

MUSLIM EDUCATIONAL REFORMS IN RUSSIA AND CENTRAL ASIA DURING TWENTIETH CENTURY: CASE STUDY OF JADEEDISM

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Abstract: Islam has always been embedded into the Central Asian life till the Soviet occupation of the region. Islam remained an integral part of socio-cultural and political life of Turkestan (old name of the region). By the end of nineteenth century, different Muslim reformist movements emerged in the broader Muslim world including Central Asia, South Asia, Russia, Ottoman Empire and North Africa. One of them were the 'Jadeed movement' in Russia and Central Asia. It tried to educate the Muslims in order to achieve lost glory and to get maximum rights under Czar occupation. This article tries to explain the reasons for such responses. It also tries to address questions like what were the social bases of support to Jadeedism? What were the Russian and Soviet responses to it? What achievements it got and what were the reasons for its failure? And what impact Jadeedism had on the social, cultural and political life of Central Asia during Soviet occupation? The research is based on historical-interpretive and explanatory approach. The research is qualitative in nature and is based on secondary data. Islamic Theory of State has been applied.

Key words: Russian and Soviet occupation, Muslims Responses, Jadeedism, Islamic state.

INTRODUCTION

Islam came into the modern Central Asian region with Arab merchants. Nevertheless, it was the military expeditions by the Muslim governors of then Iraq which provided Islam power to penetrate into this region. In 644 A.D., Ubaidullah ibn Zayyad led the first military expedition towards *Mawara an Nehr* (then Arabic name of Central Asia) followed by another expedition led by Qutaiba ibn Muslim during 670s (Polonskaya and Malashenko 2008). With the passage of time, Islam became an integral part of Turkestan (then name of the region). The Samanid dynasty declared Islam as official religion of Turkestan (Naumkin 2005). Yasvia, Qadiria, Naqshbandia, and Kubravia were the important Sufi groups which got influence over Central Asian society. Clergy got an important position in the rulers' courts. Sufism also flourished in the region. Seljuks replaced Samanids while Mongols ousted Seljuks. Tamerlane established a centralized rule in most parts of modern day Central Asia. But his death led to the fragmentation of the centralized rule into many regional rulers. Nevertheless,

Shybanis tried their best to keep rest of Turkestan united. It was a successful attempt till the advent of Sea trade routes due to which traditional "Silk Routes" lost their importance, hence revenue. This monetary loss weakened the Shybanis dynasty which ultimately broke down into three independent Khanates; Samarkand, Khiva and Kokand. During these eras in Central Asia, huge advancement was done in the fields of art, literature, poetry, philosophy, science, music and architecture. With the help of local traditions and norms, Muslim conquerors brought in social, economic and political stability in Central Asia. The region predominantly practices Hanafi school of thought of Sunni sect however, a small portion of Shiite population also lives in Gornobadakhshan (Tajikistan), and Samarkand and Bukhara (Uzbekistan) regions.

Czar occupation of three Khanates completed in 1881. Major reasons for this occupation was rivalry with the British India (which led to the [in]famous Great Game), need of lands for cotton cultivation, and new markets for Russian products. Although, Czar changed some of the traditional Muslim institutions especially

Qazicourts with Peoples' Courts and control over Muslim pilgrimage to Macca, positive endeavor by Czar in Central Asia was the introduction of modern education system.

Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 brought Soviet forces to Turkestan. Initially, Soviets did not touch the existing socio-economic and religious set up of the region but when got strength within the whole of Soviet Union, massive oppression started in this region. Turkestan was divided among five new nation-states; Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan without the consent of local population. Stalin deliberately divided ethnicities into more than one state for the purpose of divide and rule.

Two very important movements during the Russian and Soviet rules in Central Asia are worthy to mention. These movements include the Jadeed Movement and the Basmachi Movement. Although, both the movements were for Islamic revivalism, yet they were totally different in their motives, strategies and operations. Several times these movements fought against each other. Let us discuss Jadeedism as a case study.

Jadeed Movement

Many modern reform movements emerged by the end of twentieth century in different parts of the Muslim world especially in the Indian sub-continent, Egypt, Turkey and Russia. Prominent propagators of these movements were Jamal Uddin Afghani, Muhammad Abdu, Muhammad Iqbal, Syed Ahmad Khan, Ismael Beg Gaspirali (commonly known as Gasprinski), and Rasheed Rida etc. The Tatar Muslims introduced this school of thought in Russia which spread over to Central Asia later on. Khiva and Bukhara (now in Uzbekistan) remained the main centers of Jadeedism in Central Asia.

People of Central Asia always remained under the influence of clergy in the form of local imams who adhere to traditional school of Islamic thought. They disliked innovations in Islam or modernization of the religion brought by the Jadeeds. Some of the Muslim scholars and intellectuals of Central Asia and Russia challenged

the orthodox authority of this school of thought in religious affairs. They wanted reforms in the religion on modern lines. People like Vali khanov, Ismael Beg Gasprinski, ShahabudinMirjani, Abdul QayyumNasiri, Ahmad Danish, Abdur Rauf Fitrat, SaddruddinAini, Khoja Behbudi, Abdul QadirShakuri, Ajzi, Haji Moin, al-Qursavi and Abdur Rashid Khan were the prominent preachers of this school of thought.

Before the Jadeed movement was formally inaugurated by Gasprinski, it was ChokanValikhanov who advocated the unification of Asian and Russian cultures together (Polonskaya and Malashenko 2008). He said that for the sake of modernizing the Central Asian population, religion must be put aside from social and political matters. According to Adeeb Khalid, "they called themselves as Ziyalilar (intellectuals) or Taraqqiparwar (progressive)" (Khalid 1999). Al Qursavi, a Jaded declared that ijtehad (independent reasoning) is inevitable to pull out the Muslims from their miseries. He severely criticized blind submission of the Muslims towards clergy. Traditional mullah did not like him and issued a fatwa (religious declaration) to kill Qursavi(Polonskaya and Malashenko 2008). However, he managed to escape to Constantinople.

Another Jaded was ShahabuddinMirjani. He was a teacher in a religious school. He wanted to revive real Tatar culture in Central Asia. He left that religious school and joined the Jadeed (modern) school where he started teaching. These Jadeed schools used to teach modern subjects like maths, algebra, art, science and Russian literature beside Islamic teachings (Rashid 2000). Mirjani wanted religious reforms. His proposed reforms were based on the following lines; "let every Muslim find his own answer in Quran to question about religion, put an end to tradition to unquestioning submission, remove old dogmatic scholastic books from Madrassahs, introduce the teachings of Quran, Hadith and the history of Islam, permit the teaching of secular science and the Russian language at religious schools and bring the Muslims back to roots of early Islamic culture (Lazzerini. 1992)" One of Mirjani's students was

Hussain Feitskhani, who planned to modernize the madrassahs curriculum. Abdul Qayyuni, a Tatar poet, also played an important role in this modernization (Zenkovskiy.d.).

Another religious figure who joined Jadeed School was Ahmad Danish. Danish had an appointment of Mudarris (Professor) at a religious institution. He also demanded ijtehad in the religion. This school wanted Muslims to participate in political matters so that they can have a check on the appointment, working, and replacement of the leadership according to the modern means. Jadeed convened a Pan-Islamic Conference in 1905 under the leadership of Abdur Rashid Ibrahimov where they established the "Alliance of Muslims" (Hiro 1995). Through this Alliance, they tried to convince the local population that many people across the Muslim world endorse their thinking.

Jadeed thought Russia as a "necessary evil" (Hiro 1995) and were of the view that Russian imperialism will eventually bring modernization and development in the region. They wanted to reform education system according to western lines therefore, Russian presence was perceived as a potential help. Although, Czar's policy towards Central Asian madrassahs was of non-interference (Zenkovskiy.d.) yet it tried to introduce modern education in them. Another reason to support Russia was Jadeed animosity with Qadimists. The major slogan of Jadeed was "modernization, Pan-Turkism and Pan-Islamism." Russian authorities also showed relatively soft image to Jadeed because they were potential allies for them in Central Asia. The authorities helped them to publish their material as well.

Jadeed used not only books and magazines for their purpose; they also used theatre, stage shows, journals, newspapers, and poetry to spread their message. One of the most prominent Jaded poets was Abdur Rauf Fitrat. He tried utmost to revive the social structure of society through his poetry. He wanted geography and history to be included in the curriculum because these subjects, according to him, were extremely important to study. Change was inevitable to him. In one of his articles, he wrote "it is impossible to deny the changes wrought by

humans in the world. Are these changes progress or decline? Of course, progress, and they have not stopped at the point to our day. The humanity has progressed from its creation to our days, and after our time too, it will progress (Khalid 1999)." He accused clergy for the downfall of Muslims stating that isolation from world cultures, modern technology and sophisticated weapons and sectarianism in the form of Sunni-Shia conflict is the product of clergy (Zenkovskiy.d.).

One of the plays of Haji Muin described that "when will we the Muslims of Turkestan save ourselves from this ignorance? Ignorance has turned us into drunkards, pederasts, fools and even wastrels. Therefore, positive changes must be brought in education and political and social behavior and this change will come through ijtehad (Khalid 1999)." The Jaded publishers in Central Asia started publishing the work of different modern philosophers, poets and writers. Books imported mainly from Turkey and Iran were translated into native languages by these publishers.

The sectarian rift within traditionalists and sectarian violence of 1910 in Bukhara opened new ways of popularity for the Jaded. The sectarian violence in the form of Shia-Sunni violence proved as blessing for Jaded as they got more support from the common people. However, during the World War I, Jaded along with Qadimists as well as common people fought a war against czar but were crushed down by the Russian forces (Hiro 1995). During the czar-Soviet conflict over Turkestan, the region was declared as autonomous region by the local fighters but with the triumph of Soviet forces in Russia, "declared autonomy" of Turkestan was challenged by the Soviet authorities.

During 1910-1916 cotton production and its sale to international markets increased the per capita income of Central Asian population. A new middle class emerged which wanted to free itself from chieftaincy and feudalism. This class of ethnic Tajiks and Uzbeks tilted towards modernization. This new class produced many of Central Asian Jaded. Ahmad Danish, a poet and Bukhara statesman went to Russia on an official

visit where he minutely observed the Russian schools and their educational system. He got so impressed of that system that he criticized Islamic clergy for not providing Muslim students with modern education.

The Andijon uprising of 1898 and its subsequent failure forced many people in the region to think about the causes for the failure of that uprising. One of the conclusions was that since the uprising was led by the traditional mullahs, response to Russian occupation must have been in modern and western style (Pierce 1960). Despite opposition from the conservative clergy, the popularity of Jaded continued to mount. By the end of 1908, there were about 100 jaded schools in Turkestan.

Jaded started massive campaign to project their agenda through several newspapers and journal including; *UrtoOziningUmruguzorligi* (Middle Asian Observer) in 1905, *Tarakki* (Progress) in 1906, *Khurshid* (The Sun) in 1906, *Shohrat* (Glory) in 1907, *Azie* (Asia) in 1908, *Tudzhar* (Trader) in 1908, *Bukhari Shareef* (Bukhari Shareef) in 1912, *Samarkand* (Samarkand) in 1914, *Sada-i-Fergana* and *Sada-i-Turkestan* (the Voice of Fergana and voice of Turkestan) in 1914 & 1915, *Islah* (to Correct) in 1915 and *Yurt* (Homeland) in 1916 (Pierce 1960). Two magazines for women were also launched. They were *Alam-e-Niswan* (the world of Women) and *Suyum Bike* (Khalid 1999). They also brought books from foreign lands and translated them into local languages.

Slowly and gradually, Soviet authorities started consolidating their powers in today's Central Asia. Initially, the Soviet authorities were more open and supportive to Central Asian people. On 16th December 1917, the Council of Peoples' Commissars of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (RSFSR) addressed an appeal from Central Asia, which declared that all the people of the "Republic" have equal rights. They have right to religion, indigenous values, customs and beliefs and their local laws will be implemented instead of old czar laws. This declaration also called czar as "Oppressors of Russia." (Lenin 1962)

Although, Soviets tried to win the confidence of local people, the locals declared Turkestan's autonomy on 13th December 1917 and started a resistance movement against the Red Army. Not only Turkestan but Kazakhstan-Kyrgyzstan was also declared as an autonomous region by Kazakh National Congress in December 1917. Both these regions were recaptured by the Red Army by January 1918. Later in February 1918, Kokand was also captured by the Red Army which completed the Soviet invasion of Central Asia. When the invasion was completed in Central Asia, it was declared as Turkestan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic on 30th April, 1918. (Hiro 1995; Singh 2004) It was followed by a rapid process of nationalization in Turkestan.

Ismael Beg Gasprinski was born in 1851 in the village of Ajikoi in Crimea region of Russia. He started his early education from a religious school. After completion of primary schooling, he joined a Russian school. After completion of his studies he became a part of Russian military as a lieutenant. The Russian military culture influenced the thinking of Gasprinski on modern lines. He was very uncomfortable with the situation of Muslims of Russia. He travelled to countries France, Turkey, Northern Africa, and Russia which broadened his political vision.

Gasprinski strongly advocated the inclusion of Muslim lands into Russia. (Polonskaya and Malashenko 2008). He wanted these territories to be included into Russia in order to make them strengthened. He also advocated *ijtihad* in Muslim political matters. His slogan was "Dilde, Fikirde, IshteBirlik" i.e. "unity of thought and action." (Abduvakhitov 1994) He sought help from Russian authorities to establish new *maktab* schools. Gasprinski believed that "modern life and capabilities were not secrets reserved for Europe and its offshoots, but were available to all societies willing to face the challenge of change, and willing to sacrifice worthless traditions for progress." (Abduvakhitov 1994) In 1884, he was successful to establish the first *Jadeed* school in Crimea. This was the first step towards the revolutionization of Muslim culture and politics in Russia.

The father of Jadeed in Central Asia is considered as Sadrudin Aini who had a Qadimist background as well. However, the first Jadeed School established in Central Asia was in Tashkent which was established by Munawwar Qari in 1901. A similar kind of school was established by Behbudi in Samarkand in 1903. The total number of Jadeed schools in Central Asia at the time of Soviet occupation was 5000. (fisher 1988) Qari encouraged his student to visit Turkey and Azerbaijan for further modern studies. (Pierce 1960) Most of the members of this movement were literate people from all the walks of life. Majority of them belonged to the middle class. There were few businessmen and low level state officials who also supported the movement. Inspired by the "Young Turks" revolution of 1908, the Jadeed also preached a two way strategy in Central Asia; enlightenment and then political struggle. (Polonskaya and Malashenko 2008) To further the process of enlightenment through the freedom of press and delivering lectures, "The Aid", a cultural society was established by the Jadeed. (Zenkovskyn.d.) The Basmachis supported by Qadimists were also fighting to gain control of different Central Asian cities. During that time, Junaid Khan was one of the strongest Basmachi leaders in Khiva. Junaid Khan along with Isfandyar Khan, another Basmachi, attacked and captured Khiva. The fall of Khiva into the hands of Junaid Khan proved to be very fatal for the Jadeed. Junaid Khan persecuted most of them. However, some of them were lucky enough to escape to Tashkent where they established "Young Khivan Group" (Nahaylo and Swoboda 1990) to fight against Junaid and to give refuge to other Jadeed. When joined by hundreds of other Jadeed who fled from Khiva and Samarkand, the Young khivans requested help from the Soviet authorities against the alleged oppression of Junaid Khan. (Kaushik 1970) Responding to the appeal of Young khivans, Moscow declared Junaid Khan an oppressive and tyrant man. The Soviets sent a military expedition to Khiva on 25th December 1919 which got success and drove Junaid Khan out to Karakum Desert by the end of June 1920 (Becker 1968).

Young khivans established their government in Khiva under the patronage of Moscow. This government was headed by Niyaz Yousapov. (Marwat 1985) They also cooperated with the Red Army in its Central Asian occupation. A similar kind of group named "Young Bukharans" was established in Bukhara by the Jadeed in 1909. Following the footsteps of Young khivans, Young Bukharans also invited the Red Army to attack and seize Bukhara. The Red Army swiftly responded and occupied Bukhara and installed a new government of Jadeed under Faizullah Khoja. (Marwat 1985) In return to the establishment of Jadeed government in Bukhara, the Soviet forces took all the wealth of Bukhara to Moscow declaring that it is a gift by the great people of Bukhara.

This act of the Soviet authorities annoyed some of the Jadeed. Head of the Young Bukharans group, Osman Khoja was at the forefront of those who disliked this act. He started secret negotiations with Enver Pasha¹ which resulted in a treaty between Pasha and Osman Khoja. This treaty declared that both of them will fight against the Red Army. Since then Jadeed had been divided into two camps; the nationalists and the pro-revolution. (Wheeler 1964) Nationalists wanted to struggle for the enlightenment of Central Asian society without the patronage of Soviet authorities while pro-revolutionaries wanted Soviet support and patronage. This division was the strongest jerk to Jadeed struggle. Already few in numbers, the division made them vulnerable to be washed out.

The pro-revolution Jadeed were given the task by Soviet authorities to recruit maximum number of Communist Party members from Central Asia. The Central Committees of the Communist Party in Khiva and Bukhara, elected in September 1920, mostly had Jadeed as their members. (Khalid 1999) The policies of Turkestan Commission established by Soviet authorities made some of Jadeed uneasy. The Central Committee of the Party rejected the demand of Jadeed raised by Validov to include the Muslims from Central Asia in the Turkestan Commission. On the other hand, General Frunze, the head of the Commission was also unhappy with the monopoly of Uzbek

Muslims in the administration which, wanted to retain their monopoly and were against the policies of the commission. (Zenkovskyn.d.)

Once the Soviet authorities consolidated their power in Central Asia, the central committee of the Party started cleansing itself and administration from Jadeed. Although, Jadeed were allowed to retain the membership of the Communist Party, they were not included into the new Turkestan government. Moscow perceived Jadeed as potential threat to their authority in the region; therefore, they decided to purge them out of Central Asia. They thought that Jadeed may demand independence of Turkestan.

In order to divide the Central Asian population in general and Fergana valley in particular on ethnic, linguistic and regional bases, the Soviet authorities under the rule of Stalin divided the region into five new states. This division proved fatal for the struggle of not only Basmachis but Jadeed also. This division brought new identities and new problems which still exist in Fergana valley. The division never let the people of this region to get united against any Soviet move.

This was the time of Jadeed decline. Due to internal division and the Soviet policies, the movement got weakened and was unable to re-organize itself. Most of the leaders of the movement met with violent deaths. Some of them were killed by Qadimists or Basmachis while others were crushed by Soviet authorities. Some disappeared during late 1920s and early 1930s. In order to have local support, Soviet authorities created a new class of young Central Asians who replaced the old Jadeed and were groomed in total Russian style; Adeeb Khalid called them class of 38. (Khalid 1999) This class best served the Soviet interests in Central Asia. Although, Jadeed tried to revive themselves after the Central Asian independence but they were overwhelmed by Qadimists. Moreover, governments of independent Central Asia did not show any interest in the revival of Jadeedism which led to another death of Jadeed in Central Asia.

CONCLUSION

Jadeed Movement was a response to Russian colonization of Turkestan. It wanted to reform the societies on modern lines. Jadeed thought that traditional-outdated educational system was the fundamental reason for demise of Muslim Central Asia. They had the thinking that until and unless Muslims do not get modern education especially that of science, technology, logic and reasoning, they will never be able to come out of their miseries. Jadeed thought that change is inevitable and it's important for the Muslims to cope up with the situation by adopting modern trends instead of competing against them.

Jadeed of central Asia not only referred to the then innovations of science and technology but also stressed on the teachings and contributions of Muslim scientists especially AbourihunBiruni and Ibn Khaldun. They were against sectarianism which, according to them was the product of traditional mullahs and a major reason for the downfall of the Muslims. They preached 'Modernization and Pan-Islamism and Pan-Turkism.'

Although, Jadeed used all the available means of communication to attract the general public, the movement like its counterparts in other Muslim lands could not succeed due to less public interest, internal division, and Soviet oppression against them. Nevertheless, it had certainly profound effects on the future socio-political life of the region.

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