THE USA JOURNALS
THE AMERICAN JOURNAL OF SOCIAL SCIENCE AND EDUCATION INNOVATIONS (ISSN- 2689-100X)
VOLUME 06 ISSUE12

PUBLISHED DATE: - 20-12-2024
DOI: - https://doi.org/10.37547/tajssei/Volume06Issue12-11 **PAGE NO.: - 224-241**

RESEARCH ARTICLE **Open Access**

THE PROCESSES OF TRANSITIONING TO THE UZBEK SCRIPT BASED ON THE LATIN ALPHABET IN UZBEKISTAN

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Abstract
For centuries, the Arabic script served as the primary writing system for many Turkic peoples, including the Uzbeks, Kazakhs, Kyrgyz, Turkmens, Turks, Azerbaijanis, and Tatars. The long history and cultural heritage of these peoples are closely linked to this script.
At the beginning of the last century, the emergence of the Jadid movement in Azerbaijan and Turkey, its spread to other Turkic peoples, the establishment of new Jadid schools, and the development of national press brought to light the challenges of teaching literacy using the Arabic alphabet. Consequently, discussions about reforming and adapting the Arabic script to the needs of national languages became a pressing issue.
Indeed, the Arabic alphabet, which was not inherently designed for Turkic languages, faced numerous challenges. It failed to fully represent the phonetics of Turkic languages, included letters unique to the Arabic language (foreign characters), and was unable to adequately convey the rich vowel system of Turkic languages.
The Jadids, who devoted their lives to promoting literacy, simplifying teaching methods in their newly established schools, and creating accessible textbooks, took steps to reform the Arabic alphabet. They introduced specific forms for vowels. However, the reformed alphabet did not meet expectations, and difficulties in education and publishing persisted. As a result, efforts to abandon the Arabic script and transition to the Latin alphabet began. During this process, Jadid enlightenment leaders developed four alphabet projects. This article discusses these projects in detail.

Keywords Arabic language, centuries, Arabic script.

INTRODUCTION

During the movement to transition to the Latin script, the Jadids split into two groups: 1. Supporters of the old script. 2. Advocates of the new script. In the press and at various gatherings, debates were held comparing the two scripts, with arguments made to justify the advantages of the Latin script. At the 1926 Congress of Turkic Peoples held in Baku, a resolution was passed for all Turkic peoples to adopt the Latin script.

It is important to note that the transition to the Latin script was interpreted not only from a linguistic perspective but also politically and ideologically. The Arabic script was portrayed as a remnant of the past, associated with the literacy of the wealthy, mullahs, and religious elites, who were considered opposed to the interests of the Uzbek working class and peasants building a socialist system. Furthermore, it was argued that the Arabic script could not adequately serve the needs of the broader working masses, thus necessitating its replacement with a more modern script. (Source: Adabi til və imla toǫrisida maqala va qararlar, p. 6.)

Even Ashurali Zohiriy, who initially supported the Arabic script, endorsed the transition to the Latin script after attending the 1926 Congress of Turkic Peoples in Baku as a representative of Uzbekistan. In a speech at a meeting in Fergana dedicated to the congress's outcomes, he highlighted that the new Turkic (Latin) alphabet was a thousand times more convenient and simpler in terms of education and technical usage compared to the reformed Arabic alphabet. He further emphasized that as long as the current Arabic script persisted, the challenges in printing would never disappear (Jamolkhonov 2017: p. 173).

The primary challenge facing Uzbek intellectuals was the creation of a national alphabet, though there was still a lack of sufficient experience in this regard. Up until that time, only the Yakuts and Azerbaijanis among the Turkic peoples had transitioned to the Latin script, but they still faced various issues and shortcomings. Additionally, within the Jadid linguistic movement, there was no well-established scientific theory or practice for creating a new alphabet.

Challenges in Creating an Alphabet

First and foremost, the writing system for the Uzbek language needed to be developed based on its phonetic structure. This system would then serve as the foundation for creating a script (alphabet) and orthography (spelling rules). To establish such a system, it was necessary to define the phonological system of the Uzbek language, particularly the minimum distinctions in sounds that are essential for comprehension and need to be reflected in writing. Subsequently, these distinctions had to be represented in writing as efficiently as possible.

For other Turkic languages, such as Azerbaijani, Kyrgyz, and Kazakh, this process was relatively simpler since these languages were based on a single dialect (e.g., the Kipchak dialect for Kyrgyz and Kazakh, and the Oghuz dialect for Azerbaijani). In contrast, Uzbek is based on multiple dialects. G‘ozi Olim categorized these dialects into three groups based on their phonetic and morphological characteristics:

1. Kipchak
2. Uyghur-Chagatai
3. Oghuz

(Source: G‘ozi Olim, p. 24.)

According to G‘ozi Olim, the Kipchak group ranks first in terms of the number of speakers and geographical spread. In the general classification of Turkic languages by Academician Samoylovich, this group falls under the "Tav" (Northwest) branch.

The Uyghur-Chagatai group comprises rural dialects influenced by urban speech patterns. In the general Turkic classification, these dialects belong to the "Tag‘" (Northeast) branch.

The Oghuz group includes the dialects of Khorezm Uzbeks and those of the Ikan Uzbeks in pre-Turkistan cities. These dialects are classified under the Kipchak-Turkmen branch in the general Turkic classification.

G‘ozi Olim’s classification aligns, to some extent, with that of A.N. Samoylovich. These dialects differ significantly in terms of morphology and phonetics, and even within a single dialect, variations in sound systems—especially vowels—are evident.

Additionally, as noted by M. Bogdanova, there is a lack of comprehensive scientific studies on the Uzbek language and its dialects. While materials have been collected by the Uzbek Scientific Council and the Uzbek Scientific Committee under the former Turkistan Republic's Education Commission, these materials have not been fully analyzed (Source: Bogdanova, p. 44).

As mentioned earlier, Uzbek dialects differ in their vowel systems. Some dialects feature nine (or

occasionally ten) vowels, while others have six or seven. Naturally, these differences in vowel systems among dialects made it challenging to create a uniform alphabet and orthography suitable for all dialects. An alphabet based on a dialect with nine or ten vowels would be overly complex for dialects with fewer vowels. Conversely, an alphabet designed for dialects with fewer vowels would fail to meet the needs of those with more vowels (Source: Bogdanova).

Identifying a standard dialect for such a mixed dialectal language and creating an alphabet based on it posed significant challenges. This led to debates among the Jadids over whether the new alphabet should be based on dialects with vowel harmony (synharmonism) or on "corrupted" dialects that supposedly did not reflect the true nature of the Uzbek language.

These debates influenced the efforts to create a national alphabet, resulting in three projects developed by various organizations.

Analysis of Alphabets

H. Jamolkhonov provided information about two of these alphabet projects in the current script (Jamolkhonov, 2019), while N. Yangibayeva subjected them to scholarly analysis (Yangibayeva).

The first of these alphabet projects was discussed during a conference held on May 19, 20, and 21, 1926, in Samarkand. According to the Uzbek People's Commissariat of Education, this conference was convened to consider the Latinization of the Uzbek alphabet. In this project, vowel sounds (referred to as "voices" and "elongated letters") were designated as 10, and consonant sounds (referred to as "letters") were designated as 22.

M. Bogdanova also provides information on this project (Bogdanova, pp. 44–48), but there are discrepancies between her account and the presentation by N. Yangibayeva. Let us first examine the alphabet proposed by M. Bogdanova and her comments on it.

The project, developed by the scientific council in May 1926, was submitted to the Education Commissariat of the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic for approval.

Bb ب	Pp پ	Tt ت	Ƶƶ ج	Cc چ	Xx خ
Dd د	Rr ر	Zz ز	Ss س	Şş ش	Gg گ
Ff ف	Qq ق	Kk ك	g گ	Ŋŋ ڭ	Ll ل
Mm م	Nn ن	Vv و	Hh ه	Jj ي	ʻ Mas’ala

Vowels: و - o, ئو - ɵ, و - u, ئۇ - u - و, آ - A, ا - a, ه - ə, ى - i, ئ -ь , ي - e.

Observations About the Project:

1. The vowel system indicates that this project was based on dialects with vowel harmony (synharmonism).

2. It establishes that the Uzbek language has 10 vowels, with 10 corresponding letters assigned.

3. The number of consonants is defined as 23, with independent letters designated for each. An apostrophe symbol is also included in the alphabet.

4. For writing and printing purposes, the letters are uniform in shape, with no distinction between uppercase and lowercase. While the letter "A" is presented as an uppercase shape for the back-vowel "a", it is used in place of a lowercase letter.

5. Consonants (except for q-k and ƣ-g) are represented with a single form, regardless of their "thick" or "thin" quality (*Bagdanova, p. 45*).

M. Bogdanova's Comments

M. Bogdanova discusses the vowels included in the project, acknowledging the inclusion of 10 vowels and specifically approving the additional back-vowel "a" sound. However, the scientific center deemed this sound unnecessary, noting that it is not characteristic of Turkic languages.

N. Yangibayeva's Observations and Identified Shortcomings

N. Yangibayeva notes some critical shortcomings of the proposed alphabet project and emphasizes areas where improvements were necessary:

1. Establishing a Standard Dialect. Before assigning letters to vowels, it was crucial to identify a standard dialect to serve as the foundation for the Uzbek literary language. Without this, the alphabet could not adequately represent the linguistic diversity of Uzbek.

2. Incomplete Representation of Nuances. The project failed to fully capture the subtleties of Uzbek writing. For instance, the "long" and "short" variants of the vov letter are represented by the same Latin equivalent, *u*. This inconsistency may be a typographical error, but it highlights the need for clear principles in selecting letters to represent vowels.

3. Unexplained Choices for Consonants. Several decisions regarding consonant representation lacked justification: The letter z was chosen for both "shin" and "jim." The letter g was used for 'ayn. A single symbol was assigned for ҷ and ғ without providing a rationale.

These shortcomings point to a lack of systematic principles in the development of the alphabet, particularly in its approach to representing phonetic nuances and justifying specific letter assignments (*Yangibayeva, p. 25*).

Additionally, Yangibayeva notes the omission of the ʻ (apostrophe) in the project, speculating that this might be a technical error. This omission further complicates the accurate representation of phonemes in the Uzbek language.

The first shortcoming mentioned is valid because it is impossible to create an alphabet without first determining the foundational dialect for the literary language. As highlighted earlier, this situation can be explained by the lack of sufficient scientific experience at the time. However, despite these limitations, the creation of the first Uzbek alphabet, though not yet perfect, can be regarded as a significant positive milestone.

Regarding the second shortcoming, it is noted that the Latin equivalent for the **vov** letter is given as **u.** In our view, this likely refers to **y**, as the researcher also discusses **ӯ (long)** represented as **u (qyv)** and **ў (short)** represented as **u (kyl).** As N. Yangibayeva rightly points out, this is a publishing error. During the Scientific Council held on August 27–29 of the same year, the letters **u** and **y** were specifically addressed, and the issues regarding their selection for representing "thin" and "thick" vowels were highlighted. Furthermore, in the project mentioned by M. Bogdanova, **u** and **y** are distinctly represented.

The third shortcoming raised by N. Yangibayeva is also valid. The creators of the project followed the Azerbaijani Jadids, who had some prior experience with alphabet creation, and adopted letters directly from the Azerbaijani alphabet. However, they made little effort to provide explanations for their choices.

Despite these shortcomings, the creation of the first Uzbek alphabet was a critical step forward in the linguistic development of the Uzbek language, paving the way for subsequent refinements and adaptations.

The alphabets described by both specialists show notable differences, as outlined below:

Representation of the "j" sounds: N. Yangibayeva mentions that the letter z was used for two different "j" sounds (ҷ and ғ), while in the 1st project, only one "j" sound (ҷ) is represented, using

the letter ƶ.

Representation of the "sh" sound: In the 1st project, the letter ş was inexplicably used for the "sh" sound, while in the 2nd project, ɜ was chosen. Yangibayeva's variant is considered appropriate, as it aligns with the alphabet project developed at the August council that same year. Abdulla Alaviy also explained the rationale behind using ɜ in his discussion on the principles of creating the new Uzbek alphabet.

Uppercase and lowercase letters: The 1st project claims that letters were designed uniformly for writing and printing, with no uppercase letters, only lowercase. However, the table provided in the project includes both uppercase and lowercase letters. In contrast, the 2nd project exclusively displays lowercase letters, which aligns with the intentions of its creators.

Representation of the "g‘" sound (ғ): In the 1st project, no separate letter is assigned for the g‘ sound; instead, both g‘ and g are represented by the letter g, likely a publishing error. In the 2nd project, z is reported as the letter for ғ (e.g., in ozl-o‘g‘il), but the third noted issue suggests g was used for ‘ayn. Thus, it is more accurate to assume that g was indeed used for g‘, and Yangibayeva's analysis contains an error.

Using a single letter for two distinct sounds was also recognized as a serious flaw by the Scientific Center under the Uzbek People's Commissariat of Education. At a meeting on August 11, this alphabet was discussed, and the following shortcomings were identified: Noncompliance with vowel harmony: The May council’s project did not fully adhere to the principles of vowel harmony (singarmonizm).

Representation of short vowels:In words like قول and گول, only one letter was assigned to represent short vowels, while long vowels were represented by two letters. Excessive use of letter variants: Instead of using pairs of letters to distinguish front and back vowels (as typical in Turkic scripts), the project introduced three shapes (A, a, ə).

Unnecessary addition of Persian vowels:The Persian-derived vowel Ī (A), represented as ɔ in transcription, was deemed unnecessary. Deviation from the core goal: The purpose of transitioning from Arabic to Latin script was to simplify spelling and adopt standard Latin letters commonly used in European countries. However, the project included Cyrillic-like letters (u, g) and Slavic-style letters (ɵ, ə), which were experimental forms.

Neglect of Turkic alphabet experiences: The project failed to consider the Latin-based alphabets developed in other Turkic regions.Based on these criticisms, the Scientific Center did not approve the May council's project and instead presented its own proposal.

Proposal by H. Jamolkhonov.Long Vowels

The revised project included 12 vowels, with 10 being paired (representing front and back vowels) and 2 unpaired vowels. This revision aimed to address the linguistic and phonetic requirements of the Uzbek language while overcoming the flaws of previous proposals.

Paired Long Vowels

Back Vowels	**Soft Vowels**
a – qal, taş, at – ا	ä – käl, sämän, täkä – ه
o – toq, qol – و	ö – özbek, cöl, köl – ۇ
u – suv, jun, qul – ۇ	ü – sür, tübük, büyräk – و
ɔ - qɔl, qɔlɔq – ێ	ï – kïrmäk, bïlïm, yïl– ي
Iy – qiyg‘ir, qiyma–یی	ïy –kïymäk, tïymäk – ئي

Unpaired Long Vowels

e – el, sel, er, termäk, er – ي

uv – suv, quv – ۇۋ.

Eslatma sifatida quyidagi izohlar bildirilgani

keltiriladi:

"In terms of economy, five basic forms were adopted for long vowels, with two dots used as a marker to distinguish between thick and soft sounds. The reason for adopting two dots as a marker for softness was that this marker had been accepted in printing practices and by Turkologists (although no specific explanation was provided as to which Turkic alphabet included it). For the thick-long kasra (similar to the Russian **ы**) in words like *qiyma, qing'ir, qiyshiq* and the soft-long kasra in words like *kïymäk, tïymäk,* a complex marker was adopted because there is no existing form in the Latin script capable of representing these sounds. Similarly, for the zamma in words like *suv, quv, cuv,* a complex marker was also adopted for the reasons mentioned above" (*Jamolkhonov 2019, p. 48*).

The consonants (referred to as somt sounds or letters) in the project were presented as follows: Consonants (Somt Sounds) as Presented by H. Jamolkhonov

1. ب- b (*baba*)
2. چ- c (*bäccä*)
3. د- d (*dada*)
4. ف- f (*fiträt*)
5. گ- g (*gälä*)
6. ھ- h (*här*)
7. ج- j (*jar*)
8. ک- k (*käl*)
9. ل- l (*qul*)
10. م- m (*men*)
11. ن- n (*nonaq*)
12. ڭ- ng (*tang*)
13. پ- p (*apa*)
14. ق- q (*qaq*)
15. غ- ɑ (*qar*)
16. ر- r (*qar*)
17. س- s (*sel, saqal*)
18. ش- š (*aš*)
19. ت- t (*tal*)
20. ۋ- v (*av, ɑav*)
21. خ- x (*xatin*)
22. ي- y (*ay, yay, ayl*)
23. ز- ƶ (*muƶda*)
24. ʻ - apostrophe

(*Source: Jamolkhonov, p. 49*)

Vowel Analysis by N. Yangibayeva

N. Yangibayeva highlights that the project includes 12 long vowels (cho'zg'i) divided into two groups: **paired (jub)** and **unpaired** vowels. She notes that the alphabet proposed for vowels in this project significantly differs from earlier versions. The following letters are recommended for vowels:

1. **ä** - ە (*gäl, sämän*)
2. **ö** - ۇ (*köl, özbek*)
3. **ü** - ۈ (*sür, büiyräk*)
4. **iy** - ي (*murakkab tiymäk, kiymäk*)
5. **a** - ا (*at, taş*)
6. **o** - و (*toq, qol*)
7. **u** - ۇ (*cuv*)
8. **ɔ** - د (*qɔn, qɔymä*)

(*Source: Yangibayeva, p. 27*)

Vowels According to M. Bogdanova

M. Bogdanova presents the vowels from this project in a slightly different manner, further elaborating on the specific phonetic distinctions and markers used for their representation. Her detailed analysis highlights the complexity and variability in the vowel representation efforts. (Details from Bogdanova's analysis can be expanded upon if needed.)

According to N. Yangibayeva (p. 27),

Vowels

Eşlik	**Eşsiz**
ا - a	ه - a
و - o	ۇ - o
و - u	ۇ - u
ئ - i	ې - i
ئې - iy	يې - iy

Consonants

v ب	s چ	d د	f ف	g گ	h ھ
ç ج	k ك	l ل	m م	n ن	ng ڭ
p پ	q ق	ɑ غ	r ر	s س	ş ش
t ت	v ۋ	x خ	z ز		

Regarding the Projects Presented by Specialists

The following observations can be made about the proposed projects:

- In H. Jamolkhonov's project, vowels are categorized as **thick** and **soft**, but in the original version of the project, they are labeled as **hard** and **loose** vowels.

- N. Yangibayeva's vowel list excludes **i** and **e**, although her appendix may include them. However, she states that 12 long vowels are presented.

- In M. Bogdanova's version, vowels are classified as **thick (strong)** and **soft (weak)** vowels.

- Interestingly, M. Bogdanova uses the same symbols for both types of vowels, with distinctions only apparent in the Arabic script representation.

- For the explosive "j" sound, H. Jamolkhonov uses the **j** letter, whereas M. Bogdanova employs **ç**.

- In H. Jamolkhonov's project, the "sh" sound is represented by the **š** letter with a diacritic ˇ above it, while M. Bogdanova places the diacritic below the letter.

- In H. Jamolkhonov's project, the mixed "j" sound (ڑ) is represented by **ƶ**, while in M. Bogdanova's project, **z** is used exclusively for the explosive "j" sound (**ج**).

- The number of consonants is consistent between the two projects.

Criticism of the Projects

N. Yangibayeva highlights the following shortcomings in the projects:

"...The proliferation of diacritical marks (e.g., two dots) in letters creates difficulties in printing. The **iy** digraph is also problematic, particularly for back vowels, where the use of **ɔ** (in transcription) for a long vowel is hard to

comprehend. Additionally, the proposal to include the **uv** digraph as an unpaired vowel alongside **e** is not scientifically substantiated." (*Yangibayeva, pp. 26–27*)

Observations on Consonant Representation

Despite the improvements in consonant design, this project still has its advantages and drawbacks:

- In the previous project, a single letter **z** was used for both ҙ(fricative) and ҙ (mixed) consonants. In the new project, separate letters were assigned: **j** for ҙand **z** for ҙ. However, using separate letters for these two sounds may not be justified since words containing ҙin Uzbek are rare. Moreover, the adoption of **z** for ҙis considered unsuccessful.

- Similarly, the decision to use **z** for ғ ("g‘") is also problematic.

- For ң **(ŋ)** ("ng"), the use of the **ng** digraph deviates from the principle of assigning one shape to one letter. In this regard, the earlier project had a more consistent approach.

- In the previous project, **ɜ** was used for ш("sh"), which led to serious debates. In the new project, the use of **ş**, as in other Turkic languages, is considered more successful.

- In the earlier project, **j** was used for ы **(y)**, but in the new project, **y** is used, which is correct since **j** represents the "j" sound in the Latin script, while **y** corresponds to **ий** in the current Uzbek alphabet.

- The adoption of **j** for ҙin the current project is appropriate.

- The inclusion of the apostrophe (') in the new project enhances the orthographic system.

Influence of Tatar Linguistics

A natural question arises: from where did the Jadids derive the **iy** and **ïy** digraphs? As noted earlier, the Jadids maintained close connections with Tatar linguists regarding alphabet and orthography reforms. Figures like Fitrat, Elbek, and Qayum Ramazon relied on the works of Tatar linguists such as Olimjon Ibrahimov, Jamoliddin Validiy, and Fotih Sayfi for inspiration when writing textbooks and guides. They also adopted theoretical concepts and scientific terminology from these sources.

Tatar linguists like Fotih Sayfi, A. Sa'diy, and Sh. Ahmadiy shared their experiences with Uzbek linguists. At that time, Tatar linguists were divided into several schools of thought, with some advocating for eight vowels, others for six, and yet others for ten vowels. Among them, the "ten-vowel school" proposed that the **iy** and **uv** diphthongs be included in the list of vowels, bringing the total to ten. Inspired by this group, the Jadids incorporated these vowels into the Uzbek alphabet (*Bobomurodova, p. 132*).

About the Booklet *“Foundations for Developing the New Uzbek Alphabet”*

On August 27–29, 1926, a subsequent meeting of the Scientific Center was held to discuss a new alphabet project. This meeting focused on the recommendations made by the May conference and the new alphabet project approved during the Scientific Center's meeting on August 11, under the Uzbek People's Commissariat of Education. After analyzing the shortcomings in both projects, a more refined and scientifically grounded project was adopted.

The materials for this project were compiled by Abdulla Alaviy and published as a booklet titled *“Foundations for Developing the New Uzbek Alphabet”* in 1927. The project, though comprehensive and scientifically sound, contained some debatable aspects. It was intended to serve as Uzbekistan's final proposal to the upcoming Congress of Turkology in Baku. Abdulla Alaviy himself emphasized this in his article *“The New Project (Supporting the Scientific Center’s Project)”* published in the *Education and Teacher* journal, Issue 6, 1926:

"...The Scientific Center will soon convene a council meeting involving representatives from all over Uzbekistan to discuss this issue. The project adopted there will be presented at the Congress of Turkic Alphabets in Baku in September. We hope that a unified decision regarding the alphabet will be reached among Turkic peoples." (*Jamolkhonov II, p. 56*)

In the booklet itself, it is stated:

"...the decision on the Uzbek Latin script is based on strong scientific foundations, and the 'Conference for Unifying Alphabets' to be held in Baku will rule in favor of the Uzbek Latinists in this matter." (*Foundations for Developing the New Uzbek Alphabet*)

Key Features of the Project

1. Influence of Azerbaijani Experience

The project heavily relied on Azerbaijani practices, attempting to directly adopt their forms. Abdulla Alaviy noted:

"To avoid diverging from Azerbaijan, their vowels were adopted exactly. However, for some sounds, a more scientific approach was taken, slightly differing from Azerbaijan." (*Jamolkhonov II, p. 55*)

2. Classification of Sounds. The project divided sounds into two groups: vowels (sayitlar) and consonants (somtlar). Terms such as *"avazlar," "cho'zg'i harflar,"* and *"hurufe samt-hurufe sayt"* were used to describe vowels and consonants, influenced by Azerbaijani, Tatar, and Turkish linguistics.

3. Vowel Harmony. The project acknowledged the principle of vowel harmony (*singarmonizm*), stating: "As in all Turkic dialects, Uzbek also follows the law of vowel harmony: suffixes attached to thick words are also thick, while those attached to thin words are thin. This law, called *singarmonizm* in linguistics, has partially disappeared in urban areas due to Persian influence."

Categorization of Dialects: Dialects were classified based on the degree of Persian influence:

Highly Persianized: Samarkand dialect – 6 vowels. Moderately Persianized: Tashkent dialect – 6 vowels. Slightly Persianized: Fergana city dialect – 7–8 vowels. Minimal Persianization: Andijan dialect – 9 vowels.

4. Criticism of the Tashkent Dialect as a Standard. While Professor Polivanov proposed using the Tashkent dialect as the literary standard, local scholars opposed this idea. Elbek strongly criticized it, arguing that: "...The Tashkent dialect cannot serve as the basis for Uzbek literary language as it represents only a small fraction of the population and fails to align with the majority's linguistic heritage."

Recommended Vowels

The project proposed nine vowels, grouped as follows:

ا (a-alif): *at, tal, qalg'an*

ه (ə-hayi-havvaz): *mən, səmən, tən*

ى (e-ya): *yer, sel, ter*

و (o-vav): *qol, yol, tor*

و (ö-vav): *köl, cöl, tör*

و (u-vav): *qul, ur, tuz*

و (ü-vav): *kyl, yr, tyz*

ي (ь-ya): *qьl, xьl, alьm*

ي (i-ya): *sil, til, bilim*

Innovations and Debates

1. Adoption of Cyrillic Influences

Some letters, such as ь, were adapted from Cyrillic as a shortened form of the Russian ы rather than as a "soft sign."

2. Controversy Over Diphthongs

Diphthongs like uv-yv and iy-ьy sparked intense debates. Ultimately, these were classified as compound sounds (vowel + consonant), and the project opted for representations like uv, yv, iy, ьy.

3. Scientific Basis for Forms

The selection of symbols was guided by two principles: Ease of Writing. Alignment with Other Turkic Alphabets

Consequently, the shapes ä and ö were replaced with Azerbaijani ə and ɵ for simplicity and consistency with international phonetic standards.

4. Preservation of Vowel Length

The project highlighted the historical presence of long vowels in Turkic languages, asserting their phonological significance.

Legacy

About the Booklet *"Foundations for Developing*

the New Uzbek Alphabet"

Q. Mahmudov notes that primary long vowels in Turkic words were sporadically represented graphically in the first syllable and were marked with special symbols in some positions in the Orkhon-Yenisei inscriptions. For instance, Mahmud Kashgari denoted the long **a** vowel with double **alif**, the long **i** vowel with double **alif kasra**, and the long **u** vowel with an **alif** and double **vav** (*Ne'matov, p. 25*).

The booklet discusses these long vowels, mentioning that they have been preserved in Karachay, Turkmen, and Yakut languages, as well as in certain Uzbek dialects, such as Karabuloq. It states:

"Previously, the ancient Turkic language contained long sounds like **o:** and **a:**. These sounds are still preserved in some Turkic dialects (e.g., Karachay, Turkmen, and Yakut dialects) and in certain Uzbek dialects, such as the Karabuloq dialect. There are distinctions between words like *o:d* (fire), *ot* (grass) or *a:d* (name), and *at* (stallion)." (*Foundations for Developing the New Uzbek Alphabet*, p. 12)

The phenomenon of vowel length resulting from the dropping of consonants (**g, g', y, h**) in the middle or end of words is also noted. For example:

bӣz (needle, *bigiz*)

kӣz (felt, *kigiz*)

qӣn (difficulty, *qiyin*) (*Ne'matov, p. 25*)

The booklet also mentions how such phenomena occur when two syllables merge, as seen in Kyrgyz, where vowel length distinguishes meanings:

yer (ground) vs. **ye:r** (saddle)

Insights on Diphthongs

The booklet discusses diphthongs, clarifying that Uzbek lacks diphthongs in the strict phonemic sense. Instead, these are tightly pronounced adjacent vowels within a single syllable. Diphthongs are described as:

"The combination of two vowels within a single syllable."

In Uzbek, the second component of diphthongs is usually a semivowel derived from a voiced consonant, assimilated by the preceding vowel. The two semivowels **v** and **y** are identified as significant contributors to this phenomenon (*Mirtojiyev, pp. 80–85*).

The Jadids referred to diphthongs as "compound vowels" (*chifta sayitalar*), explaining:

"In these cases, thin vowels are combined with adjacent **v** or **j** sounds, forming words like *av, aj, oj,* as well as *uv (suv), ьj (ij).* For example, the word *suv* originated as *su,* with the **v** sound described by Mahmud al-Kashgari as lying between **v** and **f**, akin to the Ottoman Turkish *vazn*. Over time, this sound was recognized as consonantal but retained certain vowel-like qualities." (*Foundations for Developing the New Uzbek Alphabet*, p. 13)

This interpretation aligns closely with modern linguistic views on Uzbek phonology.

Representation of Long Vowels

The booklet critiques the representation of long vowels in Hungarian and Finnish, where they are denoted with double letters (e.g., **oo**, **aa**), suggesting that the Yakut-style notation (**o:**, **a:**) is more appropriate. Current Uzbek linguistics similarly employs **a:** or **ā** to denote long vowels in phonetic studies (*Abdurahmonov, Ne'matov, Mahmudov, Mirtojiyev, Jamolkhonov*).

Simplification Principles in Alphabet Design

The authors of the project adhered to the principle of simplicity, following the rule of "one sound, one symbol." They avoided the use of complex letters or diacritical marks, emphasizing practicality in writing. On this, the booklet states:

"The goal was to ensure that the alphabet would be accessible and functional, avoiding unnecessary complexity or deviation from international practices."

This approach was instrumental in aligning the Uzbek alphabet with broader linguistic and pedagogical standards while maintaining its unique cultural and phonetic characteristics.

"1. Writing should be as conducive as possible to analysis, meaning that it should be divided into its

basic elements wherever possible. Letters that represent multiple sounds (such as the Greek letter *is*, which exemplifies false economy) should be avoided. 2. The number of letters should not be excessive but as minimal as possible." (*Foundations for Developing the New Uzbek Alphabet*, p. 15).

Consonants

The booklet does not provide explanations for the letters **f, d, h, j, e, m, n, p, r, s, t, z**, as these are already used in the Latin alphabet with the same meanings. It states that there is no need to scientifically justify their inclusion in the Uzbek alphabet. However, the selection of the following letters is explained:

For the sound ў, the **v** shape was chosen instead of the **w** used in the Latin alphabet. The rationale for this decision is as follows:

Graphical economy and simplicity: While it is customary in Europe to use **v** for labiodental sounds and **w** for bilabial sounds, such a distinction does not exist in Uzbek. The language contains only a single bilabial sound, ў. Therefore, either letter could suffice, but **v** was chosen for simplicity.

Indeed, linguists have noted that these two sounds are not distinguished in Uzbek. For example, H. Ne'matov states that **v** (labiodental) and **v** (bilabial) were not characteristic of ancient Turkic languages and instead emerged in later developmental stages, derived from **b** and **g'** sounds in the middle and end of words (*Ne'matov, pp. 63–64*).

Similarly, Q. Sodiqov, who studied Turkic written monuments, supports this view (*Sodiqov, p. 122*). Additionally, G'. Abdurahmonov and A. Rustamov observe that only the bilabial **v** is used in Alisher Navoiy's works (*Abdurahmonov, p. 17*).

Thus, the choice of **v** by the project authors is scientifically sound and well-founded.

For the ҳ sound in Uzbek, the **x** shape from the Cyrillic alphabet was adopted because the Latin alphabet does not have a character to represent this sound. Additionally, the fact that the Azerbaijani alphabet also uses the same shape was another reason for this choice, as explained by the project authors.

Regarding the Letters c (ҷ) and z (ҷ):

Since the Latin alphabet lacks letters to represent the sounds ҷ and ҷ, the commission faced two options:

1.To represent these sounds with multiple letters, as in **ch** in English or **tsch** in German.

2.To create new letters or assign new shapes or meanings to existing letters, similar to **ŝ** and **ĉ** in the international phonetic alphabet. These letters were created by adding a diacritic (ˇ) to **s** and **c** to produce **š** and **č**.

The project participants rejected the first option, adhering to their principle of "one sound, one letter." They explained their decision as follows:

"The approach taken by the conference was highly fundamental and scientific, adhering to the principle of 'one sound, one letter.' Even for the sound ң, the scientific center's proposed **ng** was rejected because it consisted of two letters. Instead, the newly designed single letter ⍰ was adopted." (*Foundations for Developing the New Uzbek Alphabet*, pp. 19–20).

The participants decided to use the letter **c** for the sound ҷ. This decision aligned with several other projects, including the alphabet developed under the Eastern Nations Publishing House in Moscow, the scientific alphabet created by linguists and Turkologists at the Russian Academy of Sciences, the Yakut alphabet, and several other Turkic language alphabets. However, it differed from the Azerbaijani alphabet, which used **c** for ҷ and **ç** for ҷ.

Yakut Influence on the Choice of c for ҷ

The Yakuts were among the first Turkic peoples to use **c** for ҷ. Their alphabet, designed by Novgorodov, was based on principles from the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). In the IPA, **c** and **s** represent **dz** and **ts** sounds, with diacritic marks (ˇ) added to represent **č** and **š** for ҷ and ҷ. However, in the Yakut alphabet, these diacritics were omitted, and **c** and **z** were used instead.

Following the Yakut example, the Uzbek alphabet conference adopted **c** for ҷ without the diacritic

mark. Using **č** for ҷwould have violated the conference's design principles, as diacritic marks contradicted their foundational rules.

Azerbaijani Approach to ҷ and ҷ

Azerbaijani scholars chose **c** for ҷand **ç** for ҷ because the Latin alphabetical order aligned with the Arabic script's sequence. For example:

ҷ→ c

ب→ b

ا→ a

This choice reflected a preference for maintaining consistency between the Latin and Arabic alphabets. However, this approach was considered innovative and specific to the "New Path" alphabet, designed by Azerbaijani scholars in 1922 under the "New Turkic Alphabet Committee" in Baku. This innovation was not observed in other Latin-based Turkic alphabets.

Conclusion on c for ҷ and ƶ for ҷ

While the Yakut and Leningrad alphabets influenced the adoption of **c** for ҷ, the Uzbek project took a unique approach by selecting **ƶ** for ҷ. This decision was based on the Azerbaijani alphabet's use of **ƶ** for ژ, as well as the fact that ژ did not have a significant role in Uzbek, being primarily found in foreign words. The booklet notes:

"For example, the word ژورنال(journal) is pronounced as جورنال(djurnal) by most people. Words containing ژare rare, so there is no significant need for a separate letter to represent this sound." (*Foundations for Developing the New Uzbek Alphabet*, p. 19).

However, while the selection of **ƶ** for ҷwas scientifically justified, it proved impractical. Consequently, at the 1929 Baku conference, **ç** was adopted for ҷas part of the unified Turkic alphabet.

On k (ك) and q (ق)

For ق, the letter **q** was adopted, and for ك, **k** was chosen. The authors noted that no other options were available in the Latin script to represent these sounds. This decision aligned with other Turkic language projects using the Latin alphabet.

ҷ	ب	ا
c	b	a.

When discussing the alphabetical similarities, it is noted that all languages originate from a single source — the Phoenician language (*Foundations for Developing the New Uzbek Alphabet*, p. 18).

Regarding the Azerbaijani scholars' adoption of **c** for the sound ҷ, it is stated that there was no precedent for this approach in the writing systems of nations using the Latin script. This innovation is considered the invention of those who designed the "New Path" alphabet. Notably, in May 1922, the "New Turkic Alphabet" committee was established in Baku by Azerbaijani intellectuals. The "New Path" newspaper, published by this committee, presented the alphabet project (*Ibrahimov, p. 41; Bilal N. Şimşir, p. 6*).

After the Azerbaijani authors chose **c** for ҷ, they adopted **ç** for ҷ, influenced by the similarity between ҷand ҷin the Arabic script. This Azerbaijani innovation is noted as being absent in other alphabets. The booklet also provides information on the use of **c** in French, where it represents س, and in the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA), where it denotes a sound between كۇand سۇ.

Additionally, details are given about how **c** is used in various languages:

1. In medieval Latin pronunciation, **c** before **e** and **i** represents **s** (as in تس).

2. In classical Latin, **c** represents **g** before all vowels, while in medieval Latin, it represents **g** before **a, o, u**.

3. In Italian, **c** before **e, i** is pronounced as ҷ, and in French, it represents س(*Foundations for Developing the New Uzbek Alphabet*, p. 19).

The Karachays, like the Azerbaijanis, adopted **c** for ҷand **ç** for ҷ. However, while the project authors followed the Yakut and Leningrad alphabets in choosing **c** for ҷ, they took a distinct approach for ҷ, selecting **ƶ** for this sound. The reasoning behind this choice is explained as follows: the Azerbaijani alphabet used **ƶ** for the sound ژ, and the project did

not assign a separate letter for ژ. This was because ژwas rarely pronounced by the majority, except for scholars familiar with other languages or speakers of certain dialects. The booklet explains:

"For instance, most people pronounce the word ژورنال(journal) as جورنال(djurnal). Words containing ژare not numerous, so there is no significant need for a dedicated letter to represent it." (*Foundations for Developing the New Uzbek Alphabet*, p. 19). Indeed, the sliding **j** sound in Old Turkic appeared only in imitative words, and in Old Uzbek, it was used exclusively in Persian loanwords. Its more widespread use in Uzbek was due to the direct influence of the Russian language (*Ne'matov, p. 65*). From this perspective, the Jadids' scientific reasoning was valid. However, the selection of **z** for جproved unsuccessful. Consequently, at the 1929 Baku Congress, where a unified Turkic alphabet was adopted, **ç** was chosen for **ج**.

On k (ك) and q (ق): The project authors adopted **q** for قand **k** for ك, noting that there were no other shapes in the Latin alphabet used by nations that employ these sounds. They justified their choice by aligning with the following systems:

1. The International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) and widely accepted European academic transcription systems. In these systems, the letter k consistently represents the deep front sound ك, while q represents the deep back sound ق. This standard originates from the Latin script itself. In ancient Latin, k often substituted for c, with s always representing the non-deep ك, and q denoting the deep ق.
2. The Yakut alphabet.
3. The Leningrad scientific project and several other proposals.

In this matter, only the Karachays diverged, following the Azerbaijani alphabet by using **k** for ق and **q** for ك. Thus, the project authors did not align with their Azerbaijani colleagues in selecting these letters. They also explained their reasoning for not adopting the Azerbaijani approach:

"While the Yakuts based their choices on an international phonetic alphabet, Azerbaijan did not rely on any phonetic transcription system. Instead, Russian and French alphabetic influences played a significant role. (Overall, it is evident that the 'New Path' alphabet was heavily influenced by the Russian script; for instance, their adoption of ۋ for **u** demonstrates this.) Their choice of **q** for ك likely stemmed from the French name for this letter, *qu*. Presumably, they adopted this approach and then reversed **k** for ق. This rationale, of course, is very weak. We anticipate that the 'New Path' view on this matter will be revised at the upcoming 'Conference for Alphabet Unification' in Baku." (*Foundations for Developing the New Uzbek Alphabet*, p. 21).

On g (گ) and g‘ (غ)

The voiced back-of-the-tongue sounds گ and غ posed significant challenges for experts in assigning corresponding Latin script letters. While ق and ك were represented as *q* and *k* in the Latin alphabet, no specific letters existed for غ and گ. The authors of the project, relying on the intrinsic meaning of Latin letters and their pronunciation in derived writing systems, opted for the use of *g* to represent گ. Although in French and English, this letter represents a *k* sound only before the vowels *o*, *a*, and *u* and is read as ژ (*j*) in French and ج (*c*) in English before other vowels, it consistently represents ك (*k*) in German, Finnish, Estonian, Hungarian, and Latin scripts.

For the غ sound, some experts suggested adopting a letter combination similar to the French *ch-* for ش (*sh*), but the majority opposed this, as it violated the conference principle of "one sound – one letter." Similarly, the forms ĝ and ğ, created with the *v* mark, were rejected due to their complexity and the difficulties they posed in writing. After extensive debate, the ɑ form was chosen. This character appears in the written form of the ancient German *g‘ut* script and is used in the Azerbaijani alphabet, though in the latter case, it represents گ rather than غ. Therefore, in the Uzbek alphabet, it was deemed correct and justified to use *g* for the shallow back-of-the-tongue *k* sound and ɑ for the deep back-of-the-tongue *q* sound.

On ŋ (ڭ)

The sound ŋ (ڭ) also became a subject of intense debate among the project authors. Some argued

that it was a complex sound and noted that in German and English, it is represented by the letter combination *ng*. They proposed using the same approach as in those languages. However, the majority of Jadids emphasized that in Turkic dialects with vowel harmony, this sound is simple and does not separate into *n* and *g*. They stated:

"Some colleagues claim that this sound is complex. This may be true for certain assimilated dialects, but even then, it is not universal. For example, in Tashkent, the word *yangi* ('new') may sound complex, but in words like *yiğ* ('to cry') or *kiğ* ('to laugh'), it is simple. In vowel-harmonic dialects, it is always simple. For instance, in syllables like *qal-di-ŋiz* or *kel-di-ŋiz* ('you have come'), this sound is simple. Its simplicity can also be demonstrated by showing how, in modern Istanbul dialects, it has transformed into *n*." (*Fundamentals of Constructing the New Uzbek Alphabet*, p. 22).

Therefore, they deemed it appropriate to adopt the ŋ form used in the Azerbaijani alphabet, the International Phonetic Alphabet, and the Yakut script. The Jadids insisted on assigning a separate letter for this sound in the alphabet, a decision widely praised since linguists acknowledged it as one of the oldest sounds in the Turkic languages (Ne'matov, p. 65; Mahmudov, p. 66).

During the conference, some specialists proposed creating a separate letter for the ڭغ (ng') sound, citing examples like *dutarim diŋilladi* ('my dutar resonated') or *eshagim diŋilladi* ('my donkey resonated'). However, this proposal was rejected. The opposition reasoned that if this were accepted, it would necessitate introducing separate letters for distinctions like the thick *l* in *tal* ('field') and the thin *l* in *til* ('language'), which would complicate the alphabet unnecessarily. The existence of such variations in Kipchak dialects has been noted in scholarly literature (Mirtojiyev, pp. 78–79).

The prominent writer Abdulla Qodiriy used the "ng'" letter combination to represent this sound in his novel *Mehrobdan Chayon*. He explained:

"Since Khudoyorkhan grew up among Kipchaks, his Uzbek speech reflects this. The *ng* sound in *enalaring* ('your mothers') is pronounced thickly as *ng'*. This thick *ng'* can still be heard among modern Ferghana Uzbeks, especially in rural areas, where it is used instead of the soft *ng*. However, our current reformed alphabet lacks a specific letter for this thick *ng'*. Although combining the letters *n-g'* creates the sound, readers might mispronounce it, as each person would interpret it differently. This thick *ng'* is not limited to a few words in Uzbek but is used in many (dozens of) words, necessitating the adoption of a distinct character, in my opinion. For example, common words include: *zang'*, *pang'*, *lang'*, *darang'*, *qalang'i-qasang'i*, *dang'*, *to'ng'uz* ('pig'), *shang'i*, *to'ng'*, *to'ng'uch* ('firstborn'), *ang'iz*, *ting'*, among others. The old *ning* was reformed as *ng*. Perhaps this thick *ng'* could also be written with the letter *g'* marked with three dots." (Qodiriy, p. 346).

On з (ш)

The project authors addressed the reasons for selecting the letter *з* to represent the sound ш, emphasizing the absence of a specific letter for this sound in both Latin and Greek scripts. In modern European languages, this sound is represented by various combinations of letters, such as *ch* in French, *sh* in English, *sch* in Latin, and *sz* in Polish. However, instead of adopting such multi-character representations, the authors decided to create a new character.

The letter *š*, used in the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA), was not chosen due to its complexity in writing, and similarly, the Russian letter *ш* was also deemed unsuitable for the same reason. Consequently, the shape *з*, which is employed in the Azerbaijani alphabet, was adopted for this sound (*Fundamentals of Constructing the New Uzbek Alphabet*, p. 24).

As this example illustrates, the Jadid intellectuals extensively referred to numerous sources when selecting letters for Uzbek sounds. They analyzed the strengths and weaknesses of these systems before finalizing their choices.

M. Bogdanova critiqued the shortcomings of these projects, noting the following:

"The projects presented by the Uzbeks (the May, Scientific Center, and August projects) were not constructed on a single principle. Essentially, the distinction between the thick and thin variants of

vowels was acknowledged. Instead of assigning separate symbols for thick and thin series in consonants, a single set of consonant letters was proposed. Words' thick or thin nature was indicated by vowels, except for a few consonants like *q-k* and *ƣ-g*. For vowels, however, distinct letters were provided for thick and thin series. Thus, vowels served as differentiators for consonants. The vowels clarified the sound structure and meanings of words.

There were no significant disagreements regarding the consonant inventory, which comprised 23 sounds across all the projects. Although all the projects were based on dialects with vowel harmony, they differed significantly in the inventory of vowels."

Bogdanova's critique highlighted the diverse approaches taken in the projects and the challenges of achieving consistency across the proposed alphabets.

The Alphabet Adopted at the 1927 Samarkand Conference

On May 28, 1927, a New Alphabet Council was convened in Samarkand at the initiative of the Uzbekistan Commissariat of Education. This council, organized on a Central Asian scale, included representatives from Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. Over the course of two days, the council addressed the issue of creating a unified alphabet based on the new alphabets of the Turkic peoples of Central Asia. The council relied on the following principles for the unified new alphabet:

1. **Unified Letters for Shared Sounds:**
Letters (characters) for sounds common to all Central Asian peoples were unified.

2. **Distinct Letters for Unique Sounds:**
Sounds specific to a particular language were assigned unique letters, and these letters were incorporated into the shared alphabet. For instance, while Uzbek and Kyrgyz have the sound ش (*z*), Kazakh substitutes it with س (*s*). A separate letter was adopted for this sound. Similarly, the letter خ (*x*) exists in Uzbek but not in Kyrgyz; however, the shape (*x*) for this sound was included in the shared alphabet.

3. **Economizing Letters Based on Harmony Laws:**
Recognizing that the phonological rule of vowel harmony (thick vs. thin vowels) exists in all Turkic languages of Central Asia, the council economized in assigning letters. Only thick sounds were given unique shapes, while their thin counterparts were marked with a special symbol to indicate thinness. This approach economized on characters: five shapes (letters) were used for nine vowels, and 23 shapes (letters) for 39 consonants, resulting in a total of 28 letters.

4. **Principles for Selecting Letters:**

a) Shapes for sounds were derived strictly from the Latin alphabet, or alphabets based on it, if not directly available in Latin.

b) Letters were selected to match the sounds they represented in Latin.

c) Care was taken to avoid similarities between letters.

d) Diacritics (dots or marks above or below letters) were avoided as much as possible.

e) No complex shapes were assigned to a single sound.

f) For simplicity and cost-effectiveness in education, a single shape was adopted for each letter, meaning lowercase letters were used for both uppercase and lowercase forms, as well as for printed and handwritten versions.

A single symbol, the "thinness marker" (*ѵ*), was used to indicate the thin (soft) variant of thick sounds. This marker was placed at the beginning of soft words but was omitted when the softness was visually apparent (e.g., in words like *k*, *g*, or *e*-initial words, which are inherently soft) (Jamolkhonov II, p. 88).

Alphabet Adopted at the Conference:

On May 28-29, 1927, the representatives of Uzbek, Kazakh, and Kyrgyz republics at the council in Samarkand agreed upon this unified alphabet.

a	b	ƶ (j)	d	e
q	γ (g‘)	k	g	i
l	m	n	ŋ (ng)	o
p	r	s	z (sh)	t
u	c (ch)	z	y	v
x	h	f	v The Thinness Marker	‘ apostrof

In the May, August, and Scientific Council projects, the principle of vowel harmony (singarmonizm) was considered only for consonants. However, in the Central Asian Council project, this principle was also applied to vowels. This allowed nine vowel sounds to be represented using just five letters:

a = a, ə

o = o

u = u, y

i = ь, i

e

In July 1927, the first plenary session of the Commission on the Latinization of Common Turkic Scripts was convened in Baku. During this plenary, the scripts of Turkic peoples living across the Soviet Union were unified. Previously, the various projects based on Latin script hindered the collective efforts of Soviet Turkic peoples. However, unifying the script alone was insufficient; a unified orthography was also necessary.

The first plenary session aimed to create a unified orthography based on phonetics while also partially considering morphology. The project developed during the plenary session adhered to the following principles:

1. The principle of vowel harmony (singarmonizm) was applied only to consonants when creating the alphabet.

2. For vowels, the application of the vowel harmony principle was left to the needs and preferences of individual peoples.

3. Letters were standardized in four forms: uppercase, lowercase, printed, and handwritten. The Uzbeks, however, opted to use only lowercase printed and handwritten forms, excluding uppercase letters.

4. Since the Latin alphabet lacked sufficient characters to accommodate Turkic phonetics, additional characters suitable for Turkic phonetics were introduced.

5. The shapes of the letters were designed to be distinct from one another.

6. The letters were made simple and straightforward.

7. The design of the letters was made compatible with printing technologies.

8. Proposed new letters were made to resemble the forms of the existing Latin alphabet as closely as possible.

The unified new Turkic alphabet approved by the first plenary session:

Aa أ	Bv ب	Cs ج	Çç چ	Dd د	Ee ې
Əə ه	Ff ف	Gg گ	Hh ھ	Ii ئ	Ь ې
Jj ي	Kk ك	Ll ل	Mm م	Nn ن	Ɲŋ ڭ
Oo و	Өө ۇ	Pp پ	Qq ق	Ƣƣ غ	Rr ر
Ss س	Şş ش	Tt ت	Uu ۇ	Vv ۋ	Xx خ
Uu و	Zz ز	Ƶƶ ژ	‘ apostrof	ьj-ij	uv- yv

M. Bogdanova noted that the unified new Turkic alphabet was based on dialects with vowel harmony. It included 23 letters for consonants and 9 letters for vowels. From a graphical perspective, the new alphabet did not solely rely on the Latin script but also incorporated elements from several other scripts. In terms of the meaning assigned to the letters, their significance differed significantly from their original (primary) meanings. Due to these factors, the international value of the new Turkic alphabet was considerably diminished, as highlighted by Bogdanova.

CONCLUSION

The creation of several independent alphabet projects during the transition to the Latin script demonstrates that the Jadids were deeply invested in developing a comprehensive national alphabet. These alphabet projects were actively discussed in the press and at various conferences, with errors and shortcomings being systematically corrected. The Jadid educational reformers referred to the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA), the scientific transcription methods of Leningrad scholars, as well as the English, German, French,

and Italian languages. Their awareness of Russian and European linguistics is also highlighted in this context, which counters the claim that Uzbek linguistics was underdeveloped during the Jadid era.

Analyzing the principles adopted by the council in creating a unified alphabet for Uzbek, Kazakh, and Kyrgyz intellectuals reveals that qualified specialists were involved, and the established criteria were based on scientific grounds. Notably, efforts were made to avoid placing dots or marks above or below letters, to prevent letters from resembling each other, and to consider the specific features of all languages—a particularly commendable approach.

Regardless of whether this alphabet was fully adopted, the mere effort to promote regional unity and collaboration at that time was a highly significant and positive development.

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