



HOKKAIDO UNIVERSITY

Title	Sultan Galiev no Yume : Isuramusekai to Roshiyakakumei. [Sultan Galiev's Vision : Islam and the Russian Revolution], By Masayuki Yamauchi, Tokoy : Tokyo-Daigaku-Shuppankai, 1986, v+366+17pp, ¥2,000
Author(s)	NISHIYAMA, Katsunori
Citation	Acta Slavica Iaponica, 7, 147-148
Issue Date	1989
Doc URL	https://hdl.handle.net/2115/7993
Type	departmental bulletin paper
File Information	KJ00000034160.pdf



Sultan Galiev no Yume : Isuramusekai to Roshiyakakumei. [Sultan Galiev's Vision : Islam and the Russian Revolution] By Masayuki Yamauchi. Tokoy : Tokyo-Daigaku-Shuppankai, 1986. v+366+17 pp. ¥2,000.

Masayuki Yamauchi is one of Japan's leading historians, studying contemporary Islamic history. Two volumes of his major work on the theme have been published up to the present in Japan (*Contemporary Islam*, Tokyo, 1983 ; *Osman Empire and Egypt*, Tokyo, 1984). He wrote the third brilliant one on Islam and the Russian Revolution, making full use of Russian and Turkic literature and introducing the excellent results in France (A. Benigsen et Ch. Lemerrier-Quelguy, *Sultan Galiev : Le père de la révolution tiersmondiste*. Paris, 1986). In this volume under review, throwing fresh light on Tatars, he discusses the history of Moslems in the Russian Empire in all its aspects from the mid-16th century to the Russian Revolution and its aftermath.

In the introduction "Islam. Socialism. Nationalism" Yamauchi presents the framework of his viewpoints in the whole work. He adopts the clever criticism on Orientalism and makes a serious attempt to apply the "metropolis-periphery" theory to the historical development of the Russian Empire. He explains in this context that Sultan Galiev had struggled with the "colonial socialism" in the metropolis and his ideas were coloured not only by Marxism but also Islam-reformism. Therefore the author appreciates him as the first man who stingingly criticized the bolsheviks, advocating universality of the European civilization and groped for the way to socialism in Moslem society. His other viewpoint, plausible as it may appear, that Russia is geopolitically not in Europe but at the west end of "Eurasia" against the background of Asia (pp. 7, 35), regrettably, is not born out by the facts.

In the chapters II, III and IV the author brings to light the fact that the Europeans including Russian bolsheviks exhibited a tendency to exclude the native Moslems from the political process during the Russian Revolution. He points out also that Tatars were assigned the second position to govern their own autonomous republic. These points, different from the official statement in the Soviet Union, pose a serious problem for the revolution in the non-Russian borderlands. In such a context the author shows us the detailed picture where the movements of Moslem communists with Sultan Galiev in the forefront was depicted vividly. It is valuable and interesting to us, familiar only with "high-politics" in the Kremlin, showing anew the reality of politics in the non-Russian regions.

In spite of his admirable results and sharp viewpoints above mentioned, there seem to be several points to be questioned. Firstly, he made it clear that Moslem communists aimed vigorously for their independence from the Communist Party, as is one of his great successes, but he lacks the full understanding of organizational problems in the Russian Revolution. In this point he inherited the completely traditional opinion. Judging the highly centralized organization of the Communist Party from Lenin's work *What is to do ?* (1902), he contrasts it with the Moslem movement in strong relief. But it is not necessarily correct to present such a fixed understanding *a priori*, especially in 1917-1918. It was from the late 1918 to the spring of 1919 that Moslem communists were affiliated with the Communist Party. And in that time the coalition and incorporation with the Party exhibited the rapid trend toward the so-called one-party political system. It seems to the reviewer that the author overestimated the independancy sought for by them without due consideration to each phase and its dynamics in the revolution.

Secondly, the author describes Sultan Galiev only in opposition to Stalin and the Com-

munist Party. If he had given special consideration to the honeymoon between them in 1918–1920 (E. H. Carr, *The Interregnum 1923–1924*, London, 1954, p. 286), he would have gained a better understanding of their relations. As to their relations it is necessary to scrutinize them narrowly not only in their conflicts but also in cooperation in such turning points as 1918, 1920, 1923 and 1929. His fixed, rather one-sided, viewpoint also found its expression in his comprehension that the East was always secondary in the bolsheviks' strategy in the revolution (pp. 11–13). But it must never be forgotten that there was one period in the revolution when the revolutionaries took a growing interest in the East (J. M. Meijer, ed., *The Trotsky Papers*, T. I. The Hague, 1964, pp. 626, 672–4.). It was in such a period that Sultan Galiev insisted that the internationalists, earnestly keeping their eyes on the revolution in the West were not correct. His insistence upon it was not adverse criticism of the bolsheviks, as the author contended, but should be evaluated in terms of the orientation forwards the East in the Russian Revolution.

Thirdly, the author's exposition of "Tatar-hegemony" must be questioned. He explains away the antipathy or antagonism to it on the part of the other Moslem peoples by their incompetency of mighty organization and prematurity of the February Revolution in Russia (p. 128). In this point he lays too much stress on the Tatars' leading role in Moslem movements rather than their suppression of the other Moslems. But the opposition to the "Tatar-hegemony" seems to be more properly explained by their apprehension towards the assimilation to the Tatars. His understanding as to the "Tatar-hegemony" gave doubtful descriptions of the attitudes of non-Tatar peoples to it in Volga-Ural and Stepp regions.

Last but not least, it is regrettable that the substance of such key words as "national nihilism", "Great-Russian chauvinism" was not sufficiently explained in the book. These words are key terms and important in the study of the nationality problem in Russia. Furthermore, what is worse is the author's statement that the "sergent-type", "raw" party members of "puny intelligence" developed such tendencies as "national nihilism", "Great-Russian chauvinism" (pp. 29–30, 321–322). But their social character has been devised in order to explain the cadre of War-Communism, and it seems to be obviously inadequate for the case. The tendency toward the neglect and suppression of the national elements in the revolution, exhibited by Europeans including bolsheviks, must be more concretely investigated in each nationality and each region in the future.

This hasty review is concerned only with the apprehension that the author's new framework of thought is likely to transform in the Procrustean bed, cutting rashly the dynamics of the Russian Revolution in which Sultan Galiev took an active part. Having said so, however, no need to add that his presentation of problems is of keen intelligence. He gave a serious orientation in the study of the Russian Revolution and contemporary Islamic history. Each subject presented in this volume must be investigated more concretely in full detail.

Katsunori NISHIYAMA
Hokkaido University