only two times retrospectively. In the IMU’s statements, the terms; “Islamic law”, “Islamic community”, “mujahidin”, and “jihad” come

Politik“ 2008, http://www.swp-berlin.org/de/publikationen/swp-aktuell-de/swp-aktuell-detail/article/Islamische_jihad_union.html, (accessed: 26.03.2013).

to the forefront explicitly. Hence, this can be commented that the last mentioned organization favours armed conflict.

Stressing jihad in its statements more emphatically, the IMU established contacts with the other jihad organizations in Afghanistan, Pakistan, East Turkestan, Chechnya, and Africa. Yuldashev lived in Pakistan and Afghanistan between the years of 1995 and 1998. The IMU ensured that its armed groups composed of the Uzbeks and the Tajiks were sent to Pakistan and Saudi Arabia in order to let them train in madrasas and guerrilla camps. These countries provided the IMU with financial support as well. For instance, Jamiatul Ulama permitted IMU to collect charity in Pakistan. Even though substantial portion of the guerrilla fighters, whose figure was between 3000 and 5000, underwent training in Afghanistan, there are reports that a part of them were trained in Pakistan, Chechnya, and East Turkestan. According to Rao, revenues of the IMU come from drug trafficking and from foreign aids. A Kyrgyz official reports that 70 % of the drug traffic through Kyrgyzstan is controlled by the radical Islamist groups⁴⁷.

CONCLUSION

As indicated above the Mujaddidiyya understanding and Wahhabism played an important role in the emergence of radical Islamic movements in Uzbekistan. Even if Wahhabism actually constitutes only one dimension of the theological thoughts of the mujaddidi imams, Hindustani and his friends did not hesitate to consider them as Wahhabis. Karimov regime names all the religious groups conveniently as Wahhabis without relying on any measure.

The transition period in Uzbekistan gave birth to Islamist political parties (IRPU, Adolat, Tauba, Islam Laskarlary, Hezbollah and Turkistan Islamic People Movement) on one side, and Islamist movements (Hizb ut-Tahrir, IMU and Akromija), on the other side. The first group based in Fergana Valley mainly focused on the solution of social problems and was

⁴⁷ N. Rao, *op.cit.*, p. 105.

not influential and it can be considered as pseudo parties and formations without a strong membership base, while those that handled within the second group contained movements (IMU) that operate at global level, which have powerful financial supporters, and do not hesitate to conduct armed conflict with the Karimov regime.

Especially the brochures of Hizb ut-Tahrir and IMU demonstrate that Hizb ut-Tahrir refers to the word “caliphate” 13 times whereas in IMU’s statements, such it appeared only two times. Moreover, in IMU’s declarations, the terms of “Islamic law”, “Islamic community”, “mujahidin” and “jihad” are clearly dominant elements. This can be interpreted that IMU prefers armed conflict rather than peaceful treatment of the problems. The discourses of both Hizb ut-Tahrir and IMU indicate that the both organisations have an anti – Western and the anti-Jews attitudes.

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