



A Brief Note on Sadriddin Aini's Life

by

Iraj Bashiri

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For a complete account of Sadriddin Aini's life, see Iraj Bashiri's article in **"Encyclopedia of World Literature in the 20th Century."**

Sadriddin Aini, author of major fictional accounts of life in Bukhara at the turn of the century and during the formative years of the Soviet Union, did not appear in a vacuum as some Soviet author would like us to believe. He was heir to a poetic tradition that harked back to Rudaki and Firdowsi and a prose tradition that recalls Narshakhi and Nizam al-Mulk. Like Rudaki, he expressed his feelings. These were, at times, suffused with the hatred he harbored for the atrocities of the Amirs of Bukhara and, at other times, overwhelmed by the sentiments arising of what, in the early days of the Soviet Union, seemed judicious and honorable.

Born in 1878 in the village of Saktara, Aini grew up in the Ghijduvan region of Bukhara in a traditional Islamic setting. His grandfather and father were both learned figures of the time and followers of the strict Kubravi school of thought. Becoming an orphan at the age of 12, he left Saktara for Bukhara where his older brother studied and where he hoped to pursue his own studies and fulfill his father's dying wish.

In Bukhara, Aini became familiar with the dynamics of the world of his time through the efforts of Ahmad Donish who had made three trips to Russia and who had documented his observation in a valuable "guide" entitled "Navodir al-Vaqaye'" (Rare Events), and through the teachings of Domulla Ikromcha. This awakening, happening at the time of the October Revolution in Russia, impacted Aini's world view immensely so that his lyric poetry centered on the themes of love and nature gave way to anthems in praise of the dawn of a new age for the working people of Bukhara. Additionally, the more he heard about the new society in the making, the more he detested the regime that had fallen. In fictional works such as "Ghulomon" (The Slaves) and "Jallodon-i Bukhara" (The Bukhara Executioners) he exposed the inhumanity of the Amirs as they clung to power and used repression and terror as a means to sustain them. He also gathered materials and wrote extensively on the transition that was taking place in Bukhara and the Kuhistan as new trends replaced the old.

Aini's knowledge of the atrocities of the Amirs was first hand. Indeed, it was his vivid descriptions of the Arg and the hellish scenes therein that prompted me to visit Bukhara and its proverbial Arg fortification. arrested as a revolutionary by Alimkhan's henchmen,

Aini was imprisoned in the Arg. Unlike those whose hands were tied in the front--a sign to the watching crowd of the forthcoming execution--his hands were tied in the back. He was administered 75 lashes of the whip and he would have died, had not Bukhara fallen that day and had he not been taken to Kagan to receive medical attention.

Many of Aini's contributions like "Odina" (Odina) and "Marg-i Sudkhur" (Death of the Money Lender) have been subject of exciting movies, but his most remarkable work comes towards the end of his life when he writes an account of his life, especially the formative period, in the 1940's. Called the "Yoddoshtho" (Reminiscences), this work details life in Bukhara of the turn of the century in a most vivid and informative way. The chronology that follows is taken from this work as well as Aini's many other contributions to our understanding of the life and culture of his Noble Bukhara.

Sadriddin Aini's Life: A Chronology

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(new calendar)

1878: April 15

Born in the village of Saktari, Ghijduvan, Emirate of Bukhara, to the family of Sayyid Murad Khoja.

1884

Enters the village boy's mektab for the first time.

1887-88

Is transferred to the village girl's mektab.

1889: September

In the plague epidemic, his father and mother die; travels to Bukhara to live with his brother and continue his education.

1891

Becomes a servant at Sharifjan Makhdum's house.

1892

Is appointed the custodian of Alimjan Madrasah.

1893

Studies under Domulla Ikramcha, one of the most prominent teachers of Bukhara.

1893: July

Is stricken by plague.

1894-95

Studies poetry; chooses his first pen name, Mardikari (workman); works as an accountant at a rich man's firm.

1896

Attends almost every get-together in town; becomes acquainted with the poet Hairat.

1896-97

Stays at the Hajizoda Madrasah; becomes a well-known figure among the poets and those who regularly frequent literary circles.

1898

Moves to the Kukaltosh Madrasah and lives in his older brother's living quarters.

1900

Becomes acquainted with Ahmad Donish and his work in progress, "Navoder al-Vaqoye'"; chooses ideological strains that profoundly affect the future course of his life.

1902

Death of the poet Hairat; to appease Aini, Amir Abdulahad makes a futile attempt at including him among his court poets.

1904

Homeless, he lives in "darun-i kurtagi"

1905

Finds living quarters at Domulla Shir Madrasah.

1907

Finishes the madrasah; Sharifjan Makhdom buys a place in the Kukaltosh Madrasah and gives it to Aini.

1908: Spring

Travels to Samarqand to become acquainted with the new-method schools taught by Abdulqadir Shakuri. Within a short time, new-method schools become a hot issue in the Bukhara of Abdulahad.

1908: September

Along with Mirza Abdulvahid Munzim, opens a new-method school at Sallokhkhona; authors "Rahbar-i Khat" for teaching in this school.

1909

Provides textbooks for the newly established school: "Tartil al-Qur'an," "Tahzib al-Sibian," and "Zaruriat-i Dini." The new-method school is closed by the order of the Amir's government. Aini is forced to leave Bukhara.

1910

Establishment of the clandestine group "Children's Education;" Aini is recognized as a prominent educator.

1915

Aini is summoned personally by the Qushbegi (Prime Minister); works in a cotton factory in Kizilteppe.

1916

A second trip to Samarqand; makes side trips to Khujand and Ferghana to assess the revolutionary potential of this major rural Muslim region.



Aini upon his release from
Alimkhan's prison

1916: November

Aini is appointed teacher to the prominent Khiobun Madrasah of Bukhara.

1917: April 7

Amir's order for reform is celebrated by Young Bukharans; rise of the reactionaries.

1917: April 9

Imprisonment and severe torture; saved by the Revolutionary soldiers from certain death, Aini is hospitalized at the Kagan hospital.

1917: April 25

Aini's co-prisoner, Mirza Nasrullah, dies. Nasrullah was tortured the same way that Aini was tortured only a day or so earlier. Fortunately for Aini, he was saved by the Red Army.

1917: June

Aini's third and final trip to Samarqand for some time to come.

1918: March

Kalisoov mounts an unsuccessful attack on Bukhara. Aini's youngest brother, Sirajuddin, is killed.

1918: April

Aini writes his first Revolutionary poems. His life is threatened by Samarqand's reactionary mullahs. Aini leaves Samarqand for Tashkent.

1918: October

Returning to Samarqand, he is assigned teacher to one of the first Soviet schools. Aini writes his "Marsh-i Hurriyat" (Liberty Anthem).

1919

Works at the Revolutionary journals in Samarqand; publishes publicist articles as well as the first installments of his post-revolutionary work "Tarikh-i Inqilob-i Bukhara," in Uzbeki language and "Tarikh-i Amiron-i Manghit," in Tajiki. With Aini's assistance, the first children's journal entitled "Ballar Yoldashi" (Children's Companion) is published in Samarqand.

1920

As a teacher at Samarqand Soviet schools, Aini begins preparation for the pending revolution in Bukharan. Writing lectures and speeches, he clandestinely spreads the new thinking among the Amir's subjects. At the same time, he completes the Uzbeki version of his "Jallodon-i Bukhara" (The Bukhara Executioners).

1920: September/October

Soviet revolution in Bukhara. Aini gets married in Samarqand.

1920-21

Completion of his studies in history: "Materiolho roji' ba Torikhi Inqilobi Bukhara" (Materials Pertaining to the History of the Bukhara Revolution) and "Torikhi Amiron-i Manghit-i Bukhara" (History of the Manghit Amirs of Bukhara). Participates as a consultant in Samarqand for Bukharan affairs and directs the Bukharan law firm in Samarqand.

1922

Publication of the novella "Jallodon-i Bukhara" in Tashkent in the journal "Inqilob," no. 3-8.

1922: March

His older brother, Muhiddin, dies at the hand of the Bashmachis.

1923

Publication in Bukhara of Aini's collection of poetry in Tajiki called "Akhgar-i Inqilob" (Flames of Revolution) and "Inqilab Uchkunlari" in Uzbeki. Buys a house in which he lives until the end of his life.

1923

Election to the membership of the Central Executive Committee of the Peoples Republic of Bukhara.

1924

The writing of the first version of the novella "Odina" (Odina) which was published in "Avaz-i Tajik."

1925

Aini is ordered by the government of the Republic of Tajikistan to prepare a book entitled "Nimune-i Adabiyot-i Tojik" (Samples of Tajik Literature) to be published in 1926 in Moscow under the supervision of A. Lahuti.

1926

Establishment of the Tajik publications center in which he works as a consultant and scientific writer.

1927

Publication of the novella "Odina." Begins to write the first Tajik novel, "Dakhunda" (Dakhunda)."

1928

Writes several articles dealing with language and with the new Tajik alphabet.

1929

Publication of the novella "Odina" in Russian, translated by P.P. Videnski. Election to the membership of the Central Executive Committee of the SSR Tajikistan.

1931

Publication of "Dakhunda" in Tajiki and Uzbeki. Assisted by Pairav and Rahim Hashim, Aini prepares materials for instruction in elementary schools and is awarded the Laborers Red Flag of Tajikistan.

1932

Writes the novel "Ghulomon" (The Slaves) in Uzbeki.

1933

The government of Tajikistan assigns Aini a pension so that he could spend his time on creative writing.

1934

Asked by Maksim Gorkii to write about life in his Kolkhoz, Aini writes "Kholkhozi Kommunism." Publication of the translation of "Dakhunda" in Russian.

1934: August

The first Soviet writers Congress. Aini meets Gorkii personally. Election of Aini to the membership of the Privlennia SSSR.

1935

Publication of the Tajiki version of "Ghulomon" and a collection of poetry called "Yodgori."

1936

Publication of the article "Ferdausi and his Shahnamah."

1936-38

Arrangement of the "Lughat-i Nimtasilia Zabon-i Tajik." This work was not published until 1976.

1937-38

The writing of the novella "Marg-i Sudkhur" (Death of the Money Lender) and the scholarly work "Ibn-i Sina" (Avicenna).

1940

Research on the works of Sa'di and Rudaki. Search for Rudaki's tomb. Trip to Panjekent.

1941-44

Writes a series of patriotic articles: "Chingiz-i Asr-i XX," "Sherzad," "Marsh-i Intiqom," "Talvasi-i Jankini-i Darande-i Zakhmdor," "Ghahramon-i Leningrad," "Sorud-i Zafar," and the like. Election to honorary membership of the AF of Uzbekistan. Works on historical stories, including "Ghahramon-i Khalq-i Tajik: Timurmolik," "Isiyan-i Muqanna'." He is awarded the "Khadem-i Khizmati-i Shandaya Ilmiya RSS Tajikistan" and the Order of Lenin.

1945-46

The writing of the *qassida* "*Jang va Safar*" and the completion of scientific research on Abdulqader Bedil.

1947

Election to the membership of the Supreme Soviet of Tajikistan; delivered the opening address.

1948

Writes a monograph about the life and creative works of Alishir Navoi. Is awarded the Order of Lenin during the celebration of his seventieth year.

1949

Election as a Deputy of the Supreme Soviet of the SSSR. Is awarded a doctorate in philology by the University of Leningrad. Completion of the first two volumes of "Yoddoshtho" (Reminiscences). Is awarded the Order of Lenin for the third time.

1950

Creation of the Academy of Sciences of the SSR of Tajikistan and appointment of Aini as its president.

1953

Works on the Uzbeki version of "Yoddoshtho." Is awarded the Order of the Red Flag of Labor on the occasion of the 75th year of his birth.

1954

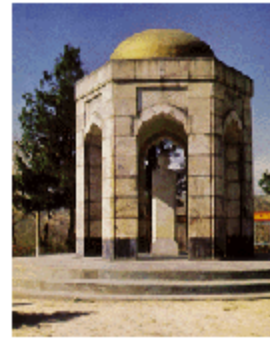
Completes the 4th volume of "Yoddoshtho."

1954, May

Delivers his last lecture in the Plenum of the Union of the Writers of Tajikistan.

1954, 15 June

Dies in Dushanbe; is buried in a park carrying his name.



Aini's mausoleum
in Dushanbe

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