

ИСЛАМСКИЙ ДИСКУРС ВИЗУАЛЬНОЙ ПРОПАГАНДЫ НА СОВЕТСКОМ ВОСТОКЕ МЕЖДУ ДВУМЯ МИРОВЫМИ ВОЙНАМИ (1918–1940)

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Огромную роль в истории XX в. сыграла визуальная пропаганда. По сравнению с XIX столетием она была рассчитана не только на образованные классы метрополий, но и массы населения в колониях великих держав, включая огромные территории на востоке и юге бывшей Российской империи. Плакаты, созданные для мусульман (и с участием мусульман) между двумя мировыми войнами на Советском Востоке — в Поволжье, в Крыму, на Урале и в Сибири, на Кавказе и в Средней Азии, — представляют собой огромный и пока еще мало изученный пласт в истории советской пропаганды. До сих пор плакаты изучали преимущественно с искусствоведческой точки зрения. От внимания ученых ускользал скрывающийся за их образами ныне почти забытый язык визуальной пропаганды, оперировавшей образами, понятиями и цитатами, до боли знакомыми поколениям, выросшим при советской власти. Работа с произведениями визуальной пропаганды исключительно значима для исторических реконструкций. Важнее понять их язык, идею, отношение к государственной политике, иначе говоря, дискурс пропаганды. Это — часть жизни, пусть даже очень официальной, утрата которой упрощает и обедняет картину прошлого. Дискурсивный анализ плакатной живописи позволяет понять отношения знания и власти в обществе, роль в их воспроизводстве разных социальных слоев, особенности восприятия и отторжения официальной пропаганды.

Ключевые слова: визуальная советская пропаганда, советский Восток, межвоенный период.

ISLAMIC DISCOURSE OF VISUAL PROPAGANDA IN THE INTERWAR SOVIET ORIENT (1918–1940)¹

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Visual propaganda played an enormous role in the history of the twentieth century. Unlike the propaganda of nineteenth century, it was aimed not only at educated classes in the imperial centres, but also at subaltern masses living in the colonies of great powers, including the vast territories in the east and south of the former Russian Empire. Posters created for (and with the assistance of) Muslims between the two world wars in the Soviet Orient (i.e., in the Volga region, Crimea, Urals, and Siberia, on the Caucasus and in the Central Asia) represent an enormous and still poorly studied layer in the history of Soviet propaganda. So far, the posters have been studied primarily in the context of art history. But the creation of visual propaganda is critical for historical reconstructions as well. It is more important to understand posters' language, historical context, attitude to public policy, cultural background, in other words — the discourse of propaganda. This is a part of life, even if semiofficial, the loss of which would simplify and impoverish the picture of the past. Discursive analysis of poster art allows one to understand the relationship between knowledge and power in society, the role of different social strata in its reproduction, and the aspects of perception and rejection of official propaganda.

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Visual propaganda played an enormous role in the history of the twentieth century. Unlike the propaganda of nineteenth century, it was aimed not only at educated classes in the imperial centres, but also at subaltern masses living in the colonies of great powers, including the vast territories in the east and south of the former Russian Empire. Posters created for (and with the assistance of) Muslims between the two world wars in the Soviet Orient (i.e., in the Volga region, Crimea, Urals, and Siberia, on the Caucasus and in the Central Asia) represent an enormous and still poorly studied layer in the history of Soviet propaganda. A certain contribution to their popularization was made by an exhibition conducted with my participation in the Museum of Contemporary History of Russia (former Museum of Revolution) in Moscow in 2013, and a catalogue issued thereto that provided the basis for this publication (Bo-

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brovnikov & Filatova, 2013)². Yet, most of the eastern posters remain unknown to the general public. Only certain eastern versions of works created by such classic Soviet political cartoonists as Dmitry Stakhievich Moor (Orlov; 1883–1946), Viktor Nikolaevich Deni (1893–1946), Nikolay Nikolaevich Kogout (1891–1959), Aleksander Mikhailovich Rodchenko (1891–1956), and Kukryniksy (a group comprised of Mikhail Kupriyanov, 1903–1991, Porfiri Krylov, 1902–1990, and Nikolai Sokolov, 1903–2000) received wide renown in Soviet times.

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A WISH TO SEEM IMPARTIAL

During the Civil War, posters by the “Reds” accused the “Whites” – primarily Admiral A. V. Kolchak and General A. I. Denikin – of the mass extermination of the working class, even though the Red Terror resulted in no fewer casualties among the civilian population. To paint a rosier picture, the posters created in the 1920s and 1930s contained many figures and photographs. In the first Five-Year Plan (1928–1932), a whole new style of photo montage emerged. (It is noteworthy, that in this period photo montage also became widespread in Western and Nazi posters). Aleksander Mikhailovich Rodchenko, a constructivist artist, one of the first leaders of the Left Front of the Arts and a friend of Vladimir Mayakovsky, was among the first to use this genre in his posters on the history of the labor movement and Soviet construction projects. On the one hand, the figures that peppered the posters precisely repeated official Soviet statistics and quotations of the party and government leaders. Their fidelity to the originals was closely monitored by proofreaders of the state publishing houses.

THE THEATER OF ORIENTALISM

By using a contrasting range of colors, poster artists deliberately simplified reality. Sharp colors without transitions and shadows created an impression of a gap between the “old regime” and the capitalist encirclement (they are depicted with the blackest colors in the margins or in the lower part of a poster), and what collectivization, industrialization, and cultural revolution gave to the working class. The state symbols of interwar posters were defined by the pathos of nihilistic negation of the pre-Soviet state. They often depicted fragments of the imperial seal, crown, scepter and the orb, which in reality had been destroyed even before the Bolsheviks seized power, during the February Revolution. Heroics of the Soviet present are opposed by grotesque figures of the foreign Orient where crowds of emaciated workers collapse under the oppression of predatory exploiters. Some of the posters could serve as beautiful illustrations for the book *Orientalism* by E. Said. This pertains, above all, to the image of

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Figure 1

dagger. In the distance, one can see a group of horsemen in robes standing against a tent among the sand dunes in the desert. The poster reflects the strong influence of images of Muslim exotica in the vein of colonial Orientalism. Everything in it looks fake and far-fetched. Red Army cavalry did not wear sheepskin hats. The harness and the abundance of cold arms carried by the rider look quite odd. And he is holding the dagger like a theater character would, at risk of stabbing himself in case of an impact. The Orientalist impression from the drawing is further enforced by the long caption/appeal inscribed in Russian and Tatar languages both in Cyrillic and Arabic scripts: "Comrade Muslims, Under the Green Banner of the Prophet you fought for your land and villages. But the enemies of the people took your land. Now, under the banner of the workers' and peasants' revolution, under the star of the army of all oppressed and working people, join us from the east and west, north and south. Saddle up, comrades! Everyone join the *vseobuch* regiments!"

QUOTATIONS

Soviet posters always contained many quotations. An aphorism from the famous *Communist Manifesto* by Marx and Engels is illustrated on a 1920 poster by Beno Teligater, issued by *Bakinskiy rabochiy*, which contained a drawing of the planet Earth with capitalist Europe and colonial Asia facing the viewer. A giant proletarian casts a shadow on the mainland from the north, which occupies the territory of the Russian Republic with

a downtrodden Oriental woman transferred from medieval slavery into a futuristic Soviet paradise with a wave of the artist's magic wand. On a Baku poster from 1921 (Figure 1), a half-naked mountain woman has thrown off her veil and walks briskly across the mountains under the red flag heading for the suffering Muslim women enslaved by the "kings, beys and khans" and raising their shackled hands. Such fantasies were terribly far removed from the realities of the Caucasus and Turkestan. They were too theatrical, as many of the first poster artists were stage designers.

At that time, Soviet propaganda still had a fuzzy concept of its potential allies in the Muslim Orient. The posters addressing Muslims had too much Orientalist exotica and pretentious theatrical postures. A rider wearing a sheepskin hat with a red star depicted on a poster by Dmitry Moor in 1919, calling on Muslims to enroll in the *vseobuch* cavalry courses, looks like he leaped off a playbill. Before a universal military service was introduced in 1923, this organization provided training to the Red Army volunteers. He is riding a white horse with a pike at the ready and an unsheathed

a red star in the location of its capital, Moscow. The heading “A specter is Haunting Europe — the specter of Communism” is written in Russian and Azerbaijani (in Arabic script).

Poster headings from this period often contain excerpts from then-popular revolutionary poems and songs. Many have long since been forgotten and cannot be identified, whereas for others the sources can still be established. For example, a poster depicting a worker under a red banner, issued in 1920 by the State Publishing House in Kazan, is titled by the last line from a 1890s hymn of the Polish insurgents that was translated into Russian:

*“Down with the tyrants! Off with the shackles!
We don’t want the yoke of slave chains!
We will point Earth to a new path —
Labor shall rule the world”!*

A poster featuring a worker by a red-hot forge, issued in the same year in Tashkent by the Literary Publishing House of the Political Directorate of the Turkestan Front (*puturkom*), is based on an excerpt from a Red Army song that was based in turn on A. Blok’s famous poem “Twelve” in Russian and translated into Uzbek:

*“We shall whip up a worldwide fire
to the great sorrow of the whole bourgeoisie”.*

From the late 1920s, the revolutionary impulse of the masses with its spontaneous nature that the artists of the early Soviet posters liked to depict became a subject of sharp criticism by All-Union Communist Party (*bolsheviks*). Poster artists were instructed to show how the proletarian party guided the progress of revolution and the subsequent building of socialism. An increasing number of posters showed extensive quotations from speeches of the party and state leaders, resolutions of party congresses and conferences, and portraits of leaders and ideologists of the Bolshevik Party, primarily Stalin, Lenin, Marx, and Engels. By the 1930s, quotations from revolutionary leaders had become so ingrained in the drafters of the Soviet posters that sometimes they inserted them without a caption or quotation marks.

LANGUAGES AND TRANSLATIONS

Until the mid-1920s, posters intended for the Soviet Orient were primarily bi- or multilingual. They were composed in Russian and then translated into one (or several) national languages of the former “Eastern minorities” of the Russian Empire. Arab script used in the Volga region, Crimea and the Urals, in the Caucasus, Turkestan, Western Siberia, and the Kazakh steppe was adapted for the specifics of local dialects (*‘Ajami*). Arabic script, sacred to Muslims, was used as a language of authority and propaganda. In the first decade of its existence, the Soviet government still relied on its prerevolutionary experience of interacting with the empire’s former subjects in the oriental languages. Headings and captions on the posters addressed the literate elites. It was no accident that the artists inscribed them in scripts that were customary there: usually in regional versions of *naskh*, printed in the Volga region and Central Asia and handwritten in the Caucasus, less often with the elements of ornamental *qufi* or *ta’liq*. To address the illiterate, a poster used the caustic language of cartoons.

Transition from Arabic script to the Latin alphabet in the late 1920s was caused primarily by the state's crackdown on religion. In addition, it was fuelled by the hopes for a world revolution that was being prepared by the Comintern and related organizations such as the International Organization for Assistance to the Fighters of the Revolution (MOPR) established in 1922. The Latin alphabet is more widespread than Cyrillic. Initially, the plan was to use it as a basis to create alphabets for the languages that had previously used Arabic script, and later transfer the Russian language to the Latin script as well. Conversion of languages spoken by the peoples of the USSR to Cyrillic was a result of orientation toward the victory of socialism in an individual country. Under Stalin, such an attitude was elevated to undeniable dogma. The conversion from Cyrillic to Roman script occurred during the adoption of the 1937 Constitution and was associated with the launch of a new Soviet Russification project. A shared script would facilitate the process of erasing ethnic differences in order to form a new community — the Soviet people. In the early 1930s, however, posters continued to be released in Arabic script as the majority of Soviet Muslims were unable to read texts in Latin and Cyrillic.

In general, the themes and symbols of posters reproduced quite accurately the repertoire of visual Russian-language propaganda intended for the non-Muslim Russians. The style of visual propaganda addressed to different Soviet nationals was identical. Workers on these posters are portrayed as giants, whereas representatives of the old world are depicted as harmful black bugs. They are trash and parasites who have engorged themselves from the blood of the working people, which they sucked out under the tsarist regime. This uniformity is largely due to the hierarchical and centralized nature of Soviet propaganda. Moscow handed the topics and texts of posters down to the centers of the constituent and autonomous republics and regions. Some of them were issued with minor variations in tens of thousands of copies. For example, in 1920, a Russian-language poster by an unknown artist with a title “Literacy is the Path to Communism” was published in Moscow in an edition of 50,000 copies. It depicted a young man with a torch and an open book flying on a fiery red-winged horse. Exactly the same poster, with a slogan written in Russian but a name in Azerbaijani written in Arabic script, appeared in the same year in Baku. Similar posters were printed in Arabic script for Turkestan and in Yiddish with Hebrew script for the Jewish towns in Ukraine and Belarus.

STYLES AND ARTISTIC INFLUENCES

The style of images in the 1920s reflected all kinds of prerevolutionary artistic influences. A decade later, the variety came to an end. Iconography of images assumed the uniform and compulsory forms of socialist realism, which by the time of the Patriotic War had absorbed the influence of the Russian patriotic style typical of the end of the imperial era. But in artists of the 1920s one can see the influences of earlier eras, as many poster artists began as journalists during the decade before the Revolution. Genre drawings that resembled the Western comics of the interwar era transferred from magazine cartoons to posters. They showed the influence of the art nouveau style, and a little later of avant-garde art and constructivism, as well as traditions of folk woodblock prints and Tatar calligraphic ornament — *shama'il*. At the same time, creators of Soviet antireligious posters did not so much follow as start out from the stylistics of the prerevolutionary era. They often used verses in the form of deliberately simple and sometimes bawdy couplets in their visual propaganda, especially during the Civil War.

Soviet political cartoons were especially influenced by genre artists who worked in the traditions of denunciatory painting of the pre-Soviet Wanderers. It is typical that the last chairman of the Association of Wanderers, Pavel Aleksandrovich Radimov (1887–1967), headed the Association of Revolutionary Russian Artists (AKhRR, and from 1928 on, AKhR) established in Moscow in May 1922. A speech by Radimov at the 47th touring exhibition “On the Reflection of Everyday Life in Art” became the association’s manifesto. It urged Soviet artists to be guided by genre features in the realism of the late Wanderers that are “understandable to the people’s masses” when portraying “our times, i.e. the life of the Red Army, the life of workers, peasants, revolutionaries and heroes of labor” (Gronskii & Perel’man, 1973, p. 19). These propositions formed the credo of Soviet poster artists, most of whom belonged to the AKhR. From the very first months of its existence, the association was closely linked to the Red Army command, for which its members created hundreds of posters in the first half of the 1920s. Its branches appeared in the Northern Caucasus and in the Volga Region with Turkestan — from Nizhny Novgorod and Rostov-on-Don to Astrakhan and Tashkent. In 1932, the AKhR was the basis for the establishment of the Soviet Artists’ Union.

ANTIRELIGIOUS PROPAGANDA

Soviet poster artists inherited a harsh antireligious pathos from the Wanderers. Initially, one of the poster artists’ favorite themes was cartoons along the lines of Karl Marx’s thought, paraphrased by Lenin, that “religion is the opium of the people” (Marx, 1844, p. 71; Lenin, 1968a, p. 143; Lenin, 1968b, pp. 416, 423, 425; Lenin, 1968c, p. 438). Lenin’s denunciations of “spiritual booze” were repeatedly reinforced by poster artists who expressed them in extremely harsh forms. A fat Orthodox priest with a large, gilded cross on his potbelly personified on the posters one of the rulers of the old world who had been overthrown by the revolution but had continued to plot against it in alliance with the White Guards and domestic enemies of Soviet Russia (the “bourgeoisie” and the “*kulak*”).

In the regions, he was accompanied by ministers of “other” religions, such as a shaman with a drum on a 1921 Yakutsk poster that read “Get away from the scoundrels! Come with us!” Particularly clever (albeit blasphemous) cartoons against religion were created by Mikhail Mikhailovich Cheremnykh (1890–1962), who was close to Moor. The main target of their attacks was the Russian Orthodox Church. The attitude that Soviet authorities and thus the poster artists had toward Islam practiced by the masses of indigenous population of the Caucasus, Volga region, and Central Asia was more cautious. The period of open war against Islam was brief. It began with the first Five-Year Plan and lasted until the beginning of the Great Patriotic War. In the 1920s, the Bolsheviks actively cooperated with the Muslim elites of Turkestan and North Caucasus whose support helped establish the Soviet power in that region.

POSTER ARTISTS

Even before the Revolution, Muslim *jadid* modernists reformed Arabic script adapting it to the phonetics of the languages of the peoples of the Russian Orient, of which the Soviet poster artists took advantage later. Most posters were usually drawn by non-Muslims. Among them were Russians, Russified Germans, Latvians, Armenians, and Jews. One of the best known cartoonists working in this area was Dmitry Moor from Novocherkassk,

author of the famous poster “Did You Volunteer?” (1920). He adopted his pseudonym “Moor” in honor of Karl Moor, irreverent son and rebel and character of *The Robbers* by Schiller. Like Viktor Deni (Denisov, 1893–1946), another classical artist of Soviet political posters, he started as a cartoonist at the prerevolutionary satirical magazines *Budilnik* and *Utro Rossii*. Among Moor’s disciples were the famous Kukryniksy.

The palette of visual propaganda was no less diverse and complex in the Soviet Caucasus between the Civil War and World War II than in the capital of the country. The region had well-developed traditions of prerevolutionary Muslim journalism including political cartoons in the magazine *Molla Nasraddin*. Tiflis and Baku had their own publishing houses and printing plants that became major centers of state propaganda in the Soviet period. In the first half of the 1920s, quite a few impressive Orientalist paintings and writings were also created there. “Here in the Great Orient, a friendly clash between two arts and cultures — those of Asia and Europe — is taking place,” an artist, Pavel Chichkanov, wrote in the first issue of the journal *Iskusstvo* for 1920–1921. Chichkanov went on, “A collision of two comets. The Orient of fairy tales and dreams. The Orient of manuscripts, frescos, rugs and engravings, and Europe with its Cubism, Futurism and Suprematism. Painting in painting. Take the Orient’s ability to ‘make a thing.’ Take it and apply it to the entire complexity and richness of contemporary thought and feeling. And you will get a golden age of art” (cited in Bobrovnikov & Filatova, 2013, p. 258).

In 1919, Solomon Telingater (1903–1969), son of stage designer and illustrator Beno (Benedikt) Rafailovich Telingater, established in Baku a branch of ROSTA Windows — a studio of BakKavROSTA. He moved here from his native Tiflis in 1910, before the Revolution and war. In 1921–1925, Telingater was in charge of the art studio of the Baku House of Communist Indoctrination in the capital of Soviet Azerbaijan, and later resettled to Moscow. A group of talented poster artists formed around him. Beno Telingater also painted posters. He became a cartoonist during the first Russian revolution and worked at the Baku satirical magazines *Dzbigit* and *Zianbur* (1906–1920). Velimir Khlebnikov (1885–1922), a notable futurist poet, worked at BakKavROSTA for some time; he tied his work to Soviet visual propaganda during the Civil War, which brought him to the Caucasus.

Some poster artists came to Central Asia together with the Red Army. Many of them decorated scenery while working as designers in theaters and later in cinema productions. In September 1920, Ilia (Ruvim) Moiseevich Mazel (1890–1967), under the Political Department of the First Army of the Turkestan Front in Ashkhabad, founded the Advanced School of Arts of the Orient, which specialized in posters. One graduate of that school was Mikhail Voldemarovich Reikh (1904–1966), a well-known poster artist.

The first Muslim cartoonists began their careers at *Molla Nasraddin* magazine, which was published between the two Russian revolutions in the capital of the Caucasus region, Tiflis (1906–1912, 1913–1914, and 1917). The censors shut down the magazine more than once. In 1921, it resumed publication in Tabriz, Iran. Among its employees was the Dagestani artist Khalil-Bek Musayasal, who also worked at the satirical magazine *Molla Nasraddin*, which was resumed in Baku in the 1920s. During the Civil War, Musayasal made a few Soviet posters and emigrated in the early 1920s. Among Soviet poster artists were the prominent Tatar artist Baki Urmanche (1897–1990) and Kazimir Malevich’s student Aleksandr Vasilievich Nikolaev (1897–1957), who in 1920 moved to Central Asia where he adopted Islam. He signed his works as Usto Mumin, which in Turkicized Arabic means “Faithful Master.”

STATE CLIENTS

The state industry of visual propaganda that had gradually formed by the 1930s also included publisher-clients and censors. The role of the latter was played by Soviet government bodies that often disguised themselves as public organizations (Rabkrin — the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate; Pomgola — the Committee to Help the Starving; or the above-mentioned MOPR). The clients and poster distributors were usually identified at the bottom or the top above the frame of a drawing together with the author's name and the number of copies. The first posters for the Soviet Orient were issued by the order of the Political Directorate of the Red Army, as well as the famous ROSTA windows and ROSTA satirical windows. The acronym in the latter name meant "Russian Telegraph Agency." ROSTA's group of cartoonists and poster artists included Dmitry Moor; Kazimir Malevich (1869–1935), the prominent avant-garde artist and founder of the suprematist school in abstract art; and Vladimir Mayakovsky, the poet of Soviet rule. ROSTA's successor was TASS. ROSTA's satire targeted primarily the external enemy, the "White Guards," "capitalists," and "Western colonialists."

An important area of state propaganda was the struggle against religion and for atheistic indoctrination of the working people. From 1925 on, it was managed by the Union of Militant Atheists (SVB), which in 1947 was replaced by the all-Union Knowledge Society whose successor still exists in Russia. The permanent chairman of SVB was Yemelian Yaroslavsky (1878–1943), a prominent party and Soviet leader. The SVB associated the building of a socialist society with the destruction not only of the exploiter classes but also of religion in all forms. This is concisely and exhaustively expressed in the society's slogan engraved on its membership badges: "The struggle against religion is the struggle for communism." The goal of both societies was to coordinate the efforts of loyal creative intellectuals and government. However, the people who worked at the Knowledge Society were mostly scholars, whereas at the SVB they were scientific atheists, journalists, and poster artists. The union issued a large number of antireligious pamphlets, newspapers, and magazines (for more information, see Stykalin, Kremenskaia, 1963; Bobrovnikov, 2011a, pp. 66–85). The best known ones with the largest circulation were *Bezbozhnik* (1923–1941) and *Bezbozhnik u Stanka* (1923–1931). The art director of both magazines between 1923 and 1928 was Dmitry Moor.

In Central Asia, in addition to SVB publications, there were illustrated satirical magazines *Mashrab* (in Uzbek, Samarkand, 1924–1927) and *Mullo Mushfiki* (in Tadzhik, Samarkand, 1926–1929). They were named after historical figures who were popular in Central Asia: an eighteenth-century dervish-satirist and a sixteenth-century poet, who became the hero of satirical folk stories (*latifa*). In Azerbaijan, the role of *Bezbozhnik u Stanka* was played by the magazine *Molla Nasraddin*, whose publication was resumed between 1922 and 1931 by Dzhalil Mamedkulizade (1869–1932). The Uzbek-language magazine *Mushtum* ("Fist"), which started publication in 1923 in Tashkent, played an equally significant role in the development of cartoons and antireligious propaganda in Central Asia. The magazine's head artist was Ishtvan Tullia (1923–1928). From the second half of the 1920s on, it employed such prominent poster artists as Usto Mumin (A. V. Nikolaev), Varsham Nikitich Yeremian (1897–1963), Vladimir Leonidovich Rozhdestvensky (1897–1949), and others.

THEMATIC REPERTOIRE

The history of posters in the Soviet Orient began during the Civil War. Early Soviet propaganda strove to convince Muslims in the former outlying eastern regions of the empire that they and the Soviet state had common enemies: tsarism that oppressed

Muslims until 1917, and kulaks who continued to exploit them in the countryside; and abroad – White Russian émigrés and capitalist powers of Entente. Its goal was to make Muslims join the Red Army and, together with Russians, fight White Guards and Western interventionists. A wonderful example of such propaganda was a 1920 poster by Nikolai Kogout (Kog) that appealed to Crimean Muslims who had been called up into Wrangel's army to turn their bayonets against their White commanders. A caption made in Arabic script in Crimean Tatar language reads: "Your enemies are using lies and intimidation to send you to war against me, your brother. Don't listen to them! We will secure freedom and peace! Together with me, turn the rifle and bayonet in your hands against the enemy!" The top part of the poster shows a duped Muslim with a rifle, prodded in the back by Wrangel, a bourgeois, the Entente, and French Marshal Joseph Joffre, one of the organizers of the anti-Soviet intervention, attacking a Red Army soldier. In the lower part of the poster, the Muslim, convinced of the rightness of these words, sticks his bayonet into Wrangel's belly.

An important theme of Red propaganda during the Civil War that remained in the repertoire of Soviet posters even after the war's end was the brotherhood of working people in the armed struggle for the Soviet rule and in the labor exploits on the home front. In 1920, Moor made a poster in this style for the peoples of the Caucasus ordered by the Political Directorate of the Red Army. Highlanders in felt cloaks, their horses prancing, hold out their hands under red banners to their Red Army brother, who show them the path to the communist summits above the snows of Elbrus. The caption under the drawing reads: "Peoples of the Caucasus! Tsarist generals, landowners, and capitalists were strangling our freedom and selling your country to foreign bankers by fire and sword. The Red Army of Soviet Russia won over your enemies; it brought you liberation from bondage and the rich. Long live the Soviet Caucasus!" It was written in five languages. On the left is the Russian text of the appeal, and on the right is its translation into Georgian, Armenian, Azerbaijani,

and Kumyk (the last two in Arabic script). The abundance of translations was attributable to the military successes of the Red Army, whose units between January and April 1920 established Soviet rule in the Northern Caucasus. By May they occupied Azerbaijan and in December, Armenia. The poster was supposed to help the troops prepare for a march into Georgia that was completed by March 1921.

Such propaganda artwork calling on volunteers to enlist in the army was issued by all combatants during the Civil War and the two world wars. A 1919 White poster (*Figure 2*) that particularly stands out depicted a highlander, sword drawn, galloping through the mountains under the tricolor prerevolutionary Russian flag. The caption under the drawing called for enlistments in the Muslim highlander cavalry division of General A. I. Denikin's Volunteer Army in the Northern Caucasus under the command of Shir-Khan (pseudonym of



Figure 2

Andrei Fyodorovich) Berladnik-Pukovsky, colonel of the Terek Cossack Host. The division commander appealed in the Russian, Arabic, Karachay-Cherkess, and Adygei languages (in ‘*ajami*’) to mountain-dwelling blood relatives whose family members had died from Red terror: “For the truth, order and justice! Muslim highlanders! Colonel Pukovsky, the commander of the Muslim Highlander Division of the Volunteer Army, invites young Muslims to enlist together in his military unit.” According to White Russian émigré’s archives, the division was manned and fought in Denikin’s army against the Red Army in 1919–1920 near Astrakhan, in the Northwest Caucasus, and later with Wrangel in the Ukraine (Berladnik-Pukovsky, n.d.).

From the point of official ideology of the 1920s, the triumphant march of Soviet rule in the Caucasus, Siberia, and Central Asia fitted well into L.B. Trotsky’s theory of permanent world revolution that expected the power of the Soviets to spread to the foreign Orient, which at that time was in colonial dependency on England and other great Western powers. To serve this purpose, the posters issued during the final years of the Civil War and after its end depicted the horrors of colonial regimes and the prospects for a joint armed struggle of working people of the Orient with the Red Army against the colonialists. At the same time, poster creators tried to substantiate them in terms of Islamic rhetoric familiar to the Muslims of the outlying regions, which provided for fighting a war for the faith (*jihad*) in order to liberate Muslims who were under the yoke of infidels. In this regard, they found support among the *jadids* and other members of the Muslim religious elite, which had sided with Soviet Russia in the Civil War. The theme of a Red *jihad* became a leitmotif of a series of all-Russia Muslim congresses held between 1916 and 1926 in Moscow, Ufa, Makhachkala, and Baku. It was also reflected in the posters issued in their commemoration.

A previously unknown “proletarian” figure was “molded” in the Soviet Orient. Failing to find an equivalent to this scholarly Western concept, the translators of posters replaced it with a simpler word, *workfolk*, at the same time replacing *proletarian women* with *workers’ wives*. Occasionally, to translate the term they used a popular among Russia’s Muslims Arabism *fugara*, or *poor people*, which until 1917 had the religious connotation of humble or obedient to God. In order to avoid needless (and unpleasant for the Soviet government) Russian Orthodox associations, the concept of “peasants” on the Central Asian posters was translated with the term *dehkans* (“landowners” in Persian). The famous quotation from the *Communist Manifesto* and the slogan of the Soviet state (“Proletarians of all countries, unite!”) was translated into the languages of the peoples of the Soviet Orient as “Working people of this world (*dunya*), unite!” For purposes of clarity, here translators used the Arabic term *al-dunya*, which in Islamic tradition denoted our transitory world as opposed to the eternal afterworld (*al-akhirah*).

A number of terms from the new social and political everyday routine moved to the posters of the Soviet Orient without translation, as a calque from Russian: *kooperativ*, *kolkhoz*, *kulak*, *fabrika*, *raion*, and *sotsializm*. In the process, many Arabisms and Iranianisms entered the Soviet political language, such as *shura* (the Soviets), *ittifaq* (union), *engelab* (revolution from the Persian, from the Arabic *inqilab* – “coup”), and *islah* (reform). The struggle against general, abstract concepts with prerevolutionary Islamic connotations began later, during the period of direct attack against religion in the 1930s.

Poster artists made their contribution to the struggle against religious holidays. One that became a target of especially sharp criticism in the Caucasus was the self-flagellation of the Shi‘as during ‘*ashura*, the most important date of the Shi‘a religious calendar, associated with mourning over the grandson of the Prophet Muhammad, the third Shi‘a imam al-Hussayn, who



Figure 3

Not settling for criticizing the Shi'a processions during Muharram in posters, a documentary film entitled *Shakhsei-Wakhsei* was shot in the republic in the mid-1920s, portraying mournful rites of the Shi'as' *ashura* as a bizarre medieval superstition. In 1931, the Azerbaijan's Central Executive Committee prohibited processions of self-flagellators but was unable to eradicate them; they continued illegally in defiance of all the bans (Arapov, 2011, pp. 245–246).

Posters opposed Muslim holidays involving foreign Muslim clergy with the new revolutionary calendar. As early as 1918, posters began to be issued on a mass scale for the new Soviet holidays: anniversary of the 1917 October Revolution (November 7), International Women's Day (March 8), and International Working People's Solidarity Day (May 1). Unlike Christian holidays, to which Soviet cartoons and posters responded with blasphemous bashing, the major Muslim holidays — Uraza Bayram and Kurban Bayram — were always treated with more restraint by Soviet antireligious propaganda. Journalists even praised the Muslims' abstinence during holidays in comparison with the drunken revelry that they ascribed to the Easter celebration. Only with the development of the Soviet Union-wide programs of collectivization and industrialization at the very end of the 1920s and in the 1930s did attacks begin on them as well. Poster artists and cartoonists joined in the ridicule. Every year on Uraza Bayram and Kurban Bayram, the Komsomol began to hold mock public processions and performances.

was killed by the host of Umayyad caliph Yazid in the Battle of Karbala on 10 Muharram 61 AH (October 10, 680 AD).

One can judge the nature of Soviet criticism of the Shi'a processions by the 1920s poster with Azerbaijani-language verses under the title "to Muharram" (Figure 3). An unknown author calls on believers "not to shed your blood for nothing," forgetting that in the meantime "the European imperialists are killing their brothers" in the Middle East. He denounces "hypocritical pickpockets and murderers." The main targets of his criticism are the *rouzekhan* crooks "that during Muharram skulk to the Caucasus from Iran where they are engaged in the tinning trade, in order ... to collect money in mosques by deceit." He contrasts self-flagellators with "the socially conscious workers of Muslim countries, who during the days of *ashura* help the Red Army to destroy the khans and beys — the Shimir and Yazid of our time — who are fighting in Turkey against the British and the Sultan's army, who declare strikes in India against the British, who speak at rallies in Azerbaijan about communism that will wipe injustice off the face of the earth ..."

a bareheaded young Muslim girl under a red banner who has trampled on her *parandja* pushes away her parents and a mullah who are pulling her toward the old patriarchic life as she heads for the room of a Komsomol cell under the sign “Young People’s Union,” where two young Komsomol members are inviting her to come. The main idea of this work is expressed in an Arabic-script inscription on the red banner: “Now I am free, too!” Integration of female workers into public production, even prospectively, was viewed as a means of such liberation. For example, on a 1931 poster by Semyon Adolfovich Malt (1900–1968) and Boris Shubin we see a female Muslim worker from Turkmenia in a red kerchief standing by a lathe, from which the remnants of the old world in the form of chips are flying out in the guise of scary ghosts: a saboteur engineer with a wrench, a kulak with a dagger, and a mullah with the Qur’an. Turkmenistan of that time, however, had neither a proletariat nor heavy industry.

For the Caucasus, this theme was bound up with liberation of mountain women from outdated patriarchal customs (*adat*). A cartoon by Nikolai Kogout posted in one of the issues of the magazine *Bezbozhnik u Stanka* for 1923 depicts a giant mountain woman wearing a traditional dress. Armed with an enormous broom, she — with a proud smile — sweeps all sorts of little scum from the mountain in her native village. A mosque with a minaret that the broom has smashed to pieces, a mullah with a Qur’an, and a namesake of the Prophet Muhammad in a white turban, on which his name, Magomed, is written, go tumbling over the precipice. In impotent rage, an old man who is an exploiter makes a strike with his dagger at the emancipated woman, and is clearly also about to go over the precipice. On the slopes of the nearby mountains she is welcomed by sister-workers from other national autonomies of the Northern Caucasus, all the way to Kabarda or Adygeia in the west, which can be recognized by the traditional high, gold-colored headdress. The cartoon is titled “Cleanliness is a guarantee of health.” The ditties placed below read:

*“From mountain to mountain
I’ve begun the clean-up*

*I sweep out the attic
To the last particle”*

The concepts of this antireligious quatrain are taken from the everyday life of the Russian prerevolutionary countryside (attic and so forth) but inserted in conventional European images of the Muslim Orient where women collapse under the power of men who shamelessly exploit them. In addition, just as on the 1921 poster, an indicator of a liberated woman for Kogout is an exposed face and, less often, an uncovered head. To understand the meaning of these symbolic details of traditional attire, one should recall that it was precisely at that time in Dagestan that the campaign of “Down with the *chukhta*! Give a mountain woman a coat!” started. A *chukhta* was a local name of a woman’s traditional high headdress that covered the hair but left the face exposed. It survived in the everyday life of mountain women until the 1930s and 1940s, and then receded into the realm of ethnographic legends. In Kogout’s drawing, no mountain woman can be seen wearing a *chukhta*, and the main heroine with a broom covers her head with a red kerchief, whose cut resembles the attire of urban female workers of the time. The posters were intended to instill the modern standards of hygiene and a healthy Soviet lifestyle in the working people of the outlying eastern regions. This topic was presented quite well not only in the Northern Caucasus but also in the posters of the Volga region.

A separate large theme of Soviet propaganda was a struggle against religious prejudices. Just as in Central Russia, with the transition to full scale collectivization it evolved along the general lines of depicting the socialist restructuring of a Muslim village. From that time on,



Figure 5

the brunt of propaganda was aimed not at external enemies who had been driven out of Russia during the Civil War but at domestic adversaries interfering with the building of a new life and doing all they could to harm the Soviet state and society. Posters created visual images of such “people’s enemies” as kulaks exploiting poor *dehkans*, parasitic mullahs, and phony *ishans* declaring themselves “saints.” A portrait gallery of these negative characters was presented on a Tadjik poster at the end of the 1920s in Arabic script under the title “Peasant. Do not elect these people to the Soviet, as they were and will [forever] remain your enemies.” The artist warns a *dehkan* against electing to the village Soviet “a loafer, an emir’s official, a bribe-taker [referring here to former officials of the Bukhara Emirate], a bey, or an *ishan*.” Transition to the full scale collectivization served as a signal for their elimination “as a class.” Religion as a “harmful carry-over” also had to be eliminated.

It was precisely at this time that a series of posters appeared depicting a tractor of social progress crushing “men of the cloth” as if they were small and harmful bugs. One such poster created in 1930 in Uzbekistan depicted a large, red “Five-Year Plan” tractor driven by a working boy wearing a skullcap and a striped smock; kulaks are putting spokes in the wheels but fail to stop the vehicle that is about to catch and crush a mullah with a Qur’an and a saboteur with a *ketmen* who are running from it. The poster bears a long title in Russian and Uzbek: “Neither the prayers, nor the terror, nor slander would stop the execution of the Five Year Plan. Let’s execute the Five Year Plan in four years!” One year later, the All-Union Research Institute on Cotton-Growing and the Cotton Industry issued a very similar poster in Tashkent titled “Every piece of fallow land plowed up for cotton is a blow struck at the *bais*, saboteurs, and opportunists” (Figure 5). The artist, Chernysh, drew the plow of the tractor named “International” that is cutting and pressing into the ground the little figures of a former *bai*, a saboteur engineer, a kulak, and a mullah holding a Qur’an in his hands. It was issued in several versions at once for the majority of the region’s republics in Uzbek, Kazakh, and Kirgiz languages. The source of these images was the Kukryniksy poster “Let’s destroy the kulaks as a class” (1930) showing a large, heavy tractor smoothing out the socialized land of collective farms, wiping away scurrying kulaks, priests, and lopsided churches in the process. Plant chimneys are growing in the red field of the broken ground.



Figure 6

wheels of the locomotive of history. The locomotive thus joined the tractor as a theomachist antireligious symbol. The very path of Soviet Russia to communism was depicted on posters as a competition between a red Soviet locomotive and a green bourgeois-fascist one.

The Soviet state struck the final blow at Islam in Central Asia when total collectivization was in full swing. In two or three steps, Muslims were deprived of their language and alphabet consecrated by a centuries-long religious tradition. It is fair to say that the Arabic writing system had changed quite a bit during the first decade after the establishment of Soviet rule as a result of joint activities of modernist *jadids*, Russian linguistic scholars, and Soviet politicians. It underwent a *jadids'* orthographic reform that was even more drastic than that of the Russian language after 1917. At the end of the 1920s, unified national alphabets based on Latin script were developed for the peoples accustomed to writing and reading in Arabic script. The drastic and rapid transitions from the Arabic alphabet to the Latin one, and in 1930s to Cyrillic, created in the region and the country whole generations of semiliterate people. The knowledge they had received in the early Soviet era found no application in public and everyday life (with the possible exception of posters, for which the writing systems that had gone out of general use continued to be used), and actually could result in their political persecution based on religion.

The significance of the change of alphabets for Soviet political propaganda can be judged by one of Gerasimov's posters, "The New Uzbek Alphabet" (early 1930s), devoted to the cultural revolution in the region (Figure 6). The poster shows the already familiar tractor of progress driving into the sky, with the buildings of a new general-education school, collective farms,

These posters appeared at the onset of the so-called atheistic Five Year Plan of 1932–1937. This was an extremely important turning period when, with the physical destruction of the *jadids* who had previously cooperated with the Bolsheviks, the Soviet propaganda departed once and for all from Islamic rhetoric, the actual language of Islam, and imposed images and a reality completely alien to Islam on believing and nonbelieving Soviet citizens alike. For that period's fighters against religion, the differences between Russian Orthodoxy and Islam and the special features of various forms of Islam were no longer important. All of them were enemies that had to be exposed and destroyed as quickly as possible. During this period, quite a few cartoons appeared that made no particular difference between "priests" and "mullahs with sheikhs." In one such picture from *Bezbozhnik u Stanka*, the well-known artist Deineka depicted a locomotive going full steam ahead, with a priest symbolizing Jehovah running in front of it. The idea of this cartoon is that God and the priest will inevitably perish under the

and factory chimneys visible behind it. A group of stocky workers in green overalls is decisively displaying a new Latin Uzbek alphabet in the center of the poster. One of them is holding a newspaper with Lenin's name already written in Latin script. At the bottom, an enormous excavator bucket is picking up all kinds of trash, which here includes madrassas, mosques, mullahs, *jadid* reformers, and teachers of the old Muslim school — and, above all, Arabic letters, sick in some way, wriggling like venomous snakes and falling together with the kulaks and mullahs. A not-yet-destroyed *jadid* intellectual in a necktie grasps for one such letter, *ayn*, but he too ends up in the excavator bucket. There is also a scene from the life of an old school where a teacher is beating a student with a ruler.

A well-known book by Shoshana Keller on the Soviet persecution of Islam in Central Asia between the two world wars bears a symbolic title “To Moscow, Not Mecca!” (Keller, 2001). This sharp turn can be clearly seen in the posters from the 1930s issued for the Muslims of Central Asia, where the symbols of Red Moscow loom obtrusively in the background. Prophet Muhammad as a role model for believers on earth and Allah in heaven are replaced by a single earthly supreme leader, a wise helmsman of the peoples of the Soviet Union — Stalin. These images can already be seen on the posters in Latin script, such as Baranovsky's work “Lenin died but Leninism lives, 1924–1935,” issued in Tashkent in a print run of 41,000 copies. Columns of demonstrators with red banners are floating past the mausoleum against a background of chimneys of red plants. Conspicuous in the front ranks are the striped smocks, turbans, and sheepskin hats of people from the Caucasus and Central Asia, on the order of the images of Uzbeks, Tajiks, and other members of the family of Soviet peoples designed by official propaganda together with the scholars. They are being led by Stalin standing at the helm wearing a green overcoat without epaulets and in a simple military service cap. There is simply no room for Islam in this picture. Religion has given way to the nationality-based element. Official Soviet propaganda was trying to use posters to convey this idea to the viewer.

Another trend that began to receive special development in Soviet Central Asia in the mid-1920s was advertising posters for documentary and feature films. This trend also existed in Central Russia. As early as 1924, Lev Trotsky published an article entitled “Vodka, Church, and Cinema” in *Pravda*, recognizing the art of film-making as a powerful tool in the fight for a healthy Soviet lifestyle (Trotsky, 1923). The importance of opposing religious carry-overs by means of cinema is pointed out on a poster issued in Moscow in 1930 for the Muslims of Central Asia in Russian and Uzbek languages (in Cyrillic and Latin script) in a print run of 10,000 copies (Figure 7). It portrays a *debkan* with a *ketmen* on his shoulder, boldly marching behind a Red



Figure 7

worker into a colorful world of schools, film clubs, and radio towers. The old religious life with the spires of mosques, a muezzin calling for prayer from them, and women in *parandjas* on the flat roofs of houses is thinning in the night behind him much like pale gray smoke. An antireligious appeal was made in the title of the poster: "To *ishans*, mullahs, and *bais* — the accomplices of capitalism: You will never be able to bring back the past. Cast off religion, and march boldly forward!"

Film showings in Tashkent began as early as 1897. In 1924 appeared Bukhino, the region's first association — Bukharan Cinema. Together with Proletkino studio, it released two feature films in 1925. One was titled *A Muslim Woman*; the other, *Minaret of Death*. The latter film tells of the prerevolutionary past and how the khans and mullahs exploited the working people and degraded women. The film has a good ending — love triumphs amid a revolution against the feudal lords and a khan is thrown off a minaret, from where people who had tried to rebel against his authority had previously been thrown (cf. Drieu, 2015). The same year, Uzbekgoskino and Shark Yulduzi film factory appeared in Tashkent (reorganized in 1958 into Uzbekfilm movie studio). In 1931, the director Ganiev made the film *Upsurge* about the industrialization of Uzbekistan.

Among the first films shown in Soviet Central Asia were both local movies and films made by studios from other regions. In the late 1920s and early 1930s, a number of films appeared on the subjects of women emancipation and land and water reform that had been brought up in posters. The roles of Muslim women in these films were generally played by actresses who had come from Moscow and Leningrad, as the process of women's emancipation in the Orient had not yet gone that far. Their titles themselves reveal a negative attitude toward religion per se: *The Purdah*, *The Second Wife*, *In the Shadow of the Mosque* (Uzbekgoskino, 1927), *Thrice Sold* (*Tamilla/What She Was Tried For/Women as Commodities*, VUFKU, Odessa, 1927), *The Saint's Daughter* (1930), and *Ramadan* (Uzbekgoskino, 1933). The last one, for example, is about a former feudal *bai*, kulak, and a foreign spy who try to use the holiday for breaking the fast at the end of Ramadan to disrupt a collective-farm plan for harvesting cotton. The region had quite a few film-making artists, notable among whom was Varsham Nikitich Yeremian (1897–1963), a native of Nagorny Karabakh who worked a lot in the genre of political and film-advertising posters. He was a production designer for a whole range of later films that played up the topic of the region's ancient cultural traditions and their most prominent representatives, such as *Nasraddin in Bukhara* (1942), *Takhir and Zukhra* (1945), *The Adventures of Nasraddin* (1947), *Alisher Navoi* (1948), and *Avicenna* (1957).

Propaganda through the cinema in the Soviet Caucasus gained a lesser momentum than in Central Asia. In the 1930s, its center was in Azerbaijan, where the Azgoskinprom association, the Azerbaijan state film-making industry, operated. Earlier I mentioned one of its documentary films against Shi'a processions of self-flagellators in Muharram. In 1934, the silent feature film *Ismet* or *The Death of Adat* was produced there. The story line of the picture was based on the biography of Leila Mamedbekova, the first Azerbaijani female aviator. The film used her example to describe the challenges of the emancipation of Muslim women who rebelled against feudal customs (*adat*) and managed to secure the right granted to them by the Soviet Constitution—to be free citizens in their homeland.

THE ROLE OF POLITICAL REPRESSIONS

As far back as the 1920s, the engine of repression started to engulf particular state clients and even more Muslim elites who stood at the origins of cultural revolution in the regions, and practitioners of the antireligious campaign. Political repressions influenced the work of poster artists. We can recall the fate of Baki Urmanche, who from 1929 to 1933 went through one of the first concentration camps on the Solovetsky Islands. After his release he turned to semiofficial themes of socialist construction and from 1937 to 1941 designed pavilions of the Soviet Orient republics for the All-Union Agricultural Exhibition, and later in Central Asia. Usto Mumin is an instructive example of an artist who switched from portrait and landscape painting to posters that retained his distinctive style but were semiofficial in terms of iconography of the multinational family of Soviet peoples and the supreme leader steering it to the communist heights. This shifting of the accents is demonstrated by his 1936 May Day poster illustrating Stalin's slogan "Life has become better, life has become more fun!"

Visual propaganda reflected Islam's gradual departure from public life. In the late 1920s, absolutely all ceremonies related in any way to religion were declared harmful "survivals" and were banned (for more details see: Bobrovnikov, 2011b, pp. 99–117). Clergymen were required to sign pledges not to conduct ceremonies, and the ornaments of mosques, houses of prayer, and holy places were either destroyed or handed over to museums. In 1928, to make the struggle against "harmful survivals" more efficient, the scope of the special Chapter 10, "On Crimes That Constitute Carryovers of Clan-Based Life," of the Russian Soviet Federal Socialist Republic Penal Code was expanded to apply to the Volga-Urals Region, the Northern Caucasus, and Kazakhstan. Similar sections appeared in the penal codes of other Soviet republics (*Sistematizirovannyi tekst obschesoiuznykh ugodovnykh zakonov i ugodovnykh kodeksov soiuznykh respublik*, 1948, pp. 495–507). The poster "Down with *kalym*, polygamy, and any violence against women," issued in the late 1920s and early 1930s in Moscow on commission by the Central Committee of the women's Department of the All-Union Communist Party (*bolsheviks*), is a good illustration of the articles from this section of Soviet law. It clearly represents the norms of Islamic and common law for which the legislation had begun to punish the believers: a payment made by a groom's clan (*kalym*) for a bride to her clan (Article 196), kidnapping of a bride (Article 197), marriage to minors (Article 198), and polygamy (Article 199).

REACTION OF MUSLIMS

Of course, the clearly unrealizable objectives of the "atheist Five Year Plan" were not achieved. Yet, people's minds were changed in many ways. Book-oriented Islam survived in the private sphere, but the number of educated Muslims dropped sharply. Between the 1940s and the 1980s, only certain '*ulama*' and Sufis studied at illegal schools (*hujras*) and wrote scholarly treatises in Arabic and other Eastern languages consecrated by Islamic tradition. This is evidenced by the hand-copied lists of their writings in the Northern Caucasus, Central Asia, and the Volga Region. In public and cultural life, however, Russian and national languages displaced Arabic, Ottoman Turkish, and Farsi.

An earlier period between the two world wars was less endowed with sources, with almost no candid Muslim voices either for or against the political cartoons on the posters. If anything, we hear protests. One of them was preserved in a letter from one of Dagestani

ulama' to the magazine *Bayan al-Haqa'iq*, denouncing cartoons about Muslim holidays and the worship of the Prophet Muhammad published in the Baku magazine *Molla Nasraddin* (*Bayan al-Haqa'iq*, 1925). It was preserved because it was published in a magazine's issue. The rejection of Soviet propaganda seems to be indirectly evidenced by instances of recycling of Soviet collective-farm posters, which I encountered more than once while working at private libraries and archives. The entire reverse side of the posters and even blank space on the image itself could be filled with an Arabic-language comment to a certain work on Islamic law (*fiqh*), the principles of faith (*usul al-din*), Arabic grammar, or another traditional disciplines. At the same time, there are also arguments supporting the Muslims' reading and safekeeping of Soviet cartoons and posters.

Interesting to note is the posters and especially cartoons of the 1920s and 1930s from newspapers and magazines have survived not only in the central state archives and libraries but also in private collections. A fine example of this is the collection of Rustam Suleimanov from the Mardjani Foundation in Moscow, on which this study is based. It was assembled not from state libraries but from private ones. Here is another striking example from the field practice of contemporary historian of Islam in Central Asia, Paolo Sartori. In search of an interesting private collection of documents belonging to a family of descendants of saints (*hodjas*), he finally gained access to them. To his astonishment, among the prerevolutionary genealogies and legal texts he discovered a 1936 cover of the satirical magazine *Krokodil*. The illustration shows a little boy drawing the Kremlin while his father reads *Pravda*. "Dad?" the boy asks, "What's the abbreviation for the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics?" The father replies, "Write homeland." When Sartori asked about this, his acquaintance and owner of the collection said that his father, during whose life the drawing became part of the collection, was, above all, a Soviet Muslim (Sartori, 2010, pp. 315–317). Despite all of the repressions that he and his de-kulakized grandfather had experienced from the Soviet power, it became their government, Moscow became their capital, and *Krokodil* became the press that he had become accustomed to reading.

The groundwork for the creation of Soviet Muslims was laid in the period between the two world wars. One can judge by the posters of that era how the language in which the government addressed the peoples of the Soviet Orient became increasingly Russified and secularized. Relics of Arabic and Latin script used in visual propaganda in Central Asia and the Caucasus can still be noticed in the early 1930s. This was obviously done in order to make the posters' content more understandable to the generations that had received an education during the prerevolutionary and early Soviet period. It is difficult to determine with precision to what extent the indoctrination of the masses was successful in regard to the rapidly changing present. Mythologizing of the past was probably more successful. The propagation of negative images of tsarist Russia and the Muslims who served the empire could not help but affect the minds of young people who could no longer see in real life the prerevolutionary "exploiter classes" and their "lackeys." For the generations from the 1950s to the 1980s, the enemies of Soviet rule became exotic figures of Basmachi movement from the late Soviet films, like the eastern *The White Sun of the Desert* (1970). Such Orientalist exotica defined a great deal in the official reaction to foreign Islam during its "awakening" after the Iranian Islamic revolution of 1978 and the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan in 1979.

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