

**MUSLIMS OF THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE AND HAJJ BUREAUCRACY IN THE
OFFICIAL REPORTS AND HAJJNAMES OF VOLGA-URAL MUSLIMS AT THE
TURN OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY**

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Abstract

This thesis examines the Hajj pilgrimage of Muslims of the Russian Empire as well as the bureaucracy pilgrims had to face on the way to Mecca at the turn of the twentieth century. Every attempt of tsarist officials to systematize and organize the Hajj made it in fact more complicated. By decreasing the number of passports for Muslims heading to the Hajj, constructing hubs where pilgrims were obliged to stay, requiring them to buy tickets for steamships of particular companies, and by sometimes banning the pilgrimage all together, the imperial bureaucracy faced ever-increasing difficulties to control the Hajj. All these measures were meant to establish state patronage over the Hajj. However, these policies often complicated the journey rather than facilitating it. The *hajjname* of Gali Chokryi, for example, reveals another important aspect related to Hajj: that a Sufi Muslim of the Volga-Ural region demonstrated his loyalty to the tsar by praising the developments of the Russian Empire. The core analysis presented in this thesis juxtaposes the official reports commissioned by the state or written by state officials with the non-state perspective as given in the *hajjnames*, in particular that of Gali Chokryi, which serves as a valuable source for understanding the Hajj bureaucracy.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
1. THE REPORTS AND ACCOUNTS OF STATE OFFICIALS	10
1.1 Long Journeys: The Hajj and the Construction of Railroads in the Russian Empire	13
1.2 The Official Report of Staff Captain Davletshin's Journey to Ottoman Hejaz	14
1.3 The Report of Said-Gani Saidazimbayev	20
1.4 V.I. Yarovoi-Ravskii's Materials on Islam.....	24
1.5 Ishaev's Observations on the Hajj.....	27
1.6 Tcharykow and his Zakliuchenie about the "Muslim Question"	38
2. THE NON-STATE PERSPECTIVE ON THE HAJJ: THE HAJJNAME.....	45
2.1 The Volga-Ural Muslims.....	45
2.2 Hajjnames as a Genre of Sources.....	47
2.3 Sufis on Hajj: Volga-Ural Muslims in the Late Nineteenth Century	52
2.4 The Case of Gali Chokryi and his "Dastan hajjname"	54
CONCLUSION	61
BIBLIOGRAPHY	65

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

d. - delo

f. - fond

op. - opis'

RGIA - Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi istoricheskii arkhiv

INTRODUCTION

“Thanks to the wonderful deeds of our Tsar, wealth is increasing in Russia, greatness and glory have appeared. I, poor Mullah Muhammadali, the son of Mullah Abdassalih, have heard about power and grace, the good deeds of our Tsar since childhood; all my life I prayed for his health. And now, having witnessed such riches and the power of our ruler during the trip, I loyally express admiration for him, his entire family and relatives, all his associates, assistants and advisers. [...]”¹

This is an extract from the pilgrimage (hajj) account of Gali Chokryi, written after he completed the Hajj in 1872. At the very beginning of the account, Chokryi (1826–1889) introduced himself as an imam of the Starochukurovo mosque (Iske Chokir) and a son of Abdassalih. According to the rules of the Bashkir language, his name is Soori, but in Tatar Cyrillic, it goes (transcribed into Latin) as Chokryi. He was an imam and a Sufi poet. After pursuing his education in madrasas, he started to teach in the Kazan region. He had a reputation of an Islamic scholar of the Volga-Ural region due to his education and based on the fact that he completed the hajj journey three times.² Gali Chokryi, is a representative of the Volga-Ural Muslims, who are a Turkic-speaking group living on the territories north of the Caspian Sea along the Volga River. They were Russian imperial subjects, which makes them the community of Muslims with the longest experience coexisting within a non-Muslim domain.³

¹ Gali Chokryi, “Dastan Khadzha-name” [Dastan Hajjname], *Khadzh rossiyskikh musulman*, no.5, 2009, 9; see on Hajj, *The Hajj, Pilgrimage in Islam*, ed. by Eric Tagliacozzo and Shawkat M. Toorawa, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016).

² David J. Matthews, Ravil Bukharaev, *Historical Anthology of Kazan Tatar Verse: Voices of Eternity*, (Richmond: Curzon, 2000), 112.

³ Mustafa Tuna, *Imperial Russia's Muslims*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 3. See also Vladimir Bobrovnikov, “Islam in the Russian Empire,” in *The Cambridge History of Russia*, ed. by Dominic Lieven (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 202-210; on Muslims of the Russian Empire, see, Bobrovnikov et al., *Musulmane v novoi imperskoi Istorii* [Muslims of New Imperial History], (Moscow: Sadra, 2017).

The case of Volga-Ural Muslims is unique in Russian imperial historiography. The community established a wide network of contacts with other Muslims within the imperial borders. They had wide diasporic communities in Transoxiana, the Kazakh Steppes, the Caucasus, and the Crimea. Towards the nineteenth century, the networks stretched even beyond the imperial domains.⁴

The starting point for my research was the book of Eileen Kane “Russian Hajj”. She introduced a new topic, which was missing from the historiography. Her primary goal is to reconstruct a lesser-known history of the Russian Empire by illuminating the role of human mobility in the nineteenth century and Russia’s complex motivations in building an infrastructure for the Hajj.⁵

The common view on why Russia took an active role in Hajj regulations is the threat of the spread of cholera and the rise of Pan-Islamism. However, Eileen Kane’s argument gives a more complex understanding of the role of the Hajj in the Russian Empire. She stresses that, besides the already mentioned reasons, Russia saw economic and political potential in Hajj traffic. She zoomed in on the history of the organization of the Hajj and mobility in the Russian Empire, mainly from Russian officials’ perspectives by using archival evidence, including official reports.

By facilitating the pilgrimage of Muslims and, in some cases, even subsidizing the Hajj, Russian officials aimed not only to control but also to help to integrate Muslims in their empire’s society. With the development of railroads and steamships, the hajj became an empire-wide phenomenon, which raised the question of how to administer its infrastructure. The Hajj also formed an important part of evolving trans-imperial connections. In the

⁴ Tuna, *Imperial Russia’s Muslims*, 4.

⁵ Eileen Kane, *Russian Hajj: Empire and the Pilgrimage to Mecca* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2015), ix.

Russian-Ottoman context, for example, these connections included merchants, captives, fugitives, war prisoners, and pilgrims, among others.⁶

Aim of this thesis is to investigate the bureaucracy of Hajj from different angles. I use a two-layered analysis as my main approach. I examine the perspective of imperial state officials (of both Muslim and non-Muslim origin) and juxtapose it with the perspective of a Hajji. This method shall help to review the bureaucracy of Hajj from multiple perspectives. The additional value of this approach is also to realize what motivated Hajjis to write the *hajjnames*, what the *hajjnames* can tell us about the regulation of the Hajj, as well as to shed light on the perspective on the Russian imperial governance and to highlight the information related to the connections between the Muslims of the Russian Empire and the Ottoman world. I argue that the state's perspective reflected in the reports and accounts of the officials is mainly concerned about the organizational aspects such as public health, subjecthood, and infrastructure. While imperial officials of Muslim origin try to find a balance between Muslim subjects, their faith, and the state, non-Muslim officials tend to emphasize the threat that emerges from the Hajj and call for a stronger integration of Muslim subjects into the empire. However, at the non-official end of the spectrum providing insights into the non-state perspective, the *hajjname* of Gali Chokryi is an illustrative example of "Russian" Muslims in that he underlines both his loyalty to the tsar and the importance of the Hajj for a Sufi.

⁶ For the wider context, see for example, Will Smiley, "The burdens of subjecthood: the ottoman state, Russian fugitives, and interimperial law, 1774–1869." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 46, no.1 (2014):120; another perspective on trans-imperial subjects can be traced in the work of James Meyer. According to him, the pattern of trans-imperialism in context of the Russian-Ottoman migration was followed by the Pan-Turkists. The idea of Pan-Turkism emerged and nurtured by Russian Muslims – mainly outside the Ottoman Empire. Indeed, many of the representatives of Turkish movements were originally from the Russian Caucasus, Crimea or Volga region see James Meyer, *Turks Across Empires: Marketing Muslim Identity in the Russian-Ottoman Borderlands, 1856-1914*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

As mentioned above, one of my focusses is on the bureaucracy of the Hajj based on the reports of Russian state officials. The reports I analyze in my thesis can be categorized as follows:

- 1) reports written by the officials of various ranks, such as the reports of the staff captain Abdul-Aziz Davletshin, a Hajj director of the empire - Said-Gani Saidazimbayev, and of the lieutenant I.P. Yarovoi-Ravskii;
- 2) accounts of Russian officials working in diplomatic missions, for example, the account written by the dragoman of the embassy in Jedda, Shakirdzhan Ishaev, and the *Zakliuchenie*, a treatise penned by Nikolay Tcharykow, the then-Russian diplomat in Constantinople.

I argue that official reports from Ottoman Hejaz played a crucial role and served more than just a guide for future hajjis or as a formal document in the routine of the imperial bureaucracy. They were a tool for surveillance of Muslim communities on one side, and, on the other, they facilitated the emergence of a systematic organization of Hajj in the Russian Empire.

Robert Crews, in his seminal article, states that “the tsarist regime achieved a relative stability in managing its large Muslim population”.⁷ His main argument shows the way in which the Russian government positioned itself in a new realm as a patron of its Muslim population. Tsarist Russia’s religious policies of the fin de siècle was tightly connected with politics and started to serve as a tool of foreign policy. By protecting their subjects, the Russian Empire could claim their presence in foreign lands.⁸ This case has been illustrated by Eileen Kane in her “Russian Hajj”, where we can trace how the Russian Empire managed the

⁷ Robert Crews, “Empire and the Confessional State: Islam and Religious Politics in Nineteenth-Century Russia.” *The American Historical Review* 108, no. 1 (2003): 52.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 52.

Hajj of its Muslim subjects and had a reason to be present in the Ottoman Empire via the opening of consulates.⁹

As Crews notes, the religious strategies and notions of tolerance were introduced by Catherine II in 1788 with the idea of disciplining religious institutions and integrating them into the state apparatus. Catherine founded the Orenburg Muhammadan Ecclesiastical Assembly, which incorporated the Islamic faith into the state structures of tsarist Russia. In a sense, the Russian state became a kind of *Polizeistaat*, as it tried to control all aspects of life from marriages and divorces to arrangements related to pilgrimage. What we are missing in Robert Crew's article is the voice of Muslims towards the institutionalization of the process.¹⁰

Some criticism might be raised in that this perspective might appear to be a little too sympathetic to the cause of the tsarist regime, while neglecting the view of the Muslims themselves. Crews explains his perspective in his book *For Prophet and Tsar*.¹¹ His understanding of the "Muslim Question" points to co-optation and accommodation of Islam in Russian society. The relation of the Russian state with Muslim communities played a significant role in political views, especially in relation with its main rival – the Ottoman Empire.¹² Competition and a mutual sense of fear and mistrust was common for the empires, and it was coming from the fact that, on both sides, they had coreligionists to rely on. In that sense, Russia occupied a special place in the Muslim world.

After the Russian-Ottoman war of 1768-1774, based on the Treaty of *Küçük Kaynarca*, the provinces of the Ottoman Empire with vast Orthodox populations came under

⁹ Kane, *Russian Hajj*, 20.

¹⁰ Crews, "Empire and the Confessional State", 67.

¹¹ Robert Crews, *For Prophet and Tsar: Islam and Empire in Russia and Central Asia* (Cambridge: Harvard University press, 2006), 33.

¹² On the Muslim question, see, Elena I. Campbell, *The Muslim Question and Russian Imperial Governance*, (Bloomington: Indiana University press, 2015); more on Russian-Ottoman context see, Viktor Taki, *Tsar and sultan: Russian encounters with the Ottoman Empire* (London and New York: I.B.Tauris).

Russian protection. This treaty provided a formal guarantee for the local Orthodox coreligionists.¹³ However, as Taki notes, Russia did not present itself as “a protector of the entire Orthodox millet in the Ottoman Empire” and mainly focused on the Ottoman territories that were returned to Constantinople after being occupied by Russia.¹⁴

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the Russian Empire had a clear picture of its role in the global significance of the Hajj as a crossroad. Under the umbrella of the protection of Russian subjects, Russia started to establish its embassies and consulates along the route of Hajj. In her book on the Russian Hajj, Eileen Kane shows that the reaction of Muslims towards official state governance of the Hajj was mixed. Hence, the evidence she offers reveals, in fact, that thanks to the professional, resourceful approach of the Russian diplomats, Russian Muslims started to contact state officials on their way to Mecca.¹⁵

In 1908, Russian Prime Minister Stolypin decided to manage the pilgrimage of Muslims by assigning a director of the Hajj administration. His aim was to make sure that Russian subjects informed Russian officials before starting their journey (in order to obtain their passport) so that the government could keep abreast of their movement and also ensure that they were safe in the face of dangers that could threaten them along their journeys. A Tashkent-born Said-Gani Saidazimbayev – the author of a report that is going to be a subject of this thesis – was the first assigned director of the hajj who hailed from a Muslim background.¹⁶

In fact, the idea of hiring a coreligionist was logical, but the fact that Stolypin hired Saidazimbayev without checking his “files” and intentions, led to difficult situations: Pilgrims

¹³ Victor Taki, “Limits of Protection: Russia and the Orthodox Coreligionists in the Ottoman Empire,” *The Carl Beck Papers in Russia and East European Studies* no.2401 (2015), 36.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 38.

¹⁵ Kane, *Russian Hajj*, 13.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 120.

were complaining about being forced to buy expensive tickets for the Volunteer fleet steamship (Russia's largest steam enterprise) and about being locked in Hajj complexes, which reminded them rather of prisons, where they became detainees.¹⁷

Saidazimbayev offered a plan on how to facilitate the Hajj. This plan included the building of *Hajjhanes* along the long way from Tashkent to Odessa - special facilities where the hajjis could pray, get medical treatment, and if needed, find shelter.¹⁸ In reality, the facilities were not big enough, the train wagons were overcrowded, and Saidazimbayev's travel agents were selling tickets only from one particular steamship company with whom he struck bargains. He had his own selfish interests in this project, and the Hajjis' experiences were tied to his ambitions. At that moment, the state decided not to assign anyone and departed from the idea of centralizing the Hajj.¹⁹

Another perspective on trans-imperial connections can be traced in the work of James Meyer. According to him, the pattern of trans-imperialism in the context of Russian-Ottoman migration was followed by Pan-Turkists. The idea of Pan-Turkism emerged and nurtured by Russian Muslims – mainly outside the Ottoman Empire. Indeed, many of the representatives of the Turkish movements were originally from the Russian Caucasus, Crimea or Volga region.²⁰

In my chapter on the official perspective on the Hajj, I will discuss the bureaucracy of the administrative procedures based on reports and writings of imperial officials. There was

¹⁷ Kane, *Russian Hajj*, 143.

¹⁸ Said-Gani Saidazimbayev, *Otchet o dvizhenii musul'manskikh palomnikov v Mekku v 1908 godu*, [Report on mobility of Muslim pilgrims to Mecca in 1908] (St. Petersburg: Tipografia "Ekspress", V.S. Borozina, 1909), 4.

¹⁹ Kane, *Russian Hajj*, 146.

²⁰ James Meyer, *Turks Across Empires: Marketing Muslim Identity in the Russian-Ottoman Borderlands, 1856-1914*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 33.

a fundamentally different perception about the Hajj between Russian officials of Muslim origin and the non-Muslim Russian officials.

In the first chapter, I examine the official reports written by Russian officials of Muslim origin: the report Staff Captain Davletshin from his journey to Hejaz, the report of Said-Gani Saidazimbayev “*Otchet o Dvizhenii Musul'manskikh Palomnikov v Mekku v 1908*”, the account of Shakirdzhan Ishaev, a dragoman of the Russian consulate in Jedda. The reports of the officials of non-Muslim origin: “*Sbornik materialov po musulmanstvu*”, published in 1899, written by Yarovoi-Ravskii, a lieutenant, and the final conclusion of a Russian diplomat in Constantinople, Nikolay Tcharykow. The latter is particularly relevant in that the figure of Tcharykow and his *Zakliuchenie* has not been widely researched.

In the second chapter, I explore the *hajjnames* and argue that these personal accounts written by Muslims who performed the journey to Mecca played a more crucial role than just serving as guidance and tutorials for future hajjis. They served as a valuable source for the state’s understanding the bureaucracy of the Hajj and as a tool for the government to keep closer tabs on its Muslim community, as well as to have an idea about what kind of information was circulating within the community and about their attitude towards tsardom. My aim is to transcend the issues of the organization of Hajj and to understand the bureaucracy behind it through analyzing the *hajjname*, by particularly discussing the case of Volga-Ural Muslim Gali Chokryi whose account exhibits an important complementary response to the state’s perspective in that its author directly addresses the tsar in the context of his descriptions of the Hajj.

The issue of *hajjnames* as “guidebooks” for future hajjis, however, should not be disregarded. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, printed *hajjnames* were a popular form of media that served as guides for those planning to perform the Hajj. They had all sorts

of information related to Hajj, starting with itinerary, lodging, expenses, as well as interactions of Muslims of the Russian and the Ottoman Empires. The *hajjnames* consisted of a set of information regarding all matters related to Hajj.²¹ The “*Dastan hajjname*” of Gali Chokryi very delicately touches upon the issues of the administration of the Hajj and the difficulties of the pilgrims on their way to Mecca, providing the personal perspective of someone who experienced the empire’s attempts at organizing the Hajj on the ground. The report of Said-Gani Saidazimbayev – on the contrary – exposes all the issues of the Hajj journey and seeks to provide solutions to facilitate the organization of the Hajj from above. Despite the fact that Saidazimbayev’s plan failed, it triggered the state to reconsider its attitude towards the organization of Hajj and the itineraries of a Hajj journey. These juxtapositions show that one objective of the thesis is to compare Muslim state officials’ reports with the personal descriptions of the hajjis. In comparison to Chokryi’s personal account, Davletshin’s official report provides some insights about the circumstances why pilgrims might not be able to go on the Hajj, a period which he calls “less fortunate years”.²²

²¹ Norihiro Naganawa, “The Hajj Making Geopolitics, Empire, and Local Politics: A View from the Volga-Ural Region at the Turn of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries”, in *Central Asian Pilgrims: Hajj Routes and Pious Visits between Central Asia and the Hejaz*, ed. Alexandre Papas et al. (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 2012), 174. However, it is important to understand the nuance between the travel writing account and the hajj memoirs, where latter does not intend to provide any entertainment. Kane, *Russian Hajj*, 51.

²² Abdul Aziz Davletshin, *Otchet shtabs-kapitana Davletshina o komandirovke v Khidzhaz*, [Report of Staff Captain Davletshin on his mission to Hejaz] (St. Petersburg: Voennaia tipografiia, 1899), 89.

1. THE REPORTS AND ACCOUNTS OF STATE OFFICIALS

The Russian Empire's approach to its Muslim subjects and their travels to Mecca went through different stages of development from banning the pilgrimage to subsidizing the Hajj. In 1822, Tsar Alexander I officially banned the Hajj. The main reason for this was the perceived threat of "fanaticism" among the Muslims. However, the ban did not last long. In January 1826, tsarist officials recognized the ban as not conducive to sustaining cordial relations with its Muslim subjects and substituted it with policies geared towards regulation rather than suppression. Russia started to issue travel documents. The authorities required recommendation letters, as well as declarations about the financial situation from those traveling for Hajj. This was in line with Russia's toleration policies towards Muslims and the state's attempt to co-opt Muslims into its society by new regulations of controlling the Hajj.²³

Toleration in a religious context can be expressed by the Russian term as *veroterpimost*. During the last decades of the eighteenth century, Russia started to incorporate its non-orthodox regions. One of these regions was the Volga-Ural region.²⁴ The process started with the establishment of the relationship of the Russian administration with the Muslim Elite – the 'ülemâ. Paul Werth notes that it was also connected with the mass conversions.²⁵ The rhetoric of the term "toleration" in the tsarist context dictated the fact that those who wished to enjoy toleration should be tolerated by others and not to get involved into politics.²⁶ This indicates that the toleration in the nineteenth century goes in pair with the meaning of control or regulation.

²³ Kane, *Russian Hajj*, 21-22.

²⁴ Paul W. Werth, *The Tsar's Foreign Faiths, Toleration and the Fate of Religious Freedom in Imperial Russia*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 2014, 48.

²⁵ The question of conversion in the Russian Empire is outside of my topic. Please see, Werth, *The Tsar's Foreign Faiths*; see also, Agnes Nilufer Kefeli, *In Becoming Muslim in Imperial Russia: Conversion, Apostasy, and Literacy*, (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2014).

²⁶ Werth, *The Tsar's Foreign Faiths*, 108.

According to Robert Crews, toleration was a tool of the Russian Imperial rule. By suggesting a policy of toleration, Catherine II and her successors aimed to make non-Orthodox religions, including Islam, as one of the building blocks of the Empire. In that regards, Crews elaborates that the state not only tolerated but also presented itself as a defender of the faith.²⁷ Toleration in the late eighteenth-century Russian context can be described as a “policy of non-interference”. It was a structure designed for the integration of the non-orthodox subjects. The aim was to create a society of loyal and disciplined subjects.²⁸ On top of it toleration helped the tsarist Empire to get closer “to the local mosques”.²⁹

Religious toleration was an essential component of the dialogue between the state and the representatives of religious groups. It was also an important aspect of Russian Imperial identity.³⁰ Several factors of the eighteenth century motivated this process. One of them was the Treaty of *Küçük Kaynarca* of 1774, which gave some “spiritual authority” over Muslims outside the Ottoman Empire to the Sultan.³¹ The *polizeistaat* model designed by Catherine II and her “enlightenment conceptions of religious toleration” were focusing on institutionalization of the non-Orthodox religions.³²

The ban on the pilgrimage in 1865 imposed by the Ministry of Internal Affairs created complications for the future Hajjis. However, Daniel Brower states that the ban was not a real obstacle. He investigates the case of Central Asians, who - despite the ban - completed the journey to Mecca.³³ The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia required all governors to decrease the number of passports issued for Muslims heading to the Hajj. Tsar Alexander II

²⁷ Crews, *For Prophet and Tsar*, 2.

²⁸ Ibid., 9.

²⁹ Ibid., 3.

³⁰ Werth, *The Tsar's Foreign Faiths*, 121.

³¹ Ibid., 49; More on *Küçük Kaynarca*, see, Roderic H. Davison "Russian Skill and Turkish Imbecility: The Treaty of Kuchuk Kainardji Reconsidered", *Slavic Review*, 35, No.3 (1976), 463.

³² After annexation of Crimea several changes acquired for the Muslims of the Russian Empire. One of them was an establishment of “a spiritual directorate” in 1783-1794. Werth, *The Tsar's Foreign Faiths*, 51.

³³ Daniel Brower, *Turkestan and the fate of the Russian Empire*, (London: Routledge, 2010), 114.

cancelled the fee for passports (which was 250 roubles, then a significant amount), and the restrictions on travel to Europe were lessened. However, the Ministry of Internal Affairs harbored certain fears towards the pilgrims heading to Mecca and tried to restrict their access to passports despite the risk of interfering in the religious affairs of the Muslim community.³⁴

Ultimately, in the late nineteenth century, with the successful expansion of territories, Russia became “a patron of the Hajj”. By facilitating the pilgrimage of Muslims and, at some point, even subsidizing the Hajj, the Russian government aimed not only to control, but also to co-opt Muslim subjects into the Russian administration. Here, Kane explains the case of co-opting Muslims, mainly local elites in the Caucasus who were complaining about the Hajj ban. The Russian Empire tried to present its measures from the position of the defender of its’ Muslim subjects, by protecting them from ubiquitous violence on the Ottoman route to Hajj.³⁵

The development of railroads and steamships was essential, since the Hajj became a trans-imperial phenomenon. The pilgrims’ heading to the Hejaz, Muslim holy cities in the Ottoman Empire, were crossing borders and entering into another imperial domain. At the beginning of twentieth century, the Russian empire had constructed “a transimperial hajj infrastructure” stretching from Russian to Ottoman lands. One of the architects of this infrastructure, foreign ministry official N. V. Tcharykow, who was also a Russian envoy in Constantinople, noted that it was built with “the active participation” of Russian diplomats “to ensure safety, comfort, and low costs for Muslim pilgrims.” By 1906, the railroad system facilitated Muslims of the Russian Empire from the Volga-Ural region to take direct trains

³⁴ Kane, *Russian Hajj*, 55.

³⁵ Ibid., 22.

from Orenburg to Odessa. This shift transformed Russia's landscape dramatically, and new Hajj hubs appeared along the way.³⁶

1.1 Long Journeys: The Hajj and the Construction of Railroads in the Russian Empire

The construction of railroads and monetary reform were major projects of the reign of Tsar Nicholas I. The railroads were supposed to solve the problem of great distance and transportation. Walter McKenzie Pinter connects railroads to the emancipation of the serfs and considers the railroad as a revolutionary sign of a modernity.³⁷ According to Frithjof Benjamin Schenk, recent studies on the European empires raise the question of political ambitions and the control over multi-ethnic and multi-religious domains. All these matters are also applicable to historiography of the Russian Empire. Schenk emphasizes that the biggest concern for the empires was “the consolidation of imperial space”.³⁸ Tsarist Russia in the nineteenth century was the biggest continental Empire in Eurasia. In 1838 a promising engineer and future Minister of Communication Pavel Melnikov, noted that Russians needed railways more than any other country in Europe. Schenk underscores the role railways played in imperial rule. He provides several reasons for this: first, the railways were used to deploy the tsarist army; second, the railways were considered as an instrument to consolidate Russia's vast territories and to keep an eye on external borders.³⁹ Third, the construction of railways

³⁶ Kane, *Russian Hajj*, 1; more on Tcharykow please see, Dmitry Arapov, “Russkii Posol v Turcii N.V. Tcharykow i ego “zakliuchenie” po “musulmanskomu voprosu””[Russian Ambassador in Turkey N.V. Tcharykow and his final report on muslim question], *Vestnik Evrazii* 2:2002.

³⁷ Walter McKenzie Pinter, *Russian Economic Policy under Nicholas I*. (Ithaca and New York: Cornell University Press, 1967), 131.

³⁸ Frithjof Benjamin Schenk, *Mastering imperial space? The ambivalent impact of railway building in tsarist Russia in Comparing empires: encounters and transfers in the long nineteenth century* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011), 61.

³⁹ Schenck provides an example of Alexander II, who gave an order to build Trans-Siberian Railway. The Tsar was a major investor in all the projects: Trans-Caspian, Trans-Siberian and Orenburg-Tashkent.

would serve as a tool for a cultural homogenization.⁴⁰ However, neither Pinter nor Schenck emphasized the economic importance of the construction of railways network in the Russian Empire in their works. Eileen Kane, in contrast, touches upon the economic value of railways in the context of Hajj organization.⁴¹ While demonstrating the state's attempts at organizing the Hajj, she used the example of Gani Saidazimbayev, who created a plan on how to organize the Hajj and penned a report on it in 1909.⁴²

1.2 The Official Report of Staff Captain Davletshin's Journey to Ottoman Hejaz

This report was written in Russian in 1899 and published by St. Petersburg's military publishing house (located in the house of the headquarters). The full name of the report is *Otchet Shtabs Kapitana Davletshina o komandirovke v Hejaz* (Report of Staff Captain Davletshin about his Official Journey to the Hejaz). The cover of this report reads "confidential" (*sekretno*), and the document consists of seven chapters.⁴³ In the first pages of his report, after describing the geographical peculiarities of Hejaz, Davletshin provides his view on the political situation of the Hejaz. He reports that the Hejaz remained a part of the Ottoman Empire after Sultan Selim I (r. 1512 to 1520) conquered the region in 1517. For the two centuries, however, followers of Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab, known as Wahhabists from Najd, were the defacto rulers of the Hejaz. In 1799 they took Mecca and, five years later, Medina, only to be expelled by Ibrahim Pasha, the son of the Ottoman Egyptian governor

⁴⁰ Frithjof Benjamin Schenk, *Mastering imperial space*, 63-65; Gertner's plan to create a network of railways failed. However, the railways enthusiast the Minister of Finance, Sergei Witte in his report to Alexander III noted that despite the fact that Siberia is a part of Russia, it lacks the civil and economic advantages. And the Trans-Siberian railways were viewed as a way to facilitate the reduction of distance and to spread the Russian lifestyle in Siberia.

⁴¹ Kane, *Russian Hajj*, 47.

⁴² Ibid., 120.

⁴³ Abdul Aziz Davletshin, *Otchet shtabs-kapitana Davletshina o komandirovke v Khidzhaz*, [Report of Staff Captain Davletshin on his mission to Hejaz] (St. Petersburg: Voennaia tipografiia, 1899).

Mehmed ‘Alî who defeated them several times eventually by taking their capital Diriyah. According to Davletshin’s observation, the power of the Ottoman state is limited to a mere military force and manifests itself only where they have troop stations. In other words, the Ottomans had limited control over these cities and the road between Mecca and Jedda.⁴⁴

Davletshin notes that their control of Hejaz is questionable and is not recognized in depth by the local community. Further, he criticizes that, after four centuries of “Turkish” rule of Hejaz, they failed to establish meaningful contacts with the locals and exert effective cultural influence on them. The relation between the two groups, the author noted, was distrustful and even hostile. He continues his observations: “Turks consider Bedouins dogs,” while the latter perceive the Turks as unbelievers. He also recalled that the Turks often warned him to be careful with these “barbarians”.⁴⁵

In the year 1898, Davletshin reports, when he undertook his journey, the number of pilgrims was only 450, which is a low number. According to the *dalils* (guides), it was only one tenth of the all pilgrims who usually go on Hajj. The main reason for the low number of pilgrims was a prohibition of issuing passports.⁴⁶

Brower states clearly that once the pilgrims obtained their passports, they “confronted” the Russian administration. In addition to the pilgrim’s passport, people could also obtain “business passports”, which were easier to get, and there were no restrictions for travelling to Hejaz with such passports.⁴⁷ Many pilgrims traveled without any documents. One may ask, what they had instead: a letter from “the wise man” of their village, i.e. a blessing of the local imam.

⁴⁴ Davletshin, *Otchet shtabs-kapitana Davletshina*, 11.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 11-12.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 86; He uses the term *blagopoluchnye gody* - which could be translated as more fortunate years when there were no restrictions.

⁴⁷ Daniel Brower, *Turkestan and the fate of the Russian Empire*. (London: Routledge, 2010), 115.

Davletshin mentions that the status of a Hajji, the person who performed the Hajj, is not as important as it used to be 40-50 years ago for the Muslims of Inner Russia, for example, from the Volga-Ural region.⁴⁸ At that time it was very difficult to perform the Hajj, which usually took about two years, and only wealthy Muslims could afford the significant expenses that came with the journey. Unfortunately, Davletshin does not elaborate more. Perhaps this is why only few people had decided on pursuing it, inspired by deep religious feelings together with financial sources, which - he notes - “is a rare combination in case of our Muslims”.⁴⁹

Davletshin records that with industrial development the whole journey could be achieved in two-three months. The number of Hajjis was growing; however, not all of them had a good reputation. According to Davletshin, the intentions were mixed; some of them were performing⁵⁰ “bedel” (a service of performing Hajj on behalf of another person) simply to earn money.⁵¹

His report provides some insights about the financial reasons why pilgrims could not go on the Hajj, which he calls “less fortunate years”.⁵² During such a period, shortly before starting their journey, pilgrims found out about a state order not to issue passports and started to read circulars of the “Ecclesiastical Assembly of the Muhammadan Creed” to abstain from taking a journey this year. He notes that the majority postpone the journey for a better time, but some still go to Hajj, due to the fear that the upcoming years there will be even more severe disorders.⁵³

⁴⁸ Davletshin, *Otchet shtabs-kapitana Davletshina*, 87.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 86.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 87; he also provides an example of a youngster whose wealthy father sent him on Hajj, in hope that the son will recovery from hard drinking.

⁵¹ Ibid.; Bedel or Badal is a service which was used by the people, who were unable to accomplish Hajj and hired a person who would do it on behalf of them.

⁵² Ibid., 86.

⁵³ Ibid., 89; see also Crews, *For Prophet and Tsar*, 52.

Daveltshin notes the same year that pilgrims from the Caucasus obtained passports from the local authorities. However, Tatar pilgrims mostly got their passports from Moscow. He also adds that the visas were obtained in Constantinople from the Turkish consuls. Some of those traveling to Mecca left their Russian passports in Constantinople, in order to avoid any problems getting back to Russia. This indicated that pilgrims could be questioned about their journey to the Ottoman Empire or even restricted and not allowed to travel to the Ottoman Empire in future. Some of them obtained Egyptian passports, which were required by the marine company Hediviye taking aboard only Egyptians.⁵⁴ In the winter of 1826, the Commander in chief of the Caucasus, A. P. Ermolov presented rules and procedures for Muslims to get passports for travelling to Mecca. The idea was to give travel documents only to “well-intentioned Muslims”. In order to ascertain the character of applicants, he relied on testimonies of local elites well known by Russian officials. The “simple folk”, as Kane termed them, had to have a letter of recommendation from the local authority for transit in Tiflis. Ermolov hoped to construct a statistical body by requiring the Muslims to apply for passports. In a broader context, these new rules aimed to create a centralized bureaucracy on the Hajj and to assist in understanding the local elite, hierarchy and to identify who would be reluctant to cooperate with the tsarist administration.⁵⁵

Davletshin admits that the movement of pilgrims started very early in 1899. In December he met some pilgrims in Egypt heading to Hejaz while it was easier to get foreign passports. The official standpoint can be summarized by the following quote from the Daveltshin’s report:

“It is difficult to indicate any valid measures so that, if necessary, we could stop the departure of our Muslims to the Hejaz. Maybe the issuance of passports only at the place of residence, or a mandatory requirement that those leaving show evidence of the absence of obstacles to traveling abroad from

⁵⁴ Davletshin, *Otchet shtabs-kapitana Davletshina*, 89; see also Crews, *For Prophet and Tsar*, 89.

⁵⁵ Kane, *Russian Hajj*, 23.

their police authorities, would further reduce the number of people going on a pilgrimage; all traveling to Turkey should also be forewarned what difficulties they would face on the return to Russia.”⁵⁶

In the above passage, we clearly see what was behind the ban of completing the Hajj and how important the bureaucracy of issuing of passports played in it. Even though it was almost two decades after the Hajj journey of Gali Chokryi, the ban issue was still important.

What was the Russian state interested in when dealing with the Hajj and commissioning official reports? Davletshin, the state official, formulates this interest as a strategic question: “What is the influence of the Hajj on our Muslims?”⁵⁷ Based on his observations there are two types of pilgrims: first, mostly older people, uneducated, who saw some spirituality even in Bedouins who had robbed them. Once they are back, they became Sufis, very pious for the rest of their lives. The other group, which became larger in past years, are the individuals who are well-educated, curious about different matters, in other words, who are not only pilgrims, but also observers. Despite that, he points out that it is hard to deny that the Hajj serves as a rise for religious feelings, the pilgrims usually change their spiritual life and keep strictly to the rules.⁵⁸ “But”, Davletshin notes, “in general, it can be important to say that almost all of our pilgrims return to their homeland with significantly changed views, more insightful and have a more conscious attitude to the political situation, and the way, in which they imagined Muslim Turkey and its head the caliph”.⁵⁹ Davletshin’s observations are clearly imbued with the state’s gaze in that he explains that overall, the Hajj had no political influence on the Muslims of Russia. He did not see any threat for the state.

⁵⁶ Davletshin, *Otchet shtabs-kapitana Davletshina*, 90.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 115.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 116.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 117.

His conclusion is simply that the whole journey is very risky, and all pilgrims just want to accomplish it and to return home safely.⁶⁰

The official report of Davletshin, who was a Muslim himself, in a way was unique, since he was a first military officer who was sent to Hejaz. As it was noted by the Russian scholar I.P. Senchenko, Davletshin had a knowledge of the Quran and spoke vernacular Arabic.⁶¹ Obviously, he had a great chance to get as close as it was necessary for being able to report on religious-political aspects of Hajj. By analyzing the report of Davletshin, one can see that the influence of this report was crucial for the state and for the Muslims of the Russian Empire.

I find his report as a specific type of official report, since Davletshin, as a Muslim and a Turkic-speaker with knowledge of Arabic, had a chance to observe and to provide all necessary facts from the ground to the imperial administration, as it was impossible to a non-Muslim to embark upon Hajj and to visit the sacred cities of Mecca and Medina. In other words, the empire employed its subjects' skills, religious affiliations, expertise, and experience in the interest of the state, while Davletsin's agency lay in his ability to mediate between Muslim subjects and empire through assessing the political ramifications of the Hajj. In this way, Davletshin's report contributes to the official perspective on the Hajj, since it was an official report written after he completed his mission to the Hejaz. Moreover, as it was noted by the Russian historian Igor Senchenko, Davletshin's evaluation of the religious and political aspects of Hajj defined in the report formed the basis of the measures taken by tsarist

⁶⁰ Davletshin, *Otchet shtabs-kapitana Davletshina*, 117.

⁶¹ Igor Senchenko, *Rossiiskaya Imperiya, Araviya i Persidsky Zaliv*, [Russian Empire, Arab lands and the Persian Gulf], (St. Petersburg: Aleteiya, 2018), 497.

Russia to organize and facilitate the journey of Muslim pilgrims from Russia to the Holy lands of Islam.⁶²

1.3 The Report of Said-Gani Saidazimbayev

Three decades later, a businessman by the name of Said-Gani Saidazimbayev proposed his solution on how to organize the Hajj in the Russian Empire. In 1908, Prime Minister Stolypin appointed him as the leader of the Hajj administration for all the Muslims of the Russian Empire. This was viewed as an attempt to regulate the huge trans-imperial mobility of Russian subjects to Mecca by a co-religionist. Saidazimbayev published a report in St. Petersburg in April 1909 about the mobility of Muslim pilgrims to Mecca. This report was written upon direct request of Prime Minister Stolypin. The document was unique, as there was nobody before Saidazimbayev in charge of the organization of Hajj in the Russian Empire.⁶³ In fact, as it was noted by Kane, he was not the first to approach the Russian government with a plan to organize the Hajj; however, his connections and enterprising charisma prompted Stolypin to assign him the role of “Director of the Hajj”.⁶⁴

The document consists of twenty-three pages organized in five chapters. At the beginning of the document, Saidazimbayev provides overall information about pilgrims travelling on Hajj between 1908 and 1909. The majority of the contingent of pilgrims, he recalls, were from the Arab domains and Turkey, while only a minority was from the Russian domains, China, and Persia. Annually approximately two hundred thousand pilgrims completed the Hajj, but only ten percent of them were pilgrims coming from the Russian Empire. He highlighted,

⁶² Igor Senchenko, *Rossiiskaya Imperiya, Araviya i Persidsky Zaliv*, [Russian Empire, Arab lands and the Persian Gulf], (St. Petersburg: Aleteiya, 2018), 497.

⁶³ Said-Gani Saidazimbayev, *Otchet o dvizhenii musul'manskikh palomnikov v Mekku v 1908 godu* [Report on mobility of Muslim pilgrims to Mecca in 1908] (St. Petersburg: Tipografia “Ekspress”, V.S. Borozina, 1909).

⁶⁴ Kane, *Russian Hajj*, p. 123-126.

however, that the amount of Muslims of the Russian Empire had increased in recent times, partly due to a low cost of railways.⁶⁵

Saidazimbayev starts his report with a detailed explanation of all the challenges and issues pilgrims face on the way to Mecca. The pilgrims from Russia appreciated the speed of the journey by railways and on the facilities, which were lacking on caravan routes. But the first experience of traveling for Hajj using the railways brought them quite a bit of adversity. All the troubles started once they entered the carriage designed for 36 people; the wagon carrying pilgrims would usually be set up to carry 50-60 people sitting wherever it was possible. In such conditions, the pilgrims moved for 12 or more days.⁶⁶

The conditions were harmful to health, and it was impossible to do any obligatory religious rituals. The ventilation of the wagons and overall sanitary conditions were “horrible”. The Ministry of Communications reacted to the conditions of Hajj travels in 1907, when a circular was issued on the provision of separate wagons to pilgrims. But the lack of wagons, especially in the railway depots of Central Asia, dictated that no more than a dozen of wagons could be used for Hajj travelers per annum.⁶⁷

Another reason to organize the Hajj was the lack of food provisions along the way to Constantinople. Train stations rarely had any food shops. Even if they did, they were selling unsuitable products for Hajj pilgrims. Pilgrims therefore brought dried meat, bread, vegetables and other food items with them from home. On the long journey without proper storages, food spoiled and created non-sanitary, dangerous conditions. Pilgrims had no other option than to eat the poisoned food or to starve. Saidazimbayev highlights that it was extremely detrimental to the health of the pilgrims, and infectious diseases became an

⁶⁵ Saidazimbayev, *Otchet o dvizhenii musul'manskikh palomnikov*, 1.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 2.

ordinary occurrence among them. Another issue was the lack of knowledge of the Russian language, so individuals who took advantage of this circumstance appeared.⁶⁸

Saidazimbayev explains that, at first, such individuals worked separately, and then they began to form groups, having united afterwards into one a larger organization titled “Artel of Conductors-Translators”.⁶⁹ These guides were engaged in the delivery of various services to pilgrims (like groceries, tickets to steamships, etc.); however, Saidazimbayev emphasizes that the lack of necessary traveling experience caused the pilgrims to be financially exploited. Pilgrims paid for non-existent services like a place in a queue to the ships, supposedly to avoid long waiting before boarding. In short, pilgrims paid some money for every step on their journey. All these uncertainties motivated Saidazimbayev to organize the Hajj journey.

“While I was listening to the stories of my coreligionists and gradually became convinced on the basis of the experiences of the journey and seeing that the pilgrims themselves cannot directly eliminate the defects of the case and Muslim society stubbornly keeps silent, a few years ago, I realized that it is necessary to find a way to deal with defects rooted in pilgrimage”⁷⁰

Based on the Saidazimbayev’s report, once the pilgrims reached the port, they were usually exhausted and not in the position to find safe shelter. The guides therefore accommodated the pilgrims in prepared rooms at the cheapest hotels and crammed in dozens of pilgrims in single rooms. Saidazimbayev continues to underline his perspective on the organization of the Hajj - the formation of food points (Muslim railway stations), later called Hajjhane. He planned to open buffets, separate rooms for men and women’s ablution, small

⁶⁸ Saidazimbayev, *Otchet o dvizhenii musul'manskikh palomnikov*, 3.

⁶⁹ Ibid.,2

⁷⁰ Ibid.

shops with food supplies, as well as a chai-hanes (tea houses). He emphasized the importance of building such Hajjhanes in the biggest Hajj points as Odessa and Feodosia.⁷¹

Eileen Kane, in her article “Odessa as a Hajj Hub, 1880s-1910s”, explains the importance of the city on the Black Sea for Muslims on their way to Mecca.⁷² “Adis” or Odessa was a well-known port city, mostly described as a Jewish city, a culturally important trade city of Russia’s South. However, according to Kane, it is rarely mentioned that Odessa was also a Hajj hub for pilgrims heading to Mecca.

Saidazimbayev’s plan started to fall apart, when the Muslim pilgrims began to complain about the conditions of their stay in Odessa and overcrowded ships, for example. They started to write to newspapers and suggested the pilgrims to avoid Odessa. They strongly recommended not to listen to Saidazimbayev’s agents and to travel from Sevastopol where ships were waiting for them.⁷³ Saidazimbayev’s plan did not work. However, the legacy of his project on the Hajj organization survived. Apart from Odessa, he opened Hajj hubs in Kharkov and Tashkent. As noted by Kane, he built a trans-imperial Hajj infrastructure. Surprisingly, in the following years, the tsarist state followed Saidazimbayev’s plan and started to act upon it. One of the followers of Saidazimbayev’s plan was the politician M. O. Menshikov. He supported the idea of Russia’s being the patron of the Hajj. Menshikov clearly saw the economic and strategic advantage of it. He supposed that if one trip to Mecca costed 300 roubles and if 20 000 pilgrims used it, it might generate tens of millions of roubles. He was also motivated politically: Menshikov emphasized that the state should accept the Hajj as an inevitable ritual, and the patronage of the Hajj by Russia would show the world that the

⁷¹ Saidazimbayev, *Otchet o dvizhenii musul'manskikh palomnikov*, 4.

⁷² Eileen Kane, “Odessa as a Hajj Hub, 1880s-1910s”, in *Russia in Motion: Essays on the Politics, Society, and Culture of Human Mobility since 1850*.ed. John Randolph, Eugene Michael Avrutin (Urbana:University of Illinois Press, 2012), 107.

⁷³ Kane, *Russian Hajj*, 144.

Russian Empire tolerated Islam. Moreover, as Kane has shown, it would give Russia the right for extraterritoriality, which was a crucial aspect in Anglo-Russian Rivalry in Persia and the Muslim East.⁷⁴ It was crucial for the Russian Empire to expand its consulate network and to have a presence in Middle East, starting with Syria to bolster its position against rival European powers in the Ottoman Empire.⁷⁵ The new network was built along hajj routes and facilitated the expansion of Russian presence and influence in these lands.⁷⁶

1.4 V.I. Yarovoi-Ravskii's Materials on Islam

In 1899, a series of materials about Islam, titled “Pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina” was compiled by lieutenant Vladimir Ivanovich Yarovoi-Ravskii, as ordered by the Turkestan Governor General S.M. Dukhavsky. Yarovoi-Ravskii's account is based on two reports of the Russian general consul in Jedda A. Levicky (from 1893 and 1894). Yarovoi-Ravskii provided a detailed understanding of the Hajj. He mentions that the Hajj did not require true moral motivation and can freely be replaced by hiring another person for this purpose, the so-called *bedel*.⁷⁷ He explains that the reason why it became widespread is due to propaganda of the Supreme Muslim spiritual authorities, who get the financial advantages from Hajj and the main mission of it is to consolidate and unite the world of Islam.⁷⁸ Similar to the report of Davletshin, Yarovoi-Ravskii's report refers to the statements of the Jeddah branch of the Turkish Sanitary Committee on the movement of ships with pilgrims, based on which it is clear that the number of the Hajjis who came through Yanbu and Jeddah was as following: in

⁷⁴ Kane, *Russian Hajj*, 144.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 46.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 45.

⁷⁷ V.I. Yarovoi-Ravskii, *Sbornik materialov po musulmanstvu* [Materials on Islam], (Tashkent: Tipografia Shtaba Turkestanskogo Voennogo Okruga), 1899, 1.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 2.

1891 - 44,900, in 1892-53,962 in 1893 - 86,489 and 1894 - 46,280.⁷⁹ In 1891, the total number of the Muslims of the Russian Empire who arrived in Mecca through Afghanistan and India was 1269, and through Constantinople 784. In 1894, as he mentions, there were 3349 of “our pilgrims”, of which 2931 arrived via India and 418 via Suez.⁸⁰ Out of 3349, only half were registered by the Russian consulate in Jeddah, and the statistics show that 46 of them were Tatars.⁸¹ The numbers of the pilgrims registered in the consulate, might indicate that they obtained Russian passports. However, Yarovoi-Ravskii states that the vast majority of the pilgrims travel without any passports.⁸²

As we will see in the second chapter, on the case of the Tatar Muslim Gali Chokryi, the pilgrims applied for required stamps to the Russian consulates, and as his *hajjname* will show, he was satisfied with the efficient service provided to him.

Yarovoi-Ravskii provides his own opinion of the Ottomans:

“Under the primitive order of the Turkish government, with the prevailing complete lack of authority, weakness and indulgence of the local authorities, property, personal security and the very life of pilgrims are not at all secured from all kinds of encroachments.”⁸³

He also touches upon imperial concerns with regard to the epidemics, that the absence of any medical care gives an abundant harvest to the annual epidemics. He states that the diseases there take the lives of at least 20 percent and up to 50 percent of the total number of pilgrims in the unpleasant years.⁸⁴

⁷⁹ V.I Yarovoi-Ravskii, *Sbornik materialov po musulmanstvu*, 3.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 8.

⁸¹ Ibid.; the author used the work *oprosheny* which could be translated as a surveyed, but he is not elaborating on how they were surveyed or registered. However, he provides a statistic which include the total number of the Tatars as well.

⁸² Ibid., 9.

⁸³ Ibid., 9.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 10.

On the other hand, he also mentions the Ottomans in the positive light. In 1894, the Hajj was safe for public health, which was facilitated by the comparatively small number of Hajjis and useful orders of the local Turkish authorities. He names a strict restriction on slaughtering the cattle in Mina valley, which is one of the rituals of Hajj, to be carried out only in those places which had drains for blood. The quarantine authorities paid more strict attention to quarantine measures being kept by Hajjis.⁸⁵

He notes that pilgrims are also subjected to bribes and abuses due to lack of foreign passports. Yarovoi-Ravskii gives an example of Batumi, where a certain Persian Khoja Ali was engaged in the sale of old Persian and Bukhara passports to the Hajjis from the Russian Empire at a high price.⁸⁶ After Batumi, once the Hajjis reach Constantinople, their ordeals continued. After Batumi, the next point on other abuses was Constantinople. He states that in Constantinople, “our Hajjis” - even those who have foreign passports - will use the services of the *dalils*, the guides, who would take their passports for a visa and issue Turkish *teskeres*, which is an equivalent of a passport. In fact, as Yarovoi-Ravskii notices, they usually returned the passports without any visas.⁸⁷

Yarovoi-Ravskii concludes that “Hajj represents a flammable element”.⁸⁸ For the most part, the interests of the Muslims are in conflict with the interests of Christian governments since Hajjis sometimes bring pan-Islamic impressions from Arabia to their homeland that easily develop into fanaticism.”⁸⁹ In stark contrast to Davletshin, Yarovoi-Ravskii makes a bold point on the Hajj, namely that it undoubtedly serves as one of the powerful tools to arouse and strengthen Muslim fanaticism.⁹⁰ He adds that the deplorable situation of the pilgrims

⁸⁵ V.I. Yarovoi-Ravskii, *Sbornik materialov po musulmanstvu*, 11.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 13.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 14.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 25.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 25.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 21.

might attract the attention of the other governments. The Russian Empire is now striving not to stay outside, and to get a part of control and to take possible measures to the bureaucracy of Hajj, particularly in terms of the judicial matters, national economy and the public health.⁹¹

The main concern of the Saidazimbayev was to address the challenges and issues pilgrims face on the way to Hajj. The problem of the overcrowded wagons, lack of food and financial exploitation motivated him to make Hajj as an organized event. If Yarovoi-Ravskii was concerned about fanaticism which would penetrate the Russian Empire through the pilgrims crossing the borders, the staff captain Davletshin in his report sets it clear that Hajj has no threat for the Russian Empire and the pilgrims travel to Hajj following their pious obligations. He also underlines the professional approach and support provided by the Russian officials working in the consulates.

1.5 Ishaev's Observations on the Hajj

Apart from Davletshin and Saidazimbayev, Shakirdzhan Ishaev was another Russian official of Muslim origin, and who was a dragoman of the Russian consulate in Jeddah.⁹² He wrote his observations and memoirs on the Hajj, which were published in the “*Sredne-Aziyatsky Vestnik*” journal, in Tashkent in November 1896. It was a scientific-literary journal, published monthly. Ishaev's report had seven chapters and was marked as “censorship approved”. This account fits the official framework in the present chapter in that he was a state official himself (even if his report was not a commissioned one and includes more personal observations and interpretations). As such his views contribute to the overall official perspective I set up for this part of the thesis, since it was written by someone in the service

⁹¹ V.I. Yarovoi-Ravskii, *Sbornik materialov po musulmanstvu*, 22.

⁹² Naganawa, “The Hajj Making Geopolitics”, 183.

of empire. Besides that, as it was marked by Schimmelpenninck van der Oye, the periodicals in the nineteenth century played a great role and helped to understand the Russian perspective of the world.⁹³

During Ishaev's mission at the Jeddah consulate, Mr. Levitsky served as a consul. However, prior to him, the first Russian consul in Jeddah was Shagimardan Miryasovich Ibragimov, who died of cholera in the first year of his assignment in 1892. He adds that the death of the late Ibragimov can be related to the general situation of pilgrims during epidemics. Ishaev highlights that the disorder in communication between Jeddah and Mecca, helplessness and the lack of care for them by local Arabs and the Turkish government.⁹⁴

Ishaev explains that Ibragimov, as a Muslim living near Mecca, in the first year of his work in the region, was obliged to perform the Hajj. Ishaev writes the same about himself as well, that he as a Muslim working in the proximity to the holy cities for Muslims and was obliged to go on the Hajj. Unfortunately for Ibragimov, there was an outbreak cholera that year, and especially in Mecca on "Arafat's day" - the day when pilgrims go to the Arafat valley, 20 km from Mecca, in order to perform Hajj duties. Ibragimov was very scared and went straight from Arafat to Mecca. Here his wife fell ill either from cholera, or from exhaustion following their journey from Arafat. Leaving his wife in Mecca, Ibragimov with two *dzhigits* (servants) and with one of the Turkestanis went to Jeddah; some other Egyptian doctor came along. When leaving, everyone was healthy and rode on horseback with a caravan; however, later he fell ill, refused any medicine and passed away.⁹⁵

⁹³ David Schimmelpenninck Van Der Oye, *Russian Orientalism: Asia in the Russian Mind from Peter the Great to the Emigration*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 10.

⁹⁴ Shakirzhan Ishaev, "Mekka, sviashchennyi gorod musulman", [Mecca a sacred city of the Muslims], *Sredne-Aziyatsky vestnik*, 11(1896): 61.

⁹⁵ Ishaev, "Mekka, sviashchennyi gorod musulman", 62-63.

Ishaev wrote about his Muslim identity openly. He could not to postpone the performance of the Hajj. It was important for him to show to his co-religionists the decisiveness in the fulfillment of the sacred duty, despite the fact that Cholera was already in Mecca and there were already deaths reported.

Ishaev was warned of the danger of falling sick from cholera and advised to postpone his journey to another year. However, he recalls that the situation with cholera might be even worse the next year. This might indicate that he did not see any serious threat in cholera. Ishaev concluded that “cholera here can be considered as an almost constant disease”⁹⁶. This reaction is very different from the one provided by Yarovoi-Ravskii, since the former characterizes it as an epidemic and a threat to the public health of the Russian Empire.

On 30th of April 1895, once Ishaev was leaving Jeddah for Mecca, the official of the Russian Consulate in Jeddah, G.V Brandt and the secretary F.F. Nikitnikov, as well as many Turkestanis living in the city came to say goodbye to Ishaev.⁹⁷ This illustrates that he was an important and well-respected figure, by both Muslims and the Russian officials. An important part of his account is dedicated to citizenship and national belonging. He recalls that the caravan from Jeddah to Mecca was not yet ready for departure, so he headed to a coffee shop. He says that G.V. Brandt who was also working in the Russian consulate, was wearing a white Russian cap. Mr. Nikitnikov, a secretary, was wearing a straw hat, and Ishaev was wearing Turkish fez. He further explains what the fez meant, if the European costume here is not infrequent and do not catch the eyes of the local; however, the headdress - fez - is the generally accepted hallmark of Turkish citizenship.⁹⁸ This is a bit confusing, if we take into consideration that Ishaev was a dragoman, a Russian official working in the consulate,

⁹⁶ Ishaev, “Mekka, sviashchennyi gorod musulman”, 66.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 67.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

perhaps only wearing a Fez would open a chance for him to eye-witness Hajj. And this was a diplomatic tool used by the Imperial Russia to get more information about Hajj on the spot.

“Although I belonged to the number of foreigners, I was known here as a co-religionist, and the Turks do not respect Muslims wearing any headdress other than fez.”⁹⁹

Ishaev shares also his ideas on Turkish security. He recalls that:

“...on the way, military guards... accompany the caravans of pilgrims from one picket to another, and along the way, stretching along the length of the caravan, they call each other with trumpet sounds, letting them know that all is proceeding well, and when approaching to the next picket, they call the convoys to take their place. In this order, we drove all night, stopping at the meeting coffee houses for a very short time.”¹⁰⁰

This fact shows that all the route was fully protected by Ottoman authorities.

He also shares his views on the relative comfort during his Hajj journey. He explains that, there are eleven coffee houses between Jeddah and Mecca, namely: Rasulgay, Ragama, Gerada, Kahvatul-Obad, Bagra, Hadets, Shamasy, Kahvatul-Bugas, Kelva, Salim and Bustan.¹⁰¹ These coffee houses are supposed mainly to serve to pilgrims as places for a short rest; however, as he states, they provide little comfort – especially for someone who is used to it.¹⁰²

“To the European view, all this is truly amazing, tens of thousands of people are constantly moving between Jeddah and Mecca, including a lot of wealthy people. Meanwhile, there are no places or rooms arranged for the travelers’ rest arranged, like in Persian and Turkestan caravanserais, European hotels, etc., not to mention about the postal service or railways. However, pilgrims move under the protection of a military convoy.”¹⁰³

⁹⁹ Ishaev, “Mekka, sviashchennyi gorod musulman”, 67.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 70.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 71.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 72.

He concludes that “in general, Turkey is a very strange state, and the wildness of the Arabs surpasses any likelihood.”¹⁰⁴ These kind of depictions of the Ottoman Empire greatly fits the “general pattern of Orientalization” by the Russian Empire, explained by Victor Taki. According to Taki, the depiction and comparisons of the Empires were changing in line with the politics and the period when they were written. The sixteenth-century Russian writer Peresvetov praised Sultan Mehmet the Conqueror and even suggested to the young Tsar him as a model¹⁰⁵. Later, the Ottomans started to lose the appreciation of the Russians and the Ottoman decline was contrasted with the Russia’s success. In the nineteenth century, both of the Empires were concerned about their image in the West. The Russian authors usually perceived the Ottoman Westernization from a negative angle as “rootless”, “superficial”, and “ultimately unable to stop imperial decline”. The Russian Empire benefited from the orientalisng of the Ottoman Empire, by accentuating its European identity, which was questioned by western authors. The writings of the western orientalist were very carefully translated and the references to the “semibarbarousness” of Russia was cut out from the text. Taki calls it “compensatory Orientalism” used by the peripheral states to reassure their “westernization” and “to overcome their marginality.”¹⁰⁶

Orientalizing the Ottoman Empire undoubtedly allowed Russian writers to assert their European identity in the face of the references to Russia’s own semi-barbarous character that one found at times in the Western literature. Such references must have hurt the pride of educated Russians, for they were judiciously edited out from translations of the Western Orientalists’ writings. Articulated with the help of borrowed idioms, Russian views of Ottoman Turkey can be taken as an example of the “compensatory Orientalism” that helped

¹⁰⁴ Ishaev, “Mekka, sviashchennyi gorod musulman”, 72.

¹⁰⁵ Victor Taki “Orientalism on the Margins: The Ottoman Empire under Russian Eyes”, *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History*, 2011:327-328.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 349-350.

many peripheral societies to overcome their marginality.¹⁰⁷ Schimmelpenninck van der Oye specifies the aforementioned “compensatory orientalism” in the Russian context. He characterizes it as a complex phenomenon, while highlighting the following aspects of it: orientology (*vostokovedenie*) and culture.¹⁰⁸ Despite the fact that Russians had “different minds” on the Orient, the research, study of it was nurtured by imperial aims.¹⁰⁹ Russian orientalism can be traced in Ishaev’s remarks about the Ottoman Empire.

Ishaev also provides information on *dalils*, the guides on Hajj. The main Meccan *dalil*, Muhammad Ali, met Ishaev with his students.¹¹⁰ Pilgrims are distributed by tribe and nationality among the *dalils*. Ishaev, as a representative of all the Muslim tribes, subjects of the Russia Empire, received dinners as a sign of respect from all the *dalils*. However, as it was noted by Ishaev, it was reciprocal gesture and he had to do the same.¹¹¹ “Overall, the services of *dalils*¹¹² are so widespread and have become a mandatory habit that pilgrims already know the names of their *dalils* in their homeland, i.e. before arriving to Mecca”.¹¹³ He was surprised to find out that *dalil* of Mecca, Muhammad Ali, spoke Russian to him. It turned out that he had been arrested for traveling through the Turkestan Territory without a passport and spent more than two years in the Tashkent City Prison, where he learned the Russian language.¹¹⁴

According to his descriptions, Muhammad Ali was an Arab, who was over 60 years old, knew the Turkish language, and was a very respectable and talkative old man. About twenty years before, Muhammad Ali-Srufi was in Russia, and now he is a *dalil* for all Tatars

¹⁰⁷ Taki “Orientalism on the Margins”, 328.

¹⁰⁸ Schimmelpenninck Van Der Oye, *Russian Orientalism*, 10.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 9.

¹¹⁰ Ishaev, “Mekka, sviashchennyi gorod musulman”, 73.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 78.

¹¹² Here he used a word *dalilstvo*, which derives from the word *dalil*.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 67.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 79.

and Kyrgyz of the Russian Empire, receiving income from them for the leadership in performing the Hajj during their visit to Mecca. He enjoys great respect among the Tatars and knows not only those who came here to worship, but also all the famous merchants and rich Tatars living in the Russian cities. Ishaev was surprised how well he knew Russia and Turkestan and what connections he had there. Ishaev adds:

“I am a resident of Turkestan. I do not know many Tatars here; he knows everyone. Later, however, this was easily explained by the fact that Muhammad Ali has whole volumes of lists of the Russian Muslims. He maintains correspondence with many of them and sometimes with returning pilgrims he sends his students to Russia to collect donations.”¹¹⁵

The information on *dalils* is crucial since we understand the bureaucracy of the Hajj on the spot and that the pilgrims were relying on *dalils*.

There is no reference to Sharia law about accomplishing the Hajj with the assistance of *dalils*. However, Ishaev notes that ninety nine percent of the pilgrims do not know the rules and rituals of Hajj.¹¹⁶ This adds a point to the importance of the *hajjname* as a source of information for pilgrims. Once in Mecca they were relying on the *dalils*. The job of *dalil* was inherited from father to son, and the title was given by the *Sharif* of Mecca. The *Sharif* of Mecca is the highest spiritual leader of the entire Muslim world. By the origin, he is considered a direct descendant and heir to the Prophet Muhammad. Over the past 20 years, the power of the *Sharifs* of Mecca was completely limited by the Turkish Sultan. They are only spiritual leaders, have no civil power, are subordinated to the Turkish governor, and are appointed to their posts by the Turkish Sultan.¹¹⁷ In 1895, Awn al-Rafiq was named the *Sharif* in Mecca.¹¹⁸ His account also shows the connection between other Muslim subjects of the

¹¹⁵ Ishaev, “Mekka, sviashchennyi gorod musulman, 73.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 66.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 61.

Russian Empire. As Ishaev recalls, he stayed at the house of one Sart Mullah Sadyk, who was from Kokand.¹¹⁹

“A lot of our Central Asians live in the city, they are engaged in various crafts and do not think about returning to their homeland.”¹²⁰

For the poor pilgrims of any nationality, as we learn from the Ishaev’s account, free rooms called *tekke*-lodges in the form of houses are provided by wealthy Muslims.¹²¹ As for Ishaev, all pilgrims can be divided into four categories: authentic pilgrims, specialists, industrialists, rogues. Authentic or true pilgrims go to Mecca solely by religious desire, like Christians in Jerusalem, Buddhists in Tibet and so on. They are exclusively engaged only in performing Hajj, i.e. performing religious rituals and duties, after which they immediately return to their homeland. These, of course, are the best of the pilgrims.

Pilgrim-specialists are those who are engaged in performing the Hajj for others, which is permitted by the Sharia, and called “*badals*”, with a certain reward. “*Badalism*” is very wide spread among the Kyrgyz and even more among the Tatars. Ishaev is not a big supporter of this type of Hajj, since he believes it makes Hajj as a craft or business, mainly done by imams or mullahs. Industrial pilgrims are mainly engaged in trade, the transport of various goods from city to city, and stop indefinitely where it is beneficial for them. They often marry along the way and remain resident in those cities of Arabia or Turkey in general, where they have found refuge. Pilgrims have chosen for themselves the specialty of robbing the more simple-minded of their congregations, and especially those from different wild places. They meet and try to establish a contact such pilgrims along the way, they take care of their well-

¹¹⁹ Ishaev, “Mekka, sviashchennyi gorod musulman”, 50.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Ibid., 48.

being and interests; they pretend to be the kindest and most simple-minded companions, especially on steamboats.¹²²

This typology should not be taken for granted, for it undermines the narrative of fanaticism on the other hand also disrupt the spiritual and religious meaning from the perspective of Hajjis. Here he, as a Muslim Russian Official, understands how important it is to give a clear information, but also to try to be as objective as possible.

Pilgrims were obliged to report on those who passed away in Mecca (in Hejaz in general) to a special Turkish official, whose position was called “*baitul-mal*” (Bai-Tul-Mal, a significant Head of Estate and Inheritance). He was obliged to take the property and money of the deceased for storage, which was very rarely executed neatly. Most of the times, property was taken away by the friends of the deceased and the money remained with those to whom it was given for safekeeping in Jeddah or Mecca. Among such persons owning the capital acquired by the indicated illegal means are “our Turkestanis”, Ishaev noted.¹²³

He also explains the geographical importance of Jeddah, which is a significant city, the main trading point of Hejaz. The pilgrims heading to Mecca by the sea route come through Jeddah. From there they take a land trip to Mecca, which is located seventy miles away. Also, he highlights the significance of the city by the fact that it is the city of consulates, which protect the interests of pilgrims. Among the European consulates, there is also the Russian consulate, which Ishaev served in 1895.¹²⁴ The bazaars are full of all kinds of goods from European factories - from the Russian factories the locals valued the locks.¹²⁵

After the formation of the Russian consulate in Jeddah, Ishaev states, an attempt was made to accept money for storage at the consulate; however, this initiative was not welcomed

¹²² Ishaev, “Mekka, sviashchennyi gorod musulman”, 65.

¹²³ Ibid., 69.

¹²⁴ Ibid., 60.

¹²⁵ Ibid., 47.

by the *dalils*. In 1894, the consulate accepted money for storage from only 12 pilgrims out of 3349 people, which was 2990 roubles and 5 roubles in things. In 1893, our consulate opened the inheritance of two Bukhara and 11 Russian citizens of the pilgrims.¹²⁶

Ishaev's driver, an Arab was pointing a finger at a large building which Arabs were diligently destroying. It turned out that the disinfecting place was built by the Turkish government in order to reduce the infectious diseases in the city, mainly cholera, which was rampant especially in 1892. Ishaev already received information about this disinfector, its construction was just completed, and it was supposed to be put into operation in the coming year, but the Arabs became very irritated, blaming the authorities, and especially the doctors who invented institutions that are contrary to religion.¹²⁷ In order to avoid a great massacres and disorder, the Turkish governor decided to agree with the locals, and the brand-new building was destroyed.¹²⁸ Ishaev penned that while he was on Hajj, the consuls of European powers had been killed in Jeddah. Christian consulates were plundered. He added that if someone will just mention or joke around, that there is "orus" – a Russian – here, he might be killed immediately.¹²⁹ He was devastated by this news.

He goes into details about Hajj's main rituals. From his account we learn that the main religious ceremonies of the Hajj are as follows: on the borders of the sacred region of Mecca, the pilgrim is obliged to put on *ihram* (special cloth), enter Mecca and make *tawaf* (go around the Beitullah seven times and seven times to trot between Safa and Merva). These rituals can be considered "ceremonies of entry" into Mecca. Then the pilgrim must, at the appointed time (on the 7th day of the *dhul al hijjah*, the last month of Islamic calendar), make a trip to Arafat, listen to the imam's *khutbah* (Muslim sermon). Pilgrims are supposed to come here in *ihram*.

¹²⁶ Ishaev, "Mekka, sviashchennyi gorod musulman", 69.

¹²⁷ Ibid., 71.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Ibid., 74-75.

Then they go to the area of Muzdalaf, collect stones and throw them “at the *shaitan* in the Mina area”, where they make a sacrifice. At the end of these rituals, the pilgrim returns to Mecca again and performs the *tawaf* the same as it did in the “ceremonies of entry”. Ishaev concludes the section on the rituals stating that everything else required by sharia and customs is already a luxury and performed by only few pilgrims. This also includes a trip to the city of Medina.¹³⁰

He also talks about his wife and family. Unfortunately, on the way to Mecca, his wife suffered from the sickness, the journey was difficult for his four-year-old son and he was carried in the arms of the servants.¹³¹ He adds that Although women walk with their faces covered, they walk completely freely, talk loudly and laugh, ride usually in pairs in the carousels, sing songs, play tambourines. This is not forbidden to them, and no one condemns them, but on the contrary, men stand nearby and listen to their songs and games on tambourines. Ishaev was involuntarily surprised by such freedom of women in the city and in general in Hejaz.¹³² It is also notable the way how he describes the status of women in Mecca, who were smoking shisha almost as they would be “drinking tea from the samovar”.¹³³

His account finishes with the following paragraph:

“I speak as an eyewitness about everything that I saw, without adding anything, or even slightly reducing, so as not to affect, somehow inadvertently, the religious feelings of Muslims, who, having returned from the Hajj, usually consider it their duty to tell different miracles. As the reader could see, there are actually no miracles; on the contrary, everything is very simple and, perhaps, even poor. Miracles can only be created by an enthusiastic imagination about a religious feeling. What I saw and heard, I’m talking about, adhering to possible accuracy.”¹³⁴

¹³⁰ Ishaev, “Mekka, sviashchennyi gorod musulman”, 70-71.

¹³¹ Ibid., 72.

¹³² Ibid., 50.

¹³³ Ibid., 51.

¹³⁴ Ibid., 83.

What makes Ishaev's account different from other reports and the *hajjname* is, among other aspects, the gender perspective. Ishaev tells that the pottery and the braids from the date palms is usually produced by the Arab women.¹³⁵ Many widows who own water tanks as an inheritance buy slaves and use them for private work, mainly as water carriers.¹³⁶ In the case of the Gali Chokryi's *hajjname*, in the Russian translation of it, there is only one paragraph where is a reference to women. The report of Saidazimbayev have references to women; however, no further details are provided.

1.6 Tcharykow and his Zakliuchenie about the "Muslim Question"

In the Russian-Ottoman context of the nineteenth century, Russian ambassadors appointed to Constantinople were highly experienced in diplomacy and politics. Before joining the Sultan's court, they usually had a high-ranking position in the Russian Imperial Hierarchy. Tcharykow was not an exception.¹³⁷ Born in 1855 to an old noble family, which had, as many surnames of the Russian nobility, Turkic origin. He graduated from the Imperial Lyceum in 1875 and continued his education in the archive of Moscow, where he had a chance to scrutinize historical documents and publications.¹³⁸ Here in the archive, he carefully observed the reports of the Russian envoys, Pazoukhins brothers. They were sent to Bokhara by the father of Peter the Great, Tsar Alexis in 1671.¹³⁹ In 1876, by order of the Chancellor of the Prince A. M. Gorchakov, he was assigned to the position of a diplomat at the St.

¹³⁵ Ishaev, "Mekka, sviashchennyi gorod musulman", 61.

¹³⁶ Ibid., 48.

¹³⁷ Arapov, "Russkii Posol v Turcii", 151.

¹³⁸ Ibid., 149.

¹³⁹ N.V.Tcharykow: *Glimpses of high politics through war and peace. 1855–1929*, (London: Allen & Unwin, 1931), 190.

Petersburg's office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and later in 1909 he served as a diplomat in Constantinople.¹⁴⁰

In the eighth chapter of the memoir, which is the same named as the memoir itself, Tcharykow has a section "In Constantinople as ambassador, 1909-1912" where he provides details about his mission as a diplomat in Constantinople. This section sheds the light on the status-quo of the Ottoman Empire in 1908, when the Young Turk revolution of 1908 gave the chances for participation in "High Politics" to Triple Entente: France, Russia, and Great Britain.¹⁴¹

In 1911, Tcharykow transcended his ideas on the "Muslim question" and the matters of the Hajj in the final report. The question of the central role Muslims played in the empire was discussed by the highest institutions like the Ministry of Internal affairs the Department of the Foreign Confessions and the police.¹⁴² The Muslims question was discussed on special meetings organized in St. Petersburg in 1905-1914 with the participation of the representatives of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Education and other departments. All the discussions were recorded in daily "journal" entries from the meetings. The discussion was based on diverse materials on Islamic subjects such as notes, conclusions, memoirs and petitions.¹⁴³

The document prepared by the Tcharykow is a "conclusion" written in May 1911 on The "Muslim Question". In fact, it was an answer to the request of the Russian Foreign Ministry to analyze the situation on "The development of measures to counter the Tatar-Muslim influence in the Volga region." Tcharykow states that the content of the

¹⁴⁰ N.V.Tcharykow: *Glimpses of high politics through war and peace*. 1855–1929, (London: Allen & Unwin, 1931), 149.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., 273.

¹⁴² Arapov, "Russkii Posol v Turcii", 148.

¹⁴³ Ibid., 14.

interdepartmental (*mezhhvedomstvennoe*) meeting on the development of the measures on the counteract to Tatar Muslim influence in the Volga-Ural region. The key objectives of the meeting were:

1. The role of the Turkish Government and some Turkish spiritual, publicist, pedogeological, political activists
2. The role of Pan-Islamism, philosophical and political teaching originated outside the Empire.¹⁴⁴

Tcharykow wrote to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs:

“It is hardly possible to hope for success in a fight with such kind of cultural-historical process even by the usage of the strictest laws and administrative measures. If it is not possible to weaken or stop this process perhaps it is possible to diffuse it or give it a certain direction.”¹⁴⁵

He continues by stating that the most crucial part of the Muslim question is Pan-Islamism and Pan-Turkism, which he perceived as the biggest threat to Russia’s rule over the great number of Muslims as Russian Empire. The threat can be traced by the following attributes:

- 1) The subjects use the same political rights and tend to culturally and religiously unite on an autonomous basis totally independently from the Government, as it is happening in Russia. This aspiration is a matter of threat for Russia; it is increasing since Muslim publications preache the rapprochement motivated by the fidelity to “Caliph - Turkish padishah” and a fond of a dream of the formation of an all-Muslim state. (*vseumusulmanskoe gosudarstvo*)

¹⁴⁴ RGIA f.821, o.133, d.469.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

- 2) The threat intensifies once the Muslims of various states get together to help each other in the fight against Christian dominion. Motivated by Muslim religious unity (Pan-Islamism) or seeking support of the Muslim domain like the Ottoman Empire.¹⁴⁶

Further in the conclusion he provides his solutions on the Muslim question. However, before he also wrote about Hajj:

“It is also important to consider the proper impact on the «religious center» Mecca and Medina, the visit of which, the Hajj, plays the biggest role in maintaining and development of feelings of solidarity in between all Muslims of the world.”¹⁴⁷

The question of Hajj was not discussed on the meetings; nevertheless, he believes that

“it is worthy to consider implying a certain administrative measure on this crucial aspect of the lives of Russian subjects. It is obvious, that the Russian Government takes an active part in the Hajj rite by all the Russian subjects including Central Asians who take Russian rail roads and Russian steamships to reach Mecca. Our government is ensuring the security, good conditions and sanitary provisioning of the hajjis. It even organized steamship routes, with an active participation of the Russian consulates.”¹⁴⁸

According to Tcharykow, the key to peaceful coexistence would be to integrate all subjects of the Empire into Russian culture. He also suggested that the Russian government should protect the Russian Muslims from the propaganda and develop their national identity without a Turkish influence.¹⁴⁹ I would agree with the Russian historian Dmitry Arapov who states that Tcharykow as an experienced diplomat, knew the game very well: the language and the observations reflected in the official’s conclusion just fits well the rhetoric of the late Russian imperial politics.¹⁵⁰ I would also add that, by comparing the report of Tcharykow

¹⁴⁶ RGIA f.821, o.133, d.469.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ Arapov, “Russkii Posol v Turcii”, 152.

with the report of Yarovoi-Ravskii, we can trace a change in the language, despite the fact that both of the authors emphasize the threat of the Islam for the Russian Empire, still the tone and approach of Tcharykow is more flexible and deliberately cautious.

Conclusion

This chapter made a preliminary attempt to contextualize the Hajj through the lens of the reports of Russian officials: the official report of Staff Captain Davletshin from his journey to the Ottoman Hejaz, the report of Said-Gani Saidazimbayev, V.I. Yarovoi-Ravskii's materials on Islam, Ishaev's observations on Hajj, and the treatise by the Russian Consul in Constantinople, Tcharykow.

According to Norihiro, Naganawa, the Russian state tolerated the Hajj and was ambivalent about it at the same time.¹⁵¹ Indeed, as we see from this chapter, the imperial apparatus tried to address it by means of toleration policies and to find a certain way to control Muslims and to have access to firsthand information on the Hajj through officially commissioned reports or the writings produced by state officials. As this chapter shows, one of these ways was to assign a Muslim official, who would be an intermediary between the Empire and its Muslim subjects (three of the above-mentioned officials were of a Muslim origin).

Each of the reports used in this chapter contributed to the general discussion on the Hajj bureaucracy. If we look closely, every report addresses similar issues and crucial details of the Hajj journey, but they do it differently from author to author. Particularly, those are the rituals, the importance of Hajj or the critique of the journey to the Hajj as provided in the

¹⁵¹ Naganawa, "The Hajj Making Geopolitics", 190.

Yarovoi-Ravskii's report, where he notes that "Hajj represents a flammable element". Yarovoi-Ravskii in his report provides a decent amount of statistics and general information about the ceremonies. However, he has a tendency to desacralize the Hajj. In fact, from his tone one can ascertain that the Hajj was in fact a threat to the Empire, whereas, it was understood as a necessary fulfillment for pious Muslims to achieve salvation in the reports of Muslim-officials reporting on this crucial ritual back to St. Petersburg.

The significance of Ishaev's observation is that he goes into great detail. He wrote 60 pages and published them in a journal which was widely accessible. He had a mixed feeling about the Russians' Ottoman rival, reporting on both positive and negative aspects of Ottoman governance. Ishaev's account, apart from the route to sacred places, the rituals, and geographical details, provided also a gender perspective, which is not very usual and can hardly be traced in the other reports.

Perhaps one the most important reports on this topic is the report of Davletshin. Overall, he states that Hajj had no political influence on Muslims of Russia. He does not see any threat for the state. He concludes that the whole journey is very risky, and all pilgrims just want to accomplish it and to return home safely.¹⁵² Davletshin played a huge role in the further developments of the bureaucracy of Hajj. As a Muslim and a Tatar¹⁵³, he was serving the role of a mediator between the state and the Muslim community. On one hand, he served the Tsar, and this discredited him in the eyes of many Muslims of the Russian Empire. On the other hand, his official report and his statement, that indeed the Hajj had no political intentions and imposed no threat to the state, allowed Muslims to make the journey to Hejaz and fulfill their religious duty. Here we can observe that not all documents are "dry" and only provide factual data. I believe that the value of the official report of Davletshin is significant. In

¹⁵² Davletshin, *Otchet shtabs-kapitana*, 117.

¹⁵³ Kane, *Russian Hajj*, 82.

particular, the report of Davletshin was thought-provoking and even changed the attitude of the administration towards Hajj and the Muslims in the Russian Empire, which prompted Prime Minister Stolypin to assign a Hajj leader from a Muslim background to organize it.

Saidazimbaeyv's report explains that all the nuances of the Hajj journey and is written in a way to prove that his actions and ambitions were in fact sincere and should be heard that way. Saidazimbayev's plan did not work; however, the legacy of his project on the Hajj organization was implemented by the tsarist state. Tsharykow's conclusion, on the other hand, gives a sense of the diplomatic approach of the tsarist government and its Muslim subjects. He provides an analytical view on the Muslim question. One can make an impression from his commentary that there was a big effort not simply to control but also to integrate the Muslims of the Empire for a peaceful coexistence.

2. THE NON-STATE PERSPECTIVE ON THE HAJJ: THE HAJJNAME

In this chapter, I focus on the testimony of a Hajji, Gali Chokryi, a native of the Volga-Ural region and a member of a Sufi order, who described his Hajj experience in the *Dastan hajjname*.¹⁵⁴ His approach provides valuable insight into the Sufi perspective of the Hajj of the Volga-Ural Muslims and the regulations of Haj. Besides that, it shows the importance of *Hajjname* as a source and helps to explain why they were written and what can they tell us about the connections of the Sufis in Istanbul on the way to Hajj. I argue that the Hajj connected the Muslims of the Sufi network, mainly in Istanbul as described in Hajj accounts. In the history of the Hajj and Muslims of the Russian Empire, the importance of *Hajjname* as a genre is almost forgotten. The reports of Russian officials of Muslim versus Non-Muslim backgrounds (which were covered in the first chapter) juxtaposed with perspectives provided by the Hajjis have not been explored. Such a perspective could shed light on different aspects of the organization and meaning of Hajj in the late period of the Russian Empire.

2.1 The Volga-Ural Muslims

Until the mid-nineteenth century, the Russian Empire endorsed the exchanges and even used Volga-Ural Muslims to widen tsarist influence on the rest of imperial Russia's Muslim subjects. However, towards the last decades of the nineteenth century, tsarist views changed dramatically: Volga-Ural Muslims were restricted in their contacts with the other Muslims of the Empire in that they were suspected of being in collaboration with the Ottomans. The overall experience of Volga-Ural Muslims in the late decades of imperial

¹⁵⁴ Chokryi, Gali. „Dastan Khadzh-name” [Dastan *Hajjname*], *Khadzh rossiyskikh musulman*, no.5, 2009.

Russia therefore merits close examination. The interpretation of Mustafa Tuna in his book *Imperial Russia's Muslims* tries to challenge the idea of modernity in connection with Islam and tsarist Russia by focusing on Volga-Ural Muslims and its education system.¹⁵⁵

The treaty of *Küçük Kaynarca* gave the right for Catherine II to protect the Orthodox subjects of the Ottoman Empire and to the Ottoman sultan a right to protect and represent Muslims of the Russian Empire. The protection of the latter expanded during the reign of Sultan Abdulhamid II (r. 1876-1907). Lale Can demonstrates the patronage of the Sultan through the Sufi perspective. She states that the shaykhs of the sultantepe and other tekkes of Istanbul became Ottoman bureaucrats who played a larger role in “managing foreign Muslims”.¹⁵⁶ By foreign Muslims she meant the Muslims of the Russian Empire, particularly coming from the Central Asia. Ottoman patronage offered not just financial and psychological support but also shelter for tens of thousands of Muslims who embarked on the Hajj from the Russian Empire. The tekkes also featured a plaque commemorating Abdulhamid II for renovating the tekkes; according to Can, it greeted pilgrims whenever they entered the tekke and was a manifestation of the Ottoman patronage.¹⁵⁷ The Hajj and the political idea of global Muslim unity engendered many debates in the Russian Empire. The Hajj became a widespread phenomenon for Muslims in the Empire, and their experiences were often recorded in *Hajjnames* which served as guidebooks for future Hajjis. The *Hajjnames* had various information related to the Hajj, like lodging, expenses, shrines to visit, as well as interactions within the Sufi networks on the way to Hajj.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁵ Mustafa Tuna, *Imperial Russia's Muslims*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 5.

¹⁵⁶ Lale Can, *Spiritual Subjects*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2020), 88.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 91.

¹⁵⁸ Kane, *Russian Hajj*, 51

2.2 Hajjnames as a Genre of Sources

The close study of one *hajjname* has its limits, as it provides a narrow perspective. However, it also has its advantages; by focusing on one *hajjname*, I intend to embed it in a wider context through the in-depth analysis of the text which points to the scope of the thesis. *Hajjnames* consisted of a set of information regarding all matters related to Hajj. Besides detailed guidance including information about transportation, expenses, lodging, holy sites, and the route itself, in the *hajjnames*, the future Hajjis could find answers to some of their frequently asked questions, e.g.: How to travel? What to visit? What to bring on the journey?¹⁵⁹ However, it is important to understand the nuance between the travel writing account and the hajj memoirs, where the latter did not intend to provide entertainment.¹⁶⁰

At the turn of the twentieth century, one might think of *Hajjnames* as a kind of “Baedeker” (a guide-book) for Muslim pilgrims.¹⁶¹ The significance of these travel accounts is relay one’s experiences on this journey and educate the reader about Muslim holy places. *Hajjnames* also provide details about the author and his motivation for performing the Hajj and writing about it. Hajj accounts also served as a tutorial, consisting of early Islamic History and knowledge about the Prophet Muhammad’s life.¹⁶²

According to Anisya Aliyeva, a senior researcher in the Academy of Science of Tatarstan, *Hajjnames* were compiled uniformly from a structural point of view. They consisted of three parts. In the beginning, we usually get acquainted with the author - he

¹⁵⁹ Naganawa, “The Hajj Making Geopolitics”, 174.

¹⁶⁰ Kane, *Russian Hajj*, 51.

¹⁶¹ Karl Baedeker (1801–59) was the first who wrote the guide-books. Baedeker’ became a synonym for the guidebooks not only for European countries, but also for Palestine and Syria. Oxford English dictionary, (Oxford:OxfordUniversityPress, 2020)accessedApril8, 2020
[<https://www.oed.com/view/Entry/14587?redirectedFrom=baedekers&>] *Baedeker became almost a synonym for the guidebooks. Chambers’s encyclopaedia: a dictionary of universal knowledge*, (London and Edinburgh: J.B.Lippincott Company, Philadelphia, 1901), accessed April 8, 2020,
[https://archive.org/details/b2900150x_0001/page/654/mode/2up/search/baedeker].

¹⁶² Naganawa, “The Hajj Making Geopolitics”, 186.

explains his reasons why he embarked on the Hajj, as well as details of his itinerary. The core of *Hajjname* is placed in the second part of the work. Here, the narrator describes the journey to the Hejaz, giving detailed impressions about the holy cities of Mecca and Medina and - most important - the Hajj rituals embedded in the legends about Muslim saints. In conclusion, the narrator describes his journey back home.¹⁶³

Hajjnames in the Tatar context were compiled starting from the tenth century onwards when pilgrims were performing the Hajj and kept records. A number of *hajjnames* can be found in the collection of the manuscripts of the fund of the archive of Academy of the science of Tatarstan, the fund of the Department of Rare Books of the Scientific Library. N.I. Lobachevsky at Kazan State University and Institute of rare books of Academy of science showed that the earliest travel notes on Hajj belong to Murtaza Bine Kutlugush al Simeti, dated 1698. The account is a small-sized *Hajjname* written in the form of a letter, in which the author describes the journey in order to encourage his disciples to visit the sacred sites of Islam.¹⁶⁴

Tatar pilgrimage literature is one of the most poorly-studied genres. A small part of *Hajjnames* was published as books before the revolution.¹⁶⁵ Aliyeva refers to *Hajjnames* as monuments of Tatar pilgrimage literature, penned in the Arabic script, and serving as a primary source for the spiritual and philosophical understanding of Tatar culture and literature, remaining in manuscript collections of libraries and archives unexplored and often inaccessible to the modern reader¹⁶⁶ Aliyeva's article was published in 2009 and, by that time,

¹⁶³ Aliyeva, Anisya. "O razvitii zhanra putevych zapisok v tatarskoi literature", *Vestnik Chuvashkogo Universiteta*, no.4, (2009):280.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., 279.

¹⁶⁵ Here the author refers to the 1905 Revolution. Aliyeva Anisya, "Tatarskaya palomnicheskaya literatura (khadzhname)", *Vestnik Bashkirskogo Universiteta* no.2, (2009):498; Also, in her earlier article, the term *hajjname* and *seyahatname* are used interchangeably. She determines *seyahatname* as a "travel sketches" and "description of the travelers. See, Aliyeva, Anisya. "O razvitii zhanra putevych zapisok v tatarskoi literature", *Vestnik Chuvashkogo Universiteta*, no.4, (2009):280.

¹⁶⁶ Aliyeva Anisya, "Tatarskaya palomnicheskaya literatura, *hajjname*", 498.

indeed only a small amount of the *hajjnames* were translated into Russian or Modern Tatar. She singles out Almushev's *hajjname*, (translated into Russian only in 2006), and the *Dastan hajjname* of Gali Chokryi (translated into modern Tatar language in 1988).

Since then, the situation slightly changed: in 2008, the publishing house Medina (ID Medina) with a headquarter in Nizhny-Novgorod, Russia, started to publish an almanac "Hajj of Russian Muslims / Annual Collection of Travel Notes About Hajj". What is remarkable for my research is the almanac from 2012 that commemorated the 125th anniversary of the death of Gali Chokryi and the 140th anniversary of his *Dastan hajjname*. It was the first the *Dastan hajjname* of Gali Chokryi translated into Russian.¹⁶⁷ Aliyeva remarks that *Hajjnames* also familiarized readers with scientific and technical developments.¹⁶⁸ Such tendencies are likewise visible in the *hajjnames* of Central Asian Muslims in that they were writing about the ways in which progress could be brought to their region, since their journeys revealed how their homes lagged behind in comparison with the rest of the world.¹⁶⁹

Coşkun Menderes, in his article on the Ottoman perspective towards pilgrimage writings, compares Christian pilgrimage narratives with the Muslim and the Ottoman case. He maintains that Christian pilgrimage was more sporadic and had an essence of a fascination for new places. There is a big corpus of Christian pilgrimage narratives in comparison with the Muslim hajj narratives up to the nineteenth century. The Ottomans were also not very enthusiastic about writing about their hajj experience. Certainly, there are many Ottoman pilgrimage narratives written in various literary genres like *kaside* (panegyric) or *mesnevi*

¹⁶⁷ Izdatelsky Dom Medina – Izdatelsky Dom Medina was officially registered in 2007 and established by the Spiritual Administration of Muslims of Nizhny Novgorod and the Nizhny Novgorod Region (DUMNO). Its main mission is publishing literature on modern Islamic theology, research in the history of the Tatar people, popularization of the culture of Muslim peoples of Russia, accessed April 10, 2020, http://idmedina.ru/books/history_culture/?1500.

¹⁶⁸ Aliyeva Anisya, "Tatarskaya palomnicheskaya literatura, 501.

¹⁶⁹ Shovosil Ziyodov, "The Hajjnames of the Manuscript Collection of the Oriental Institute of Uzbekistan (mid-19th to early 20th centuries)" in *Central Asian Pilgrims: Hajj Routes and Pious Visits between Central Asia and the Hejaz*, ed. Alexandre Papas et al. (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 2012), 224.

(romance). Menderes points out that Ottomans were traveling within the same state, with well-protected caravans on well-known and established routes.¹⁷⁰ In this regard, I claim that Muslims of the Russian Empire, crossing the borders, more specifically traveling from a non-Muslim state domain, had to face certain obstacles on their journey to Mecca. All these factors also prompted Muslim pilgrims to write not only about the religious aspects of the journey but also about the state apparatuses they encountered in both empires along with their respective attitudes of towards the Hajj.

Lale Can, in her very recent book *Spiritual Subjects*, characterizes the *Hajjname* as a “burgeoning genre”. The *Hajjname* she focuses on, “Hajjnoma-i Turkiy”, written by a Russian subject similarly as the “*Dastan hajjname*” to which I refer in this chapter, describes different aspects of the “industrialized hajj” full of trains, steamships, and travel through Russia, hajj bureaucracy, as well as quarantines. She also highlights that despite all the industrial developments and globalization, Hajj, in fact, became more difficult at the turn of the twentieth century.¹⁷¹ She also adds that the *hajjname* as a genre influenced public views on one side and informed about tsarist hostility toward the Hajj (in the case of “*Hajjnoma-i Turkiy*”) on the other.¹⁷²

Shovosil Ziyodov refers to *hajjnames* as books of pilgrimage or accounts of pilgrimage, which reflect the intellectual dimension of modernity. He classifies *Hajjnames* as “neglected texts” which shed light on how Muslims perceived the Russian conquest of their ancestral lands as well as the lifestyle according to Islamic norms. According to Ziyodov, the narrators of *Hajjnames* in the Central Asian context were usually high religious authorities

¹⁷⁰ Coskun Menderes, “Ottoman attitudes towards writing about pilgrimage experience”, *Millî Folklor* no.24, (2012):95; on Ottomans and Hajj, see, Caroline Finkel, *Osman's Dream*, (London:John Murray, 2006), 494-495; Suraiya Faruqi, *Pilgrims and sultans: the Hajj under the Ottomans, 1517-1683*, (London and New York: I.B.Tauris, 1994).

¹⁷¹ Can, *Spiritual Subjects*, 35.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, 37.

qazi (judge), *naqib* (leader) or *mudarris* (teacher).¹⁷³ However, Can gives a wider portrait of the pilgrims, who were coming from different stratas of society. There were craftsmen, artisans, agriculturalists as well as “dervish-as-pilgrim” of modest origin.¹⁷⁴ In case of the Volga-Ural Muslim, Gali Chokryi, the protagonist of the following sections, fashioned himself as a Sufi poet and a local imam.

¹⁷³ Ziyodov, “The Hajjnamas of the Manuscript Collection”, 224.

¹⁷⁴ Can, *Spiritual Subject*, 81.

2.3 Sufis on Hajj: Volga-Ural Muslims in the Late Nineteenth Century

In his book on Tatar Sufis, Kemper states that Islamic discourse in the Volga-Ural region in the nineteenth century developed based on the writings of scholars and Sufis.¹⁷⁵ It includes the traditional set of information and opinions, which were discussed by the elite, in order to reveal the current situation of the Russian Empire and different attitudes towards it. Until the eighteenth century, the most present order in the Volga-Ural region was the Yasawi order. Later, in the nineteenth century, the Naqshbandi Mujaddidi tariqa covered all levels of the society of Volga-Ural Muslims. The order spread via students, who studied in Central Asia. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, all members of the ‘*ülemâ*’ of the region were a part of the order. According to Michael Kemper, there was almost no difference between the “people of pen” and the “people of the mystical state”. Muslim scholarship of the region was developing through the tariqa.¹⁷⁶

Gali Chokryi (1826–1889) was a Sufi poet, scholar, and an active Naqshbandi of the Volga-Ural region. In 1872 he accomplished his Hajj and wrote down this experience in a Hajj account. In his “*Dastan hajjname*” he describes different aspects of the Hajj journey, by focusing on railways, steamboats, and rituals, but he also provides the Sufi dimension of the pilgrimage. At the very beginning of his *hajjname*, Chokryi introduced himself as an imam of the Starochukurovo Mosque (Iske Chokir), a son of Abdassallih.¹⁷⁷ After pursuing his education in medreses, he started to teach in the Kazan region.¹⁷⁸ He is the author of many

¹⁷⁵ Michael Kemper, *Sufii i uchenye v Tatarstane i Bashkortostane: Islamskiy diskurs pod russkim gosподstvom* [Sufis and scholars in Tatarstan and Bashkortostan: Islamic discuss under Russian rule] (Kazan: Rossiyskiy islamskiy universitet, 2008), 24.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 129-130.

¹⁷⁷ Chokryi, „Dastan Khadzh-name”, 1.

¹⁷⁸ David J. Matthews, Ravil Bukharaev, *Historical Anthology of Kazan Tatar Verse: Voices of Eternity*, (Richmond :Curzon, 2000), 112.

Sufi and legal didactics, as well as historiographical works, which present him as a scholar and a Naqshbandi.

One of the features of the Naqshbandi Mujaddidi order was a tranquil understanding of God.¹⁷⁹ However, in a Naqshbandi lodge in Istanbul, Zayn Allah Rasulif (1833-1917), a sheikh from the Volga-Ural region, introduced a loud form of *zikr* (a repetition of the name of God) in this lodge, which was unconventional for this region.¹⁸⁰ The debates on the changes of rituals were inevitable in Sufi orders. Due to the aspects of religiosity or interpersonal relationships within the community, the changes were not easily acceptable.¹⁸¹

Gali Chokryi, in his work “Fass al-ahiyar” (Precious virtue) written in the 1850s, raises the question of the importance of arranging *zikr* in a mosque outside of the prayer times, by sitting in a halk (tahalluk, i.e a circle). He wrote this work during his studies in a medrese in Sterlibashi.¹⁸² The village of Sterlibashi was a regional Islamic center of the Naqshbandi Mujaddidi order. The first Hajji of the region was Muhammad Harith b. Tuqay (1810-1870).¹⁸³ Chokryi found out about the “circle sessions in the mosque” from his Sheikh Haris al Starlabashi. However, such rituals were not welcomed and often considered as “a bida” (innovation), since once in circle worshipers were not facing the direction to *qibla* (House of God). Chokryi based his statement about the importance of the *zikr* in circles on the Hadith, stating that “the circle sessions in the mosque” are only restricted during the Friday prayer and that the Prophet himself recommended to spend the time between prayers in the state of *zikr*.¹⁸⁴ This demonstrates his active position as a Sufi scholar and a member of the *tariqa*. He also did not solely stick to the earlier texts but appreciated the knowledge provided by his

¹⁷⁹ Kemper, *Sufii i uchenye v Tatarstane i Bashkortostane*, 497.

¹⁸⁰ Naganawa, “The Hajj Making Geopolitics”, 176.

¹⁸¹ Brett. Wilson, “Binding with a Perfect Sufi Master: Naqshbandi Defenses of Rābiṭa from the Late Ottoman Empire to the Turkish Republic”, *Die Welt des Islams* 60, no:1 (2020), 56.

¹⁸² Kemper, *Sufii i uchenye v Tatarstane i Bashkortostane*, 500.

¹⁸³ Naganawa, “The Hajj Making Geopolitics”, 187.

¹⁸⁴ Kemper, *Sufii i uchenye v Tatarstane i Bashkortostane*, 501.

Sheikhs. Curiously, his Sheikh Al Starlabashi was following the Russian newspaper “Golos”, translated it to his disciples and encouraged them to study the state language.¹⁸⁵ Indeed, in his *hajjname*, Gali Chokryi praises the government and demonstrates that the Sufis were in fact able to coexist with Christians in the Russian realm. This is important in the context of his own *hajjname*, because in *Dastan hajjname*, he manifests his Hajj experience from the Sufi perspective and states that he was astonished by the progress of the Empire and expressed his loyalty and admiration for the Tsar.¹⁸⁶

2.4 The Case of Gali Chokryi and his “Dastan hajjname”

The *hajjname* of Chokryi I analyze in this thesis was published in Moscow in 2009. It is a translation of a Tatar version, which was published in Kazan in 2002. The original of the *Dastan hajjname* was written in 1872 in the Old Tatar Language in the form of verses. It remains in manuscript form in the Library of Bashkortostan, Manuscript and rare books collection. The translator of the “*Dastan hajjname*”, Ilshat Gimadeyev, characterized Chokryi as an enlightener of his community. He mentions that Gali Chokryi himself pointed out that his ancestors had been forced to be close to those who were at the very bottom of the social hierarchy.

Chokryi studied in a number of *medreses*: of Birsik, Belebey, Menzelinsk (in Ufa province). In 1849, he started to study at the Sheikh Muhammad Kharis al-Isterlibashi *medrese*. In 1852, Chokryi returned to his native village and replaced his father as an imam and a *mudarris* (teacher). He also describes him as a true Sufi, who travelled to various regions of the Muslim world including Holy Mecca, and came back to his native village and continued

¹⁸⁵ Kemper, *Sufii i uchenye v Tatarstane i Bashkortostane*, 499.

¹⁸⁶ Chokryi, „Dastan Khadzhi-name”, 9.

his spiritual and educative path for his countrymen. On top of it, such individuals like Chokryi, Gimadeyev admits, had to endure persecution and denunciations, but they continued their work until the last days of their lives. However, the author does not elaborate on what kind of persecution and denunciation he was subjected to. According to Gimadeyev, Chokryi gives a high assessment to the Russian state, admiration of technological progress in Russia and respect for the efficient work of the Russian administration. Besides that, he argues that, despite a general trend of not including Gali Chokryi due to his “estrangement” and being a local imam, Chokryi is an important figure in the context of the Muslims of the Volga-Ural region.¹⁸⁷

The main reason to record his memories into a *Hajjname*, according to Chokryi himself, was the request of his friends, future Hajjis. Also, he admits, that since those who asked him to record his journey were not able to travel that far, he was obliged to go into details of the journey and the places he visited.¹⁸⁸ I find it as a useful element which shows, what was the reason to record the *hajjname*. His hajj itinerary is helpful to understand the route he took. After departing from his home in Starochukurovo, he headed to the Kazan Governorate to reach Nizhny-Novgorod on Volga River by ship. From there he took a train to Moscow. He left behind Tula, Kursk, Kyiv, and finally reached Odessa.

In her article “Odessa as a Hajj Hub, the 1880s-1910s”, Eileen Kane touched upon the importance of Odessa during the Hajj period.¹⁸⁹ “Adis” or Odessa was a well-known port city, mostly described as a Jewish city, cultural or important trade city of Russia’s south. However, it is rarely mentioned that Odessa was also a Hajj Hub for pilgrims heading to Mecca.

¹⁸⁷ Ilshat Gimadiyev, Aidar Khabutdinov “Gali Chokryi i ego put’ Hadzha”, *Khadzh rossiyskikh musul’man*, no.5, (2009):7.

¹⁸⁸ Chokryi, „Dastan Khadzh-name”, 8.

¹⁸⁹ Kane, “Odessa as a Hajj Hub, 1880s-1910s”, 107–25.

Gali Chokryi recalled that the hajj was prohibited in 1872; hence, only a few people obtained a passport to accomplish it. He was lucky in a sense, since he obtained his passport before the ban was efficient.¹⁹⁰ He writes: “It turned out that this year it was forbidden to cross the border for the purpose of performing the Hajj; only few received a ticket [passport] to go to the Hajj. My passport was obtained before the introduction of this ban, and only because of that was valid for traveling.”¹⁹¹

In her book *Russian Hajj*, Kane acknowledges that the Hajj could not be easily banned or prohibited. On the other hand, she says that Russian officials usually banned the hajj during the wars and epidemics.¹⁹² Chokryi was discrete and did not provide his insights on the ban of passports. It is still important to acknowledge that he recorded it in his *Hajjname*. Following that, he started with his praising “You will be amazed to look at the riches of the Russian state” and shared his observations of industrial developments, the construction of railroads and steamships, the station's equipment which he witnessed on the way from his home village to Odessa. Once in Odessa, he had to get a visa and to buy a ticket to a steamboat. He acknowledged that Russian officials were very demanding in checking his documents. Particularly in 1872 because of the ban to travel abroad it was much more difficult, and the ticket purchase was dragged on. Since he got his passport before the ban, officials permitted him to travel, but his passport was still taken for a check, and he was required to visit several administrative institutions. He recalls that it was an unpleasant procedure to get the passport back. Despite many difficulties and issues, he decided to continue his journey. Once everything was “in accordance with the laws of the Russian state”, he finally departed from Odessa by steamboat.¹⁹³ After one and a half-days on the boat, they reached the Turkish straits

¹⁹⁰ Chokryi, “Dastan Khadzname”, 8.

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

¹⁹² Kane, *Russian Hajj*, 19.

¹⁹³ Chokryi, „Dastan Khadz-name”, 10.

and stopped there for a while. The officials and a doctor came shortly from Istanbul. They were told to wait five days in quarantine. Chokryi remembered, how much suffering it caused for pilgrims to wait in the quarantine. Nevertheless, he admitted, that the quarantine procedures were undertaken in all parts of Europe and, once the quarantine was over, they could enter Istanbul.

In his “*Dastan hajjname*”, Gali Chokryi, expresses his marvel and wonder of the city. Chokryi refers to Istanbul as “the center of the four corners of the world”, magnificent and beautiful. He also acknowledges that he lived in Istanbul completely in line with the rules of the blessed month of Ramadan. Chokryi met with many sheikhs and visited *sokhbets* (spiritual sermon). He also stopped at a place called Sheikh Daudhan. Even though he did not specify the name of the order, since he was associated with the Naqshbandi order, one can assume that he was staying within his Sufi “communitas”.¹⁹⁴ He recalls that sheikhs and ascetics gather in these mosques and tekkes; they are in constant remembrance of Allah and fully devoted to worship.

In the late nineteenth century, tekkes were used as shelters for less privileged pilgrims coming from Central Asia and other parts of the Russian Empire. These pilgrims were staying there not only for a day or two but for months or even years. They had to be registered upon arrival and, if they had any health issues, the necessary help was provided to them from the lodge. Can argues that the tekkes were close to state institutions and should not be viewed as unofficial Central Asian “embassies”.¹⁹⁵ Some of the tekkes were run by Tatars. One of them

¹⁹⁴ Chokryi, „Dastan Khadzkh-name”, 13.

¹⁹⁵ Lale Can, “Connecting People: A Central Asian Sufi Network in Turn-of-the-Century Istanbul”, *Modern Asian Studies* 46, (2012):146.

was Mirza Salekh Mukhammed Karimov, a merchant, who worked as a mediator (administrated a tekke) for Hajjis arriving in Istanbul in the 1890s.¹⁹⁶

Chokryi also noticed that sohbet with the sheikhs attract a lot of attention. Even the Sultan tried not to miss the sohbet, not to mention ordinary people. Certainly, the loyal disciples found a special pleasure in sohbet, enjoying it “like a fish in water”. Disciples renewed their inner nature and their morals whilst enriching the qualities prescribed in the Sharia. Chokryi notices that Muslims of Istanbul are all sincere in their religion of Islam. He is amazed that there is no man in Istanbul without a sheikh, and everyone goes to the sohbet. This makes it clear that according to Chokryi’s “*Dastan hajjname*”, the sheikhs in Istanbul were respected. If the sultans respected the sheikhs, bowing their heads before them, then, of course, their subjects respected them too.¹⁹⁷ He also visited the graves of many sheikhs, as Abu Ayub al Ansari’s. Chokryi recalls that he received a knowledge of the tariqa from many sheikhs from the early age, and wanted to take the opportunity to continue studying “the science of the heart” from the sheikhs of Istanbul. He concludes that by staying one month in Istanbul it became possible for him to repeat “the heart lessons” that he had received from the sheikh of the Volga-Ural region.¹⁹⁸

Chokryi’s observation of Istanbul could be summarized by his words that “tariqa and Sharia are two wings of a bird”. He tried to equally master both tariqa and Sharia throughout his life. He uses poetical comparisons, which are common for the Sufis. He contemplates that all that he had achieved along his path is “honey collected from flowers growing in the sheikh’s gardens”.¹⁹⁹ He does not provide the names of the sheikhs and the tekkes he visited - perhaps there was a reason to remain silent. Only towards the end of his *hajjname* does he

¹⁹⁶ Naganawa, “The Hajj Making Geopolitics”, 176.

¹⁹⁷ Chokryi, „Dastan Khadz-name“, 14.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid., 15.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

state that “in every district of Istanbul there are some sheikhs. Some of them are from the Naqshbandi tariqa, some are Kadiriya, and some are Suhrawardia. Someone performs zikr loudly, someone quietly. It is possible to receive lessons from each of them, to learn from them. Oh blessed, Istanbul!”²⁰⁰

Later he admitted, that his writings about the journey on the railroads and the Black Sea were getting overextended; however, it was desired by those who persuaded him to write this *Hajjname*. Many of them never had a chance to travel abroad and never experienced the journey on railroads. But for some who did, he noted, these writings could be unnecessary and boring with all the details, described here. His *Hajjname* was written to describe the road and educate people who were going to perform the Hajj. Chokryi believed, that maybe it will increase the desire to go on a journey for people who intended to perform the hajj. As he pointed out after his *Hajjname* was spread around, many people accomplished the Hajj, and several pilgrims once safely returned, found him, thanked, and offered prayers for him, saying: “You were the guidance for us in the Hajj.”²⁰¹

Conclusion

Despite some complaints about how unnecessarily difficult some procedures were, the author still showed the loyalty of his own and his community towards the Tsar. This indicates that the *hajjname* was not only guidance of the Hajj journey but also a source of evidence that helps to understand the Hajj from the perspective of a Muslim of the Russian Empire of the Volga-Ural region. The *Hajjname* of Gali Chokryi demonstrates that Istanbul was not only “a stop” on the way to Mecca but also a trans-imperial locus of Muslims of the Russian Empire

²⁰⁰ Chokryi, „Dastan Khadz-name“, 28.

²⁰¹ Ibid., 16.

in the Ottoman Empire. One can conclude that Istanbul played a significant role for the Volga-Ural Muslims and other Muslims of the Russian Empire simply because the capital of the Ottoman Empire was perceived as the capital of the Muslim world. In the history of the Volga-Ural region, the figure of Chokryi is almost forgotten. In this way, his “*Dastan hajjname*” sheds light on a new aspect of Hajj and a history of Islam of the late period of the Russian Empire.

CONCLUSION

In order to thoroughly research the Russian Empire's Muslims and of the bureaucracy of Hajj, selecting sources out of the vast pool of available materials happened to be the most challenging task. The direction I took while doing the research for my thesis could be described as putting together a puzzle. While analysing the organizational aspects of Hajj, I decided to illustrate different sources from an official and a non-official perspective. As we can see, the starting point of my research were four reports and accounts written by state officials of different ranks and positions. I started with the report of Staff Captain Davletshin from his journey to Ottoman Hejaz , then "Sbornik materialov po musulmanstvu", published in 1899, written by Yarovoi-Ravskii a lieutenant, who was not of a Muslim origin, a Russian official of Muslim origin, Shakirdzhan Ishaev, the dragoman of the Russian consulate in Jedda, the report of Said-Gani Saidazimbayev "Otchet o Dvizhenii Musul'manskikh Palomnikov v Mekku v 1908" and finally the treatise by a Russian diplomat in Constantinople, Nikolay Tcharykow.

The materials I analyzed demonstrated that there was a fundamentally different perception on Hajj of the Russian officials of Muslim origin and the other (non-Muslim) Russian officials. As it was noted in his account "Sbornik materialov po musulmanstvu", Yarovoi-Ravskii accepts the importance of Hajj for Muslim believers and the fact how widely-spread a phenomenon it became.²⁰² The reason why the Hajj became so wide-spread, Yarovoi-Ravskii (Non-Muslim) believes, was due to the persistent propaganda of supreme Muslim authorities. He also notes that the very essence of the Hajj does not require truly moral

²⁰² Yarovoy-Ravskii, *Sbornik materialov po musulmanstvu*, 1-2.

motivation; it has material advantages and it also aims to unite the Muslim world. One of the issues he highlights is “the primitive order of the Turkish government”.²⁰³

In contrast, Shakirdzhan Ishaev, the dragoman of the Russian consulate in Jeddah (Muslim), who went on Hajj in 1895, noticed the attempts done by the Ottomans to regulate the situation, to provide the security for the pilgrims and to offer some basic disinfection regulations. For instance, he mentions that a small building – “disinfector” – which was built by the Ottoman government in an attempt to reduce the infectious diseases in the city, mainly cholera, which was rampant especially in 1892. The construction of the building had just been completed, and it was supposed to be used in the coming year, but the Arabs started to blame the authorities, saying that the “disinfector” was not in line with Islam. Eventually, the Turkish governor gave up on the plan, in order to avoid a great massacre and disorder.²⁰⁴

Other main issues, according to Yarovoi-Ravskii, were the lack of passports, which worsened the process of control for Russian officials, the absences of the medical care, sanitary regulations, and the threat of cholera. As mentioned above, there were attempts of the Ottoman government to regulate the Hajj and to ensure some basic medical care for the pilgrims. In 1896, Ishaev remarkably admits that there is a threat of cholera. He initially planned to postpone his Hajj journey, but then he realized that “cholera is almost always present in Hejaz” so that he decided to go on Hajj anyway.²⁰⁵ While Yarovoi-Ravskii (Non-Muslim) raises his concern about Hajj by portraying it as “a powerful tool for strengthening the fanaticism of Muslims”, Ishaev, a Russian official who happened to be a Muslim, uses the trope of fanaticism towards the local population of Hejaz. Despite the different approaches to

²⁰³ Yarovoy-Ravskii, *Sbornik materialov po musulmanstvu*, 9-10.

²⁰⁴ Ishaev, “Mekka, sviashchennyi gorod musulman”, 71.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 66.

Hajj, the issues raised were similar. The way they were presented, and the tone used was different.

In his report, staff captain Davletshin states:

“It is difficult to indicate any valid measures so that, if necessary, we could stop the departure of our Muslims to Hejaz. Maybe the issuance of passports only at the place of residence, or a mandatory requirement that those leaving show evidence of the absence of obstacles to traveling abroad from their police authorities, would further reduce the number of people going on a pilgrimage; all traveling to Turkey should also be forewarned about what difficulties they should be expecting at the return entrance to Russia.”²⁰⁶

In this passage, we can see what was behind the ban of completing Hajj and how important the bureaucracy of issuing of passports was for it. Even though it was almost two decades after the Hajj journey of Gali Chokryi, the ban issue was still important.

After a close reading and exploring the *hajjname* as a genre, one can conclude that these personal accounts written by Muslims who performed the journey to Mecca played a more important role than just guidance and tutorials for future hajjis. They served as a valuable source for understanding the bureaucracy of Hajj and as a tool for a government to keep an eye on its Muslim community, as well as to have an idea about what kind of information circulated within the community and about their attitude towards tsardom.

The *hajjname* of Gali Chokryi shows that Istanbul was not only “a stop” on the way to Mecca but also a trans-imperial locus of Russian Muslims in the Ottoman Empire. One can argue that Istanbul played a significant role for the Volga-Ural Muslims and other Russian Muslims simply because the capital of the Ottoman Empire was perceived as the capital of the Muslim world. Based on the Hajj accounts, Tatar Hajjis had conversations with the Sufi sheikhs, stayed in Sufi lodges and exchanged information. In fact, the restrictions issued by

²⁰⁶ Davletshin, *Otchet shtabs-kapitana Davletshin*, 89.

the state complicated the Hajj journey for the pilgrims. Besides that, it became more difficult for imperial authorities to have control over it as the Hajjis, in order to bypass the restrictions, were choosing unofficial ways of travelling. This thesis also attempts to contribute to the history of Russian Muslims and Hajj by emphasizing the importance of *hajjname* as a genre. The reports of Russian officials in contrast with the evidence provided by Gali Chokryi, not only shed light on different aspects of the bureaucracy of Hajj, but also make a point about the concerns of the Russian Empire about the integration of Muslims and their loyalty to the tsar. I hope that my research on the organization of Hajj in the late period of the Russian Empire will open new avenues for further research.

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