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Unknown

Citation for published item:

Bergne, P. (2004) 'Some thoughts on grave symbolism in Tashkent cemeteries.', Working Paper. University of Durham, Centre for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, Durham.

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**SOME THOUGHTS ON GRAVE SYMBOLISM IN
TASHKENT CEMETERIES**

by

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Durham Middle East Paper No. 76
April 2004

Durham Middle East Papers
ISSN 1476-4830
No. 76

The Durham Middle East Papers series covers all aspects of the economy, politics, social science, history, literature and languages of the Middle East. Authors are invited to submit papers to the Editorial Board for consideration for publication.

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Published by: Institute for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies
University of Durham
The Al-Qasimi Building
Elvet Hill Road
Durham DH1 3TU, UK
Tel: +44 (0)191 334 5660 | Fax: +44 (0)191 334 5661

Pam 726.8
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BANOLO

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SOME THOUGHTS ON GRAVE SYMBOLISM IN TASHKENT CEMETERIES

By Paul Bergne

Introduction

Some of the most interesting of the not very distinguished examples of Islamic architecture that Tashkent and its surroundings have to boast are shrines to holy men. These are often situated within by now long-established cemeteries. There is nothing here to match the thousand year-old cemetery surrounding the Shah Zنده in Samarkand, but tombs like those of Zangi Ata to the South and Zain ul Din to the North-East of the city are fair examples of the modest artistic achievements of the later Islamic periods in Central Asia. Visits to these and similar tombs during the years 1993 to 1995, and periodically in the succeeding years, prompted thoughts about the burial rituals of the local population, especially in view of the impact of atheist communism on its traditions and beliefs after the Bolshevik revolution, which encouraged the introduction of new burial practices. To judge at least by the symbolism on graves in Tashkent's cemeteries, the proportion of atheists in the community seems to have varied throughout the Soviet period, initially growing from the 1920s to 1960s but stabilising thereafter. As we shall see, there were also significant differences between the various ethnic communities in Tashkent in the proportion of those who were prepared to admit to atheism - in death at least. The exploration of these phenomena forms the basis for this article. Although originally stimulated by acquaintance with these Islamic shrines and their surrounding graveyards, my interest extended to include observation of the same processes in the Christian, Jewish and atheist cemeteries. In this article I shall examine how the practices and rituals observed in Tashkent's various cemeteries over the years of Soviet rule reflected the impact of Soviet attempts to create an atheist society, initially "nationalist in form but socialist in content" but whose ultimate identity was to be new and fully Soviet, without more than a slight residual indebtedness to the original nationalities of which it was composed.

The Pre-Soviet Period

First I shall briefly examine the situation that existed in Tashkent up to the triumph of communism, which for the purposes of this article I shall date from 1924, the year of the National Delimitation which divided Soviet Central Asia into national republics. By this time it had become clear that, even if it would continue to cause headaches, the Basmachestvo no longer posed a serious threat to the very survival of Soviet power in the region. (Here it should be noted in passing that the capital of the new Uzbek SSR was Samarkand until 1930 when it was decided to move it back to Tashkent, which had been temporarily out of favour as tainted by its past role as capital of the Tsarist Governorate General of Turkestan). Before this time, there was only one Christian cemetery in Tashkent, the Botkin, which had been laid out in the late 19th century.¹ The church which now stands at the centre of the Botkin, whose construction lasted from 1902 to 1905, is dedicated to St Alexander Nevskii.²

Although the Botkin is clearly Russian Orthodox in origin, the authorities seem from the start to have adopted a reasonably inclusive policy when it came to burying Christians of other denominations on its territory. Moreover, in the North corner of the cemetery there is a space which seems to have been set aside at some early stage for Tashkent's European Jews and which still contains numerous Jewish graves (of which more below). If this part of the Botkin really does date back to before the revolution, it would seem that the Jews who arrived from Europe at this time preferred the Botkin to the very old Bukhara-Jewish Cemetery in the Old City which already existed at the time and is usually referred to nowadays as the Jewish Chagatai cemetery.

Of the Muslim cemeteries, the oldest and most distinguished is that surrounding the famous shrine of Zangi Ata to the South of the city. Zangi Ata was a distinguished Islamic scholar of the 12th to 13th century, whose great grandfather is said to have been the first student of Ahmad Yasavi, founder of the Yasaviah Sufi Tariqa, who is buried in the huge shrine in Turkestan in Southern Kazakhstan. The Zangi Ata shrine and its surrounding buildings date from the 14th and 15th centuries, apart from the minaret-cum-clock tower which was added under Russian rule in the 19th. The whole area behind the shrine is full of graves dating up to the modern period. Zangi Ata and his wife Ambar Bibi have for many centuries attracted particular veneration among the inhabitants of the left bank of the Chirchik river amongst whom he is seen as the guardian of flocks (especially cattle), while to his wife are attributed, as so often with the tombs of famous women in the history of Central Asia (see Bibi Khanum in Samarkand), the powers of helping women with fertility and related problems.

In addition to Zangi Ata, there is a considerable cemetery around the shrine of Zain ul Din Baba in North-East Tashkent. Born in 1214, Zain ul Din Kui Arifani was the son of a leading Baghdad Sufi, Sheikh Shihab ul Din Hafsa al Suhraverdi who sent him to teach in Tashkent. In addition to teaching, Zain ul Din also founded a school where Shams ul Din Kulyal, Tamerlane's teacher, received his training. The surviving buildings date mainly from the 13th to 16th centuries. The whole complex is surrounded by an extensive cemetery still in use and dating back to the 11th.³

Of the numerous historic Muslim cemeteries of this sort in Tashkent, it is worth mentioning four others:

- that surrounding the shrine of Chupan Ata off Farhadskaya Ulitsa, whose buildings date from the 18th century but whose saint is the subject of several legends involving variously Tamerlane and Ulug Beg. As his name implies, Chupan Ata has traditionally been venerated as a protector of sheep flocks.

- the very old cemetery surrounding the 19th century shrine of Hoja Alambardor on Bolshevik Street. This saint is supposed to have been one of the first Islamic missionaries in the Tashkent region. As if to confirm this tradition, beneath the shrine archaeologists found the remains of a house dating back to the 10th century.⁴

- although no longer directly associated with a surviving shrine, one of the oldest and largest Muslim cemeteries in Tashkent is the so-called Chagatai cemetery on the Western Edge of the Old City.

The so-called Minor cemetery near to the earthquake memorial (close to the Ts5 district) is said by local sources to be about 150 years old.⁵ At that time the cemetery was situated closer to the earthquake memorial ("Monument to Courage") which was on the very edge of the city and took the dead from some 80 "mahallahs" in the city. The presence there of at least one very old grave whose weathered inscription is written entirely in the Arabic script strongly suggests that it at least dates back to before the 1917 Bolshevik revolution.

As already mentioned, for Tashkent's long-standing Bukhara Jewish community, there was the Jewish Chagatai cemetery, which, like its Muslim namesake, is very old. Here it should be mentioned that, in nearly all the old Tashkent cemeteries, shortage of space obliged their users to place new burials on top of old ones, often obliterating all trace of the latter in the process. The age of cemeteries is not therefore accurately reflected, like in an English graveyard, by the antiquity of the gravestones.

Early Soviet Religious Policy

This then was the situation in Tashkent up to the time of the National Delimitation of 1924. In the early Soviet period, the new communist government's policy towards Islam was marked by abrupt swings. After vicious suppression in the period of the revolution itself, a policy of cautious tolerance was adopted in the early 1920s, as the new government made an effort to win over the sympathy of the local population in the face of Basmachi successes and to make a good impression on Muslim nations under British rule. Perhaps this policy also reflected the advice of the Tatar Bolshevik Sultan Galiev,⁶ who had warned Moscow to proceed cautiously when setting out to destroy the traditional beliefs and practices of non-Russian peoples of Central Asia, peoples whom the Russians had anyway always regarded as volatile and unpredictable. By the mid 1920s, however, a determined assault on the whole traditional structure of Islam had begun. From 1923, the Communist Party began to whittle away the authority of the religious courts, and by 1925, the Uzbek SSR abolished the "waqf" and transferred them to the People's Commissariat for Agriculture. From 1928 onwards, the Islamic establishment faced the full onslaught of Stalin's attack on religion. Most mosques were closed, and thousands of priests executed or exiled.

The Bolshevik government's treatment of Christianity was if anything harsher than of Islam. Already in the 1920s, the church of St Alexander Nevskii in the Botkin was handed over to the so-called "obnovlentsy" a minority movement within the Orthodox church which was under Soviet and Communist Party control. Modified Christian funerals with simplified rituals were thereafter conducted by the "obnovlentsy", although one or two Orthodox priests continued unofficially to perform the traditional rites in the separate chapel of "the Joy of All-Sorrows".⁷

Funeral Ritual (Background).

This study will be limited to an observation of the grave symbolism adopted by the different peoples living in Tashkent in the Soviet and post-Soviet period, and will not investigate in detail how the actual funeral rituals developed. Such an investigation falls outside the scope of this article, although anecdotal evidence suggests that it

would be extremely worth while, for the very revealing light it could throw on how many people, including members of the Communist Party, contrived to keep a discreet religious element in the funeral rituals of their dead relations, usually by having a suitable person (e.g. an unofficial religious figure) read a passage from the Koran (e.g. from Surat al Mulk: "tabaraka aladhi be idehe al mulk..."), Bible or other religious text. It may however be worth digressing briefly for a brief examination of how the new Soviet regime dealt with the question of funerary ritual, of which gravestone symbolism after all forms a part.

It was one thing for the Soviets to try and abolish the traditional Christian and other rituals. It was more complicated to devise new ones to take their place in the hearts and minds of the people. After 1917, the Party and new communist government faced a problem over what rituals to recommend to their followers for coping with death. At the centre, one of the first challenges of this sort had already presented itself with the burial of Nikolai Baumann who had been martyred during the 1905 revolution. Thereafter, the first big ceremonial communist funeral after the October revolution was that of Moisei Uritskii who died in Petrograd in September 1918. The elaborate rituals associated with this occasion were devised by Grigorii Zinoviev and thereafter became a model for grand and pompous funerals of leading Communists.⁸ As for graves, the Communist Party's weakness for imposing memorials was established with the erection of Lenin's tomb, and the inauguration of the custom of burying senior figures in the wall of the Kremlin, or, if they did not quite make the right grade of heroism, in more or less elaborate tombs in the Novo-Devichi monastery and other Moscow cemeteries. However, as Kampars and Zakovich point out in their book on Soviet rituals written in 1967, although there was in the early 1960s a general tendency to orchestrate the new Soviet holidays and rituals on a grandiose scale, this approach did not always fit in with the requirements of ordinary people. As they put it: "not everyone is in a position to organise choirs, orchestras or soloists".⁹ The CP was well aware that the beauty of the Orthodox church's funeral ceremonies had a profound appeal to ordinary Russians, admitting rather grudgingly that: "religion has always exploited funerals for its own ends. The church's rituals contribute to the strengthening of a religious "Weltanschauung". Indeed they have remained firmly entrenched in daily life".¹⁰ Faced with this realisation, Lenin himself seems to have been aware of the need to retain useful parts of the old rituals in the Party's programme to replace the religious ceremonies with communist equivalents, writing "proletarian culture must be a normal development of those reserves of knowledge which humanity has worked out [even] when oppressed...".¹¹ Certainly, the new Soviet burial rituals seem to have taken a long time to catch on. As late as 1986, the UzSSR's Council of Ministers set up voluntary so-called "Cemetery Councils" whose main purpose was "to help the Ispolkoms of the local Soviets introduce new Soviet burial rituals and to fight against survivals of the past, religious prejudices etc".¹² A traditional Central Asian (indeed not only Central Asian since it has long been a Russian tradition also) practice which has been preserved throughout the Soviet period up to the present amongst members of all three major religions is that of visiting graves on certain dates. This practice accounts for the little "sitting rooms" or enclosures, which are such a feature of all Tashkent cemeteries, of whatever persuasion, and where visitors sit and remember the dead after sweeping and tidying up their graves. Such visiting days, are, amongst Muslims, the two big 'Ids (Al Fitr and Al Adha (Qurban)) and Nowruz, and, amongst the Orthodox Christians, Easter and Pentecost. An attempt to interfere in traditional ceremonies was made in the

1980s by the Party when they tried to replace the Nowruz holiday with a "Den' Pamyati" (Memory day) on the last Sunday in March, to encourage people to visit the graves on that day. This had no lasting effect and the Party eventually moved Den' Pamyati to a different date in May.

Cemetery Location.

Here it is important to remember once more that the ultimate aim of the communist government of Central Asia, as elsewhere in the Soviet Union, was to create a new single Soviet identity in which the old national characteristics would eventually be absorbed. As Kampars and Zakovich state: "A great process is under way - that of bringing together the peoples [of the Union] - the strengthening of their indissoluble friendship, unity and integration."¹³

What does the grave symbolism of the cemeteries of Tashkent tell us about the replication of these new centrally-determined rituals in such an outpost of the Soviet empire? Do they reflect this shedding of traditional national and religious differences between groups in the community? Or rather, do we see what Kampars and Zakovich had noted in the 1960s, particularly in the Baltic: "the link between national prejudices and religion is projected into the positioning of cemeteries. In the Baltic states, a host of different cemeteries are situated within a small area. People of different nationalities lived and worked together, but in death they were divided".¹⁴ The authors suggest that, by the late 1960s, the situation was gradually changing. The cemeteries which had previously been separate were, in many parts of the USSR, becoming the common-resting places of citizens of different nationalities and religious beliefs.¹⁵ In Tashkent, as in the Baltic, there was a rich mixture of peoples and cultures. Were they divided in death? Or can we see the gradual introduction of mixed cemeteries which Kampars and Zakovich thought they were already witnessing in the late 1960s?

The new communist government swiftly realised that, if it was to create a new atheist elite, it would be politic to elevate the dead members of that elite by burying them in special atheist cemeteries separate from the traditional resting places with their religious associations. In 1927, a new such cemetery was opened next to the Chagatai,¹⁶ while, at about the same time an atheist extension of the Botkin was opened the other side of the adjacent road to the west. Lesser mortals continued to be buried in the original cemeteries, Muslim, Christian and Jewish. A study of the changing symbolism adopted for these Soviet-period graves throws an interesting light on the attitudes of the people of Tashkent, whether or not professing atheism, towards their beliefs and their national identity. The tentative conclusions of such a study can be taken a stage further by examining the same phenomena in the cemeteries such as those in Dombabad and Yakkasarai which were expanded during and after the war when the population of Tashkent was swollen by large numbers of immigrants from other parts of the Soviet Union, either transported by Stalin from their original homelands for political reasons (Germans, Koreans, Greeks, Tatars, Meshkets), or fleeing the German advance (Russians and Jews), or relocated to man the factories which had been shipped bodily eastwards out of reach of the invader.

Recognition Criteria

In trying to identify the beliefs and ethnic origins of those buried in Tashkent's various cemeteries, I have had to rely on rather rough criteria. The use of a cross, crescent (with or without star), or Star of David are, when present, a reasonable guide to the deceased's religion. Fortunately, the CP's attempt in 1985 to abolish the use of religious symbols met with such opposition that they dropped the idea.¹⁷ I have taken the five pointed, often faceted, as an indication of allegiance to Marxism, although it was clearly also often used simply to indicate that the deceased or his surviving family attached importance to his service in the Red Army. Where no religious symbol is present, I have had to make some reasonable deductions as to religious affiliation from the names of the dead. Certain names give a reasonably clear guide to ethnic identity: e.g. Jews, Russians, Koreans, Greeks, Georgians and Armenians. However, Islamic names do present a problem. While it is easy to tell an Islamic name as such, it is by no means always possible to distinguish between nationalities like, say, Uzbeks and Tajiks. The first names of peoples of the Caucasus and Tatars are sometimes a give-away. However, despite these limitations, for the purposes of this study, while ethnic identity (nationalnost') is interesting, it is religion or the absence of it that is most telling in a society with ambitions to become atheist.

Tashkent Cemeteries Under Soviet and National Rule

According to the Tashkent City Council (Hokimiat) there are 67 cemeteries in the city's limits, of which 3 are Christian, 2 Jewish (presumably meaning Ashkenazi) and 2 "Bukhara" Jewish. The administration of cemeteries in the city (and indeed elsewhere in Uzbekistan) seems to be something of a headache for the authorities throughout the Soviet period. The attachment to a note from the Ispolkom of the Tashkent Soviet of Workers, Red Army Soldiers and Peasants dated 16 April 1922 states that all cemeteries, crematoria and morgues were to come under the jurisdiction of the Komunotdely of the local Soviets.¹⁸ In 1953 the UzSSR Council of Ministers noted the unsatisfactory condition of both city and "raion" cemeteries and blamed both the local Soviets and the then Minister of Municipal Economy Aliev for neglecting them. Even the much-honoured graves of those who fell in the Great Patriotic War were described as neglected.¹⁹ The situation in ordinary cemeteries seems to have been even worse. A report prepared in 1954 for the Council of Ministers by a certain Iskanderov (described as the authorised representative of the Council for Religious Cults), listed graveyards overgrown with brushwood and overrun with grazing livestock, with smashed graves and broken perimeter walls.²⁰ By 1958 a so-called Directorate for Urban Renewal had come into being and reported to the Secretary of the Tashkent City Committee of the CP of Uzbekistan on plans to upgrade the main cemeteries of the city.²¹ Some confusion seems to exist as to when responsibility for Tashkent's cemeteries was transferred from the local district Soviets to the Tashkent Hokimiat where it now resides. The hokimiat claims that this transfer took place in 1968.²² However, a 1986 Council of Ministers Order (Rasporazheniye) of 1986 created so-called voluntary "Cemetery Councils" answerable to the local Soviets to help with introducing new Soviet burial rituals.

Although details of the funeral arrangements followed by members of the three main religions or by atheists fall outside the scope of this study, a few points may be worth

mentioning by way of background. In independent Uzbekistan as in the Uzbek SSR, the law forbids the burying of people in cemeteries assigned to faiths other than their own. This is in line with established Islamic tradition²³ although it is an interesting provision in a country that was governed by an atheist government and raises the crucial question as to where people should be buried who have no religion but for whom there are insufficient places in the atheist cemeteries. The Uzbek state still pays for half the basic funeral costs of all Uzbekistan's citizens whatever their religion. Particularly for Christians, Jews, and declared atheists all the funeral arrangements are undertaken by a state-run organisation called the "Black Tulip" which organises coffins, gravestones, and lays on funeral rituals in line with the requirements of the deceased and his/her family. Members of the Muslim majority of the population make less use of the "Black Tulip" than followers of other religions. There are a number of reasons for this. Muslims are more likely than the European members of the community to live as members of the traditional Uzbek "mahallah" (district) whose organisation, backed up by the local mosque (of which large numbers have been built since independence) usually helps the family of the deceased with the funeral arrangements. Moreover, since Muslims are buried in a shroud rather than a coffin, the cemetery provides the re-usable wooden bier in which the body is carried to the grave. Muslim families have, therefore, less need for help from the "Black Tulip" to obtain coffins, organise funeral arrangements, and so on, although many take advantage of the fact that the organization sells fabric for shrouds at reduced prices. Moreover, it seems that increasing numbers of Muslims are having to make use of the "Black Tulip" as the current government's "development" of the Old City and neighbouring old quarters has resulted in large numbers of the local inhabitants being compulsorily re-housed in blocks of flats many of which do not have the traditional access to a local mosque.²⁴

I shall now examine the **grave symbolism** which is visible in a number of Tashkent's existing cemeteries.

Orthodox Botkin Cemetery

Let us make a start with the Russian Orthodox Botkin cemetery which as already mentioned was established some time in the second half of the 19th century. I have a report of a grave here dated 1883²⁵, but the oldest I have been able to find myself has been that of Fedor Ivanovich Gerasimov (1852-1902).

Here, right through the Soviet period, the majority of graves carry the Orthodox double cross with its diagonal. However this majority is not large. There are considerable numbers (perhaps as many as 30%) of secular graves, marked by a simple headstone with secular inscription, while about ten per cent carry either red stars or five pointed stars engraved in the stone. These last mainly date from the 1960s or before.

Although the cemetery is basically an Orthodox Christian one, during both the Tsarist and Soviet periods it accepted all sorts of Christians. However, even in the Soviet period, when one might have expected a more "internationalist" policy, the overwhelming majority of those buried there are, to judge by the names, Slav. In the main, the only other nationalities buried here are those who, whatever their beliefs at

the time, were considered (by those in charge and despite their ostensible allegiance to an international Soviet identity) to stem from the Christian tradition: Armenians, Germans, Georgians, Greeks, Balts and so on.

There are some interesting exceptions. A very few people from the Muslim tradition - mostly Tatars - are buried here.²⁶ Jews are very rare in this cemetery (apart from the Jewish section - see below).²⁷ Koreans have also been buried here.²⁸ All these could of course conceivably be converts to Christianity.

Red Stars become unfashionable after the 1970s. The latest one I could find was Georgy Zatserkovin, buried 1980. At present, those who want to avoid a cross continue to choose a plain secular grave. Some of them still have a strong Soviet flavour like the huge grave of Aleksander V. Baakyan, died 1978, which carries the medal of the Great Patriotic War engraved in the stone but no star.

The Jewish Section of the Botkin

At the far end of the cemetery lies the Jewish section. This is a forlorn and abandoned area with very few trees and its stones lie higgledy-piggledy with many of them vandalised and broken. The overwhelming majority of the graves date from 1942, with some from 1943 and 1944. The oldest grave I found was of Rakhil Mashchinskaya who died in 1933. The cemetery seems to have been closed by the mid 1940s. While older graves are very few, this does not mean that the cemetery was not founded until 1942 since, as already mentioned, it was the custom in many cemeteries to place new graves on top of old ones and many of the latter were lost or broken in the process. The bulk of these graves seem to belong to Jews who died during, or due to the after-effects of, the evacuation from the Ukraine when the Germans invaded. Several graves are marked "born in Odessa".²⁹ As we shall see, this cemetery was replaced by the Jewish one on Solomatn street which was opened in the early 1940s.³⁰

Turning to the situation in a Muslim equivalent of the orthodox Botkin (i.e. which already existed prior to the revolution), I shall now examine the situation in the Muslim Chagatai and Minor cemeteries.

Chagatai Muslim Cemetery.

In the main part of the cemetery (i.e not the atheist or "government" section, as it is now called, which I shall examine below), I could only find one star and that was on the grave of a former soldier in the Red Army and was thus more an emblem of his service than a statement of his beliefs. Otherwise the majority of the graves are secular (i.e; without any religious symbolism), headed with a large stone, often with a sloping top, and often also carrying an engraved portrait of the deceased (a violation of Muslim tradition which seems to have been introduced under Soviet influence and been generally adopted by the Muslim population). Perhaps a third of the graves carry a crescent, and a few have a short inscription in Arabic script, usually the Bismillah, often followed by a suitable Koranic quotation.³¹ The graves, especially those dating from the 1970s and later, are often quite sumptuous, sometimes surrounded by a low stone or metal perimeter. A number are presented in the old way

with a simple mound of earth and a peg with a number stuck into them. Some local sources claim that this is indicative of a trend back to the old purity of Islam which recommends a grave no higher than a hand span.³² On the other hand, it has always been customary to mark graves with wooden stakes while the family organises a larger and more permanent memorial.

Minor Cemetery.

This is a large cemetery not far from the Earthquake Memorial next to the bridge over the Anhor canal. Locals in the neighbourhood claim that it was popular with intellectuals during the Soviet period (many of whom used to live in the neighbouring Ts1 to Ts5 districts). The atmosphere is similar to the Chagatai. There are numerous graves, particularly the new ones (from say the 1970s onwards), which carry no crescent moon but simply a photograph of the deceased engraved on the stone. These graves appear very secular. One or two are even adorned with carved faces and busts.³³

However, also here there appears to be something of a revival of old practices which began well before the end of Soviet rule. There are a number of old-style Central Asian graves (a big hump with a ridged back) most, although not all, of which date to the 1970s and 1980s, and which generally seem to be associated with very old.³⁴

I could find only two graves which carried only a star (one or two carried a star - one a Soviet star - but in conjunction with the crescent moon like on the Turkish flag). One of these was dated 1963 although the rest of the inscription had been eroded away. The other seems to be associated with the grave of Mukhammadiyor ogli Mukhammadumar (1852-1938), the actual stone plaque on which carries the "bismillah" and a crescent!

Amongst the more recent graves there are quite a few officers - but, interestingly (bearing in mind that all officers in the Soviet army had to be Party members), without communist stars. Another interesting burial is that of Karim Zaripov the first organiser of the Uzbek-Soviet circus (1893-1960) described as "izvestnyi kizikchi, znameniyi dresirovchik" ("the famous clown and renowned trainer").

There are a very few graves using only the Arabic script, although a fair minority use it for the "bismillah" at the top of the stone.

Chagatai "Bukhara" Jewish Cemetery.

This is the oldest Jewish cemetery in the city.

According to the Tashkent Hokimiat, the Chagatai is overwhelmingly a "Bukhara" Jewish cemetery. There are only one or two graves carrying names of apparently Ashkenazi origin.³⁵

Virtually all the tombstones carry the star of David and many have inscriptions in Hebrew as well as Russian, and give the Jewish date of death as well as the Christian date (as adopted by the Soviets). The earliest graves are simple flat stones with carved

inscriptions only in Hebrew, often very crudely executed (Plate I). The earliest grave I could find was a shared one for Rakhmin Khalilovich Iskhakhov who died on 10 Sevan 1914) and Khiya Yusupov (1879-1919). In the 1970s and 1980s however, the graves are large and elaborately carved.³⁶

One tomb which does not carry the star of David is that of Maryam Yakubova (1909-1987) "Narodnaya Artistka UzSSR" ("People's Artist of the Uzbek SSR") and only one tomb carries the communist star, that of Aron Ribievich Saidov (1902-1954) (Plate II).

Yakkasarai Cemetery.

This is basically a Muslim cemetery (with the exceptions described below) although it has the reputation in Tashkent of being the cemetery for non-Central Asian Muslims including Shi'ites - mainly Azerbaijanis. Indeed, apart from Uzbeks, there are large numbers of Azeris, Tatars, Bashkirs and other Muslim peoples of the former USSR buried here. Nearly all the graves carry the crescent moon or are headed with plain secular stones - often with an engraved portrait.

There are however a very few graves carrying the communist star.³⁷

Apart from the overwhelming majority of Muslims, there are some interesting exceptions, for example Oleg Valerievich Naborshchikov (3.7.72-7.7.99) who is buried in a secular grave with an engraved picture. On what grounds was the law forbidding the burial of Christians (presumably including atheists belonging to peoples from the Christian tradition) in Muslim cemeteries suspended in his case?

At the far end from the entrance to the cemetery on the left, lie the Japanese and German PoW cemeteries. The former was laid out (or more likely re-laid) on 23 May 1990 thanks to the efforts of the Uzbek society for friendship and cultural relations with foreign countries and the Tashkent branch of the USSR-Japan society. It is immaculate with about fifty flat stones with names inscribed in Japanese. Next to it lies the German equivalent, also immaculate but undated, where lie about forty German PoWs who, according to the inscription, died in the no: 385 camp. The main stone is inscribed with three crosses. The dates of death are all of the late 1940s. One wonders why these PoWs were put into the Muslim cemetery especially bearing in mind that most of the Germans at least were Christian and could have gone into the Botkin. Perhaps the Russians refused to share their cemetery with the former enemy.

Dombrabad Cemetery.

This is an enormous cemetery of 76 hectares which was set up by the Soviets in 1964 in an area in the Dombrabad massif of the Chilanzar district to the South of Tashkent. It is a pleasant place, well endowed with trees, and has a brook running through it, which would be beautiful if it wasn't blocked with branches, leaves and rubbish. The cemetery was designed for the European citizens living in Tashkent city³⁸ and is interesting in that it shows how the local Soviet authorities, under the guidance of the Communist Party, planned a new cemetery for a population which had been under

atheist rule for more than 45 years and which, theoretically at least, was encouraged to abandon religion and ethnic self-awareness in favour of a new Soviet identity. With this in mind it is striking that the authorities decided to divide the place into clear separate blocks (so-called "plans") separated by paths, each one reserved for a different religion, which usually meant a different cultural/ethnic group. First it should be noted that, with one exception (see below) there are no Muslims in this cemetery. The various "plans" accommodate solid blocks of co-religionists - Christians in one block, Jews in another. These divisions are strictly maintained, although occasionally one or other of the faithful manages to slip across the dividing path into alien territory.³⁹ One group of apparent eccentrics who have placed extremely luxurious marble tombs with Islamic crescents and stars in a sort of no-man's land on the edge of the road between Christian and Jewish sectors is the Ogly family: Svetlana Gadzherovna (1946-1995), Dzhanpyi Gadzherovich Ogly (1958-1994) and Larisa Nikolaevna Ogly (1935-1994). Two members of this family are portrayed on their tombs, glass in hand and obviously enjoying Champagne, Cognac, and Vodka. Local authorities describe the Oglys as gypsies⁴⁰ (Plate III).

Apart from Russians and other Slav peoples, the Christian blocs include numerous Koreans and a few Christians of other denominations, including Catholics:⁴¹ In the Christian sectors the types of graves break down roughly as follows in proportions that remain fairly constant at least until the 1980s: 60% secular (most with picture), 38% with crosses, 2% with communist stars.

The Jewish blocks consist mainly of large headstones often with sloping tops and nearly always with photographs of the deceased. About 50% have the star of David, the rest are plain. In this, these European Jewish graves suggest that their community may have been less religious than their "Bukhara" Jewish co-religionists, virtually all of whose graves in the Chagatai cemetery carry the six-pointed star. In all the Jewish sections I only saw two communist stars, one illegible and the other also bearing the star of David. This prudent man was: Aron Solomonovich Braginskii (1886-1978).⁴²

At the far southern end of the cemetery amongst the Christian graves, lies a small patch of ground about 150 yards long by 70 yards wide and surrounded by a stout wire fence. This is a small Muslim cemetery with graves consisting of plain mounds of earth which according to local informants pre-dates the Dombabad cemetery. To the north of the main cemetery and separated from the rest of it by a concrete wall, lies the adjacent Sygallik Otaa Muslim cemetery, which is also an old one which existed before the Dombabad cemetery was laid out.⁴³ According to local informants, in the late 1980s when there were inter-ethnic riots in Tashkent, it was judged safer to fence it off from the rest. This may also have been the reason for the fencing-off of the smaller isolated plot of Muslim land to the South.

In the centre of the cemetery stands the newly built and consecrated church of St Vladimir. On either side of the approach path, there are two "plans" which appear to have been set aside as "communist" - although a local informant denied that there was a specifically communist part of the cemetery describing these "plans" as for officials and the military. Whatever the intention, with the exception of one orthodox cross placed in 1991 (for Lyudmila Petrovna Brazhentseva born 1907), and a rather vague boundary line with the neighbouring Christian block, the graves are solidly secular with about 5% carrying either red stars or stars engraved in the stones. There are

numerous servicemen buried here, of whom many seem to have been killed in the Afghan war. These are all secular graves with photographs. People killed in the Afghan war are either described simply as having been killed in Afghanistan (Rafiq Shaikhiyevich Galimov 10.9.57-15.11.88 - himself from the Islamic tradition, possibly a Tatar), or as having been killed on duty (Vladmir Petrovich Yegorovskii 30.8.65-17.1.87) This is truly an international(ist) section of the cemetery. In addition to Russians, there are Jews,⁴⁴ Koreans⁴⁵ and probable Caucasians:⁴⁶

Despite the apparently secular, even atheist, designation of these two “plans”, red stars are only slightly more common than in the “Christian” areas of the cemetery (maybe 2%). They seem to die out after the late 1980s although some continue in the form of stars etched into the stone.

Solomatn Street Cemetery.

This was originally a Jewish cemetery set up in the early 1940s⁴⁷ to cope with the influx of Jews during the second world war when the Jewish section of the Botkin became full. It is very extensive. The earliest graves I could find there were dated 1944 and 1945⁴⁸ although there are numerous, mainly simple, graves from the second half of the forties.

This is an Ashkenazi cemetery. No names were recognisably Central Asian. All the graves I saw carried the star of David, except for one Soviet star (Yakov Davydovich Kleitman 1917-1963).

The most recent Jewish grave I could find was dated 1997.

In the corner of this cemetery, next to the Stalingrad memorial,⁴⁹ there is a small Russian cemetery which seems to have expanded over the years and to have trespassed in amongst some of the Jewish graves, with the result that the two faiths are quite mixed up near the limit between them. Apart from Prokudnik's which may be a later insertion (see below), the earliest graves date from the late 1940s, so the Orthodox seem to have got their foot in the door from relatively early on. The most recent grave I could find was for Zinaida Chervenenko dated 1998.

The big majority of these Russian graves carry the Orthodox cross but there are a few red stars.⁵⁰ There is also a Korean under a secular monument with picture: Nikolai Alekseevich Kim (1928-1979).

So far, in the cemeteries which were designed to accommodate people who were still clinging to their sense of identity as members of different nationalities and faiths, we have noticed a distinct reluctance on the part of both the authorities and the people to accept the “unification” at which the Soviet government and Communist Party were theoretically aiming. But what of the cemeteries which had been especially opened for “atheists” of all nationalities? Assuming that those who were buried in these places were from the communist elite, and thus, theoretically at least, committed to the concept of a Soviet identity that transcended national and religious loyalties, should one not expect them to have accepted the proposition put forward by for example Kampars and Zakovich (see above) that they should all be buried together?

Atheist Cemeteries.

I should now like to examine the situation in the Botkin and Chagatai Atheist cemeteries (the latter is officially referred to as the "government" cemetery although popular parlance refers to it as "atheist"). According to local sources:⁵¹ entry to these cemeteries had to be applied for with a special "khodataistvo" or petition to the Ispolkom of the CP. Once approval was granted, the Ispolkom would decide on whether the deceased rated an official funeral. Where the ceremony took place would depend on the deceased's profession. Film-stars and actors for example would be celebrated in Dom Kino and so on.

Atheist Section Of The Botkin.

I visited this on 24 Feb 2001. Although locals date this cemetery to the late 1920s, the earliest grave I could find was dated 1935:⁵² The cemetery was officially closed in the 1980s but is still occasionally used chiefly for the relations and spouses of people already buried there.

The overwhelming majority of the graves are of Russians, or rather Slavs, with a fair number carrying Jewish and Armenian names. Most are secular graves, while many carry red or plain-metal five-pointed stars. There is a large monument in the middle of the cemetery dedicated to four soldiers buried in 1943.

There are large numbers of graves with Jewish names right through the period of the cemetery's existence.⁵³

Apart from Russians and other Slavs, and Jews, there are a variety of other Soviet nationalities e.g.:

Greeks: e.g. Nikos Afanasievich Rumeliotis. 1908-1969.

Koreans: e.g. Andrei Dmitrievich Zi. 1931-80.

Germans: e.g. Friedrich Rudolfovich Dyummel. 1912-1976.

There are numerous Armenian graves.

On the other hand, the number of people with Muslim names buried here is very small, while those with apparently Uzbek names are even fewer.⁵⁴ The latest Uzbek grave that I could find was that of Alisher Babaev (1974-1997), described on the stone as having "died tragically". He is buried in a plot with other members of his family. They appear to be only Uzbeks of the modern period (post-Perestroika).

As Babaev's grave shows, although officially closed in the 1980s, the cemetery appears still to be in use. There are numerous graves dating from the 1990s. Moreover, along the wall next to the street are several very grand graves to important people dating from the 1980s or later. Virtually all are secular although none are under a star, and one carries a cross. There are some interesting names - e.g. the poet Sergei Yesenin's daughter. Other noteworthy graves include that of Boris Mikhailovich Borzhanov (1885-1936) the former commander in chief of the forces of the People's Republic of Bukhara).

Although this was the “atheist” cemetery, since Perestroika, the cross is increasingly seen above graves even in this former sanctum of communism. Nearly all the crosses date to the 1990s. However there are a very few crosses dating back much further - an odd phenomenon in the communist cemetery.⁵⁵

One grave seems to have been set as a secular one only to have a cross added later: Char Nikiforovich Gus'kov (1905-1977), while, in another case a man and wife were buried under one stone with a cross (in her case) and a star (in his case) engraved on the shared monument (Photo Cemfig 14). In yet another example of mixed beliefs in one family, the Savchuk family plot starts (Pavel Ivanovich Savchuk) with a secular grave only to end (Irina Pavlovna Loiko - his daughter) with a cross. These and others like them raise the broader question as to whether women were more inclined than men to remain religious in an atheist society.

As in the main Orthodox part of the Botkin, most of the red star graves seem to date from the 1960s.

“Government” Chagatai Cemetery.

According to Soviet tradition⁵⁶ leading figures in Soviet Uzbekistan’s political, scientific and cultural life are buried here, including of course, former first Party Secretary Sharaf Rashidov,⁵⁷ cultural figures like the actor Abror Hidoyatov, Shukur Burkhon (1906-1987 - Popular artist of the USSR), Hamid Alimjon, poet and husband of the poetess Zulfia, politicians like Yuldash Akhunbabaev (1885-1943 - first chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the UzSSR), Askhad Mu'mar Agib (1920-1997).

The overwhelming majority of those buried here are Uzbeks but, in keeping with the aim of founding a “government” cemetery of secular (i.e. atheist) character, a small number of non-Uzbeks are also present, mainly Russians⁵⁸ but also including others like the famous Korean member of the Uzbek communist party Kim Pen Hva (1904-1974) complete with a big portrait bust, and Armenians: Akop Abramovich Sarkisov (1907-1971) in a secular grave with picture, and the actress Tamara Khonym (1906-1991 - nee Petrosiants).

Unlike in the main (Muslim) part of the cemetery, there are a number, albeit a small one, of communist stars.⁵⁹

Overall, most of the graves are secular without any indication of political or religious affiliation. By the 1990s, however, the exclusively secular atmosphere of this part of the cemetery was being eroded:

In 1994, the family of Sabira Khon Irgasheva (born 1922) had a crescent moon engraved on the tomb which she shared with her husband Khidirali Irgashev (1917-1965). The family seem to have waited until she died before uniting her with her husband in a Muslim grave. Incidentally the script on the stone is also in the modern Latin script for Uzbek introduced since independence.⁶⁰

The most modern grave I could find was that of Marsum Ismailova (1918-1998).

CONCLUSIONS

An interesting if somewhat predictable conclusion that can be drawn from the observations described above, is that Tashkent's cemeteries yield a harvest of fascinating reflections of the city's history under Soviet rule. Only specialists of Soviet literature will be aware that Sergei Yesenin's daughter lived and died in Tashkent (or indeed that Yesenin had a daughter at all). The presence of Japanese PoWs' graves in a Muslim cemetery in Tashkent provides a sobering post-script to the well-known story that it was they who built the Navoi Opera House. The obvious speed with which the Jewish section of the Botkin cemetery filled up after the German invasion in 1942 bears eloquent testimony to that tragedy and to the way in which Uzbekistan gave a home to those fleeing the invader. The size of the Jewish cemetery in Solomatin street and of the Jewish "plans" in the Dombrabad cemetery and the growing opulence of the graves in them show clearly how that community grew and prospered throughout the post-war Soviet period, just as the slowing down of burials in all the still functioning Jewish cemeteries today reflects the exodus of Jews after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The numerous graves of soldiers killed in Afghanistan are a reminder that it was from Tashkent as the HQ of the Turkestan Military District that the Soviet campaign was directed. The fact that the most magnificent grave in Dombrabad was erected to a family of gypsies must say something about that family not to mention the gypsy community in Central Asia as a whole, just as the mixed symbolism of champagne, cognac, vodka, horses and the Islamic crescent project an interesting picture of their attitude to religion. The "government" Chagatai cemetery reads like a "Who's Who" of Soviet Uzbekistan especially if one has followed the peregrinations of Sharaf Rashidov's corpse.

However, beyond providing an interesting historical narrative, Tashkent's cemeteries also seem to tell us something about the way its inhabitants, of whatever ethnicity and religion, reacted to the Communist Party's grand design to turn them into Soviet citizens liberated from their historic and religious traditions; and about the tactics the local government judged suitable for dealing with these attitudes. Of course, allowance must be made for the fact that, at this distance in time and given the limited scope of this research project, it is impossible to elucidate much of the background which attended the burials observed. Why one family chose a red star and another an Orthodox cross; why some families chose both; why nearly all Uzbeks, even those who had nailed their political colours to the mast of communism chose to bury their relations in the Muslim cemeteries (or did the authorities encourage this?) and to eschew the Soviet star on their graves; how some wives chose to be buried with their husbands even when the latter were buried on "alien" territory; how the German PoWs and the single Russian in the Yakkasarai cemetery came to be there (in contravention of the law); all these questions must remain unanswered at least at the personal level. Nonetheless, even if one allows for all the numerous exceptions, a pattern does emerge.

Perhaps the two most striking facts are that, in the 1920s, when the Communist Party was in its most revolutionary phase, it established two separate "atheist" cemeteries, one in the Old City and one outside the European city. Possibly neither was explicitly intended as exclusive to one or the other community, but their topographical position made it virtually impossible for them to develop in any other way. Moreover, in 1962, by which time Soviet rule was firmly established and the effects of Soviet

education might have been expected to have made an impact on attitudes, when the Tashkent City Council decided to open a new cemetery, it purposely excluded Muslims (even fencing off those ancient Muslim cemeteries which adjoined it) and, within the new area, created clearly defined and separate areas for "Christians" and "Jews" (even when they were no longer believers), as well as a separate area for members of the "nomenklatura".

This separation continued throughout the Soviet period. The Uzbeks buried in the atheist Botkin form a tiny minority amongst the thousands of Russian and other "ex-Christian" and "ex-Jewish" graves. Likewise, although the number of Europeans in the "government" Chagatai cemetery is proportionately greater than Uzbeks in the Botkin, they are far fewer than their element in the Tashkent population would have justified, not to mention their influence in the Party and government. The fact is that, even amongst the intelligentsia and "nomenklatura", although the two communities, Uzbek and Russian, lived as Soviets, in death they returned to their separate traditional nationalities. At first sight the Jewish community seems to have adopted a different policy. Those who had embraced communism did not hesitate to declare their allegiance. The "atheist" Botkin contains scores of graves with Jewish names (the "government" Chagatai none). But the Jewish community contained its own division between European and "Bukhara" Jews - to the extent that the Hokimiat openly describes for example the Chagatai Jewish cemetery as "Bukharan" and the Solomatin Street cemetery as "European".

What is one to make of the frequency or otherwise of the use of communist and/or religious symbolism on graves? It must be clear from the outset that, even in the old cemeteries (except the Jewish Chagatai), a large proportion of the graves bear no symbolism at all, religious or communist, but are plain memorial stones with names and usually pictures of the deceased. This in itself may be an indication of lack of religious belief. On the other hand, there may be other explanations. Muslim tradition favours simple graves (although you might not believe it to judge by the opulence of many of the graves in the Muslim cemeteries from the 1970s and 1980s). Throughout the Soviet period, many families preferred not to advertise the fact that they were believers by placing religious symbolism on the graves of their "dear departed" but at the same time did not feel inclined to make a statement about their commitment to atheism.

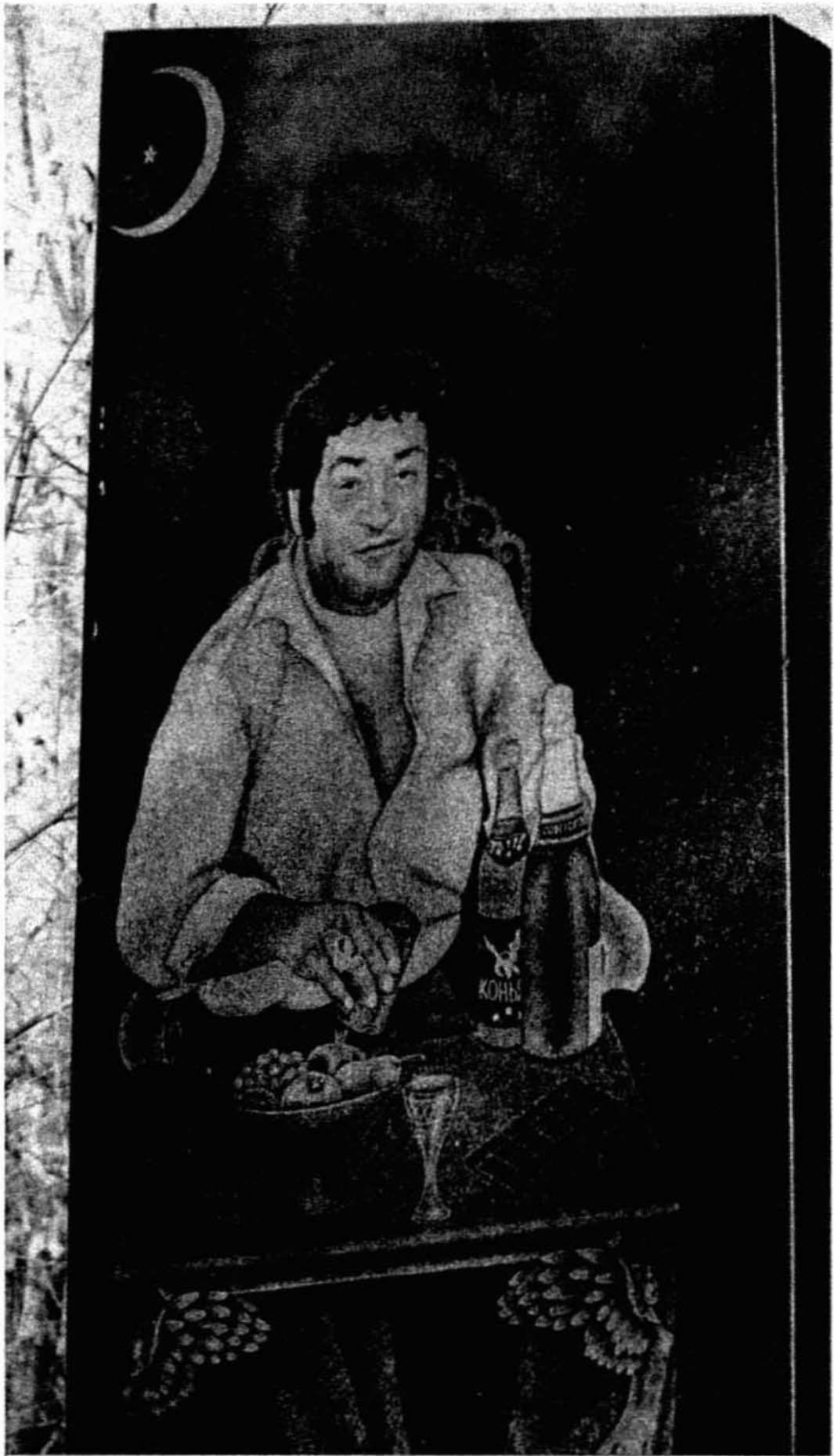
However, perhaps some conclusions may be drawn from examination of those graves which do carry such symbols. First, in neither the Muslim nor in the Jewish cemeteries, of whatever persuasion, do more than a tiny handful of graves carry any sort of clear communist symbolism. Moreover, those "muslim" graves (in the Yakkasarai cemetery for example) which do carry a Soviet star are often those of non-Uzbek muslims like Tatars, Bashkirs, persons from the North Caucasus etc. One might conclude from this that communism made very little headway amongst the local Uzbek (and Tajik) population. In contrast, the Orthodox Botkin contains numerous graves which carry the red star, probably as many as ten per cent in the pre-war and immediate post-war periods. However, by the 1970s, even here the proportion of stars had declined significantly.

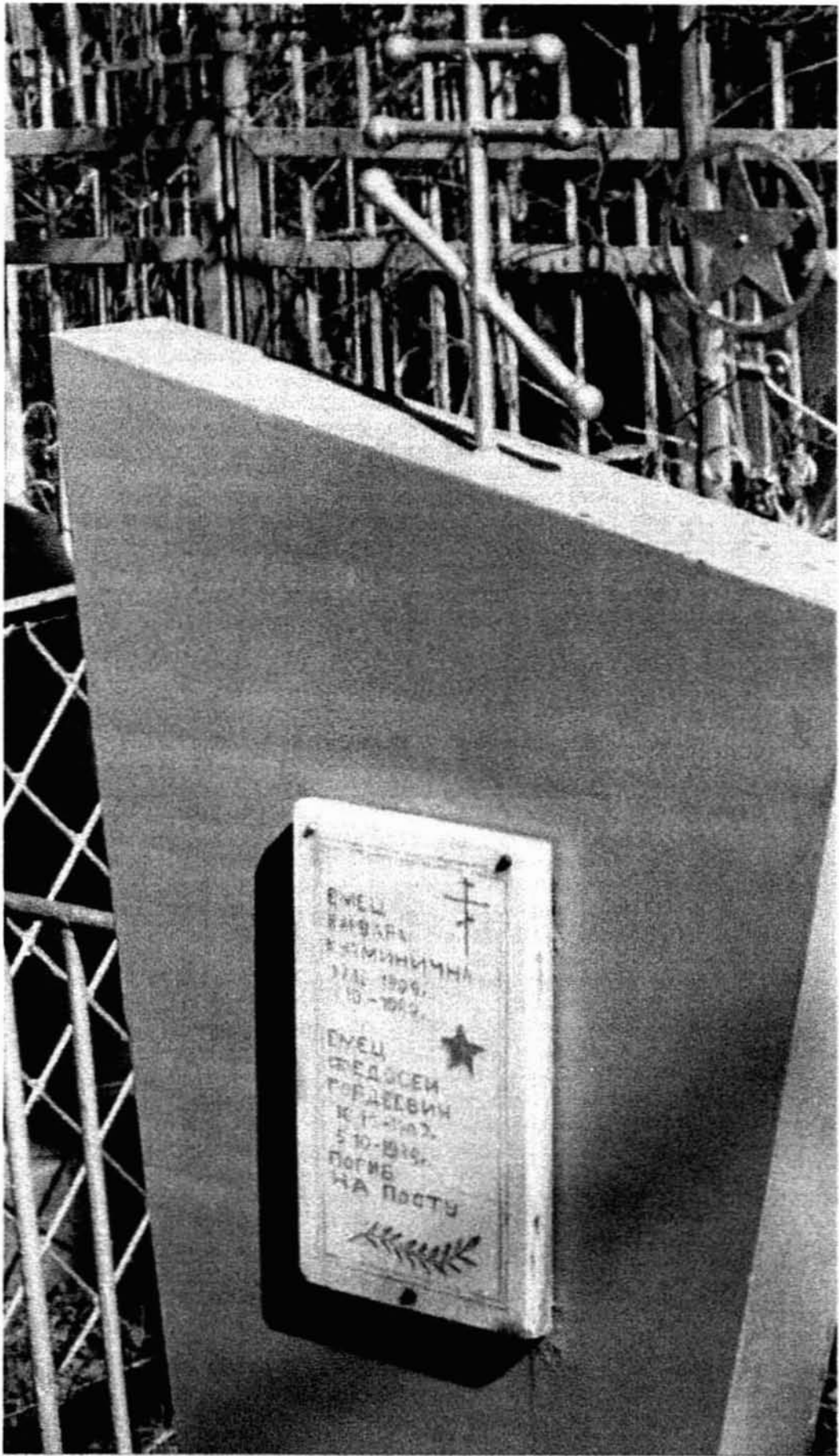
Conversely, by the same date, the proportion of Orthodox crosses was growing, and, by the 1990s they had even invaded the "atheist" Botkin. It is harder to attribute a

significant increase in Islamic symbolism to any particular period, the proportion of graves using the Arabic script for example seems to remain fairly constant. One thing is certain: the Islamic injunction against representing the human form is now widely ignored. Large numbers of Muslim graves carry a portrait of the deceased etched on the stone. In the Minor cemetery, one grave even carries the Bismillah and a full Koranic quotation beneath a life sized portrait bust (Plate IV). Nonetheless, it is hard to escape the conclusion that many fewer Uzbeks than Slavs, Jews, or even Tatars, of whatever social stratum, were prepared to make the sort of commitment to atheist communism, or indeed a Soviet identity, on which burial outside their traditional territory would have set the seal.









- ¹ The Tashkent Encyclopaedia (chief editor S.K. Ziyadullaev, Tashkent 1984), in the entry for "kladbishche", says early 19th, but this must surely be wrong.
- ² According to the Russian Orthodox Bishop of Tashkent's office the church was constructed with money raised from the state budget (Roubles 11,674), with additional help from the city's purse (Roubles 1500), and Roubles 285 being contributed by private individuals. Communion vessels, banners and icons were presented by many private people. The largest gift was from commercial counsellor N.I. Ivanov who paid for the iconostasis. The construction of the church was executed by Engineer F.V. Smirnov. The church was dedicated on 8 May 1905 and the rites were performed by Archpriest Konstantin Bogoroditskii. (Private communication from the Bishopric, November 1996).
- ³ V. Bulatova and A. Man'kovskaya, Pamyatniki Zodchestva Tashkenta. (Tashkent 183). P 118.
- ⁴ Ibidem P 119.
- ⁵ Personal interview with Mirkhasim Oka, latest in four generations of sextons in the cemetery, drawing on statements by his father Tajiboi Oka.
- ⁶ Sultan Galiev: "Metody antireligioznoi propagandy sredi musulman". Zhizn' Natsionalnosti. Dec 14, 1921.
- ⁷ According to the office of the Bishop of Tashkent the traditional Orthodox rites continued to be performed by Metropolitans Arsenii and Nikander and Bishop Boris. After the end of the Second World War, the church was handed back to the Orthodox authorities, who re-commenced celebrating the traditional rituals. Source: Private communication November 1996.
- ⁸ Sheila Fitzpatrick and Richard Stites (eds): "Russia in the Era of the NEP". See Stites' article.
- ⁹ P.P. Kampars and N.M. Zakovich: "Sovetskaya Grazhdanskaya Obryadnost'". (Moskva 1967). P 34.
- ¹⁰ Ibidem. P 59.
- ¹¹ Ibidem. P 91.
- ¹² Order no: 114 of the UzSSR Council of Ministers dated 18 March 1986.
- ¹³ P.P Kampars and N.M. Zakovich. op cit. P 140.
- ¹⁴ Ibidem. P 149.
- ¹⁵ Ibidem. P 149.
- ¹⁶ Uzbek Soviet Encyclopaedia (entry for "kabrestan").
- ¹⁷ Hokimiat Interview. March 2001.
- ¹⁸ Note of 16 April 1922 - Hokimiat Central Archive: Fond 30, Inv 1, File 229, Pages 91, 92, and 63-64.
- ¹⁹ Decree no: 1362 of UzSSR Council of Ministers dated 31 August 1953.
- ²⁰ Report of 10 July 1954 to N.A. Mukhitdinov, Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers, signed Iskanderov.
- ²¹ Kh. Kamilov's report to F.I.Sazonov, Secretary of the Tashkent City Committee of the CP Uzbekistan. Hokimiat Central Archive: Fond 312, Inv 1, File 158, Page 140.
- ²² Hokimiat Interview, March 2001.
- ²³ Ali Hasan Ali Abdul Hamid. (Al Hidayba, 1994). P 30.
- ²⁴ Hokimiat Interview. March 2001.
- ²⁵ I am grateful for this and much other useful information to Sergei Bozhko of the UNDCP in Tashkent.
- ²⁶ For example: Ashraf Khakimovich Galimov. 1905-1974. Participated in the civil and great patriotic wars. Ismail Khasanovich Kadyraliev. 1888-1974. Ravil Yakubovich Abdullin. 1936-1974. This man's grave is headed with a Soviet star. Anna Mirzajanovna Garibova. 1883-1981 (apparently married to Setrak Garibyanz - an Armenian?). Although it is theoretically conceivable that these people were converted to Christianity, it seems unlikely, at least in Galimov's and Abdullin's cases. The former fought in the civil war on the side of the "reds", while the latter's grave carries the Soviet star.
- ²⁷ For example: Abram Moiseevich Rabizanovich. Died 1974 and his wife Bertha, died 1990. This grave does not carry the star of David. Perhaps Bertha was Christian or he himself was a convert.
- ²⁸ For example: Khan su ne. 1926-1990. Tsoi Sergei. 1920-95. They are buried under one stone and were thus presumably married. The inscription is bi-lingual in Russian and Korean.
- ²⁹ For example: Wolf Zuckerman died 1943 and Fanya Moiseevna Cherkes 1867-1943, whose stone also carries the words "died on the evacuation".
- ³⁰ Source: Hokimiat Interview. March 2001.
- ³¹ The most favoured inscription is a simple "Bismillah" although a few graves also carry the "Fateha". A small number also carry a Koranic quotation, the commonest being from Surat Al e Imran, Verse 185 ("Kull e nafs en Dha'eqat ul Maut") while on a very few, perhaps half a dozen, the whole inscription is in the Arabic script.
- ³² Ali Hasan Ali Abdul Hamid. op cit. P 32.

- ³³ For example: Agdam Mukhamedtin, a Tatar described as an architect, who lived from 1912-1973.
- ³⁴ For example: Magrufkhon ogli Matrukkhon (1886-1980) and next to him presumably his wife Kursiyankhon Khasankhon kizi (1892-1987). Another such example might be Hoji Isomhammad Mirza Abdullah (1851-1921) whose new stone, placed on an old humped grave, carries the bismillah and crescent. However, not all such graves are so recent, which suggests that the old grave form continued throughout the Soviet period albeit in a small minority of cases. Another old style grave is that of Khon bibi Ibrokhim khon kizi (1863-1947). Next to it is a very small and very old stone indeed with a much weathered inscription all in the Arabic script.
- ³⁵ A possible example is Avner Davydov (1920-1942.) who died before Leningrad.
- ³⁶ The latest grave I could see was for Malmal Yushuvaeva-Mullaeva (1900-1990) although there may be even later ones as there is plenty of room.
- ³⁷ For example: Roman Mingatin. Killed on active service in 1984 (Afganistan?). (Presumably a Tatar). Fatashlam Khabibrakhmanov (1926-1985) (the grave carries an inscription possibly in Bashkir - "tynych iokla khatynyn mindayamal". Kasem Ibragimovich Shafeev. 1932-82.)
- ³⁸ Uzbek encyclopaedia, entry for "kabrestan".
- ³⁹ For example: Efim Semyonovich Gofman (1918-1964) who is buried amongst the Christians. His wife (Tansiya Alekseevna - 1915-1991), whose body was added later, may have been Christian and may have insisted that he be buried there so she could be on Christian ground. Another Jewish grave on Christian territory is Rafael Yosifovich Ionin (1928-1997). Besides the occasional Jew, there are also some others of probably mixed origins who have found their way there: e.g. Georgii Normatovich Tursunbaevy (1931-1964) and his wife Lina Akremova (1939-1990) who, to judge by their names, must have some Muslim family connections. Other Muslim names in the Christian sector appear to be Russian wives of Muslims, such as Mariya Sergeevna Kholmukhamedova (1928-1989).
- ⁴⁰ Hokimiat Interview. March 2001.
- ⁴¹ For example: Antonina Aleksandrovna Rutto (1914-1984) to judge by the form of cross above her grave at least.
- ⁴² The most recent grave I saw was a Jewish one freshly dug and strewn with fresh flowers: Roman Isaakovich Beislekhem (1917-26 Feb 01).
- ⁴³ Hokimiat Interview. March 2001.
- ⁴⁴ For example: Moisei Izraelovich Feldman 1893-1987 "participated in the revolution and the civil war". His secular grave carries a picture and a carved five pointed Soviet star. The other side of the road, the grave of Zinovii Akovlevich Kraizman (1926-1986) carries both a six pointed star of David and a five-pointed Soviet star!
- ⁴⁵ For example: Valentin Filipovich Khvan (1924-1987) - with what appears to be a Korean inscription.
- ⁴⁶ For example: Shamyil Akhmedovich Yurmukhamedov; (1939-2.6.86). Both the last two have pictures engraved on their graves. Another apparent atheist from the Muslim tradition here is Ramzii Ibragimovich Mustafin (1927-87) with a secular grave complete with picture.
- ⁴⁷ Hokimiat Interview. March 2001.
- ⁴⁸ For example: Gersh Solomonovich Blaikhman born 1898 and died 16.2.44 and Efam Natanovich Doman born 1907 died 1945.
- ⁴⁹ The main entrance to which is from Shota Rustaveli Street (now Usmon Noser St).
- ⁵⁰ For example: Klavdii Grigorievich Smyshlaev (1889-1964); Sergei Ivanovich Ushakov (1950-1988); T.I. Prokudnik. Died 1936. (a very makeshift memorial and, if original, is the earliest); Aleksei Sklyarenko. (1928-1948).
- ⁵¹ Hokimiat Interview. March 2001.
- ⁵² For example: Mikhail Ivanovich Markov. (1874-1935). Another old grave is Alimpiada Illarionovna Vlasyuga (1912-1937).
- ⁵³ Examples of apparent Jews buried here include: Abram Lvovovich Brotskii (1882-1943) and Lazar' Lvovovich Shabshai (1920-76).
- ⁵⁴ With some difficulty I found the following: Kaibula Alievich Akhmedov. (1909-1970). Nelya Khairullaevna Amanullaeva (1931-1974). Ibrahim Khalilovich Useinov. (1903-1958). "Member of the CPSU since 1930." Abdurakhman Abdubakirovich Mukhamedov (1905-1973)(he was buried with Rakhima Yusupovna Elkibaeva: born 1908 died 1979 so presumably they were married.) Khamza Bakirovich Muzafarov (1913-1972). Nariman Alikovich Rakhimbaev. Died 1979. Askar Arifovich Rakhimbaev. Died 1977. Ismail Rakhmatov (no dates). Saifullah Azizov. Former director of the Irrigation Insitute. Mamajon Akhmedov. Former chairman of the Central Committee of the All-Union Cotton Processing Industries Trades Union (sic).
- ⁵⁵ For example: Mikhail Pavlovich Ganin. (1894-1937) (not a good time to be a declared Christian,

though of course he may have been shot). Ekaterina Pavlushina. Died 1948. Tatyana Arkhipovna Nered'ko. (1889-1967). Mariya Semkina. Died 1983.

⁵⁶ Interview in March 2001 with Goga Abrorovich Hidoyatov: the wife of the famous Uzbek actor Abror Hidoyatov, Vera Ishantoraeva, who was a member of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, travelled to Vienna in 1952 as part of the Soviet delegation to the peace conference. During this trip she paid a visit to the main Vienna cemetery and was impressed by the monuments there. On her return to Tashkent she persuaded the government to start a new tradition of monumental tombs. In the "government" part of the cemetery, many of the tombs are indeed huge, often with carved portraits of the deceased.

⁵⁷ When Rashidov died he was buried in a special individual grave in the centre of Tashkent, which was intended to become a national monument no doubt rather like the statue of the great Central Asian poet Alisher Navo'i. However, shortly after his death, Gorbachev embarked on his campaign to root out corruption in Uzbekistan and Rashidov was posthumously disgraced. His body was then transferred to his birthplace, Jizzakh. However, with his rehabilitation after Uzbekistan's independence, the great man's remains were returned to Tashkent where they now rest.

⁵⁸ Slavs include:

Aleksandra Sapozhnikova 1905-1977.

Miroslav Yaroslavovich Buresh 1924-1981 and Lieutenant-General Vladimir Kharitonovich Shudra (1925-1981).

Ol'ga Ivanovna Batyushina-Anisimkina.

Viktor Nikolaevich Sivets (1919-1984).

Iosif Antonovich Telyatnikov (1898-1965) whose grave carries a star. The tomb of Sergei Petrovich Borodin (1902-1974) is backed by an impressive relief of a standing horse.

⁵⁹ For example:

Gulyam Kokanbaev (1957).

Iman Al Kulibaev (1912-1970).

Z.A. Habibullina. 1929-1971) Tatar.

Kholbek Yodgorov (1913-1979).

Sobir bdurakhmanovich Rakhmanov (1907-1963).

Hamid Faiziovich. (1905-1952) (actually his grave carries a hammer and sickle and an inscription telling us that he was a member of the CP)

⁶⁰ Some unusual graves in this cemetery include the following:

Sultankhozha Yusimkhojaev (1874-1961) who according to local informants, fought with the Basmachi.

Fatima Siddikova, died 1919, who was one of the first Komsomolki of the Sabur Rakhimskii Raion. died 1979.

Askar Arifovich Rakhimbaev. Died 1977.

Ismail Rakhmatov (no dates).