Extraterritorial Security: Governing Islam and Security Beyond Tajikistan

with Edward Lemon, Harriman Institute, Columbia University

Often considered Central Asia's 'weakest' state, Tajikistan has nonetheless created a relatively sophisticated network through which it monitors and targets both secular and religious opponents abroad. Since 2002, the government of Tajikistan has targeted at least 51 of its citizens living abroad, subjecting them to harassment, intimidation, attack, detention, kidnapping and assassination. Drawing on and extensive ethnographic fieldwork and semi-structured interviews conducted between 2013 and 2015 in Tajikistan and Russia, this paper examines how these extraterritorial security practices relate to power dynamics inside Tajikistan. Usually conceptualised as domestic or international, this paper challenges this dichotomy, examining how these transnational practices shape our understanding of statehood and security in Central Asia.

Dr. Edward Lemon is a postdoctoral research scholar at the Harriman Institute, Columbia University. He recently completed his PhD at the University of Exeter. In his research, he examines the governance of religion and security in Tajikistan. His research has been published in Central Asian Affairs, Caucasus Survey and The RUSI Journal. He was author of the Tajikistan chapter in last year's Nations in Transit report, published by Freedom House.

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