

## Central Asian Survey

### THE VIEWS OF TURKESTAN JADIDS ON LITERARY LANGUAGE AND THEIR ROLE IN AWAKENING NATIONAL IDENTITY

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4 **THE VIEWS OF TURKESTAN JADIDS ON LITERARY**  
5 **LANGUAGE AND THEIR ROLE IN AWAKENING NATIONAL**  
6 **IDENTITY**  
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23 ***Introduction***

24 The emergence of national consciousness and the construction of  
25 national identity are widely acknowledged as defining phenomena of the  
26 modern historical era. Across the globe, the process of nation-building  
27 has been closely linked with socio-economic transformations,  
28 industrialization, and the evolution of modern political and cultural  
29 institutions. The decline of religious authority as the primary organizing  
30 principle of social life, the expansion of literacy, and the consolidation of  
31 territorial and linguistic communities have all contributed to the  
32 development of modern national identities. Nevertheless, despite  
33 extensive scholarship, the precise nature and origins of national identity  
34 remain contested.  
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37 Two principal theoretical approaches dominate contemporary  
38 discussions on national identity. The primordialist approach posits that  
39 national identity is rooted in pre-existing cultural, linguistic, and kinship  
40 ties, emerging naturally under specific historical circumstances. In  
41 contrast, the constructivist approach emphasizes the socially constructed  
42 nature of nations, arguing that intellectuals and elites actively forge  
43 national consciousness by creating shared histories, symbols, and cultural  
44 narratives. Despite their differences, both approaches converge on the  
45 recognition that language, economic structures, and territorial cohesion  
46 are central to the formation of national identity.  
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50 In Central Asia, the interplay between these factors has been  
51 particularly complex. The Turkic-speaking populations of the region—  
52 including the Uzbeks, Kazakhs, Kyrgyz, Turkmens, and others—shared  
53 cultural and religious commonalities but also displayed significant  
54 linguistic and regional diversity. Understanding the emergence of Uzbek  
55 national consciousness, therefore, requires a nuanced analysis of language,  
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4 education, print culture, and social reform movements, particularly the  
5 Jadid movement, which sought to modernize Muslim societies under  
6 Russian imperial rule.  
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8 The Jadids were a progressive group of intellectuals in Turkestan  
9 who emerged at the turn of the twentieth century. They aimed to  
10 modernize education, promote literacy, and reform religious practices  
11 while preserving key elements of Islamic and local cultural heritage.  
12 Central to their program was the development of a national literary  
13 language, which they viewed as essential for awakening national  
14 consciousness and fostering socio-political progress. This study examines  
15 the Jadids' linguistic ideas, their strategies for promoting the Turkic  
16 literary language, and the role of these efforts in cultivating a sense of  
17 Uzbek national identity.  
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### 19 *Literature Review*

20 The study of national identity formation in Central Asia has  
21 attracted considerable attention from both local and international scholars.  
22 Research has explored the socio-cultural, linguistic, and political factors  
23 that influenced the emergence of Uzbek national consciousness, often  
24 emphasizing the importance of Turkic affiliation as a key determinant of  
25 identity. However, the specific role of language within this process has  
26 not always been adequately analyzed.  
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28 American scholar Adeeb Khalid provides a comprehensive  
29 overview of the cultural and educational reforms initiated by the Jadids,  
30 highlighting their efforts to develop a standardized Turkic literary  
31 language within broader national projects [Khalid, 1999:196]. Khalid  
32 argues that while the Jadids were instrumental in shaping Uzbek national  
33 identity, the linguistic dimension of their activities has been insufficiently  
34 treated as a distinct analytical focus.  
35

36 German researcher Ingeborg Baldauf has also contributed  
37 significantly to understanding the role of the Jadids in language and  
38 identity formation. In her work *Sketches on Twentieth-Century Uzbek*  
39 *Literature*, she examines the linguistic perspectives of prominent Jadid  
40 figures, particularly Mahmudkhoja Behbudi, whose efforts to modernize  
41 education and literature were closely linked with the development of the  
42 Turkic literary language [Baldauf, 2001]. Baldauf further analyzes the  
43 complex relationship between language reform and national identity in  
44 her article "Some Thoughts on the Making of the Uzbek Nation,"  
45 emphasizing the strategic importance of language in constructing a  
46 collective Uzbek identity [Baldauf, 1991:79–95].  
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48 Other scholars have explored similar themes. D. Alimova addresses  
49 the intersection of religious tolerance, ethnic self-identification, and  
50 language in the Jadid movement, highlighting how the preservation and  
51 promotion of the Turkic language were integral to broader projects of  
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4 national awakening [Alimova, 2009:64–78]. Uzbek researchers such as N.  
5 Karimov, S. Ahmedov, B. Hasanov, B. Irzayev, D. Jamolova, and Sh.  
6 Nazarova have further investigated the role of language in shaping Uzbek  
7 national consciousness, analyzing aspects ranging from literary reform to  
8 educational initiatives and the dissemination of nationalist ideas  
9 [Karimov, 2005; Ahmedov, 2018; Hasanov, 2024; Irzayev, 2020;  
10 Jamolova, 2024; Nazarova, 2022].  
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13 While these studies collectively acknowledge the significance of the  
14 Turkic language in the Jadids' projects, a systematic analysis of the  
15 processes, debates, and intellectual strategies surrounding the formation  
16 of a national literary language remains underdeveloped. This gap is  
17 particularly notable in discussions of orthographic reform, dialect  
18 standardization, and the interaction between local, regional, and pan-  
19 Turkic linguistic influences.  
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21 By synthesizing historical sources, Jadid publications, and  
22 contemporary scholarship, this study aims to provide a comprehensive  
23 analysis of how the Turkestan Jadids conceptualized, promoted, and  
24 implemented the development of a national literary language, and how  
25 this endeavor contributed to the awakening of Uzbek national identity. In  
26 doing so, it situates the Jadids' linguistic activities within the broader  
27 socio-political transformations of early twentieth-century Central Asia,  
28 including colonial pressures, educational reform, and the emergence of  
29 print culture.  
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### 32 *Analysis and Discussion*

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34 The primary objective of this study is to examine in depth the role of  
35 the Turkestan Jadids in fostering a national literary language and, through  
36 this process, awakening Uzbek national consciousness. At first glance,  
37 the promotion of a standardized literary language appears to be merely a  
38 linguistic endeavor. However, a more nuanced examination reveals its  
39 profound socio-cultural, political, and educational implications.  
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#### 41 *The Socio-Cultural Context of Language Reform*

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43 At the turn of the twentieth century, Central Asia was experiencing  
44 a period of profound socio-cultural transformation. Traditional structures  
45 of knowledge and authority, rooted in religious institutions and local  
46 customs, were increasingly challenged by the pressures of modernization  
47 and colonial policies implemented by the Russian Empire. Prior to  
48 colonization, identity in the region was predominantly religious and  
49 territorial. Communities identified themselves as Muslims or by regional  
50 affiliations such as Tashkentian, Kokandian, or Bukharan. Tribal and clan  
51 structures remained strong among nomadic populations, while sedentary  
52 populations were organized around religious and local-cultural  
53 frameworks.  
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The arrival of Russian imperial administration introduced new dynamics into these structures. Colonial policies encouraged categorization of local populations into ethnolinguistic units, effectively redefining social identity along the lines of nationality and language. The Russian authorities promoted the learning of Russian as a vehicle for integration into imperial structures, while simultaneously attempting to suppress local languages in official and educational contexts. The Jadids perceived these policies as a threat to cultural continuity and local identity, prompting their efforts to develop a national literary language.

#### *Educational Reform and Mother-Tongue Instruction*

Education was central to the Jadids' strategy. They recognized that meaningful enlightenment and modernization could only be achieved if instruction was delivered in a language comprehensible to students. Traditional madrasas and maktabas used Persian and Arabic texts, often beyond the comprehension of students who spoke Turkic vernaculars. Mahmudkhoja Behbudi critically described the situation: "The textbook is in Arabic, the teacher is Turkic, and the explanation and translation are in Persian—an exceedingly strange arrangement" [Behbudi, 1913:12]. The Jadids' solution was to develop educational materials in the vernacular, emphasizing literacy in Turkic (Uzbek) and its potential as a medium for modern knowledge.

The Jadids' educational reform extended beyond simple language instruction. They aimed to cultivate critical thinking, scientific reasoning, and cultural awareness, all while maintaining respect for Islamic and local traditions. They sought a balanced approach: introducing modern pedagogical methods while preserving the moral and spiritual foundations of society. This entailed the creation of textbooks, primers, and periodicals in the vernacular, fostering a literate public capable of participating in cultural and intellectual life.

#### *The Turkic Literary Language and Its Historical Foundations*

The Turkic literary language that the Jadids sought to promote was closely linked to the Chagatai literary tradition. The Chagatai language, which had flourished during the fifteenth to nineteenth centuries, provided a historical and literary foundation for the emerging Uzbek language. The Jadids recognized the need to standardize the language, reduce excessive Arabic and Persian loanwords, and reconcile regional dialectal differences. This linguistic standardization was essential for creating a cohesive literary culture that could be universally understood across Turkestan.

Notably, there were differences among the Jadids regarding the extent to which Arabic and Persian elements should be retained. Mahmudkhoja Behbudi argued pragmatically that these elements could not be entirely eliminated: "Let us expel Persian and Arabic from our

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4 language—this is an easy dream, but one that is impossible to realize”  
5 [Behbudi, 1913:14]. Instead, he advocated for a gradual process,  
6 beginning with the education of mothers and extending to broader public  
7 literacy, thereby ensuring a sustainable development of the Turkic literary  
8 language.  
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### 11 *Pan-Turkism and the Challenge of Regional Identity*

12 The early twentieth century also witnessed the rise of pan-Turkism,  
13 which aimed to unify all Turkic-speaking peoples under a common  
14 linguistic and cultural framework. Influenced by intellectuals from  
15 Turkey, Crimea, and the Caucasus, this movement presented both  
16 opportunities and challenges for the Jadids. On one hand, pan-Turkism  
17 offered models for linguistic reform and cultural revival. On the other  
18 hand, it threatened to overshadow local identities, including emerging  
19 notions of Uzbek national consciousness.  
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21 Abdurauf Fitrat and the “Chagatai Circle” exemplified the Jadids’  
22 response to this challenge. The circle aimed to promote Uzbek literary  
23 language and literature, emphasizing the Chagatai literary tradition as a  
24 uniquely Uzbek cultural inheritance. Fitrat explained: “Life did not allow  
25 me to remain entrenched in pan-Turkism. I became an Uzbek  
26 nationalist... Under the slogan of unifying Turkic languages and  
27 literature, actions were taken... Against this movement, the ‘Chagatai  
28 Circle’ was established... fighting against pan-Turkist groups and right-  
29 wing Jadids” [Fitrat, 1917–1918:232]. By asserting a distinct national  
30 language, the Jadids sought to reinforce a sense of Uzbek identity while  
31 navigating the broader currents of Turkic cultural unity.  
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### 33 *Colonial Policies and Linguistic Resistance*

34 The Russian Empire’s policies posed a significant challenge to the  
35 development of local languages. Russian authorities sought to promote  
36 Russian-language education and suppress local literary traditions. New-  
37 method schools teaching in vernacular Turkic were viewed with  
38 suspicion, and attempts to create a pan-Turkic literary language across  
39 Russian Muslim regions were often opposed by the colonial  
40 administration. The Jadids’ insistence on mother-tongue instruction and  
41 local-language publishing directly contested imperial objectives.  
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43 The Jadids’ publications—including newspapers, journals, and  
44 textbooks—became critical instruments of resistance. Figures such as  
45 Abdulla Avloniy emphasized the dangers of linguistic and cultural  
46 erosion: “We, the people of Turkestan, are not merely failing to preserve  
47 our national language—we are gradually forgetting and losing it... It is  
48 true that knowing Russian is necessary... but it must be used in its proper  
49 place” [Avloniy, 2008:33]. Similarly, contributors to *Sadoyi Turkiston*,  
50 including Abdurauf Muzaffarzoda, highlighted the interconnection  
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4 between language, morality, and intellectual development, framing the  
5 preservation of the Turkic language as a national imperative  
6 [Muzaffarzoda, 1914].  
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### 8 *Language Reform and Literary Production*

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10 The Turkestan Jadids placed the reform of language at the very  
11 center of their socio-cultural and educational agenda. They understood  
12 that the creation of a national literary language was not simply a matter of  
13 linguistic preference but an essential instrument for the awakening of  
14 national consciousness and the modernization of society. In traditional  
15 Central Asian societies, the Turkic vernacular had long been subordinate  
16 to Persian and Arabic, which dominated literature, religious instruction,  
17 and administrative correspondence. Arabic, as the language of the Qur'an,  
18 held a sacred status, while Persian functioned as the language of  
19 scholarship, bureaucracy, and high culture. Turkic, in contrast, was  
20 primarily spoken in everyday life and lacked a standardized literary form  
21 comprehensible across different regions.  
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24 The Jadids' linguistic reform aimed to elevate the Turkic language  
25 to the status of a literary and educational medium. Central to this process  
26 was the revival of the classical Chagatai literary tradition, which provided  
27 both historical legitimacy and a structural foundation for modern Uzbek.  
28 However, the Jadids recognized that Chagatai, while esteemed, had  
29 evolved differently across regions, leading to a complex mosaic of  
30 dialects. For example, the dialects of Samarkand, Bukhara, and the  
31 Fergana Valley exhibited significant influence from Persian and Arabic.  
32 Therefore, one of the primary challenges for the Jadids was to create a  
33 standardized literary language that would transcend regional variation  
34 while remaining accessible to the general population [Jamolova,  
35 2024:184].  
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39 Textbooks, primers, and didactic literature were central instruments  
40 in this linguistic modernization. Pioneers such as Mahmudkhoja Behbudi  
41 and Hoji Muin emphasized the importance of producing materials in the  
42 vernacular to facilitate literacy and comprehension. Behbudi argued for a  
43 gradual approach to language reform, noting the impossibility of instantly  
44 purging Persian and Arabic elements from the Turkic language,  
45 advocating instead for a systematic, incremental process beginning with  
46 educating women, who played a pivotal role in the cultural transmission  
47 of language and values [Behbudi, 1913:14].  
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50 In addition to textbooks, the Jadids produced literary works, poems,  
51 and plays in Turkic, aiming both to enrich the language and to provide  
52 models of modern literary expression. These efforts not only enhanced  
53 the status of the Turkic language but also reinforced its function as a  
54 medium of intellectual engagement, moral education, and social critique.  
55 Literary production became intertwined with the broader project of  
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4 nation-building: by establishing a shared linguistic and literary  
5 framework, the Jadids sought to foster a sense of belonging and identity  
6 among disparate populations of Central Asia.  
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8 The Jadids were also mindful of external linguistic influences.  
9 While recognizing the practical necessity of Russian for participation in  
10 administrative and commercial spheres, they were wary of its  
11 encroachment upon Turkic vocabulary and literary norms. Similarly, they  
12 critically assessed the role of pan-Turkic influences, striving to balance  
13 external models with indigenous linguistic traditions. This nuanced  
14 approach reflected their broader objective of combining modernization  
15 with the preservation of cultural heritage—a hallmark of Jadid thought.  
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17 By promoting literacy, producing written materials, and  
18 standardizing the Turkic literary language, the Jadids laid the groundwork  
19 for a national intellectual culture. Their work transformed language from  
20 a primarily spoken, regional medium into a vehicle for education,  
21 journalism, literature, and scientific discourse, thereby facilitating the  
22 emergence of a cohesive national consciousness.  
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#### 24 *Role of the Press and Publications*

25 The emergence of the press in Turkestan during the late 19th and  
26 early 20th centuries was a transformative development in the cultural and  
27 intellectual life of the region. The Jadids recognized the press as a  
28 strategic instrument for both linguistic reform and the awakening of  
29 national consciousness. By producing newspapers, journals, and  
30 pamphlets in the vernacular, they sought to bridge the gap between  
31 traditional education and the broader population, many of whom had  
32 limited access to knowledge due to the linguistic dominance of Persian,  
33 Arabic, and, increasingly, Russian.  
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35 The publication of newspapers such as *Oyna*, *Shuhrat*, *Sadoyi*  
36 *Turkiston*, and *Ishtirokiyun* played a central role in promoting literacy,  
37 modern ideas, and national awareness. For the Jadids, newspapers were  
38 not merely tools for reporting news; they were instruments of cultural  
39 reform. Articles often addressed issues such as education, hygiene, civic  
40 responsibility, and the importance of literacy, thereby fostering a sense of  
41 collective identity and social responsibility. Furthermore, newspapers  
42 provided a forum for discussing linguistic reform, orthographic  
43 standardization, and the creation of a unified literary language accessible  
44 to all Turkic-speaking populations of Central Asia [Behbudi, 1913:12–14;  
45 Muin, 1918].  
46

47 One of the earliest challenges faced by the Jadid press was the issue  
48 of comprehensibility. The diverse dialects spoken across the Fergana  
49 Valley, Samarkand, Bukhara, and other regions necessitated the creation  
50 of a standard written form of Turkic that could be understood widely.  
51 This was particularly important for educational publications, as textbooks  
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4 and primers needed to convey concepts clearly to students from different  
5 regions. The Jadids addressed this by drawing upon the Chagatai literary  
6 tradition, modifying its vocabulary, syntax, and stylistic conventions to  
7 align with contemporary spoken Uzbek while retaining the cultural  
8 prestige of classical literary forms.  
9

10 The press also served as a platform for ideological debates. Articles  
11 frequently discussed the tension between tradition and modernization, the  
12 role of Islam in society, and the importance of national identity. For  
13 instance, Mahmudkhoja Behbudi highlighted the inadequacies of  
14 traditional educational methods, pointing out that “the textbook is in  
15 Arabic, the teacher is Turkic, and the explanation is in Persian” [Behbudi,  
16 1913]. Through such critiques, the press challenged prevailing  
17 educational practices and advocated for the centrality of the mother  
18 tongue in instruction and intellectual life.  
19

20 Moreover, the press allowed for interaction with broader Pan-Turkic  
21 and international intellectual currents. Influential figures like Ismail  
22 Gasprinskiy advocated for a pan-Turkic literary language, and the Jadid  
23 newspapers disseminated these ideas while simultaneously emphasizing  
24 the distinctiveness of Uzbek language and culture. This dynamic  
25 interaction shaped a discourse in which local nationalism, modernist  
26 reform, and Pan-Turkic thought intersected, often leading to debates over  
27 linguistic purity, vocabulary, and orthography.  
28

29 In addition to newspapers, periodicals such as *Oyna* and *Shuhrat*  
30 published serialized literary works, poems, and short stories in Turkic.  
31 These publications were crucial for cultivating a literary culture,  
32 demonstrating the expressive capacity of the language, and inspiring new  
33 generations of readers and writers. The combination of literary content  
34 with educational articles fostered a literate public, capable of engaging  
35 critically with ideas of national identity, social reform, and cultural  
36 revival.  
37

38 The Jadid press faced substantial challenges. Imperial authorities  
39 frequently censored publications, imposed restrictions on local-language  
40 printing, and attempted to limit the dissemination of nationalist ideas.  
41 Despite these obstacles, the press became a resilient platform for  
42 promoting the ideas of reform, language standardization, and national  
43 awakening. The persistence of the Jadid newspapers reflected the  
44 intellectual commitment of the movement and its recognition of print  
45 media as a fundamental tool in shaping social consciousness.  
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47 In conclusion, the press and publications of the Jadids were  
48 instrumental in establishing the foundations of modern Uzbek national  
49 consciousness. They served not only as vehicles for literacy and  
50 education but also as forums for debate, cultural production, and the  
51 articulation of a collective identity. By promoting a standardized literary  
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4 language, disseminating reformist ideas, and fostering an informed  
5 readership, the Jadid press played a critical role in the nation-building  
6 project of early 20th-century Turkestan.  
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### 10 *National Identity and Mother Tongue Education*

11 Education occupied a central place in the Jadids' vision for the  
12 modernization and cultural revitalization of Turkestan. The movement's  
13 intellectuals firmly believed that the key to societal progress, economic  
14 development, and political awareness lay in educating the masses. At the  
15 core of this educational reform was the emphasis on instruction in the  
16 mother tongue, which they identified as a prerequisite for fostering  
17 national consciousness.  
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20 Prior to Jadid reforms, traditional educational institutions—  
21 madrasahs—focused almost exclusively on religious instruction,  
22 primarily in Arabic and Persian. The curriculum emphasized  
23 memorization of religious texts, such as the Qur'an and other Islamic  
24 writings, and little attention was given to subjects related to science,  
25 history, or practical knowledge. Consequently, the majority of the  
26 population, while religiously literate, lacked the skills required for  
27 broader participation in socio-political and economic life. Moreover,  
28 Persian and Arabic dominated literary and administrative life, limiting  
29 access to knowledge for speakers of Turkic languages, particularly the  
30 Uzbek-speaking population [Khalid, 1999:196].  
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34 The Jadids, aware of these limitations, introduced the so-called  
35 “new-method schools” (usul-i jadid), which combined religious  
36 instruction with secular subjects, including arithmetic, natural sciences,  
37 geography, and history. These schools utilized textbooks and reading  
38 materials in the vernacular, aiming to make knowledge more accessible  
39 and practical. Hoji Muin emphasized that education could only be  
40 effective when delivered in the mother tongue: “Within any nation, the  
41 dissemination of education occurs in the people's own mother tongue;  
42 therefore, if we wish to enlighten our people, we must give due  
43 importance to the Uzbek language” [Muin, 1918].  
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46 The use of the mother tongue in education had several significant  
47 effects on national identity formation. Firstly, it strengthened the sense of  
48 belonging among students, fostering pride in their linguistic and cultural  
49 heritage. By learning in Uzbek or other Turkic dialects, children became  
50 aware of the historical depth, literary richness, and expressive potential of  
51 their language. Secondly, mother-tongue education facilitated the  
52 assimilation of modern knowledge, as students could comprehend and  
53 engage with new scientific and social concepts without the linguistic  
54 barriers posed by Persian or Arabic. Thirdly, it enabled the  
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4 standardization of the Turkic literary language, as textbooks, primers, and  
5 school readers required consistent spelling, grammar, and vocabulary that  
6 could be widely understood across different regions of Turkestan.  
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8 The influence of mother-tongue instruction extended beyond the  
9 classroom. By promoting literacy and literary activity in the native  
10 language, the Jadids created a literate public capable of engaging with  
11 newspapers, journals, and books. This, in turn, enhanced the  
12 dissemination of reformist and nationalist ideas, linking literacy,  
13 education, and cultural identity in a mutually reinforcing cycle. Abdulla  
14 Avloniy warned of the dangers of neglecting the mother tongue: “We, the  
15 people of Turkestan, are not merely failing to preserve our national  
16 language we are gradually forgetting and losing it. As if it were not  
17 enough that half of our language is filled with Arabic and Persian, we are  
18 now attaching Russian as well. It is true that knowing the Russian  
19 language, the language of our government, is as necessary for our  
20 survival and prosperity as bread itself. But it must be used in its proper  
21 place” [Avloniy, 2008:33]. His statement highlights the careful balance  
22 Jadids sought between adopting modern knowledge and preserving  
23 national linguistic identity.  
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28 Jadid schools also contributed to the intellectual empowerment of  
29 women. Recognizing that mothers played a pivotal role in shaping the  
30 literacy and values of the next generation, the Jadids promoted female  
31 education. Educated mothers could transmit linguistic skills, cultural  
32 knowledge, and reformist ideas to their children, thereby reinforcing the  
33 formation of national identity at the family level. Mahmudkhoja Behbudi,  
34 for example, argued that language reform and education should begin at  
35 home, stating that educating mothers in a pure form of Uzbek was  
36 essential for broader societal enlightenment [Behbudi, 1913].  
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39 In addition, the Jadids faced significant challenges in implementing  
40 mother-tongue education. The Russian colonial administration sought to  
41 promote Russian as the language of governance and official instruction,  
42 often limiting the spread of local-language schools. Policies oscillated  
43 between supporting Russian-native schools and restricting local-language  
44 education, creating obstacles for the development of a standardized  
45 Uzbek literary language. Despite these challenges, the Jadids persisted,  
46 emphasizing that the mother tongue was not only a medium of instruction  
47 but also a core element of national identity and cultural continuity.  
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50 The interplay between mother-tongue education and national  
51 consciousness was further reinforced through literary production. School  
52 textbooks, primers, and reading materials often included historical  
53 narratives, folk tales, and moral stories that highlighted national heroes,  
54 historical achievements, and cultural traditions. Through these texts,  
55 students internalized a sense of belonging to a distinct community,  
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4 linking language, history, and identity. The content was carefully curated  
5 to balance traditional values, Islamic principles, and modern scientific  
6 knowledge, thereby fostering a holistic educational experience aimed at  
7 producing enlightened and culturally grounded citizens.  
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10 By the early 20th century, the combination of mother-tongue  
11 education, the press, and literary activity created a fertile ground for the  
12 emergence of a collective national identity. The Uzbek language evolved  
13 from a vernacular mode of communication into a literary and intellectual  
14 medium capable of articulating ideas of reform, progress, and cultural  
15 pride. The Jadids' focus on mother-tongue instruction ensured that  
16 education served not only as a vehicle for literacy and practical  
17 knowledge but also as a catalyst for national awakening.  
18

### 19 *Conclusion*

20 The views of the Turkestan Jadids on literary language and  
21 education were central to the awakening of national consciousness in  
22 early twentieth-century Central Asia. At a time when the region was  
23 undergoing profound socio-political, cultural, and economic  
24 transformations under Russian imperial rule, the Jadids recognized the  
25 critical importance of language as a medium for intellectual, social, and  
26 national development. They argued that the preservation, development,  
27 and standardization of the Turkic (Uzbek) language were essential for  
28 nurturing a collective national identity and enabling the population to  
29 engage with modern knowledge and reforms.  
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32 Through the establishment of new-method schools, the publication  
33 of textbooks, primers, newspapers, and journals in the mother tongue, and  
34 the promotion of literacy, the Jadids sought to create a literate and  
35 culturally aware population capable of participating in social and political  
36 life. They understood that language was not only a tool of communication  
37 but also a symbol of historical continuity, cultural heritage, and national  
38 pride. By linking education with the mother tongue, the Jadids enabled  
39 the transmission of knowledge, values, and reformist ideals across  
40 generations, fostering a sense of belonging and shared identity.  
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43 Moreover, the Jadids' engagement with language reform reflected a  
44 careful balance between preserving traditional cultural elements and  
45 integrating modern scientific and intellectual practices. They resisted both  
46 excessive foreign influence—from Persian, Arabic, and Russian—and  
47 rigid traditionalism, seeking a dynamic, culturally grounded, and practical  
48 literary language suitable for the challenges of the modern era. Figures  
49 such as Mahmudkhoja Behbudi, Hoji Muin, Abdulla Avloniy, and  
50 Abdurauf Fitrat emphasized the necessity of linguistic development,  
51 orthographic reform, and mother-tongue instruction, linking these efforts  
52 directly to the broader project of national awakening.  
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4 The Jadids also confronted the political and ideological pressures of  
5 the time, including the Russian colonial administration's attempts to  
6 standardize education in Russian and the pan-Turkist movements  
7 promoting linguistic unification across Turkic peoples. In response, they  
8 championed the Uzbek literary language, fostering a sense of national  
9 specificity while remaining aware of wider Turkic cultural connections.  
10 Initiatives such as the "Chagatai Circle" and orthographic reform projects  
11 illustrate their commitment to creating a literary framework that could  
12 serve both educational and national objectives.  
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15 In sum, the Turkestan Jadids' linguistic and educational activities  
16 played a pivotal role in shaping Uzbek national consciousness. Their  
17 vision linked language, education, and culture to the broader goals of  
18 enlightenment, reform, and social progress, laying the foundations for  
19 modern Uzbek identity. While their approaches varied, the common  
20 thread was the recognition that a shared language and literate citizenry  
21 were indispensable for the survival, cohesion, and advancement of the  
22 nation. The legacy of the Jadids thus highlights the inextricable  
23 relationship between language, education, and national identity formation,  
24 providing valuable insights for contemporary scholarship on nation-  
25 building, cultural revival, and linguistic heritage in Central Asia.  
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30 The authors declare that they have no competing interests.  
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