PLACING FAITH IN TATARSTAN, RUSSIA:

ISLAM AND THE NEGOTIATION OF HOMELAND

by

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DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

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The Republic of Tatarstan, a Muslim-majority region of the Russian Federation, is home to a post-Soviet Islamic revival now entering its third decade. Throughout the 1990s, the Tatars of Tatarstan were recognized as practicing a liberal form of Islam, reported more as an attribute of ethno-national culture than as a code of religious conduct. In recent years, however, the republic's reputation as a bastion of religious liberalism has been challenged, first, by a counter-revival of conservative Islamic traditions considered indigenous to the region and, second, by increasing evidence that Islamic fundamentalism, generally attributed in Russia to Wahhabism or Salafism, has taken hold and is growing in influence among the region's Muslims.

This dissertation explores how changing political-territorial circumstances are implicated in this transformation. Drawing on extensive fieldwork in Kazan, the capital of Tatarstan, and a variety of qualitative research methods, including textual analysis, semi-structured interviews, and ethnographic study, the dissertation demonstrates that the transformation in Islamic identity relates to changing understandings of this region as a political space. An examination of practices and representations of the Muslim Spiritual Board of Tatarstan and conflicting perspectives on landscape elements in the Kazan Kremlin shows that the meaning of Islam is being driven by political-geographic change.

Analysis of these matters reveals that, as part of Tatarstan's quest for wide-ranging territorial autonomy in the 1990s, government-supported institutions cultivated a preferred understanding of Islam that corresponded to visions of the region as the Tatars' sovereign historic homeland. Over the past decade, amid a rapid recentralization of the federation, support has shifted to Islamic practices deemed "traditional to Russia" as part of a broader multinational Russian identity crafted to fit visions of the country as a powerful, unified state. Thus, the meaning of Islam in this particular place is mediated by competing visions of Tatarstan as a homeland.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Presenting the Problem

In the immediate aftermath of the Soviet Union's demise, two Muslim-majority regions of Russia mounted aggressive sovereignty campaigns that challenged the country's territorial integrity. In Chechnya, the better known of the two, an indigenous Islamic revival became radicalized as it articulated justifications for independence that eventually resulted in two wars with Moscow. Separatism in Chechnya persists to this day, fueling Islamist-inspired violence that spills over into neighboring areas and threatens the stability of the entire North Caucasus region – and Russia itself. Many of the same conditions were present in Tatarstan after the collapse of the USSR, including an indigenous Islamic revival that was a driving force behind claims for sovereignty. Unlike Chechnya, however, Tatarstan avoided armed conflict with Moscow even as it continued in pressing for an unprecedented degree of autonomy.

What explains these different outcomes? In the 1990s many observers credited the Tatars' revival of an indigenous liberal form of Islam, known as Jadidism (from Arabic

for “renewal”), as important in saving the region from bloodshed, curbing aspirations for full-fledged independence, and, in an area home to a sizeable Orthodox Russian minority, safeguarding the interfaith peace that has been Tatarstan’s hallmark (e.g. Rorlich 1999; Yemelianova 1999). More an ethno-cultural attribute than a strict code of religious conduct, Jadidism – in its current form also known as “Euro-Islam” – is said to embrace religious reform, keeping the gates of *ijtihad* (independent interpretation of the Koran and Sunnah) wide open, and Westernization in the service of modernizing the Tatar nation. As Rorlich observed, writing on the eve of the new millennium,

> Jadid Islam … today unites the political, religious establishment of Tatarstan with most of the voices of an emerging *umma* [community of believers] in their rejection of conservative Islam as represented by missionaries from the Middle East who have been coming to Tatarstan since 1991 (Rorlich 1999, 394).

This message was repeated by the republic’s political leadership throughout most of the 1990s and into the new century. Those in power held up Jadidism as a model for other Muslim groups, in Russia and beyond, to emulate (e.g. Khakimov 1998; Bukharaev 1999). Thus, it was widely thought that the Tatars’ indigenous liberal version of Islam inoculated the region against the types of religious fundamentalism[1] and associated extremism that have affected Chechnya and other Muslim regions of the Russian Federation.

[1] I recognize and acknowledge the contested nature of the term “fundamentalism,” especially when applied to Islam in the contemporary milieu. For sake of clarification, I use the term to refer to literalist versions of monotheism, affecting Christianity and Judaism as well as Islam, based on “the idea of inerrancy of a sacred text” (Lehmann 1998). In no way do I necessarily conflate “fundamentalism” with “extremism” or “radicalism.”

Such sanguinity, however, has proved short-lived. Over the past decade, the primacy of Jadidism in Tatarstan has been increasingly challenged on two fronts. The first is a counter-revival of indigenous conservative Islamic traditions based on fealty to the Hanafi *madhhab* (school of Islamic jurisprudence). With its theologians firmly set against religious reform, this so-called "Tatar traditionalism" is today the sole "official" Islam in the region (Makarov and Mukhametshin 2003) and is enforced by the state-associated Muslim Spiritual Board of the Republic of Tatarstan, which is charged with monitoring all mosques in the region. The second challenge is posed by increasing evidence that religious fundamentalism, generally attributed in Tatarstan and Russia to Wahhabism or Salafism[2] and claimed to be imported from abroad, has taken hold and grows in influence among the region's Muslims. These decidedly non-liberal forms of Islam most generally are expressed in banal ways, such as a growing public presence of the *hijab* (the traditional head covering worn by Muslim women) and other religious markers that were rarely seen on the streets of Tatarstan a decade ago. More unsettling, though, is that fundamentalist Islam, again attributed to Wahhabism or Salafism, has been implicated in sporadic acts of violence and political radicalism, piquing anxieties that Tatarstan's comparative calm could prove ephemeral.

[2] Ware et al. describe Wahhabism as "a fundamentalist Sunni Islamic movement founded in Arabia in the middle eighteenth century," a "puritanical" form of Islam that is based on "strict adherence to the Koran" and does not recognize state authority (Ware et al. 2003, 287-88). Gammer rightly adds that the term "Wahhabi" is often a label used to marginalize opponents, a point that will be developed later in this dissertation (Gammer 2005, 845). Identifying Wahhabism with "opposition forces advocating radical Islamic ideology," Malashenko and Yarlykapov say it would be more correct to call adherents of this literalist form of Islam "Salafists" because "their ideology goes back to the 8th-9th centuries AD, when those who urged believers to adhere to the norms of religious and everyday life followed by the 'righteous ancestors' (*as-Salaf as-Salihun*) called themselves Salafists" (Malashenko and Yarlykapov, 2009, 4). Both terms, Wahhabism and Salafism, are generally used interchangeably in current discussions of Islam in Tatarstan.

What accounts for this transformation in Islam in Tatarstan? Previous attempts to explain the upswing in religious conservatism and fundamentalism among Russia's Muslims have focused on Islam itself. For instance, in his analysis of territorial conflicts involving Muslim groups in the post-Soviet space, Aleksandr Ignatenko, a specialist on Islam who also serves as an adviser to the Russian Parliament, contends that "the religion's *all-embracing nature* rules not only the Muslim's religious life but also politics, economics, etc." (Ignatenko 2004, 8-9, emphasis added). The "all-embracing nation" of Islam, Ignatenko concludes, drives its adherents away from democratic principles and, ultimately, toward confrontation and conflict with non-Muslims.[3] Thus, in the formulation of Ignatenko and others (see also e.g. Bowers et al. 2004; Hahn 2007), with the fall of a totalitarian Soviet state that tightly regulated society, it was only a matter of time before conservative and fundamentalist versions of Islam made inroads in Tatarstan, following in the footsteps of Chechnya and other parts of the North Caucasus. Ignatenko's diagnosis, however, is unsatisfactory. In framing religion as *the* independent variable driving Muslim behavior, culture is reified as having an almost singular explanatory power. Such over-determined cultural explanation neglects the spatial and temporal contexts within which religion is always embedded and therefore is unable to answer the basic questions, *Why here? Why now?*

Placing Faith in Its Political-Territorial Context

If one looks at this and other cases of Islamic revival, a variety of factors are at play, including the numerical size of groups involved, socio-economic development, and

[3] This focus on Islam's supposed "all-embracing nature," of course, is not limited to study of the religion in the Russian context, but, as explored further in Chapter II, is characteristic of a much broader tendency in the contemporary social scientific study of Islam.

a multitude of other variables. Yet one variable all these cases share is that they take place within a modern political-territorial order which assumes states represent a defined "people," understood as a nation. Because political borders rarely reflect on-the-ground patterns of culture, states are compelled to "nationalize" their populations continually through institutions, discourses, symbols, and practices. Conversely, when minority cultural groups feel threatened, marginalized, or excluded from dominant understandings of national community, the logic of the international system can propel them to seek "national self-determination" in the form of sub-state territorial claims, which generally lead to conflict. Globalization undoubtedly undermines the power of the nation-state to control its economy and even its politics. Nonetheless, the nation-state remains a primary source of group identity, and for many sub-state cultural groups the nation-state remains the ultimate aspiration.

The issue of territory and national identity is particularly acute in Russia, which remains by far the largest country (in geographic terms) in the world and is home to great ethno-cultural diversity. Changing understandings of Russia as a political-territorial entity historically have been decisive in shaping the character of Islam within its borders. Two decades after the fall of the Soviet Union, this remains the case, as Russia continues to struggle to define itself in post-imperial terms and to cultivate an all-Russian multiethnic sense of nationhood. Thus, to understand more fully the transformation of Islam in Tatarstan – to get at the fundamental questions, *Why here? Why now?* – it is necessary to place the faith in its political-territorial context. Rather than focusing on "Islamic fundamentalism" or "political Islam" as first-order problems, as is commonly the case in the study of Islam in contemporary Russia (e.g. Lanskoy 2002; Gammer 2005; Hahn

2007; Ponarin 2008) and other parts of the world, a more fruitful entry point is to ask: (1) Under what set of political-territorial circumstances was liberal-minded, reform-oriented Jadidism revived?, and (2) What set of political-territorial circumstances gave rise to the more conservative "Tatar traditionalism" of the Hanifi *madhhab*?

To start with the first question, following Tatarstan's sovereignty declaration in 1990, the political leadership based in Kazan, the capital of the republic, constructed a "regime of territorial legitimation"[4] based foremost on (1) the Tatars' centuries-long history of statehood in the Middle Volga region, until their defeat by Moscow and incorporation into the Russian Empire in the mid-sixteenth century, and (2) concerns for culture, particularly language but also religion, both of which had suffered from various Russification policies in both the Tsarist and Soviet empires. The Tatars' survival and development as a Muslim nation, it was argued, could only be safeguarded by their own state structure (Derrick 2008). There exists no objective reason that Jadidism should have risen to prominence in the early 1990s. It was, after all, a religious reform movement that appeared in only in the latter part of the nineteenth century and, although gaining in influence, remained a minority phenomenon until being extinguished by the Bolsheviks (Yemelianova 1997). However, the Tatar political leadership supported, discursively and institutionally, the revival of Jadidism because its legacy of religious liberalism fit well with its aspirations to define Tatarstan as a nation-state on the European model and project its sovereignty to a Western audience (Graney 2009).

[4] Murphy defines a "regime of territorial legitimation" as a collection of "institutions, practices, and discourses that are designed to legitimate a particular conception of a state" (2005, 291). This concept will be explored further in Chapter II.

Over the past decade, as Moscow has restored its central authority over Tatarstan, the Westernizing vision of Jadidism has been eclipsed by a revival of the Tatars' pre-reform conservative Islamic traditions based on the Hanafi *madhhab*. Again, there are no objective reasons why these traditions should be ascendant in the twenty-first century. However, theologians associated with the Muslim Spiritual Board of Tatarstan emphasize that pre-reform Tatar Islam evolved in dialog with Russian Orthodoxy, the two religions having become complementary over the centuries (Malashenko 2007). This message, passed down to the mosques of Tatarstan that the Muslim Spiritual Board oversees, corresponds to Moscow's broader support of religions "traditional to Russia" and is in line of the Kremlin's project to construct a trans-confessional Eurasian – a multinational Russian – identity.

Thus, the central argument of my dissertation is that the changing form and function of Islam in Tatarstan is not primarily a question of culture, but rather relates to a shifting balance of power between Moscow and Kazan in their competition to define the region as a political space. In its quest for wide-ranging territorial autonomy, the Kazan-based political leadership cultivated a preferred understanding of Islam to correspond to its vision of Tatarstan as the Tatars' sovereign historic homeland. Over the past decade, amid a rapid recentralization of the federation, support has shifted to Islamic practices deemed "traditional to Russia" as part of a broader multinational Russian identity crafted to fit visions of the country as a powerful, unified state. Thus, the meaning of Islam in this particular place is mediated by competing visions of Tatarstan as a homeland.

This dissertation investigates the ways in which shifting political-territorial circumstances have influenced Islam in Tatarstan. Specifically, I address the following questions:

- *What are the political-territorial ideas and ideologies underpinning dominant understandings of Islam in Tatarstan?*
- *How are different ideas of Islam and homeland institutionalized and communicated?*
- *How do these different conceptualizations of Islam and homeland come into conflict?*
- *How does this negotiation reveal itself, and what are its real-world implications?*

My examination of these questions draws on a year and a half of fieldwork conducted in Kazan, the capital of Tatarstan. I made use of qualitative research methods, including textual analysis, semi-structured interviews, and other ethnographic methods (explained in greater detail later in this chapter), to illustrate why it is important to *place faith* in its political-territorial context. But *placing faith* refers not only to the theoretical-methodological aspects of my dissertation; it also relates to this research's empirical findings. The Islam-impacting competition to define Tatarstan as a political space, as this dissertation illustrates, to a significant degree is characterized by compromise between Kazan and Moscow.

Empirical, Trans-Disciplinary, and Disciplinary Relevance

Whereas Muslims today comprise approximately 14 percent of Russia's population, with most living compactly in their historic homelands, demographic trends indicate they could attain relative parity in numbers with ethnic Russians in a matter of

decades. Compounding demographic trends is the increasing complexity of Islamic expression in Russia today – a complexity that will likely only grow in coming years (Malashenko and Yarlykapov 2009). This sea change will challenge the core identity and ideological foundations of a transcontinental power traditionally associated with Orthodox Christianity or, for much of the twentieth century, atheism, and current arrangements intended to accommodate its Muslim segments increasingly will be tested. This process is already well underway in the North Caucasus, where Moscow's policies are countered by growing Islamist-inspired violence and entrenched separatism, creating a situation Russian President Dmitry Medvedev (2009) has termed his country's "most serious domestic political problem." However, in attributing the source of the problem to "international terrorism," Medvedev invokes a nebulous global Islamism, he elides the political-territorial context whence the conflict originated, and he thereby complicates efforts to find sustainable solutions. One of the aims of this dissertation is to provide some insight that might contribute to solutions to this problem.

Although much of the world's attention has focused on the tragic case of Chechnya, an investigation conducted in Tatarstan into the ways shifting political-territorial circumstances affect Islam may go further in pointing out directions toward potential solutions. First, because Tatarstan is populated in roughly even numbers by Muslims and Orthodox Christians, it more closely approximates demographic projections for Russia as a whole. Second, Tatarstan, alongside Chechnya, formed the vanguard of Russia's post-Soviet "parade of sovereignties" (Kahn 2000), but only the former has escaped bloodshed. Additional research could elucidate factors contributing to, or endangering, this comparatively positive experience. Third, as a bulwark against what is

often viewed as nonnative religious fundamentalism, government authorities in recent years have actively supported Islamic traditions deemed indigenous to Tatarstan. Gaining an understanding of the ways those religious traditions are institutionalized, along with the outcomes of their institutionalization, assumes greater importance as Moscow puts its weight behind similar strategies in Chechnya and other Muslim-majority regions of Russia (Malashenko 2008). And, fourth, although Tatarstan thus far has avoided, aside from a few cases, acts of religious extremism that are a common feature of life in the North Caucasus, reports such as the one issued by Gorenburg (2010) indicate that "radical Islam … is now spreading into the Volga region" (see also Malashenko and Yarlykapov 2009). Thus, Tatarstan today is said to stand at a precipice, giving my research added urgency.

Social scientists (outside of Geography) have produced a growing body of literature on Islam in the context of post-Soviet Russia. However, the most frequently cited of these works mainly offer broad overviews of countrywide trends (e.g. Yemelianova 2002; Pilkington and Yemlianova 2003; Hunter 2004; Malashenko 2008). Higher-resolution studies focus almost exclusively on Chechnya and other parts of the North Caucasus (e.g. Ware and Kisriev 2000; Akhmadov et al. 2001; Lanskoy 2002; Ware et al. 2003; Bowers et al. 2004; Gammer 2005; Giuliano 2005; Swirszcz 2009). Islam in contemporary Tatarstan largely has been neglected by Western academic researchers, and the few Anglophone works that have addressed the topic are either primarily idiographic (Musina 2000; Ponarin 2008), outdated (Rorlich 1999; Yemelianova 1999), or simply inaccurate. For example, a recent article by Bilz-Leonhardt carries the suggestion that Jadidism is almost universally embraced by Tatars

and claims that religious conservatism or fundamentalism has "virtually no proponents" in the region (Bilz-Leonhardt 2007, 231); no mention is made of the revival of non-liberal indigenous Islamic traditions that are today recognized as the sole official version of Islam in Tatarstan. A recent article by Laruelle (2007) provides a solid overview of the main positions and institutions involved in the current "struggle for the soul of Tatar Islam," but her handling is a snapshot of a moment in time, lacking analysis of the changes that have taken place in the post-Soviet period and avoiding consideration of the broader political (not to mention territorial) circumstances that condition the meaning of Islam in Tatarstan.

In addition to its empirical and trans-disciplinary contributions, my research also confronts some gaps within the literature in Geography on religion and territory. Although a number of recent forums have called for disciplinary contributions to the study of religion (Kong 2001; Agnew 2006; Brace et al. 2006; Proctor 2006; Kong 2010), a topic most leading academic geographers in the past have neglected, contemporary geographies of Islam and territory in the Russian context are few in number and primarily offer broad descriptive overviews that lack empirical richness (e.g. Walker 2005; Helniak 2006; Matsuzato 2006). A notable exception is Gearóid Ó Tuathail's (2009) astute reading of events leading up to, and the subsequent fallout of, the 2004 Beslan school tragedy that claimed the lives of more than 200 children. Ó Tuathail convincingly illustrates how what started as a local territorial conflict between ethnic groups claiming different confessions became discursively framed as an expression of international Islamic terrorism. However, with analysis centered on representations of a single

extraordinary event, his engagement provides limited insight into the synergistic relationship between religion, group identity, and territory.

Geography's shortcomings in dealing with Islam in the post-Soviet Russian context in no small part is a result of a subfield that, after more than a decade of exploring the functional and ideological aspects of territory (e.g. Murphy 1990; Taylor 1995; Herb and Kaplan 1999), in the twenty-first century has focused its energies on the examination of transnational processes assumed to undermine long-dominant political-territorial arrangements and corresponding place-based identities (e.g. Amin 2002). Theses of globalization-fueled deterritorialization only serve to bolster notions of Muslim fealty to a worldwide *umma* displacing attachments to territorial homelands. However, as "hyperbolic claims" (Elden 2005, 9) of an emerging borderless world are critiqued with increasing frequency, a stream of geographers is now reexamining "territory's continuing allure" (Murphy, forthcoming; see also Antonisch 2009; Elden 2010). It is this literature to which this dissertation aims to contribute by showing how religious identity is shaped by the territorial context in which it is embedded. Islam in its totality (as is the case with other religions) is just one of multiple bases of identity that form group consciousness in the modern era, and these various aspects of identity shift depending on political-territorial circumstances.

Research Activities, Design, and Methodologies

Drawing on 18 months (October 2008 – February 2010) of fieldwork conducted mainly in Kazan,[5] my work relies on what Crang (2003) identifies as the "three streams"

[5] Additionally, this study is informed by six months of previous fieldwork in Kazan in 2004 and 2005.

of qualitative research: textual analysis, "oral methods," and participative approaches. A strict positivist might take me to task for this study's lack of testability, but issues of religious identity and homeland are especially complex and sensitive, involving the non-rational realm of emotions and bringing up questions of power relations. It is unlikely that even the most intricate statistical calisthenics could provide satisfactory explanations of the questions addressed in this dissertation. In examining these issues, I agree with Herbert that "order should emerge *from* the field rather than be imposed *on* the field" (Herbert 2000, 552, original emphasis). I harbor pretensions about the universality of my study – it does take place in a fairly unique context. Nonetheless, my methodological approach contributes to a comparative framework that can be useful when examining other cases.

Textual analysis in this study was conducted not merely to represent dominant ideas of religion and territory, but rather to examine how those ideas are shaped by the active production, reproduction, and contestation of social structures (Crang 2002). With Islam occupying a prominent position in current public discussions in Tatarstan, researchers have access to a wealth of primary data sources. Most important in my work have been books, pamphlets, newspapers, and articles obtained from the archives of the Marjani History Institute and the Muslim Spiritual Board of Tatarstan, state-supported institutions most active in framing the content and parameters of public debates on Islam and its place in the region. Two additional data sources deserve mention. First, I spent untold hours in the archives of the Tatarstan National Library, where I perused a range of newspapers, magazines, and journals published over the past two decades. These periodicals provide critical insight into the shifting public discourse surrounding Islam

and the evolution of key institutions in post-Soviet Tatarstan. Second, public places and landscapes are also texts (Hay 2005). My research incorporates textual analysis of the Kazan Kremlin, Tatarstan's most symbolically rich landscape, along with other "unofficially sacred" sites (Kong 2005).

"Oral methods" form the second major component of my research methodology. I conducted more than 25 semi-structured interviews with intellectual, political, bureaucratic, religious, and national elites (my approach to elite interviews was informed by Herod 1999). Elite interview subjects were chosen primarily for the keys roles they have played in influencing or examining the meaning of Islam in post-Soviet Tatarstan, and they were selected to reflect the range of opinions on the religion's meaning and place in contemporary Tatarstan and Russia. Among the elite informants who were most integral to this dissertation were Rafael Khakimov, the director of the Marjani History Institute, former top political advisor to Tatarstan's first president, Mintimer Shaimiev, and the republic's best-known propagator of "Euro-Islam"; Valiulla Iakupov, the first deputy Mufti of the Muslim Spiritual Board of Tatarstan and most active in publicly defining and defending "traditional" Tatar Islam based on the Hanafi *madhhab*; Rafik Mukhametshin, rector of the Russian Islamic University in Kazan and a leading scholar on the subject of Islam in contemporary Tatarstan; Damir Iskhakov, a senior researcher at the Marjani History Institute and a key player in shaping Tatar national ideology in the post-Soviet era, including the place of neo-Jadidism in the Tatars' national revival; and Rinat Nabiev, the director for the Council for Religious Affairs (CRA), a state agency charged with monitoring religious activity in the region.

Although no single, uniform approach was employed in conducting semi-structured interviews with elites, interviews tended to last between one and two hours and were generally arranged in an inverse pyramid, beginning with an initial focus on general issues and gradually progressing to more personal matters and issues specific to the informant. The advantages of this "funneling" strategy, as Dunn discusses, is that the interview begins in a "relaxed and non-threatening" manner, which allows a rapport to develop between the researcher and key informant before more sensitive issues are introduced to the conversation (Dunn 2000, 58). In many instances my elite interview subjects were the same people producing print texts that have been central to public debates surrounding religion in Tatarstan. If these discussions often replicated arguments made previously in books, journals, and newspapers, they also presented an opportunity to ask for clarification and expansion of those arguments. More importantly, though, elite interviews gave me a significant degree of insight into key players and the networks of ideology involved in shaping Islamic identity in contemporary Tatarstan. For example, interviews with top Muftis at the Muslim Spiritual Board, followed up by interviews with imams and mullahs at mosques, showed how ideas of what Islam *is* in Tatarstan are constructed in a networked hierarchy.

Interviews with approximately 50 non-elites provided insight into how dominant understandings of religion and territory are reproduced, or resisted, by "common" believers. It should be noted that non-elite interviews included subjects identifying with a range of Islamic expression, from the highly liberal and secular to the conservative and highly literalist. One-on-one interviews with non-elites generally were conducted in a more unstructured manner that allowed informants to expand on personal histories, in the

process providing data on concrete events and experiences. This biographical approach not only yielded insight into how informants of various faith profiles relate to society, but also produced evidence on how notions of what constitutes Islam in Tatarstan have changed over time and how individuals interact with institutions that have played an important role in shaping the republic's post-Soviet religious revival. Thus, unstructured interviews with non-elites provided data on both individuals and social structures, bringing attention to the "interplay between structure and agency" (Dunn 2000, 64).

Many of the insights in this dissertation are derived from other ethnographic methods. While interviews constitute ethnography, it is useful to draw a distinction between verbal and participatory ethnographic methods. As Warren states,

> [Participatory] ethnography's lens is that of lived experience, set in an eternal present. The lens of the intensive interview is verbal – what people say and mean – but its temporal range is biographical, extending into the past and the future (Warren 2002, 85).

Herbert also distinguishes between the two types of ethnography, arguing that the immediacy of participatory observation provides critical insight into how "human agents reproduce and challenge macrological structures in the everyday of place-bound action" (Herbert 2000, 550; see also e.g. Paterson 2009). Indeed, geographers in recent years have become increasingly skeptical of research based solely on interviews or textual analysis (e.g. Crang 2002; Lorimer 2005; Davis and Dwyer 2007) – representation which, if divorced from the materiality of everyday lived experience, can easily slide into misrepresentation. My research avoids this pitfall by pairing textual analysis and interviews with a year and a half of active observation, interaction, and participation in

events such as public lectures, religious holidays, political protests, and the like. Multiple interviews and attendance at public lectures and meetings at the History Institute and the Muslim Spiritual Board gave me insight into their separately distinct institutional cultures. Two weeks of observation at the Russian Islamic University allowed me to see how the training of future imams and mullahs in Tatarstan involves a delicate balancing act of global and local, conservative and liberal, Islamic practices. Intimate acquaintance with the city of Kazan shed light on the variable urban geography of the public performance of religious identity.

Perhaps most valuable in my ethnographic studies were activities at mosques, including my participation in worship and attendance of religious lectures. Considering the intimacy and sensitivity of the performance of religion, this brings up important questions of ethics and positionality (Hay 2003). As an initial response to potential criticism, in my interactions at mosques I was always forthright in identifying myself as a non-Muslim researcher who explores issues related to Islam. While in a few cases I encountered some suspicion from religious leaders and rank-and-file believers, the clear majority were enthusiastic about my presence, seeing my interest – and especially my desire to take part in worship – as an opportunity to educate. My position as a researcher on multiple occasions was acknowledged as a plus, since it was recognized that the intimacy of personal interaction inside the mosque would contribute, to some degree, to demystification of Islamic practice, belief, and identity.

As a final note on my research activities, it should be acknowledged that, although I conducted interviews and participatory observation in a number of sites (both rural and urban) in places throughout Tatarstan, the bulk of my field research was

conducted in Kazan. However, this study is not just an urban geography focusing on a single city. As the cultural and intellectual capital of Tatarstan, Kazan is home to the region's most important human and material resources. Moreover, Kazan is the republic's seat of political power and decisions made there have ramifications for the entire region. In short, Kazan sets the tone politically, culturally, and intellectually for the entire region, and what I learned there pertains not just to the city alone, but to the trajectory of Tatarstan as a whole.

Structure of Dissertation

Consisting of an introduction, four substantive chapters, and an epilogue, this dissertation is a work of political-cultural geography. Though strongly informed by historical narrative, it is not simply a history. The need to explore the past when addressing the political and cultural geography of the Eurasian heartland is illustrated by a lament often heard by scholars in Russia as they consider the explosive nature of their country: "How can we predict our future when we cannot even predict our past?" This refrain not only reflects the capricious role that centralized ideology traditionally has played in the Russian academy; it also underlines the necessity of a multidisciplinary reexamination of Russian history, both distant and contemporary. This dissertation aims to contribute to that process.

Following this introductory chapter, the study begins with an examination in Chapter II of the role territory plays in shaping group identity. The chapter starts by identifying and critiquing a tendency within the social sciences to view the *umma* as a social formation that is innately averse to its territorial division into modern nation-states.

Because this tendency arises from the failure to investigate the ideas and ideologies underpinning the territorial ordering of modernity, the chapter continues with an analysis of the historical coupling of territory and culture, expressed today in the form of the nation-state. The chapter then explores examples of the shifting territorial bases of Muslim identities in the modern era and the relative significance of the *umma* ideal to those identities in varying geographical and political contexts.

Chapter III shows how territorial considerations have long influenced the development of Islam within the context of a Russian state. The chapter begins with an overview of the territoriality of Islam in contemporary Russia, explaining how ethnicity and religion are intertwined within the country's complex federal system. Focus then turns to an examination of how the form and function of Islam in the Middle Volga region have been conditioned by changing political-geographical circumstances since the region was brought into the Russian Empire in the mid-sixteenth century. To prepare the reader for analysis of Tatarstan's post-Soviet Islamic revival, the chapter concludes with an overview of the political-territorial developments in post-Soviet Russia, giving special attention to Tatarstan's involvement.

Chapter IV looks the role of institutions in shaping the form and function of Islam in Tatarstan. Specifically, this chapter looks at the creation of the Muslim Spiritual Board of the Republic of Tatarstan as an act of territoriality. Since the late eighteenth century a single Muslim Spiritual Board had overseen all mosques in Siberia and European Russia. In the early 1990s, however, the Kazan-based government created its own Spiritual Board as part of its sovereignty campaign. The Spiritual Board, first, gave Tatarstan what its leaders viewed as an important attribute of statehood and, second, removed the region's

Muslims from a trans-Russian institution that traditionally had been a mechanism for the empire to control its Muslim subjects and instill an "official" (that is, unquestionably loyal to the state) Islam. Having created its own Muslim Spiritual Board, the Kazan-based government sought to encourage a preferred understanding of Islam that corresponded to its vision of Tatarstan as nation-state on the European model. However, as this chapter shows, with the recentralization of the Russian Federation over the past decade, the Muslim Spiritual Board of Tatarstan is also being reintegrated in certain important ways into the broader Russian territorial expanse. A consequence of this reintegration of religious institutions, coinciding with the political-territorial reintegration of Tatarstan, is that the meaning of Islam in the republic has shifted, too.

Chapter V reveals how Islam in Tatarstan is being driven by political-geographic change through an examination of conflicting perspectives on landscape elements in the Kazan Kremlin. The Kazan Kremlin is *the* symbol of the region, containing within its fortress walls both the recently constructed Kul-Sharif Mosque, billed as Europe's largest mosque, and the refurbished Orthodox Cathedral of the Annunciation. This chapter shows how this space in the early 1990s was discursively framed by Tatar national and political leaders as a landscape of tragedy, the place where their ancestors were defeated by Muscovy and brought into the Russian Empire in the mid-sixteenth century. The construction of the Kul-Sharif Mosque, as it was decreed in 1995, was explicitly intended as a symbol of the Tatars' regained statehood, a symbol of historical injustice being rectified. By the time construction on the mosque was finished a decade later, however, Moscow had restored central control over Tatarstan, along with the rest of the federation. Since its opening in 2005, dominant representations of the Kazan Kremlin have shifted to

portray the landscape as a symbol of the friendship between Tatars and Russians, the harmony between Tatar Islam and Russian Orthodoxy.

Changes in the landscape's meaning, corresponding to shifting political-territorial conditions, are contested by Tatar national and religious activists who, maintaining that Tatarstan should be their sovereign homeland, conduct an annual march on the Kazan Kremlin in memory of their ancestors' loss of statehood in 1552. Thus, as this chapter shows, the shift in the meaning of Islam in Tatarstan, driving by a changing political-geographic context, is reflected in the landscape of the Kazan Kremlin. This landscape, in turn, works to reinforce dominant understandings of territorial identities. The symbolic power of this landscape also creates a space for dominant understandings of national-religious identity and homeland to be contested through performance.

This dissertation concludes with an epilogue that presents the reader with a review of major findings and implications of this study. Implications for Tatarstan, Russia, and other parts of the world are discussed, as are implications for the social scientific study of Islam in general. The final chapter also provides suggestions for future directions in research, including comparative studies of contemporary Islam in regions of Russia and other parts of post-Soviet space.

CHAPTER II

CONTAINING THE *UMMA*? ISLAM AND THE TERRITORIAL QUESTION

The Social Sciences Approach the *Umma*

In his account of Islam's contemporary resurgence as a social and political force, Samuel Huntington claims the Muslim world – identifying monolithically as the *umma*, the transnational community of Islamic believers in its entirety – comprises a civilization that is innately averse to the political-territorial ordering of modernity. "The idea of sovereign nation-states," he asserts, "is incompatible with the belief in sovereignty of Allah and the primacy of the *ummah*" (Huntington 1996, 175). In short, Islam is cast as an all-embracing religion-as-culture, encompassing Muslims wherever they might be, that rejects secular politics and the territorial division of its faithful. It is this centrality of religion to politics and identity, Huntington concludes, that explains the global upswing in Islamic fundamentalism, "fault line conflicts" between Muslims and non-Muslims within states, and "bloody borders" between Muslim and non-Muslim states. Among his evidence of the nation-state's inability to contain the *umma* is the case of post-Soviet

Russia, where Moscow has been in conflict with Muslim Tatars and Chechens, the latter yet embroiled in Islamist-inspired violence that threatens to destabilize the entire country.

Such grand theorizing, tinged as it is with an anti-Muslim sentiment, has provoked a wave of criticism in the social sciences that continues even 15 years after the appearance of *The Clash of Civilizations*. Not least has been the backlash from Huntington's own academic International Relations community, which has challenged his arguments on Islam's exceptionalism on at least two fronts. First, IR researchers have responded with multiple empirical studies purporting to undermine notions of an undifferentiated, essentially different Muslim world. For instance, Fox (2004) analyzed quantitative data from the Minorities at Risk Phase 3 dataset to show that state borders separating Islam from other civilizations are statistically no bloodier than other state borders, while a study by Gartzke and Gleditsch (2006) indicated that armed conflict *within* Islam is more prevalent than warfare between Islam and other civilizations (see also Fox 2000; 2001; Ellis 2010).[6] For his part, Sheikh (2002) offered a qualitative examination the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), the so-called "United Nations of Islam," to illustrate how international relations among the world's 50-plus Muslim-majority states are arranged and conducted firmly within the modern political-territorial framework.

More forceful, however, has been the challenge mounted by a second group of IR scholars who assail Huntington's "moral geography" (Shapiro 1999) for its baseline presumption that nation-states universally comprise modernity's natural order. As Mandaville avers, the "fairly crude, essentialising hypotheses of the 'clash of

[6] For quantitative studies presenting evidence claiming to confirm Huntington's thesis, see Tusicisny (2004) and Charron (2010).

civilisations' variety" (Mandaville 2001, 2; see also Mandaville 2007) arise from the failure to problematize the nation-state and question its underlying Eurocentric ideas of inclusion/exclusion and the secularization of public ethics. For Mandaville and other advocates of the cultural turn in IR, the worldwide upsurge in Islam as a socio-political force does *not* signify an unreflective reaction posted by a monolithic, anti-modern religion-as-civilization. Rather, it is part of a multi-vocal process of negotiation within Islam, and with the West, to unseat the "liberal-modernist framework as the *naturalised* order of things" and, in turn, establish "an alternate vision to Western modernity, an alternate 'Islamic modernity'" (Pasha 2003, 115-116, original emphasis; see also Pasha 2000) – a more authentic political order that neither delimits the sacred from the public nor bounds itself territorially. Displacing Huntington's "moral geography," these scholars maintain that a new geography of globalization is giving rise to Islamism as an "authentic counter-hegemonic movement" (Butko 2004, 41) and an incipient alternative Islamic modernity. Spelling the demise of the nation-state, increasingly mobile human populations, transnational media, electronic social networking, and other forces associated with globalization open spaces for the formation of a deterritorialized worldwide *umma*, which is declared to represent "a new form of postnational, political identity which is as profound as any extant nationalism" (Saunders 2008, 303; see also Roy 2004).

This latter group of scholars should be lauded for its affirmation of Muslim agency and recognition of Islam's internal debates. Yet certain aspects of their approach bear more than a passing resemblance to those found in Huntington's neo-realism. First is the contention that religion is the primary, if not almost exclusive, basis of Muslim

identity and necessarily stands in opposition to national and other foundations of identity considered as belonging to the West. As Salih discusses, "the idea of Islam as the most 'authentic' ground for identities of Muslims around the world" (Salih 2004, 996) reifies civilizational narratives and hardens dichotomous representations of Islam vs. the West, the *umma* vs. the nation. In turn, this dichotomization indirectly supplies a base of justification for Al-Qaeda and others whose violence delineates the world into an oversimplified *dar al-Islam* ("the Land of Peace") and *dar al-harb* ("the Land of War") (Aydin and Özen 2010).

Following this notion of religion as *the* arbiter of Muslim authenticity, a second feature shared by Huntington and his detractors is the failure to examine the ideas and ideologies underpinning the modern nation-state. Quantitative empirical studies claiming to undermine the "clash of civilizations" proposition generally employ state-level data to reach their conclusions and thereby accept, without much reflection, the nation-state as a fixed unit of sovereign space. This is the same type of methodological nationalism decried by IR scholars who invoke the cultural turn. This latter group, however, falls short of its own call to problematize the contemporary political-territorial order. In hinging their arguments on the powers of globalization and an imminent "end of the nation-state" (Ohmae 1995), they decisively choose a side in the Manichean debate over the "persistence or obsolescence of the territorial state" (Agnew 1994, 54) rather than consider the ways in which territory actually works as a dialectic with culture in different historical settings.

Burdened with its unexamined understandings of territory – an unproblematic array of "power containers" (Giddens 1985) at one extreme, a hapless victim of

globalization at the other – scholars in the field of International Relations have trouble explaining the uneven geography and temporality, as well as the diverse expressions, of Islam's resurgence. For instance, to return to the Russian context, the post-Soviet Islamic revivals in Tatarstan and Chechnya from the very beginning were part and parcel of ethno-nationalist movements whose goal was territorial autonomy and/or sovereignty. Two decades on, they have assumed starkly different, increasingly complex trajectories – with only one case turning bloody – but questions of ethno-national identity and homeland remain central to each. Nonetheless, in his book *Russia's Islamic Threat*, Hahn assumes a distinctly Huntingtonian stance as he discusses both regions as being enmeshed in a broader *jihadist* terror network. "With the collapse of the Soviet Union," he propounds, "Russia's Muslims again became an inextricable part of the Muslim *umma* (world community), subject to its ideological trends and operatives for the Islamo-fascist revolution" (Hahn 2007, ix). His analysis leaves little trace of the national-territorial bases of the Tatars' and Chechens' post-socialist religious rebirths, replacing them instead with the specter of an uncontainable worldwide *umma* inherently inclined to violence against non-Muslims.

To take a more recent example, in spite of early anxieties that this past year's revolutions in the Middle East and North Africa would go the way of the 1979 Iranian Revolution (Kaplan 2011), the popular uprisings in Tunisia, Egypt, and Bahrain, among other countries, were not carried out under the monochromatic green banner of Islam or in the name of the transnational *umma*. They were conducted under the multicolored national flags of each separate state and in the name of "the people," formulated in glaringly national terms. A defining slogan of this year's revolts came from Bahrain: "We

are all Bahrainis; Not Sunnis, Not Shiites" (Damir-Geilsdorf 2011). The Muslim Brotherhood's refrain "Islam is the solution" was mute amid the popular nationalist din. However, in an article addressing "transnational Muslim solidarities" that was published on the eve of these upheavals, Mandaville contends that although political Islam has failed "to establish alternative political orders within the container of the nation-state … this does not mean we are seeing a reaffirmation of the nation in Muslim contexts today" (Mandaville 2011, 7). It is too early to say how the political revolts of 2011 will turn out, but from the current standpoint a repeat of Iran in 1979 seems highly unlikely. A replication of 1989 in Europe, as has been suggested (Economist 2011), is also unlikely – the relationship between politics, culture, and territory, as this chapter explores, is dynamic and historically contingent.

It would be unfair to single out International Relations scholars for their failure to consider territory as a variable influencing Islam today, as this tendency is prevalent across the social sciences. A significant body of literature in Sociology, for example, interprets the current upswing in Islamic fundamentalism as part of a global shift toward more strict forms of faith that is witnessed among all major world religions. According to Manuel Castells, for example, the worldwide upsurge in conservative Islam, like the growing fundamentalism in Christianity and Judaism, is "always related to the dynamics of social exclusion and/or the crisis of the nation-state" that result from globalization:

> An Islamic fundamentalist project [has] emerged in all Muslim societies, and among Muslim minorities in non-Muslim societies. A new identity is being constructed, not by returning to tradition, but by working on traditional materials in the formation of a new godly, communal world, where deprived masses and disaffected intellectuals may reconstruct

> meaning in a global alternative to the exclusionary global order (Castells 2010, 21-22).

In focusing primarily on the forces of globalization, neglecting the local and national contexts, the comparative fundamentalisms model in Sociology, like the cultural turn in IR, stumbles in explaining the highly variable spatiality of "the revenge of God" (Kepel 1994; see also Stark and Finke 2000; Lehmann 2009). Moreover, this paradigm is handicapped by its unwillingness to differentiate among the manifold manifestations of Islam's resurgence, from the innocuous to the radical, as they are all grouped together under the single heading: Religious Fundamentalism.

If the comparative fundamentalisms paradigm neglects local and national scales, historical accounts aiming to shed light on the current state of Islam often presume a fixed nature of territory and culture on the temporal scale. Bernard Lewis (1993; 2002), as a visible and visibly egregious example, invokes the life of Muhammad, the genealogy of the *umma* and the institution of the caliphate, and medieval Islamic legal traditions, among other historical evidence, as ostensible confirmation of the maxim *Islam din wa-dawla* ("Islam is religion and state"), i.e. Islam encompasses all domains of the Muslim's life and therefore is incompatible with democracy and modern statehood. In an effort to counter such neo-orientalist conceptions of Islam's essential difference, Ira Lapidus (1996; 2001) shows how the *umma* in various epochs has actually accommodated itself to being separated into different state formations, including non-Muslim states, as proof that Islam can indeed be contained within the contemporary political-territorial order. But, again, both Lewis and Lapidus, in drawing parallels from the era of the prophet and subsequent caliphates (although reaching opposite conclusions), operate from an

ontology that, first, does not acknowledge territory as a distinctly modern actor and, second, does not recognize how its significance and meaning can change over time.

The point of this chapter is not to argue against globalization, culture, or history as forces shaping Islam. Cross-border flows of currencies and humans, transnational media, and other forces associated with globalization undoubtedly undermine the *functional* power of the nation-state. Yet, as Murphy (2010) affirms, territory nonetheless retains its *ideological* appeal, not the least for Muslim groups, as the 2011 revolutions in the Middle East and North Africa have made clear. The nation-state as a political-territorial ideal also retains its allure for sub-state groups such as the Kosovar Albanians, Kurds, Uyghurs, Palestinians, and other Muslim groups who aspire to control their own historical homelands, as opposed to being included in some post-national, post-territorial social formation. The task at hand is to go beyond the perception that Islam is somehow incompatible with the nation-state, take seriously the challenge issued by the cultural turn in IR, and interrogate the ideas and ideologies underpinning the modern political-territorial order that condition Islam's social and political expression. As indicated above, this cannot be accomplished by fetishizing globalization or culture, or by historical analogy alone.

Failing to problematize the geographical assumptions underpinning the Huntingons and Lewises of the world, researchers are in a weakened position to understand why Islam has emerged as such a potent force. While a variety of factors influence the meaning of the religion, an important variable is the political-territorial environment in which it is embedded. This relates to the historical development of the modern international system that is rooted in the mid-seventeenth century agreements of

Westphalia, which formalized the principle of territorial sovereignty. Subsequent developments in the way sovereignty has been justified have resulted in a coupling of nation and state, and social processes within the framework of the nation-state work to reinforce territorial identities. To understand the implications of Islam's increasing profile, in Tatarstan as well as other parts of the world, it is imperative to examine this synergistic relationship between territory and culture and to consider how this relationship changes in different historical contexts.

The fundamental purpose of the remainder of this chapter is to show why scholars need to analyze religion in relation to the political-territorial context in which it is embedded. In light of the shortcomings outlined above, the next section examines the historical developments in which territory and culture have become coupled, expressed today as the nation-state, and discusses some key social processes that reinforce this relationship. The following section explores how the bases of Muslim identities, and the relative significance of Islam to those identities, have shifted *vis-à-vis* changing political-territorial circumstances.

Territory and Identity

Having emerged as the dominant form of social and spatial organization across the globe over the past two centuries, the nation-state today is sometimes described as "*the* fundamental basis for defining group and individual identities" (Penrose 2002, 283, original emphasis). Yet, while many leading scholars attribute the success of nationalism to the conditions of modernity (see e.g. Nairn 1981; B. Anderson 1983; Gellner 1983; Hobsbawm 1990), few include an explicit consideration of territory and its associated

bordering processes as a key factor shaping those identities. Instead, territory is most generally framed as just one of the multiple attributes that define nationhood. For instance, Anthony Smith identifies several "attachments" upon which nations are built:

> Among these attachments, those deriving from such cultural attributes as kinship and descent, language, religion, and customs, as well as historical territory, assume a prominent place; they tend to give rise to that sense of communal belonging we call ethnicity and ethnic community, and they form the basis for subsequent development of nations and nationalism (Smith 2000, 5).

Thus, "historical territory" takes its place alongside "cultural attributes" in a laundry list of "attachments" that figure in the development of national community. Territory is seen as somehow passive and objective, rather than an actor that actually shapes those cultural attributes and, ultimately, a given national community.

Part of the problem in much of the priorly published work is a certain confusion surrounding the concept of territory itself, which is often viewed as a self-evident, even primordial, spatial referent (Paasi 2008). But, rooted in legal and technological advances coming out of Europe's late Middle Ages, territory as "*bounded space, a container, under the control of a group of people, nowadays usually a state* … must be conceived as a historically and geographically specific form" of political and social organization (Elden 2010, 757-758, emphasis added). This section provides a brief historical overview of the changing significance and meaning of territory to show how *nation* – a cultural signifier – and *state* – a political signifier – have become intertwined, used today almost interchangeably, in the development of the modern political-territorial order. Critical to this development are shifts over time in the way sovereignty has been justified. My

attention then turns to key social processes that work to reinforce this synergistic relationship between culture and territory.

Historicizing Territory and the Nation-State

In medieval Europe all sovereignty was concentrated in the throne of the Holy Roman Empire, which, as God's terrestrial representative, claimed ultimate authority over a complex "patchwork of overlapping" (Elshtain 2008, 41) political-geographical arrangements that included feudal principalities, increasingly centralized monarchies of Western Europe (i.e. England, France, and Spain), Italian city-states, and other forms suzerainty. Borders were nonexistent or fuzzy at best. Amid these "geographically interwoven and stratified" (Ibid.) political-geographical structures, according to Penrose, "societies were characterised by primary identification with small units" of population and space: "For some this meant kin groups and/or tribes as well as the village and/or lands used to support the community. For others it meant the diocese, manor, guild or town" (Penrose 2002, 283). Loyalties were also expressed vertically. Peasants, for example, were directly connected to their feudal landlords, whose loyalties in turn were tied into a hierarchy leading up to the Holy Roman Emperor. As such, group and individual identities in medieval Europe were defined, first, by the borders of immediate day-to-day social interactions and relationships and, second, by hierarchical membership in universal Christendom. Between these local and universal identities, the concept of nation, as it is generally understood today, had no meaning (Knight 1982).

By the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, this multi-scalar, overlapping political-geographical arrangement gave rise to power struggles and competing claims to

sovereignty among kings, princes, nobles, and clergy that frequently erupted into conflict. Both a byproduct and contributor to the "break-up of a single Christian society" (Elshtain 2008, 55) was England's separation from the Catholic Church and the Protestant Reformation. The centralized mid-sized states of Western Europe proved most effective in mobilizing for the resultant religiously inspired warfare, which reached its apogee with the Thirty Years' War. The hostilities were halted in 1648 with the Peace of Westphalia, a series of treaties that formalized the realist principle of *cuius regio, eius religio*[7] (see generally Taylor 1994; 1995; Murphy 1996). The agreements of Westphalia, cementing the legal principle of noninterference, were combined with advances in mathematics and surveying that allowed for more precise delineation of state borders. This marriage of the new political-legal principle of state sovereignty and the new political-technological feat of precise border-drawing marked what Elden calls the "birth of territory" (forthcoming; see also Elden 2005; 2007), that is, the nascence of the modern political-territorial order.

Territory in its infancy was an expression of the state, not national community. The centralized states of Western Europe represented the future of political-territorial ideology, their victory heralding the march to what Taylor calls "interstateness":

> At Westphalia the roll-call of members of the interstate system was agreed: The Netherlands and Switzerland were finally recognized as independent and in Germany the political units were consolidated from 900 to 300. From this time forth sovereignty has been recognized as a mutual recognition of states by states. … Hence we can date interstateness

[7] "He who rules decides the faith of his realm." This principle was first articulated in the Treaty of Augsburg in 1555 that halted the violence among the German princes that resulted from the Protestant Reformation.

> and the final defeat of premodern universalism from Westphalia (Taylor 1995, 5).

Territorial sovereignty after 1648, as implied by the principle *cuis regio, eius religo*, found its locus of legitimacy in the head of each state, i.e. the sovereign kings. Thus, sovereignty, no longer monopolized by a single Holy Roman Emperor, was devolved to the various monarchs who, often seen as the God's divine representatives, claimed absolute authority within their bordered realms. This devolution of sovereignty in turn influenced the configuration of group identity. While primary identification remained tied to local spatialities of immediate social interaction, membership in a universal Christendom was increasingly replaced by shorter hierarchies of vertical integration into the churches of newly sovereign states, e.g. the Church of England, the Dutch Reformed Church, the Church of Sweden, etc. (Kaplan 1999). This was symptomatic of the role territory began playing in the geographical organization of politics and society, an early incarnation of what Häkli (2001) terms the "state-centered construction of society."

If Westphalia gave birth to territory as sovereign statehood, it was only with subsequent developments that territorial states came to be seen as representative of nations. The era of Enlightenment, with its focus on reason and the individual, led to a situation in which royal divinity increasingly was questioned. The American and French revolutions and their concomitant romantic nationalism represented a paradigm shift, what Taylor calls a change from "interstateness" to "internationality" in the political-territorial system (Taylor 1995, 6). From that point, sovereignty found a new locus of legitimacy – "the people." As Murphy writes,

> Before the age of nationalism, sovereignty was vested in the ruler; power was circumscribed by whatever territory a ruler controlled as a consequence of the vicissitudes of history. With the rise of nationalism, however, sovereignty came to be understood as resting with the nation. By extension, it became important to see *political territories as reflections of nations* (Murphy 1996, 97, emphasis added).

Under this new directive, the long-established absolutist states of Western Europe worked to mold nations within their already erected boundaries; it can be said that they created *state-nations*. For instance, Claval emphasizes that the French nation resulting from this period was formulated in distinctively civic terms:

> France was not conceived of as an ethnic unit. It had been built through history from a variety of groups, and the limits which had been reached during the eighteenth century were considered well-fitted to the national will, since everyone who wished to build a common future as Frenchmen lived within the same state (Claval 1994, 41).

One might take issue with the assertion that "everyone" within France desired a common future as Frenchmen. But the larger point is that, because states now were assumed to represent self-identifying historical cultural groups, France and other centralized states of Western Europe were compelled to encourage stronger national feeling among sometimes disparate cultural groups within the spatial extent of their territories. This process of territorial nation-building was accomplished through what Paasi (1997) calls "the institutionalization of territories," which includes the standardization of language, the cultivation of national symbols with emotional resonance, the development of idealized histories, national militaries, as well as other institutions. This process is common to the shifting political-territorial order and, as Herb

elaborates, “is not linear or universal but a contested discourse that needs to be negotiated between different factions within the nation as well as *vis-à-vis* other nations” (1999, 21). Indeed, to return to the case of France, significant portions of the country’s population did not feel themselves to be French even up to World War I, as Eugen Weber (1976) has shown in his classic account of the construction of the French nation.

The re-situation of sovereignty’s locus of legitimacy from state to nation had a different effect in the lands east of the absolutist states. The cultural groups of Central Europe faced the task of creating their own territorial states. The unification nationalisms of the Italians, who were ruled by foreigners, and the Germans, who lived in a number of fragmented states, resulted in the formation of their *nation-states* in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Unlike the French example, these nationalist movements were expressed in explicitly ethnic terms. Still the cultural contents within these newly formed territories were by no means objective; each would-be nation was riven with disparate folk customs and highly uneven levels of economic development, among other cleavages. For the Italy of 1870, the decision to locate its capital in Rome, over the new country’s more economically dynamic cities, was an effort to co-opt the glorious past of the Roman Empire while simultaneously drawing on the institution of the Catholic Church as a key source of national identity that would transcend regional differences, particularly the sharp cleavages on the north-south axis, and thereby create greater territorial cohesiveness (Agnew 2002b).

The extent of Germany’s external borders in 1871 also presented particular issues for the new country’s state leaders and nation builders. Most glaringly, the territory was divided by religion, with Protestantism predominant in the north and east and

Catholicism dominant in the south and west. Therefore, religion was deemphasized in imagining the newly minted ethnic German nation while language was elevated as a defining feature. For historical reference, the legacy of Prussia, particularly its recent military glories against France, assumed a central place in the early national development of Germany (Applegate 1999; Johnson and Coleman, forthcoming). Emblematic of the Prussian influence was the decision to locate the capital of the new German nation-state in Berlin. If the extent of German state's external borders affected how the ethnic German nation was conceived, the cultural contents in turn influenced the internal territorial structuring of the state into numerous federal *Länder* that reflected the diversity of the German nation while ensuring its overall cohesiveness (Sandner 1994; Herb 2004). This internal political-territorial arrangement of the ethnically defined German nation sharply contrasts with the centralized, civically defined French example.

With sovereignty's locus of legitimacy replaced in the nation, logic dictated that territorial borders should extend to wherever a defined people dwelled. Such romantic nationalism led to a political-territorial system that was characterized by an extreme anarchy from the middle of the nineteenth century and into the first two decades of the twentieth century (Murphy 1996). Following the German and Italian national movements, the peoples of the moribund empires east of them posted their individual claims to territory under the slogan of national self-determination. These forces reached an apotheosis with the First World War, which laid rest those empires and contributed to the subsequent appearance of many new territories on the political map of the world. These states were ostensibly created as sovereign nation-states, the political-territorial ideal of the young twentieth century. At this point, sovereignty was believed to have found its

ultimate locus of legitimacy in the various entities that constituted the political-territorial order; the overlapping, vertical political geography of pre-modern Europe had been displaced by the discrete horizontality of modernity.

In sum, during this period three main principles of the modern political-territorial order were established: (1) *exclusivity*, i.e. the surface of the Earth should be divided up into an array of discretely delimited territorial units; (2) *sovereignty*, i.e. states have ultimate control over their territories and are free from external interference; and (3) the *nation-state ideal*, i.e. territories should be reflections of historically self-identifying cultural groups (Murphy 2005; Agnew 2009).

The ascent of the sovereign nation-state as *the* political-territorial ideal after World War I had contradictory effects. First, the Wilsonian ideal of national self-determination, understood as the right of peoples, i.e. nations, to control their own homelands, discredited European rule over territorial holdings in Asia and Africa, leading to successive waves of decolonization, including that of much of the Muslim world, and consequently resulting in a proliferation of new sovereign territories on the political map of the world (Barnsley and Bleiker 2008). This same ideal, however, contributed to the outbreak of Europe's second great conflagration of the twentieth century. With the close of World War II, the charter of the newly created United Nations expressed its commitment to support the national self-determination of peoples; yet it also purported to uphold the sovereignty and territorial integrity of its member states. These two principles are at clear odds, considering that the UN today incorporates approximately 200 members and there exist, according to one estimate, more than 800 ethnic groups who could assert

their rights to national self-determination (Falk 1992, 202).[8] When these two principles come into conflict, most often in the form of sub-state minority claims, the international community generally has remained committed to the territorial status quo. Only in extreme cases, beyond decolonization, has it recognized sub-state ethno-national territorial claims.

In spite of the international system's commitment to the status quo, sub-state groups persist in pursuing territory as the ultimate expression of their national self-determination. An overview of conflicts around the globe provides an illustration of this issue. For the latter half of the 1990s, only two of the world's highly violent conflicts were waged between states. In that same period, between 26 and 28 internal conflicts – mainly on secessionist grounds, i.e. ethno-national groups seeking control of territory – were registered each year (Christopher 1999). A more recent report shows that, of the world's 28 highly violent conflicts in 2010, none was between states. Again, the main reason for these conflicts was sub-state nationalist movements seeking self-determination (Heidelberg 2011). Notable to this discussion is the fact that a great deal of these secessionist conflicts involve Muslim groups, for reasons that will be addressed later in this chapter.

Reinforcing Territorial Identities

As the persistence of sub-state territorial claims attests, the nation-state as the modern political-territorial ideal in many ways is unattainable – with the exception of only a few cases, mainly found in Europe, a "myth" (Mikesell 1983). However, because

[8] By other estimates, this figure is conservative. White cites a figure of 5,000 nations (White 2000, 2), but according to Minahan, "Estimates of stateless nations in the world run as high as 9,000" (Minahan 1996, xvi).

the modern international system assumes that state leaders represent a defined "people," states are impelled to nationalize their populace, to cultivate state nationalism that corresponds to a "sense of territory" (Murphy 202, 197). But how is this accomplished? To address this question, three conceptual approaches liberally are drawn on in this dissertation.

The most foundational of the three conceptual approaches, *territoriality* is "a primary geographical expression of power," according to Robert Sack (1986, 3), who defines the term more fully as "*the attempt by an individual or group to affect, influence, or control people, phenomena, and relationships, by delimiting and asserting control over a geographic area*" (Ibid. 19, original italics). Sack emphasizes that territoriality is not an essential part of human behavior, unlike with animals, but rather a learned "strategy" in which power relations are reified through a threefold process of (1) *classification* of space, e.g. "homeland" vs. "foreign land," "ours" vs. "not ours"; (2) *communication* of a sense of place, e.g. the erection of boundaries; and (3) *enforcement* of control, e.g. policing, surveillance (Sack 1986, 32-33; see also Sack 1983). Following from this dynamic, the usefulness of territoriality as a control-oriented strategy lies in its efficiency – power relations are depersonalized by moving attention away from individuals and to the entire extent of bounded space. Hence, territoriality shapes identity in its role of defining group membership, literally who is considered "in" and who is "out" of place. In the context of the territorial state, as Herb has shown in his case study of pre-unification Germany, territoriality and its accompanying bordering processes are employed in the construction of the nation to "identify who is included and excluded" by accentuating "external difference or internal unity" (Herb 2004, 144).

Building on Sack's concept of human territoriality, Anssi Paasi provides a second useful conceptual approach with his idea of *spatial socialization*, which he defines as a constant "process" in which individuals and groups

> are socialized as members of specific territorially bounded spatial entities, participate in their reproduction and "learn" collective territorial identities, narratives of shared traditions and inherent spatial images (e.g. visions regarding boundaries, regional divisions, regional identities, etc.), which may be, and often are, contested (Paasi 2009, 226).

Territories and identities, according to Paasi, are co-constructed through boundaries separating "us" from "them" via the process of Othering. These borders are not just the physical borders located at the edge of states. Rather, the borders of Paasi's spatial socialization, both discursive and material, are "spread" – however unevenly – throughout territories and permeate everyday life (Paasi 2008, 113; see also Paasi 1998). These lines of inclusion and exclusion, in their ubiquity, represent hidden power relations that are communicated foremost through *institutions*, including national school systems, politics, popular culture, government, media outlets, and multiple others via practices and discourses that serve to "nationalize everyday life" (Paasi 1999). Consequently, Paasi urges researchers to analyze textbooks, art, newspapers, and other common materials that aid in reinforcing the institutional shape of territory and group identity.

In tandem with the institutional shape of territory and national identities, according to Paasi, is the symbolic shape: "Territorial symbols are abstract expressions of group solidarity and serve to evoke strong emotions of identification with territorial groups" (Paasi 1997, 43). Symbols, too, are border-producing agents. As is the case with institutions, borders produced by symbols are "simultaneously territorial (exclusive) and

emphasise internal integration" (Ibid.). The symbolic shape of territories and national identities includes three aspects:

> (a) dynamic, discursively constructed elements (like the process of naming), (b) fixed symbols such as flags, coats of arms and statues, and (c) social practices in which these elements come together, such as military parades, flag days, and education (Paasi 2008, 113).

Places, such as capital cities, national parks, etc., are symbols that are also important to the social integration of national groups. Landscape is a specific type of place that commonly is important to national iconography.[9] For example, Paasi (1996) discusses how nineteenth-century paintings and literature played an important role in representing Finnish landscapes populated by lakes as representative of the Finnish national character.

Whereas Sack looks at territoriality as a foundational control-oriented strategy and Paasi examines internal bordering processes that give shape to territories and group identities, a third conceptual approach is developed by Murphy, who is concerned with the "territorial logic of the modern state system" (Murphy 2005, 280). Because, as discussed above, the nation-state is a political-territorial ideal that, with the exception of rare cases, is never met, nationalists and state leaders are compelled to develop what Murphy terms *regimes of territorial legitimation* (RTLs), defined as "the institutions, practices, and discourses that are designed to legitimate particular conception of the state" (Murphy 2005, 281). The aim of these regimes is to cultivate and inculcate a "particular sense of territory" (Murphy 2002, 197) that would contribute to a heightened sense of nationhood. In the face of the sovereign nation-state ideal, however, RTLs are

[9] The work landscape does in shaping territorial identities will be discussed in more depth in Chapter V.

constrained by the geographical circumstances of states as they entered the modern system of nation-states. In light of this, Murphy identifies three historical-geographical understandings of the state that are often evoked in RTLs:

1. That the state is the historic homeland of a distinctive ethnocultural group (e.g. France, Poland)
2. That the state is a distinctive physical-environmental unit (e.g. Hungary, Australia)
3. That the state is the modern incarnation of a long-standing political-territorial entity (e.g. Egypt, Mongolia) (Murphy 2005, 283).

These arguments, he points out, are idealized notions of history and territory – not necessarily reflections of reality – employed to instill state nationalism. They are not exhaustive and can change over time.

Taken together, these three conceptual approaches show how territory and identity are deeply coupled. *Territoriality* is a primary power strategy used, among other actors, by states to classify, communicate, and enforce who is considered "in" and who is considered "out" of the national community. *Spatial socialization* shows how borders separating "us" from "them" are produced and reproduced within the territorial extent of states through institutions, symbols, and practices. And the concept of *regimes of territorial legitimation* helps us understand how state and national leaders attempt to cultivate a "sense of territory" among their populaces that would conform to the norms of the international political-territorial system.

The Territorial Bases of Muslim Identities

Theses positing Islam's incompatibility with the modern political-territorial order invariably point out that the nation-state is a European import, a product of the colonial experience for most of the Muslim world. While unquestionably true, this assertion carries with it the implication that the Islamic world was free of European influence until the age of colonialism. But, as historian Reinhard Schulze stresses in the introduction to his *A Modern History of the Islamic World*, Muslims and Europeans share a history of interaction, characterized both by antagonism and mutual enrichment, dating back several centuries (Schulze 2000). European encroachments in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, though qualitatively different from previous encounters, did not signal the arrival of an alien civilization to a previously separate Muslim world. Additionally, as addressed in the previous section and underscored by Sami Zubaida, ideas and practices associated with the nation-state, although originating in Western Europe, "have proved highly diffusible to all regions of the world, first to the rest of Europe and the white colonies, then to the rest of the world, colonised or not" (Zubaida 1989, 121). To argue that the nation-state is incompatible with Muslim societies, but not with Buddhist, Hindu, or Christian societies, is to advocate cultural exceptionalism.

In recognition of these dynamics, Fred Halliday argues that "it is fruitless to begin by posing the question of how far Islam, as a transnational religion, is compatible with the modern state or modern nation. The answer is self-evidently that it is" (Halliday 2002, 25). He points out that Islam in its totality is just one of multiple bases of identity – along with sectarian, ethno-linguistic, and other affiliations – that form group consciousness in the Muslim world in the modern era, and these various aspects of identity "shift in

balance as between one and the other *depending on the circumstances*" (Ibid., 24-25, emphasis added). Whereas Halliday and other modernist researchers (e.g. Al-Azmeh 1996; Eickelman and Piscatori 1996; Zubaida 2004) are specifically interested in the *political circumstance* that have conditioned Muslim identities in the age of the nation-state, their work highlights the importance of exploring how *territorial circumstances* have influenced Muslim group identities in the modern era. An exhaustive handling of this issue is far beyond the scope of this section. The primary aim here is simply to identify and discuss important examples of shifting territorial bases of Muslim identities, and the relative salience of Islam to those identities, in a variety of contexts as illustrative of the synergistic, historically contingent relationship between territory and identity.

The Modernity of the Umma *and Pre-Colonial Muslim Territorial Identities*

Because of its importance to current debates on Islam, a proper place to begin is with a discussion of the *umma*. The term entered modern political discourse only in the latter part of the nineteenth century in the context of two interrelated phenomena: European colonization of what by then was the majority of the world's Muslims and the decline of the Ottoman Empire. Most active in propagating the *umma* was Jamal al-Din al-Afghani (1839-1897),[10] an early champion of Pan-Islamism whose primary objective was liberating Muslims from the European yoke. He argued that Muslims had come under direct foreign control because they had retreated from Islam's essential unity, as expressed in the *umma*, and had allowed themselves to become divided by competing loyalties of sect, school, kin, and territory. To restore Islamic solidarity and thereby rid

[10] See Keddie (1983, 3-36) for a concise biography of al-Afghani and his political-intellectual development.

Muslims of foreign rule, al-Afghani advocated aggressive religious reform based on a return to the "pure" Islam that was practiced in the time of the prophet and the virtuous forefathers (Schulze 2000, 18).[11]

His ideas of returning to a pristine past, however, were firmly tied to modernist ideologies. The *umma*, in al-Afghani's conceptualization, was a "nation" in the modern European sense (Halliday 2002, 26).[12] He considered the German nation, having recently come together across lines of religious schism, a model for the *umma*'s unification.[13] Consolidating the Islamic nation, as al-Afghani recognized from the German example, could only be accomplished through a state, or a confederation of states, prompting him to seek collaboration with Sultan Abdulhamid in his campaign to unify the *umma* under the authority of a single caliphal ruler (Hourani 1970, 103-129). Hence, although the *umma* is said to be incompatible with the political-territorial ordering of modernity, the

[11] This movement for the return to "pure" Islam was the early embodiment of the current Salafist movement. As Schulze explains of this movement in al-Afghani's time, "Corruption, it was argued, had invaded the Oriental world because Muslims had given up Islam and turned to obscure varieties of religiosity such as popular mysticism, magic and witchcraft. The return to the 'pure' Islam of the forefathers (*al-salaf al-salih*) became the target of a new intellectual movement, which was accordingly given the programmatic name Salafiya. The Salafiya movement was an Islamic variant of late 19th-century classicism. … Like classicism, the Salafiya sought a timeless aesthetic and intellectual ideal, derived from an origin that was pure of all temporal circumstances. In the Islamic context this could only be the early Islamic period" (Schulze 2000, 18).

[12] His singular definition of the *umma* as "nation" is representative of the nationalist habit of, if not all-out "inventing traditions" (Hobsbawn 1983), then at least reviving and radically reinterpreting traditions. In fact, the term for centuries had been used in several different meanings. *Umma* appears in the Koran more than 60 times, with at least a dozen separate meanings, and is used often in the *hadith* (sayings and acts of the prophet), again, with multiple meanings (Dallal 1995, 267). While the most important usage of the term in these foundational texts appears to address the community of believers who were ruled by the prophet while in Medina, the *umma* is also used in reference to other faith communities, state formations, kin groups, and even all living creatures. To shift analysis from text to practice, the *umma* was used in these multiple ways in pronouncements made by *khulafa* (Muslim rulers, literally "successors") until the caliphate was abolished in 1924 (Halliday 2002, 23).

[13] It should be remembered that the ideology of Pan-Germanism was an early political-intellectual movement that contributed to the Germans' ultimate unification. Indeed, as Landau discusses, Pan-Islamism should be seen as part of a broader milieu of nineteenth-century unification movements, related intellectually and politically to Pan-Germanism, Pan-Slavism, and Pan-Hellenism (Landau 1990, 2).

term itself, as it is commonly understood today,[14] was developed and defined within the framework of modernist territorial ideas and ideologies.

Pan-Islamism arose in various places, including Egypt, the Ottoman Empire, British India, Iran, and Tsarist Russia. A considerable exchange of ideas, literature, and transnational activism took place among these various movements. But in the final account, as Mandaville attests, Pan-Islamism "failed miserably" in its goal of creating a united *umma*. He attributes the failure to the fact that the "*umma*, simply put, was too abstract" and instead Muslim groups "opt[ed] for nationalism over Islam" as resistance to European colonialism (Mandaville 2011, 9). Mandaville is correct is his assessment of Pan-Islamism's record, but his analysis suffers two mistakes, one ontological and the other factual. To start with the former, his focus on civilization/culture as driving politics, not the other way around, forces Muslims to make a zero-sum choice between nationalism and Islam, when the two are in fact not mutually exclusive. As for the latter, it is clear that several Muslim groups identified themselves in modern national terms before they were brought under European colonial rule. This can be illustrated by looking at two stops in the career of al-Afghani.

First, the Pan-Islamist ideas of al-Afghani were developed in the 1870s, while he was active as an Islamic reformer/modernizer in Cairo. By that point Egyptians already had a strong national feeling separate of other Arabs. As Lapidus explains,

> Even before nationalism became a self-conscious doctrine, Egyptian writers spontaneously identified Egypt as the *watan*, motherland. The

[14] As an example, Muhittin Ataman asserts that "all Muslim ethnic (linguistic, cultural, territorial and racial) groups are considered one nation or one political entity. The *ummah* is the name given to this political, cultural and religious entity" (Ataman 2003, 90).

> homogeneity and isolation of the country, its long history of central government, and its distinctive cultural past encouraged a consciousness of Egyptian identity (Lapidus 1988, 622).

With the country only nominally associated with the Ottoman Empire, Egyptian nationalism was on par with Islamic reformism as the country's dominant ideology. Nationalists recognized Egypt as a modernist Islamic country, but, according to Hourani, al-Afghani and other Islamic reformers could not accept "the idea of an Egyptian nation, entitled to a separate political existence" because it "involved not only the denial of a single Islamic political community, but also the assertion that there could be a virtuous community based on something other than a common religion and a revealed law" (Hourani 2008, 193). This milieu of Egypt in the 1870s indicates, first, that modernist ideas underpinning the nation-state were well established among a significant portion of the population prior to British occupation beginning 1882 – they were not simply grafted on or developed as a reaction to Europe – and, second, that al-Afghani's conceptualization of the *umma* was worked out not just as a reaction to European colonialism, but also came as a response to nationalism among Muslims he encountered while in Egypt.

On the eve of British occupation, after al-Afghani had moved on to other lands to spread his Pan-Islamism, patriotism was on the upswing in Egypt, seen in the popularity of *Al-Watan* ("Motherland"), one of the first important unofficial newspapers (Hourani 2008, 194). The all-subsuming Pan-Islamist definition of *umma* proffered by al-Afghani was rejected by the Sheikh of Al-Azhar University in Cairo, who, in his *Risalat al-kalim al-thaman* ("Essay on Eight Words"), defined the term to mean a community defined not

only by religion, but also a community that can be defined by territory and/or language. Notably, among his few examples of a territorially defined *umma* was Egypt (Ayalon 1987, 27-28). British occupation did not create nationalism in Egypt. Instead, as Hourani writes, British rule "fused Islamic modernism with Egyptian nationalism" (Hourani 2008, 194) in a united nationalist front. By the close of the century, under the conditions of external occupation, modernist Islam was eclipsed by a secular nationalist definition of Egyptian identity and politics. This understanding of national community grew in strength until the country emerged as an independent nation-state in 1922. Thus, in the case of Egypt we see how preexisting territorial conditions, i.e. centralized institutions, a modernizing state, and a sense of distinctive culture, gave rise to a national identity that was only strengthened, not created, under foreign rule.

By the time al-Afghani arrived in Istanbul in the 1890s, his Pan-Islamism could do little to stem the Arabism that had arisen in the core of the Ottoman Empire. Various Arab nationalisms were shaped by a specific set of changing political-territorial circumstances that began with the territorial modernization of the empire, launched in the mid-1800s, which replaced the traditional Ottoman system of decentralized governance with modern institutions of centralized administration. Carried out in tandem with the standardization of laws and education, as Selim Deringil (1998) explains in his book *The Well-Protected Domains*, one goal of the empire's centralization was the construction of a unified Ottoman identity. This process of territorial modernization and nation-building had unintended consequences, sharpening local and regional identities under the umbrella of a vaster imperial identity. By the latter part of the century, a new generation of educated Arabs in the Fertile Crescent began expressing grievances that were driven

primarily as a reaction to the Porte's recognition of Ottoman Turkish as the sole official language within the core of the empire. Muslim and Christian Arabs together sought territorial autonomy – something akin to the Ottoman sub-states of Egypt, Tunisia, or Algeria – within which Arabic would be the official language (Lapidus 1988, 644). Hence, we see territorial modernization giving rise to a proto-national group defining itself ethno-linguistically and seeking territorial expression of its culture.

It was at this point that Sultan Abdulhamid began incorporating ideas of Pan-Islamism, aimed not at territorial expansion as envisioned by al-Afghani, but in an effort to curtail Arab nationalism within his domains (Peters 2010, 84). A second set of political-territorial changes further fuelled the embers of Arab national feeling. The increasing losses of the Porte's Christian possession in the Balkans in early part of the twentieth century left the empire with the pronounced character of a Turko-Arab state. By this point, writes Choureiri, "it was becoming increasingly obvious that the Arab educated elite, along with the local constituencies, had developed a sense of national identity that could no longer be ignored" (Choureiri 2002, 654). As their demands for territorial autonomy and language rights intensified, Ottoman officials refused any concessions as they leaned more heavily on Islamism – a common religious identity that would unite the Arabs with the Turks in the territorially diminished empire – as a source of legitimacy while implementing *de facto* Turkification policies. This approach further inflamed Arab nationalist sentiment. Haarmann claims that this point in history signaled the arrival of a "new idea of an Arab political nationality" that was defined by a common language (Haarmann 1988, 186), but it would be difficult to discuss a single, unified Arab national front. If Arab Christians were generally in favor of secession, particularly

with the recent rise in Islamism, Muslim Arabs were more ambivalent about departing from the caliphate (Lapidus 1988, 640-641). Nonetheless, it can be concluded that, by the start of World War I – prior to European colonization – Arabs of the Ottoman Empire had developed a distinctly modern sense of nationality, if in different forms, and the desire to express it territorially.

Territory and Muslim Identities in the Post-World War I Context

After the First World War, with the dismantling of the Ottoman Empire and the abolition of the caliphate, Turkey was refashioned as a nation-state under the leadership of Atatürk, as was un-colonized Iran under the Pahlavi regime. Each of these countries, in building its regime of territorial legitimation in the interwar years, drew on pre-Islamic histories and the legacy of past statehood, each billed in glorious terms, to help mold new secular national identities (Zubaida 2004, 413-416). Most of the rest of world's Muslims remained under European colonization, but, as Peters writes,

> Almost nowhere, though, did Islam play a crucial role as an ideology of anticolonial resistance. … The new political forces fighting for independence were grounded ideologically in secular nationalism and liberal European democracy and constitutional government (Peters 2010, 102).

The relative absence of the *umma* ideal in resistance to European colonization in the post-World War I context is reflective of both the *internal* and *external* normative powers of the nation-state, which had become *the* political-territorial ideal worldwide (as discussed earlier in this chapter). National identities were shaped *internally*, within the spatial extent of each colonized territory, by the institutions of colonial administration. Demands

for independence, conditioned *externally* by the norms of the international sovereignty regime, were framed within the borders of each colonized territory in terms that invoked the Wilsonian ideal of national self-determination. The European colonialist, in the various independence campaigns, served as the Other against which the nascent territorial nations were defined.

For instance, to continue with the example of the Arab Fertile Crescent, the Sykes-Picot agreement of 1916 divided the Arab Near East into an array of new territorial states. While these states might have been "artificial" (Halliday 2002, 29), the power of modern territory in shaping identity is seen in how anti-colonialism was expressed. In the mandate period, leaders of the older generation, holding to the Pan-Arabism that took form under Ottoman rule, still dreamed of a single Arab nation into the 1920s and 1930s. By the 1940s, however, a new generation had been spatially socialized within the new national school systems, militaries, and multiple other institutions of each Arab state. Consequently, separate Arab nationalisms within each territorial state, Lapidus writes, became the "principle expression of the demand of independence" (Lapidus 1988, 644). Even within Lebanon by the 1940s, a common "Arab character" united Muslim and Christians in a Lebanese nationalism that was gelled in opposition to foreign occupation (Havemann 2010, 512).

A similar pattern is evident in preexisting colonies. For instance, the Dutch East Indies remained politically divided until the Dutch colonists centralized their control over Indonesia in 1914 with a new territorially defined system of administration. Only at this point did the colonizers begin differentiating between "natives" – a category that, although Muslim-majority, also comprised other religions and a multiplicity of ethnicities

– and "foreigners," i.e. the colonialists themselves. In institutionalizing these distinctions, the Dutch thereby "confirm[ed] the nationalist view that Indonesia had its own nationality and hence the right to independence" (Schulze 2000, 43). Although Islamist groups were part of the anti-colonial drive, it was secular Indonesian nationalism under the leadership of Sukarno that secured the country's independence in the wake of the World War II.

At the same time in British India, with the Indian National Conference beginning its campaign for home rule and independence in 1919, it seemed a common Indian nationalism might similarly evolve to unite Muslims and Hindus in the face of foreign rule. The Muslim-nationalist Pakistani movement, however, eventually became ascendant – but not, as current reading might suggest, out of some innate religious aversion to political coexistence with Hindus. Rather, the rise of Muslim nationalism was primarily due to the British colonial administration's earlier institutionalization of communal difference via the Indian Councils Act of 1909, which, as Lapidus contends,

> reinforced the collective identity of religious groups by giving them the right to petition for relief of grievances and to elect their own representatives. The British identified the Muslims as a religious community; then they provided the political machinery to translate that identity into concerted group action. By the Indian Councils Act of 1909 they confirmed the existence of two separate communal electorates, Hindu and Muslim, and thus gave legal and political substance to the underlying differences of religion (Lapidus 1988, 733).

While the idea of a mass Muslim society in India before that time "had only the most tenuous basis [and] was perhaps stronger in the minds of the British than in the minds of the Muslims" (Ibid.), the institutionalization of religious difference conditioned the

subsequent trajectory of independence on the Indian subcontinent. This led to the territorial separation of Pakistan from India in 1947, with attendant widespread inter-communal violence.

The case of Algeria after World War I illustrates how group identity can change as aspirations for opt-in solutions of greater representation, integration, and participation within the broader French/French Algerian society shift to the opt-out territorial solution of Algerian independence (Mikesell and Murphy 1991). Although the French had maintained a presence in Algeria since 1830, it was only after 1914 that the colonial administration created a special "Muslim" nationality to separate the indigenous Arabs and Berbers from the Christian European *colons* (Schulze 2000, 43). In institutionalizing a common indigenous Muslim identity, the French in turn created, quite unintentionally, national movements, at first expressing various opt-in aspirations. The Young Algerians, for instance, sought full integration into French society, while other groups sought equality in the army, education, and other civil institutions. By the 1930s, denied these rights and institutionalized as a common "Muslim" nationality, Arabs and Berbers began speaking in more strident nationalist terms and resisting French assimilation as native Algerians. By the late 1930s, they also began resisting the French colonizers' efforts to divide their "Muslim" designation into separate Arab and Berber nationalities, a campaign aimed at weakening an increasingly radicalized indigenous nationalist movement (Lapidus 1988, 690).

Demands shifted to opt-out territorial solutions after World War II. With this change, French offers to enfranchise all Algerian males was, as Perkins phrases it, "too little, too late" (Perkins 2010, 428) – once group demands have switched over to the opt-

out territorial solution of independence, as Mikesell and Murphy (1991) have shown, it is unlikely they will revisit opt-in solutions of greater representation, integration, or participation. The Algerian revolution, beginning in 1954, was conducted by various nationalist groups, but the leading, most decisive *Front Libération Nationale* (FLN), although not officially Islamic, "held strong Islamic sentiments and puritanical attitudes" (Lapidus 1988, 693) that were amplified in the course of fighting for Algeria's liberation, ultimately gained in 1962. Thus, the case of Algeria in this period shows (1) how modern institutions mold territorial identities, (2) how group identities can change in tandem with shifts from opt-in to opt-out territorial aspirations, and (3) how Islam can mix with nationalism in the course of intensified territorial demands.

Territory and the Contemporary Contours of Muslim Identities

If secular nationalism was the main basis of Muslim territorial identity in the face of the colonizing European Other, the postcolonial era has exhibited a far greater variability in the ideas and ideologies underpinning territorial identities. Two poles of ideology that surfaced in the Arab Near East provide illustration. The first was the "radical nationalism" (Halliday 2002, 28) of Pan-Arabism, which, after being muted in the in the mandate period, resurged in the late 1950s and early 1960s with attempted unions between, first, Egypt and Syria (1958-1961) and then between Egypt, Syria, and Iraq (1963). Later ventures in unifying Arab territories included efforts between Egypt and Libya (1973) and Syria and Iraq (1979) (see generally Farah 1987; Jamkowski and Gershoni 1997). All of these attempts were unqualified failures.[15] Rather than forging

[15] With North and South Yemen merging in 1990, Yemen is the one exception. The two parts of the country, according to Halliday (1997; see also Halliday 2000, Chapter III), were united on Yemeni

new, enlarged Arab territories, the ethno-nationalist ideologies – explicitly secular, generally socialist – informing Pan-Arabism were employed within the borders of the newly independent states. Baathism, for instance, was enforced by Saddam Hussein to unite Shiite and Sunni Arabs within the borders of Iraq (Simon 1997, 88). More concerned with bridging potential sectarian cleavages between Arabs of Iraq, Hussein, in effect, never considered Kurds part of the Iraqi national community,[16] which in turn contributed to Kurdish sub-state nationalism in the country's north.

The second pole, Islamism, initially came to prominence in the postcolonial age as a reaction to the era's virulent Arab nationalism. The Muslim Brotherhood, for example, became a force in Egypt as a response to Nasserism, witnessed in the group's most famous ideologue, Sayyid Qutb, who denounced Arab and Egyptian nationalism before a Cairo courtroom in the early 1960s as follows:

> The ties of faith are stronger than the ties of fervent patriotic feeling that relate to a region or territory … the homeland is not the land but the group of believers or the whole Islamic *umma* (quoted in Castells 2010, 15).[17]

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nationalist terms, not under the banner of Arabism or Islamism. However, considering how the country's continuing political struggles and division along the north-south axis, the case of Yemen is a very qualified "success," an exception that, for most intents and purposes, proves the rule.

[16] Hussein tried to justify his 1991 invasion of Kuwait by adding Islamism to his Pan-Arabism. Neither, of course, worked. As Halliday attests, "In Kuwait, in contrast to almost all other modern occupations, no collaborator puppet regime could be established as there was simply no support for the Iraqi move" (Halliday 2002, 30). This response by the Kuwaiti people, Arabs who share a religion with Hussein, is illustrative of attachments to territory trumping common ethnicity or religion. The near unanimity of the international community in censuring Hussein's invasion is reflective of its commitment to upholding the territorial status quo.

[17] This quote by Qutb, called the "godfather of contemporary radical Islamism" (e.g. Musallam 2005) is commonly cited in building the case that Islam is incompatible with the modern political-territorial order. In my readings, I have encountered this same quotation (in slightly differing translations) in Castells (2010), Zubaida (2004), and Mortimer (1982).

As indicated in this quote, the Muslim Brothers and other Islamists of this period, however at odds with Arab nationalists, shared with them a declared desire to rearrange the region's territorial configuration. But, much like the ideologies underpinning Pan-Arabism, Islamist ideologies became organized within the borders of individual states. Their relative salience likewise was conditioned by the political-territorial circumstances in each state. For instance, Hamas, an offshoot of the Muslim Brotherhood, was formed in Palestine as a response to political-territorial circumstances affecting Muslim Palestinians, as was Hezbollah formed in Lebanon as a response to issues related to Lebanese Muslims. Their ideologies speak of the *umma* in its entirety, but these and other Islamists "are in fact localized in the national state contexts" (Lapidus 2001, 38).

The fate of Pan-Arabism and the Pan-Islamist sentiments expressed by the likes of Qutb and others in this era is, on the one hand, a reflection of the international sovereignty regime's commitment to maintaining the status quo; on the other hand, it is a testament to the degree to which the institutions of territory had taken hold in the internal organization of society and politics among Muslims in the postcolonial era. The changing balance in the relative weight of these two poles – ethnicity and Islam – to territorial identities in the postcolonial era is not limited to the Arabs of the Fertile Crescent. As a start, the case of post-1947 Pakistan, exceptional in that its subsequent partition ran counter to the international community's dedication to the status quo, provides illustration of the diverging fortunes in the balance among the territorial bases of Muslim identities.

Muslims of British India, influenced by the institutionalization of communal difference by the colonial administration, justified their independence separate from India

on religious grounds. But Islam proved insufficient in keeping the western and eastern parts of the newly formed Pakistan together, as Sufia Uddin explains in her book *Constructing Bangladesh: Religion, Ethnicity, and Language in an Islamic Nation* (Uddin 2006, see especially Chapter IV). Although Muslim Bengalis were instrumental in the formation of the Muslim League and its campaign for a united, independent Pakistan leading up to 1947, the issue of language became a central grievance compelling East Bengali to separate from the four provinces of West Pakistan. Urdu was the *lingua franca*, and was seen as the language of Islam in the highly ethnically (and intra-religiously) diverse West Pakistan. Soon after gaining independence, politicians in Islamabad sought to make Urdu the sole official language for the entire country, the goal being to unite the new Muslim Pakistani nation by language and religion and thereby bring it in line with the nation-state ideal, as established in the European context. However, Muslims of East Bengali, forced to learn Urdu, "saw their ethnicity as coming under attack by West Pakistanis" (Uddin 2006, 120), which led to "East Pakistanis, regardless of religion, establish[ing] more of a common bond based on ethnicity" (Ibid., 121). Two decades of resistance to what was seen as ethno-linguistic assimilation by an overbearing West Pakistan led to war and, not long after, an independent Bangladeshi nation-state in 1971. Thus, in the course of a few of decades, ethnicity, defined primarily in linguistic terms, came to outweigh religion in defining what was to become the Bangladeshi nation.

A country in which 90 percent of the population is Muslim (mostly Sunni) and almost everybody natively speaks Bengali, Bangladesh perhaps comes closest among the world's Muslim-majority states to approaching the nation-state ideal in which

linguistically and religiously defined ethno-cultural borders are assumed to match political borders (Azerbaijan, where ethnicity outweighs Islam in the balance of territorial identity, is another example that approaches this ideal). This contrasts with the extreme diversity, both ethno-linguistically and intra-religiously, of Pakistan, where, explicitly defined as an Islamic state, religion remains a primary basis of its territorial identity. Neighboring Afghanistan is similar in these dynamics. The *umma* ideal also tends to hold greater sway in the balance of Muslim group identities in territories that play host to high ethnic diversity and high inter-religious diversity, as seen in the postcolonial contexts of Malaysia, Indonesia, Nigeria, and Sudan.

Changes in the balance of territorial identities in the post-World War II context are not limited to the formerly colonized Muslim lands, as seen in the cases of Iran and Turkey. Neither formally colonized, both defined themselves in the early decades of the twentieth century as nation-states that were the modern embodiments of historical political-territorial units, the former drawing on the legacy of the pre-Islamic Persian Empire, the latter as the rump of the Turkish-dominated Ottoman Empire. It is notable that, while both early on were overtly nationalistic in a strict ethnic sense, reflective of the post-1914 milieu, neither approached the ideal of ethnic homogeneity. In recent decades, however, Islam has been become a stronger basis of national identity in each country, first, of course, with the 1979 Iranian Revolution. This momentous event, coming soon after most of the Muslim world had been decolonized, has been interpreted by many as proof of Islam's innate incompatibility with the nation-state and has colored much subsequent analysis.

The shift away from Persian ethnic nationalism toward a more Islamic definition of Iranian nationhood should not come as a surprise when looking at the cultural contents of the territory. Persians account for only about half of the population,[18] but about 90 percent of the country's citizenry are Shiite Muslims. Although the revolution's leader, the Ayatollah Khomeini, spoke in Pan-Islamist terms, his language was "full of nationalist appeals" and allusions to Iran as a "Great Nation," as Halliday attests. He concludes that, "in effect, the Iranian revolution was a Shiite revolution" (Halliday 2002, 32-33; see also Halliday 2000, 155-169). The sectarianism of Iranian nationalism is evident in the post-revolutionary constitution of the ostensibly Islamic republic, which specifies that its president must be an Iranian by birth and possess a "convinced belief in the … official school of thought in the country," that is, the president of Iran must be a Shiite (quoted in Zubaida 2004, 416). One clearly should not exaggerate sectarian difference as a source of division and/or conflict among Muslims (Keshavarzian 2007), but, as seen in the case of post-1979 Iran, sectarian commonality can become emphasized as a salient basis of territorial identity.[19]

A similar dynamic colors the increasing profile of Islam as a social and political force in Turkey in the post-Cold War era. In a territory where almost everybody is a Muslim,[20] but only three-fourths of the citizenry is an ethnic Turk, a major concern of Islamists has been the rise, beginning in the mid-1980s, of rebellions and separatist

[18] Shiite Azeris account for about a quarter of the population, the rest made up of various other ethnic groups. All population statistics, unless otherwise noted, are from the CIA World Factbook (https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/aj.html).

[19] Ahmadi (2005) makes the argument that religion has been the primary basis of a multiethnic Iranian national identity long before the 1979 revolution. However, this analysis, going back as far as 2,500 years, does not take into account the modernity of both nation and territory.

[20] There were, of course, large Armenian and Greek populations in Turkey until state-sponsored ethnic cleansing and population transfers in the early decades of the twentieth century.

sentiment among the Kurdish population concentrated in the country's southeast.[21] As a study by Sakallioğlu (1998) indicates, Turkey's Islamists are not so much concerned with Kurdish nationalism *per se* as they are with what they see as its catalyst, namely, the Kemalist legacy of defining the national community as a strictly secular, culturally Turkish entity (in the Kemalist tradition, Kurds were defined as "Mountain Turks," thereby officially negating their ethno-linguistic difference). Kurdish rebellions, Turkish Islamists contend, would cease with the return of Islam as central in defining the "territorial identity [and] collective unity" of the Turkish state (Sakallioğlu 1998, 79). As such, the country's Islamists, anxious about the territorial integrity of their *vatan* ("homeland"), position themselves as patriots in their promotion of religion as the basis of national identity, the glue that holds Turkey together. Their primary concern is the territorial nation, not the worldwide *umma*.

If ethnic diversity is a factor contributing to the increasing salience of religion in the balance of group identities in Iran and Turkey, this situation points to another set of political-territorial circumstances faced by Muslim groups, namely, that of being a national minority. While the Shiite Azeris of Iran, as Borhani (2003) points out, were indeed at the "forefront of the broad anti-monarchial coalition that led to the 1979 Revolution," their participation should necessarily be seen an endorsement of the subsequent Islamization of Iranian society. Their grievances at that time centered on Persian-nationalist policies of the Pahlavi regime that marginalized their Turkic language and other aspects of ethnic Azeri culture. A recent article by Riaux provides evidence that, since the late 1990s, there has been an upswing in ethno-nationalism in Iran's north

[21] Ethnic Kurds, by far the country's largest minority, account for almost one-fifth of Turkey's population, or about 80 percent of its non-Turkish citizenry.

in which Iranian Azeris demand greater "recognition of cultural rights" (Riaux 2008, 45).[22] Similarly, Sakallioğlu suggests that the increasing salience of Islam in Turkey has done little to stem Kurdish separatism in that country. "Kurdishness today is being made not by referring to Islam," he says, but rather by reference to a set of other "cultural artifacts," i.e. an ethnic identity that has already been largely defined against the Turkish Other (Sakallioğlu 2010, 87; see also Hastings et al. 2006).

The Azeris of Iran and the Kurds of Turkey (and Iraq and Iran) are minorities in Muslim-majority countries, providing some explanation as to why Islam has not factored into the expression of their territorial aspirations. The situation is more complicated for Muslim minority groups within non-Muslim territories – a type of political-territorial context central to this dissertation. Palestine is a glaring example, where the Arab nationalism of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) has been challenged by the Islamism of Hamas as a response to the political-territorial circumstances faced by Palestinians. Among the Uyghurs of the Xinjiang province of western China, evidence suggests that religion may be becoming more important in the balance of group identity in the expression of their territorial aspirations (e.g. Davis 2008; Reny 2009). The situation in Chechnya is also illustrative of the shift toward Islam amid conditions of war over territory.

[22] Ahmedi (2010) reports that leaders of Iran's Azeri community, along with leaders of other ethnic minorities in other regions of Iran, have expressed their desire for territorial autonomy within the framework of a countrywide federal system. But Tehran, fearful of ethnic separatism, is unwilling to consider to such an arrangement.

Concluding Remarks

Territory and identity have become coupled as the result of historical developments in which sovereignty has been devolved from God-like rulers to "the people," understood in contemporary terms as a "nation." While the nation-state as the modern political-territorial ideal first took shape in Western Europe, it has been diffused throughout the world. Opponents of the Huntingtons and Lewises of the world are correct in criticizing their failure to problematize the modern political-territorial order. The nation-state in no way is the natural order of things, but rather is a historically contingent entity. However, it is this very historical contingency that requires an examination of the role of territory in shaping identities, including those of Muslim groups. While globalization undoubtedly makes the nation-state an increasingly "leaky container" (Taylor 1994, 157), it nonetheless remains an important source of group identity, not excluding people in the Middle East and North Africa, as recent events in those regions have shown. Thus, an important task for researchers is to take the nation-state seriously and interrogate the ideas and ideologies underpinning the modern political-territorial order that condition Islam's social and political expression.

The question of territory has been at the heart of historical developments, both distant and near, that have influenced the form and function of Islam and Muslim identities within the Russian context. This topic is examined in the following chapter. I begin with an overview of the territoriality of Islam in contemporary Russia and then provide a historical overview of how territorial conditions have affected Islam in the Middle Volga region. The chapter concludes with an overview of the dramatic political-territorial changes in the post-Soviet Russian Federation to help prepare the reader for the

analysis that follows in Chapters IV and V centered on an examination of the changing shape of Tatarstan's post-Soviet Islamic revival.

CHAPTER III

SETTING THE STAGE: THE POLITICAL-TERRITORIAL INFLUENCE ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF TATAR ISLAM

Introduction

In November 2003, then-President of Russia Vladimir Putin traveled to Kuala Lumpur to attend the summit of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC). He cited the fact that Russia is home to 20 million Muslims[23] in his successful bid to secure his country's membership, albeit initially only with observer status, in this important club of Muslim states.[24] While some observers questioned Putin's appeal for OIC membership, seeing his request as driven by geopolitical or economic motives, his acknowledgement on a world stage that Russia in fact is part of the Muslim world is better understood as part of a nation-building process. His primary audience was not

[23] This figure cited by Putin has been disputed, some people claiming it is inflated, others claiming it is deflated. Much of the debate is polemical, politicized. Alexei Malashenko, a respected and moderate observer of Islam in Russia, provides as overview of the range of estimates and agrees with Putin on the most generally cited figure of 20 million (Malashenko 2009, 321). See also Hunter (2004), Walker (2005), Helniak (2006) for similar discussions.

[24] As noted at the time, Russia was home to more Muslims than a most of the world's Muslim-majority states, including Malaysia, which was hosting the summit (Lamborschini 2003).

Malaysians or citizens of other Muslim-majority countries. Putin was speaking directly to Muslims of Russia as part of what he called *konsolidatsiia* ("consolidation") of the "multinational Russian people" (*mnogonatsional'nii rossiiskii narod*) (Putin 2003), a nation that, in Kuala Lumpur, he made clear was also multi-religious.

Putin's *konsolidatsiia* of the all-Russian nation was matched by his political-territorial *konsolidatsiia* of the Russian Federation. The complex federal system he inherited upon becoming president in 2000 was in terrible disarray and threatened by the specter of separatism. He made the restoration of political-territorial order his number-one priority. By the time Putin appeared in Kuala Lumpur in late 2003, his program to recentralize the federation had reached its pitch, most notably affecting Muslim-majority regions such as Tatarstan and Bashkortostan (not to forget Chechnya), ethnic republics which previously had considered themselves sovereign states. His message of *konsolidatsiia* was that Russia will become a united country, territorially and nationally.

This political-territorial transformation, from decentralization to recentralization, lies at the heart of Tatarstan's post-Soviet Islamic revival, as will be discussed in Chapters IV and V. Yet as this chapter shows, political-territorial conditions have long influenced the development of Islam in this part of the world. This chapter consists of three parts. Part one presents an overview of the territoriality of Islam in contemporary Russia, explaining how ethnicity and religion are intertwined and territorialized within the country's complex federal system. Part two focuses on how both the form and function of Islam in the Middle Volga have been influenced by changing political-territorial circumstances since the region was brought into the Russian Empire in the mid-

sixteenth century. Part three looks as the political-territorial developments of post-Soviet Russia, with a special focus on Tatarstan.

The Territoriality of Islam in Russia

The increasing recognition of Russia as a Muslim country is part of a long-term demographic trend that will continue in the decades ahead. The ratio between Russia's Orthodox Christian and Muslim populations in 1926 was 16 to 1; by the close of the twentieth century it was 10 to 1 (Kurbatova et al. 2002, 155). Projections for the foreseeable future indicate significant growth in favor of the latter, with Paul Goble, a specialist on ethnic and religious issues in Eurasia, going so far as to predict a Muslim-majority Russia "in our lifetime" (RFERL 2006). Most observers reject Goble's prognosis as alarmist, but Warhola and Lehning echo the consensus viewpoint in asserting that for the foreseeable future "the proportion of Muslims in the Russian Federation is almost certain to continue increasing" (Warhola and Lehning 2007, 937).

Yet the challenge Russia faces in accommodating its Muslim community lies not in its numerical size. The real challenge relates to the manner in which religion and ethnicity are intertwined and territorialized within the county's complex federal structure. First, it is important to recognize that, in the context of Russia, who is considered a Muslim – or an Orthodox Christian, for that matter – is not defined by rigorous adherence to religious rules, but instead is a question of self-identification that highly correlates to ethno-nationality, as it is understood in the context of Russia. Just as most ethnic Russians consider themselves to be Orthodox Christians, regardless of active religious observance or conviction, Tatars, Bashkirs, Chechens, and other cultural groups in Russia

Ethnic Group	Population, 2002
Tatars	5,554,601
Bashkirs	1,673,389
Chechens	1,360,253
Avars	814,473
Kazakhs	653,962
Azeri	621,840
Kabards	519,958
Dargins	510,156
Kumyks	422,409
Ingush	413,016
Lezghins	411,535
Karachay	192,182
Laks	156,545
Adygey	128,528
Uzbeks	122,916
Tajks	120,136
Balkars	108,426

Table 1: Ethno-national groups traditionally associated with Islam in Russia with a population greater than 100,000 (source: Goskomstat 2002).

consider themselves to be Muslims by fate of belonging to a nationality traditionally associated with Islam (see Table 1). As indicated in a recent poll, 90 percent of Russia's citizenry who consider themselves to be Muslims do not attend mosques (cited Malashenko 2009, 321).

Second, it is important to understand how ethno-national identity is territorialized within Russia's federal structure. The Russian Federation is a hierarchy of 83 administrative units that includes 21 republics, four autonomous *okrugs*, one autonomous

oblast, 46 *oblasts*, and nine *krais* (see Figure 1). Additionally, Moscow and St. Petersburg, as large cities with populations greater than most of the other constituent parts, form administrative units of their own. These units can be separated into two basic categories: (1) the ethnically defined republics and autonomous *okrugs* and (2) the non-ethnic *oblasts* and *krais*. The former, designated as the historic homelands of titular (i.e. non-Russian) populations, traditionally have enjoyed certain cultural privileges, such as native language rights and some attributes of quasi-statehood, including in the post-

Figure 1: The Russian Federation is a hierarchy of 83 administrative units that includes republics, autonomous *okrugs*, *oblasts*, and *krais* (map by author).

Soviet era their own presidents, parliaments, constitutions, and flags. The latter, presumably inhabited almost exclusively by ethnic Russians, enjoy no special status.[25]

The federal structure in Russia today, aptly called "ethnofederalism" by at least one observer (Leff 1999, 208), is a Soviet legacy. The Bolsheviks granted the country's most important national minorities *autonomous republics*, which, while distinguishing them from the 15 *union republics*, were "designed to give Russia's minorities a semblance of statehood" (Teague 1994, 26). The hierarchy of constituent units that was created after the 1917 revolution loosely mirrored the Marxist-Leninist conception of nationhood, which made a distinction between a "nation" (*natsiia*)[26] and a "nationality" (*natsional'nost'* or *narodnost'*). A nation was viewed by Bolshevik theoreticians as a more developed cultural entity than a nationality. Therefore nations warranted more self-government (Stoliarov 2003, 62).

The most important of the autonomous republics are those located in two areas, the Middle Volga Basin and the North Caucasus, which are designated as the historic homelands of Muslim national groups (see Figure 2). Tatarstan and Bashkortostan, combining to make the Middle Volga region Russia's largest Muslim area, are

[25] Although nationality is the deciding factor in establishing a unit's status within the Russian Federation, it must be pointed out that ethnic Russians, who account for nearly 80 percent of the country's total population, also form majorities in most of the republics. In fact, titular populations form majorities only in the Muslim republics of Ingushetia, Chechnya, and Tatarstan. Other non-Muslim republics in which titular populations form majorities include Chuvashia, Tuva, and North Ossetia (Goskomstat 2002). In the republics of Karelia and Khakassia, for instance, the titular populations account for only about 10 percent of the total; the remaining inhabitants are overwhelmingly Russian. "Titular minorities," as they have been called (Balzer, et al. 2001, 227), represent between one- and two-fifths of the total residents of eight other republics. In response to these glaring discrepancies, one observer has called the concern for ethnicity and culture on which these units were formed "sufficiently artificial as to be rendered meaningless" (Koehn, et al. 2001, 10).

[26] In 1913, Lenin charged Stalin with articulating the Bolsheviks' conception of a nation, a formula that endured throughout the Soviet era and continues to influence policymakers and academicians in contemporary Russia. Stalin defined a nation as "a historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on a basis of a common language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up manifested by a common culture" (Stalin 1953, 307).

Figure 2: Russia's autonomous republics historically associated with Muslim groups (map by author).

recognized as the homelands of the Tatars and Bashkirs, closely related ethnic groups of Turkic heritage. The first Muslims to be brought into the Russian Empire in the mid-sixteenth century, they traditionally are Sunni Muslims who follow the Hanafi *madhhab* (juridical school of Islamic thought). In the North Caucasus, which Russia began colonizing only in the late eighteenth century, six autonomous republics are recognized as the historic homelands of Muslim nationalities: Dagestan, Chechnya, Ingushetia,

Kabardino-Balkaria, Karachai-Cherkessia, and Adygeia. While this bloc of republics claims fewer total Muslims than the Middle Volga area, the North Caucasus is host to far greater ethno-religious complexity. Dagestan alone is home to dozens of Muslim nationalities, none forming an outright majority, speaking an array of languages. Sunni Islam officially is most widespread in the North Caucasus, yet its *ulema* (Islamic juridical scholars) are divided between the Shafi and Hanafi *madhhabs*. There are also pockets of Shiites in the region, and Sufism is widely practiced throughout the North Caucasus, historically associated with the mountain peoples' resistance to the Russian Empire (Makarov and Mukhametshin 2003, 134). But, again, Sufism in the North Caucasus is split into numerous *tariqats* ("brotherhoods") that often correspond to clan or tribal loyalties. Islamic fundamentalism, generally ascribed to "Wahhabism" by Russian authorities and the press, has made far greater inroads, much more quickly, in the North Caucasus than in the Middle Volga region (Akhmadov et al. 2001; Ware et al. 2003).

Edward Walker identifies a number of problems brought about by maps of Russia "highlighting the ethnic republics with titular nationalities that have traditionally embraced Islam," saying "most obvious is the implication that Russia's Muslims are relatively compactly settled" in their own ethnic republics (Walker 2005, 249-250). He points to the example of the Tatars. Although they form Russia's second-largest ethnic group, with a total population of 5.6 million, less than half of all Tatars actually live in Tatarstan. Such cartography, Walker continues, also ignores the fact that several of the Muslim republics are inhabited by large numbers of non-Muslims. For example, almost three-fourths of the population of Adygeia, which is officially recognized as the homeland of its titular Muslim nationality, are non-Muslims. Additionally, an exclusive

focus on Russia's Muslim homelands elides the fact that the federation is home to some two million representatives of ethnic groups traditionally associated with Islam who are not afforded their own titular republics (e.g. Azeris, Kazakhs, and other peoples of Central Asian heritage) and that major cities such as Moscow also play host to large Muslim populations. Instead, Walker suggests that a graduated system of mapping in which the proportion of Muslims is displayed for each of the country's 83 territorial units, regardless of its status within the hierarchy of regions, provides a more accurate picture of Russia's Muslim community (see Figure 3).

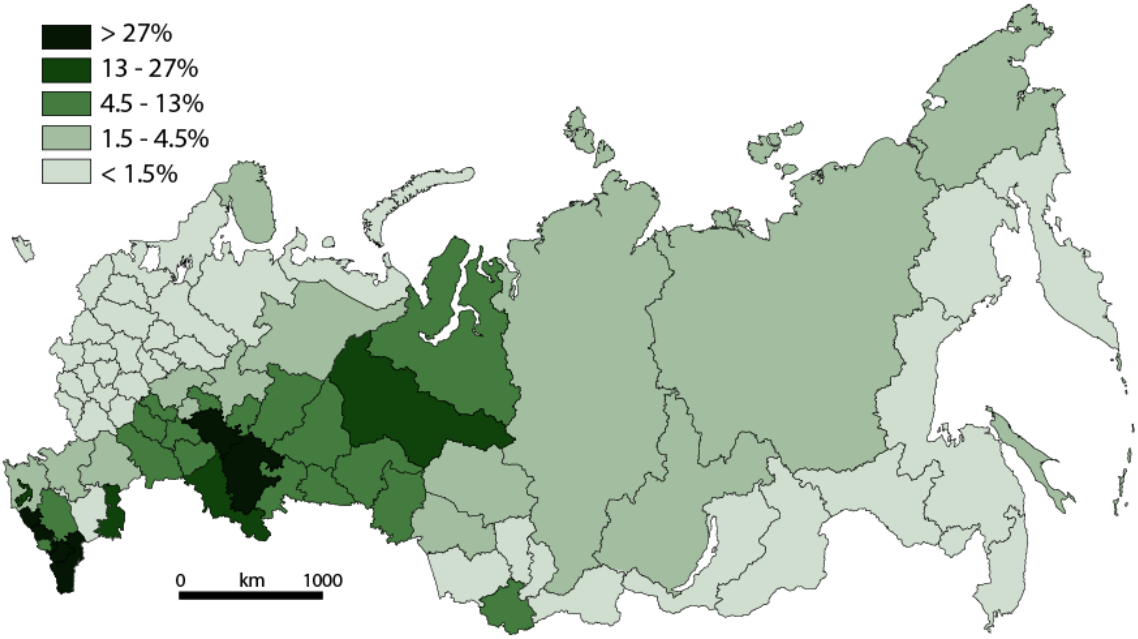

Figure 3: Map of Russia showing percentage of Muslims for each territorial unit (map by author; source: Goskomstat 2002).

Walker is factually correct in each of his assertions, which, taken together, give the impression that Russia's Muslim republics were created *ad hoc* with little consideration for actual on-the-ground cultural patterns. His analysis, however, does not address their original *raison d'être* and continuing effects of their creation, a brief

discussion of which provides insight into the dynamic relationship between territory, nationality, and Islam in Russian history. Although the Bolsheviks cloaked their construction of the USSR's ethno-federal territorial system in Wilsonian ideals of national self-determination, as Wixman and others (e.g. Pipes 1997; Bennigsen and Lemercier-Quelquejay 1967; Zenkovsky 1967) have argued, they created the ethnic republics within the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR) in no small part as a response to Pan-Islamic and Pan-Turkic overtures that had surfaced among Russia's Muslims with the fall of the Russian Empire. Nationalism and territory were used as part of the Soviet policy of *razmezhevanie* ("division") "aimed at dividing the Moslems of the Russian Empire into smaller ethnic (national) groups, that would not pose a threat to the state, or regime" (Wixman 1986, 450). Territorial homelands, with a host of attendant institutions, were created to encourage national consciousness and in some cases even create nations that would weaken Islam as a unifying factor among the Soviet Muslims. This policy was used to divide what would have been much larger multiethnic, Muslim-dominated autonomous states within the Soviet Union in both the Volga-Ural and North Caucasus regions.[27]

The policy of *razmezhivanie* further explains what appear as poorly drawn borders between the resultant ethnic territories. For example, the border between the Tatar and Bashkir autonomous republics left about one-quarter of all Tatars in the latter ethnic territory. This border divided and thereby reduced the numbers of Tatars, who

[27] See Pipes (1997, 155-192) for an account of the formation of separate Tatar, Bashkir, and other autonomous ethnic republics in place of a previously envisioned single, much larger Volga-Ural autonomous state within the Soviet Union. See Wixman (1984, 135-169) for an account of how, beginning in 1921, national territories were created and institutionalized in the North Caucasus after the Bolsheviks dismantled the Muslim-dominated United Mountaineer Republic, formed in 1918, that unified most of the region.

were traditionally dominant in the region, in their own republic. In turn, the border diluted the proportion of Bashkirs in what was designated as their own homeland. Similar border-drawing strategies were employed in North Caucasus, for example, to break a larger Circassian people into three different nationalities in three separate territories: the Adygei of Adygeia, the Cherkess of Karachai-Cherkessia, and the Kabardin of Kabardino-Balkaria.

The institutionalization of nationality within these ethnic homelands was a temporary strategy that, amid official Soviet atheism, was eventually paired with *de facto* Russification policies. These policies were intended to contribute to a *sblizhenie* ("coming together") and ultimately *sliyanie* ("merging") of all national groups into a monolithic "Soviet people"(*sovetskii narod*) within a unitary Soviet polity (Hodnett 1967; Wixman 1986; see also Martin 2001b; Suny and Martin 2001). While this strategy contributed to a significant degree of Russification, mainly linguistic, and even Sovietization of targeted Muslim groups, the most salient effect has proved to be the strengthening and/or creation of national feeling – although uneven in intensity among the different republics, depending on a host of factors – concomitant with what Murphy terms a "sense of territory" (Murphy 2002, 197). The fall of the Soviet Union left Russia's main Muslim groups with many of the accoutrements of statehood, within defined borders, providing a base of justification to launch nationalist movements in search of greater territorial autonomy, sovereignty, and, in the case of Chechnya, outright separatism in the newly formed Russian Federation.

The Changing Shape of Tatar Islam in Tsarist and Soviet Russia

> "When, in 1552, Kazan was conquered and destroyed by the armies of Ivan IV, the very existence of its people as a different national, cultural, and religious entity was in danger. This danger was nowhere better illustrated than by Ivan IV's own statement: 'Let the unbelievers receive the True God, the new subjects of Russia, and let them with us praise the Holy Trinity for ages unto ages'" (Rorlich 1986, 37).

Much research on Islam in the Middle Volga region reflects a nationalist predisposition that simplistically reduces religious politics to a struggle between empire and a minority ethno-confessional "nation" (Crews 2003, 54). For example, Rorlich contends that Muscovy's conquest of Kazan was foremost driven by missionary zealotry that posed an existential threat to Tatar "national" culture. The empire's goal of converting the Tatars to Orthodox Christianity, she contends, "remained unchanged until the Revolution" (Rorlich 1986, 38). Likewise, Bennigsen and Lemercier-Quelquejay frame the Tatars' nineteenth-century religious reform movement as a response to Russian Orthodox hegemony, saying that "for centuries the Muslim community had been struggling for survival under the direct rule of the 'infidels'" (Bennigsen and Lemercier-Quelquejay 1967, 33). These and other theses (e.g. Devlet 1991; Zverev 2002) positing the empire's perennial aim of converting its Muslim subjects (or, conversely, a colonized Muslim nation unified against infidel rule) too often rest upon an undo focus on isolated statements of ideology, as seen in Rorlich's citation of Ivan IV ("the Terrible") as evidence of the Russian Empire's anti-Islamic, anti-Tatar policies.

Closer examination of actual state practice, as presented in more recent histories, reveals a more nuanced picture. Kappeler, for instance, argues that Moscow inherited the Golden Horde's traditions of religious tolerance, a legacy that contributed to what he terms "pragmatic flexibility" *vis-à-vis* Muslims of the Middle Volga in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (Kappeler 1994, 146). The Kremlin's traditional tolerance, Kappeler contends, was vanquished with the top-down Westernization of Peter I ("the Great"), leading thenceforth to "early absolutism and Western intolerance of the non-Christian world serving as models" (Ibid.). On the other hand, Werth argues that the empire's confessional politics fluctuated throughout its history between periods of missionary activity of varying intensities and periods of varying levels of tolerance. These fluctuations, he says, "corresponded to changes of rulers and the overall imperatives facing the imperial government at the time" (Werth 2002, 18). Crews (2006) concurs and points to the nineteenth century as an especially auspicious period for the Tatars, when their religious leaders sought and received the active support of state officials in efforts to uphold preferred notions of Islamic piety in the region. This spirit of cooperation, Crews says, resulted from policies enacted by enlightened rulers and attests to "an imperial consciousness" having emerged among the Tatars (Crews 2003, 54).

The attention to actual state practice by Kappeler, Werth, Crews, and other historians of religious politics in Russia and the Middle Volga region (see e.g. Geraci 2001; Geraci and Khodarkovsky 2001) is a welcome counterweight to the nationalist teleology of previous efforts. Still one should be somewhat skeptical of the focus of this body of work on the influence of individual rulers in determining the shape of Islam in the region. Kappeler and Crews both discuss the Westernization set forth by Peter I, but

they draw different conclusions about its effects on Russia's Muslims. Their diverging conclusions, at least in part, result from their ignoring territory and its relationship to identity as part of the modernization initiated in Petrine Russia. If one considers the form and function of Islam in the Middle Volga in relationship to the question of territory, a certain logic is added to the analysis of Kappeler and Crews without resorting to qualifiers such as "enlightened" or "autocratic" in providing explanation based on a single monarch's relative impact.

Islam in Pre-Territorial Middle Volga

The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the period Kappeler identifies with Moscow's policy of "pragmatic flexibility" *vis-à-vis* Islam, were part of a pre-territorial age. The Kazan Khanate, like Muscovy, had no defined borders. However, the Kazan citadel was similar to a Russian kremlin in that it formed the seat of state power, protected the realm's most important temples, and was the area's central site of religious learning – a guarantor of a certain "high Islam." The official clergy of the Kazan Khanate adhered to the Hanifi *madhhab* of Sunni Islam, which was introduced to the region in 922 in connection with trade and diplomatic relations with Baghdad (Garaeva 2006). Muscovy's 1552 conquest of Kazan, resulting in all Muslims being forced from the city, most immediately affected the form and function of Islam in the region by relegating it to a rural faith lacking an educated clergy. Suddenly inhabitants of an Orthodox state, Muslims became classified as *inorodsty* ("aliens" or "others," i.e. non-Orthodox).

However, since most of the region's Muslims were already rural (as was the case with rural Russians and Europeans at the time), they identified primarily with local

spatialities of social interaction. Also, much like Russian peasants who called themselves *krestiane* – "Christians" – Tatars self-identified as *musul'mane* – "Muslims." It was not until the start of the twentieth century that Tatars actually began calling themselves "Tatars" (Khabutdinov 2008, 4).[28] Muslim villages were, for all intents and purposes, self-ruled and independent of state institutions. At the head of villages were *abyzes* ("elders"), who were liaisons with Russian officials and, in the absence of a formal clergy, often served as clerics. *Inshans*, respected Sufi leaders, also played an important role in the social and spiritual life of Muslim villages (Yemelianova 2002, 40). In this period, following the loss of urban centers of religious learning, Islam in the region became an exclusively "folk" religion that with a mixture of local and ethnic traditions (Mukhametshin 2006a, 134).

Periodic missionary activity of low intensity was carried out in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but Orthodox conversions were only successful among the animist Finnic peoples in the region. Forced conversions of Tatars, creating the *starokreshchennye* ("old converts"), were largely failures.[29] They produced either revolts or quick apostasy, not surprising for a people who self-identified primarily as "Muslims" and were in no way institutionally integrated into society outside of their villages.

Islam in the Middle Volga and the Empire's March Toward Territory

By the end of the seventeenth century, Moscow was the capital of by far the largest contiguous state in Europe. Yet, even a half century after Westphalia gave birth to

[28] It is interesting to note that Russians and other non-Muslims referred to the Tatars, and non-Tatar Muslims as well, as "Tatars" in the imperial age. "Tatar" and "Muslim" were often synonyms.

[29] Muslim nobles, however, often voluntarily converted to Orthodoxy in order to maintain their privileges and enter the ranks of state service (Khakim 1998, 40).

the modern conception of territory in Western Europe (Elden 2010; forthcoming), Russia had no coherent territorial ordering of its vast lands and its leaders lacked any real knowledge of its shape, terrain, or resources. In short, Russians had no sense of territory. The Westernizing Tsar Peter I changed this situation. He attached *imperiia* to his state's name, making it explicit that Russia was a now European power, and then started the process of transforming his empire into a Westphalian-like territory through the Cartesian arts of surveying, mapping, etc. Indicative of his new sense of territory and the importance Peter gave it as an expression of Russian power, he expanded the traditional demarcation of Europe and Asia from the Don River far out to the Ural Mountains (Sunderland 2007, 43). Orthodoxy was understood as European and Islam was seen as Asian in the Petrine *weltanschauung*. This reconfigured meta-geography, following the logic of the Westphalian principle *cuis regio, eius religo*, would have significant consequences for Muslims of the Middle Volga.

In the drive to standardize territory and its inhabitants – to fulfill the rearranged meta-geography of European Russia – renewed missionary activity started under Peter's watch. It greatly intensified in 1740 with the creation in Kazan of the Office for the Affairs of the New Converts (*Kontora novokreshchenykh del*). Over the next quarter century, this office converted more than 400,000 non-Christians in the Middle Volga (Werth 2002, 22).[30] These converts to Orthodoxy became known as *novokreshchennye* ("newly baptized"). The office was also responsible for the physical destruction of

[30] Werth explains that this was accomplished through a combination of force and incentives, such as exemption from military service and direct cash payments. This last incentive was added via a 1740 decree promising the non-Orthodox who became baptized "bronze crosses, shirts, caftans, footwear, and cash payments that varied on the convert's age and sex" (Werth 2003, 552). Perhaps not surprisingly, Werth says, cash "was the single most important factor in drawing non-Russians to the baptismal font" (Ibid.).

hundreds of mosques in the region, thereby clearing the landscape of Islamic traces.[31] Many Muslims, in response to this pitched missionary spirit, revolted or fled into dense forests. Others migrated to freer Bashkir lands and even into Central Asian (Khodarkovsky 2001).

Catherine II ("the Great") pushed Russia into the age of what Sunderland terms "high territoriality" (Sunderland 2007, 45), taking particular interest in the concepts of province (*guberniia*) and population (which she ordered to be located and inventoried through surveys and questionnaires). To rationalize the two, she had the provincial borders drawn to match population distributions; each province was to contain approximately the same number of people (Ibid., 49). A critical step Catherine took in rationalizing the use of population was the enfranchisement of her non-Orthodox subjects. She forbid the Orthodox Church from engaging in conversion and then issued a 1773 edict granting Muslims religious tolerance (Geraci and Khodarkovsky 2001, 6). This law permitted local authorities to make decisions on the construction of mosques, along with the *mektebs* (primary Islamic schools) and *medresses* (secondary Islamic schools) usually attached to them. The Empress followed this edict by creating the institution of the Muslim Spiritual Board in the city of Ufa in 1788. Roughly replicating the hierarchical administrative structure of the Orthodox Church, the Muslim Spiritual Board was established to register state-approved clergy and monitor all mosque activity in Middle Volga. The Hanifi *madhhab* was recognized as the region's sole official form of Islam (Yemelianova 2002, 40). *Medresses* and *mektebs*, where Tatars traditionally received their education, were also placed under the Spiritual Board's purview.

[31] A 1744 government report informs that 418 of 536 mosques in the region were destroyed under the office's watch (cited in Khodarkovsky 2001, 133).

The creation of the Muslim Spiritual Board enfranchised Muslims, but it also kept them institutionally segregated from non-Muslims. Muslims were spatially socialized, in worship, education, and many other social activities, within the institutional context of the Muslim Spiritual Board. This cultivated a group identity associated with and loyal to the state (worship included blessing the Tsar as a recognition of his sovereignty) and with other Muslims, but it encouraged no idea of nationhood outside of one's confession. No institutions existed to socialize a people across religious lines. Crews is correct is asserting that the Tsarist state's "commitment to ruling through religious practices and institutions and the policing of orthodoxy – the *confessionalization* of the population and empire – allowed the state to govern with less violence, and with a greater degree of consensus" (Crews 2006, 8). But this *confessionalization* of society, continuing more or less until the fall of the empire, maintained long-standing traditions of exclusion that, as we will see soon, certain Muslims would battle to overcome as they sought greater representation and participation within the institutions of the empire.

The Empress's religious politics were not driven by her devotion to Enlightenment ideals of human dignity, as some have suggested in discussing her edict on religious tolerance. Rather, her "legalization" of Islam was informed by a similar territorial logic that underpinned the mass conversions of non-Orthodox Christians earlier in the century. Her formulation of religion and territory was configured differently, though. Whereas the Petrine definition of European was Orthodox Christianity, Catherine equated European with Orthodoxy, be it Christian or Islamic. The Muslim Spiritual Board, a mechanism of state control over territory, institutionalized a preferred understanding of Islam in the Middle Volga. Although billed as the Hanafi *madhhab*, the

Islam that was governed by the Muslim Spiritual Board – and by extension the state – was in fact Orthodox Islam, meaning Russian in the territorial sense, above all loyal to the state. Catherine and her successors, as Crews (2003) explains, made an "Orthodoxy" of all religions in the empire and thereby built Russia into a confessional state. Because of the numbers of its faithful and its historical claims to the region, Islam commanded most intervention to ensure it remain Orthodox.

Catherine's decree on religious tolerance, coupled with the creation of the Muslim Spiritual Board, was therefore what Russians call "a stick with two ends" for the Tatars. One end of the stick allowed them to build mosques and practice their religion. The other end determined, to a significant degree, the shape of their religion. Unofficial – "unorthodox" – Islamic practices were viewed with suspicion and often seen as a threat to the state. The new territoriality of Islam, the first example of the "state-centered construction of society" (Häkli 2001) for the Volga Muslims, severely disrupted the social and spiritual structures of local self-rule that had taken hold after 1552. Denied state sanctification, *abyzes* and *inshans* were sidelined as the guardians of Muslim tradition (Mukhametshin 2006a, 136). "Folk" Islam, mixed as it was with local and ethnic traditions, was decried by the state-approved clergy as being riddled with *bid'ah* (illicit innovation). The state became the ultimate arbiter in disputes among Muslims over the meaning of Islamic tradition in the empire, and the state ensured a significant degree of standardization of Islam in the Middle Volga.

Tatar Islam Meets Tatar Nationalism

The religious freedoms implemented by Catherine opened the door to several waves of apostasy among the *kreshchennye* ("baptized") Tatars, beginning in the early years of the nineteenth century and continuing until the mid-1860s. Non-Tatars in the region were also being drawn to Islam and, consequently, to the Tatar language that was the region's *lingua franca*. Imperial officials responded by implementing new education policies that taught local populations in both Russian and their native languages. This bilingual education policy, known as the Il'minskii system (after its founder N.I. Il'minskii), simultaneously aimed to Christianize local populations and weaken Tatar influence in the region (Werth 2000). As Lazzerini informs, "Crucial to all of this was an appropriate representation of Islam … a critique of *magometanstvo* in its mid-nineteenth century circumstances" (Lazzerini 1994, 38), meaning the faith's comparative "backwardness" *vis-à-vis* Christianity. Il'minskii was challenged by other state officials, who were anxious his program would promote nationalism among non-Russians. He responded to his detractors:

> If from fear of separate nationalities, we do not allow the non-Russians to use their language in schools and churches, on a sufficient scale to ensure a solid, complete, convinced adoption of the Christian faith, then all non-Russians will be fused into a single race by language and faith – the Tatar and Mohammedan. But if we allow the non-Russian languages, then, even if their individual nationalities are thus maintained, these will be diverse, small, ill-disposed to the Tatars, and united with the Russian people by the unity of their faith. Choose! But I believe that such diverse nationalities cannot have any solid existence, and in the end the very historical

> movement of life will cause them to fuse with the Russian people (quoted in Rorlich 1986, 46).

The Il'minskii system that was implemented in the 1870s, influenced by Western European ideas of nationalism that were at that time the force behind the creation of Germany and Italy, introduced ideas related to nation and nationality to the Middle Volga, where religion previously was the primary foundation of group identity. The Il'minskii system led to the development and/or promotion of the Chuvash, Mari, Udmurt, and Komi literary languages.[32] The simultaneous Russification (religious) and nationalization (linguistic) of local populations, combined with the increasing presence of Russians in the Middle Volga,[33] in turn forged a Tatar national consciousness. Tatarism found its earliest articulation in a religious reform movement known as Jadidism (from Arabic for "new way"). Although Jadidism at first was a critique of the outdated teaching methods and curriculums of the area's traditional *mektebs*, the Kazan-based intellectuals who formed the movement's core in the Middle Volga were at the forefront of defining the Tatar nation and its place in the Russian Empire.

An early Jadidist was a cleric named Marjani (1818-1889), who developed what is perhaps the first modern history of the Tatar nation. He traced the Tatar nation back to the Hunnic Bolgar Kingdom of the Middle Volga that arose in the eighth century, accepting Islam as the realm's official religion in 922. His version of Tatar national history also claimed the legacies of both the Golden Horde and the Kazan Khanate. This

[32] Lallukka (2003, 144-151) offers an informative analysis of the Il'minskii education program and its effects on the Mari, a Finnic people endemic to the Middle Volga region.

[33] According to Russia's 1857 census, Russians accounted for 42 percent of Kazan's population. In other provinces in the region, they formed majorities: 81 percent in Viatka, 72 percent in Simbirsk, and 53 percent in Orenburg (cited in Werth 2002, 18).

interpretation of Tatar national history is dominant among Tatars even today. He was first and most forceful in urging his people to call themselves "Tatars" instead of "Muslims," asking them, "If you are not a Tatar, an Arab, Tajik, Nogay, Chinese, Russian, French, … then, who are you?" (quoted in Rorlich 1994, 63). Although a member of clergy himself, Marjani, like European nationalist historians of the nineteenth century, emphasized the role of language in shaping and preserving the nation. Islam remained vital to the nation, but, because the religion was shared with other nations throughout the world, language became the basis of Tatarism. Islam beyond the Middle Volga, the worldwide *umma*, was of only a peripheral concern to the Tatar Jadidists.

Jadidists were active in many parts of the empire, among many different Muslim groups. Their ideas of nationhood and political goals, often at odds, were shaped by their local contexts. Some espoused Pan-Turkic ideas, while other talked of Pan-Islamism. Most saw their future within Russia. The Kazan-based Jadidists, however, generally rejected ideas of Pan-Turkism or Pan-Islamism (Kappeler 2001, 236). Their focus was the development and modernization of the Tatar nation within Middle Volga. Most of the prominent Volga Jadidists, Yemelianova informs, were united in the "belief in the political integrity of the Russian state as the precondition for the national prosperity of Russia's Muslims" (Yemelianova 2002, 80). For them, Russia was Europe and therefore a transmitter of modernity. Appreciative of the historically tolerant interaction between the Tatars and Russians, they saw knowledge of the Russian language as critical to their social and economic development. Their goal was greater participation and representation for the Tatar nation in the social and institutional life of the empire (Crews 2003, 50).

Limiting the Tatars' national development, the Jadidists claimed, were the outdated Islamic doctrines and practices enforced by the conservative Kadimists who filled the ranks of the Muslim Spiritual Board. Specifically, they opposed the rote memorization of Arabic and Persian texts and blind fealty to the Hanafi *madhhab* (see generally Khakim 2010). The Jadidists insisted the gates of *ijtihad* (independent interpretation of the Koran and Sunnah) remain open and that Muslims should return to the Koran and reinterpret the text with a consideration of their geographical context and place in time. The Tatar Jadidists called for religious texts to be translated into Tatar, which they had made into a standardized literary language, and advocated the introduction of secular subjects, especially Russian, to the curriculum of *mektebs* and *medresses*. The Kadimists rejected all these ideas. They saw their political future firmly within Russia, acknowledged the mutual tolerance between Russians and Tatars, and were grateful to the Tsar. They nonetheless feared that the study of Russian, greater societal integration with non-Muslims, and religious reform would lead to their cultural Russification and destruction of their Islamic way of life (Dyudyan'on 1997; Yemelianova 1997). The Kadimists appreciated the semi-detached existence that was safeguarded by the state-supported Muslim Spiritual Board based in Ufa.

Jadidism in many ways might seem similar to the *salafiya* movement in which Islamic reformers/modernizers such as al-Afghani were involved at about the same time, as some have pointed out (e.g. Yemelianova 2002, 76). The movements are similar in the rejection of *madhhabs* and returning to the primary text for independent interpretation. But the Tatar Jadidists were conditioned by a different political-territorial context and therefore part ways with the likes of al-Afghani. Jadidism arose not as a reaction *against*

the empire, but as a movement for greater participation and representation *within* the empire. Their drive to modernize Islam was foremost a program to develop the Tatar nation, not an effort to adapt modernity to Islam. For the Jadidists, modernity was a universal phenomenon coming from Europe – and for them Russia was European – not a phenomenon to be resisted, but rather a phenomenon to be integrated. A comparison more apt than al-Afghani might be Martin Luther (and Marjani has often been compared to Luther), whose demand the Bible be printed in the language of the people undermined the power of the backward-looking guardians of faith and society.

Collapse and Reconstruction

In the aftermath of the Tsarist Empire's collapse in 1917, the Kadimists straightaway dismissed the Bolsheviks' enticements of territorial autonomy. They advocated a return of the monarchy and even fought on the side of the Whites, seeing the Tsar as the only guarantor of stability and peace between the religions (Yemelianova 2002, 99). There appears to have been no overwhelming desire among a significant amount of Tatars for territorial autonomy, not to mention independence. While a real national sense had developed among some groups of the Tatars, notably those like the Jadidists, there had been no institutions within the Tsarist Empire set up to reinforce a sense of territory at the sub-state level. Up until the collapse, most of the Jadidists sought greater access within the empire, not opt-out solutions (Mikesell and Murphy 1991). For instance, a primary goal of *Ittafak* ("Alliance"), a Jadidist-led Muslim political party that formed after the 1905 revolution, was securing "democracy and civil and equal religious rights for Muslims" within the empire (Kappeler 2001, 337). Even after the collapse, the

majority moderate wing of the Jadidists only sought cultural autonomy within a unitary Russia. In light of this ambivalence, it seems reasonable to agree with Crews' assertion that a "realm of an imperial consciousness" (Crews 2003, 54) – a sense of imperial territory – had developed among the Muslims of the Middle Volga. In short, after the fall of the monarchy, nobody was invoking the injustices of 1552 to rally people around the idea of reconstructing the Kazan Khanate; that would happen much later in the twentieth century for reasons related to the territorial reconfiguration of empire.

In the fight to reconfigure a post-Tsarist Russia, some Muslims discussed a Pan-Turkic state, while others discussed a Pan-Islamic formation. Proponents of these approaches, however, were marginal voices. Accusations (usually false or exaggerated) of Pan-Turkism and Pan-Islamism in the Russian context, with its historical Orthodoxy of confessions, have long been ploys to discredit an opponent or mobilize authorities against any enemy (Crews 2006, 300-316). A territorial project with real potential took force when groups of Tatar and Bashkir nationalists joined ranks and campaigned for the formation of an Idel[34]-Ural state that would have united the Middle Volga's various Turkic peoples inside an ethno-federal Soviet Russia and within which the Tatar tongue would have been the *lingua franca*. The Tatar-Bashkir national leaders formed a government and in January 1918 drafted and adopted a constitution. While initially indicating support for the Idel-Ural state, Lenin and Stalin ultimately changed course and carved the Middle Volga region into several ethnic homelands (see Figure 4), including

[34] Idel is Tatar for Volga.

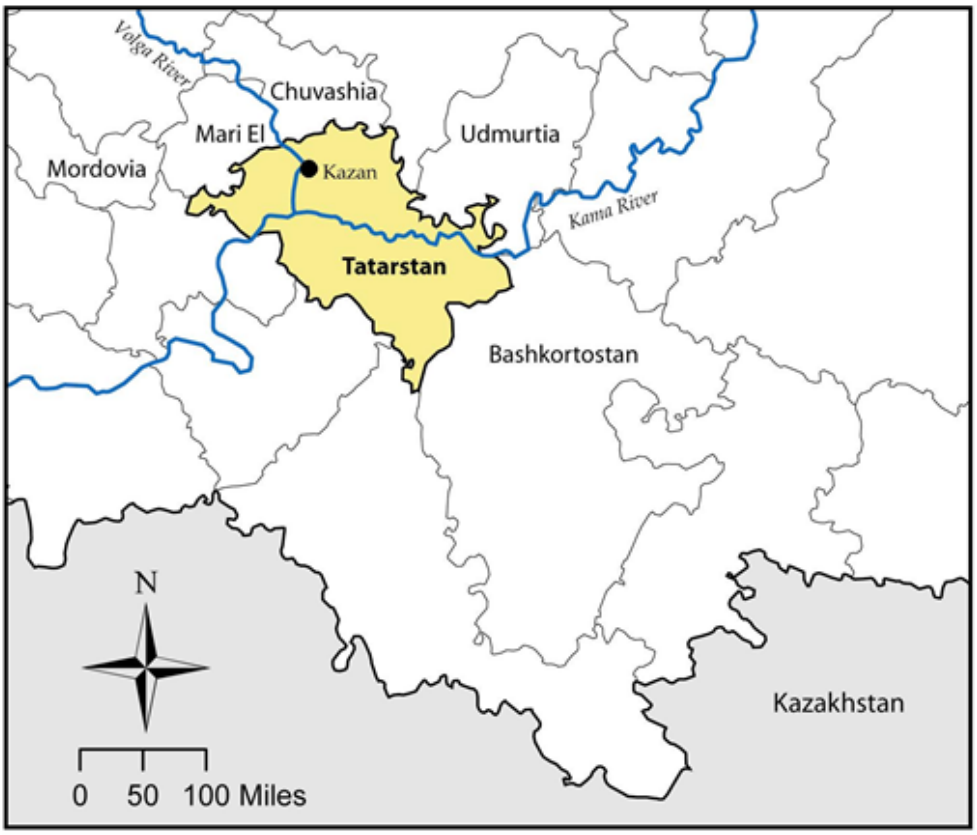

Figure 4: Ethnic homelands of the Middle Volga region created by the Bolsheviks (map by author).

those for the Mari, Mordovians, Chuvash, and the Udmurt – peoples who previously expressed no territorial aspirations.[35]

[35] The creation of the various ethnic homelands in many ways appears to be an updated version of the Il'minskii system that had Christianized people through their linguistic nationalization, with the main goals being to undermine Islam and Tatarism in the Middle Volga and reconstruct the Russian Empire (only this time, the Bolsheviks added territory to nationalism with similar goals). Indeed, for much of the Soviet era, variations of the divide-and-conquer argument were put forth and formed a dominant stream of thought in the study of Soviet nationalities policies (see e.g. Pipes 1997 [1954]; Bennigson and Lemercier-Quelquejay 1967; Bennigson and Wimbush 1986; Rorlich 1986; Wixman 1986). However, some basic assumptions of the divide-and-conquer thesis have been challenged in more recent investigations that draw on archival documents and other primary-source data previously unavailable to researchers (see especially Martin 2001b; Suny and Martin 2001; Suny 2001). While more recent studies generally recognize that the baseline goal behind the creation of the ethnic homelands in the Middle Volga, and other parts of the USSR, was "preserv[ing] the territorial integrity of the old Russian Empire and enabl[ing] the construction of a new centralized, socialist state" (Martin 2001b, 67), newer research complicates notions that the Bolsheviks' division of the Tatar-Bashkir lands was motivated foremost by the same concerns held by the Tsarist-era officials (such as Il'minskskii) who feared Tatar assimilation and Islamization of neighboring peoples. Shafer, for instance, draws on extensive archival work to show that the birth of the Republic of

In creating the Tatar, Bashkir, and other Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republics (ASSRs) within Russia, Lenin and Stalin intended to harness the mobilization force of nationalism by giving various non-Russian peoples certain "forms of nationhood" (Martin 2001b, 3). With the formation of the ASSRs, the Bolsheviks implemented the policy of *korenizatsiia* ("indigenization"), giving unprecedented support to new educational and cultural institutions that promoted the ethno-national development of the titular groups of the ethnic autonomies. For instance, in the 1920s the Tatars were permitted to convert their language from its original Arabic script into a Latin-based script, a move that echoed the modernizing vision of the Young Turks in Istanbul. Moreover, the Tatar language was given preference over Russian in schools and governmental environs of the Tatar ASSR. The policy of *korenizatsiia* also led to the development of national elites who were trained and promoted into leadership positions in the government, communist party, educational centers, and industry of each ASSR (Brubaker 1996, 23-54). The overriding goal of *korenizatsiia* was to cultivate Soviet national cultures that, in Stalin's famous formulation, were "national in form, socialist in content" (Stalin 1934, 158). The fact that Stalin never sufficiently elaborated on this formulation, according to the historian Terry Martin, was intentional, since "Bolshevik plans for the social transformation of the country did not allow for any fundamentally

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Bashkortostan in 1919-20 likely did not result from careful, long-term planning intended to stem Tatar hegemony in the region, but instead appears to be a case of "improvisation" amid the chaos of the civil war (Shafer 2001, 171). The declarations of the Idel-Ural state and then separate ethnic homelands, he argues, did indeed represent a policy of *divide et impera*; however, the enemy that Lenin and Stalin sought to divide was not a Tatar-dominated Turko-Islamic nation-in-becoming, but rather the enemy was the more immediate threat of the anti-Bolshevik movement as a whole. While Shafer and other researchers in the post-Soviet era have challenged some basic assumptions of the previously held divide-and-conquer thesis, they have not satisfactorily considered the logic of territory. Notably, none has, in my reading, addressed the issue of the "poorly" drawn borders that weakened Tatar influence in the region and diluted Bashkir influence within their own autonomous republic.

distinctive religious, legal, ideological, or customary features" (Martin 2001a, 74). Although the ASSRs were created as part of a *de jure* multinational federation, *de facto* all decision-making powers were concentrated in Moscow. The "national form" of the ethnic autonomies above all was intended to avoid the impression that Soviet Russia was an empire and thereby contribute to USSR's political-territorial integration and centralization (Brubaker 1996; Martin 2001b).

By the 1930s it was becoming apparent to Stalin that the policy of *korenizatsiia* was "leading to the nationalization of Bolshevism, rather than the Bolshevization of nationals" (Suny 2001, 12). In a bid to counteract this trend, Russian was made a compulsory subject in all non-Russian schools in 1938,[36] and the following year Stalin forced upon the Tatars a Cyrillic script in the name of "internationalism." The Tatars were also promised religious freedoms after the creation of their namesake ASSR, but those rights, too, were revoked in the 1930s as the Soviet authorities instituted and executed a policy of "militant atheism." For much of the existence of the Soviet Union, Islam once again became, for the most part, something akin to the "folk" religion that took hold after 1552, practiced in secret or led by untrained, semiliterate clergy who could only carry out basic rituals (Usmanova 2010, 46-47). Thus, the Tatars, along with

[36] The historian Peter Blitstein contends that the "intent" of the 1938 law decreeing mandatory study of Russian was not linguistic or cultural Russification, but rather was aimed at strengthening Russian as the *lingua franca* of the USSR (Blitstein 2001). He points out that the law did not eliminate native-language education. Indeed, the requirement that titular nationals attend native-language schools remain in place until 1958,when, he points out, non-Russians were given the "choice" to educate their children in Russian rather than in their native languages. Whereas the Stalin-era native-language requirement acted as a brake against linguistic Russification, he continues, the Khrushchev and Brezhnev eras witnessed great numbers of non-Russian parents "choosing" to send their children to Russian schools. On the face of it, the explicit "intent" of Russian-language education indeed may not have been linguistic and cultural Russification, and non-Russians may have "chosen" to send their children to Russian schools. However, this line of argumentation ignores the fact that the ASSRs enjoyed no real territorial autonomy. The national elites had no power to create conditions conducive to the development of non-Russian languages. The shift toward greater *de facto* Russification in the USSR, Blitstein's analysis fails to consider, follows the territorial logic of the modern nation-state.

other titular nationals of ASSRs, were subject to what Kappeler aptly terms "the simultaneity and interdependence of nation building and nation destroying" for the duration of the USSR (Kappeler 2004, 245). Territorialized institutions that were previously employed to nationalize the Tatars, such as schools and government, became vessels through which *de facto* Russification took place. Yet the ASSRs *de jure* remained nationally defined territorial entitities, contributing to what Suny calls an "indigenization from below" (Suny 2001, 16) – nation-building that continued out of inertia within the territorially defined institutions – which became apparent in the 1970s and grew in strength up until the fall of the USSR.

With the fall of the Soviet Union, the previously existing institutions of the Tatar ASSR were reimpowered to counter the previous decades of Russification. In essence, a new policy of *korenizatsiia* – this time controlled by the Kazan-based Tatar political elite itself – was implemented. Many prerevolutionary institutions were given renewed powers. One of them is the Muslim Spiritual Board. The dispute between Jadidists and Kadimists has also resurfaced, playing out through new institutions and in a different political-territorial context. Before examining these revived institutions and disputes, it is useful to look at the territorial-political context that has unfolded since the demise of the Soviet Union.

The Changing Political-Territorial Context of Post-Soviet Russia

Russia has undergone a dramatic political-territorial transformation over the past two decades. Considering the examination provided above, it is not surprising that these changing political-geographical circumstances have continued to influence the form and

function of Islam in Tatarstan (as well as other places in post-Soviet Russia), as I will make the case in Chapters IV and V. Before turning to analysis of Tatarstan's post-Soviet Islamic revival, however, it is necessary to provide a general overview of the shifting political-territorial conditions in Russia over the past two decades. A special emphasis will be given to how Tatarstan has factored into changing political geography of the post-Soviet Russian Federation.

In the 1990s, many observers anticipated that the multiethnic Russian Federation in its democratic transition would go the way of the multiethnic Soviet Union. Even before the official demise of the USSR in December 1991, all 20 of Russia's ethnic republics had declared their sovereignty and for the remainder of the decade they pushed for varying degrees of territorial autonomy, including, in the case of Chechnya, all-out independence. Yet, with the start of the new millennium, the federal center managed to reverse these centrifugal forces and has subsequently restored a high degree of centralization over the federation. The purpose of this section is to provide an overview and examination of this changing political-territorial context with a particular focus on interactions in Tatarstan, which has been a central player in events and processes affecting post-Soviet Russia's political-territorial transition.

Russia's Parade of Sovereignties

In June 1990, with the "parade of sovereignties" marching through the union republics, Boris Yeltsin declared Russia's independence from the Soviet Union. Two months later, to gain support in his political battle against Mikhail Gorbachev, Yeltsin traveled to Kazan where he urged the political leadership of the Tatar Autonomous Soviet

Socialist Republic (TASSR) to "take all the sovereignty you can possibly swallow." He followed this command with a pledge to "welcome whatever independence the Tatar ASSR chooses … If you want to govern yourself completely, go ahead" (quoted in Bukharaev 1999, 97). Accepting the challenge, the Tatar ASSR parliament proclaimed the territory a "sovereign, democratic state" on August 30, 1990, renaming it the Republic of Tatarstan. With this, Tatarstan set off a cascade of sovereignty declarations in all of the other 19 ethnic republics of what was still officially the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic.

Yeltsin was strategic in issuing his famous challenge in Kazan. For months prior to his arrival, the parliament of the Tatar ASSR had been seeking an elevation in status within the USSR, from that of an autonomous republic to that of a union republic (Slocum 1999, 54). Aspirations included greater recognition and access *within* the Soviet polity itself. As I have argued elsewhere (Derrick 2008), the republic most likely did not seek sovereignty as it is understood in international law, i.e. independence. It strove for greater territorial autonomy within an accommodating federal structure. The republic already possessed a *de jure* autonomous status in the USSR, which should have allowed its citizens certain privileges, such as native language rights, but autonomy proved to be a legal phantom as Moscow managed a *de facto* unitary state. Aiming to assume a meaningful degree of control over the territory designated as their historic homeland, the Tatars were compelled to pursue the next category in the spectrum of autonomy: sovereignty. Once sovereignty was introduced into the political discourse and spread to the other republics, the legal definition of the concept became obfuscated by the symbolic power it obtained in the context of an autocratic state that was quickly crumbling.

When Yeltsin assumed the Russian presidency in June 1991, he was forced to deal with the specter of separatism that, with his urging, had emerged as the Soviet Union was in deep crisis. The 20 self-declared sovereign republics, however, did not necessarily seek independence (Chuman 2011, 134). Rather, as was the case with Tatarstan earlier, their primary goals included expanded powers within the territories designated as their historic homelands. The first step Yeltsin took in his negotiations with the ethnic republics was to issue a March 1993 Federation Treaty that recognized them as "sovereign governments." As such, the treaty granted the ethnic republics greater power than the non-republics (i.e. *oblasts*, *krais*, autonomous *okrugs*, and autonomous *oblasts*) in their relations with the federal center. However, the December 1993 Federal Constitution excluded this power prioritization – all regions would be equal in their power *vis-à-vis* the center, although the ethnic republics maintained privileges originally promised in the 1993 Federation Treaty, such as the right to their own constitution, national language, and president. For the most part, this territorial arrangement replicated the Soviet model, giving the ethnic republics some outward attributes of statehood, but maintaining the legal equality of all regions in their relations with Moscow.

All but two of the ethnic republics signed the 1993 Federation Treaty. In signing the treaty, they thereby forfeited claims to sovereignty. Tatarstan and Chechnya were the two republics that refused to sign the Federation Treaty. Their rejection of the treaty, according to geographer Robert Kaiser, signaled "intent to secede from Russia" (Kaiser 1994, 356). Chechnya in no uncertain terms was intent on seceding, going to war with Moscow a year after opting out from the treaty. Tatarstan took a more pragmatic course. An important step was holding a republic-wide referendum in 1992 in which a clear

majority of the population agreed that Tatarstan should be sovereign.[37] This status was subsequently codified in the republic's constitution, which stated that Tatarstan "shall be a Sovereign State, subject to international law, associated with the Russian Federation." Constitutionally sovereign, yet still "associated" with Russia, the Tatars left enough ambiguity not to be accused of all-out separatism (see generally Graney 2001).

In refusing to sign the 1993 Federation Treaty, Tatarstan presented a twofold justification. First, the republic's political leadership framed its refusal to sign the treaty in legal terms, saying it was constitutionally prohibited for Tatarstan as a sovereign state to enter a treaty on unequal terms. And, second, the Tatar leadership cited democratic reasons for opting out of the treaty, claiming Tatarstan's sovereignty reflected the will of the people. At this point, considering the case made by republic's political leadership, it is important to see how sovereignty was justified by Tatarstan.

Legitimating Territorial Claims

In constructing its regime of territorial legitimation, the political leadership of Tatarstan interwove two justification discourses. The first was based on the Tatars' historical claims to territory[38] and concerns for national culture. The political leadership drew on the national history first developed by Marjani and claimed the legacy of Volga Bolgaria, the Golden Horde, and the Kazan Khanate. Muscovy's 1552 defeat of Kazan,

[37] The full question they were asked was, "Do you consider that the Republic of Tatarstan is a sovereign state, a subject of international law, entitled to develop relations with the Russian Federation and other states on the basis of treaties among equal partners?" With a voter turnout of 82 percent, 61.4 percent answered "yes," while 37.2 percent said "no" (Slocum 1999, 55). This margin indicates that a significant number of ethnic Russians in Tatarstan were in favor of sovereignty.

[38] Such historical arguments, as Murphy (1990; 2002) discusses, are the most commonly cited justifications for territorial claims. For example, the Greeks invoke ancient mythology and Homer's writing to justify their claim to Cyprus. Iran, Turkey, China, Egypt, and several other countries employ similar discourses in support of their various territorial claims.

signaling the beginning of Russia as a multiethnic empire (Kappeler 2001, 14), was framed as a historical injustice that led to centuries of forced assimilation. Linguistic Russification, not religious, was the Tatars' primary concern. Russification policies had nearly decimated the Tatar language as an urban tongue. By the *perestroika* era Tatar was abandoned in governmental environs and virtually untaught in city schools.[39] With their native language disappearing, national leaders voiced fears of "ethnic disappearance" (Khasanov 2000, 14) without the protection of their own state.[40]

The ethno-nationalist discourse, however, was constrained by demographics. First, less than one-third of all Tatars live in Tatarstan (although about two-thirds of all Tatars live within the Middle Volga region). Second, Russians account for about 40 percent of the republic's population (Tatars make up just over half of the population) (Goskomstat 2002). These demographic constraints informed a secondary justification discourse that accentuated Tatarstan's dedication to civic multiculturalism. The republic's 1992 constitution justified sovereignty in the name "of the entire multiethnic people of the republic." Prominent politicians invariably addressed the "multinational Tatarstani people" (*mnogonatsional'nyi tatarstanskii narod*) in an effort to cultivate a unified supranational identity and state nationalism (see generally Graney 2007). The republic's stated devotion to civic multiculturalism was reflected in a constitution promising equal

[39] As Musina writes, by the late 1980s, "just one Tatar school was functioning in the capital of Tatarstan. Tatars' level of knowledge of their native language declined. The use of two (Tatar and Russian) languages became dominant in the domestic sphere of urban Tatars. Bilingualism, the declared objective and achievement of state policy, turned out to be a one-sided practice" (Musina 2004, 81).

[40] According to Gorenburg, "The fear of continuing language shift [i.e. Russification – MD] was one of the main mobilizing factors in the nationalist movements that developed in virtually all ethnic regions of the Soviet Union in the late 1980s" (Gorenburg 2003, 1). This was particularly true in Tatarstan.

protection of all national cultures and establishing both Tatar and Russian as official state languages.

However, there existed "an in-built contradiction in the idea of Tatarstan as both a Tatar republic and a multiethnic one" (Davis, et al. 2000, 219). The question was posed, how can the state claim first and foremost to represent the Tatar nation (*tatarskaia natsiia*), defend and develop its culture, while ensuring the equal rights of all the Tatarstani people (*tatarstanskii narod*)?

Economic enticements smoothed over this apparent contradiction. During the Soviet era 2.5 billion tons of oil were extracted from Tatarstan, which Moscow sold abroad for an estimated $257 billion. Yet out of that sum only 2 percent of the wealth was returned to the republic (Iakupova 2001, 8). Leading Tatar politicians promised that a sovereign Tatarstan would retain its oil dollars, reconstruct the republic's infrastructure, and maintain maximum employment. Thus, the "classical … accusation that the centre is responsible for socioeconomic problems" was a strong incentive to persuade Tatarstan's Russians to join the Tatars in supporting sovereignty (Stepanov 2000, 323). These material considerations are commonly cited as the deciding factor in the 1992 referendum in which more than 60 percent of the voting republic – indicating support from both ethnic groups – agreed that Tatatarstan should be sovereign.

Just as important, the political leadership emphasized that they did not equate sovereignty with separatism. The 1992 referendum promised that a sovereign Tatarstan would remain part of the Russian Federation. After the referendum's passage Tatarstan's President Mintimer Shaimiev repeated his commitment to remaining part of the country:

> We do not intend to split up with Russia … Let's remember the geopolitical place of Tatarstan and the economic ties with Russia. And because we have lived together for centuries, we are connected by spiritual bonds (quoted in Mukhmetshin and Ageeva 2000, 337).

Addressing pragmatic concerns of geographic location and important questions of identity, such statements had a reassuring effect on the republic's Russians and Tatars, both of whom feared being cut off from Russia. Shaimiev's statement also indicates the confused understanding of sovereignty that was part of the political discourse of Russia in the 1990s. However, Tatarstan's "sovereignty project" (see generally Graney 2009) allowed it to approach Moscow on equal terms.

The Era of Power-Sharing Agreements

Tatarstan insisted that it was a sovereign state. Having refused to sign the Federation Treaty, Kazan was able to leverage its position *vis-à-vis* a severely weakened center to negotiate a 1994 bilateral treaty in which Moscow tacitly acknowledged the republic's sovereignty, recognizing Tatarstan as a "state united with the Russian Federation." According to the terms of the treaty, the republic assumed most powers normally afforded to independent states, including the right to control its borders (which Tatarstan never showed an interest in doing) and broad rights in developing its own foreign policy and foreign trade relations independent of Moscow (Sharafutdinova 2003). The treaty stipulated that, when inconsistent, the republic's laws take precedence over federal laws, and thenceforth legal and other relations would be conducted on a treaty basis, as equals. The treaty also gave Tatarstan exclusive rights over its gas and oil, 100 percent of taxes from vodka and other spirits, and 50 percent of sales and income taxes.

This arrangement allowed Kazan to keep about three-fourths of its tax revenues and send the remainder to Moscow – the inverse what it had been in the Soviet era (Derrick 2009a, 53).

Kazan considered the 1994 treaty its *coup de grace* in its aspirations to establish state-to-state relations with Russia. Shaimiev called the treaty "the ideology of our republic" (quoted in Derrick 2008, 76). The clause "united with" ultimately left the nature of the relationship unresolved. Moscow interpreted that clause to mean the republic had given up its sovereignty claim, and some of the more vociferous nationalists in Tatarstan, according to Slocum, accused Shaimiev of "betraying the cause of independence" (Slocum 1999, 56). But nowhere in the treaty or the republic's constitution was Tatarstan referred to a as a *member* of the Russian Federation. The strategic ambiguity of the pact brought to a close an extremely tense period of confrontation between Kazan and Moscow. As one observer noted, "the bilateral treaty between Tatarstan and Russia … saved Tatarstan from eventual bloodshed and all-out civil war" (Bukharaev 1999, 100).

In signing the 1994 bilateral treaty with Moscow, Tatarstan set off another cascade. By the close of 1998, Moscow would sign power-sharing agreements with 46 regions of the Russian Federation. Each pact devolved different powers of varying degrees. The bilateral treaties can be split into two eras. In the first set of power-sharing agreements, beginning with Tatarstan and then with six other strong ethnic republics in the years 1994-96, Moscow sacrificed most power, conferring these units with unprecedented freedoms. Tatarstan, having attained the greatest degree of autonomy, became a "quasi-independent nation state" (Stepanov 2000, 315). The treaties signed

after 1996 devolved much less power, but the overall effect of the power-sharing agreements was to create differences in power between the regions and force Moscow to work with the regions on broadly diverging sets of terms (see generally Chuman 2011).

From the original sovereignty declarations of 1990 to the time the final treaties were signed in 1998, Russia was transformed from a highly centralized, hierarchical empire to a highly decentralized and, moreover, highly asymmetrical federation. The bilateral treaties constrained and complicated central coordination of an already hierarchical federation of 89 territorial subjects. However, in giving the regions unprecedented degrees of power, the Kremlin managed to mute the threat of separatism (except, of course, in Chechnya) and maintain, if somewhat tenuously, the territorial integrity of Russia; this was a temporary strategy that ultimately worked.

Russia's political-territorial transformation in the 1990s was accompanied by a transformation in identity. The Soviet identity, however ephemeral, provided a supranational identity that helped transcend traditional ethnic ones. Deprived of this supranational category, cultural groups formerly calling themselves "Soviet people" (*sovetskie liudi*), were impelled to "define themselves anew in largely ethnic-national terms, because there was little else upon which to rebuild political identity" (Agnew 2002a, 93). This was the result of the ways in which ethno-national identity had been institutionalized within the sub-state territorial homelands created by the Bolsheviks. Soviet authorities in turn never encouraged an all-Russian (*rossiiskii*) identity aside from an ethnic Russian (*russkii*) identity, i.e. Russification (Hosking 1998).

Yeltsin made an attempt, though, to construct a post-Soviet political identity. In 1996, he commissioned a group to develop and to define an "all-Russian, common-

national idea" (*rossiiskaia, obshchenatsional'naia ideia*) upon which to build a new all-Russian identity. The group conducted a large survey questionnaire to measure society's values and aspirations. The results revealed the difficulty Russia confronted in cultivating a post-Soviet supranational identity. About half of the respondents sought a democratic future defined by individual responsibility, while the other half called for authoritarian rule ("the firm hands of a strong leader," "strong and strict power," "a leader who can make people follow him") (quoted in Billington 2004, 98). Yeltsin soon abandoned the project, emblematic of what Suny, writing in the late 1990s, termed post-Soviet Russia's "chronic failure to construct an identity" (Suny 1999, 141). As the decade wore on, increasing numbers of Russians welcomed "the firm hands of a strong leader."

The Consolidation of a Unified Legal Space

Vladimir Putin's program of *konsolidatsiia* ("consolidation") began in the fall of 1999, when, as a then-unknown prime minister appointed by Yeltsin, he launched the second post-Soviet military campaign against Chechnya. This *blitzkrieg* proved hugely popular, propelling him to the country's top post on January 1, 2000. President Putin promised to bring order – what he called a "unified legal space" (Putin 2000) – to the rest of Russia's asymmetrical federal system, bringing the self-proclaimed sovereigns to heel and leveling out the legal status of all the federal territories. What this has meant, in practice, is rapid political-territorial recentralization, the return to vertical authority. The legal space Putin inherited constituted what he called a "patchwork territory" (quoted in Mitin 2008, 49) – fragmented, divided, and quarrelsome. Constitutional acts contradicting federal law had been enacted in 19 of Russia's 21 ethnic republics – perhaps most

egregiously in Tatarstan – four of the ten autonomous *okrugs*, and 29 of the 49 *oblasts*. Up to 30 percent of all laws adopted in Russia's ethnic republics contradicted norms established in the federal constitution (Ross 2003).

The first steps Putin took toward establishing control over Tatarstan, and other ethnic republics, was to take control of key institutions formerly under the exclusive jurisdiction of Kazan. These included the regional constitutional courts, intelligence agencies, tax police, and customs officials (Derrick 2009a, 52). With control of these institutions, the federal Constitutional Court announced in April 2000 that all regional legislation must be brought into line with the federal constitution and followed with a second ruling establishing that the republics' sovereignty declarations were incompatible with the sovereignty of the Russian Federation.

In May 2000, to facilitate the harmonization of regional and federal law, Putin divided the country into seven federal districts. In creating these "super regions," he redrew the map of Russia to contain a dozen or more territorial units, an intentionally mixed bag of ethnic republics, autonomous *okrugs*, *oblasts*, and *krais* (see Figure 5). Notably, the new map was drawn to match the military districts of Imperial Russia (Petrov 2002, 74), and none of the capitals of the new federal districts was located in an ethnic republic. Each federal district was to be headed by a Moscow appointee – a cadre drawn almost exclusively from military and intelligence agencies – specifically charged with overseeing the prompt harmonization of regional and federal constitutions. Sergei Kirienko, sent to Nizhny Novgorod to head the Volga federal district, and the other appointees were given until the end of the year to make sure no regional laws contradicted central legislation (Teague 2002).

Figure 5: The seven federal districts created in May 2000 (map by author).

Containing five ethnic republics – all with power-sharing agreements – the Volga regional district presented the most difficulty in harmonizing federal and regional legal norms. Tatarstan was especially resistant, claiming that its relations with the center, as stipulated in the 1994 bilateral treaty, must be conducted on a treaty basis. However, following a variety of threats from Moscow, Tatarstan's courts began making the legal changes. By April 2002, more than 120 changes had been made to Tatarstan's constitution; many more would follow. On the question of sovereignty, Tatarstan would prevaricate. Rafael Khakimov, then Shaimiev's top political advisor, pointed out that few in Tatarstan equated "sovereignty" with "independence" (Nelson and Kuzes 2002, 10), trying to retain the concept for its symbolic value. Nonetheless, the republic eventually relinquished its hold on the word. The court also demanded that Tatarstan's constitution be stricken of the law requiring its president to speak both Tatar and Russian. Again, after

much resistance, this clause was eliminated from the constitution (Derrick 2009a, 53). The Kremlin also created a new tax code that required all federal subjects, including Tatarstsan, send 70 percent of its taxes to the center – a return to the Soviet model.[41]

The creation of the federal districts was a territorial strategy that proved effective in restoring a unified political-territorial expanse. Although the republics maintained their *de jure* status, along with some of the symbols of statehood, all of the subjects were made more-or-less equal in their relations with the center, just as Yeltsin laid out in the 1993 Russian Constitution. The federal districts have performed a secondary, and perhaps more important, function. The creation of seven large regions has also brought into being an alternative, simplified map of Russia, which previously could only be displayed as a complicated array of 89 units of varying status. Literally laid over the ethnic republics, autonomous *okrugs*, *oblasts*, and *krais*, the new cartography of "super regions" has blurred the boundaries of the federal hierarchy. This new visualization of Russia, broadcast on television, which now is almost exclusively controlled by the central state, may be fostering a new sense of territory. This appears to be Moscow's intention. The State Statistics Committee now structures its reports according to the seven federal districts, textbooks have been written in a similar format, and, according to Petrov, "presidential envoys are speaking about the need to cultivate a 'district identity'" (Petrov 2002, 79).

[41] In Tatarstan, Moscow also assumed partial control of the republic's oil and gas industry and revoked its exclusive right to license vodka and other spirits.

The Consolidation of Territory

Well before the end of his first term, Putin had restored central authority over Tatarstan and the other ethnic republics. His creation of the federal districts was a top-down territorial strategy that has been followed by a new ground-level policy of *ukrupnenie* ("merging"), which consolidates multiple territorial subjects into unified, enlarged political-territorial units. Since late 2005, a series of five mergers has reduced the number of federal subjects from 89 to 83 (see Figure 6), quite short of the ultimate

Figure 6: The merging of Russia's regions, accomplished and projected (map by author).

goal of 40 or 50 that has been mentioned by Kremlin associates (Kuznir 2008, 8). Putin insists that the purpose of *ukrupnenie* is to "solve social-economic problems" in impoverished regions by linking them to wealthier neighbors, in the process slashing resource-draining regional bureaucracies (Putin 2008). If the main goal is in fact to improve the socio-economic status of the country's neediest areas, at the head of the line for merging should be the *oblasts* of the central and northwest federal districts suffering from the effects of prolonged deindustrialization, the poverty-stricken Muslim republics of the North Caucasus, and the poorest ethnic enclaves of the Middle Volga Basin, such as Mari El and Mordovia.[42] However, to date none of these regions has been merged, and none is slated for merging in the immediate future.

The policy of *ukrupnenie*, as I have argued elsewhere (Derrick 2009c), is not based on socio-economic concerns, but rather is guided by a rationale based on ethnicity. So far, the policy of "merging" has eliminated six ethnically defined autonomous *okrugs*, and the remaining autonomous *okrugs* are next in line for abolition.[43] These small Siberian ethnic homelands were "relatively easier targets," according to Mitin, because they lacked "large populations and vociferous ethnic minorities" (Mitin 2008, 52). Among the mergers already in discussion include the elimination of the weakest ethnic republics, first of all the impoverished republics of Buryatia, Altai, Adygea, and Ingushetia. A reduction in the number of territories to 40 or 50 will eventually target the

[42] These are the regions identified as the most impoverished by the United Nations Development Program and also by Rosstat, the Russian federal statistics agency. See UNDP (2007), Rosstat (2006).

[43] That autonomous *okrugs* are slated for disappearance first should come as no surprise. Most were created as historic homelands for small-numbered shamanist-animist peoples of the Siberian north. They first appeared on the map in the 1920s and '30s as "matryoshka" subjects, i.e. a small political-territorial units contained within larger *oblasts* or *krais*, apparently intended to recognize the areas as historic homelands of indigenous peoples without affording them the full administrative rights of ethnic republics. It was only in the 1990s that the autonomous *okrugs*, like the republics, took significant control of their territories.

stronger ethnic republics. Territorial consolidation of this magnitude would, as Oversloot contends, "entail a transfer to a non-territorial model of support for nationalities, but, more likely, such a reduction in numbers would imply (or would be part of) a policy of outright Russification" (Oversloot 2009, 135). Either way, any significant political-territorial rearrangement of the Russian Federation is likely to meet resistance from the ethnic republics, where national identity is closely intertwined with the bordered space designated as their historic homelands. [44]

The Consolidation of Identity

One should not give Putin undo credit (or blame) for the overhaul of the Russian Federation. There existed an objective need to restore a degree of legal standardization common to all the territories. The consolidation and reduction of the federal units might also have been necessary to streamline administration. Such an overhaul was discussed in the 1990s under the Yeltsin presidency (Sakwa 1993, 199; Kolobov and Skliarov 2001, 32), but central weakness and division prohibited any change in the political-territorial status quo at the time. The question, though, is whether Putin has taken recentralization too far. Following the September 2004 Beslan school hostage crisis, a tragedy resulting in the deaths of some 300 people, mostly children, Putin canceled popular elections of

[44] For instance, serious attempts have already been made to merge the Republic of Adygea with Krasnodar *krai*. As discussed earlier in this chapter, Adygea is one of the three ethnic republics created by Stalin to divide the Circassian people; its titular group accounts for only one-quarter of the republic's population. Furthermore, Adygea is an enclave within the significantly wealthier Krasnodar. Nonetheless, there has been strong resistance in Adygea to being swallowed by Krasnodar. Circassian activists have protested talks of even conducting a referendum on the issue. The republic's president has also been vocal in his opposition to the merger, saying an "infusion" of Russians will further marginalize Circassian culture and language (quoted in Oversloot 2009, 127). Following sizeable demonstrations mobilized by the Adygean president, Moscow seems to have backed off, at least temporarily, from plans to merge Adygea.

regional governors and republic presidents, decreeing that thenceforth all regional heads must be approved by the Kremlin. In doing so, the Kremlin restored a form of central autocracy. As Mitin contends, "Formally federal, Russia now functions as a unitary state" in which all regions are "rigidly embedded in the state hierarchy" (Mitin 2008, 59).

The consolidation of Russia as a highly centralized political-territorial entity is reflective of Putin's understanding of the "primordial Russian values that have stood the test of time" (Putin 1999). Central to those values, he says, are collectivism and paternalism, the innate desire for a strong state: "From the beginning, Russia was created as a super-centralized state. That's practically laid down in its genetic code, its traditions, and the mentality of its people" (Putin 2000, 86). The decentralization and asymmetry of the 1990s, a time when society was "splintered into small groups," each pursuing its own interests, was unnatural for a collectivistic people, Putin contends. Russia cannot move forward, he continues, "in a condition of division, internally disintegrated, a society in which social strata and political forces adhere to different basic values and fundamental ideological orientations" (Putin 1999). For Putin, as Evans argues in an article titled "Putin's Legacy and Russia's Identity" (2008), the Yeltsin-era chaos, in society in general but especially witnessed in its territorial disorder, was a function of uncritical acceptance of Western norms and ideas of democracy and civil society. Consolidation and recentralization, of territory and society, is the restoration of *soglasie* ("consensus"). For Russia to progress as a nation, Putin asserts, it must return to its own traditions – this is the "all-Russian, common-national idea" (*rossiiskaia, obshchenatsional'naia ideia*) that Yeltsin could not develop.

For Tatarstan, the Putin-era consolidation of territory and his concomitant nation-building – his restoration of *soglasie* – have produced effects that transcend questions of legal jurisdiction and control of its oil and gas industry. The political-territorial restructuration has also affected the Tatars' own nation-building. By the end of the 1990s, when Tatarstan acted as a *de facto* sovereign state, the Tatar language was taught in every school and the government employees were given incentives to know both state language, Tatar and Russian. The Tatars also had planned to convert the alphabet of their language from the Cyrillic forced on them by Stalin in 1939 to a Latin-based script, following the example of other Turkic peoples (Suleymanova 2010). With the Putin-era recentralization, Moscow's demand that Tatarstan remove the constitutional clause that its president speak both Tatar and Russian has been accompanied by attacks on other aspects of the Tatars' language revival.[45] The center has forced Kazan to stop the conversion of its alphabet and, in the fall of 2009, the federal Ministry of Education removed the "national component," i.e. the right of ethnic republics to require the study of native languages, from the national curriculum. For many in Tatarstan, Moscow's language policies show that Putin's idea of a "multinational Russian nation" is largely coterminous with the ethnic Russian nation.

What does this political-territorial transformation, along with Putin-era nation-building, mean for the Tatars' religious revival? That question is the subject of examination in the following two chapters of this dissertation.

[45] For an account of Tatarstan's post-Soviet language policy, see Cashaback (2008).

CHAPTER IV

THE MUSLIM SPIRITUAL BOARD OF TATARSTAN, POLITICAL-TERRITORIAL TRANSFORMATION, AND THE CHANGING CHARACTER OF TATAR ISLAM

Introduction

The central goal of this chapter is to illustrate how the dramatic political-territorial restructuring of the Russian Federation in recent decades has conditioned Islamic identity in post-Soviet Tatarstan. To show how this dynamic has played out, I examine representations and practices of the Muslim Spiritual Board of the Republic of Tatarstan (DUMRT), a centralized ecclesiastical institution that, since its formation in 1992, has reflected and, to a significant degree, driven the character of Islam in the republic. Specifically, I show how the establishment of DUMRT, achieved by seceding from a previously unified all-Russian Muslim Spiritual Board, was spearheaded by the then-influential Tatar national movement as a response to Tatarstan's sovereignty declaration of August 30, 1990. The various organizations making up the Tatar national movement, broadly united in their vision of Tatarstan as the Tatars' independent homeland and

working in alliance with the official Tatar political leadership to bolster the republic's sovereignty claim, viewed the institution foremost as an important attribute of independent statehood and, correspondingly, understood the redevelopment of Islam as one component of a broader revival of national culture – not necessarily a return of a strict set of religious rules. Consequently, for much of the 1990s, while Tatarstan enjoyed an unprecedented degree of territorial autonomy and the redevelopment of Tatar national culture proceeded primarily through secular institutions, DUMRT did not play a central role in shaping the nature and practice of Islam in the republic. However, as the decade progressed the varying factions of the Tatar national movement became internally riven over the nature of Islam and its relationship to Tatar national identity; these internal divisions related to diverging understandings of Tatarstan as a political space that emerged as the decade progressed.

Over the past decade, however, as the aggressive recentralization of the Russian Federation has disabused Tatarstan of its pretensions to sovereignty, DUMRT is no longer seen as just another attribute of Tatar statehood. Rather, with the republic's secular institutions no longer viewed as representative of the Tatar nation, the Spiritual Board occupies an increasingly prominent place in society and politics, and Islam has assumed greater weight in balance of group identity. The Kazan-based government, deprived of most of its formal territorial autonomy, relies on DUMRT to communicate and reinforce an "official" Tatar Islam that is understood as apolitical and, above all, loyal to the state (Mukhametshin 2006b, 39); DUMRT's cultivation and maintenance of a loyal *umma* contributes to the republic preserving a degree of informal autonomy in its relations with Moscow. Simultaneously, Islam has eclipsed nationalism as the primary register through

which the territorial demands are expressed by certain sectors of the population who retain their vision of Tatarstan as the Tatars' independent homeland. Thus, as examined in this chapter, the story of the DUMRT shows how the changing political-territorial restructuration of Russia has influenced the character of the Islamic revival in the context of post-Soviet Tatarstan.

The remainder of this chapter is comprised of five parts. First, a historical background of the Muslim Spiritual Board, from its creation in the late eighteenth century up to the fall of the Soviet Union, is provided. Part two consists of an overview of the trajectory of the Islamic revival in post-Soviet Tatarstan, showing how the secular character of Tatar Islam in the 1990s has been eclipsed in recent years by more conservative expressions of religion. To provide an explanation of the changing face of the Tatars' post-Soviet Islamic revival, the following two sections examine how changing representations and practices of DUMRT have been influenced by the dramatic political-territorial restructuring of post-Soviet Russia. Part three analyzes how the creation of DUMRT in 1992 and its subsequent development for the remainder of the decade was conditioned by Tatarstan's sovereignty campaign that took place amid a broader decentralization of the Russian Federation. Part four investigates how this past decade's counter process of recentralization has affected DUMRT and, by extension, the increasingly complex character of Islamic identity in Tatarstan. This chapter concludes with a discussion of the implications of the current state of the Islamic identity in Tatarstan as it is influenced by Russia's continuing territorial transformation.

Background of the Muslim Spiritual Board

Catherine II ("the Great") established Russia's first Muslim Spiritual Board in the city of Ufa (currently the capital of Bashkortostan) in 1788[46] to monitor and police the affairs of Muslims in the empire. The creation of the Spiritual Board, following the Empress' earlier decrees on religious tolerance, came as a response to Muslim revolts that resulted from previous waves of forced Christianization; it was also formed in anticipation of the empire's continued eastward expansion, a process in which Moscow would employ the Tatars as a "civilising force" to promote Russia's interests among the "culturally less-developed" Muslims of Central Asia (Yemelianova 2003a, 25). Modeled after the Russian Orthodox ecclesiastical hierarchy and headed by a Mufti who was appointed by the state, the Muslim Spiritual Board (also known as the Muftiate) managed cadres of imams and mullahs, oversaw the operation of *mektebs* and *medresses*, and formed a bridge between Muslims and the government (Zagidullin 2007).[47]

The Mufiate ensured that the empire's *umma* would remain loyal to the Tsars and Tsarinas, but it also kept Muslims of Russia institutionally segregated from Orthodox Russians and other non-Muslims. The institutional segregation of Muslims in turn contributed to what Crews calls the "confessionalization" of the empire (Crews 2006, 8) – citizenship within the vast Russian Empire based not on an all-Russian (*rossiiskii*) identity, but instead based on religious affiliation. This religious-based segregation gave Russia's Muslims a certain degree of autonomy and room for negotiation in their

[46] The Muslim Spiritual Board was relocated in the city of Orenburg (currently located in the Orenburg *oblast* of the Middle Volga region) in 1796, but returned to Ufa in 1802 (Azamatov and Usmanov 1999).

[47] Strictly speaking, Islam does not recognize an ecclesiastical hierarchy, although it is a common practice in many states. See Matsuzato and Sawae (2010) for a comparative historical study of Islamic ecclesiology in Russia, Turkey, and China.

relations with the state. While the relations between the empire and its Muslims, as institutionalized by the Spiritual Board, have been described as “confederative” (Norihiro 2006, 102), they surely comprised a non-territorial confederation.

The Bolsheviks, against the background of broader and more intense institutional atheism, retained the Spiritual Board as a means of controlling Soviet Muslims by molding an Islam that was “fundamentally loyal to the Soviet state and generally pliant” (Ro’i 2000, 155). With the creation of the Tatar ASSR and other ethnic homelands, however, the state provided a secular education for all of Russia’s Muslims and assumed jurisdiction over most other social functions formerly coordinated by the Muftiate. By the late 1920s the Spiritual Board was permitted to perform only narrowly defined religious rituals as the state began persecuting clergy (exiling them to labor camps or physically eliminating them) and destroying mosques. By the mid-1930s, deprived of a Mufti and its clergy and its network of temples decimated after a decade of militant atheism, the institution existed in name only (Usmanova et al. 2010, 40-43).

The Spiritual Board received a new lease on life during World War II when Stalin revived the institution in a bid to foster state patriotism among the Volga Muslims and mobilize them in the military campaign. He also ordered the creation of three new Muftiates: the Muslim Spiritual Board of the North Caucasus, based in Buinaksk (later in Makhachkala); the Spiritual Board of Transcaucasia in Baku; and the Spiritual Board of Central Asia in Tashkent. Yemelianova explains that the new Muftiates “were designed to tighten state control over Soviet Muslims who were regarded by German commanders as a potential fifth column” (Yemelianova 2003b, 139-140). At the war’s conclusion the state returned to its antireligious policies, but all four Muftiates were nonetheless

retained. With the addition of the new Spiritual Boards in Central Asia, the North Caucasus, and Transcaucasia, the Ufa-based Muftiate was renamed the Muslim Spiritual Board of the European Part of the USSR and Siberia (*Dukhovnoe Upravlenie Musul'man Evropeiskoi Chasti SSR i Siberi* – DUMES).

In the latter decades of the USSR's existence, the activities of DUMES were severely limited and tightly controlled by Soviet authorities. Muftis were appointed by the government and consequently associated by parishioners with the atheist regime. Friday sermons at the few remaining official mosques, for example, had to be approved beforehand by representatives of the Council for Religious Affairs (CRA), a state organ that policed the Muftiate and often forced Muslim religious leaders "to instruct their communities in contradiction with their beliefs" (Matsuzato and Sawae 2010, 346). In order to serve in official mosques, imams and mullahs were required to receive state certification. The religious education required for state certification, however, was practically impossible to attain. All *medresses* in the Middle Volga region had been closed by Soviet authorities, and potential clergy from the Tatar ASSR could receive a higher Islamic education only in Bukhara, Uzbekistan, an option often complicated or deliberately blocked by state organs (Ro'i 2000, 239-253). By the *perestroika* era only 18 mosques were officially operating (only one was open in all of Kazan), and only about 30 registered Muslim clergy were active in the Tatar ASSR (Usmanova et al. 2010, 46).

In the immediate aftermath of the Soviet Union's collapse, DUMES remained in place as the sole Muftiate for all of the European part of Russia, Siberia, and the European CIS countries; DUMES retained its headquarters in Ufa, Bashkortostan. At the Spiritual Board's head was Talgat Tadjutdin, who had held the post since 1980 and in

1990 was elected as Supreme Mufti for life (Garaeva 1994). Like his predecessors in the Tsarist Empire and the Soviet Union, Tadjutdin was a protector of a conservative "Orthodox" Islam. Moreover, Mufti Tadjutdin was a *gosudarstvennik* (in favor of a strong, unified Russia) who maintained his institutionalized position as "state Mufti" and, along with Patriarch Aleksei, was integrated into Yeltsin's political establishment (Yemelianova 2003b, 146). Tadjutdin, although a Tatar himself, was unambiguously opposed to Kazan's aspirations for greater territorial freedoms (Khairetdinov 1995). Thus, DUMES as it stood represented a road block for the Tatar national movement that, following Tatarstan's August 30, 1990, sovereignty declaration, put forth two primary goals: strengthening the republic's claim to independent statehood and redeveloping Tatar national culture. As part of the second goal the national movement was broadly united in its dedication to a modernizing "Tatar Islam," understood then as a revived version of Jadidism, the indigenous liberal religious reform movement led by Tatar intellectuals in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (see generally D. Iskhakov 1992; Mukhametshin 1994).

Early support for Jadidism came from the Tatar Public Center (*Tatarskii Obschestvenyi Tsentr* – TOTs), the republic's most influential national organization in the late 1980s and into the latter part of 1990s and then closely aligned with the Tatar political leadership.[48] In its 1991 platform TOTs claimed that the "great achievements of Tatar society connected with Jadidism were mostly lost" under the repressive Soviet

[48] Two of the TOTs' early leaders became part of President Mintimer Shaimiev's immediate circle of advisors. Rafael Khakimov became his top political advisor and a key player in the 1994 bilateral treaty with Moscow. Damir Iskhakov became a top advisor to the Tatar president on ethno-national questions. Today they both are primarily associated with the Marjani History Institute of the Academy of Sciences of Tatarstan. Khakimov is its director, while Iskhakov is a senior researcher in the institute's Department of Ethnology. Multiple interviews conducted by the author with both Khakimov and Iskhakov are integral to this chapter.

regime that had inflicted untold damage on Tatar national culture (TOTs 1991, 146). TOTs contended that a "revival of the noble traditions of Jadidism," embracing *ijtihad* (independent interpretation of the Koran and Sunnah) and insisting on Islam's compatibility with the conditions of modernity, would reorient the Tatar nation toward Europe and contribute to its socio-economic development. The liberalism of "Euro-Islam," as post-Soviet neo-Jadidism soon became known in popular parlance, would also insulate the Tatars from the "threat of Muslim fundamentalism, which is unacceptable for civilized life," TOTs averred (Ibid.). The document suggested that Jadidism's rebirth, and with it a revival of the Tatar nation, could not be achieved under the institutional jurisdiction of DUMES, which it characterized as an anti-democratic instrument of a Moscow-centered state striving to recreate a "unitary-totalitarian type of government" (Ibid., 134).

In identifying DUMES with the Russian government, together set against democratic values and ultimately engendering religious fundamentalism, TOTs crafted an anti-imperial discourse that provided a base of justification for the creation of an independent Muslim Spiritual Board coterminous with Tatarstan's political borders. The secession from the Russia-wide Islamic ecclesiastical structure, in turn, would bolster the republic's claims to sovereignty. TOTs also ensured its involvement, along with that of other national organizations in Tatarstan, including the more radical *Ittifak* ("Alliance," the self-described "Tatar Party of National Independence") and *Milli Mejlis* ("National Congress"), in the Kazan-based Muftiate's formation and development for much of the first post-Soviet decade. As Damir Iskhakov, a leading Tatar national ideologist and early TOTs member, said, "Although formally created as an autonomous Islamic organization,

the Spiritual Board [of Tatarstan] developed as a faction of the national movement in the 1990s" (quoted in Galiamov 1998, 3). With this relationship established early on, changes to the Muslim Spiritual Board of Tatarstan and the character of Islamic identity would be intertwined with the changing fortunes of the Tatar national movement. Before turning to an examination of the foundation and subsequent changes to the republic's Spiritual Board, along with its relationship to the Tatar national movement, it is necessary first to provide an overview of the trajectory of Tatarstan's Islamic revival in the post-Soviet era.

The Changing Face of Islamic Revival in Post-Soviet Tatarstan

By almost any account Tatarstan has undergone a far-reaching "re-Islamization" in recent decades. The religion's forceful reemergence in the public sphere is vividly manifest in a proliferation of mosques throughout the region – if only 18 mosques were officially operating in the region in the mid-1980s, the number had risen to about 1,000 by the close of the 1990s and today stands at about 1,300 (interview with Nabiev 2009). Most visible of the new temples is the Kul-Sharif Mosque, which, billed as largest mosque in Europe (Siraeva 2006), occupies a central position in the Kazan Kremlin and, since its official opening in 2005, has become the single most recognizable symbol of Tatarstan (more on the Kul-Sharif Mosque and the Kazan Kremlin in the following chapter). In tandem with the mushrooming number of mosques, the ranks of Muslim clergy, who today number about 3,000 and form a "special social layer" in the republic (Mukhametshin 2005, 122), have multiplied a hundredfold since the late *perestroika* era. Additionally, no fewer than a dozen professional Islamic education centers, including the

highly regarded Russian Islamic University in Kazan, have been established (Nabiev 2006, 17). The spectacular growth in temples, clergy, and religious schools attests to a broader, more fundamental transformation of the social landscape. Yet the "re-Islamization" of Muslim society in post-Soviet Tatarstan has not been a phenomenon uniform in process or dominant expression, but rather has proceeded in stages and has exhibited a shift toward more conservative manifestations in recent years, including certain developments that cause palpable anxiety among politicians, elite observers, and the general public.

Emblematic of the early stages of the Tatars' religious rebirth were mass public events, beginning in late 1989 with large celebrations held throughout the republic in honor of the 1,100-year anniversary of the official acceptance of Islam by the Tatars' ancestors (the Volga Bolgars) and the bicentennial of the creation of the Muslim Spiritual Board in Ufa. Another notable event occurred in April 1991, when a public *namaz* (Muslim prayer) in honor of Uraza Bairam, a holiday celebrating the end of Ramadan, was held for the first time at the Siuiumbike Tower within the grounds of the Kazan Kremlin, an event that reportedly drew tens of thousands of participants (Musina 1997, 213). These mass public events reflected a dramatic change in personal attitudes among Tatars toward Islam. Findings from survey data from the late 1960s and into the early 1980s indicated that a majority of Tatars in villages (where religiosity is traditionally higher) self-identified as "atheists" or "indifferent" toward religion – less than 16 percent categorized themselves as "believers" in 1980 (see Table 2). A decade later, however, a clear majority of Tatars, both rural and urban, claimed to be "believers" or at least

"vacillating" in faith, and by 1994 a vast majority categorized themselves as more or less religious (see Table 3).

Attiude toward Religon	1967	1980	1989
Believer	17.9	15.7	43.4
Vacillating	19.7	14.9	19.1
Indifferent	46.6	59.1	12.3
Atheist	15.8	59.1	24.1

Table 2: Attitudes of Tatar villagers toward religion in the latter part of the Soviet era (source: Musina 1997).

Attitude toward Religion	1994	
	Urban	Rural
Believer	66.6	86
Vacillating	12	9.8

Table 3: Attitudes of Tatars, urban vs. rural, toward religion in 1994 (source: Musina 2001).

While almost all Tatars of all social groups in the republic claimed some degree of religiosity by the mid-1990s, these survey data were far from unambiguous – Tatars were selective in which religious rites they chose to observe. *Nikakh* (traditional Muslim wedding) and *sunnat* (circumcision), for example, quickly became popular practices once again.[49] Yet few Tatars exhibited active commitment to the central tenants of Islam. A 1993 survey indicated that fully three-fourths of all Tatars who self-identified as "believers" had never attended a mosque, and most of those who had visited a mosque did so only on the occasion of a religious holiday or family celebration (Vorontsova and

[49] Already by 1990 *nikakh* was practiced by more than 70 percent of marrying Tatars, while *sunnat* was chosen by more than 80 percent of Tatar parents of newborn sons (Musina 1997, 214).

Filitov 1993, 144). It is generally recognized that Islam does not demand mosque attendance (although communal prayer is considered more pleasing to Allah). Still, only about 8 percent of the Tatars of Tatarstan – and only 15 percent of those self-identifying as "believers" – surveyed at the height of the republic's "Muslim renaissance" in the 1990s practiced even home prayer (Musina 2000, 16-17), not to mention fulfilling any of the other five obligatory principles of Islam.[50]

Within a matter of a few years, Tatarstan's "Islamic revival" ceased to be a mass public phenomenon and the hundreds of newly built mosques were largely empty, aside from religious holidays or family events. Indeed, as several of my interview subjects attested, mosques remained empty for the duration of the 1990s, attended mainly by a small stream of elder Tatars.[51] In light of these trends, Baltanova, writing at the end of the decade, pointed to the year 1994 as the beginning of a "crisis" or a "certain stabilization or possibly even a drop off in the growth of Islamic religiosity" in the republic (Baltanova 1997, 186).

Other Kazan-based researchers, however, have challenged Baltanova's foundational assumption that Tatarstan's "Muslim renaissance" in late 1980s through the mid-1990s was a question of religiosity *per se*. As Khabutdinov has contended, the early mass public celebrations "were foremost understood as a measure of respect toward ancestors and their statehood" (Khabutdinov 2005). For her part, Musina has argued that

[50] In addition to *namaz* (or *salat*, prayer), the five "pillars" of Islam include *shahada* (affirmation of faith), *uraza* (or *sawm*, fasting during Ramadan), *zakat* (almsgiving), and the *hajj* (pilgrimage to Mecca).

[51] Data presented by Musina provides support for this assertion. According to a 1999 survey of college-age Tatars in Tatarstan, i.e. representatives of a generation entering adulthood in an age of religious freedom and therefore, Musina posits, more likely to be actively religious, fully half had never been to a mosque for any reason, while 20 percent had been to a mosque for a religious holiday, and another 10 percent had been to a mosque for a family event (Musina 2001, 516).

the Tatars' "re-Islamization" was a "manifestation *not so much of religious sentiments as of ethnonational self-awareness,* a distinctive 'religious nationalism'" (Musina 2001, 516, emphasis added). As support, Musina proffered survey data illustrating that most Tatars in the 1990s viewed religious holidays foremost as national celebrations and that nearly 80 percent of Tatars believed that "Islam contributes to the preservation of national culture and traditions" (Musina 2000, 17). In short, Tatarstan's early period of "Islamic revivalism" was part and parcel of a broader national revival – to be Tatar once again meant being a Muslim, regardless of one's actual observation of religious tenants.

Considering the close relationship between national identity and Islam, Musina, writing in the latter part of the 1990s, was sanguine enough to assert that "the republic has few of the prerequisites for the development of religious extremism and fundamentalism" (Musina 1997, 216). Having evolved over several centuries in isolation from the broader Muslim world and having gone through a period of intense religious reform under the leadership of the Jadidists in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Musina contended, Tatar Islam is distinguished by its adherence "to *secular norms*, and one would not be mistaken in calling it 'Euro-Islam'" (Ibid., 216-217, emphasis added). To be sure, for the duration of the 1990s, the "re-Islamization" of Tatarstan appeared to be more of a secular than a religious affair. No reports of religious-based "radicalism" or "extremism" were registered. Although missionaries from Saudi Arabia and other Muslim countries had been active in the republic since the fall of the USSR, Tatarstan seemed to offer little or no fertile ground for their ideas, which were generally dismissed as "foreign" to the Tatars (Rorlich 1999, 394).

Over the past decade, however, a significant shift has occurred in the social expression of Islam in Tatarstan. Once-empty mosques are now active hubs of worship, some overflowing during Friday prayers.[52] The upsurge is mostly accounted for by Tatars under 35, who today comprise a growing portion of all mosque-goers in Tatarstan (Suleimanov 2011b). With the upswing in mosque attendance, the primacy of secular-minded Euro-Islam identified by Musina above has been challenged, and perhaps superseded, by more conservative, explicitly "Islamic" expressions of the faith. A visible indicator of this change is the growing popularity of the *hijab*, the traditional head covering worn by (some) Muslim women.[53] For the duration of the 1990s this religious marker was largely unseen in urban environs, and the rare Tatar *muhjibh*[54] who ventured into public "often drew attention and provoked incomprehension and aggression" (Kuznetsova-Morenko and Salakhatdinova 2006, 7). Present today in almost any public setting, the *hijab* has quickly become a normalized part of the social landscape (see Figures 7 and 8). As Dmitry Gorenburg, a noted specialist on culture and politics in Eurasia, noted in 2010,

> When I was last in Kazan two years ago, I was struck by the sheer number of young women wearing "Islamic" clothing … This was in stark contrast to previous visits, when everyone (and especially young people) wore European style clothing and hair styles. The number of people with such

[52] I have encountered no survey data similar to those published by Musina and other Kazan-based sociologists in the 1990s. This assessment is based both on my participant observation and assertions made by other researchers (e.g. Khabutdinov 2005; Laurelle 2007; Ponarin 2008).

[53] Muslim women who wear the *hijab* clearly attribute diverse meanings to the head covering (Ruby 2006; Tarlo 2007). My purpose here is not to attribute any single signification of the *hijab* in Tatarstan, but rather simply to identify a general tendency, however varied internally.

[54] A woman who wears the *hijab* is called a *muhajibh*.

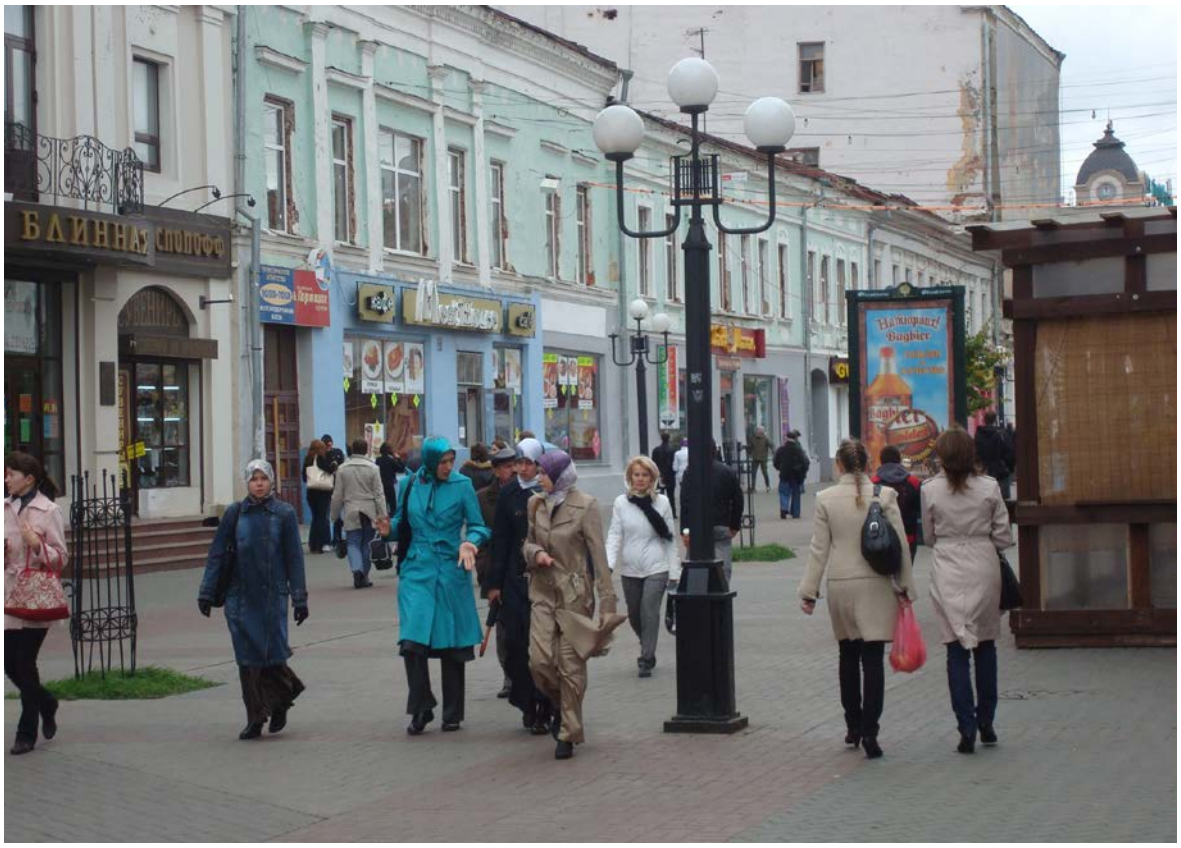

Figure 7: The *hijab* has become a normalized part of the social landscape in Tatarstan (photo by author).

> Islamic markers was also much higher in Kazan two years ago than in my visit to Baku last week (Gorenburg 2010).[55]

The secular norms of the Tatars' Euro-Islam are further undermined by widespread reports of a growing presence of religious fundamentalism, most generally attributed to Salafism or – as is most common in Russia – Wahhabism, versions of the faith considered by many in Tatarstan as too universalistic, too utopian, and wholly unsuited for the social conditions of a multi-confessional region (see e.g. Mukhametshin

[55] Like Gorenburg, I too have observed this transformation. As late as 2003, when I first visited Kazan and other parts of Tatarstan, the rare *muhajibh* seen in public places was still subjected to stares that bespoke of social censure. By the time I returned to conduct fieldwork in 2008, the *hijab* had become a common presence that attracted little attention. For similar accounts by Kazan-based observers, see e.g. Khabutdinov (2005), Khakim (2010), and Amelina et al. (2010).

Figure 8: Shops have opened in Tatarstan to meet the demand for Islamic fashion (photo by author).

2005; Laurelle 2007).[56] Based on the results of fieldwork and interviews, surmising the number of adherents of this so-called "pure Islam" is difficult if not impossible, although Valiulla Iakupov, the first deputy Mufti of Tatarstan, estimated in my interview with him that a few thousand are probably active in Kazan alone. Furthermore, he said that the "majority of youth" who attend mosques in Tatarstan, along with a small but "significant part" of the republic's clergy, are followers of Salafism (interview with Iakupov 2009). Other observers and key informants have contended that a widespread "Wahhabization"

[56] A small sampling of newspaper headlines includes the following: "No to Wahhabism, Yes to Jadidism?" (Mirgazizov 2001); "Tatarstan in the Embrace of Wahhabism" (Postnova 2004); "The Threat of Fundamentalism in Tatarstan" (D. Iskhakov 2006); "Jihad in Tatarstan" (Amelina 2010a); and "Wahhabism in Tatarstan: An Attempt to Take Revenge?" (Suleimanov 2011b).

of the region's *umma* is underway (e.g. interview with Salman 2009; see also Sosedov 2010; Suleimanov 2011b). Fundamentalist understandings of Islam no doubt have grown in popularity in recent years, but most of my key informants, although disconcerted by the phenomenon, agreed that scenarios of Tatarstan's full-scale "Wahhabization" are greatly exaggerated (e.g. interviews with Garipov 2009; Khakimov 2009; Zagidullin 2009; Mukhametshin 2010; Shagaviev 2010). Nonetheless, officials in Kazan have taken a number of measures intended to stop the spread of Wahhabism, including banning the works of Muhammad Ibn Abd-al-Wahhab (considered the founder of Wahhabism) and a host of other Islamic literature deemed "extremist," evicting foreign missionaries accused of propagating "dangerous" ideologies, and currently are considering legislation that would outlaw Wahhabism in Tatarstan altogether (Amelina 2010b).[57]

Rafik Mukhametshin, a leading scholar on Islam in Tatarstan and the rector of the Russian Islamic University, has publicly made a distinction between "moderate" and "immoderate" Wahhabites, warning against the tendency to conflate fundamentalism with radicalism (interview in Minvaleev 2004, 6). His is a position that has been increasingly difficult to maintain, as adherents of "pure Islam" have been implicated in a number of extremist acts in Tatarstan in recent years. In 2003, for example, a group of young men alleged to be Salafists was accused of blowing up a natural gas pipeline running through republic. In 2004 and 2005 several dozen young Muslims accused of being members of *Hizb ut-Tahrir* ("The Islamic Party of Liberation"), banned as an "extremist" group in Russia for its goal of establishing an independent Islamic state (caliphate), were arrested in a string of sting operations in various cities of Tatarstan.

[57] Laws banning "Wahhabism" already exist in Dagestan and Chechnya, although they have done little to stem the spread of religious fundamentalism in those republics.

Intelligence officers claim they uncovered and prevented a plot to commit terrorist acts in Kazan on the eve of the city's millennium celebrations in August 2005 (Trofimov 2005). In November 2010 three men accused of being members of *Hizb ut-Tahrir* were killed in a firefight with Special Forces after planting a bomb that failed to explode at a regional division of the Center to Combat Extremism (Smirnov 2010). Following this most recent incident, which was the first example of bloodshed related to "Islamic extremism" in the region, a headline appearing in a Kazan-based newspaper announced "*Jihad* in Tatarstan" (Amelina 2010a, 3).

The trajectory of the Islamic revival in post-Soviet Tatarstan, especially as it has played out in recent years, appears to provide support for theses of Islamic exceptionalism or globalization-fuelled fundamentalism (discussed in Chapter II). However, as examined in the following sections, the changing face of Islam in Tatarstan is better explained through an examination of how the political-territorial transformation of the Russian Federation has influenced the practices and representations of the Muslim Spiritual Board of Tatarstan.

Forming an Independent Spiritual Board for a "Sovereign" Tatarstan

The formation of the Muslim Spiritual Board of the Republic of Tatarstan (DUMRT) in 1992, along with its development for the remainder of the decade, was conditioned by two interrelated factors. First was the political-territorial decentralization of the Russian Federation – the twin processes of democratization and "sovereignization" – that followed in the wake of the Soviet Union's collapse. Second was the response to those forces by the Tatar national movement, which, after Tatarstan's sovereignty

declaration of August 30, 1990, viewed a Kazan-based Muftiate as an important institution for the redevelopment of Tatar national consciousness and a key attribute of independent statehood. At first, however, discussions were not about establishing an independent Muftiate, as seen in the 1991 platform of the Tatar Public Center (TOTs), then the republic's "largest and most influential social-political formation" (D. Iskhakov 1992, 5):

> TOTs offers to work in the future in close coordination with the Muslim Spiritual Board of the European part of the country and Siberia [DUMES]. However, *in connection with the acceptance with the Declaration of State Sovereignty of the Tatar ASSR*, in the opinion of TOTs, *the organizational form of management of Muslims in the Republic of Tatarstan must be changed*. TOTs considers it necessary to look at the question of *transferring the Spiritual Board [from Ufa] to Kazan* (TOTs 1991, 147-148, emphasis added).

In the event DUMES refused to transfer its headquarters to Kazan, TOTs reserved the right to form an independent Spiritual Board of Tatarstan, which would include Muslim Tatars from other regions who agree to the arrangement (Ibid.).

TOTs' critique of the "organizational form of management" of DUMES was both cultural and political in nature. In supporting a "revival of the noble traditions of Jadidism" (Ibid., 146), TOTs argued that Tatar Islam must be thoroughly reformed and modernized (something akin to the Protestant Reformation), Islamic education must include the study of secular subjects, and the *Ulema* (Islamic scholars) must be comprised of only "the most educated scholars in the fields of Islam and Muslim culture," meaning the inclusion, if not domination, of secular scholars, not just traditionalist imams and

mullahs (Ibid., 147). As the situation stood under DUMES' purview, TOTs contended in its 1991 document that "the intellectual level of cadres of the Muslims working in Tatar society do not correspond to the demands of modernity" (Ibid.). TOTs' support for a more intellectual form of Islam, its demand for secular-minded, Western-oriented Jadidism – or Euro-Islam, as it became known – was echoed by other nationalist organizations, including the more radical *Ittifak* ("Alliance"),[58] which viewed a rejection of the traditionalist "orthodox" Islam propagated by DUMES as contributing to a broader modernization and advancement of the Tatar nation (Ittifak 1991).

TOTs was not eager to break up the Spiritual Board because the vast majority of Muslims under the institution's jurisdiction were Tatars. As Rafael Khakimov, an early TOTs leader and subsequently a top political adviser to Tatar President Mintimer Shaimiev, explained to me,

> We saw DUMES as a way to unite Tatars throughout Russia, a way to develop Tatar culture not only in Tatarstan. The network of mosques would be used not only as places of worship, but also as cultural centers where Tatars could study their own language, learn their own culture, even study secular subjects (interview with Khakimov 2009).

Thus, transferring the headquarters of the DUMES from Ufa to Kazan, the nationalists believed, would allow the Tatar national organizations that had arisen as a force in Tatarstan to reform the Spiritual Board, implement their preferred understanding of

[58] In the early 1990s, TOTs and *Ittifak* were essentially a single organization, the latter simply representing the more vociferous wing of the former. The majority, centrist TOTs was less confrontational in its relations with the official political authorities in pursuit of Tatarstan's "sovereignty," a term that was ambiguous from the time it was introduced to the political discourse of Tatarstan. *Ittifak* – the self-described "Tatar Party of National Independence" – was (and remains) more confrontational with the political authorities, far less ambiguous in its goal of all-out "independence" and "national statehood" (Ittifak 1991, 223).

Islam, and consolidate the Tatar nation as it was dispersed throughout Russia (TOTs 1991, 145). Making Kazan the Tatars' spiritual capital would also add weight to the city's pretensions as the political capital of the Tatars' "sovereign" homeland, as it became understood following Tatarstan's August 30, 1990, declaration.

In hindsight, the suggestion to transfer the headquarters of DUMES to Kazan, as Damir Iskhakov characterized the situation, was a nonstarter:

> [DUMES Mufti] Tadjutdin was unquestionably loyal to Moscow, for a Eurasian [*evraziiskii*] Islam,[59] a Russian [*rossiskii*] Islam. In no way did he support Jadidism or reform Islam. Moreover, he was completely against to the sovereignty of Tatarstan. He understood that the transfer of DUMES to Kazan would strengthen our sovereignty. He was in favor of Russia as a united power [*derzhava*] (interview with D. Iskhakov 2009).

As such, the course was set for the Tatar national movement to take the lead in forming an independent Muslim Spiritual Board of Tatarstan. Although the Tatar national revival would take place mostly through secular institutions in the 1990s (thereby assuring the secular character of the Tatars' Islamic revival in that period), the development of the Muftiate of Tatarstan would proceed in tandem with the republic's sovereignty campaign that was launched amid the decentralization of the Russian Federation.

Seceding from the All-Russian Muslim Spiritual Board

Concrete moves to secede from DUMES were not taken until the republic-wide referendum on Tatarstan's sovereignty was passed in March 1992. Forming an independent Spiritual Board of Tatarstan before then would have potentially upset the

[59] Khakimov also pointed out that Tadjutin was one of the founders, along with Alexander Dugin, of the Eurasian Party.

"parity nationalism" proclaimed by Shaimiev following the republic's sovereignty declaration (D. Iskhakov 1997b), alienating a significant portion of the ethnic Russians in the republic whose votes were needed in order to pass the referendum. Before then the ground was laid by a boom in mosque construction throughout region. Of the approximately 1,000 mosques opened in the Tatarstan from 1989 until the end of the following decade, about 700 had been built or were in the process of being constructed by the close of 1992 (Mukhametshin 2006b, 30). This spectacular growth in mosques in a period of just a few years cannot be explained by new religious freedoms alone.[60] To begin with a comparison, in neighboring Bashkortostan, which is home to more Muslims than Tatarstan, the number of mosques rose from 14 in 1981 to about 300 in 1994 (Iunusova 1994, 109-114), meaning the number of mosques in Tatarstan grew at a rate greater than twice that of Bashkortostan.[61] The early boom in the construction of mosques in Tatarstan also did not correspond to actual mosque attendance, as discussed in the previous section.

The rapid growth in mosques in the early 1990s should be understood as part of a campaign by Kazan's political and national leadership to Tatarize the republic's landscape and thereby articulate more sharply the "symbolic shape" of territory (Passi 1997).[62] Direct state involvement is confirmed by Rafik Mukhametshin, a highly

[60] Religious freedom was introduced to the USSR in 1990 with the passage of two laws, "On the Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations" and "On the Freedom of Worship" (Usmanova et al. 2010, 50).

[61] For further comparison, in 1917 there were 1,152 mosques registered in the Kazan *guberniia*. In Russia as a whole, 189 mosques were registered in 1989; by 1994 there were 3,264 (Iunosova 1994, 114). In Kazakhstan, the number of mosques rose from 63 in 1989 to 200 in 1992; in Tajikistan from 4 (1989) to 83 (1992); in Uzbekistan from 350 (1989) to 1,000 (1992) (Abazov 1995, 62).

[62] Multiple interview subjects, including those involved with the Tatarstan's sovereignty project, indicated that the early, rapid construction of mosques was coordinated by the Tatar politicians with national leaders.

regarded scholar of Islam in Tatarstan,[63] who informs that "almost all mosques in the republic, especially in villages, were built with significant support of the local authorities ... The functioning of the mosques more or less depended on them" (Mukhametshin 1997, 257; see also Matsuzato 2007, 788).[64] Notably, by the early 1990s Tatar President Mintimer Shaimiev had already begun the practice of appointing heads of districts (*raiony*) and cities (Derrick 2009a, 54; see also D. Iskhakov 1997b, 126). The inordinate rise in the number of mosques within Tatarstan's borders in the early 1990s thus had a twofold function. First, the large number of mosques enhanced justification to set up a Kazan-based Spiritual Board. Second, it established a chain of dependency (imams at the local level → heads of governments at the district level → the political leadership at the republic level) that helped make certain that most mosques in Tatarstan would transfer loyalties from DUMES to the republic's newly created "sovereign" Muftiate.

With this foundation laid, national and religious leaders from Tatarstan convened an extraordinary Muslim Congress in late August 1992, while Supreme Mufti Tadjutdin was abroad. A majority of delegates in attendance, led by representatives from *Ittifak*, voted to secede from DUMES and create the independent Muslim Spiritual Board of the Republic of Tatarstan (DUMRT) (Garaeva 1994, 198). Gabdullah Galiullin, one of the new generation of "young imams" and allied with TOTs and *Ittifak* (Malashenko 1992, 3), was elected Supreme Mufti of DUMRT. In justifying Tatarstan's secession from DUMES, Gailiullin said,

[63] Rafik Mukhametshin is a senior researcher associated with Marjani History Institute of the Academy of Sciences of Tatarstan. He is also the rector of the Russian Islamic University (RIU) in Kazan.

[64] As further evidence, Damir Iskhakov, who helped develop the government's ethno-national ideology, said in a 1998 interview that mullahs "need to work with the heads of the districts" on issues related to constructing mosques and salaries (quoted in Galiamov 1998, 3).

> We want to address the problems not included in those dealt with by the Spiritual Board and its headquarters in Ufa. What we find acceptable is not often acceptable for the Spiritual Board operating *in Russia* (quoted in PostFaktum 1992, 1, emphasis added).

In making a political-territorial distinction between Russia and Tatarstan, Galiullin also drew on the historical memory of the Kazan Khanate and the loss of Tatar statehood, echoing the political discourse underpinning Tatarstan's sovereignty claim. He said, "They [i.e. Russians] have kept our ancestors and us down under their crosses since 1552" (quoted in Galimov 1992, 1). He added that the creation of DUMRT will "strengthen the *independence* of the republic" (Ibid., emphasis added). DUMRT was registered by the Council for Religious Affairs in the Cabinet of Ministers of Tatarstan within two weeks (Tul'skii 2004a), an unusually speedy processing of papers indicating that the Kazan-based government likewise viewed the new Muftiate as important to its sovereignty campaign.

While the new Mufti generated discursive borders that fostered an inside-outside dynamic in line with the nationalists' understanding of Tatarstan as the Tatars' sovereign homeland, the internal territorial arrangement of DUMRT was similarly patterned on the contours of the republic. DUMRT was headquartered in Kazan and subdivided into *mukhtasibs* (regional divisions) that were coterminous with the republic's administrative districts (*raiony*). The Kazan-based government empowered district heads with the authority to register *mahallas* (Islamic communities, i.e. mosques), powers previously held only in Kazan by the Council for Religious Affairs of Tatarstan (Garaeva 1994, 202). Devolving the registration of mosques to the districts expedited the transition of *mahallas* from DUMES to DUMRT and reinforced relationships between imams and

heads of districts forged earlier with the construction of mosques. In effect, the territoriality of DUMRT replicated, and to a degree even fused with, that of the republic.

By 1994 DUMRT had secured the loyalties of more than half of all mosques in the republic, while DUMES claimed jurisdiction over the remainder.[65] While Kazan was in negotiations with Moscow over its sovereignty, the situation of having dual Spiritual Boards was allowed to stand so as not to upset the policy of "parity nationalism" set by the Shaimiev government. As explained to me in an interview with Khakimov, securing a favorable agreement with Moscow to a significant degree was dependent on no overt showing of favoritism by Kazan for one religion or national group (interview with Khakimov 2009). However, the policy of "parity nationalism" in this period, after decades – even centuries – of Russification policies, led to state support for a blossoming of Tatar-language newspapers and magazines, a substantial growth in the time allotted to the broadcasting of programs in Tatar on the radio and television, and, perhaps most importantly, the establishment of Tatar-language courses in many kindergartens, elementary schools, and high schools (Malik 1994). In other words, the Tatar national revival was in full stride, proceeding through secular institutions, not necessarily in mosques.

The First Unification of DUMRT after the 1994 Bilateral Treaty

The signing of the 1994 bilateral treaty between Kazan and Moscow, after a tense period of negotiations, reactivated the Tatar national movement in its attentions to the Muslim Spiritual Board. In December of that year an open letter from the "Tatar

[65] At the start of 1994, 418 mosques in Tatarstan were registered with DUMRT, while 316 mosques in Tatarstan were registered with DUMES (Garaeva 1994, 201-202).

intelligentsia," a group including both the centrist and more radical wings of the nationalists, called on all "imams and the Muslim community of the republic" to unite behind DUMRT and Mufti Galiullin (Obraschenie 1994, 4). The motivation behind this entreaty was to end the situation of dual, competing Spiritual Boards in the region and create a single, independent Muftiate of Tatarstan, thereby delinking the republic's *umma* and the republic itself from the Russia-wide DUMES that was unquestionably loyal to Moscow. The existence of DUMRT as Tatarstan's sole centralized Islamic institution was viewed by the Tatar national movement and the Kazan-based government alike, according to Mukhametshin, as a "necessary attribute of state sovereignty" in the post-treaty context (interview with Mukhametshin 2010). This idea was realized the following month in an extraordinary Muslim Congress, organized in Kazan by the national leadership, to which more than 80 percent of the Muslim communities (i.e. mosques) of the republic sent delegates – a turnout that, while not completely extinguishing DUMES' presence in the republic, *de facto* represented the unification of the region's *umma* around DUMRT (Ibid.).

The Muslim Congress of January 1995 resulted in a series of concrete measures, including the formation of an *Ulema* Council (Council of Islamic Scholars) that consisted of academics, intelligentsia, and national leaders; traditionalist religious leaders, because of their perceived fealty to "Orthodox" Islam, were mostly excluded (interview with D. Iskhakov 2009). The *Ulema* vowed to take up the task of formulating a "conception for a *national type* of Muslim education" that would produce a new generation of clergy to serve in the burgeoning number of mosques in Tatarstan (Polozhenie 1995, emphasis added). According to Damir Iskhakov, who was a top advisor to Mufti Galiullin and

served as a bridge between DUMRT and state authorities, the *Ulema* were in agreement that "national type" decisively meant reformist, Western-oriented Jadidist Islam that embraced *ijtihad* (independent interpretation of the Koran and Sunnah) and secular learning (interview with D. Iskhakov 2009). It is notable that DUMRT's inaugural charter, penned at the January 1995 Muslim Congress, while supporting the practice of *ijtihad*, makes no reference to – not to mention support for – any specific *madhhab* (school of Islamic jurisprudence) (Ustav 1995, 64-65). As Iskhakov told me, DUMRT's charter reflected the institution's early dedication to adapting Tatar Islam to the conditions of modernity, crafting an "intellectual Islam" to serve the development of the Tatar nation and Tatar state, and its openness to theological pluralism.

The national orientation of the "intellectual Islam" identified by Iskhakov, however, was distinguished not so much by its ostensible Western orientation, but by its anti-colonialism. This dynamic was evidenced in Rashad Amirkhanov's take on the Jadidists' legacy of religious reform. He wrote that their "Islamic teachings, which stimulated a progressive reformation of the Muslim's life" a century earlier, were needed be Tatars today

> to fill the ideological vacuum, formed as a result of the crisis of a totalitarian ideology, and return to the people [*narod*] its faith in spiritual values. Islam is to educate a generation of thinkers and believers on the basis of humanistic principles. The fate of our people is largely determined by the ability of the new generation to use this historical chance given to us by the crisis of an imperial state and follow the struggle for national sovereignty through to the end (Amirkhanov 1996, 28).

As had been the case since TOTs first introduced Jadidism to the social-political discourse in 1991, Amirkhanov maintained that the "function" of Islam foremost was to serve the Tatar nation and the nascent Tatar state against a revanchist, innately imperialist power opposed to a people's right to self-determination (Ibid.). Neo-Jadidist Islam, although grounded in universal "humanistic principles" – not religious dogma – was defined foremost against the colonial Russian Other.[66]

The national movement may have spoken in a single voice for the unification of Tatarstan's *umma* around DUMRT and Mufti Galiullin, but the divide between the moderate and more radical wings hardened and deepened over the terms of the 1994 treaty, which acknowledged Tatarstan as a "State …*united* with the Russian Federation" (Treaty 1994, preamble, emphasis added). This division, based on the treaty's glaring elision of the question of sovereignty, in turn affected the character of DUMRT. The centrist leadership of TOTs put its weight behind Shaimiev's policy of "gradualism" (Malik 1994), understanding that the case for Tatarstan's sovereignty would be built methodically over time through institutions, notably among them DUMRT. Viewing the Muftiate as part of a long-term nation- and state-building project that was based on the bilateral treaty, TOTs declared that "the Islamic community and the Spiritual Board of Tatarstan, not yielding to the influence of any political party, organization, or group, must serve the entire nation and the state" (TOTs 1996, 1).

[66] For similar handlings of Jadidism in this period, see Amirkhanov (1994), Safin (1996a), and Safin (1996b). The first serious, in-depth analysis of the legacy of Jadidism appeared in 1997 with the publication of Iskhakov's *Fenomen Tatarskogo Dzhadidisma* (*The Phenomenon of Tatar Jadidism*), a socio-historical analysis of the Tatars' religious reform movement (D. Iskhakov 1997a). In recent years scholars at the Marjani History Institute in Kazan have been compiling and translating into Russian (originals were generally written in a variant of the Arabic script that was used for the Tatar language until 1928) the works of leading Tatar Jadidists in the latter part of the nineteenth century and into the first decades of the twentieth century. This is an important project that will contribute to broader and deeper academic exploration of the Tatar Jadidists' legacy.

Mufti Galiullin, however, became more associated with the more radical *Ittifak*, whose leader, Fauiziia Bairamova, decried the 1994 treaty because, as she contended, it "took everything from us, most of all our national aspirations, our aspirations for independence" (interview with Bairamova 2009). Allied with *Ittifak*, Mufti Galiullin nurtured a confrontational relationship with the political establishment of Tatarstan (Khabibullin 2008, 80-81), echoing the radicals' criticism of Shaimiev for betraying the cause of the Tatars' independent statehood in favor of melding a state-defined national polity – a multiethnic "Tatarstani people" (*tatarstanskii narod*) – in the wake of the 1994 treaty (D. Iskhakov 1997, 127-135). Thus, with conflicts arising over diverging understandings of homeland, Galiullin opposing the political elite, and a number of imams and parishioners following his lead, DUMRT enjoyed no regular financial support from the government (Iakupov 2005, 76-78). This stunted the development of a Jadidist-inspired Islamic education system.

The future shape of DUMRT and the position of its Mufti were decisively thrown into question again in late 1996, when Galiullin's allies in *Ittifak* took part in the formation of a new political party called Muslims of Tatarstan (Mukhametshin 2005, 176). The party's creation coincided with a distinct shift in the character of Islam propagated by the radicals. Bairamova abruptly abandoned her previous support for Jadidism, claiming that the Tatars' religious reform had "destroyed Islam from within." She wrote,

> If the essence of Jadidism (reformism) is reduced to the renewal of religion under the guise of progress, pushing the nation toward infidels and battling against *fundamental Islam*, then the absolute unbelief of the

> Tatar people can be viewed as a telling result of Jadidism (Bairamova 1997, 22 emphasis added).

Central to Bairamova's rejection of Jadidism in favor of "fundamental Islam," a concept she left undefined, was her concern for the fate of the Tatar nation, which, under Shaimiev's propagation of a "Tatarstani people," she saw as threatened by its admixture with "infidels." As such, her criticism was not of Jadidism *per se*, but more immediately of the moderate nationalists. In supporting the post-treaty policy of "gradualism," she argued, TOTs unduly embraced "alien" notions of progress and Western democratic ideals, stopping short of its original demand of constructing Tatarstan as the Tatars' sovereign homeland:

> The Tatar intelligentsia, unable to fight for the independence of their own state, saw the path of the nation's survival in progress, in the acceptance of the principles of an alien civilization. If Jadidism had not destroyed the bases of Islam, if it had created a Tatar national science,[67] we would not be against the movement. But Jadidism has damaged *true Islam* (Ibid., 23, emphasis added).

Bairamova's repudiation of Jadidism, along with the explicit politicization of Islam that came with her participation in the party Muslims of Tatarstan, represented a decisive split in the Tatar national movement. Whereas the national movement theretofore collectively supported the nationalization and modernization of Islam under the banner of Jadidism, or Euro-Islam, *Ittifak* now called for the Islamization of the Tatar nation, a return to explicit faith based on the Koran, not universal "humanistic values." The radicals' shifting register that incorporated an ambiguous "fundamental" or "true"

[67] Bairamova here referred to the Tatar intelligentsia's plans – never realized – to create a Tatar university independent of the Russia's university system.

Islam, however, was not based on any theological argumentation; rather, it was driven by territorial grievances coming out of the 1994 treaty.[68] While Mufti Galiullin publicly maintained his adherence to the principles of Jadidism and also worked with the moderates from TOTs who largely comprised the *Ulema* Council (Interfaks 1996), his alliance with *Ittifak* not only brought him into opposition with the political authorities, but also contributed to a renewed division in Tatarstan's *umma*, reflective of the hardened split in the national movement.

Protecting the Territorial Status Quo: The Second Unification of DUMRT

For most of the 1990s, Shaimiev remained behind the scenes in his involvement with DUMRT, allowing the national leadership to guide the Muftiate's development. However, by the latter part of the decade the Tatar national movement and its involvement in Spiritual Board had become a liability to the republic's sovereignty project, which, since the signing of the 1994 treaty, was dependent on cultivating state nationalism (interviews with D. Iskhakov 2009; Khakimov 2009). With its Mufti allied with nationalists who maintained a vision of Tatarstan as the Tatars' independent homeland, DUMRT in essence had become an oppositional organization rather than an institution that fulfilled its envisaged purpose of contributing to Tatarstan's regime of territorial legitimation (Murphy 2005). Complicating matters was the fact that DUMES,

[68] Bairamova's grievances – accounting for her rejection of Jadidism in late 1996 – were undoubtedly compounded by the example of Chechnya, which had recently come out victorious in its war with Russia. In April of that year, as the battle for Grozny reached its pitch, Bairamova announced at a press conference that she awaited a phone call from the Chechen leader Dzhokar Dudaev. As *Vecherniaia Kazan'* (*Evening Kazan*) reported, "An interesting situation has arisen. Now two people in Tatarstan – the president and the leader of the national opposition – are ready to talk directly with the Chechen general. Mintimer Shaimiev will recommend the 'Model of Tatarstan' to Chechnya – negotiations with the federal authorities, a treaty with Moscow, and a special status. Bairamova, on the other hand, wants to say that the 'Tatarstani Model' is in no way appropriate, that the Chechens have the right to independence, for which they paid with in blood" (Chernobrovkina 1996, 1).

as of late 1997 still claiming jurisdiction over approximately 10 percent of the mosques in Tatarstan,[69] stood in opposition both to the political establishment – fundamentally set against its pretensions to sovereignty – and the leadership of DUMRT.[70]

Facing these challenges to the post-treaty territorial status quo, Shaimiev decreed that a "unifying" election would be held at the Muslim Congress of Tatarstan scheduled for February 1998, meaning that afterward all mosques in Tatarstan would be placed under the jurisdiction of a single Spiritual Board (Shaimiev 1998, 3). In so doing, he put forth a favored candidate, Gusman Iskhakov, a more pliant imam and a conservative traditionalist who had developed good relations with Tatarstan's political elite. To ensure his candidate's victory, Shaimiev, first, reactivated the established relationships between district heads and imams at local mosques, the former influencing the vote of the latter.[71] Second, a significant number of delegates who were unquestionably loyal to Mufti Galiullin (members of *Ittifak* in particular) were excluded from the Congress (Todres 1998, 3). Third, the president also promised material incentives for a *loyal* DUMRT (Shaimiev 1998), including a new headquarters in central Kazan and greater financial support for Islamic education –items that had not been provided under the confrontational leadership of Mufti Galiullin.

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[69] According to the Council for Religious Affairs of Tatarstan, in December 1997, of the 769 registered Muslim communities (*makhallas*), 599 were affiliated with DUMRT, 60 sided with DUMES, and 110 were unaffiliated (cited in Adrakhmanov and Mavrina 1999, 85-87).

[70] Muftis Galiullin and Tadjutdin, since DUMRT's 1992 secession from DUMES, maintained a highly antagonistic, even slanderous, relationship that was in no way hidden from the public.

[71] This is supported by several newspaper reports (e.g. Todres 1998; Sanin 1998; Vetlugin 1998) and interview subjects. As one observer attested, "The heads of local administrations explained to the congress deputies (brought to Kazan in buses hired by the republic's administration) that they should vote for Gusman Iskhakov" (Tul'skii 2004b). As Mukhametshin added, some 200 mosques were under construction in the republic at the time – none wanting to risk the revocation of their funding (Mukhametshin 2005, 145).

Gusman Iskhakov's victory at the February 1998 Muslim Congress was a foregone conclusion, as Damir Iskhakov, who since 1995 had served as a bridge between DUMRT and Shaimiev, made clear in a surprisingly frank newspaper interview on the eve of the election. In the interview he identified three reasons why Tatarstan needed a single Spiritual Board under the leadership of a Mufti loyal to the state:

> First, if all [mosques] are brought under the roof of a unified Spiritual Board of Tatarstan, quite a solid organization will be created that would include 700 [Muslim] communities. Practically every village has a mosque. Second, the republic somehow needs to reach out to Islamic countries. We work in Iraq, Iran, and in many instances the pioneers of those contacts are Muslim leaders. Throughout the world cultural expansion is connected with economics. But for that, as you understand, we need a capable organization. Third, there exists a direct interest in the realm of politics. For example, elections for the presidents of Russia and Tatarstan are right around the corner (interview in Galiamov 1998, 3).

Thus, the Shaimiev government came to view DUMRT as a state institution of great importance, foremost for the performance of Tatarstan's sovereignty, not necessarily the development of Tatar culture. Controlling all mosques in the region, the Spiritual Board could serve as the diplomatic vanguard in Tatarstan's state-to-state relations with Muslim countries and, perhaps even more importantly, would help ensure Kazan's status as the capital of a quasi-state within the Russian Federation.

After the Muslim Congress, Shaimiev admitted that his hand had been "particularly visible" in engineering the election of his favored candidate.[72] The Tatar

[72] Twelve candidates competed for the votes of the 718 delegates in attendance. Iskhakov won 430 votes (60 percent), while Galiullin received 111 votes (15 percent) (DUMRT 1999, 29).

president, however, was less brazen in justifying his actions, claiming social – not state – interests were at stake:

> Although separate from state, religion is not separate from society. Therefore the state recognizes the necessity of constructive cooperation with religion in solving many socially important problems. Foremost that means the *consolidation of society* (Shaimiev 1998, 3, emphasis added).

Prefiguring Putin's discourse on the *konsolidatsiia* of a "multinational Russian people," Shaimiev viewed Islam as an independent political force – as it had become under the influence of the Tatar national movement – as a threat to his consolidation of a "multinational Tatarstani people." This message was repeated by the government's mouthpiece newspaper, *Respublika Tatarstan* (*The Republic of Tatarstan*), which claimed that Shaimiev "in his interactions with religious confessions proceeds from the principles of serving the people … state organs and the Muftiate of Tatarstan will promote the unity of the people, the preservation of stability and peace in society" (Tatar-Inform 1998, 1). With the state and the new Mufti together claiming to serve the unity of the people – the "multinational Tatarstani people," not the Tatar nation – the unified Muftiate abandoned its previous dedication to religious reform and Western-oriented modernization, and officially rededicated itself to the promotion of a so-called "traditional" Tatar Islam based on fealty "to the religious school (*madhhab*) of Imam Abu Hanifa" (Ustav 1998, 38-39).

The next section of this chapter examines how this "traditional" Islam is represented by DUMRT and how it has been influenced by Russia's political-territorial transformation brought about under Putin's watch. Prior to engaging in this discussion,

however, it is important to underline that the 1998 reformation of the Muftiate signaled an end to the direct influence of the Tatar national movement in the institution's development. That the Kazan-based government was able to engineer these changes to DUMRT without a significant backlash is indicative of both the national movement's success and its declining importance. The creation of DUMRT was only one part of a much larger program spearheaded by TOTs, *Ittifak,* and other organizations to redevelop Tatar national culture and to bolster Tatarstan's sovereignty claim. Although the latter of these twin goals was only nebulously formalized in the 1994 bilateral treaty, Tatarstan, nonetheless, in many ways operated as an independent state in the latter part of the 1990s. As for the former, the Tatar language was taught universally in the republic's schools as a required course, and Tatarstan appeared to be on the way to accomplishing the state goal of functional bilingualism (Davis et al. 2000; Cashaback 2008). In short, although mosques had multiplied throughout the region, the Tatar national revival proceeded apace through a variety of secular institutions. With its primary goals seemingly having been met, the influence of the Tatar national movement was already in sharp decline by the latter part of the 1990s (D. Iskhakov 1997, 105-118).

Nonetheless, in the wake of the DUMRT's 1998 unification, TOTs, although still loyal to Shaimiev's policy of "gradualism," issued a guarded warning about the consequences of trying to divorce Islam from politics and the Tatar national movement:

> The history of Tatar culture … is in the closest way connected with Islam. Therefore Islam cannot be cut off from national politics, from the national movement. Islam is tightly intertwined and must be involved with them [i.e. national politics and the national movement]. What's more, *pure Islam* itself may even move the national movement forward. Whatever

> happens, *pure Islam* must fight for the national and state independence of the Tatar people (TOTs 1998, 94, emphasis added).

Although TOTs, like Bairamova earlier, offered no explanation of the concept of "pure Islam," the implication here was that, in the event that the Tatars were deprived of their aspirations of a nation-state, an Islam of a much different character than reformist Jadidism, or notions of Euro-Islam, would come to the fore of the national movement. As will be seen in the following section, this was a prescient warning.

DUMRT and the Borders of Faith in a Period of Recentralization

The 1998 unification of DUMRT signified the institution's definitive break with the Tatar national movement that spearheaded its formation earlier in the decade. Since its unification the Spiritual Board has firmly dedicated itself to propagating a so-called "traditional" Tatar Islam based on strict adherence to the Hanafi *madhhab*, the school of Islamic jurisprudence followed by the Tatars' ancestors since the religion was introduced in the region in the tenth century and the type of Islam the original Jadidists, along with the neo-Jadidists in the 1990s, sought to reform and modernize (D. Iskhakov 1997a). Under a law titled "On the Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations," passed by Tatarstan's parliament in June 1999, DUMRT was designated as the "single centralized religious organization" for all of the republic's Muslim communities (Zakon 1999, Article 10, Point 5). Consequently, Tatar traditionalism as supported by the conservative Hanafi theologians of DUMRT has become the sole "official" Islam in Tatarstan (Makarov and Mukhametshin 2003), communicated and reinforced via a vertically integrated network that encompasses all mosques and Islamic education centers in the republic. The Spiritual Board's support for neo-traditionalism was established just

before the renewal of warfare in Chechnya, which heralded a sharp reversal in the political-territorial context that, in turn, has fundamentally shaped the meaning of "official" Islam in Tatarstan today.

DUMRT and the Borders of "Official" Islam

Unlike the neo-Jadidism inchoately formulated by the national intelligentsia for much of the 1990s, "traditional" Tatar Islam as advocated by DUMRT today demands active observance and practice of prescribed religious principles and rituals. Yet the religious requirements of "official" Islam do not detract from its national orientation. If reform-minded Jadidism was cast foremost as an attribute of national culture by the TOTs leadership and first *Ulema* Council, the post-1998 Spiritual Board represents Islam as the very core of the Tatar nation. Supreme Mufti Gusman Iskhakov made this point clear following his election in February 1998: "Islam, tightly interwoven with our customs and the moral codes of our people, defines our national identity" (G. Iskhakov 1998, 27). In this understanding, religion and national identity cannot be separated – Islam is the very foundation of Tatar national identity, not simply a cultural attribute of the nation. "Traditional" Tatar Islam, as denoted in its very name, is an ethnic religion.

The national movement of the 1990s hailed Jadidism for its ostensible modernizing qualities, which they associated with Europe, their geo-civilizational orientation and model for Tatarstan. In contrast, the unified Spiritual Board emphasizes the Tatars' specific local and regional geo-history, which its leaders claim has formed a distinctive Tatar Islam over the centuries. Following his election, Mufti Iskhakov stressed that Tatars have developed as a unique Muslim people, their identity and religion

fundamentally having been shaped by their relative isolation from the broader Islamic world and their adaptation over the centuries to living within a non-Muslim state (G. Iskhakov 1998, 26). Because the Hanafi *madhhab* is distinguished by its "especial tolerance toward other religions and the capacity to coexist with *culturally dissimilar peoples*," the Mufti contended, traditional Tatar Islam is "suited to our local conditions" (Ibid., 27, emphasis added). The Tatars' ancestors could recognize the authority of a Christian ruler and dwell among Orthodox Russians, he said, but only their strict observance of long-established religious traditions saved them from total assimilation by a "culturally dissimilar people."

The new Mufti's emphasis on the tolerant nature of Tatar traditionalism was codified in DUMRT's 1998 charter. A primary goal of the organization was "preserving inter-confessional and inter-national [i.e. interethnic] peace and accord in society" (Ustav 1998, 38). This aim was calibrated to complement Shaimiev's concept of a "multinational Tatarstani people" (Derrick 2008, 81-83), thereby enhancing the legitimacy of "sovereign" Tatarstan and contributing to the maintenance of the territorial status quo formalized in the 1994 treaty with Moscow. Whereas the Tatar president formerly discussed mutual tolerance as expressed between the Tatar and Russian "peoples" [*narody*] in the republic, following DUMRT's unification, he shifted focus to the tolerance he insisted exists between Islam and Orthodoxy in the region, claiming that "the kind of inter-confessional relations that have formed in Tatarstan are a model for the rest of Russia" (quoted in Zargishiev 1999, 4). Thus, the Spiritual Board and state synchronized discursive borders of inclusion/exclusion, framing social relations within the republic as qualitatively different (better) than outside in the rest of Russia,

reinforcing notions of a certain tolerance arising from a centuries-long shared history and geography between Muslim Tatars and Orthodox Russians within Tatarstan.

DUMRT's communication of tolerant traditionalism was originally intended to counter previously institutionalized representations of Tatar Islam defined against an innately imperial Russian Other and thereby assist the political leadership in cultivating a state nationalism that would contribute to Tatarstan's pretensions to sovereign statehood. With the political-territorial recentralization of the Russian Federation effected under Putin's watch, however, the Spiritual Board's message of simple tolerance has shifted to one of mutual respect and even a significant degree of similarity between the two main religions traditionally practiced in the Middle Volga region. In my interview with first deputy Mufti Valiulla Iakupov, for instance, he discussed the "experience of peaceful coexistence of the two traditional religions" – Russian Orthodoxy and what he called "Orthodox Islam" (*ortodoksal'nyi Islam*) – as being characterized by

> not mere tolerance, but in fact deep respect for each other. The two religions cooperate in Tatarstan, complement each other. Tatars and Russians have lived side by side in the Volga area for centuries, our religions have evolved in a close dialogue with each other. And therefore our faiths actually have a lot in common (interview with Iakupov 2009).[73]

A short distance separated the discursive *konsolidatsiia* of a "multinational Tatarstani people" shaped by Shaimiev after the 1994 treaty and Putin's discourse of the *konsolidatsiia* of a "multinational Russian people" who are united by the fate of sharing "religions traditional to Russia" (Putin 2002). In short, "official" Islam in Tatarstan

[73] This message was repeated in several interviews with Tatar imams at mosques. For his part, Iakupov has gone so far to identify "theological reasons for the compatibility of Islam and Orthodoxy in Tatarstan" (Iakupov 2006, 433-435).

today, by the deputy Mufti's own accord, is in essence a rescaled version of the "Orthodox" Islam promoted by the Spiritual Board in Tsarist and Soviet Russia.

DUMRT and the Exclusionary Borders of "Unofficial" Islam

Considering that DUMRT is legally recognized as the "single centralized religious organization" in Tatarstan and the institution supports only Tatar Islam based on the Hanafi *madhhab*, all other Islamic movements in the republic are *de facto* understood as "unofficial." However, the most important target of the Spiritual Board's censure is what most often is referred to as "Wahhabism." DUMRT representatives decry Wahhabism as an aggressive "sect" that, in its pretensions to universalism, poses a distinct threat to the inter-confessional harmony in Tatarstan and, moreover, to Tatar culture itself. As Iakupov, who has been most public in making the case for neo-traditionalism, asserts,

> Wahhabites do not simply consider themselves the most perfect exponents of the Muslim religious idea, but they also aspire to make all other Muslims like themselves. If certain Muslims do not wish to become like them, then they at least attempt to make sure that Muslim Spiritual Boards are managed by their allies. This aggressive intra-confessional proselytism is opposed by the scattered masses of traditional Muslims. Tatar culture is connected with a specific form of spiritual life – Hanafi Islam. If our Islam is destroyed, then our culture itself is destroyed (Iakupov 2006, 367).

During an interview, Iakupov discussed how "Wahhabites" and "Salafists" (he used the two terms interchangeably) have criticized as *bid'ah* (heretical innovation) religious practices long held by Tatars, such as the (informal) institution of female clergy; the tradition of praying and reading the Koran at the graves of relatives on the third, seventh,

and fortieth days after the death of a loved one; and the annual pilgrimage, popularly called a "little *hajj*," to the historical ruins of the city of Bolgar, where the Tatars' ancestors first officially accepted Islam in the tenth century (interview with Iakupov 2009).

Iakupov went on to blame the Saudi Arabian Embassy in Moscow for drawing on its considerable resources to finance the spread of their Wahhabi ideology among the *umma* of Tatarstan. He cited the presence of Saudi-backed "extremist" literature that, in spite of its illegal status in Russia, is easily obtainable throughout Tatarstan. The Mufti also condemned Saudi Arabia and a host of other Arab countries for their "foreign inference" in the lives of the republic's *umma*, employing methods such as sending young Tatar Muslims abroad to receive an Islamic education;[74] upon their return home, he contended, these young men sow seeds of discord in mosques in villages and cities throughout the republic by "forcing a foreign religious ideology" on Tatars accustomed to their own Islamic traditions (interview with Iakupov 2009).

Although Wahhabism receives the lion's share of DUMRT's censure, the institution's leaders also denounce a host of other "unofficial" Islamic "sects," including the Tablighi Jamaat,[75] the Nursi movement,[76] *Hizb ut-Tahrir* ("The Islamic Party of

[74] According to the Council of Religious Affairs of Tatarstan, in the 1990s about 200 Muslims from Tatarstan received a religious education abroad (Nabiev 2006, 17). In 2001, 60 Muslims from Tatarstan were studying theology abroad in the following countries: Egypt (37 students), Saudi Arabia (16), Syria (4), Turkey (2), Tunisia (2), Yemen (2), Malaysia (1), Sudan (1), and Libya (1) (Nabiev 2002, 198).

[75] Originally started in India in the 1920s, the Tablighi Jamaat is an Islamic missionary and revival movement that seeks to bring a spiritual awakening among Muslims throughout the world. It is banned in Russia as an "extremist group."

[76] The Nursi movement, started by Said Nursi in post-World War II Turkey and updated today by Fethullah Gülen, who lives in the US, seeks the modernization of Islam. With the fall of the Soviet Union, its leaders set as a primary goal the re-Islamization of their "Turkic brothers" in Central Asia and Russia. The movement, along with the works of Nursi, is banned in Russia as "extremist."

Liberation"),[77] and numerous others.[78] However, one "unofficial" Islamic movement in particular in Tatarstan has been the target of highly personal attacks: neo-Jadidism or, as it is alternately known, Euro-Islam – the same type of Islam that was favored by DUMRT from its formation in 1992 until the institution's 1998 unification. In a pamphlet issued by DUMRT in 2003, Iakupov denounced the Tatar "Islamic reformists" for their uncritical faith in "progress" and unwarranted embrace of Western ideas. He characterized their promotion of *ijtihad* as a "battle against religion" because the independent interpretation of the Koran and Sunnah, in essence, absolves Tatars of their traditional spiritual commitments and active observation (Iakupov 2003, 29). Elsewhere, Iakupov has implicated Rafael Khakimov, who popularized the idea of Euro-Islam while serving as Shaimiev's top political adviser in the 1990s, in the spread of Islamic fundamentalism in Tatarstan, writing, "Let's not forget that Wahhabites also reject the *madhhabs*" (Iakupov 2006, 39).

Keeping the Mosque Clean for "Official" Islam

"Official" Islam is today defined primarily against Wahhabism and other foreign "sects." However, nowhere in materials from the 1998 Muslim Congress were concerns for "nonnative" Islam or "extremism" mentioned (DUMRT 1999). Neo-traditionalism was defined foremost against previous representations generated by the national movement, not against "alien" religious dogma. Muslim missionaries (and others) from Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and other Muslim countries had been present in the republic for

[77] Founded in Jerusalem in the 1950s, *Hizb ut-Tahrir* is a Sunni Muslim political party that seeks to restore the caliphate through nonviolent means. It is banned as an "extremist group" in Russia.

[78] DUMRT issued a pamphlet in 2003 titled "Unofficial Islam in Tatarstan" that lists 14 "sects" it considers "unofficial" (Iakupov 2003).

much of the previous decade.[79] Yet their activities attracted little or no censure. In fact, their presence was generally viewed positively, as evidence of the Tatars "restoring lost cultural and economic ties with countries of the East" (Musina 1997, 217). In the 1990s the appellations "extremist" and "nonnative" were applied mainly to neo-Protestant "sects" to which increasing numbers of "genetic Muslims" were drawn (Baltanova 1997, 192-193). This is not to say that Tatarstan was free of Wahhabism or other forms of Islamic fundamentalism. In fact, by the latter half of the 1990s, according to Mukhametshin, "You could meet adherents of that doctrine among religious figures, teachers, and students in *medresses*" (interview with Mukhametshin 2009).[80] Nonetheless, Islamic fundamentalism appeared to be of no concern to state authorities or DUMRT.[81]

Wahhabism became a salient feature of social and political discourse in Tatarstan only in August 1999, when then-Prime Minister Putin launched the second Chechen war. The presence of some foreign militants, including Arab *mujahideen*, fighting against

[79] The presence of missionaries in part was a byproduct of Kazan's sovereignty project. The republic drew on its Islamic identity, according to Sharafutdinova, to "develop special relations with Turkey, Egypt, the UAE and Jordan" (Sharafutdinova 2003, 618). She identifies "cultural, religious and political factors as driving forces behind these contacts" (Ibid.), since Turkey, Egypt, and other Muslim states, out of cultural and religious affinity, took Tatarstan's claims to statehood more seriously than non-Muslim countries. Diplomacy with Muslim countries included cultural exchanges bringing foreign missionaries to the republic and allowing Muslims from Tatarstan to pursue Islamic education abroad.

[80] Followers of more literalist versions of Islam were active – and open in their activity – in Tatarstan by the late *perestroika* era. For example, a group of Muslims calling itself *Saf Islam* – "Pure Islam" – was public about its fundamentalist beliefs. The group's publications from the early 1990s contained assertions such as "the only true path on Earth is the path of the Koran. That path has been revealed by the 'Creator' himself, and those who do not follow it are 'lost people'" (quoted in D. Iskhakov 1992, 40). *Saf Islam* insisted that the Koran could be interpreted by any educated Muslim; *madhhabs* were unnecessary. The group's concrete goals were essentially democratic, including the election of Muftis by all Muslims in the republic, not appointed by the state, and the election of imams by members of each mosque, not appointed by the Muftiate, as was the Soviet convention (Ibid., 40-41). Freely propagating its beliefs in the early 1990s, *Saf Islam* attracted few followers and, as records indicate, no public reprobation (Mukhametshin 1994, 112-113).

[81] This assertion is based on my broad reading of Kazan-based press and other secondary materials, along with interviews with key informants.

Russian troops allowed Moscow to frame the conflict as a campaign to liberate Chechens from the clutch of international Islamic extremism and thereby restore the country's territorial integrity (see generally Ware 2005). The proliferation of Wahhabism in the North Caucasus, along with the justifications proffered by Moscow in its bombardment of Grozny, served as a clarion warning to DUMRT and the political establishment of "sovereign" Tatarstan to cleanse the republic's Muslim communities of, as Mufti Iskhakov put it weeks after the renewed warfare in Chechnya, "alien, nonnative doctrines" that have the potential of "destroying society's traditional soil" (G. Iskhakov 1999, 18). Since the start of the second Chechen war, accusations of Wahhabism have become a political weapon of sorts, deployed first by opponents of DUMRT outside of Tatarstan[82] and eventually by different factions within Tatarstan's Muslim community itself.[83] Anxieties of "Chechenization" and the political power in allegations of being friendly to religious fundamentalism endure as drivers behind DUMRT's policing of the republic's mosques.

DUMRT's campaign to keep "nonnative" versions of Islam out of mosques under its purview, however, is not simply a prophylactic measure. With the Putin-era political-territorial recentralization having denuded the republic of much of its formal autonomy,

[82] For instance, just weeks after renewed warfare in Chechnya, Farid Salman, a high-ranking imam associated with DUMES who was pushed out of Tatarstan following the unification of DUMRT, sent a letter to *Rossiiskaiia Gazeta* (*The Russian Gazette*), the official newspaper of the Russian parliament in which he accused DUMRT of "sowing Wahhabism under the guise of 'traditional Islam'" (Salman 1999). Tatar nationalism, he charged, was fusing with radical Islamism. Salman blamed these and multiple other allegations on Mufti Iskhakov, whom he characterized as a Saudi agent. He painted Kazan-based politicians as collaborators, since, having recently passed legislation making DUMRT the sole centralized Islamic organization of Tatarstan, they gave Iskhakov and his foreign sponsors free range to spread their "alien" ideologies. As an opponent to Tatarstan's pretensions to sovereign statehood, Salman found a willing audience in Moscow – and a press eager to publish his allegations – and has repeated accusations of Tatarstan's "Wahhabization" in a number of forums, including in my interview with him in 2009.

[83] High profile proponents of neo-Jadidism, or Euro-Islam, have targeted various high-ranking clergy and leaders of DUMRT's central apparatus with accusations of Wahhabism over the past decade.

the temple is seen today as one of the last bastions of the revival of Tatar culture. The leadership of the Spiritual Board is insistent that Tatar remain the language of "official" Islam in the mosques of Tatarstan (interviews with Iakupov 2009; G. Iskhakov 2009),[84] as has historically been the case in the region. All *medresses* in Tatarstan, in addition to providing a religious education, also require *shakirds*[85] to take courses on the history of the Tatar people, Tatar language, and Tatar literature (Khabutdinov 2005). Additionally, many mosques now offer similar courses for non-*shakirds*. Because the number of Tatar-language schools has precipitously dropped, as has the number of hours devoted to the Tatar language in mixed schools in the republic,[86] "traditional" Tatar Islam is once again said to "fulfill the task of preserving the Tatar nation" from all-out assimilation (Iakupov 2006, 25), much as the religion did in the Tsarist era.

The Spiritual Board's campaign against "unofficial" Islam also aids in fulfilling a highly important political function by ensuring that Tatarstan, although disabused of its pretensions to sovereign statehood, retains a significant degree of informal autonomy in its relations with the Moscow. Since DUMRT seceded from DUMES in 1992, more than 40 Muslim Spiritual Boards have been formed in Russia, which can be divided into two categories: regional and all-Russian. DUMRT is the only regional Spiritual Board – its territoriality replicating that of the republic – not subject to one of the two main all-

[84] As a number of observers have contended, the language of "unofficial" versions of Islam in Tatarstan (and other parts of Russia) most often is Russian (interviews with Garipov 2009; Zagidullin 2009; Mukhametshin 2010; see also Arkhangel'sakia 2003 for an extended discussion on the topic). My observations provide some confirmation for this assertion. In the two (of more than 50) mosques in Kazan where the primary language is Russian, Friday prayers and lectures were generally led by Arabs, clearly not versed in "traditional" Tatar Islam. Although missionaries from Saudi Arabia and other Muslim countries are essentially banned from Tatarstan, a number of religiously trained Arabs study in universities in Kazan or have married locally.

[85] A *shakird* is a student of a *medressah*.

[86] Additionally, the Tatar language is being squeezed out of state-sponsored broadcast media.

Russian Muftiates. Controlling some 1,250 mosques – more than one-quarter of all Muslim communities in Russia – DUMRT is the largest Spiritual Board in Russia (Silant'ev 2008, 217). Thus, unquestionably loyal to the Kazan-based government, DUMRT, in cultivating a tolerant "traditional" Tatar Islam, contributes to a relationship between Russia and Tatarstan that can be described as a "confessional confederation" that, unlike in the Tsarist era, today is surely territorial. While no longer the capital of "sovereign" Tatarstan, Kazan can rightly claim the title of Russia's "Muslim capital" (Garaev 2009), ensuring itself a significant role in the country's push to expand diplomatic and economic relations with Muslim countries.[87]

To ensure that mosques remain spaces where "official" Islam is followed, DUMRT relies on a number of reinforcement mechanisms. First, since its 1998 reformation the Spiritual Board maintains a close relationship with the Council for Religious Affairs (Nabiev 2002), a state agency that, much as was the case in the Soviet era, is associated with internal security and intelligence forces and retains its duties in monitoring mosques in the republic. Second, the territorial-administrative arrangement of the Spiritual Board aids in reinforcing the dictates of the institution's central apparatus. As discussed earlier in the chapter, each of the republic's mosques is arranged within one of 45 regional subdivisions (*mukhtasibaty*), each of which is headed by an imam-*mukhsatibat*. Each of the 45 regional subdivisions is in turn arranged within one of nine

[87] A notable example is the role played by Kazan in seeking Russia's membership in the Organization of Islamic Congress (OIC). According to Khakimov, he and Shaimiev had worked with Putin to arrange the Russian president's attendance at OIC 2003 summit, at which Russia was admitted as an observer status. Tatars from Kazan accompanied Putin in the visit. OIC representatives since have made numerous visits to Kazan.

meso-scale regions (*khaziiats*),[88] each headed by an imam-*khaziiat* who reports directly to the Supreme Mufti of the central apparatus (DUMRT 2011). Third, DUMRT reinforces "official" Islam through accreditation and licensing procedures. Since 2000 all religious schools in the region have been subject to the centralized institution (Mukhametshin 2005), which has implemented a standardized educational program that produces imams and mullahs exclusively trained in the traditions of the Hanafi *madhhab*. Although each Islamic community has the right to select its own clergy, each imam and mullah must first be approved by the central apparatus of DUMRT (interview with Iakupov 2009). In addition to policing, administrative, and accrediting oversight, the Spiritual Board also produces an array of Islamic literature that helps communicate and reinforce preferred religious expressions and practices.

The Moderate Face of Fundamentalism

The unification of DUMRT and its subsequent promotion of "official" Islam have been accompanied by a noticeable upswing in mosque attendance. A significant portion of Tatar society is being re-traditionalized (or a new conservative identity is being created). Yet in being "openly at war with local Salafist movements" (Laurelle 2007, 26), the leaders of the Spiritual Board, along with the authorities who support them, not only close the Tatar *umma* to new and potentially innovative ideas, but their marginalization of "unofficial" forms of the faith may be short-sighted and potentially even dangerous. I

[88] The meso-scale regions were created after the 1998 reformation. Originally numbering seven, the *khaziiaty* recently were rearranged and increased in number to nine. This most recent reorganization appears to be a connected to the April 2011 election of the new Supreme Mufti, Il'dus Faizov, who rose to DUMRT's top post promising a complete "de-Wahhabization" of Tatarstan's *umma* (Suleimanov 2011). The election of Faizov set off separatist sentiment among Islamic communities in the Al'met'evsk region, leading to the imam-*mukhsatib* and imam-*khaziiat* overseeing the region to be accused of fostering "Wahhabism" and, subsequently, being replaced by the new Supreme Mufti with new, loyal imams.

spent several months attending Friday sermons and lectures led by a Jordanian national named Kamal Al Zandt,[89] a Salafist whose speaking engagements in Kazan draw large crowds.[90] Nothing in his sermons or lectures could be construed as "radical," "extremist," or even overtly political.[91] However, in the atmosphere created by DUMRT today, his popularity, based on the simple – what to the uninitiated would seem innocuous – message of Islam's universalism, is perceived as a threat.[92] His invocation of the popular *hadith* about the *umma* being divided into 73 sects, but only one of them being true is anathema to the Muftiate and its propagation of an ethnic Islam. The notion, as Al Zandt communicated to me, that "it is necessary to Islamize the nation, not nationalize Islam" puts him in opposition, even without advocating any form of proselytism, to the authorities (interview with Al Zandt 2009) – a position unnecessarily imposed on him, along with his followers, in the current environment.

During my fieldwork, young Salafist men with whom I developed close acquaintanceships complained of harassment by local authorities, most often consisting

[89] Al Zandt moved to Kazan in the early 1990s to study medicine and, after marrying locally, has lived there since, practicing medicine, in addition to giving sermons and lectures. He and other Arab students began holding prayers at the historical Burnai Mosque in central Kazan, which had been used as a music school under the Soviet authorities. Today the Burnai Mosque is the only mosque in Kazan where Russian language dominates and followers of "unofficial" Islam freely gather. When Al Zandt delivers Friday sermons, it is not uncommon that people flow out into the streets.

[90] He is said to be the most popular speaker on Islam in Kazan, although he is not a formal clergy member.

[91] In addition to attending his lectures and sermons in person, I have read a collection of his writings and watched a number of video recordings (which sell well at the small bookstore located on the grounds of the Burnai Mosque). Again, I have detected nothing "extremist," "radical," or even overtly political.

[92] During my fieldwork, Al Zandt regularly gave religious-based lectures at the Eniler Mosque, associated with the Russian Islamic University (RIU) in Kazan. As was the case with his sermons at the Burnai Mosque, his lectures at the Eniler Mosque attracted capacity-level crowds. His popularity, especially at a mosque associated with RIU, drew criticism from the authorities. Since my departure from Kazan, I have been informed, Al Zandt has been barred from giving lectures at the mosque.

of being stopped and aggressively questioned by police for no apparent reason.[93] While undoubtedly strident in their religious convictions, these young men contended that it was the authorities who politicize Islam, not followers of "unofficial" Islam. As Abdullah,[94] an ethnic Russian convert in his mid-twenties, complained, "Our Muftis and most of the clergy are more concerned with politics than with Islam." His criticism of DUMRT's leaders for being "corrupt" and their close association with the government was echoed by a number of my other acquaintances who could be classified as Salafists.[95] Contrary to assertions made by the authorities, these young men did not advocate the politicization of Islam, but instead wished for its *de-politicization* in Tatarstan.

Islam and the Changing Nationalist Discourse

For the nationalist organizations *Ittifak* and TOTs, which led the formation of DUMRT in 1992, the political-territorial transformation that has been effected over the past decade has served to intensify the Islamist register to which they had begun shifting by the latter part of the 1990s. In my interview with Fauiziia Bairamova, who remains the highly outspoken leader of *Ittifak*, she claimed that

> Allah is punishing the Tatars for our lack of faith, for not being good Muslims. We did not fight for our independence. Instead we believed in a treaty, we believed in Euro-Islam, not in *pure Islam* [*chistyi Islam*], not in the Koran. And what did sovereignty give us? Absolutely nothing … For

[93] This is especially true of those with large beards and other markers that are associated with Wahhabism in Russia, as I have witnessed in my walks with such men in Kazan.

[94] This is a pseudonym. However, it should be noted that most ethnic Russians take a "Muslim" names following their conversion. For more on ethnic Russian converts to Islam in Tatarstan, see Derrick (2009b).

[95] It should be stated that Muslims, at least in the context of contemporary Tatarstan, who generally would be classified by others as "Salafists" or "Wahhabites" are unlikely to classify themselves as such. Rather, they are more likely to call themselves simply "Muslims," without any qualification. This is at least in part due to the official censure of "unofficial" Islam.

> Russians, Russia must be an Orthodox power [*pravoslavnaia derzhava*]. Islam has no place in Russia … If we Tatars want independence, we must be *true Muslims* and fight for our freedom, for our statehood (interview with Bairamova 2009).

In Bairamova's formulation, only a deep spiritual renewal of Tatars – turning to "pure Islam" and acting as "true Muslims" – will result in their own statehood. She insisted that, under the current DUMRT, Tatars cannot be "true Muslims" because the Spiritual Board's leaders are "agents of the empire … calling Muslims to reconcile themselves to living peacefully under the rule of infidels [*kafirs*] when they should be calling us to struggle against them."[96]

Bairamova's transformation from a "radical nationalist" to a "radical Islamist" was already well underway before the unification of DUMRT and the subsequent recentralization of Russia, reflective of her grievances over the terms of the 1994 bilateral treaty. TOTs, which had supported Shaimiev's policy of "gradualism," shifted to more of an Islamist register only after the federal center had unambiguously launched its campaign against Tatarstan's claim to sovereignty. This change is witnessed in a resolution accepted at the organization's seventh Congress of 2002. In stating that "religion and the national movement are elements of a single social system, tightly intertwined, and complement each other," TOTs repeated earlier assertions, but the declaration went on to urge Muslims

[96] In my interview with Bairamova, she used the Russian words *bor'ba* ("fight" or "struggle") and *borot'sia* ("to fight" or "to struggle"), but never mentioned *Jihad* as she had in some of her writings (in Tatar) earlier in the decade. While she has mainly used *Jihad* in its "greater" meaning (i.e. an internal struggle), she has also used the term in its "lesser" meaning: "To defend oneself, and especially for Muslims mired in a difficult plight, Allah permits the use of physical force, even views it as pleasing and a required act for Muslims. A Muslim must always be ready for *Jihad*, especially when Muslims live among infidels. We Tatars, having fallen into slavery more than 500 years ago, in order to free ourselves from that slavery, must fight, conduct Jihad, in order to achieve freedom" (quoted in D. Iskhakov 2002, 125).

> to fight actively for freedom and independence of peoples and nations in this world, not in the life hereafter. Those believers who fall for the false exhortations of the *allies of colonial policies* commit a great sin, *attempting to maintain neutrality*, not differentiating good from evil, just preparing themselves for the next life. … [A]ccording to the canons of Islam, only the Muslim who in this life actively fights for his rights and the rights of his people for freedom and independence will be permitted entrance through the heavenly gates. … The fight for national and state sovereignty of the Tatar people and the Republic of Tatarstan is the sacred duty of the Muslim in this life, prescribed to him by the Koran (TOTs 2002, 24).

TOTs offered a thinly veiled denunciation of DUMRT's leaders for being "allies of colonialism" who maintain "neutrality" in the face of perceived injustice, an accusation repeated in a more recent declaration in which the nationalist organization paints the Muftiate as an imperial instrument "for the control of Muslim clergy and the brainwashing of Muslims" (TOTs 2011). Like Bairamova and others in *Ittifak*, TOTs has moved to a position in which negotiations with the "colonial rulers" are now viewed as futile. Only an active fight "in this life" will secure Tatarstan as the Tatars' namesake nation-state; to fight for independence is a "sacred duty" laid out in the Koran. While this argument was framed in a larger struggle going on in the Muslim world, TOTs understands the *umma* as fundamentally divided into distinct peoples and nations, each with a right to its own sovereign homeland. Thus, TOTs' shift to an Islamist register, like Bairamova's, is the result of unfulfilled territorial demands.

While nationalist organizations such as *Ittifak* and TOTs retain only a small fraction of the public support they enjoyed in the early years of Tatarstan's sovereignty

campaign, there is evidence that their changing discourse is indicative of a broader shift in the character of Islam among certain segments of society in the republic. The cities of Naberezhnye Chelny and Al'met'evsk, along with the surrounding areas, were places where the Tatar national movement had its greatest following in the 1990s[97] – today they are recognized by many observers as Tatarstan's most notorious hotbeds of "Wahhabism" (interviews with D. Iskhakov 2009; Garipov 2009; Mukhametshin 2009; see also Suleimanov 2011b).

Concluding Remarks

As seen through this examination and analysis of the Muslim Spiritual Board of Tatarstan, the political-territorial transformation of post-Soviet Russia has influenced the changing character of the Islamic revival in Tatarstan. The creation of DUMRT as an independent institution in the early 1990s was spearheaded by the Tatar national movement in an effort to redevelop Tatar national culture and strengthen Tatarstan's claims to independent statehood. While the redevelopment of Tatar national culture proceeded through secular institutions, the Spiritual Board played a nominal role in society and politics. The Tatars' Islamic revival assumed a distinctly secular character. However, a divide in the national movement over perceptions of Kazan's 1994 bilateral treaty with Moscow led to the politicization of Islam and DUMRT, ultimately leading to the government's intervention in order to maintain the territorial status quo established by

[97] The support for nationalism in these areas to a significant degree can be explained by the cities' recent histories. They are among Tatarstan's newest cities, the result of rapid industrialization in the mid-twentieth century (Naberezhny Chelny, now Tatarstan's second-biggest city with a population of about 500,000, was formed around the Kamaz truck factory – at one time the largest in the world – that opened in 1976; Al'met'evsk, with a population today of about 150,000, was founded only in 1953 as an oil-processing city that brought together Tatars mostly from surrounding villages and Russians from other parts of the country, each group with no previous experience living together.

the treaty. Maintaining the political-territorial status quo became dependent, to a significant degree, on the Muftiate stressing the tolerant nature of "traditional" Tatar Islam and thereby reversing previous representations of Tatar Islam defined in opposition to an inherently colonial Russian Other.

With the recentralization of the Russian Federation that has deprived Tatarstan of much of its formal autonomy, representations by DUMRT of the tolerant nature of neo-traditionalism have shifted to emphasize the harmony and even commonality between Tatar Islam and Russian Orthodoxy. The Spiritual Board's communication and reinforcement of "official" Islam, defined primarily against Islamic fundamentalism, has assumed greater importance as the institution has taken on an increasingly important role in the revival of Tatar national culture and assists the Kazan-based government in maintaining a significant degree of informal autonomy *vis-à-vis* Moscow, a certain territorial "confessional confederation." Although the Islamic revival in Tatarstan has assumed a more conservative character in recent years, various phenomena are at play. On the one hand, DUMRT's promotion of neo-traditional Islam, which demands active observance of religious rituals, is now part and parcel of the preservation and redevelopment of Tatar national culture in Russia. On the other hand, Islamic fundamentalism has become not simply a question of religious belief held by Wahhabites or Salafists insistent on the religion's ostensible universalism – it has become integral to the Tatar nationalist register in which political-territorial grievances are expressed.

CHAPTER V

THE TENSION OF MEMORY:

RECLAIMING THE KAZAN KREMLIN

Prologue: "Day of Memory," October 2009

On a Sunday morning in mid-October of 2009, a few hundred Tatar national activists converge on Kazan to take part in the twentieth annual "Day of Memory" in honor of their ancestors who perished while defending the city in their ultimate defeat by the Muscovite troops of Ivan IV ("Terrible") in 1552. As in years past, the public spectacle begins on Liberty Square with a *namaz* led by an imam. The opening prayer is followed by fiery speeches delivered, in Tatar, by nationalist leaders who address a crowd brandishing a motley array of flags, among them republic's official green-white-red tricolor, the Tatarstani flag with a white crescent and star superimposed, and the solid greed banner of Islam. Many of those gathered clutch placards bearing slogans such as "I Remember 1552" (see Figure 9), "Tatars Return to Your Homeland," and "Holocaust of the Tatar People – 1552." The speeches are followed by a recitation, now in Russian, of this year's "Day of Memory" declaration, decrying centuries of "uninterrupted

Russification and Christianization" that continues today with federal laws rolling back and revoking freedoms previously granted to Russia's ethnic republics such as Tatarstan (quoted in Amelina 2009, 3). The document also includes a laundry list of demands, including two that have appeared in almost every declaration of the past twenty years: the erection of a monument to the Tatars' ancestors who died defending Kazan in 1552 and Moscow's recognition of Tatarstan as a the Tatars' sovereign homeland (Ibid.).

Figure 9: "I Remember 1552" (photo by author).

With the 2009 declaration unanimously agreed, the activists unfurl a banner proclaiming, in Tatar, "Our Goal is Independence!" (see Figure 10). A phalanx of mostly young men carries the banner while the flag carriers, placard bearers, and other participants file in behind. They commence a boisterous march through the city center, first heading south down Pushkin Street. A veteran national activist wields a megaphone and leads the marchers in shouts of *Azatlyk* ("Freedom"). The chants increase in intensity as the crowd turns right and snakes its way westward down Kremlin Street, a stretch of little more than a kilometer that leads them to a team of Muslim clergy. The imams greet the marchers outside the thick white walls of the Kazan Kremlin. One of the robed clergy members commandeers the megaphone,

Figure 10: Activists unfurl a banner proclaiming, in Tatar, "Our Goal is Independence!" before marching on the Kazan Kremlin (photo by author).

starts up an incantation of *Allahu Akbar* ("Allah is Great"), and leads the group through the gates of Spasskaya Tower and into the confines of the fortress, site to what the national activists term "the tragic events of 1552." We are now on hallowed ground, I am told, this kremlin built atop the ruins of what once was an Islamic citadel, the seat of the vanquished Kazan Khanate, the enduring symbol of the Tatars' lost statehood.

The throngs of flags and placards, mixed with loosely coordinated cries of *Allahu Akbar* and *Azatlyk*, startle tourists who have arrived to experience firsthand the landscape they've seen numerous times in ubiquitous panoramic representations – in regional and local newscasts, on souvenirs and miscellany bric-a-brac, in magazines and newspapers, in advertisements of virtually anything connected to Kazan and Tatarstan – that prominently feature the signature onion domes of the sixteenth-century Annunciation

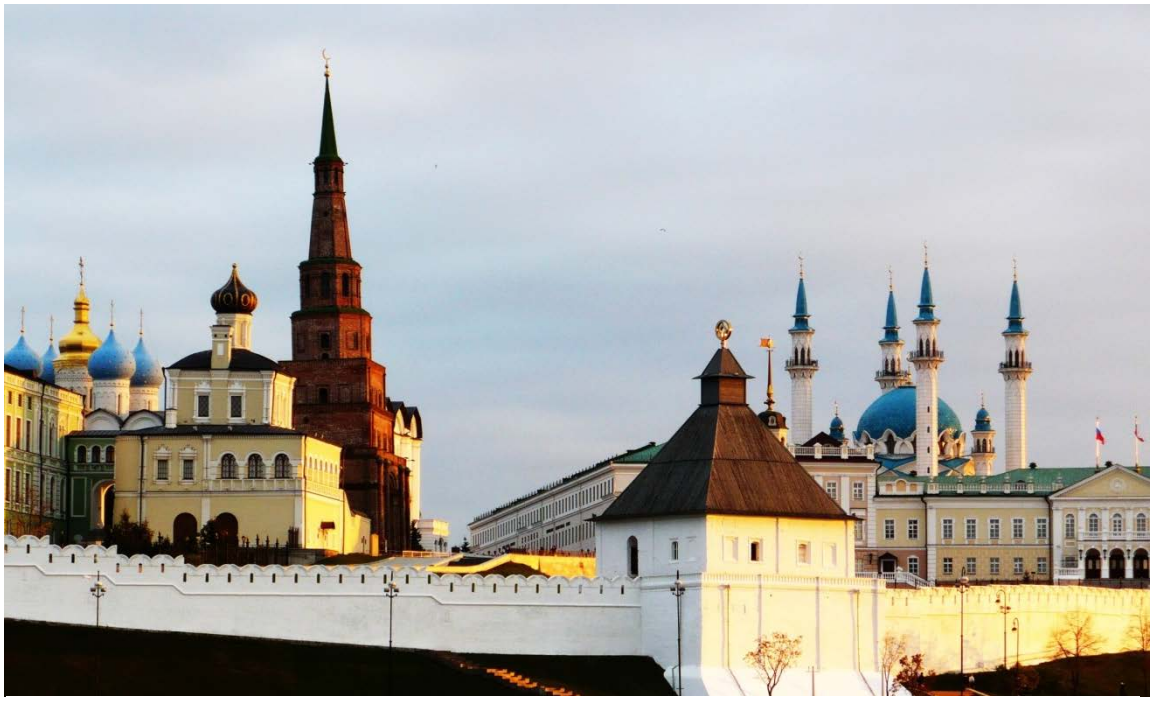

Figure 11: The landscape of the Kazan Kremlin as it is today. Far left is the Annuncation Cathedral. Far right is the Kul-Sharif Mosque. The Siuiumbike Tower stands between them (photo by author).

Cathedral and the minarets of the grand Kul-Sharif Mosque, officially opened in 2005 after a decade of planning and construction. These two monuments stand side by side within the grounds of the Kazan Kremlin, their proximity most often narrated as a symbol of the harmony between Islam and Orthodox Christianity, Russia's two main religions, and material evidence of the peaceful relations between the Sunni Muslim Tatars and Orthodox Christian Russians who inhabit the city and region in roughly equal numbers (see Figure 11). Today, however, the intended harmony of the landscape is pierced, disrupted by the national activists who stream past the tourists and move decisively toward the fortress' westernmost reaches on their way to the seven-tiered Siuiumbike Tower, standing 58 meters tall and crowned with the golden crescent of Islam. The imams assume central positions at the base of the tower as the crowd forms a semicircle

around them. This year's "Day of Memory," as has been done at this same place on a Sunday morning every mid-October since 1989, culminates with a public *namaz* in remembrance of the Tatars' ancestors who perished while defending these grounds in 1552 (see Figure 12).

Figure 12: "Day of Memory" concludes with a public *namaz* in honor of the Tatars' ancestors who died while defending the Kazan Kremlin against Muscovite troops in October 1552 (photo by author).

The landscape of the Kazan Kremlin presents a compelling case study because, in piquing questions of historical memory, it reflects how ideas about religious and national identity have shifted along with changing notions of homeland in post-socialist Tatarstan. Although the current dominant meaning of the Kazan Kremlin, with its skyline today graced in tandem by the onion domes of the Annunciation Cathedral and the minarets of the recently constructed Kul-Sharif Mosque, is one of interfaith harmony, this landscape as it has developed in the post-Soviet period in fact is a product of *tension* between

competing political-territorial visions. Specifically, this landscape is a result of the tension between how the national activists who organize and partake in the annual "Day of Memory" understand what Tatarstan should be as a political-territorial space and how those who hold power view the region and its place within the Russian Federation. This central tension has shaped the meaning of the Kazan Kremlin and how the relationship between religion and national identity is encoded in the landscape. This tension is far from static. Indeed, as examined in this chapter, the dominant meaning of the Kazan Kremlin has changed dramatically over the past two decades.

Because of their brute materiality, landscapes such as the Kazan Kremlin may appear as fixed, objective reflections of collective memory and social relations. Yet, as geographers have shown, landscapes are active participants in the structuring of social relations, vessels that communicate and reinforce notions of "ideal community." As Daniels writes,

> Landscapes, whether focusing on single monuments or framing sketches of scenery, provide visible shape; *they picture the nation* [although] there is seldom a secure or enduring consensus as to which, or rather whose, legends and landscapes epitomize the nation (Daniels 1993, 5, emphasis added).

For Daniels (1993) and Cosgrove (1998), landscape is a historically contingent "way of seeing," a "representation" that structures society in a manner that legitimates the state and reifies images of the nation. Duncan and Duncan liken landscape to a "text" that "transforms ideologies into concrete form," reflecting and reproducing group identity (Duncan and Duncan 1988, 117). Landscape as "text" or "discourse" is read and internalized, thereby naturalizing dominant ideas of national community. While

representational and textual approaches have been criticized for neglecting the materiality of landscape (e.g. Mitchell 1993; Mitchell 2003) and the realm of practice (e.g. Cresswell 2003; Lorimer 2005), contemporary studies continue to investigate landscape as a transmitter of national ideology (e.g. Shein 1997; Olwig 2002; Mills 2010). Common to these studies is the understanding that landscape "encapsulates a dominant image of how elites view 'a nation,' and perhaps even how 'a people' see themselves" (Till 2008, 350).

Informed by this scholarly tradition, this chapter examines how dominant views of "ideal community" are reflected and reproduced in the landscape of the Kazan Kremlin and how those dominant understandings have changed under the influence of the political-territorial restructurating of Russia. As illustrated in this chapter, when Tatarstan was pursuing its sovereignty campaign in the 1990s, the "re-Islamization" of the Kazan Kremlin, most vividly embodied by the construction of the Kul-Sharif Mosque that began in the latter part of the decade, was discursively framed foremost as a symbol of the Tatars' resurrected statehood; indeed, the republic's sovereignty drive was largely justified by the memory of 1552 as revived and nurtured by the national activists taking part in the "Day of Memory" spectacle. However, by the time construction on the behemoth mosque was completed in 2005, as shown in this chapter, the new political-territorial context of a recentralized Russian Federation had altered the dominant meaning of the Kazan Kremlin. Kul-Sharif, once its doors officially opened, was no longer framed by political elites as a symbol of the Tatars' revived statehood. Instead, its relative proximity to the Annunciation Cathedral became more emphasized, its dominant meaning shifting foremost to one of tolerance and even commonality between Islam and Orthodoxy, between Tatars and Russians, in the Middle Volga. This more recent

narration of the Kazan Kremlin is in line with a larger Russia-wide nation-building that stresses the harmony between the now unified country's "traditional" religions. Yet the much-trumpeted interfaith accord discursively embedded in the landscape belies the tension upon which the Kazan Kremlin is founded.

Background: 1552 and the Landscape of Colonization

While the Russian word *kreml'* ("kremlin") denotes a fortress,[98] historical-cultural connotations of the word run much deeper than the defensive function served by a stone-walled fortification. Kremlins have historically hosted the seat of regional political power – the Russian prince or, later, the Moscow-appointed governor – and the city's main monastery and cathedrals (Aidarova 2007). Thus, a kremlin both embodies and protects, literally and figuratively, the concept of *simfoniia* ("symphony") between the Russian state and the Orthodox church, the corporal and heavenly powers complementing each another in ruling the people of *Rus'*. In light of the historical-cultural attachments to the word *kreml'*, the Kazan Kremlin as it has been transformed over the past two decades, today housing what is touted as Europe's largest mosque (Siraeva 2006) and a crescent-topped tower that shadows over a Russian Orthodox cathedral, radically challenges the very core of a centuries-old national-architectural trope. Subsequent sections of this chapter examine the changes to the Kazan Kremlin in the post-Soviet era, showing how the "Islamization" of this highly symbolic landscape was posited on a critical reexamination of Russia's imperial legacy and potentially puts forth a new formulation of the concept of *simfoniia* – one that emphasizes the symphony between peoples and faiths

[98] Most people association the word "kremlin" with *the* Kremlin in Moscow, but many historic Russian cities were – and still are – site to such fortresses.

within a shared homeland, not the domination of a single state-backed religion over others. However, first it is necessary briefly to explore the context under which this landscape first came to be a kremlin.

Until the mid-sixteenth century, the space currently occupied by the Kazan Kremlin was an Islamic citadel, seat of the Kazan Khanate, the most powerful of the khanates that emerged a century earlier following the dissolution of the Golden Horde. The transformation of the citadel into a kremlin began immediately after October 15, 1552 (new calendar), when, following a two-month siege, Muscovite troops captured Kazan. Leading the battle against the Russians, according to legend, were Kazan's top imam, Said Kul-Sharif, and his *shakirds*, who were among the last to die – "with a prayer on their lips" – defending the city (Sorokin 1998, 5). After Moscow's victory, all non-combatant Muslims were driven from the citadel far out into the countryside (Faller 2002) and, on the orders of Tsar Ivan, the first steps of the new Russian administration were taken toward remaking the landscape into a kremlin. Mosques, palaces, and all other structures of the khanate were razed, and the city was cleansed and resacralized by an Orthodox prayer procession (Aidarova 1996). In the first days after the capture of Kazan, temporary wooden churches were erected. However, by 1562, construction of the Annunciation Cathedral (see Figure 13) – the first stone church to appear in the Middle Volga region – was completed, built atop the foundation of what was formerly Kazan's main mosque, known as the Kul-Sharif Mosque.[99] Also, a governor's palace was built in

[99] In 1928-29, archeologists discovered that parts of the foundation of the Annunciation Cathedral consisted of gravestones bearing the Arabic script that was used by the Tatars' ancestors (Aidarova 2007, 48). The destruction or usurpation of mosques, synagogues, or churches and their subsequent replacement by or conversion to the conquerors' holy building is a highly symbolic act that signifies the complete subjection, and even literal extermination, of the enemy group. This is a practice with a long tradition. Early Christian rulers appropriated Greek and Roman pagan temples and turned them into churches; the Parthenon is a

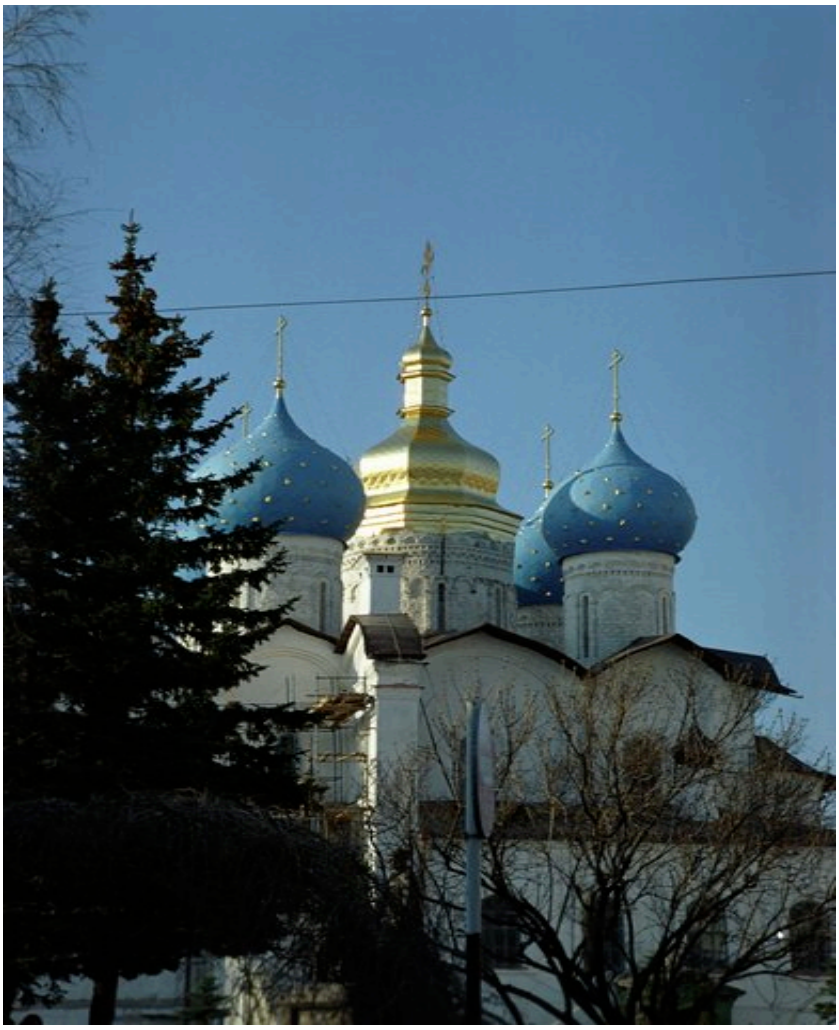

Figure 13: The Annunciation Cathedral was built atop the Kul-Sharif Mosque following Kazan's defeat at the hand of Muscovite troops in 1552 (photo by author).

the place of what previously were the khan's quarters, nestled next to the Annunciation Cathedral, the two structures embodying the Russian concept of *simfoniia* in what was now a *kreml'*.

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famous example. Hindu temples in Pakistan and India were commonly demolished by Muslim conquerors and overlaid with mosques. Soviet authorities, of course, employed this tradition, reinscribing traditional holy sites with their own quasi-religious ideology (Sidorov 2000). No faith was spared in the communist regime's drive to stamp out traditional religion and reinscribe the landscape with their totalitarian ideology.

The significance of the events of October 1552, along with the subsequent transformation of Kazan from an Islamic citadel to a Russian Orthodox kremlin, cannot be underestimated. Whereas previously Muscovy was a princedom that exclusively ruled over Orthodox Christian Slavs, the conquest of Kazan of represented the very beginning of Russia as a multiethnic, poly-confessional empire (Kappler 2001, 14). Muscovy's conquest of Kazan also "signaled the beginning of the Russian *reconquista*" aimed at liberating Christian lands, including Jerusalem and Constantinople, from Muslims (Frank and Wixman 1996, 140). The single most recognizable and enduring symbol of Russia, St. Basil's Cathedral, was built (by the decree of Ivan IV) in honor of the Moscow's victory over Kazan.[100] For the Tatars, however, their ancestors' defeat on October 15, 1552, was followed by waves of forced Christianization and, for much of the twentieth century, forced atheism (Derrick 2010). The Kazan Kremlin had been denuded of virtually any visible trace of a Muslim historical-cultural legacy. With the Annunciation Cathedral standing as an enduring reminder of Orthodoxy's victory (literally) over Islam, the fortress was "perceived by many Tatars as a symbol of colonization" (Kinossian 2008, 194). This was a landscape of alienation, at least until the democratization and liberalization of the *perestroika* era opened a space for the national movement to renew the Tatars' claim to the landscape – and, eventually, statehood.

[100] It is instructive that, while the Soviets destroyed thousands of holy Christian sites, including the largest and third-largest cathedrals in Moscow and Irkutsk respectively, they left the Annunciation Cathedral in Kazan and St. Basil's Cathedral in Moscow intact. These symbols of the Russians' defeat of the Tatars in the mid-sixteenth century, an event that heralded the onslaught of empire, were deemed untouchable by the Soviet authorities.

Repossessing and Transforming the Kazan Kremlin

The first instance of the Tatars re-staking a claim to the Kazan Kremlin occurred on October 15, 1989, when a modest-sized crowd of national activists[101] gathered beneath the Siuiumbike Tower for a public *namaz* in observance of the first-ever "Day of Memory" (Iakupova 2001). They rallied around the tower because it was the only element on the landscape that could reasonably be claimed as Tatar. While most of the structure uncontestably had been built in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries – and many argue that the entire structure was built by Russians – enough archeological evidence (and legend)[102] existed to suggest that at least the first level, in some form, had existed before the mid-sixteenth century, forming the entrance to the khan's palace (Akhmetzianov 2002).[103] The activists at the first annual "Day of Memory" were the first to demand the construction of a monument that would "perpetuate memories of the defenders of Kazan who fell in 1552" (Sanachin 1990, 2). They saw this request as just, considering that the remains of the Muscovite soldiers who died in the same battle were honorably housed in a pyramid-like memorial church located on an islet at the confluence of the Kazanka and Volga rivers, in clear sight from the kremlin's southwestern walls (see Figure 14). A local planner presented the idea to the authorities (Ibid.). At the time,

[101] It is reported that more KGB agents were in attendance at the first "Day of Memory" than actual participants (Iakupova 2001, 28).

[102] The tower is named in honor of the last Tatar princess who, according to legend, preferred to die by her own hands rather than be carried off to Moscow to marry a Russian nobleman. Beneath the tower, some archeologists believe, was the burial site of khans. Iakupova says that Tatars had surreptitiously prayed for their ancestors at the tower for centuries (Iakupova 2001, 28).

[103] The origins of the Siuiumbike Tower are subject to an inordinate amount of scholarly debate. Some researchers (mainly Russian) argue that no tower existed before the mid-sixteenth century, i.e. it was fully constructed under Russian rule, while others (mainly Tatar) argue that a tower existed at the same site during the Kazan Khanate. See, for example, Khanzafarov (2001), Khalit (2006), Sitdikov (2006), Sitdikov and Khuzin (2009), Habiullin (2007), and Khuzin and Sitdikov (2011).

Figure 14: Memorial church in honor of the Muscovite troops who perished in 1552 during the conquest of Kazan (photo by author).

however, with Tatarstan negotiating an elevation of its status *within* the USSR and the political leadership wanting to avoid conflict with Moscow, the idea of constructing a monument to the defenders of Kazan gained no traction.

Following Kazan's sovereignty declaration, the "Day of Memory" spectacle began attracting thousands of Tatars to the grounds of the Kazan Kremlin to reclaim, if only through an hours-long performance, the landscape as Muslim Tatar. [104] The annual event decisively transcended ancestor worship, assuming an explicitly political character that linked this landscape to the memory of 1552 and Tatarstan's elevated territorial

[104] The organizers of "Day of Memory" also played a key role in organizing the April 1991 public *namaz* in honor of Uraza Bairam, a holiday celebrating the end of Ramadan, that was held for the first time at the Siuiumbike Tower within the grounds of the Kazan Kremlin. Tens of thousands of participants were reported to have been in attendance (Musina 1997, 213).

aspirations. At the 1992 "Day of Memory," for example, Marat Muliukov, the director of TOTs, proclaimed, "This date for us is not only a day of mourning, today we avow our decisiveness to fight for the full independence of our republic" (quoted in Batyrshin 1992, 2). Placards bearing slogans such as "Judge and Disassociate Yourself from Ivan IV and His Executioners like the Germans Did with Hitler" and "Give *Milli Mejlis*[105] Power in the Fight to Get Rid of the Colonial Yoke" were marched into the kremlin and paraded at the base of the Siuiubike Tower (Izvestiia Tatarstana 1992, 1). Following that year's "Day of Memory," leaders of the national movement issued a public letter addressed to Shaimiev reminding him that the churches in the Kazan Kremlin had been "built on top of the graves of Tatars and their mosques" and demanding the city be given a "national face" by constructing mosques within the grounds of the fortress; in other words, nationalizing the landscape was equated with its "re-Islamization." They also repeated the demand for a monument to their ancestors who died defending the Kazan Kremlin in 1552 (TOTs 1992, 1).

The early "Day of Memory" performances framed the primary justification discourse employed by the Tatar political elite in defending the republic's sovereignty claim. The year 1552 marked the loss of Tatar statehood and the subsequent transformation of the Muslim citadel into an Orthodox Russian kremlin that symbolized centuries of policies resulting in the decimation of Tatar culture. The return of Tatar statehood, embedded in the promise of sovereignty, meant the repossession of the Kazan Kremlin. Nonetheless, Shaimiev was hesitant in responding to the nationalists' demands. Although the memory of 1552 had become central to Kazan's discourse justifying its

[105] *Milli Mejlis* was an umbrella group for the various Tatar national organizations that claimed it would take responsibility for achieving Tatarstan's independence if the Shaimiev-led government failed to do so.

claim to sovereignty (Derrick 2008), the political elite did not want to risk inflaming local Russian sentiment by erecting a monument to the defenders of the Kazan Kremlin; maintaining interethnic peace was of paramount importance while engaged with Moscow in negotiations over Tatarstan's status within the Russian Federation. However, the national activists had succeeded in pointing out to the Tatar president the symbolic importance of the Kazan Kremlin. While discussions of undertaking any major changes to the landscape would have to be tabled until after the 1994 treaty was secured, Shaimiev in the meantime ordered that a golden crescent be placed atop of Siuiumbike Tower in time to serve as a minaret for 1993's "Day of Memory" (Iskhakov 1997, 102) – the first material evidence of the "re-Islamization" of the Kazan Kremlin (see Figure 15).

Having secured the bilateral treaty with Moscow, the political elite of Tatarstan committed itself to a fundamental transformation of the Kazan Kremlin with the explicit goal of shaping a landscape deserving of – and serving – a new sovereign state. In August 1994, Shaimiev decreed the "museumification" of the entire landscape with the stated goal of "preserving" and "restoring" the "ensemble of the Kazan Kremlin" (Postanovlenie 1994). The decree immediately brought to the fore the tension laden in the memory of 1552. What parts of the ensemble should be *preserved*? What should be *restored*? On the one hand, the kremlin had traditionally been considered a Russian landscape, its architectural elements of various epochs – those lost and those remaining – unified by the Orthodox idea. On the other hand, beyond the basic footprint of the Kazan Khanate, not a single trace of the citadel's Muslim architectural legacy remained; no material existed to preserve or restore. From this situation, deputy director of the Kazan Kremlin Niiaz Khalit explained, two ideas clashed: "'Russian' restoration and 'Tatar'

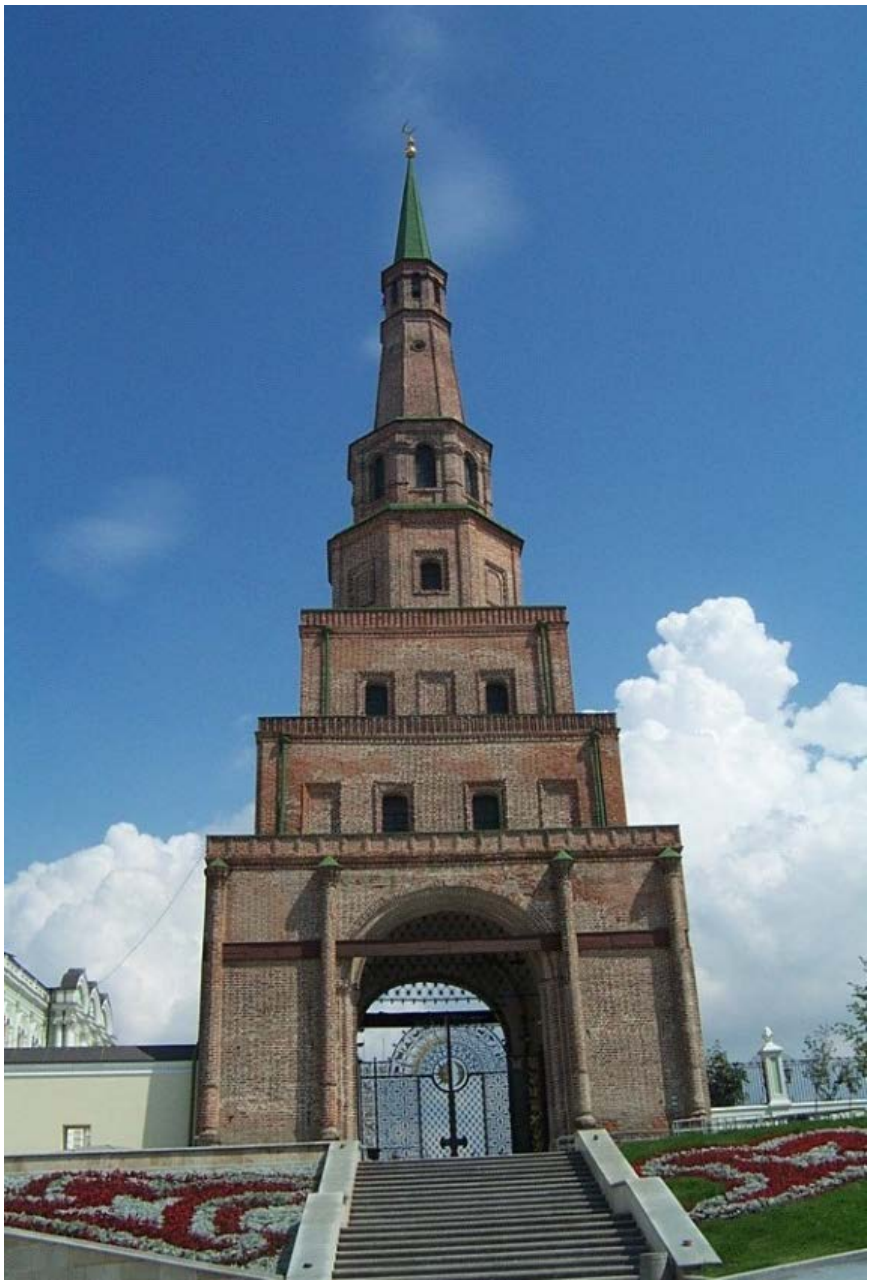

Figure 15: The golden crescent atop the Siuiumbike Tower, set in 1993, was the first example of the “re-Islamization” of the Kazan Kremlin (photo by author).

reconstruction" (Khalit 1997, 236). According to the first, restoring the landscape meant rebuilding the churches and monasteries that were destroyed in the Soviet era.[106] This approach, Khalit insisted, was unacceptable on political and moral grounds because the restoration of Orthodox churches in the Kazan Kremlin would represent "monuments to the barbaric destruction of the parts of Kazan that are holy to the Muslim segments of Kazan: mosques, tombs of khans and saints" (Ibid., 237).

After a year of reconceptualizing the kremlin's transformation, Shaimiev issued a second decree in November 1995 titled "On the concept of the preservation, development, and use of the ensemble of the Kazan Kremlin" (Ukaz 1995). The use of the words "preservation" and "development" were carefully chosen. The former meant the "preservation" of cultural legacy, not simply the protection and restoration of existing elements on the landscape, while "development" implied newness, a wholesale rethinking of the meaning of the word *kreml'*. Seemingly in line with the Tatar president's post-treaty propagation of state nationalism, the envisioned overhaul of the Kazan Kremlin included the preservation of both Tatar and Russian cultural legacies. This included the complete "restoration and reconstruction" of the Annunciation Cathedral and the promise "to reconstruct the Kul-Sharif Mosque" for the purpose of "preserving historical succession" (Ukaz 1995, Points 1 and 4). While the decree appeared to be calibrated to complement Shaimiev's propagation of state nationalism in the post-1994 treaty context, the resurrection of the Kul-Sharif Mosque, named after the legendary imam who died alongside his *shakirds* defending Kazan for the purpose of "preserving historical

[106] For instance, one Russian architect publicly posed the question, "if the mosque is being constructed while the only thing known about it is the number of minarets, why not restore the ancient sixteenth-century Saviour Transfiguration Cathedral, which has a perfectly preserved basement as well as a necessary archival data? (Zhuravskii 1995, 2).

succession," was a direct allusion to 1552 – drawing on the grievances first expressed by the "Day of Memory" activists and thereby affirming the primacy of the Tatars' claims to the landscape. In an official document issued alongside Shaimiev's 1995 decree, the resurrection of the Kul-Sharif Mosque would be a "symbol of the statehood" of the Republic of Tatarstan (Osnovnye 1995).

Subsequent decisions on the location and design of the Kul-Sharif Mosque, along with the political discourse surrounding its resurrection, provided further indication that the temple was expressly intended as a symbol of the Tatars' revived statehood. Dismissing out of hand the demands of some of the more vociferous nationalists to resurrect Kul-Sharif on its original foundation (interview with Khakimov 2009) – meaning the destruction of the Annunciation Cathedral – a commission formed by Shaimiev to oversee the transformation of the kremlin chose a space occupied the Tsarist-era military barracks along the fortress' southern wall. This location was formally justified on two accounts. First, the military quarters were viewed as an especially grievous symbol of colonialism and the Tatars' alienation from the kremlin; and, second, only that space, it was contended, was geologically sound enough to support a large structure (Latypov 2005). While these justifications indeed may have been factors, above all the space was chosen because of its central, dominating position that overlooked the city and could be seen far out in the Volga River. Kul-Sharif was to be the unquestioned central element of the ensemble of the Kazan Kremlin, *the* symbol of Kazan and Tatarstan, *the* symbol of the Tatar nation.

Discussions about the design of the mosque provide more insight into the function Kul-Sharif was intended to fulfill. An important and highly revealing article authored by

Niiaz Khalit, the deputy director of the Kazan Kremlin who was at the forefront of the project, provides illustration. In discussing the future shape of the temple, Khalit said the mosque must incorporate semantic elements of Tatar culture, such as the tulip (a symbol traditionally associated with Tatar culture), and reference the few known architectural features of the original Kul-Sharif (e.g. eight minarets) and other ancient temples belonging to the Tatars' ancestors. However, because the mosque would embody the Tatars' cultural revival and the rebirth of their statehood, it therefore must represent a fundamental break with the colonial past:

> The idea of resurrecting a mosque in the kremlin has signified a fundamental break in the consciousness of our people, who bore the heavy cross of 450 years of a slave's existence in an Orthodox empire. Almost half a century after the fall of the Kazan Khanate, which fought to the death with the Moscow predator for its freedom, the ancient citadel of Kazan has become the center of a reviving state … And, as if visibly marking this historical event, [the kremlin's] architecture, tightly bound in our consciousness with the Russian colonial and ecclesiastical administration, once again is obtaining a Tatar image. As such, Kul-Sharif is not just a mosque and not even the main mosque of Kazan and the state. It is the main center for the entire Tatar diaspora. It is a vector from the past that passes through today to tomorrow (Khalit 1997, 242-243).

The Shaimiev-appointed Khalit, as seen in this passage, internalized the discourse initiated by the "Day of Memory" activists. He made clear the understanding that the principle of "balancing cultures" in the makeover of the Kazan Kremlin was trumped by the idea of Tatar statehood. The mosque, to occupy a dominating central position in the

fortress, was to be *the* symbol of a sovereign state that is understood foremost as the Tatars' historical homeland.

The balance of cultures idea embedded in the landscape, however, was not only distantly secondary to the idea of a resurrected Tatar state to be reflected in the Kul-Sharif Mosque. The image of a brilliant mosque in close proximity to a Christian church was intended to bolster Tatarstan's image on the international arena. The international arena, the Tatar political elite clearly understood as it crafted its "sovereignty project" (Graney 2009), was where the question of independent statehood is ultimately decided:

> The mosque will represent us before world civilization. Tatarstan today is not a backwater province of Russia, where a fading culture trickles through the marshy mouth of a filthy stream. A new state is being born, by the intellect of its people providing a positive example in resolving the most complex of political problems – international [i.e. interethnic]. Today, as wars rage in Bosnia and Chechnya, Eretria and Somalia, conflicts simmer in Quebec and the Basque Country, the "Tatarstani Model" of political-cultural development puts us in a company of nations that, by their intellectual level, are advanced (Khalit 1997, 247).

The "advanced nation," the "people of intellect" – the "us" – discussed here is not the "multinational people of Tatarstan." The mosque's relative location to the church would provide material evidence of the religious tolerance of the Tatars, a powerful counter example to other territorial conflicts involving Muslim peoples, a counter example that would positively influence the opinion of the international sovereignty regime. Indeed, with the beginning of construction on the Kul-Sharif Mosque, Kazan began lobbying UNESCO for the inclusion of the Kazan Kremlin in its list of World Heritage sites, the

close proximity of temples of two different religions serving as proof of the historical exchange of cultural values between the Tatars and the Russians (Demina 2000).[107]

For the remainder of the decade, as the Kul-Sharif Mosque began to take shape, the transformation of the Kazan Kremlin was discursively linked to Tatarstan's aspirations to statehood. A 1998 article appearing in *Respublic Tatarstan* (*Republic of Tatarstan*), the official newspaper of the Kazan-based government, discussed the "radical reconstruction" of the kremlin as a project of "state significance" (Sorokin 1998, 5): "The kremlin has always been the center of state power, the resident of the Bolgar prince, the Tatar khan, the Kazan governor, and now the president of sovereign Tatarstan" (Ibid.). However, by the latter part of the 1990s, as seen in this article's discussion of the historical significance of the Kul-Sharif Mosque, the political elite had toned down its anticolonial rhetoric:

> The Kul-Sharif Mosque, now being resurrected, is the main object of the kremlin's reconstruction. The exact place of its location has not been determined by archeologists. Kul-Sharif, imam of the city's main mosque, was a leading political figure. In the name of the Kazan Khanate he conducted persistent negotiations with Moscow, traveling several times with a delegation to the capital of Muscovy. But Tsar Ivan the Terrible and those around him, having long before set the goal of expanding the borders of *Rus'* to Siberia and the Far East, did not want to hear about peace (Ibid.).

This passage, in explaining the significance of the new mosque arising in the Kazan Kremlin, refocuses attention away from Kul-Sharif as the legendary warrior who was

[107] After several years of lobbying by Kazan, UNESCO officially recognized the Kazan Kremlin as a World Heritage site in December 2000.

killed by Muscovite troops and directs it instead to Kul-Sharif the diplomat whose message of peace the Tsar refused to hear. On one level, the change of rhetoric evident in the biographical sketch, coming as the carcass of the new mosque was approaching completion, was an attempt to counter the previous anticolonial discourse associated with the kremlin's "re-Islamization." On another level, it was reflective of Kazan's relationship with Moscow at the time. Like Kul-Sharif, the author implied, the current political elites of Tatarstan were in favor of negotiations and peaceful relations.

While the Kazan Kremlin in its entirety remained a symbol Tatarstan's sovereignty, in addition to the "embodiment of peace and tolerance of different religions" (Sorkokin 1998, 5), by the latter part of the decade the Kul-Sharif Mosque was no longer publicly cast as a symbol of statehood. The mosque's more narrowly cultural-religious purposes became emphasized, as seen in an article claiming that Kul-Sharif was destined to be the "unifying, main mosque … not only for the residents of Tatarstan, but also for Tatars of the whole world" (Valeeva 1999, 5). The discursive shift in the way the Kazan Kremlin, along with the Kul-Sharif Mosque, was framed coincided with Shaimiev's more intense propagation of state nationalism. It is notable, however, that even with Shaimiev retreating from the Tatar national movement, the annual "Day of Memory" in the final years of the decade was attended only by a handful of the more radical nationalists and no longer attracted any significant press coverage.

The Post-Sovereign Landscape of the Kazan Kremlin

By the close of the 1990s, the landscape of the Kazan Kremlin in its entirety – the Annunciation Cathedral and the resurrecting Kul-Sharif Mosque together – had become

the symbol of *Tatarstani* statehood. The meaning of the under-construction mosque, earlier conceived as a symbol of Tatar statehood, had been eclipsed by the directive to cultivate state nationalism. Nonetheless, while Tatarstan still maintained its claim to sovereignty, amid Moscow's weakened position, the tension of the historical memory of 1552 that existed between the two temples came to be subsumed by the idea of a greater inter-confessional harmony, and the annual "Day of Memory" spectacle ceased to attract any significant attention. The tension in the landscape, however, flared up suddenly when Putin ascended to the Moscow Kremlin, reversed the previous decade's process of political-territorial decentralization, and began aggressively recentralizing the Russian Federation anew.

Already by the fall of 2000, Moscow had made clear its intention to mold a "united political space" out of a legally and culturally disunited Russia, meaning an end to the ethnic republics' pretensions to sovereignty. As a response to Moscow's campaign to bring all regional legislation into line with federal law, the "Day of Memory" was suddenly revived as a mass public protest. Whereas only a handful of activists took part in the previous years' events, the 2000 "Day of Memory" was reported to have drawn more than a thousand participants (Zvezda Povolzh'ia 2000) and even more each of the following two years (Bilalov 2001; Akhmetov 2002), when attacks on Tatarstan's sovereignty became more explicit. The tension of the landscape of the Kazan Kremlin came into the open when the "Day of Memory" protestors, after the concluding *namaz* at the Siuiumbike Tower in 2000, addressed their grievances directly at the Annunciation Cathedral that stood next to the tower. As reported in one newspaper, "It was announced [among the "Day of Memory" activists] that the Annunciation Cathedral used to be a

mosque and it is once again necessary to demand that the Orthodox clergy return the mosque to Muslims" (Zvezda Povolzh'ia 2000, 2). Thus, the protest was not only against central attacks on Tatarstan's sovereignty; it also targeted Shaimiev's promotion of state nationalism that was being inscribed in the landscape of the Kazan Kremlin. The "Day of Memory" activists were demanding that the "national face" of the fortress be remade into a solely Tatar landscape, returned to its pre-1552 form, corresponding to their demands for the republic's unambiguous independence.

The political authorities gave symbolic support to the revival of the "Day of Memory" spectacle, at least while the potential of preserving Tatarstan's sovereignty seemed to exist. At the 2001 event, Shaimiev's handpicked Supreme Mufti, Gusman Iskhakov, accompanied the marchers into the kremlin and led the ritual *namaz* at the tower. The Mufti explained his participation:

> This has already become a tradition. On the "Day of Memory" *believers* gather in the kremlin to pray for the souls of those who gave their lives to *preserve our religion, our statehood*. A variety of people came to honor the memory of the defenders of Kazan … but a deep honor and gratefulness to the *national heroes* unified everybody in prayer (quoted in Bilalov 2001, 2, emphasis added).

Although Mufti Iskhakov discussed past "national heroes" who died in the defense of "our religion, our statehood," his message was coordinated to support the primary demand of the "Day of Memory" activists that Moscow "stop its revisions of the Constitution and laws of Tatarstan" (Ibid.). Two other demands put forth by the national activists, and the response of the political elite, were notable. As in every year past, the protesters demanded the erection of a monument to the defenders of the Kazan Kremlin;

Figure 16: A stone marking the future monument to the defenders of Kazan was laid outside the southern wall of the Kazan Kremlin (photo by author).

they also demanded that October 15 be officially recognized as an annual "Day of Mourning" in recognition of the events of 1552 (Obrashenie 2001, 2).

The activists' demands were taken under consideration. In 2001 Shaimiev declared that the government would indeed erect a monument to the defenders of the Kazan Kremlin (Grigorenko 2001). However, he made it clear that the monument would not appear within the grounds of the Kazan Kremlin, which would have disrupted his ideology of *simfoniia* between the confessions that was expressed in the landscape of the Kazan Kremlin. Instead, a white stone was laid on a square at the base of the kremlin's external southern wall, marking the spot where a future monument to the defenders of the Kazan Kremlin would be placed (see Figure 16). The Tatarstani parliament also took under consideration legislation that would officially recognize October 15 as a "Day of Memory of Those Who Fell in the Conquest of Kazan in 1552" (Rakipov 2002). These

overtures, made at the peak of Putin's campaign against Tatarstan's pretensions sovereign statehood, amounted to a temporary tactic intended, first, to appease the "Day of Memory" protesters and, second, to display resistance as a warning to Moscow. Although the stone would rest outside the southern wall of the kremlin for the next decade[108] and the government held a contest for the design of the monument, a memorial to the defenders of the Kazan Kremlin has never materialized. Draft legislation that would have made October 15 an annual "day of mourning" was removed soon after it was introduced (Respublika Tatarstan 2002). As in the past at critical moments in Russia's political-territorial transformation, the Kazan-based government was once again negotiating its post-sovereign status and did not want to run the risk up upsetting either the local Russian population or Moscow.

By the fall of 2002 it had become clear to Tatar political elites that they had little power to reverse the formal revocation of Tatarstan's sovereignty and have since dedicated themselves to retaining the republic's status as a powerful region informally. The campaign to retain a significant amount of informal autonomy, as Rafael Khakimov, formerly the top political adviser to Shaimiev, told me (with no small hint of irony), has meant being the "good Muslims of Russia" – a counterexample to the quagmire of Chechnya and the surrounding regions of the North Caucasus (interview with Khakimov 2009). The landscape of the Kazan Kremlin has reflected and served as a stage for this new, post-sovereign relationship. Being the "good Muslims" in first order has meant that, beginning with the 2002 "Day of Memory," the "authorities [have] completely distanced themselves from the march and [have] even attempted to ban the meeting" (Akhmetov

[108] I have been told that the stone was unceremoniously removed before after the 2010 "Day of Memory" protest.

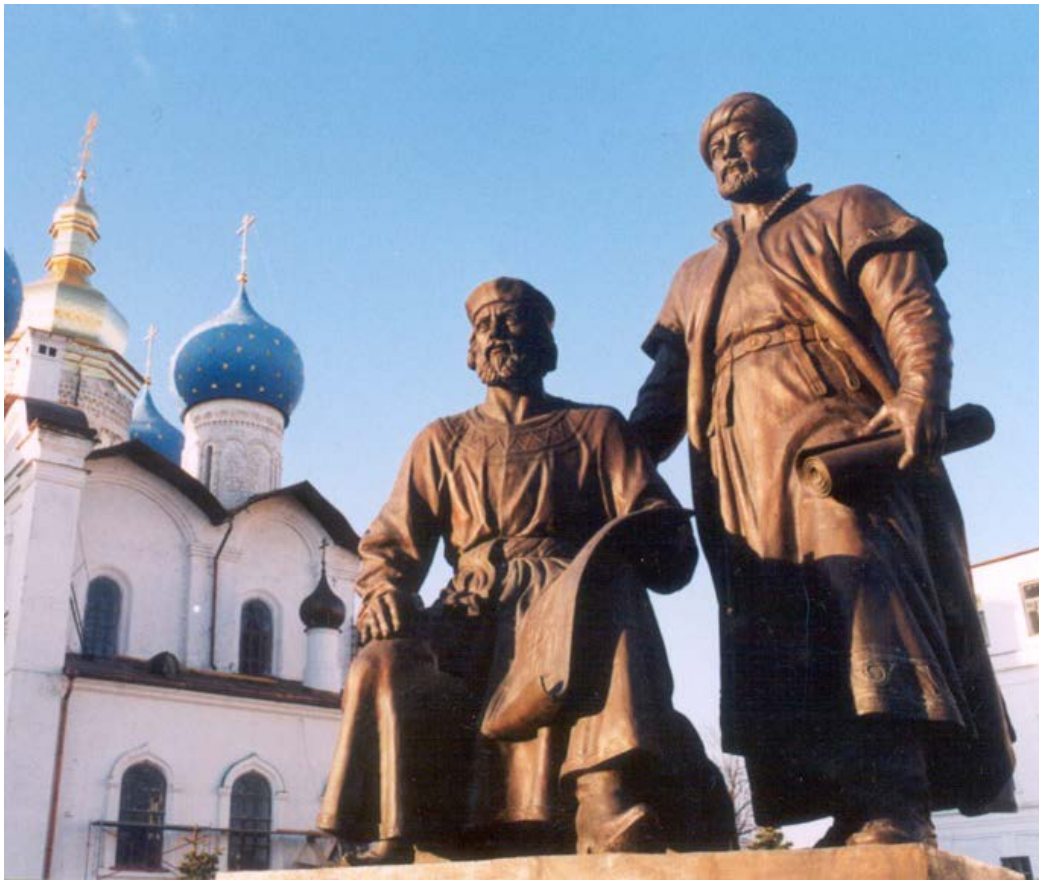

Figure 17: *The Architects of the Kazan Kremlin* was unveiled in November 2003 (photo by author).

2002, 1).[109] Although the 2002 meeting managed to attract an estimated 1,500 activists (Ibid.), the number of attendees has dropped off to only a few hundred each year and only "dissident imams" lead the participants in prayers at the Siuiumbike Tower.

Second, instead of erecting a monument to the defenders of the Kazan Kremlin, with the Kul-Sharif Mosque still under construction, Shaimiev unveiled a new monument

[109] The Kazan-based government, in spite of warnings, has not attempted to make an all-out ban on the "Day of Memory." However, as news reports indicate (e.g. Grigorenko 2002; Minvaleev 2004; Akhmetov 2005) and interview subjects have told me, police have stopped buses carrying national activists from Naberezhnye Chelny (traditionally a stronghold of Tatar nationalism) and other cities from entering Kazan on the appointed "Day of Memory."

titled *The Architects of the Kazan Kremlin* in November 2003 (see Figure 17). The sculpture composition depicts two anonymous sixteenth-century architects, a standing Tatar and a seated Russian, each grasping in his hands blueprints of the Kazan Kremlin. The would-be builders gaze out at the crescent moons that rest atop the minarets of the Kul-Sharif Mosque, which, at that point, had become visible from most any point in the city center. And to their right, perched atop the blue and gold onion domes of the Annunciation Cathedral, arise Orthodox crosses. The Tatar president elucidated the imagery for whomever the message was not evident:

> This monument embodies the unification of the aspirations and cultures of the Tatar and Russian peoples. The Annunciation Cathedral and the Kul-Sharif Mosque are now being revived. And is this not our position and homage to the long and strong friendship of the two peoples? This monument brings us closer to creative and spiritual unification (Arsent'eva 2003, 1).

Erecting *The Architects of the Kazan Kremlin* was an effort to diffuse the tension that had arisen between the mosque and the church with the recentralization of the Russian Federation. The bronze side-by-side Tatar and Russian architects, an attempt to humanize the space and neutralize the renewed antagonism, tied together the two temples. Yet, with Tatarstan's claim to statehood by that point having been dismantled, this monument could only tenuously be viewed as a representation of a "multinational Tatarstani people" – it now had become Kazan's contribution to Putin's conceptualization of a "multinational *Rossiiskii* people" (Putin 2003).

Figure 18: The Kul-Sharif Mosque was officially opened in June 2005, after a decade of planning and construction (photo by author).

The official opening of Kul-Sharif Mosque in June 2005 (see Figure 18) revealed the change in meaning of the Kazan Kremlin and pointed out the function the landscape has played since. In his speech at the ceremonial opening of the mosque, Shaimiev said the new temple represented the restoration of "historical justice and harmony between religions" (Shaimiev 2005). The Tatar president did not articulate exactly what injustice was being rectified with the resurrection of Kul-Sharif; he did not mention the year 1552. The mosque had become a "new symbol of Kazan and Tatarstan" and an "attractive center for the entire Tatar world," neither a symbol of the Tatar nation nor a symbol of statehood. However, Shaimiev pointed out the role the mosque plays in challenging the historical meaning of the word *kreml'*:

> With its appearance this building has changing not only the city-planning composition of the kremlin and the artistic image of the entire center of Kazan, but it represents a change in the consciousness of the residents of Tatarstan. The appearance of this structure, unique in its meaning, allows us to focus on our history in a new way, to more thoughtfully look at our history, our spiritual and material legacy (Ibid.).

Whereas Kul-Sharif, in itself, earlier had been intended to represent a change in the consciousness of the Tatar people, the appearance of a mosque in the context of a kremlin now represented a change in thinking for all people of Tatarstan. The republic had become an example for the rest of Russia, its primary symbol – the kremlin in its entirety – "a symbol of the mutual understanding of the two main confessions of the country." That the Kul-Sharif Mosque stands close to the Annunciation Cathedral, according to Shaimiev, "does not only show the history of Islam in the republic, but [shows] its peaceful, tolerant character" (Ibid.).

Since the opening of the Kul-Sharif Mosque, the landscape of the Kazan Kremlin has safeguarded Kazan's place as Russia's "Muslim capital" (Garaev 2009). The mosque, standing next to the cathedral, ensures that Tatarstan plays an important role in developing and strengthening Russia's diplomatic and economic ties with Muslim countries. It is notable that the head of the Organization for the Islamic Conference – a club in which Russia had become an observing member in 2003 in no small part thanks to Kazan's assistance (interview with Khakimov 2009) – was in attendance at the opening of Kul-Sharif, as were top diplomats from Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, and other Muslim countries (Siraeva 2006). As Khakimov points out,

> Tatarstan, which is seen as a *Muslim republic*, has become an intermediary in Russia's international politics. The advantage of Tatarstan is that Muslims and Christians live peacefully together here (Khakimov 2008, emphasis in original).

During my fieldwork, Kazan welcomed high-profile guests, including Mahmoud Abbas of Palestine, delegations from Iran and Malaysia, among others, before they visited Moscow. The Kazan Kremlin was central in staging these visits, with Shaimiev providing his guests a tour, first, of the Kul-Sharif Mosque and then the Annunciation Cathedral. But the Kazan Kremlin is not only staging grounds for Russia's relations with the Muslim world. In October 2009 Kazan received its highest profile guest, US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, who went through the same paces as Abbas and other representatives of the Muslim world, first visiting Kul-Sharif Mosque and then the Annunciation Catherdral. Afterwards Clinton praised Tatarstan for "foster[ing] religious tolerance"

(quoted in RT 2009). Thus, Tatarstan, as expressed in the landscape of the Kazan Kremlin, now positions itself as a bridge between the East and West.

Epilogue: The Missing Monument

The Kazan Kremlin has undergone a dramatic transformation in its morphology and meaning over the past twenty years. The appearance of the Kul-Sharif Mosque represents a significant repossession by the Tatars of a landscape that for centuries represented their colonial condition within an Orthodox – and then atheist – empire and challenged long-held notions of what a *kreml'* means. The mosque was originally intended as a symbol of the revival of Tatar statehood, and then the Kazan Kremlin in its entirety – with Kul-Sharif standing in close proximity to the Annunciation Cathedral – was cast as the symbol of Tatarstani statehood. Today the Kazan Kremlin stands as a symbol of the harmony between Islam and Orthodoxy in the Middle Volga and, more broadly, Russia. As expressed by Khakimov, the Kazan Kremlin is a symbol of Russia's "good Muslims," tolerant and peaceful, a counterexample to the example of Chechnya.

The inter-confessional harmony communicated and reinforced by the Kazan Kremlin, however, belies a tension that is brought to the surface at least once a year with the "Day of Memory" spectacle. It is notable that the sole demand issued by the activists who organized the first "Day of Memory" more than two decades ago was the erection of a monument to their ancestors who died defending Kazan in 1552, a monument that would recognize that the beginning of the Orthodox Russian Empire began with the defeat of the Tatars' ancestors. The activists of the 2009 "Day of Memory" unveiled a

Figure 19: A model of a monument to Kul-Sharif and his *shakirds* was unveiled by "Day of Memory" activists (photo by author).

model of a monument to Kul-Sharif and his *shakirds* who died "with a prayer on the lips" (see Figure 19). Unlike the legendary imam's namesake mosque within the Kazan Kremlin, the monument is not a symbol of harmony – the activist's monument communicates resistance. The activists proclaim their goal is independence, but their most immediate, most concrete expressed grievances concerned the right to study Tatar in schools of Tatarstan, a right previously enjoyed but one that has been steadily rolled

back under legislation that has been introduced long with the recentralization of the Russian Federation. In the model monument presented by the activists, Kul-Sharif expresses his resistance with a Koran in his grasp. Like this image, many of the activists – now led by a new, younger generation – now express their grievances in quasi-Islamist terms. Newspapers remark on the "Islamicized youth" (Amelina 2009) wearing green headbands, whereas reports in the 1990s exclusively discussed the "Day of Memory" activists as "Tatar nationalists."

CHAPTER VI

EPILOGUE:

FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS

Review of Findings

As demonstrated in this study, a significant factor conditioning the character of the post-Soviet Islamic revival in Tatarstan has been the political-territorial restructuring of the Russian Federation. Amid the democratization and decentralization of the country in the early part of the 1990s, when the Kazan-based government pursued its sovereignty campaign, the Tatars' "Islamic renaissance" (Baltanova 1994) was part and parcel of a broader revival of national culture. Neo-Jadidism was propagated by the national and political elite, which envisioned Tatarstan as the Tatars' sovereign homeland. Neo-Jadidism was an anti-colonial discourse in which the borders of reformist, Western-oriented Euro-Islam were defined foremost against what was framed as an antidemocratic, innately imperial Russian Other. By the latter part of the decade, to protect the territorial status quo enshrined in the 1994 bilateral treaty, dominant representations of Tatar Islam shifted to emphasize what were cast as traditionally

harmonious relations between the republic's two main religions, Islam and Orthodoxy, as they have developed over the centuries in the region. Simultaneously, certain segments of the Tatar national movement, interpreting the 1994 pact as "betraying the cause of independence" (Slocum 1999, 56), denounced secular-minded neo-Jadidism and shifted their support to "pure Islam" in response to the more inclusive bordering processes associated with the putative tolerance of neo-traditionalism. Nonetheless, while the republic enjoyed an unprecedented degree of autonomy, Tatar national culture was primarily redeveloped through secular institutions and the Islamic revival of Tatarstan was distinguished by its adherence to "secular norms" (Musina 1997, 216) for the remainder of the 1990s.

Over the past decade, as the Putin era of aggressive political-territorial recentralization has decisively disabused Tatarstan of its pretenses to sovereign statehood, the primacy of secular Islam has been challenged by more conservative religious expressions. "Traditional" Tatar Islam, based on fealty to the Hanafi *madhhab* as practiced for centuries by the Tatars' ancestors, is now recognized and enforced as the sole "official" Islam in Tatarstan. The borders of neo-traditionalism are defined, first, by the ostensible mutual respect and harmony that exist between Islam and Orthodoxy – between Tatars and Russians – and, second, against religious fundamentalism – generally ascribed to Wahhabism or Salafism – which is considered "alien" and wholly unsuitable to the social conditions of a multiethnic, poly-confessional Russia. Thus, dominant representations of Tatar Islam that were cultivated to correspond to the propagation of state nationalism – the "multinational Tatarstani people" – in the late 1990s have shifted and been recalibrated to correspond to Putin's attempts to cultivate a "multinational

Russian people" (Putin 2002). In parallel, an expanding segment of the Tatar national movement has embraced a more explicitly Islamist register in the face of the federal center's attacks on the republic's previously enjoyed political-territorial freedoms.

"Official" Islam is communicated and reinforced institutionally (as examined in Chapter IV) via the Muslim Spiritual Board of Tatarstan (DUMRT), which is charged with overseeing the activities of all mosques in the republic, and symbolically (as explored in Chapter V) in the landscape of the Kazan Kremlin, which fundamentally challenges and reinterprets an age-old "picture [of] the nation" (Daniels 1993, 5). Taken together, the institutional and symbolic production and reproduction of "official" Islam compensate for some of Tatarstan's lost sovereignty. In replicating the internal and external boundaries of the republic and closely policing Islamic expressions and practices in some 1,250 mosques, DUMRT, in its loyalty to the Kazan-based authorities, contributes to Tatarstan being able to maintain a significant degree of informal autonomy in its relations with Moscow. This arrangement is evocative of the "confessional confederation" (Norihiro 2006) of the Tsarist period, but an important difference distinguishes the current context from that of a century ago: The quasi-confederative relations, primarily based on religious identity, are now territorialized.

The landscape of the Kazan Kremlin, where the Kul-Sharif Mosque stands in close proximity to the Annunciation Cathedral, further strengthens Tatarstan's hand *vis-à-vis* Moscow. Today narrated as a symbol of the particularly tolerant type of Islam traditionally practiced by the Tatars, the grand mosque helps secure the republic an integral place in the country's diplomatic and economic relations with the Muslim World. In transforming the dominant discursive meaning of this landscape from one in which the

"tragic events of 1552" have been eclipsed by the message of interfaith harmony, the Kazan-based political elite simultaneously demands that the Tatars' contribution to the country's historical legacy be critically reexamined and puts forth a new vision of what might constitute national community in contemporary Russia.

Implications for Tatarstan

In light of the forgoing, a few preliminary implications can be identified. First, as the continuing recentralization of Russia further curtails the redevelopment of Tatar ethno-national culture in public schools and other secular institutions, it is likely that religion will assume even greater weight in the balance of group identity. The mosque, with the republic having lost much of its formal autonomy, plays a cultural "preservation" role much as it did in the Tsarist period (Iakupov 2006). While the social expression of Islam may continue to take an increasingly conservative, more explicit turn, this development should not be conflated with or mistaken for religious fundamentalism. As discussed in Chapter IV, a significant portion of Tatar society is being re-traditionalized – to be Tatar today for growing numbers once again means to be an *observant* Muslim.

Second, with "official" Islam closely associated with and "freely manipulate[d]" by the state (Malashenko 2008, 2) – regional and federal authorities now speaking in a single voice – one might reasonably expect those formerly described as "radical nationalists" to assume an increasingly Islamist register in expressing their grievances and resisting the region's loss of autonomy. This dynamic was already evident by the latter half of 1990s with *Ittifak*'s embrace of "pure" or "fundamental" Islam, a stance that

has only intensified over the past decade, and is becoming more detectable among the younger generation who participates in the annual "Day of Memory" spectacle and other nationalist protests (Suleimanov 2011a). While these voices today represent a small minority (compared to the numbers of Tatars who willingly adhere to "official" Islam), they previously formed the vanguard of Tatarstan's sovereignty drive – many calling for all-out independence – that was launched in the late *perestroika* era. If Russia were to suffer another political-territorial rupture, the more vociferous nationalists, this time cloaking their demands and grievances more heavily in religious terms, could potentially resurface as a major social-political force.

Third, in defining all forms of Islam except Tatar neo-traditionalism as "unofficial," political and religious authorities unnecessarily marginalize sectors of the population while closing Tatarstan's *umma* from new and potentially innovative ideas. This policy may be short-sighted and potentially even dangerous. As seen in parts of the North Caucasus, the state's harassment (and in many cases persecution) of Muslims who follow more fundamentalist or literalist understandings of religion has resulted in a violent backlash (Fedynsky 2010). While it is difficult to surmise whether the state's harassment has contributed to the isolated acts of extremism that have taken place in Tatarstan,[110] it is instructive that, for the duration of the 1990s, no acts of Islamic "extremism" or "radicalism" were registered in the republic, even though "alien" religious ideas were more or less freely propagated.

[110] However, evidence exists that state harassment has contributed to extremism. Last November, as mentioned in Chapter IV, three young men accused of being members of *Hizb ut-Tahrir* were alleged to have planted a bomb (that failed to explode) a regional division of the Center to Combat Extremism, a state organ charged with monitoring and controlling "unofficial" Islam in Russia.

Implications for Russia

State patronage of "traditional" Islam in Tatarstan, although initiated before the aggressive political-territorial recentralization of the Russian Federation, has been part of a countrywide effort in state- and nation-(re)building that began with the renewed conflagration in Chechnya. Under Putin's watch the state has supported versions of Islam deemed "traditional" to Russia in almost every Muslim-majority region of the federation, with "traditional" being defined foremost by perceived loyalty to the state, while simultaneously "categorically reject[ing] the legal existence of Islamic opposition and mercilessly suppress[ing] any appearance of political protest in religious form" (Malashenko 2008, 2). This approach has strong parallels to the way the empire, beginning with Catherine II and continuing through the Soviet era, dealt with Islam.

My examination of the trajectory of the Islamic revival in Tatarstan, first, points out the need for additional in-depth scholarly investigations into how "traditional" Islam is represented, produced, reproduced, and contested via institutions and symbols in other Muslim-majority regions of Russia. Each of the country's Muslim regions is unique in its ethnic makeup and historical experience with the empire. Therefore, empirically rich comparative studies could particularly enhance our understanding of the changing place of Islam in contemporary Russia, a federation that in many respects appears to be well on its way to becoming a unitary state (Oversloot 2009).

Second, this study, when considered in the context of a broader state support for neo-traditionalist Islams, piques the question of *to which state* is the local "traditional" version of the religion loyal? Tatarstan no longer positions itself as a sovereign state, yet DUMRT, although declaring its fealty to Russia, is foremost loyal to the Kazan-based

government. The regional and federal authorities appear to speak in a unified voice, but, again, with another political-territorial rupture of Russia, the Spiritual Board could prove a powerful institution for mobilizing Tatarstan's *umma*. Ramzan Kadyrov, the president of Chechnya, where the institutionalization of "traditional" Islam in no small measure was based on the Tatarstani model (interview with Mukhametshin 2010), has already been accused of leveraging the centralized institutions of "traditional" Chechen Islam to return his republic on the path "towards autonomy" (Ferris-Rotman 2010). Each Muslim-majority region of Russia now has its own Spiritual Board (although DUMRT is the only independent regional Muftiate, i.e. not aligned with one of the all-Russian Spiritual Boards), which raises similar issues in each of them.

Third, and perhaps most fundamentally, this dissertation indicates that Suny's assessment, issued more than a decade ago, of Russia's "chronic failure to construct an identity" (Suny 1999, 141) largely remains true today. The "multinational Russian people" propagated by Putin by definition would be grounded in a civic identity, implying the existence of a vibrant civil society. The mosque, synagogue, and church are among the foundation stones of civil society. The state's management of the mosque, as seen in the case of Tatarstan, is indeed symptomatic of post-Soviet Russia's "chronic failure" to cultivate a post-imperial, civically defined national identity.

Implications for the Social Scientific Study of Islam

There exists a strong tendency to view Islam as a thing unto itself, an all-embracing, monolithic religion-as-culture that defines the Muslim's politics, economics, and so on. Yet Islamic identity, like any other religious identity, is conditioned by a

particular matrix of cultural, historical, geographical, economic, and other factors. The trajectory of the post-Soviet Islamic revival in Tatarstan has been shaped by the Tatars' identity as a specific Sunni Muslim Turkic people, their geographical location at the far northern periphery of the Muslim world, and their centuries-long history of living within an Orthodox Christian – and then atheist – empire. The precursors to the two main Tatar Islamic movements that have been revived in the past two decades – Jadidism and traditionalism – were themselves influenced by these same basic factors, as discussed in Chapter III. The traditionalist Muslims in the Middle Volga were appreciative of the tolerance ensured by the Tsars and Tsarinas (after Catherine II "legalized" Islam in Russia), yet were anxious that any significant integration into Russian culture would weaken their faith and, ultimately, their separate identity. The original Jadidists were religious reformers/modernizers around the same time Al-Afghani was spreading his gospel of Islamic reform/modernization. However, unlike the latter, whose religious reform movement arose as a reaction *against* the British Empire, the Tatar Jadidists sought greater participation and representation *within* the Russian Empire. Their drive to modernize Islam was foremost a program to develop the Tatar nation, not an effort to adapt modernity to the nation of Islam.

While Islamic revivals today may be conditioned by sectarian differences, language, geography, history, socio-economic development, and other factors, all cases of Islamic revival take place within a modern political-territorial order that assumes states represent a defined "people," understood as a nation. Two prevalent paradigms in the social scientific interrogation of Islam, however, preclude a serious consideration of the role territory plays in shaping Islamic identity (as discussed in Chapter II). The first

paradigm, common in the academic International Relations community, may be termed "Islamic exceptionalism," which views Islam as fundamentally incompatible with the modern political-territorial order. IR neorealism *à la* Huntington is most notorious for asserting the *umma*'s innate aversion to its territorial division, but advocates of IR's cultural turn, although more sympathetic to Islam, similarly argue that Muslims are averse to Western notions of national community (e.g. Pasha 2003; Mandaville 2011). A second paradigm, termed the "comparative fundamentalisms" model, views the current upswing in Islamic fundamentalism as part of a global shift toward stricter forms of faith that is witnessed among all major world religions as a result of the "crisis of the nation-state" brought about by globalization (Castells 2010, 21).

As this study has shown, neither of these paradigms, in positing Islam's innate aversion to the nation-state or a globalization-fuelled crisis of the nation-state giving rise to Islamic fundamentalism, would likely provide a plausible account of the Tatars' post-Soviet Islamic revival. From the beginning, the Tatars' religious renaissance was tightly connected with the revival of national culture and the pursuit of sovereign statehood. It is virtually impossible to separate Islam from Tatar national identity – the question is the relative weight religion assumes in the balance of Tatar national identity, depending on the political-territorial circumstances (see Chapters III, IV, and V). The "pure Islam" espoused by the more radical Tatar nationalists was not a result of globalization, but came in tandem with intensified grievances and territorial demands. Neither paradigm would be able to differentiate expressions of the revival of Tatar traditionalism from expressions of Salafism in Tatarstan, as both phenomena would be grouped together under a single heading: Islamic Fundamentalism. For those seeking to understand the

nature and significance of Islam as a social and political force in the contemporary world, the task at hand is to go beyond the perception that Islamic identities and practices are somehow incompatible with the nation-state and interrogate the ideas and ideologies underpinning the modern political-territorial order that condition Islam's social and political expression.

Directions for Future Research in the Post-Soviet Realm

The increasing politicization of Islam and the shift toward more conservative forms of religious expression that have been observed in Tatarstan in recent years have been similarly noted in many other parts of the post-Soviet realm. This is the case not only in Chechnya and the broader North Caucasus, where Islamist-inspired violence threatens regional stability, but also – in varying intensities – in the newly independent states of Central Asia and the Caucasus. A notable example is Uzbekistan, where, as Rashid (2002) explores, the militant Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) espouses a Jihadist ideology that is evocative of the Taliban.[111] The specter of religious fundamentalism has also arisen in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, where, as research by Karagiannis (2005; 2007) indicates, *Hizb-ut-Tahrir* has gained a foothold and its call for the reestablishment of an Islamic caliphate is said to be growing in popularity. Even Azerbaijan, which can "rightly claim to be among the most progressive and secular Islamic societies," according to Cornell, has witnessed a "rise in radical Islamic groups" in recent years (Cornell 2006, 8).

[111] Members of the IMU were caught fighting alongside the Taliban against US forces in the early stages of the military action that was launched in late 2001.

As noted at the beginning of this thesis, examinations of Islam in the post-Soviet space often explain the upswing in "fundamentalism" or "extremism" as a local expression of a global social movement (e.g. Karagiannis 2010) or as being "guided by external influences" (Cornell 2006, 8). Yet the findings of this dissertation lend support to Khalid's assertion, made in his discussion of Islam in contemporary Uzbekistan, that much of the literature "suffers from a serious lack of comparative and historical perspective [and] underestimates the strength of Soviet-era nation- and state-building" (Khalid 2003, 573-574). Indeed, all Muslims in the post-Soviet realm are united in the fact that their group identities were first territorialized with the creation of Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republics or Union Republics. Institutions were organized within the spatial extent of these new territorial entities and employed to modernize Soviet Muslims through their nationalization/secularization. These territorialized institutions subsequently were used, as seen in Chapter III, to denationalize the same populations with the goal of ultimately creating a *homo soveticus* consisting of peoples "national in form, socialist in content" (Stalin 1934, 158). Thus, Muslim identities in places as diverse as Turkmenistan, Karbardino-Balkaria, and Tajikistan have been fundamentally shaped by common political-territorial processes, carried out through a common set of institutions and occurring at roughly the same time over a period of seven decades.

This commonality of experience in the USSR forcefully points to the need for comparative studies of post-Soviet Islamic revivals. The findings from this dissertation suggest that a starting point would be a comparison of how "traditional" Islam is represented by political elites in various parts of the former Soviet Union. "Traditional" religious practices, as discussed earlier in this chapter, are today supported by state

authorities in all of Russia's Muslim-majority regions in a campaign to foster a common multiethnic national identity. The relevant academic literature indicates that "traditional" understandings of Islam are similarly propagated by political elites in many of the newly independent states of Central Asia and the Caucasus as part of broader nation- and state-building processes in each of those countries (e.g. Akbarzadeh 1996a; 1996b; Tohidi 1997; Motika 2001; Kuru 2002; Kaiser 2003; Khalid 2003; Peyrouse 2007).[112] This commonly shared concern for cultivating "official" Islam – although defined differently in each newly independent state – would suggest that the legacy of Soviet-era nation- and state-building continues to exert a strong influence on the character of religious expression across the now sovereign borders of the post-Soviet realm. Comparative investigations into how the inclusive and exclusive borders of neo-traditionalisms are represented by political elites in different parts of the post-Soviet realm would potentially yield greater insight into dynamics shaping Islamic expression in Russia, Central Asia, and the Caucasus.

This study models two methodological approaches for comparative studies of the changing nature of Islamic revival. First is the importance of studying the practices and representations of key institutions such as the Muslim Spiritual Board of Tatarstan (see Chapter IV). The collapse of the Soviet Union was followed by the disintegration of all the three Muftiates – covering Central Asia, Transcaucasia, and the North Caucasus – created by Stalin during World War II. However, each of the five newly independent states of Central Asia, along with Azerbaijan, promptly recreated new Spiritual Boards

[112] Examinations of the relationship between Islam and nation- and state-building in the post-Soviet space have almost exclusively focused on single-country case studies. A notable exception is an article by Hann and Pelkman (2009) in which "traditional" Islam and nation-building in Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan are compared.

coterminous with their political boundaries. Much as the Kazan-based Muftiate today promotes an "official" Islam (and combats "unofficial" versions of the faith) that is loyal to the state and is intended to contribute to the construction of a multiethnic national identity in Russia, the Spiritual Boards of the newly sovereign states of Central Asia and Caucasus encourage Islamic expressions deemed "traditional" as a way to bolster the nation-building efforts in those countries. Comparative studies could constructively investigate how preferred understandings of the faith are communicated and reinforced by the newly independent Spiritual Boards and how neo-traditionalists ideas are reproduced, or resisted, by rank-and-file clergy and "common" believers.

My reading of the changing morphology and meaning of the Kazan Kremlin in Chapter V represents a second useful methodological approach. The construction of the behemoth Kul-Sharif Mosque is exceptional only in its relative location inside a kremlin, next to an Orthodox cathedral. Grandiose mosques and other religiously themed monuments have been erected throughout the post-Soviet realm as vessels to communicate and reinforce notions of "ideal community." For instance, as if to outdo Tatarstan, a mosque even larger than Kul-Sharif was opened in the center of Grozny in 2008 after only three years of construction (Reuters 2008). The temple's name – "The Heart of Chechnya" – makes it clear that the bulky structure is presented as a vivid "picture [of] the nation" (Daniels 1993, 5).[113] In another example, Kazakhstani President Nursultan Nazerbaev moved his country's capital from Almaty to Astana (previously little more than a village) in 1997 as part of his nation- and state-building efforts (Schatz 2003); in doing so, he decreed the construction of what is said to be Central Asia's

[113] Construction for the "Heart of Chechnya" was financed by Moscow.

biggest mosque, officially opened in 2005, as a centerpiece of the city's architectural ensemble. These and other grand new temples, much like the monumental Stalin-era architecture in Moscow (Adams 2008), reflect a regime's ideology and beckon geographers to unravel and interpret their meaning.[114] However, preferred understandings of Islam and national community are embedded less spectacularly in multiple other "unofficially sacred" (Kong 2005) sites and landscapes in the post-Soviet realm. Future studies could draw on the case study of the Kazan Kremlin presented here and examine the politics underpinning the siting, design, and use of a number of such symbolic landscapes.

At a cursory glance, the upswing in Islamic conservatism in various parts of the post-Soviet realm gives some credence to notions of Islamic exceptionalism or theses of transnational fundamentalist networks arising as a result of a "crisis of the nation-state" (Castells 2010, 21). Yet as I have shown in this dissertation, the growing conservatism in religious practices and expressions in Tatarstan (and probably other Muslim-majority regions of the country) that has been observed in recent years relates more to the process of nation- and state-(re)building that has accompanied the Putin-era political-territorial recentralization of the Russian Federation. Islamic revivals in the newly independent states of Central Asia and the Caucasus have also been intertwined with nation- and state-building initiatives that have taken place in the past 20 years, as illustrated in other

[114] If oversized new mosques in Kazan, Grozny, Astana, and other temples in post-Soviet capitals are reminiscent of Stalinist architecture, reflecting the communist ideology, monuments to Niiaz Turkmenbashi ("Father of the Turkmens") in Turkmenistan can be considered updated versions of monuments to Lenin. Monuments to the now-deceased first president of Turkmenistan mix Islamic imagery with his cult of personality, casting the ruler as a "new prophet" while communicating the "state-imposed version of Islam" (Hann and Pelkmans 2009, 1532).

research. Underpinning these various religious rebirths is the shared experience of powerful nation- and state-building in the twentieth century.

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