

DAGHESTAN AND TATARSTAN: THE STATE/RELIGION RELATIONSHIP IN THE ISLAMIC CONTEXT OF RUSSIA

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For my analysis of the relations between Islam and the state in Russia I have selected Daghestan and Tatarstan, two republics with predominantly Muslim populations which demonstrate the two most typical patterns of such relations. Islam in Daghestan has concentrated the main features of this religion in the Northern Caucasus, home of about 4.5 million Muslims, over 40 percent of whom belong to the Daghestanian ethnic groups. Islam in Daghestan has a common history with Islam in the neighboring republics. This is best illustrated by the Caucasian War of the 1820s-1850s and by the Soviet period (mainly between May 1944 and January 1990 when all religious organizations in the region were supervised by the Spiritual Administration of the Muslims of the Northern Caucasus). Today, the local religious organizations are working in close contact with the Coordinating Center of the North Caucasian Muslims (CCNCM), which has several co-chairmen who alternate once every three years.

The fact that the Daghestanian ethnoses share many of the adats (all sorts of taboos, blood feud, sworn brotherhood, hospitality, etc.) makes the republic best suited for the purposes of my analysis. It is equally important that in Daghestan and its neighbors, the Sunni Shafi'i madhab is the most widespread. In addition, Daghestan and other North Caucasian republics have been most exposed to the problems created by Islamic extremism. Daghestan was the first among them to pass the so-called anti-Wahhabi law in September 1999. Kabardino-Balkaria, Karachaevo-Cherkessia, and Ingushetia followed suit; Wahhabism was also banned in Chechnia.

The above shows that for many reasons Daghestan can be regarded as a "model of the Northern Caucasus."¹

As distinct from Tatarstan, Islam in Daghestan is functioning under difficult socioeconomic conditions, which are especially obvious high in the mountains and in the foothills. Specialists in social sciences and experts on the Caucasus are of the opinion that the traditions of the Daghestanian mountain peoples are dying away as remnants of patriarchal and semi-patriarchal societies. According to other authors,

¹ A. Malashenko, *Islamskoe vozrozhdenie Rossii*, Moscow, 1998, p. 107.

this approach is not totally correct: mountain peoples cherish their traditions. It takes much time to bring reforms to these distant settlements, which are very hard to reach. For example, the pre-revolutionary administrative and religious structures survived in the northwest of Daghestan until 1927, while collectivization was completed in 1939-1940, ten years later than in the rest of the country. Roads connecting the mountains and the valleys appeared late in the 1940s-1960s; in winter and early spring snow and mud flows make these areas inaccessible.² This explains why the traditional religious ideas, Muslim norms and rites suppressed under Soviet power survived up in the mountains. Traditional religious world outlook inevitably reflected the history and living conditions of the local people.

Islamic fundamentalism as a form of social protest gives Muslim religious communities immunity against novelties and restores archaic social relationships (property, moral, religious, etc.) under the banner of embracing the true and pure religion of their ancestors. Its ideology is a powerful consolidating weapon which could develop into religious extremism. Some people are of the opinion that "Wahhabism as a religious and legal teaching is typical of Daghestan. In fact, the ideology of the Imam Shamil movement did contain certain features of the Hanbali madhab and principles of 'pure Islam'."³

This is not true: there are traditions of Islamic fundamentalism in our republic, yet they are mostly connected with the harsh climatic and living conditions in the foothills and the mountains. Ascetic and rigorist elements are inevitable in our spiritual and religious heritage: the people of Daghestan perceive this heritage as a source of heroism in the struggle against numerous enemies (also displayed in the Caucasian War against the Russian Empire), which provides spiritual support in coping with the hardships of life. These elements are still alive among the laity and Muslim clerics.

The following figures relating to the laity support the above:

1. 20.4 percent of the polled look at Wahhabism as an Islamic trend which, by banning some of the rites (worshipping of saints, costly burial rites, etc.), insists on a simpler and cheaper religious life. In the foothills, 28.7 percent of the people are convinced of this.
2. In the mountains, 20.8 percent of the polled (compared with 12.8 percent of the general sampling) describe Wahhabism as "a response to the injustice against Islam and the Muslims demonstrated by the state."
3. The idea of "Wahhabism as an Islamic movement that demands freedom of religion and does not formulate political demands" was actively supported (41.2 percent) in the Botlikh District, an area of hostilities in 1999; today the situation remains tense there.
4. Daghestanians who have greatly suffered from the ideas of extremist Wahhabism are still more convinced than the Tartar Muslims (22.1 percent in Daghestan compared with 17.7 percent in Kazan) that the religious content predominates in Wahhabism.
5. The relations between the rapidly changing world and Islam are one of the most urgent problems of Islamic resurrection in Daghestan and in Russia. To find out what the faithful thought about this they were asked: "If you think it possible please select one of the following formulas: for all the faithful, Islam should remain the same as it was under the Prophet Muhammad; Islam cannot remain the same as it was under the Prophet Muhammad since life has greatly changed since that time; undecided."

In Daghestan, 54.5 percent of the polled believed that "Islam should remain the same as it was under the Prophet Muhammad" (52.8 percent in the mountains; 82 percent in the foothills, and 47.5 percent in the valleys). It should be said that this conviction is part of the fundamentalist and Wahhabi ideologies. Only 24.9 percent of the polled demonstrated flexibility by selecting the second variant. On the whole, the greatest share of supporters of "fundamentalism" was found in the foothills (82 percent); in the countryside the share of such people is greater than in towns and cities (60.9 and 42.7 percent, respectively).

² See: V.O. Bobrovnikov, "Islam i sovetskoe nasledie v kolkhozakh severo-zapadnogo Daghestana," *Etnograficheskoe obozrenie*, No. 5, 1997, p. 138.

³ M. Shevchenko, "Etnokonfessional'nye faktory edinstva Rossii," *NG-Religii*, 27 October, 1999.

Our poll revealed that the most “fundamentalist minded” were the group of respondents who regularly performed namaz; the largest share (90.3 percent) of “fundamentalist minded” people was found in the foothills (the Karamakhi zone is part of the area) and in the countryside (83.7 percent). The figures for perfunctory prayers are much lower: 50.0 and 42.4 percent, respectively.

Sociological data confirm that fundamentalist ideas—fertile soil for Wahhabi propaganda—are popular among the Daghestanian faithful, yet this should not be taken as evidence of the local Muslims’ extremist sentiments. As a form of social protest, fundamentalism may develop into extremism in social-economic and social-political crises. Daghestan has already had a taste of this (not without a certain amount of influence from foreign religious NGOs).

By itself, rejection of Islamic modernization is not dangerous from the social-political viewpoint. It may develop into a threat if subjected to outside political influences. This is explained by the fact that everyday popular Islam as part of everyday consciousness, and public psychology is not always consistent: there are contradictory trends in it when it comes to realizing the idea of going back to the Muslim values of the early Middle Ages. It permits novelties in religious behavior created by social progress and contains rudiments of pagan beliefs, which, as a rule, remain unrecognized. Islamic fundamentalism as part of Islamic ideology is a different matter. In Daghestan, the fundamentalist ideas are consistently promoted and realized by the Spiritual Administration of the Muslims of Daghestan (SAMD), alims, and the well-educated faithful.

Recently, stronger fundamentalist trends as represented by the SAMD added urgency to the relations between Islam and the state. The local intelligentsia, who, on the whole, turned away from the religious resurrection issues, is being gradually drawn into discussions with the Muslim clerics about the relations among Islam, society, and the state. These discussions have already shown that the leaders of Daghestanian Islam are shaping Muslim consciousness to the detriment of the commonly accepted secular values; they are trying to turn some of the public institutions into religious ones in an effort to acquire the right to control certain social phenomena. The SAMD has already banned audio, video, and photo products on the religious theme, as well as the “sale and distribution of all literal translations of the Koran and the Hadiths—from those by Krachkovsky to those by Valeria Porokhova.”⁴ To destroy literature of an “anti-Islamic” nature, the SAMD expert council organized raids across the republic.⁵ In their zeal, the raiders removed from the shelves the Koranic translations by Muhammad-Nouri Osmanov, a prominent scholar and winner of the State Prize of Russia. They insisted that they were being guided by the Law on Banning Wahhabi and Other Extremist Activities on the Territory of the Republic of Daghestan.⁶ In fact, the SAMD assumed certain state functions such as the right to determine which literature is Wahhabi and which is not; it violates human rights by banning books published by a decision of the state structures, and is enlisting power agencies to help carry out its actions unsanctioned by the authorities. Examples of clerical interference in the prerogatives of the state with the aim of reviving archaic elements in social norms and relationships are numerous; there are efforts to change the content of secular education in secondary schools and higher educational establishments.⁷ The supervision structures rarely respond to violations of the law on religion by religious organizations themselves. The Public Prosecutor’s Office responded to the bans on the Koranic translations only when it could remain silent no longer: “The SAMD has no right to describe any of the Koranic translations as Wahhabi and decide whether they can be distributed or not.”⁸ By way of commentary, deputy mufti Ahmad-hajji Tagaev said: “I have seen secular courts of justice... We prefer to place our trust in Allah rather than in people.”⁹

These and other examples show that rather than trying to adjust itself to the new conditions and embrace the commonly accepted secular values, freedom of conscience, and the freedom to choose one’s

⁴ “Obrashchenie-preduprezhdenie k prodavtsam i rasprostraniteliam pechatnoy produktsii,” *As-salam*, No. 7, 2004.

⁵ See: E. Kotlova, “Glupost nesusvetnaia,” *Novoe delo*, No. 16, 23 April, 2004.

⁶ See: “Obrashchenie-preduprezhdenie...”

⁷ See, for example: D.V. Makarov, *Ofitsial’nyi i neofitsial’nyi islam v Daghestane*, Moscow, 2000, pp. 14-15; G. Magomedov, “Chto strashnee wahhabizma,” *NG*, 7 August, 2001; “Kompleksnaia programma dukhovno-nravstvennogo ozdorovleniia obshecherossiiskogo musul’anskogo dvizheniia ‘Nur’,” *Nurul islam*, No. 11, 1998; Ia. Rasulov, “A sud’i kto?” *Chernovik*, No. 19, 14 May, 2004.

⁸ L. Magomedov, “Kak borot’sia s wahhabizmom?” *Novoe delo*, No. 16, 23 April, 2004.

⁹ *Ibidem*.

world outlook, official Islam (supported by the state) is working toward realizing the Koranic and Sunni principles (in their fundamentalist interpretations) in public life. Closer examination of the principles professed by the republic's spiritual leaders shows that the choice was far from a random one. Fundamentalism determines special relations between the state and religion; the Daghestanian Shafi'ites interpreted this as the need to change Islam through new interpretations of the Koran and the Sunna. These changes, which better suit the new conditions, are expected to help the faithful to better understand the new realities according to the Islamic norms and, if necessary, to abandon the old obsolete confessional norms.

The procedure for formulating and resolving new questions (which the predecessors failed to address) in full conformity with Islam is associated with *ijtihad*. Its acceptance or rejection, as well as the nature of its acceptance and the way it is interpreted, are the main criteria by which the society's readiness to accept secular values and develop them is judged. This is a measure of tolerance of the secular norms, the importance of "this world" and human interests in the context of the initial confessional values.

Islam in Tatarstan (represented by the Hanafi madhab and Jadidism) and the Shafi'i madhab in Daghestan give different answers to these questions. This is testified by a discussion on the pages of our republic-level press, which started late in 2003.¹⁰ Two issues of the *Daghestantsy* newspaper carried an article by Rafael Khakimov, director of the Institute of History, Academy of Sciences of Tatarstan, and state political advisor to the president of Tatarstan. The article previously appeared in the *Vremia novostey* newspaper (No. 127, 2003). The author is one of the most active Jadidists (Jadidism is renovationist Islam). Its ideas, promoted because of the "opened doors of *ijtihad*," received a fresh boost in Tatarstan. When describing and developing them, Khakimov concentrates on the following points of the philosophy of Jadidism.

1. There is a stereotype equally accepted by the Muslims and non-Muslims that Islam is a single religion with no ethnic, geographic, or other specifics. This thesis lives side by side with the opposite idea about the diversity of ethnically tinged Islamic traditions.
2. The madhabs, which appeared as the result of Islam's natural development in the 9th-11th centuries, were later canonized. Since that time, the Muslims have to faithfully follow the teachings of legal schools (*taqlid*), no new interpretations of the Koran are allowed. This led to fossilization of thinking and social relations, and the idea of progress became alien to Islam. At the same time, we all know that the Prophet Muhammad said: "Indeed, at the beginning of every century Allah will send a man to the umma to renovate religion." How can this correlate with blind faith in the *taqlids*? One obviously excludes the other. Renovation demands *ijtihad* and independent critical thinking. "Closing the doors of *ijtihad*" spells a ban on critical analytical thinking; it presupposes that life has stopped and nothing fundamentally new goes on in the world.
3. The Muslim legal experts distinguish between the Mecca (before 622) and the Medina (after 622) ayats of the Koran. During his Mecca period (609-622), the Prophet addressed the ayats to all the people, men and women alike; he prohibited the use of force to convert people to Islam and clearly demonstrated his tolerance of the followers of other religions. In the Medina period, however, the Koran is addressed to the Arabs: "And slay them [pagans] wherever you catch them, and turn them out from where they have turned you out" [2:191].

The Muslim experts believed that the Mecca ayats, as the earlier ones, no longer applied. The Prophet himself, however, never excluded them from the Koran. It was under his personal guidance that the main teachers of the Holy Book of the Muslims were trained; he placed great emphasis on memorizing the *surahs*. It is not important that some of the ayats were declared annulled, while others remained valid. It is very important, however, to realize that they are addressed to different audiences, different epochs; such understanding is very important today.

¹⁰ See: R. Khakimov, "Vozmozhna li modernizatsia islama?" *Daghestantsy*, No. 9 (26), 2003; No. 1 (27) 2004; Sh. Mukhidinov, "Komu nuzhna modernizatsia islama?" *Daghestantsy*, No. 2 (28), 2004.

Wahhabism relied on coercion in its struggle against other religions or even Islamic trends. When insisting on purity, it in fact follows the extreme Hanbali interpretation, which absolutely rejects rationality. It claims that the Koran cannot be rationally understood, it can only be believed in. This means that Wahhabism rejects new phenomena, yet time changes and many provisions call for new interpretations.

4. It is stated in the theological writings that there are people worthy of analyzing the Holy Book and others unworthy of this honor and that the right to interpret Islam belongs to the elect. Today, writes Khakimov, when everybody can read and write and when higher education is available to all, everyone can study the Koran in their native tongues.
5. At all times, Islam was judged by rituals which were socially important in the past (especially in the Middle Ages). Today, many of the norms have lost their importance. For example, the ban on portraits arose during the time when Islam fought against idol worship. Today, shelling images of Buddha (as the Taliban did), no longer proves faithfulness. Barbarity and Islam have nothing in common. Allah does not approve of blind worship. The Prophet Muhammad said: "Allah does not like excessive fanaticism and extremes in worship."¹¹

Sh. Mukhidinov, editor of the Avar-language version of *As-salam* newspaper, published by the SAMD, subjected this and other provisions of Khakimov's article to scathing criticism. He ferociously attacked the idea of new *ijtihad* as the cornerstone of *Jadidism*. In a nutshell, his criticism can be presented in the following way: the Islamic norms we have inherited from Allah through the Prophet Muhammad cannot be described as being limited to certain historical period; the faithful do not need new interpretations of the Koran and Sunna—Allah alone can modernize and readjust Islam; it is not for the people to keep the "doors of *ijtihad*" open or closed; *ijtihad* was performed in the past when the *mujtahids* (people vested with the right of interpreting the Koran and Sunna) of all four legal schools "analyzed all religious problems; it is only mankind, who does not study such problems and does not live by them, who is seeking new ways which lead it astray and, ultimately, to regress." Mukhidinov went on to say that critical thinking and *ijtihad* have led the Wahhabis to terrorism and extremism. All contemporary interpreters of the Koran may be led, at best, to rejecting the rituals (namaz, fasting, etc.); at worst, they might be tempted with anti-Islamism. High technology and the best creations of human genius cause harm to mankind if supported by forces which have no faith in Allah and which follow the road of delusion. Interpretation of the Koran will attract only those who doubt or those who have no faith in the Creator and the after-life.¹²

This easily fits into the Islamic fundamentalist framework and is supported by the spiritual leaders of Daghestan. Deputy Mufti of the RD Ahmad-hajji Tagaev has asked: "...what in particular are they going to reform and renovate? Do they have the Koran in mind? Or the Sunna? ... in my opinion they want a repeat of August 1999."¹³ These questions are intended as an answer to Z. Varisov and R. Kurbanov who, together with the *Jadidists*, believe that "the old Islamic interpretations should be revised," since "Islam in Daghestan is gradually slipping into stagnation and degradation." The same authors say that Islam proved unable to respond to the new historic challenges and lost its leading role in creating viable socioeconomic and sociopolitical models.¹⁴

The very nature of the discussion between the supporters and opponents of reform in Islam is thought-provoking. The Daghestanian clerics demonstrate a complete lack of rationalism, which is indispensable for the discussion. Here by rationalism I mean well-substantiated arguments, logic, and a clear understanding of the arguments supplied by the other side, which, in the final analysis, alone can produce the necessary proofs. For example, when writing about Islam in Tatarstan, Khakimov explains its specifics with the following factors.

¹¹ R. Khakimov, op. cit.

¹² See: Sh. Mukhidinov, op. cit.

¹³ A. Tagaev, "Deystvitel'no pora nazvat veshchi svoimi imenami," *Novoe delo*, 14 May, 2004.

¹⁴ Z. Varisov, R. Kurbanov, "Islamskoe vyrozhdienie Daghestana," *Novoe delo*, 9 April, 2004.

For certain historical reasons, the Tartars found themselves in specific conditions which demanded huge intellectual and physical exertion. For example, in the Russian Empire, a Christian Orthodox state, no secular educational establishments for the Tartars were permitted; education in Tartar was limited to the religious sphere, which made the leading madrasahs centers of progressive thinking.

The state, which looked at Christian Orthodoxy as its only responsibility, did not interfere in Islam; left beyond state supervision, Tartar theology could develop freely. This was a unique situation, because in the Muslim countries the rulers imposed their conditions on the councils of the ulemas, which inevitably had to bend their will to the interests of the powers that be. "Among the Tartars, modernization became the inner and logical process of the development of Islam."

The Muslim community is a civilization that unites all the faithful, yet each nation is living in specific conditions. History made the Tartars the northernmost Islamic outpost; geographically and culturally they have found themselves on the border between West and East.

This explains the specifics of the Islamic sub-civilization in Tatarstan.¹⁵

According to Khakimov, "Islam is not monolithic"—there are contradictions between the Mansuh and Nasih ayats, while the historic destinies of the Muslim nations are very different.

Khakimov's opponents are sparing with their arguments. They limit themselves to saying that "this is not so." Mukhidinov lays the irony on thick when he comments on Khakimov's arguments: "It follows from what he says that Imam al-Hanafi interpreted the Koran and the Sunna and arrived at certain conclusions to please the Tartars and in accordance with their needs."¹⁶

First, Khakimov has never said that al-Hanafi founded his madhab for the Tartars: the first Hanafites appeared in Iraq in the 8th century, that is, long before 922, the year the Tartars embraced Islam. Second, according to Tartar academics the Tartars intentionally selected this madhab, under which everyday life is considerably easier; common law ('Urf) can be applied as an auxiliary, and independent, source of rights. This makes business and everyday contacts with people of other faiths easier. This is the most tolerant madhab.

The choice of faith was common practice. In his time, Grand Prince Vladimir rejected Islam because, among other things, it banned wine drinking while, said he, "in Rus they drink a lot and life is unthinkable without drinking." Khan Girey of Kazan adopted Christian Orthodoxy because despite his numerous prayers to Allah, the Russians captured Kazan in 1552. It was through religion that nations developed their cultures for centuries or even millennia. Any attempts to cut short the process by saying that the Koran and the Sunna are the same for all contradict historical facts.

The Daghestanian Shafi'ites cannot provide a rational answer to the questions raised by the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad, which says that at the beginning of every century, Allah will send a man to the umma to renovate the faith. If such people did come after the "doors of ijtihad" had been closed in the 10th century, the question is "Who were they?" Who performed this role in the 20th century? If "closing the doors of ijtihad" does not depend on human will (this competence belongs to the Almighty), should Jadidism be regarded as a phenomenon contradicting the will of Allah? Who is omniscient enough to say when the "doors of ijtihad" are opened and when they are closed? Finally, if they remain closed should this be taken to mean that the Prophet's prophecy was not fulfilled? Khakimov's opponents have not offered rational answers to the questions raised by his position.

It should be said that many Islamic scholars, who are successfully developing the theoretical Islamic issues, have posed and continue posing these and similar questions. Indeed, how was the "door of ijtihad" closed? Which of the imams said that no Muslim living after him should have the right to look and find the right way indicated by the Koran?¹⁷

The differences between Islam in Daghestan and Tatarstan can be found in the assessment of ijtihad from the viewpoint of its role in the emergence of Wahhabism. Some of the spiritual leaders of Daghestan identify reforms (ijtihad) with extremism and Wahhabism: "Is it not enough for us to see what harm renovat-

¹⁵ See: R. Khakimov, op. cit.

¹⁶ Sh. Mukhidinov, op. cit.

¹⁷ See: Rifat-as-Said, "Novy vzgliad," *Tarih*, No. 6, 1998, pp. 85-86.

ed and reformed Islam brought to Daghestan? What names can be found for those who call for such reforms that inevitably end in bloodshed?"¹⁸ Indeed, the religious and philosophical positions of the Wahhabis and Jadidists do share certain points. In particular, the religious reform suggested by S. Marjani contains the following points: taqlid (following the dogmas and authority of one of the madhabs) should be completely removed; the Muslims should be returned to the fundamentals of faith and culture of the Prophet Muhammad's period.

The Wahhabis also reject the madhabs and believe that the umma should return to Islam of the Prophet Muhammad's period. These philosophical and instrumental points pursued and are still pursuing different aims. First, the Wahhabis objected to taqlid because the madhabs that used ijihad, ijma (concerted decisions of the theologians) and kiyas (analogy-based rules) brought new and heretical elements (bid'ah) to Islam. They should be resolutely removed from religious life. Second, the Wahhabis object not only to ijihad carried out within four madhabs, but also to ijihad in principle, which, they argue, leads religious thinking away from initial Islam. Third, and most important, the extremist wing of the Wahhabis uses military force and violence to resolve these problems. In their eyes, all those who follow taqlid are kafirs who should and would be destroyed.

The Jadidists have set themselves different objectives and use different methods to achieve them. First, in his curriculum Marjani has given much space to secular disciplines. Russian, mathematics, physics, astronomy, fundamentals of medicine, geography, history, and foreign languages (Eastern, as well as West European) were taught in the Jadidist madrasahs. This was never done, and could not be done, in the Wahhabi madrasahs.¹⁹ Second, the Jadidists of the new generation (of the early 20th century) looked at ijma and kiyas as the main instruments of reform; the Wahhabis were dead set against this. Third, the Wahhabis refused to accept ijihad of the founders of the four madhabs, not because they wanted to offer new interpretations of the Koran and the Sunna better suited to the new realities. On the contrary: they relied on the Koran to justify archaization of social life. The Jadidists, on the other hand, reject ijihad of the four imams not to banish new elements from life, but to incorporate them on a broader scale through the procedure of Muslim sanctioning. Ijihad is the main instrument of such sanctioning. Fourth, Jadidist history has already shown that it did not give rise to Wahhabism or extremism. Jadidism has demonstrated that it is a tolerant and civilized spiritual phenomenon which has assimilated both Islamic (Eastern) and West European values.

The above demonstrates that ijihad of the Jadidists and what the Wahhabis describe as reforms are complete opposites. The Wahhabis are the most consistent enemies of ijihad of the Jadidists, which places the two at opposite ends of the scale measuring attitudes toward ijihad.

The Daghestanian Shafi'ites sit on two chairs—the Jadidist and the Wahhabi. Having rejected reforms in Islam, they were not bold enough to reject ijma and kiyas, that is, the slow process of ijihad within the madhab. The leaders of the Daghestanian clerics are convinced that any consistent effort to insist on "the closed doors of ijihad" will inevitably end in religious fundamentalism, which will regard secular laws as laws of secondary importance compared with the Shari'a. It will insist on the immutability of the religious norms, reject new interpretations of the main religious texts, and will try to revive the social norms buried long ago in the darkness of the ages. In fact, these features of religious fundamentalism can already be discerned in Daghestan to one extent or another.

Jadidism came to Daghestan early in the 20th century; influenced by the Tartar reformers prominent Daghestanian scholar, enlightener and theologian Abusufian Akaev opened a Jadidist madrasah in the village of Aksay in 1903.²⁰ A year earlier, he published a book *Usul Jadid* (New Method).²¹ Seven

¹⁸ A. Tagaev, op. cit.

¹⁹ In his article about the problems of Islamic education, Prof. I. Shamov analyzed the curricula of several Islamic educational establishments in Daghestan and concluded that they lacked secular subjects and that they were close to the fundamentalist interpretation of the priorities of Islamic consciousness (see: I.A. Shamov, "Religia i svetskoe prosveshchenie," *Daghestanskaia pravda*, 8 June, 2001).

²⁰ Well-known Tartar enlightener Ismail Gasprinsky opened the first Jadidist madrasah in Russia in 1884 in Bahçesaray (the Crimea) (see: G. Bautdinov, "Rossiiskie predtechi Evroislama," *NG*, 4 February, 2004).

²¹ See: A. Akaev, *Usul Jadid*, Kazan, 1902.

years later, he explained the ideas of Jadidism again in another book.²² Well-known scholar Ali Kaiaev (Ali al Gumuki) also promoted the ideas of “absolute ijtihad,” which he learned at the al-Azhar University in Cairo from famous theologians and their followers. His newspaper *Jaridat Daghestan* called for “absolute ijtihad” and pointed to the need to boldly study the Koran and the Sunna to be able to draw conclusions in tune with the contemporary epoch. “The conservative clerics tagged him as a Wahhabi for no reason at all, simply because he rejected the tradition and called for absolute ijtihad.”²³ He also criticized the Daghestanian murids and Sufis who extolled, without measure, their sheikhs, thus damaging their reputations. They ascribed unthinkable features to them; also they worshipped the sheikhs’ (the tariqat spiritual leaders’) portraits before entering into a state of ecstasy. For Ali Kaiaev, this was paganism. The Daghestanian clerics still consider Ali Kaiaev a Wahhabi. Time has shown that these reformers acquired no followers in the republic’s religious sphere.

In Tatarstan, religious and social thought is developing, breeding new ideas, and attracting attention. The very understanding of Jadidism must change. Pointing to the need for a new approach to Islam, Chairman of the Council of Muftis of Russia Ravil Gainutdin has said: “The mere revival of Jadidism won’t resolve all the problems of contemporary Islam.”²⁴ Mufti of the Central Spiritual Administration of the Muslims of Russia Talgat Tadjuddin is not alien to Jadidism either. We can say that Ph.D. A. Iuzeev, who lives in Kazan and is well known for his profound study of the Tartar religious-philosophic ideas, also develops Jadidism. Says he: “It is wrong to identify Jadidism with religious reform... It is reform of the educational system carried out to introduce Muslims to European science and culture. The present religious-philosophical teaching of Jadidism is not an independent phenomenon—it is a part, one of the sides of widely understood reforms and enlightenment, part of theological liberalism, not a specific and independent trend; there are even fewer reasons to call it a purely Tartar trend.”²⁵

For obvious reasons, Islamic resurrection in Tatarstan cannot be reduced to Jadidism alone. Today, there are at least three types of Islamic consciousness in the republic, Jadidism being far from the most popular among them. This place belongs to neo-traditionalism. It is supported and promoted by the followers and clerics of official Islam, who look at this religion as a set of religious symbols and fossilized forms of religious thinking, rites, and rituals. Revivalism with its patchy and narrow social basis is least popular, and is supported mainly by Islamic fundamentalists. The reformatory type of religious thinking, which belongs mainly to the intelligentsia, students and the urban middle class, is believed to be in harmony with contemporary public and state interests.²⁶

C o n c l u s i o n s

1. The traditional form (type) of Islamic thinking, which demands strict adherence to religious rites, predominates in Daghestan for historical, geographic, and economic reasons. It can be described as a “fossilized form of religious thinking” which does nothing to adjust religious consciousness to the new realities.
2. For many years, everyday life in the foothills and up in the mountains has been shaping elements of fundamentalist consciousness. In the context of a socioeconomic crisis, it proved to be fertile soil for radical religious (Wahhabi) ideas. In Daghestan, there are only two types of religious consciousness: traditional, which tends toward fundamentalism, and extremist-Wahhabi.
3. Today, fundamentalism predominates in the minds of the Daghestanian faithful, thanks to the efforts of religious organizations and their leaders.

²² See: A. Akaev, *Irshadu assibyan*, Temirhan-Shura, 1909.

²³ A. Navruzov, “Gazeta ‘Jaridat Daghestan’—istoriko-kul’turny pamiatnik,” Candidate thesis, Makhachkala, 2000, p. 168.

²⁴ *NG-religii*, 5 November, 2003.

²⁵ Quoted from: G. Bautdinov, op. cit.

²⁶ See: R.M. Mukhametshin, “Dinamika islamskogo faktora v obshchestvennom soznanii tatar XVI-XX vv. (istoriko-sotsial’nyy ocherk),” *Sovremennye natsional’nye protsessy v Respublike Tatarstan*, Issue II, Kazan, 1994, pp. 112-113.

4. As distinct from the Tartar Islamic consciousness, there is no reformatory element in Daghestan to help create a rational (from the viewpoint of public and state interests) balance between the conservative and progressive forces in Islamic resurrection. For this reason, the relations between Islam and the state in Daghestan are dominated by a trend toward more archaic social ties, abandonment of commonly accepted secular values, and greater sacralization (religious sanctioning) of secular social phenomena.
 5. The one-sided nature of the emerging relations between Islam and the state in Daghestan (as compared to what is going on in Tatarstan) is explained by the fact that the local intelligentsia is keeping away from the process of creating new relations between religion and the state. There are two reasons for this: as distinct from Jadidism in Tatarstan, the Daghestanian intelligentsia has no traditions of “secular” involvement in religious issues; the authorities of the RD have not yet realized that the intelligentsia should and could be involved in addressing the problems of the state and religion. So far, the republican leaders have failed to support academics who defend secular values and oppose interference of religious organizations and clerics in state policies.
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