The Islamic Framing of the Economic Activities of Salafi-oriented Muslims in Dagestan, North Caucasus: An Anthropological Approach

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In this paper, we explore the entanglement of spiritual and economic life through the example of Salafi-oriented entrepreneurs in Dagestan, a republic in the south of Russia. We scrutinize the Islamic framing of the economic practices of entrepreneurs who identify themselves as Salafis, or "people of the One God." This group makes up around 10–15% of observant Muslims in Dagestan,[1] and most of them work in the private sector in multi-ethnic lowland settlements and cities.[2] We will further refer to this group as "Salafi-oriented Muslims." They do not adhere to any Islamic schools of law (*madhhabs*[3]) and reject the teachings of the Spiritual Board of Dagestani Muslims, which officially claims to be the authority of all Dagestani Muslims.[4] An Islamic framing

1. These numbers are difficult to establish. The rough estimate of 10–15% is based on our conversations with authority figures (imams, *Dukhovnoe Upravlenie Musul'man Dagestana* [hereafter DUMD] officials, and representatives of the state). A survey conducted in 2015 by the Ministry of Youth Affairs shows that 11.5% of young people consider Salafism the proper religion for Dagestan, see Akhmet Yarlykapov, "Islamic State Propaganda in the North Caucasus," in Ofer Fridman, Vitaly Kabernik, James C. Pearce, eds., *Hybrid Conflicts and Information Warfare: New Labels, Old Politics* (Boulder, 2019), 219.

2. In this paper, we focus on one particular settlement in order to be able to provide a detailed ethnographic account; however, in the course of our fieldwork we also visited six other multi-ethnic lowland settlements of similar size along the Makhachkala-Baku highway. Despite different ethnic compositions, the dynamics of the local Salafi communities were similar. In one nearby settlement in the Derbentsky region, Iwona Kaliszewska, the project leader, spent four weeks between 2013 and 2016; other settlements were visited briefly, with visits spanning between one and five days. Short stays obviously limited our observations, but provided us with a broader context for this analysis. A detailed comparative analysis is beyond the scope of the paper; however, the findings allow us to draw certain generalizations within the broader context of the republic.

3. Madhhab (from Arabic): a school of thought within Islamic jurisprudence. Usually, Salafis either do not adhere to any madhhab or Hanabali school of law. In Dagestan, the majority of Salafis we encountered reject all madhhabs.

4. For a description of similar groups in Tatarstan, see Matteo Benussi, "'Sovereign' Islam and Tatar 'Aqīdah': Normative Religious Narratives and Grassroots Criticism amongst Tatarstan's Muslims," *Contemporary Islam* 14, no. 2 (September 24, 2018): 111–34.

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of most daily economic activities was very widespread among Salafi-oriented Muslims in Dagestan. Following Erving Goffman, we understand framing here as a schema of interpretation that individuals rely on to make sense of and respond to the world around them.[5] Most of the opinions on economic activities that our Salafi-oriented Muslim interlocutors expressed were followed by quotations from or references to the Quran. At the same time, they tended to criticize capitalism and think of the economic reality of the USSR with a hint of nostalgia.[6] If we, however, analytically leave out the Islamic and anti-capitalist framing of their narratives and ethnographically scrutinize their economic activities, we would see buoyant, active, and market-oriented individuals, very much involved in running and expanding their businesses.

How does living a religious life shape economic behavior and its moral dimensions? How does the gradual acquisition of the norms of the Islamic economy influence the everyday economic practices of Salafi-oriented Muslims in Dagestan? We approach the above questions by drawing on Stephen Gudeman's market-community framework, while taking into account its secular assumptions, in order to analyze the narratives and practices of Salafi-oriented Muslims in Dagestan.[7] In so doing, we will show that applying a traditional, Islamic moral frame to everyday activities allows Salafi-oriented Muslims to escape various traditional obligations, and to some extent, dealings with the state (or rather, what they perceive as a "corrupt state system"), while at the same time bestowing meaning on what they call "cold market relations" or "cruel capitalism." We will show that instead of escaping the market-society schema they criticize, they actually reinforce it. Thus, in this paper we argue against a one-dimensional perception of Salafis as people estranged from the contemporary world, the state and the market. Instead, we see Salafi-oriented Muslims as people who, despite persecutions, resourcefully try to find their way in a rapidly changing world, where their religious convictions, somewhat surprisingly, come in quite useful.

Our analysis is based on the results of fieldwork conducted in one of the lowland settlements in Dagestan between 2014 and 2018 (approximately eleven months), as well as on the earlier observations made during regular visits there by the project leader between 2004–2013.[8] During our research, we approached Salafi-oriented entrepreneurs in one of the lowland settlements along the Makhachkala-Baku highway in the Kaiakentskii District.[9] Through a practice of cohabitation with local families, we were able to take a closer look at their everyday life. Our findings are based mostly on participant

5. Erving Goffman, *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience* (Boston, 1974).

6. For a broader account of Daghestani Muslims' attitudes towards the USSR, see Iwona Kaliszewska, *For Putin and for Sharia: Dagestani Muslims and the Islamic State* (Ithaca, forthcoming); and Stéphane Voell and Iwona Kaliszewska, *State and Legal Practice in the Caucasus: Anthropological Perspectives on Law and Politics* (London, 2015).

7. Stephen Gudeman, *The Anthropology of Economy: Community, Market, and Culture* (Malden, Mass., 2001).

8. Fieldwork was conducted by three researchers: Iwona Kaliszewska, Jagoda Schmidt, and Marek Kaleta. This paper is a result of research grant number 2015/19/D/HS3/02362 financed by National Science Center (Narodowe Centrum Nauki).

9. For the sake of our informants' safety, we decided to disguise the actual settlement, with—we hope—no harm to academic standards.

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observation and fifty-nine in-depth, unstructured interviews, as well as on occasional conversations during visits to their neighbors and business partners.[10] Most of our research participants were male, because it was mostly men who were working as entrepreneurs in Dagestani lowland settlements. However, working in a mixed-gender team we interviewed both male and female Salafi-minded individuals: even if the latter did not run their own businesses, they obviously participated in daily economic activities related to their husband's businesses.[11]

The analysis presented here contributes to the literature on North Caucasus area studies. Most ethnographies from the region tend to exclude Salafi-oriented Muslims, even though they obviously live in places where the research was conducted.[12] By considering the grassroots perspective of Salafi-oriented Muslims, we apply an *emic* approach that takes seriously people's experiences and beliefs about their economic activities. Furthermore, a closer look at the nature of the processes of making one's economic activities "Islamic" from an anthropological perspective may also enrich the existing literature on the Islamic economy and the debate on the interrelations of Islam and capitalism.[13]

10. By the time of this research, we already knew many of our interlocutors from previous research. The reason for this research (which would otherwise be problematic, because Salafi-minded individuals are often perceived by state officials as a threat to national security) going more or less smoothly was, we believe, a trust that has been worked on for years prior to this research. For security reasons, the names (and other distinguishing details) of our informants have been changed.

11. Also, because of the gendered nature of space and labor in Dagestan, accompanying Salafi-oriented men during their work and religious practices/gatherings was possible only for male researchers, while women spoke at ease only with female researchers.

12. For example, in a paper about contemporary city weddings (Majsarat K. Musaeva, Saida M. Garunova, and Robert Chenciner, "City Weddings in Daghestan: A New Version of Old Tradition, or Adaptation to Global Trends of Urbanization?," *History, Archeology and Ethnography of the Caucasus* 14, no. 4 (2018): 166–72), Salafi-oriented Muslims are not even mentioned, although they certainly live in cities and organize weddings that differ considerably from those described, and thus should be taken into account when writing an overview. In-depth ethnographic descriptions of contemporary everyday life in Dagestan are generally scarce. Religious and economic life usually appear in the background of otherwise insightful ethnographies; see Jurij Ju Karpov and Ekaterina L. Kapustina, *Gortsy posle gor: Migratsionnye protsessy i etnokul′turnye posledstviia i perspektivy* (St. Petersburg, 2011); and Akhmet Yarlykapov, "Islamic State Propaganda in the North Caucasus," 213–23.

13. About the Islamic economy, see Timur Kuran, "Islamic Economics and the Islamic Subeconomy," *The Journal of Economic Perspectives* 9, no. 4 (Autumn 1995): 155–73; Evrim Gormus, "The Invisible Hand of Islam: Islamic Business and the State Relations in Turkey and Egypt," (PhD diss., University of Washington, 2014); Joel Beinin, "Political Islam and the New Global Economy: The Political Economy of an Egyptian Social Movement," *CR: The New Centennial Review* 5, no. 1 (Spring 2005): 111–39. The debate about the interrelation of Islam and capitalism started in the nineteenth century, in particular in regard to Max Weber's sociological theories. As Bryan S. Turner shows, the connection between Puritan asceticism in Europe and Islamic modernism in the Middle East is superficial and, although both sought in the basic scriptures of their religion an ethic that would be free from mystical and ritualistic accretions, Islamic reform was an attempt to answer a feeling of inferiority and frustration resulting from western colonialism; see Bryan S. Turner, "Revisiting Weber and Islam," *The British Journal of Sociology* 61, no. s1 (January 2010): 161–66.

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Background

Dagestan, populated by around three million[14] inhabitants, is the largest republic in Russia's North Caucasus, and at the same time, the most multi-ethnic[15], with fourteen official ethnic groups and over a hundred ethnolinguistic groups.[16] Nowadays, more than two-thirds of Dagestanis inhabit the lowlands and cities situated along the coast of the Caspian Sea, in an area that houses farms and major industries.[17] There are, however, still a considerable number of influential mountainous communities (*jamaats*).[18] In the lowland settlements, businesses such as stone-cladding, running a shop (a stall at a bazaar in the nearest town), a cafe, a garage, or gas station usually provide decent earnings for local families. Recent visitors to the republic may be surprised by the high number (in comparison to many other places in Russia) of such initiatives. Statistically, Dagestan is one of the poorest republics in the Russian Federation.[19] There is a significant gap between the official incomes of Dagestanis and their expenditures and living standards: a gap that does not take into account unofficial incomes from non-legalized trade and corruption.[20] The gradual economic growth in Russia (starting in the early 2000s and connected to global economic changes and the rise of oil prices) also saw a significant increase in the number of state-paid positions in Dagestan.[21]

14. "Naseleniye Regionov Rossii 2022," *Staddata.ru*, at: http://www.statdata.ru/largest_regions_russia (accessed July 31, 2022).

15. Johanna Nichols, *Linguistic Diversity in Space and Time* (Chicago, 1992).

16. Yuri B. Koryakov, *Altas kavkazkikh iazykov* (Moscow 2006).

17. The major industries include oil production, textile manufacturing, chemicals, engineering, machine building, food processing, and masonry. They are situated mostly in the cities and in the narrow, coastal region. Dagestan also has five hydroelectric power plants on the Sulak River. Dagestani oil is of high quality and is delivered to other regions, but other production is mostly used to satisfy local needs. A significant part of Dagestan's economy, however, is the agrarian sector: grain-farming, viticulture, wine-making, and dairy and sheep-farming. "Dagestan Republic: General Information," *Kommersant: Russia's Daily Online*, at web.archive.org/web/20090906042842/http://www.kommersant.com/p-94/r_438/Dagestan_Republic/ (accessed May 24, 2022).

18. For a detailed analysis of the village *jamaats*, see Iuri Iu. Karpov, "The Dagestani Mountain Village: From the Traditional Jamaat to Its Present Social Character," *Anthropology & Archeology of Eurasia* 48, no. 4 (Spring 2010): 12–88; and of their influence and political power, see Denis V. Sokolov, "Three Generations of Karata: The Transformation of a Daghestani Collective into a Global Islamic Religious Community," *Anthropology & Archeology of Eurasia* 56, no. 3–4 (Fall 2017): 194–229.

19. "Bogatye i bednye regiony Rossii: Reiting," *Krizis-Kopilka*, at krizis-kopilka.ru/archives/49104 (accessed May 24, 2022); vestikamaza.ru/news/mirovye-novosti/nazvany-samye-bednye-regiony-rossii/ (accessed January 21, 2018; no longer available). kavpolit.com/articles/o_sostojanii_ekonomiki_respubliki_dagestan_za_2013–32113/ (accessed December 8, 2018; no longer available); "Nazvany samye bogatye i samye nishchie po zarplatam regiony," Pravda, July 12, 2017 www.pravda.ru/news/economics/1359078-zarplata/ (accessed May 24, 2022).

20. Dagmara Maslova, *Budget and Tax Instruments of Economic Policy and Socio-Economic Dynamics of the Regions of the European Part of Russia (2000–2014)* (Pyatigorsk, 2019), estimates that half Dagestan's estimated GDP comes from grey income.

21. www.gks.ru/wps/connect/rosstat_main/rosstat/ru.statistics/efficiency/ (accessed December 8, 2018; no longer available); and "Russia GDP Growth Rate," *Trading Economics* at tradingeconomics.com/russia/gdp-growth (accessed May 24, 2022).

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According to the data from 2010, 40% of people in the Dagestan republic worked in the government sector.[22] State-paid jobs provided state-employees with both official incomes and "dirty money," illegally derived from the federal budget. A part of this "dirty money" provided decent earnings to cover the expenditures of Dagestani families, and therefore enabled small businesses to thrive and develop. The rest powered the *sistema*.[23] While some Dagestanis accepted this informal "system of governance," and in tandem with it took and paid bribes and purchased state-paid positions or pensions for themselves and their offspring, others radically rejected it and strived to live decent lives beyond it.[24]

Dagestan has been undergoing a rapid bottom-up re-Islamization since the fall of the USSR and, as emphasized by Vladimir Bobrovnikov, we should not forget that this re-Islamization emerged in the context of the Soviet legacy.[25] Initially, acts of piety and devotion started to be expressed in a number of new mosques.[26] The declaration "I am Muslim," was at that time similar to declaring "I am Avar," or "I am Dargi." Thus, religious identity came hand-in-hand with ethnic identity and was not necessarily connected to actual religious practice or knowledge. Gradually, however, as demonstrated by Iwona Kaliszewska, being Muslim started to signify a lifestyle that encompassed all spheres of everyday activities, including the economic practices that are of particular interest to us in this paper.[27]

22. Valery Dzutsati, "Khloponin Focuses on Dagestan's Economy While Others See Threat of Civil War," *North Caucasus Weekly* 11, no. 8 (October 18, 2010) at jamestown.org/program/khloponin-focuses-on-dagestans-economy-while-others-see-threat-of-civil-war/ (accessed May 24, 2022).

23. Alena V. Ledeneva, *Can Russia Modernise? Sistema, Power Networks and Informal Governance* (Cambridge, Eng., 2013). Ledeneva defines *sistema* as a shorthand term for a "system of governance," diffused, yet omnipresent. In her opinion, sistema is a hindrance to modernization in the longer run, but at the same time, in a shorter period, informal networks enable "things to get done." In our analysis, we mostly refer to the emic understanding of sistema, which is similar to Ledeneva's; however, the emphasis is on patron-client relations, state-paid job purchases, bribes and kickbacks. While Ledeneva insightfully describes how sistema works in the Russian Federation in general, there is little written research on how sistema plays out in Dagestan and how it is perceived by local actors.

24. In Dagestan, it is very common to "arrange" a disability pension for oneself and one's offspring, especially daughters. For more, see Iwona Kaliszewska, Jagoda Schmidt, "Nobody Will Marry You if You Don't Have a Pension: Female Bribing Practices in Dagestan, North Caucasus," *Caucasus Survey*, no. 10 (2022): 1–24.

25. Vladimir Bobrovnikov, "From Collective Farm to Islamic Museum? Deconstructing the Narrative of Highlander Traditions in Dagestan," in Florian Mühlfried and Sergey Sokolovskiy, eds., *Exploring the Edge of Empire: Soviet Era Anthropology in the Caucasus and Central Asia* (Berlin, 2011), 99–117. Vladimir Bobrovnikov, "The 'Islamic Revival' in a Dagestani Kolkhoz: Between Local Traditions and External Influences," in Bayram Balci and Raoul Motika, eds., *Religion et Politique dans le Caucase Post-Soviétique: Les Traditions Réinventées à l'épreuve des Influences Extérieures* (Istanbul 2007), 163–82.

26. Vladimir Bobrovnikov, "Withering Heights: The Re-Islamisation of a Kolkhoz Village in Dagestan: A Micro-History," in Stephane Dudoignon and Christian Noack, eds., *Allah's Kolkhozes: Migration, de-Stalinisation, Privatisation, and the New Muslim Congregations in the Soviet Realm (1950s–2000s)* (Berlin, 2014), 367–97.

27. Iwona Kaliszewska, "'What Good Are All These Divisions in Islam?' Everyday Islam and Normative Discourses in Daghestan," *Contemporary Islam* 14, no. 2

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Salafi-oriented Muslims in Lowland Settlements

When Salafi-oriented Muslims speak about themselves they use terms such as *techenie* (the flow), *edinobozhniki* (people of the One God), *praviednye musul'manie* (rightful Muslims), or just "we are simply observant Muslims." Outside of their group, in particular by police, they are often called *borodachi* (bearded-men) or Wahhabis.[28] The religious ideology advanced by the DUMD and supported by the state differentiates between "good" and "bad" forms of Islam: "Sufism/traditional Islam" and "non-traditional Wahhabism." The "traditional," "moderate," "official," or "local" is positioned against "non-traditional," "radical," "unofficial," and "foreign."[29] These labels are used in the media and in everyday speech to refer to two specific sets of "attributes." The first set includes the practice of visiting *ustazes* and making the *ziyarat*, the celebrations of *Novruz Bayram* (Spring Holiday), New Year, and the practice of *mavlid*.[30] The second includes beards, lack of underwear, rolled-up pant legs (in the case of women, long-sleeved blouses, long skirts/dresses and *hijab*), eschewal of local traditions of pilgrimage, festive weddings and funerals, and a specific way of praying. Although in everyday life, these "sets of attributes" may hold little relevance, they are used by the police or anti-terrorist units to discredit Salafi-oriented Muslims and accuse them of being or supporting alleged "terrorists," leaving them vulnerable to kidnappings, extrajudicial arrests and killings, breeding as a result suspicious and hostile attitudes towards state representatives and power structures (the police, FSB, and army in particular).[31]

Salafi-oriented Muslims in the lowland settlements usually recruit from the second generation of migrants from the mountains. They stem from different ethnic and social backgrounds and communicate predominantly in Russian (although most also speak their mother tongues), both amongst themselves and with other neighbors. They downplay the importance of ethnicity and *tukkhum* divisions, instead emphasizing the unity of all Muslims.[32]

(July 2020): 157–78; Iwona Kaliszewska, "Halal Landscapes of Dagestani Entrepreneurs in Makhachkala," *Ethnicities* 20, no. 4 (February 2020): 708–30.

28. For a more detailed account of discursive divisions, see Kaliszewska, "'What Good Are All These Divisions in Islam?'"

29. Mahmood Mamdani, "Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: A Political Perspective on Culture and Terrorism," *American Anthropologist* 104, no. 3 (September 2002): 766–75; Hilary Pilkington and Galina M. Yemelianova, eds., *Islam in Post-Soviet Russia: Public and Private Faces* (London, 2003); Zaid Abdulagatov, "Daghestan and Tatarstan: The State/Religion Relationship in the Islamic Context of Russia," *Central Asia and the Caucasus* 1, no. 31 (2005): 50–58.

30. Ustaz: teacher, master, in Dagestan often used in reference to Sufi Sheiks, *Ziyarat, ziyara* (from Arabic "to visit")—a pilgrimage or a place of pilgrimage; Mavlid: recitations of specially written poems to commemorate the Prophet Mohammad's birthday, also practiced on special occasions, such as births, weddings, and funerals.

31. For more on how state violence is experienced in Dagestan, see Kaliszewska, *For Putin and for Sharia*.

32. For more, see Kaliszewska, "'What Good Are All These Divisions in Islam?'" Salafi originate both from "noble" and "not-noble" *tukkhums* and we came across cases of intermarriage; however, as Sokolov also notices in his case studies, in case of Salafis from "noble" tukkhums, the declaration of equality was not necessarily supported by practice;

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As a result, they do not create ethnic (ethnolingustic) groups and socialize mostly in adherence to religious preferences, and—as will be made clear in subsequent parts of this paper—also economic ones.

Despite some changes in attitudes towards Salafi-oriented Muslims in recent years documented by Kaliszewska, there are still tensions in numerous settlements, connected both with their appearance and outfits, and with their contestation of localized, mostly *adat*, customary law-based traditions (in some places inspired by Sufi brotherhoods) to which their parents and grandparents adhered.[33] Such contestation of what is locally called "traditional ways of life" (*traditsionnyi obraz zhizni)* has usually been linked to the very fact that they no longer live in a village along with other tukkhum and family members who could exert control over younger people, particularly control over financial resources, access to jobs, choice of marriage partners, or the type and scale of the wedding or mourning ceremony.[34] The (at least) partial rejection of the authority of tukkhum elders, along with parallel strivings to make their lives more convergent with Islamic teachings has roused tensions in the lowland settlements.

In our researched settlement, Salafi-oriented Muslims and other inhabitants engaged in everyday interaction, greeting each other in the streets, buying from each other's shops and visiting each other during Muslim holidays. For the most part, however, Salafi-oriented Muslims kept closer neighborly or work ties with individuals who are observant Muslims, visiting one another, trading, and socializing. Moreover, they were stricter in regard to avoiding closer ties with people who openly discredit Islam or abuse alcohol. They also would not socialize with former colleagues, classmates, or even relatives who work for the police, FSB, or other law enforcement agencies. They also did not attend weddings, birthdays, or New Year celebrations where alcohol

see Sokolov, "Three Generations of Karata," 169. It would however require further research to learn how far tukkhum divisions are played out in everyday life.

33. Kaliszewska, "'What Good Are All These Divisions in Islam?'"; for a broader context on Sufi-Salafi tensions/conflict, see, for example, Alexander Knysh, "Contextualizing the Salafi-Sufi Conflict (From the Northern Caucasus to Hadramawt)," *Middle Eastern Studies* 43, no. 4 (July 2007): 503–30.

34. In most cases, the village tukkhums still exert power over the first generation of migrants to the cities and, reversely, migrants have a say about village politics even if they no longer live there. Tukkhum control is usually considerably weaker when it comes to the second or third generation of migrants; see Denis Sokolov interviewed by Agnieszka Pikulicka-Wilczewska, "Religion, Migration and the Dreams of Dagestani Youth," *New Eastern Europe* 1 (2018): 101–6. For reasons of space we do not present here a broader discussion about changes in "traditional" village life and the role of *adats* in the social order in Dagestan. A detailed ethnography of traditional mountainous communities can be found in M. A. Aglarov, *Sel'skaia Obshchina v Nagornom Dagestane v XVII - Nachale XIX V* (Moscow, 1988). An insightful account of pre-revolutionary adats can be found in W. G. Gadzhev, "Pamiatniki Obychnogo Prava Dagestana (Opyt Istochnikovedcheskogo Analiza)," Izvestiia Severo-Kavkazskogo Centra Vysshej Shkoly, Obshchestvennye nauki, no. 2 (1987): 6–9; while the interplay between adats and sharia is thoroughly analyzed in Michael Kemper, "'Adat Against Shari'a: Russian Approaches Toward Daghestani 'Customary Law' in the 19th Century," *Ab Imperio* no. 3 (March 2005): 147–73, more recent changes in mountainous villages are also analyzed in detail by Bobrovnikov, "The 'Islamic Revival' in a Dagestani Kolkhoz"; Bobrovnikov, "From Collective Farm to Islamic Museum?"; and Karpov, "The Dagestani Mountain Village."

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was served that would bring the inhabitants of the settlement together; they, however, even if briefly, would attend non-Salafi funerals, despite considering them "improper." At the beginning of our fieldwork, the Salafi-minded community was centered around the main mosque where they gathered in the yard after prayers. However, after a number of kidnappings by law enforcement units of members of their community and the installment of an imam loyal to the DUMD, they became more cautious and now socialize and pray in private homes.

Most Salafi-oriented Muslims in our settlement were involved in trade-related activities: stone-cladding, growing vegetables, selling produce at the bazaar in Derbent, or running small shops or garages. They left behind (or never aspired to) state-paid employment, claiming they did not want to be involved in corruption and deal with the "state." They also did not want to work on the local farm that provided grapes for wine production and forbade their wives to do so. The wives of the Salafi-minded individuals in our settlement took care of the household and children and/or helped with their husband's business. Men made most decisions in regard to their businesses: their spouses, however, also participated in other economic decisions, such as those regarding lending money or spending it on a wedding.[35]

In contradistinction to other traders in this settlement, Islam was in the foreground of most of the economic activities of the Salafi-oriented Muslims. Discussions about the norms of the Islamic economy and about what is *halal* (permissible) in business were very popular.[36] These issues were also discussed in *Chernovik:* the newspaper that was read by our Salafi-oriented interlocutors.[37] Authors, in particular Abdulmumin Gadzhiev, advised Muslim entrepreneurs on how to run a business according to the Islamic economy and discussed issues connected with Islamic banking, usury, and *zakat*.[38] While elements of the Islamic economy were debated among many observant Muslims, in our settlement the Salafi-oriented Muslims were in the forefront of actually introducing them into their economic activities.[39] Below, we will demonstrate how these ideas were put into practice, and how this changed the conduct of business. We will take a closer look at the narratives of Kurban

35. Nowadays, in Makhachkala there is a growing number of observant (both Salafi-minded and not) Muslim female entrepreneurs who try to follow sharia in their business arrangements. In smaller settlements, however, this niche is male-dominated, and it is primarily men who pass their economic decisions through an Islamic moral filter. As a result, our analysis focused mostly on their narratives and practices.

36. For more, see Kaliszewska, "'What Good Are All These Divisions in Islam?'"

37. In Makhachkala, there are even classes and webinars performed for businessmen who strive to acquire more knowledge in how to manage a business in Russia or Dagestan and stay in line with Islamic norms; however, our interlocutors had not heard of them.

38. *Zakat*—the obligatory payment by Muslims for the benefit of the poor. Abdulmumin Gadzhiev, interview with Iwona Kaliszewska, 2018, Makhachkala. In 2019, he was arrested and accused of "supporting terrorism," most likely on fabricated charges, and is still awaiting trial. Arrests (earlier: murders) of well-educated Salafi-minded individuals are still not rare.

39. Recently, the DUMD has also become involved in discussions about the Islamic economy, for example, in the DUMD-run newspaper As-salam, see Muhammad-Faruk Azimov, "Vazhnoe o Torgovle," *As-aalam*, issue 560, 2018 at as-salam.ru/news/2165/ (accessed May 25, 2022).

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and Rashid, two Salafi-oriented Muslims from the researched settlement. The choice of the two entrepreneurs was not random: Rashid and Kurban's narratives and practices in regard to their business activities were illustrative, as similar quotes and opinions were shared among other Salafi-minded individuals in this settlement and beyond.[40] The names of our interlocutors were changed for reasons of security. By quoting their narratives, we will try to illustrate how Dagestani Muslims speak about their economic practices, what they struggle with, what activities are emphasized, and what this tells about their relationship with the market.[41]

Kurban

The Friday *namaz* (daily prayer) in winter 2017 gathered many fellow believers. Kurban, a man in his late 40s, stands proudly with his long beard in front of the mosque. He is a merchant, who owns a shop and occasionally does some interior finishing works. Formerly, he worked as a teacher, but eventually left his job because it paid poorly. Kurban's neighbors remember him as the life and soul of the party, and the best dancer at weddings. Since he stopped drinking, however, started praying five times a day and grew a beard, his family has distanced itself from their old friends. Kurban and his wife, daughter, and daughter-in-law wear hijabs are now called "Wahhabis" by neighbors and relatives, and themselves identify as "rightful Muslims." He actually does not deny his "wild" past and the social life it involved:

> "Only now I see how my former companions feel. I pity them, because I was there and now I am here. . .. They have not visited me since I stopped drinking. I changed quantity for quality," he explains. "When we have any problems among our friends, among our brothers—well, we all call ourselves brothers—when a problem occurs, we are all ready to stand behind one another, to support, or help both materially and morally. There is nothing else like that in this country. It comes from our upbringing. . .. Moral support is even more important than material support."

Kurban's friends try to buy products in his store, even if its location is inconvenient. He also prefers to trade with "proper" Muslims. "[If] a proper Muslim, a person who holds more seriously to Islam, works at the spot where I usually buy my supplies, I will try to trade with him. Why? Because, according to Islam, brothers should support one another. In such cases, too." He supports poorer brothers in faith with zakat that he pays to a trusted person in the community, who later distributes it among the needy in their settlement and beyond.

40. Kurban's narrative in regard to his sons' kidnapping was obviously exceptional: by choosing to share this information with the reader we wanted to outline, even if briefly, the problems the Salafi community faces in Dagestan.

41. We understand market after Gudeman. According to Gudeman, the economy consists of two realms: the community (where exchanges are performed through already existing social relations, and are done *for its own sake*, for maintaining the community) and the market (that motivates anonymous, short-term exchanges); see Stephen Gudeman, *The Anthropology of Economy: Community, Market, and Culture* (Malden, 2001), 1.

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Kurban criticizes excessive spending, which he tries to emphasize should be avoided: "You should not live above your means, be happy with what you have. Do not expect more. Allah will help you as long as you help your brothers. If you earn ten thousand, you shouldn't live as though you had fifteen thousand and go into debt." He is particularly critical of excessive spending for life event ceremonies, claiming that in order to live up to social obligations, many families go into debt by organizing a festive wedding or "appropriate" ceremony of mourning.[42] Kurban rejected all such rituals when burying his mother: an act that was met with censure by his co-villagers. The humble wedding that he organized for his son was received with more understanding: "If you hold a wedding the way common people do, it costs twice as much. Why? Because they unnecessarily spend money on alcohol. . . . They also give away money to musicians—that costs a certain amount. They book a wedding hall that costs a lot. *Sharia* forbids music. What does Allah teach us?: That you mustn't listen to music, you mustn't drink alcohol. When this is all removed from the start, you pay less."

When asked about his expenses, Kurban remarked that besides the above mentioned life events, a considerable part of families' budgets are spent on various kinds of bribes, given to state officials, that are not permissible in Islam and should be avoided. Bribes that are forced upon a person are seen by Kurban as permitted, however, especially if you cannot fulfill Muslim family duties in any other way:

> "If several families live under one roof, and their sons grow up and get married, they have no place to live: they then should build their own house, they need a piece of land. To get it, you have to give [money]. This is a forced bribe. Allah tolerates that. But an unlawful act that Allah tolerates, no matter what it concerns, shouldn't be done with joy. . . . In my family nobody has a disability pension, there was no reason to arrange it."

Despite having the possibility to receive an extra income though the commonplace practice of "buying" a disability pension for a (healthy) family member, Kurban did not want to do so: "Why? Because I have the opportunity to provide for my family, that's why I haven't even tried to get one. . . . But if it gets hard, then yes. Sharia tolerates such options when the country in which you live treats you unjustly. Then, you can take from it unlawfully.[43]

Half a year later, we saw Kurban sad and keeping to himself. In winter 2018, unidentified men kidnapped his two sons from the village. Along the lines of a "typical" kidnapping, they were arrested and accused of belonging to a "terrorist organization," tortured, and forced to sign "confessions."[44] He hired attorneys and tried to act legally, but the trials kept being postponed and not leading anywhere. "I would love to be a patriot for my country, but

42. Traditionally, one is supposed to read the Quran at the cemetery and organize a three-day-long mourning that includes not only food, but also gift giving (every mourner leaves with a bag of food or sweets). After forty days, mourners revisit the cemetery and, once again, are received at home.

43. More on this practice Kaliszewska, Schmidt, forthcoming.

44. For more on extrajudicial killings and arrests in Dagestan see Kaliszewska, *For Putin and for Sharia*.

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they don't let me," he commented with resignation. He did not try to buy his sons out. He knew the "price" from a neighbor, who had been in a similar situation a year ago.

Rashid

Rashid, a man in his late thirties, lives in a vast three-story house. He has owned a stone-masonry workshop for eleven years. In 2013, he also started growing greenhouse tomatoes, which, thanks to the European embargo in 2014, turned out to be a big success.[45] For each of his business activities, he has a religious explanation: "Religion for Muslims is a way of life. For any kind of business we conduct, whichever activity we begin, Muslims who fear God start forming a question: is it permissible according to Islam?" he asks. "There are no problems between business and religion," he assures. "On the contrary, when it comes to business, the situation is better for me than for others, because in my business everything is transparent. Many clients who work with me know that 'Rashid does not cheat anybody.'" When he says that there will be are 100 pieces of slab in the package, there must be 100. "I can give more if I want, but never fewer than I promised."[46] Rashid certainly cares about profit, but he also claims that moral rules are more important for him than the income itself. "Islam does not permit high markup." He then recounts an *Ayat* that condemns cheating on scales.[47] "I know that I didn't cheat anybody and on Doomsday, I will be saved." He stresses that Islam does not forbid wealth, but requires certain rules: "It is a big trial when you are rich, which I need to pass daily: you cannot make money in a haram way."[48]

Rashid likes dealing with pious Dagestanis, similar to himself. This also influences his choice of business partners. In such a case: ". . .If I know that he is a decent man," he explains, "I am eager to give him a discount. I know he is honest, he delivers on time, and he won't cheat me." Some of his clients paid him their debts after years of delay. This kind of negative experience does not prejudice him: "If they have a difficult life situation, their house was damaged in a fire, I never refuse." What really makes him furious, however, is dishonesty and deception. Rashid does not go into debt; he does not take out loans at banks, because, he claims, there are no Islamic banks in Dagestan that would not charge usury.[49] He owns a bank account, but uses his bank

45. Oliver Fritz, Elisabeth Christen, Franz Sinabell, and Julian Hinz, "Russia's and the EU's sanctions: Economic and trade effects, compliance and the way forward," at www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2017/603847/EXPO_STU(2017)603847_EN.pdf (accessed May 25, 2022).

46. Interview, December 2017, Kayakentsky District, Dagestan.

47. *Ayat, ayah*—a verse. Verses make up the *surahs* (chapters) of the Quran. They are marked by a number.

48. *Haram*—an Arabic term meaning "forbidden."

49. *LaRiba* is an Islamic bank established in 2013 in Dagestan, but our interlocutors had little knowledge of it and were slightly suspicious as to how it functions. Dagestani LaRiba Finance specializes in retail short-term *murabaha* financing: the maximum finance period is a year, the maximum amount is 500,000 RUR For more see: Medina Kalimullina "Islamic finance in Russia: A market review and the legal environment," *Global Finance Journal,* no. 46 (November 2020).

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account and credit card only when there is no other way. Cash is a preferable way of payment for him, but when we asked the reason why, expecting a religious explanation, he simply said: "You never know when they will block your account and take hold of your money."[50]

Like Kurban, Rashid opposes excessive spending, supporting his statements with references from the Quran. "There is an Arabic notion: *israf* if you spend too much money. For example, you buy too much flour and fill up the table with *khinkal*. To lose too much is also not permissible in Islam. Showing-off at weddings, for example, doing things not to be worse than your neighbor, this is israf."[51] Rashid extends the notion of israf to excessive giving:

> "We can assume that I am ascetic, well, at least I try not to waste money if I do not need to. It's because I brought myself up, I lived poorly in my childhood and I value what I earned, and I teach my children the same. So, when my relative comes and asks: 'Rashid, I need to buy a second car, give me some money,' I won't give it to him. My answer is: 'You already have a car, you live decently.' But if he asks for life-dependent things, for example, expenditures for a hospital, I help him. You need to measure what he wants. There are people who are dishonest, who want to cheat you. I know such people. They ask even though they do not need. In such cases, I decline. But overall, you need to help relatives and neighbors. Today you have this possibility; tomorrow, maybe you will be in need of help. We live, and only the Almighty knows what will happen tomorrow."[52]

Rashid admits later that he was able to start his business, because of his uncle's financial support. Relatives also helped him with his first job: selling used cars. Later, however, when he developed his greenhouse business, instead of taking on local people or members of his tukkhum, he employed Uzbeks. As a result, he was exposed to criticism from villagers: "I cannot understand why he does not support *jamaat*,"[53] complained Rashid's neighbor, also an entrepreneur in his fifties (but not Salafi-minded), Halim. He recalls that initially, local women from poorer families picked tomatoes for Rashid, which was better paid and easier to do than working on the farm, but, allegedly, a rumor about chemicals scared them off. Halim understood that employing one's relatives or neighbors may be problematic due to tukkhum obligations (and taking days off for weddings and funerals), but he still found it important to help one's own tukkhum or villager first. For Rashid, however, Uzbek migrants turned out to be better workers. He points out that what matters to him is not their ethnic or tukkhum origin but their faith, and thus, he perceives hiring them as helping *umma*.[54] He saw this help as equal to helping the local community and clan. He wants to employ decent, diligent, non-drinking Muslims. He avoids the so-called "cunning, scandalous men" (*khitrykh aferistov*), who work poorly and demand the same pay. Rashid

50. Interview, December, 2017, Kayakentsky District, Dagestan.
51. *Israf*—wastefulness, spending that is lawful, but exceeds moderation.
52. Interview, December 2017, Kayakentsky District, Dagestan.
53. Here: the community.
54. Literally, from Arabic *umma* also means community: but it is used not to designate a small local community, but rather a supra-national community with common history.

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guarantees just, piecework-based payment. His employees are allowed to take breaks for prayer, but since he pays for the work done and not for the hours spent at work, the breaks do not influence his income pay. There are also no written agreements between him and his workers, so their relationship is based on mutual trust. He later admits that Uzbek migrants are "good," because they live where they work, and they do not take sick leave or days off for their cousins' weddings.[55]

Rashid is aware that while doing business he is unable to avoid entanglements with the sistema*:* "Here, our officials count your money in advance. They know how much you can earn and they won't give you documents just like that. . . .. It is all difficult everywhere, as this system was established long ago, we cannot go against the wind. . . .. From the fire department to the prosecution office, not a single authority will let you by, all of them penalize you, the ecological department torments you, everyone torments you. You need to pay everywhere."[56] The only way to minimize the price is through influential connections. Rashid explains that the kind of bribe where one's life is at stake is permissible in Islam. He also recounts an Ayat that permits drinking alcohol in a desert when no other liquids are available. It is thus the aim and the goal of an action that matter. He condemns officials who ask directly for money or demand too much, especially the traffic police: "I know that all my documents are in order and I have done nothing wrong, but he anyway asks: 'Give me something, give!' Or he would say, 'You have just bought a new car, youngster. Give me a present, too.' Why should I give you any present? I bought the car for myself. But he lives that way, 'Give *sadaka*, give!' he says.[57] 'Why do you begrudge fifty rubles?' They would even belittle themselves when they do it."[58] Unlike many other villagers who admit that they pity a traffic policeman who is forced to take bribes in order to give the money to his boss, Rashid strongly refuses to pay in such situations. He also tries to obey traffic rules to avoid bribing for their transgression. Instead, from time to time, he tries to convince the traffic police or a civil servant that it is forbidden to take bribes in Islam.

The Islamic Framing of Economic Practices and Narratives of Salafi-oriented Muslims

We make sense of our surrounding environment in the terms and frames familiar to us: our interpretations of theses frames provide moral criteria for our behavior and for that of those around us. The communal valuation of certain knowledge(s) makes some framing approaches more acceptable or powerful than others: some frames resonate, some do not. Goffman envisioned frame analysis as an element of ethnographic research that would allow analysts

55. In the wedding season, workers may be absent even for up to a few days weekly.
56. Interview, December, 2017, Kayakentsky District, Dagestan.
57. *Sadaka*—voluntary alms.
58. Interview, December 2017, Kayakentsky District, Dagestan.

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to read identifiable strips of social behavior and to try to understand how, through what frames, people comprehend their social reality.[59]

In the above examples of Rashid and Kurban, we can see how religious framing was applied to every economic activity they talked about. Kurban and Rashid, as well as a number of our other interlocutors, narrated their economic activities and made their work important not only as a source of profit, but also as an activity highly valued in the times of the Prophet Muhammad. This holds particular importance if we contrast it with the way trading or making profit was seen in Soviet times, when it was particularly unwelcome to "exploit the lower classes," "be greedy," or make profit "out of nothing."

It was issues of honesty and decency in business that were brought up most often, supported by references to Islamic teachings. Both Rashid and Kurban tried to act according to sharia when running a business, paying attention to numerous details, such as usury or over-expenses. It is important to mention here the specific context of Dagestani small business and legal regulations. Practices such as taking goods from suppliers and not paying for them used to be common practice in Dagestan. *Kinut′ na den′gi* (literally: "throwing yourself at money," that is, extorting money by cheating) has become a phrase that appears regularly in narratives about various economic activities. While richer clans are usually able to, often with the use of violence, reclaim the stolen money or goods, weaker clans or city dwellers with weak clan ties are far less successful. Dishonest business practices were linked with the turbulent 1990s and so-called "capitalism," envisioned locally by both Salafi and non-Salafi minded individuals, as inhumane and cruel, often in contrast to socialism. In tandem with a rapid bottom-up Islamization, a link between being an observant Muslim and a decent person has become gradually established and rhetorically created. Muslim business partners have started to be viewed as more reliable and trustworthy. Turning to Islam was in many ways connected not only with religious conversion, but also with a striving towards honesty and decency in everyday life. It has also allowed traders from weaker clans to slowly create a business network among fellow believers without their clan/ethnic belonging being seen as an obstacle. Salafi-oriented entrepreneurs built networks based on trust that help them to cope with uncertainty and take risks in their businesses.

An Islamic framing was also applied to narratives and practices linked to the payment of zakat and spending money on life-cycle events. In order to support other Salafi-oriented Muslims, Rashid, Kurban, and most of their brothers-in-faith (who made enough profit to do so), paid zakat. Unlike Muslims who trusted the DUMD authorities, they paid it not to a DUMD-run foundation called Insan, but to a trusted and respectable person from the community who collected it and distributed among brothers-in-faith who were in need. While they supported other Salafi-oriented Muslims in need through zakat, their refusal to spend much money on weddings and funerals allowed them to lower the costs of community life. By interpreting the notion of israf in terms of money, as extravagance or showing-off (*pokazukha*), Rashid was able to

59. Erving Goffman, *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience* (Boston, 1974).

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refuse to save money on parties or gifts. Refusal to share and give away money risks straining or even breaking ties with relatives (traditionally seen as the first point of reference, identity, and safety networks) for whom festive weddings are often the most important life-cycle events. Rashid and other Salafi-oriented Muslims realized that some of their activities (like employing a cheap workforce from Central Asia) may be criticized, or that some may perceive them as greedy for not helping relatives and co-villagers. Dagestani society generally respects those who make a lot of money (the source of the money is of less importance) or have a career; respect is also shown to the families of such individuals.[60] It is, however, important that "respectable individuals" help one's tukkhum or indeed the whole village. If they do so, they are praised on every occasion in front of their relatives and strangers. The status of wealthy individuals thus emerges not from having or spending money, but from investing it in the community. However, in the multi-ethnic lowland villages that house 2000–10,000 inhabitants, these obligations no longer play themselves out in a similar way. Some tukkhums are strong and support their members, whereas others are weaker and their members cannot rely on help. Certainly, not everybody participates in everyday giving and spending; nonetheless, many of our informants found themselves unable to refuse to support tukkhum members financially, even if they knew that the money would be wasted or never given back. Many non-Salafi-oriented Muslims also found it hard to resist the sistema. Salafi-oriented Muslims, for their part, could not totally escape it, but at least, through reference to sharia, they tried to minimize their participation in it (in this instance, rigorous sharia prohibitions are adapted to the specific social situation).

Thus, Salafi-oriented Muslims, though still embedded in their tukkhums and communities, have a religious backing for their choices not to lend money excessively, bribe, or provide services free of charge. Their initial status as misfits gave them the possibility to behave differently. It also gave them a religious explanation for their choices, which—in a society with a generally low level of scriptural knowledge—shows them as knowledgeable in the tenets of Islam.

An Islamic Sub-economy

An Islamic framing of economic activities, the payment of zakat, avoiding usury, unnecessary waste, and extravagance, striving towards hard work, charging fair prices, and paying others their due, as well as the general necessity to pass all economic decisions through "an Islamic moral filter" (implies acting according to the guidance of norms drawn from the traditional sources of Islam) are all elements of the Islamic economy.[61] In this way, Salafi-oriented Muslims created a sort of niche/space encompassing the activities of Muslim entrepreneurs who try to build a network based on trust and act according to the rules of the Islamic economy within an otherwise secular economy.

60. In regard to Uzbekistan, see Jesko Schmoller, *Achieving a Career, Becoming a Master: Aspirations in the Lives of Young Uzbek Men* (Berlin, 2014).

61. Kuran, "Islamic Economics and the Islamic Subeconomy," 156.

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Timur Kuran calls such a niche an Islamic sub-economy: "Islamic economics must matter to participants in the Islamic sub-economy less because of its economics than because of its Islamic character," writes Kuran.[62] ". . .The intended effect of the norms is to transform selfish and acquisitive *homo economicus* into a paragon of virtue, *homo Islamicus*."[63] He adds: "The significance of the concrete steps taken to give economies an Islamic character lies only partly. . . in their economic content. Much of their importance lies in their symbolism, in their implications for the distribution of political power, and in their cultural meaning."[64] Salafi-oriented entrepreneurs are certainly operating within the broader economic sphere of the Russian Federation and its informal economy. The moral framing provided by their faith gives them the incentive to reject (or attempt to reject) certain practices embedded (and socially accepted) in the "system," such as giving money to policemen "for nothing, just to stay away" or bribing to receive a disability pension. At the same time, the reality of living in the Russian Federation allows them to resort to bribes if they are indispensable for running a business or when bribing is forced upon them. Such bribes, they argued, are permissible in Islam.

The Salafi niche of the Islamic sub-economy in Dagestan is obviously strongly embedded in the economic reality of the Russian Federation and the traditional obligations of the society in which they live. However, through referring to Salafi teachings and the Islamic economy in general, Salafi-oriented Muslims both manage these constraints and are able to maneuver themselves out of the social and moral obligations put on them by relatives and neighbors. This differentiates them from other community members, who hold to traditional social ties, values, and tukkhum obligations. At the same time, they try to resist social constraints actively, in a way that most Dagestanis consider impossible: by questioning attitudes towards bribe taking and giving, and refusing to participate in these activities, even if this results in the destruction of their social ties. Participation in the Islamic sub-economy helps them, therefore, not only to free themselves from the burdens of traditional customs, but also, to some extent, to free them from the burdens of the sistema, while at the same time acting according to the principles of the Islamic economy (or local understandings of it).

Salafi-oriented Muslims, Market-oriented Entrepreneurs

The Islamic sub-economy, therefore, delineates the frame for our analysis. Gudeman's market-community framework, as we will show below, proves useful in elucidating broader changes caused by the emergence of the Islamic sub-economy. Gudeman created an anthropological model for understanding economic practices, in which the economy is seen as a domain of values.[65] Values, according to Gudeman, flow inside a community and outside it, linking it to other communities and to global markets. Furthermore, values, in

62. Ibid., 170.
63. Ibid., 159.
64. Ibid., 169.
65. Gudeman, *The Anthropology of Economy*.

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their nature, are inconsistent, incommensurate, and locally specified; thus, each community needs to be perceived through its own lens.[66] According to Gudeman, economic practices are constituted of two realms—the community and the market—and four value domains: (1) base, (2) social relationships, (3) trade, and (4) accumulation.[67] The base consists of the community shared interests, cultural agreements, and beliefs that provide structure for other values; simply speaking, it comprises all that is generally acknowledged about what one should or should not do. Social relationships are comprised of communally valued connections that mediate between base and community while also creating the base. Gudeman defines trade as a sphere of exchange performed in order to achieve financial gain. Accumulation, in its turn, is achieved by enhancing resources, relationships, goods, or money capital. These are gathered to be held, invested, consumed, or displayed. In this process, people can also appropriate newly formed values gained through innovation.

The community realm is connected mainly to the base and social relations. It concerns a local, specific and *up-close* aspect of the economy, in which exchange goes through already existing valued relations and is performed *for its own sake*, for maintaining the community. The market realm, in turn, consists of trade and accumulation. This *far-distant* aspect of the economy transcends social boundaries. Actions are undertaken *for the sake of something*, mainly for financial gain. These two realms, though they seem contradictory, are interrelated on a daily basis. "Both realms are ever-present, but we bring now one, now the other into the foreground in practice and ideology."[68] For example, individuals can act to improve their economic situation, but also to maintain high social status, accumulate symbolic capital, maintain a relationship, or show moral supremacy over someone.[69] Gudeman's framework is thus useful for the analysis of the social changes that took place in Dagestan in recent years. Using it, we can say that Salafi-oriented Muslims, with the help of Islamic teachings and participation in an Islamic sub-economy, influence and gradually change the commonly shared base. The base includes the importance of lavish weddings, expensive gifts, and the necessity to support cousins, and it is influenced and sustained by social relationships (here: tukkhum, village-of-origin, and neighborly ties). It is important to emphasize here that certain elements of the economic activities that are an inherent part of the sistema (such as giving and receiving bribes, and giving gratuity money to professionals) correspond well with the locally accepted base. Salafi

66. Gudeman argued with the neoclassical economic model, in which households and firms exchange labor, goods and capital through the market. Each household/firm has other values, while the value of a product is simply a result of the supply/demand intersection.

67. Gudeman, *The Anthropology of Economy*, 5–10.

68. Ibid., 1.

69. Caroline Humphrey, "Favors and 'Normal Heroes': The Case of Postsocialist Higher Education," *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 2, no. 2 (September 2012): 22–41; Abel Polese, "'If I receive it, it is a gift; if I demand it, then it is a bribe': On the Local Meaning of Economic Transactions in Post-Soviet Ukraine," *Anthropology in Action* 15, no. 3 (December 2008): 47–60; David Sneath, "Transacting and Enacting: Corruption, Obligation and the Use of Monies in Mongolia," *Ethnos* 71, no. 1 (March 2006): 89–112.

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ideologues emphasize that bribing practices are cases of wrongdoing in Islam and strongly discourage involvement in them. Referring to the Quran's stance on corruption, they try to avoid or at least minimize their involvement in bribe giving, looking for formal ways to comply with regulations. They inspire many people frustrated with the sistema and encourage them to leave state-paid jobs or not take ones that make participation in the sistema unavoidable. Salafi-oriented traders, therefore, add their own "innovation"—that is, their understanding of Islamic teachings about economic activities and their strong adherence to them—to the base values.

At the same time, as traders they accumulate capital (both material and social) and employ a cheap migrant workforce, instead of relatives towards whom they would have to be more considerate in case of life-events. Accumulation (and trade) allows them to inscribe their plan of innovation into the community base. Furthermore, accumulation would not be possible if they stayed fully attached to the old base and to its corresponding social relations, because they would have to respect commonly held norms, such as extensive gift-giving, money-lending, and kin-employment schemes that, in most cases, would negatively influence their accumulation and trade. What is more, in achieving the possibility of disregarding some commonly held assumptions about social life, they expand trade and accumulation values and limit (but not exclude) the base and relationships. As such, according to Gudeman's model, they drift more (than other non Salafi-oriented traders) into "the market realm"; they seem to make more market-oriented choices aimed at profit maximization and escape expensive obligations towards their clan and family members. They become more market-oriented as if "by chance," as a result or in the process of implementing their "innovation."

As our analysis shows, profit maximization and market orientation are not what Salafi-oriented Muslims present as their primary goal. What is more, they often remain very critical of western capitalism, or rather of their understanding of it, which runs closer to what was portrayed in socialist times as "cruel capitalism." Older Salafi-oriented Muslims, who remember life in the Soviet Union, are more eager to praise socialism (despite the communist persecution of religious figures) and emphasize the unity that prevailed under socialist slogans. Their longing for unity in Islam includes a certain dose of nostalgia towards the USSR.[70] The Islamic sub-economy, therefore, although portrayed as more Islamic than economic, encompasses both the community and market realms. Although portrayed as moral, "not-for-profit only," it is a space that "produces" market-oriented individuals, most likely better fitting to the contemporary economic space of the Russian Federation than their non-Salafi-oriented peers.

For Gudeman, religion and religious teachings belonged to the base, and would be placed rather among commonly held customs, cultural agreements, and beliefs.[71] What he meant by innovation was rather connected to the sphere of trade: innovative production, ideas, and the like.[72] In our case, innovation

70. For more, see Kaliszewska, *For Putin and for Sharia*.
71. Gudeman, *The Anthropology of Economy*, 7.
72. Ibid., 21.

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comes from the principles of the Islamic economy, or rather the local understandings of it. We would, therefore, offer a small corrective to Gudeman's theoretical model: firstly, by trying not to compartmentalize economic life and spiritual life, and secondly, by paying more attention to innovations that may originate from newly reclaimed religious principles. Gudeman seems not to pay sufficient attention to religion, which may be due to the secular assumptions behind his model and more generally to secular/religious and public/private dichotomies, as well as to the tendency to make a distinction between spiritual and economic life.

Benjamin Soares and Filippo Osella have alerted us to the novel connections between religious and economic practice through which "economic development and success in the global economy become linked to the cultivation of specific ethical dispositions."[73] Thinking of Salafi-oriented Muslims not through a security lens, but as multi-dimentional individuals with strong agential power, as individuals focused on trade and accumulation, or as individuals who try to get detached from various traditional loyalties that hinder money-circulation may at first sight seem counter-intuitive. As we have demonstrated, by introducing Salafi teaching into their lives and their economic practices, Dagestani entrepreneurs create a niche in an everyday Islamic sub-economy, and portray themselves as honest and faith-abiding business partners. Through this innovation, they change the core beliefs and norms of the communities they live in: influencing the very base of community values. Salafi-oriented Muslims introduce "innovation" to the base, escaping from norms that also turn out to be obstacles in business. Gradually, still within their initial community, they contribute to the formation of a community of economically successful Salafi-oriented traders.

If we look from a global perspective, there are a number of religious groups that, similar to Salafi-oriented Muslims in Dagestan, are somewhat socially marginalized yet economically successful and supportive of others in their communities. The Muslim Brothers in Egypt, the 1990s Anatolian Tigers and the Gullen Movement in Turkey, and the Tablighi Jama'at in Southeast and Central Asia are all examples of entrepreneurs unified through religion, who became not only strong economic but also political actors in their societies.[74] They built networks based on trust and mutual support, gained economic capital, and at the same time used religious principles to gradually introduce a new social order. Additionally, if we agree with Bryan S. Turner that Muslim reformers' emphasis on hard work and ascetics is largely the result of colonialism and their feeling of inferiority and frustration connected with it, we could see the Salafis' drift to the market realm as their response to the

73. Benjamin Soares and Filippo Osella, "Islam, Politics, Anthropology," *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, vol. 15 (2009): S1–S23, S14.

74. Gormus, "The Invisible Hand of Islam"; Beinin, "Political Islam and the New Global Economy"; Kathrin Lenz-Raymann, *Securitization of Islam: A Vicious Circle. Counter-Terrorism and Freedom of Religion in Central Asia* (Bielefeld, 2015), 104–8; Farish A. Noor, *Islam on the Move: The Tablighi Jama'at in Southeast Asia* (Amsterdam, 2012).

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post-Soviet sistema, and more broadly, to the post-Soviet condition of the state and society.[75]

We believe that the model described in this paper can be seen as representing something more fundamental about the interrelation of religious and economic life characteristic for reformist movements in different parts of the world, as it shows the dynamic of the gradual introduction of a new social order by people who are somewhat socially and politically marginalized. They use this condition for their benefit by rejecting "old rules" and being quick to introduce innovation, and in tandem creating a trust-based network of people who apprehend their economic life though a religious frame and who try to live their religious ideals through moral economic practices. As a result, they gradually form economically successful groups that, under favorable political conditions, may become socially and politically powerful.

75. Turner, "Revisiting Weber and Islam," 241. Turner (who studied reformers in the Middle East in the 1970s) contests Eugene Weber's assertion that asceticism is a necessary aspect of capitalist development, by showing that when Muslim reformers came to comprehend their economic decline under colonial rule, they often employed theories of ascetic motivation.

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