



# Caucasus and Central Asia Newsletter

The Caucasus and Central Asia Program

at the University of California, Berkeley

Issue 4

Summer 2003

## Issue 4, Summer 2003:

Notes from the Executive Director <i>Sanjyot Mehendale</i> .....	1
Mosque and State in the Caucasus, 1828-1841 <i>Dana Sherry</i> .....	3
Activity of the Russian Orthodox Church Among the Muslim Natives of Caucasus in Imperial Russia <i>Manana Gnolidze-Swanson</i> .....	9
Faculty news .....	17
Book Review: Michael Goodson and Larry Griffin <i>Wali Ahmadi</i> .....	21
Rocks and Hard Places: Society and the Environment in Central Asia: Abstracts .....	23
Report on Current Research in Shari-Sabz, Uzbekistanp <i>Kim Codella</i> .....	26

Caucasus and Central Asia Program  
University of California, Berkeley  
260 Stephens Hall #2304  
Berkeley, CA 94720-2304  
<http://socrates.berkeley.edu/caucasus/index.html>

Editors: Sanjyot Mehendale and Dana Sherry  
Please send suggestions, corrections, or  
inquiries to [ccasp@uclink.berkeley.edu](mailto:ccasp@uclink.berkeley.edu).  
This publication is made possible by funding  
from the National Security Education Program.

## Notes from the Executive Director

*Sanjyot Mehendale*

I am pleased to report that the Caucasus and Central Asia Program (CCAsP) has had a very productive and exciting spring semester. Visiting scholar Professor Vitaly Naumkin, President of the International Center for Strategic and Political Studies in Moscow, Russia, taught a well-attended and very well received lecture course entitled "Islam and Politics in the Former Soviet Union," through the Department of Political Science at UCB. In addition, highlighting our commitment to the development of regional languages curriculum, Nigora Bozorova taught "Studies in the Languages of the Caucasus and Central Asia: Introductory Uzbek" and Shorena Kurtsikidze taught "Studies in the Languages of the Caucasus and Central Asia: Second-Year Georgian Language and Culture."

Aside from developing and sponsoring courses on the region, our primary focus this spring has been our third annual CCAsP conference, this year titled "Rocks and Hard Places: Society and the Environment in Central Asia" (March 14-15, 2003). The conference included twelve participants and the presentation of eight formal papers. Abstracts of these papers are published in this issue of the newsletter. The conference was attended by a wide audience from the university community and from the public. In addition to the depth of the research presented and the rich exchanges that ensued during the conference, the event culminated in an agreement with scholars from Wellesley College and the University of Pennsylvania on the need to create a permanent presence for research in the region. We resolved to investigate the possibilities of establishing a center for Central Asia research in the region to facilitate academic exchanges with institutions in the region and provide a base for US scholars and students while conducting research in Central Asia.

Following up on this very rewarding semester, I am very pleased to announce what I believe will prove to be an extremely interesting upcoming academic year. The fruits of our recent efforts have culminated in two research volumes to be published in the near future. The proceedings of the 2002 CCAsP conference, "Currents, Cross-Currents and Conflict: Transnationalism and Diaspora in the Caucasus and Central Asia," will be published by Routledge in a volume entitled "Central Asia and the Caucasus: Transnationalism and Diaspora." The contributions explore, among other issues, Caucasus and Central Asian diaspora communities within the region and around

the world and how these groups are affecting policies in their host nations with regard to their home countries.

A second publication, produced by Cal Performances and set to appear this summer, documents Yo Yo Ma's Silk Road Project's residency at UC Berkeley in April 2002. This volume will include the full text of papers presented at the "Sound Travels: A Musical Journey Along the Silk Road" conference and reports on the various activities organized during that time.

In addition to these edited volumes, CCAsP is pleased to announce the forthcoming publication of two working papers made possible by NSEP funding. One working paper is authored by Vitaly Naumkin, entitled "Militant Islam in Central Asia: The Case of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan." The second, by Edward W. Walker, executive director of the Berkeley Program in Soviet and Post-Soviet Studies, is entitled "Ideologies, Identities and Cleavages: The Impact of War in Chechnya, Tajikistan, and Afghanistan." Both working papers will be available at the CCAsP website later this year.

CCAsP also has good news to report regarding the development of teaching on Central Asia and the Caucasus. Nigora Bozorova will continue teaching the Uzbek language in the next academic year, and Shorena Kurstikidze will offer first year Georgian. Also, Dr. Alma Kunanbaeva has agreed to be our spring 2004 visiting scholar. Dr. Kunanbaeva is a cultural anthropologist specializing in Central Asia who has worked on issues such as cultural identity, nationalism and oral history in Central Asia. She will teach two courses through the Department of Near Eastern Studies, one on Kazakh language and culture, and the other on nationalism, identity and culture in post-Soviet Central Asia. In addition, we are making arrangements to host Dr. Boris Marshak of the Hermitage in St. Petersburg, director of excavations at Panjikent, Tajikistan, to teach Silk Road art and archaeology in the Department of Near Eastern Studies in spring 2004.

Potential events for 2003-4 include a program entitled "Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region: Central Asia or China?" Through a series of workshops to be held throughout the academic year, the program will explore the cross-border and global transnational forces that have an impact on the political, cultural, and social landscape in Xinjiang and whether these forces pull the province towards China or away from it towards Central Asia and the Middle East. These workshops will culminate in spring 2004 with the fourth annual CCAsP conference.

The format of the *CCAsP Newsletter* has also evolved, as we have made a few additions that will become recurring features. In addition to its main articles, we plan to include regular book reviews and announcements on research conducted by UC Berkeley scholars as a way to highlight the development of Central Asia and Caucasus research at our institution. This issue includes a review by Prof. Wali Ahmadi, Assistant Professor of Near Eastern Studies, of two books on the Taliban in Afghanistan.

This issue of our newsletter includes two articles that highlight the history of Islam in the Caucasus. One, by Manana Gnolidze-Swanson, senior research fellow in modern and contemporary history of the Near and Middle East at the G. Tsereteli Institute of Oriental Studies at the Academy of Sciences of Georgia and a former visiting scholar at UC Berkeley, focuses on the missionary activity of the Russian Orthodox Church among Islamic communities in the Caucasus during the late imperial period. The second, by UC Davis history graduate student (and CCAsP publications coordinator) Dana Sherry, explores attempts to create a Muslim Spiritual Administration for the Caucasus in the early 19th century.

For more information on CCAsP activities, please visit our website at: <http://socrates.berkeley.edu/~bsp/caucasus/index.html>. You may also email CCAsP at [ccasp@uclink.berkeley.edu](mailto:ccasp@uclink.berkeley.edu) or leave a message at the CCAsP office for Sanjyot Mehendale (510) 643-5845, or Connie Hwong (510) 643-6737.

## Mosque and State in the Caucasus, 1828-1841

Dana Sherry

In the first half of the nineteenth century, Russia's presence in the North Caucasus was characterized above all by the military methods used in attempts to bring the region under imperial rule. The historiography of this period has focused primarily on the war, turning to civil administration only with M.S. Vorontsov's appointment as viceroy of the Caucasus in 1845.<sup>1</sup> Although political methods, as administrators termed their efforts to utilize local collaborators, proved difficult to implement among *gortsy* of the North Caucasus, this lack of success should not be read as a lack of imperial interest in establishing relations with Muslim leaders as a means to institute Russian rule. Russian officials from at least Ermolov's time sought connections with the ulema<sup>2</sup> as well as secular figures as part of their efforts to control the local population, and during the war with Shamil this drive to find collaborators intensified. Even when they failed, these efforts reveal aspects of the imperial project that cannot be understood through military history alone. Here, I draw on materials that appear in *Akty sobrannye Kavkazskoiu arkheograficheskoiu kommissieiu* (Tiflis, 1866-1904) in an initial exploration of these interactions between the state and the ulema.<sup>3</sup> I focus on the extended and turbulent relationship between a member of the Persian ulema and the Russian administration as they attempted to create a Muslim religious assembly in the Caucasus, and on the changing notions of what this assembly should accomplish.

The first Muslim Spiritual Assembly was created in Orenburg by Catherine II in 1788, and it served as the model for the Crimean assembly created in 1794. These institutions were intended to connect the state with its Muslim subjects, and their precise responsibilities changed in response to demands from Petersburg.<sup>4</sup> The idea of creating a Muslim spiritual board in the Caucasus was first raised on February 12, 1828, when Ivan Paskiewicz, then governor general of the region, wrote to Petersburg to propose that Mir-Fettakh, a high-ranking Muslim cleric (specifically, he was a *mujtahid*<sup>5</sup>) from Tabriz (in western Persia), should be made head of the Muslim ulema in the Caucasus. The Russians did not seem aware at this point that there could be a problem in the fact that Mir-Fettakh was Shiite, while most of the Muslims in the Caucasus were Sunni. As time passed, they recognized that Shiites and Sunnis would need separate treatment, but that came much later. (On a related note, the administration eventually concluded that only religious figures from the Caucasus could have significant influence in the region, a reflection of the inability of Sunni Muslims from Kazan to draw a following among the *gortsy*.<sup>6</sup>) Thus, while Paskiewicz's request to install Mir-Fettakh as head of a spiritual assembly was approved in theory, it would first be necessary to create the structure to support such a position. From 1828 until 1841, the story of Russian attempts to institutionalize the Muslim ulema is inextricably intertwined with the story of its relations with Mir-Fettakh.

Mir-Fettakh met Paskiewicz during Russia's recent campaigns in Persia, when he provided invaluable assistance to the Russians by keeping the populace of Tabriz passive under Russian occupation. He wanted to develop lasting ties with the Russian administration, and his high stature in the Muslim community suggested that he could make a very valuable contribution to the consolidation of Russian rule over its new territory. AKAK show no information about Mir-Fettakh as an individual, but he was impressive enough to dominate the administration's imaginings of how to handle Caucasus Muslims for over a decade.

Initially, Mir-Fettakh and the Russian administration displayed great enthusiasm for the project, which could bring great rewards to both parties. There seemed few obstacles to their mutual assistance: Mir-Fettakh's influence was at its height, and the Russian empire no longer had to compete with outside powers for control over the entire



*Mushtaid Garden in Tbilisi, reputedly laid out by Mir-Fettakh.*

Caucasus. Moreover, Murid resistance in the North Caucasus that would cost so many lives in the coming decades had only recently begun. The region seemed quiet, and the Russian state made no heavy demands of the proposed religious assembly. Petersburg wrote to Paskiewicz in April 1828 to outline the functions of the Orenburg Spiritual Assembly as a potential model to use in the Caucasus, and in this description, the mufti who made up these boards enjoyed relative independence as long as their decisions did not run counter to the spirit of Russian laws. The religious assembly was meant to ensure that no undesirable movements developed, but the state did not advocate using the boards as a means to interfere actively with the Muslim community.

This system of loose controls was not taken up in Transcaucasia, as indeed it had begun to change in Orenburg, where since 1825 the imperial government had been taking a more active role in appointing muftis.<sup>7</sup> Although the Catherinian model of loose control (based on the assumption that Islamic influence would quickly fade in the face of Russian culture) would be advanced intermittently throughout the century, Russian authorities were not fully committed to it – yet they were unable to advance another principle of rule. This inability to articulate what they sought to achieve with a religious assembly in the Caucasus would plague them throughout their negotiations with Mir-Fettakh and formed one of the great impediments to putting a plan into practice.

This is not to say that attempts to clarify their goals were not made, and Mir-Fettakh was made a part of this process. In June 1828, the mujtahid was appointed to a newly formed Caucasus Committee<sup>8</sup> that was to gather information on the Muslim inhabitants of the Caucasus and make recommendations on how to incorporate them into the Russian polity. Three weeks later, Mir-Fettakh sent a letter to Paskiewicz that defined his ideal religious hierarchy. A sermon exhorting Muslims to submit to Russian rule was enclosed with this letter, perhaps as proof of the good services he could render. (Contrary to stereotypes of “Oriental” rhetoric and in contradistinction to Paskiewicz’s flowery letters to the mujtahid, Mir-Fettakh wasted no time on niceties before launching into his demands.) Aside from substantial and detailed requests for money and property, Mir-Fettakh focused on three main points:

1. State salaries for Muslim religious figures (including teachers) and their administrative staff.
2. Mir-Fettakh was to be the ultimate authority on religious matters for all Muslims in the Caucasus.
3. Mir-Fettakh’s unique and influential relationship with the state was to be formalized.

Specifically, the last point called for Mir-Fettakh to be the sole point of contact between the Muslim ulema and the Russian state, and it also would give him the right to propose legislation, the right to correct any misguided decisions by local commanders, and the right to appeal to a higher authority if local commanders did not heed his advice. Clearly, Mir-Fettakh’s plan was meant to give him substantial political and religious influence in the region, as well as great wealth. At the same time, he was willing to bring the rank-and-file ulema closer to the state by putting them on the imperial payroll. In this plan, the line between the secular and the religious would be very blurred indeed, as the state would be brought further into religious life and an explicitly religious figure would have the right to propose imperial legislation. It would also give the head of the spiritual assembly much greater influence on the Russian state than his counterparts in the Orenburg and Tauride Assemblies enjoyed. The record is silent as to the reception of this missive, and it would be years before the Caucasus Committee would produce reports of its own. When Russian reports were finally written, the issues laid out by Mir-Fettakh figured prominently in them, though they would be interpreted differently.

In the meantime, Mir-Fettakh proved his worth again as he not only kept the Shiite population quiet during the first Murid uprising in spring 1829 but even persuaded many to fight in Russian ranks. Petersburg sent word in February 1830 that his appointment as head of the Caucasus ulema was moving forward – confirming that it had not yet been approved, although he remained in good standing until the end of the year and even received an audience with Nicholas in Petersburg in December.

In January 1831, the Caucasus Committee finally produced a general report on the state of Caucasia, but it had not managed to collect data on the Muslim ulema or determine how to work them into an administrative apparatus. The Committee was particularly frustrated by its inability even to identify who exactly the ulema were, as they were virtually indistinguishable from the lay population and were often simply elected by their communities. To judge by secondary materials, this accurately described the relationship between the ulema and their community, but these observations could not be transformed into a coherent system of rule.

And with this inconclusive report, efforts to construct a religious assembly stalled. Mir-Fettakh’s personal fortunes took a turn for the worse when Paskiewicz was sent to help combat the Polish insurrection in October 1831. The mujtahid followed his patron shortly thereafter, spending 1832 in Warsaw. When he returned to

Tiflis in 1833, Mir-Fettakh's relations with Paskiewicz's successor, General Rozen, began on a fairly positive note, but within a year they had deteriorated so far that Mir-Fettakh submitted the first of his many unsuccessful petitions for permission to return to Persia. From this point forward, his career went into a long, steady decline, though the state would never relinquish its hold on him.

Rozen submitted his substantial notes to the Committee's next proposal for a religious assembly in November 1837, almost seven years after the committee's first report.<sup>9</sup> By this time, the situation in the region looked grim. The Murid movement had proven itself capable of vigorous resistance, and the Caucasus administration had begun to see the religious assembly as a way to persuade the Muslim populace to accept Russian rule peacefully. If defiant imams like Shamil could evoke such fervent support, perhaps pliant figures could do a good service to the state, but the problem was finding them. The previous proposal, Rozen complained, did not account for the

difficulty of imposing rules on the extremely independent ulema and their communities, and moreover it was out of tune with the government's broader goals. Rozen did not spell out what those broader goals were, but his revisions suggested that the state aimed to rationalize Muslim religious structures and take them out of the secular sphere as defined by the Russian state. He focused on the following points:

1. State salaries for the religious bureaucracy (as the ulema neither have nor should have the funds to pay for this themselves).
2. A hierarchy must be established and a single person must serve as the connection between the religious assembly and the state.
3. Sharia law must be limited to spiritual affairs, and any influence of Sharia law on the workings of secular courts must be eradicated immediately.

Like Mir-Fettakh, Rozen was concerned to involve Russian monies in the workings of the ulema, though unlike

---

## Sound Travels:

### *A Musical Journey Along the Silk Road*

Overture: The Silk Roads Past and Present  
*Sanjyot Mehendale, UC Berkeley*

The Buddhist Journey Along the Silk Roads  
*Lewis Lancaster, UC Berkeley*

Islam's Path to China: Muslim Cultures and Communities of the Silk Roads  
*Dru C. Gladney, University of Hawaii, Manoa*

Engaging the Senses: Music, Art and Imaginative Practice at Dunhuang  
*Patricia Berger, UC Berkeley*

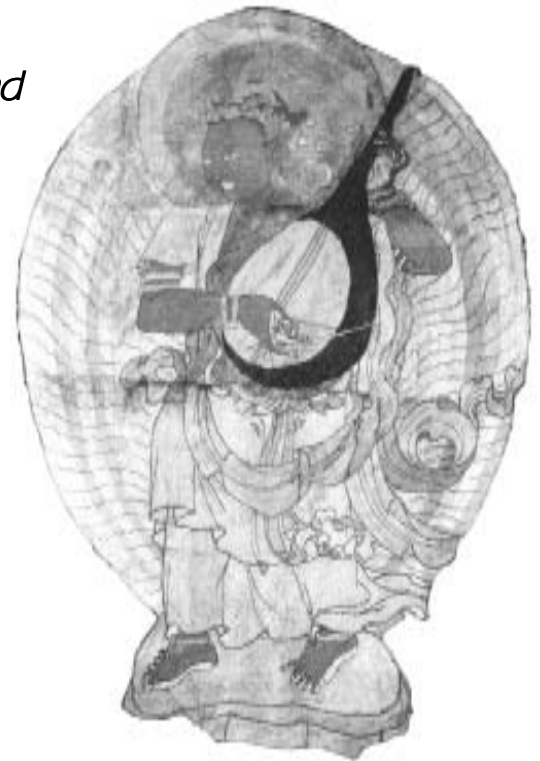
Music to Medicine: Central Asian Influences on Chinese Daily Life  
*Susan Whitfield, International Dunhuang Project*

The Virtual Silk Roads Atlas: Exploring Culture in Time and Space  
*The Electronic Cultural Atlas Initiative, UC Berkeley*

What if Chinggis Khan had a Tape Recorder? Music along the Silk Road Then and Now  
*Theodore Levin, Dartmouth College*

The Earliest Documentation of Musical Contacts Between the Ancient Near East and the More Distant East  
*Anne Draffkorn Kilmer, UC Berkeley*

Lutes Along the Silk Roads: A First Millennium Migration  
*Bo Lawergren, Hunter College, City University of New York*



Some Interethnic Musical Phenomena of the Silkroad:  
Toward a History of the 'Drawn-Out' Singing in Eurasia  
*Izaly Zemtsovsky, University of Wisconsin, Madison*

Nomadic Civilization as an Art of Interpretation  
*Alma Kunanbaeva, University of Wisconsin, Madison*

For information on this publication, please contact Cal Performances or CCAsP at [ccasp@uclink.berkeley.edu](mailto:ccasp@uclink.berkeley.edu).

the mujtahid, Rozen did not suggest paying for teachers at Muslim schools. He also agreed with Mir-Fettakh's proposal to restrict clerical access to Russian officials, though he made no reference to legislative rights for the top Islamic official. Particularly noteworthy is his attention to the sharia courts. These religious courts had been a contested matter since Ermolov's time at least, but this marked their first appearance in discussions of the religious assembly.<sup>10</sup>

Although Rozen's program retained some of Mir-Fettakh's proposals, the powerful figure at the center of Mir-Fettakh's plan is totally absent from Rozen's. Instead, the state overshadowed any Muslim members of the proposed religious assembly. The strength of Shamil's imamate seems to have made the Russian state reluctant to create a strong Muslim leader under its own auspices. There was apparently no longer room for an influential yet trustworthy Muslim leader, and accordingly the head of the religious assembly would have much more limited authority than in the model proposed by Mir-Fettakh. Although the state would be involved in religious affairs by providing salaries for religious officials, there would be no reciprocal influence of the ulema over state practice, and the practice of Sharia law, the source of much of the ulema's authority in their communities, would be sharply restricted. Moreover, Rozen was the first administrator to propose separate religious boards for Shiite and Sunni Muslims. This appreciation of the distinctions between Muslim groups revealed further limits to Mir-Fettakh's utility.

Not surprisingly, Mir-Fettakh's personal standing suffered in this environment. Rozen claimed that Fettakh did not regularly attend the meetings of the Caucasus Committee, and that his comments when finally offered were unsatisfactory. Mir-Fettakh's objections to the proposed legislation, as reported by Rozen, were understandable. He remained committed to his original vision of a religious assembly that would support the Russian state, yet give its head great influence over the Muslim populace and among Russian administrators alike. He argued that as a mujtahid, Islamic hierarchy by definition placed him above imams (such as Shamil, perhaps), for only mujtahids had the right to interpret Islamic law. Yet, as a mujtahid he was obligated to recognize the authority of secular rulers, and any interference of religious leaders in secular affairs was contrary to Islamic law. Rozen took this argument as a claim to "unlimited power," a stronger reading of the statements than I can find support for. He concluded that given these views, it was possible that Mir-Fettakh would not accept the position as head of the Shi'a assembly.

Nevertheless, despite his questionable views and low standing in Rozen's eyes, Mir-Fettakh should retain the right to interpret the Koran for Shiites and the right to make suggestions concerning religious matters directly to the central administration, albeit in an unspecified capacity. Such an arrangement would rule out the sort of clear hierarchy that Rozen claimed to seek, but somehow it was not possible to create a system that excluded Mir-Fettakh entirely.

The record shows no response from Petersburg to this report, and for the next 18 months AKAK focused solely on Mir-Fettakh as an individual. He again petitioned to be allowed to go to Persia, and despite Rozen's ominous warning that his services to Russia made such a trip dangerous, he finally went back to Tabriz. The date of his departure is not noted, but he returned in fall of 1841. In his absence, the proposed religious boards became even more explicitly means of inculcating Russian propaganda.

In April 1839, Evgenii Golovin, now governor general of the Caucasus, was optimistic about the eventual decline of Islam under Russian administration. He claimed it would not be possible to impose order on the ulema, but that religious figures had only gained influence due to the corrupt rule of the khans. The introduction of Russian courts had already weakened the ulema's hold on the population, and he predicted that this process would continue. Muridism had influence primarily on those areas that did not yet have solid civilian rule, and in those regions Islam could have serious repercussions. Nevertheless, in time the Caucasus would become like other Russian provinces and the ulema ultimately would be made to accept "an order that was beneficial for it."

This faith in the gradual, inevitable erosion of Islam was not advocated by all members of the administration, as evidenced by a strident report from approximately 1840. It stressed the author's alarm at the combination of secular and religious authority (by Russian standards) embodied by the ulema. Their secular authority must be broken (i.e., they must not act as judges), though their religious functions were to be left intact, and the means to achieve this goal lay in careful observation of the clerics and in appointing reliable figures to important posts. In this way, ultimately the religious assembly would become the government's most reliable means of shaping the future views of Muslims by ensuring that the ulema act in the spirit of the government and depriving the ulema of the means to oppose the government.

In this plan, the boards are unequivocally tools of surveillance and state control, in the purest Foucauldian sense. The author wanted the ulema to become a means of

getting pro-Russian propaganda to the Muslim populace, and there was no question of allowing communities to select their own ulema independent of government approval. Yet, as the author emphasizes, the head of the religious assembly could not be appointed directly by the Russian administration, or, like Mir-Fettakh, he would be compromised in the eyes of his flock. Thus, the drive for control was linked with a drive for secrecy – a new twist in the equation. It coincided with an increase of correspondence on the need to send secretly pro-Russian ulema to Dagestan and Chechnya to preach against Shamil (not a new practice, but one which seemed to have increasingly occupied strategic thinking at this time).

A report presented in 1841 drew on views expressed by Rozen, Golovin, and the anonymous author of the ca. 1840 report, with one addition. Specifically, it called for the following restrictions:

1. The ulema must not be responsible for education (a new argument that was offered without commentary, perhaps as part of the drive to keep religious figures out of secular domains).
2. Sharia and Russian law must not be allowed to co-exist.
3. The lower ulema must be subordinated to the religious elite.

This report focused primarily on the difficulties encountered in establishing this assembly rather than on the shape it should take. Nevertheless, the report shared Golovin's confidence that the Muslim populace would eventually and naturally come to adopt Russian practices. Surprisingly, the language about Mir-Fettakh and the rights that he should retain regardless of his connection to the assembly was inserted unaltered from Rozen's 1837 report – despite the mujtahid's flight to Persia (presumably he was back in Tiflis by this point) and recalcitrant behavior. The report made no progress on determining the shape or staff of the would-be assembly, and it concluded with the assertion that time would resolve troubling issues naturally. Nicholas accepted this conclusion, as he confirmed that the administration should continue unchanged for the time being and that regional officials should constrain themselves to fact-finding until such time as it would be possible to impose a proper Muslim assembly.

It appears that this was the last proposal for a Muslim religious board until after the conclusion of the war. The demands of the intensifying war in the north Caucasus made such concerns secondary, and in December 1841, Mir-Fettakh's collaboration with the Russians ended abruptly when he left Tiflis for parts and reasons unknown, causing a scandal among Russian administra-

tors. His motives for embarking on this partnership in the first place are not spelled out in the documents, and this confusion made it difficult to predict what he would do after breaking with Russia. It seems logical that his close relationship with Paskiewicz would have played a role in his decision to work with Russia, but even before Mir-Fettakh left, Rozen proposed another motivation for his actions. He noted that the mujtahid had bad relations with Persian crown prince Abbas Mirza, and he claimed that the mujtahid had always wanted to return to Tabriz but had to wait for the prince's death. Mir-Fettakh's petitions to return to Persia did begin after Abbas Mirza died in 1833, but Paskiewicz's departure and bad relations with subsequent governors-general from 1833 onwards also provided reasons to leave.

Once he absconded, Russian officials speculated that he was en route to Constantinople to plea for Ottoman help on behalf of discontented Lezghins and Georgians (disregarding religious affiliations in the latter case), while his servants claimed that he was making the hajj. In the event, he went to Erzerum, where his two sons who were traveling with him died of the plague, and then turned up in Isfahan. Count Medem, the Russian consul there, reported that Mir-Fettakh cited his poor health and his grief at his sons' death as his reasons for returning to Persia. Medem assured Golovin that Mir-Fettakh really did look terrible, and that there was no sign that people thought the Russians had mistreated him and thereby provoked his departure. Golovin remained suspicious of Mir-Fettakh's intentions, even after receiving an emotional letter from Paskiewicz that defended Mir-Fettakh's actions as the typical response of an "Asiatic" to great grief. Nicholas offered to "forgive" Mir-Fettakh and reconfirm his privileges if he returned to Tiflis, but in the end the mujtahid confided to Medem that, "his mind and conscience prevented him from going to Tiflis, that seventeen years ago he had rendered important services to the Russian government and in return he endured great losses."<sup>11</sup> He continued to receive a pension from the Russian government and spent the remainder of his days in Tabriz, where he had lost all his status in the community. A final note appeared to report that he died on October 24, 1852, and with that, this chapter on Russian attempts to establish a Muslim assembly drew to a close.

### *Conclusion*

Although the Russian state did not manage to create a Muslim religious assembly until well after this period (sources cite 1864 or 1872 for Transcaucasia and

1891 for the North Caucasus<sup>12</sup>), these early attempts to institutionalize Islam in the Caucasus are revealing on several levels. First, they show the evolution of the government's attitudes towards the place of Islam in the empire and the origins of policies implemented after the end of the war. Initially, the connections between mosque and state were seen to be loose, meant only to establish some contact between the main religious figures and the state. Mir-Fettakh proposed the idea of a more active collaboration between the two institutions at a time when the Russian administration was looking to increase its involvement in the lives of its subjects, but he envisioned that the head of the assembly would have the power to influence the state in return for bringing the ulema closer into the imperial fold. Gradually, the proposed relationship between them became more unbalanced. Rozen's proposal eliminated the strong head of the assembly and stated the need to limit the province of sharia law, making the ulema weaker than the state and curtailing its influence in Muslim communities. From here, the administration split between the desire to make the ulema an instrument to implement Russian rule, and the old Catherinian style of governance that would let the influence of Islam erode gradually.

After the war, the Russian government did not return to the less restrictive policies of the pre-Shamil era. Principles of tolerance would influence other aspects of civil administration, both after and even during the war, under Count Vorontsov. Yet when the religious boards were ultimately established, they were completely dependent on the state and were de-legitimized in the eyes of the populace. The balance of power clearly favored of the Russian government. At the outset of the conflict, Mir-Fettakh seemed to embody a possibility for collaboration between the Russian state and a viable Islamic leadership, but this potential was never realized. Other intermediaries presented themselves in time, but none excited the same enthusiasm as Mir-Fettakh. For thirteen years, it was impossible for the Russian administration to imagine a Muslim hierarchy that did not include him – and equally impossible to find a way to incorporate him into the imperial system.

### Endnotes

An earlier version of this paper was presented at the Central Eurasian Studies Society, October 2002.

<sup>1</sup> For more details on civil administration in the North Caucasus, see especially Anthony Rhineland, *Prince Michael Vorontsov: Viceroy to the Czar* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1990) and Austin Jersild, *Orientalism and Empire: North Caucasus Mountain Peoples and the Georgian Frontier, 1845-1917*

(Montreal ; Ithaca: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002).

<sup>2</sup> *Ulema* (singular, *alim*) refers to 'those learned in the ways of Islam,' and is the collective term for the members of the Islamic religious establishment, including judges, teachers, scholars of religion, and administrators, etc. The Russian term is *dukhovenstvo*, and they refer to the individual members as *mully*, to Shamil as *imam*, and to Mir-Fettakh as *mudzhtakhid*. Given the complexity of religious titles in the region and the loose usage of Russian officials, I will refer to all Muslim religious figures as *alim* and collectively as *ulema*.

<sup>3</sup> The materials in AKAK are admittedly incomplete, as they do not tell the entire story of Mir-Fettakh's relationship with the state and do not address any other members of the ulema with whom the state had contact, but I believe they begin to offer insight into an important aspect of Russia's administration of the Caucasus. My goal here is not to provide a definitive account of Russian relations with the ulema, but to make use of the documents available to me to suggest directions that more detailed archival research could take.

<sup>4</sup> For changes in expectations of the Orenburg Spiritual Assembly, see Danil' D. Azamatov, "The Muftis of the Orenburg Spiritual Assembly in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries: The Struggle for Power in Russia's Muslim Institution," in Anke von Kugelgen, Michael Kemper, and Allen J. Frank, eds., *Muslim Culture in Russia and Central Asia from the 18<sup>th</sup> to the early 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries. Vol. II: Inter-Regional and Inter-Ethnic Relations* [Leiden; Boston; Köln: Brill Publishing, 2001] pp. 355-384). For the role of Islamic institutions in connecting the Russian state with Muslim subjects more generally, see Robert Crews, "Empire and the Confessional State: Islam and Religious Politics in Nineteenth-Century Russia" (*The American Historical Review*, February 2003, pp. 50-83).

<sup>5</sup> A *mujtahid* is one who is recognized as competent to exercise *ijtihad*. *Ijtihad* is defined by one scholar as "the process of arriving at judgments on points of religious law using reason and the principles of jurisprudence" (Moojan Momen, *An Introduction to Shi'i Islam* [New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1985: xx]).

<sup>6</sup> Unfortunately, AKAK only includes Rozen's report lamenting the inability of a Kazan alim to sway the *gortsy*, and does not offer more information on his dealings with that individual.

<sup>7</sup> Azamatov argues that from 1825, the Russian state took an active role in appointing the head of the Orenburg Spiritual Assembly, and clearly Paskiewicz intended to do the same in the Caucasus, but the extent of Russian influence over religious matters beyond that is unclear.

<sup>8</sup> It is not clear from AKAK what exactly the Committee's mandate was, but it appears to have been an advisory board responsible for gathering statistical information, not proposing policy.

<sup>9</sup> The second report itself was not included in AKAK.

<sup>10</sup> For Ermolov's own discussion of his efforts at judicial reform, see *Zapiski A. P. Ermolova: 1796-1826* (Moskva: "Vysshiaia shkola", 1991: 380).

<sup>11</sup> AKAK t. 9, p. 722. The math is curious here, as AKAK shows Fettakh's relationship with the Russian state dating from 1828. I have been unable to verify whether this calculation was a slip of the tongue, or if the connection goes deeper than it seems.

<sup>12</sup> See Mostashari, Firouzeh, "Colonial Dilemmas: Russian Policies in the Muslim Caucasus," in Robert P. Geraci and Michael Khodarkovsky, eds. *Of Religion and Empire: Missions, Conversion, and Tolerance in Tsarist Russia* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, pp. 229-249), and S. G. Rybakov, *Ustroistvo i nuzhdy upravleniia dukhovnymi delami musul'man v Rossii* (Petrograd: 1917) for discussions of the establishment religious boards.



## Activity of the Russian Orthodox Church Among the Muslim Natives of the Caucasus in Imperial Russia

*Manana Gnolidze-Swanson*

The Caucasus is a region with an incredible variety of ethnic, religious and linguistic groups. The Muslim North Caucasus and Azerbaijan, Orthodox Christian Georgia, and Christian-Monophysite Armenia, together with people of different sects and denominations represent a multidimensional picture of the region. This variety does not, by itself, lead to conflict. The variety encompasses common customs, traditions, and the ethnic and psychological individualism of the Caucasian people.



If measured by diversity and integrity, the most interesting area in the Caucasus could be Georgia, where the majority Orthodox Georgian population has always lived alongside people of different ethnic and religious denominations. Religious faith has never caused war inside the country, but the Orthodox Christianity of Kartli-Kakheti (East Georgia), combined with political aspirations, determined the pro-Russian sympathies of the ruling class. This alliance with Russia in the eighteenth century defined the Caucasus' future destiny to become a part of the Russian Empire. The Treaty of Kuchuk-Kainardji between the Russian Empire and Sublime Porte on 10 July 1774, in articles concerning the Caucasus, pronounced Russia to be the protector of all Orthodox Christians in the East.<sup>1</sup> It prohibited the tribute of young girls and boys from Georgia to the Ottomans<sup>2</sup> – a most despised obligation for Georgia. This act began to create real obstacles to slave trade from the Caucasus.

In 1783, Kartli-Kakheti signed the Treaty of Georgievsk, which continued Russia's political advance into the Caucasus. In it, Georgia openly declared its desire for Russian protection against Turkey and Iran. In exchange for relinquishing part of its political independence, Georgia demanded that its protector help conquer and win back Georgian territories occupied by the Ottomans between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Most importantly for the present analysis, the act established regulations of the two Orthodox Churches (in Russia and Georgia) that made the Patriarch of Georgia a permanent member of the Holy Synod.<sup>3</sup>

This agreement instituted a new relationship between the Georgian Catholicos-Patriarch and the Holy Synod, giving eight degrees of sanctity to the Georgian Patriarch and ranking it behind the Archbishop of Tobolsk.<sup>4</sup> This meant that the Georgian Church lost its independence, coming under the jurisdiction of the Russian Catholicos-Patriarch. Importantly, as the Synod was supervised by a (secular) Ober-Prosecutor who answered to the Empress, the Georgian church became dependent on the Russian state.

Russia needed to articulate a sound ideological basis for extending its political rule over the newly annexed territories, and the Treaty of Georgievsk allowed the Orthodox faith to serve this purpose.

### *The beginning of missionary activity*

The idea to use the Orthodox faith to create a common ideology in the Caucasus was not new. Missionary activity in the region had been pioneered in the eighteenth century by two clergymen, Joseph (Archbishop of Sameba Monastery in Georgia) and Nikolai (head of the Znamensky Monastery in Moscow). In 1743 they presented a petition to the Empress Elizabeth, asking for permission to found a missionary society to spread the Orthodox faith in

---

*Manana Gnolidze-Swanson is a senior research fellow at the G. Tsereteli Institute of Oriental Studies at the Georgian Academy of Sciences*

Ossetia. The petition was approved and led to the establishment of the Clerical Commission of Ossetia in 1745. The Society sent its first missionaries from Moscow the next year. The centre of the mission was Mozdok. Nevertheless, despite its energetic attempts, the Commission did not achieve any significant goals. The instability of Russia's political presence in the North Caucasus led the Empress to abolish it in 1792.

The status of the Georgian Church began to erode in reality after the kingdom of Kartli-Kakheti was joined to Russia in 1801 and lost its independence completely in 1811. The Synod then appointed Varlam Eristavi as Exarch of Georgia (the head of the Georgian Church and a Bishop, ranking below the Patriarch). The Synod obliged him to reform the Georgian church to match Russian Church organisation and also to make Georgia the centre for spreading Orthodox Christianity among the non-Christian population of the Caucasus.<sup>5</sup>

Following the reforms in the Georgian church, the erstwhile Clerical Commission of Ossetia was re-established in 1815, now centred in Tbilisi. The Synod appointed Dositheos, Archbishop of Telavi and of Georgia-Caucasus, as head of the Commission.

The Imperial Treasury distributed the substantial sum of 14,750 rubles annually for the Commission, as well as money for the maintenance of 100 Cossacks and 30 church peasants (the latter served as guides through the mountains). The fact that Cossacks were enlisted indicates Russia's fear of the mountain people's resistance to the missionary project.

In 1810, the kingdom of Imereti (West Georgia) joined Russia. Accordingly, the borders of the Georgian Exarchate expanded to the west to include Megrelia and Abkhazia. Thus, the area of the Commission's renewed activity was already much bigger and included territory beyond the Caucasus Mountains. The main new objectives were directed against Islamic influence in Georgia, specifically in Abkhazia and Saingilo (Kakhi and Zakatala districts of today's Azerbaijan). According to the missionaries' reports, they baptised 216 Abkhazians, as well as 2,788 Kists (Chechens and Ingush) living in Georgia, and 43,927 Ossetians between 1817 and 1825.<sup>6</sup>

In 1857, the Viceroy of the Caucasus, Alexander Ivanovich Bariatskii, and the Exarch of Georgia, Isidor (Nikolskii), reported to the Emperor that, "The duty of the Orthodox Christian state is to create a Society for the restoration of Orthodox Christianity in the Caucasus. Russia cannot remain indifferent to the problems of religious education for our younger brothers who have

wandered from the Christian church due to Muslim propaganda. Muridism expresses this propaganda. Individuals must play an active role in the preservation of Christianity among the Caucasian mountain people. Orthodoxy is the main tool of Russia, and Russia is the tool of Orthodox Christianity herself."<sup>7</sup>

The report presented by Bariatskii and Isidor was discussed for three years in St. Petersburg. Circumstances for the main ideological attack were suitable after the Russians captured Shamil and ended his holy war against Russia (1834-1859), and the Society for the Restoration of Orthodox Christianity in the Caucasus was established in July 1860. The Society announced that Empress Marie Alexandrovna would be its official patron.<sup>8</sup> The Society declared, as did Bariatskii, that the main aim of its work was to spread Orthodox Christianity in the Caucasus as a counter to extensive Muslim propaganda. Bariatskii wrote, in a report cited in the *Survey of Activity of the Society for Restoration of Orthodox Christianity in the Caucasus, 1860-1910*, that:

Islam for the Caucasian mountain people is the faith of patriotism. It is the symbol and flag of independence. Independence means everything for the mountain people, it is their aim in life. Both the laypeople and priests, Muslims and non-Muslims alike, accept such an evaluation of religious faith (from its political point of view). For the entire population of the Caucasus Mountains, the Muslim mountain people are "their" people – accepted with honour anywhere. The non-Muslim is a pariah, a slave, an outcast. [...] For our half-Christian tribes, the prophets of Muridism embody the ideal of the man's dignity – man's pride and courage. He is a person who is always ready to sacrifice himself, but not to suffer. He does not understand suffering. He is ready for death with pride in the most unequal battle against the *giaours* (non-Muslims) for the glory of God. [...] Islam attracts mountain people from all walks of life.<sup>9</sup>

As this quote makes clear, for Russian policy makers in the Caucasus, being Muslim was incompatible with being a Russian subject.

The establishment of the Society proclaimed the aim of restoring Christianity in the region where the natives had been Christians since ancient times. The main directions of the Society's activity were:

- 1) To construct and restore churches, and to establish nearby housing for the clergy;
- 2) To establish and finance parochial schools for the education of the locals;
- 3) To translate and publish the Bible and other sacred books into local languages and to compile alphabets for peoples who did not have them;
- 4) To improve the social position of priests and to improve their training.<sup>10</sup>

Only Orthodox Christians could join the Society. The Council of the Society was the main authority for missionary activities, with the Georgian Exarch serving as Chairman of the Council.

The Society inherited the property of the Clerical Commission of Ossetia, totalling 238,174 rubles,<sup>11</sup> and received money from the government and individuals, which by 1861 had reached 376,339 rubles.<sup>12</sup> The Society received lands, including the Karaiaz steppe, amounting to 100,000 square dessiatinas (approximately 275,000 acres) in all. The property of the Society as of January 1, 1864, amounted to 450,188 rubles.<sup>13</sup> In 1862-1863, the finances of the Society were increased permanently, thanks to the attention of the Emperor and the Empress of Russia, and reached a “considerable amount.”<sup>14</sup> The zeal of the government to finance the Society shows the great importance it gave to the spread of Orthodox Christianity in the Caucasus.

How did the Muslim population and mullahs react to this activity? In its first report (for 1862-1863), the Society admitted that, “the mere fact of the appearance of the Society caused an awakening of religious fear and enmity towards it and presented a challenge for Muslim propaganda, which uses any means to paralyse the defensive activity of the Society.”<sup>15</sup>

Muslim resistance as well as the Georgian mountaineers’ reluctance to give up their traditional customs, including some pre-Christian elements, presented some difficulties for missionary activity in the Caucasus, which the missionaries identified in a report presented to the Emperor and Ober-Prosecutor for 1862-3. In response, the Emperor appointed the Viceroy of the Caucasus, Michael Alexandrovich Romanov, as Chairman of the Society. The Emperor also was convinced that the current and future prospects for Orthodox Christianity in the region lay in the foundation of Orthodox educational institutions and the immediate compilation of local alphabets. The Society admitted in the same report of 1862-1863 that the compilation of alphabets in the local lan-

guages was intended to remedy the fact that all local education was conducted by the mullahs. They taught the Arabic language to the local children in order to teach them the *Qur’an* in Arabic. The Society thought that if they could provide new schools for the youth, where the teaching would be in native languages using books in the (new) local alphabets, they would win the “battle” for Christian propaganda. According to this plan, Georgian was to be used at schools among the Georgian mountaineers and Armenian, Turkish, and Georgian would be used in south Georgia, in consideration of the ethnic structure of the region (at least for the beginning classes). The Society was trying to make the Georgian mountaineers give up the local “pagan” traditions and change the local structure of the communities, where often the head of the community was also the elder, or *khevisberi*. The *khevisberi* was also the spiritual leader of the community, leading church service during the festival for the community saint. Regular weekly church service among the Georgian mountaineers was not observed, but they had special celebrations of Christian saints such as St. Mary, St. George, and others when they gathered at a special place called *khati* (in English, “icon”). A *khati*, which was not a large church but a small building like a basilica, was built for each saint. The *khevisberi* would lead the ceremony, praying for community, offering sacrifices to the saint, and switching candles. This structure apparently seemed dangerous, as it made a single person both a spiritual and community leader and gave him great influence on the local community. At present, this institution has been weakened in Georgia, but among some North Caucasian groups it remains strong and defines the unity of community (such as among Chechens and Ingush).

The Viceroy began his work actively and created the post of Inspector of Orthodox schools in 1864, by the Order of the Society #16, and assigned two inspectors to this position. In 1873, the local government created the special position of Inspector of the Society’s schools “under the administration of the Caucasian educational district.” The Inspector was also responsible for some public schools in regions located outside the authority of the Governor’s inspectors in Svaneti and Abkhazia.<sup>16</sup> The first Inspector, Streletskii from Moscow University, was very active in arranging the Society’s schools.

Muslim priests opposed the Society’s educational activity, since they had previously maintained a monopoly on education in regions with dense Muslim populations,<sup>17</sup> and yet they could not stop the Society’s educational activities.

In 1861, the Commission for Introduction of Literacy Among the Mountaineers was established by the Society to compile alphabets. The Society appointed Ivan Bartolomei as Chair of the Commission, with a staff made up of Pavel Uslar, Dimitry Purtseladze, Vladimir Trirogov, and others. In 1865, the Commission compiled and published an Abkhaz alphabet with translations of Abkhaz aphorisms and stories for children. The book was approved as the textbook for use in Abkhaz schools.<sup>18</sup> In 1868, the Board of the Society changed this policy, admitted the “infant” position of Abkhaz language and so Abkhaz language remained undeveloped and all translation projects were ceased.<sup>19</sup> Konstantin Davidovich Machavariani and his seventeen-year old student, Dimitry Gulia (the creator of the present Abkhaz alphabet), continued the work only later after 1892.<sup>20</sup>

The reaction of Georgian intellectuals to this act was remarkable. Jacob Gogebashvili, the creator of the Georgian textbooks (*Deda Ena*, *Bunebis Kari*, and others) noted:

We Georgians must strive to develop and enrich our literature and the liturgical language. And we have to wish the same for the other nations, including the Abkhaz. [...] Exarch Kirion supported efforts to compile an Abkhaz alphabet and create their literature. He demanded that I take part in creating textbooks in the Abkhaz native language. Georgians in Sokhumi should work towards this goal, as the awakening of the Abkhaz will change their external unity with Georgians into the internal solidarity and intensive brotherhood.<sup>21</sup>

During 1864-1865, some of the Kists in the Pankisi gorge were converted to Orthodox Christianity, and the Society opened a school in Pankisi. The Society invited two Kists to come to Tbilisi in 1867 to create textbooks in the Chechen language, using an alphabet already created by Pavel Uslar. The Commission for Literacy published the textbook the same year together with the Chechen alphabet, but soon the work stopped as Russia began mass deportations of Chechens and Ingush (together with other rebellious people from the North Caucasus) to the Ottoman Empire.

The translation of Gospel into Ossetian was finished in 1864 and published in the same year.

The changed political situation after the end of the wars prepared fertile ground for the future missionary activity. Now that it did not have to contend with Murid

resistance, Russia was able to reorganize the administration of the region to better integrate the Caucasus into the imperial system, a project in which missionary work played an important role. Following the wars with Turkey, Batumi-Kobuleti pashalik was ceded to Russia in 1878.

Akhatsikhe pashalik (Akhalsikhe-Akhalkalaki distr.) had become part of Russia fifty years earlier, and consolidating Russian rule involved exiling part of the Georgian Muslims (Meskhs) and settling Christian Armenians in their place. In 1864, Russia dissolved the Abkhaz Principality, and the last Prince of Abkhazia, Michael Shervashidze, was exiled to Russia where he soon died.

The new territories with compact Muslim populations created some difficulties for the Caucasian governors. Paving the way for the establishment of the new rule was resolved by forcing the native Muslims (ethnic Georgians and others) to immigrate to Turkey, a process known as Muhajirism. The first deportations occurred in 1828, while the next flood of Muhajirs went from Abkhazia to Turkey from 1864-1878 and from Adjara (1878) as well as from the North Caucasus. These regions became the main arenas (together with the Georgian Mountain provinces) for missionary activity.

#### *Akhalsikhe-Akhalkalaki districts, 1861-1885*

By 1880, the Society had three schools in Akhalkalaki and two in Akhalsikhe district,<sup>22</sup> and one shelter opened in 1878 at a school in the Akhalkalaki district.<sup>23</sup> In 1880, four more parochial schools were opened in Akhalsikhe district, in Akhalsikhe, Vale, Safara-Muskhi, and Toloshi.

#### *Akhalkalaki district: Akhalkalaki, Kilda, Baraleti*

Society schools were located in three of the four parishes in the district (the village Mushki being the only parish without a school), one school in each. The fourth school was established in the Muslim village of Khertvisi.<sup>24</sup> Georgian served as the language of instruction when the school first opened, but later it was replaced by Russian.

In 1880, the Assistant Commander of Civil Affairs in the Caucasus, S. N. Trubetskoy, and the Head of the Society's Office at the Georgian Exarch, Michael Smirnov, inspected the Society's schools in the Akhalsikhe-Akhalkalaki districts.<sup>25</sup> They agreed that it was good to teach in Georgian, but that later Russian language instruction should be instituted. In order to increase the number of the students at the Society's schools, and also to break down some barriers in teaching because of the ethnic diversity in the region, it was useful for the instructor to be fluent in Turkish, Georgian, and Armenian.<sup>26</sup>

The most remarkable development was the establishment of a school in Khertvisi in 1870 where the majority of the population was Muslim. About twenty young men graduated from the school, and in 1880 five Muslim students studied at the Caucasian Teachers Seminary. Four young Armenian men also graduated from the school.<sup>27</sup>

The attempts to use education to spread Orthodox Christianity in Akhaltsikhe-Akhalkalaki districts did not yield the anticipated results. The report of the Society for 1885 shows the disastrous position of the newly converted Christian population in the region.<sup>28</sup> For 1880, there were only 77 cases of baptism into Christianity among the Muslim Georgian (Meskhs),<sup>29</sup> and this number did not increase considerably in future.

#### *Abkhazia, 1860-1885*

The situation in Abkhazia was different. The Russian Orthodox missions in this region were extremely successful. Building on the activity of the Clerical Commission of Ossetia in Abkhazia, the Society worked to strengthen and spread Orthodox Christianity in the region. Before examining the main reasons for its success, we must first examine the form of Islam that was prevalent in Abkhazia.

The establishment of Turkish supremacy over the Black Sea coast of Georgia between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries was the main impetus for the spread of Islam in the region. The rulers of Abkhazia (as well as the rulers of Adjara and Samtskhe [Akhaltsikhe–Akhalkalaki]) were converted to Islam, largely in response to the Muslim law that prohibited non-Muslims from owning land. Actually, in the Muslim countries the ruler of the country owned the land, and he distributed it to his servants. In practice, land ownership was hereditary but the ruler needed to approve it. In 1810, after realising

Russia's increasing strength in the Caucasus, the Abkhazian ruler Sapar-bei Sharvashidze declared his alliance with Russia and converted to Orthodox Christianity together with his nobles. The Society reported that despite their conversion, Abkhazian political interests and religious sympathies still were biased towards Turkey: "There is no sign that Christianity is preserved either among the princes or the people."<sup>30</sup>

To expand their activity, the missions needed to have detailed descriptions of different regions and ethnic groups in the Caucasus. The Society did this work in Abkhazia and in the other parts of Georgia and Caucasus, and reports were submitted by the Society's missionaries. The missionaries divided the Abkhazian Muslim population (in accordance with their devotion to Islam) into two groups, fanatics and non-fanatics. The former, a minority, kept all the traditions of Islam strongly but were not committed to pilgrimages to the sacred Muslim sites nor to praying five times a day.

Non-fanatic Abkhazians, who formed the majority, maintained Islamic traditions by keeping Ramadan and the feast of Kurban-Bairam, and by inviting mullahs to ceremonies. They practised a more syncretic Islam, as they also celebrated Christmas, Easter, New Year, Whit Sunday, and festivities observing the Virgin Mary and St. George. In addition, they worshipped icons and lit candles when praying, dyed eggs on Easter, and poured wine on bread in memory of dead ancestors.<sup>31</sup>

The missionaries concluded that there was no religious friction in Abkhazia between Muslims and Christians. The missionaries had been disturbed by the fact that religious difference did not impede marriage between Christians and Muslims in the Caucasus, and this was most common in Abkhazia. They decided that the only difference that the Abkhazians recognised was based on social status and not on religion.<sup>32</sup>

---

### AWARDS

**Soroor Ghanimati**, research fellow in Near Eastern Studies at UCB and specialist on the architectural history of Iran and Central Asia, has been named as the winner of the 2002 Cultural Research of the Year by the Research Institute on Culture, Art and Communication of the Iranian Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance for her dissertation (UCB 2001) entitled, "*Kuh-e Khwaja: A Major Zoroastrian Temple Complex in Sistan.*"

**Sanjyot Mehendale**, executive director of CCAsP, received a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities for a project entitled "*Preserving Afghanistan's Silk Road Art: A Virtual Catalogue of the Begram Ivory and Bone Carvings*" for 2003-4. The grant will enable Dr. Mehendale to create a virtual database for one of the most extensive sets of finds formerly housed in the National Museum in Kabul, Afghanistan: the Begram ivory and bone carvings, all of which are now gone – looted, sold on the black market, or destroyed – from the Kabul Museum.

These and other facts led officials to conclude that the great majority of Abkhazians (the so-called non-fanatics) were Christians, despite the influence of Turkey in the region.

According to the missionaries' reports, the two main centres of Islam in Abkhazia were Atsi (in the Gudauta region) and Jgerda (in the Kodori region), where there were two small mosques. The Muslims in Gudauta were more devoted Muslims than their coreligionists in the Kodori region. Nevertheless, the influence of Orthodox Georgians living in Samurzakano (the Gali district of today's Abkhazia) did not outweigh the influence of Islam on the population of Kodori.

Samurzakano is a territory in Abkhazia where the great majority of the natives are Georgians (Megrelians). The Society claimed that one outstanding result of missionary activity here was the fact that in 1910 there were not any Muslims recorded among the citizenry. In this situation the missionaries exaggerated the impact of their work, as the great majority of natives in Samurzakano were Georgian Christians even before the missionary activity began. The reality was that the observance of Christian traditions in the region persisted, albeit weakly, and that the missionaries had simply strengthened existing tendencies. The Society also emphasized that the population tried to preserve and restore Christianity in other parts of Abkhazia.<sup>33</sup>

The popular Georgian newspaper *Droeba* mentioned that about 2,875 Muslims and 876 pagans were baptised in 1867, the majority of whom were Abkhaz.<sup>34</sup>

The real success in baptising Muslim Abkhazians was achieved by Bishop Gabriel (Kikodze, 1869-1885) of Imereti. He sent David Machavariani (as part of the Clerical Commission of Ossetia) to carry out missionary work in Abkhazia. Although the Commission for Ossetia no longer existed, Machavariani continued his work after 1869 under the authority of the Society for Restoration of Orthodox Christianity in the Caucasus. In October of 1879, 700 Abkhazians were baptised. Machavariani organised the mission and divided the region into two parts, Bzipi and Kodori. Mokvi (Samurzakano) was chosen as the centre of the mission for Bzipi and according to the reports eighty percent of the population was baptised.<sup>35</sup>

Georgians contributed significantly to the success of Russian missionary work – in fact, they defined the success of the Russian Orthodox missions. Their knowledge of local languages, customs, traditions, and ethnic-psychology simplified their task. Tradition also played an

important role. Georgians, indeed, had historically been the propagators of Christianity among the different ethnic groups in the Caucasus. The Society was a pioneer of mass education in Abkhazia and in many regions of the Caucasus. Machavariani opened the first school in Okumi (Samurzakano) and as of 1885 the Society's schools were the only educational institutions in Abkhazia.<sup>36</sup> The Society founded the new school in 1876 at the New Athens Monastery where about twenty Abkhazian young men studied.

### *Reorganisation of the Society in 1885*

1885 marked a turning point in the history of the Society, when the Emperor ordered its reorganisation. The Chairman of the Society became the Exarch of Georgia, and the Assistant Commander for Civil Affairs in the Caucasus was appointed as Deputy Chairman of the Society.<sup>37</sup>

The reorganisation was initiated by the Ober-Prosecutor of Holy Synod and the Commander for Civil Affairs in the Caucasus, Dondukov-Korsakov (the former Chairman of the Society). The Society was brought into accordance with the Orthodox Missionary Society and passed under the authority of the Holy Synod.<sup>38</sup> The Society transformed its schools into parochial schools, though they still remained dependents of the Society. The report on the state of Christianity for 1885 counted 170 churches under the auspices of the Society. There were 143 parishes in the region: East Georgia - 64, Vladikavkaz - 26, Sokhumi (Abkhazia) - 37, Guria-Megrelia (West Georgia) - 15, Imereti (West Georgia) - 1. The Society also had a number of churches in the regions of Georgia and North Caucasus: Vladikavkaz bishopric - 29, Sokhumi bishopric - 54, Guria-Megrelia bishopric - 14, Imereti bishopric - 1.

In 1885, the Society spent over 281 rubles to repair the Muslim mosque in village Samovat (Karsi district).<sup>39</sup> This flexible policy in regions where the majority of the population was Muslim guaranteed local assistance for the foundation of the missionary schools there.

The priests of the Society received generous salaries of about 200-700 rubles annually. The total amount for the maintenance of the clergy increased to 64,687 rubles in 1885.<sup>40</sup> The Society also granted scholarships to successful pupils to continue their education at the ecclesiastical schools of Tbilisi, Kutaisi, Gori, and other high educational institutions of the Russian Empire. For 1884-85 academic year, the Society granted 30 scholarships to successful students.<sup>41</sup>

The outcome of the missionary activity during the period of 1860-1885, according to the Society's reports, was not impressive except in Abkhazia and in parts of modern-day Azerbaijan (Zakatala district). The reasons for failure in Akhaltsikhe-Akhalkalaki and Pankisi were, according to the Society, the influence of Muslim culture on neighbouring Christians; the poverty of those newly converted to Christianity; and reliance on poorly qualified missionaries.<sup>42</sup>

This evaluation of immediate causes was correct, but the main reason for local resistance to Christianity was defined by resistance to Russian political rule.

#### *Akhaltsikhe - Akhalkalaki districts, 1885-1910*

The most poverty-stricken converts were the Christians in Akhaltsikhe and Akhalkalaki. The authors of the 1885 report stated: "The prospect of such a poor life restrains even those Muslims who sincerely wish to become Christians. ... Muslims are afraid of Christian priests and try to avoid the meeting with them. Naturally, it is difficult to speak of the possibility of successful missionary activity, let alone of success achieved."<sup>43</sup>

The missionary activity of the Russian Orthodox Church also focused on Georgian society, as expressed on the pages of Georgian newspapers and magazines such as *Tsnobis Purtseli*, *Shroma*, *Droeba*, *Iveria*. In assessing the Society's activity, the press was mostly critical of the Society not only for its lethargy in spreading Orthodox Christianity but also for its passive educational work.<sup>44</sup>

The period of 1885-1910 can be considered the second stage in the history of the Society. The political tides in the Caucasus had finally turned in Russia's favour. The migration processes in newly acquired territories had ended. Colonization of the Black Sea coast and the Akhaltikhe-Akhalkalaki districts had finished or was being carried out successfully. In 1888, Tsar Alexander III visited Georgia and was met by representatives of the Abkhazian nobility returning from exile in Turkey as Muhajirs. The meeting was held in Sokhumi, and the nobles presented a petition requesting the return of lands the Muhajirs owned before deportation. The Tsar approved the petition but as of 1898, the local government had not fulfilled the order.<sup>45</sup>

The missionaries and the native Muslims improved their relations by the end of the nineteenth century: "The Muslims, who not a long time before were full of enmity towards their Christian neighbours, at present express not only religious tolerance but also allowed their children to receive education at Christian schools ... In the year of this report (1896) there were five Muslim young men and one

young woman at the Toloshi School (Akhaltsikhe Distr.) They make up one seventh of the total number of pupils there."<sup>46</sup>

Beginning in 1901, the situation turned against Christianity. Muslims in the village Muskhi who had previously agreed to send their children to the Society's school suddenly changed their minds for fear that they would be converted to Christianity. The number of mullahs was increasing. They were coming from Turkey, and had been educated in Istanbul. Turkey understood the danger posed by a restored Christianity on its borders and contradicted by Muslim propaganda. The report of the Society for 1898-1901 shows that the missionaries were concerned with possible attempts to inspire enmity between Muslims and Christian Georgians. The situation did not encourage peace and friendship, and eventually there were signs of growing hatred because of religious differences. The Society suggested that the government not give permission to mullahs from Turkey to come to Georgia and accordingly to appoint less fanatical, native mullahs to these positions.<sup>47</sup>

#### *Adjaria, 1889-1910*

Beginning in 1889, the Society took a step forward in the restoration of Christianity in another region of the Black Sea coast of Georgia: Adjara. Here, in Batumi, the Society established a Missionary Section, chaired by Bishop Gregory of Guria-Megrelia. The members also included the assistant to the governor-general of Kutaisi (West Georgia), and the assistant to the head of the Batumi district (Adjara).

The foundation of this Missionary Section came as a result of a report by Ambrosi, the leader of the Shemokmedi monastery (Guria, in West Georgia), who was sent as a missionary to Adjaria by the Exarch in 1888. Ambrosi explored the current position of Islam in the region and concluded that many Christian traditions survived in Adjara. He thought that it proved that the Batumi-Artvini districts could be fertile ground for reviving the ancient faith of the natives – Orthodox Christianity.<sup>48</sup>

The Missionary Section did not produce any results, despite the active efforts of the Society. The Society itself recognized the reasons for its lack of success: the death of Bishop Gregory, who had much influence among the Muslims in Adjara, and the significant distance between the residency of the Bishop in Guria-Imereti and Batumi.

It should be recognized that these reasons were not the primary causes of their failure. The main cause was

the strong influence of Islamic propaganda in the region: “Mullahs have a great influence among Muslim Georgians. These mullahs are fervent fanatics, Adjarians constitute a tightly united body at their disposal, and each member of Muslim society is expected to work equally hard towards its preservation and prosperity. The Muslims strove to preserve the faith among their brothers... The most malicious in this field are the mullahs who arrived from Turkey. They try to erase any memory of Christianity from the soul of Adjarians.”<sup>49</sup>

The restoration of Orthodox Christianity in the Caucasus became the main objective of the Orthodox Christian Empire. The Society and the Russian Emperor made this a central theme in their policy.

On October 21, 1896, the day when Tsar Nicholas II ascended to the throne, the annual assembly of the Society took place in Tbilisi and conducted a liturgy in honour of the new Tsar. The Council of the Society discussed the Tsar’s order to the Military Governor of Kutaisi (West Georgia) to support the Society’s missions in Batumi and Artvini districts, where the natives “had been converted to Islam because of Turkey’s influence. This support would be an appropriate remedy for bringing up the natives with a love and devotion to Russian state and throne.”<sup>50</sup>

#### *Abkhazia, 1885-1910*

The next step to increase the influence of Christianity was to found libraries at the schools and the churches of the Society,<sup>51</sup> and to open two parishes in Abkhazia in 1899.<sup>52</sup> Special attention was given to the professional education of the youth. The pupils at the New Athens Monastery were permitted to continue study for a fifth year to study agriculture and Psalm teaching.<sup>53</sup> The fruits (lemons) grown at the monastery were represented at the agricultural exhibition of the Caucasus. The authors of the 1898–1901 report admitted, “Favourable conditions in Abkhazia for cultivating even tender southern plants ... will no doubt bring region a significant profit. To introduce the natives to scientific methods of planting through the help of the New Athens Monastery school’s students ... will result in the growth of economical prosperity in the country.”<sup>54</sup>

From 1889 to the end of the century, the Muslim population began to increase in Abkhazia: “Many Christian settlements became totally Muslim. Before 1889, not a single village in Abkhazia had a majority Muslim population. Christians lived even in the centres of Islam in Abkhazia (such as Gudauta) and, concerning the birth

records, Christian Abkhazians there diligently carried out their Christian duties.”<sup>55</sup>

The Bishop of Sokhumi reported that the inclination of Abkhazians towards Islam was very serious and dangerous for the influence of Christianity in the region. In order to revise and lead the missionary activity in Abkhazia, in 1899 the Society appointed the missionary Tarasi Ivanitskii. His main task was to draft an accurate picture of the influence of Orthodox Christianity in Abkhazia. Ivanitskii reported that the Turks living in Sokhumi, Ochamchire, and Gudauta were the key factor for the conversion of Abkhazians to Islam. They secretly kept mosques in Jgerda, Atsi and even in Megrelia (Tskhenitskali).

Ivanitskii emphasized that the reason for the weakness of Orthodox Christianity in the region was its use of Old Church Slavonic for church services instead of local languages, and, conversely, the requirement that the vernacular be used for teaching at schools. He paid particular attention to the method Ilminskii used in Kazan to return native Tatars to Christianity, including the use of Tatar in teaching the Bible and in the church service. The teachers and the priests were required to know the local languages.

Arseni, Bishop of Sokhumi, appealed to the Military Governor of Kutaisi to exile the mullahs from Abkhazia or at least to forbid Muslim propaganda. The Governor arrested the mullahs, but soon he had to release them.<sup>56</sup>

In 1899, the Society relocated the anti-Islamic library from Zakatala district to Abkhazia.

#### *Zakatala district, 1885-1910*

The Zakatala district was settled by Georgians of Sunni Islamic confession. The Society expended great effort to restore Orthodox Christianity in the region and partly achieved its goal.

Ingiloes, natives of Zakatala, lived in compact villages: Kakhi, Alibeglo, Koragani, Tasmalo, Zagami, Marsani, Lala-pasha, Musuli, Engiani, etc. Missionaries reported that Muslim Ingiloes remembered their Christian heritage, respected Christian churches, and kept some Christian traditions. At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Society had five parishes (in Kakhi, Alibeglo, Tasmalo, Koragani and Ketuklo) with four schools (including one for girls) in Alibeglo, Koragani and Ketuklo.

In 1899, E. Maminaishvili was appointed to the post of Inspector of the Zakatala district, replacing the aforementioned Tarasi Ivanitski, who had carried out some of the most important missionary work among the Ingiloes



and was now transferred to Abkhazia. The activity of the missionaries was met with resistance by the mullahs. Ivanitskii reported that the mullahs forbade the Ingiloes (Georgians living in Azerbaijan in Zakatala/Kakhi districts) to speak in Georgian even for everyday usage.<sup>57</sup> The same fact was reconfirmed in 1915 by *Kavkazskoe slovo*.<sup>58</sup> The newspaper mentioned that after 1860s, when the war with Shamil was over and the North Caucasus finally was joined to the Russian Empire, Ingiloes began to lose their native language. *Kavkazskoe slovo* linked this loss with the persistent efforts to restore the Orthodox Christianity among them. It acknowledged that, “missionary work had almost no positive result, except for four villages which really turned back to Christianity. All others

not only did not express any interest in Christianity but withdrew even further into their religious fanaticism, and hated anything Georgian as a reminder of despised Christianity.”<sup>59</sup> The Georgian newspaper *Sakartvelo* stated that, “many of the villages resolved that mothers would not speak Georgian with their children. To hasten the disappearance of the Georgian language, Ingiloes began to marry women from the Nukhi and Kazakh Districts, which, as known, are settled by Tatars [that is, by Dagestanians and Azeris. The term “Tatar” was often used as a synonym of Muslim. M. G-S.]. Children whose mothers did not speak Tatar were sent to Tatar villages to learn the language and to forget their native Georgian. Ingiloes stopped visit Georgian sacred places [i.e.,

---

## FACULTY NEWS

**Wali Ahmadi**, assistant professor in the Department of Near Eastern Studies, edited and published issues 14 and 15 of *Critique & Vision: An Afghan Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences*.

**Sanjyot Mehendale**, executive director of CCAsP, presented a series of papers this year: “Itinerant Kingship, Buddhist Monastic Institutions and The Making of the Kushan Empire: A Working Hypothesis” at Columbia University; “Lost Art of Afghanistan: The Begram Ivory and Bone Carvings” at the Metropolitan Museum of Art/Archaeological Institute of America; and participated in a conference entitled “Afghanistan: Meeting Point Between East and West” at the Museum of Lattes in Montpellier, France.

**Johanna Nichols**, professor in the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures, has authored *Noxchiin-inglas, ingals-noxchiin deshnizhaina / Chechen-English and English-Chechen Dictionary* (coauthored with Arbi Vagapov) and *Galghaai-ingalsii, ingalsa-ghalghaai lughat / Ingush-English and English-Ingush Dictionary* (RoutledgeCurzon, 2003).

**Leslie Peirce**, professor in the Departments of History and Near Eastern Studies, spent the 2002-3 academic year at the School of Historical Studies, Institute for Advanced Study, in Princeton and has been appointed to the Board of Directors of the Middle East Studies Association. Her book, *Morality Tales: Law and Gender in the Ottoman Court of Aintab* (UC Press) appeared in 2003, and she delivered papers entitled “Bargaining with the State: Provincial Elites in 16th-Century Aintab” at the Institute of Mediterranean Studies, Rethymos Crete, and “Inverted Racialization in the Architecture of Ottoman Sovereignty” at Duke University.

**Harsha Ram**, associate professor in the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures, presented a paper entitled “Romantic Topography and the Dilemma of Empire: The Caucasus in the Dialogue of Georgian and Russian Poetry” (coauthored with Zaza Shatirishvili) at the Modern Literature Association in New York and at the University of Chicago, and it has been accepted for publication in the *Russian Review*. He also published a review essay entitled “Fantastical Tbilisi. Tat’iana Nikol’skaia and the Russo-Georgian Avant-garde.”

**Edward W. Walker**, executive director of BPS, published an article entitled “Islam, Islamism, and Political Order in Central Asia” in the *Journal of International Affairs* (Spring 2003). His book, *Dissolution: Sovereignty and the Breakup of the Soviet Union* (Rowman and Littlefield) appeared in June 2003.

churches M. G-S.], which they had worshipped until now. They dug up the vineyards, accepted Tatar customs, and voluntarily went towards total denationalisation.<sup>760</sup> *Kavkazskoe Slovo* also mentioned that, in Georgian newspapers, intellectuals began to devote much attention to the restoration of the Georgian spirit among the Muslim Georgians after the last Turkish invasion of Adjara. Georgian intellectuals supported their Muslim brothers during this hard period morally and financially, and the interest in Georgian Muslims is increasing among Georgians. The newspaper mentioned that it should immediately begin hard work in Zakatala to restore this lost region to its native culture.<sup>61</sup> The same newspaper in October admitted a similar situation among Abkhazians and Meskhs.<sup>62</sup> It is noted that, “in the western part of the Sokhumi district, Georgian culture is disappearing. Abkhaz culture, which for many centuries was close to Georgian culture, is today almost totally detached from the Georgian family. It is perhaps strange, but this voluntary denationalisation (as seen in the Muslim parts of Georgia – Akhaltsikhe, Batumi) took place recently, mostly during Russian rule.” I do not think that it can be explained by a lack of interest from Georgian intellectuals in their Muslim brothers, or by the role of Orthodox missions in weakening the position of Christianity. The reality is that Islam began to serve as the flag against Russian supremacy among all independent people of the Caucasus. Opposition to Georgians, who were joined to the Russians by a common faith and also who led the Russians to enter the Caucasus, was also a natural feeling among Muslims Georgians and non-Georgians. Prince Alexander of Georgia allied with Muslims to fight Russians after Georgia was annexed by Russia in 1801. Of course the newspaper could not mention the true reasons. It mentioned the anti-Georgian, but not the anti-Russian reaction among Muslims.

#### *The Society, 1885-1910*

The reorganisation of the Society marked increased engagement in different fields of missionary activity and also some revision of its methods. Monies allocated for the restoration and construction of the churches was doubled, reaching 200,000 rubles.<sup>63</sup>

The Inspector of the Svaneti-Batumi-Artvini regions examined the Society’s schools and assessed the state of Christianity in Abkhazia for 1894-95. His sudden death ended the review, but in 1896 Society appointed a new missionary, Evtikhi Maminaishvili, who worked successfully under the Society’s authority in Zakatala (Azerbaijan).

The Society reported in 1896 that its schools consisted of: 21 for young men, 8 for young women and 19 coeducational institutions in different regions of Georgia. It had forty schools in Muslim districts: four in Zakatala, four in Akhaltsikhe-Akhalkalaki, seven in Abkhazia, eighteen in North Ossetia, six in South Ossetia, and one in Pankisi (among Chechens and Ingush).<sup>64</sup> The number of students at the schools were:

30 boys in Pankisi (Chechens and Ingush);  
 72 boys and 9 girls in the Zakatala district;  
 237 boys and 52 girls at the schools of  
 Akhaltsikhe-Akhalkalaki districts;  
 289 boys and 13 girls in Sokhumi district schools;  
 1,157 boys and 367 girls in North Ossetia;  
 263 boys and 26 girls in South Ossetia.<sup>65</sup>

The hardest task was to improve teaching methods. Using the vernacular in teaching and preaching would assist in the victory of Orthodoxy, according to the Society’s resolutions. It was decided to use the Georgian clergy in organizing missionary work. “A Khevsuri, or Svani, or mountaineer ... who is familiar with local conditions, is educated... and who is appointed to the post of priest or teacher would not hesitate [to go] and never would request to be reassigned to another location. Besides, he will be content in his native country among his countrymen, with the customs and traditions he is already familiar with. He will have a stronger influence than a priest or teacher who would need some time to study the native culture.”<sup>66</sup>

To proceed with this plan, Society granted scholarships to the most successful students from the region for graduate study at the St. Petersburg and Kazan Theological Academies, the Tbilisi and Kutaisi Theological Seminaries, the Kutaisi Theological School, the Tbilisi Diocese Women’s School, and St. Nino Women’s School at the Bodbe Convent.

The Society discussed the missionaries’ reports on different parts of Georgia with majority Muslim populations and concluded that the main obstacle to their conversion was the animosity towards those new converts of their relatives and neighbours. They killed them, burnt their houses, and their lands were expropriated by their family members if they did not bequeath them before converting.

The Society considered it expedient to move the new converts from dense Muslim areas to regions settled by Orthodox Christians or to give them fields from fiscal (state) lands. The Chair of the Society Council and Exarch of Georgia, Flavian, petitioned the Main Commander of Civil Affairs in the Caucasus, Gregory Golitsyn, to make

land available for this project. The Exarch based his request on the fact that there were free state lands in the Caucasus, as well as lands given on short-term rent.<sup>67</sup>

Why had the success of Christian education not led to the success of Orthodoxy itself in the Muslim regions of Georgia (except in Abkhazia, Ossetia and partly the Zakatala district)? The Society reported that the difficulty was due to the multi-religious societies of the Caucasus - the huge pantheon of religions and ethnic groups:

Nowhere else are the universal ideas of Christian enlightenment embodied ... as in the church schools of the Caucasus. If it one were to ask where and in what circumstances we find Orthodox Christians are praying together with the pagans, Muslims, Jews etc., you would conclude: at the church schools of the Caucasus.

The church school has not been an unusual entity for the non-Orthodox population, even for the Muslims. The latter are the neighbours of Russians and, when given the opportunity, the Muslims send their children to church schools. ... If a missionary was skilful, any missionary institution could have a great influence on the wide-scale Christianization (mostly of Muslims) at the school. Muslims are afraid of the missionary but don't fear the mission school, and this in particular is the way to draw in Christianity without force and to bring Christian and Muslim customs in contact.<sup>68</sup>

The Society acknowledged that it should recognize the role of its schools as institutions of public education and assist in the conversion of the natives into Orthodox Christianity.<sup>69</sup>

The Society's schools used the same teaching methodology as throughout the Russian Empire. The textbooks used at the schools were the best textbooks at the time, such as the "Reader in Russian Literature" (by Ushinskii), "Arithmetic" (Grubbe), "Deda Ena" (Georgian language), "Kartuli Anbani" (Georgian alphabet), and "Bunebis Kari" (Biology, Gogebashvili). Textbooks, notebooks and other necessary school things were free for the students and teachers.

By 1910, the society managed 53 parishes and 83 educational institutions in the Caucasus. The Viceroy of the Caucasus, the Emperor, and the Empress made donations that helped them flourish. A special publication, "Survey of the Activity of the Society for the Restoration of Orthodox

Christianity in the Caucasus 1860-1910," was published in Tbilisi, and analysed the results of the Society's activity in the region.

It stated that 2,063,795 rubles totally were spent only for the education of the natives. Correspondingly, 2,761 rubles were spent in 1860, and 75,498 rubles in 1909.<sup>70</sup> The number of the Society's donors varied between 30 and 158. The Society had 53 parishes and 83 schools. The number of those converted from Islam were:

North Ossetians	3,303 (between 1865 - 1893)
South Ossetians	815 (1862 - 1879)
Ingiloes	162 (1869 - 1903)
Kists	161 (1864 - 1868)
Meskhs	96 (1880 - 1895)
Adjarians	23 (1888 - 1899)
Abkhazians	21,336 (1866 - 1902)
Assyrians	3 305 (1867 - 1902) <sup>71</sup>

The Survey concluded with the statement: "Instead of the crescent of the mosque, many of mountaintops of the Caucasus are capped with the cross of the world's saviour. Where the wild passions rule, where the customs were created on the basis of Islam and paganism, ... [n]ot everywhere do the rows of rivers meet the din and the wild cries of the crowd seeking revenge. For the voices of singing children at the temple come to meet them and the school admiring Jesus is coming with love into the soul of the sullen mountaineer instead of Mohammed or Dzuara."<sup>72</sup>

### *Conclusion*

As the result of the missionaries' activity among the Muslim natives of Caucasus, we can conclude that the methodology of cultural conquest in the Caucasus was based on the Orthodox faith. Russia regarded itself as the main bearer of this faith in the world and used it as a tool to expand the borders of the Russian Empire. The main difference with the British missionary activities was that the British Empire expanded via the East India Company, which focused more on business than the souls of the natives. When it began, the East India Company even opposed religious activity in its territories (mostly on the Indian peninsula). In contrast, Russia expanded into adjoining territories and promoted missionary activity so that the Russian Orthodox Church would also be supreme among the people in the newly adjoined territories. The Orthodox Georgian priest served as the best means to accomplish this aim. The non-Christian (Muslim) population began using Islam as their tool against Russia's

expansion. This medium was used many times in 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The current situation in the Caucasus, with increasingly religious shape of national struggle of the Caucasians (Chechens, Dagestanis and other Caucasian nations) is a reminder that religious and national relations remain undecided in today's Russian Federation.

#### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> *Imperial Russia: A Source Book (1700 – 1917)*. Ed. Basil Dmytryshyn (Hinsdale, Ill.: Dryden Press, 1974), Chs. 7, 8, 23.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Ch. 23.

<sup>3</sup> Full Collection of Regulations and Ddecrees concerning to Orthodox Faith of the Russian Empire, v. II. (Petrograd, 1915). Reg. #1186, October 25, 1784 (in Russian).

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, Al. Khakhanov, Anniversary of Joining of Georgia to Russia (Legislative documents), p. 116 (in Russian).

<sup>5</sup> Report of Synod to the Emperor of Russia from 21 June, 1811, p.8 (in Russian).

<sup>6</sup> *Survey of Activity of the Society for Restoration of Orthodox Christianity in the Caucasus, 1860 – 1910* (Tiflis, 1910), p. 85 (in Russian).

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p.92. For the full version of Bariatinski's report, see pages 91-98;); Bishop Kirion, *Short View of the History of Georgian Church and Ekzarkhat for 19<sup>th</sup> Century* (Tiflis, 1901), p.106 - 107 (in Russian).

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 101.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 92-93.

<sup>10</sup> *Report of the Society for Restoration of Orthodox Christianity in the Caucasus for 1906-1907* (Tiflis, 1909), "Chart of the Society for Restoration of Orthodox Christianity in the Caucasus," p. 7 (in Russian).

<sup>11</sup> Dudko, A. P.. *From the History of Schools in Abkhazia before the Revolution, 1851-1917* (Sokhumi, 1956), p. 25 (in Russian).

<sup>12</sup> *Report of the Society for Restoration of Orthodox Christianity in the Caucasus for 1862-1863* (Tiflis, 1864.), p. 2 (in Russian).

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 6-7.

<sup>16</sup> *Survey...*, p. 194.

<sup>17</sup> *Report... for 1862-1863*, p. 7.

<sup>18</sup> Bartolomei, I. *Abkhazian Alphabet* (Tiflis, 1865).

<sup>19</sup> *Survey...*, p. 157.

<sup>20</sup> Uslar, P. *Abkhazian Language* (Tiflis, 1885) (in Russian).

<sup>21</sup> Gogebashvili, J. *Selected Works*, v. III (Tbilisi, 1990), p. 135 (in Georgian).

<sup>22</sup> *Report of the Society for Restoration of Orthodox Christianity in the Caucasus for 1880* (Tiflis, 1884), p. 62 (in Russian).

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 193.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 51.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 69.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 77.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 82.

<sup>28</sup> *Report of the Society for Restoration of Orthodox Christianity in the Caucasus for 1885* (Tiflis, 1886), pp. 30 -31 (in Russian).

<sup>29</sup> *Survey...*, p. 172.

<sup>30</sup> *Survey...*, p. 62.

<sup>31</sup> *Survey...*, p. 64.

<sup>32</sup> *Survey...* p. 71.

<sup>33</sup> *Survey...*, p. 70.

<sup>34</sup> *Droeba*, no.5, January 30, 1869, p. 1 (in Georgian).

<sup>35</sup> *Shroma*, no.2, September 2, 1881, p. 4 (in Georgian).

<sup>36</sup> *From the History of Schools in Abkhazia...*, p. 25.

<sup>37</sup> *Report...for 1885*, pp. 3, 10; "Chart of the Society for Restoration of Orthodox Christianity in the Caucasus," Ch. 2 (in Russian).

<sup>38</sup> *Report ... for 1885*, p. 7.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 16.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 17.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 18.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 27.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 31-32.

<sup>44</sup> *Droeba*, no. 67, March 29, 1881, pp. 1-2; *Droeba*, no. 104, May 1881, pp. 1-2; *Droeba*, no. 35, February 15, 1881, p. 1 (in Georgian).

<sup>45</sup> *Iveria*, no. 100, May 14, 1898, p. 3 (in Georgian).

<sup>46</sup> *Report of the Society for Restoration of Orthodox Christianity in the Caucasus for 1896* (Tiflis, 1899), pp. 170-171 (in Russian).

<sup>47</sup> *Report of the Society for Restoration of Orthodox Christianity in the Caucasus for 1898-1901* (Tiflis, 1903), p. 184 (in Russian).

<sup>48</sup> *Survey...*, pp. 145-146.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 40-41.

<sup>50</sup> *Report ... for 1896*, p. 15.

<sup>51</sup> *Report ... for 1898-1901*, p. 19.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 48.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 61.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 61-62.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 80.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 111.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 147.

<sup>58</sup> *Kavkazskoe slovo*, no. 210, September 18, 1915, p. 4, "Concerning the Question of Georgian-Ingiloes" (in Russian).

<sup>59</sup> *Kavkazskoe slovo*, no. 210, September 18, 1915, p. 4.

<sup>60</sup> *Report ... for 1898-1901*, p. 147.

<sup>61</sup> *Kavkazskoe slovo*, no. 210, September 18, 1915, p. 4.

<sup>62</sup> *Kavkazskoe slovo*, no. 236, 1915, p. 3.

<sup>63</sup> *Report ... for 1896*, p. 18.

<sup>64</sup> *Report ... for 1896*, "Register of the Society's Schools," pp. 62-95.

<sup>65</sup> "Statement of Inspection of the Society's Schools for 1896," pp. 62-102 (in *Report ... for 1896*).

<sup>66</sup> *Report ... for 1898-1901*, p. 29.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 15-16.

<sup>68</sup> *Report of the Society for Restoration of Orthodox Christianity in the Caucasus for 1906-1907* (Tiflis, 1909), pp. 76-77.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 77.

<sup>70</sup> *Survey...*, pp. 196-197; 199.

<sup>71</sup> *Survey ...*, pp. 170-174.

<sup>72</sup> *Survey...*, p. 201.

## BOOK REVIEW

by Wali Ahmadi, Professor of Near Eastern Studies, UC Berkeley

Michael Griffin, *Reaping the Whirlwind: The Taliban Movement in Afghanistan*. London and Sterling, Virginia: Pluto Press, 2001. 283 pp.

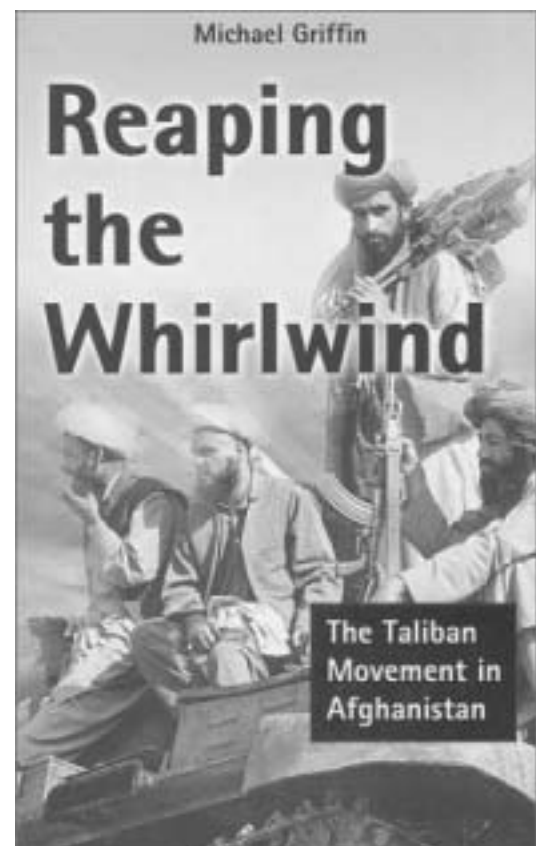
Larry P. Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War: State Failure, Regional Politics, and the Rise of the Taliban*. Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2001. 264 pp.

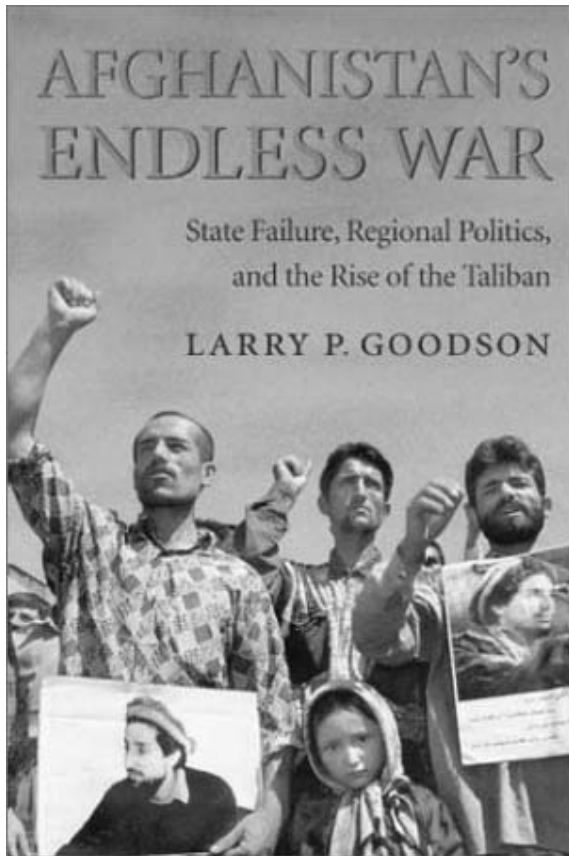
In the aftermath of the demise of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan in December 2001, we've witnessed the publication of numerous books and monographs about contemporary Afghan history, society, and politics. Undoubtedly, some of these titles on Afghanistan will also prove helpful to scholars of Central Asia. One recently published book that deals with the Taliban phenomenon in Afghanistan in a serious, comprehensive, and thought-provoking manner is Michael Griffin's *Reaping the Whirlwind*. The book offers an excellent account of the rise and consolidation of the Taliban rule over nearly the entire Afghan territory. It narrates how the Taliban initially emerged in the southwestern province of Kandahar in 1994 and, within two years, were able to supplant the fragmented Mujahideen government in Kabul. Griffin's account covers the 1999 military coup in Pakistan and analyzes the potentially significant impact of the coup on the Taliban. Throughout the book, the author attempts to engage himself in a thorough analysis of the events and avoids the pitfalls of simplistic answers to complex questions concerning the context of the establishment and power of the Taliban.

In a flood of chronological detail, Griffin explores the roles of the U.S. and Russia as well as regional powers such as Saudi Arabia, India, Iran, and especially Pakistan in recent Afghan history and politics. He discusses at length how and why Pakistan (especially the Pakistani state intelligence agency) was willing to foster an Afghan insurgency (the Mujahideen) during the years of occupation of Afghanistan by the Soviet Union. The roots of the Taliban movement should be sought in the experience of the fractious Mujahideen groups, particularly after their disastrous four years of (mis)rule in Kabul. But Griffin also reminds the reader that Pakistan, through its open support to various Afghan insurgency groups, has paid a price, in the strengthening Islamist voices at home and in "the leaky weapons pipeline and burgeoning drug culture that had created a Pakistan rife with violence, crime, and corruption" (p. 52). Thus, weapons detained for use against the Soviets ended up in the hands of Pakistani soldiers and drug traffickers, were sold in the arms bazaars of Peshawar, or were simply stockpiled for later use.

Griffin is especially good in providing comprehensive profiles of key protagonists, including some important Taliban leaders. He explains not only the origins and beliefs of the Taliban but also the religious and political ethos that motivated them to fight. The Taliban connection with Al-Qaeda and other groups needs to be seen in this context. Also, Griffin does not hesitate to illustrate the linkages between the CIA and the Pakistani ISI as well as the intended consequences of US involvement and Pakistani machinations in Afghanistan over the past two decades.

While the main strength of Michael Griffin's *Reaping the Whirlwind* is that it situates the Afghan war regionally and internationally, Larry P. Goodson concentrates mainly on the internal politics of contemporary Afghanistan. Written before the events of September 11, 2001, Goodson describes Afghanistan as "a weak and fragmented country on the verge of collapse and perhaps even disintegration,





brought to this condition by the Cold War struggle of superpowers and their post war disinterest in its fate” (p. 10). Subsequently, Goodson examines the “severe state failure” (p. 168) in Afghanistan from various aspects, namely internal problems and divisions within the country, the politically incoherent social structure, the effect of the war fought against the Soviets and the subsequent “civil war,” as well as the significance of external powers that are deeply involved in manipulating Afghanistan’s internal affairs.

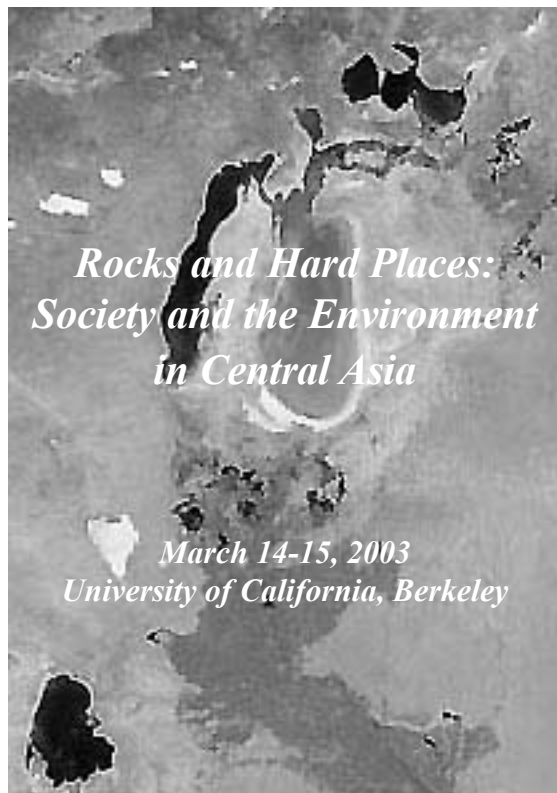
Goodson argues that Afghanistan was never really a nation-state because of its many deep social and political divisions. In addition to ethnic divisions, regional and sectarian divisions have caused disunity. The rugged topography of Afghanistan has made interregional mobility difficult. Furthermore, the social structure of Afghanistan delimits the development of a strong state, for the country is not only divided into various ethnicities, each of these ethnicities is further split into tribes and sub-tribes. Loyalty to the social group rather than the state fosters divisions, prevents the consolidation of national identity, and weakens the state.

Social divisions in Afghanistan have certainly hindered the development of a strong nation-state in Afghanistan, but (as the rest of Goodson’s book well demonstrates) it has been the persistent Afghan War of

the past quarter of century that has had the most catastrophic effect on the “failure” of a viable state in Afghanistan. The culture of “Talibanization” and “Kalashnikovization” that Goodson refers to is a direct result of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979. The height of the Cold War at the time quickly made Afghanistan into an important battleground for the two opposing superpowers, the Soviet Union and the United States. With new weapons from the US and hard determination, the Mujahideen fighters were able to make the Soviets retreat from Afghanistan in 1989. With the end of the Cold War, however, Afghanistan was effectively forgotten.

The brutal “civil war” in Afghanistan in the 1990s saw what Larry Goodson regards as the triumph of society over the state, rendering the latter virtually powerless. According to Goodson, “the rise of society over the state means the rise once again of the local community, or qawm. Afghans are now basing their identity on qawm and/or ethnicity, and Afghan national identity has become essentially a barren concept. Indeed, as the Afghan conflict has dragged on, it has become increasingly ethnicized as group alignments have become more heavily based on ethnicity, race, and linguistic or sectarian difference” (p. 169).

Writing prior to the recent American intervention in Afghanistan, Goodson insists that the US should play a crucial role in the reintegration of Afghan society and state. Since the model that Goodson holds to is state-centric, he would prefer the promotion of a strong central authority in Afghanistan. Both the Bonn Accord in December 2001 and the convening of the traditional Loya Jirga in July 2002 (explicitly backed and implicitly manipulated by the US) suggest that such authority may be forthcoming in post-conflict Afghanistan. However, unless sufficient attention is paid to embody the society (no matter how divided it may be) in the process of state formation, nation-state relations in Afghanistan, even if well-funded and well-supported by outside patrons, will remain tenuous at best.



The Caucasus and Central Asia Program, together with the Institute of Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies, the Department of Near Eastern Studies, and the Silk Road/Central Asia Working Group, was pleased to present its third annual conference, “Rocks and Hard Places: Society and the Environment in Central Asia” on March 14-15, 2003.

Abstracts for papers presented at the conference follow.

### **Indigenous Afghan Architecture: Structure and Culture**

*Thomas Barfield, Boston College*

Afghanistan has a wide variety of indigenous domestic architectural traditions that befit its role as one of the cultural crossroads of Asia. A comparative examination of a wide variety of structures drawn from both nomadic and sedentary cultures demonstrates that their designs are sophisticated solutions both to the problems presented by the harsh natural environment and the cultural demands of the people who live in them. They have survived and been replicated for so many centuries, and even millennia, because they have proved their superiority and effectiveness, not because of cultural conservatism. In both ex-Soviet Central Asia and Afghanistan there has been a tendency to dismiss such traditions as primitive and in need of replacement. But in reality the solutions provided within the existing domestic architectural tradition still have much to offer, particularly because seemingly simple designs often disguise their sophistication. This indigenous architectural tradition should serve as a template in the planning for the reconstruction of Afghanistan.

### **The Archaeology of Semirechye from the Bronze Age through Medieval Periods: Does Climate Matter?**

*Claudia Chang, Sweet Briar College*

This presentation will examine the role that climate and environmental change may have played in the evolution of steppe communities from the Bronze Age (ca. 1700 B.C.-1100 B.C.), Iron Age (ca. 750 B.C. – 100 A.D.), and Medieval Period (ca. 900 A.D.- 1300 A.D.) in the Talgar Region of Semirechye in Southeastern Kazakhstan along the northern edge of the Tian Shan Mountains. The empirical basis for the paper is drawn from archaeological research conducted on settlements collected from 1994 to 2002 by the Kazakh-American Talgar Project. In particular, environmental data such as paleo-ethnobotanical studies, zooarchaeological data, and geomorphological studies will be presented. The paper focuses on the role that ancient herding and farming played in the development of early steppe economies in this area of Eurasia.

## **The Politics and Poetics of the Nation: Urban Narratives of Kazakh Identity**

*Saulesh Esenova, McGill University*

Various sources on Kazakh history demonstrate that a Kazakh culture was generated out of the predominantly pastoral experiences of its people. For centuries, Kazakh communities were engaged in a definite set of practices prescribed by pastoralism. An effective system of ecological adaptation, pastoralism shaped a structure of Kazakh identity and social organization, serving to maintain social relations within and between communities, which were neatly tailored to a decentralized system of political governance. In addition, as an economic practice, pastoralism was equated with the Kazakhness demarcating the boundaries of Kazakh “most general identity.” This paper examines the way the Kazakh society responded to drastic changes in the livelihood of its people in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries associated with the increase in colonial pressures, sedentarization, political and economic modernization, and, finally, with the formation of a nation-state at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Two interrelated issues are at stake here: how have the notions of Kazakh identity and social organization, originated in the nomadic past, become adapted to the demands of modern nation-building projects? And how do self-regulating aspects of this organization play out in the urban environment and interact with the state?

## **The Pulse of Asia: The Role of Environment in Culture Change of Early Central Asia**

*Frederik Hiebert, University of Pennsylvania*

Ever since Ellsworth Huntington’s classic (1907) study on Central Asia, climate change has been considered a “prime mover” in population movements and the development of civilizations. However, paleoenvironmental data and studies on naturally deposited sediments from Central Asia are relatively rare. Pollen and plant macroremains from archaeological sites do not provide a true picture of ancient vegetation. Thus, the role of climate and climatic change during the period of the origins of agriculture, the rise of villages and the establishment of cities in Central Asia has only been inferred. New approaches including coring of glacial ice in the Karakorum region, developing dendrochronological sequences and studies of buried soils allow us to better understand the relationship between culture and climate change in Central Asia.

## **The Steppe Meets the Sown West and East of the Caspian Sea: Environmental Constraints to Distinct Historical Processes**

*Philip Kohl, Wellesley College*

Mounted pastoral nomadism on the Eurasian steppes emerged gradually as a distinct and specialized subsistence economy during the fourth through second half of the 2nd millennium BC. It only began to assume its classic historically and ethnographically documented form at the end of the Bronze and beginning of the Iron Age, ca. 1000 BC. This paper sketches the development of this specialized economy and the initial occupation of the steppes through two distinct stages: 1) a primary focus on cattle-herding and the use of oxen-driven wagons; and 2) the movement to mixed herds, particularly emphasizing sheep and horses, including, most significantly, riding the latter. The development of this specialized form of animal husbandry spread initially west to east, affecting first sedentary terraced agricultural societies in the Caucasus and subsequently irrigation agricultural societies in Central Asia. The paper emphasizes important environmental differences that facilitated the initial interaction between the steppe and the sown in the Caucasus, on the one hand, and hindered and temporally retarded such interaction in Central Asia, on the other.

## **Water in Central Asia: Cooperation and Conflicts**

*Viktoriya Levinskaya, Visiting Fulbright Scholar - Uzbekistan*

Water is an extremely politicized resource, and it has factored in at least 42 violent conflicts worldwide since the start of the last century. As Central Asian countries push against the limits of water availability and experience unprecedented levels of water stress, fears of potential conflict over resources are growing. Regional water systems, closely integrated during the Soviet period, are now managed by five countries with little willingness to cooperate. Central Asian countries are increasingly adopting “zero-sum” positions on resources while stepping up consumption at unsustainable rates, running the risk of drought and catastrophic environmental damage, as already seen around the Aral Sea. International cooperation is further hindered by military and economic imbalances, as downstream countries are more powerful than



their upstream neighbors. Central Asian economies are highly dependent on irrigation for much of their economic output, and irrigated crops provide the elites with money and control of patronage that keep them in power.

Water plays a key role also in internal conflict. Indeed, one expert argues that the risk of violence becomes more intense the smaller the scale of the dispute, an idea supported in Central Asia where local conflicts have been more serious than wider ones. Water is one strand of a complex web of tension involving drugs, Islamist extremism, ethnic rivalries, and border disputes. None of these issues have led to outright war, but problems among the Central Asian states have occasionally resulted in violence. Degradation of agricultural land and lack of economic opportunities, stemming from water shortages, create a fertile social environment for extremist groups. Rising costs, poorly maintained water systems, and privatization of utilities will only add to the pressure on local water systems. Water affects the poorest sector of societies, which end up paying the largest proportion of their incomes for the resource. Problems with irrigation, drinking water, floods, and declining soil quality are additional burdens to people already coping with economic turmoil and rapid social change.

### **Environmental Security and Shared Water Resources in Central Asia**

*David R. Smith, Ohio Northern University*

This paper examines the distribution of water and the location of physical and political boundaries in Central Asia, identifies indicators of the susceptibility of its various regions to resource and water-related conflict, and then applies those indicators to discover the potential for future water-based regional conflict.

The dimensions of the problem are addressed not only in terms of the physical availability of water (or lack of same), but also water quality and regional social unrest as a consequence of migration from regions of environmental deterioration.

### **The Conservation of Agricultural Biodiversity in Uzbekistan: The Impacts of the Land Reform Process**

*Eric Van Dusen, UC Berkeley*

This paper reports on an ongoing research effort between an international conservation network and scientists in Uzbekistan to study the socio-economic processes impacting local farmer conservation of agricultural biodiversity. A specific focus is the land reform process, the creation of new forms of land tenure and the impacts that new tenure regimes may have on conservation. A wealth of agricultural biological resources were able to survive the collectivization of agriculture and the hegemony of cotton in Uzbek agriculture. However it has long been known that the majority of tree crops and fruits and vegetables were actually produced in small plots allocated to each household as gardens. The recent, and ongoing, land reform process is following two main tracks. On the garden level, almost all rural households have been able to expand their home garden, or *tamorka*, by a small amount. On the commercial level, collective farms are being divided up into 5-10 hectare plots, distributed to the wealthier and more connected farmers, a new capitalist farmer called *firmer*. The intermediary group, *Dekhan* farmers, are a key sector for agrobiodiversity management, producing on garden plots but oriented towards marketing some portion of their production.



*Conference announcement*

## **Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region: Central Asia or China?**

Spring 2004  
UC Berkeley

For more information, please contact CCAsP at  
510.643.6737 or [ccasp@uclink.berkeley.edu](mailto:ccasp@uclink.berkeley.edu).

## **Report on Current Research in Shari-Sabz, Uzbekistan**

*Kim Codella*

The Uzbek Berkeley Archaeological Mission (UBAM) was incepted in 1999 and is a joint Berkeley-Uzbek archeological investigation of the region of Shari-Sabz, approximately 100 km south of modern day Samarkand, Uzbekistan. Shari-Sabz today is a provincial capital located in a fertile valley just west of the foothills of the Zeravshan Mountains.

UBAM is under the joint direction of Dr. Sanjyot Mehendale (UC Berkeley) and Dr. Mutalib Khasanov (Archaeological Institute of Samarkand). Other key participants in the 1999 season included Dr. Rustam Suleimanov (University of Tashkent), Professor David Stronach (UC Berkeley), Dr. Shoki Goodzarzi-Tabrizi (1999 field director, currently at SUNY, Stonybrook) and Mr. Kim Codella (graduate student, Near Eastern Studies Department, UC Berkeley). Another key player in the development of UBAM was Dr. Timur Shirinov, director of the Archeological Institute of Samarkand, which continues to provide institutional support for the project.

UBAM's 1999 season consisted of exploration of two promising sites, Sangyr Tepe and Padayatak Tepe (or "hill"), with an eye toward future excavations. In both cases, our Uzbek colleagues had already performed preliminary excavations prior to UC Berkeley's involvement and concluded that these locations held promise for further archaeological investigation.

Sangyr Tepe is a small site located near the modern town of Kitab. Sangyr Tepe was originally excavated in the 1970s and 1980s by a team from the University of Tashkent. Preliminary investigations concluded that the site dated to the Sassanian period (ca. 226-651 C.E.). The Sassanian capital was at Ctesiphon located near modern-day Baghdad, and the region of Shari-Sabz may have been one of the empires eastern most provinces. UBAM's goal in the 1999 season was to establish a chronological sequence for the site by cleaning previous excavated sections and to recover pottery samples in an archaeological context to help further understand the date and construction of this mound. After one season's work the site appears to have been a monument of some importance. Excavated features included an outer round enclosure wall which may have enclosed a cultic site, and a sacrificial burial in an outer niche in the enclosure wall (there are so far 3 niches exposed, though only one has been fully excavated).

The second site explored in 1999 was the nearby site of Padayatak Tepe. Located in the small village of Padayatak about 10 km from Sangyr Tepe, this site was much larger than Sangyr Tepe and may have functioned as a regional center, controlling access from lower plains to mountain foothills and more importantly water resources in the region. Earlier excavations had determined that the site had a long period of occupation with very complicated stratigraphy. Preliminary excavations revealed an occupation from at least the sixth century B.C.E. down to the second century B.C.E. Padayatak Tepe has generated much interest because it thrived during the sixth and fifth centuries B.C.E., when we know from ancient records that the Persian Achaemenid Empire (550-331 B.C.E.) annexed the region.

Uzbek scholars have concluded that there was an Persian period occupation in the region of Shari-Sabz of which very little is yet known. Importantly for scholars looking from a Near Eastern perspective, the region of Shari-Sabz seems to demonstrate a change in settlement pattern and material culture with the coming of the Achaemenids. This is in contrast to the evidence for Persian occupation to the west in places such as modern day Turkey, Egypt and the Tigris Euphrates valley, where the Persians seemed to have ruled through a system of co-option producing very little evidence for themselves "on the ground" as it were.

Although the initial 1999 season provided important information on the two sites explored, it did not bring about an understanding of how these sites related to the area around them. At this point the team decided that before excavations could begin in earnest we needed to find out more about this regional picture.

---

*Kim Codella is a Ph.D. candidate in Near Eastern Studies at UC Berkeley*

In 2000, a team from Berkeley returned to conduct a regional survey of the area around our two sites. The survey team consisted of Dr. Sanjyot Mehendale, Dr. Mutalib Khasanov, Mr. Kim Codella (survey director), Dr. Soroor Ghanimati (UC Berkeley), and Dr. Bill Collins (UC Berkeley). The survey area consisted of a 400 sq. km area, which covered terrain from low mountain valleys to fertile plains. Sangyr and Padayatak Tepe sat at roughly the center of the survey area, as one of goals was to place Sangyr Tepe and Padayatak Tepe in geographical context and in relation to other possibly related archaeological sites. Another and equally important objective was to map sites which our Uzbek colleagues had excavated but had not systematically mapped and categorized.

Our survey was conducted with the aid of handheld GPS units, and a total station (a laser based survey instrument) generously loaned to UBAM by the Archaeological Research Facility at UC Berkeley. In addition, high-resolution maps of the region were obtained from the Earth Sciences and Map library at UC Berkeley (interestingly, CIA copies of old Red Army maps). In our short three-week season, we were able to map 89 archaeological sites in the immediate region of Kitab and Shari-Sabz. This was accomplished by the hard work of both the UBAM team members (Uzbek and American) in addition to students from the University of Tashkent who worked tirelessly.

In addition to gathering GPS coordinates and a topographical sketch for each location, when possible, surface pottery was collected to help determine approximate dates. The archaeological history of the region is a long one. Many of these sites are multiple-period and could conceivably cover a broad range of time. Uzbekistan has archaeological remains dating from the Paleolithic age down to the Islamic era. These surface collections are only an indication of what period these sites may date to; without further excavation, some of the dates must remain ambiguous. In addition to the information above, anecdotal and previous excavation histories known by our Uzbek colleagues were also included for each site mapped.

After collecting data on each location and entering this information into a relational database (in this case Microsoft Access), the findings were sorted by size and possible date, as well as other characteristics. This information was mapped in an effort to detect settlement patterns and more importantly, change over time in site distribution. Even at this early stage there does seem to be a clear difference between the pre- and post-Persian occupation in the region, as well possible changes in resource management and use (i.e. control and access of resources such as water). The picture that has emerged so far is that the fertile plain of what is today Shari-Sabz was important enough in the sixth century B.C.E. that the Persians seem not only to have entered the region but incorporated it into their overall pattern of empire. This pattern is only now beginning to emerge. In the fall of 2002, these preliminary results were presented at the annual meeting of the American Schools of Oriental Research (ASOR) in Toronto.

Future plans for UBAM include a return to Uzbekistan to analyze the pottery collected in the 2000 season and consultation with our Uzbek colleagues to further fine tune our dating of the sites surveyed. We look to the future not only to begin full-scale excavations at the Sangyr and Padayatak Tepe, but also continue the collaboration we have enjoyed since 1999. Our program has included not only the Berkeley team's travelling to Uzbekistan, but also provided funds for our Uzbek collaborators to travel to UC Berkeley on extended visits to conduct research and most importantly, to make connections with western scholars. UBAM has from the beginning made the research needs and goals of our Uzbek counterparts a centerpiece of our collaboration, providing not only the travel funds mentioned above, but also when possible donating equipment to the Samarkand Archaeological Institute.

UBAM is grateful to UC Berkeley's Stahl Foundation and the Center of Middle Eastern Studies (Mellon grants), as well as the Headlands Foundation for providing the necessary funds for our research.

University of California, Berkeley  
Caucasus and Central Asia Program  
260 Stephens Hall MC #2304  
Berkeley CA 94720-2304

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED