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A VIEW FROM BELOW**

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ISLAM AND ETHNIC IDENTITY IN CENTRAL ASIA: A VIEW FROM BELOW

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The role of Islam and ethnic identity in Central Asia has dominated academic and policy research on this region for some time. To better understand some of the popular views towards their role, this author, under the auspices of the U.S. Institute of Peace and in conjunction with the "Expert" Center in Central Asia, conducted a public opinion survey in June and July, 1993, among 2000 respondents in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan -- countries that together comprise almost three quarters of Central Asia's population and about 80 percent of its land mass.

The survey examined questions regarding the adherence to Islam in the region; the way individuals define themselves relative to others, and where ethnic animosities may lie; and the extent to which Islamic or ethnic identity may affect the foreign policies of these new Central Asian states.

Islam: Islam has often been portrayed -- perhaps especially by local Central Asian leaders -- as one of the strongest sources of identity in this region, likely to grow rapidly and present important political challenges for both Central Asia and the rest of the world. While Islam is deeply ingrained in Central Asian ethnicity and culture, and while popular interest in Islam is growing, the survey suggests that at least currently, these fears are overblown.

Instead, largely because of a history where religious teaching and practice were either forbidden or coopted by the political regimes, the survey suggests that personal understanding of Islamic doctrine in Central Asia remains limited or distorted. With the possible exception of parts of the Fergana Valley, Islam tends to be viewed much more in traditional and cultural terms than in religious ones. Politically, the survey suggests that Islamic leaders are seen as relatively weak, and few respondents hope for an Islamic state. Were an "Islamic" conflict to explode in the near future, the results suggest, it is unlikely that Islam itself would be the root cause of the conflict, as much as it would be a vehicle for expressing other grievances that are far more immediate causes of dissension and despair.

Ethnic Identity: Survey results suggest that while divisions among nationality groups in Central Asia may run deep, they may be as much among Central Asians as between them and Russians. This was particularly glaring when respondents were asked whom they would like and not like to see as a son or daughter in law, as a neighbor, and as a colleague at work.

Responses suggest, in addition to ethnic affiliation, how important other identities are -- family, relatives, community, region, etc. -- in individuals' thoughts and actions.

The lines between Central Asians versus Russians, or Muslims vs. non-Muslims, are not always as clear cut as often assumed. Instead, discord may be expressed in terms of smaller ethnic groups, family, neighborhood and regional terms as much as in broad ethnic or religious terms. The survey also suggests that the younger generation -- of all nationalities and educational levels -- may be just as intolerant of other national groups as older respondents. Divisions run deep, and will likely have an enormous influence on Uzbekistan's and Kazakhstan's paths to reform; but the splits and schisms will not always be clear cut.

Foreign Policy: Facing a littyany of political, economic and social challenges at home, Central Asian citizens are often expected to be in favor of turning to other countries for aid and assistance. Religious and ethnic identity are viewed as playing an important role in their determinations of partners abroad, with foreign competition largely a contest between Turkey and Iran, or the Muslim and non-Muslim worlds. Despite economic hardship at home, the survey suggests that support for foreign investment or assistance to their countries may be far weaker. And among those who do welcome foreign investment, most are seeking this not from Turkey or Iran, but overwhelmingly from the West or Japan. Most of the respondents in both countries who said that they should turn to other countries for assistance named European countries (one third of Uzbekistani respondents, and over half of Kazakhstani respondents), and Japan (close to one third of all respondents). One third of respondents in Uzbekistan also named the United States; but the U.S. was named by only 15 percent of Kazakhstani respondents -- about the same proportion who advocated turning to Russia.

Certainly our survey is but a snapshot in time. But overall, it seems to portray a picture of populations seeking to build a stable world out of their current chaos and divisiveness -- a world where their Islamic, ethnic and cultural heritages are perceived as playing a central role, but not precluding integration with the wider international community or a reduction in ethnic tension at home. Their answers paint a confused and contradictory picture of their potential success in reaching these goals.

ISLAM AND ETHNIC IDENTITY IN CENTRAL ASIA: A VIEW FROM BELOW

Nancy Lubin¹

The role of Islam and ethnic identity in Central Asia has dominated academic and policy research on this region for some time. Questions regarding the adherence to Islam in the region; the extent to which a growth in Islam may represent a political threat to the current leadership in Central Asia and to Western interests there; the way individuals define themselves relative to others, and where ethnic animosities may lie; and the extent to which Islamic or ethnic identity may affect the foreign policies of these new Central Asian states not only help shape our understanding of the region, but underlie much of Western policy there.

Traditionally, these kinds of questions in Central Asia have been examined from the top down or from the outside looking in. The purpose of this paper is to examine some of these questions from the bottom up. In the eyes of Uzbekistan's population, how strong is Islam, and does it in fact represent a significant political challenge to current authority? What are the most important individual identities, and where do strong antagonisms lie? Should these new Central Asian countries seek foreign assistance from other countries, and if so, do these kinds of identities strongly affect their choice of most desirable partners?

As a small step towards understanding some of these popular views, this author, under the auspices of the U.S. Institute of Peace and in conjunction with the "Expert" Center in Central Asia, conducted a public opinion survey in June and July, 1993, among 2000 respondents in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan -- countries that together comprise almost three quarters of Central Asia's population and about 80 percent of its land mass. The survey results could be broken down by most major indicators of age, sex, nationality, urban/rural, place of habitation (oblast), level of education, and profession, and closely follow the 1989 census data in most of these indicators. The survey was conducted in face-to-face interviews

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in one of four languages: Uzbek, Kazakh, Russian, and Karakalpak. Margin of error was roughly 6-7 percent. (Table 1, page 13)

By themselves, the responses in our survey by no means paint a definitive picture of the views of Uzbekistan's or Kazakhstan's citizens. Responses were undoubtedly influenced, for example, by the prevailing "party" line, by fear, or by an undoubted desire among many respondents to give a "right" answer -- i.e., an answer that the respondent believed the interviewer would like to hear rather than his or her personal opinion. This may have been particularly true in Uzbekistan, where the regime of President Karimov has tended, sometimes brutally, to suppress views contrary to those of the government. As with other types of research, the survey was also undoubtedly influenced by outside events and local media coverage at the time the survey was conducted. For example, this survey was conducted at a time when relations were depicted in Uzbekistan's media as somewhat more strained between Uzbekistan and the U.S. than they had been just a few months earlier, and after several opposition figures had been arrested or had fled. And survey research generally, as any other type of research, is plagued by a host of other uncertainties and inexactitudes.

The effect of these problems in our survey, however, may have been less than anticipated. First, for a good number of questions, it was unclear what the proper answer or "party line" even was at the time the survey was taken. Official government pronouncements at this time were quite contradictory on the question of Islam, for example, simultaneously supporting and condemning the renewed interest in Islam throughout Central Asia. The survey questionnaire was designed to minimize these problems further by including, for example, a good deal of overlap where the same type of question was asked several times in different contexts and in different ways. And personal observation on the part of this author (in rural and urban areas of the Fergana Valley and Tashkent oblast) and the survey takers (throughout Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan) suggest that respondents were far more forthcoming and honest about their answers, including in Uzbekistan, than one might have expected.

Thus, despite the limitations, and albeit superficially, the results are intended to provide a broad sense of some of the attitudes among Uzbekistan's and Kazakhstan's populations, to gain some additional appreciation for the challenges in this region that may lie ahead, both for the Central Asians themselves and for the West. Our survey results challenged some commonly held assumptions, and raised new questions. The purpose of this paper is to present some of the survey results regarding attitudes towards Islam, ethnic identity, and foreign policy orientations. The survey responses suggest that many of our judgments and stereotypes may require more investigation if we are to better understand where Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan may be headed and what role we could most productively play there.

ISLAM

In the past, Islam has often been viewed as one of the strongest sources of identity and belonging in this region, likely to grow rapidly and present important political challenges for both Central Asia and the rest of the world. Certainly this is something some of the regional leaders have played up. As Central Asian leaders consolidate their power in the wake of the disintegration of the USSR, they have often presented the specter of growing Islamic political movements as the biggest challenge to their own power and authority, and to stability within their new countries. President Karimov of Uzbekistan has used the threat of an allegedly growing Islamic opposition in Central Asia to justify a crackdown on his own population.

While interest in Islam is growing rapidly throughout Central Asia, however, our survey highlights more ambiguous conclusions, and suggests that at least currently, these fears may be overblown. Certainly Islam is deeply ingrained in Central Asian ethnicity and culture. But largely because of a long history where religious teaching and practice were either forbidden or coopted by successive political regimes, personal understanding of Islamic doctrine in Central Asia remains limited or distorted. Although this could certainly change, our survey suggests that Islam tends to be viewed much more in traditional and cultural terms than in religious ones. In terms of political power, our survey suggests that Islamic leaders are seen as relatively weak, and few respondents hope for an Islamic state. Although Islam may be important in the long term, then, our survey results tend to weaken the claims of some Central Asian leaders that an already widespread Islamic fundamentalism poses a threat to their very survival.

In terms of Islamic awareness, for example, respondents were asked to select several of a number of groups to which they felt it was most important to them to belong. "Each person simultaneously belongs to different groups or communities of people," respondents were told. They were then asked to look at a list of choices, and select the groups to which they feel they most belong. Respondents identified much more readily with community -- with family, neighbors, neighborhood (makhalla), relatives, region and country -- than with Islamic communities as such. For example, two thirds of our Uzbekistani sample selected their family, followed by belonging to their group of neighbors (40 percent), neighborhood (makhalla, 36 percent); and to their relatives (35 percent). Only about one tenth of all respondents in Uzbekistan selected "people of my belief", consisting of about one eighth of the Uzbeks and only 4 percent of the Russians. Many of those who selected this choice were from the Fergana oblast, but they still represented a small proportion of people from this oblast. While it is likely that most members of one's family and neighborhood may already be of the same Islamic background, an insignificant proportion of respondents in Kazakhstan included

"people of my belief" in the list of groups to which they feel it is most important for them to belong.

Likewise, while Islamic awareness may be growing in Central Asia, the way this awareness expresses itself may be more complex and contradictory. In terms of personal belief, fewer than half (46 percent) of all respondents in Uzbekistan, and about one quarter of all respondents in Kazakhstan, said they were "believers" and practice Islam. More than half (52 percent) of respondents in Uzbekistan said they are "believers", of which 587 people, or 46.4 percent of the entire sample, said they practice of Islam.² (Table 2, page 14) Among these Muslim "believers", however, knowledge or practice of the main pillars of Islam appeared weak. Almost one third of Uzbekistani "Muslims", and two thirds of Kazakhstan's "Muslims" could not translate "There is no God other than Allah and Mohammed is his prophet" from the Arabic, or they gave a wrong answer. (Indeed, close to 20 percent of the small number of Kazakhstani respondents who said they are Muslims also said that they disagree with this statement, which is a most fundamental tenet of Islam!) In terms of rituals, over three quarters of those Kazakhstanis who said they are Islamic believers do not pray at all, and three quarters say they never fast. In Uzbekistan, responses suggest slightly more adherence to rituals, but adherence is still low: forty four percent of those who said they are religious Muslims do not pray at all, and 23 percent do so only occasionally; roughly one third do not fast at all, while another third do so "only sometimes".

Age and regional differences were striking, especially in Uzbekistan where expressed adherence to Islam was higher. Despite a reported spread of Islam among Uzbekistan's younger population, our survey suggests that Islamic belief is still weakest among the younger generations. Roughly 39 percent of the 18-29 year olds in our survey, for example, consider themselves Muslim believers, vs. 47 percent of the 50-59 year olds and two thirds of respondents over 60.

Regionally, adherence to Islam was stronger in the Fergana Valley than elsewhere in Uzbekistan, especially in Andizhan oblast', where about three quarters of respondents see themselves as practicing Muslims -- vs., say, 25 percent of respondents from Tashkent, or between 13 and 20 percent in the Western regions of the country. At the same time, the majority of even these respondents said their primary allegiances are to neighborhood, makhalla, and family, with only a tiny proportion naming "people of my belief." The proportion of Islamic believers was also lower in the other two oblasts included in our survey

² More than half (52 percent) of respondents in Uzbekistan said they were "believers", of which 587 people, or 46.4 percent of the entire sample, said they practice Islam.

from the Fergana Valley: 47 percent of respondents in Namangan consider themselves practicing Muslims, and 41 percent in Fergana oblast -- roughly the same proportion as in the Syrdarinskaia oblast and only slightly higher than Samarkand and Bukhara oblasts.

As far as the threat of political Islam is concerned, our survey also suggests that, so far, Uzbekistanis and Kazakhstanis tend to view the political role of Islam as weak. Our survey indicated that Islamic leaders are generally viewed as exerting little power and influence today, and few respondents support the establishment of an Islamic state in Uzbekistan. For example, when asked in Uzbekistan to rank on a scale of one to nine how much real power different individuals and institutions wield in Uzbekistan (with one signifying no power, and nine signifying unlimited power), 96 percent of all respondents put President Karimov between 7 and 9 on the scale, i.e., as wielding significant power; 86 percent of all respondents gave President Karimov a 9, i.e., suggesting he is perceived as wielding unlimited power. Almost 70 percent of respondents put oblast leaders (khokimiaty) on the scale between 7 and 9; 60 percent put raion and city leaders there; and 43 percent put local Soviets, or councils there.

Only 27 percent of respondents, on the other hand, put the Muslim clergy in this category -- a level which was only slightly fewer than the number of people who put the mafia in this category! 28 percent of all respondents put the Muslim clergy between 1 and 3 on the scale, ie, as exerting little if any power -- again, about the same level of responses as for the mafia. Interestingly, Russians tended proportionately to ascribe more power to Muslim leaders than Central Asians did. (Table 3, page 15).

When asked what kind of state would best promote the resolution of Uzbekistan's or Kazakhstan's problems, the majority of respondents, or slightly over half of all respondents (50.4%) selected the answer of "any system, as long as there is order." The proportion of Central Asians and Slavs, male and females, and different age groups did not differ greatly on this answer. In Uzbekistan, less than one eighth (or 127 people, consisting of about 11 percent of all Central Asians, but only 2 percent of all Slavs) selected an Islamic state -- slightly less than the one eighth of respondents, (about ten percent of all Central Asians and 25 percent of all Slavs), who selected a western-style democracy; in Kazakhstan, only 18 people, or less than 2 percent of all respondents, chose an Islamic state. (Table 4, page 16)

Of those who selected an Islamic state, moreover, it was unclear if their notion of an Islamic state is the same as what is normally associated with this in other countries, and answers were contradictory. For example, when asked what traits are most important for a politician to have to get your vote, only 17 percent of those who support the creation of an Islamic state in Uzbekistan believe it is important for the politician they vote for to be a Muslim! Instead, the most important traits were that he be honest and decent (68 percent), and

that he be an experienced leader (49 percent). Also more important than religious affiliation were that he defend the poor (24 percent); that he understand people well (23 percent); and that he bring law and order (19 percent). For the survey as a whole, religious affiliation was viewed as one of the least important traits for a prospective leader of Uzbekistan.

Likewise, when asked which leaders they most respect as a government leader, 90 respondents in the Uzbekistani survey, or over 70 percent of those who selected an Islamic state, named President Karimov. This represented both a higher number and a higher percentage of people who chose Karimov than was found among those who selected any other desired system of government -- and this despite the fact that Karimov has been quite vocal in his opposition to the establishment of an Islamic state. Next in line were 11 people (or 9 percent) who named Rashidov and 8 people who named Lenin. (Only one person said he or she most respected the Ayatollah Khomeini.)

Finally, in a question that asked with what political parties the respondent is affiliated, 12 percent said they belong to the People's Democratic Party, and over half (52 percent) belong to the trade unions. Only two respondents who support the creation of an Islamic state said that they belonged to the Islamic Renaissance Party, although this is difficult to interpret as the IRP is outlawed in Uzbekistan.

Certainly responses about personal belief may be underestimated in our survey, as respondents likely sought to provide the politically correct answers to our questions. At the time the survey was taken, however, it was unclear what the "correct" answers to these questions necessarily were. At the time of the survey, most Central Asian leaders presented quite a dual approach to ethnic identity and Islam. They tended to support the growth of traditional values and Islam as a faith, while steadfastly denouncing the growth of any potential fundamentalist or political Islam that could challenge their political power. While this could possibly account for the low proportion of those who support an Islamic state, therefore, it would not explain the low level of personal belief in Islam. On the contrary, it would likely have seemed more embarrassing to assert that one is a practicing Muslim but to then display little knowledge of, or interest in, its content.

If this is true, then our survey responses suggest that, with the possible exception of parts of the Fergana Valley, adherence to Islam may be seen today more in cultural or traditional terms than purely religious ones. Notions of an Islamic state may also be more idealized in Uzbekistan. In the minds of our respondents, Islamic governments tend to be associated with fairness, goodness, and other traditional or culture values associated with Islam, but not with the clergy or religion as such. Most important to our Uzbekistan respondents are questions of maintaining order and stability in the wake of the chaos of political and economic disruption

throughout the former Soviet Union. While Islam may be growing in Uzbekistan, public opinion would suggest that the threat of the growth of a political Islam as an alternative power source to Presidents Karimov or Nazarbaev is at least so far a relatively weak one.

This is not, however, to minimize the importance of Islam in Central Asian society or politics. Certainly the practice of Islam is growing throughout Central Asia, and these fears may become reality in the future. As we have seen elsewhere in the world, Islam can be a powerful political tool in fomenting conflict and unrest. What our data do suggest, however, is that adherence to Islam in personal terms might mean something quite different from what it does just across the border to the south or in the Middle East. They also suggest that were an "Islamic" conflict to explode in the very near future, it is unlikely that Islam itself would be the root cause of the conflict, as much as it would be an umbrella, or vehicle for expressing other grievances that are far more immediate causes in Central Asia of dissension and despair.

ETHNIC AND NATIONAL IDENTITY

It is difficult in any analysis to separate ethnic, religious, cultural and other identities from each other, and our survey again presented mixed results with regard to ethnic and national identity. As described above, when respondents were asked, for example, to which groups it was most important for them to belong, most selected family and community over religious or specifically national identity. Only 13 percent of respondents in Uzbekistan, and only 4 percent in Kazakhstan, selected "people of my nationality". This likely reflects the fact that the groups they selected -- family, relatives and community -- are often of the same nationality to begin with. But it also suggests how important are other identities -- family, relatives, community, region, etc. -- in individuals' thoughts and actions.

Most respondents tended to feel most a part of family, neighborhoods and community, although there were interesting differences among nationalities. Whereas over 40 percent of the Uzbeks selected their neighborhood community (makhalla), for example, twenty seven percent of the Russians, on the other hand, selected "Soviet people" (even though there was no longer such a thing), and 23 percent selected "people of my profession."

Responses to other questions, on the other hand, suggested schisms as much within Central Asian and Muslim communities as between them and others. Indeed, aside from the most pronounced dislike they seemed to display towards Jews and Armenians, Central Asians displayed almost as much wariness of each other as they did of Russians.

For example, when respondents were asked whom they would like to see as a son or daughter-in-law, a neighbor, and a colleague at work, most respondents -- and especially ethnically Central Asian respondents -- tended to have strong preferences and biases. Over 90

percent of our Uzbek and Kazakh respondents said they would like their son or daughter to marry someone of their same nationality; only 4-5 percent said it did not matter what nationality the individual was. But the second highest remaining percentage of people, roughly 10 percent of both groups, also said they would like their son or daughter to marry a Russian. Between half and two thirds of all Russian respondents (with a higher percentage in Uzbekistan) said they would like to see a Russian as a son or daughter in law; about 13 percent said an Uzbek, and 10 percent, a Kazakh; while about one quarter of the Russians in both countries said it did not matter what nationality the individual was.

When asked whom they would not want to see as a son or daughter in law, Central Asians likewise had strong feelings. Most disfavored in both countries were Jews and Armenians. But about the same proportion of Kazakhs who named a Russian as an undesirable son- or daughter-in-law (37 percent) also named Uighurs (36%) and Uzbeks (35%); and about the same proportion of Uzbeks who named a Russian (23 percent) as undesirable also named a Kyrgyz (21%) and a Kazakh (20%). Only 4 percent of the Kazakhs in our Kazakhstani survey, and only 6 percent of the Uzbeks in the Uzbekistani survey, said that they did not have strong feelings about whom their children should not marry.

Respondents naturally became more tolerant regarding the desired nationality of their neighbors, i.e., the greater the distance from their immediate personal lives; but prejudice and intolerance remained high. Again, Jews and Armenians were at the top of the list, with almost one third of all Uzbek respondents, for example, stating that they would not want to have a Jew as a neighbor, and 26 percent said they would not like to have an Armenian neighbor. But here again, more Uzbek respondents named Tatars (19.4%), Koreans (15%), Kazakhs (12%), Kyrgyz (11%), and Tajiks (8%), than named Russians (7%); and more Kazakh respondents named Uzbeks (14%), Tatars (20%), Koreans (19%), and Uighurs (17%), than named Russians (10%). Only 9 percent of the Uzbek respondents, and about 20 percent of Kazakh respondents, said it made no difference who their neighbor is.

Finally, regarding colleagues at work, again, a good proportion of respondents preferred not to have Jews and Armenians even as professional colleagues. Almost one quarter of all Uzbek respondents said they would prefer not to have a Jewish colleague at work, and one fifth said they would prefer not to have an Armenian one. But again, more people said they would prefer not to have other Central Asian and non-Russian nationalities generally than Russians. More Kazakhs would prefer not to have an Uzbek (11%), Tatar (13%), Korean (11%), or Uighur (11%) colleague at work than would prefer not to have a Russian (6%) colleague; and more Uzbeks would prefer not to have a Kyrgyz, Tajik, Tatar, Kazakh, or

Korean co-worker than a Russian one. Only 10 percent of the Uzbeks, vs. 26 percent of the Russians, said that it doesn't make a difference.

These patterns were similar among the younger generations and more highly educated portions of our sample, moreover, who proved to be no more tolerant than their older or less educated counterparts. Indeed, generally they were less tolerant.

Nonetheless, with increased emphasis on "indigenization" of these countries after such a long period of colonial rule, and with increasing economic hardship, Russians and Central Asians, not surprisingly, displayed a different sense of stake in these countries. When asked whether, given the opportunity, they would like to leave Uzbekistan or Kazakhstan and live in another place, well over 90 percent of the Uzbeks and Kazakhs replied no; by contrast, about 43 percent of the Russians in Kazakhstan, and over one third of the Russians in Uzbekistan, replied in the affirmative, despite the fact that many likely had roots in Central Asia going back two or three generations and had established their own communities there. Most of these Russians wanted to go to Russia, Ukraine, or Belarus, or else to Europe, the U.S., or Canada. Most wanted to leave because they feared for the future of their children, or else were seeking better economic conditions. They tended to be concentrated in the lower age groups and were among the more highly educated.

What the survey results suggest is that while divisions among nationality groups in Central Asia run deep, they may be as much among Central Asians as between them and Russians. Lines between Central Asians versus Russians, or Muslims vs. non-Muslims, are not as clear cut as often assumed. Our survey suggests that discord may be expressed in terms of smaller ethnic groups, family, neighborhood and regional terms as much as in broad ethnic or religious terms. And our survey suggests that the younger generation -- of all nationalities and educational levels -- may be just as intolerant of other national groups as the older respondents. Divisions run deep, and will likely have an enormous influence on Uzbekistan's and Kazakhstan's paths to reform; but the splits and schisms will not always be clear cut.

FOREIGN POLICY

Facing a litany of political, economic and social challenges at home, Central Asian citizens are often expected to be in favor of turning to other countries for aid and assistance. With a strong sense of separate ethnic and cultural identity imbued in Central Asian societies, questions of religious and ethnic identity are often viewed as playing an important role in their determinations of partners abroad. For example, many Western observers have tended to view foreign assistance in Central Asia as largely a contest between Turkey and Iran, given their proximity to Central Asia and the shared cultural if not religious values. But the contradictory

contextual nature of identity in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan seems to be reflected in foreign policy orientations as well.

First, despite the economic hardship at home, our survey suggests that attitudes towards foreign investment or assistance to their countries may be more ambiguous. When asked to rate the importance of a number of possible measures to address Uzbekistan's problems, only about one third of respondents in both Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan said that the widespread attraction of foreign capital is important, with more Russians in Uzbekistan arguing against this than Uzbeks.

Likewise, when asked if their country should turn to other countries to help solve its economic and environmental problems, respondents in both countries were split: almost half of all respondents in Uzbekistan said no, while 40 percent said yes; in Kazakhstan, these proportions were reversed. About one tenth did not know or found it difficult to answer.

Interestingly, these responses were somewhat contradictory by nationality. In Uzbekistan, for example, more Russians argued against the widespread attraction of foreign capital than Uzbeks (19% of Russian respondents said that this was totally unimportant, and 17% said it was even undesirable; this was more than twice as high a proportion of respondents of this nationality group as among Uzbeks.) When asked whether Uzbekistan should turn for help to other countries to solve its problems, however, about half the Russians answered yes, while only about 38 percent of the Uzbeks said yes; more than half of the Uzbeks said no.

The overwhelming reasons for this wariness to turn to other countries for assistance were the sense that the Central Asian new states can "do it themselves." In Uzbekistan, for example, 68 percent of the 620 people who said no to outside assistance stated the reason as "we have our own capabilities and possibilities;" Central Asians comprised 81% of them. In Kazakhstan, 61 percent of the 231 people who reject outside assistance gave this reason, with Central Asians comprising 44 percent of them. Other reasons included the perceived humiliation that would come with receiving outside assistance, and the fear of becoming dependant on Western countries.

Among those who do welcome foreign investment, however, most are seeking this not from Turkey or Iran, but overwhelmingly from the West or Japan. Of the 519 in Uzbekistan and 423 people in Kazakhstan who said that their countries should turn to other countries for assistance, most did not name Turkey or other Islamic countries as the most desirable source of that assistance. Instead, the largest proportions of respondents named European countries (one third of Uzbekistani respondents, and over half of Kazakhstani respondents), and Japan (34 percent of Uzbekistani respondents, and 29 percent of Kazakhstani ones). One third of

respondents in Uzbekistan also named the United States; but the U.S. was named by only 15 percent of Kazakhstani respondents -- about the same proportion who advocated turning to Russia (Bar Graph, page 19).

The most striking answers to this question in Uzbekistan were in the younger age groups of the survey (17-29 years of age). The first three choices were to the U.S. (44 percent of all 17-29 year olds selected the U.S., vs. 22 percent of those over sixty); Japan (40 percent of all 17-29 year olds); the European states (37 percent); and Muslim states (31 percent). Only 20 percent of this age group selected Russia, vs. close to half of those over sixty.

By contrast, only about one fourth (26 percent) of Uzbekistani respondents, and about 6 percent of Kazakhstani respondents said that they should turn to Turkey. For Uzbekistan, this was slightly less than the 29 percent who said Uzbekistan should turn to Russia for assistance, and about the same proportion (25 percent) who said it should turn to governments of the CIS, and also to other Muslim countries. Only 9 people among Uzbekistani respondents, or less than 2 percent of those who responded to this question -- and only about one half of one percent of respondents in Kazakhstan -- believed their countries should turn to Iran.

Nor were these answers divided strictly along nationality lines. Central Asians predominated both among those selecting Muslim countries, and among those seeking aid and assistance from the West. Nor were these answers divided strictly along nationality lines (Table). While 88% of the 135 people in Uzbekistan who selected Muslim countries were of Central Asian nationalities, and 85% of the 137 people who selected Turkey were Central Asians, 70% of the 150 people who selected Russia and of the 159 people who chose European countries were Central Asians. 81% of the 153 people who selected the U.S. were also Central Asian. In Kazakhstan, over 40 percent of those who chose European countries, and more than half of those who selected the U.S., were ethnic Kazakh.

When asked from which countries Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan should keep the greatest distance, those most frequently named was Afghanistan (over one third of respondents in both countries, followed by Israel, Iran and Pakistan. One third of Kazakhstani respondents also named China. When asked from which countries Uzbekistan should keep the greatest distance, Uzbekistani respondents most frequently named Afghanistan (36% of respondents), Israel (21%), Iran (16%), and Pakistan (16%). Kazakhstani respondents named Afghanistan (35 %), China (33 %), Israel (14 %), Iran (13 %), and Pakistan (12 %); 30 percent of Kazakhstani respondents did not know or could not answer.

Uzbeks in Uzbekistan were most wary of Afghanistan (34%), Israel (23%) and Iran (15%). Russians were most wary of Afghanistan (50% of Russians in Uzbekistan, and 41 percent in Kazakhstan), Pakistan (33% in Uzbekistan, vs. 14% for Uzbeks, and 18 % of the

Russians in Kazakhstan); and Iran (29% of Russians in Uzbekistan, and 16 percent of Russians in Kazakhstan). One fourth of the Russians in Kazakhstan were also most wary of China. Kazakhs in Kazakhstan wanted to keep the greatest distance from China (45 %), Afghanistan (30 %), and Israel (17 %); 31 percent of the Kazakhs did not know or could not answer.

Presidents Karimov and Nazarbaev have long argued that with their countries' great wealth, they do not need outside assistance or investment; rather, they seek partners with whom to work on an equal basis. Both leaders consistently have argued that they are not looking to Turkey, or to Iran, or to any one single country for assistance or for a model of development; on the contrary, both countries are seeking contacts with a wide range of countries, and are seeking their own paths to development. Regardless of the success they may reach in these endeavors, our survey suggests that their words may have found profound resonance among their citizenries.

CONCLUSION

As anywhere in the world, identities in Central Asia are fluid and contextual, and the role they play in domestic or foreign policy may be ambiguous. Islam plays a key role, especially in Uzbekistan, in the way people identify themselves, but not necessarily in the all-encompassing or strictly religious way often ascribed to it. National differences are also strong, but are not clear cut: divisions and tensions may be as deep among, and even within, Central Asian groups as between Central Asians and Slavs.

The role of Islam and nationality may be likewise ambiguous in foreign policy. Although the questions above give a cursory and superficial view, they suggest that at least in the area of foreign assistance, foreign involvement is not widely perceived to be a contest between Turkey and Iran, or the Muslim vs. non-Muslim worlds.

Certainly our survey is but a snapshot in time. But overall, it seems to portray a picture of populations seeking to build a stable world out of their current chaos and divisiveness -- a world where their Islamic, ethnic and cultural heritages are perceived as playing a central role, but not precluding integration with the wider international community or a reduction in ethnic tension at home. Their answers paint a confused and contradictory picture of how successful they ultimately may be in reaching these goals.

TABLE 1:
Comparison of Overall Population Distribution and the Survey Sample in
Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan

	KAZAKHSTAN			UZBEKISTAN		
	Year	Census Data	Survey	Year	Census Data	Survey
TOTAL	1990	16,464,464	801	1991	20,613,123	1,266
Male	1990	48.43 %	47.80 %	1991	49.44 %	52.70 %
Female	1990	51.57 %	52.20 %	1991	50.56 %	47.30 %
Urban	1990	57.11 %	52.30 %	1991	40.14 %	66.70 %
Rural	1990	42.89 %	47.70 %	1991	59.86 %	33.30 %
Age 18-29	1991	33.50 %	27.00 %	1991	21.58 %	28.00 %
Age 30-39	1991	24.00 %	26.50 %	1991	12.90 %	29.90 %
Age 40-49	1991	14.00 %	19.60 %	1991	5.96 %	18.20 %
Age 50-59	1991	13.70 %	14.20 %	1991	5.98 %	11.90 %
Age 60 +	1991	14.60 %	11.40 %	1991	6.45 %	11.90 %
Higher Ed	1991	13.00 %	20.10 %	1991	9.17 %	21.30 %
Secondary Ed.a	1991	64.00 %	59.90 %	1991	57.70 %	62.80 %
Unfinished Sec.	1991	23.00 %	18.10 %	1991	33.13 %	14.60 %
Titular Nat'lity	1991	41.00 %	42.90 %	1991	71.39 %	70.40 %
Russian	1991	36.00 %	31.70 %	1991	8.35 %	10.50 %
Other	1991	23.00 %	25.40 %	1991	20.26 %	19.10 %

TABLE 2: Religious Belief by Age and Region

Do you consider yourself a believer? If so, which belief do you profess?

		Islamic Believers		Other Believers*		Non-Believers		Don't Know/Difficult to say/No answer	
<u>Kazakhstan</u>									
TOTAL		196	24.5%	147	18.4%	397	49.6%	61	7.6%
<u>Uzbekistan</u>									
TOTAL		587	46.4%	72	5.8%	564	44.5%	43	3.3%
OBLASTS									
14	Tashkent city	52	35.4%	32	21.8%	56	38.1%	7	4.7%
	Tashkent	93	68.4%	0	0.0%	43	31.6%	0	0.0%
	Bukhara	18	36.0%	1	2.0%	31	62.0%	0	0.0%
	Karakalpakistan	37	50.0%	3	4.1%	31	41.9%	3	4.1%
	Navoi	19	25.3%	8	10.7%	45	60.0%	4	5.3%
	Khorezm	22	24.4%	0	0.0%	68	75.6%	0	0.0%
	Samarkand	59	43.1%	5	3.6%	66	48.2%	6	4.3%
	Syrdarinskaia	28	50.9%	7	12.7%	18	32.7%	2	3.6%
	Kashkadarinskaia	57	40.4%	1	0.7%	79	56.0%	4	2.8%
	Andizhan**	53	74.6%	7	9.9%	9	12.7%	2	2.8%
	Namangan**	48	52.2%	3	3.3%	33	35.9%	8	8.7%
Fergana**	101	51.0%	5	2.5%	85	42.9%	8	4.0%	
AGE									
18-29 years		138	38.9%	16	4.6%	186	52.4%	16	4.5%
30-39 years		184	48.7%	18	4.8%	160	42.3%	16	4.3%
40-49 years		94	40.7%	16	6.8%	112	48.5%	9	3.9%
50-59 years		71	47.0%	14	9.3%	64	42.4%	2	1.4%
60 and more years		100	66.2%	9	6.0%	43	28.5%	0	0.0%

*Category includes Christian, Orthodox, Catholic, Protestant, Buddhist, Jewish, Baptist, and Adventist

**Located in the Fergana Valley

TABLE 3:

	Total Survey	Power/influence of Muslim Clergy					
		Has no power 1	2-3	4-6	7-8	Has unlimited power 9	Don't know
Total	1242 100%	210 16.9%	136 11.0%	315 25.4%	212 17.1%	119 9.6%	233 18.8%
Nationality							
Uzbek	878 70.7%	177 14.3%	93 7.5%	232 18.7%	120 9.7%	82 6.6%	160 12.9%
Other CA	114 9.2%	7 .6%	19 1.5%	30 2.4%	31 2.5%	11 .9%	16 1.3%
Russian/Other Slav	141 11.4%	7 .6%	10 .8%	32 2.6%	39 3.1%	15 1.2%	36 2.9%
Other	110 8.9%	19 1.5%	14 1.1%	21 1.7%	23 1.9%	11 .9%	21 1.7%
Don't know	1 .1%	0 .0%	1 .1%	0 .0%	0 .0%	0 .0%	0 .0%
No answer	1 .1%	0 .0%	0 .0%	1 .1%	0 .0%	0 .0%	0 .0%

15

	Power/influ ence of Muslim Clergy
	No answer
Total	17 1.4%
Nationality	
Uzbek	14 1.1%
Other CA	0 .0%
Russian/Other Slav	2 .2%
Other	1 .1%
Don't know	0 .0%
No answer	0 .0%

TABLE 4: Preferred Donor Countries for Economic & Environmental Assistance to Uzbekistan by Age & Nationality

	European states	Muslim states	Russia	Iran	CIS states	Turkey	USA
AGE							
17-29 yrs	55 10.6%	46 8.9%	30 5.8%	3 .6%	29 5.6%	39 7.5%	65 12.5%
30-39 yrs	61 11.8%	42 8.1%	42 8.1%	2 .4%	52 10.0%	45 8.7%	50 9.7%
40-49 yrs	25 4.8%	22 4.2%	31 6.0%	3 .6%	25 4.8%	27 5.2%	25 4.8%
50-59 yrs	24 4.6%	16 3.1%	26 5.0%	1 .2%	16 3.1%	14 2.7%	22 4.2%
60 yrs and up	11 2.1%	9 1.7%	22 4.2%	0 .0%	10 1.9%	12 2.3%	10 1.9%
Total	176 34.0%	135 26.1%	151 29.2%	9 1.7%	132 25.5%	137 26.4%	172 33.2%
Nationality							
Uzbek	111 21.5%	104 20.1%	97 18.8%	8 1.5%	81 15.7%	110 21.3%	105 20.3%
Other CA	17 3.3%	16 3.1%	8 1.5%	0 .0%	8 1.5%	7 1.4%	21 4.1%
Russian/Other Slav	27 5.2%	6 1.2%	29 5.6%	0 .0%	28 5.4%	8 1.5%	28 5.4%
Other	20 3.9%	9 1.7%	17 3.3%	1 .2%	14 2.7%	12 2.3%	18 3.5%
Don't know	1 .2%	0 .0%	0 .0%	0 .0%	0 .0%	0 .0%	1 .2%
Total	176 34.0%	135 26.1%	150 29.0%	9 1.7%	131 25.3%	137 26.5%	172 33.3%

TABLE 4: Preferred Donor Countries for Economic & Environmental Assistance to Uzbekistan by Age & Nationality (Conti.)

	Preferable env aid donor countries													
	Arab states		Japan		CA states		Israel		Asian states		China		Germany	
AGE														
17-29 yrs	13	2.5%	59	11.4%	31	6.0%	3	.6%	11	2.1%	6	1.2%	1	.2%
30-39 yrs	17	3.3%	62	12.0%	49	9.5%	3	.6%	18	3.5%	7	1.4%	0	.0%
40-49 yrs	7	1.4%	29	5.6%	20	3.9%	1	.2%	7	1.4%	1	.2%	0	.0%
50-59 yrs	4	.8%	19	3.7%	14	2.7%	2	.4%	4	.8%	2	.4%	0	.0%
60 yrs and up	3	.6%	8	1.5%	16	3.1%	1	.2%	3	.6%	2	.4%	0	.0%
Total	44	8.5%	177	34.2%	130	25.1%	10	1.9%	43	8.3%	18	3.5%	1	.2%
Nationality														
Uzbek	29	5.6%	122	23.6%	89	17.2%	3	.6%	28	5.4%	12	2.3%	1	.2%
Other CA	10	1.9%	20	3.9%	19	3.7%	2	.4%	5	1.0%	0	.0%	0	.0%
Russian/Other Slav	1	.2%	19	3.7%	12	2.3%	3	.6%	6	1.2%	1	.2%	0	.0%
Other	3	.6%	16	3.1%	9	1.7%	2	.4%	4	.8%	5	1.0%	0	.0%
Don't know	1	.2%	0	.0%	0	.0%	0	.0%	0	.0%	0	.0%	0	.0%
Total	44	8.5%	177	34.2%	129	25.0%	10	1.9%	43	8.3%	18	3.5%	1	.2%

TABLE 4: Preferred Donor Countries for Economic & Environmental Assistance to Uzbekistan by Age & Nationality (Conti.)

	Preferable env aid donor countries			
	All states		Don't know	
AGE				
17-29 yrs	0	.0%	2	.4%
30-39 yrs	2	.4%	1	.2%
40-49 yrs	1	.2%	1	.2%
50-59 yrs	0	.0%	2	.4%
60 yrs and up	1	.2%	0	.0%
Total	4	.8%	6	1.2%
Nationality				
Uzbek	2	.4%	1	.2%
Other CA	0	.0%	1	.2%
Russian/Other Slav	0	.0%	3	.6%
Other	2	.4%	1	.2%
Don't know	0	.0%	0	.0%
Total	4	.8%	6	1.2%

Countries to which republic should turn for assistance in the resolution of economic and environmental problems

