AFGHAN SOURCES
OF THE TAJIKISTAN CIVIL WAR

A thesis presented to the Faculty of the U.S. Army
Command and General Staff College in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE

by

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ABSTRACT

AFGHAN SOURCES OF THE TAJIKISTAN CIVIL WAR by MAJ Scott W. Tousley, USA, 84 pages.

This study investigates Afghanistan influences in the Tajikistan civil war. Ongoing conflict in Afghanistan overlaps the Tajikistan conflict developing after the USSR's 1991 breakup. The Tajikistan civil war includes elements of ethnic, religious and political conflict. This research classifies Islam, leadership, the border, and Russian experience as Afghan sources of the Tajikistan conflict. Independent sources of the Tajikistan conflict include Tajik state weakness, Islam, and Russian strategy towards the "near abroad."

The study concludes the Tajik conflict should be viewed from a regional perspective. Existing boundaries and regimes of the Central Asian region interact at the political level. Islamic influence, while impacted by the Afghanistan conflict, retains more extensive roots in Tajikistan. Finally, Russian influence in Tajikistan follows from broader Central Asian and "near abroad" policies towards all of Central Asia. Some of these regional issues (Uzbek political trends and regional environmental and economic trends) promise to develop into serious causes of continuing conflict in Tajikistan and throughout Central Asia.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Two broad subjects of significance to the world's political evolution are the future of Russia and its nearest neighbors, and the likelihood of local civil conflict in different regions of the world following the relaxation of superpower tensions. These two subjects coincide in Tajikistan, a former republic of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) now making its way as one of the newly independent countries of Central Asia. Following the fragmentation of the USSR, civil war broke out in Tajikistan in 1992, a civil war which continues today. Tajikistan shares its southern boundary with Afghanistan, the site of the 1979-1988 Soviet military intervention and an ongoing civil war. This proximity of country and history suggests the question: How did the war in Afghanistan contribute to the civil war in Tajikistan? This research effort will serve as a case study contribution to the larger question: how effectively does the fighting in one area bleed over into a neighboring region? If the Afghan War served as a significant cause of the Tajik civil war, or even the most significant cause, then the parallels for the rest of Central Asia, Europe, and Turkey are clear.

The smallest of the Central Asian countries, Tajikistan covers more territory than Armenia, Azerbaijan, or Georgia. It shares short northern and eastern borders with Kyrgyzstan and China; a long southern border with Afghanistan, along the Pyandzh and Amu Darya rivers; and a

complex and largely artificial western border with Uzbekistan. Tajikistan is extremely mountainous, with less than 10 percent of the country capable of agriculture even under intensive irrigation. Dushanbe, the largest city, numbers about 600,000, with perhaps 50 towns of population 2000 or greater throughout the country. Most of Tajikistan's economy involves heavily irrigated cotton production in the available valleys; subsistence agriculture and weapons/drug trading also provide important economic components. Perhaps a dozen large industrial or hydroelectric complexes exist in Tajikistan, legacies of Soviet command industrialization.

Tajikistan separates into four major regions. They are (1) Leninabad and a portion of the Ferghana Valley, in the north; (2) the Hissar Valley and the capital, Dushanbe, in the center; (3) the Gorno-Badakshan region and Pamir mountains, in the east; and (4) the Khujand and Kurgan-Tyube regions, adjacent to both Uzbekistan and Afghanistan in the southwest. The only viable land routes in Tajikistan run east-west, through Leninabad, through Dushanbe, and along the Afghan border.[1] In the winter, travel to Dushanbe requires air transport or extended road/rail movement through Uzbekistan. Unlike the other Central Asian countries, Tajikistan's social fractures derive from the mountain rather than the desert terrain. In this respect, Tajikistan resembles Afghanistan and the Caucasus more than the rest of Central Asia.[2] This terrain reality dominates any attempt to integrate the country politically or economically. Tajikistan's history remains interlinked with both Uzbekistan and Afghanistan. Nearly one million Tajiks live in Uzbekistan, while about three million Tajiks live in Afghanistan; Tajikistan's own population numbers just over five million.

Tajikistan's history began with the rest of Central Asia and the ancient silk trade routes linking China and the Middle East. Early Islamic expansion followed these same routes. The region experienced Turkic dynastic rule from about the eleventh century, along with Mongol khans and a local ruler, Timur the lame (Tamerlane). Uzbek tribes began migrating into the region in the sixteenth century. The original "Great Game" was played in Central Asia and Afghanistan throughout the nineteenth century, between Russia and England.[3] British influence spreading north from India and Pakistan met Russian expansion into the Central Asian khanates of Bukhara, Khokand, and Samarkand. As Central Asian trade turned towards Russia, contact with the Middle East and historic Muslim networks dwindled.

Following the Bolshevik Revolution and Russian Civil War, the Soviet Union reasserted control over Central Asia in the 1920s.[4] Bukhara dissolved into the Uzbek and Tajik Soviet Socialist Republics (SSR). Dushanbe was named capital of the Tajik SSR. The Soviet regime forced substantial migration of upper-class Tajiks from the historic centers of Bukhara and Samarkand, to Dushanbe. Tajikistan received part of the rich Ferghana Valley (the Leninabad area) to attempt to provide a source of wealth to an otherwise impoverished republic. The Soviet Union created Tajikistan as an explicitly non-Turkic state, which helped maintain historical Pamiri/Tajik animosity towards their Uzbek overlords.[5]

Significant Tajik opposition to the ruling Communist Party began to surface about 1990; this opposition included various nationalist and Islamic groups. Following the August 1991 failed coup in Moscow, major demonstrations in Dushanbe pressured the Tajikistan

parliament to hold direct presidential elections. The Communist Party candidate Rakhmon Nabiev was elected president in November 1991. Large scale protest developed in March 1992 when Nabiev arrested the anticommunist, pro-opposition mayor of Dushanbe on charges of corruption. Initial fighting and political pressure resulted in Nabiev's May 1992 agreement to form a coalition government with the opposition. Other conservative elements in the country refused to accept this agreement, and the initial conflict quickly developed into civil war. The simplest description of the opposing sides is the pro-communist, pre-1992 power structure, against a loose collection of anticommunist, pro-democratic, and pro-Islamic elements. President Nabiev resigned in September 1992; interim governments and continued civil war followed. Russia deployed "peacekeeping" troops in Dushanbe and along the Tajik-Afghan border beginning in September 1992. Despite their efforts, civil/guerrilla war continues in Tajikistan. Tajik refugees in northern Afghanistan, armed and assisted by local Afghan leaders, serve as a primary source of military and political opposition to the Russian-backed Dushanbe government. This situation is beginning to replicate a key characteristic of the Soviet/Afghan War--the military manpower available in the refugee camps.[6]

The roots of Central Asian conflict reach back into the nineteenth century "Great Game" competition between Russian, British, and local powers. Following the Soviet Revolution,

> Bolshevik Russia's war against the Basmachis [the Central Asian resistance] constituted a complex military, social and political struggle that in important ways foreshadowed the multidimensional nature of modern conflicts involving developed powers in regions of the Third World.[7]

After this takeover of Central Asia, Stalin's legacy for the region included drawing state boundaries mismatched with ethnic patterns. These boundaries are today's national borders. While Communist control kept a lid on most Central Asian tension, the disintegration of the USSR has allowed conflict to return to the region (as in the Caucasus and the former Yugoslavia). Russian military deployment in Tajikistan seeks to stop or control the fighting there, in order to promote peaceful neighbors and borders. Russian strategy also sought, with partial success, to use the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) to establish a multinational peacekeeping presence. Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan deployed peacekeeping troops in Tajikistan, and all of the Central Asian countries are concerned about the war's spillover potential and that threat to their own stability. The Central Asian region remains one of Russia's active security interests, as was demonstrated in Afghanistan just fifteen years ago.

Thesis And Supporting Questions

How did the protracted Afghan War affect the Tajikistan Civil War? Answering this question requires three supporting questions:

1. What were the primary Afghan War influences on the Tajikistan Civil War?

2. What were other major sources of the Tajikistan Civil War, independent of the Afghanistan War?

3. What perspective best explains the origins of the Tajikistan Civil War?

This research groups the elements surrounding each war into separate, distinguishable factors. The first factor--political and military involvement--served as a primary impact on both the Afghan and

Tajik Wars. Soviet involvement defined the war in Afghanistan, until their pullout in 1989. Russian involvement in Tajikistan is certainly less extensive, but at least equally complex, as its involvement in Afghanistan. Russian national and Russian military interests in both wars can be separately identified. Russian behavior in Tajikistan partly reflects "lessons learned" from Afghanistan. Finally, Russian intervention in Tajikistan affects a radically different Central Asia than did Soviet intervention in Afghanistan.

The Central Asian and regional perspective establishes the second factor. The Central Asian "region" is mostly a geographic term, as the area is not homogeneous. Regional interests in the Afghanistan War included Pakistan and Iran, in addition to Afghanistan and Russia. But the same geographic region now interested in the Tajikistan War has radically changed with the disintegration of the Soviet Union. Turkey, Pakistan, and Iran remain regional players, now competing with Russia rather than the Soviet Union. Afghanistan is now an "outside interest" rather than central participant. Regional leaders Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan have their own direct interests in the Tajikistan War. Additionally, the Central Asian area has occasionally acted collectively (under Russian leadership), as in the attempt to deploy a multinational peacekeeping force in Tajikistan.

A third factor present in both the Afghanistan and Tajikistan Wars is the Islamic religion. The Afghanistan War provided a clear Soviet threat to temporarily unite different Islamic (and tribal) factions around a common goal. These factions were from Afghanistan as well as other Islamic countries. This Islamic unity disintegrated with the military withdrawal and collapse of the USSR. However, the war in

Tajikistan includes a much smaller anti-Islamic threat, and much of the conflict derives from competition among Islamic groups to fill the post-Soviet power vacuum in Tajikistan. In Tajikistan, Islam serves as a primary means of national identity, as well as a significant means of protest.

A final factor found in both the Afghanistan and Tajikistan Wars is the region's tribal or clan-oriented society. Similar to the Islamic characterization, the Soviet invasion united diverse Afghan tribes. This unity disappeared with the end of overt Soviet/Russian activity in Afghanistan. As with the Islamic characterization, tribal tensions, which were concealed in the Tajik SSR have emerged and contributed to the patterns of the Tajikistan War. Urban versus rural population characteristics used by the Soviets to divide and rule have reemerged as one of the fault lines splitting the country's people. Both the Afghan and Tajik wars include tribal warlord participation, as well as tribal influence cutting across formal national boundaries.

After identifying and describing these four characteristics as the means of analysis, the supporting research questions will assess the significance of the Afghanistan War contribution to their overall impact in the Tajikistan Civil War. How has each characteristic evolved during the Afghanistan War, and what are the early indications in Tajikistan? For example, consider the Russian military force in Tajikistan. Its activity and behavior is heavily influenced by the Soviet experience in Afghanistan; not only are many soldiers and officers veterans of both wars, but the primary Russian force in Tajikistan (the 201st Motorized Rifle Division) also participated in Afghanistan. Is Russian military behavior in Tajikistan largely derived from the Afghan experience, or

are there other, equally significant influences like the conflicts in the Caucasus, or the hard changes and deterioration of a post-USSR Russian military?

Islam provides a second example of how to follow characteristics from the Afghanistan to the Tajikistan War. The major objective of some of the conflicting groups in Tajikistan is the establishment of an Islamic state in Tajikistan. Is their major inspiration the "success" of the Afghanistan War, or the previous success story in Iran, or the subtler, background effort to keep Islam alive through the decades of Soviet control of Tajikistan?

Methodology

In comparing Afghan War versus background influences on the Tajikistan fighting, four basic criteria apply. These are military, social, individual, and political factors impacting on the Tajikistan conflict. Military factors include weapons availability, soldiers and units involved, Russian military experience in Afghanistan, and so on. Social factors address the multiple geographical, tribal, cultural, religious, and other factors scrambled throughout Tajikistan, Afghanistan, and all of Central Asia. A few examples of these are mountain versus valley Tajiks, Shi'ite versus Sunni Islam, and Tajik versus Uzbek peoples. Discussion of these social factors then leads to individual factors, which address key specific individuals involved in Tajikistan and the Central Asian region. Some of these individuals are Uzbek leader Rashid Dostam, Afghan-Tajik leader Ahmed Shah Masoud, and Russian Defense Minister Pavel Grachev. The final criterion addresses political characteristics. These include Russian strategic objectives in Central Asia, Uzbek objectives concerning her weaker neighbor

Tajikistan, Iranian strategy in the region and its component states, etc.

The initial research question requires identification of explicit Afghan influences on the Tajikistan fighting. The most significant Afghan influence is the local (clan, tribal, or individual) leadership developed during the Afghan War. Two of these leaders, Rashid Dostam and Ahmed Shah Masoud (ethnic Uzbek and Tajik, respectively), control significant territory along the Tajikistan/Afghanistan frontier. These "warlords" continue to fight over Kabul and control of Afghanistan, and their initial support to the Tajik opposition provided the critical spark to the Tajikistan conflict.

The second major Afghan factor affecting Tajikistan is weapons. The long-term fighting in Afghanistan generated massive stocks of rifles, rockets, and other weapons available to the competing groups. Without the Afghan War stockpile, these opposition groups would be much weaker in their ability to fight the Dushanbe government and Russian peacekeeping soldiers.

The third Afghan factor affecting Tajikistan is directly related to the previous factors--the porous, little controlled border between the two states. The remote, mountainous terrain would be extremely difficult to control even with a capable government in Kabul. Since Rashid and Dostam control the border, instead of the Kabul government, Russian peacekeeping troops can marginally affect the flow of weapons, drugs, soldiers, and refugees between the two states.

The final Afghan factor affecting Tajikistan is Russian experience. Russian peacemaking in Tajikistan is significantly different from the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. While much of this

difference clearly derives from the USSR breakup and changed nature of Russian challenges, the Soviet military-political experience in Afghanistan has affected Russian actions in Tajikistan. The actions and policies of senior Russian defense officials (General Grachev, the defense minister, and General Pyankov, the commander of the peacekeeping troops) are colored by their experience with Soviet troops in Afghanistan.

Several major sources of the Tajikistan fighting are not founded in effects from the Afghan War. The first source is the limited strength of the Tajik state and government. Tajikistan began its post-USSR existence with arguably the weakest and least unified government of all the Central Asian states. The Tajikistan government might have broken up under initial opposition pressure, even if the opposition was not supported by groups within Afghanistan. The next independent source of the Tajikistan conflict is the broad, diffuse influence of the Islamic religion and culture. With the breakup of the USSR, multiple countries (Pakistan, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, etc.) are now able to more readily project influence into Tajikistan and the Central Asian region. Islamic culture, religious practice, and political influence will partly fill the vacuum established by the Soviet pullout, even though these Islamic factors probably do not reflect fundamentalist Islamization of the region. While the Afghan War undoubtedly strengthened or focused the Islamic forces now present in Tajikistan, these forces would still be present without the war as a lead-in. Russia provides the final Afghanistan-independent source of the Tajikistan fighting. While the Russian experience in Afghanistan certainly affects her behavior in Tajikistan, Russian strategy in

Tajikistan derives from her changed geopolitical condition and significant border tension. These two determinants of Russian "near-abroad" strategy do not depend on the Afghanistan history. While Russia undoubtedly recognizes the regional threat posed by Afghanistan's continuing conflict, this problem must remain secondary to more central concerns like relations with Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, the Tajik civil war, etc.

Several different perspectives enable analysis of Afghan versus non-Afghan factors in the Tajikistan conflict. One perspective uses the criteria mentioned earlier in this chapter: military, geographical, individual, and political characteristics. Another considers the degree of "Islamic problem" generated by the Tajikistan conflict, and asks how much of this problem derives from the Afghan history. A final consideration is a broad evaluation of the Tajikistan fighting from the regional (Central Asian) perspective, considering both Afghan and non-Afghan contributions. A combination of these different perspectives allows analysis of the Afghan contribution to the Tajikistan conflict.

Assumptions, Conditions and Definitions

One major methodological assumption grounds this work: chronological organization. This historical background includes the "Great Game," Russian and Soviet expansion and control, and changing behavior during the Russian/Afghan War. Detailed analysis begins from the end of that war, considering its stalemated condition, Russian motivations for pullout, and the continuation of fighting without direct Russian participation. Conclusions and implications (but not a focus of the paper's analysis) will include likely trends for future activity.

Two major conditions affect this research effort: the nature of the consulted sources, and how to address the 1991-1992 breakup of the USSR. Secondary sources form the bulk of the references as the author does not read or speak Russian, nor other languages of the Central Asian region. Sources were judged on their tone, balance, and perceived bias. Sources include translations of interviewed participants, writings of in-country observers, and analysis and assessments from London, Washington, Moscow, and the like. Source analysis includes the bias(es) of the source, knowledge and personal experience, and chronology, both absolute and in relation to associated events. Most analysis involves either Russian or Western sources.

The disintegration of the former USSR establishes the other condition of this research effort. The research focuses on Afghanistan before the USSR's breakup and on Tajikistan after the breakup. While Afghanistan continues to fight in the post-USSR era, and the Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic was slowly evolving under Gorbachev's changes, neither of these areas are primary to this research. More importantly, the USSR breakup serves as a background condition that frames the Afghan/Tajikistan connection.

Several definitions should be discussed here in the introduction. The first involves the description of Russian activity in Tajikistan. Some sources cite Russian peacekeeping troops deployed along the Tajik/Afghan border; others note a difference between Russian and U.N. definitions of peacekeeping, and term the Russian presence "peacemaking." Because stabilization and border control form the Russian objectives in Tajikistan, military intervention best defines the Russian presence. Their effort is certainly far more limited than the

invasion of and major war in Afghanistan, but it is also far less benign than common understandings of the terms peacekeeping and peacemaking.

The second set of definitions address Islam. Four major branches of the Islamic faith affect the region. Most Central Asians are Sunni Moslems, perceived by westerners as one of the most "passive" forms of Islam. Some are Shi'a Moslems, commonly characterized as fundamentalist (or "evangelical," to use an analogous description). The Wahabi sect or branch of Islam (predominant in Saudi Arabia) is both conservative yet relatively passive. A final branch of Islam present in Central Asia is the Isma'il sect of Aga Khan. These multiple Islamic groups present in Tajikistan (and Afghanistan) generate multiple opinions over the appropriate role for Islam in the region and its states. The external Islamic states interested in Tajikistan, including Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Pakistan, and Afghanistan, reflect the same variety of opinions. It remains to be seen which version(s) of Islam will be reestablished in Tajikistan after this civil war runs its course.

Another set of definitions involves "civil war," and how to describe fighting in Tajikistan and Afghanistan. Fighting in Afghanistan remains a civil war, with multiple parties fighting in and around Kabul and elsewhere. This civil war involves all major ethnic groups in Afghanistan: Uzbek, Tajik, Pushtun, etc., along with conflict between individual warlords loosely based in geographic regions. The weak Afghan government remains simply a feeble participant in the country's fighting; the focused external influences (U.S.-backed, anti-Soviet) found during the Afghan-Soviet War are now absent. Civil war also best describes the fighting in Tajikistan. The progovernment side

in this conflict represents substantial Russian interest and backing. While not on the scale of the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, Russia as a participant in Tajikistan exercises at least as much influence as either the opposition or the "procommunist" government. Regional conflict also drives this conflict, with any Tajik government in Dushanbe caught among Kulyab, Khojand, and Gorno-Badakhshan. Considering this complicated fight with one party from outside the state, civil war also serves as the best description for the Tajikistan fighting.

The final definitions used here address peacekeeping, peacemaking, and intervention. Russian leaders emphasize their "peacekeeping" role in Tajikistan, to better secure legitimacy and international acquiescence for their actions. However, Russia actually terms its action in Tajikistan as "peacemaking," emphasizing their effort to separate fighting groups and the need for substantial Russian activity on the ground. The scale of Russian actions in Tajikistan certainly pales relative to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, but their actions represent a substantial investment of policy, prestige, and soldiers. The term "intervention" emphasizes the difference from the Afghanistan case, and avoids the different topic of peacekeeping.

Summary

Examining how extensively the Afghan conflict spread to Tajikistan is the significant part of the research objective. The potential for a civil war to expand beyond its boundaries explains world concern over Bosnia, Russia's concern over the civil wars on its borders, and Central Asian concern over Tajikistan. The end of the twentieth century has brought independence to many countries that may

not be strong enough to support their newly-awarded freedom. The Afghan-Russian war and the Tajikistan civil war are neighbors in both space and time; therefore, the study of their cause and effect should provide useful lessons for other conflicts like the Balkans and the Caucasus. Additionally, considering how much of the Tajikistan civil war derives from Afghanistan indirectly suggests the importance of other factors in the conflict. If ethnic divisions, Islamic influences, or basic tribal politics were enough to generate conflict in Tajikistan, without Afghan carryover, then Russia's concerns over its "near abroad" are well-founded even without the fighting on parts of its borders.

This research effort focuses on the question of the impact of the Afghan War on the Tajikistan Civil War. This question leads to three major sections for the paper: Afghan sources of the Tajikistan conflict, independent sources of the Tajikistan conflict, and selection of the best perspective. Different characteristics allow comparison of these sources. One group of criteria considers military, regional, individual, and political characteristics. Another approach involves directly comparing the perceived, relative strength of the Afhgan and non-Afghan influences on Tajikistan's conflict. Other approaches include the Central Asian regional perspective, an Islamic perspective, an ethnic/tribal perspective, and the nature of Russian strategic and political objectives. While the Soviet-Afghan War significantly contributed to the fighting in Tajikistan, Afghanistan was only one contributing factor in the broader regional instability that generated the Tajik civil war.

CHAPTER 2

CHARACTERIZATION

Analysis of the Tajikistan Civil War first requires an understanding of the nature of the conflict. The method used here describes the conflict through four factors: social, leadership, political and military. The social factor starts with a historical perspective and then considers ethnic, clan, class, and religious factors. The leadership factor discusses the roles and impact of key individuals involved in the conflict. The political factor addresses the major organizations and political behavior contributing to the conflict. Finally, the military factor addresses the forces involved and the nature of the fighting. Subsequent chapters of this paper apply these characteristics to analysis of the Afghanistan contribution to the Tajikistan Civil War.

Social History

While the nineteenth century's "Great Game" provides the best-known historical perspective for Central Asia and Afghanistan, Tajikistan's modern history begins with the Basmachi resistance movement of the 1920s. Following the Bolshevik victory in the Russian Civil War, the Soviets fought a Muslim guerrilla movement of 20,000 based in eastern Bukhara (now Tajikistan). This fight reflected general rural resistance to Russian expansion in the region.[1] Stalin then divided Soviet Central Asia into individual republics, establishing the borders

that form today's national boundaries in the region. Stalin's boundaries gave ethnicity greater weight in the region's politics, adding to related social, cultural, and economic concerns.[2] Additional fractures in Tajikistan and the rest of Central Asia derive from sedentary versus nomadic traditions, and Islam. In Dannreuther's words:

> Within these loose state formations . . . the peoples of Central Asia were free to express a variety of over-lapping identities. The most basic of these was related to place or lineage - to region and clan for the oasis dweller, and to tribe and tribal confederation for the inhabitants of the steppe. Another source of identity was cultural or ethnic, principally focused on association with the Turkic or Persian family of nations. The third and potentially most unifying source of identity was Islam, which by the late 19th Century had penetrated the furthest reaches of Central Asia . . . What did not emerge from these multiple and overlapping sources of identity was a clearly defined national consciousness on the European model of nation-state consolidation.[3]

These differing identities impacted the Soviet military's efforts to assimilate its Central Asian conscripts. Soviet military policy and practice concerning nationalities contributed to preexisting ethnic, tribal and religious tensions among Central Asian soldiers.[4] These same tensions help drive the nature of the Tajikistan conflict now. While perhaps 30 percent of the Tajiks do not live in Tajikistan, and 30 percent of the peoples in Tajikistan are not Tajik, "economic and political realities do not allow a recourse to history for the solution of the territorial problem."[5]

Social Structures

Describing the social structure influencing the Tajikistan Civil War requires addressing two primary areas of analysis. The first area includes the rough "tribes" or clans found throughout Tajikistan and their geographical focus. Islam provides the second area of

analysis. Both of these areas influence the makeup of the fighting groups in the country.

Tajik ethnic groups serve as a critical element of individual and group identity within the country today. These groups provided a useful stabilizing role during the breakup of the USSR.[6] They derive from the principal pre-Stalin distinction between nomad and sedentary (Sart) populations.[7] This division follows from the region's ecology, where sedentary Persian-speakers occupying the oases and mountains competed with Turkic nomads moving throughout the steppes and deserts of the Central Asian plateau. "The indigenous sedentary Persian population became the principal victim of these nomadic invasions, with the region as a whole assuming a predominantly Turkic identity."[8] As a result,

> In lowland areas of Central Asia, the Persian-speaking populations have long undergone a process of acculturation to the dominant Turkic invaders and settlers. In such areas a regional identity including both Tajiks and Uzbeks may outweigh the fluid lines between the jurisdically distinguished nationalities. Mountainous areas remained more purely Tajik.[9]

The largely settled Tajik population developed a localized identity based on place, crossing linguistic and ethnic lines.[10] Hence Tajikistan's primary social fractures follow from the geographic separations included in the artificial political boundary: the Khujand part of the Ferghana Valley in the north; the central, isolated Dushanbe, Hissar and Garm regions; the Kurgan-Tyube and Kulyab mountain regions in the south; and the largely independent Gorno-Badakhshan region in the east. Khujand, Hissar, and Kurgan Tyube all have populations that are about one-third Uzbek; these areas are significantly more bilingual (Uzbek and Tajik) than the rest of Tajikistan.[11] Mountains separate the Khujand region from the rest of Tajikistan; rapid movement requires flying, while ground routes pass

through Uzbekistan. The Pamiris in Gorno-Badakhshan speak a Persian dialect distinct from Tajik. These "mountain Tajiks" see themselves as a distinct ethnic group; after (briefly) declaring sovereignty and joining the opposition in 1992, "Tajiks targeted Pamiris outside of Gorno-Badakhshan during the score settling and atrocities of the civil war."[12] The nomadic, Persian-speaking Tajiks in Kurgan Tyube consider themselves Arab by descent, as with the adjacent group across the Amu Darya river in northern Afghanistan.[13] Gharmis, Pamiris, and others from the more purely "Tajik" areas constituted the primary Tajik cultural intelligentsia, hence ultimately played the primary roles in the nationalist and religious opposition.[14] The net result was that the Russians ended up

> in a war involving four clans that have long been at each other's throats: the Khujand, in the north; their traditional allies, the Kulyab, in the southeast; the Pamiri, in the Gorno-Badakhshan region; and the Garm, from rural areas around Dushanbe. These clans are fighting each other, both for power in the Tajik government and for control of smuggling . . . the Kulyab came out on top and became the dominant force in the government . . . [15]

The second, equally important analytical approach to Tajikistan's social condition must be Islam. Olivier Roy's analysis sees the Islamic world divided into distinct geographic, cultural, and political tendencies: the Sunni Arab Middle East, the Sunni Indian subcontinent, and Irano-Arab Shi'ism.[16] He notes that these separations come together within Afghanistan: Sunni areas in the north and the Pushtun south, and the Shi'ite region of the central Hazarajat.[17] Tajikistan's "Islam" falls under the Sunni system, although with many of the same divisions found throughout Central Asia and adjacent regions.

The Central Asian political leadership as well as a majority of the Russian press use every opportunity to publicize the threat of an

Islamic revolution in Tajikistan and Central Asia. The Islamic movement represents a powerful rejection of the old Soviet order and its control over Central Asia, but no consensus on replacing it with a centralized Islamic state exists. Islam competes with nationalistic, ethnic, and other political currents running through Tajikistan.[18] In reality, the Islamic component of the Tajik opposition represents

> an Islamic movement with an Islamic leadership and a critique of the old order and plan for the future, both formulated in Islamic terms . . . Maududi's definition of Islamic revolution as the process of creating the social consciousness and moral climate *prerequisite* to the establishment of an Islamic order and state.[19]

Two coupled conclusions show Islam's limitations in Tajikistan. First, politics in Tajikistan derive primarily from non-Islamic factors like family, ethnic, and regional considerations. Islamism remains a blunt instrument at the national level, not a unifying movement at the local level.[20] Second, Tajikistan's government cannot assume the Islamist mantle as easily as the nationalist one. They have followed Gorbachev's policies in permitting the growth and practice of the religion, while resisting the development of the political party.[21] Because the Tajik government cannot credibly push Islam from the national level, and Islam remains just one aspect of politics at the lower levels, Russian fears about "Islamic Tajikistan" are exaggerated.

These local, ethnic, and Islamic fractures generate the complexities of the Tajikistan conflict. Prior to the Soviet breakup, mujahidin in northern Afghanistan moved at will into Tajikistan to conduct military raids, weapons transfers, and Islamic activities.[22] Sponsors included Ahmad Shah Masoud, the ethnic Tajik mujahidin leader controlling northeast Afghanistan, Gulbudin Hekmatyar, a Shi'ite mujahidin leader, and Pakistan's Inter-Service Intelligence (ISI). Each

was able to apply some element of influence within Tajikistan. The Tajik government's power base provides another example of these fractures. Most of the legislature comes from historically dominant Khujand in the north, while Rakhmonov and the supporting military forces come largely from the south of the country. Kulyabi warlord Sangak Safarov led Kulyab and ex-communists forces in the 1992/1993 fighting, while allied forces from Kurgan Tyube followed part-Uzbek Faizali Saidov.[23] The regions along both sides of the Tajik/Afghan border provide a third example of these fractures. The Kurgan Tyube and Kulyab areas in the south of Tajikistan more closely match their Afghan counterparts to the south and east than the other areas to their north in Tajikistan. This condition underlies the influence of Afghan leaders Dostam and Masoud in Tajikistan.[24] The single overriding characteristic of Tajikistan's society remains separation, divisiveness, or diversity of influence.

Several conclusions follow from this brief summary of Tajikistan's society. First, unlike the consistent message from the Russian press, "cultural similarities among Tajikistan, Iran and Afghanistan do not foreordain Tajikistan becoming a part of these other two countries."[25] And second, while demographic, environmental, and economic trends clearly indicate rising pressures on Tajikistan and other Central Asian states, many different fractures could be split by these pressures. One author includes the possibilities of conflict with Russia; conflict between Central Asian states; and ethnic, religious, or nationalistic conflict within a state like Tajikistan.[26] The strongest influences in this society today--conservative ex-communists and

Islamists--will remain unable to bring the country together against all of the underlying ethnic, religious, and local tensions.

Leadership

Several individuals serve as the key leaders in Tajikistan's recent past and present. Imomali Rakhmonov won election as chairman of the communist-dominated national parliament in November 1992, assuming the country's ranking leadership position. Previously he had been chairman of the Kulyab oblast (area) executive committee. Rakhmonov strengthened his Russian-supported position by winning the presidential election in November 1994. Uzbekistan's President Islam Karimov must also be counted among Tajikistan's primary influences. Karimov remains the most active anti-Islamist of all the Central Asian leaders. Combining with recognized Uzbek nationalism and aggressiveness, Karimov repeatedly pushed conservative Russian and Uzbek intervention in the Tajikistan Civil War. He expects to maintain a major role in Tajikistan's future.

Two primary Afghan leaders influence events in Tajikistan. Ahmed Shah Masoud controls northeast Afghanistan; he became known to the West as a leading Afghan military commander in the war with the Soviet Union. He united the Tajiks in Afghanistan, has cooperated with Dostam and other Afghan Uzbeks, and has served as Defense Minister for the current Afghanistan "government." Masoud's primary focus remains preventing complete Pushtun control of the Afghanistan government, although additional motivation probably includes expanding his Tajik base well into Tajikistan.[27] General Abdurrashid Dostam "represents the interests of the largest people in Central Asia, the Uzbeks." His anti-

mujahidin history underscores his antifundamentalism; he controls a significant Uzbek "colony" in northern Afghanistan and eagerly serves as Uzbek president Karimov's tool in the Tajikistan game.[28]

The most interesting individual in Tajikistan's recent history is Akbar Kazi Turadzhonzoda, an Islamic cleric who developed into the chief leader of the opposition. Despite his relatively young age (41), he served as an Islamic religious leader in Tajikistan as the Soviet system gradually relaxed limitations on religious activities in the late 1980s. He rose to prominence as one of the opposition's leaders, early in the Tajikistan Civil War. Following the military defeat of the opposition, he established a base of operations in both Jalalabad and Tehran. His travels include a visit to the United States in the summer of 1994, where he met with U.N. and American political leaders.[29] Without aligning himself as the leader of any individual opposition party (including the IRP, or Islamic Renaissance Party), Turadzhonzoda speaks out and negotiates with the Tajik government as the primary leader-in-exile.

Political History

A Central Asian and Tajikistan political characterization must begin with some historical perspective. The "Great Game" concept provides a regional strategy concept born from the nineteenth century Russian-British competition. Applied more recently, many authors have seen a replayed game in the competition for regional influence in post-Soviet Afghanistan, among Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan.[30] Some then apply this construct to the Tajikistan case and include Uzbekistan in the cast of characters. These struggles for influence should be

expected in the weak Central Asian nations. Before Sovietization (or Russification), the region consisted of a loose geopolitical entity called Turkestan. Three old empires formed Turkestan: the Khanate of Kokand, the Empire of Bukhara, including the Tajiks' historical capital Samarkand, and the Khanate of Khiva.[31] In Dannreuther's words,

> Political unity has been a rare historical commodity in the history of Central Asia. The deeply entrenched divisions between sedentary and nomad and between Persian and Turk have traditionally prevented the formation of a clearly defined unified state. Only Tamerlane succeeded in welding together a unified Central Asian polity, but the short duration of his dynasty revealed the brittleness of this political construct.[32]

This Central Asian history significantly affected the legacy of Soviet rule over the region. Unlike countries like Ukraine or Georgia, Soviet occupation here did not destroy distinct, historical national boundaries. Central Asian peoples are simply less hostile to their Soviet history than counterparts elsewhere in the former USSR.[33] One characterization of the region notes political similarities among the different states: (1) the same Soviet past, (2) comparable economic, social, and cultural factors, (3) strong overlap between ethnic, religious, and regional factors, and (4) an overriding special relationship with Russia.[34] Another description recognizes the needed transitions in Central Asia forced by the end of Soviet rule: from an interdependent union to a national economy, from a centrally planned to a market economy, from a semicolony of empire to sovereign nation, and from a totalitarian to a democratic society.[35] Reconnection to the outside world provides the final political gift from the region's Soviet history: "These relationships are indeed entirely natural and were broken artificially by the Tsarist and Bolshevik empires."[36]

Political Trends

This section identifies the Tajikistan's "key political events and processes which underlie the confrontations between various political, ethnic and regional groups."[37] Protests had occurred in Tajikistan before the post-coup Soviet breakup, including some aimed at the ruling party apparatchiks.[38] Tajikistan's post-USSR government understandably identified national security in terms of stability of the "old order," justifying restrictions on political participation and activity.[39] Open protest and fighting followed not just from the 1991 Moscow coup failure, but also from the April 1992 fall of the pro-Communist Najibullah government in Afghanistan.[40] As opposition grew,

> The coalition government was powerless to stop the growing unrest. It had no effective force at its disposal, with the 201st MRD insisting on maintaining its neutrality. The Kulyabis were probably better armed than the scattering of internal troops who would obey the government's orders. The divided government was incapable of taking crucial decisions . . . [41]

Representing conservatives and renamed communists, the government united much of its forces under the Popular Front of Tajikistan. The opposition included four distinct groups.[42] The Rastakhaz (Rebirth) Party emphasized Tajik identity, revival, and culture. The Islamic Renaissance Party (IRP) represented (Sunni) Islamisation of Tajik society and politics. The Democratic Party (DP) included Pamiris and other intellectuals and sought the democratization of Tajikistan. And La'l-i Badakhshan (Ruby of Badakhshan) pursued autonomy for the Gorno-Badakhshan region. These groups constitute "moderate" political parties, applying Roy's political analysis of Afghan political groups.[43] Under Russian, Iranian, and U.N. auspices, the opposition entered into negotiations with the Tajikistan government beginning in 1994. Akbar

Turadzhonzoda, the former qazi (religious leader) of Tajikistan, represents the opposition coalition at these talks.[44] No opposition leader participated in the presidential elections in November 1994, which was won by Parliamentary Chairman Rakhmonov.

Military Forces

A military description provides the final method for analyzing the Tajikistan Civil War. This factor begins with the forces involved in the fighting, classified as Russian, Tajik government, and opposition. Chronology then describes the major events central to the conflict. The final element of the military characterization, tactics or actions, provides an interpretation of the major activities by the forces involved in the Tajikistan conflict.

Western interest in the Tajikistan Civil War developed from Russian participation in the fighting. Headquartered in Dushanbe, the 201st Motorized Rifle Division (MRD) fell under command of the Turkestan Military District and Russian 40th Army.[45] The Soviet Union posted the 201st MRD to Dushanbe as part of its post-Afghan War redeployment. This division includes 10,000 to 15,000 soldiers, and reached a peak of perhaps 20,000 soldiers with Russian and Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) augmentation in 1992 and 1993.[46] Russians provide the officers for this unit, with Russian and Central Asian conscript soldiers; some officers have Afghan War experience.[47] The Tajikistan government "has no army worth speaking of;" their Minister of Defense, Major General Aleksandr Shishlyannikov (an ethnic Russian), must build a rough national guard into a military force with the help of perhaps 500 Russian and Tajik officers from the former Soviet Army.[48] The "military

component" of the Tajik opposition combines Afghan mujahidin and newly trained Tajik refugees, organized into company and battalion-sized groups, and armed with weapons taken/provided from Afghanistan and Tajikistan.[49] They number perhaps 5,000 strong, drawn largely from refugee camps in northern Afghanistan.[50] This represents a much smaller force than the Afghan opposition to the Soviet Union.[51]

Fighting in Tajikistan has ranged from riots and bombings in Dushanbe, through company/battalion-sized infantry battles throughout southern Tajikistan, to artillery and air strikes along the Tajik-Afghan border and into northern Afghanistan. The major fighting, in 1992, caused an estimated 20,000 deaths and 500,000 refugees.[52] The Russian media reported about 100 Russian soldiers killed in Tajikistan in both 1993 and 1994. These Russian peacemaking (or "peace intervention") forces arrived following the more intense fighting.[53]

Chronology

Although public protest started in Tajikistan as early as 1990, a chronology of the conflict should begin with Tajikistan's independence in September 1991.[54] Former Communist Rakhmon Nabiev won election as President in November 1991. His arrest of Dushanbe Mayor Maksoud Ikramov in March 1992 sparked opposition demonstrations and fighting in the city, culminating in Nabiev's May agreement to a coalition government with the opposition. When conservative groups rejected Nabiev's agreement, fighting intensified and spread throughout Dushanbe and the south of the country. Russian military garrisons and Afghan sources both contributed weapons. Opposition success in Dushanbe forced Nabiev's resignation in September 1992. However, in November the

conservative Tajikistan parliament invalidated Nabiev's resignation, abolished the presidency, and elected Imomali Rakhmonov to the leadership position of parliamentary chairman.

While these political activities developed in the fall of 1992, military activity grew with the participation of outside parties. Russian troops initially kept out of active fighting, limiting their efforts to protecting key Dushanbe facilities and their own barracks.[55] However, Rakhmonov's government significantly changed the character of the conflict in 1992 when they

> launched an offensive against the opposition armed formations, relying on the firepower of the 201st MRD, the overhead support of the Uzbek air force and supplies of heavy weaponry from Uzbekistan. The result was a bloody success - the opposition forces were driven from Dushanbe into the Pamir mountains and over 80,000 refugees were forced to flee into Afghanistan. The Russian and Uzbek intervention had imposed a military solution . . . [56]

Sporadic fighting continued throughout the winter and into 1993, pushing opposition forces farther across the Afghan border and Tajikistan mountains. At this point, military activity settled into a pattern of guerrilla raids, skirmishes, bombings in Dushanbe, and individual killings. In July 1993 a 200-man opposition force captured a Russian post along the Tajik/Afghan border, killing 24 Russian soldiers and border guards. Individual terrorist killings of Russian officers in Dushanbe occurred in 1993 and 1994. Opposition forces fired artillery from border positions in Afghanistan, and Russian forces conducted air and artillery strikes into northern Afghanistan.

Paralleling the fighting, several political developments occurred that influenced the nature of the fighting. At a January 1993 CIS summit in Tashkent, Russia, and Central Asian countries (Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan) agreed to provide peacekeeping forces to

secure Tajikistan and prevent or limit further fighting. By October 1993, nearly 25,000 peacekeeping forces deployed in Tajikistan and along the Afghanistan border. Russia provided nearly all the peacekeepers, using the same 201st MRD that had supported the Tajikistan government's fight against the opposition. Company-sized units from Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan only infrequently supported Russia's lead; Turkmenistan refused to participate.[57] The CIS agreement provides legal justification for keeping these forces in Tajikistan through the rest of this decade. Other agreements provide Russian military support to Tajikistan in areas of training, equipment and weapons, air defense, and financing.[58]

Additional Afghan and Tajik political developments affected the course of military activity in Tajikistan in 1993 and 1994. While factional fighting continued to focus on Kabul and the leadership of Afghanistan, the two primary northern leaders (Masoud and Dostam) husbanded and developed their strength. Thus when the Tajikistan conflict developed, both Masoud (an ethnic Tajik) and Dostam (an ethnic Uzbek, closely tied to Uzbekistan) were able and inclined to support the Tajik opposition. Both the Tajikistan and Afghanistan conflicts influenced each other, in ways which will be fully discussed later in this paper.[59] Following the 1992-1993 fighting, both Russia and the international community began pressuring the Tajik government and opposition to work for a negotiated settlement.[60] Iran hosted talks between the two sides in June 1994, with Russian and UN participation. Then in September 1994, the acting head of Tajikistan Imomali Rakhmonov agreed to elections, in response to Russian and Uzbek pressure.[61] Rakhmonov won the November 1994 election with about two-thirds of the

vote. His opponent was the moderate Abdul Abdullodzhanov, the Tajik ambassador to Russia. None of the opposition participated in the election.[62]

Military Tactics

Military activity in Tajikistan spans a wide variety of behavior. Inter-Tajik fighting reflected a clear ethnic character. The opposition versus government/Russian fighting changed in intensity and target selection. Russian military activity evolved from avoidance, to entanglement and active participation, and finally into peacemaking.

The early fighting in Tajikistan, in 1992 and early 1993, displayed ethnic patterns. Kulyabi troops supporting the Rakhmonov government systematically attacked and destroyed Gharmi villages. Areas near the Uzbek border lost most of their Tajik population. "The various armed groups that had brought the new government to power began a campaign of reprisal and persecution against opposition supporters, Gharmis and Pamiris."[63]

The Tajikistan conflict proceeded through distinct military phases. The summer and fall of 1992 constituted the first phase, with the opposition winning small arms fights focused around and in Dushanbe. The late fall of 1992 through the winter of 1993 constituted the second phase, with Russian/Uzbek heavy weapons enabling the government to push opposition forces out of Tajikistan. From the summer of 1993 through the presidential election in November 1994, the third phase reflects Goodson's "refugee-based insurgency."[64] Opposition forces regrouped in Dostam and Masoud-controlled areas in northern Afghanistan, training refugee volunteers and rearming. While unable to defeat forces in

Tajikistan, the opposition conducted raids, ambushes and individual killings. These killings targeted both Tajikistan government individuals and Russian officers and soldiers.[65] The opposition conducted its largest military activities following the winter buildup of weapons and strength.[66] The Tajikistan-Afghanistan border stretches more than 1,000 km, and the few available Russian/CIS troops simply cannot prevent military activity in this region.

As with the fighting, Russian military behavior proceeded through distinct phases in this conflict.[67] Initially the 201st MRD attempted to separate the factions in Dushanbe, prior to Nabiev's departure. As open fighting spread, they guarded Dushanbe's dam and power facilities, and probably served to deter more substantial fighting in the city. Russian border troops joined the fighting in the summer of 1992 as local armed groups began moving to and from Afghanistan. The challenge to the Russian military included conscript desertion; the background turmoil in the CIS and Russian state; and the essential requirement to guard their own facilities, families, and Russian citizens remaining in Dushanbe. This initial phase ended and the second phase started in late 1992 and early 1993, with the Russian government decision to back the Tajikistan government and authorize weapons and military support to the government's militia forces.

Peacekeeping defines the third and current phase of Russian military activity in Tajikistan. Russian peacekeeping, normally better described as "peacemaking," both aims to maintain stability and to defuse the conflict. In Shashenkov's words, peacekeeping "represents the most politically correct and acceptable form of the used of armed forces in political aims."[68] In Tajikistan, Russian peacemaking

includes readiness to use force alongside active fighting, a desire to maintain Russian preeminence in the operation, the use of high levels of force to establish and maintain control, and the desire to maintain at least an appearance of neutrality.[69] More recently, we see:

> an exercise conducted by elements of the CIS collective peacekeeping force in Tajikistan in late March of 1994. A force based on two Russian motor rifle battalions, a Tajik battalion, and an Uzbek motor rifle company . . . took part . . . it is clear that, in Tajikistan at least, the Russian Army is extending the definition of peacekeeping to include fighting local wars some way removed from normal understanding of low-intensity operations.[70]

Russian peacemaking in Tajikistan reflects military activity somewhere between U.N. peacekeeping and 1980s Soviet military operations in Afghanistan.

These four characteristics (social, leadership, political, and military) provide a way of analyzing the Tajikistan civil war. All of these characteristics combine to help form the multidimensional and regional nature of the conflict. They provide a consistent framework to identify the strongest Afghan and Tajik influences on the Tajikistan civil war. Chapters 3 and 4 examine these major influences: first Afghanistan's influences on the Tajikistan conflict, then Tajikistan's own independent causes.

CHAPTER 3

THE AFGHAN IMPACT ON TAJIKISTAN

Effects from the war between the Soviet Union and Afghanistan clearly influenced the development and outcomes of the Tajikistan Civil War. This paper separates these influences into three distinct areas: leadership; the refugee, border, and weapons system; and Russian experience. The Afghans withstood Soviet intervention in part because a diffuse leadership was able to command their forces effectively in the conflict. This leadership continues a civil war over the form and future of Afghanistan; two of these leaders were active in the Tajikistan Civil War. Afghan factions provided weapons to the Tajik opposition, from the massive stocks of available small arms and ammunition. The porous Afghan-Tajik border established protection and a stronghold for Tajik opposition forces, sustained by the manpower in the refugee camps. Finally, some of the reasons for Russian intervention in support of the ex-communist Tajik government draw from the Russian experience in Afghanistan. These three influences provide a coherent method of analysis of the Afghan impact on the Tajik Civil War.

Afghan Leadership Impact

Analysis of the individual leadership context of the Afghanistan War reveals key links to the subsequent Tajik Civil War. The Afghan resistance developed out of armed antigovernment protest movements in the 1970's, in a manner similar to the development of the

Tajik opposition.[1] Goodson also notes how the "classic disunity" of the Afghan clan structure precluded a Soviet attack on central leadership; however, this comment indicates the presence of multiple Afghan leaders capable of influencing events in Tajikistan. He writes, " . . . look to the young field commanders who have engaged the Soviet/Kabul forces inside Afghanistan as being most likely to provide the postwar leadership of the country."[2] A combination of clan loyalty, military capability and local interests enable their influence in Tajikistan as well as their continued fighting in Afghanistan.

These Afghan leaders demonstrate their interest in events beyond their immediate borders. For example, some of Hekmatyar's mujahidin-assisted fellow Islamists in the Caucausus, organized and led Azeri attacks toward Dzhebrail in September 1994.[3] Afghan leaders provided Tajik opposition leaders with bases-in-exile in Jalalabad, Mazar-i-Sharif and Kundiz.[4] The Tajik opposition receives a variety of forms of assistance from Afghan leadership, including religious literature, weapons, training, food and medicine, and inspiration.[5] The real limitation on these Afghan "foreign policy" efforts remains the leadership's overriding focus on the struggle for control of the Afghan state.[6] Despite this limitation, their external orientation provides critical assistance to the Tajik opposition.

Most of Afghanistan's interaction with the Tajikistan Civil War involves from two key Afghan leaders: Ahmed Shah Masoud and Abdul Rashid Dostam. Most observers consider Masoud a fundamentalist, compared with more moderate leaders in the Afghan power structure.[7] He controls the majority of Afghan territory adjoining both Tajikistan proper and the Gorno-Badakhshan autonomous region. Masoud's strengths

(military expertise, organizational networks, and control over Afghanistan's Tajik population) allow him to exercise significant influence inside Tajikistan. Masoud's effect on the Tajik opposition can be seen as early as March 1992. His attacks on Kabul energized the Tajik opposition's uprising in reaction to Nabiev's arrest of the Dushanbe mayor, a critical precursor to the Tajikistan Civil War.[8] When the progovernment forces pushed the opposition south out of Tajikistan, Masoud helped support the refugee camps and began military training for the opposition in these camps. The opposition's free movement into Tajikistan, especially along the Pyandzh River in Gorno-Badakhshan, is from Masoud's Afghan stronghold which they use as a base of operations. The Tajik opposition requires Masoud's support to maintain their military actions against the Tajikistan government.

General Dostam, the "wild card in the Afghan pack," provides the other individual influence on the Tajik conflict.[9] An opportunistic Uzbek initially armed by the Soviets to fight the mujahidin, Dostam's current allegiance belongs to his Uzbekistan master, President Karimov. In Davis' words:

> in the Afghan northwest, a haven for prominent officers and politicians of the Communist Party's Parcham wing . . . Both Rabbani and Masoud steadfastly refused to recognize as a political party Dostam's National Islamic Movement (NIM), an organization heavily peopled by former communists and Islamists in little more than name.[10]

Dostam's stronghold provides the same kind of sanctuary to the Tajik opposition as Masoud's neighboring area. Dostam reportedly does not actively train the opposition, but he welcomed Uzbek and other refugees from Kurgan Tyube and Garm during the Civil War.[11] In accepting these refugees, Dostam improved his international standing with the interested countries and the U.N.[12] Many diplomatic and humanitarian activities

left Kabul in 1992 and set up in the quieter city of Mazar-i-Sharif. This northern Afghan city is Dostam's headquarters. Dostam now controls an essentially autonomous region, and performs many of the civic functions found in any government. His stronghold also provides an invaluable resource to the Tajikistan opposition. These safe regions controlled by Dostam and Masoud sustain the Tajik opposition in the same way that the Pakistan Northwest sustained the Afghan mujahidin throughout the Afghan War. This condition exists largely through the independent actions of Masoud and Dostam, the two key Afghan leaders contributing to the Tajikistan conflict.

Afghan Border Impact

The character of the Tajikistan-Afghanistan border critically impacted on the nature of the Tajik conflict. Past and present examples within Central Asia provide lessons to the involved parties. Refugees provided the base which enabled the Tajik opposition to recover and rebuild their capabilities, in the same manner as other refugee-based insurgencies. These refugees occupy independent border regions controlled by the key Afghan leaders (Masoud and Dostam). These Afghan regions support the opposition movement through the flow of individuals, weapons and drugs across a porous border. The Tajik opposition would not survive without this nearby, vital and accessable region.

Soviet experience with irregulars operating from border strongholds began with the 1920s and 1930s Basmachi campaign. These early Muslim guerrillas "often operated from the shelter of a sympathetic Afghanistan."[13] Soviet counterinsurgency doctrine analyzes the Basmachi rebellion, Lithuania, Ukraine and Afghanistan cases. Afghanistan differed from the other cases in that it could not be

isolated from outside support (provided across the Pakistani and Iranian borders).[14] Pakistan's former ambassador to China, Maqbool A. Bhatty, notes Afghanistan's critical location relative to Central Asia.[15] In his opinion, two different reasons guarantee the importance of the Afghan border: economic access to Pakistan and the sea, and Islamic control in Afghanistan. Historical and recent considerations establish the importance of the Afghan border to the Tajikistan opposition movement.

Goodson's analysis of the Soviet-Afghan War proposes a refugee-based insurgency conflict model, defined as "when insurgents find support, sanctuary and base areas among refugees, who enjoy protection under international law."[16] His model includes the erosion of conditions in the home country, high levels of border permeability, the role of outside actors, effects of refugee population size and cohesiveness, and host country refugee and foreign policies.[17] His analysis concludes that refugee-based insurgency both protracts and internationalizes the conflict.

Goodson's Afghan-initiated model fits the Tajikistan Civil War. Nearly every characteristic from the model describes features common to both cases. While the size of Tajikistan's refugee movement remains much smaller than Afghan/Pakistan refugee movements, camps developed along the border's edge in both situations. Both boundaries exist in a largely artificial sense. Pakistan's Chief Commissioner for Afghan Refugees noted that the multiple ties between them made it natural for the fleeing Afghans to seek refuge in Pakistan; ethnic Tajiks and Uzbeks leaving Tajikistan make up most of the refugees in Masoud and Dostam-protected camps.[18] Both cases reflected a "rotation" principle, where

insurgent forces moved across the border to conduct military actions for a period of time, then return to the camps while a new group of forces moved out. Both cases drew significant strength from a common Islamic ideology and set of beliefs, on both sides of the borders. But while both cases capitalized on international humanitarian assistance to their refugee base (United Nations [UN] support of refugee camps in Pakistan, and Dostam's specific UN sponsorship in Mazar-i Sharif), the depth of international assistance reflects a crucial difference. Northwest Pakistan's Afghan camps developed into a de-facto Afghan state in exile, with a community sense of working collectively to defeat the occupying government. Northern Afghanistan's Tajik and Uzbek camps do not enjoy the same degree of international attention or support, and will not develop to the same strength as in the Afghan case. However, refugee support to the Tajik opposition remains substantial and crucial. Goodson's model fits the Tajikistan case well.

Several common characteristics of the "fiefdoms" on each side of the Tajikistan-Afghanistan border reflect a common interest in control. Neither the Afghan or Tajik government controls the border regions adjoining the other country.[19] Both areas remain locally controlled and geographically isolated.[20] Additionally, other influences seek to use these border regions to their own ends. Pakistan and Western influences in the Afghan refugee camps have been well documented. Uzbekistan is using General Dostam to establish a buffer zone along their border region (similar to Israel's use of the South Lebanon Army to establish a buffer zone).[21] Much of the Tajik-Afghan border remains controlled by Pamiris who intend to establish and strengthen an independent Gorno-Badakhshan.[22] Every party in the Afghan

and Tajik conflicts recognizes the advantages provided by control of the border regions.[23] Finally, direct pressure on the Afghan (or Tajik) government remains limited by their lack of control over their border regions.[24]

Drug production helps support the independent border regions. The continued weakness of the Kabul government allowed the drug trade in northern Afghanistan to grow. This provided local warlords with money to purchase weapons and strengthen their power.[25] The drug trade expanded along with independence and turmoil in Central Asia. Afghan opium moves through Tajikistan's autonomous Gorno-Badakhshan region into Kirgyzstan, and this transit is assisted by border soldiers from Russia, Tajikistan and Kirgyzstan.[26] One author links the predictable expansion of the drug trade into Tajikistan to the lack of foreign aid, and states that the local commanders have no other choice in their condition.[27]

Freely available weapons ultimately served as the "proximate cause" of the Tajikistan Civil War. As the situation in Tajikistan deteriorated through the summer of 1992, the 201st MRD either failed to prevent or actively cooperated in pro-communist and Kulyabi seizure of weapons from Russian garrisons.[28] The opposition found its weapons either from Soviet leftovers as they pulled out of Afghanistan (and moved through Tajikistan), or from direct smuggling out of Afghanistan.[29] Weapons are smuggled across many borders in Central Asia. Reported cases include Afghan weapons to the Tajik opposition in Tajikistan and Afghanistan, Uzbek weapons to General Dostam in Afghanistan, and Kyrgyz weapons into Gorno-Badakhshan.[30] Goodson's description of northwestern Pakistan describes the trend in the Tajik-Afghan border region today:

> The leakage of weapons has led to the Kalishnikovisation of Pakistani society, and families have been known to upgrade their personal arsenals to include mortars, heavy machine guns, and even rocket launchers. Pakistan's domestic politics, always volatile, have now become even more violent as a result.[31]

While Tajikistan requested Afghanistan's assistance in stopping the flow of weapons to the opposition, the lack of control over the border regions makes this stated effort useless.[32] General Boris Gromov's comparison of the Tajikistan conflict with the Soviet-Afghan conflict cites the free flow of weapons throughout the border region, and finishes by concluding "The Afghan-Tajik border is becoming increasingly reminiscent of a front line."[33]

A final confirmation of the Afghan/Tajik border connection lies in various descriptions of the military activity conducted in the region. The opposition "ferociously attacked" a Tajik/Russian post along the Amu Darya in July of 1993, killing more Russians than at any other time that year.[34] Sometimes the opposition has

> infiltrated small guerrilla units into Tajikistan to harass government positions and attack traffic around Dushanbe, in a version of the mujahidin's tactics against Soviet troops in Afghanistan.[35]

The "low-level campaign of harassment across the Tajik/Afghan border" slows during the winter, reintensifying during the summer.[36] Reports characterize the most recent fighting as "small arms skirmishes," from "groups of opposition fighters infiltrating Tajikistan from Afghanistan."[37] Russian analysis often places an Islamic border interpretation on the fighting. Mainstream press descriptions include "aggression against sovereign Tajikistan . . . literally every day armed gangs and groups from the Islamic State of Afghanistan try to penetrate

the (CIS) . . . "[38] One of President Yeltsin's advisors understands the border linkage:

> To a significant degree, the direct armed conflict has moved from the territory of Tajikistan to the northern areas of Afghanistan, where it has become closely interwoven with the local civil strife that has gone on in the area for more than ten years.[39]

Finally, a general of the Russian border troops recognized the inherent conflict between the economic need for "transparent" borders between the republics of the former USSR, and the inability for many of these republics to protect their own borders in the absence of collective or pooled security arrangements.[40] All of these perspectives underscore the critical nature of the border condition between Tajikistan and Afghanistan.

Afghan Islam

Islam certainly influenced the Tajikistan conflict, but in ways that are difficult to identify and evaluate. This section will approach the Afghan/Islamic influence question first through a comparison of Islam's strength relative to other significant influences. Next follows a contrast of Islam's strengths and weaknesses as sources of influence. The primary evidence of an Afghan/Islamic effect on Tajikistan develops from an examination of the significant events in the conflict; the record shows an Islamic contribution to the Tajikistan conflict, coming from Afghanistan. Finally, Afghanistan's impact will be compared with similar influences from several other national sources of Islam: Iran, Uzbekistan and Pakistan. In total, this analysis shows that Afghanistan's influence in Tajikistan was real, but probably not decisive.

In the Middle East and Central Asia, the effect and influences of Islam are one part of a more complex whole. Islam interacts with states, societies and cultures, in ways difficult to understand in terms of Western culture, societies and politics.[41] Olivier Roy's analysis concludes that two problems dominate the question of Islamic influence: "The appearance of a political space in the practice of power in classical Islam, and the nature of contemporary states in Muslim countries."[42] In other words, any Islamic effect competes with the effects of power politics and existing national structures. Even at the lowest levels of clan leader and regional warlord, Islam must fight with other substantial influences (like ethnic and geographical differences, and drugs and arms networks.)[43] The ubiquitous spread of VCR and satellite communications technologies expands both religious and non-religious influences to the most remote towns.[44]

Judith Miller provides an appropriate example to illustrate the complexity of judging Islamic influence.[45] She interviewed a Shi'a leader from Lebanon along with a Sunni leader from the Sudan, noting some interesting connections:

> Each has affected Middle Eastern politics far beyond his own country's borders . . . Though they have never met, each told (the author) he respects the other. They have also begun to correspond, though neither will say about what.[46]

Her article attributes their "democratic" leanings to patient, pragmatic realism. These two Islamic leaders exemplify the Islamic influences present in Central Asia and Tajikistan today: a mixture of religion, ideology and politics at the local, regional and national levels. Afghanistan's Islamic effect in Tajikistan remains difficult to separate from other equally strong influences.

Islam retains a number of significant strengths affecting its ability to influence Tajikistan. The failure of communism, Soviet control, and post-Soviet nationalism leaves Tajikistan like many other potentially Islamic countries: searching for something to fill the vacuum.[47] Additionally, Islam provides a logical recourse for the post-Soviet state: "Tajiks are embracing Islam as part of their endeavor to erase the Russian colonial legacy, since religion was considered taboo under the Soviets."[48] A possible shift from Islamic radicalisation to (partial) reconciliation with the West may add to Islam's strength and influence.[49] However, Islam's most potent strength will continue to develop: the "disinherited." In Judith Miller's words:

> Given the enormous attraction Islam holds for young Muslims, and lack of any convincing, homegrown alternative, the militants' failure may be only temporary . . . the militant Islamic revival feared by conservative rulers and prayed for by the millions of unhappily ruled, the futureless young, the poor, the dispossessed . . . All other modern "isms" - nationalism, socialism, communism, and capitalism - have failed. All that has not been tried in modern times is Islamic absolutism and the politicians who promote it.[50]

Along with strengths, Islam also retains significant weaknesses limiting its impact in regions like Tajikistan. Noting the decisive separation between Sunni and Shi'ite, Olivier Roy concludes that "The great ethnic, religious, and national divisions of the Muslim world are turning out to be stronger than all the calls to Islamic solidarity."[51] These strong divisions overcome fundamentalists' efforts to move beyond simply reestablishing Muslim law and society.[52] In Tajikistan, these divisions explain the predominance of inter-Muslim group conflict, over (largely absent) Muslim-Slavic conflict.[53] Considering Islam's multiple weaknesses, one view holds that " . . . the pan-Islamic millenium has run its course; the Islamic decade is over."[54]

Considering these broad strengths and weaknesses, what do events reflect in the specific case of Tajikistan? First, the years prior to the 1992 conflict represent a part of the Afghan/Islamic influence in Tajikistan. Both Uzbekistan and Tajikistan retained stronger Islamic traditions, dating back centuries, than the other Central Asian countries.[55] Perestroika marked a watershed for Islam; despite the continued political and economic conservatism in Central Asia, religion was able to develop like a "coil springing back."[56] The release of unofficial or underground Islam ensured competition with now co-opted official or state-sponsored Islam, helping add to Muslim tensions prior to the 1992 war.[57] With this context, the crucial factor was the Tajik/Afghan border, which was open long before the 1990's Russian protests. Tajik and Islamic spillover from Afghanistan and its continuing civil war contributed to the development of religious and ethnic consciousness in Tajikistan.[58] The most important Afghan/Islam contribution to the Tajikistan conflict might have been the early growth of religious consciousness, ignored by the authorities against a background of Soviet upheaval.

The Islamic Renaissance Party (IRP) serves as the primary mechanism for Islamic political influence in Tajikistan. Legalized in October 1991, the IRP started in the 1970's as a regional affiliate of a larger Islamic Party of the Soviet Union.[59] The IRP and the Islamic leader Akbar Turadzhonzoda represent separate sources of influence: "While the Qazi represents Dushanbe's urban Islamic establishment, the IRP appears to capture the hearts and souls of Tajikistan's impoverished masses, particularly in the countryside."[60] A primary objective of the IRP remains establishing an Islamic state in Tajikistan. However,

serious differences exist within the IRP concerning the tactics and timetable needed to reach this objective. Establishing Islam in the long term, through completely democratic processes, continues as the IRP's official position. Developed from IRP moderates with a history of working with the secular anticommunist opposition, this position is at odds with the more aggressive Islamist views generally supported by Afghan extremists active in Tajikistan.[61] One observer has noted that "These tactical differences could probably split the party in the future, particularly if an IRP government takes power."[62] Yet these differences exist largely unrecognized by the Tajik government, which tends to lump all Islamists together in the opposition.[63]

Three primary sources of Islamic influence in Tajikistan, the IRP, Akbar Turadzhonzoda, and Afghan Islamic elements, all played differing roles in the background of the Tajikistan Civil War. While Turadzhonzoda

> represents the government-sanctioned clergy that was appointed by the Soviet government, he has supported the opposition since at least 1990. As a result . . . (he) enjoys popular support and has not been discredited for his association with the Communists.[64]

He helped negotiate the 1992 settlement between the opposition and the Nabiev government, against a social background of rapidly growing Islamic freedom and presence. The IRP emerged in the summer of 1992 as the primary militant force in the Tajik opposition.[65] After Rakhomonov came to power in November 1992, the government reacted against both Turadzhonzoda and the IRP. In March of 1993, the government outlawed the IRP, and then subsequently issued an arrest warrant for Turadzhonzoda.[66] While the IRP and Turadzhonzoda clearly differ in how and when to establish a Tajik Islamic state, "there is no evidence that

they, or any other opposition party, received significant support from the . . . Afghan fundamentalists before the civil war."[67] The Afghan Islamists undoubtedly contributed to the Tajikistan Civil War, but then so did the IRP and Akbar Turadzhonzoda.

A final indication of Afghanistan's limited Islamic impact on Tajikistan follows from considering this impact relative to other Islamic neighbors. Iran provides substantial cultural and religious influence in Tajikistan, and retains substantial respect for its independence from the West. However, it stops short of active, open support for the Tajik opposition movement.[68] Uzbekistan's President Karimov banned the Uzbek branch of the IRP as soon as it formed, pushing Islamic forces underground and away from government observation and control.[69] This could help explain why some observers "report hearing rumors that Islamic forces in the Ferghana Valley are in touch with Afghan mujahidin groups."[70] One observer concludes only one Afghan faction (Hekmatyar) provides serious support to the Tajikistan opposition.[71] This conclusion appears consistent with analysis of the Afghan War, a war of tradition rather than ideology, where "fundamentalists or Islamists were only hitchhiking on the war."[72] Despite extreme fear of Islam on the part of both Moscow and Central Asia's conservative governments, Islam remains only one of multiple influences determining Tajikistan's politics and conflict.[73]

Russian Impact

The Soviet experience in Afghanistan significantly influenced Russian analysis and actions in the Tajikistan Civil War. The Soviet/Russian perspective on their war in Afghanistan includes a short

summary of events, the military perception of the conditions in Afghanistan at the time of withdrawal, the impact of ethnicity on Soviet forces, and some views on possible connections between the Afghanistan and Tajikistan Wars. This context leads to discussion of specific Russian objectives in their Tajikistan operations, from the Afghanistan and Central Asian perspective. Finally, more recent Russian behavior in Tajikistan reflects a more conciliatory and political policy, partly grounded in the Afghan War experience. Both factual and "trends analysis" evidence reflects an Afghan impact.

Soviet judgment leading to the 1979 invasion of Afghanistan relied heavily on experience gained in controlling bloc partners in earlier decades. Soviet decision makers saw their intervention in Afghanistan as a rerun of the 1968 Czechoslovakian intervention.[74] Military power had served well in other Third World applications. However, as in the U.S./Vietnam experience, "the Soviet leadership remained blind to the problems of entanglement with a hopelessly incompetent regime."[75] Four stages make up the evolution to the Afghanistan War: (1) development of resistance to the Saur revolution, leading through the initial Soviet intervention; (2) increasing success of the Soviet effort, with the associated development of refugee migration and the resistance movement; (3) intensification of military trends, with larger-scale fighting and depopulation of the countryside; and (4) change in the military complexion, as the resistance made substantial gains and the Soviets begin withdrawal.[76] Two conclusions about the Afghan experience relate to Russian decisions concerning Tajikistan. First, "Gorbachev's administration decided to leave Afghanistan, and quickly; the reason is that the costs of leaving came

to be exceeded by the costs of staying."[77] Additionally, "Soviet leadership made a fundamental political mistake in assuming that the Afghanistan problem could be resolved using the military option."[78] Elements of this thinking have impacted Russian considerations in their intervention in Tajikistan.

Other Soviet/Russian conclusions about Afghanistan bear on the Tajikistan decision. The military forces, while needing improvements in tactics and operations, did not lose the war. Changing domestic and international factors prompted the Soviet withdrawal.[79] Even the international political context remained manageable (witness progress in arms control and general US/USSR relations), but the domestic political interpretation shifted under Gorbachev's perestroika policies.[80] The military identified key elements in counterinsurgency doctrine, including destruction of individual and cohesive local leadership, and elimination of the support structure sustaining the guerrilla movement.[81] While recognizing the utility of gaining military combat experience, Soviet and Russian military leaders recognized the military problems generated by the intervention: smuggling, corruption and drug usage; aggravation of ethnic tensions; desertion, draft evasion and low morale; and growing anti-military sentiment in society.[82] Finally, and most importantly, the Soviet and Russian military recognized "that it was not able to disengage itself from the political impact of the war."[83] These conclusions based on the Afghan War experience are re-expressed in Russian media and journalism today, including reports from the Army's "Red Star" newspaper.

Another class of Afghanistan lessons influences Russian thinking on Tajikistan: the military's ethnic condition. Afghanistan

provides an opportunity to observe the interaction of ethnic policies and military operations. Two sources noted the presence of significant numbers of Central Asians in the initial invasion force.[84] However, within several months of the initial invasion, the USSR withdrew most of these Central Asian troops partly to prevent "Central Asian infection with pro-Afghan, Islamic, nationalist or anti-Russian sympathies."[85] Soviet political and military doctrine recognized the ethnic risks inherent in their military forces; the "use of Central Asians in Afghanistan was a significant departure from established Soviet military policy, which discourages the use of non-Russians in spearhead roles where ethnic affinity is likely."[86] The Afghanistan case provides today's Russian military leadership with an ethnic warning; in Martha Brill Olcott's analysis, the increased Islamic contact and awareness reconfirmed Russian judgment of Central Asian unreliability and disloyalty.[87]

These political and ethnic conclusions about the Afghanistan War contribute to Russian assessment of the background issues in the Tajikistan problem. Russians in general, and especially the military, perceive Tajikistan as a "carbon copy" of the Afghan War.[88] Multiple levels of ethnic tensions throughout Central Asia (including Afghan-related tensions) aggravate "historic Russian chauvinism and an ingrained xenophobia and intolerance towards things foreign, including the non-Russian minorities."[89] Significant military thinking warns against repeating the Afghan mistake with the wrong doctrine and forces.[90] Finally, from the Russian political and military strategy perspective, Tajikistan brings the ethnic and Islamic threat one country closer to the Russian heartland.

Early Russian participation in the Tajik Civil War fully supported the conservative side fighting to retain power in the country. In one observer's words, Moscow "allowed itself to be captured by the remnants of the old imperial representatives fighting to retain their privileges."[91] While comparisons with Afghanistan inevitably developed, supporters of intervention pointed to substantial differences between the two cases. Russia completely controlled the military situation, and the other (conservative) Central Asian states viewed Russian intervention as an indicator of their commitment to stability in the region.[92] Russian Federation Defense Minister Pavel Grachev spoke of the need to defend the Tajik/Afghan border against the Islamic South, and against the spread of the Afghan discord throughout Central Asia to the unprotected border of the Russian Federation.[93]

However, a different view began to develop in Russia, opposing the intervention:

> Many Russian diplomats and commentators, however, remained skeptical that this approach would facilitate a long-term solution to the conflict. They feared that Russia could be sucked into an Afghan-style guerrilla war and that Russia could only avoid this outcome by sponsoring a political dialogue between the different factions and groups in Tajik society.[94]

Media coverage and comparisons with all-too-recent Afghanistan reporting raised public concern over the vulnerability of Russian troops. This development forced Moscow to "consider more subtle approaches to the internal Tajik conflict."[95] By 1993, Foreign Minister Kozyrev helped expand the policy to include a parallel effort of negotiation between the Tajik government and the opposition. The Foreign Ministry judged a military approach insufficient to settle a complicated, religious and ethnic conflict linked to the ongoing Afghan turmoil.[96] While military support to the Tajikistan government continued, Kozyrev's parallel

effort succeeded in bringing the two sides together for talks.[97] His policy's additional benefits included bringing regional and U.N. participation into the talks, as well as implicit international acceptance of Russian military intervention to stabilize the Tajikistan conflict. The case of the Tajik civil war contrasts with other examples of Russian intervention in conflicts on her borders. Mistakes in the Afghanistan "military only" approach helped set the stage for the relatively successful "military plus diplomatic" approach now underway in Tajikistan.

CHAPTER 4

TAJIK INFLUENCES

While Afghanistan politics clearly impacted on Tajikistan and contributed to that conflict, the Tajikistan civil war developed primarily from other causes independent of Afghanistan. Tajikistan gained an unwilling independence from the Soviet Union, and lacked the strength to accept nationhood. Her limitations include ethnic and social divisions, strong neighbors, and a miserably poor economy. Islamic influences contributed to the Tajik civil war, and have continued to influence the conflict. Finally, Russian policy goals concerning Tajikistan and all of Central Asia establishes a significant background context to the fighting. While internal factors started the Tajik civil war, Russian intervention broadened the conflict.

The Weak Tajik State

The weakness of an independent Tajikistan developed out of its Russian and Soviet history. The weakness includes the lack of a distinctive national identity, multiple ethnic splits within the country, and strong regional influences. The economy, arguably the weakest of all of the ex-Soviet republics, further undermines state viability. The conditions surrounding the outbreak of the Tajikistan civil war largely derive from the multiple weaknesses of the Tajik state and society.

Tajikistan's national history begins in the 1920s, since before Soviet control there was no independent state or ethnic homeland. Stalin combined two separate regions to form Tajikistan: the mountainous Tajik-populated areas adjoining Afghanistan, and a Uzbek-populated portion of the Ferghana Valley (Khojand).[1] Stalin also assigned historically Tajik trade centers to the west of the mountains (like Samarkand) to Uzbekistan. These actions reflect two separate purposes for the selection of these borders. First, the Soviet Union intended "to forge distinct nation-state identities in Central Asia."[2] At the same time, there was a need to "destroy the pan-Turkic and pan-Islamic nationalist currents" challenging Soviet power there, by establishing divided political units.[3] Stalin completed this process by liquidating the existing political elites and selecting specific clan or regional groups as replacements: the Samarkand clan in Uzbekistan, the Leninabad (Khojand) clan in Tajikistan, and the Kazakh Greater Horde in Kazakhstan.[4] Additionally, Stalin deported a large number of disaffected peoples to Tajikistan during the Soviet purges in the 1930's and following World War II. These groups did not integrate into Tajikistan or help build a harmonious state. Stalin's policies established the Tajikistan Republic with an approved core ethnic group, inherent regional and ethnic fractures within the country, and national leadership arbitrarily selected from one of the regional clans. These conditions set up and maintained a weak Tajikistan.

Between the formation of the Tajik state and the breakup of the Soviet state, Soviet actions worked to weaken Tajik autonomy. Growing economic and military links focused on developing a Moscow-dependent nation. Dzhabar Rasulov's Tajik Communist Party provided "a solid

bastion of Brezhnevite orthodoxy," contrasting with Western and Transcaucasian Soviet republics.[5] By the 1970's, an alliance of Khujand, Kulyab, and Russian-speaking leadership combined to rule the country.[6] While Gorbachev began to allow significant reforms within the republics, "nothing was really happening in Tajikistan because of the strong hold of the old Communist Party structures and their resistance to those changes."[7] Tajik Communist Party secretary Kakhar Makhkamov personified this resistance. His policies contributed to today's instability in Tajikistan.[8]

More recent events continue to indicate the weakness of the Tajik state. Riots first broke out in Dushanbe in February 1990, well before the more recent conflict, when the government blocked an effort to establish a branch of the all-USSR Islamic Renaissance Party.[9] When independence arrived in Tajikistan in 1991, this event provided the existing leadership with the "perfect public relations opportunity (flags, constitutions, diplomatic relations, UN membership) for cementing national and international stature."[10] This helped Communist Party chief Rakhmon Nabiev become the only Soviet successor state with a ruling Communist Party (as of November 1991).[11] When the opposition movement strengthened and toppled Nabiev in September 1992, the conservative and "old order" parliament remained firmly in power. They elected Imomali Rakhmonov, a former state farm manager with clear communist sympathies, as speaker of the parliament and effective head of state.[12] These actions secured the critical support of the Russian elites within Tajikistan, who remained primarily concerned with the threat to their interests of precipitous Russian withdrawal from Central Asia and Tajikistan.[13] Tajikistan's political activity during the

breakup of the USSR reflects the strength of the old power interests, and their critical dependence on Moscow.

From a broader historical perspective, several observers note key sources of Tajikistan's inherent political weakness. Colonel V. Cheban perceives confrontation between more recent social and political systems, and more ancient ideological and social biases.[14] Dannreuther compares the problem with prior Western experiences with decolonization, noting (Soviet) state weakness grounded in mixtures of peoples and territorial proximity to Russia.[15] One writer describes Central Asian state weakness in the following terms:

> They are artificial entities that never appeared on the map in their present borders, shapes and forms. Even when they existed within the framework of the Soviet Union, they were not normal, full-fledged states: linked by umbilical cords to Moscow, they got their food and drink from that capital and were governed from it, too.[16]

The lack of clear national or state identity remains Tajikistan's basic weakness. Tajiks have never ruled a coherent society or sovereign state or territory.[17] Samarkand and Bukhara, centers of Persian-speaking culture in Central Asia, have been controlled by Turkic-speaking dynasties.[18] While these two cities might have provided a focus for a Tajik state, they remain within Uzbekistan from the Soviet border legacy. Whether or not the inherited borders make sense, Tajikistan must pursue nationhood based on her existing territory.[19] Many Russian observers concluded that Tajikistan was not and would not become a viable nation, a conclusion helping to justify Russian intervention.[20]

Roland Dannreuther's analysis indicates another source of weakness--the overwhelming, unavoidable Russian presence.[21] Russia's significant control over Tajikistan enabled dual citizenship demands for

Russian citizens living in Tajikistan, and substantial financial contributions towards the Russian security "assistance" provided by military and border forces. Ethnic tensions continue between Russian officers and Tajik soldiers, now attempting to build Tajikistan's army. Tajikistan must remain seriously concerned about "the loyalty of the Russian military elite, particularly if any future threat were to emanate from Russia itself." Tajikistan's weakness becomes apparent when measured against the help provided by her northern guardian.

Ethnic conflict between the different peoples in and around the country threatens Tajikistan's stability. One common view claims that without Russian intervention, the different ethnic groups would continue to fight and eventually spark a regional crisis worse than the Transcaucasus.[22] Given the turmoil and problems in Tajikistan and Central Asia, some observers judge ethnic and factional fighting a natural outcome.[23] This fighting reflects the multiple regional and ethnic fractures in Tajikistan: Uzbek minorities in the north and west, the Khujand/Kulyab coalition controlling governmental power at the expense of Gharmis and Pamiris, and the autonomous Gorno-Badakhshan region in the east harboring different ethnic groups with different objectives.[24] Ethnic differences provide one major reason Rakhmonov and other Central Asian leaders associate "political liberalisation and bloody conflict."[25]

In addition to the Russian problem, Uzbekistan threatens Tajikistan. Dushanbe's weak control throughout the country is most noticeable in the west, which has a large Uzbek population.[26] Uzbeks make up the largest single ethnic group in Central Asia, and "clearly

believe their numbers entitle them to special prerogatives which they do not hesitate to exercise."[27] Roland Dannreuther observes:

> Under the leadership of Karimov, Uzbekistan has already been projecting its power externally. The Uzbek involvement in the Tajik civil war was critical and the government in Dushanbe does little without the approval of Tashkent.[28]

Karimov's primary strategic concerns address Islamic movements (which threaten his conservative, authoritarian regime) and the Ferghana Valley. Split between the countries of Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, the Ferghana Valley could easily support a political movement threatening Karimov's regime.[29] This development would provide Uzbekistan an excuse to invade and unify the area under Uzbek control. Uzbekistan retains the means, motive and opportunity to threaten Tajikistan at will.

Economic weakness represents another massive threat to the Tajik state. The weakest of the Central Asian states, Tajikistan stands perhaps the least developed and most isolated of all the former Soviet economies.[30] Khujand gained most of the Soviet investment in Tajikistan, with some investment in the Hissar Valley near Dushanbe. However, "the rest of the country, locked into the cotton economy and subsistence farming, continues to suffer from vast underemployment and chronic shortages."[31] Russian currency problems seriously impact countries, like Tajikistan, that remain on the ruble currency.[32] The net result of these economic problems: Tajikistan suffers "negative feedback" where political instability feeds economic problems, which feeds into additional political problems . . . [33] These weaknesses lead to three conditions driving Tajikistan's economic future. First, the conservative government's "vested interests and entrenched attitudes have hindered (economic) progress . . . "[34] Second, foreign aid remains

absolutely inadequate to the economic task.[35] Finally, the combination of underemployed youth, political and social turmoil, and economic hardship virtually guarantee future instability and uprisings.[36]

Combining these multiple sources of state weakness, Tajikistan risks a growing vacuum at the center combined with increasingly independent and separate regions.[37] Afghan instability to the south only increases these risks.[38] Tajikistan's chaotic problems balance between internal instability and external insecurity.[39] This context establishes the critical nature of current Tajikistan political developments. Without negotiated agreement between government and opposition, serious Tajikistan weaknesses will spread the conflict. In Olivier Roy's analysis, "the socioeconomic realities that sustained the Islamist wave are still here and are not going to change . . . "[40]

The Islamic Effect

Islam impacted the Tajik civil war in a broad, diffuse way, substantially independent from Afghan/Islam influences on the war. As with other analysis elements, Islamic influences in Tajikistan derived from the historical context. The Islamic effect in the Tajik conflict reflected religion as a means to an end of social protest. Finally, a number of external Islamic links, positive and negative, affected events in Tajikistan. While the Afghan War strengthened related Islamic influences on Tajikistan, more substantial influences developed from larger changes set in motion by the USSR breakup.

Islam gradually spread throughout Central Asia in the 18th and 19th Centuries, only briefly preceding the spread of the Russian empire. Communist assumption of the Russian empire changed little in the Central

Asian power structure. However, religious policy changed significantly, from the tsarist policy of converting to Russian Orthodoxy to the communist policy of atheism. This communist policy sought to break the "religious-national interlock" to help consolidate power in Central Asia.[41] Stalin later adjusted his tactics in 1941 by organizing Soviet Islam into four geographical muftiyya (spiritual directorates), one of which was Central Asia.[42] These organizations certainly aimed to co-opt the movements the Soviets could not stamp out. However, because of Tajikistan's isolation, "Islam survived in the countryside to a much greater extent than elsewhere in Central Asia."[43] This history establishes the base of Islamic fundamentalism in Tajikistan: opposition to official Communist ideology (the Russian connection), and opposition to Western ideology (the Iranian connection).[44]

The Islamic Revival movement (IRP) developed in the 1970's as a local and regional underground organization. IRP and Tajik religious leaders initiated external religious links with the warming of Soviet/ Middle East relations in the 1970's.[45] By 1985 the IRP and other Islamic fundamentalist organizations existed in every major region of Tajikistan, effectively bypassing the formal Soviet-sponsored Islamic organization.[46] The Western perspective notes the rising of Islamic consciousness throughout Central Asia, partly from an Afghan Islamic spillover.[47] However, Allen Hetmanek's more complete view of Tajikistan's Islamic influences includes contributions from Afghan fundamentalism, from Iran, and distinct and internal Tajik roots.[48]

In 1988, the Soviet-sponsored Islamic authorities selected Akbar Turadzhonzoda the new Islamic head (Qadi) of Tajikistan. As political protest openly developed in Tajikistan in 1990, Turadzhonzoda

joined with the IRP and democratic movement Rastokhez (Renewal) to form the core of opposition to the Tajikistan government. Turadzhonzoda's demands included legalization of political parties, free press rights, and release of political prisoners.[49] The IRP also emerged into the open political forum, and joined the all-union IRP movement formed the prior summer.[50] However, as Turadzhonzoda and the broader Islamic movement gained strength in Tajikistan, other antigovernment parties began to separate themselves from the fundamentalists.[51] As Roland Dannreuther observed:

> Islam was potentially a more sustainable integrative force, but ultimately proved to be just as divisive . . . Even though Islam failed to override the internal Tajik divisions, a radical politicized Islam emerged out of the crisis as the most effective (single) opposition force.[52]

Concluding that Tajikistan's political and military conflict followed from Afghan and other Islamic fundamentalists remains a gross exaggeration.[53] Some of this exaggeration derives from Russian perception of the threat on their southern borders. More realistic Russian analysis concludes "that the Islamic component of the coalition of Islamic and more secular, democratic elements, dominated."[54] While Turadzhonzoda continues as the primary opposition leader, he acknowledges his limitations as the leader of a diverse, multi-interest coalition.[55] Graham Fuller sees Islam as an element of nationalism, as a set of beliefs able to provide identity to new countries like Tajikistan. He concludes that "To the extent that social and economic trends in the region are negative, Islamic radicalism will serve as the vehicle for discontent, but will not be the cause of that discontent."[56] Olivier Roy's important work, The Failure of Political Islam, concludes that Islamic fundamentalism eventually becomes compromised and reduced

to another part of the strong nationalistic, ethnic and local concerns in countries like Tajikistan.[57]

Many of the Islamic influences on the Tajik conflict establish incentives for outside countries' interventions. Uzbekistan provides the clearest example. In addition to proximity, ethnicity and regional interests, Karimov's "personal antipathy to any manifestation of Islamic fundamentalism . . . (his) overwhelming fear that the Tajik crisis might spread to Uzbekistan, leading to social and political anarchy."[58]

Uzbekistan's fears match Russia's concerns, with the mainstream Russian press reporting on Islamic conferences coordinating assistance to Tajikistan muslims in their jihad against the primary enemy of Islam, Russia.[59] One Russian general contrasted modern Turkey with feudal Iran, arguing that fundamentalists in Afghanistan presented the primary threat to Tajikistan and all of Central Asia.[60] Even India, concerned with her primary rival, Islamic Pakistan, "envisages strengthening the secular aspects of the states in Central Asia and discouraging Islamic political militancy of the type already unsettling conditions in Tajikistan."[61]

A number of Islamic linkages tie Tajikistan to other countries, but these linkages do not indicate a significant Afghan influence. Iran provides one possible influence on Tajikistan. At least one wing of Tajik fundamentalism maintains "an Iranian orientation."[62] However, Iran provided essentially humanitarian support to the Islamic opposition, tempering its religious interest at the expense of strategic interests with Russia.[63] A secular government and Sunni population indicate Tajikistan will probably maintain a healthy distance from the

Iranian Shi'a regime, limiting connections to economic and cultural interests.[64]

Other sources indicate a Pakistan Islamic connection to the IRP and Tajik opposition, motivated by a combination of Pakistani domestic politics and Islam.[65] Saudi financial support also finds its way to the Tajik opposition.[66] Finally, Roland Dannreuther concludes that the direct Afghan/Tajik connection remains limited in scale, and focused more on pragmatic rationale than fundamentalist jihad.[67] Two basic conclusions summarize the result of the Afghan/Islam influence on Tajikistan. First, cross-border Islamic support has never been very strong or significant. Second, Afghan religious influences in Tajikistan resulted in strengthening existing Islamic segmentation and divisiveness, and not in providing a unifying support.[68]

RUSSIAN POLICY

Russian interests in Central Asia mandate some level of intervention in the Tajik conflict. This conclusion follows only peripherally from the Soviet experience with Afghanistan, but instead follows directly from Russia's post-USSR regional and strategic interests. The USSR's "decolonization" leads to discussion of the Russian policy towards the "near abroad," the areas lying between the old USSR and new Russian boundaries. Russian military peacekeeping, perhaps better termed peacemaking, helps implement the "near abroad" policy. Russian actions in and around Tajikistan reflect broader strategic concerns, as well as a focus on Islam as perhaps Russia's most serious ethnic problem. Finally, Russian intervention in Tajikistan and

activity in Central Asia indicates her overriding concern with maintaining a security equilibrium in the region.

Recognition of "imperial separation" must precede analysis of Russian security interests in Tajikistan and Central Asia. Maxim Shashenkov cites previous British and French decolonization. Their policies reflect a conscious attempt "to substitute influence for rule," and they "sought to perpetuate military bases in regions of strategic importance and to establish a network of military agreements with newly independent states."[69] Analysis of the nature of the Soviet empire shows some key characteristics. The Soviet empire did not separate neatly into nation-state and colony. Extensive economic, political, and military links evolved between inner and outer parts of the empire, which helped tie together geographically contiguous regions into a complex, networked system.[70] This perspective suggests that Russian and CIS behavior in Tajikistan seeks a managed, orderly withdrawal from direct rule, to be replaced by stability and an orderly assumption of control by the local authorities.[71]

Initial Russian attitudes towards newly independent Tajikistan indicated disinterest. Reasons included Tajikistan's continued communist control and economic liability, and Russia's European and Western focus.[72] Russian interest developed as Tajik violence escalated, following Uzbek President Karimov's energetic warnings. "The Russian military, in particular, found Karimov's (obligation and strategic interests) argument highly persuasive."[73]

At the same time domestic politics gradually grew more influential in forming foreign policy, here reflected in a more active interest in Tajikistan.[74] Public military discussion alternated between

Tajikistan's "deteriorating security position" and concern over unnecessary entanglement in a pointless war.[75] Ethnic Russians fleeing "hot spots where armed clashes are taking place" have created significant domestic pressure in Russia, because of the size of the movement and the refugees' economic difficulties.[76] Other significant domestic influences included the increasing strength of neonationalist political parties and their statements about "reclaiming" former republics, recognition of the economic liability represented by Tajikistan and Central Asia, and general Russian orientation towards European/Slavic rather than Central Asian/Muslim neighbors.[77] Domestic reality certainly rivals strategic design in determining Russian behavior in Tajikistan and Central Asia.

Yet Russian strategic design exists, her "Monroeski Doctrine" concerning rights and responsibilities regarding the former Soviet republics. From the Russian perspective, this doctrine includes Russian primacy in the "near abroad," Russian rights to intervene to ensure stability there, and Russian expectation for Western recognition and acceptance of this doctrine.[78] Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev's initial pro-Western, low profile foreign policy and the more recent, more assertive foreign policy, both agree on the essential framework of the near "abroad" policy. Differences follow from the ways and means used to exercise influence and protect Russian interests there.[79] Several important factors affect how this doctrine is converted into specific action. First, from the public perspective, Russia's real sphere of influence "is getting closer and closer to Russia's geographic borders . . . "[80] This perception increases pressure for corrective action in Central Asia and the Caucasus. Second, several observers

suggest the "near abroad" should be defended along two boundaries, the inner (critical) Russian boundary and the outer (protective) CIS boundary.[81] Finally, as Michael Orr has observed,

> In practice, Russia has dealt with each conflict in an essentially ad hoc fashion but used the name of the CIS to give a cloak of international respectability to its pursuit of what the government perceives as Russia's national interests in the near abroad.[82]

Russian foreign policy will remain strategically and pragmatically focused on the "near abroad," acting based on this perspective.

Kozyrev's initial foreign policy concluded Russia needed strong linkages with the West to fight her economic weakness and political isolation.[83] Therefore natural Russian inattention to Tajikistan fell in step with Western preference for passive Russian political and military behavior. But Central Asian policy quickly foundered on the developing Tajik conflict. Kozyrev's policy ran up against the "reality" of Uzbekistan's interests and continuing turmoil in Afghanistan.[84] Most importantly, the Russian military already present gradually edged into the conflict, establishing new policy by their actions. Roland Dannreuther notes:

> The absence of a coherent foreign policy framework leads different institutions, such as the Defense Ministry, the Foreign Ministry, the government and parliament, to promote and execute divergent and frequently irreconcilable policies.[85]

The civil war strengthened Kozyrev's critics, helping force a more activist Russian policy in Tajikistan.[86] Multiple interests pushed a more assertive position: the military, economic interests, nationalists emphasizing the Islamic threat, and a general desire to reestablish an expanded Russian influence.[87] Once Russian military forces engaged in Tajikistan, substantial support existed to defeat the opposition and establish the conservative government. Consensus between

Kozyrev and his critics then enabled a policy seeking negotiated settlement, where the West sees negotiation replacing military activity and Russia's conservatives see consolidation and support of a Russian ally in Tajikistan.[88]

Russian peacekeeping remains as her primary foreign policy action in Tajikistan. Better termed "peacemaking," Russian military activity serves as "an instrument of imperial disengagement, and an important element of national security policy."[89] Common objectives include securing multilateral action under Russian leadership, and preserving Russian freedom of action.[90] Colonel-General Pyankov, former head of Russian peacekeeping forces in Tajikistan, described the mission:

> We have a clear position in the Tajik conflict--we are not interfering in any political scrapes, which differs favorably from the position of the Soviet Union in Afghanistan, where support was rendered to one of the dueling sides.
>
> Our main objective is to provide assistance in protecting and defending the borders . . . other functions include analyzing the military and political situation in the region, protecting humanitarian aid columns, and participating in the negotiation process with the goal of stabilising the situation. But in no way are we providing any military assistance to local groupings.[91]

In contrast to General Pyankov's idealistic description, analyst Colonel Cheban identifies some of the significant limitations in military peacemaking: military intervention does not address the true causes of the conflict, the blunt military tool has limited usefulness, and armed rivals often co-opt and take advantage of peacemakers for their own purposes.[92] Russian operations in the Tajikistan civil war combine significant elements of both peacekeeping and military intervention.

Maxim Shashenkov identifies two other factors supporting peacemaking operations in Tajikistan. Russia conducted similar

operations in Georgia, Moldova and South Ossetia, reinforcing Russia's position as chief arbiter throughout the "near abroad." In each of these actions, Russian strategists judge them successful in terms of stabilizing and exercising control.[93] The second factor involves tacit Western acceptance of Russian actions. Russian action remains necessary because existing multilateral organizations like the UN and CSCE cannot begin to address the problem. In Maxim Shashenkov's analysis,

> If the no-risk approach continues to underlie UN peacekeeping practices, an argument for regional action to enforce peace will grow . . . Russian partiality was to be accepted by the West as a price for the West's own reluctance to become involved in local conflicts in the former USSR.[94]

These factors help explain Russia's ability to intervene in Tajikistan, subject to its own objectives, resources and understanding of the situation.

The Islamic "threat" supports Russian strategy in Tajikistan. Russian perception of Islam remains significantly influenced by their Afghan War experience. Tajikistan represented the possibility of a second antiRussian Islamic regime on the southern border.[95] Managing the Islamic threat to Russia suggested an Afghan-like preemptive strike into Tajikistan.[96] Along with this recent historical context, two factors underlie evolving Russian strategy relative to Islam. First, much of Russia perceives a real, significant fundamentalist threat against their unprotected southern border, a threat fueling related ethnic problems within Russia.[97] Second, the breakup of the Soviet Union requires Russia to "define a new geostrategic relationship with the Muslim world for which there was no clear historical precedent."[98]

The geostrategic perspective provides the final influence on Russian peacemaking in Tajikistan. The Tajik conflict served to force

self-examination of Russian policy towards all of Central Asia.[99] Russian strategic concerns remain regional stability and maintenance of the Russian preferential position, relative to external powers like Turkey, Iran and China.[100] This policy appears realistic and likely to succeed, based on the Iranian example:

> Russia is determined to follow a pragmatic policy towards Tehran, which would reward Iranian concessions to Russian interests in Central Asia and the Caucasus and would advance Russian economic penetration of the Persian Gulf.[101]

One military source proposed that Russia's vital interests should include preventing CIS countries from establishing buffer zones that would isolate Russia, maintaining exclusive influence over CIS states, and preserving good neighbor relations with the Middle and Far East.[102] The crucial question in approaching these interests continues to be the nature of relationships with the CIS countries; the degree of Russian domination in political, economic and military spheres. Specifically, the Tajikistan policy will be keyed to Russian relations with the region's primary CIS states, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan.[103]

Reviewing public assessment of Russian policy in Tajikistan indicates relatively good support. The Russian peacekeeping forces commander, Colonel-General Pyankov, speaks to a primary Russian concern when he warns of "social destabilization . . . influx of weapons and drugs" without the presence of these forces.[104] While many conservatives prefer much stronger action, "Moscow understands that the cost of reasserting colonial control and responsibility in Tajikistan is prohibitively high."[105] Others observe that the price of control in Tajikistan will increase, indicating the general support behind the "control plus negotiations" policy now in place.[106]

Roland Dannreuther's analysis provides the definitive perspective on Russian strategy in Tajikistan. The peacekeeping operation, keyed to relations with Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, provides a cost-effective method of local control and regional stability. Russian policy is far more complex and pragmatic than simple neoimperialism.[107] The real Russian challenge will be to maintain a dynamic stability over the short-term negotiations process, and over the long-term Central Asian change process.

CHAPTER 5

THE REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Sources of the Tajikistan civil war, whether or not grounded in Afghanistan, develop from the regional character of all of Central Asia. Although the region is not defined by five homogeneous, similar countries, a number of characteristics affect and apply across the entire region. Significantly, Islam remains the single most powerful social characteristic of Tajikistan and Central Asia, and can only be understood from a broad regional approach. Finally, the most important country involved in Central Asia, Russia, continues to develop and practice a complete regional policy. The Tajik civil war remains best understood from the broad Central Asian perspective.

Characterization

Several major factors help best describe Central Asia as a distinct, complete region. The area historically reflected a regional character, especially from its Soviet heritage. A number of significant neighboring countries now find specific interests in their overall relations with Central Asia. Several key individuals continuing to affect the Tajik conflict interact with states across the entire region. Finally, two major influences on the future of Central Asia, Uzbekistan and "Malthusian trends," will affect the entire region in significant ways.

Following the USSR breakup, several different models emerged to predict the Central Asian future.[1] The new Great Game considered Iran and Turkey the new players in an old balance of power system. As Russian military activity developed, observers suggested the growth of a new Russian imperial order. Over time, however, a consensus view perceived simply a weak Central Asian independence. Two realities color the future of this independence. First, none of the global powers considers Central Asia as a vital interest; even Russia's activity in Central Asia falls behind more pressing interests in eastern Europe, the Caucasus, and her own rebellious territories.[2] Tajikistan then stands as the weakest country in a low priority region. For the second reality, Central Asian countries and especially Tajikistan reflect significant and interdependent economic, military and domestic weaknesses. These realities mean Central Asia will progress only as well as they coordinate their efforts across the region. A regional perspective provides the best means for analysis of Central Asia.

The environment faced by Central Asian and Tajik leadership represents threatening and unpredictable conditions. Chinese imperialism, Iranian fundamentalism, and Afghan anarchy all present real problems for Central Asia. Credible Western organizations like the UN, NATO and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) avoid real involvement in Central Asia.[3] Current leadership, including Uzbekistan's Karimov and Tajikistan's Rakhmonov, expect substantial Russian involvement in their affairs but less than full Russian support for their own efforts to retain control.[4] Continuing structural change within Russia and the CIS also generate regional unpredictability, as

the former Soviet Union continues to "undergo profound change and readjustment of their relations."[5]

The overriding assumption underlying regional behavior remains the presence of substantial Russian influence. "The idea of Central Asia remaining within Russia's sphere of influence does not upset the indigeneous political establishment."[6] Russian military interests support this influence, and emphasize subordination of regional military activities to independent Russian direction.[7] Mutual benefits exist between Moscow's desire for a friendly Central Asia, and Central Asian (former communist) leadership's desire for Russian insurance.[8]

Tajikistan and the other Central Asian states have already initiated tentative steps towards some form of regional unity. In early 1993, the five states (Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Kyrgyzstan) formed the Central Asian Regional Union (CARU). CARU objectives include economic coordination, political status and military planning.[9] This organization could develop into a significant structure affecting major regional influences like Iran, Pakistan, Turkey, and other countries, expanding Central Asian independence and influence.

Central Asia stands as a region relative to different national interests from the surrounding areas. Turkey retains the strongest social and cultural links to Central Asia (except in Tajikistan), and offers substantial technical and economic opportunity. However, Turkey, like Russia, sees Central Asia as an increasingly secondary interest compared with the problems and opportunities in the Caucasus region.[10] Iran and the fundamentalist Islamic character of its regime present both opportunity and threat to Tajikistan and Central Asia. Many observers perceive significant Iranian influence in the development of the Tajik

civil war.[11] While Iran provides substantial geographic access and religious commonality, especially relative to Tajikistan and Tajik parts of Uzbekistan, her influence remains more complex.[12] Iran's Shi'ite Islamic fundamentalism does not match well with Central Asia's Sunni Islamic faith. Additionally, Iran's low profile in Central Asia follows from her substantial interest in Russia and Russia's interest in limiting overt fundamentalist activity.

Graham Fuller explained Pakistan's reaction to an independent Central Asia in these terms: "The huge new Islamic strategic depth that Pakistan has acquired has greatly excited Pakistan and upset India."[13] Pakistan notes three basic elements in the Central Asian relationship: she shares a strong cultural and religious affinity with many of the peoples within Central Asia, can offer useful economic and military assistance, and expects to build a "new strategic depth" to alter her strategic condition relative to India.[14] However, Pakistan's interaction with Central Asia may eventually pale relative to China. According to one observer,

> Now that Russia is no longer perceived as the major external threat, China is the natural replacement. Given its size and nuclear status, its unreconstructed imperial pretensions and its traditional historical claims on the region, China represents a threat far exceeding that of Iran.[15]

China retains a strong interest in political stability as cross-border ethnic connections include her own northwestern minority populations.[16] Chinese efforts to downplay their threat to Central Asia focus on economics, as the Chinese economy offers multiple advantages to Central Asian states.[17] Central Asia will develop a Chinese relationship, following clear military and economic trends.

Two examples serve to illustrate the complexities of these multiple national relationships with Central Asia. One perspective on the Tajikistan civil war context connects

> drawing Russia into a protracted war in Tajikistan on the side of Uzbekistan, thereby to put Russia at loggerheads with Afghanistan, China and Pakistan. Uzbekistan, in attempting to gain hegemony in southern Central Asia . . . in conjunction with Turkey, is looking into the possibility of intervening militarily in Kyrgyzstan . . . [18]

Another observer identifies other regional strategic links:

> one would have expected Uzbek/Iranian relations to deteriorate as a result of the increased unrest and bloodshed in Tajikistan. The opposite occurred, however . . . Had Iran supported the Islamic/democratic forces in Tajikistan, it would have damaged its relations with the rest of Turkic Central Asia. Iran's restraint and its desire not to win a battle in Tajikistan at the risk of losing a Central Asian war . . . the improvement in relations between Uzbekistan and Iran parallels increased Russian/Iranian cooperation and a thaw in relations between Ankara and Tehran.[19]

Individual behavior provides another indication of the regional character of the Tajik conflict. Afghan/Uzbek General Rashid Dostam operates in the Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Afghanistan political triangle, pursuing opportunistic policies intended to strengthen his own independent position.[20] Islamic and Tajik opposition leader Akbar Turadzhonzoda operates similarly, most recently from Tehran, Islamabad, and Jalalabad. He recognizes the importance of developing regional support to help pressure the Tajik government in the current negotiation process.

Uzbekistan continues to pursue an active leadership role across the Central Asian region. One of the two strong powers in the region, Uzbek relations with Kazakhstan remain tense over competition for leadership.[21] President Karimov's fundamental security problems cross national boundaries: democratic and Islamic opposition to his authoritarian regime, and irredentist claims by Tajik nationalists to

Bukhara and Samarkand.[22] Uzbekistan actively supports General Dostam's efforts to control northwestern Afghanistan, expanding Uzbek influence to other parts of Central Asia: "Uzbekistan's position in General Dostam's camp today is very reminiscent of that which the Soviet Union once held in Kabul."[23] Finally, growing pressure within Uzbekistan has serious implications for the entire region:

> If a successful Islamic revolution should occur in Uzbekistan, however, it will be of crucial importance, for that republic is the core and pivot of Central Asia, and its fate can determine the destiny of the entire region.[24]

One final set of regional issues require discussion. Many observers expect that the collapse of the Soviet economic system will cause destructive social and environmental consequences for most of Central Asia.[25] While initial steps towards economic coordination exist, the economic problems for the region remain massive.[26] Central Asia represents a small, remote market, with only humanitarian incentives available to encourage significant external investment.[27] Beyond the obvious initial economic problems caused by the Soviet and Russian economy, the more serious threat remains the vanishing Central Asian water supply.[28] The Aral Sea continues to evaporate and increase its salinity, as massive cotton irrigation continues from the Amu Darya and Syr Darya rivers. However, the inefficient irrigation system now requires increasing amounts of water to grow a shrinking cotton crop. The system grows worse as most supporting engineers and technicians leave the region to return to Russia. And the worst water conditions will develop in the Ferghana Valley, the most unstable social, ethnic, and religious location in Central Asia--controlled by the repressive Karimov. The water situation alone represents a regional time bomb.[29]

Unfortunately, additional problems beyond water and economic development threaten Central Asia. The region's environment, again most clearly in the Ferghana Valley, also nears collapse. Problems include waterborne and respiratory diseases, and worsening life expectancy and infant mortality.[30] This problem continues the region's negative trend: public support for improving environmental conditions would have to be justified on economic grounds, a justification fast collapsing as well.[31] Given the final problem of a 3.5% annual population increase, Central Asia faces a "death spiral" of regional problems:

> The water supply per person will have fallen by half, from a level already inadequate. The supply of water cannot be increased because the only way of doing that would be to divert water from Russia's Siberian rivers. The independence of Central Asia has made such a diversion impossible. The efficiency with which water is used cannot be significantly increased because cotton farming is already relatively efficient. Virtually any other crop would use as much water.[32]

This developing Malthusian disaster will result in confrontation over water between upstream Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan and downstream Uzbekistan, aggravated conflict between holdover, conservative governments and combination opposition parties, and continued Islamic growth as the means for expressing social protest.[33] The Central Asian bomb will explode.

Islam

Islam remains the one possible characteristic capable of unifying the diversity in Central Asia. Olivier Roy's definitive work in this area concludes this unification will not occur, that Islam's effect will be limited to a loud protest of the problems of the existing order. In his words,

> The collapse of the Soviet Union and of communism makes it likely that Islam will long remain the dominant force in the

> mobilization of the Muslim world's masses in times of crisis, and the Third World is still in crisis. But unlike Marxism, Islam cannot reach beyond its cultural sphere: the age of converting entire peoples is past.[34]

Roy concludes that Islam will essentially remain a social phenomenon, and that Islamist political action either follows existing political behavior or reinforces existing segmentation (as in Afghanistan).[35] His conclusions imply that Central Asia's substantial divisions across political state, local region, and ethnic group will combine to prevent any significant Islamic unity in the region.

However, one significant individual might change this conclusion. Kazi Akbar Turadzhonzoda serves as the chief representative of the Tajik opposition, Islamic leader of Tajikistan, and best known religious leader throughout Central Asia. He has travelled beyond Central Asia to Iran, Pakistan, Europe, and the United States. He is young, charismatic, and provides a leadership figure possibly able to coalesce the various Islamic peoples in Tajikistan and the broader region.[36] Recent interviews in Russian newspapers suggest two primary interests: pragmatic acceptance of Russian presence in Tajikistan and Central Asia, with strong desire to establish Islamic traditions and beliefs in the cultural and religious spheres.[37] Strong, consistent individual leadership might eventually overcome current political conditions and general Islamic trends to succeed in changing the Tajik state. Turadzhonzoda's success or failure in Tajikistan could then also generate secondary effects in the Central Asian region.

Russia

One overriding factor keeps the different countries of Central Asia together in a regional sense--the interests and presence of Russia.

The Soviet legacy, Russian desire for relative quiet on her borders, and the absence of any comparable influence all combine to support Russian leadership in Tajikistan and Central Asia.[38] With the absence of public mandate or sense of government priority, Russia looks to establish a regional equilibrium through the two primary states in Central Asia: Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan.[39]

As President Nabiev resigned the Tajikistan presidency in the chaos of September 1992, Russia and Uzbekistan arrived at similar conclusions. Their common interests dictated the imposition of order on the Tajik civil war, and the excommunist government provided the means to impose order.[40] Russian policy confirmed

> Uzbekistan as the de facto regional policeman of the region. In this role, Uzbekistan can act as the first strategic line of defense against the advance of Islamic fundamentalism and the spread of ethnonationalist fragmentation and irredentism . . . [41]

Fighting in both Tajikistan and Afghanistan remains overwatched and influenced by Uzbekistan. Karimov hoped to influence the developing negotiations between Tajikistan and the opposition, by assisting General Dostam's consolidation in northwestern Afghanistan.[42] Uzbekistan's rhetoric and actions attempt to sway conservative governments throughout Central Asia into the strongest possible stand against Islamic and anti-conservative movements.[43]

Despite Uzbekistan's activism, Russia's real regional focus lies elsewhere:

> For Russia, however, Uzbekistan is primarily a second line of defense; the first line lies in the vast territories of Kazakhstan . . . (which) is vital for Russian security because of its geostrategic location on the dividing line between Russia and Central Asia, between Slav/Christian and Turkic/ Muslim worlds.[44]

While problems in Tajikistan or Uzbekistan could be troublesome for Moscow, problems in Kazakhstan would likely invoke direct Russian intervention. Today President Nazarbaev continues in control of Kazakhstan, following policies supporting his strategic partnership with Russia.[45] However, Kazakhstan's large ethnic split and stratification represent a permanent vulnerability. Russia will also continue to work through Uzbekistan to accomplish objectives in Central Asia, assuming the strategic Kazakh base remains in place.

The final element of Russia's regional perspective towards Central Asia addresses the multilateral nature of their military activity. The CIS operation in Tajikistan can be considered not only a case of Russian/CIS peacekeeping, but also a collective security operation via the regional Tashkent Treaty.[46] Regional or CIS action tends to legitimize Russian involvement, as a partner with at least a formal equality of status.[47] Despite the limited participation from other states, Russia continues to cast its Central Asian actions in a multilateral and regional perspective.[48]

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS

The Tajikistan civil war was and is inescapably connected with the ongoing conflict in Afghanistan. However, significant factors in the Tajikistan conflict exist independent of Afghanistan. The best understanding of the situation follows from a regional perspective; Tajikistan/Afghanistan connections cannot be isolated from surrounding influences. Several different directions of future research appear promising, involving military, religious and economic trends. Finally, some conclusions address projected trends and the key issue in Tajikistan: whether Russian influence will outlast the multiple tensions pulling at the Tajik state.

Multiple, interrelated factors combined to cause the conflict in Tajikistan. Some of these factors are largely due to the presence of Afghanistan; others derive from sources other than Afghanistan. Islam's effects in Tajikistan probably owe as much to Afghanistan's presence as to anything else. Regional Islamic "consciousness" established by the Iranian revolution continued to grow and develop during the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, spilling over the border into Tajikistan. Russian military behavior in Tajikistan followed mostly from post-USSR strategic interests, and was only tangentially related to Afghanistan. Key individuals connected to the Tajikistan civil war (Ahmed Masoud, Rashid Dostam, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and Akbar Turadzhonzoda) were often

involved in Afghanistan as well. One Russian military officer observed that "There are forces (individuals) on the other side of the border that have an interest in destabilising this situation in Tajikistan."[1] The political reality of the weak Tajik state undercut by ethnic, tribal, and regional divisions exists independently of Afghanistan. Considering these interrelated factors, this observer concludes that Afghanistan was a "proximate cause" of the Tajikistan conflict, but far from the only cause and probably not the most important. The primary cause of the Tajik civil war was a combination of the weak Tajik state and strong Russian military and political interest in stabilizing the Central Asian border. These two factors helped generate the "ethnic crystallization" that fueled the inter-regional conflict in Tajikistan.[2] They also established another basic structure to the conflict, opposition "between nationalist forces that seek to create an independent Tajik state and a nomenklatura of former elites that is unwilling to relinquish its position."[3] The breakup of the Soviet Union really did not change Russian strength and Tajik weakness in the Central Asian arena.

The Tajikistan conflict remains best understood from a regional perspective spanning Central Asia and selected outside interests. Shahrbanou Tadjbakhsh concludes: "Regional differences were both the cause and the consequence of political disagreements."[4] Russian strategy addresses the region as a whole. Despite significant political differences throughout Russia, "a strong consensus exists in the Russian foreign and defense policy community that views the 'near abroad' . . . as a Russian sphere of influence."[5] In terms of Central Asia, this means Russia's focus will remain on Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Islam.

Additionally, one other reality continues to grow: " . . . (the) widening gap between Russia's strategic ambitions and its shrinking economic and military capabilities . . . "[6] In other words, Tajikistan remains only important as it affects Central Asia, and Central Asia only relative to competition in the Caucasus, Ukraine, Siberia, and other sources of Russian political turmoil.

Islam also must be viewed from a broad regional perspective. Islam competes for support and identification with other trans-boundary movements like ethnicity, tribal groupings, and political affiliations. Conflict throughout the region matches Islam against secular, excommunist authority as well as moderate against fundamentalist Islam.[7]

Other influential factors extend beyond Tajikistan to affect the whole of Central Asia. The possibility that the rest of world will largely ignore the region and its problems is suggested by the observation that "Central Asia remains a strategic black hole. . . The region's old strategic importance as a buffer zone between two great empires has gone."[8] Reversing the conventional perspective, Maxim Shashenkov notes the leverage that countries like Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan can seek over Russia through multilateral peacekeeping activity.[9] Tajikistan will be impacted by the policies and objectives of her relatively powerful neighbors. Other regional neighbors and interests like Iran, Pakistan, and even China may evolve into more significant influences.[10]

Afghanistan's own effects cannot be isolated solely on Tajikistan. Several different relationships illustrate this conclusion. Tajikistan, Afghanistan, and Uzbekistan interact on a regional and ethnic level, where northern Afghan and Tajik links are resisted by the

Uzbek regime intent on maintaining political and ethnic supremacy. Iran, Tajikistan and Afghanistan interact on a religious and political level, with Tajik religious and opposition leader Turadzhonzoda supported in Iran and much of Afghanistan.[11]

Current developments in Afghanistan also reflect this regional interdependence. The growing presence of Afghanistan's Taliban movement could have a number of different impacts on Tajikistan. Increasing regional and Islamic focus on this new Afghan presence might push rebel support in Tajikistan farther into the background. Taliban success will strongly impact Dostam and Masoud, causing changes in their support to the Tajik opposition. Taliban's connections to Pakistan could shift the Russian focus from Tajikistan and Afghanistan to Afghanistan, Pakistan, China, and India.

Finally, significant trends will cross boundaries throughout the Central Asian region. The drug trade continues to expand throughout the region.[12] Environmental degradation and the shrinking Aral Sea promise conflict over water in future years. The region's weakening cotton monoculture combined with continuing population growth also promises increasing tension. Because of these facts, Islamic fundamentalism will feed off deteriorating conditions and conservative regimes throughout Central Asia. Other Central Asian countries have good reason for concern over Tajikistan's "preseason" civil war.

This research effort suggests several directions for future investigation and analysis. As many observers perceive Russian intervention in Tajikistan a relative success, certainly compared with the Caucasus and now Chechnya, a direct comparison of these initial near abroad cases would be useful.[13] Starting with Olivier Roy's seminal

work The Failure of Political Islam, analysis of current Islamic conditions in Central Asia and especially the Uzbek/Tajik/Afghan focus should follow. A biography or case study of Akbar Turadzhonzoda is needed. Given Russia's post-USSR peacekeeping history, study of Russian military operations in the near abroad should now focus on the linkage of political and military objectives in the different cases.[14]

In conclusion, Russian intervention in Tajikistan will continue if for no other reason than the estimated 200,000 Russians remaining behind.[15] The question is whether Tajikistan will evolve for better or worse as President Rakhmonov hangs on to a gradually deteriorating nation-state. One observer correctly identifies two critical near-term factors: " . . . whether the Russian government can pressure the Tajik government into making concessions (to the opposition), and how far Turadzhonzoda will be able to keep his followers under control."[16] Additionally, Tajikistan government pressure, clearly backed by Russian and Uzbek support, may well strengthen the more radical and extremist elements in the opposition. One conclusion states: "The radicalization of political Islam in Tajikistan could actually emanate from the territory of Afghanistan."[17] Looking into the future, this observer will watch for Russian military activity, the political evolution of Afghanistan, pressures within Uzbekistan, and longer-term environmental and population trends.[18] These are the primary ways that Tajikistan's current, tenuous stability could change and generate further conflict and regional instability.

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Chapter 6

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R U S S I A
Tatarstan
Bashkortostan
Petropavlovsk
AZERBAIJAN
GEORGIA
Irtysh R.
KAZAKHSTAN
Aral Sea
Karaganda
MONGOLIA
Ust-Kamenogorsk
Caspian Sea
UZBEKISTAN
Karakalpakstan
ARMENIA
Amu-Darya R.
Syr-Darya R.
Nagorno Karabakh
TURKMENISTAN
Bishkek
Almaty (Alma-Ata)
Tashkent
Urumqi
Bukhara
KYRGYZSTAN
Ashgabat
Samarkand
Osh
C H I N A
Xinjiang
TAJIKISTAN
I R A N
Dushanbe
0 600 kms
0 400 miles
AFGHANISTAN
PAKISTAN

Figure 1

Tajikistan

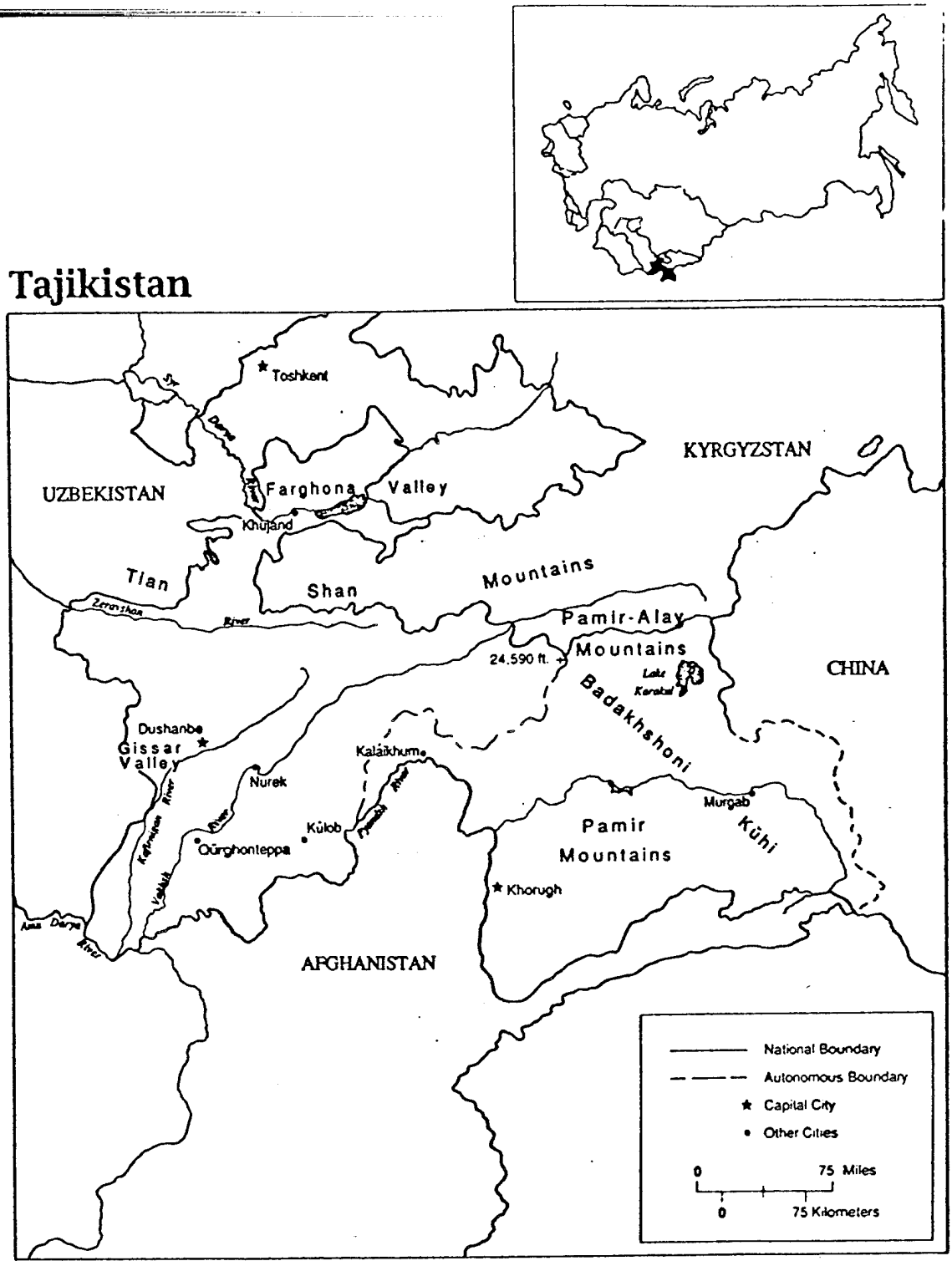


Figure 2

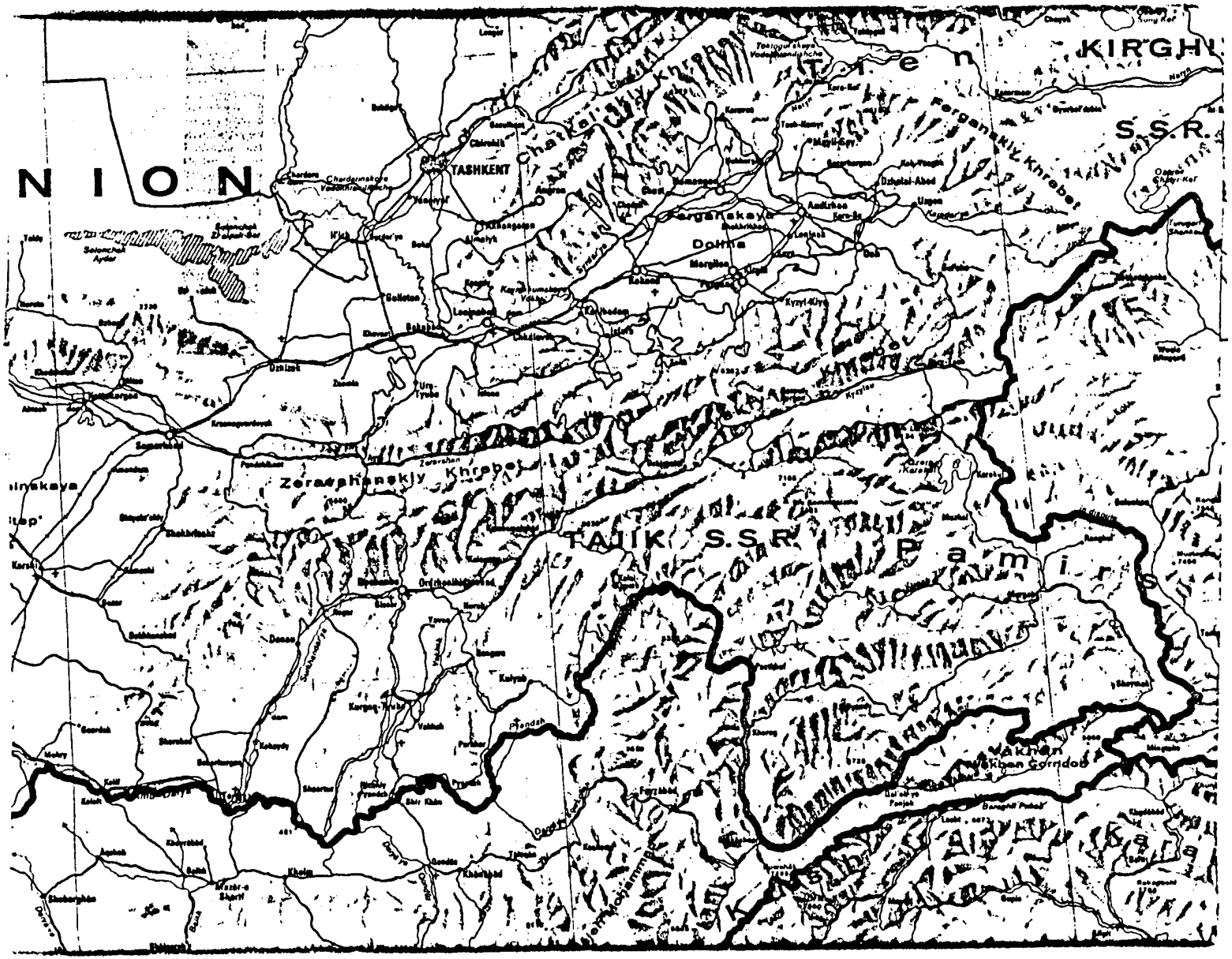
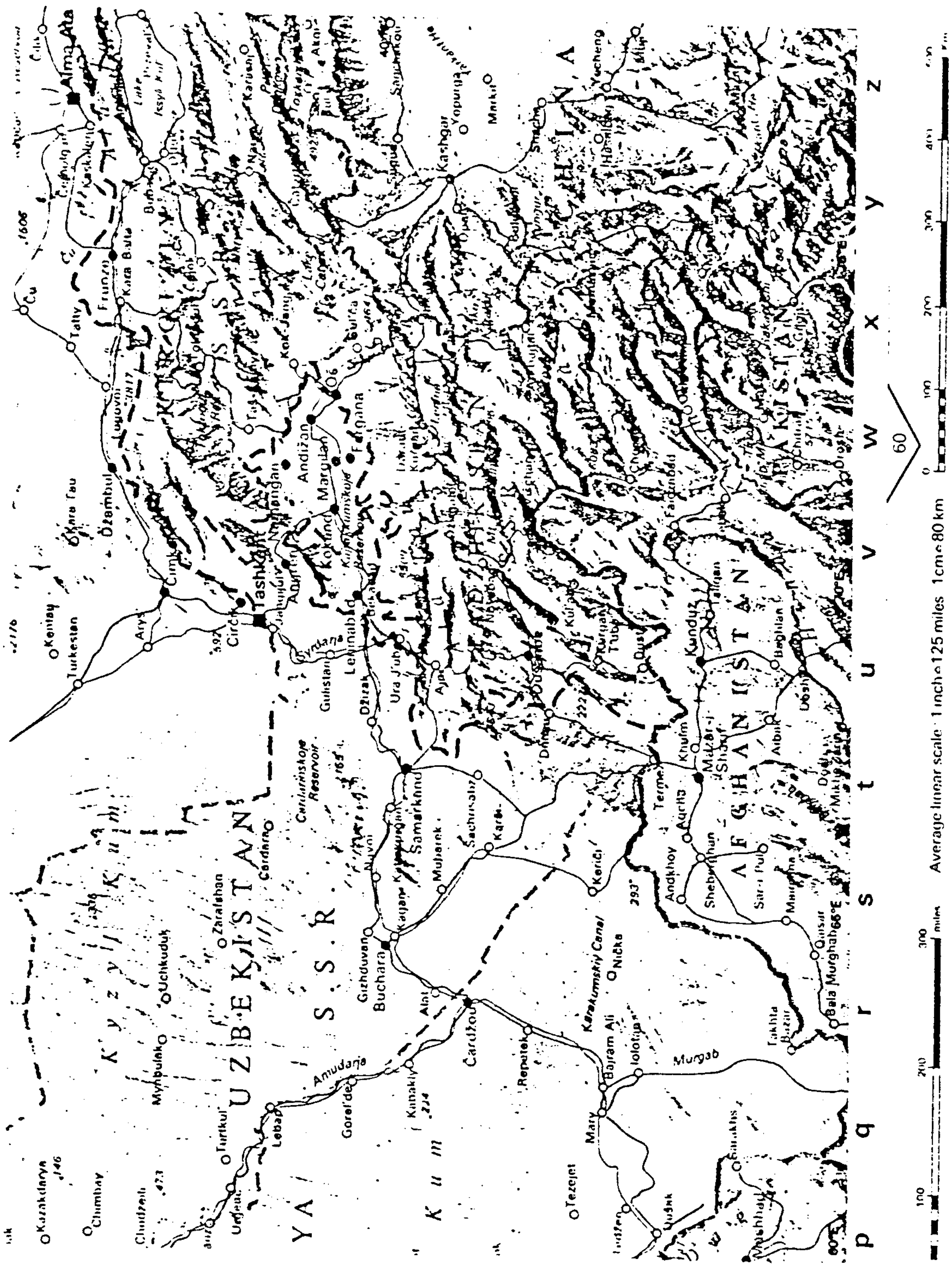

NION
KIRGHI
S.S.R.
TASHKENT
Chatkal'skiy Khrebet
Ferganskiy Khrebet
Ferganskaya
Dolina
Zeravshanskiy Khrebet
TAJIK S.S.R.
Pamirs
Vakhan
Vakhan Corridor

Figure 3



UZBEKISTAN
AFGHANISTAN
CHINA
Alma Ata
Frunze
Tashkent
Samarkand
Bucharа
Andižan
Fergana
Kashgar
Dušanbe
Kunduz
Termez
Čardžou
Mary
Amudarja
Murgab
Average linear scale 1 inch = 125 miles 1 cm = 80 km

Figure 4

LITERATURE SURVEY

Readily available sources allow investigation of Afghanistan connections with Tajikistan. The first part of this literature review discusses the broad categories and timing of these sources. The second part then briefly describes some of the primary sources in this area, both in terms of their own conclusions and in the evolution of research in this field. Sources cited and consulted then follow, organized by (1) broad analytical research, (2) Russian and non-Western reporting, and (3) Western reporting.

The first group includes sources completed prior to the breakup of the USSR. These sources further divide into two subgroups. Regional or cultural studies address several different topics of interest to Tajikistan and Central Asia, including Islamic culture under the communists, Islamic fundamentalism and its spread from the Iranian revolution, and the reliability of the various ethnic sources for the USSR military. A second subgroup involves the evolution and outcome of the Soviet/Afghan War. This topic includes Soviet strategic and military objectives, the execution of the war and its military lessons, and the Soviet pullout and Gorbachev's associated objectives.

A second group of sources involves analysis of the implications for Central Asia of the breakup of the Soviet Union. These sources generally focus on regional politics, Islamic fundamentalism, and military and economic interdependencies. While many of these sources

were written as the Tajikistan conflict developed, they normally include the conflict as a major element of Central Asia's broader realities.

A final group of sources focuses directly on the Tajikistan civil war. These sources include near term reporting from Russian, Western and other sources; analyses of Russian peacekeeping activity in Tajikistan against other cases in the "near abroad;" broader analysis of Russian strategies in the conflict; implications of the conflict for Central Asia as a region; and evidence of Islam and fundamentalism in the conflict.

Shifting to more specific discussion, selected sources illustrate these general groupings and trends in the literature. One source reflects a perspective on Tajikistan and Central Asia just prior to the outbreak of war in Tajikistan. Several sources provide similar perspectives, but include the significance and influence of the ongoing Tajikistan conflict. Two sources provide a view of Russian behavior in Tajikistan and throughout the near abroad. Finally, Olivier Roy provides an extremely comprehensive view of Islam and its relations to ethnic, nationalistic and political trends, a view entirely applicable to Tajikistan and Central Asia.

Martha Brill Olcott published "Central Asia's post-empire politics" in the spring of 1992, before protests grew into civil conflict. Her analysis focuses on the political break from Russia and the Communist Party. She considers the result when government appeal to nationalist sentiment inevitably runs into national fractures found throughout Central Asia. Olcott foresees growing yet chaotic political opposition to controlling regimes, and hopes for both regional cooperation and useful external help from outside interests.

Several excellent sources written in late 1993 and early 1994 provide comprehensive discussion of the tensions in Central Asia and the conflict in Tajikistan. Michael Mandelbaum brings together eight separate essays in Central Asia and the World that together examine the region from the best perspectives. International relations seems one common theme to the different essays. Several authors treat Tajikistan's civil war as a central focus, representing both social divisions found in the region and a clear demonstration of underlying Russian policy towards the region and its countries. Most of the eight essays concentrate on the political realm at the expense of Islamic discussion and analysis. Shahrbanou Tadjbakhsh provides another, far shorter source in "The Bloody Path of Change: The Case of Tajikistan," concluding (page 2):

> The conflict in Tajikistan has been described as (1) a political conflict between supporters of reform in Tajikistan and the conservative old guard holding on to its power; (2) a conflict between people of different regions of origin (i.e. between a politically privileged north and an economically poor south); and (3) a religious confrontation between forces seeking to establish an Islamic state and Communist powers. The conflict in Tajikistan, meanwhile, does encompass some elements of all three disputes.

Barnett Rubin and Roland Dannreuther also wrote extensive analyses of the Tajikistan civil war and its surrounding context. Rubin's "Tajikistan: From Soviet Republic to Protectorate" and "The Fragmentation of Tajikistan" provide a balanced discussion of Tajikistan/Afghanistan connections, Tajikistan's own weaknesses, Russian and Uzbek interests, and a topical/chronilogical approach that shows how the civil war developed. In "Protectorate," Rubin concludes that four major factors shaped the conflict in Tajikistan (page 208):

1. Independence created a greater shock than elsewhere in Central Asia, because of greater poverty and economic dependence.

2. Tajik nationalism was a weak, ineffective alternative to Communist ideology, unlike other, Turkic states.

3. The presence of Slavic forces directed by Moscow and Tashkent provided support to one side.

4. Afghanistan's proximity provided arms and money for the other side, along with local warlord support.

In "Fragmentation," Rubin's presents a conclusion concerning Tajikistan that he asserts can be applied to other post-USSR cases (page 71):

> What is really at stake is whether Tajikistan can become a stable independent state. Like many post-colonial states, Tajikistan gained independence without a clear national identity, a viable economic and fiscal base for state power or genuine national security forces . . . As institutions broke down, an insecure population increasingly fell back on whatever resources it could find for collective action and self-defense, namely armed struggle based on ethnic and clan affiliations and aid from whatever external sources were willing to give it.

Roland Dannreuther's two significant sources, "Russia, Central Asia and the Persian Gulf," and "Creating New States in Central Asia" together conclude that Russian policy towards Central Asia (and Tajikistan) has grown more assertive over time, and that this change stabilized and generally helped the entire region. He discusses Tajikistan within the broader regional perspective, explains the evolution of Russian policy since the USSR breakup, and concludes that a strong Russian presence in Central Asia is inescapable. Dannreuther, while acknowledging the region's autocratic regimes and limited democracy, favorably contrasts Central Asia with the Caucasus and the former Yugoslavia.

Two key sources focus on Tajikistan and Central Asia from the Russian foreign policy perspective. Mark Smith published "Pax Russica: Russia's Monroe Doctrine" in the summer of 1993. His work provides a broad overview of Russian policy towards her former states, in areas like nuclear weapons, refugees, open conflict, and economics. He focuses on Kazakhstan as the key Central Asian relationship,

underplaying Uzbekistan. Smith also reminds the reader that Tajikistan is only one of many Russian problems, and that it may not be very high on the Russian priority list. Maxim Shashenkov graduated from Moscow State University, and published "Russian Peacekeeping and the Near Abroad" in the fall of 1994 as a part of his doctoral program at Oxford. He focuses on military activity in Tajikistan and other near abroad countries from a Russian perspective. He observes that Russian military action in the near abroad could be justified simply from the lack of Western interest or participation. His conclusions include (page 49):

1. The near abroad is a foreign policy priority, a sphere of vital Russian interest.
2. Western leaders should acknowledge these interests.
3. Russia should establish itself as the legitimate guarantor of military and political stability in the CIS.
4. Russia will need to play an enlightened post-imperial role in the CIS, especially in unstable and unpredictable areas like Central Asia.

Shashenkov accurately identifies the key issue as linkage of Russian political and military objectives, noting that Russian reality includes serious limitations on her capabilities in a case like Tajikistan.

Olivier Roy published The Failure of Political Islam in the fall of 1994. Roy clearly explains differences between Islam as a nationalistic, religious and political tool. He asserts the Islamic state can only exist where other, capable social structures support the state. Where fractures exist (as in Tajikistan), Islam will remain a mobilizer of discontent, and one of competing political parties--but Islam will not be able to override the differences and establish stable political rule. His work establishes a benchmark source applicable throughout Central Asia and the Islamic world.

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