

From Mediator to Martyr: Dukchi Ishan, Sufi Authority, and the Transformation to

Political Resistance in the Andijan Uprising of 1898.

HST 499: History Capstone: Undergraduate Dissertation

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Research Question: How did Russian colonial rule in the Ferghana Valley transform the traditional Naqshbandi model of Sufi authority into armed resistance in the career of Dukchi Ishan and the 1898 Andijan Uprising?

Introduction

In the early morning of May 18, 1898, roughly two thousand men armed with farm tools, sickles and knives charged the Russian barracks at Andijan. They gathered behind their leader Dukchi Ishan who was also their spiritual teacher. The whole attack was over within hours, however it led to the panic in Tsarist officialdom that lasted for years.

How does a figure like that become a rebel? There are no standard answers to this question. Most Tsarist officials called him a religious fanatic and followers as fanatical muslims. Unfortunately, the point neglects the factors of land seizures, the cholera regulation, the waqf taxation and the corruption of native courts that from modern viewpoint have preceded the uprising. Early Soviet historians for the sake of the government agenda turned it into a class struggle, then in the 1950s the idea reversed course by declaring it reactionary when class struggle became politically inconvenient. In modern days, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Uzbekistan rehabilitated Dukchi Ishan as a national hero whose ideas fit the modern anti-colonial agenda, but it also creates an issue with the fact that actual goal that Dukchi Ishan wanted to achieve was restoration of Sharia and creation of Islamic caliphate that highly contradicts with a modern nation-state.

This thesis argues something different. Dukchi Ishan was working inside a tradition that goes back centuries. The Naqshbandi-Mujaddidi order had its own way of doing things. It

worked through chains of spiritual transmission, through networks of murids loyal to a shaykh, and through waqf endowments and direct contact with Muslim rulers.

My thesis argues that Dukchi Ishan was working inside of a traditional Naqshbandi that traces back for centuries. The most famous example of how this worked is Khwaja ‘Ubayd Allah Ahrar in the fifteenth century. He described what he was doing as “protecting the Muslims from the evil oppressors” by “trafficking with kings and conquering souls.”¹ He gave advice to Timurid sultans. He got the *tamgha* tax abolished in Bukhara and Samarqand because it violated the Islamic norms. One of the things that he founded is a political aspect of sufists. Khoja Ahrar created a model that continued many decades after, within which Dukchi Ishan governed.² This model continued into the eighteenth century in Bukhara, where the Manghit rulers like Shah Murad made Sufi shaykhs central to their government. The Manghits could not claim Chinggisid descent, so they used religion to legitimize their rule. The whole arrangement only worked under one condition: there had to be a Muslim ruler willing to receive the Sufi advisor. Without that, the model breaks.

The policy of ignoring Islam, the Regulations of 1886, the taxation of waqf and its removal, the restriction of pilgrimage, together built a condition where Muslim community entirely got oppressed.³ The previously operated context where orders and rulers had a clear system removed entirely by colonialism. Colonizers dismantled the institutional space within which Sufi leaders had historically operated as mediators. In a place where there is no ruler to advise, no Islamic court, no waqf, Dukchi Ishan did not abandon the tradition. He turned on the whole infrastructure to resist. The murid networks became a mobilization structure. The

¹ Algar, Hamid. "Political Aspects of Naqshbandi History," p. 126.

² Algar, Hamid. 'Political Aspects of Naqshbandi History,' p. 126; Gross, Jo-Ann. 'The Economic Status of a Timurid Sufi Shaykh,' p. 90–94."

³ Komatsu, Hisao. *Dar al-Islām under Russian Rule*, p. 14-15; Malikov, Yuriy. *Modern Central Asia*, p. 86.

khanaqah became a center of power for supporters of the oppressed. From 1895, he appointed his own *ra'ises* to enforce Sharia law in the Ferghana Valley. From the words of Lieutenant General Korol'kov, it was noted that at the time when the "nominees of the ishan exercised authority parallel to ours," it amounted to the existence of dual power.⁴ By the middle of that decade, Dukchi Ishan had built a state within a state. Dukchi Ishan is not a break with the Naqshbandi tradition but a transformation of it which includes the same institutional form, but a completely different political function forced by a colonial situation the tradition had never encountered before. In this dissertation you can find: the perceptions of him by Russian officials, local ulama and contemporary poets; the profound historical analysis of the Sufi model he inherited; and the colonial conditions that formed the portrayal of Dukchi Ishan and the reasons for uprising.

Perceptions of Dukchi Ishan among Contemporaries

a. Russian Colonial Perception

The 1898 Andijan Uprising led by Dukchi Ishan was an unexpected situation for the Tsarist colonial administration of Turkestan. The reaction of Russian officials and commanders reinforced a paranoid view about Central Asian Islam. They even attributed it to deeply rooted religious fanaticism. The interpretation of Russian officials like Governor-General S.M. Dukhovskoi and Lieutenant-General F.M. Koral'kov suggested the point that the uprising was driven by Muslim fanaticism. Furthermore, it can be interpreted this way, but in reality there are several factors that led to these kinds of consequences. The official inquiry of Koral'kov's stated that "...можно безошибочно сказать, что главнейшая причина рассматриваемого мятежа

⁴ Komatsu, Hisao. *Dār al-Islām under Russian Rule*, p. 15; *Андижанское восстание*. Красный архив 88 (1938), p. 146, 173.

заключается в мусульманском фанатизме.”⁵ Moreover, by the invasion into the lands of natives, colonizers made changes on traditions that were held since Amir Temur’s period.⁶

The uprising was quickly linked without any vital evidence to the global Pan-Islamic movement that was popular in the 19th century. First and foremost, Russian authorities thought that it was connected and sponsored by Afghanistan and the Ottoman Empire, since Dukchi Ishan went on pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina in 1886, 12 years before that rebellion.⁷ In the official reports of Dukhovskoi there was cited the possibility of meeting with the Ottoman Sultan Abdulhamid II with ishan.⁸ This suspicion was also fueled by the conspiracy of Dukchi Ishan appointed as caliph, the spiritual successor of the Ottoman Sultan. However, Morrison states that this sort of belief is an entirely fantastic story. Firstly, it was said that he met with Amir of Afghanistan beyond the grave which proves that he was dead at that time and secondly, Ottoman Sultan’s official letter was forged.⁹

Not all Russian officials shared this interpretation. A minority acknowledged that the policy of “non-interference into the religious affairs of Turkestan” had created more problems than it solved. Morrison notes that Russian rule brought visible moral changes to the valley including the spread of alcohol and prostitution which Dukchi Ishan himself later cited as evidence of civilizational decline under colonial regime.¹⁰ The fact that the Naqshbandiya Sufi leader led a revolt intensified the fear of dervishism by Russians. In his report 1899, Dukhovskoi stated that Muslim-Sufists are in many respects much more dangerous to us than ordinary

⁵ Андижанское восстание. С предисловием Е. Штейнберга. Красный архив <https://abashin.org/2024/06/24/andizhanskoe-vosstanie/>, p. 156.

⁶Gross, Jo-Ann. The Naqshbandiya Connection – From Central Asia to India and Back (16th-19th centuries), p. 232-235.

⁷ Komatsu, Hisao. From Holy War to Autonomy, p. 459.

⁸ Андижанское восстание. Красный архив, p. 162.

⁹ Андижанское восстание. Красный архив, p. 142.

¹⁰ Morrison, Alexander. Sufism, Pan-Islamism and Information Panic, p. 260; Komatsu, Hisao. From Holy War to Autonomy, p. 455.

Orthodox Muslims that are clearly related to being cautious in regards to Sufis. Moreover, their experience in the North Caucasus, particularly in example of the long war against Imam Shamil showed how Sufis even from different and diverse places can respond to invasion via activating their power and holding authority over the vast majority of the population.¹¹

b. Perceptions among Ulama

Even though some Russian officials viewed Dukchi Ishan's concerns about moral decay with a degree of sympathy, the established Muslim elites associated with the Hanafi school largely condemned his actions as dangerous and illegitimate. The central objection that local ulema held was "the fatwa on peace with the White Czar," Most of Turkestani people, authorities and ulema approved the acceptance of Russian rule because it brought stability and peace, while a small group's deed in Andijan was illegitimate.¹² The uprising was seen as a thoughtless and harmful act for the whole society that caused fitna (internal disorder in Islamic society). For instance, Bukharan historian Mirza Abd al-Azim Sami states that the main reason for the rebellion was a strong desire for fame and power.¹³ It was driven by egoism and that is why the majority of ulema did not accept that action, even for governing Russians rather than for their nation. In this way, it can be argued that there was no unity among nations, but the military odds were simply insurmountable. There was no chance to take the power from the Tsarist regime, even though after some decades it collapsed. Rebellious people came with agrarian tools against well-educated, mastered army with weapons. Komatsu Hisao states that Dukchi Ishan and his

¹¹ Lenz-Raymann, Kathrin. *Securitization of Islam: A Vicious Circle*. Chapter: Features of Central Asian Folk Islam, p. 60.

¹² Komatsu, Hisao. *Dar-al Islam Document where Clergy agreed with Russians*, p. 16-18; Olcott, Martha Brill. "Sufism in Central Asia: A Force for Moderation or a Cause of Politicization?" *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, 2007, p. 11-12; Erkinov, Aftandil. *The Andijan Uprising of 1898 and Its Leader Dukchi-Ishan*, p. 46-47. Note: "Fatwā-yi Musālemat"

¹³ Komatsu, Hisao. *From Holy War to Autonomy*, p. 465.

followers were poorly coordinated, after many it was suppressed and many people were executed and exiled.¹⁴

c. Literary Perceptions and Satires

Another worth mentioning perception is his contemporaries, the poets who composed a cycle of verses known as *Dukchi-Ishan hajwi*. In these poetic satires he was shown as not a legitimate person. This Hajwi cycle was a literary game which is undoubtedly one of the greatest sources that shows the whole retrospective of Uprising and the figure of Dukchi Ishan. More than 20 poems were linked by the same rhyme and refrain in order to turn poetry into a chain of mockery.¹⁵ The work of poets reveal predominantly negative portrayals from the educated elite, local poets and intelligentsia. Ishan himself was from the *qara suyak* and that is why his followers' vast majority was also from that sort of society.¹⁶ These poems give us an opportunity to look back at the moment when Dukchi Ishan started a rebellion and collected an army to ghazavat.¹⁷ Poets like Muqimi, Dhawqi, Nadim Namangani, Raji Marghilani depicted this kind of actions not as a heroic rebel but as a fraudulent opportunist as same as it was depicted by modern historians. As it was said before, the lowborn origin of Madali also played a crucial role in case of legitimacy. Raji Marghilani claimed that his position even in the Naqshbandiya tariqat is doubtful because there was no connection between silsila and him. That is why people from clerical society who had some knowledge about Islam had a biased view on him, subsequently rejected to support him in any base against colonizers with whom they had agreed relationship unlike Mujaddids.

¹⁴ Komatsu, Hisao. *The Andijan Uprising Reconsidered*, p. 46.

¹⁵ Erkinov, Aftandil. *The Andijan Uprising of 1898 and Its Leader Dukchi-Ishan*, p. 45-46.

¹⁶ *Qara suyak* means black bone, people from non-elite society, servants and the poor.

¹⁷ Ghazavat – Holy War, against infidels

Sufism itself is very connected to the mysterious knowledge and doing extraordinary, mystical actions. Dukchi Ishan is not an exception, thus he has many spiritual miracles in his repertoire. As it was stated in Erkinov's work, he was accused of doing fake treatments through mysticism, and many ulema of his time claimed him to do fake karamat.¹⁸ He foresighted the future of clients who came to cure or open the paths, in fact it was just illusions and fraud. Sifqi Khandayliqi described that he [Dukchi Ishan] sees things clearly only after it occurred.¹⁹

One interesting moment from Erkinov's text is that many authors also used some sort of accusations like qizilbash, shiite, accusing his father from Shughnan which is located in the Pamir region where the dominant population is Ismaili shi'a. Moreover, Nadim Namangani called him dajjal which directly means antichrist and fir'awn (pharaoh) in order to state him in a bad sense through Quranic figures.²⁰ The character of Imam Madali seemed to be moot, even though he had a bunch of people who compromised with his badly described opinions.

Historiography

The people who had opinions about Dukchi Ishan did not agree on much. But all of their characterizations became material that later scholars used to build their own arguments by looking at materials of Russian commanders, Bukharan historians and satirical poets. The problem is that those interpretations were shaped more by the politics of the moment than by what the sources actually said. Morrison notes that the Andijan Uprising was called upon to carry a "huge weight of interpretation" out of all proportion to its real military significance.²¹ He reflects to the point that an uprising crushed within hours, but treated as one of the critical threats to the entire empire. Then, looking at the historiography is not just listing opinions. It is watching

¹⁸ Erkinov, Aftandil. *The Andijan Uprising of 1898 and Its Leader Dukchi-Ishan*, p. 49.

¹⁹ Erkinov, Aftandil. *The Andijan Uprising of 1898 and Its Leader Dukchi-Ishan*, p. 49.

²⁰ Erkinov, Aftandil. *The Andijan Uprising of 1898 and Its Leader Dukchi-Ishan*, p. 47-49.

²¹ Morrison, Alexander. "Review of Erkinov, *The Andijan Uprising*," p. 389.

the same event get used over and over, consequently each time by someone who needed a different version of Dukchi Ishan.

a. Tsarist and Early Imperial Historiography

As it was stated previously, perceptions of Tsarist authorities towards Sufism mostly connected with fear. It can be explained by the fact that before 1898, Russia had to face the small power in the Caucasus mountains, commonly popular by name of the Russian-Murid War. During this period, leaders like Imam Shamil shaped the geopolitics of the Caucasus and he was associated with Sufi networks, thanks to them, particularly the members of Naqshbandi order made to fear such a big imperial power like Russia. Russian military writer Vasilii Potto described muridizm as a militant religious brotherhood that can easily mobilize mountaineers against imperial rule.²² Russian authorities interpreted the ideology of Sufism (Naqshbandi tariqat) as a foundation for anti-imperial struggle. Over time, this experience produced a stable conviction within the imperial administration that Sufi contained inherent potential for political mobilization and rebellion.

Earlier experience of Russia faced with small, but powerful Sufi-run power eventually influenced the interpretation of the Andijan Uprising. When Dukchi Ishan appeared as a charismatic religious leader, similar in a context of Imam Shamil and others, who mobilized followers through murid networks, Tsarist officials did not see him as an isolated local phenomenon. Instead, they perceived him through the prism of previously mentioned Caucasus precedent. That idea indeed was analogical, maybe even similar where the leader of Islamic culture naturally transforms spiritual authority into political resistance. Therefore, the uprising

²² Dukhovskoi, S.M. "Islam v Turkestane." In *Imperatorskaya Rossiya i musul'manskii mir*, edited by D.Yu. Arapov, 8-12. Moscow, 2006. <https://abashin.org/2024/03/29/duhovskoj-s-m-islam-v-turkestane/>

was quickly categorized as another manifest of “Muslim fanaticism” rather than as a reaction to land dispossession, marginalization or economic crisis.

In August 1898, Military Prosecutor Dolinskii and Lieutenant-General Korol’kov concluded that the main reason for the uprising was Muslim fanaticism. Governor-General Dukhovskoi later expanded on this idea in his report *Islam in Turkestan*, where he wrote that what he called “Musulman-Sufists” were more dangerous than ordinary Muslims.²³ He claimed that Sufi shaykhs combining both spiritual and political authority can make their disciples as universal soldiers of war against the colonial regime that would be tough to control. Dukhovskoi was not just reacting to Andijan. Furthermore, he was thinking back to Shanil’s resistance in the Caucasus where the same Nashbandi networks had supported a long armed struggle against the empire. From his point of view, what happened in Andijan looked similar enough to fit the same pattern. A Sufi leader with loyal murids was a threat for the security of the administration.

Dukhovskoi’s vision of the event of 1898 was not accepted by other imperial court members. For instance, Finance Minister Witte said that the kind of crackdown Dukhovskoi was proposing would only alienate the Muslim population further and create more uprising rather than that.²⁴ Dukchi Ishan’s complaints about moral decay under Russian rule were not entirely made up, and Russians somehow agreed and understood the reasons for rebellion.²⁵ Even an orientalist-administrator in Turkestan, Nil Lykoshin started out from the standard suspicion of Sufi networks but moved over time toward a different position. He came to see the corruption of native officials and the broader failures of Russian administration as the actual problem.²⁶ The fear of “dervishism” and “ishanism” did not emerge nowhere, the comprehensive of the whole

²³ Духовская, В.Ф. Туркестанские воспоминания. Санкт-Петербург, 1913.
http://az.lib.ru/d/duhowskaja_w_f/text_1913_turkestanskije_vospominaniya.shtml; Morrison, Alexander. "Sufism, Pan-Islamism and Information Panic," p. 288.

²⁴ Erkinov, Aftandil. *The Andijan Uprising of 1898 and Its Leader Dukchi-Ishan*, p. 11-12.

²⁵ Erkinov, Aftandil. *The Andijan Uprising of 1898 and Its Leader Dukchi-Ishan*, p. 10-11.

²⁶ Morrison, Alexander. "Sufism, Pan-Islamism and Information Panic," p. 290-292.

picture can be almost understandable by looking at the both absolutes, the wife of Dukhovsoi, Princess Varvara Golitsyna states the same as her spouse “fanaticism” manner of uprise.²⁷ For this reason, Alexander Knysh argues that Russian scholarship developed a tendency to explain resistance movements primarily through Sufi organization itself, reducing complex historical processes to the structure of religious networks.²⁸ That is why the Tsarist reading of Dukchi Ishan should not be understood not only as a reaction to 1898, but a part of the big picture, in a broader part of imperial habit of interpreting Sufism as a political threat.

b. Muslim Fanaticism

The interpretive habits described above were not accidents of individual judgement. They formed a coherent paradigm with recognizable components, each of which deserves separate examination. Why do we study the 1898 situation in Andijan? The answer to this question might not be explicit to some extent, however Andijan Uprising remains to be one of the most contentious episodes of the Russian imperial period, due to the fact that it serves as a flashpoint where colonial paranoia collided with a society pushed to its structural limits. To understand this event, one must deconstruct the explanatory paradigm of “Muslim Fanaticism.” This term means a narrative constructed by Tsarist officials to mask a profound failure of colonial governance.²⁹ By dismissing the rebellion as a spontaneous situation of irrationality, Tsarist officials effectively silenced the legitimate material and legal grievances of a society pushed to its structural limits. To understand the true nature of the uprising, one must first deconstruct the paradigm by examining how colonial stereotypes, institutional trauma and the erasure of traditional Sufi

²⁷ Зияев, Х. Об освещении Андижанского восстания 1898 г. *Общественные науки в Узбекистане* 1 (1987), p. 26-27.

²⁸ Knysh, Alexander. "Sufism as an Explanatory Paradigm," p. 170-172.

²⁹ Knysh, Alexander. "Sufism as an Explanatory Paradigm," p. 146-148, 170-172.

mediation roles converged to create a movement where such monsters were created in order to preserve a society and its moral form.

The official Tsarist interprets the 1898 attack as it was built upon the concept of “Muslim fanaticism” which served to delegitimize any political or economic basis for the revolt.³⁰ Military Prosecutor Dolinskii and Lieutenant General Korol’kov stated “without error... that the main reason for the mutiny was Muslim fanaticism.”³¹ By framing the event this way, the administration could reclassify complaints about land seizures, the taxation of waqf endowments and the restriction of the hajj as mere expressions of religious discontent rather than valid protests against policy conducted by the colonial Empire. Consequently, the state was able to avoid addressing the causes of the uprising, so the label of fanaticism became a tool of imperial informational panic used to justify their presence, their violent suppression of a population that Russian officials no longer understood.³² Ultimately, this paradigm ensured that the “Official Mind” remained blind to the rational motivations of the rebels and they preferred to see a pathologically driven mob instead.³³ Thus, the motif was not fully attached to the fanaticism, even though the people who participated in the rebellion were murids, their perfect reason can be seen as a call of intolerance to suffer from being oppressed.

Stereotypes

Russian practical experts in Islamic studies consistently portrayed the local population as wild or backward which provided a moral foundation for the use of brutal force as a primary tool of administrative acts.³⁴ Official reports frequently utilized derogatory terms such as

³⁰ Андижанское восстание. Красный архив 88 (1938), p. 156.

³¹ Андижанское восстание. Красный архив 88 (1938), p. 156. The Russian original reads: "можно безошибочно сказать, что главнейшая причина рассматриваемого мятежа заключается в мусульманском фанатизме."

³² Morrison, Alexander. "Sufism, Pan-Islamism and Information Panic," p. 257.

³³ Morrison, Alexander. "Sufism, Pan-Islamism and Information Panic," p. 269-272.

³⁴ Erkinov, Aftandil. The Andijan Uprising of 1898 and Its Leader Dukchi-Ishan, p. 10-12.

“savagery”, “Asiatic barbarians,” and “half-wild Asian country” to describe the Ferghana region and its inhabitants.³⁵ These stereotypes were based on the assumption that Central Asian stood at a lower stage of development for the people who came there, and were thus incapable of reasoned political thought or civil dialogue. Due to the fact that they were viewed as unenlightened, the authorities believed that the only language they truly understood and respected was brute force and the demonstration of might leading to a policy where pacification meant terrifying the populace through exemplary punishment.³⁶

Islam as an Irrational Force

The Tsarist administration perceived Islam not as a sophisticated legal and theological system, but as an inherently static and irrational force that petrified its people and hindered progress of humanity. Reports from the military administration claimed that “Islamism petrifies its people,” causing them to “regress still further into a morass of ignorance.”³⁷ This view held that the faith of the majority was the standard of life that stood in direct opposition to the Russian so-called “civilizing mission.”³⁸ From that point appears another problem that was used to be repeated in previous sections: the policy of ignoring Islam. By framing Islam as inherently irrational the state justified this policy. This perception was fundamentally flawed because it ignored the fact that Muslim community’s conversion to sharia was a rational defensive reaction to the chaotic and corrupt legal dualism introduced by the Russian bureaucratic reforms.³⁹

Leaders as Manipulators

³⁵ Erkinov, Aftandil. The Andijan Uprising of 1898 and Its Leader Dukchi-Ishan, p. 11.

³⁶ Erkinov, Aftandil. The Andijan Uprising of 1898 and Its Leader Dukchi-Ishan, p. 12; Morrison, Alexander. “Sufism, Pan-Islamism and Information Panic,” p. 277.

³⁷ Morrison, Alexander. Russian Rule in Samarkand, 1868–1910, p. 4–5.

³⁸ Erkinov, Aftandil. The Andijan Uprising of 1898 and Its Leader Dukchi-Ishan, p. 13.

³⁹ Komatsu, Hisao. Dār al-Islām under Russian Rule, p. 8-10; Komatsu, Hisao. “The Andijan Uprising Reconsidered,” p. 35-36.

In the official Russian accounts, charismatic leaders such as Dukchi Ishan were portrayed as the person who manipulates uneducated people and presented as charlatans who lie to people. The historian Sami and other representatives of the loyal-to-Russian elite just repeated the view of Tsarists by calling Ishan a stupid man and other words who lured followers with free meals. This narrative sought to deny the Ishan any legitimacy related to spirituality, moreover, this narrative tells that his such influence was collected with the help of simple tricks.⁴⁰ By reducing the leader to the level of fraud, the state was able to view thousands of his followers as helpless puppets of his ego rather than as active participants in the public struggle for justice. Such a view of course meant a lot for the administration to justify afterwards actions. This deconstruction of ishan's leadership led to the loss of his moral weight. And authorities were allowed to treat the rebels for its fanaticism rather than a community response to systematic failure of Russians.

Sufi brotherhoods, often referred to as ishanism or dervishism were reevaluated by Russian officials as secret agents, state against secret societies, often resembling Jesuits.⁴¹ In an 1899 report, Dukhovskoi argued that "Musulman-Sufists" are much more dangerous than ordinary muslims because they created disciplined and integrated organizations by using spiritual authority.⁴² The colonial authorities were obsessed with the idea of a conspiracy "enemy within" that could mobilize thousands of followers through the secretive murid-pir bond.⁴³ This fear led to a permanent state of information panic of that Morrison suggests, where every khanaqah was monitored as a potential hive of sedition and every pilgrimage was seen as a weapon for "Muslim fanaticism."⁴⁴ So, Sufism was securitized and categorized as a threat to the state, yet the

⁴⁰ Komatsu, Hisao. *Dār al-Islām under Russian Rule*, p. 13-14.

⁴¹ Knysh, Alexander. "Sufism as an Explanatory Paradigm," p. 148.

⁴² Morrison, Alexander. "Sufism, Pan-Islamism and Information Panic," p. 288.

⁴³ Morrison, Alexander. "Sufism, Pan-Islamism and Information Panic," p. 257; Knysh, Alexander. "Sufism as an Explanatory Paradigm," p. 160–161.

⁴⁴ Morrison, Alexander. *Russian Rule in Samarkand, 1868–1910*, p. 4-5; Morrison, Alexander. "Sufism, Pan-Islamism and Information Panic," p. 257, 269.

paranoia blinded officials to the public philanthropic and stabilizing nature of Sufi centers like the one at Ming-Tepe.

Ignoring the Sufi Tradition

Again, labeling Dukchi Ishan simply as a fanatic fails because it ignores the deeply laid Naqshbandi tradition of social mediation and moral reform that guided his actions. Dukchi Ishan acted within the “Ahrar model” which held that a Sufi should “mingle with kings” and provide more guidance to protect the community from oppression.⁴⁵ His primary work, *Ibrat al-Ghafilin* was a traditional religious tract focused on moral purification and the basic education of a community he saw as corrupted by the spread of drunkenness and gambling under colonial rule.⁴⁶ His authority was built on communal services like hospitality, healing the sick during even cholera outbreaks and providing water to travelers, so that was the traditional visible manifestation of good muslim and good sufi who succeeded in spiritual legitimacy.⁴⁷ But because the Russian system offered no space for these leaders to act as legitimate advisors, his influence was changed to resistance and his leadership became militant only when the state destroyed the traditional grounds for meditation.⁴⁸

Fear of Dervishism

The Russian perception of Andijan was profoundly illustrated by the “Caucasus trauma,” decades long resistance of caucasian muslims, especially Imam Shamil that left a footprint on the memory as a fear. Dukhovskoi, surprisingly a veteran of the Caucasus wars, explicitly used the memory of Shamil’s muridizm to interpret the Andijan Uprising. He warned that Sufists produce

⁴⁵ Gross, Jo-Ann. "Authority and Miraculous Behavior," p. 162-165; Algar, Hamid. "Political Aspects of Naqshbandi History," p. 126.

⁴⁶ Komatsu, Hisao. *Dār al-Islām under Russian Rule*, p. 14-15; Olcott, Martha Brill. "Sufism in Central Asia," p. 13.

⁴⁷ Komatsu, Hisao. "The Andijan Uprising Reconsidered," p. 33-34.

⁴⁸ Babajanov, Baxtiyor M. "Dukchi Ishan i Andizhanskoe vosstanie 1898 g." In *Подвижники ислама*, p. 264. See: “можно рассматривать, с известными оговорками, как накшбандийскую реакцию на колонизацию”

leaders who would challenge the imperial state as charismatic as Dukchi Ishan and Imam Shamil.⁴⁹ This fear rooted in the Caucasus experience meant that Dukchi Ishan was never read on his own terms, but he was always read through the shadow of Imam Shamil. The empire was haunted by the specter of a holy war from the mountains, so they projected the militant model of North Caucasus onto the social landscape of the Ferghana Valley. This universalizing of different sufi models and regions might be seen as a right decision, however the fear of failure pushed region officials to use the same strategy, despite it neglected and ignored specificity of local people and their relationship to the long-time serving actors such Sufists.

The Failure of the Paradigm

The theory of fanaticism ultimately failed because it could not account for the social, economic and religious causes that produced the uprising. For instance, it was not irrationality due to the fact that land dispossession, waqf taxation, cholera regulations and the destruction of Islamic institutions had emotional and social effects on the citizens. They were grievances produced by colonial policy, and the uprising was a response to them. Labeling it as fanatical did not explain the rebellion, however, it explained and concealed the failure of Russian colonial governance. This paradigm did not vanish with the empire that produced it. Soviet historiography inherited many of its assumptions, even as it reversed their political valence.

c. Soviet Historiography

In the Soviet period there were two diverse opinions on the Andijan Uprising, Both of them were driven by the policies that were introduced by communist party. First and foremost, the early progressive view considered uprising in a positive sense and ignored the religious core

⁴⁹ Morrison, Alexander. "Sufism, Pan-Islamism and Information Panic," p. 286-288. See:... This was partly owing to earlier fears generated by the long war against the Chechens and Daghestanis in the North Caucasus. That was an experience Governor-General Dukhovskoi (who had served in the Caucasus war in his youth) referred to in his equally paranoid (and in some places downright bizarre) report a year later

of that movement. As communism itself in Russia was a revolutionary movement, the Red movement also wanted to find resembling revolutionary side from Dukchi Ishan's action. To look at the context, people who are mostly working class oppressed and were against the regime. Communists were focused on national-liberation and anti-feudal character and interpreted all from their own prism. The most plausible explanation is that early Soviets needed to condemn tsarism, while after they wanted to prioritize ethnic harmony under Russian guidance.

In the 1950s it was considered a reactionary movement and altered from progressiveness.⁵⁰ By reactionary it is often attributed to religious fanaticism and foreign help or intervention of Pan Islamic movements that were popular at that time.⁵¹ That kind of shift occurred right after World War II by the "Great Friendship" campaign promoted by regime states Morrison. Also he relies on Lowell Tillett's view that in the 1950's it turned to be reactionary because of the involvements of British agents.⁵² From the Red archive (Красный архив) article: "Большое значение андижанских событий 1898 г. заключалось в том, что это было открытое нападение организованной повстанческой группы на колонизаторов... Политический характер Андижанского восстания был настолько очевиден, что русской администрации пришлось признать его политическую окраску."⁵³ This indicates the communist view of colonial revolution was objective, even under religious soil.

Many ulema who were under the Soviet regime also accepted the views of their predecessors. For instance Muhammadjan Hindustani strongly condemned the uprising by stating in his treatise written in 1987: "It is even more surprising that you extol Dukchi Ishan for his jihad. It would have been better if this jihad had never happened!" From his notion we can

⁵⁰ Morrison, Alexander. Sufism, Pan-Islamism and Information Panic, p. 256.

⁵¹ Erkinov, Aftandil. The Andijan Uprising of 1898 and Its Leader Dukchi-Ishan, p. 33.

⁵² Tillett, The Great Friendship, 79-123.

⁵³ Андижанское восстание. С предисловием Е. Штейнберга. Красный архив <https://abashin.org/2024/06/24/andizhanskoe-vosstanie/>, p. 123-124.

understand that he criticizes not only leaders and also followers who pushed him as well as it led to consequences of domination of the White Czar.⁵⁴

d. Post-Soviet and Contemporary Scholarship

The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 emerged a re-evaluation process that created a new vision of interpretation. In the independent republics, in this case Uzbekistan Dukchi Ishan's was transformed from reactionary figure to national hero. Erkinov in his work gives a positive evaluation of Dukchi Ishan who have struggled for liberation from Russian colonial rule. Once it was criticized by the contemporary poets Dukchi Ishan, most historians state that authors of satires of his are traitors who were against their own nation and preferred to stay without any business. This kind of re-evaluation also gives a new duality problem. His identity itself is very complicated and his motifs are also tied comprehensively. The first thing that most authors say is national independence, while his motifs were driven with an idea of restoration of the Islamic state like in the times of four righteous caliphs.⁵⁵

Context

a. Social and Political Context of Naqshbandiyya-Mujaddidiyya

4.a.i. Policies in Central Asia

The broader context starts from the historical role of Sufism before Russian intervention. The Naqshbandiya order to which Dukchi Ishan belonged has deeply intertwined with Central Asian political life. The proto Naqshbandiya which is known as Khwajagan from Khwajah 'Abd al-Khaliq Ghijuvani until the succession of Baha' al-Din Naqshband was characterized as non-hereditary shaykhhood. In the later period of Sufism when the conquest of Central Asia by Russians started, the previous authority of Islam remained as it was until the expansion.

⁵⁴ Komatsu, Hisao. *The Andijan Uprising Reconsidered*, p. 54.

⁵⁵ Olcott, *Sufism in Central Asia*, p. 13-14.

Conquest was achieved by force, and local Hanafi madhab accepted control. Before colonization, there was a traditional election system with one of administrative appointments for local officials.

Why was the local population in a stressful situation? The Regulations of 1886 significantly changed the administration. First and foremost, it led to the increase of paperwork. However, the main thing happened was a shift from actual authority over the local population into the hands of native administrators like qadis, biis and the volost chiefs. This allowed traditional judicial courts. From the first glance it can be seen that with the local administration citizens would have an easier conversation, however in this case due to the corruption and injustice, people were in more stressful situations. Moreover, Russian judicial interference that came later, such as efforts to replace traditional seals used by qadis with new state-issued seals, was a frequent source of resistance.⁵⁶

The uprising was a critical point to control weakening, and the role of Dukchi Ishan who held an autonomous parallel government in the space sharing with Russians, places him in the same place as von Kaufman level of authority for another part of the oppressed society of Ferghana. The question appears how he created that authority and what measures he has taken to create an enormous army. First of all, to look back at the biography might be seen as appropriate in understanding what kind of person he was. Dukchi Ishan is the other controversial leader of the Naqshbandiya-Mujaddidiya Sufi order. He combined both spiritual authority and political resistance. He was not only a religious figure but also a symbol of resistance against both colonial oppression and the feudal system.

He was born in Margilan district in a poor family of Kashgar origin. His father owned a small land of 5 tanaps and made spindles and that is why his nickname is Dukchi which is

⁵⁶ Morrison. Sufism, Pan-Islamism and Information Panic, p.279

translated directly as a spindle-maker.⁵⁷ He also was a master of that craft as his father. Dukchi Ishan became a student of Paytok Ishan Sultan Khan Tyure. He worked for him as a mud-brick maker and most of knowledge was given by that person. After mentor's death he became successor in the Naqshbandiya Sufi order. In 1886 he went to perform hajj to Mecca which was 12 years before the Uprising. One of the biggest things that happened in that period of his life is his revelation at the Prophet's tomb.⁵⁸ As usual Ishan cured many people who had many murids as his mentor. He was cured by simple rituals like blowing on salt or earth, slapping patients, stroking his beard by saying "Allahu-Akbar" and etc. He reintroduced many practices that were in pre-Russian times. From all these things the portrayal of him says that he valued traditions of Islam, Shari'a and was a good muslim.

The turning point appears when under Russian rule Ferghana valley became morally worse. For instance, increased prostitution, drinking, gambling within the ban on zakat taxes, religious endowments (waqf) and pilgrimage significantly stressed local muslim communities. He recruited many people, most of them were his murids. In fact, the first ever plan was to attack Osh and Margilan, but it failed due to haste and betrayal.⁵⁹

b. Is Dukchi Ishan a Continuation of Sufi Traditions?

The above sections have explored the colonial context of the Andijan Uprising and the Russian perception of Dukchi Ishan. Nevertheless, this does not resolve the issue of why Dukchi Ishan was able to gain a substantial number of followers, nor does it clarify the nature of his leadership as a continuation or transformation of Sufi tradition. To resolve this issue, it is necessary to explore the issue of silsila and the transmission of authority within the Naqshbandi

⁵⁷ Komatsu, Hisao. "The Andijan Uprising Reconsidered," p. 30. Note: Unit of measurement. 1 tanap = approximately 0.22 hectares.

⁵⁸ С.Н. Абашин, В.О. Бобровников. Подвижники ислама: Культ святых и суфизм в Средней Азии и на Кавказе, p. 259; Komatsu, Hisao. *Dār al-Islām under Russian Rule*, p. 14.

⁵⁹ Андижанское восстание. Красный архив 88 (1938), p. 149.

Mujaddidi tradition, and to compare the role of Dukchi Ishan to that of earlier Sufi leaders who functioned in the context of Muslim rule. This will enable us to move from a classification of Dukchi Ishan as either a traditional Sufi or a radical rebel to an exploration of how the inherited religious form was transformed by the colonial context.

4.a.iii. Transregional Networks

The Naqshbandi tradition of Sufism is one in which spiritual authority is not merely personal but also genealogical. Sufi authority is established through the silsila, the chain of transmission that leads from a shaykh to his predecessors and, finally, to the Prophet Muhammad. Gross highlights the importance of the Naqshbandiya Mujaddidiya as a transregional network in which “patterns of piety, political identity, and legitimacy” were transmitted between Central Asia and India.⁶⁰ This indicates that subsequent Sufi leaders did not establish their own personal authority but rather placed themselves within established chains of transmission that were invested with both religious and social capital. One of the key players in this web of connections is Khwajah Ahmad Kasani, known as Makhdum i A‘zam, who is recognized by Gross as a leading figure of the Dahbid tradition in Transoxiana.⁶¹ The later Naqshbandi memory of Makhdum i A‘zam’s importance reveals that silsila were more than simply a theological genealogy and that they also provided a common language of legitimacy through which claims to authority could be assessed and challenged. When later individuals such as Dukchi Ishan claimed to be authorized guides, they did so through this inherited language of lineage rather than personal charisma, even when challenged by clerical elites.

Komatsu’s account of the career of Dukchi Ishan provides tangible evidence of the continuity of logic. He observes that Dukchi Ishan initially became a murid of a Naqshbandi

⁶⁰ Gross, Jo-Ann. "The Naqshbandiya Connection: From Central Asia to India and Back," p. 232.

⁶¹ Gross, Jo-Ann. "The Naqshbandiya Connection: From Central Asia to India and Back," p. 222-224.

Mujaddidi shaykh, was subsequently appointed khalifa, and finally replaced his master Sultankhan Tora upon the latter's death around 1882.⁶² This pattern clearly shows that Dukchi Ishan's authority was recognized within a silsila of transmission rather than being self-proclaimed. It also shows that his leadership was embedded in existing Sufi networks long before the Andijan Uprising, which challenges the idea that he can be understood primarily as a rebel leader. Komatsu also observes that Dukchi Ishan studied under a shaykh in Kashmir, which located him in a wider trans-regional religious space rather than a local Ferghana one.⁶³ This connection to Kashmir is important because it locates Dukchi Ishan in the same Indo-Central Asian religious space as the figures discussed by Gross, and implies that his religious formation took place within a wider Islamic geography rather than a local one. Such transregional experiences may have helped to inform his sense of the Muslim world as a moral community, which in turn informed his political imagination under colonial rule.

Next, the hajj and legitimization through uwaisi justifies the continuity of Sufi traditions. Komatsu explains how the pilgrimage of Dukchi Ishan to Mecca and Medina raised his religious stature, as pilgrims were known to return with gifts, tales, and that is why his authority arose within reputation and was added to their status in the local community. He also relates how Dukchi Ishan in one account asserted that he had been given spiritual education in a dream vision, where the Prophet Muhammad and the first four caliphs appointed him as a khalifa to lead Muslims. Though this account may be viewed with a dose of skepticism by historians, it is certainly a common trope in Sufi hagiography, where visions are used as a way of demarcating spiritual authority and as a means of mobilizing credulity in followers. Such visions of legitimation had been used in earlier Sufi hagiographies, where dreams and encounters with holy

⁶² Komatsu, Hisao. "The Andijan Uprising Reconsidered," p. 30-31.

⁶³ Komatsu, Hisao. "The Andijan Uprising Reconsidered," p. 31.

figures were used to confirm the spiritual authority of a shaykh to his followers. The fact that you can find these same motifs in Sufi biographies from many different periods suggests that Dukchi Ishan was using a recognizable religious pattern, without inventing new things to legitimize himself. But the colonial setting changed how those claims got read, because in an earlier period claims about visions and direct contact with the Prophet would have been understood as signs of acting within the tradition. By the late 19th century, Russian officials read the same claims as evidence of fanaticism or as a political threat on other readings too.

On the level of practice, Komatsu gives examples of how Dukchi Ishan established his authority through service to the community. He points out that Dukchi Ishan gave water and rest to travelers on the busy road near Mingtepe, and that people gathered around him under trees that he planted, where preaching and religious talk probably took place.⁶⁴ Such practices are significant because they indicate how religious authority was embedded in everyday social interactions and economic practices. Dukchi Ishan's authority was not merely manifest in the moments of political activism but was constructed through everyday interactions, hospitality, moral teaching, and the provision of practical benefits to travelers and villagers. Such practices are similar to earlier Sufi patterns of shaykhs establishing a following through visible service and everyday presence in the community. This similarity in the realm of social practice indicates that Dukchi Ishan's authority cannot be seen as the result of a single moment of rebellion but as the result of long-term engagement with the local society.

4.b.i. Khwaja Ubayd Allah Ahrar and the Classical Naqshbandi Model

To understand what Dukchi Ishan inherited and what he changed, it is necessary to return back to the figure who created the classical Naqshbandi model of political engagement. Khwaja Nasir al-Din 'Ubayd Allah Ahrar represents a decisive stage in the development of the

⁶⁴ Ibid, p. 31-34.

Naqshbandiyya in Central Asia. While earlier Naqshbandi masters were known for their spiritual discipline and local influence, Ahrar transformed the order into a socially and politically active movement. He is often described as a *pir-i-sani* which translated as a second elder, because of his holy role in consolidating and expanding the authority of the order. Overall, most of the traditions in most modern Naqshbandi uses, like the principle of *khalwat dar anjuman*, firstly appeared and introduced to the world by him.⁶⁵ This doctrine encouraged active participation in worldly affairs while maintaining spiritual sobriety. As Gross demonstrates, the Naqshbandiyya under Ahrar did not promote withdrawal from society, but he claims that to be engaged within it as a key.

Ahrar's authority was closely connected to his commitment to Shari'a. He believed that it was not enough for rulers to possess political power. They had to govern according to Islamic law and any implementation in his era was strongly accused to be blasphemy, not as similar as in many *bida* making Sufis. Historical accounts attribute to him an important role in the accession of Sultan Abu Said in 1451 and he later acted as a mediator between the princes of Timurid lineage princes in order to prevent conflict in civil society.⁶⁶ He also intervened in fiscal matters including the abolition of certain taxes as the *tamgha* which were considered inconsistent with Islamic norms.⁶⁷ In this way, he showed that Sufi authority did not function as a rebellion against political order but as moral correction and guidance within it.

The strength of his model can be supported by the economic well-being of that times *tariqa*. Ahrar accumulated extensive *waqf* properties as well as agricultural lands, mills and commercial establishments across Transoxiana. These endowments provided the material basis

⁶⁵ *Khalwat dar anjuman*: solitude within society, the Naqshbandi principle of inward focus on God while remaining outwardly engaged in worldly affairs. See Algar, Hamid. "Political Aspects of Naqshbandi History," p. 126.

⁶⁶ Gross, Jo-Ann. "Multiple Roles and Perceptions of a Sufi Shaikh," p. 113-115.

⁶⁷ Algar, Hamid. "Political Aspects of Naqshbandi History," p. 126; Gross, Jo-Ann. "The Economic Status of a Timurid Sufi Shaykh," p. 90-94.

for charitable activities, educational institutions and social protection. Gross notes that Ahrar's waqf network allowed him to support entire communities and to act as a patron of the poor layer of society.⁶⁸ Through such economic foundations, spiritual authority became institutionalized and continued for many centuries even in the time of the Margelan leader. The order under Ahrar was not a loose mystical circle, despite people interpreted mostly in that way, but it was a structured network with centralized leadership and wide regional influence. This configuration of silsila, economic stability and political mediation may be described as the classical Naqshbandi model that prolonged and inspired many others too. It functioned within a Muslim political framework where it shared legal and moral norms, moreover it was first-ever time to be able to implement mediation. The later Mujaddidi branch associated with Ahmad Sirhindi revitalized this Sharia rule orientation and for the further successors to locate themselves between spiritual and political engagement.⁶⁹ Understanding this model is essential, since it provides the historical baseline from which the transformation of Sufi authority under Russian rule can be interpreted.

The religious and political landscape of 18th and 19th centuries' Transoxiana was deeply shaped by renewal of the Naqshbandiyya-Mujaddidiya branch that came from the reformist teachings of the above mentioned Ahmad Sirhindi. Sirhindi, known as the "Renewer of the Second Millennium" strengthened the order through a strict commitment to Shari'a observance and rejection of local innovations (bida).⁷⁰ By the middle of the 18th century, this branch's network had returned to Central Asia and formed a close political alliance with the rising Manghit dynasty in Bukhara. Rulers of that Emirate such as Shah Murad (reigned 1785-1800) and his son Amir Haydar (r. 1800-1826) relied on Naqshbandi pirs for Islamic legitimacy,

⁶⁸ Gross, Jo-Ann. "The Economic Status of a Timurid Sufi Shaykh," p. 92-98; Gross, Jo-Ann. "The Waqf of Khoja 'Ubayd Allah Ahrar," p. 128-133.

⁶⁹ Babajanov, Baxtiyor M. "On the History of the Naqshbandiya Mugaddidiya," p. 386-390; Kügelgen, Anke von. "Rastsvet Nakshbandiya-Mudzhaddidiya," p. 105-110.

⁷⁰ Babajanov, Baxtiyor M. "On the History of the Naqshbandiya Mugaddidiya in Central Mawarā'annahr," p. 385-390; Kügelgen, Anke von. "Rastsvet Nakshbandiya-Mudzhaddidiya," p. 101-110.

becoming their disciples and including shaykhs to be in the formal state structure in a position of qadis and mudarrises. In this way, Sufi leaders worked as a parallel moral and governing authority, acting as mediators between the community and the court to solve problems, grievances and maintain the branch that they are membering to. By this it means to be that the Sufi master was not a rival to a political power, but rather the moral compass that guides and helps in order to create peace in nations and mediate between them.

4.b.iv. Ahrar as the classical Naqshbandi model

Comparison with previous Naqshbandi leaders helps to understand both the continuity of form and the change in the political function. Gross's research on Khoja 'Ubayd Allah Ahrar illustrates that he kept strong ties with the Timurid rulers, engaged in political disputes through advice, and employed waqf patronage to safeguard the population.⁷¹ Gross writes that Ahrar was a politically engaged but shari'a shaykh who sent letters to rulers and members of their administrations in order to shape policy.⁷² This kind of engagement represents a form of Sufi leadership functioning within Muslim political systems. Ahrar's leadership did not contest Muslim rule per se but rather attempted to improve it from a moral and social point of view. His economic power and position within the Naqshbandi order further enhanced his mediating function, enabling him to play the role of an intermediary between the rulers and society.

4.b.iv.1. Contrast with colonial context of Dukchi Ishan

The case of Dukchi Ishan was different because the political systems he encountered were not in search of Islamic legitimacy. Morrison illustrates how, under Russian colonial rule, religious elites were marginalized, and Islamic institutions were subordinated to colonial

⁷¹ Gross, Jo-Ann. "Multiple Roles and Perceptions of a Sufi Shaikh," p. 116-119.

⁷² Gross, Jo Ann. "The Waqf of Khoja 'Ubayd Allah Ahrar in Nineteenth Century Central Asia," p. 128-133.

administration.⁷³ This structural marginalization reduced the space within which Sufi leaders could operate as mediators or advisors. The political context in which Dukchi Ishan operated was thus vastly different from that of Ahrar. While the power of Ahrar could be realized through negotiation and advice, Dukchi Ishan operated in a political system that did not find Sufi mediation legitimate. In this case, the political meaning of Sufi power was radically altered. Dukchi Ishan continued to be a moral leader and a community leader, but the political meaning of this leadership changed when the option of mediation with rulers became ineffective. This is why his leadership took on a more militant form.

Komatsu gives evidence that the majority of Muslim leaders in Turkestan were in favor of legal accommodation with Russian colonial rule and not rebellion. He writes that Turkestani intellectuals defined their region as Dar al Islam as long as Islamic practice was allowed.⁷⁴ This legalistic definition made it possible to cooperate with colonial rulers in a cautious manner and made rebellion less appealing. Dukchi Ishan's decision to lead an armed rebellion was thus different from the strategies of other religious leaders and from the strategies of Naqshbandi leaders who were cautious in their accommodation with colonial rule. This difference helps to explain why his rebellion was not supported by the ulama or Sufi institutions. His uniqueness, therefore, lies in the political direction he gave to his Sufi leadership. Instead of abandoning Sufi leadership, he radicalized the political meaning of Sufi leadership in response to a colonial system that did not allow Sufi mediation.

The relevance of Indian Sufi traditions also further supports the comparative aspect of this argument. Gross highlights that the Naqshbandiya Mujaddidiya was a tradition that evolved from the movement of people and ideas between Central Asia and Mughal India, influencing

⁷³ Morrison, Alexander. *Russian Rule in Samarkand, 1868 to 1910*, p. 171-175.

⁷⁴ Komatsu, Hisao. *Dār al-Islām under Russian Rule*, p. 16-18.

common patterns of reformist Sufi piety and political identity.⁷⁵ This movement of people and ideas across regions created a set of religious responses to political power, ranging from moral critique and reform activism to, in some instances, resistance to imperial power. Dukchi Ishan's involvement in Kashmir situates him within this larger religious landscape and indicates that his notion of Sufi political power was informed by his familiarity with a variety of regional Islamic traditions of political leadership. Although he did not himself directly copy Indian Sufi political practices, it is likely that his transregional experiences contributed to a larger vision of the Muslim community and its political vulnerability under non-Muslim rule.

Dukchi Ishan embodies continuity in terms of Sufi institutional forms, such as silsila-based legitimacy, stories of charisma and spiritual appointment, community service, moral preaching, and the global networks of learning. However, his instance embodies a paradigm shift in the political role of Sufi authority. In the Muslim period, Sufi authority was often mediated and morally corrected within the political system. In the Russian colonial period, when such mediation was structurally impossible, the Sufi authority of Dukchi Ishan was transformed into a tool for political mobilization and resistance. Therefore, the paradigm shift occurred not at the level of religious practice itself but in the manner of its deployment in response to the new political context. This reading enables the historian to view Dukchi Ishan not as an anomaly, but as a historically specific transformation of Naqshbandi Mujaddidi authority in the late imperial period.

c. Political Context

The political environment that produced Dukchi Ishan's uprising came out of how Russia chose to govern its new Muslim subjects in Turkestan. The Russian administration through its policies showed their greed, pushing the local population toward total desperation. What was at

⁷⁵ Gross, Jo-Ann. "The Naqshbandiya Connection: From Central Asia to India and Back," p. 217-220.

the bottom of the conflict was a contradiction in how the Russian state approached the people it had just conquered. The first Governor-general, Konstantin von Kaufmann, set up a policy called “ignoring Islam.”⁷⁶ The thinking behind it was simple. If the state did not interfere with religious life directly, Islam would weaken on its own. Yet, this policy was undermined by the Regulations of 1886, which introduced a misguided. Korol'kov recognized it at the time, noting that when the followers of the ishan exercised authority parallel to Russian power, it meant the existence of dual power, a state within a state. Not a fanatic, not selective system for native officials like qadis and volost chiefs. The result was the opposite of what the Russians wanted. Local position ended up being bought and sold, and ordinary people watched the offices that were supposed to serve them get filled by whoever could pay the most.⁷⁷ Consequently, a stone wall of the district rose between the Russian military and the masses that created a state of legal dualism where the official courts were viewed as illegitimate and unjust.

The economic transformation of the Ferghana Valley further embittered the population, as the Russian administration put imperial benefits above human lives. Starting in the 1880s, the colonial state aggressively promoted cotton production which was hard for the nation due to the fact that the region went to the monoculture of cotton, where the other agriculture should be grown.⁷⁸ This shift forced local dikhans into inescapable debt cycles governed by usury. As cotton fields expanded, the valley lost its food self-sufficiency, so the population was forced to rely on irregular grain import from the vassaling Russia. This doubtful system collapsed during the 1890s due to the repeated large scale famines in the region. Many local people rightly viewed it as an artificial disaster engineered by their conquerors.⁷⁹ Unfortunately, the sight of starving

⁷⁶ Komatsu, Hisao. *Dār al-Islām under Russian Rule*, p. 8; Malikov, Yuriy. *Modern Central Asia*, p. 77.

⁷⁷ Komatsu, Hisao. "The Andijan Uprising Reconsidered," p. 35-36.

⁷⁸ Komatsu, Hisao. *Dār al-Islām under Russian Rule*, p. 10-11; Malikov, *Modern Central Asia*, p. 86.

⁷⁹ Komatsu, Hisao. *Dār al-Islām under Russian Rule*, p. 11.

peasants contrasted sharply with the rising “new bourgeoisie” of native merchants who profited from the cotton trade that obviously created a condition where local people supports not the legal authority, despite its power, contrary, the dual authority of the second, who serves to the nation and respects the traditions and shari’a.

The 1892 cholera outbreak made the situation worse. More than ten thousand people died in the Ferghana Valley alone, what turned a public health crisis into a political one was how the Russian authorities responded.⁸⁰ They imposed strict burial regulations that required a doctor’s examination before burial which conflicted with the Islamic burial requirements that bodies be interred quickly.⁸¹ Moreover, burials are not held in the Islamic way. Indeed, some of them burned which might be shown to Muslim families, this looked like a deliberate violation of religious law. The authorities knew this and went ahead anyway. The Tashkent Cholera Riot of 1892 was the most visible and popular of the tensions held in Turkestan, but the same anger ran everyday across the region for that period. Beyond the disease itself, ordinary people experienced Russian rule as a moral collapse. Drinking, gambling and prostitution became more visible in towns where Russians had settled. Dukchi Ishan in his own writings returned to this point repeatedly. He framed his eventual call to action as a defense of the moral order of his community against a regime that he believed had no respect for it.

The Tsarist state put further pressure on the religious elite by going after the institutional pillars of the Islamic Umma. The administration abolished the zakat fee in violation and, in 1893, began taxing waqf (charitable) income, which had previously been exempt under Islamic law. This taxation “ruined poor and weak people” who relied on these endowments for education and welfare, nor did it spare even the most prestigious institutions. Russian authorities also used

⁸⁰ Komatsu, Hisao. *The Andijan Uprising Reconsidered*, p. 34.

⁸¹ Malikov, Yuriy. *Modern Central Asia: A Primary Source Reader*, p. 89.

health concerns as the official reason for restriction of the hajj, but in practice the restrictions were read by many Muslims as a proof that the state was openly hostile to Islam. The pressure on madrasa, mosques and the practice in those institutions meant that by the 1890s the original fatwa of peace was starting to look outdated. Most of ulama counseled accommodation, but the consensus that held before conquest was no longer working.

d. Land Expropriation and the Kyrgyz Call to Ghazavat

In 1893, the colonial machine began taking fertile land and water resources in the Ferghana foothills to settle Russian peasants. That was the policy of land expropriation where local administration distributed fruitful lands taken from locals to the new settlers coming from Russia. They have chosen the most attractive lands for their own people, while for the natives they gave the places that they did not want to live. The Kyrgyz nomads' pastures they relied on were being handed over, and the Russian peasants who took them were being armed by the state to defend the new settlements. The Kyrgyz lost grazing land that their families had used for generations. They were forced into worse terrain, precisely on poorer soil, while colonizers take what had been theirs. By the time of the 1898 uprising, the Kyrgyz had become the most committed group inside Dukchi Ishan's following. From their perspective, the attack on Andijan was not religious fanaticism. It was just a last attempt to push back against the regime that had taken their land and treated them and the religion as an obstacle.

One question that comes up here is about who was actually driving the uprising. If the Kyrgyz were the ones pushing for armed reaction, was Dukchi Ishan really transforming the role of a Sufi shaykh? Or was he just going along with people whose problems he had no real way of fixing? When you look at how Babajanov reads the Fozil-bek chronicle, the answer makes the structural argument stronger, not weaker. Already in 1895 and 1896, Kyrgyz villagers in the

eastern Ferghana were holding about going after the Russian peasant settlers who had taken over their pastures. When Dukchi Ishan heard about these collective meetings, he traveled to Kugart himself and tried to talk them out of acting early. He counseled patience. This was the mediating role the Naqshbandi tradition expected of him, the same role that Ahrar had once played with Timurids. Due to several factors and the collapse of long-lasting regime where Sufi courts had a power, there were nothing to mediate. Khanates, qadi court and other institutions were already gone. There had no chance to reestablish that courts. By the 1890s, the institutional conditions that had once made Naqshbandi mediation effective were already gone, so his attempt to play that role had little chance of succeeding. When he eventually led the uprising of 1898, he was not abandoning the traditional manner of actions, however, he was carrying it as far as it could go in colonial conditions that no longer allowed for mediation in the older sense.

Transformation

By the late nineteenth century, the political environment that Sufi leaders had operated in for centuries no longer existed in the Ferghana Valley. The traditional channels of Naqshbandi authority required a Muslim ruler willing to recognize Sharia ruling and an economic base of waqf properties that could fund religious education and welfare of villagers. By the 1890s the Russian colonial administration had removed all three. What was left was the form of Naqshbandi authority without the political ground that had once made it work. This section examines what happened to that authority once its conditions were gone and how the same institution forms ended up serving a function they had not served before.

a. Silsila

The spiritual identity of Dukchi Ishan was rooted in the prestigious Naqshbandiyya-Mujaddidiyya silsila and his legitimacy was contested and the people contesting it were divided alone in places that mattered.

Dukchi Ishan came out of the naqshbandiyya-Mujaddidiyya silsila which was one of the prestigious lines of spiritual authority in the region. However his legitimacy as a shaykh was disputed. Most of urban ulama rejected him, while his rural followers accepted him as a saint. As it was mentioned earlier, he was born into a humble family of spindle-makers, but he spent his youth in Samarkand and Bukhara pursuing sacred knowledge under Mulla Usman Akhund Sudur.⁸² His first teacher was Ishan Sultan Tora, a respected Naqshbandi master in the eastern Ferghana Valley. Sultan Tora trained him in the classical Naqshbandi-Mujaddidi tradition and eventually appointed him as a *khalifa*.⁸³ When Sultan Tora died in 1882, the disciples raised Dukchi Ishan on a white felt. This was an old Turkic coronation ritual that had been used for centuries in coronation ceremonies of khans. It shows that he was recognized by Sufis as more than just a religious teacher.⁸⁴

However, this ascension deeply offended the established clerical aristocracy who viewed him with an inherited sense of contempt for his lowborn origin, calling him a charlatan who preyed on the “ignorant masses.”⁸⁵ This tension highlights that while the spiritual chain was formally intact and he even claimed a “Golden Chain” (*silsila-yi zahab*) directly from the

⁸² Komatsu, Hisao. "The Andijan Uprising Reconsidered," p. 30.

⁸³ Komatsu, Hisao. *Dār al-Islām under Russian Rule*, p. 13. Note: *Khalifa* here means designated successor within a Sufi silsila.

⁸⁴ Olcott, Martha Brill. "Sufism in Central Asia," p. 10; Babajanov, Baxtiyor M. "Dukchi Ishan i Andizhanskoe vosstanie 1898 g." In *Подвижники ислама*, p. 257; Komatsu, Hisao. "The Andijan Uprising Reconsidered," p. 30; Olcott, Martha Brill. "Sufism in Central Asia," p. 10

⁸⁵ Babajanov, Baxtiyor M. "Dukchi Ishan i Andizhanskoe vosstanie 1898 g." In *Подвижники ислама*, p. 257.

Prophet, his social background made him a revolutionary outsider to the urban elites who had made their peace with the Tsar.⁸⁶

b. Continuity

As Sufi shaykh he has to share everything that he has, doing good actions and to be an example for the people who followed him, but it was not a new innovation for the Sufis. He performed the hajj in 1886 and stayed in Medina for two years afterward. According to his own account, the Prophet Muhammad appeared to him in a dream during camping near tomb, accompanied by the four Rightly Guided Caliphs and gave him a mandate to guide the Muslim community.⁸⁷ After the 2 years of hajj, he visited one of the khanaqahs of Mujaddidi branch located in Kashmir and stayed there for a year.⁸⁸ His khanaqah at Mingtepe operated as a community center. It was an usual practice to feed poor people and cure them for the spiritual figures like Dukchi Ishan. Thus, once the hard times appeared in the region, he provided shelter for travelers, fed and distributed medical treatment in pandemic and famine in the 1890s.⁸⁹ His murid network drew followers from across ethnic groups in the Ferghana Valley, including Uzbeks, Tajiks, and the Kyrgyz nomads who would later become the most active part of his following.⁹⁰ None of these activities were new or unusual. They were what a respected Sufi shaykh was expected to do and they were how a shaykh demonstrated his spiritual standing to the community he served.

c. Ibrat al-Ghafilin

⁸⁶ Babajanov, Baxtiyor M. "Dukchi Ishan i Andizhanskoe vosstanie 1898 g." In *Подвижники ислама*, p. 260.

⁸⁷ Komatsu, Hisao. *Dār al-Islām under Russian Rule*, p. 14.

⁸⁸ Komatsu, Hisao. "The Andijan Uprising Reconsidered," p. 31.

⁸⁹ Komatsu, Hisao. "The Andijan Uprising Reconsidered," p. 33-34; Babajanov, Baxtiyor M. "Dukchi Ishan i Andizhanskoe vosstanie 1898 g." In *Подвижники ислама*, p. 261–263.

⁹⁰ Komatsu, Hisao. "The Andijan Uprising Reconsidered," p. 33.

Perhaps the most direct evidence for this is the Ibrat al-Ghafilin itself. It is Dukchi Ishan's own written masterpiece, composed in the Ferghana dialect of Uzbek in rhymed prose. It contains neither political manifest nor call for the war against infidels nor the theory of jihad. What it contains is an explanation for people who are interested in prayer, ablution and rules for fasting. Most of his writings are written in an understandable way for the followers who had forgotten the elementary requirements of the Sharia.⁹¹ Overall, his goal was just teaching people to be good muslim. It was not a thing that may represent anti-Russian propaganda from Sufi side. If the Ibrat al-Ghafilin represents his actual intellectual and religious priorities, then the radical action of 1898 was not the expression of an ideology that he had been building toward. Indeed, it shows how a person was coherent from the perspective of Islam, doing good for people, but once there was a cause which is supposedly great ideology contradiction and total ignorance it had to be the place for the response. The colonial context changed the meaning of what he was doing, even as what he was doing remained the same, in its own logic, it was entirely traditional. In other words, the transformation was not in his mind, it happened only because of the political ground beneath him.

The political environment of the late nineteenth century underwent a seismic shift that rendered the traditional Sufi role of the "mediator" structurally impossible. Under Kaufmann's policy of ignoring Islam, religious life retained some autonomy. As the colonial state restricted the hajj and, in 1893, began taxing waqf income to "ruin poor and weak people," the Muslim community felt a deep sense of "religious grievance". Unlike in previous eras, there was no longer a pro-Islamic system for a Sufi leader to advise, so the space for peaceful negotiation vanished. By 1895, Dukchi Ishan began appointing his own *ra'ises* to enforce Sharia law in

⁹¹ Komatsu, Hisao. *Dār al-Islām under Russian Rule*, p. 14–15; Olcott, Martha Brill. "Sufism in Central Asia," p. 13.

direct competition with Russian power. This creation of a "dual power" structure signaled that since mediation was no longer an option, the only remaining path to preserve Islamic identity was active resistance against a regime that "ignored the decline of people's morality."

d. Comparison of Dukchi Ishan with Khoja Ahrar

Khoja Ahrar is the founder of political Naqshbandi movement that was continued and inherited by Dukchi Ishan. He used the principle of *khalwat dar anjuman*, which means staying inwardly focused on God while staying outwardly engaged with the world.⁹² He gave advice to Timurid sultans. He intervened to protect the poor from unjust taxes. The political system around him recognized his authority as a Sufi shaykh and accepted his role as a moral counselor. Dukchi Ishan inherited the same tradition four centuries later. His training was traditional and practices with murids looked similar to what Ahrar built. But the political system around which Dukchi Ishan acted was Christian colonial rule, not a Muslim sultanate. The same form of Sufi authority was sitting in a two different world.

While Ahrar could mediate to prevent conflict, Dukchi Ishan found that even his initial attempts to restrain the radicalism of his Kyrgyz followers, who were desperate due to the expropriation of ancestral pastures, were eventually overcome by the weight of colonial oppression. They both utilized the "same Sufi form," but the political meaning of their leadership was radically altered by the lack of a receptive, Islamic state. What remains to be drawn together is what this case tells us about Sufi authority under colonial rule generally.

e. Was Dukchi Ishan an Exception?

In the final analysis, Dukchi Ishan was not a religious exception, but he was a political one. From a religious perspective, he was a traditional Naqshbandi-Mujaddidi leader who emphasized Sharia-mindedness and the purification of morals as a stance shared by many

⁹² Algar, Hamid. "Political Aspects of Naqshbandi History," p. 126.

quietist ulama of his time. He taught the most elementary principles of the Five Pillars to an audience that was often "ignorant" of basic requirements. Yet, politically, he was an anomaly because he broke the "fatwa of peace with the White Tsar" that governed the actions of the established religious elite. He represented a transformation of Sufi authority where the shaykh was forced to become a martyr and to suffer because of many humiliations from the side of Russians. His contemporaries were divided on him. The satirist poets called him a fraud and an ignorant man not fitting for spiritual authority. Ordinary people in the Ferghana countryside remembered him as a martyr who had given his life for the faith. The uprising itself should not be considered as an outbreak of fanaticism. It should be read as what happened when a traditional Sufi authority found himself with no remaining channels through which to defend the community.

Conclusion

The name "martyr" in the title of the thesis requires further examination. Both members of the educated elite, the satirical poets, the Hanafi ulama and as well as Bukharan historian Sami rejected Dukchi Ishan. He was considered to be nothing more than a charlatan and a fraud pretending to have legitimate silsila and miraculous capabilities. The Russian officials condemned him in similar terms. However, four years later, the situation looked rather differently. A Russian provincial report from 1902 recorded something the official narrative preferred to be unspoken. The main narration, supposed to be thoughts of ordinary people in the Ferghana Valley, still referred to his name with respect and remembered him as a martyr who sacrificed himself for God.⁹³ The martyrdom was built from below by the people whose land had

⁹³ Komatsu, Hisao. "The Andijan Uprising Reconsidered," p. 54.

been taken, whose waqf had been taxed and whose qadis had sold their judgments to the highest bidder. They were not confused about what had happened to them.

This gap between elite condemnation and popular memory is not a just footnote to the thesis, indeed it is the thesis. The ulama who issued the fatwa of peace with the White Tsar were disappointed with the political situation correctly, though it contradicted the nation's feelings. Armed resistance against the Russian Empire was suicidal and probably Dukchi Ishan knew it too which might be under the stress contributed by his Kyrgyz followers. But the people who remembered him as a martyr were also reading something correctly. The traditional channels of Naqshbandi authority had been destroyed. There was no longer the place for the kind of mediation Ahrar practiced before with the Timurids or Mujaddidi shaykhs had practiced with the Manghits. What Dukchi Ishan attempted, however disastrously, was that chance was the last available expression of a tradition that colonial rule had made structurally impossible.

What was exceptional about Dukchi Ishan was not his religious profile, his silsila was formally intact and his practices were recognizably Naqshbandi-like. *Ibrat al-Ghafilin* is a traditional religious tract that talks about prayer and moral behaviour, he talks neither about nationalism, pan-Islamism nor call for political violence. Looking at him as a religious figure, he fits inside the tradition. What was exceptional was the situation he had to work in. Russian colonialism took part, piece by piece, the conditions that had let Naqshbandi authority work as mediation in earlier centuries. There was no Muslim ruler left for him to advise. The waqf system was being taxed and dismantled. The hajj was restricted and the qadi court had been brought under Russian control. The same institutional forms he inherited from brotherhood founders like networks, khanaqah and the Sharia ended up doing something different. They became a way to resist Koral'kov saw this at the time, when he wrote that the ishan's nominees

were exercising authority parallel to Russian power, what existed was dual power, a state within a state.⁹⁴ The Tsarist label of fanatic does not capture what was happening, moreover, post-Soviet portrayal of him as a hero misses it too. Dukchi Ishan was working inside a tradition that no longer had a place to function in the way that they used to do many centuries, and his uprising was what that tradition looked like when nothing else was left.

⁹⁴ Komatsu, Hisao. *Dār al-Islām under Russian Rule*, p. 15; *Андижанское восстание*. Красный архив 88 (1938), p. 146, 173.

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