

THE JADID MOVEMENT AND ITS CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF LIBRARIES

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Author – Zuxriddinova Barno

2nd year student of the correspondence course “Library and Information Activities”

Scientific advisor – Nilufar Pardayevna Ro‘ziyeva

*Senior lecturer at the Department of “Library and Information Activities”,
Uzbek State Institute of Arts and Culture*

Abstract

This article explores the contribution of the Jadid movement to the development of the library network and the culture of reading. It describes how, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Jadids established libraries, printing houses, and promoted education and enlightenment. The study highlights these activities with historical facts and analyzes them as the foundation of today’s information society.

Keywords

Jadidism, library, reading culture, printing, enlightenment, education, culture, reform, Uzbekistan, history.

At the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century, the Jadid movement emerged in Central Asia, especially in the Turkestan region. It was a social and educational movement that aimed to improve literacy among the people, spread modern scientific knowledge, and raise national awareness. Within this movement, not only new-style schools but also public libraries, printing houses, and publishing centers were established. The Jadids played an important role in shaping the reading culture of the Uzbek people by organizing libraries.

Jadidism was a social, political, and cultural movement based on religious and educational reforms. It developed among Muslim nations under the Russian Empire, including the Uzbeks. The Jadids opposed the outdated medieval education system and promoted new-style schools based on secular sciences. Their main slogan was: “Education first, then progress.”

The term “Jadid” comes from “usuli jadid” (new method), referring to a modern education system. The founders of the movement included great intellectuals such as Mahmudkhoja Behbudi, Munavvarqori Abdurashidkhanov, Abdulla Avloni, Fitrat, Cholpon, and Ismail Gasprinskiy. They opened schools that

taught worldly sciences and natural knowledge, trying to free the people from ignorance.

According to the Jadids, illiteracy, lack of interest in books, and the absence of information sources were major reasons for society's backwardness. That is why they considered the creation of libraries as one of the most important social and spiritual reforms.

The libraries established by the Jadids were of two main types:

School Libraries – In new-style schools, small libraries were organized to increase students' interest in reading and provide them with modern knowledge. These libraries included textbooks, dictionaries, historical books, and translations of world literature.

Public Libraries – In some cities and villages, Jadid intellectuals also opened public libraries. These were mainly intended for reading newspapers and journals and served people from all social backgrounds. For example, the “Turon Library” in Tashkent (established in 1914 by Munavvarqori) and several school-libraries in Samarkand and Bukhara are of historical significance.

Publishing and printing were also important parts of the Jadid movement. One of the major publishing houses of the time was “Matbaai Islomiya” in Samarkand, founded by Mahmudkhoja Behbudi in 1903. It published textbooks, religious-ethical booklets, and educational materials.

In 1906, Munavvarqori Abdurashidkhanov started publishing the newspaper “Taraqqiy” (“Progress”). Publications like these formed the core of library collections at that time.

Behbudi's works such as *Padarkush*, *Risolayi Jadida*, and *Tuhfayi Islomiya* were distributed not only in schools but also in public libraries. Similarly, Avloni's book *Turkiy Guliston yoxud Axloq* aimed to instill moral values in youth.

The Jadids viewed libraries not just as places to store books but as centers of information, spirituality, and ideology. They believed books could awaken the people, help them realize their national identity, and promote culture and enlightenment.

As a result, libraries became cultural and educational centers, and reading culture spread widely. The efforts of the Jadids laid the foundation for modern library development in Uzbekistan.

The widespread publication of Jadid literature – often in 10,000 to 15,000 copies – shows how seriously the Jadids regarded books and libraries as the primary sources of knowledge.

They believed that opening schools and providing education required appropriate literature first. Therefore, the Jadids did not limit themselves to writing textbooks – they also actively promoted the establishment of public libraries.

Many Jadid schools had small libraries attached to them. These libraries were open not only to students but also to the general public. They contained works in Uzbek, Turkic, Russian, and Persian, contributing greatly to the development of a reading culture among the population.

The progress of librarianship during that era is closely tied to the Jadids' involvement in publishing and printing. Figures like Mahmudkhoja Behbudi, Munavvarqori Abdurashidkhanov, and Abdulla Avloni established their own printing presses and published textbooks, scholarly pamphlets, and literary works. Their publications were distributed to various libraries, and in some cases, allocated to school libraries based on specific lists.

The Jadids played a significant role in founding the first public libraries in cities such as Tashkent, Samarkand, Bukhara, Fergana, and Kokand.

To them, a library was not just a place to store books – it was also a **source of awareness, a call to national identity**, and a means to expand worldviews. Through books, newspapers, and magazines, they promoted their ideas among the people.

Publications like *Shuhrat*, *Taraqqiy*, and *Sadoyi Turkiston* were widely available in library collections. As a result, libraries became more than information centers – they turned into platforms for ideological discussion and reform. The Jadid movement holds a unique and lasting place in the spiritual and intellectual development of the Uzbek people. By establishing libraries, they awakened minds and promoted critical thinking. The opening of school-based and public libraries, along with the development of printing, represents a major stage in the history of Uzbek librarianship.

Today, information-resource centers and the library system in Uzbekistan are the modern continuation of the traditions started by the Jadids. Their commitment to education and enlightenment remains a valuable example for us.

The Jadid movement marked a true turning point in the history of Uzbek librarianship.

They saw the library not merely as a building filled with books, but as:

- ✓ a **center of thought**,
- ✓ a **space for spiritual growth**,
- ✓ and a **hub of reform**.

Through their efforts, librarianship gained deeper meaning, reading culture expanded, and information exchange through publishing was established. These contributions formed the **historical roots of today's modern library system**.

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