



MAHMUDKHUJA BEHBUDIY – THE FOUNDER OF THE JADID MOVEMENT

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Abstract: This article provides a scientific and theoretical analysis of the life and multifaceted activities of Mahmudkhuj Behbudiy, a prominent representative of the Jadid movement. His pedagogical views, his role in establishing new-method schools, his contribution to the development of the national press, and his influence on Uzbek dramaturgy are examined. The article also highlights Behbudiy's socio-political activities and his role in shaping national consciousness. Furthermore, the historical significance of the Jadid movement and the contemporary relevance of Behbudiy's legacy are substantiated.

Keywords: Mahmudkhuj Behbudiy, Jadidism, *usul-i jadid*, enlightenment, national awakening.

Introduction

At the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, significant socio-political and cultural changes took place in Turkestan. The colonial policy of Tsarist Russia placed the local population in economic and political dependence. The educational system was outdated, and religious schools were limited mainly to theological subjects, while modern secular sciences were insufficiently taught.

Under such conditions, intellectuals concerned about the nation's future emerged. They argued that progress could be achieved through social reform, the adoption of scientific achievements, and educational modernization. This movement became known in history as the "Jadid movement." One of its brightest representatives was Mahmudkhuj Behbudiy, who occupied a special place in the history of Turkestan due to his enlightenment activities.

Main Part

Mahmudkhuj Behbudiy was born on January 20, 1875, near Samarkand. He initially studied in a traditional maktab and madrasa, mastering Arabic and Persian languages. Along with religious knowledge, he developed a strong interest in modern sciences. Through communication with progressive intellectuals of his time, he broadened his worldview.

Behbudiy performed the Hajj pilgrimage and visited Istanbul, Cairo, and other cities. During these travels, he became acquainted with reforms in



Muslim countries, the activities of new-method schools, and modern educational systems. These experiences strengthened his enlightenment ideas. He believed that the backwardness of Turkestan society was caused by ignorance and the lack of modern knowledge.

As one of the organizers of Jadid schools, Mahmudkhujja Behbudiy carried out fundamental reforms in education. In the “usul-i jadid” schools, lessons were conducted using the phonetic method, which accelerated literacy and increased efficiency.

In addition to religious subjects, new schools introduced secular disciplines such as mathematics, geography, history, natural sciences, and the native language. Through this, Behbudiy aimed to broaden students’ worldviews. He created textbooks and teaching manuals, striving to modernize the educational system.

Behbudiy believed that the primary goal of education was to awaken the nation, teach the younger generation independent thinking, and prepare them for active participation in social life. In his view, enlightenment was the main factor of national liberation and progress.

Mahmudkhujja Behbudiy regarded the national press as a means of awakening the people. In 1913, he founded the newspaper “Samarqand”, and in 1914, the journal “Oyna.” These publications had a strong influence on the development of socio-political thought in Turkestan.

In his articles, Behbudiy openly analyzed societal problems. He addressed issues such as women’s education, youth upbringing, political awareness, and national unity. Through his famous statement, “Rights are taken, not given,” he called on the people to be active and aware of their rights.

Through the press, he sought to shape national identity, modern thinking, and civic responsibility. Behbudiy’s journalism was written in a simple, clear, and persuasive style aimed at a wide readership.

Mahmudkhujja Behbudiy is considered one of the founders of Uzbek dramaturgy. His drama “Padarkush” (The Patricide), written in 1911, occupies an important place in the history of national theater. The play depicts a tragedy caused by ignorance and improper upbringing.

Through dramatic events, the author urged society to reflect and encouraged parents to pay serious attention to the upbringing of their children. After being staged, “Padarkush” gave a strong impetus to the development of Uzbek theater. The work became significant not only as a literary achievement but also as a socio-enlightenment phenomenon.

Behbudiy viewed theater as a means of educating and spiritually awakening the people. He considered art to be a force that should serve social progress.



During the political transformations of the early 20th century, Behbudiy actively participated in public life. After the 1917 Revolution, he supported the idea of Turkestan Autonomy. He advocated national self-governance, freedom of education, and cultural development.

However, political instability and conflicts intensified pressure against Jadid intellectuals. In 1919, Mahmudkhujja Behbudiy was executed in the city of Qarshi. His death was a great loss for the Jadid movement. Nevertheless, his enlightenment ideas and views on national awakening remained alive in the consciousness of future generations.

Conclusion

Mahmudkhujja Behbudiy is one of the most significant figures of the national awakening period in the history of Turkestan. He made invaluable contributions to educational reform, the development of the national press, dramaturgy, and social thought. His activities demonstrate that social progress is closely connected with enlightenment and conscious action.

Even in today's era of globalization, Behbudiy's enlightenment ideas remain relevant. His legacy serves as an important source for educating the younger generation in the spirit of knowledge, independent thinking, and respect for national values.

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