

How to Be a Proper Muslim in the Russian Empire: An Intellectual Biography of Musa Jarullah
Bigiyev (1875-1949)

By

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CHAPTER I- INTRODUCTION: WHO IS BIGIYEV, WHY BIGIYEV?

Why Bigiyev: *Isnād* of the Project

The *isnād* of this project goes back to the prominent scholar of Sufism Annemarie Schimmel (1922-2003), *may Allah sanctify her secret*. While giving a series of lectures at Columbia University during academic year 1979-80, she indicated in a conversation with my doctoral adviser Prof. Uli Schamiloglu (who was a graduate student at Columbia University at the time) that a project on Musa Jarullah Bigiyev would be of great importance.

Who Is Musa Jarullah Bigiyev?

Musa Jarullah Bigiyev was a Tatar Muslim scholar from Russia. His scholarship focused mainly on Qur'anic sciences, e.g., *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence), *qirā'āt* (recitation), *tafsīr* (exegesis), etc. In his 45-year scholarly career from 1905 to 1949, he penned numerous books and articles, both in Tatar and Arabic. He also participated in the general Muslim congresses in and out of Russia, and delivered public lectures. His educational background consisted of a combination of classical Islamic education and Russian schooling. Bigiyev completed his primary education in various madrasas across the Islamic world, in Turkestan, Egypt, Syria, the Hijaz, Istanbul, and India. After about ten years of study, he returned to Russia on the eve of the First Russian Revolution in 1904 as a young promising scholar. Afterwards, he audited classes in law at St. Petersburg University. Bigiyev published his first book, *Tārīkh al-Qur'an wa'l-Maṣāhif*, in Arabic in 1905. In it, he discussed the problems of madrasa education in general and the codification of the Qur'an in particular. From that time onward, he wrote extensively on the Qur'anic sciences. He also actively took part in the political activities of the Muslims of Russia and published the records of the

Russian Muslims' congresses, which were held between 1905 and 1917. His works gained him fame at home and abroad as he conducted *ijtihād*, independent legal reasoning, on a variety of issues. His relentless attack on the great scholars of the past, and even his Western-style outfit, made him an *ad hominem* target for the religious establishment and the Sobraniye (Central Spiritual Administration of Muslims of Russia).

After the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917, unlike many other political and intellectual figures of the time, Bigiyev decided to stay in the Soviet Union; he saw the newly established regime as an opportunity for Muslims of Russia to gain more political rights. In this regard, he got in contact with top leaders of the Communist regime, Lenin and Stalin, and helped the delegation of Indian Muslims meet with them for their political causes. However, Bigiyev's hopes for the regime gradually faded away as he was put under more and more political pressure because of his "pan-Islamic" political activities, or rather ambitions. Thus, he left the Soviets in 1930 with no intention to return. His life in self-imposed exile was full of travels covering an area from Finland to Egypt and from Turkey to Japan. In this period, he continued publishing books, mostly in Arabic. Bigiyev's refutation of the Shi'a, *al-Washī'ah* (1936), is one of his best-known works from this period. Because of this book, he was banned from entering Iran and Iraq. On his way back from Japan in 1939, Bigiyev was temporarily imprisoned by the British on the Indian-Afghan border. From his release until 1947, he lived in India and continued to write works on the Islamic sciences. Eventually, because of his poor health and advanced age, Bigiyev moved to Egypt. He died there in 1949 at the age of 74, far from his homeland.

His Contemporaries on Bigiyev

Below is a short sketch of how Bigiyev was portrayed by some of his notable contemporaries, many of whom, be it his admirers or opponents, wanted to see him as a religious “reformer” or “reviver.” Bigiyev had to refute that idea more than once. While being a “reformer” had a positive implication for his admirers, it had a negative connotation for his opponents.

To begin with, the well known ideologist of Turkism Yusuf Akçura (1876-1935) believed that in order for the Muslim world in general and the Turkic world in particular to recover from stagnation and catch up with the Western world, it was paramount to follow the way that was heralded by Bigiyev and his friends who were striving to purify Islam of its impurities and recover its true form.¹ Likewise, the Turkish novelist and nationalist Halide Edib Adıvar (1884-1964) believed that the Turkish sociologist Ziya Gökalp (1876-1924), who was also influential in shaping the ideological outlook of the new Turkish Republic, was under Bigiyev's influence with regards to “reform in religion”.² The Russian orientalist Vasily Bartold (1869-1930), in his review of Bigiyev’s *Şeriat Esasları*, referred to him as someone whose name deserved the full attention of all those interested in “progressive currents” in modern Muslim society.³

The publisher of *Tercüman*, İsmail Bey Gasprinskii (1851-1914), considered Bigiyev among the “modern ulama,” along with Shihāb al-Dīn Marjānī, Alimjan el-Barudi, Abdurrashid Ibrahimov, and others. Likewise, Azerbaijani journalist Ahmet Bey Agayev (1869-1939) listed him among other prominent figures, such as Muhammad Abduh, Shihāb al-Dīn Marjānī,

¹ Yusuf Akçura, *Suriye ve Filistin Mektupları*. Ed. by İsmail Türkoğlu (İstanbul: Ötüken, 2016), p. 35-6. Şerif Mardin was in the idea that Akchura was under Bigiyev’s influence in terms of religious reform. Şerif Mardin. *Türkiyede Din ve Siyaset: Makaleler 3* (İstanbul: İletişim, 1991), p. 23.

² Halide Edib Adıvar, *Mor Salkımlı Ev* (Ankara: Özgür Yayınları, 1998), p. 181. I would like to thank to Funda Guven for bringing this to my attention.

³ Ilya Zaytsev, “An Unknown Review of Vasily V. Bartold On the Book of Musa Bigiyev “Basics of Sharia”,” *Pax Islamica*, vol. 6, no. 1, 2013, pp. 161-66.

Rizaeddin Fahreddin, Alimcan el-Barudi, etc, as someone who, following the path of Jamal al-Din Afghani, sought ways to reconcile Islam with the West.⁴ Ahmet Hadi Maksudi (1868-1941), publisher of the *Yulduz* newspaper in Kazan and the elder brother of Sadri Makdusi [Arsal] (1879-1957), attributed religious reformism (*reformatörluk*) to Bigiyev in a rather derogatory sense.⁵ When commenting on the *Ülfet* newspaper in Petersburg, Ayaz Ishaki (1878-1954)'s *Süz* newspaper stated that it was published by those who were willing to ignite a reform in religion and specifically mentioned its publisher Kadi Abdurreshid Ibrahimov and Mūsā Jārullāh Bigiyev.

The Luther of Islam?⁶

For some, Bigiyev was yet another Luther of Islam due to his translation of the Qur'an into Tatar, as if the act of translation itself was enough for someone to be honored by that title. The first person who used this phrase to describe Bigiyev was the Turkish author Haşim Nahid (1880-1962), who, in 1912, joyfully proclaimed that "the Luther of Islam just appeared on the horizon of Asia. This renewer of religion is Mūsā Jārullāh Bigiyev of Kazan. At the moment, he

⁴ Ahmed Agayev, "Türk Alemleri," *Türk Yurdu*, no 3, 15 Kanunievvel 1327-28/28 December 1911.

⁵ Ahmet Hadi Maksudi, "Ufak Fikirler," *Yulduz*, no. 1224, 9 July 1914.

⁶ Bigiyev was not the only person who was associated with the title. It seems that the first one who consciously used the term was Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī (1839-1897), "the Awakener of the East," who saw himself as the Luther of Islam. Likewise, Tatar religious scholar and historian Shihāb al-Dīn Marjānī (1818-1889) was called as the Luther of Islam by his disciples. For some, it already appeared long ago in a rather different context. It was no one else other than Muhammad Abd al-Wahhab, the founder of the Wahhabi movement which constitutes the official creed in Saudi Arabia today. The Luther of Islam did not necessarily have to be a man. Hasan Ali Yücel, the minister of Education of Turkey, praised Nilla Cram Cook, an American who served for the Iranian government more than 12 years, as the Luther of Islam because of her translation of the Qur'an into English (*Milwaukee Journal*, 1945). Today, among the living "Luthers of Islam," we see Abdulkarim Shorosh, Tariq Ramadan, and Ismail al-Faruqi, to name some.

is translating the Qur'an into Turkish.”⁷ Others followed him. For example, Crimean Tatar Turkologist Bekir Çobanzade (1893-1937), writing in the early years of the Soviets, called Bigiyev the “belated Luther of Islam” because of the backwardness of Bigiyev’s overall outlook, which put religion in the center of life “in the modern age.”⁸

Although Azerbaijani journalist and statesman Mehmed Emin Resulzade (1884-1955) did not spell it out directly, he hinted that what Bigiyev was trying to achieve was similar to that of Martin Luther. While Luther attacked the authority of the Pope, Bigiyev attacked the authority of the ulema in order to pave the way for an open access to the scripture. Resulzade commented that even though the ulema was not solely responsible for leaving the populace in ignorance, they were nonetheless responsible for banishing intellect and science. He further noted that while in Christendom, those who opposed the Catholic Church were burned to death by the Church, in the Muslim world, the ulema threatened those who opposed to them with eternal fire.⁹

However, I would argue that if we want to find a Christian counterpart for Bigiyev, the most suitable candidate would be the Apostle Paul. First, Bigiyev, like Paul, was constantly on the move from one city to another, even one country to another. Likewise, part of Paul’s mission was to spread the message of Jesus to the Gentiles, as opposed to some of Jesus’ disciples who preferred to keep it a primarily Jewish religion. Bigiyev’s main goal was to make sense of religion for everybody, not for only a group of specialists in religious sciences. Of course, Bigiyev lacked the impact that Paul had on the Christian tradition in the sense that Christianity today owes a lot to Paul. Nonetheless, Bigiyev’s vision of Islam, which makes religion a

⁷ Haşim Nahid, *Türkiye İçin Necat ve İtila Yolları* (İstanbul]: Şems Matbaası, [1331/1915]), p. 213.

⁸ Bekir Çobanzade, *Dini Islahat ve Medeni İnkılab* (Akmescit: Kırım Devlet Neşriyatı, 1927), p. 60. Cited in Ahmet Kanlıdere, *Kadimle Cedit Arasında Musa Carullah: Hayatı-Eserleri-Fikirleri* (İstanbul: Dergah, 2005), p. 60.

⁹ M. E. Resulzade, “Bahadır ve Sona,” *İkbal*, no. 541, 29 December 1913 (quoted in *Məhəmməd Əmin Rəsulzadə, Əsərləri II Cilt (1909-1914)* (Bakı: Təhsil, 2014), pp. 287-89.

personal experience rather than an unconditional adherence to a particular interpretation, provides a relevant alternative in the face of religious extremism in the Islamic world today.

Making Sense of Religion in the Modern Age

Bigiyev produced many of his works in the colonial era. The peculiar nature of Russian colonialism aside¹⁰, he is a product of the colonial period. He belonged to a generation of Muslim scholars who were well versed in at least one Western language, which was Russian in Bigiyev's case. Bigiyev was aware of the disadvantageous position of the Muslims vis-a-vis the "civilized world." Yet, for him, the problems that the Islamic world had been struggling with were not because of Western domination, but rather due to internal Muslim affairs. Those who were most responsible for the backwardness of the Muslims were the scholars of Islam, i.e., the theologians, jurists, commentators, and even the Sufis, despite their wider outlook compared to others. What they presented as Islam was nothing more than a diminished version of a universal religion with principles as vast as life itself. With their convoluted language, which can only be comprehended by specialists like themselves, they alienated the common people from religion.

In this case, how could the general public make sense of Islam in an era when Muslims had to get out of their comfort zones and interact with people from other religious backgrounds?

¹⁰ For a short review of Russian military expansion in general, see James Gibson. "Russian Imperial Expansion in Context and by Contrast," *Journal of Historical Geography*. 28, 2 (2002) 181-202. In his seminal work, *Orientalism*, Edward Said predominantly focused on French and British colonialism. Based on Said's paradigm, van der Oye demonstrated how Russian colonialism created its own type of Orientalism. David Schimmelpenninck van der Oye, *Russian Orientalism: Asia in the Russian Mind from Peter the Great to the Emigration* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010). This same issue has also been pointed out by Lazzerini, who, in his critique of Said, stated that confining Orientalism by and large to Franco-British involvement overseas would ignore some other possible examples, such as the Russian involvement in Asia. Edward J. Lazzerini, "Defining the Orient: A Nineteenth-Century Russo-Tatar Polemic Over Identity and Cultural Representation," *Muslim Communities Reemerge: Historical Perspectives on Nationality, Politics, and Opposition in the Former Soviet Union and Yugoslavia*. Eds. Andreas Kappeler, Gerhard Simon, Georg Brunner, editors of the German edition, Edward Allworth, editor of the English edition, and translations from the German by Caroline Sawyer. (Durham: Duke University Press, 1994), pp. 34-35.

A prominent Turkish scholar of sociology, the late Şerif Mardin (1927-2017) explained that the secularizing reforms of the late Ottoman Empire and the early Turkish Republic aimed to get rid of the traditional constraints of the Muslims society whose quintessence was the “*mahalle* ethos,” a phrase that later became popular in Turkish political discourse. As the “smallest operative unit of the Turkish society, mahalle, neighborhood, used to shape the ordinary life of the folks. In order one to be a part of the global society of people, he has to be rescued from the suffocating mahalle ethos as a part of the trajectory of the “cultural Westernization”.¹¹ Nonetheless, for Bigiyev, it was not “cultural Westernization,” but the purity of Islam which would get Muslims out of their neighborhood and integrate them into the international community as equal citizens.¹² For Bigiyev, this could be achieved not by compromising with Western values, but by enlarging the limits of Islamic thinking and rulings while still staying within Islamic boundaries. He believed that it would work better for Muslims not to stay away from religion, but to get closer to it in its most pristine and simple form.

What time period and place exemplify the true religion? For Bigiyev, it should be sought in the first three centuries of Islam, especially within the first generation of Muslims. That is the religion of the *salaf*, the righteous ancestors. Does this mean that he is a Salafi? Not necessarily. His “Salafism” is not to return to early Islam, but to bring it into a modern context.¹³ He believed

¹¹ Şerif Mardin, “Religion and Secularism in Turkey” in the *Modern Middle East: A Reader*, ed. By Albert Hourani, Philip S. Khoury and Mary C. Wilson. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), pp. 368-370.

¹² At this point, one might wonder why Muslims have an issue with adapting to the global community. This has to do with the traditional formation of Muslim society, which, as Ruthven suggested, is “programmed for victory” in the sense that the classical Islamic institutions had been formed in a time when Muslims exercised great military and political power. Muslims are not used to live under foreign domination. In this regard, colonialism exacerbated the difficulty Muslims faced in integrating into the global community. Malise Ruthven, *Fundamentalism: The Search for Meaning*. (Oxford University Press: 2004), p. 39.

¹³ As Lausiere points out, the very term “Salafism” is problematic. He argues that it is a label given to contemporary Islamic reform movements around 1919 by Western Orientalists. Henri Lauzière, *The Making of Salafism: Islamic Reform in the Twentieth Century* (Columbia University Press, 2015), p. 34.

that the best way to make sense of the religion of the *salaf* in the contemporary world is *ijtihād*, independent legal reasoning, whose doors are not closed, but open until the Day of Justice.¹⁴ It is what he did in in many of his groundbreaking works.¹⁵

Ijtihād was also instrumental in getting rid of the authority of the past, which is often represented by the schools of law. Bigiyev's main trajectory was to make religion a "personal experience," as Gustave Nieburh calls it,¹⁶ rather than being a blind follower of an established tradition. Religion can be a personal experience when one can exercise his or her own judgment based on the basic tenets of Islam. For Bigiyev, when it is possible to extract ruling from the Qur'an and the Sunna, it is not appropriate to recourse to a particular jurist or any other authority. It is not following the religion of the jurists, but the religion of the Qur'an and the Sunna which is much simpler and yet more comprehensive than the Islam of the jurists. Taqlid, or blind imitation, is only permissible, not the norm, for those who are not capable of doing their own judgment.¹⁷

Even though Bigiyev, in his *ijtihāds*, remained within religious boundaries in his *ijtihāds*, he nonetheless did not restrict his judgments to what religion had to offer to. For him, freedom of thought and intellect was above all, even religious dogmata, including Islam's. This is why he, in

¹⁴ Safi pointed out that *ijtihād* is the most commonly referenced term by the "modernist ulama" of the last two centuries, since it allowed them to operate within religious boundaries as opposed to non-Islamic loans. Omid Safi "Modernism: Islamic Modernism," in *Encyclopedia of Religion*, ed. By Lindsay Jones, (Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2005).

¹⁵ According to the prominent Turkish historian Kemal Karpat, Bigiyev produced some of the most outstanding theological works of the century. Kemal H. Karpat, *The Politicization of Islam: Reconstructing Identity, State, Faith and Community in the Late Ottoman State* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 294.

¹⁶ Gustav Niebuhr, *Beyond Tolerance: Searching for Interfaith Understanding in America* (New York: Viking, 2008), p. xxx.

¹⁷ Musa Bigiyev, "Zekat Mesarifi, Mektep-Medreseler Nafakası [III]," *Ülfet*, no. 15, 16 March 1906, pp. 5-8.

principle at least, did not hesitate to challenge not only the rulings of science and philosophy, but also those of religion when they did not offer an answer satisfying the human intellect. For him, one could challenge any of these, so long as he was genuinely searching for truth.

Bigiyev never presented what he had done as reform in religion. Indeed, he had approached the term “religious reform” or “*islahat*” cautiously. One way of understanding religious reform is to give up one aspect of religion and substitute it with others from external sources, which is usually the West. For Bigiyev, full or partial adoption of foreign values, be it Western or other, would be an insult to the religion of Islam.¹⁸ In this regard, he said, “The religion of Islam which is under the divine protection until the doomsday is superior to the madhhabs of the jurists, the dialectics of the theologians, the vast imagination of the Sufis, philosophies of the philosophers, fancies of the politicians, theories of the sociologists.”¹⁹ For him, what needed *islahat*, if anything, was not Islam itself, but *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence), specifically the schools of law,²⁰ which were far from providing relevant answers to the problems that humanity faces in modern times.

For Bigiyev, there was no difference between life and religion. At first, it might sound irrelevant, if not impossible, by looking at the Islam of the theologians and the jurists which is restricted to their limited interpretation of its essence. Yet Islam is as vast as life itself and thus capable of providing the necessary tools to cope with new problems. Although *fiqh* comes third

¹⁸ It is apparent that Bigiyev resented the emerging Islamic states, their attitude toward the “civilized world,” and their failure to adapt and apply Islamic law pertaining to the state. For example, he lamented that the new Turkish Republic adopted Western civil codes while it was possible to work out an Islamic model. Likewise, he expressed his disfavor of the abolishment of the Turkish caliphate and the abandonment of the Arabic script.

¹⁹ Not Defteri, Milli Kütüphane Yazmalar Koleksiyonu, 06 Mil Yz A 5912.

²⁰ Bigiyev was a *sui generis* person. As those who knew him personally pointed out, he was a free-thinker and did not like to confine himself to a particular movement or group. Thus, he avoided following a specific school of law.

after *tafsīr* and *ḥadīth* in Bigiyev's classification of Islamic sciences, it is of prime importance because of its impact on human life. It is *fiqh* which outlines the principles of the Qur'an in relation to social norms. The miraculousness of the Qur'an is not only its poetic language, but also its meaning. The principles of the Qur'an are capable of providing universal norms for all of humanity until the end of time. However, jurists have failed to demonstrate this aspect of the Qur'anic principles.²¹ While in Islamic jurisprudence the matters of *ibadah*, or rituals, have been treated excessively, though still insufficiently, commentary on *muamalah*, or social interactions, has not enjoyed the same diligence. Moreover, in the books of jurisprudence, there are sections whose application in real life is almost impossible and that are contrary to the principles of justice.

The scholars of *kalām*, or speculative theology, were also not able to escape from Bigiyev's attacks. He went further and claimed that it was *kalām* which left the entire Muslim community of Russia in a state of stagnation.²² Bigiyev's dislike of *kalām*, which goes back to his early student years in Western Turkestan, even led him to deny its place within the framework of Islamic sciences. He aimed to rescue Islam from the narrowness of *kalām* and show that it is universal, suitable for all of humanity.²³ He believed the scholars of speculative theology were making a great mistake in belittling the faith of the ordinary people, which they deemed deficient. Just as the jurists, they too made simple matters complicated.

²¹ Musa Jarullah, *El-Muvafakat Mukaddimesi: Kitāb al-Muwaḥḥat* (Kazan: Imparatorskii Universitet, 1909), cited in Emrah Çelik, "Makasıd-ı Şeria'yı Bilmenin Önemi," May 2009, <https://emrahce.com/tag/musa-carullah-bigiyev/> [retrieved on October 16, 2017].

²² Musa Bigiyev, "Rahmet-i İlahiye Umumiyeti Meselesinde Burhanlarım," *Shura*, no. 3, 1 February 1910.

²³ Musa Bigiyef, "Benim Emelim Benim İmanım," *Vakit*, no. 713, 1 January 1911.

Ironically, while he was criticizing the scholars of *kalām* for dealing with trivial matters, like the number of the stars in the sky, he was not able to escape from same sorts of accusations from some of the Tatar intellectuals of the time. For example, journalist Fatih Kerimi (1870-1937), the great Tatar poet Gabdulla Tukayev (1886-1913), and Ismail Bey Gasprinskii (1851-1914) all agreed that Bigiyev had occupied the public opinion with theoretical, if not trivial, matters rather than discussing real problems. Yet, for Bigiyev, it was only after the people's religious diseases had been cured, that we could look forward to seeking solutions for other problems.

Bigiyev's vision of Islam might seem similar to the modernist tendencies in Islam for the last two centuries. Yet like his personality, his thought is also *sui generis*. It is hard to associate him with any particular group or movement without ignoring some aspects of his thought. Thus, one goal of this project is to portray him without confining him to binaries, such as Jadidism vs. Qadimism, modernist vs. traditional, etc.

Bigiyev on Women's Rights

Bigiyev's support for women's rights was unprecedented in Russia. In this regard, he was also well ahead of many of his contemporaries in the Islamic world. As Bauer pointed out, Muhammed Abduh and his pupil Rashid Rida, who are considered the first scholars of the modern time dealing with the question of women at length in their commentaries of the Qur'an, advocated women's equality only under specific circumstances.²⁴ In contrast, Bigiyev's support for Muslim women's equal rights with Muslim men was unconditional. For him, it was not only

²⁴ Karen Bauer, *Gender Hierarchy in the Qur'an: Medieval Interpretations, Modern Responses* (Cambridge University Press, 2015), pp. 14, 69-70.

a religious matter, but also a social and political one. He knew it was impossible to achieve either religious or political liberty without the presence of women, who made up the half of the Muslim population in Russia. Where did he get his ideas on women? Perhaps, the nucleus of his overall view of women goes back to his mother, who took care of him in the absence of his father.

Interestingly enough, in some of his works published in exile, he signed his name as Ibn Fāṭimah, Son of Fatma.²⁵ Likewise, he dedicated his *Hatun* to his wife Esma Hanım with sincere words of devotion and forgiveness to his wife.

Bigiyev started to present his ideas on women in his early writings. He wrote an entire volume, *Hatun* (1933), in which he dealt with the question of women in Islam in detail. Because of his ideas on this topic, Bigiyev jeopardized his scholarly reputation more than once in the eyes of his coreligionists. For example, despite strong opposition from the conservative ulema, he proposed a resolution for the recognition of the equality of Muslim women with men in the All-Muslim Congress in Moscow in 1917. This resolution was eventually overturned by the same body of clergy during the following congress in Kazan the same year. Again, during a discussion of women's attendance to the congregational prayers at mosques, Bigiyev unequivocally supported their right to do so. For him, although the "spiritual fathers" (*ruhani atalar*) saw it as impermissible for women to join the congregational prayers in mosques, the doors of the mosques were always open to them anytime and anywhere.²⁶ Again, as Rizaeddin Fahreddin

²⁵ The majority of my predecessors are of the idea that the reason for him signing his name as the Son of Fatma was a way of paying respect to his beloved mother. However, it is also likely that he disguised himself under his mother's name in order to protect his family back in the Soviets.

²⁶ Musa Jarullah, "Hacı Yusuf Efendinin Makaleleri Münasebetiyle," *Vakit*, no. 2104, 4 October 1916.

informs us, both men, Fahreddin and Bigiyev, doubted the authenticity of the Edict of Umar which forbade women entering the mosques.²⁷

Bigiyev's support for women's equality resonated with Muslim women, and they constituted the biggest portion of his public support. Bigiyev often complained about not being appreciated, or at least noticed, by his colleagues. For example, he resented the literati, including his close friend Rizaeddin bin Fahreddin, for not citing his relevant publications in their works.²⁸ But again, it was the women who recognized his efforts more than any other group. For example, Bibi Jamal Rakhmatullina, in her open letter to Bigiyev in *Shura* journal, pointed out that even though his scholarship had not acquired due appreciation, it would certainly be acknowledged by future generations. In this regard, she likened him to Uwais al- Qarani, who wandered unrespected in the Tatar deserts.²⁹

Education

For Bigiyev, the whole purpose of writing a book is not to solve a problem in all aspects, but to get people to think about it.³⁰ Indeed, this is what he did in many of his works, inviting people to critical thinking. He, more than once, stated that he would be happy to hear counter ideas to what he presented in his works. For him the biggest problem of the madrasa system in Russia and elsewhere in the Islamic world had been the absence of critical thinking which was a result of ossified ways of teaching and learning. Thus, any reform on the madrasa system should start

²⁷ Rizaeddin Fahreddin, "Hatunların Mescitge Yürüleri," *Shura*, no. 21, 1 November 1916.

²⁸ For example, see his consecutive articles in *Shura* "Dini ve İçtimai Meseleler," (1914).

²⁹ Bibi Cemal Rahmetullina, "Üstaz-ı Muhterem Musa Efendi Bigiyef Cenablarına," *Shura*, no. 4, 15 February 1913.

³⁰ Musa Jarullah, "Siyonizm II," *Vakit*, no. 1261, 28 July 1913.

with the removal of *kalām* which, with its narrowness, blocked the way for free thinking.³¹ Part of the critical thinking is to bypass the authority of the agent who transmits the true meaning of the text. As Khalid pointed out, in the classical madrasa education, there is a mistrust of the text to relate its true meaning to the reader. Rather, the information should be learned through a chain of transmission going back to the author. This requires agents.³² Bigiyev challenged this way of acquiring knowledge. By providing madrasa students with examples of free thinking, he urged them to go beyond what was narrated to them by the agents, i.e., teachers. It was yet another reason for him to be the target of the religious establishment.

Bigiyev brought his examples from within the Islamic tradition. In this regard, his prime example was the Arab philosopher and poet Abū al-‘Alā’ al-Ma‘arrī (973-1057), Ma‘arrī the Blind. It had been a theme which he pursued from the beginning to the end of his writing career. In his choice of al- Ma‘arrī, this “doubly imprisoned captive”³³, as a summit of freedom, lied his outspokenness on delicate matters and questioning the established religious authority. For Bigiyev, if one wanted to escape from narrowmindedness, he had to definitely consult with al-Ma‘arrī.³⁴ In many places in his writings, Bigiyev brought up excerpts from al- Ma‘arrī in order to support his case. However, the choice of someone like al- Ma‘arrī, whose very faith in Islam had been greatly questioned, turned out to be not a good one since it sparked the mistrust of the religious establishment toward Bigiyev and his works ever since.

³¹ Musa Bigiyev, “Rahmet-i İlahiye Umumiyeti Meselesinde Burhanlarım,” *Shura*, no. 3, 1 February 1910.

³² Adeb Khalid, *The Politics of Muslim Cultural Reform: Jadidism in Central Asia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), p. 29.

³³ Ibn Khallikān, and William MacGuckin Slane. *Biographical Dictionary* (Paris: Publisher Not Identified, 1871), p. 96.

³⁴ Musa Bigiyev, “Kuyruklu Yıldız,” *Shura*, no. 4, 15 February 1910.

It is a common feature of his writings and his scholarship in general that he maintained whatever he said at the beginning of his career until the end of his life. Is this good or bad for a scholar? Does that mean that he is stuck with his own ideas and closed to new approaches and developments? I think the best way to describe it is to say that he had deepened his understanding of his own ideas and convictions throughout the course of his scholarly career. So far in my reading of him, I have not seen him regretting what he said in the past on a given topic. For example, in his *Kitāb al-Sunnah* (1945), he stated that he is convinced of what he said back in 1910 in his *Ruze* regarding the fasting of atonement (*kafarah*).³⁵ Another example is his use of al-Ma‘arrī. He began making references to him as early as 1907 and still in his last writings in the late 1940’s he was still relying on him as his point of reference.

Except for his short tenure at the Huseyniye Medrese in Orenburg in 1909, Bigiyev never taught in a medrese. However, it would be safe to assert that in almost all of his writings his primary target audience had been the madrasa students.

Bigiyev and Political Activism

Bigiyev had never been an armchair scholar. His scholarship relied on both intellectual and political premises. He began his intellectual career both as a prolific writer and a political activist. It is only his self-exile after 1930 that he seems to give up his political aspirations, at least partially. He is one of those who participated in all major congresses of the Muslims of Russia from 1905 to 1927. Moreover, he recorded and published the records of the Muslim congresses up until the Bolshevik era as separate volumes and eventually a single one in 1917.

³⁵ Mūsā Jārullah /Musa ibn Fāṭimah, *Kitāb al- Sunna* (Bhopal: 1945), pp. 82-3. Consulted with Görmez’ Turkish translation of it. Musa Carullah Bigiyef, *Kur’an Ve Sünnet İlişisine Farklı Bir Yaklaşım: Kitabı ‘s-Sünne* Tran. Mehmet Görmez. (Ankara: Ankara Okulu Yayınları, 1998), p. 115.

Thus, it is almost impossible to reconstruct the political activities of the Muslims of Russia without consulting his writings. He also took part in the political party of the Muslims of Russia, Ittifaq al-Muslimin, from beginning to the end. Interestingly enough, he stayed away from the short-lived cultural autonomy of the İdil-Ural Republic (1917-18) whose president was his friend Sadri Maksudi. Instead, he took an active position within Zeki Velidi's autonomous Bashkir Republic as adviser to the minister of justice and enjoyed commercial privileges.

Throughout his corpus, the term "Millet-i Islamiye (the Nation of Islam) appears as a leitmotiv in his political discourse. What did he mean by that? For him, the entire body of Muslims of Russia was a single political unit and thus a millet or nation. Schamiloglu informs us that when it came to the early 20th century, there were two competing ideas about the political future of the Muslims of Russia. The first one was an overarching Muslim-Turkic territorial nationhood which had been propagated by Crimean Tatar intellectual Ismail Bey Gasprinskii in his Tercüman (1883-1918) and other publications. The other was a regional territorial nationhood of Tatars whose promulgator was Shihāb al-Dīn Marjānī (1818-1889).³⁶ The later developments proved the feasibility of the latter.³⁷ In this regard, he came closer to the Gasprinski's imagined community of Russian Muslims, rather than Marjānī's territorial Tatar homeland. His zeal for the political unity of the Muslims of Russia led him to write his *ABC of*

³⁶ Schamiloglu in his article "İctihat or Millet" argues that Marjani's role in Tatar nationmaking has not been discussed enough. In this regard, Schamiloglu holds French historian Hélène Carrère d'Encausse responsible for the dissemination of Marjānī's thought in the Western academia as the champion of religious revival in the Volga-Ural region. This misrepresentation of Marjānī and the early Tatar reform movement as merely religious began with the colonialist tsarist scholarship and was taken on by the Soviet historiographers such as Arsharuni and Gabidullin. And finally, it made its way to the Western scholarship mostly through Encausse. Uli Schamiloglu, "İctihad or Millāt? Reflections on Bukhara, Kazan, and the Legacy of Russian Orientalism," in *Reform Movements and Revolutions in Turkistan: 1900-1924: Studies in Honour of Osman Khoja*. ed. Timur Kocaoğlu (Haarlem: SOTA, 2001), pp. 347-368.

³⁷ Ibid.

Islam (1923) as a response to Bukharin's *ABC of Communism* (1920). But eventually he made peace with the fledgling regime willingly or unwillingly.

By the year 1925, Bigiyev appeared as someone who was working for the Soviet cause. Moreover, he helped the Indian Muslim delegates, including the leaders of the independent India government in exile in Afghanistan, Maulana Muḥammad Barakatullāh and 'Ubaidullāh Sindhī, to meet the leaders of the revolution, i.e., Lenin and Stalin. Bigiyev was also useful for the political agenda of the Bolsheviks in their policy towards Muslims both within and outside of the Soviets. For instance, he was one of the rare lucky Muslims, if not the only one, who was granted permission for Hajj in 1927 in order to show the friendly side of the communists to the Muslims pilgrims from around the world. Likewise, he penned a letter to one of the leaders of the Indian Muslims, Muhammad Ali Jawhar, in which he explained how the Soviet regime fit into an ideal Islamic *walchtentung*.³⁸

Bigiyev's view of Turkey is also an interesting one. He had a strong affinity to the Turkish state which he maintained until the end of his life. For example, he dedicated his *ABC of Islam* (1923) to the "glorious Turkish soldiers" who won the Turkish War of Independence and donated its revenue to the orphans of those soldiers. Likewise, he donated all the revenue of his *Muskirat Meseleleri* (1927) to the Turkish Green Crescent Society. Furthermore, he dedicated one of his later works which he completed while in India, to the President of Turkey, İsmet İnönü. What was appealing in the Turkish case for Bigiyev? The prominent Turkish historian Kemal Karpat pointed out that the secular Turkish Republic provided a suitable model to emulate for the non-Arab Muslim societies, such as Afghanistan and Iran.³⁹ Even though Bigiyev had one

³⁸ Musa Jarullah, "Muslims in Russia, Perfect Equality of Rights: A Letter to Maulana Mahomed Ali," *Bombay Chronicle*, 1 October 1925.

³⁹ Kemal H. Karpat, *Türk Demokrasi Tarihi* (Istanbul: Timaş, 2010), p. 149.

of his biggest disappointments as the new Turkish state abolished the Islamic law and replaced it with Western codes. Yet, for Bigiyev, it was not a fault of the political leaders, but the incapability of the Turkish religious scholars who failed to produce an Islamic code of law which is compatible with the needs of modern time. Again, there was nothing un-Islamic with the Turkish hat reform since he himself preferred Western style outfit since earlier.

Bigiyev's Literary Gusto and His Affinity for the Arabic Language and Literature

Bigiyev was a master of language. It is not possible for one not to be amazed vis-a-vis his use of the Tatar language. It is very likely to come across poetic expressions that would be singled out as a quote to be shared, let's say, on Social Media. He likes short sentences with parallel structures. In terms of Bigiyev's language style, it is conventional to liken it to the general or simplified Turkish which was articulated and advocated by Ismail Bey Gasprinski in his *Tercüman* newspaper. However, it would be more accurate to call his language as elite Tatar rather than simplified Turkish since his language is a combination of Tatar, Arabic, and Turkish, whereas Gasprinskii's simplified Turkish lacks Tatar linguistic elements in it for the most part.

The excessive use of Arabic loanwords makes it feel especially in his early writings. In his later works in Tatar, he gradually gave up some, but continued in his own style of elite Tatar. In 1912, a *Vakit* reader complained about Bigiyev's excessive use of Arabic vocabulary in his writings and urged him to use a simple language for the understanding of the general public.⁴⁰ Similarly, a certain damulla in literary *el-Islah* journal politely complained about the language that Bigiyev used in his works which is half Arabic and half Turkish. For him, the madrasa

⁴⁰ "Zel. Ra. Efendi Yaza," *Vakit*, no. 942, 18 March 1912.

students, with their crippled education, would have hard time to understand his high language.⁴¹ This was recognized by not only the laity, but also the notable literati of the time. That is why Sadri Maksudi and Yusuf Akçura teased him out for using Arabic loanwords as what they meant in Arabic rather than what they meant in Turkish/Tatar. Hadi Maksudi's *Yulduz* newspaper even made up a term for the peculiarities of Bigiyev's language: *Musayizm*.⁴² Additionally, the *Vakit* newspaper advised those who had hard time to make sense of Bigiyev's convoluted language to check the same topic with Rizaeddin Fahreddin whose language was much easier.⁴³

In addition to his mastery in the Tatar language, Bigiyev was also fond of the Arab language and literature. In his autobiography, the prominent Qur'an exegete Muhammed Asad, whom Bigiyev met during the Hajj in 1927, cited Van der Meulen -Dutch minister at Jidda- saying "[N]o sensitive person can ever remain immune to the enchantment of Arabian life, or pull it out of his heart after living among the Arabs for a time."⁴⁴ Bigiyev was no exception. The enchantment of Arabia made itself lucid in his affinity with the Arab language and poetry. For example, Damulla Salih Efendi narrated that Bigiyev chanted *aruz* all the way on their way back from Bukhara to Kazan.⁴⁵ Moreover, in a discussion on what language is easier for foreigners to learn, Turkish or Arabic, while Rizaeddin bin Fahreddin defended the first, Bigiyev went with the latter.⁴⁶

⁴¹ Damulla, "Yanga Eserler: Edebiyat-ı Arabiye ile Ulum-i Islamiye," *el-İslah*, no. 57, 15 January 1908.

⁴² "Kavaid-i Fıkhiye," *Yulduz*, no. 584, 8 September 1910.

⁴³ "Rahmet-i İlahiye Meselesi," *Vakit*, no. 566, 14 January 1910.

⁴⁴ Muhammad Asad, *The Road to Mecca* (Fons Vitae Publishing and the Book Company: Louisville, KY, 2000), p. 137.

⁴⁵ Rizaeddin Fahreddin, "Seyyid Ali el-Zahir Hazretleri Hakkında Hatıra," *Shura*, no. 24, 15 December 1916.

⁴⁶ Kanlıdere, *Kadimle Cedit Arasında Musa Carullah*, p. 188.

A Review of the Bigiyev Studies: Endless Treasure

In Russia

For obvious reasons, i.e., the Soviets dislike of nationalism, Bigiyev's name was rarely mentioned in the Soviet times. When so, as Tagirdjanova points out, he was nothing other than an emigrant and a pan-Turkist.⁴⁷ Even though his name was cleared in 1997 by the High Court of the Russian Federation, as Akhmadova notes, the academic research on Bigiyev did not flourish as expected until recently.⁴⁸ One big exception is A. G. Khayrutdinov's account of Bigiyev, *The Last Tatar Theologian* (1999), which is a valuable source in Russian on his life and activities.⁴⁹

Since early 2000's, Bigiyev's name has started to find its proper place in the cultural and religious landscape of Russia. In 2013, as a part of the 140th birth anniversary of Bigiyev, several events took place in Penza, where his family originally belonged to. For instance, in Kikino (Kamensky, Penza), on the facade of the school, a memorial plaque was installed in honor of the famous natives of these places brothers Muhammed Zakir and Musa Bigiev. On December 2013, in the city of Kamenka, the first "Bigeyev spiritual and moral readings" were held with the support of the city administration and the active participation of local ethnographers, religious figures and schoolchildren. Bigiyev's name was also given to the mekteb and the square next to the Kamenka Mosque. In January 2015, in the Literary Museum of

⁴⁷ Iskander Bahmutov, "Musa Bigeyev – Dolgoe Vozvrashcheniye na Rodinu." *Islam News*. December 2013. Web. March 4, 2018 <<https://www.islamnews.ru/news-Musa-Bigeev-dolgoe-vozvrashhenie-na-rodinu/>>.

⁴⁸ Elmira Akhmetova, "Pan-Islamism In Russia 1905-1930: An Analysis of Its Origins, Features and Impact," (Ph.D. Dissertation, International Islamic University Malesia, 2014), p. 23.

⁴⁹ Aydar G. Khayrutdinov, *Posledniy Tatarskiy Bogoslov: Zhizn' i Naslediye Musy Dzharullakha Bigiyeva* (Kazan: Iman, 1999).

Gabdulla Tukai an evening was held: "Exile from Paradise". From April 10 to May 29, 2015, the exhibition "Eternal Wanderer" was held in the Museum of Islamic Culture in the Kazan Kremlin. In June 2015 in Zaporozhye (Ukraine) an international roundtable was held to the memory of Musa Bigiyev by the Center of National Cultures "Suzirya", M. Gorky Regional Library, and Zaporozhye Center for Tatar Culture (Altyn Ay).⁵⁰

Since 2014 the Spiritual Administration of Muslims of the Russian Federation has been organizing an annual international conference under the title of "Bigiyev Readings" to honor the legacy of the "the last Tatar theologian." In the third meeting of the conference on April 27-29, 2016 in St Petersburg - The Third International Scientific and Theological Conference "Bigiyev Readings": Inclusiveness of divine grace as a principle of interreligious dialogue in the XXI century- it was decided to translate his selected works into Russian, English, and Arabic, and to offer a prize named after Bigiyev for his contribution to the development of religious and philosophical thought.⁵¹ The same year, in 2016, the Muftiate commissioned a Russian translation of his *Tārīkh al-Qur'an wa'l-Maṣāḥif* (in Arabic) with a foreword by the Grand Mufti Ravil Gainutdin.⁵² Once condemned by the Muftiate of Orenburg on account of his writings and even his outfit, hundred years later today, he is celebrated as one of the greatest Muslim theologians of Russia by the same institution.⁵³

⁵⁰ Almira Tagirdjanova, "From the Experience of Studying the Problem of Distortion of the Name of Musa Bigeev. *Gasyrlar Avazy (Echo of the Ages)*, volume ½, 2016.

⁵¹ "Rezolyutsiya III "Bigiyevskikh Chteniy," *Dukhovnoye Upravleniye Musul'man Sankt-Peterburga i Leningradskoy Oblasti (Sankt-Peterburgskiy Mukhtasibat)*, 29 April 2016 <<http://islamdumpb.ru/blog/rezolyutsiya-iii-bigiyevskikh-chtenij>>.

⁵² Musa Dzhharullakh (Bigiyev) Rostovdoni, *Istoriya Korana i ego svodov* (Moscow: Medina, 2016).

⁵³ For example, see the foreword of the Grand Mufti of Russia Ravil Gainutdin in the Russian translation of Bigiyev's *Tārīkh al-Qur'an wa'l-Maṣāḥif. Istoriya Korana i ego svodov*, pp. 5-8. The same observation is also true for the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Turkey. The former director of it, Mehmet Görmez (in office 2010-17) made an academic career out of Bigiyev. His MA thesis on Bigiyev's life and thought was published as a book by the

The most important contribution to the Bigiyev studies in Russia came out in 2010 by Elmira Tagirdjanova, the daughter-in-law of Bigiyev youngest daughter Fatma Hanım (d. 2006). In two volumes, Tagirdjanova published the materials in Bigiyev's family archive which was in the possession of his daughter Fatma Hanım. The first volume is presented as Bigiyev's notorious Tatar translation of the Qur'an. But recently it has become clear that it was not Bigiyev's, but Süleyman Tevfik [Özzorluoğlu] (1861-1939)'s 1926 Turkish translation of the Qur'an. The second volume consists of hitherto unknown documents, including Bigiyev's wife Esma Hanım's diary, Bigiyev's solo, family and friends' pictures, and excerpts on Bigiyev and relevant events from the press of the time (predominantly Russian press), and so on. It is especially important for Bigiyev's life in the Soviets between 1917 and 1930. One big flaw of the work is its reliance on recently retired (2017) head of the Turkish Ministry of Religious Affairs Mehmet Görmez' outdated work on Bigiyev (1994).

In Turkey

Bigiyev's last articles appeared in *Islam-Türk Ansiklopedisi Mecmuası* (1940-48) and Ömer Rıza Doğrul's *Selamet* and *Yeni Selamet* magazines in 1948 in Istanbul one year before his death. Three years after his death, in 1952, his first full biography came out in Turkey in 1952 by his close friend and admirer Abdullah Battal Taymas (1883-1969). The first Turkish translation of his works is his *Uzun Günlerde Ruze* which was published by another friend of him, Yusuf Uralgiray, in 1975. Since early 1990's, a good number of his works have been translated in

same institution. Mehmet Görmez, "Musa Carullah Bigi: Hayatı Fikrileri ve Eserleri," (MA Thesis, Ankara Üniversitesi, 1989); Mehmet Görmez, *Musa Carullah Bigiyef*. (Ankara: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 1994).

Turkish. The most recent one is *El-Lüzumiyyat* (2018) which is edited by Erzurum Atatürk University professors Yanık and Utku.⁵⁴

In terms of academic studies, there is a considerable body of literature on Bigiyev in Turkey. Apart from ongoing academic projects, there are two PhD dissertations and twelve MA theses on Bigiyev and his works in various Turkish universities so far.⁵⁵ One of the MA thesis was done by recently retired president of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Turkey, Mehmet Görmez (in office 2010-2017), in 1989 and published by the Ministry of Religious Affairs in 1994.⁵⁶ Among others, Ahmet Kanlıdere's MA Thesis at Marmara University (1988), which was also published as a book later on (2005), stands out as being the most comprehensive work on Bigiyev's life and thought in Turkish so far.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ Ebu'l-Ala el-Maarri&Musa Carullah Bigiyef, *El-Lüzumiyyat*. Edited by Nevzat H. Yanık and Ali Utku, (Çizgi Kitabevi Yayınları, 2018).

⁵⁵ Ahmet Kanlıdere, "Rusya Türklerinden Musa Carullah Bigi (1875-1949)," (MA Thesis, Marmara Üniversitesi, 1988); Mehmet Görmez, "Musa Carullah Bigi: Hayatı Fikrileri ve Eserleri," (MA Thesis, Ankara Üniversitesi, 1989); Semra Ulaş, "Musa Carullah'ın "Hatun" Adlı Kitabı Işığında İslam Kadını," (MA Thesis, Ankara Üniversitesi, 1993); Ahmet İşleyen, "Musa Carullah Bigiyef'in Kur'an Anlayışı ve Yorum Yöntemi," (MA Thesis, Ankara Üniversitesi, 2002); Abdilaziz Kalberdiev, "Musa Carullah Bigiyef'in Kalâmi Görüşleri," (MA Thesis, Ankara Üniversitesi, 2004); Nurhan Kuzu, "Osmanlı'dan Modern Türkiye'ye Geçiş Döneminde Aydınların Medeniyet-Din İlişkilerine Bakışı: Hüseyin Kâzım Kadri Ve Musa Cârullah Bigiyef Örneği," (MA Thesis, Uludağ Üniversitesi, 2005); Nuri Öz, "İslam Düşüncesinin Yenileştirilmesi Bağlamında Mustafa Sabri ile Musa Carullah Bigi'nin Karşılaştırılması," (MA Thesis, Marmara Üniversitesi, 2007); Yakup Kayhan, "Musa Carullah'ta Dini Çoğulculuk," (MA Thesis, Ankara Üniversitesi, 2007); Raim Gafarov, "Musa Carullah Bigiyev'in Kader Hakkındaki Görüşü (MA Thesis, Uludağ Üniversitesi, 2009); Ömer Küçükmehtetoğlu, "Musa Carullah Bigiyef'in Dîvân-ı Hâfız İsimli Eserinin Kelime Hazinesi Bakımından İncelenmesi," (MA Thesis, Gazi Üniversitesi, 2010); Akif Savaş, "Kalâm'ın Yenileşme Sürecinde Musa Carullah Bigiyef," (MA Thesis, Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi, 2010); Remzi Kurtde, "Musa Carullah Bigiyef ve İslam Hukuku ile İlgili Görüşlerinin Değerlendirilmesi," (Ph.D. Dissertation, Ankara Üniversitesi, 2011); Gülşah İleri, "Musa Carullah'ın Eserlerinde Rusya Müslümanları'nın İlk Siyasi Faaliyetleri," (MA Thesis, Marmara Üniversitesi, 2016); Yaşar Akaslan, "Tayyibetü'n-Neşr Şerhlerine Dair Bir İnceleme (Mûsâ Cârullah Örneği)," (PhD Dissertation, Ondokuz Mayıs Üniversitesi, 2017).

⁵⁶ Mehmet Görmez, "Musa Carullah Bigi: Hayatı Fikrileri ve Eserleri," (MA Thesis, Ankara Üniversitesi, 1989); Mehmet Görmez, *Musa Carullah Bigiyef*. (Ankara: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 1994).

⁵⁷ Ahmet Kanlıdere, "Rusya Türklerinden Musa Carullah Bigi (1875-1949)," (MA Thesis, Marmara Üniversitesi, 1988); Ahmet Kanlıdere, *Kadimle Cedit Arasında Musa Carullah: Hayatı-Eserleri-Fikirleri* (İstanbul: Dergah, 2005).

In the Arab World

When Bigiyev died in 1949 in Egypt, there appeared a number of articles honoring him in the Arab media of the time. Even though nearly half of Bigiyev's corpus is in Arabic, especially the works that he published in exile, Bigiyev, in the Arab world is known mostly for his refutation of the Shi'a, *al-Washī'ah* (1936), which has been reprinted more than once. The most recent one is published by the prestigious al-Azhar University in 2014/15.⁵⁸ It is so popular in the Arab milieu that it even features on Sunni apologetic videos on YouTube. It has been highly circulated across the Sunni world and received numerous responses from the Shi'ite clerics.

Among his celebrated works in the Arab world, we should also mention his *Tārīkh al-Qur'an wa'l-Maṣāḥif* (1905), which is his first published work in his writing career, and *Sarf al-Qur'an al-Karīm* (1944) which was reprinted by the Iraqi government in 2011.⁵⁹ Even though he wrote extensively during his stay in India, especially between 1944 and 1947, many of those works in Arabic are not in circulation today.

In the English-Speaking World (the West):

As for the works in English or in the West, one of the aims of this project is to fill the gap in this academic domain. True that there are a couple of articles partially related to him, there is still neither an MA, nor a Ph.D. dissertation solely devoted to Bigiyev and his thought in the English

⁵⁸ Mūsā Jārullāh, *al-Washī'ah fī Naqḍ 'Aqā'id al-Shī'ah*. Ed. by U. D. Muḥammad 'Imārah. (Cairo: Majallat al-Azhar, 1436 [2014 or 2015]).

⁵⁹ Mūsā Jārullāh, al-Turkistānī al-Qāzānī al-Rūsī. *Risālah fī Sarf al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*. Edited by Firās Fakhri Mīrān, Ḥaydar Fakhri Mīrān. (Baghdād: Jumhūriyat al-'Irāq, Dīwān al-Waqf al-Sunnī, Markaz al-Buḥūth wa-al-Dirāsāt al-Islāmiyah, 2011).

academic milieu. Elmira Akhmetova's MA thesis (2007) at International Islamic University of Malesia compares Bigiyev with Bediuzzaman Said Nursi (1876-1960) in terms of nationalism.⁶⁰ Even though this is a good attempt to compare Bigiyev's political ideas with that of Nursi's, it is devoid of some of Bigiyev important articles that appeared in the Tatar press of the time.

Ahmet Kanlıdere's PhD dissertation at Columbia University, which later on published as a book under the title of "Reform Within Islam (1997)" devotes a subchapter on Bigiyev. Kanlıdere situates Bigiyev as a scholar between Jadidism and Qadimism partly because of the difficulty in reconciling some of his apparently contradicting ideas. He also translated a short article of Bigiyev into English "Why Did the Islamic World Decline while the Civilized World Advanced?" in Kurzman (2002)'s reader on Islamic modernism.⁶¹ Much of the references to Bigiyev in later works in the Western academia owe their existence to Kanlıdere's works in English. In other word, Kanlıdere is responsible for the dissemination of Bigiyev's thought and ideas into the English milieu.

Chapter Outlines

Besides the introduction, which is chapter I, this work has five chapters, along with two appendices.

Chapter II constitutes the theoretical framework of the project. Here, I relied on anthropologist Talal Asad's notion of Islam as a discursive tradition. Bigiyev in the secondary literature is often time dealt with within the Jadidist vs. Qadimist binary. Even though he is

⁶⁰ Her work is entitled "Ideas of Muslim Unity at the Age of Nationalism: A Comparative Study of the concept of the Ummah in the writings of Musa Jarullah and Said Nursi," (MA Thesis, International Islamic University Malaysia, 2007).

⁶¹ *Modernist Islam (1840-1940): A Sourcebook* Ed. by Charles Kurzman, (Oxford University Press: 2002), pp. 254-56.

portrayed as a “reformist” in many works, it is also possible to find references that describe him as a traditional conservative scholar. Thus, I attempted to look at him holistically as to see his place within the Islamic intellectual tradition beyond the established binaries.

Chapter III is a relatively lengthy sketch of Bigiyev’s life and works. Here, I avoided repeating some of the well-known facts about his life that are already worked out by my predecessors in Turkey, Russia, and elsewhere. Instead, I incorporated a good deal of hitherto unknown information about his life especially between 1905 and 1918 based on the Tatar periodicals of the time. For his life in the Soviets, I benefited a lot from Bigiyev’s family archive which was published by Tagirdjanova in 2010. As for his life in exile after 1930, especially his imprisonment and life after release in India between 1939 and 1947, I draw on Oğuz Haşmioğlu, whose father was a close friend of Bigiyev in this period.

Chapter IV presents Bigiyev’s overall view of the Qur’an and the sciences of the Qur’an. Bigiyev first and foremost was a scholar of the Qur’an. More than half of his corpus is related to various sciences of the Qur’an, such as *tafsīr*, *qirā’āt* (recitation), *fiqh*, and so on. He is one of the first scholars in the Turkic world who made a translation of the Qur’an in Tatar. Having evaluated his scholarship of the Qur’an, this chapter deals with in detail his notorious Tatar translation of the Qur’an which he completed in 1912.

Chapter V deals with Bigiyev’s ideas on the question of salvation for others. For him, it was not only a matter of faith, but also a basis for how Muslims related to the people of other beliefs. It looks at his idea of commonality of God’s mercy (*rahmet-i ilahiye umumiyeti*) in detail. In regard to the fate of others, Bigiyev appeared as a universalist since he claimed the Paradise as the final destination of all human beings. In other words, the punishment of the Hell for non-Muslims and Muslims alike was not eternal. This chapter examines Bigiyev’s overall

idea of universal salvation and its two basic premises: the mercy of God and the human's journey towards perfection. It also addresses his view of Sufism in relation to the question of salvation.

In Appendix I, I have provided an annotated list of his selected works. One of the difficulties in Bigiyev studies is to identify his complete oeuvre. Today nobody knows exactly how many books he wrote or rather published. Our knowledge of some of his works consists only of a reference to their title in some of his published works and in some other secondary sources. That is all. For example, even though he says, "in my such and such book, I have discussed such and such topic", we are not sure if that work had been published at all or remained in manuscript or got lost. There is a similar problem with his published works as well, as many of them are rarities today. Thus, it is not always possible for one to locate the original copy of his books. That is why majority of my predecessors commented on some of his books based on the secondary literature without seeing them. In my list, I refrained from listing the ones that are only known in title, unless I am hundred percent sure about its existence like his notorious Tatar translation of the Qur'an.

In Appendix II, I laid out a list of his scholarly articles, along with his published letters. Some of his books are the revised version of his articles in the Tatar press of the time with slight revisions. It includes a good number of hitherto unknown articles of Bigiyev. It is the most accurate and complete list so far. However, it is still possible to come across his unknown articles. And I believe the best bet would be the Egyptian press, Muslim press in Germany and India in the years when he stayed in those places respectively while in exile.

CHAPTER 2- THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: A VISION OF ISLAM THAT MAKES SENSE

Islam as a Discursive Tradition

In January 2016, in a well-attended public panel at Madison's scenic Monona Terrace, Madisonians, Muslims and non-Muslims alike, discussed and condemned the atrocities of the so-called Islamic State (ISIS) against humanity in the Middle East and elsewhere. At the beginning of his presentation, the first panelist, an imam from a local Madison mosque, stated that "Islam does not change, but Muslims" in the sense that Islam is not responsible for the atrocities ISIS has committed in the name of the religion of Islam. And throughout his presentation, he kept repeating that "A Muslim can change, but not Islam". Likewise, another Muslim panelist in his presentation pointed out that "Islam and Muslims are two different things".⁶² I think these statements constitute enough basis for my discussion of diversity in Islam and where Bigiyev stands in it.

How are we to understand these similar statements by two different "Muslims"? How is Islam different than Muslims? Why does Islam stay fix, but Muslims change? Is there more than one way of being Muslim? Are different "Islams" equally Islamic or legitimate? What makes a specific practice Islamic? We can deal with these and similar questions through anthropologist Talal Asad's idea of Islam as a tradition consisting of discourses that determines what it means to be Islamic in a given context.

⁶² "Islam, Muslims and the West: ISIL Our Common Enemy," 23 January 2016, Monona Terrace, Madison, WI.

Asad dealt with the issue in his seminal article “The Idea of An Anthropology of Islam,” which first came out in 1986.⁶³ Since then, his piece provided a basis for the academic study of Islam across disciplines, mostly in anthropology and religious studies. In it, having seen the futility of his predecessors in providing, what he called a “correct model” for the anthropological study of Islam, Asad basically suggested that the apparent plurality in Islam should be understood as different discourses operating in each one of them. For Asad, as Caton pointed out, religion is not a mere body of symbols to be interpreted as suggested by anthropologist Clifford Geertz, or a metaphysical system in the sense of making sense of the world, but it is a discursive practice which has to do with social action and bodily discipline.⁶⁴

Another anthropologist Gabriel Marranci informs us that the anthropological interest in Islam does not have a long history because the religion of Islam was less attractive to the anthropologists due mostly to its abstract conception of God and insistence on orthodoxy.⁶⁵ Marranci continues that for the awakening of anthropological interest in Islam as a global religion, many credit Clifford Geertz, who, for the first time, put Islam in the title of his anthropological study of Islam: *Islam Observed: Religious Development in Morocco and Indonesia* (1971).⁶⁶ However, Geertz’s understanding of Islam was universalistic in the sense that a universal body of religious consciousness is at place across the globe despite local

⁶³ Talal Asad. *The Idea of an Anthropology of Islam* (Occasional Papers Series, Washington, DC: Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, Georgetown University, 1986).

⁶⁴ Steven C. Caton, "What is an “Authorizing Discourse?” *Powers of the Secular Modern: Talal Asad and His Interlocutors*. Eds. Charles Hirschkind and David Scott. (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2006), p 32. For a short survey of the evolution of the term "religion" and its plural "religions" and its derivative "religious" in Europe 15th century onward, see Jonathan Z. Smith, "Religion, Religions, Religious." *Relating Religion: Essays in the Study of Religion*. (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2004), pp. 179-196.

⁶⁵ Gabriele Marranci, *The Anthropology of Islam*. (Bloomsbury Publishing PLC, 2008), p. 43. ProQuest Ebook Central, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/wisc/detail.action?docID=533064>.

⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 42.

differences in interpretation. In this schema, while the ulema is responsible for the production and the preservation of the universal soul of Islam through legalistic activities, it is the Sufis who constitute various local expressions of Islam at the local level.⁶⁷

Geertz's notion of a universal Islam, which operates both in philosophical and practical levels, was challenged by another anthropologist Abdul Hamid el-Zein who somewhat proposed the opposite of what Geertz asserted. According to Zein, instead of a universal Islam with upper case "I", we should talk about many islams with lower case "i". Likewise, Gilsenan agreed with Zein on the multiplicity of Islam and stated that the anthropologists should take them all into account as equally valid "islams." After that, Eickelman joined the discussion and suggested that we must find a middle ground between Geertz and Zein, but he did not offer a clear formula.

The quotes that I put in the beginning could be dealt with through a Geertzian understanding of religion as a category of its own, universally operating across time and space. Thus, as Caton points out, it should not be confused with the essence of science, or of politic, or of common sense.⁶⁸ However, for Asad, "there cannot be a universal definition of religion, not only because its constituent element and relationships are historically specific, but because that definition is itself the historical product of discursive processes".⁶⁹ This is another place where Asad challenged part of Geertz's definition of religion⁷⁰ as a body of symbols. For Asad,

⁶⁷ For a wonderful summary of the formation of the anthropology of Islam as an academic discipline and how Geertz' study on Islam contributed to it, see Gabriele Marranci, *The Anthropology of Islam*, pp. 39-59.

⁶⁸ Caton, *Ibid.*, p. 34.

⁶⁹ Quoted in Caton, *Ibid.*, p. 34.

⁷⁰ Here is Geertz' definition of religion: "[A] religion is: (1) a system of symbols which acts to (2) establish powerful, pervasive, and long-lasting moods and motivations in men by (3) formulating conceptions of a general order of existence and (4) clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that (5) the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic." [numerics belong to Geertz]. "Religion as a Cultural System." *The*

Geertz's effort to reach to a universal definition of religion was not only inaccurate, but also of Christian origin.⁷¹ If so, is the Muslim panelists' understanding of Islam in error as they wish to claim a universal unchanging religious essence operating trans-historically?

The main question here has to do with the diversity in Islam, the diversity of thought and practice. Is there only one Islam (universal Islam) and thus one orthodoxy operating across time and space? Or are there multiple "islam"s equally legitimate operating independently from each other? Asad sees both ways of looking at Islam, or rather studying it, as misleading partly because it leads to dichotomies, what Asad calls "the dual typology of Islam", such as orthodox vs. heterodox, little tradition vs. greater tradition, urban vs. countryside, shaikh vs. ulama, etc. For Asad, "Islam is neither a distinctive social structure nor a heterogeneous collection of beliefs, artifacts, customs, and morals. It is a tradition."⁷²

Asad's formula has two main components in it: One is tradition and the other is discourse.⁷³ First, what is tradition? Asad's definition of tradition is as follows:

A tradition consists of discourses that seek to instruct practitioners regarding the correct form and purpose of a given practice that, precisely because it is established, has a history. These discourses related conceptually to a past (when the practice was instituted, and from which the knowledge of its point and proper performance has been transmitted) and a future (how the point of that practice can

Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays by Clifford Geertz. (New York: Basic Books Inc., Publishers, 1973), p. 90.

⁷¹ For Asad's critic of Geertz' definition of religion, see Talal Asad, "The Construction of Religion as An Anthropological Category." *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam.* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1993), pp. 27-54

⁷² Talal Asad, "The Idea of an Anthropology of Islam," *Qui Parle* 17.2 (2009), p. 20.

⁷³ Interestingly, what makes the core of the article, i.e., Islam as a discursive tradition, constitutes only a small portion of the paper towards the end, probably one third of it or less than that. Asad himself also pointed to it in his presentation in a symposium organized in his honor at the American University of Beirut in 2014 that by looking at it after almost 30 years, he –like me– realized that he said indeed very little about what he meant by discursive tradition in it. *The Idea of Islam Today: Towards Non-Orientalist Genealogies: An International Symposium in Honor of Talal Asad*, American University of Beirut, September 25-26, 2014.

best be secured in the short or long term, or why it should be modified or abandoned), through a present (how it is linked to other practices, institutions, and social conditions). An Islamic discursive tradition is simply a tradition of Muslim discourse that addresses itself to conceptions of the Islamic past and future, with reference to a particular Islamic practice in the present.⁷⁴

How to understand this quote by Asad? Scott and Hirschkind help us making sense of “discursive tradition” as “those discourses and practices of argumentation, conceptually articulated with an exemplary past and dependent on an interpretive engagement with a set of foundational texts, by which the practitioners of a tradition distinguish correct actions from incorrect ones.”⁷⁵

Again, it comes to the question of what makes a particular practice Islamic in a given context? This has to do with orthodoxy, the correct practice. In a given Islamic tradition, what determines orthodoxy is a distinctive relationship, a relationship of power to truth as Asad puts it. It is a matter of argument and conflict between those who exercise power and those who are subject to it.⁷⁶ For Asad, what asserts the correctness of a particular practice is the manipulation of population through production of knowledge that is appropriate to the context.⁷⁷ Thus, Asad continues, it is paramount “to understand the historical conditions that enable the production and maintenance of specific discursive traditions, or their transformation-and the efforts of practitioners to achieve coherence”.⁷⁸

⁷⁴ Talal Asad, “The Idea of an Anthropology of Islam,” p. 20.

⁷⁵ David Scott, Charles Hirschkind, *Powers of the Secular Modern: Talal Asad and His Interlocutors* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2006), p. 8.

⁷⁶ Asad, “The Idea of an Anthropology of Islam,” p. 22.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

Orthodoxy in Islam cannot be thought apart from the Shari'a, the Islamic Law. At the core of the matter lies how the main sources of the Islamic Law, i.e., the Qur'an and the Sunna (Prophetic tradition), are interpreted by those who are in a position to interpret them for the general public. Thus, in the formation of any Islamic tradition, all conditions have to conform with the sacred texts of Islam, i.e., the Qur'an and the Sunna, or the Prophetic tradition.⁷⁹ What the Shari'a asks indiscriminately from all Muslims meet the needs and circumstances of the local context through which a particular discourse emerges.

Thus, Asad thinks, instead of looking for orthodoxy, the correct way of looking at Islam or the proper way of being Muslim is to look at the discursive traditions of Islam. Asad states that "A practice is Islamic because it is authorized by the discursive traditions of Islam, and is taught by Muslims, whether by an alim, a khatib, a Sufi sheikh, or an untutored parent".⁸⁰ As Caton pointed out there are two things that need to be figured out in this definition. One is the instructional texts, i.e., the Qur'an and the Ḥadīth, and other authoritative texts. All in all, it is a matter of how those instructional texts find meaning in a particular practice. In other word, as Caton notes, it is a matter of how the Shari'a (texts) meets with practice since doctrine and practice are two different things. How Muslims are instructed to be proper Muslims through the use of those instructional texts. This implies, as Caton frames it, a gap between the ideal of Islam and the practice on the ground because the practice is not a mere repetition of the past.⁸¹

By looking at orthodoxy in Islam from this perspective, as Asad points out, it does not make sense to divide Islam as classical vs. modern, or urban vs. rural, legalistic vs. spiritual, and

⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 20.

⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 21.

⁸¹ Caton, Ibid., p. 43.

so on because the same process takes place in each domain. Thus, Asad's model provides an alternative perspective to look at Islamic "reform" or "revival" other than the established binaries, most of whom are the products of Western scholarship on Islam.⁸²

Although Asad's idea of Islam as a discursive tradition has been utilized a lot in religious studies and anthropology ever since, it does not mean that it is immune from criticisms. For example, anthropologist Marranci criticized Asad for prioritizing Islam over Muslims as Asad asserts that any Islamic discourse must conform with the founding texts of Islam i.e., the Qur'an and the Ḥadīth. For Marranci, this type of an approach is more theology than anthropology. Instead, Marranci suggests starting with Muslims because what they have in common is not Islam, but being human beings.⁸³ Thus, Marranci thinks, part of being Muslim or Islamic has to do with feelings. Without a mind interpreting it, Islam (the Qur'an, the Ḥadīth, etc.) does not make sense for Marranci.⁸⁴ Marranci also goes on to say that Islam is a map and it is not the same thing with that of the territory that it covers. And some personal interpretations of Islam can go beyond the map.⁸⁵ Likewise, another anthropologist Schielke criticized Asad for putting too much attention to the practicing Muslims over non-practitioners. Schielke is in the idea that for many Muslims, religion is of secondary importance and thus the religious knowledge.⁸⁶

⁸² A good example of looking beyond the binaries is Tareen's dissertation in which the author argued that the binaries are the products of Western scholarship on Islam and they are not helpful to understand the contesting Islamic traditions in South East Asia. SherAli Tareen, "The Limits of Tradition: Competing Logics of Authenticity in South Asian Islam," (Ph.D. Dissertation, Duke University, 2012).

⁸³ Gabriele Marranci, *The Anthropology of Islam*, p. 15.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

⁸⁶ Samuli Schielke, "Second thoughts about the anthropology of Islam, or how to make sense of grand schemes in everyday life," *Working Papers*, no.2, 2010, p. 16.

Ibrahim Moosa, made a similar remark and stated that if the discursive tradition of Islam referred to the Islamic sciences, their holders are nobody else other than the ulama because most common folks are illiterate of them.⁸⁷

The Problem: Is Bigiyev a “Traditional Reformist”?

It is conventional to look at the Islamic “revival movements” in the Islamic world in general and in Russia and Central Asia in particular within the framework of binaries, such as traditional vs. modern, conservative vs. reformist, etc. Thus, the existing literature on Bigiyev often looks at him through the Qadimist vs. Jadidist binary. However, there is a confusion about his place in this scheme. In the secondary literature on Bigiyev, it is possible to find him all around the religious spectrum. Even though majority puts him on the Jadidist end (and thus refer to him as a “jadid,” “reformist,” “modernist,” “renewer,” etc.), still some others associate him with Qadimism (and thus consider him as a “conservative,” “traditional,” etc.). Additionally, another approach is to situate him in between.

The examples of the first kind are numerous. I will only provide two specific examples to illustrate it. To begin with, William Gervase Clarence-Smith, in his study of slavery in Islam, put Bigiev into the category of “radical rationalist” due to his stance on slavery in Islam which rejected it altogether as opposed to gradualists who were in the idea that abolition of slavery will take place naturally when the time is suitable.⁸⁸ Likewise, İhsan Çolak in his dissertation on

⁸⁷ Ebrahim Moosa. *Ghazālī and the Poetics of Imagination*. (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press), 2005.

⁸⁸ The author’s portrayal of Bigiyev as someone who called for a ‘Protestant Reformation’ in Islam, which was not the case, is a good example of “labelling” everybody as a reformer who is not “traditional.” William Gervase Clarence-Smith, *Islam and the Abolition of Slavery* (Oxford University press, 2006), pp. 210-11.

Shihāb al-Dīn Marjānī kept referring to Bigiyev, along with Abū Naṣr Qūrṣāwī, Shihāb al-Dīn Marjānī, Rizaeddin Fahreddin, Abdurresid Ibrahimov to name some as "well known modernists" as the members of the intellectual phase of the "modernist Islam" which led up to the secularization of Muslim mind.⁸⁹

As for the conservative end, for example, Michael Reinhard Heß commented that the Tatar poet Babic in his poem *Gazazil* (1916) referred to Bigiyev as a “defender of traditional Muslim beliefs” regarding the question of theodicy, a branch of theology which deals with the question of evil, though there is nothing in the text that suggests so. Then Reinhard goes on to label Bigiyev as a “conservative Muslim” and a “traditional thinker”.⁹⁰

In his early works Turkish historian Kanlıdere, who has written excessively on the Islam in the Volga-Ural region, placed Bigiyev in the Jadidist end and called him a modernist and reformist scholar, along with Rizaeddin bin Fahreddin, Ismail Bey Gasprinskii, and so on.⁹¹ However, in his later works he seems to adopt a more reconciliatory approach and placed him in between. In his *Kadimle Cedit Arasında Musa Cârullah* (2005), which is the most authoritative book on Bigiyev in Turkish so far despite some factual errors and mishandlings, he portrayed him as a scholar who could be seen as a scholar having a foot in both domains.⁹²

What is it that leads people to come up with totally opposite statements on Bigiyev regarding his place on the religious spectrum? Moreover, it gets more complex if we take him

⁸⁹ İhsan Çolak, “Secularization of The Muslim Mind: Defining the Muslim Reformation Among Volga-Urals Muslims (Between Late Eighteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries),” (Ph.D. Dissertation, Indiana University, 2011).

⁹⁰ Michael Reinhard Heß, “Satan, the Uncanny Harbinger of Modernity in Şäyexzada Babič' Ğazazil,” *Wiener Zeitschrift Für Die Kunde Des Morgenlandes*, vol. 101, 2011, p. 163.

⁹¹ Ahmet Kanlıdere. *Reform within Islam: The Tajdid and Jadid Movement among the Kazan Tatars (1809-1917): Conciliation or Conflict?* (Istanbul, Eren, 1997).

⁹² Ahmet Kanlıdere, *Kadimle Cedit Arasında Musa Cârullah: Hayatı, Eserleri, Fikirleri* (Istanbul: Dergah, 2005).

out of the Russian context and put into the Turkish one. In that case, while he could be a “modernist” in the first, he could also be a “conservative” in the latter concurrently. A good example could be his support for the preservation of the Turkish caliphate and the Arabic letters.

This type of a binary also entails some certain terminology, such as “reformist”, “conservative”, “modernist”, “traditional”, and so on. Even though for practical purposes, we need some sort of terminology to discuss the matter at hand, the words, as Rippin pointed out, that are used do not represent accurately what is on the ground.⁹³ They are by and large the products of Western scholarship on Islam and most of the time artificial. Again, as late Marcus Borg, a Christian scholar and a public speaker, warned us, labels carry on the risk of stereotypes and caricatures, and the difference between “label” and “libel” is just one letter.⁹⁴

Jadidism: What Is It?

Again, Bigiyev is often time dealt with within the Jadidist discourse, but what is Jadidism. The term Jadidism itself is problematic and loose. Generally speaking, it is everything that is not old.⁹⁵ For Lazzerini, it was Gasprinskii who spearheaded the social and cultural reform movement which came out in the third quarter of the 19th century in Russia. It began as a new teaching method in the Islamic schools and extended towards other social issues.⁹⁶ Having

⁹³ Andrew Rippin, *Muslims: Their Religious Beliefs and Practices* (Routledge, 2005), pp. 168-69.

⁹⁴ Marcus J. Borg, *Convictions: How I Learned What Matters Most*. (Harper Collins, 2014), p. 8.

⁹⁵ For a harsh critic of the Jadidist discourse, as supposed by the author, dominating the study of Islam in Russia and Central Asia in the academia, see Devin deWesee, “It was a Dark and Stagnant Night (‘til the Jadids Brought the Light): Clichés, Biases, and False Dichotomies in the Intellectual History of Central Asia,” *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 59 (2016) pp. 37-92.

⁹⁶ Edward J. Lazzerini, “Jadidism at the Turn of the Twentieth Century: A View from Within.” *Cahiers Du Monde Russe Et Soviétique*, vol. 16, no. 2, 1975, p. 248.

started as a new method of literacy or teaching the alphabet, it evolved into the new way of curriculum which brought together the religious education with secular ones. From there, it has become the common term for social and “religious reform” in Russia and Central Asia.

Generally speaking, Usul-i Jadid is the new method of teaching how to read and write.⁹⁷ It was faster and more convenient style of learning the alphabet in about three months. Although it started merely as a teaching method, by the time it has been associated with political tones. When it got to 1912s, the proponents of the old school vilified it by calling it as another version of pan-Islamism through which the Ottoman Turks infiltrate into the Russian state. It is interesting to see how the proponents of it had to confront these accusations of being agents of Turkey. For example, Hadi Maksudi's *Yulduz* published a number of pieces to refute the idea that usul-i jadid was imported from Turkey. On the contrary, it was a sheer innovation of the Muslims of Russia as Gasprinskii is its pioneer.⁹⁸

A more specific approach to look at it is to see it as a cultural, not necessarily religious, debate on transforming the Muslim communities of Russia and Central Asia. This approach is presented by Adeb Khalid in his famous work on Central Asian Jadidism where he outlined the politics of reform. According to Khalid, looking at the roots of the cultural reform within the indigenous tradition, i.e., the Bukharin madrasas' struggle to break with the bonds of *taqlid* does not answer the question. It is rather the Russian colonialism (Khalid also calls it as the transformative role of the Russian rule) and Western modernity by which the Central Asian jadids got their motivation. However, this does not mean that theirs was only a response to the

⁹⁷ These terms were even used to describe the alphabet reforms in the Russian language. For example, see Muhammed Kemal Muzafferov, “Ruslarda Usul-i Kadim ve Usul-i Cedid,” *Shura*, no. 2, 15 January 1912.

⁹⁸ “Usul-i Cedide Kaydan Çıktı?” *Yulduz*, no. 814, 3 April 1912.

West. They were at the same time confronting the internal challenge of the traditionalist scholars who are called “Qadimists,” though the wholesale use of the term requires caution. What they were debating on was changing the “cultural capital” in the words of Pierre Bourdieu. In other words, it was a struggle for defining the orthodoxy, or tradition. It is, by and large, a project of Muslim elites in transforming Muslim society by embracing modernity and redefining tradition⁹⁹ in the face of modernism through new style schools as the core of their transformation project. For the Jadids, there was no contradiction between the notion of progress and faith in Islam. What enables one to better understand Islam is knowledge and Islam is the guarantee of progress.¹⁰⁰

Khalid’s presentation of Jadidism singles out Muslim elites as the major actors of social transformation. How about other agents of change? In his assessment of Jadidism, Khalid also put too much emphasis on “the transformative role of the Russian rule”. But does not it make it primarily an outcome of the colonial endeavor? If there were not the Russian rule, would they stay in "stagnation"? This approach leads the author to define Jadids as hybrids between the colonial masters and the natives.¹⁰¹ Khaled claims that the central Asian Jadids were a result of the transformation which began with the Russian conquest.¹⁰² Could we say the same thing for the Volga-Ural region which was integrated into the Russian state much earlier? Maybe. This way of looking at Jadidism could be misleading as it ascribes the *raison-de-atre* of Jadidism to external forces, i.e., the Russians.

⁹⁹ Adeeb Khalid, *The Politics of Muslim Cultural Reform: Jadidism in Central Asia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), p. 1.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 12.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 14.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 7.

Khalid in another piece commend further on the jadids' dilemma with the Russians. For many jadids of Central Asia, like Fitrat and Bahbudi, Russia was the epitome of modern civilization to emulate. In this respect, for example, Fitrat saw the Russians as practicing Muslims without belief. While jadids saw the Russians as a whole, the jadids too saw themselves as "us" distinct from the first. For Bahbudi, for example Russian rule over Muslims was better than any other power because Russians were not a threat to the integrity of the Muslim community.¹⁰³

Lazzerini also agrees with Khalid in the sense that in the cultural awakening of the "natives," Russian orientalism played a crucial role. Lazzerini comes to the point that in the cultural achievement of the Turkic people of Russia, the very presence and challenge of Russia played a so-called positive role. In the words of the famous Russian missionary scholar Ostroumov, he added, they "used all the advantages of Russian culture to defend their own nationality".¹⁰⁴ This could be true if we assume that the only way of enlightenment for these subject people went through the European way via Russia. Like Khalid, he thinks that Jadidism would have been impossible without the transformative effect of the Russian rule and the inspirational superiority of the West.

Kanlıdere, on the other hand, has a broader definition of Jadidism. In this regard, Kanlıdere's distinction between religious and secular (including socialists) reformers as two divergent groups with jadidism is useful.¹⁰⁵ This could also be seen in the terminology that was

¹⁰³ Adeeb Khalid, "Representations of Russia in Central Asian Jadid." *Russia's Orient: Imperial Borderlands and Peoples, 1700–1917* (Indiana-Michigan Series in Russian and East European Studies). (Indiana University Press, 1997), pp. 188-202.

¹⁰⁴ Edward J. Lazzerini, "Defining the Orient," p. 40.

¹⁰⁵ Ahmet Kanlıdere, "The Trends of Thought Among the Tatars and Bashkirs: Religious Reformism and Secular Jadidism vs. Qadimism (1883-1910)." *Orta Asya ve Kafkasya Araştırmaları (OAKA)*, 2010, Cilt: 5, Sayı: 9, p. 51.

used back then. It would be safe to assert that while religious jadids were called as reformers, secular jadids were called as jadids. A good example is Ahmet Hadi's relevant article in which he called Bigiyev as a religious reformer albeit in a derogatory sense.¹⁰⁶ What this type of a classification is missing is a subgroup of religious reformers who were deeply interested in politics and anti-colonial/Russian struggle. Again, it would include Bigiyev, along with Abdurresid Ibrahimov, and Azerbaijani Mustafa Lütfi Ismailov Shirvanski, to name some. With his political activism, Bigiyev could have been the first Islamic scholar one who could have achieved an Islamic state, even before Iqbal's Pakistan and Khomeini's Republic of Iran.

Kefeli, in her recent book, uses the term Jadid indiscriminately for any intellectual regardless of his or her political ideology and religious outlook. Therefore, her use of the term "Jadid" for all those who, one way or another, opposed to the tradition. She puts many people from different ideological background, such as Rizaeddin Fakhreddin to Tuqay within the use of the term Jadid.¹⁰⁷

As Khalid pointed out the new style schools, Usul-i Jadid, constituted the basic institution for transforming the cultural capital for the Central Asian Jadids.¹⁰⁸ Muslim modernists in Russia, like their counterparts in other part of the Islamic world, were very much concerned with the quality of classical style education because ignorance is one of the main causes of Muslims' falling prey to the Russian state. Thus, the remedy for the backwardness of the Muslims is first

¹⁰⁶ Ahmet Hadi Maksudi, "Ufak Fikirler," *Yulduz*, no. 1224, 9 July 1914.

¹⁰⁷ Agnes N. Kefeli, *Becoming Muslim in Imperial Russia: Conversion, Apostasy, and Literacy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2014).

¹⁰⁸ Khalid, *The Politics of Cultural Reform*, p. 130.

and foremost education and knowledge. Jadids' admiration for the Russians mainly come from the fact that their knowledge led them to the establishment of their multiethnic empire.¹⁰⁹

The whole movement of Usul-i Jadid is about creating a new way of literacy and education. It does not only propose a phonetic style of learning the alphabet, but also the integration of new secular subjects, including the Russian language classes. Through Gasprinskii's efforts, numerous new style schools were opened across Russia beginning from the last quarter of the 19th century to the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917. Although this new style education aimed to revive the Islamic education within its Islamic boundaries, Mustafa Tuna suggests that it ended up with the secularization of the education because Russian Muslims get their inspiration from Turkey and Egypt.¹¹⁰ But I think Tuna is underestimating the Soviet factor in his article. After the coming of the Bolsheviks in 1917 and the establishment of the Soviet Socialist Republics in the following years left no room for other choice but the secularization of education.

The disunity among the Jadidists has already been emphasized by Khalid.¹¹¹ The case between Marjānī, who is often time portrayed as the summit of religious revival in the Volga-Ural region, and Bigiyev could be a good example. Even though there is a number of similarities between Marjānī and Bigiyev it would be a mistake to put them into the same line of thought and action. In terms of their educational background, both men happened to be in Turkestan for higher Islamic education. Yet both were disappointed with the quality of education there.

¹⁰⁹ Adeeb Khalid, "Representations of Russia in Central Asian Jadid," pp. 194-95.

¹¹⁰ Mustafa Tuna, "Madrassa Reform as a Secularizing Process: A View from the Russian Empire," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 2011, 53(3), pp. 540-570.

¹¹¹ For Lazzerini, the apparent reason for it was the vast geographical landscape of the Russian Empire and the lack of inter-community contact. "Ġadidism at the Turn of the Twentieth Century," p. 248.

Likewise, both had become the target of the religious establishment of their times. But in this sense, Marjānī was luckier than Bigiyev in the sense that he was accused of being a Shi'a¹¹² (still Muslim), whereas Bigiyev accused of apostacy (not Muslim at all).

Although Bigiyev had a great esteem for Marjānī, he disagreed with him on several issues. For example, in the debate on the printing of the Qur'an in Russia, Bigiyev accused him of committing grave mistakes in determining the number of the verses of the Qur'an and the spelling of some specific Qur'anic words due to his zeal for the Hanafi School of Law.¹¹³ Likewise, in the calculation of the beginning and end of Ramadan, Bigiyev again accused Marjānī of ill-translating of the relevant *ḥadīth* which reads as Ramadan and Zilhijja are never incomplete.¹¹⁴ Besides, according to Bigiyev despite his disfavor of the traditional system of madrasas in Turkestan and India, Marjānī himself still followed the old style madrasa system for 40 years.¹¹⁵ Bigiyev in his polemic with Keshashafeddin Tarjumanī went further and declared Marjānī no more than an encyclopaedical scholar with his rudimentary knowledge on religious matters.¹¹⁶

Who started Jadidism first? Many considers Abū Naṣr Qūrṣāwī the progenitor of Jadidism. Nathan Spannaus, in his PhD dissertation on Qūrṣāwī, is in the idea that it would be an anachronism to put Qūrṣāwī along with the jadids simply because the ideas of the jadids were not there at that time. Instead he calls Qūrṣāwī as an “inspiration” for the later jadids. In terms of his

¹¹² Burhan Sheref, “İsabet Kitabı,” *Vakit*, no. 561, 1 January 1910.

¹¹³ Musa Bigiyef, “Yine Muhim Bir Mesele,” *Vakit*, no. 569, 21 January 1910.

¹¹⁴ Musa Bigiyev, *Şariat Niçin Rü'yeti İtibar Etmiş?* (Kazan: Ürnek, 1910), p. 68.

¹¹⁵ Musa Bigiyev, “Mektep Medreseler,” *Ülfet*, no. 10, 9 February 1906.

¹¹⁶ M. Bigiyef, “Anlav Tiyiş İdi,” *Yulduz*, no. 677, 1 May 1911.

ideas and solutions, Spannaus locates him in the pre-modern era.¹¹⁷ But in terms of the similarities between Bigiyev and Qūrṣāwī, there is not many to point, except for their quick temperament. And I think any attempt to find the nucleus of his thought in Qūrṣāwī would be in vain.

Bigiyev: A Vision of Islam that Makes Sense

Taking Asad as its theoretical background, this study seeks to examine Bigiyev in a non-binary perspective as where he stands within the intellectual history of Islam and what vision he has for the future of the Islamic community in Russia and beyond. It looks at Bigiyev's historical conditions in which how he is related to a particular discourse and how he presented it. It looks at how Bigiyev utilized the foundational texts of Islam, i.e., the Qur'an and the Ḥadīth, the early generation of Islam (the Salaf) and other relevant writings in his representation of what it means to be a Muslim in the face of both secularism and religious fundamentalism in the modern age. He was also concerned with the image of Islam and Muslims vis-a-vis the "civilized world" as he strived to present an Islam which was presentable.

Asad's definition of tradition takes place in time and space. There is a past, present, and future, as well as a given location. What do they refer to in Bigiyev's case? As for the past, Bigiyev holds dear the early generations of Muslims and some specific figures from the later periods. Bigiyev's present is the first half of the 20th century Russia in particular and the broader Islamic world in general. And as for the future, he envisions a universal Islam which makes sense. In other words, his Islam, through its general principles encompasses the needs of the modern times and works in all contexts.

¹¹⁷ Nathan Spannaus, "Islamic Thought and Revivalism in the Russian Empire: An Intellectual Biography of Abū Naṣr Qūrṣāwī (1776-1812)," (Ph.D. Dissertation, McGill University, 2012).

Asad's notion also holds the scripture as an integral part of the discourse. One major characteristics of the Qur'an, as Neuwirth pointed out, is the universality of its message and the knowledge that it contains which was new to its time.¹¹⁸ One goal of Bigiyev was to show universality of message of the Qur'an in the forms of general principles that make sense for everybody. In other words, he was in search of the universal in Islam.

Asad's model is useful for a study of Bigiyev because it provides an alternative way of looking at Bigiyev as a whole. This study looks at whence Bigiyev got his sources and how he presented his material to the populace in order to lead them to the correct model of thought and action. Tradition as Asad defined it is collective, not homogeneous. That is to say, what constitutes diversity is not always agreement, but disagreements on what it means to be Islamic. As Asad puts it, disagreement is central to the nature of discursive tradition. Different types of Muslims possess different types of foundational beliefs.¹¹⁹ One goal of this project is to discern how Bigiyev disagreed from his co-religionists in a shared framework of Islamic tradition.

One major challenge in this is the problem of terminology. As mentioned before there is an established tradition to look at diversity in Islam through binaries. And the terminology is coming from that context. Thus, it is a challenge to discuss Bigiyev without referring to the established terminology. I found to solution in putting them in quotation marks to signal that I do not use them in the sense that they are often time used.

¹¹⁸ Anna Alvi and Alia Hübsch, "Interview with Angelika Neuwirth: The claim that Islam lacks an Enlightenment is an age-old cliché." Translated from the German by Aingeal Flanagan. *Qantara*, 2013. Web. [Retrieved on April 4, 2018] <<https://en.qantara.de/content/interview-with-angelika-neuwirth-the-claim-that-islam-lacks-an-enlightenment-is-an-age-old>>.

¹¹⁹ Basit Kareem Iqbal. "Thinking about Method: A Conversation with Talal Asad." *Qui Parle: Critical Humanities and Social Sciences* 26, no. 1 (2017): pp. 198-200.

CHAPTER 3- ALWAYS ON THE MOVE: A SKECTH OF BIGIYEV'S¹²⁰ LIFE

*"To become like a tree rotting in the place it was planted- what a boring life, Tatsuo"*¹²¹

*How wonderful steamboat. How wonderful action, vacation.*¹²²

Below is a relatively lengthy sketch of Bigiyev's life and activities. I have divided it into four periods, which are conventionally used in discussions of his life: 1. Formative Years (1873/75-1905), 2. Between the Two Revolutions (1905-1917), 3. In the Soviets (1917-1930), 4. In self-exile (1930-1949). Yet, I tried to avoid some of the well-known facts about his life and activities that have already been worked out by my predecessors.

1. Formative Years (1873/75-1905)

The Beginning

Bigiyev's date and place of birth are controversial. While majority of his biographers noted that he was born in 1875 in Rostov, according to the family legend it was 1873 in Penza.¹²³

¹²⁰ While in his early works, he signed his name most of the time as Musa Bigiyev, after 1913 he abandoned Bigiyev all together and preffered Musa Jarullah.

¹²¹ Uttered by Musa in Toyoko Izutsu's -Toshihiko Izutsu's wife- novella *Bafurunnuru Monogatari* (The Tale of Bahr-un-Noor." This novel character represents no one else other than Musa Jarullah Bigiyev. *Bafurunnuru Monogatari* (The Tale of Bahr-un-Noor), in *Hakuji Goshi (White Porcelain Box)* (Tokyo: Shokoten Shobo, 1959; rept. Chuo Koronsha, 1993), p. 42, cited in Eisuke Wakamatsu, *Toshihiko Izutsu and the Philosophy of Word: In Search of the Spiritual Orient* Translated by Jean Connell Hoff, (Tokyo: LTCB International Library Trust/International House of Japan, 2014), p. 53.

¹²² "Ne kadar güzel şeydir vapur. Ne kadar güzel şeydir hareket, seychat!" Musa Bigiyev, "Kütüb-i Sitte ve Müellifleri," *Vakit*, no. 666, 10 September 1910.

¹²³ Bigiyev's date of birth is usually recorded as 1875 by his biographers and appears so in the international library catalogues and other places as well. The strongest evidence for it is a letter of Bigiyev to the editor of *Vakit* newspaper, Fatih Kerimi, in 1914. A transliteration of it appeared on *Gasyrlar Avazy* (Echo of the Centuries) in 1996. In it, Bigiyev himself stated that he did not know the exact year of his date of birth, but it should be either November, or December of 1875 since he was called to military service in 1896. Likewise, in the same letter, Bigiyev noted his place of birth as Novo-Cherkessk (Rostov on Don) as his mother used to tell him that he was born

Bigiyev as a Student (1888-1906)

It is often time typical for a Muslim scholar to get his primary education from his father. But in the case of Bigiyev, due to his father's death at a relatively young age -most probably because of alcoholism- his mother Fatma Hanım took the job on herself to take care of young Bigiyev's education.¹²⁴ Being raised by a single mother should have played a role later in his overall view of women which was well ahead of his time in terms of women's equality with men unconditionally. It was also his mother who wanted him to learn the Russian language and positive sciences, along with the Islamic disciplines. That is why he went to and from between Muslim and Russian schools in his secondary education.¹²⁵ While he cultivated Islamic sciences at the Muslim schools, he developed an interest in mathematical sciences at the Russian schools.

on the way when his family was moving to Rostov. A. Rakhimova and R. Minullin, "Musa Bigiyev: Şu Mektubum Sözləri Size Emanettir," *Gasyrlar Avazy*, 1996, v. 1-2. On the other hand, the family legend has a different story, albeit not unanimously. Even though it agrees on 1873 as his year of birth (the exact date differs), there are conflicting reports on his place of birth in it. For example, Bigiyev's late daughter Fatma Tagirjanova (d. 2006) reported that her father was born on January 6, 1873 in Rostov on Don. See, A. G. Khayrutdinov, *Posledniy Tatarskiy Bogoslov* (Kazan: Iman, 1999), p. 31. Likewise, Fatma Hanım's daughter in law Elmira Tagirdjanova, challenged both the conventional date and the place of his birth that are mentioned in Bigiyev's aforementioned letter because she thinks the authors of the article in *Gasyrlar Avazy* ill-transliterated it from Arabic to Cyrillic letters. Based on the narrations of Bigiyev's wife Esma Hanım and his youngest daughter Fatma Hanım, she claims that Bigiyev was born on December 25, 1873 in Kikino of the Chambarsky district of the Penza province (today the Kaminsky district of the Penza region). Tagirdjanova also adds that in an official document dated 1921, Bigiyev declared his date of birth as 1871 and his place of birth as Chambar of the Penza province (today Belinsky). It was not without reason that, she comments, by adding years, he avoided forced labor (logging, demolition, etc.), and pointing to Mr. Chambar (or in other documents of Rostov-on-Don) tried to save his relatives from persecution. Almira Tagirdjanova, "From the experience of studying the problem of distortion of the name of Musa Bigiyev," *Gasyrlar Avazy*, 2016, v. 1-2.

¹²⁴ Bigiyev in many of his works in exile signed his name as Ibn Fāṭimah (the Son of Fatma), along with Musa Jarullah. My predecessors took it granted as a way of paying respect to his mother. It might be the case. But if so, why did not he do it in his early works while his mother was still alive. I think part of the reason why he used such a pen name is that he was concerned with the security of his family back in the Soviets. Interestingly, the Shi'a ulema also found it interesting, if not inappropriate. For example, see al-Sayyid Muḥsin al-Amīn al-ʿĀmilī, *Naqd al-waṣhī'ah aw al-Shi'a bayn al-ḥaqāiq wa'l-awham* (al-Ghadir, 2001), p. 11.

¹²⁵ Yusuf Uralgiray, *Uzun Günlerde Oruç: İctihad Kitabı* (Ankara: Kazan Türkleri ve Yardımlaşma Derneği, 1975), p. XII.

Seeking illumination in the ancient seats of learning in the Noble Bukhara and Samarkand¹²⁶ was still a common tradition among the northern flank of the Turkic world in the 19th century. Thus Bigiyev, like Qūrṣāwī, Marjānī, and others, happened to be in Western Turkestan as his first destination for higher Islamic education. Yet, despite its rich history of madrasas and presence of libraries, the quality of religious education was far from satisfying young Bigiyev. Perhaps, his major gain in this period was the linguistic skills that he acquired as he improved his Arabic and learned Farsi. Having returned to Rostov without fulfilling his expectations, he applied to the Russian university in there, but it was returned due to his lack of proficiency in Latin which was mandatory in entering the Russian higher educational institutions back then.¹²⁷

Rejection from the university did not hinder the young Bigiyev. This time, he embarked on another set of journeys to the greater Middle East around 1899/1900. After studying in Istanbul for a brief period, he made his way to Egypt where he spent most of his time studying the Qur'an and Islamic jurisprudence. From there, for the next 18 months, he happened to be in the holy cities of Mecca and Medina, where he continued his study of the Qur'an, along with the tradition of the Prophet. Among his *ḥadīth* teachers was a certain Hanafi Mufti Sheikh Salih.¹²⁸ Towards the end of his life, Bigiyev described his stay in Mecca, i.e., Hira Cave, where the Prophet Muhammed received the first revelation of the Qur'an, as the most prolific and the most

¹²⁶ Fuat Köprülü well explained this connection in his article on the famous Turkish Sufi Yunus Emre. "Yunus Emre Asarı," *Türk Yurdu*, no 51, 13 Teşrinievvel 1329/30 October 1913.

¹²⁷ Alimcan el- Idrisi, "Tercüme-i Hal: Musa Carullah Efendi Bigi," *Türk Yurdu*, no. 89, 16 July 1331. In a news piece in *Vakit*, it was stated that for the entry to the Russian higher education, it was required to pass the written Latin exam for those who had not taken it in middle school. "Latin Tili," no. 2104, 4 October 1916.

¹²⁸ Musa Bigiyef, "Rahmet-i İlahiye Umumiyeti Hakkında Burhanlarım," *Shura*, no. 2, 15 January 1910.

honorable moments of his life.¹²⁹ Among his fellow classmates were his countrymen Sayyid Sharif bin Ahmed Jihanshin in Medina¹³⁰ and Ziyaeddin Kamali (1873-1944) and Lutfi el- Ishaki (d. 1925) in Mecca. His thirst for knowledge was not quenched there too. Bigiyev, from the holiest places of Islam, happened to be in the land of the Vedas, i.e., India,¹³¹ for about three months. Then he came back to Egypt again along with a short visit to Palestine, Beirut and Damascus on the way.¹³² Even though his biographers Idrisi, Taymas, and Uralgiray noted that he might have attended to a number of Muhammed Abduh's lectures during his stay in Egypt, I was not able to find a reference to it in Bigiyev's own writings.¹³³

Finally, in 1904, as a promising young scholar and political activist he returned to Rostov and reunited with his lovely mother Fatma Hanım who supported her son financially during all those trips albeit with small sums.¹³⁴ This reunion is completed by meeting with the "other half of his soul", Esma Aliya Hanım (1884-1979) as they got married one year later in 1905.

¹²⁹ Uralgiray, *Ibid.*, p. 20.

¹³⁰ Seyid Sherif bin Ahmed Jihanshin, "Medrese-i Hüseyiye Hakkında Teshis-i Maraz ve İzhar-ı Hak," *Vakit*, no 596, 25 March 1910.

¹³¹ In his "Zekat Mesarifi," Bigiyev provided some information about the British educational policy in India. This information should have based on his firsthand observation during his sojourn in India during his student years. Musa Bigiyev, Zekat Mesarifi, Mektep-Medreseler Nafakası," *Ülfet*, no. 13, 2 March 1906, pp. 7-8.

¹³² Bigiyev stated that he wandered through the land of Palestine on foot because of lack of money. Musa Jarullah, "Siyonizm II," *Vakit*, no. 1261, 28 July 1913.

¹³³ According to Murad Ramzi's account, in the Hijaz, Bigiyev, along with Lutfi Ishaki, attended to the lectures of a certain Sheikh Faliḥ who was influenced by Sheikh Sunusi. From there, he happened to be in India where he was in the company of the Wahhabis. Then again, he came back to Egypt where he was influenced by the Masons and Farah Antun. Muhammed Murad Mekki [Ramzi], "Musa'ga Mekke Polemiti," *Din ve Magishet*, no. 30, 23 July 1910.

¹³⁴ Alimcan el-Idrisi, "Tercüme-i Hal," p. 193. In this regard, one might wonder about his finance. Perhaps, the best way to make sense of how he was able to manage all those trips during his student years was to assert that Bigiyev was content with less.

Bigiyev later reflected on his student years and noted that having spent almost ten years in the madrasas of Kazan and Turkestan, and another five years in the madrasas of the greater Middle East (Turkey, the Hijaz, Egypt, Damascus, India) what he found least was the knowledge itself due to the lack of a systematic religious education in those “giant schools.” Thus, he had to fill the gap with private lessons from private scholars and men of letters.¹³⁵

2. Between the Two Revolutions (1905-1917)

A Scholar was Born (1905)

Bigiyev stayed in Rostov for only a short while. For the next couple of years, he wandered between Kazan and Petersburg. Towards the end of 1904, he went to St Petersburg¹³⁶, where he stayed until 1930, albeit interruptedly. There he audited classes, mostly pertaining to law, at St Petersburg University.¹³⁷ Perhaps, his move to Petersburg stemmed not only from his desire to pursue further education, but also his willingness to be more active politically at the Russian capital.¹³⁸ 1905 was also the beginning of his career as a journalist and publicist. His years of

¹³⁵ Musa bin Jarullah Bigiyev, *El-Luzumiyat Şerhi* (Kazan: Sheref Kütüphanesi, 1907), pp. 1-3. The disappointment with the Bukharan medreses was not peculiar to Bigiyev. Utiz Imeni, for example, after his 10-year sojourn in Bukhara came to the same conclusion that he wasted his time while studying in Bukhara. Schamiloglu, “İctihad or Millät?” p. 351.

¹³⁶ Mūsā Jārullāh, *Nizām al-Jāmiat al-Islāmīyah al-‘Ilmiyyah* (Bombay: Maṭba‘at al-qaimah, 1946), p. 2.

¹³⁷ It can be surmised from Sadri Maksudi’s piece in *Yulduz* that Bigiyev, despite his age and reputation, was still attending lectures at the university towards the end of 1906 and the beginning of 1907. Sadreddin Maksudi, “Milletin Vicdanı,” *Yulduz*, no. 75, 18 January 1907. At this point, I am not sure if it was his first choice to audit classes or he had to after failing to get into the department as a full-time student. As mentioned before, his first attempt to get into a Russian University in Rostov was denied for the lack of language proficiency in Latin. In any case, he found the solution for entering the Russian higher educational institutions in auditing classes. In his piece on Bünyamin Ahtamov, Bigiyev described Ahtamov’s student years around the same time slot at the Law School. But unfortunately Bigiyev did not say a word about his own auditing experience at the same department. Musa Bigiyef, “Bünyamin Ahtamof 1,” *Yulduz*, no. 631, 11 January 1911.

¹³⁸ It is highly possible that he got involved with the Cemiyet-i Hayriye of Petersburg in his early years in there. He stated that in 1905, in an open letter published by the Cemiyet-i Hayriye, he talked about the four types of public revenue that are designated by the Sharia. Musa Bigiyev, “Zekat Mesarifi, Mektep Medreseler Nafakası,” *Ülfet*, no.

study of the Qur'an gave its first fruit in April 1905 as he published his first book *Tārīkh al-Qur'an wa'l-Maṣāhif* in Petersburg in which he discussed the madrasa education in general and the early written copies of the Qur'an in particular.¹³⁹ Likewise, while in Petersburg, his first articles appeared in the *Ülfet* newspaper¹⁴⁰ which was published by his close friend, soulmate, and mentor Kadi Abdurreshid Ibrahimov whose political activism and religious orientation resonated well on Bigiyev.

First Three All-Russian Muslim Congresses (1905-1906)

In addition to his publications, Bigiyev took an active role in the political activities of the Russian Muslims. Bigiyev's return to Russia coincided with the 1905 Revolution of Russia in which the Russian Tsar declared a constitutional monarchy because of the military defeat against the Japanese in the East. It is quite safe to assert that the Muslims of Russia did well in taking advantage of the first Russian Revolution. This freer political environment provided the Muslims of Russia with a political representation in the subsequent Dumas and freedom of publication which enabled them to publish newspapers and journals in their respective languages across the empire. Between the two revolutions, i.e. the 1905 and the 1917, Muslims of Russia published more than a hundred periodicals in different centers of the Russian Empire, such as Kazan, St.

12, 23 February 1906. He also narrated that he talked to Mufti Muhammedyar Sultanov on behalf of the Jamiyat-i Khayriya regarding its schools. Musa Jarullah, "Hatır Defterinden: Mektep-Medreselere, Ruhani İdarelere Dair Nizamlar Hakkında," *IL*, no. 6, 28 November 1913.

¹³⁹ Musa Jarullah Rostofdoni, *Tārīkh al-Qur'an wa'l-Maṣāhif* (Petersburg: Ibrahim Boraganskiy, 1905). According to the official Ottoman imperial records, Bigiyev sent 400 copies of it to Izzetullah Efendi (most probably his half-brother), who was emigrated from Kazan to Istanbul earlier and teaching at the Fatih Madrasa. After the books were investigated by the Turkish officials, they were handed in to Izzeddin Efendi to be donated to the Ministry of Education. *Osmanlı Belgelerinde Kazan*. (Ankara: T.C. Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, 2005), pp. 215-16.

¹⁴⁰ Even though some of Bigiyev's biographers have noted that in this period he also wrote for the Arabic journal al-Tilmiz which was also published by Ibrahimov, I was not able to locate anything written under his name on it.

Petersburg, Ufa, Orenburg, Astrakhan, Baku, Samarkand, and Tashkent. In this regard, they also summoned the first three congresses of the all-Russian Muslims between 1905 and 1906, and the fourth one in 1914.

The first of these meetings took place on 15 August 1905 during the Mekerdje Fair. Summoning a general congress of all Russian Muslims was first decided in a gathering which was attended by a number of notables, such as Kadi Ibrahimov, Alimardan Topchubashov, Ismail Bey Gasprinskii, Ahmet Bey Agayev, Ali Bey Hüseyinzade, etc., on April in Petersburg. Even though an attempt was made to get an official permission from the governor, it was rejected due to the ongoing war against the Japanese. The solution was found to meet on water instead of soil and thus a steamboat, Gustuve Struve, was rented by Kadi Ibrahimov. This way, nearly 120 delegates from different parts of Russia came together and discussed the political future of the Muslim of Russia under the open air. As a token of respect to his service to the nation through *Tercüman*, Ismail Bey Gasprinskii was elected as the chairman of the meeting. It was started with a Qur'an recitation by Muhammed Sadik Rahimkulov, who was the imam of Vladikavkaz and a poet himself, followed by remarks of Gasprinskii and Topchubashov on the significance of the meeting. This was the first attempt toward the political unification of the Russian Muslims, be it Sunni or Shi'a, and the creation of the Muslim political party, Ittifaq al-Muslimin.¹⁴¹ It was especially emphasized in the congress' resolution that in order for Muslims of Russia to gain equal political rights with Russians, the first prerequisite is to achieve the unity

¹⁴¹ Musa Jarullah, 1914 Sene İyun 15-25'te Resmi Cemiyet Münasebetiyle Islahat Esasları: 1904-1915 Senelerde Rusya Müselmanlarının İctimai Hareketlerine Dair (Petrograd: Maksudov, 1915), pp. 167-69.

between and among themselves.¹⁴² Shortly after the congress, Ibrahimov along with Topchubashov drafted a party program of the Ittifaq in 23 articles.¹⁴³

In his report of the meeting, Bigiyev stated that all the participants were full of enthusiasm throughout the meeting which took for about 13 hours. Yet, when the boat was about to return to the dock, initial euphoria left its place to worry since a good number of the attendees were worried for the possibility of arrest by the Russian police upon their arrival. Thus, nobody wanted to carry the resolutions of the meeting on him, including Gasprinskii. It was Kadi Reshid Efendi who took it with him.¹⁴⁴

Five months later in January 1906 (13-23 January), the second congress was held in Petersburg as separate private meetings, again without official permission from the government.¹⁴⁵ Both in the first and the second congresses, the reluctance of the delegates in openly discussing some of the issues that were at hand was apparent. Yet, Bigiyev was on the maverick side of the political spectrum along with his lifelong friend Abdurresid Ibrahimov. In the second congress, it was agreed to form a Muslim political party, Ittifaq al-Muslimin. It was also decided to work with the Kadet Party in the upcoming elections. Bigiyev published the resolutions of the first congress, along with the Ittifaq's party program in his *Rusya*

¹⁴² For the resolutions of the meeting (five articles in total) both in Tatar and Russian, see Ibid, pp. 175-77.

¹⁴³ Ibid., pp. 179-81.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 171-72. Bigiyev resented the lack of financial support from the Tatar businessmen of Kazan. Ibid., p. 175. Shortly after the congress, Kadi Ibrahimov also published his reflections of the congress in his "Bin Uc Yuz Senelik Bir Nazire" in Petersburg. Bigiyev commented that this book was the first book in Turkic that was able to escape from the Russian censor. Ibid., p. 178.

¹⁴⁵ "Peterburg Civilisi," *Kazan Mukhbiri*, no. 30, 30 January 1906. The organizing committee's 2,5 hours meeting with the Interior Minister was not enough to obtain the necessary permission for the congress as he referred them to the municipality. "Peterburg Meclisi Hususunda," *Kazan Mukhbiri*, 27 January 1906.

Müselmanları İttifakının Nizamnamesi, which was published as a supplement to *Ülfet* newspaper.¹⁴⁶

The third and the last of this series of meetings was held again in Nizhniy Novgorod on 16-20 August 1906, not on the water, but on the soil since the government this time granted the permission for it.¹⁴⁷ Thus, not surprisingly, this was the best-attended of the meetings, with over 800 present. Initially, some of the participants, including Ismail Bey Gasprinskii, Seyyid Geray Alkin, and Alimardan Topchubashov protested the way in which the permission had been obtained by the commission, which consisted of Abdurrashid Ibrahim, Mirza Alim Maksudov, and Lütfi el- Ishaki. As the leader of the commission, Ibrahimov in his petition to the government stated that the congress would discuss how evil pan-Islamism, socialism, and anarchism were for the Muslims of Russia. Given his background as the forerunner of pan-Islamism, Ibrahim, when called upon by the congress for an explanation, stated that it was just a political trick and apologized for any inconvenience. Only after the apology the congress could start. After the congress, Bigiyev penned an article in *Ülfet* in defense of Abdurresid Efendi and others as well.¹⁴⁸ The biggest achievement of the third congress was the official declaration of

¹⁴⁶ Musa Bigiyef, *Rusya Müslümanları İttifakının Nizamnamesi* (Petersburg: K. S. Antokolsky, 1906), pp. 16.

¹⁴⁷ Despite the permission, some dignitaries of the Muslims of Russia still did not attend the congress. For example, The Mufti of Orenburg Muhammedyar Sultanov did not attend the first two meetings citing that they were held without the official permission of the government. Yet his absence in the third one, which was organized with the official permission, was openly criticized by the Tatar press. S. "Orenburg Müftüsü Sultanof'ga Açık Hat," *Kazan Mukhbiri*, no. 138, 23 August 1906. Abdurresid Ibrahim further claimed that the Mufti Sultanov tried to halt the second meeting and even threatened to revoke the licenses of those imams, including the mufti of Crimea, who attended to it. "Söylemek Ağır, Söylememek Mümkün Değil," *Ülfet*, no. 12, 23 February 1906.

¹⁴⁸ Bigiyev was especially disappointed by Topchubashov's unwillingness to stand in defense of Kadı Abdurresid İbrahimov. Peterburg Vekili Musa Bigiyev, "Bir Gün Olur Hakikat Meydana Gelir," *Ülfet*, no. 36, 23 August 1906.

the Muslim political party, Ittifaq al-Muslimin.¹⁴⁹ Despite its name, the Unity of Muslims, the future developments made it clear that the unity of Muslims on the grounds was not an easy task.

Bigiyev during the meetings did not contribute to the discussions much with his thoughts and ideas¹⁵⁰ because he was busy with writing down, by hand, the records of the congresses as the chief scribe.¹⁵¹ In the third congress, he was elected to the governing committee of the Ittifaq party. His connection to the party continued until the Bolshevik Revolution on different levels. From this time onward, his scholarly life went hand in hand with his political activities up until his leave of Russia in 1930.

After the congresses, Bigiyev continued publishing books. Upon his return to Russia, what concerned him most, apart from politics, was the problems of Muslim educational system which was far from providing students with quality education and free thinking. Therefore, for the next couple of years (from 1907 to 1912), he was busy with translating some of the classics of Arab Islamic literature for the benefit of madrasa students. Part of his goal was to provide a model for critical thinking. What he offered as a model for the madrasa students was the well-known sceptic, if not heretic, al- Ma‘arrī the Blind. In this regard, he published the translation of

¹⁴⁹ The Ittifaq party had never officially been recognized by the government though. In other words, the party itself never really sought official recognition from the government due to the concerns over the Russian laws pertaining to the non-Russian political entities. However, Ittifaq formed a political alliance with the Constitutional Democratic Party, aka Kadets, and through its share, could send Muslim representatives to the consequent Dumas. This alliance between the two lasted until 1917, despite the times when the relationships were uneasy because of Kadet’s hostile attitude towards Turkey during the WWI.

¹⁵⁰ A certain author with the initial Sh. in Nur stated that Bigiyev during the congress sided with the elders’ fraction vis-a-vis the youngsters’. “Müselmanlar Syezdine Dair,” *Nur*, no. 65, 31 August 1906.

¹⁵¹ Bigiyev reported the proceedings of the second congress at *Ülfet* in consequent articles. And he published the records of the Third Congress, along with the charter of the Ittifaq in the end as a separate book. The book was praised by both Yusuf Akçura and Sadri Maksudi. Sadri Maksudi regretted that Bigiyev was not able to contribute to the congress with his thoughts because of his responsibilities as the secretary/scribe of it. Maksudi also praised him as he wrote down the proceedings of the congress by hand without a stenograph. Sadreddin Maksudi, “Milletin Vicdanı,” *Yulduz*, no. 75, 18 January 1907. Later on, in 1915/17, Bigiyev combined the reports of all the meetings of the Muslims of Russia by then and published them as a single volume under the title of *Islahat Esasları*.

al- Ma'arrī's *al- Luzūmiyyat*, along with a biography of the author in 1907. Yet even al- Ma'arrī's name was enough for the religious establishment to be suspicious of the book, let alone of the broader project. As a result, he became a target of the religious establishment from this time on. The conflict between Bigiyev and the religious establishment got higher when Bigiyev in *el-Islah* newspaper declared that the Qur'ans that were printed in the Russia had errors in them. Thus, he summoned the ulama for a public panel to discuss the matter.

In the meantime, Bigiyev's name was brought up as a candidate for qadi to the Sobraniye. The editor of the *Yulduz* newspaper in Kazan Hadi Maksudi suggested Bigiyev as one of the most suitable candidates for the qadi to the Sobraniye which was vacant after the death of Hayrullah Osmanov (1848-1907). The editor of *Yulduz* stated that with his competence in Islamic sciences, as well as linguistic capability in Turkish, Arabic, Persian, and Russian would qualify him for the position. In terms of formalities, Maqsudi continued, if Bigiyev was appointed as an imam to a village mosque in Kazan, he could officially be the candidate of the Muslims of Kazan for the qadi.¹⁵² However, it apparently did not work for Bigiyev.

The Printed Qur'ans with Errors (1909)

Bigiyev, already having established himself as a young and promising author, made his debut as a public speaker in January 1909. As a result of a long line of research dating back to his student years in Egypt, he came up with a bold statement and claimed that there were many typos/errors in the Qur'ans that were printed in Russia, i.e., Kazan, Petersburg, and Bakhchisaray (later on he also included Istanbul). The crux of the matter for him was that these Qur'ans were not printed in accordance with the codification of Uthman as the first and the greatest ijma of the Companions

¹⁵² "Kadı Saylav," *Yulduz*, no. 193, 16 November 1907.

of the Prophet Muhammed. Therefore, in his view, any spellings other than Uthman's would be incorrect and thus the distortion of the scripture.

Bigiyev continued that, for example, the Qur'ans that were published by Ismail Bey Gasprinskii at the Tercüman Print house had many typos in them, like additional or missing letters. However, he focused his attention on the ones that were revised by Shihabuddin Marjānī, who was appointed as the first proofreader of the Qur'an in Russia by the Orenburg Spiritual Assembly in 1857.¹⁵³ Marjānī even wrote a book about the proofreading, *al-Fawaid al-Muhimmah*.¹⁵⁴ Bigiyev claimed that even though Marjānī did his best to fix the previous errors in typesetting and to make the Qur'an identical to the codification of Uthman, his version still did not fulfill its promise. Even though Bigiyev attributed some of Marjānī's mistakes to the proofreaders, he still held Marjānī responsible for them.¹⁵⁵ Thus, in his piece in *el-Islah* magazine, he asked the ulama of Kazan to solve this problem among themselves. Otherwise, he invited them to summon a public meeting to discuss the matter before the folks.

The ulama promptly accepted the invitation. In this regard, three major consecutive meetings and some other smaller gatherings took place afterwards from January to mid-summer 1909. In the first one of these meetings, Bigiyev explained his claim before a crowd which

¹⁵³ As the discussion went on in the Tatar press, we learned some valuable information about the history of the printing of the Qur'an in Russia. The appointment of an official redactor by the Orenburg Spiritual Assembly for the printing of the Quran occurred in 1857. This first redactor was Shihabeddin Marjānī who revised the Qur'an based on Uthman Qur'an. "Kur'an Tashihi ve Tab'ası", *Vakit*, no. 431, 14 February 1909. After his death, his son Burhaneddin and son in law Safiyullah continued the job. When Safiyullah Hazret was sent into exile, Alimcan Barudi, Abdulkayyum and İlaceddin Hazrets assumed the position. Molla Keşşafeddin Tercümani, "Tashih-i Kur'an Hakkında," *Yulduz*, no. 362, 10 February 1909.

¹⁵⁴ Şakircan Hamidi, "Mushaf-ı Şerif Hakkında," *Yulduz*, no. 363, 12 February 1909.

¹⁵⁵ Musa Bigiyev, "En Lazım Bir İlan," *el-Islah*, no. 58, 25 January 1909.

reportedly comprised of 200 attendees.¹⁵⁶ As the discussion proceeded in the following meetings, he brought up specific examples from the Marjānī version and provided the correct spellings. Yet, after heated discussions, his claim was dismissed by and large at the end of the third meeting.¹⁵⁷

For some, Bigiyev's attack of Marjānī was as blasphemous as the claim itself. For example, Gabdrakhman Gomerov of Astrakhan,¹⁵⁸ a pupil of Marjānī and the publisher of the *İdil* newspaper (1907-1914), did not believe that his teacher did any mistake in the printing of the Qur'an and he referred them, if any, to the proofreaders coming after him. Likewise, Kashshaf Tarjumani warned Bigiyev to use a polite language with respect to Marjānī and not to criticize him publicly.¹⁵⁹ The chief editor of the *Yulduz* newspaper in Kazan Hadi Maksudi was another one.¹⁶⁰

Teacher at the Husayniya Madrasa in Orenburg (1909)

¹⁵⁶ Later, he acknowledged that since it was his first speech in public, he might have not expressed himself properly and thus explained his claim in more detail in his piece at *el-Islah*. Musa Bigiyef, "Resm-i Kur'an," no. 61, 18 February 1909.

¹⁵⁷ In the general Muslim Congress in St. Petersburg in 1914, it was decided that the muftiates only –idare-i ruhaniyeler- had the right to print and publish the Qur'an. A[bdullah] Battal, "Peterburgda Kingeş Meclisi XI" *Yulduz*, no. 1217, 29 June 1914.

¹⁵⁸ Gömerov found Bigiyev's invitation nonsense. Instead of having a public meeting, he invited Bigiyev to explain his case in the Tatar press. Moreover, he promised to print Bigiyev's pieces as a separate book in his printing house and distribute it to the Idel readers for free and to others for a trivial price. İdil Naşiri Gömerov, "Ulema Dikkatine," *İdil*, no. 125, 3 February 1909.

¹⁵⁹ Molla Keşşaf Tercümani, "Tashih-i Kur'an Hakkında," *Yulduz*, no. 362, 10 February 1909.

¹⁶⁰ The friendly relationship between the two came to an end after this meeting and probably never healed ever since.

In October 1909, Bigiyev became a teacher and vice principal at the Huseyniye Madrasa in Orenburg. But shortly after, he found himself in the center of another heated discussion. However, this time he had to pay a price for his thoughts.

Mardasa-i Hüseyniya was probably the most well-doing of the Tatar madrasas of the time financially due the generous endowment from its founder Mahmud Bay Hüseyinov.¹⁶¹ However, 1909 was a year of turmoil for it mostly due to the lack of instructors, the internal conflicts among the extant instructors, and mismanagement. As a result, some of the students openly expressed their discomfort with the current state of the school and some of them either left it on their own will or expelled by the school administration. The search for a new director for a long time was also fruitless.¹⁶² Amid the administrative crisis, the school hardly opened towards the end of October which was way behind the normal starting date. Under these circumstances, Bigiyev accepted the teaching position, along with assistant principal at the medrese.

As an introduction to his history of religions course, he brought up the topic of universal salvation. He also did something quite new and shared his class notes with the students of other madrasas and general public through the pages of *Shura* journal. With his theological outlook and unusual physical appearance with long hair and western style garment, etc., Bigiyev, even prior to his appointment, had become an *ed hominem* target of the Orenburg based *Din ve*

¹⁶¹ Medrese-i Hüseyniye was founded by Mahmud Bay Hüseyinov at a cost of 350 thousand rubles. All the expenses of the school including the salaries of the teachers and other staff, the stipends of nearly 400 students and their clothing were paid by Mahmud Bay himself. Ayn. Kef. Hatof (?), "Rusya Müslümanları," Kırım Mecmuası, no. 5, 27 June 1918.

¹⁶² Many names had been proposed to the school board, including Rizaeddin Fahreddin (he was already teaching there part-time since 1907), Hayrullah Osmanov of Ufa, Hasan Ata Gabeshi of the Sobraniye, Feyizhan Davudov of *Din ve Magishet* journal, Musa Jarullah Bigiyev, and others.

*Magishet*¹⁶³ journal. His introduction just provided the ulama with the opportunity to attack him. As a result, outraged by the topic, the imams of Orenburg and the surrounding cities relentlessly attacked him on the pages of *Din ve Magishet*. Furthermore, as Bigiyev puts it, they declared him an apostate and wanted to have him fired from the madrasa. The imams also organized the folks against him. It came to a point that Bigiyev's very life was at stake. Bigiyev again, as he did in the typo debate, invited the ulama -though he doubted their competence in the matter- to organize a public meeting to discuss the matter¹⁶⁴ but it was not accepted this time. Finally, in December, in order to calm down the masses and not to cause further disturbance at the madrasa, he handed in his resignation to the school administration and left the city.¹⁶⁵ Students' petitions and some others' requests did not persuade him to come back.¹⁶⁶ In the meantime, in his spare time -as he put it- while in Orenburg, he wrote an annotated commentary on Shatibi's *Nazimet al-Zuhr* which is about the numbering of the verses of the Qur'an.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶³ *Din ve Magishet*: A religious magazine based in Orenburg issued fatwas regarding impermissibility of theatre in Islam, women's attendance to congregational prayers at mosques, intermingling of sexes in Muslim schools, European style clothing, banking, along with promoting strict adherence to the Hanafi school of law and advocating Sufism, etc.

¹⁶⁴ Musa Bigiyev, "Rahmet-i İlahiye Umumiyesi Hakkında İtikadım," *Shura*, no. 23, December 1909.

¹⁶⁵ The school administration was lucky enough to fill in Bigiyev's position with another like-minded teacher, Seyyid Jihanshin of Bilebey from Medina who happened to be in Orenburg in February 1910. Both men, Bigiyev and Jihanshin, attended classes in Medina in the past and knew each other well. Upon the request of the administration, he accepted to teach classes in Arabic, *ḥadīth*, and *fiqh*. Yet his tenure lasted very short, for about one and a half months. Seyyid Sherif bin Ahmed Jihanshin, "Medrese-i Hüseyiniye Hakkında Teşhis-i Maraz ve İzhar-ı Hak," *Vakit*, no. 596, 25 March 1910; Abdurrahim Eldemini, "Tenkid al-araz fi tashhis al-marad," *Kazan Muhbiri*, no. 375, 28 April 1910.

¹⁶⁶ "Musa Efendi Hakkında," *Vakit*, no. 566, 14 January 1910. Bigiyev's resignation exacerbated the situation in the madrasa. In February, students from the middle level protested against Abdurrahim Diminef, who had been teaching there for 15 years, as being responsible for Bigiyev's resignation and thus demanded his removal from the medrese. Yet the school administration stood with the teacher and expelled the protesting students which left the middle level empty. Seyyid Sherif bin Ahmed Jihanshin, *Ibid*.

¹⁶⁷ Musa Bigiyev, "Yine Muhim Bir Mesele," *Vakit*, no. 569, 21 January 1910.

After Hüseyiniye, Bigiyev spent much of his time travelling around in and outside of Russia. In October 1910, he had a three-week trip to Finland in order to learn more about the country and its people. Based on his own report of the trip, we can say that he acted as an anthropologist as observing even minute details of how the people of Finland lived and acted. Having seen the honesty, cleanliness, religiosity etc., of the Finns, Bigiyev returned back to Petersburg amazed.¹⁶⁸ Next year in June he, along with Lütfi Ishaki, did his second trip to Finland in order to observe the unsetting Sun.¹⁶⁹ The outcome of these trips to the furthest habitable north of the time was his groundbreaking book *Uzun Günlerde Ruze* in which he conducted *ijtihad* on the conditions of obligatory prayers and fasting during the month of Ramadan.¹⁷⁰

In the meantime, Bigiyev was also working on his Tatar translation of the Qur'an. He had a complete translation handy by the end of 1911. However, the Sobraniye did not allow the publication of it (See Chapter IV).

Mashihat (Ottoman Ministry of Religious Affairs) in Istanbul Bans His Books

It seems that when it came to Bigiyev, the ministries of Muslim Religious Affairs of both countries, Russia and Turkey, had a consensus in condemning his books. Upon the request of a certain Ishak bin Murteza of Orenburg, the Meshihat in Istanbul advised the Ministry of Interior to put a ban on four of Bigiyev's books: *Rahmet-i İlahiye Burhanları*, *İnsanların Akide-i İlahiyelerine Bir Nazar*, *Uzun Günlerde Ruze*, and *Kavaid-i Fıkhiye* (1910). Meshihat's verdict

¹⁶⁸ Uralgiray, Ibid., p. 63.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., pp. 61-2.

¹⁷⁰ Musa Jarullah Bigiyev, *Uzun Günlerde Ruze* (Kazan: Ümid, 1911).

was not different than what Bigiyev's opponents in Russia thought of them. According to the Meshihat, while the first three were nothing but apostasy and blasphemy, the latter was the sheer personal opinion of the author.¹⁷¹ Not surprisingly, the ban fueled people's appetite for his books in Istanbul.¹⁷² In response, Bigiyev wrote an article in *Vakit* –Teessüf Etmıştim Artık Anladım-- and harshly criticizes the Meshihat's decision.¹⁷³

Emanet (Trust) Printing House (1913)

In 1913, Bigiyev, along with Huseyin Abuzerov of Khvalin as the director, opened a publishing house in St. Petersburg under the name of Emanet.¹⁷⁴ In it he hoped to publish mostly religious books including his own translation of the Qur'an as its first publication.¹⁷⁵ Interestingly enough, none of Bigiyev's works had been printed at the Emanet Print House. An important periodical that was printed in Emanet was Ayaz Ishaki's *IL* newspaper in 1914. Initially Bigiyev also contributed to it with his articles. However, due to the personal disagreements between the two,¹⁷⁶ Bigiyev stopped writing for it.

¹⁷¹ Kanlıdere, *Ibid.*, pp. 232-33.

¹⁷² "Meşihat-i İslamiye," *İdil*, no. 550, 3 May 1913.

¹⁷³ Having cited this article of Bigiyev, *İslam Dünyası* was sued by the Meşihat and its editor in chief Osman Cudi Bey was sentenced to 10 lira and one month in jail. Upon his plea, the court in the second hearing reduced his sentence to 15-day jail. "İslam Dünyasını Hükümge Taratu," *İdil*, no. 618, 7 January 1914.

¹⁷⁴ The first person who opened a printing house to process publications in Arabic letters in Petersburg was a Crimean Tatar, Ilyas Mirza Boraganskii who was among the faculty of Turkic languages at the Turkology department of St Petersburg University. Abdurresid İbrahim published his *Mir'at* and other short-lived periodicals in there. Likewise, the first Tatar newspaper *Nur* was also started in Boraganskii's print house. "Petrogradda Tatar Gazeteleri," *Süz*, no. 9, 10 January 1915.

¹⁷⁵ "Petrogradda Yeni Matbaa," *İkbal*, no. 432, 18 August 1913; "Musa Efendi Bigiyef'in Yeni Matbaası," *Türk Yurdu*, no. 50, 13 Tesrinievvel 1329/16 October 1913.

¹⁷⁶ Yulduzçı, "Tançı Tagın Süzge Başladı", *Yulduz*, no. 1601, 31 January 1916.

The fate of the Emanet and Bigiyev's relation to it afterwards is not clear. But we know that it is the Emanet directors who appointed Bigiyev as the editor of *al-Minbar* newspaper in 1917-18 in St. Petersburg. It suggests that Bigiyev was not in the position of ownership of the print house in the early years of the Bolshevik Revolution. And it is most likely that it was either closed or confiscated by the Bolsheviks in 1918.

Fourth All-Russian Muslim Congress in Petersburg in June 1914

In 1914, the Muslims of Russia held their fourth congress in St. Petersburg.¹⁷⁷ In the organization of the congress, the Ittifaq Party and especially its chair Mirza Kutlug Muhammed Tevkilev worked hard. Having obtained the necessary permission from the government, the congress was held between June 15 and 25th at the School of Jamiyat-i Hayriya. Even though the government only allowed 35 representatives in total, the number was a bit higher in some sessions of the congress. Tevkilev prior to the congress warned the Muslim public that people should not attribute any legal ramifications to its resolutions since the congress only assumed the role of an intermediary between the government and the Muslims of Russia.¹⁷⁸

The congress was opened with the Qur'an recitation and the benediction of the Russian Tsar. After Tevkilev's opening remarks, an election was held for the steering committee. Tevkilev was elected as the president of the congress and Alimardan Topchubashi and Bünyamin Akhtamov as his vice presidents. Bigiyev and Sadri Maksudi were elected as the secretaries.

¹⁷⁷ Although in the third all-Russian Muslim congress, the next meeting was scheduled for 10 August 1907 in Nizhni Novgorod, apparently it did not take place. Musa Bigiyev, *Umum Rusya Müslümanlarının 3üncü Resmi Nedveleri*. (Kazan: Matbaa-i Kerimiye, 1906), p. 140.

¹⁷⁸ "Müselman İsyezdi," *Yulduz*, no. 1199, 3 June 1914.

The congress caught the attention of both the Muslim and the Russian press. Despite the prior attempts and the requests during the congress, the government did not allow journalists to observe the sessions. But this did not prevent the correspondents of Tatar newspapers, such as Abdullah Battal of *Yulduz* and Burhan Manatov of *Turmush*, reporting the minute details of the sessions in their newspapers. After the congress, a Russian newspaper resentfully commented that by not allowing journalists observing the congress, the Russian government deprived the Russian people of knowing more about the Muslims of Russia, who showed a great deal of dynamism in terms of social and religious activities for the last couple of years.¹⁷⁹

In terms of the topics that are covered, the congress focused more on the problem of the muftiates and the Muslim clergy because the Russian government only allowed the discussion of religious matters. But other issues, such as the women's issues, charitable endowments (waqfs), social structure of Muslims, printing of the Qur'an, educational reform, etc., were also briefly discussed as a part of it. One of the most important resolutions of the congress was requirement for the newly elected muftis and qadis to be competent in religious sciences, along with the Russian language. For Bigiyev, it was not enough. He supported Kazakh Alikhan Bükeyhanov who demanded a Russian university education and a dissertation in Islamic sciences as prerequisites. But having seen Rizaeddin bin Fahreddin remaining silent, he preferred to remain silent too.¹⁸⁰

During the sessions, the language of the representatives arose as an issue. Within the first couple of days of the congress, almost all representatives spoke in Russian instead of their version of Turkic. This made, for example, Rizaeddin Fahreddin unhappy. For him there was

¹⁷⁹ "Peterburg Kineş Meclisi Hakkında Rus Matbuatı," *Yulduz*, no. 1218, 1 July 1914.

¹⁸⁰ Musa Jarullah, "Dini ve İctimai Meseleler: Dini ve İctimai Meseleler İsimli Eseri İntikad III," *Shura*, no. 22, 15 November 1914.

nothing outrageous with speaking in Russian, but he could not tolerate imams and mullahs doing it. When this issue was brought up to the congress, the middle way was found: both Russian and Tatar. In the following days, many representatives first spoke in Russian and then translated his own speech into Tatar.¹⁸¹

The congress took Friday off, as it was reserved for the Friday prayer and sightseeing in Petersburg since some of the representatives were visiting the Russian capital for the first time. Having done the Friday prayer in a near masjid, the delegation made their way to the Petersburg mosque. Although still under construction, both inner and outer splendor of the mosque amazed the visitors. One aspect of the mosque especially took the attention of the delegates: the separate prayer area for the women. Upon looking at it, Mahpeyker Devletgildiyeva, a female physician from Kazan, stated that it is worthy of coming from Kazan to Petersburg solely for the purpose of praying in this mosque. The delegation, along with the members of the press and some imams of Petersburg, posed a picture in the mosque altogether. The sightseeing part was more interesting though. An unusual group of people walking down the street took the attention of the people of Petersburg. What made them unusual was their appearance. On the one hand, there were in the group people with chalma, chapan, and robes. On the other hand, there were others with western suits and frock.¹⁸²

As the secretary of the congress, Bigiyev, along with his three assistants, was responsible for the records of the congress. He performed this role “masterfully,” as Abdullah Battal put it. Apart from this, Bigiyev did not participate the discussions until the fifth day of the congress. He

¹⁸¹ The language problem was also apparent among the Muslim representatives of first Dumas so that representatives from different parts of Russia, i.e., Kazan, Crimea, Caucasus, Turkestan, Kazakhstan, etc., found the solution in communicating in Russian with little resistance. El-Hac Temirbay, “Dumadagı Müselmanların Tilleri,” *Yulduz*, no. 116, 6 May 1907.

¹⁸² Abdullah Battal, “Peterburgda Kingeş Meclisi VII,” *Yulduz*, no. 1215, 25 June 1914.

shared his ideas on the Muftiate's decision making process, the duration of the appointment of the clergy, and the stipends of the imams.¹⁸³ In the last session of the congress, Bigiyev, as his closing remarks, stated that the religious affairs of the Muslims of Russia were the most important matter before the ulama at that moment. If it is resolved, then everything would be fine. He concluded his remarks by thanking the congress for appointing him as the secretary and promising to publish its records in a separate book in the future as he did in his *Islahat Esasları* in 1917.¹⁸⁴

Joining the Ranks of the Imams (1915)

Unlike his peers who completed their higher education outside of Russia, be it Turkestan, Turkey, Egypt, etc., Bigiyev upon his return to Russia in 1904 did not seek an imam position in a Tatar mosque. Instead, he preferred to serve the nation intellectually by writing books and articles and through political activism. But he was not able to escape what was in his destiny and joined the lines of imams in 1915. In order to replace the late Imam Muhammed Zarif Yunusov,

¹⁸³ During the discussion of the muftiates' decision making, Bigiyev stated that religious matters were not only the business of the clergy. Ordinary Muslims also had a share in the decision-making process pertaining to religious affairs. He also participated in the discussion of whether the clergy should be appointed for life or a limited time. He stated that the important thing in the Shari'a was their competency and merit. Once they do not possess the necessary qualifications or violate them, then they should be dismissed from the office even if they were appointed for life. In the end, despite the opposition of the imam participants of the congress, it was decided that the imams have to be elected for eight and the mufti and the qadis for five years. Rızaeddin Fahreddin was among those who voted against the resolution. In his view, the eight-year term would bring internal conflict among the people and uncertainty for the imams at the end of their terms. This would put their livelihood under jeopardy. Another discussion to which Bigiyev participated was the stipend of the imams. According to Bigiyev, the livelihood of the imams is secured by the Shari'a. Imams should be paid enough money by their communities for at least their survival. He brought up the issue of the stipends of the imams again when the young imam of Perm, Lütfullah Efendi died without securing the livelihood of his family. Musa Bigiyev, "Merhum Ali Asgar Efendi Sırtlanof Cenabları," *Vakit*, no. 1032, 7 September 1912.

¹⁸⁴ Abdullah Battal, "Peterburgda Kıngeş Meclisi XI," *Yulduz*, no. 1217, 29 June 1914.

the Muslims of Petersburg elected Bigiyev as the new imam of the first neighborhood. Initially hesitant, Bigiyev accepted the position and went to Ufa to take the necessary exam.¹⁸⁵

The exam took place on March 4th at the Sobraniye. Bigiyev was interviewed by three qadis and the Mufti himself for about an hour.¹⁸⁶ The committee asked him questions mostly pertaining to *kalām* and Sufism, such as the existence and unity of God and *wahdat al-wujud* (Unity of Being). Bigiyev answered them all on their merits. It was only the Inayatullah Qadi who objected some of the answers that Bigiyev came up with. In the end Bigiyev passed the exam and was “sincerely” congratulated by the committee members.¹⁸⁷ Having been approved by the Sobraniya, Bigiyev returned back to Petersburg on March 12th. A good number of people including imams, students, women, and other dignitaries of the city came to bid farewell to him.¹⁸⁸ Bigiyev maintained his imam position in Petersburg, albeit with interruptions, up until he left Russia in 1930.¹⁸⁹

Sirat-i Mustakim (The Straight Path Party) Controversy (1916)

¹⁸⁵ “Musa Efendi Bigiyev’nin İmtihanga Baruvı,” *Vakit*, no. 1715, 1 March 1915.

¹⁸⁶ “Musa Efendi Bigiyef İmtihan Kılınan,” *Vakit*, no. 1722, 10 March 1915.

¹⁸⁷ “Musa Efendinin İmtihan Kılınuvı Münasebeti ile,” *Vakit*, no. 1724, 12 March 1915. At the end of the article, *Vakit* commented that they were not sure whether it was good or bad for a scholar like Bigiyev who was free and unique in his thought to enter an official government position.

¹⁸⁸ “Musa Efendi’nin Ufa’dan Kituvi,” *Vakit*, no. 1731, 20 March 1915.

¹⁸⁹ In terms of his appointment, Ayaz Ishaki’s *Süz*, as well as Koyash, accused him of getting the job with the intervention of notables. In response, Bigiyev said that in 1913, he was personally invited by Patriarch Gregorios (he should be the Gregory of Antioch) to the 300th anniversary of the Romanov Dynasty though he was not able to make it. If he were to seek the intermediary of notables, he said, he could have pursued this opportunity through the patriarch. Musa Jarullah, “Son Süzim,” *Vakit*, no. 2040, 1 June 1916. For Ishaki’s relevant article, see Ayaz [Ishaki], “Musa Efendinin Sırat-ı Müstakimçiler bilen Münasebeti,” *Süz*, no. 45-46, 20-22 April 1916.

At the beginning of the year 1916, a public discussion took place about a proposed Tatar newspaper *Islam ve Maarif* (Islam and Education)¹⁹⁰. To summarize, Fatih Bayrashev of Kasim who was operating a buffet (probably a portable one at the train station) and among the co-founders of the Sirat-i Mustakim party¹⁹¹, wanted to publish a newspaper in Petersburg as the publishing organ of the political organization of the ultra-conservative ulama "Sirat-i Mustakim," which was founded at the beginning of 1914 by Muhammed Safa Bayezidov, the future mufti of the Sobraniye (1915-1917) and his friends.¹⁹² Among those who expressed their disfavor of the party was Ismail Bey Gasprinskii who condemned such an initiatives strongly.¹⁹³

Among the authors of the newspaper, we see a couple of well-known figures like the former editor of *Sharq-i Rus* (1903-1905) Azerbaijani Mehemmed Agha Shahtakhtinski, the former editor of *Sibirya* Vaiz Navruzov, and Abdullah Ismeti.¹⁹⁴ What caused the outcry among the liberal and socialist intellectuals, who were centered around the newspapers *Süz* and *Koyash*, was Bigiyev's possible/implicit acceptance of publishing the newspaper in his printing house Emanet.¹⁹⁵ Bigiyev was put under pressure because of his reluctance in refusing the proposal

¹⁹⁰ It was proposed to appear both in Russian and Tatar. The name of the newspaper was inspired from late Ataullah Bayezidov's book *Islam and Progress* (1883). "Musa Efendi hem Sirat-ı Müstakimçiler," *Süz*, no. 10, 14 January 1916.

¹⁹¹ "Petrograd'da Tatarca Gazite," *Vakit*, no. 1932, 5 December 1915.

¹⁹² IL published Sirat-ı Müstakim's party program: "Bütün Rusyadaki Müselman Halkının İttifakı Bulgan Sirat-ı Müstakim'nin Ustafi," no. 15, 5 February 1914. In the same issue, IL also published a critic of the party and declared it yet another backward party from the Muslim side. It also warned the general public that it did not represent the entire Muslims of Russia unlike the party itself put it otherwise. Bigiyev was among the signatories, along with some other leaders of the Ittifaq Party. In this outcry, it is also possible that Ittifaq perceived the new party as its rival. "Müselmanlar Dikkatine," *IL*, no. 15, 5 February 1914. Ayaz Ishaki penned another very harsh critic of the party for being pro-government. "Sirat-ı Müstakim Sayuzı," *Süz*, no. 16, 13 February 1914.

¹⁹³ Hikmet [Ayaz Ishaki?] "Musa Efendi hem Sirat-ı Müstakimçiler," *Süz*, no. 10, 14 January 1916.

¹⁹⁴ "Petrograd Müselmanları Arasında," *Vakit*, no. 1969, 26 January 1916.

¹⁹⁵ Bigiyev expressed his appreciation of their initiative but kindly refused it and suggested them to publish it at Din wa Magishat's print house. Hikmet [Ayaz Ishaki(?)], Ibid.

right away. He also did not make it clear if he would be the editor in chief or a writer of the proposed paper. Even though he stated that his permission was contingent upon not to make the newspaper as the mouthpiece of the Sirat-i Mustakim, it was enough for even his friends like Abdullah Taymas and Ayaz Ishaki to resent to the very idea.¹⁹⁶

Later on, the Ittifak Party also got involved in the discussion. The party leader Kutlug Muhammed Tevkilev stated that the party is not responsible for Bigiyev's actions and words. Moreover, Bigiyev was summoned to a party meeting in March to clarify his position in the controversy.¹⁹⁷ In the meeting, it was decided to issue a protest letter against Sirat-i Mustakim and Bigiyev to be published in a number of Tatar newspapers. Bigiyev, in response, accused the party leadership to deal with trivial issues, like this one, and shrinking the party. Likewise, earlier in 1916, he attributed the problems that the party faced to the lack of sense of dignity.¹⁹⁸ The discussion came to a point that Tevkilev showed Bigiyev the door and dismissed him from the meeting. The polemic between Bigiyev and Tevkilev continued in the Tatar newspapers.¹⁹⁹ In his final answer to Tevkilev, Bigiyev concluded with an Arabic saying which reads as the high truths do not fade away before God's fools.²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁶ A. Battal, "Islam ve Maarif Gazetesi," *Yulduz*, no. 1603, 3 February 1916.

¹⁹⁷ The editor in chief of *Yulduz*, Hadi Maksudi commented on the issue in an article in his newspaper and stated that between Bigiyev and him there had been and would always be an irreconcilable difference on many issues. However, how the party handled this problem was unacceptable as it assumed the role of a court for itself and questioned Bigiyev like a criminal suspect regarding his position on the newspaper. Maksudi also said that it was Bigiyev who proposed Navruzev and Shahtahtinski as authors to the newspaper. But for Maksudi, Bigiyev had always been wrong about Shakhtinski and he was wrong this time too. Hadi Maksudi "Fraksiye ve Musa Efendi," *Yulduz*, no. 1657, 15 June 1916.

¹⁹⁸ Ayaz, "Müselman Fraksiyasında Üçüncü Kinges Meclisi," *Süz*, 24 February 1916.

¹⁹⁹ Kutlug Muhammed Tevkilev, "Beyan-ı Hakikat: Musa Efendinin Yazularına Cevap," *Yulduz*, no. 1665, 4 July 1916. Tevkilev's response was also appeared in *Vakit*. Kutlug Muhammed Tevkilef, "Beyan-ı Hakikat: Musa Efendinin Yazularına Cevap," no. 2059, 5 July 1916.

²⁰⁰ Musa Jarullah, "Edeb Hürmetine," *Vakit*, no. 2064, 13 July 1916.

In line with the decision made at the party meeting, a rebuttal was published in Ayaz Ishaki's *Süz* newspaper in which Bigiyev was put on the spot. Bigiyev's response was very strong as he accused the editor of *Süz*, Ayaz Ishaki of filling his newspaper with lies and answered all accusations against him one by one. Somewhere in his response he somewhat sarcastically stated that there should not be a huge difference between those of *Din ve Magishet* who made Sharia as a tool for their ignorance and those of *Tan* who made freedom as a tool for their littleness.²⁰¹

The Hasan Akchurin (1866-1916)²⁰² Library

The year 1916 also marked a great loss for the Muslims of Russia, as one of the wealthiest businessmen and philanthropists, Hasan Akchurin (1866-1916), died on June 23rd at the age of 50. Even though it was not his habit to show up at funerals, Bigiyev attended Akchurin's funeral ceremony and expressed his condolences to his family members.²⁰³ Tatar bourgeois is known to

²⁰¹ Musa Jarullah, "Evvelki Süzlerim I-II," *Vakit*, no. 2012-13, 5-6 April 1916; Musa Jarullah, "Son Süzim," *Vakit*, no. 2040-41, 1-3 June 1916.

²⁰² **Hasan Akchurin (1 January 1866-23 June 1916):** The eldest son of industrialist Temir Bulat Akçurin. He was survived by his two sons Ömer and Mahmud both were at the business school in Moscow at the time of his death. Even though his main factories located in Simbir and other places, he used to live in Moscow for the last couple of years of his life. "Hasan Akçurin'nin Vefatı," *Vakit*, no. 2054, 26 June 1916. According to Rızaeddin Fahreddin, he had attended to Marjani's lectures at his madrasa. During Jamaladdin Afghani's sojourn in Petersburg, he met Afghani and the sheikh gave him a picture of himself. Fahreddin further noted that it was Akçurin who left a positive impression of the Muslims of Russia on Afghani in his writings. Besides, when Abbas Halim Pasha, along with his son Muhammad Ali visited the Mekerce Panayır, Akçurin was their host. Akçurin also made a visit to Istanbul and then Edirne which was recently recaptured by the Turkish army. The governor of the city welcomed him and had him took a tour of the city with his automobile. While in Edirne, he was also accepted by the Sultan [From the syntax, it should be Edirne, not Istanbul]. When Fahreddin asked him how he communicated with the Sultan, whether he needed a translator or not, Akçurin jokingly responded that the Sultan used him as a translator to communicate with the scholars from Chinese Turkestan who were also present there. Rızaeddin bin Fahreddin, "Hasan Efendi Akçurin," *Vakit*, no. 2058-59, 3-5 July 1916.

²⁰³ Musa Jarullah, "Dini Meseleler: Söz Besmelesi," *Shura*, no. 15, 1 August 1916.

support social projects and educational institutions. Akchurin was one of them.²⁰⁴ He was not only a businessman, but also a lover of books, art, and knowledge.²⁰⁵ According to Rizaeddin Fahreddin, who wrote a wonderful account of his reminiscences with him in two consecutive articles in *Vakit*, he owned one of the largest personal libraries among the Muslims of Russia, along with Alimcan Barudi, Dibirdiyevs, Ahmet Ishaki, and Musa Bigiyev. From his narrative, we understand that Fahreddin and Bigiyev had a close relationship with him and benefited from his library a lot. Fahreddin noted that once –it should be in 1914 when they were invited from Petrograd to Guryev by Akchurin- both men entered this disarrayed library and left it even more disarrayed. Fakhreddin continues that he always advised Akchurin to prepare a catalog of his library (his books, coins, other collectible materials) and he himself was also in the same idea.²⁰⁶ But the job of cataloging fell onto both men, Fahreddin and Bigiyev, as they did it nearly four months later after Akchurin's death.²⁰⁷

Ten-Year Anniversary of Madrasa-i Aliye in Ufa (1916)

The tenth anniversary of Madrasa-i Aliye in Ufa was celebrated by the Muslims of Russia on several occasions, which echoed widely in the Tatar and even Azeri press.²⁰⁸ A special

²⁰⁴ Akçurin also helped the Turkish prisoners of war in Syzran, Russia during the WWI as he donated clothing to them. Askeri Imam Mengli Veli Ulimayev, "Syzran," *Vakit*, no. 1735, 31 March 1915.

²⁰⁵ In his private collection, he had nearly 15 thousand coins, including Umayyad, Abbasid, and Timurid ones. He transformed a room of his private house into a quasi-museum in order to keep those coins and other objects in good condition. "Müselman Müzesi," *Vakit*, no. 1578, 6 September 1914.

²⁰⁶ Rizaeddin bin Fahreddin, "Hasan Efendi Akçurin."

²⁰⁷ "H. Akçurin Kütüphanesi," *Yulduz*, no. 1690, 7 September 1916.

²⁰⁸ For example, *Vakit* in Orenburg, *Yulduz* in Kazan, and *Açık Söz* in Baku published special articles about the Madrasa-i Aliye and congratulated its founder Kamali. But *Turmush* in Ufa had a different approach and criticized Kamali. The editor in chief of *Turmush* Zakir Kadiri, who previously was a teacher at the medrese, criticized some aspects of the madrasa, even its name Madrasa-i Aliye-i Diniye, and attacked Kamali on personal issues. *Tercüman*

celebration was held in Ufa on December 26th to which a number of dignitaries were invited from different parts of Russia. An invitation was extended to Bigiyev too, but he was not able to make it. Instead, in his letter to *Vakit*, he applauded its founder-director and his former classmate Ziyaeddin Kamali,²⁰⁹ for his good work at the madrasa and encouraged him to do more for the benefit of people.²¹⁰

Shortly before the ten-year anniversary celebrations, a financial crisis broke out in the madrasa. The external affairs committee of the madrasa (heyet-i hariciye),²¹¹ which mainly consisted of the wealthy merchants of the city, declared in an open letter in the *Turmush* newspaper (no. 310) that they will discontinue their financial support to the madrasa mainly because of the theological outlook of its director Kamali, along with some administrative issues. They basically accused Kamali of distorting the religion of Islam with his excessive “reformist” ideas and raising his students alike. To illustrate, one of his students who, during the Friday prayer on the war field, delivered the khutba by kneeling instead of standing on foot. Upon these

commented on the issue that “çekememezlik hastalığı” was not only in Crimea, but also among the Northern Turks. “Aliyenin Yübileyi ve Milli Matbuat,” *Tercüman*, no. 3, 4 January 1917.

²⁰⁹ With regard to his acquaintance with Kamali, Bigiyev himself provided some valuable information. He stated that he, for the first time, met Kamali while studying at Mecca, Madina, and al-Azhar. They were even classmates for a year in the *usul al-fiqh* and *tahrir* classes. He added that he never saw Kamali missing a class for eight months. He went on to say that even though he harshly criticized Kamali earlier in his *Büyük Mevzularda Ufak Fikirler* (1914) because of his *Dini Tedbirler* (1913) which was presented to Bigiyev as a gift by the author himself, it did not mean the incompetence of him as a teacher. Moreover, his criticism meant a point of pride on Kamali’s part because he only criticized competent authors like Kamali and Rizaeddin. Musa Jarullah, “Son Günlerde Naçar Haller,” *Vakit*, no. 1891, 16 October 1915. Bigiyev made a visit to the madrasa back in 1914. In this visit, he donated the necessary money to be used for the installation of electricity to the madrasa. *Turmush* newspaper commented on the occasion as “Our philosopher who illuminates our nation with his knowledge now also illuminates Madrasa-i Aliye with the illuminator of the time, i.e., electricity.” “Medrese-i Aliyege büyük alimimiz ...” *Turmush*, no. 35, 5 March 1914. We learn from Idrisi that this money came from the publication of his *Ruze* (1911). Idrisi, “Tercüme-i Hal,” p. 193.

²¹⁰ Musa Jarullah, “Medrese-i Aliye hem Milletin Vazifesi,” *Vakit*, no. 2150, 28 December 1916.

²¹¹ Back in 1914, during his visit to the madrasa, Bigiyev encouraged the formation of such committee. Feyzurrahman Veliyev, “Medrese-i Aliyege Un Yıl Tulu Münasebetiyle,” *Vakit*, no. 2145, 18 December 1916.

accusations from the committee, Kamali defended himself in an article on *Vakit* and explained them on their merits.²¹² Because of this and other reasons, they asked the resignation of Kamali from the directorship position.

Bigiyev was following the discussions on the newspapers closely. For him the disadvantageous financial situation of the Aliya was more important for the Muslims of Russia than anything else, even the Great War.²¹³ He was in the idea that although far from being perfect, the Aliya was still the best madrasa in Russia with its reformed curriculum and progressive education. Bigiyev acknowledged Kamali's responsibility in the problem, but still did not approve the committee's withdrawal of financial support. He also resented Fatih Emirhanov's taking a position of a prosecutor in his relevant article in *Koyash* (no. 788).²¹⁴

The years of the Great War was a productive one for Bigiyev. By the eve of the Bolshevik Revolution, he penned several books, including his *Islahat Esasları* (1915/17), *Hukuk-ı Esasiye* (1916), *Fiqh al-Qur'an* (1915/1920), *Zekat* (1916/17), *Şeriat Esasları* (1916/17). Later in his life, he lamented the demise of his *Medeni İslam Kanunları*, which was lost during tumult of the Bolshevik Revolution. He informs us that in it he reiterated his "great words" that "in Islam, women are equal to men in all respects".²¹⁵

²¹² Kamali explained that the reason for his student's kneeling during the khutba was the fear of being shut on foot. Ziyaeddin el-Kamali, "Medrese-i Aliye-i Diniye Nezaretinden (İzah)," *Vakit*, no. 1872, 19 September 1915.

²¹³ Musa Jarullah, "Son Günlerde Naçar Haller."

²¹⁴ Ibid.

²¹⁵ Ibn Fāṭimah, *Kur'an-ı Kerim Ayet-i Kerimleri Huzurunda Hatun* (Berlin, [Koyash Matbaası], 1933/1352), p. 10. In the same place, he promised to rework it as a part of a bigger project if he would live enough.

All-Russian Muslims Congress in Moscow (1-11 May 1917)²¹⁶

Upon the request of the Muslim Bureau of Petersburg,²¹⁷ the First Congress of the All-Russian Muslims took place on May 1-11, 1917 in Moscow with the presence of approximately 900 delegates.²¹⁸ The first session began under the presidency of Ahmed Salihov, the head of the interim Petersburg Muslim Bureau and the official publisher of the *Süz* newspaper in Moscow, on May 1st. The chairperson invited Bigiyev to make the opening speech of the congress. Instead, Bigiyev invited Imam Ibrahim Urmanov to do a recitation of the Qur'an because, for him, the first congress of the era of freedom should start with the blessings of the Qur'an.²¹⁹ Only after the recitation Bigiyev made his opening speech which was frequently interrupted with applause from the audience. In his remarks, he put a special emphasis on the presence of women representatives in the congress. He stated that previous congresses were incomplete because half of the nation, i.e., the Muslim women, were not represented.²²⁰

After Bigiyev's speech it was time to elect the members of the executive committee.

Twelve members of the congress, including Bigiyev were elected unanimously. The congress

²¹⁶ For an abridged English translation of the records of the congress, see Shafiga Daulet, *Kazan And Moscow: Five Centuries of Crippling Coexistence under Russian Imperialism, 1552-2002: from Ivan, Lenin, Stalin, Gorbachev, Shaimiev, Yeltsin to Putin* (Hudson, N.H.: Kase Press, 2003), pp. 623-704.

²¹⁷ Prior to the meetings, the Bureau published a number of documents explaining the logistics and other things of the congress. Some of these documents were very political in tone. For example, it was stated that the dark days of the Tsar were over, and a bright future was waiting for the Muslims of Russia. Bigiyev was among the signatories. "Petrograddaki Müselman Merkez Büýürosu Tarafından: Müselman Grajdánlar!" *Vakit*, no. 2210, 21 April 1917.

²¹⁸ It was the first one after the February Revolution (March 1917). Otherwise, Russian Muslims already held four congresses up to that point between 1905 and 1917.

²¹⁹ "Umumi Rusya Müslümanları Birinçi İsyezdi," *Vakit*, no. 2219, 8 May 1917.

²²⁰ While relating his reflections on the congress, Mehmed Emin Resulzade especially highlighted this part of Bigiyev's speech. M. E. Resulzade "Umum Rusya Müslüman İsyezdi (Hatırat ve Teessürat): Birinci Gün," *Açık Söz*, no. 479, 23 May 1917; Bigiyev's speech was also quoted in *Koyash*, "Meskevede Bütün Rusya Müselmanları İsyezdi," no. 1116, 9 May 1917.

discussed various issues like the future political system, territory, women, workers, education, religion, local governance, etc. The congress also elected a mufti and several qadis to be recommended to the Russian government. Although Bigiyev was suggested in absentia for the mufti, he was not elected to the position.²²¹ What he was elected was the all-Russian Muslim Council as one of the ten representatives of the Volga-Ural region.²²²

In the first days of the congress, Bigiyev did not participate to the sessions except a few occasions because again like in the previous congresses he was responsible for keeping the records of the congress. But this time he had some assistants, most of whom consisted of students from the Caucasus.²²³ On the ninth day of the congress, he showed up to present his report on women's issues, which dominated the rest of the congress. During the congress, it was the women's rights session which was discussed most heatedly and caused more disagreement than any other topic. In this session, Bigiyev stated that men and women were equal before the Sharia, be it in testimony, inheritance, voting, etc. Even though in the end it was officially accepted by the congress that men and women were equal in all respects as Bigiyev suggested, 205 representatives, mostly from Turkestan, afterwards released a statement declaring that they did not recognize the resolution in its current form. What they wanted was the addition of the phrase "except for the issues that are restricted by the Sharia" to "men and women are equal".²²⁴

²²¹ *Bütün Rusya Müselmanlarının 1917'inçi Yılda 1-11 May'da Meskev'de Bulgan Umumi İsyездinin Protakolları* Edited by Shakir Muhammedyarov and Kerim Said. (Petrograd: Emanet Şirketi Matbaası, 1917), p. 432.

²²² Ibid., p. 452.

²²³ Ziya, "Müselman İsyездindeki Tesirat: İsyезде Umumi Bir Karaş," *Vakit*, no. 2273, 22 August 1917. Although Bigiyev served as one of the main secretaries of the congress, his name did not appear on the published version of the minutes of the congress. In fact, the book version came out under the editorship of Shakir Muhammedyarov and Kerim Said. *Bütün Rusya Müselmanlarının 1917'inçi Yılda 1-11 May'da Meskev'de Bulgan Umumi İsyездinin Protakolları* (Petrograd: Emanet Şirketi Matbaası, 1917). Kerim Said's endnote was dated as May 1918.

²²⁴ Among the signatories were Tatar historian Hadi Atlasi, publisher and scholar Gabdrakhman Gomerev, etc. Azerbaijani *Açık Söz* newspaper was especially interested in the women's session and its resolutions. "Moskva

Given his background, it is not surprising to see Bigiyev reiterating the equality of men and women in the eyes of the Sharia. Nonetheless, the steering committee assigned him in this task, as Daulet states, taking the risk of dividing the delegates and thus the public opinion. Daulet is in the idea that securing Muslim women's equality with men was not only a religious matter. In light of the political changes that took place after the deposition of the Tsar, it was crucial for Muslims to gain foot in the new political arena. Thus, it was paramount first to integrate the Muslim women into the social and political life and then gain their support in the upcoming general elections.²²⁵

The Second Congress of All-Russian Muslims of Kazan (July 22-31, 1917)

Two months later, the second all-Russian Muslims Congress was held in Kazan towards the end of July. After the concurrent meetings of two separate congresses, ie., Religious and Military, the main congress took place. The Kazan congress was not as well attended as the first one in Moscow. The total number of the attendees was around 150. Fewer representatives from Turkestan, Kazakhstan, Crimea, and the Caucasus resulted in Tatars dominating the congress. One of the reasons for the lack of interest from those regions was the problem of communication, since last time in Moscow the sessions were most of the time either in Tatar or in Russian, and thus the representatives from those parts of Russia and Turkestan had a difficult time understanding each other's dialect. Likewise, the women representatives were hindered by the

Kurultayında," *Açık Söz*, 18 May 1917; "Kazan Müslimeler Kurultayında" *Açık Söz*, no 469, 10 May 1917; Mehmed Emin Resulzade, "Moskva Umum Müselman İsyezdi," *Açık Söz*, no. 495, 12 June 1917.

²²⁵ Daulet, *Ibid.*, p. 448. Alimcan Al-Barudi felt it necessary to publicly declare that there was no harm for women to go to the ballots in the elections. Diniye Nezaretinde Reis Alimcan Muhammedcan el-Barudi el-Mufti, "Hatunların Sayılarına Katıluları Tiyiş," *Süyünbike*, no. 18, 10 December 1917.

unrest among Muslim men regarding the Moscow Congress's resolution on women's equality with men. A Tatar journalist commented that fewer representatives, on the other hand, worked more effectively. The only opposition group was the socialist friction the extension of the Tanchilar of 1905.²²⁶

The Ulama Meeting (18-26 July) was opened on July 18th at the Noviy Klub with an opening speech by Alimjan Barudi under the chairmanship of Abdullah Apanayev. The first day was for the elections of the subcommittees and other logistics of the meeting. Initially, the request for forming a separate subcommittee on revising the resolutions of the Moscow Congress was denied by the presidency. The second day began with the opening speech of Bigiyev. In it he briefly went over the previous congresses of the Muslims of Russia since 1905 and urged the ulama to consider the situation of the Muslim troops on the battlefield in the following discussions. As his last remark, he mentioned his disapproval of the green flags in the meeting hall and the green flames on some of the ulama as green in Islam is the color for grief and thus not suitable for this kind of a meeting.²²⁷

Based on the petitions from Muslims different parts of Russia, the ulama reviewed some of the resolutions of the Moscow Congress again. Among the topics were the women's issue. The Moscow Congress passed the resolution on women which gave them equality with men despite the opposition from the ulama. But the equality in theory did not bring about equality in practice. Even though one would expect the condition of Muslim women to be improved after the congress, it was not and even got worse in some part of Russia, especially in Turkestan. Furthermore, some women were physically attacked by men because of it. It even caused unrest

²²⁶ Ziya, "Müselman İsyezdindeki Tesirat."

²²⁷ "Ulema İsyezdinin İkinci Künü," *Koyash*, no. 1142, 23 July 1917.

among the Muslim soldiers. For instance, some soldiers in the field threatened to set the Sobraniye on fire and kill the mufti. Furthermore, some soldiers kicked off women from some mosques. During the discussions, some also commented that these many rights had not been granted to women in any part of the world except some states of the US.²²⁸ Because of all these and other reasons, the Ulama congress went through the women's resolution again.

In this regard, a subcommittee was formed under the presidency of Murad Ramzi. It came up with a 14-article draft. According to the new version, the Muslim women were deprived off all the rights that were granted by the Moscow Congress in terms of testimony, polygamy, inheritance, divorce, veiling, etc.²²⁹ If the one that was put together by Bigiyev constituted the far "progressive" end of the religious spectrum, Ramzi's is the most "conservative" one.

Since it was Bigiyev who drafted the resolution in Moscow, he was on the top of the list who wanted to talk about the new draft. But the five minutes that were designated for each speaker was not enough for him to read through his long speech. His request for an extension was refused by the delegates and thus Bigiyev left the meeting in protest.²³⁰ Some of the delegates, mostly younger imams followed him. They collected enough signatures to persuade the committee to have Bigiyev back to make his speech. Finally, he was able to read through his lengthy presentation in the following day.²³¹ In it, he basically reiterated what he said back in Moscow as women are equal to men in all respects according to the Shari'a. Besides, he stated

²²⁸ "Platformamız," *Turmush*, no. 696, 10 August 1917.

²²⁹ Fatih Emirhanov, "Kurultayda Hatun Kız Meselesi," *Koyash*, no. 1148, 6 August 1917; Alaeddin Aymushin, "Nedve Hatiratından," *Koyash*, no. 1155, 24 August 1917.

²³⁰ "Ulema Syezdi: Altıncı Meclis," *Turmush*, no. 694, 2 August 1917.

²³¹ Muhammed Murad [Ramzi], "Kazanda Nedvetü'l- Ulemada Hatun Kızlara Müteallik Meseleler Ne Tarika Hal Kılındı?" *Din ve Magışet*, no. 34, 10 September 1917.

that if the Muslim women (mothers and daughters) are deprived of their rights which are granted to them by the Shari'a, the civilized world look down upon Muslims as backwards.²³²

In response to Bigiyev, Ramzi, who played the leading role in drafting the counter proposal basically stated that the Qur'an does not give women equal rights with men as men are superior to women. As for the problems of the Muslim family, he agreed with Bigiyev but attributed them not to the Sharia but the society itself. After a certain point, it turned out to be a personal quarrel between Bigiyev and Ramzi. Bigiyev in support of his cause concluded with a letter from Mahmud Esad Efendi of Istanbul regarding the issue of veiling.²³³

At the end of the sessions, the presidency did not accept Ramzi's 14-point proposal either, lest it harm ulama's reputation as backwards. Instead, it reduced it to a five-article resolution to be presented to the general congress stating that women are equal to men in all respects, *except what is stated in the Qur'an*.²³⁴ Afterwards, Ramzi wrote a long article in *Din ve Magishet* summarizing his overall view of the Ulama congress which aimed to fix "the evil resolutions" of the Moscow congress that were "contrary to the Shari'a". In it he criticized the President Abdullah Apanayev for not giving enough time to discuss each article and being concerned with "the necessities of the time" more than it deserved.²³⁵

Another issue that was discussed in the Ulama congress was the calendar of religious dates and festivals. Upon the request of Abdurrahman Niyazi of Astrakhan, the ulama discussed whether the calculated method or the sighting of the moon should be considered accurate for the

²³² "Ulema İsyездinin 5'inci Künü," *Koyash*, no. 1144, 27 July 1917.

²³³ Ibid. For another account of the quarrel between the two, see Aymushin, "Nedve Hatıratından."

²³⁴ "Bütün Rusya Müselmanlarının İkinci Kurultayı," *Turmush*, no. 696, 10 August 1917.

²³⁵ Muhammed Murad [Ramzi], "Kazanda Nedvetü'l- Ulemada Hatun Kızlara Mütəallik Meseleler Ne Tarika Hal Kılındı?" *Din ve Magışet*, no. 32/34, 18 August/10 September 1917.

beginning of each month. For Bigiyev, there was no harm in using the scientific/calculated method in determining the beginning of the months. Moreover, he suggested the books of Muhtar and Şakir Pashas in this regard. In the end, the ulama accepted them both as equally valid ways of determination. Besides, the ulama came up with a typical calendar of Islamic dates and festivals. In the final draft, it is decided to omit the Ashura day from the calendar since it was not a celebration but a mourning. The ulama substituted Ashura with the commemoration the Battle of Badr. Although Bigiyev opposed to it lest the Shi'as be disappointed, his suggestion to keep it on the calendar was turned down.²³⁶ Besides, in line with Murad Ramzi's request, the ulama added 13th day of *ZilHijjah* on the calendar as the day of *Tashrik*.²³⁷

Among the other issues that were discussed by the ulama was publishing a religious and literary newspaper by the ulama union. The idea was proposed by Abdurrahman Omerov of Astrakhan. One of his main concern was to protect ulama from defamatory news on the press. Among the proposed names for the newspaper were *Yulbash*, *Irshad*, *Hami al-Islam*, and *Himayat al-Islam*. Another agenda item was the compilation of *Ahkam-i Ser'iyе Mecellesi*. Other issue was the structure of the Muslim neighborhoods, how they are run, how the imams are appointed, etc.²³⁸ And as a part of the restructuring of the primary schools which was proposed by Arif Marjani, it was accepted to raise it up to six years and increase the amount of religious courses .²³⁹ In the last day of the congress on July 31st, the ulema reiterated their allegiance to

²³⁶ "Ulema Syezdi: Dini Bayramlar Meselesi," *Turmush*, no. 693, 1 August 1917. On the chart of religious days and festivals that was produced by the Muftiate in 1925, the Ashura day came back. "Miladi 1925'inci Yılda (Hicri 1343-44'ünçü Yıllarda) Dini Beyremler Cetveli," *Islam*, November 1924.

²³⁷ "Ulema İsyездinin Üçünçü Künü," *Koyash*, no. 1143, 25 July 1917.

²³⁸ Ibid.

²³⁹ "Ulema İsyездinin Altınçü Künü'nün Songı," *Koyash*, no. 1147, 3 August 1917.

the Turkish caliphate and denounced any effort of the British and the French to create an alternative caliphate in Arabia.²⁴⁰

In the general congress, the resolutions of the Ulama and Military congresses were put into discussion. In terms of the women's issue, the congress accepted the resolution of the ulama congress as was. Now the men and women are equal according to the Shari'a except what is stated in the Qur'an, ie., inheritance and bearing witness.²⁴¹ In terms of polygamy, the congress held the Sobraniye responsible for not allowing it anymore.²⁴² Interestingly enough, in the general meeting Bigiyev did not talk about the women issue, but the cons and pros of operating a Muslim regiment within the Russian army.²⁴³ He was worried that if it was dispatched to the Turkish front in the war field, it would be the confrontation of two Muslim armies.²⁴⁴ Unlike the previous congresses, Bigiyev for the first time did not assume the scribe position. Instead, the records were written down by the Tatar imams and teachers.²⁴⁵

It is also this congress in which the autonomy of the İdil-Ural republic was officially declared.²⁴⁶ For some reason, Bigiyev did not assume any administrative role in it. Instead, he worked with Zeki Velidi's Bashkir Republic as an advisor to the Ministry of Justice. Togan in memoirs informs us that Bigiyev took advantage of free travel privileges granted to the ministers

²⁴⁰ Ibid.

²⁴¹ Habibullah Ahtamov, "Rusya Müselmanlarının Umumi İsyezdi," *Vakit*, no. 2265, 8 August 1917.

²⁴² "Bütün Rusya Müselmanlarının İkinci Kurultayı," *Turmush*, no. 696, 10 August 1917.

²⁴³ Habibullah Ahtamov, "Üç İsyezdin Birleşgen Meclisi Hakkında Tafsilat," *Vakit*, no. 2263, 4 August 1917.

²⁴⁴ Shakir Yakubov, "Mühim Meseleler Hakkında Üç Kurultayın Kushma Meclisi," *Turmush*, no. 692, 30 July 1917.

²⁴⁵ Ziya, "Müselman İsyezdindeki Tesirat." Kerim Said, in his endnote to *Protokollar* dated 12 May 1918, noted that he handed in the minutes of the Kazan Congress to the publishing organ of the Milli Shura.

²⁴⁶ M. E. Resulzade, "Üç Kurultay," *Açık Söz*, no. 537, 4 September 1917.

and associates, as he conducted salt trade and made “a lot of money” since it became a rare good in some part of the country in war time.²⁴⁷

3. In the Soviets (1917-1930)

Grand Opening of the St Petersburg Mosque (May 1918)

In May 1918, a delegation of Turkish officials²⁴⁸ arrived in Petersburg from Moscow for the grand opening of the Petersburg Mosque whose foundation ceremony took place in 1910 with the presence of the Khan of Bukhara who contributed a good sum.²⁴⁹ The Mufti Alincan el-Barudi and Bigiyev also came along with them on the same train. The delegation brought with them the Sultan Mehmed Rashad's 15-meter-carpet and Enver Pasha's ornamented Qur'an and the Qur'an stand as gifts to the mosque. The opening ceremony took place on Friday, May 24. Before the Friday prayer, the Turkish delegation installed the carpet in the main sanctuary of the mosque. The head of the Turkish delegation Galib Kemali Bey, Turkish ambassador to Russia, enthusiastically narrates that the carpet covered the main sanctury exactly as if it were specifically manufactured for that space. Then, they placed Enver Pasha's Qur'an, which was handwritten by Jamshir Hāfız in 1718, along with the ornamented Damascus Qur'an stand next

²⁴⁷ Zeki Velidi Togan, *National Existence and Cultural Struggles of Turkestan and Other Muslim Eastern Turks* Trans. by Hasan Paksoy, (North Charleston, SC: CreateSpace, 2012), pp. 234-35. Bigiyev himself stated in rather a vague expression that in the years 1919-20s, “he was looking after basic food stocks, such as salt and flour (Ben un tuz gibi zaruretleri arardım).” Ibn Fāṭimah, *Hatun*, p. 14.

²⁴⁸ In fact, this is not the first Turkish delegation that made a visit to the mosque. In 1913, a group of Turkish officials happened to be in St. Petersburg as a part of Turkish lobbying efforts for Edirne to be handed back to the Ottoman Empire. From the group, Hamdullah Suphi [Tanrıöver] and a certain Faik Bey visited the mosque and even donated some money to it. Afterwards, Hamdullah Suphi Bey visited Bigiyev in his apartment as the two had a long conversation. “Peterburg'da Edirne Vekilleri,” *Vakit*, no. 1273, 13 August 1913.

²⁴⁹ The initial attempt to build a mosque in Petersburg goes back to 1880s. Even though it was planned to open the mosque in 1914, the project was interrupted by the Great War. “Peterburg Mescidi,” *Yulduz*, no. 502, 9 February 1910; “Peterburg Mescidi,” *İdil*, no. 592, 1 October 1913.

to the pulpit. As a token of gratitude, the congregation penned a thank you letter for Enver Pasha and handed it to Galib Bey.²⁵⁰

In the opening ceremony, the Turkish ambassador Galib Kemali Bey [Söylemezoğlu] climbed up to the pulpit and made a speech in Ottoman Turkish saying that Turkey will always be with the Muslims of Russia and protect their rights. Then the head of the masjid committee Devletshin Efendi made a brief presentation about the history of the mosque. His speech was translated to the Turkish delegation by the head of Hilal-i Ahmer Yusuf Akçura. After that, Bigiyev talked about famous mosques in the Islamic world and noted that the Petersburg Mosque has become one of them. Then the congregation did the Friday prayer together as the Mufti Barudi led the prayer. Finally, the entire group posed a picture together. The German ambassador was also present in the opening ceremony.²⁵¹

First Congress of the Muslim Spiritual Assembly in Ufa (16-25 September 1920)

This is the first congress organized by the Orenburg Muslim Spiritual Assembly. Unlike the previous ones, it was exclusively for the Muslim clergy under the jurisdiction of the Spiritual Assembly and representatives of the Muslim neighborhoods.

The congress was opened under the direction of Mufti Barudi. Restructuring of the Orenburg Spiritual Assembly was on the the congress's agenda. It was officially transformed into the Central Spiritual Administration of Muslims of Inner Russia, Siberia, and Kazakhstan. In

²⁵⁰ Galip Kemali Söylemezoğlu, *30 Senelik Siyasî Hâtıralarımın Üçüncü ve Son Cildi, 1918-1922* (İstanbul: Ülkü, 1953), pp. 43-44.

²⁵¹ "Petrograd Mescidin Açılış Merasimi," *Yıldız*, no. 1896, 21 May/3 June 1918; For some reason, Galib Kemali Bey, when narrating the event in his memoir, avoided spelling out Bigiyev's name and kept calling him "the imam." Söylemezoğlu, *Ibid.*, pp. 43-44.

its new structure, it was no longer responsible for Crimea, Caucasus, Ferghana, and Turkestan. Bigiyev in the congress laid out his vision for the future structure of Muslims of Russia. His speech formed the basis of his future book the *ABC of Islam*, aka *Islam Milletlerine*.²⁵²

Bigiyev in Western Turkestan (Bukhara and Tashkent) (1920-21)

Shortly after the Ufa Congress, Bigiyev headed towards West Turkestan where the anti-Bolshevik sentiment was very high compared to other Muslim parts of Russia. The reason for this trip is not clear. But it is certain that he got involved in anti-communist activities. Bigiyev states that having seen what the Bolsheviks had done to the ancient mosques and madrasas –they transformed them into public restrooms and barns- his sorrow made him to leave Bukhara after three days.²⁵³ From there he headed to Tashkent where he continued his political activities and got in contact with the Turkish military officers in there.²⁵⁴ Yet he had to pay a price for it. For the first time in his life, he was arrested by Cheka in 1921.²⁵⁵ Luckily, he was released after a short time.²⁵⁶

²⁵² Tagirdjanova, *Kniga o Muse-Efendi, ego vremeni i sovremennikah: sbornik istoriko-biograficheskikh materialov (Kniga II)*. (Kazan: 2010), pp. 152-3.

²⁵³ Ibn Fāṭimah, *al-Washī'ah fī naqd 'aqā'id al-Shī'ah* (Cairo: Matba'at al-Khanji, 1355/1936), p. letter waw.

²⁵⁴ Around the same time period, the young member of the new Turkish National Assembly, Suphi [Soysallıoğlu] was also in Tashkent. He was sent to Turkestan by the Turkish government as an observer after the treaty between Turkey and Afghanistan signed in Moscow which recognized the sovereignty of Bukhara and Khiva. Nevzat Kösoğlu, *Şehit Enver Paşa* (İstanbul: Ötüken, 2013), p. 513. Bigiyev met him and handed in his Müracaat to be passed on to Mustafa Kemal Pasha. Tagirdjanova, *Kniga o Muse-Efendi*, p. 271.

²⁵⁵ *Yeni Kafkasya* mentioned his imprisonment in two separate articles in the same issue. Azeri, “Musa Jarullah Efendi'nin Tevkifi,” and “Bolşevik Mezalimi,” no. 6, 7 Cemaziyelevvel 1342/15 December 1923).

²⁵⁶ According to Azeri in *Yeni Kafkasya*, he was released from prison after his friends interfered into the affair. *Yeni Kafkasya*, Ibid.; One of the pioneers of the Tatar Soviet Literature G. Ibrahimov, on the other hand, claimed that the compassionate proletariat court acquitted them upon their repentance. Galimcan Ibrahimov, *Kara Mayaklar* (Kazan: 1986), p. 355 (cited in Kanlıdere, *Kadimle Cedit Arasında*, p. 103).

As the reason for his arrest, Galimcan Ibrahimov claims that Bigiyev was actively working for the unification of the Muslims of Turkestan against the Bolsheviks and seeking ways to get in contact with the British for his cause. In this regard, when he was trying to send a letter to the British Prime Minister Lloyd George through the British civil servant in Gulja, he was caught up on the scene.²⁵⁷

At this point, we can also think about another possibility for his arrest. Enver Pasha's uncle Halil Pasha, in his memoir, relates that when he was in Tashkent, Bigiyev was also there (they met for the first time when Pasha was in Moscow not long ago). Pasha narrates that once Bigiyev climbed up to the pulpit during the Friday prayer and gave a khutba "in very clear Turkish" saying that it is not possible to live without freedom under an unjust government by way of translating some *ḥadīth*. He went on to say that if this many Muslims do not stand up and rise against an unjust government, they will be responsible before God and the Prophet. Moreover, while there was a Turkish Pasha present, God would not forgive those Muslims who sit dormant and do not act. After quoting Bigiyev, Pasha comments that it would not have been good for none of them, if there were a Soviet commissar or spy in and around the mosque.²⁵⁸ Looking at Bigiyev's arrest soon after, one cannot help but think that there was indeed a Soviet officer in or around the mosque on that Friday.

Second Congress of the Muslim Spiritual Assembly in Ufa in 1923 (June 10-18)

²⁵⁷ Galimcan Ibrahimov, *Kara Mayaklar* (Kazan, 1986), p. 335 (cited in Ahmet Kanlıdere, p. 103).

²⁵⁸ Halil Paşa, *İttihat ve Terakki'den Cumhuriyet'e: Bitmeyen Savaş*. Ed. by M. Taylan Sorgun (Istanbul: 7 Gün Yayınları, 1972), p. 344-5.

The second congress was held in Ufa again with the attendance of approximately 300 delegates. On the agenda of the congress were the regulations of the Muslim Spiritual Assembly, the transfer of the Uthman's Qur'an to the Muslims of Turkestan, etc.²⁵⁹ The congress also elected Rizaeddin Fahreddin as the new mufti. At the congress, Bigiyev, particularly was concerned with the fate of the Bashkirs. In this regard, he delivered a long speech in which he urged Congress to unite with the Bashkir Central Muslim Congress.²⁶⁰

Arrest in Petrograd (1923)

Towards the end of 1923, Bigiyev, along with some other Muslims of Petersburg, was arrested by the Cheka for the second time. After three months in jail, he was sent to into exile in Moscow at the beginning of 1924. It has been commonly accepted that the reason for his arrest first and then exile to Moscow was his book *Islam Milletlerine* (To The Muslim Nations), aka the *ABC of Islam* which was published in Berlin in 1923 by Ayaz Ishaki with some revisions on it.²⁶¹ However, Ali Şamil Hüseynoğlu of Azerbaijan Academy of Sciences based on his archival work in the KGB documents in Azerbaijan claims that the primary reason for Bigiyev's arrest was his help to Mehmet Emin Resulzade and some other Muslims from Azerbaijan and other parts of the

²⁵⁹ Tagirjanova, *Kniga o Muse-Efendi*, pp. 173-4.

²⁶⁰ Julia Guseva, "Musa Bigiyev i ego usilia v dele abedinenia rossiyskikh musulman v 1920e gg.," *Bigiyevskie Chitenia II: Musulmanskaya mysl v 21 veke: Edinstvo traditsii i obnovenia: (Materialy II Mejdunarodnoi Konferetsii 'Bigiyevskie Chitenia', Sankt-Peterburg: 17-20 Maya 2015 g.*, Eds. D. V. Mukhetdinov, Shamil Ravilevich Kashaf, and Ildar A. Nurimanov. (Medina, 2016), p. 110.

²⁶¹ It seems that it was a certain author, "Azeri" in Yeni Kafkasya who first attributed his arrest to his book. Later on this idea was adopted by later scholarship. For example, A. Battal-Taymas, *Kazanlı Türk Meşhurlarından II-Musa Carullah Bigi: Kişiliği, Fikir Hayatı ve Eserleri*. (Istanbul: M. Sıralar Matbaası, 1958), pp. 19-20; Salavat Iskhakov, *Rossiskie Musulmanie i Revolyutsia 1917-1918*. (Moscow: Izdatelstvo Sotsialno-Politicheskaya Mysl, 2004), p. 42; Kanlıdere, *Kadimle Cedit Arasında*, p. 105.

Soviets to escape the Soviets from Petersburg to Finland.²⁶² Hüseyinoğlu's idea seems more acceptable because if it were the book, only Bigiyev would have been arrested. But some other Muslims too were arrested along with him. Perhaps, the publishing of the book gave enough evidence to the Soviet authorities who were in the search of a real document/evidence.

It seems that his exile in Moscow did not last long. On October 6- November 18, 1925, Bigiyev had a vacation in Crimea where he was asked about the Islamic rulings on selling alcohol. Bigiyev answered the questions in consecutive articles in *Asri Müslümanlık*, the press organ of the Crimean Muftiate, and eventually published it as a book in 1927 in Istanbul on his way to Hajj.

World Muslim Congress: Cairo Congress (13-22 May 1926)

In hope for electing a new caliph, the ulama of Azhar, in conjunction with the Egyptian government and the British will, summoned scholars from around the world for a congress in Cairo. Bigiyev was among those who received a personal invitation to the congress. Bigiyev on his way to Egypt arrived in Istanbul but something happened on the way. Joining the Indian Muslims, Mufti Rizaeddin bin Fahreddin declared that it is inappropriate to conduct the caliphate congress in Egypt which is was under the British control. Instead he suggested the congress to be held in Mecca which is free from the "imperialist influence."²⁶³ Thus, the consular personnel of Egypt in Istanbul did not issue a visa for Bigiyev lest he disturb the congress with similar

²⁶² Ali Şamil Hüseyinoğlu, "Musa Carullah Bigi'nin Görünmeyen Tarafları veya Musa Carullah Bigi Mehmedemin Resulzadenin Kaçırılmasında Nasıl Yardımcı Oldu?" *Türk Dünyası Bilgeler Zirvesi: Gönül Sultanları Buluşması*. 26-28 Mayıs 2014. Eskişehir, p. 338.

²⁶³ Mufti Fahreddinov, "Halifelik Kongresin Ciyuga Ait R. S. F. S. R. Müselmanlarının Protesti," *Islam*, no. 11-12, August-September 1925, p. 506.

remarks with that of the Mufti of Russia.²⁶⁴ Disappointed by his denial, Bigiyev sent a lengthy letter of protest to the steering committee of al-Azhar.²⁶⁵

World Muslim Congress: Mecca Congress (June-July 1926)

Following up on the Cairo congress, Ibn Sa'ūd invited scholars for another congress in Mecca to discuss the governance of the two holy cities, i.e., Mecca and Medina and the Hajj logistics. This time, electing a new caliph was not on the list.²⁶⁶ In this respect, an invitation was extended to the Diniye Nezareti by Ibn Sa'ūd himself on March 29, 1926.²⁶⁷

In King Sa'ūd's invitation of the Soviet delegation to the congress, it is believed that the first Soviet ambassador to Saudi Arabia Karim Khakimov,²⁶⁸ -known as Kızıl (Red) Pasha by the Tatars and Soviet Lawrence of Arabia- played an important role through his personal acquaintance with the new king. Upon receiving the invitation, the Diniye Nezareti approached

²⁶⁴ Bigiyev, in his notebook, presented some conflicting ideas on the Cairo Congress. While in some notes he expressed his disappointment with the conference for not electing a caliph, in other notes he stated that a caliphate congress in Egypt, which was under the British control, was not appropriate. Instead, he thought such a conference should be held either in Mecca, or Ankara, or Istanbul. Not Defteri 06 Mil Yz A 5924, Milli Kütüphane Yazmalar Koleksiyonu.

²⁶⁵ Martin Kramer, *Islam Assembled: The Advent of the Muslim Congresses* (New York: Columbia Press, 1986), pp. 96, 213.

²⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 106.

²⁶⁷ For the text of the invitation both in Arabic and in Tatar, see [Keshshafeddin Tercümanı], "Üçünçü İslam Nedvesinde Mekke-i Mükerrreme Mutemeri Hakkında Kadı Keshshafeddin Tercümanı Tarafından Ukılğan Dokladın Hülâsası," *İslam Mecellesi*, no. 8, December 1926.

²⁶⁸ With his advance language skills in Arabic, Turkish, Persian, and French and his personal determination to gain Arab's sympathy for the Soviet cause and especially his acquaintance with Ibn Sa'ūd, he earned the title of the Soviet Lawrence of Arabia. He was also an alumnus of the Medrese-i Galiye in Ufa. For an account of his life written by former Russian Ambassador in Saudi Arabia Oleg B. Ozerov, see 'Tragic Loss of 'Red Pasha' I-II," March 11-14, 2016, Katehon, [accessed on September 27, 2017]. Bigiyev made his acquaintance with Khakimov during his Hajj trip in 1927. He described him as a nice smart man who had an eloquent tongue like his intellect. Not Defteri. Milli Kütüphane Yazmalar Koleksiyonu, 06 Mil Yz A 5924, p. 6.

the Soviet Government for permission to attend. They got more than their expectation. The Government further allowed the Diniye Nezareti to include members from other districts that were not under the jurisdiction of the Nezaret. Initially, 12 candidates were presented to the government. But some of them, including representative of the Muslims of Caucasia, were not be able to make it due to variety of reasons. The final version of the delegation consisted of eight representatives who were good at Arabic and knowledgeable in Hajj duties: 1. Rizaeddin bin Fahreddin (Ufa Muftiate), 2. Kashshafaddin Tarjumanı (Ufa Muftiate), 3. Tahir el-Ilyasi (Kazan), 4. Gabdurrahman Gomeri (Astrakhan), 5. Haci Muslihuddin Halili (Crimea Muftiate), 6. Mehdi Makuli (Akmola Kazakhs), 7. Abdulvahid Kari (Uzbekistan/Tashkent Muftiate), 8. Musa Jarullah Efendi (Moscow).²⁶⁹

On their way of the Hijaz, the Soviet delegation stopped in Istanbul for a couple of days.²⁷⁰ Their arrival was quite noticed by the Turkish press.²⁷¹ For example, *Cumhuriyet* informed its readers about their arrival with a picture of them on the boat.²⁷² For the Turkish press Russian Muslims' thoughts on the ongoing Turkish reforms were more interesting than the congress itself. In this regard, *Cumhuriyet* made an interview with Kashshafaddin Tarjumanı,

²⁶⁹ There are conflicting reports on whom Bigiyev represented in the congress. According to the official records, he represented the Muslims of Moscow. Keshshafeddin Tercümanı, "Mekke-i Mükerrerme Nedvesi Münasebetiyle," *İslam*, no. 6, October 1926, pp. 734-37; "Şimal Türkleri Heyeti Bugün Gidiyor," *Cumhuriyet*, 26 May 1926. However, in some secondary sources, he was listed as claiming to represent the Muslims of Kashgar or the Chinese Muslims. *İslam İi Sovetskoe Gosudarstvo (Po Materialam Vostochnogo Otdela OGPU. 1926 g.)*. Ed. by D.Yu. Arapova and G.G. Kosach. (Moscow: Mardjani, 2010), p. 141. Yet, in his journal, he noted that he had the honor of representing the Muslims of Russia as well as Turkestan. Not Deferi 5912.

²⁷⁰ Zeki Velidi Togan in his memoir stated that Rizaeddin Fahreddin made a visit to him, but he did not give further detail of their meeting. If Bigiyev were present in the meeting, Togan would have mentioned his name too. Zeki Velidi Togan, *Hatıralar* (Ankara: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı Yayınları, 1999), p. 235.

²⁷¹ It would be safe to assert that if their visit did not coincide with Atatürk's visit to Istanbul, it would have found more coverage in the Turkish press.

²⁷² "Rus Müslümanları Heyeti Nihayet İhramize Çıkabildi," *Cumhuriyet*, no. 729, 19 May 1926.

while *Akşam* talked to Bigiyev. Tarjumani, for example, in response to the correspondent Cumhuriyet remarked that the new Turkey is better than the old one so long as it is not under foreign power/influence. As for the hat reform, he said that it is a simple problem and how Turkey handled it serves better for Turkey's cause.²⁷³ During their sojourn in Turkey, they were treated well and got the necessary assistance from the Soviet consul general in Istanbul and the Soviet ambassador to Ankara.²⁷⁴

When the Soviet delegation arrived in Istanbul, Bigiyev was already in Turkey. In the meantime, he made a visit to the new Turkish capital Ankara, where he was welcomed by the Prime Minister İsmet İnönü. In his interview with the Turkish press, he commented on some of the reforms of the new Turkish Republic, such as the hat reform.²⁷⁵ As for the congress itself, he stated that he did not have high expectations from it.²⁷⁶

Tercümani in his report of the congress stated that they arrived in Mecca on June 6th as seven of them. This brings mind the question of who was missing in the delegation. Was it Bigiyev or somebody else in the group? My guess is that Bigiyev like the first part of his trip to Istanbul, travelled to Mecca on his own separate from the group.²⁷⁷ Although they received a warm personal treatment from Ibn Sa'ūd during the conference, they did not find the same treatment from the British as they had to transit the Egyptian seaway. Tarjumani narrates that

²⁷³ "Hicaz Kongresine Gidecek Rusya Müslümanları," *Cumhuriyet*, 21 May 1926.

²⁷⁴ [Kashshafaddin Tarjumani], "Üçünçü İslam Nedvesinde."

²⁷⁵ Kanlıdere, *Kadimle Cedit Arasında*, p. 111. In his *Hatun*, Bigiyev, in regard to the question of hijab, stated that hijab had already been disappeared among the Northern Turks. He also approved the way Atatürk dealt with it in Turkey. Ibn Fāṭimah, *Hatun*, p. 35.

²⁷⁶ "Musa Jarullah Bigi," *Yanga Milli Yul*, no. 7, July 1931.

²⁷⁷ Bigiyev's own statement in his journal somewhat supports the idea that he travelled alone. He says that he joined the post-Hajj part of the congress which means he was absent in the pre-Hajj part. Not Deferi 5912.

because of the Soviets' denouncement of the Cairo congress shortly before it, the British stopped issuing visas to the Soviet citizens. Even though their transit visas were issued before the crisis, they nevertheless suffered harsh treatments from the British officials in Egypt both in their arrival and return as they were detained for a couple of days.²⁷⁸

The Soviet delegation took part in a number of subcommittees during the congress. However, Tarjumani does not list Bigiyev taking part in any of them. It suggests that he acted independently from the rest of the Soviet delegation during the congress. We find a partial description of his observations of the congress in his journal. In it, Bigiyev stated that on their way back to the Soviets, he wrote a length article in which he put down his observations of the congress to be published in the Turkish press. However, the idea of getting it published in Istanbul was rejected by other members of the delegation. He further noted that he later on wrote an extended version of it as a book and distributed to it some of his acquaintances who were interested in it. This book is yet another book of him that we do not know its whereabouts.²⁷⁹ Where he narrates these in his journal, he only deals with a specific topic that was brought up by him in the congress: the issue of slavery in Islam.

Bigiyev notes that he, along with the Indian delegation, was more concerned with the ongoing slave trade in Arabia. Even though their proposal to halt it was approved by the congress, his short article on it that he was handed in to the chairman of the congress did not receive the same positive reception from him as he commented that the ideas in it are of Western

²⁷⁸ [Kashshafaddin Tarjumani], "Üçüncü İslam Nedvesinde."

²⁷⁹ Among the list of Bigiyev's books in Uralgiray, one is about the Mecca Congress. No 64- Al-Mu'tamar al-Makki wa Kullu Majara fihi wa Kullu Masailah. Uralgiray, Ibid., p. VII. This could be the report that he presented to the Ufa Congress in 1926 right after the Mecca Congress.

views. Bigiyev, instead of reacting to it, preferred to remain silent, but it did not hinder him to make it clear that they are not Western ideas, but his own personal opinion.

Third Congress of the Muslim Spiritual Assembly in Ufa (October 25-November 4) in 1926

This is the congress for Muslims that are under the jurisdiction of Merkezi Diniye Nezareti which included Tatarstan, Bashkortostan, Kazakhstan, Ukraine, and Chuvashstan. There attended also the voluntary members of other republics, Uzbekistan and Crimea, including a mufti.

Attended by 430 representatives, the congress opened and closed with Bigiyev's recitation of the Qur'an. Having evaluated the deeds of the Muftiate and the Ulema Union since the last congress in 1923, the congress discussed and reevaluated the outcome of the Meccan Congress based on the report presented by Tarjumani and Bigiyev.²⁸⁰ Elections were also held for various positions including the Mufti and the qadis. Some delegates, majority of whom were from Orenburg, nominated Bigiyev for the Mufti but he kindly refused on account of his quick temperament, which would pose a serious obstacle in their relationship with the Soviet government. Instead, he endorsed incumbent Rizaeddin Fahreddin who was even revered by the representatives of the Meccan Congress as a great scholar of Islam. Thus, Fakhreddin was reelected as the mufti with 350 against 36 votes. Bigiyev, instead, was elected as a member to the Ulema Union.²⁸¹

Islamic education was among the top priorities of the congress which reiterated the importance of having religious education at the maktabas and madrasas. Furthermore, the

²⁸⁰ [Kashshafaddin Tarjumani], "Üçünçü İslam Nedvesinde."

²⁸¹ Ibid.

congress demanded the end of antireligious propaganda at the Soviet schools.²⁸² During the discussion of education, Bigiyev stated that Muslims cannot ignore the Russian schools at the expense of having an Islamic education. He stated that his six children go to Russian schools and take their Islamic education afterschool.²⁸³ Despite the congress' resolution on Islamic education, the Soviet authorities began outlawing religious schools around the same time.²⁸⁴

In the end, the congress sent thank you letters to the leaders of the Soviet Republics, such as Mikhael Kalinin (1875-1946), Alexei Rykov (1881-1938), Joseph Stalin (1878-1953), Georgy Chicherin (1872-1936), Kliment Voroshilov (1881-1969) for giving Muslims the opportunity to hold the congress. Other greetings were sent to the head of the Bashkortostan Central Administration Koshayev and the king of the Hijaz and other members of the steering committee of the Meccan congress.²⁸⁵

The Hajj (1927): Perhaps the Only One from the Soviets²⁸⁶

One year after the Mecca Congress, Bigiyev embarked on another trip to Arabia for the Hajj. He got on a boat in Odessa on May 15th and arrived in Jeddah on May 25. The boat was specifically

²⁸² Dilyara Usmanova, Ilnur Minnullin, Rafik Mukhamedshin, "Islamic Education in Soviet and post-Soviet Tatarstan" in *Islamic Education in the Soviet Union and Its Successor States*. Edited by Michael Kemper, Raoul Motika, and Stefan Reicmuth, (Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon; New York, NY: Routledge, 2010), p. 33.

²⁸³ Sergey Sinenko, "Musulmanskii syezd 1926 goda," *Posredi Rossii*. 14 November 2012, [Accessed on January 8th, 2017].

²⁸⁴ Usmanova, *Ibid.*, p. 34.

²⁸⁵ [Keshshafeddin Tercümani], "Üçüncü İslam Nedvesinde"; The ones that were sent to Voroshilov and Stalin were singed by Bigiyev and Sheref. Musa Bigiyev and Sheref, "Askeri ve Dengiz İşleri Halk Kamisarı İpdesh Voroshilofga," *İslam Mecellesi*, no. 8, December 1926; Musa Bigiyev and Sheref, "İpdesh Stalinga," *İslam Mecellesi*, no. 8, December 1926.

²⁸⁶ Bigiyev's Hajj notes are translated to Russian as an example of the literary genre Hajjname. Aydar G. Khayrutdinov, "Hadjname Musy Bigeeva: "Iz Rossii, modjno skazat, ya odin..." *İslam v Sovremennom Mire*. 2016, v. 12, no. 3-4.

reserved by the Soviet government for the transit Hajj passengers from the Chinese Turkestan.²⁸⁷

Bigiyev's hajj trip coincided with the first hajj campaign of the Soviet government. The Soviet government was under pressure from foreign Muslims for opening the old hajj routes.

Khakimov, the Soviet consul general to Jeddah, also received many petitions especially from the Muslims of Persia, Afghanistan, and China. Thus, he advised Georgy Chicherin that it would be for the advantage of Soviet propaganda in the Muslim Middle East. Chicherin's extended proposal for hajj in 1926 was accepted by the Politburo despite serious oppositions. According to the proposal, not only the transit hajj pilgrims but also "select Soviet Muslims" as political agents were allowed for hajj. Thus in 1926, after a decade hiatus, the Soviet Hajj route was reopened afresh.²⁸⁸

Bigiyev kept a diary during his trip, so we have a detailed account of what he saw and did during the Hajj. When he was giving the number of Hajjis from specific locations/countries, he noted that he is probably the only one from the Soviets which makes him one of those "select Soviet Muslims". One thing prevailing in his Hajj notes is his admiration for Ibn Sa'ūd. Having frustrated with the direction that was undertaken by the new Turkish Republic towards the West and other Muslim states under foreign dominance/influence, he saw the new *melik* of the Hijaz as

²⁸⁷ In the boat, he should have travelled with his staunch opponent Murad Ramzi who was accompanying the Muslims of Kashgar, but he is silent on it in his diary. Murad Ramzi and Hasan Fahmi were organizing Hajj tours each year from Sinkiang through India by British steamships. On their return back from Arabia, they were inquired in Istanbul by a Soviet official to work for the Soviet government in order to attract Muslims of Xinjiang to the Soviet Hajj routes. They accepted the offer with certain conditions, basically the increase of the amount of money that the pilgrims carry with them and the improvement of the transit conditions. It was agreed by the Soviet officials because the first campaign was paramount for the Soviets to make a good impression on the first group of hajjis and spread how good the Soviet route was vis-à-vis the British route. Eileen Kane, *Russian Hajj: Empire and the Pilgrimage to Mecca* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2015), 168-9.

²⁸⁸ Ibid., pp. 162-4.

a champion of pure Islamic governance.²⁸⁹ As for the Hajj itself, he complained about the lack of orderliness in the Hajj logistics as nearly 3000 people died in Arafat and Mina due to sunburn alone. Upon the initiative of the Javanese delegation, a small meeting took place on July 6-7 in which Bigiyev read through a four-page presentation in Arabic. It is also this Hajj in which he met the newly convert to Islam and the future scholar of Islam, Muhammed Asad (1900-1992).

Having completed his Hajj duties and visiting the city of the Prophet, i.e., Medina,²⁹⁰ Bigiyev made his way to Turkey where he spent more than four months from August 27 to December 20. Bigiyev does not specify on what route he followed to get to Turkey. Apart from Çanakkale, where he travelled through the battlegrounds and the graveyards, the only clear reference is his arrival in Istanbul on September 8.²⁹¹ Again, Bigiyev does not provide a detailed account of his nearly four months stay in Turkey except for referring to it as a troublesome one. However, we know that in his stay in Istanbul he got his book *Müskirat Meseleleri* published in the Mahmut Bey Matbaası.

Bigiyev returned to the Soviets towards the end of December 1927. Upon his return from the Hajj, Bigiyev found himself and his family in financial hardships for the next couple of years. Since his profession, which is the religious sciences, was not needed in the new system,²⁹² he was not able to publish new books and thus deprived of his main source of revenue. Likewise,

²⁸⁹ His only resentment towards Ibn Sa'ūd was his announcement of himself as the new king of the Hijaz before the promised schedule date, the general Muslim congress.

²⁹⁰ Later on, in his letters to Veli Ahmed (1882-1970), he specifically mentioned how he passionately visited the Ghari Nur and its vicinity for contemplation and inspiration from the history of Islam and the life of the Prophet Muhammed, as he used to do during his student years in Mecca some 20 years before. Uralgiray, *Ibid.*, p. 20.

²⁹¹ Some references in his notes hint that he visited Izmir on the way. If so, he should have taken the seaway to get to Istanbul, i.e. Izmir-Canakkale-Istanbul.

²⁹² Tagirjanova, *Kniga o Muse-Efendi*, p. 225.

his publisher Muhammed Alim Maksudov²⁹³ was also in a bad situation financially.²⁹⁴ He even looked for some menial jobs, but nothing came up for him.²⁹⁵

Under these circumstances, in June 1928, he wrote a letter (in Arabic) to Ignatu Yulianovich Krachkovsky (1883-1951), the head of the Arabic division of Academy of Sciences of USSR, asking for a teaching position (Turkish, Persian, Arabic) in the department.²⁹⁶ However, this and his follow up inquiries (the last one in 1930) were denied on account of his “counter-revolutionary activities” in the past.²⁹⁷ His last attempt to get into the Russian university system, as a professor this time, ended up with the same disappointment as he made previous attempts to get into it as a student in the past. In 1929, he made another attempt to somehow change his life and appealed to the government of Afghanistan through the Afghan embassy in Moscow. In his letter he listed his credentials, the financial crisis he was having, and his desire to serve for an Islamic government.²⁹⁸ But nothing came up.

While trying to find a teaching position at the university, his passion was to open a model religious medrese in the Soviets. In his correspondences with Abdurrahman Nasreddin of

²⁹³ Bigiyev described him as "Şu günde Peterburg müselmanları arasında en akıllı, fakirler, talebeler, studentler için en merhametli, umumi işlerde hayrat yolunda en işlikli umum için açık eşikli, her adam kaşında açık yüzlü tatlı sözlü king kollu, büyük bir ailede en güzel ata olan meşhur muteber Alim Efendi Maksudov hazretleri." Musa Bigiyef, "Bünyamin Ahtamof," *Yulduz*, no. 631, 11 January 1911.

²⁹⁴ Tagirjanova, *Kniga o Muse-Efendi*, p. 223.

²⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 222.

²⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 216.

²⁹⁷ Ibid., pp. 218, 227, 229.

²⁹⁸ It could be considered as his CV and cover letter in modern sense. It begins like this: "I am Turkish. My name is Musa. My father's name is Jarullah. I am known as Musa Jarullah. I am a specialist in Islamic law and methodology. I am well versed in the laws of the ancient tribes, and I also understand the books of the Old and New Covenant ..." Ibid., pp. 222-23.

Kashgar he stated that he was in the idea of opening a middle level girls' medrese in the Chinese Turkestan.²⁹⁹

It was not only Bigiyev who was having a difficult time during this period. Indeed, the Muslims of Russia as a whole were undergoing tremendous hardships. Mufti Rizaeddin Fahreddin's negotiations with the Soviet officials in Moscow were in vain too. 10,000 out of 12000 mosques were already closed by mid-1930.³⁰⁰ Political pressure on the Muslim clergy, fines and arrests, exile to forced labor, and seizures of the Qur'an became commonplace.³⁰¹ Under these circumstances, Bigiyev had to accept what was at stake for him in his destiny.

4. Bigiyev In Exile (1930-1949)

Escape from the Soviets (1930): The Moment of Truth

The moment of truth for Bigiyev came in 1930. Giving up all his hopes for a future for him under the new regime and "entrusting his family³⁰² and his books to Allah," he left the Soviets on November 1930.³⁰³ Initially he had the enthusiasm of being a student again like he was years ago.³⁰⁴ But as the years passed, he realized that he crossed the Rubicon as he grew homesick day

²⁹⁹ Not Defteri. Milli Kütüphane Yazmalar Koleksiyonu, 06 Mil Yz A 5912.

³⁰⁰ Tagirjanova, Ibid., p. 228.

³⁰¹ Ibid., p. 232.

³⁰² Because of his escape, his family suffered imprisonment and eventually exile between 1930 and 1934. Fatma Bigiyeva Tahircanova, "Etiyem Hakkında Hetireler," p. 172 (cited in Kanlıdere, Kadimle Cedit Arasında, p. 120); "Musa Jarullah Bigi," *Yanga Milli Yul*, no. 7, July 1930.

³⁰³ Musa Jarullah, *al-Washr'ah*, page. letter dal. In his notebook dated back to February 1930, he hinted that just as the Prophet Muhammed moved to Medina after the harsh treatment that he received from the people of Taif early in his ministry, he too would do the same thing if he were in a similar situation. Not Defteri. Milli Kütüphane Yazmalar Koleksiyonu, 06 Mil Yz A 5912.

³⁰⁴ Musa Jarullah, *al-Washr'ah*, page. letter h.

by day. It is safe to assert that he escaped the Soviets though just on time since an arrest warrant had been issued for the mullahs of the Petersburg mosques on February 1931.³⁰⁵ Uralgiray informs us that Bigiyev used to tell him that he just escaped from death as the Bolsheviks used to threaten to put him on fire squad shrouded with “the silks that he imported from Turkestan”.³⁰⁶

Ultimately, his plan was to get to Finland.³⁰⁷ Even though in the past he helped others to make it to the Finnish side of the Soviet-Finnish border, this time he had to follow rather a long and unusual way to get there. While the Soviet police was looking for him at the Soviet-Finnish border, he already made his way to the Chinese Turkestan.³⁰⁸ After more than a four months’ journey on the back of horse, he arrived in Kabul, Afghanistan, the paradise on earth in his eyes. Having stayed in Afghanistan for about 40 days, “God opened him the doors of travel again through the gesture of the great king of Afghanistan Nadir Shah (1883-1933).”³⁰⁹ Having left Afghanistan around July of 1931³¹⁰, he made his way to Egypt where he published his *Müracaat* which he worked out in 1921.

Bigiyev was finally in Finland in November 1931, one year after his departure from the Soviets.³¹¹ But shortly after his arrival, he embarked on another trip to the Middle East in order

³⁰⁵ Tagircanova, *Kniga o Muse-Efendi*, p. 237.

³⁰⁶ Uralgiray (p. XVII) unfortunately noted that he cannot remember the details of the story of the “silk roles.”

³⁰⁷ Kanlıdere states that he was in the idea of settling in Kashgar and teaching in a madrasa there. *Kadimle Cedit Arasında*, p. 119. However, what he said in Uralgiray suggests me that it was not Kashgar but Finland as his ultimate destination in mind. Uralgiray, *Ibid.*, p. XVIII.

³⁰⁸ According to Isa Yusuf Alptekin, those who helped him to cross the Soviet border were arrested and eventually executed by the Soviet state. Uralgiray, *Ibid.*, p. XVII.

³⁰⁹ In his *al-Washī'ah*, he stated that he arrived in Afghanistan through West Turkistan, East (Chinese) Turkestan and the Pamirs. Pages. d, h.

³¹⁰ He should have stayed in Kabul until July because one of the notes in his diary is dated as July 1931, Kabul. Not Deferi, 06 Mil Yz A 5910, p. 21.

³¹¹ Uralgiray, *Ibid.*, p. XVII; “Musa Jarullah Bigi,” *Yanga Milli Yul*, no. 12, December 1931.

to join the World Muslim Congress in Jerusalem in December 1931.³¹² His friend Ayaz Ishaki also joined the congress from Berlin representing the Muslims of Russia.³¹³ It is not clear whether they travelled together. After the congress, both men spent time together visiting the important sites of Palestine.³¹⁴ In the congress, Bigiyev made acquaintance of the great Shi'a scholar Hussein Kashif al-Ghita (1877-1953)³¹⁵ who, upon the suggestion of Ishaki, led a historic Friday prayer in which the Sunni ulama, including the Mufti of Jerusalem Amin al-Husseini and publisher of al-Manar Rashid Rida, lined after a Shi'a imam.³¹⁶

Having performed yet another Hajj in May 1932³¹⁷ he went to Turkey and joined the First Turkish History Congress in July 1932.³¹⁸ For the next couple of years (1932-34), his life was divided between Finland and Germany, where he opened a printing house in 1933.³¹⁹ In Berlin, he published his *Yecüc, Hatun, and Tarihin Unutulmuş Sahifeleri*. Even though in his foreword to the latter he promised to publish at least 20-30 more books and journals, apparently none of them came out in publication.

³¹² Martin Kramer, *Islam Assembled*, p. 132. Bigiyev himself also hinted that he participated the congress in his *al-Washī'ah*, p. 34.

³¹³ "İslam Kongresinde," *Yanga Milli Yul*, no. 12, December 1931.

³¹⁴ Ayaz [Ishaki], "Yul İsdelikleri: İslam Memleketlerinden," *Yanga Milli Yul*, no. 4, April 1932.

³¹⁵ Musa Jarullah, *al-Washī'ah*, p. letter fa.

³¹⁶ Basheer M. Nafi, "The General Islamic Congress of Jerusalem Reconsidered," *The Muslim World*, vol. LXXXVI, no. 3-4, July-October 1996, p. 263.

³¹⁷ İsmail Türkoğlu, "Musa Carulla Bigineñ Gayaz Ishakiyga Yāzgan Dürt Hatı," *Gasırlar Avazı*, no 3-4, 2002.

³¹⁸ Ibn Fāṭimah, *Hatun*, p. 4.

³¹⁹ According to Uralgiray, in opening it he got help [financial? SA] from his compatriots from Turkestan (p. XVII). However, Kanlıdere implies that Muslims of Finland provided him the necessary support. *Kadimle Cedit Arasında*, p. 123.

Bigiyev was not only a friend, but also a spiritual counselor for the Tatars of Finland. But it does not mean that he was admired by everybody.³²⁰ For example, in her letter to Hasan Ali Yücel (1897-1961), the Turkish Minister of Education, Zinnetullah Ahsen Böre (1886-1945) accused Bigiyev along with Sadri Maksudi promoting the Arabic script among Tatars as opposed to the new Latin-based Turkish alphabet which was about gain more spectrum prior to their arrival.³²¹ Bigiyev's letter to Weli-Ahmed Hakim reveals that he was aware of the increasing number of Latin proponents. In it he stated that the Latin based Turkish alphabet should be taught to kids at schools. But it should not be at the expense of total demise of the Arab script. Otherwise it would not be different than what the people of the *usul-i kadim* did in the old times as they opposed to science and progress and the Russian schools.³²²

While in Finland, Bigiyev applied to the Iranian consulate for a visa because it was necessary for him to have firsthand data for his upcoming book on the Shi'a praxis.³²³ Thereafter he embarked on a trip to the Shi'a crescent (mainly Iraq and Iran) in the Middle East for about seven months. He visited many Shi'a mosques, madrasas, and pilgrimage sites and engaged in debates with some well-known Shia' ulama in Iran.³²⁴ Based on his first-hand observation in the Shi'a word, he wrote his famous refutation of the Shi'a, *al-Washī'ah*, in 1936 in Cairo. According to Bigiyev, it was not a "refutation" but an "invitation" and even "advise" to the

³²⁰ Tagirdjanova, *Kniga o Muse-Efendi*, p. 243.

³²¹ Saime Selenga Gökgöz, "Finlandiya Türkleri Ve Türk Hariciyesinin Siyaseti," *Bilig*, Fall 2008, no. 47, p. 11.

³²² Uralgiray, *Ibid.*, pp.2-3.

³²³ Tagircanova, *Kniga o Muse-Efendi*, p. 246.

³²⁴ Musa Jarullah, *al-Washī'ah*, pp. letters zey, ha.

Shi'ites for resolving some of the fundamental issues between Sunnis and Shi'ites, such as the latter's insult of Abu Bakr and Omar, the Prophet's wives Aisha and Hafsa, etc.³²⁵

Bigiyev probably stayed in Egypt between 1935 and 38. In this period, beside his *al-Washī'ah*, he reworked his earlier book *Şeriat Niçin Rü'yeti İtibar Etmiş* (1909) and republished it in three separate volumes in Arabic in 1935: *Ayyam Hayat al-Nabiy al-Karim* (*Days of the Noble Prophet*), *Nizam al-Taqwim fi'l Islam* (*System of Calendar in Islam*), *Nizām al-Nes'i 'Inda al-'Arab: Qabla al-Islām* (*Alteration of Sacred Months among the Pre-Islamic Arabs*). In the meantime, his name was brought up for a "Supreme Islamic Council", proposed by then-rector of al-Azhar Mustafa al Maraghi for the rapprochement of the Sunni and Shi'a schools of law. But his very name was offensive enough for some Shi'a ulama as a fierce anti-Shi'a polemicist.³²⁶

In Japan (1938)

In 1938, Bigiyev made his way to the Far East, Japan, where his mentor and mentor Abdurreshit Ibrahimov had already been culminating the seed of Islam on the soil of this promised land of Islam. On the way, he stopped by Bombay and Aligarh³²⁷, in India. Haşmioğlu notes that in Bombay, he delivered a speech at the meeting of the Anjuman Muhajirin of Turkestan in which he talked about the major waves of migrations in the Turkish history. For him, after Genghis and Tamerlane, their exile from the Soviets constituted the third wave.³²⁸

³²⁵ Uralgiray, Ibid., p. 21.

³²⁶ Rainer Brunner, *Islamic Ecumenism in the 20th Century: The Azhar and Shiism between Rapprochement and Restraint* (Boston: Brill, 2004), pp. 114-16.

³²⁷ In his notebook, he noted that he arrived in Aligarh on April 13, 1938. *Müsvedde Defteri*, Milli Kütüphane Yazmalar Koleksiyonu, 06 Mil Yz A 3851, p. 21.

³²⁸ "Paqıstannan üzbäk jurnalisti Oğuz Haşmioğlu," *TRT Tatar*. June 21, 2016. Web. April 4, 2017 <<http://www.trt.net.tr/tatarca/video/angamalar/paqistannan-uzbak-jurnalisti-oguz-hasmioglu>>.

Although the information about his life in Japan is limited, what we know is highly valuable. The Japanese scholar of Islam, Toshihiko Izutsu³²⁹ informs us that he studied Arabic with Bigiyev as his first teacher of Arabic along with Abdurreşid Ibrahimov. Izutsu goes on to say that in their very first class meeting, "Professor Musa", as he called him³³⁰, told him that they will study so and so grammar of Arabic. Understandably, Izutsu asked his teacher how to find it in this far end of the world. In response, Bigiyev said "from here" pointing his head. And they started to study it the next day. While Bigiyev taught him Arabic, he refused to teach him the *ḥadīth* saying that "an unbeliever ought not to study it" which Izutsu resented even later in his life to be called an "unbeliever (kafir)".³³¹

At this point, one wonders why he refused to teach the Ḥadīth, but not Arabic, which is the language of the Qur'an, to an "unbeliever." Izutsu is not the only "unbeliever" who studied Arabic with him. The British scholar of Islam Arthur Jeffrey, a hard-working British missionary as Bigiyev put it³³², in the introduction of his *Old Codices* thanked him as one of the two savants of the East (Sheikh Sayyid Nawwar of Cairo being the second) for teaching him the *shadh* (broken, uncommon) readings of the Qur'an while in Egypt.³³³ My guess is that Bigiyev did not

³²⁹ Wakamatsu informs us that Izutsu himself had a piece in which he narrated his recollections of Bigiyev. But I was not able to see it. Angya hyohaku no shi: Musa (Musa: The Wandering Pilgrim Teacher) in Wasureenu hito (Unforgettable People), Yomiuri Shimbun, 7 March 1983 evening edition. Cited in Eisuke Wakamatsu, *Toshihiko Izutsu and the Philosophy of Word*, p. 50.

³³⁰ Ibid., p. 52.

³³¹ Cemil Aydın, "Dünya Küçüktür: Toshihiko Izutsu, Abdürreşid İbrahim, Musa Carullah: Global Ölçekte Geleneksel Bir İlmi Nakil Hikayesi" *Dergah*, no. 11, May 1999, pp. 15-16. Unlike Bigiyev, Izutsu's first Arabic teacher Abdurresit Ibrahimov called him as a natural born Muslim due to his deep immersion to the lore of Islam. Wakamatsu, Ibid., p. 51.

³³² Uralgiray, Ibid., p. 9.

³³³ Arthur Jeffrey, *Materials for the History of the Text of the Qur'an: The old Codices* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1937), p. X. Furthermore, Jeffrey, in his article on the Tashkent Qur'an, e.g., the Qur'an of Osman, hinted that there had been

see Jeffrey as an unbeliever per se since he is still within the boundaries of an Abrahamic religion because on the person of Jeffrey, Bigiyev applauded Christians who work on the Qur'an. But in the case of Izutsu, Bigiyev probably saw him as someone who professed the traditional Japanese religion, which is not Abrahamic, or no religion at all.

Bigiyev's remarks on Izutsu's scholarship also provide some valuable input about his view of what it means to be a real scholar. Once Bigiyev visited his student when he was ill. Having seen his books in Izutsu's room, Bigiyev asked: What do you do with your books when you move? He said: "I take them with me." Bigiyev laughed and said a person is not a true scholar unless he can work anywhere empty-handed.³³⁴

In the Land of the Vedas (1939-1947)

Bigiyev most probably left Japan towards the end of 1939 with Kabul, Afghanistan in mind as his destination. Yet just an hour from the Afghan border in Peshawar in India, he was arrested and put into prison by the British. At this point, I am not sure when his imprisonment took place exactly and how long it lasted. But his travel from Japan to Peshawar should have taken months so that it should be sometime around 1940.³³⁵ He should have stayed in prison until March 1943 because in his letter to Bigiyev dated on March 9, 1943, Maulana Hashmioglu told him that they were working hard to get him out of prison.³³⁶ It should be shortly after this letter that he was

some private correspondences between the two. A. Jeffery and I. Mendelsohn, "The Orthography of the Samarqand Qur'ān Codex," *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, vol. 62, no. 3 (Sep., 1942), p. 177.

³³⁴ Wakamatsu, *Ibid.*, p. 53.

³³⁵ Haşmioğlu notes that Bigiyev dictated his father a letter in Arabic to be handed in to Abdulhay Kurbanali. It was dated 1940/1360. I am not sure, if he dictated the letter in prison or not. But in any case, it could be taken as another evidence of 1940 as the date of his arrival in India. Haşmioğlu, *Ibid.*

³³⁶ *Ibid.*

conditionally released towards the end of March, 1943 and put under house arrest in the mansion of the nawab of Bhopal Muhammed Hamidullah until the end of 1945.³³⁷

Apart from his life in prison, Bigiyev's had not been treated as a foreigner in India as he knew the country since his student years. Throughout the years, he had the acquaintance of a good number of scholars and other notables from India. Before and during his stay in India, Bigiyev often time preferred the company of Muslims of India many of whom were revolutionaries and proponents of Hindu-Muslim cooperation towards freeing India from the British yoke. The newly established communist regime in Russia was the best fit for the Muslims of India who were in search of an ally against the British in India. Likewise, the Soviets found it suitable to their anti-British foreign policy to support the Muslims of India. It was a win-win for both parties. Among them are 'Ubaidullāh Sindhī (1872-1944)³³⁸, Muhammed Ali Jawhar (1878-1931)³³⁹, Maulana Muḥammad Barakatullāh (1854-1927)³⁴⁰, Zakir Hussein (1897-1969), etc.

³³⁷ Taymas, *Musa Carullah Bigi*, p. 31.

³³⁸ 'Ubaidullāh Sindhī during his visit to the Soviets in early 1923, stayed at Jarullah's place in Petersburg for about a week instead of staying at a hotel. Abdullah Khan, *Mawlana Ubayd Allah Sindhī's Mission to Afghanistan and Soviet Russia* (Pashawar: Area Study Centre, 2000), pp. 104-5.

³³⁹ In 1925, Bigiyev sent a letter to Maulānā Muḥammad 'Alī Jauhar (1878-1931), previously the president of the Khilafa Movement and then the president of All India Muslim League. An abridged English translation of the letter appeared on Bombay Chronicle on October 1st, 1925. In it, Bigiyev briefly explained the opportunities that the Bolshevik Revolution provided the Muslims of Russia with the improvement of Islamic institutions and sought ways for future cooperation with the Muslims of India. Musa Jarullah, "Muslims in Russia, Perfect Equality of Rights: A Letter to Maulana Mahomed Ali," *Bombay Chronicle*, 1 October 1925. Taymas, based on what Bigiyev told him personally in 1947 in Turkey, stated that he unwillingly signed the letter which was handed in to him by the Russian intelligence service. A. Battal Taymas, *Musa Carullah Bigi*, pp. 49-50; However, Bigiyev made similar remarks in regard to the conditions of the Muslims of Russia (as they were in a better political and social condition compared to the past) in his interview with the Turkish press on his way to the Mecca congress in 1926. "Musa Jarullah Bigi," *Yanga Milli Yul*, no. 7, July 1931.

³⁴⁰ Bigiyev and Barakatullāh knew each other earlier. Back in 1911, Bigiyev hosted him in his place in Petersburg for a week. Having exiled by the British, Maulānā Muḥammad Barakatullāh Bhopali (1854-1927) and his associates found a refuge in the Soviets too. Bigiyev hosted them in his places in Petersburg and Moscow for a couple of times. Barakatullah established the short-lived Provincial Government of India, in Afghanistan in 1915. He became the PM and Sindhī interior minister of this government in exile. Like Sindhī they were also looking for opportunities to get help from the Communist regime. And Bigiyev helped them out in their communication with the Soviet officials. But his search for political help both from the Soviets and Afghan Government were in vain. Ibn Fāṭimah, *Hatun*,

Bigiyev's life in India, like Japan, is still a big lacuna since there is little known about it. In this regard, Oğuz Haşmioğlu of Radio of Pakistan's Dari section provides some valuable information about it. In his interview at TRT Tatar, Haşmioğlu informs us that his father Maulana Azam Hashmi (1913-1973) used to be a very close friend of Bigiyev during his stay in India. He goes on to say that it was his father who worked hard for Bigiyev's release from prison as he urged many Muslims and notables, including Zakir Hussein and the Turkish Embassy in India (1943) to put pressure on the British government in that regard. Furthermore, in a number of newspaper articles, he assured the British authorities that Bigiyev had no political aspirations. His father also urged Muhammed Ali Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan, to bring the issue of Soviet expatriates, including Bigiyev, to the attention of the United Nations in his speech there as the Soviets claim them back.³⁴¹

After his release from prison, Bigiyev continued to write books. Unfortunately, our knowledge of some of those books from this period consists of the short references in his other books from the same period. We are even not sure if they were published at all. Some of them are, *Sahifat al-Faraiz* (Bhopal: 1944), *Al Bank fi'l Islam* (Bhopal: 1946), *Nizam al-Khilafat al-Islamiyya Al-Rashida al-Yawm fi Usuri't Tamaddun* (Bhopal: 1946), *Al-Qanun al-Madani li'l-Islami* (Bhopal: 1946?), *Mesahif al-Amsar* (Bhopal: 1946?), *Al Usul al-Jalaliyya* (Bhopal: 1946?).

pp. 14-15. For Bigiyev, Barakatullāh's activities in the Soviets was more beneficial to both Indian and Russian Muslims than Sadri Maksudi's political activities on the European capitals. Taymas, *Musa Carullah Bigi*, p. 24.

³⁴¹ Haşmioğlu, Ibid. My personal correspondences with Hasmioglu were fruitless in obtaining a copy of those letters.

In 1946, Bigiyev published his *Nizam al Jamia Islami Ilmiyya* as a part of the silver jubilee celebration of the Jamia Millia Islamia³⁴² which was held between 15-18 November 1946 in Bombay. He dedicated it to Dr. Zakir Husain, the future president of India. At this point, I am not sure if he personally attended the event, but it is highly possible since his protegee the nawab of Bhopal Hamidullah Khan came for the celebration to Bombay and played an active role in the organization.³⁴³

While in Bhopal, Bigiyev mentions his desire to go to London. Perhaps, this is the reason why he happened to be in Delhi and approached the government for “political necessities.”³⁴⁴ In April 1946, he went to Bombay and received some medical treatment for his decreasing health there.³⁴⁵ After this point in his life, he had to struggle with various health problems due to his advancing age, the weather conditions in India, life in prison, etc. That is why he sought ways to go to Egypt.³⁴⁶

³⁴² As a prestigious university in India today, Jamia Millia Islamia was founded 1920 in Aligarh, India. What gave impetus for its establishment was the Khilafat and Non-Cooperation Movements. As the Khilafat faded away with the abolishment of the caliphate by Mustafa Kemal in 1924 and Gandhi’s calling off of the non-cooperation movement, the institution hardly survived due to financial constraints came out of political crisis. Initially it was an institution for Muslims per se. Likewise its sympathy for the Turkish leaders of the time was apparent as one visitor in 1928 reported that on its walls the portraits of Enver and Mustafa Kemal Pashas were hanging side by side (it is ironical though to see two political rivals together). Someone believing in Muslim-Hindu cooperation, Dr Zakir strived for making it an institution for the entire country, India. Apart from Rauf Orbay (1933) and Halide Edib (1936), Bigiyev is the third one from the Turkish speaking world who made a visit to Jamia Millia Islamia. Ziaul Khurshed Alam Khan, *Dr. Zakir Hussain: Quest for Truth* (New Delhi: A.P.H. Publishing Corporation, 1999), p. 111.

³⁴³ Ibid., p. 134.

³⁴⁴ The political necessities might be either obtaining a British visa in order to get to London, or the requirement of reporting himself to the government.

³⁴⁵ Uralgiray, Ibid., pp. 17-18.

³⁴⁶ Taymas, *Musa Carullah Bigi*, p. 32.

Final Years: Egypt and Turkey

Circumstances in India had a detrimental effect on Bigiyev's health. Having obtained an Egyptian visa with the help of his friend Ali Abdurrazik Pasha in Egypt, Bigiyev went to Egypt in 1947 for the hope that Egypt's weather would be better for his declining health. In the meantime, the old age and life in exile made him homesick as he had a desire to return back to the Soviets at all costs in order to reunite with his family.³⁴⁷ However, fearing his life, his friends both in Egypt and Turkey convinced him not to go back.³⁴⁸ Towards the end of summer of 1947, he went to Turkey from Egypt. Except for a brief visit to Ankara –perhaps for the procedures for his Turkish citizenship– he stayed in Istanbul. Togan narrates in his memoirs that he hosted Bigiyev at his place in Istanbul for six months.³⁴⁹ During his stay in Turkey, he contributed to Ömer Rıza Doğrul's *Selamet* and *Yeni Selamet* journals with a number of articles, most probably as his last publications. But his health problems did not allow him to stay longer and he had to return back to Egypt towards the end of 1948.³⁵⁰ He went through some medical treatments like cataract and prostate surgeries. Princess Khadija Abbas Halim (1879-1951) was informed about his condition and thus arranged his stay in a senior house, where the itinerant scholar closed his eyes to life on October 25th in 1949. He was buried in the Khedive Tawfiq's royal cemetery.³⁵¹ His body remains buried there up today.

³⁴⁷ He especially expressed his desire to reunion with his wife Esma Hanım and his son Ahmed, a Soviet airforce engineer who became a prisoner of war in Finland in June 1942. In September 1943, Ahmed was allowed to go to Germany and he never came back to the Soviets ever since. Cingiz Safiulla, "Finlandiyada Tatar Esirlere," *Bezneng Miras*, no. 4, Kazan, April 2017, p. 39.

³⁴⁸ Uralgiray, *Ibid.*, XVIII.

³⁴⁹ Zeki Velidi Togan, *Memoirs*, p. 235.

³⁵⁰ Ömer Rıza Doğrul's *Yeni Selamet* kept informing its readers about Bigiyev's health condition.

³⁵¹ "Büyük Üstad Musa Carullah 25 Ekimde Allahın Rahmetine Kavuştu," *Yeni Selamet*, 2 November 1949, pp. 10-11. *Yeni Selamet* also informed its readers that Bigiyev's last wish was to go to the city of the Prophet and die there.

Weli-Ahmet Hakim noted that there were about 10-15 people in his funeral. Weli-Ahmed Hakim, *Üstaz-i Şehir Musa Carullah Hazretleri Hakkında Mülahazalar* (Helsinki: Finlandiya Cemaat-i Islamiyesi, 1950), p. 31. I would like to thank to Cingiz Safiullina who provided me with a copy of this book.

CHAPTER 4- ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF MYSTERY: THE CURIOUS CASE OF BIGIYEV (1875-1949)'S TATAR TRANSLATION OF THE QUR'AN³⁵²

This chapter deals with Bigiyev's Tatar translation of the Qur'an within the context of internal Muslim affairs in Russia at the beginning of the 20th century. Bigiyev's Tatar translation of the Qur'an, which was completed in 1912, remains one of the mysteries of the academic study of the Qur'an in the Turkic world. Having been barred from publication by the Orenburg Muslim Spiritual Assembly (the Sobraniye), its whereabouts has been puzzling researchers for the last hundred years. In 2010, a so-called facsimile of it came out in Kazan by Elmira Tagirdjanova and Gareyeva. However, seven years later, in 2017, the enthusiasm turned to disappointment as it turned out to be the exact copy of Süleyman Tevfik's *Tercüme-i Şerife: Türkçe Kur'an-ı Kerim* (1926), which is one of the first full Turkish translations of the Qur'an in the republican era. Having evaluated Bigiyev's translation within the context of internal Muslim affairs in Russia, this paper deals with the story of Bigiyev's failed publication attempt in 1912 and the false promise of the Kazan Edition in 2010.

Bigiyev as a Scholar of the Qur'an

As it has become clear so far, Bigiyev was a scholar of the Qur'an. For him, the physical aspects of the Qur'an, such as its printing, the variant readings, the number of verses, its translation, etc., were as crucial as its meaning. In his words, his overall vision of the Qur'an as a book consisted of "the beauty in its publication, trust in its recording (*rasm*), and orderliness in its number (of the

³⁵² A slightly different version of this chapter is currently under review for publication in *Golden Horde Review*, Kazan, Tatarstan, Russia.

verses).” In this regard, his zeal for the Qur’an led him to declare in 1909 that the Qur’ans that had been printed in Russia had a good number of errors in them as they were not identical with the codification of ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān. For him, since ‘Uthmān’s Qur’an was the first and the greatest *ijmā* (consensus) of the Companions, it was a religious obligation to adhere to it in the printing of the Qur’an. In this regard, he held Shihāb al-Dīn Marjānī (1818-1889), -the first official proofreader of the Qur’an in Russia appointed by the Sobraniye- responsible for those errors, which Bigiyev partially attributed to Marjānī’s zeal for the Hanafī School of Law [8, 9, 10].³⁵³ Additionally, he disagreed with those who were of the idea that the Qur’an should be written with the advanced Arabic alphabet. Bigiyev advocated that the Arabic alphabet at the time of the Prophet Muhammed and in its codification during the reign of the Caliph ‘Uthmān was already an advanced one.

In terms of the variant readings of the Qur’an, Bigiyev accepted the authenticity of the relevant hadith which stated that the Qur’an was revealed on seven letters, which was understood by many as seven dialects of Arabic.³⁵⁴ It is commonly accepted by Muslims that the Qur’an had been written down on various materials, such as leather, palm leaf, stones, etc., during the time of the Prophet Muhammed. But it took the shape of a bound book during the time of the second caliph Abū Bakr. Later in the reign of the third caliph ‘Uthmān, this single copy of Abū Bakr became the basis for an additional 7 or 8 copies which were distributed to the major centers of the Islamic Empire.

³⁵³ Musa Bigiyev, “En Lazım Bir İlan,” *el-İslah*, 25 January 1909; Musa Bigiyev, “Kuran-ı Kerimin Vucuh-i Arabiyesi, Ayet-i Kerimleri Hakkında,” *Shura*, 15 January 1912; Musa Bigiyev, “Yine Mühim Bir Mesele,” *Vakit* 21 January 1910.

³⁵⁴ Musa Efendi Bigiyev. *Halk Nazarına Bir Niçe Mesele* (Kazan: Ümid, 1912), pp. 39-48. In his translation of Hafız, he also mentioned seven other readings of the Qur’an, which makes up 14 in total. Musa Bigiyev. *Divan-ı Hafız Tercümesi* (Kazan: Ürnek, 1910), p. 80.

At this point one would ask, if there were seven equally authentic readings of the Qur'an, then upon which reading was the codification of 'Uthmān based? There are different opinions on this among the commentators. Abd Allah pointed out that some were of the idea that 'Uthmān was not in a position to abandon any of them, so he maintained all of them. And some others thought that since other dialects came closer to the Quraysh dialect, 'Uthmān ordered it to be based on the Quraysh dialect. Still, some others opted for a more conciliatory approach and said that 'Uthmān preserved as many as he could from all other dialects. This would explain that the first copies missed the diacritical marks and vowels to accommodate all possible readings.³⁵⁵ In this regard, Bigiyev did not accept that the mushaf of 'Uthmān was compiled based on the Quraysh dialect only. In his view, each one of those seven readings had been recorded during the time of the Prophet Muhammed and Abū Bakr.³⁵⁶ When he listed the conditions of an ideal translation of the Qur'an, he noted that he would translate all extant readings of a particular verse, if any.³⁵⁷ If his translation had come out, we would have had the chance to see some sort of a critical-textual edition of the Qur'an, albeit in translation.

How did he understand these variant readings? Bigiyev explained that the differences in the recitation of the Qur'an occurred most of the time in regard to grammar (nahw) and morphology (sarf) and sometimes in lexicology (lugat) as could be seen in all advance languages like Arabic and Turkish. For example, there was a slight difference between the Kazan and Ottoman dialects in saying "gitti, geldi."³⁵⁸ Perhaps, in his insistence on the orthography of

³⁵⁵ Ahmad Ali Muhamad Abd Allah, "The Variant Readings of the Qur'an: A Critical Study of Their Linguistic and Historical Origins," (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Edinburgh, 1984), pp. 103-06.

³⁵⁶ Musa Efendi Bigiyev, *Halk Nazarına Bir Niçe Mesele* (Kazan: Ümid, 1912), p. 80.

³⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 89.

³⁵⁸ Musa Bigiyev, *Divan-ı Hafız Tercümesi*, p. 80.

‘Uthmān lied that fact that he saw it as a way to preserve variant readings of the Qur’an because, again, for him the differences in recitation were not in the lexemes but in pronunciation.³⁵⁹

Similarly, Bigiyev was also concerned with the numbering of the Qur’anic verses. Having heard of the Sobraniye’s decision to put numbers at the end of each verse in 1910, Bigiyev commented that consistency in determining the number of the verses and the pauses was also equally important. In this regard, he published an annotated edition of Muḥammad al-Qāsim ibn Fīrruh al-Shāṭibi (1144-1194)’s *Nāẓimat al-Zuhr* in 1910 which, for him, was the best book ever written on the subject. He basically stated that among the six legitimate methods of determining the number of the Qur’anic verses (Makkī, Madanī awwal, Madanī akhir, Kūfī, Shāmī, Baṣrī), Madanī akhir was the best one. He suggested that the best way to approach it was to decide on one of the six legitimate methods and apply it throughout the entire Qur’an with verse numbers in a moonlike circle. Likewise, he continued, the signs of pausing should be abandoned altogether as they caused more disorder rather than orderliness.³⁶⁰

One other aspect of the Qur’an that concerned Bigiyev most was its translation into the Tatar language. For Bigiyev, the translation of the Qur’an into Tatar was a religious and literary necessity in the modern age and the day of its debut would be a day of celebration for not only the Tatar world, but the entire Turkic world.³⁶¹ Despite all disadvantages, like the incapability of the Tatar language, -as Bigiyev put it, -vis-a-vis Arabic, and the unsuitable religious environment, he translated the Qur’an into Tatar and got it ready for publication in 1912.

³⁵⁹ Musa Jārullah, *Kitāb al- Sunna* (Bhopal: 1945), pp. 77-78. I also consulted with Görmez’ Turkish translation of *Kitāb al- Sunna*, Musa Carullah Bigiyev, *Kur’an Ve Sünnet İlişkisine Farklı Bir Yaklaşım: Kitabı’s-Sünne*. Tran. Mehmet Görmez. (Ankara: Ankara Okulu Yayınları, 1998), pp. 109-10.

³⁶⁰ Musa Jarullah Bigiyev, “Kur'an-ı Kerimin Vucuh-i Arabiyesi,” *Shura*, no. 3, 1 February 1912, pp. 46-9.

³⁶¹ Ibid.

The Qur'an and Its Translation as Politics in Russia

The translation of the Qur'an in Tatar is a byproduct of internal Muslim affairs in Russia. The problem-space of the translation, a term that is coined by anthropologist David Scott,³⁶² involved several issues in this time period many of which were religious, literary, and linguistic, such as the possibility and permissibility of the translation of the Qur'an, distortion of the scripture, emulating non-Muslims, the literary capability of the target language, i.e. Tatar, etc. One key point was the person who conducted the translation. This is where internal Russian Muslim politics made itself more clearly felt than any other place.

The Qur'anic text, like its recitation, had been taken seriously by Muslims since early on. Indeed, one of the first major disputes among the early generation Muslims had to do with the Qur'an. During the caliphate of 'Uthmān, it came to a point that the reciters of the Qur'an accused each others of apostasy on account of different readings of the Qur'an. This was the reason why 'Uthmān took the initiative and standardized the text of the Qur'an in a bounded book which was called *muṣḥaf*.³⁶³

In the colonial period, Muslims realized that they lost parity, if not superiority, with the West which had colonized much of the Islamic world except for a few states, such as the Ottoman Empire, Iran, and Afghanistan. In this period, as Goddard pointed out, while much of the political, military, and technological power resided with the West, spirituality and religious convictions

³⁶² Cited from Micah Hughes, "Making the Qur'an Turkish: Translation and Power in the Ottoman Empire," *Marginalia*, 14 March 2016.

³⁶³ Bigiyev, in his *Kitāb al- Sunna*, mentioned six Qur'ans: 1. In the eternal knowledge of God, 2. At the al-Lawh al-Maḥfūz (the Preserved Tablet), 3. At the heart and tongue of Gabriel, 4. At the heart and tongue of the Prophet Muhammed, 5. At the memory of the people of knowledge (the Oral Qur'an), 6. At pages, tablets, and the mushafs. Jārullah, *Kitāb al- Sunna*, p. 73; Bigiyev, *Kitabu's-Sünne*, pp. 105-06.

remained strong in the Muslim world.³⁶⁴ In other words, as Wild noted, for Muslims, Islam itself has become the perfect weapon in the struggle against the West.³⁶⁵ Thus, as the ultimate source of Islam, along with the Sunna, Muslims have fiercely defended and protected the Qur'an from both internal and external threats. One of those internal threats has been the translation of the Qur'an, which in the eyes of many Muslims, was the distortion of the scripture.

At the beginning of the 20th century, there were already a good number of Tatar Qur'an translations (translations alongside commentary) in the Volga-Ural region. Some of them were Muhammed Zarif Emirhan (1852-1921)'s *Kalam-i Şerif Tefsiri: Tefsir-i Fevaid I-II* (1899-1900), Şeyhulislam bin Esedullah el-Hamidi's *Kur'an Tefsiri Kazan Dilinde: Al- Itqān fî Tarjumat al-Qur'an* (1907-1911), Muhammed Sadık İmankulı's *Tashîl al-Bayān fî Tafşîr al-Qur'an* (1911), Kamil Mutigi Tukhfatullin's *Kur'an Tefsiri* (1914-1917), etc. Among the list, two are important for our discussion of Bigiyev's translation, *al- Itqān* and *Tashîl*, as Bigiyev described them inaccurate and more importantly, hinted at them as being promoted by the Sobraniye.³⁶⁶

From the same period, we have two notorious Qur'an translations that are not on the list provided above. We can rather refer to them as "translation attempts" since they never came out. Yet they are important because of the impact that they left on the overall discussion of the Tatar Qur'an translations in this period and afterwards. These are the translations of Ziyaeddin Kamali and Mūsā Jārullah Bigiyev. Both men had different translation projects around the same time period (1911s) that suffered the same mishap, as the religious establishment blocked the way for their publication.

³⁶⁴ Hugh Goddard, *A History of Christian-Muslim Relations* (Chicago: New Amsterdam Books, 2000), p. 2.

³⁶⁵ Stefan Wild, "The Qur'an as A Political Factor in Pre-Modern Times" in *The Cambridge Companion to the Qur'an*. Edited by Jane Dammen McAuliffe, (Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 276-77.

³⁶⁶ Musa Jarullah "Tatar Dünyasında Rezalet," *Vakit*, no. 957, 19 April 1912.

Putting aside the details of Kamali's translation project³⁶⁷, in this piece, I will discuss Bigiyev's translation in detail. The question that should be raised is that why the same Sobraniye allowed and even supported, as Bigiyev put it, or remained neutral to some of the translations, while it stopped some others. As the discussion for Kamali's project unfolded in the Tatar press of the time, one issue became prominent. For a good number of imams and the laity as well, even though translation in itself was permissible according to the Islamic jurisprudence, translation by such individuals like Kamali and Bigiyev was not permissible.

From Bigiyev's perspective, there was a need for a new translation of the Qur'an because the extant ones were problematic in many ways, but he did not elaborate on it. So, what was it that was missing in other translations but was present in his translation? Bigiyev, in his *Halk Nazarına Bir Niçe Mesele* (1912), listed all the qualifications that an ideal Qur'an translation should possess, but unfortunately, he did not provide a sample translation for any of the listed items, except for a few certain phrases and words.³⁶⁸ Still, we have partial translations of some of the verses of the Qur'an scattered across his writings mostly belonged to the same time period, but by looking at those excerpts, it is hard to judge if he followed his own principles in translation or not.

At the outset, both men, Kamali and Bigiyev, possessed enough qualities that made them fit for the job. Both were educated in the Middle East and were fluent in Arabic as their native language. Kamali was a teacher in a prestigious medrese, Medrese-i Hüseyiniye, and publishing books on Islamic philosophy. Likewise, Bigiyev was a productive author of religious books both in Tatar and Arabic and acquired fame as a young scholar and philosopher. Bigiyev, himself stated

³⁶⁷ I have discussed Kamali's translation attempt and its ramifications in the Tatar press of the time in a conference presentation. Selcuk Altuntas, "A Public Discussion over the Sacred among the Muslims of Imperial Russia: Ziyaeddin Kamali's Attempt to Translate the Qur'an into the Tatar Language (1911-12)," Fifth CESS (Central Eurasian Studies Society) Regional Conference at Kazan Federal University, (Kazan, Tatarstan, Russia), 2-4 June 2016.

³⁶⁸ Bigiyev, *Halk Nazarına Bir Niçe Mesele*, pp. 88-93.

that all the religious books that he published up until that time, such as *el- Luzumiyat Şerhi* (1907), *Kavaid-i Fıkhiyye* (1910), *Kitāb ‘Aqīlat* (1908), *Nāẓimat al-Zuhr* (1910), *Uzun Günlerde Ruze* (1911), *Ṭayyibat al-Nashr fi'l- ‘Ashr* (1912), served as preparation for the translation of the Qur’an and also showed his competence for the job. He claimed all the effort that he put into those works demonstrated that he had the necessary qualities for such a deed.³⁶⁹

However, for the Sobraniye, it was not a matter of outer qualifications, but religiosity or piety. In the eyes of the religious establishment, Bigiyev was not credible for such a deed because his piety was suspicious in the eyes of the folks. For the religious establishment, this was the main argument against him, as they thought that his translations would serve for his evil agenda of spreading heresy among the people. But was it really a matter of piety? By the time his translation was ready to be published in 1912, Bigiyev had already established himself as someone who challenged the entire tradition of Islamic scholarship, i.e., *fiqh*, *tafsir*, *kalām*, and Sufism. In his previous publications, he emerged as an iconoclast, as he disgraced the great scholars of the past, conducted *ijtihād*, challenged the schools of law, slammed the Sufi teachings, and so on for the sake of reviving the ossified tradition of critical thinking and individual judgment in the Islamic world in general, and in Russia in particular. Obviously, it disturbed the religious establishment for the most part, and thus, the Sobraniye, which was backed and supported by the same establishment, took a position against Bigiyev.

After all, Bigiyev was hopeful that the Russian state and the Russian laws would stand along with him and against the Sobraniye. But apparently, it did not go as he wished. Although the Qur’an itself had been important for the Russian state as a symbol of power, its translation into

³⁶⁹ Musa Jarullah, “Tatar Dünyasında Rezalet,” *Vakit*, no. 957, 19 April 1912.

Tatar or any other Turkic language in Russia and Turkestan did not interest the Russian state that much, so it did not interfere into the discussions about translation amongst its Muslim subjects.

The Qur'an and the Russian State

As Efim Rezvan of the Oriental Studies of Russia pointed out, the Qur'an had an enormous political significance in the Russian state which perceived it as a sign of power.³⁷⁰ The prime example of it was Catherine II who, as part of a political and military struggle against Turkey, portrayed herself as a patron of Islam by incorporating Islam as a religion into the state apparatus. In this regard, the Russian state established the office of Muslim Spiritual Assembly in Ufa (later on the Orenburg Muslim Spiritual Assembly), funded mosques (one in Moscow), and printed the Qur'an in 1787.³⁷¹ Shortly after, in 1790, Catherine II also commissioned a Russian translation of the Quran by Mikhail Ivanovich Veryovkin (1732-1795).

In this regard, as Rezvan continued, Russia also became one of the first places where the Qur'an was printed rather than handwritten as was the case, for example, in Turkey. Since then, first St. Petersburg and then Kazan became a hub for the Qur'an printing and other Islamic literature, next to other centers of Islamic printing like Cairo and Istanbul. As for the Russian state, it was not only a sign of good-will gesture towards its Muslim subjects, but also a source of revenue as Kazan became the center of Islamic printing in Russia and the main supplier of the Qur'an and other Islamic publications for Central Asia. Even though it annoyed the Russian Orthodox Church, which persuaded the Tsar to stop or at least reduce the number of Islamic printings for a brief

³⁷⁰ Efim Rezvan, *Qur'an and Power in Russia, Christianity and Islam in the Context of Contemporary Culture: Perspectives of Interfaith Dialogue from Russia and the Middle East*. Ed. by D. Spivak and N. Tabbara. (St. Petersburg / Beirut, 2009), pp. 41-56.

³⁷¹ Ibid., pp. 44-45.

period, the Russian state realized that it would cause backlash in the Great game against the British in Central Asia. Thus, the big centers like Petersburg, Kazan, and Bakhchisaray continued to be the centers of Qur'an printing in Russia until the establishment of the Soviet State.³⁷²

In an effort to win the hearts of the Muslims and spread the Bolshevik ideology to the Muslim lands of the East, the fledgling Soviet state, similar to the previous Tsarist regime, followed a policy of compromise in regard to the Muslims.³⁷³ Part of the policy had to do with the 'Uthmān Qur'an, which was believed to be the personal Qur'an of the third caliph 'Uthmān. One of the demands of the Muslims of Russia in the general congress of Moscow in 1917 from the new Bolshevik government was the transfer of 'Uthmān Qur'an back to Muslims from St. Petersburg Public Library (today the National Library of Russia). Believed to be the Qur'an of 'Uthmān, the manuscript had been preserved at the Hoja Ahrar Mosque in Samarkand until the Russian take over. The Turkestan Governor-General K. P. von Kaufmann handed it over to the Petersburg Public Library in 1869.³⁷⁴ Upon the persistent requests of the Muslims of Russia, Lenin ordered the transfer of it from St. Petersburg to the Sobraniye in Ufa in 1918. In 1923, the Central Spiritual Board of Muslims of Inner Russia and Siberia (Diniye Nezareti) discussed the status of it in the general Muslim congress in Ufa and finally handed in to the people of Turkestan in 1924.

While it was the Russian state who was interested in the Qur'an itself, the translation of it in the Russian language occupied the Russian Orthodox Church most. The Russian translation of the Qur'an served as a tool for the Russian Orthodox Church in its polemic against Muslims. This can be seen well in the first Qur'an translation from Arabic to Russian, which was done by Gordii

³⁷² Ibid., pp. 40-45.

³⁷³ Galina Yemelianova, "Russia's Umma and its Muftis," *Religion, State & Society*, vol. 31, No. 2, 2003, p. 1.

³⁷⁴ A. Jeffery and I. Mendelsohn, "The Orthography of the Samarqand Qur'ān Codex," *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, vol. 62, no. 3 (Sep. 1942), pp. 175-78.

Semenovich Sablukov (d. 1880), the prominent Russian orientalist. Sablukov's main motivation in translation was to show that the sacred scripture of Muslims was of no divine origin.³⁷⁵ In this sense, it stemmed from the same Christian tradition of discrediting Islam through its scripture as was the case with the first Latin translation of the Qur'an in the 12th century, which was manufactured to demonstrate the "weakness and evilness of Mohammedanism."³⁷⁶

The Story of Bigiyev's Translation of the Qur'an: The Acts of the Mullahs

To better understand the historical background of Bigiyev's Tatar translation of the Qur'an, we need to look briefly at another similar project proposed by Ziyaeddin Kamali, who was the founder of the Aliye Medrese in Ufa and Bigiyev's classmate back in the Hijaz. Towards the end of the year 1911, Ziyaeddin Kamali made a public announcement in two influential Tatar newspapers of the time, *Vakit* of Orenburg and *Yulduz* of Kazan, that he was working on a Tatar translation of the Qur'an. In this regard, he asked his fellow countrymen's advice on how to publish it in terms of format, such as a pure translation, translation along with Arabic, translation with commentary, etc.³⁷⁷ In line with his request, Kamali got only a few suggestions, the majority of whom advised him to publish it along with Arabic and annotations when necessary. Instead, it turned out to be a public discussion on whether the Qur'an should be translated into Tatar or not. In the end, Kamali's translation did not make its way to publication, but the proposal of the project itself occupied the Tatar press for about six months until the middle of 1912.

³⁷⁵ Mursal Atamov, "Rus Dilinde Yayınlanan Kur'an-ı Kerim Çevirilerinin Çeviribilim Açısından İncelenmesi (Başarılı Bir Rusça Kur'an Çevirisinin Oluşturulmasına Katkı)," (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Ankara, 2013), p. 71.

³⁷⁶ Gabriele Marranci, *The Anthropology of Islam*. (Oxford: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2008), p. 40.

³⁷⁷ Ziyaeddin el-Kamali, "Kur'an-ı Kerim hem Kur'an Tercümesi Hakkında Millete Müracaatım," *Yulduz*, 4 December 1911; Medrese-i Aliye-i Diniyede Müderris Ziyaeddin el-Kamali, "Kur'an-ı Kerim Tercümesi: İdarege Mektup," *Vakit*, 27 November 1911.

Meanwhile, Bigiyev was following the discussions in the newspapers. Instead of contributing to it with an article, he decided to put his own translation into publication in order to clarify his position on the issue. At this point, one would wonder how long he would have waited to publish his translation if Kamali had not announced his own project, because even in 1910, he already had a rough draft of his translation ready to be published with minor revisions.³⁷⁸ Because of the timing, and the unconventional religious viewpoints of the two men, those who participated in the discussion often time juxtaposed Kamali and Bigiyev as if they were working together on the same project, but it was not the case.

Having resolved to publish his own translation, in late January of 1912, finally Bigiyev went to Kazan and negotiated with the administrators of the newly opened Ümid Printing House³⁷⁹, and both parties signed an “unofficial” contract as Bigiyev put it. According to the contract, in April the publisher would print the first set of the translation, which would consist of 30 facsimiles of 16 pages each and 5000 copies in total. This means that each copy would be 480 pages in total. Having his trust in Ümid, Bigiyev left Kazan without even talking to other publishers. But as a precaution, he did not leave the manuscript there. Afterwards, he mentioned the plan to a couple of notables of Kazan and poet Derdmend, i.e., Zakir Ramiyev in St. Petersburg.³⁸⁰

It is not known in what form the news took shape among the general public, but on January 28th, *Vakit* of Orenburg published a news piece which stated that Bigiyev’s translation

³⁷⁸ Musa Bigiyev, “Beyan-ı Hakikat,” *Vakit*, no. 646, 24 June 1910.

³⁷⁹ The owner Abdulveli Ahmedullin, in an ad piece in *Yulduz*, stated that after his 30 years of experience at the Kazan University’s printing house, he resolved to open his own printing house under the name of Ümid which started to operate in June 1911. Abdulveli Ahmedullin, “Ümid Matbaası,” *Yulduz*, no. 782, 19 January 1912.

³⁸⁰ Jarullah, “Tatar Dünyasında Rezalet.”

of the Qur'an was being published at "Sabah" printing house in Kazan.³⁸¹ *Vakit*'s story was also resonated in the Turkic press of Crimea and Baku.³⁸² Having heard of *Vakit*'s story, the owner of the Ümid Printing house, Abdulveli Ahmedullin, in a letter to *Yulduz* of Kazan, refuted the news that they had started the publication of Bigiyev's translation. In his letter, he also mentioned that they received notices from the Sobraniye and Safiyullah Hazret, the official proofreader of the Qur'an in Kazan appointed by the Sobraniye, regarding the issue.³⁸³

Later in the discussion, *Yulduz* published, without any comment, the official notice that was sent to the Ümid Printhouse by the Sobraniye. It was signed by the members of the Sobraniye Muhammedov and the chief clerk Mamaliyev and dated as March 1st, 1912. It stated:

On February 25 [1912], The Sobraniye received a telegram signed by 14 Kazanites. In it, it was mentioned that Bigiyev's translation of the Qur'an had been put into print in Ümid printing house and requested the Sobraniye to stop its publication. Based on the relevant laws, it is only the Sobraniye who is allowed to issue a permit to print anything related to the sacred book of Muslims, the Qur'an, and its parts such as Haft-Yaks. Thus, without the permission of the Sobraniye, the Ümid Printing house is not entitled to publish the Tatar translation of the Qur'an. Therefore, the Sobraniye urges the Ümid print house to stop the publication by its own will.³⁸⁴

It seems that the people of Kazan got the sense that the printing of the translation started immediately even though it was scheduled for April in the initial contract that was signed between Bigiyev and the Ümid publishing house. That printing had begun cannot be the case because

³⁸¹ "Kuran Tercümesi," *Vakit*, no. 931, 28 February 1912. This was a mistake on *Vakit*'s part as the correct name of the printing house should be Ümid, not Sabah.

³⁸² "Musa Efendi Bigiyef tarafından...", *Tercüman*, no. 11, 9 March 1912; "Kur'an-ı Kerim Tercümesinin Tabı, İqbal, no. 5, 12 March 1912.

³⁸³ "Kur'an-ı Kerim'nin Tercümesi Basıla Başlagan Digen Haberni Tekzib," *Idil*, no. 438, 23 March 1912.

³⁸⁴ "Kur'an Tercümesi Hakkında," *Yulduz*, no. 810, 25 March 1912. Among the signatories was Muhammed Sadık İmankulı, the author of the *Tashıl al-Bayān* (1910). "Kuran-ı Kerimi Tatarçaga tercüme...", *Vakit*, no. 932, 1 March 1912.

Bigiyev had stated that he did not leave the manuscript at the publishing house. However, because of the complaints of the people of Kazan to the Sobraniye, the Ümid publishing house gave up the publication of Bigiyev's translation of the Qur'an in February 1912.

After all these, Bigiyev penned an article, "Scandal in the Tatar World," in Vakit in which he expressed his regrets to the Ümid publishing house, which gave up the publication, and his resentments to the Sobraniye, who stopped it by a "magnificent edict (ferman-ı şahane)". According to Bigiyev, the Sobraniye did not have the authority to do such thing and surely, the Russian laws would not allow it to do so. He wondered how on earth the Sobraniye, which, in the past, encouraged and even sponsored *tafsīrs*, like, *Itqān*, and *Tashīl*, that were full of mistakes now dared to stop proper translations like his own.³⁸⁵ Again, he asked why the Sobraniye considered the petition of 14 people and yet did not take into consideration all the articles that appeared in the Tatar press of the time in his defense.³⁸⁶

The translation discussion on the Tatar press faded away towards the middle of 1912. One year later, in 1913, Bigiyev opened a printing house, Emanet, in Petersburg. Some asserted that the whole purpose of establishing a brand-new print house was to publish his own translation of the Qur'an.³⁸⁷ Apparently, it did not work out, however, and the translation did not come out from Emanet.

³⁸⁵ The author of *Tashīl al-Bayān*, Muhammed Sadık İmankulı, in response to Bigiyev stated that he never claimed to author the best possible translation/commentary of the Qur'an in Tatar. What he did was the Turkish rendering of some of the classical commentaries. In the end, he accused Bigiyev himself for the mishap that befell on his translation since it was he who made people suspicious about his works when he brought up the topic of universal salvation back in 1909. Ever since, people got the sense that whatever Bigiyev wrote was his personal opinion which was not based on the Qur'an and the Hadith. İmankulı also added that it was only Bigiyev himself who understood his own writings due to his peculiar use of language and style. "İfrat," *Yulduz*, no. 824, 26 April 1912.

³⁸⁶ Musa Jarullah, "Tatar Dünyasında Rezalet."

³⁸⁷ "Musa Efendi Bigiyef'in Yeni Matbaası," *Türk Yurdu*, no. 50, 16 October 1913.

For the next couple of years, people were still waiting for the debut of Bigiyev's translation. For example, in 1914, Ebu Rifat, the imam of the Bishtepe Avil, urged Bigiyev to publish his translation of the Qur'an as soon as possible.³⁸⁸ Likewise, in mid-1915, *Vakit*'s readers, such as Nesimcan Efendi, were inquiring the newspaper's administration whether Bigiyev's translation made its way to publication. *Vakit*, in response, was straightforward: No.³⁸⁹

After almost a ten-year hiatus, Bigiyev brought up the issue again in his *Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisine Müracaat*, which he completed in 1921, and published in 1931 in Egypt. In it, he stated his willingness to publish his Qur'an translation in the honor of the Grand Turkish National Assembly. Even though it would have been a good fit for the Turkish state in its project of the Turkification of Islam, apparently it did not interest the Turkish government.

Another reference to it belonged to Bigiyev's sojourn in India during his life in exile. Taymas narrated that when Habiburrahman Shakir (1903-1975), who assumed the imam position in Tampere in 1947 upon the recommendation of Bigiyev, asked Bigiyev in 1942 while Peshawar about his translation, Bigiyev told him that he sent it to abroad through Russia to be published. Taymas asked if so, then why he did not publish it himself during his stay in Finland in 1933. Taymas further inquired it with Imam Weli-Ahmed Hakim of Helsinki who told him that he was not aware of Bigiyev's sending his translation to Finland.³⁹⁰

One last reference to it worth mentioning during Bigiyev's life time was an advertisement in a Turkish newspaper one year before his death. Taymas informed us that an ambitious biweekly

³⁸⁸ "Musa Efendi Hazretlerinden Ütinç," *Turmush*, no. 37, 2 March 1914.

³⁸⁹ "Musa Efendi Bigiyev kalemiyle...", *Vakit*, no. 1825, 18 July 1915.

³⁹⁰ Abdullah Battal Taymas, *Kazanlı Türk Meşhurlarından Alimcan Barudi* (Istanbul: [M. Sıralar Matbaası], 1958), pp. 69-69.

newspaper, *Millet* in Istanbul, in its September 9, 1948 issue, announced that Bigiyev handed in his translation to the newspaper administration to be distributed to its readers. Taymas did not give credit to the validity of the “good news”. For Taymas, this was nothing but another indecent way of advertising.³⁹¹ He also noted that he had no reason to believe that Bigiyev left it to someone in Istanbul.

After almost half a century silence, finally, in 2010, the long awaited “good news” came from Kazan.

The Kazan Edition of Bigiyev’s Qur’an Translation (2010): The Story Continues

In 2010 in Kazan, the two volume *The Book of Musa Efendi* came out under the editorship of Elmira Tagirdjanova, the daughter-in-law of Bigiyev’s youngest daughter, Fatma Tagirdjanova (d. 2006). While the first volume was presented as Bigiyev’s translation of the Qur’an, the second book consisted of Bigiyevs’ family archive which included a collection of some hitherto unknown documents and other relics that belonged to Bigiyev.³⁹² Since it was printed in limited quantity, the book did not get as much publicity as it deserved across the academic milieus.

I was able to obtain a copy of the book with great enthusiasm when I happened to be in Kazan for a conference in June 2016. However, my enthusiasm faded away as I dug into it more and more.³⁹³ When I finally concluded, due to a number of issues explained below, that it was not

³⁹¹ Abdullah Battal Taymas, *Kazanlı Türk Meşhurlarından Musa Carullah Bigi: Kişiliği, Fikir Hayatı Ve Eserleri*. (İstanbul: M. Sıralar Matbaası, 1952), pp. 40-41. The imam of Tampere, Habiburrahman Shakir, in his letter to Taymas informed him that this ad was about the isolated sheets containing partial translations of the Qur’an that Bigiyev brought with him from India to Istanbul. Taymas, *Alimcan Barudi*, p. 68.

³⁹² Almira Tagirdjanova, *Kniga O Muse Efendi, Ego Vremeni i Sovremennikax: Sbornik Istoriko-Biograficheskix Materialov (Kniga II)* (Kazan: 2010).

³⁹³ It was my doctoral adviser at University of Wisconsin-Madison Uli Schamiloglu who first took my attention to the possibility of it’s not belonging to Bigiyev.

Bigiyev's translation, I concurrently became aware of an article written by İlşat Saedov of the Russian Academy of Sciences at Moscow that was published very recently.³⁹⁴ As Saedov claimed, the 2010 Kazan edition is a reprint of the Turkish author Süleyman Tevfik's 1926 translation of the Qur'an, except for the missing foreword and the index.³⁹⁵ Thus, from now on, I will deal with the Kazan Edition in reference to Saedov's relevant article.

Most resources which talk about the fate of Bigiyev's translation have cited it either as unknown or lost forever. However, around 2004, a historian of Islam, Efim Rezvan, of Petersburg State University was informed by the granddaughter of Ziyaeddin Kamali that Bigiyev's Qur'an translation was in the possession of Bigiyev's youngest daughter, Fatma Hanım, in St. Petersburg. Then he, along with his research assistants, started a research project in Bigiyev's archive which was handed down to Fatma Hanım from her mother Esma Hanım. The project gave its first fruit as a documentary film, *The Manuscript and the Fate*, about the life of Bigiyev in 2007.³⁹⁶ As a part of the project, Fatma Hanım also allowed the publication of her father's Qur'an translation.³⁹⁷ In 2009, Efim Rezvan announced that the publication of the translation was on its way and would appear shortly.³⁹⁸ Indeed, the publication came out in 2010, not by Rezvan, but by Tagirdjanova

³⁹⁴ I. G. Saetov, "Ni Tatarskij i Ni Bigeeva: Istorija Odnogo Osmanskogo Perevoda Korana (Neither in Tatar nor Bigeev's: Story of One Ottoman Translation of the Qur'an)," *Islam v Sovremennom Mire (Islam in the Modern World)*, 2017, vol. 13. no. 1.

³⁹⁵ Tevfik's translation has an interesting story going back to the Second Constitutional Era in 1908. Even though he started publishing parts of his translation in 1908, the political and religious establishment of the time did not allow him to complete its publication. Under the premise of the newly established Turkish Republic, finally Tevfik found the necessary political support, not necessarily the religious one, and published his long awaited Turkish translation of the Qur'an in 1926.

³⁹⁶ Saetov, *Ibid.*, p. 61.

³⁹⁷ Azad Akhunov, "Koran Po-Tatarski," *Group of Strategic Vision: Russia-Islamic World*. 30 March 2016, [Accessed on March 4th, 2018].

³⁹⁸ Rezvan, *Ibid.*, p. 47.

and Gereeva.

We know that after Bigiyev left the Soviets in 1930, his books, along with other possessions, remained with his wife, Esma Hanım, and were passed on to their daughter Fatma Hanım. It is quite impossible for someone like Esma Hanım, who was well educated and literate in Russian and the old Tatar script, not to recognize her husband's translation. Thus, she probably knew that the Qur'an translation in her husband's archive did not belong to her husband. How about Fatma Hanım? Like her mother, she was also literate in the old Tatar script. Was not she supposed to be more familiar with her father's writing style than anybody else (because from a linguistic point of view, there is nothing Tatar in the translation as Saedov rightly pointed out)?

There is another question to ask about Fatma Hanım. Ahmet Kanlıdere, who is the author of the most comprehensive book on Bigiyev in Turkey, narrates that he had an interview with Fatma Hanım back in 1999 in Petersburg.³⁹⁹ In it, he got some valuable personal information about Bigiyev and his family. At this point, one wonders why Fatma Hanım did not mention the translation to Kanlıdere back then but instead waited until 2004 to reveal it. Likewise, it is also curious why Kanlıdere did not ask about her father's translation.

Let me come back to the Kazan edition itself. Again, it is obvious that it is identical, except for the missing foreword of the author and the index, to that of Süleyman Tevfik's 1926 translation of the Qur'an, which was printed by Yeni Şark Kitaphanesi. The problem at this point is that, though I'm not sure how much it matters, the book was also published by another printing house, Suhulet Kütüphanesi, with the same page numbers in the same year.⁴⁰⁰ The Tevfik edition that I

³⁹⁹ Ahmet Kanlıdere, *Kadimle Cedit Arasında Musa Carullah: Hayatı-Eserleri-Fikirleri* (İstanbul: Dergah, 2005), p. 36.

⁴⁰⁰ Düccane Cündioğlu, "Kur'an Çevirilerinin Siyasi Tarihine Dair: Süleyman Tevfik'in Kur'an Çevirisi Üzerine Birkaç Not," *Düccane Cündioğlu Simurg Grubu*. July 1998 [retrieved on July 18th, 2017].

have is the Yeni Şark Kitaphanesi, and the Kazan edition is identical with it. However, I was not able to obtain the other copy that was published by the Suhulet Kütüphanesi that has the same page numbers. Therefore, which edition is the Kazan Edition based on: Yeni Şark Kitaphanesi or Suhulet Kütüphanesi?

From here, let's ask another question. Why are the foreword and the index missing in the Kazan Edition? What happened to them? Have they disappeared over the course of time, or has someone removed them consciously? In fact, it is possible for such a book to lose pages, especially from the beginning and the end, but in the case of the Kazan Edition, the book was very well preserved until the last page, except for very few pages that are partially deleted. If so, was it Bigiyev or somebody else who removed them from the book and why? Saetov is of the idea that they were removed by Bigiyev himself in order to avoid a problem at the Russian customs.⁴⁰¹ Saetov's assertion seems reasonable, but if it is not Bigiyev himself, then who? Esma Hanım or Fatma Hanım, or somebody else?

As mentioned before, the Kazan Edition has been well preserved. Except for the author's foreword and the index, the book is in excellent condition in terms of physical appearance, but the lines on a couple of pages are cut off. These pages are 253, 254, 255, 510, and 511. The missing parts on page 511 are filled out by hand. Looking at its writing style, it is quite safe to assert that it was filled out by Bigiyev himself in a way that is identical with the 1926 Tevfik edition.

Another important question about the Kazan Edition is how Bigiyev obtained it. Saetov is quite sure that Bigiyev acquired it on his way back from Mecca to Russia in 1926 and 1927. That is the case, but it requires further explanation. In May 1926, Bigiyev arrived in Istanbul in order to join the Cairo Congress organized by King Fuad of Egypt in conjunction with al- Azhar

⁴⁰¹ Saetov, *Ibid.*, p. 66.

University. However, when he was denied a visa at the Egyptian Embassy in Istanbul (because of the Mufti of Russia's denouncement of the Congress on account of the possible British involvement in it), he joined the Soviet Muslim delegation in Istanbul, which was en route to Mecca for the World Muslim Congress, which was summoned by the newly crowned king of the Hijaz, Ibn Sa'ūd (1875-1953), in June and July. Tevfik's translation appeared in Istanbul's bookstores as early as April of 1926, so it is possible that Bigiyev obtained it in 1926. It is also possible that he obtained it one year later in 1927 when he stopped in Istanbul and got his book, *Müskirat Meseleleri*, published by Mahmut Bey Matbaası, on his return back from the Hajj.

There are still other possibilities, albeit weaker. Because we know that Bigiyev regularly followed publications in his field of interests, it is conceivable that he ordered a copy of it at a later date through someone going on to Hajj. The Soviets started a Hajj campaign in 1926 that allowed non-Soviet Muslims to go Hajj in transit through the old Hajj routes, which included the Soviets.⁴⁰² One more possibility is that he might have obtained it through someone from the Turkish Embassy in Moscow.

Although Bigiyev had Tevfik's translation in his library, it is unlikely that Bigiyev liked or approved of it. The strongest evidence is a letter that he wrote to his friend, Weli-Ahmed Hakim of Finland, while in exile. In it he said that many people in Turkey had translated the Qur'an, but all of them were "nothing," except Little Mehmet Hamdi Efendi's translation, which he had access to at the author's house in Istanbul earlier.⁴⁰³ This Little Mehmet Efendi is none other than the renowned scholar of the Qur'an and author of the best Turkish commentary on the Qur'an, Elmalılı

⁴⁰² Eileen Kane, *Russian Hajj: Empire and the Pilgrimage to Mecca* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2015), pp. 162-64.

⁴⁰³ Yusuf Uralgiray, *Uzun Günlerde Oruç: İctihad Kitabı* (Ankara: Kazan Türkleri ve Yardımlaşma Derneği, 1975), pp. 7-8.

Hamdi Yazır (1878-1942). Thus, in comparison, it should come as no surprise that Tevfik's translation was "nothing" in Bigiyev's eyes. Perhaps the reason for his dislike had to do with the main source that Tevfik used for his translation. As mentioned in its early partial editions, Tevfik heavily relied on Fakhr ad-Dīn al-Rāzī's *al-Taḥf al-Kabīr* in his translation, and not surprisingly, Rāzī was not Bigiyev's favorite commentator of the Qur'an.⁴⁰⁴

Where Is the Translation?

We are still left with the burning question of where the Bigiyev's notorious translation might be? We can begin with some of the statements of those who knew Bigiyev personally, such as Yusuf Uralgiray and Abdullah Battal Taymas. Uralgiray, who happened to be with Bigiyev in his last months in Egypt, narrated that it was among the piles of books that Bigiyev left at the Berlin Mosque.⁴⁰⁵ Additionally, Uralgiray stated that Bigiyev told him that he had left some of his books in India. This is another possibility. According to Uralgiray, if these locations proved to be unfruitful, then it should be sought out in Petersburg.⁴⁰⁶ Wherever its whereabouts, it now has become clear that it is not in the archive that Bigiyev left to his family.

Taymas informed us that when the books that Bigiyev brought with him from India to Turkey in 1947 were inspected by Zeki Velidi Togan, the translation was not found in there. Taymas also added that these books should be the ones that he donated to the National Library of Turkey.⁴⁰⁷

⁴⁰⁴ Musa Jarullah, "wa Khasaf al-Qamar wa Jumi'a al-Shamsu wa al-Qamar," *Shura*, no. 8, 15 April 1912.

⁴⁰⁵ Taymas in this regard stated that he was not able to find someone to get further information about the books that Bigiyev left entrusted to the Berlin Qadyani Mosque. Taymas, *Alimcan Barudi*, p. 69.

⁴⁰⁶ Uralgiray, *Ibid.*, pp. XXII.

⁴⁰⁷ Taymas, *Alimcan Barudi*, pp. 69-70.

Halife Altay, the author of the first Kazakh translation of the Qur'an, was yet another person who made a claim as to the location of the text, alleging that the only manuscript of Bigiyev's translation remained in Ufa.⁴⁰⁸ It is unclear whether or not he meant the Sobraniye when he said Ufa, but this cannot be the case since the Sobraniye did not even request a copy of it for inspection.

Saetov is of the idea that it should be sought in Turkey that it either lies in the repositories of the National Library in Ankara or in the family archive of one of the Turkish high-ranking diplomats who worked at the Turkish Embassy in 1949.⁴⁰⁹ As for the National Library option, it seems quite unlikely because Uralgiray, who prepared a catalogue of Bigiyev's donated books to the National Library, stated that it was not on the list.⁴¹⁰ Taymas' aforementioned statement about those books also confirms Uralgiray.

Indeed, an online catalogue search at the National Library reveals that it is not in the section that harbors the books that were donated by Bigiyev. Nonetheless, İbrahim Maraş of Ankara Divinity School interestingly claims that the important part of Bigiyev's books that he donated to the National Library are not present in the library's archive. He goes on to say that Turkish scholar Necip Hablemitoğlu (d. 2002), one year before his assassination told him that these books were under his possession. Maraş thinks that Hablemitoğlu's archive did not only include Bigiyev's Tatar Qur'an translation but also his other notorious books that are only known in their title.

⁴⁰⁸ İsmail Çalışkan, "Kazakistan'da Kur'an Ve Tefsir Literatürü (Kazakça Ve Rusça Eserler)," *Marife* Summer 2015, 15/1, pp. 140-41.

⁴⁰⁹ Saetov, *Ibid.*, pp. 66-67.

⁴¹⁰ Uralgiray, *Ibid.*, pp. XXII. Taymas also stated the same thing that it was not among the books that Bigiyev brought with him from India to Turkey in 1947 and from Turkey to Egypt in 1948. Taymas, *Alimcan Barudi*, p. 69.

However, Maraş states that it was not possible for him to see them.⁴¹¹ What could support Maraş' claim is the fact that Hablemitoğlu was also the one who had the archive of Ismail Gasprinskii and his daughter Shafika Hanım.

After all, the remaining options are the books that Bigiyev left in Berlin and India. But who knows what happened to them.

Conclusion

Although it did not make its way to publication, Bigiyev's notorious Tatar translation of the Qur'an remains a significant work. Bigiyev realized the importance of the Qur'an's translation into the Turkic languages and the essential qualities it must possess and put forth much effort to produce a worthy text. Its legacy contains important materials for discussion of the religious and intellectual life of the Tatars at the beginning of the 20th century. Even though it occupied the public opinion of Russia's Muslims, the Russian state itself remained neutral to the translation discussions. One hundred years later, we are still looking for the manuscript of his translation, hoping to see one of the first full translations of the Qur'an in the Tatar language.

⁴¹¹ İbrahim Maraş, "Musa Carullah," Anadolu İlahiyat Akademisi, April 2017. Available on YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Dfdh57vq4A>.

**CHAPTER 5- PASSING THROUGH THE STARS, THE MOON, AND THE SUN:
BIGIYEV ON THE RELIGIOUS ODESSY OF HUMAN BEING**

"He who knows one knows none"
Max Müller

*Good news! Oh, people of St. Petersburg
You too, oh, people of New York*

...
*Do you know that you will not stay in hell forever
Since Musa Efendi has come to your rescue*
Gabdulla Tukay

This chapter deals with Bigiyev's ideas on the question of salvation for others. For him, it was not only a matter of faith, but also a basis for how Muslims related to the people of other beliefs. It looks at his idea of commonality of God's mercy (rahmet-i ilahiye umumiyeti) in detail. Regarding the fate of others, Bigiyev appeared as a universalist since he claimed the Paradise as the final destination of all human beings. In other words, the punishment of the Hell for non-Muslims and Muslims alike was not eternal. What is eternal is the mercy of God. This chapter examines Bigiyev's overall idea of universal salvation and its two basic premises: the mercy of God and the human's journey towards perfection. It also addresses his view of Sufism in relation to the question of salvation.

Soteriology: The Fate of the Others

Fate of the others is usually discussed under soteriology, a branch of theology whose main concern is salvation.⁴¹² How religions see the fate of others is not only a matter of the world to come, but the world we live in as it often time decides how we relate to the others. As Gustav Niebuhr stated, all major world religions hold truth claims at the expense of other. While for Christians Jesus is the Son of God and the only way to salvation, Jews maintain their privileged status affirmed by God in the Hebrew Bible. As for the Muslims, the Qur'an is the inerrant scripture revealed by God to his final prophet Muhammed. Then, Neibuhr asks, how to relate the people of other faiths in an ever-globalizing world?⁴¹³

Indeed, as Mohammad Hassan Khalil demonstrated in his discussion of the fate of others, it is not a new topic in Islamic theology. It has been a contentious issue among the Muslims scholars since early times. Scholars from variety of backgrounds like Ghazālī, Ibn Taymīyah, Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā, Walī Allāh al-Dihlawī, Muhammad Iqbal, etc. discussed it in various degrees with various conclusions.⁴¹⁴ While there is a wider consensus among Muslim scholars on the eternity of Paradise, there is much more diversity in regard to the eternity of Hell.

Bigiyev's View of Other Religions

For Bigiyev, the religion of Islam is the point of perfection for humanity in its religious Odyssey.⁴¹⁵ This can be seen in the Qur'anic verse (5:3) which states that religion had been

⁴¹² Mohammad Hassan Khalil, *Islam and the Fate of Others: The Salvation Question* (Oxford University Press, 2012).

⁴¹³ Gustav Niebuhr, *Beyond Tolerance: Searching for Interfaith Understanding in America* (New York: Viking, 2008), xxix.

⁴¹⁴ Khalil, *Ibid.*

⁴¹⁵ Maida: 20-1 *I have completed your religion today.*

imperfect until the coming of Islam.⁴¹⁶ In this sense, he was yet another Muslim “supremacist”, but for a different reason. Bigiyev was in the idea that Islam is superior to other religions because it is only Islam which acknowledges the proper place of each religion in God’s divine plan for the salvation of human being and thus does not claim the truth exclusively for those who confess to be Muslims. Moreover, for him, what ruined the followers of other divine religions was religious exclusivism which condemned the people of other religions to eternal damnation in the hereafter.⁴¹⁷ For Bigiyev, this is sheer ignorance and does not have to do with Islam. In his view, in order to demonstrate the superiority of Islam over other religions, it is not necessary to reserve Paradise for Muslims only and the Hell for the followers of other religions.⁴¹⁸

Bigiyev was of the idea that even though the Qur’an, without invalidating their old ways of salvation, invited nations to follow the way of the Prophet Muhammed who brought with him a better religious system (Qur’an, 43: 23-24), it nonetheless has left them free to either retain their old traditions, or to follow the better way of the Prophet. Again, Bigiyev continued, Islam has left every nation free to follow its established ways of doing things so long as it does not cause any harm to the society.⁴¹⁹

According to Bigiyev, Islam is also superior to other religions in terms of the wisdom attributed to the rituals. For example, fasting is found in almost all religions. However, in many of them it is either for atonement for the forefathers’ sins or appeasing the deities. Yet the fasting

⁴¹⁶ Musa Jarullah, *Maide: Zabiha hem Hitan* (S. Petersburg: M. A. Maksudov, 1914), pp. 19-20.

⁴¹⁷ Musa Bigiyev, “Rahmet-i İlahiye Umumiyyeti Meselesinde Burhanlarım,” *Shura*, no. 3, 1 February 1910.

⁴¹⁸ Musa Bigiyev, “İnsanların Akide-i İlahiyelerine Nazar [II],” *Shura*, no. 6, 15 March 1910.

⁴¹⁹ Ibn Fāṭimah, *Kitāb al- Sunna*, pp. 46-47; Consulted with Görmez’ Turkish translation of it, *Kitabu ’s-Sünne*, pp. 24-25.

of Islam is a triumph of the soul over the body.⁴²⁰ Likewise, Islamic spirituality or Sufism is also superior to similar mystical currents in other religions.

Since every religious tradition reflects God's divine will on salvation, nowhere in his corpus Bigiyev employed an abrasive language toward other religions and their followers, and even praised their rituals as different manifestations of the Divine. This does not only include the Abrahamic religions, but also the primordial religions of the East, the idol-worshippers and the pagans. Moreover, he criticized his fellow Muslims, especially the Muslim scholars, who refer to them as "barbarians". Not surprisingly, his acknowledgement of the legitimacy of other religions was enough in itself for the religious establishment, such as the *Din ve Magishet* journal, to declare him an apostate.⁴²¹

In his discussion of other religions, Bigiyev heavily drew on the Sufi literature and even praised Sufism for its inclusivity and openness towards non-Muslims. Furthermore, he stated that among the various branches of Islamic sciences, i.e., *tafsīr*, *kalām*, *fiqh*, etc., it is only Sufism which came closer to the vastness of the Qur'an. At this point, Bigiyev's pluralism goes beyond the territory of Islam and transforms into universalism. For example, when commenting on the great Persian mystic poet Ḥāfiẓ's couplet "For he whose heart is full of love of God, both mosque and the church are the same because anywhere on the face of the earth is the temple of divine love", he stated that there are numerous verses in the Qur'an that suggest a similar attitude.⁴²² However, the Sufism here should not be confused with popular Sufism or institutionalized Sufism of the later period which was practiced at Sufi lodges across Russia and

⁴²⁰ Uralgiray, *Ibid.*, p. 112.

⁴²¹ İmam Mutiullah el-Atai, "Musa Safsatası," *Din ve Magishet*, no. 25, 22 June 1912.

⁴²² Musa Bigiyev, *Divan-ı Hafız Tercümesi*, pp. 59-60.

most other parts of the Islamic world. He got encouraged by the writings of the great masters of philosophical Sufism, such as Ibn 'Arabī, Rūmī, and Ḥāfiz.

Can Bigiyev's universalism be explained with Sufism only? Why does he recourse to Sufism even though it is not among his favorite topics and even he escapes from it in its modern manifestations? Kanlıdere is in the idea that Bigiyev's universalism is due to this Sufi influence, especially Ibn 'Arabī.⁴²³

Bigiyev on Sufism: From Expectation to Action

At this point, it would be relevant to look briefly at Bigiyev's view of Sufism. As Knysh pointed out, it is customary to begin any discussion of Sufism with the origin of the word *taṣavvuf*.⁴²⁴ Today, many Western sources, as well as the Islamic ones, agree that it is a derivative of *ṣūf*, the Arabic word for wool.⁴²⁵ In this sense, it signifies the ascetic lifestyle of the Sufi who cover himself with a woolen cloth which symbolizes poverty.⁴²⁶

Bigiyev discussed the linguistic origin of Sufism in a rather interesting context in which he discussed a specific grammar rule in Arabic. He stated that the root letters of any Arabic

⁴²³ *Kadimle Cedit Arasında*, pp. 55-67.

⁴²⁴ Alexander D. Knysh, *Islamic Mysticism: A Short History* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), p. 5.

⁴²⁵ For example, Andrew Rippin, *Muslims: Their Religious Beliefs and Practices*. (Routledge, 2005), pp. 130-32; Annemarie Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1975), p. 14; Farīd al-Dīn 'Aṭṭār, *Muslim Saints and Mystics: Episodes from the Tadhkirat Al-Auliya* ("Memorial of the Saints") Translated by A. J. Arberry, (Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1976), p. 1; Michael Sells, *Early Islamic Mysticism: Sufi, Qur'an, Mi'raj, Poetic and Theological Writings* (New York: Paulist Press, 1996), p. 20.

⁴²⁶ As for *sūf* being the origin of *taṣavvuf*, Bigiyev found it not plausible because it was historically inaccurate. For him, it is nothing other than the meddlesomeness of the lugal scholars in an effort to find a Qur'anic reference for Sufism. He claimed that the tradition of putting on woolen garment was not found in early Sufi masters and it appeared later on as yet another innovation. Musa Jarullah, *Kur'an-ı Kerim Ayet-i Kerimelerinin Muciz İfadelerine Göre Ye'cüc* (Berlin, 1933), p. 25.

word, including loan words, could not exceed five. If a loan word had more than five letters, it was okay to get rid of the initial letters in order to bring it down to five. For example, Greek proper name “Alexander” has become *Skender* in Arabic due to this grammar rule. And another example was Greek “theosophia” which became *Sofiya* and ultimately *taşavvuf* in Arabic (theo-sophia> sophia>sufiya>taşavvuf). Bigiyev noted that when we think about the emergence of Sufism, which coincided with the era of translations from Greek to Arabic during the Abbasid period this type of an explanation on the origin of Sufism would make sense.⁴²⁷

However, for Bigiyev, the strongest candidate for the root for *taşavvuf* was the Arabic word *şafā* as it was also in line with the Sufi etiquette and the Arabic grammar. He noted that the Arabic grammar allows such a derivation from *şafā* to *taşavvuf*. He continued that what is as likely as *şafā* is *şuffah*, i.e., *Ahl al- Şuffah* (Companions of the Şuffah), a group of Companions who devoted themselves to the study of the religious sciences in the Medina period of the life of the Prophet Muhammed.⁴²⁸

When did Sufism start? It is not an easy task to designate a certain starting date for it. For many Sufis, Sufism as a reality without a specific name began simultaneously with the religion of Islam. In this sense, the Prophet Muhammed himself was the first Sufi. As Schimmel pointed out some even took it back to the first human being, Adam, since he was in seclusion in 40 days –the number of perfection in Sufism- and even to the Day of the Covenant.⁴²⁹

⁴²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 24-26. In another piece, Bigiyev discussed the detrimental effects of the Greek philosophy on the Islamic religious doctrine through this translation project in the Abbasid period. Musa Bigiyef, "Zehirlenmiş Fikirler hem Felsefe-i İtikadiye," *Yulduz*, no. 652, 2 March 1911.

⁴²⁸ Musa Jarullah, *Ye'cüc*, p. 25.

⁴²⁹ Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam*, p. 16.

However, technically speaking, Sufism, how we understand it today, began towards the end of the first century of Islam as a protest movement against utter worldliness and government corruption during the Umayyad period. In this regard, many Sufi manuals mention a certain individual, Hasan of Basra (642-728), as the progenitor of Sufism.⁴³⁰ Indeed, Fariduddin Attar (1110-1221) –he himself a Sufi from the Khurasan School- began his encyclopaedical dictionary of Sufi masters with Hasan. As Sells points out this ascetic movement associated with Hasan developed voluntary devotional forms like asceticism, fasting, meditations, and spiritual pedagogy since the Shari'a fell into the hands of the government.⁴³¹ That is why, as Schimmel noted, “the Sufis would often equate ‘government’ with ‘evil,’”⁴³² again which can also be observed in Attar’s Sufi poetry.

For Bigiyev, Sufism as a concept was another term for Islamic philosophy. He claimed that if it is compared to any other philosophy, be it Hindu, Greek, old, modern, etc., Islamic philosophy, or *taṣawwuf* would be more comprehensive than all. It would be unjust to judge Sufism by looking at its modern practices. In its true form, it is a great school. Bigiyev attacked the modern practice of Sufism and glorified the early masters like Junayd, Ma'ruf, Hallaj, Bistami, Ibn 'Arabī, Shams-i Tabrizi, Rūmī, Ḥāfiẓ Shīrāzī, Jāmī, to name some. He said *taṣawwuf* had lost both its reputation and its essence in the hands of later Muslims as Sufism in late times turned out to be a school for charlatans and a place of dwelling for the wretched. But in its glorious times, he continued, it was a great school for Muslim philosophers and other respected teachers.

⁴³⁰ Rippin, *Muslims: Their Religious Beliefs and Practices*. (New York: Routledge, 2012), p. 132.

⁴³¹ Sells, *Early Islamic Mysticism*, p. 19.

⁴³² Schimmel. *Mystical Dimensions of Islam*, p. 30.

Bigiyev expressed some conflicting ideas on the esoteric aspects of Sufism, or Sufi hierarchy like *qutb*, *gavth*, *awtad*, *abdāl*, the hidden Imam, etc. When relating al-Ma‘arrī’s denial of Khidr, he commented that all these “minor deities” and “little idols” had been brought to Islam by non-Muslims in order to harm it. On the other hand, in his refutation of Kamali, he did not totally deny their existence but expressed his curiosity for where on earth to find them. He likened them to the hierarchy of the Catholic Church. It would be great to see them at work in anytime and anyplace in the Islamic world, but it never worked out. If it were, then the Sharia would not be a plaything in the hands of governments, and jurists and clerics would not be despicable. Even though it might have had some side effects, they would not be worse than the current situation he commented.

Bigiyev was also concerned with the Sufi epistemology. In his understanding of Sufism, which is Islamic philosophy, the heart plays a crucial role as the ultimate source of knowledge. He thought that the intellect and the sense organs are not capable of comprehending the knowledge of anything as they need the help of inclination and vigilance of a pure heart. That is why every mystic current in every religion including Islam strived for the purity of heart through beauty of etiquette and behavior. However, the human intellect is limited by time and space unlike the divine knowledge which is omnipotent.⁴³³

Abrahamic Religions

Today some of the revisionist scholars of Islam incline toward a view of Islam as an Abrahamic revival movement. For example, Fred Donner, a specialist on early Islamic history, refers to Islam as an Abrahamic revival movement which did not only envision to create a brand-new

⁴³³ Ibn Fāṭimah, *Kitāb al-Sunnah*, pp. 57-59; Consulted with Görmez’ *Kitabu’s-Sünne*, pp. 88-89.

Muslim community, but also to incorporate those of other religions especially Jews and Christians. Donner is in the idea that the movement which began with the Prophet Muhammed was an open "Believers Movement" which around the year 700 CE came to be known as Islam, a religion for Muslims exclusively.⁴³⁴ Bigiyev's vision of other religions resonated with that of Donner's Believers Movement so far as it is a religion for everybody.

Bigiyev, in what could be considered his resume in modern sense, indicated that he understood both the Old and the New Testaments and was well versed in the laws of the ancient tribes.⁴³⁵ Indeed, it is a common feature of his writings of *ijtihad* to recourse the matter at hand to the Torah and the Christian Bible, along with the Qur'an. Bigiyev held all divinely revealed books eloquent in their statements of religious and social matters.

Contrary to the mainstream Muslim discourse, Bigiyev did not think that the previous scriptures had been distorted over the course of time. This is especially true for the Torah, which is one of the greatest books of world literature in his view.⁴³⁶ Additionally, it did not matter for him if they were corrupted or not. If, he said, they (Christians and Jews) claim their scriptures of being authentic, he was ready to accept them authentic as well. For instance, Bigiyev in his conversation with the Ottoman Sheyhulislam Musa Kazım Efendi in 1910s claimed that the copies of the Torah during the time of the Prophet Muhammed were authentic.⁴³⁷ He elaborated more on it when the issue came up again in his critic of Rizaeddin Fahreddin's *Kütüb-i Sitte*

⁴³⁴ Fred M. Donner, "Qur'anicization of Religio-Political Discourse in the Umayyad Period," *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée*, (129), 211, pp. 79-92. Donner discussed the whole idea of Believers Movement in his *Muhammad and the Believers: At the Origins of Islam*. (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010).

⁴³⁵ Tagirjanova, *Kniga O Muse Efendi*, pp. 222-23; Taymas, *Alimcan Barudi*, pp. 72-73.

⁴³⁶ Ibn Fāṭimah, *Hatun*, p. 21.

⁴³⁷ Musa Bigiyev, "Beyan-ı Hakikat," *Vakit*, no. 646, 24 July 1910.

Müellifleri. He stated that it is a well-known fact that the Qur'an has been revealed to preserve and protect the previous scriptures, i.e. the Hebrew Bible and the Christian Bible. If so, he asked, does the Qur'an protect a book that had not been out there in its true form. Again, for him this was yet another proof that the copies of the Torah in the time of the Prophet Muhammed and during the course of the revelation of the Qur'an must have been authentic. He also supported his case with the famous *ḥadīth* collector and scholar Bukhari who referred to Torah as a "divinely revealed book". If a descent scholar like Bukhari, he said, talked about it in this way, then it should be taken seriously. If the scientific findings and historical facts challenge it, as he continued, it still would not harm the case because what is in the domain of science and or history does not have to be true in the domain of religion and faith.⁴³⁸

Bigiyev agreed with the mainstream Muslim view which accuses the previous religions of distortion of their scriptures, but again for a different reason. He thought that they are corrupted not in their textual form, but in their essence or meaning. That is to say, those who are in the position of interpreting the scripture got its meaning wrong in their commentaries. Thus, it is not the Torah itself corrupted, but the body of literature that is known in the Islamic exegetical tradition as *Israiliyyat* which is the generic term referring to the oral and Rabbinical tradition. Likewise, for Bigiyev the same was also true for the Gospel of Jesus. Whether the "gospels of Jesus" are the "Gospel" or not, what is said in them is of great importance.⁴³⁹

Bigiyev illustrated his point with an example in rituals. For him, what distorted any religion is excess in ritual which is to make something compulsory that which is optional. A

⁴³⁸ Musa Bigiyef, "Cevaplarım," *Shura*, no. 11, 1 June 1911.

⁴³⁹ Ibn Fāṭimah, *Hatun*, p. 33.

good example is monasticism in Christianity which puts religion at odds with the conditions of social life.⁴⁴⁰ And Islam is not immune to the same affection that befell on the previous religions. Again, in his view, all religions including Islam have lost their original beauty and simplicity due to the excess of the extremists and the sinister of the ignorant, the mystic, and the hermit.⁴⁴¹ Another mistake of the previous divine religions was ascribing esoteric meanings to their scriptures at the expense of their apparent meaning.⁴⁴²

Bigiyev did not hesitate to challenge the limits of traditional Islamic discourse regarding the status of *ahl al- kitāb* in Islamic Jurisprudence pertaining to their testimony. Again, he took into consideration the social structure of his society which was a mixed one. He believed that in determining the beginning of the month of Ramadan, the testimony of *ahl al- kitāb*, which was the Orthodox Russians in this context, was valid since it was not a matter of the Sharia' but an ordinary act of life. In the eyes of the Shari'a, he continued, what is valid was not only the Tatars' testimony, but also the Russian's because the important point is whether the statement is true or not. For the statement to be true, it is not necessary to be narrated by a Muslim, i.e., a Tatar.⁴⁴³ Rather sarcastically, he further asked if "justice is to be a masjid elder holding a long tasbih. Or is it an adjective similar to Tatar or is a virtue that is only found among Tatars but absent in other nations".⁴⁴⁴

⁴⁴⁰ Musa Bigiyev, *Şeriat Niçin Rü'yeti İtibar Etmiş?* p. 20.

⁴⁴¹ Uralgiray, *Ibid.*, p. 111.

⁴⁴² Musa Bigiyev, "İnsanların Akide-i İlahiyelerine Nazar [II]," *Shura*, no. 6, 15 March 1910.

⁴⁴³ Musa Bigiyev, "Ehl-i Kitabın Şehadeti [III]," *Beyan el-Hak*, no. 522, 22 September 1909.

⁴⁴⁴ Musa Bigiyev, "Ehl-i Kitabın Şehadeti [IV]," *Beyan el-Hak*, no. 523, 27 September 1909.

Regarding the death of Jesus, Bigiyev again thought differently than the mainstream Muslim discourse which asserts that Jesus was not crucified on the cross but taken up to the heavens while alive. In his *Hatun* (1933), he stated that his mind had been occupied with questions on it for many years. He continued that it is an ordinary deed to kill a messenger of God for Jews as it occurred many times in the Jewish history. If so, why on earth the Jews should ascribe a special point to Jesus' killing on the cross and even take pride on it. And why does the Qur'an take their claim seriously and respond to them? Again, in *Hatun* he said that he presented his answers to these and similar questions in his *Christ, the Son of Mary, according to the Miraculous Expressions of the Noble Qur'an*⁴⁴⁵ but unfortunately, this is yet another book of him that we only know in its title.

As mentioned earlier, Bigiyev throughout his corpus used a polite language towards other religions. One major exception is his critic of the use of liquor in both Judaism and Christianity. In a rare occasion, he harshly criticized the Old and New Testament -along with the Eastern poets and the Sufis- for being the prime reason for the evil of alcohol in humanity as they portray it as something good. And today in the modern world, it has become a part of life. In that respect, even the poetry of the Great Homer, who is doomed as pagan by Jews and Christians, is far much higher than the both testaments. He went outrageous when commenting on the Christian liturgy in which wine holds an indispensable position. He also hinted that the Christian and Jewish scriptures are responsible for wine's acquiring a central status in the poetry of the East which is well manifested in Sufism and the Sufi poetry.⁴⁴⁶ Thus, he commented, it would be accurate to

⁴⁴⁵ Ibn Fāṭimah, *Hatun*, p. 16.

⁴⁴⁶ Musa Jarullah, *Şeriat-i İslamiye Nazarında Müskirat Meseleleri* (Istanbul: Mahmud Bey Matbaası, 1927), pp. 30-45.

revise the famous maxim of the great philosopher Karl Marx, who knew both the Jewish and Christian scriptures more than anybody else, from “religion is the opium of the masses” to “The Old and the New Testaments are the opium of the masses”.⁴⁴⁷

In his view, just as Islam respects the people of the book, so too it gives due respect to the people of nature worshippers or pagans. Bigiyev thought that one of the meanings of the *ḥadīth* in which the Prophet Muhammed forbade prayer in certain times depending on the position of the Sun is that these specific time slots are solely reserved for these nature worshippers as a sign of respect because what they worship is not the Sun but the Creator.⁴⁴⁸ Likewise, because of the Sun and its importance for the life on earth, he stated that the fire worshipping Zoroastrians and Hindus understood this fact much earlier and made it, fire worshipping, an integral part of their religions.⁴⁴⁹

As for Zoroastrianism, Bigiyev agreed with Jalaluddin al-Devvani (Mulla Jalal) (d. 1502) who considered Zarathustra a great prophet of God. Bigiyev asked if God has sent a messenger to each and every nation, then the one that was sent to the Persians could not be other than Zoroaster as he had a great impact on the history of the Persians. Bigiyev even compared Zoroastrianism, whose core teaching is the unity of God, with Hinduism in terms of their viewpoint for the life on earth. He found it better than Hinduism because while Hinduism encourages renunciation of the world and focuses on the realm of the imagination, Zoroaster invited people to get their share of the worldly paradise by exploiting the natural sources of the

⁴⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 45.

⁴⁴⁸ Uralgiray, *Ibid.*, pp. 76-7.

⁴⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

earth.⁴⁵⁰ Here Bigiyev's obsession with religious pacifism makes itself obvious.⁴⁵¹ Likewise, for Bigiyev, the Buddha was one of the wonders of the world.⁴⁵²

Universal Salvation

What reflects best his view of other religions is universal salvation, or in his words the commonality of God's mercy. It is a topic in which Bigiyev delved deep into the depths of Islamic theology. Perhaps, this is the place where he showed his disfavor of the tradition of *kalām* more than anywhere else. Furthermore, he went too far in his critique of the *mutakallimūn* (the scholars of Islamic theology) that he accused them of altering religion in favor of their own *madhhab* (school of law). They were in error when they left aside the Qur'an and prioritized their own madhhab in giving a legal opinion regarding the fate of others. Even though, he claimed, there are evidences of universal salvation in the Qur'an and the Ḥadīth, the *mutakallimūn* concealed them and thus condemned the entire humanity to eternal hellfire.⁴⁵³

Background of the Discussion

In the fall of 1909, Bigiyev assumed the teacher position at the Medrese-i Hüseyiniye in Orenburg, Russia. Having left his family in Kazan, he moved to Orenburg in October. Since there was a turmoil in the madrasa for quite some time due to student protests, high teacher

⁴⁵⁰ Musa Bigiyev, *Divan-ı Hafız Tercümesi*, pp. 99-101.

⁴⁵¹ Similarly, one of his main critics of the Bahai faith was the emphasis on renunciation and the absence of social regulations in it. Not Defteri, 5912, pp. 17-18.

⁴⁵² One of the reasons why he attacked the Ottoman author Celal Nuri was his derogatory remarks on the Buddha. Musa Jarullah, *Büyük Mevzularda Ufak Fikirler* (St. Petersburg: M. A. Maksudov, 1914), p. 109.

⁴⁵³ Musa Bigiyev, "Rahmet-i İlahiye Umumiyeti Hakkında Burhanlarım," *Shura*, no. 2, 15 January 1910.

turnout and weaker governance, the semester hardly started in mid-October which was way behind the normal starting date.

As an introduction to his world religion course, Bigiyev started to deliver his lectures on universal salvation (rahmet-i umumiye) at Hüseyiniye. In his view, without due respect for the followers of other religions and the proper knowledge of their religions, it would not make sense to talk about them in an academic setting. Hence, he wanted students to know that religions other than Islam have their proper place in God's divine will.

While lecturing at Hüseyiniye, Bigiyev did something quite new in the Tatar milieu and published his class notes in the literary *Shura* journal which was published by his close friend and mentor Rizaeddin bin Fahreddin. However, it became clear that beginning his teaching career with such a controversial topic was not a good idea as he became the target of the religious establishment of the city. What the ulema accused him of were disgracing the tradition of Islamic theology and distorting the religion of Islam. Ulama's protests gave its fruit and Bigiyev had to resign from Hüseyiniye in mid-December 1909. That is to say his academic career as a madrasa teacher did last less than a semester. Nonetheless, he continued to pursue the topic on the *Shura* journal even after his resignation. Beginning from 15 November 1909 up until 15 March 1910, Bigiyev published eight lengthy articles on it in *Shura*. Even though he claimed to have more to say⁴⁵⁴, he ended the discussion only after the administration of the journal urged him to do so for his own sake because it came to a point where his life was at stake. Later in 1911, he published those articles, with minor revisions, as two separate volumes: *Rahmet-i İlahiye Burhanları* and *İnsanların Akide-i İlahiyelerine Bir Nazar*.

⁴⁵⁴ Later in 1911, he stated that he was only able to say one tenth of his words in *Shura* and had to stop due to the reasons that were not in his hand. Musa Bigiyef, "Benim Emelim Benim İmanım," *Vakit*, no. 713, 1 January 1911. At this point, we could ask if he had more to say, then why he did not say them in the book version.

During the discussion, Bigiev had to defend himself against two major groups: the ulama or the religious establishment and the liberal Tatar intellectuals. As for the ulama, the language that Bigiev used for the great scholars of *kalām* was as blasphemous as the topic itself. Bigiev presented his argument in a way that he openly disgraced the entire tradition of *kalām* and *tafsīr*. For example, it was quite blasphemous in the eyes of the “conservative” ulama when he discredited the classics in the field, such as Ghazālī, *al-Fatāwá al-Bazzāzīyah*, Ibn Abidin, *Jāmi‘ al-Rumūz*, *Tafsīr al-Kabir*, to name some as nothing but trash.⁴⁵⁵ So far it was only *Zamakhsharī* from among the *mutakallimūn* who, contrary to his own *madhhab* i.e., the *Mu‘tazilah*, acknowledged that there is a possibility of salvation for those who are in the greatest error, *shirk*.⁴⁵⁶

In response to Bigiev, many articles appeared in the Tatar press of the time. It was *Din ve Magishet* of Orenburg, though, who took it more seriously than any other periodical. The clergy responded to Bigiev’s arguments in its pages in great length. Basically, they reasserted the two mainstream schools of theology, *Māturīdī* and *‘Ash‘arīyya*, on the topic. Their prime evidence for God’s eternal punishment for non-Muslims was the punishment verses of the Qur’an. One notable critic of Bigiev was Muḥammad Murād Ramzī. His responses to Bigiev’s arguments in *Din wa Magishat* later on published as a separate book: *Mushāya‘at Hizb al-Raḥmān wa Mudāfa‘at Hizb al-Shayṭān*.⁴⁵⁷ Next to *Din ve Magishet* was the *Nur* newspaper in

⁴⁵⁵ Musa Bigiev, “Rahmet-i İlahiye Umumiyyeti Hakkında Burhanlarım,” *Shura*, no. 1, 1 January 1910.

⁴⁵⁶ Musa Bigiev, “Rahmet-i İlahiye Umumiyyeti Hakkında Burhanlarım,” *Shura*, no. 2, 15 January 1910.

⁴⁵⁷ *Din ve Magishet*, no. 2, January 1917, cited from Sait Aykut, “The Intellectual Struggle of Murād Ramzī (1855-1935) An Early 20th Century Eurasian Muslim Author,” (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2015), p. 26.

Petersburg. Since it was not published on a regular basis – it was sometimes published only once a month – it did not contribute to the discussion as much as *Din ve Magishet*.

Even though the liberal Tatar intellectuals agreed with him in principle, the setting in which Bigiyev presented the topic was problematic. For example, Ismail Bey Gasprinskii in his *Tercüman* criticized Bigiyev for occupying the public discourse with trivial issues vis-a-vis serious problems faced by the Muslims of Russia like education, the Duma elections, status of women, etc. Gasprinskii advised Bigiyev that if he wanted to teach the history of religions, he should go with Ahmet Mithat Efendi's relevant book on it.⁴⁵⁸ For Gasprinskii, it was a common problem of the Tatar youth, probably including Bigiyev who was around his mid-thirties at the time, that they, since the first Russian revolution in 1905, had been more concerned with "humanity" rather than the "nation". Gasprinskii even coined a term for it: plenitude of philosophy (*felsefe çoklugu*) which has done nothing good to the nation. Furthermore, Muslims were in so backward situation that nobody in the developed world would care about what Islam thinks about the fate of non-Muslims.⁴⁵⁹ Gasprinskii's argument is parallel with that of the general sentiment of the Western world in the colonial age regarding Islam and Muslims. Bigiyev got so disappointed with Gasprinskii's critic that he penned a four-page response in the *Shura* journal⁴⁶⁰ in which he basically accused him of blocking the way for free thought and expression.⁴⁶¹ For him, even though at the outset the topic seemed merely like a theological

⁴⁵⁸ *Nur*, no. 183, 13 January 1910.

⁴⁵⁹ "Rahmet-i İlahiyenin Umumiyeti," *Tercüman*, no. 1, 1 January 1910.

⁴⁶⁰ In the book version, these pages were omitted.

⁴⁶¹ Musa Bigiyev, "Rahmet-i İlahiye Umumiyeti Hakkında Burhanlarım," *Shura*, no. 2, 15 January 1910.

issue, it had social and political ramifications especially for a community like the Muslims of Russia who lived in a predominantly Christian society.⁴⁶²

The discussion also caught the attention of the great Tatar poet Abdullah Tukay, who contributed to the discussion with a poem in which he announced that Musa Efendi has rescued the nations of the world from eternal hellfire.⁴⁶³

Another person who had an interest in the topic was the would-be Şeyhulislam of the Ottoman Empire, Mustafa Sabri Efendi (in office 1919-20). In his *Yeni İslam Müctehitlerinin Kıymet-i İlmiyesi* (1919), he responded to Bigiyev's arguments in *Rahmet-i İlahiye Burhanları* (1911) (It seems that Sabri Efendi did not see Bigiyev's subsequent book on the topic, *İnsanların Akidetü'l- İlahiyelerine Bir Nazar* (1911), which consisted of Bigiyev's follow up articles in *Shura*).⁴⁶⁴ Sabri Efendi singled out Bigiyev from other "reformers" as someone rooted in the Islamic tradition as opposed to those who were sheer admirers of the Western civilization.⁴⁶⁵ But he was still in error in ascribing an end to God's punishment for unbelievers. For him, like the Russian Muslim clergy, there was no need to look for further evidence other than the verses of the Qur'an for the eternal punishment of God to unbelievers. Indeed, the punishment verses well

⁴⁶² Musa Bigiyev, "Feylesof İmam Maarri Hazretlerine Huda Rahmet Etsin," *Beyan el-Hak*, no. 481, 14 June 1909.

⁴⁶³ Quoted in Ahmet Kanlıdere, *Kadimle Cedit Arasında*, p. 61.

⁴⁶⁴ Uralgiray (xxiv) mentioned that Sabri Efendi wrote it in 1912 and got it published in 1919. But it seems not possible because Sabri Efendi at the beginning of his book (page 5) stated that he wrote it as a response to Bigiyev's *Rahmet-i İlahiye Burhanları*, which he saw after four-five years of its publication. Since Bigiyev's book was published in 1911, Sabri Efendi must have seen it in 1915-16. Mustafa Sabri, *Yeni İslam Müctehitlerinin Kıymet-i İlmiyesi: Kazanlı Musa Bigiyef Efendinin Rahmet-i İlahiye Burhanları Namındaki Eseri Hakkında İntikadâtı Havidir* (Darü'l- Hilafetü'l- Aliye: Evkaf-ı İslamiye Matbaası, 1337/1335).

⁴⁶⁵ Sabri Efendi stated that when Bigiyev came across someone more liberal than him (for example, Ziyaeddin Kamali and Celal Nuri), he took a position of a conservative scholar. Mustafa Sabri, *Ibid.*, pp. 12-13. Hadi Maksudi had a similar argument against Bigiyev back in 1914. He said that even though one would expect to see Bigiyev and Kamali side by side as fellow reformists, Bigiyev acted like a religious fanatic when he encountered a more liberal person like Kamali. Ahmet Hadi Maksudi, "Ufak Fikirler," *Yulduz*, no. 1224, 9 July 1914.

outnumber the mercy verses. Sabri Efendi, rather sarcastically asked why Bigiyev withheld the same mercy of God which even extends to the unbelievers from the scholars of *kalām*. Sabri Efendi also found Bigiyev's resources, Abū al-ʿAlāʾ al-Maʿarrī and ibn ʿArabī, not credible.⁴⁶⁶

God's mercy made itself available to Bigiyev in the person of Rizaeddin bin Fahreddin. Upon the request of the people of Orenburg, Fakhreddin published a translation of the relevant chapter of the well-known scholar of *ḥadīth* Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawzī's *Ḥādī al-Arwāḥ ilā Bilād al-Afrāḥ* as short booklet under the title of *Rahmet-i İlahiye Meselesi*.⁴⁶⁷ In it, he basically demonstrated that the commonality of God's mercy was not a new topic in Islamic theology. He pointed out that the temporality of the Hell and thus the punishment had been dealt with by the righteous predecessors and even some of the Companions.

Fakhreddin, like Bigiyev, also commented that the topic of the fate of others was not a religious matter per se. Otherwise, it would not have been published on a literary journal like *Shura*. Indeed, it had social ramifications which the Muslims of Russia were supposed to know better than any other community. Again, even though the universal salvation had been dealt with merely as a matter of theology in the past, now and in the future, it would be discussed as a social matter, he pointed out.⁴⁶⁸ Perhaps, even Rizaeddin was unhappy about the direction of the discussion which went on to a different direction than what it was meant to be. In fact, he concluded that it was so open-ended matter that neither the pages of the journals, nor the booklets would be enough to come up with a decisive conclusion. Instead, it would be resolved

⁴⁶⁶ The discussion between Sabri Efendi and Bigiyev was also asked to Said Nursi (1873-1960). In line with his general writing style, Nursi stated that while one was going too extreme (Bigiyev), the other one sounded too conservative (Mustafa Sabri). Bediüzzaman Said Nursi, *Lemalar*. (Istanbul: Yeni Asya Neşriyat), pp. 272-73.

⁴⁶⁷ Rizaeddin bin Fahreddin, *Rahmet-i İlahiye Meselesi* (Orenburg: Vakit Matbaası, 1910).

⁴⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

in the long run as the time passes. In this regard, it is also a response to the liberal intellectuals who accused Bigiyev of dealing with abstract issues which did not have real life applications.

Fahreddin later hinted that the reason for publishing the piece was that he wanted to prevent an evil so close that it was “between eye and eyebrow.” Perhaps he was afraid of the threats against Bigiyev's life. He accused some “merchants of religion” of taking advantage of people’s ignorance in religious matters. He further stated that those who were claiming that it was forbidden in the Shari’a to learn the Russian language fifteen years ago, are now sending their kids to the Russian schools. Likewise, it is likely that those who criticize Bigiyev on universal salvation today might put on “gamut” in the next 15-20 years he commented.⁴⁶⁹

In general, throughout the discussion, Bigiyev enjoyed the full support of the young Tatar intellectuals, such as Fatih Emirkhanov and Sheher Sheref. His supporters, though, were not limited only to the youth. There is no doubt that this was a big boost for his fame throughout Russia and the Ottoman Empire as well. For instance, he was invited to Kizlyar by the Muslims of the city for a feast in his honor. During his three weeks trip to Finland, the Muslims of Finland welcomed him "like an angel descended from the heaven." Likewise, the Muslims of Kiev and especially the Maksudov family, who was leading the mosque project in the city, showed enormous respect for him during his time in Kiev.⁴⁷⁰

Bigiyev informs us that he had been advised by those who admired him not to mention out loud the "delicate matters" like this one since the general public would not understand correctly what he meant. For Bigiyev, even though politics required one to remain silent on "delicate matters," the Shari'a did not say anything about keeping some matters as "secrets," lest

⁴⁶⁹ Fahreddin, *Rahmet-i İlahiye Meselesi*, p. 15.

⁴⁷⁰ Musa Bigiyef, “Benim Emelim Benim İmanım,” *Vakit*, no. 713, 1 January 1911.

it cause unrest among the folks. On the contrary, it would be inappropriate to conceal those matters that could be explained both by religion and science. It is not Islam but other pre-Islamic religions where these types of matters had been kept as secrets.⁴⁷¹

Bigiyev's Argument

Bigiyev began his discussion of universal salvation with a short critic of the books of kalām. Having disappointed by seeing that the books of kalām, including Ghazālī's, are not capable of providing a sound answer to his questions regarding the fate of others, he decided to check with the Sufi commentaries, such as Rūmī's *Mathnawi*, Ibn 'Arabī's *Meccan Revelations*, Kushairi's *al-Risālah*, Ḥāfiz' poetry, etc. And he came to the conclusion that it was not the scholars of speculative theology, but the Sufi masters who understood universal salvation correctly: Universal salvation is indeed a fact in Islam.⁴⁷² He thought that if the Qur'an is released from the commentaries of the *kalāmiyyun*, its verses would support his case. Thus, encouraged by the Sufi masters and disappointed by the commentaries, he decided to go to the Qur'an itself as the fountainhead of all knowledge.

Initially, Bigiyev presented the topic in a way that other than the Sufis, it is he who talked about the universal salvation in Islam for the first time. However, as the discussion went on, he acknowledged that what he was advocating had been put forward by the Companions, the Tābi'ūn, and some other great scholars. It is not Islam itself but the *mutakallimūn* who were ignorant of it. I think Rizaeddin's book on the topic is the main reason behind the transformation of his thought.

⁴⁷¹ Musa Bigiyev, "Rahmet-i İlahiye Umumiyyeti Hakkında Burhanlarım," *Shura*, no. 2, 15 January 1910.

⁴⁷² Musa Bigiyev, "Rahmet-i İlahiye Umumiyyeti Hakkında Burhanlarım" *Shura*, no 2, 15 January 1910.

Obviously, universal salvation is not exclusively a Sufi enterprise as Bigiyev initially asserted. Surprisingly or not-surprisingly someone like Ibn Taymīyah, for whom Sufism was anathema, also asserted that the final abode of human being is the bliss, not the torment. Based on Ibn Taymīyah's verdict, it is safe to assert that it even includes the Pharaoh, Hitler, Abu Lahab, etc.⁴⁷³ Another non-Sufi from the modern times is Rashid Rida who, drawing on Ghazālī, considered Christians and Jews among those who were not reached out properly and thus left the matter to God.⁴⁷⁴

We should keep in mind that Bigiyev is someone who lived under a non-Muslim government as minority, whereas in the case of Rida it was still a Muslim dominated administrative system, albeit the presence of outsiders. One scholar comes closer to him in terms of context would be Walī Allāh al-Dihlawī who lived in a Hindu majority society with a weakening Muslim government.⁴⁷⁵ By looking at the religious context, we can surmise that different scholars from different contexts could come to the same conclusion regarding the fate of non-Muslims. In this regard, Bigiyev's article on the testimony of the people of the Book stands paramount. In it, he strongly rejected the *fatwā* of a certain mulla who declared the possessions of non-Muslims permissible to Muslims since Russia was not the abode of Islam. In Bigiyev's response his concern of living under a Christian government was apparent.⁴⁷⁶

The Commonality of God's Mercy

⁴⁷³ Khalil, *Ibid.*, p. 107.

⁴⁷⁴ Khalil, *Ibid.*, p. 128.

⁴⁷⁵ Khalil, *Ibid.*, p. 52.

⁴⁷⁶ Musa Bigiyev, "Ehl-i Kitabın Şehadeti [I]", *Beyan el-Hak*, no. 520, 17 September 1909.

The problem of terminology aside, because both soteriology and universal salvation are of Christian origin, the literal translation of the term that was used by Bigiyev himself is the commonality of God's mercy (*rahmet-i ilahiyenin umumiyeti*). Bigiyev's theology of universal salvation reaches out to everybody, Muslims and non-Muslims alike. In developing such a wider view of the fate of others, Bigiyev took into consideration of his social context in which Muslim Tatars lived side by side Christian Russians. In his view, acknowledging the salvation of others was a prerequisite for a peaceful society. In this regard, his vision of commonality of God's mercy could also provide a solid basis for inter-religious dialogue.

Basically, Bigiyev's argument was based on two theological premises. First, God is all-Compassionate and All-Wise so that he would not allow his creatures to stay in eternal punishment in the hereafter. Second, human being is created for the eternal happiness. As Khalil pointed out, the infinite mercy of God has been one of the major arguments of the proponents of universal salvation in Islam.⁴⁷⁷ Thus, it is not surprising to see the same tendency in Bigiyev as well. Yet, his second argument is quite interesting since the ideas that he presented regarding the second one contributed to his public image as a "philosopher".⁴⁷⁸

First premise: God's Mercy

Bigiyev at the beginning of his discussion stated that his opponents would probably try to refute him with the existence of the punishment verses in the Qur'an. In his response, he did not only challenge the ulama of Russia, but the entire tradition of *kalām*. First, in the Qur'an, the

⁴⁷⁷ Khalil, Ibid.

⁴⁷⁸ The Tatar poet Şeyhzade Babiç in his poem *Gazazil* rather sarcastically invited Bigiyev to shed light on the mystery of why God has allowed the Satan to steal the water of eternity from the Heaven. Reinhard Heß, Ibid., p. 195.

punishment verses are contingent upon God's will, which means God will punish human being IF he wants. If the punishment itself is conditional, then its duration or its eternity is also depended on God's will too. Besides, the eternity of punishment is either an exception, which means it is not the norm, or it is still for a limited period of time, even if it lasts until the end of the world's life. As his evidence, Bigiyev dwelled on A'raf 156 in length which reads:

And ordain for us that which is good, in this life and in the Hereafter: for we have turned unto Thee." He said: "With My punishment I visit whom I will; but My mercy extended to all things. That (mercy) I shall ordain for those who do right, and practice regular charity, and those who believe in Our signs."⁴⁷⁹

In his view, the *kalāmiyyun* were in error when they take the mercy of God in the verse for only Muslims. On the contrary, it was for all human beings. In the verse, God's mercy is mentioned as the norm, while his punishment is contingent upon his will. As for the mercy part, it includes every being, be it human or nonhuman: "My mercy embraces all things." This could be seen clearly in the word choice. God's mercy is upon "all things". While "thing" itself signifies commonality, it is still supplicated with the qualifier "all". In his view, this verse itself is a clear proof of the universal salvation and it shows that nobody will be exempted from the infinite mercy of God. The rest of the verse does not harm the interpretation based on logic and methodology he claimed.

Bigiyev was aware that here and other places he looked at a specific Qur'anic verse out of context. The traditional way of Qur'anic exegesis usually looks at a particular verse in relation to the ones preceding and following it. Yet, Bigiyev is not concerned with that. He said even though the context matters, it still can be overlooked because every chapter and every verse of the Qur'an is a Qur'an itself and thus could be dealt with separately from the rest.⁴⁸⁰

⁴⁷⁹ Abdullah Yusuf Ali, *The Holy Quran*. (Chicago: Iqra Book Center, undated).

⁴⁸⁰ Musa Jarullah, " wa khasaf al-qamar wa jumi'a al-shamsu wa al-qamar," *Shura*, no. 8, 15 April 1912.

Prescribed Mercy vs. Common/Universal Mercy

According to Bigiyev, God's mercy is of two types: prescribed/special mercy (*rahmet-i mektube*) and common mercy (*rahmet-i umumiye*). While, the first is by way of good deeds and thus specifically for righteous Muslims, the latter is merely out of God's will and thus not restricted to a particular faith community. Moreover, it operates both in this world and the hereafter. At this point, one would ask if God's mercy surrounds every human being unconditionally, then what is the deal in being a Muslim? Or why to bother with doing all the rituals, such as doing prescribed prayers, paying alms giving, and having faith in God in general? For Bigiyev, this is a matter of spiritual status and competing in performing good deeds. By being Muslim, people are encouraged to compete in good faith to end up with a better status in the hereafter. Besides, private mercy is out there in order not to leave human being in stagnation and to lead them toward goodness.

Similar questions were raised during the controversy on the Tatar press. For example, a Tatar journalist stated that universal salvation sounded like a general amnesty. Thus, anybody could do evil without the fear of punishment. For Bigiyev, this was yet another version of Islamic supremacy, which came out of ignorance. It was not the universal salvation but the exclusive salvation which led to such conclusion. Reserving salvation for only one's own religious community would give the followers of other religions the impression that whatever they do in terms of goodness is null because they would eventually end up in Hell.⁴⁸¹ It would leave non-Muslims desperate he concluded.

⁴⁸¹ Musa Bigiyev, "İnsanların Akide-i İlahiyelerine Bir Nazar," *Shura*, no. 6, 15 March 1910.

In the same context, he went on to clarify what he called a mistaken notion among the Muslims of Russia regarding the meaning of the opening formula of the Qur'an, the *Basmala*. He said it is usually translated or understood as in the name of God who is merciful to all human beings in this world (Rahman) and to Muslims only in the hereafter (Rahim). That is to say that God's mercy is wider in this world and narrower in the hereafter. According to Bigiyev, this was an absolute nonsense. Once it is asserted that God is Rahman to human beings in this world only, then the hyperbole in its meaning would be lost. The more accurate way of translating it is that God is merciful to all human beings both in this world and in the hereafter. And again, as he argued in the two types of mercy above, Rahman is in the context of both domains, whereas Rahim is exclusively for Muslims in the hereafter in return of good deeds of the righteous.

In terms of the mercy of God, Bigiyev also approached the matter from a humanitarian perspective. For him, Islam is not a religion based on the enmity toward humanity. In contrast, respect for humanity constitutes its basic principle.⁴⁸² He stated that as a human being, he could not wish for his fellow human beings something that he himself would not want unto himself, like the eternal punishment. He went on to explain it with an example from math. When we talk about the life in the hereafter, we are talking about something that is even greater than the concept of infinity in math. Compared to the eternity of the heavens, our world is like a bubble in the ocean. Similarly, the life of the human being on earth is also very limited, 60-70 in average, and rarely more than a hundred years. Again, compared to the life of the world, human life is like an atom. Moreover, most of the time, what dominates human life in the world is hardships rather than happiness. If this is the case, how on earth someone who lived this short of a life compared

⁴⁸² Musa Bigiyev, "Benim Emelim Benim İmanım," *Vakit*, no. 713, January 1911.

to eternity would remain in eternal fire on account of his actions in a limited period of time. God's mercy would not allow such injustice to his creatures he concluded.⁴⁸³

Second Premise: Human Being is Created for Eternal Happiness or the Evolution of Religious Thought

I think the originality of his thought does not rest on the mercy of God, though it might still be interesting, but on the idea of eternal happiness as the purpose of the creation of human being. Bigiyev claimed that human being is preconditioned toward perfection from the very beginning, and thus his journey on the straight path is guaranteed by God.⁴⁸⁴ This brought him to the idea of an evolution of religious thought from primitive to complex. Between the first human being and Islam, as the ultimate manifestation of Divine, all religious systems were the way stations of the divine truth and thus have their proper room in God's divine plan.⁴⁸⁵ If human intellect in its odyssey toward religious perfection gets stuck somewhere in between, he will not be questioned by God. Therefore, each religious system is legitimate on its own right.

Among Bigiyev's supporting arguments, one stands quite interesting: the story of Patriarch Abraham in the Qur'an (6: 75-79). In his search for the Supreme, Abraham underwent a gradual intellectual evolution after God has shown him the signs of the earth and the heavens in the outer world. Passing through the stars, the Moon, and the Sun, he finally reached God as the ultimate divine. Bigiyev argued that if a messenger of God like Abraham, in his journey toward the divine, could achieve the "nirvana" only after stopping by several waystations (the stars, the

⁴⁸³ Musa Bigiyev, "Rahmet-i İlahiye Umumiyeti Hakkında Berahinim," *Shura*, no. 24, 15 December 1909.

⁴⁸⁴ Musa Bigiyev, "İnsanların Akide-i İlahiyelerine Bir Nazar," *Shura*, no. 6, 15 March 1910.

⁴⁸⁵ Musa Bigiyev, "İnsanların Akide-i İlahiyelerine Bir Nazar," *Shura*, no. 4, 15 February 1910.

Moon, and the Sun) and none of them are nullified by the Qur'an, then humanity's journey from childhood to adulthood, which is Islam, could not be different from Abraham's journey in the eyes of the Shari'a.⁴⁸⁶

Likewise, for Bigiyev, it was not relevant to dispute or discuss one's religious convictions as Muslims often time tend to do so. Thus, looking for a rational proof for one's religion as asserted by the Islamic tradition of *kalām* is irrelevant because faith comes out of one's heart, not intellect. And heart does not look at rational proofs. In his words, one would not abdicate his religious conviction merely because of the lack of rational evidence for it. Once the heart is convinced, then it looks for ways to rationalize it.⁴⁸⁷ If one's faith encourages him to do good and admonishes him from evil, that faith is acceptable wherever it is found, even outside of Islam.⁴⁸⁸

Bigiyev's remarks reminds one Wilfred Cantwell Smith (1916-2000), a scholar of Islam and religious pluralism as well, who had a similar view of what he called the personalist quality of religious life. He began his chapter on the religious truth and falsity with a rhetorical question: Are religions true or false? For Smith, what proves the validity or invalidity of a religion was not the religion itself but the persons who practice it so long as it encourages them to do good and refrain them from evil. Thus, Smith argued, we could talk about the religion to which one belongs, but we should be concerned with the religion that belongs to him. It is only after this question is answered that we could argue if a particular Christian's Christianity is truer than a particular Muslim's Islam, and vice versa.⁴⁸⁹

⁴⁸⁶ Musa Bigiyev, "İnsanların Akide-i İlahiyelerine Bir Nazar," *Shura*, no. 6, 15 March 1910.

⁴⁸⁷ Musa Jarullah, "Dini ve İctimai Meseleler: Dini ve İctimai Meseleler İsimli Eserni İntikad," *Shura*, no. 20, 15 October 1914.

⁴⁸⁸ Musa Bigiyev, "İnsanların Akide-i İlahiyelerine Bir Nazar," *Shura*, no. 6, 15 March 1910.

⁴⁸⁹ Wilfred Cantwell Smith, *Questions of Religious Truth* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1967), pp. 71-73.

Bigiyev retained his ideas on religious pluralism, so to speak, in his later works, such as *Kitāb al-Sunnah* (1945), which he wrote in India while in self-exile. In it, he stated that if one has believed that he has found the truth and his heart is assured on that, then there was no need for rational evidence for his belief so long as it is not a sheer superstition.⁴⁹⁰

Conclusion

In conclusion, universal salvation and religious pluralism are two topics that have been discussed by Muslim scholars throughout the history of Islam. Most of the time, context led the discussion and determined the conclusion. For Bigiyev, it was not only a matter of speculative theology, but also politics and social conduct. As a scholar living under a Christian government and in a Christian dominated society, Bigiyev saw the acknowledgment of other religions paramount for the survival and peaceful co-existence of Muslims of Russia. Besides, theologically, promising salvation for the entire humanity is another sign of Islam's superiority over other religions which promise salvation for only their own followers. Based on the Qur'an and the Sufi commentaries, Bigiyev has shown that God's infinite mercy would not allow his creatures to stay in eternal torment since human being is created for eternal happiness.

⁴⁹⁰ Mūsā Jārullāh, *Kitāb al-Sunna*, pp.64-65. Consulted with Görmez', *Kitabu's- Sünne*, p. 95.

CHAPTER 6- CONCLUSION

When I first spelled out my intention to work on a project on Musa Jarullah Bigiyev to those who are familiar with him and Islam in the Volga-Ural region in Russia, a good number of them asked me why yet another study since there is already enough scholarship on him. This sounded like a legitimate question at the outset and it demanded a convincing answer which I did not have immediately at the time. But what it reminded me was the fact that a new study on Bigiyev must go beyond the ones which have been undertaken in Turkey, Russia, and elsewhere. As time passed and I delved more and more deeply into his life and his works, I came to realize that despite a gamut of studies on Bigiyev, there is still much to say in terms of his life and his place in the Islamic intellectual tradition. Moreover, it was unjust that someone like Bigiyev was missing from the attention of the general body of Islamic Studies in the academic world. In western academia, it is often time the case that those who study Islam are not aware of the story of Islam in the northern edge of the Islamic world, that is the Muslims of Russia in general and the Tatars in particular. It is also ironic that the descendants of the first Turkic tribe which converted to Islam in the 10th century is perceived as on the fringes of the worldwide Islamic community a millennium later.

Bigiyev was a prolific author and a complex figure. His areas of expertise covered a vast area from Islamic jurisprudence to political theory, to name just two. Besides, he had a command in multiple languages, i.e., Turkic in its various branches, Arabic, Persian, Russian, and maybe Urdu. Given the scope of his scholarship and his linguistic varieties, it was not possible to do justice to his scholarship and legacy. Sometimes, I felt desperate in the sense that anybody who studies Bigiyev should also be able to manage in all those languages perfectly. Although I do not claim perfect proficiency in all those linguistic domains, I believe that I brought together a good

deal of information from each one of them so that it could be considered a first step toward a much more mature and comprehensive study on him and his works. It has been painstaking, though. Such a controversial figure in his time and a prolific writer, Bigiyev was not an easy topic. But again I believe that this work has brought Bigiyev studies one step forward in terms of its theoretical framework and content.

Let me come back to the question of why Bigiyev again. My work is different than the previous ones in a couple of ways. First, it is fresh in its linguistic nature. Second, it is stronger in its content. And third, it has a theory framework through which it is studying its subject.

Firstly, this is the first dissertation in the English language solely devoted to Bigiyev. Not only its linguistic domain, but also its content is also new to English readers.

Secondly, Bigiyev lived an adventurous life. From his childhood in Russia to his last days in Egypt, he had constantly been on the move from one place to another, and across the borders. Thus, a comprehensive account of his life is as crucial as his intellectual works. The longest chapter in this dissertation is the one in which I have laid out the story of his life. That is because there are still big lacunae in his life story. I spent an inordinate amount of time digging for bits of new information on his life and activities in the Muslim press of Russia of the time. A clearer picture of his life was crucial in terms of making a more accurate assessment of his place in the intellectual Islamic tradition.

I was lucky so that I was able to access many of his works in their original version thanks to our university's library system which allowed me to get my hands on a variety of primary sources. In terms of his life, I followed the conventional way and divided it in four main periods:

1. The Formative Years (1873/75-1905)
2. Between the Two Revolutions (1905-1917)

3. In the Soviet Union (1917-1930)

4. In self-exile (1930-1949).

Yet, I tried to avoid some of the well-known facts about his life and activities that have already been worked out by my predecessors. In terms of the first period, I primarily relied on the accounts of his friends and admirers, such as Alimcan el-Idrisi, who wrote a biography of him as early as 1910 in the journal *Türk Yurdu* in Istanbul, and Abdulah Battal Taymas, who produced the first full account of his life in 1958 in Istanbul.

As for the second period, I drew heavily upon the Tatar press of the time, which is an endless treasure for his early life and writings between 1905 and 1917/18. Since it is not easily accessible to researchers, a good portion of the information that I provided here is hitherto unknown. But instead of recording each bit of information, I focused on the ones that I deemed to be paramount. Otherwise, even Bigiyev's minor illness, or thieves entering his apartment flat, or the condition of his library had been considered as important pieces of news to be shared with their readership.

As for his life in the Soviet Union (1917-1930), the major source that I consulted is Bigiyev's family archive which was published by Elmira Tagirjanova in 2010. It includes a good number of materials, i.e., family photos, personal correspondence, relevant newspaper articles mostly from the Russian press, the diary of Bigiyev's wife Esma Hanım, and so on.

The most difficult portion of his biography was his life in self-exile from 1930 to up until his death in 1949. Part of the difficulty has to do with the size of the geographical space which stretches from Egypt to Finland and Turkey to Japan, to name just some of the locations of his self-exile. What we know about his life and activities in all those places are small bits from each. In this regard, his personal letters to Weli-Ahmed Hakim (1882-1970), the first Chairman of the

Board of Islamic Society of Finland and later imam of the congregation until 1962, are extremely important. In addition, I relied on Oğuz Haşmioğlu of National Radio of Pakistan, who provided an account of Bigiyev's life in India based on the oral narration of his father, who had been close to Bigiyev in those years. Some of Bigiyev's own works that he published in exile also provide firsthand information about his travels and contacts.

Thirdly, in this project, I have attempted to look at such a complex person like Bigiyev beyond the established frameworks and portray him as the man and scholar he was and demonstrate his position within the Islamic intellectual tradition. In doing so, I relied on the prominent anthropologist Talal Asad's notion of Islam as a discursive tradition. For Asad, Islam is a tradition. What makes a tradition is not always agreements, but also disagreements. Asad claims that what determines proper Islamic behavior and practice in a given context is the discourse. This is how he explains the apparent diversity within the Islamic tradition. Therefore, the task of the researcher is to figure out the ways in which the tradition is manipulated to determine the correct practice, since it is through this manipulation that a specific discourse emerges.

Therefore, instead of talking about one orthodoxy and many heterodoxies in Islam, Asad suggests talking about discourses which make up the tradition. Each discourse has to comply with the textual sources of Islam, namely the Qur'an and the Sunna. And it ought to have a precedence in the past as well as a motivation to secure the future. Thus, a discourse is the domain in which the past and the future manifest themselves in the present in accordance with the Shari'a, i.e., the Qur'an, and the Sunna of the Prophet Muhammed.

One of the key components of Asad's notion of Islam as a discursive tradition is to determine the correct model that fits the circumstances. In other words, it is finding the best

Islamic practice in context. That is why there have been more than one "correct model" in the history of the Islamic tradition. This variety altogether is the core of tradition.

By looking at the diversity in Islam through Asad's notion of Islam as a discursive tradition, it does not make sense to put it into binaries, such as traditional vs. modern, urban vs. rural, ulama vs. Sufi, reformist vs. traditional, etc. One manifestation of this bifurcation in the study of Islam in Russia and Central Asia is the Jadidist vs. Qadimist binary. Bigiyev in the secondary literature is often time portrayed as a religious "reformist" or a "modernist" Muslim scholar, and less frequently as a "traditional conservative" scholar. Besides, there have been efforts to situate him in between as a hybrid. This is because he is viewed through the Jadidist vs Qadimist binary. He is so complex a figure that it is not easy to situate him in a certain spot. Thus, one task of this project was to acknowledge his complexity.

The story of Islam as Bigiyev wanted us to hearken to is one which does not stand at odds with the realities of life. He offered a model which is compatible with circumstances without going outside of Islam or compromising the essence of Islam. He got his inspiration from the Islamic tradition and sometimes pushed it to the limits. Furthermore, he was courageous enough to challenge the religious dogmas of the day in light of what the intellect had to offer. He offered a "correct model" in which the basic tenets of Islam come together with the realities of life without coming into conflict.

In doing this, he had to challenge the tradition of Islamic learning. He was not content with what was handed down to him from the agents of religion, i.e., the imams and scholars. What made the universality of the religion of Islam was its simplicity. Bigiyev reacted against any effort to make it complicated. I have to say that the manner in which he criticized the tradition sometimes reminded me another maverick, Ibn Khaldun, and maybe also Ibn

Taymiyya. In many of his works, he attacked the scholars of speculative theology, jurisprudence, and exegesis, both past and present. In his ijtihads, he also disagreed with the four schools of law especially in family matters, social issues, and obligatory rituals. He was not hesitant to question the capacity of the established schools in providing solutions to the problems that modern man has faced.

As mentioned earlier, Bigiyev wrote extensively on the Qur'an. His first published work was on the Qur'an. For him, the technical aspects of the Qur'an were as crucial as its meaning. Indeed, without an accurate "Qur'an" it was not possible to comment on it and extract rulings from it. Thus, he wrote extensively on the technical aspects of the Qur'an such as its printing, various readings, the number of the verses and pauses, translation into Turkish/Tatar, etc.

In this project, I decided to focus on just one aspect of the Qur'an which Bigiyev was interested in, namely its translation into the Tatar language. Part of the reason why I have chosen it was the "good news" that came from Kazan in 2010 as Bigiyev's long-awaited Tatar translation of the Qur'an was published by his youngest daughter Fatma Hanim's daughter-in-law, Elmira Tagirjanova. This was a momentous piece of news for those who were aware of Bigiyev's works because it had been thought to be lost forever. When I first held the actual printed book in my hands in 2016, I had great enthusiasm to finally see it. Yet, the more I read through it, the more I came to realize that unfortunately it was not Bigiyev's translation due to the reasons that I have explained in the relevant chapter. In fact, it is Suleyman Tevfik's Turkish translation of the Qur'an in 1927. Its only connection to Bigiyev was that it was found in Bigiyev's family archive among other books in his possession.

Another topic that I worked on is Bigiyev's claim of universal salvation in Islam. This was another discourse which Bigiyev thought of as the correct model. For Bigiyev, the fate of the

followers of other religions was not only an issue of theology. Indeed, it had a great impact on how Muslims relate to the people of other faiths in their social life. He claimed that the final dwelling place of the human being is not torment, but bliss. First, the all-merciful God would not allow his own handicrafts to perish in eternal damnation. Second, the whole purpose of the creation of the human being is to lead him to the perfection of his capabilities. While the mercy of God has been one of the primary arguments of other proponents of universal salvation in Islam, this second argument seems unique to Bigiyev.

Many of Bigiyev's ideas are still relevant today, except for his insistence on the political unity of Muslim nations and Islamic governance. Political developments across the globe and especially in the Muslim majority countries since World War I have proven the impossibility of the unity of Muslims and the unpopularity of Islamic governance. Besides, his political ideas are also a good example of how he does not fit into the Jadidist vs. Qadimist binary. Even if we assume him to be a Jadidist, his insistence on Islamic governance disqualifies him from the title and puts him in the ranks of the people of the "old school". Although irrelevant today, his courage to express his ideas in the age of nationalism and communism requires everybody's appreciation.

In summary, Bigiyev was and remains a complex figure. The established ways of looking at him do not help us to appreciate this complexity. Once we describe him as a "reformist" or a "traditional" Muslim scholar, he becomes just another one among others. I hope that my work has demonstrated that Bigiyev was nothing if not unique, his own man in the Islamic intellectual tradition.

APPENDIX 1- An Annotated List of Bigiyev's Selected Works

One big problem in dealing with such an itinerant scholar like Bigiyev has to do with identifying his complete oeuvre. Nobody really knows how many books he authored and how many of them he got published.⁴⁹¹ Our best bet would be list of his books in Uralgiray (1975) hand-written by Bigiyev himself in which he listed 87 books. Uralgiray added another 33 and came up with 122 books in total. Since then it has been taken granted by many researchers.⁴⁹² However, there are two problems with it. First, there are some overlaps between Bigiyev's original list and Uralgiray's additional list. Second, almost half of the books that are listed in it are only known by their titles. In other words, there are simply not out there. However, it should be kept in mind that it is still highly possible to come across some hitherto unknown manuscripts of Bigiyev in libraries worldwide and in private archives especially in India, Finland, and Egypt. As for his published works, it is highly painstaking to get access to them in their original version as many of them are rarities today.

Bigiyev's Unpublished Notes at the National Library of Turkey

In the depository of the National Library of Turkey, to which Bigiyev donated his books in his possession when he died in Egypt, there are a number of notes and manuscripts recorded under Bigiyev's name. However, as Kanlıdere mentioned one should be cautious with them because

⁴⁹¹ Writing in 1918, Ziyinetullah Nuşirevan aka Zenun stated that in his 8-9-year-old history of publication, Bigiyev penned 25-30 books in both Turkish and Arabic. That is to say that Bigiyev started his writing career around 1910s. However, it cannot be the case because Bigiyev's first published book came out in 1905. Ziyinetullah Nuşirevan, "Şeriat Esasları ve Kadınlık Meseleleri," *Kırım Mecmuası*, no. 10, 5 September 1918.

⁴⁹² Kanlıdere, *Kadimle Cedit Arasında*, p. 137-38.

some of them probably do not belong to him.⁴⁹³ Below is an annotated list of notes and manuscripts of Bigiyev at the National Library of Turkey.

Mevlevi Bereketullah. Milli Kütüphane Yazmalar Koleksiyonu, Yer No. 06 Mil Yz A 5929 (pp. 38): While almost half of it consists of a manuscript of his *Hatun*, which he got published in 1933 in Berlin, the rest of it includes a rough draft of his *Rü'yet* (1910), some isolated notes in Tatar and Arabic, and some poetry in Persian.

Not Defteri. Milli Kütüphane Yazmalar Koleksiyonu, 06 Mil Yz A 5909 (pp. 15): It includes his notes from *Republic* by Plato, *al-Bayyinat*, most probably by Abd al-Qadir al-Maghribi (1924-25), *Türk Harbi* most probably by M. Larcher and Bursalı Mehmet Nihat (1927), and miscellaneous.

Not Defteri. Milli Kütüphane Yazmalar Koleksiyonu, 06 Mil Yz A 5910 (pp. 24): It includes his notes from as early as 1923 to as late as 1931. The major topics in it include the early Bolshevik policy in Turkestan (roughly between 1917-1923), the political unity of Muslims, i.e., Muslims of Russia, Turkestan, Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan, India [he does not mention the Arab lands]. The big portion of it is a copy of Zeki Velidi Togan's memoirs on Enver Pasha in Central Asia: "Türkistanda Enver Paşa Hakkında Ahmet Zeki Velidi Hatıraları: Enver, Cemal Paşaların Türkistanda Sa'yleri Hakkında." At the end he says that he copied it down in July 1931, Kabul. It is curious though how he was able to obtain a copy of Togan's memoirs in Kabul. Togan in his memoir also has a section on Enver Pasha's activities in Turkestan. Perhaps, this was another piece that he were planning to publish in his printhouse in Berlin.

⁴⁹³Ibid., 139-43.

Not Defteri. Milli Kütüphane Yazmalar Koleksiyonu, 06 Mil Yz A 5911 (pp. 15): A big portion of it includes his notes, both in Turkish and Arabic, regarding the Arabic orthography in relation to Syriac and Hebrew as Aramaic being the root language of all. It also includes short notes on Turkey after the WWI and the formation of the new Turkish Republic, and isolated notes on religious sciences, especially fiqh, and the death of Jesus. There are also some notes on Sufism most probably taken from al-Kashani.

Not Defteri. Milli Kütüphane Yazmalar Koleksiyonu, 06 Mil Yz A 5913 (pp. 14): It mainly consists of Bigiyev notes from and critic of Shibli Numani (1857-1914)'s *Sīrat al-Nabī* (Life of the Prophet) (mostly on the first volume, some on the second).

Not Defteri. Milli Kütüphane Yazmalar Koleksiyonu, 06 Mil Yz A 5924 (pp. 67): A good portion of it consist of his diary during the Hajj in 1927.⁴⁹⁴ Other major themes include the Cairo Congress of 1926, the question of the caliphate, the new Turkish Republic, and the newly established Saudi state. Throughout the notes, he expressed a favorable view of Ibn Sa‘ūd and thus the Saudi state.

Müsvedde Defteri, Milli Kütüphane Yazmalar Koleksiyonu, 06 Mil Yz A 3851 (pp. 347): It includes miscellenous notes.

Not Defteri. Milli Kütüphane Yazmalar Koleksiyonu, 06 Mil Yz A 5912: A big portion of it is entitled as *Türk Talebelerine* (To the Turkish Students) in which he provided a thematic review/index of his own works that he penned from 1905 up until that time. The date at the end of it is February 25, 1930 in Leningrad. The impression that I got from the tone is that he foresaw the approaching threat to his life so that worked out some sort of a summary of his own

⁴⁹⁴ This part of the diary has been recently translated into Russian and published as an example of the literary genre *Hajjnama* in Tatar. Aidar G. Khairutdinov, “Hadjname Musy Bigeeva: ‘Iz Rossii, Modjno Skazat, Ya Odin...’” *Islam v Sovremennom Mire*, 2016, vol. 12, no. 3, pp. 25-50; no.4, pp. 25-44.

scholarship. It also has a subchapter on Mecca Congress in 1925 in which he discussed slavery in Islam along with other aspects of the congress. Another section is a draft of the second part of *Tarihin Unutulmuş Sahifeleri* (1933) which is about the Russian Famine of 1921-22. It also includes isolated notes on his plan to open a midlevel medrese for girls in the Chinese Turkestan, Jesus, and the Academy (The Platonic Academy).

Published Works:

1. Mūsā Jār Allāh Rūstūfidūnī, *Tārīkh al-Qur'an wa'l-Maṣāḥif (History of the Qur'an and its Written Collections)*. Petersburg: İbrahim Boraganskiy, 1905. As Bigiyev's first published book, this short work (38 pages) in Arabic deals with the codification of the Qur'an, and answers those, including the Shi'as, who attribute distortion of it in the process therein. Both in content and methodology, Bigiyev heavily drew on Shatibi's *Aqilah*, which he published as a separate volume in 1908. In the first couple of pages, Bigiyev touches on the problems of madrasas as the religious education that was offered in these schools was not enough to understand the Qur'an in its various aspects. Bigiyev states that having seen the copy of his book, the well-known Sufi poet Muhammed Iqbal said: Is it worth it to boast of your knowledge and schools, if they did not give you bread and even took your life from you.⁴⁹⁵
2. Musa Bigiyef, *Rusya Müslümanları İttifakının Nizamnamesi (The Charter of the Union of Muslims of Russia)*. Petersburg: K. S. Antokolskiy, 1906 (pp. 16): Published as a supplement to Ülfet newspaper, Bigiyev in this book laid out the party program of Ittifaq al-Muslimin, along with the resolutions of the first all-Russian Muslim Congress

⁴⁹⁵ Musa Jarullah, *Nizām al-Jāmiat al-Islāmīyah al-'Ilmiyyah* (Bombay: 1946), p. 2.

in Nijni Novgorod in 1905. When relevant, he provided the Russian equivalent of a specific term in Turkish/Tatar and explained why he preferred a particular term over others.

3. Musa Bigiyef, *Umum Rusya Müslümanlarının 3'üncü Resmi Nedveleri (3rd All-Russian Muslims' Congress)*, Kazan: Matbaa-i Kerimiye, 1906, (pp. 190): It consists of the minutes of the third all-Russian Muslim Congress which was held on 16-20 August 1906 in Nidjny Novgorod. The second part of the book includes *Rusya Müslumanları İttifakinin Programı* (Charter of the Union of All-Russian Muslims). Different than the first one, this time he did not deal with the specifics of terminology. He also promised to explain each article -72 in total- from the perspective of Shari'a in the future.
4. Shihāb al-Dīn ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī (1372-1449), *Ifādāt al-Kirām fī Sharḥ Aḥādīth Bulūgh al-Marām* (Attainment of the Objective according to Evidence of the Ordinances). Ed. By Mūsā Jārullāh. Kazan: Haritonov, 1909. This is a revised and annotated version of Ibn Hajar's *ḥadīth* collection.
5. Musa bin Jarullah Bigiyev, *el-Lüzumiyyat Şerhi (A Commentary on Luzumiyyat (Necessities) of al- Ma 'arrī)*. Kazan: Sheref Kütüphanesi, 1907: The book is of two parts. While the first part (56 pp.) serves as an introduction to al- Ma 'arrī's life and thought on various topics, such as religion, religious sciences, nature of God, nature, intellect, etc., the second part (208 pp.) consists of the translation of selected verses from his *al-Luzumiyyat (the Necessities)*. Since al- Ma 'arrī is notorious for his skepticism and thus sometimes accused of being a heretic by the ulama, Bigiyev supported his translation with relevant verses of the Qur'an and the Ḥadīth. It is the first translation of *al-Luzumiyyat* in the Turkic world.

6. Musa Bigiyef, *Edebiyat-i Arabiye ile Ulum-i İslamiye (The Arab Literature and the Islamic Sciences)*. Kazan, Maarif Kütüphanesi, 1907, (pp. 72): As a supplement to his *al-Luzumiyat Şerhi* and an introduction to his upcoming series of Arab literature in translation, Bigiyev, in this book, provided a general outlook of al- Ma‘arrī’s thought on the essence of religion and the importance of intellect by reevaluating the works of the ulama of *ḥadīth* and *fiqh*. Besides, by way of answering the ulama’s criticism of his *al-Luzumiyat Şerhi*, he dwelled on the problem of Khird’s life and Jesus’ descent in detail. Basically, based on the verses of the Qur’an, he reiterated that Jesus had not been taken to the heavens by God, but died like every human soul. The book received several applauses from the Tatar press of the time. For example, while literary journal *Shura* called it as a door to knowledge and the beauty of the Tatar literature, educational journal *el-Islah* referred to it as the most important work of the Tatar literature in its genre, i.e., religious sciences. Religious journal *Din ve Magishet*, on the other hand, expressed suspicion on it and hinted that Bigiyev, in regard to Jesus’ death was under the influence of Ghulam Ahmed Qadiyani (1835-1908), the founder of the Ahmadiyya movement.⁴⁹⁶
7. Abī Muḥammad al-Qāsim ibn Fīrruh al-Shāṭibī (1144-1194), *al-Aḥruf al Qur’āniyya wa al-Qirā’āt: Kitāb al-Shāṭibīyah (The Letters of the Qur’an and the History of Recitation, The Book of Shatibiyya)*. Ed. By Musa Jarullah Rastofdoni. Kazan, Kerimov Matbaası, 1907, (pp. 88): Known as *the Book of Shatibiyya*, this is a revised version of Shatibi’s book on the variant readings of the Qur’an. In it, Bigiyev basically discussed the issue of seven letters of the Qur’an as mentioned in the *ḥadīth* which reads that the Qur’an was revealed on seven letters which is understood as the seven different dialects

⁴⁹⁶ Ayn. Kef. “Bigi Fikrinin Menbאי,” *Din ve Magishet*, no. 25, 22 July 1912.

of the Arabic language. Bigiyev did not accept that the codification of the Qur'an by Caliph Uthman was based on only one letter and abrogated the other six.

8. Abī Muḥammad al-Qāsim ibn Fīrruh al-Shāṭibi (1144-1194), *Kitāb 'Aqīlat atrāb al-qaṣā'id fī asnā al-maqāṣid, aw, Jiz Kitāb al-fī rasm al-maṣāḥif*. Ed. by Mūsā bin Jār Allāh Rūstūfdūnī. Kazan: Tipografiya T-go D-ma "Bratya Karimovi", 1908 (pp. 72): It is Bigiyev's annotated (sharh) version of al-Shāṭibi's *Aqila* which is about the orthography of the Qur'an.
9. Shāṭibī, Ibrāhīm ibn Mūsā (1320-1388), *El-Muvafakat Mukaddimesi: Kitāb al-Muwāfaqat (An Introduction to al-Muwāfaqat: The Book of Reconciliation)*. Ed. By Mūsā Jārullāh. Kazan: Tip. Imperatorskii Universitet, 1909: In his short introduction, Bigiyev makes a review of the books of jurisprudence and states that they are far from meeting the needs of the modern times since they have failed to demonstrate the universality of the Islamic law in relation to human life. In his view, the only exception to it is *al-Muwāfaqat* which is the only genuine book of *usul al-fiqh* (the fundamentals of religious law) since it explains the divine law, i.e., the Qur'an and the Sunna, in a comprehensive manner and lays out its principles in relation to human life. In this edition, Bigiyev claims that he also edited/corrected some of the errors of the Tunis version which is the first print edition of the book in 1302. Earlier in his article in *Ülfet*, he stated that this is one of the two books (the other one is Ahmad ibn Idris Qarafi's *Kitāb al-Furuq: Anwar al-Buruq fī Anwa al-Furuq*) that he recommended to those madrasa students who wanted to learn the Shari'a and the sciences of fiqh. He went further and claimed that among the books of *fiqh*, there is none equal to these two and there will not be in the

future.⁴⁹⁷ In the typesetting process, Zeki Velidi [Togan], in his memoir, narrates that he helped out Bigiyev while he was studying Arabic with him.

10. Musa Jarullah Bigiyef, *Kavaid-i Fıkhiyye (Rules of Islamic Jurisprudence)*. Kazan, Ürnek Matbaası, 1910, (pp. 232): This is a book on the principles of Islamic Jurisprudence. Bigiyev explained each principle with examples from modern life. It is written as an introduction to *Ahkam-ı Şer'iyecellesi/Mecmuası*, a project of the Sobraniye who aimed to collect and compile the legal rulings of Islam across Russia for the use of the qadis. In terms of structure, it is similar to Ahmed Cevdet Pasha's *Mecelle*, but it is different in content.
11. Musa Bigiyev, *Şeriat Niçin Rü'yeti İtibar Etmiş? (Why Did the Sharia Regard Eyeshot?)*. Kazan: Ürnek, 1910, (pp. 110): Although the name suggests that it is about a specific topic, it deals with a broad range of subjects like calculation of the months, years in the Islamic calendar, the solar Islamic calendar, the forbidden months, sighting the Ramadan crescent, the Qur'anic verses on days, months, and years, etc. It is unique in Bigiyev's corpus for it is a combination of his scholarship in Islamic and positive sciences. In the part which became the name of the book, Bigiyev deals with the question of the beginning of Ramadan. In his view, the Shari'a regards the naked eyeshot vis-a-vis the calculated method because religion is for everybody, not for specialists, and thus keeps things simple. But he also warned that it does not mean the total rejection of the scientific calculation in determining the beginning of Ramadan. In his review of the book, G. Gomerov criticized Bigiyev of relying heavily on Marjani's works, especially *Haq al-Ma'rifah*, and yet not citing his name properly and overemphasizing his mistakes,

⁴⁹⁷ Musa Bigiyev, "Zekat Mesarifi," *Ülfet*, no. 15, 16 March 1906.

if any.⁴⁹⁸ Bigiyev, on the other hand stated that he wrote the book as a refutation to Marjānī's *Wafiya*.⁴⁹⁹ Bigiyev reworked (revised and extended) on it while in Egypt in 1935 and published it in three separate volumes in Arabic under the pen name Ibn Fāṭimah, the Son of Fatma. 1st Volume: Ibn Fāṭimah, *Ayyam Hayat al-Nabiy al-Karim (Days of the Noble Prophet)*. Misr: Matbaah al-Saadah, 1354/1935 (pp. 32). 2nd Volume: Ibn Fāṭimah, *Nizam al-Taqwim fi'l Islam (The System of Calendar in Islam)*, Matba'at al-Tadamun al-Akhwi, li Sahibiha Ḥāfiẓ Muhammed Dawud [no year, but it should be 1935]. Third Volume: Ibn Fāṭimah, *Nizām al-Nes'i 'Inda al-'Arab: Qabla al-Islām (Alteration of Sacred Months among the Pre-Islamic Arabs)*, Misr: Maṭba'at al-Sa'adah, 1354/1935 [pp. 16]. In the third volume, Bigiyev also responds to Carlo Alfonso Nallino's *Ilm al-Falak: Ta'rîkhuhû 'inda l-'Arab fi l-qurûn al-wustâ*. Rome, 1911.

12. Musa Bigiyev, *Divan-ı Hafız Tercümesi (A Translation of the Compendium of Ḥāfiẓ)*. Kazan, Ürnek, 1910, (pp. 145): As the name suggests, this is a partial translation of Ḥāfiẓ's Compendium in Tatar. Among his goals in this work was to spark an interest in literature among the young generation and help out those who aspired to be poets in the future. Yet, it seems that he was not interested in maintaining the poetic style of Ḥāfiẓ in his translation so that his is more of a prose rather than poetry. Along with an explanation of the correct spelling of some certain words and their extended meanings in Turkish, which is not vital, if not unnecessary for this type of a translation, he sometimes cannot prevent himself to make lengthy comments on specific words and concepts when he felt necessary. This is his only translation from Persian to Tatar.

⁴⁹⁸ Gabdrakhman el-Gomeri, "Şeriat Niçin Rü'yeti Itibar Etmiş," *İdil*, no. 193, 3 October 1909.

⁴⁹⁹ M. Bigiyef, "Anlav Tiyyş İdi," *Yulduz*, no. 677, 1 May 1911.

13. Abī Muḥammad al-Qāsim ibn Fīrruh al-Shāṭibi (1144-1194), *Nāẓimat al-Zuhr*. Edited and annotated by Mūsā Jārullāh, Orenburg/Orsk: Vakit/Şark Matbaası, 1910, (pp. 112): Having heard of Sobraniye's decision of putting numbers at the end of each verse of the printed Qur'ans, Bigiyev further commented that consistency in determining the number of the verses and the pauses is also equally important. In doing so, he personally preferred Madani akhir over other five legitimate methods, ie., Madani awwal, Makki, Kufi, Shami, Basri. Thus, hoping to contribute to the project, he annotated Shatibi's *Nazima*, which, for Bigiyev, is the best book ever written on the subject.
14. Musa Bigiyef, *Rahmet-i İlahiye Burhanları (The Proofs of Divine Mercy)*. Orenburg: Vakit Matbaası, 1911 (pp. 97): This is a collection of his articles in *Shura* journal, except for the last chapter (Chapter 8), on the history of religions and universal salvation in Islam based on his class notes at the Hüseyiniye Madrasa in 1909.
15. Musa Bigiyef, *İnsanların Akide-i İlahiyelerine Bir Nazar (A Sketch at People's Religious Beliefs)*. Orenburg: Vakit Matbaası, 1911, (pp. 25): This is a continuation of *Proofs of the Divine Mercy*, comprising of two additional articles that appeared under the same name in *Shura*.⁵⁰⁰
16. Musa Jarullah Bigiyef, *Uzun Günlerde Ruze (Fasting on Long Days)*. Kazan: Ümid, 1911 (pp. 204): Based on his two field trips to the northern tips of Finland, which was the farthest inhabitable place in his time as he claimed, this is a book in which Bigiyev conducted his own *ijtihad* on the conditions of obligatory prayer and fasting under

⁵⁰⁰ In his *Bir Niçe Mesele* (p. 63), Bigiyev noted that since he had to stop writing on the commonality of divine mercy due to various reasons, he pursued it along with other topics in a separate volume, *İslamiyette Kader*. This is yet another book of him awaiting to be discovered. It also appears among the 122 books of Bigiyev on Uralgiray: Hallu Mas'alatu'l- Qadar (no. 43).

extreme geographical conditions.⁵⁰¹ In it, he also dealt with some principles of Islamic jurisprudence, such as qiyas and logic.

17. Ebu'l Khayr Muhammed bin Muhammed al-Jazari (1350-1429), *Tayyibat al-Nashr fi'l-Ashr* ed. By Musa bin Jarullah Rostofdoni. Kazan: Ümid, 1912 (pp. 308): This is an annotated version of al-Jazari's *Tayyibat al-Nashr fi Qirā'āt at al-Ashr* on variant reliable readings of the Qur'an. Commenting on it, Vakit newspaper stated that it had been assigned as a textbook in Medrese-i Muhammediye and Medrese-i Kasimiye.⁵⁰² Later in his life, Bigiyev commented that it would be okay if this book were the only fruit of his 70 years of life.⁵⁰³

18. Musa Efendi Bigiyef, *Halk Nazarına Bir Niçe Mesele (A Couple of Issues for People's Consideration)*. Kazan: Ümid, 1912, (pp. 93): This is a collection of his articles on a number of topics, including the future of the Tatar language and literature, the eloquence of the Tatar language, the reasons for the decline of the Islamic world vis-a-vis the the West, the importance of faith, translation of the Qur'an, etc. In *Small Thoughts on Big Issues*, he says that he wrote those articles during the discussion of a very important topic in the Tatar press three-four years earlier. But he refrained from occupying the public opinion with those articles back then because of the Italian invasion of Libya and the Balkan Wars.

⁵⁰¹ In his notes dating back to February 1930, Bigiyev stated that except for some awkward expressions, he was still content with what he said in it 20 years earlier. He also added that if he were to republish it again, he would fix those expressional issues and add a short supplement in it regarding the gradual evolution of fasting during the time of the Prophet in six bullet points. Not Defteri. Milli Kütüphane Yazmalar Koleksiyonu, 06 Mil Yz A 5912.

⁵⁰² "Basılıp Çıktı," *Vakit*, 1 March 1912.

⁵⁰³ Weli-Ahmed Hakim, *Ibid.*, p. 23.

19. Musa Jarullah, ***Büyük Mevzularda Ufak Fikirler (Small Thoughts on Big Issues)***. S.

Petersburg: M. A. Maksudov, 1914, (pp. 112): This is a critic of Ziyaeddin Kamali's *Dini Tebdirler (Religious Measures)* (1913) which came out as a volume in his series of the *Library of Religious Reform (Islahat-ı Diniye Kütüphanesi)*. In it, he discussed and criticized his fellow classmate back in the Hijaz, Kamali, for taking a "radical reformist" position on variety of topics, such as Sufism, translation of the Qur'an, the Night Journey of the Prophet Muhammed, createdness vs. uncreatedness of the Qur'an, the miracles, the caliphate, etc. In general, he stated that Islam is not in need of a religious reform as the author claimed. For example, Bigiyev says that it is not relevant to explain the existence of angels, which is founded in all divine religions, with the forces of the nature as Kamali does. He summarized his overall evaluation of Kamali's book as "small thoughts on big issues". The last chapter of the book is a critic of Turkish author Celal Nuri on account of his book *Hatemü 'l- Enbiya* and *Ittihad-ı Islam* in which the author attributed some "inappropriate" statements to the Prophet Muhammed, such as him being sick (so that he married multiple women) and calling the Prophet Muhammed as the Martin Luther of the 7th century. Just as the case with Kamali, Bigiyev summarized his overall assessment of Nuri's works as "small thoughts on big issues". Bigiyev also criticized Nuri for esteeming the Western scholars, but denigrating the great imams/scholars of Islam such as Bukhari, Imam Azam, etc. Bigiyev dedicated the book to Princes Kadria, the daughter of King Hussein Kamel of Egypt.

20. Musa Jarullah, ***Devlet Dumasında Meyyit Yakmak Meselesi (The Issue of Cremation at the State Duma)***. S. Petersburg: M. A. Maksudov, 1914, (pp. 16): Upon the request of the Muslim fraction of the Duma regarding the Islamic point of view on the issue of

cremation, Bigiyev wrote this short piece and basically stated that cremation is not permissible in Islam as it is contrary to human dignity.

21. Musa Jarullah, ***Maide: Zabiha hem Hitan (Maida: Zabihah and Circumcision)***. S. Petersburg: M. A. Maksudov, 1914, (pp. 32): Upon the request of the Muslim fraction in Duma regarding the issue of dhabihah, he wrote this piece first as an article in *Millet* newspaper, the media organ of Ittifaq al-Muslimin, and then published it as a separate book. Even though the subtitle includes circumcision, there is nothing about it in the book.

22. Musa Jarullah, ***Bir Nice Mülâhaza (Some Thoughts)***. Petrograd: M. A. Maksudov, 1914 (pp. 56): This is the book version of his consequent articles in *Shura* in which he reviewed Rizaeddin Fahreddin's *Dini ve İctimai Meseleler (Religious and Social Issues)*. Bigiyev added a couple of pages to the memory of Ismail Bey Gasprinskii and dedicated it to him since his death coincided with the publishing of the articles.

23. Mūsā Jārullāh, ***Peterburg'da 1914 Sene İyun 15-25 de Resmi Cemiyet Münasebetiyle Islahat Esasları: 1904-1915 Senelerde Rusya Müselmanlarının İctimai Hareketlerine Dair (Fundamentals of Reform in Connection with the Official Meeting on 15-25 June 1914: On the Social Movements of Muslims of Russia between the Years 1904 and 1914)***. Petersburg: M. A. Maksudov, 1915 (pp. 289): This is a history of political activities of Muslims of Russia. Even though the subtitle suggests that the book would deal with all the Muslim Congresses that were held between 1904 and 1915, it only covers the Ulema Congress in Ufa on 10-15 April 1905 and the first two all-Russian

Muslim Congresses in August 1905 and January 1906.⁵⁰⁴ Besides, it includes a detailed list of petitions by Muslims that were addressed to the Russian government between 1904 and 1906 and Bigiyev's comments on the March 31 (1906) Regulations pertaining to Muslim education in Russia. In the last part of the book, under the history of constitutional law in Russia, Bigiyev provided a Tatar translation of the 1906 Russian Constitution along with the internal regulations of the Duma in 63 articles. In its second edition, which came out right after the February Revolution in 1917, Bigiyev mentioned that he intended it to be a two-volume work but had to stop after the first one. Indeed, in a number of ads on the Tatar media of the time, it is noted that this is the first volume of a 700-800 pages work.

24. Musa Jarullah, ***Hukuk-i Esasiye: 124 Statye: 1906 Sene Aprel 23'te Tasdik Kılınmış Esas Kanunlar: En Son Neşr Kılınmış Kanun Mecellesinden Tercüme (Constitutional Law: 124 Articles: Fundamental Laws that were passed on 23 April 1906: Translation from the last edition of the book of law)***, Petersburg: M. A. Maksudov, 1916: A Tatar translation of the 1906 Russian Constitution comprised of a total of 124 articles which first appeared as a subchapter in *Islahat Esasları* (pp. 257-76). Interestingly, he noted that even though it is conventional to translate “constitution” as “kanun-i esasi” in the Turkish language, he preferred “esas kanunlar” throughout his translation because while the first is Arabic in nature, the latter is Turkic.

25. Musa Jarullah Efendi, ***Zekat (Almsgiving)***. Petrograd: Muhammed Alim Maksudov Matbaası, 1917 (pp. 96): Based on his consecutive articles in the *Shura* journal, Bigiyev,

⁵⁰⁴ Bigiyev already published an account of the Third all-Russian Muslim Congress on August 1906 in his *Umum Rusya Müslümanlarının 3üncü Resmi Nedveleri* (Kazan: Matbaa-i Kerimiye, 1906). Interestingly enough, even though it is dedicated to June 1914 Petersburg Congress as the title suggests, there is nothing on it in the book. Perhaps, he was planning to cover it in the second volume which did not come out.

in this book deals with the question of *riba*, interest. Having summarized the views of the three Abrahamic religions, i.e., Judaism, Christianity and Islam, the scholars of economy, the philosophers, and the Muslim jurists on related terms like *riba*, *karz*, *duyun*, *faiz*, *itibar*, bank transactions, etc., he conducted his own *ijtihad* on it. He reiterated that the human intellect is always free and thus he can doubt any view that is presented by the scholars of economy, the Muslim jurists, and any of the three Abrahamic religions, so long as it is for the sake of finding the truth.

26. Musa Jarullah, *Şeriat Esasları (The Fundamentals of the Sharia)*. Petrograd:

Muhammed Alim Maksudov Matbaası, 1917 (pp. 72): This book is about the reality of the Shari'a, major themes of the Qur'an, the history and the principles of *fiqh*, women's rights, the question of veil, etc. In it, he basically aimed to show the superiority of Islam vis-a-vis other systems of laws, be it religious or secular. Ziyinetullah Nuşirevan published excerpts from it along with a short introduction on religious revival and Bigiyev on *Kırım Mecmuası* in 1918.⁵⁰⁵ An unpublished manuscript of Barthold's review of it was found in Barthold's archive in the fund of Prof. Ilya Nikolaevich Borozdin (1883-1959) in the Archives of the Russian Academy of Sciences in Moscow.⁵⁰⁶

27. Musa Jarullah, *İslam Milletlerine: Dini Edebi İçtimai Meseleler Tedbirler (To the Muslim Nations: Religious, Literary, and Social Issues and Measures)*. Berlin: Matbaa-i Kavyani, 1923 (pp. 109): Based on his presentation in the 1920 Ufa Congress on the political future of the Muslims of Russia, Bigiyev wrote this book as a response to the *ABC of Communism* by Nikolay Bukharin and Yevgeni Preobrazhensky (1920). It was

⁵⁰⁵ Nuşirevan, Ibid.

⁵⁰⁶ I. V. Zaitsev, "Neizvestnaya Petzenziya Akad. V. V. Bartold'a na Knigu Musy Bigiyeva 'Osnovy Shariata,'" *Pax Islamica*, 2013, 6/1, pp. 161-66.

published by Ayaz Ishaki in Germany under the title of *Islam Milletlerine*, though Bigiyev's intended title was the *ABC of Islam*. Bigiyev dedicated it to the "Glorious Turkish Soldiers" and donated its revenue to the orphans of these soldiers.

28. Musa Jarullah, *Şeriat-i İslamiye Nazarında Müskirat Meseleleri (The Issues of Liquor in the Eyes of Sharia)*. Istanbul: Mahmud Bey Matbaası, 1927 (pp. 48): This book consists of Bigiyev's response to the questions of Muslims of Crimea regarding the Islamic rulings on the consumption of liquor, i.e., raki, during his stay in Crimea between October 6th and November 18th in 1925. He got it published in Istanbul on his way to the Hajj and donated all its revenue to the Turkish Green Crescent Society. Having summarized the conventional Hanafi ruling on the question, he went on to explain his own judgement in the form of an *ijtihad*.
29. Musa Jarullah, *Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisine Müracaat (Appeal to the Turkish Grand National Assembly)*. Cairo: 1931/1350: Having completed in 1921, Bigiyev was able to publish it in 1931 in Egypt. In it, he laid out his proposal for an Islamic civil code for the new Turkish Republic and suggested the formation of an Academy of Sciences of Fiqh. While in Tashkent in 1923, he handed in a manuscript of it to Ismail Suphi [Soysallıoğlu], a member of the Turkish parliament back then, to be passed on to Mustafa Kemal Pasha. But it did not receive a good reception from him.⁵⁰⁷
30. Musa Jarullah, *Tarihin Unutulmuş Sahifeleri (The Forgotten Pages of History)*. Berlin, 1933: The book is of two parts. The first part (*Sultan Aziz'in Şehaetine Asıl Sebep Ne idi? (What was the Real Reason for Sultan Abdulaziz's Martyrdom)*) is on the policy mistakes of Sultan Abdulaziz and Abdulhamid II in regards to the unity of Muslims. It is

⁵⁰⁷ Abdullah Battal-Taymas, *Musa Carullah Bigi*, 20.

based on Abdurresit Ibrahimov's notes that he handed in to Bigiyev most probably in Egypt in 1930.⁵⁰⁸ The second part (*Rusya Müslümanlarının Açlık Hallerinden Dehşetli Bir Hatıra (A Scary Reminiscence from the Russian Muslims' Famine)*) is about the Russia Famine of 1921-22 and it is written by Bigiyev himself.⁵⁰⁹ In it, Bigiyev summarized how the Soviet Government collaborated with the Diniye Nezareti to help out those, mostly Muslims, who were affected by the famine. In this regard, the Nezaret were allowed by the Soviet government to send two representatives to Turkey in 1922, where they were able to attract very little provision.⁵¹⁰

31. Ibn Fāṭimah, *Kur'an-ı Kerim Ayet-i Kerimleri Huzurunda Hatun (Women, in the Presence of the Verses of the Qur'an)*. Berlin, [Koyash Matbaası], 1933/1352 (pp. 108): In it, he discusses women's rights and reverence in Islam in general. Some of the subtopics include marriage, family, divorce, polygamy, inheritance, testimony of women, custody of children, etc. Where he discusses polygamy in Islam, he stated that it is not the norm, but a necessary exemption for widows. He says that he finished it back in 1916. He devoted it to his beloved wife Esmâ Hanım with sincere word of devotion to her.
32. Musa Jarullah, *Kur'an-ı Kerim Ayet-i Kerimelerinin Muciz İfadelerine Göre Ye'cüc (Gog according to the Miraculous Expressions of the Verses of the Qur'an)*. Berlin: 1933 (pp. 38): This is book in which he conducted an *ijtihād* on the meaning and identity

⁵⁰⁸ Looking at Bigiyev's notes in his diary, it is safe to assert that he had similar thoughts on Abdulhamid II. Not Defteri. Milli Kütüphane Yazmalar Koleksiyonu, Yer Numarası 06 Mil Yz A 5909, p. 9.

⁵⁰⁹ For the most part, it is based on his notes in his notebook Not Defteri, Milli Kütüphane Yazmalar Koleksiyonu, Yer Numarası 06 Mil Yz A 5912, pp. Pdf. 6-7.

⁵¹⁰ Even though Bigiyev says that he cannot remember the names of those two representatives, they should be Feyzi Bubi and İlyas Molla of Kazan. Muharrem Feyzi joined the group in Turkey as the permanent representative of the all-Russian Muslims in Turkey and Europe, a position which was also recognized by then Hilal-i Ahmer now Yeşilay (Turkish Green Crescent Society). "Muharrem Feyzi Togay III," *İslam-Türk Ansiklopedisi Mecmuası*, October 1947.

of Gog and Magog. After severely criticizing Muslim commentators on account of their failure in clarifying the true identity of them -for example some commentators, relying on the reports of the Old testament and other Christian sources, referred to the Turks as Gog and Magog- he concluded that Gog and Magog are context specific. For example, while Genghis and Hulagu could have been Gog and Magog in regard to the Turkish-Muslim world at that time, the colonial Western powers could be the Gog and Magog in the modern times because of what they have done to the entire humanity in general and the Islamic world in particular. According to the note at the end of the book, it came in part of a series of books answering the questions of Abdurrahman Ahund Nasreddin of Kashgar⁵¹¹ and completed on 31 May 1930.⁵¹²

33. Mūsā Jārullāh/Ibn Fāṭimah, *al-Washī'ah fī naqd 'Aqā'id al-Shī'ah (A Reel of the Critic of the Doctrines of the Shiites)*. Cairo: Matba'at al-Khanji, 1355/1936: This is Bigiyev's well-known refutation of the Shi'a. Having traveled in the Shi'a crescent (Iran and Iraq particularly) for about eight months in 1934-35, he came up with this "invitation" rather than a "refutation" to solve the fundamental problems between the Sunnis and the Shi'ites. In it he basically reiterated some of the well-known Sunni allegations against the Shi'a, such as the misinterpretation of the Qur'anic text, the notion of the infallible imam, insult of the wives and Companions of the Prophet, the practice of temporary marriage, dissimulation (taqiyya), etc. Some accusations are peculiar to Bigiyev, such as having no memorizers of the Qur'an among the Shi'as and the oppression of women. Not

⁵¹¹ Uralgiray, based on Isa Yusuf Alptekin's narration, states that he, along with two others, were detained and eventually executed by the Soviets on account of their help for Bigiyev in crossing the Soviet border to the Chinese Turkestan. Uralgiray, *Ibid.*, p. xvii.

⁵¹² Bigiyev answered another question of Nasreddin which was regarding the Greek Academy. Milli Kütüphane, Not Defteri 06 Mil Yz A 5912. Perhaps he was thinking of it as another one in the series.

surprisingly, towards the end of the book, he went out of topic and did *ijtihād* on some unrelated issues like fasting (pp. 210-11). The book was well received in Arabia and India and shortly went out of circulation. It got also considerable responses from the Shi'a ulama.⁵¹³ Nonetheless the circulation of the book in Iraq was banned by the Iraqi government and the author was prohibited to enter Iraq, Iran, and Yemen because of it.⁵¹⁴

34. Mūsā Jārullāh, *Risālah fī Sarf al-Qur'ān al-Karīm (Epistle on the Morphology of the Noble Qur'an)*. Bhopal: Central India Press, 1944: It is primarily on the conjugation of some of the most common verbs in the Qur'an. In his conclusion, Bigiyev states that he wrote this book during his stay in the house of a certain Seyyid Ömer Ahunbay in Kashgar back in 1931.
35. Mūsā Jārullāh, *Kitāb al-Tartīb al-Suwar al-Karīma wa Tanāsubihā fī al-Nuzūl wa fī al-Masāḥif (Order of the Chapters of the Qur'an and the Coherence in its Revelation and Compilations)*. Bhopal: Central India Press, 1944 (pp. 352).⁵¹⁵ It is a small-scale commentary on the Qur'an based on the chronological order of the chapters. Bigiyev published it right after his release from the prison in India and dedicated it to his protégé Nuwab of Bhopal Hamidullah Khan.

⁵¹³ Among them are the Iraqi born Lebanese Shi'a scholar As- Sayyid Abd al-Hosain Sharaf al-Din al-Musawi's (1873-1957), *Ajwiba Masail Jarullah*; Abd al-Husayn al-Rashti (1875-1953)'s *Kasf al-Ishtibah*; Another Lebanese scholar al-Sayyid Muḥsin al-Amin al-'Āmilī's *Naqd al-washī'ah aw al-Shi'a bayn al-ḥaqāiq wa'l- awham*; Mahdi al Dawud's *Naqd al-Washī'a wa'l Islam al-Sahih*.

⁵¹⁴ Uralgiray, *Ibid.*, p. 18. Even ten years after the debut of the book, he was still not allowed to visit these three countries. Uralgiray, *Ibid.*, p. 21.

⁵¹⁵ For a partial translation of it in Turkish, see Ömer Rıza Doğrul, "Kuran-ı Kerim Hakkında," *Yeni Selamet*, 1949.

36. Mūsā Jārullāh, *Hurūf al-Awā'il al-Suwār (Initial Letters of the Chapters of the Qur'an)*. Bhopal: Central India Press, 1944: As the name suggests, it is a commentary on the initial letters of the chapters of the Qur'an.
37. 'Ubaidullāh Sindhī and Mūsā Jārullāh, *Ilhām al-Raḥmān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān: 'Alā uṣūl al-Imām Shāh Walī Allāh al-Dihlawī (Inspirations of the Merciful in the Commentary of the Qur'an: On the Way of Shah Wali Allah al-Delhi)*. Karachi: Bayt al-Hikma, 195(?), (pp. 344+248): This is a commentary on the early chapters of the Qur'an dictated by Sindhī to Bigiyev in 1937-38 in Mecca. It was later on published in two volumes by Abu Said Ghulam Mustafa Al-Qasimi al-Sindhī, most probably a disciple of Sindhī.
38. Mūsā Jārullah /Musa ibn Fāṭimah, *Kitāb al-Sunnah (The Book of Sunna)*. Bhopal: 1945, (pp. 170): In general, the book is a response to those who consider the Qur'an as the only source of Islam at the expense of ignoring the tradition of the Prophet Muhammed. Basically, Bigiyev claims that without the knowledge of the Sunna, it is not possible to understand the Qur'an. Moreover, he puts Sunna before the Qur'an since it is the Prophet who introduced a specific practice first and then the Qur'an legitimized it. Not surprisingly, he also deals with some apparently unrelated topics in length such as jihad, the Shi'a notion of the infallible imam, which he criticizes harshly, the sources of knowledge (intellect, tawatur (naql), five senses plus speech), the sources of the Shari'a (the Qur'an, Sunna, ijma, and qiyas), etc.
39. Mūsā Jārullāh, *Nizām al-Jāmiat al-Islāmīyah al- 'Ilmiyyah (The Bylaw of the Islamic University)*. (Bombay: Maṭba'at al- qaimah, 1946), pp. 16: Dedicated to Dr. Zakir Hussain (1897-1969), the head of the *Jamia* and later on the 3rd President of India. 1946 was the silver jubilee year of the *Jamia* and the book is an outcome of it as indicated in

the frontispiece. In it Bigiyev laid out an ideal curriculum for the organization's educational institute.

40. Mūsā Jārullāh, *Ta'mīn al-Ḥayāh wa al-Amlāk (Life and Property Insurance)*. 1944. I was not able to locate the original. However, an Urdu translation of it was published in 1947 by Muṭī'ullāh Afghānī: *Islām aur Bīmah: 'Allāmah Mūsā Jār Allāh kī ma'rakatulārā kitāb /Ta'mīn al-ḥayāh wa-al-amwāl wa-al-amlāk kā tarjumah*. Dihlī: Sangam Kitābghar. After Mutiullah's Foreword (pp. 3-9) and Muhammad Ahmad Sabzwary⁵¹⁶'s Introduction (pp. 10-28), the Urdu translation of Jarullah's work follows (pp. 29-74).

⁵¹⁶ Born in 1913, Sabzwary was still alive and active as of 2017.

APPENDIX 2- A LIST OF BIGIYEV'S ARTICLES

In Appendix II, I laid out a list of his scholarly articles, along with his published letters. It includes a good number of hitherto unknown pieces by Bigiyev. It is also the most accurate and complete list so far. Yet it is always possible to come across his unknown articles in places, such as the Egyptian press, Muslim press in Germany and India in the years when he stayed in those places while in exile.

Ülfet (St. Petersburg)

1. Musa Bigiyev, "Petersburg'da Avtanomiklar Cemiyeti," no. 1, 11 December 1905.
2. Musa Bigiyev, "Petersburgda Müslümanlar Cemiyeti [I, II, III]," no. 2/7/9, 22 December 1905/22 January/2 February 1906.
3. Musa Bigiyev, "Petersburg Cemiyeti [I, II]," no. 10/11, 9/16 February 1906.
4. Musa Bigiyev, "Student Muhammedcan Efendi Tunçbayef Cenablarının Hutbesi," no. 3, 29 December 1905.
5. Musa Bigiyev, "Kazan Misyonerleri," no. 4, 5 January 1906.
6. Musa Bigiyev, "Balalar Terbiyesi Analarga," no. 4, 5 January 1906.
7. Musa [Bigiyev], "Petersburg'da Bulacak Büyük Cemiyet," no. 5, 12 January 1906.
8. Musa Bigiyev, "Afyon Meselesi," no. 5, 12 January 1906.
9. Musa [Bigiyev], "Büyük Beşaret," no. 8, 26 January 1906.
10. Musa Bigiyev, "Cevap," no. 9, 2 February 1906.
11. Musa Bigiyev, "Mektep Medreseler," no. 10, 9 February 1906.
12. Musa [Bigiyev], "Tarih-i Hicri'nin İptidası," no. 11, 16 February 1907.

13. Musa Bigiyev, "Kırgızların Dini Hakkında Hükümetin Fikri," no. 12, 23 February 1906.
14. Musa Bigiyev, "Zekat Mesarifi, Mektep-Medreseler Nafakası [I, II, III]," no. 12/13/15, 23 February/2 March/16 March 1906.
15. Musa [Bigiyev], "Fetvalar," no. 18, 6 April 1906.
16. Musa Bigiyev, "Mektep Medreseler," no. 26, 8 June 1906.
17. [Musa] Bigiyef, "Hememize Lazım," no. 28, 28 June 1906.
18. Musa Bigiyev, "Umum Rusya Müselmanları Ittifakı 3'ncü İçtimai [I]," no. 35, 15 August 1906.
19. Musa Bigiyev, "Rusya Müselmanlarının Üçüncü Nedvesi [II, III]," no. 37-38, 30 August-6 September 1906.
20. Peterburg Vekili Musa Bigiyev, "Bir Gün Olur Hakikat Meydana Gelir," no. 36, 23 August 1906.

Vakit (Orenburg)

1. Musa Bigiyev, "Lazım Değil Bir Müdafaa," no. 537, 29 October 1909.
2. Musa Bigiyef, "En Ahir Sözü," no. 556, 16 December 1909.
3. Musa Bigiyef, "Gelecek Günlerde Şeriatımız," no. 565, 12 January 1910.
4. Musa Bigiyef, "Yine Mühim Bir Mesele," no. 569, 21 January 1910.
5. Musa Bigiyev, "Beyan-ı Hakikat," no. 646, 24 July 1910.
6. Musa Bigiyev, "Kütüb-i Sitte ve Müellifleri," no. 666, 10 September 1910.
7. Musa Bigiyev, "Şeriat-i İslamiye Hürmetine Bir Rica," no. 669, 16 September 1910.
8. Musa Bigiyef, "Benim Emelim Benim İmanım," no. 713, 1 January 1911.
9. Musa Bigiyef, "Ahkam-ı Şer'iye Mecellesi," no. 719, 15 January 1911.

10. Musa Bigiyef, "Ahkam-ı Şer'iye Mecellesi Hakkında," no. 744, 10 March 1911.
11. Musa Jarullah, "Tatar Dünyasında Rezalet," no. 957, 19 April 1912.
12. Musa Bigiyev, "Merhum Ali Asgar Efendi Sırtlanof Cenabları," no. 1032, 7 September 1912.
13. Musa Jarullah, "Abdullah Efendi Tukayev," no. 1186, 27 April 1913.
14. Musa Jarullah, "Teessuf Etmiş idim İmdi Anladım," no. 1219, 8 June 1913.
15. Musa Jarullah, "Siyonizm I-II," no. 1254/1261/1262, 20/28/30 July 1913.
16. Musa Jarullah, "Siyonizm Münasebetiyle," no. 1266, 3 August 1913.
17. Musa Jarullah, "Son Günlerde Naçar Haller I," no. 1886/1891/1900, 10/16/28 October 1915.
18. Musa Jarullah, "Evvelki Süzlerim I-II," no. 2012-13, 5-6 April 1916.
19. Musa Jarullah, "Son Süzim [I-II]," no. 2040-41, 1-3 June 1916.
20. Musa Jarullah, "Edeb Hürmetine," no. 2064, 13 July 1916.
21. Musa Jarullah, "Hacı Yusuf Efendinin Makaleleri Münasebetiyle," no. 2104, 4 October 1916.
22. Musa Jarullah, "Medrese-i Aliye hem Milletın Vazifesi," no. 2150, 28 December 1916.

Shura (Orenburg)

1. Musa Bigiyev, "İlm-i Ahval-i Ruh," no. 22, 15 November 1909, pp. 689-91.
2. [Musa Bigiyef], "Tarih-i Edyan: Muhterem Musa Efendi Dersi," no. 22, 15 November 1909, pp. 679-82.
3. Musa Bigiyev, "Rahmet-i İlahiye Umumiyeti Hakkında İtikadım," no. 23, 1 December 1909, pp. 716-20.

4. Musa Bigiyev, "Rahmet-i İlahiye Umumiyeti Hakkında Berahinim," no. 24, 15 December 1909, pp. 750-6.
5. Musa Bigiyev, "Rahmet-i İlahiye Umumiyeti Hakkında Burhanlarım," no. 1-2-3, 1-15 January/1 February 1910, pp. 11-6/50-59/83-88.
6. Musa Bigiyev, "Lisanımızda İlmi İstilahlar," no. 2, 15 January 1910, pp. 42-3.
7. Musa Bigiyev, "Kuyruklu Yıldız," no. 4, 15 February 1910, pp. 104-06.
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12. Musa Bigiyef, "Cevaplarım," no. 11, 1 June 1911, pp. 333-38.
13. Musa Bigiyef, "Cevaplarım: Kavaid-i Fıkhiye Hakkında," no. 12, 15 June 1911, pp. 356-60.
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15. Musa Jarullah Bigiyev, "Kuran-ı Kerimin Vucuh-i Arabiyesi II," no. 3, 1 February 1912, pp. 76-9.
16. Musa Jarullah, "wa khasaf al-qamar wa jumi'a al-shamsu wa al-qamar," no. 8, 15 April 1912, pp. 253-6.

17. Musa Jarullah, "Büyük Mevzularda Ufak Fikirler," no. 4, 15 February 1914, pp. 106-10.⁵¹⁷
18. Musa Jarullah, "Ramazan 29'da Külli Küsuf," no. 11, 1 June 1914, pp. 336-38.
19. Musa Bigiyev, "Kur'an Ayetleri ve Tanışları Hakkında," no. 18, 15 September 1914, pp. 558-59.
20. Musa Jarullah, "Dini ve İçtimai Meseleler: Dini ve İçtimai Meseleler İsimli Eserni İntikat I-II-III-IV-V," no. 20/21/22/23/24, 15 October/1-15 November/1-15 December 1914, pp. 628-31/649-52/677-80/709-15/742- 46.
21. Musa Jarullah, "Dini Meseleler I: Süz Besmelesi," no. 15, 1 August 1916, pp. 363-67.
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23. Musa Jarullah, "Dini Meseleler: İlim Nazarında Riba," no. 24/1, 15 December 1916/1January 1917, pp. 573-77/7-10.
24. Musa Jarullah "Dini Meseleler: Fakihler Nazarında Riba," no. 4-5, 15 February- 1 March 1917, pp. 76-81/97-100.
25. Musa Jarullah, "Ehl-i İlim İltifatına," no. 17, 1 September 1917, p. 408.

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1. Musa Bigiyef, "İtizar," no. 441, 10 March 1909.
2. Musa Bigiyef, "Kur'an-ı Kerim Resmi Hakkında Bir İki Süz," no. 441, 10 March 1909.
3. Musa Bigiyef, "Fitne Ocağı Nerede," no. 457, 19 April 1909.

⁵¹⁷ Even though it was noted at the end of the article that it would continue in the following issues, I was not able to locate the second part of it.

4. Musa Bigiyev, "Feylesof İmam el- Maarri Hazretlerine Hüda Rahmet Etsin," no. 481, 14 June 1909.
5. Musa Bigiyev, "Tüşünü Tiyiş İdi," no. 487, 28 June 1909.
6. Musa Bigiyev, "Ehl-i Kitabın Şهادeti [I-II-III-IV]," no. 520/521/522/523, 17/20/22/27 September 1909.

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1. Musa Jarullah, "Son Zaman Vehhabilerinin Siyasi, Dini Gayeleri," no. 7, October 1925, pp. 155-61.
2. Musa Jarullah, "Müskirat Meseleleri [I-II-III-IV-V]," no. 9/10/11/12/13, February/April/June/September/November 1926, pp. 198-202/221-24/245-247/272-275/294-98.
3. Musa Jarullah, "Teşekkürlerim," no. 9, February 1926, p 212.

İL (St. Petersburg)

1. Musa Jarullah, "Şeriat-i İslamiyeye Benim Nazarım [I-II]," no. 1/3, 22 October/November 1913.
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3. Musa Jarullah, "Hatır Defterinden: Mektep-Medreselere, Ruhani İdarelere Dair Nizamlar Hakkında," no. 6, 28 November 1913.
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3. Musa Bigiyef, "Her Şeyden Biraz 1," no. 649, 22 February 1911.
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5. Musa Bigiyef, "Her Şeyden Biraz IV: Feylosof Tolstoy [I-II-III]," no. 653/654/657, 6/8/10 March 1911.⁵¹⁸
6. Musa [Bigiyef], "Kavaid-i Fıkhiye Hakkında," no. 666, 5 April 1911.
7. M. Bigiyef, "Anlav Tiyiş İdi," no. 677, 1 May 1911.

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2. Musa Bigiyef, "Resm-i Kur'an," no. 61, 18 February 1909.
3. Musa Bigiyef, "Kur'an-ı Kerimin Resmi," no. 63, 9 March 1909.
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1. Musa Jarullah, "Mektep," no. 1, 21 February 1913, pp. 5-8.

⁵¹⁸ Even though it is noted that there was more to it, I was not able to locate the remainder of the article in the following issues.

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1. Musa Jarullah, “Mekatib: Moskova'dan,” cilt. 14, no. 361, 4 July 1334, pp. 208-9.

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1. [Musa Jarullah], “Şu Günkü Buhran İçinde İslam hem Müselmanlar,” no. 1, 24 December 1917.

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1. Musa Jarullah, “Mektuplar: Hazreti Üstaz [Abdurreşid İbrahimov'a],” c. 1, no. 9, 20 Haziran 1329 [3 July 1913], pp. 142-3.

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⁵¹⁹ Togan in his memoir noted that Enver Pasha and his friends were using *Liwa al-İslam* as a tool in their anti-British and pro-Russian propaganda. Togan, *Hatıralar*, p. 328.

1. Musa Jarullah, “Müslümanlık Hayat Kanunudur, Müslümanlık Hayat Hukukudur,” cilt 2, no. 82, October 1947, pp. 13-14.

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1. Musa Jarullah, “Cebir ve Kader Meselesi,” no. 39, 13 February 1948, p. 3.

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