

GLOBALIZATION OF MUSLIM CONSCIOUSNESS IN THE CAUCASUS: ISLAMIC CALL AND JIHAD

Ruslan KURBANOV

*Ph.D. (Political Science),
member of the Research Committee on Human Rights,
Russian Association of Political Science
(Makhachkala, Russia)*

Today most researchers of North Caucasian religious-political reality are viewing the role of the international factor in the region's Islamic revival exclusively from the narrow perspective of its financing by the worldwide terrorist international aimed at destabilizing the situation in the Caucasus. However, the circumstances that have brought the problems relating to the North Caucasian Islamic revival to the international level are much more complicated and multifaceted.

Let us begin with the fact that for many centuries, the interpretation and practice of Islam established in the Caucasus developed according to their own scenarios and were very different from those customary throughout the Caliphate as a whole.

First of all, the Muslims of the Caucasus were very isolated from the external Muslim world. Due to the region's remoteness from the political centers of the Caliphate, as well as the inaccessibility of the interior regions of the Caucasus, internal caliphate social, political, military, cultural, and other transformations reached it in the form of weak echoes.

Second, because of the incredible internal strength and tenacity of the local traditional spiritual and ritual-legal cultures, the interpretation and practice of Islam in the Caucasus were strongly influenced by them. For centuries, the Islamic religion had to reconcile itself to living next door to ineradicable paganism in everyday life, the

adats, the everyday behavior of the mountain-dwellers, and their consciousness. This caused the ritual side of Islam to become extremely deformed in the region, while the legal space of the Caucasus was divided between the traditional adat and the Shari'a, a situation that was inconceivable for classical Islam.

This last factor played an enormous role in the victory of czarist, and then Soviet Russia in the Caucasian theater of war. It was precisely due to the heterogeneity, lack of integrity, and fragmentariness of the Islamic consciousness, as well as the interruption of the legal space and the uneven "filling" of the mountain society with Islamic power that the czarist and Soviet authorities were able to split Caucasian society and implement their own political and legal projects in the region.

After the czarist authorities spent decades quietly stifling Islamic political-legal practice and intellectual thought, and after virulent destruction of the latter by Soviet power, the authorities were taken completely by surprise when Islam suddenly erupted in a burst of activity in all areas of life in the region, leading to a so-called Islamic revival.

This phenomenon is extremely complicated and multifaceted, and it is precisely this explosive awakening of Islam in the Caucasus that interests us as we take a look at Islamic globalism in the region's Muslim consciousness.

Revival of Former Islamic Schools and Trends

Today's Caucasian Muslim community is a very complicated and multifaceted phenomenon, displaying a wide range of internal differences and nuances. The first subgroup of Caucasian Muslims consists of representatives of versions of Islam that in past centuries formed a synthesis of Islamic and local ethnocultural traditions. Most of today's researchers call this version of Islam "traditional."

It is precisely this version of Islam (with some differences) that predominated in the Caucasus until the czarist and Soviet authorities began destroying the Islamic culture. In the Eastern Caucasus—Daghestan, Chechnia, and Ingushetia—the Sufi component was the most characteristic and vibrant element in the triptych of Islamic, ethnic, and Sufi traditions. In the Western Caucasus, on the other hand, where the spiritual and political-legal components of Islam were not as strong, common understanding and a truncated ritual version of this religion were more important and were very much subordinated to the local ethnocultural tradition.

It should be acknowledged that this version was distinguished by its strict adherence to the madhab division of Islam that occurred over time, by its following of only the teachers of its own school, by the aestheticism, contemplation, and humility of Sufism, as well as by giving Islam a strictly limited niche in world outlook and ritual issues, which excluded the active participation of this confession in the sociopolitical transformation of the world.

Alexei Malashenko gives a precise description of the Caucasian Islamic traditionalism that developed in the region during the time of its natural and artificial cultural-political isolation, comparing it with the Islamic schools and trends abroad that managed to retain ways to develop and rejuvenate.

He gives this description using the example of the official Soviet ideology that divided Islam into "foreign" (active, politicized, frequently anti-communist, used as a slogan in the national liberation movement) and "own," "Soviet," widespread among the "old fogies" and "weak women" ... and immersed in the affairs of faith and rejecting the political involvement of religion.¹

And this is keeping in mind that Islam in the Caucasus, undoubtedly due to its deep penetration (albeit in the syncretic version) into every pore of Caucasian society, remained a regulator of social relations in many places.

This interpretation and practice of Islam has long lost its internal dynamism and mobilization potential, currently representing the feeble and distorted residue of the first wave of Islamization of the region.

This first wave of Islamization that swept the entire world during the predominance of slave-owning and feudal relations began to ebb during the birth and blossoming of capitalism. The Muslims of the first Islamic wave, which spread this religion all over the Caucasus, were not ready to respond to the new challenges of history and lost the initiative in developing viable socioeconomic and socio-political models.

The mobilization and reform efforts of the region's first-wave Muslims reached their peak with the Caucasian war and the creation of the Imamate—an Islamic state based on the Caliphate (it is well worth noting that Imam Shamil held the title of "sovereign of the believers," just like the Islamic caliphs). After this peak subsided, Islamic tradition in the Caucasus underwent repression and destruction, which ultimately sapped its internal strength.

¹ See: A. Malashenko, "Kakim nam viditsia islam," Institute of Religion and Politics [www.i-r-p.ru], 5 November, 2006.

The current upswing in the Caucasus of the residual manifestations of this version of Islam in no way means that it is capable of prompting a genuine Islamic revival. Islam of the first wave, which began flourishing in the works of the Daghestani murshids and ustazes and came to full fruition in Shamil's Imamate, is in deep regression and suffering a spiritual and creative crisis today as a source of Islamic thought. It is incapable of offering today's Muslims of the region anything other than a return to the pre-revolutionary intellectual and scientific-educational level.

The seeming upswing of this version of Islam in the Caucasus is in no way a tempestuous outburst, nor is it a spurt forward on the path of development, as is often imagined; it is only a return to the spiritual and public positions from which it was at one time forcefully removed by Soviet power.

It is here that many analysts and researchers are falling into a trap. What they are calling an Islamic revival is merely the retrieval by the residual and "petrified" versions of Islam of the first wave of the ground they lost in the past. In actual fact, Islamic revival has not yet begun in the region. Only now, when these versions of first-wave Islam, having largely restored their former positions, have again placed the pre-revolutionary vision of the world and Islam on a pedestal, the time has come to say that these interpretations cannot satisfy the spiritual quest of the Caucasian Muslims of the 21st century.

We have to admit that today's "petrified" interpretations of Islam are in the deepest crisis. They have proven incapable of offering society any viable program for resolving the social, economic, national, political, or at least cultural-moral problems facing Caucasian society today.

A small, but vivid example of this is the struggle against prostitution pompously declared by members of the Daghestani clergy, which they lost and are now keeping tight-lipped about. This is also shown by the complete incapability of the Spiritual Administrations of the Western Caucasus to arouse the interest of the Muslim youth and make it follow them. The consequences of this defeat led to an armed revolt among the Kabardino-Balkarian Muslims against the existing power system and above-mentioned structures; in the past year, one more consequence manifested itself in a series of shootings of imams and employees of the official Spiritual Administrations of the Western and Eastern Caucasus.

The clergy is not undergoing rejuvenation in the Caucasus, on the contrary, conservation and enforcement of all the spiritual posts among specific social and ethnic groups is going on. Such closedness and conservation is preventing the appearance of new ideas and concepts of development, there is no "renewal of blood," rather there is a gradual degeneration of intellectual thought within the framework of the "petrified" interpretations of Islam. But natural and social sciences tell us that closed systems do not last long. In this way, "official Islam" in the Caucasus is gradually slipping into complete stagnation and degradation.

At the same time, young people, who are completely disillusioned by the official clergy and its interpretation of Islam, are filling the ranks of the protest movements and groups in search of fresh ideas and ways to apply their impassioned hearts. The younger generation is looking for freshness, flexibility, and purity in Islam, is striving to overcome "narrow mosque" and "narrow aul" frameworks, as well as expand the boundaries of their own Islamic consciousness to reach the international level. It is for these very reasons that young people are turning increasingly frequently not to the local imams and spiritual leaders, but to the recognized world authorities in search of a way to reach the international, planetary level.

Beginning of Islamic Reform

Before beginning to analyze this problem, we should note that by Islamic reform we do not mean reconsideration by each subsequent generation of Muslims of the main dogmas and provisions of this

religion aimed at adapting them to the changing reality. When talking of reform, we mean launching the mechanism embedded in Islam of renewal and purification of the mentioned dogmas and provisions from ethnocultural, semi-pagan elements, innovations, and rituals brought in over time and not inherent in classical Islam.

What is more, the mechanism of *ijtihad* (Arabic “*ijtihad*”—“zeal, the application of maximum effort”) should be launched every time Islamic intellectual thought becomes stagnated, thus allowing Islamic law to develop in keeping with the requirements of the times, and not allowing the development of dogmas and fundamental legal provisions. *Ijtihad* describes the process by which an Islamic law expert (*mujtahid*) makes a legal decision by independent interpretation of the legal sources on questions which do not have any specific instructions in the Qur’an and Sunnah of the Prophet. *Ijtihad* endows Islamic law with the ability to remain flexible and not become ossified, but develop and progress in correspondence with the changing historical conditions and social needs.

Most surprising is the fact that the Islamic reform currently gaining momentum in the Caucasus (just as throughout the world) did not arise in the region only today, and was in no way imported by the Arab missionaries of the post-perestroika wave, as is hailed by state propaganda.

Islamic reform was born within the very same “petrified” Islamic schools of the first wave when Islamic thought was going through a period of intense stagnation throughout the whole world. At that time, the Islamic academics in the Caucasus were becoming bogged down in their intellectual activity at the level of avocation of mystical spiritual experience and reinforcement of the concept of *taqlid*—passive and unquestioning following of already developed schools and trends (Arabic “*taqlid*”—“imitation,” “following tradition”).

The powerful process of Islamic renaissance in the Caucasus is beginning against the background of feudalism in the Caucasian free communities, transformation of the former cultural-intellectual centers of Islam into centers of feudal formations, as well as the ever greater subordination of Islamic thought to serving the interests of the powers-that-be and its transition to a position of passive imitation.

Its first representative was undoubtedly Muhammad Ibn Musa al-Kuduki from the Dagh-estani aul of Kudutl (1652-1717). Upon his return from Yemen, where he studied for seven years with a prominent academic, *mujtahid* Salih al-Yamani, al-Kuduki, for the first time in the history of the Caucasus and following the example of his teacher, very severely criticized the opinion of the Islamic academics who declared the closing of the gates of *ijtihad* in the 10th century. In Islamic history, “closing of the gates of *ijtihad*” meant that the Islamic academics were prohibited from making independent judgments based on the Qur’an and Sunnah depending on historical and social conditions, as well as transition to the position of *taqlid*—implicit following of the former schools.

Al-Kuduki relied on the opinion of his mentor in his call to reject the practice of *taqlid* infecting Caucasian Islam and return to the practice of *ijtihad*: “Closing of the gates of *ijtihad* means closing the road to understanding the Qur’an and Sunnah. And closing this road is nothing more than abrogating their truth.”²

Ushurmu, a Chechen from the aul of Alda, better known as Sheikh Mansour (1760-1791), can boldly be called a representative of the Islamic reform among the Vainakhs. Like other reformist leaders in Muslim countries, Sheikh Mansour saw the main reasons for the Muslims’ weakness to be their disregard of the “genuine Islamic virtues” and violation of the laws and values of Islam.

Mansour, although he was more of a preacher (later, he became a military commander) than a prominent Islamic academic, was nevertheless the first imam of the Caucasus who expressed

² Salih al-Yamani, *Al-Alam ash-Shamih fi tafdili-l-Hakk alia Al-Aba va-l-Mashayih*, Beirut, 1981.

the spirit of the new political and religious orientation of the Northeast region. He understood how pernicious the consequences of disunity among the different tribes were and tried to overcome them on the basis of Islam. Calling for putting an end to the many years of strife and bloody hostilities that gnawed away at the Vainakh community from the inside, Mansour preached unity and forgiveness.

But powerful intellectual transformation of Islamic thought into the revivalist trends laid down by al-Kuduki and a powerful shift in the entire spiritual culture of the mountaineers were needed to attain solidarity among the different-tongued tribes of the Caucasus in the face of the ever-stronger and ever-growing military-political pressure on the ethnic groups of this Russian region and to breathe new life into the petrified contemplative-mystical interpretation of Islam aimed at not taking active part in regulating the sociopolitical processes.

For this to happen, a more profound and authoritative Islamic mind was needed on the scene. This individual and the most vibrant member of the Caucasian movement of reform was sheikh of the Naqshbandiyya tariqat and supreme murshid (Arabic for “mentor”) of the Caucasian imams Muhammad al-Yaragi (died in 1840). Under the conditions of intense feudalism in the mountains al-Yaragi proposed the conception of “free man” justified by the provisions of the Qur’an and Sunnah (and not only by the mountain adats, as was the case in the past); he not only called for religious freedom, but also for individual freedom.³ Now the idea of freedom in the Caucasian mountains had acquired a new Islamic ring and was aimed primarily at protecting itself from the infringements of the local tribes.

It was at this stage that there was a complete transfer of the center of gravity of Caucasian Islam from the previous Islamic bastions—the shagars, which had already become feudal formations, as well as the Islamic academics involved and frozen in the taqlid and at the level of passive sophistication of their mystic practice—to protest Islamic individuals like sheikh reformer al-Yaragi and Daghestani imam-warriors Gazi Muhammad, Gamzat-bek, and Shamil.

The first Imam of Daghestan and Chechnia Gazi Muhammad carried on al-Yaragi’s cause. His message called *Proving the Apostasy of the Rulers and Judges of Daghestan who Pass Judgment according to the Adats*, compiled in 1828 and distributed throughout Daghestan,⁴ took a harsh look at the question of taqfir—accusing an individual or group previously considered Muslims to be non-believers. In so doing, he essentially divided the entire Caucasus into two camps—the camp of true Muslims and the camp of infidels who became non-believers, classifying among the latter those who continued to be guided in their lives by the provisions of the adat, and not the Shari’a. When developing al-Yaragi’s provisions on prohibiting Muslims from obeying non-Muslim authorities, Gazi Muhammad stated that if Muslims live under non-Muslim law (adat) and do not judge according to the Shari’a, they are non-believers; and even if they pray, fast, and perform hajj, this will not save them.

Such an uncompromising way of looking at the nature of power and the judicial laws applied, as well as completely prohibiting being guided by the adat was not characteristic of Caucasian societies (particularly during feudalism and passive-mystical Sufism). Issues were raised in this way only in the very first years of Islam’s appearance in Daghestan, and even then by the generation of Muslim-Arabs, the followers of the Prophet Muhammad himself.

It was the mentioned return of the imams of Daghestan and Chechnia to the original provisions of faith enforced in the Qur’an and Sunnah, as well as the claims to ultimate ousting of the adat by Islamic law that drastically distinguished these Islamic leaders of the region from the former

³ See: A.G. Agaev, *Filosofia sovesti*, Makhachkala, 1995.

⁴ See: Photocopy of the manuscript *Proving the Apostasy of the Rulers and Judges of Daghestan who Pass Judgment according to the Adats* by Imam Gazi Muhammad.

representatives of the “petrified” interpretations who were unable to resolve this question. What is more, we should note in particular that Imams Gazi Muhammad and Shamil called for purification and renewal of Islam (Arabic “tajdid), which was characteristic of all the revived movements of the Islamic world.

For example, lieutenant-general of the Russian army Baron Rozen wrote: “Wars with Persia and Turkey stopped our achievements in Nagorny Daghestan, and in 1829, a strong party hostile to us arose there, which acted under the guise of restoring pure Islamism.”⁵ It is also worth noting that Imam Gazi Muhammad signed his letters and proclamations “mujaddid,” that is, “revivalist of the faith.”

In the Western Caucasus, on the other hand, the local Islamic academics and imams were unable to gain the necessary status and authority in society to become a driving force of national-cultural history. Here, even during the anti-colonial war, it was not Islamic, but sociopolitical leaders who most often became commanders. It is very characteristic that during the blossoming of the Imamate, it was Imam Shamil’s naibs who became the Islamic heads of the mountain-dwellers of the Western Caucasus, the most well known of whom was Muhammad Amin from the Daghestani aul of Gonod, who led the resistance of the mountain-dwellers for eleven years and made an enormous contribution to the revival of Islamic thought and practice in the Western Caucasus.

In subsequent years, after defeat of the Imamate and incorporation of the Caucasus into the Russian Empire, and then into the Soviet Union, a whole galaxy of Islamic reformers appeared in the Caucasus who relied on the theological and theoretical precepts of such outstanding revivalists and transformers of Islam as Ibn Taymiyya, Ibn al-Kayim, Jamaluddin al-Afgani, and Rashid Rida. The listed people, as well as Ali Kayaev, Muhammad al-Umri from Ukhli, Abd-ur-Rashid Arakansky, and Abu Muhammad from Mokhok, called on the Muslims to study the Qur’an and Sunnah with subsequent adoption of independent decisions in keeping with the demands of the times and rejection of blind adherence to a particular person’s views. Abu Muhammad even wrote a book on the problems of ijti-had and taqlid called *Destroying the Obstacles on the Way to Ijtihad*.

In post-Soviet times, the most vibrant revivalists who began to open up the external Islamic world to the Caucasian Muslims were of course Akhmad Qadi Akhtaev and Bagauddin Muhammad. The younger generation of their reform-oriented students and graduates from Islamic higher learning institutions of Arab emigration followed in their footsteps. We will look at the role of this category of young people in this process below.

Globalization of Consciousness in Islamic Call

A chronological and narrative description of the strengthening and growth in relations between the Caucasian Muslims and Islamic community abroad and the development of their contacts with Islamic academics from the Arab countries is not part of our task. These processes have already been described in sufficient detail in the works of native experts on Islam, such as Alexei Malashenko, Dmitri Makarov, Igor Dobaev, Zagir Arukhev, and others.

In this article, we would like to focus on another aspect—the gradual opening up of the consciousness of the Caucasian Muslims to the boundless cultural-intellectual and active global ex-

⁵ Report by G. Rozen to A. Chernyshev of 8/XI-1834, No. 1024, in: U.S.S.R. Central Military-Historical Archives, General Staff Military-Scientific Archive, f. 6294, sheet 91 rev.

panse throughout the entire Islamic world. This is of particular interest since in the past centuries, this consciousness was characterized by a certain amount of narrowness and isolation from the outside world.

This isolation and the tendency of the religious communities in each region to become enclosed within themselves led to extreme fragmentation of the Islamic space in the Caucasus and of the Muslim consciousness in the region.

For example, if we look closely at the religious communities of the supporters of the “petrified” interpretations of Islam in each of the Caucasian republics, we can see that they are all characterized by their isolation from the outside world. Each community is extremely closed in terms of its national and generic traits, depending on its adherence to a certain sheikh, academic, or spiritual leader. Each of these communities is characterized to a greater or lesser extent by xenophobia, fear, and rejection of any information from the outside world that casts aspersions on their convictions, as well as by the unwillingness of their members to socialize with “outsiders,” or even prohibition of this.

By way of example, such information restrictions and prohibitions on socializing with “outsiders” are even preserved among Caucasian students studying in Arab states. That is, the alienation, isolation, and social taboos on mixing with the representatives of other Islamic trends in these religious communities are so strong that they are practiced even far beyond the homeland.

In almost all the Arab countries, graduates from the “petrified” communities try to keep a social distance from the representatives of other religious groups (even if they come from the same republic). For example, murids of the Daghestani Sufi sheikhs Sirajuddin Huriksky (Tabasarian), Muhammad Muhtar Kiahulaysky (Kumyk), and Said Afandi Chirkeisky (Avar) were allowed to greet each other, shake each other’s hands, and even exchange general niceties, but this was as far as their communication went.

Contacts between Daghestanis and Chechens of the same “petrified” Islamic trends are also very strained, not to mention between ethnic groups that are geographically distant from each other, such as the peoples of the Western and Eastern Caucasus.

The representatives of these Islamic trends make a special effort to keep the maximum possible social distance from the followers of the revival versions of Islam. Once labeled as Wahhabis, there is still a taboo on extensively socializing with the revivalists for all the other members of their community, since in the “petrified” environment there is the belief that Wahhabis inevitably recruit one and all at their very first meeting, enticing them with money and generous promises.

It is also asserted and honestly acknowledged that members of the revival Islamic trends are more convincing and eloquent in discussions than the followers of the “petrified” trends: it is enough to talk to a Wahhabi for an hour or two for his convictions to become ingrained. Due to this, the fathers and the close and spiritual mentors of the young Muslims of the “petrified” Islamic trends strictly teach their wards not to socialize with Wahhabis under any circumstances.

If young people from the “petrified” communities go to study abroad, an effort is made to put them with “approved” students from “their own” circle, from their own religious community. Since the boundary of “petrified” religious fraternities often coincides with national borders, the extreme religious-national conservation and isolation of societies that are sufficiently closed anyway is thus reproduced and preserved.

What is more, students of the “petrified” Islamic trends keep their minds so closed that all information that reaches them from Arabic teachers is carefully filtered as well. No matter how authoritative the latter may be, students are instructed by their older friends as to which teachers are “theirs” and which teachers should not be heeded because they are “outsiders.” What is more, even if students recognize a certain teacher as “theirs,” the degree of his “their-ness” is nevertheless established, that is, the extent to which and precisely what information may be received from him.

For example, most students from the “petrified” communities of the Eastern Caucasus recognize the most prominent Syrian academic of the Shafi’i madhab, Ramadan Buti, as “theirs.” Most students go to Friday prayer only at his mosque; as for additional lessons in fiqh, the hadith, and interpretation of the Qur’an held in every mosque, they attend only those classes taught by him; if disputes arise, only his books and fatwas are referred to.

But even in this case, many students are still cautious, since compared with the Caucasian Islamic consciousness of the “petrified” communities, Ramadan Buti is much more open to dialog and cooperation with other Islamic trends, including the Salafis, which is categorically unacceptable to the members of the Caucasian “petrified” communities.

The aloof and hostile attitude toward the Russian people as a nation of non-believers formed over the last two centuries is still often encountered in these circles. But this attitude is usually only found in everyday life and does not apply to politics. The attitude toward the Russian state is more than loyal, and in some issues, people are even more devoted to it than to the Islamic institutions and regulations. Members of the “petrified” Islamic trends willingly go to work in various spheres of the state system, such as law-enforcement, local self-government, management, economic, and also official spiritual structures.

The hostility retained in the “petrified” communities at the everyday level toward the Russian people (for the Ingushes, the same applies to the Ossetians), as a non-believing nation, in no way means that their members consider it necessary to convert them to Islam. Russians and Ossetians are still called “giaour” (unfaithful) in these communities, but the need to carry the Islamic call among them according to the canons of classical Islam does not even enter anyone’s head. If someone from this camp does try to convert any of the “giaour,” it will only be to try and convince him to join his own extremely national version of Islam.

For example, if a murid of Avarian Sheikh Said Afandi Chirkeisky calls a Russian to Islam, he will only try to convert him to the Chirkeisky version of the tariqat with obligatory acceptance by the new convert of the entire set of ethnic-everyday and cultural-behavioral standards characteristic of the Avars of this region. That is, the new convert must become one of them in every way.

A vivid example of this type of conversion of a “giaour” to Islam by members of “petrified,” ethnically tinted and intellectually closed communities, when a “giaour” completely accepts the behavioral and cultural standards of the people who have converted him, is Evgeny Mironov’s hero from Vladimir Khotinenko’s film *The Muslim*, who almost entirely became an Afghan mountain-dweller.

When a member of these communities is asked whether the Islamic call must be carried among Russians, his most likely reply will be a bewildered “What for? They are not Muslims...” This response and understanding of Islamic call is absolutely unacceptable for Muslims of the revival wave. What is more, calling members to join “petrified” communities, which boils down to the Muslims of the Caucasus (and throughout the world) having to strive for unity and live like brothers, is met with complete non-acceptance and rejection, since national-vird boundaries between communities are considered mandatory and inviolable.

As for the Islamic communities of the revival wave most frequently called jamaats in the press, the national question, if not completely removed, is largely reduced to naught. In so doing, whereas the “petrified” Islamic communities differ greatly from each other depending on the republic, national affiliation, and even region within a particular republic, the jamaats of revivalist Islam are incredibly similar to each other in all respects and throughout the entire Caucasus.

This similarity is ensured by the fact that the members of these jamaats reject everything that might lead to the division and fragmentation of the Caucasian Islamic space: that is, strict adherence of the region’s Muslims to the Shafi’i or Hanafi madhabs, the Naqshbandiyya, Qadiriyya, or Shaziliyya tariqats, to academics or sheikhs of only their own nationality or region of residence, to Sufism, or to various juridical schools.

Members of the revival jamaats, at times even in violation of some of the Islamic juridical regulations and scientific-historical traditions, strictly call for being guided only by the provisions of the Qur'an and Sunnah with simultaneous rejection and deposition of all authorities that oppose this call in any way.

The rejection of present and past authorities sometimes goes as far as young revivalists throwing the baby out with the bath water. For example, young Muslims often reject not only the medieval academic followers of the great imams, the founders of the canonical madhabs, Shafi'i and Abu Hanifa, but also the imams themselves, if their viewpoints on certain, sometimes even trivial questions, contradict the revivalists' vision of true Islam in the light of the Qur'an and Sunnah.

In so doing, the practice of applying the provisions of the Qur'an and Sunnah requires that the person applying them has quite a high level of Islamic knowledge, which is necessary for drawing the correct legal conclusions from these sources. But since most young Muslims of the Caucasus do not have such knowledge, they are all guided by the opinions and viewpoints of the older adherents, who have graduated from Islamic learning institutions abroad.

The latter, in turn, are guided exclusively by the opinions and viewpoints of the greatest Islamic academic of the Middle Ages, Ibn Taymiyya, former original representative of the Hanbali madhab, who then went beyond it in his quest and religious-legal practice and called precisely for Muslims to be guided directly by the provisions of the Qur'an and Sunnah.

There is no doubt that this massive rejection by young Muslims of the Shafi'i and Hanafi madhabs traditional for their region, the categorical refusal to follow different tariqat and Sufi schools, as well as the mass reorientation toward academic "non-madhabists," who mainly came from the Hanbali madhab, aroused the wrath of members of the "petrified" Islamic trends, the relatives and fellow tribesmen of the young supporters of revival.

Despite the incredible resistance and obstruction the young revivalists in the Caucasus were subjected to by their fellow tribesmen who stayed with the "petrified" interpretations of Islam, despite all the persecution, repression, and even kidnappings and extrajudicial executions, the young people of the revivalist trends sustained an unlikely strategic victory in this tough standoff, the dimensions of which have not been entirely realized even by many analysts.

During the past 20 years of spontaneous development in the Caucasus of Islamic call in its revival format, a new generation of Muslims has appeared who consider anyone their brother, regardless of national and other differences, providing that he declare the Islamic symbol of faith, adhere to the testaments of the Qur'an and Sunnah, and reject the innovations and ethnocultural stratification of the last few centuries.

A Muslim who adheres to these viewpoints can find a like-minded believer and brother-in-faith not only in any corner of the Caucasus, but also throughout the world. This conversion of large numbers of believers to a unified and single foundation of faith for all characteristic of the first centuries of Islam's existence caused a real revolution in the minds and consciousness of present-day Caucasian Muslims.

In contrast to the members of the "petrified" communities loyal to the Russian state and at the same time indifferent and often disdainful of Russians as a "target" of Islamic call, the revivalist Muslims are of an initially absolutely opposite opinion—they embrace extreme openness to all people wishing to hear about Islam (despite national and community boundaries).

The revivalists not only have a high sense of duty with respect to calling neighboring nations to Islam, but also an entirely different attitude toward newly converted Muslims from the outside ethnic environment. Newly converted Russians, Ossetians, Armenians, and representatives of other ethnoses are accepted in the revivalist jamaats as true brothers, whereby sometimes they are given much more attention and respect, since a new convert who finds himself in an alien national and cultural environment is in need of such support.

Nevertheless, despite all of this, the attitude toward the state as a non-Islamic political institution is more than cautious, to put it mildly. In the revivalist interpretation, the state is a “servant of tagut” (idols, pagan non-Islamic law), due to which the Muslim is not allowed to serve it. And even though at the outset of revivalist call, no one was asked to directly oppose the state, an absolutely indifferent attitude toward it was preached in keeping with the principle: “We don’t bother it, we don’t interfere in its affairs, let it not interfere in ours either,” and zeal in observing the law was also admonished.

It was also the spread of revivalist Islam that “flung open” the consciousness of the Caucasian Muslims and made it not only receptive to the Islamic world, but to the entire Islamic and world scientific heritage as well.

In contrast to the “petrified” versions of Islam of the first wave that are in a deep spiritual and creative crisis, reform and revivalist Islam is becoming actively incorporated into new theoretical spheres, thanks to the powerful revival boost, and is assimilating natural and social scientific disciplines, relying in so doing on the Qur’an and Sunnah. The strong side of revivalist Islam is its scientific and theoretical substantiation of many social, economic, and political provisions applied in practice.

This version of Islam is heralding in a new era—the era of information technology, the transnational economy, and an interpenetrating world. The Caucasians’ embrace of Islam of the new wave, which has been gaining ever greater momentum in recent years, is largely encompassing young people who are obtaining or have already obtained a higher and postgraduate education. This primarily applies to those young people who are not simply looking for answers to the most important questions of life in religion, but also have the potential to renew the “petrified” interpretations. In so doing, revivalist Islam is offering its adepts social and political doctrines distinguished by rationalism and accessibility, as well as those with a clear, almost irrefutable internal logic.

This version of Islam is more dynamic and active. Since it brings Islamic standards into harmony with simple elements of “initial faith,” it is becoming more attractive for regions where religious traditions have been lost or undermined (the Western and Central Caucasus, the southern regions of Daghestan), as well as for traditionally non-Muslim people—Russians, Armenians, Georgians, and so on.

The number of supporters of the revivalist version of Islam in the Caucasus is increasing due to the decrease in citizens’ legal protection, government and bureaucratic arbitrariness, low socioeconomic provision of the population, as well as the total corruption in all the main spheres of citizen service—medicine, education, and law-enforcement (also including official spiritual structures). The members of the revivalist trends are rapidly filling the niche of defenders and expressers of the interests of the impoverished and disadvantaged strata of the population, that is, the main bulk.

In contrast to the “petrified” versions of Islam enclosed within the narrow boundaries of their communities and jealous of contacts with other Islamic trends, the revivalists are largely distinguished by a call for unity with the entire Islamic ummah. They are also calling for the entire Islamic world to join forces to ensure a spiritual-moral, economic, and political renaissance. In this way, revivalist Islam is giving its adepts access to the heritage of the universal Islamic community and drawing them into globalization processes.

It is precisely this incredible openness to the whole Islamic world and striving for unification with the entire ummah that is arousing an understanding and even demand for leaving the narrow community and narrow national framework, and requiring that adepts exert the maximum effort to establish contacts with their fellow brothers in neighboring cities, regions, republics, and countries.

Whereas members of the “petrified” versions can perform hajj or study in foreign countries for decades, in so doing preserving their isolation, Muslim revivalists only have to be in a new city or

region for a few days to find like-minded believers, hold open and sincere talks about the problems of Islamic call in their regions, find common interests, look for ways to help each other, establish contacts, and part the closest of brothers in Islam.

These declared contacts are later used not only by the people who establish them: the latter will actively share these contacts back home, as well as help Muslims who are thousands of kilometers apart to become acquainted with each other. These contacts will help to develop cooperation in Islamic call, acquire an Islamic education, implement competitive Islamic projects, and so on.

In this way, thanks to the general ideology and orientation toward unified provisions of the Qur'an and Sunnah for everyone in the interpretation of academic "non-madhabists" who share similar beliefs, the entire world can be woven into a global network of like-minded Muslim believers who feel a profound sense of unity, fraternity, and mutual support, regardless of national, economic, and age differences, as well as of the thousands of kilometers that divide them.

It stands to reason that this network did not begin forming today: most countries became incorporated into it as early as the mid-20th century, when, after gaining access to European education and the achievements of Western science and technology, Muslims of post-colonial and politically modernizing Islamic states began to coordinate them with the provisions of the Qur'an and Sunnah and advance the revivalist versions of Islam throughout the world.

The Caucasus was drawn into this network later on, during the post-perestroika period, whereby in almost all the republics of the region, the young generation of preachers, who have actively penetrated the cultural-ideological expanse of the Caucasus with their call to Islam, turned out to be under the very keen observation and strict control of the law-enforcement structures. The successful work of the revivalist jamaats to recruit and educate young Muslims could not help but arouse irritation among the official spiritual structures and state power bodies.

By applying the Islamic knowledge they gained abroad, their excellent command of Arabic as well as several other foreign languages, and taking advantage of their sufficiently high level of Russian education, knowledge of the Russian language, command of all computer means of gathering, processing, and exchanging information, as well as organizational technology, the young leaders of revivalist Islam have made an extraordinary breakthrough in Islamic call, educating huge numbers of Muslims, and opening up their minds to the entire Islamic world.

It is enough to name such figures as Musa Mukozhev and Anzor Astemirov, who are the leaders of the rapidly growing Kabardino-Balkarian jamaat. Both of them studied in the Islamic higher learning institutions of Saudi Arabia. Both possess a broad vision of the development prospects of Islamic call in the republic, both use the most effective ways to convert as many people as possible, both are actively engaged in translations from the Arabic, both maintain a rather high-quality electronic resource on the web at www.islaminkbr.ru, both closely cooperate with the nongovernmental Institute of Islamic Studies (whereby A. Astemirov was its deputy director), and both are carrying out scientific research into the urgent problems of the Muslim community. In so doing, they have established very close and extensive contacts with foreign Islamic academics, to whom they turned for theological and judicial conclusions (fatwas) on specific situations.

In Karachaevo-Cherkessia, former student of a Pakistani Islamic higher learning institution Muhammad Karachai Bijiev was one such leader of revivalist Islam. He was a student and associate of prominent Caucasian academic of the revivalist wave Akhmad Qadi Akhtaev, executive secretary of the Islamic Revival Party that functioned throughout the Soviet Union. The scope of his contacts and relations in the Islamic world is shown by the fact that, despite the complaints about him by the law-enforcement bodies of Karachaevo-Cherkessia, Chairman of the Council of Muftis of Russia Ravil Gaynutdin asked M. Bijiev to be his deputy for international affairs.

In Daghestan, the most vibrant young leaders of the revivalist wave were Yasin Rasulov and Abu Zagir Mantaev. The first was a graduate of the Islamic university of Makhachkala, received an

education in Russia (he majored in philology and translation), was the regular author of the religious page in a leading republican weekly, maintained his own information-analytical website www.yaseen.ru, took a postgraduate course, and wrote his dissertation on religious studies on overcoming the madhab divisions in Islam. What is more, he had magnificent command of the Arabic language and translated fatwas and articles by the leading Islamic academics. He was a member of the presidium of the Union of Muslim Journalists and wrote its code. His translation of a collection of present-day fatwas by prominent Islamic academic Yusuf al-Qaradawi was published in Moscow. Abu Zagir Mantaev graduated from the Diplomatic Academy at the Russian Foreign Ministry and defended his thesis on political science. He studied at an Egyptian university in Al-Azkhar, headed the department of the Spiritual Administration of Muslims of the European Part of Russia for work with young people, taught in the Moscow Cathedral Mosque, and was actively published in academic journals on Islamic and Caucasian studies.

The fact that some of these figures posed an open challenge to the Russian state system, which made them politically outside the law, does not mean we do not recognize their role as Islamic intellectual leaders of the new generation of Caucasian Muslims. The wide range of different spheres of social life encompassed by these young leaders in their Islamic call efforts looks incredible against the background of the isolation of the members of the “petrified” communities and their absorption only in “mosque” affairs.

The influence and potential of the leaders of revivalist Islam grew rapidly, but at this point it transpired that the young leaders, although they had a theological education, did not have the life experience to manage such rapidly growing opportunities and such a large number of followers. What is more, the law-enforcement bodies gave them no room for maneuver. The police and Spiritual Administrations put pressure on them, the number of arrests, detentions, and provocations increased, Chechnia was in a frenzy right next door, and an increasing number of mojahedin—veterans of the combat action—returned from there and “equipped” the young Muslims with new models of behavior: “If you are repressed—answer back. Islam not only permits this, it is also your duty.”

Keeping in mind the Caucasian temperament of the young revivalists, as well as their orientation toward heroic examples of the first generations of Muslims, with sword in hand defending their right to existence, they began to incline all the more toward harsh armed scenarios for upholding their own position.

It was in precisely this way that the most vibrant young members of Daghestani revivalist Islam, Yasin Rasulov and Abu Zagir Mantaev, found themselves in the ranks of the armed Shari‘a jamaat under the supervision of Rasul Makasharipov, who in turn, by his subordination to Rabbani Khalilov, the amir of all Daghestani mojahedin in Chechnia, was a member of the general Caucasian military-political structure headed by Ichkerian President Abdul Halim Sadulaev.

This was also how the leaders of the Kabardino-Balkarian jamaat, Anzor Astemirov and Musa Mukozhev, found themselves at loggerheads with the state, after raising the armed rebellion in Nalchik with the support of Shamil Basaev and the mojahedin of the entire Northern Caucasus subordinate to him.

Globalization of Consciousness in Islamic Jihad

Historians and Caucasian experts unanimously accept the version that says representatives of the Caucasian gazawat—the imams of Daghestan and Chechnia—were convicted followers of the

Naqshbandiyya tariqat and, correspondingly, put its sociopolitical model into practice. It is believed that this tariqat model differs somewhat from the classical Islamic model in the main provision of the Sufi sheikh who possesses mystical experience and mysterious knowledge, as well as in an army of humble murid novices ready to carry out the sheikh's will, both in improving spiritual practice and in political, military, and other affairs.

It was precisely along this Sufi-tariqat line that the Daghestani official clergy, as well as all the representatives of the Sufi communities, believed themselves to be the spiritual heirs of the imams and supported this version in society. In addition, from the time the Soviet Union collapsed and religious freedom opened up, images of the Imamate and of Imam Shamil himself increasingly acquired an Avarian ethnic hue, since at that moment the most active followers of the tariqat in Daghestan were the Avars, and the Naqshbandis of other nationalities (Kumyks, Darghinians) did not see the sense in entering into competition with the Avars for the right to be called the direct spiritual heirs of the imams.

As a result, a situation developed in which only faithful Avars turned to Caucasian gazawat to maintain inter-communal, inter-tariqat solidarity and mobilization. The memorable and historical places associated with Caucasian gazawat were retained in the national memory, honored, and sublimated by most people in the Avarian regions (from all of the Daghestani regions). Members of the Avarian nation gave hypertrophied attention to building ziyarats (mausoleums) at sites of battles and where gazawat leaders died and were buried, setting up multitudinous portraits of imams along the mountain roads, singing oral folk songs in the form of historical and combat chants, and using the theme of gazawat and the Imamate in every possible theater and amateur national performance.

Whereby this practice of appealing to the heritage of the Imamate and gazawat was used primarily in national and tariqat-communal interests and projects, but in no way to serve the idea of a religious war with non-believers, including with the Russian state. Since the main religious-political players of the "petrified" interpretations of Islam who exploited the topic of gazawat and the Imamate were extremely loyal to the Russian state, they had no intention of withdrawing from it or of creating an Islamic state in the Caucasus, and if they did use this theme to scare the federal center, they only did it sparingly and only for procuring additional privileges.

As far as we know, at the beginning of the first Chechen war, the public consciousness of the Chechens was extremely ideologized not by Islamic, but by archaic-ethnic and national-political symbols and concepts. It was these precepts that provided the ideological justification of the need to wage an independence war.

In this respect, researchers are very interested in how the theme of gazawat was reflected and evolved in the consciousness of the people and in different spheres of spiritual life. The semantic blend of "gazawat-jihad" serves a very convenient indicator for defining the stages and ways to turn the narrow Chechen resistance to the Russian state into a conception of global jihad against all forces of infidelity.

As we know, both terms designate a holy war of the Muslims against the non-believers, but the concepts "fighting campaign," "battle," "combat operation" prevail in the concept of "gazawat," while "jihad" means "the Muslim's daily zeal in all spheres of life"—study, spreading Islam, and of course, in the holy war, which is recognized as the highest degree of commitment.

Historically, the term "gazawat" was used in the Imamate itself and in the context of its history in the holy war waged by the Caucasian mountain-dwellers under the supervision of three imams (as well as before and after that, under the supervision of Sheikh Mansour, Imams Muhammad Haji and Nazhmuddin Gotsinsky).

Ubiquitous use during the first Chechen war precisely of the concept "gazawat" pointed clearly to the fact that the Chechens even took their religious ideological justification of the war from the local post-imamate versions and interpretations of Islam, which, as described above, "became petrified" within the geographical, national-communal, and intellectual borders of the 19th century.

The term “jihad” was not used in the context of the Chechen resistance until later, when ties with Arab emigration gradually expanded. It was the Chechen muhajir diaspora, Arab volunteer preachers and mojahedin, as well as Islamic academics who supported the Chechen resistance with their fatwas and preaching that began extensively using the term “jihad” with respect to the mentioned war. Whereby the term “jihad” was used not in the sense of exclusively Chechen national-political opposition to the Russian state with a slight Islamic “tinge,” but precisely in the sense of full-scale resistance of the Muslims to everything non-Muslim and infidel.

Along with the establishment of ties with Arabic emigration and the powerful development of the Islamic revivalist preaching in the Caucasus, there was also an extensive spread of Islamic knowledge in the Chechen resistance environment. In this way, Chechen gazawat gradually began turning in the consciousness of the resistance fighters into jihad. It was this process, transformation of gazawat into jihad described above as semantically perceived by the Caucasian consciousness, that gives a clear indication of when the narrowly national Chechen resistance begins to turn in the minds of the Muslims into one of the fronts of the global Islamic opposition to the world of infidelity.

The songs of the Chechen gazawat-jihad are worth noting in this respect. During the first war, the works of Imam Pashi Alimsultanov and Timur Mutsuraev, two of the most vibrant singers of the Caucasian jihad, were built mainly on local historical and cultural facts. The main themes were the resistance of the mountain-dwellers under the command of Imam Shamil and Sheikh Mansour, the personalities of naib Baysangur and abrek Zelimhan, the Stalin deportation, praise of the Caucasian adats and traditions of honor, dignity, recalcitrance, mandatory revenge on an offender, playing up of ethnocultural totem insignia of the Caucasian eagles and Chechen wolves, and so on.

Later, general Islamic themes begin to prevail in the songs of Mutsuraev—the history of the Prophets (songs about the Prophets Moses, Solomon, and Jesus), greater attention was given to the mission of the Prophet Muhammad, his associates and righteous caliphs, playing up of the theme of the Jewish yoke over the Islamic ummah, the conception of the liberation of Jerusalem, as well as the world jihad of the entire Islamic ummah until the Day of Judgment.

It was these songs, in addition to the growing Islamic revivalist preaching, that became the fuse which set alight the narrow communal-ethnic consciousness of the young Caucasian Muslims. The young Caucasians listened to these songs first in astonishment, and then with awe and trepidation, imbibing each new passage written by the bard. Jihad songs became so popular among the Caucasian Muslims that they could be heard everywhere—in recording studios of all Caucasian cities, in apartments, cars, coming from cassette and disk players, on computers, at Muslim youth meetings, and even in the Caucasian diaspora in Russian cities.

The Internet, in particular the Caucasian Center, also played an enormous role in the rapid spread of the global vision of Islamic resistance throughout the Caucasus. Its printed matter, photographs, and videos evolved in the general transformation of Chechen gazawat into the universal Caucasian front of world jihad.

Works from the “Reflections of a Mojahed” series prepared under the supervision of former representative of the national Ichkerian resistance Movladi Udugov are also very valuable for our analysis. In them, he shows why the Chechen resistance should turn into a general Islamic jihad, why Chechens, Daghestanians, Ingushes, Cherkessians, and other peoples of the region should become part of the world Islamic front.

Both Saad Minkailov’s commentaries and Udugov’s works were received enthusiastically by the Caucasian Islamic youth, since the Chechens’ prolonged game of national exclusivity aroused great misunderstanding among the revivalist youth sympathizing with the Chechen resistance.

Ultimate transformation of Chechen gazawat into world jihad, the confessions and revelations of the former national leaders of the Chechen resistance about the incorrectness of the idea of national exclusivity and the Chechen national state, Aslan Maskhadov’s transformation from the Chechen

president into the Amir of all Muslims of the Caucasus, substitution of the Chechen wolf on the Ichkerian flag for the Islamic call “Allah Akbar,” the extensive internationalization of the ranks of mojahedin by means of natives from other Caucasian republics and Islamic countries, and the support of Caucasian jihad by the Taliban, the Iraqi mojahedin, as well as many Islamic academics all drastically changed the religious-political landscape of the Northern Caucasus.

After all, along with the internationalization and globalization of the Chechen resistance, the powerful formation of jamaats of revivalist Islam was going on in the neighboring republics of the Caucasus, the main orientation of which was widespread, full-fledged development of the Caucasian Muslim community as part of the world Islamic ummah. And while the national component predominated in the Chechen resistance, the jamaats of the neighboring republics tried to distance themselves from this war in order to be able to preach Islam and inspire their followers with a broad Islamic consciousness in counterbalance to the national consciousness that still long predominated in Chechnia.

But as soon as the Chechen resistance began to be globalized and appeal to the entire Islamic ummah, its unity, mutual assistance, non-separation between Islamic call and jihad, between mojahedin in Chechnia and the young jamaats of the revivalist call in neighboring republics, the two movements began to have many more things in common.

It was at this stage that the ranks of Caucasian jihad and the jamaats of call began to come together. This phenomenon—“unification” of the fighters of jihad and the preachers—is explained in particular by their identical globalizing consciousness; it drastically differs from the internationalization of the Chechen resistance during the first war.

During the first war, a large number of young people who took up arms to participate in gazawat were guided by a desire to help the fraternal Chechen people, as well as to continue Shamil’s cause in building an Imamate in the Caucasus in its previous version of the 19th century. In Chechnia itself, they were under the very strong social-cultural influence of the ideology and practice of Chechen “selectivity” and “exclusivity.” In the last years of the second campaign, entirely different cultural-ideological and sociopolitical conditions developed for uniting the two trends—jihad and call—in the ranks of the mojahedin, just as they did in the Caucasian republics themselves.

First of all, the leaders of jihad themselves assimilated Islamic call and began to carry it out throughout the entire Caucasus, whereby they acted without avoiding hot topics capable of arousing the wrath of the law-enforcement bodies and persecution by them. In particular, such topics were the inseparability in Islam of religion, politics, and war in one’s defense, complete rejection of all secular and other laws not based on the Qur’an and Sunnah, the illegitimacy in the eyes of Muslims of all authorities apart from Islamic, the inadequacy of Islamic call that does not talk about power and war, the uncompromising attitude of Muslims in questions of rejecting all non-Islamic manifestations of life, and so on.

It is entirely natural that the Islamic preachers in other republics of the Caucasus could not allow themselves to be so direct in their call efforts, were forced to keep quiet on many topics, avoid conflicts with the authorities (the police included), and disavow jihad and intentions to build an Islamic state in the Caucasus. In this way, with respect to the credibility, completeness, truthfulness, and depth of Islamic preaching, the representatives of jihad in the eyes of many young Muslims surpassed the preachers trying to conduct peaceful call by avoiding conflicts with the power bodies and law-enforcement system. Ideological unrest began in the revivalist jamaats of the Caucasian republics, and a split was noted between the supporters of jihad and those in favor of preaching only by peaceful means.

Second, the increasingly intensified persecution of the Muslim revivalists by the law-enforcement bodies, the political pressure applied by the power bodies with the help of the Spiritual Administrations, and the increasing number of arrests, kidnappings, torture, and murders led to an increasingly larger number of representatives of the revivalist jamaats realizing the need for an adequate and forceful rebuff. In some cases, the leaders of the jamaats were inclined toward counteraction from a

position of force, while their followers remained true to the tactics of peaceful call, and in other cases, some of the supporters of the peaceful preachers freed themselves from the influence of their commanders and joined the combat groups. But the undeniable fact remains that the growing ideological pressure of the combat jamaats and the intensified forceful persecution by the state split the revivalist jamaats of call and prompted a large number of their followers to take up the cause of implacable jihad.

In this way, in the last years of the second Chechen campaign, not only did subversive combat groups begin to form in the republics neighboring on Chechnia, consisting of veteran mojahedin who had gained fighting experience in the Chechen mountains, but also groups of rear support, material and information provision, as well as communications and supplies, whereby they formed from the number of former supporters of the peaceful development of Islamic call who had no previous combat experience. The next step was the fact that the “blacklisted” members of the mentioned groups took up arms and became full-fledged fighters of the combat jamaats.

The representatives and leaders of the revivalist jamaats (such as Yasin Rasulov and Abu Zagir Mantaev in Daghestan, as well as Musa Mukozhev and Anzor Astemirov in Kabardino-Balkaria) applied their Islamic understanding and wisdom about sociopolitical reality to the cause of jihad and tried to use all their contacts, experience, and authority acquired in previous years to expand jihad.

This ideological and practical blending of the ranks of mojahedin and representatives of the revivalist jamaats of call put the finishing touch to the maturing of the Islamic consciousness in the Caucasus and to the model of a new type of behavior—one that was open to the entire Islamic world oriented toward renewing Islam on the basis of the Qur’an and Sunnah, tough and uncompromising opposition in military-political questions, but open to all the latest scientific and technological developments in the information, propaganda, political, military-subversive and organizational-managerial spheres. The Caucasian front became a full-fledged component of the world Islamic jihad.

Thus, the soft line of revivalist preaching was destroyed with the help of the non-professional and indiscriminate methods of the law-enforcement bodies. It will take the Caucasus many more years to restore the former potential of the moderate and peaceful preachers necessary for the sustainable and milder development of Islam in the region.