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Contextualized violence: politics and terror in Dagestan

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Despite the escalating terrorist actions, there is no polarized constellation in the Islamic politics of Dagestan. Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB) officers regard the corrupt Dagestan authorities to be significantly responsible for the massive conversion of youths to terrorism, and began to contact with moderate Salafis to isolate the "forest brothers" (armed Salafis) in 2010. Exploiting the FSB's soft strategy, secular intellectuals requested to reform the Muslim Spiritual Board of Dagestan by electing a legitimate mufti. Having seen the incompetence of intra-Sufi opposition (non-Avar sheikhs) in the War on Terror, the Spiritual Board jumped on the bandwagon of dialog strategy in 2012. The secular authorities of Dagestan, indifferent to intra-Muslim politics, limit their activities to the call for dialog between the secular authorities and the forest brothers. In this way, political actors hijack the master narrative of the "War on Terror" and these narratives are imported to local politics.

Keywords: Dagestan; Islam; terrorism; FSB RF; moderate Salafis

Violence and depolarization of Islamic politics in Dagestan

On 28 August 2012, at about 5 pm, a suicide-bomber killed Said-afandi Chirkeisky (b. 1937), the most influential sheikh of Dagestan, at his house. Besides the sheikh and the killer, five other people died. The killer was a woman of Russian origin (b. 1982), converted to Islam. On 1 September, the Dagestani Riyad-us Saliheen Brigade of Martyrs declared that they had "demolished the leader of the Dagestani Pagans (*mushriki*), longtime agent of the KGB (Committee of National Security: *Komitet gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti*) and FSB (Federal Security Service: *Federal'naya sluzhba bezopasnosti*), and concurrently Sufi sheikh, Said Atsaev" ("Poyavilos'"). As has been the case with many other assassinations in Dagestan, Chirkeisky died in mysterious circumstances. How was the killer able to enter Chirkeisky's house and get close to him, despite the fact that she was a famous Salafi activist who lost her first and third husbands in their armed struggle against "infidel power"? Moreover, she left her second husband when he admitted his guilt on local TV after the procedure at the Commission for Adaptation of Terrorists (see below) in quest of amnesty ("Aminat Kurbanova").

In Dagestan, even this cruel attack was perceived as no more than an incident, indicating a rapid increase in victims of terrorism, undertaken by Islamic fundamentalists, as well as counter-operations conducted by the internal troops and the FSB of the Russian Federation (RF). In 2008, 77 members of illegal armed formations [often called forest brothers (*lesnye*

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brat'ya) or forest fighters (*lesnye*) because their bases are located in forests, where they train youths as partisans and prepare terrorist acts] were slain, but over 10 months in 2009, the number increased to 170. In September 2010 alone, 54 members of illegal armed formations were dispatched. At the Third Congress of Peoples of Dagestan on 15 December 2010 (see below), President Magomedsalam Magomedov of Dagestan made public the fact that during four months in 2010, 120 fighters were killed. Despite the physical elimination of insurgents, their number is increasing. At a meeting of the Coordinative Council for the Preservation of Law and Order in Dagestan, held in February 2011, Dagestan's minister of internal affairs Abdurashid Magomedov disclosed the fact that during 2010, anti-terrorist operations detected and eliminated "64 caches, 26 dugouts, and 11 camps, a huge amount of firearms, ammunitions, explosives ... " (Abdulagatov 2011a, 12).[1] The forest fighters record how they execute "infidels" on video and upload the material on YouTube. These horrors, understandably, make investment in and development of tourism in Dagestan impossible.

In such circumstances, observers tend to assume that Dagestani society is polarized and that an uncompromising war is ongoing between the armed Salafis and the alliance of official, Sufi Islam (traditional for Dagestan), the secular regional authorities, and Russia's intelligence service (FSB RF). In fact, relations between these actors have been much more complex. FSB officers, often visiting Dagestan from Moscow, regard the corrupt Dagestan authorities to be, to a significant extent, to blame for the massive conversion of youths to terrorists. In 2010, FSB officers began to make contact with moderate Salafis, such as Abbas Kebedov and Ziyaudin Uvaisov, and even cooperate with them to isolate the armed Salafis. Exploiting the FSB's soft tactics, secular intellectuals, such as Zaid Abdulagatov and Suleiman Uladiev, requested reform of the system of Muslim administration of Dagestan. Abdulagatov proposed to convene the long-awaited Congress of Muslims of Dagestan to elect a legitimate leader of the Spiritual Board of Dagestan (*Dukhovnoe upravlenie musliman Dagestana*, DUMD). With this target in mind, the secular intellectuals endeavored to organize dialog between the DUMD, moderate Salafis, and the opposition within the traditional Sufi leaders (non-Avar sheikhs; Avars are the largest ethnic group in Dagestan).[2] At first, this strategy appeared unacceptable to the current DUMD, whose leadership is almost monopolized by the Avars and disciples of the abovementioned Sheikh Said-afandi Chirkeisky. Yet perhaps having seen the incompetence of intra-Sufi opposition in this soft strategy of the war on terrorism, Chirkeisky and the DUMD jumped on the bandwagon of dialog strategy in 2012. The secular authorities of Dagestan under the leadership of Magomedsalam Magomedov, indifferent to intra-Muslim politics, narrowly interpret the meaning of "dialog" and limit their activities to the call for dialog between the secular authorities and the forest fighters, actively using amnesties as a motivator.[3] Some local intellectuals and Muslim leaders criticize the Magomedov administration for sabotaging dialog with a wider scope, in which moderate Salafis and the intra-Sufi opposition should participate, despite the FSB's pressure on Magomedov to realize a broader dialog.

Tentatively, we may illustrate the constellation of religious and secular actors as in Figure 1. This figure demonstrates that the struggle against terrorism in Dagestan has not been a bipolarized military confrontation, while both the authorities and the Salafis are far from being monolithic. In this de-polarization, political actors hijack the master narrative of the "War on Terror" and these narratives are imported into local politics. In other words, violence is contextualized in Dagestani politics. This article tries to explain how and why this is taking place.

After the USSR liberalized its religion policy in the late 1980s, Salafism flew into Soviet Muslim territories and polarized local Muslim communities into a conscious minority

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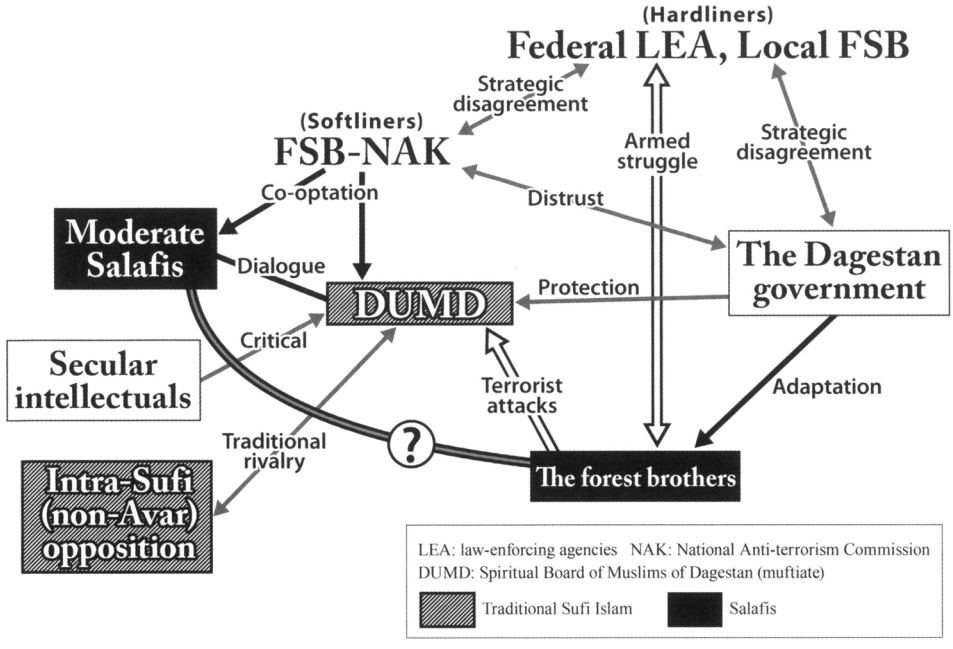


Figure 1. Constellation of political actors of Dagestan around the issue of terrorism.

(Salafis) versus a traditional majority (in the context of Dagestan, Sufis).[4] This bipolar constellation of Islamic politics, which we may call the first stage of Islamic revival, evaporated in Dagestan from 2006, while it continues to characterize other Muslim regions of Russia, such as Tatarstan, Bashkortostan, and the Northwest Caucasian republics. From Dagestan, as many as between 12,000 and 15,000 people perform the Hajj pilgrimage every year[5] and make contact with Saudi Arabian co-believers, following Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab's teachings authorized as the state religion. Despite the powerful counter-propaganda delivered by the secular authorities and the DUMD, as well as the surveillance executed by the FSB RF, more than 3000 Dagestanis continue to study at Islamic universities and schools in Arabic countries (Abdulagatov 2011a, 88). These transnational contacts with foreign Muslims undermined the once-dominant discourse of juxtaposing traditional (good) Islam against "fundamentalist" (bad) Islam. An opinion poll conducted in Dagestan revealed that more than 50% of the respondents sympathize with Salafism (Abdulagatov 2007, 270). According to Rasul Gadzhiev, vice-minister of nationalities policy of Dagestan, interviewed by the authors on 16 April 2012, approximately half of the participants in the Friday prayer held at the Central Mosque of Makhachkala have ceased to practice traditional Dagestani rites, instead practicing the rites that they learnt through Hajj and other transnational contacts. Dagestanis began to understand that Islam in Dagestan, which they used to believe as traditional and "purest in the world,"[6] was no more than a historical construction, as is the case with any other local Islam in the world. This recognition, marking the second stage of Islamic revival, dismantled the polarized constellation of Islamic politics. Both the secular authorities and the DUMD cannot but cope with the new situation in which the labeling of Salafis as terrorists has lost its persuasive power.

Another reason for depolarization is the painful socioeconomic situation of the region and the local population's distrust of the secular authorities. In 1999, the absolute majority of Dagestanis mounted a counteroffensive against intruders from Chechnya and risked their

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lives for the integrity of Russia. During the 2000s, the Dagestan and, to a lesser degree, the federal authorities discredited themselves to the extent that the population decline to sell Wahhabi suspects to the law-enforcing and security agencies. The stationing of tens of thousands of federal internal troops, associated with arbitrary and indiscriminative anti-terrorist operations (for example, detention or siege of a whole village) and daily troubles that they inflict on the population (from picking up of schoolgirls to robbing of cars) induce the population to sympathize with terrorists. According to a public opinion survey conducted by the journal *Dosh* in collaboration with several NGOs in Dagestan in September–October 2011, 49.4% of respondents answered that Dagestanis go into "the forest" because of the Siloviks' arbitrariness and their desire to take revenge upon victims, while 28.3 and 20.8% attributed it to religious conviction and unemployment, respectively ("Lesnaya al'ternativa?").

The federal authorities and the Magomedov administration of Dagestan (2010–2013) had differing opinions as to what extent corruption among the local officialdom and other social problems are to blame for the intensifying terrorism. A famous policy memo, prepared by the Center for Situational Analysis of the Russian Academy of Sciences under Evgeny Primakov's initiative and published in *Rossiiskaya gazeta* on 4 April 2012, attributes the radicalization of Islam in the North Caucasus to unemployment, poverty, disparity in wealth, interethnic tensions around access to economic resources and budget money, and the clientelistic characteristics of society, accompanied by unfairness in employment and the accordingly legitimate anger of youths ("Neotlozhnaya k resheniyu problema: Eksperty Tsentra situatsionnogo analiza RAN ob islame v Rossii i ugroze ego radikalizatsii"). At the Third Congress of the Peoples of Dagestan in December 2010 (see below), the RF presidential representative in the North Caucasian Federal District Aleksandr Khloponin admitted that the problem of security was closely connected to the problem of corruption, which in many cases "generates the current confrontation between the authorities and the population." At the same congress, President Magomedsalam Magomedov of Dagestan claimed that poverty and corruption in Dagestan were "not more than in other regions of Russia" (*S"ezd narodov Dagestana*, 34, 48). Magomedov would repeat this view many times.

Thus, the Dagestanis' transnational religious contacts and distrust of the federal and regional authorities rendered the juxtaposition between Salafism (sometimes even including its terrorist version) and local, traditional Islam obsolete, while the authorities suffer serious discord within themselves around the reasons for the escalating terrorism and measures to fight against it. These factors, combined together, depolarize actors in the religious politics of Dagestan.

Stimulated by the Second Chechen War in 1999 (its ignition point was not Chechnya, but Dagestan), the first half of the 2000s witnessed a boom in research on Islam in Dagestan (Makarov 2000, 2005; Makarov and Mukhametshin 2003; Kisriev 2004; Malashenko 2001; Matsuzato and Ibragimov 2005). These studies have become obsolete because they were dedicated to the first stage of Islamic revival before 2005. This essay tries to analyze the second stage (that is, depolarization of Islamic politics and the hijacking of the anti-terror master discourse by local political actors) in Dagestan perhaps for the first time in historiography.

The beginning of the "forest issue" and the rebirth of moderate Salafism in the mid-2000s

In 1994, Dagestan introduced a system of collective executive leadership under the name of the State Council (*Gosudarstvennyi sovet*) to overcome interethnic conflicts of the late

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1980s and early 1990s. During 1994–2006, Magomedali Magomedov (b. 1930), a Dargin, unalterably presided over the State Council. Yet in 2006, the need to harmonize Dagestan's governmental system with federal law forced Dagestan to abolish the State Council and introduce a system of one-man executive chief, titled president, which operated in other national republics of Russia. Seizing this moment, President Putin suggested that Magomedali Magomedov retire and the latter agreed. Putin recommended Mukhu Aliev (b. 1940), the Supreme Soviet chair since 1994, as the first Dagestan president, which the People's Assembly (regional legislature) of Dagestan confirmed. The same session elected Magomedali's son, Magomedsalam (b. 1964), as the new parliamentary speaker.[7]

In the same 2006, the "forest issue" entered Dagestan's political lexicon; in his first address to the regional legislature, President Aliev admitted that in 2005, the number of policemen killed or injured by terrorist actions had doubled in comparison with 2004 ("Bor'ba s terrorizmom"). According to Gordon M. Hahn, as a result of the Second Chechen War since 1999, Chechen Islamists abandoned their policy of expansion by direct invasion. By 2004, they had settled instead on a strategy of supporting a web of indigenous combat jamaats in Dagestan (Hahn 2007, 105). If we saw many foreign, especially Arab, commanders among the armed Salafis in the North Caucasus in the 1990s or even among the terrorists who attacked the school in Beslan in 2004, in current Dagestan, the armed Salafis have become independent in terms of cadres and money. A spreading practice in current Dagestan is that Salafis throw a USB flash into houses of rich families. The flash has recorded on it a video clip that shows amazingly accurately the income of the family (which implies the presence of Salafi collaborators in tax offices of Dagestan), and the family is requested to pay 2.5% of the income as Islamic tax. The rich family has no other way but to comply with the illegal request for the safety of family members. In his talk with the authors on 17 April 2012, Zaid Abdulagatov, sociologist of the Institute of History, Archeology, and Ethnography of the Dagestan Science Center of the Russian Academy of Sciences, emphasized that the spread of "business" of similar kinds and criminalization of Salafism in Dagestan, unsurprisingly, discredit Salafi ideas in the eyes of the population.

One of the first moderate Salafis, famous not only in Dagestan but also nationwide, was Akhmad-Kadi Akhtaev (1942–1998). In 1990, the First Congress of Muslims of the USSR elected him as chairman of the Council of Ulama (*ulama* meaning scholars) and the amir of the Islamic Party of Rebirth of the USSR. After this party was disbanded in August 1992, Akhtaev guided a moderate wing of Dagestani Islamists and founded the All-Russian Islamic organization Al-Islamia (Roshin 2003). Akhtaev criticized Bagauddin Kebedov (leader of the radical Salafis) for his indulgence in *takfir* (accusation of "infidels," often accompanied by condemnation to death). Akhtaev requested his own supporters to be respectful to the Sufi tradition of Dagestan and only censure its extreme forms. He opposed the justification of armed revolt in the name of jihad. Akhtaev tried to convince the Salafis to act within state law and make the authorities understand the expedience of recognizing the Salafis as a legitimate trend of Islam (Malashenko 2001, 110). According to Dmitry Makarov, however, Akhtaev was sandwiched between two fires; he appeared as a Wahhabi in the eyes of Sufi leaders, while radical Islamists regarded him as a meaningless compromiser (Makarov 2008). After his unexpected death in 1998, moderate Salafism almost ceased to exist in Dagestan.

In the mid-2000s, when the forest fighters were galvanized into action, the core of moderate Salafism was also reborn in Dagestan. One of the initiators of this trend was Abbas Kebedov (b. 1953). Although he is a younger brother of Bagauddin Kebedov, an organizer of the armed Salafism in Dagestan in the 1990s and provocateur of the Second Chechen War, Abbas chose another path. In 1992, Kebedov emigrated to Cairo to study at

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Al-Azhar University, where he was the leader of students from Dagestan (whose number once reached a hundred) and served as a transmitter of Salafism from Egypt to Dagestan. Sociologist Zaid Abdulagatov supposes that Kebedov's ideology is close to the Muslim Brotherhood (Abdulagatov 2011a, 89–90). In February 2004, Kebedov terminated his 12-year stay in Cairo and returned to Dagestan. Understandably, the return of a younger brother of Bagauddin Kebedov was unacceptable to the law-enforcing agencies; the police allegedly found a grenade in Kebedov's house. In December 2005, a district court in Makhachkala sentenced him to deprivation of freedom for a year. Kebedov appealed and was eventually rehabilitated in September 2006. He received miserable state compensation, which did not even cover the cost of the lawsuit. While he was in custody, he lost his agrarian firm, indispensable for supporting his two wives and eleven children (Matsuzato's interview with Abbas Kebedov, co-chairman of the NGO "Territory of Peace and Development", on 20 April 2012, Makhachkala; "V Dagestane vozvrashchat'" 2010).

Ziyaudin Uvaisov graduated from the Law Faculty of Dagestan State University in 2000 and began to work as an assistant to a judge. Simultaneously (1999–2002), he worked as a computer technician at the Central Mosque of Makhachkala and was a disciple (*murid*) of Said-afandi Chirkeisky. He became suspicious about Sufism in various theological matters; for example, for its deviation from *Tawhid* (doctrine of the Oneness of God). He left the Sufi camp. Since 2005, Uvaisov has been working as a lawyer and defender of human rights of active Muslims, who are often framed by the law-enforcing agencies.

Moderate Salafis and the Dagestan authorities diverge in their interpretation of who are to blame for the intensifying terrorism and what caused this situation. A. Kebedov argues that

> in the state in which rights and freedom of citizens, given by the Creator and prescribed in the Constitution, are not respected and in which society is stratified according to confessional, ethnic, property, and other indicators, monstrous social-economic unfairness would become the norm. (quoted in Abdulagatov 2011a, 19)

In his talk with Matsuzato on 19 April 2012, lawyer Z. Uvaisov remarked that, in the Caucasus, the FSB kidnaps people if it suspects someone of being a Wahhabi or a collaborator of Wahhabis, but does not have sufficient evidence to launch a legal prosecution. Uvaisov says that between about 60 and 100 people have disappeared in the North Caucasus. This horrifying number is no more than the tip of the iceberg because, after torture, the FSB threatens those kidnapped neither to appeal to law and the courts for compensation for the damage suffered by them nor to disclose their experience in the mass media. Actual occasions of law violations committed by security agencies are much more numerous than has been identified, asserts Uvaisov. A huge meeting held in Makhachkala in November 2011, which requested the security agencies to cease their kidnappings (see below), testifies to the scale of victims caused by their operations. In Uvaisov's view, in order to stop terrorist activities, the authorities should first of all cease to prosecute people based on religious indicators.

The arguments of Kebedov and Uvaisov, quoted above, especially regarding the frame-ups of active Muslims, would seem to be a master discourse of moderate Salafis in Dagestan. Imam Kamil' Sultanakhmetov of Kayakent Village Mosque, one of the Salafi leaders of Dagestan, echoes Kebedov and Uvaisov.

> The police and the state security services (*spetssluzhba*) arrest and kidnap young people over the republic [Dagestan] only because of their religious creed. Men with short trousers and beards and women wearing the hijab, some specifics in administering worship – these are the signs of those who are called Wahhabis and this is sufficient reason to prosecute them.

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Sultanakhmetov states that the Salafi youth are discriminated against in employment because law-enforcing agencies persecute entrepreneurs who hire these youth. Unemployment and lack of income push these youth toward military resistance against the authorities. Sultanakhmetov requests that the authorities abide by the law, while calling Salafis to "admit the Russian Constitution and the territorial integrity of Russia" (Mel'nikov, 2001).

In his talk with Matsuzato on 24 April 2012, Z. Zubairuev, head of the Department of Information Policy and Press Service of the President of Dagestan, asserted that the number of those kidnapped by security agencies ("sixty to a hundred"), which Uvaisov supposed, was extremely exaggerated. On 23 April 2012, director of the republican state broadcasting company "Dagestan," Aznaur Adzhiev told us that

> it is bad that our law-enforcing agencies kidnap people because this demonstrates their weakness, their inability to collect sufficient evidence to start a legitimate criminal trial. But this does not mean that those who were kidnapped were innocent, that they had nothing to do with terrorism.

New leaders, new policies (2010)

Having encountered a sudden increase in terrorist acts, President Putin issued the decree "On Measures for Counteractions to Terrorism" on 15 February 2006 ("Ukaz Prezidenta"). This decree created the National Anti-terrorism Committee (NAK), chaired by the FSB director (General A. B. Bortnikov since May 2008) and in which representatives of all coercive and intelligence agencies of the RF participate. In 2006–2009, the NAK was busy with Chechnya matters and barely played an important role in Dagestan's security policy.

The federal authorities intensified their Dagestan policy in 2010. On 19 January, President D. Medvedev issued a decree dividing the existing South Federal District (the seat was Rostov-na-Donu) into two parts and created a new federal district, that is, the North Caucasian Federal District composed of Dagestan, Ingushetiya, North Ossetia, Chechnya, and Stavropol' Region. Pyatigorsk City was chosen as the district seat ("Ukazom Prezidenta"). Thus, all conflictive territories in the North Caucasus were included in this new district. Somewhat unexpectedly, Medvedev appointed a civilian, Aleksandr Khloponin, as his plenipotentiary representative in this district full of hotspots. Khloponin was born in 1965, graduated from the Moscow Financial Institute in 1989, and made his way in banking and business. Before being appointed as head of the North Caucasus, he was Krasnoyarsk's governor. Khloponin was also appointed as vice prime minister, thus merging this post in Moscow with his responsibility to guide the North Caucasian Federal District, which was also an exceptional measure.[8] On 6 October 2010, the RF government adopted "The Strategy of Social-Economic Development of the North Caucasian Federal District until 2025" ("Strategiya"). The date of publication of this document apparently targeted the Third Congress of the Peoples of Dagestan (see below).

In the same 2010, representatives of the NAK, to be more precise, FSB generals, began to visit Dagestan with the expectation that if they could improve the situation of Dagestan, the most difficult region of Russia, the experiment would be adoptable in other regions of the North Caucasus and even Middle Volga, who were suffering from Islamist fundamentalism. The leader of the FSB team was General Evgeny Il'in, the first deputy chief of the NAK apparatus (about him, for example, see "Vystuplenie Evgeniya"). General Andrei Przezdomskii, advisor to the NAK chairman, played the most important role in anti-terrorist politics in Dagestan. Przezdomskii is a historian by education and published a book about secret bunkers built by the Nazis in Konigsberg ("Sovetnik FSB"). Przezdomskii advocated wide-ranging dialog (not only between the forest fighters and the Dagestan authorities, but

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also including moderate Salafis and oppositional Sufis). Both moderate Salafis (A. Kebedov) and secular intelligentsia (Z. Abdulagatov and S. Uladiev) highly appreciate Przezdomskii's initiative and personality. The first step that FSB officers took was to allow moderate Salafis to organize themselves legally. Moderate Salafis responded by creating the Association of Scholars Ahlusunna (in which about 70 scholars participate) and the NGO Territory of Peace and Development ("Vlast' i islam"); Abdulagatov 2011a, 18–19).

The moderate Salafi organization's name, "Territory of Peace," appears to be a phrase pregnant with meaning. The Hanafi school of law, to which most of the former Soviet Muslims belong, divides the world into the House of Islam and the House of War, while the Shafi'i school of law, to which Dagestani Muslims belong, recognizes a third category, that is, the House of Peace. The House of Peace is the territory that peacefully coexists with the House of Islam. Naming their organization "Territory of Peace," moderate Salafis distinguished themselves from the armed Salafis who regard Russia as the House of War, in which jihad is encouraged. Yet even Shafi'i scholars do not agree on the interpretation of what the House of Peace means; does it mean a temporary ceasefire or a sustainable peace between the Muslim and certain non-Muslim worlds? In hindsight, this ambivalence seemed to metaphorically imply the antinomy that moderate Salafis in Dagestan would soon suffer.

On 10 February 2010, according to President Medvedev's recommendation, the People's Assembly (legislature) of Dagestan confirmed the candidacy of Magomedsalam M. Magomedov (b. 1964) for the post of president of Dagestan. As a doctor of economics, he headed a department of Dagestan University, though practically shifting to politics in 1999, when he became a deputy of the regional parliament. The Kremlin's bet on "Magomedali's son" was a conservative choice, with the aim of stabilizing relations between elite clans and "consolidating society," so that the authorities could concentrate on the struggle against terrorism ("Magomedov, Magomedsalam"). Magomedsalam Magomedov would serve as Dagestan's president for almost three years, until 28 January 2013, when Putin released him from the post "at his [Magomedov's] own request" and instead appointed Ramazan Abdulatipov as acting president of Dagestan ("Magomedsalam Magomedov naznachen").

Magomedov significantly changed Aliev's Islam policy (Table 1). Aliev was an exceptional figure among the Dagestani elites. Having received a philosophy education at Dagestan University, he made his career as a schoolteacher and later, as a school principal. He was the last first secretary of the Dagestan regional committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) since 1990, but it was a time when none of the Brezhnevite or early Gorbachevite leaders wanted this post, but rather looked for ways to go into business. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Aliev was always the second person of the republic under the leadership of Magomedali Magomedov. Aliev never had his own business, did not take bribes, and hated clientelist arrangements between clans and ethnicities, in contrast to Magomedov, both senior[9] and junior. When Aliev was appointed as president, Dagestanis joked that "Putin appointed a philosopher to a post that only Cerberus can fulfill." Aliev's contribution to anti-terror policy was that he rebuffed the explanation caricaturizing "Wahhabis" as agents of foreign powers, which had been a dominant discourse among religious and secular leaders in Dagestan until 2004.[10] Aliev admitted that "Wahhabism" was not only a social deviation but also a religious phenomenon, behind which was a definite socioeconomic background (above all, corruption). Aliev hoisted the slogan that "we should fight against not terrorists, but terrorism," implying that it was necessary to identify and destroy the "infrastructure of reproduction of terrorism, the ideology of terrorism" (Aliev 2009, 2; see also Borisov 2006; Latynina 2006). Sociologist Z. Abdulagatov

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Table 1. Comparison between M. Aliev and M. Magomedov.

	Ethnicity	Doctoral degree	Self-presentation	Local crony capitalism, clientelism	Relations with the DUMD	Strategy
M. Aliev	Avar	Philosophy	Secularist	Aloof, clean	Very close	Struggle against the social and religious background of terrorism
M. Magomedov	Dargin	Economics	Muslim	Deeply involved	Distant	Direct anti-terror measures

praised President Aliev's first address to the People's Assembly as a "synthesis of the results of scientific researches and political will" (Abdulagatov 2007, 269). In fact, during 2006–2009, Aliev twice convened a nationwide academic conference on Islam and terrorism and promoted Islamic studies in Dagestan, which no wonder pleased local specialists.

Aliev's philosophical background and distance from crony capitalism enabled his "scientific" approach to terrorism. Yet the same "academism" or obsession with theological aspects of the issue might possibly make it difficult to draw a line between modest and armed Salafis. Moreover, Aliev was the main patron of the DUMD among the regional secular leaders and helped Ahmad Abdullaev to be elected as mufti of Dagestan in 1998. Magomedali Magomedov desperately needed at least the passive support of the Avars, the largest ethnic group in Dagestan, to stay in power, and therefore authorized Aliev, an Avar, to deal with the Avar-dominated DUMD. Aliev's close connection with the DUMD prevented him from evaluating moderate Salafis objectively. Nevertheless, coming close to the end of his presidential term, Aliev admitted that the only possible way to overcome terror is dialog, the way that "all peaceful religions aim at" (Aliev 2009, 2).

As a Soviet-type secularist, Aliev overtly stated that it is better to build schools and polyclinics than mosques. In contrast, Magomedsalam Magomedov demonstrated that he was a Muslim on various occasions. Meanwhile, Magomedsalam, a doctor of economics, had never worked in the CPSU structure and combined his university job with business. Magomedov was indifferent to the nuances of Islamic studies (relations between Sufism and Salafism, differences between various trends of Salafism, etc.) and thought that if there are problems with the forest fighters, why should he not concentrate on dialog with them? Magomedov composed his team from among people sharing his view and mentality. Possibly, Magomedov experienced some pressure from Salafis through his own business, in which he had contact with Salafi partners and racketeers. President Magomedov's Press Secretary, Zubairuev remarks that, having assumed office, President Magomedov immediately stopped accusation of the "Wahhabis" in general, which had been characteristic of Aliev (interviewed by Matsuzato on 24 April 2012). Magomedov's staff made contact with moderate Salafis for cooperation, though this endeavor did not continue (Vlast' i islam). Thus, Magomedov's indifference to Islam helped him to adopt a pragmatic policy toward the Salafis without unnecessary theologization. On the other side of the same coin, Magomedov ignored secular intellectuals' request for a structural reform of

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the DUMD as well as the FSB-NAK's request for wider dialog among Muslims, including moderate Salafis and the intra-Sufi opposition. In the eyes of the Dagestanis, Magomedov's deep involvement in the local crony capitalism deprived him of the legitimacy to criticize the forest fighters.

The first round of the soft strategy (2010–2011)

By late 2010, the Magomedov administration had prepared its anti-terrorism policy, in close consultation with the NAK. The main components of this policy were the Third Congress of the Peoples of Dagestan and the Presidential Commission to Assist the Adaptation of Those Who Ceased Terrorist and Extremist Activities to a Peaceful Life[11] (hereafter, the Commission for Adaptation). The congress was expected to unify all political forces of Dagestan and isolate the insurgents, while the Commission for Adaptation aimed to co-opt some of them by exploiting amnesty. Both components required moderate Salafis' collaboration. Therefore, moderate Salafis, as well as secular intellectuals, regarded these authorities' initiatives as a chance to pursue their own strategies. Their counterproposals eventually converged into the Civic Dialog movement in 2011.

The Third Congress of the Peoples of Dagestan

President M. Magomedov issued a decree on 29 October 2010 to convene the Third Congress of the Peoples of Dagestan "in order to consolidate society in the struggle against extremism and terrorism, and fortify the solidarity of the peoples of Dagestan" ("Magomedsalam Magomedov: s"ezd"). As the ordinal "third" indicates, there had been two Congresses of the Peoples of Dagestan in the past. The first congress was convened by the Bolsheviks on 13 November 1920, after defeating the Denikin Army in South Russia. Stalin promised to give Dagestan autonomy, "similar to that enjoyed by the Turkestan, Kirgiz, and Tatar Republics" and invited Dagestan to enter a voluntary union with Soviet Russia ("Vystuplenie Stalina"). The first congress responded to this call positively. In the early 1990s after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Dagestan was in a squeeze. Besides the "parade of sovereignties" with which many regions of Russia were infected, Dagestan had a number of transnational minorities. The "Lezgistan" movement aimed to unify Lezgin-inhabited regions in Russia and Azerbaijan, while the "Avarstan" movement requested the unification of Avar-inhabited territories in Dagestan with Chechnya (linguistically, the Chechens are close to the Avars) as well as Avar-dominant districts of Azerbaijan. Therefore, even a hint of Dagestan's secession from Russia could provoke a breakup of Dagestan itself. The Second Congress of the Peoples of Dagestan, convened on the initiative of then chairman of the Dagestan Supreme Soviet, Magomedali Magomedov, on 13 November 1992, unhesitatingly declined the possibility of Dagestan's secession from Russia. In comparison with the infantile liberalism demonstrated by other regions of Russia in 1992–1993, Dagestan's articulate loyalty to Russia's statehood and integrity had invaluable significance. The North Caucasian presidential representative, Khloponin, repeated his gratitude for Dagestan's choice in 1992 in his speech at the Third Congress (*S"ezd narodov Dagestana*, 30). The call for the Third Congress of the Peoples of Dagestan implied that Magomedov regarded the situation of Dagestan as no less critical than that in 1920 or 1992, and also that he intended to rely upon the heroic historical memory of the Dagestanis.

The Magomedov administration organized preparatory conventions at the district level democratically, pursuing maximum representation of local notables. In contrast, various

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evaluations can be made in regard to its endeavor to include moderate Salafis in the list of speakers at the congress. President Magomedov's Press Secretary Zubairuev says that the administration did its best to involve A. Kebedov in the congress program (interviewed by Matsuzato on 24 April 2012). Yet Kebedov in turn says that the minister of nationalities policy of Dagestan, Bekmurza Bekmurzaev, tried to obstruct his speech at the congress, even stealing his paper folder (interviewed by Matsuzato on 20 April 2012).[12]

Commission for Adaptation

On 2 November 2010, a little later than his call for the Third Congress of the Peoples of Dagestan, M. Magomedov issued a decree to establish the Commission for Adaptation. Then vice prime minister of Dagestan, Rizvan Kurbanov, was appointed as chairman of this commission.[13] The authorities included A. Kebedov in this commission, which Kebedov came to know "via the Internet." He discussed with his comrades whether to become its member. Kebedov's group did not see any serious quest by the Dagestan authorities for reasons that young people went into the forest. What Kebedov feared most of all was that those who left the forest, trusting the moderate Salafis' appeal, would "disappear." Nevertheless, Kebedov decided to participate in the commission, thanks to which FSB generals began to make contact with moderate Salafis. Since Kebedov became a member of the commission, many people suffering from threats by the local FSB and police began to visit him (Kebedov interviewed by Matsuzato).

It is true that the Magomedov administration tried hard to return the insurgents, who became involved in terrorist activities by error, to normal life and save them from state terrorism. Yet there is a structural problem in the rehabilitation of these youth. After the police reform in Russia in 2011, the police and procuracy authorities were released from co-subordination to the federal and regional governments and these agencies are now subordinate exclusively to the federal authorities (in the case of the police, to the federal Ministry of Internal Affairs). This means that even if the Dagestan authorities wish to exploit amnesties and commutations for the wide adaptation of young militants, local procurators will give them the standard penalty according to the federal Criminal Codex (Federal'nyi zakon; Matsuzato's interview with Zubairuev on 24 April 2012; Ibragimov's interview with Kadiev on 10 August 2012). The dissatisfaction of law-enforcing agencies with the activities of the Commission for Adaptation became apparent at the meeting of the Commission on 18 April 2012, in which Aleksei Savrulin, head of the Investigate Department of the RF in Dagestan, criticized the policies of the Dagestan leadership in regard to amnesty, overtly in front of the TV camera. Savrulin requested that petitions sent from fighters be considered only when they, in fact, surrendered. Such cases were only "two or three maximum" among 37.

> All the others were arrested as a result of a special operation .... They would have continued armed battle, aiming to kill law-enforcing officers, unless they were forced to cease to resist in extreme circumstances. The Commission for Adaptation should not accept petitions from such people; this is just unpardonable. This will nullify our whole law-enforcing activities .... Today, you may shoot and kill and later, you may come to the Commission and say, "Please pity me, I am good." ("Komissia po adaptatsii")

On 26 February 2013, the NAK held an away meeting in Pyatigorsk, the capital of the North Caucasus Federal District. One of the agenda items was to summarize the almost three-year activities of the Commissions for Adaptation in the North Caucasian republics. Aleksandr Bortnikov, director of FSB, requested these commissions to continue working, since it was necessary to shift the accent of anti-terror policy from coercive to prophylactic

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measures. It was necessary to work within the limits of law, otherwise the authorities would not enjoy "the support of civil society." Bortnikov appreciation of the commission contradicted a speech that Ramazan Abdulatipov, acting president of Dagestan, had delivered four days ago (22 February), in Makhachkala. Abdulatipov said that the effect of the commission's work had been "insignificant," and found it necessary to replace it with a certain "prophylactic organ," aimed at preventing the youth from "going into the forest" (Priimak 2013).

Counterproposals made by moderate Salafis and secular intellectuals

Toward the Third Congress of the Peoples of Dagestan, representatives of the Association of Scholars Ahlusunna, cooperating with the NGO Territory of Peace and Development, worked out a project to overcome the crisis, "after contacts, discussions, and dialogues with the federal center." This project foresaw four stages of activities. The first was the verbal (not verbal) guarantee by the Russian president that the state would bear the responsibility for realizing the project. At the second stage, a special commission would make contact with all parties of conflict, including the forest fighters, to prepare proposals for a peaceful solution. At the third stage, the Dagestan authorities would invite specialists, such as jurists, psychologists, and theologians, including renowned scholars from Muslim countries, for conflict regulation. At the fourth stage, the special commission, in cooperation with the RF president's plenipotentiary representative, would organize the Conference for Overcoming the Crisis in Dagestan, with the participation of the aforementioned specialists. "This conference will answer the questions that all strata of our society, including the 'Forest Brothers,' are asking. If the 'Forest Brothers' decline to obey what the ulama say, this would mean that they stand out of Islam" ("Proekt"; see also Kebedov's speech at the Third Congress of the Peoples of Dagestan, 15 December 2010, *S"ezd narodov Dagestana*, 194–195). FSB generals asked Kebedov whether the insurgents would support such a proposal. Kebedov optimistically answered that Islam allows Muslims to defend five things by arms: one's own religion, life, children, property, and honor and dignity. If the insurgents do not leave the forest, despite that world-famous ulama guarantee that these values would be protected, this means that they will be staying in the forest not for Allah. FSB generals discussed Kebedov's proposal and answered that "we do not have a state that makes promises and then keeps its word" (Matsuzato's interview with Kebedov on 20 April 2012).

In April 2011, on the eve of the Civic Dialog on 25 April 2011, sociologist Zaid Abdulagatov proposed the Tatarstan model to reform Dagestan's religious administration.[14] The existing DUMD in Dagestan was illegitimate because an election of a mufti had not been conducted in the last 14 years (1996–2010), violating the DUMD's own charter. Abdulagatov argued that the coming election would be free; the opposition (non-Avar) group of Sufis, as well as moderate Salafis, should nominate their candidate for mufti. In return, no group has the right to disobey the new mufti elected in a democratic way. The emergence of a legitimate and single muftiate will definitely improve the religious situation of Dagestan. This solution will underscore the secular authorities' equal attitude to all groups of Muslims, which will improve relations, above all, between the state and the Salafis. Abdulagatov repeated the same proposal to FSB generals in the autumn of 2011, when the generals had, to some extent, retreated from the previous soft-line strategy in their anti-terrorist operations. Generals disagreed with Abdulagatov, remarking that the free election of mufti might allow the moderate Salafis to win (Abdulagatov interviewed by Matsuzato on 17 April 2012).

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The civic dialog and setback

The soft strategy initiated by the NAK and the Magomedov administration culminated when it found public resonance and bore fruit as the Civic Dialog, the first meeting of which was organized by then chairman of the NGO Territory of Peace and Development Suleiman Uladiev on 25 April 2011. Despite its original purpose to create an agora for discussion of various Muslim groups, the dialog was held largely between representatives of the DUMD and moderate Salafis. This result demonstrated the decline of influence of the intra-Sufi opposition (non-Avar sheikhs) in Dagestan over the recent years. At the end of the meeting, the participants adopted a resolution appealing for the solidarity of the peoples of Dagestan, continuation of dialog, elimination of violence and intra-religious debate, strict observance of law, and protection of human rights irrespective of national and confessional belonging ("V Dagestane musul'manskie"). The meeting proposed to create commissions for adaptation and councils for reconciliation in each city and rural district and establish constantly functioning agoras for dialog on the basis of universities, cultural institutions, and mosques. The meeting also advocated educational work for tolerance and conflict-evading behavior.[15]

At the meeting, S. Uladiev boasted that when the organizers prepared the meeting, they "talked with high-ranked people in Moscow, supporting non-violent solutions to the problems of Dagestan .... The federal center bolsters a non-violent way of solving problems, so we informed President Medvedev of this meeting" ("V Dagestane musul'manskie"). Although Uladiev proposed to repeat similar meetings even every month, a second meeting of the Civic Dialog was not held. A second meeting was scheduled to be held in June 2011, but on 6 June 2011, Maksud Sadikov, rector of the Institute of Theology and International Relations and renowned public activist of Dagestan, was killed ("Provokatsionnoe ubiistvo"). Among the traditional, official Islam leaders, M. Sadikov was the most convinced supporter of dialog with moderate Salafis, so many Dagestanis construed that Sadikov was killed by the forest fighters as a warning against the ongoing dialog between Sufis and moderate Salafis.[16] This interpretation horrified the participants of the first meeting of the Civic Dialog in April 2011, and the negligible influence that the moderate Salafis had on the forest fighters was impressed on them.

At the first meeting of the Civic Dialog on 25 April 2011, the Dagestan minister of nationalities policy, B. A. Bekmurzaev, said that the dialog would be continued and that the Dagestan government would spend the necessary budget for it, but Bekmurzaev did not keep his word. Lawyer Rasul Kadiev remarks on the indifference and bureaucratism of that ministry, which, by its raison d'être, should be the top runner in the struggle against terrorism (interviewed by Matsuzato on 22 April 2012). This behavior is understandable. If the FSB's strategy to mobilize moderate Salafis in its struggle against terrorism was blessed with success and the dialog between the Salafis and the DUMD came to be regularly held, the secular authorities of Dagestan, which traditionally patronized the DUMD, would lose any initiative in anti-terrorist politics in Dagestan.

In fact, the Magomedov administration needed to do something to return the initiative in the war on terror to itself, so they decided to borrow the idea of an international conference from the proposal made by the Territory of Peace and Development. In July 2011, the Magomedov administration secretly began to prepare an international conference, which was expected to adopt a "fatwa" condemning the Forest Brothers as terrorists; they were in no way mujahids (jihad soldiers). President M. Magomedov was so ardent that he personally presided over the organizing committee of this conference. Yet FSB generals did not allow this cheap provocation. First, they leaked information about the conference to

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A. Kebedov, who immediately started to travel around Arab countries and Turkey to persuade alims not to respond to the possible invitation from Dagestan. When Kebedov returned to Russia, Przezdomskii invited him to talk. Kebedov told Przezdomskii that if the Dagestan government invited world-famous alims to the table on which the text of the pseudo-fatwa lay, it would damage Russia (Kebedov interviewed by Matsuzato on 20 April 2012).[17]

Except for this episodic attempt, a strange calm continued from the summer of 2011 to early 2012; there was no tangible initiative taken by the NAK, the Dagestan secular government, moderate Salafis, the DUMD, or secular intellectuals, with the aim of continuing the soft strategy against terrorism. Within the FSB emerged a group of officers suspicious of the soft strategy, whom Przezdomskii was not able to persuade (Kadiev interviewed by Matsuzato on 23 April 2012). In the autumn of 2011, federal and regional law-enforcing agencies in Dagestan re-intensified their violence against and kidnapping of suspects, the population's natural reaction to which was a meeting "against kidnapping of people and the arbitrariness of Siloviks," held in Makhachkala on 25 November 2011. Between 2500 and 3000 people participated in this meeting to protest against the massive arrest of the population of Shamkhal Town in the suburbs of Makhachkala and other infringements. The organizers of the meeting were relatives of the kidnapped people and NGOs such as the Territory of Peace and Development and Association of Scholars Ahlusunna. The participants of the meeting adopted a resolution that attributed the critical situation in Dagestan to law enforcement agencies. The resolution declared that similar protests would be repeated every week unless the violence and kidnappings by the law-enforcing agencies were terminated ("Na mitinge"). Vice prime minister of Dagestan, Rizvan Kurbanov, who was at that time heading the Commission for Adaptation, came to the meeting and invited the meeting organizers to the presidential administration to discuss the issue of the kidnappings. Kurbanov said that the Dagestan authorities would do everything to find those who had disappeared. When the moderator of the meeting asked the participants whether they believed Kurbanov, the participants screamed: "No, we don't believe!" ("Na mitinge").

In February 2012, a number of human rights protectors tried to repeat the meeting against kidnappings by the FSB and the police. In response, the law enforcement agencies restrained representatives of the Association of Scholars Ahlusunna and the organizers of the coming meeting. A week before the meeting, the police shot a lawyer/human rights protector to death on the street near a Salafi mosque in Makhachkala (Kadiev 2012). It had become obvious that law enforcement agencies did not fear the coming meeting, but rather were ready to exploit it for provocation. On the eve of the scheduled meeting, the Association Ahlusunna was forced to declare that its member would not participate in the meeting because its purpose was not clear (Kadiev interviewed by Ibragimov on 10 August 2012).

Moderate Salafis could not be the torchbearer of the soft strategy of anti-terrorist policy because, first, once they begin to cooperate with the FSB and the Dagestan government, they become enemy number one of the terrorists. The Internet site Caucasus Center (belonging to Islamic fundamentalists) accused A. Kebedov of collaborationism and he received a USB flash condemning him to death. Moreover, moderate Salafis cannot be definite about whether the forest fighters are committing jihad or not. They recognize that the forest fighters are Muslims and that the state is to blame for pushing them to military revolt. While saying this, moderate Salafis decline to evaluate the forest fighters' activities (Uvaisov interviewed by Matsuzato on 19 April 2012). This indefiniteness disappointed FSB generals. Unable to answer the most urgent question posed by Dagestani society concerning who the forest fighters are and how to deal with them, moderate Salafis, by nature,

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could not behave as public politicians, becoming all the more dependent on their cooperation with the FSB. At the decisive moment, when the federal authorities were returning to the coercive method, the moderate Salafis split. In the autumn of 2011, A. Kebedov left the Association of Scholars Ahlusunna. The moderate Salafis could not exploit the advantageous political situation after the protest meeting on 25 November 2011. M. Magomedov quickly restored his hegemony in Dagestani politics.

The DUMD and the second round of the soft strategy in 2012

In early 2012, Dagestan was in a situation of deadlock. Moderate Salafis showed that they had neither influence on the forest fighters nor a realistic perspective for the peaceful development of Dagestan. The Dagestan secular authorities concentrated on adaptation of forest fighters to a peaceful life, but if we quote from the police officer Savrulin's speech, real repentance of the forest fighters was found in "two or three from among 37." More importantly, the Dagestan authorities were incapable of overcoming the social background to terrorism, such as corruption, unemployment, disparity in wealth, and discrimination of the youth because of their religious affiliation. The Tatarstan model proposed by secular intellectuals to transform the DUMD into a legitimate, religious stabilizer did not meet with a public response in Dagestan. First, Magedsalam Magomedov was not President Mintimer Shaimiev of Tatarstan, who had sufficient authority to order Muslim leaders to create a unified muftiate. Second, since the intra-Sufi opposition has lost its influence over the recent years, the request for a unified, legitimate DUMD has also lost its relevance. Facing this situation, the FSB strengthened the coercive element in anti-terrorist measures in the autumn of 2011 and, at the same time, changed the soft strategy format by intensifying its contact with the DUMD and its spiritual leader, Said-afandi Chirkeisky. In late February 2012, Chirkeisky gave an order to the mufti of Dagestan, Akhmed Abdulaev, to start dialog with moderate Salafis (Gamzatova 2012).

Dagestani society was somewhat surprised to see the abrupt activation of the DUMD, targeted at the soft strategy, which contradicts its traditional, fervent anti-Salafi position. On 2 April 2012, the mufti Abdulaev argued against the "rumor" of "imams submitting lists of Wahhabis to the law-enforcing agencies." Although Mufti Abdulaev found such a rumor insulting, once it started circulating, he found it necessary to "warn everyone not to indulge in gossip and denunciation." The mufti even quoted the Prophet Muhammad's words that "an informer will not enter heaven." Abdulaev warned that Muslims should not call co-believers Wahhabis, based on superficial signs, such as long beards and certain clothes. The mufti appealed to the law-enforcing agencies to be fair.

> According to Sharia, serious evidence of a suspect's crime is necessary to punish him … If the punishment is unfair, and if, using power, the suspect is tortured so as to gain admission of crime, or violence is used against him, then Allah will definitely punish the violent. ("Muftii Dagestana").

On 29 April, representatives of the Association of Scholars Ahlusunna and the DUMD convened a *mejlis* (convention) at the Central Mosque of Makhachkala. On 2 May, representatives of the two organizations, including Ziyaudin Uvaisov and the imam of the Central Mosque of Makhachkala, Magomedrasul Saaduev, held a press conference. At this press conference, the representatives made clear that the *mejlis* aimed to remove the reasons for tension between the two groups of Dagestani Muslims (Salafis and Sufis), but did not intend to discuss global issues, including the question of how to overcome terrorism. Yet the representatives added that disagreements between the two groups around rites gave dangerous ground for the emergence of "political problems." The representatives

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stated that the Prophet Muhammad prohibits plain Muslims from entering debate on rites and interpretations of Islam and requested that plain Muslims should wait for decisions of a joint council composed of the ulama of both groups, which would be held every month. The representatives even declared that Internet articles insulting the opposite group of Muslims would be deleted ("Real'nye deistviya").

One may list several reasons for the unexpected metamorphosis of the DUMD. The first reason was religious. The DUMD leaders understood that the discourse juxtaposing traditional Sufi against "extremist" Salafi Islam had lost its persuasive power when between 12,000 and 15,000 Dagestanis perform the Hajj every year and enjoy abundant opportunities to have contact with foreign Muslims. The second reason was the DUMD's instinct for self-preservation. If the DUMD stands aloof from the problem, because of which sometimes half a hundred are killed in a month, the DUMD will irreversibly lose its legitimacy in the eyes of Dagestanis. Moreover, the DUMD witnessed that its traditional rivals, non-Avar leaders of Sufism, are even less competent than the DUMD in the struggle against terrorism. The DUMD's involvement in the soft strategy of anti-terrorism was a chance to distinguish itself from its weakening rivals and thereby supplement its lack of legitimacy. The third reason was the convergence of the DUMD with the federal center. After the secular leadership of Dagestan was returned to the hands of the Dargins, to the dynasty of Magomedov, the RF presidential administration strengthened its direct contact with the Avar-dominated DUMD.[18] This is observable, for example, from the spectacular roles played by the imam of the Central Mosque of Makhachkala, Magomedrasul Saaduev, at the Third Congress of the Peoples of Dagestan in 2010, at the Commission for Adaptation, and at the *mejlis* held on 29 April 2012. It is possible that the FSB is playing cards with moderate Salafis and keeping the DUMD as a spare card. It is difficult to believe that the DUMD could reconcile with its uncompromising enemy, the Salafis, without pressure from the FSB-NAK. It is also improbable that the mufti of Dagestan could prohibit imams from informing the law-enforcing agencies without coordinating this prohibition with the FSB beforehand.

As was the case with the Civic Dialog in the preceding year, "a joint council composed of the ulama of both groups (DUMD and moderate Salafis)" could not be convened even once. On the day following the press conference of 2 May, at about 11 at night, two explosions destroyed a police station, located by the Makhachkala-Astrakhan highway. Thirteen people died ("Dvoinoi vzryv"). The attack on 3 May terrified both the DUMD and moderate Salafis, and the dialog was suspended. While the dialog was in this state of non-resumption, Said-afandi was assassinated in August, which made the agreement at the April 2012 *mejlis* infeasible.

After Chirkeisky's death, Patimat Gamzatova, the mufti's wife and the DUMD's main negotiator with the moderate Salafis, disclosed the painful process of dialog. They actively used social networks on the Internet. When they had almost reached a consensus, the imam of the Friday Mosque of Buinaksk, Mukhammad Abdulgafurov, was killed. According to Gamzatova, some forest fighters declared on the Internet site "Guraba" that they had committed this murder, while the moderate Salafis ardently tried to convince the DUMD leaders that Abdulgafurov was killed by the Russian security forces. The DUMD leaders thought it meaningless to continue the dialog, but Chirkeisky repeated his order to do everything possible to continue it. After the *mejlis* was successfully held, "Guraba" sentenced Patimat to death. Patimat asked the moderate Salafis: "What is this all about? Why is this sentence pronounced now, when I have made a more or less friendly step towards you for the first time in the last years?" The moderate Salafis answered that "we are not connected with the forest fighters. We go on our way, and they go on their way" (Gamzatova 2012).

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Conclusions

This essay described an ambivalent process ongoing in the Islamic politics of Dagestan since the mid-2000s. On the one hand, the deplorable socioeconomic situation in Dagestan (unemployment, corruption, widening disparity of wealth, and so forth) made some Salafis all the more violent and criminal. On the other hand, the rich opportunities for transnational religious contacts that Dagestani Muslims enjoy (above all, the Hajj and study abroad) dismantled the bipolar constellation in Islamic politics. In April 2012, the depolarization reached the extent whereby the *mejlis* declared that differing rites between Sufis and Salafis should not be a reason for intra-Muslim confrontation.

In such circumstances, the struggle against terrorism cannot be undertaken purely using military or law enforcement methods. This struggle becomes contextualized in the ordinary internal politics of Dagestan (see Figure 1 again), as a result of which terrorism and the struggle against it, however tragic they are, generate an rich and nuanced discourse. Even the forest fighters cannot be free from this world of discourse. If we believe the declaration by the Riyad-us Saliheen Brigade of Martyrs that they killed Said-afandi, we receive a paradoxical picture: the insurgents did not kill Said-afandi while he was denouncing Salafism everywhere, but they decided to do so when he had become a powerful advocate for dialog with moderate Salafis.[19] Researchers should pay greater attention to the non-violent, discursive aspects of the war on terror in Dagestan.

This article has revealed serious disagreements around the tactics and strategies in the war on terror between various segments of the FSB and law-enforcing agencies of Russia. Yet a study of this issue requires another paper.

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Notes

1. According to a sociological survey conducted among youths in Dagestan in 2010, 3.4% of young believers answered affirmatively to the question "Is it possible for you to become a member of 'Forest Brothers' ('Wahhabis') under certain life circumstances?" Those who are between 18 and 25 years of age and live in rural areas gave the largest portion of affirmative answer to this question – 5.5% (Abdulagatov, 2011b, p. 179).
2. On the lack of legitimacy of the DUMD and on the intra-Sufi opposition to the DUMD, see Matsuzato and Ibragimov (2005).
3. Officially, this amnesty is termed "assistance for the adaptation of those who decided to cease terrorist and extremist activities to a peaceful life."
4. Makarov and Mukhametshin (2003) interpreted this polarization as a dualism between "official and unofficial Islam."
5. In fact, the overwhelming majority of Hajj pilgrims from Russia leave from Dagestan, which accounted for about 15,000 in 2008, 14,000 in 2009, 13,000 in 2010, and 12,000 in both 2011 and 2012. On 30 November 2012, M. Omarov, Press-secretary of the DUMD, told Ibragimov that the decrease in 2011–2012 was caused by government prohibition of land routes, cheaper than air routes, to Mecca because of the unsafe situation in Syria.
6. During our fieldwork conducted in Dagestan in 2003–2004, we often encountered this self-appraisal by local Muslim leaders. In 2001, Mufti Akhmed-khadzhi Abdulaev said, "We should thank the Almighty ceaselessly for giving us such a pure Islam and such religious freedom as do not exist even in many Arabic and Muslim countries" quoted in Matsuzato and Ibragimov 2005, 757.

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7. This constitutional change was conducted in cooperation with Dmitry Kozak, presidential representative of the South Federal District in 2004–2007 (Dagestan belonged to this district until 2010). Kozak criticized the unsystematic characteristics, poor inter-ministerial coordination, incomplete legislation in the taking of anti-terrorist measures, and the lack of personal responsiveness ("D. Kozak raskritikoval rabotu bortsov c terrorizmom na Kavkaze." *RBK*. 21 February 2005).
8. The appointment of Khloponin reminds us of the appointment of Prince M. S. Vorontsov as viceroy of the Caucasus in 1844. The coercive way to conquer the Caucasus pursued by A. P. Ermolov in the 1810s and 1820s did not work. Nicolas I requested a new Caucasian policy and personally entrusted this difficult mission to Prince M. S. Vorontsov, renowned for his successful colonization policy in Novorossia (South Ukraine) and Bessarabia ("Razgovor Safonova," 384). Well aware of North Caucasians' yearning for material wealth (they cannot accept living more poorly than their neighbors), Prince Vorontsov combined military methods with economic policy to attract the North Caucasus into the economic orbit of the Russian Empire's Black Sea Rim. Thus, Vorontsov improved the situation in the North Caucasus, though the empire needed to continue its struggle for another 20 years until Imam Shamil's capitulation. Appointing Khloponin as his "viceroy" in the North Caucasus, President Medvedev perhaps expected the Vorontsov effect.
9. As an example of Magomedali Magomedov's interethnic arrangement, see Ibragimov and Matsuzato 2005, 227–228.
10. According to this discourse, the very rise of Wahhabism in Arabia in the eighteenth century was a result of British agents' conspiracy to split the Ottoman Empire.
11. *Komissiya po okazaniyu sodeistviya v adaptatsii k mirnoi zhizni litsam, reshivshim prekratit' terroristicheskuyu i ekstremistskuyu deyatel'nost'*.
12. Bekmurzaev's offensive behavior is understandable. Only two months before the congress, he escaped death by a hair's breadth in a bomb attack (his driver, less lucky, died on the spot). Moreover, his two predecessors as minister of nationalities policy were killed by terrorist attacks in the short period of 2003–2005.
13. Following Dagestan's precedent, similar commissions were established in other national republics of the North Caucasus, such as Ingushetiya and Kabardino-Balkariya. In July 2012, the RF Presidential Council for Human Rights suggested the possibility of introducing the same commission at the federal level, though Andrei Przezdomskii criticized this idea as creating an additional link lacking sufficient information. He thinks that the work for adaptation, by nature, should be conducted at the regional level ("Prezidentskii sovet"). In an interview with Matsuzato held in April 2012, Z. Zubairuev, chief of the Press Service of the Dagestan President, and lawyer Rasul Kadiev insisted on the urgent necessity of the Commission for Adaptation at the federal level.
14. In Tatarstan, the Spiritual Board of Muslims (muftiate) was split between those who support Talgat Tadzhuddin, Supreme Mufti of Russia, and those who support the Tatarstan secular authorities in the early 1990s. Under the strong pressure of the Tatarstan secular authorities, Muslim leaders convened a joint congress and created a single muftiate in February 1998.
15. The resolution adopted at the first meeting was uploaded on Internet by Rasul Kadiev (Kadiev 2011).
16. Suleiman Uladiev, who organized the Civic Dialogue in April 2011, supposed that those who opposed the rapprochement process between Salafis and Sufis stood behind the murder of Maksuda Sadikov ("Eksperty ob ubiistve"). *Caucasian Knot* (*Kavkazskii uzel*) reported Ruslan Kurbanov's opinion that the murder of Sadikov was targeted at disrupting the rapprochement of various religious groups in Dagestan. On 9 June 2011, Ansar republished this article ("Ekspert ob ubiistve"). The same issue of *Ansar* reported that RF Social Chamber identified the murder of Sadikova as an attempt to disrupt the peace process in the Caucasus ("Ubiistvo M. Sadikova")
17. The attempt to convene an international conference of Islamic theologians failed in Dagestan, but a similar conference was held in Moscow on 25–26 May 2012. Ali Polosin (leader of the scientific enlightenment center al'-Vasatyiya – Umerennost'), in cooperation with Ravil' Gainutdin, leader of the Council of Muftis of Russia, initiated this event. The conference adopted a document entitled "Moscow Theological Declaration of Muslim Scholars on the Questions of Jihad, Adoption of Sharia Norms, and the Caliphate." It is difficult to regard this document as a fatwa. See Gadzhiev (2012); for a more positive summary of this conference, see "Islamskaya doktorina."

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18. On 28 February 2011, imam of the Central Mosque of Makhachkala, Magomedrasul Saaduev, told Matsuzato that they make contact with the RF presidential administration oftener than with the Dagestan government.
19. According to KavkazCenter, Riyad-us Saliheen, the self-declared killer of Said-afandi, requested that the Muslim organizations of Dagestan, conducting dialogue with "apostates (*murtady*)," stop spreading unjust and false accusations against jihad fighters ("Poyavilos'").

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