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CHANGING TURKESTANI CODES OF BEHAVIOR FROM THE 19TH TO THE 20TH CENTURE REFLECTED IN TWO CLASSIC UZBEK NOVELS THE DAYS OF OLD AND THE NIGHT AND THE DAY

Abstract: This article consider changes in the way of life and morale of Turkestani in the late 19th and the first half of the 20th centuries, reflected in Uzbek classical novels. A comparative analysis of the heroes' behavior in the A. Cholpan and A. Kadiry's novels shows that the writers managed to reflect changes in the value system of that time, characterized by a shift in the emphasis of people's attention from the spiritual to the real world, facilitated by political, economic and cultural changes in the life of society.

Key words: Turkestan, spiritual improvement, Jadids movement, independence, national self-consciousness, responsibility, compassion, justice, development of the nation.

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Introduction

Morality and ethics form specific codes for human behavior and social relations. Changes in people's personal and social lives cause alterations in those codes. One of the ways to learn about them is to explore literary works that reflect important steps in the life of a nation. Two Uzbek Classics *The Days of Old* by A.Kadiry (1994-1938) and *The Night and the Day* by A.Cholpon (1897-1938) give a clear picture of the most important changes occurred in the history of our country in the beginning of the previous century.

The end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century changed life in greater Turkestan. It became a part of the Russian Empire in the 1860s, and that change influenced economic and social relations in the region. In 1917, Russia experienced two big revolutions. Likewise, in 1917, in the same spirit of revolution and the struggle for independence, a Turkestan Autonomous State (27.11.1917 – 9.02.1918) was announced in Kokand. However, in three months it was destroyed by the Bolshevik Army. In 1920, the Bolsheviks captured Bukhara (Bukhara Empire 1785-1920), and in 1922, Greater Turkestan became part of the Soviet Union and was

divided into several Soviet Socialistic Republics; Uzbekistan became one of them.

Behind these political events the life of the nation flowed. However, we have to admit that while passing through all those historical periods the nation could not keep its life style as well as its code of behavior unchangeable. Precisely, we have four different images of the country, one for each period:

1. Traditional Turkestan before Russian invasion (up to 1860s)
2. Turkestan as a part of Russian Empire (1860s-1917)
3. Turkestan striving for Independence (1917-1918)
4. Turkestan as a part of Soviet Union (from 1918 to 1924 when Uzbek SSR was formed and further).

The novels we are going to discuss in this article were written in the fourth of the listed periods in 1925 – *The Days of Old* and in 1936 – *The Night and the Day*, however, both of them describe the earlier days. Indeed, A.Kadiry concentrates on the first period (before 1860s), while A.Cholpon writes about the second one (Turkestan as a part of the Russian Empire). Looking back into the past, both of the writers tried to depict “the hero of the epoch”.



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Comparing information about the main characters of the novels we will analyze the changes occurred in the living code of the nation during these two earlier periods of our history.

Code of behavior in *The Days of Old*

Professor Edward A. Allworth defined the first Uzbek realist novel *The Days of Old* (1925) by A.Kadiry as a “beautiful novel” the best among all written in the twenties [4]. The novel remained in the center of scholar attention both in the past [3; 21; 1; 5] and in present [18; 7; 28;]. Every word or a phrase in it cause some deep critical reflections [29; 25] or philosophical interpretations [26]; scholars continuously admire its accuracy in presenting national traditions and local color [16], its mastery in depicting the characters’ personalities in it [12; 13]. Some critics emphasized its relation to the folk epics and to adventurous novels [20, p. 102; 19], others concentrated on the roots of historical events [2, p. 76-78] and national traditions[17, p. 27-29] described in the novel, analyzed peculiarities of the old and new generations in the novel [14, p. 93-99]. Scholars presented new interpretation of the images in the novel [23, p. 159-167; 24] and information about the history of its publication [30, p. 44-48]. They observed linguistic features of the novel [21, p. 31-34; 15, p. 85-87] and even explored the letters included into its text [27, p. 38-45]. We will look at the fiction from a different perspective: to learn the life style and code of behavior of its people.

As it was stated above, the novel visualizes the second part of the 19th century – life in Turkestan before the Russians’ invasion. The fictional time captures a period from 1847 to the 1860s. In the introduction, the writer set as his goal presentation of the story of modern Tahir and Zuhra, Farkhad and Shirin, declaring that the novel is a love story [11, p. 3]. However, he created an expansive picture of the epoch that included the blossoming and decline of Musulmakul’s (executed in 1852) reign and the first steps of Khudoyar-Khan (1829-1886) as a ruler of the country. Inter-ethnic enmity, along with the rulers’ struggle for power, produced tremendous bloodshed. Against the backdrop of these cruel historical events a beautiful love story between Otabek and Kumush develops.

In *The Days of Old* Turkestan is metaphorically presented as Islamabad – the region where Islam is blossoming. B. Karim speaks of “the divine light that permeates the whole novel.” All the best heroes of the *Days of Old* are distinguished by Muslim (humble) obedience to the will of God: “For all the will of God!” (“Hammasi Hudoning taqdiri” [11, p. 323]), and the constant readiness for death, which may come at any moment, when God wills to end the earthly trials of man: “I trust you to God, Kymush, if my death comes, and I die without seeing you, bless me (do not bear me a grudge)” (“Hudoyga topsirdim

Kumush, qazom etib ku’rolmay u’lsam, mendan rozi bu’li!” [11, p. 347]),”With God will, you’ll get well, my child!” (“Hudo shifo berar, bolam” [11, p. 367]. Such expressions in the text are countless. People follow the Islamic code of life in the novel and the writer himself, recreating the real picture of the past of Turkestan, followed the Muslim worldview, reflecting it in the construction of the plot, in understanding the fate, characters’ behavior and even the time measurement. Observing the uniqueness of the time category in the novel, B.Karim noticed that the author set time here in accordance with five daily prayers, obligatory for Muslims: “after the adhan to Fajr was performed...” (“subkh azoni aytilib...”), “at the time when the adhan to Asr was heard...” (“asr azoni eshitilgan vaqtda...”), “after the Maghrib...” (“shomdan su’ng...”), “after praying Isha...” (“khufton namozidan su’ng...”) [9, p. 6-7].

That influences people and form the uniqueness of their code of behavior, which is represented by the main characters of the novel. Yusufbek Hadji and his son Otabek both follow religious traditions and rules in social and political life. However, even those closely related people have some differences in their attitude towards life. To see that, we have to look closely to the father and son separately.

Yusufbek Hadji – well educated, kind hearted and just – represents best qualities of the elder generation in the novel. His image is parallels that of the Biblical character Joseph, son of Jacob, and the Islamic prophet Yusuf. He is an adviser to the Tashkent ruler Azizbek. We can state some specific features of his personality, which affect his behavior code:

Yusufbek Hadji serves God but not earthly rulers. His success and failure he accepts as tests. He prays and returns to God in happy and sad moments. He asks to save and protect his son, but patiently accepts his death as God’s will.

Yusufbek Hadji stands for truth even if it costs him life. As an adviser, he stops Azizbek when he sentenced someone to death. Arguing with the ruler was never safe, but Yusufbek Hadji insisted until Azizbek had to say: “Well, leave this person alone, but take and kill Yusufbek Hadji instead of him”.

Yusufbek Hadji sees his duty in protecting people and their cultural heritage, which here means religion. He warns against possible Russian invasion. He believes that if the Russians come, they will destroy people, their traditions and faith.

Yusufbek Hadji mostly listens and speaks only when truly necessary. He explains the rules of behavior to people, teaches his wife to keep justice toward their daughters-in-law, and teaches his son’s wives to keep peace at home.

Yusufbek Hadji is much respected. A Tashkent revolt against the ruler Azizbek started after Yusufbek Hadji addressed people about new unbearable taxes, which the ruler ordered them to



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pay. As a result, Azizbek was removed, and Nurmuhammad qushbegi started to rule in Tashkent as a regent placed by Kokand's Khan.

Yusufbek Hadji reached one of the highest points on the way to perfection. He does not accept inter-ethnic enmity. After killing Musulmakul, the ruler Khudoyar Khan ordered the extermination of all kipchaks in his kingdom. Yusufbek Hadji helped people escape from the Khan's soldiers. He alone could not do much, so the number of victims was enormous.

His son Otabek follows his example; however, he belongs to a new generation and he has his own specific features, which make him outstanding and unique. The author points out the exceptional character of the hero in the description of his room: "the room is more beautiful than others" ("boshkalarga karaganda ku'rkamroq bir khujra" [11, p. 5]), his appearance: "The owner of this room is also created differently" ("Bu hujraning egasi ham boshchacha yaratilishda" [11, p. 5]), and in the hero's rare ability to love: "Love is the pearl of the heart, which is awarded to extremely rare young men" ("Mukhabbat juda oz yigitlarga muyassar bludagan yurak javharidir" [11, p. 25]). His dignity is confirmed not only by his close ones: in Margilan he was immediately appreciated (Mirzakarim Kutidor: "Allah comprehensively gifted the boy from many sides" ("Hudo har narsadan bergan yigit ekan", Akrom Hozhi: "I would elect Atabek as Khan" ("Khon qilib Otabekni ku'tarar edim!" [11, p. 18]).

Otabek is exceptionally decent and worthy of his noble father. He is as unchangeably honest and brave as his father in every situation is. Before sentencing him to death, Musulmankul says, "Such a brave heart you have, boy! Unfortunately your guilt has been proved".

Otabek is different from many young people around. He is very handsome, but his true beauty is in his heart. He is an obedient son who never hurts anyone's feeling. He cherishes love as a treasure. Even if he does not love his second wife, he is just in his relationships with both his wives, as well as with everyone else.

Otabek is ready to fight for and protect his love. Possessing strong spiritual power, after losing Kumush, he abandons life to strive for perfection.

However, as a representative of the new generation, Otabek combines traditional worldview with the trends of a new era. It makes his code of behavior different from that of his father.

Otabek cares for the future of his nation but realistically sees negative traits in people. Unlike his father, Otabek admires the Russians' ability to organize work and trade. He wants his people to do the same, but he knows they will not accept this idea.

Otabek is also not as perfect as his father is. He revolts against family traditions and evil. He also cannot forgive: he divorces his second wife (who

poisoned Kumush out of jealousy), and leaves his parents, blaming them for the happening.

Despite of those differences, Otabek remains a representative of the old traditional Turkestan, which accepted Russians as inevitable enemies. Otabek dies in 1852 trying to protect his country and its traditional values in the battle against the Russians in Oq-Maschit – the northwest fort of Turkestan (the present-day city of Kyzylorda in Kazakhstan).

Writing this novel A. Kadiry looked back more than 60 years. He bravely idealized the past and openly regretted it. With his novel *The Night and the Day* A. Cholpon took a different approach in observing the ways for the national development. He analyzed the recent past (around 20 years back in time) and told about the Jadids movement.

Jadids movement and the code of behavior in *The Night and the Day*

Initially, the democratic movement of the Enlightenment, and later the form of the struggle for the national independence – the Jadids movement arose in the late XIX – early XX centuries. It was founded by Ismoil Gasprinsky, who began publishing the newspaper *Tarjimon* in Bakhchisaray in 1883. In two years, 200 copies of this edition were distributed in Turkestan [10]. At the same time, the first schools of Jadids (Jadid – "new" in *Arabic*), and their first societies began to appear here. Although the movement ceased to exist in the late 20's - early 30's, the flourishing of the Jadids literature falls on the second decade of the twentieth century, when the most significant works of this direction were created. Jadids essentially renewed Uzbek literature, modified it using new ways of versification, and enriched by new genres: a drama in theatre and a novel in literature. Starting at the beginning of the 20th century the Jadids movement enhanced educational development in the region. However, in the Soviet Union it was destroyed due to its nationalistic nature. By the time A. Cholpon wrote his novel, all jadids were either killed or imprisoned. However, A. Cholpon presented the movement as if it was the only hope Turkestan had for its development. He permitted the protagonist of the novel, Miryakub, to become a follower of the movement. Miryakub chose a path to serve his nation, to contribute to its cultural and economic development, making a "new" national "hero of the time". However, analyzing Miryakub's behavior and understanding of life, we see how greatly his morals and ethics differ from those of his predecessors.

Miryakub does not care that Russians are ruling in the country, and he successfully collaborates with them. As a businessperson, he knows how to solve problems and defend his own interests even if they are not pure and justifiable. He is flexible, but this also means he is dishonest. He behaves differently in different situations.



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Miryakub is able to destroy other people's lives if it helps him to win the case. In order to save mingboshi from scandal he badmouths good people and wins. He arranges mingboshi's last marriage to Zebi, so her life is wrecked.

Miryakub does not care about "purity" in his personal life, too. He is the "respectable" visitor of a brothel. He spends a night with the wife of a Russian regent *naib* and tries to prove that it was in order to develop his business.

Miryakub is skeptical about soul perfection and measures everything by the money he makes. In his inner dialogue with the "supreme judges" he proves that he lives as most rich people live in his time. He knows everything about faith, but he never prays.

Difference between Miryakub and his predecessors, however, is not only in his brutal personality. A.Cholpan begins his novel where A.Kadiri finishes it. *The Days of Old* is a novel about the complex path of man's spiritual perfection, his path to Light. A. Cholpan, apparently, believes that the road built by A. Kadiri in his novel leads nowhere, and that longing for only spiritual improvement in the modern world is far from sufficient. Moreover, the world A.Cholpon describes in his novel is far from "Islamabad" in A.Kadiry's novel. In the text of *The Night and the Day*, it seems that God does not exist at all. There is an old bribe taker - ishan - the source of all Zebi's troubles, and the young libertine - a mullah from Kumaryk. A few strong phrases of protest, voiced by the younger generation to the Creator, practically drain the entire religious theme of the novel. So, Onakhon - Zebi's close friend - in response to her mother's words that "the poor are the beloved creations of Allah", blasphemes: "And is this the position of the beloved?" ("...shumi suygan bandaning holi?" [8, p. 31]), complaining that she has not enough money to treat her friends-guests, as she would like. As well as the young people of the village say getting indignant about the power of the Mingbashi: "Why does God always give only such bastards? Why He doesn't give us at least a bit (of fortune)?" ("Hudo hadeb shunaqa insofsizlarga berar ekan-da! Biz bechoralarga ham bir narsa uzatsa-chi!"). Consequently, the old people raise their sticks on them for their blasphemous words, and the young evade the blows, but continue the same joke, "Why are you running away? See, God gives you. Get your share!" ("Nimaga qochasan? Hudo senga ham berayotir, olmaysanmi?" [8, p. 54]). The only person in the novel, who sincerely and relentlessly seeking God, but does not find, is Razzaq-sufi - the unfortunate father of Zebi, deceived by his money-loving mentor - ishan.

In his book *Human All Too Human* [22], Nietzsche described features that both of these novels demonstrate in detail. In accordance with the great philosopher, people of new era have:

- No responsibility. In *The Days of Old* Zaynab poisoned her rival Kumush and ran mad after understanding the harm she brought. However, in *The Night and The Day* Poshshakhnon tried to poison her rival but instead killed mingboshi and felt no guilt. Zebi was exiled instead of her.

- No compassion. In *The Days of Old* friendship, understanding, respect, love, and compassion - all have great meaning, while in *The Night and the Day* people do not care about each other. Zaynab is not taken to court when her madness was proved, but nobody feels sorry about Zebi and her parents even if she is innocent.

- No justice. In *The Days of Old* evil is punished and the suffering of the main characters is accepted as another step on their way to perfection. In *The Night and The Day* whoever tries to keep justice - loses: mingboshi lost his job, Zebi lost her freedom.

A. Cholpon published only the first part of his novel. The second part - *The Day*, even if it was started, disappeared after Cholpon's death. However, the whole logic of the novel *The Night* brings us to the opinion that *The Day* will not come.

Analyzing the negative features of the Renaissance, Russian scholar N.Berdyayev emphasized that it released people from God and started all disasters of future centuries [6]. It would be easy to claim that people in *The Night and The Day* in comparison with the *The Days of Old* forgot about God and started to act badly. However, there were more reasons for their behavior, and the most important is the changes in real life. By the beginning of the 20th century in Turkestan there were:

New economic relations caused by its annexation to the Russian Empire.

The rapid development of transportation, trade, and business.

The need for education and the knowledge of the real world instead of the spiritual world and the world of the hereafter.

A new understanding of national "self" and the demand for national development.

Here the reason why A.Cholpon made Miryakub a protagonist of the novel rests. According to the writer, only the way of Miryakub - an active life for the benefit of the nation - can lead to success. He really is an adventurer, able to find a way out of any situation, but A.Cholpon admires him for his creativeness. People nicknamed Myryakub a "dodger" ("epaqa [8, p. 56]) and for reason. In the village, according to the author's testimony, there are only five outlets (two grocers, one butcher's shop and two canteens), four of which are operated by Miriakub ("Miryoqubning kuchi bilan aylanganini su'zlashadilir" [8, 56]). Miryakub's activities include

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his affairs in the bank, and his participation in the "problems" of the Mingbashi, from which they always come out victorious, thanks to the ineradicable agility of Miryakub. Granting his protagonist with a Jadid mentor, A.Cholpon gives him an opportunity to join the movements for a nation development, brings him out of the country to see the world, to strive for progress. In the image on Miryakub A.Cholpon displayed his dream about prosperous future of his motherland build by its devoted people. It is natural that change in life conditions develops exact alterations in people's personality, too. Consequently, A.Cholpon emphasizes that his Miryakub is far away from a traditional ideal hero in every aspect. However, due to the conditions of the new era, the nation needs exactly practical "doers" even if they have so many flaws in their personality.

Conclusion

The Days of Old and *The Night and the Day* are separated by only 10 years of real time and around

50 years of fictional time. They maintain a dialogue with each other by putting the characters into similar situations. Different outcomes from similar situation reflect new attitudes towards life brought by the new century. During a considerably short period, there were so many changes in the living code of Turkestan. It had people make a tremendous shift of their attention's focus from spiritual world into the real life problems.

Through contradicting themselves, confronting their consciences, and sometimes suffering from the difference between what they learned and what they had to do, people in Turkestan stepped into a new era. It amended their understanding of morals and ethics and made them change their Code for living. Almost a century later we have a chance to observe those struggles thanks to the records of living codes preserved in A.Kadiry and A.Cholpon's great novels.

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