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UBAYDULLA ASADULLAKHOJAYEV'S LIFE AND HIS ROLE IN THE NATIONAL AWAKENING MOVEMENT

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Ubaydulla Asadullakhojayev was one of the prominent representatives of the Jadid movement, a lawyer, and an organizer of the national press who actively participated in the socio-political life of Turkestan in the early twentieth century. His life and the development of his worldview were closely associated with a historical period characterized by colonial rule in Turkestan, when social reform, educational development, and increased political participation among the local population became pressing issues. Examining Asadullakhojayev's activities provides insight into how intellectuals of that era viewed social progress, legal justice, and national interests [1; 2].

Historical sources contain discrepancies regarding Ubaydulla Asadullakhojayev's date of birth. Uzbek encyclopedic sources indicate that he was born in Tashkent in 1878. However, Turkish researcher Erhan Giray, in a scholarly article published in 2019, gives 1882 as his year of birth [1; 2]. According to available biographical information, he received his education at a Russian-native school in Tashkent. He subsequently worked as a translator at a government institution. This experience enabled him to develop his Russian-language skills, become familiar with the administrative system, and gain a better understanding of the social relations of that period [1].

Legal education played a significant role in shaping Ubaydulla Asadullakhojayev's worldview. According to historical sources, he studied at a law institute in Saratov, Russia, between 1908 and 1912. Acquiring legal knowledge provided a foundation for understanding social relations in terms of law, justice, and citizens' rights. In particular, under colonial rule, the activities of local intellectuals with legal expertise were important in raising social issues and defending the interests of the population [1; 2].

His student years also deserve attention as an important stage in the development of his worldview. Biographical sources indicate that Ubaydulla Asadullakhojayev corresponded with the renowned Russian writer Leo Tolstoy in 1909 [1]. This information suggests that he was interested in the intellectual and social issues of his time. However, a comprehensive assessment of the correspondence and its influence on his views requires consultation of the original letters or specialized scholarly studies examining them. Therefore, this episode should be interpreted cautiously as a potentially significant factor in the development of his worldview.

After completing his education, Ubaydulla Asadullakhojayev initially worked in Saratov and, from 1913, practised as a private advocate at the Tashkent District Court. Historical and biographical sources report that he sought to expose unlawful conduct and corruption among representatives of the Tsarist administration [1]. This activity demonstrates that he applied his legal knowledge in practice. At the same time, his work as an advocate can be examined not merely as a professional occupation but also as an intellectual's experience of confronting legal and social problems in Turkestan. This perspective helps explain his subsequent public and political engagement.

In the early twentieth century, the Jadid movement in Turkestan promoted educational reform, the dissemination of modern knowledge, the development of the press, and broader social transformation. Jadid intellectuals emphasized the importance of enlightenment, civic engagement, and modern thinking as essential factors in achieving progress. Ubaydulla Asadullakhojayev also joined this movement and became increasingly involved in public affairs. According to historical sources, in 1913 he led a progressive Muslim group known as "Umid" and was one of the founders of the "Turon" society [1]. These activities represented an important stage in his transition from professional practice towards broader engagement with public interests.

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One of the key initiatives reflecting Ubaydulla Asadullakhojayev's worldview and public engagement was the establishment of the Sadoi Turkiston newspaper in Tashkent on 4 April 1914. He served as the editor of this publication. In his scholarly article, Erhan Giray describes the newspaper as a Jadid publication that sought to introduce the population of Turkestan to the ideas of enlightenment and progress, develop public socio-political awareness, and increase awareness of the struggle for independence [2]. The newspaper's cessation of publication in April 1915 due to financial difficulties is another significant aspect of its history [1; 2].

In the early twentieth century, the emergence of a national press in Turkestan played an important role in the region's intellectual, cultural, social, and political development. During this period, representatives of the Jadid movement sought to improve public education, promote modern schooling, highlight social problems, and strengthen national consciousness. Ubaydulla Asadullakhojayev was one of the intellectuals who actively participated in this process, and his journalistic activities were particularly associated with the Sadoi Turkiston newspaper. The publication contributed to the dissemination of enlightenment ideals and the formation of public opinion in Turkestan [3; 4].

Following the political events in the Russian Empire in 1905, certain opportunities emerged for the development of the press and public activities. Consequently, efforts to establish newspapers and journals also intensified in Turkestan. However, local publishing activities took place under conditions of political censorship and financial constraints. Jadid intellectuals regarded the press not merely as a means of disseminating information but also as a platform for social reform, improving literacy, and discussing pressing public issues. According to Erhan Giray, Sadoi Turkiston was one of the Jadid publications that emerged within this historical context [3].

On 12 December 1913, Ubaydulla Asadullakhojayev obtained permission to publish the Sadoi Turkiston newspaper. Its first issue appeared in Tashkent on 4 April 1914. Published in Uzbek, the newspaper was established and edited by Asadullakhojayev, who served as its chief editor. It continued publication until 10 April 1915, producing a total of 66 issues [3; 4]. These facts demonstrate that, despite its relatively short existence, Sadoi Turkiston secured a distinctive place in the history of the Turkestan press.

One of the newspaper's principal objectives was to introduce the local population to enlightenment, modern knowledge, and ideas of progress. Its pages addressed issues concerning education, culture, social relations, public life, and political developments. Through the publication, its contributors sought to encourage readers to reflect on existing social problems, participate more actively in public life, and recognize the need for change. In this respect, Sadoi Turkiston served as an important medium for communicating enlightenment ideals to the public [3; 5].

One of the important features of the newspaper was its role in bringing together prominent enlighteners and literary figures. Intellectuals such as Munavvar Qori Abdurashidkhanov, Abdulla Avloniy, and Abdurauf Muzaffarov contributed to the development and enrichment of the publication's content. In addition, historical accounts indicate that works by Tavallo, Cho'lpon, Hamza Hakimzoda Niyoziy, and other writers were published in the newspaper [4; 5]. This demonstrates that the publication was not limited to the activities of a single individual but served as a collective intellectual and educational platform that brought together leading intellectuals of the period.

In Ubaydulla Asadullakhojayev's editorial work, particular importance was attached to raising social issues through the press and increasing public awareness of socio-political developments. Historical sources indicate that the newspaper's pages featured criticism of the colonial policies of the Russian Empire and addressed issues affecting the interests of the local population [4]. Therefore, the newspaper's activities can be understood not only as part of a literary or educational process but also as an effort by Turkestan's intellectuals to shape public opinion.

The cessation of Sadoi Turkiston was caused by financial difficulties. In his scholarly article, Erhan Giray notes that the newspaper ceased publication after operating for approximately one year

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because of insufficient funding [3]. Nevertheless, its relatively short period of publication does not diminish its historical significance. The newspaper contributed to the development of national press traditions in Turkestan, the exchange of ideas among intellectuals, and the dissemination of enlightenment ideals.

In the early twentieth century, the national awakening in Turkestan manifested itself not only through enlightenment and the press but also through the establishment of political organizations and efforts to ensure the local population's participation in public administration. Ubaydulla Asadullakhojayev was one of the prominent Jadid figures who played an important role in this process. His political activities were associated with the protection of national interests, the safeguarding of the population's rights, and the promotion of ideas concerning autonomous self-government in Turkestan [6; 7].

The events surrounding the conscription of labourers in 1916 marked an important stage in the development of Ubaydulla Asadullakhojayev's political views. Under the decree issued by Emperor Nicholas II of Russia on 25 June 1916, men from the indigenous population of Turkestan were to be mobilized for labour behind the front lines. This decision intensified public discontent. Ubaydulla Asadullakhojayev chaired the Turkestan Committee for the Recruitment of Labourers, established in Tashkent, and opposed irregularities and administrative abuses associated with the mobilization process. Together with Mirkomilboy Mirmo'minboyev, he travelled to Petrograd to raise questions concerning the legality of the decree. Historical sources indicate that, in December 1916, he presented arguments on this issue during discussions in the State Duma [6; 8]. His activities demonstrate how he applied his legal expertise to the protection of the population's interests.

Following the February Revolution of 1917, the collapse of the political system of the Russian Empire created opportunities for the formation of new political organizations in Turkestan. Ubaydulla Asadullakhojayev actively participated in these developments and chaired the Sho'roi Islomiya organization, established in Tashkent in March 1917. The organization sought to represent the political and social interests of the Muslim population, expand its participation in local administration, and promote social reform [6; 7].

At the First All-Turkestan Congress of Muslims, held in April 1917, the Central Council of Muslims of the Turkestan Region was established. Ubaydulla Asadullakhojayev served as a member and secretary of this body. In May 1917, he also became a member of the Executive Committee of the All-Russian Muslim Council [6]. These positions demonstrate that his activities extended beyond Tashkent and Turkestan, connecting him with broader political developments among Muslims throughout Russia. His participation formed part of the wider movement to articulate the political demands of the local population through organized institutions.

A significant stage in Asadullakhojayev's political career was associated with the proclamation of the Turkestan Autonomy in Kokand in November 1917. The autonomy sought to organize the future governance of Turkestan on the basis of local political representation and self-government. Ubaydulla Asadullakhojayev was one of the participants in the autonomy movement and held the position of Minister of Military Affairs in the government of the Turkestan Autonomy. He served in this capacity from November 1917 until February 1918 [6; 7].

The position of Minister of Military Affairs was directly related to the security and administrative challenges facing the autonomy government. However, political instability, limited financial and organizational resources, and conflicts with the central authorities restricted the autonomy's capacity to operate effectively. Therefore, Asadullakhojayev's activities should be examined not solely in terms of the office he held but also within the broader political movement aimed at establishing a system of national self-government.

In February 1918, the Turkestan Autonomy was suppressed following armed attacks in Kokand. The termination of the autonomy government created a new political environment for its

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representatives. Historical accounts indicate that, in February 1918, Ubaydulla Asadullakhojayev travelled to the Caucasus on behalf of the government in an attempt to arrange grain supplies to Turkestan [6]. This assignment demonstrates that his activities encompassed not only political representation but also efforts to address the region's economic needs and food supply challenges.

In conclusion, the life and activities of Ubaydulla Asadullakhojayev reflect important aspects of the national awakening that took place in Turkestan in the early twentieth century. His work as a lawyer, the establishment of the Sadoi Turkiston newspaper, and his participation in the political developments of 1917 illustrate the transition from enlightenment ideals to political activism and aspirations for national statehood. In particular, his efforts to highlight social issues through the national press, defend the legal and political interests of the population, and serve as Minister of Military Affairs in the government of the Turkestan Autonomy constituted the principal directions of his historical activities. These historical facts provide a basis for examining Ubaydulla Asadullakhojayev as an important figure whose activities connected the educational and political dimensions of the Jadid movement in Turkestan. Studying his legacy contributes to a deeper understanding of the development of the national awakening, civic engagement, and ideas of national statehood in the region.

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