



Article

# The Philosophy of The Individual, Society and Development in The Spiritual Heritage of Said Rizo Alizoda

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**Abstract:** This article analyzes the socio-philosophical views of Said Rizo Alizoda, one of the prominent representatives of the Jadid movement. It examines the thinker's ideas on human development, enlightenment, spirituality, moral education, and social progress using historical, systematic, and comparative analytical approaches. The study also explores Alizoda's pedagogical and journalistic legacy, particularly his primer The First Year (Soli Avval), highlighting the role of education in personality development and the integration of national values with modern knowledge. Furthermore, the findings demonstrate that Alizoda's ideas are closely aligned with the educational and reformist principles of Jadidism. His intellectual heritage continues to possess both theoretical and practical significance for contemporary educational reforms, spiritual and moral development, and the cultivation of well-rounded individuals.

**Keywords:** Jadidism, Education, Spirituality, Development, Enlightenment, Philosophy, Humanity, Society, National Identity

## 1. Introduction

The socio-political and spiritual transformations that took place in Turkestan at the beginning of the twentieth century provided a significant impetus to the process of national awakening. During this period, representatives of the Jadid movement paid particular attention to the spiritual development of the people, the strengthening of national identity, and the acquisition of modern knowledge. One of the prominent enlightenment intellectuals of this movement was Said Rizo Alizoda. His socio-philosophical views are significant for their comprehensive treatment of human development, social progress, and spiritual renewal.[1]

A defining feature of Said Rizo Alizoda's intellectual legacy is his profound concern for the individual, his recognition of education and enlightenment as the primary driving forces of social progress, and his advocacy of harmonizing national and universal values.[2] Therefore, examining his intellectual heritage from a philosophical perspective is essential for understanding the foundations of contemporary social development. Throughout the history of philosophy, the question of the human being has occupied a central place. From the philosophers of ancient Greece to modern thinkers, diverse conceptions of human nature, humanity's role in society, and the purpose of life have emerged. Likewise, the concept of the human being occupies a central place in Alizoda's writings.[3] He portrays the individual primarily as a conscious being striving for spiritual

and moral perfection. In his view, a person's true worth is determined not by wealth or social status but by their commitment to knowledge and enlightenment, as well as their moral virtues [4].

## 2. Materials and Methods

This study employed a comprehensive methodological framework incorporating the historical method, a systematic approach, comparative analysis, synthesis, and the philosophical-hermeneutic method to examine the socio-philosophical views of Said Rizo Alizoda. The source base of the research consisted of Alizoda's pedagogical and journalistic legacy, including his primer *The First Year (Soli Avval)*, his articles published in the *Jadid press*, and scholarly works devoted to his academic and pedagogical activities. During the analysis of these sources, the texts were interpreted through a philosophical-hermeneutic approach, which made it possible to identify the essence and interrelationships of ideas concerning the individual, society, spirituality, education, and social development.[5]

Throughout the study, Alizoda's socio-philosophical views were comparatively analyzed alongside the ideas advanced by other representatives of the *Jadid movement*, as well as selected thinkers from Eastern and Western philosophical traditions. Through the application of analytical and synthetic methods, the author's conceptual views on enlightenment, moral education, national identity, spiritual development, and social progress were systematized, and their distinctive characteristics were identified.[6] Furthermore, by considering the interrelationship between historical circumstances and pedagogical activity, the study examined the close connection between Alizoda's intellectual legacy and the socio-political, cultural, and educational environment of early twentieth-century Turkestan. The adopted methodological approaches enabled a comprehensive examination of Said Rizo Alizoda's intellectual heritage, a systematic evaluation of his socio-philosophical views, and the substantiation of their scholarly significance in the context of contemporary spiritual, educational, and social development.[7]

## 3. Results and Discussion

Alizoda regards the human being as a personality formed within the system of social relations. According to his views, upbringing is an essential condition for the development of society. If a person is morally mature, they positively contribute to social progress. Conversely, moral decline leads to social degradation. This perspective is consistent with the ideas presented in Abu Nasr al-Farabi's *The Virtuous City*. Al-Farabi emphasized human perfection as the foundation of social prosperity [8]. Alizoda likewise interprets the human being as the primary subject of social development. In his articles, the issue of human freedom also holds significant importance. According to the author, true freedom is attained through knowledge and intellectual thought. Ignorance and superstition condemn a person to bondage. Therefore, enlightenment and education are essential conditions for human liberation.

Said Rizo Alizoda analyzed the problem of social development in relation to the human factor. According to his views, the development of any society depends on the moral and intellectual potential of its people. While examining the reasons for the backwardness of the peoples of Turkestan, the author identifies illiteracy and the insufficient development of science as the main factors [3]. In his view, the primary criterion of progress is not economic wealth but moral and intellectual advancement.

Alizoda understood social development as an evolutionary process. He considered gradual reforms preferable to abrupt revolutionary changes. In this respect, his views are close to the theories of social evolution advanced by European thinkers such as John Stuart Mill and Herbert Spencer. Said Rizo Alizoda regarded the press as an important means of

awakening the people and encouraging them to action. In one of his articles, he stated: "The teacher and the editor are the two hands of the nation", thereby highlighting the importance of education and journalism in society [9].

In 1913–1915, he actively collaborated with Mahmudxo'ja Behbudiy's journal *Oyna*, playing an important role in the development of the Jadid press. Through his articles published in this journal, he called on people to pursue enlightenment and acquire modern knowledge.

In 1917–1920, he prepared and published *Alifbe* (ABC books) for Uzbek and Tajik schools. These textbooks played an important role in improving literacy and establishing a new education system. The author regarded the education system as a key institution of social development. In his view, schools should not only provide knowledge but also shape a new worldview. Therefore, he supported new-method schools.[10]

The period in which the enlightened writer lived and worked had a significant impact on his personality, creative activity, and life path. Said Rizo Alizoda became one of the initiators of establishing new-method schools in Samarkand. Together with like-minded colleagues, he opened several such schools for the children of poor peasants [11]. At that time, the Jadid intellectuals of Turkestan realized that the country could only be saved from backwardness, fragmentation, and illiteracy through education; therefore, they directed their efforts toward establishing new schools and improving their functioning and structure. The establishment of new-method schools was supported by the business circles of Turkestan and progressive intellectuals. These schools were primarily primary-level institutions providing four- or six-year education.

Initially, with the financial support of Husainov, a new-method school was established in Samarkand in 1893; in 1898, Salohiddin Domla opened such a school in Kokand; in 1899, Munavvar Qori established one in Tashkent; and Shamsiddin Domla opened a Jadid school in Andijan. In 1900, Jo'raboy Qori founded a new-method school in Bukhara. In 1903, Mahmudxo'ja Behbudiy moved Abdulqodir Shakuriy's new-method school from Rajabamin to his own house in the "Qo'shgovuz" neighborhood of Samarkand and provided it with selfless support [12]. In 1905, Mahmudxo'ja Behbudiy opened a new-method school in the "Kaftarxona" village of Samarkand. The enlightened Jadid educators Hoji Muin and Shakuriy taught at this school [13].

Young people from the local population who graduated from new-method schools were employed as teachers. The administrators of these schools set specific requirements for those accepted into teaching positions. In particular, in order to work in a new-method school established in Samarkand, an announcement was published in the journal *Oyna* stating that five teachers were needed, with the following requirements: "...Teachers must be of Turkestani origin and must know the following: recitation of the Holy Qur'an with tajwid (rules of Qur'anic reading), reading and writing in Persian and Uzbek, arithmetic including the four basic operations, letter writing at an intermediate level, practical Islamic studies, essential religious knowledge, awareness of the creed of Ahl al-Sunna wa'l-Jama'a, and must not be addicted to tobacco, cigarettes, opium, or other intoxicants, nor engage in immoral behavior..." [14].

Said Rizo Alizoda's "The First Year" ("Soli Avval") alphabet book is considered one of the important pedagogical works that emerged as a practical outcome of the Jadid movement. Through this work, the author aimed to promote literacy among the population, strengthen national identity, and educate the younger generation on the basis of modern knowledge. While Jadid enlighteners regarded education as a key factor in societal development, Said Rizo Alizoda consistently sought to implement this idea in his pedagogical activities and textbooks.

The "First Year" alphabet is not only a textbook designed to teach letters and reading but also a work of educational significance aimed at shaping national consciousness and moral values. Through the texts, stories, and exercises included in the textbook, it seeks to

instill qualities such as diligence, patriotism, respect for knowledge, moral integrity, and civic responsibility in children. This represents an important feature of Jadid pedagogy, demonstrating the unity of education and upbringing.

Through this work, Said Rizo Alizoda moved away from the traditional memorization-based teaching methods used in old-style schools and introduced a new pedagogical approach based on the phonetic (sound-based) method. This approach helped develop students' thinking abilities, reading comprehension, and independent reasoning skills. In this respect, the "First Year" textbook served as an important methodological resource for new-method schools in Turkestan and Bukhara [15].

In the work, the issue of science and enlightenment occupies a central place. The author regards knowledge as an essential condition for human perfection and social development. In his view, the future of a nation is determined by the literacy of its people and their attitude toward knowledge. These ideas are consistent with the main principles of the Jadid movement and were regarded as an important means of ensuring national progress [12].

Another important aspect of the "First Year" alphabet is that it reflects the harmony between national culture and universal human values. Alongside views on national lifestyle, family relations, labor, and morality, the textbook also promotes the acquisition of scientific knowledge and learning from the experiences of the peoples of the world. This demonstrates that Said Rizo Alizoda envisioned national development in connection with the achievements of global civilization.

From a philosophical perspective, the work advances the idea of an intrinsic connection between human development, moral elevation, and social progress. According to the author, any form of social progress begins with the transformation of human thought and spiritual advancement. Therefore, he interprets education not merely as a process of transmitting knowledge, but as a social institution that shapes a person into a mature and well-rounded individual.

Thus, Said Rizo Alizoda's "The First Year" alphabet book is considered a practical expression of the Jadid movement and an important source of ideas related to national spirituality and enlightenment. In its time, the work played a significant role in improving literacy, promoting ideas of national awakening, and educating the younger generation on the basis of modern knowledge. In this respect, it holds a special place not only in the history of pedagogy but also in the history of national philosophical thought and spiritual heritage.

In his views on social development, the issues of preserving national identity and assimilating the achievements of modern civilization also occupy an important place. Alizoda emphasizes the necessity of preserving national values while simultaneously studying the experiences of advanced countries. In his opinion, development does not mean the rejection of national traditions but rather their enrichment in accordance with the requirements of the modern era. This idea remains relevant even in today's context of globalization.

One of the central ideas in Said Rizo Alizoda's spiritual heritage is the concept of enlightenment. He regarded knowledge as a fundamental factor in human and social development. According to the author, knowledge expands a person's understanding of the world, develops their thinking, and shapes the ability to make independent decisions. In this sense, knowledge leads a person toward spiritual freedom.

Alizoda evaluated science not only as a collection of theoretical knowledge but also as a practical force capable of transforming life. In his view, the development of science and technology was an important means of ensuring public welfare. The author also paid special attention to the issue of women in education. He emphasized that the education of

girls was of significant importance for societal development. This view was considered a highly progressive idea for its time.

Alizoda noted the necessity of ensuring harmony between national and universal human values in the education system. In his opinion, modern knowledge yielded effective results only when it was integrated with national spirituality. Said Rizo Alizoda regarded spirituality as one of the most important criteria of human life. In his view, the true development of society was determined by spiritual advancement. The author interpreted morality as a factor reflecting a person's inner culture. Qualities such as honesty, justice, diligence, and patriotism occupied an important place in his socio-philosophical views.

Alizoda emphasized that in order for the principle of justice to prevail in society, every individual must feel a sense of moral responsibility. The author regarded spirituality as a strategic resource of national development. In his opinion, if economic development was not supported by spiritual growth, achieving sustainable progress became difficult.

In Said Rizo Alizoda's spiritual heritage, the issues of the individual, society, and development are interpreted as being closely interconnected. He regarded the human being as the main subject of development and considered their moral and spiritual maturity an essential condition for societal progress.

#### 4. Conclusion

In conclusion, Said Rizo Alizoda's socio-philosophical views were formed in close connection with the enlightenment ideas of the Jadid movement, with a central focus on human development, education, moral upbringing, and spiritual advancement. The thinker linked social progress primarily to the moral maturity and intellectual capacity of the individual, interpreting education as an essential factor in social development. In his pedagogical and journalistic legacy, the idea of harmonizing national values with modern knowledge and fostering a free-thinking, highly spiritual individual occupies a central place. In particular, the "First Year" alphabet book serves not only as a tool for improving literacy but also as an important pedagogical source for shaping national identity, patriotism, and moral values in the younger generation.

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