

**THE MANIFESTATION OF NATIONAL CHARACTER IN THE ACTIVITIES OF THE
JADIDS: A PHILOSOPHICAL ANALYSIS**

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Abstract: This article analyzes the ways in which the national character of the Uzbek people was expressed and conceptually renewed through the educational, reformist, and socio-cultural activities of the representatives of the Jadid movement. The study reveals the philosophical foundations that shaped national identity through the worldview, pedagogical ideas, and intellectual activism of Jadid thinkers. The findings show that the Jadids—who combined traditional values with modern aspirations—played a decisive role in the spiritual awakening of society, contributing to the transformation of national identity and national character. Their intellectual legacy demonstrates that the Jadid movement was not only an educational or reformist initiative, but also a philosophical and ideological program that strengthened collective consciousness and stimulated social progress.

Keywords: Jadidism, national character, enlightenment, modernization, national identity, tradition and renewal, spiritual revival, social thought, national self-awareness, reformist movement.

INTRODUCTION

National character is a complex socio-philosophical phenomenon closely connected with a people's historical experience, spiritual worldview, value system, and patterns of social relations. It encompasses the stable features that determine a nation's place in society, its worldview, behavioral norms, and attitudes toward sociocultural realities. The national character of the Uzbek people, too, developed and matured over centuries under the influence of cultural traditions, historical processes, and social structures.

In particular, the Jadid movement, which emerged at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, played a crucial role in shaping a new sense of national identity, forming modern social consciousness, and introducing new pathways of development into society. Jadid intellectuals—being deeply aware of the demands of their time—introduced the spirit of science, enlightenment, and reform into public life, thereby enriching national character with new meanings. Their efforts embodied a distinctive synthesis of respect for traditional values and aspiration toward modernization.

Philosophical analysis of Jadid activities makes it possible to understand the historical-pragmatic and moral-spiritual dimensions of national character. Their intellectual legacy served not only as an enlightenment movement but also as an ideological force that awakened social consciousness and strengthened national self-awareness. This article examines how national character manifested in the Jadids' educational, cultural, and socio-reform activities, how their ideas influenced modern national identity, and how these processes shaped the philosophical foundations of Uzbek social thought.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The formation and expression of national character in historical processes is a subject located at the intersection of sociology, philosophy, cultural studies, and history. Theoretical foundations of national character have been interpreted through various methodological approaches in both global and local scholarship. For example, G. Le Bon emphasized that national psychology is shaped by collective consciousness and cultural experience, and that “the spirit of a people” functions as a stable factor in historical processes [1].

In Central Asia, discussions about national character intensified during the modernization processes of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Research on the Jadid movement demonstrates that its influence extended beyond its political or educational agenda, contributing meaningfully to national-spiritual transformation. In the works of Abdurauf Fitrat, concepts of national uniqueness, spiritual awakening, and the harmony between national identity and global intellectual development occupy a central place [3]. Mahmudhoja Behbudiy's works on educational reform emphasize the decisive role of schooling in shaping national character [4].

Comparative studies also highlight the unique features of Jadidism when examined alongside other Eastern modernization movements. Scholars such as Yu. N. Kotelnikov and S. G. Komarov argue that the Jadids embodied a distinctive model of national awakening, sharing certain ideological aspirations with reformist movements elsewhere in the Muslim world while retaining their own cultural specificity [5].

Manuel Castells' concept of identity in the context of globalization provides a valuable theoretical framework for understanding the Jadids' attempts to preserve national identity while simultaneously embracing modernity [6].

In post-independence Uzbekistan, renewed scholarly interest in Jadidism has produced deeper philosophical analyses of national character and national identity. Researchers such as Sh. Yakubov, B. Karimov, and A. Oripov interpret Jadid activity as an organic component of national spiritual development and a catalyst for the dynamic evolution of national character [7]. Yakubov, in particular, views the Jadids' intellectual heritage as a model of harmony between national spirit and modern thinking [8].

Philosophical studies by M. Qur'onov and Kh. Hamidov further conceptualize national character through the value system of society, arguing that the Jadids aimed not only to preserve but also to renew national character by enriching it with modern intellectual content [9].

Although much has been written about the Jadid movement, the manifestation of national character in their practical and intellectual activities still requires a more comprehensive philosophical analysis. This study aims to fill that gap.

METHODOLOGY

This research employs a combination of methodological approaches to comprehensively examine how national character manifested in the activities of the Jadids. The theoretical basis includes classical and contemporary philosophical concepts related to national character, identity, modernization, and enlightenment. G. Le Bon's ideas on collective psychology provide an important framework for understanding the psychological foundations of national character [1].

Historical-philosophical analysis was used to study the Jadid movement as a historical phenomenon, analyzing its ideological heritage, sociopolitical activism, and interaction with the spirit of the era. The works of Fitrat, Behbudiy, and other Jadids served as primary sources for investigating their philosophical views on national spirit, identity, and societal progress [3].

A hermeneutic approach was applied to interpret the meanings within Jadid texts, examining authorial intent, cultural context, and sociopolitical implications. This approach benefits from the works of Kotelnikov and other Orientalists who studied Jadidism [5].

A socio-cultural analysis was used to explore how Jadidism interacted with modernizing forces, societal change, and the emergence of new modes of thinking. Castells' theory of identity and global processes provides a methodological basis for this dimension [6].

A comparative method was also applied by examining Jadidism alongside similar movements such as Turkish and Tatar reformism. Studies by Yakubov and Karimov were particularly valuable in this regard [7].

Finally, content analysis was conducted on Jadid newspapers—Taraqqiy, Oyna, Sadoi Turkiston, Khursid—and their educational texts in order to determine which elements of national character (such as diligence, discipline, enlightenment, patriotism) were emphasized in their reform agenda.

RESULTS

The findings indicate that the Jadids played a significant role in renewing national character by integrating traditional values with modern thought. Their activities were aimed not merely at preserving national character, but at transforming it according to the needs of the time. By promoting enlightenment, civic responsibility, and social initiative, they helped shape national character as a dynamic and progressive phenomenon.

The analysis of primary sources shows that the Jadids highlighted diligence, responsibility, knowledge-seeking, discipline, patriotism, and humanism as core elements of national character. Through school reform, modern textbooks, and newspaper publications, they instilled these values into public consciousness.

Philosophical analysis demonstrates that the Jadids viewed national character as a point of synthesis between tradition and modernity rather than a site of conflict. This approach nurtured a worldview that was open to innovation while grounded in cultural heritage.

Their concept of “modern Uzbekness” emphasized the preservation of the nation’s language, history, and culture while enriching them with scientific knowledge and educational reform. This identity model widened the intellectual and cultural horizons of national character.

Overall, the Jadid movement strengthened civic engagement, encouraged enlightenment, and contributed to the transformation of national character into an active socio-spiritual force.

CONCLUSION

This study examined how national character manifested and evolved during the activities of the Jadid movement, and how these processes contributed to the development of modern

national identity. The results demonstrate that the Jadids played a decisive role in revitalizing national consciousness, enriching national character with new meanings, and promoting social progress.

First, the Jadids renewed traditional understandings of national character by emphasizing enlightenment, morality, knowledge, and civic responsibility.

Second, they formulated a new conceptual model of national identity—“modern Uzbekness”—in which cultural heritage and modern development were harmoniously integrated.

Third, the Jadids strengthened civic engagement and social responsibility, shaping national character as an active, dynamic, and socially conscious phenomenon.

Fourth, their philosophical ideas show that national character is not static, but evolves in response to historical, cultural, and social changes.

In summary, Jadidism represents a major intellectual and cultural movement that enriched national character and contributed to the formation of modern Uzbek identity. Its philosophical legacy continues to serve as an important foundation for contemporary social thought, national consciousness, and spiritual development.

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