



RESISTANCE AND IDENTITY IN THE POETRY OF ABDULLA AVLONIY: A LITERARY EXPLORATION OF ANTI- COLONIAL SENTIMENT AND CULTURAL AWAKENING

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<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.16901144>

ARTICLE INFO

Received: 13th August 2025

Accepted: 18th August 2025

Online: 19th August 2025

KEYWORDS

Abdulla Avloniy, resistance poetry, colonialism, Uzbek literature, Jadidism, cultural identity, national awakening

ABSTRACT

This paper explores the presence of resistance elements in the poetry of Abdulla Avloniy, a prominent figure of Uzbek Jadid literature. Through thematic and stylistic analysis of selected poems, this study identifies how Avloniy utilized poetic expression to challenge colonial oppression, advocate for educational reform, and revive national identity. The research employs close reading methodology within a historical-literary context. The paper contributes to broader discourses on resistance literature in post-colonial studies by situating Uzbek poetic traditions in a global framework of literary dissent.

Introduction: In colonized societies, literature often serves as a subtle but powerful site of resistance. In the context of early 20th-century Central Asia, particularly under Tsarist Russian domination, poets like Abdulla Avloniy used literary forms to contest cultural erasure and political subjugation. A pioneer of the Uzbek Jadidist movement, Avloniy's poetry was deeply infused with nationalist sentiment, moral urgency, and a call for educational reform. While his contemporaries focused on prose and journalism, Avloniy's poetic voice provided both emotional resonance and ideological critique. This article examines how his poetic texts encode resistance, particularly through metaphors of light and darkness, critique of ignorance, and idealization of knowledge and freedom.

Methodology: The research adopts a qualitative literary analysis method, focusing on thematic, symbolic, and stylistic elements in Avloniy's poetry. Selected texts were analyzed using close reading techniques, supported by secondary sources on Jadid literature and post-colonial theory. The analytical lens draws from Edward Said's concepts of cultural resistance and Homi Bhabha's hybridity to frame the multi-layered expressions of dissent in Avloniy's poetic oeuvre.

Results

1. Resistance through Enlightenment and Education

One of the core features of Avloniy's resistance lies in his passionate advocacy for education. In his famous poem "*Millatga xitob*" ("Address to the Nation"), Avloniy writes:

"Ilmsiz odam, hayvondur aslida,
Bilimdan yiroq — ojiz jamiyatda."

Translation: "A man without knowledge is like a beast;



Far from learning, powerless in society."

This line equates ignorance with dehumanization, a metaphor meant to shock the reader into recognizing the urgency of reform. Education is framed not only as a path to personal improvement but as a collective weapon against colonial and spiritual domination.

Avloniy's call for schools to be reopened, textbooks to be written in native languages, and teachers to be trained, all take on political dimensions under a regime that sought to Russify the population and suppress local culture.

2. Critique of Colonial Passivity

In another poem, *"Turkiston"*, Avloniy laments the dormancy of his people in the face of foreign control:

"Ko'ngil uyg'onmas, xalqim uxlab yotibdi,
Bedor yurak qani, bu yurtida ko'ngil?"

Here, resistance is expressed through mourning. The poet grieves over the silence of his nation — a metaphorical sleep — and simultaneously calls for spiritual and intellectual awakening. The imagery of slumber, often seen in resistance poetry, becomes a critique of passivity.

3. Metaphors of Light and Darkness

In poems like *"Nido"* and *"To'g'ri yo'l"*, Avloniy uses the light-darkness binary to contrast enlightenment (through education, truth, and action) with ignorance, fear, and repression:

"Zulmat ichra adashgandir millatim,
Nurga yetmak orzu ila yashayman."

Translation: "My nation is lost in darkness;
I live with the dream of reaching light."

This metaphor evokes the symbolic struggle common in anti-colonial literature: the poet sees himself as a torchbearer. The image of light becomes a form of symbolic resistance against the ideological darkness imposed by colonial structures.

4. National Identity and Cultural Revival

While Avloniy does not use overt nationalist slogans, his poetry is saturated with cultural affirmations — references to the Turkic identity, Islamic ethics, and the historical glory of Central Asia. His works aim to restore dignity to a people whose history and language were marginalized:

"Ey xalqim, o'tmishing ulug'dur, esla,
Bu zamonda tirik bo'l, bo'lma qusla."

Translation: "O my people, remember your glorious past,
Be alive in this era — do not be a bird with clipped wings."

The metaphor of a bird with clipped wings denotes a people stripped of autonomy. Through such lines, Avloniy fosters a sense of pride and cultural resistance.

Discussion

Avloniy's poetry functions at the intersection of aesthetics and ideology. His lyrical beauty masks deeply subversive ideas for his time. By avoiding direct political confrontation, he adopts metaphor, allegory, and moral instruction to communicate resistance. His works illustrate what Homi Bhabha termed the "third space" — a hybrid cultural zone where colonized subjects rearticulate identity and power.



In the global framework, Avloniy's literary activism aligns with other anti-colonial poets such as Rabindranath Tagore or Langston Hughes, who also employed poetry to critique oppression and envision a liberated future.

Conclusion

Abdulla Avloniy's poetry is more than literature; it is an act of resistance. Through metaphors, moral appeals, and cultural memory, he forged a poetics of awakening that aimed to revive the dignity of a colonized nation. His commitment to education, justice, and identity places him among the global voices of resistance literature. As postcolonial studies continue to expand geographically, Avloniy's work deserves greater scholarly attention for its subtle yet powerful contributions to anti-colonial discourse.

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