The Role and Actions of the Intellectuals in the Awareness of National Identity in Uzbekistan in the Second Half of the 1980s

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Abstract: The article analyses the processes, the state and the problems of material and spiritual life in Uzbekistan in the second half of the 1980s, as well as the issues raised by intellectuals on the way to realising their national identity.

Keywords: reconstruction, national identity, culture, intellectuals, heritage, literature, history, education.

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Introduction
By the 1980s, the effects of the socio-economic and political crisis in the former Soviet Union and its constituent republics had intensified, affecting all areas of life in the country. The crisis was particularly pronounced in the mid-1980s. Gorbachev introduced radical reforms in all spheres of life in order to overcome the difficult situation and socio-economic development of the country, and at the April plenum in 1985 proclaimed the path of radical restructuring of Soviet society and profound reforms in all spheres. Although this policy of "reconstruction", which differed from its predecessors, opened some channels of democratisation and transparency, it did not affect the fundamentals of the existing system. However, intellectuals who benefited from a certain level of transparency that emerged from the reconstruction policy were able to raise real issues in all spheres of life, particularly in the cultural, spiritual and educational spheres.

Main body
Since the second half of the 1980s, intellectuals have played an important role in people's awareness of the past literary heritage and national identity by passing on their masterpieces, works of art and journalism, poems and articles to the public. Another important aspect was that during reconstruction, intellectuals expressed many opinions not only about the understanding of national identity, but also about socio-economic processes in the country, including living standards, status, and problems. And the factors that negatively affected it. were revealed in many journalistic articles. In this regard, the raising of real problems by intellectuals, especially in the cultural, spiritual and educational spheres, has been one of the important steps in understanding national identity in recent years.

As a result of the negative attitude to the existing historical and cultural monuments in the country during Soviet times, many of them have become deplorable. In particular, about the historical and cultural monuments of the Kashkadarya oasis: "At present, there are 202 preserved monuments of antiquity in the region. Unfortunately, only six of them have been repaired. However, this work has been carried out for 10-15 years and requires repeated repairs. Not much attention is paid to preservation and repair of the remaining 191 monuments of the oasis. The 19th century Kori Gate and other monuments in the town of Kitab, which still exist today, have effectively disappeared"[1]. The use of many historical and architectural monuments, which reflect the national culture of the people, for other purposes and neglect has led to the deplorable condition of historical monuments. For example, R. Shokirov writes that in the fifties there were 30,000 historical monuments in Uzbekistan, but under the influence of artificial struggle only 7,000 of them remained [2]. The author also notes that a number of
shrines and healing wells were buried as a result of the struggle against religion in the mid-1980s.

The question of the need to study manuscripts, which constitute a significant part of cultural heritage, has also been considered by intellectuals as one of the most pressing problems in understanding identity. In particular, Academician E. Yusupov emphasized in his article that one of the tasks we can focus on is "to restore the lost pages of historical development, culture, art, and literature" by collecting and studying ancient and medieval manuscripts [3]. This idea was supported by the great historian B. Akhmedov also supported the loss of many rare manuscripts due to the atrocities of the 1920s and 1930s.

In the early fifties brands of "izms" such as "pan-Turkism", "pan-Islamism", "cosmopolitanism" appeared and the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Academy of Sciences of the Uzbek SSR was criticized as an institution devoid of life. Particular attention should be paid to cultivation. Prompt implementation of proposals to teach the old script in general education schools [4]. Problems in this respect certainly were of great concern to intellectuals of the time. Because the Institute of Oriental Studies itself existed from 1943 to 1987.

Concerned that only 7,576 of the 40,000 volumes had been published, Karimov said: "If this work continues at the present rate, it will take at least 4,000,000 years to study the manuscripts collected at the Institute of Oriental Studies" [5].

Since the second half of the 1980s there has been a growing demand among historians for a deeper and more objective study of the past. B. Akhmedov said: "The assessment of historical figures and some historical events is one-sided, and if a person serves in the palace of rulers or belongs to that class, he will be reacted to without verification. However, as a historical person or historical event it must be shown objectively, without being painted" [6]. The audacity of such problems by our scholars in difficult times, of course, encouraged others and encouraged them to illuminate the pages that we have neglected in our history, and objectively assess the "white spots" in it. Alongside the objective study of history, efforts were made to improve the teaching of Uzbek history in schools, universities and colleges. Articles written by a group of well-known writers and poets have stressed the need to drastically improve the teaching of Uzbek history in schools and to give serious consideration to educating schoolchildren in a spirit of patriotism and national pride. In the history departments of Uzbek universities, 1,100-1,500 hours are devoted to history, and 28 hours to the history of Uzbekistan [7]. These figures rightly indicate that the emphasis on teaching the history of the national republics was very low.

Another attempt to understand national identity during the reconstruction years was the move to restore the status of this national language. Because of the strong emphasis on teaching Russian in schools, universities and colleges, the teaching of the Uzbek language was ignored in practice. Due to the fact that Russian had long been the dominant language in practice, it became possible to become a great leader without knowing the Uzbek language, and even to defend a dissertation [8]. This is because the conditions were right for the situation to arise. As a result of these efforts, the Law on the State Language of the Uzbek SSR was adopted on 21 October 1989. This, in turn, was one of the important steps towards understanding the national identity of the time.

The one-sided approach to the study of literary heritage in the works of many intellectuals of this period [9] resulted in many well-founded examples. O. Sharofiddinov puts forward a number of important ideas about freedom that should be included in literature, the study of the works of Yassawi, a rethinking of the Jadid movement, and an emphasis on the study of the works of Cholpon and Fitrât [10]. After the establishment of the Commission for the Study of the Literary Heritage of Cholpon and Fitrât in 1987, work in this area began to take a more positive turn. In July of the same year, the Institute of Language and Literature of the Academy of Sciences, together with the Republican Writers Union and the newspaper "Uzbekiston adabiyati va sanati", held a round-table discussion on "Methodological Problems of Reconstruction and Research of Cultural Heritage". The discussion focused on the scientific study, objective coverage and
dissemination of the works of Yassawi, Husseini, Amir, Abulgazi, Cholpon, Fitrat and others in "protected" areas of literary heritage. On 22-25 January 1988, a meeting was held at the Institute of Language and Literature with the participation of republican literary scholars, philosophers, and historians on some issues of literary heritage studies and Jadidism [12].

The Commission for the Study of the Literary Heritage of Cholpon and Fitrat found it advisable to publish their works in three stages. The Institute of Language and Literature of the Academy of Sciences was tasked with preparing the literary heritage of Cholpon and Fitrat for publication [13]. The efforts of intellectuals to study the works of the Jadids and thereby reduce the "white spots" in history were welcomed by other intellectuals of the republic. On October 12, 1988, the Institute of Language and Literature of the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan held a large round table on the theme "Problems of Jadidism". It was attended by scholars from Tatarstan, Azerbaijan and Tajikistan who shared their views.

As a result of the activities of intellectuals in the second half of the 1980s, the medieval period and the 1920s and 1930s literary milieu were seen as tolerant, and the "hidden" works of many poets and writers began to be seen by the world. The media has been active in this regard. In order for the people to enjoy the literary heritage of the past and understand the national identity, the republic's creative intelligentsia reached the hearts of the masses with their complete masterpieces, works of art and journalism, poems and articles, and awakened them from shame and ignorance [18].

Conclusion

Another important aspect was that during the perestroika years many ideas were expressed not only about the understanding of national identity, but also about socio-economic processes, living standards, status and problems of the population. Many journalistic articles revealed that our people were deprived of material well-being as a result of being transported to the centre. Of course, the views expressed during this period did not leave the masses indifferent. In response, the central press promoted Uzbekistan as one of the subsidised republics unable to control its economy. In fact, Uzbekistan was forced to receive artificial subsidies from the centre as a result of being deprived of the right to set prices for its products.

The socio-economic and political processes that have changed dramatically since the second half of the 1980s have, in turn, affected the cultural and spiritual spheres. During the perestroika years, democratisation and transparency, albeit small, opened the way for an understanding of national identity, national traditions and values, and for many areas of our republic to cover our history objectively. Thus, our national intellectuals have opened the door to opportunities, albeit partial, for objective reporting of the nation's history. As a result of these processes, this served as a great impetus for the country's patriots to take their first steps towards becoming aware of their national identity.

Reference


