



## JALIL, RAHIM

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**JALIL, RAHIM**, Soviet Tajik writer (b. 3 June 1909 in Kojand; d. 10 October 1989 in Kojand), Born into a family of shoemakers, he remained true to his class origins throughout his career. He became a teacher in 1927 after a one-year training course, but was soon drawn to journalism. From 1931 to 1951 he worked on various newspapers, including *Tojikistoni surkh*, the main party and state organ, and *Sharqi surkh*, the leading literary journal. He joined the Communist Party in 1943, and from 1952 he was a secretary of the Union of Writers of Tajikistan. In 1979 he was accorded the title of People's Writer of Tajikistan.

Jalil's literary career began with the publication of poetry in 1931. He soon recognized prose as his true calling, and in 1936 he published his first collection of short stories, *Orzu*, and in 1941 his first large-scale work, part one of the novel *Gulru*. After World War II he revised the novel, adding a second part and publishing both as *Odamoni jovid* in 1949. Two other major prose works followed: the novel, *Shurob* (pt. 1, 1959; pts. 2 and 3, 1967), perhaps his most important creation, and *Ma'voi dil* (pt. 1, 1970; pt. 2, 1982), essentially his memoirs of the places and people of his native Kojand. Between 1932 and 1975 he also wrote stories for children and a number of plays.

Jalil was a master of the short story. He excelled at satirical portraits, which revealed his ear for the spoken language and his appreciation for the oral literature of ordinary people, as in the collection *Hissa az qissa* (1941) and his novels (Ghafforov, pp. 22-37). The stories he wrote during World War II describing the heroism of Tajiks in defending the common Soviet homeland



and published as *Hikoiahoi zamoni jang* (1944) were, like much of the literature of the time, patriotic and propagandistic. Then, between 1949 and 1978 he published nine more collections of stories depicting the most varied aspects of Tajik society of his time (Sayfulloev and Fayzulloeva, pp. 175-93).

As a novelist Jalil aligned himself with the proponents of socialist realism, using his skills to promote the official Soviet interpretation of the past and vision of the new society in process of formation. *Odamoni jovid* is set in the time of the Bolshevik Revolution and the early years of the new Soviet regime, and its themes are standard fare in the works of Jalil's contemporaries: the role of the Russian Bolsheviks in tutoring the first Tajik revolutionaries; the contribution of Russian and Ukrainian workers to awakening Tajik workers to class consciousness and the struggle for liberation; and the heroic efforts of a new generation of Tajiks, led by Communists to build a new life. The main characters, Pulod, who represents the revolutionary Tajik proletariat, and Gulru, his wife, who is the new Soviet woman actively engaged in production, are Jalil's ideal family of the new Tajikistan (Otakhonova, pp. 92-95). *Shurob* belongs to the same genre of the historical-revolutionary novel and treats the Russian Revolution and Civil War and the creation of a new society in the same socialist-realist fashion. In describing the struggles of the miners in northern Tajikistan, Jalil is at his best in depicting the complex Communist revolutionary in the person of Khol and in showing how simple workers in critical situations are raised to the level of committed revolutionaries (Sayfulloev and Fayzulloeva, pp. 270-73).

Rahim Jalil was a writer of his own time and place, and he himself acknowledged Maxim Gorky, "the great founder of socialist realism," as one of his mentors. His best work will undoubtedly endure as the embodiment of a distinct era in the evolution of Tajik culture.

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