Chapter 1

Jadid-inspired Paths to Modernity, 1914-1917

"Without education no one advances. One stays behind, blind."[1]

In the final years of the Russian Empire, an intellectual awakening among Muslims stretched across Crimea, the Volga region, and Azerbaijan reaching Turkestan, and finally Transcaspia, where reformists, in their aim to make society modern, encouraged new methods of teaching and advanced social norms such as universal literacy or the education of women in their aim to make society modern.[2] Turkmen added their voices to the deliberation at the beginning of the twentieth century most prominently in the pages of the Turkmen/Persian bilingual newspaper *Ruznama-i Mawera-i Bahr-i Hazar*, published 1914-1917, in Aşgabat. Writing about the need to change overall social conditions, they argued that Turkmen needed to actively engage modernity and pursue such ideals as the shaping of society through learning, privileging secular knowledge over religious authority, and empowerment of the ordinary person through education.[3] This debate continued into the Soviet period, blending with Bolshevik projects that aimed to change society through a modern education combined with socialist values. But even before Bolshevism made its way to Turkmen lands, modernist thinkers favored socio-cultural reform and, like Turks around the Russian empire, urged their fellow Muslims to "wake up [and] open schools…become literate and seek progress [*tarakgy*]!"[4] To that end, a handful of Turkmen began setting up schools and publishing their ideas. Following the example of reform-minded Muslims throughout Eurasia, these Turkmen sought out modernity and attempted to situate themselves within the greater world, a world that was both Russian and Muslim.

Scholarship has traditionally left Turkmen out of the histories of Central Asian reformism or Jadidism, as it is called in the literature.[5] For example, Adeeb Khalid posits that cultural reform "never emerged as a viable phenomenon in Turkmen society."[6] However, there was a form of cultural activism among Turkmen that obligates historians to include Turkmen in comprehensive studies of early Central Asian reform. The Turkmen belong in the historical record: their voices, ideas, and social activities should be acknowledged to more fully develop our access to Central Asian history. If we incorporate the Turkmen experience into the history of Jadidism more broadly, we widen our lens on that discourse and enhance our ability to understand its important role in Muslim Turks' relationship with modernity and can then access the experiences of a people who straddled multiple worlds: territorially and culturally the Turkic world; politically colonial Russia; and spiritually and culturally the greater Muslim world. Jadid-inspired Turkmen wanted to traverse all of them.

Turkmen had been actively participating in a reform discourse for only a few years when the Bolshevik Revolution took place. But Jadidism was short-lived among Turkmen, as just over a decade later, purges of Turkmen cultural workers caused a serious rupture in cultural affairs. The story of the Turkmen participation in the debates over tradition, modernity, Islam, and social transformation of the 1910s illustrates how Jadidism informed Turkmen thinking on all of these matters. Experiences within the greater Muslim world led Turkmen reformers to draw connections between literacy, learning, and Turkmen identity that would continue to be relevant throughout the twentieth and into the twenty-first century.

Traditional *Mekdeps*

Muslim children usually began studying around age five to seven. Boys could enter the *mekdep* (elementary school) and girls could begin studies with the wife of the *molla* (a learned person who teaches), but only if their families were well enough off that they could spare their labor. The first stages of learning varied between rituals such as ablutions and prayers and memorizing the alphabet.[7] Traditional Muslim schools relied on rote memorization of Islamic subjects in Persian or Arabic. That meant students did not possess functional literacy (they were unable to read and write freely) and could only recite memorized passages.

Traditional elementary school teachers were clerics who the community recognized as educated men: *mollas*, *imams*, and *ahuns.*[8] However, these instructors had no training in pedagogy, but they did possess cultural authority. In addition to their duties in the *mekdep*, they performed such sacred acts as life-cycle rituals at weddings, funerals, births, and holidays, and they would perform administrative services for the community such as record keeping, handling testaments, and settling inheritances. They did this into the Soviet era.[9] This aspect of the clerics' role did not come into question as much with Turkmen reformers, they were not against Islamic ritual, but they did contest the influential social power clerics held as an unchallenged intellectual authority.

The organization of traditional schools was uniform. There were no desks or blackboards. Texts included the *Qur'an* and other religious books that introduced the basic theory and practice of Islam. When studying, students sat on the floor in a half-circle with the instructor in the center facing the entrance. In this configuration, an instructor's *taýak* or stick could reach each student, disciplining and encouraging them. Most of the time, students studied their lessons and made progress individually without the teacher's oversight; older students often helped younger students. Graduates gained the ability to recite passages from memory, but most students never acquired functional literacy skills.[10] The ability to cite a suitable passage from the *Qur'an* or a *hadith*[11] in appropriate circumstances was a respected quality in a gentleman and a highly venerated Islamic tradition. Most students did not leave the *mekdep* to become gentlemen, but ultimately took on farming or a trade. In the end, the lessons learned at the

mekdep were soon forgotten, and Turkmen reformers began to think that they did most students little good, unless they were lucky enough to have a relative at home who helped them advance their skills.[12]

There were two basic ways of funding *mekdeps* in late-tsarist Turkestan. Schools could rely on a *waqf* or religious endowment[13] (but those were typically committed to *medreses*); or, most common for *mekdeps*, parents paid money or sometimes in kind.[14] The location and housing of *mekdeps* was another question. *Waqf*-supported schools included living quarters for the teacher and a space for instruction. They were sometimes located in a mosque, a *yurt*, or for some nomads under the open sky in the desert.[15] There were also itinerant *mollas* who travelled with pastoral and nomadic families, teaching the alphabet or basic religious concepts to the children for a while before moving on.[16] For the majority of Turkmen it is most likely that a *mekdep* education would have been in a village setting.

Russian-Native schools for Turkmen

Aside from *mekdeps*, there were also a handful of Russian government schools called *russko-tuzemnye shkoly,* or Russian-native schools, founded for Turkmen in 1895, though there were few graduates in the early years.[17] The Russian Ministry of Education opened *russko-tuzemnye shkoly* (Russian-native schools) – or as they were sometimes called in official documents *inorodecheskiia uchilishcha* (schools for aliens) – as an alternative set of schools for the "eastern nationalities" starting in 1870.[18] These were four-year institutions offering both Russian and traditional Muslim education in Russian and the local language.[19] The curriculum was designed so that, upon graduation, students would be able to read and write in Russian. Knowledge of Russian would be central to individuals' assimilation into the empire as well as their contribution to the acceptance of Russian cultural hegemony. The reason for this was not simply to help them align with Russian values but also to train cadres of native administrators who would be able to handle Russian language documents.[20]

After the Revolution of 1905, which expanded religious toleration, any goals of assimilation to the majority culture of the Empire no longer included conversion. Regulations of 1907 underscored this, outlining the intention to promote Russian ways of thinking via Russian language but without converting natives to Orthodoxy.[21] The orientalist Vasilii V. Radlov, editor of the Russian Ministry of Education's journal *Zhurnal Ministerstva Narodnogo Prosveshcheniia* (*ZhMNP*) wrote that the *russko-tuzemnye* schools would act as "a middle ground between our state education system and the Muslim population…[showing] the Muslims that the government in no way desires to concern itself with their religious notions, but is trying only to raise the level of their development, for their own good."[22] With this statement he describes the empire's civilizing mission. Nikolai Petrovich Ostroumov (1846-1930)[23] wrote frequently in *ZhMNP* and also used the gazette he edited, *Turkistan wilayatining gazeti,* as a

tool for "enlightening natives." Various Russian administrators sought ways of integrating Muslims into the empire while engendering the least amount of resistance. Education was an important site for employing this tactic.

Adrienne Edgar explains how the Russo-native schools were designed to "educate the natives in the spirit of respect for the throne and state, Russian law and power…"[24] and "to prepare future Russian speaking translators, clerks, military officers, and teachers."[25] Kurbanov and Kuz'min note that these schools aimed to graduate "faithful subjects."[26] This underscores the pragmatic side of the equation, but does not contradict the Turkmen scholar Kurbanov, who focuses on natives as culture brokers. Kurbanov writes that, "*Russko-tuzemnye* schools were designed to bring the Turkmen people closer to the Russian language and way of life. In that way, an influence slowly developed over time translating Russian culture to the Turkmen populace."[27] It was for this reason that the *ulema* had a healthy "mistrust" of the schools, fearing that they were designed "to convert students to orthodoxy"; that was in addition to undermining their positions in society and "stealing their jobs."[28]

Russia needed local administrators who were proficient in Russian. Edgar elaborates, asserting that that the influence of the tiny group of *tuzemnye*-educated Turkmen was significant in that they produced a Russian speaking, culturally Russified group who "later became the key political figures in the Soviet Turkmen republic."[29] Ivan Alexander Beliaev (d. 1920), who was Chief School Inspector for Transcaspia as well as editor of the Transcaspian newspaper *Ruznama-i Mawera-i Bahr-i Hazar,* hoped that the *russko-tuzemnye* schools would spread "culture among Turkmen."[30]

However, Turkmen scholar Hezretguly Durdiýew notes, however, that the number of students in Transcaspia enrolled in *tuzemnye* schools was small.[31] This is supported by the Russian administration's count of a total of 228 students in five *tuzemnye* schools in 1908; only one hundred of these students were ethnic Turkmen.[32] A year later, according to Count Pahlen, there were ten *tuzemnye* schools in the Transcaspian region with three hundred twenty-eight students.[33] By the 1914-15 academic year, the number had indeed grown to fifty-eight *tuzemnye* schools the Turkmen territory, but this was compared to two hundred nine *mekdeps*.[34] And Russian imperial and Soviet documents reveal that *mekdeps* continued to grow in number for at least a decade after 1917; the number of traditional schools far outnumbered the Russian-native schools. In 1910, in Transcaspia, there were 557 mekteps, with 9560 students (900 girls) and 56 medreses with 911 students.[35]

Jadidism

Muslims throughout the Russian empire had identified education as a social condition in need of immediate change in order for their people to become modern. Growing dissatisfaction with Islamic and Russian state education available to Muslims in the Russian empire prompted reformers to advocate new methods of teaching as part of a greater discourse addressing the needs of a modern society.[36] New-style *mekteps* [elementary schools] were more than reformed schools, they were sites for the reconfiguration of knowledge and the transmission of modern ideas. This is most visible in the works of Tatars, Uzbeks, and Azerbaijanis, but Turkmen also targeted literacy as a means to align their community with the modern world. Historians adopted the term "Jadidism" – from *usul-i jadid*, "new method" or the term for the pedagogy that began in the 1880s with a new set of Tatar schools most closely associated with the Tatar scholar Ismail Bey Gasprinskii (1851-1914).[37] Among Tatars such reformers as Gasprinskii came to be known as Jadids and the new pedagogy paralleled the discourse (jadidism) surrounding social change and a striving for modernism. However, Turkmen, like most Turkestanis, did not use the term "Jadid" or *jadidçilar.* They used the term "*tarakgy*" (progress) to refer to the process of modernization they hoped to engender. I refer to the Turkmen who promoted such ideas as Jadid-inspired Turkmen; they were not part of Central Asia's first wave of Jadids, but they certainly espoused an appreciation for progress.

Turkmen came to accept the Jadid notion that "identity was linked to language."[38] Indeed, in the 1910s there was an intellectual exchange about literacy and how Turkmen should learn to read and write. Moreover, because Jadids viewed literacy as crucial to a people's ability to become modern, Turkmen engaged questions of language and alphabet.

Jadid-inspired Turkmen before 1917: A Prosopography

When the Bolsheviks took power in October 1917, a small number of Turkmen were already engaged in questions concerning literacy, language, and learning, confronting issues such as education, women's rights, and identity. The Jadid-inspired Turkmens' ideas are notable even if their numbers were not great. The situation accords with Khalid's suggestion that "those who seek to revolutionize society are scarcely its most typical representatives, nor are they ever the majority."[39]

Although Turkmen lived far from the urban centers where Jadids typically operated, they were not, as Edgar writes, "culturally isolated" from reformist goals.[40] There was a long tradition of Turkmen studying in such centers of Islamic learning as Bukhara, Istanbul, and Ufa, which introduced Turkmen to ideas about Jadidism, modernity, and new ways of learning.[41] Those traditions continued into the twentieth century so that the Turkmen who contributed to new ways of thinking about progress and identity in the 1910s had the benefit of interacting in

multicultural settings before returning to Turkmen lands to set up new schools or write newspaper articles. Turkmen not only participated in Jadidism but also, having been educated in other Turkic regions, returned home eager to transfer their knowledge to the next generation of Turkmen.

It was not only the colonial experience with Russia that caused Turkmen to examine their social conditions and ask questions of their place in the world. Influences from around the Muslim world shaped Turkmen thinking as these societies were interactive.[42] Munawwar Qari, Mahmud Khoja Behbudiy, Rizaeddin ibn Fakhreddin, Namık Kemal, Alı Suavi, Ahmed Agaoğlu, Sayyid, Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, and Qasim Amin represented modernist movements from Turkistan, Tatarstan, the Ottoman Empire, Azerbaijan, Iran, and Egypt respectively. Their works provide examples of writing about identity in the Muslim world in the late-nineteenth to early-twentieth centuries. The works of these representatives aptly illustrate that Turkmen were sometimes chronologically a step behind, but not out of step with the rest of the Muslim world.[43] Comments by Muhammetguly Atabaý oglu (1885-1916) in his article, "Much of the work among Turkmen is derived from other peoples," acknowledged the important influence that other Turks had on Turkmen thinking.[44] Turkmen credited the Tatar Gasprinskii, but they recognized the many voices that had contributed to the arrival of Jadid discourse in Transcaspia. This was underscored by the fact that many Turkmen intellectuals had traveled beyond Turkmen lands to obtain an education. Still, it was the local level that required their attention; many returned home for just that reason.

Educated in Tashkent, Muhammetguly Atabaý oglu and Kümüşaly Böriýew[45] (1896-1942) were two such men. Atabaý oglu, a teacher and publicist, wrote such newspaper articles as "Schools and Türkmen *Mekdeps*" and "The New School Method," in which he encouraged teachers to use the new phonetic method of teaching promoted by the Tatar Gasprinskii.[46] Men like Böriýew and Aliýev helped directly in the establishment of new method *mekdeps* in their home villages.[47] Atabaý oglu also set up schools. His were in Nohur, Çeleken, and Ṣagadam (Türkmenbaşy); the latter two schools were for girls.[48] What these men had in common was a desire to see society reformed.

Abdullah Gelenow, along with the well-known Turkmen poet Berdi Kerbabaýew, studied at a Bukharan *medrese* before attending St. Petersburg University. The authors of early Turkmen language texts Allahguly Garahanow (1892-1938) and Muhammet Geldýiew (1889-1931) were students of a Bukharan *medrese*; Geldiýew went on to the Jadid *medrese* Galiya in Ufa. Abdulhäkym Gulmuhammedow (1885-1931) graduated from a Bukharan *medrese*, as well as universities in Istanbul and St. Petersburg. Each of these men contributed to new ways of thinking about Turkmen literacy, language, learning, and identity through their poetry, polemics, textbooks, or patronage of schools.

Slightly younger, Hojamurat Baýlyýew (1905-1946) attended a Jadid *mekdep* in 1914 in his own village in Mary *etrap* before entering a Russian state teacher's training school in Mary. He would go on to be a professor at the Institute of History, Language and Literature in Ashgabat, which would later be named for him. The playwright Ayitjan Haldurdyýew attended the Tashkent Pedagogical Institute. There the director, Alişbeg Aliýev, author of the first Turkmen textbook, mentored Haldurdyýew, advising him to take new approaches to Turkmen themes in literature.[49] Haldurdyýew returned to Transcaspia where his dramatic plays such as "Without a Brideprice" challenged what he saw as "conservative" Muslim ideas.[50]

Muhammetgylyç Biçare (Nizami) (1885-1922), a graduate of a Turkmen new method *mekdep* in Kaka, used the traditional format of poetry to link the question of education with traditional values and general social needs. Commenting on the antiquated methods of traditional *mekdeps* and the cultural authority held by clerics, he wrote,

> Hey friends, if you graduate from [an old style] Turkmen *mekdep*
>
> No matter how hard you work, in the end you'll be poor
>
> The imam holds great prestige in the mosque,
>
> No matter how hard you work, in the end you'll be poor.[51]

Poetry held a special and powerful place in Turkic culture. It was thus an appropriate format for transmitting reformist ideas.

Even some who did not have a Jadid-inspired education contributed to reformist ways of thinking: Molladurdy Annagylgyç (1860-1922), Muhammedgylyç Biçare (Nizami, 1885-1922), and Allahberdi Hojanyýazoglu (Mollamurt, 1885-1930) obtained their education in local *mekdep-medreses*. Such others as Süphanberdi Öwezberdyoglu (Körmolla, 1876-1934), and Durdy Kylyç (1886-1950) joined these poets in using their art to promote reformist thinking through Turkmen poetry.[52]

While not positioning themselves against Islam as a tradition, Jadid-inspired Turkmen did want to see changes in Islamic culture. They saw the *ulema* (religious scholars) as an obstacle to progress but did not want to tear down the existing structures as much as they wanted to build up new ones. It was not an anti-Islamic movement, but rather, a reorienting of the social power away from the *ulema* or clerics and a basic change in attitude toward women. However, this reconfiguration of knowledge and cultural transmission did *not* indicate a move away from Islam. Rather, as Khalid's work demonstrates, these reforms attempted to save Muslim culture by improving from within.[53] Jadid proposals aimed to pull education into a middle space between religious-based instruction and the demands of the secular modern world without

completely rejecting Islamic identity. Jadids did not intend to separate instruction into secular and religious with hard divides; rather, they meant to create a merger between epistemological spaces. The fresh intellectual environment taught European sciences as well as Islamic doctrine, redefining knowledge and social restrictions on access to knowledge. The Russian language was a particularly useful point of accommodation for the Muslims of the empire and one that the reformers incorporated into their new-method schools.

Literacy, Schools & *Ulema*

In the 1897 census, the Russian government estimated Turkmen literacy to be at less than one percent.[54] Locals and Russian administrators alike blamed this low number on the traditional Turkestani educational system: the tight social power held by the *ulema* as teachers, the authority over knowledge the *ulema* possessed, and the teaching techniques that the *mollas* used in traditional *mekdeps*. The general method of instruction – rote memorization of sacred texts rather than functional literacy – was considered the greatest problem. In the end a student was disciplined in Islamic theory and etiquette (*edep-terbiýe*) but had little formal erudition.[55] Russian government schools – or *tuzemnye* schools (for *tuzemtsy*)--[56] were also an educational option for the Turkmen, although few attended them. An increasing number of educated Turkmen felt that neither system could serve their children. In a world where literacy was fast becoming a marker of a modern man, reformist Turks perceived traditional Turkestani education to be "deficient."[57] Turkmen reformers' desire to promote mass literacy and to empower Muslims through a reformulation of what defined knowledge required social shifts that realigned the place of the *ulema*.

As Turkmen came to see older forms of Islamic pedagogy as "deficient" the *mollas* were identified as the cause of the social deficiencies. Atabaý oglu attacked *mollas* viewing the power they held over knowledge to be one of the greatest problems of the Turkmen people, writing,

> The mollas will awaken in us absolutely nothing useful.
>
> The mollas have kept your people backward.
>
> They don't even know right from wrong, yet they receive lots of money.
>
> Hey, people, don't lend your ears to these mollas.
>
> Wake up from your sleep![58]

In the 1910s, as the Turkmen questioned traditional methods of pedagogy, they also challenged traditional social status of the teachers – the *ulema* – and thereby the structure in which culture and knowledge had been inculcated.

Jadid-educated Turkmen writers referred to their efforts to reform education as "their struggle against the 'numbing' social sickness that had spread among Turkmen." They offered

poems and prose that they anticipated "would 'medicate' the tragic condition this sickness had wrought upon their people."[59] In an article entitled "The New Method" Öwez Muhammetýar oglu wrote,

We Turkmen passed a lot of time senselessly as if in a deep sleep, in ignorance, like animals. Now, in this century if we observe we will open our eyes to a great world. And realizing this all the tribes will study and learn a skill.[60]

Öwez Muhammetýar oglu, like Atabaý oglu, represented a new way of thinking about Turkmen society at a time when teachers and poets, linguists and playwrights experimented with conceptualizations of progress (*tarakgy*), endeavoring to merge Turkmen life and values into the modern world.

Tatars and Uzbeks had earlier spearheaded social and educational reforms while adopting modern Western styles of theater, publishing, or education. They provided models for the Turkmen to follow, encouraging them to preserve their religious and ethnic identity, while engaging facets of modern life. Turkmen likewise targeted the *mekdep* as an arena in which to initiate reforms. In the 1910s they wrote newspaper articles, poetry, and textbooks addressing the new method of teaching, customs concerning women, the role of culture, and the importance of teaching in the Turkmen language (as opposed to Russian or Arabic).[61]

In the nineteenth century and into the twentieth century throughout the Turkic world, a common point of contention was the amount of time it took children to learn to read the alphabet in the traditional Muslim school. A prolific contributor to reformist discourse, Muhammetguly Atabaý oglu article highlighted important points in a 1915 poem,

Boys, in school are not even able to say their "ABCs" [*elip-bi*]…

Mugallym [teacher] Aliýew published a good book[62] in the Turkmen language which adheres to the new school method and its rules, and…if children are taught with this book they will be able to read and write in two months' time (also calls for more books like this to be published). After such an education the children will quickly understand writing and will be able to explain the *Qur'an* and or any other book you put in front of them. Compared to the Turkmen, other peoples have had these new method schools for a long time. That is why they have so many literate people and in their homeland trade/commerce and all profitable things are in their own hands, while we remain behind.

Of course, not every child entering the *mekdep* and *medrese* is going to graduate to be a great *molla*. The majority will finish uninformed and useless. However, if they are taught according to the new system [*emma täze düzgün bilen okadylsa*] none of them will

leave without knowing the Muslim writing system. Their learning the alphabet in one place [school] will be of benefit to them.[63]

This sort of article fueled debates among Jadid-inspired Turkmen over methods for teaching literacy in schools. The name for schools "*mekdep*" remained, but the qualifier "new method" (*täze usul, yeni usul, täze düzgün*) signified that the author of a newspaper article or a poet was referencing the new teaching style. Some polemicists complained bitterly about old style *mekdeps,* teachers (who were clerics), and the age-old pedagogy, which though once revered they deemed in this age to be insufficient for what the modern world would demand of Turks.

The tradition of learning was one greatly respected in the Muslim world. Turkmen writings leave no doubt that within their value system education of youth ranked highly even though many families could not afford to send their children to school. Atabaý oglu wrote numerous articles about the need for school reform. He argued in order to effect change in social conditions, the Turkmen community first needed to address instruction of reading and writing, general education, and the modernization of Turkmen culture.

> …the thing the Turkmen people need more than anything else, more than food and drink, even, is education. Without education one does not advance but stays behind blind…[and as the] Qur'an reads in the first sura 'Ya Muhammed! Recite, be!' These words command us to learn. But, with which method is it easiest to teach children to write and read letters? This is the question.[64]

Holding special social authority, teachers (*mollas* and *imams*) were elevated to the status of a parent, but even the *molla's* authority came into question as the method of instruction in traditional *mekdeps* came under debate. For example, because it was no longer enough to be trained in the traditional *mekdep* or even *medrese* system to be a teacher, Turkmen *mekdeps* began hiring teachers with pedagogical training offered at new-method schools. Some reformers also stopped referring to teachers with the Persian *molla* (*mawla*) and began to use the Arabic *mugallym* (*mu'allim*) as a symbolically modern term for teacher.[65]

Changes within education, which had been under the purview of the *ulema* for centuries, meant disempowering *ulema* both individually and as a corporate body. Jadids encouraged social change by shifting the authority over formal knowledge away from Islamic texts to broader, secular curricula, adding the Russian language, and punctuating the social shifts that emerged with cultural reform. Cultural capital was shifting.

Awakening: Turkmen New Method Schools

The first new-method *mekdeps* to open in Transcaspia taught Russian, arithmetic, and geography as well as the local language.[66] There were several points that made these new-style schools different from traditional *mekteps*. First, the Jadid-style of teaching was based on a phonetic approach to literacy (*usul-i savtiye*) where students learned to read based on pronunciation and enunciation of every letter, as opposed to the conventional, syllabic approach of traditional *mekdeps*. Second, the new method's goal was to teach students to read and write in their own language, rather than in Arabic or Persian. Third, the new method *mekdep* "offered its students an expanded curriculum which, besides the time-honored instruction in correct Qur'anic recitation, catechismal study, and calligraphy, also included courses in Turkic grammar, the fundamentals of arithmetic, the history of Islam, geography, world history and hygiene."[67]

The reason for the founding of these new method schools is succinctly covered in a 1915 news article by Muhammetguly Atabaý oglu in which he argued,

In our traditional Turkmen schools nothing has changed since the time of Adam. After four to five years children still cannot read or write a letter. However, if children are taught according to the new [method] they learn to read and write inside of one year and in one school. If they learn to read and write according to the new [method] then they will be able to read every sort of book; [even] the Noble *Qur'an* will be easier to read. It is much easier to teach according to the new method (*täze düzgün boýunça*) because the teacher Aliýew and others have published books according to this method. These books were used to teach other nationalities' in their schools, but in ours there was nothing and our children in the *mekdeps* from morning to evening rocked back and forth, and even the talented ones could not read the ABCs. In three to four years' time they did not know a single thing… Because of this ninety percent of our people cannot read. In some villages there is not a single literate person and they have to go to another place entirely if they want to learn their letters. Our [Turkmen] are unschooled in trade and every profitable thing is in the hands of other nationalities, and in every way we were left behind…Slowly, *Inşallah*, we are embarking upon that road and joining those nations…moving toward change.[68]

That same year, Öwez Muhammetýar oglu wrote about the success one would find in a new-style *mekdep*,

For a long spell I studied our mother tongue in a Turkmen *mekdep* that was teaching with the traditional method (*köne usul bilen sapak berýän Turkmen mekdepde*). When I graduated I could not read or write a thing. However, I attended a new school in Tejen where I took classes from our respected teacher Alyşbek Aliýew and in just a short time I

learned to read both Turkmen and Russian. Because of the new method [*ýeni usul*] I can now read and write anything.[69]

The definition of literacy was shifting from recitation to functional literacy (reading and writing on any subject). Literacy was becoming operational rather than just ceremonial.

Reformist discourse often employed "sleep" or a state of ignorance as a trope. This metaphor referred to the social and cultural backwardness from which reformers believed enlightenment could "wake" people and put them on the path to modernity. The writer Orazmämmet Wepaý oglu, was living in the northern Daşoguz region when he wrote poetry that invoked the image of a sleeping Turkmen in which he addressed Berdi Kerbabaýew, who was living in Aşgabat. The manner in which he addressed Kerbabaýew was part of the Socratic question/answer (*sorag/jogap*) format that many polemics took and was in fact the name of this section of the newspaper.[70]

> Hey, esteemed Kerbabaý,[71] I have a question for you
>
> How many years is it going to take to open the Turkmen eyes?
>
> You take a look around and then get back to me.
>
> Which language do we need to wake our people from their sleep?[72]

Turkmen began adopting such language after attending Jadid *mekdeps* and *medreses* in Ufa, Bukhara, and Istanbul; and after being influenced by other Muslims such as the Young Turks.[73]

Muhammetýar oglu also referenced a Turkmen awakening as if from a deep sleep. In his article entitled "New Method", he referenced the new century and underscored the usefulness of learning to read and write in both Russian and Turkmen.

> For a long time, we Turkmen were useless and in a deep sleep. That is, we were ignorant…Now, in this century if we take stock of the world our eyes will open and the tribes will be educated, they will learn skills and everything will be before us. Because of all of this, in the world there is pleasure and people are living comfortable lives. At this time in history with our great White Tsar's permission we Turkmen are living well…In our cities and in our villages with his permission schools were opened for us, in them very good *mollas* have been assigned and our teaching our Turkmen boys the necessary academics. Besides giving classes in the Russian language the *molla* also offers very proper classes in *sharia* and our mother tongue.[74]

Again we see the reconceptualization of literacy. Here the author clearly values functional literacy over recitation of limited passages from memory.

Gasprinskii maintained that traditional Muslim schools had become "asylums for the infirm and unemployed." He wrote, "Industries have been paralyzed and are on the decline. We have become a negligible quantity in commerce, finance and the merchant marine."[75] This latter point also recurs as a complaint in the Turkmen writings in which authors focus on "prosperity" and the connection between society's levels of education and literacy and their access to trade and commerce; the writings underscore literacy as the mechanism for achieving material wealth. Authors lamented their situation in the newspaper *Ruznama-i Mawera-i Bahr-i Hazar* with one writing, "If we remain uneducated we will starve."[76]

Another article began, "For how long were you taught that to study in the – scholarly – language of our Russian enemy or that to learn Russian or other languages is a sin? We Turkmen have opened our eyes and realized that we are behind all of our neighbors and brethren [*taýpalardan*]…People!" It went on to excoriate the Turkmen people for allowing themselves to being duped into believing that there was nothing useful in Russian. The author praised schooling, the sciences, trades, and cited a Turkmen proverb (*nakyl*) about not forgetting that it is the educated who are the friends of God (*Hudaý*). He reminded his fellow Turkmen that without "language," by which he means erudition, they will remain like animals. But with schooling and by learning trades they could overcome the wretchedness that their people once faced.[77]

Acknowledgement of change in the world led to an increasing recognition of the need for knowledge of secular subjects. Some reformers followed Gasprinskii in arguing for a wholly secular education, the great majority retained a strong personal identification as Muslims and sought not to separate students from their Islamic heritage but rather to save that very heritage from decline. Reformist Turkmen built upon social concepts from other cultures – and Tatars were influential, introducing such ideas as universal education, mass literacy, and western methods of schooling. It was with these very concepts that Turkmen sought to preserve their ethno-religious heritage.[78] Gasprinskii's discourse in European Russia equated modernity with secularization, among Turkmen the reformist discourse was not an anti-Islamic. Turkmen sources expressed desires to reform the curriculum of *mekdeps* and *medreses* and aspirations for increased literacy and general knowledge among Turkmen, but they did not argue that the *mekdeps* should be secularized or that Islamic values should be abandoned. In fact, they argued that Islamic values should be expanded, for example to take in more students, especially women.

Educating Women as part of the Turkmen Millet

An important topic discussed in Jadid-inspired Turkmen literature was that of women in society. Authors pushed for better social conditions, education, and the rights of women. Turkmen, like Tatars and Uzbeks, wrote about the need to reform society "to make life better

for women in the interest of the greater *millet*."[79] It was still early to speak of a Turkmen nation. But the term "*millet,*"[80] which would come to mean "nation" proper, was already being used to recognize the Turkmen apart from other groups or peoples.[81] This included distinguishing between themselves and other Turkic peoples.[82] For example, they wrote of "we Turkmen [*biz Türkmen*]" and "other peoples [*başga milletler*]"[83] and of the "boys and girls of their own Turkmen *millet*" [*öz Türkmen milletleriň gyz oglanlary*].[84] Molladurdu Nizami wrote:

> There is no greater work in the world than service to one's people [il]
>
> With knowledge your youth will bring prosperity to the group [millet].[85]

Newspaper articles refer not only to the "Turkmen *millet*" and "our *millet*" [*milletimiziň*] but also to the *Türkmen dili* [language]. Though in 12 percent of newspaper articles the qualifier "Teke" was used to indicate a tribal identity, 85 percent of articles used the word "Türkmen" to describe a school, language, person or idea; four percent of news articles used both terms. Though *millet* did not yet signify the conceptualization of a nation among the Turkmen tribes, it does seem to indicate an awareness of distinction between other Turkic peoples, on one hand, and those who spoke a Turkmen dialect in addition to possessing a Turkmen genealogy, on the other.[86]

Jadid-inspired Turkmen focused on elevating the entire Turkmen community, and in their opinion women needed specific attention as "traditional" customs left women undereducated and with underdeveloped skills. The reformist Turkmen writers wanted Turkmen women to modernize, progress, have access to better education, and be free of customs such as bride-price (*galyň*). Atabaý oglu addressed these questions in his article "Newly Opened Turkmen Schools," writing:

> I am told that among the Yomuts of Çeleken sixty-plus women and girls study and learn to write in the new educational framework…A new school system has been founded in Çeleken. Seven-year old girls will begin studying at these new schools within the next five to six months…Thank God! Turkmen have [also] established new method schools in Ahal, Mary, and Tejen.[87]

Later articles focusing on the social condition of women included "Human trade among Turkmen," and "A good new custom."[88] Such men as Muhammet Atabaý oglu argued that women should be educated for the sake of the community.[89] However, most of the discussion was about women, not by them.

Galyň (bride-price) was a tradition that came under attack in the early Soviet years.[90] But even before that, debates had been taking place among Muslims as to its worth. Some authors wrote specifically of the inequities of *galyň* and how it could reduce women to an exchange at the

bazaar.[91] Like Atabaý oglu and Sabyr Söýün, Öwezgeldi Mämetgurban oglu from Tejen wrote that Turkmen should eliminate *galyň*. Mämetgurban oglu related a detailed story of a family who had been in court fighting over a bride-price. It concerned the question of whether the bride's father or the man she had run off with had a right to the bride-price. Mämetgurban oglu explained that there had been no Islamic scholarly (*kazy*) decision (*karar*) on this topic and the Turkmen people needed one. Better yet, he suggested that the custom be eliminated.[92]

One of the main differences between Turkmen and other Turkic groups seems to be the degree of emphasis placed on women and the amount of time devoted to women's issues in literature. While Marianne Kamp and Adeeb Khalid demonstrate that the role of women was a major focus of Jadidism among Uzbeks, there is nowhere near the weight placed on this issue in the Turkmen sources. From the small and scattered information about women and the miniscule information by women in the Turkmen publications, it is clear that they were not as involved in the reformist movement as extensively as other Turks. The number of Jadidist or reformist sources in the Turkmen language is not nearly as large as in Tatar, Uzbek, or Azerbaijani. However, what is extant is indicative of the broader ideas connecting the advancement of the *millet* or *il* (people) with the betterment of women's lives. Efforts to include women in the push for modernity reflected pains to address society as a whole. Print culture reflected these broad social aims.

Jadidism & Print Culture

New-method classrooms provided locations for direct presentation of reformist ideas to Turkmen students, while print media carried Jadid-inspired discourse beyond the classroom. The term "new method" referred primarily to the pedagogy of literacy and soon came to denote the new style of *mekdep* which utilized it, it was also heavily associated with a greater reform discourse especially that found in print culture.[93]

Newspapers and textbooks were crucial instruments in heralding and explaining the aims of reformist projects. In Gasprinskii's 1881 publication, *Russkoe musul'manstvo*, he assessed the condition of life for Muslims in the Russian empire and the traditional form of Islamic higher education in the *medrese*. Later, his bilingual Russian/Turkic gazette *Terjüman/Perevodchik* (1883-1915) became his most important publication as it was read by Turks around the empire. Beginning as a weekly subscription in 1904, it grew to a daily by 1912, disseminating Jadid ideas throughout the Turkic world.[94] The thrust of *Terjüman* was simply that, "the more knowledgeable and cultured a people are, the more they will progress, strengthen themselves, and increase their wealth. The greater the number of schools, libraries, books and newspapers that a people have the more knowledgeable and cultured they will become."[95] Literacy was Gasprinskii's means for getting both children and adults to join him on his journey to modernity.

Central Asian reformers used the press to discuss their concerns publicly. The bilingual Turkmen/Persian newspaper *Ruznama-i Mawera-i Bahr-i Hazar* began in December 1914.[96] Published for just over two years, closing in April 1917, it reveals a great deal about Turkmen society at that time. On December 14, 1914 in an article entitled "To the Turkmen People," Muhammetguly Atabaý oglu announced that "Today is a great, genuine holiday for us!" and that it was the duty of the Turkmen people to put out the brand-new newspaper *Ruznama-i Mawera-i Bahr-i Hazar*, "in our own language, to broaden the thinking of our uneducated Turkmen."

This newspaper, published for our people in our language and [designed] to reform them, will open the thoughts of our uneducated, illiterate Turkmen. Thank God it is our duty. Thank God our people [*millet*] got in line with the other nations [*millet*]. Every nation was putting out a newspaper except for the Turkmen who did not know how to do anything well. Among all the nations in every way Turkmen could not recover [from their ignorance]. Perhaps…now, if we gradually open our eyes and join the [other] nations [*il*], reading the newspaper for all the news, if we are able to work and…if we repair the things in which we are deficient …and of course if people who [do] learn to read will read the articles in this newspaper and other [available] works to those who cannot read, we, with God's blessing, will slowly set forth on the path of religion [Islam]. Thank God these days [the numbers of] learned among the Turkmen…boys studying in schools, and people who can read is increasing daily…

What gets printed in this Turkmen language newspaper will be accurate. [whether about] war, the market, education, farming, customs and laws, or any other such topic. This newspaper will announce all local news as well as useful news from around the world. For that reason I advise all my schooled Turkmen brothers, [that] it would be a great blessing [*sogap*] to all those who straight away subscribe to this newspaper in their name and then share it with those in their neighborhood who cannot read themselves.[97]

The paper covered several categories of news which it announced in the first issue. First, always, came news from the government of the Transcaspian *oblast'* announcing, for example, long lists of names of brave men who had received medals in World War I or when the state was in need of donations to host a religious commemoration (*Hudaý ýoly*). This section also included "*uruş habarlary*" (news about the war) a section which grew longer and longer with each issue, keeping Turkmen abreast of important details such as the Battle at the Dardanelles in the Ottoman Empire. Reformists considered newspapers to be repositories of information about the world and themselves as signs of progress.

Articles about the evolution of other societies and the need for Turkmen to catch up to them were common. A specific concern, perhaps the most important to reformist Turkmen, was literacy. This is reflected in such articles as the one which discussed how useful it was to have a newspaper in the Turkmen language so that the people could understand the world and "get out of the rut of illiteracy [*sowatsyzlyk*]" in which they had been stuck.[98]

A section titled "News" [*Habarlar*], reported with jubilation anytime *Ruznama-i Mawera-i Bahr-i Hazar* reached yet another hamlet of Turkmen society. World War I was on and there was a paper shortage, so increasing the number of papers printed and getting them out to the villages was a victory with each issue. The news from the *uezds* (district governments) had a personal touch to it, including various telegrams, often from soldiers wishing the people at home well or sending greetings to a specific person, or begging an old friend to write to them. The most pragmatic articles were about agriculture, animal husbandry, and general issues concerning cultivation, such as the irrigation of crops or the price of cotton around the world. Any of this would have been of interest to a great many readers – or listeners in the case of those who had the newspapers read aloud to them – as every family doubtless was engaged in some form of farming or animal husbandry. News from villages was a category the editors promised to cover, but it was typically mixed in with the rest especially regarding schools.[99]

This newspaper was an important source of information about schools, both those established by the tsarist government to teach Russian language and culture and the new-method schools established by locals with private funds.[100] Some notices were as simple as "In Aşgabat village, in a school where both Russian and Turkmen languages are taught, there are now Russian students studying Turkmen language."[101] But even the tiniest bits of news were more detailed sometimes because they were actually serving as advertisements.

At Aşgabat's great school for girls [*Uly gyz şkolynda*] the Turkmen Ata Molla's wife in the carpet-weaving school is teaching the landlord's daughter and other girls the "*molla* alphabet" [Arabic script] very quickly so that they will be able to go and teach Turkmen [*Turkmen milletleriň*] boys and girls. This woman is taking a salary like any other *molla.*[102]

The example is worthy of note as it shows not only the typical sort of notice that appeared in the newspaper but also tells us a little about the ways schools were advertised. This carpet-weaving school taught literacy and promised to do so well enough that the students would be able to become teachers themselves. The instructor was a woman and was advertising to both boys and girls. Gender segregation did not apply in

this school, which is interesting for the time but clearly was part of the change that schools were going through.

When an author argued that it was for the good of society to educate women, or that the very concept of literacy was one that should be embraced, they were taking part in the debate that had been rousing the Turkic world. When a Russian language teacher arrived to work at a new method *mekdep*, the name of the instructor, the number of the school, and its location were announced so students could begin attending.

In the village of Aşgabat a large *mekdep* which teaches in both Turkmen and Russian has been opened and a lot of boys are coming to this *mekdep* to study. In this [newly] opened *mekdep* those teaching the Turkmen language will be such mollas as Meret Işan Körata oglu, while Tejenli Ata Kelewmyrat oglu has been assigned to teach the Russian language. That is why every day more boys are enrolling in this school.[103]

The articles are full of detail and frequently plead with the Turkmen readers to seize the opportunity of progress (*taragky*) and not to be left behind the other peoples (*milletler*) again.

Within just a few months of its initial publication *Ruznama-i Mawera-i Bahr-i Hazar* was already full of letters from the public.[104] There was a section for Turkmen to write to the paper, "*Bize näme ýazýarlar*?" and especially for poetry to be printed. Letters, articles, and poems reveal much about everyday life as well as about the social change reformers hoped to stimulate. Letters came in from readers singing the praises of the gazette and emphasizing the fact that it was being published in the vernacular.

I am in the village of Kaka. Because there is no newspaper in Turkmen I get the daily from Baku, but I do not understand this very well. One day while walking around the bazar I came across a man holding a newspaper in his hand and I asked if I could look at it. I asked immediately, "Where did you get this newspaper?!" He said, 'In the city of Aşgabat there is a new newspaper being published in the Turkic language." I heard the man's answer with great pleasure, then I bought my own newspaper and I read that very Turkmen newspaper every day. In that paper I read the intellectual words of the poet Molla Durdy written in our own language [*dilimiz*]. Every person will be able to read this Turkmen newspaper…[105]

This man's letter showed great enthusiasm for the reading the news as well as for the Turkmen language. This attitude toward the vernacular, underscored by such references as "our language [*dilimiz*]," indicate that language was beginning to act as a marker of identity.

The modified Arabic script

The Turks of Central Asia had been using the Arabic script roughly since the advent of Islam in their region, but by the mid-nineteenth century reform-minded Turks began debating its

perceived inadequacy for use with Turkic languages.[106] Because their new pedagogy relied no longer on memorization but on a phonetic method of teaching functional literacy, instructors became "sensitized" to the unphonetic nature of the Arabic script and identified it as a "poor instrument for mass education."[107] Several intellectuals independently proposed Turkified forms of writing in an Arabic-based script. They did not wish to abandon the sacred script of their religious community, but they wanted their writing to reflect Turkic sounds and the immediate demands of literacy. They added diacritics, creating letters, to make the alphabet more specific for clearly identifying Turkic vowel sounds. They also eliminated some consonants.

Accurate representation of the Turkmen vernacular became key to Turkmen writing in the Arabic script. A point of concern was long vowel representation. In spoken Turkmen there are prominent long vowels.[108] Why should the Turkmen have been bothered over such a small detail when there was so much work to do toward basic literacy? This level of detail was precisely the point. Denotation of long vowels in writing became a way to chronicle Turkmen identity alphabetically. It was one local response to the universal consideration of literacy.

The phonetic method appealed to Turkmen primarily because Turkic languages have more vowel sounds than the traditional Arabic orthography can represent. For example, the three Arabic vowels (ا, ى, و) do not suffice for: [a] [ä], [e], [i], [y], [o], [ö], [u], [ü]. Furthermore, in addition to these nine vowel sounds shared by all Turkic languages, Turkmen possesses five distinct long vowels. The traditional orthography did not reflect these long vowels. But an expanded, modified alphabet – with the addition of diacritics – could reflect all the sounds of Turkmen.

The authors of this reform believed that a greater representation of the spoken word in print would increase intelligibility and aid in literacy.[109] Moreover, it would assert a Turkmen identity since it took the Arabic script used by all Muslims and refined it according to the vernacular. The alphabet represented Turkmen-ness in a concrete way. Written language became pivotal to Turkmen self-expression while the details of language content, alphabets, and even punctuation symbolized the speech community's positioning of itself within the world.

As Turkmen became concerned with increasing literacy they also thought about teaching it more efficiently. Reformers considered the phonetic method of teaching to be the quickest means to literacy. This core component of Jadidism was Gasprinskii's pedagogical approach, and Jadid-inspired Turkmen came to see it as the quickest means to expedite literacy and enlightenment more generally.[110] This method required every phoneme (sound) to be marked by a distinct grapheme (symbol). The idea stemmed from nineteenth-century Turkic efforts to stimulate mass literacy and the resultant belief that accurate representation of speech would ease teaching and expedite literacy.[111]

While constructing new versions of the alphabet, these Turks were also molding important symbols of group identity that would later support a national consciousness. These efforts carried over into the Soviet period and intensified when Turkification splintered into such aspirations for national language development as Turkmenification for Turkmen and Uzbekification for Uzbek.

Conclusion

By the nineteenth-century European romantic nationalism had solidified justifications for distinctive national identities based on cultural properties such as language. Nevertheless, at that time, language was still not the definitive marker of identity in Central Asia. It was not until the twentieth century that language began to emerge as but one variable of identity, along with religion, genealogy, territory, legal category, and colonial status.[112] The Jadid-inspired Turkmens' generation was the first for which language was a marker of identity. Khalid writes, while romantic notions of identity promulgated change in concepts of identity "the real change [in the use of the term *millet*] came with schooling."[113] That is, until the influence of Jadidism arrived in Central Asia, Turkmen *mekdeps* relied primarily on books in Persian and Arabic. However, one of the central tenets of Jadidism was that students should be taught in their mother tongue. Khalid writes, "If functional literacy was a desired goal, it had to be achieved only in the child's native language."[114] The vernacular, both in schools and in the press, was the medium for reaching the people and spreading modern ideas.

Cultural capital was shifting from information transmitted orally to erudition that would be reproduced in written or printed form.[115] The definition of knowledge was changing, and the understanding of literacy was undergoing revision. Whereas it had earlier been enough for a student to recite from memory excerpts from a limited number of books, reformers expected students to learn to read and write on any number of subjects.

One area where the Turkmen reformers differed from the Tatar Gasprinksii, the father of Jadidism, was on the topic of a unified or pan-Turkic language, which had been a central tenet of Gasprinskii's philosophy. Turkmen gratefully acknowledged Gasprinskii's many other unique ideas and contributions but disagreed with his proposal to unify the Turkic languages because Turkmen chose to underscore their group identity with their written language and the alphabet. They saw the written language as reflective of their group identity and insisted on denoting the peculiarities of their regional speech in writing. Modernizing Turkmen society identified itself as both Islamic and Turkic, as well as a Russian colony; but in reforming their alphabet and schools, they asserted a Turkmen identity. The Turkmen *millet* was not yet synonymous with a national identity but was the concept of being Turkmen that linked those Oguz Turks who did not see themselves as Ottoman or Azerbaijani. This concept came to share

much in common with what did develop into a national identity, though it remained primarily based on genealogical and – increasingly in the twentieth century – linguistic factors.

As Jadidism made its way throughout Russia it eventually made its way to Transcaspia. It was brought home by learned men, such as those Turkmen who had traveled abroad, and many who had been educated in Tatar and Uzbek Jadid schools, returning to open new method schools for Turkmen. These patrons and the parents who sent their children to the new method schools wanted to see Turkmen educated in an innovative way and they drew a direct connection between literacy, language, and modernity.

Understanding Jadidism and any activism leading up to 1917 helps us to better perceive ways that Turkmen intellectuals dealt with the possibilities and pressures the Soviet policy of *korenizatsiia* [indigenization] presented to them in the 1920s. Moreover, an awareness of the construction of Turkmen identity and the nation enhances our understanding of today's Turkmenistan.

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[1] Muhammet Atabaý oglu "Okuw we Turkmen mekdepleri," *Ruznama-i Mawera-i Bahr-i Hazar*, January 9, 1915, 2 [*Ylymsyz hic bir one gitmez. Korluk bilen galar].*

[2] Ingeborg Baldauf, "Jadidism in Central Asia within Reformism and Modernism in the Muslim World", *Die Welt des Islams* 41, no. 1 (2000): 73.

[3] On these points more generally see Stephen Kotkin, *Magnetic Mountain: Stalinism as Civilization* (Berkeley: California University Press, 1995), 7; Yanni Kotsonis, "Introduction," in *Russian Modernity: Politics, Knowledge, Practices*, David L. Hoffmann and Yanni Kotsonis eds. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000), 1-16.

[4] Mugallym Muhammetguly Atabaý oglu, "Näjure bolup şkollar açylandyr Türkmenler aralarynda," *Ruznama-i Mawera-i Bahr-i Hazar,* 31 March 1915, 2.

[5] Edward Allworth, ed. *Central Asia: 130 Years of Russian Dominance, A Historical Overview* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1994); Helene Carrere d'Encausse, *Islam and the Russian Empire: Reform and Revolution in Central Asia* (Berkeley: University of Los Angeles, 1988); Olivier Roy, *The New Central Asia: The creation of nations* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2000), 41; Ulugbek Dolimov, *Turkistonda Jadid Maktablari* (Tashkent: Universitet, 2006).

[6] Adeeb Khalid, *Making Uzbekistan: Nation, Empire, and Revolution in the Early USSR* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2015), 46.

[7] A. A. Kurbanov, O. D. Kuz'min, *Ocherki po istorii razvitiia pedagogichskoi mysli v turkmenistane* (Ashgabat: Turkmenistan, 1973), 10-11.

[8] In Turkmen *molla* indicates a man or woman with an elementary education who can read or recite prayers; a graduate of a *mekdep*. An *imam* is a prayer leader. An *ahun* designates a person with a higher education; graduate of a *medrese* and probably worked as an instructor at one.

[9] Communication with Gözel Amanguliýewa, Golýazmalar Institut (Manuscript Institute), 20 March 2002, Aşgabat; Medlin, *Education and Development in Central Asia*, 27.

[10] "Shkoly Turkmen'," *ZhMNP*, no. 32 (1911): 168-171.

[11] The sayings of the Prophet Muhammed.

[12] That is, unless students were lucky enough to have a relative at home who helped them advance their skills.

[13] Kurbanov and Kuz'min, *Ocherki po istorii*, 13, 14. Bringing together the material and spiritual worlds, *waqfs* were religious endowments that defined a property in perpetuity for a purpose serving the Islamic community. A donor designated the purpose and conditions before death in a *waqfiyya* or *waqf* document. The *waqf ahli,* or family *waqf*, provided an inheritance for the donor's descendants. *Waqf khayri*, the charitable or public *waqf*, supported such social institutions as schools, mosques, gardens, the poor, orphans, or some other facet of society that embodied a donor's intentions to reach his or her salvation in the hereafter through a pious act. A school supported by a *waqf* endowment linked education to larger social concerns, identifying it as an important community entity. See N.J. Coulson, *A History of Islamic Law*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1964, 1997); R.D. McChesney, *Waqf in Central Asia: Four Hundred Years in the History of a Muslim Shrine,* 1480-1889, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991). The *wqaf* became a symbol of Soviet social change when it was eliminated as a source of funding for schools. Shoshana Keller, *To Moscow, Not Mecca: The Soviet Campaign Against Islam in Central Asia, 1917-1941 (*Westport: Praeger, 2001).

[14] Kurbanov and Kuz'min, *Ocherki po istorii*, 9; Medlin, *Education and Development in Central Asia*, 29.

[15] "Shkoly Turkmen'," *ZhMNP*, no. 32 (1911): 168-171.

[16] Bendrikov, *Ocherkii po istorii narodonoga obrazobaniia*, 58.

[17] Kurbanov and Kuz'min, *Ocherki po istorii*, 52.
[18] "Shkoly Turkmen'," *ZhMNP*, no. 32 (1911): 161.
[19] Ostroumov, "Musul'manskie maktaby i russko-tuzemnye shkoly v Turkestanskom krae," *ZhMNP*, no. 1 (1906): 148.
[20] It is worth noting that administrators were not thinking of non-gendered individuals, but specifically boys. I thank Marianne Kamp for her comments on this.
[21] Robert Geraci, "Russian Orientialism at an Impasse: Tsarist Education Policy and the 1910 Conference on Islam," in *Russia's Orient: Imperial Borderlands and Peoples, 1700-1917*, Daniel R. Brower and Edward Lazzerini, eds. (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1997), 159; Robert Crews, *For Prophet and Tsar: Islam and Empire in Russia and Central Asia* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009).
[22] Cited in Robert Geraci, Russian Orientalism at an Impasse, 144-145**.** Buddhist regions were also targeted after 1905, but Tolstoi primarily aimed "to penetrate the solid Muslim mass that was estranged from European civilization." Kriendler, Educational Policies toward the Eastern Nationalities in Tsarist Russia, 164.
[23] Khalid, *The Politics of Muslim Cultural Reform*, 86-88, provides information on the state-sponsored Turkic-language periodical *Turkistan wilayatining gazeti* and its editor from 1881-1917, Ostroumov, who had been a student of Il'minskii. See also Khalid, "Muslim Printers in Tsarist Central Asia: a Research Note," *Central Asian Survey* 11, no. 3 (1992): 111-118, where he discusses the press in Turkestan, noting that "*Turkistan wilayatining gazeti* was the sole forum for public debate" at the turn of the twentieth-century.
[24] Edgar, *Tribal Nation*, 31.
[25] Edgar, *Tribal Nation*, 31, citing B.A. Khodjakulieva, "Russko-tuzemnye skholy v Zakaspiiskoi oblasti (konets XIX-nachalo XX v.) *Izvestiia AN TSSR*, seria obshestv. Nauk, no. 4 (1995): 13. I thank Adrienne Edgar for sharing her notes on this source.
[26] Kurbanov and Kuz'min, *Ocherki po istorii*, 42.
[27] A.A. Kurbanov, "Obuchenie v konfessional'nykh i russko-tuzemnykh shkolakh b. zakaspiiskoi oblasti," *Uchenye Zapiski Turkmenskogo Gos. Univ. im. A.M. Gorkogo*, 8 (1956): 37-93.
[28] Kurbanov and Kuz'min, *Ocherki po istorii*, 28.
[29] Edgar, *Tribal Nation*, 31.
[30] Kurbanov and Kuz'min, *Ocherki po istorii*, 27.
[31] Durdyýew, Hezretguly. *Ýigriminji Ýyllarda Türkmen Dil Biliminiň Ösüşi* (Ashgabat, 1995), pp. 29, 30. Adeeb Khalid, *The Politics of Muslim Cultural Reform*, 83, writes that the local population in Turkestan "steadfastly ignored the new institutions".
[32] TsGA TSSR, f. 1, op. 1, d. 14, l. 150.
[33] *ZhMNP,* 32 (1911): 188-189.
[34] M.D. Annagurdow, *Sowet Türkmenistanynda Sowatsyzlygyň ëk ediliş Taryhyndan oçerkler* (Aşgabat, 1960), pp. 8-9; A. A. Kurbanov, "Obuchenie v konfessional'nykh i russko-tuzemnykh shkolakh," 37-93. There were one hundred seventy-nine *mekdeps* in 1893. K. E. Bendrikov, Ocherki po istorii narodnogo obrazovaniia, 309.
[35] TsGA TSSR f. 1, op. 2, d. 2778, ll. 47-48.
[36] Rorlich, *The Volga Tatars*, 88; Khalid, *The Politics of Muslim Cultural Reform*, 89.
[37] Rorlich, *The Volga Tatars*, 88. Gasprinskii founded his first school in 1884. And while several well-known individuals had come before him expressing foundational ideas, there was no coordinated effort until Gasprinskii endeavored to treat the Muslims' societal problems on a grand scale and across the many Turkic peoples of the Russian empire. Edward Allworth, *Central Asia: 130 Years of Russian Dominance, A Historical Overview*, 3rd ed. (Durham: Duke University Press, 1994), 172; Uli Shamiloglu, "Formation of Tatar Historical Consciousness: Şihabäddin Märcani and the Image of the Golden Horde," *Central Asia Survey* 9, no. 2 (1990): 39-49; Lazzerini, Ismail Bey Gasprinskii's *Perevodchik/Tercuman*, 151-166. On Gasprinskii's attempts to stretch the movement across many Muslim peoples see Thomas Kuttner, "Russian Jadidism and the Islamic World: Ismail Gasprinskii in Cairo 1908," *Cahiers du monde russe et sovietique* 16, nos. 3-4 (1979): 383-424.
[38] Edgar, *Tribal Nation*, 33. The Tatar reformer Ismail Bey Gasprinskii and some Ottoman Turks promoted the idea that the many Turkic peoples should employ a unified literary language. Turkmen did not agree. On Ottoman Turks see M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, *The Young Turks in Opposition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).
[39] Adeeb Khalid, "Backwardness and the Quest for Civilization: Early Soviet Central Asia in Comparative Perspective," *Slavic Review* 65, no. 2 (2006): 250.
[40] Edgar, *Tribal Nation*, p. 33.
[41] Tagangeldi Täçmyradow, *Türkmen edebi diliniň Sovet Döwründe ösüşi we normalanyşy* (Aşgabat, Ylym, 1984); M. Söyegov, "Türkmen edebiyatinda ceditçilik dönemi hakkynda bazi tesbitler ve yeni mlumatlar," *bilig*, no. 7 (1998): 114; Edgar, *Tribal Nation*.
[42] See Khalid, *Making Uzbekistan*, 36, and Lâle Can, "Trans-Imperial Trajectories: Pilgrimage, Pan-Islam, and the Development of Ottoman-Central Asian Relations, 1865-1914 (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 2012).
[43] Charles Kurzman, ed. *Modernist Islam 1840-1940: A Sourcebook* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).
[44] Muhammetguly Atabaý oglu, "Hemme Işlerde Türkmenler Başka Milletlerden Geridir," *Ruznama-i Mawera-i Bahr-i Hazar,* 6 February 1915, 2-3.
[45] Böriýew on occasion published under his original name "Böri," without the Russian ending.
[46] Muhammetguly Atabaý oglu, "Okuw Işleri we Türkmen Mekdepleri," and "Täze Okuw Düzgüni," in *Ruznama-i Mawera-i Bahr-i Hazar* 14 December 1914 and 6 February 1915, 2.
[47] Söýegow, *Collected works*, unpublished manuscript, 155.

[48] Kurbanov and Kuz'min, *Ocherki po istorii*, 38-40.
[49] Taçmyradow, *Türkmen edebi diliniň*, 215-225.
[50] Throughout the 1920s, his works were performed at the Turkmen State Theater along with those of Karaja Burunoglu, Şemseddin Kerimi, Berdi Kerbabaýew, and Ýaradankulu Baraýoglu, graduates of the new method school in the Turkmen village of Kaka. Myratgeldi Söegov, "Tek Dramıya Edebiyat Tarihine Girmiş Olan Yazar: Ayıcan Haldurdiyev," *Bülten Press*, Year 3 (2001): 34.
[51] Transcribed in Söýegow, *Türkmen edebiyatinda ceditçilik dönemi*, 118.
[52] Söýegow, *Türkmen edebiyatinda ceditçilik dönemi*, 113-114.
[53] Khalid, *The Politics of Muslim Cultural Reform*.
[54] Berdiev, *Ocherki po istorii shkoly Turkmenskoi SSR*, 5. At this time in the Russian empire literacy was measured by self-reporting and only the ability to read. However, it was not limited to ability to read in Russian, but in any language. I thank Ben Eklof for his help with this information. Today's Turkmen scholars doubt this low statistic but do not have the resources or the time to build a case otherwise. They currently spend their time on projects mandated by the state in support of a particular brand of nationalism.
[55] Kurbanov and Kuzmin, *Ocherki po istorii*, 15.
[56] Under the Russian Imperial system the Turkmen were legally defined as *inorodsty* (alien), a term used to designate non-Russians in the empire. However, within Central Asia the term *tuzemtsy* (native) was prevalent, Khalid, *The Politics of Muslim Cultural Reform*, 74; Khalid, Backwardness and the Quest for Civilization, 236.
[57] Muratgeldi Söyegov, "Türkmen Edbiyatında Ceditçilik Dönemi hakkında Bazı Tesbitler ve Yeni Malumatlar," *bilig*, 7, Summer (1998): 112.
[58] Muhammetgulu Atabaý oglu," *Ruznama-i Mawera-i Bahr-i Hazar* 13 January 1915, 2. See also Söýegow, "*Bülten Press*," No. 26, 2000, p. 4.
[59] Söyegov, *Türkmen edebiyatinda ceditçilik dönemi*, 1998, 114. Such medicinal metaphors were common in these years.
[60] Öwez Muhammetýar oglu, "Ýeni usul," *Ruznama-i Mawera-i Bahr-i Hazar* 3 February 1915, 1.
[61] Myratgeldi Söýgow, "Ilk Türkmen Kıtabı Yazarı: Alışbek Aliev," *Bülten Press* 1 (1999): 9.
[62] He specifically references Aliýew's textbook which taught with the phonetic method that reformers wanted to see used in schools.
[63] Mugallym Muhammetguly Atabaý oglu, "Okuw we Turkmen Mekdepleri," *Ruznama-i Mawera-i Bahr-i Hazar* 9 January 1915, 2.
[64] Mugallym Muhammetguly Atabaý oglu, "Okuw we Türkmen Mektepleri," *Ruznama-i Mawera-i Bahr-i Hazar*, 9 January 1915, 2.
[65] For the Ottoman case see Emine Ö. Evered, *Empire and Education Under the Ottomans: Politics, Reform and Resistance from the Tanzimat to the Young Turks* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2012), 276.
[66] Kurbanov, *Obuchenie v konfessional'nykh*, 41-42.
[67] Lazzerini, Ismail Bey Gasprinskii and Muslim Modernism in Russia, 1873-1914, p. 26-7, citing Ismail Bey Gasprinskii, "Türk Yurtçularına," *Türk Yurdu*, I, No. 7 (1328/1912), 194.
[68] Mugallym Muhammetguly Atabaý oglu, "Okuw we Türkmen mekdepleri," *Ruznama-i Mawera-i Bahr-i Hazar*, 9 January 1915, p. 2.
[69] Öwez Muhammetýar oglu, "Ýeni usul," *Ruznama-i Mawera-i Bahr-i Hazar*, February 3, 1915, p. 1.
[70] "Sorag/Jogap," *Ruznama-i Mawera-i Bahr-i Hazar,* 9 January 1915, p. 4. I am grateful to Touraj Atabaki for bringing this form of polemic to my attention.
[71] Kerbabaýew, a Turkmen poet and author of literature. Wepaý oglu uses the Turkmen, not Russian, form of his name.
[72] Söýegow, "Orazmammet Vepayev," *Bülten Press*, No. 20 (2001), 1-2.
[73] On Young Movements in the Russian empire, see *Modernity and its Agencies: Young Movements in the History of the South*, Touraj Atabaki ed. (New Delhi: Manohar: 2010).
[74] Öwez Muhammetýar oglu, "Ýeni usul," *Ruznama-i Mawera-i Bahr-i Hazar* 3 February 1915, 1.
[75] Lazzerini, Gadidism at the Turn of the Twentieth Century, 153.
[76] A.M. "Turkmenler ders okaň," *Ruznama-i Mawera-i Bahr-i Hazar* 10 February 1915, 2 [*ylymsyzlyk derdinden özlerimizi horlaýaris*].
[77] Öwez Muhammetýar Oglu, "Hormatly atalarymyz," *Ruznama-i Mawera-i Bahr-i Hazar* February 6, 1915, 2.
[78] Khalid, *The Politics of Muslim Cultural Reform*; Rorlich, *The Volga Tatars*.
[79] Mugallym Muhammet Atabaý oglu, "Türkmen aýallarynyň zehini," *Ruznama-i Mawera-i Bahr-i Hazar* 17 March 1915, 3; Marianne Kamp, *The New Uzbek Woman in Uzbekistan: Islam Modernity and Unveiling Under Communism* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2006), 34.
[80] In the Ottoman Empire "*millet*" was a legal designation for non-Muslims which over time took on the meaning of the term "nation." "Millet" *Encyclopaedia Islam*, Vol. VII. C. E. Bosworth et al. eds. (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1993), pp. 61-64; Benjamin Braude, "Foundation Myths of the *Millet* System," in *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire: The Functioning of a Plural Society*, ed. Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis (Teaneck: Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1982), 69-88.
[81] From the Arabic, "*milla*" originally referred to a religious group, by the twentieth-century millet in its Turkic form had begun to take on a meaning closer to "nation" in some regions. Kamp, *The New Uzbek Woman*, 34; Adeeb Khalid, "Nationalizing the Revolution: The Transformation of Jadidism, 1917-1920," in Suny and Martin eds, *A State of Nations: Empire and Nation-Making in the Age of Lenin and Stalin*, pp, 156-159.
[82] Mugallym Muhammetguly Atabaý oglu, "Türkmen halkyna," *Ruznama-i Mawera-i Bahr-i Hazar* 14 December 1914, 2; Mugallym Muhammetguly Atabaý oglu, "Okuw we Türkmen mekdepleri," *Ruznama-i Mawera-i Bahr-i Hazar* 9 January 1915, 2*;* Mäneli Seýit Ahmet Durdy Işan oglu, "Ýaşulylarymyza, *Ruznama-i Mawera-i Bahr-i Hazar* 17 February 1915, 2. Sometimes an author referred to

the Turkmen people as the "Muslim people" [*musulman millet*], Seýit Ahmet Durdy Işan oglu "Ruşça-Türkmença mekdepler üçin ýazaýlan hatdyr," *Ruznama-i Mawera-i Bahr-i Hazar* 27 February 1915, 2.
[83] Mugallym Muhammetgulu Atabaý oglu, "Galyň jähetinden ýagny ynsan söwdasy Türkmenler arasynda," *Ruznama-i Mawera-i Bahr-i Hazar* 24 February 1915, 2.
[84] "Habarlary," *Ruznama-i Mawera-i Bahr-i Hazar* 16 January 1915, 2.
[85] Söýegow, Türkmen edebiyatinda ceditçilik dönemi, 116.
[86] On "millet" among Turks see Edward Allworth, "The 'Nationality' Idea in Czarist Central Asia," in Erich Goldhagen, ed. *Ethnic Minorities in the Soviet Union* (NY: Praeger, 1968), 229-247.
[87] Muhammetgulu Atabaý oglu, "Täze Açylan Türkmen Okulu," *Ruznama-i Mawera-i Bahr-i Hazar* 23 January 1915, 2-3.
[88] Mugallym Muhammetgulu Atabaý oglu, "Galyň jähetinden ýagny ynsan söwdasy Türkmenler arasynda," *Ruznama-i Mawera-i Bahr-i Hazar* 24 February 1915, 3. See also Öwezgeldi Mämmetgurban oglu, "Täze ýagşy adat," *Ruznama-i Mawera-i Bahr-i Hazar* 13 March 1915, 2. Söýegow, "Şair we nesirji," *Mugallymlar gazeti* 26 November 1997, 3.
[89] Mugallym Muhammet Atabaý oglu, "Türkmen aýallarynyň zehini," *Ruznama-i Mawera-i Bahr-i Hazar* 17 March 1915, 3.
[90] Adrienne Edgar, "Emancipation of the Unveiled: Turkmen Women under Soviet Rule, 1924-1929," *Russian Review* 62, no. 1 (2003): 132-149; Douglas Northrop, *Veiled Empire: Gender and Power in Stalinist Central Asia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004); Kamp, *The New Uzbek Woman.*
[91] Molla Sabyr Söýün, "Galyň," *Ruznama-i Mawera-i Bahr-i Hazar* 6 March 1915, 2.
[92] Mämetgurban oglu, "Täze ýagşy adat," *Ruznama-i Mawera-i Bahr-i Hazar* 13 March 1915, 2.
[93] Touraj Atabaki, "Enlightening the People: The Practice of Modernity in Central Asia and its Trans-Caspian Dependencies," Gabriele Rasuly-Palesczek, Julia Katschnig, eds., *Central Asia on Display: Proceedings of the VII. Conference of the European Society for Central Asian Studies* (Vienna: Lit Verlag, 2004), 127.
[94] Edward Lazzarini, "Ismail Bey Gasprinskii's *Perevodchik/Tercuman*: A Clarion of Modernism," in *Central Asia Monuments*, H. B. Paksoy ed. (Istanbul: Isis Press, 1992), p. 145.
[95] Lazzerini, Ismail Bey Gasprinskii and Muslim Modernism in Russia, 1873-1914," (PhD dissertation, University of Washington, 1973), 173-174.
[96] I. A. Beliaev was the first editor, and when he left Transcaspia after the February 1917 Revolution, A. C. Aliev took over; A. Tsvetkov edited the Persian language pages. It is also known by a Russian title *Zakaspiiskaia Tuzemnaia* although only tiny sections from the editor were printed in Russian.
[97] Mugallym Muhammetguly Atabaý oglu, "Türkmen Halkyna," *Ruznama-i Mawera-i Bahr-i Hazar* 14 December 1914, 2.
[98] Alyşbeg Aliýew, "Sowatsyzlyk," *Ruznama-i Mawera-i Bahr-i Hazar* 3 January 1915, 2.
[99] See also, Austin Jersild, "Rethinking Russia from Zardob: Hasan Melikov Zardabi and the 'Native' Intelligentsia". *Nationalities Papers* 27, no. 3 (2010):503-517.
[100] Articles did not report on traditional *mekdebs* or *medreses*.
[101] "Habarlary," *Ruznama-i Mawera-i Bahr-i Hazar* 20 March 1915, 2.
[102] "Habarlary," *Ruznama-i Mawera-i Bahr-i Hazar* 16 January 1915, 2.
[103] "Habarlary," *Ruznama-i Mawera-i Bahr-i Hazar* 30 January 1915, 2.
[104] "Habarlary," *Ruznama-i Mawera-i Bahr-i Hazar* 13 February 1915, 2.
[105] "Habarlary," *Ruznama-i Mawera-i Bahr-i Hazar* 20 February 1915, 2.
[106] H.A.R. Gibb, *The Arab Conquests in Central Asia* (N.Y.: AMS Press, 1970).
[107] Fierman, *Language Planning and National Development*, p. 58.
[108] Nicolas Poppe, *Introduction to Altaic linguistics* (Weisbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1965).
[109] Tagangeldi Täçmyradow, *Türkmen edebi diliniň Sovet döwründe ösüşi we normalanyşy* (Aşgabat, Ylym, 1984).
[110] "Habarlary," *Ruznama-i Mawera-i Bahr-i Hazar* 16 January 1915, 2.
[111] "*Türkmen Bilim Heýatynyň Türkmen Imlasy Hakyndaky Karary*," *Türkmen Ili*, No. 5-6, 1923, 51-52.
On the various Turkic groups see, Uriel Heyd, *Language Reform in Modern Turkey* (Jerusalem: Israel Oriental Society, 1954); Rorlich, *The Volga Tatars*; Fierman, *Language Planning and National Development*; Audrey L. Altstadt, *The Azerbaijani Turks: Power and Identity under Russian Rule* (Stanford: Hoover Institute Press, 1992); Lazzerini, Ismail Bey Gasprinskii's *Perevodchik/Tercuman*.
[112] John W. Slocum, "Who and When were the *Inorodsty*? The Evolution of the Category of "Aliens" in Imperial Russia," *The Russian Review*, 57, no. 2 (1998): 173-190.
[113] Khalid, *The Politics of Muslim Cultural Reform*, 211.
[114] Khalid, *The Politics of Muslim Cultural Reform*, 211.
[115] See Khalid, *The Politics of Muslim Cultural Reform*, especially pp. 134-136.