



## **Mahmudhoja Behbudi's Contribution To Enlightenment And National Development**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This article examines the life and work of Mahmudxo'ja Behbudiy, his role in the Jadid movement, and his contributions to education, culture, and political life in Turkistan. It analyzes the socio-political conditions of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, his pedagogical and journalistic activities, and the establishment of the Turkistan autonomy. Behbudiy's impact on modernizing education, publishing newspapers and journals, and fostering national consciousness is highlighted.

**Keywords:** Mahmudkhoja Behbudiy, Jadidism, education, press, pedagogy, national consciousness, Turkistan autonomy.

### **INTRODUCTION**

During the years of independence, the process of re-studying national history on an objective and scientific basis reached a new level. In particular, the life and activities of representatives of the Jadid movement, which had previously been insufficiently studied for political and ideological reasons, began to be studied on the basis of a new methodological approach.

In the second half of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, the territory of Central Asia, in particular Turkestan, experienced complex and contradictory socio-political processes. During this period, as a result of the conquest of Turkestan by the Russian Empire, the territory acquired the status of a colony, which led to significant changes in the local governance system, economic relations, and cultural life. On the one hand, colonial policy intensified economic exploitation and political restrictions, but on the other hand, it also created the basis for the formation of a new social stratum - modern-thinking intellectuals. The Jadid movement, which arose in such



historical conditions, manifested itself as a complex socio-intellectual phenomenon aimed at renewing society on an enlightened basis.

Representatives of the Jadid movement promoted science and education as the main factors of social development, criticized the outdated forms of the traditional education system, and paid special attention to the organization of new-style schools, the creation of textbooks, and the formation of national consciousness. Among the leading figures who worked within the framework of this movement, Mahmudkhodja Behbudi occupies a special place. He played an important role in the modernization of Turkestan society not only as a teacher and educator, but also as a publicist, playwright, and socio-political thinker.

Mahmudkhodja Behbudi's activities were inextricably linked with historical processes, and his ideas and practical work were based on the real needs of his time. By the end of the 19th century, the level of illiteracy in Turkestan was high, and in existing schools and madrasas, mainly religious knowledge was taught, and not enough attention was paid to secular sciences. This is one of the main factors that slowed down the economic and social development of society. Deeply understanding this problem, Behbudiy put forward the need to reform the education system on a scientific basis.

In his views, the issue of education is interpreted not only as a pedagogical problem, but also as a broader socio-philosophical phenomenon. In this regard, it can be seen that his work was formed at the intersection of Pedagogy, Social Philosophy, and Historical Thinking. Behbudiy directly connects the development of society with human capital, that is, the upbringing of educated and conscious individuals. In his opinion, only an enlightened society can achieve political and economic independence.

In addition, Behbudiy's work was not limited to education, but also covered the fields of the press, literature, and theater. Through the newspapers and magazines he founded, he sought to openly discuss current problems in society, and strengthened the role of the press in forming social consciousness. In this regard, his journalistic legacy is considered one of the important sources of social thought of that time.



## **MAIN PART**

Mahmudkhodja Behbudiy is the founder of the Turkestan Jadid movement. Writing a biography of Haji Muin Behbudiy, he states that he was born on January 19, 1975 (10th Zulhijjah 1291) in the village of Bakhshitepa near Samarkand into a family of a religious scholar. However, recent research indicates a slightly different date and place of Behbudiy's birth. The famous scholar Sirojiddin Ahmedov states that Mahmudkhodja Behbudiy was born on Thursday, January 30, 1874, in the Yomini neighborhood of Samarkand. Mahmudkhodja Behbudiy's father, Behbudkhodja Salihkhodja, was a Turkestan native, a descendant of Ahmad Yassavi, and his maternal grandfather, Niyozkhodja, was from Urgench and moved to Samarkand during the reign of Emir Shahmurod<sup>1</sup>.

In 1893, his mother died, and in 1894, his father died. Mahmudkhodja Behbudiy learned to read and write under his uncle Muhammad Siddiq at the age of 6-7, and took lessons in the Quran from his father Behbudkhodja, and in a short time he achieved the position of a qari. When he turned 15, he continued his education at the madrasa where Mulla Adil was a teacher. Behbudiy studied at the madrasas of Samarkand and Bukhara.

When he turned 18, Behbudiy completed his madrasa education and began working as a mirza under his uncle Muhammad Siddiq, who was a judge in Samarkand. Later, he thoroughly mastered the laws of Sharia and took the position of mufti. In the meantime, he also served as a qadi for a short time, but since he was devoted to educational work and this required a lot of money, he was forced to engage in commerce again under the mufti.

In 1899-1900, Behbudiy went on a pilgrimage with his friend from Bukhara, Haji Bako. It was this trip that radically changed Behbudiy's worldview and subsequent activities. Behbudiy's views on the social situation in Turkestan, schools and madrasas changed. During the trip, he got acquainted with the educational systems of Egypt and the Ottoman state. After 8 months, upon

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<sup>1</sup> Abdirashidov Z. Mahmudxo'ja Behbudiy. – T.: 2022. – B. 7.



returning to Samarkand, he founded the newspaper "Tarjiman". After that, he vigorously engaged in school reform, which was the cornerstone of Jadidism. For these schools, such books as "Risalayi Azosi Savod", "Risalayi Jug'rofiyayi Umroni", "Risalayi Jug'rofiyayi Rusi" appeared.

In 1913, Behbudiy received permission from the government to publish the newspaper "Samarkand". The newspaper was published in Uzbek and Tajik languages, twice a week. Due to financial shortages, publication stopped. On August 20, 1913, he began publishing the magazine "Oyina". The magazine spread to Tatarstan, Iran, Afghanistan, India, and Turkey. This weekly, illustrated magazine was mainly in Uzbek and, in addition to poetry, articles on various topics and themes, and analytical materials, it also published advertisements<sup>2</sup>.

In 1914, Behbudi, despite his health problems, embarked on a second trip to Arab countries. During this trip, he became interested in the history of cities, monuments, great people who came from there, and their customs. He attached great importance to issues of religion and belief. He was filled with joy and excitement from visiting the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem.

Behbudi joined socio-political work since 1906. On April 16-23, 1917, when the fate of the homeland was on the agenda, he delivered an exciting speech at the regional congress of Turkestan Muslims held in Tashkent, attended by 150 representatives. He called on the nation to abandon their differences, unite for a great cause, and form an alliance. He openly said that because of our differences, "they rule us with colonial rule"<sup>3</sup>.

In 1917, when Russia was preoccupied with its own problems, Mahmudkhoy Behbudi, thinking about the future of the peoples of Turkestan, made new proposals: "We want all the Muslims of Russia to live on the basis of autonomy. If we establish the Turkestan government with the participation of Russians, Jews and others, we will have a parliamentarianism."

The Bolsheviks were the first to oppose this proposal, claiming that it was made "hastily." In 1917, the Bolsheviks came to power. The nationalists began

<sup>2</sup> Abdirashidov Z. Mahmudx'oja Behbudiy. – T.: 2022. – B.13.

<sup>3</sup> O'sha yerda. –B. 21.



to demand autonomy. On November 26, 1917, the Fourth Congress of Muslims of the country in the city of Kokand announced the establishment of Turkestan autonomy. One of the founders of New Turkestan was Mahmudkhoja Behbudi, and we can learn about the nationalist's aspiration for freedom and his longing for it from the following thoughts in the article titled "Turkistan Autonomy" in the December 22, 1917 issue of the "Hurriyat" newspaper: "On November 27, the autonomy of Turkestan was declared in Khoqand at the General Muslim Assembly. May it be blessed and auspicious! I am also proud to be at the meeting. Long live the autonomy of Turkestan! ... It should be known that if the entire people of Turkestan unite, there will be no bloodshed. Land and property will not be divided. Religion will also develop. We have united to disagree a thousand times, and we will suffer misfortune because of our disagreement. If all of Turkestan unites, A force of 15 million will come to the ocean, so that the earth will tremble. If I could understand my words, I would consider myself happy."

The Bolsheviks, who did not want to be deprived of their colonies in Turkestan, opposed the Autonomy and in February 1918 launched an attack on its center - the city of Kokand. The city was drenched in blood. The government, which tried to establish an independent state, lasted only 72 days. 10 thousand Turkestans were killed, 180 villages were set on fire.

Behbudi, whose dreams were full of dreams, was captured in the spring of 1919 - on March 25 - in Shahrissabz and mysteriously executed in the city of Karshi. The news of his execution became known to the capital of that time, Samarkand, exactly a year later. In April 1920, all of Turkestan mourned<sup>4</sup>.

Remembering Ayni Behbudiy: Can Turon be seen or not? Can Turkestan find your likeness or not? He writes a poem that begins with the lines. The city of Karshi was named after Behbudiy in 1926-1937. In conclusion, it can be said that Mahmudkhodja Behbudiy played an important role in the social and spiritual renewal of Uzbek society in his time. He served to introduce the people to modern knowledge and national consciousness through education, culture

<sup>4</sup> Abdirashidov Z. Mahmudxo'ja Behbudiy. – T.: 2022. – B.26.



and political activities within the framework of the Jadid movement. The pedagogical and political legacy of Mahmudkhodja Behbudiy was aimed at educating the younger generation on the basis of enlightenment and national values, and made a significant contribution to the spiritual awakening of his time. His work is still valued today as an important source in research on education and social development.

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