

The Failure of Muslim Reformation: "Jadidism" in Eastern Europe, 1699-1922

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Abstract: *The advent of Western influence has led to a number of responses in the Muslims, one of them being an attempt to "reform" Islam—Jadidism. This study examines the influence of such movements from the early eighteenth century to the first quarter of the twentieth century, in eastern European countries, particularly relating to Polish, Crimean, Turkish and Tatar Muslims. It is shown that all such attempts resulted in cultural decay, and loss of identity and power.*

Modernist Muslim intelligentsia have long been fascinated and bewildered by the industrial, scientific, and military success of the European civilization. Some of them have accepted liberalism, others libertinism and the hedonistic philosophy of *carpe diem*. Most of them believe in cleansing Islam of of what they called "traditionalism and conservative customs," so that the Muslims can become a part of the modern world. Yet the contemporary phenomenon of revivalism in the Muslim world on one hand, and the growing power of anti-liberal and anti-capitalist new National Socialist movements (Neo-Nazism) in the post-modernist West on the other, is a total rejection of the outdated ideologies of nineteenth century Muslim reformism and antiquated leftist third-worldism of the 1960s. Today, we are heading toward a global clash of living civilizations, which will dwarf the nineteenth century "Eastern Question" in Europe.

This study is deliberately Eurocentric, because the achievements of eighteenth and nineteenth century Europe have *de facto* exceeded anything created by the other non-European cultures during this period.

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The study aims to exhibit the whole range of Muslim modernist experiences, which ended in the Great Failure of the Muslim Reformation and ignited the current "Muslim Rage" expressed in the cyclic Counter-Reformation.

The Dream and Defeat

From the Peace Treaty of Karlowitz signed in 1699, the Habsburgs of Austria became a major power in Central Europe. The Osmanli elite's *Lale-devri* or "Tulipmania" indicated an advanced cultural decadence and a symptom of *ghaflah* (inner weakness, loss of consciousness). The Serbs, Greeks, and Orthodox Bulgarians rose up in the Balkans, animated by the Spanish and Austro-Hungarian invasions of the Islamic realm in Europe. The Russians launched an ethnic and religious cleansing in the northeastern Crimean Khanate. In 1717, the Austrians attacked and won the first "holy war" against the Turks. The anti-Islamic crusader, Prince Eugene de Savoy (1663-1736), became the supreme commander of the imperial army and flag-bearer of the Habsburgs' supremacy. He defeated the Turkish Muslim armies and conquered Belgrade. The Sublime Porte in Istanbul was forced to sign another "peace treaty" in Passarowitz (1718). The former "Great Turk" was renamed the "Sick Man of Europe." Gradually, the Habsburg Dual Monarchy of Austria-Hungary pushed the Osmanli Turks out of Danube and the Balkans.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth century, the weakened "Sick Man" from Istanbul was still strong enough to confuse the political plans of the Holy Alliance of the Christian power brokers. The Sublime Porte never accepted the partition of Poland, but the Turks were forced to accept the Russian annexation of the Crimean Khanate in 1774. Osmanli Turkey opened its borders and gave asylum to any Polish anti-Russian insurgent who sought it. The "Great Emigration" was the Polish response to the failure of the anti-Russian November Uprising in 1831. Most of the intellectual and political elite of Poland fled abroad, some 10,000 in all, among them Muslim guerrillas from Lithuania and newly-converted Polish Muslim insurgents. About 50 famous Polish officers accepted Islam and joined the Osmanli army.¹

The greatest Polish poet, Adam Mickiewicz, died in Istanbul, where thousands of Polish freedom-fighters dreamt about "Legion of Freedom." °Abd al-Qādir, the Muslim hero of the anti-French jihad in Algeria, inspired the Polish Christian poet, Cyprian Camil Norwid. Norman Davies correctly described the historical connections and destiny of

Turks and Poles:

Whenever Poland was hard pressed by the Habsburgs, or by the Muscovite Russians, the Poles would fervently pray for a Turkish campaign in the Balkans or on the Black Sea coast. From the Battle of Mohács in 1526 to the Treaty of Adrianopole in 1829, the Ottomans provided the only regular counterbalance to Poland's more immediate eastern neighbors, and increasingly the only hope of relief. By the eighteenth century, during the Russian Protectorate in Poland, the Turkish mechanism had assumed a fixed pattern. So long as the Russian armies were engaged on the Turkish front, they could not descend in force on Poland. Russo-Turkish Wars provided the only intervals when the Polish reformers could act. War clouds over Constantinople spelt fair weather for reform in Warsaw.²

In 1836, eleven Polish officers of the Russian army defected to Imam Ali Shamył's *mujāhidīn*, who waged *gazavat* and jihad against Russians.³ The Polish and Lithuanian Muslims were deeply involved in the revolutionary events which shaped the new order in Old Europe. In April 1844, the Polish Tatar and *muhājir*, Ahmed Tevfik Bey (formerly Teofil Pulaski) left Istanbul in a secret mission to Russian-occupied Crimea, where he tried unsuccessfully to organize the anti-Russian Muslim movement amongst the local Crimean Tatars. He had good relations with the Crimean Khan Mirza Agay and the governor of Turkish Dobrudja, Hasan Bey. In Constanca, Romania, Ahmed Tevfik-Pulaski organized a small unit of Muslim Tatar *mujāhidīn* from Tulcha, Babadek and Hirshova, but the anti-Islamic conspiracy of Paris-based "Power" and "Agency" (fanatical Catholic and Freemasonic groups of Polish immigrants financed and organized by Prince Adam Czartoryski and Baron Zamoyski) rejected the plan of the Polish Muslims and ignored their patriotic zeal.

After the fall of the Polish-Lithuanian state in 1795, the Russian Czarina Catherine II "guaranteed" full religious freedom to the Muslims of former Poland and Lithuania. She was the same czarina who masterminded the annexation of the Muslim Crimea, and guaranteed similar "freedom" for the Crimean Tatars. They all needed the famous Tatar Muslim cavalry.

In Prussia, King Frederick II the Great formed the Muslim regiment of Bosnian and Turkish mercenaries. A Polish Muslim soldier of fortune, Ali Mustafa Korycki, organized the Tatar squadrons in the Prussian army. In 1795, Frederick William II nominated a former Polish colonel, Mirza Tuhan-Baranowski, as the chief commander of the Tatar regiments

in Prussia. After the invasion of Prussia and Russia by the victorious armies of Napoleon Bonaparte, another Polish Muslim colonel, Mustafa Achmatowicz, received permission to recruit the Lithuanian Muslims for French troops. The Polish Muslim cavalry in Napoleon's army fought the Russians and Austrians in many battles. On March 5, 1814, the Russian troops of Prince Gagarin were defeated by the Muslim sabres in the battle of Boyran Bac.⁴

After Bonaparte's defeat, the Polish Muslim squadrons returned to Russian-occupied Poland. Many Muslim Lithuanians and Poles were involved in the anti-Russian November Uprising of 1831 and the January Uprising of 1863. The victorious Russians deported them to Siberia. After general amnesty in 1878, Muslim survivors of *katorga* (hard labour), including Ali Buczacki, Amurat Achmatowicz, Adam Tuhan-Baranowski, and Mustafa Kryczynski, returned to their homes in the Tatar towns and villages of Lithuania. Numerous Muslim veterans of anti-Russian resistance emigrated to Turkey. Economic prosperity of the Muslim Tatars in Lithuania and growing political chaos in Turkey stopped this *hijrah* at the end of the 19th century.

After the partition of the misruled Polish kingdom, the Muslims of Poland and Lithuania became Russian subjects. Muslims of Podolia, Ukraine, mostly Lipka Tatars and Cheremises emigrated to Bessarabia and Moldavia. Only ruined or abandoned mosques stand as witnesses to the Islamic past of southern Ukraine. In 1763, a Turkish envoy to Prussia, Resmi Efendi, travelled across Poland, Lithuania and Podolia, where he visited the formerly Turkish-controlled fortress of Kamieniets Podolski (held by the Muslim forces between 1672-1699). He was emotionally moved by the sight of a ruined minaret with an Islamic date of construction and a Qur'ānic quotation and prayed for the "return of these places to Islam, so that the word of Truth may resound from this minaret."⁵

Collaboration and Resistance

In 1790, Mansur Bey led Circassian (North Caucasian) Muslims in jihad against Russians and Grebenskye Cossacks. A former Jesuit missionary from Genoa, Italy, Mansur Bey had embraced Islam in Daghestan. He died in the Russian prison at Solovetzkye Island in the White Sea. The jihad started in northern Caucasia in the late eighteenth century continued till 1925. It was directed by the powerful Murīds of the *Naqshbandi* and *Qādiri* ṭarīqahs. In 1785, Imam Mansur Ushurma from Chechnya annihilated a Russian army—the worst defeat ever inflicted on the troops

of Catherine II. The heroic shaykh was captured by the Russians in Anapa in 1791 and he died in Schluselburg prison three years later. Shaykh Muhammad Efendi of Yaraglar in Daghestan was the second *Naqshbandī murshid* or leader, who waged jihad against the Russians. He was the teacher of Ghazi Muhammad and ShamyI. Forty years after Mansur's jihad began, a legendary Third Imam of Daghestan, Ali ShamyI the Avar, declared *gazavat* or Holy War against the Russian czars. He was the successor of the martyred Ghazi Mullah Muhammad (the first Imam) and Hamzad Beg (the second Imam). Imam ShamyI, known as "The Lion of Avaria" was a member of the powerful *Naqshbandī tariqah*. He died in 1871 in Medina. His successor, the famous Haji Murat, continued the anti-Russian jihad in Ingushetia, Chechnya and Daghestan. In 1850, Haji Murat and his followers penetrated eastern Georgia and overran several Russian garrisons in the northern Caucasus. During the anti-colonial revolution, the Muslim Caucasians made a vigorous effort to expel the Russians and to establish an Islamic state.⁶

The Islamic revolution led by Imam ShamyI lasted for 35 years. The feudal landlords of Caucasia were not happy under the *sharī'ah* law which curtailed their brutal powers. In 1859 the legendary Imam ShamyI was betrayed by the feudal Muslim landlords and was captured by the Russians.

Under the Yoke

After the partition of Poland and Lithuania, the Muslims were placed under the religious authority of the Russo-Siberian *Muftiyat* at Simferopol (old Crimean town of Akmeceet). They were not forced to renounce Islam, but were cleverly secularized by the Russian state. At the end of the 19th century, the Polish Tatars were assimilated and absorbed by the state bureaucracy of the Russian Empire. Before World War I, about 20 Lithuanian and Polish Tatar generals served in the Russian army. There were about 300 Polish Tatar colonels and majors. The Russian government tried to separate the Muslim Tatar Poles from their ethno-religious roots in Tatarstan, and to destroy their lingual culture of Poland. But the carrot of Russification did not isolate them from the Muslims of the Russian Empire, Turkey, Arabia, and Lithuania. They were still Muslim Tatars and Polish patriots who identified themselves with the plight of Muslim Tatars in Kazan. Many Polish Tatars joined pan-Islamic movements, and some of them declared themselves *Islahi* (modernists) of Imam Bubinsky from the Marjani madrasah of Kazan. "Bubism" was

a controversial issue among the majority of Polish Muslims, who in spite of secularization were ardent followers of *Ahl al-Sunnah wa-al-Jamā'ah*.

The majority of Muslims of Poland and Lithuania belonged to secret societies based on blood ties and Sufi tarīqahs. The so called *achretne pobratymstwo* (Polish-Tatar term for secret brotherhood) protected Polish Muslims from undesirable penetration. The secret *achretni* brothers introduced a new adept to their "circle" by ritualistic sprinkling of water on bared sabres or long knives and an oath on the Qur'ān.

After anti-Russian revolts and uprisings organized by the Polish nationalists in 1831, 1846, 1848, and 1863, many Polish patriots took refuge in Turkey. Some others settled down in the Muslim lands in French-occupied Algeria, in Turkey, and in Ciscaucasian Baku. Numerous Polish officers and soldiers embraced Islam. Among them were also dishonest persons, who accepted Islam to get political or material advantages. Polish Christian refugees created an exclusively Roman Catholic ghetto in the village Adamopol (today's Polonoskoy) near Istanbul. The refugees, who had apparently converted to Islam, preferred genetic degeneration over marriages to the Muslim Turks. But honest Polish converts to Islam sincerely and enthusiastically observed the *Sharī'ah*. General Murad Pasha (J. Bem) died in the fortress of the Syrian city of Aleppo. He continued to believe to the last moment of his heroic life that only the Muslims would liberate Poland from the Russian yoke.⁷ Another Polish emigrant to France, Tadeusz Gasztowtt, wrote in his book *Islam in Polan*, that the Muslim Turks, Arabs, and Kurds are natural political allies of of the Polish national revival.⁸

In the 19th century, many Poles believed in the words of the legendary mystic called Vernyhora, who had a vision of liberated Poland. This historical hope that a powerful Muslim Turkey would destroy Russian imperialism was a very positive sign of geopolitical re-orientation in the westernized Polish mind.

During this period, the Muslim Tatar population of Lithuanian and Byelorussian *Podlasie* was completely Polonized. The Muslim Tatars lost their Turkic language and capability to read Arabic. Only the better educated and pious families preserved Arabic-written *Hamails*. The Qur'ān was known from the Polish translation made by Jan Tarak Mirza Buczacki in 1858. The Buczacki family were well-known custodians of wooden mosques in Studzianka, Lebiedziew, and Malaszewicze. In 1915, these mosques were burned down during a fierce battle between Germans and Russians. The mosque in the Lithuanian town of Neman was also destroyed. In 1913, the Lithuanian Tatar Ali (Aleksander) Ilyasewicz

visited the holy cities of Makkah and Medina. He described his Hajj and the journey to Istanbul and Damascus via Crimean Kerch and Kefe in his private diary.

As was said earlier, the Lithuanian and Polish Tatar Muslims enjoyed unusual freedom of worship in the Russian empire of the 19th century. But their brothers and sisters in Kazan, Crimea, and Idel-Yaik suffered brutal de-Islamization and discrimination. In 1874, the Russian government weakened the economic position of Islam in the whole Tatarstan by brutal confiscation of *awqāf*, the source of income of Islamic assemblies. More than two thirds of Tatar Crimean property was expropriated by greedy Russian *chynovniks* (bureaucrats). Muslims were excluded from academic and legal professions. Despite many acts of political, cultural, and religious discrimination, the Tatar Muslims were still one of the richest people of the Russian Empire. The Russian Orthodox church attempted to Christianize the Tatar Muslims of Kazan, Volga, and Bashqortostan (Bashkiria). They failed completely. In a stunning counter-reaction, the Muslim *du'āh* from Kazan converted a large number of Christianized Chuvashs (a Turkic-speaking ethnic group of the central Volga region) to Islam.

In better times in the Crimean Khanate, the Tatar Muslims had absorbed in their communities the Greek and Italian Christian Crimeans, which is the reason for the distinctly Hellenic type of face among the Crimean Tatars. According to reports of European travellers, thousands of Muslim Crimeans are descendants of the indigenous Geneoese and Venetian colonists. After the proclamation of religious liberty in 1905, the Crimean Tatars who were discriminated against were able to spread Islam among their Russian Christian neighbors.

Islamization of Kyrgyzstan

One of the most dramatic moments in the missionary history of Islam in the Russian Empire was a mass conversion of the shamanistic Kyrgyz tribes by Tatar mullahs, who preached Islam to them in the 18th century as agents of the czarist regime. The Kyrgyz khans accepted Russian rule about 1731, and for the next hundred and twenty years, all diplomatic correspondence between the khans of Kyrgyzstan and the czars of St. Petersburg was written in the Turkic-Tatar language. The Kyrgyz and the Tatars of Kazan, Crimea, and Lithuania are racial brothers divided by history and political shifts on the map of Eurasia. The ignorant Russian government unwillingly helped in the process of Islamization of Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan.⁹ The Russians believed that all Turco-Tatar

peoples of Central Asia were Muslims; however, in the 18th century, the vast majority of Kara Kyrgyz and Ak Kyrgyz nomadic clans were shamanists (the Kazakh were formerly called Kara [Black] Kyrgyz and the Kyrgyz themselves were called Ak [White] Kyrgyz). At the time of the annexation of their lands to the Russian empire only a very small number of Kazakh khans had any knowledge of Islam, and even they were confused by the activity of Ismailite preachers from the northern areas of India. There was not a single mosque in the Kyrgyz Steppe of Kazakhstan before the mission of the Tatar mullahs from Kazan. The Russians, assuming the Kyrgyz to be Muslims, gave them large sums of money for building mosques, and the Russian-paid Tatar mullahs were sent to teach the young Kyrgyz about the tenets of Islam. This is probably the only historical evidence of a Christian government cooperating in the spread of Islam in conquered Asia. Later, after the successful *da'wah* of the Tatar mullahs supported by the Russian regime, other Muslim missions, not depending on the goodwill of any government, established their own centres in the Kazakh Steppes and converted the whole Kazakh and Kyrgyz population to Islam.

After the conquest of Kazan, Astrakhan, and the Siberian khanates by Czar Ivan the Terrible, the Russian Orthodox church forcibly baptized a large number of non-Muslim and some Muslim inhabitants of the occupied territory. The forcibly Christianized Tatars were known as *Kriasheny* (Russian for baptized). *Kriashenye Tatory*, victims of Archbishop Guryi and Bishop Varsonafyi, came to be known as *starokreshchennye* (old baptized); the majority of them quickly reverted to Islam, for after the death of their Christian oppressors, the Russian priests and monks did not understand the Turkic language of the local Tatars and soon neglected them. They were very upset by the discovery that the so-called new Christian Tatars "shamelessly keep many horrible Tatar customs, and neither hold nor want to know the Christian faith."¹⁰ After a fiasco of a spiritual crusade, Christian terror usually followed. The Russian czars ordered to "pacify, imprison, put in irons, and thereby discourage and frighten from the Tatar faith those who, though baptized, do not obey the admonitions of the bishop." In 1744 alone, 418 mosques were demolished and many Tatars became pseudo-Christians for the sake of their personal security, rather than conviction. The second generation of forcibly Christianized Tatars were known as *novokreshchennye* or "new baptized" Tatars. But despite the efforts to give them a Christian education, the Tatar victims of Christianization remained very superficial in their new religion and at the end of the 19th century several thousand again returned to Islam. Nevertheless, in 1926, there were still many

Kriasheny (about two to three per cent of the total number of Tatars).

In the 18th century, the Russian czars and clergymen made a new effort to Christianize the non-Muslim tribes and "lapsed" (Russified) Muslims. In 1788, Czarina Catherine II ordered that all new "Christian Tatars" must sign a written promise to "completely forsake their pagan errors, and avoid all contacts with non-Christians."¹¹ In 1872, a Russian Christian agent wrote that "a large number of evident apostasies coincides with the beginning of measures to confirm the converts in the Christian faith."¹² In 1882, the Tatar peasants from the village of Apozov were sentenced to prison after their rejection of the Russian Orthodox Church's teachings. The Russian penal code was used against those who abandoned Orthodox Christianity, and against the Muslim preachers who converted Christians to Islam. The Muslim missionaries were deported to Siberian camps of hard labor for 10 years. They were deprived of all civil rights. In spite of such actions, these so-called "baptized Tatars" were Christians only on paper of the Russian missionaries. As a matter of fact, Christian terror and persecution created Muslim martyrs and strengthened the Islamic faith among new Muslims of northeastern Russia.¹³

The capital of Idel-Yaik Tatarstan, Kazan was the center of Islamic *da'wah* activity. A large number of Islamic pamphlets were printed in Kazan every year. Tatars who, in an act of desperation, had allowed themselves to be baptized by Christian monks and priests were brought back to Islam by the gentle persuasion of conservative "mullahs" or Islamic sages. The high number of re-conversions to Islam among the so-called "baptized Tatars" shocked and alarmed the clergy of the Russian Orthodox Church. But they lost their crusade, especially after the edict of religious liberty was issued in 1905, after the first workers' revolution in Russia and the crushing defeat of the Russian navy in the war against Japan.

Between 1906 and 1910, as many as 53,000 Christians became Muslims in the region of the Volga basin. The perception that the level of morality in Muslim societies was higher, was probably one of the main factors contributing to the re-Islamization of the whole of Tatarstan and Bashqortostan (Bashkiria). An angry Russian writer wrote: "In many Christian villages, men go away in winter to work as tailors in the Muslim towns. There, they are converted to Islam, and they return to their villages as fanatics, bringing with them pan-Islamic ideology which influences their homes." The Muslim Tatars of European Russia successfully introduced Islam to the Udmurt (Votiaks) and the Mari (Cheremiss), two Finnic Peoples of the central Volga region. The

formerly Christian Mari (Cheremises) adopted the Muslim way of life and dress. In addition, 25 per cent of Christian Chuvash accepted Islam in the first decade of the 20th century. In 1745, the Muslim *da'wah* workers from Bukhara converted to Islam, the Baraba, a Siberian Tatar tribe living between the Irtysh and Ob rivers.¹⁴

It is hard to detect how many Polish or Lithuanian Tatars participated in *da'wah* activities, but some of them engaged in activities of intensive Islamization. Polish Muslim Tatars were involved in plans of restoration of a "Spiritual Golden Horde" and they were outraged by the systematic destruction of the Islamic culture of Crimea. According to an historical account of Leon Kryczynski (a Polish Muslim historian), there were 1556 mosques and 5139 imams in Crimea in 1805, but in 1914, only 729 mosques and 942 imams survived the Russian colonization of the Crimea. Polish Muslim Tatar officers and administrators served in every corner of the vast Russian empire. In 1905, several Polish and Lithuanian Muslim intellectuals took part in the First All-Muslim Convention of Russia, organized in Nizhnii Novgorod. There, Muslim delegates from the Crimea, the Caucasus, the Volga basin, Turkistan, Lithuania, and Siberia created the All-Russian Muslim Union. The second convention of ARMU (January, 1906) divided the Muslim population of Russia into 16 regions. The Polish Lithuanian Muslims were located in the "Lithuanian Muslim Region." The Belarusian capital, Minsk, was elected as the center of Muslim intellectual life in this region. During the Third Convention of All-Russian Muslim Union organized in Nizhnii Novgorod, in September of 1906, the Polish Lithuanian Muslims were represented by a Polish Muslim, Mustafa Dawidowicz, who was the mayor of the Crimean city of Bakhchisaray. Mustafa Dawidowicz was elected to the Central Committee of the newly formed Muslim National Party (MNP), which was a political force of all Muslims in the Russian empire. The MNP was an exponent of radical pan-Islamic ideology.

There is no doubt that the MNP was penetrated by the powerful secret services of the *Okhrana*. Some Polish Tatars joined the Polish socialist-nationalist underground (PPS-FR) and its terrorist cells. But the Tatar intelligentsia of the Russian empire was fragmented and politically divided like the khans of the medieval Golden Horde.

Surrender and Betrayal

The political stress, peculiar cultural situation and "colonisability" of the "Jadids" were described by the Algerian Muslim writer Malik Bennabi

in his *Vocation de l'Islam*:

The modernist engages himself in the life of his country only on the political plane. For him the primary question is not the regeneration of the Muslim world, but of pulling it out of its present "embarrassment".... The modernist movement does not in fact reflect any precise doctrine: it is as indefinite in its means as in its ends. Its only precise path is that which leads the "Musulman" to be a client or imitator, without originality, of an alien civilization that more readily opens the doors of its shop than of its schools ... the modernist movement is not oriented toward acts and means but towards fashions, tastes, and wants.¹⁵

Almost everywhere in the Christianized Muslim world, the Muslim "radicals" and "reformers," who advocated "resistance" against European imperialism, also advocated greater Europeanization of the Muslim way of life, and this "occidentosis" survived both the passing of colonial empires and the fragmentation of the world economy.¹⁶ The balance sheet of cultural influence is overwhelmingly one-sided. The Muslim world during this period occasionally contributed to Europe, but it was nothing comparable to the contribution and effect which Christian or post-Christian Europe had on the Muslim world.¹⁷

Among the notable radicals, we may note: Osman Akchokrakly (d. 1936), a radical Crimean secularist and Tatar historian; Musa Jarullah Bigi (1875-1949), a Tatar *jadid* who believed that Islam is a kind of "religious communism"; Ismail Bey Gaspraly, also known as Gasprinski (1851-1914), the founder of the modernist mouthpiece newspaper *Terjuman* (the Interpreter); Abdürrashid Ibragimov (d. 1944), a follower of Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī; Galimjan Ibragimov (1887-1938); Muhammad Ayaz Iskhaki (1878-1954), the organizer of the anarchist group Tangchylar; Gafur Külahmetov (1881-1918), the founder of a short-lived "Muslim" anarchist circle *Berlek* (Unity); Mir Said Sultan Galiev (1880-1939), who had "a dream" about an Asian "Muslim" Communist Commonwealth; Shihabeddin Marjani (1818-1899), who advocated the westernization of the Muslim world and individual "*ijtihad*" of the *sharī'ah*; Hanafi Muzaffar (Hanafi Kuibysher); Mulla Nur Vahitov (1885-1918) who founded the Muslim Socialist Committee of Kazan; Husein Yamashev (1882-1912), the first Tatar Marxist-Bolshevik and "father of Tatar atheism"; and Ahmed Zeki Validov (Zeki Velidi Togan, 1890-1969), a Bashqort Tatar historian and son of an imam from an aristocratic feudal family.

After the mass unrest of 1905, the czarist regime democratized the

political life of the Russian empire. All sections of society, and all ethnic, national and religious parties, were given the freedom of expression. The revolutionary socialist and communist groups organized themselves into a powerful force. The Tatar modernists and Jadids formed several "Muslim" movements and parliamentary representations of the Muslims in the *Duma* (the first multinational imperial assembly). Unfortunately, the traditional (*Qadimist*) forces of Islam, ulema, imams and mullahs ignored the window of opportunity created by the weakened czarists. They preferred the position and prestige of being silent custodians of the Islamic lifestyle. In the 1910's, it was left to the modernists and socialist-oriented Tatar nationalists (pan-Turkists and pan-Islamists) to decide the political fortune and misfortune of the Muslim masses in Russia.

Notable amongst such parties and groups was, *Berlek* (Unity), a Tatar revolutionary party founded in Kazan in the spring of 1906. Inspired by non-Muslim Russian Social Democrats and anarchists, its programme was very chaotic. The party edited two newspapers, *Azat* (Free) and *Azat Khalyk* (Free People). Mullah Mudarris Abdullah Apanay, the imam of Kazan mosque, was the president of *Berlek*, but two Tatar communists, Hüseyin Yamashev and Gafur Kulahmetov, decided its ideology. The "Red mullahs," Hadi Atlasy (imam of Bogulma), Abdullah Najmuddin (imam of Sibirsk), and Kalimulla Hasanov (a *Mudarris* of Ufa) created the Muslim lobby in the Duma, called *Dumchylar*. But they were militant *islahists*, strongly influenced by the ideology of Russian populists (*Trudovniki*).

Erk (Will) was another Muslim socialist movement, which appeared in 1919 in Bashqortostan and Tashkent. In 1921, its name was changed to Turkistan Socialistar Tudesi which was changed once more, in 1926, to Turkistan Socialist Erk Firkasy. Under Stalinist rule most of them were forced to emigrate, some joined the Soviet apparatus of power, and the rest were eliminated by the NKVD.

In 1905, the radical Tatar intellectuals created *Islah Komitesi* (Committee of Reforms). They organized violent riots in madrasahs of Kazan, Ufa, Orenburg, and Troitsk; and brutally attacked "conservative" Muslim teachers and imams. There was no programme and no party discipline; the left-wing jadids were united by "action" against Islam. The most prominent liberals in the "Islahi" movement joined the Bolsheviks after Lenin's putsch of 1917.

Ittifaq al-Muslimin (Muslim Union), also known as *Rusiya Musulmanlarynyng Ittifaqy* was created in 1906, at the Second All-Russian Muslim

Congress in St. Petersburg. The party was open to all Muslims of the Russian empire, but in practice it was dominated by Volga-Idel Tatars, Crimeans and Azeris. Rich Muslim landlords favoured the "moderate" pan-Islamism of the RMI. The Central Committee was composed of thirteen wealthy Muslim Tatars who in 1908, in the face of Stolypin's policy against non-Russians, decided to disband the RMI. Some of its activists switched to the leftist bloc, some emigrated to Turkey, and the majority abandoned political life.

Ittihad ve Taraqqi (Union and Progress) was a secret underground circle founded in Moscow in 1928 by some so-called Muslim "national communist" activists. Led by Sultan Galiev (Kazan Tatar), Zeki Validov (Bashqort), Najmuddin Khojaev (Uzbek) and Ahmed Baytursun (Kazakh), the objectives of *Ittihad ve Taraqqi* were to: (1) penetrate the Communist party and the Soviet regime; (2) control education in the Muslim republics; (3) establish regular contacts between anti-Russian organizations and gradually destroy the Slavic domination; (4) found a pan-Turanic secular state; and (5) bring about the federation of Tatarstan and Turkistan with Kemalist Turkey.

The *Milli Firqa* or National Party of the Crimean "Jadids" was founded in July 1917. It had two factions: the left-wing Social Revolutionaries of Ali Bodaninski (killed in 1920) preached "socialist pan-Turkism," and Halil Chapchakchy's Bolshevik Tatars taught "Muslim communism." During the bloody civil war in Crimea, *Milli Firqa* constantly switched sides from one to the other. After October 1920, when Crimea was finally conquered by the Red Army, the leftist "Jadids" joined the Russian Communist party of Lenin and Stalin. The *Milli Firqa* activist Veli Ibrahimov was appointed president of the Communist party of Crimea.

The "Muslim modernists" and Tatar "Jadids" betrayed Islam, and all of them lost their sense of solidarity with the world-wide Islamic *Ummah*. They paid a high price for professing modernism. They were eliminated one by one, with historical regularity dictated by their Bolshevik guides.

A Modernist State

The modernist Sultan Abdülmejid I's reformation of 1839-1861, called the *Tanzimat*, was initiated by some Turkish diplomats. They opened the caliphate to Christian European influence like never before. Most of this influence was French and English, and infiltrated through educational institutions established by the Protestant missionaries. The Muslim boys

from rich Turkish families were sent to schools in Paris and London. They joined the carefully selected young Arabs, Albanians and Tatars all of whom were brain washed in special schools of the West and began to pick up political ideas of their masters. They were also introduced to secret lodges of the latter-day Templars and St. John's Order. French and English became the languages of the "educated class" in Cairo, Beirut, Salonika, and Istanbul. Soon, large European communities mushroomed in Alexandria, Istanbul, and Beirut. Jadids skillfully heaped the blame for every thing on the "despotic sultan." These grievances and manipulated sentiments led to the formation of subversive underground movements and revolts. In 1877, a great uprising of Chechen Muslims in northern Caucasus was crushed by the Russians. The modernist Turks did not help them. A few who began to urge the reform of the Caliphate, the unity of the Muslim world and decolonization, organized a pan-Islamic movement. The modernists were better organized and quickly adopted pan-Islamic phraseology to deceive the Muslim masses.

In 1908, one of the greatest Turkish sultans, Abdülhamid II, was deposed by a Young Turk coup and replaced by a dictatorship. The sultan, who had refused to sell Palestine to the Zionist European settlers, became a prisoner in his own palace. He tried desperately to re-Islamize the shrinking power of the Osmanli Caliphate. However, the conspirators foiled his efforts.

American Evangelical Christian missionaries played a crucial role in the logistic support of the new regime. They produced hundreds of Turkish modernists in their American colleges for girls and boys. As confessed by an American Christian propagandist, Talcott Williams, in an address in Brooklyn, New York, on October 15, 1908:

... many influences have turned the hearts of men in that Empire, but, if we ask ourselves what the governing and final factor is which brought about the first revolution (in Turkey) ... we do ill if we forget that for eighty years the American missionaries have been laying the foundations and preaching the doctrine which makes free government possible.¹⁸

The author of *History of the World*, J. M. Roberts correctly described the "free government" installed by the Young Turks, when he wrote:

When we look back at them, the Young Turks seem more comprehensible than they were at the time. Essentially, they faced problems faced later by many modernizers in non-European countries and their violent methods have been emulated by many since from necessity or imagined necessity. They threw themselves into reform of

every branch of government (importing many European advisers). But they took power in the middle of a shattering succession of humiliations in foreign affairs which weakened their appeal and led them to rely on force.... Under such strain, it was soon apparent that the harmony among the peoples of a reformed empire on which liberalism had relied was a chimera.... The Young Turks were driven back more and more upon the assertion of one nationalism among many, that of the Ottomans. This, of course, led to resentment among the peoples. The result was once more massacre, tyranny and assassination.¹⁹

After the Young Turk revolt, Austria-Hungary annexed Bosnia and Hercegovina, populated by Slavic Muslims. Weak Bulgaria annexed Rumelia, populated by the Slavic Muslim *Pomaks* and Rumelian Turks. The Muslims of Crete were expelled from the island when it was annexed by Greece. The Italians crushed the Turkish army led by Kemal Pasha and Enver Pasha in Tripolitania, Libya.

The same forces of destruction worked on the Arab part of the Caliphate, where old French influence among the Christian Maronites from the Lebanon mountains was strengthened by American missionaries, which led to the foundation of Christian schools and colleges to which Arab Muslim and Christian boys and girls came from all over the Arab world. Secret societies of "Young Arabs" and open groups of liberal writers were formed among Arab exiles in Paris and Cairo.

Shocking parallels existed between the Osmanli multi-ethnic caliphate of the 1900's and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth of the 1770's. Both were destroyed by gradual partitions; both had inner circles of traitors and sellouts: Targovica in Poland and Salonika in Turkey. Both were recreated, after World War I, as small states with rebellious ethnic minorities.

The First World War

World War I or the First Great Civil War of Europe was ignited by the "Balkan fuse." During the two chaotic Balkan Wars between 1912 and 1913, the Turks were defeated and removed from southern Europe by a newly created Serbian state. Aggressive and fanatical nationalistic Christian Serbs dreamt about *Serboslovakia* or the Greater Serbia. Behind the pan-Slavic nationalists of Serbia stood the Russian Empire, the traditional protector of Christian Slavdom. Serbia despoiled the Turkish

modernist regime of most of what was left of its European territory and then embroiled herself in war against her former allies. Conflict of interest within the Balkan League over the spoils of war against the Turks ignited a new war between Christian Bulgaria and Serbia. Romania, Montenegro, Greece, and ironically the "Young Turks" supported Serbia, which confused the situation completely. After the Second Balkan War of June 1913, Bulgaria lost Macedonia to the Serbs, and Dobrudja to the Romanians. But Austria-Hungary, which had incorporated the Muslim-dominated Bosnia and Hercegovina since 1908, prevented victorious Serbian pan-Slavists from reaching the coast of the Adriatic Sea. Albania became an autonomous monarchy under the rule of Prince Wilhelm zu Wied (who was later outmaneuvered by the Albanian "Jadid," Esad Pasha). The furious Serbs declared Bosnia and Hercegovina a part of *Yugoslavia* (land of the Southern Slavs). Russia supported the Serbian claims. A prosperous and militarized Germany under the rule of the Prussian Hohenzollern dynasty sympathized with the Muslims of Turkey and Morocco, which in turn infuriated English and French colonialists.

In June 1914, Gavrilo Princip, Serbian terrorist and member of the free-masonic lodge "Young Bosnia," gunned down the Austrian Archduke, Ferdinand Habsburg and his wife in Sarajevo, the capital of Muslim Bosnia. It was a well planned provocation, which ignited a chain reaction. The outraged Austrians declared war on Serbia on the 28th of July. The Germans supported the Austrians. Russia supported Serbia. On the 6th of August, Austria-Hungary declared war against Russia. Russia was supported by England and France. Germany attacked France through Belgium, whose neutrality was guaranteed by the British Empire. When the Russian armies moved against Austria, the Germans declared war on Russia. On August 4, the British government was in a state of war against Germany. Turkey joined the Central Powers (Germany and Austria-Hungary). Japan took the side of Allies. Bulgaria joined Germany and Austria-Hungary in September 1915, but Romania supported the Allies and joined the Russians. Greece became another pro-British state in 1917. Italy joined the Allies in 1915, in return for British and French promises of Austrian territory. The Russians and the British-led Arab nationalists attacked the Turks in the Caucasus and *al-Shām* (Syria).

Muslim soldiers from the French colony of Senegal fought the Germans in the trenches of northern Europe. The Muslim regiments from India led by the Christian British colonels killed the Muslim Turks in Basra. The Muslim Arabs killed the Muslim Turks in the Hijāz under

the guidance of the British Zionist Colonel Lawrence "of Arabia." The Algerian Muslims in the French colonial army fought the Germans, who led the Muslim Turks against the British and Australian invaders of Gallipoli. The Polish and Lithuanian Muslims in the Russian army fought the Muslim Turks in the Caucasus. The Muslim Turks and Kurds fought the Muslim Tatars in the Russian army. The Muslim Bosnian Slavs and Albanians struggled against the Muslim Tatars drafted by the Russians. The Muslims fought for the European Christians in Europe and Asia. And of course, as usual, the Christian Europeans fought against each other, with the huge killing power of modern weapons. Magazine rifles, machine guns, super cannons, submarines, planes, mines, gas, and tanks revolutionized warfare on an unprecedented scale. By the end of 1915, the French army alone lost 300,000 men dead, but in 1916, the seven-month battle of Verdun added another 315,000 to this total. In the same battle the Germans lost 280,000 young men. In the battle of the Somme, they lost almost a half million soldiers killed by the British and American gunfire. That battle cost the British 420,000 casualties. In the first day of that battle the British and Americans suffered 60,000 casualties. Millions of Russians perished in senseless "human waves" decimated by the German machine-guns. Nobody counted the dead and wounded Muslims.

The Russian empire was destroyed by the war. The powerful Romanov dynasty lost power. The czar was replaced by the provisional government of Prince Lvov, and later the regime of Alexander Kerensky. But in October 1917, Lenin's Bolsheviks seized power in a coup d'état called the "October Revolution." Lenin was supported by the German General Ludendorff with whom he promised a peace treaty. After the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, in March 1918, the Communist-controlled Russia accepted severe losses of territory. The October Bolshevik putsch and the American entry into the war in 1917 marked a historical break between the two eras of European history. The Allies were infuriated by the Bolshevik defection and supported the old regime of the czars. In 1918, the Austro-Hungarian Dual Monarchy was dissolved by the combined effects of Slavic nationalism (Czechs, Slovaks, Poles, Ukrainians, and Croats) and war calamities. When the British, French, and American forces began to move forward, the Jewish, Liberal, and Social Democrat politicians in Germany ignited a Bolshevik-style coup. The German Emperor Wilhelm Hohenzollern abdicated. The third imperial house of Europe had fallen. The Weimar politicians surrendered Germany to the Allies. Germany, which had been the economic powerhouse of Europe, was severely punished and disarmed. Its economy was

seized and destroyed by victorious British, French and American troops. Ironically, it was not Germany which had started World War I.

Several new independent countries rose up from ashes of the Old Order: the Serbian-dominated Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Latvia, Estonia, Finland, Lithuania, and Poland. Ten million European men had died on the battlefields of World War I. Typhus killed million of Muslims and Christians in southern Europe alone. Fifteen million men were maimed, blinded by phosgene gas, and crippled.

The Treaty of Versailles signed in June 1919 did not end the hostility between European nations; on the contrary, the arrogance of victorious powers and the sting of injustice deepened the gap between them. The British, French and Americans proclaimed that the Germans were responsible for the outbreak of war. The huge economic reparations and territorial losses angered the Germans, who were not defeated on the battlefield. Germany lost Alsace and Lorraine to France, and the Upper Silesia (Ober Schlesier) and Posen to Poland. In Eastern Europe the national minorities were incorporated into nations to which they felt no allegiance. A third of Poland's population (Ukrainians, Germans, Jews and Byelorussians) did not speak Polish. A third of Czechoslovakia consisted of Polish, Russian, Ukrainian, Magyar (Hungarian), and German minorities. Germans and Slovaks were particularly unhappy under the rule of pro-Soviet Czechs. The Muslim Slavs (Bosnians and Hercegovinians) were discriminated against by the Christian Serbs in the "Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenians" (SHS), later called *Yugoslavia* or "The Land of Southern Slavs." The "Greater Romania" received Magyar-populated Transylvania.

The greatest losers were the non-European Muslim Turks and Arabs led by westernized stooges of the Allies. Mandates were given to the victorious Christian crusaders from France and England by the American-sponsored League of Nations to administer the Arab lands. The map of the Arab Middle East was drawn by the British and French generals. The Egyptian army was commanded by an English general and the real ruler of the country was the British Agent and Consul General. Kemal Pasha's Turkish Nationalist Government recognized the new borders and the Bolshevik regimes of Soviet Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia. They accepted the Soviet rule over Bukhara, Khiva, and all of Turkistan, In return, Lenin recognized his government. The British, French, Greeks, and Italians had all agreed on their shares of the booty in Turkey. They rejected the Russian claim to Constantinople and the Straits. The powerless Sultan Muhammed VI accepted partition of the

caliphate. Asian Turkey was divided into British, French, Greek and Italian spheres of influence. On August 10, 1920, the Turkish government signed the humiliating Peace treaty of Sèvres (which was later not ratified by the Turkish Meclis). Istanbul and the straits were "internationalized" or occupied by the British fleet. Greece received eastern Thrace and Gallipoli, the Aegean islands and the coast around Izmir (Smyrna). Syria and Cilicia went to France. Iraq, Transjordan and Palestine were handed over to Britain, which also assumed the protectorate over the whole of the Arabian peninsula (Aden, Yemen, Oman, and Kuwait). The Italians received Dodecanese and Adalia. The strength of the Turkish army was fixed at a maximum of 50,000 men. Six years later, British and French crusaders signed the Treaty of Mosul. The Iraqi Petroleum Company was divided between the British (52.5%), Americans (21.25%), and French (21.25%) oil companies. The Armenian oilman C. S. Gulbenkian received a 5% commission for his services as mediator.

In 1920, the supreme Allied War Council gave a mandate to the Greek Prime Minister Venizelos (leader of the movement *Enosis*, "unity of all Greeks") to restore "law and order" in Anatolia. Greek troops seized Bursa and Edirne, which ignited a mass uprising of the Muslim Turks. Jihad was declared by the imams and *hocas* in every Anatolian village and town. Kemal Pasha's troops retreated when the Greek army attacked Eskişehir, but in the summer of 1922, the exhausted and demoralized Greeks were defeated and expelled from Turkey. France withdrew its own troops. The British navy left the Straits. On November 1, 1922, Sultan Muhammed VI was declared a traitor and his office was abolished. The Western powers were forced to abolish their own plan of the total partition of Turkey. Turkey received a small piece of Europe back in Eastern Thrace. No war reparations were demanded, but 430,000 Turks were deported from Europe. In 1923, Kemal Pasha became president of the nationalist elite of power. In 1924, he abolished the caliphate and banned the sharī'ah law, which caused a mass uprising of Muslim Turks and Kurds. Kemal, impressed by Stalin's method of dealing with religious opponents, massacred hundreds of thousands of Kurdish and Turkish Muslims led by the charismatic leader and anti-Russian war hero Bediuzzaman Said Nursi (d. 1960). In 1928, all references relating to Islam were removed from the constitution. Reading and writing in Arabic was punished by imprisonment; copies of the Qur'ān and precious Arabic and Persian manuscripts were collected and burned; many famous mosques were vandalized or converted into museums; and Sufi orders were declared illegal. Hundreds of *ulema* were

executed because they taught the Qur'ān. Law was secularized among the lines of the Napoleonic code. Criminal law was borrowed from Italy. The Muslim calendar was forbidden. In 1935, Friday was replaced by Sunday as the day of rest. "Atatürk" died in 1938. "The sad fact about Kemal Atatürk," wrote Jansen:

is not merely that he was a very shallow reformer, but that he has been proven an unsuccessful reformer. The main reason for his failure is that he did not know his people. He refused to acknowledge that the Turks always have been and for the foreseeable future will remain very devout Muslims.... The vast mass of the Turks ... simply turned their back on Atatürk's anti-Islamic reforms and took their religion underground into mysticism or *tasawwuf*, and into what was left of the closed brotherhood of the tariqas ... Nakshbandis, Qadiris and Mevlevis had all maintained limited activity underground despite police harassment.... In spite of the evident failure since the beginning of the Kemalist revolt, Western writers on Turkey remained obstinately cheerful and the biographies of Atatürk are still hagio-graphies. The reason for this Western favoritism is not far to seek. Atatürk gave the West that sincerest form of flattery—imitation."²⁰

Conclusions

In Eastern Europe, the signs of cultural decay were manifested by the emergence of a new type of Muslim rationalists—survivalists obsessed with the alleged stagnation of religious mind. At the root of their view was a chimera—national liberation of the Muslims without the re-Islamization of their states. In 1877, T. Erskine May wrote in his *Democracy in Europe*, that "an imitation of European customs including the perilous art of borrowing has been lately affected; but in the hands of Eastern rulers, the civilization of the West is unfruitful, and instead of restoring a tottering state, appears to threaten it with speedier ruin."²¹

Politically and ideologically, the modernist experiment was the worst of all scenarios. Old patterns of ethnic solidarity and bureaucracies were stronger than "westernization," and police states of one form or another became the main canal of social reform. Without political and religious freedom, modernism became a serviceable whip of tyranny in the hands of westernized despots.

Notes

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 4. P. Borawski, *Tatarzy w dawnej Rzeczypospolitej* (Warsaw, 1986), 252-258.
 5. Resmi Efendi Azmi, *Sefaretname-i 1205 Senesinde Prusya Kirali İkinci Fredrik Guillaum'in Nezidine Memur Olan Ahmed Azmi Efendin'dir* (Istanbul, 1303 AH), 27-36; also his *Berlin Sefaretnamesi* (Istanbul, 1303 AH).
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 8. T. Gasztowtt, *La Pologne et l'Islam* (Paris, 1907); Also his, *Turquie et Pologne* (Paris, 1913).
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