

Zirabad Local Lore Museum

Ravshanov Uktamali Rustam ugli
Bukhara State Museum-Reserve, Uzbekistan



DOI : <https://doi.org/10.61796/ejlhss.v2i3.1251>



Sections Info

Article history:

Submitted: February 27, 2025

Final Revised: March 06, 2025

Accepted: March 13, 2025

Published: March 20, 2025

Keywords:

Zirabad

Local lore museum

Ethnographic features

Ethnotourism

Bukhara emirate

Historical heritage

Shiite population

Iranian migration

Cultural customs

Jadidist movement

ABSTRACT

Objective: This study explores the establishment and significance of the Zirabad Local Lore Museum, a specialized institution dedicated to preserving and showcasing the historical and cultural heritage of a specific regional community. **Method:** A qualitative descriptive approach was employed to analyze the museum's structure, thematic focus, and ethnographic elements through literature review and comparative analysis of similar regional museums. **Results:** The findings highlight that the museum serves as a valuable resource for ethnotourism, presenting the local community's lifestyle, customs, rituals, crafts, and cultural identity in a coherent narrative. Its regional specificity enhances its appeal to both local and international tourists seeking authentic cultural experiences. The museum also contributes to cultural preservation and community engagement. **Novelty:** While local lore museums are often overlooked in mainstream museology, this article positions the Zirabad Local Lore Museum as a unique case that bridges regional identity with global cultural discourse, thereby offering a new perspective on the role of micro-level heritage institutions in international tourism and heritage education.

INTRODUCTION

The exposition contains information about more than 400 local people and people related to the history of this region. That is, the museum belongs to the category of museums with a thematic regional and ethnographic character.

The museum's objects mainly consist of various documents and photographs, family photos that have not been preserved even by local people, and information that helps young people to learn about their ancestors in the last 100 years, have definitely become a part of the history of our country.

Literature Review

The research topic was initially studied by Yusuf Kurbanov and local scholar Aziza Mardon. During the process of organizing the museum, they also conducted interviews with many elderly people who lived during the Emirate period [1].

Jalal Ikrami, who worked at the same time as them and during the former Soviet Union, wrote about the people of Zirabad and the events that took place there in a literary-historical style.

Later and the only created scientific research work is the scientific work of S. Nosirov, dedicated to the language features of the local population. The Iranian elements present in their dialects have been extensively studied by the scientist [2].

Research Objective

Today, the Zirabad Museum of Local Lore, consisting of two exhibition halls and six departments, operates in the village of Zirabad, Kogon district, Bukhara region. The museum is classified as a school-local-lore museum under the Ministry of Public Education.

The Zirabad History and Local Lore Museum began operating in July 1986. The museum was officially opened on March 26, 1988. From that time on, the museum was named the "Zirabad Museum of Local Lore"[3].

The museum is named after the village of Zirabod in the Kagon district. The museum is organized by the team of the S. Ainiy Secondary School No. 6 in the city of Kogon.

The decoration of the museum was done by the artists of "Zolushka" cooperative. The main works were done by Valery Ivanov (artist leader), Farhod Qambar, and Sunnat Khudoyberdi. Carpentry works were carried out by Zahir Kasim, Nur Nurali, Nazar Ramazan, Jumamurod Mustafa.

Father and son Hamraqul and Mustafa Narzilar (raised the memorial wall from stone), Hamza Qayyum (wrote the drawings and inscriptions on the marble surface) and others took part in the construction of the "Shuhrat" monument dedicated to the victims of repressions and martyrs of the Second World War in the courtyard of the museum [4].

In October 1988, the opening ceremony of the "Jasorat - Fame" monument was held. The project of the monument "Jasorat" was drawn by the artist Alexander Vorobyov, which depicts symbols of courage. The organization, equipment and installation of the museum's monument "Shuhrat" were led by teacher Yusuf Kurhani.

The works of Jalol Ikromi played a key role in creating the ideological basis of the museum. The information in the museum is multilingual and is provided in Uzbek, Persian-Tajik and Russian [5].

Research Question

1. In the study, when the Iranian term zirabad was born?
2. Importance and superiority of local museums over other types of museums?
3. The role of the local population in the history of Bukhara?
4. The role of historical figures in various socio-political processes?

RESEARCH METHOD

The article used methods such as museology, classification, periodization, collecting. determined in the creation of the scientific exposition of the museum shortcomings and achievements were studied through a comparative analysis method [6].

Significance Of Study

The museum consists of the following sections:

1. The history of the village of Zirabod and the situation in the Bukhara Emirate at the beginning of the 20th century.

The village of Zirabod is a region of the Kogan district of the Bukhara emirate, located 3 kilometers west of the city of Kogan. This region was ruled by an aksakal (chieftain). The last head of the village was Sherali aksakal. The inhabitants of this region have been engaged in agriculture and cattle breeding (sheep breeding) since ancient times. In addition, there were also owners of various crafts (ganchkor, kandakor, weaver, sugar cane, jeweler, locksmith). The local population is Shiite and differs from other peoples in the Kagan region (except for Amirabad) in that they speak their own dialect of the Persian language. Although local historians have tried to prove that the population has lived here since ancient times, it is still unclear when Shiite Islam became the main religion [7].

The word "Zirabad" is used in the exposition in the sense of "agriculture", that is, taking into account the fact that the population here has been engaged in agriculture since ancient times, and "Zirabad" means "forcibly developed", that is, it means that the people who were moved here from Iran carried out development [8].

There are different peoples here, they are Moors (moved from Marv, Khurasan), Darghali (from Khurasan), Lokhis (from Afghanistan), Babaki (from Azerbaijan), Kharsaris (from Khurasan), Timurids (from Khurasan), Gundis (from Khurasan), Kipchaks (from Khurasan), Baluch (from Khurasan) and others. It seems that all of them were transferred from the south of the Bukhara Emirate from the Shia-inhabited areas. The exposition also touches on the settlement of the first Russians and Europeans in Kagan around the railway, and thus the beginning of a new way of life in the place of the old Kagan.

This section contains historical photographs of the first oil refining (1914) and cotton ginning (1915) plants established in the Kagon district, as well as their activities.

At the beginning of the 20th century, a total of 15 industrial enterprises operated in Kogon. These included 7 cotton ginning plants, 2 oil extraction plants, a match factory, the main railway stations of Kogon (Yangi(new) Bukhara) and Amirabad, and wagon and steam locomotive depots [9].

Of course, the passage of the railway network played an important role in the expansion of the city of Kogon and the settlement of Europeans here. The exhibition includes the main station building built in 1903 and its subsequent images, which are also valuable photo sources for studying the history of railway formation.

Zirabod residents were also not left out of the Jadidist movements that intensified during this period. Among the factors of active participation of Zirabad people in these processes is the migration of Europeans to Kogon and its Amirabad, Zirabad regions and their influence [10].

Shukurbek (Hamzabek) Yuldash, Jura Khudoibakhsh, Ali Bobek (a cotton mill worker who was punished with 75 lashes for his participation in the spring uprising of 1917), Kambar Ismail, Kambar Yunus, Ghulom Tillo and a number of other young people

campaigned against the emir's regime. In 1917-20, Shukurbek Yuldash led the young Jadids of Zirabod.

There is also a list of 51 Zirabod workers who worked in the first factories and an information board indicating which factories they worked in. What is interesting is that the organization "Jamiyat Farsho"(Persian branch) was active at that time, and information about its members is also provided [11].

The February and October Revolutions that took place in Russia did not fail to affect Kagan and its small village of Zirabod, as well as the entire territory of the emirate. In 1918, a revolutionary branch was also organized in Zirabod under the leadership of Ghulam Tillo. Later, the branch was headed by Shukurbek Yuldash.

In early 1918, the Red Guard organization was formed in New Bukhara. The organization was headed by S. Chernyshev. The organization's headquarters was located in the Arzimanyan Hotel (later Kindergarten No. 1). Members also met in the homes of Ramazan Kamil, Jura Khudoibakhsh, and Shukur Yuldash from Zirabad [12].

This section of the museum also includes a number of photos of the participation, Red Guards and early members of the party. In particular, historical photos of Abbas Ali (1899-1958), the organizer of the Charjoi branch of the Bukhara participation party, Mukhtar Saidjonov, Fathullo Komil, Mardon Rakhim, Ibrahim Komil, etc. have been preserved.

The Kolesov incident, which took place in March 1918, also has a separate section in the museum, complete with photographs. In 1919, a youth organization was also formed in Zirabod, led by Ahad Yusuf. This movement also participated in various historical processes [13].

In particular, 7 people from Zirabod participated in the Congress of the Peoples of the East held in Baku in 1920. When developing the museum concept, Yusuf Kurbanov conducted interviews with people who personally participated in the processes of 1917-1920, which resulted in a more comprehensive coverage of this period in the exhibition.

2. Zirabod in 1920-1924

In 1919, Jadids established their own organization in New Bukhara. Navruz Rahim, Ollonazar Kholnazar, Sadiqguli Akbar, Mirzo Rajab, Kasim Sultan, Rakhmatillo Amin, Mamadali Kurban and other Zirabad residents joined the organization. After the overthrow of the Bukhara Emirate, all the young people joined the Bukhara Communist Party. Zirabad residents led by Shukurbek Yuldash also joined this party.

This section of the museum contains the names of 71 Red Guards from Zirabod. Their names have been preserved in history only in this museum. However, most of them were victims of Soviet repressions. About 500 Zirabod residents participated in the coup d'état in Bukhara in 1920. They mistakenly perceived this process as a freedom struggle [14].

Of the 38 officers in the Zirabod Guard Department, which was formed on September 8, 1922 under the leadership of Kachaev Akhmed, 25 were of Persian origin. At that time, a commander training course was opened at the Emir's palace in Kagan to protect the new government. In 1921, the Kushchilar Movement was established in

Zirabod, and its first chairman was Kambar Yunus. Zulfiqar Ismail became the first chairman of the Corporation Bank, which was established in the same year, and Yodgor Alim became the first chairman of the Khojalik Bank. On January 1, 1924, a press society was established in Zirabod, and Kasim Husayn was elected its chairman.

In 1925, Ghulam Husen (1874-1966), a worker of the Amirabad main railway station, was awarded the title of "Hero of Labor" for his bravery in his work. His photo also found its place in the exhibition as the pride of this period.

In 1926, land and water reform was carried out in Zirabod. The land of the rich was distributed to the poor peasants. Ghulam Tillo, the chairman of "Koshchi Union", is in charge of these activities. Also, it was one of the first in the republic, and in 1929, collectivization began. Protests against this process were held in the village. During this demonstration, Grandpa Sevara was killed in a scuffle. However, the propaganda was not about the casualties during the political processes that took place during the former Soviet era, but about the "throwing away of the veil" that took place at that time.

Although in the old ideological expositions, separate panels were devoted to throwing off the burqa, we do not find this process in this museum. Despite the protests, the collective farm "Kyzil Oktyabr"(red october) will be established in the village. Ruzi Niyaz from Fergana (usually leaders are brought from different places) became the first chairman of collective farm.

This organization was headed by Kambar Karim from Zirabod in 1931, and later by Ibrahim Turab and Ghulam Qurban. Several of the chairmen of the Zirabod village community were also cited in the exhibition, and these materials helped visitors understand the administrative management of the village.

Since 1929, a special course for tractor drivers was organized in the building of the oil factory, which trained 150 people. Jumamurod Po'lod from Zirabod (photo of this person as the first tractor driver is also included in the exhibition) and Kasim Nazar studied in this course.

For their exemplary labor activities, Ghulamhasan Yunus and Asad Mammad were awarded the Order of the Red Banner of Labor.

3. The contribution of Zirabod residents to the Second World War

With the outbreak of World War II, Mirzo Rajab (the battalion's political leader), Husen Rajab, Hassan Ghulam, Ibrahim Baghir, Kadir Riza, Abdullo Kasim, Quli Avez, Abdullo Kasim, Ibrahim Baghir, brothers Safar and Sharif Haji, teachers Ashurmamad and Asad Navruz, brothers Haidar and Hassan Alimadad, father and son Nuralibegijon Adiz and his son Shahimardon Nurali, and teacher Mansur Muhammadi were mobilized from Zirabod.

Also, Mairam Ali from Zirabod showed courage among women and voluntarily went to war. During the war years, more than 300 Zirabod residents went on military mobilization. More than 100 of them died on the battlefields. Zirabod residents were not left out of the adoption of children who were resettled to the republic during the war years. For example, Muharram Abdurahim took in 4 children.

The museum's exposition also includes photographs of the heroes named above and "qora xat" (black letter about death) letters from the war. A number of Zirabad residents were also awarded for their heroism. For example, Mahmud Allonazar was awarded the Order of the Red Star, the Order of Glory of the 3rd degree, and medals "For the capture of Murmansk", "For the capture of Warsaw", and "For the capture of Berlin".

Women from Zirabad also showed courage on the battlefields. Mairam Ali, who volunteered to fight, was awarded several state awards for her bravery.

4. Zirabad residents during the Soviet era

After the war, those who returned and those who made the experience of hard work behind the front the meaning of their lives, also showed great dedication in the restoration of the national economy. In particular, in 1948, gardener Abbas Ali was awarded the title of "Hero of Socialist Labor" in Samarkand. Railway workers Mustafar Yakub, Tillo Rahmat, Ramazon Rahim, Rajab Fayzullo and others were awarded the Order of Lenin.

Local residents also showed kindness in adopting children orphaned by the war. Gulsuma Karim Rajabi adopted a boy named Kamar, and Rahima Zulfaq Zuhra adopted a girl named Zuhra. The people of Zirabad also participated in the construction of the Farkhod hydroelectric power station and reservoir. Asad Mamadrizo, Murad Ghulam, Mamad Mirali and others also participated in the construction of this hydroelectric power station and the Kattakurgan reservoirs.

The exposition also features a separate stand dedicated to Zulfiqari Hashim Qurban, a participant in the Afghan war born in 1956 and recipient of the medals "For Valiant Labor" and "For Military Courage." His life story and some photos are on display. Zulfiqari Hashim saved the lives of several people on the battlefields as a surgeon.

Along with him, Rashid Jurakuli Madali, Ali Abbas Nurali, Kasimiy Norkul Ato, Yusufiy Husen Mahmud also participated in this war as internationalists. Maryam Ghulam and others were awarded the Order of the Red Banner of Labor, and the work of school teacher No. 5 Mamedov Mardon was awarded the title of "Honored Worker of Public Education of the Soviet Union", and Hamro Kurbanov was awarded the title of "Honored Worker of Public Education of Uzbekistan".

In this section of the museum, the memories of internationalists such as Abdulla Rajab Qurban, Mamed Khairulloyi Ghulam, Safar Azam, who were disabled as a result of the explosion in Chernobyl, were recorded [15].

5. Zirabod during the years of independence

This section is not large, but reflects the latest changes made to the museum. This section mainly contains a list of those awarded state awards. In particular, the brothers Jura and Ghulam Ibrahim, Ja'far Sulayman and others received the title of "Honorary Worker of the Railway", and Kurban Rajabi Hoji, a teacher at school No. 5, received the Order of "Friendship" in 2002. Also, several car drivers and railway workers were awarded a number of state awards.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The last part of the museum focuses on the education system and the teachers who worked in it. Of course, since the museum is part of a school and the organizers of the museum were mainly teachers from this school, most of the teachers whose work is also featured in the exhibition are women, and this section also provides an opportunity to get acquainted with active women from Zirabad.

In Zirabod, as usual, there were 3 schools near the mosque, where 15-20 children received primary education. The school named after Zahrai Qori was the most prestigious school here. In 1920, a school based on European-style education was established in Zirabod. Kambar Riza was one of the first teachers of this school.

He was awarded the Order of the Red Banner of Labor in 1951 and the title of "Honored Teacher of Uzbekistan" in 1953. Mahmud Amin, who began his career as a teacher in 1925, later became the first scientist from Zirabod.

Latofat Amin (her photo is also displayed at the exhibition), who graduated from the Mathematics Faculty of the Uzbek State University in Samarkand in 1937, began her career as the first female teacher with a higher education. The number of highly educated personnel in the school's activities has increased over the years.

Since the museum exhibition has not been updated for several years, the recent history of Zirabod has not been covered. Of course, this work should be continued. Because even now, the work of artists and folk craftsmen honored by the people is being continued as a tradition.

Also, although the museum is dedicated to the history of a specific people in the selected region, some ethnographic elements: various rituals, customs, and national crafts are not sufficiently covered in the exhibition. These aspects should also be taken into account when expanding the museum's activities in the future.

As we study the activities of this museum, we can see that the main focus is on people who have a place in the history of the village and special attention is paid to displaying information related to their origins or the fact that they still live in Iran. The museum houses a total of about 1,000 exhibits.

Discussion

The museum also houses two Caucasian swords from the Emirate period, a medal awarded to Kambar Bobobekov by the government of the BSSR, late 19th and early 20th century embroidery samples (suzani, cradle accessories), a Bukhara samovar, various ceramic and copper jugs. At the end of the exhibition, historical books dedicated to the history of the Kagon district and Zirabod are also housed under display cases.

Given his contributions to the organization of the museum and his contributions to this ethnographic area, it is fitting that the museum be named after Yusuf Kurbanov. The museum's tasks include expanding its activities, equipping it to meet modern requirements, and reviving various ethnographic processes.

This museum can be included separately in the expansion of ethnotourism destinations that are currently developing in our country. This museum, which is of a

regional nature, will certainly be interesting to local and foreign tourists as it covers the lifestyle, culture, customs, rituals, crafts and other aspects of a people.

CONCLUSION

Fundamental Finding : This study identified the emergence of the Iranian population in the village of Zirabad during the era of Amir Shahmurad, providing a brief assessment of their role in the history of Bukhara. **Implication :** The findings underscore the valuable role of local museums as significant resources for the study of rural populations, highlighting their importance in preserving and interpreting regional histories. **Limitation :** The research was based exclusively on museum materials, which, while informative, may not fully capture the nuanced historical experiences of the community. **Future Research :** Future investigations could enrich this study by incorporating primary sources, such as interviews with older Iranian residents of Zirabad, to offer deeper insights into the lived experiences and oral histories of the population.

REFERENCES

- [1] J. Ikrami, *Бухоронинг ўн икки дарвозаси [Twelve Gates of Bukhara]*. Tashkent: Fan Publishers, 1971.
- [2] Y. Kurbanov, *Истоки Благородной Бухары (из истории Зўробода) [Origins of Noble Bukhara (History of Zirabad)]*. Kogon: Local Historical Society, 1996.
- [3] S. Nosirov, *Системный анализ говора бухарских ирацев [Systemic Analysis of the Dialect of Bukhara Iranians]*. Dushanbe: Tajikistan Academy of Sciences, 2013.
- [4] D. J. Timothy, *Cultural Heritage and Tourism: An Introduction*. Channel View Publications, 2011.
- [5] B. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, *Destination Culture: Tourism, Museums, and Heritage*. University of California Press, 1998.
- [6] J. H. Falk, *Identity and the Museum Visitor Experience*. Routledge, 2009.
- [7] E. Crooke, *Museums and Community: Ideas, Issues and Challenges*. Routledge, 2008.
- [8] S. Watson, Ред., *Museums and their Communities*. Routledge, 2007.
- [9] S. Macdonald, «Museums, national, postnational and transcultural identities», *Mus. Soc.*, т. 1, вып. 1, сс. 1–16, 2003.
- [10] T. Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics*. Routledge, 2013.
- [11] E. Hooper-Greenhill, *The Educational Role of the Museum*. Routledge, 1999.
- [12] L. H. Silverman, *The Social Work of Museums*. Routledge, 2010.
- [13] G. Black, *Transforming Museums in the Twenty-first Century*. Routledge, 2012.
- [14] L. Smith, *Uses of Heritage*. Routledge, 2006.
- [15] U. R. Ravshanov, «Zirabad Local Lore Museum: Structure and Ethnographic Significance». Navoi State University, Bukhara State Museum-Reserve, 2024 г.

* Ravshanov Uktamali Rustam ugli (Corresponding Author)

Bukhara State Museum-Reserve, Uzbekistan

Email: powerravshanov@mail.ru
