



The Robbery of the Hoja Ahmad Yassavi Complex by the Russian Colonials

Sadullayev Sanjar

Samarkand State Foreign Languages Institute
Teacher

ABSTRACT

Since the second half of the XIX century, not only the material but also the spiritual and cultural wealth of the Central Asian region, which was invaded by the Russian Empire, has been plundered by the colonialists. One of them is the famous Ahmad Yassavi complex (mausoleum-mosque) and its unique historical and cultural artifacts.

Keywords:

Empire, Mausoleum, Mosque, Candlestick, Turkestan, Governor-General, Archaeological Board, Hermitage Museum.

In the minds of the Uzbek people for a long time, Tsarist Russia, and later its successor, Soviet Russia, "brought culture" to Central Asia, and the "ignorant" and "backward" peoples of the region developed only after the Russian Empire established its rule here. was absorbed. However, it did not comment on the brutal nature of the economic policy pursued by the colonial regime. The colonialists plundered Central Asia not only economically but also culturally. More precisely, the centuries-old national and cultural riches of the peoples of Central Asia have been constantly looted.

One of such looted historical monuments is the mausoleum of Khoja Ahmad Yassavi in Turkestan. First of all, let's give the reader some information about the personality and mausoleum of A. Yassavi.

"Khoja Ahmad Yassavi, a future poet and religious leader, was born in Sayram in the middle of the 11th century in the family of Ibrahim ota. He was separated from his mother as a child and from his father when he was 7 years old. He is raised by his grandfather Arslonbob. When he reached puberty, he married Aisha, the daughter of Musa Sheikh, one of the caliphs of his father Sheikh Ibrahim.

... Ahmad first studied in Yassi, then went to Bukhara on the advice of his grandfather and studied at a madrasah. Here he was educated by Shaykh al-Islam, a teacher of jurisprudence, and Yusuf Hamadani, a scholar of mystical philosophy. A. Yassavi will continue his work in Bukhara for some time after the death of his teacher. ... Later he returned to Yassi and gained many followers and disciples. According to the narrations, when A. Yassavi reached the age of 63, that is, the age of the prophet, he entered the underworld, spent his life in prayer, riyadah in the way of God, and at the age of 125 or 133, between 1166-67 died"¹.

Since the date of Yassavi's death is set in the scientific literature as 1166-1167, there is almost no disagreement among scholars. But the answers to the question of when he was born and how long he lived are contradictory.

In this regard, I. Haqqul's book on A. Yassavi, published in 2001, "Ahmad Yassavi" puts forward the scientific views of several researchers. In particular, the scholar (referring to I. Haqqul) says, "The date of birth of A. Yassavi was indicated by Shahobiddin Yassavi as 1103. The Kazakh scholar S.

¹Hamidjon Homidi. Sufi scholars. - T.: «Sharq», 2004. 156-p.

Takiboyeva in her book marked it as 1105 years. According to linguist H. Nematova, Yassavi was born in 1197 AD. Some researchers say Yassavi lived to be 63 years old, while others believe he lived to be 73 and 85 years old.

Well-known Yassavi scholar Muhammad Fuad Kuprulizadeh said Yassavi lived to be 120 and died. Russian scientist V.A. Gordilevsky multiplied this number by another five years and says that Yassavi lived for 125 years. Of course, the Russian scholar in "Devoni Hikmat":

I did not receive any blessings or blessings from the people,

I didn't know I was one hundred and twenty-five.-

it is doubtful that he came to such a conclusion on the basis of his views. If we take the date of Yassavi's death as 1166 and take into account his confession, "I did not know I was one hundred and twenty-five," then Yassavi's date of birth is 1041 AD.

If we look at the history of mysticism, we can see that many great sheikhs and mystics lived much longer. Still, it's hard to believe that Yassavi's life lasted 125 years. "... In our opinion, the assumptions of scientists who estimated the life expectancy of A. Yassavi at 75-85 are close to reality, but such assumptions will remain until they are based on concrete documents and evidence"².

Eugene Skyler, an American researcher, doctor of science, diplomat, and traveler who traveled to Turkestan in the second half of the 19th century (1870-1876), wrote in his memoirs that the year of Yassavi's death was completely different, "... Died about 1120"³ noted. But in our opinion, it is even more ambiguous to say that the tourist died in 1120, because he used his approximate word here to express his opinion, to record the date of the sheikh's death.

A.Yassavi architectural complex (mausoleum, mosque complex) is located in Turkestan, Republic of Kazakhstan. "Initially, a

small mausoleum was built on the tomb of Khoja Ahmad Yassavi (12th century). Later, Amir Temur built a huge mausoleum complex, which he personally participated in the design of the building. ... Construction began immediately and began rapidly, but stopped after the death of A. Temur (1405)"⁴. According to historian D. Alimova, "the construction of the mausoleum of A. Yassavi began in December 1397 by the decree of A. Temur, and two years later was completed in late 1399"⁵. In his memoirs, Yu. Skyler also called the Yassavi mausoleum complex a mosque. In particular, he wrote in his memoirs, "The construction of this mosque was started by Timur in 1397, when he visited Turkestan (then called Yassi) and was waiting for his new bride Tokalkhanim"⁶. "... This mosque is one of the holiest places in Central Asia and has a high religious significance. Before the Russians took over the city, pilgrims from all walks of life, even khans and emirs, gathered here every quarter. ... The construction of the huge mosque called Hazrat was completed almost at the same time as Timur's death".

The first threat to the tomb of A. Yassavi by the Russian Empire was during the attack on the city of Turkestan on June 12, 1864, led by Colonel Veryovkin. The threat was that "the Russians aimed their cannons at the tomb of A. Yassavi and informed the people of the city that if they did not surrender, they would destroy the tomb"⁷.

After the surrender of the city, a group of religious leaders wrote a letter to Veryovkin, in which he denounced the Kokand khanate. So they open the city gates, declare their allegiance to any emperor, and send six requests to take this into account. "It is clear

⁴P.Zohidov. Yassavi complex // National encyclopedia of Uzbekistan. Volume 10. -T.: «National encyclopedia of Uzbekistan» DIN, 2005. 413-p.

⁵D.A.Alimova. The policy of plundering the national wealth of Uzbekistan by the dictatorial regime: the testimony and lessons of history (1865-1990). - T.: «Sharq», 2000. 353-p.

⁶Skayler Yujin. Turkestan: Travel records to Russian Turkestan, Kokand, Bukhara and Gulja. Translator: Z.A.Boboev. -T.: «O'zbekiston», 2019. 42-p.

⁷H.Ziyoev. The struggle against Russian aggression and domination in Turkestan (early XVIII-early XX centuries). - T.: «Sharq», 1998. 127-p.

²Ibrahim Haqqul. Ahmad Yassavi. - T.: «G'afur G'ulom», 2001. 4-5-p.

³Skayler Yujin. Turkestan: Travel records to Russian Turkestan, Kokand, Bukhara and Gulja. Translator: Z.A.Boboev. -T.: «O'zbekiston», 2019. 42-p.

that a group of religious leaders have focused on maintaining their privileges," he said. They were so ignorant that they preferred to live in the hands of "infidels" while being in Islam. If the privileges are reserved for them. In fact, they were "saved from the rain and caught in the snow"⁸.

However, when the Russian Empire occupied the city of Turkestan, they did not get tired of plundering not only the material wealth of the mausoleum, but also its rich historical and cultural riches. For example, "the great scholar not only plundered the mausoleum of A. Yassavi, the sacred objects inside the building of the mosque next to it, the cast gold form on the walls, but also prayed in Christianity at the holy shrine of the Muslims. It is known that the colonists soon demolished the mausoleum of Robiya Sultanbegim, which was erected in front of the mausoleum, and built a house and a barracks out of bricks"⁹.

He also "advised the chairman of the Imperial Archaeological Board to bring the valuable works of art to the Hermitage of the Russian Emperor"¹⁰.

Count A. Bobrinsky, Chairman of the Imperial Archaeological Board, wrote

in a letter to NI Grodekov, Acting Governor-General of Turkestan, on December 14, 1906: when I reported, I had to report that part of one of the bronze candlesticks donated by A. Temur had been stolen and, in addition, that foreigners were trying to take the candlesticks to museums in foreign countries. His Excellency expressed his opinion that these monuments should be the decoration of Russian museums and, above all, the Imperial Hermitage"¹¹.

After a reply letter from the Governor-General of Turkestan on June 30, 1907, it

⁸ H. Ziyoev. The struggle against Russian aggression and domination in Turkestan (early XVIII-early XX centuries). - T.: «Sharq», 1998. 130-p.

⁹ H. Sodiqov, N. Jo'rayev. History of Uzbekistan: (Turkestan during the Tsarist period) Book 1. - T.: «Sharq», 2011. 254-p.

¹⁰ D.A. Alimova. The policy of plundering the national wealth of Uzbekistan by the dictatorial regime: the testimony and lessons of history (1865-1990). - T.: «Sharq», 2000. 353-p.

¹¹ MDA Uzbekistan, Fund 1, List 12, Case 828, page 27.

became clear that it was not possible to hand over the candlesticks. However, on January 24, 1908, the board wrote a letter to the governor-general proposing that the candlesticks pull out from the A. Yassavi mosque and that compulsory punishment be imposed¹².

Based on this reply, the Governor-General of Turkestan wrote a reply letter to the Chairman of the Archaeological Board on February 15, 1908. As for the content of the reply letter, the governor-general's reply letter states that the imposition of punitive measures will lead to an uprising of the local Muslim population.

However, the Imperial Archaeological Committee decided to take the candlesticks in a different way. In 1912-1915, four candlesticks were taken out of the mausoleum under the pretext of studying and researching them. The fifth candlestick was not sent to St. Petersburg. When the archeological commission asked to send the last candlestick, the Turkestan precinct officer reported that the candlestick, mentioned on October 30, 1915, was not in place at all¹³. The missing candlestick has not been found or there is no information about its discovery. The Tashkent Archaeological Amateur Circle conducted a search. The February Revolution of 1917, followed by the October coup, led to a civil war in Russia. Perhaps the search for a candlestick was forgotten during the turmoil.

During the reign of Tsarist Russia's successor, Soviet Russia, the looting of A. Yassavi's mausoleum continued. During the Soviet era, the sheikhs of the mausoleum were persecuted, and the mausoleum, a historical monument, was neglected and turned into a ruin. In particular, the stove and candles were neglected. But the former

Soviet state used these monuments when necessary for its own benefit.

A huge stomach and a pair of candlesticks dedicated to the mausoleum of A. Temur were temporarily removed by the government in

¹² MDA Uzbekistan, Fund 1, List 12, Case 828, pages 71-72.

¹³ D.A. Alimova. The policy of plundering the national wealth of Uzbekistan by the dictatorial regime: the testimony and lessons of history (1865-1990). - T.: «Sharq», 2000. 359-p.

1936 in Leningrad (St. Petersburg) for display at the third international conference on Iranian handicrafts and archeological research. They wanted to seize it temporarily and make it the property of the Hermitage. However, at the demand of the local people, in June 1989, the stomach was returned to the tomb of A. Yassavi. ... The stomach has found its original place. But the two luxury and beautiful candlesticks that were temporarily taken away were not returned from the Hermitage¹⁴.

Drawing on the past, we must "preserve the historical and cultural monuments of Central Asia as the apple of our eye." However, some recent negative developments in the history of historical sites in the Republic of Uzbekistan certainly make us think. In particular, the site of the archeological monument in Parkent district of Tashkent region was sold for the production of bricks¹⁵, Transformation of the territory of the Chor Minor madrasah in Bukhara into a sheepfold¹⁶, The collapse of part of the Dishan fortress, an architectural monument in Khorezm¹⁷, Demolition of the wall of the Kampirtepa monument in the Surkhandarya region, known as the Oxus Alexandria¹⁸ and the collapse of part of the wall of the 16th-century Abdullakhan Madrasah in Bukhara¹⁹ and so on. Isn't it all due to our carelessness and irresponsibility for historical and cultural riches?

Let's draw conclusions from our history and be more responsible for our historical objects and pass them on to the next generation without any damage. After all, history and the past are not studied for the sake of pride.

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¹⁴ D.A.Alimova. The policy of plundering the national wealth of Uzbekistan by the dictatorial regime: the testimony and lessons of history (1865-1990). - T.: «Sharq», 2000. 361-362-p.

¹⁵ daryo.uz site. 02.02.2022.

¹⁶ daryo.uz site. 28.01.2022.

¹⁷ daryo.uz site. 24.02.2022.

¹⁸ daryo.uz site. 11.12.2020.

¹⁹ daryo.uz site. 03.08.2021.

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