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The evolution of Soviet Muslim policy, 1917–1921

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ABSTRACT

THE EVOLUTION OF SOVIET MUSLIM POLICY, 1917-1921.

Glenn L. Roberts

During the revolutionary period the Soviets came into political and cultural conflict with Russia's Muslims. Despite indications that the majority of Muslims desired political unification based on their Islamic heritage, the Party divided them into separate "nationalities" along narrow ethnic lines, incorporated most into the RSFSR, and attempted to uproot traditional Islamic institutions and customs under the aegis of class war. Resistance took the form of pan-Muslim nationalism, a reformist political conception with roots in the Near East. This conflict not only aborted the export of revolution to the Islamic world, contributing to the passing of the revolutionary era in Russia, but aided Stalin's rise to power. Soviet policy succeeded politically, defining the terms of interaction between Russians and Soviet Muslims for the next 70 years, but failed culturally in 1921-22, when the Party was forced to suspend its "war on Islam" as the price of political control.
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The Evolution of Soviet Muslim Policy, 1917-1921.

Introduction.

High demographic growth among Soviet Muslims, the revolution in Iran and the Soviet debacle in Afghanistan have given new importance to the Muslim experience in the Soviet Union. While the topic of Islam in the Soviet Union is not as obscure as it once was, it remains a neglected aspect of Soviet studies, and one with special complications. Not only are sources subject to the same ideological and Cold War biases as other topics in Soviet history, but most historians of the Soviet Union have traditionally been even more Western-oriented than their Tsarist-era counterparts. A veil of secrecy maintained by bland pronouncements of the "friendship of peoples," together with Soviet support for political causes in the Islamic world, have until recently put off many Islamic and Asian specialists who might otherwise have investigated the topic. Despite its development into what is perhaps the most sensitive security issue in the USSR today, specialists remain rare, first-hand information scarce, and the public, even Russian historians, only dimly aware of the role that Islam has played in Russian history. One authoritative textbook, for instance, devotes not a single section to Islam, makes no reference to Islam in the index, and makes few allusions to Islam within the text itself. This, despite the conversion of the Volga Bulgars to Islam in the 10th century AD, amounting to almost 1,000 years of continuous Russian interaction with Muslims—some 300 years longer than occurred in Spain.

Islam attracted the attention of the Party within a few days of the October Revolution. Before the end of 1917 the Bolshevik leadership had recognized Russia's Muslims as a significant political force and by 1919 formulated a policy to deal with them, imposing narrowly conceived Western structures of regional nationalism in order to diminish their political influence. This policy of "compartmentalization" elevated minor ethnic and linguistic traits, sometimes amounting to no more than tribal dialects, to the status of nationhood while suppressing broader political trends, especially those rooted in the heritage of Islam. The existence of this policy during the revolutionary era has long been alleged, but to the writer's knowledge no systematic effort has been undertaken to verify it. It has also been suggested that concern with the political demands of domestic Muslim Communists was a factor in the Party's decision to suspend the revolution in Asia after the Baku Congress of September 1920. No systematic study has been undertaken to demonstrate this either. While the latter question cannot be fully covered in this work, which focuses on domestic policy, I hope to show that a crisis in Soviet-Muslim relations in the year 1920, the result of growing resistance to the Soviets' Muslim policy, constituted "sufficient and reasonable cause" for this suspension, clearly demonstrating that the demands of Soviet Muslims were the primary factor.

In addition to this theme of political conflict—the dominant theme of this study—a second path is explored. This path was the more fundamental conflict that developed over class war and social revolution, and most particularly over Moscow's efforts to eradicate Islam. The social conflict, which had its roots in Marxism, Russian colonialism and fundamental differences in culture, greatly aggravated the political

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tensions. In tracing the development of these two themes—political conflict over Muslim autonomy, and social revolution in a religious and traditional society—this thesis concludes that Soviet Muslim policy succeeded politically in that the Party survived the challenge of the Muslim Communists and imposed its will for decades to come. On the other hand, this study concludes that Soviet Muslim policy failed "socially," when, between 1921 and 1922, the Party was forced to rescind its social measures. Islam not only survived the challenge posed by social stratification and class war during the revolutionary era, but experienced increased popularity. And, despite renewed repressions under Stalin, it continues to attract adherents in the Soviet Union even today.

Inclusivist religious-based nationalism among Soviet Muslims, here termed "pan-Muslim nationalism," was central to the Muslims' resistance. This political conception was the actual but unacknowledged heir of Jamal al-Din al-Afghani's reformist pan-Islam of the late 19th century.7 Although disguised and distorted by Muslim national-communists, nowhere else has reformist pan-Islam come as close to the actual reins of power as in Russia between 1918 and 1921. The failure of the Muslim national-communists to halt the growing power of Moscow relegated this pan-Muslim nationalism to academia, probably permanently, since narrower national conceptions now predominate among Soviet Muslims as in the rest of the Islamic world.8

In the following pages the two themes of political conflict between the Russian Communist Party and pan-Muslim nationalists and social conflict between European and Islamic traditions and institutions are traced in a narrative that begins with the collapse of Tsarism, and ends with the reimposition of centralized control and Russian

7 For a summary of al-Afghani's ideas, see Albert Hourani, Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age, 1798-1939 (NY: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1983), pp. 103-129.
8 The best popular summary of Muslim national-communism available is Bennigsen and Wimbush's Muslim National Communism. Pages 41-81 especially relate to this thesis.
ethnic rule in 1921-22. Chapter One details the failure of the Party's pre-October 1917 nationality policy and traces the impact of Russian clashes with Muslim nationalists on this policy after October. Chapter Two measures the effect which Bolshevik consolidation in 1918 had upon the evolving political conceptions of the Volga Tatars and describes the emergence of a Soviet nationality policy tailored to the Tatars but applicable to all of Russia's Muslims. Chapter Three presents the ideas of the foremost political theorist among the Muslim Communists, the Volga Tatar Mirsaid Sultan-Galiev. Chapters Four and Five describe the evolution of Soviet-Muslim relations in Turkestan, Chapter Four concentrating on 1917-18, and Chapter Five tracing the application of Soviet Tatar policy to Turkestan in 1919-1920. Chapter Six focuses on the growing resistance and organization of the Muslim Communists and their efforts to gain control of the movement to export revolution to Asia in 1919 and 1920. Chapter Seven follows the development of these efforts through the critical year of 1920 as opposition to Russian Communist rule spread from the Muslim Communists to the rest of Russia's Muslims, reaching a climax during the Baku Congress of the People's of the East in September. In the last chapter, Chapter Eight, Lenin cancels plans to export revolution to Asia due to apprehension that the Muslim Communists might co-opt new Soviet states in Asia and then initiates a campaign to control the Muslim Communists and to suppress domestic revolts.

At the end of this thesis a comprehensive calendar and a glossary have been added, the latter including personal names. In addition, two supplemental articles are provided: "Bolshevism and Nationalism" places the nationalism of Russia's Muslims in the context of Russia's other revolutionary movements; "Islam Under the Tsars," an extensive account of Russian-Muslim relations from the medieval period to 1917, provides important background information for the events of the revolutionary period.
The writer recommends those unfamiliar with Soviet-Muslim relations especially to read "Islam Under the Tsars" before reading the thesis itself.
Chapter 1: Soviet Policy and the Tatar Right.

Soviet Nationality Policy in 1917.

The role that nationalism should play in the socialist revolution was much debated among the Bolsheviks. Although most Marxists, including the leaders of the RSDLP(b), opposed any form of nationalism, in On the Right of Nations to Self-Determination published in June 1913, Lenin insisted that, although political unity was the ultimate goal of the Bolsheviks and federalism unacceptable, national movements nevertheless had the right to complete secession from Russia.¹ In answer to objections from the Bolshevik Left that after the revolution these movements might assume a life of their own and oppose a socialist regime, Lenin expressed the hope that the proletariats of the various national movements would perceive that their interests lay with membership in the RSDLP(b) and oppose secessionist movements on the part of their respective national bourgeoisies before such movements actually attained independence.² However, the Left remained skeptical that Lenin's reservations on secession would guarantee Bolshevik control.

At the Seventh All-Russian Bolshevik Conference in Petrograd in April 1917 Stalin offered a compromise between Pyatakov’s "Down with borders" slogan and Lenin’s "right of nations to self-determination." In Stalin’s view the Party should continue to interpret Lenin’s slogan as meaning the right to political secession, but in each case this right should be conditional on whether secession was beneficial to the world proletariat:

This...question must be settled by the party of the proletariat in each particular case independently....A people has a right to secede, but it may or may not exercise that right, according to circumstances. Thus we are

at liberty to agitate for or against secession, according to the interests of
the proletariat, of the proletarian revolution....

In Stalin’s conception, then, the Party should reserve to itself the power to avert
secessions before they gathered momentum, thus enhancing its guarantees of control.

On May 3 the Conference adopted Stalin’s views. However, since Stalin’s
assignment of veto power to the Party differed only in emphasis from views to be found
in previous articles published by Lenin, the Conference’s resolution should be seen as
an effective endorsement of Lenin’s position and a repudiation of the Left. This gave
the Party in 1917 extreme flexibility in nationality affairs—free to proclaim adherence
to orthodox Marxism, but at the same time benefiting from a liberal stance on the
national question.

After the October Revolution, in line with Party policy, the Bolsheviks issued a

Declaration of Rights of the Peoples of Russia:

The Council of People’s Commissars has resolved to base its activity in
the matter of the nationalities of Russia on the following principles:
1. Equality and sovereignty of the peoples of Russia.
2. The right of the peoples of Russia to free self-determination, up to
secession and formation of an independent State.
3. Abolition of all and any national and national-religious privileges
and restrictions.
4. Free development of national minorities and ethnic groups
inhabiting Russia.

3 Stalin, J., Marxism and the National Question: Selected Writings and Speeches (NY:
4 All dates are in the Julian calendar ("Old Style"), until February 1, 1918. On February
1 the Soviet government added 13 days to the calendar to bring Russia into accordance
with the Gregorian calendar used in the rest of Europe. Some localities did not make the
change until some time after February 1 and some localities made the change on their
own initiative already in 1917, hence the precise timing of an event in late 1917 and
early 1918 sometimes cannot be determined.
5 These differences perhaps only reflected their public personas. It is generally
accepted by historians that Stalin acted as little more than a mouthpiece for Lenin in
nationality affairs, and that the true author of Stalin’s stated positions was Lenin.
7 McCauley, Martin, ed., The Russian Revolution and the Soviet State 1917-1921:
But, despite Lenin's hopes that this declaration would satisfy the aspirations of minority nationalists until the Revolution spread to Europe, declarations of independence proliferated through the remainder of 1917. In response, again over the opposition of the other Bolshevik leaders, Lenin insisted on granting recognition to these declarations. In answer to the dissenters, Lenin now asserted that, like Russia, each nationality must experience its own socialist revolution. After the local proletariat installed socialism, Lenin assured the Central Committee, each nation would then apply to rejoin Soviet Russia. So confident was Lenin of this, that he issued a second declaration specifically endorsing national secessions on the part of Russia's Muslims. The Appeal of the Sovnarkom to the Muslims of Russia and the East appeared in December 1917 in the name of the new Commissariat of Nationalities (Narkomnats) over the signatures of Lenin and Stalin:

Moslems of Russia, Tatars of the Volga and the Crimea, Kirghiz and Sarts [i.e. Uzbeks] of Siberia and Turkestan, Turks and Tatars of Trans-Caucasia, Chechens and mountain Cossacks! All you, whose mosques and shrines have been destroyed, whose faith and customs have been violated by the Tsars and oppressors of Russia! Henceforward your beliefs and customs, your national and cultural institutions, are declared free and inviolable! Build your national life freely and without hindrance. It is your right. Know that your rights, like those of all the peoples of Russia, will be protected by the might of the revolution, by the Councils of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies!\(^8\)

At the same time, to emphasize his willingness to work with Muslims as equals, the Suyumbike Tower of Kazan, an historical monument of some cultural importance to the Volga Tatars, was transferred to the control of Tatar Socialists, and the Quran of Othman, reputed to be one of only seven original Qurans still existing, was returned to Muslims in Petrograd.\(^9\)

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These innovations to Lenin's pre-October nationality policy—recognition of independence, the Appeal to Muslims, and the return of artifacts—did not reflect a desire to co-exist with independent Muslim states in Russia. Lenin felt that the RSDLP(b), as the sole possessor of proletarian consciousness in peasant Russia, should be the dominant political power wherever possible.\(^\text{10}\) Rather these innovations demonstrated Lenin's continued pragmatism in nationality affairs. This flexibility manifested itself not only in deceptive revolutionary slogans but also in a tendency to allow misimpressions among supporters of the Bolsheviks to continue indefinitely.\(^\text{11}\)

For example, the Kipchaks (a Kazakh tribe) believed that the word "Bolshevik" was Russian for "Kipchak." Jangeldin, the Bolshevik commissar among the Kipchaks, did not disabuse them of this notion, and the Kipchaks remained among the most loyal Bolshevik allies during the Civil War.\(^\text{12}\)

**The Tatar Independence Movement.**

Under the Provisional Government Russia's Muslims established a considerable degree of cultural, political, and even military autonomy. By the end of 1917 this drive for autonomy had resulted in secessionist movements in Crimea, Azerbaijan, and Central Asia.\(^\text{13}\) In the middle Volga region former Ittifik\(^\text{14}\) politicians among the Tatars and Bashkirs constructed the core of an Islamic state based on their historic

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\(^{10}\) In the weeks after the October Revolution Lenin resisted sharing power even with the Left SRs, allies of the Bolsheviks in the October Revolution. Only the temporary resignation of several of the more moderate members of the Central Committee induced him to acquiesce in the participation of Left SRs in the Soviet government. See Martin McCauley, *The Soviet Union Since 1917* (NY: Longman, 1981), p. 23.


\(^{14}\) See Glossary.
homeland and claimed the right to govern all of Russia's Muslims. This core, consisting of a National Executive Council (Milli Merkezi Shuro), a National Assembly (Milli Majlis), and a Central Military Council (Harbi Shuro), proclaimed independence in late 1917 as the "Idel-Ural Republic," named after the older Tatar name for their homeland.  

Although the Sovnarkom implicitly recognized this proto-state when it issued the Declaration of Rights, its attitude toward the Tatar nationalists changed as the Soviet government consolidated its position. In early 1918 the Bolsheviks refrained from further conciliatory moves, and began to treat the Tatars as a political threat. Most disturbing to the Bolsheviks was control by the Central Military Council (Harbi Shuro) of a number of Muslim military units. These units had been established in the summer of 1917 with the permission of the Provisional Government in response to a "request" from the National Council (Milli Shuro), which the Provisional Government had not felt strong enough to refuse. The Bolsheviks' first encounter with Muslim units was in August 1917, when the "Savage" Division, the largest Muslim unit in the

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15 Pipes, p. 78. In Ottoman Turkey a 'millet' was a religious community which bore legal responsibility for its subjects in non-political matters. The adjective 'milli' was often employed by Muslim reformers in the 19th century in an attempt to communicate the new concept of nationalism to an unfamiliar public. Use of this term for a variety of concepts was as confusing to the Muslims of Russia and Southwest Asia at the turn of the century as it is to contemporary readers, and tended to obscure important differences among those who used the term.


17 Rorlich, p. 132. In The Modern History of Soviet Central Asia (NY: Praeger, 1964), p. 100, Geoffrey Wheeler emphasizes the partial nature of Tatar moves towards autonomy at this time. However, the incomplete state of the Tatar organizations seems to have been due more to disagreement over methods than over goals.

18 Zenkovsky, p. 171.

19 Zenkovsky, p. 159.
Tsarist army, spearheaded Kornilov's drive on Petrograd. This event also demonstrated the usefulness of leftist Muslims to the Bolsheviks when they helped to stop this drive through fraternization with the Savage Division.

In early 1918 the Muslim National Council in Kazan (Millî Merkezi Shuro) was neutral, proclaiming itself to favor "neither Kornilov nor Lenin." However, due to the previous favoritism that the Tsarist state had shown Muslims and regardless of the conciliatory moves by the Sovnarkom, the Bolsheviks and Russians in the soviets tended to view Muslims in general as intrinsically counter-revolutionary even when not actually assisting the opposition. Hence on January 31, 1918, the Red Guard occupied Orenburg and, while fighting General Dutov's Cossacks, dispersed the local Kazakh and Bashkir committees. At the same time detachments from the Red fleet suppressed the Crimean Tatars in Simferopol. In February 1918 the Tatars gathered what forces they could in Kazan for a military congress. This aroused fear on the part of the Revolutionary Kazan Soviet, one of many soviets in Muslim areas that were competing with Muslim organizations for local control in 1918. The fact that the Muslim troops suffered as much as did the Russian troops from desertion and a decline in morale due to the general collapse of the Imperial Army did not reassure the Soviet government in Petrograd which feared, at a time when only a few hundred soldiers could decide the loyalty of entire provinces, that the congress might declare Tatar support for the Whites, with serious repercussions among Russia's other Muslims.

However, the Bolsheviks held the loyalty of a number of leftist Tatars, and in late

21 Zenkovsky, p. 170.
22 Zenkovsky, p. 171.
23 Rorlich, p. 133.
February the rising tensions between the Kazan Soviet and the Harbi Shuro caused these leftists to throw in their cause with the Kazan Soviet. On February 26 the Kazan Soviet formed a Revolutionary High Command to oppose the Harbi Shuro and declared martial law. The arrest of 200 leading Tatars by the Kazan Soviet was followed by several days of clashes with supporters of the Harbi Shuro and the declaration of a new Tatar national regime in eastern Kazan across the Bulak river, which the Bolsheviks pejoratively termed Zabulachnaya Respublika or "The Trans-Bulak Republic." Soviet preoccupation with the German offensive in Courland then distracted Moscow from the conflict, and on February 28 both sides in Kazan signed a truce. The Tatars of the Trans-Bulak Republic proceeded with plans to set up an independent national state, but, once the Brest-Litovsk Treaty was concluded in late March, detachments of Red Guards from Moscow crushed what remained of Tatar national independence.

**Soviet Nationality Policy in 1918.**

This suppression of an embryonic Tatar state reflected a growing perception at the highest levels of the Russian Communist Party in early 1918 that Lenin's policy of recognizing national independence movements had been a mistake. In the Ukraine, nationalists had conspired with the Central Powers, even appearing at the side of the

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24 Zenkovsky, p. 171.
25 Rorlich, p. 133.
26 Zenkovsky, p. 174; Rorlich, p. 133.
27 As a result of Trotsky's policy of "no-war, no-peace" in the negotiations at Brest-Litovsk, on the morning of February 18, 1918, the Germans renewed their advance into Russia. On March 3, when the Bolsheviks returned to the table and signed a treaty fully accepting the demands of the Central Powers, the Germans halted their advance. See McCauley, *Soviet Union*, p. 25.
28 Zenkovsky, p. 177-8.
29 In March 1918 the "All-Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party-Bolshevik," or RSDLP(b), changed its name to the "All-Russian Communist Party-Bolshevik," rendered here as RKP.
Germans with their own demands in the negotiations at Brest-Litovsk. In Finland, the Finnish Social Democrats became embroiled in a Civil War with Finnish Whites which soon resulted in intervention by German troops. In the Crimea, Tatars had sought to affiliate with the Ottoman Turks, who were once again referring to the Black Sea as "an Ottoman Sea." In the Caucasus, the Turks had proclaimed their intention to annex Baku and were already squabbling with their German allies over its oil and over who should occupy Georgia.

The active cooperation of minority national movements with the enemies of Soviet power led to a fundamental change in Bolshevik nationality policy. On January 16, 1918, the Sovnarkom issued a Declaration of Rights of Toiling and Exploited People. This declaration mentioned for the first time a federal government:

The Russian Soviet Republic is established on the basis of a free union of free nations, as a federation of national Soviet republics....to which the workers and peasants of each nationality [have] the right to make an independent decision, at their own plenipotentiary congress of Soviets, whether they desire, and, if so, on what basis, to participate.

This declaration represented two changes over Lenin’s former open-ended nationality policy. First, the Bolsheviks finally embraced (at least in theory) federalism—a policy Lenin had vehemently opposed for years as an intolerable

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33 Pipes, p. 211.

34 Carr, I, p. 117, 139.
concession to nationalism. However, as a step backward from the 1917 policy of recognition of full national independence, federalism was no longer a concession in 1918, but a step towards centralization. It is interesting to note that in the Party discussions on how to halt the trend of secessions, the option of federalism was said to have been first suggested by Stalin—perhaps an indication of Stalin's innate nationalistic outlook.35

Second, since Party policy had now switched from concession to centralization, a change in doctrine was needed to rationalize the change. Stalin's views in his 1913 work *Marxism and the National Question*36 were expanded and adopted at the Third All-Russian Congress of Soviets. These views, which Stalin voiced on several occasions after October 1917, are summarized in the phrase "proletarian self-determination." This conception re-interpreted national self-determination in terms of class struggle, and was employed as a rationale to avoid having to recognize any further secessions:

All this points to the necessity of interpreting the principle of self-determination as a right not of the bourgeoisie, but of the working masses of the given nation. The principle of self-determination must be an instrument in the struggle for socialism and must be subordinated to the principles of socialism.37

In line with Lenin's long-standing preference for territorial as opposed to extraterritorial nationalism, the new federal structure would be based exclusively on territorial principles. This way, the Party could maintain control over the decisive institutions, e.g. education, while placating local nationalists with formal but

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35 Carr, 1, p. 132.
36 Stalin, *Marxism*, p. 7-68. See Appendix Two for a discussion of this work.
37 Carr, *Bolshevik Revolution*, 1, p. 266. Where Lenin's conception had allowed the right of secession to the bourgeoisie of a national minority, Stalin's conception restricted this right to only the proletariat of that national minority (which presumably would have no interest in seceding), hence "proletarian" self-determination. Again it should be noted that the true author of Stalin's position was very likely Lenin.
meaningless "national" boundaries. Like the innovations of late 1917, the new policy of federalism was not conceived with long-term administrative goals in mind—the Bolsheviks still expected an early extension of the Russian Revolution to Europe. Rather, the Declaration was made in a mood of growing apprehension since, far from secessionist movements applying to join Soviet Russia, they were joining or being occupied by the Central Powers, and the Bolsheviks, having aided in the destruction of the Tsarist army, were discovering that except for the vastness of Russian territory they were defenseless should Imperial Germany attempt to occupy the rest of the country.

As the spring of 1918 turned into summer, the threat posed by German occupation receded, but the threat that the Bolsheviks felt to their position as the Party of the proletariat in a backward country, now increasingly perceived to be hostile to Bolshevik rule, led the Bolsheviks to continue tightening their nationality policy. In July, the ideas of the Declaration were expanded into the first Soviet constitution, which, in providing for "autonomous regions" inside a Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (RSFSR), institutionalized federalism. Like the Declaration in January, the purpose of the constitution was not to construct a federal bureaucracy, since bureaucracy, as an instrument of state, was similarly expected to "wither away" upon completion of the World Revolution, but was rather, like Stalin's "proletarian self-determination" formula, designed to forestall future secessions. As for those regions that had already seceded, due to the failure of proletarian movements within these new nations, military coercion became the new pattern. In January of 1918, reunification

38 Under Stalin this policy was summed up in the phrase "national in form, but socialist in content."
39 In July the Left SRs broke with the government over Brest-Litovsk and initiated a revolt. Although quickly suppressed, the revolt, along with the consolidation of White armies and the Allied intervention in July and August, evoked harsh responses from the Bolsheviks and quickly mushroomed into the Russian Civil War.
with the Ukraine had failed because, due to the proximity of the Imperial German army, the Bolsheviks were forced to rely primarily on non-violent means for effecting reunification. But after a revolt in the Ukraine by local Bolsheviks failed in August 1918, the Red Army successfully invaded in January 1919. Thus, in the Ukraine, as in Kazan, reunification was ultimately accomplished only through the direct use of the Red Army.

By the autumn of 1918, the Party’s new ad hoc formula in its treatment of minority nationalities had become: a pseudo-federal structure to appease the milder nationalists in the Soviet fold; a single Communist Party to ensure control of the new pseudo-states; Stalin’s "proletarian self-determination" formula to disguise the actual abandonment of self-determination; and direct employment of the Red Army against those regimes which had already established independence from Russia and which resisted internal pressures for reunification. Thus it can be said that the whole structure of federation, formal recognition of secession, and regional autonomy amounted to no more than an elaborate facade for a traditional Russian state held together by a centralized bureaucracy headquartered in Moscow and supervised by ethnic Great Russians or Russianized minorities, a state that was poised to use a reconstructed Russian army under ex-Tsarist officers for a period of renewed expansion against the national minorities.

The Baku Soviet.

Any treatment of Soviet-Muslim relations in the months immediately following the October Revolution would not be complete without an account of events in the Caucasus and Azerbaijan. Nowhere else among the ruins of the Tsarist state were relations between Russians and Muslims so strained. Since the first half of the 19th century the various peoples of the northern Caucasus had resented Russian settlement. Under the Provisional Government a national movement grew briefly, only to fall
under the sway in the autumn of fundamentalist Sufi imams who preached a traditional pan-Islamic jihad against all Westerners. In the words of one such leader, "I am spinning a rope with which to hang all...those who write from left to right."\footnote{All major scripts in the Islamic world are written from right to left, including Arabic, Persian, and Turkish.} A more explicit statement of conservative pan-Islam one cannot find. After the October coup, these peoples no longer felt constrained and fell upon the Russian and Cossack settlements in the cities of the northern Caucasus and along the Terek causing much bloodshed.\footnote{Pipes, p. 97.} The seizure of Petrovsk (Makhachkala) in March 1918 completed a long-delayed political reassertion and cut Azerbaijan off from the rest of Russia.\footnote{Swietochowski, Tadeusz, \textit{Russian Azerbaijan, 1905-1920: The Shaping of National Identity in a Muslim Community} (NY: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985), p. 103.} In the city of Baku a Bolshevik-dominated soviet had emerged after the October Revolution. This Baku Soviet dispatched aid to the beleaguered Russians on the Terek, but were frustrated when the Muslims of Azerbaijan took advantage of the Revolution to form a provisional government and a Muslim militia under a political party called the Musavat. In December 1917 the Azerbaijanis declared solidarity with the Dagestanis and began to disarm the thousands of Russian troops who were crossing Azerbaijan on their way back to Russia. In January 1918 units of the new Azerbaijani national army, including a regiment of the "Savage" Division, killed up to 1,000 Russians on a troop train who resisted this disarming.\footnote{Suny, Ronald, \textit{The Baku Commune, 1917-1918} (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press, 1972), p. 199.} This "Shamkhor" incident was followed by organized attacks on Russians throughout Azerbaijan. The Baku Soviet took the lead in a Russian counter-offensive, the clashes escalating steadily until March 31, when, at the instigation of the Soviet, the Armenian Dashnak militia suddenly joined the
struggle and fell upon the Muslims of Baku, who were a minority in the city.\textsuperscript{44} Up to 3,000 of the Muslim population were killed, in partial payment for the Young Turk massacres of 1915. Outraged Azerbaijanis, Dagestanis and some half-hearted Georgians fulfilling a treaty obligation then attacked Baku, but failed to dislodge the Soviet. Despite the fact that diplomatic relations were established early among the several governments that had emerged in the Transcaucasus after October 1917, i.e. the Georgian Mensheviks, the Armenians of Yerevan, and the Musavat of Azerbaijan, the Baku Soviet ignored these formal relations and adopted an attitude that interpreted all national and ethnic conflicts purely in terms of class struggle: "Any peace delegation would serve no purpose. There has not been any fratricidal struggle in Baku. There was and is continuing beyond the limits of Baku a civil war against counterrevolutionary beys and khans."\textsuperscript{45}

Caught up in more immediate concerns until late spring 1918, the Party took little notice of the events in Baku and made no formal adjustment to those events in its nationality policy. But news of the conflict between Muslims and the Baku Soviet spread rapidly and already by January was exerting an intangible but nevertheless strong force on relations between Russians and Muslims throughout Russia, and must be held partly responsible for Petrograd's decision to crush the Tatar republic in March and for the entire subsequent course of events.

\textsuperscript{44} Suny, p. 216–224. Due to Tsarist policy, the Armenians had extensive military training, whereas the Muslims, being exempt from the draft, had no such experience. Armenians played an important role in the Revolution—the Armenian-Bolshevik alliance was essential for the survival of the Revolution in the southern regions and paralleled Lenin's reliance on the Lettish regiments in European Russia.

\textsuperscript{45} Swietochowski, p. 117.
Chapter 2: Soviet Policy and the Tatar Left.

Emergence of the Tatar Left.

With the suppression of overt manifestations of Tatar and Bashkir nationalism, a new phase ensued in Bolshevik-Tatar relations. The focus of this new development was the Tatar Left, which by splitting Tatar ranks had contributed to the suppression of the Idel-Ural committees and the Trans-Bulak Republic. However, this Left soon became the focus of a renewed struggle with Tatar nationalism, no longer over formal independence, but over autonomy within the Russian Communist Party. To understand the nature of this struggle, and the significance it acquired for Bolshevik-Muslim relations it is necessary to examine Tatar nationalism in Russia more deeply.

Despite their proclamation of the Idel-Ural Republic, it had not been the desire of most Tatars to construct a state separate from the other Muslims of Tsarist Russia. In early 1917, building on their Ittifak experience of the pre-war period, the Tatars had emerged as the main proponents of extraterritorial autonomy among Russia's Muslims, arguing, at the First All-Russian Congress of Muslims in Kazan on May 1, 1917, in favor of limited autonomy until the Provisional Government could convene the Constituent Assembly. The Tatars were opposed at the May Congress by many of the other Muslims of Russia, especially those from the peripheries: the Crimea, the Caucasus, and Central Asia. Even though the congress came to amicable agreements on a number of other issues such as land redistribution, labor reform, and religious education, these delegates from Russia's periphery outvoted the Tatars on the national question, endorsing a federal concept of territorial-based republics. At subsequent congresses

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2 It was at this congress that the Milli Merkazi Shuro, Harbi Shuro, and Millis Majlis were created, with the intention of exercising their jurisdiction over all of Russia's Muslims.
and conferences the Tatars consistently sought to reverse this decision. Therefore non-Tatar delegates ceased attending Tatar-sponsored events and proceeded to set up their own national organizations unilaterally, based on their respective territories without Tatar involvement or approval.\textsuperscript{3} By late summer 1917, the Tatars accepted this state of affairs and began to organize their own state, but only reluctantly and without renouncing the theoretical supersedence of their own national organizations over those of the unresponsive peripheries. Continued debate within Tatar ranks on the territorial issue delayed the formation of the Idel-Ural Republic and was largely responsible for its weakness in the face of Soviet pressure in the spring of 1918.\textsuperscript{4}

The defeat of extraterritorial autonomy at the May Congress has been almost universally interpreted as a defeat for pan-Islamic political notions and a victory for territorial nationalism. Various rationales have been suggeted for this, for instance that the "rich bourgeoisie" among the Ittifak were isolated from the Muslim masses, or that Western secular and regional nationalism had become dominant among the Central Asians who now adhered to a "Turkistani nation," and among the Azerbaijanis who now wished to set up an "Azerbaijani nation." These interpretations are incorrect. To understand the true significance of the May Congress and the position that pan-Islamic notions actually held, a second factor must be considered: Muslim attitudes toward social reform. In Russia the Tatars had been the chief sponsors of Jadidism—the program to modernize education, secularize thought, and reform the largely static mental and institutional world which Russia's Muslims had inherited from the recent past. While some Muslims from the peripheral regions were also in the forefront of Jadidism—e.g. the Crimean Gasprinsky—the peripheral areas held the highest concentration of conservative Muslims and mullahs, those elements that had

\textsuperscript{3} Rorlich, p. 129-130.
\textsuperscript{4} Pipes, p. 158.
consistently opposed the Jadids. At the May Congress the most bitter split was in fact not over rival conceptions of nationalism, but over efforts to raise the status of women. On the first day of the conference the 195 clerics and ulema, mostly Turkestanis from Central Asia and Dagestanis from the Caucasus, objected to the presence of the some 200 women delegates, and attempted to shout down proposals to abolish the veil, prohibit polygamy, prohibit marriage of minors, and establish equal rights to inheritance. A Muslim conference in Baku preparatory to the May Congress in Moscow had witnessed similar confrontations between conservative Dagestanis and liberal Azerbaijanis. At the May Congress, only after prolonged debate in which the clerics and ulema found themselves almost isolated was a resolution passed proclaiming equal rights for women. The social conservatives then fought to reverse this decision, circulating a petition to that effect signed by 224 delegates. (Several had changed their minds after they realized the implications of the resolutions for which they had just voted.) As one imam from Central Asia exclaimed, in reference to the resolution on polygamy: "How would I be able to appear before those who sent me to this congress?...What can I tell them if this motion is not revised?"  

This split over social issues profoundly affected the debate on nationalism—in fact, without the clash over the status of women, the clerics and ulema might actually have supported the Tatars' pan-Islamic agenda of political and cultural centralization, in accordance with the traditional Islamic ideal of closing ranks against non-Muslims. However, the shock the traditionalists felt when confronted with a Tatar-led majority in favor of social reform strongly influenced their perception of the Congress as a whole. A perception that the congress was controlled by secular Jadids bent on

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5 This congress should not be confused with the Congress of the Peoples of the East held at Baku in September 1920.
6 Zenkovsky, p. 151; Rorlich, p. 128. Had delegates from the Caucasus and Central Asia attended subsequent congresses, a counter-resolution stood a good chance of passing.
undermining the most sacrosanct elements of the Shariah—its family codes—led most clerics to vote against extraterritorial autonomy in order to protect the Shariah. While in one sense it would be pointless to distinguish genuine sympathy for regional nationalism on the one hand from sincere opposition to women’s emancipation on the other since the Tatars’ conception of inclusivist nationalism was inseparable from their role as Jadids, nevertheless, in another sense an important point is involved, for if it is accepted that the political conceptions of the Jadids were sufficiently similar to those of the conservatives that cooperation was possible in 1917 (and their agreements on other topics indicate that this was so), then one may suppose that should the Tatars subsequently downplay efforts to promote social reform among Russia’s Muslims, a trend towards political unity might again become feasible. This in fact happened in 1919 and 1920. The true significance of the May Congress, therefore, was not that it signaled a victory of territorial nationalists over extraterritorial nationalists; rather it represented a rejection of reformist pan-Muslims by conservative pan-Muslims. The political sympathy of most of the delegates remained at all times with pan-Islam.

Little evidence of preference for regionalism per se can be found among Russia’s Muslims in 1917. Indeed, the defeat of the Tatars’ conception of nationalism was perceived by the Tatars themselves to be due to a deep social conservatism among their colleagues and not to any sympathy for regional nationalism. This perception that social rather than political factors had caused the split was directly responsible for the growth of a radical Left among the Tatars. In the autumn of 1917 this Left grew rapidly as numerous Tatars began to perceive in socialism an ally in their struggle to modernize Russia’s conservative Muslims. At first most Tatar socialists were Mensheviks or SRs, since these parties had endorsed extraterritorial autonomy and

7 See Pipes, p. 76; Zenkovsky, p. 150; Rorlich, p. 128.
peasant ownership of the land, respectively. But by 1918 the Bolshevik element
overtook the Menshevik and SR elements. One reason for this was the prestige brought
by Bolshevik victory in the struggle for power. A second reason was the democratic
nature of the Party. It is important to recall that the centralization trend in Soviet
politics, which ultimately resulted in Stalin’s dictatorship, only became apparent in
1919. The rapid growth of the Party in 1917 had imparted a distinctly egalitarian and
democratic flavor to its procedures (which is not to say that the Bolsheviks were
willing to share power with non-Bolsheviks), and, even though the Central Committee
in 1918 was already seeking to reimpose the pre-war authoritarian “democratic
centralism,” for most of 1918 it was still possible for minority nationalists within its
ranks to regard the Communist Party as a fundamentally democratic institution that
they could utilize for their own purposes, even if those purposes appeared to be in
conflict with the stated policy of the Central Committee.

A third reason lay in the fact that the Tatars began to see in Bolshevik doctrine
an opportunity to rescue reformist pan-Islam from its tactical defeat at the May
Congress, and to resume their pre-revolutionary role as teacher to Russia’s more
backward Muslims. The Tatar Left saw within Bolshevism a world-view in some
respects similar to that of pan-Islam. The similarity of the concepts of proletarian
solidarity, extraterritorial nationalism, and personal membership in a millet led to a
natural evolution among them. Therefore, in embracing Bolshevism, far from the
Tatars abandoning pan-Islam, they reaffirmed their commitment to it. However, this
attraction to “Bolshevism” was not based on familiarity with original Marxist writings.
Rather it was based upon Bolshevik slogans and such excerpts from Marx as could be
gleaned from agitation literature and propaganda. Few Tatars had read Marx before

8 Pipes, p. 156.
1918, and most of those who finally did read Marx, did so only after they had joined the Communist Party. Moreover, the Tatar Left misinterpreted available information to such an extent, that an observer is tempted to state that in their eagerness to resume their own "revolution" among Russia's Muslims, and in their fear to openly resist Russian rule, they willfully deceived themselves to some extent concerning the nature of the Party. This attitude played into the hands of the Bolsheviks, who, as noted before, were unwilling to correct such misimpressions if by doing so they risked losing popular support.

Therefore, within the ranks of the Communist Party, the Tatar Left remained wedded, in fact, if only implicitly, to the idea of extraterritorial national autonomy and pan-Islamic unity among all of Russia's Muslims. And, so long as the Tatar Left believed that their national aspirations remained compatible with Soviet aims, they were willing to devote themselves to the pursuit of social reform and even to assist the Bolsheviks in the suppression of "bourgeois" Muslim organizations like the Trans-Bulak Republic and the Ecclesiastical Assembly in Ufa. Thus Lenin's adroit policy that equated self-determination with a purely theoretical right to national secession, continued to serve the Bolsheviks even after the Bolsheviks themselves had publicly repudiated that policy, allowing them in 1918 to exploit the conflict among Russia's Muslims over social reform.

As with most generalizations, of course, there is an exception to this assertion that pan-Islam remained predominant among Russia's Muslims in 1917. Due to the proximity of Azerbaijan to Turkey, renewed clashes with Armenians, and intense activity by Turkish agents, pan-Turkism during the War outstripped all other political ideals in Azerbaijan. Opposition of Azerbaijanis to the Tatars—Azerbaijanis in fact led the pro-regional faction at the May Congress in 1917--was not due to tension over social issues. The advanced industrial economy of Baku had already exposed them to women's
emancipation, for example. But neither was this due to sympathy for regionalism.
Rather, the February Revolution led to a sudden hope that unification with Turkey was
imminent. Since the Azerbaijani delegates in Kazan expected soon to become Turkish
citizens, they had no interest in unification with the rest of Russia's Muslims.

The Tatar Left Alliance with Stalin.

Like all the Bolshevik leaders except Lenin, Stalin was originally not in favor of
autonomy for nationalities and federalism, formal or otherwise. In an article of March,
1917, entitled Against Federalism, he wrote:

Is it not clear that federalism in Russia does not and cannot solve the
national question, that it merely confuses and complicates it with
quixotic ambitions to turn back the wheel of history?10

But Stalin did not permit his views on the subject of nationality policy to affect
his performance as Lenin's "right-hand man," a role he assiduously cultivated after the
April Conference in 1917. Although he had voiced a more conservative position than
Lenin at this Conference, and did not refrain from expressing dissatisfaction with the
policy to Lenin in private, over the next few months Stalin loyally implemented
Lenin's nationality policies.11 Immediately after the Bolshevik coup and the Second
Congress of Soviets, the new Sovnarkom set up a Commissariat of Nationalities
(Narkomnats) and, as the nationality "expert" in the Central Committee of the Party and
a loyal Party cadre, Stalin was assigned the important responsibility of representing
the Soviet government in its dealings with nationalists. Although Stalin felt obliged to
consult his colleagues on important decisions concerning the nationalities throughout
the Civil War period, it was also true that Stalin's unique role made his colleagues
dependent upon him for information concerning the nationalities. A lack of interest
on the part of most of the other Bolshevik leaders concerning events in the non-

11 Zenkovsky, p. 160.
European parts of the Soviet Union, whose ranks included Lenin, accentuated their dependence on Stalin, particularly in Muslim affairs, since Stalin alone among the Bolsheviks had had extensive and intimate relations with Muslims.\footnote{Carr, \textit{Bolshevik Revolution}, III, p. 234.}

Stalin did not stand by idly while the Muslim nationalists seceded in late 1917. In line with current nationality policy, he tried to recruit Muslims into the Soviet government in order to open communications and halt the centrifugal movements. Contacting Ahmed Tsalikov, head of the Tatars’ Milli Shuro, Stalin offered to make him commissar of a prospective Commissariat of Muslim Affairs (Muskom) on condition that the Milli Shuro merge with it and join the eighteen other national commissariats under Stalin’s chairmanship.\footnote{Rorlich, p. 132. Bennigsen states that the Milli Shuro was to 'preserve' its independence and merely acknowledge Stalin as the Soviet representative: "le Milli Shuro garderait son indépendance et Calikov serait nommé président du Commissariat aux Affaires musulmanes." See Bennigsen, \textit{Les Mouvements}, p. 89.} Tsalikov declined this invitation and Stalin turned to the Tatar leftists, appointing a socialist of Saratov, Said Engalychev, to represent the Muslims on the Commissariat of Nationalities. In January the overzealous Said arrested three leading Muslims, one of whom was the nephew of the famous Caucasian Muslim resistance fighter Shamyl, and Stalin, on the advice of Tsalikov, who at this time was as anxious as Stalin to prevent a rift, replaced Engalychev with a Committee for Muslim Affairs.\footnote{Zenkovsky, p. 162.} This committee drew on recently converted Bolsheviks among the Tatar-Bashkir Left, and especially on a former "Muslim Socialist Committee" in Kazan, now become the "Muslim Revolutionary Headquarters." The novelist Mullanur Vakhitov, although a Menshevik who had disapproved of Bolshevik actions in 1917, accepted Stalin’s invitation to chair Muskom in January 1918. In June 1918, the Tatar Bolshevik Mirsaid Sultan-Galiev joined Muskom.\footnote{Pipes, p. 158.} Sultan-Galiev had a broad conception of inclusivist Tatar-Bashkir nationalism and argued for the establishment of a state
comparable in size to that of the Idel-Ural project on the middle Volga within a Soviet federation.\textsuperscript{16}

Stalin considered the successful establishment of a Tatar-Bashkir state as important not only for the consolidation of Soviet rule among the minorities, but for the consolidation of his own position in the Soviet government. If Zenkovsky's view that Stalin wished to set up "his own Volga-Ural feudal appanage" seems exaggerated, the basic community of interest between the Tatar Left and Stalin in the establishment of a Greater Tatarstan subject to Narkomnats in the spring 1918 remains sound.\textsuperscript{17} Just as the Tatars wished to use the Party for their purposes in Russia, Stalin wished to use the Tatars for his purposes within the Party.

At a conference in May 1918, called to prepare the groundwork for the establishment of a Tatar-Bashkir Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (ASSR) within the RSFSR, Stalin, in the first implementation of the new nationality principles laid down at the Third Congress of Soviets, made it clear that the new administration would not only be based on class principles, but would be subject to Soviet control, i.e. the Commissariat of Nationalities:

Autonomy is a form. The whole question is what class content is put into this form. The Soviet power is not at all opposed to autonomy. It is in favor of autonomy—but only such autonomy in which the entire power belongs to the workers and peasants, and in which the bourgeoisie of all nationalists are debarred not only from power, but even from participation in the election of government bodies.

Such autonomy will be autonomy on a Soviet basis...\textsuperscript{18}

At the closing session, Stalin added:

To bypass the national question, to ignore it or deny it, as some of our comrades do, is not defeating nationalism...in order to solve the national question openly and by socialist methods, it is necessary to approach it from the Soviet viewpoint, subordinating it entirely and finally to the interests of the toiling masses organized into soviets. Thus, and only

\textsuperscript{16} Zenkovsky, p. 162.
\textsuperscript{17} Zenkovsky, p. 180.
\textsuperscript{18} Stalin, \textit{Works}, IV, p. 89.
thus, can we knock from the bourgeoisie's hands its last spiritual weapon... Let then this autonomous [Tatar-Bashkir] republic serve the peoples of the Muslim world, as a shining beacon which lights their way toward liberation... 19

From this passage it is clear that Stalin regarded the purpose of federalism as an attempt to "satisfy" the national urge, as if nationalism was a temporary infatuation of intellectuals, and not a fundamental reorientation of social consciousness.

This alliance between Stalin and the Muslim Communists was fragile. At the May 1918 Conference, the latter's representatives, being delegates of regional muskoms which had sprung up under Tatar tutelage 20 and with Stalin's approval across large areas of central and eastern Russia, met opposition from delegates of non-Muslim soviets from these same regions. The non-Muslim delegates were opposed to the notion of a Greater Tatarstan, which, even though the Tatars would in theory be answerable to Stalin and Narkomnats, would have placed the Tatars, a minority within the planned republic, over all other ethnic elements in the region, including the Russians.

In fact, the Tatars themselves had no intention of serving as Stalin's puppets in this prospective republic—they expected the projected ASSR to be not merely autonomous, but fully independent, with themselves answerable to no one. To this end the First Conference of Muslim Communists was convened in Moscow in June 1918, and a recently formed "Party of Muslim Socialist-Communists," which held the allegiance of most of the Tatar Left, was upgraded to the "All-Russian Party of Muslim Communists (bolshevik)." This organization was conceived by the Tatar Communists to be on a par with the RKP. The Party of Muslim Communists(b) was kept separate from the RKP, only Muslims were allowed to join the organization, it had its own elective Central Committee, and it was declared open to foreign Muslims, especially if they were also

20 Pipes, p. 160; Zenkovsky, p. 186.
Communists, although this was not made a requirement. The main purpose of this last move was to recruit Communist Turks, with whom the Volga Tatars had always maintained strong ties.

The Civil War and the Struggle for Federative Autonomy.

The June 1918 conference clearly demonstrated that Muslim Communist ambitions went far beyond what any of the Bolshevik leaders were prepared to tolerate. Stalin began to distance himself from the Tatars and ceased to argue their cause of inclusivist nationalism within the Party, which now regarded the Muslim Communists in the same category as the Jewish Bund, i.e. as carriers of nationalism bent on fragmenting the unity of the Party. But, since during 1918 the RKP needed their services in another capacity, Lenin and Stalin felt it necessary to treat the Muslim Communists with restraint. In May the Czechs Corps had become embroiled with local Soviet militia in western Siberia and made common cause with the White Admiral Kolchak. In June the Czechs took Ekaterinburg and in August occupied Kazan, rendering plans for a Greater Tatar Republic superfluous. The timing of this advance was fortunate for the Soviet government because it enabled the regime to take another of its pragmatic turns and profess support for Tatar aspirations while blaming the Whites for their frustration and avoiding a backlash from those local Russians who did not wish to come under Tatar control. The Soviet government was thus able to postpone a clash with the Muslim Communists and in the meantime benefit from their loyalty—ensured by continued promises of eventual autonomy—by using them to recruit

21 Rorlich, p. 145; Pipes, p. 160.
22 Rorlich states that the Tatar Communists especially admired Mustafa Kemal and would have invited him to join their party but for his status as pasha. See Rorlich, p. 245, note 12.
24 Sverdlovsk today.
Muslims into the Red Army. At the same time the loss of Kazan province eliminated the
groass-roots political apparatus which the Muslim Communists had just built, weakening
them in relation to Moscow.25

The first Tatar-Bashkir batallion was formed on April 11, 1918, as part of
Trotsky's efforts to build the Red Army.26 On April 28, a Central Muslim Military
Collegium (CMMC), consisting of four Tatars and two Russians, was formed to assist in
the recruitment and formation of Muslim units.27 In August, as their numbers grew to
50,000—mostly Tatars and Bashkirs—these Muslim units were brought under the direct
control of the Red Army, and the CMMC was relegated to purely political and
propaganda work.28 Mullanur Vakhitov was killed by Czechs in August, and Stalin
appointed Mirsad Sultan-Galiev to replace him as the chairman of the Central Muskom
under the impression that Sultan-Galiev would be more amenable to Stalin's control
than had been Vakhitov.29 In this capacity Sultan-Galiev chaired the CMMC over the
next two years and served as its chief advocate in Soviet circles.30 In the autumn,
many more Muslim regiments were raised, at one time, according to Sultan-Galiev,
composing up to half of the Red soldiers deployed against Kolchak.31

At the same time the Bolsheviks benefited from the policies of the White
generals who tended to identify the revolution with national minorities and whose
desire to restore Tsarist russification policy had no place for national autonomy, even

26 Rorlich, p. 137.
27 Rorlich, p. 134.
28 Rorlich, p. 137
29 This impression was erroneous. Sultan-Galiev used his position as chairman of
CMMC to educate Muslim recruits in the Tatar language and to indoctrinate them with
Tatar nationalism—another facet of the Tatar disposition to propagate inclusivist
political ideas among the Muslims of Russia.
30 Bennigsen, Les Mouvements p. 127.
31 Sultan-Galiev, 'Tatary i Oktyaberskoi Revolyutsii,' in Zhizn Natsional'nostei 24(122),
November 5, 1921.
in a formal sense. Tiring of the near anarchy which prevailed in the Kazakh plains, in October 1918, Kolchak ordered the suppression of the Kazakh national councils, or Alash Orda, in Orenburg and Semipalatinsk. This alienated a potential ally, for the Kazakhs had recently developed a strong sense of particularism, being the only sizable group of Muslims in Russia to reject all cooperation with other Muslims.\textsuperscript{32} Their defection to the Bolsheviks in 1919 greatly complicated Kolchak’s task.\textsuperscript{33} Kolchak’s slogan “Russia: One and Indivisible” alienated Muslims everywhere in Russia—after 1917 such attitudes no longer had a place in Russian politics.\textsuperscript{34} In early 1919, difficulties between Kolchak and his Bashkir troops caused the Bashkirs to defect to the Bolsheviks in exchange for a promise of self-rule in an autonomous state of their own.\textsuperscript{35} And in the Caucasus General Denikin expended much of his strength in a strategically unjustifiable campaign to occupy the northern Caucasus and Dagestan. This struggle, which lasted a full year from early 1919 to January 1920, not only earned him the contempt of the more practical British, and exasperated the Georgians who feared a Bolshevik victory, but drove Azerbaijan to actively assist the Dagestanis. Even Turkey, beset by its own difficulties in 1919, yielded volunteers for the Muslims’ struggle against Denikin.\textsuperscript{36}

In November 1918, after the Soviets had suppressed the Left SR revolt, and driven Kolchak back to the Urals, Stalin was recalled from Tsaritsyn. In a move that was almost certainly prompted by a Politburo directive, Stalin moved to reassert his authority over the Muslim Communists. The death of Vakhitov and the occupation of

\textsuperscript{32} Despite a century of Tatar proselytizing, Kazakhs remained Kazakhs first, and Muslims second. The Kazakhs were the first to boycott Tatar congresses in 1917, and also disliked the Bolsheviks, since the Kazakhs had been loyal supporters of the Provisional Government.\
\textsuperscript{33} Carrère d’Encausse, p. 237; Wheeler, p. 102.\
\textsuperscript{34} Spector, p. 45.\
\textsuperscript{35} Pipes, p. 162.\
\textsuperscript{36} Swietochowski, p. 153.
Kazan by the Whites had left the Muslims too weak to resist. In November 1918, at the First Congress of Muslim Communists, Stalin subjected the "Russian Party of Muslim Communists (bolshevik)" to a reorganization in which it was renamed the "Central Buro of Muslim Organizations of the RKP(b)." This "Muslim Buro," as it became known, was formally subordinated to the Narkomnats' Central Muslim Committee of the Commissariat for Muslim Affairs (Muskom), still chaired by Sultan-Galiev. The local muskoms were subordinated to local organs of the RKP. Soon after, the CMMC was placed under the jurisdiction of the Revolutionary War Council (Revvoensovet), to which Stalin was transferred in compensation for the loss of his field command, thus placing in his hands not only further means of harassing Trotsky but another avenue of supervision over Muslim affairs.

Stalin's campaign to curb the Muslim Communists, conducted with the full knowledge and support of Lenin, continued into 1919. On March 20, the "Central Buro of Muslim Organizations of the RKP(b)" was reorganized again as the "Central Buro of Communist Organizations of Peoples of the East" and the Central Muslim Committee (Muskom) was renamed the Tatar-Bashkir Commissariat. Despite these changes, the administration of the Muslim Communists continued to be known simply as "The Muslim Buro" and the Tatar-Bashkir Commissariat continued operating as a de facto Party committee. These changes in early 1919 were important in determining the future development of Soviet-Muslim relations. While they might be taken as part of the Bolshevik tendency to disregard formal differences between Soviet and Party structures, two other results should be recognized: First, the final outcome was to expel

37 Pipes, p. 160.
38 Not to be confused with the First Conference of Muslim Communists in June 1918.
39 Bennigsen, Les Mouvements, p. 130.
40 Pipes, p. 160; Rorlich, p. 145.
41 Bennigsen, Les Mouvements, p. 130.
national-communist organizations from the Party and to place them under the "tutelage" of Narkomnats. Second, all references to Islam were removed from Party and Soviet organizations.

Although operational, the CMMC had never secured official approval of its statute from either Revvoensovet or Narkomnats. With the passing of the Civil War crisis, this statute, the pet project of Sultan-Galiyev, became in the eyes of the Muslim Communists a test case for the Bolsheviks' sincerity in fulfilling their promises of Muslim autonomy. On January 16, 1919, Narkomnats discussed the statute, and on January 27 decided to reject it and abolish the CMMC (Rorlich states that Sultan-Galiyev was absent from these meetings but does not say whether or not Stalin had arranged this absence). Sultan-Galiyev's efforts to persuade Stalin to reverse this decision were answered by a resolution of the Eighth Congress of the RKP in March 1919, that "all decisions of the RKP and of its guiding organs are compulsory for all Party organs, regardless of their national composition." The same congress also officially endorsed the autonomous republic which the Soviet government had promised the Bashkirs in 1919. This republic, which contained more Tatars than Bashkirs within its borders, and, despite the fact that most Bashkirs spoke Tatar as their native language, was a further indication that Bolshevik intentions regarding a greater Tatar-dominated Volga republic had changed greatly since the previous spring.

The renewal of the Civil War in April 1919, however, postponed an open break and led to a renewal of Bolshevik appeasement. Central Russia was again occupied by Kolchak, the Muslim Communists again had no basis to press their claim for a Tatar-Bashkir Republic, local Tatar organizations were again disrupted, and Narkomnats felt justified in cancelling any plans of the Tatar Republic for the remainder of the year.

42 Rorlich, p. 134.
43 Bennigsen and Wimbush, p. 62.
44 Pipes, p. 163.
On the other hand, anxious to retain the loyalty of Muslim military units, Stalin reversed his stance on the CMMC and on July 12, 1919, passed an amended version of its statute. Also in July Revvoensovet approved a special badge to be worn only by soldiers of Muslim units, consisting of a crescent moon and a star on a field of green, an indication of the popularity of pan-Islamic symbols among the Tatar and Bashkir lower classes as well as among their leaders.\(^{45}\)

In the autumn, Kolchak fell back, this time all the way to Omsk, and in December, at the Second Congress of Communist Organizations of Peoples of the East,\(^{46}\) the Muslim Communist leadership once more issued a call for the long-delayed Tatar-Bashkir Republic. However, the cause of autonomy was fated to suffer a second defeat. On December 13, at a meeting of the Politburo of the RKP Lenin quashed the idea.\(^ {47}\) Despite continued resistance from Muslim Communists, especially Sultan-Galiev who continued to promote Tatar-Bashkir unity in personal interviews with Stalin and Lenin, on January 26, 1920, the decision was made to draw up plans for a purely Tatar ASSR, and on March 22, 1920, disregarding a last attempt on the part of Sultan-Galiev to secure a reversal, Lenin approved the plans. On May 27 the Tatar ASSR came into being. Like the Bashkir ASSR, this Tatar Republic was only a shadow of what its advocates had originally desired. It amounted to less than one-third the area of the Idel-Ural project of 1917, included little more than one-third of the Tatars residing in the Volga region in 1920, and excluded virtually all of the smaller Muslim peoples who had long enjoyed close cultural contact with the Tatars. These smaller peoples, such as the Maris, Chuvashes, Udmurts, and Mordovians, were each assigned their own geographical region and eventually recognized as a separate Autonomous Soviet

\(^{45}\) Rorlich, p. 136.
\(^{46}\) Also referred to as the Second Congress of Muslim Communists.
\(^{47}\) Rorlich, p. 137.
Socialist Republic. As in Bashkiriya, in each of these new republics Tatars outnumbered non-Tatars.48

Conclusion.

Soviet policy towards Russia's Muslims was formulated in the course of a protracted struggle with the Volga Tatars over autonomy, first outside the formal structures of the Soviet government and then within the structures of the government and the RKP. During this struggle Lenin came to regard Islam as a tool of the Tatars in their nationalist program to unify all of Russia's Muslims under their leadership. In order to accomplish the subordination of Muslim organizations to Soviet institutions and supervision by the RKP, it was decided in early 1919 to eliminate all references to Islam from political life, and, in early 1920, to fragment the Muslims of the Volga region into their narrowest ethnic components. The ultimate motivation for this policy was primarily pragmatism, dictated not by ideological imperatives, but by Lenin's conviction that close control of minority nationalism was essential for the Party to gain and hold power in Russia until the Revolution could spread to Europe.

In response to these pressures, the Tatars' search for national autonomy also evolved, from the Ittifak extraterritorial autonomy of 1917, to a thinly disguised inclusivist national movement within the RKP in 1918 which, like Ittifak, regarded Islam as its primary distinguishing feature. The issue of social reform was intimately connected with the Tatars' national conception in that their traditional role of teacher to Russia's Muslims made it seem to the Tatars that they could most effectively continue this role within the formal structures of the Soviet government, a strategy that required them to join the RKP. Certain similarities between Marxism and the Tatars' tradition of 'millet' political conceptions provided a rationale which eased this transition.

48 Rorlich, p. 138.
Chapter 3: Sultan-Galiev and Muslim National-Communism.

After the Armistice of November 1918 a new wave of revolutionary zeal swept the Russian Communist Party in anticipation of the imminent transformation of Europe into a Communist society. However, the difficulties of maintaining a dictatorship in "backward" Russia increased as the economy continued to suffer from blockade, the blunders of War Communism, and the White generals' offensives. In 1918 the Party established an authoritarian control over Soviet organizations. In 1919 the Party's Central Committee consolidated its control over the Party itself. Those Muslim Communists with access to the Party press took the lead in resisting this centralization and promoted Muslim unity and autonomy whenever possible. The most prominent Muslim advocate was the Volga Tatar Mirsaid Sultan-Galiev. Before the February Revolution Sultan-Galiev was a journalist, contributing leftist articles to several liberal and nationalist Tatar periodicals. In 1917 he attended the Muslims' May Congress in Kazan and joined the Milli Merkazi Shuro, lodging complaints concerning the lack of interest or attendance by others in the all-Russian Muslim movement.¹ He then joined the Muslim Socialist Committee in Kazan, entering the RKP in November, and in September 1918 replaced Mullanur Vakhitov as head of the Muslim Bureau.² As deputy to Stalin in Narkomnats he became a co-editor of Narkomnats' official organ, the "Life of Nationalities," Zhizn Natsional'nosti.

In a number of articles published between 1918 and 1923, Sultan-Galiev elaborated his own brand of national-communism which became not only the most influential among Tatar Communists but has since been recognized as the earliest prototype of the national-communism which became popular in East and Southeast Asia

¹ Zenkovsky, p. 154.
² Bennigsen and Wimbush, p. 206.
in the 1930s and 1940s.\textsuperscript{3} Sultan-Galiev's writings can be divided into three periods. In the first, from 1918 to 1919, he formulated his view of "proletarian nations." In the second, late 1919 to 1921, he advocated exporting the socialist revolution to the Islamic world. In the third, 1921 and after, he defended the cultural, social, and historical role of Islam among all Muslims. This development led to his arrest in June of 1923 for promoting bourgeois nationalism within the Party.

The roots of Sultan-Galiev's doctrine of proletarian nations lie in the dilemma of constructing socialism in a peasant country. Having no industrial proletariat, and pressured by the Left in the RKP to accept as local administrators Russian proletarians in place of native ones—which in the view of the Muslim national-communists amounted to no more than a change of colonial masters—the Tatars could either embrace a more explicit nationalism or find a "proletariat" that might substitute for the missing industrial one. The first option was not available to Communists, and Sultan-Galiev and most Muslim national-communists were sincere Communists, even if their conceptions were unorthodox and unsophisticated. This option had vanished with the "Trans-Bulak Republic" anyway. Sultan-Galiev's solution was to redefine "proletariat" to fit the Tatars. In Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism Lenin had sought to justify a socialist revolution in underdeveloped Russia by asserting that the capitalists of Europe had bribed their working classes into a posture of reformism with profits extracted from colonies.\textsuperscript{4} Thus the "weakest link" of the capitalist system no longer lay in Europe but in its periphery, and the most revolutionary class was no longer to be defined by its relation to industry but by its degree of exploitation. Sultan-Galiev seized on this fundamental shift in Lenin's interpretation of Marx. Observing that the great mass of the Tatars were poorer than the average European worker, and that class

\textsuperscript{3} Bennigsen and Wimbush, p. 124.
differences among Muslim peoples throughout the world were small in comparison
with the class differences in Europe, Sultan-Galiev proclaimed "proletarian" status for
all Muslims excepting only the very wealthiest.  

All Muslim colonized countries are proletarian peoples [proletarskie
narodnosti]. Since almost all classes in Muslim society have been
oppressed by the colonialists, all classes have the right to be called
'proletarians'....

The Muslim countries are proletarian peoples. In their economic
situation there is a great difference between the English or French
proletariats and the Afghan or Moroccan proletariats. One may point out
that the national movement in the Muslim countries has the character of
a socialist revolution.  

This view had wide-ranging implications. First, implicit in this view was the
notion that, since they had been more oppressed, Muslim peoples were by definition
more revolutionary than the Russians. Thus, it was no more legitimate to put Russian
proletarians in charge of colonial administration than Russian bourgeoisie, because
the Muslims were more revolutionary than either, and qualified to govern themselves.
Second, by adjusting classes to coincide with nations he extended Lenin's initiative in
the use of nationalism. Lenin had stretched Marxism to accommodate nationalism and
thus used nationalism to further the cause of Russian Communism. Sultan-Galiev
sought to stretch nationalism to accommodate Marxism and so further the cause of Tatar
Communism and the Muslims of Russia. Third, by emphasizing the unity of all Muslims,
Sultan-Galiev drew on the pan-Islamic sympathies which lay just below the Tatars'
inclusivist conception of nationalism. Fourth, by identifying the class struggle with
the national struggle, he implied that the true task of Communism was to unite the
colonized peoples of the world against the colonizers of Europe, including European
workers. This he made explicit:

5 Rorlich, p. 144.
6 Arsharuni, A., and Kh. Gabidullin, Ocherki panislamizma i panturkizma v Rossii
(Moscow: Bezbozhnik, 1931), p. 78.
We think that the substitution in a world dictatorship of one European class (the bourgeoisie) by its antipode, the proletariat, i.e., its other class, is no great change in the social life of the oppressed part of Humanity that does not engage in manufacturing [*ne proizvodit*]. In any case, if some change is made, it will not be for the better, but for the worse. In opposition to this, we are advancing another idea: the conception that the material prerequisites of the social reconstruction of Humanity can be created only by the establishment of a dictatorship of the colonies and semi-colonies over the metropoles.7

Sultan-Galiev conceived his doctrine of proletarian nations at a time when he still believed that Tatar ambitions were compatible with the goals of the REP. By late 1919, however, Sultan-Galiev understood that the Tatars' hopes had little chance of realization in the highly centralized Soviet Union that was emerging. Therefore he sought, by building on his doctrine of proletarian nations, to construct a bridge between the Muslim Communists and the rest of the Islamic world. To this end, in a series of articles entitled "Social Revolution and the East," appearing from October 5 to November 2, 1919, Sultan-Galiev argued that the focus of revolution should be in Asia:

We assume that the general course of international policy in the social revolution taken by us is correct and that there is no need of correctives. Nevertheless, one must be aware that the question of the relation of the East needs serious correction. However grievous this may be, one must admit that up to now all of the measures which we have taken in the matter of the establishment of correct mutual relations between Soviet Russia and the East were only of an accidental and palliative character...8

The influence of Lenin's Imperialism is clear in the passage that follows:

While international imperialism in the form of the Entente holds the entire East as a colony, where it is the unchallenged master of its natural resources, it is guaranteed a successful outcome in all of its many economic clashes with the working masses of the metropoles, since in that situation it is always possible to 'shut their mouths,' by agreeing to satisfy their economic demands.

Our fruitless expectations of revolutionary assistance from the West in the course of these two years of the revolution in Russia eloquently confirms this view.9

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7 Arsharuni and Gabidullin, p. 79.
The purpose of redirecting the focus of the international Communist movement to Asia was not simply to achieve victory for the revolution in Europe. Implicit in his notion of proletarian nations was the idea that the East was the only legitimate sphere of revolutionary activity:

Even should the West European worker succeed in winning the victory over his bourgeoisie, we [the Communists] must still inevitably collide with the East, since in the final analysis, the West European bourgeoisie, following the example of its unlucky friend—the Russian bourgeoisie—would focus its concentrated strength in its 'outlying districts,' and first of all in the East...¹⁰

The East in general is the main source of nourishment of international capitalism. Deprived of the East and cut off from India, Afghanistan, Persia, and from its other Asian and African colonies, Western European imperialism must wither and die a natural death.¹¹

By pursuing its European policy, Sultan-Galiev implied, the RKP was responsible for mismanaging the World Revolution:

The leaders of the October revolution well understood this situation [the global nature of the revolution] and tried to direct its flow in an international direction...

But this process of development of the revolution in tactical respects was directed along an incorrect path. Although apparently correct in its external manifestations (the Spartakist movement in Germany, the Hungarian revolution, and so on), taken all together it shows a one-sided character. This one-sidedness consisted in the fact that almost all the attention of the leaders of the revolution was turned toward the West...

The East, with its population of one and a half billion enslaved by the West European bourgeoisie, was almost completely forgotten. The flow of the basic processes of development of the international class struggle went on, ignoring the East. The Eastern question and the problem of "revolutionization of the East" existed only in a few minds, constituting in general no more than a drop of water in the raging sea of the revolution.¹²

Finally, Sultan-Galiev left open the possibility that neglect of the East, and therefore of the ultimate success of the World Revolution, had been intentional:

¹¹ Sultan-Galiev, Mirsaid, Zhitn Natsional'nostei, 42(50), 1919. November 2, 1919.
Because of the ignorance of the East and because of the fear which it inspired, the idea of the participation of the East in the international revolution was plainly treated with contempt [pavnio profanirovalos]...\textsuperscript{13}

What should be the nature of the Revolution in the East? Sultan-Galiev conceived the task of Communism in the East to be two-fold. First was the struggle for national independence; second was the struggle against feudalism, represented by the "clerical-feudal bourgeoisie" who presently serve the interests of the imperialists. Although defensiveness leads him to emphasize the necessity of social revolution, it is apparent that these struggles are to remain distinct—the struggle against feudalism is not to begin until after national independence is won:

We must not for one minute forget that if the entire East is in complete economic slavery to the West, then there is a second weight, its own national bourgeoisie, which applies a no less heavy internal pressure on the working masses of the East.

We ought not for a minute overlook the view that the development of the international socialist revolution in the East in no case should limit itself only to overthrowing the power of Western imperialism, but must continue further, so that afterwards will appear the complex question of the overthrow of its current liberal pretenders, the cruelly despotic clerical-feudal bourgeoisie, who are capable for the sake of their own interests of changing at a moment's notice their attitude toward their former enemies...

The East is the cradle of despotism, and we are not at all safe from the possibility that a moment after the overthrow of the West European imperialism an Eastern imperialism will not begin, which for the time being is still oppressed by the heavy weight of its European brethren. We are not safe from the possibility that once 'liberation' in these countries occurs, the feudal lords of China, India, Persia, or Turkey will not unite with imperialist Japan and even with some other imperialism from Europe, and will not organize a campaign against their 'liberators' in order to save themselves by this means from the contagion of 'Bolshevism'.\textsuperscript{14}

In 1919 national independence for the Islamic world was a distant prospect at best. Therefore, the role which class struggle plays in Sultan-Galiev's vision of social revolution in the Asia is a future one. Class struggle will preserve the Revolution and modernize the nation, but the first task of the Revolution is the national independence


\textsuperscript{14} Sultan-Galiev, Mirsaid, \textit{Zhizn Natsional'noste}, 42(50), 1919. November 2, 1919.
of all Muslims. Until then Communism should work for the unity of all Muslims, not their disunity.

As the year 1920 progressed, Sultan-Galiev became convinced that open conflict between the Muslim Communists and the RKP was inevitable. As a result, he increased his efforts to bridge the gap between Muslim Communists and the Islamic world. In an article directed against attempts to arouse Europe against a new "yellow peril." Sultan-Galiev connected the "yellow peril" and pan-Islam with Bolshevism.

Several years before the imperialist world war, the 'learned' orientalists of Western Europe spoke of the 'yellow peril'...The 'yellow peril' has again appeared on the scene after the October Revolution in Russia, but this time as an aspect of the 'Bolshevik' peril...At the present time the imperialists of Western Europe are issuing the following sort of provocation, announcing that the 'secret' reunion of eighty princes and influential Muslim sultans have the intention of inaugurating a 'world campaign in favor of the peoples of the East'. The bourgeois West European diplomats wish to kill two birds with one stone. They want to tell the workers of Western Europe:

'Attention, don't let yourselves be seduced by your eastern policy...You are menaced by the danger of unification of the Muslim world with its princes, its sultans and its heads of state. Abandon your class struggle and arm yourselves against the danger of pan-Islamism.'

At the same time, they think to frighten the Comintern and Soviet Russia:

'If you organize the peasants and the workers whom no one knows, then we will assemble the princes and influential sultans.'

[But the workers of the colonial East know] who is their friend and who is their enemy. They will follow not the princes and the 'potentates' but the Third International and Soviet Russia.15

By asserting that Bolshevism underlay pan-Islam and the "yellow peril" (which Sultan-Galiev equates with all people "aux yeux bridés," i.e. with slanted eyes, including himself), Sultan-Galiev was seeking to implant the notion that all three phenomema had a common root—resistance to the imperialism of the West.

In another article, misleadingly entitled "The Tatars and the October Revolution," Sultan-Galiev defended the Tatars' contribution to the winning of the Civil

War. From his discussion of the role of the Tatars in enlightening Russia's Muslims, one can perceive a larger vision of a greatly expanded "cultural revolution," such as Lenin advocated from his deathbed in *On Cooperation*; however, conducted by Tatars in the Islamic world:

It is necessary to say a few words about the importance of the Tatar Republic in the history of the development of the social revolution in the East, since this factor [i.e. the Tatars] had great importance in this matter. All the cultural forces which Tataria is now creating and shaping will become in the future the seeds of cultural development of our remaining eastern regions [in the rest of Asia]. We are already witnesses to the fact that from all quarters of the Urals, Siberia, Central Asia and Turkestan, Khiva and Bukhara, and even far Afghanistan requests are arriving in Tataria for culture-workers: teachers, journalists, etc...

We must admit that the Tatar working masses and Tatar poor did not participate in the revolution, however, they assisted in spreading it to the regions of the East. This strength must be maintained, filling their ranks with new, vigorous, still unfatigued elements. The base for this work must be the Tatar Republic. To carry on the work in Tataria and support the comrades already working along these lines--this is the next task of the day which now stands before our revolution.

By 1921 Sultan-Galiev saw a chasm opening between Communists and Muslims, which made his efforts to construct ties between the Muslim Communists and the rest of the Islamic world increasingly difficult. In *Methods of Antireligious Propaganda among the Muslims*, Sultan-Galiev argued for greater respect for Islamic tradition on the part of Russian Communists and for more subtlety in proselytizing Muslims. This led him to place a high value on the cultural, social, and historical role of Islam among all Muslims, in a manner at times indistinguishable from that of any modern Muslim nationalist.

The first and most basic factor determining the position of Islam in this question is its late appearance. Out of all the "great" religions of the world Islam is the youngest and therefore the most strong... This

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17 Sultan-Galiev, Mirsaid, 'Tatary i Oktyaberskoi Revoliutsiya,' *Zhizn Natsional'nostei*, 24(122), November 5, 1921.
religion more than any other has maintained civil-political elements, while in other religions purely clerical-ethnic traits dominate.

Even the family and inheritance law of Islam contains positive traits, since they regulated at the time of their creation and even later, the anarchic state of these matters among the pagan Arabs...

There is much significance in the election of Muslim clergy. This election places them in a much better and more solid position than, for example, the Russian clergy. The [ulema] consider themselves to be 'servants of the people' and give close attention to their opinions, and therefore enjoy greater respect and influence with them than does [the priest] over the Russian peasant...

If West European imperialism appeared first in the form of the Crusades in the Muslim countries, it has at the present time the character of a purely economic struggle, which in the eyes of the Muslims, at least of the majority, is now perceived to be a political struggle, that is, a struggle directed against Islam. It could not have been otherwise since in the view of the Muslims the entire Islamic world has no tribal or national differences, but is an undifferentiated whole and a unity...

Historically, Islam fosters a feeling of solidarity among the various groups of its followers and psychologically strengthens their proselytizing... 18

As with the conduct of the international revolution, Sultan-Galiev suggested that the Soviet government must bear some responsibility for the alienation of Russia's Muslims:

For example, it can be said that even after the formation of the autonomous republics, the Muslims are often denied the participation in the political life of their republics. So long as we have not released them from their shackles and made them, not only in words but in fact, free and equal citizens of the Soviet Republic, in no way will anti-religious propaganda among the Muslims yield the expected results... 19

This work of Sultan-Galiev concerned more than just methods of conversion to Communism; it also spelled out in detail why the Tatars should assume the lead in this task.

The final development of Sultan-Galiev's ideas is known only from accounts of his later indictment and from passages from the writings of associates which parallel

18 Sultan-Galiev, M., "Metody antireligioznoi propagandy sredi Musulman," in Zhizn Natsional'nostei, 29(127), December 14, 1921, and 30(128), December 23, 1921.
19 Sultan-Galiev, M., "Metody antireligioznoi propagandy sredi Musulman," in Zhizn Natsional'nostei, 29(127), December 14, 1921, and 30(128), December 23, 1921.
his ideas. First, deciding that a clash with the RKP was not only inevitable but necessary for the fulfillment of Muslim national-communism, Sultan-Galiev proposed the creation of a "Colonial International" to replace the Russian-dominated Comintern. This was to be an alliance of all colonized peoples, not only the victims of capitalist imperialism, but of Soviet "socialist imperialism" as well. Its purpose was to replace Western domination over the East with an Eastern dictatorship over the West, including Muslim Communist rule over Russia.20 This reflected Sultan-Galiev's belated conviction that Soviet "socialist imperialism" was no more than a more efficient and ruthless form of European imperialism.

Second, Sultan-Galiev desired to construct a Republic of Turan centered on Central Asia. This desire was common to many of his Muslim contemporaries and was by no means limited to Muslim Communists, and in this regard, by abandoning any participation by the RKP, Sultan-Galiev had shifted his position to those of the conservative pan-Muslims, Turks and Afghans who had sought for some time to build a conservative pan-Islamic state in Central Asia.21 However, Sultan-Galiev kept faith with his Bolshevik convictions in that he saw this Republic as a springboard for a new Islamized Communism, which would construct a unified revolutionary Islamic world to oppose both the Soviet Union and the West. By the time Sultan-Galiev came to formulate these ideas, which of course were never printed in Zhizn Natsional'nostei, the political consolidation of the Soviet state over the peripheral Islamic areas had progressed too far to be undone short of foreign intervention.

Like the earlier pan-Muslim reformer al-Afghani, Sultan-Galiev drew on the internationalist traditions of Islam in order to make a modernizing European ideology.

20 Arsharuni and Gabidullin, p. 88-90.
more palatable to his politically aware but still traditional brethren. But in doing so he was forced to divest Communism of the doctrine of class struggle for the more traditional notion of the unity of the Islamic Ummah. This development, which in effect rendered his conception of Communism into an updated version of al-Afghani's reformist pan-Islam, necessarily placed him at odds with the Party leadership. It is not known precisely how Stalin regarded the dissident opinions being published in "his" press. However, from his later acts, i.e. his arrest of Sultan-Galiev and his annihilation of the Muslim national-communist leadership in the 1930s, and from Stalin's known sympathies for Russian nationalism and antipathy for "feudal" Muslims, it is safe to assume that Stalin disapproved, and only awaited an opportunity to remove his deputy. This required time. It bears repeating that in 1917 the Party was amorphous and flexible. As late as 1920 many Muslim Communists still believed that the Party could be persuaded to accommodate their views. Of the members of the Central Committee, Stalin was perhaps the least known among the party rank-and-file and the least secure in his authority, depending almost entirely upon his close association with Lenin to maintain his position. Stalin needed the Muslim Communists as evidence of his successful management of the nationalities; they needed Stalin as long as they yet believed a Greater Tatar Republic was possible; and the Party needed the cooperation of both in its struggle against the Whites. Only after the inauguration of NEP and the ban on factions, two years after the centralization trend had begun, and after Stalin had become well-established in the Party, did the Politburo extend its press controls to silence dissident Party intellectuals like Sultan-Galiev.

22 Stalin defined nationalism as a function of territory, language, historical consciousness, and a unified economy. Religion did not qualify as one of its determinants. See Stalin, *Marxism*, p. 9-17.
Chapter 4: The Revolution in Turkestan.

The Provisional Government.

In July and August of 1916 Central Asia was shaken by a series of revolts in reaction to an attempt by St. Petersburg to conscript Muslims for wartime labor service.¹ The Turkish sympathies of the rebels left the government suspicious of their motives and the successful suppression of the revolts left St. Petersburg with the impression that force was the best remedy for insurrection. The cessation of the fighting did not restore the previous peaceful mood of the population. The two sides remained suspicious, the Muslims frustrated over the economic changes in Central Asia and wary of any further attempt on the part of the government to attack their traditional privileges and status, and the Russians apprehensive of renewed violence on the part of the Muslim peasants and nomads. The underlying grievances of European colonization and the transformation of the economy from agriculture to cotton, both of which dislocated large numbers of people, and the correct perception that these were but facets of an over-all process of assimilation into Christian Russian culture, so polarized Muslims and non-Muslims, and the indiscriminate violence of the revolt so poisoned intercommunal relations, that any opportunity that may have existed for Central Asia to remain aloof from the Russian Revolution and Civil War due to the region's geographic isolation was seriously diminished. Even during 1917 a relatively peaceful interlude between the revolt of 1916 and the October Revolution, there were few attempts by any of the major political groups at peaceful reconciliation of interests, and no successes.

In the spring of 1917 it was not yet apparent that the Revolution might mean different things to different people. In Turkestan both Russians and Muslims assumed that the Revolution represented their own interests. Russians assumed that it would not

¹ See Appendix One "Islam under the Tsars" for an account.
interfere with Russian control of Central Asia, which they regarded as essential to their survival and prosperity; Muslims—insofar as they took an interest in the affairs of Russians at all—assumed the Revolution would increase their participation in the government and remedy their grievances of a colonial economy, immigration, and cultural assimilation.

At first both Russians and Muslims confined their political efforts for the most part to relations within their own communities. Among Russians a struggle ensued between representatives of the Provisional Government and the radical Left. In March of 1917 there appeared in Tashkent, the largest and most industrialized city in Central Asia, a "Turkestan Committee." This Committee, organized by local supporters of the Provisional Government, was soon challenged by a Soviet dominated by Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks. The Soviet secured the allegiance of most of the soldiers and industrial workers in Tashkent, but made no effort to recruit Muslims. Relations between the Turkestan Committee and the Tashkent Soviet were tense and paralleled relations in Petrograd between the Provisional Government and the Petrograd Soviet, with public influence and administrative privileges flowing steadily from the former to the latter as the year progressed. In September 1917 the small Bolshevik faction in the Tashkent Soviet, with the assistance of the railworkers' union and some soldiers, attempted a coup against the Turkestan Committee, but failed due to lack of support from the SRs in the Soviet—at the end of the year the Bolsheviks still had no more than 64 actual Party members in Tashkent. Learning from this failure, the Bolsheviks then worked more closely with the SRs in the Soviet (as the Bolsheviks were learning to do in Petrograd), and, after the October Revolution, the Tashkent Soviet succeeded in eliminating the Turkestan Committee in a week of fierce fighting.

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2 Pipes, p. 89.
The Tashkent Soviet then proclaimed allegiance to the new revolutionary regime in Petrograd.⁳

During most of 1917 the Muslim population of Turkestan remained passive and allowed those few Turkestanis who had gained political experience in the First and Second Dumas in Saint Petersburg to decide their future.⁴ These were for the most part Jadids who traditionally looked to the Volga Tatars as role models in their efforts to reform Turkestan. But in Turkestan the conservative ulema were more representative of public opinion. For most Turkestanis, the only political conceptions they possessed beyond that of narrow communal and kinship loyalties consisted of traditional notions of the solidarity of the Islamic Ummah. Conservative ulema despised the Jadids and considered them apostates. And since nationalism in Turkestan was a Jadidist plank, they opposed nationalism as well. Unlike the Tatars with their extraterritorial national program, the Jadids of Turkestan advocated a regional Turkestani nationalism. But at the All-Russian Congress of Muslims in Moscow during May 1917, as seen in Chapter Two, conservative support for the Jadidist program of regional autonomy (which, in fact, had been led by Azerbaijanis) was not due to enthusiasm for this "Turkestani nationalism" or to sympathy for the Jadids, but primarily to a perception that the Tatars were radical reformists whom the ulema found even less tolerable than Jadids.

Other factors also influenced the decision of conservative ulema not to attend the Second All-Russian Muslim Congress in July 1917. By the summer of 1917 a breakdown in transportation hindered travel, and renewed ethnic tensions between Russians and Muslims in Central Asia began to shift the focus of conflict away from intra-community to inter-community relations. In June clashes between Muslims and

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³ Carrere d'Encausse, p. 221.
Russians broke out in the province of Semirechie\(^5\) resulting in a massacre of Muslims.\(^6\)

In July the Tashkent Soviet, in a usurpation of authority from the Turkestan Committee, which was temporarily paralyzed by the collapse of the Provisional Government's Kadet-socialist coalition in Petrograd, approved a curiae plan for elections to the All-Russian Constituent Assembly, guaranteeing that most of the Central Asian representatives would be ethnic Russians. When the Muslim Council (a council of Turkestanis Jadids set up in Tashkent after February 1917) objected, the Soviet replaced this scheme with a demand that a minimum number of seats be reserved for Russian representatives.\(^7\) In August riots broke out in several cities in which Muslim candidates for the All-Russian elections were killed.\(^8\) These factors contributed to an erosion of the Jadids' former position of political leadership among Turkestanis Muslims and to the advance of conservative, traditionally-educated ulema to the forefront.

By autumn it was apparent that Russians and Muslims would not be able to agree on election procedures for the Constituent Assembly, and, at the Second Congress of Muslims of Central Asia, in Tashkent, Jadids and conservative Muslims together called for a separate autonomous Turkestan Republic. By calling for territorial autonomy and a uniform legal system for both Russians and Muslims, the ulema gave limited recognition to the idea of a secular "Turkestan nation." This was the first clear indication that the ulema of Turkestan had absorbed national ideas from their much-abused brethren, the Jadids. However, this limited acceptance of Western secular ideas (which even the Tatars had not entirely accepted—most Muslim Tatars still regarded a

\(^5\) Now Kirgiz SSR. The Kirgiz are of Kazakh derivation. European immigrants settled most often in Kazakhstan, next in Semirechie and Syr Darya provinces (i.e. Tashkent), and least often in the areas to the south of Tashkent and in Turkmenistan.


\(^7\) Pipes, p. 90.

\(^8\) Carrere d'Encausse, p. 219.
Christian Tatar as an alien) was accompanied by the virtual abandonment of reformism by those Jadids who attended—all citizens of the new Republic, including Russians, were to live under traditional Islamic Shariah Law and be represented by an assembly of clerics presided over by a Sheikh-ul-Islam.9 When the Provisional Government's General Korovnichenko arrived from Petrograd to suppress the Bolsheviks in Tashkent during the course of the Bolsheviks' September putsch, Muslim delegates from the congress handed him, as the price of Muslim neutrality, a list of demands which included, in addition to the above resolutions, the replacement of all Russian troops in Central Asia with the newly formed Muslim Tatar and Bashkir units under Tatar control in the Military Shuro. The significance of this "detente" between Jadids and conservatives is that it demonstrated once again the capacity of Muslim reformers to join with Muslim conservatives under the aegis of traditional notions of Muslim unity when faced by a non-Muslim adversary, and while doing so, dropping their reformist agenda. General Korovnichenko's reply to these demands was diplomatic, promising to give the list his full attention.10 Unfortunately for the Muslims, the October Revolution cut short these discussions.11

The Tashkent Soviet and Kokand.

After the Tashkent Soviet eliminated the Turkestan Committee it found itself in control of the European quarter of Tashkent. However, the Muslim residents, in the old

9 Zenkovsky, p 229. This political conception of a 'Sheikh ul-Islam' sharing power with an assembly of clerics was a new idea among Muslim reformists in 1917. It was put into practice for the first time by the Ayatollah Ruhollah al-Khomeini after the Iranian Revolution of 1978.

10 Pipes, p. 90. Korovnichenko, an ex-lawyer, has been criticized for being just as diplomatic with the putschists. This consideration brought him no advantage. In November he was captured by the revolutionists, beaten, put on public display, and then murdered.

11 The Muslim Congress probably could not have influenced events greatly anyhow. Like the Azerbaijanis, the Muslims of Central Asia lacked modern arms, training, and military experience.
quarter of the city, continued to organize themselves with the expectation that some form of genuine autonomy for the Muslims of Turkestan was imminent. In mid-November 1917 Europeans and Muslims held simultaneous congresses in Tashkent and engaged in a series of exchanges to decide on the make-up of a Turkestani government. The Europeans convened a Third Regional Congress of Soviets which elected a Central Executive Committee and a smaller Revolutionary Committee (Revkom).12 The latter was soon reorganized into a "Turksovnarkom" of eight Left SRs and seven Bolsheviks under the leadership of a former Russian army lieutenant F. Kolesov.13 From the outset the Turksovnarkom left no doubt that they expected Europeans to continue governing the region. At the Third Congress of Central Asian Muslims, convened without Jadid participation, its chairman, the Alim ("Learned one") Shir Ali Lapin, offered to share power with the Tashkent Soviet on a 50-50 basis:

Around the time of the October events, Lapin offered to set up a 'Turkestan Executive Committee' in the name of the Congress to be composed of the following representatives: 3— from the Soviet, 3— from autonomous municipalities, 6— from the Regional Congress of Muslims, i.e. from the ulema. Moreover, it must be formed from the controlling organ—the 'Tashkent Regional Soviet' to which the 'Executive Committee' would be responsible. [The Tashkent Regional Soviet] be proposed to form in the following fashion: 5— from the Regional Congress of Soviets... 5— from the Regional Congress of autonomous municipalities, 10— from the Congress of Ulema.14

This offer is not as anomalous as it may first appear to the thesis that most of Russia's Muslims in the revolutionary era still adhered to some form of Muslim unity.

With this offer Lapin did not simply request permission for Muslims to join the Tashkent Soviet—rather he invited the Soviet to join in an autonomous Islamic

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12 This Revkom consisted of four Russians (F. Kolesov, Kazakov, Pershin, and Tomilin), one German (Bauman), four Jews (Zwilling, Weinstein, Solkin, and Tobolin), one Moldavian (Cirul), and one Pole (Czerniawski). See Zenkovsky, p. 231.

13 Safarov, Georgii, Kolonialnaya Revoliutsia: Opyt Turkestan (Gosudarstvennoe Izdatel'stvo, 1921), p. 70.

government under Shariah Law in line with the resolutions of the Second Congress of Muslims of Central Asia. This amounted to an attempt to reconstruct the old Tsarist truce between ulema and conservative Russians, who at least had not interfered with the Shariah, and to forswear the Jadids, who had previously demonstrated their antipathy for the old ways.

About the same time the Jadids, organized in their nationalist-oriented Muslim Council, inquired as to whether the Tashkent Soviet would recognize federal autonomy for Central Asia. Both Muslim initiatives were explicitly rejected by the Tashkent Soviet, which adopted on a vote of 97-17 a resolution declaring:

At the present time one cannot permit the admission of Muslims into the higher organs of the Regional revolutionary authority, because the attitude of the local population toward the Soviet of Soldiers', Workers', and Peasants' Deputies is quite uncertain and because the native population lacks proletarian organizations, which the Bolshevik faction could welcome into the organ of the higher Regional government.

Western historians are correct in endorsing Georgii Safarov's opinion that the Tashkent Soviet acted precipitously and without justification in excluding all Muslims from meaningful participation in the government. Those few Muslims who were admitted, two to the Turkestan CEC and four to another organ termed the Turkestan Council, were ordered to absent themselves on discussions of importance. Only three Muslims participated in the Congress itself. In a final empty gesture, the Revkom extended an invitation to the most prominent Jadid leader, the Khivan Mustafa Chokaev,

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16 Safarov, p. 70.
17 Park, p. 34.
to chair the Soviet, which he declined on the grounds that he would have become a mere figurehead.\footnote{18}

The Muslim response to these rebuffs was to coalesce rapidly into a united political front, called the "Itifak ul-Muslimin" (Union of Muslims).\footnote{19} This front, composed of ulema, Jadid-nationalists, and a number of anti-Bolshevik Russians and chaired by Mustafa Chokaev, was overtly nationalistic, circulating slogans such as "Turkestan for the Natives" and "Turkestan without Oppressors."\footnote{20} In the midst of riots and growing disorder in Tashkent, the Jadids' Muslim Council, with the backing of the conservatives, announced a congress of the Itifak in the town of Kokand in the Ferghana Valley, which would be open to anyone willing to resist the Tashkent Soviet. At this congress, which many delegates were unable to attend due to striking Bolshevik railworkers, a twelve-member "National Government of Autonomous Turkestan" was set up and a "Provisional Parliament" created. This Government had diverse representation: one-third of the Parliament's seats were reserved for ethnic Russians, the Kazakh Jadid Tanyshbaev was elected head of the National Government,\footnote{21} and negotiations began with the Kazakh national body, the Alash Orda.\footnote{22} The Congress even considered a proposal for political union from the Cossack General Dutov who had declared against the Bolsheviks and whose forces in the southern Urals were currently holding Orenburg against Bolshevik efforts to reinforce Tashkent.\footnote{23}

\footnote{18} Pipes, p. 92. This paralleled Stalin's invitation a few weeks later to Ahmed Tsalikov to join the new Commissariat of Nationalities, a move which would likewise have deprived Tsalikov of real influence.  
\footnote{19} Not to be confused with the earlier Ittifak of the Tatar liberals in 1906. The two organizations possessed the same title.  
\footnote{20} Park, p. 40.  
\footnote{21} Tanyshbaev was soon replaced by Mustafa Chokaev, who, although from Khiva, was of Kazakh lineage. See Zenkovsky, p. 235.  
\footnote{22} Presumably the Alash Orda of Orenburg, which shared a rail line with Tashkent, and not its counterpart in Semipalatinsk.  
\footnote{23} Zenkovsky, p. 234.
For two months the two governments of Turkestan existed in uneasy rivalry. Kokand received the endorsement of several soviets, but most soviets in Turkestan, being exclusively phenomena of the European settler population, recognized Tashkent. Kokand found subscribers for an emergency loan of 3,000,000 rubles but was unable to buy arms.24 Kokand then appealed to the Soviet government in Petrograd for official recognition. Stalin, engaged in his public campaign to recruit Muslims for Narkomnats, but at the same time privately speaking against autonomy for minority nationalities, washed his hands of the affair in an enigmatic reply:

The soviets are autonomous in their internal affairs and discharge their duties by relying on their actual forces. The native proletarians of Turkestan, therefore, should not appeal to the central Soviet power with the request to dissolve the Turkestan Sovnarkom which, in their opinion, is leaning upon the non-Muslim army elements, but should themselves dissolve it by force, if such a force is available to the native proletarians and peasants.25

Stalin’s answer seems to presume that a correlation existed between force and democracy and that an armed contest was capable of revealing which side was the true vehicle of progress. A strange view—although perhaps an echo of common social darwinist traits in Marxism, with its mortal struggle between classes, and Fascism, with its mortal struggle between nations.

Appeals to the Emir of Bukhara26 to assist Kokand were also fruitless. The Emir refused even to admit the Kokand emissaries, presumably due to his distaste for the Jadids in the Kokand government though perhaps to avoid giving the new regime in Tashkent an excuse to invade. Viewing union with Turkestan with distrust, the more exclusivist nationalists of the Kazakh Alash-Orda turned down Kokand’s invitation as

26 Bukhara was formally a sovereign state, but Tsarist Russia had conducted its foreign relations. See Wheeler, p. 84.
well.\textsuperscript{27} And, while awaiting Stalin's reply to their appeals, the Kokand government had already refused Dutov's offer for union, as H.C. d'Encausse asserts, because his demands were "unacceptable."\textsuperscript{28} As a final blow, the soviet in Kokand which, like the other soviets, was composed of indigenous Europeans, and had refused to acknowledge the authority of the Muslim-dominated National Government, took refuge in the town's citadel and called for military assistance from Tashkent.\textsuperscript{29}

On January 18, 1918, Soviet troops took Orenburg from Dutov and reopened the railway line to Turkestan. The Tashkent Soviet convened the Fourth Regional Congress of Soviets, and, following the new Soviet line of "proletarian self-determination" announced at the Third All-Russian Congress of Soviets in Moscow, denounced the Kokand government as bourgeois and counter-revolutionary. On the 26th the Turksovarkom declared war on Kokand. On January 29, 1918, Kolesov began a military offensive with troops from the Orenburg front bolstered by Austrian POWs recently conscripted into the Red Army. Kokand had only a small locally recruited militia and on February 18 (New Style) the town fell. It was then given over to several days of pillage by the Soviet troops, many of whom were Armenians with fresh memories of the 1915 Turkish massacres, resulting in the deaths of up to 14,000 residents and the

\textsuperscript{27} Carrere d'Encausse, p. 226. Pipes implies that Kokand broke off the talks when Dutov refused to guarantee autonomy for Turkestan. See Pipes, p. 175.
\textsuperscript{28} Carrere d'Encausse, p. 227. It is interesting to speculate what Kokand's reply might have been had Dutov been Muslim.
\textsuperscript{29} Pipes, p. 175.
destruction of the Muslim quarter. The survivors took refuge in the mountains ringing Ferghana Valley where they initiated a guerrilla campaign against Tashkent. The formal surrender of Kokand had no effect on this "Basmachi" or "bandit" movement which soon took root among the peasants throughout the Ferghana region.

It is often argued, and with much justification, that the Tashkent Soviet achieved what the Jadids had unsuccessfully sought for decades—i.e. the unification of ulema and Jadids under the banner of regional Turkestani nationalism. However, this trend towards Turkestani unity under Jadid nationalism was both incomplete and misleading. It was incomplete in that the new national conceptions still reached only a handful of the educated elite of Turkestan. The vast majority of the population remained loyal to traditional notions of the unity of the Sunni Ummah. It was misleading in that this "Turkestani nationalism" was always implicitly pan-Islamic in the reformist tradition of the Tatars much more than it was a territorial conception. The broadly inclusivist nature of this "Turkestani nationalism," even in the January days when the Kokand government was most viable, was demonstrated by its recruitment of members from all Muslims in Turkestan whether Turkestani, Tatar, or Turkish, and even flirting with the Alash Orda. The recruitment of Russians and the attempted recruitment of the White General Dutov was made necessary by the absence of educated personnel among the Muslims. In all of Turkestan, with its tangle of

30 The Tashkent armed forces consisted of 'Red Guard' detachments of local railway workers, soldiers of the former Tsarist garrison in Tashkent, soldiers dispatched from Russia, and local Armenian militia, but in addition up to one-half of the Tashkent force were Hungarians, hired on by Tashkent after the harsh POW camps in Central Asia were dismantled. These so-called 'Austrians' were organized in their own units or mixed with others. See Anon., 'The Red Army in Turkestan, 1917-1920' in Central Asian Review, No. 1, 1965; and Bailey, Major F.M., 'In Russian Turkestan under the Bolsheviks' in Journal of the Central Asian Society, Vol. VIII, Part I, 1921, p. 50. In reaction to the employment of POWs as mercenaries, Austria protested to Moscow, and Lenin, Trotsky, and Chicherin issued a general order in the spring of 1918 that no POWs were to be inducted into the Red Army under any circumstance, but Kolesov disregarded this instruction as well. See Park, p. 20.
languages and lifestyles, there were perhaps 50 Uzbeks sufficiently literate to run a governmental bureaucracy, and of course fewer in Kokand. All administrative matters, therefore, had to be conducted in Russian. Already before the fall of Kokand, convened as we recall by the "Union of Muslims"—hardly a title calculated to attract regional nationalists, and declared moreover on Muhammad's birthday—those ulema participating in the National Government came to dominate that organization, issuing appeals and declarations couched in purely Islamic terms, e.g. appeals for "Muslims" to defend the Shariah, and "Muslims of the World Unite." In the Turkestan of 1917-18, then, nationalism in the Western sense never took hold. Rather, if one can reduce the confused expressions of the "National Government" of Kokand to a single political conception, it would have to be characterized as reformist and implicitly pan-Islamic.

**Tashkent's Social Revolution in Asia.**

The fall of Kokand left a violent legacy in Ferghana, but of more significance in the long run in uniting Muslims against the Tashkent Soviet and against Moscow than the fall of the Jadids' "innovative" regime in Kokand, were attempts on the part of the Tashkent Soviet to implement Sovnarkom decrees on social revolution. It was Tashkent's escalation of "class war" during this period, which in the popular mind amounted to a war on Islam, that brought the average Muslim, whether urban dweller or peasant, to oppose Tashkent. This contravenes the Soviet view prevalent since 1919, that emphasizes the "renegade" nature of Tashkent. Far from condemning Tashkent, in 1918 Moscow went to great lengths to reinforce the Soviet with Red Army troops and often praised Tashkent's contribution to the Revolution. In November 1917, the Tashkent Soviet established a Commission of Inquiry to try political offenses.

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31 The Kokand Executive Committee included two Kazakhs, two Azerbaijanis, one Bashkir, one Austrian POW, and four Uzbeks. Zenkovsky, p. 235.  
32 Park, p. 18, note 23.
Thereafter both Muslims and Europeans became subject to arbitrary searches and arrest, but, since the enforcement personnel were exclusively European, the effect was to further strain ethnic relations. In fulfillment of a Petrograd Sovnarkom decree of December 5, 1917, the "Turksovnarkom" ordered the abolition of all existing judicial institutions in Central Asia, including the canonical Shariah courts. Many of the canonical courts were renamed "people’s courts" and through them the Tashkent Soviet began to enforce the endless stream of decrees emanating from Petrograd. With the breakdown of the regular courts in December 1917, local soviets began arbitrarily to requisition Muslim land and property. On January 22, 1918, due to delays in organizing the new revolutionary tribunals, Tashkent reversed itself and issued an order to re-employ the regular court system—but the process of abolishing them was already far advanced and the local soviets and Commission of Inquiry for the most part continued to do as they wished in open defiance of any supervision for the remainder of 1918, managing simultaneously to be both chaotic and oppressive. Similarly, in its efforts to implement the Petrograd decree of January 23 on separation of church and state, some waqf lands in Tashkent were nationalized, striking at the livelihood of the ulema, and especially the religious jurists, or mullahs. Thus the "excesses" of the Tashkent Soviet were not merely due to distortion of Bolshevik nationality and domestic policies, but were largely the result of genuine attempts to implement Petrograd-style social revolution in a tense border region.

Several days after the fall of Kokand, Kolesov suppressed a Turkmen National Executive Committee which had arisen in Ashkhabad near the Iranian border. Then, persuaded by Jadid refugees from a failed revolt in Bukhara who had recently converted to socialism that Bukhara was ripe for a reform-oriented people's revolution

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33 McCauley, Documents, p. 179.
34 Park, p. 228.
35 Park, p. 227.
against the unpopular Emir, Kolesov advanced on that town and on March 14, 1918, with only a small detachment, delivered a 24-hour ultimatum. The frightened Emir stalled for two days while discussions were held arranging for a transfer of power to the socialist Bukharan Jadids, known as the "Young Bukharans"; then the Emir seized and executed the ten Russian emissaries who had been invited to stay the night within the city walls. Kolesov's subsequent hasty attack on Bukhara failed, and the Commissar, having expended all of his artillery's ammunition in a fruitless bombardment of the city, was forced to escape the enraged populace by tearing up rails from behind his train and re-laying them in front where the Bukharans had made off with the tracks.36 A new expedition organized within a few days sufficed to intimidate the Emir into signing an agreement formally establishing Bukhara as a protectorate of Tashkent, but Kolesov was careful to exclude the Jadidist provisions on social reforms, which the Emir still insisted would never be accepted by his subjects.37 Since no provision was made for the stationing of Soviet troops on Bukharan soil, its terms left the Emir essentially as Kolesov found him—the sole ruler of an ungarrisoned and neutral Bukhara. The Emir did not rest, however. Over the next few months he contacted the Basmachis and the British, purchased arms for his military, and attempted to negotiate defensive alliances with Iran and Afghanistan.38

Meanwhile, the Party had taken the first steps toward the new policy of federalism with its Declaration of Rights of Working and Exploited People.39

37 This was perhaps an accurate statement. In January of 1910, the opening of the first Jadid school in the city evoked a riot in which the population turned on the Iranian Shiite minority—identified in the public mind with "innovation" and Jadids—and killed many. Only the quick intercession of Russian troops from Turkestan, called in by the Emir, succeeded in quelling the fighting. See Carrere d'Encausse, p. 196.
39 See Chapter One, p. 12.
Interpreting this as an invitation to proceed with autonomy, the Tashkent Soviet on its own initiative proclaimed Turkestan to be an Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic with its own Turksovznarkom, its own Red Army, its own Narkomnats and eventually its own Narkomindel (People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs) and its own system of revolutionary courts. After the fall of Kokand, Tashkent redoubled its efforts to transform the area under its control into a model socialist society, conceived not in terms of class struggle among Russians and Muslims, but "class struggle" between Russians and Muslims where the Russians' status as proletarians removed all restraint from their relations with the Muslim "bourgeois" nationalists and "feudal" landlords. Many of the traditional privileges that Islam and the ulema had enjoyed under the Tsardom and the Provisional Government were terminated and Muslims subjected to the arbitrary control of Russian railworkers in their new capacity as People's Commissars. Although for the most part, the legal and social structure of the Muslims remained intact through late 1920, especially in rural areas, much "progress" was made in the cities toward the abolition of Shariah courts, and the coordination of revolutionary tribunals. After the fall of Kokand many mosques were desecrated or converted to secular use and more waqf land was seized. In response to the shortage of grain, which in late 1918 assumed the proportions of a famine, food requisitions were stepped up. These were applied mainly to the Muslims. In the spring of 1918 the cotton industry and all accumulated stocks were nationalized, as were all estates that employed hired labor. Minor trade was still allowed among the Muslims, but the rampant inflation resulting from Moscow's free use of the printing press reduced urban trade to barter. Whatever property of value that Muslims might possess was likely to be nationalized, by 1919 including most houses, motor-cars, horses, and carriages. The Tashkent Soviet was under no illusions concerning the effect which these policies had upon the Muslims.

40 Park, p. 213.
As early as March 1, 1918, the Turksovnarkom instructed its military to maintain a lower profile "in order to forestall a declaration of war by Muslims throughout the whole region."\textsuperscript{41}

**The Basmachis.**

The fall of Kokand together with social revolution and the assault on the "holy city" of Bukhara, changed the nature of the struggle in Central Asia from a rivalry of parliaments to a low-intensity but permanent guerrilla war. The former event alienated Jadids and nationalists; the latter brought conservative Muslims into the struggle. Two "Basmachi" movements emerged in the summer of 1918, reflecting this distinction. That under the Jadid Madamın Bek was better organized and tended to employ nationalist slogans. The other, under the former Kokand chief of militia, Irgash, was more fragmentary, socially conservative, and at times lapsed into tribal feuding. Both, however, were strongly pan-Islamic: Madamın’s group called itself the "Muslim People’s Army" and Irgash had himself bestowed by prominent mullahs with the ancient title of the Muslim Caliphs, "Amir ul-Mu’minin," or Commander of the Faithful, and Khan of Ferghana.\textsuperscript{42} But the precise relationship between the reformers and the conservatives is difficult to determine, given the often amorphous and transient nature of the political conceptions of Russia’s Muslims, and the two factions often managed to work together.

For most of 1918 the Basmachis were limited to the valley of Ferghana. The Tashkent Soviet feared that they might succeed in arousing most of Turkestan to a holy

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\textsuperscript{41} Park, p. 21.

\textsuperscript{42} In The Basmachi or Freemen’s Revolt in Turkestan, 1918-1924, *Soviet Studies* Vol. XXXIII, No. 3 (July, 1981), p. 355, M. Olcott gives the term "Amir ul-Musulman." The term "Musulman" is a Russian rendering of the Arabic term "Muslimuuna," the plural of "Muslim." The original was probably "Amir ul-Mu’minin," an epithet of the medieval Abbasid Caliphs which is still used in the Islamic world today. The phrase means "Commander of the Faithful," and not "Leader of the true believer."
war against Bolshevism, and went to great lengths to eradicate the movement, but in 1919 the movement spread through the mountains of eastern Turkestan. When Madamin accepted subordinate status to Irgash in March 1919, these two organizations merged, greatly increasing their effectiveness. In the summer of 1919 some of Tashkent’s troops ordered to Ferghana mutinied, triggering an independence movement among the Russian peasants of Semirechie, called the “Peasant Army” under a Russian peasant named Monstrov. This group demanded an end to the Cheka, the revolutionary tribunals, the grain requisitions, and especially Kobozev’s attempts to create Muslim army units. Paradoxically, when Madamin’s collaboration with Irgash broke down, the Peasant Army joined with Madamin to form a Ferghana Provisional Government. This strange alliance of "both ends against the middle," i.e. colonists and Jadids against Bolsheviks, lasted into 1920, convening a Constituent Assembly in Ferghana which called for freedom of labor, trade, speech, an end to the Cheka and grain requisitions, and solicited support from Afghanistan, Bukhara, and the British. By autumn of 1919 it is estimated that 20,000 Basmachis exerted effective control of most of Turkestan, limiting Bolshevik rule to the cities. In late 1919 the arrival in Turkestan of Frunze’s Red Army with attendant concessions in social policy went far towards pacifying Turkestan, so that by mid-1920 the guerrilla movement was well under control.

43 Olcott, p. 355.
Chapter 5: The National Resurgence in Turkestan.

Moscow and the Tashkent Soviet.

By April 1918 the acts of the Tashkent Soviet had brought Bolshevism into disrepute among virtually all Muslims in Central Asia. Moreover, the contribution of Soviet troops and Stalin’s role in exacerbating the conflict were not forgotten by the Muslims. The refusal of the Sovnarkom of the RSFSR to recognize or aid the National Government, in stark contrast with the Declaration of Rights, and the Appeal to Muslims, left Turkestanis embittered and skeptical of Bolshevik intentions.

Nevertheless, Moscow did sincerely regret the sack of Kokand and wished to shed itself of its reputation in Central Asia. But how? Any attempt to discipline Tashkent, which in 1918 contained a majority of Left SRs, might have resulted in a declaration of independence or in the Soviet’s defection to the Whites. To prevent such a declaration, on April 30, 1918, Moscow granted ASSR status to Tashkent, the first region to be given this distinction. At the same time Moscow sought to increase its control over Tashkent.

Accordingly, in late April 1918, the Central Committee sent an emissary, P. A. Kobozev, to Tashkent to begin, by means of persuasion and threats, the process of bringing its policies into line with those of Moscow short of pushing Tashkent into the camp of Moscow’s enemies. At the same time Stalin sent conciliatory messages to the soviets of several cities with large Muslim populations apologizing for the excesses of Tashkent (this was the period of Stalin’s de facto alliance with the Tatar Left) and stressing the importance of bringing Muslims into leading positions in the Soviet

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1 The first ASSR to be announced within the RSFSR was the Tatar-Bashkir ASSR, on March 23, 1918. The second to be announced was Turkestan. Czech occupation of Kazan prevented implementation of the Tatar project. Central Asia was not occupied, but only cut off, hence Moscow was able to complete federation plans for Turkestan on April 30, 1918. See Pipes, p. 179. The abortive Soviet Ukraine project of January, 1918, was not the first ASSR, but the first SSR, i.e. the Ukraine was conceived on a par with the RSFSR, while Turkestan was technically a part of the Russian Soviet Republic.
government, that is, the RSFSR. More serious measures for disciplining Tashkent were in preparation when, on July 7, 1918, the White forces of the Cossack General Dutov again took Orenburg, cutting Turkestan off from Moscow, and depriving Kobozev in his negotiations with Tashkent of his trump card—the threat of invasion by the Red Army. Except for a brief re-opening of the rail line to Tashkent in early spring 1919, which had no effect on Tashkent's policies, this isolation was to last until September 1919.

Moscow regarded its unpopularity in Central Asia as the fault of Tashkent. In Lenin's view, the "excesses" of the Tashkent Soviet were responsible for alienating Turkestanis, and constituted a threat to Moscow's delicate relations with the rest of Russia's Muslims. These "excesses" reflected the "colonial mentality" of the Tashkent Soviet, which Lenin believed was still dominated by Russian settlers and colonial administrators from before the Revolution. Throughout the period of Turkestan's isolation from Moscow during the Civil War, Lenin saw the main task of the Party in Central Asia in exclusively political terms. When he called for Tashkent to show "caution, and more caution," this did not reflect a belief that Tashkent's social revolution was an error—simply that it was premature. At no time did he cease placing the blame for the political conflict in Turkestan on the legacy of Tsarism, or cease regarding social revolution as the ultimate solution to this conflict. No one in Moscow, it seems, envisioned the possibility that social revolution might aggravate the political conflict, instead of mitigating it. Therefore, in mid-1918 Lenin decided that the way to better Russian-Muslim relations in Turkestan was to recruit Turkestanis Muslims into both the Tashkent Soviet and the Turkestan Communist Party in proportion to their make-up of the population as a whole. Since Muslims constituted 95% of the population.

in Moscow's view, they should comprise 95% of the local Communist Party, though some concessions would still be allowed to Europeans due to the Party's immediate need for literate functionaries. And, through most of Tashkent's isolation, Moscow remained unconcerned with Tashkent's class-biased policies of grain requisitions, nationalization of property, and the seizure of waqf.

Kobozev and the Civil War.

For a year and a half, from April 1918 to September 1919, Kobozev sought to recruit Muslims into positions of importance in the Communist Party and the Soviet government, against fierce resistance from the European veterans of the Soviet. When Kobozev first arrived, he convened the Fifth Regional Congress of Soviets in Tashkent—the first Bolshevik-sponsored congress in Central Asia with significant Muslim representation. At this congress Kobozev engineered the election of a new Turksovnarkom of 16 members, and a Turkestan CEC of 26 members, headed by Kobozev, which included ten Jadids, but without securing Muslim control of either body. On this occasion several commissariats were set up including a Turkestan Commissariat for Nationality Affairs, or "Turkmnats," headed by a former Jadid. A month later, in June 1918, at the First Regional Congress of the Russian Communist Party in Tashkent, several pro-Muslim recommendations were passed, to be implemented by the Turkestan CEC: the ban on Muslims in governmental posts was formally lifted and Kobozev elicited conciliatory statements from the Russians in regard to the participation of Muslims in the Tashkent government, e.g. "The Muslim proletariat must be the main bulwark of Soviet power in Turkestan." Next, the Party congress recognized "the Turkic language," probably Uzbek, as a state language on a par with Russian. The congress

3 Bailey, p. 55-6.
also called for the creation of Turkomnats Muslim committees (muskoms), or "Muslim Soviets," throughout Turkestan, and the establishment of a Muslim Red Army to parallel the Russian one. However, without troops to enforce these resolutions, Kobozov and his Muslim proteges had no means of ensuring the cooperation of the Europeans, with the result that Kobozov and the remaining Russians in the Turkestan CEC maintained their hold on the government—every move on the part of Kobozov was either ignored or indefinitely postponed. In particular, Kobozov's efforts to recruit large numbers of Muslims into the Party failed—in June 1918 out of 261 Communist Party members in Tashkent, only 28 were Muslims; out of 1500 Communist Party members in all of Turkestan, only 50 Party delegates attended the First Regional Congress of the Russian Communist Party in Turkestan, and only 5 of these were Muslims.5

However, the Tashkent Soviet was slowly losing control to other forces in Central Asia. In the summer of 1918 short-sighted repressions by Frolov, a representative of Tashkent, provoked an anti-Bolshevik revolt in Ashkhabad that quickly spread throughout Turkmenistan.6 Attempts by Tashkent to crush the revolt were countered by an invitation to the British in Iran, who dispatched an expeditionary force. In January 1919 riots by Muslims in Tashkent rocked the government. Meanwhile, the famine grew to such proportions that by spring it was estimated that perhaps 25% of the Muslim population had died, reaching even higher proportions in Semirechie.7 In addition to the famine, which alone made stability in Turkestan impossible, clashes between Kirgiz and Russian settlers in Semirechie escalated steadily through 1918-19. In January 1919, the Tashkent Soviet's Commissar of War, Osipov, attempted a coup, managing through trickery to arrest and shoot several

5 Park, p. 125.
6 Park, p. 27.
7 Park, p. 21.
of the most important figures in the Tashkent Soviet.\textsuperscript{8} His followers in the Tashkent Red Army were defeated, however, and over 4000 suspects shot, mostly ethnic Russians.\textsuperscript{9}

The elimination of many of the "old Bolsheviks" in the Tashkent Soviet, who had formed the focus of resistance to Kobozov, soon led to results for Kobozov.\textsuperscript{10} At the Seventh Regional Congress of Soviets in Turkestan, in February 1919, almost one-half of the delegates were Muslims. At the Second Regional Congress of the Communist Party of Turkestan, on March 30, 1919, a Turkestani Regional Muslim Buro was created, which assumed control of Turkomnats.\textsuperscript{11} In late May the regional Musburo sponsored the First Conference of Muslim Communists of Turkestan at which approval was secured for the disbanding of the Armenian units that had participated in the sack of Kokand.\textsuperscript{12} But resistance by Tashkent's "old Bolsheviks" had not ended with the Osipov coup—for example, since the police remained suspicious of Muslims, the delegates to this conference were forced to carry special certificates to avoid arbitrary arrest.\textsuperscript{13} In the spring of 1919, the Muslim Communists charged the Russians in the Turkestan CEC with conducting a "policy of extermination by famine." At a meeting of the Turkestan CEC one Russian named Tobolin even stated that the Government should let the Kirgiz starve since they were the "economically weakest [in Central Asia] from the Marxist

\textsuperscript{8} Bailey, p. 52. Alexander Park gives a figure of 14 shot. See Park, p. 32. Apparently Kolesov survived this episode. Becker relates that during the 1930s Kolesov attempted to justify his acts in published works. See Becker, p. 399, note 25.

\textsuperscript{9} Park, p. 33.


\textsuperscript{11} These duties were defined by Statute on the initiative of Stalin's Narkomnats on February 8, 1919, and essentially were a reflection of RSFSR Narkomnats policy. Propaganda departments were set up for residents of Turkestan, including Uzbeks, Tadjiks, Turkmens, Kazakhs, Tatars, Ukrainians, Jews, and Armenians. Vaidyanath, p. 93.

\textsuperscript{12} Zenkovsky, p. 242.

\textsuperscript{13} Safarov, p. 96-7.
point of view [and therefore it is] far more important to devote available resources to the maintenance of the front [against the British in Ashkhabad] rather than expending them on famine."14 Similarly, a suggestion that taxation on the Russian population should be increased was rejected by the Turkestan CEC as too risky since Soviet power in Turkestan still rested primarily on their goodwill.15

By this time Kolchak had again advanced to the Volga and, anxious to ensure the loyalties of Russia's Muslims, Lenin intensified his efforts to persuade Tashkent to appease the Muslims in Turkestan. In June the Politburo sent a strong message to the Turkestan CEC instructing it to cease taking the property of Muslims without consent.16 At the Third Regional Congress of the Russian Communist Party in Tashkent in the same month, the "colonizers" again responded merely with conciliatory slogans,17 but at local Party elections the Muslims made progress in increasing their representation, securing four of eleven Regional Party seats in the Musburo.18 But the Russians continued to dominate at the Regional Party level since they held the remainder of the seats. Instructions from Moscow to reduce the food tax in Ferghana by 50% in order to defuse the Basmachi revolt were ignored; the Turkestan CEC then actually increased local provisioning.19

In July, as part of an effort throughout Soviet territory to replenish the ranks of the RKP, Kobaev recruited several thousand Muslims from all classes into the Party.20 This influx was soon reflected in gains at the highest levels. In September of

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14 Park, p. 39. One can detect here an attitude similar to that expressed by Stalin in his reply to Kokand in January 1918. Both seem to regard Marxism as "scientific" justification for a social struggle in which only the fittest should survive.
16 Park, p. 213.
17 Park, p. 127.
18 Zenkovsky, p. 242.
19 Park, p. 39.
20 Carrere d'Encausse, p. 233.
1919, at the Eighth Regional Congress of Soviets the Muslim Communists finally secured effective control of the Turkestan CEC.\textsuperscript{21} When the "colonizers" passed a resolution calling for the abolition of Turkomnats, the Muslims countered with a resolution abolishing Turksovnarkom, the last remaining center of Russian control.\textsuperscript{22} However, at the Fourth Regional Congress of the Turkestan Communist Party a few days later, the Muslims were stalemated again, when the Congress resolved that it would allow Muslim proportional representation only in instances "in which the regional or local Congress of Soviets desires this form of representation" and only on condition that individual Muslim candidates remained subject to veto by other bodies.\textsuperscript{23} Resistance on the part of the "old Bolsheviks" to Moscow's pro-Muslim policy in Turkestan did not finally cease until the arrival of the Red Army and the Turkestan Commission in November of 1919.

**The Muslim National Resurgence.**

On September 13, 1919, forces under Frunze took Orenburg, broke through the White front, and dispatched Red Army regiments to Tashkent with food trains to relieve the famine.\textsuperscript{24} Just before this breakthrough, Moscow set up a committee to make recommendations on how to solve the problem of Turkestan.\textsuperscript{25} On September 29, the Orgburo of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party wrote an official charter for a Commission to be sent to Turkestan. On October 8, 1919, a Turkestan Commission was set up and charged with rectifying the past errors of the Tashkent Soviet in Turkestan. Its members were Shalva Z. Eliava (a Georgian ex-Menshevik), Yan Z. Rudzutak (director of the textile industry in Russia, to inspect the cotton

\textsuperscript{21} Zenkovsky, p. 242.

\textsuperscript{22} Vaidyanath, p. 98.

\textsuperscript{23} Park, p. 35.

\textsuperscript{24} Carrere d'Encausse, p. 233.

\textsuperscript{25} This committee included Georgi Chicherin, Nariman Narimanov (an Azerbaijani), Maxim M. Litvinov, Vladimirsky, Milyutin, S. I. Gusev, Goloshchekin, and Shalva Eliava. Shukman, p. 13.
resources of Turkestan), Red Army General Mikhail V. Frunze (son of a Russian settler in Turkestan), Filip I. Goloshchekin (a veteran Russian Bolshevik), Valerian V. Kuybyshev (Frunze's Commissar), and Gleb I. Bokii (Cheka). After many delays, the new Turkestan Commission finally arrived in Tashkent on November 4, and immediately held a joint meeting of the Regional Committee of the Russian Communist Party, the Regional Musburo, and the Turksovnarkom.

In the next few days the Commission secured control of the Tashkent apparatus and disbanded Tashkent's military. An extensive purge of kulaks and colonizers, including public trials of the worst offenders, was followed by the deportation of about 1,000 Russians. Frunze then sent a report to Lenin in which he described at length the provocations and "excesses" of the settler population in their domination of the Muslims. In response, Lenin ordered in November 1919 still further concessions to the Muslims in Turkestan, including the virtual cessation of War Communist policies—sixteen months before War Communism was halted in the rest of Soviet Russia. Private trade was again allowed (among Muslims only) and the public bazaars were reopened. Waqf lands, Quranic schools and Sharia courts were restored, and price fixing and food requisitions discontinued. Then a Special Commission of the Turkestan Commission went to Semirechie to subdue the colonists and return stolen lands to the nomads.

When the Turkestan Commission first arrived in Central Asia, the Commission—despite Lenin's sympathies for the Muslims—was somewhat divided between the Muslims and the Russians in their loyalties. In the report sent to Moscow in October

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26 See Shukman, p. 5.
27 Lenin, Works, XXX, p. 544, note 47. Kobozev returned to Moscow, since by then he was thoroughly disliked by the Russians of Turkestan and could be of little further use to the Party. See Shukman, p. 13.
28 Shukman, p. 7.
29 Pipes, p. 183.
30 Vaidyanath, p. 117.
31 Shukman, p. 7.
Frunze had indicated not only that the Russian settlers were to blame for the conflicts but that national ambitions on the part of the Muslims bore some responsibility as well. Lenin chose to ignore this, but no sooner did the Commission purge the Turkestan Party apparatus of its "colonial" elements than it began to encounter difficulties with the Turkestan nationalists. On November 3, 1919, the Turkestan Musburo passed a resolution calling for the consolidation of the separate national divisions of Turkomnats into a single "Turkic" division, which the Turkestan Commission ordered cancelled. Then, in late November 1919, Eliava of the Turkestan Commission urgently requested a fuller complement of administrative personnel from Moscow. This request was not due merely to a shortage of educated Party members in Turkestan, though this did figure into the request. But, after purging the Party of the leading Russians, the Commission had discovered that many of the Turkestanis were unreliable politically. The Muslims whom Lenin had allowed to join the Central Asian branch of the Party were far from being the kind of Communist one might expect to encounter in Moscow. The Jadid element knew even less Marxism than the Tatar Left, and most had no understanding of Bolshevism beyond that which could be gleaned from the most superficial of Party slogans. Virtually all of the Muslim Communists continued to adhere to Islam, in practice if not in theory, and often in theory as well. Ulema of traditional education had become Party members; village elders had become "chairmen of soviets." From 1919 until as late as 1925 Party meetings might be suspended so that members could attend Friday prayers. Most worrisome to the Commission was the preoccupation of the Muslim Communists with a thinly disguised inclusivist nationalism, similar to that which the Tatars were advocating in Kazan.

32 Vaidyanath, p. 98.
33 Shukman, p. 7.
34 Bailey, 59.
The Commission now found itself in a difficult position. Most of the members considered both Muslims and Russians in Turkestan disloyal to Moscow. But the head of the Commission, the Georgian Eliava, remained more in favor of the Muslims than did the other members, to the point of disrupting Commission business on occasion. And Lenin, far removed from events in Central Asia and preoccupied with General Wrangel in the Crimea and growing tensions with Poland, was inclined to interpret any criticism of the Turkestani Communists, even from Commission members, as manifestations of a "colonizing mentality" or of Great Russian chauvinism. As long as Lenin continued to support Eliava, those in opposition, in particular General Frunze, were unable to control the Muslim takeover of the Party. On January 15 the Commission learned of Muslim plans to unilaterally declare a "Greater Turkestan Republic," echoing a resolution of the previous spring which Moscow had ignored, but the Commission made no move to block this declaration due to fear of being labeled "colonialist" by Moscow. At this time Lenin's relations with the Commission were at low ebb. On January 17, 1920, for example, Frunze complained to Lenin that Trotsky's requests for military assistance in Siberia were affecting Frunze's campaign against the Basmachis in Turkestan. Annoyed at this hint of a "colonial mentality" on the part of Frunze, the Central Committee in Moscow sent the following caustic reply to Frunze: "When an opinion is asked for, it should be given."

The Commission did have one means of combating Muslim nationalism in Turkestan without incurring the ire of Lenin—this was by calling for the implementation of Stalin's Narkomnats policy in Turkestan. We recall that the policy of dividing Muslims into ethnic components was introduced by Narkomnats, probably on Politburo initiative, between November 1918 and March 1919 to separate the Tatars

36 Shukman, p. 8.
37 Lenin, Works, XXXII, p. 811.
38 Lenin, Works, XXXII, p. 159-60.
from the rest of Russia's Muslims. In reaction to the growing independence of the
Turkestanis, in early January 1920, apparently on its own initiative the Turkestan
Commission proposed to Moscow that Turkestan be split into separate Turkmen, Uzbek-
Tadik, and Kirgiz regions in line with RSFSR Narkomnats policy. Moscow, however,
still took no action but continued to let events in Tashkent drift.

The Muslims continued their nationalistic campaign without pause. On January
17, 1920, the Muslim Communists held their Third Regional Conference of Musburos of
Turkestan. The conference passed a resolution declaring the Turkestan ASSR of the
RSFSR to be a "Soviet Republic of Turkic Peoples," declaring:

In the interests of international union of the working and oppressed
peoples, to instill by means of Communist agitation the idea of abolishing
the tendency of the Turkic peoples to separate by substance and by name
into Tatars, Kirgiz, Bashkirs, Uzbeks, etc., and to form separate small
republics, but [rather] to unite for the purposes of consolidation and to
draw the other Turkic peoples not now a part of the RSFSR around the
Turkic Soviet Republic, and where it is not possible to add them [to the
Turkic Soviet Republic] -- to unite the scattered Turkic peoples among
themselves according to their territorial distribution.  

This declaration was an attempt to upgrade Turkestan's ASSR status to that of SSR status,
such as had been envisaged in January 1918 for the Ukraine. But this union was not to
be merely a union of territory -- it was to be a union of independent and equal
Communist Parties, each with its own territory. Another resolution declared the
Russian Communist Party of Turkestan to be the "Turkic Communist Party," with the
Musburo of Turkestan as its Central Committee. Finally a resolution announced the
formation of a separate "Turkic Red Army."  

Immediately after this conference the Fifth Congress of the Russian Communist
Party of Turkestan was held. At this Congress the Muslim Communists obtained a

39 Vaidyanath, p. 106.
40 Safarov, p. 110.
41 Shukman, p. 8.
majority in the Turkestan Musburo for the first time. The Muslim Communists thus attained a dominant position not only in the Tashkent Soviet, but also in the regional apparatus of the RSFSR and of the Communist Party. A resolution was passed declaring that Moscow's long-standing instruction that a Party member must possess "freedom from religious prejudice" was no longer to apply to every Party member, but only to Europeans and to Muslims in the highest ranks of the Party in Turkestan:

The struggle with religious prejudices among the members of the party needs to be placed on international, class grounds. Just as among the oppressed nationalities the power of religious prejudice is explained by [Tsarist] national oppression, the attachment to religion on that part of the dominating nation that serves in the colonies is of significant measure, and is manifest by the oppressor's chauvinism. Therefore, among the Europeans, freedom from religious prejudices is required as an absolute condition for the occupation of responsible posts. This requirement is no less necessary for the fully conscious and responsible Muslim-workers. As for the ranks and less responsible Muslims, [who are] members of the Party, the struggle with religious prejudice in their ranks needs exceptional guidance from the developed self-conscious class.

The government monopoly on the sale of grain was then declared restricted to the Russian population, and a program set up to return seized lands to Muslims. These resolutions were submitted to Moscow for approval—in confusion the Central Committee in Moscow contacted the Turkestan Commission for advice. In Tashkent, the Commission was still split. While all agreed that the resolution on a separate Communist Party could not be tolerated, Eliava, Goloshchekin and Kuybyshev favored supporting the resolution for a Greater Turkic Republic. For a month the Commission wavered, unable to advise the Central Committee in Moscow. Finally, on February 23, 1920.

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42 Muslim buros, including regional branches, were part of Narkomnats, the People's Commissariat of Nationalities, and thus part of the Soviet government of the RSFSR. The Muslim Communists had already achieved control of the Central Executive Committee of the Tashkent Soviet upon the arrival of Frunze in September of 1919.

43 Safarov, p. 139.

44 Shukman, p. 9.

45 Shukman, p. 8.
Frunze returned to Tashkent and in a highly critical meeting with the other members of the Commission persuaded them to condemn the Muslim Communists and to use the Commission's powers to annul all of the resolutions.46

**Lenin versus the Muslim Nationalists.**

In response to the nationalist declarations of the Muslim Communists in Tashkent, Lenin had at last become alarmed over the trend in Turkestan. On February 2, 1920, in a speech to the CEC, Lenin stated:

> Our policy in the East must be even more cautious and patient than in the West, for here we are dealing with countries that are much more backward, are under the oppressive influence of religious fanaticism, and are imbued with greater distrust of the Russian people...
>
> We have granted autonomy to the Bashkir Republic. We must found an autonomous Tatar Republic. We shall continue the same policy in relation to all the Eastern peoples...
>
> If the European countries have to go through a Kerensky period, in the countries that are at a lower developmental level there are even greater elements of distrust, and it will require more time to influence them.47

Since federalism was designed to appease nationalists, it seems that Lenin now regarded the Turkestani Communists as afflicted with both nationalism and "feudalism." That same month Lenin convened a commission which would make recommendations for a full and final solution to "the Muslim problem" in the Soviet state. An eight-man team was set up to reconsider federation for Tatarstan, Bashkiria, Siberia, and Turkestan, under the chairmanship of Stalin.48 On March 8, 1920, Stalin's team issued a policy directive which was communicated to Turkestan on March 22. It was a crushing disappointment to the Muslim Communists who until then had believed that they had the backing of a majority in the Politburo in Moscow. The team in effect recommended...

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46 Shukman, p. 8.

47 Lenin, *Works*, XXX, p. 315-331. The phrase "the same policy" probably at this time referred only to the setting up of autonomous republics, not the extension of the policy of dividing natives along narrow ethnic lines.

48 Pipes, p. 247.
expanding the Soviet Tatar policy to apply to all Muslims in the Soviet state, including Central Asia, in accordance with the Turkestan Commission’s January request. It was announced that Turkestan was to be incorporated into the RSFSR as an ASSR along the same lines as the grant to Kolesov’s regime in April 1918—this meant that a Turkestan governed by Muslim Communists was to be accorded no greater independence than one governed by a Tashkent Soviet of Left SRs, Mensheviks, and “colonizers.” The commission recommended that neither Kazakhstan, nor Azerbaijan, nor the Volga should be included in Turkestan ASSR. The resolution for a separate Turkic Communist Party was rejected outright, and the Turkestan Musburo reduced in authority to that of an oblast (regional) section of the Russian Communist Party.

These recommendations amounted to an endorsement of Frunze’s position in the Turkestan Commission, with whom Lenin had been in communication. In response, the Central Asian Musburo announced that it would convene both a Regional Party congress and a Regional Soviet congress to challenge Moscow’s ruling, but this was blocked by the Turkestan Commission. Then, through the Bashkir A.Z. Validov, the Muslims requested Lenin to include as many Muslims as Russians on the Turkestan Commission itself. But, when Frunze warned Lenin that this would only encourage their nationalistic tendencies, Lenin merely promised to study the matter. Finally, in a last effort to achieve some measure of genuine autonomy, in mid-May the Turkestan CEC sent a delegation to Moscow, consisting of T. Ryskulov, Khojaev, and Bekh–Ivanov, in order to petition for the dismissal of the Turkestan Commission. At the same time Eliava and Rudzutak went in a separate delegation to represent the Commission’s point of view. Eliava was still inclined to support the Muslims in their

49 Shukman, p. 9.
50 Shukman, p. 9.
51 Carrere d’Encausse, p. 234.
52 Shukman, p. 9.
quest for formal autonomy, but was as opposed as Rudzutak to autonomy within the Party or to any diminution of authority for the Commission. On May 23, the Muslim delegation met with the Central Committee of the RKP in Moscow and explained that a policy of class struggle would not work in Turkestan, and that a stable Turkestan in the form of a Greater Turkic Republic was essential for the cause of world revolution. They asked for the Turkestan Commission to be terminated and its powers to be transferred to the regional Musburo, and for the creation of a separate Muslim Red Army and a separate Narkomindel. On May 25 the delegation saw the Politburo and repeated their requests.\textsuperscript{53}

After the departure of the delegations, the Politburo appointed a Special Commission to consider the requests, composed of Eliava, Chicherin, and Krestinsky. On June 13 the Special Commission submitted its report to Lenin.\textsuperscript{54} On June 22 the Politburo discussed it and on the same day rendered its decision. This decision was put in the form of a resolution on June 29. On July 1 Eliava communicated the gist of it to Kuybyshev in Tashkent. On July 12 the Turkestan Commission received the full text, but not until July 19, 1920, did the Musburo of Turkestan learn the whole story from Ryskulov when he returned from Moscow. On the same day the entire Turkestan Regional Central Committee resigned.\textsuperscript{55}

The Special Commission did not overturn any of the rulings of Stalin's previous eight-man team. Rather it re-defined the mission of the Turkestan Commission and specified in greater detail the relationship between the Turkestan Commission and the Turksovnarkom and Central Executive Committee. The primary purpose of the Commission would remain the reconciliation of Muslims with Europeans by eradicating the "colonial" attitude engendered by Tsarism and the former Tashkent Soviet. On the

\textsuperscript{53} Shukman, p. 11.  
\textsuperscript{54} Shukman, p. 11.  
\textsuperscript{55} Shukman, p. 13.
other hand, the life of the Turkestan Commission was to be extended indefinitely,
becoming in effect the permanent ruling body of Turkestan. The Turkestan CEC could
not veto any decision of the Commission. Communications, post and telegraph, finance,
foreign affairs, foreign trade, the economy, and the military all became exclusive or
almost exclusive affairs of the Commission. The Government would control only
education, health, and cultural affairs. The decision of June 22, which was composed by
Lenin, is worth relating in full:

Draft Decision of the Politburo of the CC RKP(b) on the Tasks of the
RKP(b) in Turkestan:

The Theses and draft to be endorsed as a whole, but both to be amended
in the direction of
(1) equalising land tenure of Russians and newcomers with that of
local peoples;
(2) overcoming, ousting and subordinating Russian kulaks in the
most energetic manner;
(3) not giving the Turkestan Commission the right to alter decrees
without obtaining the consent of the Turkestan CEC and the
Turksovnarkom and without consulting the centre;
(4) systematically considering, preparing and carrying out the
transfer of power—gradually but steadily—to the local Soviets of
working people, under the control of reliable Communists;
(5) the question of dividing the Republic into three parts not to be
decided beforehand;
(6) the general task to be, not Communism, but the overthrow of
feudalism.56

Points (1) and (2) had been Commission policy from its inception, so did not
indicate any major change. Point (3) reflected Lenin’s desire for a maximum of
consultation between the Turkestan Commission and the Turksovnarkom, and
eventually a transfer of powers, but the Politburo significantly failed to incorporate
this point in the June 29 resolution. Point (5), which concerned the division of
Turkestan into three “national” regions, had been discussed in the Politburo since
January 1920, when the Turkestan Commission had first proposed it. On July 13, 1920,
Lenin went further and instructed the Turkestan Commission to undertake special

measures to combat pan-Islamic and nationalist tendencies and to draw up a map, and to report in detail on "the conditions of merging or separating" the three parts.\(^57\) But, still inclined to concede more to Turkestan than he had to the Tatars, Lenin instructed the Commission not to proceed to the actual implementation of these divisions.\(^58\)

Lenin's delay on this territorial division of Turkestan was due primarily to his desire to allow his provisions on social revolution—points (4) and (6)—an opportunity to undermine the social basis of nationalism in Turkestan before Moscow employed the more direct measures, i.e. the ethnic fragmentation mentioned above.

Finally, in reference to the Muslim request to include Muslims on the Turkestan Commission itself, Lenin ruled that no Muslim could serve on the Commission. Of the new members announced in August 1920 none were Muslims. All of the former members of the Commission were then transferred. The new members were G.Ia. Sokolnikov, L.M. Kaganovich, Ya.Kh. Peters, and G.I. Safarov. Despite the continuing expressions of support for Muslim participation in Tashkents' government from Moscow, the main task of this latest Turkestan Commission was in fact no longer to appease offended Muslim sensibilities. Rather Lenin's main concern in Turkestan by July 1920 was to undermine nationalism among the Muslims by an intensification of class-biased policies.

**Conclusion.**

After two years of cajoling, persuading, and threatening the Tashkent government to change its policy to one of appeasement of the national sensibilities of Turkestanis, less than three months after securing full control in Turkestan Lenin learned that the nationalism of the Turkestani Communists was as vigorous and as

\(^{57}\) Park, p. 91. Lenin had already put this in writing in notes he made to himself on June 13. See Lenin, *Srednei Azii*, p. 367.

\(^{58}\) Vaidyanath, p. 113.
opposed to Bolshevism as the nationalism of the Tatar Left that had caused Moscow such difficulty during 1918-19. In response, during the summer of 1920, Lenin curbed the "Turkic Communist Party" as Stalin had curbed the Tatars' "Russian Party of Muslim Communists," stripped it of most of its powers, and drew up plans to break up Turkestan into smaller ethnic entities, the same policy applied earlier to the recalcitrant Tatars and Bashkirs. But, while Lenin correctly perceived that the Tashkent Soviet was to some extent to blame for Turkestanis assertiveness by their exclusion of Turkestanis from power in 1917-19, Lenin overlooked a more fundamental source of the conflict between the Russians and Muslims in Central Asia. This was the conflict that was bound to occur from attempts to impose social revolution and an ideology of class division by administrative fiat on a conservative society that traditionally held to an ideal of internal unity with distrust and contempt for anyone not of the Ummah.
Chapter 6: The Soviet turn to the East.

Muslim Resistance Strategies.

As Soviet Muslims began to perceive that the true goal of the Bolsheviks was a monolithic concentration of all political power in Moscow, the separatist territorial tendencies which the non-Tatars of Russia had displayed since 1917 began to reverse themselves and a trend towards unity on the basis of their common Islamic heritage began. This trend, which began in mid-1919, sought expression in two ways: revolution at home, and revolution abroad. Even while the Muslim Communists attended official congresses in Tashkent and Moscow, their most important leaders met in secret and constructed clandestine organizations in preparation for eventual armed revolt against the RKP. In the spring of 1920 the most influential Muslim national-communists in the Soviet Union formed the secret organization "Ittihad va Taraqqi" (Union and Progress). A list of those involved—if Soviet indictments dating from the 1930s can be believed—is a virtual compendium of the most prominent Muslim Communists in the Party, including M. Sultan-Galiev, "almost all Volga Tatar Communist leaders," the Bashkir A. Zeki Validov, and many important Kazakhs, Crimeans, and Central Asians.¹ Already in November 1919, Bashkirs and Turkestanis in Moscow for the Second Congress of Muslim Communists drafted a program for another secret party that would be entirely separate from the RKP. In September 1920, this clandestine party, known later as ERK, drafted a 27-point program which demanded an independent Turkestan and an end to the "neocolonialism" of the Russian Bolsheviks.² This ERK,

¹ Bennigsen and Wimbush, p. 87.
² Bennigsen and Wimbush, p. 47. In Bukhara in 1921, the leaders of this party, which also included A. Zeki Validov, adopted the name "Turkestan Sotsialistlar Tudesi" or "Tude Party." (no relation to the later Iranian Tudeh Communist Party) which in 1926 became the "Sotsialist ERK Firkasi" or the "Socialist Party of Turkestan ERK," or simply "ERK." In 1926 ERK was exposed and eliminated. See Bennigsen and Wimbush, p. 166.
from its base in Turkestan, adopted Sultan-Galiev's notion of proletarian nations as the basis for building the Colonial International.³

The chief significance of these secret societies lay in their implicit affirmation of Islam as the single irreducible component in the political self-identification of its members. Whether Tatar, Bashkir, Crimean, Turkestani, or eventually even Kazakh, each member felt his Islamic heritage to constitute the most fundamental dividing line between himself and other Communist Party members. In terms of the political struggle, however, these secret organizations did not have much impact—despite the extravagant claims of the Stalinist investigators who saw Turkish or British conspiracies behind every sign of Muslim independence. Although the underground parties lasted as late as 1926, they only reinforced previously existing traditions of covert anti-Russian resistance. Already by 1920 state control over the media and the Cheka's interest in Soviet Muslim affairs had put a limit on the potential for covert resistance within the Soviet state.

The Muslim Program to Export Revolution.

Increasingly limited in their options inside the Soviet state, Muslim Communists during 1918 and 1919 turned to another line of resistance, one which seemed more promising in the fluid conditions of the revolutionary era. This developed into the Muslim Communist program to export revolution to the Islamic world. This trend seems originally to have grown out of Stalin's alliance with the Tatar Left in 1918. Stalin initially favored the idea of revolution in the East. In May 1918, at the announcement of the first Tatar ASSR, Stalin declared that "this Autonomous Republic [will] serve the peoples of the Muslim world as a shining beacon which lights their way toward liberation."⁴ With Stalin's blessing, the Tatars took the initiative in this field at an

³ Arsharuni and Gabidullin, p. 85.
⁴ Stalin, Works, IV, p. 90.
early date, organizing in July 1918, a number of foreign Muslims into national
Communist Parties through Narkomnats. When Stalin reined in the Tatar Left at the
First Congress of Communist Organizations of Eastern Peoples in November 1918, he in
fact explained the need for Moscow’s increased control over the Tatars by asserting that
it was necessary for the cause of world revolution. At this congress a Department of
International Propaganda for Eastern Peoples was set up with sections for various
Muslim peoples, who for the most part resided outside the Soviet orbit.5 Already in
October the Muslim Buro had assisted Turkish and Iranian Communists in forming a
"Union for the Liberation of the East," which openly advocated Communist support for
national liberation movements.6

In 1919 the Comintern became the focus of Muslim Communist efforts to export
revolution to Asia. The reason for this interest was due to the fact that the Comintern,
as a loose association of voluntary affiliates, was the last major Communist organization
not dominated by the Politburo of the RKP.7 At the First Comintern Congress, Stalin
again called for revolution in the East and asserted that Turkestan ASSR must become
"an exemplary republic...an advanced post of the revolutionization of the Orient."8
Although the congress ignored his request, the Muslim Communists continued to
promote the idea. The pages of Zhizn Natsional’nostei during 1919 were replete with
calls for national revolution in Asia. An article by Paliukaitis gives some indication of
the enthusiasm current among Muslim Communist circles:

Marx foresaw the development of contemporary events and stated that
the Communist Revolution must be preceded by a number of national

5 Arab, Iranian, Turkish, Azerbaijani, Bukharan, Kirgiz, Kalmuk, Chinese, Korean,
Japanese, Indian, and within a few months a Tatar section. See Branko Lazić and
6 Troyanovsky, K., Vostok i Revolyutsiia (Moskva: 1918).
7 This soon changed. At the Second Congress of the Comintern, in July 1920, Lenin
initiated Russian control of this organization too, which was completed by 1922.
8 Stalin, Works, V, p. 329.
Revolutions of the oppressed peoples, in the first place of India and the peoples of the East...

Only through the stage of liberation from the oppression of imperialism, through the phases of national self-determination, will the East reveal its secret, but favorable, conditions for the development of socialism...

From this point of view, there now lies before Turkestan the task of taking all possible measures to hurry the process of drawing the East into the orbit of the world socialist movement...

The actual implementation of these tasks in the revolutionary East consists of the following:

1. Creation of special battalions of Russian Muslims in order to actively assist the East in its struggle with British imperialism;
2. Creation of an apparatus for organized propagation of socialist ideas not only through literature, but through specially trained emissaries;
3. The establishment of permanent official ties [with the Eastern countries] by means of the exchange of representatives and agents with all the countries of the East...

England, which always feared the nightmare of Cossacks' spears on the summits of the Himalayas, will be surprised to behold these same spears in the hands of Russian proletarian Muslims, coming to rescue their brothers in Persia, India, and Afghanistan.9

Despite such fervent calls to arms, through most of 1919 the Russian Communist Party showed little interest in Asia. In fact, the Comintern's chief publication, The Communist International, which put out its first issue on May 1, 1919, did not so much as mention revolution in Asia until its fifth issue.10 Only after the most promising Communist movements in Europe, the Bavarian Soviet and Bela Kun's regime in Hungary, collapsed did the Party leadership allow a memo from Muslim Communists to appear in late September 1919:11

The Communist ideal, in its contest with world Imperialism, is rapidly making its way through all the lands of the east, where the revolutionary movements [illegible word: 'rush']? to adopt the principles of the Comintern...Soviet Turkestan, joining the Communist Party and

9 'Turkestan i revolyutsii Vostoka,' in Zhizn Natsional'nostei, No. 19(27), May 25, 1919.
11 Such seemingly casual memos were in fact highly significant. Lenin read every issue of the The Communist International carefully and took prompt action to blacklist any author whose work displeased him. In July 1920, for example, Lenin instructed IKKI not to accept any more articles from Maxim Gorky because an article in Vol. XI-XII was not sufficiently "communist." See Lenin, Works, XXXVI, p. 205.
entering the Red Army, becomes a revolutionary school for the whole East. The revolutionaries of adjoining countries come to us in crowds and become convinced adherents of the Communist Parties, with whose aid we are making extensive propaganda throughout the East. We now fully realise the justice of Soviet Russia's policy towards Turkestan, the policy decided upon at the 7 Congress of Soviets (of Central Asia), completed and confirmed at the 3 Congress of the Communist Party. Distrust is no longer exhibited towards the Muslim proletariat, which now sends numerous delegates to the Soviets. Perfect tranquility prevails among the Soviets of Turkestan. Now that Turkestan is reunited to central Russia, it is our hope that central Russia will send to Turkestan in sufficient numbers the guides and initiators we need...."12

In September 1919, Kobozev's program of packing the Turkestan Communist Party with Muslims regardless of their reliability, was on the verge of success. But even on this happy occasion of liberation from two years' domination by Russian "colonialists," faith in Moscow's good intentions was balanced by moves to recruit the Comintern to the Muslims' cause. By late 1919 the Muslim Communists envisaged using the Comintern as a vehicle to extend Muslim Communist control over the entire Islamic world, not only to fulfill the Tatars' traditional ambitions of reforming and modernizing more backward Muslim peoples, but also to preserve what remained of Soviet Muslim independence from Moscow. It was with this independence in mind that the Turkestan Musburo and CEC addressed the following to Moscow when the Red Army "liberated" Tashkent on October 8, 1919: "We promise to carry out all the tasks with which history has presented us in accordance with the instructions of the Central Committee of our Party and the Comintern."13

In 1920 the Muslim Communists' agitation was finally rewarded by a surge of Soviet interest in revolution in the East. This interest grew swiftly in the spring, motivated not only by fear that the Revolution had failed in Europe, but also from a perception (as the Muslim Communists never tired of pointing out) that opportunities

had grown in Asia. In 1919 British troops, including the expeditionary force at Ashkhabad, withdrew from Russia, and Britain cut off funding for most of the remaining White forces in Russia. In February 1920, Britain lifted its economic blockade. By 1920 the British were overextended and had difficulty coping with the postwar unrest that was erupting from Egypt to India. Since 1917 Bolshevik propaganda had made a favorable impression among foreign Muslims and this was reinforced by anti-British radio appeals to Turkey and Iran in 1919. Finally, Soviet victories in the Civil War (contravening Marxist doctrine that predicted successful revolution in Europe accompanied by military defeat in Russia) brought the Red Army not only to the Afghan frontier in Central Asia by 1920, but to the border of an independent Azerbaijan, which, lacking its customary Russian markets but not wishing to lay off workers, had accumulated a years' production of oil in reservoirs near Baku. This oil was seen in Moscow as critical to the further functioning of the Soviet economy and military. In view of these events the Bolshevik leadership in the spring of 1920 seemed suddenly to awaken to the fact that the presence of significant numbers of Muslims within the Soviet state and the RKP offered an opportunity to revive the revolution in Europe by expanding the revolution into the Islamic world and thereby striking a direct blow at the British Empire.

The Muslim Communists in Turkestan were well-prepared to take advantage of this new interest in Asia. Not only had they co-opted the organizations of emigre Muslims through Narkomnats in 1918 and 1919, but, once Narkomnats began to breathe life into these organizations in early 1920, the Muslims in the Party succeeded in getting them based in Tashkent. By the spring of 1920, Khivan, Bukharan, Turkish,

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15 Swietochowski, p. 150.
Iranian, Afghan, and Indian Communist Parties had been set up in Tashkent in preparation for anticipated Soviet military advances into those respective countries.

The Soviet Occupation of Azerbaijan.

This military advance seemed to have begun on April 27, 1920, when the Red Army crossed the Azerbaijani border and occupied the country almost without opposition. What is interesting about the Soviet occupation of Azerbaijan was the role played by Muslim Communists in facilitating this takeover. After the collapse of Ottoman Turkey, the Musavat Party had assumed control in Azerbaijan. For most of 1919 the Musavat was opposed by the Social-Democratic Hummat Party, but enjoyed the support of the conservative Muslims of rural Azerbaijan and Dagestan organized in the Itihad Party. The Hummat formerly had been the only section allowed a measure of national autonomy by the RSDLP(b). During the period of Azerbaijani independence, Hummat continued this ambivalent relationship with the RKP. A few Azerbaijani Hummatists--mostly old Bolsheviks from 1905--chose to reside in Russia where they rose to high positions in Soviet organizations. Like their Tatar colleagues these individuals were enthusiastic supporters of revolution in Asia, which, in their view, should be launched from an independent Soviet Azerbaijan. For this they needed the Red Army, since Hummat could not summon sufficient popular support on its own. In 1919, therefore, Hummat flirted with joining the RKP as a quid pro quo for Moscow's commitment to the creation of a Soviet Azerbaijan under Hummat control. To guarantee its independence Hummat insisted upon recognition as a fully autonomous Communist Party. On July 19, 1919, at the height of the Civil War, a joint meeting of Politburo and Orgburo resolved to recognize Hummat as an "Autonomous Communist Party with the Rights of an Oblast' Committee and...Azerbaijan as an Independent Soviet Republic."

However, these rights were conditional.
...it being understood that the definitive solution of the issue will be submitted for the approval of the Transcaucasian Committee of the RKP(b). Comrade Stalin will be informed about its decision, which will be binding if no objections are raised by him. The same applies to the recognition of an independent Azerbaijan.\textsuperscript{16}

The Transcaucasian Kraikom, however, had in the past consistently refused Hummat's requests for affiliation on an autonomous basis. Thus, even at the height of Bolshevik need for Muslim loyalty during the Civil War, no firm commitment was made either to an independent Azerbaijan or to an autonomous national Party. Hummat then applied for admission to the RKP under various titles, e.g. "Muslim Communist Party-Hummat" and "Turkic Communist Party-Hummat." But, in line with a decision of the Eighth All-Russian Conference of the RKP in early December 1919, that all national-communist organizations were to join the RKP at the regional level, Moscow rejected the proposed titles. Thereafter, with Soviet forces rapidly defeating Denikin and approaching Azerbaijan, Hummat gave in to Moscow's demands and agreed to merge with the Baku Committee and subordinate itself to the Tiflis Kraikom. However, when the agreed upon fusion with the Baku Committee occurred on February 11, 1920, the Hummatists apparently ignored instructions concerning the title and unilaterally declared itself the "Azerbaijani Communist Party (b)," to the great annoyance of the attending Russians.\textsuperscript{17} Anxious to secure Azerbaijani cooperation in its imminent invasion of the Caucasus, Moscow acquiesced in this move. It is interesting that although Moscow was forced to accept a national-oriented title in its affiliate--a compromise reminiscent of 1905--it succeeded in eliminating any reference to inclusivist conceptions of nationalism, i.e. the titles "Muslim" and "Turkic," just as Moscow had rejected the Tatars' "Party of Muslim Communists" in 1918 and a few weeks later would reject the Turkestanis' "Greater Turkic Republic." Thereafter, as Soviet forces reached the

\textsuperscript{16} Swietochowski, p. 169.

\textsuperscript{17} Swietochowski, p. 170-2.
Azerbaijani frontier and European countries declined to commit themselves to that country's independence, AKP's ranks swelled with new members. The rival parties became so demoralized, in fact, that even the President of the Republic, the Musavat president Hajinski, begged to be admitted as a Communist and was granted a token membership card.

Given the 1918 clashes between the Musavat and the Bolsheviks, the influence of the AKP and its Soviet Muslim connections would not alone have been sufficient to induce the ruling Musavat in Azerbaijan to submit to Soviet invasion without a fight. But another factor played into the hands of the Muslim Communists. In early 1920 Mustafa Kemal began his movement for a Turkish national renaissance in Anatolia. Although actually distrusting Kemal for his advocacy of the Caliphate, and hoping that Mustafa Subhi's Turkish Communist party would pull off a pro-Soviet peasant revolution, Moscow at the same time supported Kemal in public for his anti-imperialist stance. The conservatives and pan-Turks in Azerbaijan took this apparent support for Kemal at face value. In March, the Ittihad and a party of pan-Turkish "Federalists" switched

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18 This was in effect a reversal of the sequence observed in Tatarstan. While among the Tatars the Right did not join the Bolsheviks until after the suppression of its independent Idel-Ural state; among the Azerbaijanis the Right (i.e. the Musavat) joined the Bolsheviks before the fall of independent Azerbaijan. However, with the Red Army just a few miles away and having been abandoned by every major power, there was no doubt in Baku that Musavat's days were numbered while Hummat seemed to have a bright future.


20 See the section on the Baku Soviet in Chapter One.

21 Pipes, p. 224. The tangle of politics surrounding Kemal was intricate. Moscow, alienated by Kemal's support for the Caliphate, nursed a revolutionary movement to oust him. Failing that, Moscow later hoped to co-opt Kemal's movement by means of the Turkish Communists. Kemal, who only feigned support for the Caliphate in order to gain the support of Muslims, pretended in his relations with Moscow to the status of social revolutionary to gain an ally against Britain, wishing only to use Moscow's support while keeping the Turkish Communists at bay. The Turkish Communists, meanwhile, hoped to use Soviet support to obtain control of Turkey and then proclaim independence in the Comintern. In this game of misunderstandings and deliberate deception, the Turkish Communists eventually lost.
their support to the AKP—even considering joining that Party en masse—under the impression that the Communists were sincere supporters of Kemal and advocates of Turkish independence. The head of the Ittihad Party was even led to believe that he would assume command of the invading Red Army to lead its triumphal march into Turkey. On the day of the invasion he arrived at Kazovo (Caucasian Bureau) headquarters where the uncomprehending Ordzonikidze sent him on to Moscow.\textsuperscript{22} Several small Turkish Red Army units recruited from the Turkish Communist Party may actually have participated in the invasion of Azerbaijan.

Then, in April 1920, Armenian moves to consolidate its hold over the province of Nagorno-Karabakh triggered conflict with its Azerbaijani inhabitants. Azerbaijan responded with what amounted to a national crusade to prevent the Armenians from blocking the only route by which the expected hordes of Red Army troops were to pass through Azerbaijan and assist Kemal in his war against the Greeks. The Musavat dispatched the entire national Azerbaijani army to Nagorno-Karabakh, leaving the border with the Soviets virtually undefended, with full knowledge that the Soviets were about to invade. When the AKP demanded power a few days later with a militia of 4000 men at its disposal, the Musavat meekly complied, whereupon the Red Army immediately occupied the country. Although the Soviet forces doubtless would have occupied Azerbaijan even without the assistance of the Muslim Communists, this assistance was responsible for rendering the Soviet takeover smooth and virtually bloodless. It is plain that most Azerbaijanis viewed the Soviet invasion more as a national liberation by fellow Muslims than as a military occupation by foreign troops.

The Asian Revolution Begins.

Soviet Muslims regarded the occupation as the beginning of a glorious march across Asia, expecting the Red Army to expand their territorial base and accumulate the

\textsuperscript{22} Swietochowski, p. 182.
human resources with which the Muslim Communists could both resist Moscow's
control and expel Britain from Asia. M. Sultan-Galiev, in an article in Zhizn
Natsional'nostei in April 1920 hailed the conquest of Azerbaijan:

The sovietization of Azerbaijan is a highly important step in the
evolution of Communism in the Near East. Just as Red Turkestan is
playing the role of the revolutionary lighthouse for Chinese Turkestan,
Tibet, Afghanistan, India, Bukhara, and Khiva; Soviet Azerbaijan, with
its old and experienced proletariat and its already consolidated
Communist Party—the Hummat Party, will become the Red lighthouse for
Persia, Arabia, and Turkey....23

In Baku a Provisional Azerbaijani Military-Revolutionary Committee
(Azrevkom) was installed composed of Hummat and Adalat24 members under the
direction of N. Narimanov. This committee assumed control of the Azerbaijani army
and laid plans for a new attack upon the Armenians to rescue Kemal. The Soviet
advance did not stop with Azerbaijan but continued along several routes. Under the
command of Ordzhonikidze and the Kavuro, which was set up specifically for the
occupation of the Transcaucuses, Soviet troops, crossed the borders of Georgia and
Armenia on May 3, 1920, with the assistance of Azerbaijani troops. In Georgia the
advance was slowed by Georgian resistance, but, as the British, who still had troops in
Batum, refused requests for intervention, there could be no doubt as to the final
outcome. Both the Georgian and the Armenian Communist Parties initiated armed
revolts in anticipation of the arrival of the Red Army. To the south the Iranian
province of Persian Azerbaijan could offer no resistance. In Tabriz a Democratic Party
under Sheikh Muhammad Khiabani had already seized power on April 15 and, rather
than joining an independent but doomed Azerbaijan, proclaimed an independent
"Azadistan" to differentiate itself from Musavat-controlled Azerbaijan in Soviet eyes.
During the advance Khiabani issued pro-Soviet and pro-Hummat declarations.25

23 Bennington and Wimbush, p. 54.
24 Later the Iranian Communist Party.
25 Swietochowski, p. 187.
The advance also carried across the Caspian where it acquired international significance. A small British force had occupied the Iranian port of Enzeli in 1918 and equipped a minor flotilla to interdict a possible Turkish move into Central Asia. This British force was still in Enzeli in 1920. On May 18 Soviet troops under one Raskolnikov landed in a surprise dawn raid and seized this flotilla, at the same time surrounding the British who soon surrendered. In the wake of their humiliating release, British prestige in Iran plummeted, causing the Iranian Majlis to refuse to ratify the British-Iranian Treaty of 1919, and ruining Lord Curzon’s “forward defense” of India policy in the British Foreign Office. Raskolnikov advanced inland to the Iranian province of Gilan where he was welcomed by a Muslim sheikh Kuchuk Khan who had been leading a pan-Islamic insurrection of Turkish peasants called Jangalis (“jungle-dwellers”) against Teheran since the Great War. In the negotiations that followed Kuchuk Khan declared Gilan to be a Soviet Socialist Republic and sent a letter to Lenin requesting Red Army troops and membership in the Comintern. The next few weeks saw the withdrawal of British troops from northwest Iran and Batum, the arrival of a Soviet division in Gilan, and the start of a joint Soviet-Jangali advance on Teheran. Finally, on June 4, 1920, the Iranian Adalat group arrived in Enzeli, founded the Iranian Communist Party, and formed the rudiments of a professional administration in tandem with the followers of Kuchuk Khan. In Turkestan, meanwhile, Frunze's crack Red Army units, which ever since the British evacuation of Central Asia had been waiting at the Iranian border recruiting disaffected Iranian tribes, prepared to move on

Meshed as on June 10 Kamenev announced that the Red Army had begun its advance towards India.29

**Lenin and the Revolution in Asia.**

In order to understand how Soviet-Muslim relations developed through the remainder of 1920, it is necessary to examine the theoretical side of the Party's attempt to initiate revolution in Asia and how Lenin's growing concern with Muslim nationalists within the Party affected his support of this project. Once the Party had accepted the idea of revolution in the East, the next issue to be decided was what kind of revolution it should be. This debate reflected the balance of "Left" and "Right" in the Russian Communist Party. We should recall that before World War I Lenin was at times accused by European Communists of having leanings towards nationalism as a result of his strategic alliance with minority nationalists in Russia. The suspicion that behind his revolutionary mask Lenin somehow lacked the qualities of a genuine Marxist re-emerged after the October Revolution. The Bolshevik capitulation at Brest-Litovsk, which Lenin engineered almost single-handedly, had been the chief cause of the Left SR revolt in July 1918 and came close to alienating the Bolshevik Left as well. The Bolshevik Left viewed the growing symptoms of a returning bureaucracy and state apparatus in Soviet territory with alarm and felt that only quick success of the revolution in Europe could avert a slow strangulation of the revolution in Russia. The Left was categorically opposed to any concession to minority nationalists in Russia and objected to Lenin’s recognition of complete secession in late 1917. While Stalin’s 1918 formula of "proletarian self-determination" was a step in the right direction, his advocacy of federalism turned the Left against him as well. Stalin’s alliance with the Muslims in 1918 earned him much abuse for the same reason. The Bolshevik Leftists,

who were orthodox Marxists in the style of Trotsky and Luxemburg, believed that only an industrial proletariat qualified as the vehicle for social progress; therefore, in their view Europe was the only legitimate sphere of revolutionary activity. However, with the fall of Bela Kun in August 1919—the second major disappointment of the ultra-revolutionaries, after the first at Brest-Litovsk—and with the success of the Civil War in Russia, it was clear that a major reevaluation was in order.

This reevaluation resulted in the Bolshevik Left’s acceptance of the Left SR view that the peasantry was a revolutionary class and could serve as an effective ally to the proletariat in its struggle against feudalism. After this sudden “realization” in early 1920 of the potential revolutionary strength of the peasantry, the Bolshevik Left, whose ranks had swelled with many ex-Left SRs, joined the Bolshevik Right in embracing revolution in Asia. However, upon accepting the SR view, the Left did not repudiate the primacy of social revolution—on the contrary, just as class war in the villages had enabled the revolution to survive in Russia, so would class war be the basis of the revolutionary movement in the East. This view developed in direct opposition to the view of the Muslim national-communists, who all along had asserted that national independence must precede for a significant length of time—even up to ten years—any divisive attempt to turn class against class in Asia. In the parlance of the time, the national-communists felt that national liberation should precede social revolution; the Left, both SRs and Communists, felt that social revolution should precede or at least accompany national liberation.

Unlike the Bolsheviks, the Left SRs had seen the peasantry as an intrinsically revolutionary class, a “rural proletariat.” Many Left SRs joined the movement to spread revolution in Asia in 1920, not only for the cause of world revolution, but also to reestablish a base from which the Left SRs could again challenge Bolshevik control over the Russian Revolution—precisely analogous to the strategy of the Muslim Communists. But where the Muslims sought to co-opt the Comintern, the Left SRs sought to co-opt the Krestintern, and make of it a sort of Peasant International. Bela Kun’s neglect of the Hungarian peasantry was seen by the Left SRs as a major cause of the failure of Soviet Hungary.
Most historians have correctly acknowledged Lenin's views as important to this debate. His views, as stated in Imperialism in 1916, asserted that any revolutionary movement in Asia must by definition be "bourgeois-democratic" and be a national movement directed against the imperialist agents of capitalism, since this corresponded to Asia's stage of development, which was rising capitalism. Most historians go on to assert that Lenin's views remained consistent throughout 1920, eventually taking concrete form in early 1921 when Narkomindel (People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs) signed a series of "normalizing" agreements with the new bourgeois regimes of Turkey, Iran and Afghanistan. But, in fact, Lenin's views on revolution in Asia changed significantly during 1920. In the spring of that year, even though Lenin remained formally a "Rightist" on revolution in Asia, he moved substantially toward the new Left point of view.

This occurred in two ways. First, while he still maintained that the Asian revolution could only be "bourgeois-democratic," he dropped the idea in Imperialism that national liberation had to precede the social revolution and began to echo the "Leftist" view that social revolution and national liberation must be virtually simultaneous.

The question was posed as follows: are we to consider as correct the assertion that the capitalist stage of economic development is inevitable for backward nations now on the road to emancipation and among whom a certain advance towards progress is to be seen since the war? We replied in the negative. If the victorious revolutionary proletariat conducts systematic propaganda among them, and the Soviet governments come to their aid with all the means at their disposal—in that event it will be mistaken to assume that the backward peoples must inevitably go through the capitalist stage of development....the Communist International should advance the proposition, with the appropriate theoretical grounding, that with the aid of the proletariat of the advanced countries, backward countries can go over to the Soviet

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system and, through certain stages of development, to communism, without having to pass through the capitalist stage.32

The chief reason for this move to the Left, however, was not Lenin's conviction of the revolutionary potential of Asia. Actually Lenin was still skeptical of this and remained convinced of the correctness of his views in Imperialism. Rather it was fear that the Tatar Left of Stalin's Narkomnats--who as Lenin now realized were far more nationalist than Communist--might co-opt a purely national movement and deprive Moscow of control over the revolution. At the very least, by handing direction of the revolution so vehemently urged by the Muslims of Stalin's Narkomnats over to Zinoviev and the Central Committee of the Comintern (IKKI), Lenin could guarantee that in the new Soviet territories the nationalistic Muslim elements would be supervised to some extent by genuine Communists from Europe.

This led to acceptance of a Leftist strategy for Asia in a second way. Lenin's chief tactic for avoiding a repeat of the internal political difficulties which the Party had experienced with Soviet Muslims was to rely on the new perception of the Left that the peasantry were intrinsically revolutionary. Therefore, whereas before 1920 Lenin had never stated precisely who he meant by "bourgeois-democratic" when discussing Asia, keeping the term vague enough to include any movement towards independence on the part of Asians, by June 1920, Lenin had endorsed the Leftist position that the peasantry should be the basis of the revolution.

[The Comintern must bear in mind] the need, in backward countries, to give special support to the peasant movement against the landowners, against landed proprietorship, and against all manifestations or survivals of feudalism, and to strive to lend the peasant movement the most revolutionary character by establishing the closest possible alliance between the West European communist proletariat and the

revolutionary peasant movement in the East, in the colonies, and in the
backward countries generally.\textsuperscript{33}

In his original conception of the alliance of the proletariat with the peasantry, upon
the accession of the socialists to power they were to establish a dictatorship and then
eject the peasantry from power, since, as Marx had always asserted, they were a
reactionary class.\textsuperscript{34} Now the peasantry themselves were to become the vanguard of
world revolution, preserving it from co-optation by both nationalists and feudalists.
This switch in his views on the revolutionary potential of the peasantry was not
accompanied by any formal change in doctrine—Lenin continued to refer to both the
peasantry and to the Asian revolution as "bourgeois-democratic," but now asserted that—
with the right guidance from Moscow—the peasantry in Asia could play a truly
revolutionary role. Given Lenin's fundamental views that class consciousness was
distinct from the class itself, such tactical shifts presented no theoretical difficulty.
And the theoretical differences between the Left Communists and Left SRs were
obscured as well by the emphasis on the peasantry.

In this way Lenin sought to limit the influence of Soviet Muslims on the
movement while benefiting from their contacts, and at the same time not formally
committing himself to the Leftists' ultra-revolutionary platform. What Lenin attempted
in effect was to open a revolutionary door to the European Leftists, clear the path as

\textsuperscript{33} Lenin, V.I., 'Preliminary Draft Theses on the National and the Colonial Questions,'
in \textit{Works, XXXI}, p. 147.

\textsuperscript{34} Kolakowski, Leszek, \textit{Main Currents in Marxism}. Vol. II (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press,
1976), p. 411. One of the foremost traits of Lenin's personality was his tendency to place
himself in opposition to the majority within the Party and then gradually to impose his
views upon the rest. His unorthodox innovations of Marxism, his decision to oppose the
Provisional Government, the timing of the coup in October, and Brest-Litovsk each
demonstrate this. When the Left turned to Asia, Lenin followed only reluctantly; but
once the initiative had failed and the Left returned its attention to Europe, Lenin then
sought to begin a whole new approach to the East with "cultural revolution" in \textit{On
Cooperation}.\textendnote{34}
best he could of the less reliable Asian elements, then wait to see if the revolutionary "experiment" would justify further effort.
Chapter 7: The Crisis of 1920.

Revolt in Azerbaijan.

Despite the auspicious beginning to the much hailed Soviet move to the East, no sooner had the Red Army occupied Azerbaijan than a chain of events began which in only four months was to end Moscow's entire initiative in Asia. Several days before the invasion, Soviet relations with Poland, which had been poor throughout 1919 due to the two countries' inability to agree on a common border, finally broke into open war as Pilsudsky decided to seize the disputed areas by force. The Soviets had known of Polish intentions for some months, but nevertheless were caught unprepared, and when General Wrangel burst out of the Crimea leading the last White army in Russia, the Red Army was forced to retreat deep into Russian territory. As the crisis heightened Moscow decided to suspend any further military moves in Asia until the Poles and Wrangel could be repulsed. On May 10 the Kavburo, under protest, signed a peace treaty with Georgia and pulled back to the Azerbaijani border, leaving the Armenian and Georgian Communists to be massacred.¹

The role played by the Polish invasion in Moscow's suspension of the military advance in the Caucasus has long been recognized. What has been neglected is the course of local Russian-Muslim relations after the Soviets occupied Azerbaijan. Even had Moscow been willing, events in Azerbaijan were guaranteeing that should the Red Army continue its advance into Iran and Turkey it would not be welcomed as liberator, but as a hostile army of occupation.² Within hours of the invasion the illusions fostered by the Soviet Muslims in Narkomnats evaporated under the glare of a harsh military repression. On the first morning, the Kavburo began to round up Musavat party leaders and execute them. The shootings increased for weeks, expanding as

¹ Pipes, p. 227.
² Sweitokowski, p. 188.
conflicts between Russians and Muslims multiplied throughout Azerbaijan. On May 28, an Azerbaijani unit of 1800 men mutinied over an attempt to break up their unit and attempted to seize the town of Ganja from its Russian garrison. By the time the Soviets regained the town three days later, 1,000 Azerbaijanis had been killed and 8,000 Russian artillery shells expended. The Soviets immediately instituted a purge of all Azerbaijani army units in which hundreds of Muslim were arrested and shot, including seventy-nine officers on May 29 alone. Orders were issued reminiscent of those of the Tashkent Soviet two years before when it had first become aware of the effect of its requisitions on the Muslim population. The Soviet troops in Azerbaijan were instructed to concentrate in brigade strength and to expect a widespread revolt of the Muslims as the “disturbances rooted in national and religious prejudices assume a massive character.” In June more Muslim units mutinied and the Kavburo, with the assistance of Azrevkom, began systematically to disarm the population. Over the following weeks the revolt spread and took on the character of a traditional jihad, keeping the province in turmoil through mid-summer. Thereafter, the province became more settled, but in September revolt flared again for several weeks, although at no time representing an actual threat to Soviet rule.

In general, the reaction of the Azerbaijanis to these events can be summarized in the following way: The less-educated rural conservatives of the Ittihad rose in revolt against the Soviets until forced to admit defeat. The more educated urban pan-Turkish members of the Musavat fled to form emigre anti-Soviet societies in Tabriz, Ankara and Istanbul where they were welcomed and their activities abetted by the local regimes, now greatly suspicious of Soviet motives. Most of the Azerbaijani Communists who survived the summer purges soon realized that the Azrevkom had no

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3 Pipes, p. 228.
4 Elsewhere Elizavetpol, and now Kirovabad.
5 Sweitochowski, p. 188-190.
authority in Azerbaijan, which in fact remained under the direct rule of Kavburo for years. Like the Turkestan Commission in Turkestan, the Kavburo wielded actual power in Azerbaijan, to the exclusion of local Muslim Communist organization. In September the dependency of Azerbaijan on the RSFSR was made official in a treaty that ceded all important powers to the latter.⁶

**The Bashkir Revolt.**

Meanwhile, the Soviet-Bashkir courtship had also developed in an ominous direction. The price which A. Zeki Validov had demanded from the Soviets for deserting the Whites in 1919 was recognition of Bashkir claims to an independent Bashkir Republic which Validov had originally articulated at the All-Russian Congress of Muslims in 1917, in union with the territorial nationalists. This included an understanding that a Bashkir Revolutionary Committee (Bashrevkom), elected by and consisting solely of Bashkirs would exercise authority over all Bashkir matters within this territory with the exception of the industrial infrastructure of railroads, mines, and factories. In return for this, the new Bashrevkom placed the Bashkir armed forces under the command of the Soviets' Revolutionary War Committee.⁷ These troops, some 2,000 men, were to remain in segregated Bashkir units.

The Soviet government was both unwilling and unable to live up to its agreement. When the Red Army recovered the Ural region in the autumn of 1919, and Bashrevkom attempted to assume its legitimate powers, its decrees met immediate resistance from the local Russians. These Russians, together with the local Tatars who regarded the separatist Bashkir movement as a betrayal, were already organized into soviets, and, as veterans whose loyalty was unquestionable, the Russians wielded far more influence within the Party. They argued that since the Bashkirs had no

⁶ Pipes, p. 252.
⁷ Pipes, p. 162.
industrial proletariat, the counter-revolutionary nature of their class background left no place for them within a dictatorship of the proletariat. Hence Bashkirs could not participate in the Soviet government of Bashkiriya—this too was reminiscent of the Tashkent Soviet of 1917. The Bashkirs meanwhile further reduced their influence in the Party in 1919 by attempting to organize a separate Bashkir Communist Party as the Tatars had attempted. Making use of its control of food distribution and the growing isolation of Bashrevkom from the RKP, the local Regional Committee (Obkom) provoked a series of confrontations which forced Moscow to choose sides. On May 22, 1920, Moscow unilaterally abrogated the 1919 agreement and reassigned most of the privileges of Bashrevkom to the Obkom. 8

At a secret meeting the Bashrevkom stated:

In view of the imperialistic tendencies of the Russians, which hinder in every manner the development of national minorities; in view of the lack of faith of the center toward Bashkir Communists, Bashkir officials are abandoning Bashkiriya and departing for Turkestan, for the purpose of creating there an independent eastern Communist Party...[which] must be admitted into membership of the Comintern. The aim of this exodus is by no means to rouse the national masses against the Soviet government, but...to protest against Russian chauvinism. 9

In mid-June 1920, A. Zeki Validov and most of the members of the Bashkir administration departed, some for Turkestan, some for the Urals. Despite the disclaimer, civil war erupted immediately in Bashkiriya. The first phase of the revolt was suppressed within a month by detachments of the Red Army recalled from Turkestan (the main part of the Army being still occupied with the Polish invasion), but the guerrilla movement continued intermittently into 1921, succumbing as much to the effects of winter as to military operations. 10

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8 Pipes, p. 165.
9 Pipes, p. 167.
10 Pipes, p. 167.
The conflict in Bashkiriya had significant implications for Soviet-Muslim relations. While on the one hand the Tatars' attempts in 1918 to set up an inclusive Muslim Communist Party had proved unacceptable to Moscow, on the other hand, by the end of June 1920, it had become clear that the new Soviet policy of small ethnic "republics" was only a cover for military rule by Russians, with or without colonization. So, although the Tatars of the RKP could view with some satisfaction the frustration of Bashkir nationalism which had contributed to the demise of their plans, the sudden repressions in Azerbaijan and Bashkiriya removed any remaining hopes among Soviet Muslims that they could fulfill their own plans for autonomy through peaceful compromise with Moscow or through separate dealings. Only a few weeks later Lenin's decision on Turkestan, which installed the Turkestan Commission as the permanent government, demonstrated that Central Asia was no longer immune to Moscow's Muslim policy, as it had been under the Tsars, but would suffer the same fate as the rest of Russia's Muslims.

The events in Azerbaijan and Bashkiriya in late May and June of 1920 initiated what can only be called a crisis in Soviet-Muslim relations. Far from achieving a satisfactory resolution to the problem of Muslim nationalism through ersatz federalism with its Autonomous Republics, the struggle between Muslim Communists and the RKP had broken into open conflict and become irreparable. Despite their service to the RKP, Tatars, Azerbaijanis, Bashkirs and Turkestanis had seen virtually all Bolshevik promises, declarations, and resolutions abandoned or cancelled, their own role in the government marginalized to the status of token minorities, and their national projects fragmented into regional-cultural enclaves dominated by a new "proletarian" colonial administration that ruled through martial law. The revolts in Azerbaijan and Bashkiriya also served to accelerate the trend towards unification of Russia's Muslims that had begun in 1919.
**Lenin and pan-Muslim Nationalism.**

In 1918-19 all references to Islam had been removed from Party organs and Soviet committees. Although this policy was applied equally to all Muslim organizations in the Party, it was not an attack on Islam per se, but rather the result of a protracted struggle with the Volga Tatars over the unity of the RKP. The Party rejected Islam not out of any formal separation of church and state (elimination of Islam from the Party followed the decree on separation of church and state by over a year), but due to the formal structure that Islam was providing the Tatar bourgeoisie for their inclusivist political movement among Russia's Muslims -- the same role that Islam had played for the pan-Muslim Itifak before World War I. Therefore, Soviet Muslim policy was conceived in 1919 only as a counter to the political ideology of the Tatar bourgeoisie, i.e. Islam was seen as a tool, not a force in itself. The rest of Russia's Muslims Lenin saw as more backward than the Tatars. In 1918-19, contradicting his stance in *Imperialism*, Lenin saw Turkestan in particular as characterized by feudal relations and devoid of a significant national movement, thus Islam in Turkestan, being the expression of a feudal ruling class, was different from Islam on the Volga, enabling Lenin, to call for appeasement of Islam in Turkestan even while eradicating Islam on the Volga. In early 1920, it was Lenin's fear of "contamination" of the revolution in Asia by the Tatar Left, as perceived in the above way, that brought Lenin to endorse in effect the new Left position that the peasantry were genuinely revolutionary.

The January 1920 events in Turkestan, however, challenged Lenin's perception of Russia's Muslims, not merely by revealing an unexpected strength on the part of Turkestanian nationalism, but more fundamentally by undermining Lenin's Marxist assumptions on the nature of nationalism in Asia. Lenin had long been aware of the Tatars' role in promoting reformist pan-Islam in Central Asia. His studies for
Imperialism, for example, included a 1913 work by Otto Htzsch, from which Lenin copied:

Pan-Islamic agitation among the Muslim Sarts [i.e. Uzbeks] and Kirgiz [i.e. Kazakhs], which hitherto have been tranquil in this respect, has been introduced by the Muslim Tatars coming from the North, the Volga area (the Nogaisy) and Western Siberia...it is primarily to them that Islam owes its great internal and external strengthening and its cultural growth [in Central Asia].

However, the Turkestani proclamation in early 1920 of a "Greater Turkestan" and a "Turkic Communist Party" induced Lenin to give Islam a closer look. While "Turkic" could be no more acceptable to Lenin than "Muslim," since both conceptions were broadly inclusivist (the two terms are still used interchangeably in the Soviet Union), the similarity between the pan-Turkic program of Turkestan to the pan-Islamic program of the Tatars suggested that the Turkic terminology was simply a device to circumvent the prohibition on references to Islam in the Party. The shallowness of the Turkestans alleged pan-Turkism was apparent in other ways. For example, like the pan-Turks before the War who always included non-Turkic Caucasians and Volga Finns in their plans, the Turkestans of 1920 included in their "Greater Turkestan" peoples who were not Turkic in any way, e.g. the half million Iranian Tadjiks of Tadjikistan. This appearance of a thinly veiled pan-Islam in a second major region of Russia necessarily imparted a subtle shift in emphasis away from those who advocated the phenomenon towards the phenomenon itself. As the spring of 1920 elapsed and evidence accumulated that all of the Muslim Communists in the RKP aspired towards an organic unity on the basis of their common Islamic heritage, and moreover sought independence and expansion through the Comintern, Lenin no longer saw Islam as simply the tool of the Tatar bourgeoisie but began to suspect that Islam had become the principal vehicle for the expression of the national aspirations of the

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11 Lenin, Works, XXXIX, p. 535.
bourgeoisie of all Soviet Muslims. This amounted to the emergence of a new type of nationalism—a religious-based "pan-Muslim nationalism."\(^{12}\)

As Lenin considered the problem raised by this "new, improved pan-Islam," he found that it entailed special theoretical difficulties. Before Lenin could even recognize a religious-based nationalism he had to discard Marx because the possibility that a religion could exert an influence over nationalists to the point of becoming the central feature of a national movement defied Marxist analysis.\(^{13}\) In Marx's view religion belonged to the stage of "feudalism" or to even more primitive stages and was by definition incompatible with both nationalism and socialism. Since historical progress by stages and historical progress by evolution are mutually exclusive concepts, one cannot mix these stages and remain faithful to Marx. For this reason it is unlikely that any direct quote could be found from Lenin to the effect that the Soviet state was faced with a virulent and spreading religious-based nationalism. After all, the purpose of the October Revolution was to implement Marxism—the demand for a public show of ideological orthodoxy from Lenin would have made such statements decidedly impolitic.

During the early summer of 1920 Lenin's ambivalence on the nature of the movement first became manifest. In brief, he could not decide whether this religious-

\(^{12}\) Pan-Muslim nationalism is not identical with Muslim national-communism. The former refers to an attitude and a perception rooted in traditional political culture, and characterized by non-verbalized cognitive and perceptual habits. The latter refers to the consciously expressed conceptions of a number of leading Soviet Muslims in the RKP. The political movement among Soviet Muslims achieved expression in the ideas of national-communists such as Sultan-Galiev, but the underlying political perception of pan-Muslim nationalism provided the ground that made it possible for national-communism to flourish. The Muslim national-communists were the foremost exponents of pan-Muslim nationalism, but the main strength of the latter lay in the middle-classes of all Soviet Muslims, both Party and non-Party, and in the fact that their program enjoyed increasing acceptance by lower-class religious conservatives throughout Russia.

\(^{13}\) This incompatibility has been noted by others as well. See Stanley Aronowitz, *The Crisis in Historical Materialism* (South Hadley, Mass: Praeger, 1981), p. 11.
based nationalism was an expression of a feudal class, or an expression of bourgeoisie.

At times he asserted the former, and at times the latter. On June 5, 1920, in his

Preliminary Draft Theses on National and Colonial Questions, composed for submission
to the Second Congress of the Comintern, Lenin included among his points:

Second, the need for a struggle against the clergy and other
influential reactionary and medieval elements in backward countries;

Third, the need to struggle with pan-Islamism, with the pan-Asian
movement [of Japan], and similar movements, which strive to combine
the liberation movement against European and American imperialism
with strengthening of the power of Turkish and Japanese imperialism.

of the nobility, landowners, mullahs, etc....

Fifth, the need for a determined fight against the attempt to put a
communist cloak around revolutionary liberation movements that are
not really Communist in the backward countries.14

Here, Lenin's ambivalence is exemplified perfectly. Point Two refers to the
need to combat feudalism. Point Five, the need to combat nationalism. But Point Three,
where he explicitly affirms that inclusivist Muslim nationalism was a political force to
be reckoned with in Russia, Lenin states that it "combines the liberation
movement...with strengthening of...the nobility, landowners, mullahs, etc." Thus, pan-
Islam is an anomaly—a national liberation movement, but a class expression of
feudalists. The reference to Turkish imperialism is not so important as the fact that he
mixes nationalism with feudalism, a confusion stemming from the religious basis of the
new nationalism. For Lenin nationalism in the Party was nothing new, but plainly
feudalism in nationalism in the Party was a whole new experience.

During the summer of 1920, as the crisis in Soviet-Muslim relations deepened,
the pressures to resolve this ambivalence increased. At times Lenin emphasized the
feudal and backward nature of Turkestan and Dagestan. But, while this might provide
an easy rationale for military suppression of the Azerbaijani and Bashkir revolts, such
an interpretation led away from the views in Imperialism that Asia was in the era of

14 Lenin, 'Preliminary Draft Theses on the National and the Colonial Questions,' in
Works, XXXI, p. 149.
rising capitalism and ripe for revolution. The trend was rather for Lenin to emphasize its nationalistic quality. Already at the Second Congress of the Comintern, Lenin saw Turkestan as imbued with nationalism, even asserting the strange and distinctly anti-Marxist view that the more feudal elements that exist in a country, the more nationalistic it is:

...the more backward the country, the stronger is the hold of small-scale agricultural production, patriarchalism and isolation, which inevitably lend particular strength and tenacity to the deepest of petty-bourgeois prejudices, i.e., to national egoism and national narrow-mindedness. 15

In another example, he alludes to the threat represented by nationalism to the Comintern project, perhaps with Soviet pan-Muslim nationalism in mind:

Two movements can be discerned which are growing further and further apart with every day that passes. One of them is the bourgeois-democratic nationalist movement, which pursues the program of political liberation with the conservation of the capitalist order; the other is the struggle of the propertyless peasants for their liberation from every kind of exploitation. The first movement attempts, often with success, to control the second; the Comintern must however fight against any such control. 16

The crisis provoked by the Azerbaijani and Bashkir rebellions, occurring 1,500 kilometers apart, and connected only by the Narkomnats office still popularly called the "Muslim Buro" in defiance of Party policy, together with the simultaneous defection of A. Zeki Validov to the Basmachis—must have not only powerfully reinforced Lenin's suspicions that a "new pan-Islam" had emerged, but that the Muslim Communists of Narkomnats were responsible for its propagation. The possibility that, in propagating their pan-Muslim nationalism, the Muslim Communists might discover a latent power base throughout the Islamic world soon led Lenin to suspend—temporarily he hoped, but permanently as it turned out—the Bolshevik Revolution in Asia.

15 Lenin, Works, XXXI. p. 149.
The Second Congress of the Comintern.

The new Soviet interest in revolution in the East was reflected in the agenda of the Second Congress of the Comintern, held in Moscow from July 19 to July 30, 1920. At this congress Lenin demonstrated a clear concern that reformist nationalism might contaminate the revolutionary movement in the East, and that by relying upon peasants' soviets, the Comintern could hope to circumvent the problem. This underlay Lenin's compromise with M.N. Roy at the Congress. Roy's experiences in India had convinced him that the "bourgeois-democratic" movement in Asia was in danger of being diverted from true revolution to mere reformism and called for further guarantees than those Lenin had provided that the revolution in Asia would be social as well as national. Lenin, intent on preserving intact the formal aspects of his revolutionary doctrine so as to minimize the damage should the revolution in Asia fail, at first insisted that endorsement of peasants' soviets and federation with the RSFSR were sufficient. Finally, however, Roy's views made an impression on Lenin and he agreed to substitute the term "national-revolutionary" for the term "bourgeois-democratic." 17 This change was significant in that whereas Roy had in mind the reformist bourgeoisie of India during the debate, Lenin probably had in mind not only middle-class reformers of the Islamic world, but also those "reformist bourgeoisie" around whom the revolution in Asia necessarily would turn—the Muslim nationalists in the Party. If so, then Lenin's compromise further demonstrated his willingness to take measures to avoid the contamination of the revolution in Asia by these nationalists.

At this congress Lenin's theses met certain objections. A Turkish Communist, Ismael Hakki-Pasha, reacted to Lenin's call to arms against pan-Islam with a short history lesson, pointing out that pan-Islam and pan-Turkism had been the official

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17 Pearce, p. 111.
ideologies of the Sultan and of the Young Turks respectively, and that they had no place in the ambitions of Kemal's Democratic Party, which limited its ambitions to Anatolia.

Pan-Islamism was unable to unite all the different nationalities with their different languages. The idea of pan-Turkism which the Young Turks later took over—which idea strove to fuse all the Turkish peoples from Kazan to Turkestan and to the Caucasus with the whole of Turkey and a part of Persia. The endeavour of the Young Turks was to unify this huge territory. But all these dreams were condemned to remain on paper.18

Being involved in the activities of the Muslim Communists himself, Ismael Hakki, one may assume, had reason to play down any contemporary role for pan-Islam.

The Dutch representative, Maring, then criticized Lenin on the grounds that the careful distinctions that Lenin and Roy had drawn between the reformist national movement and the revolutionary movement was a mere splitting of hairs:

I can see no difference between Comrade Lenin's Theses and those of Comrade Roy. They are at one with another in their meaning. The difficulty consists only in finding the correct attitude towards the relations between the revolutionary nationalist and the socialist movements in the backward countries and the colonies. [But] in practice this difficulty does not exist. There is the necessity of working together with the revolutionary nationalist elements, and we are only doing half the job if we deny this movement and play at being doctrinaire Marxists.19

Maring stated that the Communists in the Dutch East Indies had embraced the more popular Sarekat-Islam Party, despite its religious and national coloring, because "A significant part of this mass organization is not consciously socialist, but they are nevertheless revolutionary..."20 Maring's view, however apt for Indonesia, reflected a lack of insight into the nature of the debate and a lack of familiarity with political trends in Soviet territory. What Maring advocated was exactly what the Muslim Communists wished and what Lenin and Roy were carefully trying to avoid—an independent Communist Party that would suspend social revolution for an indefinite

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18 Pearce, p. 148.
20 Pearce, p. 152.
period during the struggle for national liberation. It is safe to say that none of the foreign delegates at the congress, including Maring, had any knowledge of recent events in Azerbaijan or Bashkiriya, and that the attending Muslims, having invested many months in securing Comintern interest in Asia, were unlikely to endanger their program by drawing undue attention to these events or to themselves. It was probably in reaction to Maring's endorsement of Sarekat-Islam that Lenin wrote a note to himself on July 28: "Medieval particularism? Too dangerous, not Marxist. Modern national movements should be distinguished from 'movements' (so-called movements) of a medieval nature."21 Here Lenin again demonstrates his ambivalence concerning a religious-based nationalism. This statement cannot be reconciled with the one above on the "national egoism" of "feudal" Turkestan.

The caution of the Soviet Muslims at the congress explains the behavior of the Iranian representative, Sultanzade, chairman of the Iranian Communist Party founded only days earlier in Gilan. In his address on July 28 Sultanzade endorsed Lenin's position and rebuked the Turkestanis for their deviationism. He asserted that the revolution in the East depended on the assistance of Europe, and that the social revolution should follow quickly if not accompany the national liberation movement. It is noteworthy that Sultanzade at the time still needed the services of the Red Army to complete the Iranian "Revolution," whereas Indonesia could not hope for such assistance. Sultanzade did manage to add, however, before finishing that Moscow's support of the bourgeois-democratic movement in the backward countries can...only have reference to those countries in which this movement is in its very early stages. If one were to try to proceed according to the Theses in countries which already have ten or more years of experience, or in those where the movement has already had power, it would mean driving the masses into the arms of the counter-revolution.22

21 Drachkovitch and Lazitch, p. 395.
22 Writer's italics. Pearce, p. 135.
Sultanzade could only have been referring to Iran, where his party was even then reaching for the reins of power. In other words, once the Red Army should install the Iranian Communist Party in power, it should pack its bags and go home, because the Iranian Communists would then insist upon complete organizational independence from the RKP.

In view of such criticism and veiled warnings, and Lenin's own theoretical confusion, it is understandable that he continued to have doubts as to the correctness of the Comintern initiative. Quite often he expressed his uncertainty:

Our experience in this respect is not as yet very considerable...
So far our joint experience in this respect has not been extensive, but more and more data will gradually accumulate...
The necessary means for this [the revolution in Asia] cannot be indicated in advance. These will be prompted by practical experience.23

When Lenin first met Roy, he promptly admitted that he knew next to nothing about Asia, and, if his reference to pan-Islam as bolstering "Turkish imperialism" in 1920 is any indication, he was certainly correct.

The Baku Congress.

The significance attached to the First Congress of the Peoples of the East at Baku by all those interested in revolution in the East can hardly be overestimated. The congress represented the culmination of two years' efforts on the part of Soviet Muslims to obtain Comintern support for the Muslim Communist initiative in Asia. Despite its title, the congress was in reality the fifth congress of the pan-Muslim movement in Russia, after the three pre-war Ittifak congresses and the May Congress of 1917, and was intended to re-establish the unity of Soviet Muslims at the same time that it extended the "new pan-Islam" to the rest of the Islamic world. For this reason, there were no formal qualifications for delegates. Eighty-percent of the approximately

2,000 delegates attending were Muslims, mostly Soviet, and over half were Party members.\textsuperscript{24} It was hoped that the congress would quietly endorse the Comintern program—however, the congress was anything but quiet. The multiplicity of languages confused proceedings from the start, and the unfamiliarity of the Russian organizers with the sensibilities of the Muslims soon resulted in the latter’s disaffection. Grigory Zinoviev, as acting chairman, exercised a firm control over the congress and, from its first session on September 1, used his influence to secure support for social revolution on a secular basis:

\begin{quote}
We must...raise up the peoples of the East to carry out an agrarian revolution like that effected by the peasants of Russian, those Russian peasants who only half a century ago were still serfs and who are still largely illiterate. Why should the peasants of Turkey, Persia, India, China, Armenia and so on not do what has been done by the Russian peasants who so recently were serfs? We are sure that the peasants of the Whole East, under the wise leadership of the organized workers of the West, will now be able to rise up in their hundreds of millions in order to carry out a real, thoroughgoing agrarian revolution, to clear the soil so that no large landowners are left, so that no debt-slavery, no taxes, dues or any other variety of the devices used by the rich are left, so that the land passes into the hands of the laboring masses....

You know that for a long time the view existed that, first of all, each country must pass through the capitalist stage... We now think that this is not so. From the moment that even just one country has broken away from the chain of capitalism, as Russia has done...from that moment we can say that in China, India, Turkey, Persia and Armenia it is possible and necessary to begin fighting directly for a Soviet system....
\end{quote}

Zinoviev affirmed that the revolution in Asia must be a social revolution in order to preserve it from corruption by nationalism:

\begin{quote}
We have two streams. One is very fast, impetuous and strong—the stream of the workers’ proletarian Communist struggle in Russia, Germany, France and Italy, which is everywhere spreading wider. But there is also another stream, which is as yet not strong enough, which in some places takes a zigzag course—this is the movement of the oppressed nationalities which have not yet chosen the road they will follow, do not yet know exactly what they want.... We want these two streams to draw closer and closer together, so that the second stream may be cleansed of national prejudices...
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{24}The figures for the delegates attending this congress are imprecise. Many of the delegates failed to fill out the background questionnaires, and some who registered failed to attend.
Zinoviev stated an equal concern that the revolutionary movement might be
turned from its goals by Islam.

The movement which is headed by Kemal wants to rescue the 'sacred'
person of the Caliph from enemy hands--this is the viewpoint of that
party. Is it a Communist viewpoint? No, it is not. We respect the
religious feeling of the masses [but] we know how to re-educate the
masses. This requires many years' work. We approach with caution the
religious beliefs of the working masses of the East and of other
countries. However...what Kemal's government is now doing in Turkey,
supporting the power of the Sultans, you ought not to do, even if this
line be dictated by religious considerations....You should dispel and
destroy faith in the Sultan, and establish genuine Soviets....
We say, directly and definitely to the non-Party delegates here: Pan-
Islamism, Musavatism, all these trends are not ours. We have a different
policy.... 25

On the following day, the Congress' other chief organizer, Karl Radek, spoke in
a similar vein.

As intent as Zinoviev and Radek were on social revolution, the Muslim delegates
were equally intent on national liberation in conjunction with Islamic principles.
What was worse for the REP, this national liberation seemed directed against the RSFSR
and the Party as much as against British imperialism. At the start of the Third Session,
on the morning of September 4, a non-Party delegate from Tashkent named
Narbutabekov in a now-famous speech openly criticized Bolshevik policy and
challenged the Party representatives to change it. His speech was so revealing of the
attitudes then current among Soviet Muslims, and was so at odds with the tone that
Zinoviev and Karl Radek were attempting to impart to the proceedings, that it is worth
relating extensively:

Everyone knows that the East is utterly different from the West, that
its ideas are different--and so a rigid application of the ideas of
Communism will meet with resistance there. Accordingly, if we want the
four hundred millions in the Muslim world to join Soviet power, we need
to apply a special yardstick in their case....Comrades, the Muslims will not
abandon Soviet power, but this is on condition that the peculiarities of

25 Pearce, p. 30-2.
the Eastern peoples be recognized, and the measures adopted by Soviet power in this direction must be implemented not on paper but in fact.

Comrade Radek said that Soviet power is accused by the West-European Kulturtrager, the West European brigands, of carrying out a policy of Red imperialism. In order to refute this charge it is necessary that our comrades, the leaders of the Communist Party and Soviet power, shall declare that this is not so and will not be so. We Turkestanis state that we have never before seen Comrade Zinoviev, or Comrade Radek, or the other leaders of the revolution. They should come and see for themselves what is happening in Turkestan, what exactly is being done by the local authorities there, whose policy is such that it is antagonizing the working masses against Soviet power. I regard it my duty as a delegate to say this, because I am staunchly in favor of the platform of Soviet power....

There is no question of counter-revolution here, any more than of chauvinism, for we, the representatives of our working people, have suppressed our narrow nationalist tendencies; and we, the first Revolutionaries of Turkestan have no fear of any ulamas, of any Black Hundreds of the mullahs. We were the first to raise the standard against them [applause] and we shall not lower that standard, to the very end: we shall either perish or conquer. I tell you, comrades, our Turkestanian masses have to fight on two fronts. On the one hand against the reactionary mullahs in our own midst, and on the other against the narrow nationalist inclinations of the local Europeans. Neither Comrade Zinoviev, nor Comrade Lenin, nor Comrade Trotsky knows the real situation, knows what has been going on in Turkestan these last three years. We must speak out frankly and draw a true picture of the state of affairs in Turkestan, and then the eyes of our leaders will be opened. They will come to Turkestan and set things right....

So that what has happened in Turkestan shall not be repeated in other parts of the Muslim world, I warn our government that we know all the shortcomings of the policy which has been pursued in these three years, and we say: Remove your counter-revolutionaries, remove your alien elements who spread national discord, remove your colonizers who are now working behind the mask of Communism! [Tumultuous applause, cries of 'Bravo'.]...

Now, as we travel about, Muslims come up to us and say that our beliefs are being trampled on, that we are not allowed to pray, not allowed to bury our dead in accordance with our customs and religion. What is this? It is nothing but a sowing of counter-revolution among the toiling masses.

It may be that the same thing is happening in other places [in the RSFSR] too, but I declare, in the name of the non-Party delegates, and perhaps the Communists also will join in this, that with the remarkable congress we are holding today our Soviet power shd introduce a definite [change of] policy in relation to the East. Then the Eastern peoples will rally to Soviet power...26

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26 Pearce, p. 61-4.
As a statement of Turkestanian grievances against Bolshevism, this speech had no precedent and was to have no successor. The belief that the Bolshevik leaders were unaware of events in Turkestan, was of course, quite incorrect. Even as Narbutabekov spoke, Lenin was preparing a program specially tailored for Central Asia—only not to be directed against the Russian colonizers, but against Muslim nationalists like Narbutabekov.

Other delegates, disregarding Zinoviev’s criticism of Kemal, proclaimed the Turkish movement to be both proletarian and revolutionary, and even defended the Young Turks’ role in the War, as in this passage from September 2:

When the European war began, Turkey went to war with no intention of conquest. It entered the war of necessity, to defend itself...

In our country, in Turkey, the officers belong to a different category from the Russian or European officers. The Turkish officer is a genuine proletarian...
The agrarian question in our country, in Anatolia, also has special features. It is a very simple question. There are no landlords there, no large landowners. Turkey has, in general, no powerful bourgeois class, and so neither the Turkish Government nor the Turkish peoples could pursue a merely [sic] aggressive policy...²⁷

Despite the stand against Islam taken officially by the Congress, no meetings were scheduled for September 3 since it was a Friday, the Muslim ‘Sabbath.’ Instead, a parade was held for the delegates in which the ex-Turkish leader Enver Pasha participated on horseback. Enver was forbidden from attending the Congress due to the opposition of the Armenian delegates who held him responsible for the Armenian massacres of 1915. However, among the Muslim delegates he still commanded great loyalty and respect for his wartime championing of Islam and Turkism. The bowing and hand-kissing of his adorers at this parade evoked revulsion from the Europeans in

²⁷ Pearce, p. 55. Since Kemal was justifying his defiance of the legitimate Turkish government in Istanbul by posing as the defender of an imprisoned Caliphate, Turkey was still seen by most of the world in 1920 as the champion of Islam. Hence, the pro-Turkish speeches delivered at the Baku Congress cannot be divorced from the pan-Islamic movements popular in Asia in 1919 and 1920, such as the Caliphate movement in India.
attendance, and left a distaste for the proceedings of the entire Congress. On September 4, Enver and the official representative of Kemal’s government sent separate written messages to the congress. To the further disgust of the non-Muslims, these messages and the pro-Turkish speech delivered two days earlier, vied with one another in asserting the revolutionary and proletarian nature of the Turks in their current struggle against the Greeks and Armenians, and of Turkey’s innocence in the Great War:

Comrades, I thank on my own behalf and on that of my comrades the Third International and its Presidium, who have enabled us fighters against world imperialism and capitalism to assemble in Baku today....

German imperialism used us for its bandit aims. But our desire was only to safeguard our independence...

It is not only our endeavor to find support in the struggle we have begun that has caused us to draw near to the Third International. It may be that another factor is the similarity of our principles. We have always drawn our revolutionary strength from the people, that is, from the peasants.29

It should be recalled that Kemal, by advocating the "liberation" of the Caliph from British imprisonment, had attracted the support of Muslims throughout the Islamic world. From Kemal’s representative:

The Turkish peasant who, when he took up arms [in the Great War], had no other aim than to protect his national frontiers and defend his productive forces from foreign exploitation...

[Then] the Western capitalists decided to send against this Turkish peasant...the Venizelist Greeks and from the East the Dashnak Armenians [who want to seize] by force the fruits of the labor of the working class.30

After the speech by Narbutabekov, which had been delivered at the Third Session on the morning of September 3, Zinoviev was so disconcerted that, before the Fourth Session began that evening, he announced that translations would henceforth be abridged to a length of no more than a quarter of the original speech. This measure

29 Pearce, p. 76-8.
30 Pearce, p. 79-80.
was largely justified by the excessive time involved in the previous translations, but the timing of Zinoviev's alteration is suspicious. Since the organizers of the congress were Russians and most of the principal Muslim Communist leaders fluent in Russian, the change placed non-Russian speakers at a disadvantage, which included most of the foreign and a considerable percentage of the Soviet Muslims. For this reason, when it was announced that the messages from Enver and Ibrahim Tali were to be read in Russian, the audience vigorously protested. Zinoviev had the messages read in Russian anyway. Then, obviously displeased by the repeated demonstrations of support for Turkey and Kemal's pro-Caliphate posture, Zinoviev railrode an anti-Turkish and anti-Kemalist resolution through the congress. The exact wording is not as important as the reaction of the delegates:

Chairman: I now put to the vote the resolution which the Presidium has unanimously recommended to you. [Uproar. A voice: 'I want to speak. ']

The Presidium proposes that the vote be taken without discussion, and according to the rule you should have handed up a note. [A voice: 'I did hand up a note. The vote is taken. ] All in favor of the resolution that was read to you, please raise your hands. [Uproar. Voices: 'I handed up a note. ' 'Let me reveal the truth. ']

Please do not make a row. There are 1,800 of us here. It is impossible to carry on like this. Please put your hands down. Who is against? Any abstentions? The resolution is carried. [Applause.]31

The following day, September 5, was scheduled for discussion of the national and colonial question. A long speech by a Comintern representative, M. Pavlovich, reinforced impressions that the European Communists adhered to an anti-Turkish and anti-Islamic attitude:

The two-months' rule of the Turks in Baku was the blackest page in the history of that long-suffering city, the stronghold of the proletariat in Caucasus...

And now comrades, you are beginning your ascent of the mountain in order to win all the treasures of the world. And you will hear the voices of those who are near to you, appealing to you not to risk your lives, you

31 Pearce, p. 83.
will hear the terrifying cries of all sorts of Muslim bigots, pan-Turkic and pan-Islamic fanatics... 32

Shortly afterwards, the Kirgiz Communist Ryskulov, speaking in Russian, put the congress back on an even keel with a calm, reasoned speech stressing the necessity for a Muslim Communist movement throughout Asia in accordance with the program of the Second Congress of the Comintern. In an attempt to repair the damage done by Narbutabekov, Ryskulov affirmed Muslim Communist support for the Soviet system:

In relation to the East, the Third International proves, not only on paper, in appeals, in words, but in practice, in deeds, that 50 millions (sic) of the peoples of the East have joined the Soviet power. 33

In conformance with the Muslim Communist 'line,' the necessity of postponing the social revolution until after national liberation was again asserted:

But while in the West the socialist movement takes the form of a Communist movement, we certainly cannot count on a purely Communist movement. In the East the movement assumes a petty-bourgeois character, the form of a movement for national self-determination, for the unity of the East. But this movement will undoubtedly develop into a social movement, an agrarian movement...

At the present time the movement in those countries of the East where revolutionary organizations are weak, where the organizations of the working people are weak, is assuming, of course, a bourgeois-national character. At the head of this movement stand supporters of a petty-bourgeois revolution, supporters of democracy, but not supporters of Soviet Communism. This movement... is rendering us a great service...

The Third International, the Communist Party, must, of course, support this movement, but at the same time we have to say that it is not this movement that will finally liberate the toiling masses. Liberation of the toiling masses can be effected only through the social revolution. 34

The word "finally" was the key to his speech. Like M. Sultan-galiev, who, under virtual house arrest since August for his articles in Zhizn Natsional'nostei, was unable to attend the congress, Ryskulov purposely left vague the span of time after which the

32 Pearce, p. 107.
33 Pearce, p. 116.
34 Pearce, p. 115-7.
social revolution was to follow the national revolution. The social revolution might occur in a decade—or not at all.

Even Ryskulov's caution, however, could not keep him from voicing veiled criticisms of Soviet policy. His speech is replete with euphemisms that carefully refrain from a clear endorsement:

The colonial and national questions, which we are discussing today, are of very great importance for us. These questions are also very important for the capitalist system...

With the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat in Russia, with the victory of the Communist Party, we see that light has been thrown upon the colonial question from a different angle...

Despite the fact that the Communist tendency is growing stronger in all countries, despite the fact that the Third International is a mighty force which is shaking the foundations of capitalism, despite the achievement of the victory of socialism, nevertheless the colonial question is of paramount importance for our policy, along with the agrarian question...35

Even Ryskulov's compliments can be read as warnings to other Muslim peoples:

Comrade Lenin, in his theses on the colonial and national question at the Second Congress, defined quite exactly and realistically the tasks of the Communist party, the tasks of the Third International in the East. Although he has not been in the East [a statement of support for Narbutabekov?], in his theses he registers everything as though it has been taken from life....

The break which these [Muslim] borderlands [of the Soviet state], these republics, have experienced, what has happened there, must serve as an example to the entire East. Let all the working people not just hearken to our appeals, to our ideas—let them look at these republics, which are examples for them....36

To the satisfaction of both Ryskulov and Zinoviev the theses on revolution in the East agreed to at the second Congress of the Comintern were quickly endorsed without further disruption, but in the following days the relations between Russians and Muslims significantly worsened.

A speech on September 6 by a Comintern delegate, Skachko, spelled out for the Muslims what social revolution really meant as applied to Islamic society. He rejected

35 Pearce, p. 115-7.
36 Pearce, p. 117-8.
any special role for Islam, discounted the alleged benefits of Sharia Law, condemned
the tradition of waqf, and held up Islamic civilization in general, and Turkey in
particular, as a reactionary survival from the past, long overdue for the "dust-heap" of
history:

Despite the fact that at the basis of the Muslim religion lay principles
of religious Communism...these religious principles have not saved the
peasants from being reduced to serfdom, or preserved the land from
seizure by landlords and despots...

The despotic government of Turkey, which always looked upon the
peoples subject to its rule as conquered peoples, always pursued one aim
and one alone in its administration: to extract from the population as
much income as possible...Today the Russian proletariat, ruined by many
years of war and receiving, in the big centres which are worst stricken
with famine, only one-and-a-half pounds of bread a day, is better
supplied with bread than the Turkish peasant living in a fertile country
abounding in free land...

All the land belonging to the landlords and feudalists, shahs and
kholds must be taken from them and given to the peasants...there is no
cause to fear because some of this land belongs to the clergy. Of course
the latter, who have concentrated huge tracts of land in their possession,
and exploited peasant labor on this land, declare that this land belongs to
God and therefore is inviolable, and the peasant dares not reach out to
take it, but, comrades, this is all lies and fraud! Even according to the
Sharia, the land can belong only to him who tills it, and not to the clergy
who have grabbed it, like the mujahids in Persia, who were the first to
violate the fundamental law of the Muslim religion. They are not
defenders of this religion but perverters of it. They are just such
parasites and oppressors as the feudal landlords, except that they are also
hypocrites who disguise their character as oppressors behind the white
turban and the Holy Koran. This mask of sanctity must be torn from
them, comrades, and the land they own must likewise be wrested from
them and given to the working peasantry. [Applause]...³⁷

The occasional indications of applause have little meaning after September 4.

Those delegates most likely to object to the content of the speeches given in Russian
were the least likely to understand the language, and had to wait for the abridged
translation that followed. This is indicated by the fact that Skachko's lengthy theses
that called for extensive social revolution along the above lines were adopted by voice
vote immediately after the speech "unanimously," and with "tumultuous applause" and

³⁷ Pearce, p. 131-4.
"Shouts of 'bravo'."\textsuperscript{38} We may assume that potential dissenters only discovered what had actually been said and agreed to at some later time.\textsuperscript{39} At any rate, the reaction of the Muslim delegates to this speech was so extreme that before the congress ended it is said that some Muslim delegates tossed garbage at Zinoviev.\textsuperscript{40}

On the following day, the last day of the congress, speeches were given by two Muslim women and feminists. From Shabanova, a Turkish feminist:

The women of the East are not merely fighting for the right to walk in the street without wearing the chadra, as many people suppose. For the women of the East, with their high moral ideals, the question of the chadra, it can be said, is of the least importance. If the women who form half of every community are opposed to the men and do not have the same rights as they have, then it is obviously impossible for society to progress; the backwardness of Eastern societies is irrefutable proof of this.

The women Communists of the East have an even harder battle to wage [than the men] because, in addition, they have to fight against the despotism of their menfolk.\textsuperscript{41}

Shabanova then presented a list of demands for Muslim women, that included "complete equality of rights," removal of all restrictions to education, equal rights in marriage, the "unconditional abolition of polygamy," removal of all restrictions on employment of women, and the formation of committees for the advancement and protection of women.

Bibinur, from Turkestan, agreed with these sentiments:

We, the women of the East, are exploited ten times worse than the men, and the ugly sides of the life led by those recluses, the Muslim women of the East, affect us more closely...\textsuperscript{42}

\textsuperscript{38} Pearce, p. 144.

\textsuperscript{39} One recalls the mullahs at the May Congress of 1917, who, unfamiliar with the proceedings and at a disadvantage linguistically, voted for equal rights for women, only later to reverse themselves.


\textsuperscript{41} Pearce, p. 148.

\textsuperscript{42} Pearce, p. 150.
The difficulty with translation again explains the apparently enthusiastic reception of these women's speeches. The social conservatism manifest in the men's speeches contravenes the women's declarations, which, nevertheless, were followed by the usual expressions of "tumultuous applause."

On the last day, the congress elected a "Council of Action and Propaganda in the East" that was to serve as a permanent executive committee until a second congress could be called. The Council, subject to the supervision of the Comintern, was to support the revolutionary movement in Asia with a journal and a school for propagandists from its base in Baku.

Despite the worsening of relations between Russians and Muslims, the Baku Congress tipped the balance for Lenin in his decision to suspend the revolution, not because he regarded it as a failure as most observers have claimed—but because he feared it had been a success. The congress had succeeded where it was supposed to: Lenin wanted the Asian program of the Comintern's Second Congress endorsed by the Muslim Communists, and it was endorsed. Instead of demanding equal status in independent national-communist parties, the Muslim Communists had accepted the authority of the Moscow-based Central Committee of the Comintern (IKKI), which Lenin had made certain contained no Muslims. The Party had secured statements of unswerving support on the part of domestic and foreign Muslims for the Soviet system of government and sweeping condemnations of British and French imperialism.

However, the Muslim Communists had been even more successful. They had implicitly secured a commitment that the Red Army would continue to put them in power in foreign countries. They had succeeded in cementing ties among all of the Muslim delegates, both Soviet and foreign. Their new confidence had resulted in

43 Pearce, p. 147.
explicit attacks on Soviet policy and criticism of the highest leaders of the Party—a
clear departure from the reticence demonstrated at the second Congress of the
Comintern. Finally, the Muslims had achieved what they most desired: a permanent
executive body, composed mostly of Muslim Communists, with guaranteed access to
Soviet supplies and logistical support, formally independent of the RSFSR or any Soviet
body, far removed from the center of Comintern control in Moscow, but at the same
time only one step away from the sovereign power of the Central Committee, which in
1920 seemed to have every possibility of expanding into an international democratic
world government. The 48 members of this Council of Propaganda and Action included
only nine non-Muslims.\textsuperscript{44} Thirty-nine were Muslims, carefully drawn from as many
Soviet nationalities and tribes as possible, plus ten foreign Muslims.\textsuperscript{45} Zinoviev's
endorsement of this Council was a success beyond the highest hopes of any pan-
Muslim's dreams. Lenin was correct in his perception that the Muslims, who "for
decades were at daggers drawn," had achieved an "unprecedented, amazing, heart-
lifting unanimity...despite their not understanding each other's languages."\textsuperscript{46}

**The Caucasus Revolt.**

The Baku Congress represented the peak of the Soviet-Muslim crisis of the
revolutionary era, but it was only one of several factors in Lenin's decision to
terminate the Comintern initiative. Among these other factors was the continuing
trend of armed revolt among Moscow's Muslim subjects. One of the few speeches given
by Muslims at Baku that expressed uncritical admiration for Soviet power was delivered
by a delegate from the northern Caucasus. But even before the Congress was convened

\textsuperscript{44} Three ethnic Russians, 1 Ukrainian, 3 Georgians, 1 Armenian, and 1 'Oriental Jew'.
Pearce, p. 151-2.
\textsuperscript{45} Three Turks, 2 Iranians, 2 Afghans, 2 Indians, and the Turkish woman, Shabanova.
Pearce, p. 151-2.
\textsuperscript{46} From Zinoviev's concluding speech at Baku. Pearce, p. 156.
a revolt of Dagestanis against the Soviet occupation had rendered his pledges of the
Mountaineers' support meaningless. This revolt spread from the Azerbaijani province
of Karataly, which adjoined Dagestan, to other areas in the Caucasus, and, in mid-
September, was matched by renewed conflict in Azerbaijan. The new wave of revolts
caused Moscow much concern because the Dagestanis had successfully resisted the
attacks of Denikin for an entire year. Preoccupied with the oil of Baku, Lenin did not
want to risk a repeat of the Murid wars of the 19th century.

When Soviet troops approached Dagestan in April 1920, Lenin had repeatedly
issued orders to Ordzhonikidze not to antagonize the inhabitants.47 Upon arrival the
Kavburo turned the administration over to locally recruited Muslim Communists,48 and
issued a manifesto promising to respect all religious and national customs. All for
naught—in mid-August the Dagestanis charged the Kavburo with breaking these
promises and initiated an armed revolt—the third such revolt since 1917.49 Lenin's
reaction was one of fury. He lost all patience and in early September ordered
Ordzhonikidze to pacify the Caucasus at all costs, labeling the resistance—somewhat
illogically considering the Muslims' long struggle against Denikin—as whiteguard
activity:

The most rapid and complete elimination of all bands and remnants of
the whiteguards in the Caucasus and the Kuban area is a matter of
absolute importance to the whole state. Inform me more frequently and
more precisely on how matters stand.50

These measures, however, proved ineffectual. In October Lenin sent Stalin on a month-
long fact-finding mission through the northern Caucasus and Azerbaijan.51 Lenin
still had no clear grasp of the source of the resistance in the Caucasus, stating in a

48 Pipes, p. 223.
49 Pipes, p. 229.
51 Pipes, p. 229.
speech on November 21, "at the moment conditions in the Caucasus are becoming most complex and extremely difficult to analyse..." Finally, in late November Lenin granted Stalin plenipotentiary powers to solve the Caucasus problem by any means:

Submit a concrete proposal and at once table it for the Politburo, or act independently on the basis of the powers conferred on Stalin [sic], or else expedite your coming to Moscow to settle the entire Caucasus question as a whole. In any case, the bringing up of reinforcements should be intensified and speeded up...

On November 26 Stalin returned to Moscow and a few days later the Politburo decided to incorporate the northern Caucasus into the RSFSR as four separate Autonomous Republics. The fighting did not stop, however. A grandson of the 19th century resistance leader, Shamyl, appeared on the scene and led the struggle against the Soviets through May of 1921, causing an estimated 5,000 Russian casualties.

The Revolution in Bukhara.

From the first day of the Baku Congress, meanwhile, events in Turkestan had reinforced Lenin's perception that the Muslim Communists were unreliable. Ever since their ejection from Bukhara in 1918, the Bukharan Jadids in Tashkent had agitated for Red Army assistance to eject the Emir and install them in power. In the summer of 1920 the Turkestan Commission assembled the various Bukharan factions in a Bukharan Communist Party with the purpose of using them to foment an internal socialist revolt which would act as a cover for an invasion, in line with established Soviet policy towards former tsarist territories. The Bukharan Communists, on the other hand, had formed extensive ties with the Turkestani Communists and laid plans to assert full independence after the invasion in a Bukharan Soviet Republic. For this reason, in a

52 Lenin, Works, XXXI, p. 415.
54 Pipes, p. 247.
55 Pipes, p. 230; Swietochowski, p. 189-90.
now familiar pattern, the Bukharan Communists demanded and obtained membership in the Comintern as one of the Committees of Foreign Communists in Tashkent in early 1920.56 On August 23, the Bukharan Communists staged their "revolt" in a town just across from the Turkmen frontier, and on August 30, the Red Army invaded. The Emir of Bukhara, who, since 1918, had been arming himself for an eventual showdown with the Bolsheviks, put up a stiff fight. But after five days and many Soviet casualties, the Emir fled to his eastern realms in mountainous Tadjikistan where his forces gradually merged with the Basmachis.57

Once installed in Bukhara the Bukharan Communist Party, which in fact consisted mostly of Young Bukharan pan-Muslims,58 signed a treaty with Turkestan which recognized them as the government of a Bukharan People's Soviet Republic. As a member of the Comintern, the Bukharan Communist Party was already theoretically independent from the RKP. Almost immediately the new government, under the Muslim Communist Fayzullah Khojaev, dropped the more radical of the social measures previously advanced by the Party, and on September 25 issued a constitution specifying that "no published laws of the Republic may contradict the foundations of Islam."59 and making no mention of a dictatorship of the proletariat. Furthermore, the new guarantees of freedom of speech and press could not be used to criticize Islam, and "kishlaks," the traditional councils of elders, were redefined as soviets.60 The Turkestan Commission reacted to these developments with extreme emotion, suspending all trade with Bukhara, and pressuring the new government in various other ways, but did nothing more until 1921. Given Bukhara's reputation for sanctity, it was feared that

56 Park, p. 72.
57 Pipes, p. 184.
58 Park, p. 146.
59 Park, p. 215.
60 Carrere d'Encausse, p. 248.
more drastic measures would aggravate the Basmachi problem and provoke
intervention from Afghanistan.\textsuperscript{61} The Bukharan Communists soon began not only to
aid the Basmachis covertly, but began to defect and join their ranks.\textsuperscript{62}

The trend towards asserting a nationalistic independence on the basis of
participation in the Comintern continued into October. On the tenth of that month, the
First Congress of Soviets of the Kirgiz (Kazakh) ASSR declared:

\begin{quote}
We wish to point out the special task which results from the location
of the Kirgiz republic. Being situated in the Asian borderland, and
having close contact with the peoples of the East, we, the Kirgiz, will be
the instrument for spreading the revolutionary influence of Russia in
the East. We declare that the revolutionary East is passing from
unorganized actions to active struggle against the world vultures. In the
course of this struggle the ideas of Communism will penetrate into all
Eastern countries, and will arouse the people of these countries to
struggle for their own liberation.

The Working population of Soviet Kirgizia rallies closely around the
red banner of the revolution. In joining the ranks of the Russian Soviet
Federation, the Kirgiz SSR [sic] hopes to become the school of revolution
for the entire East. In this great hour we declare that we shall do
everything we can in order to spread the ideas of the Communist
revolution to the East, and in that way to hasten the approach of the last
hour of capitalism....\textsuperscript{63}

A Kazakh Congress in Orenburg at about the same time unilaterally proclaimed
an end to Russian colonization.\textsuperscript{64} Lenin's confusion on how to deal with these
nationalistic manifestations continued as well. In an October report Lenin wrote "In
Turkestan and the Caucasus the situation is more complicated..."\textsuperscript{65}

The Gilan Debacle.

\textsuperscript{61} In the spring of 1920 a series of Afghan border raids had occurred, partly in
consequence of Soviet policy toward Bukhara. These raids were answered in kind by
\textsuperscript{62} Carrere d'Encausse, p. 251.
\textsuperscript{63} Eudin, Zenia, Joukoff and Robert C. North, Soviet Russia and the East, 1920-1927: A
\textsuperscript{64} Carrere d'Encausse, p. 239.
\textsuperscript{65} Lenin, \textit{Works}, XXXVI, p. 216.
As if Moscow's concerns with domestic Muslims were not headache enough, the one success story in exporting revolution in Asia beyond Soviet border had also backfired by September. As with Turkey, the international politics that swirled around the Gilan episode were far too involved to bear treatment here. But the internal difficulties created by Moscow's attempts to actually implement the decisions reached at the Second Congress of the Comintern resulted in a situation similar to that of Ordzhonikidze in Azerbaijan. That is, whether or not Moscow had been willing to pursue military expansion, the attempt in Gilan to join social revolution with national liberation produced immediate conflict with the natives. Most interpretations of this conflict in Gilan (and there are not many, given the scarcity of documentation), depict the Iranian Communist Party under Sultanzade as the villain in the conflict, blaming it for premature radical measures such as outlawing petty trade, closing the bazaars, depleting women, and seizing the estates of the rich and the clergy.  

66 However, it is far more likely that the provocateurs in these measures were the European Narkomnats and Party administrators connected with Ordzhonikidze's Kavuro and the Russian military. The establishment of the Gilan Soviet Socialist Republic in June was welcomed in the Moscow newspapers with great fanfare and apparently a number of Left Bolsheviks and ex-Left SRs found their way to the province in the summer and fall.  

67 In August, Kuchuk Khan's advance on Teheran halted as the "class struggle" in Resht intensified. Factions began to coalesce, with Narkomnats personnel on one side, i.e. adherents of Stalin and Ordzhonikidze—including, for example Raskolnikov—and Kuchuk Khan's people on the other side. The Iranian Communist Party seems to have been caught somewhere in between, taking abuse from both sides, much as the Azrevkom and the Turksov narkom were doing in their territories. However, Kuchuk

67 For example, Jacob Blumkin, the Left SR assassin of Mirbach, was in Gilan at this time. See Alexander Barmin, One Who Survived (NY: 1945).
Khan was a radical pan-Muslim nationalist, and as such the Iranian Communists had more in common with him than with the Russians. Therefore, in late fall the Central Committee of the Iranian Communist Party purged itself of Leftists albeit without recovering the confidence of Kuchuk Khan.  

The Gilan affair probably had been initially undertaken on direct orders from the Politburo. Lenin certainly followed events in Gilan carefully. On August 5 Lenin even forced a protesting Chicherin, along with Karakhan and Central Committee member S. Eliava, to receive Kuchuk Khan’s ambassador in Moscow.  

It was Chicherin who kept Lenin closely informed on every negative aspect and failure of what he contemptuously called “Stalin’s Gilan Republic,” in an opinion that doubtless dated back to Stalin’s alliance with the Tatar Left. By the end of September 1920, at the very latest, Lenin had decided to abandon Gilan as part of his decision to terminate the entire revolutionary initiative in Islamic Asia. In the spring of 1921, as part of the reversal, the remaining Soviet troops departed, the Soviets suspended aid, and Kuchuk Khan murdered most of the leadership of the Iranian Communist Party out of revenge, only to die himself while fleeing Reza Khan’s troops. Significantly, it is said that he was trying to reach the Caucasus where bands of Dagestaniis still resisted Soviet control.

Conclusion.

After the Baku Congress, Lenin suspended indefinitely the revolution in the East. This decision had three factors. The first factor was the growing trend of armed revolt inside Soviet territory. By the fall of 1920, the entire southern periphery of the Soviet state was in revolt, and the question for the Party had become not whether

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68 Spector is the best secondary source for the class struggle in Gilan. See p. 90.
70 Technically, the Soviet troops departed in the summer of 1920, but they were replaced with troops from Azerbaijan SSR, at the ‘request’ of Gilan. Volodarsky, p. 82.
revolution could be exported, but whether the Soviet state could prevent further revolts at home and prevent their exploitation by foreign states. The second factor was the doubts that Lenin had entertained throughout 1920 concerning the theoretical relationship of Islam to nationalism. This confusion, ultimately rooted in the incapacity of Marxism to account for a religious-based nationalism, led to doubts as to the "correctness" of the Comintern line in the East. The third and decisive factor was the Baku Congress, which Lenin felt had enabled the Muslim Communists of Narkomnats not only to consolidate the new pan-Muslim nationalism that had become dominant in Soviet territory, but had given them a tool—the Council of Propaganda and Action—by which to export this nationalism under the cover of the Comintern and with the aid of the Red Army.
Chapter 3: Lenin's Campaign against the Muslim Communists.

Given the trend of domestic revolt, his dissatisfaction with his theoretical analysis, and the results of the Congress at Baku, which ensured that the Asian revolution in 1920 could benefit only the Muslim Communists, Lenin decided that before the revolution should be attempted it would be necessary to reestablish the unity of the Party and of the RSFSR. And, since the precautions taken at the Second Congress of the Comintern to guard the revolution from Muslim usurpation had proven insufficient, Lenin decided that the Comintern line had to change as well. Lenin's campaign, then, was waged on two levels that were in practice and in theory inseparable: First was the suspension of the Comintern initiative in the East. Second, the suppression of internal revolt and the elimination of what remained of Soviet Muslim autonomy. Although Lenin did not intend to wage a "war on Islam" and against Muslims, nor to abandon Asia permanently to capitalism, but rather intended to resume the socialist offensive once peace and unity had been reestablished, the former were in fact the actual results of his campaign.

The Revolution Interrupted.

The decision itself, we may be certain, was made in private sessions of the Politburo. No direct quote of Lenin is available to the effect that the campaign against the Muslim Communists was to be intensified while reversing the revolutionary policy in Asia. But the circumstantial evidence is clear. The Baku Congress had been originally organized by a secretary of the Kavburo, Elena Stasova, together with Muslim Communists from Narkomnats' Department of International Propaganda. Before the Baku Congress convened, the Muslims of this Department somewhat hopefully announced the arrival of the "preparatory stage toward the organization of the Third International's Eastern Division." IKKI did indeed transfer its Asian apparatus from
Tashkent to Baku sometime in August of 1920. But during the proceedings authority over the Congress remained in the hands of Stasova and the Kavburo. The Council of Propaganda and Action included the Comintern members Pavlovich, Kirov, and Skachko plus Central Committee member S. Eliava, and Kavburo representatives Ordzhonikidze and Stasova who were granted Comintern status to cover actual control by the Kavburo. Plenary meetings of the Council were scheduled for every three months, between which a reduced presidium of seven would have executive power.

Five of these presidium members were to be elected by the 48-member Council, and two, with power of veto, appointed by IKKI. On September 8, the day after the close of the Congress, the plenary Council met and elected a Presidium of nine (sic) members, with Stasova and Pavlovich representing the Comintern. Sources are scarce at this point—it is not clear in the months ahead whether Pavlovich exercised the Comintern veto on instructions from Zinoviev, or whether Stasova withheld logistical aid on orders from Ordzhonikidze. But, although "some people" on the presidium wanted the Council to become a "super-government" of all Eastern Soviet states, either Pavlovich or Stasova, or both, used their authority to block all such moves. On September 20 IKKI approved Zinoviev's actions at Baku even though Zinoviev himself had been discouraged, relating that the delegates were only non-Party bourgeoisie who wanted free arms.

After Baku 40 members of the Council visited Moscow and met with the Politburo on October 13. That same month they petitioned IKKI to set up a special Comintern bureau that would assume direct authority for three proposed major centers of Council activity in Baku, Tashkent and Irkutsk. This amounted to an attempt to transfer the Muslim Buro itself from Narkomnats to the Comintern.

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1 Lazitch and Drachkovitch, p. 398.
2 Pearce, p. 146.
4 Lenin, Works, XXXVI, p. 218.
At first the Council was allowed to proceed with the more formal task of organizing and training revolutionaries in the new centers. In October the Council opened a branch in Tashkent which set up a Military School for M.N. Roy and his Indian revolutionaries. That same month the journal People's of the East appeared in several languages. But the signs of retreat were already unmistakable. Moscow instituted a news blackout on the Baku Congress almost immediately after its conclusion, allowing only one short article to appear in Izvestia. On October 10 Stalin warned in an article in Pravda that regional Communists should refrain from "cavalry raids" with the object of "immediately communizing" the backward masses of Asia.

Lenin's references to Baku were something short of enthusiastic:

I shall not dwell on the significance of the Second Congress of the Comintern, which took place in Moscow in July, a congress of the Communists of the whole world, and also of the Congress of the Peoples of the East, which took place afterwards in Baku. These were international congresses which united the Communists and showed in all civilized countries and in all the backward countries of the East, the banner of Bolshevism... That which was achieved by the congress of Communists in Moscow and by the Baku congress of Communist representatives of the peoples of the East cannot be immediately assessed or directly calculated...

By November, I.K.K.I. had reversed the tone of its propaganda on Kemal and begun to praise his qualities as a national-revolutionary. The center in Tashkent was followed by the opening of a center in Irkutsk, but the request to "transfer" the Muslim Buro to Comintern supervision was turned down. In December Stasova was removed from her duties in Baku and instructed to return to Moscow without explanation, apparently due

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6 Lazitch and Drachkovitch, p. 608.
7 Park, p. 53.
to her inclination to consider requests of the Baku Council seriously.\textsuperscript{10} On December 15 the Muslim Communists of Zhizn Natsional'nosti openly criticized the Council for its impotence.\textsuperscript{11} In January 1921, Narkomnats again renamed the Muslim Buro, this time titling it the "Central Buro of Agitation and Propaganda," and thereafter the Buro drifted into obscurity.\textsuperscript{12} The suppression of the revolutionary initiative in the East was so successful that the British MI6 intelligence organization concluded that Baku had been a failure,\textsuperscript{13} and the British Foreign Office left no memoranda concerning either the Second Congress or the Baku Congress.\textsuperscript{14}

Nevertheless, the Muslim Communists continued their attempts to promote revolution in Asia. On November 2, 1920, "shock courses" were begun in Baku and in January the first graduates were sent into Turkey and Iran (presumably Gilan) by the Council. Mustafa Subhi, head of the Turkish Communists since mid-1918, and previously deported from Turkey for his activities, entered Trebizond illegally on January 16, 1921, with 17 companions, whereupon all were arrested and murdered while in the custody of the Turkish police.\textsuperscript{15} Only two months later, on March 16, climaxing a year of intermittent negotiations, a Soviet-Turkish Friendship Treaty was signed by Narkomindel which settled all outstanding issues and provided massive military aid with Red Army advisors to Kemal through Armenia (partitioned by Turkey and the RSFSR in late autumn of 1920). The treaty included a mutual pledge not to interfere in internal affairs.\textsuperscript{16} Complaints from Muslim Communists and the Baku Council about the lack of support from Moscow and IKKI continued until the Third

\textsuperscript{10} Lazitch and Drachkovitch, p. 409.
\textsuperscript{11} Lazitch and Drachkovitch, p. 409.
\textsuperscript{12} Park, p. 128.
\textsuperscript{13} Spector, p. 59.
\textsuperscript{14} Ullman, III, p. 320.
\textsuperscript{15} Lazitch and Drachkovitch, p. 412; Pipes, p. 236.
\textsuperscript{16} Spector, p. 76.
Congress of the Comintern in late June 1921. At this congress Comintern relations with the Islamic world were virtually ignored, and over Roy’s protests the Tashkent branch of the Council was formally closed, having accomplished almost nothing. A Congress of the Toilers of the Far East was planned, but significantly, the Comintern was not given the responsibility of sponsoring it.

Lenin’s campaign against the Muslim Communists' foreign initiative was ultimately decided by the fact that the Muslims' revolution in Asia was entirely dependent on the logistical and military assistance of the Soviet government. The retraction of this assistance, most obvious in the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Gilan in the spring of 1921, but apparent also in the lack of positive action on the Iranian or Afghan borders in the fall of 1920, demonstrated the powerlessness of the Muslim Communists. Given that the main purpose of Lenin’s new initiative was to achieve stability along the southern border and to subordinate foreign policy to domestic requirements, an instrument was needed that could treat directly with foreign governments to secure their cooperation in achieving this stability. Lenin found that instrument in Narkomindel. Under Georgii Chicherin, Narkomindel emerged in the autumn of 1920 and the spring of 1921 as the predominant institutional means of Soviet interaction with foreign states, eclipsing the Comintern and Narkomnats, formerly the chief instruments of Soviet "foreign policy" in Europe and Asia, respectively. The details of this emergence are far too voluminous and complex to discuss here. However, it should be noted that Narkomindel achieved this distinction primarily as a result of its negotiations with the southern border states in connection with Lenin’s campaign against the Muslim Communists.

17 Lazitch and Drachkovitch, p. 415.
18 Spector, p. 60.
The rise of Narkomindel with its formal recognition of Turkey, despite Kemal's continued advocacy of "Turkish imperialism" (Lenin's phrase at the Second Congress of the Comintern) and the Caliphate, and of Iran, despite Colonel Reza Khan's clear autocratic tendencies, required a new interpretation of the revolutionary "line" agreed upon at the Second Congress of the Comintern. This was accomplished by yet another re-interpretation of the revolutionary theory set down in Imperialism. The original notion behind Imperialism had been that in the final stage of capitalism "bourgeois-democratic" movements were emerging in Asia and Africa, which by definition were directed against European imperialism in an alliance with the European proletariat. In Imperialism these bourgeois movements were perceived as the most Europeanized sector of society, i.e. the urban middle-class. When, in the summer of 1920, it became clear that the European proletariat would not revolt and the Bolsheviks looked to Asia for the socialist revolution, "bourgeois-democratic" was stretched so as to accommodate recognition of the peasantry of Asia as a substitute proletariat, which was then re-christened "national-revolutionary." This was done precisely in order to exclude those nationalistic elements which refused to subordinate themselves to Party and Soviet control. In the Comintern scenario it was assumed that the peasantry were the natural and enthusiastic allies of the Soviet state. Lenin's sudden reversal of the Asian initiative required an interpretation that would extend legitimacy instead to the new partners of Narkomindel while withholding legitimacy from the Muslim Communists. Therefore, "national-revolutionary" was reinterpreted to mean sovereign, independent, secular if possible, but above all--non-Muslim Communist. Peasants' soviets were quietly forgotten and military expansion cancelled. Lenin returned again to his views in Imperialism--views which he had never abandoned privately--and re-emphasized the Europeanized middle-class, but dropped the requirement of
subordination to the Soviets or the RKP. By stressing internal unity, Lenin, for the first time in the history of socialism, had made neutrality respectable.

The change implied by the recognition of neutrality cannot be overestimated: the difference represents no less than that between world revolution and international detente. At Baku, as in Moscow, the prevailing view in 1920 had still rejected neutrality as a sham:

If the government of Mustafa Kemal in Turkey, or liberal-national governments in Persia and India, were to expel the British and then make peace with Britain on the basis of political independence of the Eastern countries, but with retention of the capitalist system in these countries, all the politically-independent Eastern countries would remain dependent economically. Political independence would not save them from penetration by industrial capital... 19

But on March 16, Chicherin signed the Anglo-Soviet Trade Agreement of 1921. The doctrine of a world divided into two armed camps had been discarded for one of detente, a relationship which was compatible with stable borders--treaties with Iran, Afghanistan and Turkey had been signed only days before. The extent to which a collapsing economy and rail net, and increasing factionalism and resistance to prodrazvorskia (forced requisitions) also made detente essential cannot be discussed here either. Suffice it to be said that once the impetus of revolution had been interrupted on Russia's obscure southern front, the trend toward stabilization throughout Russia proved irresistible.

Stabilization of the crisis in Soviet-Muslim relations required above all the elimination of those Muslim Communists whose main base of support existed outside Soviet territory. The Turkish and Iranian Communist Parties, had they succeeded in establishing themselves in power, would by virtue of their example not only have inspired continued attempts at autonomy within the Party, but might have become direct sources of support for Soviet Muslim rebels, logistically and militarily, perhaps

19 Skachko at the Baku Congress. Pearce, p. 138.
eventually even inviting foreign assistance. This was why, when Mustafa Subhi was killed, Narkomindel did not so much as file a protest. In Iran, after Soviet troops had been evacuated, Soviet ambassador Theodore Rothstein practically requested Reza Shah to eliminate Gilan—which was done with alacrity.20

The Second Social Revolution in Turkestan.

The second aspect of Lenin's campaign was as complex an affair as the first. Just as the Comintern initiative in Asia had not been cancelled, but only suspended until a new strategy could be worked out, Lenin wished not merely to suppress the domestic rebels, but to change social conditions so that the Muslims would not feel compelled to rebel again. Once the "laboratory" of Turkestan should reveal the "correct" Marxist strategy for building socialism in a backward society, Lenin expected to renew the Comintern effort in Asia. True to Marx, Lenin felt that this "correct" solution lay in class war and secularism. Accordingly, in October 1920, the Turkestan Commission began to organize the poorest village peasants of Turkestan, Azerbaijan21 and Dagestan into "Qoschi Ittifak," or Committees of the Poor, around whom a comprehensive land reform program was planned with land seized from Russian colonists and "kulaks."22 At the same time, in Turkestan, the Commission again closed the bazaars, circumscribed Shariah courts, renewed grain requisitions, began a program of education and emancipation for Muslim women, and for the first time limited Party recruitment to lower-class Muslims. These policies amounted to an assault on Islam, and was perceived as such by both Russians and Muslims. For example, in

21 The "Committees of the Poor," in Azerbaijan at least, apparently used Muslim Communists as the cadre. Presumably they were well-supervised in this activity, which must have amounted to a sort of rural "re-education" program for deviating Muslim intellectuals. See Shukman, p. 13.
22 Lenin, Werke, XXXII, p. 228.
1921, some time after the Khivan Communists pledged not to interfere in the Sharia or waqf as part of an attempt to pacify the region, Narkomindel representative²³ Byk surrounded a Khivan congress with troops and had several officials summarily shot.²⁴ By 1921, then, the wheel had turned full circle, and the Soviets in Turkestan had returned almost completely to the policies of the Tashkent Soviet.

The effects of this second social revolution in Turkestan were no different from those of the first. Within weeks the Basmachi movement had sprung back to life. In the spring of 1920 the Turkestan Commission had begun to conscript Muslims into national units for garrison and labor duty, forming a number of national Muslim units such as the 1st Uzbek Cavalry Brigade and the 1st Kirgiz Territorial Regiment.²⁵ Frunze also experimented with “Soviet Basmachis,” i.e. units of Basmachis who had defected. This policy proved so effective that the Basmachi leader Madamin Bek defected to Tashkent.²⁶ But, with the onset of the new class war, the Muslim units, along with their new Soviet weapons, defected en masse to the Basmachis.²⁷ In August 1920 a new Turkestan Commission member, the Chekist Y. Peters, accused Turkestani Communists of secretly aiding the Basmachis.²⁸ By the end of 1920 Communists were not only aiding them but joining their ranks. Unlike the first Basmachi phase, which was led by Jadid nationalists from Kokand, the second phase was dominated by conservative Muslims. In a development which suggested that by 1921 Muslim national-communism had lost the confidence of Muslims everywhere, the previous cooperation between Jadids and

²³ The People’s Soviet Republics of Khiva and Bukhara in 1921 were technically independent of the RSFSR, much as the khanates had been independent of the Tsar’s Russia before the Revolution.
²⁴ Carrere d’Encausse, p. 244.
²⁶ In retaliation, Madamin Bek was soon assassinated by one of Irgash’s Basmachi followers.
²⁷ Carrere d’Encausse, p. 251.
²⁸ Carrere d’Encausse, p. 235.
conservatives vanished. The Basmachis searched out Jadids and Muslim Communists for special punishment and new slogans surfaced, for example, "Struggle against the Unbelieving Jadids" and "Defend the Sharia." No longer was it possible for Muslim Communists to take a middle position between Bolsheviks and conservatives—the Muslim Left, now seen as collaborators with the colonial enemy, was forced to surrender its last pretensions to social reform in order to avert Basmachi attacks.

In response to the new crisis in Turkestan, Lenin’s policies came under growing criticism from Bolsheviks. After March 1921, the new Politburo member M.P. Tomsky sought to extend NEP to Turkestan. But Turkestan Commission member G.I. Safarov, backed by Lenin, fought to continue the class war. Lenin followed their arguments closely:

What is the attitude of the natives to Safarov? Facts, facts and more facts...

"The Union of the Poor" (set up be Safarov?)—its composition? importance? strength? role? Is it true that the natives were "forcibly" stratified?... [as Tomsky claimed]

Cotton? Its future? Is it true that Safarov is ruining the cotton? [as Tomsky also claimed] Facts, facts

The fronts in Ferghana? The Basmachi? Their attitude to the Tomsky and the Safarov "line"?...

It is terribly important for all our Weltpolitik to win the confidence of the natives; to win it over again and again; to prove that we are not imperialists, that we shall not tolerate any deviation in that direction [i.e. Russian chauvinism].

This is a world-wide question, and that is no exaggeration.... It will have an effect on India and the East; it is no joke, it calls for caution.

Elsewhere Lenin insisted that, although NEP was necessary to keep Moscow fed, the "Muslim poor" must be kept mobilized in the "interests of our 'world policy' throughout the East." Lenin’s interruption of the Comintern initiative in Asia was therefore intended to be only temporary, explaining Lenin’s (and later Stalin’s),

29 Park, p. 50.
31 Lenin, Works, XXXV, p. 246.
reluctance to abandon social revolution in Turkestan. For to give up the social revolution in Turkestan was to admit defeat throughout Asia—and to recognize at last the passing of the revolutionary era and the isolation of the Russian Communist Party.

By August 1921, NEP had been given formal precedence, but most of the injunctions against Islamic institutions continued. To Lenin's perplexity, this continuation of class war did nothing to stop Basmachi growth in 1921. In the autumn, hoping that his support for Moscow would appease the movement, Enver Pasha was brought to Turkestan by the authorities as a show-piece. A series of high-level defections to the Basmachis had already occurred, and, in November, Enver also defected, accompanied by the Ministers of War and Interior of the Bukharan Soviet Republic. The president of Bukhara soon joined them. In the following weeks Moscow's other "Turkish card," Jamal Pasha, was sent with the Soviet ambassador to Afghanistan to calm Muslim feelings there which were still indignant over the Soviet invasion of Bukhara in 1920. Soon after his arrival Jamal Pasha as well defected. In the spring of 1922, under slogans such as "Unification of All Muslims," and "Creation of a Great Central Asiatic Muslim State," Enver succeeded in uniting the Basmachi movement into a force of some 20,000 men, holding a congress in Samarkand which declared an independent Greater Turkic Republic under Shariah law and delivered an ultimatum to the Bolsheviks to evacuate Turkestan. Under Enver, but thanks mostly to Lenin, what Moscow most feared in Turkestan had finally occurred by mid-1922—its unification into a single national movement directed against Moscow.

Moscow responded by dispatching several divisions of its best troops, where, with concentrated firepower and aircraft, they managed in about six months to

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32 Park, p. 51.
disperse the rebels and to kill Enver. To reduce Basmachi recruitment, those peasants who were not put into the Qoschi "strategic hamlets" where they could be guarded from Basmachi contact, were conscripted into a new "Muslim Red Militia" and assigned to guard the Qoschi. The conscripted Muslims deserted in droves, but Moscow found new ways to avoid turning the conflict into a purely colonial war by bringing in Tatar units and exploiting traditional ethnic rivalries in the stationing of Muslim troops. Draft evasion was made a capital offense. However, the most important factor in finally ending the revolt was Lenin's decision to rescind his policies of social revolution. In order to avert the complete secession of Turkestan the government was forced, beginning slowly in late 1921, then, more rapidly after April 1922, to rescind most of the class war policies that had been instituted in October of 1920. The bazaars were reopened, waqf again legalized and returned to its former owners, Sharia courts and traditional schools allowed to operate again, seized mosques returned, and official propaganda against mullahs restrained. In the spring of 1922 several important mullahs gratefully called for an end to resistance and endorsed the Bolshevik regime.

From Lenin's point of view, the pacification of Turkestan was bought at a high price, for the failure of class war in Turkestan was an admission that the revolution in Asia was dead. The suspension of class war in Turkestan may in fact have only become possible due to Lenin's ill health—his first stroke occurred in May of 1922, and his second stroke, which resulted in paralysis, in December of that year. Moscow began to rescind its extremist policies in 1921, however, before Lenin's illness. After the death of Lenin, Stalin did not relinquish the field entirely to the Muslims, but initiated a

34 Soviet troops in the Ferghana valley were decimated by malaria and had to be rotated out every two months.
36 Park, p. 51.
37 Park, p. 214; Olcott, p. 360.
"third social revolution," no longer with the unreliable peasantry serving as the missing proletariat, but rather, according to Gregory Massell, Muslim women. These efforts evoked yet another round of Basmachi activity which lasted into the 1930s.

The Campaign Against the Tatars.

Although by 1920 the influence of the Tatar Left within the Russian Communist Party had declined, the Tatar leadership continued to struggle for autonomy within the structures of the Soviet government, concentrating their efforts within the new Tatar ASSR after its establishment on May 27. This legal "dissent" was pursued through the remainder of 1920, but with little success. On July 26, 1920, at the First Regional Conference of Tatar Communists in Kazan, the Kazan Guberniia Committee (Gubkom) of the RKP, a committee which Muslim Communists had organized in October 1919, was upgraded to the Tatar Regional Buro of Communist Organizations. This amounted to an effort to turn back the clock to 1918 when Regional Buros, originally instituted to foment proletarian revolution among the national minorities, had been assigned national titles as a concession. The Tatars were encouraged in this act by the belief that the establishment of the Tatar ASSR allowed them control of Tatar affairs within the new region. However, on August 6, 1920, a resolution of the RKP cancelled this hope by declaring that the Regional Committees (Obkoms) of the RKP were to be the highest Party organs in the various republics, and were to supersede all national-communist regional buros. The same resolution informed Sultan-Galiev that his duties required his presence in Moscow. In the same month CMMC Headquarters, the command center for Muslim military units, was also transferred from Kazan to Moscow.

Finally, in October 1920, the CMMC was abolished and its Tatar vice-president charged

39 Rorlich, p. 146.
40 Rorlich, p. 146.
with disseminating nationalism among Muslim troops and reassigned to Central Asia ("administrative exile" to Central Asia was commonly employed in the revolutionary period as a form of Party discipline). 41

In July 1921, an exchange remarkable for its candor took place between Lenin and the current chairman of the Central Executive Committee of Tatar ASSR. S.G. Said-Galiev had sent Lenin a list of four questions concerning Tatar autonomy:

(1) Is there need for the existence of small autonomous republics within the Russian Soviet Federation in general, and of the Tatar Republic in particular?
(2) If the answer is 'yes', then for how long, or, in other words, until the fulfilment of what tasks or the attainment of what goals?
(3) Is it right to say that the Communists of the formerly dominant nation, as having a higher level in every respect, should play the part of pedagogues and nurses to the Communists and all other working people of the formerly oppressed nationalities, whose name has been given to the said autonomous republic (region, commune), and that the former should give up their places to the latter as they grow?
(4) In all autonomous republics, the Tatar Republic in this case, there are two clearly distinct trends (groupings) among the native Communists (Tatars): one of them takes the standpoint of class struggle and works for further class differentiation of the sections of the native population, and the other has a shade of petty-bourgeois nationalism.... Is it right...that the former should enjoy the full and all-round support of the whole of the RKP and its supreme organs, whereas the latter...should merely be made use of and simultaneously educated in a spirit of pure internationalism, without, however, being given preference over the former, as has been recently the case not only in the Tatar Republic? 42

On July 20 Lenin answered him:

To the first question—yes.
To the second—for a long time yet.
To the third—not "pedagogues and nurse-maids," but helpers.
To the fourth—please let me have exact, brief, clear information on the "two tendencies." 43

The only point that should be added to this open declaration that a new era of political dictatorship by Russians had begun, is that the Tatar "grouping" that allegedly

41 Rorlich, p. 146–7.
42 Lenin, Works, XXXVI, p. 703–4, note 604.
43 Lenin, Works, XXXVI, p. 541.
promoted class differentiation in fact hardly existed, being rather a device to justify keeping at least a few Tatars in positions of authority, and hence that the "full and all-round support" applied rather more to the Russian administrators of Narkomnats.

Beginning in 1920 attempts to build autonomous Komsomol organizations among Tatar youth were successful for a time in preserving a measure of Tatar control over political and cultural affairs in Tatarstan, but by 1923 the growing centralization of the Soviet Union had brought these into line as well.\textsuperscript{44} In 1928 the struggle flared again, but soon ended with the wholesale annihilation of the national-communist leadership of all Soviet Muslims, including the Tatars. M. Sultan-Galiev was arrested again in 1928 and was last seen in 1938 in the Solovki labor camps.\textsuperscript{45}

Colonial Communism—Bolshevism, Stalin and Narkomnats.

As much as the evolving national conceptions of Russia's Muslims found expression as Muslim national-communism, the evolving national conceptions of Great Russians achieved expression as Bolshevism, or Russian national-communism. Bolshevism was a profoundly Russian phenomenon. The use of national minorities, such as Letts and Armenians, as "praetorian guards" should not obscure this fact. The craving for political centralization, the emphasis on internal solidarity, the messianic international stance, the elitist nature of its leadership, the preference for "administrative terror" over reward and compensation—these traits communicated to those Russians living among ethnic minorities the message that Bolshevism reflected Russian traditions and defended Russian interests. In fact, the first soviet to renounce Kerensky and endorse the Bolsheviks was the Tashkent Soviet during the abortive putsch of September 1917. As the Bolsheviks would have said, this was no accident. The formula "dictatorship of the proletariat" in regions where most proletarians were

\textsuperscript{44} Rortlich, p. 149.
\textsuperscript{45} Bennigsen and Wimbush, p. 90.
ethnically Russian, could hardly fail to attract Russians and alienate Muslims.46

Despite Lenin's anti-colonial posture, Russian colonists were among the strongest
Bolshevik supporters. In the Caucasus one of the first acts of Shaumian's Baku Soviet
was to defend Russian colonists in the Mungan Steppe from attacks by the Musavat; the
influence of Russian colonists in the struggle over Bashkiriya has been described. The
influence of colonists perhaps contributed also to Lenin's decision to use Turkestan as
his "laboratory," rather than, for instance, the Ukraine. These pressures from Russian
colonists, who routinely labeled minorities as bourgeois to justify requisitions and
seizures of land, inevitably found expression in the policies of Narkomnats.

Stalin himself was the foremost example of this "colonizing" school in the Party,
not only stamping his sublimated nationalism on Narkomnats, but rising to power in
part because his status as a minority enabled him to champion Great Russian
chauvinism without seeming to violate the official prohibition on bourgeois
nationalism. Thus, although in 1918 Narkomnats was ambiguous, standing somewhere
between an Asian Comintern and a "nationalists' anonymous" club where minorities
could air their grievances, by 1919 Stalin's persistent tendency to view the least sign of
national autonomy as a threat to the revolution had led to a deadlock with the Muslim
Communists of the Commissariat. Lenin felt he could control Stalin, so, when the
retreat from revolution in late 1920 led to a search for increased internal unity, Lenin
selected Stalin's Narkomnats as the agency for enforcing this unity, i.e. for "solving"
the nationality problem once and for all, before the Party resumed the revolution in
Asia. It was in his capacity as chief of Narkomnats that Stalin was granted full power to

46 It is interesting that, of those areas in Turkestan densely settled by Europeans, only
Semirechie was chronically disloyal to the Tashkent Soviet, giving birth to numerous
revolts. Most settlers in Semirechie were Ukrainians, not Russians. See Martin Gilbert,
Atlas of Russian History (Dorset Press, 1972), p. 98. Thus, the colonists which so
incurred Lenin's ire and who suffered arrest and expulsion from the Party in 1920 may
well have been for the most part Ukrainians.
implement this unity. Stalin had been present at all of the meetings concerning the appeals of the Turkestanis for autonomy in 1920. In fact it had not only been his team that had recommended permanent status for the Turkestan Commission in February 1920; it had been Stalin's Narkomnats that had originated the policy of replacing the pan-Muslim political conception with various "Peoples of the East" as a counter to the Tatars in late 1918. All ASSRs had been decreed by Stalin's Narkomnats.

Stalin's new enhanced role was formalized on October 14, 1920, with the Politburo's Decision on Tasks of the RKP in Localities inhabited by Eastern Peoples. This was the chief legal instrument for the strategy of countering revolution at home, directing Narkomnats, on the one hand, to grant ASSR status to all minority peoples which did not yet have it; and on the other hand, to undertake a social revolution among these peoples by organizing the poor into peasants' soviets.47 This was supplemented by a decree on November 11, specifying that all decrees affecting the nationalities must have Narkomnats approval to become law. The nationalities themselves were forbidden to address the government except through Narkomnats channels.48 By the end of 1920, then, Lenin's reversal at the hands of the Muslim Communists had led him to grant Stalin unprecedented powers in a direct attack upon them. Stalin's well-known views on centralization were given full play—in his trip through Dagestan in November, Stalin announced in true dialectical fashion: "Autonomy means not separation but a union of the self-ruling mountain peoples with the peoples of Russia."49

Stalin's awareness of his indispensability to Lenin's plans for Asia, together with his innate aggressiveness and his virtually unlimited powers within the ASSRs, led him to defy Lenin and the Central Committee during the invasion of Georgia in

47 Lenin, Works, XXXVI, p. 218.
48 Pipes, p. 248.
49 Pipes, p. 247.
February 1921. Once Lenin discovered the deception, he demanded that Stalin and Ordzhonikidze be tried by the Party, but significantly reversed himself once the invasion proved successful.\textsuperscript{50} What, after all, could Lenin say? He himself had provided the example by seizing Azerbaijan, and, having charged Stalin to deal with the recalcitrant Muslims of Dagestan precisely because of Stalin’s "steel-like" reliability, he could hardly blame Stalin for dealing with the defiant Georgians in his own way. Stalin’s expanded responsibilities led to Lenin’s reliance on him yet again at the 11th Party Congress in March 1922. At this congress when Lenin ousted Trotsky’s supporters from the top echelons of the Party, he replaced them with Stalin’s supporters, and secured Stalin himself the post of General Secretary.\textsuperscript{51}

Yet Stalin’s importance to Lenin was chiefly due to his role in "curing the backwardness" of the peoples of Asia so that—someday—the Asian revolution could be resumed. For this, Narkomnats continued its twin role of incorporating the Eastern Peoples into the RSFSR in narrowly conceived ethnic units, and transforming them into model secularized socialist republics. In April 1921, Narkomnats founded the University of the Toilers of the East in Moscow to train Soviet Muslims, who were subjected to "compulsory recruitment" for socialist work in their own regions.\textsuperscript{52} In May Stalin wrote \textit{New Features of the National Question}, in which he emphasized the importance of class-biased policies in the struggle to socialize Asia.\textsuperscript{53} On May 26, a Narkomnats decree announced that henceforth all activities of the other commissariats would be supervised by Narkomnats insofar as they affected the nationalities.\textsuperscript{54}

\textsuperscript{50} Pipes, p. 237.
\textsuperscript{52} Park, p. 134-5.
\textsuperscript{53} Stalin, \textit{Marxism}, p. 111.
\textsuperscript{54} Pipes, p. 248.
In the summer of 1921, Turkmenistan was separated from Turkestan ASSR and set up as a separate ASSR.55 In April of 1922, Kirgiz ASSR was separated as well.56 By 1923 social revolution in Turkestan had been largely abandoned, but the campaign to fragment the region as part of the drive for internal unity accelerated, climaxing with what is termed the "National Delimitation" of 1924. At the 13th Congress of Soviets of Central Asia, in April 1924, Ferghana "demanded" separation from Turkestan.57 Then, in October, what remained of Turkestan ASSR was broken up, being divided into Tadzhikistan ASSR, Karakalpak ASSR, and Uzbekistan ASSR.58 The least justifiable "nationality" was the Karakalpaks, who had no literature, indeed no separate language, and no distinct history. In the years ahead, in a policy known as "Korenizatsia," or "rooting," Narkomnats went to strenuous efforts to supply each of these ASSRs, along with the other Autonomous Regions and Oblasts being set up throughout the Soviet Union, with its own written language, culture and history, not shrinking on occasion from outright fabrication. With minor territorial adjustments the National Delimitation remains intact today.

Conclusion.

Lenin's interruption of the revolution in the East due to "contamination" by the Muslim Communists had two principal effects. First, it led to the rise of Narkomindel and established stable, firm southern borders, thus contributing to the transformation of the Russian revolutionary movement into a stable Soviet state. Second, it led directly to the implementation of the world's first socialist colonial policy under Stalin's Narkomnats, which took another step away from its former role of "Asian Comintern."

The purpose of this policy, which had been first discussed--and rejected--at the

55 Park, p. 91.
56 Park, p. 91.
57 Park, p. 91.
58 Carrere, d'Encausse, p. 257.
Stuttgart Congress of the Second International in 1907 for being inherently repressive and unworthy of socialists, was to "civilize" backward Asia and undermine nationalism in order eventually to resume the course of socialist revolution in Asia. The increased importance of Narkomnats in this global strategy enhanced the power of Stalin, just as the termination of the Comintern in Asia harmed Zinoviev.
Conclusion.

This study has dealt with the emergence and evolution of Soviet policy towards Muslims and Islam. We have traced two themes important to this policy: a dominant theme of political conflict, and a subordinate theme of social and cultural conflict. In Soviet policy the political conflict led to the formulation of a policy of "compartamentalization" the purpose of which was to divide Soviet Muslims into small, even minute, ethnic components. This began in late 1918 in Narkomnats' Department of International Propaganda and then, in early 1919, was extended to all Muslim Communist organizations, resulting in their expulsion from the Party and reinstatement under the jurisdiction of Narkomnats. Later this compartamentalization was extended to Soviet federal institutions as well, first in Tatarstan in early 1920, then in the Caucasus in late 1920, and finally in Turkestan by 1924. This policy was conceived as a counter to the tendency of Russia's Muslims, especially the Tatars, to unite in broadly conceived political movements. The most popular and, from the Soviet point of view, most dangerous of these movements was the new pan-Islam, which followed in the tradition of the pre-war Itifak. As the Soviets came to realize that the pan-Islam of the Muslim Communists was even more inclusivist, organized, united and anti-Russian than had been the Itifak pan-Muslims, Moscow extended compartamentalization to the foreign sphere as well, reconstituting the southern border, canceling the export of revolution to Asia, and separating Soviet Muslims from any potential foreign base of support. Since the Party won the struggle and succeeded in imposing its political vision on Soviet Muslims, one may conclude that this facet of its policy was successful.

In addition to a political policy, a social policy grew out of the Party's struggle with the "new pan-Islam," due to the role that the religion of Islam had played in uniting the Tatars. Beginning with the removal of Islam from Party organizational
titles, the Party then sought to eradicate the traditional institutions which were based on Islamic principles. This policy, already begun by the colonists of Tashkent in an attempt to execute a genuine social revolution in a colonial area, stemmed principally from Lenin’s exceedingly political habits of thought, and from his Marxist orientation. However, far from ameliorating the political conflict, as Lenin had expected, the social policy instead aggravated it. After several years of social conflict with Muslims over Islamic institutions, this socialist offensive was cancelled (only to be renewed by Stalin in the late 1920s). Since Islam and its social institutions survived the period 1917-1921, one may conclude that this aspect of Soviet policy failed. The fact that Soviet Muslims lost their political struggle to achieve national independence, but won the social struggle to keep Islam and its associated traditions is an interesting development in that it parallels later events in the Middle East—the failure of nationalism to achieve its stated goals, but the survival and even growth of more traditional elements despite predictions of their demise.

This study has treated at length the details of the organizational and military conflict between Soviets and Muslims in the perception that it was these details and not Marxist ideology that primarily set Soviet Muslim policy. More evidence for this lies in the repeated changes which Lenin was forced to make in his nationality policy during the revolutionary period. But one of the most important sources of Soviet Muslim policy was organizational pressures exerted by Russian colonists from the periphery of Russia. Despite Lenin’s superficial hostility to their influence and activities, these colonists, especially ethnic Great Russians (as opposed to Ukrainians and other non-Russians), intuitively understood that the October Revolution had been executed in their interests, and that the nationality policy of the Party promoted their interests as well. Lenin’s acquiescence to the demands of the colonists in Bashkiriya indicates this, as does Lenin’s grooming of Stalin, the most eminent “colonist” in the Party, as head of
Narkomnats. Stalin's lack of sympathy for the problems of the Muslims, and the increased importance of Narkomnats in the wake of the cancellation of the Asian revolution, doomed their aspirations for political independence. Under Stalin Narkomnats emerged as a Soviet Colonial Office, in as real a sense as the colonial offices of Britain or France in their more scattered territories. The fact that Lenin was never able to return to the cause of revolution in Asia left Stalin in an impregnable position in the succession struggle.

Finally, in the title to this study, I deliberately omitted the qualifier "domestic." The evolution of Soviet Muslim relations intimately involved both "domestic" and "foreign" aspects which were not merely inseparable, but indistinguishable. That in fact is the mark of a revolution—a revolution is for the most part an expression of domestic factors, and by definition is unresponsive to foreign pressures. One of the most important consequences of the Soviet-Muslim conflict was its contribution to the transformation of a revolutionary movement without borders, a movement reflecting internal pressures and relatively oblivious of foreign factors, into a stable, conventional European nation-state, the USSR. The evolution of Soviet Muslim policy is not comprehensible without considering the role it played in the revolution as a whole. The Baku Congress was the climax of this evolution, as was clearly recognized by both Russians and Muslims. And by 1922 Soviet Muslim policy had attained the form it was to keep in all essential aspects up to the present day.
Appendix One.
Islam under the Tsars.

During the millennium in which Russians and Muslims maintained contact in the Eurasian plain, Russian-Muslim relations evolved through several stages. These can be summarized briefly as a period of forced conversion, followed by limited toleration in the 18th century, official encouragement of Islam under Catherine II, limited toleration again under Nicholas I, and finally, after the Turkish War of 1877, growing apprehension and preventive political measures as the growth of nationalism threatened to disrupt the domestic peace. The salient feature of this long relationship is the remarkable tolerance of the imperial period in view of the long record of Muslim predation on Russians before the 18th century, and the peacefulness of domestic relations despite the almost incessant conflicts with one Muslim people or another on the periphery of Russia in the course of the country's long era of expansion.

Islam and Medieval Russia.

In the early medieval period, there were no sizable Muslim populations among the Slavs, who had only recently spread from their home in the Pripyat marshes. Relations between Slavs and Muslims, the latter being represented only by Bulgars in the early medieval period, consisted almost exclusively of trade. A sort of ruling merchant class called Varangians, the descendants of Swedish Norsemen, ran this trade, exporting furs, timber and slaves down the great rivers of the Eurasian plain to the Black and Caspian Seas in exchange for manufactured articles from Byzantium, Iran and Central Asia. Such large numbers of slaves were sent down the Volga and across the Caspian Sea to Iran and Central Asia that in the 10th century the Volga became known to the Islamic world as the "highway of the slaves." By the 12th century the Varangians had been absorbed by the Slavs. But the Mongols, who arrived in the 13th century, imposed a new system of tribute upon the Slavs, and again exported furs, timber and slaves to the south. The independence of Russia from Mongol domination, led by Muscovy, gradually reduced the traffic in slaves, but never eliminated the practice entirely. Until the 17th century one of the chief economic resources of the Tatars (as the Mongols became known after their conversion to Islam circa 1400 AD) remained the traffic in Christians and their export to the urban centers of the Islamic world. The common etiology of the words 'slave' and 'slave,' originating in the late medieval period, is well known. This traffic continued until a comparatively late date. The last Crimean raid on the city of Moscow was in 1591. The Crimean Tatars, "like monkeys on greyhounds," would conduct annual slave raids in the Ukraine as late as the latter half of the 18th century.¹ Only Russian defeat of the Ottomans, who patroonized the Crimean Tatars, and Russian occupation of the Crimea in 1783, ended this threat to the Russian and Ukrainian peasantry. However, isolated abductions of Russians by Kazakhs for the slave markets of Central Asia continued until the Tsars' conquest of Khiva and Bukhara in the 1860s. These ancestral memories, though difficult to link directly with 20th century events, are by no means irrelevant to later developments in Russian-Muslim and Soviet-Muslim relations. These memories and the extreme emotions which they evoke are very much alive in Russia even today.

Until the 18th century the main determinant of social identity in the Eurasian plain was religion. Islam was originally disseminated in the Eurasian plain by Sunni Muslim merchants from Iran and Central Asia, these areas being the heart of the

Islamic world in the late Middle Ages.\(^2\) Conversion of the Turkic peoples of the Volga and west Siberia to Islam at this time was gradual but voluntary, in accordance with the Shariah, which enjoins political conquest but forbids forced conversion.\(^3\) Once a people had converted to Islam, it was found that only rarely would they later voluntarily accept Orthodox Christianity. This trait was noticed by Russians soon after the conquest of Kazan in 1552 and was employed as an argument for forced conversion to Christianity into the 18th century. Although instances of employment of Muslims in official positions can be found soon after the fall of Kazan, it would be misleading to interpret this as official tolerance. For many years a shortage of literate personnel forced Muscovy to rely upon local elites against the better judgment of the dynasts and clergy in Moscow.\(^4\) In 1555 Orthodox bishops began seeking conversions among the Tatars of Kazan, provoking a revolt the following year, which led Ivan IV to destroy all the mosques of the city and to forbid Muslims from residing within its walls.\(^5\) In 1592 all mosques in the duchy of Moscovy were ordered destroyed and the construction of new ones forbidden.\(^6\) Moscow’s “minority” policy in this era was harsh. In west Siberia the Cossacks were said to have committed mass suicide in 1627 rather than come under Moscow’s rule. In the 17th and 18th centuries revolts of the Muslim Bashkirs near the Ural occurred with predictable frequency and were dealt with by harsh repression and the taking of hostages by Moscow. The role which Islam played in these insurrections, as well as in the great Stenka Razin Cossack revolt (in which Bashkirs participated) in 1670, and the Pugachev peasant revolt of 1775 has yet to be thoroughly investigated, but at least one researcher asserts that the Islamic element has been underestimated. In 1647 burning at the stake was decreed for any Muslim who converted a Christian.

Islam under the Empire.

At the turn of the 18th century, with the purge of Old Believers from the Orthodox Church hierarchy, a new effort to force the conversion of the Volga Tatars began. This culminated in the establishment of the Office of New Converts in 1740 which was intended to oversee the conversion effort. Saint Petersburg offered three years’ exemption from military service and taxes to Tatars who would profess

\(^2\) Shiism only became popular in Iran in the 16th century. In the Middle Ages Iran was Sunni, and Central Asia, which is still Sunni today, was considered part of Iran, being called Khorasan, and later Khwarezm. With Persian as its chief literary language (until finally replaced by Russian in the 19th century), Central Asia rose to cultural and military leadership of the entire Islamic world. The incursions of the Mongols began the cultural decline of Central Asia. The shift of world trade routes from land to sea routes in the 16th century contributed to the region’s economic decline as well.

\(^3\) At no time was Muslim military power sufficient to force conversion of the nomadic peoples north of the Oxus or Amu Darya. Trade and its required literacy skills disseminated Islam in these areas. It is a common misconception that conversion to Islam was compulsory. In fact where Muslim rule was secure, rulers on occasion forbade conversion to Islam in order to continue collecting jizya, the tax on infidels. Conversion to Islam often occurred despite prohibitions in order to avoid this tax.


\(^5\) Zenkovsky, p. 15.

\(^6\) Zenkovsky, p. 135.
Christianity. While this tactic understandably enjoyed some success, the government at the same time felt it necessary to baptize whole villages of Tatars and other Volga Turkic peoples “at gunpoint.” In 1743 alone 500 mosques were destroyed. However, in 1755, despite accusations that Crimean and Bukharan agents in the service of Ottoman Turkey were behind Tatar resistance, the government abandoned forced conversion of its Muslim subjects, due both to the paltry results of the policy and to the growing popularity in Russia of the idea of enlightened despotism.

Catherine II abolished the Office of New Converts and for the first half of her reign, from 1762 to 1782, allowed a limited toleration of Muslim practices. Beginning in 1767, her desire for efficient and popular government led her to undertake a series of fundamental reforms affecting Muslims in the Russian Empire. Partly in response to petitions from Muslims to be allowed to build mosques, she convened a Legislative Commission, which included Muslims in its ranks. After consulting this Commission, and in the face of the Pugachev rebellion, the most serious revolt the Russian state had yet faced and which manifested distinct Islamic overtones, in 1773 Catherine signed an Edict of Religious Toleration. According to the terms of this edict, which dealt primarily with the grievances of Muslims, the latter were again allowed to build mosques and to reside in Kazan, and all proselytizing between Christians and Muslims was forbidden. Conversion remained the official goal of the Russian state, however. Tatars who adopted Christianity still enjoyed three years’ exemption from taxes and service; the penalty for conversion of a Christian remained burning at the stake; Muslim criminals were pardoned if they converted to Christianity; and Russian Muslims were prohibited from traveling to Mecca.

Despite resistance from Russian patriots, who regarded all Muslims as inveterate enemies of Russia, Catherine II continued liberalizing her policies to the point of actual encouragement of the spread of Islam. In 1776 all trade restrictions on the activity of Volga Tatars in Asia were removed. In 1780 Muslims were allowed to travel to Mecca. In 1782 an Orenburg Border Commission was set up in the town of Orenburg, in south Bashkiria, for the purpose of initiating a systematic extension of Russian power into what is today the Kazakh steppes. The chief instrument of this policy, as conceived by the first governor of Orenburg, Baron Igelstrom, and approved by Catherine, was to be Tatar merchants of the middle Volga, who, by propagating Islam among the Kazakhs, it was anticipated, would induce the Kazakhs to settle and thus become more amenable to Russian control and less friendly to the haughty and uncooperative Central Asian khanates of Khiva and Bukhara.

In line with this course, Catherine embarked on a program of direct state support for Islam. The government provided funding for the construction of new mosques, subsidized a madrasah (a traditional Islamic school) for each mosque, and even paid for their textbooks. Catherine herself became so enamored of the anticipated blossoming in relations between Russians and Muslims that she referred to Islam as "a reasonable religion"—about the highest compliment a proponent of French rationalism could give at the time. Finally, to ensure that this new encouragement of Islam did not cause it to become independent of the government, she established a Muslim Spiritual Assembly (Musulmanskoie Dukhovnestva Sobranie) in Orenburg (which later moved to Ufa), under a Mufti nominated by the Minister of the Interior. This Assembly was closely regulated by the Russian government and its chairman, or Mufti, placed on

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7 Prince M. Shcherbatov, for instance, stated: "As once they [the Muslims] ruled over Russia, it should be Russia's policy to treat them as her enemies." Fisher, Alan W., 'Enlightened Despotism and Islam under Catherine II,' in Slavic Review, Vol XXVII, No. 4 (December 1968), p. 543.
government salary. All work was done in Russian with subsequent Tatar translations and the jurisdiction of the Assembly was limited to civil matters and to the content of education in the new madrassahs (entirely religious naturally). The Russian Commission for Public Schools oversaw the printing of the textbooks, done in both Russian and Tatar.

Under Catherine II, religion, as the primary factor in social identity, yielded to the political conception of citizen and inorodets, or "alien," which roughly reflected a distinction between settled and nomadic. But this new conception only took hold among the Europeans of the Empire—the Muslims of Russia continued to regard all non-Muslims in the same light as before, urban Muslims feeling a greater kinship with Muslim inorodets than with urban Russians, and felt no more loyalty to the Russian state than before. Even before the establishment of the Commission, relations between Russians and Muslims found new sources of friction. In 1783 Catherine annexed the Crimea to the Russian Empire. The Crimean Muslims were allowed extensive privileges, including the freedom to practice their religion and to keep their possessions, the formal equality of Russians and Tatars before the law, and continuance of the Muslim clergy in their traditional waqf entitlements (at a time when Orthodox clergy were allowed no property). The government even allowed the Crimean Tatars to continue paying the name of the Ottoman Sultan in Friday prayers, a traditional method of acknowledging the legitimacy of secular authority. However, these measures failed to win the loyalty of the Crimean population. Faced with heavy European immigration, over half a million Crimean Tatars left for Ottoman Turkey by 1793, and another million by 1860, reducing the remaining Crimeans to permanent minority status.

Soon new tensions affected Russian-Muslim relations. In 1795 the Persian Shah invaded Georgia and inflicted a number of atrocities and massacres on the Orthodox population. In response to subsequent requests for protection, Russia began to occupy the northern face of the Caucasus, a region which had long been among the most isolated in the Near East due to the many inaccessible valleys that provided shelter for numerous small and fiercely xenophobic tribes. By 1800 most of these tribes had converted to Islam, chiefly due to the missionary activities of the ancient Naqshbandiya order of Sufis, known as Murids. These Murid Wars continued with interruptions until 1865, in their final 25 years capturing the imagination of Europe as the Caucasian Muslims coalesced around the popular Dagestani chieftain Shamyl. Three Persian wars extended Russian territory into Azerbaijan and Armenia without difficulty, but peace came to the northern Caucasus only after many years of the most savage 'pacification' policies involving the extermination of entire tribes and extensive bribing of native elites. The long Caucasian campaign proved extremely costly for Russia, upon its conclusion qualifying as one of the most expensive projects the Tsars ever undertook. The stubborn resistance of the Mountaineers and the poor

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8 i.e. medieval Turkish, called Chagatai.


10 Protection of the Georgians was only a pretext for this occupation, as the Russian suppression of a Georgian revolt soon after demonstrated.

11 It has been estimated that its cost ranked with the building of Saint Petersburg in the 18th century, the construction of Russia's rail network in the 1890s, and the fortification of Poland before World War I.
performance of Russian troops who suffered enormous casualties for years on end sank deep into the Russian psyche, and undermined confidence at home and prestige abroad. The defeat in the Crimean War of 1853–5, revealing as it did the extent of Russian technological and military backwardness, completed a collapse in confidence that had been quietly eroding for years in the Caucasus.

Developments in Central Asia seemed to offer an opportunity to recoup Russian losses. In 1860 the outbreak of the American Civil War cut off much of Russia's supply of cotton and Russian troops began to move into the Syr Darya valley. In 1865 Tashkent fell. Three years later Bukhara was defeated, soon followed by Khiva and Kokand. The conquest of Central Asia succeeded to some extent in restoring Russian pride in arms. At a cost of only 2500 casualties the military acquired an area the size of Europe that was rich in agricultural and mineral resources. They had beaten Muslims, thus recovering to some extent confidence lost in the Caucasus, and alarmed Britain, which believed the Russians fully capable of advancing into India, thus in a small way making up for their lost prestige in the Crimea. However, like the conquest of the Caucasus, the seizure of Central Asia was bought at the cost of the long-term integrity of the Russian Empire in that it added a new dimension to the problem of Russian-Muslim relations. No Russian of rank questioned the strategic and economic value of the new conquest, but for those to whom fell the task of administering the new province it was immediately obvious that decades would be required before the new regions could be assimilated.

General von Kaufman, the first governor-general of Turkestan and a veteran of 13 years fighting Murids in the Caucasus, understood that if the Empire was to avoid a "second Caucasus" in the mountainous eastern regions of Turkestan and give Russia the time necessary to absorb the region, unprecedented concessions to Muslim sensibilities would have to be made. On his own initiative, and with the full knowledge and approval of Tsar Alexander II, von Kaufman proceeded to build an administration designed to ensure the stability of Turkestan while interfering as little as possible with native life. Abolition of slavery and judicial torture were decreed, to be applied throughout Central Asia. However, Bukhara and Khiva were allowed to maintain formal independence as protectorates, and von Kaufman and his successors showed little interest in verifying the khanates' compliance with Russian edicts. The Russian administration was especially careful not to antagonize Bukhara, since it was the chief religious center of the region. No Russian troops were stationed on Bukharan territory, the Emir was left in full control as before the conquest, no Russians were allowed to settle there, and when clergy asserted that locomotives in Bukhara would violate the Shariah, the government re-routed the tracks around the city. In Russian Turkestan local administration and customs were left intact in all areas that did not directly concern Europeans. The clergy were allowed to retain their waqf privileges, the traditional courts of the ulema continued to administer Shariah Law, and Muslim traditional schools—the madrasahs—continued as before. Furthermore, from the beginning of his administration, Von Kaufman prohibited Orthodox missionaries from even entering Turkestan and forbade any Russian settlers from acquiring rural land to the south and west of Tashkent where the Muslim population was mostly concentrated. Finally, von Kaufman personally rejected a request from the Tatar-dominated Ecclesiastical

12 Queen Victoria adopted the title "Empress of India" at this time, partly to discourage any Russian move into the subcontinent.

Administration in Ufa to include Turkestan in its jurisdiction, and in later years
Russian administrators routinely closed down the experimental schools of reformers
when requested to do so by conservative clergy.

These measures in Central Asia represented the limit of Russian toleration of
Islam and native Muslim custom in the 19th century. With the Murid Wars over and the
conquest of Turkestan completed, a sort of truce set in. This truce has often been
characterized as biased in favor of conservative Muslims at the expense of reformers,
and this was perhaps the practical effect of Russian policy, but it should be
acknowledged that the government's purpose was not to retard Muslim progress by
keeping them ignorant. Rather the purpose was to preserve the peace so that Russia
could exploit Central Asian resources and develop the economy. Eventually, it was
envisaged that Russian peasants would colonize all Muslim areas and relieve the land
shortage in Russia, and some resistance to this was expected eventually, but
pacification and the development of a basic economic infrastructure such as railways,
dams, and harbors on the Caspian were prerequisites to extensive settlement.
Therefore, the Muslims were to be allowed to follow their collective impulses wherever
they may lead without interference from the government, so long as they did not
challenge Russian rule or obstruct economic development of the region. Russian
policy towards the Muslims of Turkestan and the Caucasus in the 19th century should be
viewed in this way, not as a plot to enslave Muslims by enforced segregation, but as a
recognition that segregation and conservatism were the foremost desires of the Muslim
population itself, and that any attempt to change this by force was likely to be met with
force, with unpredictable consequences for Russian rule.

Russian toleration had its limits even in the early days of the occupation,
though. Von Kaufman initiated many fundamental reforms, including the
simplification and reduction of taxes, and the transference of land titles to
sharecroppers. On the whole the protests of Muslims were not allowed to interfere with
the rapid transformation of the economy from agriculture to cotton, which involved
the displacement of large numbers of Muslims, and periodic outbursts of violence, or
the settlement of Russian peasants in the major cities, where the government built
orderly European quarters for their benefit, and in Kirgiziya, where von Kaufman
specifically requested Russian settlers in order to prevent Uzbeks from obtaining land.
The government and European population lived in constant fear of revolt from the
native population. In India the British had at most 50,000 troops to maintain order, half
of whom were permanently stationed on the Afghan frontier. In Central Asia, the
Russians never had fewer than 200,000 troops stationed in the region before World War
I, despite the fact that the population was only one-thirtieth that of India.

Through most of the 19th century Russia's Muslims refrained from political
activity and continued to enjoy the benefits of "most favored nation" in the eyes of the
government. The Turkish War of 1877-8 changed this relationship permanently. In
eastern Europe the impact of nationalism led to repeated and ever more violent attempts
by the Orthodox Slavic subjects of the Ottomans to gain independence, and

14 Only Finland, technically not part of the Russian Empire, was accorded greater
freedom than the Muslims. While other nationalities enjoyed greater participation in
civil society, they also had been fully incorporated into Russia itself. Central Asia,
while occupied, was not incorporated but maintained separately. Muslims bore legal
discrimination in Russian civil society, but this was a consequence of their own desires
to maintain segregated schools and an "uncontaminated" culture. Until ca. 1900 this
segregation was seen by most Muslims as advantageous and a concession from the
government.
simultaneously to the growth of a sympathetic pan-Slavism in Russia. In 1875 the Serbs revolted and in Russia a movement grew for intervention against the Turks. In 1876 Russia introduced universal conscription, from which inorodtsy were exempt. Upon their conquest, the Muslims of Central Asia, the Caucasus, and Azerbaijan had been classified as inorodtsy, and therefore were excluded from this draft, while the Tatars of the Crimea and the Volga were included. The purpose of these exemptions, however, was no longer merely to appease Muslim sensibilities. Even though the new Muslim territories, with the exception of Bukhara and Khiva, were governed as Russian territory, they were in fact colonies, the population of which was marked for eventual absorption or expulsion—there could be no question of arming them. The khanates of Turkestan and the Mountaineers had often responded to appeals for jihad from Istanbul and were as likely to turn their weapons on their Russian officers as on the Turkish enemy.

The Volga Tatars, meanwhile, had prospered in the 19th century as a result of the initiatives of Catherine II, and, serving as middlemen between Russians and Asian Muslims, steadily converted Kazakhs and other nomadic peoples to Islam through the media of the Tatar language and the Ecclesiastical Assembly in Orenburg. In this way already by 1850 the Volga Tatars had established themselves as the cultural and financial leaders of all Muslims in Russia, and forged strong economic and personal ties with the other Muslim peoples of Asia and the Middle East, in particular Ottoman Turks and Central Asians. In the conscription act of 1876 it was assumed that the Volga Tatars were sufficiently Russianized as to present no security problem. However, in response to the Russian intervention in the Balkans, anti-Christian demonstrations occurred among the Volga Tatars. More important than demonstrations, however, the war gave rise to a national movement among the Tatars that eventually found echoes among all of Russia’s Muslims.

Islam and Nationalism.

In the 1870s Ottoman Turkey was in a state of crisis, conscious that old political organizations and attitudes would no longer suffice to maintain Muslim independence but uncertain as to what should replace them. Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, a peripatetic professional revolutionary and anti-imperialist, attracted much attention with his call to reinterpret Islam. While al-Afghani favored internal reforms, calling for a constitution to limit despotism, and asserting that Islam if correctly understood was fully compatible with rationalism and science, his ideas had much political significance, implying, as al-Afghani himself often declared, that the entire Muslim world should unite to resist European encroachment. Besides this reformist pan-Islam, one of many such efforts to reinterpret Islam for contemporary needs, there existed a rival ideology, a recent import from Europe that sought to separate religion from politics entirely. This was pan-Turkism, a more purely national conception, being based on ethnic, linguistic, and territorial unity. Most Pan-Turkists in the Ottoman state included in their definition of “Turk” the Muslims of Anatolia, the Balkans, the Crimea, the Caucasus, and Azerbaijan. Other pan-Turks preferred to extend the definition of “Turk” to include Muslims further afield. These, in particular Crimean Tatars, many of whom resided in Istanbul, asserted that all Muslims in the Russian Empire were Turks, including the Volga Tatars and Central Asians.

Ismail Gasprinsky was one of these Crimean Tatars. A Turkish patriot estranged from Russia due to the chauvinism of the pan-Slavists, Gasprinsky was in Istanbul during the War of 1877-8 and enthusiastically embraced both pan-Islam and pan-Turkism. After the war he returned to the Crimea and founded a periodical under the slogan “Unity of language, mind, action” meaning both Muslim and Turkish unity. Gasprinsky then founded a school in which he experimented with new methods of
education. His methods and schools proved popular and spread through Russia, being known as Nez Method, or "Usul-u-Jadid," schools and their proponents as "Jadids." Among the Tatars, Gasprinsky's innovations, both methodological and ideological, were warmly received and by 1900 he was widely acknowledged as the founder of the national movement among Russia's Muslims.

As might have been expected, however, the ethnic and linguistic complexities of the Muslims in Russia proved resistant to a smooth adjustment to European ideas. Russia's Muslims remained divided in practice and thought until the Russian Revolution. The chief division lay between the Jadids and the ulema. Jadid newspapers often attacked ulema as lackeys of the autocracy and harmful to the interests of Muslims. Ulama, especially those in the Ecclesiastical Assembly at Ufa, regularly denounced Jadids as against Islam and petitioned the authorities to close down reformist schools. On the Volga and in the Crimea, the contest was severe at first. But the large number of Russians, the prosperity of the Tatars, and exposure to European ideas brought most clergy, an important exception being the Assembly in Ufa, to endorse or at least acquiesce in Jadid activities by 1917. In Turkestan the authorities sought to prevent such a struggle by curtailing Jadid activities. For example, in 1886, Tatars were prohibited from buying land for the purpose of settling. But in 1893 Gasprinsky himself visited Turkestan, was shocked by the backwardness of the region, and opened several Jadid schools. After that, the Jadid movement escalated in Central Asia, provoking much indignation among the conservatives, who regarded Jadids as agents of secularism and harbingers of Russian cultural assimilation of Turkestan.

Aside from conservative resistance, and administrative obstruction, a third difficulty in achieving uniformity among Russia's Muslims was linguistic. Gasprinsky launched his periodical in Ottoman Turkish and urged Muslims in Russia to learn this "pure" dialect to realize the pan-Turkic ideal. The Turkish dialects of Crimea and Azerbaijan were similar to Ottoman Turkish, so, as a Crimean, Gasprinsky had no difficulty understanding Ottoman. But the dialect of the Volga Tatars was considerably different, and Kazakhs, Uzbeks, and Turkmen found Ottoman Turkish completely incomprehensible. Uzbeks and Turkmens spoke their own Central Asian Turkic dialects and traditionally used a dialect of Persian for writing, which the Tadjiks spoke as their primary language. Use of Arabic in liturgy was universal, but only ulema had more than a superficial knowledge of that language. The nomadic Bashkirs spoke Tatar for the most part, but nomadic Kazakhs and Kirgiz were unable to communicate directly with any of the settled peoples. In view of these complexities, inter-regional conferences of Muslims, to make themselves understood, were forced to use either Russian or the dialect of the majority of those in attendance, who in the early days of the Muslim national movement were usually Volga Tatars. Many Jadids even found the old medieval Chagatai Tatar cumbersome and preferred a written version of modern spoken Tatar that had recently been worked out.

What is most remarkable about the national movement among Russia's Muslims is that, despite these wide and seemingly unbridgeable schisms, or perhaps in a way because of them, virtually all Muslims in Russia adhered to some sort of broadly inclusive political conception, usually focused on the heritage of Islam. So long as the

15 Zenkovsky, p. 84.
16 Zenkovsky, p. 86.
17 Before the arrival of the Uzbeks from the Ural region in the 16th century, Turkestan was culturally a province of Iran, populated mostly by Iranian Tadjiks, and using Persian for their literary needs, as did Ottoman Turkey itself until the 1860s.
authorities in Turkestan continued to respond to their petitions, the socially conservative ulema refrained from political activity. Their political conceptions remained dominated by traditional notions of religious segregation and the Sunni tradition of acquiescing to any government so long as it did not interfere with the Shariah.\(^\text{18}\) Their response to gross violations of the Shariah was equally traditional—a jihad of the Ummah against all non-Muslims. For most Turkestanis the only political conception beyond that of kinship loyalty remained the Ummah, i.e. the Islamic nation, or "millet" in Ottoman legal usage. This conception remained dominant through the 1920s not only in Central Asia, but also in the Caucasus, and continues to exercise an important indirect influence in much of the Islamic world today.

Due to the efforts of the Jadids, most Volga Tatars, particularly those of advanced education, adhered to reformist pan-Islam. Though reluctant to characterize their political conceptions as nationalistic, preferring to ground their political platform in "true" or "correct" interpretations of the Quran, the Tatars in fact had formulated an "eastern" nationalism based not on territory, but solely on the religious heritage of each individual. In the late 19th century the Tatars sought to recruit all of Russia's Muslims to this program. The wealth and far-flung economic and cultural ties of the Tatars gave reformist pan-Islam important advantages over other political strains that might have made gains among Russia's Muslims at this time, such as the conservative pan-Islam of Abdulhamid II. This reformist pan-Islamic outlook characterized the Central Asian Jadids as well as the Tatars. The small Jadid party that emerged in Bukhara attracted many Shiites and accused the conservative ulema in Bukhara of having "divided the Muslim nation into Sunnites, Shiites, Zeydits and Wahabis, and made them enemies of each other."

After the Russian Revolution of 1905, an edict of religious toleration was announced, which abolished the last legal restrictions on Muslims in the Empire. Taking advantage of the freedoms of this new edict, the Tatars sponsored the First all-Russian Congress of Muslims in August 1905, and endorsed a liberal program in favor of constitutional monarchy, preservation of private property, and distribution of crown lands to the peasantry. The pan-Muslim nature of the movement was clearly evident in an address given by a representative of the congress, Yusuf Akchurin, to the First Congress of the Kadets several months later. In this address Akchurin requested Kadet cooperation in achieving full autonomy for the Muslim Ecclesiastical Assembly in Ufa (in order to establish its independence from the government and liberalize the Assembly), recognition of the Shariah and Adat in Russian civil and penal codes, and bilingual education for all Muslims. As Akchurin put it: "Just as the agrarian question is of basic importance for the peasant, so for Muslims the most important is their religion."\(^\text{19}\) The favorable response that Akchurin received from the Kadets induced the Muslim representatives in the first Duma to forge an alliance with the Kadets which lasted until the collapse of the monarchy. A Second Congress of Muslims was held in January 1906, at which was founded a political party, the first party of Muslims in Russia, the Muslim Peoples' Party, more commonly known as the "Itiifaq ul-Muslimin" (Union of Muslims), or simply "Itiifik.

The Third congress, in August of 1906, was most important for later developments in two ways. First, in reply to several socialist delegates who expressed skepticism on the feasibility of one party encompassing all classes, the majority reaffirmed the unity of all Muslims and rejected a party based on class. In the words of Rashid Ibragimov: "The fraternity of the peoples of Islam is not just an abstract theory.

\(^{18}\) This did not imply active support, which was only accorded to Muslim governments.

\(^{19}\) Zenkovsky, p. 42.
but a reality." And Akchurin: "If we do not do this [i.e. unite all Muslims], the same fate which befell the Muslims of Bulgaria—who, because of internal rivalries, lost their unity and political rights—can befall us likewise..." 20 Second, the congress passed a resolution calling for, in good Gasprinsky fashion, the introduction of Ottoman Turkish in all Muslim schools throughout Russia. Due to the linguistic difficulties described above, this not only imposed a needless restriction on the ability of the pan-Muslim movement to unite all Muslims, but incurred the hostility of the government, which regarded any intimacy with Turkey as bordering on sedition.

Contact with Turkey was, of course, nothing new to Russia's Muslims. Many delegates at the all-Russian congresses had spent time in Istanbul. Ibragimov, for instance, in the 1890s published from Istanbul the first explicitly anti-Russian pamphlet to be written by a Russian Muslim. His charge that the authorities were planning to forcibly convert the Tatars to Christianity set off riots along the Volga. In 1908 events demonstrated once again the intimate connections between Turkey and Russia's Muslim movement. This was the Young Turk coup that overthrew Abdulhamid II. The Young Turks installed a military Triumvirate which began propagating pan-Turkism in preference to the conservative pan-Islam that Abdulhamid had used as a corrupt tool of state. In Turkey there had always existed a certain tension between the two ideologies of pan-Islam and pan-Turkism. The former conception presumed a coincidence of interests between Turkey and Muslims everywhere, a notion that was contradicted by experience almost every day; but the latter conception, by separating religion from politics, alienated important Ottoman allies like the Arabs.

In Russia, since most Muslims were Turks, and most Turks were Muslims, Gasprinsky had felt no need to distinguish between them when he launched the Jadid movement in the 1880s. But after the Young Turk coup the two strands began to unravel in Russia. Whereas the Russian Revolution of 1905 had demonstrated the weakness of the Russian Empire, the coup of the Young Turks in 1908 seemed to reveal an unexpected strength in Turkey. Perceiving an opportunity for a political renaissance of the Muslim world led by a united Turkish nation—to be built on the ruins of Russia—many Muslims in Russia began to emphasize the pan-Turkist strain to the neglect of reformist pan-Islam. This was the case particularly in Azerbaijan, less so among the Volga Tatars, and least of all in Central Asia. Conversely, during the years previous to World War I reformist pan-Islam declined considerably in Azerbaijan, but remained predominant on the Volga. Central Asia, of course, remained rooted in the old conception of the Ummah, or millet, which, strictly speaking, was not pan-Muslim because it recognized only Sunnis as authentic Muslims and rejected Shiites.

These were the most popular political orientations of Russian Muslims before the Revolution of 1917—the traditional Ummah in Central Asia, reformist pan-Islam on the Volga, and pan-Turkism in Azerbaijan. In the years just prior to World War I, several smaller factions emerged, including three socialist factions: Socialist Revolutionaries (called 'Tangchelar' from their newspaper 'Tang' or 'Dawn'), Social Democrats ('Uralchelar'), and a few eclectic socialist Tatars in the Duma ('Dumachelar') who split with the Muslim caucus and joined the Trudoviki Duma faction. In addition, a Muslim labor organization in Baku, the Hummet, affiliated themselves with the Social Democrats in 1905. Again, what is striking about these organizations was their continued emphasis on segregation on the basis of their Islamic heritage and the little interest they showed in regional particularism. The Hummet in Baku insisted on its preservation as a separate Muslim organization, and was granted this status by the local Social Democratic organization, the Baku Committee—the only time that the

20 Zenkovsky, p. 47.
RSDLP (bolshevik) allowed autonomy to an affiliated organization based on ethnicity. In 1906 Stalin pressured Hummet to join the regular Social-Democratic organization, but this pressure was resisted and Hummet remained autonomous until the Revolution of 1917. 21

Russian-Muslim Policy to 1917.

By the turn of the century the Russian government had become alarmed at the rapid growth of political sensibilities among Russia's Muslims. The role that Islam seemed to play in this political awakening was seen increasingly as negative. In Kazakhstan, far from severing kinship ties and aiding absorption into Russian society, the spread of Islam increased the Kazakhs' sense of separateness from Russia while doing nothing to loosen allegiance to traditional clan leaders, and promoted fraternization of Kazakh politicians with Tatars and Turkistanis. In the Kazakh plains, the sudden wave of Russian and Ukrainian settlers in the 1890s, which the government had delayed as long as possible, 22 renewed tensions that had lain dormant for decades. Clashes between Kazakh stock herders and European agriculturalists soon became a daily occurrence.

In Turkestan several minor disturbances occurred in the 1880s and 1890s, renewing Russian fears of fundamentalist jihad in Central Asia. Plans to make Russian language compulsory in all schools in Turkestan, part of the Russification policy currently being enforced in Armenia, Georgia, and the European provinces, were cancelled in 1888 due to the opposition of the ulama. 23 In 1891, a statute reaffirmed the policy of prohibiting Russian peasant settlement in Turkestan. 24 In 1898 a revolt flared briefly in the Ferghana Valley at Andijan, led by Naqshbandiya Sufis, the organizers of the Murid Wars in the Caucasus. Although quickly suppressed, there were indications that the rebels had planned to invite a nephew of Abdulhamid II to be their Khan, accentuating Russian suspicions that Ottoman agents were partly responsible for the dissatisfaction of Russia's Muslims. As a result of this revolt all locally elected officials in Turkestan were replaced with Russian appointees and a systematic inquiry conducted. When the inquiry was completed, Saint Petersburg came to the sudden realization that Islam was more than mere "native superstition," but had a political and cultural importance in the lives of Turkistanis that was not likely soon to disappear. A call from Tashkent Muslims for the government to extend the Ecclesiastical Assembly to the Turkestan guberniya only increased Russian suspicions of Muslim intentions.

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21 It is interesting to note that just as Imperial Russia treated its Muslim subjects better than it did its Jewish subjects, the RSDLP(b) allowed Hummet autonomy even while refusing it to the Jewish Bund.

22 The Resettlement Act of 1880 sought to restrict immigration into Kazakhstan and Siberia. When this failed, due primarily to the completion of the Trans-Siberian Railway which offered millions of Russian and Ukrainian peasants an opportunity for the first time to resettle, a Resettlement Administration was set up in 1895 to halt the immigration, but with similar poor results. After 1905 Stolypin opened the floodgates entirely, relieving to some extent the land pressure in Russia, but at the cost of increasing tensions with Muslims in Kazakhstan and Turkistan. See Wheeler, Geoffrey, The Modern History of Soviet Central Asia (NY: Praeger, 1964), p. 77.


24 Wheeler, p. 77.
In the Trans-Caucasus, meanwhile, Russian-Muslim relations were affected by the long-running feud between Armenians and Azerbaijanis. In 1885 Armenian resistance to the introduction of Russian language in local schools evoked a Russian crackdown. The Armenians, hitherto preoccupied with a terrorist campaign in Turkey, turned on the Russian government, headed by the governor-general G.S. Golitsyn, who was known to be pro-Muslim. The Azerbaijanis, apprehensive over Armenian aspirations for a Greater Armenia, and envious of Armenian prosperity in Baku, sided with the Russian authorities. This relationship continued through 1905 when numerous Azerbaijanis assisted the authorities in breaking strikes in the oil fields which were organized mostly by Armenians and Social Democrats. This "counter-revolutionary" activity often degenerated into anti-Armenian massacres which the authorities did little to halt. In the Trans-Caucasus on instructions from the RSDLP(b), Joseph Stalin helped to organize these strikes and witnessed many of the events in Baku firsthand. In 1906, impatient to restore the production of oil and pacify the Trans-Caucasus, Saint Petersburg replaced Golitsyn, who had been wounded by an Armenian's bomb, with Count I.I. Vorontsov-Dashkov, who favored the Armenians' national cause. The replacement of a pro-Muslim governor with a pro-Armenian one was a particularly ill-considered move on the part of Saint Petersburg because for years Azerbaijanis had justly held the reputation of being among the most solid supporters of Russian rule and of the autocratic principle among Russia's Muslims.25 In 1905 an Azerbaijani paper in Baku announced that "The constitution is less beneficial for Muslims than autocracy, and it is in the interest of Muslims not to combat the monarchy since the probable new order would be inimical to the religion." and another paper declared that "The ideas of the Social-Democrats are harmful illusions and cooperation with them is inadmissible to Muslims."26 It was no accident that the Muslim units in the Tsarist army, the "Savage Division" in particular, were recruited mostly from Azerbaijan, and especially from the regions close to Armenia. Soon after these events the Young Turk coup occurred in Istanbul, which set off a strong slide in Azerbaijani public opinion away from support for Tsarist Russia in favor of Ottoman Turkey. Domestically this was reflected in the rapid growth of pan-Turkist notions among the Azerbaijani intelligentsia, which was duly noted by the Okhrana, the Tsarist secret police.

Before 1905 Saint Petersburg still regarded the Tatars of the Volga as reliable supporters of the government; those in the Crimea continued to emigrate and were allowed to do so. Then the Edict of Religious Toleration was issued in April of 1905. While the Tatars were convening their congresses in 1905 and 1906, 30,000 Volga Tatars who had been converted to Orthodox Christianity in the early 18th century (i.e., by force) took advantage of the new edict and returned to Islam, to the surprise and disappointment of most Russians, both conservatives and liberals. This number amounted to a quarter of all Christian Tatars on the Volga.

By 1907, therefore, the government had come to view both the religion of Islam and Muslim nationalists as a threat to the state. Saint Petersburg ceased ignoring Islam as a primitive "survival" expected eventually to disappear on its own, but began to work actively to impede its spread in Russia and to suppress the activities of the Tatar

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25 The Azerbaijani Turks were close kin of the Sunni Turks of Anatolia, but Shiite as a result of centuries of Iranian rule. The Armenian conflict together with an economic boom following the discovery of oil in Baku in the 1860s, led to extreme reluctance on the part of the local Muslim intelligentsia to endanger their good relations with the Tsarist government.
26 Zenkovsky, p. 44.
nationalists. Thirty Muslim deputies were elected to the first Duma in 1906. The second Duma included 39 Muslim deputies. Stolypin's electoral reform of 1907 cut back their number to 9 and in the fourth Duma to 7, completely excluding Central Asians. The government for the first time began to obstruct Jadid activities in anticipation of petitions from conservatives, not only in Turkestan but across Russia. In 1907 the authorities suppressed Tatar and Jadid newspapers in Turkestan, where in 1911 authorities decreed that teachers had to be of the same background as their students, thus prohibiting Tatars, Ottomans, and Iranians from teaching Turkestanis. In March of 1906 new regulations required Russian language in all Muslim elementary schools, excepting only Turkestan, and in 1909 the Ministry of Education convened a special commission "to study means for combating Tatar-Muslim influence in the Volga region." After the Third Muslim Congress in 1906, no further congresses of Muslims were allowed until the fall of the regime in 1917. The campaign against Muslim nationalism inside Russia was matched by Tsarist intervention abroad. In northern Iran, which had been a virtual Tsarist province for some years, the Cossack Brigade dispersed the new Iranian Majlis in June of 1906 and then moved on to suppress the nationalists in Tabriz. This rendered stillborn a brief movement among Azerbaijani intellectuals for unification with their Azeri brethren to the south.

On the other hand, after the Revolution of 1905, the government was no longer willing or able to restrict immigration into Muslim regions. Restrictions on emigration to Russia's Asian provinces, imposed partly in deference to the wishes of Asian Muslims, had been partly responsible for the convulsion of 1905. With peasant demands for land mounting, the Ministry of the Interior removed the last obstacles to unrestrained Russian settlement. In 1907 Stolypin opened Turkestan to settlement by Europeans. The following year a commission toured Central Asia to find land for new colonists, and in 1910 Stolypin himself visited the region to supervise the expropriation of land. Meanwhile, the transformation of Turkestan's economy into the main source of cotton for Russia's textile mills, coupled with the inadequate integration of the region's Muslims, resulted in famines of increasing severity and frequency in Central Asia.

The government feared Muslim nationalism not only for the intrinsic difficulties it presented for a multi-ethnic empire, but also for the dangers it represented to foreign policy. In the years prior to World War I, Russia feared that its

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27 Zenkovsky, p. 85. Zenkovsky speaks of 'same national group' without specifying whether this means the same territory, ethnicity, or language.
28 Zenkovsky, p. 49.
29 Zenkovsky, p. 106.
30 Gasprinsky tried to organize a fourth pan-Muslim congress in Cairo, but it fell through.
31 Spector, Ivar, The First Russian Revolution: Its Impact on Asia (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: 1962), p. 49. In 1911 Russian troops shelled the Shia bast ('asylum') shrine. 17,000 Russian troops remained in northern Iran until 1917. One consequence of this intervention and the resulting strength of Iranian autocracy was the appearance of the pan-Islamic Jengeli insurrection led by the mullah Mirza Kuchuk Khan. This movement, of Turkic and Iranian peasants in the wooded country northwest of Teheran, was directed against the Shah, the Russians, and the British, and favored Germans and Ottoman Turks.
domestic Muslims might serve as a "fifth column" in the event of war, and regarded a German-Turkish-Russian Muslim alliance as a very real danger. This placed Russia's Muslims in a position unlike that of any other nationality in Russia. This fear was exaggerated, but not unreasonable. Many prominent Russian Muslims emigrated in the wake of the return of autocracy and became deeply involved in pan-Turk activities in Istanbul, including Gasprinsky and Akchurin, both of whom joined the Young Turk Party's Central Committee in 1911.\textsuperscript{32} and published pan-Turkic appeals aimed at various regions in Russia, e.g., 'Turan,' i.e. Central Asia. In Azerbaijan, their efforts were rewarded with the creation of the Musavat Party in 1911. This pan-Turkist party favored secession from Russia and union with Turkey, and soon became the most popular party among the intelligentsia.\textsuperscript{33} Only the conservatives of the Ecclesiastical Assembly were committed to supporting Russia, out of resentment for the Young Turks for deposing Abdulhamid II, whom they had regarded as Caliph, the spiritual head of the Islamic world.

These measures made the Muslim nationalists skeptical of the possibility of ever achieving their national ambitions under Tsarism. They became more cautious and at the same time more patient, although perhaps the most important result, for both pan-Muslims and pan-Turks, was their experience in underground organization and activity between 1908 and 1917. This experience was mostly acquired in the guise of Muslim "Benevolent Societies" that flourished in the years before 1917.\textsuperscript{34} These organizations, sponsored chiefly by Jadids but with wide popular participation, were clear evidence of the continuing predominance of reformist pan-Islamic notions among all classes of Tatars.\textsuperscript{35} The "repression" of this period should not be exaggerated, though. It was not severe but was applied only to political activity outside the Duma—there was no effort on the part of the government to interfere with the usual cultural activities of the Muslims aside from requiring them to learn Russian, which most Tatars already knew as a second language. Along the Volga, Jadid schools continued to expand, amounting to about 500 out of 5000 schools by 1912. To transform a political group into a benevolent society, organizers were sometimes merely required to drop the word "Muslim" from their titles.\textsuperscript{36} Therefore, most Muslims did not know how to regard the war in 1914. The Tatars had deep economic interests in the perpetuation of the Tsarist state which seemed unlikely to lose in war to a weak Ottoman Empire. So in 1914 the Itifak, not wishing to endanger its last legal outlet for political activity, or the cooperation of the Kadets, endorsed the war effort. However, this was not a true gauge of their commitment to either the autocracy or to Russia, and was certainly misleading if seen as evidence of an estrangement from the pan-Turkists who remained in Istanbul. In 1914 the Itifak was ambivalent and Central Asians and Azerbaijanis waited only a signal that Russia was faltering to come out openly in favor

\textsuperscript{32} Zenkovsky, p. 108.
\textsuperscript{33} Zenkovsky, p. 100.
\textsuperscript{34} These Benevolent Societies actively proselytized the so-called Lithuanian 'Tatars', who no longer had any cultural connection with the Volga Tatars or the larger Islamic world in any way except a formal admission of adherence to the Islamic faith; Kazan liberals organized a committee in Kazan to re-establish contact and bring them back into mosques and to educate them; an extensive relief effort was organized among the Volga Tatars in 1917-8 to assist these "Muslim refugees." Rorlich, p. 80.
\textsuperscript{35} Rorlich, p. 81.
\textsuperscript{36} Rorlich, p. 80.
of Turkey. The government understood this clearly enough and was careful not to employ its Muslim units on the Ottoman front during the war.

In 1916 the Russian government feared that the signal had come. In Kazakhstan and Turkestan, immigration of Ukrainians, Armenians and Russians had pushed the number of non-Muslims in the region to 400,000 out of a total population of 7,500,000. This caused great hardship on nomads in particular as scarce water supplies were diverted to agriculture. In June of 1916, in need of manpower during World War I, the Imperial government ignored warnings from local leaders and decreed that Muslims would henceforth be liable for military service. Within days revolts erupted in several locations across Central Asia. In Kirgiziya, where the worst violence occurred, nomads attacked numerous Russian settlements and the settlers retaliated. In Turkestan the rebels temporarily seized control of Jizak and moved on Samarkand. Quick action from Russian troops suppressed the violence in the south within a few days, but in Kazakhstan several clans continued raiding Russian towns until January of 1917. When the revolts were finally suppressed several thousand Russians had been killed, and many more Muslims.

Conclusion.

In summation, what stands out from the long era of Tsarism is the abiding influence of the religion of Islam, not only as a “way of life” in a localized sense, or even as a broad cultural inheritance, but also in its theoretical injunctions concerning political and social organization. The slow Russian expansion into Islamic territories necessitated gradual changes in policy from religious intolerance, to attempts to ignore religion entirely, and finally to strong political and military controls which had every indication of intensifying when the World War interrupted. But at the same time the cultural development of Muslims was left almost untouched. This accords with the tradition of social tolerance in Russia—one can find few indications of racism or ethnic prejudice until the very end of the 19th century. On the contrary, for most of Russia’s history, all that a Muslim, or for that matter a Jew, had to do in order to be accepted as a Russian was to formally convert to Orthodoxy or Lutheranism. This immediately erased all legal and much social discrimination.

37 Pipes, p. 88.
38 Wheeler, p. 7.
39 The government announced that Muslims would be employed only in non-combatant roles, but this was not believed by most Turkestanis. Construction duty could be lethal as well. Bruce Lincoln mentions that many Turkestanis died during the construction of the Murmansk railway in 1915-17. See Lincoln, Bruce, Passage Through Armageddon: The Russians in War and Revolution 1914-1918 (Simon and Schuster, NY: 1986), p. 261.
40 Many of the Russian deaths were due to the government’s call-up of privately owned rifles in 1915 due to the shortage of weapons for the army. This left many settlements almost defenseless.
41 Estimates of Muslim casualties vary widely, from as low as a few thousand, to one observation that the population of Central Asia dropped by approximately one million between 1914 and 1917, which includes several hundred thousand refugees who crossed the border into Chinese Turkestan.
Appendix Two.

Bolshevism and Nationalism.

If one were to balance Lenin’s desire to overthrow Tsarism against his fidelity to Marxism, the latter would prove the less important to Lenin. This fact was the origin of Lenin’s revolutionary alliance of the proletariat with nationalism. Lenin’s singular devotion to the cause of revolution in Russia led him to use any means available, and rendered his interpretation of Marxism in a sense as fully “revisionist” as Bernstein’s.

According to Marx, nationalism was in decline, being characteristic of and peculiar to middle-class bourgeoisie and the contemporary nation-state. As the nation-state declined, corroded from within by workers’ “alienation” and the growing poverty of the proletariat, the forces of socialism grew, i.e. the international proletariat, the unique creation of modern socialization of the means of production. In Marx’s view, after the Socialist Revolution, the remaining centers of nationalism would crumble before the socialist offensive—if any such centers survived the Revolution itself. Marx misjudged nationalism because he lived in a centrifugal age. In his lifetime Germany and Italy coalesced into nations and there seemed little reason to suppose that these nations could not eventually, in their turn, unite into a larger continental unit under socialism. By 1900, however, it became clear that larger units could not assemble without the imposition of overwhelming force. On the contrary, the multi-ethnic empires of Austria, Russia, and Turkey were beginning to crack by the turn of the century as the subject peoples of East and Southeast Europe and Southwest Asia put forward their own claims for national entities with increasing vehemence. And as Europe drifted into an escalating series of international crises after 1910, it is clear that the Marxist movement could no longer cope with nationalism, in theory or practice.

Austria reluctantly shared power with the Hungarians in 1867. The Austrian Social-Democrats compromised with their minority nationalists as well by 1900. Imperial Russia, on the other hand, made no concessions to its minority nationalists, but rather toward the end of the 19th century implemented a Russification policy, itself a result of increased national consciousness among the Great Russians. This reluctance to compromise also permeated the Russian political parties that assumed legality after 1905. Until 1905 none of the major political movements in Russia (technically there were no parties until the October Manifesto), including the Social-Democrats, would publicly commit itself to recognizing the national aspirations of Russia’s minorities. At the formation of the RSDLP the adopted program included a passage recognizing “the right of all nations (natsii) to self-determination.” However, this passage did not imply any recognition of the right of nations to secede from the metropole. Far from representing a deliberate nationality policy, the passage was included at the time only because it had formed part of the platform of the Marxist Second International in 1895, which the Russian Social-Democrats appropriated as the basis of their program at the inception of the RSDLP in 1903. In fact, the passage was little more than a slogan, having no more concrete meaning than similar slogans in the 1903 platform recognizing the right of all peoples to “freedom” and “democracy.” Protest movements among Russia’s minorities had not yet developed to the point where the major Russian parties would be forced to formulate an actual policy.

Between 1905 and 1917, however, all of the parties in Russia were subjected to increasing pressures to recognize the aspirations of Russia’s minorities to some form of genuine national existence. The picture was complicated by the fact that the minorities themselves were often unsure of what form this existence should take. Before World War I the national question turned on two separate but related questions: First, what degree of autonomy should the central government extend to the nationalities? Second, what form should national existence take? These questions, and the first attempt at
their solution, emerged first among the Austrian Social-Democrats. Under increasing pressure from nationalists, the Austrian Party in the 1890s called for the transformation of Austria-Hungary into a federation of nationalities. But the Austrian SDs split over the issue of what form these federal structures should take. Representatives of compact nationalities, i.e. ones that were concentrated within clear geographic boundaries, favored a tight correlation between nationality and territory. This conception was correctly perceived as favoring political decentralization. However, some peoples, in particular the "South Slavs" of what is today Yugoslavia, were relatively scattered, existing in "enclaves" situated among other nationalities and feared domination and political exclusion unless a more flexible system were adopted. The latter's delegates advocated what came to called the "South Slav" solution, or extraterritorial "national-cultural autonomy." In this conception nations consisted of individuals, not territories, and, since it ignored regional boundaries, was correctly viewed as favoring political centralization. In a federated Austria each individual would belong to a nationality, each of which would be represented in Vienna. No internal boundaries would exist within the state itself. To the disappointment of the "South Slavs," at the Brunn Congress of the Austrian SDs in 1899 the territorial faction prevailed. The Austrian Party then reorganized itself along territorial lines.

However, extraterritorial autonomy was just beginning its evolution in Eastern Europe. After the Brunn Congress, Otto Bauer and Karl Renner took up the notion and elaborated a complex new theory of socialism that gave full recognition to the growing influence of nationalism. Claiming that the subjection of individuals or peoples to a common experience accentuated their differences, rather than diminished them as orthodox Marxists had until then always asserted, Bauer claimed that Social-Democracy (if taken as equivalent to popular sovereignty) would itself inevitably promote national forces, in fact was itself a product of nationalism. For Bauer, nationalism was an irreducible trait of human societies, and existed before socialism. From here, Bauer, who still believed that an idealistic socialism could be built, constructed a program for socialists that would take nationalism into account but restrict its more dangerous political aspects while preserving and building on its cultural aspects. This program took extraterritorial autonomy as its basis. Extraterritorial autonomy, in Bauer's program, would be recognized as the fundamental social organization of the state, each "nation" consisting of an elective organ responsible for the cultural affairs of its respective nationality, e.g. taxation and civil administration. Each "nation" would thus be free to develop its own national-cultural affairs without interference from the central government, including bilingual education, separate literary development, etc. Nationality in this scheme would be as completely separated from government as religion. For any remaining problems of government, Bauer envisaged a territorial system of federal administration that would have no reference to nationality. 1

In the years before 1917, demands for national autonomy in some form steadily increased in Russia. The smaller national movements tended to favor the idea of extraterritorial autonomy, with Bauer's conception, being the most sophisticated expression of extraterritorial autonomy, proving most popular. From 1903 to 1912 Lenin employed his talents of persuasion in a struggle against these nationalistic demands and especially against those "rightist" Marxist groups that adopted extraterritorial autonomy. The first group to do so in Russia was the Jewish Bund in 1901. At the Second Congress of the RSDLP(b) in London, the Bund walked out of the conference hall when Lenin refused to recognize their claim to exclusive representation of the Jewish "nation," conceived in terms of extraterritorial autonomy.

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This event was largely responsible for splitting the party into Bolshevik and Menshevik factions, and provoked lasting hostility on the part of Lenin toward the Bundists. In 1905 the Socialist Revolutionaries became the first major political organization in Russia to openly advocate federalism. The other major parties—Kadets, Mensheviks, and Bolsheviks—soon found it necessary to change their policies in response. The following year, in January 1906, the Kadets conceded to Poland the right to their own Seim, or parliamentary body. In 1907 several SR parties of minority nationalities—the Ukrainian Hromada, Jewish SERP, Georgian Sarkatvelo, and the Tatar "Tangchelar"—came out in favor of extraterritorial autonomy of the Bauer-Renner type, having been influenced by the Bund and by the recent publication of Bauer's principal work on the subject. That same year the Armenian "Dashnaktsutun" or Federation Party was founded, and adopted extraterritorial autonomy as its program. Each of these groups advocated a federal Russia composed of a combination of territorial national units for the larger more compact peoples with extraterritorial "nations" for the smaller peoples scattered about Russia. In 1908 the Kadet Petr Struve broke ranks with his party by openly advocating federal status for Poland and Finland. In 1910 the Georgian Mensheviks endorsed extraterritorial autonomy and two years later at the "August Conference of Liquidators" the RSDLP (menshevik) admitted that the principle was "not contrary" to the party's platform, and in 1917 officially adopted the principle.

The political conceptions of the Muslims of Russia were remarkably similar to the "South Slav" version of extraterritorial autonomy. This was as true of the pan-Turks as of the pan-Muslims. Both conceptions viewed the "nation" as consisting primarily of individuals, not of territory; both emphasized cultural self-determination, e.g., education, religion, and civil law, rather than the political independence of this "nation." This similarity in conception was not coincidental. As seen in the previous chapter, the Muslims of the Itifak, like most Muslims, did not adopt their political conceptions from the Austrians. Rather both had a common ideological progenitor in the millet system of the Ottoman state, in which each individual legally and culturally belonged to one of the three main religious "nations," or "millet" in Ottoman usage—Sunni Muslim, Greek Orthodox Christian, and Jewish. This millet conception was the

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2 They added the word 'unconditional' to 'right of all nations to self-determination'.
3 The parties of the Duma, Octobrists, Trudoviki, etc., were reluctant to consider federalism under any circumstance. See Hosking, Geoffrey, *The Russian Constitutional Experiment, Government and Duma, 1907-1914* (Cambridge: 1973) for the Octobrists' parliamentary fiasco concerning Finnish autonomy.
4 Bauer, Otto, *Die Nationalitätsfrage und die Sozialdemokratie* (Vienna, 1907).
5 This legal discrimination was a survival of medieval corporate society and was set originally in the Near East by the Caliph Umar in his prescription of 640 AD, which established what forms of behavior were permissible to Muslims, Christians, and Jews, and what was not. In Ottoman Turkey the millet system was gradually abolished in the 1840s and 1850s in favor of individualistic Swiss and French legal codes, under pressure from several Western powers who viewed the millet system as a mechanism for the repression of religious minorities in the Near East. In the Ottoman millet system an individual was not restricted (at least in theory) where he might reside, or with whom he may interact (though intermarriage was rare) and in civil affairs was subject to legal discipline only by his co-religionists. In the Ottoman state this resulted in an extreme mixing of populations with little regard for territory.
dominant conception regulating cultural interaction in other Muslim regions as well, including Central Asia. (In August of 1906 the Muslim Itifak issued a call for Muslim political autonomy as well, without specifying whether this autonomy would possess regional boundaries or not.)

The Menshevik conference of 1912 spurred Lenin finally to take a position on the national question. With the intention of composing an article that would serve as both a rebuttal to the nationalists and a statement of the Bolsheviks' new policy, he traveled to Galicia and read everything he could find relating to nationalism in Central and Eastern Europe. Since the most vocal proponents of nationalism among the Social-Democrats were the Georgians, Lenin requested Stalin to write the article, using Lenin's notes.6 The product of Stalin's efforts was Marxism and the National Question, his first work on nationalism. In this article Stalin began by defining a nation as "an historically evolved, stable community of language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up manifested in a community of culture."7 He observed that nationalism was experiencing an "epidemic." Then Stalin repeated the standard Marxist view that nationalism was incompatible with socialism and contradicted himself by stating that nationalism was everywhere in decline. Finally he stated that "the right of national self-determination" meant the right to political secession, but not if this meant subjection to a national bourgeoisie or to a "lower" culture.

Three points in this work are of interest for further developments. First, Stalin's definition of a nation was decidedly un-Marxist, being rather the definition that a nationalist might give. No statement of Marx would ever lead one to suppose that under capitalism a "nation" could be stable economically and psychologically. This definition was more appropriate to Bauer, whom Stalin was supposed to be rebutting from the standpoint of Marx. Second, Stalin's qualifications on secession revealed a hint of his later "proletarian self-determination" formula, which eventually was adopted by the Party. Third, his view of Muslims, and Azerbaijanis in particular, is clearly revealed as a negative one and one that impinged on his views of the national question. The following passage also reveals that his views were colored by his experiences in the Caucasus:

The Transcaucasian Tatars [i.e. Azerbaijanis] as a nation may assemble, let us say, in their Diet and, succumbing to the influence of their boys and mullahs, decide to restore the old order of things and to secede from the state. According to the meaning of the clause on self-determination they are fully entitled to do so. But will this be in the interests of the toiling strata of the Tatar nation? Can Social-Democrats remain indifferent when the boys and mullahs take the lead of the masses in the solution of the national problem? Should not Social-Democrats interfere in the matter and influence the will of the nation in a definite way? Should they not come forward with a definite plan for

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6 The most capable Georgian, and perhaps the most capable of any Caucasian in the Bolshevik ranks, was Stepan Shaumian. However, Shaumian was in Baku and unavailable.

the solution of the problem which would be most advantageous to the
Tatar masses? 8

Stalin's contradictions, his misrepresentation of both Marx and Bauer, and his
de-emphasis of the right to secession rendered his effort useless as a rebuttal to
nationalists in the RSDLP. Accordingly Lenin took up the struggle himself and in a
series of articles delineated a new policy which he assiduously promoted until it was
finally adopted by the Bolshevik faction of the RSDLP at the Seventh All-Russian
Conference in Petrograd in April, 1917.

As a Marxist, Lenin believed that nationalism was a trait peculiar to the
capitalistic bourgeoisie. In his view, the masses in any society, by definition, could not
be nationalistic. However, unlike Marx, and unlike the orthodox Marxist "leftists" in
the Social-Democratic movement, Lenin paid close attention to the modern
phenomenon of the growth of nationalism in East Europe and Asia. His nationality
policy attempted to bridge this gap between Marxism and the growth of nationalism, a
gap that seemed to most unbridgeable then, and still seems unbridgeable to many today.
To accomplish this, Lenin drew on the Marxist technique of employing the dialectic to
discover order in what appeared to be an in comprehensible tangle of events. (Or,
stated with less sympathy, Marx habitually resorted to the dialectic in order to impose
order on events that otherwise failed to correspond to his scheme.) In the instance of
nationality policy, Lenin used dialectical reasoning to assert that although national
minorities had a right to secede from Russia, which the RSDLP had the duty to publicize
with political agitation, the Party itself must remain centralized, the proletariat of each
national minority having an equal duty to oppose secession. Thus Lenin envisaged the
novel possibility of one branch of the Party promoting secession as a "democratic"
right, even as another branch condemned it as an unmitigated evil. This scheme led to
vehe men critic ism from the leftists, including luminaries of the Social-Democratic
movement such as Rosa Luxemburg, Pyatakov, Bukharin, Karl Radek, the historian M.
Pokrovsky, Lunacharsky, Felix Dzerzhinsky, and Alexandra Kollontai. Their
criticisms forced Lenin to switch the target of his polemics from the right-wing to the
left-wing of the movement. Despite accusations of being a closet nationalist, Lenin's
intention in this scheme was not to promote nationalism in the RSDLP, or to subject
Marx to a new revisionism, but rather to discover an effective means of satisfying the
national urge without sacrificing the unity of socialism, at least until the Revolution
could be completed. The unity of the Party was his insurance that the unity of the
movement would not be lost, while leaving the socialist state free to adopt flexible
means to deal with the mundane requirements of day-to-day government. Actual
secession he compared to a divorce—while in some cases it should be allowed, it was
always undesirable. Insisting that the rapid growth of national movements in the
Russian Empire was a consequence of their frustration in an era of rising capitalism,
Lenin asserted against the leftists that if a socialist regime were to refrain from forced
cultural Russification, then nationalist agitation would cease and the nationalists would
voluntarily refrain from secession, because, in the absence of force, they would no
longer feel constrained by the Great Russian nature of the state. If that failed, the Party
could always rely on the native proletariat to prevent secession. Finally, if these
measures proved insufficient, Lenin stated that the right of secession did not apply in
all cases. Each case would be considered by the Central Committee of the RSDLP(b) on

8 Stalin, p. 24. In Tsarist Russia, "Tatar" commonly referred to all Russian Muslims, and
"Sart" to all Uzbeks, although neither usage is now considered correct.
its own merits, and judged according to whether it was compatible with the long-term interests of the international proletariat.

But what if the Party itself were split by nationalists? This was the source of Lenin's extreme opposition to the proponents of extraterritorial autonomy, who, echoing Bauer, often asserted the compatibility of Marxism with their views. Lenin asserted that extraterritorial autonomy did not "satisfy" nationalism, but encouraged it. Its implementation would place the education of the masses in the hands of national elites, brewing future trouble for the unity of Socialism—and the behavior of the Bund, in seeking to place its "national-socialist" elite between the rank and file of Jewish workers and the Bolshevik Central Committee, threatened the immediate unity of the Party. A more appropriate concession to those who did not wish "bourgeois" national independence, but limited cultural autonomy within the Party, was "national-regional autonomy." This would allow the free play of local ethnic and cultural customs within clear regional boundaries while leaving all important matters such as education under the control of the central government.

Even though Lenin's position on the national question was not the most practical of revolutionary strategies, as the events of 1917-18 were to show, his nationality policy did demonstrate more tactical flexibility than the other political parties. Lenin shared with those parties a faith that the victory of democracy over autocracy would solve all of society's problems (and for Lenin socialism by definition, even if not strictly true in backward Russia, was the exclusive embodiment or receptacle of democracy). Like other scientific utopians and liberals of the 19th century, Lenin believed that the solutions of the 19th century—democracy, technology, and science—would suffice for the problems of the 20th. Nationalism was new to Russia in 1914, and Russians in general could not conceive of sacrificing a stability that had endured for 600 years in order to appease minorities whose complaints seemed to lack substance. Lenin's "solution" did not face the problem of nationalism, but evaded it. His nationality policy gave minority nationalists an impossible choice—they could either secede completely, become "apostates" from socialism, and be cut off from all economic relations with the socialist metropole, or they could remain and be subjected to "democratic centralism," i.e. complete assimilation to Russian language and Russian culture. Like other Russians, Lenin regarded nationalism as basically a plea for attention, a complaint, a negative program that could be solved simply with appeasement and an end to discrimination. Few Great Russians perceived nationalism to be a fundamental change in consciousness, in social identity, a positive program that demanded an end to control and paternalism in politics.

Lenin misjudged nationalism as seriously as did Marx, and for the same reasons. While both were correct in perceiving that the growth of industrial capitalism was drawing the world closer together and making regional economies interdependent, both were incorrect in believing that this economic integration must eventually be translated into political integration. By 1914 the growth of nationalism had made the hope that such integration would occur spontaneously entirely utopian. (Bauer, in fact, was much closer to the truth.) In the end, then, Lenin's strategic innovations and tactical flexibility gave Bolshevik policy towards nationalism an essentially pragmatic character—in 1917 reflecting Lenin's flexibility in achieving the socialist revolution, and afterwards, amounting to an ad hoc strategy designed to ensure the indefinite continuation of Party rule.

Although Lenin made certain innovations to Marxism in nationality policy, he always had a clear conception of the role that nationalism played in Marx's thought. When it came to colonialism, Lenin had little to guide him. For Marx, the various regions of the world fell into a pattern, corresponding to their position in his overall
developmental scheme, with each region being classified according to its stage of development. Marx determined a region's stage according to two criteria: the nature of its economic base (the "factors of production") and the class served by its particular ideological superstructure (the "relations of production"). In its economic base Western Europe had attained the advanced industrial stage characteristic of socialism, but politically and culturally was still dominated by its bourgeoisie. Central and Eastern Europe possessed economies typical of early capitalism, with mercantile relations prevailing over industry which had only begun its development, and were dominated by "feudal" regimes that served the interests of aristocracies. In Marx's view the ancient world had been characterized by an economy that was moving from slavery to feudalism but was still ruled by a form of government he termed "Asian despotism."

Asian despotism had its origins in the hydraulic civilizations of the ancient world. These Asian despots were autocrats and dynasts of virtually unlimited authority, who maintained their power through religious mysticism, and, in Marx's view, still survived as the predominant form of society in modern Asia. According to Marx's scheme, since history progressed in revolutionary "leaps," these developmental stages could not be mixed. A specific political movement could be either socialist or nationalistic, but never both at once. In the same vein, nationalism, being a secular ideology, corresponded to the rise of capitalism, a stage of human development far in advance of slavery and Asian despotism, and hence by definition shared nothing in common with the religious mystification typical of despotism.

Aside from these tentative classificatory schemes, Marx had little to say about Asia and Africa. In his day nationalism had made little headway beyond Europe, and Marx believed that the Socialist Revolution would transform Europe into a Communist society long before capitalism transformed the rest of the world into an industrial one. While Marx at times speculated that the spark which ignited the Revolution would be struck in Ireland, or even India or China, he held out no hope that European socialists could ever rely upon nationalist or socialist forces outside of Europe in their struggle against domestic capital.

In colonial affairs, Lenin's supreme innovation on Marxism was his work *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, published in 1916. In this pamphlet Lenin brought the colonial areas of Asia and Africa into the mainstream of the European socialist movement for the first time. Flowing naturally from the realization that the Socialist Revolution in Europe would not occur before capitalism had transformed Asia, but rather afterwards, Lenin asserted—in opposition to the "Left" Bolsheviks, who maintained that the imminence of the Revolution rendered nationalism everywhere irrelevant—that imperialism, by spreading capitalism around the world, had created the necessary conditions for the appearance of nationalism. An alliance of socialism with colonial national liberation movements, which were directed against native feudal regimes supported by imperialism, was crucial to the success of the Revolution in Europe, whose working class had been bribed with profits extorted from the colonies.

Lenin's work was intended primarily to serve as a justification for conducting a socialist revolution in backward and "feudal" Russia. Convenient also in providing a rationale for his alliance with minority nationalists, Lenin found it difficult to rebut

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9 Africa was even more backward in Marx's view, being simply tribal, and only just beginning settled agriculture.
those same nationalists who later used his same arguments against Soviet rule. An unintended consequence of imperialism was that in perceiving nationalism everywhere in Asia, Lenin negated the possibility of recognizing a politics based on religion. Simply put, in seeing nationalism everywhere, Lenin left no place for religion anywhere. The publication of Imperialism, then, forced Lenin after 1917 to choose between recognizing and compromising with a religious-based nationalism—and thus questioning the appropriateness of a Socialist Revolution in backward Russia—and creating and implementing a Socialist Colonial Policy. Lenin chose the latter.

10 That is, if capitalism (mercantile relations, not industry) is well-developed everywhere, then the spark could have been in Tashkent as well as Petrograd. And since Lenin shifted his argument from science to kritik, the lack of industry was irrelevant.
Appendix Three: Glossary.

ASSR. Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic. All ASSRs were technically part of the RSFSR.

Azrevkom. The Provisional Azerbaijani Military-Revolutionary Committee.

Bashrevkom. The Bashkir Revolutionary Committee.

Bekh-Ivanov. A Turkestan Muslim Communist.

Bibinur. Turkish feminist.

Bokii, Gleb I. First head of Cheka in Turkestan.

CC. The Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party.

CEC. The Central Executive Committee of the RSFSR.

Cheka. The Soviet secret police.

Chokaev, Mustafa. A prominent Jadid leader in Turkestan.

CMMC. The Central Muslim Military Collegium, at first under control of the Muslim Buro, then transferred to Narkomvoen.

Comintern. The Third, or Communist International.

Dagestan. That part of the northern Caucasus between the Terek and Samur rivers. Dagestanis were among the most traditional and isolated of Russia's Muslims.

Dashnaks. Common abbreviation for members of the Armenian Dashnaktsutiun, or "Federation," Party.

Eliava, Shalva Z. A Georgian ex-Menshevik and member of Turkestan Commission.

Engalychev, Said. First chief of the Muslim Commissariat.

Enver Pasha. Ottoman Turkish war-time leader, deserted Bolsheviks in 1921 to join the Basmachis.

ERE. A conspiratorial organization of Central Asian Muslims.

Frunze, General Mikhail V. Chief commander of Soviet forces in Turkestan in 1919-1920.

Gasprinsky (or Gaspraly), Ismail bey. Crimean Tatar known as the "father" of Russian Muslim nationalism. Promoted pan-Turkism and pan-Islam.

Goloshchekin, Filip I. Member of Turkestan Commission.
Harbi Shuro. The Tatars' Central Military Council.

Hummet (or Gümnet). The Party of Azerbaijani Social-Democrats, later the Azerbaijani Communist Party (AKP).

IKKI. *Ispolnitel'niy Komitet Kommunisticheskoi Internatsional*, or the Executive Committee of the Communist International.

Innovation. "Bid'un," or "innovation." Any practice not sanctioned by the Sharia is considered an "innovation" by traditional Muslims and constitutes sacrilege.

Irgash. Former Kokand chief of militia, subsequently became the foremost leader of the conservative Basmachis.

Itifak ul-Muslimiin. Two occurrences: (1) The pre-war political party of middle-class Tatars in the Duma which stressed the unity of all Russian Muslims under pan-Islam. (2) The union of Turkestani Muslims which declared autonomy in Kokand in 1918.

Itihad Party. A party of conservative, mostly rural, Azerbaijanis.

Itihad va Taraqqi. "Union and Progress." A conspiratorial organization of Russian Muslims.

Jadidism. From "jadiid," the Arabic word for "new." Denotes the pre-World War I reform movement among Russia's Muslims, begun by the Crimean Gasprinsky and propagated mainly by Volga Tatars.

Jamal Pasha. Ottoman Turkish war-time leader, deserted Bolsheviks to join Basmachis.

Kaybury. The Caucasian Buro, set up under Sergei Ordzhonikidze for the purpose of occupying and governing the southern Caucasus region.


Khojaev, Fayzullah. Young Bukharan and pan-Muslim, headed People's Soviet Republic of Bukhara.

Kirgiz. Technically, only one of several Kazakh peoples, but in common Russian usage interchangeable with the term Kazakh.

Kobozhev, P.A. Lenin's envoy to Tashkent; was responsible for increasing the representation of Turkestani Muslims in the RKP in 1918–1919.

Kolesov, F. A Russian army lieutenant who headed the Tashkent Soviet in 1917 and 1918.


Kuchik (or Kuchuk) Khan, Sheikh. Led pan-Muslim nationalist movement in northern Iran.

Kulak. A greedy "fist," i.e. a bourgeois peasant.
Kuybyshev, Valerian V. Frunze's Commissar in Turkestan.


Madamin Bek. A Turkestan Jadid who became the chief leader of the nationalist Basmachis.

Maring. Leader of Dutch Communists.

Milli Merkezi Shuro. The Tatars' National Executive Council.

Milli Majlis. The Tatars' National Assembly.

Millet. An Ottoman religious community with legal responsibility for the acts of its members. If accused of a crime a member of a millet had the right to demand trial by his co-religionists under the law and in a court of their millet. The term millet later was extended to encompass the new ideology of nationalism.

Mullah, cleric. Shiites recognize imams and mullahs, or clerics, as final interpreters of Sharia Law, but Sunnis do not. So, technically, there were no mullahs or clerics among Russia's Muslims, but only ulema. The terms are used here to refer to those ulema who administered waqf and ran the traditional Shariah courts.

Murid. A member of the Naqshbandiya order of Sufis.

Musevjet. A political party of Azerbaijanis, predominantly pan-Muslim and pan-Turkish.

Muslim Buro. The Commissariat of Muslim Affairs, later the Central Buro of Muslim Organizations of the RKP(b), then the Central Buro of Communist Organizations of Peoples of the East, and finally the Central Buro of Agitation and Propaganda. The term Muslim Buro continued in common usage throughout these changes.

Muskom. The Central Executive Committee of the Muslim Buro, later renamed the Tatar-Bashkir Commissariat.

muskom. A local branch of the Muslim Buro.

Narbutabekov. A Turkestan Muslim delegate at the Baku Congress of September 1920.

Narkomindel. Narodnii Komissariat Inostrannikh Del, or People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs.

Narkomnats. Narodnii Komissariat Natsional'nostei, or People's Commissariat of Nationalities.

Narkomvoen. Narodnii Voennii Komissariat, or People's Commissariat for War, under the Revolutionary War Council, or Revolyutsionni Voennii Soviet.

Osipov. Tashkent's Commissar of War; led coup in January, 1919.
Pavlovich, M. Russian member of Comintern, in late 1920 replaced E. Stasova as chief of Comintern effort in Asia.

Peters, Y. In August 1920 replaced Bokii as head of Cheka in Turkestan.

Ooschi Ittifak (or Ooshii Itifaaq). Committees of the Poor.

RKP. The All-Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik).

Raskolnikov. The Russian commander who led the Bolshevik assault on Enzeli in May 1920.

Roy, M.N. Chief figure among the Indian Communists.

Rudzutak, Yan Z. Director of the textile industry in Russia in 1919.

RSDLP(b). The All-Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party (Bolshevik).

RSFSR. The Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic, later the USSR.

Ryskulov, Turar. A prominent Turkestani Muslim Communist and an ex-Jadid.

Said-Galiev, Sahib Giray. The principal Tatar "left" Communist, as opposed to Sultan-Galiev who was the chief "right" Communist among the Tatars. Chairman of CEC of Tatar ASSR in 1921.

Safarov, G.I. Member of Turkestani Commission.

Sart. Before the Russian conquest a member of the ruling Iranian stratum in Turkestan, but by the 20th century any Uzbek in common Russian usage.

Shaumian, Stepan. The foremost Georgian Communist until August 1918 when he was shot by the SR regime in Ashkhabad as part of the "21 Commissars" affair.

Shabanova. A Turkish feminist.

Sharīa Law, or Sharī‘ah. The comprehensive body of religious law based on one of the five "rites" of traditional Islamic jurisprudence as derived from the Qur’an, Sunna ("custom," mostly Haddith), Qiyas (analogy), and Ijmaa" ("consensus"). The four Sunni rites are Maliki, Hanafi, Shafi‘i and Hanbali, with Shi‘i constituting a "heretical" fifth rite. All Sharia rites aspire to provide legal and moral guidance to the individual in all possible social situations. Almost all of Russia's Muslims adhere to the moderately liberal Hanafi rite, which accepts Qur’an, Sunna and Qiyas.

Skachko. A Russian member of the Comintern and delegate to the Baku Congress of September 1920.


Stasova, Elena. The Comintern's first director of Asian affairs. Soon replaced by Pavlovich.
Subhi, Mustafa. Principal organizer, and leader, of the first Turkish Communist Party.

Sufi. A member of a mystical fraternity, usually devoted to a particular "saint," or revered theologian or imam. Sufism, or "heterodox Islam," was the main channel of incorporation of pre-Islamic beliefs and practice into Islamic society. The term does not refer to any single practice or belief, but to a great variety of practices and beliefs.

Sovnarkom. Soviet Narodnik Komissarov, or the Soviet of People's Commissars. The ruling body of the RSFSR during the revolutionary period. Superseded in 1919 by the Politburo.

SSR. Soviet Socialist Republic. Technically entirely independent of the RSFSR, but in practice no different from an ASSR.

Sultan-Galiev, Mirsaid. The principal Tatar "right" Communist. Replaced Vakhitov as head of Muskom in August, 1918.

Sultan-zade. The leader and organizer of the first Iranian Communist Party.


Tangshbaev. A prominent Kazakh Jadid.

Turkestan Committee. An ad hoc executive committee in Tashkent in 1917 that proclaimed allegiance to the Provisional Government in Petrograd.

Turkic. Pertains to the non-Iranian and non-Finnic Muslim inhabitants of Russia.

Turkish. Pertains to the inhabitants of Ottoman Turkey.

ulema (or ulama). From the Arabic word for learned ones or savants. Singular: "aalm; plural: "ulamaa. The learning in question refers only to traditional Islamic jurisprudence, or Sharia Law.

Ummah. The nation or community of Muslims, which, according to Sunnis includes only Sunnis, and according to Shiis, only Shiis.

Vakhitov, Mullanur. Menshevik novelist, headed the Muslim Commissariat when it was first formed in January, 1918.


waqf. Singular: waqf; plural: awqaaf. From the Arabic "waqafa," meaning "to preserve." Non-taxable pious endowments typically made by wealthy individuals for the purpose of maintaining public works from its income. A loophole in Sharia Law often allowed the donor to act as his own trustee and thus to administer his own waqf. This rendered waqf a common tax-dodge throughout the Islamic world, in some places, e.g. Central Asia, tying up the bulk of arable land.
Appendix Four: Calendar. ( ) = Old Style.

1905 (8/15) First Congress of pan-Muslim Ittifak.

1906 (1/13) Second Congress of pan-Muslim Ittifak.
(8/16) Third Congress of pan-Muslim Ittifak.

1907 (6/3) Stolypin Law bars Turkestanis from voting in Duma.
(7/?) Anglo-Russian Treaty partitions Iran.

1916 (7/4-12/?) Decree conscripting Central Asians triggers revolt.

1917 (5/14) First All-Russian Congress of Muslims, in Moscow.
Conservative pan-Muslims defeat reformist pan-Muslims.
(7/21) Second All-Russian Congress of Muslims, in Kazan. Most non-
Tatars boycott.
(9/12-16) Bolshevik putsch in Tashkent, fails.
(9/16) Second Congress of Central Asian Muslims, in Tashkent.
Calls for autonomous Turkestan under Sharia Law.
(10/?) Cossack Ataman Dutov takes Orenburg, cuts off Tashkent.
(11/?) Revolt in Dagestan cuts off Baku.
(11/15) Third Congress of Soviets of Central Asia, in Tashkent.
Turksovnarkom under Kolesov rejects Muslim participation.
Announces formation of Turkestani Ittifak.
(11/22) Sovnarkom Appeal to Muslims of Russia and the East.
(12/12) Turksovnarkom decrees abolition of all existing legal institutions
in Central Asia.
(12/13) Fourth Congress of Muslims. Declares National Autonomous
Government in Kokand on Muhammad's birthday.

1918 (1/?) Shamkhor massacre of Russians in Azerbaijan.
(1/3) CEC Declaration of Rights of the Working and Exploited People.
(1/14) Sovnarkom renounces 1907 Persian treaty, orders Russian troops
out of Iran.
Third Congress of Soviets, in Moscow. CC restricts self-determination to proletarians only, begins RSFSR.

Narkomnats creates Commissariat for Muslim Affairs (Muskom).

Red Army retakes Orenburg.

Second Congress of Muslim Military, in Kazan.

Fourth Congress of Soviets of Central Asia. Follows new Petrograd lead and denounces Kokand as "bourgeois."

Tashkent Soviet takes Kokand, destroys Muslim quarter.


Kazan Soviet arrests Harbi Shuro, clashes with Muslims.

Milli Majlis sets up Trans-bulak Republic in east Kazan.

Brest-Litovsk Treaty.

Baku Soviet begins offensive against Musavat.

Narkomnats announces Tatar-Bashkir ASSR, Turkestan ASSR (includes Bukhara, Khiva).

Kazan Soviet storms Trans-bulak Republic.

Dashnaks join Baku Soviet, massacre Muslims in Baku.

Fifth Congress of Soviets of Central Asia. Kobozev begins effort to bring Muslims into Tashkent Soviet.

CMMC begins.

Czech legion revolts, Russian Civil War begins.

First Conference of Muslim Communists, in Moscow. Tatars form "All-Russian Party of Muslim Communists (Bolshevik)."

First Congress of RKP of Central Asia.

Dutov retakes Orenburg, again cutting off Tashkent.

Fifth Congress of Soviets ratifies Constitution for RSFSR.

British cross Central Asian frontier to assist Ashkhabad.
9/? Sultan-Galiev chairs Muskom, CMMC.

10/? Sixth Extraordinary Conference of Soviets of Central Asia.

10/? Turkish and Iranian Communists form "Union for the Liberation of the East." Favors national liberation over social revolution.

11/4 First Congress of Muslim Communists. "All-Russian Party of Muslim Communists" becomes "Central Bureau of Muslim Organizations of the RKP(b)" (Muslim Buro), and placed under control of Muskom.

12/1 Stalin's article: "Do Not Forget the East."

1919 1/? Osipov coup in Tashkent.

2/? First Extraordinary Congress for the Liquidation of the Basmachi in Tashkent.

2/? Seventh Congress of Soviets of Central Asia.

2/22 Bashkirs defect to Soviets.

3/2 First Congress of the Comintern.

3/18 Eighth Congress of RKP(b), in Moscow. RKP begins centralization in all spheres.

3/20 "Central Bureau of Muslim Organizations of the RKP(b)" becomes "Central Bureau of Organizations of Peoples of the East of the RKP(b)." Commissariat of Muslim Affairs (Muskom) becomes Tatar-Bashkir Commissariat.

3/30 Second Congress of RKP of Central Asia, begins regional Muslim Buro.

4/1 British evacuate Central Asia.

spring Denikin invades Dagestan.


6/1 Third Congress of RKP of Central Asia.

9/? Eighth Congress of Soviets of Central Asia. Muslims gain control of CEC.

9/? Fourth Congress of RKP in Central Asia.

9/13 Red Army retakes Orenburg, relieves Tashkent.
10/? Basmachis declare Provisional Government in Ferghana.
11/4 Turkestani Commission in Tashkent, begin policy of appeasement.
11/22 Second Congress of Muslim Communists, in Moscow. Calls for revolution in Asia led by Comintern.
12/2 Eighth Conference of RKP, in Moscow.

1/20 Fifth Congress of RKP of Central Asia, endorses bid for autonomy.
2/11 Hummet becomes Azerbaijani Communist Party.
3/8 8-man team under Stalin decides to split all Muslim areas into narrow ethnic groups.
5/7 Red Army ceases advance, RSFSR treaty with Georgia.
5/10 Stalin returns to active leadership of Narkomnats.
5/18 Raskolnikov seizes Enzeli.
5/22 Bashkir ASSR.
5/27 Tatar ASSR.
5/28 Revolt at Ganja, in Azerbaijan.
6/5 Lenin's Preliminary Theses on the National and Colonial Question.
6/13 Special Commission on Turkestane submits report to Politburo.
6/20 A. Zeki Validov defects, Bashkir revolt begins.
6/20 Iranian Communist Party declared.
6/22 Lenin's Tasks of the RKP in Turkestan.
7/19 Turkestan CC resigns.
7/23-28 Second Congress of the Comintern.
7/26 Lenin and Roy present compromise Report on National and Colonial Questions to Comintern Congress.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8/17</td>
<td>Red Army repulsed from Warsaw.</td>
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<td>8 late</td>
<td>Revolt in Dagestan.</td>
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<td>8/26</td>
<td>Kirgiz ASSR.</td>
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<td>9/1-8</td>
<td>Congress of Peoples of the East at Baku.</td>
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<td>9/1</td>
<td>Frunze invades Bukhara.</td>
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<td>9/5</td>
<td>Bukharan People’s Soviet Republic declared.</td>
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<td>9/8</td>
<td>First meeting of Council of Propaganda and Action.</td>
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<td>10/1</td>
<td>CMMC abolished.</td>
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<td>10/7</td>
<td>Comintern’s Tashkent Military School begins, under M.N. Roy.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/14</td>
<td>Politburo decision on Tasks of RKP in Localities Inhabited by Eastern Peoples. Social revolution in Turkestan begins.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/21</td>
<td>Stalin’s inspection tour in the Caucasus.</td>
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<td>11/6</td>
<td>Narkomnats assumes direct control over all ASSRs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/22</td>
<td>Eighth Congress of Soviets, in Moscow.</td>
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1921 1/?  "Central Buro of Communist Organizations of Peoples of the East" becomes "Central Buro of Agitation and Propaganda among Peoples of the East."

1/?  Caucasus Mountaineers’ ASSR.

Dagestan ASSR.

1/16  Top cadre of Turkish Communist Party murdered in Turkey.

2/15-28 Kavburo invades Georgia.

2/21  Georgian SSR.

2/21  Colonel Muhammad Reza Khan seizes power in Teheran.

2/26 Khan’s regime. Narkomindel treaty with Iran, first official act of Reza

2/28  Narkomindel treaty with Afghanistan.

3/16  Narkomindel treaty with Turkey. RSFSR begins military aid.
3/16 Narkomindel trade agreement with Britain.
4/11 Turkestan ASSR, excludes Bukhara and Khiva.
6/? Turkmenistan ASSR.
8/? Sixth Congress of RKP of Central Asia.
9-10 Reza Khan subjugates Gilan, Tabriz, Khorasan.
10/? Tenth Congress of Soviets of Central Asia.
11/10 Enver Pasha defects to Basmachis.

1922 early Council of Propaganda and Action terminated.
Begin extensive purges in Central Asian parties.

4/22 Kirgiz ASSR.
4/? Enver declares an independent Turkestan under Sharia Law.


5/25 Lenin's first stroke.

8/8 Enver killed.

9 Stalin accuses Lenin of "national liberalism" for compromise USSR plan.

1923 6 Stalin denounces Sultan-Galiev, afterwards arrested.

1924 10/14 Tadjik ASSR.
10/27 Kazakhstan ASSR.
Uzbekistan SSR.
Turkmenistan SSR.
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