

POLITICAL VIEWS OF MAHMUDKHOJA BEHBUDI.

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Annotation. The article explores the political views and political activities of Mahmudhaja Behbudi, a major political and educational figure who lived and worked in Turkestan at the beginning of the 20th century, the father of the jadids of Central Asia. The study analyzes Behbudi's views on the development of national identity, reform, education and culture, as well as his interaction with the jadidism movement and various political forces.

Keywords. Jadid, Mahmudhaja Behbudiy, politics, education, culture, Turkestan.

Introduction. In the early 20th century, Mahmudkhoja Behbudi, along with his like-minded friends Munavvar Qori Abdurashidkhanov, Ubaydulla Khojayev, and others, ceaselessly struggled for the social-political and cultural progress of the country against the swamp of ignorance and backwardness, religious superstitions, and the oppression of Tsarist Russian colonialism. The issues of national independence, state language laws, and democratic parliamentary elections in which all nations and ethnicities participate equally and freely in Turkestan were upheld with such boldness, determination, and humanitarian aspects that one cannot help but still be astonished at how Mahmudkhoja Behbudi had already predicted our days of independence back then.

II. Literature analysis.

In Alisher Navoi's poem "Mahbub ul-qulub", he brings forth such a statement: "Whosoever spends their life serving the brave, although their life may pass, they will become the

possessor of eternal life. Do not distance yourself from such people; even if you lose your head, do not forget this aim. Life is treacherous, but a heroic life is eternal." Mahmudkhoja Behbudi was from such a brave, enlightened people; he was born on January 19, 1875, in the village of Bakhshitepa near Samarkand (Siyohob volost during the Tsarist Russian period). His lineage, on one side, traces back to Ahmad Yasawi, and on another side, to the Khojas of Urgench. Mahmudkhoja's grandfather was Salihoja, considered one of the reputable people of Samarkand. Behbudi received his initial knowledge from his father. At the age of 6-7, he learned to read from his uncle Qazi Muhammad Siddiq, and by the age of 12, he had completely memorized the Qur'an. Following that, alongside studying his own language, Turkish, he also independently studied Arabic and Persian, later also learning Russian. The father of the Jadids deeply immersed himself in the study of Arabic for his specialization and felt a great need to learn Persian and Russian to revive the Jadid movement in Turkestan. At Behbudi's initiative, a library named "Behbudiya Library" was established in honor of his father. In the 1890s, he worked as a scribe in the volosts of Chashmaob and Kobud and initially rose to the rank of qazi, later becoming a mufti. A significant role in the drastic change of Behbudi's worldview was played by his travels to Eastern and Western countries. In 1899-1900, he visited Turkey, Egypt, and Hijaz, and in 1903-1904, he traveled to Russian cities such as Moscow, Petersburg, Nizhny, Kazan, and Ufa, closely acquainting himself with and analyzing the life and political systems of foreign nations. Comparing the life of the Uzbek people living under colonial conditions with that of foreign peoples compelled Behbudi to worry about the fate of his fellow countrymen, who were oppressed by dual tyranny.

III. Observation.

"Our forefathers of the Jadid movement," considered the luminaries of the nation, particularly Behbudi, set forth several priority issues. These included:

Liberating Turkestan from medievalism, feudal backwardness, and superstitions;

Leading the region, people, and nation toward the path of progress by rejecting the "Old Method";

Establishing a national state;

Building a free and prosperous society with a constitutional parliamentary governance system;

Granting the status of a state language to Turkic languages;

Establishing a national currency and national army;

The primary goal was to save their Motherland from superstitions through such strategic tasks.

In their view, political and legal freedom could not be achieved without ensuring the country's economic independence. To achieve this, they believed it essential to declare land, underground and surface resources, and water as the common wealth of the peoples of Turkestan, to prepare local cadres capable of developing all sectors, and to build factories and plants to produce goods within the region itself.

Mahmudkhoja Behbudiy was invited to a gathering dedicated to the cultural and life problems of Russian Muslims in Nizhny Novgorod on August 23, 1907, and he delivered a speech there. In the same year, he was sent to the Muslim faction of the Third State Duma to consider the "Cultural Autonomy of Turkestan" project proposal. The project proposed electing representatives to the State Duma proportional to the influence of the Muslim population of Turkestan, granting freedom in religious administrative affairs, ensuring the participation of local representatives in all levels of governance in Turkestan, introducing compulsory and free universal education for Turkestani peoples, halting the resettlement of populations from various parts of Russia to Turkestan without the consent of the local population, and returning endowment properties seized as a result of the Russian invasion. He stamped his seal under his name and rank written in the project. However, his project was ignored by the Third State Duma. After these events, deeply realizing that the government's policy was entirely against the people, Behbudiy engaged in revolutionary activities. Additionally, the Jadids carried out reforms in the field of education, culture, and education until 1917, and from this year, Jadidism began to take on a political nature.

On March 14, 1917, in the city of Tashkent, the socio-political organization of Turkestan progressives called "Sho'roi Islomiya" ("Islamic Council") was established. Initially,

Abdulvohidqori Abduraufqori's son was elected as the leader of the organization, and later Ubaydullakhoja Asadullakhojayev (Ubaydulla Khodjaev) was chosen as the chairman. Mahmudkhoja Behbudi, Munavvarqori Abdurashidkhanov, Mustafa Chokay, Ahmad Zaki Validi, Islam Sultan Shoahmedov, Toshpulatbek Norbotabekov played important roles in the activities of "Sho'roi Islomiya." However, the "Turkestan Autonomy" that Behbudi dreamed of was established, and its 4 congresses took place, but regrettably, the autonomy lasted only 72 days. Even so, Behbudi's hope was not extinguished, and he acted based on his views, spreading enlightenment to the people until the end of his life.

IV. Conclusion

If we take a look at the prolific works of Mahmudkhoja Behbudi, one can find wise solutions to problematic situations or state-level issues, which are worthy of emulation not only in that era but also in the present day. Moreover, he always reiterated in his works that prosperity can only be achieved through knowledge. He emphasized this in his article "My Appeal to the Youth":

"If there is one virtue we possess, it is merely a product of ignorant fanaticism. This means that we are currently maintaining our so-called faith solely under the shadow of fanaticism. Yet, in this age of civilization, it is impossible to live with mere blind fanaticism without knowledge. Because our times are such that in a short period, they will uproot our rotten fanaticism from its base. Therefore, if there is something that can resist the destructive tool of the times, it is indeed education."

In the works of the Jadids, it is also emphasized that spirituality plays a very important role in the family. For example, in the famous play "Padarkush" written by Mahmudkhoja Behbudi, the spiritual poverty that turned fathers and children into cruel beings towards each other and the obsession with wealth and property were strongly condemned. It showed how the introduction of foreign habits undermined the family, which is sacred to society. May the names of such people be eternal and may their names never fade from the people's lips. In particular, special attention is being paid by our President to the Jadids and their bright memory. As evidence of this, on January 3, 2025, the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan,

Shavkat Mirziyoyev, issued a decree "On widely celebrating the 150th anniversary of the birth of Mahmudkhoja Behbudiy, the founder of the Turkestan Jadid movement, prominent writer and public figure, publisher, and educator." According to the decree, in 2025, an international scientific-practical conference on the topic "Mahmudkhoja Behbudiy's legacy and the urgent issues of studying the Jadid movement" is planned to be held at Samarkand State University named after Sharof Rashidov, and a solemn literary-educational memorial evening dedicated to the 150th anniversary of Mahmudkhoja Behbudiy's birth is scheduled to be organized at the Alisher Navoi State Academic Grand Theater of Uzbekistan. Such acknowledgments indicate the eternal living of the Jadids and the respect our state holds for them.

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