
GLOBAL AND REGIONAL ASPECTS OF ISLAMIZATION: A CASE STUDY ON WOMEN IN THE PUBLIC SPACE OF THE NORTH CAUCASUS

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This article is aimed at discussing the global and regional aspects of Islamic modernization. The study discusses the transformation of ideas about the role of women in the public space by the case study on the North Caucasus. The attitudes of traditional society, the influence of Soviet power, the role of Islamization, both early and post-Soviet, as well as the inclusion of women in Islamic education are studied. The initial spread of Islam did not deprive women of social and political rights; on the contrary, it organically fit the existing social and political status of women into the Islamic legal tradition. The Soviet system was focused on the inclusion of women in public sphere, while at the same time there was a suppression of all types of religiosity. As a consequence of the collapse of the USSR, a situation arose in which the processes of re-Islamization led to the exclusion of women from public sphere. The authors come to the conclusion that the 'new' wave of Islamization of the North Caucasus republics bears in itself a truly new phenomenon – the closure of women within the private sphere, contrary to historical experience – a phenomenon which occurred simultaneously with the rapid urbanization and informatization of the society of the North Caucasus. Basing on the data of field research conducted in the republics of the North Caucasus in 2019 and 2022, it is concluded that in the post-Soviet period an important role is played by Islamic education institutions which contributed to women's inclusion in the public space.

Keywords: *women, Islam, traditional society, the North Caucasus, Islamic education.*

Introduction

Modernization of countries and societies, although often focused on economic processes, is far from being limited to them, and in fact covers all spheres of life of states and world regions (Radiyeva 2018). We can talk about processes aimed at 'self-sustaining growth' implying the institutional distribution of all resources of society, including human resources. In this sense, modernization can be considered as a global process af-

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fecting, among other things, religions and the role that religion plays in the formation of modern societies, changing under the influence of historical developments. In this case, of course, regions of the world with a high proportion of Muslim population are not excluded, since the modernization of Islam is also noted by researchers (Ali 1997; Alatas 2005).

As Grinin *et al.* note, in many Muslim societies we can observe a significant variation in value perceptions as they modernize. However, it would be a mistake to associate Islamism with the spread of radical ideas – on the contrary, Islamism merely reflects the way of thinking and life of modern Islamic societies and in many ways contributes to the establishment of public life at different levels of society, creating a special Islamic path of modernization (Grinin *et al.* 2019).

At the same time, one of the significant topics in the discussion about the modernization of Islam is the inclusion of women in the public space. In this context, a notable historical event was the Arab Spring, during which a tendency towards the transformation in the position of some groups, and in particular women, in the political arena of Arab countries (Shishkina 2017) was outlined. At the same time, due to the widespread distribution of information technologies, women's participation in political life has reached a significant magnitude compared to previous periods and has become not only a virtually new phenomenon for Egypt and some other Arab countries, but has also outlined a global trend in the context of the modernization of Islamic communities around the world.

At the same time, as we have already noted above, the global modernization of Islam in general and in the 'women's issue' in particular can be non-linear and associated with many factors, including the role of the attitudes of traditional society characteristic of a particular region, historical features of the country's development, the system of Islamic education, *etc.* In this article, we turn to the study of the case of the North Caucasus as an example of a region with a high proportion of Muslim population and an existing system of Islamic education, in which, on the one hand, processes reflecting the modernization of Islam are recorded and, on the other hand, the influence of the above-mentioned factors is indicative.

Traditional Society vs. Modernist Attitudes

Speaking about women of the North Caucasus in general, we should address to the concept of a traditional society. The main problem in this case is its definition as such. A cluster of studies associates features of traditional society with gender inequality and patriarchy, which encompasses stratification of social attainment by sex and domination by men, as well as the effect of gender hierarchies within the family (limitations of the role of a wife in housekeeping and raising children), and generational hierarchies (the dependence of the younger generation on adult family members in making important life decisions) (Therborn 2004; Kazenin and Starodubrovskaya 2019). Szołtysek *et al.* (2017) argue that family organization is a crucial generator of social inequality. They also conceptualize four major dimensions of patriarchy:

- domination of men over women;
- domination of the elder generation over the younger generation;
- extent patrilocality (the social system in which a married couple resides with or near the husband's parents);
- a preference for sons.

Turner provides a typology of societies based on two dichotomies – thick and thin solidarity and cool and hot loyalties. Thus, traditional societies are characterized by thick/hot obligatory membership which, following Durkheim, is implemented through ritual practice and shared culture. By contrast, modern society is ‘urban, industrial, individualistic and dynamic; its culture is, at least formally, secular, individualistic and unstable’ (Turner 1999). Kuper addresses the features of small-scale societies in which people face the same living conditions and have similar personal experiences, which results in one social network of uniformly rather high density. According to him, the ideal formula of society in this case is, ‘I know, and I know that everyone else knows, and I know that everyone else knows that I know’ (Kuper 2002).

These characteristics generally fit the logic of the weak ties present in the North Caucasus societies both historically and at present. With regard to the North Caucasus region, one can add such characteristics as personality dissolution in collective representations and practices, as well as blood and territorial associations (Kazenin and Starodubrovskaya 2019).

A characteristic feature of the position of women in the history of traditional societies was their intermediate position: being a guest in the parental house and not fully integrated into the husband's house, a girl made spatial movements in society's system of marriage relations (Karpov 2013: 267). Transformations of the spatial-dynamic state of women in Caucasian societies can be represented by three stages. The first, girlhood, was the most independent period in life, during which girls, as a rule, felt a certain freedom and could engage in diverse activities. The ‘outdoor nature’ of girls gave them the opportunity to self-realize, as far as traditions and prescriptions allowed it. They could form associations that, in a sense, opposed male structures, organize parties and even salons, and also to a certain extent, behave freely in communication with the opposite sex.

The second stage for a girl – marriage – meant an introduction to the rigid framework of family life, the need to adhere to strictly hierarchical patterns of behavior (and in this case, largely represented by routine daily submission to older women in the husband's family), and following the only legitimate option of self-realization, serving her husband. Moreover, such service had a very specific manifestation, ensuring the continuity of his genealogical tree.

At the third stage, the age and social status of women historically played an important role in the distribution of their iconic functions: an elderly woman symbolized the image of the home demiurge, controlling and distributing all the work in the house; she was the keeper of the fire. At the same time, with the onset of old age (and in fact the exhaustion of her fertility – the main focus of control over the woman), her social dynamics approached the male: she was honored and respected, she could take part in public (male) meetings, express her opinion, to which they listened, and so on. That is, only by ‘proving’ over time their female virtue, fulfilling the ‘duty’ to men, women could feel eligible to make fundamental decisions for society (Karpov 2013).

The North Caucasus region, however, is marked by considerable heterogeneity, and the traditional way of life is not universal for all republics. So, while, say, in Ingushetia it was preserved to the greatest extent, in the territory of other regions the traditional norms disintegrated under the influence of Soviet modernization (the North-West Caucasus), protracted military actions (Chechnya), and rapid urbanization (Dagestan) (Kazenin and Starodubrovskaya 2019). Molodikova and Watt (2014) note that based on

some attitudes of young people, in particular, the concept of the ideal images of a man and a woman, North Caucasian societies are simultaneously in a traditional, industrial and post-industrial state.

Women in Islamic Tradition

As described in ethnographic records, since ancient times, women in different parts of the North Caucasus had a rather high degree of involvement in public space. Women could arrange sports competitions similar to men's among themselves, and there were even recorded cases when a woman killed her husband when defending her honor. Zhirkov (1930) notes that in the Dagestani aul of Kubachi at the beginning of the twentieth century when the texts of local folklore were recorded, the authors were women, and in these texts widows were described as active members of society. Women could play the role of peacekeepers in public space, fully utilizing their symbolic power, which could not be regulated by male means (Gardanov 1974: 385).

At the same time, Karpov notes that 'the traditional attitude remained basic in relation to a woman, in her position in it throughout the history of Dagestan, only being corrected by methods and forms of Christianity and Islam' (Karpov 2013: 216). Although Islam left a stronger imprint on the appearance and position of women than Christianity, nevertheless, in general, in the North Caucasus the patterns retained that existed in the pre-Islamic era.

Islam began to penetrate the territory of the North Caucasus (Dagestan) as early as the seventh century as a result of Arab conquests, starting with the military campaigns of the second caliph Umar. As for Islam, Giuliano (2005) argues that Muslims in the area do not form a coherent bloc unified by common beliefs and political preferences. Most Muslims profess traditional Shafi'i Sunni Islam. The locals, however, have deeply embraced Sufism (Matsuzato and Ibragimov 2005).

If we talk about the perception of women with the advent of Islam, we should single out two macro-level attitudes towards them: first, the Shari'a position with respect to women in Muslim societies that had developed by that time. Secondly, the specificity of Islamic dogma formed, for example, in Dagestan under the direct influence of the Shafi'i madhhab.

If we talk about women's rights in Islam, of course, there were many interpretations in Islam related to the concept of women's rights and their position in Islamic society. Nevertheless, it is possible to single out some imperative norms of Shari'ah in relation to the issue we are studying. We could start with the fact that the religious sphere should be clearly separated from the secular before assessing the position of a woman in Islam. While with respect to religious acts, Shari'ah establishes the principle of permissibility with regard to what is expressly prescribed by the Qur'an, then with regard to secular matters, one should proceed from the presumption of permissibility in general (al-Qaradawi 1967: 19–22).

In other words, here we deal with an Islamic maxim, according to which 'the presumption on religious issues is strict adherence to what Allah expressly prescribes, while on secular matters it is innovation' (Syukiyainen 2003: 28). For example, the appointment of a woman as imam of a mosque is prescribed by Shari'ah to the religious sphere and will be considered as a bid'a (unauthorized innovation). In turn, issues related to the participation of women in the socio-political life of society will be attributed

by the Shari'ah to the secular sphere, in relation to which rule-making rights are delegated to the people.

From this point of view, those aspects of the status of women that are not connected with the cult of the Shari'ah can be established by the rules developed by the people themselves on the basis of established practice. The Qur'an says the following: 'He has explained in detail to you what He has forbidden you' (6: 119). In support of this, the words of the Prophet Muhammad are also quoted: 'It is permitted what Allah permitted in His Book, and it is forbidden what He forbade; as for what He did not said about, you are free in it' (Syukiyainen 2012).

Thus, we deal with a situation when there is no direct indication in the Shari'ah of depriving a woman of any social rights or personal freedoms. However, the Islamic religion secures a whole range of marriage and family obligations for a woman, the fulfillment of which is a reflection of the leading principles of Shari'ah, focused on meeting the interests of both the woman and the family, and ultimately, society as a whole.

Another important point mentioned above should also be considered: the Shaf'i madhhab, which is rooted in Russia on the territory of modern Dagestan, Chechnya and Ingushetia, formed under the influence of the Hanafi and Maliki madhhabs, the Shaf'i law school borrowed from the Malikites the principle of deriving a solution based on the common benefit (*al-istislah*). Guided by the principle of *al-istislah*, adherents of the Shaf'i madhhab were characterized by decision-making both on the basis of free judgment and on the basis of the norms of custom ('urf), which itself was not recognized as a source. Thus, compared to the Maliki madhhab, the Shaf'i 'did not require a very detailed knowledge of the legal status of the Medina community, along with the texts of the Qur'an and Sunnah, which for most faqihs was simply impossible' (Bogolyubov 1991: 296).

Ware and Kisriev argue that Islam has the potential for adapting to changing conditions, national characteristics and lifestyles (Ware and Kisriev 2000). Therefore, one can conclude that regarding women in the North Caucasus, this aspect of the religious landscape, along with the primarily peaceful nature of Shaf'i Islam, which represents the 'official' religious branches, could be regarded as more sensitive to modernization, and to some extent, accepting of the inclusion of women in public activities against the background of rapid urbanization, the increased level of educated youth, the rapid spread of new information technologies and the new opportunities for migration both within Russian Federation and around the world.

Soviet and Post-Soviet Secular Attitudes

One of the defining characteristics of the Soviet Union's influence was the creation of a wider set of identifications in place of or in addition to the previously existing rural or clan identities. The decrees of the Soviet government ensured the equality of men and women, and to this end, so-called women's departments were formed. Despite the patriarchal attitudes of the Caucasian societies, as well as the influence of religious restrictions, the Soviet system, with its focus on the inclusion of women in public space and economic processes, had a significant impact on the transformation of the traditional system of building family relationships in the North Caucasus region. In the early Soviet years, women were able for the first time to carry into the public space the problem of violence

against them, in the broadest sense. In previous historical periods, these topics were not discussed.

The educational practices of the Soviet period also had an important emancipating influence. The modernization potential of the policy pursued by the USSR, however, was limited because it was difficult to implement it in the North Caucasus, compared to, say, central Russia – it was slower in education and employment in this republic. However, the role of women in the family gradually changed, they received education, sometimes far from home, and often became the main earners, especially in large cities (Smirnova 1983). Confirmation of the development of an effective education system in the USSR is, among other things, the degradation of the quality of education in the post-Soviet period associated with the processes of decentralization, economic stagnation, and, as a result, with the increasing influence of the clan system and the intensification of religious education (Molodikova and Watt 2014).

However, in the post-Soviet period, particularly with the development of the Internet and in the light of the ongoing processes of active urbanization, women's public activity became routinized. That is, women's participation in public life began to take a permanent form, and was perceived by all parties of the process as close to men's participation. In certain aspects, it was even perceived as possessing greater resources for mobilization and protection than that of men. However, despite the fairly high and growing level of involvement of the female part of the population in the public activity in recent decades, there has been a tangible trend towards re-Islamization in the North Caucasus republics following the collapse of the USSR.

Post-Soviet re-Islamization and Islamic Education

The collapse of the Soviet system and the processes of globalization led to the erosion of traditional societies and the destruction of existing regulators of human relations. As a result, the North Caucasus is experiencing large-scale demographic, social and economic changes (Starodubrovskaya and Sokolov 2015), in which re-Islamization is an important characteristic of the socio-political processes.

The political and economic transition has changed the foundations of Caucasian societies and caused new phenomena, including a new interest in religion, springing from the gap in ideological identification provoked by communism (Ware *et al.* 2003). After the collapse of the Soviet Union, many religious movements were re-actualized, and new ones appeared.

One trend in the Post-Soviet era was the introduction of the population (including women) to Islamic educational structures. This trend may have stemmed from their intuitive sense of the heterogeneity of the religious situation in the region. To date, there are seven officially registered higher Islamic educational institutions in the republics of the North Caucasus, several dozen madrasahs serving as secondary schools, as well as hundreds of maktabas working on a non-permanent basis at mosques. Accurate statistics are not available, but, according to field research conducted by the authors in 2019 and 2022 in Dagestan and Ingushetia,* approximately about 500 students per year are studying in Islamic universities in these republics, and the number of students in madrasahs each year is measured in thousands.

Islamic educational institutions serve as a forge of religious personnel for the entire North Caucasus (Matsuzato and Ibragimov 2005). Some Islamic universities have

women's departments – for example, Makhachkala, Buynaksk and Derbent in Dagestan. The training is separate, and the programs of the men's and women's departments differ (the latter is 'simpler,' because subjects that prepare students to become imams are excluded, and women are not taught any disciplines related, *e.g.*, to Islamic law).

Another important difference in educational approaches is a much stronger emphasis on submitting to discipline methods, compared to male students. Thus, the teachers of the women's department in Derbent note that 'more attention is paid to the discipline, purpose of women, because we [men and women] have different goals in society.' In accordance with these goals, educational programs are also adjusted. They include 'women's' aspects concerning rules of behavior in the family, communication with one's husband and relatives, raising children, *etc.* Acquiring secular education in parallel with Islamic education is not prohibited, but as a rule, it boils down to purely applied aspects that can help a woman in everyday life: sewing courses, nursing, *etc.* In some cases, women study on-campus while participating in distance education courses from other universities.

Teachers at women's departments note that with rare exceptions, parents eagerly send young girls to study at Islamic universities, because there is 'strict discipline': in Buynaksk, for example, female students cannot go out into the city without being accompanied. In addition, this kind of education is aimed at 'pacifying' girls: 'After school, girls express their opinions, character, show their personality. Our task is to discipline... Parents, even if at first they doubted, then they are grateful' (Teacher, Islamic University in Derbent).

The moral aspect of the Islamic education system with respect to women forms a trusting environment both during study and after graduation. One of the main features taken into account at admission is a potential student's motivation. Employees of women's departments of Islamic educational institutions say that applicants like the system of teaching and the atmosphere of trust and mutual assistance. In addition, the percentage of divorces among female graduates is actually reduced to zero, since there is a tradition of women turning to their former teachers in crisis situations, like a kind of psychological counseling hotline.

Classes for women are often held in a question–answer format, the purpose of which is to introduce the Islamic tradition. A pool of books approved by the Expert Council of the Spiritual Board of Muslims of Dagestan forms the basis for these questions. Examples include 'Secrets of family life and marital relations', 'How to become a beloved wife', 'Righteous Muslim woman', 'In the world of sins', 'How to choose the bride', *etc.* In a certain information vacuum that exists, the attitudes broadcast in such editions – piety, chastity, obedience, invisibility in public, frugality, being thankful for small favours, gratitude and submission to one's husband and his relatives – are accepted uncritically.

Some respondents noted that studying in an Islamic educational institution helped them overcome the feeling of abandonment (student, 32 years old, Makhachkala); in others, it activated interest in communicating with other people and 'made a person calmer' (student, 34 years old, Buynaksk). In this case, requests from the population for religious self-expression really find their outlet in the system of Islamic education, which forms a certain habitus and semantic field in the lives of the students. Thus, an Islamic education levels the possible radical moods among young people that appear in the

presence of too many different sources of information and an inability to deal with it on their own.

Regarding the impact of the learning process in Islamic universities on their lives, students and teachers in most cases noted that they became more restrained and began to show an interest in getting an education. Interviews with female students and teachers are especially noteworthy in this context:

'I was disobedient, but now I have changed 180 degrees. Religion calls us to a good attitude towards parents' (female teacher, 25–35 years old, Makhachkala).

'I was on the phone, I was not interested in anything, but it turns out there are so many things that can interest me' (female student, 32 years old, Makhachkala, Dagestan).

Others referenced having greater self-confidence as a result of studying at an Islamic university (graduate female student, Malgobek, Ingushetia).

Addressing the Muslim tradition, the clergy of Dagestan take a Qur'anic verse as a starting point for women's role in their society, a priori reinforcing the subordinate position of the woman in relation to the man: 'And they (women) have rights similar to those (of men) over them in kindness, and men are a degree above them' (2: 228). Thus, gender differences are determined at the very beginning of a person's life.

Another argument in favor of the superiority of a man over a woman is his superiority in the performance of reproductive function. Here, reference to the Qur'an is quite widespread, stating that 'And that He creates the two mates – the male and female from a sperm-drop when it is emitted' (53: 45–46). Based on this verse, the Saudi theologian Muhammad al-Bar comes to the conclusion that it is the male principle that is considered as the central element of the entire conception process, while female participation in this process is very small (al-Bar 1989: 58).

It is worth noting here that in Soviet times there was a kind of taboo attached to covering and discussing issues related to sexuality. In research on the status of women in post-Soviet Islamic societies, British expert in gender studies Colette Harris noted that one of the main mechanisms for maintaining gender asymmetry in the post-Soviet space was social and cultural control over female sexuality (Harris 2000). In the post-Soviet period, the discourse on sexuality and gender separation was intercepted by Islamic theologians and took what they considered the appropriate ideological form.

From a religious point of view, the family rights of girls are relatively protected: thus, a legitimized form of protest by a woman is a situation where a husband prohibits his wife from activities related to the observance of Islamic traditions, including training in an Islamic university, right up to the approval of the divorce by religious community. Other manifestations of dissatisfaction with family life are prevented by lectures in Islamic institutions on the importance of obedience. Here, however, it is worth understanding that the doctrine of patience with respect to power is inherent in Islamic teachings. It is most clearly reflected in the hadith 'Imam-despot is better than fitnah'. That is, in the history of Arab-Muslim teachings, only a ruler's apostasy could be an appropriate motivation for expressing discontent with him; we see exactly the same logic applied in women's Islamic education.

Based on the materials gained during the field research conducted by the authors in Dagestan and Ingushetia, it was concluded that the moral aspect of the Islamic education system with respect to women forms a trusting environment both during study and

after graduation. Classes for women are often held in a question–answer format, the purpose of which is to introduce the Islamic tradition.

As for the inclusion of female students of universities and madrasahs in public space, the situation is more univocal: as a rule, they are required to exhibit modesty in all respects, including avoiding interference in secular affairs. Women's public activity, as well as expressions of discontent, besides the form described above, is considered unacceptable, since it can lead to *fitnah* (distemper). A similar interpretation of the nature of women is common in the Islamic world. So, Moroccan Islamic Researcher Fatima Mernissi describes this parallel in the following way: 'a woman is *fitnah*: she is the embodiment of uncontrollability, a living representative of the danger of sexuality and her unrestrained subversive power ...' (Mernissi 1987: 44).

Conclusion

An analysis of the Islamic education system, the historical context and the attitudes of traditional society by the example of the North Caucasus showed that global modernization processes in Islam have an impact on this region as well. In this case, we can talk about an increased demand for appropriate education by young people in general and the growing role of Islamic education as a forge of personnel. However, if we talk about the women's issue in this region, it is not straightforward due to a number of reasons.

The territory of the North Caucasus is characterized by significant fragmentation due to the multi-ethnic composition of societies, the history of numerous conflicts, as well as cultural and ritual practices among the population of the republics. In this article, we have attempted to review general trends regarding the position of women in the structure of private-public space in different historical eras, starting with the concept of traditional society, which characterizes the pre-Islamic tradition, then proceeding to some Islamic provisions, the Soviet period and, finally, post-Soviet times with a focus on processes of re-Islamization and the spread of demand for Islamic education.

Thus, in the case of traditional society we can talk about a fairly clear division of socio-spatial reality into public and private space, and it was the latter that was assigned to women. At the same time, despite certain restrictions in the public space, in their private world women had a very high set of statuses and forms of security. A woman's age also played an important role: as she grew older and lost her fertile potential, she gained more weight in society, and her voice was practically equal to that of a man in various issues, including disputes and social conflicts.

Talking about the inclusion of women in public space in early periods, Dagestan could be a most vivid example. For a number of reasons, including its geographic location, the specifics of the conflicts taking place on its territory, and trade and economic conditions, it is the most heterogeneous republic of the North Caucasus. One of the defining characteristics of its historical development was the participation of women in public life, both routinely (participation in commerce, *etc.*) and situationally (resolving conflict situations). Thus, in the pre-Islamic period, women's right to participate in the social and political life of society was recognized under certain conditions.

With the beginning of the spread of Islam in the North Caucasus, the Muslim legal tradition began to gradually penetrate the territory of the region and influence the attitudes of its inhabitants, including regarding the status of women. However, according to the statements covered in this article, the arrival of Islam did not deprive women of

their social and political rights. On the one hand, this was due to the fact that in the Shari'ah there is no direct reference to the deprivation of a woman of any social rights or personal freedoms. On the other hand, it was connected with the fact that the Shaf'i maskhab was characterized by decision making based on the norms of custom ('urf). This, in turn, organically fit the existing socio-political status of women in certain parts of the North Caucasus into the Islamic legal tradition.

The Soviet power established in the early twentieth century only contributed to neutralization of the gender gap and involved women in public life on an equal basis with men. During the Soviet years, the process of mass inclusion of women in economic and production processes was observed, as required by the orientations of the socialist system. However, the other side of this process was the suppression of all kinds of religiosity by the Soviet government. As a result, with the fall of the USSR, starting in the early 1990s, the region faced a powerful surge of interest in religion, from both the male and female population. The interest in religion in the post-Soviet period is quite natural and is associated with the search for a new identity among young people and attempts to restore religiosity suppressed by the Soviet system.

The views on the status of women in Islamic society cultivated in the post-Soviet era in the Islamic educational institutions of the North Caucasus, as well as by its clergy, contrast markedly with what was observed during the initial spread of Islam. The processes of re-Islamization led Caucasian societies to the start of strengthening of the hierarchical gender system with its inherent dualistic view of a person, in which a man is associated with a cause and a woman with a consequence. As a result, after the collapse of the USSR, the processes of re-Islamization intensified the trends on the exclusion of women from public space.

Thus, the 'new' wave of Islamization in the republics of the North Caucasus brings about a truly new phenomenon, one which was not characteristic even of the period of early Islamization of the region – the closure of women within the private space, contrary to historical experience – a phenomenon which occurred simultaneously with the rapid urbanization and informatization of some parts of the North Caucasus. In this case, we may conclude that the described phenomenon could be connected with the regional response to the global trends due to the strong attitudes of traditional societies.

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NOTE

* To gather data, the authors of this article organized two expeditions to Dagestan and Ingushetia in 2019 and 2022. The first one was more focused on women in public sphere (secular), and the second one was devoted the Islamic Universities. In the course of the second field research, in-depth interviews and surveys of the heads and teachers of eight universities established in Dagestan and Ingushetia, as well as students of male and female departments of these universities were conducted. In total, about 80 teachers of Islamic Universities in the republics under study and more than 100 students were interviewed.

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