

MAHMUDKHOJA BEHBUDIY'S EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

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Annotation

This article explores the educational and enlightenment activities of Mahmudkhoja Behbudiy (1875-1919), a prominent leader of the Jadid movement in Central Asia. Behbudiy played a crucial role in reforming the traditional education system and promoting modern pedagogical principles. The study highlights his efforts in establishing new-method schools, developing textbooks, and advocating for secular and scientific education alongside religious knowledge.

Additionally, the article examines Behbudiy's contributions to journalism, literature, and socio-political reforms. Through his newspapers Samarkand and Oyina, he raised awareness about national identity, women's education, and the necessity of modernization. His literary works, particularly the drama Padarkush, emphasized the dangers of ignorance and the importance of enlightenment.

The research is based on various Uzbek and international sources, providing a comprehensive analysis of Behbudiy's legacy. His ideas continue to inspire educational and national development in modern Uzbekistan.

Key words: Mahmudkhoja Behbudiy, Jadid movement, enlightenment, new-method schools, pedagogical principles, textbooks, secular education, religious knowledge, journalism, Samarkand newspaper, Oyina journal.

Introduction

In the history of the Jadid movement, which was widespread in Central Asia in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Mahmudkhoja Behbudiy (1875-1919) occupies a special place. He left an indelible mark in history not only as the founder and theorist of the Jadid movement but also as a prominent representative of Uzbek enlightenment. Behbudiy's enlightenment activities were multifaceted, and he worked effectively in pedagogical, journalistic, literary, socio-political, and religious fields. However, at the core of all his activities was a single goal – to enlighten people with the light of knowledge and to develop society through science and education.

Main part

Life and Career Path

Mahmudkhoja Behbudiy was born on January 19, 1875, in the village of Bahouddin near Samarkand, in a cleric's family. His father, Muhammad Behbudiy, was an educated man of his time¹. After receiving his initial education from his father, Mahmudkhoja later studied at madrasas in Samarkand. From an early age, he thoroughly studied Arabic, Persian, and Turkish languages and became familiar with examples of classical Eastern literature.

From 1900, Behbudiy worked as a qazi (Islamic judge). However, during this period, he soon recognized the shortcomings of the traditional education system and understood the necessity of establishing new method schools². During his travels to Cairo, Istanbul, and Petersburg in 1903-1904, Behbudiy became acquainted with the education systems of the Middle East and Russia. These travels played an important role in shaping his worldview.

Enlightenment Ideas and Educational Activities

At the center of Behbudiy's enlightenment ideas was the issue of establishing new method schools and implementing new pedagogical principles. He sharply criticized the outdated traditional education system for failing to meet modern requirements. According to Behbudiy, education and science were primary necessities for the progress of the nation³.

In 1903, Behbudiy opened the first new method school in Samarkand. This school taught secular subjects alongside religious knowledge. Behbudiy also created textbooks and manuals for his school. These included "Kitob ul-atfol" (Book for Children), "Mukhtasar tarixi islom" (Brief History of Islam), and "Mukhtasar jug'rofiyai Rusiy" (Brief Geography of Russia)⁴.

Behbudiy proposed including subjects such as native language, arithmetic, geometry, geography, and history in school curricula. In his opinion, a nation could not develop without learning modern knowledge. Behbudiy wrote in his works: "Unless schools and education are reformed, we can never progress".

Journalistic Activities

Behbudiy's journalistic work occupies a special place in his enlightenment activities. He began publishing the newspaper "Samarkand" from August 20, 1913, and the journal "Oyina" (Mirror) from September 15, 1913. In these publications, Behbudiy widely promoted his enlightenment ideas⁵.

The journal "Oyina" became an important platform for the Jadid movement of

¹ Qosimov, B. (2002). *Milliy uyg'onish: ma'rifat, jасorat, fidoyilik*. Toshkent: Ma'naviyat, b. 156.

² Dolimov, U. (1997). *Turkistonda jadid maktablari*. Toshkent: Universitet, b. 78-79.

³ Behbudiy, M. (2005). *Tanlangan asarlar*. Toshkent: Ma'naviyat, b. 45.

⁴ Abdullayev, R. (2005). *Mahmudxo'ja Behbudiy*. Toshkent: Fan, b. 112-115.

⁵ Alimova, D., Rashidov, R. (2011). *Mahmudxo'ja Behbudiy va uning tarixiy tafakkuri*. Toshkent: Akademnashr, b. 67-68.

that time. The journal published articles dedicated to education, science, culture, history, and literature. In this journal, Behbudiy wrote dozens of important articles such as "Not Two, but Four Languages are Necessary," "The Needs of the Nation," and "The Disease that Gnaws at Us"⁶.

Behbudiy's journalistic works raised all issues necessary for the nation's progress. He called the nation to science, education, and modern professions. His articles raised pressing issues such as national awakening, national identity, women's education, and youth upbringing⁷.

Literary Activities

Behbudiy's enlightenment ideas are also vividly reflected in his literary works. Particularly, his drama "Padarkush" (Patricide), written in 1911, is of great importance in the history of Uzbek literature. This work is considered the first example of Uzbek dramaturgy⁸.

In the drama "Padarkush," the author shows the tragic consequences of ignorance. The play depicts the fate of a son who kills his father due to ignorance and lack of education. Through this, Behbudiy calls the people to education and proper upbringing of children⁹.

In both his literary works and journalism, Behbudiy paid great attention to the issue of the native language. In his article "The Language Issue," he writes: "The mirror of life that shows the existence of each nation in the world is its language and literature. To lose the national language is to lose the spirit of the nation"¹⁰.

Socio-Political Views

In Turkestan itself, Behbudi played a significant role in the formation of the Shuro-i Islamiya (Islamic Council), a political organization that sought to represent the interests of Central Asian Muslims. He also contributed to the development of the short-lived Turkestan Autonomy, established in Khokand in November 1917. However, this autonomous government was brutally suppressed by Bolshevik forces in February 1918, marking a turning point in the relationship between Central Asian reformers and the new Soviet regime¹¹.

Behbudiy's enlightenment activities were closely linked to his socio-political views. He fought to improve the social, economic, and political conditions of the people. According to Behbudiy, for the progress of society, education and enlightenment were needed first, followed by socio-political reforms¹².

⁶ Karimov, N. (1996). *XX asr adabiyoti manzaralari*. Toshkent: O'zbekiston, b. 23-25.

⁷ Qosimov, B. (2002). *Milliy uyg'onish: ma'rifat, jasorat, fidoyilik*. Toshkent: Ma'naviyat, b. 162.

⁸ Rizayev, Sh. (1997). *Jadid dramasi*. Toshkent: Sharq, b. 45-48.

⁹ Karimov, N. (2008). *XX asr o'zbek adabiyotining yetakchi tamoyillari*. Toshkent: Fan, b. 78-80.

¹⁰ Abdullayev, R. (2005). *Mahmudxo'ja Behbudiy*. Toshkent: Fan, b. 156-158.

¹¹ Khalid, A. (1998). *The Politics of Muslim Cultural Reform: Jadidism in Central Asia*. Berkeley: University of California Press. pp. 282-286

¹² Alimova, D., Rashidov, R. (2011). *Mahmudxo'ja Behbudiy va uning tarixiy tafakkuri*. Toshkent: Akadernashr, b. 89-90.

Behbudiy fought for the rights of Muslims within the Russian Empire. He tried to take advantage of the political opportunities that emerged in Russia after the 1905 revolution. In 1906, when Muslims were given the right to participate in State Duma elections, Behbudiy paid great attention to this issue¹³.

Behbudiy also spent great effort to unite the peoples of Central Asia and achieve their cultural and spiritual convergence. His idea of "Turkestan" served precisely this purpose. Behbudiy writes: "We, the sons of Turkestan, are brothers, one body and one soul..."¹⁴.

Religious and Moral Views

Mahmudkhoja Behbudiy was also a reformer in religious matters. He advocated for a modern interpretation of Islam, turning it into a force that serves progress. According to Behbudiy, true Islam is not opposed to science and progress; on the contrary, it encourages the pursuit of knowledge¹⁵.

Behbudiy fought fiercely against ignorance, innovation (bid'ah), and superstition. He strongly criticized the ignorance of religious figures who deceived people and took advantage of them. Behbudiy writes: "In the present time, we need knowledge, we need science. These are not our enemies, but our friends"¹⁶.

Behbudiy's moral views were also closely linked to his enlightenment ideas. He fought to restore moral values in society and to form high spiritual qualities in people. According to Behbudiy, an enlightened society should first be morally mature¹⁷.

Influence and Significance

In his time, Behbudiy, as a leader of the Jadid movement, enjoyed great respect not only in Turkestan but among all Russian Muslims. His ideas and activities had a significant impact on the worldview of many of his contemporaries.

Behbudiy's enlightenment ideas also served as a guide for the next generation of Uzbek intellectuals. His promotion of education, ideas of national awakening, and efforts to develop the native language and literature were continued by Uzbek intellectuals.

Unfortunately, Behbudiy's life ended tragically. In March 1919, he was executed near the city of Karshi. However, his ideas and enlightenment traditions have not lost their importance today. In modern Uzbekistan, Behbudiy's legacy is widely studied and promoted.

Conclusion

Mahmudkhoja Behbudiy's enlightenment activities left an indelible mark in the history of the Uzbek people. His educational reforms and journalistic, literary, and

¹³ Qosimov, B. (2002). *Milliy uyg'onish: ma'rifat, jasorat, fidoyilik*. Toshkent: Ma'naviyat, b. 174-175.

¹⁴ Abdullayev, R. (2005). *Mahmudxo'ja Behbudiy*. Toshkent: Fan, b. 167-168.

¹⁵ Karimov, B. (2001). *Jadidchilik harakatining g'oyaviy asoslari*. Toshkent: Ma'naviyat, b. 67-68.

¹⁶ Qosimov, B. (2002). *Milliy uyg'onish: ma'rifat, jasorat, fidoyilik*. Toshkent: Ma'naviyat, b. 180-181.

¹⁷ Alimova, D., Rashidov, R. (2011). *Mahmudxo'ja Behbudiy va uning tarixiy tafakkuri*. Toshkent: Akademiya nashr, b. 178-180.

socio-political activities were of great importance for the period of national awakening. Behbudiy considered education, modern knowledge, and the development of the native language as the main conditions for the nation's progress and worked selflessly in this direction.

Behbudiy's main service was that he led the Uzbek people on the path of enlightenment and science, calling them to recognize their national identity and embrace modern progress. As Behbudiy emphasized: "Salvation is in school, salvation is in enlightenment, salvation is in science and education". These words have not lost their importance today.

Behbudiy's enlightenment ideas and his selfless efforts to serve the people and awaken the nation through education continue to serve as a school of exemplary behavior for today's generation. His legacy remains an important source for shaping national spirituality, national pride, and patriotism in modern Uzbekistan.

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