

ISSUES OF SPIRITUAL RENEWAL AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATION IN THE ARTISTIC WORK OF BEHBUDIY

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Abstract:

This article analyzes the importance of Behbudiy's views on the understanding of national identity and practical activities in the spiritual renewal and development of the people. His work aims to renew society through the combination of national values, science and enlightenment, and modern ideas of development. It is revealed that Behbudiy's artistic heritage has not lost its relevance today and serves as an important source for the understanding of national identity.

Keywords: Enlightener, artistic creation, spiritual renewal of the nation, spiritual development, national awakening, Jadidism, literature, art, theatre, national leader.

Introduction

At the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries, the Jadid movement spread widely in Turkestan and other regions. Its leading representatives were, in fact, awakened enlightened intellectuals who emerged from among the people. Their spiritual, educational, and moral views were aimed at reforming society, national independence, and the spiritual renewal and development of the nation. The study and interpretation of their work and activities, the correct perception and fair assessment of the spiritual wealth of our people today serve the formation of socio-philosophical thinking in the field of science and spirituality, and the establishment of the Third Renaissance in our country. In particular, in this regard, a new analysis and interpretation of the work of Mahmudkhoj Behbudi, the ideas put forward in his artistic work, is a requirement of the times.

In his speech at the solemn ceremony dedicated to the "Day of Teachers and Mentors" on September 30, 2020, our President Shavkat Mirziyoyev specifically touched upon the Jadid movement, saying, among other things: "...the Third

Renaissance in our country could have been realized by our enlightened Jadid ancestors in the twentieth century. After all, these selfless and passionate people devoted their entire lives to the idea of national revival, mobilized all their strength and capabilities to bring the country out of ignorance and backwardness and save our nation from the swamp of heedlessness... They believed that national independence, development, and prosperity could be achieved, first of all, through enlightenment, through deep mastery of secular and religious knowledge, and modern sciences and crafts." [1]. Because studying the spiritual heritage of our youth, understanding their spiritual courage and the fate of the country and nation is of great educational importance in shaping the national and spiritual image of young people, morally elevating them, protecting them from various foreign ideas, and forming ideological immunity in their minds [2]

Methodology

In the research process, methods such as comparative analysis, content analysis, systematic analysis, and hermeneutics were employed. In contemporary Uzbekistan, scholars have been extensively studying the activities of Behbudi and the Jadid movement from various perspectives within the framework of social sciences. For instance, in F. Yuldosheva's article titled "Mahmudkhoja Behbudi – A Bright Star in the Nation's Self-Awareness and a Symbol of the National Awakening Era", in SH. Rasulov's "The Life and Works of Mahmudkhoja Behbudi", in B. Qosimov and A. Naimov's "Uzbek Enlightenment and Its Founders", in M. Haqqulov's "The History of Early Diplomatic Relations in Central Asia", in the works exploring the "Turkistan Autonomy" as a manifestation of the Central Asian peoples' dream of independence, in Q. Usmonov's "Uzbek Enlighteners", M. Saidov's "The History of Jadid Literature and Enlightenment", and R. Vohidov's "The Formation of the Uzbek Press", the goals and aspirations of Behbudi as expressed through his Jadidist activity have been discussed and analyzed in depth. This is because Behbudi, as one of the most prominent representatives of the Jadid movement, advanced the ideas of national development even in the most challenging and critical circumstances.

Results and Discussion

Mahmudkhodja Behbudi (1875-1919) was the founder of the Jadid movement in Turkestan, a member of the National Assembly of the Turkestan Autonomy, and

a strong politician and public figure of his time. He was also a creative person, a playwright, a publicist and a publisher. The relevance of Behbudi's ideas about the fate of the nation as a leader of the people and the nation is becoming increasingly relevant today. His calls for education, unity selflessness, and patriotism are still of modern significance. The purpose of these calls is to understand what lessons we need to teach ourselves and the future generation and to look at his legacy with a new perspective. As you know, at the beginning of the last century, a difficult situation arose in Turkestan. On the one hand, the policy of Russification and restrictions of Tsarist Russia, on the other hand, a period of severe stagnation in the material and spiritual life of the people passed, and the people's need for self-awareness, knowledge and modern development in a depressed state gave rise to a desire for national awakening. In such a difficult environment, an educated, politically mature representative of his time Behbudi is a bright representative of the Uzbek Jadid movement, an intellectual and thinker who put forward the ideas of national revival and was recognized for his creative work with calls for the people to understand their national identity. His artistic creation and work served as an important source for the spiritual renewal and development of the nation. Behbudi's views covered the topics of national identity, spiritual renewal, and social development. Political leader K. Shodimetov, who studied the activities of the Jadids, wrote: "Behbudi was a religious scholar of his time, that is, a mufti, an enlightened writer, and also a mature political figure who was able to evaluate the political life of his time and express his ideas and initiatives." [3].

It is worth noting that the activities of the Jadids were directly related to the pursuit of national liberation and its implementation by the Enlightenment movement, and the main tool in this was artistic creativity. Based on the study of their activities from an ideological and political, spiritual and educational perspective, we can see that the Jadids widely used the national liberation movement not only in an enlightening way but also in an artistic way, which was an important aspect of penetrating the minds and hearts of the people. In particular, in the research of researcher Mirsaid Abdurakhmanov, the Jadids are especially noted as the founders of national ideology, promoters of national freedom and national pride: "firstly, they laid the foundation for the national ideology of independence, secondly, they awakened the oppressed people who were sleeping in the sleep of heedlessness, they spoke eloquently about freedom,

national pride, the rich culture of our great ancestors, they spoke about forgotten values...” [4].

Behbudi considered the recognition of national identity and the advancement of the idea of national development as the fundamental condition for leading his people out of the political fragmentation, moral decline, and stagnation that characterized his era. He emphasized that spiritual progress could only be achieved through a deep understanding of one’s own history, language, and culture, as well as through a process of moral renewal. Behbudi strived to enrich the inner world of individuals and foster societal development by engaging people in education and enlightenment. In his articles and poems, he outlined the concept of spiritual renewal across the following key dimensions:

1. Development of National Language and Literature: Behbudi prioritized the advancement of national language and literature as a means to foster national consciousness. He advocated for supporting creative writers, promoting literary culture through publishing, and establishing theatrical art to elevate national identity.

2. Promotion of Knowledge and Education: He aimed to achieve spiritual uplift in society by eradicating illiteracy, founding modern-style schools, and expanding access to education for the broader population.

3. Restoration of Justice and Moral Values: Behbudi consistently promoted justice and moral purity in his works, viewing them as essential for consolidating national unity and ethical integrity within society.

4. Preservation of National Heritage and Values: Within the process of spiritual renewal, he underlined the importance of safeguarding the Uzbek people’s cultural heritage and traditional values as a foundation for enduring identity and moral resilience.

On the issue of developing the national language and literature.

In Behbudi's work on the understanding of national identity, the national language and literature occupy a special place. He considered language to be an important means of preserving the spirituality and identity of the nation. In his 1915 article “The Language Issue,” the great enlightener considers the enrichment of the vocabulary of languages following each other as a natural process. In his article “Not Two, but Four Languages Are Needed,” he emphasizes that young people should learn Russian and French, along with Turkish, Arabic, and Persian. The

article says: “If we do not know Arabic, religion will be subservient, and if we do not know Russian, the world will disappear. The necessity of Turkish and Persian is undeniable. There is another language and writing that the whole world speaks to each other. This is French. Knowing and learning to write another language is correct according to Sharia” [7]. Behbudi aimed to awaken the nation and enrich the people spiritually through literature. His dramatic works, poems, and journalistic articles were dedicated to highlighting contemporary social issues and national development.

On the issue of the harmony of religion and modernity.

Behbudi advocated the integration of religious values with the achievements of modern science. He sought to demonstrate such aspects of Islam as humanity, justice, and respect for science, and to encourage the people to progress. According to Behbudi, religion and modernity are not contradictory, but rather should complement each other. Therefore, he put forward the idea of establishing a constitutional parliamentary government in Turkestan, the establishment of an Administrative Republic [7].

On the issue of the unity of Western science and Eastern culture.

Behbudi considered the study of advanced Western scientific achievements to be an important condition for national development. At the same time, he paid great attention to the preservation and development of the rich heritage of Eastern culture. In his opinion, the harmony of Western science and Eastern culture is a necessary condition for the development of society.

Behbudi not only put forward theoretical ideas but also sought to implement them in practice. He understood the shortcomings of the traditional education system and put forward the idea of introducing modern education. To this end, Behbudi began to organize new-method schools and worked hard to introduce new modern methods to save the people from illiteracy. The new-method schools he founded, the inclusion of several modern subjects such as mathematics, geography, history, and natural sciences, the works he wrote, and the propaganda work he carried out were important steps towards the realization of national identity and spiritual renewal. “Behbudiya set himself the goal of arming the Uzbek nation with modern knowledge in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and made a great contribution to making the people literate by organizing libraries

and writing textbooks. The main goal of the Behbudiya Library is: to provide modern knowledge to the younger generation, to form a culture of reading, to present local and international scientific and popular literature, and to serve to preserve and promote the cultural heritage of Uzbekistan.” [5]

Behbudi is known not only as an enlightener but also as the first Uzbek playwright. It should be noted that his work “Padarkush”, written in 1911, was aimed at awakening the people with knowledge and enlightenment, and at understanding their own identity. Through this work, the modern scholar sought to call the people to modern development. “The theatre is a place of education, a field of learning. Theatre is literary education. Theatre is a mirror in which the state of society is so directed and reflected that even the blind and deaf perceive it and do not remain indifferent. Theatre is a beauty capable of singing everything and the ability to expose the disgusting, harmful, and barbaric. Such types of theatre as tragedy, comedy, and drama affect people... The power of theatre lies in the fact that even an illiterate person can read it.” [6]. The Jadids also enjoyed the theatres of Russian, Armenian, and other nations during their time, but the content and essence of our national theatre were aimed at the national liberation and spiritual awakening of the people. “The influence of Behbudi’s drama was so strong that between 1914 and 1917, many dramatic works written in imitation of it, influenced by it, and inspired by it appeared on the stage,” explains G. Mahmudova, a scholar who studied the aesthetic ideas of the Jadids. [8:109] Indeed, Behbudi’s artistic work on the spiritual renewal and development of the people inspired the new generation of artists of that time and gave rise to the creation of works on the new national spirit and development. These include Hamza Hakimzoda, Abdulla Qodiri, Shakuri, Badri, Chulpon, Abdulla Avloni, and Mannon Uygur.

Conclusions

Behbudi's views on the understanding of national identity and his practical activities are of great importance in the spiritual renewal and development of the people. He set himself the goal of renewing society through the harmony of national values, science and enlightenment, and the ideas of modern development. Behbudi's artistic heritage has not lost its relevance today and serves as an important source for understanding national identity. Therefore, it is worth noting as a proposal that it is necessary to form historical consciousness in

young people through a new approach and analysis of the scientific, philosophical, and ideological significance of the activities of the Jadids, in particular Behbudi's artistic work, to educate a new creative generation in the spirit of patriotism, and to introduce the study of their activities into the educational system.

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