

- ZAID ABDULAGATOV. THE INFLUENCE OF FOREIGN ISLAMIC EDUCATION ON THE RELIGIOUS CONSCIOUSNESS OF MOSLEMS OF DAGHESTAN (continued in No. 4, 2020) // *The article was written for the bulletin "Russia and the Moslem World."*

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*Abstract. The author states on the basis of historical facts that the foreign Islamic education of Caucasians was a problem for the Russian state at the beginning of the 20th century. According to historical information, expert assessments and data from a small sociological survey, he concludes that foreign Islamic education contributes to changes in the confessional identity of Muslims of Daghestan in the direction of Salafitization of their consciousness at the present time. Thus, foreign Islamic education contributes to the strengthening of interfaith tensions in the republic.*

Features of the current situation of manifestations of religious extremism and terrorism in the region. Despite the fact that the armed conflict in the North Caucasus after the well-known events of the late 20 and early 21 centuries is noticeably subsiding, this relative lull may be temporary. There are certain facts that provide a basis for such conclusions.

Firstly, according to the Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation, 4500 militants from Russia and the CIS countries were eliminated during operations in Syria [1, p. 11]. The head of the FSB, Alexander Bortnikov, said that in Syria, according to confirmed data only, over 4 thousand Daghestanis<sup>2</sup> are fighting on the side of ISIS<sup>1</sup> and other detachments. The ethnologist A.A. Yarlykapov believes that there are at least 5 thousand of them in Syria<sup>3</sup>. In the Russian regions, in particular in Daghestan, there are numerous close relatives of those killed and now continuing to fight on the side of ISIS. Our society has yet to digest the inevitable return of the many orphans and widows of this war to the Russian regions. There is no certainty that over time they will not become potential sources of the development of extreme consciousness and extremist behavior in the region. Perhaps they may form new dormant waves of radicalization of Islamic consciousness in certain regions of Russia.

Secondly, there is statistics of extremism on the list of organizations and individuals included in the "List of organizations and individuals in relation to which there is

information about their involvement in extremist activities or terrorism on the basis of subparagraphs 1–3 of paragraphs 2.1 of Article 6 of the Federal Law of 07.08.2001 No. 115-Φ3 “Counteracting Legalization (Laundering) of Criminally Obtained Incomes and Financing of Terrorism”. These lists are compiled by Rosfinmonitoring. Of all the published lists for the years 2013–2016 the author analyzed the five subjects of the Russian Federation, most significant in terms of Islamic activity: Daghestan, Chechnya, Ingushetia, Kabardino-Balkaria, Tatarstan. The significant excess of the number of those included in the List from Daghestan is striking: 32.6%, almost a third of the Russian list (Chechen Republic – 8.7%; Kabardino-Balkar Republic – 5.4%; Republic of Ingushetia – 1.4%; Republic Tatarstan – 1.1%).<sup>4</sup> The statistics of extremism after 2016 does not give grounds to believe that the extremist activity of the Daghestanis has begun to decline. It has rather changed the forms of its manifestation. So, according to Rosfinmonitoring, the percentage of Daghestanis in one of the lists of those involved in extremist activities and terrorism, published at the end of 2018, turned out to be 24.1%.<sup>5</sup> In the list published in early 2019, the percentage was already 38.3%.<sup>6</sup>

The list shows other configurations of extremism and terrorism in the Republic. This is not just banditry and random antics of “lost,” as they often say, young people. It is a well-organized, well-thought-out activity with religious goals. It also shows that the allegations about the decline of extremism and terrorism in the Republic of Daghestan are not grounded.

Thirdly, attention should be paid to the fact that a high level of extreme religious consciousness of a part of the Moslem population remains. This is confirmed not only by the information provided by Rosfinmonitoring, but also by the data of opinion polls in Daghestan. According to a sociological survey in the republic, 64.0% of respondents said that one should not follow the laws of the state if they contradict the faith. It is not just young people who feel most hard towards the laws of the

state, but its younger group “from 15 to 20 years old”. The above figure for this group is equal to 70.4% (“not to comply with the law if it is contrary to the faith”). To the question “Could you, for some reason, be in the ranks fighting on the side of ISIS?” 3.5% of the young people surveyed answered “Yes”. Among those with a religious education, this figure was 10.3% (with a secular education – 2.8%). Only 72.3% of respondents confidently say “No”. Those who answered “No” and found it difficult to answer the question make up a rather large group to be sure of the stability of public life in the republic.

Fourthly, the socio-economic situation in the republic remains difficult. For example, if in Russia as a whole, unemployment in April 2019 was 4.9%, then in the North Caucasus Federal District it was the highest in Russia and amounted to 11.5%, and in Daghestan – 14.1%.<sup>7</sup> This indicator is higher among the youth of the RD. At the same time, according to a sociological survey, the population points to the unsolved social problems of youth in the first place among the causes of extremism and terrorism in the republic.

In Moscow, the unemployment rate is 1.3%. In reality, in RD, the rate of unemployment is higher than officially declared. A large part of the population is just not registered with the Employment Centers as unemployed. In 2017, unemployment in the North Caucasus Federal District, including Daghestan, was lower.<sup>8</sup> For many years, the average salary of Daghestanis was the lowest in the Russian Federation. And today it remains at the level of outsiders in Russian regions in terms of this indicator. The average salary of Daghestani teachers of secondary schools who conduct educational work to counter extremism and terrorism, in 2018 was equal to the minimum wage (minimum wage) in the region – 11,163 rubles, while today the average salary in the Republic of Daghestan is 25,160 rubles.<sup>9</sup>

All this suggests that it is too early to consider the social factors stimulating protest moods to be overcome and eliminated. Forceful suppression has nothing to do with overcoming the

extremeness of consciousness as a manifestation of the ideology of extremism and terrorism. For many years now we have been observing the absence of a clearly defined secular ideology in countering extremism and terrorism, the excessively high role of force methods in solving the problems of extremism.

This concerns, first of all, the need to solve many social problems, especially those of young people, especially in regions such as Daghestan, which economists call depressed regions. RD budget for 2019–2020 is by 75% subsidized by the federal center.<sup>10</sup> This situation, against the background of the monstrous scale of corruption in the republic, has remained unchanged for many years.

The religious opposition to traditional Islam that exists in the regions still persists, and in some places it is growing.

The worldview confusion of the school education and upbringing system coexists with the excessively high role of the religious socialization of young people in certain regions of the Russian Federation.

This, and many other things is the fact that concerns the internal factors contributing to the extremity of consciousness, and as a result, its radicalization. But there are also external factors, such as the activities of ISIS, the propaganda of the ideas of radical Islam via the Internet, the activities of foreign Islamic organizations in the Russian Federation, etc.<sup>11</sup> Among them, a special place is occupied by issues of extremism and terrorism associated with the peculiarities of foreign Islamic education of Russian Moslems.

From the history of foreign Islamic education of the Daghestanis. The issue of foreign Islamic education is not a new problem for the Russian state, which arose at the turn of two centuries – the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Back in the 17th century, a well-known scholar in the Moslem East from the Daghestan village of Kudutl (now Gergebil district of the Republic of Daghestan), Muhammad b. Musa b. Ahmad al Kuduki ar-Ruguja al-Avari ad-Daghestani<sup>12</sup> to set forth to improve his knowledge to Hejaz, Egypt, Yemen, and possibly in the Crimea, Azerbaijan, Iran, Khorasan, Central Asia, Ottoman

Turkey. It is important to note that the theological work of Muhammad al-Kuduqi did not fit into the existing system of Sunni maskhab. Al-Kuduqi wrote: "I refused to follow the interpretations all my life and gave preference to the "book" (the Quran - A. Z.) over the companions" [2, p. 583]. Foreign Islamic education had a great influence on Daghestanis through the "Kudutla school", from which a whole galaxy of prominent Islamic scholars of Daghestan emerged. Describing one of them - Barka Kadi from Kakamakha, the famous Daghestan scholar Ali Kayaev (Zamir Ali) writes that he was "one of those who were the first to oppose the tarikat teaching and muridism" [3, p. 65].

Even in the pre-Soviet period, those studying in foreign Islamic educational institutions were characterized as Salafi-Wahhabis. The famous Daghestani educator and religious leader Ali Kayaev studied Islamic sciences in Al-Azhar (Cairo) in 1905-1907. He closely associated with Egyptian reformers, including Rashid Rida. According to the leaders of Daghestani Sufism, including the late most authoritative Sheikh Said Afandi Chirkeisky, Ali Kayaev is the first Daghestani Wahhabite [4, p. 99].<sup>13</sup>

In fact, the Salafist influence of foreign Islamic education on the Daghestani Islamic consciousness existed before Ali Kayaev. Ali Kayaev himself believed that the spread of religious freedom of thought in Daghestan was the result of reading the books of the Yemeni scholar Salih.<sup>14</sup> Reliable information about the Daghestani theologians, who actually practiced ijthihad, is given by the famous orientalist I.Yu. Krachkovsky. His work "Daghestan and Yemen", on the basis of various historical sources, shows that interest in the personality of the Mujtahid Salih of Yemen in Daghestan has existed for a long historical time. Evidence, the lack of complete trust in the tradition (taqlid), Sufi involvement in the secret, the expression by Salih of Yemen of his opinion on various madhhabs suggests that in Daghestan since the 17th century, with the help of his books, the ideas of ijthihad were spread. Moreover, the ideas of rationalism, laid

down in the writings of Salih of Yemen, were actively transferred to Daghestan by individual scientists, one of whom was Muhammad al-Kuduki (1652-1717) [2, p. 580; 5, p. 48-53].

The Caucasian governor, Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaevich, wrote to Emperor Nicholas II about the danger of foreign Islamic educational influence on Russian statehood as early as at the beginning of the 20th century: "... Deficiencies in the organization of educational affairs lead to the fact that Russian Moslems, intending themselves for spiritual activity, tend to educational institutions, where they often perceive views and beliefs that are dangerous for Russian statehood."<sup>15</sup>

The above information shows that the explanations of the reasons for the outflow of Moslems of Russia to foreign educational centers in the Soviet atheistic period of history in the religious and scientific environment do not correspond to reality. They go to other countries for other Islamic knowledge, which was not present either in the Russian Empire or in Soviet Russia, which is not present in post-Soviet Russia either. Firstly, in Russian Islam, little attention is paid to Islamic philosophy. In modern Daghestani Islam, there is no Islamic philosophy at all. This is a consequence of the tradition laid by Abu Hamid al-Ghazali (1058-1111). In his book *Tahafut al-falasifa* (Self-refutation of philosophers) he denied the need for philosophy in religious knowledge. Daghestani Moslems honor the legacy of al-Ghazali. Secondly, in Russian Islam, the Hanafi and Shafi'i madhhabs, which cannot absorb all the wealth of Moslem sciences dominate. Thirdly, the Sufi trend, dominant in Daghestan, inherently, cannot provide Islamic knowledge that is based on Salafi ideas about "pure" Islam. Daghestanis are looking for "pure" Islam in foreign education. The survey data given in the text confirm this. So far, Moslem education in Russia cannot provide such knowledge. Even if it were possible with the involvement of foreign experts, for religious and political reasons this knowledge will not be disseminated by representatives of official Islam in Daghestan.

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Russian Moslems in foreign educational networks. According to the available publications on foreign Islamic education, mainly Russian Moslems study in Egypt, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), Syria, Iraq, Turkey, Tunisia, Algeria, Uzbekistan (Bukhara), Jordan, Sudan, Bahrain, Malaysia, Morocco. The survey revealed that Daghestanis have a wider range of their Islamic educational interests in its geographical expression: Georgia (Adjara), Azerbaijan, Algeria, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Iran, Yemen, Kyrgyzstan, China, Malaysia, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, Uzbekistan, Tunisia, Turkey – 18 states altogether. There is no reason to believe that this list fully describes the geography of the countries of foreign education of the Daghestanis. According to a sociological survey, Daghestani Moslems are most interested in the states of Islamic education in the following order: Syria – 28.6%, Egypt – 16.3%, Turkey – 14.3%, Malaysia – 6.1%.

One of the most popular Islamic educational institutions is the Islamic University Al-Azhar (Cairo), which has ancient roots (founded in 972).

The famous Daghestani Salafi Abas Kebedov believes that “almost 90 percent of Islamic knowledge came from Al-Azhar, Egypt.”<sup>16</sup> Al-Azhar today is a gigantic religious and educational complex, where more than 120 thousand people study, 25 thousand of them are foreigners. The number of Russian students, according to various sources, ranges from one thousand to one thousand five hundred people. These are mainly people from the North Caucasus. According to one of Al-Azhar's students, Amin Magomedov, today up to 200 people from Daghestan are studying at the university at different departments.<sup>17</sup> In 1996, 1.5 thousand Daghestanis studied in foreign educational centers [6, p. 5]. The famous Daghestani religious scholar K.M. Khanbabaev, in an interview with the author of the text, spoke about 3,000 Daghestanis who went abroad for Islamic knowledge. There is no reason to believe that these indicators have decreased at present.<sup>18</sup>

According to expert assessments and the students themselves studying in Al-Azhar, Russian youth traveling to Egypt with the aim of receiving a Moslem education is not homogeneous in the specific nature of this goal. One group is represented by those who are determined to pursue a long university course with the intention of completing it and receiving an al-Azhar graduate diploma. "Unfortunately, there are not so many of them."

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TOHIR KURBONOV. INFLUENCE OF MODERN CIVILIZATION ON THE UZBEK NATIONAL MENTALITY // *The article was written for the bulletin “Russia and the Moslem World.”*

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*Abstract. This article analyses the influence that modern civilization exerts on the mentality of the Uzbek people. The article also*