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**Jadid Enlightenment and the Development of Uzbek
Educational Culture: A Synergetic Interpretation**

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Abstract. This article offers a socio-philosophical interpretation of Jadid enlightenment as a complex reform movement that transformed Uzbek educational culture in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Turkestan. Rather than attributing a formal theory of synergetics to the Jadids, the study uses synergetics retrospectively as an analytical lens for examining the interaction of schools, textbooks, the press, theatre, literature, language reform, moral education, and national consciousness. The research applies historical-logical analysis, comparison, synthesis, and systems interpretation to selected works by Abdulla Avloniy, Mahmudkhoja Behbudiy, Abdurauf Fitrat, and Begali Qosimov, alongside the theoretical contributions of Hermann Haken and Ilya Prigogine. The findings show that new-method schools acted as an organizing center within a wider enlightenment network, while print culture and theatre amplified reformist ideas across social groups. Jadid educational modernization combined secular knowledge, moral formation, national language, and cultural memory rather than treating them as isolated objectives. The article concludes that a synergetic interpretation is productive only when used as a heuristic model, not as evidence that Jadid thinkers explicitly formulated modern complexity theory. Their legacy remains relevant to educational modernization, critical thinking, and the responsible integration of national and universal values.

Keywords: Jadidism, enlightenment, synergetics, educational culture, national awakening, new-method school, modernization, self-organization, national identity, critical thinking

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**Cədid maarifçiliyi və özbək təhsil mədəniyyətinin inkişafı:
Sinergetik interpretasiya**

Musurmonqul Sattorov 

Xülasə. Məqalədə XIX əsrin sonu və XX əsrin əvvəllərində Türkiyədə formalaşmış cədid maarifçiliyi özbək təhsil mədəniyyətini dəyişdirən mürəkkəb islahat hərəkatı kimi sosial-fəlsəfi baxımdan təhlil olunur. Tədqiqat cədidlərə formal sinergetika nəzəriyyəsi aid etmir; sinergetikadan məktəb, dərslər, mətbuat, teatr, ədəbiyyat, dil islahatı, əxlaqi tərbiyə və milli şüur arasındakı qarşılıqlı əlaqəni izah edən retrospektiv analitik çərçivə kimi istifadə edir. Tarixi-məntiqi təhlil, müqayisə, sintez və sistemli şərh metodları Abdulla Avloni, Mahmudxoja Behbudi, Əbdürauf Fitrat və Bəqali

Qasimovun əsərlərinə, həmçinin Hermann Haken və İlya Priqojinin nəzəri yanaşmalarına tətbiq olunur. Nəticələr yeni üsul məktəblərinin daha geniş maarifçilik şəbəkəsində təşkilatlandırıcı mərkəz rolunu oynadığını, mətbuat və teatrın isə islahatçı ideyaların sosial qruplar arasında yayılmasını gücləndirdiyini göstərir. Cədid modernləşməsi dünyəvi bilik, mənəvi tərbiyə, milli dil və mədəni yaddaşı vahid sistemdə birləşdirmişdir. Sinergetik şərh yalnız evristik model kimi tətbiq edildikdə elmi cəhətdən əsaslıdır. Bu yanaşma cədid irsinin müasir təhsil modernləşməsi, tənqidi düşüncə və milli dəyərlərlə ümumbəşəri biliklərin məsuliyyətli uzlaşdırılması baxımından əhəmiyyətini də aydınlaşdırır.

Açar sözlər: *cədidçilik, maarifçilik, sinergetika, təhsil mədəniyyəti, milli oyanış, yeni üsul məktəbi, modernləşmə, özünütəşkil, milli kimlik, tənqidi düşüncə*

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Introduction

The Jadid movement that emerged in Turkestan at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century occupies a decisive place in the history of national awakening, enlightenment, and modernization in Central Asia. It was not merely a pedagogical campaign directed at school reform. Jadidism combined educational, cultural, ethical, literary, journalistic, and political aspirations within a broader project of social renewal (Allworth, 1990; Baldauf, 2001; Khalid, 1998). Its leading representatives regarded modern knowledge, moral education, national self-awareness, and intellectual autonomy as mutually reinforcing conditions of collective development.

The movement arose under colonial rule, economic backwardness, limited access to modern education, and a widening gap between inherited forms of instruction and the demands of a rapidly changing world (Carrère d'Encausse, 1988; Morrison, 2008). Jadid thinkers criticized educational practices based predominantly on rote memorization and proposed new-method schools, phonetic literacy instruction, graded classrooms, modern curricula, and textbooks suited to pupils' age and comprehension. They also advocated the teaching of mathematics, geography, history, natural sciences, accounting, foreign languages, and practical knowledge alongside moral and religious education.

Mahmudkhoja Behbudiy, Abdulla Avloniy, Abdurauf Fitrat, Munavvarqori Abdurashidkhonov, and other reformers did not restrict their efforts to the classroom. They created textbooks, newspapers, journals, dramatic works, publishing initiatives, and public lectures intended to cultivate an educated, independent-minded, and socially responsible person. Behbudiy treated worldly knowledge as indispensable to the survival and development of the nation (Behbudiy, 1999). Avloniy understood education and upbringing as matters upon which the future of society depended (Avloniy, 1992). Fitrat linked knowledge and free thought to national advancement while insisting that modernization should not erase language, memory, or cultural identity (Fitrat, 2000).

The conceptual difficulty lies in how this diverse activity should be interpreted. A conventional institutional history may describe schools, publications, and theatre separately, but it can miss the feedback relations among them. A purely intellectual history may reconstruct ideas while underestimating the media and organizations that circulated those ideas. A synergetic approach offers

a possible solution by asking how multiple interacting components generated effects that no single component could have produced independently.

Synergetics was developed by Hermann Haken as an interdisciplinary framework for analyzing cooperation, instability, order formation, and self-organization in complex systems (Haken, 1983). Prigogine and Stengers (1984) further demonstrated how open systems far from equilibrium may generate new structures under conditions of instability. When transferred to social and cultural analysis, these concepts must be used cautiously. Human actors interpret meanings, pursue interests, and exercise agency; societies are not physical systems. Synergetics should therefore function as a heuristic vocabulary rather than as a literal law of history.

This qualification is crucial because the Jadids did not use the term “synergetics” and did not formulate twentieth-century complexity theory. It would be anachronistic to present them as synergetic theorists. What can be defended is a retrospective synergetic interpretation of their reform strategy: they understood that changes in schooling, morality, language, the press, theatre, family education, and national consciousness were interdependent. The present study analyzes that interdependence and clarifies the methodological limits of the analogy.

The purpose of the article is to explain how the Jadid enlightenment network contributed to the development of Uzbek educational culture and to evaluate the usefulness of a synergetic interpretation. The study addresses three questions: Which institutions and cultural practices formed the Jadid enlightenment system? How did their interaction amplify educational and national reform? Under what conditions can the concepts of self-organization, openness, and emergence be applied without distorting the historical evidence?

Materials and Methods

The article is a qualitative, theoretical study based on historical and philosophical interpretation. Its primary intellectual sources include selected works by Avloniy (1992), Behbudiy (1999), and Fitrat (2000). Begali Qosimov’s study of the Uzbek national awakening provides the principal Uzbek-language historical synthesis of the movement (Qosimov, 2002). The institutional and comparative historical record is reconstructed through studies of Jadid reform, colonial Turkestan, publishing, and educational organization (Allworth, 1990; Baldauf, 2001; Kaldybekovich et al., 2013; Khalid, 1994, 1998; Morrison, 2008). For the press, the analysis also uses Azimov’s (2022) study of 269 Jadid newspaper articles and its documented publication histories of Xurshid, Oyina, and Sadoyi Turkiston. The conceptual framework is drawn from Haken’s account of synergetics and Prigogine and Stengers’s treatment of open, non-equilibrium systems.

Historical analysis was used to situate Jadidism within the colonial and socio-cultural conditions of Turkestan. The logical method clarified the relations among education, enlightenment, modernization, national identity, and social development. Analysis separated the movement into institutional components, while synthesis reconstructed the interaction of schools, textbooks, publishing, the press, theatre, literature, and language reform. Comparison was used to distinguish traditional and new-method instruction and to compare the roles of different cultural institutions. To prevent theoretical categories from replacing historical evidence, each result was mapped to at least one primary published text or a comparative historical source before it was interpreted through synergetics.

The synergetic interpretation employed four analytical categories. Openness refers to the exchange of ideas, knowledge, texts, and educational practices across local and international environments. Interaction denotes the mutual influence of institutions and actors. Self-organization refers to the

emergence of networks and initiatives without a single centralized command. Emergence designates system-level outcomes, such as national public debate and a new educational culture, that exceeded the isolated activity of one school or publication.

These categories were applied as interpretive tools, not as proof of historical causality. The study does not claim that physical models can be transferred unchanged to society. Nor does it measure network density, institutional influence, or educational outcomes statistically. Accordingly, the Results section distinguishes between documented historical observations and the author's analytical synthesis: the former are supported by published Jadid texts and historical studies, while the latter is presented explicitly as a heuristic interpretation requiring further archival and empirical testing.

Results

The first result—that the new-method school functioned as an organizing institutional node—is derived from both Jadid pedagogical texts and comparative historical evidence. Avloniy's *Turkiy guliston yoxud axloq* joins instruction with the formation of honesty, diligence, responsibility, and attachment to the nation (Avloniy, 1992). Historical studies further document the use of phonetic literacy instruction, the inclusion of secular subjects, and the establishment of reform initiatives by different groups of educators in Tashkent, Samarkand, Bukhara, the Ferghana Valley, and Khiva (Kaldybekovich et al., 2013; Khalid, 1998). This evidence supports the narrower conclusion that the school reorganized both curriculum and the social conception of the learner; it does not by itself prove that the school controlled the wider movement.

The reform of instruction was inseparable from moral education. Avloniy's pedagogical project linked knowledge to honesty, diligence, patriotism, responsibility, and respect for human dignity (Avloniy, 1992). Jadid textbooks were designed in simple and practical language and sought to account for the age and psychological characteristics of learners. Their objective was not the accumulation of information alone but the formation of an intellectually and morally developed person.

The second result—the institutional coupling of school and print culture—is supported by the documented content and publication histories of the Jadid press. Azimov's (2022) analysis of 269 newspaper articles shows that Jadid periodicals were used to discuss and promote projects of social modernization. His reconstruction identifies Xurshid among the first-period newspapers, records Behbudiy's transition from the Samarqand newspaper to the *Oyina* journal, which produced 68 issues, and documents *Sadoyi Turkiston* as a literary, economic, and scientific newspaper that also addressed women's social position. *Taraqqiy*, *Xurshid*, *Sadoyi Turkiston*, and *Oyina* therefore did more than announce events: they provided recurring venues for debate about ignorance, education, social reform, public responsibility, and national development (Azimov, 2022; Khalid, 1994, 1998).

This documentary record supports a synergetic interpretation of the press as an amplification mechanism. Reports, editorials, readers' appeals, and polemics allowed a local educational problem to become a subject of discussion across cities and readerships. The circulation of *Terjiman* among subscribers in Margilan, Tashkent, Bukhara, Samarkand, Turkestan, and Ak-Mechet, followed by locally edited publications, provides historical evidence of cross-local textual exchange rather than merely a theoretical assumption of openness (Kaldybekovich et al., 2013; Khalid, 1994). The claim of circularity is the author's synthesis of this evidence: schools created literate readers and subjects for discussion, while print advocacy generated support for schools, textbooks, and reform.

The third result concerns theatre and literature and is grounded in Behbudiy's *Padarkush*. The drama represents ignorance and defective upbringing through the consequences of a father's neglect of his

son's education; the private family conflict culminates in a socially destructive outcome (Behbudiy, 1999). The text therefore provides direct evidence that Jadid theatre translated an argument about education and moral responsibility into a visible public narrative. Comparative histories of the movement confirm that theatre, publishing, and new-method schooling developed as related reform institutions rather than as isolated activities (Kaldybekovich et al., 2013; Khalid, 1998).

Literature, drama, and journalism also strengthened national language as a medium of modern knowledge. Jadid authors created textbooks, essays, and artistic works that expanded the expressive capacity of Uzbek and connected national self-awareness with contemporary scientific and civic concepts. Fitrat's writings exemplify an attempt to combine engagement with global intellectual experience and the preservation of language and cultural memory (Fitrat, 2000).

The fourth result—that the Jadid movement had a polycentric rather than a single-command structure—is supported by comparative historical research. Kaldybekovich et al. (2013) report that, before 1917, the Jadids had no single program, leading center, or statute and were instead grouped around particular schools, publishing houses, newspapers, journals, and benevolent societies. The same study identifies reform leaders in Tashkent, Samarkand, Bukhara, the Ferghana Valley, Khiva, and Turkestan, while Khalid (1998) reconstructs the movement through dispersed cultural debates rather than a unified organization. These findings justify describing the network as decentralized; the term self-organization is used here only as an analytical interpretation of that documented institutional pattern.

Colonial pressure and cultural crisis created instability, but instability did not automatically generate reform. New order emerged through organized human agency: the creation of institutions, the production of texts, the training of teachers, and the construction of public arguments. The synergetic language of emergence is useful only if it does not conceal these intentional actions or the unequal power relations within which they occurred.

The fifth result is an evidence-based synthesis rather than an independent historical datum. Published pedagogical texts establish the linkage between knowledge and moral formation (Avloniy, 1992); Padarkush demonstrates the use of theatre for public moral criticism (Behbudiy, 1999); studies of printing document the press as an arena for reformist debate (Azimov, 2022; Khalid, 1994); and comparative histories show that schools, publications, theatre, and associations operated across several local centers (Kaldybekovich et al., 2013; Khalid, 1998). Taken together, this evidence supports a model in which schooling supplied literate participants, publishing circulated textbooks and arguments, the press connected reformers and readers, theatre dramatized social problems, literature cultivated identity, and moral education supplied normative direction.

Qosimov (2002) interprets Jadidism primarily as a movement of national awakening grounded in courage, enlightenment, and dedication. The present analysis supports this interpretation while specifying its systemic dimension. Enlightenment was not one sector of Jadid activity; it was the principle connecting education, culture, communication, and national self-understanding.

Discussion

The findings demonstrate why the original claim that the Jadids possessed “synergetic views” requires correction. Such wording risks attributing a later scientific theory to historical actors who neither used its concepts nor worked within its disciplinary context. A more defensible conclusion is that their reform activity can be interpreted synergetically because it relied on the coordination and mutual reinforcement of several institutions.

This distinction is not cosmetic. It determines whether synergetics clarifies the evidence or merely decorates it with fashionable terminology. Concepts such as order parameter, instability, and self-organization have explanatory value only when their historical referents are specified. In the Jadid case, education may be treated as an organizing variable because school reform affected literacy, publishing, public debate, professional formation, and national consciousness. Yet education did not mechanically control these domains; the relations remained contingent and contested.

The analogy with open systems is strongest in the Jadids' selective engagement with external knowledge. They studied pedagogical methods, languages, sciences, and institutional experience beyond Turkestan while seeking to preserve cultural identity. Modernization, in their conception, did not require the simple rejection of tradition. It required critical selection: inherited forms had to be evaluated according to whether they supported knowledge, ethical development, and collective advancement.

The relationship between national and universal values was therefore not a zero-sum choice. Jadid thought sought to make national culture capable of participating in the modern world. Language, historical memory, and moral traditions supplied continuity; science, foreign languages, and new pedagogical methods supplied instruments of renewal. The productive tension between continuity and innovation became a source of reform.

The movement's contemporary relevance should also be stated carefully. Jadid heritage cannot provide ready-made solutions to digital education, artificial intelligence, global rankings, or current labor-market needs. Its value lies at a higher methodological level: education should form independent judgment; knowledge should be linked with ethical responsibility; reform should connect school, culture, media, and civic life; and global learning should not require cultural self-erasure.

For present-day educational policy, the synergetic lesson is that isolated interventions are unlikely to produce durable transformation. New technology without teacher preparation, curriculum reform without assessment change, patriotic education without critical thinking, or cultural heritage without contemporary interpretation will generate limited effects. Sustainable modernization requires feedback among curriculum, pedagogy, teacher development, family participation, cultural institutions, and the information environment.

Limitations

This study relies on a selective corpus of published Jadid texts and secondary historical research. It does not reconstruct the complete network of schools, teachers, publishers, performances, and readers; compare all regional variations; or quantify the circulation and reception of textbooks and periodicals. The synergetic categories are therefore heuristic and cannot establish causal influence or network structure on their own.

Future Research

Future research should test the proposed interdependencies through archival work on school records, periodical circulation, correspondence, censorship files, and theatre reception. Prosopography and historical network analysis could establish connections among reformers and institutions, while comparative regional studies could determine whether the proposed model operated differently in Tashkent, Samarkand, Bukhara, the Ferghana Valley, and Khiva.

Conclusion

Jadid enlightenment was a complex socio-cultural reform movement in which schools, textbooks, the press, theatre, literature, language, moral education, and national consciousness interacted. New-method schools formed an institutional center, but their influence depended on a wider communication network that circulated ideas, created public demand, and connected education with social renewal. A synergetic interpretation makes this interdependence visible. It explains how localized initiatives could generate broader cultural effects through interaction, feedback, and amplification. It also highlights the openness of Jadid reform to global knowledge and the movement's effort to combine modern science with national language, memory, and ethical formation. The interpretation must nevertheless remain methodologically disciplined. The Jadids were not theorists of synergetics, and social history cannot be reduced to physical models. Synergetics is useful here as a heuristic for organizing historical evidence, not as a substitute for archival proof or a deterministic law of development.

The enduring significance of the Jadid legacy lies in its integrated vision of education. Intellectual development, moral responsibility, national self-awareness, cultural communication, and social participation were treated as parts of a common project. This vision remains relevant to the modernization of Uzbek education, provided it is studied critically rather than transformed into ceremonial praise.

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