

ISLAM IN POLYCONFESSIONAL DAGHESTAN

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Introduction

The Republic of Daghestan is the largest of the North Caucasian republics in terms of territory (50.3 thousand sq km) and population size (2.1 million). It borders on five states in the south of Russia: Azerbaijan and Georgia on land and Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Iran

across the Caspian. It has administrative borders with the Stavropol Territory, Kalmykia, and Chechnia. The incredible confessional and ethnic diversity of Daghestan is also a result of its very specific history and no less specific geographic location.

There are 2,451 religious units in the republic: 2,396 of them are Muslim; 50 Christian; and 5 Judaic.¹ The Christian communities are Orthodox (19 in all), Old Believer (1), Armenian (2), and Protestant (28, 6 of which are Seventh Day Adventists; 5 are Pentecostals; 5 are Baptists of the Union of the Evangelical Baptist Christians of Russia; 5 are Baptists of the Council of the Churches of the Evangelical Christian Baptists of Russia; 1 is Good Tidings Evangelicals; and 6 are Jehovah's Witnesses). The majority of the republic's population are Muslims; the structural diversity of Islam, the predominant religion, is present in all spheres of social life.

Standard Islam, which has accumulated all types of knowledge about the Muslim religion and is dealing with all sorts of questions related to the sphere of religious consciousness at the level of religious reflection, has acquired a very specific regional form. It is a result of its interconnection with a spiritual substructure of national cultures and is based on the polyethnic nature of the Caucasian Muslims and the fact that they belong to different Islamic schools intimately intertwined with local traditions and customs.

In the past, Soviet ideology, which promoted the idea of the world as a global society with its members devoid of national identity, allowed the government to coordinate and harmonize, to a certain extent, the interests of the Soviet ethnicities. The death of the Soviet Union buried the ideology of interethnic relations stemming from the principles of multisided fraternal cooperation and mutual assistance (the ideology of communist internationalism). Today, the post-Soviet polyethnic society has no regulator of any sort; this has become especially obvious in the Muslim regions, in the North Caucasian republics where Islam has become much more active than before. Islam's unifying and regulatory role is easily explained by the fact that it does not divide people into ethnic groups.

¹ See: *Kontseptsiya respublikanskoy tselevoy programmy "Vzaimodeystvie s religioznymi organizatsiyami v Respublike Dagestan i ikh gosudartvennaia podderzhka na 2012-2015 gody,"* available at [http://www.minnaz.ru/news_open.php?id=787], 15 December, 2011.

Indeed, after losing their old ideals and finding themselves in a hostile and incomprehensible environment people are looking for a way out of their disagreement with the world and religion provides them with all answers. They can either live in peace with the world around them or oppose it: this reveals the axiological value of the object rather than its properties. At all times, people have turned to religion in search of answers to the questions about the meaning of life, duty, happiness, the value of human life, etc.

In his *Heroes and Heretics*, Barrows Dunham pointed out that if "a movement toward social reforms" fails and if for a while problems cannot be resolved through social reforms "attention turns toward psychological problems," which become more acute. The evil which underlies social relations complicates individual lives and affects the moral side of human behavior.²

Islam provides the foundation of the Muslims' identity and loyalty; furthermore, most of the large-scale political and social movements in the recent history of the Muslim world are based on Islam as the unifying and motivating force.

Today, when it is hard to discern the "meaningful code" of the cultural transformation in world outlook and when it is even harder to place these changes in a spiritual context, Islam is doing a lot to supply adequate answers to the political, economic, and social questions within the umma's own tradition.

In fact, the greater role of religion contains no negative elements if it is based on the principles of *humanism* and the priority of *human values*. We should not exclude the possibility that social changes might be misinterpreted, however we should not exclude the possibility of changes that might provide important impulses of further development, the fruits of which will be reaped many years later.

The *bridges* which tie together different *philosophical points of view* decrease the disproportions in the development of human society, which, to a certain extent, is a self-unfolding process calling for humanistic ideals.

² See: B. Dunham, *Heroes and Heretics. A Political History of Western Thought*, Knopf, 1964, p. 59.

In Dagestan (and elsewhere), there are certain public and political forces and national movements trying to saddle religious revival and consolidate spiritual life (closely associated with popular national customs and rites) to pursue their own interests. This is true of Christianity and Is-

lam, the republic's two most popular religions. An analysis of the Islamic renaissance in Dagestan reveals three major stages with fairly conventional boundaries and chronology. The same is true of the driving forces, which differ by the degree of their involvement.

Islamic Renaissance in Dagestan: Stage by Stage

First Stage

At this stage (late 1980s-early 1990s), Islam was legalized and helped revive Islamic values in the life of the peoples of Dagestan. Old mosques were restored and new mosques built; local Muslim communities (jamaats) were registered; spiritual educational establishments mushroomed across the republic; this process, accompanied by mass publication of religious literature, looked fairly impressive.

Today, there are 2,486 Islamic communities: 1,290 jumah mosques; 827 neighborhood mosques (including 9 central and 10 neighborhood Shi'a mosques); 273 prayer houses, 13 higher educational establishments, 79 madrassahs, 2 cultural and educational centers; 1 union of the Islamic youth as well as the Spiritual Administration of the Muslims of Dagestan (DUMD). Other religious communities belong to Sunni Islam.³

These figures give a scanty idea (if at all) about the developments in Islam that leave no traces on the surface. This explains why many experts probe deeper than the mere numerical indices to assess the results of the Islamic resurrection manifested by the Muslims' ideas about life and their behavior.

R. Musina, for example, believes that "the Islamic renaissance, which was fairly active in Russia in the 1990s, could not always be described as a genuine religious renaissance (as its supporters presented these processes) or as a 'triumph of religious fanaticism' (as its scared opponents or badly informed observers insisted)."⁴

R. Yakupov who studies Islam, deemed it necessary to point out that "religious consciousness has not yet been restored in its totality. Today, consistent Muslims are but a small fraction of the formerly Muslim peoples. The greater part of those who attend mosques and observe religious holidays not only do not gear their lives to religious norms—they do not know enough of them."⁵ He was convinced that "complete religious revival starts from educating the main mass of the adepts. This is a long process, which is invariably difficult in industrial societies. This means that there will be no renaissance in the true sense of the term, while Islam will restore its position in a form adapted to the contemporary political and social conditions."⁶

³ See: L.A. Bashirov, *Islam i etnopoliticheskie protsessy v sovremennoy Rossii*, Moscow, 2000.

⁴ R. Musina, "Musulmanskaia identichnost kak forma 'religioznogo natsionalizma' tatar v kontekste etnosotsialnykh protsessov i etnopoliticheskoy situatsii v Tatarstane," in: M.V. Iordan, R.G. Kuzeev, S.M. Chervonnaya, *Islam v Evrazii. Sovremennye eticheskii i esteticheskie kontseptsii sumnitskogo islama, ikh transformatsia v massovom soznanii i vyrazhenie v iskusstve musulmanskikh narodov Rossii*, Progress-Traditsia, Moscow, 2001, p. 296.

⁵ R. Yakupov, "Islam v Rossii v svete etnografii," in: *Etnichnost i konfessionalnaia traditsia v Volgo-Uralskom regione Rossii*, Collection of articles, ed. by A.B. Yunusova, A.V. Malashenko, Moscow, 1998, pp. 99-100.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 100.

To add positive dimensions to the Islamic resurrection, the Muslims must become free to pursue their faith; the process is not smooth, however, because of the still low level of religious culture among the Russian Muslims, while several spiritual administrations, which depend on foreign aid, are locked in rivalry in the absence of a single religious center.

On 30 December, 1997, the People's Assembly of the Republic of Dagestan passed a Law on Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations, which made the Muslims of Dagestan free to communicate with co-religionists from other countries. This helped the local people extend, albeit not at a fast pace, political, economic, and cultural cooperation with the rest of the Islamic world; business communities are expanding their direct contacts. Today, members of Islamic organizations can communicate, and do so, with religious centers and state structures of Saudi Arabia, Iran, and other countries (their contacts are mostly limited to hajj-related issues). This is not an easy process and is complicated by external and internal (purely Islamic) reasons; we can only hope that over time it will gain momentum.

The Sufi brotherhoods, which gradually regained the legality they were deprived of under Soviet power, have not yet become a political force on their own right. New religious organizations and parties are barely distinguishable (with the exception of those which preach religious radicalism) and are short-lived. The very fact of their existence points to rapid politicization of Islam (from the very beginning the Islamic renaissance in the republic has not been limited to religious matters).

It should be said that in the 1990s, Dagestan had to cope with numerous problems that used to be limited to the Third World countries. The process was accompanied by sharp confessional contradictions, religious intolerance, stronger fundamentalist trends, and other sociopolitical signs traditionally regarded as diseases of the developing countries.

The transitional nature of the processes going on in Russia exacerbated the latent contradictions inherited from the authoritarian regime. Amid the general crisis, part of the Muslim community actively embraced the radical Islam brought in by the wave of new Islamization which swept the post-Soviet expanse and which in many respects had nothing in common with the way of life of the local religious communities and their ideas about the world.

Chechnia and Dagestan proved to be especially receptive to the fundamentalist alternative. At the height of interest in Islam, the Santlada Publishing House (which later moved to Moscow under the name of Badr) was set up in Dagestan to publish the works of the founding fathers of Salafism and of the local Salafi leaders (M. Tagaev, B. Kebedov, and others) sold in huge numbers in the Northern Caucasus and elsewhere in Russia.

On the one hand, they discussed the most topical problems of the umma and educated the Muslims; while on the other, they tilled the soil for more radical sentiments among the faithful, young people in particular.

Second Stage

The years 1991-1999 can be described as the second stage in the development of Islam in Dagestan; national relations became tenser; national movements became more active, while Wahhabi organizations became more numerous. This was when the Union of the Muslims of Russia (leader N. Khachilayev), the Nur Movement (co-chairman M. Sadikov), the Islamic Party of Russia (M. Rajabov), the regional Islamic Party of Dagestan (S. Asiyatillov), the Wahhabi all-Union Islamic Resurrection Party (A. Akhtaev and B. Magomedov), pro-Wahhabi Islamic Way (M. Udugov), and the Islamic Nation Congress (M. Udugov, A. Aliev), etc. came to the scene. The Congress of the Peoples of Ichkeria and Dagestan (S. Basaev) appeared in Chechnia; Jamaatul muslimin (Kh. Khasbulatov) was

formed in Daghestan. Wahhabi Islamic communities and centers of information and propaganda were set up across the two republics, which gave Muslim missionaries a chance to step up their propaganda activities.

Wahhabism penetrated every social group, their ranks swelled with new recruits; they established contacts with bureaucrats and influential members of the business community and replaced the old spiritual leaders with younger ones fresh from the famous foreign Islamic centers and universities.

Wahhabism, which can be described as a primitive version of Islam devoid of its most complicated ideas and reduced to outward rituals and attributes, was used to justify all types of deviant behavior. It was a byproduct of revived Islam and its obvious advantages. By the mid-1990s, the secular powers and official Muslim clerics became concerned about the mounting radical and extremist trends in Islam.

Revived Islam was pushing forward as a regulator of spiritual life and social relations; it also claimed the role of a political ideology. In fact, this was Islamic fundamentalism pure and simple, a combination of sociopolitical forces that tried to shift the state and society onto the Shari'a.

At this stage it became abundantly clear that the religious communities of Daghestan (and the other North Caucasian republics, for that matter) were not yet ready to accept the canonical forms of Islam and the Muslim tradition: these two aspects of historical and cultural development of Islamic philosophy remained outcasts in the Soviet Union. It turned out that canonical Islam (based on the Koran and the Shari'a) was divorced from the main part of the umma: for more than half a century Islamic clerics were isolated from the political and social life of the Muslim community.

Each social group and each and every Muslim discovered their own Islam; in fact, it is this extremely individualized approach to Islam which makes it a highly specific religion that can be correctly perceived only within national traditions.

The political-confessional and religious-psychological vacuum created under the impact of external and internal forces was filled with all sorts of sham-Islamic (or even extremist or criminal) elements. They hoisted the banner of national freedom and Islamic revival to side with the radical groups of ethnic nationalists and corrupt elements of the national bureaucracy to try to appropriate the republic's natural resources and remain in power. This tempted the socially deprived groups, young people in particular.

It should be said that, on the whole, Islamic fundamentalism was far from ambiguous in Daghestan in terms of its ethnic, social, or even geographical aspects. The process took the sharpest forms in those North Caucasian republics where Islam had gained a stronger position, that is, in Daghestan and Chechnia.

Their populations were hit worse than the others by the social and economic crisis; unemployment and crime were mounting, creating a wide stratum of social outcasts in the process.

In Daghestan, the fundamentalist ideology attracted people from all professional, social and age groups, which made it a very specific social and cultural phenomenon (its followers looked and dressed differently than other Muslims). The republic had the largest number of fundamentalist communities (jamaats) with mostly young (the most vulnerable) membership. The largest jamaat was united into the so-called Islamic Jamaat of Daghestan led by B. Muhammad (B. Kebedov).

Wahhabism spread like wildfire across the republic. A.G. Huseynov had the following to say about this: "Wahhabi organizations appeared and became popular in the Kizil Yurt (Kirovaul, Kom-somolets, Staroe Miatli, Novoe Miatli), Khasavyurt (Pervomaiskoe, Mutsalaul, Terechnoe, Sovetskoe), Kazbek (Inchkha, Gertma), Buynaksk (Karamakhi, Bugmi), Gunib (Kudatli, Sogratl), Karabudakhkent (Gubden), and Derbent (Beliji, Khpenj) districts, as well as in the cities of Makhachkala, Buynaksk, Khasavyurt, Kizlyar, and others."⁷

⁷ A.G. Huseynov, *Sotsialno-politicheskie konflikty Severnogo Kavkaza: sushchnost i puti uregulirovaniya*, Nauka Publishers, Moscow, 2007, p. 190.

The above suggests that Wahhabi cells were operating, more or less actively, in practically all the large districts and cities of Daghestan.

The Islamic revival in the republic was accompanied with dramatic or ever tragic events and bloodshed.

The poisonous volcano of Wahhabism erupted in 1999 in the Tsumada, Botlikh, and, especially, Novolak districts: "A war came to Novolak; this was a true war with all its attributes: gun fire, missiles, grenade launchers, bloodshed, and crowds of unfortunate refugees."⁸

The "genuine Islamists" headed by Sh. Basaev revealed their true nature in the village of Tukhchar of the Novolak District: "Russians were separated from the militiamen; they were dragged by the hair and thrown down to the ground. Their throats were cut in front of the crowd gripped by fear... This was how five Russian soldiers died. A three-liter vessel was placed at their throats... Nobody could make head or tail of this ferocious and hitherto unknown ritual. The vessel still remained at the checkpoint when we came to it after the bandits had driven away. TV Center showed it to Russia."⁹

The fierce conflicts in Daghestan were caused by strongly politicized religion. Much has already been written about them; the authors of books and all sorts of journalist reports tried to sum up the developments.

We should not overestimate the role of the religious factor: ethnic disagreements—obvious and latent—added fuel to the fire.

Third Stage

The third stage began in 2000 when the Wahhabis were defeated and their activities banned. It is still going on; the ethnic and religious factors became more or less blended. At first this stage looked like a return of Muslim values to public and political life accompanied by the people's emotional attitude toward the new elements in religious life.

This period looks like an integral part of social renovation in Daghestan with due account of the historical realities which, in the past, played a positive role in the people's spiritual life. These shifts in philosophical attitude call for a new axiological system and landmarks of social development.

Today, the state should extend its support to religious communities and closely cooperate with them. The republic has acquired a republican program On Cooperation with the Religious Organizations of the Republic of Daghestan and Their State Support for 2009-2011, which envisaged, among other things, financial assistance (more than 100 million rubles) over a period of three years.

There is a similar draft program for the years 2012-2015, under which religious organizations can count on state assistance in the follower spheres:

- Financial and information assistance to religious organizations and educational establishments;
- Professional training for municipal officials and teachers at religious educational establishments;
- Computer equipment and libraries for religious educational establishments;
- Help in organizing the teaching of secular subjects at higher religious educational establishments;

⁸ S.A. Musaev, A.M. Buttaeva, *Novolak-99—nachalo novoy istorii Rossii*, Makhachkala, 2009, p. 41.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 153.

- Competitions of theological works designed to refute the ideology of religious extremism, terrorism, etc.

This program taught religious figures to trust the state; the relations between the confessional organizations and the state reached a qualitatively new level.

The social tension fanned by destructive and asocial outcrops of religiosity (and extremism) still makes it unlikely that more harmonious relations can be achieved in the near future.

DUMD, on the other hand, is doing a lot to consolidate all the Muslims of Daghestan and become the center of their spiritual life—so far, all in vain. The followers of the Tariqat and Salafi (and followers of other religious movements for that matter) cannot agree on theological issues.

The religious situation in the republic remains shaky because of disagreements inside the confession, as well as disagreements on canonical, theological-legal, ritual, and moral ethical issues between followers of Sheikhs S. Israfilov, M. Rabadanov, G. Tagirov, M.-M. Babatov, M. Karachayev, M.-G. Hajiev, I. Ilyasov, P.-M. Akaev, M. Magomedov, I. Israfilov, I. Saidov, M. Kurbanhajiev, and I. Tagirov, on the one side, and those who support Sheikhs S. Atsaev, A. Gamzatov, M. Kurbanov, and A. Nuradinhajiev, on the other.¹⁰

In all other cases, conflicts inside religious communities were of a non-systemic nature and were, as a rule, caused by disagreements over the construction of cultic buildings (in the village of Karabagly of the Tarum District and the village of Jawgat, Kaytag District) and left practically no imprint on the spiritual situation in the republic.

The Commission under the President of the Republic of Daghestan is helping to restore civilian peace in the republic by assisting those who abandoned their terrorist and extremist activities in the republic to adjust to a peaceful life. The Commission is particularly involved in dealing with matters related to liberation from criminal responsibility or punishment for such people.¹¹

The Commission has met 12 times and discussed 23 applications.

Confessional Composition of the Religious Organizations in Daghestan

People living in *Makhachkala*, the republic's capital, are fairly active religiously: there are 102 mosques (44 of them are jumah mosques; 1 Shi'a, 47 neighborhood, and 11 prayer houses).

Three Islamic higher educational establishments and 14 madrassahs offer education to about 1,000 students. The absolute majority of the faithful Muslims belong to the Shafi madhhab; much fewer people belong to the followers of Hanafi madhhab and Shi'a (Jafari madhhab).

On Fridays, about 40 thousand gather in jumah mosques in the city and its environs.

There are 1,519 Islamic organizations (including 681 jumah mosques, 602 neighborhood mosques, and 197 prayer houses) in the republic's *Central Region*, which includes several cities and towns (Izberbash, Kaspiysk and Buynaksk); districts (Akushi, Akhvakh, Buynaksk, Botlikh, Gergebel, Gumbetovsky, Gunib, Dadakhaev, Levashinsky, Kaytayg, Karabudakhkent, Sergokalinsk, Tlyaratin, Khunzakh, Tsumada, Tsuntin, Charodin, Shamil, and Untsukul); and 1 unit.

¹⁰ See: D.V. Makarov, "Ofitsialny i neofitsialny islam v Dagestane," Part 3, "Konflikt mezhdru salafitami i tarakistami," available at [<http://www.ansar.ru/library/19>].

¹¹ See: Ukaz Prezidenta Respubliki Dagestan "O komissii pri Prezidente Respubliki Dagestan po okazaniiu sodeystviia v adaptatsii k mirnoy zhizni litsam, reshivshim prekratit terroristicheskuui i ekstremistskuui deiatelnost na territorii Respubliki Dagestan No. 264 ot 2 noiabria 2010 goda [<http://north-caucasus.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/189651/>], 25 July, 2011.

The *Northern Region* of Daghestan (the cities of Kizilyurt, Kizlyar, Khasavyurt, and Yuzhnosukhokumsk and the districts of Babayurt, Kazbek, Kizilyurt, Kizlyar, Kumtorkalin, Novolak, Nogaisk, Khasavyurt, and Tarum) have 448 Islamic communities (including 270 jumah mosques, 118 neighborhood mosques, and 28 prayer houses).

It should be said that the religious situation in the Northern Region has local specifics, its multi-confessional nature being one of them. The majority are Sunnis of the Shafi and Hanafi madhhabs.

People living in the *Southern Region* of Daghestan are less religious: the cities of Derbent and Daghestanskie Ogni and the districts of Agul, Akhtyn, Derbent, Dokuzparin, Kayakent, Kurakh, Kuli, Mararamkent, Laks, Suleyman Stalsky, Rutul, Tabasaran, and Khiv have 382 Muslim communities with 291 jumah mosques, 71 neighborhood mosques, and 9 prayer houses.

The education level of the Muslim clerics remains low; few people have deemed it necessary to perform hajj.

The Tabasaran District has a relatively larger religious population; people attend 78 mosques; 90 students attend the local madrassah.

Islamic Educational Establishments

In the last twenty years, the republic has acquired a far-flung (compared to the other RF subjects) network of Islamic educational establishments of three levels: higher educational establishments (universities and institutes); specialized secondary schools (colleges and madrassahs); and primary schools (maktabs at mosques).

The Department of the Ministry of Justice of the RF for Daghestan registered 15 Islamic higher educational establishments, 13 of which regularly offer education to 1,472 students. According to the town and district administrations, there are 79 madrassahs in the republic with the student body of 3,017 (27 of them are registered with the Ministry of Justice) and 158 primary schools at mosques (3,149 pupils).

In 2007, Makhachkala acquired the North Caucasian University Center of Islamic Education and Science (SKUTsION), which unites the Sheikh Muhammad-Arip Islamic University of Daghestan and the Institute of Theology and International Relations. It is headed by President M. Mutailov, First Deputy of the Mufti of the Republic of Daghestan; its first director was late M. Sadikov, the Institute's rector.

There are two theological institutes in Daghestan:

- (1) the Mamma-Dibir al-Rochi Institute of Theology and International Relations in Makhachkala, a non-state establishment of higher professional education; and
- (2) the Said-afandi Cirkey Institute in the village of Cirkey, Buynaksk District, a non-state establishment of higher professional education.

The Islamic Media in the Republic

The DUMD publishes a newspaper *Assalam* in eight languages of the peoples of Daghestan; at times its circulation reaches 80 thousand copies. There are also very similar weekly *Islamsky vestnik*

(Islamic Herald) and the *Nur-ul islam* newspaper. Both newspapers have electronic versions on the Internet.

In 2002, the DUMD started the *Islam* journal with a circulation of 150 thousand, which is published in Makhachkala; the monthly *Islam v Yuzhdage* is published in Derbent, while the Shi'a community of Makhachkala publishes the *Kavsar* newspaper from time to time.

The DUMD organizes broadcasts of 15-minute long programs, *Mir vashemu domu* (Peace to Your Home), in Russian at the State TV channel Daghestan; every other day it runs *Chas razmyshleniy* (An Hour for Reflection) on the TNT-Makhachkala and Domashny channels; every Friday the TV Tsentri-Makhachkala channel offers the *Put k istine* (The Road to Truth) program.

The DUMD uses republican radio to promote Islam in the local languages, while the mosque imams and religious activists use the local media.¹²

Christian Communities

Christianity is the second popular confession in the republic. Today, there are 50 Christian religious communities, including 19 Orthodox, 28 Protestant; 2 Armenian, and 1 Old Believer communities; there are 23 Orthodox priests in the republic.

The republic's territory is divided into two districts—the Makhachkala and Kizlyar territorial units (blagochinie). On 22 March, 2011, they were made parts of the Vladikavkaz and Makhachkala Eparchy of the ROC of Moscow Patriarchate (before that, starting in 1998, they belonged to the Baku and Caspian Eparchy). Sunday schools function at all Orthodox churches (there are 18 churches and chapels and 1 monastery).

The Makhachkala Blagochinie headed by Archpriest Nikolay Stenechkin includes:

- the Cathedral of the Dormition of the Our Most Holy Mother of God (Makhachkala);
- the Cathedral of the Holy Sign (Khasavyurt);
- the Church of the Mother of God of Kazan (Kaspiysk);
- the Church of the Intercession of the Holy Virgin (Derbent);
- the Church of Reverend Seraphim of Sarov (Izberbash);
- the Church of Alexander of Neva (village of Akhty), and
- the Church of Alexander of Neva (Buynaksk).

The Kizlyar Blagochinie headed by Hegumen Yury Palchikov includes:

- the Cathedral of Great Martyr St. George the Victorious (Kizlyar);
- the St. Nicholas Church (Kizlyar);
- the chapel in honor of the Seeking of the Lost Icon (Kizlyar);
- the Church of the Mother of God of Kazan (Komsomolskiy);
- the St. Nicholas Church (Kraynovka);
- the Cathedral of Holy Hierarch St. Nicholas the Wonderworker (Bryansk);

¹² See: Information about the religious communities in the Republic of Daghestan for 01.01.2010, available at [http://president.e-dag.ru/respublika/svedeniya-o-religioznykh-obedineniyakh-v-respublike-Daghestan-na-01012010-g/?tx_felugin_pi1%5Bforgot%5D=1].

- the Church of St. Nicholas the Wonderworker (Kochubey);
- the Church of St. Andrew the First Called (Tarumovka);
- the Church of the Holy Mother of God (Talovka);
- the Church of St. Peter and Paul (Koktyubey);
- the Alexander of Neva Chapel (Terekli-Mekteb), and
- the Convent of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross.¹³

The small republic is dotted with numerous Orthodox churches (many of which were restored after perestroika).

On 5 May, 2007, the Orthodox Convent of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross (initially a monastery set up in 1736 by Archimandrite Daniil of a Georgian princely family) was revived in Kizlyar under the jurisdiction of the bishop of Baku and the Caspian area by nuns from the Yaroslavl Region.

The Cathedral of Great Martyr St. George the Victorious has already been restored in Kizlyar; the Armenian Church of St. Grigoris in the village of Nyugdi (Derbent District) is being restored.

In 2000, the Cathedral of the Dormition of the Our Most Holy Mother of God became the dome; in 2005 it was completely restored to mark its 100th anniversary.

The largest Orthodox cathedral in the Northern Caucasus—the Cathedral of the Holy Sign—functions in Khasavyurt. It was built in 1903-1904 in honor of the Holy Sign of the Mother of God icon to mark the 300th anniversary of the royal house of the Romanovs by Cossacks of the Terek Cossack Army; it is one of the republic's cultural monuments.

In 1990, the republic started building new churches; eight of them appeared in Kizlyar, Akhtakh, Buynaksk, Izberbash, Koktyubey, Talovka, Terekli-Mekteb, and Komsomolskoe.

The republican administration and municipalities are doing a lot to help the Orthodox communities restore old and build new churches. On the instructions of President of the RD M. Magomedov, the Orthodox community in the village of Krainovka (Kizlyar District) engaged in reconstruction of its church received financial support; money was also extended to the restoration of the Cathedral of the Holy Sign in Khasavyurt within the Republican program On Cooperation with the Religious Organizations of the Republic of Dagestan and Their State Support for 2009-2011. The financial commission at the republican Ministry for National Politics, Religious Affairs and External Contacts set up to fulfill the program has already drafted the documents necessary to extend financial assistance to the church in the Rassvet settlement (Tarumov District), the Cathedral of St. Andrew the First Called in Tarumovka (Tarumov District), and the Cathedral of the Holy Sign in Khasavyurt.

For obvious reasons, Orthodox revival in the republic has been less active than the Islamic renaissance mainly because Russian speakers have been leaving the republic in great numbers.

According to the 2002 all-Russia population census, there were 120 thousand Russians in the republic (4.69% of the total population). According to the earlier population census of 1989, there were 166 thousand Russians in Dagestan (9.1%). In 1959, Russians were the second largest population group (20% of the total population).

It should be said that the outflow of Russians has undermined the republic's labor and cultural potential, which has inevitably affected the social and economic situation in the country. The republican leaders identified the problem as a key one; in 1994, a special Commission of the Government of the RD was set up to address the problem.

¹³ See: "Pravoslavie v sovremennom Dagestane," available at [http://www.minnaz.ru/news_open.php?id=652], 22 October, 2011.

There is a patchwork of Protestant groups (5 thousand members) in Daghestan who belong to several different churches: Evangelical Christian Baptists, Seventh Day Adventists, Pentecostals, Evangelical Christians, and Jehovah's Witnesses.

Judaic Communities

There are 5 Judaic communities in Daghestan based in the cities of Makhachkala, Derbent, Buynaksk, Khasavyurt, and Kizlyar. They all belong to the Federation of Jewish Communities of Russia. All of them run Sunday schools (heders); there are no higher or secondary specialized Judaic schools in the republic, to be qualified as a rabbi, boys must spend six years at the Moscow Judaic Institute of the 21st Century and two years of post-graduate training in Israel.

C o n c l u s i o n

In Daghestan, Islam, Christianity, and Judaism are living peacefully side by side; their followers have learned tolerance, mutual respect, and mutual assistance, which allows these religions to remain an important factor of social and political stability in the republic; they are helping to develop the local culture and plant humanistic, spiritual, and moral ideas in society.

We should bear in mind, however, that the impulses of Islam and Christianity are different and that the quality of cultural exchange depends not so much on the sides' readiness to cooperate but on the sum-total of objective factors indispensable for an interconfessional dialog. The degree of development of cultures of different countries is likewise important.

Today, we are witnessing an amazing historical U-turn inspired by the globalization of all spheres of public life and the fact that numerous factors (demographic, political, economic, cultural, social, etc.) are also involved in the process; the religious sphere is also affected.

The countries of the "non-Western" world are not prepared to accept the values the West is persistently imposing on them. In the past, they proved pernicious for the traditional cultures of autochthonous population and created frequently destructive contradictions. We should also bear in mind that the Western impacts are not so much accepted, they are adjusted to the historical-cultural traditions, national psychology, and social, economic, and political order of the receiving side. This makes distortions and conflicts inevitable.

This means that the dialog between the government and society and among all sorts of religious organizations should be readjusted to the task of improving the spiritual and moral situation in the republic; the bodies of state power, local self-administration, and religious communities should be ready to extend adequate information and ideological support.