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The Age of the 'Socialist-Wahhabi-Nationalist Revolutionary': The Fusion of Islamic Fundamentalism and Socialism in Tatar Nationalist Thought, 1898–1917

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Received: 9 October 2019; Accepted: 6 November 2019; Published: 13 November 2019



Abstract: This article examines the relationship among radical socialism, Islamic balanced reform and Tatar national identity in early twentieth-century Russia. In contrast to previous studies, which either have studied these various intellectual strains individually or have positioned Islamic legal and theological reforms as precursors to the emergence of a secular national identity among Kazan's Tatars, I will argue that Tatar intellectuals' positions on theology, socio-economic organization, and national identity were mutually reinforcing. Supporters of nationalism also embraced socialism and Islamic balanced reform because they saw all three ideologies as egalitarian and liberating.

Keywords: nationalism; Tatar; socialism; Islamic reform; Wahhabism

1. Introduction

Writing in protest of new madrasa curricula in Russia's Volga-Ural region, Ishmuḥammad Dīnmuḥammadov (1842–1919), the director of Tūntār Madrasa in the early twentieth century, lamented that Muslim education was besieged by "socialist-Wahhabi-nationalist revolutionaries" (sotsialist wahhābī millātche inqilābiyun) (Dinmuhammadov na.). At first glance, this amalgamation of terms might appear problematic. How could a single individual be a socialist, a theological literalist, a Tatar nationalist, and an agitator for the violent overthrow of the Russian autocracy simultaneously? Could Russian socialism, which is often associated with a materialist, atheist worldview, coexist with fundamentalist Islamic legal reform? (Walicki 1979; Manchester 2008; Roslof 2002; Frede 2011; Michelson 2017). Did not the locally specific aspirations of ethnic nationalism necessarily contradict the transnational identities posited by late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century socialism and Islamic reform movements? (Smith 2014; Aydin 2007; Karpat 2001; Meyer 2014). What place did religious law and doctrine have in a project to replace religious identities with secular nationalist ones? (Rorlich 1986; Tuna 2016).

It is tempting to write off Dīnmuḥammadov's accusation as a flight into hyperbole. Indeed, he was known to get carried away by his passions when he wrote on his most hated subject: the Volga-Ural region's Muslim cultural reformers and their students (Fäkhreddin 2010b). However, Dīnmuḥammadov was a highly educated theologian, who, at the time he penned his complaint, was the former disciple of one of the most powerful Sufi shaykhs of the mid-nineteenth-century Volga Basin, the director of a prestigious madrasa, and connected by marriage and patronage into a power social network of scholars, students, and merchants (Dinmökhämmätov Ishmökhämmät Dinmökhämmät uly 2006; Fäyzullin Säetgäräy Mostafa uly 2006; Zaripov 2002). As a scholar, he was well-versed in debate, speculative theology, jurisprudence, and Arabic grammar (Fäkhreddin 2010a; Tüntäri 2003; Zaripov 2002; Akhmetianov 2011a, 2011b). Dīnmuḥammadov dedicated his life to studying words and built a successful career around deploying them. As such, it seems reasonable to suggest that,

even as he wrote in anger, he understood the meanings of the words he used, and he chose them for a reason: they were the words that most aptly described the phenomenon he found so objectionable.

This article examines the relationships between Tatar nationalism, Islamic reform, and revolutionary socialism in Russia's Volga-Ural region from the 1880s to 1917. It will argue that it was this fusion of ideologies (rather than promotion of education reform and "modernity") that distinguished the most politically radical factions in Volga-Ural Muslim society. For these factions, the formation of a national community, the modernist/balanced reform of Islamic law and theology, and the violent overthrow of economic and political oppressors were mutually reinforcing goals. The marriage of various aspects of these ideologies can be found in the writings of early twentieth-century Volga-Ural Muslim writers, jurists, and national leaders, figures often categorized as Jadid modernist reformers. Likewise, this fusion is reflected in the writings of these intellectuals' critics (jurists and teachers such as the much-maligned Dīnmuḥammadov) who reproduced this entanglement of nationalism, Islamic reformism, and socialism in their own writings even as they denounced it.

Within the field of Russian Muslim history, this essay seeks to complicate the Jadid versus Qadim (reformer versus conservative/traditionalist) dichotomy that has long dominated the study of Muslim cultural and intellectual history in the Volga-Ural region and Central Asia. Within that narrative, the Muslim populations experienced a period of national awakening and secularization from the 1880s to the 1910s as a result of the arrival of "European modernity" and/or Russian conquest (Rorlich 1986; Zenkovsky 1960; d'Encausse 1988; Wheeler 1964; Bennigsen 1964; Lemercier-Quelquejay and Chantal 1967). The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 and the subsequent opening of the libraries and archives of post-Soviet states to scholars generated a counternarrative that turned away from national and/or secularizing elites to focus on continuities in Islamic legal, culture, and popular religiosity (Frank 1998, 2001, 2012; Kemper 1998; Kefeli 2014). Most recently, historians of Islamic reform in Central Asia have examined participation in discourses on Islamic legal theory by historical figures previously identified as nationalist and secular; and the Salafist aspects of early-twentieth-century Muslim cultural reform (Eden Jeff and DeWees 2016; Sartori 2016b; DeWeese 2016; Sartori and Eden 2016a). These new turns have introduced welcome complexity into our understanding of the evolution of Islamic culture under Russian rule and underscore the point that Islam in Russia belongs to the global history of Islamic legal and theological movements. However, in the process of returning the Islamic element to Russian Muslim history, the subjects of nation and nationalism are often pushed to the margins. Likewise, at least in the case of the Volga-Ural region, scholarly examinations of ethno-nationalism, national intelligentsias, and the role of Muslims in Russian civil society tend to de-emphasize Islam. They often set jurists/religious-legal scholars ('ulamā'/Qadimists) and nationalists/modernists/education reformers (Jadids) in ideological opposition to one another and present nationalists' engagement with Islam as the adoption of "Islamic ethics," morality, and/or cultural practices intended to bolster a secular national identity (Tuna 2017; Naganawa 2012; Garipova 2016). This division between religious and non-religious actors gives the impression that cultural reform and nationalism in the Volga-Ural region unfolded more or less the same way as in the Ottoman Empire, where "progressive," secularizing elites clashed with and eventually displaced "traditional" or "conservative" religious authorities in the legal field, education, and cultural production.

I will argue that none of these approaches accurately captures the trajectory of Volga-Ural Muslims' intellectual debates in the early-twentieth-century. The use of the term 'ulamā' to designate a particular faction of legal scholars (rather than the madrasa-educated population as a whole) obscures the fact that nearly all participants in the debates over Tatar nation, faith, and revolution had madrasa educations, came from legal/scholarly families and/or held posts as imams, qāḍīs, or madrasa teachers at some point in their careers. Unlike the case of Russian Orthodox priests' sons (popovitchy), there was no significant migration to atheism among Volga-Ural madrasa students (Manchester 2008). Even as madrasa-educated individuals left imam postings for careers in journalism, publishing, or politics, they continued to take part in discourses on the practice and future of Islam, albeit, they embraced strains of Islamic legal and theological interpretation that suited their views on Russian imperial rule, colonial politics, and socio-economic relations. Their commitment to a particular kind of Islam was a defining

aspect of their vision of the Tatar nation. So too, was their understanding of historical progress and class conflict, which they borrowed freely from Russian socialist discourses.

Outside the field of Russian history, drawing attention to Volga-Ural Muslims' interweaving of Islam, nationalism, and revolutionary socialism contributes to wider scholarly discussions of Islam in colonial and post-colonial contexts. The Volga-Ural Muslims' vision of both Islam and nation as egalitarian communities complicates Wael Hallaq's argument that Islamic law, with its inclusive, grassroots nature, is fundamentally incompatible with the vertical power relationships imposed by the modern nation-state (Hallaq 2013). Also, Volga-Ural Muslim nationalists' understanding of Islam and socialism as complementary forces for socio-economic equality presents an alternative to the antagonistic relationship between proponents of sharf'a-based governance and socialism seen in the better-studied societies of the Middle East and South Asia (Kuran 2004; An-Na'im 2010). Finally, examining the fusing of Islam and nation in the Volga-Ural region contributes to the study of how minority groups turned to Islam to express self-identity, separateness, and resistance to the potentially hostile societies within which they found themselves (Curtis 2012).

2. Background

2.1. The New Intellectual Life of the 1880s-1890s

Beginning in the mid-eighteenth-century, the Muslim community of Russia's Volga-Ural region underwent what has been termed an Islamic revival (Frank 2012; Sartori 2016c). From the 1780s to the 1880s, mosques and madrasas proliferated. The establishment of Arabic-script presses—first the government-run Asiatic Press, founded in St. Petersburg in 1785 and relocated to Kazan in 1801, and later, various private, commercial presses—facilitated the circulation of mass-printed Qur'āns, Islamic law books, and popular devotional and mystical texts (Karimullin 1992; Rezvan 2004). The expansion of educational institutions and printed books contributed to an increase in literacy. By the 1860s, some observers estimated the literacy rate for women in Volga-Ural Muslim communities to be as high as 60% (Fäezkhanov 2006).

This rise in literacy had complex effects on religious practice and intellectual life in the Volga-Ural Muslim community. For common believers, the late-eighteenth-century and the nineteenth-century were characterized by very public displays of popular religiosity and an increasingly entexted popular religious culture (Fuks 2005; Kefeli 2011, 2014). For the local scholarly elite, this period was one of unprecedented intellectual activity, with more scholars and students having access to a wider range of theological, legal, and literary texts than ever before. Such abundance fueled new trends in theological and legal thought, but also engendered intellectual conflicts within educated society and anxiety over the proliferation of what some scholars considered unorthodox or incorrect views on Islamic law and doctrine (Kemper 2015; äl-Bolgari 1996a, 2007; Spannaus 2019).

In response to this intellectual environment, madrasa-educated legal scholars and theologians positioned themselves as interpreters, curators, and disseminators of sacred knowledge. They became compilers of books of "correct" Islamic knowledge, especially collections of hadith ('Abdarraḥīm Ūtiz-Īmānī al-Bulghārī na.; al-Qūrṣāwī 1903; Amirkhanov 1883; Aqmulla 1892; Tüntäri 2003). They penned primers and translations for non-madrasa-educated Muslims, and by the 1860s, they increasingly promoted vernacular-language religious instruction in the madrasas (Bayazitov 1880). Those scholars who were Sufi shaykhs spread knowledge of basic Islamic doctrine and rituals among the rural population through public gatherings and the compilation of handbooks for their disciples (al-Ūriwī na.). Within their own ranks, Volga-Ural Muslim scholars used public debates (munāṇara) of theology to build their reputations and promote particular theological interpretations (Bigiev 1991b; Validov 1998).

The intellectual and cultural world of the Volga-Ural Muslim community from the 1780s to the 1880s was dynamic, but also rigidly hierarchical. Meritocracy existed insofar as men from humble origins who distinguished themselves as especially intelligent and who gained powerful patrons could

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join the ranks of the madrasa-educated, and perhaps, even aspire to a career as a Sufi shaykh or Muslim jurist. However, multi-generational scholarly families tended to dominate educated society. The educated, to the extent they were able, mediated the transmission and interpretation of Islamic knowledge. This arrangement created social relationships that were strictly hierarchical: master–disciple, teacher–student, and imam–parishioner. These hierarchies of religious knowledge and authority were reinforced by socio-economic hierarchies; in the absence of any state or governmental mechanism for collecting and deploying Muslim charity (zakāt, sadaqa), Islamic scholars, especially Sufi shaykhs, became the recipients and redistributors of community wealth (S. Dudoignon 2001; Ross 2017).

The Islamic revival and the class of scholarly rural gentlemen that dominated Muslim community life for much of the nineteenth-century were the results of an emerging global colonial order. The Volga-Ural Muslims' merchant wealth that financed the expansion of mosques and madrasa was earned importing Chinese tea and British calicos (Khrulev na.; Anonymity 1862; Devjatykh 2005; Fäkhreddin 2010c; Iskhakyi 2011b). The Russian conquest of the Kazakh Steppe and Central Asia allowed Volga-Ural Muslim traders and industrialists to increase their activities in these regions and opened the way for Volga-Ural Muslim peasants to migrate into the South Urals, western Siberia, and the Kazakh Steppe (Denisov 2006; Zubov 1996). (These Muslim settlers would serve as precursors of the much larger Slavic migration into Siberia and the steppe in the 1870s–1910s (Cameron 2018a, 2018b).) However, Volga-Ural Muslims did not experience the most negative aspects of colonialism and do not appear to have drawn a connection between their society's prosperity and other Muslim societies' misfortunes.

This situation began to change in the 1870s. Several factors spurred this change. The Russian conquest of Bukhara, an important center of Islamic culture and education for the Volga-Ural Muslim population, in the late 1860s led some Islamic scholars to re-assess the value and relevance of Bukharan education and to begin to seek alternatives, either by developing local madrasas or looking to education centers in the Ottoman Empire and Egypt. Travels to the Arab world (especially Mecca, Madina, Damascus, and Cairo) for pilgrimage and education (and, to a lesser extent, to India) brought Volga-Ural Muslim scholars into contact with Muslims under British colonial rule and political exiles from the Ottoman Empire (Gabderashit Ibrahimov 2001; Khayrutdinov 2005). Finally, closer to home, the Russian ministries of Education and Internal Affairs took measures to impose greater state control over the Volga-Ural madrasas, including requirements that they offer Russian-language courses and submit to state inspection (Tuna 2016).

By the 1880s, all these developments fueled an internal critique of Volga-Ural Muslim society. Volga-Ural Muslim scholars had previously critiqued the clannishness, arrogance, and questionable moral behavior of their colleagues (äl-Bolgari 1996a, 1996b). However, the critics of the 1880s and 1890s lent new urgency to these complaints by arguing that scholars' self-interested claims to sole authority over Islamic knowledge had set Volga-Ural Muslim society on the path to destruction. From Zahir Bigiev's novel, *Great Sins* (*Gonāh-i kaba'īr*), in which a young madrasa student descends into a life of crime and depravity, to Ayāḍ Isḥāqī's *Extinction after 200 Years* (*Ike yoz yildan song inqirāḍ*), in which a Muslim community that failed to embrace science and proper morality was annihilated by infectious diseases and economic depression, 1885–1905 witnessed the rise of a generation of young writers who were educated within the most prominent madrasas in the Volga-Ural region, but turned against the scholarly networks within which they had come of age (Bigiev 1991a; al-Isḥāqī 1904). These writers, who began their careers in their teens and early twenties, attacked their older colleagues, targeting their social privilege, exploitation of common Muslims, and refusal to engage with knowledge beyond the confines of Islamic law and doctrine (Ross 2015; Tuna 2016; Karīmī 1898; Maqṣūdī 1900).

While these writers used prose fiction to critique Muslim society, other madrasa graduates called for a return to the Qur'ān and hadiths to construct an Islamic law appropriate to the conditions of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As the fiction writers called into question the moral fitness of Islamic scholars to lead their community, this new generation of jurists questioned the authority and reliability of the accepted legal canon, which was the culmination of one thousand years of Islamic scholarship (Būbī 1904–1910, 1902; as-Sulaymāniyya 1907). The literati and their legist

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colleagues found a common cause in undermining powerful Islamic scholars and creating a system in which personal merit counted for more than age or family connections. The realization of such a system, according to them, was the only sure bulwark against the decline and disappearance of Muslim society in Russia and across the colonial world.

Historical studies of Jadidism, as these late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century movements for legal, cultural, and social reform in Russia's Muslim communities have been dubbed, have portrayed their participants as reacting to the arrival of "modernity" (or "European modernity") in Muslim society (Tuna 2016). However, this treatment modernity as an outside force to which Muslims chose to respond or not blurs the distinction between modernity as a lived condition and modernity as an intellectual construct. It was Volga-Ural Muslim writers and jurists' encountering the latter (through Russian, French, and German writings on nation and empire and through Ottoman and Egyptian writings on cultural and religious reform), that transformed their discourse on nation and faith. The concept of "modernity" as a condition that some societies had reached and others had not, enabled Volga-Ural Muslim intellectuals to forge a historical narrative that presented the European colonization of Muslim societies as the inevitable consequence of Muslim elites' resistance to social and ideological change. Using this narrative, the young writers of the 1880s-1900s claimed the high moral ground and cast all who disagreed with them as the enemies of Islam and Muslims in general (Cooper 2005). To be an advocate of "modernity" was to be with the reformers (islāḥchilar); to oppose them was to make a futile stand against historical forces beyond the control of any single human being and to place Muslim society at risk of being crushed by those forces. However, the implementation of "modern" or "European" technologies and ideas alone would not have satisfied those reformers. They sought, rather, the complete overthrow of hierarchy and social privilege.

Three ideologies arrived in the Volga-Ural region in the midst of this social conflict: (1) nationalism, (2) Islamic modernism or "balanced" reform, and (3) socialism. None of these sparked that conflict, but as they arrived, they were drawn into it, nativized, and deployed within it.

2.2. The Nationalists

When Dīnmuḥmmadov spoke of nationalists (millātchelar), he referred specifically to the proponents of Tatar nation. The roots of Tatar nationalism have been traced to theologian Shihābaddīn al-Marjānī (1818–1889) and his two-volume history of the Volga-Ural Muslim community, A Book of Elaboration of News on Affairs in Kazan and Bulghar (Kitāb Mustafād al-Akhbār fī Aḥwāl Qazān wa Bulghār) (Schamiloglu 1990). Marjānī penned Affairs in Kazan and Bulghar not as a declaration of the existence of the Tatar nation, but as a contribution to a dispute among Volga-Ural Muslim scholars of the 1860s-1870s over the sources of legitimate knowledge and the precedence of empirical observation over transmitted and canonical knowledge. (These same themes appear in Marjānī's legal and theological writings.) Since the early nineteenth century, Volga-Ural Muslim jurists and theologians had embedded opinions on disputed legal and theological questions into texts on regional history, and Marjānī wrote within this tradition (Frank 1998). However, as European and Russian views on a modern nation reached the Volga-Ural Muslim community by the 1890s and early 1900s, educated Muslims turned to his Affairs in Kazan and Bulghar as raw material for creating a Tatar national historical-narrative (Ross 2012). The dualistic character of Marjānī's work as both history and part of a broader legal-theological argument meant that, from its beginnings, Tatar nationalism was closely interwoven with a specific set of views on Islamic law and theology.

The peculiar aspect of nationalism as it evolved the Volga-Ural Muslim community was the ability of Muslim intellectuals to agree that they belonged to and acted on behalf of a nation without agreeing on the geographic boundaries and name of that nation. This was, in a part, a function of the diffuse nature of Volga-Ural Muslim communities, scattered from Finland to China, and in part, a result of the ongoing intellectual exchange among Turkic-speaking peoples in Anatolia, the Balkans, the Caucasus, the Volga-Ural region, Siberia, the Kazakh steppe, and Central Asia during the previous centuries. The most limited national visions expressed by Volga-Ural writers were confined to the Muslims of

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inner Russia (the Volga Basin, the Urals, western Russia, and Siberia). The most expansive included Turkic-speakers across the Eurasian landmass (ar-Rāmzī 1908; al-'Abashī 1909; A. Z. Walīdī 1915; Maqṣūdī 1906; Akchura-ogly 1909; Ibrahimov 1984a). Despite these disagreements, the concept of nation proved highly attractive to young Muslim reformers seeking an alternative to the hierarchical relationships of nineteenth-century Muslim society. Their vision of a Tatar nation was utopian. As one writer to the journal *Consciousness (Ang)* put it in 1913, "[The nation] has Tatarness in its past and bright Tatarness in its future; that is to say that I turn my gaze forward. We see troubled times now. But I see strength in the past and light in the future" (Ḥanīfa 1913). At the same time, they viewed the emergence of nations as a natural part of the evolution of human society, something that was both empirically observable and historically ordained. This latter quality made the emergence of nations unstoppable by individual or governmental resistance (J. Walīdī 1914; 'Azīz 1913a).

Finally, in place of a small group of spiritual authorities who controlled access to arcane knowledge, the nation, as the reformers imagined it, offered the possibility of creating a community in which all members were empowered. Collectively, this community could act as a single, unified force as "the people" or "the nation" ('Azīz 1913a, 1913b). Individually, every Volga-Ural Muslim man, woman, and child, having achieved national consciousness (millī wöjdān), could contribute to this community by becoming literate in their native language, reading national literature, attending national cultural events, and donating money for the promotion of popular education and the support of the poor. Each of these acts had a predecessor in nineteenth-century Islamic culture, in which Muslims who took part in Sufi gatherings and religious holidays, were encouraged to learn to read in Arabic, pursued Islamic knowledge through reading and recitation, and made charitable donations to support Islamic institutions and impoverished community members. However, in the hands of the reformers, these acts were now positioned toward building a nation of equal citizens rather than establishing and reinforcing a hierarchy between the scholarly and the less learned.

As Rozaliya Garipova has pointed out, a wide range of Muslim scholars and intellectuals, including some of Dīnmuḥammadov's colleagues and friends, identified themselves as protectors of the community or nation (millāt) (Garipova 2016). However, to be identified as a nationalist (millātche) in the Volga-Ural Muslim community was to be associated with a very specific set of values and activities. As the nationalists' critics saw it, the most notable of these was the willingness to pander to the ignorant masses in return for their support by offering them things forbidden by Islam, such as musical performances, theater, and unrestricted socialization between men and women (Anonymous 1909; Anonymous 1912). Where the Tatar nationalists saw empowerment of common Muslims through these activities, their critics saw encouragement of un-Islamic behavior.

2.3. Wahhabism

The term "Wahhabis" requires the greatest explication of all the terms Dīnmuḥammadov invokes. "Who are the Wahhābīs?"—an article published in the Orenburg journal *Religion and Life* in 1910, clarifies his use of the term. At the beginning, the author, 'Aīd Muḥammad Aḥmarov, cites a section from another Orenburg periodical, *Time* (*Waqt*), which described the Wahhabis as "tribes who wish to return to the pure Islam of the past and devote themselves to the Qur'ān and the Sunnah" (Aḥmarov 1910). Aḥmarov proceeds to explain that such a description was inaccurate; far from renewing or improving Islam, the Wahabbis were "destructive and bloody" and sowed conflict through their rejection of classical theology (kalām), their primitive understanding of God's oneness (tawhīd), and their ability to convince their "ignorant" coreligionists to commit unspeakable acts of violence against non-Wahhabi Muslims and holy sites, including Mecca (Aḥmarov 1910, 1911b, 1911a). For Aḥmarov, Wahhabism was a virus (mikrūb) that, once loosed upon the world by Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb (1703–1792), had spread through the Arabian peninsula, India, and Egypt, infecting pure-hearted scholars and turning them into violent, irrational beings intent on destroying Islam (Aḥmarov 1910).

There is no evidence of contact between Volga-Ural Muslim scholars and the eighteenth-century Wahhabis. When Dīnmuḥammadov, Aḥmarov, and other Volga-Ural writers used the term, they,

in fact, referred to those of their colleagues who identified as disciples of nineteenth-century scholars Jamāladdīn al-Afghānī (1838–1897) and Muḥammad Abduh (1849–1905). Afghānī became especially popular among Volga-Ural Muslim scholars during his visit to Russia in the late 1880s. 'Abdarrashīd Ibrahīmov (1857–1944), who later became an advocate of legal reform, a supranational Muslim identity, and anti-colonial rebellion, served as Afghānī's interpreter (Keddie 1972). Muhammadnajīb Shamsaddīnov at-Tūntārī (1862–1930), editor of the scholarly religious journal *Al-Dīn wāl-Adāb*, circulated Afghānī's views in his correspondences with his colleagues (at-Tūntārī na.). Riza'addīn b. Fakhraddīn (1859–1936) declared Afghānī one of the three most important Islamic scholars of the nineteenth century and wrote a biography of him (Fakhraddīn 1915; S. A. Dudoignon 2006). The generation of Volga-Ural Muslim jurists who came of age in the 1880s and 1890s similarly idolized Muhammad Abduh. Reformist theologians Mūsā Bīgī (1875–1949) and Dhākir al-Qadīrī (1878–1954) and jurist 'Abdullāh Būbī (1871–1922) studied at al-Azhar or visited Abduh during their travels in the Arab world (Khayrutdinov 2005; Bubyi 1999; Kadyri 2006).

The Islamic legal and theological reforms promoted by Afghānī and Abduh have been given multiple names by historians since the 1980s. Albert Hourani refrains from assigning their philosophy a name in his *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age* (Hourani 1983). Charles Kurzman identified their program as modernist Islam, highlighting the prominence of discussions of modernity and progress in their writings (Kurzman 2002). By the 1990s, historians increasingly identified Afghānī and Abduh as early Salafis (Lauzière 2016). Bernard Haykel has challenged this identification by pointing out the significant differences between Afghānī and Abduh's views and those of later Salafis (Haykel 2009). Most recently, Henri Lauzière, in *The Making of Salafism*, has used the term "balanced reform" (al-iṣlāḥ al-mu'tadil) to describe the views of Abduh, Afghānī, and their followers. His choice of term reflects the reformers' terms of self-identification, suggests the moderate goal of their project (i.e., finding a "balance" between Islamic and European cultures), and emphasizes what bound them together (dedication to legal and cultural reform, and not promotion of Salafi theology, which some embraced and others did not) (Lauzière 2016). In this essay, I will follow Lauzière's convention of referring to the adherents of Afghānī and Abduh as balanced reformers.

As balanced reform spread from Egypt to the Volga-Ural region in the last years of the nineteenth-century, it comingled with the views of Kazan scholar, Marjānī, who, in addition compiling and debating local history, had written extensively on questions relating to Islamic law and ritual. Like Afghānī and Abduh, he sought ways to integrate potentially useful aspects of European science and technology into Islamic society. In Nāzurat al-haqq fī faridiyya al-'isha' wa in lam yaghib al-shafaq (1870), he turned to Qur'ānic citations to argue that God created everything in the natural world for human beings to use and gain knowledge from. Muslim scholars were obligated to observe the natural world and use the knowledge they gained from it even when such knowledge contradicted previously-accepted legal opinions (al-Marjānī 1897; Kemper 1998). This was consistent with his call to embrace knowledge from a range of sources when writing regional history (discussed above). Marjānī was involved in a project to correct typographical errors in the Kazan edition of the Qur'ān, in the restructuring of madrasa curriculum and administration in the 1860s-1870s, and witnessed Orenburg mufti Salimgarey Tevkelev's campaign to reform the Orenburg Muslim Spiritual Assembly (Kemper 1998; Zagidullin 2014). In this environment, Marjānī came to champion efforts to update and correct all aspects of Volga-Ural Islam. In Islamic legal practice, that meant questioning canonical legal commentaries and encouraging scholars to return to the primary sources of the law: the Qur'ān, the Sunnah, the consensus of scholars (*ijmā'*), and deductive analogy (*qiyās*) (al-Marjānī 1870).

There is little evidence that Marjānī interacted with Afghānī or Abduh, but subsequent generations of Volga-Ural Muslim scholars identified all three as their intellectual fathers and saw them as proponents of the same ideals:

(1) The rejection of the classical legal and theological schools (madhhabs) and any other affiliations (teacher-student relations and Sufi discipleship) that divided the *ummah* into rival units (Karīmī 1898; Anonymous 1904);

(2) The creation a single Muslim community united by correct belief, based upon direct readings of the Qur'ān and the Sunnah, in which all Muslims were to engage;

(3) A return to the Qur'ān and the hadith in the field of Islamic law and the reinterpretation of these sources with reference to the conditions of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Volga-Ural balanced reformers heavily promoted the view that Islamic legal interpretation was historically and culturally contingent (Būbī 1904–1910). This approach opened most topics in the field of furu' al-fiqh for reinterpretation, and Volga-Ural balanced reformers used that to mediate the adoption of European and Russian technologies, clothing styles, and values (such as the rejection of polygamy) into Muslim society (al-Makhdūmī 1901; Karīmī 1898). At the same time, they all but extinguished debate in the field of theology by promoting a literalist view on commonly-debated questions such as the divine attributes (Būbī 1911; Kamali 2010; al-Qadīrī 1909).

The strategies above served several larger purposes. First, they allowed the reformers to call for sweeping social and cultural changes, while simultaneously presenting them as contiguous with the existing Muslim intellectual tradition. Second, they emphasized practical and applied knowledge over the theoretical, supporting their new vision of the village imam as a public servant rather than an elitist intellectual (Ross 2020). Finally, by reducing the quantity of literature required to master Islamic law and greatly simplifying theology, these strategies fulfilled the goals of making Islam comprehensible to a wider, less scholarly audience and facilitating popular participation in upholding sharī'a.

Dīnmuḥammadov and many of his fellow teachers criticized these balanced reformers for de-emphasizing theology, logic, and philosophy in the madrasa curriculum and doing away with the debate (munāzara) as a teaching tool because they believed that students who were not exposed to logic and debate made poor jurists and teachers (Garipova 2016). However, these critics' recurring use of "Wahhabis" as a descriptor for balanced reformers highlights the aspects of the balanced reform program that most defined it in the eyes of its opponents: its combination of simplified theology; distain for the canonical legal and theological works; seemingly free interpretation of Qur'ānic verses; and mobilization of less-educated Muslims under the banner of "purifying" Islam. Dīnmuḥammadov repeatedly emphasized these aspects of balanced reformers' writings in his critique of the works of Marjānī and Muhammadnajīb Shamsaddīnov at-Tūntārī (at-Tūntārī 2002). Where balanced reformers preached unity, purity of faith, and the full engagement of believers, their critics saw crude popularization of Islamic theology, ignorant misinterpretation of Islamic law, and an inevitable descent into violence and bloodshed that would pit Muslim against Muslim. Even if the Wahhabis and the balanced reformers did not strictly share an intellectual pedigree, they did share certain strategies and goals; for Dīnmuḥammadov, this made them essentially the same.

2.4. The Socialists and the Revolutionaries

The first and last terms of Dīnmuḥammadov's formulation—socialists and revolutionaries—are best addressed together. Volga-Ural Muslim intellectuals who opposed socialism do not seem to have envisioned any version of socialism that did not involve a revolutionary restructuring of Muslim society. Among proponents of socialism, even those who did not advocate physical violence against political and socio-economic oppressors articulated visions of a Muslim future in which certain "privileged" classes would cease to exist.

The writings of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels first attracted the attention of ethnic Russian intellectuals in the 1840s (Walicki 1979). From there, the ideas expressed in these two writers' works were nativized, elaborated upon, and became interwoven into various political movements by the 1860s (Walicki 1979). The first documented Volga-Ural Muslim socialists appeared in the early 1900s. Political leanings in early-twentieth-century Russia were often expressed through membership in one or another political party and Muslim socialists turned to the programs of two: the Socialist Revolutionaries (SR) and the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party (RSDRP).

The RSDRP was formed in 1898. Its members were those who understood the failure of the 1870s' "Going to the People" movement as a sign that Russian Populist ideology was flawed: the

peasants were not the class that would bring revolution to Russia and revolution could not be rushed or engineered through human intervention. As staunch followers of the works of Marx and Engels, the members of the RSDRP supported the principle that industrial workers would be the class to lead the revolution and that such a revolution was historically inevitable once Russia reached the requisite stage in its economic development (Walicki 1979).

The Socialist Revolutionary Party was founded in 1901 in response to the rise of Russian Marxism. Its founder, V. M. Chernov (1873–1952), sought to revive aspects of 1860s–1870s Populist ideology (narodnichestvo), especially that ideology's focus on Russia's peasants. The SR program viewed peasants, agrarian life, and rural communes as part of modern economic life rather than as historical relics that would disappear as Russia industrialized. Peasants and their communal tendencies would be key to establishing socialism throughout Russia. In contrast to the Marxist RSDRP, the SR party's members believed in the ability of the individual to affect the course of history. This ideology led some members of the party to turn to political terror as an tool for bringing about social change (White 2010; Hildernmeier 2000).

Very few Volga-Ural Muslims became members of Russia's revolutionary parties, but they engaged with Russian socialist writings. Muslims' early encounters with revolutionary socialism occurred through contact with ethnic Russian students and co-workers in the empire's cities, most notably Kazan. 'Ayāḍ Isḥāqī, Fuād Tuqtārov (1880–1938), and Ḥusayn Yamāshev (1882–1912), all studying in Kazan and influenced by their encounters with underground revolutionary life, organized the manuscript newspaper Progress (Taraqqi) in 1895 and created the "Student Society" ("Shakīrdlär jam'iyyati") in 1903 (Iskhakyi 2011a). Progress closed in 1900, but after the Revolution of 1905, Isḥāqī and Tuqtārov opened the newspaper Dawn Tāng (later changed to Morning Star (Tāng Yuldūzi)) in which they called for Muslims to violently resist autocratic rule and the imperial bureaucracy. The socialist-leaning young writers who formed the newspaper's staff became known as the Tāngchīlar (Iskhakyi 2011c; Validov 1998; Ibrahimov 1984b; Rämi and Dautov 2001). This advocacy of force to bring about political change was very similar to the doctrine preached by the more violent members of the SR party and likely derived from it. Ishaqī's view in Extinction after Two Hundred Years that human action would determine the future of the Tatar nation was also very much in line with SR views on the role of human agency in history. However, the adoption of SR political doctrines did not necessarily preclude Islamic piety. Isḥāqī later recalled how his friend Tuqtārov never missed a prayer or violated a fast while they studied in Kazan. The socialist Tuqtārov's adherence to Islamic ritual was so all-consuming that some of his classmates dubbed him "the fanatic" (Iskhakyi 2011a).

RSDRP political philosophies entered Volga-Ural Muslim society through another circle of Kazan madrasa students. Fātiḥ Amirkhan (1886–1926), student activist and self-identified socialist who became acquainted with Marxism through a Russian friend, revived the manuscript newspaper *Progress* in 1901 as part of his underground student movement at Muḥammadiyya Madrasa in Kazan (Ibrahimov-Alushev 2005; Ämirkhan 1985b). The dismantling of the imperial censorship by the October Manifesto, combined with the disorder that spread through most of Russia in autumn 1905 as a result of the Revolution of 1905, facilitated the more rapid transmission of radical socialist views through Tatar periodical press and student gatherings. One example of such public dissemination of radical Marxist views occurred in 1906 when former madrasa student 'Aliasgar Kamāl opened the newspaper *Free People (Azād Khaliq)* and used it to publish Tatar translations of the RSDRP party program (Rämi and Dautov 2001; Anonymous 1906).

Marxist theories of class conflict left a deep imprint on Volga-Ural Muslim intellectual culture as it evolved from 1900 to 1917, especially among young writers and activists. Isḥāqī, a former imam, envisioned Volga-Ural Muslim society as being dominated by an exploiter class of wealthy, obscurant Islamic scholars ('ulamā') who would sooner destroy their own people than renounce their privileges (al-Isḥāqī 1904). Sentiments of class struggle provided a framework within which radicalized madrasa students made sense of intergenerational conflicts with their parents and teachers (Ross 2015). Marxist narratives of historical evolution were equally important in shaping reformers' views on the present

and future state of Islam and the Tatar nation. Amirkhan's futuristic novel, *Reverend Fatḥullāh* (1910), and Jamāladdīn Valīdov's explication of the evolution of nations, *Millat wa Milliyat* (1914), were both built upon Marxist understandings of the stages of human history and the view that progress was driven by macro-level social and economic factors that were beyond the capacity of human beings to control or alter (Ämirkhan 1984; J. Walīdī 1914). Rebellious madrasa students' songs of how they would inherit the future when their "backward" teachers and parents died express a more popularized version of Marxist views on historical progress (Sibḡatullin 1910).

Dīnmuḥammadov had a deeply personal reason to dislike revolutionary socialism. By the early 1900s, both revolutionary-socialist-allied Muslim intellectuals and their Marxist colleagues used the classical Muslim scholar ('alīm) as a literary and visual symbol of the classes that they believed exploited Volga-Ural Muslim society. When Dīnmuḥammadov criticized them, they singled him out for special abuse, dubbing him "Ishmi the Donkey" and "Ishmi Ishan," and mocking him in the Tatar-language press (Tukai 2011b, 2011f, 2011g, 2011n). However, Dīnmuḥammadov was not alone in his anxieties over socialism and its incompatibility with Islam. His concerns were shared by balanced reformer Dhākir al-Qadīrī, who translated Syrian Rafīqbek al-'Azīm's Life and Religion from Arabic into Tatar in 1911. Qadīrī's translation laid out the case for socialism being antagonistic to Islam far more articulately than Dīnmuḥammadov managed to. The book argued that socialism, by proposing class struggle as a necessary step on the journey to achieving happiness (sa'adat) for all humanity, set itself in opposition to Islam. In Islam, the salvation of humanity was not the task of any single class, but of every human being, and it was a collective project in which the more learned were obliged to help the less learned regardless of wealth or class (al-'Azīm 1911). Though a translation by one of Dīnmuhammadov's intellectual rivals, those sentiments summarize, in a more diplomatic manner, Dīnmuḥammadov's aversion to socialism's violent and divisive aspects.

3. Discussion: Bringing the Three Ideologies Together

By the early twentieth century, young reformers combined Tatar nationalism and Islamic balanced reform with Russian revolutionary socialism and Marxist political philosophies to create a single narrative, a set of goals, and a plan for action.

In approaching both Islam and nation, the nationalist reformers adopted and adapted from European orientalist literature a narrative of golden age and decline. That narrative began with a pristine past—for Islam, the first three generations of Muslims, and for the Tatar nation, the state of Bulghar, and later, the Kazan khanate—in which people enjoyed justice and prosperity. This idyllic era was ended by a fall. For Islam, this fall was precipitated by the civil wars (*fitnas*) and the rise of the Umayyad and 'Abbasid caliphal dynasties, which preceded the emergence of the complex culture of Islamic legal commentaries and theological debates that twentieth-century reformers so despised (al-Qadīrī 1909). For the Tatar nation, this fall was the conquest of Kazan by the Muscovites, which reformers saw as having deprived their ancestors of sovereignty and the resources required to maintain their faith and culture (al-Marjānī 1897; Ghafūrī 1907; al-Jalālī 1908).

For both Islam and nation, this decline was reversible through a combination of socio-economic evolution and human intervention. Such a fusion of social revolutionary and Marxist thought was in no way unique to Volga-Ural Muslim reformists. It also appears in the concept of revolutionary vanguard laid out in V. I. Lenin's *What is to be Done?* (1902), which many of the young reformers active in the 1900s–1910s had read or were, at least, familiar with (Lenin 1902; Äkhmädullin 1981; Ibrahimov 1984b). By achieving political and national consciousness and spreading that consciousness to others, reformers believed that they could bring about a future for the nation and Islam that combined the justice and cultural flourishing of the imagined past with the most useful technologies of the present (Gafuri 1980a, 1980b; Rämiev 1980).

For the reformers, the end goal that Tatar nationalism, balanced reform, and socialism, for the promise of a society in which social inequality would at last be eliminated and hierarchy would be replaced with a community of autonomous, equal individuals who would have equal access to

material resources, knowledge, and political power. This vision finds its most elaborate expression in Amirkhan's *Reverend Fatḥullāh*, a novel that depicts a highly technological society in which all members recognize themselves as Tatars, are united in Islam, have open access to Islamic knowledge, and experience no poverty or conflict. Although *Reverend Fatḥullāh* is a Tatar nationalist novel, a balanced reformer's ideal vision of Islam plays a significant role in the future society that Amirkhan envisions. This society's legal system contains a *sharī'a* court run by a combination of legal scholars and common citizens. The city in which the plot unfolds possesses only one giant mosque capable of holding over 100,000 worshipers, an architectural embodiment of the unity of an ummah no longer divided by madhhab or sect (Ämirkhan 1984).

While Amirkhan fused together Tatar nationalism, Islamic balanced reform, and Marxist views of historical progress in fiction, his close friend, the poet 'Abdullāh Tūqāyev (1886–1913), did the same through poetry-writing and performatively. Inspired by a combination of fictional re-workings of Marjānī's *Affairs in Kazan and Bulghar* and Marxist views on history, Tūqāyev gradually worked out a theory that every nation evolved to a point when its own foundational national author appeared; Tūqāyev believed himself to be this historically predestined author for the Tatar nation (Tukai 2016a, 2016b, 2016c, 2011j, 2011k).

As Tūqāyev worked to create what he imagined would become the foundation of the Tatar national literary canon, he simultaneously made a point of commenting on Islamic belief and practice in the nascent Tatar nation. Unlike Qadīrī, Bīgīev, and Būbī, Tūqāyev was not a jurist or theologian by profession and he did not compose theoretical tracts or textbooks on Islamic law and theology in the same way that he did for national literature. Nor did he produce vernacular translations of the Qur'ān as did his friend, Kāmil Mutī'ī. However, Tūqāyev had received his education at Ural'sk Madrasa from Kāmil's father, Mutī'ullāh Tukhfatullīn, an al-Azhar graduate and a student of Muhammad Abduh (Mutigi 1986), and balanced reform formed a significant part of the intellectual scaffolding upon which Tūqāyev built his image of the Tatar nation. So too, did theories of Marxist class struggle, which Tūqāyev was first exposed to through his contact with Russian youths at an early job at a Russian newspaper and his reading of the works of Muslim-socialist novelist Ayād Ishāqī (Gladyshev 1986; Rämiev 2005). In his poetry, Tūqāyev developed a vision of Islam as a religion that was foundational to Tatar national identity, was practiced and experienced in the Tatar language, and was indispensable to the realization of social justice. In the poem "Native Tongue," he presents the Tatar language as the medium in which children address their first prayers to God (Tukai 2011p). In another poem, "A Mother's Prayer," he exalts an elderly woman praying late at night for the wellbeing of her son and implies that there is no way that God will fail to answer her prayer (Tukai 2011a). In these poems, Tūqāyev simultaneously celebrates the piety of humble Muslim believers and the power of a national vernacular language to enable those believers to experience a meaningful connection with God and Islam.

By contrast, Tūqāyev regularly calls out the wealthy and powerful for their lack of piety and meaningful knowledge of Islam. In, "A Little Story Set to Music," he tells the story of how Safi, a disciple of a powerful Sufi shaykh, is thrown into crisis when faced with his wife's demand for a divorce. Despite Safi's public displays of piety, he is revealed to be ignorant of sharī'a (Tukai 2011d). In another poem, "A Student, or an Encounter," Tūqāyev relates how wealthy Muslims praise madrasa students for their pure faith. However, when informed that the students are starving, the same wealthy people recommend that they pray to God for assistance (Tukai 2011m). In both these narrative poems, Tūqāyev explores the theme of outward piety versus inward ignorance. Both Safi the disciple and the wealthy onlookers behave in ways that suggest that they are good Muslims, but, when faced with a test of their knowledge of Islam (i.e., how to get a divorce; the need to donate money to help the poor), they fail miserably. Both of these poems reflect Volga-Ural balanced reformers' call for all Muslims to become knowledgeable about Islamic law and diligent in their application of it. At the same time, Tūqāyev's focus on social and economic privilege in these poems is very much inspired by his socialist colleagues' and friends' emphasis on class conflict and exploitation. This element is most obvious in

the contrast Tūqāyev draws in "A Student, or an Encounter" between wealthy citizens of the nation and impoverished students. However, Marxist values are also implied, if less obviously evident, in, "A Little Story Set to Music," with Tūqāyev's deliberate characterization of Safi as a Sufi, an identity that binds him into what Tūqāyev viewed as an exploitative socio-economic relationship between privileged shaykhs and their ignorant followers. Tūqāyev viewed Islamic scholars who exploited the ignorance of common Muslims as corrosive not only to Islam, but to the health of the Tatar nation (Tukai 2011h, 2011l).

Not content to confine his promotion of the Tatar nation and Islam to his writings, Tūqāyev acted out his view of proper Islam and national citizenship in his daily life. He presented his own childhood as a story of overcoming callousness and exploitation by the ignorant and impious, relating, among other things, how the woman charged with caring for him instead left him outside in the winter cold until his bare feet froze to the doorstep (Tukai 2016d). By re-telling this story, he meant for those who read or heard it to draw a comparison with how the Qur'an mandated that Muslims should treat orphaned children. Tūqāyev lived frugally, eschewing fine clothes, comfortable housing, and female company, all things that he associated with the lifestyle of the exploitative, irreligious classes (Tukai 2011e, 2011c, 2011l, 2011o). Even among his socialist-leaning friends, he became infamous for his penchant for ragged, ill-fitting clothing (Ämirkhan 1985a; Kamāl 1986; Rämiev 2005). He projected a commitment to Islam and the Tatar nation that was total and unwavering. Following the closure of Izh-Būbī Madrasa by the Russian police in 1910 and the subsequent investigation of its teachers for evidence of their participation in anti-government agitation, he cursed Dīnmuḥammadov (who he believed had denounced Izh-Būbī's teachers to the police) and vowed that if the Tatar presses were closed down (which would have amounted to the Russian government's suppression of both Islamic knowledge and Tatar national culture), he would tear his new clothing from his body and go out barefoot into the street (Tukai 2016e). In reading Tūqāyev's Tatar-language adaptation of Russian poet Mikhail Lermontov's "The Prophet," it is not difficult to see parallels between the poem's main character, a divinely-chosen messenger unappreciated and abused by his own people, and Tūqāyev's image of himself as someone destined by divine or historical forces to be a blindly devoted, ill-treated promoter of the Tatar nation, defender of pure Islam, and champion of the exploited (Tukai 2011i).

Not all Tatar nationalists and balanced reformers committed to their mission with Tūqāyev's zeal and not all combined their quests for nation-building, Islamic legal reform, and social justice in quite the same way. In fact, more of them focused primarily on one field while publishing in the same newspapers, moving in the same social circles, and voicing support for their colleagues' work. The themes of social equality and the overthrow of hierarchy were consistent across their work. For balanced reformers employed in the fields of Islamic law and theology, achieving equality among community members meant making Islamic knowledge accessible to a wider audience by translating key Arabic-language texts into vernacular Tatar-Turkish (Fakhreddinov 2005; Ross 2020) and challenging the relevance and validity of the traditional madrasa textbooks and legal commentaries (Bīgīev 1909a; Būbī 1909). Tatar nationalists saw themselves as promoting the same goal of equality and supporting their friends and colleagues in law and theology by using poetry, prose fiction, and drama to praise behaviors and individuals that advanced the causes of the Tatar nation, socio-economic equality, and the full engagement of all community members with Islam; and by condemning those who did not. Becoming a Tatar in no way meant abandoning or neglecting Islam. As G. 'Azīz argued in his analysis of nation, it was possible for a nation to have a special historical relationship with a religion that made that religion a key part of that nation's culture and identity, even if the religion was practiced by multiple nations. The Chinese nation enjoyed a distinct and important relationship with Buddhism. Why could the Tatar nation not enjoy similar relationship with Islam? ('Azīz 1913b).

4. Conclusions

When Dīnmuḥammadov accused certain Muslim scholars and intellectuals within the Volga-Ural Muslim community of being "socialist-Wahhabi-nationalist revolutionaries," he vented his anger

and anxiety about a group of people who, from his perspective, seemed to advocate political and social upheaval, debasement of Islamic law and theology, and violence against their fellow Muslims. However, he also described a very real phenomenon in early-twentieth-century Volga-Ural society: Muslim intellectuals' fused Tatar nationalism, Islamic balanced reform, and Russian revolutionary socialism to imagine a society in which all members would enjoy equal access to knowledge and economic resources and take part equally in the maintenance of Islamic law and Tatar national culture.

Dīnmuḥammadov and other critics of this vision often focused on its violent and destructive aspects, and ultimately, they were not altogether wrong in this focus. The revolutions that toppled the Romanov dynasty and facilitated the rise of the Soviet regime were driven by visions of utopia achieved through violence. Those visions sprang from the same intellectual soil as the imagined egalitarian Muslim Tatar nation. Dīnmuḥammadov himself died in 1919, dragged from his home and shot in a nearby field amid the chaos of the Russian civil war (Fäkhreddin 2010b). After a lifetime of railing against revolutionary violence, he became one of its victims.

The project of creating a state that brought together Tatar nationalism, Islam, and socialism, also fell victim to that violence. At the 1917 Union of 'Ulamā' in Kazan, as part of the broader preparations for the establishment of an autonomous Turko-Tatar state in the Volga-Ural region, participants proposed a political order in which a collection of mandatory sadaqa payments would be instituted across society to fund the salaries and upkeep of legal scholars. They also called for the publication of a bulletin that could be used to disseminate information to their colleagues posted in villages across the nation about accepted legal rulings on various issues to help them resolve local disputes (Anonymous 1917). Both of those resolutions suggest that Islam was intended to play a significant role in the emerging Tatar nation-state. However, in March 1918, shortly after the declaration of the Turko-Tatar autonomy, its leaders were arrested by the Bolshevik-dominated Kazan city soviet and the Volga-Ural Muslim community was absorbed into what would become the Soviet Union. In the late 1920s, the Soviet godless campaigns drove Islam out of public life and out of the Soviet-approved version of Tatar nationalism. Nonetheless, Volga-Ural Muslim intellectual life in the early twentieth century demonstrates the creative ways in which colonized Muslims adapted and combined seemingly conflicting ideologies to imagine a post-colonial future.

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Conflicts of Interest: The author declares no conflict of interest.

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