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Abd al-Rahman-Hajji al-Sughuri - Nakşibendi Tarikatı’nın Tasavvuf İdeologu ve Şeyhi

Abd al-Rahman-Hajji was born in 1792 in the village of Sograt (Sughur). “The village of Sograt is the spring of the wise, the God-fearing, the God-abiding, the bold, goldsmiths and hereditary blacksmiths. No village in Dagestan is equal to it in all these matters” - wrote 'Abd al-Rahman al-Ghazi-ghumuqi in his “Book of reminiscences”.

There were quite a few madrasas in this village, famous and popular throughout Dagestan. Among them especially famed were the madrasas of Shafi’-Hajji, who had graduated from the most revered school in the Muslim world, al-Azhar in Egypt, of Mahdi-Muhammad and of 'Abd al-Rahman-Hajji. Some 150 to 200 people on average studied there each year. People came there from all ends of Dagestan, mainly to complete their Islamic education.

A huge collection of manuscripts (approximately 600) has been preserved in Sograt, including works by known Arab and Dagestani writers, which were popular in Dagestan in the 17th through the 19th centuries, such as: al-Ghazali, Salih al-Yamani, Ibn Khajr al-Haytami, Abd al-Rahman al-Qazwini, al-Zanjani, Khalid al-Azhari, at-Taftazani, Yusuf al-Ardabili, Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti, Hasan al-Kudali, Abu Bakr al-Aymaki, Sha’ban al-Sughuri, Muhammad Mirza al-Aymaki, Ta’tilaw al-Karati, Da’ud al-Urabi, Suyuti, Ibrahim al-Urabi, Muhammad Tahir al-Qarakh, Muhammad al-Yaraghi, Murtada’al’I’Uradi, Shu’aib al-Uri, Hajji Hasan al-Ghumuqi, Mahdi Muhammad al-Sughuri, 'Abd al-Rahman-Hajji al-Sughuri, Nadjim al-Din al-Hutsi, Abdalla al-Sughuri and others. The collection is very rich and varying in themes: Arabic grammar, Muslim law, poetry, logic, Sufism, Qur’an commentaries, hadith, theology, astronomy, etc. The works encompass chronologically the period between the 17th to the 20th centuries. It in

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cludes a previously unknown work by ‘Abd al-Rahman-Hajji al-Sughuri - *Masa’il Sug­huriyya* ("Questions and answers on Muslim law") - and a poem dedicated to the events of the period of Shamil.

The a’ul of Sograd was one of the centres of Arab sciences in Daghestan in the late middle ages. Many learned people hailed from this village, such as Ali Rida, Shafi’i-Hajji, Mahdi Muhammad, Shaytan ‘Abdal­la, Sheikh Mustafa, Muhammad bin Satar, and Khajr Satar, Sheikh Ahmad Budalaw, Qudaw Qadi, Tinaw Qadi and others.

Into this environment, immersed with the spirit of learning and Muslim culture, was born ‘Abd al-Rahman-Hajji as-Sughuri, and there he was brought up. His father - the prosperous merchant Daran Ahmad - a man who had been to the many the trade centres of the East and Russia and appreciated knowledge, spent almost all his fortune on the education of his sons, ‘Abd al-Rahman and Salim Dibir. Ahmad’s prodigious sons, especially ‘Abd al-Rahman, did not let down their father. Both became well-known ‘ula­ma, popular not only in their native village, but in whole of Daghestan.

‘Abd al-Rahman-Hajji went through the stages of Muslim education, traditional to his times, in his own village. He studied basic sciences with Ibrahim Dibir al-Sug­huri. Later, ‘Abd al-Rahman-Hajji studied the *tariqa* and sciences with such respected perso­ns, as Muhammad al-Yaraghi and Jamal al-Din al-Ghazighumugi. He received from Jamal al-Din al-Ghazighumugi an *ijaza* (per­mission) to enter the Naqshbandi *tariqa* and guide people into it. Later he met Muham­mad al-Yaraghi while the latter was staying in Sogratl, and he also gave him an *ijaza*.

During his pilgrimage to Mecca in 1832, like many Daghestanis, he decided to stay and expand his knowledge. He was taught in Mecca by such famous scholars as Sayyid Taha al-Khalidi al-Baghdadi, Ali al-Quzbari, ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Quzbari, al-Sharqawi, Muhammad al-Dahlawi, Sayyid Husain Jamal al-Layl al-Makki and others.

In his turn, ‘Abd al-Rahman-Hajji taught, educated and gave *ijaza* to such *mursibs* and *ulama* as Muhammad al-‘Ubudi, who wrote the work *Qanz ad-Durar*, concerning the *tariqa*, ‘Abdalla-Hajji al-Gimrawi, Atanas al-Mohokhi, Sultan-Qadi al-Harakani, Muhammad-Hajji al-Kikuni, Uzun-Hajji al-Salti. Ilyas-Hajji at-Tudaqari learned the basics of the *tariqa* from ‘Abd al-Rahman-Hajji. Ilyas-Hajji tells about it in his writings dedicated to the *tariqa*: *Kifayat al-Murid* ("What is enough for the murid") and *Sullam al-Murid* ("the murid’s ladder"). Ilyas-Hajji describes his meeting with ‘Abd al-Rahman-Hajji in his work *Kifayat al-murid*:

People brought to my attention that a great sheikh, called Hajji ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Sughuri, was living in Sogratl. He was a great sheikh and an accomplished murshid, who was blessed with a great grace. My heart became filled with love to him and I visited him. On my first visit I entered his house without permission, ignorant of the [Sufi] etiquette towards sheikhs, and had a very minor benefit moderately. Then I visited him again, and entered with his permission. I was engulfed by a *fadhba* [attraction] to him, and he ordered me to perform 2000 dhikrs a day. I came back from him and began to fulfil what I had been ordered. Later I visited him again and he asked me to perform additional prayers and to educate my household members. Afterwards he ordered me to withdraw into seclusion for forty days in a pit near my house. After returning from him I dug a pit near the entrance to my house, so that no one knew, even my children, excluding my wife and my friend Hajji Husayn b. Maam­ma [Muhammad] al-Amat Haqqi. I withdrew there [to the pit], observing a fast, and spent there forty days. After re-emerging from the pit I went to my sheikh, sat in front of him and began inquiring him about certain things.
He told me: “The thing you are asking me about is what I demanded from you to do, a great deed for the sheikhs. You are my and those sheikhs ma’alhsun [successor] to teach people the tariqa. Are you satisfied with this task?” I said: “I am. But I am not the person for this task. I will not be able to perform it”. He, may Allah be satisfied with him and fill his soul with light, told me: “You must commit to it, truly, the souls of the sheikhs are satisfied with you, do it and fear nothing. Truly, if Allah wills, He will help you”. I followed his direction and left him. When I returned to my house, I related to my friends and relatives what the sheikh had told me. They believed me, took al-abd (wird) from me and became murids. And many people joined our sisila. A few years afterwards a war broke out between Muslims and infidels and discord fell between the people [fina]. The infidels destroyed Sogratl and hang the sheikh’s son, Hajji-Muhammad, his relative, the ‘alim Hajji Abdalla, and others on the mountain of Ghunib, and captured [kept under arrest] our sheikh in Nizhnee Kazanissche [Ghanzish]. He was living in the home of Hajji Abd al-Majid al-Ghanzish and people kept visiting him. I visited him too secretly, fearing the infidels. Once I went to his house after the Friday noon prayer, and was joined by two people from the village of Halimbeka’ul - ‘Abd al-Razzaq and Ataw. We sat with him and held a conversation. When we were leaving he told me to come to him the day after. When I came I saw him performing the myriad with such a devotion, that his body was shaking like a tree on a windy day. After he had completed his myriad he spoke to me until the afternoon prayer. He told me that after his death I should take no man or woman from among my followers to be a myriad without test. I said to him: “My lord, if you are ordering me such an important matter, I shall accept it. Yet I am a man of no consequence, I possess no great knowledge, while you have murids of greater knowledge and greater effort in the service of Allah. Make one of them your successor in instruction of people and relieve me of this task. I am unworthy of it”. The sheikh, may his soul be blessed, said: “You must perform this task. Truly, the souls of the sheikhs are satisfied with you and fear not that people would reject your orders. Truly, Allah the great has given you all the necessary knowledge. You must perform it after I abandon this world”. I could not disobey him and abided by his wishes.

In his book al-Mashrab al-Naqshbandiya [the water source of the Naqshbandiya] ‘Abd al-Rahman-Hajji regarded highly Ilyas-Hajji’s views on the basics of the tariqa. Defending the silent (khafis) dhiikr, ‘Abd al-Rahman-Hajji stuck to the same view as his disciple, arguing that the silent dhiikr is sincere and generally excludes hypocrisy. Another reason for the preference of the silent dhiikr was that many believers feared that the non-believers would mock the Qur’an and cause damage to the believers.


Another of ‘Abd al-Rahman-Hajji’s disciples was Shamil’s famous comrade and brother in arms - Muhammad-Amin (1818-1899), whose activity introduced a fresh and colourful chapter in the history of the western Caucasus peoples’ liberation movement against tsarist rule in the 1840s - 1850s.

Muhammad Nazim, a Naqshbandi sheikh living nowadays in Cyprus, considers himself a follower of ‘Abd al-Rahman-Hajji. He likens ‘Abd al-Rahman-Hajji to a “polar star, whose radiance illuminates the way to the people of his time”. Muhammad Nazim stresses the fact that ‘Abd al-Rahman-Hajji played a pivotal role in the mountaineers’ liberation struggle, being Shamil’s advisor and spiritual authority in Dagestan, and did a lot to “attract people to Islam and the Naqshbandi order”.

One of the Naqshbandi silsilas passes from 'Abd al-Rahman-Hajji to Turkey via Muhammad-Hajji al-Kikuni, who was deported to Siberia for his role in the 1877 uprising and later fled to the Ottoman Empire. There he passed the ijaza to his nephew and son in law Sharaf al-Din al-Kikuni, who, in his turn, made a mursbid 'Abdallah al-Fai'z al-Arakhanawi al-Daghistani, who transferred the ijaza to Muhammad Nazim al-Haqqani al-Qubrusi, whose followers currently number more than 2.5 million in Turkey, Cyprus, Germany, Britain, the USA and other countries. His successors in Daghestan are Muhajir Akayev from the village of Dorgheli, Muratzali Karachayev from the village of Tarki and 'Abd al-Wahid from the village of Apshi.

Muhammad-Hajji al-Kikuni gave his ijaza also to Suleyman-Hajji al-Apshi, who transferred it to Aydi-Hajji al-Ghazanishi, and he passed the ijaza on to Muhammad Ustadh from the village of Deybuk. This branch, the first Naqshbandi branch stretching from 'Abd al-Rahman-Hajji as-Sughuri through Aydi-Hajji al-Ghazanishi, to Muhammad Ustadh, reaches our times. Muhammad Ustadh gave his ijaza to Zubayr-Hajji from the village of Hamri, who transferred it to Muhammad-Hajji of Deybuk. Muhammad-Hajji made his son, Muhammad-Amin (d. 1999), a sheikh, and he, in his turn elevated to the degree of mursbids three persons: Ilyas-Hajji Ilyasov, Muhammad-Mukhtar Babatov and his own son Muhammad-Hajji Hajiev.

A second Naqshbandi branch that entered Daghestan started with Isma'il al-Kurttanmiri, and continued through Muhammad-Salih al-Shirwani (b. 1821). He gave the ijaza to Ibrahim Kudkashani. His successor was Yunus Lalali (1804-1860), who transferred the ijaza to Mahmud Efendi (1810-1867), and the latter elevated to mursbids twelve persons. Among those who received the ijaza from him were Ahmad at-Talali, Isma'il al-Siwaqli, Jabra'il at-Tsakhuri, Muhammad-Dhakir al-Chistawi, through whom another line of the Naqshbandi tariqa penetrated Daghestan.

During the Caucasian War, led by Shamil, Isma'il as-Siwaqli moved from Azerbaycan to Daghestan, where he received an ijaza from Jamal al-Din al-Ghaizihgumuqi. Thus he re-unified the two chains of the Naqshbandi tariqa in Daghestan.

'Abd al-Rahman-Hajji was learned in many fields, "a scholar who attained the knowledge of the tariqa, a hajji who mastered the Qur'an by heart", wrote the following works:

1. A Qasida, dedicated to Shamil's troops' victory over Vorontsov's forces in Dargo. The qasida mentions Shamil's bravest najibs - Khatyn, Suhayb and Ildar - who fell in the battles of Balgatoy and Dargo.

2. The Sufi treatise Al-mashrab al-Naqshbandiya ("The water source of Naqshbandiya"), published in Temir-Khan-Shura in 1906. The work deals with Islam and the Sufi teaching of the tariqa and aims at murids just beginning their journey on the road of the Naqshbandi tariqa. The preface to the treatise dwells upon the principles of Sufism, its subject and the final goal. Three chapters of the treatise deal with the essence of Allah the Most Elevated. In the conclusion the author returns to Sufi topics.

Al-mashrab al-Naqshbandiya's translation, done by the member of the Institute of History, Archeology and Ethnography of the Daghestani Academic Centre of the Russian Academy of Sciences, A. R. Nawruzov, is reprinted in A. M. Abdullaev's book, Det'atel'nost' i vozreniia sheikha Abdurrakhmana-Khadzhi i ego rodoslovnaia ("the activities and views of Sheikh 'Abd al-Rahman-Hajji and his pedigree").

3. Khashiya al-Sughuri or Khashiya adab al-bakhthi ("Commentary to the art of
The manuscript collection of the IHAE DAC RAS owns three copies of this work. Manuscript No. 568 is a copy inscribed on paper of European produce. The copying of the manuscript was completed in the village of Qahib, in Ramadan 1304 AH (18867), by the copyist Jabra'il ibn Muhammad ibn 'Ali. The manuscript is written in Daghestani naskh. Its margins are peppered by numerous glosses (commentaries), extracted from the works of the well-known Daghestani 'alim Muhammad of Quduqi. Manuscript No. 2030 is a copy of the work mentioned above, done in 1328 AH (1910). Manuscript No. 1143 is another copy of the above-mentioned work.

4. Al-Adwa al-Shamsiyya fi ʻl-'Awda al- Bahiyya.

5. Prof. A. R. Shikhsaidov discovered in the library of Princeton University (USA) a manuscript of Risala Sharifa li'l-Shaykh 'Abd al-Rahman al-Sughuri.

6. ʻAbd al-Hafiz al-Ukhli mentions in his work Jawab al-Sahih ("True answers") another composition by 'Abd al-Rahman as-Sughuri, Nuzhat al-Majalis.

7. Besides these, many letters of 'Abd al-Rahman as-Sughuri to the learned people of Daghestan and its religious class, as well as letters addressed to him, were preserved.

ʻAbd al-Rahman-Hajji's main activity was teaching the numerous murids of the Naqshbandi order the sciences and providing them with spiritual guidance. He instructed, guided and led the people on the way of the shari'a and the tariqa. His contemporaries characterized him as a "man of moderate and peaceful temper. He possessed a big talent for lecturing and preaching and sometimes brought his audience to tears".

It is said that 'Abd al-Rahman-Hajji used to enter the mosque in the morning and stay there until the evening prayer, teaching all the sciences, philosophy and astronomy included. After returning home in the evening he was busy until the early hours, receiving murids who asked for spiritual tuition.

ʻAbd al-Rahman-Hajji was a popular sheikh of the tariqa. His Sufi ideas and ethical, moral and philosophical views are exposed to the fullest in his treatise al-Mashrab al-Naqsbandiyya, which according to his own words, he wrote at the behest of his friends for those who were just entering the tariqa and wished to know better the basic tenets of Islam and the tariqa.

In this composition 'Abd al-Rahman-Hajji chose to use hadiths which contain short and well-known answers to many questions about Islam and the tariqa. The treatise quotes and comments on hadiths that provide important information about Islam and its laws. Thus, he asserts that the Prophet said: "no one shall believe until he loves me more than himself, his children, family, and all the people".

The work narrates in short the basic philosophical and moral principles of Sufism and the Naqshbandi tariqa. First and foremost is purifying one's heart from everything that obstructs worshipping the Most High. This principle is common to all Sufi currents and trends. The second principle of the tariqa is asceticism, that is, abstaining from earthly worries and pleasures that disturb the Sufi's concentration on God. The third principle is spiritual contact with God, which necessitates not only a release from the human "self" but also certain psychological means of spiritual-moral betterment of man.

The third chapter of the treatise cites forty hadiths which fix the ideological, dogmatic and practical aspects of Islam. They relate short and popular answers on many queries related to Islam. 'Abd al-Rahman-Hajji made use of hadiths which have a practical bearing on the life of person and community. He noted that the Muslims envy each other
and fight with each other. The sheikh quotes a *badith* of the Prophet, trying to stem this process: “Envy not each other, hate not each other, turn not from each other, but become brothers, ye servants of Allah. A Muslim is a Muslim’s brother”. The sheikh observes that Muslims oppress, cheat and despise each other. Deriding this, Abd al-Rahman-Hajji relies on the prophet, who said: “Everything in a Muslim is untouchable to another Muslim: his blood, his possession, his dignity”.

The preface of the treatise narrates ideas about the Almighty and his Prophet. It consists of three parts: 1) attributes necessary to Allah; 2) attributes impossible to Allah; 3) attributes necessary to the Prophet.

Abd al-Rahman-Hajji pays a great deal of attention in his work to criticising the love of the worldly life. In his opinion, the pursuit of earthly pleasures causes one to cool his mind and behaviour towards the faith and its commandments. Such an attitude to earthly life is all the more forbidden to the murid of the tariqa. Based on this view of worldly life, the sheikh divides the Muslims into two categories: those who devote themselves fully to worldly life and those who enjoy it no more than necessary.

The treatise also discusses the ethics of performance of Islamic ceremonies. In the chapter “*Wurds* and ethics of the Naqshbandi tariqa” Abd al-Rahman-Hajji thoroughly explains the ritual prayers, and how, when and how often should the murid perform them. Along with prayers a fast is recommended: “It is advisable [for the murid] to fast on Mondays and Thursdays as well as on the first nine days of Dhu al-Hijja [the days of the *haj*]. It is advisable too to fast every fourth day”. A great of attention is paid to moral criteria, such as cordiality, the ability to express sympathy and love to Muslims and non-Muslims alike; purity of heart and soul, the expression of happiness when meeting friends and comrades; generosity, etc.

The work also looks upon the immoral traits, which are forbidden to true believer. These are: fornication by men and women, stealing of war trophies and booty, pilage, sorcery, prodigality. Even an innocent lying or interest in someone else’s property, etc. are considered immoral. Among the gravest sins, according to Abd al-Rahman-Hajji, is the break of contact between relatives, especially the abandonment of sisters. A sin no less grave is disobedience of parents, leaving them without care and supervision, not obliging their requests and orders, (except when they demand the forbidden).

Abd al-Rahman-Hajji writes that for those who love Allah entering the *tariqa* is possible and simple. The *murid* must think of Allah constantly. The *murid* acquires all the techniques of freeing the heart from worldly thoughts and develops religiously and morally under the guidance of the sheikh, the *murshid*, who having attained the knowledge of Godly truth and is capable of steering the *murid* on the way closer to God. Abd al-Rahman-Hajji’s work discusses especially the bond (*rabita*) between the *murid* and the sheikh. The murid chooses his own sheikh and devotes himself to him. He should not only obey the sheikh, but love him wholeheartedly, extinguish his own self and dissolve himself in him. “The sheikh has complete power over the *murid* and does whatever he likes to him, until he has elevated him to the presence of Allah the great, that is, until the *murid* reaches the stage of *muraqaba*”.

The treatise views the *dhikr* as a step in the *murid’s* way to his final goal. In order to perform the *dhikr* correctly the *murid* must master special rhythmical movements, to control his posture and breath and coordinate his bodily movements with the pronounced formulas of the prayer. Abd al-Rahman-Hajji says that the followers of the Naqshbandi *tariqa* prefer the silent (*khafi*) *dhikr*, since it makes hypocrisy impossible/ prevents hypocrisy?.
Most probably the defeat of the revolt 1877, was the cause of 'Abd al-Rahman-Hajji's work in the Arabic language (it has survived until our days in manuscript) dealing with bijara (emigration). In this treatise he supports mass emigration of Muslims from the Caucasus. According to the sheikh, when Muslim lands fall under the rule of non-Muslim rulers and the believers can no longer keep their religious duties, and the situation cannot be rectified by ghazavat, each and every Muslim must abandon this territory and move to lands dominated by laws of Islam. This, however, does not entail abandonment of jihad. According to the sheikh, all 'ulama - spending a fortune on it from our treasury. He [Qibid-Muhammad] employs his tricks astonishingly skillfully, aspiring for higher posts, and now, having become an independent imam in these lands, devotes his time to disposing of the imam's na'ibs, and has even thrice gathered a clandestine council of the 'ulama so as to depose me.

'Abd al-Rahman-Hajji served under Shamil as a mubusib (inspector) and counsellor. Shamil entrusted with him the most important and complex state affairs, as well as issues of personal nature. Most frequently he had to settle conflicts between representatives of the imamate authorities, clans and notables. There exists evidence, however, that 'Abd al-Rahman-Hajji tried to prevent Shamil's election to the imamate, claiming that he acknowledged no imam above himself. Following that Jamal al-Din al-Ghazi-ghumuqi even excluded him from the group of his successors, committing the act of "breaking" the chain (silsila).

In 1843, when the Russians stormed Ghazighumuq, 'Abd al-Rahman-Hajji was among their prisoners. Other prisoners were the scholars Shahmandar al-Chirkawi and Shuhalaw al-Malafi. They were imprisoned in Tiflis. In order to raise the awareness his people in battle the imam forbade at that time to exchange prisoners. 'Abd al-Rahman-Hajji as-Sughuri sent a rhymed letter to imam Shamil, in which he said: "Oh, if only I knew - is Shamil delaying our ransom out of his desire to turn his back on us or because of the enemies?". When the imam received this letters he said:

Truly some people say: "the Russians will return you your son in exchange for these two commanders". And others say: "they will give you a great sum of money for them". But I love scholars for their mind. I want neither my son nor money for these two. However, regarding the Russians, it will be of benefit for us to first of all show indifference to the fate of our captured [scholars].
Then he sent a message offering an exchange of prisoners.

After the mountaineers’ movement had been defeated and Shamil captured, 'Abd al-Rahman-Hajji came to enjoy the highest authority in mountainous Daghestan. That he remained also a distinguished political personality is proven by his role in the revolt of 1877.

The general revolt in Daghestan was to start with an assault on merchants at the Georgievskii bridge at 8:00 AM on 29 August [10 September] 1877. On this day forty armed residents of the atil of Gergebil, led by Muhammad-Hajji al-Kikuni, approached the bridge and attacked the soldiers guarding it. Most of the soldiers were killed on the spot, but some managed to escape to the safety of the Ghenib fortress and report the events to the commander of the garrison, Colonel Voino-Oranskii. On that day the people of Sogratl declared themselves enemies of the government, announced a ghazavat and moved to "Anada Maydan", where 'Abd al-Rahman-Hajji's son - Muhammad-Hajji al-Sughuri - was elected unanimously as imam.

At first, 'Abd al-Rahman-Hajji al-Sughuri was himself offered to lead the revolt, but, he foreseeing the failure of the revolt, declined citing his advanced age. Probably, 'Abd al-Rahman-Hajji was the central figure at the "secret council" in Labazan’s house in Sogratl, which took place on the first day of Ramadan, where following the news of the attack on the Russian troops, the possibility of raising the flags of ghazavat was discussed. 'Abd al-Rahman-Hajji implored the people to remain quiet and not to take steps which would cause them harm. As a result, he lost his credibility. 'Abd al-Rahman-Hajji summoned then to the council Hajji-Musa-Hajji al-Kukni, whose way of thinking proved to be similar to [the opinion of] 'Abd al-Rahman-Hajji, since he did not believe in an Ottoman victory and thought a rebellion to be useless.

The sheikh did not believe the rumours, spread by Ottoman spies, that a regular Ottoman army was on its way to help the Daghestanis. He knew perfectly well that the Daghestani people had never seen any benefit from the Ottomans and that this time too no assistance would arrive. "However", he said "if you have decided to rise in revolt, I shall not dissociate from you".

Already after the defeat of the mountaineers’ movement led by Shamil 'Abd al-Rahman-Hajji became convinced that the mountaineers could not overpower Russia and were destined to live within the Russian state. Moreover, he understood that a revolt against such mighty power would only cause the mountaineers suffering and misery.

Once 'Abd al-Rahman-Hajji declined being imam, the rebels demanded that his son, Muhammad-Hajji, lead the insurrection. According to Ali Kayaev, "Muhammad-Hajji was soft-tempered and abiding man, who tried not to inflict any harm or offence. He was not a man of war and politics and was unsuitable for the role of imam". But, having no better candidate, the people declared him an imam and did wisely. Sons of the most respected khans and beks accepted Muhammad-Hajji’s imamate and followed him. Even Ja’far, Aghalar-Khan’s son, agreed to become his na`ib. Soon, most areas of Daghestan accepted the imam’s authority.

Many renowned Daghestani sheikhs and ‘ulama took an active part in preparing the revolt.

Although he was against a revolt, 'Abd al-Rahman-Hajji was in contact with the various provinces of Daghestan and Chechnya through his disciples in the tariqa and acquainted ‘ulama. He frequently held secret meetings with them and often entertained pilgrims returning from Mecca and had conversations with them.
Having neither a clear program nor experience in commanding military operations, the rebels were routed. The insurrection was brutally crushed. The revenge of the tsarist authorities upon the rebels was inhuman. The punitive expedition units remained in Sogratl for about a week, meting out punishment. Hundreds of arrestees were convoyed to Ghunib, where eight were executed. The fortifications of Sogratl were demolished and the village itself was burned to the ground. Its inhabitants were resettled in neighbouring hamlets and in the inner provinces of Russia.

The fall of Sogratl marked the end of the heroic struggle against colonial tsarist despotism. In the course of November the tsarist authorities extinguished with no difficulty the last flames of the movement on the southern fringes of Daghestan - in the Samur and Zakataly okrugs and the neighbouring Azerbayjani naxuchs of Quba and Nukha. The punitive expeditions continued their activity until mid-1878. Dozens of a'uls were destroyed completely. Hundreds of families were expelled deep into Russia and Siberia. Military field courts were established in Derbent and Ghunib and many leaders of the revolt were sentenced to death.

The heads of the insurrection -- Imam Muhammad-Hajji, Abd al-Majid bek, Maldaray of Bergekli, Zubayr the son of Bashir bek', Hajji the son of Konkhi 'Omar, Amir Baratov, Murtaza'ali-Tilliqi and Ghazi Muhammad -- were executed. The sheikh himself, whom the tsarist authorities accused of assisting the rebels, could not escape punishment. Prince Melikov, the commander of the Russian forces, intended to punish 'Abd al-Rahman-Hajji, who, due to his old age, could not walk by himself. Therefore he was brought to the prince on a stretcher. Melikov accused the sheikh of initiating the rebellion and ordered that the old man be arrested and transported to Ghunib, whence he was driven on an 'araba to Temir-Khan-Shura.

The mother of 'Abd al-Qadir Daitbekov from Nizhnee Kazanishche (Ghazanish), Melikov's translator, appealed to the prince to pardon the sheikh. The prince accepted her appeal and the sheikh was sent to her, to Nizhnee Kazanishche, where he remained until his death in 1881/2.

A ziyara was built on 'Abd al-Rahman-Hajji's resting place. Ilyas-Hajji al-Tsudaqari describes the erection of the said ziyara:

I came to the village of Para'ul and spent there ten days or more, since its inhabitants asked me to stay there for the recitation of mawilids. Thence I moved to the village of Utamysh to perform khalwa [solitude]. I remained there till the completion of the khalwa. Thence I moved to the village of Mukri and lived there for more than fifteen days. There I heard that my sheikh had gone to the other world. I turned to Nizhnee Kazanishche through Gubden and Kaka Shura. I lived in Kazanishche for eleven days, visiting my sheikh's grave. He was laid to rest in the centre of the cemetery of Kazanishche. His family and murids wished to build a structure to accommodate the visitors to the tomb. And when the ulama forbade building a structure over the tomb, his daughter Maryam bought from a resident of Kazanishche a small plot of a garden next to the cemetery, so that the sheikh could be reburied there. The sheikh's body was elevated from the grave and reburied in this purchased plot. Those who had descended to the tomb and those who had witnessed the reburial told that his blessed body looked as if it was asleep, and had not changed even though it had been for forty days in the grave. The tomb emanated fayd [light], so that all people saw it, even the impure ones. Afterwards, Shahruhan al-'Andi purchased the whole plot and, after building the construction above the sheikh's noble tomb, fenced it around. And after that people started coming to me to the ziyara in order to receive guidance and they were benefited by the baraka of the sheikh. And may Allah be praised.
The ziyara remains even nowadays a popular place for Muslim pilgrimage.

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