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PAN-TURANISM

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In practical politics the vital thing is not what men really are, but what they think they are. This simple truth, so often overlooked, is actually of tremendous import. It gives the key to many a riddle otherwise insoluble.

The European war is a striking case in point. That war is very generally regarded as being one of "race." The idea certainly lends to the struggle much of its bitterness and uncompromising fury. And yet, from the genuine racial standpoint, it is nothing of the kind. Ethnologists have proved conclusively that, apart from certain palaeolithic survivals and a few historically recent Asiatic intruders, Europe is inhabited by only three stocks: (1) the blond, long-headed "Nordic" race, (2) the brown, round-headed "Alpine" race, (3) the brunet, long-headed "Mediterranean" race. These races are so dispersed and intermingled that every European nation is built on at least two of these stocks, while most are compounded of all three. Strictly speaking, therefore, the present European war is not a race-war at all, but a domestic struggle between closely knit blood-relatives.

Now all this is known to most well-educated Europeans. And yet it has not made the slightest difference. The reason is that, in spite of everything, the Europeans believe that they fit into an entirely different race-category. They think they belong to the "Teutonic" race, the "Latin" race, the "Slav" race, or the "Anglo-Saxon" race. The fact that these so-called "races" simply do not exist but are really historical differentiations, based on language and culture, which cut sublimely athwart genuine race-lines,—all that is quite beside the point. Your European may apprehend this intellectually, but it will have no effect upon his conduct. In his heart of hearts he will still believe himself a Latin, a Teuton, an Anglo-Saxon, or a Slav.

For his blood-race he will not stir: for his thought-race he will die. For the glory of the dolichocephalic "Nordic" or the brachicephalic "Alpine" he will not prick his finger or wager a groat; for the triumph of the "Teuton" or the "Slav" he will give his last farthing and shed his heart's blood. In other words: "Not what men really are, but what they think they are!"

Now, why all this? Why, in contemporary Europe, should thought-race be all-powerful, while blood-race is impotent? The reason is perfectly clear. Modern Europe's great dynamic has been nationality. Until quite recent times "nationality" was a distinctly intensive concept, connoting approximate identity of culture, language and historic past. It was the logical product of a still relatively narrow European outlook. Indeed, it owed its very existence to the disappearance of a still narrower outlook which had contented itself with the regional, feudal and dialectic loyalties of the Middle Ages. But the first half of the nineteenth century saw a still further widening of the European outlook to a continental or even to a world horizon. At once the early concept of nationality ceased to satisfy. Nationality became extensive. It tended to embrace all those of kindred speech, culture and historic tradition. Obviously a new terminology was required. The key-word was presently discovered—"race." Hence we get that whole series of "race"-phrases—"Pan-Germanism," "Pan-Slavism," "Pan-Angleism," "Pan-Latinism," and the rest. Of course these are not racial at all. They merely signify nationalism brought up to date. But the European peoples, with all the fervor of the nationalist faith that is in them, believe and proclaim them to be racial. Hence, so far as practical politics is concerned, they are racial and will so continue while the national dynamic endures.

This new development of nationalism (the "racial" stage as we may call it) was at first confined to the older centres of European civilization, but with the spread of western ideas it presently appeared in the remotest and most unexpected quarters. Its advent in the Balkans quickly engendered those fanatical propagandas, "Pan-Hellenism," "Pan-Serbism," etc., which turned that unhappy region first into a bear garden and latterly

into a witches' sabbath. Before the close of the last century, nationalism had patently passed into Asia. The "Young Turk" and "Young Egyptian" movements, the "Nationalist" stirrings in Persia and India, and the Chinese revolution, are unmistakable signs that Asia is in the throes of the first phase of national self-consciousness.

But of late years numerous symptoms proclaim the fact that in Asia also the second or "racial" stage of nationalism has begun. This is strikingly illustrated by the recent course of events in the Mohammedan world. About a hundred years ago the Wahabi revolt in Arabia inaugurated that vast politico-religious movement known as the Mohammedan Revival. By the closing decades of the nineteenth century it had reached every corner of Islam, while a simultaneous pressure from aggressive, land-hungry Europe had given it a bitterly anti-European complexion. Hence close observers of eastern affairs have descanted for many years on "Pan-Islamism" and have warned us of the impending Jihadd or "Holy War" against the European west. And yet, in 1914, under highly exciting provocation and extremely favorable circumstances, the Jihadd did not "come off." Of course we are all familiar with the stock explanations for its non-appearance, and doubtless these had their weight. But one reason, though never mentioned, probably had a great deal more to do with the Holy War fiasco than is generally supposed: the dissolving effect of the new spirit of Asiatic nationalism upon Islamic unity. Just as the gospel of nationality which came to Europe with the Renaissance disrupted the Catholic unity of the Middle Ages and made crusades impossible, so that same gospel today seems to be relaxing the bonds of Islamic solidarity and transforming the true believers into patriots first and Moslems afterwards.

This tendency is especially evident in the recent relations of the two chief Mohammedan peoples of the Ottoman empire, the Turks and the Arabs. Arab and Turk have never gotten on really well together. Their racial temperaments were too incompatible for that. Still, in former times their common Islamic faith and their common contempt and hatred of the

infidel united them against the Christian world, whatever the state of their domestic relations. But throughout the present century ominous signs of disruption have been in evidence. In the two portions of the Arab world most open to western ideas (Syria and Egypt), Arab nationalist movements appeared years ago, and the leaven has since been permeating the whole Arab world. In great part these movements have been specifically directed against the menace of European domination, but they are also self-consciously nationalist and as such hostile to the ruling Turk. Indeed, within the last few years, Arab nationalism seems to have reached the "racial" stage. Many of its leaders today dream of a great Arab Empire, embracing not only the ethnically Arab peninsula homeland, Syria, Mesopotamia and Egypt, but also all the Arabized races of North Africa and the Sudan. With such a temper it is not surprising that the call to the "Holy War" from Turkish Stambul in November, 1914, found the Arab world half-hearted or cold. It also does much to explain the recent revolt of the Shereef of Mecca which today threatens Turkish rule throughout Arabia with complete destruction.

This rapid growth of Arab national consciousness was undoubtedly stimulated by the hostile reaction of the corresponding development which had been taking place in the Turkish world. We all remember the startling growth of "Young Turkey," the amazing transformation of the Ottomans from old-fashioned Moslems docilely submissive to the absolute sultan-caliph into self-conscious patriots eager to replace the theocratic despotism of Abdul-Hamid by an Ottoman national state with the Turkish language and culture supreme over and absorbing all the rest. That is merely the familiar nationalist "first stage." But we should also note that Turkish nationalism, like Arab nationalism, has already reached the second or "racial" stage of development. In fact, its growth has here been truly extraordinary. It has already passed the bounds of what might strictly be termed "Pan-Turkism" and has now arrived at the truly momentous concept known as "Pan-Turanism."

The Ottoman Turks do not stand racially alone in the world.

Right across northern Europe and Asia, from the Baltic to the Pacific and from the Mediterranean to the Arctic Ocean, there stretches a vast band of peoples to whom ethnologists have assigned the name of "Uralo-Altaiic race," but who are more generally termed "Turanians." This group embraces the most widely scattered folk—the Ottoman Turks of Constantinople and Anatolia, the Turcomans of Central Asia and Persia, the Tartars of South Russia and Transcaucasia, the Magyars of Hungary, the Finns of Finland and the Baltic provinces, the aboriginal tribes of Siberia, and even the distant Mongols and Manchus. Diverse though they are in culture, tradition, and even physical appearance, these peoples nevertheless possess certain well-marked traits in common. Their languages are all similar, and, what is of even more import, their physical and mental make-up displays undoubted affinities. They are all noted for great physical vitality combined with unusual toughness of nerve-fibres. Though somewhat deficient in imagination and creative artistic sense they are richly endowed with patience, tenacity and dogged energy. Most of them have displayed extraordinary military capacity together with a no less remarkable aptitude for the masterful handling of subject peoples. The Turanians have certainly been the greatest conquerors and empire-builders that the world has ever seen. Attila and his Huns, Arpad and his Magyars, Isperich and his Bulgars, Alp Arslan and his Seljuks, Ertogrul and his Ottomans, Genghis Khan and Tamerlane with their "inflexible" Mongol hordes, Baber in India, even Kubilai Khan and Nurhachu in far-off Cathay: the type is ever the same. The hoof-print of the Turanian "man on horseback" is stamped deep all over the palimpsest of history.

Glorious or sinister according to the point of view, Turan's is certainly a wondrous past. Of course one may query whether these diverse peoples really do form one genuine race. But, as we have already seen, that makes no practical difference. Possessed of kindred tongues and temperaments and dowered with such a wealth of soul-stirring tradition, it would suffice for them to think themselves racially one to form a nationalist dynamic of truly appalling potency.

Until about a generation ago, it is true, no signs of such a movement were visible. Not only were distant stocks like Magyars and Finns quite unaware of any common Turanian bond, but even obvious kindred like Turks and Turcomans regarded one another with almost complete indifference. It was the labors of western ethnologists that first cleared away the mists which enshrouded Turan. Particularly was this true of the Hungarian ethnological school. The Magyars, though deeply permeated by western culture, have never forgotten their Asiatic origin and have always felt rather lonely in the midst of Aryan Europe. This feeling was naturally intensified by the nationalist waves which swept over Europe during the nineteenth century, emphasizing as these did ethnic differences and sharpening existing lines of cleavage between the peoples. Accordingly the Magyars instinctively turned to seek out their long lost kindred, and the researches of Hungarian scholars, particularly those of the great orientalist Arminius Vambéry, presently disclosed the unexpected vastness of the Turanian world.

This soon acquired a much more than local significance. The works of Vambéry and his colleague spread far and wide through Turan and were there devoured by receptive minds already stirring to the obscure breath of a new time. The normality of the Turanian movement is shown by its simultaneous appearance at such widely sundered points as Turkish Constantinople and the Tartar centers along the Russian Volga. Indeed, if anything, the leaven began its working on the Volga sooner than on the Bosphorus. This Tartar revival, though almost unknown to the west, is one of the most extraordinary phenomena in all nationalist history. These Russian Tartars, once lords of the land, though long since fallen from their high estate, have never vanished in the Slav ocean. Although many of them have been four hundred years under Muscovite rule they have stubbornly maintained their religious, racial and cultural identity. Clustered thickly along the Volga, especially at Kazan and Astrakhan, retaining much of the Crimea, and forming a considerable minority in Transcaucasia, the Tartars constitute distinct enclaves in the Slav empire, widely scattered but indomitable.

The first stirrings of national self-consciousness among the Russian Tartars appeared as far back as 1895, and from then on the movement grew with astonishing rapidity. The removal of governmental restrictions at the time of the Russian revolution of 1904 was followed by a regular literary florescence. Streams of books and pamphlets, numerous newspapers and a solid periodical press, all attested the vigor and fecundity of the Tartar revival. The high economic level of the Russian Tartars assured the material sinews of war. The Tartar oil millionaires of Baku here played a conspicuous rôle, freely opening their capacious purses for the good of the cause. The Russian Tartars also showed distinct political ability and soon gained the confidence of their Turcoman cousins in Russian Central Asia. The first Duma showed a large Mohammedan group so enterprising in spirit and so skillfully led that Russian public opinion became genuinely uneasy and Tartar influence in Russian parliamentary life was thereafter diminished by summary curtailments of Mohammedan representation.

Although the Mohammedans of Transcaucasia have displayed unmistakable signs of fanaticism, the Tartars of European Russia, scattered enclaves as they are amid the vast bulk of Muscovite Slavism, carefully refrain from any overt exhibition of separatism or disloyalty. Nevertheless, many earnest spirits have gone forth to seek a freer and more fruitful field of labor in Turkish Stambul where the Russian Tartars have played a great part in the Pan-Turanian development within the Ottoman Empire. In fact, it was a Volga Tartar, Yusuf Bey Akchura Oglu, who was the real founder of the first Pan-Turanian circle at Constantinople.

Up to the Young-Turk revolution of 1908, Pan-Turanism was somewhat under a cloud at Stambul. Abdul-Hamid had an instinctive aversion to all national movements. He pinned his faith on Pan-Islamism, and furthermore was much under Arab influence. Accordingly, the Pan-Turanians, while not actually persecuted, were decidedly out of favor. With the advent of Young-Turk nationalism to power, however, all was changed. The Ottomanizing leaders of the Committee of Union and

Progress listened eagerly to Pan-Turanian preaching, and it is safe to say that all the chief men among the Young Turks have been for years affiliated with the Pan-Turanians. The present Pan-Turanian leader is the able publicist Ahmed Bey Agayeff; also, be it noted, a Russian Tartar. His well-edited organ, *Turk Yurdu* (*Turkish Home*), penetrates to every corner of the Turco-Tartar world and exercises great influence on the development of its public opinion.

Although leaders like Ahmed Bey Agayeff have long seen the entire Turanian world from Finland to Manchuria as a potential whole, their practical efforts were until very recently confined to the closely related Turco-Tartar segment; that is, to the Ottomans of Turkey, the Tartars of Russia, and the Turcomans of Central Asia and Persia. Since all these people were also Mohammedans, it follows that this propaganda had a religious as well as racial complexion, trending indeed in many respects towards Pan-Islamism. In fact, even disregarding the religious factor, we may say that, though Pan-Turanian in theory, the movement was at that time in practice little more than "Pan-Turkism."

It was the second Balkan war of 1913 which really precipitated full-fledged Pan-Turanism. That war brought a new recruit into the Turanian camp—Bulgaria. The Bulgarians have until yesterday been classed as Slavs. They are in reality of mixed origin. The primitive Bulgars were a Turanian tribe who, away back in the Dark Ages, conquered the unorganized Slavic hordes, recently migrated south of the Danube, and settled down as masters. Unlike their cousins the Magyars, these old Bulgarians were absorbed by their more numerous subjects, losing their speech and racial identity. But, like most Turanian stocks, the blood was a potent one, for they left behind them far more than their name. The resulting amalgam was stamped with marked Turanian physical and mental characteristics which set the new Bulgarians quite apart in the category of "Slav" peoples. This fact came out strongly after the Russo-Turkish war of 1877. Russia, having freed the Bulgars from the Turkish yoke, expected them to become a mere Pan-Slav outpost, the

docile exponent of Russia's Balkan will. Russia was soon bitterly undeceived. From the very hour of their liberation the Bulgarians displayed an intense and aggressive particularism, and showed themselves emphatically Bulgars first and Slavs a long way afterwards. When sharply reminded of their "duty" to Pan-Slavism, the Bulgarians answered tartly that they did not care a fig for Pan-Slavism except in so far as Pan-Slavism coincided with Bulgarian national interest. Thereupon Russia, deeply incensed, transferred her favor to the Serbs, a people with a strong Slav consciousness and hence amenable to Russia's Pan-Slav policy. But this merely widened the breach with the Bulgars, who now turned away from their former protector and sought support from Russia's Balkan rival, Austria-Hungary. The ulcerating humiliations of the second Balkan war at the hands of the hated Serbs with Russia's undisguised approval snapped the last links with the historic past and threw the Bulgars full into the arms of the Teutonic Powers and their Turkish ally. The manner of Bulgaria's entrance into the present war was thus practically a foregone conclusion.

But this chapter of European politics had in it much more than mere political significance. "Call us Huns, Turks, Tartars, but not Slavs!" exclaimed a Bulgarian leader immediately after the signing of the disastrous Treaty of Bucharest. The subsequent course of events proves that this trenchant phrase was a true reflection of Bulgarian public opinion. A few months later came the reconciliation with the hereditary Turkish enemy. This was not the abnormal *volte face* which might at first sight appear. Even before the Balkan wars many Young-Turks had favorably distinguished the Bulgars from the other Balkan peoples, while Pan-Turanian publicists had hailed this folk as "Slavized Turanians." The nightmare of Bucharest now brought the Bulgarians into a similar frame of mind. What happened was, in fact, merely a shifting of balance in the national psychology. Hitherto, latent Turanian tendencies had been submerged or inhibited by a dominant Slav consciousness. Now the scales swung the other way, and emphasis began to be laid on Turanism. It is apparently not too much to say that since their entrance

into the European war the Bulgars have formally renounced Slavism and have embraced the Turanian ethnic gospel.

This fraternization with their southern neighbors was powerfully aided by the influence of another Turanian people to the north. The Magyars, as we have seen, had long been conscious of their kinship with the Turks. The evil memories of Ottoman conquest had quite died away, and throughout the nineteenth century Magyar opinion was increasingly Turcophil. After the suppression of the Hungarian revolution in 1849 it was to Turkey that Louis Kossuth and the other Hungarian leaders fled, and the warm welcome and resolute protection there accorded them greatly strengthened the ties of sympathy between the two peoples. During the Russo-Turkish War of 1877 Hungary was violently pro-Turkish, and a magnificent sword of honor then presented by the Magyars to the Sultan aroused comment throughout Europe. The labors of Magyar publicists and statesmen have had a great deal to do with the present Turco-Bulgar intimacy.

The political potentialities of the *rapprochement* between these three contiguous peoples are truly extraordinary. Should this *rapprochement* prove lasting we shall witness the erection of a solid block, stretching from the middle Danube to Mesopotamia, bound together by that most solid of bonds, racial self-consciousness. And there is no inherent reason why it should not be lasting. The group has a common deadly enemy—Russia, whose triumph would doom all of its members to virtual subjugation. Should the present plans for a great Central European *Zollverein* mature, the tie of self-preservation will be powerfully supplemented by that of economic interdependence. And then, what a revolution in traditional ideas and old political preconceptions. Imagine the effects of Bulgarians ceasing to think of themselves as Slavs, Magyars as Western Europeans, Turks as primarily True Believers; but instead, all three considering themselves fellow-Turanians.

To Russia especially the prospect is full of ill-omen. The Volga region and the Crimea are, as we have seen, dotted with Tartar enclaves, nearly 5,000,000 strong. In Transcaucasia are

2,000,000 more. In Russian Central Asia (not to mention Chinese Turkestan), stands a compact block of 7,000,000 fanatical Turcomans. All these peoples are today consciously stirring to the leaven of Pan-Turanism. But Russia contains many other Turanian elements—the Finns of Finland and the Baltic provinces, the unassimilated Finnish tribes of the Russian North, the natives of Siberia, and in the Far East the Mongols and the Manchus. Indeed, the Russian people itself is largely an ethnic compost sprung from the union of Slav colonists with indigenous Finnish peoples. In fact, from a certain point of view, the whole Russian Empire may be conceived as a Slav alluvium laid with varying thickness over a Turanian sub-soil. Granting for the sake of argument that the Finnish and Mongol elements will never awaken to a Turanian race-consciousness, the presence in both European and Asiatic Russia of so many Turco-Tartar “Turania irredenta” may yet raise new political and ethnic problems which will tax Russian statesmanship to the full.

Pan-Turanian thinkers have assuredly evolved a body of doctrine which should appeal powerfully to Turanian psychology. Their hopes for the race-future are certainly grandiose enough. Emphasizing as they do the great virility and nerve-force everywhere patent in Turanian stocks, these men see in Turan the dominant race of the morrow. Zealous students of western evolutionism and ethnology, they have evolved their own special theory of race grandeur and decadence. According to Pan-Turanian teaching, the historic peoples of Southern Asia—Persians, Egyptians and Hindus—are hopelessly degenerate. As for the Europeans, they have recently passed their apogee, and, exhausted by the consuming fires of modern industrialism, are already entering upon their decline. It is the Turanians, with their inherent virility and steady nerves unspoiled by the wear-and-tear of western civilization, who must be the great dynamic of the future. Some Pan-Turanian thinkers go so far as to proclaim that it is the sacred mission of their race to revitalize a whole senescent, worn-out world by the saving infusion of regenerative Turanian blood.

Now most westerners will probably see in all this merely the wild figments of a disordered imagination. And, of course, Pan-Turanism may vanish like the mirage of the desert, leaving not a wrack behind. But, considered soberly and dispassionately in the light of historic precedent, dare any one assert dogmatically that it will thus end? Before Mohammed the countless tribes of Arabia, notoriously the "Jackals of the East," had vegetated from time immemorial in anarchic obscurity. Kindled by Islam's Promethean spark, they swept like a roaring forest fire over half the earth. There are men still living who saw in youth a Germany so rent by particularistic strife that they would have deemed a madman him who should then have foretold the mighty Germany of 1914, stung to action by the most grandiose vision of power and glory since Imperial Rome.

Others may object that, whatever Pan-Turanism's latent possibilities, they are wholly dependent upon the outcome of the present war. But is even this a certainty? For some movements the ringing of disaster's hammer upon the anvil of humiliation is the very thing needed to forge them into tempered steel. It was the Napoleonic despotism which engendered modern Germany. It was the Austrian "whitecoat" who fashioned modern Italy. It is the present war which is apparently welding into being a genuine "British Empire."

Turan's destiny is today close-veiled from the eyes of men. But so tremendous are its latent potencies that they well deserve our close consideration. One thing is sure: even a partial realization of those grandiose dreams would shake the fabric of the present world.