

Ali Bey Hüseynzade and His Impact on National Thought in Turkey and the Caucasus

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Ali Bey Hüseynzade (1864-1940) was one of the most significant Azerbaijani Turkish intellectuals in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, formulating Azerbaijani national identity around its Turkish, Islamic and territorial dimensions. His solution to the ambiguities of the identity crisis among the Turkic-Muslim people of Azerbaijan was Turkification, Islamization and Europeanization for the Turkic and Muslim peoples of the Caucasus and Ottoman Turkey. Ali Bey Hüseynzade¹ was an influential Azerbaijani Turkish intellectual who had a direct impact on Turkish nationalists in the late Ottoman Empire and early Republican Turkey. Hüseynzade's formulation of the triple processes of Turkification, Islamization and Europeanization spread among the Azerbaijani and Ottoman Turkish intellectuals in their respective countries. This article aims to discuss the ideas of Ali Bey Hüseynzade, especially regarding nationality, religion and Westernism and their impact on intellectuals and policy makers in the Caucasus and Turkey. His physical odyssey from Tsarist Russia into the Ottoman Empire is indicative of his ideological proclivities and his subsequent influence on the Turkish-speaking peoples in the two major empires in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Keywords: Ali Bey Hüseynzade, Turkish nationalism, Caucasus, Azerbaijan, national identity

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The Transition from a Religious Community to a Nation: What Is the Name of the Nation?

I will employ the term Azerbaijani Turks instead of Azeris or Azerbaijanis when referring to the Turkish-speaking people of the Caucasus, following Audrey Altstadt (1992) and Ebulfez Süleymanlı (2006).² The Azerbaijani Turks were one of the first Turkic peoples to attain national consciousness, partly due to the emergence of a national bourgeoisie in the region and their support for education and publishing. Industrialists such as Hacı Zeynelabidin Tagiyev, who gained his wealth in the oil industry, supported the establishment of a number of schools including the Women's Teachers School (*Darıil Muallime Mektebi*) in Baku in 1901 and the publication of newspapers such as *Hayat* (Life) and *Füyuzat* (Abundance) (Süleymanlı 2006, 46-47).³ Azerbaijani enlightenment in the nineteenth century resulted in an identity change of Azerbaijanis from that of a religious community into nationhood. We can categorize the time period from 1870 to 1918 as a nation building process, whereas the years between 1918 and 1920 can be dubbed a nation-state process corresponding to the first independence period of the Azerbaijani Republic. During the former period, literary figures such as Mirza Fetih Ali Ahundov (1812-1878) wrote plays in plain Turkish so that they would be intelligible to the common people. He even advocated adopting the Latin alphabet for his people and met a number of Ottoman intellectuals in Istanbul to discuss his plans for the implementation of his ideas. Moreover, Ahundov was critical of religion and ironically, despite his anti-national outlook, contributed to the emergence of national consciousness in Azerbaijan. Interestingly, it should also be specified that Ahundov labelled his people the "Muslim nation" despite his anti-religious views (Süleymanlı, 2006, 60-63, 142). It should be pointed out that this was a transitional period when identities were very much in the making.

It should be noted that the most influential figure in the rise of national consciousness among the Turks of Russia was the Crimean intellectual Ismail Gaspıralı (Gaspirinsky). Through his newspaper *Tercüman* (The Interpreter) and his new method schools, a common Turkish language was articulated which was intelligible for all the Turkish peoples of Russia (Süleymanlı 2006, 68-69) and beyond, most significantly in Ottoman Turkey. Previously, the first Azerbaijani Turkish newspaper *Ekinci* (Reaper) was published in Baku in 1875 by Hasan Bey Zerdabi, who emphasized the centrality of the Turkish language which, in his judgment, had been lost in history and needed to be rediscovered. He also pointed out the significance of national unity and focused on the problems of the common people. Subsequently, *Ekinci*, accused by Russian authorities of having a pro-Ottoman editorial line during the Russo-Turkish war in 1877, was closed down (Süleymanlı 2006, 73-76). Interestingly, numerous Turkish language newspapers and journals were published in Tbilisi such as *Ziya* (Light)

² It could be argued that the majority of the Azerbaijanis consider themselves Azerbaijani Turks; however, at the governmental level, there is an emphasis on the territorial nationalism of Azerbaijani national identity.

³ Tagiyev had contacts with the Ottoman Sultan Abdülhamit and contributed to an orphanage being built in Edirne in Ottoman Turkey (Imanov 2003, 12).

in 1879 and *Ziya-i Kafkasiye* (The Caucasian Light) in 1882. In 1883, the journal *Keşkul* was published by Celal Ünsizade in the same city. Consequently, until the 1920 Bolshevik occupation, there were more than 150 Turkish publications in Baku, Ganja, and Tbilisi (Süleymanlı 2006, 76-77, 84). In sum, by the end of the nineteenth century, Azerbaijanis were defined as Turks thanks to the efforts started by the *Ekinci* newspaper (Süleymanlı 2006, 79) and in the pages of numerous books, newspapers and journals by the Muslim Turkish intellectuals of the Caucasus.

Ali Bey Hüseyinzade and His Ideological Odyssey

Ali Bey Hüseyinzade, also known as Eli Bey Hüseyinzade in Azerbaijan or as Hüseyinzade Ali Turan⁴ in Turkey was born in the town of Salyan, Azerbaijan, in 1864, and died in Istanbul in 1940. His father, Molla Hüseyin Hüseyinzade, was a teacher at the Muslim School in Tbilisi, which the young Ali attended and at which he studied Arabic, Persian and Turkish. In 1875, Hüseyinzade started attending Tbilisi Classical Gymnasium where he learned Russian, Latin, French and German (Bayat 1998, 9-10). However, he was highly critical of the Muslim School in Tbilisi, arguing that he had mastered none of the languages taught at the school, not even his native Turkish. He argued, “Even though I was a Turk, I did not learn Turkish. Even though I was a Muslim, I did not comprehend the Quran.” He was also of the opinion that when he had attended the Classical Gymnasium in the same city, they had to learn Latin and Greek, which were of no use in his judgment (Bayat 1998, 46). In other words, he was very much unsatisfied with his education.

Later on, in 1885, he attended the Department of Mathematics at St. Petersburg University in Russia. At the same time, he audited a number of courses in the Department of Turcology. Hüseyinzade shared the same dormitory with other Azerbaijani intellectuals such as Ahmet Ağaoğlu (Agayef) and Tbilisi-born Ali Merdan Topçubaşı (Topçubaşov), who graduated from law school in 1888. Eventually, Hüseyinzade graduated from St. Petersburg University in 1889. In St. Petersburg, Hüseyinzade Ali came across pan-Slavism among students and scholars as well as intellectuals in the Russian capital. After graduation, he moved to the Ottoman Empire with his family in 1889 and became classmates with the Young Turk Abdullah Cevdet at the Medical School in Istanbul, where he would later start teaching. As he had joined the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) soon after its establishment, he had a close relationship with the Young Turk leaders and had an impact on their ideological formations. Hüseyinzade was as much an activist as he was a thinker, demonstrated by his joining the Ottoman army in the Turco-Greek war of 1897. In fact, under the influence of his grandfather, Hüseyinzade developed a special affinity and sympathy towards Turkishness which was the reason for his enrolment at the Military Medical School in the Ottoman capital. This was a politically active university, and among his classmates, there were revolutionary Young Turks such as Abdullah Cevdet, Şerafeddin Magmumi, İbrahim

⁴ Sevil Garaşova (2004) gives 1854 as his date of birth.

Temo, Cenab Şahabettin, Rıza Tevfik, Baha Şakir, Dr.Nazım, and Ishak Sukuti (Bayat 1998, 10-11).⁵

His classmate Abdullah Cevdet characterized him as a “mysterious” thinker, whose impact he argued resembled that of a “prophet” among the younger students at the Medical School. Ali joined the Committee of Union and Progress in Turkey as several of his classmates were already part of this underground organization (Bayat 1998, 11-12). It is evident from his own narrative that he joined the CUP after it was established as Ishak Sukuti asked him to contribute to the Committee and told him that he was now registered as a member.⁶ In other words, he was not one of the founders of the Committee as has been claimed by certain scholars but rather joined the CUP at a later date.

Hüseyinzade defended his friend Abdullah Cevdet against accusations that he was not a pious Muslim. Quite the contrary, argued Hüseyinzade, all Cevdet wanted to do was to eradicate superstitions from Islam and his most important contribution to intellectual life in Turkey was that he had taught the Turkish youth about Western education and to think in a free manner absent of fanaticism.⁷ Despite the anti-nationalism of Cevdet, Hüseyinzade supported him either for personal reasons as the two were friends in the past or due to the Westernism of the former, an idea shared by Hüseyinzade as well.

At the same time, he tried to soften his Azerbaijani dialect by reading the books of the Turkish author Halit Ziya Uşaklıgil. In 1895, Ali graduated from the medical school with the rank of captain and joined Haydarpaşa Military Hospital as an assistant at the Dermatology and Syphilis Department. During this time, he met Ziya Gökalp (1876-1924), the most significant ideologue of Turkish nationalism, who benefited from the ideas of this highly-educated intellectual.⁸ In 1897, Ali Bey joined the Ottoman army in the Turco-Greek War as a doctor (Bayat 1998, 12). As the Ottoman authorities closed in on the Young Turks, Ali had to flee to the Caucasus where he continued his publications. He attended the First Russian Muslims’ Congress in Nizhni Novgorod in 1905, and with the financial support of the Azerbaijani oil tycoon Zeynelabidin Tagiyef, Ali and Ahmet Ağaoğlu started publishing *Hayat*, which was formally owned by Ali Merdan Topçubaşı (Topçubaşov). The newspaper was closed down in 1906. However, two months later, the weekly *Füyuzat* appeared and was published continuously until 1907 (Bayat 1998, 12, 14, 16).

In 1911, Hüseyinzade Ali returned to Istanbul and joined the Central Committee (*Merkezi Umumi*) of the Committee of Union and Progress as well as the Turkish Hearths, a Turkish nationalist organization. Prior to World War I, he was among those opposed to the war, but after the conclusion of the war, Ali lobbied European countries on behalf of the Turkic peoples of Russia, demanding cultural and political rights for his people. In 1919,

⁵ Needless to say, all these figures were not ethnic Turks but to a large extent part of the Young Turk movement. For Topçubaşı, see Imanov (2003, 24).

⁶ “İttihat ve Terakki Nasıl Kuruldu? Ubeydullah Efendinin Oynadığı Roller” *Tan Gazetesi*, March 7, 1938 Bayat (1998, 333-334).

⁷ “Abdullah Cevdet” *İçtihat*, 1932 (Bayat 1998, 329-330, 332).

⁸ While another source claims Ziya Gökalp met Ali Bey in 1896, their ideological affinities as well as the latter’s influence on Gökalp are beyond doubt. See Uca (1997). For Gökalp see Uzer (2013).

he was sent into exile in Malta by the British occupiers of Ottoman Turkey. However, he managed to evade his prospective captors (Bayat 1998, 19-20, 23). In fact, he was supposed to attend the Paris Peace Conference as part of the Azerbaijani delegation chaired by Ali Merdan Topçubaşı but was prevented by the British and the French (İmanov 2003, 156, 160) from embarking on this journey.

In 1916, Hüseyinzade together with Yusuf Akçura and Ahmet Ağaoğlu attended a conference in Lausanne, Switzerland, of the captive peoples of Russia and prepared a petition to the American President Woodrow Wilson asking for religious and cultural freedoms in Russia. (Landau 1995, 15). Consequently, he returned to his homeland in 1918 to help the independent Azerbaijan Republic but had to flee after Bolshevik rule was instituted in the Caucasus⁹ in 1920.

Regarding his family life, Hüseyinzade got married to Edhiye in 1912, and subsequently they had three children, Saide (Santur), Feyzaver (Alpsar) and Selim Turan. Among his children, his son Selim became a famous sculptor in Turkey and France. It is quite possible that Selim inherited Hüseyinzade's artistic talents as his father liked to play the violin and enjoyed painting (Bayat 1998, 26-28). Among Ali Bey's scholarly works, as a medical doctor, he had written on the bubonic plague and syphilis and he had translated the works of Friedrich Schiller and Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* as well as Goethe's *Faust* into Turkish (Bayat 1998, 42-43).

In 1924, Hüseyinzade started working at the Turkish Ministry of Education, Copyright and Translation Committee in Ankara and in 1926 he attended the Baku Turcological Congress together with Professor Fuat Köprülü. The same year, he became a professor at the Medical School of Istanbul University (Önen 2005, 186; Kırmır 1965, 64). In 1926, he also attended the Azerbaijani Literature Society's conference where he argued for approaching the West in cultural matters, as well as going down to the people, the peasant, the worker and the masses. Only through a dialog between the intellectuals and common people as well as between the Eastern and Western civilizations could there be progress in national cultural life, he argued (Garaşova 2004, 314).

The very same year, because of his contacts with former unionists such as Finance Minister Cavit Bey, he was arrested for the assassination attempt on Turkish President Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, but he was eventually acquitted. He continued to teach at the Istanbul University Faculty of Medicine until 1933. At the same time, he took the family name Turan, as now it was compulsory for all Turkish citizens to choose an official surname. In 1940, he died of cardiac arrest and was buried in Karacaahmet Cemetery in Istanbul.

In sum, Hüseyinzade Ali can be described as an ideologue of Turkish nationalism, including pan-Turkism, who believed in the rejuvenation of the Turkish people from the Caucasus, Central Asia, Crimea and Kazan to Istanbul, by adopting a Westernist outlook with emphasis on Turkish literary and cultural revival.

⁹ Ekitap.kulturturizm.gov.tr/dosya/1-177723/h/alibeyhuseynzadeturan.pdf

Life and Abundance: The Ideological Odyssey in the *Hayat* and *Füyuzat* Publications

The question of identity was of paramount concern for the Turkic intellectuals in Russia. As the Azerbaijani Turks were vacillating between Russian and Persian cultures, Hüseyinzade Ali was among those who characterized the identity of South Caucasian Muslims as Turkish. On June 10, 1905, in the *Hayat* newspaper, Ali Bey started writing a series of articles titled “Who are the Turks and who are they composed of?”(sic). The author lamented, “There are those among us who do not know that Uzbeks, Kirgiz, and Bashkirs are Turks. We have numerous writers who, although being proud Turks, are unaware of who the Turks are and who they are composed of.” In other words, he envisaged a single Turkish nation and language. Ali Bey also was the precursor of Ziya Gökalp on the triple processes of Turkification, Islamization and modernization. In fact, he had a direct impact on Gökalp through his publications. The truth of the matter was that they had met back in 1894. As far as this formulation is concerned, Ali Bey wrote for the twenty third edition of *Füyuzat* in 1907: “The path of *Füyuzat* is Turkism, Islam and Europeanism.” He characterized the journal as being full of Turkish and Islamic sentiments, and having fully integrated into the European civilization (Bayat 1998, 31-32; Garaşova 2004, 313).

Gökalp and Hüseyinzade worked together in Salonica and attended the congresses of the CUP together. In fact, Gökalp, writing for *Yeni Mecmua* (New Journal) in 1918, mentioned the fact that he had used the library of Ali Bey for his own research. According to Ali Canip Yöntem, Gökalp was more influenced by the writings in *Füyuzat* rather than face-to-face interactions with Ali Bey. Consequently, Gökalp came to appreciate this influence on him and on Turks in general by calling Hüseyinzade a prophet (yalvaç) (Uca 1997, 169, 171, 174). Needless to say, this was an open admission of Hüseyinzade Ali’s ideational influence on Ziya Gökalp.

Hüseyinzade had also noteworthy opinions about interclass conflict, advocating harmony by coining the motto “Salvation is in love” (Uygur 2010, 154; Bayat 1998, 33). However, he demanded equality for all classes, especially for the oppressed classes, who should be liberated from the aggression of despotic classes by giving land to the peasants. In addition to these demands, he also called for autonomy for the Caucasus, freedom of religion and conscience for Muslims and liberty for the development of the Turkish language (Garaşova 2004, 311) Ali Bey Hüseyinzade also argued that “We have no salvation except Islam” (Kengerli 2008, 120). While it is difficult to decipher this statement, especially in the context of Russian Turks, protection of Islam was synonymous with the protection of the Turks. In fact, in his ideas, there was no outward expression of religiosity and Islam and Islamization were used more as ideological tools to cover his extreme Turkism and Westernism.

In the Azerbaijani context, Ali Bey Hüseyinzade could be considered as the leader of the school of “romantic Turkism” which included Ahmet Ağaoğlu, Mehmet Emin Resulzade, Abdullah Saik, Hüseyin Cavit and Ahmet Cevat among its proponents. Turkism or Turkish nationalism was an integral part of Azerbaijani romanticism in the nineteenth and early

twentieth centuries until the Soviet occupation of 1920 when all these figures were declared reactionaries, counter-revolutionaries and pan-Turkists. Of course, Hüseyinzade Ali's influence extended far beyond the Caucasus to almost all the Turkic groups in the Russian Empire, and especially towards Ottoman Turkey. The romantics believed in the cultural unity and elevation of the entire Turkish world, whereas the realists such as Mirza Celil advocated an Azerbaijani ideology. The influence of especially Hüseyinzade on the Ottoman elite and the latter's influence on the Azerbaijani literary elite can be defined as a mutually constitutive relationship of the ideational world of the Turks of the Ottoman Empire and the Caucasus (Kengerli 2008, 13-19).

Fellow Caucasian Turks such as Muhammed Hadi viewed Hüseyinzade as a "genius and honourable master," whereas Abdullah Saik saw his biggest aim as being to liberate the Azerbaijanis from Persian and Russian influence (Kengerli 2008, 24, 26) The *Molla Nasreddin* journal on the other hand emphasized Azerbaijani Turkish, which was spearheaded by Celil Memmedkuluzade (Kengerli 2008, 29). However, it should be recognized that the concept of general Turkish literature as well as Azerbaijanis' identification as part of the Turkish nation remained in currency until the 1930s when both *Füyuzat* and *Molla Nasreddin* were labelled as the "ideological tools of millionaires" and as being pan-Turkists, pan-Islamists and stooges of the Ottomans. It was only in the 1980s and more so after the second independence in 1991 that Hüseyinzade and other romantic nationalists' legacy was recognized in an objective manner (Kengerli 2008, 37, 45, 63).

Hayat (Life) advocated cleansing Persian and Russian influence from Azerbaijani culture. In its pages, Hüseyinzade expressed his belief in pan-Turkism while at the same time, formulated the triple processes of Turkification, Islamization and Europeanization, very much having a deep impact on Ziya Gökalp (Şarınay 1994, 58; Akçura 1981, 161-163).¹⁰ Of course, the latter was to use the term modernization instead of Europeanization. It should also be noted that these triple ideologies were depicted on the Azerbaijani flag during the first (1918-1920) and the second (1991-) independence periods by blue, green and red colours respectively (Süleymanlı 2006, 87).

Writing for *Hayat* on July 2, 1906, Ali praised the peoples of the Caucasus for seeking liberty and depicted the Caucasian Turks as the most ardent lovers of liberty among Turks emanating from their nomadic roots. He characterized the people of the Caucasus as "as beautiful as angels." Other Caucasian peoples such as Circassians, Lezgis, and Georgians were also praised for their quest for independence and liberty against Russians.¹¹

Füyuzat, which means abundance or enlightenment (Landau 1995, 13), was published under the editorship of Hüseyinzade Ali between 1906 and 1907. It was the successor to the *Hayat* newspaper (published between 1905 and 1906) which was closed in 1906 by the censor committee composed of a significant number of Armenians. It is also noteworthy that the *Hayat* newspaper included the note "It is a Turkish newspaper" under its masthead.

¹⁰ Also see Orkun (1944, 67-69).

¹¹ The whole article "Kuh-i Gafves-i Simurg" can be found in ekitap.kulturturizm.gov.tr/dosya/1-177723/h/alibeyhuseynzadeturan.pdf

Füyuzat, which was owned by the Azerbaijani oil tycoon Hacı Zeynelabidin Tagiyev (1838-1924), on the other hand, described itself as a “weekly Turkish Islamic journal.” Among the contributors to the journal, one could mention Hasan Bey Melikzade Zerdabi, Mirza Elekber Sabir, Hüseyin Cavid, Mehmet Emin Resulzade, Abdullah Saik, and Abdullah Cevdet. Poems and articles from Abdülhak Hamit Tarhan and Rezaizade Mahmut Ekrem from Turkey were also published in *Füyuzat* (Uygur 2010, 150-152; Kengerli 2008, 91). The journal was criticized by numerous intellectuals both in Azerbaijan and elsewhere in the Turkish world for its extensive usage of Ottoman, hence Arabic-Persian, vocabulary. The dean of cultural pan-Turkism İsmail Gaspiralı, while praising the newspaper, also pointed out that a simpler language should be employed so that the common folk would be able to understand it much better. On the other hand, Azerbaijani literatus Mehmed Aga Sahtahtli (Sahtahtinski) was of the opinion that the literary language should be the language spoken by the people (Uygur 2010, 157-158). In fact, he characterized the people as Azerbaijani or the Azerbaijani nation.¹² It would be correct to point out that the majority of Azerbaijani intellectuals, including those in the *Müsavat* party, defined themselves as Turkish. Only after the consolidation of Communist rule would the concept of Azerbaijani be reintroduced (Süleymanlı 2006, 111, 123). For instance, the extraordinary envoy of independent Azerbaijan to the Ottoman Empire in Istanbul Ali Merdan Tobçubaşev (1865-1934) in the booklet *The Establishment of Azerbaijan*, prepared in 1918 for the major powers of the world, referred to the people of his country as Azerbaijani Turks and to a lesser extent Muslims. Only once did he refer to them as the Azerbaijani nation (İmanov 2006, 13-15, 19). This state of affairs demonstrates the fact that the Turkish identity of Azerbaijanis had the upper hand, at least among the intellectuals of that country.

Another nationalist intellectual, Hasan Sabri Ayvazov, on the other hand, said that as they took their outfit from Europeans and their headgear from the Jews, why not take the language from the Ottomans as it had evolved into a perfect language. Similarly, Ali Bey argued that the ultimate zenith of all the Turks’ language would be the Ottoman language (“başka yerdeki Türklerin lisanı ... hepsinin kiblegah-i tekamülü yani en son varacağı yol Osmanlı lisanıdır”) (Uygur 2010, 161). The Ottoman influence on the Azerbaijani romantic nationalists came through a literary current called *Servet-i Fünun* (Wealth of the Sciences) and by literary figures such as Tevfik Fikret. The fact of the matter was that the latter was a believer in Ottomanism and cosmopolitanism, but his literary attraction had a serious impact on Hüseyinzade. On the other hand, ideologically, Mehmet Emin Yurdakul with his simple Turkish poems had a more significant impact on Turkish nationalism. His *Turkish Poems*, which started by stating “I am a Turk. My religion and nation are sacred” was to have a direct influence on Azerbaijani Turkish nationalists such as Ali Bey Hüseyinzade and Mehmet Emin Resulzade. Hüseyinzade was to openly admit this influence in his article in the *Terakki* (Progress) newspaper on April 10, 1909, and in 1914, he called Yurdakul “the great poet of Turan” (Kengerli 2008, 204-

¹² Published in *Keşkül* No. 15, 1890, and the *Kaspi* newspaper on May 1, 1891 (Süleymanlı 2006, 108). Another figure Mehmet Kuluzade in 1917 spoke about the Azerbaijani nation and language even though a decade earlier he had preferred the concept Turkish language and Turkish nation (Süleymanlı 2006, 109).

205, 229-230). To clarify one point, the concept of Turan denoting unification of all Turkish peoples into a single state was rather common among Azerbaijani intellectuals. For example, the poem published in *Füyuzat* on August 7, 1907, by Abdulhalik Cenneti with the title “We Are Turanians” (Turanlılarız), demonstrated the fact that pan-Turkism was more common in Azerbaijan than Turkey. In this poem, Cenneti wrote, “We are Turanians, possessors of fame and glory.” Similarly, another nationalist figure Ahmet Cevat characterized Turan as a sacred Kaba, in a sense supplanting the holy site in Mecca where Muslims go on pilgrimage.¹³

Regarding his conceptions of the past and present, Hüseyinzade Ali did not fetishize the past. While being proud of Azerbaijani Turkish history, he wanted to focus on the present and the future for the necessities of the age (Kengerli 2008, 349). In other words, he was a modernist with one foot in the national legacy of his own people.

The fact that *Füyuzat* included Arabic-Persian composites derived from Ottoman Turkish made it unintelligible for an average Azerbaijani Turk. Ali Bey’s response was that Istanbul Turkish should be taken as the source of inspiration in efforts to create a common literary language and that Azerbaijani Turkish, which had grammatical difficulties, was still evolving and its vocabulary was inadequate, making it unsuitable to be a literary language (Uygun 2007, 57-58).

Molla Nasreddin, published between 1906-1931 in Tbilisi and later in Tabriz and Baku, on the other hand, was a satirical journal, whose editor Mirza Celil Memedgülüzade supported the transformation of the spoken language into the literary language. This journal appealed to the common people whereas *Füyuzat* was attractive to the educated elite. Editorials in *Molla Nasreddin* claimed to have been printed “in the clear mother tongue of the Turk” and contributors also argued that it was Istanbul which has “Arabized the Turkish language” (Uygun 2007, 58-59). It should be evident from the quotation above that there was an element of Turkish national identity in the pages of *Molla Nasreddin*, and they were critical of excessive usage of Arabic and Persian vocabulary common in some sections of the Ottoman literati.

Erdoğan Uygun, a contemporary scholar, having analysed *Füyuzat* and the Azerbaijani Turkish press in general, characterized the position of these journals as having contributed to the “Turkish Renaissance.” One of the main objectives of *Füyuzat* and Hüseyinzade was to transcend local identities and separate nationalization projects as well as the Sunni-Shia schism among the Turkish peoples. In fact, Ali Bey specifically said, “We need to go towards unity. We need to progress towards unity” (sic).¹⁴ He also wrote a short poem in 1907 entitled “Shia-Sunni,” which asked “As their enemy of life is threatening the parties, o hoja (i.e. preacher) what is this question of Shia and Sunni?” (Bayat 1998, 128), depicting the Sunni-Shia schism as nothing but “fanaticism.” Characterizing all Crimeans, Kazan Tatars and other Turkic peoples as Turks, he called for them to become more powerful by increasing their populations and developing healthy and wealthy individuals. He also emphasized the eradication of ignorance. It should also be added that in this article, he re-published his

¹³ “Turanlılarız, sahib-i şan u şerefiz biz” (Kengerli 2008, 363-364). Cevat wrote, “Turan öyle bir mukaddes Kabe’dir ki, her bir taşı Gölgesinde yere düşer Türk’ün eğilmeyen başı” (Kengerli 2008, 378).

¹⁴ “İttihad itmeliyiz, itihad. İttihada toğri Terakki itmeliyiz” (Uygun 2010, 155).

poem, calling for the fraternal relations of Hungarians and Turks.¹⁵

The worldview of *Füyuzat* was summarized by a commentator named Ahmed Kemal in the last edition of the newspaper as being a believer of Islam, full of European ideas and advocating European outfits for the Azerbaijanis. He continued that the paper was against despotism, aristocracy, capitalism and exploitation of the people and was also supportive of liberty, democracy and human rights including those of the proletariat (Uygur 2010, 164).

Füyuzat was accused of being reactionary, racist and Turanist during the Soviet era (Uygur 2007, 61) as Soviet authorities rejected all forms of nationalism and tried to obliterate them. Hence, all forms of national identity were discredited throughout the Turkic areas of the USSR.

Hüseynzade Ali's Introduction of Turan to Turkey

Hüseynzade Ali had been advocating Turkish unity including his triple formulation of Turkification, Islamization and Europeanization (Türkleşmek, İslamlaşmak Avrupalılaşmak) (Uygur 2010, 156) from the nineteenth century onward. In 1904, in the paper *Türk*, where he wrote under the pseudonym Ahmet Turani, Hüseynzade pointed out that all Turks should be proud of the legacy of Genghis Khan and Timur (Tamerlane). These were great historical figures, in his judgment, who contributed to the unification of the Turks. Consequently, Turks living around the world should get to know each other and establish cultural links. Fellow nationalist Yusuf Akçura called Hüseynzade Ali a poetic Turanist who had not pursued the idea systematically (Akçura 1981, 158-160), denoting the unification of all Turanian peoples. Akçura was referring to the poem below as Hüseynzade was one of the few nationalists who openly called for unity with Hungarians with his poem:

You are our brothers O the nation of Hungarians,
The origins of both of our forefathers are from Turan,
We all belong to the same religion, all worshippers of God.
Is it possible for the Bible and the Quran to separate us?¹⁶

This poem went beyond the contours of pan-Turkism, reaching out to the Hungarians. However, his Turanian ideal was limited to this poem as he did not pursue this aim any further in his activities and publications.

One could argue that he was the person who introduced Turanism, as I employ it interchangeably with pan-Turkism, to Turkey, and influenced Gökalp on this issue as well as

¹⁵ "Mektub-ı Mahsus" in *Türk Gazetesi*, 24 Tesrin-I Sani 1904 (Bayat 1998, 303-304).

¹⁶ Sizlersiniz ey kavm-i Macar bizlere ihvan
Ecdadımızın müştereken menşei Turan
Bir dindeyiz biz, hepimiz hakperestan,
Mümkün mü ayırsın bizi İncil ile Kuran (Önen 2005, 112).
This poem was written around 1892 according to Bayat (1998, 93).

the triple processes of Turkification, Islamization and Europeanization. On August 18, 1906, in the journal *Hayat*, Hüseyinzade Ali Bey defined his identity as “I am a Turk, a Caucasian Turk, a Muslim Turk and a Muslim human being. Therefore, it follows that I was born with these four attributes, I have to live with these four characteristics” (Bayat 1998, 11). He summarized his ideas with the following quote denoting that Turks were to be “With Turkish blood, Islamic faith and European outfit” (Garaşova 2004, 312). In this formulation, we can see his advocacy of the idea of Turkification, Islamization and Europeanization.

Hüseyinzade offered a synthesis between Turkification, Islamization and Europeanization, having been influenced by European trends and ideas through Russian intellectuals as well as nineteenth century Young Ottomans such as Namık Kemal and Şinasi (Garaşova 2004, 318-320) Furthermore, he advocated unification of the Azerbaijani and Caucasian Turks with the Ottoman Empire for total salvation of Turks living in these different geographies (Süleymanlı 2006, 89).

The following examples demonstrate the fact that Hüseyinzade’s ideas had a direct bearing on Azerbaijani politics. Writing for the *Açık Söz* newspaper in 1915, the leader of independent Azerbaijan Mehmet Emin Resulzade called for “Turkification, Islamization and Modernization” and argued that “our nationality is Turkish” (Süleymanlı 2006, 123). On June 27, 1918, the cabinet of the independent Republic of Azerbaijan declared the Turkish language the official language of the country (Süleymanlı 2006, 133). Resulzade was adamant that Azerbaijanis were “authors of the first Turkish drama” and “the first Turkish opera composer” was an Azerbaijani. Furthermore, they were “the first among the Turks of Russia to publish a newspaper, the first to eradicate denominational conflicts ... and finally the first to declare a republic in the Muslim World” (İmanov 2003, 9). Therefore, Resulzade, while emphasizing a special role for Azerbaijanis in the Turkish world, also expressed opinions very much in line with the ideas of Hüseyinzade, and Gökalp.

Going back to the worldview of Hüseyinzade, loyal to his Young Turk roots, he also talked about the benefits of constitutionalism and compared the Ottoman and Russian empires, contrasting the former’s contraction and loss of territories with Russia, which because of the promulgation of the constitution and the parliament, had gained ever more territories and strength (Bayat 1998, 54). In other words, the establishment of a constitutional monarchy was the major aim of all Young Turks in Turkey and the Caucasus and those living as exiles in numerous European cities.

Azerbaijani Turkish Nationalism and the Fate of the Ottoman Turks

The Azerbaijani romantics were intrinsically related to the fate of the Ottomans, demonstrated by their interest in the re-conquest of the city of Edirne in 1913 or the military defeats of the Ottoman Empire during WWI. In their writings, there was a constant reference to Turan (Kengerli 2008, 66-68) and the common destiny of the Turkish peoples. In fact, Ahmet

Cevat, one of the romantic nationalists together with Abdullah Şaik and the latter's elder brother Ahund Yusuf Talibzade, joined the Ottoman army as part of the volunteer army of the Caucasus. Eventually, Talibzade was to join Enver Pasha in Turkestan and die there in 1923 (Kengerli 2008, 87-88) while fighting against the Russians. We see similar efforts of joining the Ottoman army or serving the Ottoman Turks as doctors or educators among figures such as Hüseyinzade Ali, Yusuf Akçura and İsmail Gasprıralı. The reason for this state of affairs emanated from their belief in the unity of all Turkic peoples in the world.

To demonstrate this political orientation, we could quote the future Azerbaijani president Mehmet Emin Resulzade, who in his book *Asrımızın Şyavuşu* (The Leader of Our Century) wrote, "We are Turks and sons of Turks" and called for the establishment of "a new Turan" which would be composed of states culminating in a federation (Kengerli 2008, 156-157). As Young Turk leaders, Dr. Nazım and Dr. Bahaeddin Şakir argued, Hüseyinzade Ali's goal, similarly, was to achieve Turkish unity (Türk ittihadı) from the Adriatic Sea to China, in which linguistic unity would be the first step (Önen 2005, 130).

Furthermore, on numerous occasions, Ali Bey moved from the theme of general pan-Turkism to specific war fronts and political issues in Turkey and Azerbaijan. For instance, Ali Bey Hüseyinzade wrote a poem about the Gallipoli campaign during World War I in 1915, defining the homeland as "the land of Islam" where the "Turkish banner" would fly for eternity, characterizing Gallipoli as "the gate of Turan" given to the Turk by God (Bayat 1998, 113-114). Here, we see a close amalgamation between Islamic and Turkish themes.

In 1918, he wrote for the newspaper of the Red Crescent, reporting his journey to Ganja, the first capital of the Azerbaijan Republic. It was at this time that Ottoman armies entered Azerbaijan to help them gain their independence. He wrote, "Azerbaijan and Anatolia are complementing each other." As Anatolia had neglected trade and industry, "Azerbaijani Turks" had lost their martial qualities due to Russian occupation but focused on trade. As Azerbaijan "is liberated from captivity" with the help of the Ottoman Turks, Anatolia could be liberated from economic poverty with the assistance of Azerbaijanis. He wrote poetically and allegorically that Mount Erciyes in Turkey was now uniting with the Caucasus Mountains,¹⁷ calling this, in fact, unification of Turkey and Azerbaijan.

His fellow countryman Ahmet Ağaoğlu's letters to Hüseyinzade Ali, which are preserved at the Aegean University in Izmir, Turkey, also demonstrate this nationalistic world view. Mostly sent in 1922, Ağaoğlu refers to Hüseyinzade Ali as a comrade having worked for the well-being of the Turkish world (Türk Alemi) with utmost enthusiasm. Ağaoğlu also praised Ali Bey for having taught the Turks life after death, meaning the nationalistic ideal (Özkaya 2011).¹⁸

Hüseyinzade also had great confidence in Kemal Atatürk, claiming that "independence can only be achieved through faith in Kemal" (Bayat 1998, 141). In the same vein, just like other nationalists, Ali Bey was supportive of Atatürk even though he was accused of being part of the assassination attempt against Atatürk. To reiterate, Ali Bey was acquitted of all

¹⁷ "Azerbaycan'da Düşündüklerim," July 24, 1918, Hilal-i Ahmer (Bayat 1998, 308-309).

¹⁸ For the archives at the Aegean University, see http://huseyinzadealituran.com/arsiv_hakkinda.

charges regarding this incident.

In conclusion, Hüseyinzade was one of the most influential Azerbaijani Turks, as far as Turkish nationalism was concerned, in his homeland and in Turkey, to whom Turkish unity was the central theme in his worldview. He was among a group of emigres from tsarist Russia who contributed to the political, intellectual, academic and cultural life of the late Ottoman and early republican Turkey.

Conclusion

Ali Bey Hüseyinzade should be viewed as a monumental link between the Turks of the Caucasus, especially Azerbaijan and Ottoman Turkey. This article demonstrated the evident interrelationship between the ideational world of these different geographies and how their ideas influenced their respective intelligentsia. This interaction was mutually constitutive as Ottoman writings and intellectuals influenced the Azerbaijani literati and vice versa. In addition to his belief in a single Turkish world, he endeavoured to eradicate sectarian rifts between the Sunnis and the Shias and create gender equality in Turkish and Muslim societies. Therefore, Ali Bey was part of the reformist nationalist pan-Turkist movement very much under the influence of Ismail Bey Gaspıralı who had initiated the *jadid* movement in Tsarist Russia among the Turkic peoples.

The adoption of Turkish national affiliation was essential for those ethnic groups who were ambivalent about their personal and national identities, while at the same time, in his judgment, Turks had to accept Westernization, which was the right path for their survival and scientific development. At that point in history, religious and sectarian as well as geographical identities had the upper hand, whereas for nationalists such as Ali Bey, Turkishness was the most crucial element of the national identity of Azerbaijanis and other Turkic peoples. Through a number of publications including newspaper articles, Hüseyinzade was able to spread his message to the intellectuals in Azerbaijan and the Ottoman Empire. His modernist approach to nationalism, religion and Westernism was influential on Turkish nationalist thinkers as well as constituting a mutually interactive national space between the Caucasus, Anatolia, the Balkans and beyond.

Hüseyinzade Ali Bey was denigrated during the Soviet era, emanating from that period's ideological preferences. Needless to say, the Soviet authorities were opposed to nationalist ideas coming from the Turkic peoples of the USSR. He, together with other Azerbaijani intellectuals such as Ahmed Ağaoğlu and Mehmed Emin Resulzade, were accused of pan-Turkism and pan-Islamism who "needed to be exposed" and destroyed at an intellectual level. These nationalist thinkers throughout the Soviet era were presented as the class ideologues of Azerbaijani capitalists and exploiters of the toilers. They were also accused of being "racists, chauvinists, reactionaries," and Hüseyinzade in particular was accused in the Azerbaijan Soviet Encyclopaedia as having denied the independence of Azerbaijani literature and being under the influence of Ottoman literature (Garaşova 2004, 301-304). These attacks, especially

coming from the local communists, seemed to have simmered down in the 1980s as a number of academics started commenting positively on Azerbaijani nationalist thinkers such as Hüseyinzade Ali and Ahmed Ağaoğlu (Garaşova 2004, 306) After the second independence of Azerbaijan in 1991, a statue of Hüseyinzade Ali was erected in his hometown of Salyan demonstrating the acceptance of some of his ideas by the new Azerbaijani government, but not those pertaining to all-Turkish unity (Bayat 1998, 2).

In the twenty first century, the close relationship between Turkey and Azerbaijan continues in the formulation of “one nation, two states,” stated by the leaders of Azerbaijan and Turkey. However, due to reasons beyond the scope of this study, the relationship is not as close as Hüseyinzade would have preferred. As has been demonstrated throughout this article, his vision was the formal unity of the two peoples in a single state. Different Turkic states, Turkey and Azerbaijan included, follow their own national interests which might not be commensurate all the time.

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