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Ingeborg Baldauf

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JADIDISM IN CENTRAL ASIA WITHIN REFORMISM AND MODERNISM IN THE MUSLIM WORLD

BY

INGEBORG BALDAUF

Berlin

“Central Asian Jadidism”, like many other -isms, tends to fade away the more we scrutinize it. There is nothing surprising in this; hardly anyone would expect to find a clear-cut, persistent and uniform profile for a social phenomenon which existed, roughly speaking, for three decades, and over an area that included Kabul and Almaty, Bukhara and Kashgar, Samarkand and Tashkent. Furthermore, the individuals who were part of this phenomenon came from very different socio-economic and educational backgrounds, and although they shared basic ideas and goals, we see that they followed very different paths. Perhaps it is still too early to try and define exactly what Central Asian Jadidism was. Scholarly research is still in its infancy, and what little flawed knowledge we possess is too readily obscured and engulfed by ad hoc judgement and fixed ideology. I hope comparison with similar phenomena outside my chosen scope of space and time can avoid these pitfalls and therefore help us to a better understanding of the nature and the specific character of Jadidism in Central Asia.

Adeeb Khalid has proposed a preliminary definition of who can be called a Jadidi, namely, “those individuals who took part in efforts to reform Muslim society through the use of modern means of communication (...) and new forms of sociability”.¹ In even simpler terms, it could be suggested that the common denominator that linked this otherwise loosely connected group of individuals could be their positive relationship of sorts with the cluster of enlightening and modernizing ideas that came together with the

¹ Adeeb Khalid: *The Politics of Muslim Cultural Reform: Jadidism in Tsarist Central Asia*, PhD Madison, 1993; 137.

new method of schooling introduced by Ismā'īl Gasprinskii, the *uṣūl-i jadīda*, as it was called at first. Edward Lazzerini has underlined that Gasprinskii, when calling for reform, preferred to use the term *tanzīmāt*,² a word that had been applied to the reforms in the Ottoman Empire. Schools of the type Gasprinskii suggested were in Turk called *muntazam maktablar*. However, their opponents preferred to call them *jadīd maktablari*, with clearly derogatory connotations. The strict etymology of *tanzīm* would be "amendment", "putting in order", "organizing in a solid manner", "fixing a thing as best one can". *Muntazam*, regardless of its actual etymology, was in Crimean and Volga Tatar one of those words used instead of the otherwise non-existent term 'modern'. Obviously, this is what Gasprinskii had in mind when he initiated reform: to put Muslim society in order, to modernize it, and to enable it to meet the challenges of its day.³

This ordered condition was to be achieved through a lifelong process of learning. Gasprinskii designed the "new method" (*uṣūl-i jadīda*) for the primary stage of this learning process, i.e., the schooling of children. Ismā'īl Bey used the methods practised by Russian reform pedagogues who in turn had adapted those of 19th century European pedagogics. Modernist Muslim apologetics have underlined the fact that some basic elements of the "new method" had existed in the classical Islamic *madrasa* tradition prior to the period of decay anyway. However, if understood as a part of a whole that existed together with the physical setting of a school with all its appliances, the curriculum, and the methods of instruction, as well as the aims of pedagogy as such,⁴ Gasprinskii's method really was novel, *jadīd*.

Although Gasprinskii had little in-depth knowledge of traditional Islamic learning, he was certainly aware of the fact that in its heyday Islamic learning had included geography, mathematics,

² Edward J. Lazzerini: "Beyond Renewal. The Jadid Response to Pressure for Change in the Modern Age", *Muslims in Central Asia. Expressions of Identity and Change*, ed. Jo-Ann Gross, Durham/London 1992, 151-166; 162.

³ For a general introduction to Gasprinskii's life and thought, see *EP*, II, 979-81.

⁴ Cf. Gasprinskii's *Khoja-i ṣibyān*, Baghchesarai 1888, and *Rehber-i Mu'allim*, Baghchesarai 1898.

physics, and so on, and from time to time he reminded his conservative Muslim opponents of their great scholarly past. However, Gasprinskii was not attempting to revive bygone glories, and *usūl-i jadīda* was, as Lazzerini has pointed out, not aimed at the renewal of what had been perceived as an authentic, ideal earlier stage in history. Gasprinskii was not in favor of *tajdīd* as it was commonly understood, namely “renewal”.⁵ Consequently, he did not apply the typical method of *tajdīd*, which would have been *islāh*. *Islāh* means repair and restoration, the exchanging of rotten elements for solid and healthy ones in order to re-establish the previous sound condition.⁶ *Islāh* would have aimed at re-establishing the conditions prevalent during the Golden Age of Islam, which came to an end with the Prophet and the *salaf-i ṣāliḥ*. *Tajdīd* and its method, *islāh*, are regressive rather than progressive, since they postulate the superiority of the past and attempt to revive it. Gasprinskii’s worldview, however, was a progressive one. He was striving for a future for the Muslim community that would not only be better than their present condition, but also better than that of any bygone age.⁷

When Gasprinskii died in 1914, Rāji, one of his many Central Asian admirers, devoted a *martīya* (mourning poem) to him in which he praised Gasprinskii particularly as a *mujaddid* of thought.⁸ To the ears of the Muslims of that day, the word *mujaddid*, however casually it may have been applied in that piece of literature, must have echoed the well-known use of the word as a traditional honorary title. According to a *ḥadīth*, at the beginning of every century God will send the Muslim community a *mujaddid* who will help re-establish the authentic condition of early Islamic

⁵ John O. Voll: “Renewal and Reform in Islamic History: *Tajdid* and *Islah*”, *Voices of Resurgent Islam*, ed. John L. Esposito, New York/Oxford 1983, 32-47, at 35-43.

⁶ For an autochthonous Central Asian definition of *islāh* cf. “*Islāh-i Qavm*”, *Al-Islāh* 1.1915.8-14; 10: *ayurmāk*, *khāṣ etmāk*, *tāzalamaq*, *jadabāt-i naḥsini durustlāmāk* (...); for a more general treatment see “*Islāh*” in *EP*, IV, 141-71.

⁷ Lazzerini *passim*.

⁸ F. Rāji: “*Ismā’il Beg Ḥazratlariga*”, *Ā’ina* 49.1914.1165: ... *fikrda va dilda mujaddid*. Another epithet Rāji applied to Gasprinskii was *qutb-i zamān*.

times.⁹ In fact, Gasprinskii's basic methodological works were published right at the beginning of the 14th century of the Hijra, and they proved to have tremendous reforming effect. An enthusiastic Central Asian follower might well have applied the term *mujaddid* to his Crimean master in a metaphorical sense. However, if understood in its familiar traditional meaning, the term could not apply to Gasprinskii, since, unlike the typical *mujaddid* of Islamic tradition, Ismā'īl Bey did not strive for the reestablishment of the golden past.

The *mujaddid* issue can serve as a starting point for reflections on the similarities and differences in conception between Gasprinskii and his Central Asian adherents. Like Rājī, many Central Asians of the early 20th century would have understood "*mujaddid*" in its traditional sense. The basic function of the *mujaddid* of Islamic tradition is to bring about a regeneration of the authentic Islamic spirit¹⁰ by means of *ijtihād* and *jihād*. What is to be understood by this? —*Ijtihād* is not just any "effort" in layman's terms, and as the word was widely used in Central Asian Turki and Fārsī; but it refers more specifically to the effort to derive legal opinion directly from the Koran and *hadīth*, i.e., from the fundamental texts of Islam. A *mujaddid* would claim the right to resort to the fundamentals rather than consulting the canonical writings of the authoritative founders of the law schools, which were handed down through tradition. In early 20th century Central Asia practitioners of law were expected to rely on the authority of legal writing within the Ḥanafī tradition. However, as is the case with many a problem of contemporary life, such texts did not always provide helpful answers. This at least was the opinion of some Central Asian Jadidis, for example the *muftī* Maḥmūd Khoja Behbūdī from Samarkand.

⁹ Ella Landau-Tasseron has argued that "cyclical reform" is but a "figure of speech" ("The 'Cyclical Reform': A Study of the *Mujaddid* Tradition", *Studia Islamica* 70.1989.79-117, at 117); however, since the literal meaning of the expression was widely accepted in Central Asia as in other parts of the Muslim World in the 19th and early 20th centuries, we follow that interpretation for the time being.

¹⁰ Voll, "Renewal and Reform...", 33.

In 1915, Behbūdī published an article in *Ā'ina* in which he dealt with the difficulties that Muslim students faced when living in St. Petersburg or other Russian towns. One of their main problems apparently resulted from food guidelines. A widely held belief among Behbūdī's fellow countrymen was that Muslims were not supposed to eat meat which had been slaughtered by non-Muslims.¹¹ Behbūdī continuously exhorted his fellow-Muslims to make use of the study facilities offered by the Russian state; but how could they possibly live in a Russian milieu where there was nothing appropriate for them to eat? Behbūdī selected a *ḥadīṭ* which he interpreted in the following manner. When the Prophet was asked whether meat slaughtered by neighboring infidels (*mushrik*) was permissible for his followers, he encouraged the Muslims to help themselves *after saying* "*bismillāhi r-rahmāni r-rahīm*". Behbūdī interpreted the *ḥadīṭ* as implying that food which might otherwise not be permissible for Muslim consumption could be eaten without any problem if the meal was preceded by the *basmala* formula.¹²

Since early times slaughtering has been a favorite subject of controversy between followers of tradition (*taqlīd*) and individuals aspiring to *ijtihād*. At its core it concerns the vital issue of Muslims and non-Muslims living together, and thus has much broader implications going beyond questions of diet.¹³ Behbūdī held a liberal position that favored acculturation. So for the sake of progress in his *millat*, he pushed for liberal legislation, for example in the slaughtering issue. He resorted to *ijtihād*—at least that is what he was promptly accused of by more traditionalist circles.¹⁴ Being ac-

¹¹ Obviously, this opinion was not in accordance with canonical law, see below.

¹² "Taḥsīl va safar zamāni va ta'ām" (The times of study and travel, and food), *Ā'ina* 10.1915.242-248, at 246-247.

¹³ Richard Foltz: "Ecumenical Mischief Under the Mongols", *Central Asiatic Journal* 43.1.1999.42-69 at 59; Michael Kemper: *Sufis und Gelehrte in Tatarien und Baschkirien, 1789-1889. Der islamische Diskurs unter russischer Herrschaft*, Berlin 1998; 289sqq.

¹⁴ The author of a response to Behbūdī's article, which was published in the traditionalist Tashkent journal *Al-Islāh* (Mullā Muḥammad Rasūl Rasūli: "Kutulmagan talqīn", 9.1915.260-26 and 10.297-299), suggested that Behbūdī had given a *fatwā* whose basis, namely his understanding of the *ḥadīṭ*, was wrong and not in accordance with canonical interpretations. Therefore, Behbūdī's effort was vain

cused of claiming the right to *ijtihād* could have been dangerous for a Central Asian Muslim in 1915: even most Jadidis would refrain from such a claim, since in the public discourse of the day claiming the right to *ijtihād* and thus rejecting the authority of Abū Ḥanīfa and his law school was tantamount to Wahhabism. Maḥmūd Khoja Behbūdī repeatedly rejected accusations claiming that he or any other Jadidist teacher or writer had slandered the Imām-i Aʿẓam.¹⁵ However, no matter what wording Behbūdī ultimately found to justify deriving an independent legal opinion on *dabḥ* directly from the *ḥadīth*, he had actually applied the method of *ijtihād*, which places him in the centuries old “reformist tradition” (*tajdīd*) within Islam.

Prominent *mujaddid* figures of the past obviously greatly interested those Muslims of the Russian Empire who pursued the ideals of enlightenment. From 1911 to 1915 the Orenburg journal *Shūrā* published lengthy articles on Ibn Taimiyya, the *mujaddid* of the 8th century of the Hījra,¹⁶ on the Wahhābī movement, and on Muḥammad al-Sanūsī and his followers. Since many Central Asian intellectuals read *Shūrā* (and actively contributed to it), we may assume they were well informed about all those individuals and movements of fundamentalist inspiration, who had called for *ijtihād* on a personal level and on a political level had preached *jihād*. Perhaps they even shared *Shūrā*’s obvious admiration for them.¹⁷ Many reformist Central Asians were ready for *jihād* at least when it was directed against the Muslim religious establishment whom the Jadidis regarded as corrupt.¹⁸ The reformists’ tool was

in many respects (*muḥarrir janāblarining [...] ijtiḥādлари bir necha vajhdan bātildur*). In a vigorous response, Behbūdī in his turn underlined that he by no means aspired to *ijtihād*, but of course, as any good Muslim would have done, simply resorted to the Koran and Sunna for guidance (“Dafʿ-i taʿarruz va shubha-i ajnabi taʿām haqqinda”, *Āʿina* 15.1915.411-416 at 414).

¹⁵ “Haqqsiz hujūm maqālasi haqqinda”, *Āʿina* 8.1915.187-190; 188.

¹⁶ For a description of similar interest in Ibn Taimiyya elsewhere in the Muslim World, cf. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami: “The Impact of Ibn Taimiyya on South Asia”, *Journal of Islamic Studies* 1.1990.120-149; 120.

¹⁷ Of course they may well have been acquainted with other books on these individuals that were published at the beginning of the 20th century in Istanbul, Bulaq, and elsewhere, but we have no proof of this.

¹⁸ For a discussion of *jihād* against Muslims, cf. Dominique Urvoy: “La polémi-

the pen rather than the gun, although at times even the pen was powerless, since the Russian administration prevented Jadidis as well as their opponents from attacking each other¹⁹ and censorship did not allow violent verbal assaults on the 'ulamā' to be published in the Central Asian press.²⁰

The position of Central Asian Jadidi intellectuals on *jihād* as a struggle against the non-Muslim authority was even more difficult, since the Tsarist administration watched their activities closely. Munavvar Qārī, one of those perceived as most europeanized or tatarized among prominent Jadidis, was very critical of the imperial authorities from his early years. Unlike other modernists he made no great attempt to conceal this and was thus well-known to the authorities.²¹ He had advocated the introduction of *uṣūl-i ṣavtiya* schools which he believed should be preferred over the Russian-Native schools right from the beginning of the century. In his view there was no hope that the imperial power would ever strive sincerely for an improvement of the Muslims' deplorable condition.²² When finally prosecuted by the Soviet authorities in the late 1920s, Munavvar Qārī was quoted as admitting that overthrowing Tsarist rule in Central Asia had always been one of his political aims.²³ I find it difficult to judge how much actual anti-

que autour de l'assimilation par l'orthodoxie de pratiques non islamiques", *Studia Islamica* 68.1988.129-146.

¹⁹ For example the administration interfered when in early 1914 one *mu'addin* from Samarkand accused Jadidis (and all those who sent their children to New Method schools) of apostasy, which in turn implied that their wives should be divorced and they themselves killed. (A report on these events is found in *Ā'ina* 12.1914.295, with comments in nos. 13 and 15 of the same year.)

²⁰ Right from the earliest days of an autochthonous Turkestan press, in mid-1906, the authorities closely watched all anti-clerical statements, cf. Alexandre Bennigsen, Chantal Lemerrier-Quelquejay: *La presse et le mouvement national chez les Musulmans de Russie avant 1920*, Paris 1964: 163.—Self-censorship to the same effect was exercised, e.g., by the traditionalist reformist Tashkent journal *Al-Islāh*, which anyway would side with the 'ulamā' in most controversies (cf. an exhortation to would-be contributors by the editor, 1.1915: 32).

²¹ Cf. Sherali Turdiev: "Rol' Rossii v podavlenii dzhadidskogo dvizheniia (po materialam arkhiva SNB Uzbekistana)", *Central'naya Aziya* 1(13).1998.132-146: 135sq.).

²² Bennigsen/Lemerrier-Quelquejay, 161, quoting from *Taraqyī* (1906).

²³ Cf. J. Yūldoshev, S. Hasanov: *Jadīd tarbiyashunosligi asoslari*, Toshkent 1994, 44, quoting from *Qizil Ūzbekiston*, 7 June, 1927.

Tsarist action, which might be called *jihād*, he had been involved in, since these confessions were probably made under pressure. However, it is clear that Munavvar Qārī would not credit Russian-dominated institutions with any efforts in favor of Central Asians—why else would he (most probably on Tatar advice) have advocated sending young Central Asian pupils and students to Turkey and Germany for education rather than to Russia, and the opening of a Muslim Section within the People's University of Tashkent.²⁴ While Munavvar Qārī was reluctant to entrust the education of Muslim youth to any institution run by the imperial administration, his fellow editor on the newspaper *Ṣadā-yi Turkistān*, 'Ubayd-ulla As'adulla Khojaev, had himself graduated from the Saratov law school, a fact which allowed him to engage in the anti-imperialist struggle.²⁵ A number of Jadidis were willing to accept whatever educational facilities and access to modern communication the Tsarist authorities would grant them, in order to prepare for a kind of *jihād* which might be subversive rather than overt. Even as late as the years of the First World War, Behbūdī was still exhorting his fellow countrymen to make their sons study at Russian *gimnazii*s and at the university of St. Petersburg, so that they could subsequently take up government positions from where they might serve their *millat* best.

Participation in legislation—there were two Turkestani delegates to the 2nd Duma (1907)²⁶—and in the capitalist economy would have been essential for any effective anti-imperialist struggle. Scholars of Islamic modernism elsewhere in the Muslim World have suggested that over the 19th century the modernist focus of interest shifted from intellectual and spiritual issues to the economy and to political participation.²⁷ Central Asian Muslim modernists entered the stage only well after this change of paradigms had already occurred elsewhere—even within the ranks of

²⁴ Yūldoshev/Hasanov, 46sq.

²⁵ Some documents testifying to this struggle from 1909 onwards have been published by Shukrullo in *Tirik ruhlar* (Tashkent 1999).

²⁶ Dilyara Usmanova: *Musul'manskaia frakciia i problemy "svobody sovesti" v gosudarstvennoi dume Rossii (1906-1917)*, Kazan' 1999; 128sqq.

²⁷ Fazlur Rahman: "Islamic Modernism: Its Scope, Method and Alternatives", *IJMES* 1.1970.317-333; 317.

the relatively progressive neighboring Tatar intellectuals. It seems, however, as if Tashkent and Ferghana reformists had an interest in, and understanding of, the economic and legislative aspects of reform right from the beginning of the 20th century, and even thinkers less influenced by the highly politicised Tatars caught up very quickly. In 1904 Maḥmūd Khoja Behbūdī was still publishing loyal and positive articles such as one saying that the Turkestanis had been exempt from military service only under Russian rule. At the same time crafts and business were flourishing and population numbers were increasing, all of which he judged to be important indicators of a national well-being that the Muslims could thank the Russian Empire for.²⁸ This stance of preferring infidel yet modern foreign rule to that of an unjust and backward Muslim sovereign was not unparalleled in the Muslim World, and it had been adopted by a number of intellectuals in the Ottoman Empire and India in the 19th century. However, it did not take Behbūdī too long to realize what kind of devastating effect Russian colonial rule would have in the long run on the Central Asian economy, especially on craftsmanship, and that the ultimate goal of all imperial rule was to undermine national unity among the governed population. The close connection between economics and modernist politics was also underlined by the young ‘Abdurra’ūf Fiṭrat from Bukhara. Fiṭrat shared Behbūdī’s dislike for autochthonous autocracy. However, right at the beginning of his publishing activity he had pointed out that the struggle for enlightenment had to be combined with an equally fierce struggle against imperial and colonial rule.²⁹ Indeed, by 1917 most Jadidis would rally to the autonomist movement, and some of them would continue to support the *jihād* for national liberation, with clearly religious overtones, until the final extinction of the *Basmachi* movement.

²⁸ "Pis'mo iz Samarkanda", pt. 1 published in the official newspaper *Turkistān Vilāyatining Gazeti* 24.1904, pt. 2 in 25.1904.

²⁹ Behbūdī in *Taraqqī* 7.1906: "Va illā Āvrūpa ashyā'-i nafisasi kasabalarimizni va Āvrūpā siyāsīlari vujudimizni būlib yubāradilar" ("Otherwise Europe's fine products will cut our craftsmen to pieces and Europe's politicians will split our body/existence up"; text quoted from Yūldoshev/Hasanov, 39); 'Abdurra'ūf Fiṭrat: *Bayānāt-i sayyāḥ-i Hindī*, 1911, 18.

There is yet another aspect of internal *jihād* which needs to be taken into consideration when talking about Turkestanian modernists. Their pious effort manifested itself in a constant struggle against the ills of their own community, ills which were inherent in the inappropriate cultic practice of religious dignitaries such as *eshāns*, and the “idleness” of the mystics. As I have said, the Tsarist authorities would not permit severe attacks against the establishment of Muslim learned men (*‘ulamā’*), but they did not offer such protection to the leading figures of the mystic communities (*tarīqāt*), let alone to mystics of lower ranks. While such figures as Nikolai Ostroumov, who propagated Tsarist policy among those locals willing to co-operate, constantly sought to be on good terms with the *‘ulamā’* whom they regarded as a stabilizing factor in the community, they did not depend on any cooperation from the mystics. Imperial history from the 1870s to 1916 taught that spiritual leaders, who could rely on strong and ample personal networks, were the only possible threat to Tsarist rule in Central Asia. There is good reason to believe that Russian state officials were not averse to the idea that the Jadidis would fight the Sufi brotherhoods relentlessly, albeit for entirely different reasons from their own. Thus, the denunciation of mystics and spiritual leaders, often in the guise of lamentation and admonition, made up a large portion of Jadidi writing and went unchecked. Newspapers and journals abound with articles highlighting what their authors would call *bid‘at*, i.e. illicit innovation that contaminated the *sunna* of the Prophet.

The abolition of *bid‘at* had been a major preoccupation of Muslim reformers throughout the centuries. This endeavor is purist and regressive in nature, since its method is *ishlāh*, ‘repair’ of the present in order to reestablish what is perceived to be the better condition of the past. Even those reformist movements that did not in principle reject mysticism as a source of spiritual enlightenment understood fighting *bida‘*—which they associated with certain activities of members of mystic orders—as a main duty of their *jihād*.³⁰ Modernist writing from Central Asia is full of expressions

³⁰ Cf. for example Nizami, 136, on Shah Wali Allah and other Indian reformists.

of grief about features of popular religion,³¹ the better part of which they judged to be *bida'* that testified to the people's *jahālat*, 'ignorance', a factor which placed the Central Asian Muslims on the same level as the pagans of pre-revelation *jāhiliyya* and would lead to their extinction (*inqirāz*) unless immediate measures were undertaken.³² Spiritual leaders (*eshān*) who allowed their followers to venerate them, as well as Sufi "saints" who performed miracles during their own lifetimes and who, when dead, were credited with the power to mediate between Muslims in need of help and God, were accused of tempting their followers into *shirk*. Religious officials at holy sites were accused of leading Muslims into *kufr* by the cultic practices they made them perform. There is no need to quote specific texts of this kind: almost every single issue of every reformist newspaper and journal contains shorter or longer contributions on this subject. The authorities did not interfere although, as can easily be understood, Jadidist attacks provoked equally outspoken counter-attacks, the outcome of which was unrest among the people. Reformists who rejected local Islam ran the risk of arousing suspicions that they adhered to the fundamentalist *mu'tazila*, or were at least Shiites.³³ They were sometimes even called "Wahhabis". Yet, however fiercely the Jadidis may have rejected popular cults, they never went so far as the actual Wahhabis of Arabia. One example may suffice to illustrate the difference in character between Central Asian reformism and fundamentalism of the Wahhabi brand.

One of the most conspicuous measures taken by the purist Wahhabis of the Hijaz against what they considered to be *bid'at* was to pull down the mausolea of members of the Prophet's family and his *ṣaḥābagān* and to lay waste the cemeteries of Madina.

³¹ Compare John O. Voll's definition of the fundamentalist as a person for whom any compromise with local religion is tantamount to polytheism ("The Evolution of Islamic Fundamentalism in Twentieth-Century Sudan", *Islam, Nationalism, and Radicalism in Egypt and the Sudan*, ed. Gabriel R. Warburg, Uri M. Kupferschmidt, New York 1983, 113-142; 115sq.).

³² A typical example of this writing is a letter by one Faḡlullāh Junichī from Yarkand, published in *Turkistān Vilāyatining Gazeti* 38 and 39.1905. On the Central Asian Jadidis' preoccupation with *inqirāz*, cf. Khalid, *The Politics...*, 201.

³³ Cf. complaint by a reader from Alma Ata in *Shūrā* 5.1912.153.

According to Wahhabi ideology, the *sunna* of the Prophet demanded giving no special regard to a person's grave, no matter whose. They argued further that any maintenance of a burial site would sooner or later develop into a cult around the personality of the interred, which in its turn would be *shirk*, polytheism. Such extreme scrupulousness was totally alien to Central Asian reformist thought. In fact, exactly the opposite was the case: contributors to *Ā'ina* repeatedly called upon their fellow countrymen to "put their cemeteries in order", meaning the need to tidy up those burial grounds which were misused as sheepmarkets, *buzkashi* grounds, or depositories for litter and animal corpses, and to fence them in properly and to tend the graves. The Russian Muslim press joined in the lamentation over the state of Turkestani graveyards; from 1911 to 1913 the "neglected Turkestani cemetery" was a stereotyped motif in enlightenment poetry published in *Shūrā* and other periodicals.³⁴

Central Asians could have felt good in themselves if comments about their graveyards had been the only thing that Muslim reformists from elsewhere in the Russian Empire said when writing about them. If we are to talk about Central Asian Jadidism's place in worldwide Muslim reformism and modernism, we must also ask what Muslims abroad thought and wrote about the condition of Islam in Central Asia. In short: it was a sad tale that travelers had to tell upon their return from Turkestan and Bukhara. Liberal reformists from the Caucasus and among the Tatars expressed particular concern about local cultic practices, which to their understanding were at best *bid'at* if not *kufr* or *shirk*.³⁵ Even the normally cautious Ismā'il Bey Gasprinskii allowed remarks of that strain to be published in *Terjimān*.³⁶

However harshly local reformists criticised their fellow countrymen's *bida'*, they would have felt insulted if Muslims from abroad commented upon such compromising features of Central Asian

³⁴ "Tashlandyq qabyr", *Shūrā* 21.1912.670-1, and many others.

³⁵ Cf. a letter to the editor of *Turkistān Vilāyatining Gazeti*, written by a Mullah from Namangan, who complained about "Noghays" (i.e., Tatars) accusing Central Asian Muslims of *kufr*.

³⁶ Quoted in an editorial in *Turkistān Vilāyatining Gazeti* 44.1905.

Islam. Nikolai Ostroumov successfully applied the *divide et impera* method by launching a debate after the publication of an article by the famous Petersburg Tatar modernist 'Abdurrashīd Ibrāhīm in the Baku magazine *Hāyāt* in 1905. In this article 'Abdurrashīd Qāzī expressed his sorrow that adherents of Central Asian local Islam were leaving the path of the *sharī'a*. Ostroumov, being a true defender of the imperial cause, knew that he had to fight that nightmare of all foreign rule in the Islamic World, "Pan-Islam".³⁷ When pointing out what he called Tatar, Azerbaijani and Crimean slanders against the Muslims of Central Asia, he not only successfully stirred up resentment among Central Asian Jadidis against their "big brothers" from the Muslim North-West; his remarks also provoked a violent reaction from those Turkestanis who were opposed to the Jadid movement anyway, and who in turn directed their anger primarily against the Central Asian "lackeys of the infidel Noghays."³⁸

In the minds of enlightened Muslims from other regions of Russia, Central Asian Islam was inextricably linked with local cults on the margin of paganism, or traditionalist obscurantism. Only a few isolated individuals, like Gasprinskii, took notice of the reformist and modernist struggle of some Central Asians. On the other hand, the *uṣūl-i ṣavtiya* schools of Tashkent had obviously escaped the notice of 'Abdurrashīd Ibrāhīmof when he visited the town in 1907, hard though this is to believe; nor did he so much as mention the young but existing Jadid press, or welfare organizations. As for the Jadid milieu of Samarkand in early 1908, he praised the efforts of Shakūrī and Behbūdī, whom he named "heroes of the Uzbeks"—but he devoted all of three lines to their

³⁷ On the role of "Pan-Islamism" in the relationship between Russia and Great Britain, cf. Naimur Rahman Farooqi: "Pan-Islamism in the Nineteenth Century", *Islamic Culture* 57(4).1983.283-296.

³⁸ The debate opened in *Turkistān Vilāyatining Gazeti* 44.1905 was continued in 48.1905 and 1.1906 and extended well into 1906. Ostroumov had good reason to try to destroy confidence in 'Abdurrashīd Ibrāhīmof, who on the eve of the 2nd Duma encouraged Central Asian Muslims to fight for civil rights. 'Abdurrashīd Qāzī's writings were well-known in Central Asia, and so was his anti-imperial propaganda (cf. 'Abdurrashīd Ibrāhīm: *Ālem-i Islām*, 2 vols., Istanbul 1328/1911, 1329-32/1915: 1.10sqq.).

activities in his book *‘Ālem-i Islām*, compared with, for example, tens of pages on the modernist movement in Japan.³⁹

One of the few reformists abroad who not only knew the Turkestani and Bukharan Jadidist movement rather well, but also appreciated its struggle and strove for vital contacts with its representatives, was Maḥmūd Ṭarzī from Afghanistan.⁴⁰ Out of all Central Asian Jadidis he seems to have been closest to Maḥmūd Khoja Behbūdī in terms of intellect, socio-cultural thought and the methods of enlightenment which he applied: Ṭarzī like Behbūdī was a passionate enlightener, a person whom we might with justice call the “teacher of his nation”.

I should like to conclude with a few remarks on some “teachers of their nations”, which I believe may reveal a great deal about Central Asian Jadidism within Islamic enlightenment and reformist modernism; they bring us back to the person who served as the starting point of this presentation, Ismā‘il Gasprinskii.

The title of the most touching obituary written on Gasprinskii was *“Berenche moghallym”*, “The First Teacher”.⁴¹ In fact, for the Muslims of the Russian Empire Gasprinskii laid the basis of modern schooling when in 1884 he published his *Khoja-i Šibyān* followed by the teachers’ guide *Rehber-i Mu‘allim*. Elsewhere in the Muslim World modern pedagogics had been introduced well before that time. In the Turkish regions of the Ottoman Empire, Aḥmed Midḥat had published a primer *Khāje-i evvel* in 1868, which was to earn him the honorary title of “First Teacher” among his

³⁹ *‘Ālem-i Islām*, 22. When in 1908 Zāhir Bigīyef published a report on his 1893 trip to Central Asia (Mōḥammād Zāhir Bigīyef: *Māvarā’ōnnāhrdā sāyāhat. Trānsoksānyāyā sāfār*, Kazan’ 1908), he did not find it necessary to update information on the existing state of schools and learning in Samarkand, but stuck to the opinion that there had been no attempt at reform either of *maktabs* or of *madrasas* up to that time (98). Through their extensive travels to Istanbul, Egypt, the Hijaz, India and Russia (Cf. Khalid, *The Politics ...*, 190sq.) some Central Asian Jadidis may have had personal networks, even extensive ones; however, this did not show in the writings of their fellow modernists abroad.

⁴⁰ May Shinasi: *Afghanistan at the beginning of the twentieth century: Nationalism and journalism in Afghanistan. A study of Serāj ul-akhbār (1911-1918)*, Naples 1979; Vartan Gregorian: *The emergence of modern Afghanistan: Politics of reform and modernisation, 1880-1946*, Stanford 1969, 162sqq.; several entries by Behbūdī in *Ā‘ina*, 1913 and 1914.

⁴¹ Hādī Maqsūdi in *Yoldyz*, 14 September 1914.

fellow countrymen.⁴² While Gasprinskii's primer and his model school in Baghchesarai had an enormous influence on Muslims all over Russia, and Ahmed Midhat's primer was re-issued twice in the two years following its initial publication, primers written by Central Asian enlighteners, among them those by Behbūdī, barely made it out of the classrooms of their authors⁴³—whether because of the distribution deficiencies of the inexperienced Central Asian book market or because of their lack of quality.⁴⁴

According to enlighteners, learning was a lifelong experience and schooling was not to be confined solely to children's classrooms. Adult education demanded its own medium, and the "teachers of their nations" resorted to the press for that purpose. The journal *Ā'ina* was Behbūdī's podium from which he read lessons to his adult pupils, covering a spectrum of subjects ranging from archaeology, geography, and hygiene to history, banking, and meteorology. These articles were informative, but they were presented without any systematic or "scientific" approach. Much the same mode of piling up "useful" materials in an unsystematic manner had been applied from the early 1870s onward by the Tatar "first teacher"⁴⁵ and "teacher of his nation", 'Abdōlqayyūm an-Naṣīrī, in his popular calendars⁴⁶; by Maḥmūd Ṭarzī in his journal *Sirāj ul-Akhhbār* (1911-18); and much earlier, yet in a definitive manner, by Ahmed Midhat in his journals *Daghariyyq* ('Pouch', 'Bag', 1871-73) and *Qırqanbar* (1874-77), which means 'Magazine'—in the sense of 'storehouse' or 'warehouse' as well as 'journal', and last but not least 'magazine' in the sense of 'a room for

⁴² As Hasan-āli Yücel puts it: "[Ahmed Midhat] ne bir Üstad-i âzam, ne bir Üstad-i ekrem, ne bir Şair-i âzam, ne bir Dehâ-i mücessem olmadı. O sadece bir Hâce-i evveldi. Daima öğrendi ve durmadan öğgretti. Bir fikir adamı için bundan büyük mazhariyet olur mu?" ("Hâce-i Evvel", *Bir Jübilenin intuba'ları* ..., 149-151; 151).

⁴³ Among the Volga Tatars, just as in Central Asia, at the beginning of the century almost every teacher wrote a primer on his own (cf. a review by Mākhbūbōljāmāl Aqchurina in *Māktāb* 2.1913.55-57, and reviews in almost every issue of *Moghallim*, from spring 1913 onwards).

⁴⁴ Adeeb Khalid: "Printing, Publishing, and Reform in Tsarist Central Asia", *IJMES* 26.1994.187-200, at 195.

⁴⁵ *Berenche uchitel'*, cf. Gabdrakhman Sagdi: *Tatar ādābiyatı tarikhe*, Kazan 1926, 43.

⁴⁶ 24 issues starting from early 1871.

storing explosives'. Regardless of shortcomings in journalistic excellence, all of these publications could have served the purpose of providing information and education—if only the public had accepted them. Ottoman journals had already managed to find a readership of sorts from the 1870s onwards; *Sirāj ul-Akhhbār*, although little demanded by the public, continued in existence, because state officials were obliged to subscribe to it; *Ā'ina*, however, was closed down after only one and a half years, *mushtarisiz matā' zāyi'dir* ("Products which find no buyer go to waste"), as Behbūdī put it. Thus Behbūdī lost his adult classroom for the sciences, although he continued to teach morals and ethics, which had also been among his favorite subjects in *Ā'ina*, in the classroom for illiterates, i.e., on the stage.

The "teacher of his nation" was obviously an important figure in Muslim enlightenment modernism. Gasprinskii's enormous success resulted from the excellent timing of his publications, and from Ismā'il Bey's being familiar with European pedagogics, mass media and technology.⁴⁷ *Terjimān* was founded when the Muslims of Central Russia and the Caucasus were just about to awaken from their *khāb-i ghaflat* and they needed a transmitter of modern knowledge and modernist thought. Along with *usūl-i jadida*, the newspaper earned Gasprinskii a prominent position among Russian Muslims that he held until his death, although the "first teacher's" reputation suffered somewhat when he failed to associate himself with the political developments after the turn of the century. Aḥmed Midḥat, although an excellent popularizer of science, ultimately failed because the development of Ottoman society overtook him in too many respects.⁴⁸

Behbūdī and Ṭarzī's oeuvre—and the works of many other Central Asian Jadidis, for that matter—are a fascinating blend of centuries-old Muslim reformist discourse and modernist enlighten-

⁴⁷ I cannot dwell here on what is perhaps the most important reason for his success, the supra-regional koine which he chose, or invented, for his writings.

⁴⁸ Interestingly enough, his most faithful admirers up to his death in late 1912, two years before Gasprinskii, were Muslims from Russia (see for example an obituary for Midḥat Efendi by Fäṭikh Kārimī, one of Gasprinskii's earliest adepts: Fäṭikh Kārimof: *Istanbul Mäktublary*, Orenburg 1913, 152).

ment debate, and many Jadidis did not in fact mingle in socio-political affairs. Although they may have lagged behind in almost every respect, when compared to Muslim modernists elsewhere in the world, they came early, or rather too early, for their own Central Asian society. In their *ijtihād* in Islamic legal matters as well as in their striving for repair and reform (*islāh*) of virtually all aspects of Muslim life, as well as in their struggle for the modernization of society (*tanẓīmāt*), their success was limited, and on Soviet territory it came to an end when all action legitimized by an Islamic Weltanschauung was devalued from the early 1920s on. The rest of the Muslim world has hardly taken notice of Central Asian Jadidism. It is high time for historians to secure its place at least on scholarly grounds.