



THE FATE OF TURKESTANI STUDENTS

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Abstract:

This article highlights the educational and enlightenment activities of the Jadid movement in Turkestan, their contributions to leading the nation towards freedom and progress, as well as the history of the policy of sending young people abroad for studies. It reveals the process of education, goals, and tragic fate of Uzbek youth sent to Germany starting from 1922 on the initiative of Tura Riskulov and Fayzulla Khojayev. Additionally, it analyzes the role of progressive specialists who either became victims upon returning home or were forced to stay abroad due to the Soviet era's "Great Purge" and repressive policies, and their impact on national development.

Keywords: Jadidists, enlightenment, Turkestan, students from Germany, Tura Riskulov, Fayzulla Khojaev, 'the big massacre,' repressive policies, national personnel, Omonulla Nusratullaev, national development

INTRODUCTION. It is well known that before the October Revolution, a number of prominent intellectuals from Turkestan, including Fitrat, Ghozi Olim Yunusov, and Ubaydulla Khojayev, had studied at prestigious universities in Russia and foreign countries. Upon returning to their homeland, they became actively involved in socio-political life and educational activities. In the post-revolutionary period, the number of young people following in their footsteps increased significantly. In particular, German educational institutions served as important centers for training highly qualified scientific and political specialists during that period.

The Jadid reformers of Turkestan initially began their activities by promoting enlightenment and education. The noble idea of leading their homeland toward freedom and national independence occupied a central place in the thinking of the most progressive Jadid intellectuals. They believed that this goal could only be achieved through continuous educational and political activities. The Jadids could not imagine the independence and development of their homeland without highly qualified specialists equipped with modern knowledge. Therefore, they focused their attention on educating progressive and knowledgeable professionals from among the children of the local population. To accomplish these objectives, they considered the proper organization of schools and education, as well as the upbringing and education of the younger generation, to be matters of primary importance.

MAIN PART. The Jadid reformers of Turkestan used every available opportunity to spread education and enlightenment among the population. They promoted

their ideas through schools, educational institutions, the press, literary works, and theatrical performances. Their activities were aimed at raising public awareness and improving the educational, economic, political, and everyday life of the nation. Through their educational efforts, they actively opposed religious innovations, superstitions, and any circumstances that hindered the progress of society.

During 1937–1938, a campaign initiated by the Soviet state, later known as the "Great Purge," intensified significantly. During those years, numerous innocent people in Turkestan were executed, exiled, or imprisoned. In other words, they became victims of political repression. The repression affected all segments of society, including both young and elderly people.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION. Beginning in 1922, young people from Turkestan were sent to Germany to pursue higher education. Among the main initiators of this undertaking were prominent leaders of that time, such as Tura Riskulov and Fayzulla Khojayev. Their primary objective was to acquire knowledge of European science, industry, and agriculture and subsequently contribute to the development of their homeland. They intended to apply the modern knowledge and professional skills they acquired to the advancement of Turkestan's economy, healthcare system, and education.

It should be emphasized that while compiling the list of students to be sent abroad, Fayzulla Khojayev sought to give preference to students from the "Shahido" school, which had been established for children whose parents had lost their lives fighting against the Red Army [1]. Furthermore, Tura Riskulov



personally visited Germany to inquire about the students' living conditions and well-being.

In Germany, the students pursued education in various academic and professional fields. However, the Soviet authorities subsequently decided that students should receive their education not abroad but at educational institutions within the Soviet Union. Accordingly, they were required to return to the USSR and continue their studies at universities and other educational institutions in major Soviet cities, including Moscow and Leningrad.

Nevertheless, the students remained committed to their dreams and aspirations. They insisted on completing their education in Germany and returning to their homeland. Unfortunately, after their return, many of them became victims of political repression based on fabricated allegations, false accusations, and slander.

The students began to be arrested on charges that they had allegedly fallen under European influence and developed hostile attitudes toward Russia. Other students, realizing that a similar tragic fate awaited them, chose to remain in foreign countries, where they subsequently contributed to the development of those societies.

The Soviet policy of political repression affected not only these young, progressive intellectuals but also their family members. One such example was Omonulla Nusratullayev, a native of Kitob District in Kashkadarya Region, who had studied mechanical engineering in Germany. Upon returning to his homeland in 1937, he was arrested and sentenced to death by a court [2]. Many other students experienced similarly tragic fates.

The fate of students who had studied in Germany during the 1930s and 1940s became one of the most painful and tragic chapters in the history of our nation. These individuals represented some of the most progressive, intellectually capable, and patriotic members of their generation.

If the Soviet authorities had not feared that these young people would soon become highly qualified national professionals, and if they had not been concerned that exposure to Germany's scientific, technological, and cultural achievements would transform their intellectual outlook, the practice of sending students to Germany might have continued. Under such circumstances, the Republic of Uzbekistan might have become one of the most advanced and developed republics within the USSR as early as the 1930s.

Although their tragic fate remains a dark chapter in our history, their courage in pursuing knowledge and their dedication to the development of their homeland will never be forgotten.

CONCLUSION. In conclusion, the noble educational aspirations of the Turkestani Jadid reformers and the activities of young people sent to Germany for education during the 1920s represent some of the most remarkable yet tragic chapters in the history of our nation. This important initiative, launched with the support of patriotic leaders such as Tura Ryskulov and Fayzulla Khojayeov, was directed toward the great objective of mastering modern science, industry, and agriculture and using this knowledge to promote the development of their homeland.

However, the totalitarian regime of the Soviet state and its policy of political repression, particularly the Great Purge, shattered the dreams and aspirations of these young people. Thousands of progressive specialists, including Omonulla Nusratullayev, who returned to their homeland with a strong sense of patriotism and dedication, became victims of unfounded accusations and political persecution.

The Soviet authorities feared that these young intellectuals would develop into highly qualified national professionals capable of leading their people toward a free, independent, and prosperous future. Consequently, their lives were tragically destroyed, leaving a dark mark on the nation's history.

Nevertheless, their courage in the pursuit of knowledge, their selfless dedication, and their efforts toward the progress of their homeland will never be forgotten. On the contrary, their legacy will continue to serve as an inspiring example of patriotism, intellectual commitment, and devotion to future generations.

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