

# JADIDS AND THEIR ROLE IN THE NATIONAL AWAKENING OF UZBEKISTAN

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## Abstract

This article discusses the Jadid movement and its important role in the national awakening of Uzbekistan and Turkestan in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The article analyzes the educational, cultural, literary, and political activities of the Jadids, their efforts to modernize society, establish new-method schools, develop the national press, and promote enlightenment among the people. Special attention is given to the contributions of prominent Jadid intellectuals such as Mahmudhoja Behbudi, Abdulla Avloni, Abdurauf Fitrat, and Cho'lpon. The article also examines the historical significance of the Jadid movement in shaping national identity, educational reform, and independence ideas.

**Keywords:** Jadid movement, national awakening, enlightenment, education reform, Turkestan, Uzbek literature, new-method schools, national identity, modernization, Jadid intellectuals, cultural development, independence ideas, theater, journalism, reform movement.

## Introduction

At the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, the Jadid movement emerged in Turkestan and became one of the most important historical phenomena in the social, political, cultural, and spiritual development of the Uzbek people. The Jadids aimed to free the nation from ignorance and backwardness, awaken the people through education and enlightenment, and lead society toward modern progress. Their activities resulted in the establishment of new-method schools, the development of the national press, the growth of theater and literature, and the strengthening of national consciousness and independent thinking among the people. The Jadid movement was not only an educational and cultural reform movement but also an important factor in the formation of ideas about national independence and modernization.

The word “Jadid” comes from the Arabic language and means “new” or “supporter of innovation.” Initially, the term was used in relation to the “new-method schools,” but later it became associated with intellectuals and reformers who sought to modernize society. The Jadids believed that the traditional educational system in old schools and madrasas did not meet the requirements of the modern era. In those institutions, religious sciences were mainly taught,



while secular subjects received little attention. As a result, society remained behind the achievements of modern science and technology [1].

The development of the Jadid movement in Turkestan was closely connected with the activities of prominent intellectuals such as Mahmudhoja Behbudi, Munawwar Qori Abdurashidkhanov, Abdulla Avloni, Abdurauf Fitrat, and Cho'lpon. Through their writings, schools, and public activities, they tried to awaken the people and inspire social reforms. The Jadids considered ignorance and illiteracy to be the main obstacles to national development. Therefore, they focused primarily on reforming the educational system.

One of the greatest achievements of the Jadids was the establishment of new-method schools. In these schools, children learned to read and write through modern and effective teaching methods. Unlike the traditional schools, secular subjects such as geography, mathematics, history, and natural sciences were included in the curriculum. Teachers used maps, globes, and visual materials during lessons. These schools quickly spread among the population and gave many young people the opportunity to receive a modern education.

Abdulla Avloni made a significant contribution to the creation of textbooks for Jadid schools. His famous work "Turkiy Guliston Yoki Axloq" encouraged young people to become educated, moral, and patriotic individuals. Avloni believed that education and upbringing were the foundations of national progress. His famous statement, "For us, education is a matter of life or death, salvation or destruction," clearly reflects the essence of Jadid ideology [3].

The Jadids also played an important role in the development of the press. Through newspapers and journals, they sought to educate the people, raise political awareness, and discuss social problems. Newspapers and magazines such as "Taraqqiy," "Sadoyi Turkiston," "Hurshid," and "Oyina" became important examples of Jadid journalism. In particular, the magazine "Oyina," published by Mahmudhoja Behbudi, gained great popularity among readers. These publications discussed issues related to science, education, politics, economics, and culture.

The Jadids made a major contribution to the formation of Uzbek national theater. They regarded theater as an effective means of educating and awakening the people. Jadid drama laid the foundation for modern Uzbek theater. The play "Padarkush" written by Mahmudhoja Behbudi is considered one of the first examples of Uzbek drama. The work criticized ignorance, lack of education, and social backwardness. Jadid theatrical performances encouraged people to pursue knowledge, adopt modern thinking, and strive for national unity.

Jadid literature also played a crucial role in the national awakening of the Uzbek people. Jadid writers described the difficult conditions of the people, the oppression of colonial rule, and the



problems of ignorance and backwardness. Writers such as Cho‘lpon, Abdurauf Fitrat, and Abdulla Qodiriy made a tremendous contribution to the development of national literature. Their works promoted freedom, patriotism, enlightenment, and human dignity.

By the beginning of the twentieth century, the Jadids became active not only in education and culture but also in politics. They defended the rights of the people of Turkestan and promoted ideas of national autonomy and independence. After the events of 1917, the Turkestan Autonomy was established in Kokand, reflecting the Jadids’ dream of national statehood. However, it was soon suppressed by the Bolsheviks.

Later, the Soviet government declared many Jadids “enemies of the people.” During the political repressions of the 1930s, numerous intellectuals, including Abdulla Qodiriy, Cho‘lpon, and Abdurauf Fitrat, were arrested and executed. This caused serious damage to Uzbek culture and intellectual life.

The Jadids aimed to build a modern and free society through education and enlightenment. They believed that progress depended on changing people’s thinking. Through schools, literature, journalism, and theater, they strengthened national identity and inspired ideas of independence.

Today, the ideas of the Jadids remain important. Their focus on education, science, patriotism, and modernization continues to inspire modern society, making the preservation of their heritage an important task [6].

In conclusion, the Jadid movement occupies an important place in the history of Uzbekistan and Central Asia. The Jadids devoted their lives to enlightening the people, developing national consciousness, and leading society toward progress and modernization. Their contributions greatly influenced the development of Uzbek education, literature, journalism, theater, and culture. The Jadids remain symbols of national awakening, enlightenment, and the struggle for freedom. Their intellectual and spiritual heritage continues to inspire future generations and serves as an important source of knowledge and patriotism.

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