



SAMARKAND JADIDS AND THEIR ROLE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF SPIRITUAL VALUES THROUGH EDUCATION

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Abstract

This article provides an in-depth analysis of the Jadid movement that emerged in the Turkestan region in the early 20th century, focusing specifically on its representatives in Samarkand and their distinctive contributions. Particular attention is given to the educational reforms initiated by the Samarkand Jadids, including their efforts to establish modern-method schools and their significant role in authoring textbooks and educational materials. The paper emphasizes that the central objective of the Jadids was to rescue the population from ignorance and illiteracy and to foster a spiritual awakening by strengthening national consciousness and identity.

Moreover, the article highlights the Samarkand Jadids' approach to integrating education with national values, underscoring their pedagogical commitment to instilling high moral standards—such as patriotism, honesty, diligence, and justice—among the younger generation. Through education, they sought to achieve moral renewal within society and consistently worked to harmonize progressive ideas of their time with enduring national traditions.

Keywords. Samarkand Jadids, Jadid movement, educational reforms, new method schools, spiritual values, national revival, self-awareness, youth education, enlightenment, historical heritage.

Introduction

The Jadid movement that emerged in Turkestan at the beginning of the 20th century was one of the most significant historical processes to bring about profound transformations in the region's socio-political and cultural life. Its primary aim was to introduce a modern educational system, promote enlightenment among the masses, strengthen national self-awareness, and foster a spiritual awakening. The Jadids initiated their reformist activities in the field of education, criticizing the

inefficiency of traditional schools and advocating for the establishment of new-method schools.

These educational reforms found wide expression in Samarkand, one of the leading centers of knowledge and enlightenment in the region. The Samarkand Jadids, as conscious and dedicated members of the nation, pursued not only the dissemination of modern scientific knowledge but also the moral, spiritual, and patriotic upbringing of the younger generation. Through their efforts, the ideas of enlightenment, progress, and national awakening gained broad traction within Uzbek society. This article offers a historical analysis of the contributions of the Samarkand Jadids to educational reform and their role in shaping spiritual and moral values, based on primary historical sources.

At the turn of the 20th century, Turkestan—including Samarkand—experienced a period of profound socio-political and cultural transformation. The region's incorporation into the Russian Empire disrupted traditional systems of governance, yet the newly imposed order failed to align with the national interests of the local population. In this historical context, the growing need to overcome widespread ignorance and illiteracy, along with the awakening of national consciousness, compelled the intellectual elite of the time to seek new pathways for societal advancement.

As an ancient center of science and spirituality, Samarkand became one of the focal points of this awakening movement. Progressive-minded intellectuals active in the city championed the idea that society could be transformed through educational reform and that guiding the people toward modern sciences and enlightenment was both necessary and achievable. These ideals laid the ideological foundation for the Jadid movement.

The traditional schools (maktabs) that existed in Samarkand at the time were increasingly seen as inadequate in terms of teaching methodology, curriculum content, and educational relevance. Instruction was primarily based on the Qur'an, religious texts, and Arabic grammar, offering little preparation for the practical demands of contemporary life. In contrast, the Jadids advocated for the inclusion of subjects such as arithmetic, geography, history, natural sciences, and the native language. They took concrete steps to establish schools that embodied these modern educational principles.

In addition to their reforms in education, the Jadids also utilized media, theater, and

civic engagement as tools to promote enlightenment and public awareness. In Samarkand, this movement gained significant momentum through the efforts of progressive intellectuals such as Mahmudhoja Behbudi, Munawwar Qori Abdurashidkhanov, and Sadriddin Ayni. These figures actively addressed the pressing social issues of their time and strove to awaken and enrich the moral and intellectual life of the people.

In general, the Jadid movement in Samarkand emerged as a product of historical necessity, the prevailing socio-political context, and an internal drive for spiritual awakening. At its core lay the idea of renewing society through knowledge, enlightenment, and moral development. The Samarkand Jadids initiated their efforts primarily through reforms in education, identifying widespread ignorance, illiteracy, and social stagnation as critical issues. They viewed the dissemination of modern knowledge and the upbringing of the younger generation in line with the spirit of the times as the key to societal progress. With this aim, they began replacing traditional religious schools with modern "new-method" schools.

These new-method schools differed fundamentally from traditional ones in their instructional methodology, curriculum, and organizational structure. Education was conducted using textbooks for specific subjects, and students were divided into classes. Teaching tools such as blackboards, notebooks, and pencils were introduced, contributing to improved instructional quality and better comprehension among students. In the schools established by the Samarkand Jadids, secular subjects such as arithmetic, native language, history, geography, and natural sciences were taught alongside religious studies, creating a balanced and modernized educational model.

The Jadids' contributions to education extended beyond the establishment of new schools; they were also actively involved in developing textbooks and methodological guides. Works such as *Padarkush* and *Risolai Jadida* by Mahmudkhoja Behbudi, as well as *Adibi Avval* and *Adibi Saniy* by Munawwar Qori Abdurashidkhanov, became essential educational resources for new-method schools. These texts were designed not only to promote literacy but also to instill moral values in young learners.

Importantly, the Samarkand Jadids did not confine their educational reforms to boys alone. They strongly advocated for increasing female literacy and emphasized the importance of involving women in social life. In some Jadid schools, education

for girls was introduced—a significant and progressive development for that period. Despite facing considerable societal resistance, the Jadids remained steadfast in advancing this aspect of their reform agenda.

The activities of the Jadids in Samarkand extended well beyond the realm of school education, evolving into a broader intellectual and cultural movement. They utilized theatrical performances as a means of public enlightenment and published newspapers and journals to promote knowledge and awareness among the masses. Local publications such as *Taraqiyi*, *Hurriyat*, and *Sadoi Turkiston* served as key platforms for disseminating Jadidist ideas and promoting educational and cultural reform.

One of the defining features of the Jadid movement was its holistic approach—it did not confine itself to structural or administrative reforms but aimed at a profound transformation of the moral and intellectual life of society. The Samarkand Jadids, in particular, considered the spiritual development of the younger generation, along with the cultivation of national consciousness and historical memory, as their central mission.

For the Jadids, education was not merely a tool for imparting literacy; it was a moral enterprise designed to nurture individuals with strong ethical principles, patriotism, proper manners, honesty, and selflessness. Therefore, in their new-method schools, teaching went hand in hand with the moral and emotional formation of students. Great emphasis was placed on preparing students for real life, instilling in them a deep sense of dignity, human values, and a commitment to the common good.

Prominent Samarkand Jadids such as Mahmudkhoja Behbudi, Munawwar Qori Abdurashidkhanov, and Sadriddin Ayni repeatedly emphasized in their works and activities that a society in moral decline could only be restored through knowledge and education. In their schools, alongside religious instruction, lectures were delivered on national history and heroic figures, fostering a sense of pride and identity among the youth.

The Jadids also called the broader public to spiritual awakening through theater and print media. Literary works such as *Padarkush*, *The Tashkent Incident*, *Arslon*, and *The New School* addressed pressing social issues of the time through artistic expression. These efforts contributed to a broader moral revival, encouraging both youth and society at large to engage in self-reflection and develop a sense of civic

responsibility.

Moreover, the Jadids sought to promote the essential values of Islam—emphasizing the pursuit of knowledge, moral integrity, and the prioritization of collective welfare over individual interests. They aimed to teach religious subjects in a rational, accessible, and practical manner, blending Islamic thought with modern educational approaches. Overall, the educational endeavors of the Samarkand Jadids represented not only a campaign to spread literacy, but a crucial historical phase in fostering spiritual revival, national identity, and ethical maturity among the Uzbek people.

Conclusions

The work of the Samarkand Jadids represents not only a testament to the intellectual dedication of a group of reformers in their own time, but also a bold step toward the spiritual awakening of an entire nation. Their reforms in education, the establishment of new-method schools, the production of textbooks, and their focus on the moral upbringing of the younger generation constitute a rich historical legacy that continues to hold relevance today. The Jadids championed the idea that true societal progress could not be achieved solely through political means, but must begin with moral and intellectual enlightenment grounded in knowledge, critical thought, and a strong sense of national identity.

Their efforts to cultivate spiritual values through education provide a powerful model for fostering patriotism, national pride, moral integrity, and modern worldviews among today's youth. A deep study of the intellectual heritage of the Samarkand Jadids and the incorporation of their progressive ideas into contemporary educational and moral development strategies are vital for shaping a spiritually mature generation in the context of a renewing Uzbekistan.

Therefore, a thorough academic examination of the Jadid movement—particularly the experience and legacy of the Samarkand Jadids—alongside the widespread dissemination of their ideals among the youth, remains an urgent and important task in the present day.

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