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## **The activity of the Uzbekistan intelligentsia in the 80s of the XX Century in the restoration of national values and cultural heritage**

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### **Abstract**

This article is educated the history of cultural processes in Uzbekistan in the last years of the former Soviet Union. The article covers the cultural riches that have lost their value under the influence of communist ideology on the eve of independence and the state of national traditions of the Uzbek people in the 1980s. The cases in which the policy of atheism pursued by the Communist Party led to the disappearance of national values, religious historical monuments, and ancient manuscripts have been studied. Moreover, the activities of intellectuals in the restoration of Uzbek national values and cultural heritage were analyzed on the basis of periodicals, archival documents and scientific works. The activities of intellectuals in the restoration of Navruz, protection of national values, raising the status of the Uzbek language, objective coverage of history and solving other social problems have been objectively assessed and scientific conclusions have been made

**Keywords:** Uzbekistan, intellectuals, former union, national values, Islam, Navruz, socialist traditions, communist ideology, independence, Uzbek language, cultural heritage, historical monuments, manuscripts

### **Introduction**

In the history of the world each nation intellectuals are distinguished by their role. An intelligent person is someone who is knowledgeable, educated, enlightened, engaged in mental work <sup>[1]</sup>. The intellectual work done for the development of the country is in itself a contribution to world development. They are also intellectuals who study the spiritual culture of a nation and convey it to the world community. The intelligentsia is also the driving force behind the self-realization of nations that have their own national pride.

The peoples of Central Asia have a very rich cultural and spiritual heritage, which occupies a special place in world culture. This heritage has been created over the centuries through the efforts of scientists, thinkers, literary and artistic figures, and architects.

As a result of the colonial policy that lasted from the end of the XIX century to the 90s of the XX century, there were lost in the spiritual and cultural heritage of our people. The colonial policy of the Russian Empire was to keep the population in this way for a long time. Such a policy of spiritual impoverishment of peoples continued even after the establishment of the Soviet regime. During the dictatorial Soviet regime of 1917-1991, the communist ideology, like many other peoples in the USSR, sought to alienate the Uzbek people from their national history, culture and values. Spiritual leaders were persecuted in the 1920s and 1930s as a result of the "offensive" movement and the struggle against religious scholars. Intellectuals who aspired to self-realization became victims of repression. In the post-war years, elements of European culture began to be artificially introduced instead of national traditions under the guise of "internationalism". Works of art, movies, music and theater, the media were used effectively. The activities of the national intelligentsia were kept under strict control, and instead of historical, national cultural themes, they were instructed to describe the positive aspects of the October Revolution, the achievements of socialism, and the lives of ordinary workers and collective farmers. Under the influence of communist ideology in the following years, even in the 1980s, as a result of the atheistic struggle against the "Islamic extremists", our people lost a great cultural and spiritual heritage. New socialist traditions were introduced instead of national values. The responsible leaders stressed, "One of the most important tasks of the new Soviet traditions is not only to oppose Soviet traditions to religious traditions, but also to completely eradicate religious traditions from our lives <sup>[2]</sup>."

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The shrines of scientists and thinkers, which have been valued by the Uzbek people for centuries, have been considered as a means of propagating religion. Because for more than one thousand two hundred years, the main part of the peoples of Central Asia has been believing in Islam. According to his custom, prayers are said for the souls of the dead in front of graves, especially when passing by tombs. There are many such mausoleums in the ancient cities of Uzbekistan. This is due to the high level of development of Islamic theology and secular science in the region during the Middle Ages, as well as the emergence of many well-known theologians. Communist party leaders told investigators from Moscow that the removal of religious elements from life and the widespread promotion of atheistic policies were hampered by the fact that shrines have become a historical monument. Leaders are told, "Steps must be taken. So far, it has been reported that there is a "grave" of a "saint" in the cemetery" [3]. As a result, many mausoleums and mosques with a rich history have been neglected. Also, many of them were demolished.

Ancient customs and traditions that had nothing to do with Islam were also persecuted. One of them was the holiday "Navruz". Navruz is a Persian word meaning a new day. The first day of the new year in the lunar calendar (solar calendar) falls on March 21<sup>st</sup> [4]. It is a holiday celebrated by the people of the Central Asian region on the occasion of the beginning of spring. As a result of the artificial strengthening of atheistic policy, it was proposed to call Navruz "Navbahor" holiday [5]. The word Navbahor also means early spring when translated from the For language. Navbahor is celebrated on the first Sunday of April each year [7].

In the 1980s, the communist ideology's critique of the funerals and funerals of the Muslim population in Uzbekistan reached a new level. Opinion of party activists on changing the funeral and mourning ceremonies: "As soon as you come to the house of dead, an" active "old man of the neighborhood begins to recite a verse. As a result, even an atheist of faith (communist ideology) involuntarily participates in a religious ceremony. Neighborhood assets, especially young people, must fight against such abuses." [8] Thousands of historical monuments, mosques, mausoleums and madrassas have been neglected under the influence of the above instructions and calls. Traditional customs that had been formed over the centuries began to disappear. Employees of the leader (party or state bodies) were even unable to attend the funerals of their loved ones.

During the policy of "reconstruction" in the former USSR, which began in the second half of the 80s of the XX century, the consciousness of our national intelligentsia began to grow. Along with the policy of "reconstruction", it was possible to express a partially open opinion.

During this period, intellectuals gathered in society and worked hard to find ways to solve the various social, economic, political, cultural, educational and environmental problems that are taking root. Because of the lack of opportunity in political platforms, they initially conveyed their views to the public, party and state leaders in publicist articles, the media, scientific and popular events.

The activities of Uzbek intellectuals in the deep study, preservation and transmission of cultural heritage and historical monuments to future generations had been developing since the second half of the 1980s. Hundreds and thousands of mosques, rare manuscripts of invaluable

wealth, were in a state of disrepair, buildings were closed, demolished or used for other purposes under the slogan of fighting "Islamic heresies" and "hotbeds of superstition". For example, about the condition of historical and cultural monuments in the Kashkadarya it is written: "Currently, 202 ancient monuments are preserved in the region. Unfortunately, only 6 of them have been repaired ... The preservation and repair of the remaining 191 monuments in the oasis are also neglected. Qori Darvoza which was built in the 19th-century and other monuments in the city of Kitab, which are still listed, have actually disappeared [9]. Regarding the deplorable condition of our historical monuments in Bukhara: "Everything is burned here, the thousand-year-old brick walls are stained with blackberries. Madrasai Saroitash, Chukur and many other monuments have been abandoned, and several generations of stray dogs live in them ... Don't we see them? Yes, our eyes are open, we are as blind as a thousand eyes ... we are blind ..." [10] The situation in Samarkand region is not good either, according to the imam of those years M. Malikov: "Our city of Samarkand is world famous. But there are mosques where pigs are fed," [11] he said at the regional council of people's deputies.

The study of manuscripts in the Arabic alphabet, a large part of the cultural heritage, has also not escaped the attention of intellectuals. Academician E. Yusupov has started great work in this direction. In his speeches, he said, "As a result of some atrocities carried out under the slogan of the struggle against religion in the 1920s and 1930s, many rare manuscripts preserved in the hands of our people have disappeared forever. We know from the past and recent events how horribly cultural savagery has left its mark on the history of culture." [12] In his article, E. Yusupov stressed the need for in-depth study of our history, for which the collection and study of ancient and medieval manuscripts is one of the great tasks, and said "ancient manuscripts are not only cultural monuments, but also invaluable treasures. On the basis of the manuscripts, it is possible to restore the pages of historical development, culture, art and literature that were disappeared" [13]

The great historian B.Akhmedov also supported the above ideas: "Many rare manuscripts were completely lost due to the evil that took place in 1920-1930. Unfortunately, the attack on old books did not stop even after. In the early 1950s, "isms" such as "pan-Turkism," "pan-Islamism," and "cosmopolitanism" emerged. At that time, the Institute of Oriental Studies under the Academy of Sciences of the Uzbek SSR, one of the largest centers for the preservation and study of manuscripts not only in the Soviet Union but around the world, was criticized as a "dead institute." At the same time, he makes the following proposal to solve the problem in the field of reading and studying manuscripts: "Special attention should be paid to the training of qualified specialists. This work requires a serious peer in charge of higher education, the heads of the Academy of Sciences, the Institute of Oriental Studies, the Institute of Manuscripts and the Institute of Language and Literature. It is necessary to implement the proposals on teaching the old script in secondary schools as soon as possible, to restore the Arabic language classes, which were unjustifiably suspended in some schools in Tashkent" [15]. The scientist also expressed his views on the science of history in this article: "In my opinion, we have ignored the great, powerful educational power and influence of history. One-sidedness in the

evaluation of historical figures and certain historical events, whether or not that person serves in the palace of the Humrans or belongs to this class, has long been the dominant principle in history and literature. However, it is necessary to present a historical person or a historical event in an objective way, without painting it as it is,"<sup>[16]</sup> he said. The boldness of the Uzbek intelligentsia to raise such issues has, of course, encouraged other intellectuals and young people to shed light on cultural heritage and neglected areas of history. They have made an objective assessment of the "white spots" in our history.

The issue of a broader and more objective study of the literary heritage has also begun to be raised as a topical issue by creative and scientific intellectuals. One such article after another was published in the press. It is no exaggeration to say that these articles are the way to promote the initiative that was created in a small and narrow circle to the public.

Erkin Vahidov's article "Sense of Justice, Human Dignity" was also one of the great works in this regard. In this article the result of a one-sided approach to the study of literary heritage was given by his words "we have made our classical poets progressive and reactionary, religious-mystical and democrat, palace poet and folk poet, with a very superficial interpretation of literature as a class, partisan approach to our classical literature."<sup>[17]</sup> Well-known writer Ozod Sharofiddinov's work in this regard can also be considered courageous. In his article "Loyalty to the Truth"<sup>[18]</sup> he gives a number of weighty ideas about the freedoms granted to writers at the party congress, but these freedoms were soon suppressed, the study of Yassavi's works, the reinterpretation of the Jadid movement, the study of Cholpon and Fitrat.

Meeting about "Methodological problems of reconstruction and study of cultural heritage"<sup>[19]</sup> which was took place at the Institute of Language and Literature of the Uzbek Academy of Sciences in July 1987 in collaboration with the Republican Writers' Union and the newspaper "Uzbekistan adabiyati va sanati" also discussed the issues of scientific study, objective coverage and transmission of the works of Yassavi, Hussein, Amir, Abulgazihan, Cholpon, Fitrat and others to the "protected" areas of literary heritage. On October 12, 1988 at the Institute of Language and Literature was held a round table on "Issues of Jadidism."<sup>[20]</sup> The issue of reducing "white spots" in Uzbek literature and history was discussed at the meeting.

It was mentioned above that the Central Committee started a new struggle against Navruz in 1986. The year 1986 was marked in the history of Uzbekistan as the year of repression against Navruz<sup>[21]</sup>. Instead, Remembrance Day was declared. Thanks to the efforts of intellectuals, Navruz was revived. "There have been unfounded attempts to deregulate Navruz, a very ancient holiday of our people I consider the failure of these attempts and the revival of Navruz to be a great victory for the writers' community,"<sup>[22]</sup> said E.Vahidov. In March 1991, the legal basis for the permanent celebration of Navruz as a national holiday was the Decree of President Islam Karimov "On the preparation and holding of the national holiday" Navruz "in the Republic"<sup>[23]</sup>.

In short, in 1985-1990, the socio-political activity of intellectuals increased. This was influenced by the political changes of those years, ie the policy of "reconstruction". Many problems of the country have been studied by

intellectuals. In addition to cultural issues, their activities reflected issues such as the monopoly of cotton and the resulting environmental situation and the difficult state of rural life.

In 1985-1990, intellectuals came up with progressive ideas about giving Uzbek the status of the state language, gaining political and economic independence, and raising the price of cotton. All these processes have contributed the intellectuals to the independence of Uzbekistan. Because their speeches in the media helped to change the worldview of the population, to understand the mistakes of the former USSR. But it is difficult to say that all intellectuals have also contributed. Because most of the executives, as well as a number of intellectuals, had not left the mutiny. It should also be noted here that the communist ideology had a strong influence on the minds of the people, convincing them of their ideas.

There is another important aspect of the work of Uzbek intellectuals in 1985-1990 on the restoration of spiritual heritage and national culture. The reason for this was that even the strong pressure from the party and state bodies had not lost its force. That is why the activities of our freethinking intellectuals of those years, who encouraged others to do the same, should be valued and appreciated.

Ensuring the freedom of creativity of intellectuals increases the efficiency of their labor. When a person willingly and wholeheartedly undertakes a task, he can achieve great things. In this regard, the intellectuals who worked in those years to restore the national values and cultural heritage of the Uzbek people have achieved results. They were able to convince the people, national holidays were revived, customs and manuscripts were studied.

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