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## What are the Results of Russia's Civilizing Mission

### Into the Lands of Turkistani Muslims?

Before studying Russia's expansion in Muslim Central Asia it is appropriate to give an account of her early south-east conquest, in particular her occupation of the Caucasus, which played an important role in the future of the Central Asian Muslims. Russia's first success was the occupation of Kazan in 1552, which opened the gates of Asia for them. After that the Russians turned to clearing the Volga all the way to the Caspian Sea. Control of this Muslim valley offered commercial and strategic advantages to the Russians. Russian merchants wanted to increase their trade with Persia, Turkistan, and even India, and the Volga valley was the gateway to these countries. Control of the valley and its river, especially after the occupation of Astrakhan in 1556 and the subjugation of the Cossacks, who controlled the area from the Volga to Siberia, in the 1570's and 1580's, not only improved the Russian position but also gave them superiority in their struggle with the Muslim steppe peoples, notably the Tatars, Bashkirs, Kazakhs and Kirghiz of the East.

The Russian occupation of Astrakhan, however, ended direct relations between the steppe Muslims and Istanbul and pilgrimages to Makkah. This sudden and unexpected expansion by Russia alarmed the Muslim people of the steppes; so they began sending emissaries and letters to Istanbul asking for help (1). This brought the intervention of the Ottoman Empire, which, in fact, was the only serious intervention in the history of Russia's expansion in Muslim Asia until that of the British in the 19th century.

Turkish authorities planned to prevent Russia's expansion not only in the steppes but also in the Caucasus and the Crimea by opening a canal between the rivers Volga and Don. For this purpose, the Governor of Kefe and the Crimean Khan were ordered to make the necessary preparations. But, soon, the difficult conditions in the area between the rivers, and the internal events in the Empire, changed the minds of the Turkish authorities about the canal project, and they gave up the idea for the time being. The Ottomans never made a second attempt and paid very little attention to Russia's expansion in Asia. On the other hand, the Russians, seeing that their powerful neighbours had given up the canal project, continued to move into direction of Central Asia.

After several small expeditions against the steppe peoples, the Russians discovered the weakness of their opponents : their inferior weapons and their disunity and constant quarrelling. The Russians easily exploited these weaknesses and spread their influence (2). In this way they brought the steppe peoples under their control without much difficulty. The Lands of the Tatars and Bashkirs were occupied between 1580-1740, and half of the Kazakh steppes was also brought under the Russian control.

Another important event in the history of Russia's expansion in Asia was the annexation of the Crimea in the 1780's and the successive victories of Russia over Ottoman Turkey and Persia in the Caucasus in the years following 1810. By these victories, Russia not only controlled the important areas in the Caucasus but also dominated Persia and the Caspian Sea. Russia's domination of Persia and the Caspian Sea gave an opportunity to the Russians to explore the country of the Turkmens and the other parts of Central Asia. From that point on, it was not very difficult for the Russians to expand their Empire to the east and the southeast, as there was very little opposition against them in that direction. Between the 1820's and the 1850's occupation of the Kazakh steppes was completed. By the middle of the 19th century the Russians controlled most of the Caucasus, and their frontier reached as far as the northern shores of the Aral Sea and the Far East.

The 18th and the first half of the 19th centuries were Russia's period of expansion not only in Asia but also in Europe and the Middle East. Although her expansion in Asia was almost unnoticed, her expansion to the south and the west was much noticed by the European powers. Russia's expansion was rudely checked by Britain, France, and Turkey in the Crimean War (1854-56). The Crimean defeat destroyed the prestige of Russia not only in Europe but also in Asia. The Russians wanted to restore their prestige, at least in Asia, by completing the conquest of the Caucasus. To achieve this aim, Tsar Alexander II appointed one of his closest and most faithful friends, Prince Alexander Ivanovich Bariatskii, as the viceroy of the Caucasus (3). He was also one of the greatest expansionists of his time and a great reformer in the military and administrative fields (4). In three years, Bariatskii's reforms began to give good results in the Caucasus. The Caucasian army became more effective in its operations against the Caucasians and in the administration of that area. In 1859 and 1860, the Russian forces inflicted a series of defeats upon the legendary Shamil and conquered his followers in the following two years. Thus, the Caucasus became a major base for Russia's south-east expansion.

Meanwhile, upon the advice of Bariatskii, Tsar Alexander II sent a mission, headed by Ignat'ev, to Bukhara and Khiva, in order to obtain topographical, statistical and other information of military importance about Turkistan. Ignat'ev visited Khiva and Bukhara in 1858. Upon his return to Petersburg, Ignat'ev summed up the results of his mission thus: "The chief and essential result of our sending a mission to Turkistan is that the fog is now dispelled which hides the Khanates from the Russian Government. Our eyes have at least been opened to the real value of Central Asia" (5). He recommended to his government that Russia should follow an active policy in Central Asia, as there were good possibilities for expanding Russian power in that area. He advised the taking of immediate military action against Khokand, and the bringing of Turkmen of the eastern shore of the Caspian under Russian control and their use against Khiva (6).

In Summer 1864, Alexander II called a number of meetings in Petersburg to discuss the Central Asian problem once again. As the supporters of a

"forward policy" were in the majority and had the blessings of the Tsar, it was decided to follow an active policy in Central Asia and to make the necessary preparations for this purpose. For Gorchakov, the Russian Foreign Secretary, there was only one alternative, to hide military operations by diplomatic manoeuvres and to give justifications to the other governments. To cover Russia's expansion by laying a smoke screen needed courage, skill and the diplomatic experience, which Gorchakov possessed. On 3 December 1864, before the armies march began, he sent a circular despatch to Russian representatives abroad asking them to use it as a guide "In any explanations you may give to the Government to which you are accredited, in case questions are asked, or you may see credence given to erroneous ideas as to our action in these distant parts"(7).

The words and the examples were well chosen in this cleverly written despatch. It was a good mirror of the complexity of Russian Policy which often led Western diplomats to the wrong conclusion. Gorchakov wrote :

"The position of Russia in Central Asia is that of all civilized states which are brought into contact with half-savage, nomad populations, possessing no fixed social organization.

In such cases it always happens that the more civilized state is forced, in the interests of the security of its frontier and its commercial relations, to exercise a certain ascendancy over those whom their turbulent and unsettled character make undesirable neighbours.

First there are raids and acts of pillage to put down. To put a stop to them, the tribes on the frontier have to be reduced to a state of more or less perfect submission.

The state is bound to defend them against these depredations and to punish those who commit them ... If, the robbers once punished, the expedition is withdrawn, the lesson is soon forgotten; its withdrawal is put down to weakness. It is a peculiarity of Asiatics to respect nothing but visible and palpable force. The state thus finds itself forced to choose one of two alternatives, either to give up this endless labour and to abandon its frontier to perpetual disturbance, rendering all prosperity, all security, all civilization an impossibility, or, on the other hand, to plunge deeper and deeper into barbarous countries.

Such has been the fate of every country which has found itself in a similar position. The United States in America, France in Algeria, Holland in her colonies, England in India - all have been irresistably forced, less by ambition than by imperious necessity, into this onward march, where the greatest difficulty is to know when to stop" (8).

Gorchakov's statement on Central Asia was a questionable one. First he said that the Central Asian people were a "half-savage, nomad population, possessing no fixed organization". If he meant the Kazakh steppes, which were already under Russian control, he was probably

right. The situation in the kazakh steppes was that most of the fertile lands of the Muslim Kazakhs were occupied by the Russians. Naturally, the people, whose lands were taken by force, from time to time began to attack the Russian posts, in order to regain their properties and lands. How can we blame the Kazakh for their action?

If Gorchakov meant the Khokandians, Khivans, and the Bukhrans, he was absolutely wrong : these people were settled and had their own government and states with fixed frontiers; those of Khokand, Khiva and Bukhara had existed for centuries. Second, Gorchakov's assertion that "It is a peculiarity of Asiatics to respect nothing but visible and palpable force" is demonstrably false. The vital question here is : Did the Russians ever attempt to make a sincere peaceful approach to the Central Asian Khanates to establish a good relationship which could provide an equal opportunity for both sides? The evidence indicates that the Russians never made such an attempt (9). It is difficult to accept the comparison with the United States, France and England, as the conditions and the problems in the instances quoted were considerably different from Russia's in Central Asia. In giving these examples, it is more probable that Gorchakov was trying to excuse and to justify Russia's conquest of Muslim Central Asia.

After the declaration of the circular despatch, the Russian commanders on the Central Asian frontiers began to create problems with Khokand, Bukhara, and Khiva. Regardless of international law, the Russian armies moved into these Muslim countries and occupied them one by one between 1865-1885. People who wanted to defend their country were crushed and killed in cold-blood. Thousands of them lost their lives including women, children, and elderly people. The Muslim people were massacred deliberately in Khokand, Tashkent, Khiva, and Goktepe. This was Russia's civilizing mission into the Muslim countries of Central Asia. Russia's civilizing mission into Muslim countries won admirers in Europe. Mr. Gladstone, the leader of Liberal Party in Britain, was one of them. As a Christian fellow, Gladstone was a strongly religious person. His religious convictions led him to condemn the Ottoman rule over the Christians in the Balkans, but to condone the oppressiveness of Russia in Turkistan. As Gladstone saw it, Russia was introducing christian civilization and morality into the wilds of Muslim Central Asia. The Tsar's Government said Gladstone, "exhibits ... a career of marked moderation and prudence, and a rather reluctant submission to the inexorable causes which drove them forward in an anxious, costly, and uninvited career" (10). No wonder Gladstone's portrait decorated a Russian office in Petersburg. "I admire him much" said one Russian General to a European journalist in 1882 (11).

However, the Russians were also not successful in the administration of Muslim people in Turkistan. Ruined by the enemies merciless attack during the invasion, the Muslims of Turkistan also found themselves in the hands of bad administrators. The Russian administration of Turkistan brought a new tragedy into the lives of Muslim people. It was during their invasion of Turkistan that the Russian Government decided to establish an administrative position in Central Asia. In the autumn of

1867, the Governor-Generalship of Turkistan was established, and General K. P. Kaufman, from the War Ministry, was appointed its first Governor-General. After completing the occupation of the whole country, most of the Russian officers had to take part in the administration of Turkistan. But, in few years time, the events proved the incapability of the Russian officers who were considered as the heroes of the recent past. Mismanagement and corruption became quite evident among the Russian administrators.

When the corruption of Russian administration in Turkistan became evident, the Russian Government had to start an investigation about it. In 1882 Privy Councillor F. K. Giers, and in 1884 General Count N. P. Ignatev were sent to Turkistan to investigate the civil and military administration. Each of them found the officials guilty. However, the Governor-Generals of Turkistan, General Von Kaufman and General Kuropatkin, preferred merely to transfer the offenders to other posts or send them out of the region instead of imposing fines or imprisonment (12).

Eventually, however, the realities of the situation became plain to everyone, and the Russian Government decided to take firm steps in order to solve the problem. In 1908 the Governing Senate of the Russian Government was ordered to conduct a complete investigation and to prosecute the offenders. Senator Count K. K. Palen, famed for his ability and honesty, and known as the inspecting senator because of his energetic prosecution of corrupt officials, was chosen for the task. Given broad powers and a staff of twenty assistants, Palen spent over a year scrutinizing nearly every aspect of government and economic affairs in the region, including the regional, oblastuezd, city, rural, and native administrations, as well as mining, agriculture, colonization, taxation, the police, courts, and state property (13).

Palen made liberal use of his power to suspend and prosecute officials found to have been involved in indiscretions. In the first general housecleaning in the region's administrative history, scores of officials were arrested, tried, and convicted. General Mishchenko, governor-general for less than a year, was forced to resign his office because of the commission's criticism and the arrest of some of his most trusted personnel (14).

Transcaspia oblast was hit hardest by the investigators. There, Palen found most of the military and civilian officials guilty ... Among those mentioned by Palen were the assistant commandant, accused of extortion, bribery, falsification of official documents, and even of planning the murder of an unfavourable witness; the commandant of Ashkhabad Uezd, "a gambler and a wastrel"; the police chief of Ashkhabad, accused of robbery, bribery, murder and rape; and the director of the Ashkhabad Gymnasium, who gave diplomas for money. Palen suspended and brought charges against two-thirds of the officials in Transcaspia, and, after lengthy trials which continued long after his return to the Russian capital, all were convicted (15).



In the end a familiar pattern was followed; after much discussion nothing was done by the Russian authorities. The reports of the Palen commission were printed in massive volumes and then, like the reports of many a previous commission were forgotten. But one man did not forget the sufferings of Turkistani Muslims: Gaspirali Ismail Bey, a Crimean Muslim reformist. In a brave statement, Gaspirali said that Russia's civilizing mission into Turkistan brought not positive results for the Muslims, but unhappiness. He asked the Russians to allow Muslims to handle their own problems. He drew the attention of Russian officials to the modernization of Muslim life. After reminding it of the constitutional rights of the Muslim as Russian citizen, he called on the Russian Government to fulfil its responsibilities for the Muslim people. He said that the Russian government had the responsibility of improving the Muslim educational life by providing enough opportunity to the Muslims to learn their mother tongue and Islam at their schools. He strongly opposed assimilation of the Muslims by the Russians, but he argued for the most intimate drawing together of the two peoples (Muslims and Russians) on the basis of mutual respect, recognition of fundamental rights, and solidarity of interests. Although Gaspirali did not gain any support from the Russian authorities for modernizing Islamic life, he was able to get the permission of the Tsar's Government to work for his people. Then, he travelled from the Crimea to Kazan, from Kazan to Baku, and from Baku to Tashkent to explain to his brothers the importance of modernizing their educational system. After convincing his Muslim brothers, Gaspirali was able to establish hundreds of modern schools (which he called new methods of learning or *usul-i cedit*) in Turkistan, where the Muslims began to study Islam as well as the other subjects (16). This was the situation in Turkistan when the Bolshevik revolution broke out in 1917.

Progress of the Islamic life was interrupted once more by the followers of the Bolshevik regime. The lives of the Muslims now took a new tragic turn. Ever since the Muslims of Turkistan and Caucasia have been suffering at the hands of the communist rulers of Soviet Russia. But, at the beginning of the revolution, the attitude of the Bolshevik leaders was, some how, quite different. The well known Declaration of 15th November 1917, signed by Lenin and Stalin, runs like this :

"The Council of Peoples Commissars has decided to base its work in relation to the nationalities on the following principles :

1. Equality and sovereignty of the nations of Russia
2. The right of the nations of Russia to free self-determination, including the right to secede and form independent states ..." (17).

This Declaration was followed by a manifesto specially addressed to "All toiling Muhammadans in Russia and in the East", words that would read oddly in Pravada today :

"Muhammadans of Russia, Tatars of the Volga and the Crimea, Kirghiz (Kazakhs) and Sarts of Turkistan, Turks and Tatars of Trans-Caucasia

(Azerbaijans), all those whose mosques and prayer-houses were destroyed and whose religion and customs were trampled upon by the Russian Tsars and tyrants! Henceforth, your faith and customs, your national and cultural institutions, are proclaimed free and inviolable. Build up your national life freely and unhindered. This is your right ..." (18).

This proclamation has created a kind of hope and excitement in the hearts of Muslims who thought that the golden age for them was becoming a reality. And they began to form their national institutions and local government, as a step towards establishing independent governments. They also began to repair the mosques and prayer-houses. However, this golden age of the Muslims did not come, as the Red Army, under the control of the Bolsheviks, began to invade the Muslim countries one by one between 1917-1920. As soon as the reoccupation of these countries was completed, the Communist leaders of Russia began to establish so called Autonomous Republics in order to destroy the unity of the Muslims. Afterwards, the Soviets started a campaign in order to suppress the Muslim people in the Soviet Empire. The Attitude of the Communist Authorities changed completely. The Soviets openly began to accuse the Muslim people of being counter-revolutionary between 1917-1920. A recent Soviet source has described the background to this episode as follows :

"In November 1917, mullahs, sheiks, rich merchants, bais, representatives of the national bourgeoisie, prominent Pan-Islamists and Pan-Turkists gathered in Khokand at the so-called Muslim Congress. Referring to the major point in the proletarian national program, promulgating the people's right to self-determination up to and including secession and formation of an independent state, the bourgeois nationalists endeavoured theoretically to "substantiate" their plans aimed at separating Turkistan from Russia and subordinating it to American and British imperialism" (19).

If we remember that at the beginning of the Bolshevik Revolution how the Soviets appealed to the Muslim people by : "Henceforth your faith and customs, your national and cultural institutions, are free and inviolable. Build up your national life : this is your right". All this evidence shows that the Soviets, from the beginning, have been absolutely insincere and unreliable people. But, yet, they could send messages to the Muslim countries and say that "Asia for the Asians" or "Freedom for the Peoples of Islam". I wonder, is there a Muslim gentleman who can still believe the words of the Soviets? If there is one, I have to tell my naive brother that he has got to pay attention to the sufferings of Muslims who live in Soviet Russia.

Dear Brothers!

You may know that Communism, as a materialistic concept is closely bound up with the theory of godlessness. Communism categorically rejects religion and thereby belief in Allah.

However, I have to mention that the Communist leaders of Russia did not take immediate action against Islam. By the beginning of 1930, the Soviets started an anti-Islamic movement in political and educational fields in Turkistan. They tried to win some of the Muslim Ulemas over to communism. At the same time, the communist rulers of Russia tried to interpret Islam from a communist standpoint in order to falsify the teachings of Islamic principles. On the other hand, the Soviet authorities ordered the teaching of atheism in schools and Universities. This continued for years and is still in practice in Turkistan today.

It is sad to notice that the tragic situation of Islam in the Soviet Union has not been compiled in a documentary fashion by a Muslim scholar. It is, therefore, hardly surprising that young Muslims outside the sphere of influence of the communist regime can hardly imagine what is happening to the Muslims of Turkistan.

Here, I have to draw your attention to this particular point : The communist countries pursue, on the one hand, an intensive anti-Islamic policy within their sphere of influence and, on the other hand, pro-Islamic policies and propoganda in those Islamic countries outside the Soviet Union and China. By doing this, they achieved two objectives : one is suppressing Islam within their sphere of influence and, the other is winning Muslims from outside the Soviet Union and China over to their political goals.

Dear brothers!

Such policies of the communist countries, in particular Soviet Russia, caused enough trouble for the Muslims. It is so essential to answer this very particular question: "What has communism achieved with its anti-Islamic policy?" Dr. Baymirza Hayit, the well-known Turkistani scholar, after doing intensive research on the subject, gives the following answer to this question :

1. Islamic spiritual leaders have been arrested and many have been executed. Muslims have been left without trained religious personalities.
2. Mosques and Medresehs have been closed and Awkaf properties have been confiscated.
3. The education of youth on the basis of Islam has been forbidden.
4. Islamic religious life (Prayers, Ramadan, Zekat, Pilgrimages to Makkah) has been forbidden by law.
5. The publication of religious tracts has also been forbidden.
6. Communism, as the ideology of Russia, has had every possible means at its disposal in the fight against Islam,
7. The anti-Islamic education of our youth has been pursued up till the present day as an integral part of the communist education policy.

8. The communist theory and practice of godlessness has been an integral part of the substructure of the state. Instead of these, the Muslims have their inner, unshakable belief in Allah.

9. It is also a fact that communism is training some godless youth groups from Muslim families, who are, in their turn, now helping the Russians in their fight against Islam. However, these remain in the minority amongst Muslims"(20).

Under such circumstances, now, we have to examine the defence of Islam by the Muslims who live under communist rule. It must, first of all, be noted that, because of legal stipulations, and as a result of continually enforced anti-Islamic measures, Muslims are forced to defend Islam in a predominantly illegal manner and to perform their duties, as far as possible, inconspicuously. According to Dr. Hayit, the defence of Islam by the Muslims in the Soviet Union can be summarized and interpreted in the following way :

1. Creed (Kalima-yi Shadat): As it is known, between 1930-1937, Muslims have had no religious leaders at their disposal as the teachers were murdered by the Soviets. Therefore, there was not anyone who could remind the Muslims of their duties. Also, there was not any written material on Islam from which the Muslim youth could learn. Furthermore, the teaching of the Islamic faith was, and still is, forbidden by law, both in the Soviet and Chinese educational systems. In spite of this, Muslims from the older generation have tried, and are still trying, to convey the fundamental principles of Islam to the Muslim youth. That is Kalima-yi Shadat. Naturally this teaching takes place only in the family. This is the only way the Muslims can maintain their Creed today.

2. Prayer: According to Soviet law, prayer in the mosques is forbidden. However, under the religious law (article 4), Muslims are obliged to seek registration if they wish to pray together in a mosque. To obtain permission, at least twenty Muslims must submit an application to the municipal authorities for the registration of a religious community and for the opening of a mosque. Only after the application has been approved by the Council for Religious Affairs of the Ministerial Office of the Soviet Union, in Moscow, may Muslims undertake common prayer. However, Muslims do not seek registration. Religious services in mosques are rare, since there are hardly any mosques in existence and since Muslims want to protect themselves against possible criminal prosecution by the communist state. Most prayers are conducted, not in public, but privately and in secret. Even in the family, prayers are conducted only if the head of the family is of the opinion that no member of family is an agent of the state or of the communist party. In those mosques which are approved by the authorities, Muslims predominantly of the older generation, are allowed to pray. It is estimated that about 200 mosques are open in the Soviet Union at the present time. Before communist rule, there were 24,321 mosques in good condition, of which 12,733 were in Turkistan. The voice of the Muezzin, calling the Muslims to prayer, has disappeared. As you know, the

Muslims pray according to their own time-tables. In the Soviet Union they must say their prayers in silence, as far as possible, as the law forbids religious rites to be conducted in state offices and schools. And so they pray in silence, without drawing attention to the fact that they are doing so ... Allusions of this nature signify that Muslims are trying, by all the means at their disposal, to retain their Islamic spirit.

3. Fasting: Communist Religious Law makes no mention of Ramadan. However, this does not mean that the state permits fasting. On the contrary, fasting is vigorously opposed by the regime, since it maintains that fasting hampers the work process and is, therefore, detrimental to communism. Despite this, many Muslims fast without drawing attention to themselves. For social reasons, too, Muslims are not in a position to hold religious ceremonies.

4. The Zekat: Communist religious law also remains silent on the question of the Zekat. However, because of the living conditions under communism, nobody is socially in a position to fulfill his obligation to the Zekat. As a result of this, a regular contribution to the Zekat has almost vanished from Muslim life.

5. Pilgrimage: Pilgrimage to the Holy City of Makkah may only be undertaken with the approval of the Soviet Government. According to our information, which we receive from the Muslims of Turkistan, more than 50,000 Muslims annually await approval to undertake the pilgrimage to Makkah. Occasionally the Soviet Government allows 18-20 persons to make this journey. Allah alone knows how many of these pilgrims are direct agents of the communist regime. In any case, all those who are permitted to make the pilgrimage are, as always, investigated by the KGB. All the others continue to wait to make the pilgrimage, yet receive neither approval from Moscow nor foreign currency" (21).

### A New Anti-Islamic Campaign

The war in Afghanistan and the Islamic Revolution in Iran made an impact on the Turkistani Muslims. This created great anxiety among the Soviet authorities since 1979. They think that the Afghan Mujahideen groups might inspire Islamic principles in the Soviet controlled Turkistani Muslims. As a result of this thought the Soviets began to accuse the Islamic countries of the Near and Middle East of using Islam as an offensive instrument to incite Soviet Muslims against the Soviet system and against their Russians "Elder Brothers". The question for us here as a Muslim people is, "do we really incite our Muslim brothers in Turkistan and Caucasia against the Soviet system?" The answer is "no". Since this is the case, "Why do the Soviets accuse the Muslim countries of inciting the Turkistani Muslims?" I can tell you the reason why they do accuse the Muslim countries: The Soviets do this deliberately, in order to find an excuse to start a new anti-Islamic campaign in Turkistan and Caucasia. For this purpose they always began to publish hundreds of anti-religious books and pamphlets directed againsts Islam. This campaign is still continuing in an increasing manner. At the same

time the Soviets began to recruit a spectacular number of atheistic cadres in Turkistan in order to use them in their anti-Islamic campaigns.

Professor A. Bennigsen, one of the leading scholars on the problems of Turkistani Muslims, in a recently published article in the Problems of Communism, gives the following figures :

"In Azerbaijan (with a total population of approximately 6 millions), in 1983 there were 3,761 atheistic 'political information groups', 6,911 propaganda collectives, more than 50,000 professional agitator-propagandists, 6,756 'political reporters' (also specializing in anti-religious propaganda), 3,091 lecturers for various party committees (lecturing occasionally on anti-religious themes), 40,000 members of the 'Bilik' (knowledge) Society (the Azeri equivalent of the Russian 'Znaniye' Society), and 32,250 instructors specially trained in anti-religious agitprop. In Kirghizia (total population 3.5 million), in September 1982 there were 27,500 anti-religious propagandists. In Ozbekistan, in the summer of 1983, the number of member of the 'Bilim' (knowledge) society -all trained in anti-religious propaganda - was 150,000, organized into 7,500 primary organizations. In Chardzhu district of the Turkmen SSR alone, in June 198- there were 'more than 360 atheist lectures of the BILIM society'. Current figures for the other republics and autonomous regions are not available, but we can assume that similarly massive anti-Islamic efforts are under way there. In addition to these professional propagandists, thousands of part-time specialists are engaged in the same anti-religious work, including all Communist Party and Komsomol members, veteran workers and soldiers, teachers and university professors, village elders, kolhoz executives, and medical workers.

"Since 1980, party and komsomol central and district committees have held numerous seminars on atheistic propaganda and atheistic education. Examples include the plenum of the Turkmen SSR Komsomol Central Committee (Ashkhabad, 1983); the 'zonal seminar' in Andizhan (January 1983) devoted specially to the formation of anti-religious activists in the Ferghana Valley; another 'zonal semiar' in the same city (March 1983) for the benefit of anti-religious militants of Azerbaijan, Kirghizistan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan; the conference of the Ashkhabad City Party Committee (September 1982) devoted to improving atheistic propaganda in the Turkmen SSR; and the seminar organized by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Azerbaijan (Baku, December 1982) on 'How to improve Atheistic Propaganda and Education'.

"All educational institutions - from the lowest kindergarten to universities and academies of sciences - are expected to participate actively in the new anti-Islamic campaign. All Soviet higher educational institutions now have a 'Department of Scientific Atheism'. Recently, special 'People's Universities' were created in all Muslim republics, where scientific atheism is one of the main subjects. In the Turkmen SSR alone there are 360 such 'universities' with 93,000 students.

"Many other institutions are also mobilized for the intensified anti-Islamic work. Various writers' unions have been recently reminded that atheistic themes must be prominent in native-language literature. Then too, village councils of elders (axsaqals) - in areas where clan and tribal structures survive (mainly in Turkmenistan, Kirgizistan, and the northeastern Caucasus) - are being pushed to participate more actively in the introduction of new secular domestic rites and ceremonies to replace religious ones. Moreover, famous 'holy places' are being turned into anti-Islamic museums : examples are the Shah-i Zenda mausoleum and the Khizr Mosque, both in Samarkand.

"In 1982 a new anti-religious institution was created in the Central Asian republic, 'House of Scientific Atheism', of Uzbekistan. Located in Tashkent and having affiliates in every oblast of the republic, this organization has the mission of publishing anti-religious books and other materials, training anti-Islamic experts, and improving the activities of atheistic schools and people's universities. It is probable that similar institutions now exist or are planned for other republics of Central Asia and the Caucasus"(22).

## NOTES

1. For detailed information on Russia's expansion in Muslim Asia, see : M. Saray, "The Russian Conquest of Central Asia", Central Asian Survey, Vol. 1/2-3, Oct. 1982 - Jan. 1983, pp. 1-30. And by the same, Ruoİsgali Devrinde Osmanle Devleti ile Tukistan Hanliklari Arasindaki Siyasi Munasetler 1775-1875. Istanbul : 1984 (in Turkish)
2. A. S. Donnelly, The Russian Conquest of Bashkiria 1552-1740, London: 1968, pp. 54-60.
3. A. J. Rieber, (ed.), The Politics of Autocracy. Letters of Alexander II to Prince A. I. Bariatinskii, 1857-1864. The Hague - Paris : 1966, p. 60.
4. Ibid, pp. 67-69.
5. N. Ignatiev, Missia v khivu i Bukharu v 1858 g. Petersburg: 1897, pp. 274, 278.
6. A. N. Khalfin, Russia's Policy in Central Asia 1857-1868. London: 1964, p. 39.
7. Correspondence, from 1864-1881, regarding movement of Russia in Central Asia and her relations with Afghanistan, p. 4, F.O. 65/1150.
8. Correspondence, from 1864-1881, regarding movement of Russia in Central Asia and her relations with Afghanistan, pp. 2-5, F.O. 65/1150.
9. As mentioned before, the Russian mission of 1858, which was headed by Count Ignat'ev, was purely a spying mission. As a result of this mission the Russians began to prepare for the invasion of Central Asia.
10. W. E. Gladstone, Bulgarian Horrors and Russia in Turkistan; with other tracts - Leipzig: 1876, p. 79.
11. C. Marvin, Russian Advance Towards India. London: 1882, p. 229.
12. R. A. Pierce, Russian Central Asia: 1867-1917. Univ. of California Press, 1960, pp. 79-84.
13. Ibid, p. 88.
14. Ibid, p. 88.
15. Pierce, pp. 88-89. The lengthy reports of the Palen mission are the best single source concerning Russian administratin of Turkistan.
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