

Political Endeavors of Mustafa Shokay and Ahmed Zaki Validii in Turkestan's Landscape

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Abstract: In this article, the fact that Mustafa Shokay and Ahmed Zaki Validii are well-known state and public figures and consistent fighters for the independence of the people of Turkestan is widely covered.

1 INTRODUCTION

Two notable representatives of the Turkic peoples, Mustafa Shokay (1890-1941) and Ahmed Zaki Validii (1890-1970), played significant roles in the political processes of the Turkestan region in 1917. Born in the same year and sharing similar ideologies, Shokay hailed from a Bashkir village in present-day Bashkortostan, while Validii was born into a noble Kipchak family. Both individuals, being of the same age and like-minded, migrated to Tashkent, the political and economic center of the Turkestan region during that period (Chokay, 1992a)

2 METHODS

The article employs scientific research methods, including historicity, principles of systematization, and a civilizational approach to the problem. It utilizes comparative and chronological analyses to enhance its exploration of the subject.

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Mustafa Shokay, a well-known state and public figure and a consistent advocate for the independence of the Turkic peoples, was born on December 25, 1890 (or January 7, 1891, according to a new calculation) in Avliyotarang'il Ovul, Perovsk District, Syr Darya Oblast, in the village of Narshok, as per some sources (Sadykova, 2004). His father, the son of Shokaybey Torgay dodkhoh, served as the head of a bolis

(volost), belonging to the nobles of the Kypchak clan of Kazakhs, while his mother's ancestors were traced back to the Khans of Khiva. Mustafa Shokay identified himself as a Kipchak in his biography.

Mustafa Shokay received his primary education in Okmachit and later attended the men's gymnasium in Tashkent from 1902 to 1910. He graduated from the Faculty of Law at St. Petersburg University in 1914. Notably, Alexander Kerensky (1881-1970), who would later become the Prime Minister of the Provisional Government in Russia, had graduated from the same educational institutions about ten years earlier, in 1899 and 1904. In 1916-1917, Mustafa Shokay served as a secretary and translator in the Muslim faction of the IV State Duma of Russia. Following the brutal suppression of the 1916 uprising in Turkestan, he, along with Kerensky, visited the ruins of the devastated cities in Turkestan, including Jizzakh (Rajabov, 2003)

The Central Asian uprising of 1916, known as the "workers' uprising," aimed against the colonial policy of the Russian Empire in the Turkestan region. Mustafa Shokay, in his later memoirs, reflected on the events in Turkestan in 1917 and the impact of the February revolution on the region's life. He expressed disappointment in the hope that the revolution would lead to the establishment of a national state but emphasized the importance of remembering their participation in the 1917 revolution (Chokay, 1992b).

Mustafa Shokay was in Petrograd, the capital of the Russian Empire, when the February Revolution of 1917 began. At that time, he represented Turkestan in the bureau under the Muslim faction of the Russian State Duma. He played a crucial role in providing information about Turkestan to Muslim representatives in the State Duma and documented

the events of the 1916 uprising. Shokay vividly described the victory of the February Revolution in Petrograd and the subsequent upheavals, which led to his return to Turkestan in April 1917.

Upon his return, Mustafa Shokay became actively involved in political processes in Turkestan. He founded and started publishing the newspapers "Birlik Tug'i" and "Свободный Туркестан" in Tashkent during the spring of 1917. At the First All-Turkestan Muslim Congress held in Tashkent on April 16-23, 1917, he chaired the establishment of the Central Council of Turkestan Muslims (Kraymussovet), also known as the National Center. Shokay participated in the First All-Kyrgyz [All-Kazakh] Sejd held in Orenburg in July 1917 and became a member of the Turkestan Committee of the Provisional Government from August 1917. After the Bolsheviks seized power in Tashkent, the National Center led by Mustafa Shokay relocated to Kokand in early November (Rajabov, 2021).

According to the "Ulug` Turkestan" newspaper, on July 15, 1917, Mustafa Chokai was nominated and elected as a member of the Turkestan Committee of the Provisional Government of Russia during the meetings of Tashkent city, Transcaspian, Fergana, and Syrdarya regions (Committee of Turkestan, 1917).

Ahmed Zaki Validii, another prominent state and public figure and a consistent advocate for the independence of the Turkic peoples, was born on December 10 (22), 1890, in the village of Kuzyanovo, Ilchik-Temirovsky district, Sterlitamak [Istarlitomak] uezd, Ufa province. His parents, both religious workers, were educated and proficient in several languages. Ahmed Zaki Validii, also known as Akhmatzaki Akhmetshakhovich Validov or Toghan in emigration and later in Turkey, played a crucial role as an orientalist and Turkic scholar.

In his memoirs written abroad, Ahmed Zaki Validii detailed his travels to Turkestan and Bukhara, particularly his stay in the Bukhara Emirate in the summer of 1914.

Similar to Mustafa Shokay, Ahmed Zaki Validii arrived in Tashkent in April 1917 and actively participated in the political processes of the country. He became the general secretary (Proceedings of the Convention, 1917) of the Muslim Council of Turkestan (Kraymussovet), established at the First Congress of All-Turkestan Muslims in April 1917. Validii also served as the editor of the "Kengash" newspaper, the official organ of the Council, and played a key role in the autonomy movement in Turkestan, consistently advocating for the unity and independence of the Turkic peoples.

As the editor of the "Kengash" newspaper, the press organ of the "Sho'roi Islam" society, Ahmed Zaki Validii mentioned in his memoirs that he wrote

most of the main articles published in the press organ (Validii, n.d.).

In order to provide a clearer understanding of the activities of national political forces in Turkestan, Validii categorized societies into three groups: class organizations, sectarian organizations, and general organizations. He emphasized the need for these organizations to have charters to maintain order. Validii also proposed the reform of various societies and organizations operating in Tashkent and other major cities of the Turkestan region.

Ahmed Zaki Validii served as secretary and chairman in several meetings of the Central Council of Turkestan Muslims held in June-July 1917. On June 27, 1917, he was accepted as the director of the organization and education department of the Central Council (Turkestan Central Council, 1917).

In the fall of 1917, Ahmed Zaki Validii left Tashkent and became one of the leaders of the government and national movement of Bashkortostan, assuming roles such as head of government and military inspector. When autonomy was restricted, he distanced himself from the Soviet state and the Bolsheviks, arriving in Bukhara in the fall of 1920.

4 CONCLUSIONS

In 1917, key figures among the Turkic peoples, such as Mustafa Shokay and Ahmed Zaki Validii, played pivotal roles in the political landscape of Turkestan. Tashkent, being the political and economic hub, witnessed the active involvement of these leaders in guiding Turkestan progressives. Together, these Turkic leaders spearheaded the fight for freedom and independence, initially against the Russian Empire and later against the Bolsheviks and Soviet Russia.

Alongside Mustafa Shokay and Ahmed Zaki Validii, other prominent figures like Munavvar Qori Abdurashidkhanov, Ubaydulla Khojaev, Abdulla Avloni in Tashkent, Obidjon Mahmudov in the Fergana Valley, Cholpon, Hamza, Mahmudhoja Behbudi in Samarkand, Fitrat, Fayzulla Khojaev, Abdulvahid Burkhanov, and Abdulkadir Muhitdinov in Khorezm, as well as Polvonniyoz Haji Yusupov and Bobohun Salimov in Khorezm, demonstrated courage in the struggle for the unity and independence of Turkestan and their people.

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