

Diverging Developments In Post-Soviet Russia:

A Case Study of Tatarstan & Chechnya

A Thesis

Presented To:

The Russian & Eurasian Studies Department

The Colorado College

In Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree
Bachelor of Arts

By: Keith Weber
May 2012

Introduction

At first glance, the Chechens and Volga Tatars share several similarities. Both ethnic groups have religious traditions rooted in a regionally particular form of Islam. This is the Khanafi school of Sunni Islam, which combines traditional, Muslim law (Shariah) with local customs influenced by Sufi brotherhoods. In addition, both Chechens and Volga Tatars were incorporated into the Russian Tsarist Empire against their will as a result of military conquest. Moreover, both peoples suffered mightily during the repressive Stalinist period, but also experienced certain degrees of modernization, urbanization and industrialization. Lastly, both peoples occupied similar rungs in the Soviet hierarchy, meaning that each was the titular people of an autonomous republic. The Volga Tatars of the Tatar Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (TASSR) were incorporated into the USSR on May 27th 1920 and the Chechens of the Chechen-Ingush Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (CIASSR) were incorporated on December 5th 1936.

However, the trajectory of the Post-Soviet transition has resulted in very different outcomes for these two peoples. In Chechnya, the transition brought to power General Dzhokhar Dudaev, a radical separatist, who did not flinch from the prospect of war with Russia. On the other hand, Tatarstan won substantial autonomy from Russia without using violence. This paper aims to answer the question: why did these outcomes diverge so drastically? This question can be answered in various ways. In the first chapter, I will address the basic geographic and demographic differences between the two societies. In the second chapter, I will explore the differences in the long-term historical experiences among the Volga Tatars and Chechens and the impacts the Tsarist Empire and Soviet Union had on their respective societies. In the third chapter, I will examine Russia's insecurities regarding its level of civilization and their efforts to "orientalize" the Caucasus as a means of better defining Russian identity. I will use Edward Said's Orientalism as a theoretical lens

of analysis. In the fourth chapter, I will outline the differences between the two republic's political developments in post-Soviet transition and the vital distinctions in the democratic processes. In this section, religion and its role in each society's respective politics will become apparent. In the final chapter, the aftermath of the two wars with Chechnya will be examined and the correlated socio-economic problems as well as the contrasting socio-economic situation in Tatarstan today. In this section I will specifically stress the significance of the Kadyrov family on modern day Chechnya and prospects for the future.

Chapter 1

Geographic Differences

One of the major reasons for Tatarstan's non-violent development and Chechnya's violent development within the Russian Federation lies in the geographic location of each. Tatarstan has no external borders and is completely surrounded by the territory of the Russian Federation. As a result, sustaining its territorial integrity within the Russian Federation is essential. Unlike Tatarstan, Chechnya lies in close proximity to other Muslim republics. Its potential influence on other republics and ethnic groups in the North Caucasus raised concerns of a "domino effect" that could lead to the rise in anti-Russian nationalism as well as pan-Muslim or pan-Caucasian sentiments.¹ Strategically, Chechnya stands across key transportation routes including the Rostov-Baku highway and Rostov-Baku railroad, the only links between northern Russia and Transcaucasia and the countries of Eastern and Southern Europe. Although Tatarstan is also in possession of oil and important natural resources, Chechnya is considered the more strategically important center for oil refining and transit. This is because Azerbaijan's Caspian Sea pipeline passes directly through Chechnya and some Russian officials sought to justify the first invasion of Chechnya as "being necessary to secure these facilities for the sake of the economic well-being of the rest country."² Chechnya represented a key geo-political and economic location for the federal center to handle, which greatly contributed to the use of force in securing it. If Russia was to be a key player in the Caspian oil business, they felt they must control Chechnya or at least peacefully co-exist with it. An independent Chechnya would have posed a threat to Russian economic interests in the Caspian. Proof of the importance of oil and the geo-politics involved in Russia's pursuit of a military option

¹ Sakwa pg 226

² Hughes pg 24

lies in what is called the “deal of the century”³. A western-led oil consortium headed by BP and Chevron signed a deal with government of Azerbaijan in 1994 for the development of Caspian sea oil reserves-- this was a direct challenge to the Russian-led Caspian Pipeline Consortium established in 1992 to construct a 1600 km link between a field in Kazakhstan and a terminal near Novorossiysk. The pipeline traverses over 150 km of Chechnya and a cooperative regime was essential to smooth commercial operations.

Unlike Chechnya, Tatarstan was viewed as economically independent from the start and its geographic location did not pose a threat to the economic interests of the Federal government. Tatarstan’s total area is 67,000 square kilometers and is approximately as large as Ireland, Sri Lanka or Lithuania.⁴ The republic is rich in oil as well with estimates of over one billion oil deposits⁵. The republic has huge water sources and the Volga River is of high importance to both Russia and Tatarstan. The geographical location of Tatarstan is especially favorable for the development of industry and trade.

Demographic Differences

Tatars are a more dispersed group than Chechens. In 1992, 75% of Tatars lived outside of Tatarstan and more than 700,000 of them lived in Moscow and its suburbs.⁶ The future of what would become of the 3/4ths of Tatars that lived outside of the republic made it impossible for the slogan of “Tatarstan for Tatars” to have legitimacy. Tatarstan could not be presented as a ‘home for Tatars’ because a significant majority of ethnic Tatars would not have been able to enjoy the benefits of the

³ Hughes, James pg 24

⁴ <http://english-fans.tgim1.edusite.ru/p43aa1.html>

⁵ <http://english-fans.tgim1.edusite.ru/p43aa1.html>

⁶ Toft Pg 57

independent republic had it been allowed to secede.⁷ In fact, Russian President Boris Yeltsin represented more Tatars than Tatarstan President Shaimiev did in the Tatar Republic.⁸

Most importantly, during negotiations on autonomy in the early 1990s, Tatars only accounted for 48% of the population of Tatarstan while ethnic Russians comprised 43%.⁹ The large portion of ethnic Russians balanced the nationalist sentiment in the country and made the democratic parliament accountable to two sizeable populations, thereby tempering negotiations. In fact, the ethnic mix was a strategy by the Bolsheviks during Soviet rule.¹⁰ By delineating Tatarstan's borders in a way that guaranteed the majority of Tatars resided outside the republic, it prevented the risk of internal inter-ethnic strife in the event of outright secession from Russia. The fact that Tatars were a minority within their own republic was almost sufficient enough to severely undermine the independence movement. Furthermore, Tatar settlements were interspersed with those of Russians, and Tatars and Russians shared high rates of intermarriage.¹¹ Vladimir Belyaev, leader of the pro-Russian Soglasie (Unity) movement, stated in the early 90's, "There is a better chance for peace here because almost half of the families are mixed- Tatar and Russians...It will be much harder to split people among ethnic lines".¹²

Today, Tatars have high assimilation rates as revealed in their high rates of Russification. For example, Tatars show a high rate of linguistic assimilation with 96.1% of Volga Tatars able to speak Russian.¹³ Moreover, their high rates of urbanization are key factors as well. In Tatarstan, 74% of

⁷ Toft Pg 57

⁸ Toft Pg 58

⁹ Zverev Pg 118

¹⁰ Rorlich pg 138

¹¹ Toft Pg 58

¹² Toft Pg 58

¹³ Hahn pg 8

the population is urbanized¹⁴. Volga Tatars barely increased in population over the 13-year period (1989-2002) between censuses and as a result, Russian authorities do not feel threatened by population explosions and a demographic challenge in regards to Tatars.

According to the 1989 census, Chechens comprised only 0.6% (899,000) of the total population of Russia. In Chechnya, Chechens represented 93.5% of the population, with ethnic Russians only comprising a meager 3.7% of the population.¹⁵ Mixing between the groups was very minimal: rates of intermarriage were exceptionally low¹⁶. Moreover, Chechens have higher population growth rates, which is attributable to their more traditional lifestyle, rural custom and Islam. They frown upon birth control and women working outside the home. In addition, North Caucasian traditions of ‘machismo’ make it important to have high numbers of children.¹⁷ As opposed to Volga Tatars who have high rates of urbanization, Chechnya’s urban population stands at 33%.¹⁸ With an exploding population and low levels of Russification, motivations on the part of Russians to intervene and control the area were obvious.

Chapter 2

History of Tatarstan & Chechnya Under Tsarist Conquest

The Tatar national identity is tied to moderate and secularized forms of Khanafi Islam. The Kazan Khanate was the home of the Volga Tatars and was a major military and ethno-confessional component of Genghis Khan’s Mongol hordes that swept across Eurasia.¹⁹ Kazan was captured by

¹⁴ Hahn pg 11

¹⁵ Toft Pg 69

¹⁶ Toft Pg 69

¹⁷ Hahn pg 10

¹⁸ Hahn pg 10

¹⁹ Hahn pg 175

Ivan the Terrible in 1552 and converted to Russian Orthodox Christianity. Tatar nationalism has its roots in a tradition of revolt against Russian rule and conversion attempts resulted in numerous uprisings. Tatars also participated in peasant revolts with no distinct ethno-national goals.²⁰ Before the Kazan Khanate's defeat by Ivan the Terrible's armies, the Kazan Khanate (1438-1552) was a complex city-based civilization with developed trade, handicrafts and a high literary culture. Its social structure consisted of a powerful landed nobility, a hierarchy of state officials, a military, an ecclesiastical establishment, free urban merchants and artisans, peasants, serfs, and slaves.²¹ Tatar nationalist uprisings often began as peasant revolts sparked by socio-economic circumstances rather than cultural, national, or religious issues. Tatars would band together with Russian peasants to oppose oppressive Tsarist policies.²² For example, during Pugachev's Rebellion (1774-1775), the Tatars played a crucial role in Emelyan Pugachev's recruitment efforts of Russian serfs. Tatars banded together with Russians in similar socio-economic situations to oppose Russian monarchical policies.²³ Although the loss of Tatar statehood and self-determination is directly tied to Russian imperialism, these are concepts that formulated only at the end of the 18th, beginning of the 19th centuries. Due to Tsarist and later Communist efforts to convert Muslims and destroy Islam, the Tatar's distinctive Muslim identity was strengthened and reinforced.²⁴

Chechen pre-conquest society was vastly different from the Volga Tatar's pre-conquest society. Unlike the Tatars, who had a relatively modern state-structured society, Chechens had no towns and no written language. It was not until around 1815 that they began to develop the

²⁰ Hahn pg 175

²¹ Rorlich pg 28-31

²² Hahn pg 175

²³ Frank pg 34

²⁴ Hahn pg 175

rudiments of the modern state structure.²⁵ For an encyclopedia in 1903, prominent Russian-Ukrainian scholar Lev Shternberg wrote an article on ‘Chechens’. Although he took many liberties, often mixed with stereotypes in his description, he accurately described the period of pre-conquest Chechnya:

“They (Chechens) had no feudal system or class divisions. They lived in free communities governed by people’s assemblies. ‘We are all uzdeni’, they explained, that is free and equal. Only some of the tribes had khans, whose hereditary power originated from the Mohammedan conquest...the absence of aristocracy and equality explains their exceptionally tough resistance to the Russians.”²⁶

Chechens lived in mountain villages and sustained themselves by agriculture as well as occasional raids on neighbors. The traditional Chechen society is characterized as a “mountain democracy” or by some as a “military democracy” similar to that of ancient Sparta.²⁷

The impact of conquest affected these two societies very differently. In Chechnya, large portions of the population perished or were deported to the plains of European Russia, Siberia or Turkey. Some estimates put the number around 35% of the population, while others put it at as high as 70%.²⁸ The physical devastation suffered by Chechnya is believed to be greater than that of Kazan post-conquest, in absolute and proportional terms because of Chechnya’s prolonged armed resistance. In addition, Chechnya was never truly pacified and remained under martial law until the collapse of the tsarist regime in 1917.²⁹

²⁵ Gakaev pg 11

²⁶ Tishkov (1) pg 19

²⁷ Derlug’ian p. 20

²⁸ Gall and de Waal pp. 50-51

²⁹ Yevsyukova, Mariya http://www.colorado.edu/conflict/full_text_search/AllCRCDocs/95-5.htm

On the other hand, the cultural impact of Russian conquest affected Tatars far more than Chechens. Tatar identity was tied to the Kazan Khanate and was inevitably undermined by its conquest. Kazan was rebuilt as a Russian city and Tatars turned into a rural population. Its mosques were destroyed and any attempt to rebuild them was forbidden. Tatars only started to practice Islam again under the more tolerant policies of Catherine the Great (1773)³⁰. The Tatars' sense of a broader ethnic identity faded and only persisted in varying forms in local communities and in the wide-ranging trans-ethnic identity supplied by Islam. It was not until the late 19th century that the secularizing and moderate "jadidist" Islamic modernization movement took place in Tatar society. The word "jadid" means new "new method" in Arabic.³¹ This movement urged fellow Tatars to reclaim their ethnic identity and take pride in it. Of course, the identity the 'Jadids' espoused was a new cultural identity-- it was an identity that would no longer recall the traumas of conquest and the fatalities suffered during armed resistance, but a Tatar identity based on civil freedom in the middle of a multi-ethnic Russian state. Rather than trying to incite hatred towards their Russian conquerors, many jadids attributed positive influences of incorporation into Russian society, such as exposure to European culture and philosophy. Many sections of the Tatar intelligentsia felt that their subordinate position within Russia bred an intense desire to be equal with Russians in all spheres of social, public and cultural life³²; this desire would ultimately manifest itself in a political demand that Tatarstan should be equal in status with Russia.

On the contrary, Chechen culture was harmed far less than Tatar culture. This is because Chechen society was already heavily fragmented. There was no central cultural or ethnic identity that encapsulated Chechen society. Russians never deprived them of leadership of statehood or

³⁰ Rorlich pg 28-31

³¹ Hahn pg 24

³² Zverev pg 142

abolished their nobility because neither existed. The structure of Chechen society was unchanged after conquest and life in Chechen villages essentially continued as it always had. As a result, visions of pre-conquest society were preserved and the memories of armed resistance were kept alive.³³ The broadest union of Caucasian people resisting Russian rule occurred during a twenty-year period that followed 1839. In 1839, Russia attempted to disarm the locals via searches and seizures of private residences. This policy so aggravated the peoples of the area that they joined efforts under the military and spiritual leadership of Imam Shamil, the most powerful regional warlord. Shamil led the people of the North Caucasus relatively successfully until his death in 1859. Armed conflicts continued throughout the 1860s in the Caucasus region, however, for the most part, Chechnya became subdued and incorporated into the Russian Empire. A new outlook, espoused by the head of the Kadyria Sufi order Sheikh Kunta-Khaji spread. He justified submission to Russia as a necessity for ethnic survival. However, the ‘defeatism’ of the Kadyria was simply a “pragmatic adjustment to the painful reality”³⁴. In 1864 Kunta-Khaji appealed to the Chechen population with a declaration:

—Brothers, stop fighting. They provoke us to war in order to destroy us. ... If they force you to go to church, go. It’s only walls. It suffices that your souls be Moslem. I’ll never believe that any Turks will help us. ... So learn to live with the Russians.³⁵

This adoption of this way of life within the Russian Empire was a forced necessity. It neither erased the Chechens desire to be free nor did it prevent them from attempting to secure independence yet

³³ Gakaev pg 12

³⁴ Gakaev pg 12

³⁵ Gakaev pg 12

again.³⁶ This movement bared little resemblance to the deep engagement in Russian life of the Tatar ‘jadids’.

Chechens never fully assimilated into Russian society to the degree the Volga Tatars did. For instance, many Tatars came to use the Russian language almost exclusively and lost fluency in the Tatar language. Conversely, Chechens continued to use the Chechen language amongst themselves. In addition, while Tatars may have internalized Russian stereotypes and would try and be accepted as “civilized”, there was no such behavior found in Chechnya.³⁷

Tatarstan and Chechnya differed immensely from the benefits of Tsarist industrialization. Industry came to Kazan in the late 18th century; Kazan was home to textile mills, a large soap factory, and one of Russia’s biggest manufacturing plants of gunpowder. Workers at these factories were both Russian and Tatar. Tatar jadids created a modern Tatar culture while building secular and religious schools, a theater, and numerous books and periodicals. Tatars had a long history of merchants and traders in their society, who would trade with Moscow and St. Petersburg. As a result, this strengthened links between European Russia and Central Asia. In pre-revolutionary Russia, the Volga Tatars were arguably one of the most socio-economically developed societies. The Volga Tatars owned 1/3rd of the industrial establishments and controlled most of the trade with the ‘Orient’³⁸. Although industrialization began in Chechnya around the same time as Tatarstan, the effects sharply differed. Oil was discovered in the capital, Grozny, in the 1880s. Oil-extraction was the dominant industry in Chechnya and the Russian government never attempted to meaningfully

³⁶ Gakaev pg 12

³⁷ Bersanova pg 223-249

³⁸ Pipes pg 12

diversify it.³⁹ Unlike in Kazan, industry in Chechnya was owned and staffed by people from other parts of the Tsarist Empire rather than native Chechens.⁴⁰

History of Tatarstan & Chechnya Under The Soviet Rule

Both the Volga Tatars and Chechens suffered immeasurable wounds to their ethnic identities, cultures and freedoms during Soviet rule. During the revolution and shortly after, it seemed as if the new Bolshevik government would be highly supportive of the local Muslim populations. Vladimir Lenin diligently avoided alienating Muslims and tried to gain their support. He issued the “Declaration on the Rights of Peoples of Russia”, which declared sovereignty, equality and the right of non-Russian peoples to self-determination:

Muslims of Russia, Tatars of the Volga and Crimea, Kyrgyz, and parts of Siberia and Turkestan, Turks and Tatars of Trans-Caucasia, Chechen and Mountain peoples of the Caucasus, and all of you whose mosques and prayer houses have been destroyed, whose beliefs and customs have been trampled upon by the Tsars and oppressors of Russia: your beliefs and usages, your national and cultural institutions are forever free and inviolate.⁴¹

The results of these efforts to garner Muslim support for the Bolshevik cause were fairly positive. Muslims supported the Bolsheviks because they believed that the Bolsheviks offered Muslims greater religious liberty than the White Army⁴². The Volga Tatars and jadidists in particular felt a Muslim revival would be achieved with greater success under the Bolsheviks.⁴³ In 1918, Chechens united with other North Caucasian peoples to form the Mountain Republic (Горская Республика).

³⁹ Dunlop pg 34

⁴⁰ Dunlop pg 34

⁴¹ Hunter pg 23

⁴² Hunter pg 23

⁴³ Hunter pg 23

During the Russian civil war, the forces of the Mountain Republic played a large role in eliminating enemies of the Bolsheviks. Their help was welcomed during the war, but was repaid with severe repression after.

As the major opposition to Bolshevik power had subsided, Vladimir Lenin began to focus on developing a long-term solution to address the “Islamic Challenge”. His ultimate goal was to eliminate Muslim religious infrastructure and its influence. In his essay, “Socialism & Religion”, he shared his view of religion:

Religion is one of the forms of spiritual oppression which everywhere weights down upon the masses of the people {...} impotence of the exploited classes in their struggle against the exploiters just as inevitably gives rise to belief in better life after death... gives rise to belief in gods, devils, miracles and the like.⁴⁴

Despite Lenin’s distaste of religion and its role in society, he cleverly appealed to Muslims’ desire for self-determination. Lenin calculated that he needed Muslim support to obtain power. Once he settled in power, his anti-Islamic strategy would begin to be implemented. In 1924, Lenin outlined how to deal with Islam in three ways: 1) eradicate the Muslim judicial and education infrastructure; 2) eliminate clerical establishments and financial independence and 3) implement anti-Islam propaganda.⁴⁵ The policies of Vladimir Lenin were less harmful than the later policies of Stalin, but laid the foundation and institutional framework for future policies.

Joseph Stalin’s repression of the Chechen population culminated in deportation. On February 23rd, 1944, all Chechens were deported to Central Asia with the exception of those who were murdered on the spot. Stalin accused the entirety of Chechens of collaborating with Nazi Germany

⁴⁴ Hunter pg 26

⁴⁵ Hunter pg 24-25

during WWII. But in fact, the frontlines of the German advance stopped in Mozdok, in Northern Ossetia, never reaching Chechnya. Therefore the Chechens not only were unable to collaborate with the Germans, but also never truly saw any of them.⁴⁶ Moreover, nearly 1/3rd of the Chechen population died en route or quickly after arrival.⁴⁷ The pain that the Chechen people experienced is astounding. Dzhabrail Gakaev, in his political history of 20th century Chechnya, writes:

Upon their arrival in the areas allotted for them, the deportees were distributed for work on the local and collective farms. A NKVD officer exercised direct control. He held in his hands the lives of hundreds of thousands of defenseless people who had been denied any rights. All of the able-bodied among the exiled population were forced to work for no other re-numeration than food ration coupons. A breach of rules was punished by 20 years hard labor without trial...Famine, disease and harsh treatment brought the Chechen people to the brink of survival.⁴⁸

Stalin's deportation fragmented the most important aspect of Chechen society, the extended family. Families were consistently separated and deportation brought a criminal aspect to families who had no other choice but to steal in order to survive and protect relatives. Gakaev was a child during deportation and he recalled his experience:

The first years were hard, for lack of housing (deported people were just dumped in the open steppe), as well as food (the local Kazakhs were also starving). My father had about 40 people in his charge: his own children and several relatives...The situation was desperate: our men had to steal livestock from the Kazakhs...Father told us once that a group of Kazakhs riding on horseback had caught up with him as he was driving away their sheep. He

⁴⁶ Vatchagaev 1969

⁴⁷ Zdravomyslov 1998

⁴⁸ Tishkov (1) pg 27

drew a circle around himself with his knife and said, ‘Don’t cross the line. I’m starving, and I’ll fight to the death’. They thought about that and rode off.⁴⁹

The suffering during deportation is considered the most important source of Chechen resentment, which would ultimately manifest itself in radical Chechen nationalism. Richard Sakwa, an expert in Russian & Eurasian communist and post-communist politics, claims that Chechen history has a uniquely “*monochronic*” approach. He specifically cites Umalat Umalatov’s book *Chechnya Through the Eyes of a Chechen*. It recalls Umalatov’s family’s tribulations and exile to Turkey after the Caucasian War (1817-1864)⁵⁰. He asserts that the core of Chechen identity is historical, not ethnic. As a result, Chechen people’s long history of resistance to Russian rule has created a single, unbreakable “*monochronic narrative*”⁵¹. The claim of independence rests on a distinctive historical reading of Chechnya’s relationship with Tsarist Russia and the USSR; this relationship is interpreted in black-and-white terms of exploitation and subjugation, accompanied by heroic resistance tales. Although there is plenty of evidence to support this “*monochronic*” account, it leaves out a more complex contextualization of the relationship, i.e. the Russian Empire was far from a solely repressive being throughout history. Regardless of deportation, Chechens maintained their feelings of independence and refused to fully give in to ‘Sovietization’, far more than the Volga Tatars.⁵²

For the Volga Tatars, the Soviet period consisted of considerable distress as well, but not nearly to the degree faced by the Chechens. Soviet authorities considered the Volga Tatars as “the avant-garde of the peoples of the Red East”.⁵³ In addition, cultural institutions that had been formed in Tatarstan continued to operate. Although the Volga Tatars experienced their own traumatic

⁴⁹ Tishkov (1) pg 28

⁵⁰ Sakwa pg 5

⁵¹ Sakwa pg 5

⁵² Zdravomyslov

⁵³ Roi pg 652-653

deportation, only some 6,000 were deported to Uzbekistan⁵⁴. This was the fate of only a small minority of the population unlike the Chechen population.

In the post-Stalin period, the different experiences of Tatars and Chechens were even more evident. After Stalin's death in the early 1950's, new USSR chairman Nikita Khrushchev allowed the surviving deportees to return to Chechnya and their autonomous republic status was restored. However, no substantial political or ethnic autonomy was obtained.⁵⁵ The Chechen-Ingushetian republic was treated like a colonial possession by Moscow, with ethnic Russian's serving as leaders. Chechens were systematically denied equal rights in industry and education. For example, it was even forbidden to promote a Chechen teacher to the position of school head.⁵⁶

On the contrary, Tatars in Tatarstan were granted more ethnic rights and more progress was made towards true, political and ethnic autonomy. Tatars were not systematically denied positions in the political system. For example, from after 1960, the first-secretary of the communist party in Tatarstan was occupied by a succession of ethnic Tatars.⁵⁷ Due to their authoritative positions, they encouraged a revival in Tatar language, culture and history. Over the years, these leaders also pushed Moscow for their autonomous republic status to be enhanced to union status in the course of numerous discussions throughout the 1970s and 1980s.⁵⁸

Concluding Thoughts on Historical Differences

Chechnya and Tatarstan both pursued sharply contrasting outcomes in the post-Soviet transition.

The violent or diplomatic outcomes can be partly explained by the degrees of historical grievances

⁵⁴ Tagirov

⁵⁵ Tishkov (2) pg 11-12

⁵⁶ Mezhidov & Aliroev pg 27-28

⁵⁷ Iskhakov pg 35

⁵⁸ Iskhakov pg 35

faced by each society's population. The Volga Tatars may have lost their pre-conquest identity but were able to form a new ethnic identity based on integration and equal rights. They were viewed by Moscow as a vital component to Russia's multi-ethnic population and pursued autonomy within Russia. The Chechens remained on the periphery and continued to alienate themselves. Any hope of possible integration into Soviet society was forever tarnished after Stalin's brutal policy of deportation, which left a deep-seeded feeling of distrust and hostility in Chechen identity towards Russia.

Chapter 3

Russia's Orient

While most European countries were building imperial empires through their colonial possessions in far away continents, Russia was also building an empire, however, far closer to home. The means by which Russia pursued its Empire building in the 19th century greatly influenced public perceptions of the Caucasus as the 'orient' or 'the other'. Russia's entrance into the Caucasus brought an exceptional amount of Russian citizens, civil servants, travelers, soldiers and exiles to the Caucasus. Russia's imperial mission in the Caucasus had several components: 1) commitment to the multi-national tsarist empire already in existence, 2) territorial aggrandizement and the assertion of political sovereignty over subject peoples, 3) a reliance on force to subjugate the tribes, 4) an interest in economic enrichment and 5) an avowed dedication to a civilizing mission in Asia.⁵⁹ All these factors in conquest contributed wholly to the public perception as the peoples of the Caucasus as "the other" and not part of the Russian empire, but exotic, foreign peoples.

Edward Said's seminal work "Orientalism" proposed a theory of "dynamic exchange" between individual writers or texts and the intricate processes of Empire building with which they

⁵⁹ Mostashari pg 13

interact. Said stresses that drawing a boundary between ‘us’ and ‘them’ always carries with it multiple “suppositions, associations and fictions” about foreign people.⁶⁰ The character attributed to the ‘other’ logically does not require their consent or input. An assumed western stance of superiority over the orient i.e, to build an empire in Asia, was to behave as a ‘European’ dedicated to the spread of Christianity and the realization of a colony’s economic potential.⁶¹ Lastly, the tribes of Chechnya and Dagestan arose in Holy War against Russia in the late 1820s. In light of the history of warfare, educated Russians of the era tended to view the Caucasus as a “colossal battlefield” where the Orthodox state was locked in a continuous battle with Islam.⁶²

Russia’s insecurities concerning their level of “Europeaness” drove Russia’s imperial ambitions in enacting “civilizing” missions of their own. The campaigns were rationalized as inevitable and following a moral dictate harking back to the Westernizing efforts of Peter the Great; in the Caucasus, the Russians could be the bearers of civilization as Europe was to the Russians.⁶³ The language of numerous Russian military officials who had fought in the Caucasian Wars is indicative of their perceived mission at hand. Colonel Romanosov, who later became an academic, wrote:

Can we deny the salutary influence of the West on our development? Are we not obliged to pay the debt of being civilized and transmit this influence to the East? The pacification of the Caucasus will cut a window for the whole of the western Asia, Persia, Armenia and Mesopotamia, which have been numbed for centuries. Through this window, they will be

⁶⁰ Said pg 54-55

⁶¹ Riasanovsky pg 15-24

⁶² Layton pg 73

⁶³ Mostashari pg 9

able to glance at Europe, and if they do not benefit, then at least there can be no doubt that Russia has honestly and consciously repaid its great debt to civilization.⁶⁴

General V.A. Potto extolled the Russian soldiers and Generals in the Caucasus as “ancient heroes”; despite the fact these “ancient heroes” were notorious for their cruelty. Of them he wrote, “It is not for nothing that they inspire the Russian poets.”⁶⁵

It was professed that Russia bought the Caucasus with young soldiers’ blood. Since Russian’s had paid dearly to “civilize” the region, the Caucasian’s loss of statehood seemed justified and expected. Russian literary critic, Vissarion Belinsky, “looked forward to exploring the empire’s ‘unknown’ corners, observing exotic populations, defining them and assigning them cultural ranks in relation to his metropole.”⁶⁶ This was done without questioning the Tsarist Empire’s ‘right’ to rule other nationalities. This period of Russian “Orientalism” towards the peoples of the Caucasus is vital in understanding the differences in public perception in relation to the Tatars and Chechens in modern day.

Tsar Alexander I’s first directive on university education (1804) called for study of the languages of the Bible and the Muslim peoples. Kazan University emerged as the major center of oriental studies in Russia at this time.⁶⁷ Higher education and fusion of ethnic Russian and oriental ideas was located in Kazan for a long time, studying the Caucasus as the ‘other’. Kazan was consistently viewed as the progressive capital of understanding Islam in a cooperative manner and the ‘civil embodiment of Russia’s multi-ethnic mosaic’. Why did the Chechens stand out and differ in perception from the masses of Tatars? There are several answers to this question. Firstly,

⁶⁴ Mostashari pg 9

⁶⁵ Mostashari pg 8

⁶⁶ Layton pg 15

⁶⁷ Layton pg 76

Chechens proved harder than any other ethnic group for Russians to subdue. Secondly, because of their under-developed civil society, Chechens were far less susceptible to material privileges offered by the Tsarist colonizers for their cooperation.⁶⁸

Contrasting with Kazan's perception as a progressive place for inter-ethnic cooperation, Chechen people were described as "tribesman, wild animal(s) with only the outward form of a human being, a vile, fearful enemy with all the cruelty of a bloodthirsty beast."⁶⁹ Another example comes from the Russian official Count Platon Zubov, who in 1834 published an overview of the North Caucasus and its inhabitants, with suggestions for their pacification: "{The Chechens} have a particular enthusiasm for brigandage and predatory behavior, a lust for robbery and murder, perfidy, a martial spirit, determination, savageness, fearlessness and unbridled insolence"⁷⁰. Later on, he recommended for the "total extermination" of the Chechens as the solution.⁷¹

One of the major sources for Russian perceptions of the people's of the Caucasus derives from 19th century Russian literature. Due to the fact the majority of Russians had never traveled to the Caucasus first hand, they relied on stories of some of Russia's most famous authors to paint them pictures of the lands and its inhabitants. Mikhail Lermontov's *A Hero of Our Time* is filled with imperial imagery. Lermontov served time in the military and was stationed at Fort Groznaia and participated in numerous campaigns against Chechens. In 1840, Lermontov was recommended for medals for his actions in a battle between the Russians and Chechens. His experiences in the Caucasus strongly influenced the portrayal of its inhabitants in his seminal romantic novel. The character of Maxim Maximych, makes assertions regarding the Caucasian spirit. He describes their

⁶⁸ Ziolkowski pg 42

⁶⁹ Ziolkowski pg 41

⁷⁰ Zubov pg 173

⁷¹ Zubov pg 176

cunning (“These Asians are terrible rogues”⁷²), propensity for violence (“Once they get drunk on *buzza* at a wedding or a funeral, it’s sheer murder”⁷³), and obsession with revenge (“These mountaineers are vindictive people”⁷⁴). In the first section of the novel, the main characters Pechorin and Maxim Maximych chase after Bela’s Caucasian abductor. Lermontov describes that on horseback, “Pechorin let out a shriek as good as any Chechen, grabbed his gun from the holster and was after him like a shot”⁷⁵. These examples lent credence to the continued reputation of Chechens as lawless brigands.

On the other hand, Russia could not locate itself in Western civilization and declare the orient its ‘other’ as easily as Europeans. The orient comprised an “organic part of Russian history”⁷⁶. Asian peoples had comprised part of the Tsarist Empire since the 16th century and in light of this, a Russian could not honestly believe he was the alternative of the orient as uncompromisingly as a European might. At the same time, Russians determined a need to accommodate and bring order to the “young” people of Asia⁷⁷. The term “young” does not imply age, but a sense of childlike underdevelopment. The self-determined need for Russia to play the role of the paternal guardian, who brings order to chaos, influenced its actions in the region. In Orientalism, Said states, “Every Empire...tells itself and the world that it is unlike all other empires, that its mission is not to plunder and control but to educate and liberate.”⁷⁸ This encapsulates the mission of Russian penetration of the Caucasus. Ilya Radozhitsky, 19th century writer, endorsed Russian imperialism and took pride in the civilizing mission:

⁷² Lermontov pg 6

⁷³ Lermontov pg 10

⁷⁴ Lermontov pg 36

⁷⁵ Lermontov pg 37

⁷⁶ Layton pg 75

⁷⁷ Layton pg 77

⁷⁸ Said Interview <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2003/648/op2.htm>

He encountered children among Russia's prisoners of war near Georgievsk and pronounced the little captives cute as supernumeraries in the 'Asiatic ballets of Didelot'. Momentarily saddened at the thought of children wrenched from their parents and possibly orphaned, he quickly soothed his conscience by asserting that the adults were confirmed 'savages' anyway, whereas their offspring would now evolve through schooling in Russia.⁷⁹

Said asserts that all empire's justify their missions as civilizing and educating peoples they conquer, rather than to destroy. This stance is consistent with condescending attitudes of Western imperialism towards Eastern peoples, who they viewed as 'backwards' and 'uncivilized'. Russia's view of the Caucasian people as 'savages' portrays these people as opposed to their 'civilized' society. This view of people from the Caucasus, namely Chechens, as a disorderly people in need of Russian authority, has a deep-rooted, historical presence in the Russian psyche. It undoubtedly influenced the actions of Kremlin officials in their military presence in Chechnya in the 1990s.

⁷⁹ Layton pg 58-59

Chapter 4

Post-Soviet Political Developments

Introduction

It was not until 1988 that Communist Party Chairman Mikhail Gorbachev began to change the Soviet policy towards religion. The change was prompted by two factors: 1) The more democratic personalities and actions persuaded Gorbachev that economic reform was unlikely without an overall liberalization of the system that would include the religious sphere; and 2) beginning in 1986, intellectuals and clergy members had started to “defend religion or passively criticize the Soviet Union’s religious policies”.⁸⁰ His liberalization of the political system unleashed powerful anti-systemic forces that culminated in the disintegration of the USSR and a collapse in communist ideology. The role of non-Russian ethnic minorities and their respective nationalist movements played a tremendous role in the collapse. The future of the Soviet collapse in a specific region of the USSR depended on a variety of goals and strategies of the political elite, nationalist forces and the interplay between the regional authorities and federal center. In Tatarstan and Chechnya, the types of political and cultural development differed sharply, leading to drastically dissimilar outcomes.

The Tatarstan Model

Mikhail Gorbachev’s *perestroika* program had an awakening influence on the Tatar intelligentsia. Tatar intellectuals focused on Tatar ethnic history, the ethnonym of the people, culture and language, the role of Islam, geographical names and the creation of national symbols.⁸¹ Before the collapse of the Soviet Union seemed inevitable, Kazan sent a letter to the 19th Communist Party conference

⁸⁰ Hunter pg 38

⁸¹ Zverev, Alexei pg 120

proposing to upgrade Tatarstan from the rank of autonomous republic to the rank of Union republic. In 1990, Chairman Gorbachev was faced with the threat of secession by the Baltic Republics; his administration resorted to counter moves. He adopted a Law on the Delimitation of Power between the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics and the Subjects of the Federation. According to this law, autonomous republics were equalized in their rights with the Union republics. Chairman Gorbachev's aim was to keep the Union republics inside the Union, if need be on a con-federal basis. It would also hold over them the threat of conflict with the autonomous entities within them⁸². In addition, prospective President Boris Yeltsin traveled to Kazan in August 1990 and appealed to its people by saying, "Take as much sovereignty as you can digest!"⁸³ This proclamation sealed the fate of the USSR as it offered autonomous entities an unexpected array of possibilities. For the elite, it proved how far they could bargain with the center for economic and political privileges.

The peaceful and diplomatic means by which Tatarstan developed is referred to as "the Tatarstan model". Several other republics in the Russian Federation that have nationalist or secessionist tendencies have attempted to implement this model. However, Tatarstan has shown itself to be the exception, not the rule in negotiations with the numerous ethnic republics. There are multiple reasons for this: 1) Its success is highly attributable to the brilliant political maneuvering of President Shaimiev, who prohibited nationalists from controlling the political system; 2) its ethnic make up was highly diverse, disallowing any one group to dominate another in the democratic process and, finally, and 3) its limited access to loot-able goods and weapons by its population.

In the beginning stages of the quest for sovereignty, Tatarstan's ruling elite took control of the national movement. They felt sovereignty meant, first and foremost, mastery over the republic's

⁸² Zverev, Alexei pg 122

⁸³ Excerpt of Yeltsin speech in *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 27 March 1992

natural resources and the possibility of establishing political, economic and cultural ties with Russia and foreign countries.

President Shaimiev

After the dissolution of the USSR in March 1991, Tatarstan's greatest step towards achieving sovereignty through a peaceful method was the election of Mintimer Shaimiev in June 1991. He won the election by accumulating 70.9% of the votes. Originally, due to the fact Shaimiev was a former communist party official, his election was interpreted as merely a changing of seats by the ruling elite⁸⁴. This was the same class of people associated with the growing economic chaos. In fact, Shaimiev was the reason why Tatarstan avoided violence.

During the coup in Moscow in August 1991, President Shaimiev banned rallies and strikes and imposed censorship in the republic's media. Despite clamoring of citizens concerned with authoritarian rule, Shaimiev's motivations were to "preserve the republic, not to impose terror"⁸⁵. As a result of his actions, multiple nationalist groups emerged. Among these groups were the *Ittifak* who called for Tatar independence. The movement was led by Tatar writer Fauziya Bairamova. She organized meetings and incited Tatar youth to storm the Supreme Soviet Building during a coup attempt. In addition, the Milli Mejlis were created and deemed themselves the alternative parliament of the Tatar people. This alternative parliament allocated to itself the right to regulate the activity of Tatarstan Supreme Soviet in case of its incapacity and rescind laws "contravening the national interests of the Tatar people"⁸⁶. This alternative parliament was deemed unconstitutional by Tatar leadership and its acts null and void. At this point, events could have gotten out of control.

⁸⁴ Zverev, Alexei. Pg 121

⁸⁵ Khakimov, R. pg 3-5

⁸⁶ Zverev, Alexei pg 127

Despite the radical nationalists' strong presence, President Shaimiev was able to diminish their activity by channeling nationalist sentiments into a law-governed, parliamentary procedure. Instead of ceding power to the nationalists and their demands, he used them as a fundamental tool to portray himself as a moderate to Moscow. By portraying himself as a responsible politician, he made Moscow feel he was the one who could save them from a potential threat. He monopolized the negotiation process with Russia and did so by keeping the nationalist groups away from decision-making political issues. Shaimiev accomplished this by undermining the legitimacy of the various alternative groups and their capacity to affect the rightful political system. The Shaimiev administration also tended to avoid extreme rhetoric in its nationalist pursuit. On the other hand, the Shaimiev administration did use some of the rhetoric of nationalists to bolster their position inside and outside the republic, which found nationalists unable to map out a coherent strategy for independence⁸⁷. Tatar independence was an end in itself for the nationalists while safeguarding social stability and thereby, preserving and consolidating political power was the goal of the establishment. Shaimiev's main prerogative was to enhance the republic's constitutional liberties inside Russia by negotiating with the Kremlin.

An understated contribution to the successful outcome of the negotiations was the personal relationship that formed between Boris Yeltsin and Mintimer Shaimiev. In contrast to the case in Chechnya, negotiators on opposite sides achieved a respectable level of trust and mutual understanding.⁸⁸ While not closely acquainted at the outset of discussions, Shaimiev and Yeltsin developed a relationship of special trust that played a key role towards the end of negotiations. Shaimiev's personality had a large imprint on success. His ability to gain the trust of a man as

⁸⁷ Zverev, Alexei pg 128

⁸⁸ Tishkov (2)

“difficult and moody” as Yeltsin may not have been navigated as well by another Tatar leader. Valery Tishkov speculates, “Yeltsin and Shaimiev may have had a private conversation with nobody else present at which they reached certain agreements. Shaimiev was not the sort of person who would insist over Yeltsin’s strong objection to some point. He would not say a straight NO to Yeltsin”.⁸⁹ In addition, in 1996, Emil Payin, the director of the Center for Ethno-Political Studies in Moscow, stated, “Without Shaimiev, there would have been no treaty”.⁹⁰ Payin also noted that, “Yeltsin treated Shaimiev as an honored guest”.⁹¹

Although Shaimiev compromised with the Russian government, his strength as a leader was identifying when to stand up to the center and when to hold back. In 1992, Tatarstan did not sign the Federal Treaty with Moscow. It had been signed by 18 of the 20 autonomous republics with the exception of Tatarstan & Chechnya.⁹² Shaimiev did not sign this treaty because he felt it offered Tatarstan less autonomy than Gorbachev’s plan: it did not provide for the right to secede from the federation, denied the republic a special status, and it retained central ministries, exorbitant taxes and a centralized foreign trade.⁹³ After 1992, Tatarstan reduced the amount of taxes they sent to Moscow; Moscow retaliated by suspending Russian factories from sending spare parts for Tatarstan’s oil industry and cut state contracts for military enterprises.⁹⁴ Moscow put enormous pressure on Kazan to avoid a referendum on the status of the state in 1992. Yeltsin warned the population that the referendum could result in inter-ethnic strife. Despite this, the referendum was held and sovereignty was supported by 61.4%. The Tatar parliament also passed a law establishing

⁸⁹ Tishkov (2)

⁹⁰ Payin pg 15

⁹¹ Payin pg 15

⁹² Zverev pg 128

⁹³ Zverev pg 129

⁹⁴ Zverev pg 129

two state languages: Russian and Tatar. Tatarstan's constitutional language was flexible, as it supported sovereignty but made no mention of the Tatar nation as the source of sovereignty. The Tatar Parliament proposed to the Russian Constitution a clause on the "contractual and constitutional" relationship between the two.

In the summer of 1993, President Yeltsin asked President Shaimiev to participate in a Constitutional Conference. Yeltsin warned that if Shaimiev refused to participate, no further talks on the status of Tatarstan would be held. President Shaimiev acquiesced despite his earlier refusal to take part. Only 13.4% of Tatarstan citizens voted in the national referendum on the Russian constitution and elections to State Duma: the message being, "no recognition of Tatarstan's sovereignty- no voting in Moscow-organized elections".⁹⁵

President Shaimiev's brilliance stemmed from his decision to negotiate large numbers of power sharing agreements with Russia during his Presidency. Rather than focusing on one agreement, he focused on numerous bi-lateral agreements. This made it easier to ultimately negotiate an all-encompassing treaty when the time came. From 1992-1994, the Russian government signed more than a dozen agreements with Tatarstan on specific questions: the underlying principle in all of them was that Tatarstan owned its enterprises and the assets it financed, while Moscow owned those assets that were financed from the federal budget⁹⁶. Land and natural resources were recognized as the sole property of Tatarstan, but could voluntarily be transferred to Russia's jurisdiction if the property needed to implement joint projects, or those in Moscow.⁹⁷ Moscow offered to shelve the question of the status of the state with step-by-step agreements on economic matters. Despite several contradictions, it met with a favorable reaction from Tatarstan's

⁹⁵ Zverev pg 132

⁹⁶ Zverev pg 137

⁹⁷ Zverev pg 137

business circles, non-partisan intellectuals and clergy. The criticism came from the Tatar national movement, who had been marginalized and were unable to map out a strategy of opposition to the treaty or organize protests against it⁹⁸. It allowed Russia to get rid of a dangerous hotbed of separatism and the Tatarstan leadership to save face. Although the negotiations between Moscow and Kazan were to encounter difficulties and take much longer than initially expected, both sides were to remain firmly committed to the process and to its successful outcome. From April 1992 onward, the grounds for a confrontation were neutralized.

Ethnic Cooperation

On top of President Shaimiev's exceptional political maneuvering, the situation was made easier due to Tatarstan's inter-ethnic population and demographic diversity. There were limitations of demands set forth by Tatarstan's 43.5% ethnic Russian population. Although 78.1% of Tatarstan's elite were of Tatar extraction, Tatar officials countered claims of "ethnocracy" by pointing to the absolute predominance of ethnic Russians at the central government level.⁹⁹ In 1993, the Tatar national movement split into three centers. The most important was the Unity and Progress Party, which cooperated with President Shaimiev. They believed that Tatarstan's future was independence but based on a multi-ethnic principle. Thus, a linkage between the non-Russian nationalities and the local Russians was possible, even if for reasons of political expediency.

On the other hand, inter-ethnic conflict did exist. However, the means by which it was handled prevented its escalation and any potential to inhibit the democratic process. For example, all Tatar parties professed the need to spread Islamic teaching. There were calls for "an all-round

⁹⁸ Zverev pg 139

⁹⁹ Farukshin pg 69-70

renaissance of Islam as a way of rebirth and consolidation of the Tatar people”¹⁰⁰. Even though Islam was viewed as more of a vehicle of unification, ethnic Russians hotly contested it. The ethnic Russian population stood for the autonomy of Tatarstan within Russia and opposed Tatar radicals, who often tried to limit the functions of the Orthodox Church. In order to try and quell the inter-ethnic conflict, President Shaimiev’s pursuance of a referendum on the status of the state in 1992 led to some form of consolidation among Tatarstan’s people. By holding a referendum of sovereignty, it lent credence to the official doctrine: the Republic of Tatarstan was not only the vehicle of Tatar self-determination, but also the homeland of all its inhabitants irrespective of ethnic affiliation. The referendum result has generally been perceived as proving that sovereignty, in the form advocated by the Shaimiev leadership, enjoyed widespread popular support among Russians as well as Tatars in Tatarstan. By emphasizing commonalities between the ethnicities rather than their differences, President Shaimiev was able to legitimize his government and isolate nationalists. Sergei Kondrashov wrote:

Despite provocations, the political and economic elites did not split but retained their unity...Tatarstan’s leaders engaged in a battle with Moscow for power and resources, but it was not ethnic nationalism at all that animated the republican ruling elite in their push to sovereignty. Far from jumping on the nationalists’ bandwagon, the establishment fought, if at times half-heartedly, to contain nationalism. They worked out their own strategy as an alternative to the nationalist project.¹⁰¹

In terms of ethnic divisions, the main difference between Tatarstan and Chechnya was that Tatarstan’s leadership did not engage in what analysts call “ethnic out-bidding” in order to gain

¹⁰⁰ Zverev pg 134

¹⁰¹ Kondrashov pg 92-93

support.¹⁰² Its ethnic division actually resulted in a more cooperative democracy because the ethnic Tatar majority had to be accountable to the sizeable ethnic Russian population and their demands.

Limited Access to Weapons

The most controversial aspect of Tatarstan's referendum in 1992 is whether there was any risk of federal military action. There was fear in the Kremlin that if Tatarstan seceded, other ethnic republics would follow suit and Russia could go the way of the Soviet Union. However, no documentary proof has ever been presented or found that proves of plans to intervene militarily.¹⁰³ If there were military intervention, how would Tatarstan have reacted? There is reason to believe that the reaction would have been a non-violent protest similar to the one in Prague in 1968.¹⁰⁴ On the contrary, there is also reason to believe that the minority of radical nationalists would have attempted to pursue armed resistance and tried to make preparations for a military action.¹⁰⁵ One of the main factors attributable to Tatarstan's peaceful solution was the lack of arms available to nationalists. Amidst the confusion of the disintegration of the Soviet Union, there was no leakage of arms out of local military bases or enterprises. President Shaimiev assured that these facilities would be under tight security.¹⁰⁶ Moreover, there was no black market for arms for nationalists because the nationalists lacked the funds and criminal connections needed to buy arms in those regions of Russia, i.e. Udmurtia, that did have such a market.¹⁰⁷ Additionally, the nationalists could not find a way to smuggle in the arms from outside Russia. For example, there was one attempt by radical nationalists

¹⁰² Evangelista pg 97

¹⁰³ Tishkov (2)

¹⁰⁴ Zilia Valeeva Interview

¹⁰⁵ Tishkov (2)

¹⁰⁶ Tishkov (2)

¹⁰⁷ Tishkov (2)

in Naberezhnye Chelny to obtain arms from the Baltic, but the plan was detected and the shipment intercepted.¹⁰⁸ Even in the early stages of the sovereignty struggle, President Shaimiev did what was necessary to prevent violence with Moscow. For example, in mid-October 1991, he banned all paramilitary organizations and prosecuted violations, arresting 673 people and confiscating 742 firearms.¹⁰⁹

Tatarstan Conclusion

President Shaimiev made sure the Tatar people understood what their grievances with the Russian federal government were. Most importantly, he facilitated them in a legitimate manner. President Shaimiev's main course of action was to maintain ethnic peace within Tatarstan while asserting the republic's rights via the central government. By portraying himself to Moscow as the legitimate ruler and a responsible person with whom to negotiate, he successfully marginalized nationalist groups. Rather than advocating outright secession for its own sake, Shaimiev pursued a diplomatic course of highlighting economic and political prerogatives in a time of rapid transition. Russia was well aware of the legitimacy problems that a push for Tatar independence entailed and this helps to explain the willingness to negotiate. They knew if given reasonable concessions, Tatarstan would be satisfied with partial political and economic autonomy. On the contrary, as will be demonstrated below, Russia was cognizant that Chechens were extremely serious about secession and there was little hope for Chechens to back down. In many respects, Tatarstan resembles Chechnya in terms of its oil, Islam and its autonomous status within the USSR. One can only suppose what would have

¹⁰⁸ Tishkov, Valery (2)

¹⁰⁹ Kondrashov pg 177

happened without the stabilizing and democratic leadership of President Shaimiev; relations with Moscow could have been more violent.

Chechnya & The Military Option

As in Tatarstan, Mikhail Gorbachev's *perestroika* provided opportunities for Chechen intellectuals to revive ethnic and cultural identity. Due to *perestroika*, a Chechen-Ingush state institute was established to formally train more Chechen teachers. Chechens were finally beginning to be allowed to assume elite posts in universities and politics. In June 1989, the Communist Party Committee elected Doku Zavgayev First Secretary of the republic, the first time a Chechen had ever occupied the position. Though he was an ethnic Chechen, Zavgayev was hesitant in stressing Chechnya's rights.¹¹⁰ Coincidentally, he did beseech the Russian government to promote a Chechen military officer to the rank of General for the first time in history. This promotion went to Dzhokhar Dudaev, who would soon become Zavgayev's adversary for leadership control. From the summer of 1988 until the fall of 1990, the most prominent group in Chechen parliament was the Popular Front of the Chechen-Ingush ASSR. It combined general calls for democratization, action against corruption, the revival of Chechen culture, an end to anti-Chechen discrimination, and restoration of "historical truth". Popular Front was in principle a multi-ethnic civic organization, although in practice its efforts to draw in Russians were unsuccessful.¹¹¹

Similar to Shaimiev in Tatarstan, Zavgayev proclaimed Chechnya's right to sovereignty and self-determination. In theory, it was similar to the declaration adopted by the Tatarstan Supreme Soviet only three months prior. However, unlike Shaimiev in Tatarstan, the radical nationalists

¹¹⁰ Tishkov (1) pg 58

¹¹¹ Tishkov (1) pg 58

outmaneuvered Zavgayev. The various nationalist parties came together in a bloc. The organizers decided to invite General Dzhokhar Dudaev, who had never lived in Chechnya, to head the nationalist movement. On November 23-25, 1990, the Supreme Soviet of the Chechen-Ingush ASSR (SSCIR), chaired by Zavgayev, adopted on November 27 a Declaration of the State Sovereignty of the Chechen-Ingush Republic. It asserted that Chechnya was a sovereign state and was ready to enter into union and federal treaties with other Soviet republics on the basis of equal rights.¹¹² Despite the declaration, officials of the Supreme Soviet intended that the republic maintain close relations with Russia. The nationalists, headed by Dudaev, were strongly opposed.

Dzhokhar Dudaev

Dudaev favored secession and linking Chechnya to neighboring Muslim republics in a North Caucasian confederation.¹¹³ Dzhokhar Dudaev was born in 1944, only a few weeks before Stalin's Chechen deportation. He lived in Kazakhstan until he was thirteen years old and then enrolled in flight school. He served in the military as a pilot in Siberia, Ukraine, Afghanistan and Estonia and then commanded a Strategic Bombing unit post in the long-range strategic air forces, earning him the Order of the Red Star and the Order of the Red Banner.¹¹⁴ He married a Russian and had little connection with the Chechen republic. Yet, he did maintain his knowledge of the native language and possessed a strong sense of Chechen identity.¹¹⁵ The second session of the Chechen National Congress in Grozny on June 8-9 1991 marked "the triumph of the radicals".¹¹⁶ Dudaev, as the head of executive committee of the National Congress, emerged as the main rival to the existing Soviet

¹¹² Tishkov (1) pg 58

¹¹³ Evangelista pg 16

¹¹⁴ Tishkov (1) pg 59

¹¹⁵ Tishkov (1) pg 59

¹¹⁶ Evangelista pg 17

political structure. The biggest opportunity for Dudaev and the radical nationalists came with the failed coup against Soviet President Gorbachev in August 1991.

Zavgayev and the local communist authorities in Grozny failed to condemn the coup plotters, who sought to reverse Gorbachev's reforms, most particularly his proposal to create a less centralized, confederation of republics to replace the USSR.¹¹⁷ Zavgayev's failure discredited himself in the eyes of nationalist and anti-communist Chechens. The demonstrations in Grozny convinced new President Boris Yeltsin that Zavgayev and the Soviet-era authorities had to leave. Demonstrations in Shiekh Mansur Square in Grozny did not have a political objective but were "rather a demonstration of solidarity, free spirit or libertarianism, and militancy, mobilized and directed by local leaders."¹¹⁸ In the interim, Dudaev and his supporters seized government buildings and the radio and television center. Zavgayev demanded that Moscow forces disperse the demonstrators and restore order, but Yeltsin made another decision. He persuaded Zavgayev and the members of the Supreme Soviet to abolish that body, resign their positions, establish a temporary council and hold parliamentary elections on November 17th.¹¹⁹ After the resignation of Zavgayev, the Yeltsin administration began to be fearful of the "increasingly independent behavior" shown by Dudaev.

Ruslan Khasbulatov, an ethnic Chechen and parliamentary deputy, was an ally of Yeltsin and was the one who went to convince Zavgayev to resign. As he later admitted, he "spoke with Yeltsin about adding one more star to Dudaev's shoulder-strap and returning him to the army" to get him out Chechnya¹²⁰. In fact, Russian Air Force Chief Petr Deinekin evidently offered Dudaev

¹¹⁷ Evangelista pg 17

¹¹⁸ Evangelista pg 17

¹¹⁹ Evangelista pg 18

¹²⁰ Evangelista pg 18

promotion to a high command position if he would stay in the service. Dudaev responded, “The highest position for me is as an ordinary Chechen.”¹²¹ Moscow’s initial support of Dudaev and abandonment of Doku Zavgayev played an instrumental role in the coming to power of national-radicals and the overthrow of the old regime. Dudaev took advantage of the ‘anarchic’ environment. Dudaev’s National Congress of the Chechen People declared itself the sole authority of the republic on October 8th. Boris Yeltsin was becoming frustrated and sent a letter to the leaders of the National Congress demanding that they relinquish control of the government buildings they had seized, return weapons to the interior ministry and hold elections as scheduled on November 17th.¹²²

On the contrary, Dudaev and his allies followed their own plans. They held elections on October 27th for parliament and the presidency. Dudaev’s executive committee claimed that 77% of the eligible electorate participated and that 85% voted for Dudaev.¹²³ However, voting took place in only 70 of the 360 electoral districts with a turnout of only 10-12% of the population.¹²⁴ In response, the Russian parliament declared that the Chechen elections were illegal. Five days later, Yeltsin issued a state of emergency in the republic and dispatched 2500 troops. Dudaev reacted by declaring martial law and mobilized forces for the defense of Chechen independence. He issued his famous Decree No. 2 in which he called on “all Moscow-based Muslims to turn the city into a disaster area”.¹²⁵ In fact, because of the threat of Russian invasion, those who may have been opposed to Dudaev rallied to his side. Despite being very active in the removal of Zavgayev and the installation of Dudaev to the post of president, Boris Yeltsin refused to acknowledge his legitimacy. According to Colonel Viktor Barants, a former advisor to the chief of the General Staff and later head of the

¹²¹ Shakhbiev pg 306

¹²² Evangelista pg 18

¹²³ Dunlop pg 114

¹²⁴ Tishkov (2) pg 202

¹²⁵ Trenin & Malashenko pg 18

Defense Ministry's press service, President Yeltsin visited the Caucasus at least five times in the period of 1992-1994: "He went swimming in the sea, went hunting, went wine-tasting, played tennis. The only thing he didn't find the time for was to sit at a table with Dudaev and come to an agreement."¹²⁶

In fact, whenever Moscow did undertake negotiations, groups of "experts" from both sides met; Boris Yeltsin or Dudaev refused to take part.¹²⁷ One of the most significant factors in the peaceful approach with Tatarstan and President Shaimiev was the close personal relationship that formed between the two leaders. In Chechnya, no such relationship was remotely close to being formed. A key factor in the negotiations between Moscow and Chechnya was General Dudaev and the government's attitude toward him. For example, Dudaev was not a particularly observant Muslim. He was a product of the Soviet system and had participated in bombing raids on Muslims as a fighter pilot in Afghanistan. Russian authorities desperately tried to use this to undermine his legitimacy as President and his Islamic credentials.¹²⁸ The ramifications of these actions were profound. Upon inauguration, General Dudaev consistently advocated for a secular state because they realized only a secular Chechnya had a chance of being accepted into the international community. However, the Russian government's attempts to undermine his Islamic credentials actually radicalized Dudaev and changed his opinions on religion in the Chechen political system. It is believed that because of this he "discovered his Islamic roots and most importantly, the usefulness of religious zeal in achieving political goals."¹²⁹

¹²⁶ Evangelista pg 23

¹²⁷ Evangelista pg 23-24

¹²⁸ Evangelista pg 26

¹²⁹ Tishkov (2) pg 51-52

Russia marked Dudaev's regime as illegitimate and no steps were taken to formal recognition of Chechnya as an independent state. While Dudaev clearly did not possess Mintimer Shaimiev's political and diplomatic skills, the role of Boris Yeltsin cannot be understated. His personal decisions of who he felt was legitimate influenced his capacity to negotiate. No clear choice was ever made between the two approaches, which were inherently incompatible with one another: negotiating with Dudaev enhanced his legitimacy and weakened the position of his rivals. On the other hand, attempts to get rid of Dudaev undermined negotiations. Unlike Shaimiev, who maneuvered himself with his own people and the Russian government diplomatically, Dudaev "slandered" Russia consistently and was met unfavorably by Russian officials and the public. An example of Dudaev's 'slander' appeared in a Turkish newspaper in 1994 and intensified Russian fears:

My plan foresaw the creation of a union of Caucasus countries directed against Russian imperialism...our chief goal was the achievement of independence and liberation, acting together with the Caucasus republics, which have been oppressed by Russia over the course of 300 years.¹³⁰

Yeltsin hated these insults and these plans for North Caucasian union and therefore refused to meet face-to-face with Dudaev. Valery Tishkov claims Kremlin advisors told President Yeltsin, "He (Dudaev) is crazy, he can't be trusted, and he speaks badly about you, Boris Nikolayevich. It isn't fitting that you, the president of Russia, should meet with a rebel".¹³¹ According to his advisors,

¹³⁰ Hunter pg 226-227

¹³¹ Tishkov (2)

Yeltsin did not expect his terms of negotiation to ever be met: “Inside he had already decided on a forceful, military solution”¹³².

Whichever side is more to blame for refusal to meet in person, relations deteriorated and reached the point where it became too late. Essentially, the stubbornness of both leaders and their refusal to recognize the legitimacy of one another led to the lack of any constructive negotiations. A potential meeting could have made a tremendously positive impact. Colonel Viktor Baranets wrote, “it was as if a secret evil force separated Yeltsin and Dudaev every time the idea of a meeting between them was floated”¹³³. Dudaev later claimed that he needed only “half an hour with Yeltsin”¹³⁴ to resolve the conflict between Chechnya and Russia. In January 1993, Dudaev’s guards turned away Russia’s chief negotiators, Sergei Shakhrai and Ramazan Abdulatipov, when they arrived in Grozny to discuss the treaty with members of the Chechen parliament.¹³⁵ General Aleksei Mitiukhin reported Dudaev’s frustration in being unable to meet with Yeltsin personally to work out their differences:

“I (Dudaev) waited for a long time to be invited to the Kremlin like a normal person (po-liudski). As late as the 29th or 30th of November 1994, if they had only spoken with me as a human being (po-chelovecheski), everything could have been completely different. But all I heard was ‘bandit, criminal, dictator, thief, leader of a criminal regime!’ That didn’t offend just me, but my entire people!”¹³⁶

¹³² Evangelista pg 31

¹³³ Evangelista pg 26

¹³⁴ Evangelista pg 26

¹³⁵ Hunter pg 226

¹³⁶ Evangelista pg 26

As late as December 10th 1994, Chechen propaganda minister Movladi Udugov communicated that Dudaev would accept an official invitation, if it were made, to come to Moscow for negotiations.¹³⁷ The Kremlin's policy via Dudaev was one characterized as "carrot and stick". The carrot was proposed talks with the separatists and the stick was rendering support to anti-Dudaev opponents, an opposition that was in constant state of flux.¹³⁸ If Yeltsin did meet with Dudaev, it would signal to the world Russia's acceptance of the possibility of Chechnya's sovereignty.

Access to Weapons

In Tatarstan, one of the major factors contributing to a peaceful resolution was the lack of access to weapons by nationalists. However, in Chechnya, this was not the case. Chechen nationalists had access to an abundant supply of arms. There was a thriving black market for arms in the Caucasus and criminal mafias generously funded the nationalist organizations.¹³⁹ Among the Chechen diaspora, there was a considerable leakage of arms from local military bases during the disintegration of the Soviet Union. Dudaev's forces inherited a sizeable arsenal from the Soviet bases: 40,000 automatic weapons, 153 cannons and mortars, 42 tanks, 18 Grad rocket launchers, 55 armored personnel carriers, training aircrafts and helicopters, and 130,000 grenades.¹⁴⁰ Moreover, on account of historical and ethno-cultural differences, it resulted in a higher proportion of Chechens with combat skills and experience than the corresponding proportion of Tatars. Therefore, the nationalists found it easier to organize paramilitary forces in Chechnya. In Tatarstan, President Shaimiev outlawed paramilitary organizations and was able to keep order in his republic. On the

¹³⁷ Evangelista pg 33

¹³⁸ Trenin & Malashenko pg 19

¹³⁹ Tishkov (2) pg 202

¹⁴⁰ Tishkov (2) pg 207

contrary, Chechnya did not possess a leader with the political professionalism. Their lack of a structured society made it difficult to find consensus with its people.

Chapter 5

Role of Islam

In Chechnya

*“For many Russians, a bearded man holding a Kalashnikov automatic rifle and wearing a green headband has become the symbol of Chechen separatism and the stereotypical image of a Chechen. Today in Russia the word terrorism is rarely used without the adjective Islamic.”*¹⁴¹

Understanding the Islamic factor in Chechnya is imperative in order to analyze the conflict. The use of Islam as a political mechanism has mostly been a reaction to or a consequence of the wars with Russia, not its cause. Throughout the 18th and 19th century, Russia imperial pursuits in the North Caucasus consistently strengthened Islamic sentiments among the local populations. In the late 18th century, resistance against Russian conquest left three important legacies: 1) it sowed the seeds of Sufi traditions; 2) it demonstrated to the population that Islam was a factor of unity for resistance; and 3) it contributed to the expansion of Islam into the last remaining pagan enclaves of the North Caucasus.¹⁴² Iman Shamil, who led the largest Chechen resistance against Russian rule, was the first to come out against the local customs. He claimed that they violated Shariah law and also hindered reforms aimed at opposing colonial policies of Tsarist Russia. Politically mobilized Islam can only survive if there is a common enemy with which to align against. Under normal peacetime conditions when the banner of jihad becomes irrelevant, extremist principles dissipate,

¹⁴¹ Trenin & Malashenko pg 71

¹⁴² Hunter pg 11

thus eroding interest in the formation of an Islamic state.¹⁴³ Russian political analyst (and former minister of separatist Chechnya) Shamil Beno accurately evaluated the situation when he said, “Fundamentalism cannot appear in a place where there are no serious problems in the society. Only an atmosphere of complete spiritual vacuum can force a young man to give up worldly temptations”¹⁴⁴. Russia’s military option with Chechnya formed solidarity among the Chechen people and extremist Islam only emerged when more powerful forms of mobilization were needed.

Historically, Islam tended to take moderate forms in Chechnya. Before Iman Shamil’s leadership in the middle of the 19th century, Chechen citizens adhered to an *adat* system. This is a system of social norms based on local customs, mainly of non-Islamic origin.¹⁴⁵ Chechen society has typically been integrated in autonomous communities, which were often regulated by their own *adats*. Even after Islam had been established in the Caucasus, Shariah law never replaced the *adat* system.¹⁴⁶ The type of Islam found in regions like Chechnya and throughout the Caucasus differed greatly from the stricter, more orthodox version found throughout the Middle East. Islam in the North Caucasus was tied to Sufi Islam rather than a strict adherence to Islamic Shariah law because it allowed the mountaineers to preserve their way of life and regional customs.

Sufism itself is divided in turn into various orders or brotherhoods called *tariqats*. In Arabic, the term is translated into the “path leading to Allah”¹⁴⁷. The Sufi Naqshbandiya *tariqat* and the Qadiriya *tariqat* dominate Russia’s Sufi landscape. Both of these *tariqats* existed underground in all the Muslim populated areas of the Soviet Union, but were particularly strong in the North Caucasus

¹⁴³ Trenin & Malashenko pg 75

¹⁴⁴ Morozov <http://www.religare.ru/print15568.htm>.

¹⁴⁵ Sykiainen, Leonid <http://www.ca-c.org/dataeng/08.syki.shtml>

¹⁴⁶ Sykiainen, Leonid <http://www.ca-c.org/dataeng/08.syki.shtml>

¹⁴⁷ Hahn pg 24

republics of Checheno-Ingushetiya and Dagestan.¹⁴⁸ Sufi tariqats are estimated to compose some 60% of Muslim believers in Chechnya.¹⁴⁹ Despite enormous anti-religious propaganda, Islam persisted in Chechnya, more than in any other part of the country during Soviet rule excluding Uzbekistan.¹⁵⁰ During the years of deportation (1944-1957), it appears that adherence to the Sufi orders increased among the Chechen people. The *tariqats* became a symbol of national association and a highly effective form of community survival.¹⁵¹ Many families maintained adherence to ritual aspects of Islam and read the Quran. In the 1960s and 1970s, many citizens of the Chechen-Ingush ASSR were discovered to be in a religious *magnitizdat*, the recording and/or transmission of illegal material on tapes.¹⁵²

But at the same time, the modern generation of Chechens, who were brought up in the Soviet system, tended toward atheism. Gorbachev's liberalization policies brought about a religious revival. This included greater freedom for clerical activities and the open preaching of Islam and reprinting of the Quran throughout Russia. However, at first, the resurgence of Islam occurred in isolation from the independence movement. Dudaev's declaration of sovereignty (1992) and the newly formed Chechen constitution were comprised of secular documents without reference to religion. In fact, Dudaev was never seen praying, no Islamic symbols were present in his home or office and he never went to a mosque.¹⁵³ This is precisely why the Russian authorities tried to undermine his Islamic credentials in the media. In an interview with *Literaturnaya Gazeta* in August 1992, Dudaev

¹⁴⁸ Hahn pg 24

¹⁴⁹ Hahn pg 24

¹⁵⁰ Roi pg 407

¹⁵¹ Roi pg 407

¹⁵² Roi pg 417-418

¹⁵³ Tishkov (1) pg 169

stated, “Where any religion prevails over a secular constitutional organization of the state, either the Spanish inquisition or Islamic fundamentalism will emerge”¹⁵⁴.

Even as late as 1993 in a convention with Chechen elders, Dudaev was quoted as saying:

The Quran and the imamate are holy causes, and we should not use those words in vain...Not every Chechen is a Muslim. The roots of Islam have been badly damaged here by the communists, and we cannot restore them in an hour or even a year. If we declare Shariah law today, tomorrow you will demand the heads and hands of offenders be cut off, giving little thought to the fact the day after tomorrow, it will be a rare man, even in this assembly who keeps his head and hands. You are not ready for that, nor am I. So let us put our souls in order...and our lives according to the constitution.¹⁵⁵

Initially, Dudaev rejected Islam as an ideological foundation of the Chechen independence movement. However, he attempted to use it to persuade Muslim states to support Chechnya’s independence and rally the Chechen people to his cause. As negotiations with Moscow rapidly diminished, he renounced his support for a secular state. He viewed devout Muslims as an important resource of nationalist resistance to Russian efforts to control the republic.¹⁵⁶ In January 1994, Dudaev refused to negotiate regarding Chechnya’s inclusion in a “united economic and legal space” and he actively sought to limit the republic’s association with Russia in regards to defense, transport, communications and cultural ties. This refusal was dictated by plans to introduce elements of Shariahh law into Chechnya.¹⁵⁷ After negotiations failed between the Russian Federation and

¹⁵⁴ Hunter pg 151

¹⁵⁵ Tishkov (1) pg 169

¹⁵⁶ Hahn pg 32

¹⁵⁷ Hahn pg 32-33

Chechnya, Dudaev stated, “Russia...has forced us to take the Islamic path”.¹⁵⁸ The culmination of this transformation took place in November 1994. Dudaev officially declared an Islamic state and formed an Islamic Battalion to counter the activities of opposition forces supported by Moscow. He pushed further for the application of Shariah law in the republic to counter Russian aggression.¹⁵⁹ As a result, the Chechens’ increasing Islamic orientation is partially attributable to the collapse of the agreement with the Kremlin on Chechnya’s place within the Federation.

During the Dudaev presidency, the seeds of future Islamic militancy were being sowed and heavily contributed to the violence. President Dudaev was supported in his campaign for independence by the Islamic Path Party, a Chechen branch of the Muslim Brotherhood¹⁶⁰. Both al-Qaeda and Saudi officials were instrumental in spreading Salafism and Wahhabism to Russia, providing the historically Sufi Chechens with a fertile soil for potential Islamic jihadism¹⁶¹. In order to explain the extent of their influence it is imperative to define these two schools of Islam in contrast with the pre-existing Sufism among Chechens:

Salafism is as much a revolutionary political movement as a religious movement. It was founded during Egypt’s national liberation movement in the early 20th century. Sayyid Qutb (1909-1966), the founding father of the political Islamist movement, radically revised the Islamic concept of *jahiliya*, which divides the world into two irreconcilable groups doomed to conflict. In Arabic, *Jahiliya* is translated into “(the time) ignorance”, which Qutb claimed the secular West represents. Qutb redefined jihad as revolutionary armed struggle and the establishment of an Islamic state or caliphate. This Islamic state was to be governed strictly according to Shariahh Law.

¹⁵⁸ Dudaev and Y. Zarakhovich, (March 4, 1996) “Terms of War and Peace” Time Magazine

¹⁵⁹ Hunter pg 151

¹⁶⁰ Hahn pg 36

¹⁶¹ Hahn pg 37

Wahhabism is a form of Islamic teaching derived from Saudi theologian Muhammed ibn Abd al-Wahhab (1703-1766). Where it differs from Salafism is that it is more of a theology than political ideology. It is founded on a pure, literal interpretation of the Quran and passages from the Sunnah, a sacred compilation of the Prophet Muhammad's words and deeds.¹⁶² Al-Wahhab implemented a return to a pure form of Islam, devoid of any and all innovations emanating from abroad. Muslims who fail or refuse to comply with al-Wahhab's Islam, in particular Shiite or Sufis, are deemed worthy of death.¹⁶³ It is worth noting that the people who promote Wahhabism never define themselves as Wahhabists, but consider the term a derogatory label imposed by the intelligence and academic communities. To identify oneself with the name of a single man would be idol worship, but Al-Wahhab's followers call themselves "monotheists" and adherents to the original, 'pure' form of Islam.¹⁶⁴

Shortly before the first Chechen War (1994-1996), the Chechen insurgency started to be radically re-Islamicized. President Dudaev, who was previously noted to have a weak connection with Islam, began to adopt Islamic-tinged symbolism and propaganda, providing an opening to Islamists. Due to the continuously failed negotiations between the Kremlin and Chechen authorities in the early 1990s, Islamic militancy was able to flourish. Jeffrey Bale notes similarities between the Chechen movement and the Palestinian movement: "the older nationalist elements of the resistance movement have been displaced or supplanted by certain key Islamist commanders and a younger cohort of militant Chechens that has chosen to rally around them".¹⁶⁵ This was a process that gained force as radical and new types of Islamic elements were incorporated into the resistance movement.

¹⁶² Hahn pg 25-26

¹⁶³ Hahn pg 25-26

¹⁶⁴ http://csis.org/files/publication/101122_Markedonov_RadicalIslam_Web.pdf

¹⁶⁵ Hahn pg 37

In addition, the influence of foreign Wahhabists and other Islamic extremists were able to infiltrate the movement. They provided finances, guerilla- terrorist training, and theologically driven guidance to disenfranchised youth and vulnerable peoples. If negotiations between Dudaev and Yeltsin were successful or more productive, Islamic fundamentalism would not nearly have had the type of penetration and influence among the population that it did, resulting in a quagmire that continues to this day.

In Tatarstan

Understanding the historical significance and the impact of Islam in Tatarstan is imperative in order to analyze why they avoided conflict, unlike Chechnya. As described earlier (pg 10), Jadidism is a European-oriented Muslim reform movement that swept through the Tatar community in the 19th century. Jadidist thinkers were at the forefront of a renaissance of Tatar culture designed to bring Tatars into the contemporary world as both Muslims and as a nation. They acquired the modern tools of science, culture, organization and social thought. The father of Jadidism is considered to be Crimean Tatar Ismail Bey Gasprinsky. In the 1870s and 1880s, he came to Kazan to spread these educational reforms among the Volga Tatars. He was quoted in 1881 stressing the Tatar people's need for modern education:

“Our ignorance is the main reason for our backward condition. We have no access at all to what has been discovered and to what is going on in Europe. We must be able to read in order to overcome our isolation; we must learn European ideas from European sources. We

must introduce into our primary and secondary schools subjects that will permit our pupils to have such access”.¹⁶⁶

The jadidists modernization of education in Kazan’s Tatar schools provided not only religious education but put a premium on the study of the natural and social sciences as well as the study of languages such as Russian, Arabic and Tatar.¹⁶⁷ Jadidists began to secularize and rationalize Islam, turning the Tatar people into the some of the most modern Muslims in the world. The late 19th/early 20th century Tatar nationalist movement, with strains of democracy, socialism and federalism was a direct outgrowth of jadidist thought.¹⁶⁸ Jadidism is considered by some to be an ideological antidote to both moderately conservative Islam indigenous to Russia and reactionary foreign forms of Islam.¹⁶⁹

Similar to occurrences in Chechnya, Gorbachev’s liberalization and perestroika programs in the 1980s produced a religious revival in Tatarstan after years of atheistic propaganda and lack of religious freedom. However, because Jadidism was founded on the principles of modernization, education and secularism, the chances of Islam being transformed into a radical form was not likely. President Shaimiev’s top political advisor, Rafeal Khakimov, believed that the revival of Jadidism was important to avoid radical re-Islamization.¹⁷⁰ Khakimov became Tatarstan’s leading ideological patron of a jadidist revival. He declared, “I live in Tatarstan and do not want to be like an Arab of the Middle Ages,” and believed that jadidist revival would allow Russia’s Tatars to advance rather than hinder ethnic Tatar’s modernization. Thereby, it would secure a place for them in a rational,

¹⁶⁶ <http://www.iccrimea.org/gaspirali/fahredden.html>

¹⁶⁷ Hahn pg 174-177

¹⁶⁸ Hahn pg 174-177

¹⁶⁹ Hahn pg 183

¹⁷⁰ Hahn pg 183

globalized, high-tech, democratizing world.¹⁷¹ According to Khakimov, the Quran is a writing that is “aimed at all peoples” and portrays a tolerant attitude to peoples of all religions.¹⁷² Furthermore, Khakimov asserted Tatars in Russia should not seek the establishment of Shariah Law, but should live like Muslims in Turkey i.e. live in a secular state and transform Russia into a fully multi-cultural, democratic federation:

“The Shariah does not function in Russia...Muslims should settle into this way of life...This country is no worse and no better than Muslim states, it is simply different. We cannot be made a Saudi Arabia, and we can hardly become Christian Europe. We are as we are. The date tree does not grow on Russian soil”.¹⁷³

Khakimov also spoke on Tatarstan’s global task:

“For the Tatars salvation is in the future, not the past. And our path to progress was begun by the jadidists, who following the Prophet’s testament began the reform of Islam...Our mission is the spreading of tolerance which can strengthen all mankind with common ties”.¹⁷⁴

Because intellectuals and members of the intelligentsia in Tatarstan have played such a large role in forging Tatar identity throughout their history, they were far less susceptible to being drawn in by radical forms of Islam. Khakimov played an instrumental role in advising President Shaimiev during the negotiation process with Moscow. Deeply rooted in the history of the Tatar peoples, this exceptionally progressive and intellectual form of Islam was too strong to be overcome by foreign influences. Although radical Tatar Islamists and nationalists did exist and did play a role, President Shaimiev and his administration brilliantly expounded that Islam’s central place was in Tatar

¹⁷¹ Hahn pg 183-184

¹⁷² Hahn pg 184

¹⁷³ Hahn pg 184

¹⁷⁴ Hahn pg 184-185

national identity. They reconciled Islam and its potential to foster Tatar nationalism with its history of reformed Islam, jadidism, to restrict any emerging Islamic nationalism.

Политический Ислам на Кавказе

В этом разделе, я переводил стенограмму конференции Фонда Карнеги за Мир, обсуждение между гостем Алексеем Малашенко и регулятором Томасом Де Ваал:

Де Ваал: В этой сессии мы надеемся пролить свет на сложность ислама на постсоветском Кавказе. Для различных типов ислама; – Салафизм, Шиизм, Суфизм— это нормальный процесс возвращения религии на постсоветское пространство, но, очевидно, есть и спорные моменты.

Малашенко: Спасибо, Том. Спасибо, что пришли послушать. В самом деле, я начну с Ислама на Северном Кавказе. мы говорим так много об этой проблеме, не только в Москве и на самом Кавказе, но и здесь в Вашингтоне, и в Европе, потому что это не проблема религии; это проблема политической жизни, это проблема общества, это проблема идеологии. В противном случае, мы никогда не обращали внимания на проблемы ислама на Кавказе.

Раньше, в последние 10 лет, когда мы говорили об исламе на Кавказе, обычно мы упоминали восточную часть региона, самые большие республики на Кавказе—на русском Кавказе, я подчеркиваю—Дагестан, республика Чечня, Ингушетия и так далее. Так, с этой

точки зрения, с точки зрения Ислама, Кавказ может быть разделен на две большие части: восточную и западную.

Что у нас есть сейчас? Теперь ислам развивается в радикальном восточном направлении. Исламская деятельность, деятельность радикальных мусульман и проблема того, как устанавливать законы Шариата-Исламского закона--охватывает не только Чечню и так далее, но республики в южной части Кавказа, как Карачаево-Черкесии, Кабардино-Балкарии и так далее.

Так, в последние 10 лет, мы наконец понимаем, что Ислам-общая проблема для всего этого региона, и не только для конкретной территории. Я просто не хочу рассматривать отдельные теологические нюансы потому что, как обычно, не обычно, но иногда, когда в Москве, например, или в других центрах России, если люди говорят об исламе, они обычно говорят о различиях между Ваххабизмом, Фундаментализмом, Исламизмом, Джихадизмом, Салафизмом и так далее.

Конечно, все понимают, что эти различия существуют, но, если вы спросите на Кавказе, например, в Дагестане или Ингушетии, если вы зададите тот же вопрос: какое общество вы предпочитаете...Ваххабизм, Салафи, или Исламизи, ответ будет очень прост: Мы хотим чтобы общество было Исламизированно, или мы хотим Исламское государство, несмотря на все различия между «традиционным» Исламом, «не традиционным» Исламом, «Новым» Исламом и Исламом из-за рубежа.

Люди, которые смотрят с точки зрения Ислама, обычно пытаются объяснить свою позицию в двух направлениях: если мы сравним ислам сегодня и ислам сразу после распада Советского Союза, я думаю, есть большая разница. Первые 10 лет после распада

Советского Союза были Исламским возрождением. Это был нормальный процесс. Это была реакция против коммунизма, советизма, атеизма и так далее. Исламский ренессанс состоял в увеличении числа мечетей, создании системы образования—Исламской системы образования—а также в изменении менталитета. В самом деле, практически все мусульмане чувствовали, что они не просто жители Кавказа или пост-Советов в своём менталитете. Их самоидентификация не русский, они мусульмане, и они принадлежат к чему-то большему, исламской умме.

Это было очень важно и очень серьезно потому что это помогло мусульманам издаться от их комплекса неполноценности. Конечно, в России мусульмане-меньшинство, но вообще, они большинство, потому что они Мусульмане.

Я просто попытался описать Ислам в первые 10 лет. Если в 90-х основным трендом был ренессанс который иногда называют «легализация ислама». Этот термин обычно используют мусульманские священнослужители. То, что мы имеем теперь, и о чём мы так много говорим, это следующая волна исламизации, или ре-Исламизация. О чём я говорю? Я хочу сказать, что раньше они думали о реконструкции ислама...Конечно, Исламская активность умножается, благодаря Чеченскому сепаратизму, восстанию в Дагестане и так далее.

Но вообще они думали, как спасти ислам. Вопрос в том, являются ли республики Северного Кавказа исламскими или Исламизированными. Если вы путешествуете по таким республикам, как Кабардино-Балкария или Дагестан и другим, вы увидите, что исламская самоидентификация растёт и растёт. Они не говорят об образовании светской

государства, они говорят о необходимости исламизации «Шариатизации» на Кавказской территории. Они сделали это, и они делают это.

Если вы переходите границу между Россией, в какой-нибудь русской области, и вы входите в такие республики, как Дагестан, Кабардино-Балкария, Ингушетия или Чечня, вы увидите, что вы находитесь в мусульманском государстве и даже в государстве глубоко Исламизированном. Я ничего не имею против ислама, это прекрасная религия, но он создает разрыв между мусульманским Северным Кавказом и всей Россией.

Ну, я упоминал раньше о некоторых изменениях, о возрождении, возрождении Исламской активности и так далее- это нормально. В то же время, мы должны понять и признать, что самый важный фактор исламской деятельности- это исламская политическая и идеологическая деятельность в регионе. Это, конечно, протест против того, что Москва сделала в регионе. Когда они (мусульмане) говорят о законе Шариата, это означает, прежде всего, что они считают, что русский федеральный закон не работает и никогда не будет работать. Они не понимают, как они могут жить в стране—в России— где законы не работают и полностью коррумпированны; как они могут выжить, как они могут существовать, как они могут жить в этой гражданской войне.

Конечно, есть много вопросов о терроризме, об исламском радикализме. По-моему, самое главное, что эта часть России, живет в состоянии гражданской войны каждый день. Каждый день кого-то убивают. Каждую неделю у нас взрывы. Это можно считать терроризмом. Хорошо, Я согласен. Но какой терроризм? Можно сказать, что это исламский терроризм, если мы признаем, что идёт гражданская война.

Это ненормально, но русская политическая элита в Москве, привыкла к этой ситуации с 2000 года. Владимир Путин и его команда не обращают особого внимания на эту ситуацию. Они не обращают внимания на проблему исламского радикализма, терроризма и гражданской войны. Эта ненормальная ситуация, связанная с Исламской радикализацией считается нормальной для политической элиты Москвы.

Так, проблемы Шариата, Исламизации, гражданской войны, и отсутствия понимания Северного Кавказа в Москве, способствуют отчуждению Северного Кавказа от России. С точки зрения гражданского общества, культура и религия на Северном Кавказе всё больше отдаляются от Москвы. Что я могу сказать о будущем? Я думаю, что перспективы Северного Кавказа безрадостные. Я пессимист, да, но я считаю, что у них нет выхода. Это вопрос между Кавказом и Москвой, который никогда не будет закрыт.

Существует проблема удара с Ближнего Востока, укрепление исламской деятельности в Египте и Тунисе, исламской деятельности в России—на Кавказе.

До сих пор реакция довольно слабая. Мы не наблюдаем его на улицах. Тем не менее, если вы говорите с мусульманами, если вы говорите с некоторыми политиками, вы узнаете, что будет реакция может быть, даже в этом году. Я думаю, что это практически неизбежно.

Так мы должны быть готовы к исламу как к вечному—постоянному политическому фактору на Северном Кавказе. Я буду продолжать верить, что в России, в Москве, будь ее лидер Путин, Медведев, или кто-то другой, они не смогут достичь нормальных отношений между этим регионом и федеральным центром.

В этом разделе, я переводил и резюмировал доклад что Сергей Маркедонов писал для Центра Стратегических и Международных Исследований в Ноябре 2010 года:

Радикальный ислам на Северном Кавказе: Эволюция угрозы, вызова, и перспективы

Россия сталкивается с большой парадоксой в ситуации на Северном Кавказе. Россия должна быть гарантом стабильности и безопасности на Кавказе, но Россия сталкивается с серьезными проблемами внутри страны в Северо-кавказком регионе. В середине 1990-х годов радикальная исламская среда формируется на Северном Кавказе. Новый проект называется “Чистый ислам” и развивается не так, как в советское время или во время этнического национализма. Этот проект приобрел массовую популярность не из-за неграмотности местного населения или их якобы «провинциализма». Радикальный ислам связал людей с религией мира и общечеловеческими ценностями, за пределами этнических групп. Ислам был связан с эгалитаризмом, борьбой против коррупции и социальной несправедливости. Идеологи «чистого ислама» использовали психологические методы воздействия. Они обратились к маргинальным молодежным группам, которым было отказано в карьерных возможностях или качественном образовании. В настоящее время нестабильность на Северном Кавказе не должна рассматриваться как этнический национализм или сепаратизм. После трагедии в Беслане в 2004 году, заявления делались под флагом радикального ислама, а не политического самоопределения. Исламский радикализм этнический сепаратизм представляю очень разные проблемы.

Различные группы и лидеры Салафитов на Северном Кавказе имеют важные особенности, которые позволяют нам оценить их политические и идеологические

ценности. Во-первых, на Кавказе радикальные мусульмане стараются отделиться от этнических националистов, которые готовы идти на компромисс. Они стремятся представить себя как часть «Глобального Исламского Движения». Во-вторых, антисемитизм является основным элементом все Севернокавказских прокламаций исламского радикализма. С 2000-х годов кавказских террористов стали использовать как смертников, и определили евреев и «крестоносцев» в качестве мишеней. Это зависит от арабских мусульман, которые в настоящее время успешно действуют на Северном Кавказе. Кроме-того, аль-Каида сыграла роль в кавказской исламской деятельности. Хотя аль-Каида не провозглашала на кавказе “Новой битвы джихада”, как в Афганистане или Ираке, но видеокассеты о кавказском терроризме были найдены в Афганистане и Ираке. Также, несколько представителей аль-Каиды организовали финансовую и идеологическую помощь повстанцам в Дагестане и Чечне.

Россия должна разработать стратегию борьбы с терроризмом в соответствии со своими общими целями. После двух войн с Чечней, некоторые русские чиновники и эксперты по терроризму пытаются освоить Израильские методы, чтобы бороться с терроризмом. Израиль успешно уничтожил часть террористических групп, однако, России нужна антитеррористическая стратегия, которая отвечает ее конкретным политическим и идеологическим особенностям. Кроме-того, израильтяне проявляют профессионализм в их усилиях, но надо сказать, что Израиль не своей целью интеграцию местного населения на оккупированных территориях. Велись незначительные разговоры об ассимиляции на оккупированных территориях. Так как целью Москвы является объединение республики Северного Кавказа и ее граждан с остальной Россией, стратегии

борьбы с терроризмом не могут быть смоделированы, как стратегии Израиля на Ближнем Востоке.

Скорее всего, Россия должна рассмотреть испанский, французский, или британский опыт, сочетая жесткое управление с “мягкой силой”. В борьбе с террористами сегодня Россия не должна использовать «псевдо-патриотическую» риторику; вместо этого, России нужно ясное понимание динамики, чтобы действительно понять причины терроризма как политического инструмента. Россия должна сделать различие между террористическим актом и бандитизмом. Кроме того, Россия должна разработать эффективную стратегию борьбы с коррупцией и внедрения альтернативных форм ислама, как на пример, европейский ислам.

Наконец, Россия должна участвовать в практическом сотрудничестве с Западом по этому вопросу. Вашингтон недавно включил Доку Умарова, лидера исламских радикалов на Северном Кавказе, в свой список международных террористов. Это был важный жест и часть “перезагрузки”. Конечно, госдепартамент США не может решить все проблемы насилия на Северном Кавказе. Эти проблемы внутреннего и чтобы преодоление их будет зависеть от качества государственного управления в России. Тем не менее, действия Вашингтона показывают, что Россия и США имеют общие интересы. Это хороший знак: преодоление “игры с нулевой суммой”, возможно. Необходимо организовать регулярный обмен информацией, касающейся деятельности исламских радикалов. Необходимо, остановить риторические кампании против друг друга и начать вести более предметный диалог.

Chapter 6

Political Aftermath: Tatarstan

After Shaimiev's first election and the success he endured in securing a peaceful solution to Tatarstan's independence, he was elected three more times. In January 2010, Mintimer Shaimiev stepped down as President on his own accord. Why did Shaimiev step down? Firstly, he is 72 years old and, according to Alexei Malashenko, "He (Shaimiev) is simply tired. He wanted to step down earlier, a few years ago, but was persuaded to stay on. For many years, no one in Moscow could imagine who else could possibly take the reins of this wealthy and strong-willed region"¹⁷⁵. Secondly, Shaimiev is confident that the system he has built in Tatarstan will continue to operate. Shaimiev endorsed his Prime Minister Rustam Minnikhanov to be his successor. Shaimiev has called Minnikhanov an "active" and "good manager"¹⁷⁶. Minnikhanov was appointed prime minister in 1998 after serving as Tatarstan's top diplomat and is the chairman of Tatneft, one of the biggest Russian oil companies. His biography on the republic's official web site says he holds a degree in economics and likes motor racing. He has raced in several international rallies, including the Desert Challenge in the United Arab Emirates in 2007 and 2008, as a driver of a Tatarstan-made KamAZ truck.¹⁷⁷ Lastly, Shaimiev will continue to play an important role in Tatarstan politics and has been named to the post of "advisor" in the new government. Moreover, Shaimiev has been working on important cultural projects such as the restoration of the Bulgar Museum and Park and the creation of a 'museum island' in Sviyazhsk, an amazingly beautiful place not far from Kazan.¹⁷⁸ According to Alexei Titkov at the Institute of Regional Politics, the peaceful handover of power appears to be

¹⁷⁵ <http://carnegie.ru/publications/?fa=40503>

¹⁷⁶ http://www.times.spb.ru/index.php?action_id=2&story_id=30673

¹⁷⁷ http://www.times.spb.ru/index.php?action_id=2&story_id=30673

¹⁷⁸ <http://www.carnegieendowment.org/2010/01/25/mintimer-shaimiev-steps-down-as-president-of-tatarstan/wru>

smooth and was completely Shaimiev's intention, rather than resulting from any pressure from the Kremlin.¹⁷⁹

Tatarstan is not without its fair share of problems, and as evident by a recent scandal in Kazan, suffers from similar forms of police corruption that engulf much of Russia. In March 2012, 52 year-old Kazan citizen Sergei Nazarov, died of injuries allegedly suffered during a sodomy attack by local police. Five officers were arrested and the incident set off local protests, casting a dark shadow over out-going President Dmitri Medvedev's police-reform campaign. In addition to Nazarov's death, at least 28 other citizens have come forward with complaints of egregious police misconduct, including one 22-year old man who claims that police sodomized him with a pencil and bottle¹⁸⁰. However, those in authority are being held accountable. Asgat Safarov, the head of the Tatarstan police since 1998, reigned amidst the scandal. According to RIA-Novosti, Safarov stated, "After all measures that depend on me have been taken — both bringing those responsible to justice and not allowing such cases to occur in the future — I have submitted my resignation"¹⁸¹. One of Safarov's last acts in order to attempt to rectify the situation was an order installing surveillance cameras in all rooms where police interrogations are conducted and will provide round-the-clock monitoring¹⁸².

Economic Aftermath: Tatarstan

Throughout the end of the 20th century and continuing into the 21st century, Tatarstan remains one of the most highly developed and economically efficient and prosperous regions in the Russian

¹⁷⁹ http://www.times.spb.ru/index.php?action_id=2&story_id=30673

¹⁸⁰ <http://www.themoscowtimes.com/news/article/tatarstan-top-cop-resigns-over-sodomy-scandal/456243.html>

¹⁸¹ <http://www.themoscowtimes.com/news/article/tatarstan-top-cop-resigns-over-sodomy-scandal/456243.html>

¹⁸² <http://www.themoscowtimes.com/mobile/article/454631.html>

Federation. Tatarstan citizens experience high standards of living and the republic's economic potential continues to grow considerably every year. Important sectors such as agriculture, construction, chemicals, and oil refining have grown considerably every year since 2007.¹⁸³ In terms of foreign trade, Tatarstan has positive ratio of exports to imports, a trend seen consistently since 2002.¹⁸⁴ Tatarstan is also leading the way for Russia in terms of incorporating clean forms of technology and addressing important environmental issues. In July 2011, Tatarstan via the Russian Federal government signed a treaty with Germany to create the "Tatarstan Clean Technology Fund".¹⁸⁵ The purpose of the fund is to encourage German-Russian cooperation with the strategic goal of modernizing Russia's economy. Projects which the fund will invest in are: 1) electric cars, 2) growing and refining bio fuels, 3) environmentally less damaging oil and gas extraction and 4) production of chemicals in a CO₂-negative fashion.¹⁸⁶ In addition, Tatarstan is planning on building a Moscow equivalent of Skolkovo (Russia's Silicon Valley project) outside of Kazan and is aiming to increase the role of Information Technology. IT accounts for 3.5% of the regional economy and the government is aiming to double that amount in the immediate future¹⁸⁷. Tatarstan citizens have the capacity to access government services online and for those without Internet access, touch-screen systems are present across the city for easy-access.¹⁸⁸ The immense economic and social progress Tatarstan has made since becoming an autonomous republic in 1994 is staggering. Unlike Chechnya, Tatarstan has flourished due to their negotiation and cooperation with the Russian center.

¹⁸³ www.napi.ru/default.aspx?mode=binary&id=53

¹⁸⁴ www.napi.ru/default.aspx?mode=binary&id=53

¹⁸⁵ http://rbth.ru/articles/2011/09/14/tatarstans_high-tech_transformation_13410.html

¹⁸⁶ http://rbth.ru/articles/2011/09/14/tatarstans_high-tech_transformation_13410.html

¹⁸⁷ http://rbth.ru/articles/2011/09/14/tatarstans_high-tech_transformation_13410.html

¹⁸⁸ http://rbth.ru/articles/2011/09/14/tatarstans_high-tech_transformation_13410.html

The republic is the ranked first in terms of economic capacity in the Privolzhsky Federal District of Russia¹⁸⁹.

Political Aftermath in Chechnya: Maskhadov

On April 21st, 1996, President Dzhokhar Dudaev was assassinated by a Russian air-to-ground missile. The Chechen President was talking by satellite phone to Konstantin Borovoi, a member of the Russian parliament who was trying to arrange negotiations between Dudaev and Tatarstan's President Shaimiev, as a first step toward direct negotiations with Yeltsin. Nearby, Russian forces used the satellite signal to target Dudaev with a missile that killed the Chechen President and two of his aides.¹⁹⁰ Commander Aslan Maskhadov became the "acting" leader of Chechnya while still leading the armies. On August 6, 1996, 1,500 Chechen fighters, led by Maskhadov, stormed Grozny and pinned down the 12,000 Russian troops defending it. As a result of the ensuing battle and air raids, 494 Russian soldiers were killed, 1,407 wounded and another 182 missing in action. It is estimated 2,000 civilians were killed and the battle turned more than 220,000 civilians into refugees.¹⁹¹ On August 31st, 1996, Maskhadov met with Russian General Alexander Lebed in the presence of the OSCE's Tim Guildimann. The Khasavyurt Accord was signed, which effectively ended the First Chechen War.¹⁹² It called for the demilitarization of Grozny and the withdrawal of federal forces from Chechnya.

In order to "reestablish political normality", Chechnya conducted new elections for Presidency in January 1997. General Maskhadov, the hero of the war and the peace, took 59.3% of the vote, followed by Shamil Basayev with 23.5%. International observers declared the elections

¹⁸⁹ www.napi.ru/default.aspx?mode=binary&id=53

¹⁹⁰ Gall and de Waal pg 318-321

¹⁹¹ Gall and de Waal pg 318-321

¹⁹² Evangelista pg 44

“legitimate and democratic” and even Boris Yeltsin’s spokesperson reported the Russian President was “satisfied” with the vote.¹⁹³ Maskhadov was portrayed as a moderate figure, who was concerned with asserting Chechnya’s nominal independence and sovereignty, within the framework of economic and political cooperation with the Russian Federation. However, Maskhadov was “unable to rein in the increasingly lawless and jihadist elements.”¹⁹⁴ Shamil Basayev was able to maneuver himself a post in Maskhadov’s government and this brought a leading Islamist near to the pinnacle of power in Chechnya. As his power increased, the pro-Islamist element within the Chechen separatist movement increased substantially. In 1998, Basayev and Saudi-born Commander Ibn al-Khattab began organizing terrorist structures with the goal of establishing a North Caucasus caliphate.¹⁹⁵ Khattab and Basayev were responsible for the most horrendous of the initial terrorist attacks in Russia.

The start of the Second Chechen War in August 1999 allowed Basayev and other jihadists to climb the ladder of power and weaken the more secular and moderate President Maskhadov’s hold on power. Although the government had a professed negative attitude to Wahhabism, it could not control its appeal to the people. The Chechen people’s religious faith and institutions, which had barely been restored in the Post-Soviet liberalization period, were heavily fragmented by the war and foreign influences. Religious differences became violent and the conflict left the average Chechen citizen confused and in despair. Traditional Sufi Chechens began to see the influence of Wahhabism, which in turn, further fragmented families. Fathers banished sons who were “infected with Wahhabism” and one father even claimed, “My son died for me when he joined that scum. He

¹⁹³ Parish, Scott, “Moscow Welcomes Election Results,” OMRI Daily Digest, no. 20, pt 1 (1/29/1997)

¹⁹⁴ Hahn pg 37

¹⁹⁵ Hahn pg 38-39

became then an alien man, cruel and dangerous to others”¹⁹⁶. Rustam Kaliyev like many Chechens at the time, viewed Wahhabism as the foreign religion:

Those who sympathize with the Wahhabites or join them are 80% young men from disadvantaged families in which devotion to the Chechen *adats* is weak or even completely absent. They study Islam from Russian translations...and their most powerful religious incentive is the foreign currency they get regularly from their new patrons. The fact is so well known that they make no attempt to conceal it.¹⁹⁷

In fact, in 1998, most citizens were no longer able to tolerate Wahhabites. President Maskhadov made an attempt to banish them from the republic by attacking the Wahhabite armed formations in Gudermes, but it was unsuccessful.¹⁹⁸ Shamil Basayev soon joined the Wahhabites in order to carry out new-armed actions with the goal of spreading separatism. He began the ideological and military training of radical youth from both Chechnya and Dagestan. On October 26, 1998, Basayev and his followers attempted a failed assassination of Mufti Akhmad Kadyrov.¹⁹⁹

The Kadyrovs & Chechenization

Mufti Akhmad Kadyrov was appointed Mufti of Chechnya in 1995. A Mufti is a Sunni Islamic scholar who is a prime interpreter of Islamic Law and is the rough equivalent of a Deacon to the Sunni population.²⁰⁰ Akhmad Kadyrov was born in Kazakhstan to Chechen parents who had been deported from Chechnya during Stalinist repression. They returned to Chechnya in April 1957 as a result of the policies of Nikita Khrushchev. In 1980, Kadyrov began studying Islam at the Mir-i

¹⁹⁶ Tishkov (1) pg 177

¹⁹⁷ Tishkov (1) pg 176

¹⁹⁸ Tishkov (1) pg 178

¹⁹⁹ Tishkov (1) pg 178

²⁰⁰ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mufti>

Arab Madrasah in Uzbekistan and in the early 90s, he returned to Chechnya where he established an Islamic Institute in Kurchaloy²⁰¹. Kadyrov was a strong supporter of Dzhokhar Dudaev and fought in the First Chechen War as a militia commander.²⁰² Initially, Akhmad Kadyrov was intensely anti-Russian and went so far as to declare a jihad against Russia in 1995.²⁰³ However, Kadyrov became disillusioned with the shift in focus of the independence movement. While the First Chechen War was fought for nationalism, the majority of Chechen forces were now foreign influenced jihadis such as the Arab Mujahideen in Chechnya. As Chief Mufti and the voice of Sufism for the Chechen population, Kadyrov was very critical of the Wahhabis. In 1999, he abandoned insurgency and offered his support to Russian federal forces during the Second Chechen War. According to James Hughes, Kadyrov's shift in allegiance is in part due to his personal ambitions, his concern with the desperate condition of the Chechen people and his fear of the growing Wahhabi influence on the separatist movement.²⁰⁴

After Russian forces seized Grozny in July 2000, Russian President Vladimir Putin appointed Akhmad Kadyrov as the Head of the Provisional Administration. Kadyrov stated shortly after his appointment that, as the Mufti of Chechnya, "he had no enemies except the Wahhabites".²⁰⁵ In an interview with Reuters, he stated, "(Russia) gave us everything that is Chechnya, (saying) do with it what you will, but we did not use it properly," when asked why he changed sides.²⁰⁶ On October 2003, he was officially elected the President of Chechnya where he remained pro-Moscow. He pushed numerous amnesty campaigns for former rebel fighters, granting them a position in the

²⁰¹ http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/english/doc/2004-05/10/content_329330.htm

²⁰² http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/english/doc/2004-05/10/content_329330.htm

²⁰³ http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/english/doc/2004-05/10/content_329330.htm

²⁰⁴ Hughes pg 265-288

²⁰⁵ Tishkov (1) pg 178

²⁰⁶ http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/english/doc/2004-05/10/content_329330.htm

Chechen police and loyalist militia (called the Kadyrovites) if they surrendered.²⁰⁷ On May 9th 2004, there was an explosion at the Dinamo Soccer Stadium in Grozny, instantly killing Akhmad Kadyrov among 30 others.²⁰⁸

During the reign of Akhmad Kadyrov and after, President Vladimir Putin has implemented a policy of “Chechenization”. This strategy was aimed at bringing the Chechen Republic into the constitutional field of Russia, in accordance with a scenario of "referendum-presidential elections-parliamentary elections."²⁰⁹ According to Zaindi Choltaev, one of its main components was "Kadyrovization," the formation of a mono-centric regime based on institutions closely controlled by the Kadyrov clan. Kadyrov was to transform the counter-terrorist operation “first into an internal Chechen conflict and then into a battle of the local police against a so-called ‘handful of militants’”.²¹⁰ After Akhmad was killed in 2004, Vladimir Putin installed Akhmad’s son, Ramzan Kadyrov as Prime Minister and both share a close relationship. In an interview with *Rossikaya Gazeta*, Ramzan stated, “If it were not for Putin, Chechnya would not exist. I owe my life to Putin”.²¹¹ Ramzan clearly understands loyalty and was also quoted as saying, ““Russia has never had such a president [as Putin]...If I had my way, I would make him president for life. He and his team are the only ones who can maintain Russia's might and its greatness”²¹².

The younger Kadyrov has followed in his father’s footsteps and has overseen the rooting out of separatist insurgents and the resurrection of Chechnya with help from Moscow. Russian policies towards Chechnya have been quite successful in rooting out Islamic insurgency and a decisive

²⁰⁷ http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/english/doc/2004-05/10/content_329330.htm

²⁰⁸ http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/english/doc/2004-05/10/content_329330.htm

²⁰⁹ http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=1999

²¹⁰ http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=1999

²¹¹ <http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1892517,00.html>

²¹² <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/people/profiles/ramzan-kadyrov-the-warrior-king-of-chechnya-430738.html>

moment in the campaign came in 2006, when Shamil Basayev was killed. Although insurgency in Chechnya has been relatively subdued, human rights groups question Kadyrov's aggressive tactics employed to achieve this end. Human Rights Watch researcher Tatyana Lokshina says, "The legacy [of the counterterrorist operation] is one of absolute impunity for blatant human rights abuses, such as disappearances, murder and torture" and that "Kadyrov plays by his own rules... Under his rule, Chechnya became an enclave outside Russia's legal framework where the Kremlin didn't interfere"²¹³. Police and paramilitary forces under his authority allegedly have committed flagrant abuses of human rights, including holding the relatives of insurgents as hostages under threat of death until the insurgents surrendered. Another technique has been the torching of relatives' homes and crops.²¹⁴ Ramzan is also well known for his lavish lifestyle and extravagant behavior. His "pets" include a lion and a rare and endangered tiger. He is an avid boxer who considers Mike Tyson one of his friends. In October 2011, he threw a much publicized, multi-million dollar 35th birthday party in which he invited Hollywood celebrities Jean Claude Van Damme and Hillary Swank.²¹⁵ When asked where the unemployment-ravaged region got all its money from, Kadyrov responded, "Allah gives it to us...I don't know, it comes from somewhere"²¹⁶. One Chechen citizen seemed very skeptical of this "New-Chechnya" and claimed, "My family only thinks about one thing: getting close to Ramzan's motorcade when he throws out 5,000-ruble [\$165] bills. It's humiliating. I can't take this feudalism and this movie-set scenery anymore"²¹⁷. Critics of Kadyrov have often suffered violent deaths, most notably journalist Anna Politkovskaya, who was murdered in her apartment

²¹³ <http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1892517,00.html>

²¹⁴ http://www.colorado.edu/ibs/waroutcomes/docs/EGE_2007_InstabilityGeopCulture_s5.pdf

²¹⁵ <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/people/profiles/ramzan-kadyrov-the-warrior-king-of-chechnya-430738.html>

²¹⁶ <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/people/profiles/ramzan-kadyrov-the-warrior-king-of-chechnya-430738.html>

²¹⁷ <http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2098122-2,00.html>

building Moscow in 2006 after exposing human rights violations in Chechnya. Kadyrov responded to accusations by saying, ““Why would I have killed her?” in heavily accented Russian. “She used to write bad things about my father, and if I had wanted to, I could have done something bad to her at that time. Why now?”²¹⁸

Rather than an enemy, Kadyrov has become a proxy for the implementation of Russia’s policies in Chechnya. However, there is reason to be skeptical concerning how far the trust goes. For example, when Kadyrov or his advisors are interviewed about his government’s claim for a piece of the revenue accrued from oil extraction on its territory, they are quick to draw an end to the interview. Chechnya’s oil reserves are controlled firmly by the Kremlin, but Kadyrov has historically been keen to claw back some of that money from the center. According to Kremlin sources, the bluntness of Ramzan Kadyrov makes several officials seriously concerned about how much power he has been delegated.²¹⁹ Kadyrov’s critics argue that Moscow may have made a “Faustian-pact” that it will come to regret. All things considered, Kadyrov is considered by both Russians and Chechens as a guarantor of peace, for the time being. Kadyrov insists himself that the future for Chechnya is bright, but questions linger of whether he will live to see it, considering how the last three Chechen leaders were violently killed. Ramzan also has many enemies including embittered elements of the Russian military who “can't stomach the fact that a former rebel is now backed by the same Kremlin that sacrificed the lives of so many troops”²²⁰. According to The Independent, if Kadyrov does decide to “slip from the Kremlin's leash”, many in the military would

²¹⁸ <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/people/profiles/ramzan-kadyrov-the-warrior-king-of-chechnya-430738.html>

²¹⁹

http://www.pol.ed.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0011/28676/Chechnya_from_enemy_to_proxy.pdf

²²⁰ <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/people/profiles/ramzan-kadyrov-the-warrior-king-of-chechnya-430738.html>

relish the opportunity of bringing him to heel. On the other hand, they are aware that would probably trigger a third Chechen war.²²¹ “The situation seems calm on the surface but it's not. It could blow up at any minute,” says Timurlan Ibaïlov, one of the myriad of unemployed men all seeking work at the marketplace in the Chechen town of Argun.²²²

Economic Aftermath: Chechnya

During the two wars in Chechnya in the 1990s, the economy practically fell apart. As an effect of the war, it is believed that approximately 80% of the economic potential of Chechnya was destroyed. Since 2000, the Russian government has spent over \$2 billion per year in order to repair the Chechen economy, however, most of the funds have been misallocated. Chechnya still suffers from incredibly high unemployment rates, lack of adequate social and medical services and a meager infrastructure. Although Russia officially ended its counter-terrorism efforts and withdrew the bulk of its army in April 2009, the situation in Chechnya is still far from being ameliorated. In order for Russia to maintain a relatively peaceful coexistence with the North Caucasian republic, the federal government must find ways to improve the socio-economic situation in the area. In Chechnya in 2006–2008, the number of unemployed was estimated to be between 300,000 and 330,000 people. While the average all-Russia rate was 7.3 percent unemployed in 2006 and 6.1 percent in 2007, in the Caucasus the unemployment rate was 13.7 percent and 11.7 percent respectively.²²³ The unemployment rate for Chechen youth is also astoundingly high. It is believed that 70 to 80 percent of people younger than 30 years old are unemployed. At the same time, the level of the shadow

²²¹ <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/people/profiles/ramzan-kadyrov-the-warrior-king-of-chechnya-430738.html>

²²² <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/people/profiles/ramzan-kadyrov-the-warrior-king-of-chechnya-430738.html>

²²³ http://csis.org/files/publication/101122_Markedonov_RadicalIslam_Web.pdf

economy in Chechnya is close to 87 percent.²²⁴ Conversely, Chechnya, along with other North Caucasian republics are at the top of the most subsidized constituencies of the Russian Federation. In 2004, the Russian state lost 50 billion rubles to the shadow economy, though financial aid to the Caucasus republics was estimated at 47 billion rubles.²²⁵ This would indicate that the Russian Federation is not ignoring the region by not sending funds, however, it demonstrates that the investment is misallocated and that there is a desperate need for viable institutions.

Furthermore, during the last five to six years, Chechnya's GDP decreased at a rate of 3–5 percent annually²²⁶. Per capita public expenditures of the republican budget put it in 88th place of the 89 subject regions of the Russian Federation²²⁷. Mass surveys in the North Caucasus reveal widespread dissatisfaction with the “lack of economic opportunity.” Young people are especially inclined to believe that they will never “be able to get a job [they] really want.”²²⁸ In addition, UNICEF has been active in reporting about the republic's lack of adequate social services. Particularly in the water and sanitation and health sectors, access remains insufficient in Chechnya, especially for women and children. IDPs are estimated at over 100,000 in Chechnya.²²⁹

If Russia truly wants to pacify the area and ensure that the republic develops peacefully in the future, improving the socio-economic situation of Chechen youth must be the priority. While Moscow plans to spend roughly \$170 billion on the military in the North Caucasus by 2020, this is almost \$40 billion more than what Moscow was planning to spend on the overhaul of the infrastructure and economic projects in the North Caucasus under the special federal program by

²²⁴ http://csis.org/files/publication/101122_Markedonov_RadicalIslam_Web.pdf

²²⁵ http://csis.org/files/publication/101122_Markedonov_RadicalIslam_Web.pdf

²²⁶ http://www.colorado.edu/ibs/waroutcomes/docs/EGE_2007_InstabilityGeopCulture_s5.pdf

²²⁷ http://www.colorado.edu/ibs/waroutcomes/docs/EGE_2007_InstabilityGeopCulture_s5.pdf

²²⁸ http://www.gwu.edu/~ieresgwu/assets/docs/pepm_028.pdf

²²⁹ http://www.unicef.org/har07/files/North_Caucasus.pdf

2025.²³⁰ In July 2011, the Russian government announced plans to invest up to \$86 billion on North Caucasus economic development and attract another \$47 billion in private investment. Even though government investment would amount to only about \$6 billion per year over the life span of the program of 14 years, Russia's finance ministry still decided it could not afford it. Were the program to be implemented, the average monthly salary in the North Caucasus after 14 years would increase from the current \$330 to \$770. The latter number is lower than even the current average wages in Russia.²³¹ Similar to the inadequacy of social services to the population, Chechen citizens have very little faith in the republic's institutions. There are exorbitantly high levels of corruption and a high degree of social apathy exists among most of the population.²³² Courts maintain a highly negative stance: 54-90% of enterprises feel they do not have the slightest chance in court in disputes with regional authorities²³³.

According to Anatoly Savateev, [because of] "The flawed policies conducted both by the federal center and the republican leadership, the Russian pseudo-reforms hit the North Caucasus particularly hard. The overall fall in industrial output; the breakdown of agriculture; massive unemployment; and the drastic deterioration of living conditions of people were partially responsible for the growth of extremist ideas, notably those inspired by the Wahhabi doctrine".²³⁴

²³⁰ http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,THE_JF,,RUS,,4ee0806c2,0.html

²³¹ http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,THE_JF,,RUS,,4ee0806c2,0.html

²³² <http://studies.agentura.ru/centres/csrc/caucasus.pdf>

²³³ <http://studies.agentura.ru/centres/csrc/caucasus.pdf>

²³⁴ http://www.colorado.edu/ibs/waroutcomes/docs/EGE_2007_InstabilityGeopCulture_s5.pdf

Conclusion

Chechnya and Tatarstan have had sharply different experiences in dealing with Russian authorities throughout their respective histories. However, there was potential for violent outcome in Tatarstan just as equally as there was potential for a peaceful solution in Chechnya. Important differing degrees of historical grievances, personal relationships between leaders, as well as socio-economic conditions were the main contributing factors to these different outcomes. The important structural differences between these two societies are rooted in various psychological, cultural, political and economic dynamics. Tatars have had a long history of integration into Russian and Soviet society with equally important intellectual ways of coping with repression of their ethnic identity. On the other hand, Chechens have had relatively incessant traditions of armed resistance, a fragmented civil society and also faced more prejudice from Russian society than did the Tatars. This issue is less about a so-called “clash of civilizations” but a look at how severe differences in modernity can result in drastically different outlooks for two *seemingly* similar groups. Tatarstan’s balanced economy, with a lack of youth underemployment, and its steadfast political and intellectual elite were cornerstones of their diplomatic and cohesive society. Chechnya’s lack of a coherent narrative among its elite and undiversified economy created a fertile social base for radical nationalists to emerge and ultimately take control. Today, Tatarstan enjoys a high standard of living for its citizens and its capital, Kazan, will be a major city for the 2016 World Cup in Russia. Islamic activity has increased in Tatarstan recently, but it is connected with non-violent origins. Levels of Islamic insurgency in Chechnya certainly have dissipated dramatically compared to just 5 years ago, but their political and social institutions are still heavily disjointed. It is hard to predict what a regime change in Moscow would do to the temporary peace that Chechnya has seemingly established. But with Vladimir Putin’s reign over Russia continuing into the foreseeable future, Russia’s policies of “Chechenization” will apparently continue, but hopefully not at the expense of Chechnya’s sustainable political and economic future within Russia.

Bibliography

- Bersanova, Zalpa. "The Value System of Contemporary Chechens." In *Chechnya and Russia: Societies and States*. Edited by D. E. Furman. Moscow: Polinform-Taliburi, 1999, 223-.
- Derlug'ian, Georgii. "Chechnya and Russia: Societies and States." In *The Chechen Revolution and Chechen History*. Edited by D. E. Furman. Moscow: 1999, 197.
- Dunlop, John B. *Russia Confronts Chechnya: Roots of A Separatist Conflict*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
- Evangelista, Matthew. *The Chechen Wars: Will Russia Go the Way of the Soviet Union*. Washington D.C.: The Brookings Institution Press, 2002.
- Farukshin, M. "Politicheskaya Elita v Tatarstane: Vyzony Vremeni i Trudnosti Adaptatsii" " *Polis* 6, (1994).
- Frank, Allen J. *Islamic Historiography and 'Bulghar' Identity among the Tatars & Bashkirs of Russia*. Brill, Netherlands: Brill Academic Publications, 1998.
- Gaal, Carlotta, and De Waal. *Chechnya: Calamity in the Caucasus*. New York and London: New York University Press, 1998.
- Gakaev, Dzhabrail. *The Chechen Crisis: Sources, Outcomes, Prospects (the Political Aspect)*. Moscow:1999.
- Hahn, Gordon M. *Russia's Islamic Threat*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2007.
- Hughes, James. "Chechnya: The Causes of a Protracted Post-Soviet Conflict." *Civil Wars* 4, no. 4 (Winter 2001). Database on-line. Available from http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/641/1/Hughes.Chechnya.Civil_Wars.pdf.
- Hunter, Shireen T. *Islam in Russia: The Politics of Identity & Security*. Armonk, NY: The Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2004.
- Iskhadov, Damir. "On the Identity of the Volga-Urals Tatars in the 18th Century." In *Islam in the Tatar World: History and Present Day*. Kazan, Tatarstan: Kazan Institute of Academic History, 1997, 22.
- Khakimov, R. "Uroki Strannogo Putcha." *Tatarstan* 10, (1991): 3-5.
- Kondrashov, Sergei. *Nationalism and the Drive for Sovereignty in Tatarstan, 1988-1992*. London, UK: Macmillan Press Ltd, 2000.
- Layton, Susan. *Russian Literature & Empire: Conquest of the Caucasus from Pushkin to Tolstoy*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University of Press, 1994.
- Lermontov, Mikhail. *A Hero of our Time*. Translated by Paul Foote. London, UK: Penguin Books, 1841.
- Mezhidov, D & Aliroev, I. *The Chechens: Customs, Traditions, Morals; the Socio-Philosophical Aspect*. Grozny:1992.
- Mostashari, Firouzeh. *On the Religious Frontier: Tsarist Russia & Islam in the Caucasus*. New York, NY: I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd, 2006.
- Multiple Authors. *Chechnya: From Past to Future*. Edited by Richard Sakwa. London, UK: Anthem Press, 2005.
- Payin, Emil A. and Popov, Arkady A. "Chechnya." In *U.S. and Russian Policymaking with Respect to the use of Force*. Edited by Payin, Emil A. and Azrael, Jeremy R. Santa Monica: RAND, 1996, 9-30.
- Pipes, Richard. *The Formation of the Soviet Union*. 6th ed. USA: First Harvard University Press, 1997.
- Riasanovsky, Nicholas V. "Asia through Russia's Eyes." In *Russia and Asia. Essays on the Influence of Russia on the Asian Peoples*. Edited by Wayne S. Vucinich. Stanford University: Hoover Institution of Stanford University, 1972.
- Roi, Yaacov. *Islam in the Soviet Union: From the Second World War to Gorbachev*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2000.
- Rorlich, Azade-Ayse. *The Volga Tatars: A Profile in National Resilience*. Stanford University: Hoover Institution Press, 1986.
- Sakwa, Richard. *Chechnya: From Past to Future*. London, UK: Anthem Press, 2005.
- Shakhbiev, Zaindi. *Fate of the Chechen-Ingush People*.1996.
- Tagirov, I. R. *History of the National Statehood of the Tatar People and of Tatarstan*. Kazan:2000.
- Tishkov, Valery. *Chechnya: Life in a War-Torn Society*. Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 2004.
- Tishkov, Valery. *Ethnicity, Nationalism and Conflict in and After the Soviet Union: The Mind Aflame*. London, UK: SAGE Publications, 1997.
- Toft, Monica Duffy. *The Geography of Ethnic Violence*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003.
- Trenin, Dmitri V., & Malashenko, Alexei. *Russia's Restless Frontier: The Chechnya Factor in Post-Soviet Russia*. 1st ed. Washington D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2004.
- , Deputy Speaker of State Council of Tatarstan June 8, 1999).
- Vatchagaev, Mairbek. "Remembering the 1944 Deportation: Chechnya's Holocaust." *North Caucasus Analysis* 8, no. 8 (1969).
- Zdravomyslov, A. G. *The Osset-Ingush Conflict*. Moscow: ROSSPEN, 1998.
- Ziolkowski, Margaret. *Alien Visions: The Chechens and the Navajos in Russian and American Literature*. Cranbury, NJ: Rosemont Publishing & Printing Corp., 2005.
- Zubov, Platon. *A Picture of the Caucasian Region and Neighboring Lands Belonging to Russia*. 2 Volumes ed. St. Petersburg, Russia: Vingeber, A., 1834.
- Zverev, Alexei. "Qualified Sovereignty: The Tatarstan Model for Resolving Conflicting Loyalties." In *Conflicting Loyalties & the State in Post-Soviet Russia and Eurasia*. Edited by Michael Waller, Bruno Coppieters & Alexei Malashenko. London, UK: Frank Cass Publishers, 1998, 118.

