



## POLITICAL ACTIVITY OF THE TURKESTAN JADIDS IN THE ASSESSMENTS OF ENGLISH-SPEAKING RESEARCHERS OF THE SECOND HALF OF THE 20TH - THE FIRST DECADES OF THE 21ST CENTURIES

Journal Website:  
<https://masterjournals.com/index.php/crjh>

Copyright: Original content from this work may be used under the terms of the creative commons attributes 4.0 licence.

Submission Date: February 01, 2023, Accepted Date: February 05, 2023,

Published Date: February 10, 2023

Crossref doi: <https://doi.org/10.37547/history-crjh-04-02-02>

**Azizbek Tursunmetov**

Junior Research Fellow The Centre Of “Historiography And Source Studies” The Institute Of History Of The Academy Of Sciences Of The Republic Of Uzbekistan

### ABSTRACT

The article takes into consideration the assessments of English-speaking authors about the political stage of the Turkestan Jadids, the viewpoints are notable for the fact that the trends of the times makes an impact on the interpretation of the problem, presenting which topics come to the fore.

### KEYWORDS

Jadids, Ulamo, All-Islamic Congress, State Duma, Turkic Federalist Party, Shuroi-Islomiya, Shuroi-Ulamo.

### INTRODUCTION

Muslim reformism, which first took shape as a social and cultural phenomenon, embraced at the end of the 19th century many countries of the East, pursued political goals that received soil at the beginning of the twentieth century. In the Russian Empire, Muslim reformers received their "the high point" after the February Revolution of 1917. But its root proceed from political awakening in 1905. Afterwards political events taking place in different regions, at that time of the

former Russian Empire, such as elections to representative bodies of power, ended with an armed seizure of power on the ground by the Bolshevik party, often after the defeat in the elections and the lack of a chance to lead the legally. This happened on the territory of the Turkestan General-Governorate in November 1917, as a result of the unstable political situation that arose after the seizure of power by the



Bolsheviks in Tashkent, local political forces formed their own government, moving to the city of Kokand.

### THE MAIN RESULTS AND FINDINGS

In the monograph “120 years of Russian influence in Central Asia” edited by E. Allworth, one of the authors of the monograph, Helene Carrere d'Encausse, spoke about the first attempt by Central Asian Muslims to participate in the political life of the empire in 1905-1914. This discourse has been enriched with known facts about delegates from Turkestan who face various restrictions. Helene Carrere d'Encausse speaks of the non-participation of the representatives of Turkestan in the convening of the first Duma, due to legislative restrictions, as well as an overly liberal atmosphere of debate, due to which it stopped its work. The first political experience, according to the author, was useful. The author writes about the political events that formed the promotion of ideas for granting broader rights to the population. And the rally, which D'Encausse mentions, that took place in March 1906 in Tashkent, as well as previous events, according to the author, determined qualitative changes in the "awakening" of the population: "These demands remained unfulfilled, but the movement that led to them, served the political experience of Central Asia and the awakening of national self-consciousness [1].”

C. d'Encausse dwells on the political initiatives of the Jadids and analyzes the materials of their newspapers. The author gives a brief description of the criticism of the tsarist authorities and representatives of the ulamo in the region, and also explores the participation of Muslims in political associations. The involvement of representatives of Central Asia in the political processes of the empire can be seen, as the author notes, in their independent attempts to participate in the Muslim congresses of 1905 and 1906, the articulation of demands for their rights in the region and elections to the Tashkent City Duma.

C. d'Encausse notes that “during the revolutionary years, the political activity of the Muslims of the Russian Empire manifested itself through two new aspects: efforts to create an Islamic association and the participation of Muslims in the Duma. In each of these cases, the role of the Central Asian representatives remained severely limited [2].” Another scholar A. Hagen noted that the realities of the region were determined by the force that had the greatest military and political power, saying that: “However, pretty soon, forces based outside the region again began to dominate in Central Asia, since the Bolsheviks and their Red Army won control over Central Asia in civil war. Thus, the internal struggle in Central Asia again had to be regulated by the power that possessed the military force necessary to maintain political control [3].” Considering the Russian revolution of 1905, the researcher assesses the political maturity of Turkestan Jadidism.

Another important point, according to the American historian A. Khalid, is the poor knowledge of the Russian language and the setting of Muslim cultural reforms of the Turkestanis as opposed to democratic reforms, which, in his opinion, distanced the Turkestanis from the majority of Muslim delegates at the All-Russian Congress of Muslims in 1905-1906 [4]. In such a context of uncertainty and some doom, there have been presented a picture of the first experience of the political participation of the Turkestanis in the State Duma and the All-Russian Congress of Muslims. Therefore, A. Khalid refers to the failures of the Jadids as the restrictions imposed by the imperial regime on the path of the political participation of the progressives, and their unpreparedness and immaturity in comparison with their Tatar counterparts. For example, speaking about the “quality” of the political participation of Russian Muslims and their broad programmatic discourse, as well as their rapprochement with the Cadets, he



writes: “In Central Asia, on the contrary, there have not yet been any groups capable of participating in such an enterprise. This discrepancy between the language of the programs of the Muslim political movement and the cultural debates of Turkestan is remarkable in determining the marginal position that Turkestan occupied in the political movement [5]. Nevertheless, the decisions of the All-Russian Muslim Congresses have sunk into oblivion, and here the author seeks to summarize the futility of political experience: “In any case, the decisions of the congresses never took practical forms, and the organs of the all-imperial organization of the Muslim community remained only on paper [6].”

The February Revolution of 1917 further strengthened the accents of the political struggle in Turkestan. And, above all, this applies to new forms of rivalry among Muslim elites. As A. Khalid noted: “Now thoughts about the state are central to the future, and the policy of warnings (exhortations) is giving way to the policy of mobilization, leaving it to the elections. [7]”

The features of this period, in his opinion, are explained by the very nature of disagreements and contradictions among the elites for national, and as a result, political leadership in the region. The struggle for political influence in society is resumed through participation in the work of Muslim congresses and national organizations: “Shuroi-Islomiya” and “Shuroi-Ulamo”. English-speaking researchers considers the events after February 1917 as a period of active confrontation among the Muslim community, debates about the political status of the region and national consolidation. Above mentioned A. Hagen in the monograph "The Establishment of National Republics in Soviet Central Asia" speaks of the Jadids as the harbingers of the national community: a community united by a common culture and associated with a clearly demarcated territory [8]. At the same time, the

author noted the rivalry between the Jadids and the ulamo, in which the victory of the ulamo in the summer of 1917 in the State Duma became exponential, indicating the weak position of the reformers in society [9]. Thus, the creation of a national modern state was the cherished goal of the Jadids according to A. Hagen. Earlier, A. Khalid said in a similar way that after the February Revolution, for the Jadids, the main thing was the transformation of the Muslim community into a nation, and only unsuccessful rivalry with the conservative wing eventually determined their positions [10]. Another author A. Sengupta in the monograph “The Formation of the Uzbek Nation-State. A study in Transition” talks about the Jadids presenting their views, which are an alternative to the state structure of Turkestan. In particular, Munavar Kory is described as a person who stood up not only for ideas about the revival of cultural and spiritual life, but also for the achievement of national freedom [11]. The statements about debatable issues of identity and the nation-state, supplemented by statements about the manifestation of a romantic national outlook, Jadid newspapers in which there are references to history, religion and geography, as well as the identification of Turkestan as a homeland [12]. A. Sengupta speaks of a radical rethinking of the concept of native territory, which is now viewed not through dynasties, but through the concept of identity [13]. According to the researcher, the concepts of nation and identity become central in the publications of the Jadids, coming from ideas known since ancient times, through the coexistence of the Iranian and Turkic peoples [14].

Often mentioned in the literature, the First All-Muslim Congress in Moscow in May 1917 is considered from the point of view of the articulation of the political demands of Turkestan at the All-Russian level. One of the leading English-speaking experts on the Jadids, A. Khalid, called these meetings not particularly effective in the long run, since the controversy about the



political form of the Muslim state system became a stumbling block and alienated its participants from each other [15]. The American researcher S. Daulet in the article “The first all Muslim congress of Russia Moscow, 1–11 May 1917” speaks of a serious dilemma of political development between cultural and territorial autonomy, in which the federalist position of the delegates from Turkestan and the Caucasus contradicted the vowels from Tatarstan. The author cites the arguments of the latter, who nevertheless were polar in the person of Gayaz Ishakov and Fatih Karimov [16].

However, authors such as Helene Carrere d'Encausse and H. Komatsu speak of the desire for territorial autonomy driven by the idea of getting rid of foreign presence and the unity of the region by the delegates from Turkestan [17]. Further actions, according to d'Encausse, involved following the stated strategy, seeking to expand the rights of Muslims in Turkestan, who encountered the rejection of European functionaries [18]. The researcher noted that the second and third All-Russian Congresses of Muslims were held without participants from Turkestan due to the dedication to purely Tatar and Caucasian topics.

The adoption of the program by the Turkic Federalist Party (Türk Adam-i Markaziyat Firqasi), or rather its corrected version of the Azerbaijani Musavatist Party at the Third All-Russian Congress of Muslims in May 1917, is described by H. Komatsu in a collective monograph edited by H.V Paksoy “Central Asia Reader. The Rediscovery of History”. What the author of the chapter, H. Komatsu, draws attention to, is that the correction of the program was made to please the ulamo, and the goals of the program were to establish the national autonomy of Turkestan as part of federal Russia. At the same time, one should notice the contradictions in the terminology used, calling the region either national and cultural autonomy, or

independent Turkestan. Nevertheless, the argumentation of H. Komatsu is quite convincing when he said that territories with a national majority should be content with national or territorial autonomy, and in the case of Turkestan - with a national republic [19]. The Japanese researcher noted that the key problem was disagreements with the conservative wing of the party on the distribution of previously expropriated land and women's rights, which presented certain difficulties in participating as a unit in the All-Russian Congresses of Muslims. According to the researcher, the difference from the Azerbaijani party was based on local specifics, ultimately directed against their colonial stay. And the party itself was the original embodiment of all the Muslim forces of Turkestan: “The Turkic Federalist Party attempted to develop the first and systematic political program independent of the Russian political parties in Turkestan and promoted the idea of an autonomous Turkestan among the population, albeit in a limited area. And around this, such talented young intellectuals as Fitrat began to search for the national history and traditions of Turkestan. When the Musavatists in Azerbaijan decided to adopt the blue banner of the Ilkhanids as their symbol, Fitrat remembered the golden age of the Timurids [20].”

A. Khalid connects the political participation or Jadids agency among the Russian Muslim political actors, and such provisions define the Jadids of Turkestan as pro-imperial people, and not vice versa. He emphasizes: “The irony of all this is that the Muslim political movement represented as Ittifaq was nothing less than pan-Russian – it sought to speak for the Muslim community defined by its membership in the Russian Empire and therefore it created (or sought to create) new connections among the various Muslim communities that were conquered or annexed by the Russian Empire [21].”



The representation of the two currents of the Muslim elite is considered from the point of view of the struggle for dominance in their environment. A. Khalid distances himself from positions that perceived them as apolitical, as the result of insignificant attempts to articulate political demands, and therefore marginal. The author talks about the role of the 1917 revolution, which presented an opportunity to strengthen positions without making political demands: “The Russian revolution became a practical test of any existing social bond in a vast multi-national empire. Among the Muslim population of Turkestan, it did not take the form of a class or ethnic conflict, but became a struggle for cultural and moral authority among its community, defined in cultural terms [22]”. Although in his text Khalid already pointed out the existence of a political demand for territorial autonomy on the part of the Jadids, therefore his thesis that they do not have political views, or do not voice them publicly, is difficult to accept.

## CONCLUSION

Thus, the political activity of the Turkestan Jadids is represented, on the one hand, by representations about the restrictions imposed by the political system of the Russian Empire, as well as the immaturity of the Muslim community of that time in formulating political initiatives. On the other hand, the problems of the internal contradictions of the Muslim community, competition and struggle for the power. The subject of the struggle for dominance, as well as discussions about the internal program of the Jadids on in terms of national or Turkic aspirations, among the key themes of modern researchers.

## REFERENCES

1. Helene Carrere d'Encausse. Social and Political Reform.// Allworth Edward. 120 years of Russian

influence in Central Asia. Durham and London, 1989. P.188.

2. Ibid. P. 186
3. Arne Haugen. The Establishment of National Republics in Soviet Central Asia. London, 2003. P.68.
4. Khalid Adeeb. The Politics of Muslim cultural reform. Los Angeles, 1999. P.231.
5. Ibid. P. 233.
6. Ibid. P. 232.
7. Ibid. P. 253.
8. Arne Haugen. The Establishment of National Republics in Soviet Central Asia. London, 2003. P.63.
9. Ibid. P. 68.
10. Khalid Adeeb. The Politics of Muslim cultural reform. Los Angeles, 1999. P.287.
11. Sengupta. The Formation of the Uzbek Nation-State. A study in Transition. Lexington Books.2003. P.63
12. Ibid. P. 66
13. Ibid. P. 66
14. Ibid. P. 66-67.
15. Ibid. P. 266.
16. Shafiga Daulet. (1989) The first all Muslim congress of Russia Moscow, 1–11 May 1917. Central Asian Survey, 8 (1), 38
17. Helene Carrere d'Encausse. Social and Political Reform.// Allworth Edward. 130 years of Russian influence in Central Asia. Durham and London, 1989. P.218.
18. Ibid. P. 218.
19. Hisao Komatsu. The Program of the Turkic Federalist Party in Turkistan (1917) // Central Asia Reader the rediscovery of history. edited by H. B. Paksoy. London and New York, 1994. P. 119.
20. Ibid. P. 121.



21. Adeb Khalid.( 2009) Culture and Power in Colonial Turkestan. Cahiers d'Asie central, Le Turkestan russe : une colonie comme les autres? 17 (18), 438.
22. Ibid. P. 295.

