

# SOCIO-CULTURAL REFORM MOVEMENT IN CENTRAL ASIA

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## **Abstract**

*The study of socio-cultural reform movement in the form of Jadid movement in Central Asia throws light upon the history of the national progressive socio-cultural movement in the region during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. This cultural movement is known as Jadid movement. The word Jadid has been taken from the Arabic language, which means progressive/modern or new method. The history of Jadid movement and its evolution from socio-cultural enlightenment to a powerful political movement would also be highlighted in this study.*

## **Keywords**

Progressive Movement, Jadidism, Socio Cultural, Central Asia, Reform Movement, Literary Legacy, Traditional Intellectuals, Jadidist.

First of all, it is essential to throw light on the socio-cultural and political situation in Central Asia during the 19<sup>th</sup> century which prepared the ground for reform movement in the region. If we look at these conditions, we find that prior to Russian conquest, the culture and political life of the people of Central Asia did not differ greatly from the settled and nomadic population in other parts of the Muslim world<sup>1</sup>. At that time, Central Asia was divided into three native *Khanates* of Kokand, Khiva and *Emirate* of Bukhara. These *Khanates* and *Emirate* were backward feudatories which were ruled by *Khans* and *Emirs*, and Islam was the main source of political legitimization. The system of administration, land tenure and the taxation was based on the Perso-Arab administration of Transoxiana. The system of justice was based on the Islamic laws (*Shariah*) and the customary laws (*Adat*). In practice, the dynastic rulers of the *Khanates* and their subordinate officials did not generally follow the accepted principles and the legal norms. The rule of the native *Khans* and *Emirs* was cruel and exploitative. The *beiy*s, the wealthy landlords and subordinate feudal officials used to exploit the poor people of the region. Poverty was the rampant, disease and illiteracy widely prevailed.

The Russian Army moved towards south in 1839. But, this move was half hearted. In reality, it began after 1857 world economic crisis.

Russia fought the Crimean war (1853-56) with the European powers. Russia was badly defeated. Due to defeat, Russia lost its national glory and prestige. In the aftermath of this, Russia made an attempt to get back its lost glory as well as to raise its prestige at the international level. As a result, Russia showed serious interest to move towards south<sup>2</sup>. The Russian army captured Tashkent on June 15, 1865. The Russian conquest of the Central Asian region was completed with the capture of Merv in January 1884 Kushka and in March 1885. The Russian advance in Central Asia, which began in 1839, in the course of less than half a century resulted in the reduction of the *Emirate* of Bukhara and the *Khante* of Khiva to vassal status and the total annexation of the territories of the Kokand *Khanate* into the Russian Empire. The Russian army did not face any serious resistance because the native rulers were disunited and were fighting against each other. The Tsarist army did not face any serious challenge during the conquest of Central Asia. In the aftermath of the annexation of the region into the Russian Empire, the Tsarist administration started colonization of Central Asia. The Central Asian response to Russian colonialism followed two distinct patterns. The first was rebellion under the clerical leadership which played significant role in the various rebellions, including 1916 uprising. The second pattern was reform movement which adopted the liberal ideas<sup>3</sup>. During the period of conquest, there was political and ideological unrest in the region. Conservative circles were facing severe criticism for the first time. This was not the case only in Central Asia. Similar social, psychological and political upheavals were prevalent in all the Muslim societies of the time. They were looking for ways and means of liberating their people and lands from the colonial rulers. Religious intellectuals and political elites in these societies were formulating new ideologies and methods in order to end exploitation<sup>4</sup>.

The educational system in Central Asia during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, was associated with religion and largely based upon the scholastic pattern. The existing system of Islamic education consisted of the *Maktabs* or primary schools which were attached with mosques, and the *Madrasahs* or seminaries for training of clergy and religious teachers. Thus, higher education was provided by the *Madrasahs* to the Muslim clergies and specialists in Islamic law. Independent thinking was not encouraged. The teachers were recruited from among the clergy and some of them could only read but could not write. The pupils repeated aloud after

the teacher and no attempt was made to understand what they were studying, with the result that pupils learning in the *Maktabas* even after a period of five or six years was often unable to read. The *Jadidists* were of the view that the Muslim society of the Russian Empire in general and Central Asia in particular was backward in comparison to the Western countries and was in desperate need of reform to catch the standard of the advanced people of the world. The *Jadidists* were of the view that Muslim society was in a crisis. According to them, the departure from the true path of Islam was the main cause of this crisis. The *Jadid's* plan was to introduce some secular instructions in the curricula and at the same time to preserve their religious character. Thus, it can be said it was an Islamic reform movement which fundamental objective was to revive Islamic culture in the region.

*Jadidism*, a movement of enlightenment in Islam, appeared in Central Asia in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century as a critique of traditional Muslim education and advocated the need of reform movement in the native society. In the region the esteemed representatives of the *Jadidists* movement were Makhmud-Khodja Bekhbudi, Ubaidullah Assadullahodjaev, Munawwar Kary Abdurashidov, Abdullah Awlani, Abdulqadir Sakuri, Ajzi, Khodja Muin, Tashpulatbek Norbutaev, Nasyrkhanura Komolkhonturaev, Obidzhon Mahmudov, Ishankhodja Khanhodjayev, Faizullah Khodjayev, Abdurrashid Khan Oghli, , Ishaq Khan Tora Junaydullah Oghli, Ashurali Zahiri, Hamza Himmatzada Niyazi, Abidjan Mahumdov, Mir Zahid Mir Aqil Oghli, Said Nasir Mir Jalilov, Sayyid Ahmed Wasli, Tawalla, Kami, Khislar, Siddqi, Abdullah Qadiri, Abdulqadir Sayyah, Abdunnasir Kursavi, Shihabuddin Marjani, Ahmad Makhdum Danish, Sadriddin Ayni, Said Karim Bay, Said Ahmad, Mirza Hakim Sarimsaqov, Abdulhamid Sulayman Oghli, Mirmuhsin Shermuammadov Ubaydullah Khojzev, Abdurauf Fitrat, Mukhitdin Mansurov, abdulvahid Burhanov, Musa Saidzhanov, Mukhtar saidzhanov, Usamon Khodkayev, Muhammad Rasul Mirzo, Bekzhon Rakhimov, Matyakub Pozachi, Bobookhun Salimov, Palvanniyaz Khodja YusupovAvaz Utar, Khussain Matmurodov, Nzar Sholikorov and others. All of these reformist leaders made immense contribution to enlighten the masses and also helped to the development of emancipating ideas.<sup>5</sup>

The fundamental beliefs in *Jadidism* were civilization and progress. As a result, *Jadidism* propagated highly enlightenment philosophy of

history and historical change. The *Jadidists* assimilated these ideas into their understanding of Islam to produce a modern analysis of Islam, in which the achievement of civilization came to be seen as the religious commitment of all Muslims. The *Jadidists* argued that only a modern person equipped with knowledge, in accordance with the need of the time, could be a high-quality Muslim<sup>6</sup>. As far as the Tsarist Government is concerned, it had little intention of educating the people of Central Asia. As a result, until the last decade of the nineteenth century no significant effort was made to change the old system of education and modernize it. With the change of Tsarist imperial policy towards local religion and religious institutions, the Russian Government did not interfere in any way with *Makhtabs*. At the beginning of the twentieth century the Russian Government began to take interest in the *Madrasahs* and established Russian type schools. These schools were of three types: (i) for the training of interpreters; (ii) schools for the education of Russian settlers and families of officials in which a limited number of places were reserved for native children.; and (iii) the so-called Russo-native schools whose object was to acquaint Muslim children with Russian culture through the medium of their own language. The new schools helped a small section of native society. The Russo-native schools were not a success, but they stimulated the creation of so-called new method schools by *Jadidists*<sup>7</sup>.

With the change in the structure of the native society, the traditional pattern of life also began to alter. Thus, towards the close of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries, a new born native intelligentsia had started emerging and gathered strength and influence. Though small in numerical strength they influenced the native population. The native intelligentsia was divided into three groups. These were:

**Intellectuals:** The intellectual on whom the impact of the Russian culture was great and worked for better relation between the Russians and native people. They were scholars and writers. They interpreted the Russian cultural and literary legacies through their writings. They favoured the opening of Russo-native schools in Central Asia and made attempts to popularize them. Their role in bringing about the cultural awakening among their own people was of considerable, despite their not having great following among the natives.

**Traditional Intellectuals:** The second group of Central Asian people was traditional intellectuals, known as *qadimists*. They were

the bitter critic of the *Jadid* movement. The majority of *qadimists* (Ulema) was ultra-conservative and did not provide much spiritual or intellectual leadership in the region. If contemporary accounts are to be believed, they were venal, ignorant and dominated by superstitions. The emergence and growth of the new ideology had impacted significantly the conservative and traditional elites of the region who were against any kind of reforms in the Central Asian society and culture. The traditional, conservative Islamic leadership was opposing *Jadidists* reform movement because their own power was threatened as *Jadidists*' following grew and influence expanded. The traditional conservative Islamic leaders were apprehensive that educational reform in the region would wear down their base, as the number of students in the traditional *maktabs* and *madrassahs* were decreasing and scriptures were easily available to more Muslims<sup>8</sup>. These traditional conservative people were against the reform in the region. They stood up to defend and preserve Islamic orthodoxy and the unity of the *Islamiyat*, and to oppose the Western education which was based on Russian pattern. They also opposed all the reforms which sought to modernize the native society on Russian lines. *Qadimists* not only opposed any change in education system, but also according of equal rights to women and non-Muslim minorities. They regarded any socio-cultural changes as un-Islamic. They found the new method school threatening to their cultural and political dominance and called them *haram*. They were of the opinion that their children would turn into infidels. They controlled all educational, religious and cultural institutions. Their supporters came from among the Muslim clergy, landlords, wealthy merchants and also the peasant of the vast hinterland<sup>9</sup>.

**Jadidist:** Another intellectual group of native society, namely the *Jadidists*, was under the Tatar cultural influence. These progressive/modern people were in favour of the reform, especially in the field of education. So far as the genesis of the *Jadid* movement is concerned, it can be traced, with introduction of the Phonetics known as '*Usul-I Jadid*', meaning new method of teaching, reading and writing instead of understanding the subject in Muslim religious school system of *Maktabs* and *Madrassahs*. Young Central Asian intellectuals, who had good religious knowledge, started advocating the reformation of dogmatic understanding of religion. Reform, according to them, was revival of Islam that the prophet and his followers had practiced, an

Islam, which was different from religious dogmas that were prevailing in the 18<sup>th</sup> -19<sup>th</sup> centuries. These arguments of the reformists angered traditionalists (*qadimists*) who were in favour of maintaining status quo. First Muslim reformists such as Jamalluddin Afghani, Muhaamad Abduh, Rashid Rida and Dr. Muhammad Iqbal were advocating that the “gate of *ijtihad* (exercise of independent judgment) is open for renovation which helps the Muslim people to solve the problems of the community”<sup>10</sup>.

Initially, a group of native intelligentsia, the *Jadidists*, started their reform movement first in the field of education and proposed a radical reorganization of the old educational system. In other words it can be said that the fundamental object of this movement was to modernize the Central Asian society under the Tatar cultural influence. It was a kind of social and cultural reform movement led by native progressive intellectuals of the region. The *Jadidists* were critics of religious fanaticism. They stood for fighting religious fanaticism of the masses by spreading new secular literature and developing European type of schools. They also started talking about the requirement of substitution of obsolete Muslim schools and seminaries with new method schools. *Jadidists* supported the development of science and culture, advocated the publishing of newspapers in the native language, the opening of cultural and educational institutions, which helped in the consolidation of democratic forces of the native society. The main aim of this movement was to reform the traditional Muslim religious educational system of Turkistan. They introduced arithmetic, algebra, geography and science subjects in the new method school. They attempted to change traditional *Maktab*s and *Madrasah*s by introducing a new method of study. However, the movement ended in failure. The *Jadidists* also began compiling new alphabets and special text-books for the new method of study. Following this, the followers of the movement started opening “new method schools in many of the cities of Central Asian region”<sup>11</sup>.

The first Jadid School was opened in Andijan in 1889 and during the subsequent decade spread to all major cities of the region. The first alphabet in Uzbek language based on phonetic method was published in the year of 1900<sup>12</sup>. Between 1898 and 1908, the *Jadidists* were running 102 new method elementary schools and two new method junior high school in the Turkistan General Governorship of Tsarist Russia, Six

new method schools in the Emirates of Bukhara, and six new method elementary schools in the Khanates of Khiva. In order to support the new method schools, the Bukharan reformist intellectuals and businessmen founded a company, *Shirkat-I Bukhara-I Sharif* (company of noble Bukhara), in March 1909, which was presented as a trading company but in reality was a political organizations in disguise<sup>13</sup>. This company secretly provided textbooks and other materials to the new method schools of the region.<sup>14</sup> The *Jadid* educators and intellectuals were facing severe difficulties and ill-treatment in their drive to expand modern education in their new method schools.

Russia's initial response to the new method schools was rather positive, and the Russian colonial administration in Central Asia encouraged the *Jadidists* reform movement. In the process the Russian authorities realized that *Jadidism* was developing itself from a purely educational reform movement to a regional movement for social and political transformation in the native society. Consequently, the Tsarist colonial administration withdrew its support and joined hands with feudal rulers of the region to oppose the reforms<sup>15</sup>. The authorities supported the conservative Muslim clergy against the reformist Muslim intellectuals. Even a small number of new method schools frightened the clergy in Bukhara and Russian officials of Turkistan as well. The establishment's fury was so immense that the Russian authorities closed down 50 new method schools in Turkistan during the academic year 1910-11. During the academic session of 1913-14, the *Emir* of Bukhara closed all the new method schools known in the *Emirate*<sup>16</sup>. Due to such type of attitudes of the Tsarist Government, these new method schools were reduced to 57 in 1913, of which 12 were situated in Tashkent city, 17 in Semi-rechie Oblost, 12 in Kokand region, and others in Peovsk, Samarkand city, Bukhara city, Andijan, and in Turkistan city. In other words it can be said that the foundation of secularization of education had been firmly laid by the *Jadidists*. So far as the process of modernization is concerned, it was a great land mark in the history of Central Asia. They glorified the virtues of Islam and also sought to absorb some traits of modernity<sup>17</sup>.

Despite the pressures from the imperial authorities, interest in native intellectuals for new method schools remained strong. One of the leading reformists of Bukharan *Emirate*, Osman Khodja, met with Ismail Bay Gasprinski in 1909, on his way to Istanbul. After studying

essential methodology of the new method schools, he went to Istanbul where he studied the modern Ottoman school system. During his stay in the Istanbul, Osman Khodja and Abdurrauf Fitrat founded the Charity Society of Bukhara for the spread of education on October 26, 1909. The basic aim of the society was to bring student from the Central Asian region to continue their education in Istanbul.

The *Jadid* movement did not remain confined for long to mere educational and cultural activities. *Jadidism* gradually began to transform itself into a political movement. They advocated the relaxation of censorship and the development of free native press, lowering of taxes and regularization of the tax structure. In Khiva and Bukhara, they demanded the limitation of the autocratic powers of the *Khan* and the *Emir*; fixation of taxes and their proper management, granting of legal guarantees for the security of life and property. In 1909 the *Jadidists* laid the foundation of an organization, the objective of which was propagation of cultural and social reforms. In fact, it was a political organization. But as the Tsarist colonial administration did not permit the functioning of political organizations the *Jadidists* propagated their political programme under the guise of a cultural body<sup>18</sup>. However, the *Jadidists* remained loyal to the Russian empire and Tsar, but the colonial administration still considered them dangerous for their idea of pan-Islamism and Pan-Turkism. Political organization like the Union of Muslims (*Ittifak*) was formed to counter *Jadidists* influence in the region<sup>19</sup>.

The *Jadidist* movement developed in the region through education and press. In terms of press influence, the bilingual newspapers played the most significant role in the establishment and development of press during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries in Central Asia. The *Jadidists* also began to publish newspapers, booklets and magazines. Apart from this, the intelligentsia of the region began to establish libraries, museums, clubs, scientific societies and other social, political and cultural institutions and theatre, which became powerful ideological weapon in the fight against the moral, economic and political backwardness of the region. They wanted to study the experience and progress of the other people of the world, especially the best practices of Muslim reformers of the Crimea, the Volga region, the Transcaucasia, Turkey, Iran and India, who had already become aware of the progressive social and political, spiritual and cultural life of Europe<sup>20</sup>.

The *Jadid* movement in Central Asia was influenced by the reformist and revolutionary movements of Russia and the neighbouring Islamic countries in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The founding father, Ismail Bay Gasprinski, of the new method school in Crimea in 1884 and the publisher of the newspaper *Terjuman* which was published first in 1883 were significant and potent sources of ideas and inspiration for Central Asian *Jadidists*. The literature from Turkey, Egypt, Lebanon, India and Iran left deep impact on the *Jadid* movement in Central Asia. A number of books were imported to the region from India. The Persian poetry and newspapers in Persian language reached the region from India, Afghanistan and Egypt in spite of the strict sanctions imposed by the Russian imperial government on the import of the literature from outside<sup>21</sup>.

The *Jadid* movement was formed to modernize the native society on the one hand and to oppose the Russian rule in Central Asia on the other. The low level of literacy rates in Central Asia caused the *Jadidists* to push for reform in the field of education. Thus, it can be said that the main objective behind the reorganization of the educational system and other cultural reforms of *Jadidists* were to awaken the national consciousness and the achievement of the national freedom. So far as the emancipation of women is concerned, the *Jadidists* were in favour of girl education. They were of the view that the women and minorities should be given equal rights as the native men. The genesis of the modern education and activism of Turkic Muslim women could be traced out from the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century with start of the modernization drive. The founding father of the *Jadid* movement in the Russian Empire, Ismail Gasprinski, started the first women's journal *Alem-i Nisvan* (Women's world) in 1906 and made his daughter, Shefika Khanim, its editor<sup>22</sup>.

They were of the opinion that the emancipation of women in Central Asia could be achieved in three ways:

- 1) Through gradual reforms in the education of both male and female by introducing new method of teaching in reformist *Jadid* schools.
- 2) Through dissemination of reformist ideas among the Central Asian Muslims via independent newspaper and journals, and finally,
- 3) Through the establishment of democratic government in the region<sup>23</sup>.

The *Jadidists* reform movement in Central Asia was divided into two groups: Turkistani and Bukharan *Jadids*. The main reason behind this

division was the independence (vassal status) of the Bukharan *Emirate* from the Russian Empire. Turkistan was totally under the control of the Russian Empire. During the early period of the reform movement in the region, the Central Asian *Jadidists* were functioning under the influence of reform ideas of Ismail Bey Gaspirnski who transmitted his views through the use of modern schools and newspapers. As a result, *Jadidists* managed to open schools in Central Asia<sup>24</sup>. The main aims of the movement were the creation of political and cultural awakening, the modernization of Islamic life and emancipation of women as well. Besides, they also wanted to unite all Turkish Muslim subjects of Russian Empire<sup>25</sup>. The ideology of reform can be found in the writings of *Jadidist* leaders of the region, which became the foundation stone of *Jadid* (renovation) movement.

In due course, Bukharan *Jadids* changed their methods as they were followers of the Tatar model. They decided to adopt a method of Young Turks who were working to bring the reform in the Ottoman society. As a result, they named themselves as “Young Bukharans” by drawing an analogy between the activities of the “Young Turks” and their own. The *Jadidists* were generally linked to the Young Turks, even though they rejected their vision of Pan-Turkism<sup>26</sup>. Abdulrauf Fitrat, Fayzulloh Khojaev, Usmon Khojaev, Sadridin Ayni, and Abdullah Qodiriy were among the main leaders of the movement. The main difference between Young Turks and Young Bukharans was that the former were thoroughly secular and sought to reform the society by rejecting Islam, whereas the Bukharan reformists were religious, conservative, radical and moderate people. They wanted to purify the Islam rather than rejecting it. They professed their ideas about culture and identity, social change, religion and the state. The main goal of Young Bukharans was to find solution for the problems faced by the Muslim society, by tracing the genesis of those problems. Initially, they paid their attention to problems of Bukhara but latter expanded their thought to the wider Muslim society. According to Young Bukharans, the reason behind problems in Central Asia was deviation from the original Islamic thought and practices. This deviation led to the spiritual degeneration in Islamic societies<sup>27</sup>.

The Young Bukharans were feeling pride in their Islamic past. For example, Abdulrauf Fitrat’s splendid writings on Bukhara reflected this tendency: O unhappy Bukhara, who has known such spirits as Abu Ali Sina al-Arabi (Avicenna), in these days of distress thou art

bereft of motion. Yet this is the same Bukhara that, in the past, through the prestige of its knowledge and its faith, won recognition for its exceptional dignity. He adds that if the same conditions persist Islam can disappear from Bukhara<sup>28</sup>. According to Bukharan *Jadids*, the Bukharan state of their time was corrupt, violent and exploitative. They accused the traditional clerics for it. They were of the view that these clerics and Ulemas were the responsible because they had replaced the religion of Prophet with their own interpretation. The motive was to serve their own interest. Their perception of Islam was an “ossified religion, immobile and hostile to all dynamism and all progress”<sup>29</sup>. They condemned those who blindly followed and obeyed the traditional clerics without questioning them. They dubbed these people as *taqlidchi* (imitator). Young Bukharans were of the opinion that this was the main cause behind Muslim backwardness which isolated them from the progressing modern world, especially the West. Dogmas of traditional clerics were seen in the education system, as well. Bukhara had been the cradle of science in the past. But, at the time of Young Bukharans the education system had almost collapsed. The curriculum of *madrasahs* did not contain any natural sciences. Education was based on learning by heart, not on reasoning<sup>30</sup>.

Young Bukharans did not criticize the Muslim societies very bitterly. But, they believed that the native society was in a serious crisis, in which its survival was at stake<sup>31</sup>. After analyzing the problem, they suggested some solutions, certain “ways in which their country and the entire Islamic community could escape from this crisis and restore God’s Kingdom on earth”<sup>32</sup>. The reformists were of the firm belief that everything was in need of change, with education at center stage. They said that enlightenment and modern education would save the society from all these problems<sup>33</sup>. The Bukharan *Jadidists* were of the opinion that, individually, every Muslim should be educated. Because without education progress of the society is not possible as individuals make the society. According to them, knowledge should be useful in both worldly and spiritual lives of individuals. Thus, knowledge should not be restricted to the material world. They advocated that new knowledge should be subjected to intellectual enquiry and should not be accepted blindly. Young Bukharans also argued that knowledge should be obtained from wherever it could be gained. They also refuted that Islam needed to learn from the West, either in terms of inspiration or imitation. They were of the view that the sequential importance of the West

actually came from Islam. In short, they argued that Muslims should take back their culture and civilization from the West<sup>34</sup>. The Bukharan reformist leaders were in favour of transformation of the governmental structure in totality. They accused that all the bureaucrats and wealthy *begs* (lords) were corrupt<sup>35</sup>.

An organization namely, Gamiyati Tarbiye-i Atfal (Society for the Education of Children) was established in the end of December 1910. The fundamental objectives of the society were to found new method schools in the *Emirate*, to *provide* education to Children, to fight government abuses, and to wage agitation against the government. This group functioned like a conspiratorial organization in order to escape government suppression. It was headed by active reformists like- Mirza Abd al-Vahidov, Usmon Khodjaev, Ahmad Makhdum and Hamid Khojaev Mihri. Soon after its creation, the society managed to unite all the reformist organizations of the *Emirate*. Abdulrauf Fitrat's organization Society for Disseminating Knowledge among the Masses was one of these organizations. The organization's main function was to finance the native students to going to study in Turkey<sup>36</sup>. Gamiyati Tarbiye-i Atfal's main objective was the dissemination of knowledge by the introduction of natural sciences in the new method school system. For practical reasons the society was functioning through two branches; *Maarifat* (Talent) and *Barakat* (Blessing). *Marifat* was headed by Fitrat and Usmon Khodjaev. Its function was to disseminate the essential quality of reform among the native population through the distribution of books and the establishment of social-cultural and political clubs. *Barakat's* job was to import necessary material for mass education and propaganda. In a short period of time the society proved itself to be one of the best-structured reformist organizations in the area. It was very difficult to become a member of the society. They had formulated very strict rules in this regard. The references of the members of the society were required to get membership<sup>37</sup>.

The Young Bukharans adopted several methods in achieving the long term goals of the society. These were- (i). They opened new method schools in Bukhara. These schools achieved considerable successes during the period of 1910-14, while they were stringently pursued and attacked by the traditional clerics. (ii). They began to print newspapers, *Bukhoroi Sharif* (Noble Bukhara) to disseminate their ideology among the masses. (iii). They used the *Jadid* circles for the dissemination of reformist ideas in the region. Young Bukharan intellectuals were used

to gather in one of the comrades' house where they read newspapers and books, both imported and native. Fitrat's works were especially widely read in the new method schools and many Young Bukharans knew his main works by heart. His major works were copied and made available to the people of the *Emirate*. (iv). They used theatre as an instrument to propagate their ideas among the native masses. The works of active reformist leaders, like- Mufti Behbudi, Abdurauf Fitrat and Chulpon were staged in the theatre. At the time of the revolution in 1917, a majority of the Young Bukharans decided to collaborate with the Bolsheviks as they had promised equality among nations and equal religious, cultural and linguistic rights<sup>38</sup>.

The Bukharan *Jadidists* were ardent supporter of the change. But, they were not in favour of gradual change. In this regard, Fitrat was of the firm view that rapid method to change of education, language and orthography, or the position of women, is against public opinion and creates dispute among the Muslims. We need to inter into gradual reforms through public opinion that does not exist in the society. We have a general majority, but it has no opinion. There is not a thought, not a word that emerges from their own minds. The thoughts that our majority has today were not their own, but were the thoughts of some imams, clerics and mufti. He further states that no real change can take place in the society through gradual process<sup>39</sup>. *Jadidists* favoured the idea of revolutionary transformation of society. In other words it can be said that *Jadidists* were in support of radical, sudden and imposed change. In actual sense they wanted to revolutionaries the mind of the people. According to Fitrat, no change can take place in a society without changing the mind of the people. The *Jadids'* embrace of the idea of revolution brought them close to the Bolshevik Party. But, their idea of revolution was quite different from the Bolsheviks ideas of revolution. For *Jadids*, the idea of revolution was national rather than class in terms. It was against the basic postulate of the Bolshevik Party<sup>40</sup>.

The Bolshevik Revolution took place in Russia in October 1917. But, due to opposition of the native population, the Bolsheviks could not get control of Bukhara in their first attempt. Consequently, they decided to preserve the autonomy of the Bukharan *Khanate*. Soon after revolution, the *Jadidists* created Islamic Councils, while the traditional conservative Islamic leadership (*Qadimists*) drew its power from the society of Ulema. Both group proposed a programme for the future

development of the native society. In the beginning, the *Qadimists* were success in their strategy by portraying *Jadidists* as too young and inexperienced people<sup>41</sup>. However, the *Jadidists* continued to demand for the implementation of their reforms. They opposed the rule of the conservative. As a result, they were persecuted by the *Qadimists* in the *Emirate* of Bukhara. The autonomy of the Bukharan *Khanate* did not last for long. The Red Army captured the city of Bukhara on 2 September 1920. Consequently, its last Emir, Said Olim Khan, the last Manghit (a Turkic tribe) ruler of the *Khanate*, fled to Eastern Bukhara. The *Emirate* of Bukhara was transformed into the People's Republic of Bukhara immediately after the conquest. Because of their help to the Bolsheviks, Young Bukharans were awarded with some key posts in the newly formed republic<sup>42</sup>. In other words it can be said that the *Jadidists* were given control of the area for a short period of time.

Thus, it can be said that the process of reform in Central Asia was not an easy tasks. There were some obstacles in the way of reformists contributing to the failure of the movement, which are summarized as under:

- The physical remoteness of the region hampered the establishment of contacts with like minded thinkers of the region.
- The *Jadidists* were frequently under the pressure from *Ulema*. Very few members of Traditional clerics were compassionate to *Jadidists* ideas while most of them were the harsh critic of the reformist movement.

It can be safely concluded that modernization of religion and culture guarantees that the nation and state will survive and develop. The *Jadidists* movement emerged in Central Asia in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. It was not limited to the idea of reforms in education and modernization of Islam. It believed that several cultural parameters should also be changed. It rejected religious xenophobia. It relied on the basic Koranic principles to critically analyze all sorts of scholastic ideas preached by orthodox Muslim theologians. Thus, it should be clear that *Jadidists* movement in Central Asia did not create a new form of Islam. It tried to remove historical and ethnic layers which had developed into *taqlid* (unquestioned truth). The *Jadidists* restored the freedom of thinking in Islam based on the principle that neither the community, nor the imam or mufti should stand between man and God. It means that man should be conscious of his responsibility for what he is doing and should be able to distinguish between good and bad.

On the eve of the revolution, the *Jadidists* reform movement had taken root in the urban areas of the region. But the traditional elite (Ulema) still retained considerable influence. The carriers of the reform found themselves fighting a mounting battle as their position was in danger in the society. Despite this the *Jadidists* were determined and confident that the surge of history was behind them. They aspired to universal civilization, which they considered as fully in harmony with Islam. The *Jadidists* were fighting for inclusion of Muslims into the modern world, and into the Russian Empire as equal citizens, with rights and representation, rather than as subordinate subject.

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