

## **The Role of Siddiqiy Ajziy in Uzbek Jadid Literature**

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**Abstract.** *The article reflects on the political-legal, socio-economic, and spiritual-educational views of the enlightenment poet Siddiqiy Ajziy, as well as the tragic fate of a nation, caught in the vortex of ignorance, left behind in the development of Turkestan. The discussion revolves around the idea that the purpose of literature and poetry is to heal the wounds of the homeland and nation, and to call them towards knowledge, enlightenment, and progress.*

**Key words:** *Ignorance, enlightenment, enlightenment movement, knowledge and wisdom, homeland, nation, national decline, national prosperity.*

At the beginning of the last century, the Turkestan Jadid movement set forth the idea of elevating the homeland and nation to the level of the world's advanced countries and peoples, and for this, reforming all spheres of societal life – political-legal, socio-economic, and spiritual-educational – became a priority. To properly fulfill this complex and responsible task, it was necessary to spiritually uplift the nation and instill Jadid ideas into the hearts of the young generation. The Jadids directed literary creativity toward this goal. It is through this lens that the poetry of Siddiqiy Ajziy, one of the prominent figures of Uzbek Jadid literature, should be studied.

The poet's literary legacy is broad in scope and genre coverage. His collections of Uzbek poems "*Ayn ul-adab*" ("Spring of Etiquette") and Tajik poems "*Ganjinai hikmat*" ("Treasure of Wisdom") published between 1914 and 1916, the epic works "*Mir'oti ibrat*" and "*Anjumani arvoh*", his artistic journalism covering the pressing issues of his time, his translation of Gogol's "*Shinel*", and his stories all confirm this idea. His poems were published in the Caucasus-based journals "*Mulla Nasriddin*" and "*Dirilik*", indicating his recognition within the Turkic world. The poet Toshkhoja Asiriyy from Khujand, deeply impressed after reading "*Mir'oti ibrat*", responded by writing "*Timsoli Asiriyy dar javobi Mir'oti ibrat Ajziy Samarqandiy*". He highly praised Ajziy's talent, describing him as having a "blessed nature."

Siddiqiy Ajziy deeply understood the tasks set before the nation's intellectuals of his time. The backwardness of Turkestan, the tragic condition of a nation lost in the vortex of ignorance, caused him great anguish. He sincerely felt that the aim of literature and poetry should be to heal the homeland's and nation's pain and to call them towards knowledge, enlightenment, and progress. His decision to renounce his lyrical poems and burn them in fire stems from this very understanding.

According to the Jadid scholar Begali Qosimov:

"Such a phenomenon is not unique to our literature, but can also be found in the literatures of other nations."

As an example, the scholar presents these translated lines by Modesto Mojica, written during the height of Panama's independence struggle in the 1960s:

Ortiq kuylamasman ishq-muhabbatni,  
Ilohiy she'rlarga bormaydi qo'lim.  
Vatanda erk va baxt bo'lmagunicha,  
Ashulamiz bitta: Ozodlik yo o'lim!

In his article "*Turk shoiri Ajziy*", Vadud Mahmud analyzes the poet's works by dividing them into two categories:

1. Ajziy's love poetry;
2. His social thought.

The fate of his love poetry was mentioned earlier.

In the poems where social ideas are expressed, the poet condemns Russia's colonial policy. He expresses his anguish over the plight of a nation caught in the grip of tyranny. Saddened by the attacks on the Muslim nation, the poet's heartfelt lines are:

Kavkablarig-la millati isloma otma dosh,  
Bag'rin jarohati dilamaz shimdidin xarosh –

Analyzing these lines, Vadud Mahmud writes the following:

"The very first activity of the Jadid era was to educate and enlighten the people – the nation. It would be appropriate to call this period the era of enlightenment.

The poisonous wounds of Russian nationalism left deep scars on Ajziy's heart.

He always lamented the suffering of his nation under bloody oppression; wherever he looked, he saw this suffering, and he drew this conclusion from every event.

For Ajziy, the stars were stones hurled into the heart of his nation<sup>1</sup>.

Jadid poetry holds a special significance not only because it elevated the social and political theme to a leading position, but also because it renewed the traditional images of classical literature, attributing to them an entirely different meaning.

In particular, traditional symbols such as the flower and the nightingale, which previously represented lovers and beloveds, were reinterpreted by Jadid poets to express the plight of a nation trapped in the vortex of oppression.

The image of the tulip in the following lines by Ajziy also reflects this very characteristic:

Ko'randa lola yafrog'in gumon etmak chamandur bu,  
Lisoni holi harfi darsi ibrat, anjumandur bu.  
Shahidi xanjari ishq vatanlar laxta qonidin,  
Ko'rinnish parda nomus ilan xuni kafandur bu.

In other words, do not mistake the tulip's petal for a simple garden flower.

It is, in fact, a gathering that teaches a lesson of wisdom through the silent language of suffering. The tulip's petal is the clot of blood shed by those martyred for the love of the homeland, appearing as a bloodstained shroud beneath the veil of honor.

The poet skillfully uses vivid imagery to express the sorrows of the heart.

Ajziy also assigns a new meaning to the symbol of the nightingale (*andalib*).

While redefining the essence of this traditional image, he places it in contrast to the images of the crow (*zog'*) and the owl (*chug'z*) to enhance the emotional impact of his ideas.

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<sup>1</sup>Vadud Maхмуд. Турк шоири Ажзий. //Инкилоб, 1924, 11-12 сон. – Б. 116-128.

Masterfully using the art of contrast (*tazod*) characteristic of classical poetry, he artistically interprets the social realities of his time with profound and cutting lines:

*Na andalib faqat masti jomu bodai zavq,*

*Har oshyonda bukun xurram o 'ldi cho 'g'z ila zog'.*

"Introducing innovation into imagery is far more complex than merely innovating in form," writes Professor Nurboy Jabborov.

"However, the true elevation of poetry is closely tied to this very poetic phenomenon<sup>2</sup>". Siddiqiy-Ajziy's ability to masterfully renew traditional imagery — a highly complex creative task requiring exceptional skill — serves as strong evidence of his artistic potential.

In the following lines, the poet again imbues the traditional image of the nightingale with a new, socially charged meaning linked to the sorrow of the nation:

*Bulbuli xoknishin etdi guliston shavqi.*

*Qafasi dahrda ra'noyi Eramdandur dog'.*

*Bodai hirs ila arbobi karamdur sarxush,*

*Ajziy bu borada arbobi karamdandur dog'.*

In these verses, the nightingale, longing for the garden's beauty but forced to dwell upon the earth, remains trapped in the cage of time (*dahr*), unable to reach the glorious rose of the Garden of Eram. The imagery poignantly reflects the tragic fate of a nation which, despite its glorious past and inherent right to live freely and achieve progress, found itself oppressed under colonial rule, deprived of its rights and dignity.

It would be difficult to find a more powerful artistic expression of the nation's situation during that time.

By the logic of classical poetry, the image of the nightingale usually necessitates the presence of the rose.

However, in Ajziy's interpretation, the redness covering the scene of the garden should not be mistaken for the color of rose petals; rather, it is the soil of the homeland reddened by unjustly shed blood.

This depiction shows the poet's deep understanding of contemporary realities and the essence of the colonial policy, as well as the intense pain he felt due to the wrongful spilling of his compatriots' blood:

*Bu gulshan sahnida gul yafrog'i rangi gumon etmang,*

*Qizormish xuni nohaq rangidin xoki vatandur – bu!*

Professor Begali Qosimov points out that the Jadids pursued three different paths in their struggle for independence:

1. Liberation from Russian rule by force, achieving independence through armed struggle (e.g., the Dukchi Eshon uprising, the 1916 conscription movement, the Basmachi movement);
2. The path of compromise: attaining enlightenment and claiming rights and national identity through cooperation with Russians (e.g., I. Gasprali, M. Behbudiy);
3. The path of collaboration: participating in the programs of Tsarist officials and later the Soviet authorities, with the goal of eventually preparing for and achieving independence (e.g., Munawwarqori, Hamza, Avloni)."

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<sup>2</sup>Жабборов Нурбой. Замон, мезон, шеърят. – Тошкент: Фафоу Ғулом номидаги НМИУ, 2015. – Б.

Following the path of Ismail Gasprali and Mahmudkhoja Behbudi — striving to elevate the nation through enlightenment — Siddiqiy-Ajziy mobilized his full creative potential to instill this ideal into the consciousness of his contemporaries through his poetry.

Ajziy was one of the capable figures of his time. Vadud Mahmud characterizes his versatile talent and intellectual breadth in the following manner:

"Possessing great talent, he is a master of many crafts. First and foremost, Siddiqiy is an excellent technician. He is skilled at repairing clocks and machines. He is a fine weaver and tailor, having lived for many years by this trade. He is a proficient hunter and has also devoted considerable time to music. In addition to his native language, he knows Arabic, Persian, and Russian. His Persian poems testify to his deep acquaintance with Persian literature. He is also well-versed in Arabic and Russian literary traditions."

A multilingual poet, Ajziy emphasized in his verses that possessing such knowledge is a source of great honor, and that mastering languages opens the path to the hearts of other nations. He expressed this idea succinctly:

*Har qochki lisoni cho 'q bilursan,*

*Dunyoda azizroq o 'lursan.*

(Whenever you know many languages, you become more esteemed in the world.)

By highlighting the importance of learning languages, he encourages his compatriots to pursue linguistic proficiency.

Ajziy also stressed that acquiring knowledge and education is the foundation of the nation's prosperity. In one of his ghazals, he artistically conveys this message:

*G'unchasin ochmish tamaddun gulshani javlon edub,*

*Olam ahlini sanoyye gullari hayron edub...*

*Maktabu atfola, hamd o 'lsunki, vermish toza jon,*

*Toza qonuni-la ta 'lim aylamak nishon edub.*

The poet joyfully notes that the buds have blossomed triumphantly in the garden of civilization, and the flowers of fine arts (*sanoyye* — referring to literature and the arts) have dazzled the people of the world with their beauty.

He expresses gratitude to God for the fresh spirit breathed into the children attending newly established schools, where education is conducted under the "new method" (*usuli jadid*) based on fresh, progressive laws.

The poem continues with these verses:

*Fikr as 'hobiga tabrik aylamak shoistadur,*

*Har dam, har soat, har lahza dastijon edub.*

*Dahr avzoyin mujaddad aylamak oson dagil,*

*Bo 'yla bir mushkulni mushkul anglamak oson edub...*

*Xalqni, Ajziy, taraqqiyotga sa 'y etdurmaka,*

*Aylaram taklifi irfon xislatin burhon edub.*

Delighted with the positive outcomes achieved through educational reform, the poet believes that it is worthy to congratulate the thinkers at every moment, even at the cost of one's own life. Ajziy acknowledges that it is not easy to renew and transform the circumstances of the era (*dahr*). However, he thanks God for making it easier to comprehend such a difficult task. Finally, the poet calls upon the people to strive toward progress, presenting the virtue of knowledge (*irfon*) as the principal justification for this endeavor.

In a poem published in issue No. 38 of the *Oyna* magazine in 1914, Siddiqiy-Ajziy wrote:

*Ilm ekan farz, nedan jahlg'a tabdil etduk,*

*G'arqai ziynat o'lub jubbau dastorlara.*

*G'arb ilan Sharq uyonmaq-la boshin qoldurdi,*

*Ta'na paykonini mahdufi biz ag'yorlara.*

The poet expresses deep sorrow over the nation's abandonment of knowledge — a religious and moral obligation (*farz*) — in favor of ignorance. He attributes this downfall to the people's immersion in luxury and superficial pursuits (*g'arqai ziynat o'lmoq*), lamenting the loss of true values. Rather than blaming external forces (*ag'yorlar*, meaning "foreigners" or "enemies") for the nation's plight, the poet calls upon his compatriots to awaken by drawing lessons from both Eastern and Western civilizations.

A study of Siddiqiy-Ajziy's poetry reveals the continuous evolution of his socio-political worldview. His verses passionately urge the nation to awaken from the slumber of ignorance and heedlessness, emphasizing the necessity of understanding the state of the world through knowledge and enlightenment.

Seeking remedies for his people's suffering, Siddiqiy-Ajziy composed heartfelt poetry aimed at elevating national consciousness.

The literary scholar Nurboy Jabborov, in his analysis of Cho'lpon's poetry, makes a point that equally applies to Siddiqiy-Ajziy's work:

*"A true poet cannot remain imprisoned by sorrows alone. Inevitably, dreams will sprout from those sorrows. Without dreams, a person's wings are broken, and their hope for the future extinguished. Our enlightenment-era forefathers were able to avoid such despair. In their soul-stirring works, they not only expressed their own heartfelt desires but also gave voice to the dreams of the nation."*

In this sense, Siddiqiy-Ajziy, while mourning the fate of a nation trapped under colonial domination and advocating for enlightenment and education, also expressed in his poetry dreams connected to the people's quest for freedom and independence.

For instance, in his poem *Mir'oti Ibrat* ("The Mirror of Instruction"), he articulates his aspirations for independence with these lines:

*Ilmi ila olmoq va fununni,*

*Davlatni, lisonni, zakunni,*

*Har qavm bulardin o'ldi mahrum,*

*Istiqboli holidin o'lur shum<sup>3</sup>.*

To acquire knowledge and science, to establish governance, to preserve language and law — for the poet, this equates to achieving true independence. Siddiqiy-Ajziy asserts that a nation deprived of these essential elements would face a future even more bleak than its already dire circumstances. It is not difficult to detect the poet's longing for national liberation in these lines.

Assessing Ajziy's work, literary critic Vadud Mahmud aptly defines the essence of the poet's creativity:

*"This poet of ours, too, is a lover. Yet his love is neither the mystical love of the Sufis nor the superficial love often depicted by realist poets. Our poet is a lover, and his beloved is the people — the nation itself. His passion reveals this to us. Ajziy is a poet whose spirit is infused with love and pain for his nation. His emotions are not fabricated, but genuine and natural. When he sheds tears, he sheds them for his nation; when he feels anger, it is for those who neglect the plight of his people. Likewise, his joy is only for the well-being of his nation and people."*

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<sup>3</sup>Сиддикий-Ажзий, Мир'оти ибрат./Миллий уйғониш ва ўзбек филологияси масалалари. —Тошкент: Университет, 1993. — Б.103.

Indeed, Siddiqiy-Ajziy can rightly be called a lover of his homeland and nation. His love is nourished by sacred feelings such as the desire for national progress and the dream of independence. His emotions are sincere, his passions are authentic; if he weeps, it is for the nation, and if he feels sorrow, it is because of indifference toward the people's suffering.

Thus, Siddiqiy-Ajziy's works, calling the younger generation to knowledge, enlightenment, patriotism, and devotion to the nation, retain great relevance even today.

In conclusion, Siddiqiy-Ajziy's literary legacy holds significant value for its vivid portrayal of the socio-political life of Turkestan in the early twentieth century, as well as for capturing the hopes and sorrows of his nation.

His literary and aesthetic ideals are deeply intertwined with the history and destiny of his homeland and people, which makes his work particularly important.

Furthermore, the unique expressive style, the strong educational and patriotic content, and the sophisticated system of imagery distinguish Ajziy's poetry from that of his contemporaries. The renewal of classical literary traditions, the creative synthesis of themes, forms, and images characteristic of Uzbek and Eastern classical literature, all serve as evidence of his high artistic skill. All these factors confirm Siddiqiy-Ajziy's rightful place in the development of Uzbek Jadid literature.