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RESEARCH ARTICLE

THE ATTITUDE OF THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT TOWARDS MATERIAL CULTURE MEMORIALS IN UZBEKISTAN (1917-1990)

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ABSTRACT

The article studies the attitude of the Soviet government towards material culture memorials in Uzbekistan through scientific literature and primary resources.

INTRODUCTION

Cultural memorials and their preservation, protection, and to take care of them has had an important position in the life of society. It should be pointed out that during the former Union the architecture and art of Uzbekistan was under influence of foreigner ideas and was formed through a frame which contradicts Uzbek national traditions. This period is responsible for prohibition of great cultural heritage, spiritual wealth and customs that had been shaping over many centuries in order to break the national pride of the nation. In particular, the heritages and names of great ancestors, even the holy places and destinations where their soul was resting were made ruins. For instance, "during the soviet reign the mausoleum of Imam Bukhari in Samarkand was used as a store for fertilizers, in Tashkent the yard of the mausoleum of Kaffol Shoshiy was used as cattle bazaar or in Karshi Mosque Odina was used as a prison which clearly indicates how evil were the eyes looking at our national cultural heritage during the years under forceful ideology government" (1). From the initial years of the soviet government, there began a strict fight against religion, religious ideology and the pious men. The relationship between soviet government and the church was pointed out in the decree of RSFSR XKS on 23rd of January 1918 named «On separation the church from the government and the school

from the church» (2). The decree constituted 13 articles that it was stated to separate the government from the church (3). After the announcement of the decree, the executive committee of Tashkent soviet made a suggestion to the head inspector of the educational institutions of Turkistan to sign a decree meaning "to stop teaching any kind of subject related to religion or religious ideology" (4). The school was separated from the church according to the decree. It was also prohibited to conduct religious education even at the private educational institutions. All of the credits to teach religion were closed at schools and teachers that conducted religious lessons were cut off any kind of supply. All of the buildings belonging to any religious school were transferred to the commiserate account of public enlightenment or local soviets as public property. Moreover, the process of transferring the properties of national-cultural and educational institutions was at peak. The enlightenment commiserates of public announced 38th command on the 4th of November, 1918 basing on the decree (5). The order clearly mentioned that it was absolutely banned to worship before or after the classes, and any kind of idol had to be handed in to the sanctuary. The soviet of the public commiserates of Turkistan adopted a decree on the 20th of November which was readjusted to the decree adopted on the 23rd of January of that year. According to aforementioned decree, it was prohibited to teach religious subjects at religious schools and madrasahs of the land (6). Munavvar Qori Abdurashidkhonov, a bright representative of enlightenment, made a comment on that saying "As it was prohibited to teach

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religious subjects and worship at schools within the all local schools of Turkistan, only Muslims were permitted to study religion as exception, either the adopted decree might have not spread very well or even though it was spread, since it was brief the content might have not been truly realized" (7). The adoption of the decree had also contributed negatively to preserve and protect historical and cultural monuments. The committee of the preservation of antiquity, art and nature memorials of Turkistan founded in 1920 which is abbreviated as "Turkkomstaris" had also started its initial task mainly focusing on architectural monuments and cultural memorials. Initially, architects and history scholars named as V.I. Vyatkin, M.Mawer, M.Masson, B.Zasipkin, and M.Saidjonov worked on finding, clarifying, scientifically defining and reconstruction of memorials (8). Scientific architectural and archeological expeditions were also begun simultaneously. This resulted in discovery of many unique architectural memorials. Russian scientists – V.Bartold, B. Denike and B.Veymari were conscripted to the processes.

The process of marking state national-regional border took place in Central Asia in 1925, and then the committee "Turkkomstaris" was renamed as "Sredazkomstaris". The main objective of the committee was set as to protect historical and cultural memorials where constructive maintenance was going on. The scientific-research institute of arts was founded in Tashkent in 1928 that it worked on the issues of the history of architecture along with the art of common people. For instance, the discovery of examples of sculpture in Ayritom memorial, archeological news in Khorazm and Bukhara was of great importance in the history of Uzbek architecture. "Sredazkomstaris" organized an archeological expedition under the leadership of B.N.Zasipkin to Khorazm in 1937. The team of archeologist-scientists was Ya.G.Gulomov, R.N.Nabiyev, T.S.Stramtsova, and the postgraduate students of Moscow Archeology Institute – Sh.S.Ratiya and Yu.A.Yegorov (9). The main task of the expedition was to study memorials and traditional shelters from archeological point of view, and to evaluate the quality of maintenance and reconstruction.

The processes of maintenance and restoration were reanimated; experienced masters were summoned to the work. Following missions were completed: "the master of nation A.Boltaev actively took part in restoration of Ancient Arch reserve. The veranda, its ceiling have been maintained, the original ancient carving decorations on the walls have been erected and the roof of mint has been repaired under his leadership" (10). As a result of the fight of soviet government against Islam and religious organizations several madrasahs were closed down and were ruined. For instance, the association of atheists of the whole union that performed from 1925 to 1947 was considered to be promotion-agitation organization of soviet government that it led an atheistic policy against the activity of religious institutions and organizations. As a result of the association's strict policy against religion many historical monuments, religious institutions and organizations were left abandoned. Mosques and madrasahs, mausoleum, the resting places of saints, graveyards, prayer halls and sacred destinations were left ruined. The buildings of some mosques and madrasahs were used as stable; some others were even turned into alcohol-wine and beer beverage producing factories. In the period from 1930 to 1940 a group of ethnography, archeology and art scientist namely L.Vororin, B.Zasipkin, L.Rempel, B.Baklanov, V.Voronina, G.Gaganov

and others led researches on the history of monuments and architecture of the Central Asia. Wide scale study of architectural memorials started in the 1950s. In particular, the study of archeological memorials of Tuprokkal'a, Varakhsha, Afrasiab, Kuva, Kholchayon, Dalvarzintepa resulted in the discovery of the examples of the art of ancient architecture and sculpture to the science. The scientific center founded in Tashkent in 1979, in other words, the scientific-research and project institute of restoration of memorials of Uzbekistan also contributed to preservation and protection of cultural pearls of Uzbek nation that had formed over many centuries. The scientific research institute studied historical memorials of the republic during the years of soviet period in terms of science. Thanks to the efficient works of masters Aminjon Salomov and Ochil Bobomurodov of Bukhara that the mosques of Kolon, the minaret of Kolon, the madrasahs of Ulugh beg and Kukaldosh were restored. According to the command of the Central Committee of the communists party of Uzbekistan "Main Department of scientific production preservation of memorials" was founded under the cabinet of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic in 1979. The financial aid by the department for preservation and restoration of memorials was increased.

The amount of the events had multiplied by 2.5 in a fifteen-year period of time (1976-1980). For instance, certain works completed in "Labihevuz" ensemble of Bukhara, Registan ensemble in Samarkand, and historical architecture museum of "Ichankal'a" of Khiva. Famous masters of Samarkand B.Jurayev, A.Umarov, K.Jalilov, A.Kuliyev, A.Hakkulov, Bukhara R.Masharipov, T.Yokubov, I.Rajabov, Kokand Sh.Mahmudov, S.Muydinov, Namangan T.Fozilov, Andizhan K.Yunusov and T.Ismoilov contributed invaluable to the restoration of memorials (11). It is widely known that Uzbekistan was world famous for her rich culture and historical memorials. However, preservation and handing them down to the future generation was not paid attention based on the policy of soviet departments. In 1989, 9310 motionless cultural and historical memorials were listed in Uzbekistan. Only 6466 of them, in other words, 70% was under protection of the state (12).

Conclusion

To sum up, during the years under the soviet government the area of taking care and preservation of cultural memorials in Uzbekistan was not run well. In many places the job was treated irresponsibly that historical monuments and spiritual-cultural heritage of the nation was destructed. The use of historical-cultural memorials, monuments for other purposes was at its peak in the last years of the soviet government. More than 20 such memorials just in Tashkent were occupied by tenants, various organizations and enterprises. It was frequent to see occupation of some kind of offices, stores, cooperatives in buildings that are considered to be memorials.

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