

THE IMPERIALIST REVOLUTION IN BUKHARA

Muhammadjon Shakuri Bukhara'i

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| The last book by the **eminent** scholar Academician Muhammadjon Shakuri Bukhara'i (1926–2012), *The Imperialist Revolution in Bukhara* represents a new look at the contradictory, crucial, and destructive events that took place at the beginning of the 20th century. Based on published and archival documents, valuably enhanced by his own reminiscences and experiences, it endeavours to break stereotypical thinking about what is known as the Bukharan revolution of 1920 and events that followed.

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A PAINFUL AND BITTER STORY FROM A NOT-SO-DISTANT PAST

Some time ago, our interpretation of the recent events of our history was that of a brilliant page of the Tajik people's past and our ancestor's lives were considered to be a period of darkness and gloom. On the one hand, we were proud and boasted about our great peoples' services and hardships. On the other hand, however, we threw stones of disdain at them. All of the achievements and successes are considered to be due to the remuneration of the October Revolution and the prosperity of the Soviet era, which, in fact, brought forth significant progress and changes in the social life of the Tajik people. After a millennium of statelessness, history granted us an independent state and established a state by the name of Tajikistan on the map of the world. It laid a solid foundation for the revival and development of our science and education, and our ancient literature and culture that our grateful people never forget and scholars working in various fields always speak about in their works.

An opportunity to cast a fresh, new glance appeared in our history upon gaining independence and caused us to speak not only about our gains, but also about our losses during the Soviet period. Furthermore, it allowed us to recall the flaws and shortcomings of our not-so-distant past and to ask, "What is the value of all these achievements?"

Academician Muhammadjon Shakuri Bukhara'i is one of the first scholars who regularly discussed this issue in his writings during recent years and who tried to find an answer to those still unanswered questions. He published a book every year following the independence, and those provide a new look at important issues of the Tajik people's science, education, literature, culture, and history. Every one of them is a painful story about history, particularly during the last one hundred or two hundred years. Again, in 1997, in his book *This is Horasan*, he deliberated about important issues such as intellectual values and national revival, cultural essence during the era of globalization, independence, and the social and moral self-consciousness of the Tajik people that our famous poet Loiq in "Entry into the World of this Book" emphasized with his unique emotion and a rapture, as well as a subtle opinion:

Oh, if we knew all of these. If we thought highly about the deep agonies and valiant actions of Ahmad Donish! If we appreciated greatly the heroism of Allomah¹ Sadriddin Ayni, who calls the Tajik people “a great nation” and proves their standing through his scholarly research and singular poetry and prose! After him, until today, we have not added any greatness to the grandeur of this people. Muhammadjon Shakuri courageously and reasonably took every effort to write the book that you hold in your hands. But, because in the course of over three thousand years our nation did not learn sufficient or ample lessons from the mythologies of ancient Iran, the Avesta, the Koran, or from all of the books on philosophy, records of war, poetry and prose, scientific and historical works, or it forgot them, or did not apply them, and sometimes its progress regressed, because of that lacuna, Shakuri felt the need to write this kind of a book .

Shakuri, a generous and virtuous man, is one of the selfless persons in the field of Tajik civilization and culture who saw with his own eyes the burning of books, the curling smoke of the conflagration (namely, the painful sigh of the Tajik people!), the plundering of the libraries of Bukhara, including the library of his father Sharifjon Makhdum Sadri Ziyò where Sadriddin Ayni had breathed “the dust of an inn” during seventy years of his life and fifty years of writing and suffering from hearing the laudatory words of rulers high and low. He saw the unprincipled nature of the people and the times with his own eyes, and the Tajiks of Bukhara officially becoming Uzbeks. He felt the humiliation of every syllable, every word, and every phrase of the Tajik language, and in the book *Every Word has its Place and Every Point has its Position* expressed his intention to purify the language and clarify writing with the tip of his pen. He is a man whom I believe clenched his teeth, breathed the lantern’s smoke, and while composing the present book burned within himself over every sentence, every phrase, every thought, and every point, and, again, went on to continue another sentence, another hypothesis or opinion, and like the Phoenix from its ashes, he rose to life again and strove to fly to the space of a higher subject and purpose. He is a man who cut from the day and sewed it to the night and made his nights longer and broader out of the cloak of his patriotic and cultural thoughts. He is a man who seems born to burn, to burn only for the benefit of the people, the homeland, the word, intellectual values, identity, spirituality, that is, entirely for the integrity and unity of his lost and unknown nation. He is a man who today is stand-

¹ Said Nafisi was the first to call him *Allomah* Sadriddin Ayni (the learned Sadriddin Ayni) in his article “The Pure Country of My Ancestors.”

ing firm as a rock in our culturally purposeless and colourless environment. He is a man who goes to work and returns home walking through the dirty, barren streets of today's Dushanbe with a cast down head, but with a sack full of high thoughts and dignity, and who says in his heart, "I have a God too!" He is a man who sees beggars for bread in the street who extend their hands toward him, but the spiritually indigent request nothing from him and do not even know that they are poor in spirit. He is a man who believes in the perfection of the national faith, courage, dignity, self-awareness, self-consciousness, and in those of his nation who raise their heads to heaven. He still has faith in the connection between nations with common roots and their three-part language. After the world famous morals and instructions given by Rudaki, Ferdowsi, Mawlavi, Sa'di, Hafiz, Ahmad Donish, and others, he also admonishes his people, you, and me to be our own masters. It is as if he is reciting this simple verse to me:

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Once you are not the master of your own language,
You will not become the master of your own
world!²

He is a man who always considers the sun as proof of the sun and repeatedly calls us to return to the shining residence of coming back to the Self. He wants to return the lost water to the stream, and he repeatedly emphasizes that if we fall from the horse, we should not fall from our origin...."

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What interesting discoveries our great poet has made! We see that even today, on the eve of his 85th year, and having gradually placed the nation's pains and sufferings on paper while using his small and large microscopes to spy on history's pages, Shakuri has warned us not to be ignorant of history's games. "Long after the demise of the Samanid state and over the course of centuries, the Turks and Mongols conquered the Tajik people and oppressed them. The Tajik people have lost an enormous amount in lives and material. The Mongol conquest was a campaign for killing Tajiks. That 'campaign' continued through Timur's reign and after the fifteenth century.

The Turks physically annihilated the Tajiks. After the breakup of the Samanid state, the physical extermination of the Tajiks continued for a thousand years. But they were not able to exterminate the Tajiks. The Tajiks became hardened and capable of tremendous endurance in those struggles and despite suffering losses in manpower and material, whatever happened,

² Loiq's unpublished verse.

they succeeded in preserving themselves with inner power and complete cultural advantage.”

How well Shakuri learned that, “After Russia occupied Central Asia, the transformation of the Tajiks into Turks has intensified”. The scholar V. V. Barthold stated that, “Only after the arrival of the Russians did the process of transforming people into Turks make major progress in Samarkand”. (Here, undoubtedly, not only Samarkand itself is meant, but its surroundings, namely the area Samarkand referred to, because today, at the outset of the twenty-first century, the overwhelming majority of the people residing in Samarkand and some of its vicinities are Tajiks and speak the Tajik language.)

At the end of the nineteenth century, the process of transforming the Tajiks into a Turks reached Zarafshan...”.

According to the author’s view, in those days the process of transforming the Tajiks into a Turkic people in the Emirate of Bukhara was relatively weak when compared to that of Tashkent and the Fergana Valley. But “with the invasion of 1920, the Bolsheviks facilitated the accession of the pan-Turkists to power. From 1918–1920, pan-Turkism in Central Asia has evolved into pan-Uzbekism, and pan-Uzbekism remains the most aggressive branch of pan-Turkism. The leader of the pan-Turkists and pan-Uzbekists in Bukhara was Fayzulloh Khojaev, who became the first to ignore the existence of the Tajik people, considered the Tajiks an Uzbek tribe, claimed that there were no Tajiks living in the Emirate of Bukhara and that its entire population were Uzbeks.

That claim made by Fayzulloh Khojaev and his pan-Turkist followers was undoubtedly far from the historical reality. The overwhelming majority of the people inhabiting the Emirate of Bukhara were Tajiks, not Uzbeks”.

In his book, *The Imperialist Revolution in Bukhara*, the scholar Muhammadjon Shakuri Bukhara’i carefully researched the reasons for the permutations of the Emirate of Bukhara that we call a revolution and the distancing of the Tajik language from the height of power in the cradle of the Aryan civilization, and he reached the conclusion that,

From ancient times, at least from the time of the Samanid dynasty, which was the time of the formation of New Persian, Bukhara passed nights watching over the cradle of this language and cared for the Dari pearl like the pupil of the eye until it became the language of our time. The Bolshevik and pan-Turkist occupiers wanted to eliminate the Tajik-Persian language in its birthplace, Bukhara. Pursuing that aim, they forced the Tajik language out of schools, the press, publications, and government institutions. Anyone who spoke Tajik in any agencies was fined. Everyone who hoped to live had to call himself an Uzbek and register as an Uzbek.

That is why the spiritual annihilation of the Tajiks after the revolutions from 1917 to 1920 suddenly expanded endlessly until it reached Bukhara and encompassed the entire country.

The Tajiks suffered a great deal of loss from the Revolution. With the Revolution, the denial of the existence of the Tajik people took on an official colouring and became a part of the state policy. A newly established Soviet state in Bukhara pursued a policy of genocide towards the Tajiks. It sought to obliterate the Tajik language and the Tajik people, and it has achieved that to a great extent.

Playing an important role, the new book of Muhammadjon Shakuri Bukhara'i, *The Imperialist Revolution in Bukhara*, not only changes our views about the past by looking for opinions and viewpoints and breaking through very limited, deficient, and incomplete thoughts about the not-so-distant history of our people and country while stating conclusive figures and evidence as if the territorial division of Central Asia took place this way through the fault of several treacherous countrymen, but it also guides us to look at the modern world's events and incidents with exemplary conduct. "Moscow, which intervenes in all the affairs of the government of Bukhara, even in the smallest policy issues of that government, did not exert any influence on the issue of the Tajik people. The Bukharan government was unable to step forward without a signal or recommendation from high officials in Moscow and Tashkent on any issue other than those related to the Tajik people". On the issue of the Tajik people, the government of Bukhara was free and independent.

We emphatically stress that the Bolshevik government in Moscow did not admit the existence of the Tajik people, or it did not want to consider it.

One can say that the failure to take the existence of the Tajik people into consideration began with writing by V. I. Lenin. Because the representatives of the Turk tribes in Central Asia persistently wanted autonomy and independence, on 13 June 1920 Lenin ordered that, "The maps (ethnographic and others) of Turkestan, should be made with divisions into *Uzbekiya* [Uzbekistan], *Kyrgyziya* [Kirgizstan], and *Turkmaniya* [Turkmenistan]".

As we can see, no indication can be seen here that the Tajik people also reside in Turkestan and that they too should be granted autonomy.

Our grateful people proudly remember Stalin's telegram on the occasion of the establishment of the Republic of Tajikistan and his high appreciation for the Tajik people's role in Central Asian history. The people do not know, or do not want to know, that Stalin resolutely ignored G. Chicherin's plan beneficial to the Tajik people. "It did not matter for Stalin whether

he was the Peoples' Commissar of Nations or the Party's Secretary General. In those times, all news came to him, and it was not possible for him to remain ignorant. In particular, when Stalin decisively denied G. Chicherin's plan for the Tajik people related to the territorial division of Central Asia and suggested a project disastrous for the Tajiks, it became completely obvious that Stalin had ill-intentions toward the Tajiks".

Shakuri found the primary reason for that attitude in the strong Islamic culture of the Tajik people. That conflict has become more widespread in the modern world, and the superpowers want to strike a blow against the possessors of that culture by any means and under any excuse. The struggle against Islam and Muslims was one of the main aspects of policy of Tsarist Russia. Namely, it was a policy against the Tajiks. The division of the Tajiks into sections took place after the occupation of Central Asia by Tsarist Russia, and it subordinated some of the areas and centres inhabited by the Tajiks to the governorship-general of Turkestan. It even delegated the water of the Zarafshan River to Bukhara. But the self-indulgent Emirs of Bukhara were busy with debaucheries instead of resolving the problem and pretended that there were no difficulties at all in the Emirate. Our truthful and honest writer Ahmad Makhdum Donish understood the circumstances of those times very well:

Another situation that emir Muzaffar brought about regarding provincial governance were gatherings (*ughur*), dancing by children, and the utterances and poems of jesters and their rope-walking. That lifestyle was taking place throughout the entire territory all year round. The sound of flutes and drums could be heard everywhere day and night so that the people would not talk about any news or rumours. All were engaged in similar kinds of buffoonery, and the people believed that everywhere was calm and all disorders and intrigues had died down. If there were any incidences around the country, it would not have been possible for the Emir to be so confident and to arrange such merriment, to the extent that the people of the cities died from the lack of water and sometimes passed away from high price(s). The sound of the flute, drum, and trumpet was loud, dancers were dancing and singing, and rope-walkers were turning somersaults on their ropes.

Ayni described the situation in the Emirate of Bukhara during the reign of Emir Abdulahad and wrote that, if the Bukhara Emirate was deprived of its true independence after the Zirabul¹aq war and peace with Russia, it went under the Russian protectorate preserving autonomy in internal affairs and formal independence. "Even more rights were ceded to Russia under Abdulahad's government".

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The Russian government considered itself the ruler of Bukhara in all respects, and the Emir's government carried out every order and request of the Governor General of Turkestan implicitly without any pretence or delay. Having had his own doubts about the Emirate of Bukhara's independence, Ayni wrote that, "This dead body is not worth crying over".

The atheistic Bolsheviks continued this struggle with intensity and, as emphasized by Muhammadjon Shakuri, "They wanted to first take the major historical and cultural centres out of the hands of the Tajiks, deprive the Tajiks of their most powerful areas of spiritual existence, and dry up the source of their spiritual and religious influence. They only wanted that a part of this great people who had created civilization to live weak and backward in distant mountainous locales incapable of holding their heads up".

Looking at the events at the end of the last decade, we can explore the continuation of that same policy of exploiting the simplicity, gullibility and discord in the nation. They again began to instigate, and several proud and careerist military servants began to serve their old masters again, scattered the people, and made their government incompetent. The last decade's treason, too, was not less than the treason of the first decade of the 20th century that had weakened and subdued our newly independent state. Until today, we have been unable to come to our senses.

Devotion, heroic deeds, selflessness, and the courage of the wise children of the nation for the protection of the national interests and the treason of several persons for the sake of posts and positions are also brought onto the pages of *The Imperialist Revolution in Bukhara*, and each one of them is exemplary.

The remainder rests upon the judgment of the intelligent and respected reader.

PAYVAND GULMURODZODA

THE SHADE AND LIGHT OF THE 'BUKHARAN REVOLUTION'

Muhammadjon Shakuri Bukhara'i, the author of *The Imperialist Revolution in Bukhara*, is a Full Member of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Tajikistan and the Academy of the Persian Language and Literature of the Islamic Republic of Iran, a winner of the Rudaki State Prize of Tajikistan and of the *Eternal Figure Award* of Iran. This book was written in 2006–2007 and was first serialized in the Tajik weekly *Ozodagon* in 2008. Its two editions were published in Dushanbe in Tajik in 2010 and 2012. For this latest edition, the author has revised the text and made important additions. These Russian and English translations are the first book of Shakuri to be published after his death.

The Imperialist Revolution in Bukhara is one of those fourteen major works of Muhammadjon Shakuri Bukhara'i published during the 21 years of the independence of Tajikistan, where he explores the pressing problems of the Tajik society, such as the social and spiritual self-discovery and self-consciousness, the national identity, the political identity, as well as the current state of the Tajik language, literature, culture and education. He explains his devotion to these problems by the fact that “the Civil War was engulfing Tajikistan, a fratricidal war that was driving the nation to self-destruction and the country, to devastation”³ while the “social consciousness of the people remains undeveloped whereas the regional allegiances grow stronger”.⁴ It is thus urgent to strengthen and develop the “national self-consciousness in the Tajik society as well as the philosophical and spiritual self-understanding of the newly formed Tajik state”, to promote “a balanced development of the social consciousness and self-discovery” and encourage “the national spiritual quest”.⁵

These problems are obviously in the realm of political studies, sociology, philosophy, linguistics, pedagogics and education, rather than literary criticism, the lifelong specialisation of Muhammadjon Shakuri Bukhara'i who devoted most of his

³ Muhammadjon Shakuri Bukhara'i, *Khuroson Ast In Jo* (This is Khorasan), 2nd ed., Dushanbe, 2009, p.3.

⁴ Muhammadjon Shakuri Bukhara'i, *Zindaginomai khudnavisht* (Autobiography), in: *Abarmardi Ilmu Farhang* (Personalities of Science and Culture), Dushanbe, Donish, 2006, p. 22.

⁵ *Khuroson Ast In Jo*, pp. 6–7.

life to the studies of modern literature, especially prose, and published a number of remarkable works, each of them widely considered to open a new page in modern Tajik scholarship.

Even though the author of *The Imperialist Revolution in Bukhara* demonstrates once more his invariable modesty declaring his limited abilities and noting that “I am not an expert in political and social studies and philosophy, but I do have some knowledge of the historical experience of the nation, and wish to present some of my thoughts on this subject”,⁶ no other Tajik scholar or intellectual, apart from him, was, in fact, capable of exploring these problems and had the relevant research experience and expertise.

Long before Tajikistan became independent, he had been working on “problems of Tajik-Persian language, especially its applied aspects and its usage in everyday life, which were of a significant sociological importance”,⁷ and summarised the results of his studies in a widely known book *Har Sukhan Joevu, Har Nukta Maqome Dorad* (Every Word Has Its Role and Every Point Has Its Place), which was first published in 1968 and has already had three later editions. He was in the team of scholars who spent nine years working on the major *Farhangi Zaboni Tojiki (az Asri 10 to Ibtidoi Asri 20)* [Lexicon of the Tajik Language (from the 10th to the Early 20th Centuries)] published in two volumes in Moscow (1969). Another everlasting contribution of Shakuri is his draft of the Language Law adopted by the Supreme Soviet of Tajikistan on 22 July 1989, which declared the Tajik Persian the state language. A philologist by education, he was the Head of the Terminology Committee of the Tajik Academy of Sciences from 1989 to 2000 and thus contributed to establishing the linguistic foundations of the Tajik terminology, which had become largely dysfunctional in the 20th century.

Even by the time of the independence of Tajikistan, Muhammadjon Shakuri Bukhara’i had done much of what should have been the subject of lexicographers, sociologists, political scientists, historians, philosophers and experts in culture, pedagogy and education. However, the so-called experts not only failed to rise to their social role, but, instead of supporting and promoting the ideas and initiatives of Shakuri, turned to attacking him with diatribes that contained rather absurd accusations. They remembered that he is the son of Sadri Ziyov who served the Emir of Bukhara as a judge, that he has changed his name from the Russified version Muhammad Shukurov to Muhammadjon Shakuri Bukhara’i – these must be the reasons, they asserted, for his lengthy discussions of the positive role of the

⁶ Muhammadjon Shakuri, *Istiqlol va Khudshinosii Ijtimo’ivu Ma’navi* (Independence and the Social and Spiritual Consciousness), Dushanbe, 1999, pp. 6–7.

⁷ Muhammadjon Shakuri Bukhara’i, Autobiography, p. 21.

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Jadids, the Bukharan Enlightenment activists, in particular of his father Sadri Ziyoy and other intellectuals of Bukhara, Samarkand and Khujand. He was accused of sowing the seeds of regional dissent by his negative appraisal, based on his father's opinion, of the historical roles of such natives of the Mountainous Bukhara as the Judge Burhannuddin, and so on and on.

As an incentive to write *The Imperialist Revolution in Bukhara*, the author identifies the articles of his son Rustam Shukurov 'What happened in Bukhara in September 1920?' and of the Moscow historian Alexander Krushelnitsky 'Dictatorship via telegraph' published in an issue of the *Sado-i Sharq* magazine devoted to the 70th anniversary of the Bukharan revolution (No. 9, 1990). As Shakuri writes (p. 1), Rustam Shukurov, "based on eyewitness accounts, including evidence from the Red Army pilots who bombed Bukhara for four days with eleven airplanes (published in the Russian press of those days), ... argued that these events, officially known as the Bukharan Popular Revolution, were in fact an invasion of the Red Army rather than a social revolution".

Interestingly, the author of *The Imperialist Revolution in Bukhara* had arrived to a similar conclusion from his own analysis of "Ayni's account of the events of 1900–1920's, particularly those in 1917–1920" (p. 1). On 3 September 1990, Shakuri presented a talk on 'Ayni and the revolution in Bukhara' at the annual Ayni Conference devoted to the anniversary of the Bukharan revolution.

The first four chapters of this book present a thorough analysis and interpretation of Ayni's account of the events of the first two decades of the 20th century, "where he was a witness" (p. 2).

Ayni's *The History of the Bukharan Revolution* solicited by the Education Inspectorate of the People's Soviet Republic of Bukhara (17 November 1920), based on Ayni's notes of 1918–1919, and his other works, bring Muhammadjon Shakuri Bukhara'i to the conclusion that "the internal political stress in Bukhara of the early twentieth century, which became especially intense in its second decade, was focussed on education and enlightenment" and that "the dominant activities of the Bukharan Jadids ... were the organisation of new-method ... schools, publishing newspapers *Bukhoro-i Sharif* (1912) and *Turon* (1912), etc.", to "prepare ground for social and political reforms"; the goal of Jadids were "reforms, which they hoped the Emir and his government would introduce with their help, to open ways to further development and spread the ideas of enlightenment" (p. 4).

Another interesting thought of the author of *The Imperialist Revolution in Bukhara* that arose from his analysis of Ayni's works and the practical activities of other educators such as Abdulvohid Munzim, is that "the Jadids were monarchists" (p. 4), and that "monarchism was deeply rooted in the minds of the reformers" (p. 5). This explains why they "remained true to

their monarchist aspirations” “even after the devastating events of April 1917 and the unsuccessful attempt of the armed annexation of the Bukharan Emirate by the Bolshevik expeditionary corps in March 1918 (the Kolesov Campaign), when any hope of reforms driven by the Emir and his conservative circle had been thwarted” (p. 6).

Muhammadjon Shakuri Bukhara’i demonstrates convincingly that “any social and political conditions that could possibly facilitate a Bolshevik revolution did not exist in Bukhara” (p. 7), and “the social awareness of the population and their ability to guard themselves against oppression were still low, well below the revolutionary level of consciousness” (p. 8). The author notes, “Ayni and his circle were not alone to appreciate this. This was clear to many foreign travellers, as well as to the Soviet authorities in Moscow and Turkestan. For example, V. V. Kuibyshev, one of the most hawkish representatives of Moscow in the Bolshevik Turkestan and the proponent of the immediate intervention of the Red Army in Bukhara, said on 25 June 1919, ‘The Bukharan masses have not matured to making a revolution, not only in the European meaning of the word, but even in its Oriental sense’” (p. 10). Still, this representative of the Russian authorities insisted that “in so far as the elimination of the despotic Bukhara is a vital necessity for the Soviet Turkestan, the Red Army forces are justified in overthrowing the Bukharan government under the screen of the Bukharan revolutionaries” (p. 10). Indeed, the life in Bukhara has been changed fundamentally “under the screen of the Bukharan revolutionaries” such as Fayzullo Khojaev and a handful of his opportunist and careerist followers ready to sell their people and Motherland to the invaders — but this was not a social revolution. The Bolsheviks were justifying their unlawful, inhuman actions by the “vital necessity” pursuing the interests of the new Bolshevik Empire, with the Red Army bayonets as the main instrument.

The history of the last 70–80 years has demonstrated that this was a fundamental part of the Bolshevik policy. A ‘vital necessity’ was further used in the 1920–30s to justify the classification and division of people into poor and rich, *basmachis* and freedom fighters, and then, in 1937, to denounce the intellectuals – patriots and inspirers of the nation – as ‘enemies of the people’ and to condemn them to Siberian prisons; and again when the Soviet Army invaded Afghanistan under the pretext of ‘international aid’. Eventually, these policies have destroyed the Soviet Empire itself, which has crumbled within days.

The author of *The Imperialist Revolution in Bukhara* is convinced that the principal objective of the Bolsheviks was not a social revolution and liberation of Tajiks and other nations, but rather the obliteration of “the Noble Bukhara, the cultural, religious, and political heart of my nation” (p. 10). This is illustrated by the bigoted boasting of the Soviet pilots about their barbaric aerial bombing of Bukhara: “We destroyed the ancient Emirate. ... We especially rejoiced when hitting the famous

‘Tower of Death,’ even if this target actually had no value. During the short breaks between the missions, we joked, ‘Holding the bomb, I see a mosque down below – banged it away, straight to the dome.’ We all guffawed” (p. 25).

However, as shown by Muhammadjon Shakuri Bukhara’i, Fayzulloh Khojaev and his supporters, “with lies, deception, and self-serving sedition” (p. 13), spent great effort “to convince the authorities of Soviet Turkestan and Moscow that Bukhara had been prepared for the revolution by the propaganda of the revolutionary Young Bukharans (the exiled Jadids), and if the Red Army began a military assault against Bukhara, the revolutionaries would rise up from inside Bukhara and overthrow the Emir” (p. 13). In his letter to V. I. Lenin, Fayzulloh Khojaev asserts that “revolution in Bukhara is becoming imminent” (p. 14). However, the truth was, writes Shakuri, that “the activities of the underground revolutionaries in 1918–1920, pompously advertised by Khojaev, did not have much effect and produced almost no results. ... It was rather Ayni who was right to say that there were no prerequisites for the revolution in Bukhara and that the propaganda of the revolutionary ideas among the population was a wasted effort” (p. 15).

Muhammadjon Shakuri Bukhara’i has also demonstrated how wrong was M. Frunze to assume that “the people of Bukhara have risen up against their oppressors”, also by quoting Frunze himself, who later admitted in his memoirs that “the absolute falsehood transpired of the assurances of the Bukharan revolutionaries that the population was ready for an uprising” (p. 18).

Having concluded that the Bukharan Jadids aspired to a ‘revolution of thought’ and ‘intellectual revolution’ rather than a social revolution, the author proposes that “the Jadids’ concept of revolution should nowadays be interpreted as that of a cultural revolution” (p. 7), and “the Jadid movement of the first two decades of the twentieth century, until April 1917, belongs to the history of the Tajik enlightenment” (p. 6). He suggests that “the social revolution became a new political objective in the programmes of some Bukharan Jadids only as late as in 1917–1918” (p. 6). This absolutely new idea is an accurate presentation of the political and cultural processes of that time.

The author of *The Imperialist Revolution in Bukhara* strives to explore thoroughly all aspects of the ‘Bukharan revolution’ – in what terms were the events described; what were their causes; the attitude of the Bukharan population to them; the true motives of the ‘Bukharan radical revolutionaries’ such as Fayzulloh Khojaev and his supporters; the attitude of Jadids towards, and their lot after the ‘revolution’; true designs and motives of V. V. Kuibyshev and M. V. Frunze, the representatives of the Bolshevik authorities; the looting of Bukhara by Russian soldiers and officers; the position of the Russian Bolshevik leaders, Lenin and Stalin; and, finally, the lives of true heroes, now forgotten. All this multitude of facts and views is

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presented and discussed carefully and insightfully, covering all their fundamental aspects. His detailed analysis involves all sources available today, including archive materials that have become accessible since the epoch of Gorbachev's *glasnost* and *perestroika*.

A large part of the book, central to its thrust, addresses the role of the Bolshevik pan-Turkist revolution in the historical destiny of Tajiks. This part is of extraordinary importance as it convincingly demonstrates the deep roots of the 'revolution.' Pursuing this goal, the author turns "to the previous centuries, to the history of a great tragedy of Mawarannahr" (p. 45). The catastrophe started in the early sixteenth century when the Shai-banid Uzbek tribes invaded Central Asia and the lands of Tajiks "became an arena of incessant raids of various nomadic tribes" (p. 45). Shakuri rightly identifies this tragedy as the cause of "an immense wave of Tajik migration", where "the populations of Bukhara, Samarkand, Dabbed and other places escaped to the mountainous regions of the present-day Tajikistan, to Afghanistan, India, Iran, and the Arab countries" (p. 47), resulting in the "spiritual annihilation" (p. 47), physical extermination (p. 47) and "Turkification" of Tajiks (p. 48).

The author of *The Imperialist Revolution in Bukhara* emphasizes that that tragedy of Tajiks was further aggravated by the Bolsheviks who not only occupied their land in 1920, but installed new rulers – pan-Turkists professing pan-Uzbekism, "the most aggressive form of pan-Turkism" (p. 50). Shakuri describes how "Fayzullo Khojaev, who became the leader of the pan-Turkists and pan-Uzbekists in Bukhara, ... denied the existence of the Tajik nation considering the Tajiks to be an Uzbek tribe, and claimed that there were no Tajiks among the populations of the Emirate of Bukhara – all were Uzbeks for him" (p. 50). Shakuri stresses that "the Pan-Turkists, supported in Bukhara by the Russian Bolsheviks, changed the language of instruction in schools to Uzbek, and Ayni bitterly notes that, 'At the beginning of the October Revolution, the Tajiks did not have a single Soviet school with instruction in their own language'" (p. 51). Solely by the unceasing effort of such valiant people as Abdurrahim Hojiboev, Abdulqodir Muhiddinov, Ahmadjon Hamdi, Abbos Aliev, Chinor Imomzoda, Shirinsho Shotemur, Nusratullo Makhsum Lutfulloev, the Tajiks have won their national state and relative independence.

Shakuri is convinced "that the leaders of Bolshevik Russia were aware of and supported the policy of genocide perpetrated by the government of the Bukharan Republic and the spiritual elimination of the Tajiks" (p. 54). Indeed, "the government of the People's Socialist Republic of Bukhara under the leadership of Fayzullo Khojaev was a puppet of Soviet Russia" and they "were not allowed taking any steps on any issue without suggestions and recommendations from the top leaders in Moscow and Tashkent, except on the issue of the Tajiks" (p. 54). The author suggests that "the disregard of the Tajik na-

tion started with a recommendation of V. I. Lenin” who ordered on 13 July 1920 that “maps (ethnographic and others) of Turkestan should be made with division into Uzbekiya, Kyrgyziya and Turkmaniya” (p. 54). This prompted the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party to conclude that “Turkestan’s indigenous peoples are the Uzbeks, the Kyrgyz and the Turkmens” (p. 54).

In his quest for the main causes of this state of affairs, unfortunate for the Tajiks – a deliberate disregard of the very existence of the Tajik nation despite the fact that “the Tajik people were one of the largest nationalities in Central Asia” (p. 55) – Shakuri supposes that representatives of the Russian Communist Party of Tatar and Bashkir ethnic origin played a role, such as Najib Husainov and Alimjon Akchurin. Thus, Husainov instructed Akchurin in May 1921 that “Our objective is to ensure that more than half of the Bukharan population are deemed to be Uzbeks, a small part Turkmens, and then the Iranians and Jews” (p. 55). The author reaches quite a justified conclusion that “the pan-Uzbekist plans of N. Husainov and A. Akchurin were finding support in Moscow as well” and “that Moscow too had a hand in the Uzbekification of the Tajiks and their spiritual extermination from the first days of the revolution” (p. 56).

Shakuri regrets that, despite further increase of tensions in the Tajik–Turk relations in 1924 and the efforts of such people as Abdurrahim Hojiboev, “Stalin’s plan damaging to the national interests of the Tajiks” was preferred, under Stalin’s pressure, to “Chicherin’s plan advantageous to the Tajik people” (p. 58). A few years ago Shakuri described this as “one of the greatest historical injustices to the Tajiks”.⁸ The author asks, “Why did not Stalin want in 1924 that Bukhara, Samarkand, Khujand and other cultural centres become a part of the Tajik Republic?”, to suggest that “the struggle against Islam and the Muslims was one of the main policies of the Tsarist Russia, and the atheist Bolsheviks continued that struggle with even more vigour. And now that the Tajiks were one of the nations in Central Asia strongly devoted to religion, they had spread Islam among the Turkic peoples living in the vicinity. For centuries they had a strong spiritual influence on those people” (p. 59). The objective of that policy of the Bolsheviks was “to release the Central Asian Turks from the spiritual influence of the Tajiks and to guide them toward spiritual impoverishment and atheism” (p. 60). It is not surprising then that the Bolsheviks’ protégé Fayzullo Khojaev was so much concerned with the fact that “old Arabic and Iranian culture have a stable abode in Bukhara” (p. 61).

⁸ Muhammadjon Shakuri Bukhara’i, *Tojikoni Farorhud dar ostonai asri umed* (The Tajiks of Mawarannahr at the Dawn of the Age of Hope), in: *Panturkism va Sarnavishti Ta’rikhii Tojikon* (Pan-Turkism and the Historical Fortune of Tajiks), Dushanbe, Adib, 2012, p. 296.

Although the arguments and logical conclusions, presented in *The Imperialist Revolution in Bukhara* to explain the deep roots of Stalin's position in establishing Tajikistan's borders that excluded Bukhara, Samarkand, Khujand and other valleys of Central Asia populated by Tajiks, are carefully justified, we think that another suggestion of the author is more plausible. He notes that, "if Stalin assisted the Tajiks and created a large, 'independent' Tajik republic, this would have provided the Tajiks an opportunity to gain strength, rise up, and, eventually, look towards their language kin who are in Afghanistan and Iran. The strengthening of the Tajiks could bring more of a threat to the Bolshevik empire than pan-Turkism. Therefore, it was necessary to keep the Tajiks weak and suppressed. This was one of the aspects of Stalin's policy concerning the Tajiks at the time of the administrative chopping up of Central Asia in 1924" (p. 62).

Some pan-Turkists and pan-Uzbekists, such as Fayzullo Khojaev, and others, like Ahmadjon Hamdi and Abduqodir Muhiddinov who became as disoriented as to share anti-Tajik sentiments, later admitted their delusions and injustices they helped to commit towards the Tajiks. Nevertheless, the Stalinist policy of suppression of the Tajiks is still to the fore despite radical political changes over many years that have passed since. This evokes a passage from an exceptionally valuable book of Muhammad Shakuri *Sadri Bukhoro* (2005), where he quotes a member of the Russian State Duma who expressed his concerns that the Tajiks, who represent a majority of the population of Tajikistan, Afghanistan and Uzbekistan, might "unite and thus pose a great threat to Russia".⁹

Summarising his extensive and deep study of the 'Bukharan revolution' based on reliable documents and various archive sources, Muhammadjon Shakuri Bukhara'i concludes that "Events known as the Bukharan revolution were, in fact, a pan-Turkist conquest of the Tajiks by Bolsheviks", "coup and commotion", "the tumult of the revolution" (p. 66), "the illegitimate child of history that came into the world as a consequence of a chain of domestic and foreign betrayals, treason towards the historical mission of enlightenment and supreme human ideals, and treachery towards the nation and the Motherland" (p. 63). As an honest and impartial researcher, the author faces up to the truth and confirms that "the turmoil of the Bukharan revolution" also provided benefits. As the primary positive result for the Tajik people, he mentions that the "Red Army, in its war against the Basmachis in the mountainous Eastern Bukhara, defeated anti-government Turkic tribal leaders and freed the local population from their oppression" (p. 64). Nevertheless, the author believes that the benefits of the 'revolution' "were mostly material, whereas the damage was all spiritual" (p. 64)

⁹ Muhammadjon Shakuri Bukhara'i, *Sadri Bukhoro* (Sadr of Bukhara), Dushanbe, 2005, p. 267.

because “the revolution released the Tajik people from the Manghit oppression, but only to force them into another submission. The revolution took the Tajik people out of the hands of the Manghits and committed them to the hands of the pan-Turkists. And it immediately became clear that the pan-Turkists were worse than the Manghits. The Manghits were exterminating us physically and tormenting us spiritually. The pan-Turkists undertook to exterminate us spiritually” (p. 64).

The author of *The Imperialist Revolution in Bukhara*, being fully aware that the problems discussed are highly sensitive and alive with orthodox ideas and delusions, weighs up his every thought striving to allow for all its aspects and shades, and only formulates his opinion when confident that it is consistent with everything known to him. He is rightfully scrupulous in striving to avoid that his words and writings may be used for their purposes by his partisan, fanatic opponents and dabblers, especially the “proponents of pan-Turkism and pan-Uzbekism”.¹⁰ Regrettably, he had ample first-hand experience of such misuse towards the end of his life: he was attacked openly and clandestinely, by individuals and groups.

The Imperialist Revolution in Bukhara, one of the most valuable writings of *Ustad* Muhammadjon Shakuri Bukhara’i, “explores momentous aspects of the modern history of the Tajiks of Mawarannahr and exposes the historical tragedy of this nation”.¹¹ The great Tajik poet Loiqli Sherali wrote in his preface to *This is Khorasan* that “this book is not only for now or for today – this is a book for today, for tomorrow and for many days to come”.¹² These words equally apply to *The Imperialist Revolution in Bukhara*.

Over the last years, my friends and I would, now and then, visit *Ustad* at his home, an attraction for people of the heart, often to leave with his new book. On the title page of *Sadri Bukhoro*, he addressed the following words to me: “To Professor Abdunnabi Sattorzoda – Alas! This Navruz present of mine is on one of the sorrows of the culture of the Tajik people. M. Shakuri, 22.III.2005”. Since that time and to his last day, despite his “old age and feebleness”,¹³ *Ustad* was doing all he could to express the sorrows of the Tajik culture, to “bring the nation to its senses”¹⁴ through his works, *Nigohe ba Adabiyoti Tojikii Sadai Bist* (A Glance at the Tajik Literature of the Twentieth Century, 2006), *Ravshangari Buzurg* (A Great Educator,

¹⁰ Muhammadjon Shakuri Bukhara’i, *Panturkism va Sarnavishti Ta’rikhii Tojikon* (Pan-Turkism and the Historical Fortune of Tajiks), Dushanbe, Adib, 2012, p. 17.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² Loiqli, *Vurude ba borgohi in kitob* (Entering the palace of this book), in: Muhammadjon Shakuri, *Khuroson Ast In Jo* (This is Khorasan), Dushanbe, 1997, p. 11.

¹³ *Khuroson Ast In Jo*, p. 3.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

2006), *Huviyati Farhanghi va Jahongaroi* (The Cultural Identity and Globalism, 2006–2007), and his last book *Panturkism va Sarnavishti Ta'rihi Tojikon* (Pan-Turkism and the Historical Fortune of Tajiks, 2012).

A merciless and indifferent death has not allowed *Ustad* Muhammadjon Shakuri Bukhara'i to leave this world in peace having finished his telling of the many unspoken sorrows of his beloved nation. He is without peer – he was “not just an adept of the national culture, but its holder and ambassador”¹⁵, knowledgeable of the bitter history of the Tajik nation with all its ups and downs, and courageously outspoken about them. I am confident that his achievements, his dear name and his matchless works will remain alive as long as the Tajik nation exists.

Muhammadjon Shakuri Bukhara'i (may he rest in peace) was, beyond doubt and without exaggeration, extraordinary and unusual, exceptional and peerless, a man of the humankind. A courteous and noble personality, he was at ease with people from all strata of the Tajik society, intellectuals and common people, clergy and working men, prominent writers and their readers. He had many students and followers, friends and acquaintances; he was deeply revered by many. He was welcoming to them whenever they needed him, without any appointment or invitation, either at work or at home. Putting aside his own business, he would engage his visitor in a conversation, offering advice and counsel with his distinctive grace and benevolence. I met most of them at his home on the day of his funeral, in tears of pain and sorrow over the loss of a dear and beloved person.

In his book *Sadri Bukhoro*, discussing the great role of Ahmad Donish and Sadridin Ayni in the history of the Tajik people, Shakuri wrote: “My view is that Ahmad Donish and Sadridin Ayni fully encapsulated the essence of their epochs with their own personalities, and thus brought the Tajik society to a higher level. Each of them became a spiritual leader of the progressive avant-garde of the society, a spiritual heart of the nation. In this sense, the 19th century is the age of Ahmad Donish in the history of the Tajiks of Mawarannahr, and the 20th century is the epoch of Sadridin Ayni”.¹⁶ Academician Muhammadjon Shakuri Bukhara'i is without doubt a truly befitting heir of these grantees of the Tajik nation in the 21st century.

Professor ABDUNNABI SATTORZODA
1 December 2012
Dushanbe, Tajikistan

¹⁵ Hoji Akbar Turajonzoda, Ziyoi Milli va Farhangi Milli (*The Intellectual of the Nation and the National Culture*), in: *Abarmardi Ilmu Farhang* (*The Outstanding Man of Scholarship and Culture*), Dushanbe, Donish, 2006, pp. 44–45.

¹⁶ *Sadri Bukhoro*, pp. 191–192.

TRANSLATOR'S FOREWORD TO THE ENGLISH EDITION

The original text of this book was published in 2010 in Dushanbe, entitled *Fitnai Inqilob dar Bukhoro* (*The Turmoil of the Bukharan Revolution*, or *The Revolutionary Tumult in Bukhara*, or *The Revolutionary Intrigue in Bukhara*). The change of the title for the Russian and English editions was approved by the author. The English translation has been slightly extended and amended to adapt the text to the background of the Western reader. In particular, the context, obvious to the Tajik reader, was at places briefly explained, and some background information provided. This edition also includes a selection of maps and illustrations. I took full advantage of my close kinship ties with the author to discuss all significant changes, and had them approved.

As in the Tajik original and unless specified otherwise, dates are given according to the Julian calendar which was in use in Russia until 1 March 1918, and according to the Gregorian calendar for the later dates (e.g., 7 April 1917 corresponds to 20 April 1917 according to the Gregorian calendar). Names are transliterated in the simplest form, avoiding the use of diacritics, and using the spelling adopted at the time of the events (thus, for example, *Khojaev* rather than *Khoja*). Place names are given in their modern English form, largely derived from Russian transliterations, rather than from Tajik originals (hence, *Bukhara*, *Kagan*, *Samarkand*, *Karshi* rather than *Bukhoro*, *Kogon*, *Samarqand*, *Qarshi*).

The translation contains a few footnotes introduced where there were reasons to believe that they add to the author's arguments, each identified as *Note to the English translation*. Although I have discussed most of them with the author, their content is my sole responsibility. **I translated Chapters 1–11, and B. Alizoda, Chapters 12–15.**

Dr James D. Clark of the American Institute of Iranian Studies and Dr Rustam Shukurov of the History Department of Moscow State University improved the text; their contribution is gratefully acknowledged. I am grateful to Kamol Obidov, Programs Director at OSI in Dushanbe, for his patience and help, and to Monica Whitlock (London) and Andrew Fletcher (University of Newcastle) for their generous help.

ANVAR SHUKUROV
April–December 2012
Newcastle upon Tyne, England

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CHAPTER 1

One of the events of the turbulent year of 1990 in the Soviet Union was the celebration of the 70th anniversary of the Bukharan revolution. On that occasion, the Tajik literary magazine *Sado-i Sharq* (The Voice of the East, No. 9) published several articles, including one by Rustam Shukurov (who happens to be the author's son), entitled "What happened in Bukhara in September 1920?" Based on eyewitness accounts, including evidence from the Red Army pilots who bombed Bukhara for four days with eleven airplanes (published in the Russian press of those days), he argued that these events, officially known as the Bukharan Popular Revolution, were in fact an invasion by the Red Army rather than a social revolution.

That issue of *Sado-i Sharq* also contains an article by the Moscow historian Alexander Krushelnitsky⁴¹ whose analysis of the events has a taste of sarcasm. The target of his sarcasm, fed by the materials that he found in Soviet archives and publications, is the official qualification of those events as a revolution.

A major programme of events was launched in Bukhara in September 1990 to celebrate the anniversary. The annual Ayni Conference of philologists and historians was organized there to coincide with the celebrations, and a large delegation of scholars travelled from Dushanbe in Tajikistan to Bukhara in Uzbekistan. Problems concerning the ethnic identity of the Tajik population of Bukhara (which is treated as an insignificant ethnic minority by the Uzbek authorities) were hotly debated, leading to a rather pointed discussion between some members of the Tajik delegation and the Bukharan officials. I was involved in that discussion alongside Muhammad Osimi, Jalol Ikromi, and Namoz Hotami. I will come back to this discussion later, but let us return to the Bukharan revolution for now. I presented a talk on 'Ayni and the revolution in Bukhara' which was published in the daily *Omuzgor* (The Teacher) in Dushanbe a few weeks later, on 25 September 1991. Based on Ayni's account of events in the 1900–1920's, particularly those in 1917–1920, I suggested that the dramatic events of late August and early September 1920 in Bukhara could hardly be considered a social revolution.

⁴¹ See also: A. Krushelnitsky, Dictatorship via telegraph. *Rodina*, 1989, No. 11, pp. 31–39.

CHAPTER 2

Sadriddin Ayni's works chronicle the crucial events of the first two decades of the twentieth century – some fateful, the others fatal – where he was a witness.

The Education Inspectorate of the People's Soviet Republic of Bukhara (PSRB) in its resolution of 17 November 1920 commissioned Abdurrauf Fitrat, Sadriddin Ayni and B. Solehov to compile an eyewitness historical account of the Bukharan revolution.⁴² Fitrat's work has never materialized. I am not aware of Solehov's contribution. Meanwhile, Sadriddin Ayni promptly started his work to write a book now known as *A History of the Bukhara Revolution*.

Ayni notes at the end of his book that the work began on “20 Raby` al-Thani 1339 A.H., or 31 December 1920”⁴³ and was completed on “23 March 1921 AD”. However, the latter is the date of the completion of the Uzbek text; the original text in Tajik had been written earlier.

In his article ‘My response’ (1933, a response to Bektosh), Ayni writes, “In fact, most of *A History of the Bukhara Revolution* I wrote in 1918–1919 in Tajik while in Samarkand”.⁴⁴ One of the Tajik versions of the text was completed in February 1918 as *A History of the Revolution of Thought in Bukhara*; a copy of this work has recently been found in the archives and published by Kamol Ayni, the son of Sadriddin Ayni.⁴⁵

A History of the Bukhara Revolution is based on Ayni's notes of 1918–1919. As he writes in the article ‘My response’, the Education Inspectorate requested that he translated the book into Uzbek. It was that text in Uzbek that Ayni completed in March 1921 and submitted to the Inspectorate. The publication was then delayed until 1926 when it was published in Moscow under the title *Bukhoro Inqilobi Ta'rikhi Uchun Materiallar* (Materials for a History of the Bukhara Revolution).

The book now known as *A History of the Bukhara Revolution* was translated from Uzbek into Tajik by the late Rahim Hoshim and published in 1987.

A History of the Bukhara Revolution is the first chronicle of what became known as the Bukharan revolution, written dur-

⁴² N. Hotamov, An Important Document (on S. Ayni's *Materials for a History of the Bukhara Revolution*), *Sado-i Sharq*, 1971. No. 1, p. 137–144.

⁴³ S. Ayni, *Works*, Vol. 1, Tashkent, Politizdat, 1963, p. 186.

⁴⁴ S. Ayni, *Kyulliym* (The Complete Works), Stalinabad–Dushanbe, 1958–1977, Vol. 2, Part 2, p. 185. Hereafter, *Kulliyot*.

⁴⁵ The history of the discovery of Ayni's manuscript can be found in Kamol Ayni's article in: S. Ayni, *A History of the Intellectual Revolution in Bukhara*, Tehran, Soroush, 1381 (2002), pp. 3–16. English translation: S. Ayni, *Tarikh-e Engelab-e Fikri-ye Bukhara (A History of the Intellectual Revolution in Bokhara)*, Mazda Publ., Costa Mesa, USA, 2003.

ing the events. In the first months of the new Bukharan government, censorship and ideological restrictions were not in place as yet. Even in 1926, when the Uzbek version was published, such constraints still were insignificant (although some parts of the text had been removed by the censor), so there is good reason to believe that the facts and opinions expressed in the book were not significantly affected by any external constraints. Ayni did have an opportunity to provide an accurate account of events of which he was well informed and where he was an eyewitness. As one of the prominent participants of the events, Ayni had an insider knowledge of them, which makes his testimony especially valuable.

CHAPTER 3

A History of the Bukhara Revolution and the other works of Ayni make it quite clear that the internal political stress in Bukhara of the early twentieth century, which became especially intense in its second decade, was focussed on education and enlightenment. The dominant activities of the Bukharan Jadids (*Jadidon*), progressivists and reformers who called themselves the Young Bukharans (Ayni calls them the ‘young people’), were the organisation of new-method (*usul-i jadid*) schools, publishing newspapers *Bukhoro-i Sharif* (The Noble Bukhara, 1912) and *Turon* (1912), etc. Their goal was to prepare the ground for social and political reforms. The Jadids expected such reforms, which they hoped the Emir and his government would introduce with their help, to open the way for further development and to spread the ideas of enlightenment.

The Jadids were monarchists. They first hoped that the Emir Abdulahad Khan (1885–1910) would support the reforms, but these were vain hopes. The ascension of Emir Alim Khan in 1911 revived their aspirations. One of them wrote on the occasion:⁴⁶

Through God’s will a thorough reform
Prevails in Bukhara these days,
The just Said Alim Bahodur Khan,
Whose justice will pacify the world,
Sat on the throne of the kingdom by good fortune,
God grant that his hopes of the rule come true.
From now on by law and justice
The affairs of the country will be settled.
Oppression and tyranny will be uprooted,
And the Shari’a law will grow stronger.

A divine messenger uttered about his ascension:

“Progress will bless the people of Islam.”⁴⁷

This poem is quoted by Sadri Ziyo in his *Diary* without providing the author’s name. Sheikh Abdulqodir Rahmatulloh Bukhara’i, nicknamed Sabboq, writes in his book *Armughon-e Sabboq*

⁴⁶ *The Diary of Sadri Ziyo*, Tehran, Center for Document and Research Services, 1382 (2003), p. 217. English translation: *The Personal History of a Bukharan Intellectual. The Diary of Muḥammad-Sharīf-i Ṣadr-i Ziyā*, Brill, Leiden, 2004, p. 264.

⁴⁷ Чу эзид хост исоҳоти кулӣ / Бухоро андар ин айём ёбад, / Сайид Олим Баҳодурхони одил, / Ки аз адлаш ҷаҳон ором ёбад, / Ба тахти салтанат биниаст аз бахт, / Зи тахту бахт ё раб ком ёбад. / Кунун аз рӯйи қонуни адолат / Умури мамлакат анҷом ёбад. / Равад бунёди зулму ҷавр бар бод, / Асоси шаръ истеҳком ёбад. / Ба таърихи ҷулусаш ҳолифе гуфт: / Тараққӣ миллати ислом ёбад.

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(The Gift of Sabboq, published in 1410 A.H. in Medina, Saudi Arabia, transliterated into Cyrillic by the Tajik scholar ▼ Maʼruf Otahon-zoda and published in Tashkent in 2007) that this poem belongs to Abdulvohid Munzim, one of the prominent Jadids and revolutionaries of Bukhara.⁴⁸ He also notes that panegyric poems were also written for the coronation of Emir Alim Khan by other Bukharan Jadids, Abdurrauf Fitrat and Sadriddin Ayni.

Munzim makes it clear in his poem what the Jadids expected of the reforms. Firstly, the reforms should be deep and comprehensive rather than merely cosmetic. Secondly, they are to lead to stability, social justice, stronger rule of the Shariʼa law and the overall progress of the land. The poem formulates the Jadid programme for the Emir.

However, it soon became clear that Emir Alim Khan would not introduce any substantial reforms, and this radicalized some Young Bukharans in 1911–1912. The Bukharans living in Istanbul, Turkey (Hoshim Shoiq among them) suggested that, unless Emir Alim Khan implemented reforms and introduced a political system similar to a constitutional monarchy, he should be deposed and replaced by another member of the Manghit dynasty.⁴⁹ This was not going to happen, however.

Thus, even a coup d'état was thought as a means to replace one Manghit ruler by another. Monarchism was deeply rooted in the minds of the reformers.

In the aftermath of the February 1917 revolution in Russia and the abdication of Nicholas II, and forced by revolutionary winds sweeping through the Russian Empire, the Emir nevertheless announced democratic reforms in his manifesto of 7 April 1917 (20 April according to the Gregorian calendar) and nominated high-level officials to implement them. A. Miller, the Political Agent of Russia in Bukhara, was instrumental in convincing the Emir of the necessity for reforms. Sadri Ziyo, who was appointed the *Qazi-i Kalon* (Chief Justice) of the Emirate just before these events and who was delegated by the Emir to announce the Order of Reform, was aware of the true intentions of the Emir to use the manifesto to provoke, and then suppress, the reformists; he warned them of the deceit.⁵⁰ Indeed, a demonstration organized by Jadids on 8 April to welcome the reforms was brutally dispersed by armed soldiers. Sadri Ziyo himself was mobbed by a crowd inspired by the orthodox clerics and narrowly escaped death. Many Jadids were arrested and prosecuted, the others fled to Tashkent and the neighbouring Samarkand and Kagan.⁵¹

⁴⁸ Шайх Абдулқодир Кароматуллоҳи Бухорӣ (Sheikh Abdulqodir Karomatulloh Bukhara'i), *Тазкираи Саббоқ* (Tazkera-i Sabboq: The Collected Poems of Sabboq), Tashkent, Fan, 2007, pp. 160–161. Munzim's poem, as quoted here, has one *bayt* (distich) more than the version given by Sabboq.

⁴⁹ Sh. Turdiev, The role of Russia in the suppression of the movement of the Jadids, *Central Asia*, No. 1 (13), 1990, p. 133.

⁵⁰ S. Ayni, *Kulliyot*, Vol. 1, p. 76

⁵¹ An excellent overview of the history and political and social background of the Emirate of Bukhara, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan is provided by Monica Whitlock, *Beyond the Oxus: the Central Asians*, John Murray, London, 2002. [Note to the English translation – A. Sh.]

The Jadids remained true to their monarchist aspirations even after the devastating events of April 1917 and the unsuccessful attempt at an armed annexation of the Bukhara Emirate by the Bolshevik expeditionary corps in March 1918 ('the Kolesov Campaign', see below), when any hope of reforms driven by the Emir and his conservative circle had been thwarted. In 1918, the organization of Young Bukharans assigned Abdurrauf Fitrat to formulate their new Programme. He prepared a *Plan of Reforms*, which remains one of the most fascinating documents in the history of the Tajik enlightenment. The main political goal proclaimed in this document is the establishment of a constitutional monarchy in Bukhara. Fitrat suggested the establishment of a Council of Ministers, led by the Prime Minister, whose responsibility would be to formulate and implement the Government policies. The monarchist idea was deeply rooted in Fitrat's mind as late as after the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia in October 1917.

Only the *Maromnoma* (Programme) of the Revolutionary Party of the Young Bukharans, written by Fayzulloh Khojaev, the radical comrade-in-arms of Fitrat, in 1920 after his visit to Moscow and adopted at the Party Conference on 14 June 1920, proclaims the deposition of the Emir and the establishment of a democratic republic in Bukhara as the aims of the organisation. The idea of republicanism had been formally adopted by the Young Bukharans just weeks before the dramatic events that are the subject of this book.

Radical ideas developed in the minds of Fayzulloh Khojaev and other progressivists much earlier, emerging in about 1917–1918 through contacts with the Russian Bolsheviks. However, the ideas of social revolution and communist republicanism did not spread much among the Bukharan Jadid émigrés in Russia, being entertained only by a minority. Nevertheless, the history of the Bukharan revolution can be traced back to April–May 1917 when Jadids fled to Kagan after the reactionary backlash. Their alignment with the Russian revolutionaries, including Bolsheviks among the Russian working-class population of Kagan, enhanced their leaning toward radicalism. As the social revolution became a new political objective in the programmes of some Bukharan Jadids only as late as in 1917–1918, I believe that April 1917 is the factual beginning of the history of the Bukharan revolution. The Jadid movement of the first two decades of the twentieth century, until April 1917, belongs to the history of the Tajik enlightenment.

Until 1917, the Jadids of the Bukharan cultural space were oriented toward a 'revolution of ideas' and a 'revolution of knowledge'. Many of them remained on that path after 1917. Today, we call it a 'cultural revolution'. The Jadids understood cultural revolution as a peaceful process of gradual cultural change. The social revolution occasionally mentioned in their writings, including those of Ayni, was understood as a result of a peaceful socio-political reform as well as the outcome of a gradual cultural transformation. For them, social revolution was a great result of the new enlightenment and the socio-political developments that they strove to promote. The Jadids' concept of revolution should nowadays be interpreted as that of a cultural revolution.

The enlightenment movement initiated by Ahmad Donish in the nineteenth century and continued until 1917 was aimed at what should be called the cultural and enlightenment revolution.

It is appropriate to note here that Ayni's *A History of the Bukhara Revolution* is a record of the development of the Tajik enlightenment movement in Bukhara rather than a history of the Bolshevik revolution. Social and political conditions that could facilitate a Bolshevik revolution did not exist in Bukhara. This fact was emphasized by Russian researchers of the time in their arguments with Fayzullo Khojaev and Ayni's book presents it quite clearly.

Ayni testifies that the people of Bukhara were not ready or prepared for a Bolshevik revolution. Describing the armed intervention, in 1918, of the Bolshevik forces led by Fyodor Kolesov, President of the Turkestan Soviet of People's Commissars (*Sovnarkom*) in Tashkent, Ayni writes, "In those days, the young people [the Young Bukharans] deluded themselves with hopes regarding the Bukharan peasants and soldiers. They expected that the peasants and soldiers, driven into dire difficulties by the tyranny and oppression of the Bukharan authorities, would join us as soon as we started the action and would help us in achieving our goals, which was in their own interest and for their benefit. However, the peasants and soldiers were so oppressed under the chains of abuse that they had no vigour even to crawl. In addition, the efficient propaganda of the deceitful *mullahs* and *ishans*, who betrayed the Shari'a law, against the young people had prepared [the population] for any action in the name of the Shari'a. The appeals and propaganda of the young people were inefficient against such a preparation".⁵²

It is thus clear that Bukhara was far from ready for a revolution in 1918, and its population was not prepared to embrace revolutionary ideas and programmes. The situation hardly changed in 1919 and even 1920. Given that even the moaning of the oppressed could not be heard, how could they embrace a revolution?

Ayni stresses that the people of Bukhara were not prepared to support even enlightenment reforms. *A History of the Bukhara Revolution* includes a chapter entitled "Was the population willing reform and was it ready for it?" Ayni provides a positive answer to the first part of the question but a negative one, to the remainder. He explains in detail, why: "Roads are in decay, the water is spoiled, entire country is in ruins. ... People are ailing, impoverished and helpless...".⁵³ Further, having elaborated on the oppression and deprivation of the population, and on the dominance of conservative and fanatical *mullahs*, Ayni concludes, "Thus, it can be said that, except for the young people [Jadids], the majority of people were not ready for the reforms. Even more than that: those oppressed and ignorant people were incited against reforms by the government and its lickspittle *mullahs*".⁵⁴

⁵² S.Ayni, *A History of the Bukhara Revolution*, Dushanbe, Adib, 1987, p. 208.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 151.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 152.

Could the people, who were unprepared to support even an enlightenment reform, be ready for a revolt? In fact, it is more plausible that they would rise against the Young Bukharans and their case rather than defy the Emir, Vizier, clerics and corrupted *mullahs*. The social awareness of the population and their ability to guard themselves against oppression were still low, well below the revolutionary level of consciousness.

CHAPTER 4

The social inertness of the masses, which Ayni particularly emphasizes, does not imply a lack of social and political strife and movement for justice. On the contrary, the social struggle of previous centuries continued in Bukhara, becoming particularly intense with the emergence of Ahmad Donish (1828–1896) in the second half of the nineteenth century. The disciples and followers of Ahmad Donish, the members of the literary circle of Sadri Ziyoy (1867–1932), youthful idealistic Jadids – all or most of them were active and ambitious people. The love of truth, a central element of the active humanism of Sa‘di Shirazi, gained popularity, and a fearless and active quest for truth spread widely. They loudly exposed oppressors and unjust officials. Popular heroes such as Shukurbek The Outlaw were robbing from the rich and giving to the poor.

Mullah Amon, a character from the *Reminiscences* of Ayni, is depicted as one of these brave fighters. He dislikes the sorrowful sound of the *tanbur* and loves the “tambourine’s clamour”. Ayni puts the following words into his mouth: “... accompanied by the wild, turbulent tambourine thunder, I would furiously break out into the street and, roaring like Rustam [the hero of Ferdowsi’s *Shahnameh*], march to the gates of the Emir’s palace and growl like a lion, ‘Hey you, man-eating wolves! Futile are any expectations of humanity in you, and vain are any hopes of you becoming human! Wolf’s atonement [i.e., death] should become your fate!’”⁵⁵

Such selfless fighters are frequent among Ayni’s characters. Altogether, they form an impression that, as Georgy Lomidze of the Institute of World Literature in Moscow once put it, “Bukhara was boiling over” at that time. The city was never calm and mute. Whether in science and culture or in the social struggle, Bukhara was always restless, always on the move.

Ayni’s historical writings and novels draw a broad picture of the popular struggle and its heroes, showing persistent resistance to social oppression, nepotism, regionalism and the tyranny of the *Bayzoids*.⁵⁶

However, this struggle remained confined to the ancient, traditional form of the resistance of an individual to the tyranny

⁵⁵ S. Ayni, *Kulliyot*, Vol. 7, p. 402.

⁵⁶ *Bayzo* (from the Arabic for *pale-faced*) is the nickname of a family of prominent Bukharan *ulama* of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century who enjoyed great influence at the Bukharan court. Three of them held the office of *Qazi-i Kalon*: Mullah Sadriddin, his son Mullah Badriddin, and the son of the latter, Mullah Burhanuddin. The whole clan was notorious for their nepotism, corruption, retrogressive views and actions and extreme orthodoxy. [Note to the English translation – A. Sh.]

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of specific oppressors. It was quite far from an organised revolutionary activity and universal public indignation. This is why Ayni concludes that the Bukharan people were not prepared to revolt or to even to support a revolt.

Ayni and his circle were not alone in appreciating this. It was clear to many foreign travellers, as well as to the Soviet authorities in Moscow and Turkestan. For example, V. V. Kuibyshev, one of the most hawkish representatives of Moscow in Bolshevik Turkestan and the proponent of the immediate intervention of the Red Army in Bukhara, said on 25 June 1919, “The Bukharan masses have not matured to making a revolution, not only in the European meaning of the word, but even in its Oriental sense”.⁵⁷

So, Kuibyshev was well aware that there were no prerequisites for a revolution in the Emirate. This was undoubtedly also clear to officials in Russia and Soviet Turkestan. Nevertheless, many of them supported the idea of a prompt export of the revolution to Bukhara. Prominent among them, Kuibyshev argued that, “in so far as the elimination of the despotic Bukhara is a vital necessity for Soviet Turkestan, the Red Army forces are justified in overthrowing the Bukharan government under the screen of the Bukharan revolutionaries”.⁵⁸

So, the true goal of the Bolsheviks was openly stated as the “elimination of Bukhara”, not for the benefit of its people but for the survival of the Russian Turkestan, that is, of the Bolshevik empire. Kuibyshev was quite open in this respect and was not hiding his motivation. His aim was to concoct a revolution fronted by those Young Bukharans who fled to Turkestan in 1917 after the defeat of the enlightenment movement – some of them embraced Bolshevism and Bolsheviks after August 1918.

The goal of the Russian intervention was to obliterate the Noble Bukhara, the cultural, religious and political heart of my nation, rather than to liberate the Tajiks. Let us remember Kuibyshev’s words “elimination” and “the screen of the Bukharan revolutionaries” – this will help us to understand some events that followed.

The quotations above are from Kuibyshev’s speech at a meeting in Tashkent with high-ranking emissaries from Moscow. The resolution passed at that meeting unequivocally stated that “a revolution in Bukhara is inevitable” and that “it will be carried out by the force of the Red Army bayonets”.⁵⁹ These are shockingly open statements. It is especially notable that the decision to instigate a revolution in Bukhara was made not in Bukhara itself, and not among Bukharans, but rather in Tashkent at a meeting of Moscow representatives. It is also striking that the meeting is not concerned at all about the fate of the people of Bukhara: the participants are inspired by the “vital necessity for Soviet Turkestan”, that is, the interests of the newly established Bolshevik Empire.

⁵⁷ Vladimir Genis, *It’s Time to Finish with Bukhara.... On the History of Sham Revolutions. A Documentary Chronicle*. Moscow, MNTI, 2001, p. 19.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

CHAPTER 5

Sadriddin Ayni's opinion of the lack of any prerequisites for revolution in the public consciousness and, moreover, of the inability of Bukharans to support even enlightenment reforms, is significant in several respects. Firstly, Ayni understood very well the state of the society and the public mood. He truly knew Bukharan society and the politics of his times and his well-known ability to adapt to the ever-changing political environment emerged from his ability to gauge the times. The perspicacity of Ayni became apparent on 7 April 1917 when he firmly opposed the idea of a 'thanksgiving' and 'joyous demonstration' of Jadids to celebrate the Emir's Order of Reform. Unfortunately, Abdulvohid Munzim (Burhonov) and Fayzulloh Khojaev disagreed, and 'the joyous demonstration' took place but turned into one of mourning. The enlightenment movement suffered a defeat, the Jadids fled to Kagan, Samarkand and Tashkent, and some of them set off down the road to revolution.

Ayni's conclusion that there were no prerequisites for a revolution in Bukhara, clearly formulated and convincingly justified in his book, was first of all aimed at the leaders of the revolutionaries of Bukhara, particularly their young champion Fayzulloh Khojaev. We should remember that Ayni's work was published in 1926, when Fayzulloh Khojaev was President of the Council of People's Commissars of the Uzbek Republic, already a part of the Soviet Union. This open statement of truth as Ayni saw it, was a manifestation of civic courage entirely within the centuries-long tradition of truth-seeking in the intellectual life of the Iranian world.

The point is that, starting in the second half of 1917, Fayzulloh Khojaev was repeatedly claiming that the underground groups of the Young Bukharans, both inside Bukhara and in several regions of the Emirate, had succeeded through revolutionary propaganda in preparing the population for an armed uprising, and they only need external assistance: as soon as the Red Army invaded the Emirate, the underground revolutionaries would start an armed insurrection and overthrow the Emir.

Determined to incite a revolution, Khojaev appealed for help to Fyodor Kolesov, the head of the Turkestan Soviet Government in Tashkent. Kolesov only needed a suitable pretext for the invasion, so he promptly promised support. His attack against Bukhara started on 1 March 1918. None of the groups inside or outside Bukhara in fact provided any support to his troops and there was no internal action to overthrow the Emir.⁶⁰ Kolesov

⁶⁰ The Danish Captain Alfred Brun, a keen and experienced observer, who visited Bukhara on the day before Kolesov's attack (without knowing that it was imminent) notes that "In the city of Bokhara there were

suffered a crushing defeat from the Bukharan army and retreated in disgrace. Back in Tashkent, Kolesov blamed the Young Bukharans for the defeat accusing them of providing false information and pointed out that there had been no Bukharan groups to support the revolution. In response, Fayzulloh Khojaev accused Kolesov himself of failing to supply sufficient arms to the Bukharan underground groups who thus could not start the uprising.

Fayzulloh Khojaev gives the following reasons for the failure of Kolesov's attack and the internal uprising in his book *On the History of the Revolution in Bukhara*: "The first and foremost external reason was that Kolesov was not able to carry out the agreement and did not deliver the promised weapons on time and on a large scale to the Young Bukharans Organization. The result was the impossibility of arming all of the members of our organization and consequently to start a rebellion from inside as was agreed upon and according to the plan, which, of course, was completely reasonable [in such circumstances]".⁶¹

An uprising inside Bukhara was an essential element of the action plan. However, Jadids did not command any noticeable forces inside Bukhara. After the terror of April 1917, most of the Jadids had fled Bukhara, and those who stayed, regretful and scattered, were saving their skins. Relying on their resurrection was the height of short-sightedness.

Of course, I have no intention to absolve Kolesov. His attack on Bukhara was fully consistent with the ideas of the revolutionary imperialism and the export of revolution. But I wish to stress the rashness of Fayzulloh Khojaev who strove, even using an aggressor's hands, to incite a revolution as soon as possible.

The revolutionary mindlessness of Fayzulloh Khojaev was not only apparent once. It first came as a surprise a year earlier when the Emir's reform manifesto was announced on 7 April 1917. The manifesto was announced on behalf of the Emir by Sharifjon Makhdum Sadri Ziyo in the Bukhara Ark in the presence of invited dignitaries. At 3pm of the same day the Jadid leaders met to decide if they should organize a 'demonstration of joy' to show their support of the Emir's manifesto. Many of those present at the meeting were against the demonstration. Particularly Abdulvohid Munzim (Burhonov), Muhiddin Raf'at and Muso Saidjonov (a member of the Central Committee of the Young Bukharans), as well as Sadriddin Ayni, Ahmadjon Makhdum Hamdi, Homidkhoja Mehri and others, firmly opposed the idea of a demonstration. But Khojaev and his sympathisers insisted on a 'revolutionary demonstration'.

One of the participants of that meeting was Mahmudkhoja Behbudi Samarkandi, who had earlier attended the ceremony where the manifesto was announced. When the arguments drew out and intensified, Behbudi suggested consulting the Russian Agent, Miller. This was agreed, and Khojaev met Miller in the

actually no disturbances, but the outlook was by no means promising" (A. H. Brun, *Troublous Times. Experiences in Bolshevik Russia and Turkestan*, Constable, London, 1931, p. 101). [Note to the English translation – A. Sh.]

⁶¹ F. Khojaev, *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, Tashkent, 1970, p. 135.

latter's office, together with three or four other Jadids. As Fayzulloh Khojaev writes, "Miller replied succinctly that he advises against the demonstration".⁶²

Thus, Miller did not support the idea of a demonstration. It is interesting how Khojaev describes what followed: "Next morning, I came to the *Shirkat Barakat* shop where I found the late Fazliddin Maksum and Abdulvohid Burhonov [Munzim]. These two opponents of the demonstration asked me under oath if it was true that Miller had approved the demonstration. I gave an evasive answer".⁶³ Khojaev concealed the truth from his comrades even under the oath! His thoughtless lie eventually led to the demonstration.

With that demonstration as a pretext, as we have already said, the reaction intensified and terror broke out. Luckily, there was only one casualty as an immediate consequence of the backlash: both Mirzo Nazrulloh Ghafurzoda and Ayni were sentenced to 75 cane lashes each (150, according to Fayzulloh Khojaev) on 9 April 1917, and Ghafurzoda died of his injuries three days later in the Russian hospital in Kagan. A still greater damage to the enlightenment movement was that it was discredited and scattered.

The Emir's terror reached its peak later, during Kolesov's attack in March 1918. According to Fayzulloh Khojaev and other Young Bukharans, 3,000 people were executed. The horror of 1918 is the subject of Ayni's novella *Jallodoni Bukhoro* (The Executioners of Bukhara).

At that time, Fayzulloh Khojaev was only 21 or 22 years old (born in 1896). From the days of his youth, he was bursting with a lust for power, using any means to reach his goals: quarrelling, instigation, or with lies and deception. In most instances, his strong will delivered his goals to him. As we can see, his political career began with lies, deception and self-serving sedition in the period from April 1917 to March 1918. He remained on that treacherous path until the end of his life.

In 1918–1920, Fayzulloh Khojaev was making every effort to convince the authorities of Soviet Turkestan and Moscow that Bukhara had been prepared for the revolution by the propaganda of the revolutionary Young Bukharans (the exiled Jadids) and if the Red Army began a military assault against Bukhara, the revolutionaries would rise up from inside Bukhara and overthrow the Emir. Although it became apparent in March 1918 that such expectations were groundless, Fayzulloh Khojaev pressed on and on with his arguments. The authorities of Soviet Turkestan, too, spared nothing in assisting the expansion of the propaganda activities of the Organization of the Young Bukharans (which later acquired the name of the Revolutionary Young Bukharan Party) and the Communist Party of Bukhara.

There is ample evidence of clandestine propaganda, allegedly spread widely to the population of Bukhara, in various sources on the history of the Bukharan revolution, including the

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 105.

⁶³ *Ibid.*

writings of Khojaev himself. Here are some facts. The exiled Jadids published 10,000 copies of propaganda booklets in 1918–1919,⁶⁴ 10,000 copies of the political programme of the Young Bukharans and 17,000 pamphlets were printed⁶⁵ to be distributed among the population.⁶⁶

However, Fayzulloh Khojaev does not say whether those leaflets and booklets reached the people, how many copies were distributed, how the people accepted them, or what the effect was. In the end, the fundamental aim was to deliver the propaganda materials and to obtain a result from them. Some researchers tried, unsuccessfully, to find out if the propaganda materials were reaching the population.

Even if one in a hundred leaflets were reaching the target, we should not forget Ayni's informed opinion that "Pamphlets distributed by the Young Bukharans and their propaganda could not have had any effect".⁶⁷ This is a credible statement: any amount of propagandist materials published in Soviet Turkestan, even if smuggled successfully to Bukhara, could not, on their own, prepare the population for an uprising.

A letter addressed to Lenin, written by Fayzulloh Khojaev on behalf of the Revolutionary Young Bukharan Party, insists that, "revolution in Bukhara is becoming imminent" and appeals for help for the Bukharan revolutionaries.⁶⁸ Apart from referring to the amounts of propagandist materials published, as given above, he presents the following evidence for the 'imminent revolution'. There are twelve underground revolutionary groups in Bukhara, involved in agitation, referred to as *yacheyka* (cell). One of these cells is claimed to be working with the Emir's Ark guards. He asserts that there are also underground organizations in Katta-Kurgan, Karshi, Shahr-i Sabz, Kitab, Guzar, Charjou and other towns.

Just as in the other writings of Fayzulloh Khojaev and other authors, the information about the underground propaganda groups and their numbers does not extend to explaining how those groups operated and, particularly, what was the outcome of their work. It remains unclear from Khojaev's works how many of those twelve underground groups were able to continue their

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 105.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ The population of the Emirate at that time was about 3 million (see p. 50). The literacy level is uncertain but, in 1909, the Governor-General of Russian Turkestan P. I. Mischenko noted that "The literacy of the natives of Turkestan, especially in its main regions such as Syrdarya, Ferghana and Samarkand, is at a very high level, which is much higher than that of European Russia" (K. K. Bazarbayev, H. Tursun and R. Sadykova, Jadidism as an educational system and a political movement in Turkestan (Central Asia), *International Education Studies*, Vol. 6, No. 1, pp. 85–94, 2013). The literacy level was about 11% in Soviet Uzbekistan in 1928 (D. A. Alimova and A. A. Golovanov, Uzbekistan, in: *History of Civilizations of Central Asia*, Vol. VI, Eds M. K. Palat and A. Tabyshalieva, UNESCO, 2005, p. 224) and about 20% in Soviet Tajikistan in 1926 (M. Dinorshoev, Tajikistan, in: *Op. cit.*, p. 294). [Note to the English translation –A. Sh.]

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 27 (Preface).

⁶⁸ S. Ayni, *A History of the Bukhara Revolution*, p. 230.

activities up to the revolution of 1920. There are contemporary reports implying that many of them were quickly discovered and liquidated by the authorities.

For example, a prominent revolutionary Hussein Khojaev was arrested and brutally murdered as soon as he started agitation among the Emir's guards.⁶⁹ Khalilbek Abdujalilov who was engaged in propaganda among the Emir's soldiers, was arrested as quickly.⁷⁰ Abdullokhoja (Abdullokhoja Makhdum Turazoda), one of the daring revolutionaries, is described in Ayni's novel *Dokhunda*. According to Ayni, he was imprisoned at the end of April 1920 and executed.⁷¹ *A History of the Communist Parties of Central Asia* mentions that Abdullokhoja was arrested in April 1920, but he had already organized 15 underground communist groups by then.⁷² It can be deduced that the members of those groups, or the majority of them, were arrested, jailed, or killed along with Abdullokhoja. According to some evidence, Abdullokhoja was executed on 1 September 1920, that is, one day before the victory of the revolution.⁷³ If this is true, Abdullokhoja and his followers were jailed from April to 1 September and only then executed.

However, there is no information available on the majority of the underground propaganda groups. It is not known what their activities were, for how long they were active, which of them were more successful than the others. It is quite plausible that most of them were quickly discovered by the authorities and, thus, could not operate for a long time.

Apart from the information on twelve underground groups, Khojaev presents to Lenin further evidence of both the legalized and underground operations of the Bukharan revolutionaries. He also mentions that 120 Bukharan revolutionaries languish in the Emir's prisons. I wonder if the two numbers are connected, and those 120 revolutionaries were in fact the members of the 12 groups.

It is reasonable to conclude that the activities of underground revolutionaries in 1918–1920, pompously advertised by Khojaev, did not have much effect and produced almost no results. Indeed, when the Red Army eventually invaded Bukhara in 1920 under the smoke screen of a 'popular uprising', it met fierce resistance from the population: "the broad masses of the peasantry did not take an active part in the revolt itself. With the exception of the Charjou uprising, the peasantry was sympathetic at best [to the revolution], as in Kitab and Shahr-i Sabz, and fought against the revolution on the side of the feudal class at worst, as in Old Bukhara and Karshi".⁷⁴

⁶⁹ S. Ayni, *Kulliyot*, Vol. 2, Part 2, p. 183.

⁷⁰ F. Khojaev, *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, p. 122.

⁷¹ S. Ayni, *A History of the Bukharan Revolution*, p. 230.

⁷² *A History of the Communist Organizations of Central Asia*. Tashkent, 1967, p. 485.

⁷³ F. Khojaev, *Selected Works*, Vol. 1 p. 463 (comments).

⁷⁴ O. Glovatskii, *Revoliutsiia pobezhdaet*, Tashkent, 1930, pp. 31–32 (quoted by S. Becker, *Russia's Protectorates in Central Asia: Bukhara and Khiva, 1865–1924*, Routledge, London, 2004, p. 403). [Note to the English translation – A. Sh.]

For this and several other reasons, it is quite clear that the repeated assertions of Fayzulloh Khojaev that, in 1918–1920, Bukhara was ready for a revolution from inside and was just awaiting the arrival of the Bolshevik Red Army, are far from true. It was rather Ayni who was right to say that there were no prerequisites for revolution in Bukhara and that propaganda promoting revolutionary ideas among the population was a wasted effort.

There was hardly any real opportunity for underground revolutionary activity in Bukhara, especially in 1917–1920, on the eve of the revolution. Even with very careful precautions, the propagandists had very limited opportunities.

The internal government spy network was quite extensive everywhere in the Emirate of Bukhara, especially in the capital. The Bukharans called those spies *voqeanavis* ('reporter', an ironic reference to an informer). The *reporters* were present everywhere, day and night. No undesirable action and no questionable words could be concealed from their eyes and ears. Inhabitants of the Emirate, including lesser and greater officials, were in a lingering fear of the *reporters*. Their numbers and zeal particularly increased between 1917 and 1920.

It is quite implausible that the underground propaganda of the revolutionaries could escape the attention of the *reporters*. For example, a significant fraction of the interior spies were women. They were known as *dukhtarbin* (girl watchers) or *dukhtaryob* (girl finders). Their job was to be on the streets, to visit households unexpectedly to chat to the women, and then to report on the subject of the conversations. In addition, they would inform the Royal harem of any beautiful girl seen. The victim would often end up in the Emir's harem.

The *dukhtaryob* spies were the plague of the Bukharans, causing widespread indignation. Nobody and nothing could be hidden from them. There is hardly any doubt that the *dukhtaryobs* were involved in a systematic search for the revolutionary agitators, especially in 1917–1920. This would be a serious impediment for the underground revolutionaries.

The shell of the large drum of the Ark (the Citadel of Bukhara) was said to be adorned by gilded letters combining into a verse:⁷⁵

Like a mirror, do not tell what you have seen,
Like water, wash away what you have heard.
If you have learned manners here,

Do not tell in the morning of what you have seen at
night.

For this starry vault of heaven
Does not tell by day what it has seen by night.

⁷⁵ Оинасон ҳар чӣ бидидӣ, мағӯ, / Обсифат он чӣ шунидӣ, бишӯ. .
Гар ту дар ин варта адаб дидаӣ, / Сӯбҳ мағӯ он чӣ ба шаб дидаӣ. /
Лоҷарам ин гунбади анҷумфурӯз / Он чӣ ба шаб дид, мағӯяд ба рӯз.

The late Tajik scholar Rahim Hoshim heard this poem from his teacher Sadriddin Ayni. We, several people, together with Rahim Hoshim, spent quite a time trying to understand why these lines were on the royal drum. Why these words that call for keeping secrets to oneself, should be written on the big and loud drum of the Citadel? Could the intention be to remind loudly (and the royal drum was loud indeed) that the subjects are expected not to divulge official secrets, and to make sure that everybody would have heard this, remembered and obeyed? Or, perhaps, these lines mean that the subjects were required to be inaudible watchdogs seizing at once those who blab the secrets out. The authorities needed a reliable population of informers and communal spies.

In the first two decades of the twentieth century, the world was shaken by three revolutions in Russia, revolutions in Turkey, Iran and other countries. It was truly the epoch of social revolutions. It is not surprising that the Bukharan government of the time spared no effort to recruit more bloodhounds. The Russian embassy in Bukhara had its own spy network, also aimed at the revolutionaries.

It is understandable then that the revolutionary propaganda was inefficient and the efforts of the agitators bore no fruit.

On August 25, 1920, the Commander of the Turkestan Front Mikhail Frunze announced in an order that the military campaign against the Bukhara Emirate would start on the morning of 29 August.⁷⁶ Frunze explained the necessity of this military action as follows: "The people of Bukhara have risen up against their oppressors",⁷⁷ and the Red Army should extend a helping hand to the Bukharans. This was a blatant lie or a glaring mistake. There was no revolt in Bukhara in August 1920. Only Fayzulloh Khojaev, the Tatar communist Najib Husainov (the leader of the Communist Party of Bukhara) and their supporters were insisting that the people were ready for a rebellion, and they perhaps

⁷⁶ *Soviet Military Encyclopaedia* describes the *Bukharan Operation of 1920* in the following terms: "... The Emir's army (16 thousand troops, 16 machine guns, 23 cannons) was located in the Old Bukhara with its main forces, and its individual regiments were at Khatirchi and Kermine. Parties of the local rulers (*beks*) supporting the Emir (more than 27 thousand troops) were active in the areas of the Takhtakaracha Pass, Shahr-i Sabz and Karshi. On 23 August 1920, the working people of Bukhara revolted against the Emir and requested aid from the government of the Turkestan Soviet Republic. Frunze divided the Soviet forces (about 9 thousand troops, 230 machine guns, 40 cannons) into several groups." It is further claimed that the "working people who joined the revolt" were "about 5 thousand" in number, the interaction of the Soviet ground troops with artillery and 11 airplanes is noted as a distinctive feature of the operation, and the Emir is characterised as an ally of the "Anglo-American interventionists" (*The Soviet Military Encyclopaedia*, Vol. 1, p. 627, Moscow, USSR Defence Ministry Publ., 8 Vols, 1976–1980; abridged English edition: *The Soviet Military Encyclopaedia*, 4 Vols, ed. and transl. W. C. Green and W. R. Reeves, Boulder, Westview Press, 1993) [Note to the English translation – A. Sh.]

⁷⁷ *Directives of the Command of the Red Army Fronts. Collection of Documents*, Vol. 3. Moscow, 1976, p. 550.

claimed that the population had in fact rebelled. Or perhaps Frunze was encouraged by the fact that the Regiment of Eastern Muslims (also known as the 'Muslim Division') had joined his troops, or he could also mean the armed groups of Bukharan revolutionaries that had begun preparations for a revolution. Frunze might mistakenly consider this to be a popular uprising. But these were, at most, preparations for a revolt rather than the revolt proper.

The utter falsehood of Frunze's justification for the invasion became clear from the first day of the war (revolution) in Bukhara. Frunze writes in his memoirs that, as soon as the war had begun, it became clear that the claims of the Bukharan revolutionaries that the population of the city were ready to rise up and would revolt as soon as the war began were false. As Frunze writes, "The absolute falsehood of the assurances of the Bukharan revolutionaries that the population was ready for an uprising became apparent".⁷⁸

Thus, the fabricated and exaggerated reports of Fayzulloh were finally exposed. We do not know when exactly the truth became evident, what Frunze said to Fayzulloh Khojaev at the height of the fighting, or what was Khojaev's answer. No doubt, he quickly concocted another lie – he was a master at concocting lies. His book *On the History of the Revolution in Bukhara* makes it clear that he found some other people on whom to place his fault. As he puts it, "the Jadids were guilty of a number of mistakes and were unable to spur the masses to fight against the Emirate".⁷⁹

Thus, the Jadids – the brilliant Tajik intellectuals – are said to be at fault. As we emphasized above, their programme in fact never included any armed action against the Emirate. Still, Fayzulloh Khojaev used them to clear his name.

This quotation is usually interpreted as Khojaev's assertion of the 'historical mistake' of the Jadids. Quite differently, it rather provides further evidence that the great mass of the population were not involved in the Bukharan revolution. Here this is admitted by Khojaev, the leader of the revolution of Bukhara himself. Therefore, there are no reasons to consider the Bukharan revolution a popular revolution.

Altogether, the claims of the Revolutionary Young Bukharan Party and their leader Fayzulloh Khojaev, and the assertions of the Communist Party of Bukhara that their agitation and propaganda had prepared both the urban and rural populations of the Emirate for a revolution, which would be welcome by the people, are far from the truth and only represent revolutionary self-adulation.

Unfortunately, even today, in the twenty-first century, there are scholars who still consider the Bukharan revolution a 'popular revolution.' For example, Sohیب Tabarov writes that "as a result of the armed struggle of the oppressed people, the Bukharan Emirate ceased to exist on the 15th of Zulhijja 1338 A.H.

⁷⁸ Quoted by: V. Genis, *It's Time to Finish with Bukhara ...*, p. 37.

⁷⁹ F. Khojaev, *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, p. 121.

(August 29, 1920)".⁸⁰ He continues, "Ayni's *A History of the Manghit Emirs of Bukhara* describes the popular uprising as follows: 'The Young Bukharans, assisted by the Red Soviet soldiers, or rather Red soldiers led by the youth of Charjou, Bukhara, Khatirchi, Karshi and Shahr-i Sabz, attacked together the throne and crown of Emir Alim'".⁸¹ As we can see, Tabarov's opinion disagrees in fact with Ayni's words that he quotes. This sentence of Ayni, used by Tabarov to prove his point, does not imply at all that "the oppressed people" of the Emirate carried out the revolution and that this revolution was, as Tabarov puts it, "a popular uprising."

On the contrary, Ayni emphasizes that only "the Red Soviet soldiers" and "the Young Bukharans" "attacked the throne and the crown of the Emir." The Bukharan revolution was the work of the Young Bukharans and Red soldiers, but not of the people of Bukhara. Ayni named here only two political and military powers as primary factors: the Soviet Red Army and the Young Bukharans. A third power, such as the popular masses, is not mentioned at all. In our opinion, Ayni has correctly identified here the main driver of the revolution. His pen was describing the primary and crucial factors of the revolution as they were, rather than as they were presented in official statements from the revolutionary leaders. This is another example of Ayni's adherence to the classical tradition of truth seeking mentioned above.

Witnesses of the revolutionary events also suggested that the working people were not involved to any significant extent. For example, Sadri Ziyov in his *Diary* writes that, during the days of the revolution, the terrified and confused population of villages from Karshi up to Bukhara fled from the Soviet soldiers. In his book *On the History of the Revolution in Bukhara*, Fayzullo Khojaev quotes from the memoirs of G. Omelyustiy, a participant of the military action, entitled *At the Walls of Bukhara*, where he reports that Frunze's soldiers advanced through the city's streets "being scalded with boiling water thrown at them from the rooftops and windows".⁸² We can assume that the boiling water was thrown on the heads of the enemy not by the Emir's soldiers but by the city's inhabitants who were using their own means against the invaders.

It should be noted that the formation of the Bukharan Red Army during three years prior to the revolution (in 1918–1920) raises a number of questions and, in our opinion, requires special study.

The Bukharan revolutionaries – the Communist Party and the organization of the Young Bukharans – apparently had several armed groups. For example, a group in Kagan had 300 people, the one in Kerki had 270 fighters, the Termez group had 200 members, etc.⁸³ The Bukharan Red Army might have been raised from these groups. It still is not clear, however, when the groups were organized; who were their members; how strong was their

⁸⁰ S. Tabarov, *Three Tajik Intellectuals on the Rulers of the Manghit Dynasty*, Dushanbe, Ejod, 2006, pp. 182–183.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 185.

⁸² See F. Khojaev, *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, p. 189.

⁸³ *A History of the Communist Organizations of Central Asia*, p. 488.

motivation; to what degree did they have proper social consciousness; how well trained they were, etc. The substantial figures quoted above also need careful verification.

The social prerequisites of the Bukharan revolution, especially as a revolution carried out by the Red Army of Bolshevik Russia, remain one of the most important issues of our history. It has varied aspects; each of them should be researched separately and, eventually, all the elements should be combined into a coherent understanding of the events that are called the Bukharan revolution.

CHAPTER 6

The quotes from Kuibyshev and Frunze used above are from the book of Vladimir Genis *It's Time to Finish with Bukhara....* This title is in fact a quote of Kuibyshev's categorical decision. That is, Kuibyshev's intention was to finish with Bukhara without delay and occupy Bukhara sooner rather than later.

The subtitle of Genis' book is *On the History of Sham Revolutions*. Having worked in Russian archives which were opened to researchers in the 1990s, this author concludes that the upheaval of 1920 in Bukhara was an artificial, fictitious 'revolution'; it was in fact an invasion of the Red Army portrayed as a revolution.

The entire book of Genis consists of documents from archives bound together by brief comments. It is clear from those documents that Valerian Vladimirovich Kuibyshev, one of the major political personalities of Soviet Russia, and Mikhail Vasilyevich Frunze, a prominent Soviet military leader and the commander of the Turkestan Front at the time, were especially eager to quicken the campaign against Bukhara.

In 1918–1919, Russia became an expanse of ruins. Very little was left of the great empire. Finland, the three Baltic countries, Poland and other countries separated from Russia to become independent. The leaders of the social revolution in Russia, including V. I. Lenin, L. D. Trotsky and I. V. Stalin aimed at compensating those losses with the 'Revolution of the East'. In Soviet Russia, many supporters of the Red intervention came to dominate the political scene, and most of them turned towards the East. An Afghan Revolutionary Party was hastily formed in Tashkent, which could be used to pave the road to India. The Indian Military Training School was organised in Tashkent by the Comintern and Indian communists, with more than 100 students.⁸⁴ The Khanate of Khiva and the Emirate of Bukhara were clearly obstacles for these plans. In February 1920, the Bolsheviks occupied Khiva and began to prepare the troops of the Turkestan Front to confront Bukhara.

Kuibyshev and Frunze repeatedly informed Moscow that the Bukharan state was gaining strength with British assistance. At a Communist Party meeting in Tashkent on 26 August 1920, Kuibyshev asserted that Bukhara "is getting ready to strike at

⁸⁴ See, e.g., G. L. Dmitriev, *Indian Revolutionaries in Central Asia*, Hope India Publ., Gurgaon, 2002; Z. Anwar, Indian freedom fighters in Central Asia (1914–1939), *Journal of the Research Society of Pakistan*, Vol. 45, No. 2, pp. 147–157, 2008 [references added by the translator – A. Sh.].

Russia”.⁸⁵ Although Emir Alim Khan in his memoirs *La voix de la Boukharie opprimée* (published in Paris in 1929) bragged that he entertained the idea to declare war on the Russian Turkestan, Bukhara could in no way sustain a war with the great and vast Russia, despite the fact that the situation in Soviet Turkestan was dire for the period of the Russian Civil War when Turkestan was isolated by counter-revolutionary forces. Still Kuibyshev and Frunze were bombarding Moscow with telegrams requesting permission for a ‘Red invasion’ into Bukhara.

Lenin, Trotsky, Bukharin and others did not approve of the requests of the Commission for Turkestan Affairs in Tashkent and the commanders of the Turkestan Front. They were reluctant to start a war with Bukhara not because they detested war, aggression and colonial policies, but rather because Soviet Russia was at war with Poland at that time, and they were preparing for an attack on Warsaw. So, the war with Bukhara had to be postponed until victory over Poland was ensured.

But Stalin agreed with Frunze’s hasty plan and suggested to “act as soon as possible following Comrade Frunze’s recipe”.⁸⁶ Kuibyshev and Frunze eventually lost patience and started military preparations without waiting for orders from Lenin and Trotsky.

⁸⁵ *A History of the Communist Organizations of Central Asia*, p. 36.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

CHAPTER 7

In a period of little more than one month (August 1920), all of the necessary decisions concerning the export of the Bolshevik revolution to Bukhara had been made. On 29 July 1920, the Organizational Bureau of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) resolved to support a revolution in Bukhara, and to provide ideological and material assistance to the Revolutionary Young Bukharan Party founded in 1920 in Tashkent. Thus, Moscow finally agreed formally to carry out the revolution in Bukhara.

At the same time, it was decided that the leader of the revolution should be the Bukharan Communist Party, not the Revolutionary Young Bukharan Party. Fayzulloh Khojaev agreed that the Bukharan Communist Party should take over the government after the victory of the revolution and moved to the Bukharan Communist Party, leaving the Revolutionary Young Bukharan Party on its own. He agreed that the Revolutionary Young Bukharan Party ought to be dissolved immediately after the revolution, with most of its members to join the Bukharan Communist Party. (This happened on 11 September 1920.)

In July 1920, the Commission for Turkestan Affairs (*Turkcommission*, the plenipotentiary representative of the Russian Communist Party and the Soviet government in Tashkent) established the Revolutionary Military Bureau (*Revvoenburo*), an organization designed to coordinate preparations for the revolution. On July 30, the Revvoenburo discussed the composition of the government of the Republic of Bukhara to be installed after the revolution. In particular, Ahmadjon Hamdi (Abusaidov) was recommended for the post of the Chairman of the Revolutionary Committee (*Revkom*), and Fayzulloh Khojaev was nominated as chair the Soviet of People's *Nazirs* (Commissars), a position equivalent to that of prime minister. The Turkcommission approved these recommendations on August 10, and Fayzulloh Khojaev was appointed the Chairman of the Soviet of People's *Nazirs*. Thus, the Soviet authorities in Turkestan had decided this appointment 33 days before the revolution.

On 25 August 1920, the Turkcommission established a Communist Party Centre to organize and manage the Bukharan revolution. Kuibyshev became the head of the Centre, with the Tatar communist Najib Husainov (the Chairman of the Communist Party of Bukhara) and Fayzulloh Khojaev among its members. The responsibility of this Centre, mainly of Kuibyshev, was political leadership.

So, all decisions regarding the revolution in Bukhara were made in Moscow and channelled via Tashkent. The political parties of Bukharan emigrants in Tashkent were readily accepting these decisions. For example, the Fourth Congress of the Bukha-

ran Communist Party, which took place in Charjou on 16–18 August, confirmed these decisions and discussed some arrangements for Bukhara after the revolution, such as the government of the Bukharan Republic.

As soon as the plans for the revolution in Bukhara were approved by the highest levels of Soviet authorities in Turkestan and, probably, Moscow, it was time for Frunze to start the military action.

All the military power Frunze had at his disposal was directed at Bukhara, including eleven airplanes gathered from throughout Turkestan. His troops included three Tatar regiments and the First Regiment of Eastern Muslims consisting of Bukharan volunteers (some deserters from the Emir's army, but mostly Tatars and Bashkirs, muslims from Russia). A number of armed extremist Bukharan Jadids, who were organizing émigré political parties after 1917, joined the march on Bukhara led by Fayzulloh Khojaev and his sympathizers.

The war started on 29 August 1920. As Frunze wrote in his diary, it soon became clear that the assurances of the Bukharan revolutionaries that Bukhara was ready to rise up, were false. The population of Bukhara provided no assistance to Frunze's troops either on the second day of the fighting, nor on the third or the fourth.

The well-trained army of Frunze was astonishingly close to defeat on the first day of the action when the Bukharan army counter-attacked and the volunteers of the First Regiment of Eastern Muslims broke into a run and dispersed. The Russian troops, as Frunze wrote later in his memoirs, "suffered heavy losses and were forced to retreat".⁸⁷ The debacle of Kolesov's campaign loomed over the Red Army again. As we have already seen, Kolesov attacked Bukhara on 1 March 1918 but was defeated and narrowly escaped. This ended the first attack of the Russian Bolsheviks on Bukhara. Their second attempt could turn out to be as disastrous as the first.

Frunze deployed the eleven airplanes available at the Bukharan front to save the situation. Four days of aerial bombing of the city solved the problem and brought Frunze victory. As he admitted, "Only the dashing action of the airplanes saved the regiment from destruction".

The war ended on 2 September 1920. This date is considered the victory day of the Bukharan revolution.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

CHAPTER 8

In his memoirs, Frunze provides some details of the aerial bombardment of Bukhara in the self-opinionated style typical of a Bolshevik revolutionary. The Russian press published the reminiscences of the pilots who were in action in Bukhara in the 1920s and, later championed by Maxim Gorky,⁸⁸ in the 1930s. This source has been almost completely overlooked by scholars and is rarely used. It is worthwhile to describe briefly this barbaric bombing, that went on from 29 August to 1 September.

The Great Bukhara, a museum city replete with unique historical monuments, was under heavy bombardment for four days. During that time, 170 bombs were dropped on the city.⁸⁹ There were extensive fires at 25 locations. It was reported to Lenin that “half the city was on fire”.⁹⁰ The Tajik writer Jalol Ikromi, who was 11 years old at the time, saw those fires from a nearby village. “Day after day, we saw dense smoke coming from the direction of Bukhara and spreading across the sky. They were saying that the city was on fire, that the city was being reduced to ashes.”⁹¹

The Soviet pilots enjoyed boasting about their barbaric performance: “We destroyed the ancient Emirate. ... We especially rejoiced when hitting the famous ‘Tower of Death,’ even if this target actually had no value. During the short breaks between the missions, we joked, ‘Holding the bomb, I see a mosque down below – banged it away, straight to the dome.’ We all guffawed”.⁹²

This barbaric spirit of Genghis Khan and his Mongols guided the pilots who brought the revolution to Bukhara. They would have levelled the entire city if they had the opportunity.

The outsiders’ name ‘The Tower of Death’ of the Great Minaret of Bukhara, an architectural masterpiece of world culture and an object of pride for the Tajik nation, was picked up and enthusiastically spread by the rogue ‘revolutionaries’.⁹³ Unfortu-

⁸⁸ M. Gorky *et al.*, eds., *Voina v peskakh. Materialy po istorii grazhdanskoi voiny* (The War in the Sands. Documents on the History of the Civil War), Moscow, 1935 [reference added by the translator –A. Sh.].

⁸⁹ See N. Hotamov, 170 bombs exploded in Bukhara, *Ilm va Hayot*, 1994, Nos 3–6, pp. 13–15.

⁹⁰ V. Genis, *It's Time to Finish with Bukhara...*, p. 40.

⁹¹ J. Ikromi, What I went through, *Sado-i Sharq*, 2006, No. 1, p. 22.

⁹² V. Genis, *It's Time to Finish with Bukhara...*, p. 40.

⁹³ The name ‘Tower of Death’ originates from the legend that “the criminals whom the Emir sentenced to the special punishment were hurled down” from the Great Minaret (A. H. Brun, *Troublous Times*, p. 101; see also O. Olufsen, *The Emir of Bokhara and His Country. Journeys and Studies in Bokhara*, William Heinemann, London, 1911, p. 371); it can be traced back to Alexander Burnes who visited Bukhara

nately, Tajiks themselves occasionally use this dreadful misnomer – for example, the truthful poet Payrav Sulaymoni has entitled one of his poems *The Tower of Death*.

The damage to The Great Minaret was mended in later years, but, after the strong earthquake of Gazli (Uzbekistan) in 1984, the old wounds opened again. They were repaired once more, but that damage is still hidden in the fragile heart of this monument to intellect and art. That wound still hurts.

It was clear to Emir Alim Khan that the Bolsheviks planned to destroy Bukhara and the Emirate completely, so he forsook the throne and crown and took flight.

In his *Diary*, Sadri Ziyo compared the terror of those four days of war with a ghastly nightmare: “There cannot be greater commotion and trouble than this”.⁹⁴ So, Sadri Ziyo describes the events as “commotion and trouble”. In his view, those four days crushed “the Holy Motherland” rather than brought about a social revolution. The city centre was completely destroyed and “turned into a desert so dreadful and a wilderness so awful, the sight of which struck one with horror and inspired terror”.⁹⁵

Yes, the revolution was a “commotion and trouble” that brought about destruction and sorrow.

in 1832 (e.g., A. Burnes, *Travels into Bokhara. A Voyage up the Indus to Lahore and a Journey to Cabool, Tartary & Persia*, Eland, London, 2012, p. 194). Ayni, in his account of the last 150 years of Bukharan history, mentions only one occasion of using the Minaret for this purpose, and that was an exceptional case. In fact, the Minaret was used to recite the *azan* (call for prayer), and to provide an observation point for military purposes. M. Shakuri recalls that it was also used to wake up the Bukharans in the mornings of the month of Ramadan by beating drums and, to make sure that the children woke up too, singing a simple verse: Who has beaten you? / Who has beaten you? / A short, red-haired man has beaten me! (*Tūya kī zad? / Tūya kī zad? / Mana yak mardaki zabzardaki pastak zad!*) [Note to the English translation – A. Sh.]

⁹⁴ *The Personal History of a Bukharan Intellectual. The Diary of Muḥammad-Ṣharīf-i Ṣadr-i Ziyā*, Brill, Leiden, 2004, p. 359.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 358.

CHAPTER 9

The Bukharan revolution had its heroes. Strikingly, they were all opponents of the revolution rather than the revolutionaries. These were people who fought not to achieve the goals of the Bolshevik revolution, but, on the contrary, to implement certain parts of the revolutionary programme that actually opposed the plans of the leaders of the revolution and their Bolshevik patrons.⁹⁶ To fight against the Soviet occupiers and the leaders of the revolution was to swim against the tide. Nevertheless, there were people whom we can now call the heroes of the protest against the Bolshevik and pan-Turkist revolution. We will tell, briefly, the stories of three members of a respected family: being aware of their life stories will help us to understand the nature of the Bukharan revolution.

In *A History of the Manghit Emirs of Bukhara*, Ayni mentions *mullah* Abusaid Makhdum, the son of Najmiddin Makhdum, who lived in Bukhara during the reign of Emir Muzaffar (1860–1885). The Emir appointed Abusaid Makhdum the judge (*qazi*) of the town Shahr-i Sabz (Kesh). “As this *qazi* was a well-known *mullah* and had a reputation as a very just person, the *mullahs* of Shahr-i Sabz, who kept a rein on the people there, stood around him like disciples.”⁹⁷ Qazi Abusaid once learned that the ruler of the province, using the *dukhtarbin* girl watchers, had gathered 120 girls for the harem of Emir Muzaffar Manghit. Qazi Abusaid invited the fathers of those girls to his office and suggested that they summon at once the fiancés of their daughters, so that the judge could marry the girls immediately and thus save them from the Emir’s harem. The gladdened fathers quickly brought bridegrooms for their daughters, and the judge married them, whereupon they returned to their towns and villages. Then the *qazi* wrote a letter to the Emir to inform His Excellency that he had freed several girls in the name of His Excellency, and that he would pray for His Excellency, and that the girls would now pray for His Excellency their entire lives. The Emir was in Karshi (Nasaf) near Shahr-i Sabz at that time. He came immediately to Shahr-i Sabz, furious, and took Qazi Abusaid with him to Karshi. On the way to Karshi, luckily for him, Qazi Abusaid had an opportunity to help the Emir by resolving some complicated problem with wisdom and knowledge, thus quenching the Emir’s anger and winning his pardon.

⁹⁶ “... once the Bolsheviks had secured power they had no hesitation in forbidding many of the things they professed to be fighting for, especially for example freedom of the press and freedom of public meeting” (F. M. Bailey, *Mission to Tashkent*, Oxford Univ. Press, Oxford, 2010, p. 38) [Note to the English translation – A. Sh.].

⁹⁷ S. Ayni, *Kulliyot*, Vol. 10, p. 88.

This story shows Mullah Abusaid as an undoubtedly brave and witty person. I have heard that such a venerable conduct was usual for Mullah Abusaid.

Qazi Abusaid had a child, Ahmadjon Makhdum Abusaid-zoda Hamdi by name. He was a close friend of Sadriddin Ayni and one of the disciples of Sadri Ziyov. *Tazkori Ash'or* (Collection of Poems) of Sadri Ziyov includes several poems by Hamdi as examples of the new poetical style in Bukharan literature. Hamdi participated in the Jadid movement, and the first new-method school in Bukhara was founded in 1908 (1326 A.H.) by him together with Abdulvohid Munzim, Sadriddin Ayni and Homidkhoja Mehri. Official religious scholars (*ulema*) denounced the new-method school of the Jadids as inconsistent with the Shari'a law and the authorities persecuted its teachers and students. Hamdi and his friends in the enlightenment movement valiantly took their lives in their hands. The later life of Hamdi further proved his heroism.

In April 1917, Hamdi escaped to Tashkent where he joined the revolutionary movement together with other Jadids. Some well-known Jadids, including Azimjon Yaqubov, Mukhtorjon Saidjonov (a friend of Payrav Sulaymoni) and Ahmadjon Hamdi, organised the Bukharan Communist Party in the summer of 1918 in Tashkent. In *Namunai Adabiyoti Tojik* (Sample of Tajik Literature), Ayni mentions Hamdi among the founders of the Bukharan Communist Party.

On the eve of the revolution, at a meeting of the Revolutionary Military Bureau on 30 July 1920, Hamdi was appointed the chairman of the Revolutionary Committee, the head of the post-revolutionary government. In modern terms, he became President of the Bukharan Republic to come. That shows how high Hamdi's standing was among the revolutionaries and in the Bukharan Communist Party during his three years of exile (1917–1920), including the days close to the revolution.

As the revolution in Bukhara was getting nearer, Hamdi came to understand better the malign intentions of the Bolsheviks, such as Kuibyshev, Frunze and others. Little by little, he stepped aside from the revolutionary movement.

Shortly before Frunze's invasion of Bukhara, Hamdi, Frunze, Fayzullo Khojaev and other high-ranking officials were to leave Tashkent for the Emirate to take part in the revolution. When they gathered at the Tashkent railway station before the departure, Hamdi did not show up, apparently to avoid being involved in the revolution that directly. Frunze was outraged at his absence, and in his memoirs (he uses his Russified name, Abusaidov) described Hamdi's action (or rather the lack of action) as a "shameful cowardliness".

I had heard about that aborted trip of Hamdi a long time ago, and my memories were revived by reading the writings of Frunze in the book of V. Genis. I was told that Hamdi was Frunze's interpreter in the days of the revolution. He played chess with Frunze, and would lose to make the commander happy – perhaps this would make him less ruthless in the fighting. Among what I heard about Hamdi, there was also a hint that, for some reason, Hamdi was held at a distance from the revolutionary

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events. The significance of that vague suggestion became clear from the memoirs of Frunze quoted in Genis' book.

So, Hamdi did not turn up at the Tashkent railway station to join the making of the revolution in Bukhara. Frunze ordered the Special Department (*Osobyj otdel*) to find him: "I was forced to issue an order to find him through the Special Department and forward him [to the Emirate] under escort".⁹⁸ That order was carried out, and Hamdi was taken to Samarkand under armed escort and turned over to Frunze. In Samarkand, Hamdi disappeared again. And again, he was found and taken back to Frunze. Hamdi was not able to stand aside any more, and he had to join, reluctantly, the revolutionary events.

Kuibyshev and Frunze needed reputable leaders such as Hamdi to be involved in the revolution, and Frunze kept Hamdi at his side by force.

For some reason, Frunze has omitted the rest of the story in his memoirs. However, it has the following very interesting ending discovered by Namoz Hotamov.⁹⁹

We have seen that Frunze's troops "suffered heavy losses and were forced to retreat" on the first day of fighting, and only the aerial bombardment had saved the situation for him.

The order to use the airplanes for an aerial bombardment of the city had to be signed by Hamdi (Abusaidov), the Chairman-to-be of the Revolutionary Committee, Fayzulloh Khojaev, the Chairman of the future Council of People's Nazirs (Commissars), and the Front Commander Frunze. Hamdi refused to sign the order, opposed to the bombing of his dear city and holy motherland, the Noble Bukhara. Frunze and Khojaev failed to persuade Hamdi to sign and Khojaev signed in place of Hamdi.

That refusal by Ahmadjon Hamdi is an example of exceptional courage. Frunze's eyes were red with anger and the stubborn Hamdi, standing face to face with him, had his life at stake but stood firm.

Hamdi was soon relieved of his post as the head of the Revolutionary Committee. After the revolution, he held various insignificant appointments. When Tajikistan had been established as a separate administrative unit, he moved to its capital Dushanbe and worked in the press and publishing. He wrote poems but was not as eloquent a poet as before the revolution. In 1937, he was jailed and executed.

The son of Hamdi also had an eventful and unusual life. His name was Anvar Ahmadov. Among a group of gifted children supervised by Abdulvohid Munzim, he was sent to study in Germany in 1922. Having been educated there, he returned to Russia to become a master engineer in the factories of Leningrad (St Petersburg). As his father fell under suspicion in 1920 and was eventually arrested and executed in 1937, Anvar Ahmadov became the 'son of an enemy of the people' in the Stalinist parlance, and avoided visiting Bukhara and Dushanbe where his father was well known. He was involved in the Soviet space programme and had appointments at the Baikonur cosmodrome.

⁹⁸ V. Genis, *It's Time to Finish with Bukhara...*, p. 39.

⁹⁹ N. Hotamov, *A History of the Tajik People (From the 1860s to 1924)*, Dushanbe, 2007, pp. 242, 262.

Ahmadv said that he had, in his home in Leningrad, all of the Tajik books published in the Latin and Cyrillic scripts and all of the gramophone records of Tajik music he could get. He attended all concerts of Tajik music in Leningrad and even in Moscow, to sit in the last row and weep listening to Tajik songs. Once, when the Lahuti Drama Theatre from Dushanbe was on tour in Leningrad, the actors noticed a man sitting at every performance in the last row who would leave at the end wiping tears. Finally, the actors became acquainted with him, heard about his life on foreign soil, and discovered that he was the son of Hamdi.

Ahmadv spent the end of his life in Dushanbe and published a book about his father. He would say very little about his own past, apparently reluctant to remember the events of his trouble-filled life. It is unfortunate that I have not written down his life story as he told it.

This is what I know about the lives of three members of one family, as little as it is. The first was the courageous Qazi Abusaid, and then his son Ahmadjon Makhdum Hamdi, a brave person who became a martyr and, in the next generation, Anvar Ahmadv whom, because of the noble courage of his father and grandfather, was forced to spend his life as an emigrant. Yet, he did not forget his mother tongue and cherished his love of Tajik music, of his country and people. I think this also required quite a deal of courage and devotion.

As Hamdi was purged in 1937, it was not possible for Ayni to write openly about him in his *Reminiscences* published in 1949–54. However, he mentions a certain Ahmadjon in connection with the death of Muhammad Siddiq Hayrat and his funeral. It was not clear who that person was, but now we know that that Ahmadjon, who also features in other writings of Ayni, was Ahmadjon Hamdi.

CHAPTER 10

The *Diary* of Sadri Ziyo presents an account of the looting of Bukhara and the Emirate provinces by hungry and aggressive Bolshevik soldiers. For several days, towns and villages were pillaged and their inhabitants killed if present.

The plundering of the victorious Bolshevik soldiers reached a point whereby Bukhara was left naked. A high-ranking representative of Moscow, reporting to Lenin on the pillaging of Bukhara, apologetically explained that “Bukhara has been treated, unfortunately, in the same manner as any other city liberated by our soldiers when they get out of hand. It was not any better in Persia. And had that not that happened in Rostov too? and in Kharkov?”.¹⁰⁰ However, Bukhara suffered from the Bolshevik plundering more than many other cities. Another representative from Moscow, Mashitskii by name, sent a telegram to Moscow on 21 September 1920 to report that, “The whole Red Army participated in the plundering and two full wagons were sent to Tashkent. ... The plundering has now spread to the villages. We are receiving complaints about the rape of women and girls”.¹⁰¹

Kuibyshev, who was appointed the representative of Moscow in Bukhara at the beginning of the revolution, put into his *Diary* on 15 September 1920, that “the soldiers continue plundering valuables”. On September 16, he notes that “the soldiers robbed 21 boxes of jewellery in Vabkent”. Fayzullo Khojaev confirms that, in plundering, “the commanders (all kinds of *Belovs*) set an example. In fact, they just walked on gold objects and trampled on jewellery”.

Belov, referred to by Khojaev, was the commander of the ‘Bukharan Group’ among Frunze’s regiments, and he was found to possess a bag of gold ingots a few days after the victory. Another document reports that “the occupied villages have been looted bare”. The locals believed that the revolution was an excuse for “the Russians to come to Bukhara only to rob it”.¹⁰² Without doubt, that belief was justified. Occupation and plundering were hiding behind the slogan of revolution.

The booty of one Red officer and his deputy, taken in Ghijduvan, included: “A box of jewellery, a sack of gold, golden belts, gold and silver weapons inlaid with precious stones, a golden stick, a diamond star, a silver casket with precious stones, etc.”.¹⁰³

Kuibyshev was doing nothing to stop the plundering. On the contrary, he tried to conceal it and was reported to have done

¹⁰⁰ V. Genis, *It's Time to Finish with Bukhara* ..., p. 40.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 42.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

“nothing to enforce clearing the mosques of stables and barracks”.¹⁰⁴

The pillagers went unpunished. The Commander Belov was spared any punishment by the decision of the Organizational Bureau of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of 4 April 1921 “to abrogate the case of Comrade Belov”. Very few people were detained or questioned, and nobody was punished.

The plundering was committed by the Soviet soldiers and commanders, that is by individuals. The looting also proceeded at a large-scale, official level. Thus, the Front Commander Frunze removed the Emir’s treasury to Tashkent. The treasury consisted of the following: “Bukharan gold, 1,148,380 pieces; Russian gold valued at 4,365,100 Russian roubles; Hamburg gold, 1,108 *puds*; silver, 45 tons; Russian silver, 1,385 *puds*; Bukharan coins (silver), 62,834,780 pieces; gold dust and threads, 16 *puds*; silver from the Bank of Russia, 864 *puds*; diamonds, 3482 carats”, and many other things¹⁰⁵ (one *pud* is equal to 16 kg). The Bukharan gold and silver was said to be taken to Russia in several wagons.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p.43.

¹⁰⁵ N. Hotamov, *A History of the Tajik People*, pp. 260–261.

CHAPTER 11

As the days and months of the revolution were moving on, Fayzulloh Khojaev and his supporters perhaps realized that they had been deceived and used by the Bolsheviks. It is more plausible, however, that they were content with the power they gained and did not care that their country had lost even those traces of independence that the Emirate of Bukhara had, that its towns and villages had been destroyed, and that their people had lost all they had.

Fayzulloh Khojaev was the son of one of the most notable Bukharans, the millionaire Ubaydulloh-khoja. Bukhara had several millionaires at the beginning of the twentieth century, one of whom was the Emir himself, one was Ubaydulloh-khoja, and the others were Muhiddin Mansur-zoda and Jurabek Arab. Mansur-zoda participated in the movement of the Progressivists and was supporting the Bukharan Jadids financially. (Similarly, Sadri Ziyov and his nephew, the poet Sayidjon Nazmi, were secretly providing a certain sum to the intellectuals every month. Nazmi was executed for this in 1918.)

Muhiddin Mansur-zoda was providing Sadridin Ayni with help and support. When Ayni had to flee from Bukhara in 1915–1916, he moved to a place called Kizilteppa where Mansur-zoda had a cotton factory. He hired Ayni to operate the scales, one of the easier jobs in the plant. Later, Ayni described that factory in his short novel *Odina*.

The son of Muhiddin Mansur-zoda, Abdulqodir Muhiddin-zoda (1892–1934), was an activist in the Jadid movement. At 17–18 years of age, he was publishing articles on the social and economic conditions of Bukhara in the Tatar newspaper *Vaqt* (Time). His pen name in those articles was Bukhara’i.¹⁰⁶ His articles were very popular with the readers but his identity remained undisclosed.

Ayni writes about these exciting articles of Bukhara’i: “From the beginning of their publication [in 1910 — M. Sh.], these articles stimulated public thought and made the Young Bukharans boiling, thus promoting their greater zeal and enthusiasm for their activity”.¹⁰⁷

Ayni highly appreciated the early writings of Abdulqodir Muhiddin-zoda (and some of his later works), and later became a mentor of the young writer. The saying, “The excellent pupil is he who can amaze his teacher”, well applies to Muhiddin-zoda.

¹⁰⁶ For details, see S. Ayni, *A History of the Bukharan Revolution*, pp. 71–79; P. Gulmurodzoda. *Enlightenment and the New System of the World*, Dushanbe, Irfon, 2006, pp. 38–47.

¹⁰⁷ S. Ayni, *A History of the Bukharan Revolution*, p. 72.

After April 1917, Abdulqodir Muhiddin-zoda moved to Tashkent, and became known as Muhiddinov. In 1918, he joined the Turkestan Communist Party. Despite that, he openly opposed the colonialist policies of Soviet Russia as soon as he arrived to Tashkent. The first government of Soviet Turkestan did not have a single member from the native populations, for example, Uzbeks. Muhiddinov protested vehemently.

The opposition of Muhiddinov to the Russian imperialist policy became even stronger after the Bukharan revolution. When appointed the Chairman of the Revolutionary Committee (the head of the government) on 4 September 1920, he tried to keep down the widespread looting by Red soldiers, but with little success. The victorious Bolshevik soldiers felt above reproach and were out of control. Fires continued in the city for several days, but the occupying troops were too busy pillaging to help fight the fire.

This provoked a strong protest by Muhiddinov. He demanded that the Red Army be withdrawn from Bukhara and that a national army be created. He also suggested that the Russian and Tatar communists, sent in by Tashkent in large numbers to work in the Party and government offices, be recalled from Bukhara because they were subduing Bukhara to Soviet Russia. The Tatar communists, who had been sent in groups to Bukhara, strengthened pan-Turkism in Bukhara. Thereby, Muhiddinov's demand to withdraw them from Bukhara was clearly in the interests of the Tajik nation.

Muhiddinov also suggested that the revolutionary organizations of Iran, Afghanistan, India and others be abolished or moved from Bukhara.

Abdulqodir Muhiddinov strived for complete independence of the Bukharan Republic. For example, he suggested that the Peoples' Soviet Republic of Bukhara should have independent political, economic, and cultural relations with countries near and far, such as Iran, Afghanistan, Turkey, England, Germany, and others.

These patriotic proposals of Muhiddinov were not accepted and the Commission for Turkestan Affairs (*Turkcommission*, the Communist Party organ for Turkestan), among others, accused Muhiddinov of "bourgeois nationalism," a grave and dangerous accusation at that time.

As a result, Muhiddinov was removed from his post in August 1921 and was not re-elected the Chairman of the Central Executive Committee. He worked for some time in various government offices but his position and behaviour remained ideologically flawed from the Bolshevik viewpoint. Just as before, he kept arguing with Fayzullo Khojaev. Jalol Ikromi notes that, while Khojaev was publishing his articles in Turkic (Uzbek) in the newspaper *Bukhoro Akhbori* (The Bukhara News), Abdulqodir Muhiddinov's responses were being published invariably in Tajik.¹⁰⁸

Muhiddinov was the first among the Tajik intellectuals to publish a history of the Tajik people. His book on the history of

¹⁰⁸ J. Ikromi, *Ibid.*, p. 36.

Bukhara was published in Tajik in several issues of the Uzbek newspaper *Bukhoro Akhbori*.

After the revolution, the rivalry between Abdulqodir Muhiddinov and Fayzulloh Khojaev has transformed into a conflict between a persistent champion of the Tajik people and a pan-Uzbekist. The revolutionary struggle in Bukhara was gradually taking a patriotic hue, especially during its early stages abroad. However, pan-Turkism gained much in strength after the revolution, and the conflict evolved into the opposition of pan-Uzbekists and pro-Tajiks. As we will see below, Muhiddinov was the leader of the Tajik party.

During the years of political emigration (1917–1920), at the beginning of the Bukharan revolution, Muhiddinov fell into the trap of pan-Turkism. It is not clear why he was attracted to these ideas. This could be a success of the masterful propaganda of Abdurrauf Fitrat and Fayzulloh Khojaev (with whom he seems to have had some family relation); or the effect of pan-Uzbekism, which reached a peak of popularity in Tashkent in 1917–1920; or some other influences had had an effect, causing Abdulqodir Muhiddinov to gravitate towards pan-Turkism. In any case, his ethnicity was recorded as Uzbek in all documents from the beginning of the revolution until the middle of the 1920s. Being a devoted champion of Tajiks, he formally considered himself an Uzbek.

One reason that Abdulqodir Muhiddinov turned to support the Tajiks was his closeness to Sadridin Ayni who was a friend of Muhiddin Mansur-zoda, the father of Abdulqodir Muhiddinov. Mansur-zoda helped Ayni on various occasions¹⁰⁹ and, from 1915–1916, a stable friendship arose between Ayni and Abdulqodir, which grew into the relationship of a teacher and a disciple.

Ayni's influence was of special importance in turning Muhiddinov from pan-Turkism towards the Tajiks. Munzim and Zehni, among many others, were released from the spell of Turkomania through the encouragement of Ayni who explained the nature of the conflict between Turks and Tajiks and the essence of the collision between pan-Turkism and the Tajik national identity, and inspired in them a devotion to the freedom and independence of the Tajik people. Munzim, Zehni, Muhiddinov and even the inveterate pan-Turkist Abdulloh Rahimboev recognized Ayni's influence in their release from pan-Turkism, and some of them, for instance Munzim and Muhiddinov, later published letters of confession.

Muhiddinov often helped Ayni to earn some income. In 1923, he helped Ayni to get the job of adviser at the Bukharan Consulate in Samarkand. Later, Ayni was appointed the head of a department at *Bukhgostorg* (the State Trading Company of the Bukharan Republic) through the assistance of Muhiddinov, where he worked "from the beginning of 1924 up to the beginning of 1925".¹¹⁰ Ayni had begun writing his novel *Odina* in the storage of that office among the full and empty bags and boxes.

¹⁰⁹ S. Ayni, *Kulliyot*, Vol. 1, pp. 65–67.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 97.

The territorial carving up of Central Asia began in 1924 and the Commission for the National Delimitation of Central Asia was established in Tashkent. The well-known supporter of Tajiks, Abdulqodir Muhiddinov was made a member of the Uzbek Sub-Committee of the Commission, perhaps to enhance its validity. Muhiddinov made no secret of his Tajik sympathies within that Sub-Committee and his position became widely known. This was apparently the reason for his appointment as Chairman of the People's Nazirs (Commissars) of the newly formed Soviet Socialist Autonomous Republic of Tajikistan, that is, the first prime minister of Tajikistan.

One of the first actions of Muhiddinov in his prime-ministerial role was to charge his teacher Sadriddin Ayni with the compilation of an anthology of Tajik literature, *Namunai Adabiyoti Tojik* (Sample of Tajik Literature), which has served well in proving and defining the national identity of the Tajik people and summarising the long history of their language and culture. This book represented a serious argument against pan-Turkism.

In 1924–1929, Tajikistan was an autonomous republic within Uzbekistan and the rope of subordination to Uzbekistan pressed hard against the neck of the newly formed Tajikistan. The budget of Tajikistan, equipment and materials for construction, education, the press, etc., were supplied to Tajikistan from Uzbekistan. To be more precise, the money and equipment were either not supplied at all, or delayed, or, after much exertion, delivered incomplete, causing much difficulty for the government of Tajikistan. Most of the pressure was on Muhiddinov, the prime minister. The archives and press of the second half of the 1920's provide ample evidence of this.

I have heard that Abdulqodir Muhiddinov and Fayzullo Khojaev, who was the prime minister of Uzbekistan, once travelled to Moscow by rail in the same special government carriage. In those days, the train took 15 days to reach Moscow. During those 15 days, Muhiddinov and Khojaev had numerous discussions, one of them especially heated. Muhiddinov spoke about the bad condition of the Tajik people and devastated Tajikistan, which was the poorest part of Central Asia, and about the hardships and obstacles in rebuilding Tajikistan. Muhiddinov spoke fervently. Khojaev answered, and his answers were as fervent. The 'conversation' continued until reaching Moscow with that same emotion and anxiety. When they reached Moscow, Khojaev went to see Stalin and complained about Muhiddinov, alleging that he is a bourgeois nationalist opposed to socialist internationalism: he only worries about the Tajik people; he does not worry about the other Soviet peoples; he has set the Tajik people against the other peoples, and so forth. That defamation by Khojaev had an impact on Stalin, and Stalin declined Muhiddinov's request for an audience the next day.

After the establishment of autonomous Tajikistan in 1924, tensions between Muhiddinov and Khojaev, and the malicious actions of Khojaev against both the Tajik people in general, and Muhiddinov in particular, continued. The conflict even intensified further.

From 1927, the leaders of Tajikistan Nusratullo Makhsum (Lutfulloev), Abdulqodir Muhiddinov, Abdurrahim

Hojiboev, Shirinsho, Shotemur, Nisor Muhammad and others advocated the separation of Tajikistan from Uzbekistan, with the cities of Khujand, Bukhara, Samarkand, Surkhan, and others to be included into Tajikistan. Nusratullo Makhsum wrote a detailed letter about this to Stalin in 1928.

Muhiddinov also wrote a letter to Stalin in 1928, and later published it as an article in Tajik and Russian with the title, *Are the people of the city of Bukhara and its surroundings Tajiks or Uzbeks?*¹¹¹

Lobbying for the creation of the Soviet Republic of Tajikistan became a responsibility of Abdulqodir Muhiddinov and the prime minister's assistant, Abdurrahim Hojiboev. They expended much effort in this matter and, according to one account, Abdurrahim Hojiboev spoke about this subject to Stalin, who played the central role in decision making in Moscow. Finally, in 1929, the Soviet Socialist Republic of Tajikistan, the seventh republic of the Soviet Union, was founded. Abdurrahim Hojiboev was appointed its first prime minister.

The role of Nusratullo Makhsum, Abdulqodir Muhiddinov and Abdurrahim Hojiboev in the formation of the Soviet Republic of Tajikistan later became a liability. Nusratullo Makhsum and Abdurrahim Hojiboev were relieved of their positions and, in 1937, executed.

Abdulqodir Muhiddinov had also committed other 'crimes.' For example, he resisted changing the name of the city of Khujand to Leninabad, and that of Dushanbe to Stalinabad. He came out strongly against one of the big plans of the Soviet government to cultivate only one kind of industrial crop in Tajikistan, cotton.

Fayzullo Khojaev, who was the prime minister of the large and powerful Uzbekistan, manipulated the official perception of Muhiddinov's actions in Moscow and did not shy away from inventing other 'wrongdoings.' (Such as, that Muhiddinov had money in the banks of Switzerland and India.) Abdulqodir Muhiddinov was jailed in 1932.

There were rumours that, when Muhiddinov was in jail, a journalist met him in the corridor and asked the reason for his imprisonment. Muhiddinov replied, "Ask Fayzullo Khojaev!"

One of the main reasons for the arrest and further suffering of Muhiddinov was his struggle against Fayzullo Khojaev and pan-Turkism and his efforts to protect the interests of the Tajik nation. He was executed in 1934.

There is an account that Muhiddinov was spared in 1934, and that a journalist saw him in a prison in Ashkhabad in 1941, in a state of utter mental deterioration.

This is the story of one of the heroes of the Bukharan revolution and one of the popular political leaders of the 1920s, Abdulqodir Muhiddinov.

¹¹¹ See *The Lesson of Self-Consciousness*, Dushanbe, Irfon, 1989, pp. 58–66. Also: *The Tajik Language Based on Discussions*, Dushanbe, 2006; and P. Gulmurodzoda, *Language and National Self-Consciousness*, Dushanbe, 2007.

CHAPTER 12

It is not surprising that some Bukharan Jadids were reluctant to cooperate with radicals such as Fayzulloh Khojaev. Some of them had been avoiding the selfish Khojaev since the early stages of his preparations for the revolution that drew him closer to the Bolsheviks, of whom he fawned. The others separated from him later and withdrew from the 'revolutionary movement' of the Bukharans in Tashkent. Some high-principled Jadids even chose not to return to Bukhara after the revolution, preferring to stay in poverty and to end their lives in exile.

Other former Jadids were unable to pull their heads out of the Bolshevik trap while in exile and, like Ahmadjon Hamdi, were compelled to join the revolutionaries. Some, such as Abdulqodir Muhiddinov, were involved with the revolutionaries but opposed the violence and rampage of the Bolsheviks and their puppets.

Sadriddin Ayni managed to keep himself out of the organization of the 'Bukharan revolutionaries' who became very active in Turkestan in 1918–1920, once they had been taken under the wings of Bolsheviks. As Ayni writes in *A Brief Account of My Life*, "The leaders and members of the organization of 'Bukharan revolutionaries' were the Bukharan rich and small merchants. Another part of this organization were the sons of *mullahs* and *makhdums*¹¹² of Bukhara".¹¹³ For this reason, Ayni avoided any close cooperation with the 'Bukharan revolutionaries'. Although during the period of 'enlightenment' until 1917 Ayni had a very productive cooperation with some of the wealthy and many of the clergy families, later, and perhaps because of the increasing class and caste divide, he had suddenly become cautious with them. In any case, it is clear that Ayni kept at a distance from the 'Bukharan revolutionaries'. During his exile from 1918 to 1920, Ayni did not maintain any contacts, not even with Munzim, who was his close friend from childhood and belonged to the circle of Sadri Ziyo. After the February Revolution of 1917 in Russia, the Emir's aborted reforms and the terror of 1917, Munzim joined the extremists causing a bitter conflict with, and professional separation from Ayni, as described in detail in Ayni's *A History of the Intellectual Revolution in Bukhara*.¹¹⁴ From that time, April 1917, when Ayni opposed the 'demonstration of appreciation' proposed by Fayzulloh Khojaev and Munzim, he avoided any extremist movement. During the emigration before the revo-

¹¹² The word *makhdum* in Bukhara at that time was used as a title of respect for people of religion and wealth. [Note to the English translation – B. A.]

¹¹³ S. Ayni, *Kulliyot*, Vol. 1, pp. 91–92.

¹¹⁴ S. Ayni, *Kulliyot*, Vol. 14, pp. 179–206.

lution in Bukhara, Ayni cut off his relationships with some friends and colleagues. He remained alone for some time and suffered from his loneliness.

This state of mind is reflected in his poem *Shabj Tanho'i* (The night of solitude) written in Samarkand in 1918 and published in the first Tajik weekly newspaper, *The Spark of Revolution* in 1920.¹¹⁵

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In the night of solitude, bleeds my heart,
Bleeds my heart in the night of solitude.
My lovelorn heart, where have I lost you?
Where have I lost my lovelorn heart?

Whom can I tell of my bleeding heart?
Of my bleeding heart, who would listen?
From whom shall I seek the lost heart?
The lost heart, from whom shall I seek it?

I have neither companion nor friend,
I have neither friend nor companion.
I have neither confidant nor sympathizer,
I have neither sympathizer nor confidant.

The height of disgrace holds my head,
It holds my head, the height of disgrace.
Where should I put my restless head?
Where should I put my restless head?

I have neither a home nor a bed,
I have neither a bed nor a home.
I have neither a nest nor a pillow,
I have neither a pillow nor a nest.

What suffering is the pain of distance!
The pain of distance is so hard!
The sorrow of abandonment does not leave the heart,
It stays in the heart, the sorrow of abandonment.

The yearning for my companions
– what is such a punishment for?
For what am I punished by the yearning for my companions?
The pain of separation, why does it torment me?
Why am I tormented by the pain of separation?

O' Lord, what should I do in the night of solitude?
The restless head, the lovelorn heart.
Together with sorrow, let go the world,
O' God, the night of solitude!¹¹⁶

¹¹⁵ S. Ayni, *Kulliyot*, Vol. 8, p. 293.

¹¹⁶ *Шабӣ танҳӯӣ дили ман хун шуд, / Дили ман хун шуд шаби танҳӯӣ. / Дили шайдоӣ ба кучо гӯм шуд? / Ба кучо гӯм шуд дили шайдоӣ? // Ба кӣ меғӯям дили хунгашта? / Дили хунгашта ба кӣ меғӯям? / Зи кӣ меҷӯям дили гӯмгашта? / Дили гӯмгашта зи кӣ*

This poem renders the spirit of a political exile who is far away from the action, from his motherland, friends, and dear ones. Ayni had many old friends in Samarkand, and he found new friends, most of whom were struggling intellectuals. Their kindness and favour bestowed strength upon Ayni, and he continued revolutionary enlightenment struggle among them. Nevertheless, the defeat in Bukhara, isolation from the motherland and his former comrades were a source of deep sorrow. In 1937, in the Uzbek newspaper *Bukhara Haqiqati* (The Truth of Bukhara), an anonymous article was published in Tajik entitled *Neqobpushii Ayni* (Ayni's Mask). Its author called Ayni "the enemy of the people". In particular, the article described the poem *Shabji tanho'i* as a song of lament and despair, anti-revolutionary by nature and an example of escapism. For sure, it was nothing more than false accusations. The poem does not express any anti-revolutionary feelings. Not the escapism, but the sorrow of being away from past activity and separation from friends and comrades are reflected in this poem.

Ayni was careful in his conduct amid social and political conflicts and stayed away from extremism. This attitude drew him from Munzim, Fayzullo Khojaev and other earlier comrades. But, in 1918–1920, he did not oppose or resist the 'Bukharan revolutionaries' but even once accepted their invitation to cooperate: "I was invited in June 1920 by the Communist organization of Bukhara to Tashkent. I stayed there one month and wrote all of the projects, statements, and other things that needed my pen in two languages, Tajik and Uzbek".¹¹⁷ That was Ayni's contribution to preparations for the revolution.

After the revolution of Bukhara, Ayni had a cool relationship with the new Soviet government of Bukhara. He did not take any office from them. (He declined their invitation.) He did not even return to Bukhara. That is, he wanted to stay far away from the new officials, and he remained in Samarkand.

Ayni, who did not return to Bukhara after the revolution and did not want to cooperate with the pan-Turkist officials of Bukhara, has explained the reason as follows: "There were distrustful people at the head of the Executive Central Committee and The Soviet of People's Commissars of Bukhara".¹¹⁸ Here Ayni refers to Mu'minjon Aminov, who was chairman of the

мечӯям ? // На маро ҳамдам, на маро мӯнис, / На маро мӯнис, на маро ҳамдам. / На маро маҳрам, на маро мушфиқ, / На маро мушфиқ, на маро маҳрам. // Сари расвой сари ман дорад, / Сари ман дорад сари расвой. / Сари савдой ба куҷо монам? / Ба куҷо монам сари савдой? // На маро хона, на маро бистар, / На маро бистар, на маро хона. / На маро лона, на маро болин, / На маро болин, на маро лона. // Чӣ бало мушкил алами дурӣ? / Алами дурӣ чӣ бало мушкил? / Наравад аз дил ғами маҳчурӣ, / Ғами маҳчурӣ наравад аз дил. // Ғами ҳамзодон чӣ ситам бар ман? / Чӣ ситам бар ман ғами ҳамзодон? / Алами ҳичрон чӣ ҷафо бар ман? / Чӣ ҷафо бар ман алами ҳичрон? // Чӣ қунам, ё раб, шаби танҳой? / Сари савдой, дили шайдой / Ба ҷаҳон бо ҳам зи ҷаҳон барҳам / Бихурад, ё раб, шаби танҳой!

¹¹⁷ S. Ayni, *Kulliyot*, Vol. 1, p. 92.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 94.

Executive Central Committee (ECC) several times, and Fayzulloh Khojaev, who was prime minister and chairman of the Soviet of People's Commissars (SPC). Ayni delicately called them "the suspect people", even though he knew that, for example, Fayzulloh Khojaev was a harmful person.

It is also clear that Ayni did not have a good relationship with Fayzulloh Khojaev. The bad relation of Ayni with Fayzulloh Khojaev started in 1916 or in April 1917. The intellectuals divided into two groups over the problem of the Emir's reforms and welcoming the Order of Reform, and Ayni joined the group opposed to Fayzulloh Khojaev, Munzim, and Fitrat. That difference between Ayni and Fayzulloh Khojaev continued until the end of Fayzulloh Khojaev's life. They had discussions from time to time. That coldness between them had started from their differences in principle. Ayni was opposed to Fayzulloh's political objective from the beginning, and that difference continued to the end.

The relation of Ayni to 'the Bukharan revolutionaries' and Fayzulloh Khojaev, and his Soviet government did not mean that he was opposed to the revolution and the Soviet government. Ayni gladly welcomed all three Russian revolutions: the revolution of 1905, and the February and October revolutions of 1917. Especially after he received 75 lashes from the Emir's executioners in April 1917, and in March 1918 when the blood-suckers of the Emir killed Ayni's younger brother, the intellectual Sirojiddin. As a result of such tragedies, which went to his head and the progressive people of society, he adopted a revolutionary spirit. Ayni started to work for the revolution from 1918, and his intellectual activity took on a revolutionary tint. Ayni wrote several songs in the praise of the October Revolution. The first of them was *Marshi hurriyyat (or Surudi ozodi – March of Liberty or Song of Freedom)* written in November 1918. Tajik revolutionary literature began. It is clear from the writings of Ayni that he was happy about the destruction of the Manghit system in Bukhara, but he was dissatisfied with the course the revolution took (and, essentially, not a revolution, but an occupation by the Red Army). Similarly, he was not satisfied with the regime Fayzulloh Khojaev and other self-centred forces set up after revolution in Bukhara. Ayni was dissatisfied with the behaviour and actions of the 'Bukharan revolutionaries' and their unlawful results.

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Freedom or

CHAPTER 13

It is clear that not all intellectuals participated in the revolution of Bukhara. Some of them took themselves aside from the preparation for the revolution and some like Hamdi, regretted being with the Bolshevik revolutionaries and finally spoke out in protest. (Hamdi's not signing the order to bombard Bukhara was a strong protest against the revolutionary savagery.) Some, like Ayni, chose to remain neutral. Whether before or after the revolution, they did not cooperate with the exiled Bukharan revolutionaries, or they did some as a deception. Some of them chose another course. Sadri Ziyoy in his *Diary* totally rejected the revolution and the Soviet republics.

Of course, the attitude towards the revolution was varied because the revolution itself was an event with many contradictions. Each notable personality of the time had a particular reaction. And the revolutionary activities of the fighters were different from one another in content. There were also people who did not accept the revolution, but who worked in Soviet offices.

But we do not know anyone who would, before the 1990s, have said out loudly that the revolution of Bukhara was not a true revolution. Perhaps some said so quietly. Perhaps those who, as a form of protest, turned down high offices after the revolution, went abroad, and published a letter of protest. But those who stayed here, all of them called the victory on 2 September 1920 'the Revolution of Bukhara,' and sometimes even 'the People's Revolution of Bukhara,' as if all of the people had helped to bring it about. From 1920, Ayni described it as a revolution in all his writings and eulogized it.

Moreover, most Tajik intellectuals welcomed the revolution of Bukhara and were ready to serve it. Some of them even considered the revolution of Bukhara a solution to their problems with respect to implementing intellectual ideals. Habibulloh Makhdum Avhadi wrote in the poem *Inqilob-e surkh* (The Red Revolution), which resembles Lahuti's poems:¹¹⁹

The first goal of the Revolution is education,
Remember this lesson from the Red Book.¹²⁰

Intellectuals such as Avhadi believed the revolution of Bukhara to be a social and cultural revolution. A hope appeared in their hearts out of history. In the 17th and 18th centuries historical despair increased in the Tajik society because it seemed there

¹¹⁹ *Таърихи адабиёти советии тоҷик* (History of the Soviet Tajik Literature), Vol. 1, Dushanbe, Donish, 1984, p. 20.

¹²⁰ *Аз инқилоб мақсади аввал маориф аст, / Ин як сабақ ба ҳӯи бидор аз китоби сурх.*

was no hope in the future. But in the second half of the 19th century, following the occupation of Central Asia by Russia, the historical hope appeared again in the works of Ahmad Donish and intellectuals sought ways for national revival. With the revolution of Bukhara a great hope and the hope of realizing old desires gained greater strength in the hearts of intellectuals. They thought that their wishes would now be realized.

Unfortunately, however, most of those intellectual hopes evaporated. The revolution rejected many of the intellectual ideals, and Bukhara entered into another path after the revolution, and its leaders chose to be obedient to the Bolshevik empire and Bolshevik principles.

As a result, the feeling of despair and disbelief in the revolution, and regret of their revolutionary activity gradually appeared and began to grow stronger among some of the former Jadids who were loyal to the ideals of intellectual humanism. Avhadi's experience is worthy of attention from that perspective.

Avhadi (his official name was Habibulloh Ibodullaev) was the grandson of Abulfazl Sirat and the son of Ibodullah Makhdum Ibrat. The mother of the author of these lines was the sister of Avhadi. Avhadi worked in the Ibn Sino Library in Bukhara. His two brothers had a small grocery shop in Bukhara. It is mentioned in the book *Armoghan-e Sabboq* that the name of those two brothers were Sa'dulloh Makhdum and Fayzulloh Makhdum.¹²¹ Those two brothers were unable to tolerate the increasing hardship of life at the end of 1920 and set off for Afghanistan. They wanted their younger brother Avhadi to join them. Avhadi did not want to go to Afghanistan and said, "I was a Jadid, and we Jadids made a revolution. Therefore, the Soviets will not bother me. I will not leave the motherland". His brothers went to Afghanistan together with their wives, children and elderly mother. Avhadi stayed in Bukhara. But after two or three years his tolerance came to an end, and around 1934 he sold his house and went to Kerki (a town near the frontier) in order to pass into Afghanistan. However, for some reason, perhaps because he could not afford the services of Turkmen guides to take him, his wife, and his children across the border, Avhadi was unable to pass to Afghanistan, and he returned to Bukhara. Because he had sold his house, he had no house in Bukhara, and he had to become a tenant.

In 1937, because of this 'misdeed' of receiving a letter from Afghanistan from his mother and brothers, and he was imprisoned and died in Siberia.

In the end, Habibulloh Avhadi's heading for Afghanistan shows that this former Jadid in the 1930s, or twenty years after the revolution, became afflicted with hopelessness and despair. He lost enthusiasm for the Soviet order. His devotion to the revolution vanished. Among the thousands upon thousands who turned from Bukhara to Afghanistan during the 1920s and 1930s, many of them were former intellectuals who had served the revolution and then later regretted it. Avhadi was one of them.

¹²¹ Шайх Абдулқодир Кароматуллоҳи Бухорӣ (Sheikh Abdulqodir Karomatulloh Bukhara'i), *Тазкираи Саббоқ* (Tazkira-i Sabboq: The Collected Poems of Sabboq), Tashkent, Fan, 2007, p. 100.

Another was Hoshim Shoiq. The famous poet Hoshim Shoiq was one of the Jadid intellectuals before the revolution. He studied in Turkey, and after the revolution he entered the service of the People's Soviet Republic of Bukhara. Very soon, however, his heart grew cold toward the 'People's Revolution' and the 'People's Republic'.

When he was appointed the ambassador in Afghanistan, he stayed there and until the end of his life did cultural work in Afghanistan and became very famous.

Even the consequences of the activities of Fayzulloh Khojaev, that famous leader of the revolution, the Republic of Bukhara and Republic of Uzbekistan, who is considered one of the most skilful politicians of Central Asia, are instructive. As we said, his political activities from the beginning were accompanied by repeated acts of treason and faithlessness. His gravitation toward pan-Turkism and pan-Uzbekism was treason to his own nation, the Tajiks. His uniting the Republic of Bukhara with Soviet Uzbekistan, that is, with the Soviet empire, meant that he betrayed his homeland. He put Bukhara up for sale, and with its price, he bought the post of prime minister of Uzbekistan from Moscow. For that reason, and for other political reasons, Stalin did not expect loyalty from him, and he was executed in 1937. At that time he was 42 years old, and he died young.

What has been said shows that what they called the revolution of Bukhara was a very unfair and illegal event. The revolution of Bukhara was the result of mistakes by some inexperienced politicians such as Hamdi and Munzim, the result of the treason and crimes of some unworthy children of the nation such as Fayzulloh Khojaev, and the result of the aggression and occupation of the world-devouring Bolsheviks. The revolution of Bukhara was devoid of high ideals and principles. It was not based on humanitarian ideals.

CHAPTER 14

The nature of the Bolshevik and pan-Turkist revolution in Bukhara is revealed deeper and clearer when assessed in the context of the history of the Tajik people.

To understand these problems, we have first to turn to the previous centuries, to the history of a great tragedy in Mawarannahr (Transoxiana of the Greeks). These dramatic events are the subject of a number of my works, but it is necessary to briefly recount them here.

At the beginning of the sixteenth century, the Shaibanid Uzbeks invaded Transoxiana. The hard-fought, incessant wars of the 16th and 17th centuries (the 10th and 11th centuries A.H.) caused much destruction. In the 18th century, their intensity was at their peak.

Transoxiana became an arena of incessant raids of various Turkic and Mongol nomadic tribes, such as Uzbeks, Kazakhs, Karakalpaks, Kipchaks, Kara-Kitays and Kalmyks. Some of them were based in Transoxiana, the others were invading from the neighbouring steppes and deserts.

In 1722 (1135 A.H.), Tsar Peter I of Russia sent an Italian, Florio Beneveni as an envoy to Bukhara, who stayed there until 1725. Beneveni wrote several letters to Peter I and presented a report describing in detail the state of Bukhara and its people. Those letters were published with detailed comments in 1988.¹²² It is clear from the description of Beneveni that the great land of Bukhara had been overcome by disorder, unconstrained and ruthless raids of the nomads whom he calls 'Ozbek' (the letter 'o' in the Russian transliteration 'ozbek' can be a version of the Tajik 'y', and 'yзбaк' evolved into 'yзбaк' in the pronunciation of the Tajik population of the lowlands of Central Asia). According to Beneveni, the Ozbeks comprised 32 tribes,¹²³ all of them fighting with each other and all busy pillaging. All the cities and villages of the land were ransacked and all roads were in the hands of the nomadic robbers: "The highway robbery is everywhere; plundering is everywhere".¹²⁴ The trade routes to Iran and India were also under the nomads and thus interrupted.

According to Beneveni, "Samarkand is also a great city, but now it is half empty. It has been destroyed by the raiding of

¹²² *Посланник Петра I на Востоке. Посольство Флорини Беневени в Персию и Бухару в 1718-1725 годах* (The Envoy of Peter I to the Orient: The Embassy of Florio Beneveni to Persia and Bukhara from 1718 to 1725), Moscow, Nauka, 1988. I am grateful to Karomatulloh Shukrulloh for providing me with this book.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, p. 124.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 129.

the Ozbeks”.¹²⁵ Tajiks, the indigenous settled population, were subject to extreme suffering, deprived of any protection.

Beneveni said, “The Tajiks and *Haris*¹²⁶ keep praying to God to release them from the intolerable yoke of the Ozbeks.”¹²⁷ The indigenous population was being driven from their lands.

During the three years that Beneveni was in Bukhara, more than four thousand people migrated to the Moghul India.¹²⁸

Such was the state of Transoxiana in the first quarter of the 18th century.

In addition to all of that, in the 18th century, steppe nomads came every autumn in the harvest time like ants and locusts to take away the whole harvest, to plunder and destroy. The autumn raids of the Turkic nomads once continued for seven years without interruption; according to another account, the harvest was plundered every autumn for twenty years in a row causing unspeakable bloodshed, famine and hunger. The native people, the Tajiks, died by the thousands or escaped from their country. At the end of the 18th century, only two streets were inhabited in Bukhara. Nobody remained in Samarkand. The *madrasas* (religious schools) in Samarkand’s Registan became jackal dens. The following was said about the year 1148 A.H. (1735 A.D.):

In the year one thousand and hundred forty eight,
Samarkand became like a steppe.¹²⁹

Describing the events of 1215 A.H. (1800 A.D.) in *A History of Manghit Emirs of Bukhara*, Ayni notes: “Samarkand was in decay for a long time and, except for three or four households inside the city, neither inhabitants nor building remained there”.¹³⁰ Those “three or four households” were the abode of gypsies. As we can see, for 65 years from 1735 to 1800, Samarkand remained ruined. Later, Samarkand regained its life, but Merv and Balkh disappeared forever as great cities, and today these ancient centres of the Iranian culture are just scattered ruins.

The people of Falghar and Maschoh also left and abandoned their lands. Other cities such as Khujand, Istaravshan, Hīsar and Bukhara were also at the brink of death and remained barely alive.

According to Ahmad Donish, in Bukhara of the late 18th century, “*Madrasa* cells became stalls of water-bearers’ donkeys and grocers’ storehouses as Uzbeks intervened in the state affairs causing disorder in the monarchy”.¹³¹ This was written about the

¹²⁵ *The Envoy of Peter I to the Orient: The Embassy of Florio Beneveni in Persia and Bukhara in 1718–1725*, p. 124.

¹²⁶ *Ҳарӣ*, from Herat: Herati.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 81.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 129.

¹²⁹ *Ба соли ҳазору саду чӣҳлу ҳашт / Самарқанд гардид монанди дашт.*

¹³⁰ S. Ayni, *Kulliyot*, Vol. 10, p. 19.

¹³¹ Аҳмад Дониш (Ahmad Donish), *Рисола* (Risola, or Treatise), Dushanbe, Sarvat, 1992, p. 8.

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very beginning of the rule of the Manghit dynasty. That situation continued for a long time.

The Turk raids and the slaughter of the Tajiks in the 12th century A.H. (the 18th century A.D.) had devastating consequences for the Tajiks of Transoxiana. An immense wave of Tajik emigration followed, the population of Bukhara, Samarkand, Dahbed and other areas escaped to the mountainous regions of the present-day Tajikistan, to Afghanistan, India, Iran and the Arab countries. They escaped from the destroyed and ruined motherland, or rather they left their land to the Turkic tribes. Those who stayed became destitute. The distress of the people and their country, this great historical tragedy that affected the genetic roots of the nation resulted in a *historical despair* in the society. The future had no hope to offer, the nation seemed to be evolving towards extinction.¹³² The history of the Tajik nation in Transoxiana appeared to be close to its end. However, this was only the beginning of a *spiritual annihilation of the Tajiks*, a new phenomenon in the history of Tajiks that had no precedents, at least at such a scale.

Following the collapse of the Samanid state in the late 10th century, the Turks and Mongols dominated the Tajiks and suppressed them. The Tajik people suffered for centuries from great human and economic losses. Later, the Mongol conquest was their violent feast lethal to the Tajiks. This 'feast' continued through the epoch of Timur and further after the 15th century.

The Turks have been exterminating the Tajiks physically for a thousand years after the fall of the Samanid state. Yet, they have failed to destroy the nation. The Tajiks hardened in their resistance, became tough and, despite enormous human and economic loss, they were able to succeed in self-preservation owing to their tremendous spiritual power and general cultural superiority.

However, after the devastating Turkic raids and the continuous massacre of the Tajiks, the situation started changing significantly in the 18th century. A trend towards ethnic consolidation commenced among the Uzbek tribes. This has only intensified the brutality of the Turkic yoke leading to a complete subjugation of the Tajiks. Uzbeks called Tajiks 'slaves' (*qul*), and indeed often treated them as slaves. Until the 18th century, Tajiks and Uzbeks had lived apart and did not mix with one another. For example, intermarriages were extremely rare and exceptional. However, the mixing of the indigenous population with the newcomers has started from the 18th century as they were now living next to each other. In some areas, forced assimilation of the Tajik population was becoming widespread. Forced assimilation in fact means a spiritual obliteration of the individual and the nation. Thus, the physical obliteration of the Tajiks has now been aggravated by their spiritual destruction. Its first steps took place in such areas as Tashkent and Ferghana where a part of the Tajik

¹³² About this historical catastrophe of the 18th and 19th centuries, see M. Shakuri Bukhara'i, *Хуросон аст ин ҷо* (This is Khorasan), 2nd ed., Dushanbe, Donish, 2009, Chapter *Ҳаёт амри маънавист* (Life is a spiritual matter).

population adopted the Turkic language to perceive themselves as Uzbeks.

Until the 18th and 19th centuries, the Turkification of the Tajiks, and their adoption of the Uzbek language, was very rare and exceptional. The Turks knew the Persian of the Tajiks, but Tajiks did not speak the Turkic, even though some spoke Turkic as a 'foreign' language without giving up their mother tongue. The adoption of the Turkic by Tajiks always had a specific, significant reason. Academician A. A. Semyonov emphasized that, at the beginning of the 19th century, the whole urban population of Tashkent spoke Tajik. Only a minority of that population spoke Turkic in the second half of the 19th century when Russia annexed Tashkent. In his account of the events of 1867, A. P. Khoroshikhin notes that "Most of the inhabitants of Tashkent are the same Tajiks", with the implication that, in the mid-19th century, most of the population of Tashkent spoke Tajik and perceived themselves as ethnic Tajiks; their self-perception has been transformed to the Uzbek identity only later. Anyway, the Turkification of the Tajiks significantly accelerated in many areas in the first half of the 19th century. However, even then only a fraction of the Tajik population was subject to the Turkification.

The process of Turkification became widespread and endemic after the Russian conquest of Central Asia. According to Academician V. V. Barthold, "Only after the arrival of the Russians, the process of the Turkification of the population was intensified even further, e.g., in Samarkand".¹³³ (He apparently means not so much the city of Samarkand itself, but rather its environs, i.e., the Samarkand province, as even today mostly Tajiks who have preserved their mother tongue inhabit the city of Samarkand and some of the surrounding regions.)

The Turkification of the Tajiks reached as far as the Zarafshan valley at the end of the 19th century. I will offer below my explanation of the acceleration in the Turkification of Transoxiana with the arrival of the Russians.

Thus, the Turkification of the Tajiks accelerated dramatically during the period from the late 18th century to the late 19th century, i.e., in less than a hundred years. Some were forced to accept Turkic and some accepted it by choice. However, even the voluntary adoption had a tint of compulsion as the expansion of the Turkic power made the 'voluntary' adoption of the Turkic a compelling and pragmatic decision.

As some Tajiks accepted the Turkic language, a very interesting situation came about. The Tajiks who adopted Turkic ethnic identity maintained their original material and spiritual culture. Their customs and traditions, dress and meals, songs and

¹³³ Записка академика В. Бартольда по вопросу об исторических взаимоотношениях тюркских и иранских народов Средней Азии (A note of Academician V. Barthold on the historical relations of the Turkic and Iranian nations of Central Asia); *Archive of the Academy of Sciences of Russia*, The Barthold Fund, resource 68, item 1, file 35, p. 2. Quoted in: A. Tursunov, Исторические судьбы культур разделённых наций (Historical destinies of the cultures of divided nations), *Bulletin of the Academy of Sciences of the Soviet Socialist Republic of Tajikistan. Oriental Studies Series*, 1991, No. 3, p. 17.

dances remained unchanged. They were Turks by language, but Tajiks by culture, Uzbeks outwardly and Tajiks internally.

Undoubtedly, a change in the language caused changes in the mentality. Some elements of Turkic culture, however subdominant, have penetrated the cultural thought of the new Turks. To some extent, this caused their distancing from the Aryan culture of the Iranians affecting fundamental aspects of their spiritual existence. Gradually, the Turkic-speaking Tajiks evolved to a firm ethnic self-identification as Uzbeks.

With the calamity of the Turkic raids of the 18th century, with the years of starvation, death and emigration, the Tajik population in Transoxiana shrank. The daily intensification of Turkification aggravated this process even further. However, the natural growth of the Tajik population soon accelerated to recover the population size in a relatively short time. This had, again, cultural causes as their relatively high level of living standards (in particular, of hygiene and medicine) ensured a lower infant mortality than in nomadic families.

What were the consequences of the Turkification of a part of the Tajik population? What historical transformations in Transoxiana resulted from the adoption of the Uzbek language by some Tajiks?

The answers to those questions require special detailed studies, but here we only briefly note that the adoption of the Uzbek language by a part of Tajiks was a tragic phenomenon in their history. Abandoning their mother tongue and their ethnic identity had far-reaching, devastating historical consequences. The physical elimination was then extended to the spiritual annihilation. Without changing the countenance, it was affecting the internal, spiritual world of the Tajiks deeper and deeper. Each spiritual transformation of this depth and magnitude meant the death of one Tajik and the birth of another Turk.

The 'new Uzbeks' had a superior culture among the Uzbek people and were able to shape and lead the spiritual social life. Even in Turkestan of the early 20th century (modern Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan), most of the schools had instruction in Tajik. The 'new Uzbeks' strengthened the influence of the Islamic Persian-Tajik culture among the Turks of Central Asia. As a result, the Uzbek intellectuals became a growing power and authority not only among the Uzbeks, but among other Turkic peoples as well.

Having suffered from a historical tragedy, the Tajik nation still contributed to the spread of high culture among other peoples.

The process of the Turkification of the Tajiks also reached the Emirate of Bukhara, but in a weaker form than in Tashkent and Ferghana. Turkmens, Kazakhs, Uzbeks and other Turks were among the Emir's subjects, but the majority of the population were Tajiks.

In the 19th century and the first two decades of the 20th century, the conflict between the Manghits and the Tajiks intensified in the Emirate of Bukhara due to the government's policy of tribalism (*uruqdori*). Nevertheless, the Tajiks still essentially

managed the country.¹³⁴ The spiritual life and the administration of the Shari'a law were completely in the hands of the Tajiks. The press and publications were in the Tajik language. (In 1912, simultaneously with the first Tajik newspaper, *Bukhoro-i Sharif* [The Noble Bukhara], Tajik intellectuals founded the newspaper *Turon* published in Uzbek but only few books were written or published in Uzbek.) The schools and education were exclusively in Tajik. In the city of Bukhara, a school with instruction in Tatar was opened, but there were no Uzbek schools. (Apparently, there was one modern Uzbek school founded by a Jadid who returned from Turkey.) All the new-method schools opened by the Jadids in Bukhara and in the provinces had instruction in Tajik. Even in the religious schools where the textbooks were in Arabic, the lessons were conducted in Tajik–Persian.

Whether in spiritual life or in clerical work, the Tajik–Persian language was dominant throughout the Emirate of Bukhara.

That is why the Tajiks have avoided a complete spiritual elimination. Although the obstinate tribalism of the Turkic tribal chiefs intensified in some areas, including the mountainous areas of Bukhara known as Eastern Bukhara after the revolution, the ethnic self-identification of the Tajiks was not under a serious threat.

In the Emirate of Bukhara, the Tajiks dominated in all aspects of life – social, cultural, economic, etc. Although the political power belonged to the Manghits, who were prone to the Turkic ethnocentrism, the Bukharan Emirate was essentially a Tajik state. The sacred land of Noble Bukhara had retained its predominant Tajik–Iranian character in the social and cultural life, as well as in the personal and everyday life.

After the revolution of 1920, the situation in Bukhara has changed completely and abruptly.

Having occupied the land in 1920, the Bolsheviks placed the pan-Turkists in power. Between 1918 and 1920, the pan-Turkism took in Central Asia the form of pan-Uzbekism, which became the most aggressive form of pan-Turkism. Fayzullo Khojaev, the leader of the pan-Turkists and pan-Uzbekists in Bukhara, was appointed the prime minister of the People's Soviet

¹³⁴ “The Tadjik is in Bokhara proud of his nationality, and even now he recalls the frontiers of his former country, the old Khorrasan. ... The Tadjiks have produced the most renowned teachers, the first statesmen and officials; nearly all mullahs are Tadjiks, and all intellectual culture is with the Tadjiks, but at the same time also the greatest vices. In the oasis of Bokhara itself the Tadjiks are in the majority; then they live in great numbers on the middle course of the Serafshan [Zaravshan]; in Karategin, one of the best mountain provinces of Bokhara, the Tadjiks are the main population, and they inhabit the provinces of Darvas, Roshan, Shungan, Garan and Vakhan, further they live more collectively in the oasis of Shirabad, whereas the Uzbeks are the main population in Hissar, Karshi, Shahresebbs [Shahr-i Sabz], Kasan, Husar, Kerki, Charjui [Charjou], Chiraktshi, Kulab etc.” (O. Olufsen, *The Emir of Bokhara and His Country*, Heinemann, London, 1911, p. 285). [Note to the English translation – A. Sh.]

Republic of Bukhara immediately after the revolution. He denied the existence of the Tajik nation considering the Tajiks to be an Uzbek tribe, and claimed that there were no Tajiks among the populations of the Emirate of Bukhara – all were Uzbeks for him.

This claim of Fayzulloh Khojaev and his pro-Turkic followers was obviously far away from the historical reality. The population of the Bukharan Emirate were mostly ethnic Tajiks rather than Uzbeks.

To refute these claims, Abdurrahim Hojiboev referred to a demographic study of the General Staff of Tsarist Russia, which was free of political bias and had been carried out with military precision. For example, he wrote, “So, consider a census conducted by the Military Geographic Society. This document shows that there is a population of 3 million in Bukhara, and 2 million and 100 thousand of them are Tajiks and 750 thousand are Uzbeks.”¹³⁵

Thus, more than two-thirds of the population of Bukhara were Tajiks; this figure also applies to the period after the revolution, perhaps subject to only a minor correction. It is not surprising that the Tajik–Persian language was predominant in the Bukharan Emirate before the revolution. The land of Bukhara, from the Samanid epoch to the 20th century, was a country of ethnic Tajiks. In a speech of 1929, Abdurrahim Hojiboev rightfully concluded that “It is clear to all that the Republic of Bukhara was not an Uzbek republic. It was an Iranian state whose capital was Bukhara”.¹³⁶ Hojiboev is right. Many knew this truth from the beginning of the revolution, but the pan-Turkists forcefully silenced their opponents.

Fayzulloh Khojaev, under the pressure from protests of Tajiks, was later forced to recognize that there are 400,000 Tajiks in the land of Bukhara, but with a reservation that they live in the mountainous areas of Eastern Bukhara.¹³⁷ All the others remained Uzbeks for Khojaev.

After the revolution, the Pan-Turkists, supported in Bukhara by the Russian Bolsheviks, changed the language of instruction in schools to Uzbek, and Ayni bitterly notes that, “At the beginning of the October Revolution, the Tajiks did not have a single Soviet school with instruction in their own language”.¹³⁸ We should add that the situation with the schools did not improve with time. In that statement, Ayni was referring not just to Bukhara, but also to Samarkand and many other areas where the situation is still the way it used to be then.

Bukhara was the **centre** of a vast area where the literary Persian (Farsi, Tajik) language took shape in the 9th and 10th centuries.

From ancient times, at least since the Samanid epoch when the New Persian or the Dari Persian (*Farsi-i Dari*) developed there, Bukhara, the cradle of this language, nurtured and fostered this pearl of culture to deliver it gloriously to our times. The Bol-

¹³⁵ R. Masov (P. Масов), *История тонкого разделения (A History of a Coarse Division)*, Dushanbe, 1991, p. 120.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 125.

¹³⁸ S. Ayni, *Kulliyot*, Vol. 11, Part 2, p. 348.

shevik pan-Turkists strived to eliminate the Tajik–Persian language in its birthplace, Bukhara. Hence, it was ejected from the schools, press, publications and offices. Fines were introduced for using Tajik in the office. Anyone who hoped to live there had to call himself an Uzbek and record himself as Uzbek in documents.

This is what I mean by the immense intensification of the spiritual genocide against the Tajiks after the revolution of 1917–1920. At that time, it reached Bukhara and engulfed the whole country.

The Tajik nation suffered greatly from the revolution. With the revolution, the denial of the very existence of the Tajik people has become a part of the adopted official policy. The newly established Soviet State in Bukhara pursued a policy of genocide towards the Tajiks, suppressing the Tajik language and the Tajik people and thus inflicting enormous damage.

As more and more Tajiks were formally recorded as ethnic Uzbeks, the official statistics was showing fewer Tajiks and more Uzbeks. For example, in the present province of Bukhara at the beginning of the second decade of the 20th century, that is, in the first years of the revolution, the recorded number of Tajiks was 160,000, but only 42,482 remained in 1924. How can this be true that the number of ethnic Tajiks in Bukhara decreased by a factor of four in just four years? Of course, the number of Uzbeks increased by the same amount.

One of the items in the unwritten charter of pan-Uzbekism was to record the other ethnic groups of Transoxiana as Uzbeks (especially the most numerous one, the Tajiks), either forcefully or by falsification, as to present the Uzbeks as a great and powerful nation, and hence to justify the creation of a major Uzbek state. This policy was called the Uzbekification (*Uzbeklash-turuv*). Using a Tataro–Mongol violence, the pan-Uzbekists attained their goal in a short time, and a new Soviet republic of Uzbekistan appeared on the maps in 1924.

We quoted above V. Barthold who noted that, after the occupation of Central Asia by Russia, i.e., from the second half of the 19th century, the Turkification of the Tajiks accelerated and expanded, and soon reached Zarafshan and Samarkand. We can add that the acceptance of Turkic by the Tajiks then continued and reached its peak during the Bolshevik revolution of 1917–1920. With the arrival of the Russians, the dominance of Turkic reached Zarafshan. With the Bolshevik revolution of 1920, it reached the city of Bukhara and a large part of the Bukhara region. Whether in the second half of the 19th or in the 20th century, the abrupt increase in the official number of Turks and Tajiks self-identified as Uzbeks is related to the Russian aggression. The Russian invasion and the expansion of the Turks occurred simultaneously. As we saw, the Russian Bolsheviks brought pan-Turkism and pan-Uzbekism to power in Bukhara and encouraged the Turkification of the Tajiks.

Thus, two great powers united in the 19th and 20th centuries to suppress the Tajik nation. Even though the Tajiks had been weakened during a thousand years of struggle (the Qarakhanid period, the Mongol invasion, Timur's conquests, the aggression of the Shaibanids and the Ashtarkhanids, and the tribal-

ism of the Manghits), it held out against the pressure. Having suffered enormous losses, the Tajik nation still survives.

The Uzbek people are not guilty of the malicious actions of the pan-Turkists, who recorded the Tajiks of the historical cultural centres of Transoxiana as ethnic Uzbeks to inflate the number of Uzbeks in multiples. The Uzbekification of the Tajiks was not the work of the Uzbek people, but the poisoned fruit of the pan-Turkist and Bolshevik ideology implemented by the nationalist pan-Uzbekists. This is not guilt of our brothers Uzbeks. On the contrary, the Uzbek people have suffered too from the spiteful actions of their nationalists. In particular, the historical self-consciousness of the Uzbek nation has been misled and the Uzbek people suffer from a distorted understanding of themselves, their history and origins as well as of their neighbours, especially the Tajiks. It is unfortunate that the magnanimity of pan-Turkism has poisoned the national consciousness of the Uzbeks in so many respects.

Ethnic Tajiks also took part in the pan-Turkist propaganda; Fayzullo Khojaev, and one of the leaders of pan-Uzbekism, was an ethnic Tajik. His change of the ethnic allegiance has its roots in political selfishness. Here I should add that, in the first years of the revolution from 1917 to 1920, some Tajiks succumbed to the propaganda, encouragement and deception of the pan-Turkists, and pronounced themselves Uzbeks. Many Tajiks, recorded themselves formally as Uzbeks because of the fear of the purges and threats of the pan-Turkists. Even now the Tajiks of Uzbekistan are intimidated to be registered as ethnic Uzbeks.

Many prominent Tajiks who changed their ethnic self-identification later understood the gravity of their decision and some of them were successful in correcting their mistake.

Abdulqodir Muhiddinov was among them. In connection with the events of first years after the Bukharan revolution, he wrote in 1928: "We were the enemies of the Tajik language. We were the servants and proponents of a Turkic union and the Turkic language".¹³⁹ His article ends with a repentance: "We recognize our past political mistake and our political betrayal, and wish that it be corrected".¹⁴⁰

The atonement of Muhiddinov was indeed coming from the bottom of his heart. He proved his loyalty to the Tajik nation with his efforts in the establishment of the Autonomous Republic of Tajikistan in 1924 and the Soviet Republic of Tajikistan in 1929, as well as other services to the Tajik nation.

There are more people, first caught into the trap of pan-Turkism and pan-Uzbekism, who later demonstrated a similar loyalty and devotion to the Tajik nation.

¹³⁹ Abdulqodir Muhiddinov, Мардуми шаҳр ва атрофи Бухоро тоҷиканд ё ўзбек? (Are the people of the city of Bukhara and its environs Tajiks or Uzbeks?), in: P. Gulmurodzoda, *Забон ва худшиносии миллӣ* (Language and National Self-consciousness), Dushanbe, 2007, p. 199.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 201.

The forced Uzbekification of the Tajiks should be qualified as a spiritual genocide that became one of the main goals and the cornerstone of the state policy of the pan-Turkist government of the Bukharan Republic. It was implemented with exemplary effort and uncompromising ruthlessness. Let us not forget that *the government of the People's Socialist Republic of Bukhara under the leadership of Fayzulloh Khojaev was a puppet of Soviet Russia. Therefore, there is no doubt that the leaders of Bolshevik Russia were aware of and supported the policy of genocide and the spiritual elimination of the Tajiks perpetrated by the government of the Bukharan Republic.*

It cannot be excluded that Kuibyshev did not realize that the majority of the population of Bukhara were ethnic Tajiks rather than Uzbeks. However, when, soon after the revolution, the schools were transferred to instruction in Ottoman Turkish and Uzbek causing indignation and protests of the population, numerous inspectors and envoys from Moscow could not avoid seeing distortions in the ethnic policy of the Bukharan government which openly practiced ethnic and intellectual oppression. This information was certain to reaching Moscow. However, *Moscow, which interfered in even minute dealings of the Bukharan government, did not show any interest in the fate of the Tajiks. The government of Bukhara were not allowed making independent decisions on any issue of even minor importance without suggestions and recommendations from the top leaders in Moscow and Tashkent, except on the issue of the Tajiks.* The government of Bukhara was free and independent on the issue of the Tajiks alone.

We would like to emphasize that neither did the Bolshevik government in Moscow admit the existence of the Tajiks as a nation, nor it did want to include them into their considerations and plans.

It seems that the disregard of the Tajik nation started with a recommendation of V. I. Lenin. As representatives of the Turkic peoples of Central Asia eloquently and persistently argued for their autonomy and independence, Lenin ordered on 13 June 1920 that “maps (ethnographic and others) of Turkestan should be made with division into Uzbekiya [Uzbekistan], Kyrgyziya [Kirgizstan], and Turkmeniya [Turkmenistan]”.¹⁴¹

As we can see, there is no indication that the Tajik people also exist in Turkestan and they also need autonomy.

On 12 August 1920, the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) sent a letter to the communists of Central Asia instructing them that “Turkestan’s indigenous peoples are the Uzbeks, the Kyrgyz [Kazakh – M. Sh.] and the Turkmens. The Soviet government must rely on the toiling masses of these peoples”.¹⁴²

¹⁴¹ V. I. Lenin, *Полн. собр. соч. (The Complete Works)*, Vol. 41, p. 436.

¹⁴² *Иностранная военная интервенция и гражданская война в Средней Азии и Казахстане. Сб. док. (Foreign Intervention and the Civil War in Central Asia and Kazakhstan. A Collection of Documents)*, Vol. 2, Alma-Ata, 1964, p. 647.

The Tajik nation is not mentioned here either, when *the Tajik people were one of the largest nationalities in Central Asia in those years and it was not possible to overlook them.*

Now, consider some figures. According to one estimate, there were 1,300,000 ethnic Tajiks in Russian Turkestan before the Russian Revolution of 1917. If we add this number to the 2,100,000 of Tajiks living in the Emirate of Bukhara (as mentioned above), the number of Tajiks living in Transoxiana comes out as 3,400,000. There are other statistical data, which are worth considering here (although the statistical data of that time can be inaccurate, approximate and contradictory). At the time of the population census of 1897 and in the first decade of the twentieth century, the sizes of the Central Asian ethnic groups were as follows: 1,890,000 Tajiks, 2,000,000 Uzbeks, 1,571,000 Kazakhs and Kyrgyz, and 450,000 Turkmens. Besides those, there were nearly one million (976,000) Sarts. Most of the 'new Uzbeks' and Uzbek-speaking Tajiks were called Sarts (and at the time of the census of 1926 the authorities of Uzbekistan were recording all Sarts as Uzbeks). It is clear from the above that during the period of revolutions, 1917–1920, the Tajiks were not fewer in number than any other Central Asian nation. In spite of that, Lenin did not forget the 450,000 Turkmen people, but overlooked the Tajiks, all 2,000,000 or more of them. The speechwriters and drafters of the Party documents on the first half of the twentieth century faithfully followed Lenin and never mentioned the name Tajik (except for Lenin himself in one of his writing). It is obvious that for several years after the 1917 Revolution, the Soviet leaders had only vague picture of the ethnic situation in Central Asia, and when they became worried about the strengthening of pan-Turkism and the resolute demands of its leaders, they never considered Tajiks in their dealing with the pan-Turkists.

Moreover, anti-Tajik and pan-Turkist sympathies are evident in the activities of many Party leaders in Moscow and Tashkent. Here are some examples.

In May 1921, the former chairman of the Communist Party of Bukhara, Najib Husainov, an ethnic Tatar, sent the following telegram from Moscow to Bukhara, addressed to the acting chairman of the country's Communist Party Alimjon Akchurin, also a Tatar: "Our objective is to ensure that more than half of the Bukharan population are deemed to be Uzbeks, a small part Turkmens, and then the Iranians and Jews."¹⁴³ It is obvious that Husainov removes the Tajiks completely from the picture, as if they simply were not living there.

This telegram represents a telling example of a directed struggle against the Tajik nation and a manifestation of the spiritual annihilation of the Tajiks.

Two aspects of this message of Najib Husainov deserve special attention. The first is that this letter was sent from one ethnic Tatar to another. The second is that this message had been sent from Moscow.

¹⁴³ I. Keldiev, *Фарҷоми худношиносӣ* (The outcome of self-discovery), *Sado-i Sharq*, 1989, No. 7, p. 101; N. Hotamov, *Таърихи халқи тоҷик* (A History of the Tajik People), Dushanbe, 2007, p. 320.

The first point focusses our attention on the fact that, from the early days of the Bukharan revolution the communists of Tatar ethnic origin were playing a key role in formulating and executing the pan-Turkist policy and in strengthening the anti-Tajik feelings. Before the revolution, and during the period of the Jadid movement in Bukhara and Turkestan, many of the Tatar and Bashkir intellectuals had cooperated with the Tajik intellectuals pursuing their historical missions. Unfortunately, on the threshold of the revolution and after it their role changed and became rather negative. During the revolution, most of the ethnic Tatars, and Bashkirs in Bukhara and other areas of Central Asia were the envoys of the Russian Communist Party and the Tashkent Bolsheviks fanatically serving the Bolshevik Russia and the pan-Turkism. To be fair, we should mention that not only the ethnic Tatars and Bashkirs contributed to the pan-Turkist designs, but also Tajiks such as Abdulloh Rahimboev and Ahmadbek Mavlonbekov, who had been sent to Bukhara from Tashkent and were leaders of the Communist Party of Bukhara.

The second point is that when Najib Husainov's letter was sent from Moscow to Bukhara, it can be said that the pan-Uzbekist plans of N. Husainov and A. Akchurin were finding support in Moscow as well. The sending of the communist Husainov to the communist Akchurin was inspired by the thinking of some of the official or unofficial circles in Moscow. This implies that Moscow too had a hand in the Uzbekification of the Tajiks and their spiritual extermination from the first days of the revolution.

We have come to believe in this truth based on several events from those years, and we want to mention several of them here.

On 21 June 1924, Abdurrahim Hojiboev (then a member of the leadership of the Republic of Turkestan) signed one of his letters of historical importance entitled *Theses On the Status of the Tajiks*, and submitted it to the high authorities. Here are several quotes from that work of Hojiboev.

"The remainders of pan-Turkism and pan-Islamism still survive now. ... The consequence of that is confusion in understanding the ethnic issues in Turkestan and Bukhara and having them firmly established in the eyes of many of the Soviet and Party workers, particularly the Russians. ... But nothing has been done until recently for drawing [the Tajiks] into a new culture and resolving the problem of one of the largest nationalities of Central Asia, namely the Tajik people. ... This circumstance provided the occasion and the possibility for many Soviet and Party workers in Central Asia, some of them intentionally due to nationalistic and chauvinistic considerations, and some of them due to ignorance, to affirm that the Tajik people do not exist as a separate nationality and, if they exist, they should be assimilated with the Uzbeks."¹⁴⁴

These lines and the *Theses* as a whole are the writings of a thoughtful person who at the height of the Bolshevik pan-

¹⁴⁴ *The Central Archives of the Institute of Marxism–Leninism (ЦГА ИМЛ).* Resource 62, list 2, file 1744, sheet 419. This document was provided by the late Prof. A. Vishnevsky. He left good memories.

Turkism boldly protested in a loud voice. He had in view the conditions of the Tajiks in both Turkestan and Bukhara. He directly identifies Uzbek chauvinists and their patrons among the Russians in the Party and government offices as those whose intention is the Uzbekification of the Tajiks, “one of the largest ethnic groups of Central Asia.” Knowing the ruthless manners of the pan-Uzbekists and pan-Turkists, the voice of protest on this issue could only be raised in those years by exceptionally daring people. During those years, several valiant people emerged from among the Tajiks, and Hojiboev was one of them. We mentioned the names of some of them above, and we will mention some more later.

One of our purposes for citing some extracts from the writings of Hojiboev is that when he speaks about the violence of pan-Turkism, he is also referring to the Russians of Turkestan and Bukhara as well. Many of the Russian Party and government officials also took part in the elimination of the Tajiks. Instead of trying to prevent the pan-Turkists’ determination or at least being neutral, they were ready to support the pan-Turkists. Most correctly, they carried out the orders issued by their higher leaders, and they tried to expedite the Turkification of the Tajiks.

There are many stories about this. Some similar accounts can also be found in archives. For example, in one archival document a certain Sa‘di Maqsudzoda, teacher by profession, complained that in the village of Oqmasjid of the *volost* of Mahalla (near Samarkand), “All the pupils are Tajiks and all the school activities are conducted in the Tajik language.” There is a Russian doctor in the village who opposes Tajik lessons in the school and, for example, one day, “He came to the school and said ‘This is Uzbekistan. Why do you teach in Tajik?’ ... When [the pupils] coming for medical tests were identifying themselves as Tajiks, he would record them as Uzbeks and even say, ‘Do not learn in Tajik. This is Uzbekistan. You should study in Uzbek.’ ... We asked him, ‘Why do not you learn in Uzbek yourself? Why in your [local Russian] schools students learn in Russian?’ He said, ‘We will go just as we came.’”¹⁴⁵

As we can see, even a doctor, who should be far removed from politics, was bluntly implementing the pan-Uzbekist policy. Perhaps that doctor had good intentions and cared about the rights of the Tajik children, but even then he was reinforcing the pro-Uzbek policy. Considering the Turkification of Tajiks reasonable and natural became more and more apparent from the Party and government officials. Junior and senior officials, regardless of whether they were Uzbek or Russian, put the Center’s instructions into practice. But the Center’s instructions were entirely pro-Uzbek. Even if the Tajiks were office holders, they executed that policy, whether by choice or by force.

Of course, one cannot say that all Uzbeks, Russians, Tajiks, or other people accepted the pro-Uzbek policy and carried it out. There were many people, including Russians, who did not facilitate the execution of that policy.

¹⁴⁵ *The Archive of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan in the Department of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism (ЦГА ИМЛ), Resource 58, list 2, file 1316, sheet 15. This document was provided by the late Prof. A. Vishnevsky.*

Many Russians took the side of the Tajiks and resisted the instructions of the pan-Turkists – this is also reflected in archival documents. For example, a detailed letter of complaint that relates the trampling of the rights of Tajiks was sent to the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan, signed by Lushnikov who called himself ‘The Chairman of the National Minority Department of the Central Committee (Bolsheviks) of Uzbekistan.’¹⁴⁶ Many Russian intellectuals, scholars, and orientalists tried to support the Tajik people and seek solutions for assisting them.

Unfortunately, most Russian functionaries were the envoys and instruments of the Centre (Tashkent and Moscow) and they worked for the benefit of the pan-Turkists.

I do not doubt that *the leaders of the Bolshevik government in Moscow were aware of all those injustices performed against the Tajik people. But not a single sign exists about any solutions undertaken to prevent those injustices. This is particularly true of Stalin, either in the role of the People’s Commissar of Nationalities or as the Party’s General Secretary. He was well informed of the state of the Soviet Union. Moreover, during the preparations for the national territorial division of Central Asia, he rejected the plan of G. V. Chicherin, which benefited the Tajiks, and suggested a project that was harmful to the Tajiks. Stalin’s anti-Tajik political sympathies were quite obvious.*

In 1924, and prior to the national demarcation in Central Asia, the conflict between the Turks and Tajiks significantly intensified. I have heard that Chicherin, Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union, arrived to Samarkand from Moscow to acquaint himself with the problem of Tajiks. He wanted not only to know the thoughts of the government officials, but also the people’s opinions. A large group of people was gathered in the large square of Registan in Samarkand, and Chicherin asked them, whether they consider themselves Tajiks or Uzbeks. The unanimous answer was, ‘Uzbeks!’ Chicherin realized that those people had been selected among the Uzbeks, and any Tajik in the crowd should have been properly instructed. Of course, Chicherin presented his report to Stalin who could not avoid knowing this problem in detail.

The demarcation of Central Asia was a good opportunity to tame the pan-Uzbekists. However, on the contrary, Stalin used that opportunity to strengthen the pan-Uzbekists by providing stability to most of the foundations and ideas of pan-Uzbekism. Stalin was opposed to pan-Turkism, but implicitly, or sometimes openly, he supported pan-Uzbekism.

We saw that in 1924 that there were two plans behind the national territorial division of Central Asia: one of them was Chicherin’s plan advantageous to the Tajik people, and the other was Stalin’s plan damaging to the national interests of the Tajiks. In the end, Stalin forcefully implemented and ratified his own plan. Its ratification took place first in Tashkent. The Commission for the National Territorial Division in Tashkent confirmed

¹⁴⁶ *The Archive of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan in the Department of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism (ЦГА ИМЛ), Resource 58, list 2, file 1316, sheet 12b. This document was provided by the late Prof. A. Vishnevsky.*

Stalin's suggestions verbatim (except for some insignificant details). Nobody dared to step over the line drawn by Stalin. I believe that *Abdurrahim Hojiboev, Chinor Imomzoda, and other champions of the Tajiks, who supported Stalin's plan and its pan-Turkist ideas in the summer of 1924, had no opportunity to protect the national interests of their nation. They should not be reproached today. It was unthinkable to oppose the instructions and orders of the high Party and government authorities and conduct anything contrary to those instructions.* In any case, the struggle continued, sometimes openly and sometimes clandestinely, in support of the interests of the Tajik people. As a result, the Tajiks were finally provided not with an autonomous region (the smallest national administrative unit in the Soviet Union), but with an autonomous republic. The autonomy of the newly formed Republic of Tajikistan had many limitations, and those deficiencies emerged from the fact that, contrary to Chicherin's plan, Stalin's plan was extremely far from being historically just.

Stalin never agreed that Bukhara, Samarkand, and Khujand are included into Tajikistan. In 1924, he limited Tajikistan to Eastern Bukhara.

Now, what was the reason for these problems? Why was Stalin opposed in 1924 to Bukhara, Samarkand, Khujand and the culturally rich valleys becoming a part of Tajikistan? In 1929, only Khujand was united with Tajikistan, but Bukhara and Samarkand remained in Uzbekistan. Why?

The struggle against Islam and the Muslims was one of the main policies of the Tsarist Russia, and the atheist Bolsheviks continued that struggle with even more vigour. As one of the nations in Central Asia strongly devoted to religion, the Tajiks had spread Islam among the Turkic peoples living in the vicinity. For centuries, they had a strong cultural and spiritual influence on their neighbours, including the Turkic tribes. Islam spread among the Turkic people by means of the Iranian culture of the Tajiks. Most mullahs in areas populated by Uzbeks, Kazakhs, Kyrgyz and others were Tajiks, and Tajik sheikhs had many followers among the Turks. In many cases, the Tajik mullahs were shaping the desires and inclinations of the heads of Turkic clans and tribes. The Tajik religious intellectuals have determined the cultural and religious consciousness of the Turkic peoples in many ways.

Prior to the Russian Revolution of 1917, Turks studied Tajik–Persian in many local schools, so that the pupils knew much of the Tajik classics by heart, for example, *Chor kitob* ('The Four Books,' with one chapter written by Fariduddin Attar, the Sufi poet of the 12–13th century from Nishapur). Me, the writer of these lines, met several writers from the neighbouring republics who recited by heart extracts from *Chor kitob* in Tajik. In 1972, the famous Turkmen writer Berdi Kerbabaev arranged a magnificent literary meeting in his large courtyard in Ashkhabad with guests from all Soviet republics and other countries; I also was invited. The host had good words to say about the Tajik people and mentioned in his speech that the principals in the Turkic schools of Central Asia and Kazakhstan were Tajiks or educated in the madrasas of Bukhara. Berdi Kerbabaev concluded that the Tajiks had educated the peoples of Central Asia and Kazakhstan

becoming true teachers of these nations. (I described this occasion in my book *This is Khorasan*.)

The first President of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbaev quotes in his book *In the Stream of History* the 19th-century Kazakh scholar and intellectual Chokan Valikhanov who said that the Kazakh Khan Sultan Muhammad Mu'ming "was an intelligent and talented man. He knew major parts of *Shahname* by heart."¹⁴⁷

The Tajik scholar Prof. Abdusattor Nuraliev emphasized, "many Kazakh scholars and rulers of the Middle Ages spoke Tajik well as the language of science, poetry and the government bureaucracies in the major Central Asian states of those times."¹⁴⁸

Concerning the Uzbek classical literature, one can say that it developed in its entirety under a strong influence of the Persian-Tajik literature, and that Alisher Navoi was educated in the great literary schools of Ferdowsi, Nizami, Sa'di, Hafiz and Khusraw Dehlavi, and that in that school Abdurrahman Jami was his master.

There are many facts and ample evidence of the spread of culture by the Tajik people among peoples living around them. *The Tajik people went to Turkic villages with beneficence and with the intention to disseminate culture, and Turkish people accepted them warmly and with great respect. A school in an Uzbek, Kazakh or Kyrgyz village, a Turkmen yurt was usually headed by a Tajik. The Tajik intellectuals had always had a role in the shaping of the intellectual values of the Turkic peoples.* Therefore, the anti-Islamic policy of Tsarist Russia was a policy directed against the Islamic culture of the Tajik people and against Tajiks. We believe that this was one of the main reasons for the enhancement of the Uzbekification of the Tajiks after the arrival of Russians to Transoxiana. The reduction in the numbers of Tajiks and the deterioration of their spiritual and intellectual influence among Transoxiana's other nationalities provided an additional opportunity for Russia to subdue them and to exert their own influence on those people.

The Soviets continued that policy, in particular by depriving the Tajiks of their major historical centres of culture, the basis of their intellectual existence, by cutting their intellectual and religious roots. The intended outcome of that policy would be a minor fraction of this great civilizing nation living weak and backward in remote mountains, unable to lift up their heads.

Both the Bolsheviks and the pan-Turkists needed equally the Central Asian peoples are removed from the range of the spiritual influence of the Tajik people. Here, the imperial designs of Russia and the pan-Turkists were in agreement. The Bolsheviks wanted to pull the Central Asian Turks out from the spiritual influence of the Tajiks and to guide them toward spiritual impoverishment and atheism. The pan-Uzbekists deemed it necessary to

¹⁴⁷ N. Nazarbaev, *B nomoke ustopuu* (In the Stream of History), Alma Ata, Atamura, 1999, p. 210.

¹⁴⁸ A. Nuraliev, *Таджикско-казахские культурно-литературные связи XIX-XX вв.* (The Tajik-Kazakh Cultural and Literary Relations in the 19th-20th Centuries), Dushanbe, Surushan, 2001, p. 42.

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release the people from the spiritual influence of the Tajik people in order to allow the pan-Turkish ideology to replace that influence. The revolution, with its enormous destructive power, was required to change the ideological foundation of the society and to plant the ideology of pan-Turkism in people's minds.

To achieve this goal, Bukhara and its great spiritual influence first had to be destroyed. According to Fayzulloh Khojaev, Bukhara is "geographically located in the depths of Central Asia, far from the highways of modern culture but at the very centre of the world's ancient roads. Its inhabitants are illiterate and down-trodden. At the same time, the signs of high Arabic and Iranian culture can be seen everywhere, those, of course, have now also become an anachronism."¹⁴⁹ Further, Fayzulloh Khojaev observes that "the old Arabic and Iranian cultures have a stable abode in Bukhara."¹⁵⁰

Here, Khojaev means the Islamic Irano-Tajik culture, which he wished to obliterate together with Bukhara, its pillar, the focus of the Islamic and Iranian roots of the Tajik nation, the third most important religious centre of the Islamic world after Mecca and Medina. For Muslims, the city was *Qubbat al-Islam* (Dome of Islam), *Bukhoro-i Sharif* (Noble Bukhara), *Dar al-Fakhira* (Abode of Splendour) and *Majma'-i Ilm* (Centre of Learning). The great Jalal al-Din Rumi called it *manba'-i donish*, the source of knowledge.

The mind and talent of the Tajiks were concentrated in Bukhara more than in any other cultural center. Within its confines, Bukhara fostered the Tajik-Persian language, its literature and the great Irano-Tajik culture in general, that transcend the national and ethnic borders. The Soviets wanted to wipe out this great cultural background from the consciousness of the peoples of Central Asia, to uproot the Islamic Irano-Tajik spirituality in the people's hearts. The Bolsheviks were eradicating the Bukharan spirit to deprive the Tajik people of its glory, its spiritual blessings and grace, and of the essential part of their historical memory, to undermine their spiritual and intellectual authority. *The suppression of the Tajiks and the obliteration of Bukhara were a part of the Soviet policy of anti-intellectualism and anti-Islamism.* Yes, it was from the fear of Islam and the intention to wipe out its influence that the Soviets were destroying Bukhara, and it was from being wary of the Tajik people that they were keeping the Tajiks subjugated and weak. Clearly, *the pan-Uzbekists were a perfect tool to implement these plans.* This is why Stalin was quite lax regarding the glaring extremism of the pan-Uzbekists in the Tajik question despite his strong opposition to pan-Turkism. *The support of the pan-Uzbekism and compliance with the unprecedented crimes of the pan-Uzbekists originate from this attitude and policy.*

The revolution has stripped Bukhara of its independence, even that limited independence that it had before 1920. *The historical existence of Bukhara has been forcefully interrupted in 1924. Since that time, Bukhara has been removed from the scene*

¹⁴⁹ Ф. Ходжаев, *Избранные труды* (F. Khojaev, *Selected Works*), Vol. 1, Tashkent, 1970, p. 79.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 81.

*of history as a cultural, economic and political centre, and very soon became a minor provincial town, a collection of gloomy ancient ruins. I remember from my childhood and adolescence, that is, the third decade of the twentieth century, Bukhara lying in ruins, with many houses abandoned and in decay, whole streets a pile of ruins. Its people were dying in the innumerable prisons and in the icy expanses of Siberia, many left to the four directions, and those who remained were barely surviving. The devastation continued for decades. Bukhara improved somewhat only on the eve of the 21st century. However, that was a superficial improvement. Bukhara is no longer a capital of culture, a 'centre of learning', a 'source of knowledge.'*¹⁵¹

We stress again that *Bukhara was the unique focus of the spiritual existence of the Tajik people. Their learning and culture, their religious knowledge were accumulated more in Bukhara than in the any other cultural center. The intention of the Bolsheviks was to deprive the Tajiks of that living source of knowledge, to undermine their cultural independence and to cut their connections with their ancient culture.*

Events now known as the Bukharan revolution were a deliberate action of Soviet Russia aimed at eradicating the Islamic and Iranian mentality, particularly the spiritual deprivation of the Tajik nation in Central Asia. This vantage point makes transparent the true nature of the Bukharan revolution.

We believe that *if Fayzulloh Khojaev, an ethnic Tajik, was to step into the arena of revolution as a champion of the Tajik people, the Bolsheviks would have never supported him. With his ambitions, Khojaev had to declare himself an Uzbek, that is to betray his nation in order achieve his goals. It was pan-Uzbekism that delivered Fayzulloh to the official positions.*

It was suggested that, if Stalin assisted the Tajiks and created a large, 'independent' Tajik republic, this would have provided the Tajiks an opportunity to gain strength, rise up, and, eventually, look towards their language kin who are in Afghanistan and Iran. The strengthening of the Tajiks could bring more of a threat to the Bolshevik empire than pan-Turkism. Therefore,

¹⁵¹ Firzroy Maclean, a British diplomat posted to Moscow at that time, visited Bukhara in 1938. He describes his impressions as follows: "The problem which faced the Bolsheviks in the domains of the former Emir, and particularly in such a stronghold of Moslem culture as the city of Bokara itself, was as hard as any with which they were confronted in Central Asia. The solution adopted was perhaps the only one possible. The capital of the Emirs could not be converted into a Soviet town unless it was to be razed to the ground and built up afresh. And so it was left to decay. In contrast to that of most provincial towns in the Soviet Union, which in many cases increased tenfold, the population of Bukhara has fallen steadily until now it is less than half what it was thirty years ago. ... The only changes are those which have been wrought by neglect, decay and demolition. ... Everywhere heaps of masonry and rubble testify to the process of demolition, which is robbing the city of its splendour." (F. Maclean, *Eastern Approaches*, Penguin, London, 2009, pp. 149–150.) [Note to the English translation – A. Sh.]

it was necessary to keep the Tajiks weak and suppressed. This was one of the aspects of Stalin's policy concerning the Tajiks at the time of the administrative demarcation of Central Asia in 1924.

The Bukharan revolution was the illegitimate child of history that came into the world as a consequence of a chain of domestic and foreign betrayals, treason against the historical mission of enlightenment and supreme human ideals, and treachery towards the nation and the Motherland.

Perhaps before his suffering in prison during Stalin's purges¹⁵² (in 1937) or straight after his arrest, Fayzulloh Khojaev has understood how disgraceful had been his political life, where from 24 years of age he was a toy in the hands of the Bolsheviks and pan-Turkists who were implementing their dreadful plans with his hands and of others like him. Before hearing his death sentence, and in his last words at the trial, he admitted that he had been unjust to the Tajik people and that he considers this his only guilt. This confession and admission of Fayzulloh Khojaev is not published in the official records of the 1938 trial (Soviet officials did not allow such a publication), but it can be found in the archives; the Tajik researcher, Professor Imomnazar Keldiev (the brother of Gulnazar, the poet) has read the complete trial records in the archive.

Khojaev's admission of one of his wrongdoings before his death is very important. That confession is a kind of repentance before the motherland and the people, before the Noble Bukhara and the Tajik people. But the guilt of Fayzulloh Khojaev and other such ignoble people is so great that this repentance and penitence can hardly be accepted by the people and the motherland and their unrighteous child can hardly be forgiven.

On the other hand, another leader of the Bolshevik Uzbekistan, Akmal Ikromov, who was the First Secretary of Central Committee of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan and the second person in this country after Fayzulloh Khojaev, acknowledged the tyranny of pan-Turkism and pan-Uzbekism over the Tajiks in the Bukharan Republic and Uzbekistan, their unjust treatment. On 8 May 1929, Akmal Ikromov said the following at the assembly of the Organizational Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union: "I would like to say some words about the Tajik people, who are the largest national

¹⁵² Fayzulloh Khojaev was among 21 accused at the Third Moscow Trial in 1938 as an alleged member of the 'Rightist-Trotskyist Bloc', together with N. I. Bukharin (former Chief Editor of *Pravda* and Secretary-General of the Communist International), A. I. Rykov (former Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the Soviet Union), C. G. Rakovsky (former Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the Ukraine and ambassador to Great Britain and France), N. N. Krestinsky (former Vice-Commissar for Foreign Affairs and ambassador to Germany), A. P. Rosengolts (Commissar for Foreign Trade), G. G. Yagoda (Commissar for Internal Affairs and head of NKVD) and Akmal Ikromov (First Secretary of the Uzbek Communist Party). [Note to the English translation – A. Sh.]

minority in our republic. Prior to the national territorial demarcation of former Turkestan and the Bukharan Republic and at the time of the formation of the Republic of Uzbekistan, we were under strong influence of the ideology of pan-Turkism, and we exercised arrogant pan-Uzbek chauvinism towards the smaller nationalities.¹⁵³

Akmal Ikromov further informed the audience that there was not a single Tajik school in Bukhara prior to the demarcation of national boundaries, that is before 1924. It is not clear why Akmal Ikromov admitted the vices of pan-Turkism in front of the Soviet political elite, perhaps he was forced to do so. But the leaders of Uzbekistan forgot their repentance before long, and the condition of the Tajiks in Uzbekistan, particularly in Bukhara, did not change. As before, Soviet leaders kept turning a blind eye on this problem.

Despite of this, has the revolution brought any benefits to the Tajik people? In fact, it appears to be a positive outcome that the Russian Red Army, in its war against the Basmachis in the mountainous Eastern Bukhara, defeated anti-government Turkic tribal leaders and freed the local population from their oppression. Of course, this was important. But this positive aspect of the revolution and its other similar results (whether they were economic, cultural, social or political) are incommensurate with its destructive impact on the historical destiny of the Tajik nation. The benefits cannot compensate the grave damage. Furthermore, the benefits derived from the revolution were mostly material, whereas the all damage was fundamentally spiritual.

Indeed, the revolution has released the Tajik people from the Manghit oppression, but only to force them into another submission. The revolution took the Tajik people out of the grip of the Manghits and committed them to the iron sway of the pan-Turkists. *And it immediately became clear that the pan-Turkists were worse than the Manghits. The Manghits were exterminating us physically and tormenting us spiritually. The pan-Turkists undertook to exterminate us spiritually. Spiritual extermination is worse than physical obliteration. Spiritual damage deprives the person of historical memories, of ethnic identity, of national pride, of many essential human qualities, reduces one to a mankurt¹⁵⁴ and degrades one into an obedient slave.*

During the rule of the Manghit dynasty, social justice was obstructed, and oppression and ruthlessness reached its peak. However, social oppression was not relieved by the pan-Turkists; moreover, it was aggravated by spiritual oppression. Those who were educated in Soviet times, during the era of the Bolshevik materialism and inanition, do not consider important the spiritual

¹⁵³ *The Archive of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan in the Department of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism (LIJA IIM/T)*, Resource 17, list 69, file 660. This document was provided by the late Prof. A. Vishnevsky, former Deputy Director of the Institute of State and Law in Dushanbe.

¹⁵⁴ *Mankurt* is a word used by the Kirghiz writer Chingiz Aitmatov in his novel *The Day Lasts More Than a Hundred Years* (1980; English translation: Macdonald, 1983; John Wiley & Sons, 1988) to describe an socially alienated, brain-washed person deprived of historical memory and cut off from their national and ethnic roots [Note to the English translation – B. A.].

aspect of events, they interpret any historical event solely in terms of its social, material, and economic significance disregarding any spiritual consequences. Let us emphasize here again that in every instance the spiritual essence of every event is more important than its other aspects, including social and economic ones. From this perspective, the spiritual oppression of the period of pan-Turkism has done more damage than the social oppression of the Manghit era.

Spiritual oppression deprives a person of his or her human face. *The Bolshevik pan-Turkism worked hard to strip the Tajiks of their ethnic identity, to deprive them of their own character, their own self-appreciation, and turn them towards another existence, to an existence opposite to higher spiritual existence, contrary to the tradition of humanity. Spiritual oppression draws man towards inhumanity.*

Pan-Turkism and Bolshevism have failed to achieve many of their objectives, they have not succeeded in wiping away the Tajik souls in the Tajiks, in diverting them from the paths of the mankind. In most cases, the people outwardly accepted another existence just to deceive the eyes, but they remained true to their nature. But in many other cases, the people believed the pan-Uzbekist propaganda and branded themselves Uzbeks. In some cases, people declared themselves Uzbeks just to compromise, and sometimes to seek benefits or positions. More often still, the Uzbek officials were recording the people's ethnicity as Uzbek without asking.

That is how pan-Turkism and Bolshevism, introduced to Bukhara by the revolution, struck at the root of the spiritual existence of the Tajiks and their historical individuality. In this connection, we stress again that the revolution did more harm than good. The revolution of the pan-Turkists and Bolsheviks was an upheaval with little benefit and much damage. Whatever the Tajik nation gained from the revolution, it has paid an impossibly high price.

The History of Bayhaqi contains the tale of a certain ruler who "is **skilful** and courageous but his ruthless tyranny offsets his skills." I believe that this applies well to the Bolshevik rule: their tyranny overrides their virtues.

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Events known as the Bukharan revolution were, in fact, a pan-Turkists conquest of the Tajiks by the Bolsheviks, and so require another denomination. Historians will eventually identify a suitable term to describe this tragedy. It would be appropriate to select words used by the insightful witnesses of these events. As we have seen, Sadri Ziyo called the Bukharan revolution “coup and commotion”. Elsewhere, while identifying the compilation date of his *Navodiri, Ziyoiyya* (Ziyo’s Rarities), he writes “This book was completed in 1338 [1918 — M. Sh.], in the time of the tumult of the revolution [*fitna-i inqilob*]”. It appears to me that the word ‘tumult’ characterises well the meaning of those events in Bukhara. *Fitna* means putsch, coup, civil unrest, trouble, turmoil and disaster, war and outrage. Thus, the Tajik edition of this book has the title *Fitna-i Inqilob dar Bukhoro* (The Turmoil of the Bukharan Revolution).

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The twentieth century has introduced the burden of ideology into international politics and its continuation, wars. Colonial wars of the previous centuries were driven by pragmatic commercial and economic needs and by strategic goals of empire building – reasons then considered sufficient to justify international military interventions. By the twentieth century, these goals have been mostly achieved by the leading international powers, and ideology became prominent on the international scene, first practiced by the Bolshevik Russia as the cornerstone of their propaganda. In particular, the Jacobin idea of the export of revolution was adopted and implemented by the Bolsheviks. The ideological decorations of modern international relations shine brightly through the wars of the 21st century: thus, the declared goal of the Iraq war of 2003 was the gift of freedom and democracy, promptly delivered under the wings of fighter jets.¹⁵⁵

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The first, or one of the first implementations of the ideological imperialist policy were the events in Bukhara in 1920, where the indigenous reformist movement, encouraged by the Russian revolution, was cynically used as a pretext to export the revolution and implant Bolshevism in Central Asia, which was thus firmly embedded into the Soviet Empire.

The symbiosis of the Bolshevik ideology, at that time sincerely but fanatically professed by many participants of those events, with expansionist political designs of Moscow has produced a new phenomenon, called here an ‘imperialist revolution’, and put into the title of the Russian and English editions of this book.

The imperialist nature of the Bolshevik policy in Turkestan was clearly appreciated at the time, but this understanding was later suppressed in the Soviet Union for obvious ideological reasons. One of the architects of the Soviet nationalities policy, Georgij Safarov published, as early as in 1921, a book revealing-

¹⁵⁵ The apparently paradoxical convergence of the far left and the far right prompted accusations of George W. Bush in Jacobinism (e.g., C. G. Ryn, A Jacobin in Chief. *The American Conservative*, April 11, 2005. [Note to the English translation – A. Sh.]

ly entitled *Colonial Revolution: the Experience of Turkestan*,¹⁵⁶ with reference to the dominant doctrine of the Bolshevik international policy of the time.

In this military-political drama, tragic for the ancient people of Tajiks, candid devotion to Utopian ideas is interwoven with cynical propaganda, brutal use of military force is interlaced with fundamental improvements in economy and living standards, and official programmes of national revival conceal ruthless eradication of an ancient culture unreservedly denounced as a relic of Dark Ages. The official Soviet term *Bukharan People's Revolution* is merely a propagandist label, an insult to the people of the city and land of Bukhara, whose inner, spiritual world has been ruthlessly destroyed by, and following, the events described in this book.

¹⁵⁶ Gosizdat, Moscow, 1921. Reprinted by *Society for Central Asian Studies*, Oxford, 1985.

CHAPTER 15

The pan-Turkic despotism, ethnic cleansing and suppression of the Tajiks, which were intensifying from the first days of the revolution leading, in the same way as the class struggle, to a totalitarian rule, caused various forms of resistance. We have already mentioned the struggle of several individuals such as Ahmadjon Hamdi and Abdulqodir Muhiddinov. However, today, in the beginning of the twenty-first century, people emerged who disregard the struggles against pan-Turkism and Bolshevism and even reproach the Bukharans (as well as people from Samarkand, Khujand and other regions of Maverannahr), who in fact fought with ardour, for their alleged inaction, conformism, compromise with the foes of the nation, etc. For example, the Tajik scholar Ghaffor Ashurov wrote in 2006, “Nearly all of the Tajik intellectuals of Bukhara, Samarkand and Khujand took an active part in the forced Turkification of their own people during the first years of the revolution and in the 1920’s.”¹⁵⁷ This is a groundless accusation resulting from ignorance, or rather from a meager, limited, provincial or even tribal thinking that creates distrust, suspicion, and hatred towards people from other regions, even compatriots.

Of course, whether prior to the revolution and past centuries, after the revolution, or during the first years of Tajikistan’s independence, among the intellectuals of Bukhara (Samarkand, Khujand, and any other places) there were, and there still are people who put their own personal interests above the national interests and who worked, and continue to work, for personal aims to the detriment of the nation. This includes, as we mentioned above, Fayzulloh Khojaev and most of those around him, who worked to betray their own nation. Abdulloh Rahimboev, who was also an ethnic Tajik, and probably some of his followers, who were Tajiks as well, but who acted against the national interests of the Tajik people and were traitors similar to Fayzulloh Khojaev. But we should recognize that this was an isolated group who sold themselves. All of the intellectuals, such as all of the political intellectuals, were not like that and did not betray their nation. As opposed to the treasonous and sell-out groups, there were also patriotic groups who strived to support the nation. As the Bolsheviks placed the nation-selling traitors in power, there was little space for those who strove for patriotic goals. The opportunities available for the patriots were very limited. In spite of that, the Tajik patriots continued their struggle.

So, consider an example. I knew of mass protests of both the general population and intellectuals of Bukhara in 1922 or 1923 against the official recording of the Bukharans as ethnic

¹⁵⁷ G. Ashurov, *Философия эпохи Саманидов* (Philosophy of the Samanid Epoch), Dushanbe, Irfon, 2006, p. 216.

Uzbeks and the Turkic (Uzbek) language becoming the state language. My fellow Bukharans were telling me about that in half voice. When the memoirs of Jalol Ikromi were published in 2006, I found there an account of those riots with some interesting details.

Among other very important information about Abbos Aliev (Alizoda), Jalol Ikromi mentions that “in Bukhara, [he] was fighting with Fayzulloh Khojaev and others.” In other words, he disagreed with some of the ideas of Fayzulloh Khojaev and his government policy, and he led serious struggle against him. Jalol Ikromi further adds,¹⁵⁸ “I remember that once Abbos Aliev, together with his friends, provoked a sort of a riot in Bukhara. He urged people in the schools and townsfolk to join a demonstration in the streets demanding that schools in Bukhara should have instruction in Tajik. After that demonstration, most of the Bukharan schools were indeed transferred to teaching in Tajik.”¹⁵⁹

That outbreak of disobedience, remembered by Ikromi all his life, refutes the claims of R. Masov and his followers like Gh. Ashurov who apply such words as ‘treachery,’ ‘cowardice,’ ‘mendacity,’ and ‘unscrupulousness’ to the intellectuals of Bukhara (and Samarkand, Khujand, Istravshan, etc.).¹⁶⁰ According to Ikromi, Abbos Aliev was joined by “people in the schools and

¹⁵⁸ J. Ikromi (Ҷ. Икромӣ), Он чӣ аз сар гузашт (What I went through), *Sado-i Sharq*, 2006, No. 3, 39–40.

¹⁵⁹ Protests involving groups of people were treated as a serious crime in the Bolshevik Russia and the Soviet Union; this was one of the reasons why the protests of the Brezhnev-era dissidents were always individual. The actions of Abbos Aliev could be subject to Article 77 of the Criminal Code of RSFSR of 1922: “Participation in public disorder incidents not aggravated by the criminal actions of Art. 75 [violent public disorder involving armed perpetrators] but associated with an obvious refusal to obey legal demands of the authorities, or with counteraction to the execution, by the latter, of their legal responsibilities, or with the compulsion of the latter to satisfy obviously illegal demands, even if the refusal to obey only took the form of a denial to terminate the [people] gathering threatening the public safety, is penalised: 1) for the instigators, leaders and organisers – at least 2 years imprisonment with strict isolation, 2) for the other participants – at least 6 months imprisonment.” The legislation of the Bukharan Republic differed from that of the Russian Federation (RSFSR) with regard to the private ownership of land and other means of production and the family law. However, the Russian legislation was widely used in the Bukharan Republic. [Note to the English translation – A. Sh.]

¹⁶⁰ R. Masov used such words as ‘betrayal,’ ‘timidity,’ ‘hypocrisy,’ and ‘unprincipled’ accusing the intellectuals of Bukhara in selling out their souls to the Manghits before the revolution and, later, to the pan-Turkists. According to him, they were traitors who had betrayed the Tajik nation. See: R. Masov (Р. Масов), *Наследие мангытской власти или о предательстве, трусости, лицемерии и беспринципности как позорных явлениях нашей истории* (The Heritage of the Manghit Rule, or the Treachery, Cowardliness, Hypocrisy and Lack of Principle as Shameful Events in Our History, Dushanbe, 2002). I disproved this in my publications using numerous examples, e.g., M. Shakuri Bukhara’i, *Садр Бухоро* (Sadr of Bukhara), 2nd ed., Dushanbe, Devashitch, 2005; M. Shakuri Bukhara’i, *Забони миллӣ ва ҷаҳонгаройӣ* (The National Language and Globalism), Dushanbe, Shojaiyan, 2010.

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townsfolk”, so that the demonstration had a significant scale. It should be remembered by the today’s claimants that the struggle against pan-Turkists and their policy of Uzbekization was not limited to just a few people, such as Ayni, Hamdi, Abdulqodir Muhiddinov and Abbas Aliev, but sometimes stretched widely and kept becoming common. The protest of 1922 was a demonstration with wide participation, and it bore fruit: according to Ikromi, “most of the Bukharan schools were indeed transferred to teaching in Tajik.” Undoubtedly, that was an achievement worth to be proud of.

Abbas Aliev continued fighting against pan-Turkism for several years in various ways. He kept courageously repelling attacks on him inspiring the like-minded people. Recently, Payvand Gulmurodzoda published a collection of articles that includes *The Ethnic Problems in Bukhara and Its Region* of Aliev, an article full of feeling, excitement, and love towards the nation and mother tongue, and aversion to of pan-Turkism. In that article, Aliev says: “*Bukhara and Samarkand were two of the cultural centres of the Perso-Tajiks. The Tajik people were tilling this land for millennia, this is the land of their ancestors.*” The author concludes his resolute arguments by saying that “*The national and ethnic problem of Bukhara needs to be resolved. Teaching and office work should be conducted in the people’s mother tongue, the Tajik language.*”¹⁶¹

Of course, people as valiant as Abbas Aliev were not numerous, but they were not rare either. Their followers learned courage from them and continued their work with determination.

Owing to the dedication of those brave men Tajik schools kept opening in Bukhara in the 1920’s and 1930’s and even later, but the authorities were converting them into Uzbek ones before long. Each new Tajik school in Bukhara or Samarkand was a result of a strenuous efforts of the intellectuals, and each time the success did not last long. The initiators were pursued and punished, but the struggle did not cease.

Speaking in his memoirs about the struggle of Ayni against the pan-Turkists and his publication of *Namunai Adabiyoti Tojik* (Sample of Tajik Literature) and his other works, - Jalol Ikromi qualifies Ayni’s conduct as an example of heroism: “*In those times (1926–1927), such courage was indeed heroic.*”¹⁶² Indeed, after Tajikistan had achieved independence and the title *Hero of Tajikistan* had been established, Ayni was the first to be awarded this distinction (fifty years after his death).

Those that strove to preserve the Tajik language, were opening Tajik schools in the 1920’s and 1930’s in Bukhara and Samarkand, including those who were involved in the disturbances of 1922 (or 1923), and particularly their leader Abbas Aliev, were indeed heroes. As J. Ikromi pointed out, Abbas Aliev kept “fighting with Fayzullo Khojaev and others” – this was an act of heroism by itself. Because of his dissension and since Abbas Aliev, eventually, once seriously offended Fayzullo Kho-

¹⁶¹ P. Gulmurodzoda (П. Гулмуродзода), *Забон ва худшиносии миллӣ* (Language and National Self-Consciousness), Part 1, Dushanbe, 2007, p. 212.

¹⁶² J. Ikromi (Ҷ. Иқромӣ), Он чӣ аз сар гузашт (What I went through), *Sado-i Sharq*, 2006, No. 3, p. 25.

jaev and Akmal Ikromov (the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan), he was arrested in the 1930's on the order of Fayzullo Khojaev. When Fayzullo Khojaev and Akmal Ikromov were, in turn, arrested in 1937, Abbos Aliev was released from the prison.

Abbos Aliev became the first Minister (People's Commissar) for Education in Tajikistan in 1924, and in the thirties he became the first Tajik professor. Unfortunately, his name has been almost completely forgotten, just like Hamdi, Abdulqodir Muhiddinov, Abdurrahim Hojiboev and others. Their names deserve an eternal place in the historical memory of the Tajik people, next to the names of Nusratullo Makhsum, Shirinsho Shotemur, Chinor Imomzoda, Nisor Muhammad and others.

It is appropriate to mention here another open manifestation of opposition to pan-Turkism and pan-Uzbekism in Bukhara of the 1920's. I already wrote about it [elsewhere](#), but it is reasonable to repeat it here.

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A population census was conducted in 1926 throughout the Soviet Union. Before that, the Communist Party and state propaganda intensified in Bukhara, Samarkand and other places hammering into people's minds that, in the census, they should state their ethnicity as Uzbek. Though on the day of the census many people said they were Tajiks, the enumerators recorded them Uzbeks.

When the results of the census were published, it became evident that the formal number of Tajiks in Bukhara is negligible, that is, the official records had the whole population of Bukhara counted as Uzbeks. The resulting indignation drew the people to the streets with flags and slogans, with numerous meetings around the city. A large meeting held in the Registan Square resolved that the census in Bukhara was falsified and that another census should be conducted using another method. That resolution was sent to Moscow.

After a time, a [response](#) came informing them that the Soviet government had set up a commission to examine the issue, chaired by V. V. Kuibyshev, known as the 'Kuibyshev Commission.' One of its members was Alexandr Alexandrovich Semenov (1873–1858), a Russified ethnic Tatar, a historian, a specialist in the history of Central Asia and a fair researcher. From 1951, when the Academy of Sciences of Tajikistan was established, he was both a member of the Academy and the director of the Institute for Historical Research within the same Academy. Academician A. A. Semenov mentioned the Kuibyshev Commission in a number of informal conversations pointing out that the Commission achieved nothing and quietly disbanded on its own.

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Thus, the people's protests against the pan-Turkist excesses, deceptions, and falsifications, their demands and complaints were all in vain.

We draw the reader's attention once again to the fact that 'treachery,' 'mendacity,' 'cowardice,' and such like were committed not by the veracious intellectuals of Bukhara, Samarkand, Khujand and other regions, but by the pan-Turkists and their patron, the central government of Moscow.

Unfortunately, the name of the leader or leaders of the 1926 protests is not known. It is a great pity that we do not keep the memory of such people. Perhaps someday we will find those names in the archives or in the reminiscences of the grateful witnesses.

It should reach the unresponsive ears of the creators of the 'theory' of treason by the intellectuals of Bukhara, Samarkand, and Khujand that two major protests took place during six or seven years following the revolution of Bukhara, both of which were directed above all against the pan-Turkism. Let us remember this: two open protests in six years!

It is obvious that dedicated opponents of pan-Turkism were active in Bukhara and strived to protect people's rights, the national language and culture.

Small protests, demonstrations, and minor conflicts, apart from the mass disturbances mentioned above, were numerous but they remain unexplored and unknown to the mainstream historians. Some *basmachi* groups were also driven into an anti-government armed action by their opposition to the pan-Turkist Bolsheviks.

The fact that the two major protests of 1922 and 1926 (or 1923 and 1927) in Bukhara remained without result makes it clear that Moscow did not support the Tajiks in the controversy around their **ethnic** identity and turned blind eye to the excesses of pan-Turkists. In the Soviet times, Moscow never supported Tajiks in the Turkic-Tajik conflict (*apart from rare exceptions*).

I wish to emphasize again that the *'theory of the treachery' of the intellectuals of Bukhara, Samarkand, and Khujand is untenable*. It was concocted by those who are not aware of the historical reality and do not want to be aware. Of course, sometimes ignorance should not be blamed, but rather forgiven. However, those who are not willing to know, at the end of the day, drag others into ignorance:¹⁶³

Anyone who does not know, and does not know that he
does not know,
Will stay in the double ignorance for eternity.
The one who does not know, but knows that he does not
know,
He will reach home [safely] with his donkey!

One needs one's heart in the right place to follow the path of truth. **These modern theoreticians are blinded** by the dust of parochialism and regionalism, and unless they clean that dust from their eyes, they will remain off the road of the scholarly quest for truth, knowledge and understanding.

¹⁶³ *Ҳар кас, ки надонад ва надонад, ки надонад, / Ў дар ҷаҳли мураккаб абадуздаҳр бимонад. / Он кас, ки надонад ва бидонад, ки надонад, / Ў лошахари хеш ба манзил бирасонад!*

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In this connection, we provide another example, although this may bring us somewhat away from our theme. Another slander in the book of Ghaffor Ashurov mentioned above deserves some attention, also connected with his accusations of the intellectuals of Bukhara, Samarkand, Khujand and other lowlands. He finishes his book with a quote from Academician S. P. Tolstov: "In his article (*Soviet Ethnography*, 1950, No. 1) dedicated to the 25th anniversary of the national territorial division of Central Asia, the historian S. P. Tolstov correctly qualified the behaviour of Tajik intellectuals of those years as treachery. He (S. P. Tolstov) emphasizes that 'The Tajik intellectuals did not lead their own people's struggle for national liberation. They (the Tajik intellectuals) acted under the flag of pan-Islamism and pan-Turkism and effaced from the memory their own people's interests'."¹⁶⁴

One cannot avoid wondering why the book *The Philosophy of the Samanid Epoch* ends with a discussion of the problems of the third decade of the twentieth century and with the problems of the national territorial division of 1924. Perhaps Gh. Ashurov believes that those problems were the outcome of the philosophical issues of the period of the Samanid dynasty?

Another fact is that S. P. Tolstov was an **archaeologist**, and he was never considered to be an expert in the history of the revolution and the Soviet period. He was the director of the Anthropology Institute of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, and wrote an article about the national territorial division of 1924 only because his administrative position required it. Therefore, he committed an egregious mistake.

Calling the Tajik intellectuals traitors, and claiming that they had betrayed their own people during the national territorial division, testifies to his complete unawareness about the history and is a kind of abusive vision of the Tajiks. These were not the Tajik intellectuals who performed the crude territorial division of 1924. If the territorial division of Central Asia had been placed with this country's national intellectuals, that demarcation would have turned out entirely differently and would not have ended up with such unfairness. Of course, Fayzullo Khojaev and Abdulloh Rahimboev committed treason against their own people. But with the evil deeds of those two individuals and their several followers, it is entirely unfair to consider all of the Tajik intellectuals as traitors. That is the result of being far removed from historical and scientific justice.

The plans of the territorial demarcation of 1924 were conceived in Moscow. The Soviet government realized its plans through the hands of A. Rahimboev and Fayzullo Khojaev who carried out Moscow's orders slavishly. S. P. Tolstov *attributed to the Tajik intellectuals those injustices that the Soviet government leaders committed to the Tajik people in 1920 (the Bukharan revolution), 1924 (the territorial demarcation) and 1929 (during the formation of Tajikistan as a Soviet Union Republic), so as to place the fault of the Moscow officials on the shoulders of the Tajik intellectuals and conceal the Center's mistakes.* The Tajik

¹⁶⁴ G. Ashurov, *Философия эпохи Саманидов* (Philosophy of the Samanid Epoch), Dushanbe, Irfon, 2006, p. 216.

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intellectuals struggled against Moscow's nationalities policy, pan-Turkism, and the crude territorial division of 1924 with courage and determination. Many specific examples of this are provided above and in other works of mine.

The extract from S. P. Tolstov quoted by Gh. Ashurov suggests that the Tajik intellectuals had gravitated towards pan-Islamism. I do not have sufficient facts at my disposal to make a competent comment. But regarding the claims that, in the 1920's, all or almost all Tajik intellectuals became pan-Turkists, neglected their people's interests, and failed to inspire and lead the nation, I can resolutely say that those accusations are entirely groundless. Tajik intellectuals, whether the Jadids who led to modernity and enlightenment or those who emerged later in the 1920's, struggled for the national interests of the Tajik people, inspired the Tajiks to struggle for their national liberation and defended their rights, at times fighting with self-sacrifice and dedication. The inability to see this and to attribute the faults of a few deluded sons of the nation to all intellectuals is a gross unfairness that stems from a denial of historical reality. Calling courageous men cowards is itself cowardly.

It is true that the representatives of the Tajiks were unable to defend the interests of their people when, in the summer of 1924, the Commission for the national territorial demarcation of Central Asia and the establishment of the national republics began working in Tashkent. At the beginning, the Commission simply did not include any representatives of the Tajiks. Later, three ethnic Tajiks were admitted to a sub-panel of the Commission, but too late for them to get prepared for that work. Besides, it seems that the organisers of the territorial demarcation forced the Tajik representatives to endorse Moscow's demarcation plan and to refrain from opposing it. The resolution of the Central-Asian Bureau of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) that prohibited any discussions of the problems of the national territorial divisions in fact declared that Stalin's demarcation plan was the 'Party's line' and any critical discussion of it was utterly impossible. When the First Secretary of the Communist Party of Turkestan Abdulloh Rahimboev, a fervent proponent of pan-Turkism, had been appointed the head of the Tajik sub-panel of the Commission, its members, Chinor Imomov, Abdurrahim Hojiboev and Muso Saidjonov, had no choice but to acquiesce in the plan tabled.

Of course, efforts to protect the national interests of the Tajik people were unceasing but they were being made outside the meeting rooms of the territorial demarcation Commission. As a result, the Tajiks won a higher degree of autonomy in the form of an autonomous republic rather than an autonomous region as originally planned. We think that not only one or two, but many people were involved in that life-and-death struggle, and they should have had a leader.

It is completely wrong to say that, in the 1920s, the Tajiks had no national leader, that the intellectuals failed to shoulder the responsibilities of national leadership, and so on. No, it was never so! Tajik people had outstanding leaders in those times, in decisive moments of their history. The spiritual leader of the Tajiks of Transoxiana in the 1920-30's was Ayni. He amply de-

serves the epithet ‘Father of the Nation.’¹⁶⁵ *Abdulqodir Muhiddinov, Nusratullo Makhsum (Lutfulloev), Abdurrahim Hojiboev, and Shirinsho Shotemur were our first political leaders. They were outstanding leaders who founded Tajikistan and guided it to the road of development through fight and struggle. To appreciate the scale of their effort, it is sufficient to read the letters to Stalin of Shirinsho Shotemur, Nusratullo Makhsum and Abdulqodir Muhiddinov, and the text of the well-known speech of Abdurrahim Hojiboev.* An analysis of those letters and the delivery of that speech are outside the theme of this book. In spite of that, we deem it necessary to briefly state their historical significance.

As discussed above, the crude territorial division of Central Asia in 1924 that established the Tajik Autonomous Republic within Uzbekistan in fact meant for the Tajiks subjugation to the Turks and deprivation of any real national and ethnic independence. Tajikistan and the Tajiks suffered in the cold and tight embrace of Uzbekistan. From the first days of the autonomy, 1925–1926, as the moans and groans of the Tajiks grew, the intellectuals and politicians strived to make them heard in Moscow. The newspapers *Ovozi Tojik* (The Voice of the Tajik) and *Bedorii Tojik* (The Awakening of the Tajik), the magazine *Rohbari Donish* (The Leader of Knowledge) and others published numerous articles complaining about the Turkic oppression and voicing openly vigorous protests. Those articles (most of which are collected in the book *Забони тоҷикӣ дар мабнуи мубоҳисаҳо* (The Tajik Language as the Sources of Disputes, Dushanbe, Irfon, 2007) published by the staff of the Tajik Polytechnical University of Tajikistan) make it that the Tajik intellectuals were not traitors or puppets of the pan-Turkists but rather opposed pan-Turkism resolutely.

One of the episodes of this steadfast struggle were the letters repeatedly sent to Stalin. The first was written by Shirinsho Shotemur in 1926. I have heard that it had several authrs, including Ayni. Since Shotemur had close contacts with Russian workers and Communist Party officials, it was agreed that Shotemur would be the only endorser. I also know that even though several people took part in the composing the letter, it basically belongs to the pen of Shotemur, and it was appropriate that it was sent with his signature alone. The poor condition of the Tajiks in Uzbekistan is presented in that letter in detail. The letter more or less openly criticizes the crude territorial demarcation of 1924 (as do several other letters discussed below).

Shotemur’s letter was the first official document firmly suggesting the need to include Bukhara, Samarkand, Khujand and other regions of the Tajik historical homeland into Tajikistan.

The letter of Nusratullo Makhsum to Stalin written in 1928 is based on the resolution of the local Regional Committee of the Communist Party. It is more detailed and presents both the history of the Tajiks and their current conditions. It raises the issue that Tajikistan should be separated from Uzbekistan, promoted to the status of a Soviet Union republic, and **includes** such **regions** as Ferghana, Khujand, Samarkand, Bukhara, the Surkhon

¹⁶⁵ M. Shakuri Bukhara-i, *Равшангари бузург (Садриддин Айни)* [The Great **Enlightener** (Sadriddin Ayni)], Dushanbe, Adib, 2006.

Valley and others. As other writings appeared after 1925–1926, this letter confronts the views of Stalin who was against the inclusion of Bukhara, Samarkand and Khujand in Tajikistan. The letter of Makhsum provides another example of the struggle of Tajiks for national liberation. It played an important role in separating Tajikistan from Uzbekistan and establishing it as a Union republic.

The letter of Abdulqodir Muhiddinov to Stalin was also written in 1928. It presents both some aspects of the turbulent history of the Tajiks and their condition in Bukhara. The letter was published in the same year as an article entitled ‘Are the people of city of Bukhara and its Surroundings Tajiks or Uzbeks?’ in Tajik in the magazine *Rohbari Donish*¹⁶⁶ (The Leader of Knowledge) and in the magazine *Za Partiyu* (For the Party) published in Russian in Tashkent.

The letters of Nusratullo Makhsum and Abdulqodir Muhiddinov, another detailed letter of Nisor Muhammad, the aforementioned article of Abbos Aliev and other actions were a consequence of a decision of the Communist Party Committee of Tajikistan of 1928 which resolved to propose that the highest authorities in Moscow seriously review and resolve the problem of the separation of Tajikistan from Uzbekistan, with the ancient cities of the Tajiks and their surrounding region to be included into Tajikistan. Thus, the leaders of Tajikistan *decided to make Stalin change his mind, to make him revert his decision of 1924 that resulted in the unfair territorial division and thus to restore historical justice to the benefit of the Tajik people.*

Abdulqodir Muhiddinov and Abdurrahim Hojiboev were charged with lobbying for the separation of Tajikistan from Uzbekistan, and they prepared the materials required. According to one account, Abdurrahim Hojiboev had an audience with Stalin in Moscow and used the arguments thus prepared to persuade him to separate Tajikistan from Uzbekistan and to promote it to a Union republic status.

Until recently, this version of events was only supported by anecdotal evidence but hard facts emerged in 2010. It has been confirmed that, indeed, Abdurrahim Hojiboev had an audience with Stalin. A telegram of Hojiboev to Shirinsho Shotemur was found in archives, sent on 27 July 1929 to deliver some good news: “How are you, dear Shotemur? I wished to tell you of the news by telephone, but could not as not everything can be trusted to the telephone. I inform you that: 1) Concerning the Uzbek issues, it is a hotchpotch here. It has neither beginning nor end. Since the decision of the Central Executive Committee is still not known to us in full. ... I saw Comrades Rykov and Voroshilov and yesterday had a meeting with Comrade Stalin. Comrade Stalin gave a number of instructions about which I can say: Comrade Stalin and all the others support the direct entry of Tajikistan into the Union.”¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁶ For more details see P. Gulmurodzoda (П. Гүлмуродзода), *Забон ва ҳудудиношии миллӣ* (Language and National Self-Consciousness), Part 1, Dushanbe, Payvand, 2007, pp. 196–202.

¹⁶⁷ *The Central Archive of the Party Institute of Central Committee of the Communist Party of Tajikistan*, resource 1, list 1, file 1299, sheet 27. See

In my understanding, there is no doubt any longer that Abdurrahim Hojiboev succeeded in meeting Stalin and discussing the necessity of changing the status of Tajikistan in the Union. Several conclusions follow from this document.

Firstly, it should be kept in mind that historical anecdotes often have a factual basis and originate in material evidence or are made up to reflect material evidence. In any case, no tree shakes without a wind. Historical anecdotes deserve careful analysis but with special prudence. As exemplified by the story of Ayni's meeting with Stalin,¹⁶⁸ some tales have several versions typical of the folklore, are prone to fabulous additions, etc. In spite of that, historical anecdotes should not be summarily dismissed. In this case, a document has eventually emerged confirming that Abdurrahim Hojiboev did meet Stalin. This urges us once more to treat seriously tales, anecdotes and even rumours about historical events. Of course, one should follow the lead provided by the archival document in conjunction with other historical sources as to pinpoint the subject matter of the conversation, and so forth. The telegram of Hojiboev directs us to further exploration and suggests new and fresh conclusions.

Secondly, it is now clear that the discussion of Abdurrahim Hojiboev with Stalin about the establishment of Tajikistan as a Union republic was serious and fruitful and played an important role in resolving this historical problem. In fact, Hojiboev has succeeded in changing Stalin's position and decisions on Tajikistan. He succeeded in persuading Stalin, who still wanted to see the Tajiks constrained under control of the pan-Turkists, to approve the separation of Tajikistan from Uzbekistan and thus grant Tajikistan relative independence. Undoubtedly, it was not an easy task to change Stalin's mind but it did happen in 1928. Thus, although Stalin's position denied the Tajiks a true autonomy in 1924, their champions continued their strenuous efforts with zeal and vigour to achieve it in 1929. The autonomy of 1924 and the independence of Uzbekistan of 1929 were not the favours of the Soviet government to the Tajik people, but the results of their enduring national aspirations for freedom and liberation. The letters sent to Stalin from Tajikistan mentioned above, Hojiboev's visit to Moscow and his discussion with Stalin were separate episodes of that struggle, and the latter was of particular importance.

also: M. Shakuri Bukhara-i, Matluba Mirzoyunus and Subhon A'zamzod, Абдуллаҳим Ҳочибоев ва исботи ҳастии маънавии тоҷикон (Abdurrahim Hojiboev and the proof of the spiritual existence of the Tajiks), *Ozodagon*, 2010, June 1, No. 27, p. 15; Abdurrahim Hojiboev, *Осор ва пайкор. Асноди бойгонӣ ва матбуот, пажӯҳиш, мусоҳиба, ёддошт ва феҳрастҳо бахшида 110-солагии нахустин раиси Шӯрои нозирони халқи Ҷумҳурии Тоҷикистон* (Works and Struggles: Documents from the Archives and the Press, Research, Interviews, Memoirs, and Lists Dedicated to the 110th Anniversary of the First Chairman of the Council of Peoples Commissars of the Republic of Tajikistan), Khujand, 2010, pp. 46–47.

¹⁶⁸ M. Shakuri Bukhara-i, Таърихи шиғоҳӣ эҳтиёти вежа мехоҳад (Oral history needs special care), *Ozodagon*, 2010, February 24, No. 8, p. 13, and March 3, No. 9, p. 14.

Thirdly, the document that confirms Hojiboev's audience and discussion with Stalin has a special place among other documents that refute the 'theory' of the intellectuals of Bukhara, Samarkand and Khujand being corrupt renegades. The fact that **Abdurrahim** Hojiboev did speak to Stalin eye to eye and managed to convince him that Tajikistan needs to be independent of Uzbekistan, leaves no room for any doubt regarding the leading role of the Tajik intellectuals from the lowlands of their historical motherland in the **establishment** of the Tajik Republic.

The Uzbekification policy of the pan-Turkists mostly targeted the Tajiks living in the lowlands and great historical cities, the heart of the ancient civilization, particularly Bukhara and Samarkand. It is not surprising then that these regions produced the heroes of the struggle against the pan-Turkism and pan-Uzbekism, the struggle to protect the nation and the cultural identity of the Tajiks. The perjured modern 'theoreticians' who call these heroes renegades and traitors will **face the judgement of history**.

At that time, Stalin agreed to transfer the region of Khujand to Tajikistan, but left out, or rather refused his consent on the issue of Bukhara, Samarkand and other regions. In spite of that, the leaders of Tajikistan further demonstrated dauntless courage insisting on justice regarding the national rights of their nation. For example, in 1929 Hojiboev insisted at a meeting of the Commission assigning Tajikistan's borders that not only Khujand, but Bukhara, Samarkand and other regions should be included into Tajikistan. His speech was full of meaning, reasons, convincing proofs and undeniable facts. It represents a reliable historical document exposing the unjust policies of the leaders in Moscow who denied the Tajiks Bukhara and Samarkand. That eminently logical and courageous speech of Hojiboev was a heroic act in itself that pointed out the way for the national struggle for justice and the way for reviving the oppressed nation.

Unfortunately, in 1930–1932 Stalin reconsidered his position on these matters. With the instigation and provocation of the Tashkent pan-Uzbek leaders (for example, in 1930 he revoked the decision to transfer the Surkhandarya Region to Tajikistan), he denounced the efforts of Hojiboev and Nusratullo Makhsum to include Surkhandarya, Bukhara, Samarkand and other regions into Tajikistan as hostile and anti-Soviet actions. Hojiboev and Nusratullo Makhsum were then accused of further sins, relieved of their posts in 1932 and arrested in 1937. In 1933, the pro-Turkist Abdulloh Rahimboev replaced A. Hojiboev as the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, but was also purged in 1937 and executed in 1938.

This outcome of the efforts of Nusratullo Makhsum and A. Hojiboev testifies once again that Stalin did not support the Tajik people in the strife between them and the Turks, and even when he occasionally assisted them, he broke his promise before long.

Abdurrahim Hojiboev, Nusratullo Makhsum (Lutfulloev), Shirinsho Shotemur, Abdulqodir Muhiddinov and others sacrificed their lives in the struggle for national freedom. It is due to

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their efforts that the Republic of Tajikistan is on the world map today.

It is quite possible that some of the prominent fighters of the 1920s, those young, courageous and great people, also had oversights and made mistakes. We should pardon them. It is obvious that the significance of great people's actions is not based on their faults, but it is determined by the service that they did for the nation and history, for the promotion of modern times, and for knowledge and culture. For example, one can find flaws in the works of Ayni and Bobojon Ghafurov. Ayni and Ghafurov corrected some of them themselves, and some of them remain. But this does not diminish the historical significance of these great people.

Bobojon Ghafurov entered the arena after A. Muhiddinov, Nusratullo Makhsum, and A. Hojiboev. He succeeded in working at prominent posts for a longer period and provided great services to the nation. The high title of *Hero of Tajikistan* that the government of independent Tajikistan bestowed on Academician Bobojon Ghafurov is an example of well-deserved historical justice. Awarding Nusratullo Makhsum (Lutfulloev) and Shirinsho Shotemur the title of *Hero of Tajikistan* was another act of justice.

The great services of Abdulqodir Muhiddinov, Abdurrahim Hojiboev, Abbos Aliev, Chinor Imomzoda, and Nisor Muhammad, ardent fighters against pan-Turkism who strove to establish the independent Republic of Tajikistan, also deserve similar highest recognition by both the nation and the government.

In this text, I have used the words 'hero' and 'heroism' quite often. *The times discussed in this book were abounding with fierce battles and heroism.* Thank God, dedicated and unselfish people were emerging from among the Tajik people. Having heard so many unfair words and opinions of those heroes, I felt urged to emphasize once more the services of those valiant sons of the nation to the Tajiks. We should deeply appreciate, respect and value the services of those nation's beloved sons.

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