



Russia's Anti-Islamic Policy: Now Books in Turkish are also Banned

On April 19, 2021, the City Court of Naberezhnye Chelny of the Republic of Tatarstan in Russia ruled on the recognition of the books of the Turkish theologian Said Nursi, published in Turkey in Turkish, as “extremist materials”. The court refused to order a comprehensive examination for the defense and limited itself to the conclusion provided by the prosecutor's office.

The defense side, represented by lawyer Ruslan Nagiyev, disagrees with this court decision and intends to send an appeal to the Supreme Court of Tatarstan. In his opinion, the examination was carried out by the specialists of low qualification, who do not know the original language and who are not native speakers of Turkish. In addition, it is obvious that the experts appointed by the investigation are non-objective, dependent and biased, since they are employees of the official structures. This explains the refusal of the court to allow an alternative independent examination, because the task of the court was to satisfy the request of the prosecutor's office, to ban these Islamic books and to give this ban a “legal” look.

Recall that the process began in January this year. In total, 163 editions are considered, mainly authored by Said Nursi in Turkish, Tatar and Russian. The prosecutor demanded to recognize them as extremist materials.

In Russia most of the translations of Said Nursi's books into Russian have already been recognized as extremist materials. However, this trial is the first in Russia when theological works in the original language are prohibited. Prior to that, only translations of texts into Russian were recognized as extremist. At the same time, usually the investigation claimed that the translator used NLP methods to include in the books the motives of violence and discord on religious grounds. And now the prosecutor's office claims that extremism is already, allegedly, not in translation, but in the original itself.

In 2018, the European Court of Human Rights ruled that the ban on Said Nursi's books and the persecution of his followers was a violation by Russia of the European Convention on Human Rights.

At the same time, the trial in the case of Gabdrakhman (Albert) Naumov, who is accused of organizing the activities of an extremist organization and financing extremist activities (282.2 part 1; 282.3 part 1 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation), continues in the Privolzhsky District Court of Kazan of the Republic of Tatarstan. He was arrested back at the end of March 2020. He has been in custody for over a year. Gabdrakhman (Albert) Naumov - was a member of the Ulema Council of Russia, a teacher at the Russian Islamic University, for many years in the past he was the imam-khatib of a mosque in one of the districts of Kazan. However, the fact that he belonged to the official clergy did not save him from the Russian repressive machine. Naumov is accused of organizing a cell of the banned religious association

"Nurdzhular". In the opinion of human rights activists and lawyers, the ban on the Nurdzhular organization is unlawful. Recognition of it as an extremist organization in 2008 was the result of unjustified bans on books by Turkish Islamic theologian Said Nursi - for promoting the superiority of Islam over other religions. Although, from the point of view of a representative of any religion, its superiority in his eyes is natural, otherwise he would not be a believer in it. Thus, Muslims reading and discussing Nursi's books can be prosecuted under Art. 282.2 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation on involvement in an extremist organization and assign them real terms of imprisonment. Similar criminal cases are initiated in Russia every year.

It should also be noted that since March 25, 2020, a 62-year-old woman from Naberezhnye Chelny, Nakia Sharifullina, has been under house arrest. She is accused of organizing the activities of the so-called. "Home mederese", where, according to the investigation, she studied the Quran and the books of Said Nursi with the audience. She is also accused of actively publicizing the ideas of the Nurdzhular movement. A criminal case was initiated against her under part 2 of article 282.2 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation "participation in the activities of an extremist organization", for which she faces imprisonment for up to 6 years. At that time, the police and the FSB searched 20 women's homes, taking away their phones, computers, books and passports. At the moment, a trial is underway against these old women. Sharifullina, who read Said Nursi's books together with 60-80-year-old old women, was previously fined 100,000 rubles. Even despite the non-political nature of Said Nursi's teachings, the Russian authorities, fearing outside influence on Russian Muslims, fearing any uncontrolled Muslim movements, are in a hurry to ban all this.

Allah (swt) says in the Quran:

﴿وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ لَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ قَالُوا إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ مُصْلِحُونَ﴾

"When they are told, "Do not spread corruption in the land," they reply, "We are only peace-makers!" [2:11].

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