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JADID WOMAN MARYAM SULTONMURODOVA: HER WORK IN THE CAUSE OF ENLIGHTENMENT AND NATIONAL AWAKENING

Abdrimova S
Lecturer of History, Khorezm Branch of the Asia International University
Email: abdrimova1809@gmail.com
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Introduction: In the early 20th century, the Jadid movement in the territory of Turkestan championed goals such as educational reform, the advancement of science and the press, and the elevation of national consciousness. Within this process, the education of women and their active participation in social life emerged as key issues.

Keywords: Jadidism, Maryam Sultonmurodova, Khorezm, enlightenment, women's education, Germany, national awakening, repression

Maryam Sultonmurodova, who hailed from the Khorezm region, was a prominent figure in this movement. Maryam Sultonmurodova was born on February 13, 1905, in the city of Khiva. In 1911, her progressive father, Jumaniyoz Sultonmurodov, enrolled her in a "new-method" Nogai (Tatar) school in Urgench. Later, following her family's relocation to Turtkul, Maryam continued her education at a local Jadid school[1;2]. From 1919, she studied at an educational gymnasium in Tashkent, and between 1920 and 1921, she attended the Tatar Pedagogical Institute in Orenburg. Upon returning to Khorezm during the summer break of 1921, Maryam Sultonmurodova was appointed to lead first the literary department and subsequently the women's department. In 1922, she returned to Tashkent and applied to the Workers' Faculty (Rabfak) of the Central Asian State University. In October of that year, she was included in a group of students sent to Germany for their studies by the Bukhara government. She traveled to Germany via Leningrad and went down in history as one of the Uzbek women who received an education abroad[1:3].

Maryam Sultonmurodova's activities were not limited to education alone. Historical sources document her work as a journalist and educator, her translation efforts, and her public contributions regarding women's issues. Notable among her articles and sketches are works such as "Mehr ko'zda" (Affection Through Sight), "Kutilmagan baxt" (Unexpected Happiness), "Qalbim nidosi" (The Cry of My Heart), "Rahmat desinlar" (Let Them Say Thank You), "Majnuntol" (Weeping Willow), "Karvonlar kelganda" (When the Caravans Arrive), and "Betamiz yigit" (The Ill-Mannered Young Man). This creative legacy reflects her keen interest in enlightenment and societal issues[5]. In 1937, Maryam Sultonmurodova fell victim to political repression; she was arrested on charges related to her studies in Germany and other political accusations. She subsequently endured exile and persecution. She was exonerated on August 2, 1957, by the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court of the USSR. Her life story serves as a significant historical resource for understanding the impact of Soviet repressive policies on the lives of intellectuals and enlightened women[4].

Conclusion

The Social and Cultural Setting of Khorezmian Jadidism

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To appreciate the scale of Maryam Sultonmurodova's achievement, one must first reconstruct the environment that produced her. Khiva at the beginning of the twentieth century remained a khanate governed by customary hierarchies in which female literacy was neither expected nor institutionally provided for. Instruction for girls, where it existed at all, was confined to the otin-oyi tradition — private, household-based teaching devoted chiefly to recitation and religious etiquette. Against this backdrop, the arrival of the new-method (usul-i jadid) school represented not merely a pedagogical innovation but a reordering of assumptions about who was entitled to knowledge.

The reformers of Khorezm borrowed selectively from Tatar, Azerbaijani and Ottoman precedents, yet adapted them to local conditions. Their curricula introduced arithmetic, geography, natural history and systematic grammar alongside religious subjects, and replaced rote memorisation with graded reading. Equally consequential was the question of language: teaching in a comprehensible vernacular rather than in an inaccessible scholastic idiom made rapid literacy plausible for pupils who had previously spent years on recitation. It was within this reformist infrastructure, thin but expanding, that a girl from Khiva could begin a trajectory leading ultimately to a European university town.

Family Environment and the Formation of an Educational Path

The decision of Jumaniyoz Sultonmurodov to enrol his daughter in a Nogai school in Urgench in 1911 deserves emphasis as a deliberate act rather than an incidental one. Sending a six-year-old girl beyond the household to a foreign-language institution meant accepting social criticism and assuming financial burdens that most contemporaries avoided. Family support of this kind was, in practice, the decisive variable separating women who entered the Jadid intelligentsia from those whose abilities were never recorded.

The family's subsequent relocation to Turtkul widened rather than interrupted her schooling, since the town then functioned as an administrative centre where reformist teachers congregated. Her progression from a provincial Jadid school to the gymnasium in Tashkent in 1919, and from there to the Tatar Pedagogical Institute in Orenburg in 1920, traces the emerging educational corridor that linked Turkestan to the Volga-Ural region. Orenburg was of particular importance: as a long-established centre of Muslim publishing and teacher training, it supplied both textbooks and pedagogical models to the reformist schools of Central Asia, and study there conferred a professional competence immediately applicable at home.

The Journey to Germany and Its Historical Meaning

The group of students despatched to Germany by the Bukharan authorities in 1922 constituted one of the boldest cultural undertakings of the early Soviet period in Central Asia. Its rationale was pragmatic: the new administrations required engineers, agronomists, physicians and teachers, and the domestic higher-education system was not yet capable of producing them. Berlin and the university towns around it offered technical instruction of recognised quality, and the Weimar Republic's relative openness to foreign students made the arrangement feasible.

Maryam Sultonmurodova's inclusion in this cohort carried a symbolic weight beyond her personal accomplishment. A young woman from Khiva travelling through Leningrad to Central Europe reversed, in a single biography, the assumption that scholarly mobility was a male prerogative. Her presence among the students abroad

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furnished reformist publicists at home with a concrete argument: that the capacity for advanced study was not differentiated by sex, and that the obstacle had always been access rather than aptitude. For subsequent generations of Uzbek women the episode became a point of reference, cited whenever the question of female higher education was raised.

The experience also proved historically ambiguous. The same qualification that distinguished her in the 1920s was reinterpreted a decade later as evidence of foreign entanglement. The biographies of the Germany cohort therefore illuminate a broader pattern in Soviet cultural policy, in which an initiative encouraged by the state was subsequently treated as incriminating for those who had accepted it.

Journalism, Translation and Literary Work

Her publications indicate that she conceived of enlightenment as a task of persuasion as much as instruction. The sketches and stories attributed to her — among them "Mehr ko'zda", "Kutilmagan baxt", "Qalbim nidosi" and "Karvonlar kelganda" — favour recognisable domestic settings and ordinary protagonists over didactic abstraction. Titles such as "Rahmat desinlar" and "Betamiz yigit" suggest an interest in social manners and moral accountability, themes that allowed a writer to address questions of women's status without direct polemic.

Her translation work performed a complementary function. In a period when the reading public was expanding faster than the supply of original texts, translation supplied both material and vocabulary, and the translator's choices shaped how new concepts entered the language. Taken together, the journalistic, literary and translational strands of her activity describe a single project: extending to a general readership the intellectual resources she had acquired through an exceptional education.

Repression, Exile and Rehabilitation

The arrest of 1937 placed Maryam Sultonmurodova within the largest wave of political persecution directed at the Central Asian intelligentsia. The accusations levelled against her followed a standard template of the period, in which study abroad, correspondence with foreigners and association with reformist circles were assembled into a charge of disloyalty. What the documentary record reveals is less an investigation than a procedure: the evidentiary threshold was low, the outcome effectively predetermined, and the biographical details that had earlier been sources of distinction were converted into liabilities.

Two periods of exile followed. Her letters from these years, published in recent decades, are valuable precisely because they are not retrospective testimony composed after rehabilitation; they record the immediate conditions of displacement, material scarcity and the effort to maintain contact with family. Her exoneration by the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court of the USSR on 2 August 1957 formally annulled the sentence, yet came after two decades during which professional and creative work had been made impossible. Rehabilitation restored a legal status; it could not restore a career.

Historiographical Significance of Her Legacy

For the historian, the value of this biography lies in what it demonstrates about the structure of the Jadid movement. Accounts of Turkestani reformism have long been organised around a small number of male publicists and school founders, with the result that women appear chiefly as the objects of reformist argument rather than

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as its authors. Reconstructing the careers of figures such as Maryam Sultonmurodova corrects this asymmetry and shows that the movement's female participants were teachers, administrators, writers and translators in their own right.

Her case also cautions against treating the reformist generation as a uniform category. Individual outcomes were determined by variables that differed from person to person — the disposition of the family, the availability of a nearby new-method school, the timing of institutional openings, and the arbitrary logic of the purges. Attending to these contingencies produces a more exact picture than a single narrative of collective advance or collective destruction, and it identifies a clear direction for further research: the systematic recovery of archival materials, personal correspondence and periodical publications relating to the women of the Khorezmian Jadid milieu.

Maryam Sultonmurodova's life illustrates the historical significance of women's education and social activism within the context of the Khorezmian Jadid movement. Her educational journey spanning schooling in the "new-method" system, further studies in Orenburg, educational work in Khorezm, and studies in Germany represented a significant development for her time. Subsequent repressions reflect the complex fates of the Jadids and enlightened intellectuals. Studying the legacy of Maryam Sultonmurodova serves to shed further light on the role of women in the history of the Jadid movement.

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