

Russian Muslims and the "Arab Spring"

A. Lukmanov

"I believe that sooner or later the Russian Muslims educated by Russia will lead the intellectual development and head the civilization of the rest of the Muslims."

*Ismail Gasprinsky*¹

The Crucial Points

TODAY, the peoples of the Middle East are living through one of the brightest and critical periods in their history known in the world as "Arab Spring." For two years now, the forces which emerged as a new political element have been fighting desperately in the name of subjugated peoples to restore their violated rights. They call on the world to support their ardent desire to free themselves from the shackles of "injustice" which have been restricting their freedom for a long time. In some cases, these efforts cause relatively little pain, in others, they run across fierce resistance of the ruling elites; they develop into street protest rallies, waves of violence and revolutionary upheavals.

The region's history is brimming with stories of struggle the local peoples waged for their rights: riots against the Crusaders, the mameluks of the Porte, the French and British colonialists, the Israeli occupation authorities which moved into Arab lands after the 1967 Six-Day War. Very much like the Arab Spring which has been going on for several seasons now, these just outburst of popular discontent and ire were, in fact, caused by the desire to put an end to internal and external stagnation which interfered with free and independent development of the Arabs and their neighbors. Today, however, there is one more, novel circumstance, which ties together past and present.

Artur Lukmanov, First Secretary, Department on New Challenges and Threats, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Candidate of Science (Economics); lukmanovy@gmail.com

Several years ago, the public in Egypt, Syria, Palestine or Tunisia was convinced that the anti-Islamic and anti-Arabic external, mainly Western, forces acting hand in glove with the local regimes was the source of all troubles of the Arab-Muslim world. Today, the public has become awakened to a qualitatively different “friend-foe” idea. Russia’s image and Russia’s policy, together with Europe and the United States, is seen by Sunni Muslims and those who inspire them to “liberation” as a threat, or an obstacle on the road toward shaping their own political ideas and gaining political weight. At the grassroots level Moscow is consistently presented as one of the forces checking the “democratic” impulses of the region’s peoples; it is assumed that Russia is getting rich on weapon deliveries to the region torn apart by conflicts and on the fuel prices which went up because of continued bloodshed in fuel producing countries.

In the last couple of years, in Egypt, Libya, Tunisia and some other Arab Spring countries, the share of positive opinion of Russia plummeted²; in Egypt, the indicator of grassroots sentiments, it dropped from 50% in 2007 to 30% in 2012. In Jordan, the approval rate barely reached 25%; in Turkey, 16%.³ Today, an average figure for the Middle East still remains at the 50-55% level thanks to the high figures in Yemen (76%) and Syria (69%).⁴ This cannot but cause concern: we have come too close to America’s figures: In the Arab-Muslim world it, is approved by not more than 20-25%.⁵ This means that the radicals are gaining ground; that their actions – ranging from demands for retribution and burning down national flags after Friday khutbahs to hostage taking and murders of common people – are widely hailed.

The leaders of the Arab Spring do a lot to plant negative ideas about Russia. In February 2012, Yusuf al-Qaradawi, prominent theologian and one of the spokesmen of the Sunni world, exposing “our enemies” on Al-Jazeera called the “Islamic umma” to boycott Russia which, he claimed, supported the criminal Syrian regime with weapon supplies.⁶ In October 2012, this religious figure (probably carried away by anti-Russian passions flying high in the United States during the election campaign) said: “Russia has become the first enemy of Islam and Muslims because it has stood against the Syrian people; more than 30,000 Syrians have been killed by the weapons supplied by Russia.”⁷ Encouraged by the Arab Spring, Fethullah Gülen, well-known leader of the Turkish Muslims, who in the last decade has been “guiding” his followers from across the ocean through YouTube and other social networking websites, became even

more eloquent. He nearly wept when talking about religious persecution of the Muslims in post-Soviet states and called on the world to help them liberate themselves from Russian occupation.⁸

The main electronic media and the press imitated the religious leaders: they started talking about, at best, Moscow's inflexible position on the "revolutionary changes" in the Middle East and in Syria. These opinions are supported by information about "protest sentiments" in Russia in general, and its Muslim regions in particular, which cannot but cause concern. Significantly, this information is supplied mainly by the agencies and TV channels operating with state support in the countries where protest sentiments and protest actions are promptly quenched without much ado; in some of them opposition was outlawed.

There is a very dangerous tendency in the way the public opinion in the Middle East treats Russia and its policy in the region; it has been registered by the leading analytical centers all over the world. In Russia, however, analytical centers are not interested in organizing public opinion polls in the region. At the same time, the fairly vast expert community of Moscow, St. Petersburg and Kazan is actively discussing the rising anti-Russian wave in the Arab Muslim world; these people have already warned that the Arab Spring will negatively reverberate in Russia, especially in the context of its Muslim factor. The fact that 62% out of 1800 polled activists of the Russian blogosphere believe that "the war in the Middle East will spread to the Caucasus and Russia" should not be treated lightly.⁹

New people, new elite and new leaders in the political, economic and cultural life of the Arab Muslim world were behind the U-turn in what common people thought about Russia. The philosophy of life and attitudes of the newcomers differ greatly from those of the previous generation raised in the spirit of secularism and Arab nationalism with Islamic hues. While holding forth about democracy and freedom, the new generation is busy setting up a new regional order based on the principles and

The expert community of Moscow, St. Petersburg and Kazan is actively discussing the rising anti-Russian wave in the Arab Muslim world; these people have already warned that the Arab Spring will negatively reverberate in Russia, especially in the context of its Muslim factor.

rules of political Islam: “There is a strong desire for Islam to play a major role in the public life of these nations” and most want Islam to figure prominently in political and personal lives.¹⁰ Overwhelming insistence on religious dogmas might stir up confessional conflicts in the prevailing system of social, state and international relations based on the principles of secularization and separation of church from the state.

There is nothing new in this; in the Middle East, politics and religion were practically never separated. Today, the adepts of religious thought have closed ranks for the sake of their shared strategic aim “Caliphate based upon Sharia”¹¹ which for many centuries remained the cherished dream of those who led the Muslim world. There is no agreement, however, about roads and tactics, the forms and the order as well as geographical outlines of the possible geopolitical unit. They all agree, however, on Machiavellian “the end justifies the means” and stake on “soft power” which is expected, in the long term, to create favorable conditions in which their pan-Islamic dream will be realized in the short-term perspective.

The Balance of Power – New Elements

IN THE LAST FEW DECADES, the ruling circles, religious leaders and business community of the national segments of Middle Eastern Sunni have crowned their energetic activities with impressive successes in promoting and popularizing political Islam. It seems that the Soviet Union’s one-sided withdrawal from the region (in the latter half of the 20th century, Moscow had influenced at least half of the ideological landscape of the Middle East) helped Islamists push forward their ideas. I deliberately put aside the West’s traditionally strong positions in the region the elite of which (including the people brought to power by the Arab Spring) is bound hand and foot by the interests of Washington and London. The numerous leaders and activists of the secular elite of the largest Middle Eastern states educated in the Soviet Union (there were about 100 thousand of them¹²) moved aside to give space to the new generation of young and ideologically determined people educated in the Middle Eastern states with the deeply rooted traditions of political Islam.

It is hard to correctly estimate how much has been done to promote the cause of “Islamic resurrection” in the Middle East: People are often driven by inflexible religious principles rather than by economic or material consideration. Certain figures, however, can give an idea of how

much Islamists poured into their cause in the last few decades and help us assess their strategic evolution.

Indeed, by 2010, annual "charity investments" of Saudi Arabia, leader of the Islamic world, went up to 0.8% GDP or \$3.7 billion in absolute figures.¹³ In October 2012, at a press conference convened by El Riyadh, it was announced, with a great pomp, that throughout several decades the kingdom poured into the "Islamic cause" over \$122 billion.¹⁴ Successful foreign policy of the Saudi monarchy says that the money was not wasted; despite considerable limitations in social, political and economic life the regime became the main political force when it comes to any of the Islamic issues and even to fairly important global issues.

Here are some of the most prominent initiatives and projects launched on Saudi's initiative: the OIU and a network of related structures; "oil boycott" of the United States in the 1970s; the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf; the Arab Peace Initiative of 2002; the UN Counterterrorist Center; mediating numerous inter-Palestinian and inter-Lebanese agreements. El Riyadh's international prestige was convincingly confirmed by the fact that in 2011 and 2012 the UN GA adopted Saudi's resolutions by majority, including the resolution on Syria passed on August 3, 2012 by 113 votes on favor to 21 against and 31 abstentions.¹⁵

El Riyadh relies on its own state machine and on a wide network of international pan-Islamic organizations (an Islamic UN of sorts headed by the OIU); it also finances an equally ramified network of public organizations. By the mid-2000s, they built and put into operation about 210 religious centers, over 1500 mosques, 202 colleges, and 2 thousand schools¹⁶ half of them functioning in the Middle East and South Asia. This and the people trained on Saudi money and according to Saudi programs who joined the elites of the majority of Arab Muslim states give the Saudi leadership a reason to claim that Islam has victoriously marched into all corners of the world.¹⁷

Egypt plays an important role in shaping a new Middle East; its economic weight can be ignored yet its spiritual, cultural and academic impact on the global Sunni community can be likened to the positions occupied by the leading universities of the UK and U.S. – Oxford and Harvard – in the Western world. The higher educational establishments of Cairo lure future ulema and imams from over the world; at home their graduates are treated by Muslim communities as authoritative theologians, teachers and judges.

Their millennia-long scholarly and religious traditions and religious fervor, as well as money which in the recent decades started coming in from Saudi Arabia, UK and the United States, turned the Cairo universities into the hub of academic knowledge and the main educational center of the Islamic world. In fact, it was Egyptian Hassan al-Banna who after the downfall of the caliphate in the Ottoman Empire, founded the Muslim Brotherhood and, indirectly, what is known as political Islam, the adepts of which keep the multi-million Sunni communities under control through their sermons the media carry worldwide.

The following figures testify to the amazing scope of the Al-Azhar University, one of the largest educational centers of Egypt: its student body (without its branches in Qatar, Pakistan and Palestine) comprise over 1.5 million at high schools and over 0.5 million at higher schools.¹⁸ About 10 million alumni remain in contact; according to expert assessment, practically all members of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt (there are about 600 thousand of them) are Al-Azhar graduates.¹⁹

Turkey, or rather social-political forces operating on its territory or exploiting the historical images of Islamic-Turkish identity, complements or even develops the Saudi and Egyptian missionary drive. In an unprecedented effort Ankara has pooled state, NGOs and business community together in a common effort to strengthen Turkey's positions in the region by building up its cultural impact, popularizing its way of life and its image in the Muslim world. The country is consistently increasing its economic presence in the Middle East; today, the region's share in Turkey's foreign trade turnover has grown from 6% (\$4 billion) in 2002 to 16% (\$23.5 billion) in 2010.²⁰

Every year, over 1 thousand Arab students enroll at Turkish universities²¹; in the 2000s, Turkey set up a vast network of over a dozen of schools in Egypt, in the north of Iraq, in Jordan, Yemen, and Tunisia with a total enrollment of about 15 thousand,²² mostly offspring of well-to-do families. Education is not the only vehicle by which the idea about the unique nature of the Turkish social and political model (a blend of secularism and the cultural and religious tradition) has spread far and wide. This is an all-out effort in which the media and the entertainment industry play an important role. "A full 78 percent of respondents in the Arab world and Iran report that they have watched Turkish soap operas. Indeed, these TV programs have taken the region by storm"²³; the share of Turkish programs among the foreign programs on Arabic TV channels is over 60%.

The following figures testify to Ankara's impressive successes and its growing influence. In the Middle East up to 80% believe that Turkey plays a very constructive role in what is going on in the region.²⁴ Turkish leaders are much more popular than the local Arab politicians. Before the presidential elections in Egypt, the majority wanted their new leader emulate Premier Erdogan.²⁵ Turkish politicians are equally popular in Tunisia, Libya and Lebanon.

Any careful observer of new political realities, leaders and movements in the changing Middle East will inevitably see that the majority of them are operating within the political, cultural and religious coordinates which cross, in one way or another, in Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Egypt. Political statements of new leaders of the Middle Eastern states and other evidence testify that these countries have formed a sustainable "triangle of influence" in the Muslim world as a whole and in its Sunni space, in particular. "The leader of Tunisia's Islamist Ennahda Party has hailed Turkey's ruling Justice and Development Party (AK Party) as a model of success for his country to follow."²⁶ Mohamed Morsi, member of the Muslim Brotherhood, made his first visit as president of Egypt to Saudi Arabia and Turkey. The parliamentary elections in Libya brought the forces closely connected with Egyptian and Saudi Islamists to power. Turkey and Egypt actively support Jordanian adepts of political Islam.

The huge scope of ideological "fermentation" caused by religious issues testifies to the "triumph of political Islam" the driving force of which can be likened to the passionary drive (to borrow the term from Lev Gumilev) of the first Muslims.

Metastases of the Arab Spring

IN VIEW OF THE FACT that the majority of the Muslims of Russia and Central Asia are Sunnis and that in the last two decades foreign missionaries (especially those coming from Mid-Eastern political and religious centers) have become very active among them we can expect that the next wave of hectic activities of the adepts of political Islam will rise in the post-Soviet space.²⁷ Russian experts R. Silantiev and R. Suleymanov have been talking about this threat for a fairly long time; recently, foreign brain trusts, likewise, have started talking about the threats of radicalization and extremism generated outside Russia.²⁸

The uprisings in the Middle East stirred up protest activities among the religious youth; the first signs of this became obvious in Kazakhstan,

Kirghizia, Tajikistan, and the Muslim regions of Russia. An analysis of these events shows that not infrequently they were encouraged from abroad not only and not so much by radical elements connected with the “terrorist international”: so far they are a marginalized minority. Extremists find the steadily increasing number of enthusiastic followers among the youth educated, and by all appearances, brain-washed, abroad – the fact which cannot and should not be neglected.

In the last twenty years, about 10 thousand (conservative assessment) young men from Russia and Central Asia studied theology in the Middle East.²⁹ The Islamists explained their educational fervor by the desire to help young men “push aside Soviet legacy.”³⁰ After several years of studies, many of these young men managed to preserve their cultural-historical identity yet the larger part of them was strongly influenced by teaching programs very different from what was taught in Russia. There is another important and eloquent fact: the knowledge of Russian students educated in the Middle East about the history of their country and its Muslim community is either small or warped; at the same time, they have been obviously filled with the knowledge of the cultural and historical experience and spiritual potential of political Islam.

In Kazakhstan, according to the republic’s officials, missionaries of all sorts of Mid-Eastern movements of political Islam lured at least 15% of the youth of the wealthiest Central Asian republic to the Salafi ideas.³¹ In Tajikistan, the situation is even worse; the armed clashes between the regular army and the Jihadists who went underground have become a seasonal warfare. Turkish ideologists who are very open about their intention to fill in the post-Soviet cultural void in the Turkic-speaking countries are moving here to the fore on par with Salafi agitators.³² The Turks have already opened in Central Asia about 100 schools and twelve universities³³ which train several thousand every year.³⁴

In Central Asia, foreign Islamists not only pushed aside the traditional religious movements; they strengthened their positions in Central Asian society and economics. In response to this and the ensuing radicalization of society Tajikistan and Uzbekistan outlawed certain trends of political Islam. For the first time in its recent history, Kazakhstan tried to oppose the impact of foreign factors on the religious situation inside the country and the dangerous trends of legalization of non-traditional religious groups and their merging with the bodies of power.³⁵ In Kirghizia, the situation is even worse: there is no chance to reverse the popularity of the radicals among about 30% of the youth in the country’s south and

southeast.³⁶

The protuberance of the Arab Spring has reached Russia; religious radicalism is spreading at a fast pace in the Volga area, in Tatarstan in the first place. Out of 1500 Muslim communities, about 300 are controlled by adepts of very suspicious (from the point of view of ethno-confessional ethics) foreign religious movements. There is an opinion in the expert community that the Jihadists of the "Idel-Urals Vilayet" can mobilize at least several thousand if and when it comes to armed clashes.³⁷ In the neighboring regions, foreign missionaries, likewise, preach everything except the cultural and religious heritage of the Muslim peoples of Russia; they regularly promote views on important domestic and foreign policy issues which contradict Russia's official position.

Foreign "prophets" offer different interpretations of the religious aspects of Islam yet they move to their common aim: to push out the Hanafi Madhhab and the related teachings of the Bukhara theological school, traditional for the Muslims of Russia and its neighbors, which preach tolerance and moderation when dealing with other confessions and religious movements. These "prophets" are guided by the publicly proclaimed strategic intentions to set up the Arab United States or the Arabian Caliphate³⁸; this means that the political map of the Middle East, at least its Sunni areas, will be changed beyond recognition. The ideologies shared by thousands of Russian and Central Asian followers of Jihadists might stir them into action; this means that the threat of ethno-confessional destabilization is very real.

What Is to Be Done?

THE 1990S when the state moved away from the ideological expanse and when the borders were open to all sorts of religious rules and technologies deeply wounded an entire generation of Russian citizens exposed to the pressure of the ideas about the world alien to Russian mentality. The Orthodox community relied on firm institutional structure to oppose Western pressure and won; the Russian Muslim umma, much smaller than the Orthodox community, divided and weakened by 70 years of atheist practices succumbed to religious experiments. It became even more fragmented, lost ties with Russia's national and cultural space and started taking orders from abroad.

The far from simple situation in the Northern Caucasus and the deterioration of the situation in the Volga area in summer 2012 confirmed that

continued experiments with the limitless “freedom of conscience” based on foreign prescriptions are fraught with the final and irrevocable loss of cultural and religious sovereignty and will cost the state its authority. The Russian Muslim umma abandoned to foreign ulema and leaders of political Islam became a handy instrument of political pressure on Russia. Further encouragement of all sorts of “prophets” will endanger not only the Russian system of social, political and cultural landmarks but also the very foundations of the country’s ethno-confessional stability.

Numerous foreign missionaries operating under the slogan of restoring the genuine spiritual tradition in Russia concentrate at the younger generation – they try to promote their own values, accepted in the Middle East as a norm, which divides the world into “friends” and “foes.”³⁹ Negative ideas about the Soviet Union and Russia as its legal heir are planted, indirectly yet consistently, in the minds of the Russian Muslims in the form of hysterical or oblique criticism of Moscow’s politics not only in the Middle East, but also in the Balkans and the Caucasus. This is done mainly by Muslims who follow non-traditional Islamic trends which have nothing in common with the Russian Islamic legacy.⁴⁰

In this far from simple context Russia was left with no alternative: it has to restore control over its cultural-religious space in the Muslim community, in the first place. This strategy should rely on Russia’s cultural-historical and religious tradition and on its rich experience of communication with the rest of the Muslim world. It should not limit itself to strict control over the foreign missionaries and their audiences; it should educate its own Islamic theologians and create conditions conducive to the appearance of local Muslim leaders from among the Russian Islamic umma. Russia should actively promote its positive image of the country with vast Muslim population to acquire enough “soft power” in the ideological struggle for the “hearts and minds” of millions of Middle Eastern Muslims.

There is no need to invent new methods to stop proliferation of extremist ideologies and ensure de-radicalization. We should master the already existing potential and Russia’s experience of cooperation with the Muslims which goes back into history. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, outstanding thinkers K. Nasyri, Sh. Marjani, G. Bayazitov, and I. Gasprinsky, the ideological leaders of Russian Islam, relied on the philosophical principles and ideas of liberal ideology, progressive development of society, friendship between the Slavic and Turkic peoples, and confessional tolerance of Christian and Muslims which ruled out radical-

ization. These ideas and attitudes had been formulated long before political Islam as a social and political phenomenon developed in the Middle East.⁴¹

Ismail Gasprinsky had clearly formulated the strategically important aspects of the mission of the Russian Muslim community (much earlier than political Islam came to the fore!) in his works “Gore Vostoka” (The Misfortunes of the East), “Russkoe Musulmanstvo. Mysli, zametki i nabliudeniia musulmanina” (The Russian Muslims. Thoughts, Notes and Observations of a Muslim), “Russko-Vostochnoe soglashenie. Mysli, zanemtki i pozhelania” (An Agreement between Russia and the East. Thoughts, Notes and Wishes). He insisted that Russian Muslims should be consistently educated: “It seems that until the Russian borders as inherited from the Tatars have reached the historical, natural limits of their settlements they cannot be stable. This means that in future, probably in the near future, Russia will become one of the most important Muslim states which will not belittle its importance as a great Christian power.”⁴²

We should never forget that in the 19th and 20th centuries, besides a very original theological school of the Russian thought, there was a very strong school of Oriental studies represented by N. Ilminsky, A. Krymsky, V. Barthold, and M. Batunsky, the latter becoming one of the greatest experts in Islam. Unrecognized in the Soviet Union and post-Soviet Russia, he immigrated, in the 1990s, to Germany where he published three volumes of *Rossia i Islam* (Russia and Islam); this is a unique work unprecedented in its cultural and historical scope which looked into the past to show that the relations between Russia and the Muslim world were deeply-rooted and multi-dimensional.

So far, another very important factor of Russia’s cultural-religious immunity remains untapped. I have in mind the memory of the common contribution made, at different periods of history, to the benefit of Russia and its Muslim community. We can be proud of it and can share our experience with the rest of the world, including our partners in the Middle East threatened with a loss of cultural and historical identity and upset demographic balance. Catherine the Great, for example, instructed to train Muslim clerics to be sent to Kazakhstan and Kirghizia to spread Islam among the local peoples.⁴³ As distinct from many of her subjects, she never wanted speedy assimilation of the Empire’s Asian population: “Our vast empire needs peace; we need populated rather than abandoned lands; if possible our vast deserts should be populated. It is hardly advisable to

force our faith on our non-Christian peoples to achieve this aim. Plural marriage would be much more useful; this is what is related to our domestic affairs.”⁴⁴

The holiday of the Cyrillic script is another pertinent example: it has already transcended the official ethno-confessional frameworks. Today, about twenty states use it either officially or ad hoc; nearly half of them are countries with the Muslim majority – Kazakhstan, Kirghizstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. (In the light of the recent statements which came from Astana and Bishkek about switching to the Latin script “for no geopolitical reasons at all,” few doubts are left that Russia had practically neglected the factor of common script in its foreign policy.) It seems that Turkey’s efforts of many years were finally crowned by the landmark decisions of the Kazakh and Kyrgyz leaders. In view of the fact that the Muslim peoples of Russia are using Cyrillic script the feat of Cyril and Methodius acquired Eurasian dimensions.

The list of common victories, cultural images and ideals of the Muslims of Russia (starting with the feats of Muslims fighting in armies of princes of the Old Rus and ending with the Muslims’ heroic contribution to the victory in the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945) deserves a special publication.⁴⁵ History of Russia and its neighbors is brimming with examples of self-sacrifice and loyalty of peoples of different confessions during Russia’s numerous wars against foreign invaders, the Russia’s peoples joint efforts to build up and strengthen the state and their contributions to scientific and cultural breakthroughs each of which is much more important for mankind than the “spiritual revelations” of the contemporary East.

This impressive corpus of knowledge and victories of historic dimensions allows us to diplomatically “show the door” to all missionaries eager to indoctrinate our youth; we can also help the Middle East restore its inner balance in the face of approaching threats and challenges.

NOTES

¹ I. Gasprinsky (1851-1914) was a great Tatar public figure, author, reformer of the old religious school and ideologist of Pan-Islamism in czarist Russia. As an ideologist of the young Tatar bourgeoisie he fought doggedly against scholasticism and ignorance of Muslims... Tried to reconcile Islam and European culture; argued that further development of mankind depended on a blend of Islam and European culture (*Literaturnaia entsiklopedia* in 11 volumes, Moscow, 1929-1939 // <http://slovari.yandex.ru/~книги/Лит.%20энциклопедия/Гаспринский>).

² Pew Global Attitudes Project. Opinion of Russia by years 2007-2012 // <http://www.pew-global.org/database/?indicator=27>; Menser Akgun. *The perception of Turkey in the*

Middle East. 2011. February 2012 // http://www.tesev.org.tr/Upload/Publication/8df416b2-6026-4af7-bbc9-ba90954e7b3b/Perception%20of%20Turkey%202011_IIBASIM.pdf

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Pew Global Attitudes Project. Opinion of the United States by years 2000-2012 // <http://www.pewglobal.org/database/?indicator=1>

⁶ Life and Sharia Program, broadcasted on February 5, 2012 // <http://www.aljazeera.net/programs/pages/8dd26065-1213-48fd-9ec3-40316262ce98>

⁷ <http://uprootedpalestinians.blogspot.ru/2012/10/nato-mufti-calls-russia-muslims-no1.html>

⁸ Ivanov V. “Dvizhenie Fetkhullaha Gulena: ekstremistskaia organizatsia maskiruetsia pod storonnikov dialoga mezhdru tsivilizatsiami,” *Rossiiskie tendentsii*. September 8, 2012 // <http://rostend.su/node/167>; *Obrashchenie F. Gulena “Ozhidania v otnoshenii Sredney Azii”* // http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XBMnVMP_XW0&feature=youtuve_gdata_player

⁹ *Voyna Blizhnego Vostoka rasprostranitsia na Kavkaz i Rossii: mnenia blogerov* // June 19, 2012 // <http://www.iarex.ru/news/26816.html>

¹⁰ <http://www.pewglobal.org/2012/07/10/most-muslims-want-democracy-personal-freedom-and-islam-in-political-life/>

¹¹ *Kontseptsia vossozdaniia khalifata prinadlezhit odnomu iz osnovateley dvizhenia politicheskogo islama Kh. Al-Banne* // http://www.mideastweb.org/Middle-East-Encyclopedia/hassan_al-banna.htm; <http://www.ikhwanweb.com/article.php?id=17065>. One of M. Morsi’s supporters also sided with the idea of the Caliphate at a rally in support of M. Morsi in Cairo on May 1, 2012 // http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QI3wG3loKIA&feature=youtuve_gdata_player

¹² Expert assessments are based on the figures published by the International Coordination Council of Educational Institutions Alumni // <http://www.incorvuz.ru/union.shtml>

¹³ Una Galani. *Saudi Foreign Aid Bill Piles Up*. May 28, 2012 // <http://blogs.reuters.com/breakingviews/2012/05/28/saudis-foreign-aid-bill-piles-up/>

¹⁴ <http://www.islammemo.cc/akhbar/arab/2010/12/22/113725.html>

¹⁵ *As Syria Fighting Continues, General Assembly Urges Immediate Halt to Violence*. August 3, 2012 // <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=42624&Cr=Syria&Cr1=>

¹⁶ <http://www.ainalyaqeen.com/issues/20020301/feat3ar.htm>

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ World Data on Education 2010/11 - Egypt/ UNESCO-IBE. May 2012, pp. 16-17; July 11, 2012 // <http://www.saudiwave.com/Religion/al-azhar-university-the-strong-third-force-in-egypt.html>

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ozdem Sanberk. *How Strong is Turkey in the Middle East* // USAK. May 9, 2012 // <http://www.turkishweekly.net/columnist/3621/how-strong-is-turkey-in-the-middle-east.html>

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ozcan Keles. *Promoting Human Rights Values in the Muslim World: Towards an*

Inclusive Civilization in Gulen's Thought and Practice. 20.10.2009 // <http://en.fgulen.com/conference-papers/peaceful-coexistence/2508-promoting-human-rights-values-in-the-muslim-world-towards-an-inclusive-civilization-in-gulens-thought-and-practice>

²³ Hatice Utkan. *Series Boost Turkish Soft Power in Region*. 12.12.2011// <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/series-boost-turkish-soft-power-in-region.aspx?pageID=238&nID=8919&NewsCatID=381>; <http://middleeast.about.com/od/mediacultureandthearts/a/noor-tv-show.htm>

²⁴ Public opinion polls by Brookings Institute in November 2011 and Turkish Organization for Social-Economic Studies // <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-270290-turkey-remains-popular-for-middle-eastern-nations-tesev-study-finds.html>; <http://www.brookings.edu/research/reports/2011/11/21-arab-public-opinion-telhami>

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ *Ennahda leader says Turks are model, inspiration for Tunisia*. 15.07.2012 // http://www.todayszaman.com/newsDetail_getNewsById.action?newsId=286550

²⁷ Shchukin I. *Islamic Syndrome: Dream of the Great Turan*. 16.06.2004 // http://religion.ng.ru/problems/2004-06-16/3_islam.html

²⁸ Dzutsev V. *Experts Warn North Caucasus Violence Spread to Russia's Volga Region*. July 20, 2012 // http://www.jamestown.org/programs/nca/single/?tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=39654&cHash=f07f642832c1792ed31e9adadb93c35e

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Assessments based on the materials of the Conference “Muslim World in Transition: Contributions of the Gülen Movement”/ London School of Economics. October 2007 // <http://gulenconference.org.uk/conf.php>; <http://www.fethullahgulen.org/conference-papers/contributions-of-the-gulen-movement.html>; <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1969290,00.html>; <http://turkishinvitations.weebly.com/every-continent-but-antarctica-country-by-country.html>

³¹ Statement of A. Bakenov, deputy of the Parliament of Kazakhstan. September 29, 2010 // <http://vesti.kz/playbill/64731/>

³² Evidence of this religious activity in Central Asia and the Caucasus was supplied by former interpreter of the CIA S. Edmond // <http://letsibeledmondsspeak.blogspot.com/2008/07/court-documents-shed-light-on-cia.html>; <http://www.boilingfrogspost.com/2011/01/11/additional-omitted-points-in-cia-gulen-coverage-a-note-from-%E2%80%98the-insider%E2%80%99/> и др.

³³ Assessments based on the materials of the Conference “Muslim World in Transition...”

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Telibekov H. *Kazakhstan: Salafis in Power*/Alma Ata Helsinki Committee. November 11, 2010 // <http://www.humanrights.kz/articlesrus.php?id=4512>; Saktagan B. *Who Protects the Salafis in Kazakhstan*. August 8, 2011 // <http://tajmigrant.com/kto-obespechivaet-neprikosновенnost-salafitov-v-kazaxstane.html>; Meyram A. *Devil's Advocates. Does Kazakhstan Need Salafis?* 20.05.2011 // <http://www.zonakz.net/blogs/user/patriot/18776.html>

³⁶ Karabaev Aibek. *Salafism in Kyrgyzstan: Armed Jihad or Muslim Schism*. December 26, 2009 // http://centralasiaonline.com/en_GB/articles/caii/features/main/2009/12/26/feature-04

³⁷ Suleimanov R. *3000 Tatar Wahhabites Are Biding Their Time*. August 7, 2012 // <http://svpressa.ru/society/article/57617/>

³⁸ Speech of one of the leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood at the rally in support of President M. Morsi in Cairo May 1, 2012 // http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QI3wG3loKIA&feature=youtube_gdata_player

³⁹ Political Islam prefers to divide the world into Dar al-Harb (literary “house of war,” the territory where there is no Islam) and Dar al-Islam (literary “house of Islam” where the faith, din, and its law, Sharia dominate).

⁴⁰ *The Muslim Brotherhood in Russia and Tatarstan*. April 13, 2012 // <http://e-umma.ru/node/1187>; Suleimanov R. “Impact of the Arab Revolutions in the Middle East on the Muslims of Russia and Tatarstan,” *Novoe vostochnoe obozrenie*. March 15, 2012 // <http://www.ru.journal-neo.com/node/14569>

⁴¹ It should be said that the terrorists who murdered V. Yakupov, the staunch opponent of the radicals who wanted to see the national religious school of Tatar Muslims banned in the Soviet Union restored in post-Soviet Russia, knew that he and his enlightenment activity were dangerous for their simplified ideology. The hysterical response of non-traditional Muslims to the “persecution of the Muslims” within the framework of investigation was a convincing evidence indicating those who masterminded the crime. No wonder, all sorts of “orange and white-ribbon forces” promptly joined their protest rallies (*Krasny khalifat*. August 10, 2012 // <http://www.vz.ru/politics/2012/8/10/592730.html>).

⁴² <http://www.milli-firka.org/content/HGDC>

⁴³ Temirgaliev R. *How Cossacks became Muslims* // <http://www.zonakz.net/articles/35169>

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ For more detail see: Khairtdinov, *At the Service of God and the Fatherland* // http://www.idmedina.ru/books/history_culture/minaret/5/hairtdin.htm

Key words: Russia and its Muslim community, political Islam, ideological landscape of the Middle East, Islamic world.