

Title: A Confluence of Modernisms in Tatar Writer Gaiaz Iskhaki

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The period of cultural and religious reform among Muslims of the Russian Empire starting in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century (Khalid 1998) brought with it a revived practice of *belles-lettres*, explicitly begun by Crimean Tatar reformer Ismail Bey Gasprinski in his *French and African Letters*, 1887-1891 (Gasprinski 2008). By the first years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the renewed Kazan Tatar cultural world was producing the poetry, drama, and prose that would come to define the modern literary language and canon, replacing older Persian, Arabic, and pre-conquest texts. This literary ferment was mediated by numerous Tatar-language newspapers that carried the political, religious, and literary debates that marked the time. The present paper considers the poetics of Gaiaz Iskhaki in terms of Muslim modernism and contemporaneous developments in Russian modernism. Iskhaki corresponded with Maksim Gor'kii, himself a onetime Kazan resident, as part of an abortive project to produce a collection of Tatar literature for distribution in Russian translation. I describe the realization and tension of the two modernist poetics in Iskhaki's prose, understood through his letters to Gor'kii and articles in Tatar newspapers. With this paper, I hope to broaden our field's scope of inquiry to better accommodate liminal cultural figures such as Iskhaki and better understand the diverse literatures of Russia.

Bibliography:

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Khalid, Adeeb. *The Politics of Muslim Cultural Reform: Jadidism in Central Asia*. Comparative studies on Muslim societies 27. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998.