

## INTERACTION BETWEEN POWER AND RELIGION IN DAGHESTAN: EXPERIENCE, ERRORS, AND LESSONS

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### The Heterogeneous Nature of the Islamic Space

At no time could Dagestan be described as an ethnically, politically, or confessionally homogeneous territory. It is an ethnic patchwork—Russia's and the world's most ethnically diverse region. The past of this mountainous country is filled with the efforts of its peoples to beat off the attempts of their neighbors to establish total domination over them (with the exception of some cases of economic or political dependence).

Local traditions contributed to the region's political diversity. Nearly all specialists on Dagestan pointed to the varied forms of administration and political-administrative structures as one of the key features typical of the mountain communities. M. Aglarov, for example, described the community of the northeast Caucasian peoples as a "museum of a multitude of political units with varied forms of political and administrative structures."<sup>1</sup> Indeed, khanates, aristocratic and democratic jamaats, unions of jamaats ("free societies"), and democratic "federative societies" under the nominal rules of the khans coexisted in Dagestan. The efforts of some of them to spread their rule to neighboring territories invariably triggered powerful, sometimes "suicidal," opposition.

As distinct from the rest of the Northern Caucasus, the Muslim expanse of Dagestan has never been homogeneous either. Three types of religious world outlook dominated Dagestan's religious culture: Sufism, schools of the Shafi'ite legal experts, and Salafi (fundamentalism). Sufism has preserved its strong foothold in the republic. This is a mystical-ascetic teaching which preaches humility and retirement from the world. Some of its numerous interpretations and applications served as an ideology for rebels and anti-colonial wars. Three of its Tariqahs (orders) exist in Dagestan: Qadiriya, Naqshbandiya, and Jazuliya; they are spiritual schools which combine the means and methods of mystical cognition of the truth, a special code of moral and ethical rules, and forms of its internal organization.

The school of Shafi'ite legal experts (faqih) appeared in the Darghinian free societies where Muslim legal experts and judges were strong enough to challenge the position of the elected rulers. The Akusha-Dargo society lived under the dual power of two political leaders: the elected one and the judge (qadi).

<sup>1</sup> M.A. Aglarov, *Sel'skaia obshchina v Dagestane v XVII-nachale XIX veka*, Moscow, 1988, p. 6.

Contrary to the opinion actively promoted by state propaganda that Salafi (fundamentalist) Islam is alien to Daghestan and has no local roots there, it has existed in Daghestan for over 300 years now. It preaches a return to Islamic fundamentals, the way of life of the Prophet Muhammad and the “righteous ancestors” (*as-salaf as-salikhun* in Arabic), and purification of Islam of later additions.

## Monopolization of the Islamic Expanse of Daghestan by the Spiritual Administration of the Republic’s Muslims

The authorities have limited their political and legal patronage to one of three Islamic schools or, rather, an even narrower “Gidatlinskiy” Naqshbandi branch, busy imposing on the local faithful the Jazuliya Tariqah, which is absolutely alien even to the Sufi followers. This is one of the gravest mistakes of the republican authorities. The fact that the Gidatlinskiy Tariqah mainly staffed the Spiritual Administration of the Muslims of Daghestan (SAMD) with Avars who come from two districts (Shamil and Gumbet) and who follow only one Sufi sheikh—Said Afandi of Chirkey (Atsaev)—made the situation even worse. All the followers of other trends (and other Tariqahs) doubt the legitimacy of the SAMD and the sheikh’s authority. Their criticism concentrates on the following:

- *Lack of legitimacy.* The fact that after 1992 all muftis were elected by the Council of the Alims of Daghestan rather than by Muslim congresses (the Council was also staffed by supporters of Sheikh Said Afandi of Chirkey in disregard of the congress of Muslims), the SAMD opponents describe it as “self-proclaimed” and “appointed;”
- *The non-traditional nature of Jazuliya,* which became the leading Tariqah in Daghestan through the efforts of the sheikh’s supporters. The faithful are indignant because the official clerics pushed aside the more familiar Naqshbandi Tariqah and are ignoring the traditions of the great sheikhs and murids of the mountainous regions, Magomed Yaragsky, Jamaludin Kazikumukhsky, and Abdurakhman Sogratlinsky.
- *Reliance on clans, regionalism.* Up to 98 percent of those employed by SAMD, a structure functioning in a multi-national republic, are murids and followers of one sheikh only. Nearly all key posts are filled by Avars from two districts (Gumbet and Shamil). The SAMD opponents refer to the structure as the Avar SAMD and the “Spiritual Administration of the Muslims of the Gumbet District.” Under the guise of fighting Wahhabism, it tries to usurp the right to appoint imams.
- *Intolerance.* The SAMD leaders and its supporters look at the four sheikhs of the Said Afandi branch as genuine and dismiss all others as muta-sheikhs (false sheikhs). The madrasahs and Muslim universities controlled by Said Afandi’s followers teach intolerance to other sheikhs. This has already triggered a chain of conflicts, many of which almost turned into armed clashes. In September 2001, a group of followers of Muhammad Mukhtar Kyakhlaisky burst into the SAMD building with threats to “leave no stone standing” if Said Afandi’s murids did not stop insulting Muhammad Mukhtar. In the spring of 2004, members of other Tariqahs whose indignation with SAMD’s stupid and aggressive policies reached the boiling point tried to set up an alternative SAMD based on the mosque of the Redutornoe settlement of Makhachkala. The SAMD had to dispatch fighters armed with cold steel (brass knuckles and sharp instruments); to avoid bloodshed the opposition dispersed.

- *Mercantilism.* There is a widespread opinion in the republic that the SAMD leaders are not particularly scrupulous when it comes to money. The way hajj is organized also draws criticism—some people believe that annual hajj brings the SAMD over \$100,000.
- *Incompetence.* The opponents accuse the SAMD of inadequate religious knowledge. It should be said that throughout its existence this structure has not issued a single fatwah. Alims speak about Said Afandi's lack of adequate religious knowledge. Most of the local Muslims are angered by obvious violations of the commonly known Islamic postulates (permission to and encouragement of selling portraits of the sheikh and his predecessors and, most important, of the Prophet Muhammad) committed by the SAMD and its structures.
- *Political biases.* The SAMD tends to support the Avar groups trying to seize power. Some of the prominent local politicians who lobby the interests of the Chirkey group are considered its supporters.

The Daghestanian authorities, who tried, before the 1999 events, to maintain contacts not only with various Tariqah branches, but also with the members of the Daghestanian radical Salafia (the Karamakhi jamaat), later placed their stakes on Said Afandi's group for two reasons:

1. When Moscow instructed the republic's leaders to mercilessly fight the radical Salafi jamaats, only the Chirkey group fully supported (and justified from the Islamic viewpoint) the authorities' attempts to uproot Wahhabism in Daghestan. And only the Chirkey group managed within a very short time to plant anti-Wahhabi ideas in people's minds and start anti-Wahhabi hysteria in the republic.
2. Since the Darghinian clan of the republic's president Magomedali Magomedov was adamant about remaining in power, vent had to be given to the discontent that had been building among the Avars. As the largest Daghestanian ethnos, the Avars were highly irritated by the fact that the Darghins were remaining at the helm far too long. They were given religious power to quench their thirst for secular power.

The faithful were obviously indignant about the state's efforts to place them under the control of one ethnic group and one Islamic trend (or, to be more exact, one narrow branch within one of the trends). This was a bad mistake with no analogies in the republic's past: the diversity of Islamic intellectual, cultic, ethnic, and cultural life was forced into the pinching limits of the "Avar-Gidatlinskiy" (as interpreted by the Chirkey sheikh) Tariqah.

This policy has already betrayed its weaknesses. First, it contradicts the provision about separation and equal distancing of religious branches from the state. Second, the adepts of the Gidatlinskiy Tariqah are not educated enough to oppose the Salafi ideology. Third, by concentrating on one of the trends inside the Tariqah, the state is ignoring all the other constructive trends and communities. Fourth, encouraged by state support, the SAMD moved against its ideological opponents, thus alienating not only the faithful, but also the academic and creative elite of Daghestan. Fifth, close cooperation between the SAMD and the law enforcement bodies has completely discredited it in the eyes of young Muslims.

## The Rout of the Salafi Jamaats

In September 1999, the People's Assembly of the Republic of Daghestan adopted the Law on Banning Wahhabi and Other Extremist Activities on the Territory of the Republic of Daghestan to provide the legal basis for the struggle against the bands of Basaev and Khattab and for routing the Salafi jamaats in the republic. Because of the haste and highly emotional context in which the draft was pushed

through the People's Assembly, it can hardly be called a well-substantiated law; it abounds in serious faults. In particular, it speaks of religious extremists, yet fails to provide a clear definition of them, therefore secular or religious power is free to persecute all those who arouse their displeasure.

The republican authorities made another bad mistake by transferring the power to define Wahhabism to the SAMD rather than to the expert council at the Committee for Religious Affairs functioning within the republican government. The SAMD willingly shouldered the responsibility and opened fire at its ideological opponents among the Salafi and in the Tariqahs. It accused them of "Wahhabi and other extremist activities." By drawing the media into the process, the SAMD initiated "anti-Wahhabi hysteria;" it drew the law enforcement bodies into a protracted war against its ideological opponents. Along with the militia, SAMD people took part in searches and expert assessments of religious writings. By publicly accusing the so-called Wahhabis of all deadly sins (such as distortions of the Islamic doctrine, desecration of the Muslim holy places, incest, etc.), the clerics in fact invited rough reprisals against them. Being allowed to mete out punishment (both "secular" and "spiritual" authorities did not object to it), the law enforcement bodies (in particular the Administration for Fighting Extremism and Criminal Terrorism set up for the purpose) assumed the role of the religious police. Instead of protecting law and order, the militia plunged into persecutions for religious reasons; they allied with one of the sides in a religious confrontation, the meaning of which they did not fully understand.

Still, they carried out what can be described as "religious and ideological mopping-up operations." The militia was allowed to identify potential extremists by their religious convictions, their attitudes to the Tariqahs and Sufism, and their affiliation with different madhabs. To arrest so-called Wahhabis, militiamen planted weapons, ammunition, and drugs on them. To extort confessions, the detained were tortured, beaten up, and subjected to other forms of violence in district precincts and in the Administration's local offices. Those arrested with planted weapons could buy their freedom for \$3,000. Cruelty and militia arbitrariness embittered even the most moderate of the Salafis. The response was obvious—it was only a matter of time. After several acts of subversion failed, the mujaheddin finally set up a smoothly functioning clandestine network of semi-independent detachments. They opened an unprecedentedly large-scale and systemic hunt for those responsible for anti-Salafi repressions. Administration and Federal Security Service officers, as well as ordinary militiamen, were killed in great numbers (sometimes several people were murdered a day). Concentration of the mujaheddin along the administrative border with Chechnia, around Khasaviurt and even around Makhachkala, the capital of Daghestan, reached a critical level.

It seems that Amir of Makhachkala Rasul Makkasharipov (alias Muslim), who was also Shamil Basaev's personal Avar interpreter and leader of the Jannet jamaat, was one of the most successful clandestine leaders during the Chechen invasion of the Botlikh District. He managed to organize a clandestine subversive network that covered the jamaats of Makhachkala, Buynaksk, Khasaviurt, and Kizliar and synchronized their activities. It was during the period when he headed the jamaat that the mujaheddin reached previously peaceful Southern Daghestan. In the summer of 2004, a female suicide bomber was detained in Derbent; in the forests of the Kurakh District, local people discovered a group of mujaheddin and its local Salafi guides.

## **The Years 1999-2004: a New Mujaheddin Generation**

Five years have elapsed since the time when the gangs that invaded Daghestan were routed and the second Chechen war began. The time has come to look back and assess the results of our anti-

terrorist and anti-extremist efforts. We should ask ourselves whether the Caucasus has become a safer place; whether the threat of its destabilization has been removed; whether separatism has been uprooted; whether the separatist leaders have been liquidated; and whether the problem of radicalization of North Caucasian Islam has been successfully dealt with.

During these years Russia experienced several unprecedented terrorist acts: hostages were taken in a Moscow theater, President of Chechnia Akhmad Kadyrov was assassinated; Ingushetia suffered an attack; fighters raided Grozny on the eve of the elections; two aircraft were simultaneously destroyed, and the Beslan tragedy occurred. In Daghestan, people from the law enforcement bodies are murdered in greater numbers than before; concentration of the fighters around Makhachkala has reached its maximal density, while rumors about a possible attack against Daghestan are circulating with even greater intensity. War is still shattering the Caucasus; there is still a threat of Russia's disintegration. It has become even greater than before the second Chechen war because the Western bloc is pressing at the RF's southern borders.

The separatists were not weakened by the deaths or neutralization of some of their leaders—Khattab, Arbi Baraev, Salman Raduev, Zelimkhan Iandarbiev, Ruslan Gelaev, and Abu al-Walid. The resistance forces rotated, new fighters arrived. The second Chechen war raised and steered another generation of Muslims even more devoted to their ideology and even more resolutely opposed to Russia. The old leaders who grew up in the Soviet Union had a common history, culture, and mentality with the rest of the country; they felt at least some guilt for their attacks against civilians. Many of them had criminal contacts or cooperated with the Russian special services, which compromised them in the eyes of their comrades-in-arms. During the first Chechen war, they committed crimes against the Russian and Shari'a laws, which made them easy prey for the RF propaganda machine.

Ten years of the Chechen war has created a generation with no experience of school attendance and Komsomol membership—they have nothing in common with Russia. Those who were 8 or 10 in 1994 when the war started are now nearly twenty. For them the Russian language, culture, and laws are alien and even hostile. This generation, which is crueler and bolder than the "old men," is determined to take revenge on Russia with blood, death, and fear. They need no leaders: they have learned the lessons of history and international experience. Young Chechens, Daghestanis, Kabardins, and Karachais resolved to fight the state create small mobile detachments to perform irregular operations. After several attacks, they might disband to wait, sometimes for a long time, for another opportunity. They have already carried out numerous terrorist acts and blasts in Grozny, suicide attacks, the war of leaflets in Daghestan; and they murdered two soldiers in the village of Gimry.<sup>2</sup> There are small terrorist and subversion groups of 2 to 3 members in the republic made up of local young men rather than of war-hardened fighters.<sup>3</sup>

In five years, the local authorities have failed to stem radicalization among the young Muslims. Aggressive consumerism, the mass culture, and the breakdown in traditional society, which was forced to accept alien lifestyles, have inevitably aggravated the social context (this created a chain reaction akin to that which takes place in nuclear fission reaction and liberates huge amounts of destructive power).

The Daghestanian faithful look at Westernization and spiritual colonization as a spiritual and social catastrophe and the collapse of their traditional world order. They are prepared to fight brutally and implacably for their spiritual culture and historical landmarks. In other words, the more active part of the republic's Muslim community is readying itself for a jihad in all spheres—from ideology to armed struggle.

<sup>2</sup> During the fight between the federal forces and the Gelaev group in the Tsuntinskiy District in 2003, local civilians killed two Russian soldiers guarding an infantry fighting vehicle which had fallen behind the column moving ahead toward the fighting area.

<sup>3</sup> One of those who were killed in an exchange of fire outside Makhachkala in June 2004 was a student of the Daghestanian Polytechnic.

At the same time, the Islamic youth is rapidly becoming politically aware. While several years ago the dreams of an independent North Caucasian Imamate and Islamic Caliphate were discussed in private in the radical mosques, today many young Muslims are actively seeking ways to translate the Islamic political doctrine into reality. They are moving away from spontaneous and “home-grown” forms of military-political self-organization to the rich experience of international Islamic political structures. Hizb ut-Tahrir is gaining popularity among the youth attracted by the logic of its ideology and practice, its complete loyalty to the spirit of the Koran and Sunna, as well as implacable devotion to the principles of taqfir and jihad, which are expected to establish the rule of Allah on earth in the form of the Caliphate.

Despite official ideological efforts and propaganda, young Muslims are increasingly convinced that the 1999 attack was justified as a logical and legitimate continuation of the mountain peoples’ struggle headed by three imams against the Russian state. Young Muslims would either like to camp in the Chechen forests, or at least help the mujaheddin in Daghestan. A generation wishing to fight and undermine Russian statehood is growing in the Caucasus.

## The Factors of Radicalization of the Salafi Jamaats

It seems that the time to oppose the Salafi protest ideology has passed. With its current level of popularity in the region, none of the states would have been able to stem its spread. What is more, the local people are willingly embracing it despite the official propaganda and repressions. For example, Salafization of the Nogai districts, Lakia, and Lezghistan, where Islamic traditions became completely buried under Soviet power, have passed the point of no return. For several years now large Salafi jamaats have been functioning in Derbent, Daghestanskie Ogni, the Bebedji village, and in the Magaramkent, Akhty, and Kurakh districts. Today the state should stem radicalization of the disseminated ideas.

It was clear from the very beginning that, under certain conditions, Salafi ideology could remain moderate and absolutely peaceful. According to Vladimir Muratov, who headed the Federal Security Service for Daghestan, “not every Wahhabi is a criminal. He has the right to remain a believer if he does not encroach on the rights of others. We limit ourselves to those who violate law and order.”<sup>4</sup> This was ignored in the heat of struggle against terrorism and religious extremism; the dividing line between the radically and openly anti-state groups and loyal religious communities was also ignored. These rash steps and decisions damaged beyond repair the cause of preventing radicalization of the Salafi communities which were keeping away from radical anti-state slogans and practical actions.

Late in the 1990s, the moderate Salafis in Daghestan were represented by the followers of Akhmad-qadi Akhtaev, who used to head the Islamic Revival Party. Until March 1998, when he died under strange circumstances, he demonstrated the most flexible approach to religious and legal issues; he objected to attempts to realize the taqfir principles in the republic and the calls to jihad. At the same time, he supported the idea of cooperation between the Muslims and the state, and called on the Salafis to abandon squabbles inside Islam and opposition to the state for the sake of creating an attractive image for their religion. He was well aware that at all times the Caucasus would remain Russia’s neighbor and was known as an opponent of armed struggle against Russia’s presence in Daghestan.

<sup>4</sup> See: “Kto budet vospityvat imamov,” *Novoe delo*, No. 45, 7 November 2003.

For some time, the moderate Salafis tried to prevent radicalization of a large number of their coreligionists; they neutralized the impulses emanating from the radical groups and helped maintain stability in the region. Under their influence, some of the amirs did not support the calls for war against Russia and were in favor of the idea of a dialog between the republican and federal authorities. Many of the members of the internal (not performing a Hejira to Chechnia) jamaat of Muhammad Bagautdin were resolved to continue their legal educational efforts in Daghestan. This was done even after the short wave of repressions.

The death of Akhmad-qadi was a heavy blow to the moderate Salafis. There was no other person like him; the new leaders of the Daghestanian Salafis were too weak, therefore the moderate wing was gradually affected by radical anti-governmental and anti-Russian propaganda. Finally, due to the sociopolitical dynamics in the republic and the region as a whole, the authorities ignored the moderate ideas. The moderate Salafi wings were left to the mercy of the more radical groups. As a result, by the late 1990s the Islamic jamaat of Muhammad Bagautdin was the only surviving moderate Salafi organization in Daghestan.

There are several possible explanations for the failure of the moderate Salafi wing to triumph over the radical (or even extremist) groups, as a result of which some of its members moved over to the radical camp. First, the absence of a fairly respected person able to lead the faithful and knowledgeable enough to oppose the ideological attacks of the radicals.

According to the second version, the sociopolitical dynamics in the region forced the government to ignore the moderate ideas. The authorities did nothing to strengthen the moderate wing and help it oppose the radical Salafi ideas. Foreign sponsors, who also wanted to see as acute a collision as possible between Islam in the Caucasus and the Russian State, did nothing to support the moderate Salafis. They were instilling the ideas of an immediate and relentless jihad in the Northern Caucasus and rejected the very possibility of peaceful dialog and coexistence. This was why the still weak moderate Salafi structures were swept away and buried under the deluge of radical ideas.

The third version accused the government (the law enforcement structures included), the media, and the Tariqah Islam opposed to Salafi of being unable to distinguish between the moderate and the radical Salafi communities and of their totally erroneous conviction of their *a priori* radical and illegal nature.

The fourth version looks at radicalization as a response to the repressions. For example, wishing to avoid them, many moderate Salafis had to go underground, while others joined the mujahed-din in Chechnia. The latter came back as radicals well trained for ideological and armed battles. Abdurashid Saidov, who saw the rout of the Salafi communities with his own eyes, described this in his book: "When the authorities started fighting religious ideology using the crude methods typical of them—repressions and persecutions—dissidents crossed over to Ichkeria in great numbers. Persecutions and an exodus to rebel Ichkeria drove the fundamentalists closer together, inspired them, fortified their will to victory, improved the quality of their weapons and upgraded their battle-worthiness."<sup>5</sup>

Rather than contradicting, these versions complement each other; they offer an objective assessment of the very complicated process of radicalization of the moderate Salafi movement. Today, when the radical and moderate communities have all been destroyed without discrimination, the moderate Salafis have no organization; they are scattered across the region and lack a commonly recognized leader. To preserve their ideology and their physical existence, they unite into small social groups of close friends and relatives. Scattered and deprived of a religious leader capable of offering clear landmarks and behavior patterns, such people fell easy prey to more radically-minded Muslims. The latter

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<sup>5</sup> A. Saidov, *Taina vtorzhenia*, Makhachkala, 2001 (see: [<http://lib.baikal.net/win.cgi/POLITOLOG/saidov.txt>], 15 April, 2005).

are well organized, lavishly funded, and rely on a detailed military-political doctrine and a corresponding program of action.

Today, several trends have manifested themselves among the moderate Salafis:

- A certain category of the faithful (mainly village and mountain dwellers, as well as people with secondary education or without it) has temporarily moved away from the radical issues of taqfir and jihad to concentrate on Islam's ritual and ethical side;
- Another category (mainly urban dwellers and people with university diplomas) is making increasingly bolder attempts to legalize a moderate and constructive Salafī community through their mosques and Islamic shops; with this aim in view, it is tentatively exploring public opinion and the sentiments among the people at the top;
- The third group (the faithful integrated into the republic's public, economic, political, and academic structures and the elite) is demonstrating its ever-mounting desire to establish cooperation and a mutually advantageous alliance between moderate Salafis and secular society. Those of its members who have already formulated the best possible variants are people with high social statuses, and material and intellectual potential; they can soberly assess the situation and are prepared to enter into a dialog with the authorities on a wide range of problems.

The republican authorities are sure to display great interest in this group. This is not enough though. They must display a readiness to cooperate for the sake of restored religious and political stability in the republic in order to draw at least some of the faithful away from the radicals.

## What is Needed to Prevent Radicalization of Islam?

Persecutions failed to uproot the Salafī movement; in fact, history has shown that none of the modernist and reformative ideologies were liquidated using the methods the authorities applied in the Northern Caucasus. Force will fail: as an alternative and reformist ideology, Salafī will always attract people living under hard social, economic, and political conditions when religious self-awareness among the religiously ignorant population is on the rise.

This should not be taken to mean that radicalization and opposition to a non-Islamic state (Russia, in our case) are inevitable: on the whole, Islam preaches law-abidance and loyalty to a government prepared to respect Islamic values. Here is what the Koran says on this matter: "Allah forbids you not, with regard to those who fight you not for (your) Faith nor drive you out of your homes, from dealing kindly and justly with them, for Allah loves those who are just" (Surah 60, ayat 8).

The contemporary Salafī interpretation of the above says that believers should be tolerant of and loyal to people, communities, and states not engaged in a direct aggression against the Muslims. This principle underlies the Islamic principles of international relations which prescribe tolerance and respect for alien laws, cultures, and religions, because "Islam is a religion of peace that speaks of love."<sup>6</sup> The Sunna of the Prophet Muhammad also contains numerous calls for tolerance, respect, and protection of followers of different faiths.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> S. Kutb, *Fi zilyali-l-Kuran* (Under the Canopy of the Koran. Commentaries), Vol. 6, Beirut, 1988, pp. 3544-3545.

<sup>7</sup> See: An-Navavi, *Sady pravednykh*, Moscow, 2001, p. 334; M. al-Khashimi, *Lichnost musul'manina soglasno Koranu i Sunne*, Moscow, 2001, pp. 145, 156; Iu. Kardavi, *Al-khalal va-l-kharam fi-l-islam* (What is Allowed and What is Banned in Islam), Beirut, 1994, p. 306.



There is no doubt that a dialog can and should be entered with the moderate Salafis to find areas of common interest, particularly in view of their increasing influence in the region. The following measures should be promptly taken:

- All spiritual structures and leaders should be at an equal distance from official power; the same applies to all sorts of groups and leaders inside the Tariqahs. To my mind, this corresponds much better to the principles of separation of church from the state than the patronage the state offered to one branch or trend. This will develop a healthy rivalry between the traditional Naqshbandi and “alien” (Jazuliya) Tariqah;
- The time has come to clearly distinguish between radical and moderate Salafi; all statesmen and everyone serving in the law enforcement structures, as well as the ordinary people, should be informed about the difference between them. In the districts where moderate Salafi is still weak or undeveloped, it should be supported in its fight for a place in the sun against radical and ultra-radical Salafi. This will help draw a significant number of radicals away from extremist ideas toward moderate viewpoints and invite to a dialog with the authorities. For example, the RF Anti-terrorist Commission’s report for 2003 says that there are two wings in the Salafi movement; the report calls for a dialog with the moderate wing “to prevent its radicalization.” The Commission relies on a “skillful combination of open and secret measures and on large-scale propaganda among the local people.”
- Moderate Salafi, which avoids politics, should be legalized; all contradictions between Salafi and the Tariqah and between Salafi and secular power should be transferred to the ideological and theological sphere. This will decrease the still mounting radicalization potential of the entire range of Salafi movements and prevent them from becoming too radical during their struggle for survival. Otherwise a much better organized and more powerful underground ideological and political Salafi opposition to the Tariqah and government, or even an ultra-radical fighting branch, will inevitably appear.
- The Avar Tariqah monopoly over the SAMD can no longer maintain religious and political stability in the republic. It has discredited itself and lost its legitimacy: it should be urgently internationalized by setting up a council or a commission in which all Islamic trends should be represented. In fact, a similar collective body—the State Council of Dagestan—has been maintaining ethnic and political stability in the republic for a long time.

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Acting at the request of the RD Ministry of Ethnic Policies, Information, and Foreign Contacts, the Republican Center for Systemic Islamic Studies and Projects has created a plan for setting up a moderate youth Islamic movement which boils down to the following.

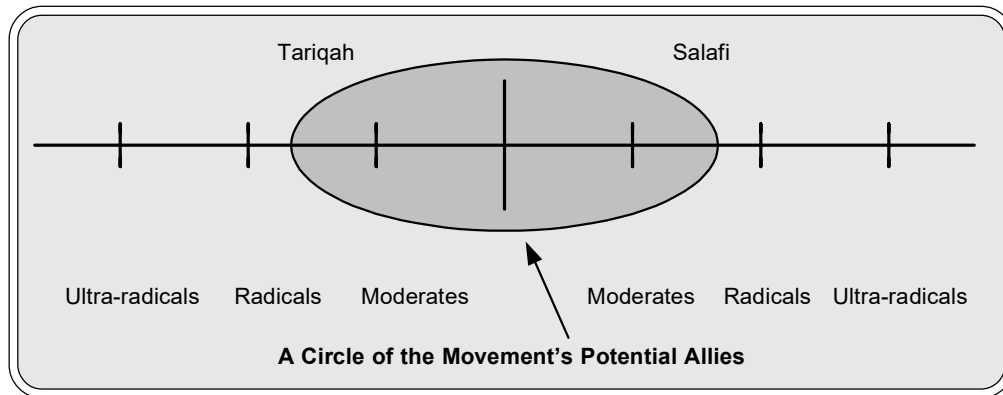
The ideological dividing line should separate the Dagestani Muslims into Salafi and Tariqah supporters with varying degrees of radicalization. Neither of the radical and intractable wings of Islam in Dagestan—unbridled “Tariqatism” and no less unbridled “Wahhabism”—are likely to reach a consensus or a peaceful settlement. Neither of them, however, will prevail, yet their never-ending clashes and conflicts might start bloodshed in the republic once more.

Today, a dedicated young Muslim must either side with ignorant and intolerant ustazes or join a protest movement. The time has come to offer him another option: a strong moderate Muslim movement. Educated young Muslims wishing to move away from the radical Tariqah and radical Salafi

stances should be relatively free in their choice. We should find common points for bringing the moderate members of both wings closer.

This can be done: the moderate supporters of the Tariqah (the murids of Muhammad Mukhtar Kyakhulaisky, for example) can cooperate and communicate in a peaceful way with the enlightened supporters of moderate Salafi (see Fig. 1).

Figure 1



The ideology of a moderate Islamic movement should rest on four components which will make it possible to embrace the interests of a wide circle of the Muslims of Daghestan. The values and dogmas that should be made part of these components are axioms uncontested by all more or less responsible Islamic trends (see Fig. 2).

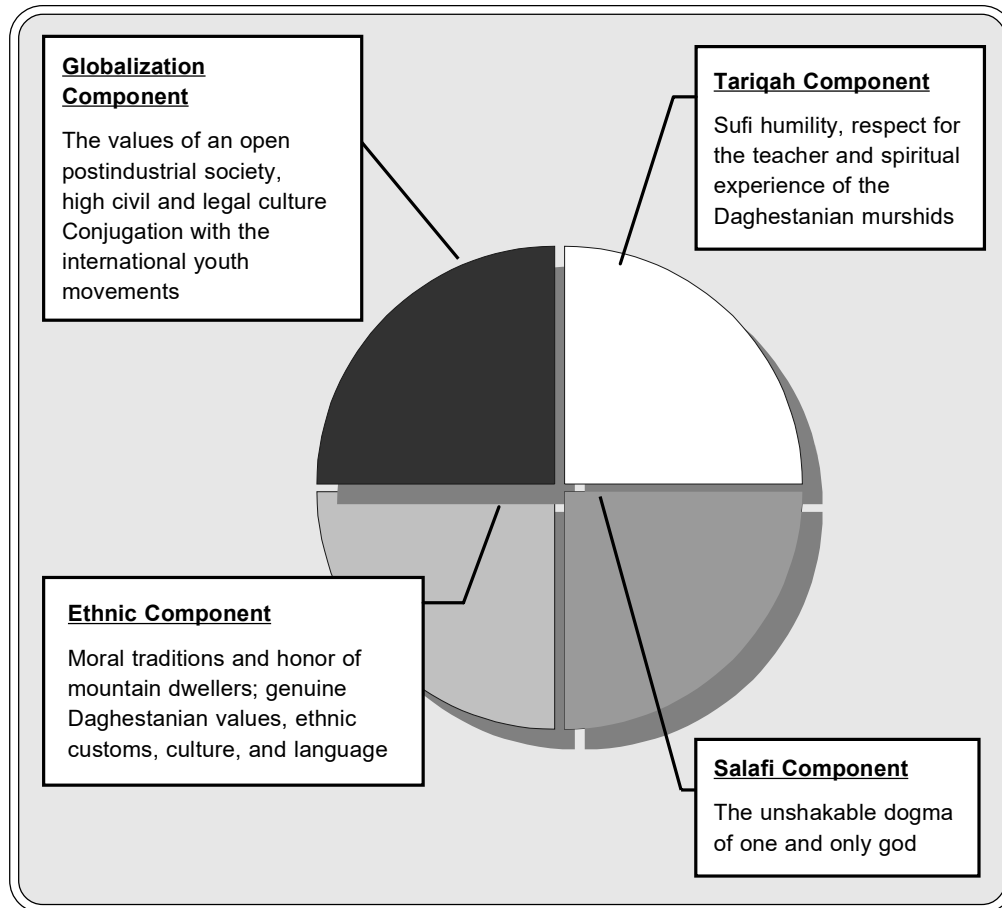
Let's discuss the axiological and ideological content of each of the sectors.

*The Tariqah component:* genuine Sufism should be recognized as such; it should be purified of sham Sufi destructive sects and movements; the rich spiritual Sufi experience accumulated by the classics of Sufism throughout the world should be mastered; we should appeal to the authority, works, and thoughts of the Daghestanian ustazes—Magomed Yaragsky, Jamaludin Kazikumukhsky, Abdurakhman-haji Sogratlinsky; the young Muslims should be taught Sufi humility, asceticism, patience, respect for their spiritual teachers, and struggle against their own passions and sins.

*The Salafi component:* the unshakable dogma of one and only god; acceptance of ijtiḥad as the only way of developing Islam in correspondence with contemporary realities; elaboration of a conception of creative jihad as an inalienable part of the Islamic way of life (jihad in creative or economic activities, in the social sphere, science, etc.) as opposed to armed jihad.

*The ethnic component:* it should be recognized that at all times Islam in Daghestan has its own specific features generated by the specifics of its peoples' ethnic cultures; it should also be accepted that the "ethnic tinge" does not contradict the very essence of Islam. It should be encouraged in order to help different peoples recognize it as a universal way; it should be clearly stated that the Saudi, Pakistani, Egyptian, or any other interpretation of the Muslim faith is unacceptable for our peoples; the entire range of Islamic activities should be adjusted to local Daghestanian conditions; it is necessary to channel the efforts of the young to deal with the specific social, cultural, and economic problems of our republic; the moral traditions of the mountain peoples and their ideas of honor should be revived along with the genuinely Daghestanian values, national customs, culture, and languages.

Figure 2



*The globalization component:* we should abandon the desire to isolate ourselves from non-Muslim cultures and states; we should imbibe the values of open postindustrial society; the local youth should be taught civil and legal culture and democratic values; the young people should be taught to think in a scientific and rational way and to accept a scientific picture of the world. They should become part of the international democratic, ecological, social, and scientific youth movements.

We should concentrate on creative and socially useful activities; convince people to abandon a black-and-white picture of the world; they should be encouraged to cooperate with the youth movements of the Caucasus, Russia, and other countries of the “near” and “far abroad,” and to accept the values of democracy and civil and legal culture. The national-cultural component and potential should play a leading role and be treated as a priority.

To encourage the movement, the state should try, first, to keep the SAMD from interfering in and opposing youth activities; second, the state should explain to the law enforcement bodies the fundamental difference between the youth movement and the radical Islamic groups; the law enforcement structures should be informed of the movement’s positive role in strengthening civil peace in the republic and its full conformity to the law; third, the authorities should refrain from flirting with the

movement for the sake of their own narrow corporate, party, or political interests, otherwise the movement will inevitably plunge into politics. This will be enough to allow the movement to organize itself and grow stronger by means of its own potential.

In fact, the new thinking, which blends the four components into an ideology and channels the activity of young Muslims toward creative goals, has been obvious among young people for some time already. The time has come to organize them.

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