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RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Books

Bennigsen, Alexandre, Wimbush, S. Enders, *Mystics and Commissars. Sufism in the Soviet Union*, London, C. Hurst & Company, 1985, 195 p.

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Erikson, John, Schneider, William, *Soviet Ground Forces: An Operational Assessment*, London, Croom Helm, 1986, 320 p.

Stahel, Albert A., Bucherer, Paul, *Afghanistan 1984/85. Besetzung und*

Widerstand, Huber & Co AG Presseverlag, 8500 Frauenfeld, Schweizerisches Afghanistan Archiv, Benzburweg 5, CH-4410 Liestal, December 1985. Contains numerous maps, graphics, bibliography.

Afghanistan: Six Years of Soviet Occupation, United States Department of State, Washington D.C, Special Report no. 135, December 1985, 16 p.

Les ordres mystiques dans l'Islam. Cheminements et situation actuelle, travaux publiés sous la direction de A. Popovic & G. Veinstein, Paris, Editions de l'Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, 325p.

Mohammad Es'haq, *Afghan Resistance: Achievements and Problems*, Jamiat-i Islami Afghanistan Political Office, Peshawar P.O. Box 264, January 1986, 16 p.

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No. 7, M.E. Rasul-Zade, *O panturanisme. V sviaze s kavkazskoi problemoi* (On Panturanism), Oxford, 1985, 93 p.

No. 8, Mustafa Chokay-Oglu, *Turkestan pod vlast'iu Sovetov*, (Turkestan Under Soviet Power), Oxford, 1986, 150 p.

No. 9, P.G. Galuzo, *Turkestan - Koloniia* (Turkestan - Colony), Oxford, 1986, 238 p.

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Voll, John O., "Muslim Minority Alternatives: Implications of Muslim Experi-

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"How many faces has Chingiz Aitmatov?", *Arabia*, January 1986, pp. 40-41.

Alptekin, Erkin, "Eastern Turkestan: An Overview", *Journal, Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs*, Vol. VI, No. 1, January 1985, pp. 127-136.

Hayit, Baymirza, "Western Turkestan: The Russian Dilemma", *Journal, Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs*, Vol. VI, No. 1, January 1985, pp. 137-151.

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- Alfred L. Atherton, Jr., "The Soviet Role in the Middle East: An American View," pp. 688-715.

- Rashid Khalidi, "Arab Views of the Soviet Role in the Middle East," pp. 716-732.

- Larry C. Napper, "The Arab Autumn of 1984: A Case Study of Soviet Middle East Policy," pp. 733-744.

- Alexander J. Bennett, "Arms Transfer as an Instrument of Soviet Policy in the Middle East," pp. 745-774.

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Sheehy, Ann, "Uzbek Cotton Harvest Falls Short of Target", RL 414/85, December 12, 1985.

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SOVIET BOOKS AND PERIODICALS

Nurulkhakov, K., *Islam i natsional'nye otnosheniia* ("Islam and National Relations"), Dushanbe: Irfon, 1985, 43 pages, 4000 copies, in Tajik.

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Zevelev, A.I., and others, *Basmachestvo: vozniknovenie, sushchnost', krakh* ("The Basmachi: Origins, Essence, Failure"), Erevan, Aiastan, 1985, 338 pages, 5000 copies, in Armenian. (Translation from the Russian.)

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Bekmetov, E., *Trudovoi kollektiv i ateisticheskoe vopitanie* ("The Labor Collective and Atheistic Education"), Tashkent: Uzbekistan, 1985, 56 pages, 6000 copies, in Uzbek.

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Nabiev, A., Asrarov, Kh., *Ispol'zovanie toponimicheskikh materialov pri izuchenii kursa istorii Uzbekskoi SSR: Metod. posobie dlia uchitelei-istorikov ped. vuzov i obshcheobrazovat. shk.* ("The Use of Place-Name Materials in Teaching Courses on the History of the Uzbek SSR: A Methodological Text for Teachers-Historians at Vuzy and Schools of General Education"), Tashkent: Ukituvchi, 1985, 144 pages, 4000 copies, in Uzbek.

Surapbergenov, A.S., *Religiia i moral'* ("Religion and Morality"), Alma-Ata: Kazakhstan, 1984, 54 pages, 1000 copies, in Uighur.

Aidarov, S.S., Aksenova, H.D., *Velikie Bulgari: Putevoditel' po bulgar. ist.-arkh. zapovedniku* ("The Great Bulgars: A Travel Guide to Bulgar Historical-Archeological Reserves"), translation from the third Russian edition, Kazan': Tatar. kn. izdatel'stvo, 1985, 73 pages, 5300 copies, in Tatar.

Zhivogliad, I.N., *Selo, religiia i ateizm: (Sekuliarizatsiia sel.naseleniia v usloviakh nauch.-tekhn. progressa na etape rasvitogo sotsializma* ("The Village, Religion and Atheism [The Secularization of the Rural Population Under the Conditions of Scientific-Technical Progress in the Stage of Developed Socialism]"), Alma-Ata: Kazakhstan, 1985, 182 pages, 5500 copies.

Kratkii ateisticheskii slovar' ("Short Atheist Dictionary"), Ashkhabad: Turkemistan, 1985, 143 pages, 15000 copies.

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Gadzhieva, S.Sh., *Sem'ia i brak u narodov Dagestana v XIX - nachale XX v.* ("The Family and Marriage Among the Peoples of Daghestan from the 19th to the Beginning of the 20th Centuries"), Moscow: Nauka, 1985, 359 pages, 3200 copies.

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Sultanov, E., *Ognennye gody: (Vospominaniia uchastnika bor'by za stanovlenie Sov. vlasti v Karakalpakii posle Velikoi*

Okt. sots. revoliutsii), ("Fiery Years: Reminiscences of a Participant in the Battles to Establish Soviet Power in Karakalpakia After the Great October Socialist Revolution"), Nukus: Karakalpakistan, 1984, 79 pages, 4000 copies, in Karakalpak.

"Raspredelenie semei po chislu detei v vozraste do 16 let po soiuznym respublikam" ("The Distribution of Families by Number of Children under Age 16 by Union Republics"), *Vestnik Statistiki*, no. 12, 1985, pp. 73-74.

Article Reviews

All the following publications from *Nauchnyi Ateizm* refer to the decisions of the June 1983 Plenum of the Central Committee of the C.P. of the USSR on the need to increase and give prime importance to ideological and atheistic education, "whose significance and role is growing". Curiously, a recurring theme in all these publications is the need not to alienate believers.

I.S. Bolotin, *Kritika anti-kommunisticheskikh kontseptsii sovremennogo religioznogo natsionalizma* ("Critique of the Anti-communist Conceptions of Contemporary Religious Nationalism"), Moscow, *Znanie*, 1984, 63 p., 47, 780 copies. *Nauchnyi Ateizm*, no. 7/1984.

Bolotin's pamphlet is a general attack on Western sovietologists. Singled out for criticism are Walter Kolarz, Alexandre Bennigsen and Enders Wimbush, and for praise Col. Geoffrey Wheeler. The booklet attempts to present the Soviet Union as friendly and protective towards religion. Some main points made by the author are:

- A refutation of Western attempts at denigrating the process of *raztsvet* (flourishing) and *sblizhenie* (getting nearer) of the Soviet nations, and the claim that national and religious antagonism prevail. According to the author, Western specialists see the roots of this antagonism in the Kazakh uprising of 1916 (provoked by the massacre of Kazakhs by the combined forces of Russian peasant colonisers and Tsarist troops). At some length Bolotin tries to prove that the Kazakh uprising had links with the proletarian revolutionary movements of Central Russia, and to strengthen his assertion that the rebellion was truly "soviet" and "proletarian", he gives the example, with slight geographical confusion, of the 26 Baku commissars (pp. 38-41). There is also an attack on North Caucasian religious leaders accused of having sided with the Germans, the Ottomans and Denikin.

- The author defends the division of

Central Asia into separate states, the creation of new literary languages and use of the Cyrillic alphabet on the grounds that Turkic languages are unsuited to the Arabic alphabet, and that literacy would not have been achieved in such record time by using Arabic script because of the lack of cooperation from the Muslim clergy.

- The author claims that there has been an increased interest in the West in the Tatar political leader Sultan-Galiev. Western specialists are accused of trying to resurrect his teachings, especially his theories regarding "proletarian nations", his assessment of Islam as a "democratic" religion and his pan-Islamic leanings.

In an addendum, *Metodicheskie sovety lektoru* (pp. 59-61), the author notes that since the June 1983 Plenum of the Central Committee of the C.P. of the USSR, which has demonstrated the efforts of foreign sovietology centres in giving religiosity a nationalistic character, the number of lectures against religious nationalism has increased. Some warnings, however, are given to propagandists:

"A lecture criticising religious nationalism must have a theoretical character. This is due, among other things, to the fact that the listeners, especially the believers, must be shown the 'business' aspect of religion in the concepts of the bourgeois and clerical ideologists. They need religion merely as a means of influencing believers for their own mercenary goals. The interest of 'sovietologists' is primarily politics - religion being used by the bourgeoisie to achieve its political aims.

"In lectures it is important to stress that nationalism takes precedence over religion in the bourgeois political consciousness. . . It should also be remembered that the bourgeoisie, when it was strengthening its political rule, was itself projected as an anti-clerical power." (pp. 59-60)

This booklet is similar to the numerous publications which immediately followed the June 1983 Plenum stressing the need to improve atheistic education in order to counter Western "propaganda" - it is superficial, and at times obvious that the author has not read the specific works that he is criticising. However, the references to Sultan-Galiev, whose ideas were taboo for over 50 years, are interesting in such a publication; indeed, mention of an increased interest in the theories of Sultan-Galiev in the West are not justified (the only scholars who have made an in-depth study of Sultan-Galiev are Bennigsen, Quelquejay and Wimbush, and their work on the subject dates back quite a few years). Could it be that there is a renewed interest in Sultan-Galiev in USSR?

M.P. Mchedlov, *Sovremennye sotsial'nye dvizheniia i religiia* ("Contemporary

Social Movements and Religion"), Moscow, *Znanie*, 1985, 64 p., 46, 470 copies, *Nauchnyi Ateizm*, 3/1985.

This booklet provides a general theoretical study of social-religious movements worldwide. It is fairly balanced except for those sections dealing with Islam. It aims to explain communist parties' collaboration with religious-based revolutionary and liberation movements, and attempts to defend the Soviet position from its Muslim detractors.

The author carefully analyzes why Islam plays an important role in national liberation movements and post-colonial politics of the Muslim world, but attacks "reactionary" Muslim politicians who try to inculcate an anti-communist spirit in the Muslim masses, in particular the Iranian clergy. Several pages are devoted to Afghanistan - "the anti-Afghan campaign of imperialist circles" is given as a "vivid example of the use of religion for reactionary political aims in order to delude the masses of the believers and poison them against the partisans of social progress" (p. 32). The author also admits that "the progressive forces of the Republic have met incredible difficulties".

According to the author, great harm has been done to the reputation of the USSR in the Muslim world by the *provokatsionnaia fal'shivka* translate (provocatory forged document) "Soviet Union and Islam", published several years ago, which falsifies the position of Islam and the nationalities question in USSR. The author generally shows concern about the increase of anti-communist activity in the Muslim world, and notes with particular concern that various movements, which could be put under the label of "Islamic socialism", have since the late 1970s veered sharply to the right, becoming increasingly anti-communist.

The author praises the decision taken by the communist parties of Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, Tunisia, Morocco and Sudan, at a meeting in 1981, to cooperate with political movements fighting for their "national integrity" with Islamic slogans. He concludes: "Constant and purposeful exposure of right-wing clericalism, political cooperation with left-wing religious forces, worldwide exploitation of the revolutionary potential of the working masses of believers, correspond totally to the needs of social progress in our time." (p. 63)

Problemy sovershenstvovaniia ateisticheskoi raboty na sovremennom etape (Problems of Perfecting Atheistic Work in the Contemporary Situation), Moscow, *Znanie*, 1984, 64 p., 46, 820 copies, *Nauchnyi Ateizm*, no. 12/1984.

This is a general study of religiosity in the USSR which describes some trends applicable to Islam. While noting the "deep crisis" which religions are under-

going in the USSR, the authors describe a "contradictory phenomenon": one witnesses "a definite stabilization and increased activity of some religious organizations, and the organization of active, although not numerous, groups of young believers, who provide most of the staff of the clergy and who are geared towards young people and actively renovate religious beliefs" (p. 6).

The following sentence probably applies to Muslim areas: "One cannot overlook the fact that . . . some religious activists try to fan the flames of fanaticism, extremism and religious nationalist moods which lead to brutal violation of Soviet legislation on religious cults," (p. 8) while the attraction felt towards religion by the young generation seems to be a trend common to both Islam and Christianity: "The attitude towards religion of certain young

people can only bring concern. A definite section of young men and women find themselves under the influence of religious organizations, and there is a process of rejuvenation of some sectarian communities." (p. 15) It is also noted (p. 21) that educated people, who for one reason or another become believers, are not "quietist" in their faith but deliberately active.

E.G. Filimonov, "Ateisticheskoe vospitanie na etape sovershenstvovaniia razvitogo sotsializma" ("Atheistic Education Under Developed Socialism), Moscow, Znanie, 1985, 64 p., 48,260 copies, *Nauchnyi Ateizm*, no. 8/1985.

General survey on ideological and atheistic education. Some information is provided on the Muslim areas of USSR: Filimonov confirms the fact (already

mentioned by Saidbaev and some Soviet ethnographers) that contrary to the European areas of USSR, in Central Asia and Caucasus, it is the rural areas which strongly influence the towns (p. 15). No details are given, unfortunately, on how or what this influence is, but it can be presumed that it is the higher religiosity and patriarchal way of life of the rural areas which influence the cities. Filimonov blames the existence of a conservative religious public opinion on the "active propaganda of the Muslim clergy". (p. 36) Quoting a novel by V. Mikhailova, the author shows that the reason for the persistent survival of kalym (bride purchase) is that it is seen by the parents of the bride as a security for the marriage of their daughter - having had to pay a heavy price the groom is less likely to abandon his wife for frivolous reasons (p. 37).

FOCUS ON DAGHESTAN

Sovetskii Dagestan, the political and literary journal of the Daghestani *obkom*, has been published six times a year since 1965. Articles in this journal provide remarkable insight into the religious life of Daghestan. It has come to our attention that since 1984 the journal has appointed a special censor responsible for checking that information provided on its pages cannot be used by foreign scholars. As a result recent issues of the journal have unfortunately been much less informative.

S. Murtazalieva, "Bor'ba idei i sovesti" ("Conflict of Ideas and Conscience"), *Sovetskii Dagestan*, no. 2, 1981, pp. 49-56, and Sh. Ismailov, "Vyshe uroven' ateisticheskoi raboty" ("A Higher Level of Atheistic Work"), *Sovetskii Dagestan*, no. 1, 1982, pp. 1-7.

Both these articles provide detailed information on the activity of the Sufi brotherhoods in Daghestan. They note the appearance, for the first time to our knowledge, of the Qadiris - or "Kunta Haji" brotherhood - in Daghestan from neighbouring Chechnia-Ingushetia. Until the 1920s Daghestan remained an exclusive stronghold of the Naqshbandi *tariqa* (brotherhood). Both authors also refer to the activity of followers of Ali of Akusha, Sheikh Amay and the Sheikh of Kakhib - all three Naqshbandis.

Sufism seems particularly active in the following districts:

- Agul in South Daghestan (which has no official mosque)
- Gumbetov, Botlikh and Untsukul in the Avar and Andi territories
- in the city of Derbent

- Dakhadaev district in the Darghin territory
- Levashi in the mixed Avar/Darghin territory
- Khasav-Yurt and Kaia-Kent in Kumyk country
- Novo-Laksoe (Laks displaced in Kumyk territory)

Upper Daghestan is singled out as being the most fanatical area of the Republic. The auls of Botlikh - which alone has two mosques - Andi, Gagatli, Zilo, Tlokh, Ansalta, Rakhata, Godoberi, Shodroda, Inkhelo, Miarso and Muni are designated as centres of "fanaticism". [Upper Daghestan - the Avar-Andi territory - was at the heart of Shamil's *Ghazawat* (holy war) and the 1920s uprising led by the Naqshbandis Uzun Haji and Najmuddin of Gotso against the Russians.] Adepts of the Kunta Haji brotherhood are now to be found in the area of Botlikh, and Gumbetov and Khasav-Yurt in the Kumyk lowlands (Murtazalieva p. 55). "It is well known that the population of Botlikh raion has inherited from the past a high level of religiosity. There are still two active mosques and in various areas can be found followers of the Kunta Haji sect. Because of this, one witnesses a revival of the activity of religious fanatics". (Ismailov, p. 4) [That the extremist and more xenophobic Kunta Haji *tariqa* should be gaining ground in the heart of Shamil's territory is not in itself surprising. What is surprising, however, is that the Kunta Haji should be recruiting followers from among the Kumyks of the lowlands, the majority of whom are city dwellers and industrial workers and who have always prided themselves as being the most religiously tolerant and progressive of the

indigenous peoples of Daghestan.] The Sufis are accused of various anti-Soviet and anti-social activities and of trying to "expand fanaticism among people and to oblige them to accomplish illegal and politically harmful acts" (Murtazalieva, p. 53).

1. Xenophobia

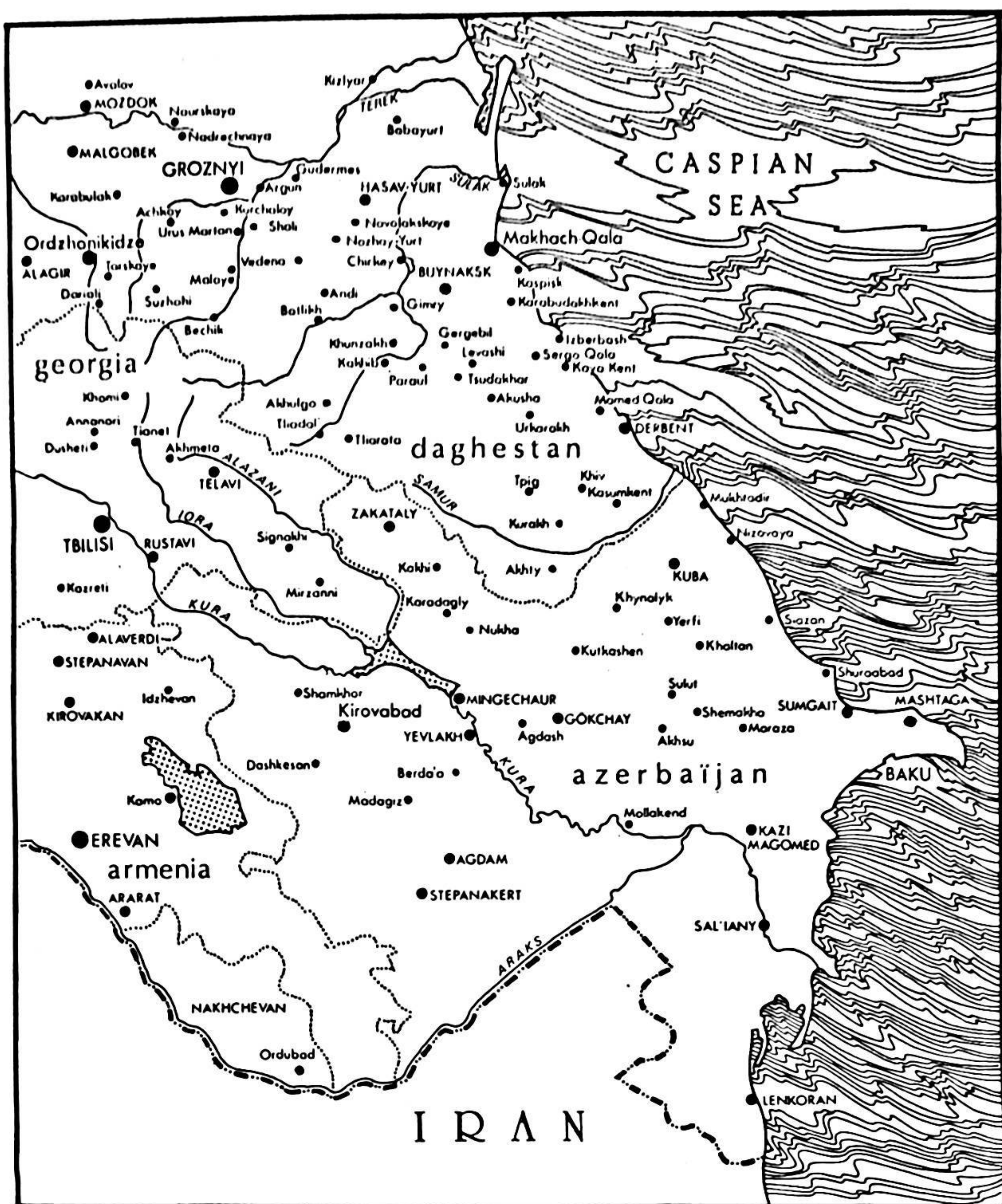
The Sufis are accused of promoting xenophobia and anti-Russian propaganda: "The clergy presents Islam as the only repository of moral and national virtues, and preaches the exclusiveness of Islam, thereby trying to induce in the people of Daghestan a negative attitude towards the Soviet way of life and the friendship among nationalities of different creeds. At the same time religious traditions are shown as being part of the eternal national patrimony." (Ismailov, p. 1-2)

2. Charitable Activity

Soviet legislation forbids churches to conduct any charitable activity. However, Sufi brotherhoods in the Northern Caucasus are accused by many Soviet sources of collecting the *zakat* - legal alms - one of the Five Pillars of the Faith (Murtazalieva, p. 55).

3. Education

Adepts of Kunta Haji, followers of the sheikhs Ali of Akusha, Amay, Kakhib and Khiderlezov (Naqshbandi) are breaking Soviet law: they do not take part in the life of the community, they are not members of the Communist Party and komsomols, their children are not



Dagestan ASSR: Created on 21 January 1921

Area: 50,300 km² in 1979

Population: 1,627,000

of which

1 Dagestanis:	1,267,000
Avars	419,493
Darghins	246,775
Kumyks	202,150
Lezghins	188,627
Laks	82,423
Tabasarans	71,703
Nogays	24,950
Rutuls	14,280
Tsakhurs	12,804
Aguls	11,462

2 others:

Azeris	65,000
Chechens	49,000
Tats	7,000 (?)
(including Muslims and "mountain" Jews)	
Volga Tatars	5,000 (?)
Russians	190,000

Capital: Makhach - Qala

Religion: Sunni Shafei *mazhab*: 76% approximately

Islam: Sunni Hanafi *mazhab*: 6%
Shia: 5%

Pioneers and they oblige them to go to illegal Quranic schools where they learn the fundamentals of Islam. Sometimes Sufi "fanatics" even try to forbid their adepts to "send their children to normal Soviet schools, go to the cinema or theatre..." (Ismailov, p. 2, Murtazaliev, p. 54).

4. Rituals

The central ritual of *murids'* (adepts) religious life is the collective participation in the *zikr* (lit. remembrance of God). The Qadiri *zikr* is a vocal one (*zikr al-jali*), accompanied by songs and dances leading to a state of religious ecstasy; thus the Qadiris are considered to be particularly dangerous. The *zikr* is usually interrupted several times to allow the *murids* to "brainwash the adepts with religious propaganda which sometimes acquires a purely nationalistic colour" (Murtazaliev, p. 53). The organization of religious meetings outside official houses of prayer and religious processions in public places such as parks and squares is equally illegal. However, "fanatical sectarians" continue to practice their rituals in the streets. For instance, in 1979, during the fast of Ramadan, a group of *murids* of the Vis Haji brotherhood (Qadiris) of the Khasav-Yurt district

from the village of Kazakbekov went to the village of Kilatl, in the district of Gumbetov, and there performed a *zikr* in public in the presence of children and officials (Murtazaliev, p. 54-55).

5. Samizdat

"We cannot accept the illegal distribution of religious literature" (Murtazaliev, p. 54).

According to information from private sources, this *samizdat* provides:

1. Extracts from the Quran reproduced by hand
2. Tapes on cassette of preachings in Arabic broadcast from the Middle East - mainly from the Gulf area.

6. Banditism

"The leaders of *zikrism* [Qadiris] attempt to completely submit their adepts to their will, to impose absolute discipline and to oblige them to carry out acts of an anti-social and illegal character... Religious fanatics are still committing crimes in our days. They are responsible for many crimes and lost lives." (Murtazaliev, p. 53)

This refers to highly publicized facts in Soviet publications such as the plundering of collective and state farms by the

leaders of the Batal Haji *tariqa* (Qadiri): "During the war, adepts of the Batal Haji went underground, they organized bands and committed crimes behind the front, killing Soviet soldiers and grabbing ammunition and produce." (Murtazaliev, p. 53)

7. Clandestine Mosques and Holy Places

Sufis are accused of running clandestine houses of prayer and holy places.

"In the Republic pilgrimages to so-called holy places have stopped; however, there are still cases of believers visiting holy places in the raions of Akhty, Untsukul and in the city of Derbent." (Ismailov, p. 5)

Both authors complain that atheistic propaganda is badly organised and ineffective, but they do not question the basic message or the value of the propaganda. There is no suggestion that the content of the propaganda should be changed or that new ideas should be tried, simply that the number of propagandists, lectures, and publications should be increased.

They also complain that the local judiciary is too lenient towards Islam: "During the last three years, only a few servants of the cult and fanatics have been tried for crimes concerning religion..."

This does not mean that the clerics have become loyal citizens . . . but it happens because there is no correct reaction against the law-breaking behaviour of the clerics." (Murtazaliev, p. 52)

"One can even find cases when no disciplinary measures are taken against those members of the Communist Party who have become reconciled with religious prejudices, reactionary customs and superstition and who even take part in certain religious ceremonies." (Ismailov, p. 5)

S. Murtazaliev, "Taking Into Account Local Conditions", *Sovetskii Dagestan*, No. 5, 1982, pp. 46-50. Excerpts follow:

During the years of Soviet power as the economy and culture developed, along with the increase in well-being of the workers, and the development of the whole complex of ideological work in our country, including in Dagestan, the roots of religious ideology were severely damaged. Under these conditions the overwhelming majority of the clergy occupied a loyal position in relation to the Soviet authorities. However, this does not mean that reactionary clerics refrain from attempting to influence the population, especially that part who are still believers. At present, the Muslim clergy attaches great importance to preaching. Without exception, all servants of the cult rely on sermons as a very effective means for preserving and spreading their influence among believers.

Preaching activity on the part of the clergy is not limited within the boundaries of the mosque. The clergy use meetings with believers in cemeteries, funerals, *pominki* (wakes), and visits to "holy" places, especially during group services and ceremonies organized for the occasions of Muslim festivals.¹

Often, the clergy act in the role of consultants on all sorts of questions in their spontaneous contacts with the people. Their individual discussions² are directed at actively winning around the workers and preserving and deepening religiosity among like-minded people or inclining non-believers toward religion. Such contacts are considered most effective and are seen by the clergy as important for strengthening its influence among believers . . .

One knows what influence muridism had in the past on the socio-political history of the North Caucasian peoples. Vestiges of this extremely reactionary phenomenon in Islam can still be observed up until the present time in Chechnia-Ingushetia and Dagestan. It is namely in connection with the activities of Muslim murid "brotherhoods" that religious fanaticism is preserved among a portion of the believers.³

Characteristically, the Muslim "brotherhoods" as a rule unite during national festivals . . .⁴

The servants of the cult try to find ways of preserving their influence among the young. One way is to use the weapon of ignorance: to forbid studying in school, in higher educational establishments. This to some degree explains the sifting out of some students, especially girls, from the older classes in those areas where a relatively high level of religiosity is preserved.

The servants of the cult place great hope on individual work with young people. Understanding that it is at that age that a person usually experiences a strong need for a spiritual mentor, advisor and friend, they actively seek personal contact with young people, and forcibly thrust upon them their solutions to moral and philosophical problems, especially on questions of good and evil, what one must do and not do, etc.⁵ At the same time these clerics try to give their edifying conversations a kindly character. In these intimate conversations the "self-styled sheikhs" *ustads*⁶ often shown an understanding of the problems which interest young people. Here, of course, can be observed a skilful use of the traditional respect for elders in Dagestan.

The servants of the cult attach great importance to prayer as a means of supporting the emotional incandescence of the faith.⁷ They consider participation in the cult's activities a necessary condition for the all-round religious education of the young generation. Emotion provoked by the collective performance of religious rites in the mosque or prayer house, and during pilgrimages to so-called "holy" places are considered by the clergy as the basis of a firm attitude toward religion. Taking into account the strength of the psychological impact of the cult's activities, representatives of the clergy try to attract children, in all kinds of ways, to collective worship.

Evidence of the pernicious influence of religious mentors on young people and children can be seen in the case when several young people, including high school students, participated in the religious festival of "shahsei-vahsei"⁸ in Derbent in 1981. Encouraged by the believers, they took part in the ritual of self-flagellation together with adults.

We have before us some pages of a school notebook, written in the hand of a schoolboy. They mention the coming of some sort of prophet, that prayer is pleasing to God, and that everyone must make copies of this document and distribute it to his relatives and acquaintances. These commands of the anonymous author are conveyed with threats against those who may not wish to distribute the pages. Unfortunately, with the connivance of parents, some of the schoolboys obediently recopied and distributed these leaflets.⁹

The Islamic clergy . . . attaches great importance to the early introduction of a child to religion. Early childhood is

considered a "golden" age for the awakening of a steady interest in religion. New evidence on the creation of groups for teaching religion to minors shows that preschool children are mainly drawn to them.

Evidence of the special interest the clergy takes in spreading religious influence among the upcoming generation is shown by the fact that the fundamentals of Islam are taught to children in groups, in various settlements. Teaching in the villages of Usisha, Tebekmakhi of the Akusha raion¹⁰, and others was carried out through the collective visits of schoolchildren to "holy" places. This was done not without gain. For every participant a specific amount of money was collected from the parents . . .

The clergy allot an active role in religious education in the family to women, because they bring up the children.

If up until recent times the role of religious mentor was played by women believers in the circle of their families, today in a number of places one may see them speaking publicly, openly intruding into the spiritual life of other families.¹¹ Their attempts at interference in the process of the moral development of members of labor collectives have been observed . . .

In their investigations and studies specialists on Islam and atheist propagandists take into account that Dagestan is a region where in the course of many centuries Islam played an important role and left a legacy of very firm principles which have become part of the everyday life and morality of the people, and are therefore very tenacious and difficult to overcome. A realistic assessment of these phenomena is necessary not only in order to define the range and complexity of the work done in freeing the masses from the influence of religious prejudices, but also to define further ways for overcoming them. Life demands that the measures for atheistic work along with controlling for the strict observance by everybody without exception of all existing laws on cults be implemented.¹²

Facts themselves demonstrate that in our Republic cases of violation of the law on cults by the clergy¹³ have not been eliminated. For example, in many settlements the majority of funerals are carried out according to religious custom with the direct participation of religious fanatics who are in charge of the cemeteries. Making use of the fact that in the first hours and days after a loss, grieving relatives can't control everything connected with the ritual of burial, the servants of the cult interfere in this process. They, as a rule, take the initiative into their own hands and use this opportunity to preach to the masses to observe the instructions of Islam. A particularly unattractive aspect in such situations is the

lack of principle of some of the activists and persons of responsibility. They do not interfere and do not keep the clergy away from participation in these rituals, or oppose their speeches.

Already in December, 1918, in a decree "On cemeteries and burials", the Soviet of People's Commissars decided that all cemeteries, and the organization of funerals, fell under the jurisdiction of the local soviets. Unfortunately, this law is often broken by the clergy.¹⁴ Moreover the servants of the cult are not only guided by the interest of Islam. Every burial is used for the extraction of material advantage. One should note that the clergy skilfully exploit people who are influenced by religion, by extracting large sums of money from them for their services . . . But there is another side to this interference. The reactionary clergy use the existing situation for activities which are alien to the Soviet way of life. At times they oppose the burial of children from mixed marriages or of a spouse who is of a different non-Muslim nationality in local cemeteries.¹⁵ Opposition to mixed marriages by the clergy is incompatible with the international friendship of Soviet peoples . . .

Representatives of the clergy are able to propagandize religion and carry out anti-social acts because of a compromising attitude toward them. There are many cases when the men who follow the wild custom of abducting¹⁶ their bride go unpunished thanks to the interference of the clerics and their recipe for marriage according to Shariat law. The servants of the cult convince the victim of this crude and cruel treatment to marry her violator to save her ruined life.

Some representatives of the clergy consider it un sinful to steal state property. They free believers from moral responsibility from a religious point of view for these crimes.¹⁷ On the initiative and connivance of the clergy, in a number of regions there are cases of private plots being distributed according to former ownership.¹⁸ This ignores the law on the nationalization of the land. Conditions are created for speculating in it.

The construction of wells, small bridges, irrigation canals, improvements to cemeteries at the expense of the masses (through money collected from them) are presented by the clergy as examples of their charitable activities. Frequently, without having taken so much as a ruble out of their own pockets, they actively interfere in the expenditure of state money. This is done in the name of Islam – more importantly, in the interest of strengthening their own authority . . ."

Explanatory notes

1 Collective prayers outside the mosque strictly forbidden by Soviet law.

2 Modelled on the "individual talks" of

the antireligious *agitpropshchiki* (propaganda workers).

3 Here "muridism" is synonymous with the Naqshbandiya.

4 Probably as a show of opposition to the Russians.

5 A very precise description of the "mechanism" of a *tariqa* based on a personal relation between master and disciple.

6 *Ustad* synonymous with Sufi *murshid* (master).

7 Probably *zikr*.

8 The public performance of Ashura (Shahsei-Vahsei) is forbidden by Soviet law.

9 A curious form of school *samizdat*.

10 In the Darghin country middle mountains, formerly less "fanatical" than Upper Daghestan (Avar country). Both activities – religious education and pilgrimage to holy places – can only be organised by a *tariqa*.

11 A completely new and important phenomenon.

12 A candid attack against those who are too tolerant toward religion.

13 The Russian term used is *dukhovniki* – an exact translation of *ruhaniun* – i.e. Sufis.

14 A candid acknowledgement that after 65 years the Soviets are unable to impose their law.

15 This shows that the Muslims in Daghestan as Shafei are more rigorist than Hanafis elsewhere in the Soviet Union – even children of mixed marriages are not deemed Muslim.

16 *Umykanie* – marriage by abduction – has of course nothing to do with Islam, but it is often prearranged in order to avoid the payment of *kalym*. The "interference" of the *dukhovniki* shows how strong the influence is of the *tariqa* in the social life of Daghestan.

17 This may refer to the Qadiri Batal Haji and Vis Haji *tariqa* living completely outside Soviet legality.

18 Another candid acknowledgement that in Daghestan the traditional system is stronger than the Soviet (*kolkhoz*) and that the *tariqa* are considered to be wardens of the traditional social system.

S. Muslimov, "V poiskakh ubeditel'nosti. Nekotorye voprosy ateisticheskoi propagandy" ("In Search of Conviction. Some Problems of Atheistic Propaganda"), *Sovetskii Dagestan*, No. 6, 1983, pp. 34-43.

The article deals with the problems and lack of sympathy and response facing the propagandist, and with the reasons for the need to educate the elderly. The author – a university lecturer in philosophy – has worked on atheistic propaganda for over 20 years, and claims to have visited all areas of Daghestan, and reads an average of 50-60 lectures a year on atheism.

Muslimov begins by complaining that people often have the mistaken idea that a propagandist is only able to transmit the notion of godlessness, that he does not have anything positive to offer. He is greeted with a distinct prejudice, or at best indifference and lack of understanding. The moral teachings of Islam are still valued by most people:

"Sociological surveys conducted by the department of philosophy of the Daghestan university 'V.I. Lenin' in 1981-1983 to study the growth of scientific atheistic convictions among the students of the Republic, showed that a certain number of them consider that religion strengthens the moral base of society, teaches self-improvement, combats drunkenness, thieving, etc. These surveys confirm that it is the moral values which are the most important factor in attracting people to religion." (p. 35)

The author then refutes that religion and morals are synonymous: "for instance the population of Daghestan was characterised in the past by a high degree of religiosity, but criminality was also high." This, claims the author, is still the case today:

"We know of many examples when religion becomes for some people a weapon to justify anti-social activities and even crimes. Many sectarians impose their anti-social way of life on their followers and on the population at large. Thus the *murshids* ("nastavniki" – masters) of the *murid* group of Akusha in the Akusha raion of Daghestan¹ tried their best to hinder the communist education of their families, opposed the enrollment of children in the *komsomol* and their education in schools, forbade their sons to serve in the Soviet army. In the "Red Army" settlement of Buynaksk raion² a group of believers tried to sow a religious-nationalistic frame of mind among the population. Some champions of religion suggest that to steal government property is not a sin . . . The first secretary of the (Daghestani) obkom, M. Iu. Iusupov, drew attention in his report to the June 1983 Plenum of the obkom of the C.P. of the USSR to cases of violation of Soviet legislation on cults by some extremist members of the Muslim clergy who ignore the principles of the socialist way of life: There are quite a few self-styled mullahs in the Republic, some of them belonging to extremist tendencies, who organise illegal assemblies and try to control all religious and ritual practices. The *murid* groups have recently increased their activity. There are cases when reactionary servants of the cult openly stand up against socialist standards and are not rebuked by Party organizations." (p. 37)

Interestingly the author reveals that Marxist dialectic is used to defend religion:

"Experience has shown that there are quite a few people among the believers and also non-believers who do not recognise that religion harms the society and the personality. The majority of such people are to be found among those of a certain age,

but also among the young and even the students. Their reasoning can be summarized in this way: the reactionary harmful character of religion is a thing of the past, of class-antagonistic societies. In a socialist society where the church is loyal to Soviet power and supports science, enlightenment and the peace-loving foreign policy of USSR, where believers and atheists are participating together in constructive work, religion is supposed to have become a harmless manifestation." (p. 37)

The author blames this tolerant attitude on the fact that young people have not personally experienced religious oppression, but also on "the intensified modernisation of religious ideology by theologians which aims at hiding the reactionary essence of religion. This develops a sympathetic attitude towards religion among some people."³ (p. 38)

Nationalism

"It is well known that religious survivals are closely linked to other survivals, particularly nationalist ones, which are often brought forward in the guise of religion, while religious prejudices are spread under the flag of 'defence of national traditions'" (p. 39).

"Sociological research shows that identification of Islamic traditions and rituals with national ones is not characteristic of believers alone... A survey of 1620 students from various educational institutions of Dagestan has shown that 4% consider Uraza Bairam a national tradition; 10% and 3% view kalym and sunnet [circumcision] respectively as national traditions". (p. 39) According to the author, the Muslim clergy likes to stress in sermons the profound religious beliefs and total dedication to Islam of national ancestors, an argument which "strengthens the centuries-old prejudice about the identity of nation and religion..." (p. 39).

Educating the Elderly

To impose atheistic convictions on the elderly is considered absolutely necessary in view of the influence that the older generation has on the young. But according to the author the problems facing the propagandists here are "acute" as an "important section of the intelligentsia, including some atheist-propagandists are inclined to think that it is useless and even counter-productive to convince elderly believers". Many consider that this brings unnecessary conflicts between the generations and that atheism has nothing to offer spiritually to the old (p. 40). These difficulties are blamed on "the wrong understanding which has developed over the centuries among Eastern nations of the special respect due to elders. Some representatives of the rural intelligentsia and

even propagandists consider it awkward to deliver a lecture on atheism in front of elderly believers. They see it as a violation of the traditional respect due to the old." "For some reason it is considered acceptable for elderly people to impose their religious convictions on children and young people while non-believers are ashamed of defending and spreading their atheistic views" (p. 42).

"Young people must realise that to imitate without criticism the obsolete views and habits of elderly people, however authoritative and respected they are, can in no way be considered as a defence of national traditions. There are cases when young people hide their atheistic convictions from their believing parents because they are afraid of upsetting and offending them. They lead a sort of double life" (p. 42-43). Muslimov concludes that by hiding his views an atheist "acts immorally, deceives others and becomes accustomed to lying."

Explanatory notes

- 1 Akusha is in the Darghin territory. The murids referred to here are Naqshbandis.
- 2 In Kumyk territory bordering the Avar and Darghin countries. Probably Naqshbandis.
- 3 There have been increasingly numerous references to Muslim "theologians" in recent Soviet publications. In each case it is never made clear whether this refers to official clergy or Sufi *tariqa* or both.

I. Makatov, "Delo slozhnoe i tonkoe" ("A Complicated and Delicate Business"), *Sovetskii Dagestan*, No. 1 1985, pp. 38-43.

This is an article about the implementation of the "new rites" (civilian). The author states that there are two schools of thought: that which wants to eliminate all the old rituals and replace them by new ones, and the second favoring the elimination of religious rituals while keeping the truly national ones. The author divides the rites into three groups: the purely religious - Uraza (Ramadan), namaz (prayers), Kurban Bairam ('Id) - the national-traditional, and the mixed ones. Purely religious rituals are easy to identify while traditional family and social ones are more difficult to define. As a rough guideline the author suggests that all rituals connected with a happy, joyful occasion are usually "national" in origin while those connected with grief are "religious" - a typical example being funerals which "in most cases are a means of religious speculation. They are used by the modern Muslim clergy to influence the believers, and also in part the non-believers

including the young" (p. 39). He suggests that "it is essential to get rid of interference of religious figures in funerals and give their organization into the hands of the community." He recommends that those responsible for funerals should include such respected figures as veterans of the war, outstanding workers, intellectuals, and collective workers. The article provides the following information:

- "Pominki" - prayers on the 3rd, 7th and 40th days after a death - are occasions for huge gatherings in which sometimes even complete strangers participate. It is also customary for families of believers and non-believers alike to distribute *sadaqa* (voluntary contribution to mosque) during funerals and *pominki* (p. 40).
- Marriages - an example is given of a typical wedding in Khasav Yurt (Kumyk territory): 300 to 1000 people are invited; everyone who is not a close acquaintance brings 25-30 rubles in an envelope. In the case of relatives the present in kind is expected to be no less than several hundred rubles. The reason for this, writes the author, is quite obvious: the money goes towards helping the parents of the groom with their expenses, i.e. presents to the parents of the bride. These must include a gift of money - no less than 5000 rubles, clothes and jewellery for the bride, and other various presents to her brothers, sisters, and first cousins. Makatov notes ironically that in the olden days this was called *kalym*, but now it is modestly termed "present" (p. 41).

Despite the fact that the civilian marriage rite is supposed to correspond to the needs and tastes of young people, the author writes that they are not very popular, the chief obstacle being the survival of religious rituals. "In this context one must pay attention to the tactical subterfuges of the modern servants of Islam. In order to attract more people to perform Muslim rituals they generally present them as national. For instance, during the days of the Muslim feast of Kurban Bairam, religious figures recommend paying respect to one's ancestors and to the national heroes in their sermons... In some areas so called 'zash-tatnye' [term designating the Sufis] mullahs have taken complete initiative in organizing and handling almost all the social and family rituals and feasts. They have taken it into their hands, in full view of the whole community, to regulate not only religious affairs but also social and family life. Thus, in many areas of the raion of Akusha the cleric lords it over marriages and funerals."

AFGHANISTAN

(Extracted from *Monthly Bulletin* No. 57, December 1985, of the Afghan Information Centre in Peshawar. This is an assessment by Professor Sayd Bahaoutdin Majrouh on the situation to date.)

On December 27, 1985, it will be six years since the Soviet invasion in Dec. 1979. But actually the resistance movement in Afghanistan is almost 8 years old. Soon after the military coup of April 1978, when a pro-Moscow Marxist regime seized power in Kabul, armed resistance groups went into action in the countryside, mutinies broke out in Afghan army garrisons, etc. The growing insurgency

motivated the violent reaction of the communist regimes of Taraki and Amin. Thousands of people were jailed, tortured and summarily executed; mutinies were severely crushed. But despite the increasing terror, the resistance grew stronger and towards the end of 1979, the regime was not far from falling. It was at that moment that the Russians "invited" themselves into Afghanistan in order to save the situation.

The second stage of the resistance began with the Soviet invasion (December 27, 1979). Babrak Karmal and his Parcham faction was imposed, the rival communist faction of Khalq was dismissed from power and Amin, its leader, who was supposed to be saved from collapsing, was killed by his own Soviet comrades. After the invasion, the early months of 1980 were marked by a massive popular uprising in the rural and urban areas

(especially Kabul, the capital). The rural population invaded government headquarters, seized arms and forced communist party members and officials to flee to the cities. Thus the Kabul government lost control over the countryside. Since then the regime's attempts to re-establish civil administration in the rural areas have not met with any success. In some districts, entirely isolated and besieged government headquarters are kept with the help of the army, protected by tanks and mine fields; they have become military outposts and have nothing to do with civil administration; there are no civilians around to administer. Also during this stage, resistance forces grew in size, strength and organisation. Resistance leaders established bases in the neighbouring countries and formed mujahidin groups who are still fighting.

I. Present Situation: A General Picture

Since the beginning of 1985 and especially since Gorbachev came to power, an escalation of Soviet military involvement in Afghanistan has been evident. The number of troops has increased from 110 to about 150 thousand. Damaged and destroyed military equipment is not only immediately replaced but also much improved. Large offensives were carried out all over the country: in the western provinces of Herat, Farah, Helmand, Kandahar, around Kabul, in the northern provinces, in Ningarhar and Kunar (eastern parts), and the latest one in Paktia in the south. In each major operation, between 8 and 12 thousand troops were deployed and over 50 different kinds of aircraft used. The main aspect of the escalation is the extensive use of heliborne special commandos. The Soviets seem to exploit their air superiority to the maximum.

Presently the Soviet occupation forces are carrying out operations on three different fronts: against the armed resistance, against the civilian population and against the economy.

1. War Against the Resistance Forces

The Soviet army, with its air superiority and fire power, is able to attack anywhere in the country. First, the area supposed to be a resistance stronghold is heavily bombarded from the air. Then special commandos brought by helicopters land on the heights. Then a massive ground force with heavy air cover moves in. Usually the resistance tactic is to avoid a

frontal clash. The mujahidin, divided into small groups, take positions and wait for the enemy to advance and settle down. After a few days the losses of the enemy increase under the resistance attacks. Soon the commandos are lifted back, the ground force starts to retreat but suffers losses in men and material on its return route. The best example of this type of warfare is Panjsher. However, the May offensive in Kunar (eastern Afghanistan) went a little differently. Some six thousand ground troops and two thousand airborne commandos were deployed. Resistance positions were raided, villages destroyed, and the Kabul army garrison at the northern end of the valley, encircled by the mujahidin, was reinforced and the encirclement temporarily broken. But the Soviet forces rushed back to Kabul and did not leave time for the resistance to re-organise and launch their usual operations.

The latest large offensive started on August 24 in Paktia (southern Afghanistan). Some four thousand troops were brought by air to the Khost garrison, which was under strong resistance pressure. Also a ground force of over ten thousand Russians and some Kabul militia units moved into the Hissarak, Azra and Jaji areas in Paktia. The simultaneous operations had three aims: to destroy the strong resistance positions in the province, to close the mujahidin routes across the border, and to reach Khost by land and re-occupy the military outposts fallen to the resistance. During the first days of the offensive, the mujahidin suffered heavy losses and lost some of their positions, but soon the situation reversed: they had time to re-group and received reinforce-

ment from other resistance units. Under the pressure of the increasing number of freedom fighters firing ground-to-ground rockets and heavy weapons, the Russians started suffering serious casualties. Hundreds of enemy troops were killed and injured, dozens of military vehicles destroyed and some five different aircraft shot down. On September 6 the Soviet ground forces retreated to Kabul. The invaders could neither close the border, nor crush the armed resistance, nor reach Khost by land. Only the airborne force in Khost reinforced the garrison and re-occupied the surrounding outposts.

On the whole the Soviet forces try to keep the cities under their tight control, expanding security belts around them by establishing new military outposts; the populations inside the occupied zones are submitted to night and day watch and house-to-house searches. They try to keep the highways open to their convoys. Despite the strong security measures, the convoys fall in ambushes and suffer losses. The cities are easily infiltrated by the mujahidin. For instance, in Kabul the security belt does not extend more than 5 kilometers outside the city. In Kandahar and Herat cities there is fighting even during the daytime, and the old bazaars are in the hands of the resistance.

2. War Against the Civilian Population

Generally the behaviour of the Soviet occupiers vis-a-vis the non-fighting rural population has been one of systematic looting and intimidation. The Soviet soldiers take every useful item they find in a house search. If the women give them their jewelry and the men their

money, transistors, watches, etc., usually they are not harmed. The civilians are terrorised by regular air bombardment. Villages suspected of having given shelter to the resistance are strafed, houses destroyed, and villagers killed. The survivors leave the areas for the towns or the refugee camps in Pakistan. The Russians, having in view the depopulation of the rural areas, let them move out. Sometimes, Soviet soldiers, out of fear or revenge for their fallen comrades, will fire at random in a village, killing women, children and cattle.

Since the beginning of the year 1985, operations against the civilian population seem to have been intensified. The difference in these operations from the previous ones is that they are carried out in a professional manner; it is not only Russian recruits of the regular army who commit crimes in anger and fear, but some special commandos seem to be in charge of the operations. News of large numbers of civilians massacred by Soviet commandos were reported from different parts of Afghanistan. Some figures:

In the second half of March, over 60 civilians, women and children included, were killed in Helmand Province (western Afghanistan); 150 villagers massacred in Khanabad district of Kunduz Province (north); over 140 in Felol valley, Baghlan Province (north); 120 in the outskirts of Kunduz city; 200 in Dehsabz north of Kabul; between 50 and 60 at Mangwal in Kunar (east); in a village of Shinwar district (east of Jalalabad), 35 women and children were executed in a mosque where they had taken shelter; 12 at Aqtepa (Kunduz). Over 600 civilians were killed in various villages of Laghman (east); the survivors and witnesses of the killing who left the area after the massacre are now living in a refugee camp near Peshawar (Pakistan).

The manpower available is no longer able to produce normal harvests. The enemy's air and ground raids make working in the fields unsafe. In many places, the population has either left the area or the adult males are involved in one way or another in the war.

3. War Against the Economy

The rural areas have been cut off from the urban centres. Now the villages have

no easy access to the urban markets; and also the people are not inclined to deal with the communist authorities as they did with the previous non-communist regime.

In the northern provinces the people are only cultivating wheat and barley in order to meet their immediate needs. Even this activity has stopped in the areas surrounding the cities. In the outskirts of Mazar-e-Sharif, for instance, the fields are not cultivated at all. The villagers have moved to the city. Sugar beet, cotton, oil-yielding seeds and plants, formerly sold to the government factories, are no longer produced. Also, chemical fertiliser required to grow them cannot be obtained in the northern markets. For lack of raw material the textile mills at Pul-e-Khomry and Balkh (which before the war had a capacity of 30 and 12 million meters annually) have come to a standstill. Factories in Mazar which employed some 8,000 workers are now reduced to 800, mostly administrative staff.

The large textile mill at Gulbahar, north of Kabul, is receiving neither enough power (the power lines being constantly cut by the resistance), nor enough raw materials to operate. The majority of the workers have left; the remaining have become government militia guarding the factory building against mujahidin attacks. The administrative staff is still paid, but for work which had nothing to do with textiles. The Jalalabad sugar mill has been idle a long time; the machines are ruined by rust and neglect. In Kandahar both textile and fruit plants have completely ceased functioning.

Among the Afghan population the most disadvantaged are the farmers. They no longer have the chance of going to the city to sell their products and buy what they need. The roads are cut and transport disorganised. In any case, they have no surplus to sell and no cash to buy with.

The countryside is deprived of its labour force. Men between 18 and 50 are in the resistance. Children, women and old men who have stayed behind and who work the fields during the night for fear of air bombardment, do not provide enough labour to maintain agricultural production at its normal level. Also the invasion has depopulated entire regions.

Villages, prosperous and full of life three or four years ago, are now in ruins, completely devastated.

The most frequent military operations are those which are aimed at systematically destroying the infrastructure of the rural economy. Motorised units raid villages, shoot down the cattle, burn foodstocks and damage the terraced fields. During harvest time, the enemy attack by surprise and set fire to the crops and grain reserves. Still worse: the irrigation system (the main support of agriculture in Afghanistan) is disrupted in many places. Irrigation is done in two ways: (1) The karez or underground channel dug in the mountain slopes, gathering underground moisture along a distance of five kilometers or more before surfacing near the fields to be irrigated. (2) The jui or surface irrigation canal diverting water from torrents and rivers by means of small dams built by the villagers themselves. Bombs dropped from the air or explosives thrown inside the karez have seriously destabilised the system. Some karez have ceased to give water, others are producing less than half of their normal capacity. The karez is a delicate system, needing constant care which is no longer available. The surface irrigation channels are facing the same problem. Normally each year and sometimes each season, they need to be drained and cleaned. The dams damaged by the spring torrents of fast melting snow have to be repaired. Apart from the enemy bombardment of the dams, which has occurred in many places, the absence of male workers who are in the fighting front has caused the canals to become filled with mud and sand, preventing the water from flowing. In places such as Kandahar, the Soviets have established military posts along the major irrigation channels, preventing the villagers from their usual work on the water system. Thus Kandahar, one of the most fertile provinces of Afghanistan with the best irrigation system, is suffering from a shortage of water. The fields and also the orchards are no longer receiving the quantity of water necessary for their survival. The pomegranates and grapes of Kandahar are dying. Many seasons in the future will be needed for the replanted trees to come back to the level of their production prior to 1978.

II. A General Assessment of the Situation:

The Soviets still try to ignore the political nature of the resistance. They are not willing to admit that they are facing a popular war of national liberation. The resistance fighters are presented as bands of murderers and bandits. The occupiers never raise the question of who these

"bandits" are, how many of them are there and why. In order to crush them, the intervention of entire divisions of an over-equipped modern army is needed. Of course, they talk about the presence of American, Chinese and Pakistani mercenaries in the country. But none has been produced so far. The only foreigners captured by the Soviet-Kabul forces were two Frenchmen – a journalist (Jaques

Abouchar) and a medical doctor (Ph. Augoyard).

The Soviet authorities seem to be seeking a military solution for the conflict. But the latest offensive in Paktia showed that they are still far from a clear-cut military victory over the resistance.

The Russians have failed to win popular support for the Kabul regime. The staging of elections for the popular council

deceived nobody, and their over-stressed, official, pro-Islamic propaganda is not taken seriously. They were not able to unite the rival factions of the ruling communist party: the tension between the two factions has become deeper. They did not succeed in re-building the Afghan army which is as inefficient and unreliable as ever, weakened by steady defection of soldiers. Their own regular soldiers are not any better: demoralised, isolated, badly treated by their officers, the young Russian recruits are reluctant to fight in a war whose aim is not clear to them. However, they are eager to find hashish or take money, watches and transistors from civilians.

The strength of the occupation forces is in their well-trained special commandos and in the superiority of their sophisticated weaponry. With the incentive of high salaries, they also had some success in recruiting local militia units who seem to fight better than the regular Afghan army. Their most substantial success is, however, in the organisation of KHAD (the state secret police) or the Afghan equivalent of the KGB. Secret agents were able to infiltrate resistance organisations and fighting groups as well as Afghan refugee camps carrying out terrorist actions and subversive operations. Some examples: in Peshawar (Pakistan) good resistance commanders are mysteriously killed, bombs explode in mujahidin headquarters, tension is created between Afghan refugees and the local population, etc. Inside Afghanistan, secret agents,

posing as mujahidin, trigger fighting among resistance groups and at the last moment, defect to the side of the Kabul regime. Then they are paraded before the press, radio and TV as genuine mujahidin who "recognise their errors", etc. Sometimes a band of agents disguised as freedom fighters attack a village, kill villagers and loot houses; the aim of the



operation is to provoke the hostility of the civil population against the resistance.

The situation of the resistance forces: Their evident weakness is that they have never had the right weapons to cope with the air superiority of the enemy; they are always short of ammunition and food supplies which prevent them from sustaining a long fight. However, their

main weakness is the lack of unity among the political organisations. Lately the leaders came under pressure to form a joint council and appoint a single speaker. Now at least, they are talking to each other. The results of their negotiations are not yet known.

The situation of the resistance groups inside Afghanistan is different. A strong trend towards better understanding is observed. The resistance leaders inside have more urgent problems to solve than to quarrel about political differences. In front of the enemy war machine, coordination among various mujahidin groups has improved. This development was much in evidence during the recent fighting in Paktia. Rival organisations rushed to the rescue of one another, forming common fronts, supplying one another with arms, ammunition and food. Other positive aspects to be mentioned: resistance fighters have more experience in warfare, know the enemy better and have become more professional. The level of arms has much improved and with it, efficiency. Also the number of mujahidin has increased. Morale is still high and the fighters are strongly motivated.

In short, resistance in Afghanistan is far from being defeated. The country is not yet lost to the Soviets. With better military equipment and stronger political pressure by the free world on the Soviet Union, Afghan freedom fighters are believed to be able to make Afghanistan a free nation again.

Afghan Mujahidin Publications

Afghan Realities, No. 49, 1986 (1-15 January), published by the Afghan Information & Documentation Centre, Peshawar, contains the following items (among others):

1. A letter from the "National Society of Human Rights of Afghanistan" to the Secretary General of the UN: "Our primary statistics show that the Russian forces, from the beginning of their military intervention in Afghanistan till November 1985, have conducted 9380 attacks on defenceless residents of various villages in the country. During the same period, they used chemical substances 89 times, particularly poisonous gases, which resulted in the death of thousands of villagers, including women, children and the elderly. Apart from 1200 women, some 2800 innocent Afghans are still suffering severe conditions in the prisons of Kabul. Around 6580 persons, according to our statistics, were interrogated on various baseless charges in 1985. These persons are still awaiting their unspecified fate in various detention centres in Kabul. During the current year, some 520 persons

were executed without trial in the provinces of Kabul, Kunduz, Ningarhar, Kandahar, Herat and Balkh. Reports received from inside Afghanistan indicate that around 70,000 Afghan children have disappeared in the country after interrogation during the past six years . . . During the same period, the Russians have maimed some 50,000 Afghans, according to facts received here. During the six years, thousands of tons of wheat were burned intentionally by the occupation forces. Likewise, 4758 head of cattle were attacked and killed by the enemy forces, in particular by gunship helicopters during the current year." [Reproduced from *Mujahidin Olas*, 22 December 1985]

2. Interview with Aziz Ishanzada, former director of provincial programs of Kabul Television, who left Afghanistan very recently. Excerpts follow:

The provincial TV and radio programs are entirely prepared in Kabul. In particular, special attention is paid to the provinces located near the border with Pakistan and Iran. Various television stations have been established in the provinces of Ningarhar, Paktia, Ghazni, Herat, Farah, Kandahar, and Badakhshan,

which telecast mainly political programs from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. Most of the provincial television programs are prepared by the Kabul television studios and telecast through the "Shamshad" satellite . . . In addition to the chief Soviet advisor, there exist three other advisors who supervise the radio and television programs and technical matters. Also, four Tajiks work with their Russian comrades as translators. Apart from their supervision of policy-making and preparation of programs, these advisors have a hand in censorship, appointments, promotions and transfers of staff members. It has happened on many occasions that the Russian advisors rejected the decisions of the minister, chairman and other officials at formal meetings. For instance, once the TV personnel decided at a meeting to introduce an instructive and recreational program, but the advisors rejected this decision and replaced it with a program called "Our Great Northern Neighbour". In addition, Soviet serials and artistic films began to be shown on television, along with news items of local Soviet incidents. Such telecasts of, for instance, cotton production in Uzbekistan or interviews with workers in Soviet