

THE PEDAGOGICAL ACTIVITY OF MUNAVVAR QORI ABDURASHIDKHANOV AND HIS ROLE IN THE FORMATION OF THE NATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM

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Abstract: This article scientifically analyzes the role of Munavvar qori Abdurashidkhanov in the formation of the national higher education system and his enlightening activities within the framework of the Jadid movement. In particular, his views on developing new methods of education, combining modern knowledge with national values, and establishing a three-tier national education system are highlighted.

Key words: Bolshevism, Jadidism movement, freedom, national education, university, new national school, education, charity fund.

Introduction

Munavvar qori Abdurashidkhanov was a leader of the "National Independence" liberation movement who operated in the first quarter of the 20th century. He was also the founder of the new-method "Usuli Jadid" school and a great enlightener who made a significant contribution to the emergence and formation of national higher education. As one of the advanced intellectuals of his time, he strove with great dedication to preserve the national identity of the population and to achieve a spiritual awakening.

A series of seemingly unresolved problems that intensified during the late 19th and early 20th centuries—such as the calamities of Bolshevism, mass uprisings against them, the illiteracy of the population and their exclusion from secular knowledge, and rebellions against forced labor—deeply troubled Munavvar qori from his youth, just as they did other Jadids. Munavvar qori believed that the only way to resolve these issues and achieve freedom was through science, enlightenment, and education. He well understood that in this pursuit, one must act with intellect rather than brute force.

Main Part

The productive activity led by Munavvar qori resulted in abandoning old schools and establishing newly structured educational institutions. Furthermore, he laid the foundation for a three-tier national education system, which was already practice in certain regions of developed countries. This system consisted of a four-year primary education, the creation of intermediate specialized schools known as "Rushdiya", and the establishment of new higher education institutions (Darul funun), which also included separate graduation examinations. Students who demonstrated their talents in these exams were continuously supported and incentivized by benevolent wealthy citizens. Munavvar qori and his like-minded colleagues created a solid foundation for young people to become mature professionals and rewarded them accordingly.

As a result of the enlightener's efforts, charitable foundations such as "Ko'mak" (Help) and "Dorul Ojizin" (House of the Needy) were established between 1909 and 1913. These foundations operated transparently to send young people abroad, ensure their access to education, and provide assistance to those in need. A specific "Charter" (Nizom) was drafted for these charitable funds, strictly defining their rights and duties. For instance, a record within the Charter of "Ko'mak" serves as evidence:

"The society provides material assistance to state, public, and private educational institutions: it establishes scholarships for students in secondary and higher educational institutions"[5:70].

Unlike the old traditional schools, the "Rushdiya" school, organized under the leadership of Munavvar qori, enabled students to achieve literacy and acquire reading and writing skills within a short period. It developed on a large scale and proved highly useful even during the Soviet era.

In addition to "Rushdiya", this school was also referred to by names such as "Lenin" and "Muxtoriyat (Autonomy) School". For his outstanding contributions to the development of public education, Munavvar qori was awarded the title of "Hero of Enlightenment" (Maorif qahramoni) by the local Soviet government in 1923.

In this school, alongside the Russian language, religious, secular, humanitarian, and natural sciences were taught in depth. Unlike other Usuli Jadid schools, young people studying at Munavvar qori's school based on the curriculum he designed achieved literacy within six months. Mastering his book "Adibi Avval" (The First Teacher—an alphabet textbook), published in 1907, was so easy that it was later adopted and used in other Russian-native (Russo-Tuzem) schools as well. Furthermore, he created textbooks and manuals such as "Adibi Soniy" (The Second Teacher—a reading book, 1907), "Yer Yuzi" (The Earth's Surface), "Havoyiji Diniya" (Religious Needs), "Til Saboqlari" (Language Lessons, 1925), "Tajvid", and "Sabzazor" (A Collection of Literary Works).

According to the four-year general curriculum compiled by the master for primary classes:

First Grade: Students were taught letter recognition, reading, writing, and basic arithmetic based on the "Adibi Avval" textbook.

Second Grade: Through "Adibi Soniy" and "Havoyiji Diniya", numbers greater than one hundred and various arithmetic operations were taught.

Third Grade: Upon moving to the third grade, students studied textbooks related to the introduction of the Quran, as well as the "Arithmetic" textbooks by the famous Russian mathematics methodologists Shaposhnikov and Valtsov.

Fourth Grade: In the fourth grade, books like the Quran, "Tarixi Anbiyo" (History of the Prophets), "Darhun Najot", "Nasihati", "Hisob Masalalari" (Arithmetic Problems), and "Dur-ul Shifohiya" were taught alongside Arabic, Persian, and Russian languages, growing progressively more complex year by year according to the students' age.

Jadid schools were established in other regions of our land modeled after the two-year "Rushdiya" school, using this exact curriculum. Studying at this school required tuition, and parents paid between 50 tiyin and 1.5 rubles depending on their financial capabilities. Students who graduated from the school went on to work in specialized positions, such as imams in mosques or clerks and administrators in enterprises and organizations.

Once a nation reaches a certain stage of development in education, the necessity for higher education begins to be felt, leading to the emergence of various universities across different periods. In Tashkent, the demand to establish a new higher education system based on modern educational equipment was exceptionally high. The low level of knowledge and inefficient teaching methods utilized in madrasas deeply worried many intellectuals. Consequently, the need to introduce a European education system based on secular knowledge into Turkistan grew steadily. For instance, Behbudi, in his article titled "Ehtiyoji Millat" (The Need of the Nation), explicitly stated the high demand for European secular higher education:

"To survive in the world, secular science and knowledge are essential. A nation devoid of modern knowledge and science will be trampled by other nations"[2:117].

The idea of organizing a new type of higher education in Tashkent was first supported by Ismail Gasprinsky, a prominent leader of the Jadidism movement. This exact concept was raised in his letter sent to Vrevsky, the Governor-General of Turkistan, in which he suggested converting one of the madrasas into a new European-style higher education institution for Muslims. Unfortunately, due to Ostroumov's opposition, the Governor-General signed the letter with the instruction: "To be left without consequences".

Nevertheless, Munavvar qori Abdurashidkhanov demonstrated great leadership in establishing higher education and created a system for organizing a new three-stage university (Darul funun).

First Stage: He organized the "Rushdiya" school based on higher education principles, teaching secular sciences such as mathematics, geography, and the native language alongside religious knowledge.

Second Stage: After becoming a member of the Tashkent City Duma, he engaged seriously in organizing the higher education system and formed a special commission for this matter. It is noted that "Munavvar qori emphasized that the interests of Muslims must be taken into account when developing the university curriculum, and specifically, the faculties of history and oriental studies should be adapted to them"[4:46].

Third Stage: While intellectuals led by Munavvar qori were striving for national higher education, the Turkistan Council of People's Commissars—which included no representatives of the Muslim population—established the Turkistan People's University in the new city part of Tashkent on April 21, 1918. In this Russian-language people's university, opened with grand celebrations, the interests of our people were completely ignored. On April 9 of the same year, Munavvar qori gathered Muslim Jadid enlighteners and held an official council to open a Muslim People's University. The organizing committee, led by Munavvar qori, consisted of 9 members, and they were assigned salaries ranging from 200 to 450 rubles depending on their work.

"At the meeting of the organizing committee on May 3, Munavvar qori Abdurashidkhanov was elected Chairman (Rector) of the Muslim People's University, Isa To'xtaboyev as the first deputy chairman, Burhon Habib as the second deputy, Abdusamiqori Ziyoboyev as treasurer, and Muxtor Bakir as chief secretary"[3:91].

By Saturday, May 22, 1918, the official ceremonial opening of the Muslim People's University took place in the Old City, attended by government members, leaders and staff of the Russian People's University, and others.

Munavvar qori Abdurashidkhanov, who spearheaded the establishment of the higher education system, also showed great leadership in sending youth to study abroad. Notably, due to his initiative and the support of local wealthy patrons, four individuals were sent to study at German higher education institutions for the first time. Later, with the further strengthening of the Jadidism movement and contributions from charitable funds, the number of young people studying abroad increased progressively. According to archival documents, 15 students studied in Turkey in 1911, and 30 students in 1912. In 1924–1925, the number of students sent to Germany reached 56, and they received stipends of \$55 and \$45.

Conclusion: In conclusion, Munavvar qori's dedicated efforts laid the foundation for modern higher education (the current National University of Uzbekistan named after Mirzo Ulugbek). The development of this institution became the cradle of science, education, and culture not only in Uzbekistan but across the entire Central Asian and Kazakhstan region. Notably, the invention of "Television" (Televizor) at this university in 1928 stood out as a unique innovation in the history of all humankind.

The magnificent services of Munavvar qori were specially recognized and highly valued by our Honorable President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, and he was posthumously awarded the Order "Buyuk Xizmatlari Uchun" (For Great Merits). Today, the heritage he left behind continues to serve as an essential theoretical and practical source in the formation and development of the national education system.

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