



THE DIALECTICS OF NATIONAL IDENTITY AND MODERNITY IN JADID PHILOSOPHY

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the philosophical foundations of the Jadid movement, which emerged in the early twentieth century, from the perspective of the dialectical relationship between national identity and modernity. The study analyzes the views of prominent Jadid thinkers such as Mahmudxo'ja Behbudiy, Abdurauf Fitrat, and Abdulla Avloniy in order to explore the issue of preserving national identity while harmonizing it with the principles of modern development. The article interprets the Jadids' ideas of enlightenment, modernization of education, the formation of civil society, and the strengthening of democratic values as a conceptual model for the renewal of national identity. Furthermore, the interaction between national values and modern social institutions is explained through a dialectical approach. The findings demonstrate that Jadid philosophy retains its relevance in the context of contemporary globalization and serves as a methodological foundation for developing national development strategies.

By the beginning of the twentieth century, the Jadid movement that emerged in Central Asia raised the issues of national awakening, education, and social reform on a scientific and philosophical basis. The Jadids deeply analyzed the complex socio-political processes of their time and sought to address, from a philosophical perspective, the problem of preserving national identity in the course of modernizing society. This process shaped a dialectical relationship between national identity and modernity and laid the foundation for the emergence of a new philosophical paradigm.

This article analyzes the dialectical relationship between national identity and modernity through the philosophical views of the Jadids, examining its conceptual foundations, socio-political interpretations, and its significance in the context of contemporary Uzbekistan.

The concepts of national identity and modernity have been interpreted through various philosophical approaches in academic research. National identity is understood as the totality of a nation's historical experience, culture, and linguistic-cognitive characteristics, functioning

as a means of identification in both individual and social life [1]. Modernity, in turn, refers to progressive renewal, scientific advancement, education, and social transformation [2]. From a philosophical standpoint, national identity and modernity are not contradictory but interrelated and complementary concepts. A dialectical approach demonstrates that the process of preserving national identity while adapting it to the demands of the time simultaneously strengthens identity and enhances developmental dynamics [3].

The Jadid movement took shape between the eighteenth and twentieth centuries and was primarily grounded in the ideas of enlightenment. The Jadids emphasized the necessity of strengthening the nation through radical educational reform, the advancement of science, and the upbringing of youth in the spirit of a modern worldview. In this process, their philosophical perspectives were oriented around two main axes:

Awareness and preservation of national identity. The Jadids valued traditional culture, language, literature, and religion as key components expressing the internal independence of the nation [4].

Acceptance and implementation of modernity. They stressed the importance of studying European and global cultural experiences and applying scientific ideas to society as a means of achieving progress [5].

These two directions formed the dialectical character of Jadid philosophy and defined it as a philosophical model of national awakening.

The Dialectics of National Identity and Modernity

In Jadid philosophy, national identity and modernity were viewed as a complex yet harmonious process. The Jadids clearly understood the distinction between two opposing approaches of their time: nationalism and modernization. While nationalism tends to defend national identity in an extreme form, modernization may incline toward rejecting it. The Jadids distanced themselves from both extremes and proposed the principle of adapting national identity to modern requirements [6].

This dialectic includes several significant philosophical elements:

Historical continuity and renewal

The Jadids deeply analyzed national history and sought to identify the values of the nation and their relevance to contemporary life. In their view, national identity is not merely historical heritage but a process of renewing and adapting it to modern demands [7].

2. Cultural harmony

Culture is one of the most essential elements of national identity, encompassing language, literature, art, and social traditions. The Jadids advocated not only preserving culture but also strengthening national identity through its protection and innovative reinterpretation [8].

3. Orientation toward education and knowledge

Education occupies a central place in Jadid philosophy. They believed that modern science and educational systems should serve as tools for understanding national identity and harmonizing it with the spirit of the age. Education was seen as a crucial instrument for enhancing the intellectual potential of the nation and shaping individual personality [9].

In the philosophy of the Jadids, the dialectic of national identity and modernity is regarded as a socio-political mechanism for transforming society. They believed that national

awakening could be achieved by reducing disparities among social strata, expanding access to education, and fostering legal consciousness [10]. Within this framework, the dialectic advanced by the Jadids was not merely an educational and spiritual phenomenon but also emerged as a theoretical foundation for socio-political transformation. They did not confine the process of national renewal to technical or organizational modernization alone; rather, they emphasized the necessity of transforming the internal structure of social consciousness, the system of values, and the foundations of identity.

In this sense, the Jadid movement provided a significant impetus to the formation of civil society, as it sought to elevate the individual from passive obedience to the level of an active social subject. In their view, social progress was primarily linked to freedom of thought, legal awareness, and moral responsibility—factors that strengthen democratic principles. Political reforms, therefore, were interpreted not as external imitation but as an internal necessity grounded in national interests and historical conditions. This approach laid a conceptual foundation for reforms such as transparency in public administration, the expansion of secular sciences in education, the development of the press and public opinion, and the enhancement of women's and youth participation in social life [11].

According to the Jadids, preserving national identity did not imply maintaining a closed and conservative system. On the contrary, a nation that deeply understands its own values should consciously adopt modern institutions. The dialectical nature of their thought lies in the idea that national identity and modernity are not oppositional categories but mutually enriching ones: national identity provides moral and spiritual substance to modernity, while modernity rescues national identity from historical stagnation and propels it toward dynamic development. The essence of national progress, in their understanding, was that a people should preserve its language, history, and culture while mastering scientific and technological achievements and introducing modern political and legal institutions.

Thus, the preservation of national identity alongside the introduction of modern social institutions became one of the core socio-political ideas of Jadid philosophy. This concept remains relevant today, as globalization intensifies the need to safeguard national identity while building a competitive modern society. The Jadids' views were not merely romantic slogans of national awakening but constituted a systematic modernization project that perceived changes in social consciousness, political culture, and economic thinking as an integrated process. Their approach is reflected today in the development strategy of the Uzbekistan, where the principle of harmonizing national values with modernization continues to shape reforms in governance, the digital economy, open society, and the rule of law.

In contemporary Uzbekistan, the dialectic of national identity and modernity is being reinterpreted on the basis of the Jadid legacy and expressed in practical socio-political programs. As an independent state, the country is implementing broad modern reforms in education, culture, the economy, and politics while preserving its national values [12]. The modernization of the education system—through new curricula, integration of international experience, support for scientific research, and expansion of academic freedom—aims to enhance intellectual capacity. Simultaneously, strengthening policies related to the national language and literature remains a state priority, as language constitutes a central pillar of national identity.

The preservation and revitalization of cultural heritage—through the restoration of historical monuments, support for national arts and traditions, and the development of cultural diplomacy—demonstrates how national identity is actively represented in the global arena. Social policies focused on human rights protection, gender equality, and improved social welfare systems contribute to strengthening democratic institutions. In all these processes, the Jadids' central principle—renewing society through enlightenment and harmonizing modernization with national values—retains its methodological relevance.

In today's context, the dialectic has become more complex: globalization, digital transformation, and the intensification of information flows pose new challenges to preserving national identity. Therefore, safeguarding identity is not pursued through isolationism but through an open, competitive, and innovation-driven development model. The current development trajectory envisions building an open society based on national traditions and values, implementing modern economic and digital governance mechanisms, enhancing civic engagement, and consolidating the rule of law.

Consequently, Jadid philosophical ideas function not merely as historical heritage but as a methodological foundation integrated into contemporary state policy. Their conception of renewing national identity as an effective instrument of development serves as a conceptual guide in modernizing social consciousness, advancing democratic institutions, and strengthening national statehood.

In summary, within Jadid philosophy, the dialectic of national identity and modernity emerged as a fundamental principle for renewing the nation and harmonizing it with the demands of the modern world. This dialectic provides a transformative mechanism through history, culture, education, and science. The reinterpretation of Jadid ideas in contemporary Uzbekistan contributes to consolidating the principle of harmony between national values and modern development within the country's current development strategy.

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