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THE LIFE AND PEDAGOGICAL ACTIVITY OF THE ENLIGHTENER SCHOLAR OLIMJON BARUDIY

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the life and pedagogical legacy of Olimjon Barudiy, a distinguished educator and reformer from Kazan who significantly contributed to the modernization of Islamic education during the Jadidist era. The paper provides a comprehensive account of Barudiy's early education, intellectual formation, and the establishment of the Muhammadiya Madrasa, highlighting his innovative teaching methods, curriculum reforms, and contributions to female education. Additionally, the study discusses Barudiy's political activities, editorial work in the journal Ad-Din wa al-Adab, and his role in Muslim congresses in pre-Soviet Russia. Drawing from biographical materials, archival records, and contemporary studies, the article presents Barudiy's efforts as foundational to modern pedagogical movements in the Turkic-Islamic world.

KEYWORDS: *Olimjon Barudiy, Muhammadiya Madrasa, Jadidism, Islamic education reform, Tatar intellectuals, Muslim congresses, pedagogical modernization, Ad-Din wa al-Adab, female education, cultural heritage*

The famous teacher and pedagogue from Kazan, Olimjon Barudiy, who made significant contributions to the history of Jadidism and rendered valuable services to Turkic-Islamic enlightenment through the modern madrasa he established, was born in 1857 in the village of Kichik-Kavali, located 40 kilometers northwest of Kazan (in the Barudiya district of Kazan). His full name is Olimjon bin Muhammadjon bin Bunyomin bin Ali bin Qulmuhammad al-Barudiy al-Muftiy, and he was also officially known under the title Galiyev. The pen name "Barudiy" was derived from the name of his place of residence, following a common tradition of that era [1, p.149].

In the 18th–19th centuries, Tatar scholars associated with Central Asian and Arab-Persian culture often named themselves after their places of birth or residence, as seen with Marjoniy from the village of Marjan and Kursaviy from the village of Kursa. Olimjon Barudiy considered himself a follower of the renowned scholar and enlightener Shahobiddin Marjoniy (1818–1889), and in many respects, he later followed in the footsteps of his mentor [6, pp. 57–64].

His father, Bunyomin bin Ali bin Qulmuhammad's son Muhammadjon, was engaged in the trade of boots and footwear and was one of Kazan's well-known merchants. His mother, Bibi Fakhrunniso, daughter of Habibullah bin Muhammad Sharaf, was Olimjon Barudiy's first teacher. He began his madrasa education in 1862 at the age of five in the school run by Imam and teacher Salohiddin Domla in Kazan and later continued his studies at the Kolboyu Madrasa, which also educated such teachers and editors as Musa Jarullah Zohir Bigi, Sadri Maqsudi, and Ayoz Ishoqiy. In this madrasa, his education began with "Haftiyak" and included the Quran and Turkic language in the first four years, Arabic in the next four years, and logic and kalam (Islamic theology) in the following three years.

Barudiy described the difficulties of his education in Kazan in his memoirs:
"Starting in 1866, during the four years I studied Arabic grammar, I began to notice some of the hardships of teaching methods of that time. Being a ten-year-old child with no interest in the Persian language, being taught a Persian book without rules and methodology, trying to understand it through long and complex grammar rules, and being required to memorize these rules written in Persian without proper explanation was an exhausting and harmful approach —I understood this and felt disturbed..." [2, p.26].

At that time, after completing their studies in local religious madrasas, young students would travel to Bukhara to further their education. There, they would first study Arabic and Persian languages and then use the extensive libraries to access the works and ideas of ancient Islamic philosophers. Following the advice of his mentor, teacher Salohiddin Domla, Olimjon Barudiy also went to Bukhara in 1875 for higher education, accompanied by his younger brother Azizjon. In Bukhara, he purchased a cell in the Mir Arab Madrasa. This same madrasa had once educated the early religious reformers from Kazan, such as Abu Nasr Kursavi and Shahobiddin Marjoniy [2, p.33].

However, in Bukhara, students were not bound to one madrasa; instead, they could attend the lectures of any teacher they chose, complete their studies, and receive an ijazah (authorization). Barudiy did the same and studied with prominent scholars such as Damolla Hasan Salat Khan, Damolla Rais Abdushukur, Akhund Damolla Ikhtiyor Khan Alem, and Damolla Isa Makhzum. His brother Azizjon was later conscripted for military service and returned to Kazan. Barudiy remained in Bukhara for another three years with his other brother Solihjon, who had joined him. He spent seven years studying in Bukhara and, not wanting to part from the city, finally returned home in

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1882, bringing with him a vast intellectual wealth and a valuable collection of books loaded on camels.

Barudiy was so satisfied with his time in Bukhara that leaving the city and returning to Kazan proved extremely difficult for him. Yet his journey did not end there—he later undertook travels to Egypt, India, Istanbul, and the Hijaz [7, p.34].

Upon his return to Kazan, Barudiy was appointed the second imam at the mosque in the Okmasjid neighborhood, alongside Yusuf Hazrat Saidov. He began working for the benefit of his nation from that very place and immediately resumed teaching students.

Barudiy also established close ties with Shahobiddin Marjoniy after returning to Kazan and receiving further education under him. He read all of Marjoniy's books and was deeply impressed by his ideas, striving to be with him at every possible opportunity [3, p.174].

In 1901, with financial assistance from his father, Barudiy built the famous "Muhammadiya Madrasa" in Kazan and implemented a modern educational system there. (In fact, the Muhammadiya Madrasa, considered one of Kazan's most important cultural heritages, was originally constructed as a one-story brick building in 1882 after Barudiy returned from Bukhara. By 1901, it had expanded into a large three-story educational institution.)

Barudiy's first wife, Magrue Barudiy, also contributed to education during the early years of the Muhammadiya Madrasa (1890), teaching girls in the Tatar language using the Usul-i Savtiya (Phonetic Method). The general approach adopted in the Usul-i Jadid (New Method) education included: simultaneous teaching of reading and writing; the establishment of elementary schools for girls and equal access to knowledge previously reserved for boys; no more than 30–40 students per teacher; three hours of classes in the morning and two in the afternoon, totaling no more than five hours of instruction per day; ten-minute breaks; a one-hour or 45-minute lunch break; school holidays on Fridays and national holidays; lighter lessons in summer; a shift from punishment to encouragement; weekly progress assessments and performance certificates; large, bright, clean classrooms equipped with blackboards and desks; a focus on comprehension and communication over rote memorization of prayer verses; a two-year core education period followed by three years of vocational training; and a rule that no new topic could be taught until the current one was fully learned.

In the upper classes, the curriculum included not only religious sciences such as tafsir (Quranic exegesis), hadith, and fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence), and Arabic language, but also secular subjects such as medicine, mathematics, history, and geography. The program also incorporated both the national language (Turkic) and the official state language (Russian).

Olimjon Barudiy believed that Islamic sciences should be studied in Arabic but also explained in the Turkic language for better understanding. Accordingly, he authored textbooks used at the madrasa such as *Azkorus-Salot*, *Badul-Maorif*, and *Muamalot-i Diniyya*. Thanks to Barudiy's material and spiritual efforts, as well as his role as a teacher and administrator, the Muhammadiya Madrasa became one of the most prestigious educational institutions of its time, recognized for having some of the most advanced teaching staff. The madrasa was structured into four levels: elementary (ibtidoiy), intermediate (rushdiya), preparatory (idodi), and higher education (oliy). A special "Teachers' Department" (*Muallimin Sho'basi*) was also created to train future educators.

According to Abdullah Battal-Taymas, a scholar, politician, editor, and writer, the modernization of madrasas began with Olimjon Barudiy. His efforts led to the implementation of graded class systems and a curriculum that combined both religious subjects (Arabic, tafsir, hadith, and fiqh) and secular sciences. Many of the teachers trained at his madrasa contributed significantly to the reform of other madrasas. Although Barudiy studied in Bukhara, his ideology was shaped by Marjoniy's spirit. His reputation and that of his madrasa spread across all Turkic regions of the Russian Empire. Students came not only from Kazan and the Ural region, but also from Turkestan, the North Caucasus, Siberia, and even the Kazakh and Kyrgyz steppes [4, p.26].

By 1913, the Muhammadiya Madrasa had approximately 400 students. The elementary and intermediate levels were set at six years each, while the higher level was three years. Despite the challenges he faced, the madrasa produced enlightened imams, knowledgeable teachers, distinguished editors, and intellectuals with broad worldviews.

Barudiy promoted new teaching methods to renew public life and enhance national consciousness. He emphasized the importance of mass media to spread the ideas of school reform more quickly and widely and believed the press could serve as a valuable platform for discussing theoretical and organizational issues in pedagogy. In this spirit, he founded the journal *Ad-Din wa Al-Adab* in 1906.

On May 2, 1907, pedagogical courses were launched at the madrasa to train Tatar teachers. However, since these were held without the local authorities' permission, the courses were shut down on May 21, 1907. The educational institution was sealed, and a search was conducted. Some scholars had their notebooks confiscated, and others were expelled from Kazan.

Barudiy suffered the most damage. Because he had long been in disputes with conservative clerics and wealthy elites, the authorities took the harshest measures against him, particularly accusing him for his involvement in the *Ad-Din wa Al-Adab* journal. On May 8, 1908, by order of the governor, Barudiy, his brother Solihjon Hazrat Galiyev, Mullah Gabdulla Apanayev, and merchant Abdulhamid Kazakov were exiled to the Vologda region for two years [5, pp.34; 229, p.360].

After staying in Vologda for four months, Barudiy and his companions requested permission from Russian authorities to serve the remainder of their exile abroad. Their request was granted, and he embarked on travels through Budapest, Istanbul, and Egypt before performing Hajj for the second time. From there, he visited Damascus, Beirut, Tripoli, and Baalbek. After completing his exile, he returned to Kazan at the end of

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March 1910. In 1912, Barudiy was again permitted to serve as imam at the Okmasjid, also known as the Fifth Mosque. While Barudiy was in exile, Muhammadiya Madrasa was managed by his successors—Ahmadjon Mustafo and Shahar Sharif—who ensured that his educational legacy continued. In the following years, due to surveillance and pressure, Barudiy's activities became more limited, and he focused almost exclusively on religious matters [8, p.204].

The journal *Ad-Din wa al-Adab*, first published in 1906, faced a suspension from May 1908 to February 1913, after which it resumed until 1918. Excluding the interrupted years, it was active for a total of eight years, with all its articles written in the Tatar dialect. Eleven issues from its first year are preserved in the digital archives of the National Library under the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Turkey. As a semi-official publication of the Muhammadiya madrasa, the journal featured many articles on educational reform, with a significant portion authored by Olimjon Barudiy himself.

The journal addressed key issues such as the future of the Tatar language, the importance of a unified Turkic writing system, women's rights, education, and historical topics. Rooted in the Jadidist slogan "Unity in language, thought, and action," the journal sought to promote progress among not only the Muslim Turks of the Russian Empire but also Turkic communities worldwide. It aimed to synthesize European advancements with national consciousness, contributing to the development of a modern Turkish identity. Biographical writings by Barudiy held an important place in the journal, including a detailed account of Ahmed Bay (1837–1906), a wealthy figure from Kazan with whom Barudiy had long-standing intellectual ties.

Barudiy authored many of the texts used in his madrasa. Between 1889 and 1901, he published independent booklets on Arabic grammar, an Arabic-Persian-Tatar dictionary, the history of prophets, arithmetic, and Islamic practices such as prayer, fasting, zakat, and purification. Except for the grammar book, most of these booklets ranged from 16 to 56 pages and were frequently reprinted.

Olimjon Barudiy also played an active role in the political life of Russian Muslims. He participated in the Second and Third Muslim Congresses in 1906 and was elected to the Central Committee of the "Ittifaq al-Muslimin" (Muslim Union). At that time, the party operated unofficially. After the 1917 February Revolution, national political activity was legalized. On May 1–2, 1917, the First All-Russian Muslim Congress was held in Moscow with 900 delegates in attendance, where Barudiy was elected Mufti. The congress addressed a wide range of topics including land, labor, women's rights, parliament, military affairs, and religious administration.

Later, Barudiy joined the National Assembly of the Turkic-Tatar peoples of Inner Russia and Siberia in Ufa. After the Bolsheviks came to power, he retained his position as Mufti following electoral success from 1918 to 1920, continuing to defend Muslim rights.

Between 1921 and 1922, following World War I, the October Revolution, and the Russian Civil War, much of Russia's arable land was lost, and below-average rainfall led to economic collapse and famine. Barudiy faced hardship during this time. While in Moscow organizing relief for starving Muslims and attempting to restore the Muftiate in Ufa, he passed away on December 6, 1921. At the height of the national struggle in Anatolia, Lenin, as a gesture of respect for the Islamic East, ordered Barudiy's body to be transported to Kazan despite the harsh conditions of the time.

Throughout his life, Barudiy amassed a significant library of rare books and manuscripts. Academic I.Y. Krachkovsky informed the Russian Academy about the collection. In 1920, Barudiy voluntarily donated the library to the Tatar Republic, and it is now preserved in the Rare Books and Manuscripts Department of the N.I. Lobachevsky Scientific Library. His handwritten letter dated July 24, 1920, expressing his desire to donate the library, is also archived. The collection includes 4,288 books, of which 947 are manuscripts and 2,274 are in Arabic.

Barudiy was also known as an educator and orator. He emphasized the importance of pedagogical science, resolving key educational issues. He founded the Muhammadiya madrasa, developed its teaching materials, published his own textbooks, and trained a full cadre of Jadidist teachers. His educational mission centered on modernizing madrasas, improving teaching methods, supporting female education, and promoting student-centered learning environments. He stressed moral development, hygiene, and a healthy lifestyle—principles that remained central to his pedagogical legacy.

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