THEOLOGICAL ISSUES ON THE PAGES OF THE TATAR PRESS OF THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY


Rezeda Rifovna Safiullina - Al Ansi
Ramil Mirgalimovich Galiullin
Marat Foatovich Safin

ABSTRACT
The relevance of the problem under study is due to the fact that the Muslim community of our region today, as at the beginning of the 20th century, is at an important stage in the transformation of public life. The article is aimed at illustrating the important role of the first Tatar newspapers and magazines in discussing the burning problems of the Ummah, using the examples of publications by Tatar authors of the early 20th century. After a thematic analysis of the articles and classification of theological issues raised by the authors, we can see that there was a plurality of solutions to various problems that were proposed during the discussions. This experience in the field of society reform and the search for effective solutions to the problems facing the Muslim community is extremely important today and can be useful for religious leaders, teachers of Islamic religious educational institutions.

Keywords: Tatar press. Tatar theological thought. Islamic creed. Islamic law. Exegetics.

QUESTÕES TEOLÓGICAS NAS PÁGINAS DA IMPRENSA TÁRTARA DO INÍCIO DO SÉCULO XX

PROBLEMAS TEOLÓGICOS EN LAS PÁGINAS DE LA PRENSA TÁRTARA DE PRINCIPIOS DEL SIGLO XX

RESUMO
A relevância do problema em estudo se deve ao fato de que a comunidade muçulmana de nossa região hoje, como no início do século XX, se encontra em uma etapa importante na transformação da vida pública. O objetivo do artigo é ilustrar o importante papel dos primeiros jornais e revistas tártaros na discussão dos problemas candentes da Ummah, usando exemplos de publicações de autores tártaros do início do século XX. Após uma análise temática dos artigos e classificação das questões teológicas levantadas pelos autores, podemos verificar que houve uma pluralidade de soluções para vários problemas que foram propostos durante as discussões. Esta experiência no campo da reforma da sociedade e na busca de soluções eficazes para os problemas enfrentados pela comunidade muçulmana é extremamente importante hoje e pode ser útil para líderes religiosos, professores de instituições educacionais religiosas islâmicas.


RESUMEN
La relevancia del problema en estudio se debe a que la comunidad musulmana de nuestra región hoy, como a principios del siglo XX, se encuentra en una etapa importante en la transformación de la vida pública. El artículo tiene como objetivo ilustrar el importante papel de los primeros periódicos y revistas tártaras en la discusión de los problemas candentes de la Ummah, utilizando ejemplos de publicaciones de autores tártaros de principios del siglo XX. Luego de un análisis temático de los artículos y la clasificación de las cuestiones teológicas planteadas por los autores, podemos constatar que hubo pluralidad de soluciones a diversos problemas que se propusieron durante las discusiones. Esta experiencia en el campo de la reforma de la sociedad y la búsqueda de soluciones efectivas a los problemas que enfrenta la comunidad musulmana es extremadamente importante hoy y puede ser útil para los líderes religiosos, maestros de instituciones educativas religiosas islámicas.

INTRODUCTION

At the beginning of the XX century at a time of the transformation of the public life of the Tatar nation a phenomenally rapid development of the national press takes place. Thus, if in the first half of 1905 the Tatars did not have a single newspaper of their own, after the October 17 Manifesto and the Provisional Rules for Periodical Press (November 14, 1905), the great need for a national press among the people who possessed a high degree of literacy in their native language is more than fulfilled. In just two years the number of Tatar newspapers and magazines exceeds twenty editions. From 1905 to October 1917 newspapers and magazines were published annually in the Tatar language, in some years more than 100 editions. (AHTYAMOVA, 2013).


The subject of publications is diverse. These are purely theological issues related to Islamic dogma, Islamic Law, Exegetics (Tafsir), and religious-philosophical issues.

The main source of research was texts in the Old Tatar language published in Arabic. First of all textological methods and techniques were applied – attribution, dating, commenting. A comprehensive review of this topic inevitably requires the use of research methods and techniques from an interdisciplinary arsenal, which includes comparative-historical and typological, structural-functional and systemic methods. In the study of the material general scientific methods (logical, method of classification) and special methods (problematic) were also used. The theological approach was used as well, which implies referring to the main sources of Islam.

RESULTS

According to the results of a study of the Muslim press of the early twentieth century, the following main topics are highlighted: issues of religious education, new textbooks, methodology and particular issues of Islamic Law, Exegetics and Translation of the Quran, issues of Islamic teaching.

Issues of religious education

In terms of the number of publications the topic of religious education takes first place. This is a criticism of the existing education system, a discussion on the methodology and methods of teaching of religious disciplines, the content of textbooks on religious subjects. Articles by Yusuf Akchura (1906), Hadi Atlasi (1913), Musa Bigiev (1906), Galimjan Barudi (1906), M Harris Muzaffarov (1915), Iskandar Khamzavi (1914), Rakhimdzhan Atnabev (1916), Fatih Safi-Kazi (1914), Zakira Kadiri (1912), Zagit Ayukanov (1915), Akhmadzhan Mustafa (1918), Riziddin Fakhreditin (1915) and others are devoted to these issues. Publications have a sharp polemical character. The discussion unfolding on the pages of the Tatar press is not limited to differences between Kadimitists and Jadidists. Supporters of updates themselves speak of the necessity of cautious, balanced approach and write critical reviews about the first results of reforming religious education (ABULHANOY, 1911). As for the opponents of the new method, it is, first of all, the publication of the famous ‘Ishmi ishan’ of Abu Naqib al-Tuntari (TUNTIARI, 1909; TUNTIARI, 1911; TUNTIARI, 1915) and the chief editor of the stronghold of traditionalists, the journal ‘Din wa Magyyshat’ of Galgametdin Hanislamov (HANISLAMOV, 1908; HANISLAMOV, 1913; HANISLAMOV, 1917).

Study guides

Musa Bigiev speaks rather sharply in assessments of previous textbooks. He lists a limited range of study guides in various disciplines of Muslim education, including Gylm Tawhid (Monotheism), Iqtiqad (Creed), philosophy (Hikmat al-Ain, al-Ufuk al-Mubin) and others. He criticizes such authoritative study guides that formed the basis of traditional Muslim education, such as ‘Mullah Jami’, ‘Isagui’, ‘Shamsia’, ‘Tahzib Silim’, ‘Akaid Nasafiya’, ‘Hikmat al-Ain’, ‘Akaid Addia’, ‘Sharhe Mella Jalal’, etc.

However, there are moderate points of view. Thus, Galimjan Barudi warns against extremes and raises the issue of underestimating the traditional examples of Muslim book heritage (Barudi, 1915). Hadi Atlasi critically evaluates new books on ‘Aqida which appeared at the beginning of the twentieth century. (Atlasi, 1913).

In total more than twenty different textbooks are known only on the Islamic Creed of such authors as G. Chokry, G. Bayazitova, G. Bubi, H. Zabiri, A.Kh. Maksudi, G. Radudi, G. Atavi, G. Barudi, R. Fakhreditin, K. Nasyri, Sh. Gauni, L. Baychurin, H. Usmanov and others, which are presented as short textbooks in the Tatar language, compiled in the ‘Aqida genre, which set out a list of the main provisions of the faith (a Creed or Muslim Creed), as well as
detailed expositions of the problematic issues of Islamic Creed (Islamic doctrine and religious practice), the methodology and legal questions of the Hadith and Tafseer, and other disciplines taught in the madrasah (SAFIULLINA ALANSI, 2013) were also published. Along with this, reviews also appear in the press for new textbooks, which often have a lot of criticism (HABUDINOVA, SAFIULLINA, 2013).

The methodology and specific questions of Islamic law

In the press of the beginning of the twentieth century, relating to the problems of Usul al-Fiqh (Islamic Law Methodology), the opposition of the methods of Ijtihad and Taklid is reflected in the articles of G. Bubi, M. Bigiev (BIG, 1911), R. Fakhretdin, M. Muzaffarov (MOZAFFAR, 1915), Sororeddin Miftakhutdin (MIFTAHETDIN, 1911) and others. Here are also considered private issues of Islamic Law related to worship (Ibadat), such as ritual cleansing (Taharat), performing night prayers on short summer nights, Friday prayers, etc. and relationship issues (Muamalat), to which relate the marriage issues, inheritance, trade and economic issues – a loan, usufruct. A separate desiring of special close attention is the theme of inalienable property (Waqf). Also, in connection with issues of a financial and organizational nature that are directly related to the content of educational institutions, special attention is paid to the topic of Zakat, which is one of the pillars of Islam (AYUNANOVA, 1916; BIG, 1906; SARIPOV, 2013).

The problem of the correlation of national identity and confessional affiliation is expressed in topics such as the use of the mother tongue in religious practice, while reading the hadiths (BARUDI, 1906), the Taharca hotba hakynda. Don’ya va magyishat 11. (1907), (FAHRETIDIN, 1917; MOZAFFAR, 1917, KHMETKARIMOV, 2019). Special attention should be paid to materials on the gender issue, in particular, the topic of hijab (BARUDI, 1906).

Exegetics and Quran Translation

More than 17 names of authors who raised questions of Exegetics (Tafsir) and the translation of the Quran into the Tatar language were revealed. Among them along with such well-known Tatar religious figures as Galimjan Barudi, Rizaeddin bin Fakhredin, Mute Bigiev (BIG, 1912; BIG, 1907), Muzaffar Hanafi Muzaffar (MOZAFFAR, 1912), Hassan Ponomarev (PONOMAREV, 1912), Muhammad-Najib Tuntari (TUNTARI, 1912), Shakhshirzhan Khami (HAMDI, 1907), Murad Ramzi (RAMZI, 1912) there are also names that are not very familiar to the general public, such as Taufik Ihsan (IHSAN, 1912), Sh. A. Valiulla (VALIULLA, 1912), Ibrahim Gani (GAINI, 1912), Badreddin Gimranov (GIMRANOVA, 1912), G. Niyazi (NIYAZ, 1912), Akhmad Tukhtabaev (TOHTABAEV, 1912), Motyugula Tukhtavullin (TOHTAVULLIN, 1912) and others. Murad Ramsay, M.-S. Gumi were supporters of an opinion calling for refraining from interpreting the sacred text of the Quran and the texts of the hadith, which contradicted to a reasonable understanding. In contrast, G. Bubi, R. Fakhretdin, M. Bigiev, Z. Kamali and many other Jadids were followers of the views of G. Kursawi and S. Marjani, who called for the understanding and interpretation of the text of Scripture on the basis of reason.

The Tatar theologian Musa Bigiev devoted to Quranic studies his first scientific publication, ‘The History of the Quran and its Vaults’, published in 1905, which was a popular exposition of the work of the scholar Abu Muhammad Qasim ibn Furrakh ibn Abu-Husam Khalif ibn Ahmad-ar-Ruani ai-Shatibi with author’s comments, as well as a compilation, in the words of the author himself ‘summarizes everything told by other authors about the history of the gathering of the Quran and its inimitability, as well as the meaning of the ‘seven hafts’ in brief’ (BIGIEV, 2016).

Doctrine issues

Along with the problem of the relationship of reason and revelation R. Fakhretdin, M. Bigiev (BIG, 1909), G. Bubi, M.-N. Tuntari (TUNTARI, 1902), M. Gaffari (GAFFARI, 1913) and others raise the question of the relationship between teaching and religion, attitudes towards philosophy and speculative theology (Kalam), the role of which in the Tatar madrasas, according to the characterization of J. Validi, was ‘unshakable’ (VALIDOV, 1923). K. Tadjuvanov (TARZHINOV, 1907), A. Mustafa (MOSTAFA, 1915), Z. Kadiri (KADIRI, 1912), M. Bigiev consider the differences that exist between Kalam and the teachings of Monotheism (Tawhid), offer to share an understanding of Kalam and ‘Aqida, consider the problem of inclusion or not inclusion of acts in the faith and other relevant issues of the Creed. A hot discussion on the pages of Tatar newspapers and magazines was provoked by the revolutionary idea of the inclusiveness of divine mercy initiated by Musa Bigiev (BIG, 1909; MAKSUDI, 1915; FAHRETIDIN, 1910). It should be noted that both in the past and today, this leads to a debate about the role of sense and authority, when the dichotomy of Ijtihad and Taklid in the framework of Islamic legal thought...
is disputed by the example of specific works of Muslim scholars and a more comprehensive understanding of dialectics between sense and power is approved (SHIHALIEV, 2017).

**Ethical issues**

The theme of Akhlaq has always been central to the work of poets, writers and religious figures of the Volga-Ural region. The texts of authors such as G. Barudi, R. Fakhretdin, K. Nasyri, Z. Kamali, Sh. Sharaf and others contain many questions that are also relevant for our time, since the predecessors faced similar problems: how to preserve for Muslims their values while successfully competing with other nations, living with them peacefully.

In the Soviet period theological themes are still found on the pages of the periodical press, especially on the pages of the only Muslim organ of the ‘Islam Majiellase’, which existed until 1927. Here are published articles of G. Suleymanov and K. Tardzhamanov who replaced each other in the post of Kazi of the Central Spiritual Board of Muslims of Russia and Siberia. However soon they like many representatives of the Tatar national intelligentsia will be among the victims of political repression of the new government.

**DISCUSSIONS**

If during the period under consideration, the main information resource for Muslims was the national periodical press, today the positioning of Islam in the information space of the Republic of Tatarstan is carried out by state secular media (news agencies, news sites, TV, newspapers, magazines), private publications, and also Muslim media segment formed in recent decades (Muslim newspapers and magazines, religious television programs, websites). The development of social networks makes it possible to make almost any fact public, and this happens in addition to the participation of leading media. And if at the beginning of XX century the discussion of theological issues took place among religiously literate people, today, as a result of more than 70 years of atheistic propaganda and the fight against religion, such religious literacy is no longer there. In the Soviet and post-perestroika period, religious literature was not the subject of scientific research by scientists.

Under the current conditions of rapid re-Islamization, Tatar theological thought of the early twentieth century is of particular interest. Translations of excerpts from texts of Tatar authors of the past regularly appear on the pages of modern newspapers and magazines, various sites with Muslim content, and even are located on social networks. Recently, many undeservedly forgotten monuments of theological thought began to return, sounding amazingly relevant in our time. Recently, many undeservedly forgotten monuments of theological thought began to return, sounding amazingly relevant in our time. The result of a professional study of Tatar theological heritage was the project “Anthology of Tatar Theological Thought” in 7 volumes.

Thanks to the research and textual work of G. Idiyatullina, A. Khairutdinova, D. Shagaviev, R. Adygamov, L. Almazova many examples of theological works of Tatar authors of the past were rediscovered. R. Safiullina prepared a two-volume anthology "Islamic creed in textbooks and works of Tatar authors of the early twentieth century." Among the specialized studies of domestic scholars covering the formation and development of religious reformatory ideas in Tatar society, it is important to note Y. Abdullin, R. Amirkhanov, R. Mukhametshin, A. Yuceev, A. Khabutdinov, B. Akhmetkarimov and others. Issues of the Tatar theological heritage were studied by such foreign authors as M. Kemper, A. Frank, I. Marash. V. Yakupov considered the possibility of formalizing the theological heritage of the domestic Islamic tradition up to the construction of a holistic, systematic theological tradition. A thematic review of theological issues raised by Tatar authors of the past is presented for the first time in this article. For the first time in the article, the names of many authors and the names of publications are introduced into scientific circulation.

**CONCLUSION**

On the example of theological discussions that unfolded on the pages of the Tatar press in the early twentieth century, we can see how significant changes in the socio-economic and cultural-ideological spheres contributed to the revision of certain concepts and the search for new guidelines for the development of the nation, while preserving the basic religious worldview values. It would seem that the field of dogma is a special abstract theological discourse, but in modern Islam it acquires a clear political connotation, because it determines which school and, accordingly, which country the believers will be oriented to, or, more broadly, to which center of power this or that territory belongs. That is why disputes over a number of issues and discussions on many small details which seem to be inconsequential often become so fierce (ALMAZOVA, 2012; USMANOVA, 2019).
Recommendations

After the first stage of the return of Islamic values to Tatarstan society (stage of legalization) and the subsequent stages of institutionalization (1992–1998), structuring (1998–2002) and internal mobilization (2002–2006), the Muslim community of Tatarstan entered a very important stage in its formation – the period of determining ideological and theological guidelines. The special significance of this stage is “in understanding the need for great intellectual efforts to clearly indicate the future landmarks of the Islamic revival in Tatarstan” (МУХАМЕТОВ, А.Х. 2014; АКХМЕТАРИМОВ, 2019). In this regard, in modern conditions, when studying the features of the formation and reproduction of Islamic discourse, extremely important is the continuity in using the theological heritage of the past, relying on its own roots in the field of Muslim thought and science.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The work is performed according to the Russian Government Program of Competitive Growth of Kazan Federal University.

REFERENCES


ATLASI, H. Maktablarebezda ig'tikad ham gyil'ime hal kitaplary. Maktap, 9, 222-224, 1913.


AL-HAMZAVI, I. Madrasalarebezda fikhyva yslu dareslare. Maktap, 3, 75-76, 1914.


AYUHANOVA, Z. ‘Dini va izhtimagiy mas'alalar ismele kitapny intikad va tak'rid. Shura, 5, 139, 6, 172, 1915.

MOUSTAFA, A. Dini tarbiya ochen lyazem bulgan asaslar. Ukytychy, 1, 47, 4, 97-98, 1918.

FAHRETNIN, R. Ig'tikad ma's'alalar va ig'tikad hakynda kitaplar. Shura, 1, 4-5, 1915.


TUNTARI, A. Mizan ash-sharigat' va mizan arbab an-nozhum motasadm. Din va magyishat, 42, 659, 1915.


HANISLANOV, G. Tak'rid. Din va magyishat, 25, 389-390, 1913.

HANISLANOV, G. Izhar hakyikat'. Din va magyishat, 14, 159-164, 1917.


ATLASI, H. Maktablarebezda ig'tikad ham gyil'ime hal kitaplary. Maktap, 9, 222-224, 1913.

ISLAMSKOE VEROUCHENIE v uchebnyh posobiyah i trudah tatarskih avtorov nachala HH v.: Hrestomatiya. Sost.,


BIGI,M. ZH. Kavagyiye fikhiya. Shura 12. 43-45, 1911.

MOZAFFAR, M. Maktaplarda iman va ightikad ukytu. Ad-Din va al-adab. 17. 524-528, 1915.


I.A. Ayukhanov is a zahirit methodology in Tatar theology of the early 20th century / Scientific Tatarstan, n. 3. C. 13–19, 2013.


TATARCHA HOTA HAKYND. Don’ya va magyishat. 11, 1907.

FAHRETDIN, R. Islam dine va ana tele. Shura. 3. 64-66, 1917.


BIGI, M. ZH. Kor’ane Karim vozheh garabiyase. Ayate karimelare hakynda. Shura 2. 46-49, 1912.

BIGI, M. ZH. Kor’ane Karim hozurynda Rus’ya moselmannary. Vakyt. 1367: 1-2, 1907.

MOZAFFAR, M. Kor’an tarzhemase hakynda. Shura 5. 122-125, 1912.

PONOMAREV, H. Kor’an tarzhemaseturynda. Shura10. 292, 1912.

TUNTARI, M. Kor’an tarzhemase. Shura12. 360-361, 1912.

HAMIDI, SH. Kor’an tarzhemase. Bayanel-hak. 187, 1907.

RAMZI, M. Kor’an tarzhemase hakynda. Din va magyishat 17. 263-266, 1912.

IHSANI, T. Kor’an tarzhemase hakynda. Shura 13. 387-388, 1912.

VALIULLA, S.H.A. Amanat bulmak it’izasy ilu Kor’ane Karim tafsire va tarzhemase. Shura. 6. 167-170, 1912.

GAINI, I. Kor’an tarzhemase hykynda. Shura. 2. 52-54; 3. 68-70, 1912.

GYIMRANDOV, B. Kor’an Karim tarzhemase hakynda. Shura10. 295, 1912.

NIYAZI, G. Kor’ane Karim tarzhemase hakynda. Shura. 12. 358-360, 1912.

TOKTABADEV, A. Kor’an tarzhemase. Shura. 5. 123-124, 1912.

TOHVATULLIN, M. Kor’anne Karim tarzhemase hakynda. Shura 10. 293-294, 1912.


TUNTARI, M. Hodus galamena ıqıtkad zhiyennan ber najar. Kazan, 87, 1902.

GAFFARI, M. Akył va nakyl' mas'alase. Shura. 8. 228-229, 1913.


1Docent at Institute of Foreign Relations of Kazan Federal University, Kazan, Russia. E-mail: rezada.saf@gmail.ru. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1878-3159.

2Senior Lecturer at Institute of Foreign Relations of Kazan Federal University, Kazan, Russia. E-mail: kriram@rambler.ru. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8505-6235.

3Deputy Director of the Centre at Institute of Foreign Relations of Kazan Federal University, Kazan, Russia. E-mail: marat_safi80@gmail.ru. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6049-7405.

Received: 20 Oct, 2020
Approved: 01 Dec, 2020