



## THE ISSUES OF EDUCATION AND UPBRINGING IN THE WORKS OF MAHMUDKHOJA BEHBUDIY

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**Abstract.** This article examines the ideas concerning education and upbringing advanced by the Jadid enlightenment movement, drawing on Mahmudkhoja Behbudiy's publicistic writings, dramaturgy, and views on school reform. It explores such issues as new-method schools, the integration of secular and religious knowledge, national identity, family responsibility, and the acquisition of vocational skills by young people. The educational concepts presented in the drama *Padarkush* and the article *Ehtiyoji millat (The Needs of the Nation)* are interpreted comparatively, and their significance for contemporary pedagogical thought is highlighted.

**Key words:** Jadidism, Mahmudkhoja Behbudiy, education, upbringing, new-method school, *Padarkush*, enlightenment, national awakening, pedagogical views.

The social and cultural transformations that took place in Turkestan in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries necessitated a new approach to the education system. Jadid enlighteners believed that the development of society depended primarily on raising a generation that was educated, capable of independent thought, and aware of its responsibilities. In their activities, the school emerged not merely as an institution for teaching literacy but also as a social institution that shaped an individual's worldview and civic consciousness. Mahmudkhoja Behbudiy (1875–1919) was one of the prominent representatives of this movement who combined pedagogical thought with practical initiatives.

In studying Behbudiy's views, his contributions to the press, his activities in establishing schools and preparing textbooks, and his drama *Padarkush* serve as complementary sources. In these works, education is closely linked to economic development, moral upbringing, national interests, and social responsibility. Therefore, it is insufficient to assess the writer's legacy solely within the framework of school reform: in his work, education and upbringing constitute an integrated programme of enlightenment. The purpose of this article is to examine how issues of education and upbringing are addressed in Behbudiy's works, to analyse their modes of expression in literary and publicistic writing, and to reveal their historical and pedagogical significance. The study employs historical-contextual analysis, comparative analysis, and textual interpretation. Particular attention is paid to the



logical connections between the ideas expressed in the sources, while avoiding the assumption that all Jadid views were identical or fully consistent with contemporary pedagogical standards.

For a long period, traditional educational institutions in Turkestan played an important role in transmitting religious and literary knowledge. However, under new historical circumstances, the need for systematic instruction in mathematics, geography, history, natural sciences, and modern languages increased. The Jadids sought to address this need not by completely rejecting existing educational traditions but by reforming teaching methods and expanding the range of subjects taught. In this respect, the concept of *usuli jadid* (the new method) encompassed practical changes such as organising lessons, teaching literacy through a phonetic approach, and allocating instructional time more efficiently.

In Behbudiy's view, a lack of access to modern knowledge was not merely an individual problem; it also restricted the economic and political opportunities of society as a whole. An educated person could work with documents, understand developments in the wider world, and make independent decisions in trade and professional activities. These ideas demonstrate the practical value of education. At the same time, the Jadids did not reduce knowledge to a means of increasing income alone; they also emphasised its role in strengthening moral awareness and national responsibility.

Historical information about the new-method schools established or supported by Behbudiy demonstrates that his theoretical views were closely connected with practical pedagogical activities. He focused on compiling textbooks, creating texts that were accessible to pupils, and explaining the necessity of education through the mass media. Works such as *Kitobat ul-atfol*, *Risolai asbobi savod*, and *Muntaxabi jug'rofiyai umumiy* served his aim of promoting literacy and broadening people's understanding of the world. Since publication dates and bibliographic descriptions of these works may differ across catalogues, they should be verified against the specific editions consulted. One of the central concepts in Behbudiy's publicistic writings is "need." In his article *Ehtiyoji millat (The Needs of the Nation)*, he discusses the knowledge, professional expertise, and organisational capacities necessary for national advancement. From this perspective, the school is regarded as a source of qualified individuals capable of meeting the future needs of society. The effectiveness of education is measured not merely by the number of literate people but also by its ability to produce individuals who can make practical contributions to the life of their people. In Behbudiy's views on enlightenment, the acquisition of secular knowledge





and the preservation of religious and moral values are not contradictory concepts. Rather, he maintains that different fields of knowledge can contribute to human development. This position was particularly important in the historical context of the time: advocates of new-method schools sought to justify educational change through values that were familiar and meaningful to local communities. Thus, the idea of reform developed alongside an effort to achieve social consensus. Behbudi's drama *Padarkush yoxud o'qimagan bolaning holi* (*The Parricide, or the Fate of an Uneducated Child*) is an important work that explores the issues of education and upbringing through dramatic conflict. The drama depicts the tragic consequences of relying on wealth while failing to pay sufficient attention to a child's upbringing. The emphasis on "an uneducated child" in the subtitle encourages the reader to consider the educational causes underlying the events. The author presents the crime not merely as an act of individual immorality but as a phenomenon associated with parental neglect, an unhealthy social environment, and separation from education.

The father's character in the drama demonstrates that material prosperity alone cannot replace proper upbringing. Guiding a child's development, paying attention to the people with whom the child interacts, and monitoring the habits the child acquires are presented as responsibilities of the family. These responsibilities involve more than supervision or prohibition; they also include encouraging the child to pursue knowledge, cultivating a strong work ethic, and fostering socially beneficial goals. In this respect, the work provides a literary argument for the importance of cooperation between the family and the school. The conflict in *Padarkush* is powerful because the consequences of a lack of enlightenment harm not only the individual but also their relatives and the wider social environment. The drama conveys the idea that upbringing is a continuous process: behaviours neglected in childhood may lead to serious consequences later in life. However, it would be incorrect to reduce the work to the simplistic conclusion that a lack of schooling is the sole cause of every crime. The artistic exaggeration and dramatic resolution serve to make the audience reflect on the seriousness of the problem.

The author also uses theatre itself as a means of education and moral instruction. Through the stage, pupils and spectators encounter not abstract advice but a sequence of actions, conversations, and consequences. Emotional impact is thus combined with intellectual reflection. Viewing theatre as a pedagogical platform is a distinctive feature of Jadid enlightenment: a literary work encourages the public to read, parents to act responsibly, and young people to remain vigilant.





A review of Behbudiy's legacy reveals the inseparability of education and upbringing as a fundamental principle. Education develops knowledge, skills, and worldview, whereas upbringing determines the purposes towards which these abilities are directed. An educated but irresponsible person may not be sufficiently beneficial to society; likewise, good intentions alone cannot replace modern professional competence. The ideal of enlightenment in Behbudiy's works rests on the harmony between these two dimensions.

The first principle is **conscious literacy**. Pupils should not merely recognise written symbols; they should understand what they read and be able to apply that knowledge in practice. The second principle is **a broad curriculum**: subjects such as language, mathematics, geography, and history expand an individual's worldview. The third principle is **family responsibility**: entrusting a child's upbringing solely to the teacher is insufficient. The fourth principle is **social service**: acquired knowledge should enable individuals to understand the needs of their people and translate that understanding into useful action.

The national orientation of the Jadid educational programme is also particularly significant. Behbudiy wanted young people to remain attentive to their homeland, language, and history, while also considering it essential to study the scientific and technological experience of other societies. In this view, preserving national identity does not mean isolating oneself from the outside world. On the contrary, acquiring modern knowledge is understood as a factor that strengthens a nation's capacity for independent thought and development.

In Mahmudkhoja Behbudiy's works, education and upbringing are interpreted as interconnected processes that ensure the moral and social development of the nation. While his publicistic writings promote school reform, modern sciences, professional training, and the educational role of the press, his drama *Padarkush* reveals the tragic consequences of neglecting a child's upbringing through artistic means. His approach is significant because it integrates knowledge with moral responsibility, national interests, and practical activity. Behbudiy's legacy should not be regarded as a ready-made set of instructions for contemporary pedagogy. Rather, it is a rich historical source that encourages reflection on the aims of education, family responsibility, and the social role of enlightenment. Studying his works with due consideration for their genres, historical context, and the author's educational intentions makes it possible to assess Jadid pedagogical thought more objectively.



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