
COVERAGE OF THE ECOLOGICAL SITUATION IN TURKESTAN IN THE MEMOIRS OF SADRIDDIN AYNI

Ravshan Tursunov

Candidate of Historical Sciences, Associate Professor at

National University of Uzbekistan named after Mirzo Ulugbek, Tashkent, Uzbekistan

ABSTRACT: This article examines the ecological situation in Bukhara and the sand and dust storms that occurred in the second half of the 19th century which was described in a memoir written by Sadriddin Ayni.

KEYWORDS: Nature, ecology, natural disaster, weather, wind, sand and dust storms.

INTRODUCTION: Human life is directly related to nature and the events happening in it. Therefore, it is important for people to use natural resources wisely and take care of it properly. It is known from history that, as a result of the violation of the laws of nature, humanity has faced a whirlwind of great difficulties. Every action taken on nature in the pursuit of material gain has had its negative impact on the natural environment.

In the second half of the 19th century, the khanates in Turkestan, and later the Russian Empire, did not use the region's natural resources wisely, could not protect the flora, and failed to take into account water shortages, leading to environmental problems and various natural disasters, including sandstorms.

In his memoirs, Sadriddin Ayni, one of the leading figures of the Jadid movement in Bukhara assessed the ecological situation in the country and wrote about sand and dust storms in Bukhara. He witnessed this natural phenomenon and described in detail the damage it caused to nature and the socio-economic life of the population.

In ancient times, according to Ayni, when the Jilvan and Shofirkom rivers in Shafirkom district were wet, the village of Mahallai Bolo, where he spent his youth, was very prosperous. He wrote that the village of Mahallai Bolo came into a very bad condition as a result of the sand flooding of the Jilvan river and the old river of Shofirkom under the influence of sands that

later migrated from the Kyzylkum deserts. He described the ecological situation and problems in the village as “this village was like that as far as I remember myself”[1].

THE MAIN FINDINGS AND RESULTS

Due to the fact that many lands of Mahallai Bolo village had been covered with sand, the population in these areas faced great difficulties in farming and animal husbandry. As a result of the natural disaster, the arable lands in the villages of Shafirkom district were noticeably reduced, which were also mostly in the hands of the rich.

In one of his childhood memories, he talked about his yard and village gardens, nature, apricot blossoms and also described how rural farmers were engaged in landscaping work, such as plowing land for farming, digging ditches and opening vineyards buried in vineyards.

In the memoirs, Ayni wrote that once with the permission of his father, he went out of his house, to join his brother, who was grazing sheep on the hills by the old river of Shafirkom. Along the way while he was going over the hill where his brother had been grazing sheep, he depicted the nature that was a greenery by the river. Together with his brother, he picked mushrooms on the hills. "At that moment," Ayni writes, "the wind began to blow and the air began to deteriorate. By the time we reached the bank of the river, the wind had intensified and covered the air with dust ... The wind became more and more intense, the sky was getting darker and darker. There was no trace of the greenery I had seen on the way ... The sand falling from the air turned the earth into sand dune in one breath. Even though people closed the doors and turned on the lights, the sand entered the house through the cracks of the doors and covered the beds ... "[3]

He wrote that the weather improved when he went out to the yard in the morning, but the yard and the garden turned into a sandy field, the flowers of the apricot trees were damaged, and the vines in the vineyards were covered with sand. The population carried out hashar works to eliminate the damage caused by this natural disaster, to clear the vineyards from under the sand.

He wrote that he went with his father to the village of Qoqoyavoni, where his grandfather lived, in order to give a hand in hashar works. He described that his father helped his

grandfather clear the orchards and vineyards of sand, noting that the village Qoqoyavoni had been considered to be more wet than the village of Mahallai Bolo, but as a result of the migration of sand, the place became a desert.

Sadriddin Ayni described the actions of the villagers as they tried to avert the damage: "In the fields, people were spread like grasshoppers: on the northeast side of the vineyards and orchards, they build barriers with branches and block the sand road. They would carry the sand on the vines and crops with shovels and sacks and take them to a place where the sand would not be harmful" [4].

In his memoirs, he wrote that he passed through the village of Boloi Rud on the way home, and that the natural disaster there also caused great damage. The author noted that this village, which had more wetlands and mills than other villages, was completely covered with sand, "although from time to time the roof corners of some high courtyards are visible, the village has lost its rural character and has a sandy desert landscape" [5].

Ayni's uncle, who returned from Tezguzar village in the days of the disaster, described to his father the damage caused by the sandstorms: "The gardens and orchards of the villages of Baghi Afzal and Tezguzar, the orchards of Karayogoch village, the northern part of Dehnavi Abdullajon, part of the village of Muhammad Boki and the village of Kochikhorlon are completely covered with sand. It is said that the sand attack reached the fortresses of Sayidato and Vardonze." [6]

Life in Mahallai Bolo and other villages becomes much more difficult after the river is flooded by a sandstorm. He noted that there were few pools in the village. "After the sand flooded the village, it became completely thirsty, the pools dried up, and the water level in the wells decreased day by day. Shafirkom district was left without water ... Seeing this, my father moved us to Suktare as soon as possible" [7].

It should be noted that the people who left their lands due to the natural disaster in Shafirkom district returned to their villages, dug ditches filled with sand and tried to get water there, but the ditch was flooded with sand again, forcing the people to ask for help from the government to dig new canals. Excavation of the new canals needed to be carried out with the permission

and control of the government. Residents of the district asked the Emir for permission to dig a new canal, assuming all the labor and costs for the development of their territory. Ayni's memoirs contain the following information: "Emir Muzaffar sent an order to the khakim of Shafirkom district - judge, chairman, landowner and constable to start this work. The governors set to work after identifying the sites for the new canal. [8] In the meantime, the Emir sent a decree to the judge to go to Shafirkom and supervise the digging of a new canal. "[9]

As a result of the hard work of the population, in the autumn of the year when the hashar had begun, the digging of the canal was completed and the farmers started farming. The farmers of Shafirkom later cleaned the old riverbed from the sand by hashar without government intervention and poured some water from the new canal into it. As a result, the population restored the sandy lands and turned them back into greenery.

Based on the above information, it can be seen that these memoirs of Sadriddin Ayni are a very valuable source in the study of the ecological situation and problems in the Turkestan region. The author's description of almost all the events that took place during his life, including the sandstorm that took place in his village in his childhood, allows us to adequately understand the ecological situation and problems in the country during the period under study. It is also clear from the author's opinion that the residents of Shafirkom district, who abandoned their territories as a result of the natural disaster, were able to unite and save their homes from harm and turn them into a prosperous place. Had Ayni's other contemporaries recounted natural phenomena in their lifetimes, it would have served as an important source in the study of the history of nature and the environment of the region.

During the study of the ecological situation in the Turkestan region in the second half of the XIX century, it can be seen that a number of natural disasters, including sand and dust storms, occurred as a result of human inefficient use of natural resources.

CONCLUSION. There are several reasons for this, firstly, the fact that the khanates, which cover large areas, focus on nature conservation in the central regions, giving almost no attention to the ecological situation in remote areas, deserts and steppes, and secondly, the population in these areas often used firewood of various trees and plants as fuel causing great damage to the flora of these areas which resulted the desert sands changing their location under the

influence of strong winds, and thirdly, the lack of interest in the study of modern science in the khanates, khans or emirs, knowing that there are mineral resources in their territory and did not know how to use it effectively, including oil fields, the population often used various trees and plants as fuel and, fourthly, the Russian Empire used natural resources aggressively turning the country into a raw material base.

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