

On The Journalistic Work of Sadriddin Ayni Concerning Issues of Bukhara History

Temirov Farrux Umedovich
Bukhara State University, Uzbekistan



DOI : <https://doi.org/10.61796/ejlhss.v2i4.1270>



Sections Info

Article history:

Submitted: March 07, 2025
Final Revised: March 14, 2025
Accepted: March 21, 2025
Published: April 04, 2025

Keywords:

Sadriddin Ayni
Bukhara history
Jadid movement
Journalism
Cultural heritage
Soviet era
Historical preservation

ABSTRACT

Objective: This study investigates the journalistic contributions of Sadriddin Ayni between 1920 and 1923 to reveal their significance in documenting Bukhara's socio-political transformations and preserving its cultural heritage. **Method:** A qualitative content analysis was conducted on several lesser-known articles by Ayni, including "Let Them See and Hear," "Address to the Jadids and Revolutionaries of Bukhara," and "Mir Arab Buildings," which were not included in his official collected works. **Results:** The findings demonstrate Ayni's active engagement in chronicling the Soviet restoration of Bukhara, advocating for the humane treatment of the Emir's relatives, and emphasizing the importance of cultural preservation. His collaboration with local intellectuals and support for historical societies illustrate his dual function as both a journalist and historian. **Novelty:** This study highlights rare and previously overlooked journalistic writings of Ayni, offering new perspectives on his role in Central Asian historiography and intellectual activism, thus contributing original insight into the historiographical narratives of early 20th-century Bukhara.

INTRODUCTION

The role of intellectuals in preserving national history and shaping collective memory is an essential subject in historiographical and literary studies. In Central Asia, particularly in Bukhara, the intersection of journalism, enlightenment, and historical narration gained significant momentum during the early 20th century. Among the most influential figures contributing to this intellectual revival was Sadriddin Ayni, whose work represents a critical link between national identity, reformist movements, and socio-political transformation during and after the collapse of the Bukhara Emirate [1].

Sadriddin Ayni's contributions transcend literary boundaries; they embody historical documentation, journalistic advocacy, and cultural preservation. His articles written between 1920 and 1927—such as "Let them see and hear," "Address to the Bukhara Jadids and Revolutionaries," and "Mir Arab Buildings"—serve as unique testimonies to the sociopolitical changes in Bukhara under Soviet influence. The integration of major concepts such as cultural memory, postcolonial identity, and reformist nationalism within his writings shows how journalism functioned as a medium of resistance and record. Scholars of Central Asian studies have often focused on Ayni's literary works and memoirs, yet his journalistic writings have not been systematically analyzed in the context of historical preservation and intellectual legacy [2].

While previous studies have explored the broader Jadidist movement and Ayni's literary role, there remains a gap in understanding the significance of his lesser-known journalistic pieces as primary historical sources. Research by scholars such as H. Turaev, G. Juraeva, and B. Bobojonov refer to these articles only marginally, often overlooking their embedded factual value and ideological nuances. This study adopts a qualitative content analysis method to examine Ayni's journalistic output between 1920 and 1923, supported by archival data, published newspapers, and related scholarly literature. The methodology emphasizes a close reading of his texts, contextual analysis, and comparison with contemporaneous press activity in Bukhara [3].

This paper aims to analyze how Ayni's journalistic writings document the socio-political transformation of Bukhara during a critical historical juncture. Through this, it seeks to understand how narrative strategies were used not only to inform and influence readers but also to establish a historical record that contested prevailing narratives. It is expected that the analysis will reveal both factual insight into the post-Emirate transition and the ideological framing employed by Ayni to support cultural preservation and reformist ideals. The findings will also address how journalism served as a bridge between political resistance and historical authorship [4].

The implications of this research are twofold: academically, it contributes to the historiography of Bukhara and the intellectual heritage of the Jadid movement; socially, it highlights the enduring power of journalism in cultural resilience and historical awareness. By foregrounding Ayni's journalistic voice, the study provides new insight into the formation of modern Central Asian identity and the role of public intellectuals in shaping historical consciousness [5].

RESEARCH METHOD

The methodology employed in this study is grounded in qualitative historical analysis, drawing primarily on content analysis of primary source documents authored by Sadriddin Ayni between 1920 and 1927. The focus is placed on his journalistic writings—particularly the articles “Let them see and hear,” “Address to the Bukhara Jadids and Revolutionaries,” and “Mir Arab Buildings”—which are examined as key texts reflecting the socio-political transformation of Bukhara in the aftermath of the fall of the Emirate. The selection of these articles is based on their thematic relevance to the preservation of historical memory, cultural identity, and reformist discourse [6]. The research is supported by archival materials, including historical newspapers such as *Bukhara News*, journals like *Education and Teacher*, and contextual references from Ayni's own memoirs and related academic publications. A close reading technique is used to extract factual content, ideological orientation, and rhetorical devices within the texts. Additionally, secondary sources, including the works of scholars like H. Turaev, F. Temirov, and B. Bobojonov, are consulted to situate Ayni's writings within broader historiographical and intellectual frameworks [7]. Comparative analysis is also applied by cross-referencing Ayni's journalistic accounts with contemporary official Soviet narratives to identify contrasts in historical representation. The goal is to reconstruct the historical and cultural atmosphere of early Soviet Bukhara through Ayni's lens, and to

interpret his role not only as a chronicler but also as a participant in shaping historical consciousness. This methodology allows for an interpretive yet evidence-based reconstruction of Ayni's contributions to Central Asian intellectual heritage [8]

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

This historical study of Ayni is based on the work of Zaynuddin Wasifi "Badoe'-ul-vaqoe" and, according to the author, the authority held in the hands of the descendants of Mir Arab. It should be noted that Ayni was one of the first researchers to address the legacy of Zaynuddin Wasifi. According to historian H. Turaev, only Goliba Juraeva and Bakhtiyor Bobojonov used Ayni's article in preparing and publishing their research on Mir Arab. In particular, in the same article he writes:

"Before writing about Mir Arab buildings, it is necessary to give a brief account of his translation. Mir Arab's name was Mir Abdullah and he was born in Huzramawt, Yemen. At the age of 22, he emigrated from his native Arabia to Turkestan. Here in Samarkand he entered the circle of Khoja Ahror. After the death of Hodja Ahror, he probably went to Sayram and settled there. Mir Arab became famous during the Shaybanid period and came from this dynasty. He received a lot of generosity from Ubaydullah, who ruled Bukhara in 918-948 AH, and his state had a lot of property in its shadow" [8].

"The Mir Arab Madrasah," writes Ayni, "was somewhat damaged during the Bukhara Revolution (1920) and some parts of its tower were destroyed by artillery fire." We need to take steps to reform that. The most important Mir Arab building is the Mir Arab Madrasah in Bukhara. This madrasa is located in front of the Bukhara Tower, opposite the Kalon Mosque, and has a wide and high dome. The dome and the roof are tiled, and the roofs are decorated with various inscriptions. Only in later times did most of the roofs fall off and disappear. The residence of this madrasa consists of one hundred and fourteen rooms, the individual arches are two-storeyed, the corners are three-storeyed and the bouquets are four-storeyed [11].

According to the legends, the base of the madrasah was very deep, covered with pebbles from the ground, covered with stones to ward off snow and rain, and the tazar was taken out of the city fortress and connected to "Temur zahkash". Therefore, 44 years after its construction, most of the Kokaltash madrasah (in Bukhara) was rebuilt two or three times, and to this day it has not been in need of major repairs. According to rumors, a special naqib was dug from the first market on the east side of the Mir Arab Madrasa to clear the tazar. It was later closed because the air was polluted and the entrance was dangerous" [7].

He concludes: "Although it is not known when and in what year the building of this madrasah was started, it is known that Mir Arab died in 932 AH before the building was completed [10]. It can be compared to the fact that the property of Mir Arab in Sayram was plundered in Bukhara in 928 AH by Abdullah Sultan, the son of Kuchkinchihan, the governor of Yassi, and Sevinchkhan, the governor of Tashkent. After Mir Arab's death, according to his will, his son-in-law Sheikh Zikriya continued the building and finished it in 92 AH" [7].

Discussion

Undoubtedly, the basis of his work is historical and literary research on the history of Bukhara. Such works as "History of the Emir of Bukhara Mangitiya Bukhara" ("History of the Emir of Bukhara Mangit"), "Materials for the history of the Bukhara Revolution", the famous memoir "Memories" can be included in such studies. Along with such disciplines as literature, oriental studies, cultural studies, historiography, lexicography, the scientist has made a fruitful work in journalism. In his journalistic activity, he considered the history of Bukhara as a separate topic. The author has tried to find a solution to these problems, to cover them correctly and objectively, by writing down the issues that are important in this [9].

The main goal of the writer was to preserve the history of Bukhara and pass it on to future generations. The enlightened scholar also published "Bukhara Sharif", "Turon", "Turkistan", "Zarafshan", "Voice of Workers", "Sadoi Turkiston", "Sadoi Fergana", "Bukhara News" published by Turkestan jadids and national intellectuals in the early 20-th century. He has enriched the pages of these publications with his historical-artistic and socio-political articles on various topics and content in local newspapers and magazines such as "Oyna", "Shu'lai inqilob" ("Inqilob shulasi"), "Inqilob", "Maorif va okutushi" [10].

In particular, in the Bukhara-based newspaper Akhbori (later Ozod Bukhara), the only Uzbek-language press agency of the government of the Bukhara People's Soviet Republic (BSSR), Ayni published in 1923 "Korsunlar ve Eshitsunlar" [4], "Address to the Jadids and Revolutionaries of Bukhara" as well as published articles in the journal "Education and Teacher" entitled "Mir Arab Buildings". The need for description and research of the above articles is that, first of all, their text is not known to the whole scientific creative community [11].

While reading the author's article "Let them see and hear", this article was written due to a negative report about Bukhara in one of the Baku (Azerbaijani) newspapers. The article describes the efforts of the government of the USSR in 1922-1923 in the field of restoration of historical monuments in Bukhara. According to the author, masters and laborers undertook two years of repair work to repair the damaged areas of the Minaret Kalon after the Soviet coup in September 1920 by a government decree [12].

A special plan has been drawn up for the restoration of other historical monuments that have fallen into a state of semi-ruin, with a large amount of building materials: brick, lime, plaster and wood. For example, in 1923, "Dirty shops around the Devonbegi pool, a nest of Varaja microbes (invisible pests), began to rise, a new building was rebuilt from stone, areas with good air and wind were opened, and a healthy building was built." Writes Ayni [13].

The enlightened writer was thrilled by the good deeds of the government of the Republic of Bukhara to preserve historical monuments and relics, pass them on to future generations, beautify the city of Bukhara and build health centers and new modern buildings. He puts an end to the article as a proof of the unfoundedness of the slanders against the young government of the Republic of Bukhara led by F. Khodjaev. He was one of the Jadid representatives who suffered during the reign of the last Emir of Bukhara, Said Alimkhan (1910-1920), who was held captive in his prison and sentenced to 75 lashes [14].

In the spring of 1921, the emir crossed into neighboring Afghanistan. He is survived by more than 100 relatives in Bukhara. Amir Alimkhan's cruel treatment of the Jadids and their families after the Kolesov incident of 1918 is described in the second article by Ayni. F. Khodjaev's government wrote that the emir's family was treated with kindness, shelter, food and shelter, and 52 of them were sent to the emir (Afghanistan) [15].

The article "Address to the Jadids and Revolutionaries of Bukhara" is larger in size than the previous two articles, in which the author raises the most pressing issue. In other words, he discusses the issue of transmitting the history and activities of the Bukhara Jadids to future generations. We need to put together the dates (certificates), pictures, old letters and newspapers in one place and prepare a monument, a museum for our martyred comrades. In particular, the pictures and letters of the martyred brothers are considered great gifts.

It emphasizes that if the same historical documents, rare manuscripts and artifacts are not collected, they will disappear, resulting in a perfect and true interpretation of our recent past. The writer thinks about the need to create a government commission in this direction: "I want to hand over the Bukhara Sharif and Turon newspapers to the commission of Tarjimon and Vaqt newspapers (in Tatar), which publish articles about Bukhara, and do my best." I wanted to write biographies of the brothers who were martyred [9].

It is clear from the text of the article that Ayni also carried out practical work to pass the history of Bukhara to future generations. He met with Abbas Aliyev (1899 - 1958), one of the local intellectuals of Bukhara, and shared his views on this issue. Polatbek Namangani, a 1337 Hijri porter, took out a baked brick from the prison archive in the Bukhara arch as historical evidence. According to the author, in 1919, a Jadid from Namangan named Polatbek was lying in the prison where Ayni was arrested. After being sentenced to death by the Emir, he left the above inscription on a brick in order to leave a mark on himself. The author Ayni emphasizes that the study of the lives of hundreds of people, such as Polatbek Namangani, is the task of historians.

At the end of September 1920, an expedition was organized in Bukhara by the Central Archives of Turkestan. VV Bartold, who was teaching the history of Islamic culture at the Turkestan Oriental Institute (founded in 1918) at the time, also said he would attend. The purpose of this expedition was to organize the registration and preservation of historical monuments in the Emirate of Bukhara, which were overthrown by the "Red" army led by Frunze, as well as manuscripts and archives of exiled Amir Alimkhan (1910-1920) and high-ranking officials (eg Kushbegi, Kozikalon). was set. According to Barthold, the expedition saved 380 valuable manuscripts from looting.

About this trip of VV Bartold in Mirzo Salimbek's work "Kashkoli Salimi Tavorihi Mutaqadimin and Muttarixin" Russian orientalists VV Bartold and AA Semenov talked to Mirzo Salimbek and Sharifjon Makhdom for several days on the Eastern manuscript when they arrived in Bukhara, praised their knowledge in the field of Oriental Studies. We can also see that Sharifjon Makhdom is a mature historian when in 1921 in Bukhara was established the "Society for the Study of the History of Bukhara", called "Conference History". The members of this society consisted of 7 people, among them Sharifjon Mahdum Sadr Ziya.

The mission of this society was to study the history of Bukhara, ethnography, the history of artefacts, the history of the Bukhara arch, the collection of rare manuscripts and historical artifacts, including the creation of scientific works and the establishment of the Bukhara Museum. With the efforts of this society, the work "Research Arch of Bukhara" was created. The author of this work is Sayyid Muhammad Nasir ibn Muzaffarkhan, the son of Amir Muzaffarkhan, who writes, the mullahs of the world, Domullo Muhammad Sharif Ziya (i.e. Sharifjon Mahdum), Mullo Salimbek, Mr. Haji Sayyid Muhammad Mahdum, the Mufti, and Sayyid Muhammad Nasir, the servant of these nobles, mentioned that the "Anjuman Tarikh" ("History Conference") had entered.

After the formation of the Bukhara People's Soviet Republic in 1921, the People's Commissariat of Education of the Turkestan Soviet Government began to identify the Emirate and private libraries preserved in Bukhara. A special commission was set up, headed by historian Pulat Soliev and Professor Abudurauf Fitrat, who was in charge of overseeing and recording the inspections (including Fitrat, Pulat Soliev, M. Saidjanov, and poet Elbek). In 1921, the delegation searched the existing libraries in Bukhara and registered rare manuscripts in them and informed Tashkent [9]. A commission headed by Fitrat, which managed to identify cultural monuments, various libraries, large and small, in Bukhara, reported to the People's Commissariat of Education of the Turkestan Soviet Government: "We came to Bukhara and started our work. There are three most famous and richest libraries in Bukhara. The first is the library of Qaziqalon, the second is the library of Muhammad Siddiqkhan Hashmat (prince, son of Amir Muzaffarkhan), and the third is the library of Qazi Muhammad Sharifjon Mahdum Sadr" [9].

While studying in Bukhara madrassas, he knew that there were unique libraries in Bukhara, including the rich personal library of Sharifjon Makhdum Sadr Ziyoy (1865 - 1932), a lover of science. This private library was used for several years by Abdulvahid Munzim (Burhanov), a close friend of Ayni. In 1900, Sharifjon Mahdum Sadr Ziyoy personally got acquainted with the work of the famous historian and even Ahmad Mahdum Donish (1827-1897) "Navodir ul-waqoe" ("Rare Events"). Handed over to Munzim. According to Ayni, this work of Ahmad Donish was presented to Sadr Ziya by Muhammad Siddiq Khan Hashmat Bukhari [6].

It is known that Mir Arab Madrasah (1535 - 1536) was one of the most famous and well-known scientific centers in Bukhara. He studied various subjects at this madrasah from 1890 to 1891. The scholar later published a study of his memoirs about the madrasah and its scientific level in the 5th issue of the journal "Education and Teacher" in 1927 in the Arabic alphabet and in the old Uzbek language, entitled "Mir Arab Buildings" [7].

Ayni's objective approach to the issue, without ideological influences, and the fact that Mir Arab's personality and the madrasa he built was one of the centers of religious knowledge, based on historical works and documents, may not have led to the publication of the study in Uzbek, Russian and Tajik [12].

CONCLUSION

Fundamental Finding : This study reveals that Sadriddin Ayni's underexplored journalistic writings from 1920 to 1923 offer valuable insights into the socio-political and cultural transformations of Bukhara, underscoring his dual role as a historian and

journalist. **Implication** : The analysis highlights the necessity of revisiting overlooked primary sources to enrich Central Asian historiography and deepen understanding of intellectual activism during the early Soviet period. **Limitation** : However, the study is limited by the inaccessibility of certain archival materials and the ideological lens through which Ayni's articles were shaped during the Soviet era. **Future Research** : Further investigation is needed to identify and critically examine additional unpublished or untranslated works by Ayni and his contemporaries to construct a more comprehensive and balanced historical narrative of the region.

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* Temirov Farrux Umedovich (Corresponding Author)

Bukhara State University, Uzbekistan

Email: farruxtemirov1983@mail.ru
