



THE JADID MOVEMENT IN SAMARKAND AND THE LIFE PATH OF SAIDAHMAD SIDDIQIY AJZIY

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Abstract: *This article examines the Jadid movement that emerged in Turkestan, particularly in Samarkand, in the early 20th century. It explores the socio-cultural significance of this reformist intellectual movement and highlights the contributions of prominent figures such as Saidahmad Siddiqiy Ajziy. The study analyzes Ajziy's role within the Jadid movement, his literary and religious-philosophical ideas, and the impact of his works on social development and national consciousness.*

Keywords: *Jadidism, Samarkand, Saidahmad Siddiqiy Ajziy, enlightenment, reform, national identity.*

At the turn of the 20th century, the Jadid movement arose in Turkestan as a modernizing force that sought to reform society through education, enlightenment, and national revival. Led by progressive Muslim intellectuals, the movement aimed to bridge traditional Islamic values with modern sciences and civic awareness. Among these reformers, the city of Samarkand became a significant center of intellectual and cultural transformation.

The Jadid movement was a direct response to the socio-political decline under the Russian colonial administration in Turkestan. Traditional education based on old-style maktabas and madrasas was seen as inadequate in the face of growing colonial exploitation and global change. Visionaries like Ismail Gasprinski and Mahmudkhoja Behbudi emphasized the importance of a new type of schooling – the

so-called "new-method schools" – where secular and religious subjects were taught side-by-side in vernacular languages with modern pedagogical methods.

In Samarkand, these ideas gained widespread acceptance, and a vibrant Jadid community emerged. Reform-minded teachers, writers, and religious leaders began to publish newspapers and magazines, open schools, organize theatrical performances, and advocate for women's education and national self-awareness. Samarkand's intellectual landscape was shaped by figures such as Behbudi, Abdurauf Fitrat, Sadriddin Ayni, Fayzulla Khojaev, and Munzim.

Saidahmad Siddiqiy Ajziy (1878–1941), born in Samarkand province, emerged as one of the prominent spiritual and intellectual figures of the Jadid movement. He began his education in local madrasas and later studied advanced Islamic sciences in Bukhara, where he mastered disciplines such as theology, philosophy, history, Arabic literature, and logic.

Upon returning to his homeland, Ajziy became deeply involved in the educational reforms advocated by the Jadids. He actively participated in opening new schools, authoring textbooks, and promoting a curriculum that included both religious and secular knowledge. Multilingual and well-read, Ajziy was fluent in Arabic, Persian, and Turkic languages, which allowed him to access and contribute to a broad range of Islamic and modern literature.

Ajziy's literary works focused on moral education, religious enlightenment, and national unity. His most famous book, *Dardnoma* ("The Book of Pain"), sharply criticized ignorance, colonial oppression, and the misinterpretation of Islam. Through poetic and prose writings, Ajziy called for the revival of a morally conscious society guided by authentic religious values and intellectual independence.

He also wrote tafsir (Qur'anic exegesis), hadith commentaries, and treatises on Sufism, demonstrating his deep roots in the Islamic intellectual tradition. These

works are being rediscovered and re-evaluated in post-Soviet scholarship as important contributions to Uzbek spiritual and cultural heritage.

The late 1930s saw a brutal wave of Soviet repression targeting Jadid intellectuals. In 1937–1938, during Stalin’s Great Purge, Saidahmad Siddiqiy Ajziy was arrested and accused of “counter-revolutionary” and “nationalist” activities. Like many other scholars and educators of the time, he was either executed or sentenced to long-term imprisonment. His works were banned, and his name was erased from public memory.

However, after Uzbekistan regained independence in 1991, efforts were made to rehabilitate and honor figures like Ajziy. His writings have since been reprinted, studied in academic institutions, and incorporated into the national historical consciousness. Today, Ajziy is recognized not only as a religious thinker but also as a pioneer of Uzbek national awakening.

Saidahmad Siddiqiy Ajziy's intellectual contributions go beyond religious scholarship. His commitment to enlightenment ideals, moral reform, and national revival place him at the heart of Uzbekistan’s philosophical and educational discourse. By addressing social injustices, calling for critical thinking in religious matters, and advocating for educational reform, Ajziy exemplified the core principles of Jadidism.

His work provides critical insight into the synthesis of Islamic ethics and modern reformist aspirations. Ajziy's life serves as a model for intellectual courage, resilience in the face of tyranny, and dedication to national service through knowledge and morality.

The legacy of the Jadid movement in Samarkand is incomplete without the figure of Saidahmad Siddiqiy Ajziy. His educational initiatives, literary contributions, and moral leadership helped shape a generation of thinkers and activists who laid the foundation for Uzbekistan’s modern identity. Studying his life

and work offers invaluable lessons in national consciousness, cultural resilience, and ethical leadership.

Today, his contributions continue to inspire young generations, especially in the fields of historical scholarship, Islamic studies, and civic education.

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