

## THE TRENDS OF THOUGHT AMONG THE TATARS AND BASHKIRS: RELIGIOUS REFORMISM AND SECULAR JADIDISM VS. QADIMISM (1883-1910)

### TATARLAR VE BAŞKURLAR ARASINDA DÜŞÜNCE AKIMLARI: DİNÎ ISLAHÇILIK, CEDİTÇİLİK VE KADİMCİLİK

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#### ABSTRACT

This document examines the late nineteenth to early twentieth century, comparing the three major trends of Islamic thought among the Tatars and Bashkirs. Usually, the focus is entirely on the Jadidists and their program of reform. However, what has been neglected is the character of opposition from the traditionalist ulema, who were known as Qadimists. Therefore, this survey first characterizes the divergent lines within the Jadidists (that is, revivalist and secular approaches). It argues that the Jadidists displayed divergent views regarding the nature and degree of change to revitalize their society. In order to get a more balanced understanding of their conflict, the research goes on to seek the voice of the traditionalist Tatars.

**Key Words:** Jadidism, Qadimism, Religious Reformism, Volga Tatars, Bashkirs

#### ÖZET

Bu makale, XIX. Yüzyılın sonu ile XX. Yüzyılın başı arasında Tatarlar ve Başkurtlar arasındaki düşünce akımlarını incelemektedir. Bu konudaki çalışmalar genellikle Ceditçiler ve onların programları üzerinde yoğunlaşmakta, onları aynı düşünce kalıbı içinde değerlendirmekte ve Kadimciler olarak bilinen muhafazakâr muhalefetin mahiyetini gözardı etmektedir. Dolayısıyla, bu çalışma ilk olarak Ceditçi olarak bilinen reformcu Tatarlar arasındaki anlayış farklarını (yani dinî islahçılar ve laik reformcuların yaklaşımlarını) karakterize edecektir; toplumun ne derece ve ne yönde değişmesi gerektiği konusunda bu iki grup arasında derin ayrılıkların olduğu görülmektedir. İkinci olarak, Ceditçi-Kadimci veya terakkiperver-muhafazakâr çatışmasının niteliğini daha iyi anlayabilmek için, araştırma Kadimcilerin görüşlerini ve tepkilerini onların kaynaklarına da dayanarak ortaya koymaya çalışacaktır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Ceditçilik, Kadimcilik, Dinî Islahçılık, Kazan Tatarları, Başkurtlar

Although relatively many works are devoted to the studies of the Tatar Jadidism, its definition and scope still remain problematic. There are still questions to be answered: How can we characterize the Tatar Jadidists? To what extent did the revivalist and the secular Jadidists overlap and at what points do they differ? To what extent do we know about the "Qadimists"? This paper, therefore, aims at developing in greater detail the differences among the reformed and traditional

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Tatar leadership. Usually, the focus is entirely on the Jadidists, their new schools and their adopting of Russian language and Russian thought. What has been neglected is the character of opposition from the traditionalist ulema who were known as Qadimists.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, this survey first tries to examine the divergent lines within the Jadidists; then, it continues to seek the voice of the traditionalist Tatars.

In order to understand the conflict better, one is required to take a closer look at the developments at the turn of the twentieth century and their pressure over the Muslims of Russia. A dramatic change of mentality and diversion was taking place among the Tatar educated class from 1880s to the early years of the following century. The number of Tatars and Bashkir students who were educated in European type of schools increased. These students formed the base of the secular Tatar intelligentsia at the turn of the century. Certainly the European types of schools helped to introduce new ways of thinking. The ulema, on the other hand, were anxious of these developments; they were worrying that these changes would cause the loss of Muslim identity. This pushed them to a more conservative situation.

Likewise the ulema, the new generation of the Tatar educated class also felt the pressure of changes surrounding the Muslims of Russia. Tatar reformists like Ismail Gaspirali (Gasprinski, 1851-1914) and Yusuf Akçura (1876-1936) were feeling the threat facing the Muslims of Russia in the period. Especially after 1880s, the economic situation of the Volga Tatars was deteriorating; trade between Volga Tatars and Central Asia was decreasing and, as a result, Tatar merchants' revenue gradually decreased. European goods were entering into the markets of Bukhara and Caucasia and driving out the local products. Unless they took necessary precautions immediately, Muslims would lose the remaining trade and industry they already had. The other threat for Tatars and Bashkirs was the Slavic waves that surrounded them. Gaspirali's project for unifying Turkic languages came out of this threat. He thought if Turkic peoples could not establish a common literary language and culture, they would face a dark future.

Both Gaspirali and Akçura believed that the reason for the economic decline was closely connected with the backwardness in intellectual development. The Muslims of Russia were still under the influence of the medieval type of Bukharan madrasahs. Bukhara was far from Europe and their people were unaware of the changes and intellectual transformation happening in Europe. Therefore, thoughts coming from Bukhara to the Muslims of Crimea and Volga basin were no longer satisfying the needs of modern minds. One precaution

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<sup>1</sup> A recent study shifted the focus on traditionalist Muslim point of view. See: Stéphane A. Dudoignon, "Qadimiya as a Historiographical Category: The Question of Social and Ideological Cleavages between 'Reformists' and 'Traditionalists' among the Muslims of Russia and Central Asia in the Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century", in *Reform Movements and Revolutions in Turkestan: 1900-1924*, (Ed.) Timur Kocaoğlu (Haarlem: SOTA, 2001), pp. 159-178. See also: Adeeb Khalid, *The Politics of Muslim Cultural Reform: Jadidism in Central Asia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998). Both Dudoignon and Adeeb Khalid regard the general rejection of the reformism of the Qadimists in favor of Jadidists as extreme, or at least biased.

Gaspirali proposed was to reform educational system immediately. His educational activities expanded rapidly to include the whole life style of the Muslims of Russia. Gaspirali thought that Muslim youth should study every aspect of life and science. He strongly believed that the Muslims of Russia should be Westernized without losing their identity. By doing that they could secure their life and future.<sup>2</sup> He urged that Muslims should learn the Russian language not only as a means for acquiring European knowledge, but also to integrate Muslims into the economic and political life of the Russian Empire.

At the turn of the twentieth century, the Muslims of Russia were still a strongly religious community, to a degree of fanaticism at some extent. Gaspirali was well aware of this fact and before publishing *Terjuman* newspaper, he went to Kazan, the center of Tatar culture, to consult with the ulema and get their support.<sup>3</sup> Almost all ulema discouraged him saying he was pursuing a useless goal. They told him that publishing a newspaper was a Russian thing and nothing but a waste of time. The only Muslim scholar who encouraged him was Shihâbeddin Merjani (1818-1889), a leading progressive figure among the Kazan Tatars.<sup>4</sup> Indeed, Merjani's support was quite important for the movement.<sup>5</sup> Thus, in a short time, the power of Jadidists increased tremendously. Akçura pointed out that this was due to Merjani and his disciples' joining to the movement.<sup>6</sup>

Meanwhile, towards the end of the nineteenth century, two important developments were taking place for the Muslims of Russia: First, Tatar students shifted their attention from the madrasahs of Bukhara. Second, there was a Salafi influence coming from Egypt and Hijaz in Arabia. Earlier, Bukhara and Samarkand had a tremendous impact over the Volga region; the Tatar and Bashkir students formed their educational and intellectual life on the traditional models of Bukhara and Samarkand. Tatar merchants traveled between the Volga-Ural region and Central Asia. Tatar youth traveled with the caravans because they were eager to learn from the famous madrasahs of Bukhara and Samarkand. However, after 1890, the Volga Muslims increasingly began to distance themselves from Bukhara.

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<sup>2</sup> Yusuf Akçura, "Rusyada Sâkin Türklerin Hayât-ı Medeniye, Fikriye ve Siyasiyelerine Dair", *Sırât-ı Müstakîm* (Istanbul), Vol. 2, No. 39, (21 May 1325 [1909]), p. 202.

<sup>3</sup> Historian Z. Velidi Togan claimed that Gaspirali was critical about Islam until the turn of the century. In 1881, in his treatise, Gaspirali wrote that the reason for the backwardness of the Muslims of Russia was not only Islam but, probably more than that, ignorance as well. However, later on, Gaspirali gradually shifted to Islamism and fell into the path of conservatism. Z. Velidi Togan, *Bugünkü Türkîli (Türkistan) ve Yakın Tarihi*, (Istanbul: Enderun Kitabevi, 1981), p. 561.

<sup>4</sup> Merjani encouraged Ismail Gasprinski with these words: "Dear Sir, you initiated a very important thing that leads the way for our progress. May God help you! Do not turn away what you are attempting, because its future would be good." Habibü'n-Neccar ibn Molla Muhammed Kâfî, "Medhal," *Mârjâni*, Salih b. Sabit Ubeydullin (Ed.), (Kazan: Maarif Matbaası, 1915), p. 455.

<sup>5</sup> Yusuf Akçura, "Rusyada Sâkin Türklerin Hayât-ı Medeniye, Fikriye ve Siyasiyelerine Dair", p. 203.

<sup>6</sup> On Merjani see; Michael Kemper, *Sufis und Gelehrte in Tatarien und Baschkirien, 1789-1889: Der Islamische Diskurs unter russischer Herrschaft* (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 1998), pp. 429-465; Michael Kemper, "Shihabaddin", *Muslim Culture in Russia and Central Asia from the 18th to the Early 20th Centuries*, (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 1998), pp. 129-166; Ahmet Kanlıdere, "Mercânî, Şihâbeddin (1818-1889)", *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi*, Vol. 29, (Istanbul: TDV, 2005), pp. 169-172.

A parallel development was the interruption of economic relationship between the Volga Tatars and Central Asians. After the Russian Empire took over the Central Asian lands, the Russians themselves entered these markets. The need for the Tatar intermediaries declined and they were gradually excluded from Central Asia.<sup>7</sup> Following this economic isolation from Central Asia, the cultural and educational links of the Volga Tatars decreased gradually.<sup>8</sup> In other words, while the Tatar merchants directed themselves toward the Russian markets, the literary elite shifted their attention toward Russian cities as well.

There were Tatar students attending Russian schools. Some of these schools were at the level of European schools. However, students attending these schools were losing their Tatar identity and culture. As a Jadidist author put it, "the fruits of Tatar Teachers' College in Kazan were too sweet to eat".<sup>9</sup> For this reason, Muslim youth of Russia turned their attention to the Ottoman schools.<sup>10</sup> Their very identity as Muslims attracted them to where they could maintain the cultural solidarity. Under these various influences, the Tatar intellectual leadership developed basically three kinds of responses to the challenge of modernization: 1. Religious reformism; 2. Secular Jadidism; 3. Traditionalist (Qadimist) reaction.

### The Religious Reformism

At the turn of the century, there was a strong body of Islamic reformers in the Volga-Ural region. The revivalist reformism was initiated by a small group of Tatar theologians; it was a movement of purification within Islam. This religious reformism continued as a divergent line within the progressive/Jadidist movement. Although secular and religious reformers share a desire for the transformation of their society, religious reformers reflected a different tendency in their outlook and educational backgrounds. The ideal model for Tatar religious reformers were the belief and practices of early Muslims (the Salaf). Superficially, they became acquainted with Western ideas, and even admired some of them, but rather than adopting these ideas, they preferred to look for the equivalent thoughts within Islamic tradition. The reforms they advocated were not limited to education and religious thinking, but also included such aspects of social life as an increase in the status of women and reforming Islamic law and economy; but still they thought of such reforms within Islamic framework. They were educated in Muslim traditional schools (*madrassahs*). Within the later generation, there were some who knew Russian but none knew Western European languages. Despite this, through their contact with Russian milieu, the religious reformers came into contact with a broader

<sup>7</sup> Michael Kemper, *Sufis und Gelehrte in Tatarien und Baschkirien, 1789-1889*, pp. 360-61.

<sup>8</sup> Bekir Çobanzade, *Dinî Islâhât wâ Mâdânî İnqilâb*, (Aqmâsjid: Qırım Dâvlât Nâshriyâtı, 1927), pp. 54-55.

<sup>9</sup> Troyskili Ahmed Tâceddin, "Tashîh-i Efkâr: Orenburg'da Münteşir Din ve Maişet Mecellesine", *Sirât-ı Müstakîm* (Istanbul), Vol. 3, No. 66, (November 1325), p. 220.

<sup>10</sup> Yusuf Akçura claimed that the despotic regime of Sultan Abdulhamid II closed that door to the Muslims of Russia until the Second Constitutional Period (1908). Akçuraoğlu Yusuf, "Rusyada Sâkin Türklerin Hayât-ı Medeniye, Fikriye ve Siyasiyelerine Dair", pp. 201-202.

Western culture. These contacts awakened an admiration for Western institutions and values as well as a wish to see these developments in their own society. However, while they desired Western knowledge and techniques, they did not want to Westernize Tatar society but to help it to regain what they believed to be the high cultural level of early Islamic centuries.

Tatar religious reformers thought that the backwardness of Muslim societies was the result of a misunderstanding of "true" Islam. They believed in returning to what they saw as the purity of faith and dynamism of the Salaf (the most eminent representatives of the earliest Islamic community). According to these reformers, the Salaf ulema were original and liberal in thinking while the subsequent (*mutaakkhkirîn*) ulema were imitators; the *mutaakkhkirîn* caused a doctrinal anarchy in Muslim belief system by introducing foreign philosophical speculations. On the other hand, reformers argued that the interpretations of the Salaf scholars, such as Imam Ahmed b. Hanbel (780-855), Malik ibn Anas (c. 711-795), al-Shafi'î (767-820) and Abû Hanîfa (699-766), were frozen and transformed into strict formulations, thereby imprisoned the minds of Muslims within certain religious interpretations. The Tatar religious reformers tried to break these strict forms, and thus, aimed at opening the way to modern solutions for contemporary problems. With that sort of approach, these reformers had parallel thoughts with the Salafism.

Especially after 1890s, the flowing of the Salafi ideas from the Middle East was accelerated because of the development of printing press. Also, the travel of Tatar students to Damascus, Beirut, Cairo and Hijaz increased their exposure to the Salafi thought. Like the Salafi reformers of Egypt, Tatar ulema criticized the teaching of Muslim scholastic theology (*Kalâm*) in madrasahs, believing that it is a philosophical current that caused contamination of the pure doctrine of Islam. Therefore, instead of scholastic theology, they said, Muslims should address themselves toward a direct analysis of the Qur'an.

The Tatar religious reformers believed the place of scientific culture had been occupied exclusively by theological questions and that this caused decline and corruption in the Islamic educational system. They especially attacked the teaching of *Kalâm* (Muslim dogmatic theology) and tried to remove *Kalâm* from the curriculum of madrasahs. They opposed it because they believed that *Kalâm* scholars had corrupted the purity of Islam. They thought *Kalâm* prevented Muslims from the direct study of the Qur'an and the Sunna. They also believed that the time-consuming and impractical disputations of *Kalâm* made educational studies pedantic.

With their further criticism of *taqlid* ("imitation", following the precepts by the established Muslim schools of theology), the Tatar reformers were not bringing a new approach to Islam, but rather reintroducing a well-known Islamic trend into their Tatar context. This trend is known as "Traditionalism" or *Salafiyya* in Islamic religious history. The first "Traditionalist" trend, the Sunni theological school of Hanbaliyya, is known for its hostility to the Muslim scholastic theology (*Kalâm*). A typical representative of Tatar religious reformism, Musa Jarullah Bigiev, was strongly against the teaching *Kalâm* at madrassahs and saw

this subject as causing doctrinal anarchy within Islamic teaching.<sup>11</sup> He thought that *Kalâm* was Islamic version of speculative Greek thought and occupied Muslim world as a deadly poison. For that reason, he criticized those Muslim scholars who had shown interest in *Kalâm*, such as al-Ghazali, Ibn Rushd (Averroes), Nasir al-Din al-Tusi, Abu'l-Hasan al-Ash'arî and Jalal al-Din al-Dawani.<sup>12</sup>

In fact, Tatars did not exactly adopt these ideas from the Middle East. They reached a compromise compatible to their own milieu. Reformist Tatar ulema has a characteristic of thought that seems to contradict with their Salafi reformism: They tried to synthesize the mystic dimension of Islam with their Scriptualism. Two things might be effective in these: First, Islamic reform movement in this region was influenced by reformist sufism of India. One of the most important characteristics of this type of reformism was a movement of purification of belief within the Sufi tradition and returning to the original sources.<sup>13</sup> Second, in the region of the Tatars and the Bashkirs, Sufi type of Islam was wide spread and the Salafi reformism had to reconcile with this strong Sufi tradition.

Another characteristic of the Tatar religious reformers was their positive approach toward the Western civilization. They saw Russia and Europe as a model for progress and wanted to learn from the West in order to rise to level of their society. The lack of anti-Western attitude is evident in Merjani's and other Tatar reformers' close friendships with the Orientalists. For example, Rizaeddin b. Fakhreddin expressed his admire for the diligent efforts of Russian Orientalists' translation of major Islamic and Turkic sources. He wished for similar efforts and the establishment of Writer's Association for the Muslims of Russia as well.<sup>14</sup> While he praised the eagerness and endeavor of Orientalist scholars, he criticized the stagnation of Muslim scholars in general; Orientalists were conducting amazing studies such as preparing index for Qur'an and writing on the philosophy of Islamic civilization. Muslim scholars, on the other hand, engaged in pedantic studies such a writing marginal notes (*hâshiya*) and commentaries (*sharh*) on the books of "trifles."<sup>15</sup>

<sup>11</sup> On Musa Jarullah Bigiev, see; Ahmet Kanlıdere, *Kadimle Cedid Arasında Musa Cârullah: Hayatı, Eserleri, Fikirleri*, (Istanbul: Dergâh Yayınları, 2005).

<sup>12</sup> Musa Jarullah Bigiev, *Halq Nazarına Birnichä Mäsälä*, (Kazan: Elektro-tipografiya Umid, 1912), pp. 16-17, p. 30.

<sup>13</sup> See; Hamid Algar, "Shaykh Zaynullah Rasulev: The Last Naqshbandi Shaykh of the Volga-Urals Region", in *Muslims in Central Asia: Expressions of Identity and Change*, Jo-Ann Gross (Ed.), (Durham: Duke University Press, 1992), pp. 112-33.

<sup>14</sup> Rizaeddin b. Fakhreddin, *Abû'l-Alâ al-Ma'arrî*, (Orenburg: Kerimof, Huseynof wä Shuräkäsî Matbaası, 1908), pp. 61-62.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 198-199 and pp. 304-305.

### The Secular Jadidism

Influenced by Western ideas, instead of conceiving themselves only as part of religious community, more and more Muslim intellectuals of Russia began to acquire a Western sense of nationality. At that period, a new generation of Muslim intelligentsia emerged that had secular interests and a better understanding of the Western culture. In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, a liberal and secular tendency, inspired by Ismail Gaspirali, a well known reformer in education, gave Tatar reformism a strong impetus. His "New Method" schools started in 1884, but it is important not to confuse or identify his educational movement with the Tatar reform in general. The New Method was called in Tatar *usûl-i jadid*. From then on, the name "Jadidist" was applied to all reform-minded people. Opponents of *usûl-i Jadid* were called "Qadimist" because of their desire to preserve the old method which was called the *usûl-i Qadim*. Therefore, it would not be proper to use the term "Jadidists" for those who had lived before this term emerged. Religious reformers have also been called Jadidists, but it is open to discussion to what degree this is proper.

Now we must ask: To what extent did the Tatar religious reformers accept the definition of being Jadidists? For example, Musa Jarullah Bigiev did not accept being a Jadidist. He called Jadidism and Qadimism as excesses in one direction and in the other. What he called as Qadimists were those who rejected any kind of reform in madrasahs. He defined Jadidists, on the other hand, as those who gave up reforming madrasahs and defended establishing solely modern institutions instead; they claimed to teach merely the secular subjects in these schools.<sup>16</sup> Therefore, as a defender of reforming madrasahs, Bigiev excluded himself from being Jadidist.<sup>17</sup>

Secular tendency among madrasah students in Kazan became evident in 1906. Under the influence of Socialist thoughts, the students of reformed Muhammediye Madrasah in Kazan found the reforms insufficient and rebelled against the administration of the school. In the eyes of rebellious students, the founder of the madrasah, a leading revivalist scholar, Âlimjan Barudî (1859-1921) became an old-fashioned person. They wanted greater and radical steps toward modernization. Musa Jarullah Bigi tried to keep these students within Islamic framework by seeking for dynamic and revolutionary ideas from Islamic works. He believed that "new thoughts" and "new philosophies" could be found in the Islamic classics.<sup>18</sup> However, his efforts would not stop the decline of Islamic reformism in Volga region. The ideas of Merjani and his disciples were hardly convincing for modern minds. In his later age, Shihâbeddin Merjani (1818-1889) himself noticed loss of interest in theological subjects among his madrasah students.<sup>19</sup> An interesting transformation from being a religious

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<sup>16</sup> Musa Jarullah Bigiev, *el-Luzûmiyyat*, (Kazan: Tipografiya Shâraf, 1907), p. 3.

<sup>17</sup> Musa Jarullah Bigiev, *Halq Nazarına Birnichâ Mäsälâ*, pp. 19-21.

<sup>18</sup> Musa Jarullah Bigiev, *Âdâbiyat-i Arabiyâ ilâ Ulûm-i İslamiyâ*, (Kazan: Lito-tipografiye, [1907?]), pp. 38-39 and p. 66.

<sup>19</sup> A. Lebib Karan, *Şehabettin Mercanî: Turmuşu Hem Eserleri*, (Istanbul: Tan Matbaası, 1960), p. 66.

reformist to a secularist is the case of Bashkir historian Zeki Velidi Togan.<sup>20</sup> He wrote: "In any case, what would I gain by studying Koran and the depth of Islamic law in order to get the 'true' knowledge... I appreciated his [Merjani's] ideas about the necessity of studying historical facts critically, the harms of theocracy and the importance of the concept of nationality, but I quickly realized that his other thoughts were out-dated things which were not applicable in real life and incompatible with the modern science."<sup>21</sup>

In the third Congress of the Muslims of All-Russia (September 1906), there was a split among the Jadidists: a new group of progressives came into being. They were called as "Tañchilar", because they gathered around the newspaper *Tañ Yolduzi*, then journal *Tañ* (Kazan, 1906-7). They found the level of progress of the New Method inadequate and wanted to take faster, bigger steps in the way of progress. They accepted socialist ideas through the influence of the university students.<sup>22</sup> The famous Ayaz Iskhaki [İdilli] (1878-1954) was among them. They established a political party and entered to the Second State Duma of the Russian Empire (February 1907 to June 1907) with their six deputies.

### **Divergent Approaches within the Jadidist Camp**

The emerging wave of liberal and secular intellectuals was more directly acquainted with the Western culture and had little interest in theological subjects. The best representatives were Ismail Gasprinski, Yusuf Akçura and Zeki Velidi Togan. Although they did not break with traditional learning, they were educated in Russian and other European institutions. While their early impulse came from the religious reformists, they were dissatisfied with revivalist explanations and developed secular interests and by the turn of the century a secular tendency gained more weight among the reformist intelligentsia.

Both religious and secular intellectuals shared common concerns and ideas to some degree; however, there were obvious differences in their outlook, which showed up in certain issues. For example, in 1909, Musa Jarullah Bigiev once raised a theological question that drew a strong reaction from the conservative ulema of the city of Orenburg. He challenged the official dogma by claiming that God extended His forgiveness to everyone, whether Muslim or not.<sup>23</sup> A clear

<sup>20</sup> For the shift of interest of some intellectuals from religious Jadidism to secular reformism, see; Ahmet Kanlıdere, "Dinî Reformculuktan Seküler Reformculuğa: İslahçı ve Ceditçilerin Zihnî Serüvenleri", XIV. *Türk Tarih Kongresi: Ankara: 9-13 Eylül 2002: Kongreye Sunulan Bildiriler*, Vol. 2, No. 2, (Ankara: TTK Yayınları, 2005), pp. 1339-1344.

<sup>21</sup> Zeki Velidi Togan, *Hâtıralar*, (Istanbul: Tan Matbaası, 1969), p. 64 and p. 78.

<sup>22</sup> Yusuf Akçura, "Rusyada Sâkin Türklerin Hayât-ı Medeniye, Fikriye ve Siyasiyelerine Dair", *Sırât-ı Müstakîm*, (Istanbul), Vol.2, No. 40, (28 May 1325 [1909]), pp. 216-218.

<sup>23</sup> Bigiev had a strong parallel with British preach by foremost Protestant reformer John Wesley (1703-1791). In 1784 titled *On Charity*, Wesley was writing at a time when Tatars, Turks and Muslims in general were represent greatest of evil. But, here, he is saying that they too were under God's umbrella. He wrote that all the peoples of the earth were under the mercy of a single God: Accordingly that sentence 'He that believeth not shall be damned,' (Mark 16; 16) is spoken of them to whom the gospel is preached. Others does not concern; and we are not required to determine anything touching their final state. I appreciate Arthur Bonner to calling this to my attention.

difference of outlook arose between religious and secular intellectuals regarding this issue. Ismail Gaspirali criticized Musa Jarullah Bigiev, saying it was not necessary to bring up such a theological question belong to the depths of history while many burning and real issues were waiting for solutions.<sup>24</sup> As with other secular reformers, he did not take any interest in the subtlety of religious thought. However, Bigiev saw such issues as closely connected to the contemporary condition of the Muslim ummah.

Bigiev felt that Muslims were still looking at world as divided between "we and them" or "Muslims and unbelievers." With this outlook, he argued, the relations of Muslims with the modernizing world could not be healthy. Bigiev saw this situation as a handicap and tried to solve it in a doctrinal sense by pointing out that such an exclusionary outlook would determine the behavior of Muslim society and its future. He argued that a society that feeds on superstitious beliefs cannot integrate itself with the civilized world; therefore, it was urgent to reinterpret Muslim faith in order to revitalize the Muslim society. This controversy clearly shows that Tatar reformers displayed divergent views regarding the nature and degree of change to revitalize their society.

Another example shows these divergent approaches among the reformers more clearly. A leading Tatar religious reformer, Rizaeddin b. Fahreddin (1859-1936) argued that the progress or retrogression of societies depends on the strength of the belief (*aqidah*) on which they are based.<sup>25</sup> According to him, the main reason for the backwardness of Muslim society was the degeneration of faith during the preceding centuries. He taught that if Muslims wanted to restore the power, wealth and dignity of their society, they had to understand Islam in the way early Muslims perceived it.

Zeki Velidi Togan (1890-1970) opposed this view. He argued that the reason for the decline was not the degeneration of religious faith but the regression of Muslims in material civilization. The decline of Muslim civilization caused in degeneration of Islam. Therefore, with this state of material backwardness, Muslim countries would not progress, whether they reformed or purified their religious faith.<sup>26</sup> As we see in Togan's way of thinking, secular reformers tend to look at issues beyond religious framework. While Musa Jarullah Bigiev and Rizaeddin b. Fahreddin put a great effort to modernize Islamic law, Togan saw all these efforts as a waste of time and energy.<sup>27</sup>

### **The Qadimist Reaction**

Despite these and other differences in outlook, revivalist and secular Jadidists took sides at the same camp. The greater difference in outlook and opposition

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<sup>24</sup> "Rahmät-i İlahiyänin Umumiyäti", *Din wä Ma'îshat* (Orenburg), No. 4, (22 January 1910), p. 57.

<sup>25</sup> Rizaeddin b. Fahreddin, *İbn Täymiyyä*, (Orenburg: Waqit Matbaasi, 1911), pp. 128-38. Musa Jarullah Bigiev offers essentially the same approach. See; Musa Jarullah Bigiev, *Halq Nazarına Birmichä Mäsälä*, p. 55.

<sup>26</sup> Ahmed Zeki Velidi [Togan], "İbn Haldun Nazarında İslam Hükümetlerinin İstikbali", *Bilgi Mecmuası*, (Istanbul), Vol. 2, No. 7, (June 1330 [1914]), p. 742.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 742-743.

came from the traditionalist ulema who were known as Qadimists (*Qadimchilär*).<sup>28</sup> The traditionalist ulema never trusted the Jadidists and watched their modernizing activities suspiciously. The differences and conflict between the reformers and the traditionalist ulema became more evident five or six years after the opening of the first Jadid school in 1884. A writer of *Nur* newspaper pointed out that the conflict between Jadidists and Qadimists began towards the end of 1890s. At the beginning, the conflict was basically on arguments about the method of instruction (*usûl-i Jadid*), but after 1905 these disputes spread into a wide level and the method of instruction was no more at the center of discussions. The rigid conservatives claimed that all the unacceptable deeds of the youth were the result of *usûl-i Jadid*.<sup>29</sup> Jadidists defended their position through their newspapers, journals and pamphlets while traditionalist ulema refuted them with their letters and dialogues in traditional gatherings.

With the 1905 Revolution, their combat extended over issues beyond the schooling system. The old-line ulema held these modern teachers and their Jadid schools responsible for all "false" behavior of the students. At the beginning of the twentieth century, a number of students received their education in the Middle East and returned their homeland. As Stéphane A. Dudoignon has convincingly argued, these teachers (*muallimlär*) organized societies and began to get the jobs of old-line imams and this situation, increased the existing conflict.<sup>30</sup> An author of *Din wä Ma'îshat* complained about newly appeared group of teachers who became widespread in about 1900s. He blamed these teachers for every trouble people conflicted with. He further described them as "ignorant of Islamic sciences, morally corrupted, however, very skilful in slandering respectful leaders such as imams, akhunds and ulema who served greatly to people."<sup>31</sup> Another author described the situation as follows: "Moreover, congresses and meetings were organized [by jadidist teachers and students]; voices were heard saying 'administrations of maktab and madrasahs should be taken from the hands of imams and akhunds and given to the board of teachers instead.'"<sup>32</sup>

Qadimists were concerned with the preservation of old values and resisted change; they opposed learning Russian language and having any contact with Western culture. They saw *usûl-i Jadid* schools as a threat to traditional schooling and considered every act of Jadidists as evil intent. It is quite possible that they used the term "Jadidist" as an accusation in a sense of "heretic". A Bukharan Qadimist described those who accepted the Jadid schools as unreligious teachers while those who opposed them were ishans (shaykhs), ulema and

<sup>28</sup> The leading Qadimists were Gilâc Molla, Ishmi Ishan and Sâdiq İmanqulu. See; Galimjan İbrahimov, *Tatarlar Arasında Revolyutsiyä Harâkâtleri*, (Kazan: 1925), pp. 26-27.

<sup>29</sup> Timirali İmadeddinoglu Zaysani, "Rusya'da Millät-i İslamiyâ Arasında İftiraknin Zuhûru", *Nur* (St. Petersburg), No. 130, (28 April 1908).

<sup>30</sup> Stéphane A. Dudoignon, "Qadimiya as a Historiographical Category: The Question of Social and Ideological Cleavages between 'Reformists' and 'Traditionalists' among the Muslims of Russia and Central Asia in the Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century", p. 174.

<sup>31</sup> Sibiryali, "Bizim Muallimlar", *Din wä Ma'îshat* (Orenburg), No. 18, (30 April 1910), pp. 284-285.

<sup>32</sup> İmam Muhammed Sâbir el-Husni, "Muallim olaçak Kimsälärniñ..." *Din wä Ma'îshat* (Orenburg), No. 14, (2 April 1910), p. 217.

mufti. He claimed that Jadidists directed the Muslims of Russia towards atheism.<sup>33</sup> He wrote: "They [Jadidists] dress in a European manner and do not pray regularly. Some of them go to mosques only on Fridays. Others go hardly ever and, besides, they do not observe the Ramadan fasting. They want to end the seclusion of women and give women equal rights with men." In the eyes of Qadimists, Jadidism represented heresy and alienation.

Around 1907, the tension between the Qadimists and Jadidists increased.<sup>34</sup> At this period, everything was working against the Jadidists. There was a pressure from the reactionary government of Russia. The Russian government banned some of these newspapers while some others were closed due to lack of readers. Only 12 out of 40 Tatar newspapers were left. All these developments forced the Jadidists to rethink their situation and decide to return back to educational and cultural activities. Nevertheless, once more they were confronted with the traditionalist ulema. By this time, the term "Jadidist" itself gained somewhat negative meaning. Likewise, a Petersburg newspaper, *Nur*, which was labeled as "Qadimist," detached itself from the clash and blamed the both parties as extreme. An anonymous writer of *Nur* claimed that if this clash keeps continuing, it would certainly harm the [fate of] nationality and progress, and perhaps more than that it would shake the base of Islam."<sup>35</sup>

To what extent do we know about the Qadimists? Our knowledge basically depends on the writings of Jadidists.<sup>36</sup> A Jadidist journal, *al-Islah*, described the Qadimists as follows: "They [Qadimists] conceive Islam as Arab customs, Arab style of wearing, Arabic alphabets, age-old Arab civilization. These things have nothing to do with the true Islam, but rather contrary to the spirit of Islam."<sup>37</sup>

The Tatar periodical defending traditionalist opinion was bi-monthly journal *Din wä Ma'îshat* (Orenburg, 1906-1917). This journal was described as being the voice of "obscurantist group who opposed everything new and defended oldness and ancientness."<sup>38</sup> The most effective means of comprehending the ideas of Qadimists is to analyze the *Din wä Ma'îshat*. The owner of this journal, Muhammed Veli Huseyinov, was a son of a wealthy merchant.<sup>39</sup> Even the very language of the journal was quite different from the Jadidist ones, reflecting

<sup>33</sup> Buhanî, "Usûl-i Jâdidä ve Diyanätsiz Muallim", *Din wä Ma'îshat* (Orenburg), No. 13, (26 March 1910), pp. 197-198.

<sup>34</sup> Yusuf Akçura, "Rusya'da Sâkin Türklerin Hayât-ı Medeniye, Fikriye ve Siyasiyelerine Dair", pp. 216-218.

<sup>35</sup> "Usûl-i Jâdidä – Usûl-i Qadimä Talashları, *Nur* (St. Petersburg), 130, (28 April 1908).

<sup>36</sup> See; Bekir Çobanzade, *Son Dâvir Kırım Tatar Âdâbiyatı Tânkid Tâjribâları* (Aqmâsjid: İleri Jurnalı İdarâsi, 1928), p. 26; Abdullah Battal Taymas, "Usul-u Kadim", *Türk Kültürü*, Vol. 4, No. 40, (February 1966), pp. 403-410.

<sup>37</sup> "Alar İslamiyätini ozunuñ äsasına muhâlif, anga hich taalluqu bolmagan, faqat Arab adâtlärini, Arab kiyumlärini, Arab hurûfunu, Arabnıñ iski mäddäniyätini qabul itudän ibarät ve yaña funûn ve tarz-ı maishätgä butunläy khilaf itub korsätäräk..." Hazrät, "Usûl-i Jâdid Nârsä?", *al-Islah*, No. 40, (6 August 1908), pp. 5-6.

<sup>38</sup> *Musul'manskaya Peçat' Rossii v 1910 godu*. Reprint (Oxford: The Society for Central Asian Studies, 1987), pp. 71-72 and p. 86. See also; İ. Remiyev, *Waqitli Tatar Matbuâtı: 1905-1925*, (Kazan: "Gejur" Matbaası, 1926), pp. 42-43.

<sup>39</sup> *Musul'manskaya Peçat' Rossii v 1910 godu*, pp. 71-72.

more archaic Tatar and Arabic words. The names of the authors are long and gave their generational chains as in the old manner. Authors, mainly imams, defined their followers as "pious Muslim people" while they referred to their opponents as "those who claim to be progressive" or "those intriguers claiming being progressives."<sup>40</sup> But they did not see their opponents the same; they recognized differences.<sup>41</sup> For example, a writer of the journal, Murad Mekkî severely attacked at radical reformist Musa Jarullah Bigiev, while used a respectful language about other Jadidist figures such as Abdurrashid Ibrahimov and Rizaeddin b. Fakhreddin.

Qadimist criticism seems to be concentrated basically on two tendencies of the Jadidists: First the Salafi trend, second the modernist challenge. They characterized the revivalist Jadidists as "Wahhâbis." According to a writer of *Din wa Ma'îshat*, the "microbs of Wahhabism easily penetrated those youth who did not get the training of *Kalâm* and *Mantiq* (Logic), the main subjects of madrasah curriculum."<sup>42</sup> Although the Qadimists used this "Wahhâbi" label as an accusation against the Jadidists, it was not totally unfounded. At least, some Jadidists had expressed a kind of sympathetic thought toward the Wahhâbi movement. For example, in the pages of *Waqit* (no. 682), a major Jadidist newspaper, there was news about the Wahhâbis characterizing them as "those who were trying to return Islam to its original purity."

The second worry of the Qadimists was the increasing indifference to religious matters among the Tatar intelligentsia and students. Related to all these behaviors, a traditionalist writer pointed out that Jadidists' main concern was worldly affairs and all their endeavors were in this direction.<sup>43</sup> Traditionalists deeply worried about the Jadidists' removing the veil of Muslim women and trying to rise them to equal status with men. They considered Jadidist theatrical performances, literary nights and musical concerts as non-Islamic.<sup>44</sup> Moreover, for the Qadimists, it was improper men and women sitting in the same space.

Qadimist ulema believed that the Jadid schools were weakening the sense of religiosity among the Muslim youth. However, they were not totally against the change in schooling system. A writer of *Din wa Ma'îshat* stated that technique (*hünär*) was surely needed but it should be in the traditional framework as in the madrasahs of Istanbul. He added that the most famous educational institution of Muslim World, al-Azhar in Egypt, was also operated by traditional method (*usûl-i Qadim*), "despite the destructive efforts of the disciples of the Egyptian reformer Muhammad Abduh."<sup>45</sup> However, Qadimists were against learning

<sup>40</sup> "Hankârman Jämiyät-i Hayriyäsi", *Din wa Ma'îshat* (Orenburg), No. 16, (16 April 1910), p. 217.

<sup>41</sup> See; Muhammed Murad Mekkî, "Musa'ga Mekke Polemiyäti", *Din wa Ma'îshat* (Orenburg), p. 511 and pp. 552-53.

<sup>42</sup> İyd Muhammed b. Mirali Biray Ahmärof, "Wähâbiler Kimlär", *Din wa Ma'îshat* (Orenburg), No. 46, (19 Noyabr 1910), pp. 731-732.

<sup>43</sup> Buharî, "Usûl-i Jädidä ve Diyanätsiz Muallim", *Din wa Ma'îshat* (Orenburg), No. 13, (26 March 1910), pp. 197-198.

<sup>44</sup> "Ufada Ädäbiyat Kiçäsi wä Tiyatr", *Din wa Ma'îshat* (Orenburg), No. 25, (18 June 1910), p. 389.

<sup>45</sup> "Hünär zarür idüğü dä bädihîdir, fakat Istanbuldagı kibi. Anıng mädräsäsi bashqa olmalıdır." Buharî, "Usûl-i Jädidä wä Diyanätsiz Muallim", *Din wa Ma'îshat* (Orenburg), No. 13, (26 March 1910), p. 197.

Russian language and studying in Russian schools, because they thought it would weaken the Muslim identity and therefore would cause further alienation of the Muslim youth.

In 1910, a conflict arose between conservative Tatars and progressive youth over the issue of language in the meetings of Philanthropic Society (Jämiyät-i Khayriyâ). Russian was the required language in these meetings. The people of the neighborhood gathered around the Akhund of the city and gave a petition to the Governor asking for using Tatar language in their gatherings. However, the "progressive" youth insisted in using Russian language and therefore the attempt of the Akhund was failed. For this reason, the Akhund withdrew from the meetings by saying "my conscience does not allow me to talk Russian with my fellow Muslims."<sup>46</sup> The author claimed that a majority of people supported the Akhund against the progressive youth. After giving this improper example, the author carried on his criticism against the Jadidists saying that the teachers and students of the Jadid schools were leaving the traditional Tatar costumes and adopting Russian ones. Therefore, he warned the Muslim public not to let their children study under the guidance of unreligious (Jadidist) teachers.

In conclusion, this research wants to reiterate the following points: 1. While the Jadidists seem as a united body, they did not follow a single line but rather branched widely from religious reformers to secular intellectuals. 2. The ideal model of revivalist Tatar reformers was what they saw as the belief and practices of early Muslims (the Salaf). However, there was a gradual decline of Islamic reformism in Volga region; the reformist ulema were loosing touch with the thought of the age. Their arguments failed to carry conviction and arose almost no response in the minds of the generation educated in modern schools. 3. The secular reformists were more directly acquainted with the Western culture and had a little interest in Islamic theological subjects; therefore, sought to find solutions within secular framework. 4. The nature of conflict between the Qadimists and Jadidists is more complicated than what has been presented; it has both historical and modern implications: that there was a historical debate within the scholars of theology as well as conflicting responses toward the challenge of modernism.

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<sup>46</sup> Imam Muhammed Sâbir al-Husni, "Muallim Olachaq Kimsälärniñ...", *Din wâ Ma'ishät* (Orenburg), No. 14, (2 April 1910), p. 217.

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