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Original Article

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**ANTI-RELIGIOUS STRUGGLE AGAINST TAJIK ISMAILIS IN THE 1920<sup>S</sup>  
(BASED ON ARCHIVAL DOCUMENTS)**

*The article covers the anti-religious struggle of the Soviet State against Islam in Central Asia with a focus on the Ismaili community of the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region (GBAO) of Tajikistan. The study is based on archival documents from two Russian archives — the State Archive of the Russian Federation (GA RF) and the Russian State Archive of Social and Political History (RGASPI). The study involved a critical analysis of archival documents, considering the context of when these documents were created. The study attempted to comprehend and scientifically evaluate the fact that the transmitters of knowledge about the Ismailis in the region included members of the Joint State Political Directorate (OGPU), who themselves had very superficial knowledge about the history of this Islamic branch. In spite of the biased approach of declassified archival documents concerning the anti-religious struggle in the early years of the Soviet State, they nevertheless provide researchers with a lot of useful information — both statistical and shedding light on the socio-political context. The OGPU members had quite sufficient information regarding the amount of zakat for Aga Khan III, the ways of delivery and the people involved in this process. These data help researchers to further investigate the socio-economic condition of religious communities, the role of their activists in establishing contacts between ordinary community members and their spiritual leader, etc. A comparative analysis of the materials prepared by government officials and the documents in the personal archives of the GBAO Ismailis is also important. They differ not only in writing style, but also in content. The anti-religious fighters, when preparing their letters and report notes to the center (Tashkent or Moscow), had the goal of promptly “ridding” the population of “religious prejudices”, while the spiritual leaders (in our case, the residence of Imam Aga Khan III) strove to preserve the spiritual bond that had developed between Imam and his followers over millennia.*

**Keywords:** *Aga Khan III, Ismaili community, Tajikistan, anti-religious struggle, Zakat, spiritual connection*

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