

Оригинальная статья / Original paper
<https://doi.org/10.22378/he.2025-10-1.23-34>

EDN: HRCSEI

Participation of Tatar intellectuals in cultural events in Turkestan (late 19th – early 20th centuries)

A.A. Yuldashev

*Institute for Cultural Research and Intangible Cultural Heritage
Tashkent, Republic of Uzbekistan
dengiz-85@mail.ru*

Abstract. The article discusses participation of Tatar intellectuals in civil events in the Turkestan region in the late 19th – early 20th centuries. At that time, modernization movements in Turkestan were widely spread. The initiatives aimed at developing the socio-cultural life of Turkestan received a significant support from Tatar intellectuals, along with contemporary educational institutions. Expansion of the Tatar diaspora in Central Asia has a long history. By the end of the 19th century, Tatars were actively involved in social, economic, and political events in the region. In the early 20th century, Tatar national intellectuals also actively participated in opening new schools and contributed to the development of the press and the theater scene in Turkestan. Because of the reform movements that appeared in the Muslim world, publishing activities and the press flourished in the Kazan Province. National newspapers and journals were launched, some of which were also present in Turkestan. These publications informed the Muslim population living within the empire about the latest developments in both internal and external affairs. Similar national press publications were also introduced in Turkestan. The adoption of innovative teaching methods in certain madrasas in the Kazan Province marked a significant improvement in the higher education system. These changes contributed to the advancement of civil life in the Muslim world of the Russian Empire. The given article analyzes historical events in Uzbekistan from the late 19th to early 20th centuries based on a number of archival documents, press materials, sources, and scholarly literature.

Keywords: Turkestan, modernization, press, educational institution, Tatar, higher education, Madrasa, “Tarjumon” newspaper.

For citation: Yuldashev A.A. (2025). Participation of Tatar intellectuals in cultural events in Turkestan (late 19th – early 20th centuries). *Istoricheskaya etnologiya* [Historical Ethnology]. Vol. 10. No. 1: 23–34. <https://doi.org/10.22378/he.2025-10-1.23-34>

**Участие татарской интеллигенции
в культурных мероприятиях Туркестана
(конец XIX – начало XX вв.)**

А.А. Юлдашев

*Научно-исследовательский институт культуроведения
и нематериального культурного наследия
Ташкент, Республика Узбекистан
dengiz-85@mail.ru*

Резюме. В статье рассматривается участие татарской интеллигенции в гражданских событиях в Туркестанском крае в конце XIX – начале XX вв. В это время здесь широкое распространение получили модернизационные движения. Инициативы, направленные на развитие социально-культурной жизни Туркестана, получили значительную поддержку со стороны татарской интеллигенции.

Формирование татарской диаспоры в Средней Азии имеет долгую историю. К концу XIX в. татары активно участвовали в социальных, экономических и политических событиях в регионе. В начале XX в. татарская интеллигенция занималась созданием новых школ, развитием прессы и театральной сцены в Туркестане. В результате реформаторских движений, появившихся в мусульманском мире, в Казанской губернии активное развитие получила издательская деятельность и пресса. Была налажена печать национальных газет и журналов, некоторые из которых распространялись и в Туркестане. Эти издания информировали мусульманское население, проживающее в пределах империи, о происходящих событиях как во внутренней жизни, так и во внешних делах. Внедрение инновационных методов обучения в некоторых медресе Казанской губернии ознаменовало собой значительное улучшение системы высшего образования. Эти изменения способствовали развитию гражданской жизни в мусульманском мире Российской империи. В статье анализируются исторические события в Узбекистане с конца XIX до начала XX вв. на основе ряда архивных документов, материалов прессы, источников и научной литературы.

Ключевые слова: Туркестан, модернизация, пресса, учебное заведение, татары, высшее образование, медресе, газета «Тарджумон».

Для цитирования: Yuldashev A.A. Participation of Tatar intellectuals in cultural events in Turkestan (late 19th – early 20th centuries). *Историческая этнология*. 2025. Т. 10. № 1. С. 23–34. <https://doi.org/10.22378/he.2025-10-1.23-34> EDN: HRCSEI

In addition to having a rich history spanning thousands of years, Uzbekistan has attracted the attention of other peoples with its geographical conditions and rich culture. Various military, economic, and cultural interactions in the region of Turkestan have influenced the ethnic composition of its population. The indigenous population, living in the ancient land of Turkestan, has been joined by representatives of many nations who have come and settled from neighboring countries over the centuries, contributing to the diversity of ethnic groups. In this regard, the presence of Tatar population in the territory of Uzbekistan plays a special part. The formation of Tatars in Uzbekistan as an ethnic diaspora dates back to the Middle Ages and beyond. The

proximity of language and culture, as well as the unity of religion, further strengthen the cooperation and mutual support between these peoples. Tatars migrated to Uzbekistan for various reasons, including trade activities, seeking education in central cities of the region (Bukhara, Samarkand, Tashkent, Kokand, etc.), and for other reasons.

Starting from the second half of the 19th century, the Russian Empire, aiming to establish control over the Central Asian territories, actively used Tatars and other peoples to implement its policies in the region. Particularly during the process of establishing control over Turkestan, Tatars and other nomadic groups of people were mobilized to serve in various roles such as soldiers, administrators, military doctors, field medics, and translators in the army of the Russian Empire (Gubaeva, 1991: 111). After the annexation of Turkestan, measures were taken to establish communication and derive benefits from the local population. Therefore, various administrative positions and jobs were assigned to representatives of the Tatar population starting from the 1860s (National Archives of Uzbekistan (NAUz). F. 1. Op. 20. C. 1191. P. 8; C. 3853. P. 2–3). Notable services were awarded by the Governor-General of Turkestan, Konstantin Petrovich von Kaufman, for significant contributions. For example, Mukhammadkarim Sharipov, who served as a translator in the Zarafshan district, was awarded a small silver medal on March 31, 1870, for his services (NAUz. F. 1. Op. 20. C. 2373. P. 1–3), and another translator Chanishev was awarded the 3rd degree Avliyo Svyatoslav order on September 4, 1872, for his services (NAUz. F. 1. Op. 20. C. 6358. P. 2). This demonstrates one aspect of the Russian Empire's patronage policy, as they were used for their usefulness without integrating into the society.

The rapid movement of Tatars into Turkestan and their activities raised concerns for the governor-generalship. Governor-General Konstantin Petrovich von Kaufman expressed fears about the Tatars being influenced by the Bukharan religious clergy (NAUz. F. 1. Op. 27. C. 10^a. P.1). With a confidential decree sent to the Governor-General of Turkestan by the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Empire on December 31, 1900, measures were taken to monitor the activities of Tatars who arrived in Turkestan (Dolimov, 2006: 11). In the following years, there was an increase in surveillance and investigations against them.

The enlightenment era in Turkestan, taking into account the colonial policy of the Russian Empire and its consequences, was marked by collaboration between progressive Turkestan intellectuals and Tatar-Bashkir enlightenment figures who envisioned the advancement and prosperity of Turkic peoples in the region through educational reforms.

By the end of the 19th century, the Turkestan region faced economic hardships and cultural stagnation as a result of colonial policies. Those who recognized this situation outlined various ways to overcome it. Their activities focused on promoting national industry, optimizing resource utilization, enhancing the socio-political status of the people, establishing new educational methods and institutions for Turkestan youth, training national experts, publishing newspapers and journals, forming various societies, establishing theater troupes to address existing issues in society, and more.

Towards the beginning of the 20th century, many young people from Muslim countries came to study at madrasas in Bukhara, Tashkent, and Kokand. Among them, there was a considerable number of Tatar youth. The particularly noteworthy representatives are prominent Islamic scholars of the 19th century, such as Abu Nasr Al-Qursawi (1782–1813) and Shahobiddin Marjani (1818–1889), who studied at madrasas in Bukhara and Samarkand during their time. However, due to lack of attention to exact and natural sciences in those madrasas and the absence of educational reforms like those in developed countries, the number of foreign students declined. Marjani criticized the education system he encountered in Bukhara madrasas during his time, “Although they praise Bukhara as a center of learning and knowledge, the people and government of Bukhara are far from knowledge. Their administration is full of corruption and their education system is not in order” (Solih bin Sobit Abiddin, 1935: 57).

Marjani’s ideas faced criticism and were eventually forced out of Bukhara. If we turn our attention to the thoughts of Munavvar Qori Abdurashidkhonov, we can see that “In the 1900s, there was no news or evidence of modern schools in Turkestan. Initial schools were old schools, while middle and high schools were madrasas. When students went abroad to study, they found that Bukhara Sharif had nothing good to offer except Arabic and religious studies, unlike other countries where there were no subjects missing” (Yosh Turkistan, 1933: 18).

With the beginning of the 20th century, there was a growing need to study modern sciences and apply them in the country’s life. The absence of modern educational institutions focused on economic development in Turkestan was one of the existing problems in the region. The high-level education institutions in Turkestan needed reforming. In such a circumstances, getting education in other countries seemed to be the only solution. In addressing those issues, Turkestan intellectuals, together with Tatar-Bashkir intellectuals, played a pivotal role in the development of the country.

Initially, the emergence and development of new-style schools in Turkestan, and their reform, were organized by Ismail Gasprinsky and his assistants. The new-style school created by I. Gasprinsky quickly became popular and expanded widely among the Muslim population of the Russian Empire. The newspaper *Tarjumon*, published by him, provided an opportunity to keep up to date with the world news, social, economic, and cultural issues. Moreover, the newspaper helped the dissemination of information about new-style schools and their educational processes, contributing significantly to the educational mission.

In the last ten years of 19th century, when I. Gasprinsky initiated the establishment of such schools in Turkestan, the movement gained attention from many people, and schools teaching Usuli Savtiya (teaching method explaining the meaning of words by associating them with letters, i.e., teaching students to recognize letters and read words aloud) were established in the provinces of Turkestan under the supervision of Tatar teachers. The activities of Tatar teachers were not limited to the Turkestan General Governorate but also extended to the protectorate regions, such as the Emirate of Bukhara and the Khanate of Khiva. In particular, Abdulghani Khusainov,

who came from Orenburg to the first new-style school in the Khanate of Khiva in 1889, laid the foundation for these schools. Later, the number of such schools increased. Turkestan progressive intellectuals also established their own schools. In those schools, alongside national talents, students who had studied at madrasas in Tataristan and Bashkortostan were admitted, continuing their education during the transitional period. The emergence and development of new schools in Turkestan, based on specific programs, were largely due to the efforts of Tatar-Bashkir intellectuals and the significant role played by their newspapers. The progressive activities of Turkestan's first new-style school instructors such as Munavvar Qori Abdurashidkhanov, Abdulqodir Shakuriy, and Iskhokhon Tura Ibrat, made a significant contribution. Particularly, Munavvarqori, who was acquainted with the *Tarjumon* newspaper, had acquired a considerable amount of information about new schools and had collected newly published religious and scientific books. Reading articles about the teaching methods of the new-style schools in Bogchasaroy published in the *Tarjumon* newspaper, he got involved in opening Usuli Savtiya schools and creating teaching curricula for them.

The emergence of modern schools in Turkestan and their reliance on specific programs significantly increased the importance of Tatar and Bashkir enlighteners and their newspapers. That situation allowed for the active participation and contribution of individuals such as Munavvar Qori Abdurashidkhanov, Abdulqodir Shakuriy, and Ishoqkhon Tura Ibrat. Especially, Munavvarqori became acquainted with the *Tarjumon* newspaper, collected new religious and scientific books, and wrote about new schools, thus contributing to the creation of educational programs for new schools.

The progressive Namangan native, Ishoqkhon Tura Ibrat, on the other hand, collaborated with Tatar enlighteners Khussain Makaev and Abdulrauf Shahidi in the establishment of a printing house, new-style school, and newspaper in his Torakurgan (Dolimov, 1994: 34–36). In 1907, when Is'hoqkhon To'ra Ibrat opened a modern-method Jadid school in To'raqo'rg'on, he invited Khussain Makaev to teach there. The school quickly gained popularity among the public due to the teachers' hard work, as evidenced by students' rapid progress and visible results. In the 1907 edition of *Turkiston Viloyatining Gazeti*, Ibrat said about his school and Husayn Makaev, "... I hired a mullah from Kazan and established a school. It hasn't even been three months since the school opened, et more than 20 young children and 10–15 adults, who used to respond to the question 'What is 'Alif?'' with 'a stick,' have learned to read and write nearly everything" (Isxokxon tura Junaydullax, 1907: 2).

Khussain Makaev was well-regarded during his time, and the public's interest in his school deepened. For example, "In 1910, a new school was established in Namangan. Initially, a Tatar man named Khussain Makaev arrived and opened a modern-method school. Rumors quickly spread across the city, "A Tatar named Makaev has come, opening a new school where in just four ears, he teaches children to read, write, and count, and turns them into mullahs. He charges one sum per student and educates them with discipline, without beating them" (Radjapov, 2011: 8).

The civilizational relations of Turkestan enlighteners with Tatar and Bashkir enlighteners were manifested not only in the field of education but also in obtaining secondary and higher education and training specialists, especially teachers. Over the centuries, traditional education systems in Turkestan operated at a high level and consisted of schools and madrasas with a strong foundation and high level of training. In madrasas, primarily, knowledge in theology and jurisprudence was provided, and exact and natural sciences were given insufficient attention. Certainly, that situation contributed to the stagnation of society's general development and lagged behind other countries.

At the beginning of the 20th century, a new teaching system was introduced in a number of madrasas in Orenburg, Ufa, and Kazan, which attracted the attention of Muslim youth in the Russian Empire. With the introduction of a new teaching method in madrasas such as Khusainiya in Orenburg, Mukhammadiya in Kazan, and Galiya in Ufa, the quality of education improved. As a result, the number of students coming to study in Bukhara madrasas from the Russian territories decreased. During that time, there was a growing demand for essential knowledge and educational reforms in educational institutions, leading to improvements in higher educational institutions and the training of young people (Çor hokumeti ve ..., 1922: 27–30).

The study in Tartar-Bashkir madrasas was completed in the spring months, and the summer months were considered vacation time until October, during which many madrasa students engaged in teaching to collect funds for the next academic year by traveling to various cities, villages, and regions. According to the book *Turmush urinishlari*, "The year 1908 has passed. I heard that three of our students came from Ufa to our city and joined three schools in our city. They were taught the basics of reading, were introduced to a new order, and were accepted to study again, and when they had finished their studies, they were given a few rubles by the school teachers upon their departure. There is even a street in the Tokli Jallob district where Nabi domla, who taught at the school, took Vali Akhmad from his students to his own school" (Muminjon Muhammadjon ugli, 1926: 138).

The Oliya madrasa in Turkestan and the Kazakh steppes became popular among the youth of Turkestan due to the teaching methods and the knowledge provided, which attracted the attention of many Turkestan students and, therefore, fostered the desire for education among young people.

Relying on the information provided by Sizikh who was in charge of the defense of Turkestan region, among the students of those schools, also included a considerable number of students from Turkestan. It is known that the Madrasa Galiya in Ufa was considered a high school for outstanding Muslims among those schools, and not only religious books are taught there, but also worldly knowledge is very much emphasized compared to other madrasas. People who had studied at those madrasas tended to be more knowledgeable than those who studied in traditional madrasas, without excluding those who have studied in new madrasas. The new students excelled in the madrasa at a much higher level. If we pay attention to the good relations between the Kazakhs and the Tatars, the high regard they have for the Tatars, and es-

pecially the influence of the Tatars on the Kazakhs, we see the greatness of the influence of Madrasa Galiya and the people who studied there on the Kazakhs.

That, in turn, increased the interest of young people from Turkestan in studying at schools in Orenburg, Kazan, and Ufa. The book *Turmush urinishlari* by the Tashkent writer Muminjon Muhammadjon (Toshqin) provides a lot of information about the education in the Tatar-Bashkir madrasas and about the young people from Turkestan who studied there (Muminjon Muhammadjon ugli, 1926: 293–324). Muminjon Toshqin himself also obtained education at the Galiya madrasa in Ufa from 1908 to 1910.

Collaboration of Russian, Azerbaijani, and Tatar theater troupes played a significant role in the development of modern theater art in Turkestan and its prosperity in the early 20th century; Tatar theater troupes also gained great importance. The formation of Uzbek national theater art in the early 20th century was greatly influenced by Tatar theater groups (Rizaev, 1999: 119). In Turkestan, Tatar performances were staged in courtyards of Tatar neighborhoods and in places where people gathered. For example, in Tashkent, during the reception held by General Sokhib Gireevich Yenikeev, the play *Ishq balosi* by Nomik Kamolnin was performed by Tatar actors (Tarix va toplum, 2000: 69). In 1909, in the same courtyard, another play, *Birinchi teatr* by playwright Galiaskar Kamal, was staged by Tatar actors. Uzbek actors also participated in this comedy (Rizaev, 2000: 88–89). Starting from 1910, a permanent Tatar theater group operated in Tashkent. Azerbaijani, Tatar, and Russian dramas were staged there. The number of such troupes increased. In 1913, actors and directors from Turkestan also joined the activities of the “Turon” theater group, founded by modern artists in Tashkent. In particular, the “Turon” theater group staged the plays *Istanbul* under the direction of the Tatar director Mukhammadyorov in 1914 and *Toy* under the direction of Z. Boyazidsky. On December 22, 1914, the play *Toy* staged by Z. Boyazidsky was performed for the second time at the Coliseum in Tashkent and attracted great interest from the local population as well as Tatar and European residents.

The revival of theater played a separate role in enhancing the spiritual and political level of the people, alongside the press. During this period, newspapers such as *Tarjumon* and *Vaqt*, the magazine *Shuro*, and the journal *Mulla Nasriddin*, published in Azerbaijan, played an important role in the development of enlightenment and national liberation aspirations among the Central Asian peoples.

During that period, many educational materials, books, journals, and newspapers were published in Turkestan, mainly in the publishing houses of Kazan. In addition, Tatar intellectuals played an active role in organizing local printing houses and bookstores in Turkestan. In the early 20th century, the language of newspapers published in Turkestan, including the language of newspapers printed elsewhere, consisted of a mixture of Tatar, Turkish, and Arabic words, which were adapted to the Uzbek language (Abduazizova, 2000: 71). That increased the interest of the population in periodical publications. In the publication of newspapers and magazines, the Turkestan intellectuals worked hand in hand with the Tatar-Bashkir progressives. For ex-

ample, among the newspapers published in Turkestan, the *Tarraqqi* newspaper, edited by Ismoil Obidiy, actively involved Tatar journalists such as Shakir Mukhtoriy and Ismail Aliyev. On April 9, 1908, the newspaper *Aziya* was launched, with one of the editors being Akhmadzhan Bektemirov, a Tatar journalist.

Furthermore, the writer Muminjon Muhammadjon ugli, who lived in that era, expressed his thoughts as follows, “Akhmadzhan Bektemirov used to publish a newspaper called *Asia*. We went to see his office. It was a small house with a small courtyard, old furniture, and shelves where newspapers were placed. There was a small table with a single lamp, and from afar, he cherished something precious, “knowledge” he obtained with a small candle” (Muminjon Muhammadjon ugli, 1926: 139).

In the following years, the publication of *Shuhrat*, *Tuzjo*, *Samarqand* newspapers in Turkestan and the release of the *Oyna* magazine under the editorship of Mahmudkhon Behbudi witnessed successful collaboration with Tatar enlightenment figures. Those events continued with the active participation of *Sadoyi Fargona* led by Obidjon Mahmudov (1871–1936), which started in April 1914 in Kokand, and *Sadoyi Turkeston* edited by Ubaydulla Asadullahoy (1878–1942), published from Tashkent. Tatar intellectuals such as Abdurauf Muzaffarzoda, Noshiravon Yaushov, Abdullah Begi, Mahmud Budayli, and others took a particularly active part in those newspapers. Tatar translator Nurmukhammad Usmanov contributed to the editorial board of *Sadoyi Fargona* newspaper (NAUz. F. 461. Op. 1. C. 1315. P. 346). He also contributed to *Sadoyi Turkeston* with his articles. Abdurauf Muzaffarzoda, known under various signatures such as Abdur Rauf Muzaffarov, A. Muzaffarov, R., Rauf Muzaffarzoda M.A., published over 40 articles in the newspaper. His articles addressed issues of education, morality, culture, and delved into social and economic issues of Turkestan. For example, Rauf Muzaffarzoda, in his articles, emphasized the importance of the human factor, “... A person is only truly human through the cultivation of both the physical and spiritual realms. Someone who has not developed their spirit, enriched their intellect, and expanded their thoughts through science and education is no different from one existing aimlessly amidst other creatures» (Muzaffarzoda, October 7, 1914).

He was a proponent of reforms and advocated for the cultural elevation of the people, criticizing societal flaws. In his articles, he compared the nation to a cultural ship that needed to be set in motion and saved from social decline by fulfilling its cultural needs. In his article *Culture and Us* he reproached his compatriots, “Even though we see what culture truly is, we ignore our cultural needs” (Muzaffarzoda, May 30, 1914).

Even after concluding his work at *Sadoyi Turkiston* and leaving Tashkent, Muzaffarzoda continued publishing numerous articles about Turkestan. His works appeared in publications like *Vaqt* and *Shuro*. Notably, his series of articles titled *The Present-Day Life in Turkestan*, which were published in several issues of *Shuro*, can be considered a cohesive work. In the series, he delved into Turkestan’s geography, its people, their culture, lifestyle, and traditions. Additionally, he addressed the re-

gion's educational institutions, urban life, achievements, and challenges. He specifically analyzed gender issues, highlighting problems and offering insights.

Muzaffarzoda referred to the Turkestan region as "the Turkestan Continent", describing it as a vast territory encompassing the Khazar (Caspian) Sea, the Amu Darya and Syr Darya rivers, and numerous snow-capped mountains, serving as a cradle for Turkic peoples. He emphasized that despite being under Russian imperial rule, Turkestan remained a stronghold of Islam and Turkic heritage. Writing about the local population, he noted, "The indigenous people of Turkestan, numbering about 10 million Muslims, speak their distinct Turkic dialect" (A. Rauf Muzaffar, 1916: 262).

He highly regarded the Turkestani people's resilience in preserving their identity under Russian imperial rule, describing them as the most steadfast among the Muslim communities in the empire. He wrote, "If asked where the most victorious Muslims of Russia are, without a doubt, the answer would be 'In Turkestan!'" (A. Rauf Muzaffar, 1916: 262).

According to Muzaffarzoda, despite the 50 years of colonization and the introduction of Russian laws and culture, the traditional lifestyle and customs of Turkestan's Muslim population remained intact. He explained this by stating, "It seems that because Turkestanis have not yet succumbed to Western cultural influences, their manners, nature, and ethics remain as they were in the days of their ancestors" (A. Rauf Muzaffar, 1916: 263).

He also elaborated on the local population's lifestyle and customs, noting that children wore braided hairstyles, men carried knives at their waists, and cemeteries were frequently visited. He highlighted their disdain for those who violated customs and praised their preservation of ancestral traditions, including traditional music, horseback riding, and producing intricately designed fabrics.

Describing the morals and character of the Turkestani people, he emphasized their cheerful demeanor and hospitality. While he criticized their flattery, he noted that it suited them well.

During the February events of 1917, Tatar-Bashkir intellectuals participated in the changes that took place in Turkestan along with Turkestan progressives. In addition to being editors and correspondents in the newly established newspapers, they also participated in them with their liberal-ideological articles aimed at the development of the country. They supported the Turkestan autonomy, which was a national democratic government. They were active not only in the practical activities of that government, but also in its propaganda in the press. Articles such as Mukhtar Bakir's *Turkistan Muxtariyati va Turkistan xalqi* (Ulug Turkestan, 1917), Shakir Mukhtari's *Turkistan Muxtariyati* (Shakir Mukhtari, 1918) are among them.

At the beginning of the 20th century, fraternal ties grew stronger between the numerous Tatar-Bashkir intellectuals who came to Turkestan and the Turkestans who sought knowledge from that land. As a result, they worked together in the struggle for the development of the sciences necessary for their time and for progress. Consequently, national press developed in the Turkestan region, new schools which implemented the new method were opened. Young people who graduated from the new

method schools were sent to secondary and higher education institutions in foreign countries. Charitable and cultural societies were established, in which Tatar intellectuals, along with Turkestan progressives, also participated.

In conclusion, the historical relations of the Uzbek people with the Tatar-Bashkir peoples led to social, economic, and cultural development in various fields in Turkestan. Innovations emerged in education, publishing, theater, and other areas in the country. Tatar intellectuals also contributed to the progress. However, the repressive actions of the Russian Empire had a negative impact on the lives of Tatars alongside the local population in Turkestan. Nevertheless, the social connections between the two peoples helped advance societal developments. The friendship of Uzbek and Tatar intellectuals during the turmoil of the Russian Empire gave hope for significant progress in social and cultural life from the February 1917 revolution onwards. However, the strengthening of the Bolshevik government led to setbacks for the intellectuals' reformist movements. Starting from the 1930s, the policy of harsh repression against intellectuals was implemented, resulting in many Uzbek and Tatar intellectuals being repressed.

Конфликт интересов

Автор заявляет об отсутствии конфликта интересов.

Conflict of interests

The author declares no relevant conflict of interests.

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Сведения об авторе: Юлдашев Абдували Абдумуталибович, PhD (история), старший научный сотрудник отдела культурологии, Научно-исследовательский институт культуроведения и нематериального культурного наследия (100011, ул. Навои, 30, Ташкент, Республика Узбекистан); <https://orcid.org/0009-0008-6609-0383>; e-mail: dengiz-85@mail.ru; abduvali1485@gmail.com

About the author: Abduvali A. Yuldashev, PhD (History), Senior Researcher at the Department of Cultural Studies, Institute for Cultural Research and Intangible Cultural Heritage (30 Navoi St., Tashkent 100011, Republic of Uzbekistan); <https://orcid.org/0009-0008-6609-0383>; e-mail: dengiz-85@mail.ru; abduvali1485@gmail.com

Поступила в редакцию / Received 16.04.2024

Доработана после рецензирования / Revised 23.12.2024

Принята к публикации / Accepted 27.01.2025