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THE ROLE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF JADID LITERATURE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF ENLIGHTENMENT IN KHOREZM AND THEIR DISTINCTIVE CHARACTERISTICS IN COMPARISON WITH THE BROADER TURKESTAN CONTEXT

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Abstract: This article examines Khorezm Jadid literature and its educational foundations as an integral part of the Turkestan national awakening movement in the early twentieth century. Drawing on the testimonies of Polvonniyoz Hoji Yusupov, Bobojon Tarroh, and Hasanmurod Qori Laffasiy, the study provides a scholarly analysis of the contributions of prominent figures such as Avaz O'tar and Bobooxun Salimov to the development of education and enlightenment in the region.

Keywords: Khorezm Jadidism, Young Khivans, Avaz Otar, Bobooxun Salimov, lithographic printing, classical *aruz* prosody, journalism, national awakening.

At the turn of the twentieth century, the Jadid movement brought about a profound transformation in the socio-political, educational, and cultural life of Turkestan. It was distinguished by its ideological orientations and regional characteristics. The division of Turkestan into three separate political entities—the Turkestan Governor-Generalship, the Emirate of Bukhara, and the Khanate of Khiva—created distinct socio-political conditions that shaped the development of the national awakening movement in each region. In particular, the Jadid movement that emerged in the Khanate of Khiva and later became known as the **Young Khivans** followed a unique path of development, as did its literary tradition [4].

Examining the role of representatives of Khorezm Jadid literature in the development of enlightenment and investigating their practical programs aimed at social reform, in addition to their aesthetic contributions, constitutes one of the important tasks of contemporary literary scholarship. Through the preparation of textbooks, journalistic writings in the press, and the transformative power of literary expression, the representatives of this movement succeeded in challenging the entrenched structures of conservatism and ignorance within society.

The emergence of enlightenment and Jadid ideas in Khorezm was driven by the region's internal socio-economic needs as well as its external cultural contacts. The most objective chronological account of this process is presented in detail in *The History of the Young Khivans (Memoirs)* by Polvonniyoz Hoji Yusupov, one of the movement's principal leaders [8]. In his memoirs, the author describes the aspirations of Khorezm's youth for secular education, school reform, and educational modernization against the backdrop of the deepening feudal crisis within the Khanate.

At the same time, works such as Bobojon Tarroh (Khodim)'s *Biographies of Khorezm Poets and Writers* [5] and Hasanmurod Qori Laffasiy's *Tazkira of Khiva's Poets and Writers* [6]

constitute some of the most important primary sources demonstrating how the traditional literary environment of the period was transformed under the influence of socio-educational ideas. These *tazkiras* chronologically document the qualitative changes in the worldview of representatives of the classical *ghazal* tradition and highlight the spiritual and intellectual support they provided to the Jadid movement.

Although Khorezm Jadid literature formed an integral part of the broader cultural awakening in Turkestan, it possessed a number of distinctive characteristics that set it apart from the literary environments of Tashkent, Samarkand, and Bukhara. These features were largely shaped by local historical and social conditions. As noted by Professor Begali Qosimov, a comprehensive understanding of the regional dimensions of Uzbek literature during the national awakening period requires identifying the fundamental characteristics that distinguished the Khorezm literary school [9]. The present study examines these distinctive features through three principal aspects.

First, the movement relied at an early stage on local lithographic printing traditions. Unlike the Jadids of Tashkent and Samarkand—such as Mahmudkhoja Behbudiy and Munavvarqori Abdurashidkhanov—who, at the beginning of the twentieth century, were compelled to struggle against the censorship imposed by the authorities of the Russian Empire and to seek printing equipment from outside sources in order to publish newspapers, journals, and textbooks for new-method schools, the Jadids of Bukhara often had their publications printed abroad, including in Kattaqo‘rg‘on and other foreign locations.

The situation in Khorezm, however, was fundamentally different. Even before the Jadid movement had taken an organized form in Khiva, the first lithographic printing house in Turkestan had already been established there in the late nineteenth century. During the reign of Muhammad Rahim Khan II Feruz, in 1874, the printing press was founded on the initiative of Otajon Abdalov [6]. This enabled Khorezm’s enlighteners and early Jadids to publish their literary works, educational materials, and socio-educational appeals not merely as handwritten manuscripts but in relatively large quantities using a locally available lithographic press. Such technological independence significantly accelerated the dissemination of Jadid literature among the broader population.

Second, unlike other regional Jadid literary traditions, the Khorezm school developed its reformist and educational ideas upon the foundations of the region’s classical *divan* literary tradition and the established conventions of *aruz* prosody.

In the Jadid literature of Tashkent, the Fergana Valley, and Samarkand, new European literary genres—such as drama, the short story, and journalism—as well as poetry composed in the syllabic (*barmoq*) meter, quickly assumed a leading position. By contrast, Khorezm Jadidism developed within the rich heritage of Khiva’s classical literary school and its long-established tradition of compiling *divans*.

Writers such as Avaz O‘tar, Bobojon Tarroh, and Bobooxun Salimov continued to compose primarily in the *aruz* meter and in classical genres including the *ghazal*, *masnavi*, and *mukhammas*. However, they infused these traditional poetic forms with an entirely new socio-political and educational content. In other words, while their literary works remained traditional in form, they

were profoundly revolutionary in substance. The concerns of the lyrical protagonist shifted from the conventional themes of romantic love and mystical interpretation to the plight of the nation and the pursuit of knowledge and enlightenment.

Avaz O‘tar regarded the reform of the public education system and the establishment of new-method schools as the only effective means of overcoming the centuries-long socio-economic and cultural backwardness of the people. His poem *School* (*Maktab*) is not merely a reflection on the educational value of the school; rather, it presents the school as a strategic force capable of liberating the nation from oppression and stagnation. The poet glorifies the school as a sacred institution that brings joy to human life and frees individuals from spiritual despair and the hardships of everyday existence. According to the poem’s lyrical voice, educating children and providing them with knowledge is the sacred duty of every parent, since humanity acquires virtue and moral values through education. Most importantly, the poet emphasizes that only the school can restore and strengthen the foundations of statehood and culture for a nation that has fallen into decline and fragmentation.

“Avaz, now summon your courage and open the school,
For it is the school that will destroy the calamity of ignorance and foolishness” [1].

In these lines, the poet sharply criticizes the clergy, accusing them of deliberately keeping the people uneducated and unskilled instead of enlightening the masses, establishing schools, and serving the progress of the nation, thereby reducing them to the level of “beasts.” He further provides both scholarly and artistic justification for the idea that this social group is directly responsible for the nation’s fragmentation, loss of freedom, and entrapment in the prison of ignorance:

“If we are human beings, open schools and teach us knowledge,
You have turned us into beasts by depriving us of knowledge and skills!” [1]

In Avaz O‘tar’s lyrical works, the concepts of enlightenment and freedom are presented as deeply interconnected. The poet clearly understood that national independence could not be achieved without the reform of society. In his ghazal beginning with the line *“Politics has been destroyed, let freedom live in the world”*, he emphasizes that in order for the sun of justice and progress to shine, the entire nation must unite as one body and one soul and acquire knowledge and science. He identifies the primary cause of the nation’s decline in the absence of both “knowledge and justice,” and argues that only the establishment of “patriotic, selfless groups” (the Jadids) and the expansion of the school system could revitalize the nation. He thus provides both an artistic and scholarly justification for this idea.

Third, the direct integration of religious and political leadership within literary activity.

While the Jadids of Bukhara were compelled to operate mainly underground and in opposition to the highly conservative regime of the Emirate, and the Jadids of Tashkent were largely limited to educational reform and theatrical activities under Russian colonial rule, the representatives of Khorezm Jadid literature were directly integrated into both practical politics and the highest levels of religious administration. The most prominent example of this is Bobooxun Salimov, who was

simultaneously a leading religious scholar (the Shaykh al-Islam of the Khiva Khanate), one of the leaders of the "Young Khivans" political movement, and an influential publicist and poet [2].

Therefore, in Khorezm Jadid literature, rather than purely aesthetic works, programmatic publicistic writings and practical initiatives dominated—works aimed at reforming the khanate system, establishing a new state structure (the Khorezm People's Soviet Republic), and regulating economic and educational institutions.

The ideological peak of Khorezm Jadid literature is represented by the creative work of the poet Avaz O'tar. Using traditional poetic forms, he called upon his compatriots to awaken from the sleep of negligence:

"It is knowledge that will build up the people,
It is knowledge that will adorn and elevate humanity…" [1]

In the poet's works, concepts such as "school," "knowledge," "press," and "nation" were elevated to the level of a sacred ideology. He openly criticized the pressing social issues of his time, particularly women's rights and feudal injustice, and as a result lived under constant persecution from court officials and conservative circles [3].

The contributions of Bobooxun Salimov to the development of Khorezm Jadid literature and social thought are also of exceptional significance. In his journalistic articles and religious-educational speeches, he provided a theological and philosophical justification for the idea that the true essence of Islam in no way opposes the acquisition of knowledge or the mastery of secular sciences; on the contrary, it encourages progress and advancement. At the time, this approach served as one of the strongest scholarly refutations of any radical accusations directed against the Jadids [3]. Through his initiative, subjects such as geography, history, and arithmetic were introduced into school curricula.

In conclusion, the scholarly study of the topic *"The Role of Representatives of Jadid Literature in the Development of Enlightenment in Khorezm"* demonstrates that Khorezm Jadid literature was not merely an aesthetic phenomenon, but a major movement that fulfilled profound socio-political and educational functions. Drawing effectively on the specific conditions of the region—including the available local lithographic printing facilities—and relying on the classical *aruz* poetic system as well as the authority of religious scholarship, its representatives chose a path of internal societal reform.

The literary and publicistic heritage of figures such as Polvonniyoz Hoji Yusupov, Avaz O'tar, and Bobooxun Salimov remains an invaluable source for studying the intellectual and spiritual foundations of our contemporary independent development.

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