

SADRIDDIN AYNİY'S PEDAGOGICAL IDEAS AND THEIR APPLICATION IN MODERN EDUCATION AND UPBRINGING

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Abstract

This article analyzes the pedagogical views of Sadriddin Ayni, his educational activities within the Jadid movement, and his advanced ideas related to the process of education and upbringing. Ayni paid great attention to enlightening the people, reforming school education, updating national curricula, and educating the younger generation as perfect individuals. The scientific and pedagogical principles presented in his works remain relevant in today's educational system and play an important role in ensuring a personal approach, creativity, and the harmony of national and universal values. The article highlights the ways of applying Ayni's pedagogical ideas in the modern educational process, as well as their effectiveness and practical significance.

Keywords: Sadriddin Ayni, Jadidism, pedagogical ideas, modern education, educational process, enlightenment, national values, curricula, personal approach, upbringing of a perfect person.

Introduction

In the decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Sh. M. Mirziyoyev, dated January 29, 2022, *"On the Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan for 2022–2026"*, a number of tasks were defined in the field of social development, in particular, the improvement of education and science, as well as the introduction of modern mechanisms for supporting innovative projects and initiatives. Within this framework, it is planned to identify urgent issues in the field of education and upbringing, to conduct scholarly research on the creative legacy of the representatives of Jadid literature, and to study their role in enriching the moral, educational, historical, and theoretical knowledge of the present generation. Furthermore, it is envisaged to draw lessons from the experiences of the Jadid movement during the teaching process, to consider the goals they aspired to and their vision for a new society as still relevant today, and to apply them in practice by delivering these ideas to students and young people through innovative methods. The Jadids regarded education not merely as a means confined to school instruction, but as a tool for cultivating independent thinking and creativity among learners. Alongside traditional subjects, they emphasized practical skills, establishing a new type of Jadid schools in major cities such as Tashkent, Bukhara, and Kokand. One of the most prominent figures of the Jadid movement, Mahmudkhodja Behbudi, in his works *"Risolayi Asbobi Savod"* and *"Kitabul Atfol"*, stressed the necessity of reforming traditional teaching methods and implementing a modern system of education in practice. He called upon teachers to nurture learners' ability to think independently and to critically question the surrounding world. Another significant aspect of the Jadid legacy was their advocacy of secularism in education. They emphasized the importance of fostering an atmosphere of tolerance in society, particularly



among the youth, where different religious beliefs would be respected. In his article published in the journal “*Taraqqiy*”, Munavvarqori Abdurashidkhanov underscored the need for an inclusive and tolerant educational system, stating: “*Education must be free from religious dogmas and superstitions; it should provide a space where students can enhance their knowledge and develop their worldview.*”

Research Methodology

The devotion of the Jadids in modernizing education and promoting the spirit of enlightenment has left an indelible mark in history. Today, the revival of scholarly interest in their legacy encourages young people to embody the very ideals of the enlightened generation envisioned by the Jadids. In Eastern philosophy, education and upbringing are inseparable; to distinguish one from the other would be impossible, as both represent an integral worldview. Historically, while madrasas provided both instruction and moral upbringing, this synthesis has now also found its place within the modern school system. Indeed, schools serve as the primary institution for transmitting national culture, traditions, and values. The Jadids, within the scope of their pedagogical activity, emphasized that knowledge is meaningless if it does not serve the interests of society or contribute to public welfare. Hence, they consistently called upon the youth to seek knowledge, uncover its secrets, understand the essence of phenomena, and engage in reading. They argued that the holistic development of an individual—encouraging virtue and discouraging vice—is directly linked to the interconnected processes of education and upbringing. Their writings frequently reiterated the idea that education itself promotes morality, declaring that “*Knowledge is the dignity of this world and the honor of the Hereafter. Knowledge is a sacred virtue of the highest order for humankind, for it reflects our conditions and actions like a mirror. A person without knowledge is like a tree without fruit.*” In this sense, the teacher was regarded not merely as an instructor, but as a moral educator. The Jadid intellectuals of Bukhara actively promoted methods aimed at reforming the educational sphere, including the establishment of new-method schools (*usuli jadid*), the propagation of modern sciences, and the dissemination of national and religious revivalist ideas through articles, dramas, and books. They championed women’s education, demanded reforms within the Emirate of Bukhara, and sought to mobilize society toward enlightenment. While upholding the core principles of Islam that encourage tolerance, the Jadids also taught respect for other religions and beliefs. In the context of contemporary globalization, the cultivation of interfaith harmony, tolerance, and mutual respect remains one of the fundamental priorities of societal development. Instilling interreligious tolerance in the minds of youth has thus acquired special significance within the framework of national spirituality and educational policy. In this regard, the pedagogical and intellectual legacy of the Bukhara Jadids carries both scholarly and practical importance. The Jadids placed particular emphasis on humanism, justice, tolerance, critical reasoning, and respect for differing opinions within their educational system. By integrating both religious and secular sciences in the curriculum, they sought to nurture a generation capable of broad-minded thinking and openness toward other cultures and faiths. In their pedagogical outlook, the primary mission of education was to lead humanity toward enlightenment, to liberate it from ignorance, and to foster intellectual independence. Their ideas therefore remain vital to the contemporary promotion of tolerance. The educational principles of the Jadid intellectuals of Bukhara continue



to provide a significant scientific and practical foundation for modern pedagogy. Through the encouragement of free thought, acceptance of diversity, and cultivation of dialogue, they aspired to shape future generations into democratic, tolerant, and progressive members of society. Mahmudkhodja Behbudi, for instance, warned young men against harmful vices, alerting them to the dangers of social ills. He strongly criticized the taverns opened by Russians in Samarkand, particularly their proximity to mosques and madrasas, arguing that they exerted a negative influence on children. Behbudi urged society to prioritize the healthy upbringing of future generations, envisioning educated, enlightened youth who would grow into doctors, lawyers, economists, and other modern professionals serving Turkestan. The Jadids attached special importance to moral education in schools, regarding children as the future guardians of liberty, independence, and national prosperity. They sought not only to instill a national spirit in the younger generation, but also to cultivate universal values, cosmopolitanism, and a love for the beauty and progress of the homeland. For the Jadids, schools were not the sole means of educating youth; rather, they believed that young people should independently acquaint themselves with contemporary world events and the conditions of their nation. Their educational wisdom, preserved through oral traditions and proverbs, conveyed timeless lessons that transcended space and time. The works of Sadriddin Ayni further illustrate this philosophy. In “*Odobnoma*”, he emphasized that diversity of nationality, religion, and traditions should be perceived as a natural phenomenon. He advised that youth should be taught to respect others’ opinions and to engage in calm, thoughtful dialogue. His personal life also reflected his educational philosophy: when his son and daughter were studying in Moscow, he sent little money to his son but more to his daughter, explaining that “*wealth corrupts a son, but poverty harms a daughter.*” Ayni underscored that parental guidance, family relations, and the interaction of mentors with their environment play a crucial role in child-rearing. Ultimately, the Jadids envisioned an education that would elevate society through knowledge, align with the demands of the time, and rest upon the responsibility of teachers. They stressed that teachers must embody the role of exemplary guides, transmitting the values of enlightenment, free thought, tolerance, and intellectual curiosity to their students. In this way, the Jadid heritage represents not merely a historical phenomenon, but also a living pedagogical framework with enduring relevance for the modern educational system.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, during its first decade, conflicts began to emerge in Bukhara between the movements of the *Jadids* and the *Qadimists*. For centuries, the madrasas, which had produced eminent scholars such as al-Farabi, al-Biruni, Ibn Sina, al-Bukhari, and al-Khwarizmi—figures who enriched both the Eastern world and global civilization—gradually lost their vitality. Their educational system, once vibrant, had by then become increasingly hollow, yielding little substance. As Sadriddin Ayni aptly observed, Bukhara, which “three to four centuries earlier had been regarded as one of the scientific centers of the Islamic world appropriate to its time,” had by the late period been reduced to a state in which “its scholarship and religious learning amounted to nothing more than an empty reputation in the eyes of the people of Turkestan.” Although numerous reasons contributed to this decline, Ayni highlights several specific causes. For instance, in 1585, Abdullakhan commissioned the construction of a madrasa in Bukhara that bore his own name. Seeking to consolidate his influence among scholars, the khan devised a contest between two candidates for the position of *mudarris*



(teacher): Mawlavi Sadriddin, a native of Bukhara, and Mawlavi Mirzajon, a traveler from Shiraz. Ultimately, Mirzajon was appointed as the madrasa's mudarris. Distinguished from other local clerics, he exercised autonomy over the curriculum, unilaterally altering the schedule. Gradually, subjects such as hadith and tafsir disappeared from the official syllabus, and disciplines like arithmetic, geometry, history, and medicine, among others, were entirely eliminated. The problem of curricula in schools and madrasas—an issue that long preoccupied Ayni—eventually led him to become one of the prominent activists of the Jadid movement. Along with his associates Abdulvohid, Hamidkhoja, and Ahmadjon Makhzum, he planned to establish a new school after the month of Ramadan. As Ayni records: "On the tenth day of Shawwal in the year 1326 of the Hijra (October 1908 CE), within the city of Bukhara, in the Darbozai Salahkhona neighborhood, in the house of Mirza Abdulvohid, the first school based on the Jadid method, with instruction in Persian, was opened specifically for the people of Bukhara." Mirza Abdulvohid Munzim was appointed as the school's teacher. Within two months, the number of pupils had reached twelve. However, the organizers encountered numerous challenges, including the absence of textbooks, the lack of a coherent system, and insufficient knowledge of innovative teaching methodologies. In search of a solution, Ayni appealed to the Tatar scholar Mulla Nizom Sobitiy for assistance in procuring textbooks. Nizom informed him that opposite the Attar madrasa there was a Tatar school, run by a man named Khalid Burnashyev, where he could obtain both textbooks and pedagogical advice. Ayni later admitted: "Until that day, we teachers were unaware of the existence of a Tatar school in Bukhara." Not wishing to lose the opportunity, he immediately visited the institution.

Results and Discussion

At the school, alongside local Bukharan children, there were also Tatar children residing in Bukhara, who, despite not knowing the Tatar language, pursued their studies there. In the spring of 1908, Ayni and Hamidkhoja Mehriy traveled to Samarkand for the first time, where Mirzo Abdulqodir Munzim was then working at Demurov's printing house. During this visit, Ayni became acquainted with Abduqodir Shakuriy, Ismatulla Rahmatullazoda, and Mahmudkhoja Behbudiy. He also visited Shakuriy's new-method school in the village of Rajabamin near Samarkand, and from that time onward he regularly attended the school's annual examinations. Later, Ayni, Mehriy, and Munzim journeyed to Tashkent to further familiarize themselves with the new-method schools. Upon their return, with the permission of the teacher at the Tatar school in Bukhara, Ayni voluntarily served as a translator for six months—without receiving any remuneration—by rendering lessons into Tajik for the pupils, while simultaneously translating their responses into Tatar (having previously acquired the Tatar language through reading newspapers and periodicals). The knowledge he gained there, together with the impressions from his visits to Samarkand and Tashkent, he successfully applied to their own school, achieving significant progress. The next step was the creation of textbooks. On this matter, Ayni wrote: *"For this reason, driven by the aspiration to prepare a book, we established a society among ourselves. The society was named 'Shirkati Buxoroyi Sharif.' Our society was founded in the middle of the month of Rabi' al-Awwal, 1327 A.H. (March 1909 C.E.), and we decided to begin by publishing the rules of tajwid under the title 'Tartil al-Qur'an.'"* This work constituted Ayni's first textbook. Subsequently, two additional primers, *Tahsib al-Sibyan* and *Zaruriyyat-i Diniyya*,



were also published. In *Tahsib al-Sibyan*, the foundations of both secular and religious knowledge were presented, blending theory and practice, as well as prose and verse. Another of Sadriddin Ayni's works, *Zaruriyyat-i Diniyya*, achieved considerable recognition within the Islamic world. Eminent figures of Uzbek literature held him in high regard, addressing him respectfully as *Ustod* ("The Master"), *Ustoz* ("The Teacher"), or, in the Bukharan tradition, *Domla*. Distinguished writers and scholars such as G'afur G'ulom, Mirmuhsin, Chingiz Aytmatov, Ibrohim Mo'minov, Mirzo Tursunzoda, Komil Yashin, Jalol Ikromiy, Vohid Abdullaev, Qudrat Khojaev, Ozod Sharafiddinov—and indeed many others who could be named—rightfully recognized and honored him with the title of *Ustod*.

Conclusion

The scientific, creative, and overall life activity of Sadriddin Ayni has become an invaluable part of the spiritual heritage of our people. This legacy continues to serve future generations without losing its intellectual or cultural significance. His works are distinguished by their ability to convey the atmosphere and spirit of his time in an unadulterated form. If such reformist views were initiated in the nineteenth century by enlightenment figures such as Ahmad Donish, their ideas and intellectual aspirations were further developed by national-minded intellectuals such as Sadriddin Ayni, Abdulvohid Munzim, Mirkomil Burkhanov, Usmonkhoja Polatkhojaev, Kholidkhoja Mehriy, Mulla Vafo, and Abdurauf Fitrat. The principles of the Jadids remain relevant even today. For instance, it is no secret that extravagant celebrations and excessive expenditures at weddings and festivities are leading many families into financial hardship. Such practices, as the Jadids argued, must be curbed through the political will of the state. The spiritual, ideological, and political struggle waged by the Jadids against colonial domination in Turkestan for many years left an indelible mark on the history of our national statehood. The historical destiny of nations subjected to ignorance and backwardness for centuries confirmed once again the warnings of our ancestors: that such conditions inevitably result in a tragic plunge into colonial dependency. This historical reality constitutes the first lesson to be drawn by the younger generation. The second lesson lies in the political and spiritual experiences left to us by our Jadid forefathers, which retain their relevance today. As our esteemed President has stated: *"The legacy of our enlightened ancestors naturally serves as the foundation for the legal democratic state and civil society we are building today. Indeed, the defense of freedom, national pride, honor, and dignity emerges from the enlightenment of the national spirit."* Sadriddin Ayni firmly believed that the advancement of knowledge, enlightenment, and science represented one of the most decisive factors in ensuring the people's peaceful, prosperous, and just life. Understanding the crucial role of intellectual education, as well as religious and secular sciences, in the comprehensive development of the human being, he contributed to the flourishing of culture, enlightenment, and morality. He regarded knowledge as a supreme human virtue, emphasizing that even if among many individuals with limited experience only one person possesses developed understanding and wisdom, the service of that single individual is of immense importance. A well-known proverb among our people, derived from his wise words, states: *"The strong of arm can defeat one, but the strong of knowledge can defeat a thousand."* Ayni also emphasized that when women are educated, modesty and moral dignity flourish in society. When chastity is prioritized, immoral practices such as adultery and obscenity disappear,



divorce rates decrease, and divine mercy, peace, and blessings descend upon the community. Ayni himself had directly experienced the hardships of poverty, ignorance, and oppression. From early childhood, he faced the harsh realities of life, which compelled him to mature spiritually at a very young age. His willpower was tempered in the grip of sorrow, deprivation, and despair. To say that the path he followed was one of perseverance and heroism is by no means an exaggeration. He endured ordeals so perilous that survival seemed almost impossible without divine providence and the support of Bukhara. All these experiences are reflected in his works, particularly in *Memoirs*, where he depicts them as phenomena that could occur in the destiny of any individual who relies on intellect, prudence, knowledge, and willpower. He was acutely aware that his own grief and misfortune were insignificant compared to the suffering of Bukhara. Even when pursued by the threat of death, he never abandoned hope in the compassion and mercy of his beloved homeland. Hence, he never succumbed to despair. As the renowned Tajik writer Jalol Ikromi rightly remarked: *"Ayni's restless heart, enamored with Bukhara, ached for her and sought salvation. He was spiritually bound to the suffering of Bukhara and was a genuine patriot."* This feeling of devotion, patriotism, and empathy never left the wise Ayni until his final breath. Had Ayni not been illuminated by his passion for Bukhara and by the light of its intellectual and cultural heritage, had he not become, like Ibn Sina, Ahmad Donish, or Abdurauf Fitrat, a devoted son and true lover of Bukhara, he would undoubtedly have remained a minor literary figure of only average significance. Yet Ayni succeeded in drawing the attention of the world to the fate of Bukhara and its people. Admittedly, the Bukhara and Bukharans depicted in Ayni's works often evoke sorrow and tragedy in the reader, confronting them with heavy and painful realities. But just as an encounter with truth may bring discomfort yet deepen conviction in goodness and humanity, so too do Ayni's works inspire struggle, awaken reflection, and strengthen faith in justice and moral values.

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