MATERIALS FOR THE STUDY OF THE WORK AND THOUGHT

OF ARNOLD J. TOYNBEE*

by Teodoro Tagliaferri (University of Naples Federico II)

Nos. 481-483

(March 7th, 2025)

WRITINGS ON THE EMPIRES IN WORLD HISTORY, XXVIII-XXX

1918

[Arnold Joseph Toynbee], *The Turk Militant*, I-III: I. *Germany and the Committe*; *The Turanian Movement*; II. *Islam in Russia: Democratic Aims*; III. *Berlin to Bokhara: Threat to British Interests*, in «The Times», Thursday, January 3, 1918, p. 5; Saturday, January 5, 1918, p. 5; Monday, January 7, 1918, p. 5, leading articles signed «From a Correspondent». For the attribution of these items to Toynbee' authorship see the *Select Bibliography* annexed to Arnold J. Toynbee, Kenneth P. Kirkwood, *Turkey*, London, Ernest Benn (*The Modern World, A Survey of Historical Forces*, series edited by H.A.L. Fisher, vol. VI), 1926, p. 319, where the overall title given for the three articles is *Pan-Turanianism*.

* *A Bibliography of Arnold J. Toynbee*, compiled by S. Fiona Morton, with a Foreword by Veronica M. Toynbee, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1980.

THE TURK MILITANT

I. GERMANY AND THE COMMITTEE

THE TURANIAN MOVEMENT

The Sick Man of Europe has changed his Doctors, and the new doctors have changed his *régime*. For repose and sedative drugs they have substituted stimulants and action. They have prescribed participation in the European War, and their treatment, though not disinterested, has produced remarkable results. There are still some sound organs in the Sick Man's body, which have profited by exercise, and the vital organs, which are thoroughly diseased, have been galvanized into functioning for the time. It is not a prudent treatment from his own point of view – it may well be the death of him – but for the moment he is on his feet, and his trainers have placed weapons in his hands. They are formidable weapons, and he is wielding them with something of his ancient prowess.

Every State has potential weapons of war, just as it has natural resources for peaceful development. The Committee of Union and Progress, and Germany their backer, hold the Ottoman Empire in their hands, and they are exploiting its political, as well as its military, capacity for aggression. What is this Empire? In its origin it was a kind of chrysalis which wound itself round a variety of nations between Vienna and Baghdad, as a result of their mis-growth during a thousand years. It was tolerated in so far as it was a lesser evil than the preceding forms of misgovernment; it was thrown off by each nation in succession – Hungary, Greece, Rumania, Bulgaria – as each returned to life. In this aspect the Ottoman Empire is a negative thing and an anachronism incapable of exploitation now for aggressive ends. It is the "Sick Man" of caricature.

EFFECT OF THE BALKAN WAR

From another point of vow, the Ottomen Empire is an Islamic Great Power – the only Moslem State which has dealt on equal terms with the naval and military Powers of Europe. The evidences of this status, before the Balkan War of 1912-13, were its subject European provinces: its claim was expressed in the title of Caliph, which the Ottoman Sultan assumed,

for theoretically the Caliph is in temporal as well as ecclesiastical matters the executive head of the Moslem world. This aspect of the Empire has appealed to Moslems under European rule, and was first exploited by Abdul Hamid. The Hamidian policy has been continued by the Committee of Union and Progress, and has been fortified instead of being discredited by the Balkan War, in which the European provinces were torn away. The Balkan War produced a profound effect upon the Moslem world, both within the Ottoman Empire and abroad. Till then, Moslems had clung to the delusion of their ascendancy over Christendom, and pointed to Turkey in Europe as proof of it. When Turkey was beaten in Europe by her former subjects, Islam realized with a shock the extent of its present weakness. Yet Islam consciously on the defensive needs unity more than ever, and Turkey may still be the best rallying point – above all, a Turkey with Germany behind her. This is the Pan-Islamic propaganda of the Committee, or of Germany speaking through their mouth. It exploits the natural impulse of Moslems to combine for the preservation of their culture, exaggerates their wrongs, and incites them to take a violent remedy. The "defensive war" is a well-known battle-cry of aggression, and in this war the championship of Islam has been one of Turkey's principal offensive weapons. Its employment will be described in a subsequent article.

A NATIONAL STATE.

But the Ottoman Empire has another aspect still. It is not only the discarded chrysalis of the Near East and an Islamic Great Power, but also a Turkish National State. This last aspect is now to the fore, and has provided a further weapon for Germany and the Committee of Union and Progress The Turkish national movement is similar in kind to the earlier movements of other nationalities in the Ottoman Empire. It draws its intellectual inspiration from Europe, like them, and is at the same time a spontaneous phenomenon. In Europe the Magyars, Serbs, Greeks, Rumanians, and Bulgars have extricated themselves from the Ottoman chrysalis in turn, and now it is the turn of the Turks in Anatolia. For the Turks, too, have been a subject people. The original Ottoman principality comprised only a tiny portion of the Anatolian Peninsula. The rest of it belonged to independent Turkish States, which offered a more stubborn resistance than the Balkans to the Ottoman conquest. It made little

difference that in Anatolia conquerors and conquered were of the same religion and speech, for the Ottoman Empire in its first phase was the antithesis of a national State. It was a military dynasty and a cosmopolitan administration, and the only privilege it accorded the Anatolian Turks was to spill their blood on the Danube and in Yemen. Especially since the early 19th century, when conscription was substituted for the Christian-descended Janissary standing army, the blood-tax has been levied from the Turks out of all proportion to the other nationalities of the Empire.

A SOCIAL REVIVAL.

The Turkish national movement began after the Ottoman Revolution of 1908, and its aim was to raise this people – at once the mainstay and the victim of Ottoman Imperialism – to a better condition. Like most national movements in Europe, it started from the linguistic side. Osmanli Turkish, the official and literary language of the Ottoman State, was as remote from the Turkish of the Anatolian peasantry as the Stambuli Effendis were from the peasants themselves. It was saturated with Persian and Arabic words and idioms, and the Nationalists – provincial notables, mostly, and young writers – agitated for the expulsion of these from the language and the restoration of Turkish equivalents. This "pure Turkish" campaign was followed by efforts in favour of primary education, the emancipation of women, and the improvement of the peasant's economic condition. It was a genuine social revival, like those which had previously accompanied the liberation of the Bulgars or the Greeks, and, if left to itself, it might have led to equally beneficial results. Unfortunately it took a different turn after the Balkan War.

The new national feeling, while it made the Turks conscious of their difference from Persians and Arabs, also reminded them of their kinship with other Turkish peoples, for no less than 70 per cent. of the Turkish-speaking population of the world is to be found outside the Ottoman frontiers. This Pan-Turkism was as natural a corollary of Turkish nationalism as Pan-Slavism was of the separate nationality movement among Russians, Jugo-Slavs, and Czechs, but at the same time the conception of it was an importation from Europe. The Turkish nationalists had no intellectual background of their own: they were largely influenced

by a single book, from the pen of the French Orientalist, M. Léon Cahun, which happened to pass through their hands; and to label their new discovery of Pan-Turkish kinship, they borrowed a European scientific term. From *Turan*, the name in Persian
medieval epic for the Central Asiatic steppes, European philologists had coined the word Turanian, to denote the "agglutinative" group of languages in North-Eastern Europe, Hungary and Asia. The Pan-Turkish enthusiasts seized upon the appellation for themselves. As "Turanians" they paraded their superiority mover the other races – whether Christian or Moslem – in the Ottoman Empire, and their solidarity with their brother Turks in Russia, Persia, and Afghanistan.

Then came the Balkan War, and the Pan-Turanian, like the Pan-Islamio, movement was converted into a political weapon by the Committee of Union and Progress.

IRREDENTIST PROPAGANDA

The abolition of the Capitulations, the language ordinance making the use of Turkish obligatory, even for the book-keeping of private firms; the atrocious race war against the Albanians, Armenians, Greeks, and Arabs, and the whole policy of forcible Turkification within the boundaries of the Empire, are one manifestation of the Committee's Pan-Turanian activity. But there is another side to the movement, less notorious up to the present, yet ultimately capable of working wider havoc, and that is the Irredentist Propaganda among the Turks abroad.

Pan-Turanianism, like Pan-Islamism, is a formidable weapon of offence in the hands of the Ottoman Government, and they are employing both weapons in the same field. Their insincerity is patent, for the two creeds are incompatible. From being anti-Arabic the Turanian movement very early became anti-Islamic too, over the question of translating the Koran into Turkish and of secularizing education; this tendency is said to have been developed still further by the Jewish element in the Committee: but the two creeds are in any case incompatible on purely political grounds. The Ottoman Government can bid for the allegiance of Persia, for example, as it sister Islamic State, or for the allegiance of the Turkish element in Persia as their long-lost Turanian brothers; but they cannot honestly woo both at

once, since the attraction of the Persian Turks into Turkey would incidentally involve the break-up of the Persian State.

But the Committee of Union and Progress are not troubled by such considerations. They have a weapon for each hand, and wield one or other as opportunism suggests. If they have failed so far to drive either weapon home, it is because propaganda follows the flag, and a political offensive requires a military preparation. Pan-Turanianism and Pan-Islamism were foiled for the moment by the Ottoman reverses at Sary-Kamysh, Suez, and Hamadan; a triumphal entry into Teheran, Tiflis, and Cairo was the presupposition of their success. Butprospects which seemed shattered already within the first year of the war have been suddenly revived since the Russian Revolution. There are as many Moslems in Russia as there are inhabitants in Turkey, and twice as many Turks in Russia as there are Turks in Turkey – a startling fact which has escaped the attention of most people in England, and was little heeded by the Ottoman Government so long as Russin's strength as a Great Power debarred them from turning it to account. But now the positions are reversed. The Sick Man finds himself less sick than his neighbour, and Russia defenceless offers her weakest flank to Turkey sharpest blades. The article that follows will describe the present state of the Moslem and Turkish population in the Russian Empire.

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II. ISLAM IN RUSSIA

DEMOCRATIC AIMS

In the preceding article the Pan-Turanian and Pan-Islamic movements were dealt with from the side of Turkey; but the success or failure of these movements depends on the Turkish and Moslem populations in Russia, who have been enabled by the Russian Revolution to pursue for the first time a policy of their own. There are nearly 20 million Moslems in Russia, and they are stronger numerically than any other non-Russian element, except the Ukrainians. But the statistical comparison is misleading. The Ukrainians are a unity in themselves, independently of their relation to the Russian State; the Moslems have a motive for union in the profession of Islam, but the possibility of their union depends on Russia. Islam in Russia is divided und cross-divided by sect, language, economic and cultural condition, and geographical distribution. The existence of the Russian State, which binds them to so many non-Moslem populations, is also their indispensable link with each other. Apart from Russia, these 20 millions Moslems could hot hold together, and certainly could not organize themselves into a political force corresponding to their numbers.

THE MOSLEM GROUPS

The Russian framework embraces a number of separate Moslem groups. There is "Mawara-en-Nahr", the country "beyond (*i.e.*, north-east of) the River" Oxus, which is an integral part of the civilized Eastern world, with ancient centres of Islamic culture in its cities, a peasant population in the oases and irrigated riverine tracts, and nomads in the steppes between. The total population is about five and a half millions, and about 83 per cent. of them speak the Turkish dialect called Chagatai. Mawara-en-Nahr is as un-European as India. It is cut off from Russia by deserts as India is from England by the sea, and under the Tsardom it was divided, on the Indian system, between protected native States and Russian-administered provinces.

Between Mawara-en-Nahr and European Russia lies Kirghizistan, a vast steppe-land which no civilized State before Russia, whether Moslem or Christian, has ever ruled. The native Kirghiz – from four to five millions in number – speak the same Chagatai dialect as the Moslems of Mawara-en-Nahr, but differ from them in their economic life and culture. The Kirghiz are nomads, threatened with extinction by the immigration of an agricultural peasantry from the overcrowded parts of Russia in Europe.

North and west of the steppes lies European Russia, a settled country of fields and towns; and here, in the Urals and along the Volga, there is another Moslem population, about four millions strong, entirely surrounded by Russians, but holding their own against them, and not inferior to them in civilization. These Moslems, whose centre is Kazan, speak the Tatar dialect of Turkish, but are Europeans in spite of their language and creed. They have not only a peasantry but an urban class – shopkeepers, merchants, an intelligentsia, a Press.

Lastly, there are the Moslems of the Caucasus and Crimea, four and a half millions in all, but divided (for the Caucasus is another Balkan Peninsula) by differences of religion and civilization and speech. There are Shias and Sunnis, townsmen and peasants, and untamed mountaineers, Turkish-speakers and Persian-speakers and speakers of innumerable indigenous tongues.

ORGANIZATION MEASURES

Under the Tsardom these various Moslem groups had few links with one another beyond their common inclusion in the Russian Empire; but since the Revolution there has been a spontaneous movement among them to make their aggregate weight of numbers tell by democratic organization. Realizing that they are behind most other Russian populations in education and economic development, they seek to compensate for this weakness by organizing on the largest scale and they do not shrink from the problems this involves. They have taken in hand the reconciliation of Sunni and Shia, and they build consistently on the Islamic basis, in preference to the Turanian. In view of the fact that over 80 per cent. of the Russian Moslems are Turkish-speakers, this is a noteworthy choice of policy; but the Turanian basis is less practicable than the percentage makes it appear, for Chagatai, Tatar, and

Azerbaijani are not so much dialects as independent languages, and when the first All-Russian Moslem Congress met at Moscow last May Russian was adopted as the medium of discussion, because no other language, whether of the Turkish family or not, was equally familiar to all the delegates,

The leaders of the movement have also made connexions with non-Mosler elements like the Buddhist Buriats of Siberia, and the Kalmuck colony between the Volga and the Don, while the local Moslem groups show a tendency to cooperate with their nearest neighbours – the Crimean Turks with the Ukrainians, and the Caucasian mountaineers with the Cossacks of the Kuban. But the instinct of the Russian Moslems for cooperation shows itself most strongly in their sympathy with Moslems abroad. They take the keenest interest in their fellow-Moslems' fate, and it is one of their most urgent demands that the Revolutionary formula of the "self-determination of nationalities" shall he applied not only to Europe, but also to Asia and Africa.

ENFRANCHISEMENT OF WOMEN

This may be Pan-Islamism, but it is singularly different from the Pan-Islamism of the Committee of Union and Progress, and entirely in harmony with the principles of the Entente. For the most striking feature of the Moslem movement in Russia is its genuine sympathy with the constructive side of the Revolution. Its leaders are not only organizing, but organizing in a democratic sense. One of their first acts was to set up a central Moslem ecclesiastical board for all Russia, but they were equally concerned to have this board elected by universal suffrage, and out of the six members chosen one is a woman. The woman question, so crucial for the social progress of Islam, has been taken up as courageously as the question of sect, in face of an equally formidable reactionary opposition, and on their own initiative the Moslem women have been organizing themselves with a view to their enfranchisement and education. It may be said without exaggeration that this is the most important contemporary movement in the Islamic world, and that its success or failure will have a decisive effect on the destiny of Moslems everywhere.

The British Empire contains too many Moslem populations of its own to regard this movement in Russia with indifference. As a partly Moslem polity, we must welcome the advance which twenty million Moslems are making in an Allied country, and we have also reason to welcome it as contributing to our own security. For it cannot be insisted upon too strongly that the actual Moslem movement in Russia presupposes the continued existence of Russia, and can only realize its objects within the Russian framework. If Russia falls to pieces, the Moslem *bloc* in Russia dissolves into its elements too – an event that would be disastrous alike to the Russian democracy, the Moslem leaders, and ourselves. For the disintegration of Russia might be followed by the reintegration of its fragments in a Turco-German structure. The possibility of this will be discussed in a concluding article.

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III. BERLIN TO BOKHARA

THREAT TO BRITISH INTERESTS

The last article described the position of the Moslems in Russia, and their share in the revolutionary endeavour to reconstruct the Russian State. How is their policy regarded by the Committee of Union and Progress of Constantinople and its mentors in Germany?The German journals that specialize on the East are paying the Russian Moslems great attention, but it may be doubted whether their sympathy with the present movement is sincere, for the last thing Germany and Turkey desire is that the various constituents of Russia should settle their difficulties by themselves.

The strongest exponents of Moslem unity in Russia are the Kazan Tatars, who at present have the leadership. Surrounded as they are by an overwhelming majority of Russians, they can only maintain their position by the support of the larger and more homogeneous Moslem groups to the south and east, and they deprecate any tendency to loosen the bonds between them. But Kazan is being supplanted in the leadership by Baku, where the Moslems have been touched by the modern industrialism of the oilfields. The self-made Moslem millionaires of Baku hold the purse-strings of the All-Russian movement, and Baku journalists are influencing it in the direction of local territorial autonomy; for Baku, the centre of a compact Moslem group on the outer edge of Russia, will not be content with the cultural autonomy advocated by Kazan. Yet Baku as well as Kazan may lose the leadership over Kirghizistan and Mawara-en-Nahr. For the Kirghiz it is a question of life and death to prevent further expropriation of their land.

As for the Chagatai Turks, they may declare for the complete severance of Mawara-en-Nahr from the Russian body politic, because they are a purely Oriental people under European rule, at the opposite pole to the Kazan Tatars, who are virtually Moslem Europeans. This Oriental antipathy to Europe has declared itself since the Revolution in the already autonomous native State of Bokhara.

These are the centrifugal forces at work among the various Moslem groups, but the outcome depends on the fate of Russia as a whole. If Russia held together, Kazan and Baku would hold the Moslems for her in some kind of Moslem *bloc*. But during the present anarchy the Moslem groups, like the Finns and Ukrainians, are severally falling away, and a belated attempt to restore strong government may drive them out of the Russian orbit altogether. This is the course of events to which the Turks and Germans look forward, for it opens the way for a scheme of their own – the "Berlin-Bokhara"
Railway to replace "Berlin-Baghdad".

Tho Baghdad enterprise is politically and militarily bankrupt –politically since the appearance of the Arab national movement, and militarily since the prospective termini of the line in Mesopotamia and the Hedjaz have fallen into the bands of the British forces and their Arab Allies. Its failure has exposed the weak points in Turkey's armoury – the ineffectiveness of Pan-Islamism and Pan-Turanianism when not backed up by military success, and the discredit that may result from their fundamental incompatibility; but just when the prospects of Turco-German expansion were receding in the south, the disintegration of Russia disclosed a more alluring liaison on the north and east.

A TURCO-GERMAN PROJECT

The railways of the Caucasus and Mawara-en-Nahr are at present linked exclusively with the railway system of European Russia by two long single lines – the line from Rostoff-on-Don to Baku and the line from Orenburg to Tashkent But this achievement of Russian expansion in the 19th century is a *tour de force*. It connects the Caucasus and Mawara-en-Nahr with a region with which they have had no connexion in history before, and leaves them isolated from regions with which they have been traditionally associated. If Russia disintegrates, this *tour de force* will break down. The Kirghiz will cut the Orenburg-Tashkent Railway where it crosses their steppes, just as the Arabs have cut the Ottoman Railway in the Hedjaz: and the line from Rostoff to Baku, where it skirts the Caspian coast, will be at the

mercy of the Moslem mountain tribes of Daghestan. If these trunk lines are severed the local railway systems of the Caucasus and Trans-Caspia will be left in the air, and the Turco-German expansionists will then try to switch them on to their own trunk like in Anatolia, along routes that have been trodden from ancient times by amies and caravans

To accomplish this vast project the Turks must bring the Caucasus under their military control, and at present they have against them the Armenian snows and the demoralization of their own troops on this front. But if, when the snows melt, the Turkish forces here were stiffened by a few German divisions there might be nothing to stand between the invaders and Tiflis. If the Turks broke through, the "Berlin-Bokhara" project would be as good as achieved, for Tiflis is already in railway communication with Bokhara by Baku and the Trans-Caspian line.

POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES

The political consequences would be disastrous: a new Balkanproblem in the Caucasus, with a dominant Moslem element andsubject Christian nationalities under Ottoman rule; an independent Moslem khanate in Mawara-en-Nuhr, fanatically reactionary and attracted to Turkey by the Pan-Islamic and Pan-Turanian movements, which in this case would not clash; and a Persiasubjected by the Ottoman Turk on one side and the Chagatai Turk on the other to a pressure which would make her regret the Anglo-Russian *régime*. Northern Persia Northern Persia is required by the Berlin-Bokhara Railway for its all-land branch from Tabriz (the present railhead of the Caucasus system), round the southern end of the Caspian Sea, and the Pan-Islamic principle would give Turkey the pretext for binding Persia to her engine-wheels.

But Southern Persia, Afghanistan, and Baluchistan are also on the list of Turco-German ambitions, and India is threatened with a far graver peril than she ever had to face from Tsarist Russia. Berlin-Bokhara is simply a cryptogram for the prolongation of "Central Europe" into a "Central Asia", welded together by arms under the sign of the Pan-Turanian idea. Central Asia and Central Europe united would blockade Russia from the west and the south, stride across the Trans-Siberian Railway, open a door into the hinterland of China

through the Chagatai Turks of Chinese Turkestan, intrigue in Afghanistan against British influence, and finally aspire to descend on India across the North-West frontier.