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IRINA STARODUBROVSKAYA

## Islamic Reformation: The Value of a Heuristic Approach

*Translation by Marcus C. Levitt*

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*This article explores the analytical value of “Islamic Reformation” as a concept for analyzing the current situation in the Islamic world. It compares different approaches to religious reformation, including those applied to the Protestant Reformation. Delineation of the characteristics of reformation makes it possible to demonstrate that current tendencies in the Islamic world are quite similar to those that occurred during the Reformation and that some groups of Islamic fundamentalists can be considered as the driving force behind this new reformation. This means that it is incorrect to assess all their values and influence as archaic, reactionary, or fascist. The Islamic fundamentalist worldview contains both modernizing and anti-modernizing features, and some elements of their influence on society are of a modernizing nature.*

**Keywords:** reformation, Islamic fundamentalism, Protestant ethic, modernization, individualism, generational conflict.

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## Islamic Reformation — Legitimation of the Concept

**E**VENTS in the contemporary world are in many respects determined by the dramatic changes that are characteristic of Islamic society: religious revival, an intensification of conflict, and a sharp increase in the political role of aggressive fundamentalist views that call for a return to origins and restoration of the Islamic caliphate. However, despite the enormous significance of these processes, they have not been considered from a systematic theoretical perspective, and existing assessments of them vary greatly.

Thus if one looks at those Islamic phenomena that experts call fundamentalist or neo-fundamentalist, Salafi or Wahhabi, one finds a variety of interpretations. One widespread position, deriving from Bernard Lewis (L'uiis 2003), is characterized by a sharp opposition between the Western modernizing and the fundamentalist models of development. This logic sees fundamentalism as ideological traditionalism, as a desire to return to the past, to the Middle Ages. Another interpretation recognizes the modern character of fundamentalist trends, but links them to the “dark side of modernity”: “Militant Islam is best understood not as a religion but as a political ideology. Indeed, it is the successor of both fascism and Marxism-Leninism in its nature (radical utopianism), its means (totalitarianism), and its goals (world conquest)” (Pipes 2008). Finally, among intellectuals there is also the view that considers Islamic fundamentalism as a modernizing ideology without reservation:

From this perspective fundamentalist Islam and related nationalisms represent an ideology that seems much closer to that of the French Revolution than for those who limit themselves to the general stereotype that opposes Western Enlightenment to religion in general and to the Islamic East in particular. (Kalkhun 2006, 225–26)

A number of well-known researchers of Islamic issues in the North Caucasus, in particular, in Dagestan, hold a similar position: “Salafism may be regarded as an ideological shell for the process of social modernization and for the separation of the individual from the clan ties that still cement Dagestani society” (Makarov 2000, 27).

Such unequivocal statements suggest that this phenomenon is something profoundly heterogeneous, contradictory, and that it influences events in an unpredictable (non-linear) way. They recall a period of Western history that manifested very similar tendencies —

a surge of active religiosity, a desire to return to sacred texts, the spread of religious knowledge, and the desire to transform not only faith, but also the life of every person in accordance with religious dogma. I am referring to the period of the Reformation, the emergence of Protestant views in Europe. Can the analogy with the European Reformation help us to understand the processes taking place in the modern Islamic world? Admittedly, using a framework connected to the Reformation to analyze Islam is far from new, and its use has been interpreted variously.<sup>1</sup> Some scholars consider it unacceptable “Eurocentrism”:

This is simply metaphorization, using a concept for Islam that was developed in a different (non-Islamic) culture and environment and intended for conceptual exploration of another religion (Christianity). It is as if when discussing a camel, metaphorically called “a ship of the desert,” one would begin to argue about shipbuilding instead of investigating the camel itself. (Ignatenko 2005, 30)

By making use of such a vivid metaphor Alexander Ignatenko is trying to explain the impossibility of the notion of “Islamic reformation” by citing the fact that the Islamic community (*Ummah*) does not have one single, officially recognized doctrine, such as Catholicism in the Western Christian world, but is divided into many sects. Therefore, it is wrong to “look at the history of Islam from the standpoint of Christianocentrism” and to assume that “in medieval Islam, there was either ‘orthodoxy’ or ‘heresy,’” because “in fact Muslims have different, divergent opinions on various questions” (Ignatenko 2005, 35 and 26). If we see the Reformation as a purely religious phenomenon, then such a position has some basis. However, from the theological point of view the Reformation, in a general sense, was a typical religious schism in which the official religious tradition of the Catholic Church was opposed by other interpretations, in particular, those based on St. Augustine.<sup>2</sup> In this case, the special term “reformation” is not at all

1. For greater clarity, in the following text I will write “Reformation” with a capital letter if it refers to a specific historical period, e.g., the Protestant Reformation, and in lower case when the term refers to a broader phenomenon that may be applied to various historical periods. In quoted material, the spelling of the term follows the quoted source.
2. The basic ideas on which the leaders of the Reformation relied — justification by faith; the original sinfulness of each person, connected with the fall of Adam; the predetermination of who is saved and who is not, irrespective of the personal qualities and actions of an individual, and established before the beginning of time; the true church of the righteous — were all formulated in the fifth century by St. Augustine. “The old

necessary. However, as is widely recognized, the Reformation was not only confined to the religious aspect:

While the old framework tended to hive off the Reformation and portray it in strictly religious terms by tracing its outbreak to the corruption of the Catholic Church and its diffusion to the mass appeal of Luther's teachings, recent scholarship has attempted to set the Reformation within a wider context, emphasizing the importance of social factors in its reception and of political factors in its propagation. (Gorski 2003, 17)

If we analyze reformation as a social and political phenomenon, there are clearly additional possibilities for meaningful analogies. In such a context, the notion of the cyclical nature of reformation in Islam has had some traction. In this view, Islam is characterized by periodic "cleansings," "returns to the basics," which, however, have had a conservative character and have not spawned an ideology pushing for active social change.

Therefore, the historical role of the Christian Reformation and the Islamic reform movements of the Wahhabi type has been completely different. The Christian Reformation opened the way for the free development of society, creativity in all spheres of life, and the constant emergence of the new. Reformation movements in the Muslim world, on the contrary, return society to the perpetual model of *shariata*, "to the way things were." (Furman 2011, 217)

Ernest Gellner, who distinguished between a high, in essence fundamentalist, culture in Islam, and a grassroots, mass culture, has made a major modification to this kind of model. Gellner recognizes the cyclical nature of Islamic reformation only for certain stages of the development of Islamic societies:

The functioning of Islam in a traditional society can be described as a continuing or constantly renewed Reformation, in each cycle of which the Puritan impulse of religious revival reinforces the intensification of the directly opposite social trends and demands. Thus, in the past reforms have always been cyclical. (Gellner 2003, 30–31)

Church was immensely strong, and that strength could only have been overcome by the explosive power of an idea. The idea proved to be a new statement of Augustine's ideas on salvation" (MacCulloch 2003, 110). In one of the letters Luther wrote to a friend he referred to "my theology, that is, St. Augustine's theology" (see Chedvig 2011, 45).



However, Gellner believes that in modern society the rules of the game have changed. These changes — the destruction of the autonomy of self-managed rural communities, urbanization, and the strengthening of the centralized state — have increased the attractiveness of the fundamentalist version of Islam for average Muslims, who have more and more begun to live in cities. It is precisely in a tradition of “high,” fundamentalist Islam and its success among the broad masses of the population that Gellner sees a “pass to the future” for Muslim communities.

Its main features are the recognition of the normative nature of the sacred texts, puritanism, individualism, regularity, a relatively small number of magical elements, intolerance of disorganized mystical and ritual practice of the common-folk, and all this, of course, belongs to the number of qualities that are able to alleviate the labors and hardships on the long road to a modern, disciplined industrial society. High Islam was as if especially designed to achieve this goal. (Gellner 2003, 34)

Olivier Roy’s position on the issue of Islamic reformation is rather contradictory. On the one hand, he cites many parallels between current trends in Islam and the religious schism of the Reformation, seeing direct analogies with what Max Weber and Michael Walzer wrote about this period (Weber 2001; Walzer 1965). On the other hand, he treats the peculiarities of contemporary Islam according to the logic of “New Age” religiosity.

What we understand by “new forms of religiosity” does not imply, without excluding it, the “reformation” of Islam in the sense of the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century, because “re-Islamization” does not entail a reexamination of basic religious dogmas. (Roy 2004, 5)

Roy believes that the same preconditions that lead to fundamentalism may lead to Islamic reformation, and these are: a critical approach to dogma, the desire for *ijtihad*, and the development of theological thought. He recognizes the existence of “many Muslim thinkers who advocate the rehabilitation of such a critical approach, using the tools of modern intellectual inquiry such as history and linguistics,” but notes that “such thinkers do not meet the expectations of young ‘born again’ Muslims” (Roy 2004, 182). That is, he connects reformation not so much with fundamentalist, Puritanical views, as with more liberal approaches.

The idea of linking reformation with liberal trends in Islamic thought that seek to reconcile Islam with modern ideas about a well-

ordered society is also quite common. The publication of the book by Abdullahi Ahmed An-Naim, a Sudanese scholar-theologian, *Toward an Islamic Reformation: Civil Liberties, Human Rights, and International Law*, contributed to the fact that reformation became associated with such ideas. An-Naim sees the task of his work as supporting a revolutionary approach to Islamic legal reform that would promote the acceptance of Sharia law in forms that would allow Muslims to enjoy the benefits of social progress, but at the same time not go beyond Islamic law. The author proposes to build on the approach worked out by his teacher, Mahmud Muhamed Taha, who distinguished “two levels or two stages of the sacred message of Islam, one of which refers to the early Meccan period and the other to the late, Median one” (An-Naim 1999, 65). The Meccan *ayahs* are based on universal values and recognized the equality of men and women and the right to complete freedom of choice in questions of religion and faith, while the Median *ayahs* permit the use of force in spreading Islam and in the struggle against unbelievers. Following his teacher, An-Naim claims that the Meccan *ayahs* are of more fundamental significance, were directed toward the future, and should be used in modern Sharia law.

Despite all of the diversity of views regarding Islamic reformation, they are united by the fact that in practically no case has the question been raised about what reformation is, apart from its specific historical circumstances, that is, reformation as a phenomenon that may be viewed in different historical contexts. Actually, going beyond surface analogies and conducting meaningful analysis are possible only if the content of this process can be separated from its concrete historical “shell.” Moreover, most of those who try to spread the term “reformation” beyond the limits of the specific phenomenon within the framework of the Christian world usually manifest a rather superficial knowledge either of that period or of Islam and the processes taking place within it, which inevitably leads to distortions. Therefore, before speaking further about Islamic reformation, let us try to understand how it is possible to define reformation as a social phenomenon without limiting it to a specific historical period.

### **The Social Content of Reformation**

Religious reformation may be characterized as the movement of large masses of people who, under the influence of newly interpreted religious imperatives, reject their heretofore habitual way of life and implement new patterns of social behavior in accordance with their new

religious ideals. Within the framework of the Christian Reformation, a number of factors contributed to the emergence of such a mass movement.

First, the Reformation brought the Bible closer to the average believer. “Luther supported Erasmus’s appeal that a farmer should read Scripture in between breaks in work or a weaver to the sound of his loom” (Chedvig 2011, 56). This directly resulted from its ideology, the key ideas of which were: the impossibility of the church mediating between God and people, its lack of any influence on a person’s salvation, and the key role of the Bible in all questions of dogma and being. Based on this, “Protestantism raised reading and contemplating the Bible to the level of compulsory religious precept and created a cult in which the central place was a pastor’s explanation of the Bible” (Furman 2011a, 104). This fundamentally differentiated the Reformation from orthodox Catholicism, for which parishioners were not expected to study the sacred texts themselves, independently. Indeed it was forbidden to keep sacred books at home; the Inquisition could prosecute the believer for doing so.<sup>3</sup> The liturgy was conducted in Latin and the congregation perceived its performance more as a magical ritual than as a conscious action.

In contrast, the Reformation made sacred texts and rituals maximally accessible to lay people. The Bible was translated into believers’ native tongues. “The fathers of the Reformation” themselves made a significant contribution to this process — Luther translated the Bible into German, Calvin into French. The liturgy was also conducted in national languages and preaching took on an incomparably more important role in the service. In order for people to read the sacred books themselves, reformers supported the improvement of literacy as well as preparation of qualified clerics able to explain the basic ideas of the scriptures. The invention of printing also made it easier to carry out these tasks, and the Bible was published in print runs that were huge for the time.

Second, as a result of independent reading, ordinary believers began to interpret the holy scriptures independently for the first time. Luther’s opponents complained “that simple people like the Bible, so that shoemakers and elderly women read it and argue about its texts” (Chedvig 2011, 74). There were obvious risks in this. “Everywhere the Bible in the living tongue becomes the source of heresy” (Fur-

3. In England, a person’s possession of the Bible translated into English (the so-called Wycliffe Bible) could result in being burned at the stake as a heretic.

man 2011a, 55).<sup>4</sup> The possibility of interpretation immediately gave rise to disagreements, related both to the individual characteristics of believers and to their social status, needs, and interests. The Reformation split into many different groups and currents that collided and clashed with one another. These groups were indeed very different: some perceived religion as purely rational; others hoped for revelation from above; some wanted to hide themselves and flee the world; others, on the contrary, sought to change the world in accordance with their ideals; some sought peaceful transformation in cooperation with the authorities; and some provoked and supported disobedience and rebellion.

Usually such fragmented reformatory thinking suggests its weakness.

The authority of the papacy was shaken, and the breach in Catholicism was quite significant. But there was a schism in the camp of the attackers — the numerous sects that grew up as a result of the religious revolution clashed with one another, diluted their power, and suffered the loss of trust at a time when, having recovered from its first defeats, the Catholic Church began to gather its forces for a new, fiercer struggle. (Prozovskaia 1995, 171)

However, in view of what has been said earlier, it seems that this was not a defect, but an immanent feature of the Reformation. If the Reformation had been monolithic, it would simply have led to replacing one system of dogma with another similar system, that is, we would have observed a church schism. However, the Reformation played a different role. The reading and interpretation of sacred texts by ordinary individuals turned religion from a set of dogmas that were divorced from people and not subject to question into a way of understanding the world in religious categories. At the same time, thanks to its diversity, the Reformation was able in one way or another to respond to the interests and demands of a wide range of social groups — poor peasants and noble knights, rich aristocrats and poor priests, protesting intellectuals and powerful princes — and thus created a broad social base for itself.

4. Luther himself, who originally proclaimed the principle of religious freedom, was later horrified at its consequences. These words were attributed to him at the end of his life: “I would leave the great majority of incorrigible sinners under the yoke of the pope. Indeed the Gospel is of no use to them and only leads to the abuse of freedom” (see Prozovskaia 1955, 161).

Third, the Reformation reflected the massive need for a new understanding and the creation of a new attitude toward reality. "Luther revealed to the world what it wanted to hear from him" (Chedvig 2011, 50). The active processes of social change during early modernization generated this need. What people previously perceived as stable and unshakable now changed before their eyes. The boundaries of the inhabited world quickly expanded as a result of geographical discoveries, creating fundamentally new perspectives and risks: from opportunities for mass migration to the American continent to inflationary processes generated by the flow of precious metals from newly discovered lands into Europe. Familiar social stratifications broke apart: in a number of areas the old aristocracy lost its position, which was now assumed by the state or by previously unknown, newly wealthy families. Formerly despised occupations suddenly turned out to be the most promising. Intensive processes of urbanization overcame the previous isolation of urban and rural communities and thereby forced them to reconsider their role and place. Periodic epidemics created an additional feeling of uncertainty and instability, as the most terrible of them, the plague, regularly devastated huge territories. All of this disorientated people, forcing them out of the usual rut, creating a feeling of chaos, and it forced them to look for at least some point of support. "The world around was changing, creating confusion and disorientation" (Armstrong 2013, 90).

In the changed conditions, someone had to provide an answer to the new problems, and the reformers did offer their own interpretations and solutions. "Calvinist theology already mirrored the new social reality and suggested a general explanation: nothing but disorder could possibly follow from the activity of fallen man, restless, lustful and disobedient" (Walzer 1965, 204). Hence followed the conclusion that "only God's command, only the perpetual struggle of his saints, imposed some minimal order on earth" (Walzer 1965, 161). Thus, the Reformation framed a demand for the large-scale transformation of generally accepted practices in response to social change and to the demands that religious dogma posed for the true believer. Following the reformation of the church came "the reformation of life." "Monarchs, priests, nuns, merchants, farmers, labourers were seized by ideas which tore through their experiences and memories and made them behave in new ways, sometimes admirable, sometimes monstrous" (MacCulloch 2003, 110). It was believed that if one did not seek to comply with the prescriptions of the Supreme Being, it was a sign that one was not elected to salvation and did not take part in the "true church."

For Calvin and his followers, the justification of the individual believer was a gradual process in which the old Adam died, and a new Adam was reborn. This process of conversion or rebirth was marked by growing conformity of the believer's actions to biblical law, that is, by increasing self-discipline. (Gorski 2003, 124)

This process was fundamentally different from the external control of behavior on the part of the authorities. "Social discipline took on new meaning when enforced through conscience, instead of being imposed on consciences that were free, or modified by the intervention of nature, blood, or patriarchy with all their affective and emotional connotations" (Walzer 1965, 57). But the "saints," feeling themselves to be the advance guard of the divine army that was called by the Almighty to protect the faith, demanded universal adherence to the norms arising from religious obligations. Self-discipline of the righteous was complemented by universal discipline enforced by the secular authorities.<sup>5</sup> "If the ungodly could not be saved, . . . then they could at least be compelled to obey God's laws" (Gorski 2003, 31).

At the same time, the "laws of the Most High" were interpreted to approximate what is contained in the scriptures as much as possible. If Luther stressed the unconditional fulfillment of secular laws, Calvin "looked more closely at the moral principles contained in the Bible, and, additionally, 'sought out' everything in the Bible which can be interpreted as specific rule of conduct. Calvin's followers attempted to present all Old Testament moral legislation as mandatory and sacred law" (Furman 2011a, 89). Thus in Calvinist Geneva the death penalty was imposed for a variety of transgressions "completely in the spirit of the Old Testament" (Furman, 2011a, 89).

And here emerges the basic paradox of the Reformation. The prerequisites for social progress, the development of the free market, the emancipation of the human person, the triumph of liberalism — all

5. In Calvin's Geneva a person could be severely punished for the slightest fault or deviation from the directives that, according to the Calvinists, followed from divine law. "Rich and poor, men and women were required to appear before the terrible tribunal for the merest, accidentally spoken word; for an inappropriate smile during a sermon, for overly fancy clothing, for curled hair, they received angry reprimands, were publicly pilloried, and were subjected to ecclesiastical excommunication, fines, imprisonment [. . .]. A cabby who cursed his stubborn horse in the heat of the moment was imprisoned" (Porozovskaia 1995, 231). Even more severe punishments were widely imposed, in particular, the death penalty. Over five years in Geneva, fifty-eight death sentences and seventy-six decrees of exile were approved (Porozovskaia 1995, 230). The situation reached a point of absurdity. "In 1547, a special decree confirmed a decree of 1535 against the wearing of trousers with slits as something disseminating disorder" (Chedvig 2011, 87).

were laid by religious fanatics seeking to return to the past, completely subordinating human life to religious prescriptions, forcibly imposing their views, and insisting on the hopeless depravity of human nature and the impossibility of achieving salvation by one's own efforts.

At the source of bourgeois ideological development are not humanist liberals but the frenzied monk Luther who was fighting against carnal temptations and Calvin, who burned "witches" and "heretics" at the stake without a twinge of conscience. The paradox of the liberating and progressive influence of ideology that pulled backward, asserting human frailty, is a real paradox. (Furman 2011a, 42–43)

To explain this paradox is one of the main challenges facing any researcher of the Reformation. It seems important to note the following features of this social process.

On the one hand, the Reformation seriously undermined those traditional relations inherited from the past within whose framework life had previously been organized. That is, if I may put it this way, it cleared the space for the formation of a new reality. Indeed, the Reformation opposed the fundamental principle of traditional patriarchal relations in which all public structures — the community, the state — develop out of the family and clan and reproduce (at least on the ideological level) their characteristic social ties.

Thus the Reformation opposed hierarchy as the fundamental principle structuring all social relations. The hierarchy of the church, the hierarchy of feudal status, had been traditionally interpreted as a reflection of the natural harmony of the universe. In the view of the Protestants the structure of the universe looks completely different — no natural hierarchy exists, and all phenomena and forms are the direct result of divine will. "A stone will not fall from a mountain without God's will, just as the sun rises only by the will of God" (Furman 2011a, 64). Subordination to divine will is man's unequivocal duty. The obligation to submit to the authorities was also preached by many Protestant movements, but gradually the radical supporters of this trend came to the conclusion that submission is necessary only to the extent that the authorities do not violate God's will. In addition, the Reformation sought to destroy those natural, primordial ties that structured traditional society in favor of the primacy of ideological unity. Family, friends, ancestral land — all these the true believer had to be ready to abandon. Taking their place was the community of like-minded people, bound by a common ideology and a common desire to fight for the tri-



umph of God's word. The chosen "would not be blinded with those vain shadows of fathers, times and customs, but would measure the truth of religion by the squire of the Word" (John Stockwood, "A Sermon Preached at Paul's Cross," London, 1578, cited in Walzer, 1965, 187).

On the other hand, the Reformation helped form a new system of modernizing values, whose influence was manifested both directly and indirectly in several ways:

1. Certain of its aspects directly contributed to the advancement of modern values;
2. A phenomenon arose that Weber described: "in significant measure, the cultural influences of the Reformation [. . .] were unforeseen and even *undesirable* consequences of the activities of the reformers themselves, often very far from what they thought was happening or even directly opposed to their true intentions." (Weber 2011, 69)
3. By itself, the religious pluralism formed under the influence of the Reformation dictated the norms that one had to follow sooner or later.

The importance of education and conscientious work were the most obvious modernizing elements of Reformation ideology. Thus Luther called for the creation of public schools for all classes of society as well as public libraries and thought that this was one of the most important duties of the Christian authorities. Many Calvinists also sought to promote reform programs related to public education. As for the new relationship to work, within the framework of the Reformation this was determined by the fact that the reformers sacralized all human activity, considering it a ministry, a vocation. Protestants denied the superiority of ecclesiastical ascetic duty over worldly responsibilities. On the contrary, "the performance of duty within the framework of one's worldly profession is regarded as the highest task of the moral life of man" (Weber 2011, 49). Success in professional work was considered a confirmation of the believer's having been chosen for salvation.

At the same time, in the Reformation one can also find embryos of those features that are characteristic of the "dark side of modernity" — repression, terror, the subordination of the individual to the depersonalized power of the state, and society's strict regulation of the life of its members. Church and police control over the life of believers in the form that it was carried out under Calvinist state church domination, not only, as Weber believed, reduced and even prevented the liberation of the individual, but also left a visible imprint on the system of relations in modern society.



The question of the unforeseen consequences of religious reform requires special analysis. To begin with, the Reformation's idea of universal sinfulness affirmed the universal equality of people in a negative way. "Since everyone's nature is equally damaged, everyone is equal in their sinfulness to one another" (Furman 2011a, 67). This was manifested not only in ideology, but also in everyday life. The wife of one of the leaders of the aristocratic Huguenots described with indignation how she was not admitted to communion because of her hairdo, and she observed in a rage how her servants had been allowed to take the sacrament (Walzer 1965, 50).

A more complex question is whether the Reformation really contributed to the advancement of individualism. One cannot disagree with the fact that "discipline and not liberty lies at the heart of Puritanism" (Furman 2011a, 149). Nevertheless, the Reformation evidently strengthened individualism in several ways. In the first place, the rejection of traditional boundaries and hierarchies was itself an act of emancipation. "The formation of ascetic communities and sects with their radical rejection of patriarchal fetters and *their* interpretation of the commandments to obey God rather than people was one of the most important prerequisites of modern 'individualism'" (Weber 2011, 174).

Secondly, within the framework of the Reformation, salvation is an individual act, not mediated by any intermediate instances, which obviously strengthens the role of the individual as a subject, determining his or her own life circumstances (if not to achieve salvation by one's own forces, at least in order to prove to oneself that one is chosen). Thirdly, the possibility of independent reading and interpretation of the Bible sharply expanded the role of individual judgment in understanding the world around us; "the unprecedented exaltation of Scripture leads to the liberation of the individual from the domination of the church and church dogma.[. . .] There is no authority in determining its meaning so that human reason turns out to be absolutely free" (Furman 2011a, 70, 72). Fourth, the very act of self-selection of one's own religious worldview in an era of schism and anarchy is a deeply individualistic act.

A fairly common notion is that the Calvinist system of community taught believers the mechanisms of citizenship, democracy and self-rule. The assertion of a new understanding of citizenship was directly related to the rejection of previous ideas about people's political passivity.

The activity of the Calvinist saints, however, required a recognition that all subjects were knowledgeable and active citizens rather than naïve

political children, that government was not a household, the state not an extended family, and the king not a loving father. (Walzer 1965, 14)

At the same time, the demand to submit to religious law, even in small things, promoted the value of abiding by the law as a universal good.

The question of the consequences of the Reformation in the family sphere and gender relations is interesting. "Puritan writers insisted upon the inferiority of the female, but nevertheless recognized in her the potential saint" (Walzer 1965, 193). Marriage between two saints was regarded as a spiritual union. Conflicting notions of the role of women were reflected in the concept of the family as a whole. The Puritan model of the family does not lend itself to an unequivocal assessment in terms of modernization; it departs from the traditional patriarchal ideal but at the same time does not correspond to modern ideas about gender roles and the rights of family members. The family was regarded as a "small church" in which the father had unconditional power and the children were reduced to the position of servants. Rigid methods of upbringing designed to prevent the consequences of original sin were imposed, even among toddlers. Natural feelings, love and tenderness, were suppressed in every possible way. Nevertheless the family increasingly came to be seen as a voluntary union of two individuals united by civil contract. The requirements for divorce, which was extremely difficult in Catholic countries, were eased.

Finally, religious pluralism significantly influenced the situation in the sphere of religious tolerance. The original Lutheran idea about freedom of conscience very quickly came to naught. In the struggle between Catholics and Protestants in Germany, the following principle was worked out: "those in power decide the faith" — subjects must share the faith of their sovereign. It was believed that without a unified state religion the state could not exist. The struggle against heretics was no less cruel in Protestantism than in Catholicism; in both heretics were burning. However, the principle of a unified state religion was not implemented in all countries even where there were numerous conflicts, religious wars and clashes. It was necessary to understand what to do in such situations. The idea that peace with two religions is better than war that does not solve anything became increasingly popular. The Edict of Nantes (1598) in France was the first document to establish the principle of religious tolerance at the state level, and even though it was abolished under Louis XIV it played a major role in affirming the principle of freedom of conscience.

The definitive step toward religious freedom was made on the American continent. That country, in whose creation religion played a key

role, became the first secular republic. The Bill of Rights of 1789 included this formulation: “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof” (cited in Armstrong 2013, 112). In this case it was also largely a pragmatic step — the founding fathers understood that “if the federal government gave the status of state religion to one of the Protestant denominations, the constitution would not have been approved” (Armstrong 2013, 113).

However, all these diverse and in many respects positive consequences of the Reformation from the modern point of view only made themselves felt after a considerable period of time. Many contemporaries saw something quite different — fanaticism, mass violence, chaos, outrages upon sacred objects, and a barbarous attitude to works of art in the name of “iconoclasm.”<sup>6</sup> Thomas Hobbes wrote that perhaps it would be better to destroy all Protestant preachers before they began to bring their ideas to the masses and to avoid the horrors and losses of civil war in England (Walzer 1965, 114). It was only at a much later time that the idealized image of the Reformation as a process aiding the modernization of society appeared. It is this kind of image that scholars who write about the Islamic Reformation often envisage.

### **Islamic Reformation: What Can a Conceptual Framework Provide?**

The proposed consideration of contemporary fundamentalist Islamic trends through the prism of the Reformation is not made in order to draw a beautiful analogy. This conceptual framework can help find answers to the following critical questions concerning contemporary analysis of the Islamic world:

1. What is the reason for the wide dissemination of and call for Islamic fundamentalism?
2. What functional roles does fundamentalism play?
3. What are the consequences of this ideology? Can Islamic fundamentalism contribute to the modernization of the societies in which it spreads, as happened with the Reformation in Europe?

Regarding the first question, we should remember that the demand for a religious reformation in Europe arose in an era of global change; in the new conditions, people were not satisfied with the usual answers

6. “A crowd, inflamed by iconoclastic sermons, broke into a church, stopped the Catholic service, and desecrated their holy things” (Porozovskaia 1995, 120). “Protestant actions were identified with the looting of churches, destruction, irreverence, religious anarchy” (Chedvig 2011, 133).

to the basic questions of being. “Old values inherited from the past came into conflict with the material and intellectual aspirations of the present” (Chedvig 2011, 15). The Reformation gave people an opportunity to seek answers independently and suggested new directions for searching.

The Islamic world is also undergoing profound transformation today. Accelerated modernization carried out by many secular regimes in Islamic countries has seriously shaken the traditional system of relations, caused sharp social changes and intensified urbanization. Globalization and active migration have also significantly changed the living conditions of large masses of people. In these conditions, can the ideology of Islamic fundamentalism satisfy the demands that Muslims have as a response to the demise of their customary institutions?

Many researchers from various countries have tried to answer this question.<sup>7</sup> I will try to do so on the basis of field work I conducted in the North Caucasus.<sup>8</sup> At first glance, it may seem that this region, which is on the periphery of the Islamic world, cannot serve as an adequate object of analysis. However, I would like to emphasize once again that the object of study in this case is not the religious, but the social aspect of reformation, and from this point of view the situation in the North Caucasus is quite indicative. The population is experiencing the same processes and the same problems as in many other Muslim-populated areas: the legacy of traditional society and its decay; urbanization and globalization; the consequences of the collapse of the official (Soviet) ideology; and military conflicts.

If we consider as an example the most Islamized of the Northern Caucasian republics — Dagestan — then it becomes obvious that in the 1990s this territory experienced a radical breakdown of the previous developmental model. This breakdown resulted from:

- the collapse of the socialist economic model, the consequences of which were reinforced as a result of the dissolution of economic ties during the Chechen war;

7. In this respect, Olivier Roy's *Globalized Islam: The Search for a New Ummah* (2007) is one of the most interesting works.

8. This was a study I conducted over five years in the republics of the North Caucasus with predominantly Islamic populations. Its subject was the prerequisites, the course and consequences of Islamic radicalization, as well as the nature of intra-Islamic conflicts. The study was conducted using qualitative sociological methods in the main cities and approximately twenty-five villages of Dagestan, Chechnya, Ingushetia, Kabardino-Balkaria and Karachaevo-Circassia, and included about a hundred individual and group interviews that were held with Islamic fundamentalists themselves. Quotes in the text are taken from these interviews as well as from statements by Islamic fundamentalists on social networks.

- active migration processes: the outmigration of the educated population of Dagestan's cities to other regions; the mass immigration of mountain people to the plains, in the first place, again to cities;
- the involvement of rural communities in market relations that have undercut their isolation;
- globalization in both the "Western" and "Islamic" senses;
- the war in Chechnya, a neighboring republic with Dagestan.

To one degree or another, similar processes are typical for almost all of the North Caucasian republics.

Young people who entered life during this period faced numerous problems and difficulties, and these difficulties were not just economic. The destruction of norms and rules of both urban and rural culture caused by mass migrations<sup>9</sup> left a normative vacuum that scholars following Emile Durkheim call *anomie* (the lack of norms, lawlessness). In the absence of generally accepted norms the cost of interaction among people proved to be extremely high. When "the rules of the game" are suspended the "right of the strong" plays the dominant role. Moreover, in such a situation, young people as a group cannot rely on the experience of forebears and use their life models in order to succeed; this experience had been formed in other circumstances and lost relevance in conditions of social breakdown. Generational hierarchies began to play a negative rather than a positive role — they prevented active adaptation, inhibiting young people's search for their own values, meanings, patterns of behavior and interactions with the outside world.<sup>10</sup>

What kind of needs did young people have in such an environment? Based on the field studies I conducted, they may be formulated as follows:

1. The need for a strict system of rules and norms that would somehow allow the surrounding normative chaos (*anomie*) to be restrained.

9. This culture itself was formed as a result of the influence of Soviet power on the North Caucasian peoples' traditional way of life. It is necessary to understand that, first, its impact was not uniform; in some places it essentially transformed existing social relations, while in others it affected them in a purely formal way; and, second, that Soviet modernization itself was conservative, that is, it did not destroy very much, but tended to preserve the rules and restrictions characteristic of traditional culture.

10. Despite the abundance of work on Islamic issues in the North Caucasus, analysis of the social consequences of post-Soviet transformation is poorly represented. A successful example is the work of Enver Kisriev, in particular, *Islam i vlast' v Dagestane* (2004).

2. The need for a community of like-minded people that could compensate for the weakening of the role of generational, family hierarchies, and, in conditions where “the right of the strong” predominates, guarantee the security of its members.
3. The need to legitimize intra-generational conflict and to increase room for the independent exploration of values and ideas.
4. The need for an outlet for social protest, to demand an alternative to the lack of order and justice that is observed all around.

Islamic fundamentalism proves to be competitive in the market of ideologies because of the way it satisfies these needs overall. It provides strict normativity and regulation in the life of believers, giving them a point of support in an atmosphere of chaos, and includes them in a community of like-minded people who share the same “rules of the game.” It expands the possibilities for independent study of the sacred texts and for choosing one’s own teachers. To some extent it legitimizes inter-generational conflict, because “if we take the paternal word and the word of the Most High, the word of the Most High is superior” (male, young, NGO, Dagestan, Makhachkala). And, finally, it acts as an ideology of protest, juxtaposing the existing state of society to an alternative social ideal — the Islamic caliphate, which is capable, in the opinion of its adherents, of ensuring order and justice.

None of the other ideologies on the “market” can satisfy these demands as successfully. Traditional Islam<sup>11</sup> is hardly able to insure the legitimization of inter-generational conflict (this is the religion of the

11. Not all Islamicists accept the term “traditional Islam,” but it is widely used as an antipode to fundamentalist currents that have been dubbed “nontraditional Islam.” “The concept of ‘traditional Islam’ is rather vague and is not easy to define. In different regions, different peoples follow various ‘traditional’ Islamic trends. For example, part of the population of the North Caucasus belongs to the Hanafit madhhab, part to the Shafi’it, and these madhhabs (Islamic trends or schools of law) have their own approaches to the legal and ritual interpretation of Islam. Sufism, a mystical current in Islam, also has its special character, one that implies unquestioning obedience to a spiritual leader (sheikh); moreover, among the various sheikhs, there may also be inconsistencies. In addition, traditional Islam can be interpreted as ‘popular Islam,’ a system of beliefs that have come under the influence of non-Islamic customs and traditions, something that is unacceptable to those who have received a proper Islamic education. Some equate traditional Islam with official Islam, represented by a religious governing body on a particular territory, although in different regions they may represent different Islamic groups” (K. Kazenin and I. Starodubrovskaya, “Severnyi Kavkaz: *Quo vadis?*; Ekspertnyi doklad,” Polit.ru, <http://polit.ru/article/2014/01/14/caucasus/>, accessed August 20, 2017). However, what unites all of these interpretations is the idea that “traditional Islam” represents the “correct” Islamic religion that dominated the corresponding territory prior to the beginning of the Islamic revival and that in modern conditions it was in one way or another supported by state authority.

fathers) or of social protest (as it usually coincides with official Islam, supported by the state). Nationalism (in the case of the North Caucasus — ethnic mobilization) may well serve as an ideology of protest, but in many cases does not provide particular norms (although some ethnic groups do have their own ethnic codes of behavior) and it does not legitimize intergenerational conflict. Liberalism in general is often seen not as a “remedy,” but as a “source of illness” — a source of chaos and injustice.

Putting anomie forward as a reason for the popularity of fundamentalist Islam departs from the widespread opinion that its causes are connected with the sense of inferiority Muslims feel in connection with their loss of world leadership and inability to be competitive in comparison with Western countries.<sup>12</sup> Without denying the role of such broad phenomena, one should note that they are perceived much more acutely when a person sees their reflection in his or her personal life. Thus, the slogans about the oppression of Muslims around the globe and the need to take revenge for it find a more favorable reception if the audience feels alienation, the denial of social advancement, and discrimination.

Analogies between the spread of Islamic fundamentalism and the Reformation are striking. In Dagestan, for example, traditional, official Islam is Sufism, which assumes complete submission to the authority of the sheikh and does not welcome independent study of the sacred texts.<sup>13</sup>

For us there was only Sufism, we were all brought up in the tradition of Sufism. This means we did not ask unnecessary questions [. . .]. There was complete unanimity. (male, old, public figure, Makhachkala)

In young people, this kind of attitude provokes active resistance:

We read. That is, I read the translation of the Koran, I read the *hadi*. Yes, at first, as a child, there was blind repetition: the imam spoke, and that's what you did [. . .] Sufis, they said — do not read translations. The

12. This position is held, for example, by Daniel Pipes, who used to connect the rise of Islamic fundamentalism with the oil boom, but then changed his opinion. “More basically, I no longer try to account for the rise in militant Islam with a single explanation [. . .]. The Muslim world feels something has gone very wrong, but has been frustrated in its attempts to right matters” (Pipes 2008, x). The position presented in the current article is much closer to that of Olivier Roy (2004), who explains the spread of neo-fundamentalism by deculturation, generation gap and social protest.

13. In cases where official Islam is not associated with Sufism, the same problem of unconditional submission to the authority of the imam still arises. “What the efendi does, it means, what everyone [. . .] must do” (male, old, imam, KChR, village of the plain).



book [the Koran] is given to people [. . .] Read but do not interpret; if you want, there are interpretations. We should study this, we are not stupid sheep to follow the shepherd. (male, young, student, Makhachkala)

The independent reading of primary sources contributes to the formation of one's own opinion on how the sacred books explain life and what they require from a believer. People understand the limits of independent interpretation of the Koran and the Sunnah differently. A moderate option is reasoned choice based on the positions of various scholars:

When I say that this is incorrect, I did not discover this by myself. I follow some scholars who have investigated this issue and come to this conclusion. It satisfied me, this research, and I accepted this position. (male, middle age, imam, KChR, village on the plain)

We turn to those who know, who have studied [. . .] And we do not stop at one instance. We ask one of them here [. . .], then we go to the other knowledgeable person who has studied, and we ask him. And then from all of these we do what will be better judging by our region [. . .] We look at what is allowed and what is clearly forbidden [. . .] And if all three of them say that it is prohibited, then we put it off. But if one says — you can, and another says — you cannot, and another — you can and you can't, it's just that kind of situation, we take [into consideration] the circumstances that we find ourselves in and do what is best. That is, according to our region, we know better [how it is] in our everyday life. [. . .] [We decide] How it will be better for society, and so that it does not contradict the canons of Sharia. (male, middle age, works in the North, KChR, village in the plains)

However, there is also a more radical approach, recognizing each person's right to independently search for the truth: "Every Muslim should seek the truth. [. . .] The Prophet exists, so let him be my sheikh. And the rest are just ordinary people" (male, young, worker, Dagestan, mountain village). Naturally, the variety of interpretations leads to a serious fragmentation of Islamic thought. To a certain extent one can agree with the widely held opinion that such division is largely due to the inadequate knowledge of Islam among its adherents. This is about the same thing that Luther feared during the peasant war in Germany when the slogans of the Reformation were used to justify the peasants' struggle for their rights.<sup>14</sup> However, by contrast, this

14. During the peasant war in Germany, the peasants, under the banner of the Gospel, "demanded the abolition of serfdom, the reduction of tithes and other feudal duties, the



means that people began not simply to follow dogmas, but had the opportunity to understand the world in religious categories, taking into account their own position, interests, and individual character. And this new way of thinking led to various results.

Thus among fundamentalists one may find advocates of very different views: apolitical people who want to fence themselves off from society and live in a narrow circle of like-minded people, strictly observing Islamic norms; supporters of peaceful Islamic proselytizing (preaching, attracting new adherents); advocates of political action and the struggle for the rights of Muslims; finally, supporters of the armed struggle to establish an Islamic caliphate. Globalization, which provides access to worldwide Islamic thought and the diversity of religious trends and groups, gives believers the opportunity to join with the followers of those views that best reflect their life goals and ambitions, whatever they may be.

Here a person no longer seeks, for example, a strong rationale from the point of view of Sharia law; any justification is enough. Not from the scholar whom he always trusted, but from someone who can explain to him that this is allowed. (male, young, NGO, Dagestan, Makhachkala)

The abstract possibility of independent religious choice does not mean that this phenomenon has acquired universal application. In such matters people may still uphold the same familial or rural solidarity and automatically follow their friends or a charismatic leader.<sup>15</sup> Nevertheless, such an opportunity fundamentally changes the “religious landscape,” individualizes religious beliefs, forces people to reckon

free use of hunting, fishing and forest areas, the return of public pastures, and, at the top of the list, the right to choose their own pastors and evangelical preaching” (Porozovskaia 1995, 127).

15. Scott Atran, studying the way people join in armed jihad, asserts that in most cases this is not chosen as a carefully thought out decision and he cites the results of a study in Saudi Arabia according to which 64 percent of people join the terrorists via friends and 24 percent through their family (Atran 2016, 68, 383). Note that in the era of the Reformation, similar ways of involving people in the Protestant movement were also actively used. Thus, Andrew Phillips observes that in organizing their struggle against the Catholics in France the Huguenots relied on various kinds of mobilization. “Huguenot confessional networks combined the strength and resilience of affective bonds derived from aristocratic kinship and patron-client ties with the command and control capabilities of a rationally organised church bureaucracy to establish a highly effective form of insurgent organisation” (Phillips 2005, 265). On the basis of field research conducted in the North Caucasus, we found that there are many paths for radicalization including those related to group solidarity and those based on individual choice.

with the presence of “competitors” in the Islamic field and develop strategies for coexistence or struggle with them.

Let us turn to our most important question: what qualities does this ideology foster in its followers? I must say that there is no single answer to this question. In the various trends of Islamic fundamentalism, modernizing and antimodernizing features may manifest themselves in a variety of combinations; modernizing elements may be generated either directly or indirectly as the unforeseen consequences of this or that religious practice.

Let us first try to consider the obvious modernizing consequences of Islamic fundamentalism. A number of researchers who make direct reference to the work of Max Weber argue that Islamic fundamentalism educates a new type of entrepreneur — an advocate of “Protestant ethics.” “Conservative in faith and beliefs, but modern in terms of business, a middle class of Islamic puritans with a Weberian work ethic can be seen to be emerging” (Roy 2004, 97). Fieldwork in the North Caucasus does not fully confirm this thesis. Rather, it may be said that the values of conscientious labor and the desire for vertical mobility do exist, however, labor is not seen as a person’s duty in the sense of fulfilling a religious requirement as it was during the Protestant Reformation.

At the same time, Islam has had a positive impact on the value of education in this region, which by all accounts is less apparent to researchers in other parts of the Islamic world. Among some Caucasian fundamentalists the following position with respect to secular knowledge is common:

Allah’s Messenger said: “Seek knowledge, even if it is in China. Because gaining knowledge is a *fard* [duty] for every Muslim. And the angels spread their wings under the feet of those seeking knowledge.” During the heyday of Islam, many of the exact sciences and medicine also flourished. (male, middle age, businessman, Dagestan, Makhachkala)

Here the emphasis on knowledge sounds much stronger than in the context of traditional Islam, in which a number of communities have advocated limits on secular education.

Our generation is like that. When there was traditional Islam under the Communists, our village was religious, and they said — you cannot study at school, let’s say. Our own people, the elders, [said this]. It was forbidden to study there in the city, or anywhere, [they said that] according to

Islam it was forbidden. And we believed them, we followed in their footsteps. Now, when more or less modern times have come, you start to study Islam yourself, and it's completely different. It demands to actually study, [because] knowledge is the most valuable thing. (male, middle age, businessman, Dagestan, village in the foothills)

Moreover, Muslims, especially in Dagestan, are striving not only to postulate the importance of knowledge in theory but also to contribute to its practical acquisition. Some Islamized Makhachkala diasporas support projects that maintain secular school education in their native villages. In Makhachkala itself, as well as in a number of villages, representatives of fundamentalist Islam are opening educational institutions that combine religious education with the serious study of secular subjects using the most advanced educational technologies. As an example we may cite what was said about a children's educational center organized by Muslims in Makhachkala:

What was included in [this program]? There was Arabic, English from the age of three. Arabic according to the Bain Iadayk course, Arabic in Your Hands [. . .], there was an Egyptian program for kindergartens and we used it. [. . .] There's also an Oxford course for those from three years old [. . .] [that went] into it. And it was [for children] from three up to six years old, preschool and preparation for school. (male, middle age, businessman, Dagestan, Makhachkala)

Modernizing influence stems also from modern cultural forms of communication and interaction that are especially important in conditions of anomie, which destroys generally accepted norms and forces villagers to adapt to an unfamiliar urban environment.

Here in the village, if you suddenly do something bad, any elder can give it to you on the noggin. That's normal. And it doesn't matter if he's a relative or not. When you come to the city, no one gives it to you on the noggin anymore. They haven't taught you how to behave, why for example you can't offend a girl. They didn't explain why it was wrong to offend a girl, but simply gave it to you on the noggin. But here you see that nobody is giving you knocks on the head. So it's okay to offend a girl. (male, young, businessman, Dagestan, Makhachkala)

Under these conditions, Islamic fundamentalists perceive themselves as carriers of civilized standards of behavior, as opposed to secular-

ized young people who are considered to be bearers of a lack of culture and bad habits.

What is modern society today? I will outline a person's values. [. . .]  
A person doesn't smoke — that's good. A man doesn't drink — great.  
A person is engaged in sports — definitely a plus. A person doesn't commit adultery — good. A person works — good. A person does not steal — good. But if he prays — ahhh, Wahhabite! (male, middle age, working in the North, KChR, village in the plains)

The most common stories in interviews were about how Muslims are carriers of higher ethical standards and demonstrate this to non-Muslims, thus asserting the superiority of Islam:

This is what happened to me in Moscow, for example. I'm with a friend [. . .], we were standing together at a station waiting for the last suburban train to Kraskovo. [. . .] On the next bench sat two guys. Drunk. They were shouting. I told one, [don't] shout, behave yourself. He shouted something offensive to me. I got up, went toward them. [. . .] I approach them, and they look at me in a way I know they are preparing for something. And I say, guys, people are tired, they are on their way home, and you are not letting them go in peace. . . Be quiet. He is like, struck dumb. They thought there'd be trouble. And they were ready for it, if it was. They were asking for it themselves, with whomever. In general, they said, sorry, blah blah. . . We moved away, back to where we were. . . The whole station was watching. They were thinking, now those bearded guys will go at it, something will happen . . . (male, young, NGO, Dagestan, Makhachkala)

It must be admitted that in the era of the Reformation Protestants played a similar role. Their moralizing attracted disoriented and anxious urban migrants, and “the discipline of the congregation taught them the appropriate city style, ensured new standards of order and new habits, separated them from the heterogeneous crowd of the growing city, and as a result gave them self-confidence” (Walzer 1965, 243).

A more difficult question is how to distinguish, with reference to Islamic fundamentalism, an analogue of what Weber considered the activities that gave rise to consequences that the Reformation ideologists did not foresee or desire, and that contributed to modernization. In the first place, such consequences are connected with the fact that fundamentalists (as well as Protestant Reformers) reject tradition and its associated

social organization and regulation. Sometimes, because of fundamentalists' desire to return to origins, it is said that Islamic fundamentalism supports traditionalism.<sup>16</sup> This is not true. To understand the paradox that arises here (similar to the paradox of the Reformation), it is necessary to make sense of *which* past, in fact, the fundamentalists appeal to. Any new religion starts with a charismatic period, a period of the breakdown of stereotypes, of searching and breakthroughs into the unknown, a period of heroism and sacrifice. Then, gradually, a tradition coheres that adapts the demands of religion to the ongoing needs of life, to the interests of those in power, to the routine of everyday existence, and rejects searching and creativity. In Islam, this has manifested itself in the image of "closing the gates of *ijtihad*,"<sup>17</sup> a ban on independent judgment and the creative development of Islam. Therefore, here the past means, on the one hand, the revival of certain archaic rituals and practices, and on the other, the legitimation of spiritual searching. "Knowledge opposes tradition" (male, middle age, worker, Dagestan, mountain village) is the way one interviewee summarized the essence of the intra-Islamic conflict in Dagestan.

What are the consequences of the destruction of tradition that results from the ideology of Islamic fundamentalism? Here are some examples. First, it creates conditions for the formation of individualism. The situation here is very close to that of the classical Reformation. Individualization of the choice of religious views; prioritization of horizontal connections of like-minded people over kinship hierarchies; independent study of sacred texts and the denial of unconditional adherence to religious authorities; subordination to divine directives first and foremost and not to the powers that be; all these factors certainly contribute to the emancipation of the individual and erode the dominance of the collective over a person's individual will. Olivier Roy describes the relationship between neo-fundamentalism and the formation of individualistic values very vividly:

By freeing the believer from the bonds of pristine societies, families, tribes, social status and ethnic solidarities, but also from the bonds of

16. "Periods of crisis [. . .] significantly increase the interest in historical traditions on the part of people experiencing frustration and depression. Traditionalism, brought to its logical conclusion, is the main prerequisite for various manifestations of such a radical ideological trend as fundamentalism" (Pain 2002, 115). "A general view is that religious fundamentalism is the expression of an increasing rigidity of traditional identities" (Roy 2004, 329).

17. The right of the highest Sharia experts, the *mujtahids*, to make independent judgment on Islamic laws.

brotherhoods, religious institutions and traditions, neofundamentalism favours individualism, or more precisely it sacralises the experience of individualization. By appealing to youths over the heads of their parents, by ignoring *ulama* in favour of a direct approach to the texts, and by encouraging a personal return to the true tenets of Islam, neofundamentalists contribute to the promotion of the individual as opposed to any sort of group or hierarchy. (Roy 2004, 268)

Researchers of Islam in the North Caucasus note analogous processes:

The Salafi demand for the strict, exclusive worship of Allah that is about to absolve the individual from the power of patriarchal clan traditions, providing the highest religious sanction for the tendency characteristic of young people to desire independence and self-determination within the framework of new modern forms of social solidarity. (Makarov 2000, 28)

It is also important that Shariah law does not provide for collective responsibility — the individual is punished for her or his actions.

Secondly, a consequence of the destruction of traditions that result from the ideology of Islamic fundamentalism is the teaching of adherence to law. Not all fundamentalists consider it necessary to follow the legislation of the secular states where they live, but the idea of unconditional observance of divinely dispensed law — the Sharia — regardless of who you are — is one of the cornerstones of the fundamentalist worldview. This differs significantly from traditional legal approaches where the maintenance of hierarchical subordination is built into the normative system of relationships. The difference is exemplified by the reaction of defenders of Adat and Shariah to the practice of honor killing, information about which has been posted on the Internet. The first declare that “it is necessary to obey the men of one’s clan, and she [the victim of honor killing] trampled on their moral law. The result is obvious.” The second: “This is a real horror. They have no right to stage a lynching.”

Education in abiding by the law is also connected to recognizing the inviolability of contractual obligations and of honest behavior toward one’s partners. “Look at what a contract is in Sharia law, especially as regards hiring. Any person who violates a contract is a hypocrite. And hypocrites are on the very bottom of hell according to Islamic doctrine” (male, medium age, businessman, Dagestan, Makhachkala).

Thirdly, although the influence of fundamentalist Islam on gender relations is far from unambiguous and, as in the process of the Refor-

mation, very contradictory, it is still possible to identify certain modernizing tendencies. Islamic fundamentalism does not recognize gender equality but significantly expands women's rights in comparison with the norms of traditional society, at least in some of the North Caucasian republics. In Islam, a woman is a subject of law and may make legal claims on her husband or demand a divorce, and in this context Islam may be perceived as giving women a basis for protest against the tyranny of males. "I now know that I have a right to this. That is, these are God-given rights. [ . . . ] Why do you, my husband, oppress me? I can go all the way because God is with me" (male, speaking for his mother, young, businessman, Dagestan, Makhachkala). The change in attitude toward girls in the family, in which they have traditionally been considered "second-rate" in relation to boys, is also important. In many families of Islamic fundamentalists in the North Caucasus there is no such division and girls' upbringing is given much more attention (possibly because the Prophet had a beloved daughter). Change in the conditions of early socialization may significantly affect women's position in adulthood.

Of course, all of these direct or indirect modernizing phenomena are not universal. First, they function in a rather contradictory fashion, especially in those cases where they are manifested not thanks to, but in spite of, implementation of the new doctrines. The end to dictates by elders may lead not to the formation of individualism but to the dictates of the Islamic community and its leaders. Abuse of the requirement for a wife to subordinate herself to her husband may result in her even worse enslavement than before. Secondly, another, alternative value system often exists among fundamentalists that is obviously anti-modernizing: it denies the importance of secular knowledge, actively rejects any interaction with the world outside of the religious community, and combines this with the fostering of social parasitism. Actually, this kind of mosaic of values, combining incompatibles, was also characteristic of the Protestant Reformation.

Effects associated with the enhancement of religious tolerance have not yet been observed. On the contrary, intra-Islamic conflicts are extremely harsh. The widespread notion that "Islam is much broader than any ritual differences [ . . . ]. The blood of a Muslim is more valuable" (male, young, a public figure, Dagestan, Makhachkala) has not yet matured in the Islamic *Ummah*. However, within the framework of the Reformation, the idea of religious tolerance also took a very long time to earn acceptance, over the course of many religious conflicts and wars.



## **The Direct and Roundabout Path to Modernity**

Analysis of the current situation in Islam in terms of an Islamic reformation that creates the preconditions for modernization leaves open the question: is such a complex path inevitable? Why is it not possible, based on the previous experience of Western countries, to simply introduce modernizing formats that have already been worked out in the course of global social development? It is known that Islamic fundamentalism is opposed not only to tradition, but also to modern models of society that provide for democracy, human rights, and tolerance. As noted earlier, there are thinkers who seek to reconcile Islam with these models. Why can't the reform of Islam occur on their basis, without acute clashes, bloody conflicts and conflicting values?

It must be said that the Protestant Reformation also gives rise to similar questions. At the time of the Reformation, there also existed an alternative ideology that was much closer to contemporary ideas of modernization — Renaissance humanism. The greatness of humanity, its boundless possibilities, the freedom of will, freedom of conscience — all these values were openly proclaimed by the humanists. The Renaissance “symbolized the destruction of old norms and enabled the expression of a brilliant, often fantastic and eccentric individuality that had become possible by the destruction of those norms” (Walzer 1965, 123). But why did humanism not become the basis for social transformation at the time?

There are two likely reasons for this. First, humanism was a very elitist ideology, unable to help ordinary people of the time understand the world they lived in. The ideas of personal self-realization with pleasure as its higher manifestation could attract representatives of the elite but only caused revulsion and condemnation among the masses. Secondly, the humanists, while condemning the vices of society and proposing various reforms, nevertheless did not strive to formulate a comprehensive program for reorganizing the world and they inscribed themselves quite easily into an environment that ideologists of the Reformation radically rejected and resolutely opposed.

In many ways, analogous factors are still at work today. On the one hand, people emerging from traditional systems of social regulation often perceive modern models of society as alien, chaotic, and characterized by total permissiveness and a lack of morality. And this may not have anything to do with religion. Here is the opinion of an undeniably secular man from Dagestan:



Why do we think that liberal democracy [. . .] is the single objective path for social development? [. . .] I approach this question from the point of view that [. . .] the entire process must be subordinate to [. . .] the phenomenon we call morality. [. . .] Both economic and other processes should [be so subordinated]. [. . .] If I say to a person: [. . .] It is written on the banners of liberalism to accept human rights, but the collective, the state and so on take second place, and you may not take into account the person standing near you, this will not lead to morality. [. . .] Now I do not believe in anything. This liberalism has brought me to a condition in which I do not believe in anything. I do not believe in the state, and I do not believe in people around me; they pursue their goals, and I do not believe anybody! (male, old, scholar, Dagestan, Makhachkala)

Until traditionalist views are overcome in one way or another — for example, by the ideology of religious reformation — and until this ideological space is cleared, liberal views will not take root.

On the other hand, Islamic countries also experience the “dark side” of modernity. In many of them, rigid authoritarian regimes supported from without have dominated for a prolonged period; these regimes do not recognize democratic procedures, violate human rights, and monopolize the economic benefits of modernization within the ruling group without attempting to mitigate the associated social costs. In these conditions, fundamentalist Islam serves as an ideology of protest, making it possible to mobilize those who are dissatisfied with the current situation. Liberal Islam cannot meet such a need or its response is much weaker than that of ideologies that are more radical. In many cases its representatives “are either cut off from their own society or, more often are themselves [. . .] part of traditional networks and combine rhetorical democracy with social patronage” (Roy 2004, 82); that is, they are implicated in patron-client relations.

Post–World War II theories of modernization have not taken into account the complex dialectic of social transformation examined above, because they are based precisely on the idea that modernization is a universal recipe for the transition from a traditional to a modern society, and that it would necessarily succeed if all of the ingredients were present and in the required proportions. However, such a “straight path” to modernization can only be an artificial construct, imposed on society from without and not derived from existing social conditions and demands. Hence its imposition will be unstable, inevitably involving violent coercion and therefore fraught with se-

rious conflict and backward steps, as has been shown by the history of many states, including those with an Islamic population. At the same time, the collapse of the modernization paradigm as framed in such simplified terms has led to the fact that the modernizing agenda has become unfashionable in the social sciences. Some have proposed the ideological possibility of “multiple” or “alternative” modernities as opposed to one “universal prescription” (see, for example, Eisenstadt 2003 and Gaonkar 2001), but this idea has not been seriously developed either on the theoretical level or at the level of concrete research. As a result, in fact, the baby has been thrown out with the bathwater — the social sciences have lost the tools for analyzing those large-scale social changes that accompany the processes of globalization, the transition from rural to urban civilization and similar shifts taking place in modern conditions, regardless of whether we call them modernization or not. These tools need to be revalidated or it will be practically impossible to adequately understand and assess the complex and ambiguous processes of transformation that are taking place, including those in the Islamic world. Identifying the role of religion and ideology within their framework is one of the necessary tasks that we face. Perhaps, considering the modern processes in Islam according to the logic of reformation will allow us to advance in this direction.

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SHAMIL SHIKHALIEV

## Muslim Reformism in Dagestan (1900–1930)

*Translation by Jenny Charlton Barrier*

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*The movement of Muslim reformism appeared in Dagestan in the early 20th century. The reformers aimed to develop Islamic thought and law in line with the new realities. There were three forms of this movement. The first group of scholars proposed reforming only the Islamic educational system, while supporting the tradition of the Shafi'i legal school. The second group of reformers went further and advocated expanding the framework of the Shafi'i legal school as well as the reform of education. The third group of reformers proposed reform of the system of Islamic education, criticized the legal schools, and called for independent judgments on the matter of Islamic law beyond the framework of the legal schools. Sufism also was the object of harsh criticism by the reformists of the second and third group. For this reason, the imperial and later the Soviet authorities supported the reform movement in Dagestan. Reformers, with their rational approach to Islam and to education, emerged as one of the Bolsheviks' major partners and were incorporated into the Soviet educational system. This ended in the 1930s during the Red Terror when many prominent reformers were executed or sent into exile. Still, the reformers' ideas survived. Their critique of Sufism and Islamic legal schools was later taken up by the Salafi groups in Dagestan in the post-Soviet period.*

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THE epoch of great geographic discoveries widened the economic and political dominance of European countries in the different continents of the world. Toward the end of the 18th century the balance of power gradually shifted in Europe's favor. Beginning with this period, a large portion of the Muslim world found itself economically and politically subject to European empires. The reaction of Muslims to the domination of European institutions in Muslim society expressed itself in various forms, one of which was armed resistance to colonial expansion. Another type of reaction to the supremacy of Europeans had an intellectual character.

A portion of the Muslim elite understood that the Muslim *Ummah* was not capable of countering European society on either a military or an intellectual plane. They saw the stagnation of Islam to be the reason for this, a state that was brought about by an obsolete system of education, the Muslim world falling behind the countries of the West in the natural sciences, and the lack of Muslim unity. A number of Muslim intellectuals consecutively developed ideas of reform, envisaging among other things contact and interaction with European countries. Their goal was to borrow a series of European achievements in the spheres of education, science, and politics, which would allow Muslims to achieve progress within the framework of the proper development of Islamic civilization.<sup>1</sup>

Ideas of reformism developed in parallel in different regions of the Muslim world — in Tunisia, Egypt, the Ottoman Empire, and India. These ideas were interpreted through the prism of local particularities of cultural and political life and became integrated into local communities with consideration of their specific characters.

Interregional contacts between Muslims played a large role in the development of ideas of Muslim reform. Thus, in the case of Dagestan, we see the influence of different ideas, which were widely disseminated in the territory of the Russian Empire: in the Crimea and the Volga-Ural region. At the same time the ideas of the Egyptian reformers Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī (1839–1897), Muhammad Abduh (1849–

1. Much has been written about Muslim reformism in the Near East in the 19th to early 20th centuries. For more detail about reforms in the Arab world, see Esposito 1998, 126–27, 142–45; Fazlur 1970, 317–33; Hourani 1983; Kedourie 1981; Nasr Abu Zayd 2006, 27; Hartman 1928; Abdelhamid Muhammad Ahmad 1963; Kurzman 2002.

1905), and Muhammad Rashid Rida (1865–1935), whose works were popular in Dagestan and often quoted in manuscripts, exerted a substantial influence on the formation of reformation discourse. In contrast to Azerbaijani reformers, who in large part were oriented toward Turkey, Dagestan had closer contacts with the aforementioned Egyptian reformers. This can likely be explained by the historic ties between Dagestan and the countries of the Arab world, and by the supremacy of the Arabic written tradition in Dagestan, which maintained popularity right up to the early Soviet period.

### **Muslim Reformism in the Russian Empire: Several Questions about Terminology, Approaches to Research, and Interpretation**

Researchers associate the term “jadidism” with the term *al-usul al-jadid* (“new method”), which was founded by the Crimean scholar and educator Ismail Gaspirali (1851–1914). He developed a new method of teaching the Arabic and Turkic languages in which attention was given to a phonetic system of learning words. This was in contrast to the root system, which was widespread in the traditional system of Muslim education.

Subsequently the term “jadism” came to encompass a larger understanding of the reform of the Muslim education system. It meant including the natural sciences in the educational plan of Muslim madrasahs. Later the term came to be understood as an even more global movement of “Muslim enlightenment,” aimed at reforming not only the educational system, but also of all of Muslim society, stimulating the development of a Turkic national consciousness and the political activity of Muslims in Russia (Abdullin 1976; Kanlidere 1997; Edward 1975; Christian 2000).

It should be noted that the very terms *jadid* (“new”) or *tajdid* (“renewal”) have an entirely different meaning in the interpretation of researchers of Muslim reformism than in the understanding of Muslim theologians themselves. The former interpret the term *tajdid* as “new” or “that which did not earlier exist” in the context of building a principally new Muslim society.

Meanwhile Arabic dictionaries, as well as the Muslim reformers themselves, mean by this concept something slightly different. In dictionaries the lexical meaning of the term *tajdid* or its synonym *islah*, which is used more often in the Arab world, signifies a return of the old to its original form (Butrus al-Bustani 1867, 219; Ibn Manzur 1955,

414; Muhammad Murtada al-Zabidi 1966, 313). In the context of the ideas of the Muslim reformers, this term signifies a return to the period of the prophet Muhammad and the first three centuries of Islam and the elimination of all later innovations that have been introduced into Islam during the course of time.

The ideas of Egyptian and Dagestani reformers did not lie in the building of a principally new society, but were based on a return to the golden age of Islam, when in the areas of science and education Muslim civilization rapidly developed and was ahead of the rest of the world (Ingeborg 2001, 72–88). Thus, the understanding of *tadjiid* or *islah*, which several researchers have incorrectly translated as “modernism” as though it were some type of renovation, semantically represents an ontological opposition to “invented novelties,” against which the reformers and Salafis struggled (Alekseev 2002, 503).

If we turn to the Muslim Arab-language literature of Egypt and Dagestan, a curious picture is revealed. In the Egyptian journal *al-Manār*, the term “reformation” is translated with the term *al-islah* in an overwhelming majority of cases. Accordingly, the reformers use the term *muslih* to refer to themselves in the Muslim press. *Muslih* is a substantive noun formed from the participle of the active voice verb “reforming.” The term *tadjiid*, meaning “to renew” is also encountered, although more rarely in articles in this journal, as in other Near Eastern Muslim literature. Moreover, in the rhetoric of the reformers, this term also indicates not the creation of something new, but a “reanimation,” “restoration,” or “renewal” of all that was best in Islam.

In Dagestani Arabic-language works both of these terms are encountered precisely in this same context in which the Egyptian reformers used them. Besides this, the Dagestani reformers in their polemical works used the special term *jadid* or *hizb al-jadid* — “the party or group of jadids.” However, in the Dagestani Arabic language tradition this term refers exclusively to those who supported the ideas of absolute *ijtihād* (FBR IIAE DNTs RAN, FMS, op. 1, no. 35, l. 52; ‘Abd al Khafiz al-Ukhli 1949). The Dagestani written tradition does not refer to advocates of Islamic educational reform as jadids. The Arabic-language work of the Dagestani theologian Abd al-Hafiz Omarov is interesting in this respect. He provides a precise differentiation between “Wahhabists” and “jadids.” Moreover, he, like other Dagestani authors, also exclusively calls adherents of absolute *ijtihād* jadids. His manuscript does not mention all the other reformers who were for reforms in education, but who all the same remained followers of the Shafi‘i



legal tradition. Unlike the “Wahhabists” and the “jadids,” they remain absent from his critical works (Shikhaliev 2006, 339–40).

Many of the characteristics of jadids of the Volga-Ural region, such as the ideas of a pan-Turkic Muslim nation, the predominance of the Turkic language in the educational process, the integration of jadids in imperial institutes, and their political or social activity, were entirely uncharacteristic of Dagestan. Here we observe what we could call “Islamic discourse,” which differs from the jadid discourse of the Volga region, as it had its own system of evaluation, symbols, and argumentation.<sup>2</sup> In contrast to the reformist discourse of Dagestani scholars at the beginning of the 20th century, which was expressed in Islamic forms, jadid discourse of the Muslims of the Volga region was expressed mostly in European forms. As a result, the religious and cultural identity of Muslims of the Volga-Ural region began to be supplanted by a new, national identity, which was determined by national and linguistic characteristics (Kemper 2008, 28–29).

Beginning in the 1930s, Jadidism was viewed by Soviet scholars through the prism of the Marxist theory of the development of socioeconomic formation. Soviet researchers analyzed Jadidism within the framework of a dichotomy between the “progressive” Islam of Jadids and “Asiatic Muslim feudalism” represented by their opponents. The former expressed the interests of the developing bourgeoisie, which aspired to the ideas of Europe, whereas the latter were representatives of the old Hanafi or Shafii theological elite, whom the Soviet scholars called “kadimites.”

In the postwar years, interest in these problems died down a little, as Soviet historians and social scientists interpreted Islam as a “feudal-clerical element” that was foreign to communist ideas, and the majority of social scientists wrote about Islam from the position of its critics.<sup>3</sup> In the years of the Khrushchev thaw a reevaluation of the history of Jadidism began in Soviet literature. In the context of socialist historical research scholars tried to reexamine the essence of “Jadidism” through interpreting Islam as a specific Tatar national cultural heritage, which received the name “mirasism.” In the framework of such an approach, the Tatar scholars displayed a growing interest in prerevolutionary Tatar literature, including eastern manuscripts and archival sources. At the same time, Soviet scholars examined these

2. For the concept of Islamic discourse, see Reinhard 1994; for Islamic discourse among the Muslims of the Volga and Ural regions, see Kemper 1998.

3. For the “class” character of Islam in Soviet historiography, see Kemper 2009, 1–48.



sources with a secular outlook, ignoring their religious context.<sup>4</sup> As a result of this approach the classical Muslim scholar-theologians of the 18th to 19th centuries began to be interpreted almost as harbingers of socialist reform, who struggled with “medieval obscurantism.” This was characteristic of Islamic studies both in the Volga region and in Dagestan. Such an approach ignored the Muslim context in discussions about Islam within the milieu of Tatar and Dagestani scholar-theologians. Jadidism and previous ideas of reform of the system of Muslim law and dogmatics began to be interpreted as a progressive movement that had an exclusively secular character.

As an additional consequence of such an approach, researchers turned their close attention to questions of Jadidism, and as a result almost completely ignored the work of those whom Soviet historiography referred to as “kadimites.” Such a conditional division into “jadids” and “kadimites,” with close attention paid to the first as a “progressive movement” and insufficient attention to the second as a “period of stagnation,” remains popular in present-day literature.<sup>5</sup>

Thus, from the 1930s up to 1980, jadidism was interpreted by various researchers as a bourgeois-liberal, bourgeois-national, counter-revolutionary, pan-Islamic, pan-Turkic, and finally enlightenment movement. At the same time, Soviet historiography for the most part ignored the Muslim context in discussions of jadids and their opponents. Instead, Soviet scholars attempted to show the activities of jadids not so much in the framework of Islamic tradition, as in the context of the Tatar national cultural heritage. Frequently such works by Soviet researchers did not consider internal Muslim sources that reflect the discourse among the reformers and their opponents.

### **Typology of Muslim Reformism in Dagestan**

In the context of the development of Muslim reformism in Dagestan, it is possible to speak of the definite influence of the ideas of Jadidism from the Crimea and Ural-Volga region on Dagestani reformers. But, along with this, we can observe an even more significant influence of Arabic models of reformism on Dagestani intellectuals. In general discourse about the development of Muslim societies, Dagestani reformers are divided into several groups.

4. For more detail, see Kemper and Bustanov 2012, 29–53.

5. For criticism using this approach, see DeWeese 2016, 37–92.

The first group called for reforms in the sphere of Muslim education, all the while remaining strict adherents of the Shafi'i legal tradition (*taqlid*). They considered the broad development in science and enlightenment along a European (and in this case Russian) model to be a necessary and foundational condition for the development of society. Dagestani intellectuals borrowed the overwhelming majority of these approaches from the Tatars of the Crimea and Volga-Ural regions. They practically repeat verbatim the ideas that the Tatar scholars Kh. Faizkhanov and I. Gaspirali promoted (Faizkhanov 2008, 5–19; Gasprinskii 1885). The Dagestani scholar and Sufi sheikh Sayfallāh-Qāḍī Bashlarov (1853–1910) was an outstanding representative of this group of reformers. Having traveled widely in Russia and the Near East, he received both a religious and European education; besides Arabic, Turkic, and a number of other eastern languages, he had a significant command of Russian, German, and Latin. The latter was a result of training with German doctors, who were invited by the colonists of the Volga region (Shikhaliev 2003, 72–73). In 1907 he studied with the important Sufi sheikh of the Volga-Ural region, Zaynulla Rasulev (1833–1917), one of the supporters of the new method of education, and for a while taught in a new method school in Ufa. At the same time in matters of theology he remained an advocate of the traditional legal schools and rejected the possibility of reform in the sphere of theology and Muslim practice (An-Nitsubkri, 364; Shikhaliev 2016, 35–40).

Followers of this group of reformers borrowed I. Gaspirali's ideas for reform of the educational system and the “sound” method of teaching from the Tatars of the Crimea and Volga region. In political issues they did not see themselves as under the aegis of Russian law. This meant that Dagestani reformers completely ignored the Russian institutions of power. As opposed to Tatar Jadids of the Volga region, widely represented by a Muslim faction of the Russian State Duma, Dagestani reformers were completely apolitical.

The second group of scholars, who also supported the reform of the system of Muslim education, came out with an appeal to widen the limits within which several theological-legal questions could be decided in the framework of the Shafi'i legal tradition. They employed the system of principles, arguments and methods of the Shafi'i legal system (“*Al-Ijtihad fi'l Mazhab*”). They did not advocate the idea of a complete revision or rejection of the Shafi'i legal tradition, but called for using the methodology and principles of the Shafi'i tradition to “reform” or “cleanse” some later interpretations of various private opin-

ions of legal scholars, if they contradicted the fundamental Muslim sources of the Quran and the Sunnah (FVR IIAE DNTs RAN, FMC, op. 1, no. 35, ll. 2–32, Nazir ad Durgili, “Al-Idzhtikhad”; *ibid.*, ll. 69–108, ad Durgili, “Ta’lik al-khamid”; Al Gazanishi 1926).

The Dagestani scholar-theologian and poet Abusufyan Akayev (Al-Gazanishi, 1872–1931), who was one of the founders of the first Islamic printing houses in Dagestan, was a most active figure among the followers of this group. As he was interested in the ideas of reform of the system of Muslim education in the Russian empire and studied the articles and notes of Ismail Gaspirali, the founder of the Russian new method system of teaching in madrassas, Abusufyan Akayev visited Bakhchysarai, Orenburg, and Kazan in 1898–99. There he became acquainted with the principles and methods of instruction in new-method madrassas, which had begun to be widely developed among Muslims in the Volga region. Having returned to his native village in Dagestan, Abusufyan Akayev opened the first new-method school with a fundamentally new system of instruction. In that same year he visited Bakhchysarai in the Crimea, where he studied publishing. From 1904 right up to the early Soviet period he published dozens of books and textbooks for madrassas in Arabic and his native Kumyk language in his publishing house in Temir-Khan-Shura in Dagestan. In 1905 Abusufyan Akayev left for Istanbul, and then Cairo, where he became acquainted with the Egyptian reformer Rashid Rida. As a result, Rashid Rida began the publication of articles under the title “The Revival of Dagestanis” in the Cairo newspaper *Al-Mu’ayyad* (Orazaev 2012, 248–52). During the Soviet period, Abusufyan Akayev was the editor-in-chief of the Arabic language newspaper of Dagestani reformers, *Bayan al-hakaik*, from 1925 to 1928. In 1928 he was sent by the Soviet authorities to the camps on a charge of Pan-Islamism and died there.

Finally, the third group of reformers went further and beyond the call to reform the Muslim system of education and criticized the four Sunni legal schools. They advocated following not the opinions of Muslim theologians, but rather relying on the Quran and Sunnah, to derive independent opinions on questions of Muslim law within the framework of the schools of law (*al-ijtihad al-mutlaq*) (FVR IIAE DNTs RAN, FMC, op. 1, no. 37, ll. 101–6, Ali b. ‘Abd al Khamid al Gumuki, “Risala fi-t-takhlid”; al Gumuki 1913; ad Dagestani, *Khark al asdad*). This group of reformers was practically unconnected to the jadids of the inner regions of the Russian Empire, but had close contact with Egyptian reformers.

The main and most active figure in this group of reformers was Ali Kayaev (al-Gumuki, 1878–1943). Ali Kayaev received his primary education in a madrassa in his native village. Then for more than ten years he perfected his knowledge under different Dagestani theologians in the mountains of Dagestan. In 1900 he was invited to Astrakhan to teach in a local madrassa, where he spent five years. In 1905 Ali Kayaev left for Cairo, where he taught in one of the madrassas attached to Al-Azhar university. Being in Cairo, he became close to Rashid Rida, who engaged Ali Kayaev in collaborating with the journal *al-Manār*. In 1908 Kayaev returned to Dagestan. There he began to actively disseminate the ideas of Muslim reform he had become acquainted with in Egypt. In the village of Giundelen (now in the Republic of Kabardino-Balkaria) he opened a new-method madrassa, where he actively inculcated the experience of the revitalized madrassas of Egypt. Soon he moved to the capital of Dagestan oblast, the city of Temir-Khan-Shura, and in 1913 with the cooperation of the governor general, Sigismund Volsky, started to publish the Arabic language newspaper, *Jaridat Dagistan*. In its style, thematics, and questions broached, this newspaper was similar in many ways to the journal *Al-Manār* that Rashid Rida published in Cairo.

After the establishment of Soviet power in Dagestan, Ali Kayaev left for his native village of Kumukh, where he taught in the local madrassa until its closure in 1927. At the end of the 1920s he was invited to the Institute of National Culture in Makhachkala as a research fellow; however, he was quickly accused of Pan-Turkism and Pan-Islamism and was exiled to Kazakhstan, where he died in 1943. It should be noted that among the reformers, representatives of the second and third groups enjoyed greater popularity. They wrote dozens of Arabic-language works, in which they broached a large number of questions about the theory of Muslim law and Sufism. Their opinions, references to sources, and even the subject matter of the issues they raised concerning the theological-legal complex almost fully coincides with analogous subjects that were widely presented in the Egyptian press of that time, in particular in the journal *al-Manār*. This fact, together with criticism of a general Turkic-Muslim idea, a deliberate distancing from the Turks of Azerbaijan and Turkey, and also a complete disregard of Ismail Gaspirali's concept of a "Russian Islam," gives us reason to suppose that the influence of the Egyptian model of reformism on Dagestani theologians was more appreciable and effective than the ideas of Tatar or Azerbaijani Jadids.

In contrast to the Jadids of the Volga region and the Egyptian reformers, political issues rarely arose in the discourse of Dagestani reformers and their opponents. On the whole discussion focused on specific problems that were tied to the system of Muslim law, dogmatics, and questions of education and science. If we look at the chronology of the discussions of reformers and their opponents, then we can observe that these debates took place in a kind of political vacuum. Their opponents were represented by the theologians, who were advocates of the Shafi'i legal system that was traditional for Dagestan. This system is tightly interwoven with Sufism. Neither the reformers nor their opponents saw the replacement of the imperial period with the Soviet one. At the same time, several questions broached by the reformers, in particular the issue of a choice of language, show that similar discussions emerged in the Soviet period. This is connected to the early Soviet government's policy of developing national languages, cultures, and the study of national histories in the autonomous and union republics of the USSR.<sup>6</sup>

Almost all Dagestani reformers were strict opponents of the secularization of society, and even in the early Soviet period several of them wrote works criticizing the idea of materialism.<sup>7</sup> All three groups of reformers were categorically opposed to copying any model of European society. In their circle, they often issued the call to return to a "golden age of Islam," by which they meant the period of the "righteous caliphate." They explained even the striving of Dagestani reformers to use the achievements of European sciences not as a desire to integrate into European institutions, but rather as a "return to their own lost scientific heritage," which had been characteristic of the Islamic world in the previous centuries. This heritage was then borrowed by the Europeans in the time of the Crusades and the Reconquista in Spain (Zametki Ali al-Gumuki 1961; IIAE DNTs RAN, f. 1, op. 1,

6. For more detail, see Bustanov 2016, 108–66. Reformation discourse in the politics of the early Soviet government is a theme for separate research, which would take us off the course of this article's objective. Therefore, we have limited ourselves below to only brief coverage of this issue.

7. In particular, in 1924, Abusuf'ian Akaev wrote the Arabic work, "Convincing Cases for the Existence of the Creator," where he subjected the "views of the socialists, who are in essence communists" to harsh criticism. Ali Kayaev also wrote a work in Arabic, "The Arrow That Pierces the Throat of the Atheist," in which he disputed with the materialists who advocated for the secularization of society as well as a materialist view of the creation of the universe. In *Baian al-haqaiq*, the journal of the early Soviet period that was published by the reformers, one can also encounter a series of articles that criticize those who advocated the secularization of society.

no. 141, ll. 2a–36). This shows the indubitable influence of the ideas of Egyptian reformers on Dagestani theologians.

The main discussions that were developed not just between reformers and their opponents, but also among the reformers themselves, touched on the issues of Muslim education, the legal sphere, and Sufism. At the same time, it should be noted that a clear distinction between reformers and “kadimites” did not exist in Dagestan. When each of the groups proposed their vision of the issues being considered, the reformers discussed them among themselves as well as with those who came out against the individual positions that they expounded. Among the opponents of the idea of the reform of Muslim law and Sufism were those who supported the Shafi’i legal tradition, including the Sufis. The latter generally wrote independent essays, at first as an answer to the reformers’ criticism of various Sufi practices and then they themselves critiqued the reformers for their call to *ijtihad*. The numerous Arab-language manuscripts, as well as the prerevolutionary and early Soviet press, reflect these polemics. Moreover, the Muslim press — the prerevolutionary Arab-language newspaper *Jaridat Dagistan* and the early Soviet Arab-language *Bayan al-Hakaik* — were the platform that reformers used to disseminate their ideas more widely. This explains the fact that against the general background of debates and discussions on various issues, the voices of the reformers were more noticeable in the first third of the 20th century.

### **Jadids and the Reform of Islamic Education in Dagestan**

In comparison to other Muslim regions of Russia, in Dagestan ideas for the reform of Muslim education had their own specific character. This was tied to the multinational character of Dagestan and to the predominance of the Arab-language tradition. At the same time, in the Volga-Ural region a large number of essays, equally in the Arabic, Tatar, and Farsi languages, were written in Arab script. In Dagestan, the influence of the Arabic-language tradition was overwhelming. Until the dissemination of the reformers’ ideas, the national literature occupied an extremely limited place and was entirely represented by only a few fragmentary paragraphs of historical essays, dictionaries, and short, concise records.

One of the main questions raised by Dagestani reformers in the early 20th century was the question of the teaching and development of national languages and literatures. The issue of the language of instruction in this context called forth heated discussion. There were

several opinions on this problem among the Dagestani reformers. Ali Kayaev highlighted three different views on the question of the language of instruction in Dagestani Muslim schools. The first group advocated for the introduction of the Turkish language, the second for instruction in Arabic, and the third for Russian (Navruzov 2012, 57–67). Critiquing all three of these positions, Ali Kayaev advocated teaching children in their native Dagestani languages. He explained this approach by saying that Russian is not an Islamic language, and the introduction of Turkic furthers the marginalization of the Dagestani people. It would include them in the orbit of influence of the much larger Turkic peoples — the Turks or Tatars — and as a result, Dagestanis would lose their own cultural and national identity (Navruzov 2012, 67). While remaining a proponent of Arabic as the language of learning in Dagestan, Ali Kayaev all the same understood that this language is quite difficult to learn by the old method. His idea consisted of learning Arabic with the aid of the native language. While he did not deny the importance and necessity of learning Arabic, Ali Kayaev proposed a method for optimizing learning through active inclusion of the native Dagestani language at the beginning stages of the educational process with a later transition to Arabic.

Arabic continued to be the predominant language of scholarship both among the reformers and their opponents. Not one of those who presented themselves as local spiritual elites advocated for a complete abolition or replacement of Arabic for any other language, either Turkic or Russian. On this issue, both the reformers and their opponents, in a rare exception, were united. The voices of advocates of inculcating Turkish in Dagestan garnered no attention in the discussion and played no meaningful role.

Abusufyan Akayaev held analogous views. He criticized the policies of the tsarist government that only allowed the study of the natural sciences, which were essential to Muslims, in Russian. He saw in this an attempt to Russify Dagestanis. The Dagestanis' sharp rejection of Russian as a language of the infidels as well as the fact that the language was not capable of educating the local peoples while preserving their identity, in Akayaev's opinion, left instruction in their native language as the only solution. All the same in the final analysis Abusufyan Akayaev remained a proponent of the Arabic language. Native languages played the exact same role for him as in Ali Kayaev's rhetoric, to facilitate instruction and to preserve Dagestani self-identity. Both reformers understood that Arabic did not threaten the loss of national and cultural identity (Akaev 2012, 225–33).



The Jadid schools in Dagestan differed from the “old-method” schools in their system, structure, method of educational process, and an almost complete replacement of educational literature.<sup>8</sup> Besides this, the new-method schools’ program included as necessary subjects the natural and social sciences, as well as mathematics, geography, history, natural science, etc., which in the kadimite system were studied mainly on an individual basis.

It is noteworthy that the reformers taught the natural sciences almost exclusively in Arabic and, in rare instances, with Turkic-language textbooks. Together with this, a portion of reformers developed their own textbooks in their own native languages (Kumyk, Avar, Lak), using the Arabic script.

It is interesting that despite the reformers’ criticism of the old system of education, a strict opposition between the reformers and “kadimites” did not exist in Dagestan. All the Dagestani scholars’ critiques were directed at the Russian schools that had been opened after the end of the Caucasian War in 1859. Moreover, they were criticized both by reformers and their opponents (Al-Bagini 1996, 374; Omarov 1869, 45; Kaimarazov 1989, 69–71, 89–92; Kaiaev 1993, 360–61; Akaev 2012, 225).

To sum up, in general the ideas of the Dagestani reformers on questions of education boil down to the following:

1. An active introduction of the natural and social sciences into the educational process of existing schools. Reformers advocated that Dagestanis not study these sciences individually, dependent on the specialization of different scholars, but within the framework of the general education process in madrassas.
2. Required instruction during the beginning stages in native languages with a gradual transition in the older classes to Arabic.
3. A separation of the individual discipline “Arabic language” as an instrument for the study of subsequent disciplines. Arabic grammar should serve not as the object of deep study, but as an ancillary discipline for the subsequent study of Islamic sciences.

As a whole, the ideas for the reform of the Muslim educational system, proposed and partially introduced by the reformers, did not find strict opposition from other scholars. The fundamental debate in Dagestan between the reformers and their opponents unfolded around issues of a legal nature.

8. For more information, see Kemper and Shikhaliev 2015, 593–624.



## Reformers and the Discussion of Taqlid and Ijtihad in Dagestan

In Dagestan discussions about *taqlid* and *ijtihad* have been going on for over three hundred years, since the end of the 17th century. The main discussion has revolved around the question of its fundamental permissibility or impermissibility, and also the limits of applying *ijtihad*. An overwhelming majority of Dagestani theologians remained adherents of the Shafi'i legal school, denying the possibility of the existence of the scholar-mujtahid in their midst. Theoretically allowing *ijtihad* in the framework of existing schools, they believed that at the present time there was not one scholar who met the strict criteria that apply to a mujtahid. In respect to the highest level of *ijtihad* (absolutely independent — *al-ijtihad al-mutlaq al-mustakil*), Dagestani theologians ruled out even its theoretical permissibility. They argued that the founders of the four schools of law had already conceptualized and researched all the foundational questions of Muslim rites and practices, so that even if some kind of unresearched questions remained they would have an individual character (*khas*) and relate to the “branches” of law (*furu'*). The last is theoretically entirely solvable through the path of *ijtihad* in the framework of the legal school (*al-ijtihad fi'l mazhab*).

Their opponents wrote that many of the rulings proposed in Dagestan departed from the principles of Sharia or did not address the contemporary reality. Therefore, they needed to be revised.

The abovementioned three groups of reformers approached the questions of *taqlid* and *ijtihad* differently. Representatives of the first group were strict adherents of the Sunni legal schools. Theoretically allowing the practice of *ijtihad* within the framework of the schools of law, they thought that in the present practically all basic and individual issues were already worked out in the legal systems. Therefore, to pronounce new fatwas it is simply enough for scholars to search for analogies in the numerous legal essays, and not resort to the practice of *ijtihad* (Saifullakh an-Nitsubkri, 369–70).

Thus, in particular, one of the representatives of this group, Jamad ad-Dina al-Garabudagi, wrote a short review of an essay by Ali Kayaev, where Ali Kayaev criticized adherence to the schools of law (*taqlid*) and appealed for absolute *ijtihad*:

There is not a doubt that it is imperative to follow one of the four schools of law [*madhhab*]. It is forbidden to stray from the framework of a par-

ticalar madhhab, as well as blend together the opinions of different schools, choosing for oneself that which is advantageous [*tafliq*]. And as to that which Ali al-Khumukh [Kayaev — Sh. Sh.] wrote in his work, to that I say that the creation of a new school of law is impossible. And those words, which Ali al-Khumukh has cited in his text, are nothing but the words and opinions of people, and not Sharia, which we must follow and beware of what contradicts Sharia. And the opinion of al-Khumukh, that Allah and His envoy forbid following the opinions of just anyone and that it is necessary to be guided only by the Quran and Sunnah, can be *attributed* to he himself and those who without appropriate knowledge and fear of God call for *ijtihad*. And to be guided by books of later legal scholars [*faqih*] — this is following the Quran and Sunnah, since these same scholars were guided by the Quran and Sunnah in the pronouncement of any decision. We choose for ourselves an imam [in this case an eponym for a legal school — Sh. Sh.] and are guided by what he has learned from the Quran and Sunnah. Our religion is Islam, the purest and most correct religion. It is forbidden to change anything in it, bringing impious [*fasiq*] fatwas, following the call of those who pretend to a level of absolute mujtahid. And it is not harmful that we will not follow after them. The arrow will strike the liars. (FVR IIAE DNTs RAN, FMC, op. 1, no. 37, l. 113).

This group of reformers thought that the formation of a new Muslim elite with new views was possible only through the development and reform of the system of Muslim education and that there was no need to reform the Shafi'i legal system.

The second group of reformers were inclined to a wide development of the practice of *ijtihad*, however they limited it by the framework of legal schools. This group of scholars considered the development of Muslim society only through the reform of the system of education to be insufficient. In their works these representatives wrote that there are often different, even opposing opinions about the same issue in the framework of one legal school, not to mention different systems. They thought that such disagreements separate Muslims, negatively telling on the unity of the Muslim *Ummah*. In this regard the discussion that unfolded in 1927–1928 between an adherent of the second group of reformers, Nazir ad-Durgili (1891–1935), and an adherent of *taqlid*, Iusuf al-Djunguti (1869–1929), is characteristic.<sup>9</sup>

9. The collected manuscript consists of three interrelated works: (1) Nazir ad-Durgili's work "Al-Ijtihad wa-t-taqlid"; (2) Iusuf al-Djunguti's answer, "Al-Qawl as-sadid," to Na-

Nazir ad-Durgili wrote an essay in which he examined several issues related to contradictions within the different Shafi'i and Hanafi legal schools. He notes that several of the later scholars of these schools pronounce judgments that contradict the Quran and Sunnah. In such a case, Nazir thinks, it is necessary to throw out the decision of such jurists and follow the direct reasoning of the Quran and Sunnah.

He also noticed that disagreements among different legal schools move from the plane of theology to political enmity. As an example, Nazir writes about the consequences of disagreements between the Hanafis and Shafi'is in several historical periods. Thus, for example, in the 18th century when the Mongols laid siege to Merv, the Muslim community of Hanafis and Shafi'is within the city started a war among themselves. As a result of this their enmity weakened the two groups to such an extent that the Mongols captured the city without difficulty and destroyed both the Hanafis and the Shafi'is. A similar thing occurred in the city of Rey, where there were three groups already fighting among themselves: Hanafis, Shafi'is, and Shia. The schism is displayed even with the worship of Muslim holy places:

We see that followers of all four legal schools pray to Mecca and Medina separately from each other, moreover each of these followers prays strictly for his own imam, as if they were followers of different religions. Even more, several Hanafi scholars think that it is not fitting for Hanafis to give their daughters in marriage to Shafi'is. (FBR IIAE DNTs RAN, FMS, op. 1, no. 35, l. 36)

According to Nazir, in order to overcome this schism and unite the Muslim *Ummah*, it is necessary to employ *ijtihad* through turning directly to the Quran and Sunnah in relation to those disputed questions that contradict each other in different schools of law. At the same time, Nazir calls for applying *ijtihad* only within the framework of any one of the legal schools. He comes out as an opponent of absolute *ijtihad* and criticizes those reformers who call for it (*ibid.*, ll. 5b–6a).

Iusuf al-Djunguti wrote a critical essay in answer to Nazir al-Durgili's work. Commenting upon Nazir's opinions and examples concerning disagreements in the different legal schools, Iusuf writes that even if disagreements exist, it is a great blessing for Muslims. This is

zair ad-Durgili's "Al-Ijtihad wa-t-taqlid"; (3) Nazier ad-Durgili's answer, "Ta'liq al-hamid 'ala-l-qawl as-sadid" to Iusuf al-Djunguti's work "Al-Qawl as-sadid." (Manuscript in Arabic. FVR IIAE DNTs RAN, FMC, op. 1, no. 35, l. 102.

because these disagreements allow Muslims to follow different decisions regarding several difficult issues, widening the scope of everyday Islamic practice (Iusuf al-Dzhungutii, ll. 316–656). Iusuf al-Djun-guti also defended the position that the existence of mujtahid of any level in his contemporary time is impossible. He thought that all legal issues had already long been decided by legal scholars, so it only remained to scholars to follow these decisions. However, both of these theologians were unanimous that those scholars who did not meet the criteria put forward for a mujtahid must absolutely follow one of the four legal schools.

At the same time Iusuf harshly criticizes the Wahhabis, who according to him, call for absolute *ijtihad*. In this connection he develops a list of proponents of the “heretical” ideas that were widespread in the Islamic world, having also penetrated into Dagestan: the Arab scholar Ibn Taymiyyah and his students (Ibn al-Qayyim, Ibn Abd al-Hadi, et al.); Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab and his students; the Egyptian reformers Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī, Muḥammad ‘Abduh, and Rashid Rida. Iusuf assigns the final three to the Wahhabis. In particular he mentions:

Ibn Taymiyyah, may Allah have mercy upon him, despite the fact that he was a prominent scholar, all of his good deeds were mixed with bad. He erred in a number of fundamental things and made mistakes in several particular issues. He did not follow [the opinion of] the majority of scholars of his era. His students were the same — Ibn al-Qayyim and Ibn Abd al-Hadi, who followed along his path. With regard to Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab, the head of the Wahhabis and the founder of the new upheaval, he followed the teaching of Ibn Taymiyyah in his error and thus a great evil disseminated from him. The Wahhabis conquered many people, captured two precious sacred places, and committed other bad deeds. . . As to the wicked Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī, Muḥammad ‘Abduh, and his student Rashid Rida, editor [of the journal] *al-Manār*, they were also Wahhabis, just like their followers. They are impious idols, who do not follow the path of the believers, but come out against prominent scholars and the pious. They are imperfect in their religion, lie, and the society of Masons [*al-masuniya*] are their masters, a society that was created with the goal of choosing what is good for people from various religious and customs . . . The views of these unrighteous Egyptians coincide with those of the Protestants of Europe, who also reformed the Christian religion, thinking that it was a good thing for people. The Egyptian reformers tried to reform Islam and called Muslims

to their renovation of religion, similar to what the Protestants did. And the similarity between the Egyptian reformers and the Protestants is obvious. Both published and disseminated books with the goal of bringing disorder to the hearts and minds of people and turning them away from the true path. . . . (ibid., ll. 66–67)

Nazir in an answering essay partially agreed with this. He also harshly criticized those who called for independent, absolute *ijtihad* outside of the bounds of the legal schools, like, for example, the Egyptian reformers and their followers from the ranks of Dagestanis, whom he called “Jadids.” At the same time, Nazir did not agree with Iusuf’s criticism of the Wahhabis, noting that those who were called Wahhabis in fact adhered to the Hanbali school of jurisprudence and that the term “Wahhabi” did not have a theological but rather a political character (FBR IIAE DNTs RAN, FMS, op. 1, no. 35, ll. 76b–77a). After this discussion, which included both the criticism and apologetics of the view of Ibn Taymiyyah, the Wahhabis, and the Egyptian reformers, other scholars got involved, who also wrote their own essays (FVR IIAE DNTs RAN, FMC, op. 1, no. 25, ll. 105–30; FVR IIAE DNTs RAN, FMC, op. 1, no. 37, ll. 107–11).

The position of the third group of reformers differed from the ideas of the first two groups. They tied the reform of Muslim society to the fundamental revision of the entire system of Muslim law and dogmatics. Followers of this group harshly criticized adherence to any legal school, calling for a return to the Quran and Sunnah as the only source of Muslim law and decision-making outside the framework of any legal school. Having close contact with Rashid Rida, the Dagestani reformers of the third group borrowed almost all of the Egyptian reformers’ ideas on issues of education and law with the exception of social and political issues.

Thus, one of the theologians of this group, Masud al-Mukhukhi, wrote an essay, “The Incineration of Obstacles on the Path to Ijtihad” (Masud b. Mukhammad al Mukhukhi ad-Dagistani) in Arabic at the beginning of the 1920s, in which he substantiated his criticism of Dagestanis’ adherence to the legal schools and called for absolute *ijtihad*:

Many scholars in the present day, in pronouncing legal decisions, distance themselves from the Quran and Sunnah. In pronouncing fatwas, they are guided by the opinions of later scholars, those who wrote books, commentaries on these books, and subcommentaries. Our modern scholars who depend not on the Quran and Sunnah, but on the opin-

ions of other scholars, do not know from where one or another decision is taken, what is its base or argument. They deny a pronounced decision even when they can see a clear argument in the Quran or Sunnah. They deny this, saying that the epoch of *ijtihād* concluded many centuries ago, that no more mujtahids remain, and that it is necessary to rely on later books and the opinions of scholars who wrote commentaries and sub-commentaries. . . . In our time it is rather easy to meet the requirements brought forth for the scholar-mujtahid. The book of the Almighty Allah is before them and the Ḥadīth are all collected in the books. The collectors and interpreters of the Ḥadīth already determined the authenticity or inauthenticity of any Ḥadīth long ago, whether it has been abrogated or annulled. They have determined the direct or figurative meaning of any word in the Hadiths and written about all of it in books. In the same way scholars have already written all about the unanimous opinion of scholars [*ijmāʿ*] so nothing remains unclear in this issue. It remains to us only to make a decision guided by all these sources. . . . And there is no reason to refuse *ijtihād*, except in those situations when a person is not a scholar [*ʿālam*]. All scholars must be guided by the Quran, the Sunnah, the unanimous opinion of scholars, and judgment according to analogy [*qiyās*] in pronouncing any decision as far as their abilities and diligence. Even those who have not reached the level of a mujtahid must be guided by the argument [Quran and Sunnah] to the extent that they are able to understand it. And they are forbidden to follow the opinions of just anybody, except for in those situations when they are completely weak in *fiqh*. . . . In our century the ideas of the reform of education, science, and religion have been widespread. People have begun to be summoned to the Quran and Sunnah, being guided by them both. And when these ideas appeared in Egypt, and also spread into both India and Russia, they were followed also in Dagestan, where several scholars came out against the obduracy of the tradition of following legal schools (*taqlid*), and called for a return to the religion that existed in the first centuries of Islam. . . . Many of our contemporary scholars are guided by those fatwas that were rendered by their predecessors. In this they claim that they are following the Shafiʿi or Hanafi school. In reality they do not follow these schools, as they do not even use those books that the imams al-Shāfiʿi or Abū Ḥanīfah wrote but use the fatwas or commentaries of those scholars who wrote later. In this manner, it turns out that they are not following even their own imams, much less the Quran and Sunnah, and are guided in their actions and decisions by the books of later scholars. At the same time the very founders of these legal schools forbid following their opinions in those situations where they contradicted the Ḥadīth. Thus

those who count themselves as belonging to any maddhab, in reality do not adhere to it. Fanatically following a maddhab, these scholars prefer the words of scholars, even non-Arabs, to the Ḥadīth. Moreover they prefer the words of these non-Arab scholars even over the words of the very founders of the maddhab, which they supposedly follow. (Masud b. Mukhammad al Mukhukhi ad-Dagistani, ll. 2, 28, 30–32)

Thus we see that despite their similarity in views concerning the necessity of reforming the system of Islamic education, in issues of the theory of Muslim law the opinions of representatives of the three groups differed. Adherents of the first group remained advocates of following one of the legal schools, de facto denying the possibility of employing the practice of *ijtihād*. The second group supported the ideas of *ijtihād*, restricting them with the limits and methodologies of one or the other legal school. The third group altogether criticized following the legal schools and advocated the idea of returning to the Quran and Sunnah, calling for absolute *ijtihād* outside the framework of any legal school. The ideas of the third group of reformers differed not just in their views on adherence to the *taqlid* or the limits of the adoption of the practice of *ijtihād*. Their views also differed on Sufism, which was widely disseminated in Dagestan in the first third of the 20th century.

### **Sufism in the Discourse of Russian Reformers of Dagestan**

Sufism in the scope of the Naqshbandi and Shadhili tariqas was closely tied to the Shafi'i theological tradition in Dagestan. Moreover the Naqshbandi tariqa was represented by two parallel branches: Naqshbandiyya-Khalidiyya and Naqshbandiyya-Mahmudiyyah. Sheikhs of the first branch played an important role in Muslim insurgency movements in the northeastern Caucasus in the 19th century. The second, Mahmudiyyah branch, developed in parallel in the territory of northern Azerbaijan at the end of the 19th century and penetrated Dagestan, where it united with the Shadhili brotherhood at the beginning of the 20th century through the abovementioned sheikh Saifulla Kadi Bashlarov. Beginning at the very end of the 19th century, sheikhs of the Mahmudiyyah branch of the Naqshbandiyyah brotherhood criticized the “false sheikhs” or “imposter sheikhs,” those who called themselves Sufi but did not have the authority to do so. Their criticism was primarily directed at representatives of the



Khalidiyya branch. Moreover, these discussions revolved around specific issues of Sufi rituals and rites, where one of the sides accused the other of illegitimacy and breaking the principles of ritual practice of the Naqshbandiyya brotherhood.<sup>10</sup> Later the Muslim reformers became involved in this critique. Their rhetoric was directed as much at the criticism of individual imposter-sheikhs as at the criticism of Sufism as a whole, as a movement that was illegitimate from the point of view of Sharia.

Representatives of the first two groups of reformers were generally loyal to Sufism, and in their works they even wrote laudatory reviews about several Dagestani and Chechen sheikhs. At the same time, they criticized those Dagestanis who numbered themselves among the sheikhs who were collecting students around themselves, although they had no basis for it.

The views of Sufism and Sufis of representatives of the first two groups were illuminated on the pages of the Arab language journal *Bayan al-haqa'iq*, which was published in the city Buynaksk from 1925 to 1928. There were a considerable number of positive articles about Sufism in this journal including fragments of works of Near Eastern medieval Sufis as well as several modern Dagestani sheikhs. At the same time in practically each issue of that journal there were articles in which the authors criticized their contemporary sheikhs, noting their low level of education, money-grubbing, thirst for profit, and violation of the norms of Sharia.

The chief editor of that journal, Abu Sufyan Akayev, himself wrote in one of the issues:

Even though Sufism is not mentioned in the Quran and Ḥadīth, all the same the movement is not censured, on the condition that it conforms to the Quran and Sunnah. (al-Gazanishi 1925, 11)

The journal editor's criticism of some contemporary Dagestani sheikhs sometimes called forth the displeasure of the readers. Thus, in one issue of the journal *Bayan al-haqa'iq* a letter with the following content was published:

It surprises me that some scholars who have great knowledge revile certain righteous Sufis, who appealing to Allah and His envoy, withdrew to their homes, read the Quran and summon people to piety. How do these

10. For more information, see Shikhaliev 2006, 137–52; Shikhaliev 2007, 137–52.



scholars know that these righteous men are unclean in their thoughts or “devour the worldly, using religion?” Why do they call them “false sheikhs?” Why can these righteous ones not be true sheikhs? And why do they not have the right to accept gifts from others, if the very envoy of Allah accepted such gifts? (al-Ashilti 1927, 7)

In answer to this criticism of the journal’s position, Abu Sufyan Akayev left his own commentary below this letter:

We do not censure those righteous men who live in isolation in their homes, occupying themselves with remembrance of Allah [*dhikr*] and living on that which they earn by their own labor. On the contrary, we ask Allah that He might assist and help such righteous men. Our criticism is directed at those who wander among villages and cities, demanding offerings for themselves, using religion as a cover. Likewise, we do not say that all sheikhs are unclean in their thoughts; however, the majority of them are so. Scholars say that a sign of a true sheikh is that he becomes poor after he was rich. But the sign of a false sheikh is his striving for riches when formerly he was poor. And if we look at the sheikhs of our time, then we see that the majority of them correspond exactly to the second description. We do not see that they became poor after they started on the path of Sufism and that for the sake of Allah distributed all their belongings, as true Sufis did in the past. (ibid., 8)

Followers of the third group of reformers, critics of the legal schools and advocates of absolute *ijtihad*, held a different position on this issue. As an example of their views, we might put forward the letter written by Muhammad al-Umari al-Ukhli (1902–40) a student of Ali Kayaev, to the prominent Dagestani sheikh Hasan Hilmi al-Qahi (1853–1937):

My dear! I see that the Sufis are perfecting our epoch. They are placing their living and deceased teachers as intermediaries between Allah and His servants. These Sufis appeal to the sheikhs requesting intercession for them before Allah [on the Judgment Day], turning to them for satisfaction of their worldly and religious needs. They assert that the path to knowledge of Allah is closed and opens only with the help of the sheikhs. They call to them for help, when they are seized by sadness, when calamity strikes, when misfortune occurs. . . . As for what those ignoramuses are doing, for that there are no instructions, neither in the Quran nor in the Sunnah of the prophet Muhammad . . . In truth, mentorship [*ash-*

*shakhiyya*] and appeal to Sufism [*at-tasavvuf*] in our age is a snare that the sheikhs set [by the prompting of] Shaytan as a sign of sin and error, and with its help they hunt people with stupid dreams and weak hearts . . . Closing the gate of Sufism is the demand of Sharia for today. (Abd al-Khafiz al-Ukhli, ll. 16–17)

One more reformer belonging to that group, M.-S. Saidov, also regarded Sufism extremely negatively. Verses remain that he wrote in 1924 and addressed to one of the students of Ali Kayaev, Mas'ud al-Mukhukhi. In them M.-S. Saidov strictly opposes Sufism in Dagestan, accusing the Sufis of ignorance and striving for worldly goods. It is curious that in this poem the author criticizes Sufism itself as well as the sheikhs. In his conclusion, M.-S. Saidov accuses the Sufis of lack of faith (*kafir*). Their actions, he said, contradict the norms of Sharia, which flow from the content of Muslim sources (FVR IIAE DNTs RAN, FMC, op. 5, no. 30, l. 1b).

Thus, in issues of Sufism, the difference between the reformers of the first two groups and the third was that the former recognized Sufism, criticizing only the imposter sheikhs. These sheikhs used Sufism for their own personal interests, introducing into it, because of their ignorance, all kinds of innovations that contradict Sharia and by this discredit the movement. The third group unambiguously came out not only against individual Sufis, but also against Sufism itself, including Sufi ritual practice.

### **Instead of a Conclusion: The Reformers and the Authorities in the Imperial and Early Soviet Periods**

Many of the Muslim reformers' ideas were familiar and interesting to the prerevolutionary authorities in Dagestan. Interpreting Sufism as a dangerous phenomenon for the existing power, the imperial authorities counted on enlisting the support of a certain segment of the Muslim spiritual elite. It is not by accident that the tsarist administration initiated the publication of the reformers' Arab-language newspaper *Jaridat Dagistan*. Ali Kayaev carried out the main work of publishing the journal (Nazruzov 2012, 16–17). By this, the authorities supported the anti-Sufi rhetoric of the Dagestani reformers and used it in their own interests.

At the same time, the reformers themselves were not active supporters of the existing authority, of which their later works give evidence. However, given the overwhelming preponderance of adherents

of the Shafi'i legal system, followers of Sufism, they understood that a broad development of their ideas was possible only with support from the imperial authorities, who could grant them a forum in the form of the Muslim press.

After the establishment of Soviet power, the Bolsheviks conducted policy concerning Islam in the northeastern Caucasus using the same methods and ideas as the imperial authorities. Understanding the huge influence of the Muslim elite on the population, they used a policy of support for the "weak elite," in the person of the Jadids and reformers, against the traditionalists. According to the apt description of D. Yu. Arapov, all the work of the organs of Soviet power went to widening opposition between the Jadids and "traditionalists," skillfully using one against the other. Chekists quickly mastered the ways and methods of the imperial secret police and actively employed them in Muslim issues (Arapov 2010, 92).

The fate of the system of Muslim education in Dagestan in the early Soviet period is also interesting. While at the beginning of the 1920s Muslim schools and madrassas still continued to function, after the beginning of the antireligious campaign of the Soviet government at the end of the 1920s their legal activities ceased. This included those few schools where instruction already occurred using the new method (Bobrovnikov et al. 2010, 107–67). Soviet schools, which were analogous to the former new-method madrassas in structure and methods of instruction, began to operate in their place, even often in the same buildings where such new-method schools had earlier existed. The reformers who had previously taught in the new-method schools were in large part included in the new Soviet educational system after their closure. This can be explained by the fact that in the early Soviet period the Soviet authorities simply did not have other teachers. Other reformers became workers in the Soviet scientific institutes. Thus, in particular, Ali Kayaev after the closure of the Muslim schools began to work at the Institute of National Culture (later the Institute of History, Archeology, and Ethnography, Dagestan Scientific Center of the Russian Academy of Science), which opened in 1924.

The integration of the Islamic reformers into the Soviet educational and academic institutes concluded in the 1930s when the Soviet authorities already had enough of their own scientific personnel. The reformers with their former religious education were no longer needed. Many of them were shot in the years of repression or sent to the camps, where they perished.

All the same, the ideas of the reformers and their views on the reform of Islam and on Sufism did not disappear without a trace. Discussion concerning “correct” and “incorrect” Islam in the rhetoric of pre-Soviet and early Soviet reformers and their opponents revived and continued in the postwar years up to the post-Soviet period. In the post-Soviet period, thanks to the fall of the “Iron Curtain,” Dagestanis had the opportunity to study in the large universities of Syria, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia. Having returned to Dagestan, the students brought back with them these same discussions about Sufism and several legal issues, reminiscent of those that all three groups of reformers advocated. The question of the necessity of jihad against Russia is new in the rhetoric of post-Soviet Salafists.<sup>11</sup> The Dagestani theologians had remained silent about this after the suppression of the uprising of 1877 in Dagestan by imperial power.

As has already been mentioned, Dagestani Arab-language sources of the first half of the 20th century often compare the positions of the reformers with the ideas of the so-called Wahhabis, considering these two groups to be identical. Indeed the methods of reasoning and rhetoric of the Wahhabis and the reformers are very similar to each other, in particular with regard to such issues as the return to the sources of early Islam, criticism of Sufism, and a denial of the authority of the four legal schools.<sup>12</sup> Nevertheless, the ideas of the reformers about the need to borrow the achievements of modern knowledge and the Salafi turn against European knowledge in the post-Soviet period, while possessing an external transregional similarity as a reaction to colonization, have fundamentally different goals and standards.

The reformers stood for the integration of Muslims into the leading directions of modern scientific knowledge. They attempted to find a way out of the crisis in which Muslims found themselves and turned to European scientific achievements and rationalism to attain that

11. In this context by Salafis we mean Dagestanis from the followers of the Arab scholar Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab, who are known in scholarly literature as “Wahhabis.” Terms such as “Salafis” and “Wahhabis” in scholarly literature are still contentious, to say nothing about terms like Sufi, as the followers of Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab call themselves “Salafis.”

12. Arguments exist among the supporters and opponents of the Wahhabi movement concerning the ideas of Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab. His supporters think that he was a follower of the Hanbali legal school and that his ideas were directed only at cleansing Muslim dogmatics of later practices. Their opponents assert that besides this Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab also called for a rejection of the legal schools and was an adherent of absolute *ijtihad*. For more about this disagreement, see al-Baha 1981, 76–77; Muhammad Khalil Harash 1982, 29–33.

goal. In a number of sources they are even called “Mu‘tazilites,” implying early medieval Islamic theologians who explained many issues of dogmatics and law from the position of rationalism, emphasizing the role of reason in the development of Islamic thought. In the ideas of the Egyptian and Dagestani reformers at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries, the reform of the educational system was a deeply Islamic project and the reformers tried to realize their dreams using Muslim sources, symbols, images, and arguments. In this their principal difference from many Jadids of the Volga region was in the ideas that were directed at a broader conception of nation-building and integration into the Russian imperial institutions. The Wahhabis, by contrast, while calling for a return to the early times of Islam, rejected both European influence and the role of reason and rational methods in the working out of a new legal system. They were categorically against the creation of a new Muslim way of life.

In this manner, we see how outwardly similar ideas, which were developed throughout centuries, were actualized and filled with new content in accordance to the realities of the time. New ideas and practices of the 19th to the first third of the 20th centuries were the result of contacts between Muslims of Dagestan and Islamic centers both interregionally within Russia as well as abroad. However, these new ideas were not blindly copied, but transformed by Dagestani theologians who took into account local realities and were integrated into the local Muslim society.

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## Jadidism as a Paradigm in the Study of Islam in the Russian Empire

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*This article is devoted to problematizing the research focus of academic literature on Islamic reformers in the Russian Empire. Studies of the late imperial period typically devote most of their attention to modernity. Jadidist reformers are considered the key protagonists and engines of history. The typical narrative about Jadids includes several elements: political activity, educational reforms, the flourishing of journalism, the renewal of religion, and the “female question.” In this article we consider Jadidism as a narrative about backwardness and progress, which is uncritically reproduced in academic literature. Relying on the memoirs of Gabdulla Bubi, we offer a revision of the framework that is generally applied to describe the intellectual history of Muslims in Russia. We classify Bubi’s narrative as a language ideology and place it within the framework of his own “imperial project.” We do so to offer an alternative to Jadidism as an explanatory model.*

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**Keywords:** Islam in Russia, Islamic modernism, Jadidism, imperial project.

## Introduction

PRIOR to the beginning of the 20th century, several million Muslims lived across practically all regions of the Russian Empire and had extensive experience of interaction with the imperial authorities within a multi-national and multi-confessional context (Prozorov 1998–2012; Abashin and Babadzhanov 2011; Bobrovnikov and Babich 2007; Babadzhanov and Kotiukova 2016; Abashin et al. 2008). Our article examines how this experience is understood in the academic literature and how academic concepts are related to voices that emerge from primary sources.

Even after the archival revolution of the 1990s,<sup>1</sup> the history of Jadidism still lies at the core of our perception of Islam in the Russian Empire. Debates around the concept of modernity shaped the scholarly language in this area. In fact, what is at issue here is exclusively the relationship between modernity and Muslims (e.g., Tuna 2015). Thus for many decades now — with all the appropriate caveats and conventions — academic discourse has depicted Jadids as admirers of European progress and has portrayed traditionalists as “moss-covered” lovers of antiquity and exotic Muslim cultures.<sup>2</sup> It is difficult to find a more politicized and pervasive misconception than the narrative of Jadidism as a triumphant struggle of enlighteners for progress against backwardness, for a secular world against religious obscurantism, for a printed book against ancient manuscripts. Historians and the Jadids themselves tell the same narrative: in the depths of “traditional” society — exhausted by ignorance and darkness — there emerged new people who boldly engaged with progressive Western ideas in Russian or Ottoman translation, and in doing so advanced the inevitable modernization and Europeanization of society. The reception of “European” ideas becomes a temporal division that separates the traditional past from the modern present/future (Abashin 2015, 9–15). The ideal “progressive” is clean-shaven, wears a European-style suit, hat, and glasses, cares about the interests of the nation, and speaks Russian well. The

1. For an overview of the achievements of the archival revolution for the study of Islam in Russia, see the special issue of *Ab Imperio* (2008), no. 4.
2. A detailed analysis and critique of this dichotomy can be found in Eden, Sartori, and DeWeese (2016).

“accursed traditionalist” wears an enormous turban, a Bukharan robe, and has leftover pilav<sup>3</sup> in his beard. Like it or not, readers will inevitably encounter these caricatures when getting to know the history of Muslims in Russia at the beginning of the 20th century. This lens portrays the late imperial period as a time of the blossoming of Islamic culture through its increasing proximity to European educational models and the articulation of political ideas.

The central problems on which the historiography of Islam in the Russian Empire have previously focused are integration, secularization, and modernization, on the one hand, and resistance to imperial power — the mirror image of these processes — on the other. One can briefly summarize this narrative as the story of how the exotic and little understood world of Muslims became intelligible and familiar for imperial observers. The empire demonstrably sought the homogenization of its population, and for this reason the best fate for Muslims in Russia would be their complete dissolution and merger into the categories, practices, languages, and institutions prescribed by imperial scenarios of power. In other words, the binary of integration and resistance to a large extent deprives Muslims of their subjectivity,<sup>4</sup> the right to their own place in history, and their own interpretation of events. Imperial knowledge focuses on Muslim groups only when they enter the field of ideas and practices as defined by the imperial context. In other situations and contexts, Islam is not of interest to outside observers. For this reason, the question of integration has divided historians into two camps (Sartori 2017).

The first camp bases its research program primarily on Russian-language administrative sources from which it follows that Muslims in the Russian Empire were certainly included in the discussions about practices of subordination and opposition to the imperial authorities.<sup>5</sup> The imperial archives reveal, as described in categories intelligible to Russian officials, the various hopes and fears regarding Russian Muslims. This paradigm produced ideas about the acceptance of imperial “rules of the game” by Muslims (Crews 2006; Meyer 2013), as well as the narrative about the eternal struggle of Muslims for independence and for the creation of a Sharia-based state (Zelkina 2000). These

3. Pilav — a rice dish originating in Central Asia. (Ed.)

4. In essence, a similar problem exists in the study of Stalinism and Soviet subjectivity, as in Gerasimov (2017).

5. The historiography of “Soviet Islam” predominantly displays this tendency of giving full credence to the imperial archives. For example, see Arapov and Kosach (2007), Guseva (2013), Arapov and Kosach (2010–2011), and Ro’i (2000).

hopes and fears arose and were discussed within the educated imperial elite, which was uninterested in the plans and ideas of Muslims themselves. Orientalists were supposed to tell administrators what Muslims were “really” about, and imperial authorities projected their own concepts onto the eastern borderlands and enthusiastically discussed the “Muslim Question” (Campbell 2015; Tol’ts 2011, 111–67).

Another camp of historians of the era of the archival revolution chooses rather to describe the experiences of Muslims within the Russian Empire in an isolationist mode. For a very long period of time, the language of Islamic discourse (Kemper 1998; Kemper 2005) allowed Muslims to articulate problems only tangentially related to those “imposed” by the imperial paradigm. These discussions, for the most part, emerged from the array of “eternal” theological debates over legal categories (see Shamil’ Shikhaliev’s contribution to this issue), as well as religious practices and historiographic traditions (Frank 1998; Frank 2001; Frank 2012) that had little in common with the surrounding world. The isolationist paradigm is based on the voices of Muslims themselves and posits their separateness and differentiation from dominant imperial discourses. The emphasis on the self-sufficiency and uniqueness of the culture of Russian Muslims allows this group of researchers to consider transnational contacts and the circulation of Islamic knowledge with little concern for the imperial context.

Of course, between these two extreme camps there is room for experiments with various sources and methods. One sees this, for example, when examining the biographies of Islamic actors who at various times participated in resistance to the empire as well as in the workings of the imperial administration (Bobrovnikov 2010) or those who discussed compulsory religious practices (the Hajj) at the intersection of imperial policies and the narratives of Islamic authors (Sibgatullina 2010; cf. Kane 2016). Or one can see it in studies of nation-building, which reveal that occasionally Islamic thinkers could be effective actors in the political sphere and actively participate in the development and realization of political projects (Khalid 2015).

In addition, the spatial perspective strongly influences our ideas about the relations between Muslims and the empire. Often this is seen when dealing with regional approaches, which trace isolated enclaves (Turkestan, Dagestan, the Volga region) with their own Islamic traditions on an imagined map. Such an approach can hold great interest when it reveals the worldviews of the regional actors themselves (Brophy 2016; Schluessel 2014). Transregional studies, with few exceptions (Meyer 2014), remain marginal and do not go beyond

the confines of a mechanical combination of microhistories (Miller 2008, 9–33).

Thus, for the last quarter century, several approaches to telling the story of the Muslims of Russia have developed in the historiography. Some, relying on administrative documents, talk about strategies of resistance and accommodation. Some show the complex and multi-faceted yet in many ways isolated life of elites, and some write about regional history through the prism of the nation. We propose a somewhat different view of Islamic texts in Russia: to not study Jadidism as a *historical phenomenon*, but rather to examine the *narrative* of Jadidism found in the primary sources themselves. We hope that studying the structures of the language of Jadidism will generate a better understanding of what stands behind this narrative. In this article, we present an analysis of one source, the author of which is usually marked as an Islamic reformer.

### **The Imperial Narrative of Gabdulla Bubi**

The search for a suitable analytical language for describing the intellectual life of Muslims is acknowledged as an important problem for the study of Islam in Russia (Naganawa 2017). Which scholarly tool kit should be used? Taking into account the marginal status of the field, where should researchers look for processes and methods? Through which lens should they approach the sources used to construct the narrative of progressive reformers and backward traditionalists?

One particularly rich source around which one can build a narrative about progressive Muslims is the memoir of Gabdulla Bubi (1871–1922). He was director of and a teacher at the Izh-Bubi madrassa in Viatka governorate. In 1911 he was imprisoned along with his brother on charges of pan-Turkism. Upon his release in 1913, he left for Ghulja<sup>6</sup> (Eastern Turkestan). Here an opportunity presented itself to create and run a new madrassa. In 1917 he returned to Russia, to Troitsk, where he also ran a local madrassa. Bubi worked to organize schools everywhere that it was possible, and in 1917 he regretted not staying in Tashkent, where he was offered the chance to run an educational institution. Clearly, his major ambition was the creation of the ideal madrassa. Such an assumption, which appears self-evident, would seem to be an excellent way to link up to the story about heroic enlighteners, who were leading the people out of the darkness of ignorance into the brightness of enlightenment, a narrative that fits well into the discourse about Jadidism

6. Currently called Yining, a city in northwest China. (Ed.)

(Makhmutova 1997; Makhmutova 2005; Gimazova 2004; Akhunov and Minnullin 2013). Can we propose an alternative interpretation?

Bubi's memoirs are a motley collection of notes that include the history of the madrassa in Izh-Bubi, travel notes about his journey to Ghulja in 1913, a detailed description of his life in Ghulja, as well as personal correspondence with various individuals. The three-volume manuscript made up of 636 pages is kept in the Oriental section of the Manuscript and Rare Books Division of the Scientific Library of the Kazan Federal University. The text is written in literary Tatar of the early 20th century, in Arabic script of the *naskh* style. The lack of ink blots and corrections, which are characteristic of diaries, indicates that the manuscript is a final draft of memoirs, possibly intended for publication (ORRK NB KFU, Ms. 207 T-208 T).<sup>7</sup>

The structure of the narrative itself resembles a kaleidoscope of stories, which are laid out not on a chronological basis but as scenes from a life story: the anecdote about the Turkish teacher, the founding of the Islamic association, the temperance society, the speech of a Chinese bureaucrat, the collecting of donations. The notes about his life in Ghulja have thus far attracted almost no attention from historians, who have been rather more interested in the story of the madrassa in Izh-Bubi and the demonstrative arrest of the Bubi brothers, which was important in the formation of their image as fighters for enlightenment. Nevertheless, it is the case that the story of the madrassa was written retrospectively from Ghulja and it does not occupy a central place in the three-volume manuscript. The episode of the madrassa, in fact, serves to introduce the scenes taking place in Ghulja. In any case, it is not the "reality" of the described events that is of interest, as much as it is the language of the narrative along with its structure.

The language of Gabdulla Bubi's memoirs can be characterized as a language ideology (Freedden 2005), which developed into the special skill of "speaking Jadid," that is, creating a discourse about the necessity of education and progress for the improvement of the lot of Muslims. This skill shapes the image of Jadids as progressive-minded people, fighters against backwardness and the remnants of religion. The language ideology of Bubi is versatile, changes depending on the conversational context, and includes key concepts that make up the "political lexicon of the era" (Potapova 2015, 180).

7. The Manuscript and Rare Books Division of the Scientific Library of Kazan Federal University will hereafter be referred to as ORRK NB KFU. For a full paleographic description and a brief summary of the manuscript's contents, see Fätkhi 1962, 11–18.

In choosing to characterize Bubi's memoirs as a language ideology, we designate that ideology an "imperial project." An important element of this type of project is its civilizing function; the ambition to carry out this function, in turn, characterizes the imperial subject. This subject echoes the language of colonial authorities when discussing backward Muslims whom it is necessary to civilize, and thereby fuses the adopted argument about Muslim backwardness with imperial rhetoric about "former greatness" and the Golden Age of Muslims. In any case, the words and themes that Bubi articulated serve the cause of constructing an imperial project that was conceptualized alongside that of the Russian Empire.

When news reached Ghulja from Beijing about the opening of an Islamic association there, Bubi said, "The Lord has given on earth that which I sought in the heavens" (ORRK NB KFU, Ms. 207 T, 112a). Any opportunity to preach ideas of unity brought him happiness and any form that allowed him to do so was useful. Education or "enlightenment" was not only a task for the madrasa, that is, not only for the rising generation, but also applied to adults. For this reason, Bubi received the news of an Islamic association that presumed to include adults with great enthusiasm. He delivered a lengthy speech at the opening of the Islamic association:

I want to tell you a little about the necessity [*luzumiyyat*] and importance of this association [*jam'iyyat*] from the point of view of Sharia and its obligation [*fard*]. The most indispensable and necessary thing in Sharia is the unity of Muslims [*āhile islamnyng ittifaq[y]*] and their education. The main mission of the Prophet, peace be upon him, was to lead the ignorant Arabs onto the path to enlightenment, to make them equal and unite them with everyone, who found themselves under the banner of Islam: white and black, Arab and non-Arab. "The violation of unity — is an indication of hypocrisy" [*khuruj al-ittifaq 'alamat al-nifaq*], in other words, leaving behind unity and Islamic society and separation is a sign of hypocrisy and unbelief [*kōfer*]. These truthful and holy words, and also the words of Allah in the Holy Quran (إِنَّ الَّذِينَ فَرَّقُوا دِينَهُمْ وَكَانُوا شِيْعًا لَأَسْتَمِنْهُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ) (Quran 6:159), in other words, "those, who divide religion [*din*] and humility [*ita'a*] into different forces and divide themselves into different groups [*firqa*] — they are not with you and you are not with them": these words are enough to understand the necessity of connection with this association and community. As you see, Allah commands Muslims to be part of one association and community. He calls one who leaves it not a Muslim [*mu'min*], but an unbeliever [*kafir*]. [. . .] This association, similar to a message [*ilham*,



*wahi*] from Allah, will take you out of the baseness and abjectness of today, it will make you a true community and people [*millät*] of the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him. Thanks to this blessed association you will be adorned with learning and enlightenment [*golum vā māgarif*], handicrafts and art will spread among you. Only in this way will you rid yourselves of today's indignities and impoverishment and be lifted above the wealthy, happy other peoples [*millätlär*] (ORRK NB KFU, Ms. 207 T, 124b–126a).

And he said all this in the presence of a Chinese bureaucrat who had come for the official opening of the association! Analyzing Bubi's fate through the prism of an "imperial project" allows one to interpret it not as the story of a man of the peripheral borderlands and subjugated groups, but as the story of a person who finds himself at the center of his own world — a world he considers the outcome of his own efforts. Just as the Holy Roman Empire promised to unite and defend all Catholics, Bubi and many of his contemporaries wanted to unify and defend all Muslims in the way that seemed most effective. Several authors have already written about the elements of imperial ideology found in Islamic texts. Stephen Kotkin, among others, notes that the "Tatars imagined, and tried to realize, an imperial project before and then within the broad expanse provided by the Russian empire and the Soviet Union" (Kotkin 2007, 517). By pointing to the struggle between "Tatar-Muslim and imperial strategies around the question of the formation of the local population's identities" in the Volga-Ural region, Alexei Miller implicitly casts this as a struggle of imperial ambitions (Miller 2006, 22).

A spatial vision and the choice of setting are very important in Bubi's narrative. In departing for Ghulja, Bubi does not see that city as a goal in and of itself; he is interested, rather, in schools, the templates of which could be spread after the successful conclusion of the experiment:

As soon as I get out of prison, I need to go to China, to Ghulja. To take one school there and to fix it, so that teachers and imams appropriate to the times can be produced. To open a school for girls that would be able to produce teachers to gradually send there all who worked in Izh-Bubi. To create in Ghulja a center for the spread of knowledge in Turkestan, and if possible to organize artistic and artisan associations among the people (ORRK NB KFU, Ms. 207 T, 96a).

Thus, Ghulja is for him a center of sorts in Turkestan. Although formally the city was part of the Chinese republic, Bubi sees it as belonging



to Muslim territories. Of course he does not “discover” Ghulja; he arrives where there is already a foundation — Muslim communities that were well-established prior to his arrival (Usmanov 1998; Light 2012). In his travel notes, Bubi writes about Troitsk, Samara, Yarkand, Bishkek, Tashkent, and Kashghar, and in each city he finds like-minded people who help him.<sup>8</sup> Bubi’s goals resonated and he was always accompanied by affluent merchants willing to support him (or whom he coaxed into doing so). In his story, cities and people are connected above and across administrative boundaries; he links these points on the basis of his own conception of their importance as centers. Bubi saw himself as a missionary of a vitally important association, and his goal was the diffusion of such ideas. Allen Frank speaks of Bubi, during his travels in the vicinity of the Kazakh steppe, addressing two questions to the population about their historical role in Xinjiang: “These were education (including among girls) and the spread of modern ideas and technologies among local Muslims, that is, a sort of civilizing mission” (Frank 2011, 463).

The imagined “empire of Muslims,” in Bubi’s vision, stretches from Viatka governorate to Western China and the inhabitants of this empire included Nogais, Taranchi, Dungans, Kazakhs, Sarts, Russians, Chinese, and Turks. This world was diverse, motley, and disparate, on the one hand, but united into a single whole, on the other. Individuals such as Bubi tied this region together; moving from place to place, he created new connections and strengthened old ones, and he collected money for madrassas and mosques from wealthy merchants.<sup>9</sup> With the like-minded, he discussed social problems, questions of backwardness or flourishing, as well as questions of subjugation or dominance. Bubi was concerned with the preservation of the Muslim heritage, he worried about the destiny of the “former greatness.” He wanted to preserve this cultural foundation.

### **The Structure of Gabdulla Bubi’s Narrative**

The key concepts in Bubi’s story include, among others: the people (*millät*), advanced people (*alga khalyq*), freedom (*hurriyyat*), education (*ma’rifat*), and progress (*taraqqiyyat*). *Millät* appears in reference to the condition of Muslim peoples as a whole: “to what depths do ignorance, baseness, and incomprehension of religion plunge man and even

8. Such networks of acquaintances were not specific to Bubi but rather were common among travelers from within Russia. See Brophy (2014).

9. On Islamic charity in this period, see Ross (2017).

the whole *people*"; "this situation burns the souls of Muslims who betrayed their *people*"; "yet where is there a place of tranquility for those who wish to serve the *people*"; "only having rid oneself of today's debasement and impoverishment will it be possible to rise above other prosperous and happy *peoples*" (ORRK NB KFU, Ms. 207 T, 97b, 98a, 99b, 102a, 126a). The unification of Muslims is a leading theme in his narrative, and the struggle for unity aided by progress is one of Bubi's key goals.

Bubi speaks and acts precisely like an imperial civilizer, organizing schooling, societies, and meetings, and demonstrating the backwardness of earlier forms and calling for facing new challenges. These challenges lie both within Muslims themselves, who have distorted or even left their religion behind, and in the "civilizational" superiority of their neighbors. He sees this superiority here and now: in Russian schools, and in his brethren who serve the "Russians" and don't recognize the values of history and religion, in a changing urban landscape:

In Tashkent we visited akhund Akhtiamov. However, I am disappointed; I did not see things among our Sart brethren that gave me hope. In Tashkent there are two parts: the new Tashkent and the old Tashkent. If one can compare the former with heaven, the latter can be likened to hell. (ibid., 96b)

In describing Tashkent, Bubi creates a dramatic image of decline: the mosque of Khwaja Ahrar in disrepair, the shiny new cupolas of churches rising above the city, and local indigenous schools destroying religion among the children. Children symbolize the future, and Bubi seems to predict it in describing the state of local schools. But he does offer hope by proposing the only means for avoiding the spiritual death of the "people's" children: to organize one's own schools and enlighten the population. Bubi wants to give knowledge, to enlighten, so as to give people power over their own lives, to unify them, and deliver them from subordination to the "Russians" — this is also one of the tasks of his imperial mission.

There is a great deal of anti-colonial rhetoric in the manuscript's text (see Bustanov 2016), but close attention to how Bubi uses the word "predator" to generalize Russians suggests that he has in mind the bureaucratic apparatus and the state. All the more so when, in response to the February Revolution, he rejoices at the "days of freedom" that have come for Muslims and for Russians.<sup>10</sup>

10. In Islamic texts of the time the February Revolution was often called *khōrriiat*, an Arabic word meaning "freedom."

The special associations that he endeavored to support or create were supposed to be responsible for religious “enlightenment.” For example, with help of the “temperance society,” he planned

to end or reduce the use of alcoholic beverages, because, after all, they are the reason for the birth of weak and drunken children, they damage health, they are what takes away what is most valuable to us — our intellect, in so far as vodka, beer, and similar beverages are forbidden [*kharam*] from the legal point of view [*shari’a*], and it is precisely because they harm the intellect and are harmful in general. Each believer of a sober mind ought to become a member of this association. (ORRK NB KFU, Ms. 207 T, 110a)

In the matter of education, there were also “enemies,” those who did not wish to “enlighten” people, those who sought only profit. Those Muslims, Bubi is convinced, are the true reason for difficulties — it is exactly due to their negligence that Allah has sent punishment. Some write denunciations, some engage in “fraud,” and they harm their own people. It is precisely in this mode that he interprets the arrival of Shami damulla in Ghulja in 1916.<sup>11</sup> The denunciation begins with a reproach for greed:

In these places he describes himself as a person whom the Turkish side has sent to collect money and donations. He visited many cities ruled by the Chinese and collected a great deal of money. (ORRK NB KFU, Ms. 208 T, 131a)

Bubi did not know that he had in fact been chased out of the Ottoman Empire over allegations of “Wahhabism” (Babadzhanov, Muminov, and fon Kiugel’gen 2007, 58). It should be noted that Bubi himself was forced to leave Ghulja soon after the February Revolution, as he was alleged to be an unbeliever by local scholars and faced real danger. Shami damulla showed Bubi records that indicated that he was an emissary of the sultan:

11. For more details on him, see Muminov (2005). At the beginning of the 1920s, Shami damulla was chosen by the Soviet authorities as a “progressive” theologian, who would support the ideas of Islamic socialism and struggle against “obscurantism.” One of Shami damulla’s most famous students was Ziya al-Din Babakhan, the mufti of SADUM, Central Asian Muftiate, from 1957 to 1982. This connection supports the opinion of our colleagues that fundamentalism lay at the core of Soviet Islamic discourse and did not come from abroad, but rather was developed as a response to the times and by Soviet power. Sartori (2010).

In so far as he was regarded as a representative of Chinese Turkestan in Istanbul, the sultan sent a holy lock of the Prophet's hair to the Muslims of Chinese Turkestan in his care. He brought this hair to Altishahr, people began to travel there, and he collected a great deal of money. (ORRK NB KFU, Ms. 208 T, 131a)

Drawing on the image of Shami damulla, the author caricatures the scholars of Kashgar:

The ulamas of Kashgar raided that site, took the sacred hair, and removed it to another mosque, and people began to go there. In order to retrieve the Prophet's hair, Shami damulla went to various villages and collected petitions to the sultan and the Sublime Porte. It is clear that the "sacred hair" was the choicest scrap that had fallen into Shami's mouth. (ibid.)

Bubi writes disapprovingly about his "entrepreneurial" activity, charging Shami damulla with deceit and self-interest:

He has gathered old manuscripts and money and sold all of these things to European museums. He told me himself that he worked for one Orientalist who arrived in Altishahr with this goal. This person became the reason that old Turkic and Islamic works that had belonged to Muslims fell into the hands of Europeans. He helped them a great deal. (ibid., 150a)

Caricaturing those who use the image of the sacred for private gain, Bubi again demonstrates the necessity of changes — enlightenment and the exposure of fraudsters, who in this case were Shami damulla and the ulamas who had taken the hair. Apart from the fact that uneducated people were being cheated, that is, forced to pay for a fake, from a historical perspective, they are also being robbed of their own heritage. Bubi's task is thus to expose the saboteurs who were interfering in the task of enlightening. He not only identifies those self-interested wreckers like Shami damulla, but he also implicitly carries on an argument with those who oppose new madrassas and his vision for religious renewal. This makes him continually demonstrate, explain, and justify his position. The arguments are constructed according to the dichotomies of "ignorance/backwardness" versus "knowledge/progress." It is ignorance that draws the ire of Allah with the consequences of sad life circumstances, poverty, and subjugation:

When they (Kazakhs) themselves kept hens, they never saw eggs; no matter how many cows, there was no milk or butter. Over the course of their lives they did not gather a single stack of hay. After they gave the Ukrainians all of their land, they tend the hens of others very well, they gather their eggs, they prepare butter and milk with great care. And when it belonged to them, they did not do any of these things. They tend pigs with great care. Verily the earth is tended by worshippers [of Allah]. O, Islam, Islam! You have come to the point of changing from safety, sloth, and unconsciousness of the people who raised your flag and said “we follow you, Islam.” Was it so that Islam entered and left the heart of our beloved Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him? (ORRK NB KFU, Ms. 207 T, 100a)

In addition to the need to better people through enlightenment and education, it was also necessary to return Islam to their hearts. But what kind of Islam, if people had abandoned its foundations? How to move forward, toward “progress,” and at the same time to return to the ideal of the past? How could “progress” (*taraqqiyyat*), a key concept in his narrative, be combined with a return to pure Islam and the “improvement” of society?

The story of the reformers commonly begins with the desire for progress. When the motif of the necessity of “progress” is encountered in the sources, it is translated as “progress” in its modern meaning. The image of reformers as enlightened young people, who aspire to a new order of things, is built on this foundation. It is exactly on this point that they differ from the old clerics, mired in ignorance and stuck in the past. However, in Bubi’s story, *taraqqiyyat* is related closely to the idea of the necessity of embracing the latest scientific advances as well as the theme of returning to the past, that is, the Golden Age of Muslims. *Taraqqiyyat* is thus indispensable for both a return to pure religion and for reaching the level of Western civilization. In other words, interpreting *taraqqiyyat* only as Westernization (Tuna 2011) and a linear forward progression is misleading when it comes to Bubi’s narrative. For him progress is not simply movement toward the future; it is also a movement backward toward an idealized past.

By all appearances, this concept itself did not have any rigorously defined content in Bubi’s rhetoric. For example, in the dictionary of the Muhammadiyya madrasa teacher Tahir Ilyasi (1881–1933), *taraqqiyyat* is defined as follows: “to develop, to grow, to render the words of another person” (Ilyasi 1912, 447b). Bubi notes Kazakh paupers and the ruined mosques and madrassas of the Sarts; and he sees Ukrainians with well-constructed homes, prosperous farms, and clean,

well-maintained roads. It is not so much the “colonizers” who are to blame for this state of affairs as it is the Muslims themselves, who have forgotten Allah’s injunctions. For Bubi religion is not something separated from life; not following religious instructions is in fact a cause of material misfortunes in this life as much as for punishment after death. For this reason, Bubi thinks of education as a combination of schools and enlightenment societies. Increasing school hours devoted to the natural sciences and decreasing those for religious instruction (if one believes the curricular tables) does not imply the secular transformation of education. When combined with conscious religiosity, Bubi’s school program was aimed at comprehensive “progress,” which was meant to help achieve an ideal in religion as well as in the attainment of equal development with the “leading nations.” Within the framework of ideas about progress, he carries out a project of codifying knowledge, searches for a universal educational framework, and this is likewise one of the important tasks of empire — normalizing scattered territories and peoples according to a common denominator (Sartori and Shablei 2015).

## Conclusion

Even a cursory overview of our knowledge about Islam in the late Russian Empire demonstrates that, in spite of the recent boom in research, the paradigm of the inevitable “integration” of Muslims in the imperial context serves as a barrier to seeing the various modes of Muslims’ self-description and the formation of their subjectivity. One can hear the language of colonial power in Bubi’s references to the backwardness of Turkic Muslims: he has adopted the descriptions of Central Asian society as backward and in need of “European enlightenment.” This narrative, of course, is connected to Orientalism and converges with the rhetoric of imperial Orientalists when it comes to the use of terms such as “Central Asian backwardness” and “European enlightenment.”<sup>12</sup> The narrative repeats clichés about “bringing European civilization and progress” to the “backward” Central Asian peoples, making a claim to legitimacy through its professed ideas about inevitable change and progress (Gorshenina 2007, 292; Geraci 2001).

12. On the mutual influences of Orientalism as an academic discipline and the discourses of “European enlightenment” among leaders of communities studied by Orientalists themselves, see Frank (2012), 163, and Campbell (2002).

When Bubi speaks about the backwardness of the Kazakhs and Sarts, he reproduces these clichés, but he changes the ideology's actors: in his telling, the "enlightened" Turks, having mastered the European system of education, ought to become the *Kulturträger*, the new imperial civilizers. This "civilizing mission" passes from Europeans (Russians) to Muslims themselves, endowing them with their own will and capacity for transformation. Yet the principal civilizers in his telling are Bubi himself and also his rather narrow "elite" circle, whose mission is to elevate the illiterate masses. Muslims are "colonized" in this narrative, appearing in the role of object of reform. It is necessary to civilize them for their own good; after all, without dedicated leadership they could not become a "happy people."

His imperial project belongs neither to the Russian nor Ottoman Empires. Bubi appears in his narrative as an independent imperial subject, despite the fact that his rhetoric is often built on a comparison with other "happy peoples," including "Russians." He is not an intermediary between different empires; he has his own plan for the development of Muslim society. Having absorbed ideas about backwardness, he fights for the happiness and flourishing of Muslims. He strives to create new, educated, competitive people according to the model he regards as ideal. He does this within the space of his own empire, in every place where his influence allows him to carry out this project. In his narrative, of course, imperial officials appear and create difficulties or assist him, such as the Chinese official with the Muslim association. But these officials quickly assume a secondary importance and Bubi continues working on his romantic project.

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DANIS GARAEV

## The Ideology of Russian-Language Jihadism before ISIS<sup>1</sup>: Treating the Soviet Past as the Origin of Post-Soviet Radicalism

*Translation by Isaac Stackhouse Wheeler*

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*This article is devoted to the origin and development of the propagandist ideology of Russian-language jihadism. It develops the idea that the jihadism in Russia should be considered not so much in the context of the Islamic issue or as a result of the influence of foreign countries, but rather as an example of post-Soviet radicalism, formed on a native ideological and intellectual base. The article states that this meaningfully diverse ideology originated under the influence of Soviet and post-Soviet intellectual traditions, which made this ideology so effective in the Russian context.*

**Keywords:** jihad, post-socialism, radicalism, Islam, jihadism.

THE First (1994–1996) and Second (1999–mid-2000s) Chechen Campaigns, which began with the proclamation of an independent but universally unrecognized Ichkeria and concluded with a struggle to create an Islamic state in Chechnya, led to the appearance of the so-called Caucasian Emirate in 2007.<sup>2</sup> This extremist organiza-

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1. Banned in the Russian Federation by decision of the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation No. AKPI 14-1424C dated 29 December 2014.
2. Banned in the Russian Federation by decision of the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation No. GKPI 09-1715 dated 8 February 2010.

tion fought for a Sharia-based state throughout the Northern Caucasus under the banner of jihad.

As a result, an entire generation of jihadist ideologues appeared in this region during the post-Soviet period. Because they had fought against the Russian authorities, they were an object of particular interest to the Russian public, especially those (both Muslim and non-Muslim) who were inclined toward radicalism. These ideologues included such figures as Shamil Basaev, Iasin Rasulov, Said Buriatskii, Anzor Astemirov, Movladi Udugov, Timur Mutsuraev, and many others. These people were very different, but the one thing they had in common was the ability to talk about jihad in a way that Russian-language audiences found accessible. Furthermore, all of them understood jihad to mean armed struggle against the Russian authorities. Propaganda methods and arguments in support of jihad differed somewhat in different periods, which made this ideology quite diverse in terms of content, yet it was, in all cases, based on a military interpretation of jihad as a form of opposition against Moscow.

Although the Arabic word “jihad,” which translates as “effort,” has a rather wide range of interpretations, from struggling against one’s own spiritual defects to armed conflict, this article will not discuss the religious and linguistic debates surrounding this term. The question of what the term “jihad” means in the context of the events in the Northern Caucasus will be left to the judgment of Islamic theologians. From a researcher’s perspective, the interesting question is how the aforementioned ideologues made this particular term the central category around which they built their discursive strategies.

The fact that they chose jihad as the main theme of their statements also provides grounds to refer to them as jihadist ideologues and to the propaganda they generated as jihadist ideology. This article is dedicated to answering the following questions: What made jihadist propaganda popular and influential in Russia during the 1990s and 2000s? What factor played the decisive role? Framing the question in this way automatically makes it necessary to consider what the actual content of jihadist ideology was during that period.

Texts by several famous Russian jihadist ideologues from the 1990s and 2000s are the subject of my study. In these texts, ideologues call for jihad and provide various justifications for and interpretations of the idea.<sup>3</sup> The analysis will focus on the semantics and ideological

3. Since the majority of the texts analyzed in the course of the author’s research project in the Netherlands may not legally be distributed in Russia, direct quotations will be avoided here.

foundations of these texts: the terms and symbols they use, the ideas and authorities they refer to, and the themes that preoccupy them.

I emphasize this particular historical period because the emergence of the so-called “Islamic State” (ISIS) in the Middle East during the 2010s was followed by a significant drop in extremist activity in the Northern Caucasus, since the bulk of this movement’s military and intellectual power shifted to Syria and Iraq. Without studying what this ideology was during the first twenty years after the collapse of the Soviet Union, however, we are unlikely to understand the problems of today.

Considering the breadth of the subject and the space limitations of a single article, I will focus on a few extremely important texts produced by ideologues from the Northern Caucasus to justify armed jihad. Specifically, they include texts by figures such as Zelimkhan Yandarbiev (1952–2004), the former president of Ichkeria; Movladi Udugov (born 1962), the creator of Kavkazcenter.com,<sup>4</sup> the main mouthpiece for Northern Caucasian jihadists; ideologue of the Dagestani “Sharia” movement, Iasin Rasulov (1975–2006); the leader of the Karbardino-Balkar Jamaat and subsequently Sharia judge of the “Caucasian Emirate” Anzor Astemirov (1976–2010); as well as Said Buriatiskii (also known as Alexander Tikhomirov, 1982–2010), one of its ideologues and most striking speakers. This selection of authors was governed by the fact that they belong to different groups at different stages of armed resistance in the Northern Caucasus, with different kinds of educational and professional experience, and have reached different levels of notoriety among the general public.

All of the texts under study were written in Russian. The very fact that not only the aforementioned authors, but also the other jihadist leaders and ideologues of the Northern Caucasus primarily wrote their texts in Russian is sufficient grounds to mark this phenomenon as a post-Soviet one, since Russian became the primary language of Islam in Russia after the collapse of the Soviet Union (see Kemper and Bustanov 2015, 211–221; Bustanov and Kemper 2013, 259–77).

The relevance of this subject is dictated by the destructive effect of this phenomenon on both Russia and the global community. A significant portion of current threats to international security are connected with the phenomenon of jihadism; therefore, a comprehensive and focused study of these problems will make it possible to develop a better understanding of the phenomenon, and consequently to find the key to solving them.

4. The source was classified as extremist by decision of the Nikulinskii District Court of the City of Moscow, dated 12 September 2011.

The main thesis of this article is that jihadism must be not be primarily examined in the context of Islamic issues, or regarded as a consequence of foreign influence, which has been commonplace for the majority of studies, but rather as an example of post-Soviet radicalism, with domestic ideological and intellectual foundations.

More specifically, Russian-language jihadist ideology from the period contained obvious Soviet and post-Soviet narratives, ideas, themes, and cultural codes that dominated the texts produced by the most prominent Russian-language jihadist ideologues. It is precisely this factor that makes their language accessible and popular in the Russian-language environment, which consisted of people who were Soviet and post-Soviet in terms of their educational, cultural, and social experience.

At the same time, one cannot claim that this phenomenon is an outlier and has nothing in common with the jihadist struggle in other regions of the world. Therefore, it is important to note that the particular subject under consideration here can contribute a great deal to ongoing academic discussions on jihadism, religious extremism, and terrorism. To that end, I propose that we must begin with a description of the general context of those discussions.

### **Jihad as a Global Phenomenon: A Historiographical Excursus**

In my view, it is currently possible to provisionally identify two basic lines of investigation into the ideology of the jihadist movement: (1) approaching it as a coherent global Islamic/Islamist ideology and movement and describing the universal religious characteristics that are inherent within it, and (2) concentrating on an analysis of the regional (ethnic or sub-cultural) ideological sources of jihadist movements. Both of these vectors share a focus on studying the religious component as the basis of jihad.

The key subject for understanding jihadism as a universal phenomenon in different regions of the world is the study of social types that contributed to the emergence of the ideology of jihadism. The French political scientist and Middle East expert Olivier Roy proposed calling such ideologues (not simply jihadists, but Islamists in general) “new intellectuals” and the “lumpenintelligentsia” (Roy 2001, 51). In his opinion, they did not hold religious or secular degrees, which determined their marginal position and encouraged them to create their own parallel institutions on the outskirts of cities (Roy 2001, 92). This social background apparently later enabled Roy to state that we are observing the “Islamization of radicalism,” when social protests take

on an Islamic form of expression. At the same time, it is worth noting that the latest research by British sociologists Diego Gambetta and Steffen Hertog provides grounds to state that there are a disproportionately high number of jihadists with university education in engineering, which partially refutes Roy's conclusions (Gambetta 2016).

Of course, the lack of systematic Islamic education among this type of extremist ideologues meant that they had poor knowledge of religious sources and did not have the status of alims (Muslim scholars). In the same vein, the British linguist Elisabeth Kendall used the example of Al-Qaeda<sup>5</sup> to describe how jihadist ideologues compensate for the lack of religious authority by stating that they simply receive their fatwahs directly from Allah (Kendall 2016, 239).

The parallel institutions and networks created by those same intellectuals has proven effective enough to assert their authority and promote their ideas. For example, American researcher Mark Sageman's explanation of what he calls the "global Salafi jihad" primarily focuses on the social networks through which people set out on the road to jihadism (Sageman 2004). British sociologist Simon Cottee employed Sageman's data point that 66 percent of jihadists entered terrorist organizations along with their friends, while another 20 percent had jihadist relatives. In the same vein, Cottee attempted to examine the problem of jihadism from the perspective of criminology, that is, to study the phenomenon in the same way that one might study the formation of gangs or so-called delinquent subcultures. Cottee states that young jihadists independently create their own cells without any participation from Al-Qaeda and only then join that well-known organization (Cottee 2011, 730–51).

According to Cottee, the fact that these young jihadists live at the edges of European cities led them to be influenced by Western urban music traditions like rap and hip-hop (Cottee 2011, 732). Italian political scientist Lorenzo Vidino cites Cottee while describing how Islamic fundamentalism can be combined with the African American hip-hop aesthetic in European ghettos, leading to phenomena like young Muslims having photographs of both Tupac Shakur and bin Laden on their mobile phones or simultaneously using marijuana and viewing videos on jihad. Vidino provides numerous examples of Muslim groups and performers who use the style of hip-hop to promote armed jihad against "unbelievers" (Vidino 2007).

The perception of jihadist ideology and the jihadist movement as a global phenomenon, functioning as a kind of network, is characteristic

5. Banned in the Russian Federation by Decision of the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation dated 14 February 2003, No. KGPI 03 116, effective 4 March 2003.



of many studies of the subject. For example, Australian international relations specialist Andrew Phillips compared the contemporary jihadist movement with the medieval Calvinists, describing what he calls modern Salafism as a sort of religious network like the ones that existed in Europe during the Reformation. Phillips referred to the work of German political scientist Herfried Münkler to argue that the terrorism practiced by jihadists is a new way of repudiating the state monopoly on violence (Phillips 2018, 257–80). A similar description of jihadism as a homogenous global phenomenon challenging the state monopoly on the use of violence can be found in the work of Israeli political scientist Barak Mendelsohn, who used the ideology of Al-Qaeda as an example to illustrate this thesis (Mendelsohn 2005, 61).

Some scholars have produced especially interesting studies that simultaneously point out the global nature of the jihadist movement and also address the existing regional agendas that might actually be even more relevant than its declared global pretensions. The work of British Arabic linguistics specialist Elisabeth Kendall is an interesting example of this approach that deserves detailed attention. She used the example of Al-Qaeda to analyze how jihadist propaganda exploits the Arabic poetic tradition. Kendall is interested not so much in the goals bin Laden was pursuing or his organization's ideology as in the propaganda instruments they used to promote the jihadist movement. Her analysis of numerous poetic works by bin Laden and his followers led to the conclusion that jihadist poetry has obvious pre-Islamic roots. Kendall points out that the poetry written by Al-Qaeda jihadists demonstrates that they are immersed in their local, tribal context and that their jihad was often provoked by internal problems (Kendall 2016, 230). In her view, the adoption of forms and styles from the pre-Islamic Arabic tradition occurs both unconsciously and quite consciously, as was the case with bin Laden. In any case, the jihadists do not regard the fact that their poetry draws on pre-Islamic sources as a problem; on the contrary, they are prepared to use that poetry to establish their own authority, just as they use the Quran (Kendall 2016, 229). Kendall states that they adopted this device because it was extremely important to them to demonstrate that they are associated with Arab mass culture rather than a counterculture or subculture (Kendall 2016, 240).

This observation is important in relation to the aforementioned work by Simon Cottee, in which he suggested that the jihadist movement should be regarded as a subculture phenomenon, consisting of marginal people striving to place themselves in opposition to the dominant order. Kendall's work, however, demonstrates that there



are grounds to doubt that the jihadists viewed themselves as a counterculture, or at least we must recognize that there are different forms of jihadism and that any statements about universal characteristics of global jihadism must come with caveats.

In any case, according to Kendall, local cultural material plays a much more important role than has been acknowledged (Kendall 2016, 239). She argues that cultural heritage has the potential to be a powerful propaganda tool when it is reconstructed to have significance that is useful to the jihadists, and therefore even non-Islamic material can be a component of jihadist propaganda (Kendall 2016, 242).

Kendall noted that since bin Laden had no religious authority, this poetic cultural heritage proved to be, in Pierre Bourdieu's terms, cultural capital, which enabled him to acquire more power (Kendall 2016, 238). According to this British Middle East expert, bin Laden and his allies used poetry to make their actions, which appeared illogical and unlawful from an Islamic perspective, seem logical and lawful. They also found images of warriors and their triumphs in this tribal pre-Islamic poetry that fully correspond to the contemporary image of the martyr (Kendall 2016, 237). Furthermore, as has been noted, Al-Qaeda ideologues' claims that they received their instructions directly from Allah were actually a consequence of their lack of religious authority.

Thus, on the one hand we see a picture of the jihadist movement as a counterculture phenomenon, as described by Simon Cottee, Lorenzo Vidino, and other researchers, while Elisabeth Kendall, on the other hand, essentially asserts the opposite, that Al-Qaeda jihadists avoided the counterculture position and strove to demonstrate that they were an authentic part of Arabic culture. In other words, there are clear differences between the strategies used by jihadists in the Arab Middle East and Europe use to promote their ideologies. In this regard, according to Elisabeth Kendall, literary analysis can be used to shed light on the contemporary political landscape (Kendall 2016, 230). Kendall used the terminology of French poststructuralist philosopher Jean-François Lyotard to claim that jihadist ideologues from Al-Qaeda have created a kind of new *grand récit*, or "grand narrative" (Kendall 2016, 227).

In my opinion, the fact that some Muslims in Europe may be motivated to pursue jihad by "non-Islamic" hip-hop, while those in Arab countries may be motivated to do the same by ancient pre-Islamic poetry, means that this grand utopian narrative of the creation of an Islamic state as a result of a "jihad against the infidels" is formed from whatever material is ready to hand and can yield results in a specific set of circumstances. In this instance, it is not important whether jihadists

make this case consciously or unconsciously. In poststructuralist terms, this picture is like a *bricolage* randomly assembled from diverse pieces, in which the terms *jihad* and *caliphate*<sup>6</sup> play the role of brands that can represent extremely varied agendas. For some, that might be the countercultural revolt of the migrant, guided by his surroundings, and for others it might be just the opposite, an effort to conform to the dominant cultural tradition in order to unite against the new colonialism. The strategies and motivations can be as different as the ideological content of their messages; the same applies to the forms in which they express those ideas. The one factor that remains unchanged is that jihad (understood to mean armed opposition to the “infidels” and the Western world) takes priority in their struggle. Since there were quite obviously a large number of factors involved in the formation of jihadism, a full understanding of the phenomenon requires a comprehensive analysis of all of its manifestations in different regions of the world.

### **Jihad in the Northern Caucasus: Regional or Global? A Brief History of the Question**

The study of regional examples of the jihadist movement also has a very rich and diverse historiography. The main trend among serious studies of this problem is an acknowledgement of the internal causes behind the emergence of armed struggle in the name of jihad (see Bonnefoy 2012). At the same time, when researchers discuss the ideological element of the movement, they describe it as part of a global jihadist ideology.

The same applies to the Northern Caucasus. There are a significant number of scholarly works dedicated to this region; they analyze a wide variety of aspects of jihadism, including the ideological dimension of the movement. As is the case for other regions of the world, the dominant trend here is also one of studying the problem as part of a global jihadism, that is, of identifying the ideological and organizational connections with extremist groups from the Middle East. For example, this type might include the work of British military research specialist Domitilla Sagramoso, who explained the radicalization of jihadist fighters and extremists in the Northern Caucasus as the result of the influence of global Salafist jihadism, which penetrated the area through students who had studied in Arab countries (Sagramoso

6. This term is derived from an Arabic word meaning “inheritance.” The Muslim state created by the Prophet Muhammad in the 7th century was called the Caliphate. This word is now used to refer to a supranational theocratic Islamic state.

2012, 567). British political scientist Roland Dannreuther advanced a similar argument, writing that the Islamization of the insurrectionist movement in the Northern Caucasus is associated with its integration into global, transnational jihad (Dannreuther 2010, 109–26). The Australian researchers Ben Rich and Dara Conduit reached essentially the same conclusions, writing that the armed Chechen paramilitary opposition proved subject to foreign Salafist framing (Rich 2015). At the same time, both Domitilla Sagramoso and Roland Dannreuther note that the movement of North Caucasian fighters was initially caused by local social and political problems.

The Russian-American Middle East expert Alexander Knysh argued in his study of the ideology of the jihadist organization known as the “Caucasian Emirate”<sup>7</sup> that there is nothing original to be found in the ideas of the North Caucasian jihadists. In his opinion, analogous ideas of Muslim opposition to the enemies of the *Ummah* can be traced in the works of the Salafist and fundamentalist authors Sayyid Qutb (1906–1966) and Abul A’la Maududi (1903–1979). Furthermore, Knysh points out that contemporary jihadists from the Northern Caucasus actively use Arabic and Islamic terminology, which also makes them closer to foreign jihadists.

This line of research treating Northern Caucasian jihadism as part of a worldwide jihadist movement continues in a collection edited by Stephen Blank and published by the American War College, which focused on studying the international factors that influenced the formation of the “Caucasian Emirate.” The authors primarily emphasize how typical the ideology of that organization was of the international Salafist/jihadist movement.

One specific chapter of this book is especially relevant for my research.<sup>8</sup> The author of this chapter, American scholar Gordon Hahn, writes that the ideology of the “Caucasian Emirate” is precisely the same as the Salafist ideology preached by Al-Qaeda and other groups in the global jihadist revolutionary alliance (Blank 2012, 4). Hahn thinks that the jihadist ideology itself is a major driving force for jihad in the region (Blank 2012, 27–28).

While the importance of studying the international connections of jihadists from the Northern Caucasus cannot be denied, I believe that

7. See Knysh. More specifically, Knysh studied the main Internet portal used by jihadists in the Northern Caucasus, Kavkazcenter.com, as well as speeches by several ideologues of this movement: Dokka Umarov, Anzor Astemirov, and Movladi Udugov.

8. It is entitled “The Caucasus Emirate Jihadists: The Security and Strategic Implications.”

concentrating exclusively on that question makes it impossible to understand this phenomenon in its totality, to explain the reasons for its popularity in the post-Soviet space, and to see what makes it unique and distinct. It is, however, the study of the internal factors behind the emergence of the jihadist movement and its ideology in the Northern Caucasus that, in my opinion, has proven undervalued in the existing historiography on this question. Nonetheless, a small corpus of research serves as an excellent illustration of how significant these internal roots truly are.

Several works by Irina Starodubrovskaja offer a close analysis of the internal social and economic reasons for the formation of the jihadist movement in the Northern Caucasus (Starodubrovskaja and Sokolov 2013, 277). There have also been other studies on the internal factors that affected the formation of the jihadist ideology in the Northern Caucasus. For example, Michael Kemper pointed out that the Russian journalistic tradition and the songs of Soviet soldiers in the Second World War obviously influenced the jihadist discourse employed by propagandists of the “Caucasian Emirate” (Kemper 2012, 273). Kemper also noted that the range of Islamic terms that those propagandists actively used was not actually very broad, and that the Islamic phraseology they employed was rather simple. In other words, their jihadist language was not grounded in deep Islamic education (Kemper 2012, 293).

Another author who devoted significant attention to the fact that the jihadist discourse in the Northern Caucasus has a Soviet-Russian intellectual layer, in addition to the Arabic-Islamic one, was the American historian Dmitry Shlapentokh. In his opinion, researchers have yet to give the influence of Russian cultural and political traditions on jihadist ideology the attention it merits (Shlapentokh 2012, 276). According to Shlapentokh, the influence of Eurasianist ideas, Russian Marxism, and Russian messianism can be felt quite keenly in the ideology of the jihadists in the Northern Caucasus during the first stage of the Russian-Chechen conflict. He does, however, contend that the jihadists in Russia shifted to the style of Islamist ideology during the second stage.

Vladimir Bobrovnikov also identified clear Soviet and post-Soviet themes in the propagandistic ideology of Northern Caucasian jihadists (Bobrovnikov 2011, 291–301). More specifically, he pointed out the fact that the Islamic polemical genre of documentary films in the Northern Caucasus was influenced not only by the Islamic missionary tradition, but also to a significant degree by Soviet propaganda from the Cold War period, including anti-Western and anti-Semitic elements. Furthermore, Bobrovnikov argues that the influence of (post-)

Soviet pop culture is also quite apparent, especially in the production of Internet videos on *shahids*.<sup>9</sup>

Czech researchers Emil Souleimanov and Ondrej Ditrych pointed out analogous internal roots for jihadism in the Northern Caucasus in their work on blood feuds as a factor in the region (Souleimanov 2008, 1199–1222). Similarly, Russian ethnographer Akhmet Yarlykapov denied that militants in the Northern Caucasus were fighting to establish a “world caliphate” (Yarlykapov 2014, 215).

Valery Tishkov’s work on the fact that “in Chechnya, motifs of Chechen greatness and Islamic messianism coexisted with the expansionist idea of liberating the Caucasus from the imperial domination of Russia and creating a unified ‘house of the Caucasus’ or ‘Caucasian confederation,’” has particular significance for this study. According to Tishkov, the primary ideologues of such projects were Zelimkhan Yandarbiev and Movladi Udugov, as well as a relatively sizable contingent of writers, political journalists, and historians who emerged in Chechnya (Tishkov 2001, 466). Udugov and Yandarbiev created quite a large body of texts justifying and conceptualizing their jihadists struggle, which means that they are also relevant.

While Valery Tishkov is absolutely right, it must be noted that this expansionist messianism was clearly “Soviet” in nature. In fact, this phenomenon cannot even be regarded as fully unconscious, since the works of both of these ideologues drew clear parallels between their own views and the policies of the Soviet Union.

### **Zelimkhan Yandarbiev: The USSR, the West, and the Islamic World**

Zelimkhan Yandarbiev, a former member of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Soviet Writers’ Union, an alumnus of the Advanced Literary Courses at the Maxim Gorky Literature Institute and the philology department of the Chechen-Ingush State University, devoted significant attention to the formation of the concepts behind political and military struggle (Yandarbiev 2016). Therefore, he left behind a certain number of rather interesting works, which occupy a prominent place in the body of texts by Russian-language jihadists, and can be used to develop a sense of the intellectual space they occupied.

9. The term “shahid” comes from an Arabic word that is translated as “witness” and used not only to refer to, for example, a witness at a trial, but also in the sense of “a martyr for the faith” who died in battle in the name of the Almighty.

Specifically, in 1996, Zelimkhan Yandarbiev published a book in Lviv entitled *Chechnya: The Battle for Freedom*. This book was a collection of his works, written both in the early and mid-1990s. It began with a poem by Alvadi Shaikhiev (born 1947), a Chechen poet who was also a graduate of the Advanced Literary Courses, with the characteristic title “In Chechnya There Is a Jihad.”

Yandarbiev describes his own struggle using Muslim/jihadist terminology. Furthermore, the same collection included his material from the early 1990s, in which there was no obvious “appeal to Islam.” This material constitutes evidence that he was already searching for supranational forms of unification that could bring the entire Caucasus together in a struggle against Russian power in the early 1990s.

For example, he developed the concept of the “Caucasian character” (literally “Caucasianness”) — a certain common spirit of freedom and independence that he claimed was characteristic of that region’s people (Yandarbiev 1996, 100). In the chapter entitled “The Caucasian Character,” written in 1990, Yandarbiev refers to Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit* to demonstrate the existence of a unique “Caucasian race.” Furthermore, according to Yandarbiev, the Caucasian character is a kind of national identity that unites all of the people of the Caucasus, including even the Russian Cossacks.

Moscow, however, supposedly provokes ethnic and religious conflicts between these peoples in order to colonize them. Therefore, according to Yandarbiev, the peoples of the Caucasus need political unity against Russia’s imperialist policies. It is important to note that Yandarbiev also includes the Russian Cossacks in this project, thereby adding a certain messianic enthusiasm to his message, which serves to elevate it above interethnic problems. It is quite clear that Yandarbiev was, in a sense, repurposing the trappings of Soviet ideology in this book. His rhetoric recalls the style of Soviet propaganda, but redirected against Moscow itself; in effect, he claims that these peoples can only truly develop within the framework of a larger supranational political structure (in Soviet terms, that would be the USSR), while external imperial forces (in the language of Soviet propaganda, that would be the West) are attempting to prevent that from happening.

In order to prove that his project of supranational unification for the peoples of the Caucasus was relevant, Yandarbiev had to persuade his readers that Soviet ethnic policy had failed. For example, in his chapter “Essence and Elements of National Unity,” he criticizes Soviet ethnic policy as not being in the interests of the Soviet peoples.

Yandarbiev claims that it was precisely this idea that Soviet dissident writer Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn (1918–2008) meant when he wrote in his novel *The Gulag Archipelago* that Soviet power was never actually accepted by the spirit of the people. According to Yandarbiev, the deportation of Chechens to Central Asia, as well as the painful methods used to establish communist control in the Northern Caucasus in the 1920s–30s, led Chechens to develop a clear distinction between “ours” and “not ours [theirs],” that is, the government, which they perceived as belonging to no one.

Solzhenitsyn was not the only author that Yandarbiev referred to who became relevant in the post-Soviet period. In particular, he refers to the opinions of Abdurakhman Avtorkhanov (1908–1997), an American political scientist of Chechen ancestry and a tireless critic of Soviet policy. Yandarbiev cited him while substantiating his thesis that the branches of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in the national republics of the USSR did not fight for the rights and interests of the peoples they formally represented. He also cites Italian journalist and socialist historian Giuseppe Boffa (1923–1998), also regarded as an anti-Soviet author in the USSR, whose most famous book, *The History of the Soviet Union*, could only be published with the onset of perestroika. Citing that book, Yandarbiev states that the policy of the Soviet authorities led the country to a political and economic crisis. All of these factors together, in his opinion, impelled the peoples of the USSR toward active participation in the country’s political life.

As can be seen from the events that followed in the Northern Caucasus in the 1990s, Zelimkhan Yandarbiev’s search for a new political project led him to support the so-called Islamic turn taken by the ideology of those who fought on behalf of the self-proclaimed Republic of Ichkeria in the second half of the decade, and the promotion of a project to create a new political entity in the region — an Islamic state. In 2000, Yandarbiev even published a book entitled *Jihad and the Problems of the Contemporary World*, in which he argues in support of the need for jihad and lays out his understanding of its place in the context of modernity.

Only a portion of this text appears to be available at time of writing,<sup>10</sup> but it is enough to show that Yandarbiev discusses a bipolar world, where one pole is the Christian world, with its inter-

10. Yandarbiev’s Facebook page, which was later deleted, included several portions of his book, which I have preserved in Word format for my own archives.



ests defended by the UN, NATO, other international organizations, and the governments of the Western countries, and the other is the Muslim world, which, in his view, lacks any such clear defenders. According to his position, the USSR, as the leader of the socialist camp, once constituted the second pole, but after its collapse, the Muslim world played that role. Yandarbiev asserts that the Christian countries saw the Islamic world as their new enemy, which had great political and economic potential. He contended that representatives of other religions who were politically, economically, and technologically dependent on the Western world found themselves at the same pole as the Islamic world. In his opinion, they would serve as a bargaining chip for the Western world in its struggle with Islam and would be destroyed if the Islamic world fell. Therefore, according to Yandarbiev, the specific potential of the Islamic world makes it the leader of this second pole at which the countries that had been wronged by the West found themselves. The style of Soviet propaganda, which declared the USSR the leader of the worldwide anti-colonial movement, is easily recognizable in this rhetoric, but in the language of Yandarbiev, the project he himself was supporting and formulating, that is, the creation of an Islamic state, took the place of the USSR. In that context, he regarded the Chechens as the vanguard of the world Islamic community. As Yandarbiev wrote, the messianic role of protecting the weak from “the strong of this world,” required following the path of jihad, including “the jihad in Chechnya (Ichkeria).”

For Yandarbiev, jihad *a priori* meant a military conflict, which should not only yield a victory for Muslims, but also bring happiness to all of humanity. Certain eschatological elements of the texts notwithstanding, Yandarbiev was primarily discussing jihad in a sociopolitical rather than theological register.

Yandarbiev practically never uses specifically Islamic terminology or cites Muslim sources when discussing jihad. He builds his primary argument in favor of the need for jihad on the idea of justice, which was violated by the Western powers. This is also related to his rhetoric, which uses the style of Soviet propaganda. In this fashion, he attempts to grant the conflict in Chechnya a high mission as one of the stages of a struggle for the future of humanity. This framing of a bipolar world in which the Islamic world has taken the place of the USSR, as well as the reuse of the logic and arguments of Soviet propaganda are entirely explicable as products of Yandarbiev’s Soviet professional and educational experience.

## Movladi Udugov: The Bolsheviks, Karl Marx, and the Quran

Movladi Udugov is another example of the same phenomenon. Unlike Yandarbiev, during the Soviet years he managed to become a candidate for membership in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union but was not accepted because he expressed nationalistic views (“Udugov obvinil” 2006). According to some reports, in addition to being trained at the economics department of Chechen-Ingush State University, he also spent some time at the journalism department of Leningrad State University and worked as a journalist for the Chechen newspaper *Komsomol'skoe plemia* [Komsomol banner] (Pylev 1999; “Udugov obvinil” 2006). In the 1990s, Udugov essentially became one of the main ideologues for the fighters who were active in Chechnya, and in the 2000s, he was one of the ideologues of the jihadists of the “Caucasus Emirate.” Udugov was referred to as the “Chechen Goebbels” in the 1990s, since he waged an information war with Moscow as Dudaev’s press secretary and then as the minister of information of Ichkeria. He then became one of the figures who supported the so-called Islamist turn in the ideology of the fighters in the Northern Caucasus and created the well-known website Kavkazcenter.com, which became the main informational portal for the “Caucasian Emirate” and Russian-language jihadist propaganda in general.

Like Zelimkhan Yandarbiev, Movladi Udugov declared that his struggle would not be limited to the Northern Caucasus; his ambitions became broader, extending to the rest of Russia. In one of his interviews, he refers to regions such as Tatarstan and Bashkortostan, which have traditionally been home to many Muslims, as well as Buryatia, Tyumen, Vladivostok, and Moscow, which he claimed were home to many Russians who had accepted Islam and sworn allegiance to the leader of the “Caucasian Emirate,” Dokka Umarov. Udugov also calls on other Russians to follow their example since he holds that Sharia should serve as an alternate way of seeking a special “Russian path” (Udugov 2008). In other words, he does not demonize the Russian people as an enemy, but instead includes them discursively in what he believes should be the world’s dominant project.

As will become apparent, Movladi Udugov’s rhetoric could more accurately be called expansionist than separatist. Udugov proposes an alternative path to greatness for Russia, one within the framework of a larger community, that is, the world *Ummah*. In this regard, Udugov might be counted as part of the circle of Russian intellectuals, like monarchists or Eurasianists, who sought new great ideological pro-

jects that might be capable of taking the place of the former communist narrative that disappeared after the fall of the Soviet Union.

In this context, it is striking that Udugov's descriptions of ways to fight for Shariah refer to historical parallels drawn from the Soviet past, which were intended to serve as examples for contemporary Muslims. For example, in 2005 he and his "Islamic Center for Strategic Research" published a large text entitled "Thoughts of a Mujahid," in which he stated that Muslims must follow the example of the Bolsheviks in developing a strategy for their struggle for power (Kavkazcenter 2005).

Udugov argued that communism and the Muslim religion had obvious shared principles. More specifically, he held that the ideas of self-sacrifice and social justice played central roles in both Islam and Bolshevik ideology (Kavkazcenter 2006a). Furthermore, he concluded that the methods the Bolsheviks used to organize their state were similar to Muslim ones. For example, he compared the functioning of the Bolshevik "Soviets [Workers' Councils]" as the foundation for a new Soviet form of statehood with *shura* (from an Arabic word that also translates as "council"), the Islamic principle of consultation as the foundation for Islamic governance. Udugov sees a whole range of obviously similar stories in the histories of Islam and Bolshevism. He argues that the Communists established their power using the technology of Shariah and the historical experience of Islam.

Udugov wrote that the Bolsheviks, like the Muslims, had sacred scripture: Karl Marx's *Capital*. Furthermore, Communism, like Islam, had the idea of a holy war for the faith, which, also like Islam, enabled it to spread halfway around the world in a single generation. Udugov pointed out that the Bolsheviks also had to undergo a process of relocation — from the Russian Empire to Europe, in their case. The reader is apparently meant to draw a parallel with the hegira, the relocation of the Prophet Muhammad and his companions from Mecca to Medina. Udugov cites Soviet People's Commissar of Enlightenment Anatoly Lunacharsky to prove that the Bolsheviks viewed their ideology as nearly religious in nature.

Thus, Udugov states that the Bolsheviks simply repurposed the Islamic experience, which demonstrated the need for contemporary Muslims to remember their history. For example, he held that Muslims, like the Bolsheviks in their time, should not participate in democratic systems, which are alien to them. Udugov wrote about the fact that Bolshevik authority was only able to endure for seventy years; since, however, the world needs a force to oppose the West, he was proposing a new project, which was meant to be a *de facto* replacement for the USSR, that is, an Islamic Caliphate.

In his article “Thoughts of a Mujahid,” Udugov refers to Marx, Lunacharsky, and Solzhenitsyn, but does not cite any Muslim author. It must be noted that citations of Muslim authorities were also quite rare in his other texts. Furthermore, Udugov’s language was not rich in Arabic or specifically Islamic terminology. Like many post-Soviet authors, he criticized Western political values and institutions, proposing that Russia follow its own special path.

The example of Movladi Udugov is largely representative of post-Soviet jihadists. This is particularly true of jihadists who took center stage in the politics of the Northern Caucasus during the 1990s, and who were Soviet people, socialized in the late Soviet period. Like Udugov, most of them did not receive Muslim education abroad, and, as a rule, were not Arabic speakers. At the same time, they had substantial experience being socialized in the Soviet Union, including a Soviet education and sometimes a fully successful career, and as a consequence, Soviet intellectual baggage. This experience left a noticeable imprint on why and how they formulated their post-Soviet ideology and their arguments for jihad.

The collapse of the USSR and the fall of its communist ideology did not simply create an ideological vacuum; it also kicked a whole generation to the curb of history, after they had attached their hopes for the future to that vast country. In essence, it was these people who became the leaders of the new Ichkeria. It is possible that many of them, like Dzhokhar Dudaev, Aslan Maskhadov, Shamil Basaev, and Dokka Umarov, who had lived and built their careers outside of Chechnya until the early 1990s, saw returning there as an act of ethnic patriotism, but in practice it was an attempt to create a new grand Islamic project as a substitute for the now-collapsed USSR.

### **Iasin Rasulov, Said Buriatskii, and Anzor Astemirov: The Legend of the Mankurts, Passionarity, and the Arab Lexicon**

In the post-Soviet period, many representatives of the Soviet and, soon after, Russian humanities intelligentsia from the North Caucasus, joined the ranks of the militants in the Northern Caucasus and strove to justify the jihadist struggle there. They used historical arguments that were meant to vindicate their struggle. This led to the formation of their own mythology, based on historical material drawn from both the local context and the entire Soviet Union/Russian Federation. The jihadist ideologues were striving to simultaneously deconstruct ethnic

and Soviet historical myths and create their own, sometimes by constructing continuity with the region's past.

To some extent, these jihadists could be regarded as participants in the so-called memory wars<sup>11</sup> that were characteristic of the post-Soviet intellectual space (Shnirel'man 2003). For example, some criticized various nationalist narratives<sup>12</sup> and interpreted the region's past in their own way, as did Timur Mutsuraev, who called himself "the bard of jihad," and who referred to the history of the Chechen people of the Northern Caucasus in his work (Mutsuraev 1998). The literary legacy left by the jihadist intellectuals of the Northern Caucasus is, of course, a rich source for research purposes.<sup>13</sup>

Their participation in the wars of memory was accompanied by the device of providing historical justifications for the rightness of their cause, which was typical for the post-Soviet period. For example, in 2005, Iasin Rasulov, a former graduate student at the Dagestan Academy of Sciences and an ideologue of the Dagestani jihadist group Sharia (which became part of the "Caucasian Emirate" in 2007) published a long programmatic text entitled "Jihad in the North Caucasus: Supporters and Detractors," which was used to justify militant jihadist activity via manipulation of historical fact and appeals to historical memory from a jihadist position (Rasulov 2016). Rasulov's text is dedicated to the history of jihad in the Northern Caucasus from the 18th to early 21st century. It was published immediately after he went underground, and was his first and only work, in which he attempted to somehow justify, explicate, and conceptualize the jihadist struggle in the North Caucasus.

11. For example, Said Buriatskii's article, "The Hero of Truth and Falsehood" [Geroi istiny i lzhi] strives to prove the falsehood of Buryat, Karelian, and even American myths. Furthermore, he strives to debunk famous Soviet mythologems such as the stories of Pavlik Morozov, Zoia Kosmodemianskaia, and Alexander Matrosov.
12. Iasin Rasulov, an Avar, criticized the muftiate of Dagestan for adherence to the trends represented by a sheikh identified exclusively with that ethnicity, Said Afandi al-Chirkawi (Chirkeiskii) (1937–2012) and intolerance of sheikhs of other ethnicities. Anzor Astemirov, a Kabardian, criticized the leadership of Kabardino-Balkaria for the creation of ethnic myths. Movladi Udugov, a Chechen, criticized the Chechen nationalists who had left for the West and had spoken out against the jihadist struggle waged by militants in the North Caucasus.
13. One such example is the 1998 book *Chechens in the Russo-Caucasian War* [Chechentsy v russko-kavkazskoi voine] by Field Commander Dalhan Hozhaev (1961–2000), who was a graduate of the history department of Chechen-Ingush State University and who spent the Soviet years working in a museum dedicated to the region's history. His book collected the biographies of famous Chechens who supported the Caucasus-wide uprising of Imam Shamil during the Caucasian War of 1817–1864. Hozhaev described this uprising in the terms of a holy Islamic war — *gazavat*.

The conceptual framework for this text was, rather unexpectedly, provided by the views of famous Soviet writer Chinghiz Aitmatov (1928–2008) on the historical process. Early in the book, Rasulov includes a large excerpt from his novel, *The Day Lasts More than a Hundred Years*, specifically the “legend of the mankurts.”<sup>14</sup> This quotation accounts for almost a third of Rasulov’s preface. Aitmatov’s legend of the mankurts becomes a kind of frame for Rasulov, serving to explain the necessity for his own text as a solution to the lack of historical memory. He writes that, in his opinion, a person cannot permit himself to be transformed into a mankurt and is obligated to know his “true past.” Rasulov claims that it is only through “historical memory” that one can understand the truth of events in the contemporary Caucasus. For Rasulov, historical excursus is only necessary to understand modernity, or, in other words, to vindicate both his own actions and those of like-minded individuals in the “Shariah” movement.

Rasulov used terms like “mankurt,” “historical memory,” and “historical amnesia” several times in his text. This naturally raises a question: why did a Soviet writer prove so necessary to one of the ideologues of jihadism in the Northern Caucasus? The key fact is that Aitmatov was regarded not only as a classic Soviet author, but also as an important name for post-Soviet culture. During that period, his term “mankurt” became very popular among Russian writers, historians, and ideologues of many different schools. Svetlana Boym was actually referring to this phenomenon when she wrote that Soviet intellectuals of the Glasnost period were fighting for the right not to be mankurts (Boym 2002, 294). Victor Shnirelman also notes that Chinghiz Aitmatov’s figure of the mankurt achieved extraordinary popularity in late Soviet and post-Soviet folklore (the struggle with the mankurt phenomenon) (Shnirel’man 2006, 14; see also Coombs 2011, 47–64 and Atkin 1993, 151–58). Shnirelman indicates that this figure is fully analogous to the ideas of Lev Gumilev (1912–1992), and specifically his images of “chimeras” and “mongrels,” people who have completely lost their ancestors’ attainments. Accordingly, there are grounds to claim that the metaphorical image of the mankurt was a post-Soviet cultural phenomenon and a marker of post-Soviet language.

14. According to the legend created by Chinghiz Aitmatov, the mankurts were slaves who had forgotten their past.

Returning to Rasulov's work, it is worth noting that the primary thesis of his text is that all of the uprisings of the Caucasian peoples against Russian power from the 18th to 21st centuries were links in a single chain, an anti-colonial movement based on the ideology of Salafism. In his view, such legendary figures for the North Caucasus as Imam Shamil (1797–1871), Sheikh Mansur (1760–1794), and Ghazi Muhammad (1795–1832), were Salafists, rather than Sufis, as the official view would have it. Rasulov created a heroicized image of the North Caucasian rebels. At the conclusion of his work, Rasulov cites Chinghiz Aitmatov once again, in order to convince the reader of the importance of avoiding failures of historical memory.

Another key feature of Rasulov's text is the fact that it was created according to the rules of the Russian academic tradition: footnotes, introduction and conclusion, and a clear formulation of the question under study and the goal of the work. Rasulov does not rely on Shariah-based arguments to justify jihad, and instead states that jihad — and specifically Salafist jihad — is a normal, historically grounded way for the peoples of the North Caucasus to interact with Russia.

Developing this theme, Rasulov refers to such famous Russian scholars of the eastern world (Orientalists) as Leonid Sukianen, Vladimir Bobrovnikov, and Alexander Malashenko. He also quotes Pushkin, the Russian Emperor Nicholas I, Dagestani political figures from the past, and even contemporary Russian-Israeli writer and journalist Israel Shamir. Although Rasulov does refer to the Quran several times, Islamic scholars and thinkers are not included among the authorities he draws upon to build his argument. Rasulov is an interesting example of the use of academic style to argue in support of the jihadist movement in the contemporary North Caucasus.

Another of the leaders and ideologues of the terrorist group known as the Caucasian Emirate, Said Buriatskii, published a programmatic article entitled "Istishhad: Between Truth and Falsehood" in 2009.<sup>15</sup> This was his first and only text, which was exclusively dedicated to his interpretation of the causes of jihadism and people's readiness to die while walking that path (*istishhad*)<sup>16</sup> with extensive text along a broad historical timeline, from the creation of the Caliphate to the contemporary jihadist movement in the Northern Caucasus.

Buriatskii, who had some degree of (incomplete) Islamic education, since he attended a Russian madrasa in Buguruslan and briefly studied

15. For more on Said Buriatskii and Lev Gumilev, see Garaev 2017.

16. *Istishhad*, which comes from the word *shahid*, refers to the act of dying as a martyr.



Arabic in Egypt, does not appear as a Muslim scholar in this text. At the very beginning of the text, he indicates that he will not offer Shariah-based justifications for the jihadist movement. Furthermore, like other jihadists, such as Movladi Udugov, Zelimkhan Yandarbiev, and Iasin Rasulov, Buriatskii does not mention Muslim authors at all in his argument for jihad.

In order to explain the phenomena of *istishhad* and jihad, he refers to the theory of passionarity, developed by the aforementioned Lev Gumilev, whom the author states he read as early as grade school. For Buriatskii, Gumilev's theory offered the highly attractive category of "the quality of sacrifice" or "the quality of self-sacrifice"; hence, his paraphrase of Gumilev's formulation states that people's ability to sacrifice themselves is the point of peak development for any civilization's passionarity.

By making this category central to his explanatory model, Buriatskii, in my view, is attempting to change the attitude of Russian society toward the phenomenon of suicide attackers ("shahids") from the negative image of a terrorist fanatic to the more noble image of a martyr. Furthermore, it speaks to Buriatskii's concept of the audience he was addressing. It will become apparent that he was striving to present himself to them not only as a Muslim ideologue, but also as a thinker with a Russian intellectual foundation.

As we will see, though both Said Buriatskii and Iasin Rasulov were representatives of the generation of jihadists that followed Yandarbiev and Udugov, they remained quite close to their ideological forebears. The main difference was that they had some degree of Islamic knowledge and biographies that were unconnected with the First and Second Chechen Wars. It must be noted, however, that their lexicon and choice of authoritative sources to draw upon when arguing in support of jihad reveals them, like Udugov and Yandarbiev, as Russian intellectuals in the post-Soviet mold who use language that is familiar and comprehensible for Russian-speaking readers.

One cannot, of course, state that all of the jihadist ideologues of that generation avoided using extensive Muslim/Arabic terminology and consistent Islamic arguments. For example, one exception to this type was Anzor Astemirov, who was practically the only one of the best-known leaders of the jihadist movements in the 1990s–2000s to receive a systematic Muslim education in an Arab country. The language used by Astemirov, who spent several years in the 1990s studying in Saudi Arabia and had the status of a Sharia judge in the Caucasian Emirate in the 2000s, was most markedly influenced by Arabic. Furthermore, he often cited Muslim authors, including so-called Salafists,

like Ibn Taymiyyah (1263–1328)<sup>17</sup> and al-Albani (1914–1999).<sup>18</sup> More specifically, this can be seen in his main work justifying jihad, entitled “Jihad against Apostates” [*Dzhikhad protiv verootstupnikov*], which was published in 2007 (Sayfullah 2007). This instance, however, is best described as the exception that proves the rule. Apparently, the use of Arabic and Muslim terminology had symbolic significance for Anzor Astemirov, a Sharia judge, and was intended to legitimize his special religious status. Nonetheless, Astemirov, like Buriatskii, Rasulov, and other jihadist ideologues, obviously understood what kind of audience they were addressing. Therefore, despite the fact that the aforementioned work often includes Arabic/Islamic terms, each of them is followed by a Russian translation in parentheses. Furthermore, the reverse process also occurred, with Russian terms used in the text being followed by Arabic translations, also in parentheses.<sup>19</sup>

As such, Astemirov’s texts might be called a unique manual on the translation of Islamic terminology into Russian and vice versa. It is obvious that Astemirov himself understood that neither the majority of Muslim youth in the North Caucasus, nor the Russian-language audience beyond the Islamic space would have understood text rich in Arabic/Islamic terminology. It was this that led to the constant linguistic switch code within a single text.

The intermediary position of Astemirov’s language may be a sign of a gradual transition of post-Soviet jihadist language to more globalized variants that have lost the Soviet roots and post-Soviet stylistics, forms, and content that were characteristic for both Astemirov’s predecessors and his intellectual allies in the Caucasian Emirate. These variants drew closer to the style of ISIS’s contemporary propaganda work.

The examples of the aforementioned Northern Caucasian ideologues are quite revealing; they spoke Russian in the fullest sense of the word, that is, on the level of symbols, terms, and cultural codes that were recognizable to Russian-language readers. Essentially, the available evidence suggests that these ideologues were referring to those authors who had either acquired particular popularity in the Russian-language environ-

17. A Muslim theologian and jurist of the Hanbali legal school who is famous as a critic of innovation (*bid'ah*) in Islam. Today, he is typically considered a forerunner of so-called Salafism.

18. A contemporary Islamic theological and hadith scholar who is regarded as one of the most authoritative figures in the so-called Salafist current of Islam.

19. Another example of work by Astemirov is his text “Amir Sayfullah’s Answers to Muslims’ Questions,” see Kavkazcenter 2006b.

ment in the late or post-Soviet period, or who were an important part of the official Soviet narrative. The ideas and terminology of authors like Chinghiz Aitmatov and Lev Gumilev, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn and Anatoly Lunacharsky, do more than permeate the jihadist discourse. To some extent, the Russian jihadist discourse was formed and even engendered by the ideas and legacy of these authors. In this regard, the Soviet cultural field (both dissident and officially sanctioned) and Russian radicalism proved sufficiently broad to find a place for Islamic radicalism.

Thus, it is no coincidence that jihadist ideologues almost always avoid debates on Sharia or theology when discussing jihad. The works of all of these authors are not simply arguments and justifications for jihad. Rather, they are investigating it, attempting to trace its genealogy. Stylistically, it is at times shaped by Soviet/Russian academic tradition, rather than any religious tradition.

There is not actually anything terribly Islamic in the Russian-language jihadist discourse of the period. The problems that the jihadist authors under consideration here touch upon and the forms in which they express their ideas, and, as a matter of fact, many of those ideas themselves, along with the terminology and the authorities they cite, are primarily non-Muslim in origin. Russian-language jihadism can be seen as a phenomenon with palpable Soviet and post-Soviet roots and fits rather well into the ideological/intellectual and cultural trends of post-Soviet Russia.

In my view, this study demonstrates that this phenomenon cannot be exclusively identified with regional or global jihadism. The example of the Northern Caucasus shows that this dichotomy is not useful. In this case, in addition to the regional ethnic variable and the global Islamic one, a third variable emerges, the (post-)Soviet one, that is, the interconnected Soviet intellectual heritage and post-Soviet political agenda. It is this third variable that was largely responsible for shaping the jihadist discourse, affecting its language, content, and style, and thereby constituting yet another example of post-Soviet radicalism, which can be placed alongside Eurasianism, monarchism, and the various forms of Russian imperial nationalism.

In Elisabeth Kendall's terms, positioning the problem of jihadism between regional (ethnic or subcultural) projects and the global Islamic project represents a failure to take into account the potential influence of other universalist metanarratives (the Soviet one, in this case) on jihadist ideologues. I would suggest that post-Soviet people, accustomed to thinking in terms of the categories of metanarratives, responded to the failure of one of them by turning to jihad as an alternative, as a way to continue struggling for revolution, but now under the new banner of jihad.

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## Round Table: What Is Happening in the Islamic World? An Attempt at a Conceptualization

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*This round table addressed the question of research methodologies for those trends now observable in the Islamic world, as well as conceptual approaches for understanding current developments there. Such frameworks as Islamic reformation, a neomodern age, and the search for a political Islamic identity were proposed. Participants did not agree about the relationship between Islamic fundamentalism and modernity. Some of them considered fundamentalism as potentially a modernist movement, and others saw it only as antimodernist and archaic. In this respect, they raised the question of balance between declared goals and real impact on social development — in other words, can those groups that call for a return to the past actually facilitate movement forward? The participants paid particular attention to terminology. They also actively discussed the issue of language for scientific analysis and the language that different Islamic movements used to present themselves, and whether they were necessarily interconnected or could be fully autonomous.*

**Keywords:** Islam, Islamic world, Islamism, Martin Luther, fundamentalism, Reformation, modernity.

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IRINA STARODUBROVSKAYA: Respected colleagues, we have all noticed that there is now a heightened interest in the Islamic world. Something is clearly happening there. There are such processes occurring as religious renewal, increased conflict, and a sharp rise in the political role of fundamentalist views, which call for a return to the sources and a rebirth of the Islamic caliphate. We have gathered here to discuss how to analyze these processes and what kind of conceptual framework would most suitably allow us to understand their essence and perspectives. This round table is dedicated to this fundamental problem. With your permission I will start our discussion.

I would like to discuss Islamic fundamentalism and modernity. At the same time, I will not dwell on whether it is worthwhile to examine these problems in the framework of large narratives. Yes, when we speak of Islamic fundamentalism, when we speak of modernity, we can always say that these are constructs, which do not have clear-cut, real meanings, and it is not worthwhile to work with them. This is a topic that we can discuss, but I do not want to start with it, because we can stray far from the topic of our discussion.

So, I will talk about how Islamic fundamentalism relates to modernity. In order to speak on this topic, we first of all need to define what modernity is, rather than what Islamic fundamentalism is. Because here we can identify two principally different interpretations. One of these interpretations is linear. The era of modernity is an era of progress, a movement away from the accursed past to a bright future. Within this framework, the system of values worked out during the Enlightenment is increasingly realized. This is a very pretty model, but it has one problem. It does not at all correspond to reality. Because, if we look at the modern era as it truly was, we see that it was a series of crises. Starting with the crisis of early modernity, with its urbanization, workhouses, monstrous overcrowding in cities, and repressive laws against vagrancy. Further, the light of the Enlightenment era ended quite quickly, even if we are prepared to consider the guillotine on the Place de Grève as light. The economy is changing, the era of coal and steel is beginning, as is the active monopolization of production. Instead of competition, we see regulation by large economic agents both of economic and all other life, and interaction with the state on that basis. The Enlightenment idea of the limitless strengthening of rationalism and the submission of nature transforms into the idea of the unlimited strengthening of rational or non-rational control of the state, about which Michel Foucault clearly wrote, that institutions of forced detention, insane asylums, and pris-



ons resembled barracks, factories, schools, which in their turn resembled insane asylums and prisons. Later, after the Second World War, for a while the ideas of modernization as a prescription for all of humankind flourished, and then the 60s begin, which are in essence a crisis of High Modernity, the ideology of which was formed in the preceding period.

Finally, we can characterize the existing situation as a kind of challenge of globalization, as some sort of crisis of globalization. The essence of this crisis is that the world has become very small. The world has become very connected by transportation, and we are forced to live alongside cultural strangers. Not simply alongside a person whom we do not personally know, as it was, for example, in the era of urbanization as described by the founders of sociology, but with people who have a different manner of life, different values, different norms. And now is the period in which we learn to live with these cultural strangers. However, for now we are not learning very successfully.

If we are going to speak of modernity as a series of crises, then we might attempt to look at the Islamic revival, which is connected to a rather widespread dissemination of fundamentalist ideas, as the search for an answer to a crisis situation. Because here the situation has turned out to be rather complicated. In essence, several crises have coincided. In many countries, the crisis of early modernization, associated with intense urbanization and an erosion of traditional society, has coincided or almost coincided with the crisis of High Modernity. And if we perceive the era of modernity not as a smooth movement along a previously established arc, but as a search for answers to ever newer challenges, a search often in the dark, a search often by blind touch, then it seems to me fully possible and legitimate to look at the events in the Islamic world as one of the directions of this search. This is actually the first idea I want to tell you about. And now concerning Islamic fundamentalism. This movement goes by different names; some call it Wahhabism, Salafism, or Islamism. Unfortunately, the terminology has not been definitively settled. I will call it either Islamic fundamentalism or nontraditional Islam, as the widest generalized understanding, which in one way or another includes all the others. Ideas about this movement are also very frequently simplistic: that it is a certain type of united movement based on a single ideology, upholding united principles and rejecting modernization as a direction of development. I think that if we try to look at it outside of the fears, myths, stereotypes with which it is often associated, we will see the following picture.

First, large groups of people begin to consider the world in religious categories independently and in various ways. They themselves read the primary sources, and themselves try to make sense of these issues. For them religion becomes not simply a collection of ceremonies and rituals, but an instrument for understanding their surrounding reality. The second thing we see is that people strive to change their lives in accordance with the norms prescribed in religion. Third, in fact, under the slogan of returning to the sources, people have set themselves far apart not only from Western models, but from established traditions. This point is very often interpreted incorrectly: it is believed that a return to the sources is a return to traditions. As I understand it, this is far from the case. When we talk about sources we must understand which sources are being discussed. We are talking about the period of a religion's emergence, the charismatic period, the heroic period, the period when existing structures and attitudes were fractured, when a new ideology won adherents. That is, we are speaking of a period of very active disruption. And then this new ideology adjusts to the rituals of everyday life, to the existing system of interests, to normal practices. Therefore, in reality, a return to the sources is not at all a return to tradition. In many ways it is a rejection of tradition. Furthermore, we see that in all of this there is a good deal of violence. This is the violence of those who try to force others to live by norms that they see as correct, while those others either do not want to or do not know how to live by these norms. This is the violence of adherents of different variants of Islamic ideology in relation to each other. That is, in reality, the environment is imbued with conflicts, opposition, and violence.

Well, essentially, when I enumerate all this evidence we get a picture of the Protestant Reformation, practically in one-to-one correspondence. This is where the idea of the Islamic reformation came from. In fact, from my point of view, this method of evaluating the consequences of the Reformation, which developed in scholarship thanks to Max Weber and other researchers of the modernizing potential of the Reformation, applies very well to the current situation in Islam. Because on the one hand, the reforming, modernizing effect is tied exactly to the destruction of traditional norms and attitudes. That is, it clears the field for something new. Until it is cleared, it is hardly possible to speak of any kind of serious changes. Further, certain values that are proclaimed by fundamentalist Islamic currents carry a truly modernizing character. If in the Reformation the values of conscientious labor were primary, then here it is possible to talk of the

values of education, which are raised up by some in this movement. Here we can speak about the values of a healthy lifestyle, completely contemporary and modern. Here is it possible to speak of the values of the conscientious fulfillment of agreements, and also of other openly modernizing values.

But it seems to me that it is much more interesting in this context to talk about the phenomenon that Max Weber wrote about. His approach, which suggests that certain modernizing values were formed not because of Protestant ideology, but as an unforeseeable and often undesirable consequence of the implementation of certain religious norms, is most interesting. Here the situation is also rather similar. We can talk, for example, about the values of individualism. Again, it is approximately the same as in the Reformation era; people themselves choose their own religious leanings and have the possibility of choice. They do this not because they are embedded in a traditional hierarchy, generational hierarchies, or hierarchies of seniority. They do this directly due to individual decisions. A horizontal community of likeminded people becomes in many situations more important than vertical hierarchies. And essentially in its purer form the ideology suggests that a person should submit to the Almighty and not to other people.

We can talk about education of the law-abiding, so far as the unconditional fulfillment of Shariah law is included in this ideology. An elder or head of a clan cannot determine either the structure of a crime or misdeed or the punishment in this system; only a judge can, by clear-cut, fixed laws. Well, again, we can talk at length about which modernizing values are indirectly formed in this manner. At the same time, in this movement we can see many anti-modernizing values. And, besides this, it is in far from all situations that similar religious schisms are connected with a modernizing agenda, as traditional conflicts between clans, tribes, villages, etc., quite often completely mimic themselves under this religious framework. That is, we have a similar, often complicated, ambiguous picture.

I would say that the result is actually unpredictable, just as the result of the Reformation was in general unpredictable. Because it is unlikely that when Cromwell's "saints" cut off the English king's head anyone would have imagined that England would be the leading industrial power for a long time. Or could anyone imagine when the Protestants immigrated to America in order to build a "city on a hill," practically the kingdom of God on earth, that the United States would be the most advanced democratic government, the first to include the

separation of church and state in the Constitution. In fact, my idea is that the process is very complicated and ambiguous. It's impossible to consider it either as unambiguously modernizing or as unambiguously antimodernizing. And it is important to understand how very different processes, very different ideologies, very different groups in reality coexist in the framework of this seemingly united movement or united process and understand how all this can influence the final result in various ways. I will finish with that. Does anyone have questions or commentary?

VASILY KUZNETSOV: I completely agree with the last paragraph of all you have said.

IRINA STARODUBROVSAIA: Is that the only thing that you agree with?

VASILY KUZNETSOV: No, not the only thing. I'll try to present two perspectives. I have two ideas about how to conceptualize and analyze the current processes. I will not use the term "Islamic world"; I do not like it. I also do not like the term "Islamic fundamentalism." For many reasons, it seems to me that it is not correct. We can still argue over "Islamic world," but as for "Islamic fundamentalism," I never really understand what that is.

One perspective that I suggest is tied directly to the understanding of modernity. It seems to me that we can look at the era of modernity, proposing it as having at least two chronologies. We can speak of a brief modernity, beginning, let's say, with the French Revolution, more or less. We can also speak of a long modernity, which, it appears, began with three important things: with Gutenberg, with firearms, and with *Cogito ergo sum* (I think; therefore I am). These three things formed the Western world and modern civilization. The principal thing here is that the printing press and firearms allowed the creation of a stable hierarchy: a stable hierarchy of power and a stable hierarchy of knowledge — more stable than they had been to this point. They allowed the creation of contemporary society and contemporary institutionalized state, a government of institutions.

The modern era, as it seems to me, ends with the famous phrase, "There can be no poetry after Auschwitz."

After this the postmodern era begins and the erosion of all these ideas of progress, development, and the unending movement toward the better. We all know this well. And of course this process involves not just culture, not just architecture, literature, or philosophy. It also

affects international relations; it affects politics. Those regimes that were overturned in the Middle East in 2011 were absolutely postmodern regimes, with a rejection of the ideologies, with an absolute rejection of the idea of some kind of truth and of development. On the whole, no one spoke of the rights of people more often than Hosni Mubarak and Ben Ali. It was in each of their speeches. Gaddafi is an excellent example: the Third World Theory explains everything and forever, including the implementation of the principles of new liberalism in economics.

However, what is more important is, of course, the crisis of postmodernity, which in the Near East was defined by the events of 2011, and all that happened after that. This crisis was far from being just Near Eastern; this crisis, I think, is much broader. Postmodernism in this manner became the highest stage in the rejection of the era of modernity, and it ends with us transitioning from the books of Gutenberg to a more or less absolute kind of informational communism. Also, the monopoly of firearms has stopped being a guarantee of the stability of the state. Changes to the essence of government structures have begun. And it seems to me, that this transition — someone has suggested naming this new era neomodernism — will be a long time starting. In the first stage it has the signs of a crisis of globalization. But “crisis of globalization” is a stupid expression, because globalization is a kind of objective process, which is connected with the scientific and technical development of humanity. There are some people, some societal forces, that do not like this. People who have not seen migrants in real life voted for Trump and his migration policies. People who have not seen Muslims in real life voted for Brexit. What could they have seen, sitting in English villages? It is a fear of the future, and it is a natural fear.

It seems to me that two trends that are observed today are important in this approach to neomodernism. The first is the rise of demands for new expression, for the creation of some kind of new narrative, because postmodernism led to the rejection of any sort of strategy of development, a rejection of the future. There was no perspective of development, no conception of what we wanted. Now the demand for some conception exists, but this demand appears often in archaic forms. It is connected with a return to some sort of more or less untamed form of social relations, to xenophobia and so on and so forth. We can consider this archaism as the second trend. It seems to me that turning to antiquity in the search for new expression can be explained by the fact that the information stage is in fact the stage of political explosion, of a rapid widening of the political space, when the

dictates of the former elite become impossible. As a result, being invariably archaic, the new message assumes different forms — the most radical being Daesh<sup>1</sup> and the less radical Trump. But in general, these are all things of the same order. This is the first idea of which I wanted to speak, and it is not connected directly with Islam.

The second perspective is essentially Islamic. When the prophet Muhammad came with his Message, he proposed a definite conception of a historical worldview. This conception principally differed from the Judeo-Christian in that it presupposes cyclic recurrence. There are prophets who periodically arrive, then these prophets die, the community gets off track, the next prophet arrives and so forth. And each *Ummah* has its own prophet, right? In this manner the world develops along a sine curve that presupposes cyclic recurrence. As a whole, I think that in connection with this idea, modernization through a return to the sources, through Salafism, is to a large degree more characteristic of Islam than of the Judeo-Christian tradition. In general, the history of Islam can be described as the history of Salafism. Each or almost every empire that has arisen in the Near East began with someone who came and called for a return to the true purity of faith, cleansed of *bid'a* (negative innovation). How this purity of faith is understood is a different question.

Islamic renewal, of course, began not in the 20th century, but in the 19th, when the problem of the clash with colonialism arose. Then the problem arose that if we have the true religion and we are the most admirable, why do we suffer defeat all the time? And we know that very different answers were given to this. Some said that the problem was in Islam, that is another line. We should not forget that it exists. Atheistic, or at least radical secular ideas, are very widespread. It was so and is still. Also, there was the Salafism issue. When we speak of Salafism, the question is to which true purity of faith are we returning; what exactly lies at the base of this purity? Of course, it is a reconstruction of the past. Of course, this is not a return to tradition, but a breaking of tradition. The question is, a breaking in the name of what? In general, what we today call Euro-Islam, is also Salafism. Because that is also a call to return to true purity, because true Islam and the essence of early Islam is *ijtihad*, is dynamic, is openness. This is why I do not like the term “fundamentalism.”

1. Forbidden in the Russian Federation by the decision of the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation on 12/19/2014, № AKPI 14-1424C.

EMIL PAIN: And what should be used in place of it? Salafism? Simply to understand.

VASILY KUZNETSOV: We can say “Salafism,” but we must always understand what we are talking about. I am not completely sure that we can generalize these movements. I am not completely sure that it is possible today to conceptualize it. There is the idea that we also need to reject the term “Salafism” because in the final analysis we understand completely various things as the Salafist movement. You have Muhammad Abduh the Salafi and so-called Caliph al-Baghdadi the Salafi, after all.

IRINA STARODUBROVSKAYA: At that you have “Hizb ut-Tahrir”<sup>2</sup> and the “Muslim Brotherhood,”<sup>3</sup> which are also Salafi, but do not always consider themselves to be Salafi.

VASILY KUZNETSOV: And so, when we speak about Islamic societies, we first have the general modernization process, which we talked about. We have the crisis of the state system associated with archaization. These are all things that in my opinion have no relationship of any kind to Islam. Also, violence has no relationship to Islam in the given situation. This is not because I want to be politically correct. I truly think so. Fifty years ago, that same violence occurred under socialist or nationalist slogans, and in twenty years it will be under some other kind of slogans. It is a question of time. However, the process of ideological seeking exists in the framework of a single Islamic intellectual space. It absolutely exists. To what extent does this process correspond to social reality? It is far from linear and far from always corresponds with it. To return to what I began. Why don’t I like the term “Islamic world?” Because the Islamic world is also some kind of fantasy of ours.

It exists more than anything in the heads of Muslim immigrant societies in Europe and it exists among Muslim minorities. This identity is very strong there. However, go to any Muslim country. What quantity of liberals or atheists, let’s say, are in Saudi Arabia? I don’t know, you understand. What percent of people do not observe Ramadan? Are people who do not observe Ramadan or believe in Allah part of the

2. Forbidden in the Russian Federation by the decision of the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation of 2/14/2003 № GKPI 03 116, which went into effect 3/4/2003.
3. Forbidden in the Russian Federation by the decision of the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation of 2/14/2003 № GKPI 03 116, which went into effect 3/4/2003.



Islamic world? I do not know; I do not have an answer to that question. Well, I could also give other examples. Probably I will stop with that.

ORKHAN JEMAL: I have some questions. First, what do we mean by the combination of words “Islamic world,” the existence of which you deny? Because coming from your context, and from what you have said, by the Islamic world you imply some kind of commonality with which no one would identify themselves. While it is completely obvious that the Islamic word is an absolutely real, objective thing. You would not deny the existence of the Christian world, which has with time evolved in the Western understanding. If we speak of the Islamic world, specifically about the Islamic world as a geographic concept, then even here political agency has had a place for a very long time. The caliphate has existed in various forms, both as a global entity and as a more local, regional entity. Thus, the Islamic world is absolutely at a minimum a historical reality.

Second, I simply want to draw your attention to the idea of incongruity between fundamentalism and Salafism. This is also a rather conditional thing. As Martin Heidegger wrote, in no term is there more content than in the sense of the words from which it is composed. In actual fact, Salafism comes from *al-salaf al-ṣāliḥ*, a return to the righteous forerunners. It is a restoration of the fundamentals, which is exactly what fundamentalism is. Another thing is that in Salafism there is a certain hint of politicized content, in contrast to Islamic fundamentalism. Islamic fundamentalism can contain the archaic, that is, opposition to *bida*. When we speak of Salafism, let us remember that in principle it is, of course, Islamic fundamentalism. It was realized and manifested, however, as a protest ideology, appearing as a response to an outside threat. Starting with Ibn Taymiyyah who opposed the Hulaguids on ideological terms, and Ibn Abd al-Wahhab, who opposed Turkish hegemony in the Hijaz. We can talk of contemporary Salafism or Ikhwan<sup>4</sup> Salafism of the 20th century, which also is a reaction to the outcome of WWI. And in this sense, of course, Salafism is Islamic fundamentalism, which has some political-protest connotations. I am simply drawing your attention to the fact that that term is absolutely correct.

VASILY KUZNETSOV: Thank you. Concerning the Islamic world, why is it that I do not like that concept, why do I try not to use it, when we are speaking of modernity? I think we can talk about three foundations of

4. The word “Ikhwan” means brotherhood and refers to *al-Ikhwān al-Muslimūn* (the Muslim Brotherhood).

the “Islamic world.” About the existence of some idea of *Dar al-Islam* in both the political and intellectual tradition. About identity, above all about the deterritorializing community of Muslims, about which Olivier Roy wrote. And the third thing we’re talking about, and which I think is the most important, is the image that is formed by the West in seminars such as ours and in larger forums as well. I think that when we analyze reality, the Islamic world does not form a unified geographic expanse from Indonesia to Senegal. These are completely different societies. There is no single political space. Despite the existence of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, there have been more wars between Muslim countries within the Islamic world in the 20th century than there have been between anyone else. There is no joint economy nor joint economic system. And if we are going to talk not only about governmental agency, but also about societies, then I think within a considerable part of these societies religious identity is not a deciding factor. For a sizeable portion of the population, religious identity does not play a principal role. It is not key. Thus, I do not like the term “Islamic world,” because it generalizes completely different things on a basis that is not very understandable, and very broad conclusions are drawn from this. Yes, it is possible to use it in some limited discursive practices.

Concerning fundamentalism, it is of course a direct translation — both fundamentalism and Salafism. As a rule, when we speak about Islamic fundamentalism, frequently it does not only involve the understanding of some ideological currents. If we confine ourselves to the fact that it is a method of thinking, then yes. But if we start to compare it with Christian fundamentalism on the one hand and on the other hand with contemporary sociopolitical practices, then we fall into the trap of analogies. This allows us to equate the contemporary Near East and medieval Europe. In order to avoid this temptation, it is better to abandon the term fundamentalism.

ORKHAN JEMAL: But Ms. Starodubrovskaya has tried to apply the Christian understanding of fundamentalism to Islam and has come to the conclusion that it is very similar to the Protestant Reformation. Because Luther nailing the 95 theses to the door of the cathedral is fundamentalism in a pure form, in a refined form, without the least admixture.

VASILY KUZNETSOV: You cannot argue with that.

IRINA STARODUBROVSKAYA: I have one question for Vasily, regarding cyclicity and the return in every cycle to some new variant of fun-

damentalism or puritanism. In reality, in scholarship there are two points of view that I know of on this subject. One is that since everything goes around in a circle, then in essence nothing changes. That is, the cycle continues: there are fundamentalists, then everyone returns to folk beliefs, then in the next cycle fundamentalist ideas arise, they again come down to the level of folk prejudices and conceptions, and so on. This is one position. Another position: everything was roughly this way, while society was sufficiently traditional. Then urbanization begins and city dwellers see the attractiveness of fundamentalist ideas not only as elitist ideas but as ideas sufficiently popular for a city. This creates several preconditions so that fundamentalism can lay new foundations, which then might or might not grow into modernization. Ernest Gellner as a matter of fact wrote quite a lot about this. What is this really? How do you imagine this?

VASILY KUZNETSOV: The first version seems closer to me. Concerning urbanization: the process of urbanization in the Middle East and the process of urbanization in Europe were fundamentally different. In the Middle East, there was not the factor of the growth of cities, which in Europe occurred since the thirteenth century with their particular status. Islam itself was originally an urban culture. How did the Arab peasantry live in any century? God only knows. There are no sources by which it is possible to speak normally of the way of life of the peasantry. Or, at the least, their sphere was extremely limited. All that we call Islamic culture is urban culture, if we are talking about the Middle East. Probably in Southeast Asia, where the situation was in principle entirely different, it is somehow different, I really do not know. Therefore, it seems to me that this is an antithesis: of the contemporary and traditional city. The antithesis is largely removed here, because all the processes occurred in cities. And Salafism was in cities.

IRINA STARODUBROVSKAYA: Well, probably, we will not go into details now, because we would have to discuss in great detail the difference between traditional cities and contemporary cities, between the phenomenon of the city and the big city. Who is next? Orkhan?

ORKHAN JEMAL: I would now like to turn our attention to the historic circumstances in which present-day Islamism formed. I will use that term and for a start I will define what it means. Political Islam is called Islamism. It is a religious doctrine that demands embodiment through sociopolitical methods and demands submission of so-

ciopolitical education to some general religious principles. This is not a unique situation, because even in the 20th century in the context of a more decrepit Christianity similar rather specific movements appeared — liberation theology in Latin America, the Catholic-Protestant parties in Germany, the system of varying types of concordats between the Vatican and governments, between the Georgian Orthodox Church and governments. That is, it did not arise only in Islam.

VASILY KUZNETSOV: Can you elaborate?

ORKHAN JEMAL: Yes.

VASILY KUZNETSOV: But is Islamism a religious movement?

ORKHAN JEMAL: It is a religious movement that demands the implementation of its ideas in the political sphere. Moreover, the entire body of politics is implied, including both outside agreements that must be submitted to these principles, and internal ones. You spoke of how goal-setting was lost in regimes that split at the seams in 2011. But this here is just goal-setting. It is countercyclical by its nature, since Islam is all the same an eschatological religion. The prophet came, namely in order to cut short cyclic recurrence.

Now let's analyze the context in which Islamism appeared: the 19th century, the era of modernity. This is the last century in which the caliphate still existed. From the time of the arrival of Islam for one and a half millennia most centuries passed under a caliphate or various caliphates, but there has always been some kind of agency. Moreover, the Abbasid caliphate was perhaps one of the most successful examples of medieval globalism in the world. Globalist European modernism received some antecedents when eastern globalism was exhausted. The discovery of America had already begun, the change of trade routes, the industrial revolution, etc. However, until the beginning of the 20th century the world lived under the caliphate, that is there always was a caliphate in the world. Under the caliphate, the times were wonderful, heroic; there was expansion. There was a period of terrible decline, when Ottoman Turkey was spoken of as of the sick man of Europe. They dreamed of when all this would finally end, when this nightmare would be over.

But just as soon as it all ended, after ten to fifteen years, a thirst for a caliphate renaissance began to arise. Approaching the 1930s, the Eastern world was a collapsed caliphate, a collapsed Islamic world.

The structure of this territory had suffered, due to European oversight. In various eras this oversight took various forms: there was the period of monarchies, the period of mandated territories, the period of national-socialist regimes. But in any case, it was not a completely internal decision about the structure. In the best case it was a compromise between the will of the local and outside players. This was not immediate: a compromise began to appear in the 1950s. This enslaved territory experienced a state that was in general similar to that of Europeans of the 1950s and 1960s. Such a peculiar Gaullism. It's impossible to say whether it was good under the Turks, but it's bad now.

It is interesting that Islamism appeared in Egypt. I define it as an ideology, based on Ikhwan ideas. Egypt did not suffer defeat during the First World War, but it was one of the first Islamic governments to face the problem of modernization on the European model. Moreover, not with that modernization, which we understand firstly as scientific-technological progress, but namely with geopolitical modernization, when Egypt began to be used as a springboard for the suppression of Sudanese protest movements and for pressuring Ethiopia. Behind Islamism as a movement, as an ideology, is longing for the restoration of political agency to Muslims, which, as much as you would like to deny it, still exists. It is precisely this that sits at the base of a whole layer of these political ideas.

It is necessary to note what happened later. This ideology has an extreme form and a mild form. On the one hand, a portion of the people cannot free themselves from old stereotypes: we need a government in which a caliph will rule; he will have a vizier, naibs, deputies, satraps, and all the like. On the other hand, there are other frameworks that are essentially of the same nature. Here they conceive of agency not in the terms of an archaic government, such as the caliphate. There are a decent number of radical anarchist network designs. Al-Qaeda<sup>5</sup> exists, which depends not on top-down administrative management, but on Jamaat networks, in certain framework agreements with each other. That is, the question of what kind of restored agency there should be is still hanging in the air. It does not have an answer. At the current time it has not been completely worked out.

Now, the wonderful comparison with Protestants, which is in its own way paradoxical, in its own way provocative, has a very interesting aspect. The radicals, the Protestants fled from their English king, from their Spanish Catholics from the Netherlands. They fled

5. Forbidden in the territory of the Russian Federation.

to America. They took some land from the Native Americans, apparently in the first periods not through much conflict, or not always through conflict. In this respect America was long an outlet for religious minorities. Until it all ended. Toward the end of the 19th century America was over and the very idea of escapism, including religious escapism, began to experience a crisis. The whole background of Russian cosmism and science fiction: gardens on Mars, it is all humankind's psychological reaction to the end of America. There is nowhere else to go. It is impossible to escape; we are in a cage. And this longing for an escape has broken forth in a portion of the people in just this way.

The Islamic world is experiencing a similar process, just in a different age and under different circumstances. Muslims also decided to run away to their America and wrest from the Native Americans their piece of land. But when we try to find a place for Islamic government in the political scale, I do not presume to place it alongside America. I do not presume, although I believe that 17th century America was a rather dark and scary government. I'll remind you that it was only in Spain that they burned people longer than in America. I would sooner draw a parallel with Marxism, and in the framework of the Marxist project with Cambodia and Kampuchea. Not the United States, not the Soviet Union, not China, not Vietnam, not Cuba, but namely with Kampuchea. In this respect I would like to note that the parallel itself, like all parallels, is imperfect, but it is a good approach as a method of research and study. In other words, look at how it happened for others in slightly different circumstances, all the while taking into account that the supporting cast is different, and that overall comparisons have their limits.

Another thing. I want to note that present-day Salafism, present-day Islamism (Salafism I would all the same allocate to the religious sphere) is longing; it is a reaction to the loss of Islamic agency. It is psychologically comparable to the yearning of the British over their empire: yearning over something large, important, and meaningful, but lost. Of course, this is the process of modernization, but not modernization in the sense of progress. It is a modernizing process, because this area is in search of new political and social technologies, new political and social relations.

Finally, when we turn away from large narratives, upon leaving them all the conversations lead to the question: what is to be done? We should give someone advice: you act thusly, and everything will be good for you. We regard this process as if some mistakes were

made that led to this situation and they simply need to be corrected and then all will resolve. No, it will not resolve. What we call Islamism as an ideology; what we call Salafism as politicized theological viewpoints; what we call jihadism, which at essence is the armed wing of this phenomena; are certain macrohistorical phenomena, which are the consequence of other macrohistorical phenomena. They are a menacing act of history that it is impossible to correct or rectify. Perhaps it can change, as, say, Marxism played out. But just as Marxism defined the end of the 19th and 20th centuries, so will Islamism define the 21st century. Perhaps this will change, evolve somehow.

I think that we can only talk about the long game through an analogy with Bolshevism. The Soviet Union was founded by some rather radical guys: Lenin, Trotsky. They saw the territory of the Russian Empire as a base, a foothold, that could be sacrificed. Thus, they played at revolution in Germany, at revolution in Britain, at revolution in France, since there was a proletariat there and industry as well. They were not fighting for those guys from the forest villages, whom Vladimir Ilyich himself called the petty bourgeoisie. However, in 1927 the United States recognized the Soviet Union. The concept of a permanent revolution was replaced by the concept of building socialism in one country. Then there was a peaceful coexistence of systems, a convergence. Well, then later there was Gorbachev and the well-known end.

VASILY KUZNETSOV: I have some commentary. I would like to call Orkhan's attention to a few things. Speaking of the Islamic world, the geographic area of your tale was limited by Iraq on the east and Egypt, or possibly Libya, on the west. All the others had no relationship with the Ottoman Empire at the time of the war, therefore nothing was said about either Indonesia, or India, or Pakistan. That is the first thing. Second thing. This is not an objection, but simply a consideration. I do not argue when you say that political Islam is a religious movement, but then we need to analyze it as religious, and not as a political movement going forward. Third, it seems very important to me that, let's say, when we speak of the rise of the "Muslim Brotherhood" in Egypt, that it was an answer not only to the West, but also to the elite that betrayed the people. There was an element of struggle (this is also the case in Daesh), and an element of struggle against internal colonial forces, which are perceived as agents of the West. And finally, when we speak of the present-day process, when you juxtapose Islamism and Marxism, it seems to me that there is one impor-



tant thing: due to its genetic peculiarities, the effect of the influence of Islamism is limited culturally, religiously, etc. It does not possess a universal form.

ORKHAN JEMAL: That is a very valuable observation, though I would like to remark that Marxism also has religious roots and they are namely Protestant. It is a distinct tradition of Christian utopianism. It is not Jewish utopianism. Therefore, it is not obvious that it is imperative to strictly differentiate religious and political movements. Perhaps there is not such an impenetrable barrier between them. Also, concerning what you said about limitedness, yes, absolutely. Until Islamism promotes a separate program for non-Muslims, it is doomed.

IRINA STARODUBROVSKAYA: Only the apostle Paul is missing.

VASILY KUZNETSOV: It seems to me that when we speak of the immeasurable yearning of Muslims for the caliphate, that it is very beautiful. It is very poetic. It is wonderful. But who has measured immeasurable yearning?

ORKHAN DZHEMAL: Well you know, there is immeasurable yearning for the vanished Soviet Union. Somebody has immeasurable yearning for Kipling.

IRINA STARODUBROVSKAYA: I have the feeling that this yearning is actualized when it resonates with something personal. If nothing works out, if we cannot move forward, if our career does not work out and in general everything is bad and we have no money, and all this is because we are oppressed and we have no political agency, it is an understandable story.

ORKHAN JEMAL: I will simply draw your attention to the fact that the leaders of this movement, moreover the leaders including the mid-level, that is not just the highest ranks, are in general rather successful people.

Well, and as to the Islamic world, I say that it is difficult to deny the existence of and a certain homogeneity in Islamism. It is impossible to understand while denying, like you, Vasily, the category of the Islamic world, even if this category is theoretical. Even if some bumpkin says "Huh?" at the phrase "Islamic world." It is not the bumpkins who determine it.

VASILY KUZNETSOV: When I said that I will not use the category “Islamic world,” it was of course to be provocative. It obviously worked. But the idea was that I did not want to combine that whole vast region in a social or political analysis. I already said that it is united in the minds of a significant portion of Muslims.

AKHMET YARLYKAPOV: I simply have a couple of things. I would really like to turn your attention to what was said regarding ideological searches in the Islamic intellectual community. It seems to me that it is completely impossible to manage without analysis of what Kemper called Islamic discourses. This Islamic discourse and all these ideological searches in the Islamic intellectual community are in my opinion very, very important. Moreover, in the 19th century all the discussions were conducted in Arabic by the most disparate Muslim intellectuals. These Muslim intellectuals understood each other very well, whether they were Tatars or Dagestanis. In addition, there was a serious participation of Muslims, of Muslim leaders, in the State Duma. They not only actively discussed, but also took part in political life. Now we see a transition to Russian, that is practically a departure from the Arabic language. Which Muslims in Russia now engage with each other in polemics or discuss Muslim issues in Arabic? That is, I am talking about the fact that this Islamic discourse has completely crossed over into Russian. And in this regard, it seems to me, a certain distance had been created from all the discussions that are happening in Arabic. Despite the fact, of course, that everything is quickly translated into Russian. All the same this very discourse is shattered. It seems to me that without analysis of the ideological searches in the Islamic intellectual community, without analysis of what is happening there, it is genuinely difficult to speak of anything and to construct any kind of theories. That is the first thing.

And the second thing. I would not focus much attention on Islamism, which all the same is more political, as it seems to me, than doctrinal. It is Islamic, naturally, but all the same it is more political. And maybe to avoid the arguments of whether it is Salafism or is it not Salafism, fundamentalism or not fundamentalism, to what extent the term fundamentalism applies or does not apply, and so on and so forth, perhaps it is worth really talking of a sort of movement toward some kind of Islamic universalism. Because all these Salafis say that there are not different Islams, that there is one Islam, and we must strive for it. This search for a universal, united Islam expresses itself both politically and in religious terminology.

Even Shiites participate in this, because the Shiites have a movement of bringing madhhabs closer to each other. Culturally, because all the Salafi brotherhood employs consistent cultural codes, you must agree. Government authorities are driven to this. They try to identify these people by attributes.

ORKHAN JEMAL: Akhmet, forgive me for interrupting. That is not a fundamental thing, but generational. Because the youth, who have spent time in the universities of Riyadh, Cairo, and Damascus, have mastered that cultural code. When you see people of my age, let's say, or even a little older, who have joined sides with the movement, even though they are from a different milieu. Well that is what happened with Muhammad Salih. This is a man from the 60s, in manner he does not differ at all from Fazil Iskander, but he is a Salafi.

AKHMET YARLYKAPOV: As to this universalism, I don't know, globalism –perhaps we can think in that direction. Because I again agree that these terms, fundamentalism and the like, they often mislead us in the analysis of what is happening namely with Islam and with Muslims.

Regarding the comparison of the Islamic State with Protestants, there are also many problems. There are very many problems with it, because, as it seems to me, the Islamic State is all the same evolving in the direction of developing some kind of network of absolutely new communities. They are already developing this; they well understand that they will not be allowed to flourish on the ground. And now they are very actively developing these network communities. When we speak of analyzing what is occurring in present-day Islam, it seems to me that it is very promising to analyze network activities and network communities. Because what is happening, to a large extent, goes in step with the present, in step with current technology, including the Internet.

ORKHAN JEMAL: On the whole, I completely agree, that it is a universalist, global scheme. The transition from one language to another, namely goes along the path of increasing this universality.

IRINA STARODUBROVSKAYA: I have another question about terminology. On the whole, if we could move forward in this, it would be very good, because there is absolute chaos here. But it seems to me that we cannot construct terms outside connections to “those on the

ground.” That is, if people name themselves, if they are comfortable calling themselves Salafis or fundamentalists, that needs to be taken into account. The term “fundamentalism” came to me not from academic books, but from the reality “on the ground.”

DMITRY UZLANER: I have an objection exactly to this. It is a classic problem in any discipline, including the discipline of religious studies: there is the language of self-description, and there is the language of analysis. At some point we must transition from one to the other. That is, I understand that it sounds arrogant, and there is even an element of discursive violence in it. However, we cannot forever try to figure out what people call themselves. At some point we must transition to the language of analysis. And in this regard, I like what Irina is doing, because she is trying namely to transition from the languages of self-description to the language of analysis. If we, for example, consider the Christian Reformation, does it really matter much what Luther wrote about himself, how he named himself. If we use analytic method, we must understand what Reformation means. Weber describes it as a way to enter into capitalist modernity. Therefore, it seems to me that if we do not commit this discursive violence, if we do not start to devise some kind of conceptual framework, then we will finally draw in such self-descriptions. Some call themselves one thing, others call themselves another, but if we call them thus, they get offended. We will just not get anywhere.

VASILY KUZNETSOV: All the same a world of Islamic studies exists, in which millions of books per year are written, where there is a fully accepted language of description. There is the concept of “Salifis,” there is the concept of “Islamists,” there is the concept of “Jihadists.” Honestly, I simply hate arguments about terminology; they often seem senseless to me. I honestly do not understand, why it is impossible to accept the existing academic, scholarly tradition. Since Islamic studies above all studies Islam, it would be logical to adopt the Islamic studies tradition and work within it.

IRINA STARODUBROVSKAYA: You know, I truly cannot find this common language. Recently I needed to figure out what is understood by Islamism in the academy, even among key researchers. I read Olivier Roy and I read Asef Bayat and they are certain that they have one and the same concept. But I started to compare and understood that they have absolutely differing concepts, different understanding of the term.

VASILY KUZNETSOV: Naumkin has a thin little book called *Islamic Radicalism in the Mirror of New Concepts and Approaches*. In its one hundred pages, each term is discussed in detail. It is very convenient.

EMIL PAIN: Akhmet and I are anthropologists and we know that in this discipline there have been a number of attempts in the last century and a half to create, if not a unified theory of the field, then a common terminology. The result has been just about as negligible as in Islamic studies. The reasons for this similarity are most likely the same — the task of developing a united concept is not realizable with admittedly lax and value-oriented approaches and definitions. In our discussion, everyone who referred to modernization gave either a different treatment of this understanding or a different enumeration of the signs of modernization. And the foundational subject of the discussion, i.e., the modernization potential of a religious phenomenon that we name fundamentalism or Salafism or Islamism, is not defined. This is not just because of the extreme complexity of this phenomenon. Even more importantly, we have different backgrounds and so the famous parable of the blind men, who feel an elephant from different sides and describe him differently, is still fair. We are different by education and by profession; we are very different (at least some of us) in our worldview, and most importantly we differ in our comprehension of the phenomena that fall within our field of vision.

I am the only open opponent of Irina here (although not in everything). I think that her conception of Islamism (fundamentalism or Salafism) as a source of modernization by analogy with the Protestant modernization can be seen as an interesting intellectual provocation, but at the same time this is a perfect utopia in practical terms. All the same, I see for myself some benefit from such interdisciplinary communication. For instance, I agree with Irina that the first contact with the “other” is a central task that arises today under the conditions of globalization on all levels: on the global, national and local levels. Therefore, the search for its solution, generally speaking, is one of the conditions for the survival of humanity. Second, it is possible and even useful to compare the “Islamic reformation” (as we call different changes in Islam, the contents of which we have not yet agreed upon) with reformations that have occurred in different religions, not just in Christianity, but also in Judaism, and many others.

If peaceful existence with cultural “others” is considered an indicator of overcoming the crisis of globalization and a manifestation of contemporary modernization, then we have the criteria for valuing

variations of reformation, and they were always different. The evolution of Lutheranism and Calvinism, carving their way through religious wars, is one thing. Anglicanism, which was planted from above, is another thing. I have a curious example taken from the history of Judaism, which will immediately explain my position. In the 18th century in this religion, two movements arose among the European Ashkenazi Jews: one was called Haskalah, and the other Hasidism. Both movements were reformational and they could be called fundamentalism, because they refuted to a large extent the established traditional systems and appealed to some forgotten sources of Judaism. But of these two movements, only Haskalah proclaimed the ideas of liberation from the total power of the rabbinate, the rationalization of Judaism, the rejection of excessive mysticism, and a rapprochement of Jews with the local population and with Christian culture in particular. The adepts of Haskalah considered enlightenment to be their main goal, their credo. On the other hand, Hasidism preached a greater isolation in the *kahal* (religious community) and a greater mysticism. Several of the most radical Hasidic movements even called on the Almighty to send great calamity on the Jewish people, to force them to immerse themselves in religious spirituality and break away from worldly pleasures.

Haskalah, which at the beginning was a tiny movement formed among highly religious Jews in the cities of Germany, Austria, and a little later in Lithuania, became the dominant tendency in the Jewish world by the middle of the 19th century. It encouraged the appearance of Reform Judaism, which is even larger today than its Orthodox branch. It also inspired such personalities as Felix Mendelssohn (the great composer and grandson of the founder of the Haskalah movement, Moses Mendelssohn), Heinrich Heine, Sigmund Freud, Albert Einstein, and many others who are associated in our minds with the idea of “modernization.” However, by the end of the 19th century the Haskalah movement had already lost its connection with religion and had dissolved into secular ideologies. It is now almost forgotten; only rarely is the term used in a narrow meaning, for example, to oppose more rational Reform Judaism to the more mystical Orthodox Judaism. But the other movement, Hasidism, which was originally formed in the small towns of Galicia, proclaimed the idea of isolation of the Jews and exists to this day. It is alive, but as a marginal phenomenon in the Jewish world and a deeply demodernizing movement.

There are similar variants in Islam. Vasily mentioned this, speaking of the urban euro-Islam movement, which is small in numbers and in

some extent similar to the Jewish Haskalah. In my view, it denotes a certain likelihood of modernization through religion. At the same time, many protest movements that oppose modernization have also appeared in Islam, for example, Boko Haram. These demand from their adherents even more isolation than Hasidism does, and are significantly more aggressive in relation to the cultural “other.”

Here I sum up my main theses in our discussion.

1. Many manifestations of religious reformation exist.
2. Only those forms of religious movements that either initially or at least indirectly proclaim enlightenment or modernization to be a goal can lead to modernization. In some of their manifestations they can cultivate an interest in books, education, and emancipation in their adherents. It is happening this way in some instances in the northern Caucasus, when separate movements of Salafism are used by youth for liberation from total control by the elders.
3. Historically not all religious reformations in the Christian world were the basis of modernization. The reformation of the 16th century was as deeply a contradictory sociohistorical process as many others; it enabled modernization in some aspects, but restrained it in others, at times generating fanaticism and obscurantism. Archpriest Alexander Men’ noted this, explaining fanaticism, intolerance and ideological dictatorship of religious movements not by the spirit of modernization and religion, but by the deep, ancient socio-biological aspects of human nature. He also rightly noted that not just the Protestant Reformation led to modernization, but also Catholicism, in periods when its upper hierarchy supported science and enlightenment, for example when Pope Urban VIII shielded Galileo from the Inquisition.
4. The influence of religion on modernization was not identical in different times. In the Middle Ages religion absolutely dominated mass consciousness, but now it is suppressed not just by secularization, but also by a growing complexity and multiplicity of human identity. At the same time, in the era of globalization, similar changes affect representatives of all religions, therefore a complete repetition of the Christian reformation by Islamic paths is quite unlikely.

Presently religion is the least integrative form of consolidating people in the boundaries of a nation state, in comparison to ethnic and civil consolidation. If we take just the countries of the Middle East as



an example, then we will see where there are the fewest problems for cultural “minorities,” the highest indicators of population consolidation, and the relatively highest indicators of horizontal trust. Above all, it is Tunisia, which is ethnically a more homogenous country with a minimal manifestation of fundamentalism and the highest level of women’s freedom. The worst conditions for the existence of cultural as well as religious “minorities” are formed where the highest manifestations of Islamic fundamentalism are found, for example in Sudan, which is one of the poorest countries in the world with many intercultural problems. Nowhere in the contemporary world does religious mobilization ensure integration within the borders of states that have retained traces of tribalism. Such pre-national communities can only hold on under rigid authoritarian power and do not demonstrate the possibility of political modernization.

Thus, there is reformation and there is reformation. As Vasily rightly noted, it is important to determine with what goal and in whose name the breaking of tradition in religion occurs. It seems to me that this idea is central for analyzing the role of fundamentalism and for predicting its consequences, because there would be no sense in limiting ourselves to the conclusion that it is all complicated and happens differently. We must find the thread that allows us to proceed to prediction.

VASILY KUZNETSOV: I am pleased that we agree in some judgments; however, I must comment on your thesis about religion being the least integrative form of consolidating people in a national state. I will not undertake to confirm this thesis, nor to deny it — it is too global for me. However, regarding the Arab world, it is worth saying first that there is no need to speak of any nation-states in their classical sense. We can argue about whether we are dealing here with projects for the construction of nation-states that have not been fully completed or simply with some other forms of statehood. In the first case we will have to organize all the Arab countries according to their closeness to some imaginary ideal European model. Egypt will be closer to it and Sudan further. In the second case, it makes sense to speak simply of its effectiveness and then we need to somehow determine its criteria.

Secondly, regarding the two cited examples. As a specialist on Tunisia, I am glad to encounter any mention of it, but despite all my love for the country, I cannot agree with the thesis presented. Yes, there is a higher level of protection for women (higher than in Russia) and ethnically the population is almost homogenous. However, it is homog-

enous also in religious confession. This means that all those wonderful things can be equally explained by both ethnic and confessional homogeneity, and the long-term policy of building a civil nation from above. However, I would not dare to speak either about an elevated level of horizontal trust, or about a high degree of public consolidation, and so on. About seven thousand fighters from Tunisia are fighting in Daesh; according to various estimates up to twelve thousand Tunisians are active in jihadist structures. The society is extremely polarized; look at the events of 2013. Pay attention to the level of racism in Tunisia; the problem is little studied but very relevant. Such things as the level of horizontal trust or the attitude toward cultural aliens are difficult to measure, and if measured, then demand colossal work with concrete data.

On the other hand, let us take Morocco and Algiers. Morocco is not ethnically homogenous but is almost homogenous by confession. It was namely the sacralization of the king that for a long time guaranteed the unity of that society, where over a third of the people are illiterate to this day. Algeria is also not ethnically homogenous. Also, it truly did not work out to consolidate this society on the basis of political Islam; everyone remembers the horrors of the 1990s. However, tribalism did not hinder implementing modernization there, even though a high degree of authoritarianism is preserved. Pay attention to the political modernization of Lebanese society. In general, it seems to me that the thesis presented is hasty.

IRINA STARODUBROVSKAYA: I want to ask a couple of questions, since, as I expected, Emil's speech was basically a discussion with me. There are several problems with saying that reformation must proclaim a modernizing, positive orientation. If we take the Protestant Reformation, about which I have personally spoken and written, then Calvin executed the inhabitants of Geneva on a massive scale. Moreover, he executed them on the basis of Old Testament moral norms as legislation. Incidentally, if you take England, then genuine reformation was Cromwell's "saints," and there it was also not very peaceful.

ORKHAN JEMAL: And half of the Protestant kings rose together with the Catholics against Müntzer.

IRINA STARODUBROVSKAYA: As to the question of trust, a vast number of religious wars preceded the development of the principles of re-

ligious tolerance. The destruction of monasteries and iconoclasm led to the loss of a significant number of valuable monuments of art. Also, by the way, Hobbes wrote that in general it would have been good to kill all the Protestant preachers before they began to preach, because then it would have been possible to avoid all the losses that were connected to the English Civil War. For me, that is hardly in accord with the idea of advancing modernization as a declarative goal.

EMIL PAIN: I have already said that firstly not all of the history of the Protestant Reformation was modernizing, and secondly that the Islamic variant of reformation cannot be an exact replica of the Protestant one. It follows that it will not necessarily repeat the terror of Calvin. If I were in power in any country, I would try, and in my place I will try, to resist similar experiments. Fortunately, I am certain that today they are very unlikely; we live in a different time.

First, in the 16th century religious identity completely dominated in a large portion of the populated territory. Now (according to data from last year's research of the Pew Research Center), in the majority of European countries where Catholicism and Protestantism historically dominated, their role had noticeably declined and the population's interest in them has weakened. It is unlikely that this tendency will not affect the adherents of other religions in these countries. According to Olivier Roy's data, today in Western Europe Islamic protestants make up less than 10 percent of Muslims.

Second, in traditionally Islamic countries Salafis, as a rule, do not make up the majority. The growth of their numbers will be complicated by the pluralization of modern identity: today most people see themselves not just as a Muslim or Christian, but simultaneously can have dozens of new identities (television viewer, football fan or member of a social network). I really hope that today humanity will not allow this type of experiment through the method of trial and error. Today the level of rationality as a whole is higher than it was during the Middle Ages or in the 19th century, and nonviolence is now normative. At least this follows from widely known documents, which if at times are declarative, still condemn violence as unacceptable.

IRINA STARODUBROVSKAYA: You need to look at Syria to see to what extent violence is not normative.

VASILY KUZNETSOV: It seems to me that that the problem of the normalization of violence is outside the scope of our theme. It is largely

connected, on the one hand, with local political culture, which is far from identical to the culture of religious confession. Compare at least Algeria with its unending hundreds of thousands of victims and Tunisia, which is historically, culturally, and geographically close, with four political assassinations in the past sixty years. On the other hand, much depends on the international environment. Yes, we have approximately 400,000 victims in Syria, up to 60,000 in Libya, and fewer in Yemen. The Syrian numbers are comparable, after amending the time-frame, to the numbers of the Iran-Iraq war and are much larger numbers than the civil war in Algeria. However, there exists a general understanding that such a level of violence is unacceptable and there also exists a substantial effort to reduce it. The fact that these efforts are ineffectual is a different issue. Besides this, in all cases, except Daesh to some extent, this violence is not undertaken in the name of realizing some political project, as it was in Nazi Germany or the Stalinist USSR. Here the question is about conflicts and the destruction of political mechanisms. This is almost always horizontal violence.

EMIL PAIN: I have not especially studied the issue of mechanisms, which do not allow experimenting with humanity. I hope such mechanisms exist or will appear. I will only note that today no one has indicated the motives that encourage a transition from bloodthirsty fanaticism to modernization, except for the rather debatable analogy with the times of medieval Europe. I have not yet lost hope that it will be a demand for renewed ideas that are in opposition to fundamentalist ones, for ideas that will be seen as prerequisites to the growth of public trust and individual freedom.

IRINA STARODUBROVSKAYA: I would very much like to hope for that. Only the objective laws of history, unfortunately, are poorly subordinated to our hopes. And they rather clearly demonstrate that for the appearance of the new, of that very modernization, about which we speak, it is necessary to clear the soil of the remains of the old. This is what Weber in his work on Protestant ethics excellently showed. Who will be ready to go against the current, to violate the established forms of life, and to question basic attitudes, creating problems for themselves and spoiling relationships with others? Probably only someone who is rigidly ideologized. A fanatic, if you wish. Not necessarily bloodthirsty, but a fanatic.

My second question is directly related to this. In reality, in the era of the Protestant Reformation there was a fully ready-made, modern-

izing, renovationist theory. It was called the Renaissance or humanism. They advocated for personal freedom, for the elevation of the person, for individualism. It did not take off. It was not the Renaissance that became the foundation for the development of new social relations, but the Reformation. In fact, this issue remains even today, it just only changes form a little. Why? Why didn't the Renaissance become the basis for social transformation?

EMIL PAIN: Who said that the Renaissance did not become the basis for social transformation?

IRINA STARODUBROVSKAYA: Well Weber himself wrote that all the same it was the Reformation and not the Renaissance.

EMIL PAIN: I believe that it was a synthesis. The opinion is expressed in the literature that the humanism of the Renaissance served as the prerequisite for the Reformation, which called forth interest in the individual and individual responsibility. It was also the prerequisite for criticism that allowed a new look at all the phenomena of culture, including religion, and the prerequisite for the fashion for searching for ancient manuscripts that drew the attention of enlightened society to the inconsistency of the early Christian and then contemporary state of the Church. Before the Reformation became widespread, its ideas were carried by the enlightened part of society. This, without doubt, was a synthesis in historical terms and Max Weber was well aware of this. He did not infer Protestant ethics from the Reformation alone but considered changes in the economic conditions as well as the development of an urban way of life as being among the factors in the emergence of these new ethics. Weber could not simply reduce modernization, which was a much wider phenomenon than the evolution of ethics, just from the Reformation, being an apologist for rationalization and the idea of the disenchantment of the world (*Entzauberung der Welt*), i.e., the process of secularization and the demythologization of public life. The conception that the Reformation and Renaissance are in many ways complementary and not competing ideas is not new. It is quite widespread.

IRINA STARODUBROVSKAYA: I will state my position about why the ideas of humanism and the Renaissance all the same did not directly become the foundation for social transformation, and if anything, only partially influenced it through the Reformation. They are elitist and in

their essence can't be the basis for protest. But the intrinsic demand was about mass ideology and the ideology of protest. And I think that these two factors continue to operate even today. Alas.

ORKHAN JEMAL: Also, when we speak of the Reformation, we must understand that the Protestants had a very concrete opponent. A concrete, localized, distinct, understandable opponent, inside of which they themselves were located. That is the mother church, the Vatican, the pope. It is the exact same when we talk of Islamism. The Islamists have a very concrete opponent, inside of which Islamism is developing. It is the process that is occurring inside that very same Islamic world, the existence of which was here denied.

IRINA STARODUBROVSKAYA: Now that is very interesting! And who is the opponent? What is its name?

ORKHAN JEMAL: I think that the opponent is the world order, which at present is impossible to call Western, because it is impossible to say that it is imposed by the West. It is now holding mainly onto internal frames and not onto external dictates. I think that this world order, which implies a secular model of government, is the opponent.

IRINA STARODUBROVSKAYA: But in the Reformation the world order was also the opponent, and not just the church.

DMITRY UZLANER: If the world order had not fractured, Luther would simply have been executed and that would have been it. So many of these reformers existed who failed. A system of sovereign states was emerging.

IRINA STARODUBROVSKAYA: The memory of the execution of Hus was still present.

EMIL PAIN: The world order is generally incomprehensible, because every protest will be based exactly on that: the bad, wrong world order. Roy himself, who speaks about the tempestuous growth of Islamism in Europe, formulates it more concretely. It is the unsettled state of this world, the unadjusted state, the non-involvement. It is a way of identification in this world, where you are perceived as foreign, despite the fact that you have been living in this country for three generations.

DMITRY UZLANER: Allow me to make a few observations. I want to return to my thesis about the languages of self-description and the languages of analysis. I still have not had enough of this transition to the language of analysis, to an attempt of some conceptualization. All the time we are getting caught up in the concrete details. For example, when we speak of fundamentalism, after all fundamentalism is not just an understanding that exists within Islam. On the whole, from the beginning it was an understanding about Christianity, Protestantism. It indicated a specific group within Protestantism, a position of people who did not accept any kind of change. These are people who do not accept modernization, who do not accept any kind of changes, who want to live as they have lived. In principle in social theory, this position is understood as fundamentalism. There is religion, there is an encroaching modernization, there is a point of view that religion and modernization are incompatible. Accordingly, from this fundamentalism is an attempt to protect itself from modernization, to close itself off from it.

There are other positions, in particular the position that Irina is defending, that this is not fundamentalism, but an attempt, so to speak, for a creative dialogue with modernity. It is an attempt to work out some sort of path for yourself, your own solution. Indeed, if we read Weber, then it doesn't really matter what Luther said about himself, in fact this was an entry into capitalism and this entry was very successful. And if we take today's discussion: for example, Peter Berger, the sociologist. He was asked if Max Weber had died. He said that no, Max Weber is alive and well and lives in Guatemala. By this, he means that Pentecostals in Latin America are the fastest growing religious movement in history. And this is also the path for these underdeveloped people, I don't know, the poor, uneducated masses in Latin America. For them, Pentecostalism is their entry into modernity, into contemporary times, into the new spirit of capitalism. I like Irina's thesis very much, because in a way it tackles what has been said. That is, the entry of the Islamic world into modernity on its own terms and it is a very strange, paradoxical path. Such a conceptualization is possible.

I do not agree with the position that reformation necessarily must have a progressive goal. That reformation is necessarily a straight path, everything is wonderful, these are the good guys. All the same, I have studied the process of secularization. There is Charles Taylor's famous book *A Secular Age*, which was recently translated into Russian. It is based on the idea that secular modernity grew out of the attempt by Christians to carry out reform. People appeared who were not satisfied



with medieval religiosity with its carnivals and its uneducated masses and peasants. They promised that they would make everyone real Christians and they began to make everyone Christian. As a result, as an unintended consequence, they achieved secularization, which is what we have today, as a matter of fact.

Besides this, one of the books that has had the greatest influence on me is Herzen's *From the Other Shore*, where he describes his horror at the reception of revolution in Europe. He sees some dirty, ragged people with some clubs. He is horrified that here it is, the light of history, and in this light of history stand not aristocrats in their beautiful doublets, but these half-people or half who knows what.

IRINA STARODUBROVSKAYA: And Luther with the civil war? The story is the same.

DMITRY UZLANER: That is, the mole of history, as Hegel said, he digs, and where he digs, we do not know. Therefore, I agree, indeed, that now there is a rupture of something, and what will be is unclear. Also, I like Irina's thesis in this sense, because we cannot verify or qualify it, we will only be able to do this after 400 years. But as food for thought it seems very interesting. That's what I really lacked, the attempt at this conceptualization. Maybe best of all, the processes in the Islamic world can be generalized only by someone who is not a scholar of Islam.

IRINA STARODUBROVSKAYA: And after 400 years.

DMITRY UZLANER: After 400 years.

IRINA STARODUBROVSKAYA: If I may, as the panel chair I will say just a few words. First: I am very glad that the return to metanarratives did not call forth rejection. What I wanted to say in defense of such a presentation of the issue is that when there is a serious crisis, all the same there is a request for metanarratives. And if these metanarratives are not generated by specialists, they will be generated in other ways.

EMIL PAIN: By journalists.

IRINA STARODUBROVSKAYA: Not just by journalists. I have a feeling that it is the concept of the clash of civilizations. Huntington collected all the scary stories, all the stereotypes, all the horrors, that the av-

erage person has, and digested them. This idea has so fully expressed the spirit of the average person's perception, that it will live and flourish completely independently of how its authors and scientists will treat it. I also have the feeling that it is important if we succeed in bringing metanarratives into this discussion.

Second. All the same, concerning the language of description, conceptualization, etc., Weber really lived 400 years later. It is simpler after 400 years. In this sense, we are compelled to be in this environment, and simultaneously, to conceptualize this environment, and simultaneously receive some kind of response from this environment. In this situation we must speak in one language. We are simply compelled to speak the same language because otherwise our conceptualization would hang in the air. After 400 years yes, I think, it will be easier. But until then, if we say Salafism, then we might somehow be understood within the Islamic community but will hardly be understood from outside. If we say universalism, then it is possible that we might somehow be understood from outside, but we will definitely not be understood from within, this will not correspond to anything. I imagine that this problem of common language from the inside and from the outside is the primary challenge.



TAUFIK IBRAHIM

## Islam and Partial Modernization: There Was No Liberation from Medieval Elements

*Translation by Anna Amramina*

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*In his interview Taufik Ibrahim argues that the main problem for Muslims is that the traditional, medieval understanding of religion has not yet been overcome. This traditional understanding is connected with the loss of the initial creative impulse of early Islam, with the so-called closure of the gate of ijtihad. Both the fundamentalists and the reformists typically reference the early Islamic period. But the question is, why do they do so? Is it in order to find ready-made answers or to find the inner sense of this or that statement, to liberate them from historical limits and discover how to realize them in modern life? T. Ibrahim thinks that there is no clash of Western and Islamic civilizations but there are clashes between traditional and modern values within civilizations. His view is that in Muslim countries the modernization of the society without religious reform, as took place in Turkey, cannot protect society from setbacks as long as the traditional understanding of religion remains untouched. And such radical organizations as ISIS exploit this situation. In the reformation of Islam T. Ibrahim underlines the special role of the Islamic periphery, mostly Europe, and also including Russia.*

**Keywords:** Islam, globalization, traditional understanding of religion, reformation, citizenship, humanism.

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**R** We all understand, and more so with time, that the Muslim world is going through something. It probably began roughly with the Arab spring. What happens in Muslim countries or with Islam as an ideology or a doctrine, even in connection with Islamic eschatology, appears in the headlines more and more often. In your opinion, what is happening in the Muslim world?

*Taufik Ibrahim:* Actually, by and large there is nothing special, nothing extraordinary happening in the Islamic world. There are countries, whether we call them developing, or third-world, or something else, that are searching for their own path in the modern world. They are a long way from leading positions, which naturally motivates them to respond in some way, to undertake something. Moreover, this is not only a problem for Muslim countries. Turbulence will linger until we develop a relatively even distribution of wealth on the global scale, until we reach a consensus on fair and equivalent exchange.

Two things are probably actually specific to Muslims. First, there are numerous oil and gas resources in Muslim countries. The role of oil in the global economy is well known. It will remain one of the main factors that will determine outside interest in the Muslim world for many years. The second is Islamic ideology itself, its specificity as a religion. Islam is a religion with an active life philosophy and active opposition to evil. In various regions and countries they might respond differently to unfavorable, negative manifestations of globalization. Muslims are particularly sensitive in this respect.

Personally, I have nothing against globalization itself. Generally speaking, globalization, or universalism, is an overarching tendency that has been present throughout the entire course of human history. Recall Alexander the Great's conquests, for one thing. Christianity, and later Islam, are nothing short of global projects. I see nothing wrong if a culture, considering itself more worthy, wishes to bring its values and ways of life to others. However, these others have the right to resist attempts to impose other values and life standards on them.

I would also like to draw attention to another point. Previously, during Soviet times, the world was bipolar. One force opposed the other. Tendencies toward protest, which are, were and will be always will be out there, mainly accumulated within communism and socialism. Now, it is largely Islam that accumulates these tendencies.

*And yet, it was namely Muslim countries that developed the idea that the reason they were trailing behind the West — Europe and America — was that these states drifted from the fundamentals of Islamic religion and only a return to true Islam would allow them to regain leading positions. What do you think, how seriously does this kind of ideology influence what is happening now in the Muslim world?*

It is very popular. Moreover, one of the main aspects of critiques of globalism is that globalism is in fact neocolonialism, a continuation of the imperialist expansion of the West.

There is also profound nostalgia (not unlike in Russia) for the glorious past, a deep sense of historical resentment. We built a global empire under the banner of Islam, spread our influence in numerous countries, created a great civilization and a highly developed culture. Thus, the proposition to reinstate the caliphate to return to former glory is a necessary part of this ideology.

Added to this is an attempt to blame everything on others, which is typical in these cases. In particular, European nations are considered responsible for the backwardness of their respective colonies. I will note the following about this. Of course, we should not disregard the negative aspects of colonialism and we cannot help but notice that Europe or the West have not always had the best intentions in their relationships with Muslim countries, to put it mildly. However, this is only half the truth. After all, colonialism itself is not so much a cause as an effect of our historical and civilizational backwardness and decline after the 14th century.

And who, for example, prevented the Ottoman Empire from producing world-class scientists?!

*Why do you think it is so?*

Because the conservation of religion was occurring, what is conventionally called “closing the gate of *ijtihad*.” This is a term we began using after the fact to describe stagnation and rejection of the creative impulse of the 8th to 13th centuries, the period that corresponds to the Middle Ages in European history. Europe first had the Middle Ages and then the Renaissance, whereas we had the opposite — the Renaissance first and then the Middle Ages. It so happened that we revived

the classical culture but then it was as if we rejected our own accomplishments. After the 13th century, conservative orthodoxy prevailed. And it was this rule of orthodoxy, not the crusades or the Mongol invasion, that was the main cause of stagnation and the subsequent decline of the Muslim civilization.

*Essentially, you are also saying that some distortion of the initial religious impulse led to the fact that Muslim countries began to fall behind. So, how do you differ from those whom you refer to as fundamentalists?*

Fundamentalists and reformists happen to share this particular point, in this respect they do not differ from each other. There are conservative Salafists and modernist Salafists. If you criticize historical layers, you should say where to go. "Let's go back to the original Islam!" But what do you want from the original Islam? Some people look for literalness, ready-made recipes that it used to offer. Others look for meaning, the spirit of this or that religious institution. They search for a way to implement this goal in modern circumstances by currently available means, that is, release the institution from a strong attachment to the historical circumstances in which it was formulated. This is where the principal, fundamental difference lies. However, going back to the beginning is a shared value for fundamentalists and reformists. Remember Luther's formula: down with tradition, back to the Bible.

*Why do fundamentalists play a leading part among those who call for going back to basics?*

There are two reasons for this. The process of transitioning from a medieval to a modern understanding of religion is a very painful one. Who introduced it to Europe? First and foremost, secular authorities. As a rule, secular powers did not allow proponents of the old understanding to pressure innovators. This did not happen in Muslim countries. Secular rulers did not even set the task of the reformation of religion for themselves.

Let us look at Turkey, the country that has progressed furthest along the path toward modernization. You would think that Atatürk brought it closer to Europe by separating the state from religion. But even before Erdogan and his party rose to power, I was arguing that was a dead-end road. A lopsided modernization was implemented,

which modernized society without reforming religion. There has been no liberation from the Middle Ages (I do not mean “from religion”), from the medieval understanding of religion. That is, even Turkey has not passed this stage.

Or let us take, for example, Sharia law. Apart from wearing hijabs, cutting of hands, and stoning, what does it mean to the general public, in the mass consciousness?! As we are informed, over the entire course of the Ottoman Empire’s history there was not a single case of cutting off hands or stoning. Well, what of it? Refraining from enforcing medieval laws, forgetting about them for a while is not enough. There was no ideological liberation from medieval practices, there was no actual religious justification for rejecting them. Which means that if someone like a person from Daesh (ISIS)<sup>1</sup> comes along and starts to explain to Muslims that they, it turns out, were not “living the Islamic law,” he will win. And most of their audience will sincerely repent their past transgressions.

So, the first reason is that the medieval period itself, the medieval understanding of religion has not been overcome, or, to be more precise, no one has touched it. In this regard, it is significant that schools affiliated with Al-Azhar finally abandoned a section of the curriculum about the enslavement of prisoners of war, i.e., of turning men into slaves and women into concubines, just last year. In all likelihood, it was eliminated under pressure from President el-Sisi.

You see, this medieval practice has not been debunked. Yes, legislation in most Muslim countries does not stipulate the death penalty as punishment for adultery, and for many decades people have lived peacefully without it. But if a fundamentalist begins actively promoting it as a true requirement of Islam, most Muslims will likely be willing to listen, because secular regimes in these countries have not established another understanding of religion. Thus, a solid foundation has been preserved almost everywhere for reviving the traditional, medieval understanding of religion. In fact, Daesh is a legitimate offspring of the medieval interpretation of Islam. Its ideologues do not invent anything new, it is all in authoritative books, according to Sharia. It is a different matter that many countries have not used it for a very long time.

Now, to the second reason. Most of these countries had regimes that were authoritarian to varying degrees and that did not tolerate any liberal or democratic opposition. By contrast, they gave the green light to

1. ISIS is illegal in the Russian Federation by the ruling of the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation of February 14, 2003, GKPI #03 116, in effect from March 4, 2003.



religious movements as long as they left the authorities alone in their mosques and preaching. Thus, religious movements had a free hand in spreading their ideology, their own understanding of Islam. As a result, liberal-democratic forces were driven out. As an aside, I will mention that against this backdrop the events in Egypt as a result of the second wave of the revolution came as a complete surprise to everyone, when tens of millions of protesters came out against the so-called Islamic project.

Circling back to your question, these authoritarian regimes are no longer popular in most of these countries. And we are witnessing two alarming phenomena almost everywhere: corruption and population growth. The size of the population is the biggest problem, it is a tragedy for most third-world countries. In contrast, modern technologies require job cuts. The population in Arab states doubles every quarter-century. The situation turns out to be objectively unfavorable for young people, there are no prospects for them. Even an ideal regime would struggle tremendously to meet the needs of a constantly growing populace. What is the solution? The liberal-democratic protest of the population? No. It is easiest to turn to religion. And this is what people do. What else is there?

*At the very beginning of the interview, you said that Muslim countries, as other third-world countries, are looking for a path to modernity. You are now saying that the medieval understanding of Islam prevails in these countries. Is there a conflict between the search for a path to modernity and the medieval mindset that you mention?*

There are societies based on secular life. There are also Bedouin, tribal societies. In many countries people still live as if by Bedouin standards, with tribal chiefs and hereditary power. They have not moved beyond this. I thought we had overcome this in my native Syria. Alas, we have not. An entire tribe would go back and forth between the side of the opposition and the side of the regime. The Bedouin, or, if you will, traditional organization of society still prevails. It is, of course, fraught everywhere with fundamentalism. It forms a ready-made base for all sorts of counterreformations, and it always will. This is, however, just an add-on to a larger problem.

It is not about who will offer a more acceptable variant of ideology; this is a secondary question if crucial issues are not being dealt with. How do we feed the people? This is the main thing. If we cannot feed the peo-

ple, then there is a simple solution: to take up arms. Let the entire world pay us *jizya* (a tax on non-Muslims in a caliphate). Switzerland flourished at the expense of people from other countries who kept their money in Swiss banks. So, we will live off *jizya*. These easy fixes will always be tempting. We should not oversimplify the problem, reducing it all to the fact that there are dictatorial regimes and medieval mindsets. There are objective issues in the form of massive population growth and shortage of natural resources. It is a huge issue that is not being addressed.

*One more clarification. You have discussed two different positions on the role of fundamentalist Islam that tend to clash with each other in Western scholarship. This is, in fact, the debate between Olivier Roy and Gilles Kepel. Is radicalism the essence of Islam or is Islam just another ideology that protesters adopt because there always must be a protest ideology in the world?*

In fact, these two positions are not so polar, they are not mutually exclusive. Before talking about the “essence of Islam,” we must define which “Islam” we are discussing. Sacred texts themselves are one thing and their interpretations are another. Moreover, interpretations can differ dramatically, and not just from one historical era to another, but within one period as well. As far as radicalism is concerned, Islam as understood by medieval Faqih theologians differs from that of Sufi mystics of the Ibn Arabi school, for example, who developed a pluralistic interpretation of faith that bordered on religious indifference at times. Thus, it would be more appropriate to talk about a dominant interpretation of Islam in this period than about its “essence.” The prevailing political doctrine in traditional theology was formed during the time when the rule of force predominated, when everyone fought against everyone else and states were often presented with a dilemma to conquer or be conquered. In these circumstances, of course, only an offensive, militant interpretation of scriptures could prevail. The pacifist, tolerant, pluralistic message of the Quran, which from the reformist-modernist point of view actually reflects the true essence of Quranic ideas, was cast aside.

To a certain extent, this political doctrine now occupies the niche for protest groups that communist and socialist ideas used to occupy. Who was it that organized explosions in Europe back then? What were they called?

*There were all sorts of Red Brigades.*

What was their fundamental difference from terrorist acts that are currently performed under pseudo-Islamic slogans? There is nothing specifically religious in this. It is not that difficult for any more or less mass ideology to adopt what we call a radical understanding. It only requires finding forces that are interested in it.

Another factor must be taken into account here. We have advanced considerably in terms of establishing humanist values, but we must not forget that the situation was much more complex in Europe not too long ago. We are now outraged by these Daesh bandits who cut off heads. Do you know what the Europeans did in their colonies? In India, British soldiers committed atrocities against the local population, they raped their wives, murdered their husbands, and forced widows to wear their dead husbands' skulls on their necks as necklaces. British soldiers preserved evidence of this in photographs, they were proud of them. Or what the French did in Algeria — more than a dozen severed heads of leaders of the Algerian resistance were displayed at the Museum of Natural History in Paris. Or what the Americans did to prisoners of war in Vietnam. Did the Europeans or the Americans think that was barbaric? There is no place for illusions here, fascism is also a brainchild of the same European culture.

*As far as I understand, in many Islamic countries the Arab spring raised very high hopes for democratization, development of Islamic approaches to society, and a new, just, different life. And it failed almost everywhere. In some places it ended in a military coup that overthrew a legitimately elected president, in other places it culminated in bloody chaos. Why?*

First, I want to emphasize that the very fact of the Arab spring is a very positive event. People grasped that they had a right to a different life and took to the street to demand it. Regardless of the outcome, we must not belittle the significance of this fact. Otherwise we will see no end of experts who sit around arguing about an East where the ideals of democracy and freedom are generally unfamiliar to people.

It seems to me that what happened in Egypt with the second wave of revolution was an extremely important moment. And again, regardless of how it ended or is going to end. It showed that not every reli-

gious project will be successful. Millions of religious people rose against the Ikhwan project. I used to think that we were doomed to one of two alternatives, authoritarianism or the Islamist project. As it turns out, there is another prospect. This is the second positive moment.

However, the fact that the Arab spring was such a failure everywhere is more of a natural, logical outcome. Why? Because you may offer a fair critique, but that does not equal having a viable alternative to it. Having the power to overturn the existing regime is not enough. You must have a constructive alternative. If you intend to rebuild your shabby house, you must have an alternative place to stay during the alterations and a clear plan for construction. This is exactly what was lacking in the Arab spring. All of this turned out to be unexpected in some way even for relatively organized groups that came to power on the wave of the Arab spring. They were not ready for this opportunity. They had no agenda. This is the source of their weakness, or, to be precise, their predestination to failure.

*I have a feeling that this lesson of the Arab spring has not been learned.*

This is the tragedy of the situation. This lesson also has not been learned from such a concurrent phenomenon as Daesh. And what if we succeed in wiping them out in the near future? I am certain that something similar will quietly appear at a different location a decade or so later. For many radicals and jihadists, the failure of the latest attempt does not mean that the entire project is doomed. They are not afraid to die either. On the contrary, they are eager to become shahids.

It should be more of a lesson for those forces that were relatively liberal-democratic at the beginning of the protests. This may also be a lesson for the West, which, in my opinion, took the wrong stand with the opposition, just like it had earlier made a mistake by supporting various authoritarian regimes.

Perhaps more exactly — I hope that these events will not pass unnoticed by the moderate wing of political Islam, though it appears that none of their ideologues yet have a higher mission. We have been asking for a positive alternative for over a century. And yet, in effect they stay within the traditional understanding of religion, which is simply incapable of producing an appropriate, promising, viable project.

Proponents of the reformist modernistic approach, such as myself, have a different understanding of Islam. For us, the Prophet Muham-

mad laid the foundation, launched the forward motion, and marked certain directions of development. For traditionalist fundamentalists, he is perfection, a pinnacle to aspire to, and all our efforts must be directed toward recreating the order established during the time of the prophet and his closest companions and followers.

We need to overcome the traditional understanding of history of the three Abrahamic religions — Judaism, Christianity, and Islam — and move away from the traditional eschatological regressivism, according to which the “Golden Age” is behind us and we are all rushing forward, toward the end of the world. All hope is placed in the Messiah who decides the fate of the world. It is impossible to create a civilization within this paradigm, with such a mindset. We must move from a regressivist paradigm to a progressivist one.

As far as modernization of Muslim societies is concerned, it must be immanent in ideological terms and based on internal resources. It must come from within, and in no case should it be imported. Otherwise it will be short-lived and not very promising.

In addition, we must go through a modernization program. Precisely this aspect is often missing, which is the problem with most third-world countries including Muslim states. When something positive is taken from the European experience, it remains one-sided and disconnected from the underlying foundation, and as such it turns out to be ineffective, “it doesn’t work.” While in Europe it was hard-won: a high price was paid to establish science by a multitude of martyrs and Galileos.

But this does not mean that we must inevitably traverse the same bloody path that Europe did. We must try, as much as possible, to avoid those sacrifices that were made in Europe in order to establish new understandings of religion. Although, what is happening now in certain Muslim countries resembles the pangs of the birth of a new society.

*Muslim migration to the West, to Europe, is not a new phenomenon, but it has now acquired a completely different magnitude. How do you think this will influence the understanding of Islam and of Western society itself? What can we expect from it?*

I look at this phenomenon in light of the experience of Russian Islam. In my opinion, in the 19th and early 20th century Russian Muslims were in the most advanced position of the entire Muslim world in terms of an accurate, correct understanding of Islam. They lived in fundamentally different conditions. Religion and politics were not

particularly closely tied in the country, and in such circumstances one might conclude, for example, that an alliance between religion and politics or between religion and the state is negative, especially for religion. I believe that migrants, who have more freedom in discussing Islam, will move toward a more accurate understanding of religion than those who live in the citadel of the Muslim world. In this sense, much hope rests on the Islamic periphery. In his time the great Tatar thinker Ismail Gasprinsky said that the Muslims of Russia must stand in the forefront of the entire Islamic world. This position is also promising for European Islam as a whole.

This is one side of the coin. The other side has to do with whether most Muslims will manage to assimilate into a new context and how our *modus vivendi* will be integrated into a new environment. If it succeeds, it will be good for all. If it fails, it will be a disaster.

*You mean, will they be able to fit into this new society?*

One of the most complex problems, which has almost never been addressed since the dissolution of the caliphate, is connected to religious justification, the religious legitimacy of the transition from life in a religious society to life in a political and civil society.

Today we live in a state based on geographic or political principles. The main criterion here is citizenship rather than religious or ethnic identity. For example, I am a citizen of Russia, a Muslim, an Arab, someone else is a Russian Orthodox Christian, or a Jew, etc. But as fellow citizens we have the same rights, we are citizens of this country. Everyone must understand that we live in a political state, not a religious one. A different principle of identity is at work here. If we do not recognize this identity, then, for example, a Muslim will consider that any Muslim anywhere is more akin to him than a non-Muslim. We must learn to carry a variety of identities at the same time. Besides religious and ethnic identities, there is a civic identity, and this should be primary, central to all socio-political matters. Unfortunately, we are still far from this awareness.

Speaking about migrants in Europe, I believe people often fight all sorts of artificial battles. For example, about the hijab. If you want people to part with an inaccurate interpretation of religious symbolism which you believe has no place in modern society, if you really want to help people to drop the inaccurate interpretation, you must not choose confrontation. It provokes an escalation of protest. You must not drive yourself and Muslims into an impasse.

And in general, I think the European project of rationalism and secularism is not entirely justified. Historically it was warranted as a reaction to the medieval understanding of Christianity. In the grand scheme of things, however, this project is not justified and not very promising. As a result, instead of Christianity we have various forms of mysticism, neo-paganism, and Satanism, which are simply replacing the role, the niche that used to belong to Christianity. It is not the best alternative. We need to establish a synthesis in which religion takes its proper place, and that will not create discomfort for someone who is both religious and engaged in science. This is the direction in which Europe must move.

For now, I must state that European culture has gone too far in secularization. Sometimes the militancy of its secularists is no less revolting than actions of religious fanatics. As types, I see little difference between them, when people claim: "I can wear whatever I want or even walk around with no clothes, but you have no right to cover your hair"!

*What do you see as the causes of the phenomenon known as Islamic terrorism?*

All radicals claim that they opt for lesser harm to prevent greater evil. If you remember, in the history of Christian Europe the same sort of motive was in circulation: burn heretics and their children as a mercy to them, for the less they sin on this Earth, the better it will be for them in the other world. Unfortunately, similar arguments work almost everywhere. Take the example of the American nuclear bombing of Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki during World War II. Or the use of napalm by those same Americans in Vietnam. We are not always inclined to ponder these phenomena and acknowledge that they are of the same nature.

In this respect, I would like to draw attention to one psychological aspect of our time, the age of technology. If, for example, they broadcast a bombing killing several hundred innocent people, this causes less shock for the audience than, let's say, a show on television in which somebody's finger is cut off.

*I have one last question. If we try to sum up the discussion and go back, so to speak, to the beginning — what is going on in the modern world? Is it a clash of civilizations? Is it a global inter-Islamic conflict, between Shia and Sunni Muslims or between traditionalists and reformists? Or is it another process? How do we package it?*



I would not recommend packing it all in one package. Because different processes are happening in the world at the same time. There was a project of secularizing Europe, now a process of desecularizing Europe is going on. There was a project of modernity that was replaced by postmodernity. Globalization advances but there is resistance to it. The Muslim world is also heterogeneous, depending on region and country. We should not think that everything needs to fit into one big scheme. This temptation is counterproductive. Instead, such generalizations must be avoided.

Yes, in some ways there is a clash of civilizations. We just need to specify which civilizations we mean. If specific claims are made about them, the ensuing theory might end up being very questionable. If we mean a clash of two approaches to the role of religion in society, then this understanding is correct. Can it be framed as a civilizational conflict? I do not see anything wrong with that.

*Yet currently, when a clash of civilizations is discussed, a very specific meaning is attached to it. It is the clash of Western and Islamic civilizations.*

Modernization is a transition to an understanding of society that Europe developed, and we must give it credit for it. There is a struggle between the old understanding and the new, and it is of course a complex civilizational process. However, it is not happening between human communities, but within each of them.

*But do Islamic and Western values clash?*

Not exactly. It is a fact that certain values of the traditional Muslim culture clash with modern values. However, it is not a clash of Islam with the modern world or the West. The traditional understanding of Christianity also clashes with the values of modern Western civilization. Not only the hierarchs of Eastern Orthodoxy, but also those of Catholicism, call modern Western culture satanic.

*So, you believe that a civilizational conflict is more of a clash between the old and the new within each civilization than between civilizations? Do I understand your position correctly?*

Precisely. Moreover, we must generally be extra careful when promoting these types of global theories on the clash of civilizations, religions,

denominations, ethnic groups, etc. There is a critical difference between a study of distant historical realities and a study of realities that can serve as the foundation for concrete decisions that are of critical importance for these realities, and not just for them. We must exercise caution and be aware of all the responsibility. It is not just about being politically correct. We are not discussing the history of disease from the distant past. We are giving a prescription, through which the patient may or may not be cured, may survive or die.

Whatever the cultural, religious, ethnic, linguistic, or economic differences between people, we all belong to one humankind. We are all sons and daughters of Adam and Eve, and that means what we are members of one family. We must think about solving global problems together.

Humanist ideals that are the talk of our society must include a deep feeling of mutual respect between people, regardless of who they are, Russians, Arabs, French, or Chinese. . . We are moving in this direction, but we still have not made much progress. In one place people are rolling in money while in another children are dying from starvation. Every single life should be valuable to you. Only then it will be true humanitarianism.

*So, Islam is a humanist religion for you?*

Yes, that is my profound conviction. It is not based on my religious identity. I speak as an objective scholar. I have tried to demonstrate this, especially in the book *Quranic Humanism*, whose first volume came out in 2015.

For me, Islam is a humanist religion, as are other celestial religions. Conflicts arise because of people's misunderstanding of religion. This applies to conflicts between religions, different denominations within one religion, and between religion and science in general. Nature, whose laws are revealed to us by science, is as much a scripture as sacred books, for example, the Quran. These two scriptures cannot contradict each other. If you find a seeming contradiction, it means that you misinterpreted the text of the scripture.

Similarly, religion is love above all else, God's love for us and in return, our love for Him. Love for God should be expressed mainly through love for His creations. If something contradicts this principle, you are misinterpreting the wording of the scripture that comes from God.

However, a crucial fact that I have already mentioned must be considered while reading the Quran, namely: In the Quran, God addresses

people according to their mentality or the level of their intellectual or social development. The Prophet Muhammad, who acted as a reformer, naturally had to take this into account. That is why in many areas he pursued not what was desired or ideal, but what was viable in that time. Quranic messages directed at all societies and all times are one thing, and messages that were designed for the Bedouins in Arabia in the 7th century are another. Many rationalists and critics of religion make the theoretical and methodological mistake of disregarding specific contexts in which prophets preached.

Do you know what the Prophet Muhammad lamented about when he was departing for the other world? He complained to his wife Aisha that the Kaaba was not built quite correctly, and he wanted to rebuild it but did not dare to do it. The Meccans had just joined Islam and the Prophet feared that such a reconstruction might drive them away from Islam. Listen to what I'm saying: the Prophet was afraid to rebuild the Kaaba, our holiest site, to which we make pilgrimage and which we address five times daily in our prayers, and you want him, for example, to free slaves or give women equal rights in one fell swoop? You cannot ask that of him. He was a reformer, he did what he could but trod carefully. In many areas, the Prophet only marked the general direction for further development. Conservative fundamentalists fail to understand precisely this. They call for a return to the way it was during the time of the Prophet as something complete, perfect, and ideal, without due regard for particular historical circumstances.

If you consider the historical context, you will find a much more rational, intellectual, and humanitarian intent in the Quran. This essence of the Quranic message of Islam must be distinguished from its historically contingent interpretations in theologians' works and the practice of Muslims themselves.

*Interview by Irina Starodubrovskaya*

ORKHAN JEMAL

## Islamic Revival as a Search for New Forms of Political Representation

*Translation by Marlyn Miller and Jan Surer*

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**Orkhan Jemal** (1966–2018) — Journalist (Moscow, Russia).

*The main idea that Orkhan Jemal expresses in his interview is that the current stage of Islamic revival does not stem from the desire to move back to the past or the denial of progress. But as a result of social progress leading to the marginalization of a huge portion of the Islamic religious community due to the loss of political representation after the Islamic caliphate was destroyed, the search for new forms of such representation is in progress. This search takes place in different forms, and it is accompanied by violence as it presupposes radical political shifts. The same thing has occurred in similar situations, for example in the course of the Protestant Reformation, and in the implementation of the communist project. Orkhan does not connect the current situation in Islam with migration from Muslim states to the West (he explains the problems that have arisen here by the crisis of Europe itself). At the same time, he thinks that one of the forms of Islamic expansion should be the development of a model of life for everyone (including non-Muslims) that is morally superior to the current Western way of life.*

**Keywords:** Islamism, caliphate, political representation, Islamic way of development, Arab spring, Islamic terrorism.

**2** *Recently, more and more news, and the top headlines, at that, are connected in one way or another either with the Islamic world, or with Islam as a religion, or even in some cases with Islamic eschatology. That is, something is hap-*

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*pening either with Islam, or in Islamic countries, that is constantly producing a stream of news. I can't remember the last time I heard about Africa or Latin America, but I hear about the Middle East all the time. What is actually happening here? Why is that?*

*Orkhan Jemal:* You know, the Chinese have a saying: “God forbid that we live in an era of change.” We are living precisely in an era of change. It is simply such a difficult historical moment, we have just come to a time of change, a time of big events, a time when the overall picture, the overall contour of the world is at a point of bifurcation and will change. And this point of bifurcation is located just at the juncture of the Islamic and Christian worlds. The message isn't that Huntington and Toynbee were right in their clash of civilizations idea. No, that's not the point. But right now this is the situation the world has logically reached.

We need to recognize that all this has its roots at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, when it was still the old world, it still bore certain archaic features, and in some of its characteristics it was comparable with the world of the era of the Crusades or even the Battle of Pavia. The vast Ottoman Empire existed at this time. It was sick, it was rotting, outdated, archaic. There were huge internal problems, internal contradictions in the Ottoman Porte: Egypt had already broken away, the Balkans were already pushing [the Ottomans] out, Turkey itself was coming apart at the seams, the Arabs were rebelling. But nevertheless, this was the very entity that claimed the central position in the Islamic *Ummah*, this political agency.

During the First World War this nightmare was brought to an end when this same decrepit Ottoman Empire, coupled with Germany, got itself involved in a huge war and suffered defeat. The Islamic world, at one level, breathed a sigh of relief, because this “sick man of Europe” was no more, this archaism was no more — an archaism which, besides that of the metropolis, Turkey itself, had still preserved a great deal of the ancient ways on its periphery, which prevented these territories from developing, from living. And then it [became] possible to absorb anything and everything within itself: Western innovations, and non-Western innovations. This was done, very specific trends appeared in the Arab world: Baathist doctrine and Arab National Socialism flourished. Systems of rule such as the Libyan Jamahiriya emerged. There were certain processes, but along with them agency disappeared.

Now, the world proletariat in the 20th century had a head — it was the USSR. Those who did not particularly like the USSR had lesser alternative leaders in the form of Beijing or Havana, but in principle, a certain class-based political agency remained. There was a head. And in principle, not only proletarians from all parts of the globe could appeal to it, but also people fighting for their independence, and for many other things, for example, for the environment. But Muslims did not have anything like this. At first, it seemed that this was not so important — develop, adopt innovations, see how wonderful it was in Britain, I don't know, in America, in France — how civilized and progressive they are, how far they surpass us.

The key event of the 20th century, which showed that everything was not right, that everything was increasingly complicated, was 1947, the formation of the state of Israel. In the 20th century, they did what was already not acceptable in the 19th century as a resolution of the [American] Indian question. At this moment the realization came that there was no one to intercede. There was absolutely no one to stand up. And a conglomerate of political entities of the type, say, of monarchies or Baathist regimes is very changeable, each [component/regime] favors its own side.

Against this background, a completely different process was developing, which, in fact, shaped the current emphasis. This was a party that emerged in Egypt, called the “Muslim Brotherhood,”<sup>1</sup> the Ikhwans. They said that the Western way is not ours, we are the side that has gotten the worst of it in this process. But we have an alternative. Moreover, we don't need to give up Western innovations entirely and completely. We are quite ready to use something of their experience. But on the whole, we have an alternative. And so this theme of Islam's distinctive path rested on mass frustration and the understanding that to the West we were just defeated savages.

Further, the Ikhwan had its own story. Various groups branched off from them, some that we consider terrorists, some that we don't. On the one hand, these were Ikhwans who were against violence; on the other hand, we can never forget that “Al-Qaeda”<sup>2</sup> was also formed on the foundation of the Ikhwans. That is, this led to the idea of radical struggle. And this is what we have, and what generates such a stream of events — the Arab Spring, events in Syria, even to a certain extent

1. This party is banned from the territory of the Russian Federation.

2. This organization is prohibited in the Russian Federation by a decision of the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation, dated February 14, 2003, No. GKPI 03 116, which took effect on March 4, 2003.

Afghan events — it is precisely that a battle is happening in the world for a kind of greater political agency among Muslims. Naturally, there are complete dead ends: let's try networks such as "Al-Qaeda"; let's try to base ourselves on territorial administration, as did the Islamic State.<sup>3</sup> But in general this is simply a process in which these numberless millions, the thinking class, and the radical class among them, realized that the loss of political agency is an evil for one-and-a-half billion people. This is an evil for them, and it needs somehow to be restored, the issue needs to be resolved. And this is the phase we're in — a struggle is going on for political agency. The kingdom of God is taken by force.<sup>4</sup>

*And why is it that the idea of going back to the source in order to become a leading force in the world again has received such wide dissemination? I understand that many see the reason for Islam losing its leading role and the West leaping forward in the departure from true Islam.*

First, the idea that we have moved away [from true Islam] and that's why everything is askew, awry, and if we fought with swords and bows, as in the time of the Prophet, then everything would be fine for us — we can't say that idea is entirely absent. But it is profoundly marginal.

*Why with swords and bows? To hack off their hands? To stone them?*

Once again, in itself the idea of returning, of forcing yourself back to the Stone Age, because it's better — is quite a marginal idea. This is well understood in the Islamic world. Of course, there are such street-tough, super-passionate people who say "yes, cut off hands, yes!" But in general, the idea itself is marginal. We simply remember the events that gave rise to this entity — the Caliphate — gave rise to it despite all circumstances. Otherwise, it is not perceived as a historical miracle. It gave rise to us.

And the struggle is actually for a return to a political role, to having political weight. When the caliph is obligated to stand up for anyone, anywhere, it means that his power is also partly extraterritorial. He is caliph of all Muslims, and not simply of those square kilome-

3. This entity is banned from the territory of the Russian Federation.

4. "From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and the violent take it by force" (Matthew 11:12 [NRSV]).



ters. And in itself Salafism, which actively exploits this idea, is, after all, born each time there is a question of external oppression. In fact, the history of the formation of this movement can also extend beyond Ibn Abd al-Wahhab, who was a proverb to all, and even goes back to Ibn Taymiyyah. What kind of ideology was this? It was an ideology that arose as resistance to the attacking Mongols who occupied the Abbasid Caliphate and enslaved everyone. The terrible Mongol campaign swept away the Abbasid Caliphate, at which point an ideology of resistance arose; it was very clearly formulated by Ibn Taymiyyah. And Ibn Abd al-Wahhab, he was an ideologist of resistance as well, he fought for Arab independence against Turkish hegemony. That is, this also took place in this case. And the revival of this tendency on the eve of the First World War — this also eroded Turkish influence in the Arabian peninsula. That is, in general, when we say that we need to return, naturally there are people who will talk about the archaic. And there are people who understand this as a return to what has been lost.

*And why is it necessary to go backward, and not forward?*

And what does it mean to go forward?

*Well, toward something new. Do you dismiss the idea of progress?*

But why dismiss progress, if progress is evident, it is obvious, it is ridiculous to deny it. And there is technical progress, and progress in information, and the increased social complexity of the system. Progress is made. It's just that when we say "to follow the path of progress," what do we have in mind? Now historically, it happened that this huge religious community, it actually was to some extent marginalized. Yes, this is historically objective, certain causes and certain preconditions have led to this. But this doesn't mean that historical objectivity can't be overcome. In fact, history is also a cycle of those extremes that overcome historical preconditions.

*As far as we can understand, the current stage of this movement nevertheless began with the Arab Spring. Well, in any case, it was during the Arab Spring that I began hearing things about Islam every day.*

The process began, in my view, in the late 20s, very soon after the disappearance of the Caliphate and the emergence of the Ikhwans. It smoldered, continued, and decayed, it entered into a deadly embrace with Baathist entities and with pro-American regimes like Sadat's or Mubarak's. It spilled over into this great world cauldron and became significant not only for the regions, but went beyond the scale of its inner workings with the beginning of the Afghan war. It had already become an important factor. And further the situation only worsened and worsened, as it passed through different phases. When, for example, it became perfectly obvious in Algeria at the turn of the 80s and 90s that, as Mao said, the rifle gives birth to power. Meaning, only the transition of power within the political consensus ensures simple democratic processes. Any figure outside the limits of that consensus will be swept away, and the results of the vote will not matter to anyone. Algeria has shown that you can vote as you like, but there will be a military junta, not Islamists.

*But all the same, the phenomenon of the Arab Spring, as I understand it, does not fully fit into your logic, because it was not a purely Islamic phenomenon. There were a number of very different forces.*

You know, there's this Islamic parable. I believe it relates pretty closely to the time of Jafar as-Sadiq. They came to him and asked: Where do we look for pure, true Islam, and where do we look for pure Muslims, true Muslims? He answered: look for true Islam in the Quran, and true Muslims — in their graves. This was Jafar as-Sadiq, separated by only six generations from Hazrat Ali, one of the Prophet's closest companions. Even then there was this kind of statement. There is no pure Islam. We don't operate in some sterile, laboratory conditions, everything is everywhere. The most complex situational alliances are possible. In general, it is very mistaken to believe that everywhere the Arab Spring occurred it was the same. The only thing that unites the Arab Spring is first, that it was Arab — that is, that a universal media field was created for it. This is Al-Jazeera. The second uniting factor was that these were Islamic countries that were governed by secular authoritarian or totalitarian regimes, that is, it was the overthrow of tyranny in an Islamic country. And the fact that there were not only Muslims, but also democrats (by the way, one does not completely contradict the other), that there might be people, for whom Islam is not a super important thing, well, they just wanted to taste existential

freedom — this is another question. That is, naturally, there is no sterility. It's not an operating room.

But notice — was this really the first time that there were these eruptions, this anger and resistance in these countries? Has there never been an uprising in Syria? Has there never been an uprising in Egypt? Has there never been an uprising in Libya? There were [uprisings], [people] just really invested in them at a certain point. In Egypt it was obviously the Ikhwan forces. Yes, at first, the democrats came out. They were Muslims, these democrats. But it was specifically when the Muslim Brotherhood invested in these protests, bringing discipline, organizational experience, and experience at resistance, that they became irreversible.

*Well, people came out against dictatorship,  
and everything ended, in the words of Timur  
Shaov, "unfairly." Everywhere it all ended pretty  
unhappily.*

Well, first of all, I don't think it's so sad everywhere. I understand that a huge number of ordinary people, including ordinary Muslims, looking, for example, at Libya, say "there was order there, everything was clean, neat, there was a kind of welfare system, there was work. And generally everything was fine." These questions are, as it were, ideological. Yes, now there is less order, yes, there are a lot of conflicts. But now there is freedom. It's not quite the kind of guaranteed freedom there is in Europe, which is what we generally talk about. The freedom is guaranteed by a still greater dictatorship — it's just a mild and disguised one. But nevertheless it is freedom.

*But there is no freedom in Egypt.*

And in Egypt there was a military coup. This concerns a divide that exists. There are situations where just voting doesn't solve anything. And it is simply decided by force, and this is an example.

*But in Egypt the divide was serious. And they began  
speaking against the Ikhwan even before  
the military coup.*

Well, yes, they began to speak against them. This is actually a revolution going on. Basically, when there was a vote, it was in favor of the Ikhwan.

This does not mean that all are prepared to stand under their banners as one. But it at least means that they are not a marginal group that has seized power by force of arms. They are not usurpers of power against the general will. And excuse me, Sisi — this is already a military junta. It's a military dictatorship. And where is the democratic approach?

*So for you the Arab Spring fits into the logic of the search for political representation? Because I have the impression that despite the fact that this was a pan-Arab movement, it was still national in each country. It was a struggle against local repressive regimes, it was not so much a global pursuit.*

True, it didn't go global. But just to draw an analogy with Marxism. Before Trotsky's concept of permanent revolution appeared, how many struggles had there been against oppression, which could take various forms: the form of a national liberation struggle, the form of anti-colonial movements, or the form, I don't know, of the Paris Commune. All these things could happen in the most varied forms, and it seemed that this wasn't universal. It became universal.

That is, the Arab Spring — this is the phase that preceded the universalization of the movement. Yes, it was national outbursts against regimes that were well integrated into the world system or were heading toward this. Not all of them had social problems, Gaddafi had no particular social problems that couldn't be completely resolved. But nevertheless these uprisings occurred. But what happened next? The Arab Spring swept in in 2011 and touched Syria. Syria had already flared up by 2012, and here, this national theme, it ended in Syria. It became universal. This has become a space in which everyone is interested, all Muslims are following it intently: who, whose side, will win. People completely from the outside go there and interfere, people who are converts. The converts did not go to fight in Libya, they did not go to resist Sisi. None of this happened. And here it is a completely different story. That is, it has stopped being a narrow, national struggle of one national group against another national group.

*So the Ikhwan's idea failed?*

It didn't fail. First, the Ikhwan had no clearly expressed general idea. It is a current, it is a river, that carves out new streams, new

branches. Moreover, the groups that disassociated themselves, that left the Ikhwans, they might curse their own subsidiary-parent structure and even accuse them of apostasy, but genetics is genetics. And the Ikhwans themselves modernized in their own mainstream, they ranged from terror to the seizure of power by democratic means, using European institutions. Of course, the idea of the Ikhwans did not fail, because it's not one concrete idea that might or might not demonstrate its effectiveness. This is a trend inside which there are disputes, squabbles, and conflicts. In fact, when we study the history of politics in the 20th century, the lion's share is the history of factional struggles within the left. Just like here. This is a general trend, which apparently will be the main issue of the coming century at a minimum. I think that if you lived a century earlier somewhere in America, you would be wondering why there's so much news from Russia, for example.

*But the form in which the project became global can't be said to be too attractive. And why was the global Muslim project realized in such a terrible, bloody, monstrous form?*

And do you know the bloody form in which the project of the building of socialism was implemented? You should know this, you live in this country, you have studied its history. And do you know in what bloody form the antimonarchical project of republicanism was realized? And look at the form in which the religious reform process was ultimately realized. Germany lay in ruins, in blood. One of the sources from this period wrote that you could travel for three days and not encounter a single populated settlement. These were the peasants' reformist wars. I don't think there was a single phase of that project about which you couldn't say, "God, what a horror!" Moreover not just a horror, but unimaginable horror.

*That is to say, the way it all began in Egypt: by voting, by a peaceful acquisition of power, by a referendum on the constitution — there was nothing at all like that?*

I am again speaking from my own point of view. The rise to power is not realized through voting, through a procedural system at all, but the transfer [of power happens] within a specific political system,

where there is a consensus among all the players. Even when the figure who comes to power is not from the central bloc of this continuum, but from its margins, this distorts the continuum, as, for example, America [is distorted] through Trump. And this is not about a man from the outside who says, “now everything will be different, inside and out.” We’re talking about very serious, systemic players, who just don’t happen to be located at the center of the system. And when it comes to a player who is outside the margins, then, excuse me, there are no procedures, no voting, that’s just how it is. Who survives, survives.

*And then what?*

And then the story just goes on.

*Where? Your prediction.*

Well, as a Muslim, I proceed from the idea that history itself is final, it comes to an end, it will end with a terrible battle, Armageddon, universal death, resurrection, the Last Judgment.

*Let’s return to the current situation. At present there’s another one of these very significant processes that affects the contemporary world — this is mass migration to the West, particularly to Europe, from Islamic countries. What do you see as the consequences of this process for the West and for Islam?*

Well, I don’t think the process of migration is so important or so fundamental. It’s quite an understandable story, they teach us in geography lessons in school that air moves from a high pressure to a low-pressure zone. Likewise, people from a zone of high economic pressure move to a zone of low pressure. The average person migrates from bad conditions to better conditions, and takes any opportunity to do so. We’re talking about purely economic migration: there is more money there and better shops. And about fleeing from war. And running toward a better social system, when we’re not really talking about such crude matters as having a job, having sausage, but we’re talking about better education, better medicine. That is, people migrate to better conditions. It is clear that in the second or third generation av-

erage people under certain conditions easily become lumpens.<sup>5</sup> That is, this is like the peasants who came to the city, who got involved in some kind of industry, in some kind of craft business. They are drifters, from whom you can expect all kinds of excesses, and this is the milieu of crime. As the Russian classics captivantly described life in Petersburg at the turn of the 19th–20th centuries, what we read in Krestovsky's *Petersburg Shums*. This process, scaled up to the level of continents, is now underway. And then the capital's merchants, the capital's inhabitants, did not like it very much that various riffraff from the villages were overrunning the place. But, nevertheless, the process goes on.

Naturally, this can cause certain reactions in Europe, and this is exploited by the right. But we must understand that what we call a European crisis is, by and large, not the result of arriving migrants. Migrants are one of the elements that make up this crisis. In the final analysis, these migrants were originally invited as a cheap workforce; they were deliberately imported: the Turks to Germany, the Algerians to France. That is, it was a stimulated process. In Europe there is a specific, perhaps even civilizational crisis, and Europe is reacting to it in some way. But it is not Arab migrants who will destroy Europe, if it is fated to be destroyed.

*All right. All the same, more and more Muslims are beginning to live in Europe and to somehow fit, or not fit, into the European context. Will this somehow influence Islam and Islamic movements?*

We are now just at the stage when Islam — I will even allow myself the expression — a Greater Islam that passes beyond liturgical borders, Islam as a comprehensive doctrine — is right in the middle of a state of phase transition in its understanding of itself. In principle, we find ourselves in a space that considers that there is the liturgy, you need to fast, you need to pray five times a day, you need to pay *zakat*, to participate in the Hajj if you have the opportunity, then take on yourself a bunch of entirely understandable and entirely universal human ethical constraints. And everything will be well for you, in principle this is enough for the Last Judgment in the absence of any other serious

5. *Lumpen* refers to (typically) lower-class individuals who have become detached from their previous class affiliation. — Trans.



sins, it is enough for Paradise. Our feet are here, but our heads are already in another place and say: yes, yes, all this is true. But another task stands before us. The task before us is much broader: it is expansion, it is development, it is life.

And this development — it's not only that we're now going to grab another piece. There was a writer who liked to pen horror stories: what would happen if the Muslims captured Paris, and there was a terrible medieval obscurantism in Paris, where a bunch of diehard liberals from the underground try to resist. That's not what this is about. Expansion will also consist of this, that at last a model must be proposed for all, which will possess firm moral excellence.

After all, when it comes to the great expansion of Islam, how many people in fact fought there? I somehow began to explore this question. And I came across an interesting figure: at that moment, in the era of the Prophet and the era of the righteous caliphs, Muslims never put forces of more than 30,000 men on all fronts, and were never able to concentrate more than 10,000 swords on any front. This was quite a ridiculous force compared to those they went up against. And Sassanid Iran, a super-empire, rooted in remote antiquity, opposed them. The Byzantine Empire, the heir of great Rome, which had made all mankind tremble for thousands of years, opposed them.

And these people, who couldn't put more than 10,000 bayonets on a single front, swept throughout the world in the course of one hundred years. This could not have been done with weaponry. Such things are not rendered with weapons. Naturally, there were also processes of coercion. But in order to bring about such a qualitative change in such a short period of time, there had to be a certain moral superiority. If this understanding of Islam as something morally superior to everything around it is offered to all, then surely the task of Muslims will be fulfilled.

*Does the phrase "Islamic terrorism" make any sense to you?*

Of course. When terrorists carry out attacks as Islamists, as Muslims, addressing their own Islamic ideological goals, this is Islamic terrorism, just as terrorism might be Catholic, far-left, or far-right. We have already discussed both the liberal French and the socialist Russian revolutions, and the revolution of the Reformation. By the way, we can also call to mind the Baathist revolution — a revolution is going on inside the Islamic world as well. Nowhere did this happen without terror.

*But at some point it exhausted itself.*

Well, at some point the movement fizzles out. Everything is exhausted, nothing is eternal. You cannot make changes with the maximum exertion of force, and say that once and for all the changes are completed. Did the Marxists change the world? They changed it. Fundamentally? Fundamentally. Did they really change it forever? Nothing like that. In a century it fizzled out and turned into nothing. In general, we all understand that the world has changed so that they are not relevant. You can't do something once and for all. Anyway, others will come later and redo what you have done once it loses its meaning.

*So then the Islamist project will also run out of steam?*

In the form in which it exists now — yes, of course it will run out of steam. It will fizzle out in order to give impetus to a new project. Islam is part of history. That is, it's not something you can do once and for all. I have a mystical perception of history — history is the language in which God speaks to people. And you cannot settle things once and for all, you will be tested and tested and tested. You will go through these trials again and again until it is said to us about everyone, all of humanity: That's it, you've suffered enough, the end.

*Interview by Irina Starodubrovskaya*



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