



## Review of the Problem in Political Journalism

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### **Abstract**

The article examines Haji Muin's political journalism as a modern thinker. The publications published following the February revolution, the attitude toward the Bolsheviks, and the processes of the Soviet press establishment were all investigated. Based on his works published in the press, the political beliefs of the modern enlightener Haji Muin were explored in these processes.

**Keywords:** *Struggle; Enlightenment; Press; Political; Soviet Government; Journalism; Newspaper; Editor-in-Chief; Turkestan*

### **Introduction**

The surge of events that followed the February Revolution in 1917 in the last century propelled Jadids into the political arena. Their activities were also covered in the press. During the February revolution, enlightened people who wished for Hurriyat began to engage in open political activity. Numerous periodicals, including "Najot", "Hurriyat", "Kengash" and "Turon" were published, and people began to speak freely. Writings asking the nation to unify and fight for Hurriyat were continually published in the press by publicists such as Abdurauf Fitrat, Mahmudhoja Behbudi, Munavvar Qori, and Abdulla Avloni. These intellectuals can be found in the start of a number of newly emerging works, including congresses, elections for city officials, preparations for the construction of the constituent assembly, food committee organization, and intervention in local governments [1; 122].

Being a journalist and editor, Enlightener Haji Muin was also involved in political processes.

Haji Muin, who returned to his motherland following the February revolution, was overjoyed with the developments in his country. Having endured the hardships of a hard life in labor, I am more sensitive to the pangs of arbitrariness:

Omad az jabri falak bar mo zamoni mardikor,

Tolib Turkistoni mo go'yo jahoni mardikor,—

*Good luck is not a burden, the sky is full of hard workers,*

*Talib Turkestan is as if the world is a worker.*

That is, the time of workers has come due to fate and our Turkestan has become a world of workers, the publicist who wrote soon joined the ranks of his colleagues. He began working for the Hurriyat newspaper in Samarkand, which was run by Mahmudhoja Behbudi and Abdurauf Fitrat. His articles have appeared in the newspaper since the 23rd edition. We can now observe that socio-political topics, rather than cultural-educational topics, gain precedence in Haji Muin's journalism. At this point, the astute publicist had evolved into a keen observer and participant in political events.

## ***The Main Part***

According to Haji Muin's article "Shurai Islamiya and Elections", Muslims are divided into two factions: "Shurai Islam" – a wealthy, scholar's society with the first number, and "Workers' Union" with the second. On election day, "Shurai Islam" organizes "various brutal crimes, tortures, looting, and extortions" against "Workers' Union" members, and even victims are provided.

Haji Muin strongly condemns the barbaric activities of "Shurai Islam" on election day in his piece. The "Shurai Islam" organization in Samarkand was distinct from the one in Tashkent, and it brought together Samarkand's scholars. According to Haji Muin, the Union of Workers, which ran with the "second number" in the election, was a "working, impoverished people's society". The creation of this organization was announced in the August 4, 1917, edition of the "Hurriyat" newspaper: "On August 1, two hundred Muslim workers in our city gathered and founded a society named the Union of Muslim Workers".

Abdurauf Fitrat, the newspaper's editor, stated of this society: "'Workers' society dispatched delegates to the honorable Shurai Islamic Society and requested a seat in the Duma for ten persons with the goal of union and unity. For unknown reasons, the Shura'i Islamic community rejected such a significant proposition" [2]. According to Haji Muin, this is because a number of Jadids joined the "Many affluent people and mullahs from the side of Shura'i Islam hatched a conspiracy among the poor and stupid people and slandered the "Worker's Union"... When they discovered the presence of young individuals, they labeled all of them as Jadids and unbelievers..." All of the Workers' Union's members and supporters were disseminating Jadids and unbelievers among the masses". "Shurai Islam", which opposes labor unionization, has established an alliance with the Russian party "Homeowners". Fitrat condemns the action of this group in the article "The Error of Shura'i Islam", demonstrating that it is inappropriate to participate in the election in alliance with the Russian party, and the results of this union will be damaging to Muslims [3]. Fitrat, on the other hand, did not go blind. According to Haji Muin, "Shurai Islam" committed atrocities on election day. "A few innocent individuals were slaughtered unjustly by a band of barbarians". Haji Muin, who accuses "Shurai Islam" of cruelty, argues that these instances were caused by the government's ignorance and carelessness: "This regrettable occurrence was also caused by the government's inaction. For example, despite knowing that there would be dissent and disagreement about the election, the administration took no action on election day. That is, no more than 20 soldiers were stationed in each section. "Such an incident would not have occurred if the government had taken such action", he claims.

It should be noted that the names of Mahmudhoja Behbudi and Muhammadguli Orinbayev, who created the Hurriyat newspaper shortly after, were published in the 36th edition of this newspaper under the heading "Candidates of the City Duma, presented in the first number ink" ("Shurai Islam" – N.N.). Yet, being elected to the City Duma on the "Shurai Islam" list does not imply that Behbudi was opposed to the "Worker's Union". Behbudi, according to Sadridin Ainy, "brings scholars and old-minded people closer to the youth and worked among the Ulama" [4]. The "Ulama" society of the time, known as "Shurai Islam," did not subscribe to any of Mahmudhoja's lofty ideas. ...during the revolution, Mahmudhoja infused the "Zahmatkash Ittifaq" society with spirit and thinking.

The following articles published in “Hurriyat” newspaper by publicist Haji Muin reveal his stance toward the leaders and that he agrees with his professional associates in this regard.

In 1917, Abdurauf Fitrat expressed concern that “a new scourge, the Bolshevik scourge, has arisen in Russia” [5]. Even before 1917, modern thinkers were fully aware with the Bolsheviks’ deeds and aspirations. For example, Mahmudhoja Behbudi stated in 1906, “The objective of their commander is to entirely shatter all current property rules and regulations, to equalize property and land among the people... In any event, this party’s aim to enter the category is “very damaging for us Muslims,” he added. Haji Muin attempts to portray the genuine picture and objectives of the Bolsheviks in his article titled “Bolsheviks and Us.” “In the days before the Bolsheviks came to power, they pledged through manifestos that: “We will offer complete freedom and independence to the little nations”, writes the publicist, “but these meaningless words were put on paper”. It was still there. They have not yet confirmed any nation’s autonomy and independence; on the contrary, they have fought with cannons and machine guns against nations that have professed such autonomy and independence. The Bolsheviks, who were fascinated with socialism, made it clear that they would not provide freedom and independence to nations who did not accept their principles” [7]. According to the publicist, terms like “Hurriyat and Istiqlal” are simply on paper, and the Bolsheviks are immediately implementing their goals by bleeding blood.

Although Haji Muin, Lenin, who was enticed by riches, did not fully understand the chief thieves’ principal intentions, he believed believe they had “unnatural appetites, warped hatred”. He claims that the Bolsheviks rejected Turkestan’s independence as a decision of “mullahs and bourgeois”, that a number of innocent people were shot at a demonstration in Tashkent for the joy of autonomy, and that the Bolsheviks, unable to achieve their goals, spread various incitements to create opposition among Muslims, but he claims that Muslims who understood the Bolsheviks’ identity did not support them.

“Let’s see what happens now! What do the Marxists think of this congress? What do they think? In any event, the Bolsheviks were not alone. We suspect they will find a way to disrupt our serenity. Because the actual terms of these have not yet been established. That is why we must be prepared in case this occurs. Let us pool our resources. Let us be willing to give up our possessions and lives to protect our freedom and independence”.

Regrettably, the unity and coherence that Haji Muin desired did not exist. This was evident in Turkestan’s stance toward independence. In his post titled “On the Protest”, Haji Muin laments this separation [8]. On the occasion of “Turkistan local autonomy”, members of the “Ittifaq” society in Samarkand, like those in other towns, planned to demonstrate and dispatch people to the “Shuroi Islam” society. However, the “Shurai Islam” society opposes this work and refuses to demonstrate it. Haji Muin feels this is due to one of three factors:

1. Cowardice;
2. Failure to understand autonomy;
3. Do not believe in the emergence of autonomy.

Haji Muin, like other modern intellectuals, hoped for the peaceful maintenance of autonomy. Haji Muin concurred with Mahmudhoja Behbudi when he declared, “...today we are providing a prophecy to the people who are content with their life, that autonomy will be settled with peace” [9]. At the same time, modern thinkers, perceiving the Bolshevik threat, worked hard to unite the masses.

Regrettably, not long after, Turkestan’s self-sacrificing offspring gave up their money and lives for the Mukhtariyat. Haji Muin’s aforementioned publications were among the “papers” that threw a shadow over his later life during the Shura period.

Power shifted from the old colonialists to the new ones. In Turkestan, the Bolsheviks declared Soviet-style “proletarian autonomy” and actively publicized its benefits. Newspapers, the most essential tool, were formed in this manner. Haji Muin began working for the newspaper “Mehnatkashlar tovushi”, a magazine of the Samarkand Shura government. According to the articles in this journal, Haji Muin and his comrades-in-arms had altered their minds about the Bolsheviks. In one of his pieces, Haji Muin’s professional buddy Saidrizo Alizoda stated, “The Shura government has ended its destructive time and entered its constructive period, and now it has entered the country’s progress and prosperity, and the working and impoverished people”. He writes that the moment has arrived for him to start keeping his promises. The fact that journalists like Saidrizo Alizoda and Haji Muin continued to work selflessly even during the Shura era shows that their expectations for the future have not evaporated and that they have begun to have faith in the new leadership.

Haji Muin argued in his article “What Do We Need?” that in order to protect the power of the poor, “military factions” should be formed, with these factions made up of Turkish lads from Turkestan. According to the publicist, to develop these military formations, first and foremost, school and education, which is the mother of culture, were required. It would be suitable if youngsters were recruited into the army after awakening a sense of patriotism. Yet time moves so quickly that it cannot wait. He claims that a soldier is required to safeguard treasured freedom and the country.

Haji Muin’s confidence in the Shura government was neither hailed or lavishly praised. His huge and little writings and messages published in the “Mehnatkashlar tovushi” newspaper, which is a publication of this government, are about the hardship of the people and looting, and they are unquestionably tied to a government event or the wrongfulness of this event. Implementation is recommended. Particularly, the notes signed by “Haqqani” paint a vivid picture of the sociopolitical climate of the period before our eyes. It is intriguing that he addressed the government more than the people in his communications, informing the government of the misery of the people and urging them to take action. For example, such messages and correspondence as “Sholi yo‘q”, “Mehnatkashlar holindan”, “Non”, “Achchig‘ un” are among them. In the report “Mehnatkashlar holindan” it is said that the goods of the village marketers are being confiscated by the Shura authorities, and as a result of this, the peasants who sell their products to them are left in a “difficult living situation”, the author appeals to the government: “If the current the government is a supporter of the poor people or the poor people are the rulers, it is necessary always to show the ways of benefiting the poor people and avoid actions harmful to their profession”.

By 1921, Haji Muin’s faith and hopes in the Shura government had been dashed. His piece titled “Word, Decision, and Work” was composed in a state of discontent with the administration, with pointed conclusions. In the piece, the publicist posed the question, “What was done during the three-and-a-half-year revolution in Turkestan for the education and cultural advancement of the oppressed population?” [10] asks a question and responds with sorrow “While this is a difficult question, we cannot find a more accurate response than the bottom words. Numerous speeches, rallies, and campaigns were held throughout this revolutionary period of three and a half years. In addition, really advanced, sound judgments have been taken, but little to no work has been accomplished. The pompous and haughty deeds have not yet been performed. The advancement of the people, the peace, and the strengthening of the country: education, military, economic, and agricultural activity will be harmonized; yet, in these areas, it is still useful and beneficial for the people. Do not perform actions for the sake of showing off”.

In this article, Haji Muin discusses education, soldiering, the economy, agriculture, and language. Because he is aware that the development of these five factors is necessary to strengthen the state and elevate the nation. During the newly constituted Shura government, he wrote numerous times about this. In this piece, he states that he does not observe any change or growth. The Soviet government’s promise of a “revolution” in educational issues has not yet been accomplished.

In conclusion of the piece, "...we are still in the "words" and "decisions" period, and during this three-and-a-half-year revolution, we were unable to do anything substantial or constructive other than issue orders and make decisions, and we began our work in peace. We were unable to do it. Now we are tired of meaningless words and ineffective decisions "He reached a conclusion. This article's criticism was one of the primary reasons for his resignation as editor. The report indicates that by 1921, Haji Muin's confidence and expectations in the governance of the Shura had diminished, and his unhappiness with the government had grown. Following his imprisonment from 1929 to 1932, the publicist barely contributed to his press publications. The poem "I Believe" was published in the newspaper he ran, Kyzil Syztan, as "evidence of his devotion" for the party and its "geniuses".

The party, however, did not accept his "repentance". Along with other intellectuals, Haji Muin was jailed in 1937. He was condemned to ten years in prison in 1938. Without liberty, he fell ill and died away from his birthplace.

In summary, Haji Muin appeared to be a selfless nationalist who considered the interests of the people regardless of the regime he lived under or the field in which he worked.

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