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THE FATE OF A LINGUIST SCHOLAR (A LOOK AT THE ACTIVITIES OF KHALID SAID KHOJAYEV)

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Abstract

This article analyzes the activities of Khalid Said Khojayevev, a linguist who played an active role in the Jadidism movement of Turkestan. He participated in the reformist movements of early 20th century Turkestan and contributed to the national press through his articles. Educated in Istanbul, he worked as a teacher and linguist, participating in language and orthography conferences. He authored numerous works on language, history, and literature. Living and working in Turkestan and Azerbaijan, he contributed to strengthening the cultural and fraternal ties between the two peoples. The article sheds light on Khalid Said Khojayevev's activities by analyzing various press sources and scientific literature.

KEYWORDS: Turkestan, Jadidism movement, Ganja, language and orthography congress, Turkestani students, repression.

INTRODUCTION

Born in Turkestan and, by fate, settling in other countries, many intellectuals from Turkestan became esteemed figures and cherished individuals in those nations as well. One such revered enlightener of the Turkestan land, who came to belong to two peoples, was Khalid Said Khojayevev. He was a linguist, a skilled translator, and an intellectual who authored valuable works in the fields of history and literature.

METHODS

The study of Khalid Said Khojayevev's life, activities, and works began in the 1980s (1, 24–25). Starting from the 1990s, several articles highlighting his activities were published. Scholars from Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan, including literary

critics, historians, source researchers, and art historians, contributed to the publication of articles on his life and works in newspapers and journals. Khalid Said Khojayevev's writings were published in newspapers and journals of Turkestan and Azerbaijan during his time, serving as essential sources for studying his activities. Additionally, archival documents related to him were utilized in the process of writing this article. By comparatively analyzing these sources and scientific literature systematically, Khalid Said Khojayevev's contributions have been thoroughly examined.

RESULTS

Khalid Said Khojayevev was born in 1888 in the village of Qoshqorgan, part of the Bo'stonliq volost

near Tashkent. He was the third of five sons in the family of Said Khoja. His original name was Kholkhoja, which later evolved into Khalid. After receiving his primary education at the local school in his village, he studied for six years at the Beklarbegi Madrasa in Tashkent, one of the most prestigious institutions of higher education of his time.

During this period, dissatisfaction with the dominance of traditional views and the colonial policies of the Russian Empire in Turkestan was widespread. This discontent significantly hindered the ability of Russian-native schools to attract young people. These schools were often viewed as “infidel schools,” and many parents refused to send their children to them. However, there was also a desire for the government to pay more attention to local schools. Under the Russian Empire’s administrative rule in Turkestan, initiatives that aligned with the local population’s interests were often suppressed, undermining any grassroots efforts by the indigenous communities.

The 1905 revolution in the Russian Empire also had an impact on Turkestan. Democratic views in society began to change, albeit slightly. The Jadid reformist intellectuals, who prioritized the interests of the people, started using this period to establish national press outlets, create cultural and charitable organizations, further develop and expand the number of new-method schools, and pay greater attention to the education and upbringing of the youth. These revolutionary changes and transformations in Eastern countries also influenced Khalid Said’s life. He supported the ideas of the enlightenment movement and paid close attention to the changes occurring in Turkestan.

Khalid actively participated in the Jadidism movement and its reformist activities, gaining valuable experience in the process. He worked as a teacher in new-method schools, seeking solutions to the issues of his time. He regarded education and upbringing as essential aspects for the progress and future of the nation. Khalid wrote articles on these topics for the national press, publishing them under his own name and pseudonyms such as “Hayoliy” and “Sayyoh Darvesh.” Notably, his

poems “Maqola Manzuma” and “Ta’lim,” published under the pseudonym “Sayyoh Darvesh,” appeared in the “Sadoyi Farg’ona” newspaper’s issues from June 13–15, 1914.

In the 9th issue of the “Sadoyi Farg’ona” newspaper in 1914, Khalid Said drew attention to the importance of education, stating: “There is no need to bring evidence that, for the illumination and flourishing of humanity’s inherent abilities and talents, education is more necessary than anything else” (2). This emphasis on education is not only relevant to his era but remains significant even today. The importance of educating future generations is universally recognized, and as such, governments today pay great attention to every stage of education and upbringing.

Khalid Said’s articles published in the national press, such as “Arzi Tashakkur,” “Tarbiya Iksiri Azimdur,” “Jim O’tir Juvonmarg, Gapirma, Haromi,” “Fasodi Axloq Qay Vaxtdan Boshlanur,” and “Menga Nima Kerak?” primarily focused on educational and upbringing issues. For instance, in his article “Jim O’tir Juvonmarg, Gapirma, Haromi” published in the Sadoyi Turkiston newspaper on May 6, 1914, he highlighted the challenges in family upbringing that hindered the intellectual growth, worldview, and logical thinking of the younger generation. He called for serious attention to these issues, emphasizing that upbringing should not be limited to specific institutions but must involve every sector of society. He stressed the importance of educating and nurturing children from a young age. In his words: “A nation’s child is the sapling it plants in the garden of the world for the future of that nation” (3). This statement underscores the critical importance of education and upbringing.

Additionally, Khalid Said used his articles to urge his nation to unite, struggle for progress, and strive to join the ranks of the world’s developed countries. He expressed hope and confidence that every Turkestani would make the region “a beautiful garden to present to the world” (3).

As a forward-thinking individual, Khalid continuously sought to enhance his knowledge. Inspired by the stories of merchants and pilgrims returning from abroad, he developed a strong desire to see foreign countries, particularly to

study in Istanbul. Combining the knowledge he gained at the madrasa with a practical approach, he worked for 5–6 months in land surveying to save enough money for the journey. Despite the restrictions imposed by the Turkestan General-Governorate on issuing foreign passports to Turkestanis, Khalid found a way. In his autobiography, he wrote: "... following the advice of an acquaintance, I obtained a passport from the Chinese consulate for 4–5 rubles. The passport I received from the Chinese consulate did not specify a date, and the owner's name was hardly legible. Using this passport, I managed to reach Istanbul" (4).

DISCUSSION

Khalid Said planned to travel to Egypt and Syria, but after reading an announcement about a two-year course at Istanbul University, he changed his mind and decided to pursue education there. The course had 430 available spots, with 1750 applicants, and Khalid was admitted based on his exceptional abilities. He studied at Istanbul University until 1918. Initially, he completed the preparatory course and then pursued medical studies, which proved beneficial in his later life. According to his daughter Bayja's recollections, Khalid Said became the family's reliable doctor (5, 67). Later, he shifted his focus to history and philology.

Between 1918 and 1920, Khalid Said lived in Ganja, Azerbaijan, teaching at a teachers' seminary and a boys' gymnasium. His arrival in the region was linked to the "Caucasian Islamic Army," organized by the Ottoman Empire to support the newly established Azerbaijan Democratic Republic. Khalid Said mentioned during an interrogation: "In 1918, I was sent to Azerbaijan as part of the Turkish army led by Nuri Pasha, along with a group of Istanbul University students. We were assigned to a special division of the army." This army aimed not only to establish peace in the Caucasus but also to assist Turkish prisoners in Tatarstan and Turkestan. Individuals familiar with these regions were included in the mission. Among them were Ahmed Agayev, a political advisor to Nuri Pasha, and Khalid Said Khojaye.

On April 28, 1920, the Bolsheviks occupied

Azerbaijan, and in May of the same year, an anti-Bolshevik uprising broke out in Ganja. Khalid Said returned to Turkestan during this period to avoid potential persecution for supporting the Azerbaijani national government. Upon his return to Tashkent, he began teaching at the Higher Pedagogical Institute in September 1920, later serving as its director. He continued his academic and pedagogical activities in Turkestan until 1922, after which he returned to Baku. According to interrogation documents, he cited "discomfort with Tashkent's climate" as the reason for his return. However, considering the events of the 1920s, it is likely that he left due to increasing Soviet repression of national intellectuals and Jadid movement members.

In Baku, Khalid Said worked in remote areas such as the Balakhani district's workers' faculty and the mountainous Gusar district's pedagogical courses until 1924. During this time, Azerbaijani nationalists faced significant repression from the Bolsheviks. After the persecution subsided, he returned to Baku, where he married Sorra Rizo qizi and had a daughter, Bahija.

From 1922 onwards, Turkestan intellectuals sent young people to study in Germany, central Russian cities, and Azerbaijan's Baku and Ganja. Khalid Said actively participated in this initiative, representing Turkestan students in Baku between 1924 and 1926. During this period, the number of Turkestan students in Baku exceeded 150. However, he was dismissed from his position due to accusations of counter-revolutionary and nationalist propaganda. Despite these challenges, Khalid Said focused on fostering patriotism and national consciousness among students.

Khalid Said also played a significant role in Azerbaijan's social and cultural life. He participated in the 1922 Baku conference on transitioning to the Latin alphabet and contributed to the activities of the "New Alphabet Committee". He documented his experiences in the book "On the Path of the New Alphabet: My Memories and Feelings" (Baku, 1929). The work contains valuable insights into the geography, culture, and ethnography of the regions he visited, as well as critical reflections on the challenges faced by Turkestan's Jadid schools

during the Russian Empire's rule.

At the First Turcology Congress held in Baku from February 26 to March 6, 1926, Khalid Said actively participated in discussions about adopting the Latin alphabet. He was tasked with writing "The Comparative Morphology of Ottoman, Uzbek, and Kazakh Languages" (Baku, 1926), further demonstrating his scholarly reputation.

Fluent in 12 languages, including Arabic, Persian, Turkish, and Russian, Khalid Said continued to contribute significantly to linguistics, history, and literature, even under the growing repression of the 1930s. He translated ancient Turkic inscriptions, such as the Orkhon-Enisei texts, into Azerbaijani and promoted Turkestan literature, including Abdullah Qodiriy's "O'tgan Kunlar" (Bygone Days), which he translated into Azerbaijani.

From 1926 to 1934, Khalid Said taught at several institutions in Azerbaijan, including the Azerbaijan State University and the Azerbaijan Scientific Research Institute. After 1934, he worked as a researcher at the Linguistics Department of the USSR Academy of Sciences' Azerbaijan branch. In 1935, he was awarded the title of Candidate of Sciences and Associate Professor for his scholarly contributions.

Khalid Said also undertook the translation of Mahmud al-Kashgari's "Divan-i Lughat-it-Turk" into Azerbaijani, a groundbreaking effort in Turkic linguistics. However, on June 3, 1937, he was arrested by the NKVD on charges of counter-revolutionary activities and nationalism. Shortly thereafter, on October 12, 1937, he was executed alongside many other intellectuals.

Khalid Said's unpublished works and manuscripts were confiscated during a search of his home, including 27 books, issues of the "Jumhuriyat" newspaper, and other journals. His wife, Sora Rizo qizi, was also arrested and exiled to Siberia for 14 years, enduring severe hardships. His daughter, Bahija, faced psychological and social pressures for many years following her parents' persecution. Khalid Said's legacy, however, lives on through his invaluable contributions to Turkestan and Azerbaijani culture, education, and scholarship.

CONCLUSION

Due to the repressive policies of the Soviet government, many works created by intellectuals and the valuable resources they collected were destroyed. The fate of most of Khalid Said's works is also unknown, as many were confiscated during searches. The titles of more than ten of his works are known, but only five or six were published.

In summary, the independence of Uzbekistan has allowed for the study and introduction of the lives and scientific activities of many Jadid intellectuals to the public. In this context, the study of Khalid Said Khojavev's life and scientific legacy holds significant importance. As a reformist who fought for the independence of his homeland and the progress of Turkic peoples, his contributions are invaluable. The issues he raised in his articles remain relevant today, and his works serve as vital sources for researching the history of Uzbekistan.

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