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**The Sali Bauatdinov's manuscript sub-collection
within the manuscript collection from the Karakalpak
institute of humanities of the Academy of sciences of
the Republic of Uzbekistan / Nukus**

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Abstract. This article is a continuation within a research series, which deals with hand written and early printed books, which constitute a Manuscript Collection housed at the Karakalpak Institute of Humanities of the Karakalpak Branch of the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan (City of Nukus, Karakalpakstan). The Collection contains several hundred manuscripts, early printed books and lithographs in Arabic, Turkic and Persian languages from 18th to the middle of the 20th cent. This diverse Collection itself is a clear evidence of the development of the book culture in Karakalpakistan. An important part of the whole Collection is a recently acquired sub-collection of ca 150 items (handwritten, early printed and lithograph books) mostly from the 19th–20th cent., which did belong to Sali Bauatdinov. The sub-collection comprises tafsirs, works on fiqh, Turkic Sufi literature (Sufi Allah Yar) and Persian poetry, Arabic fiction of the 20th century, etc.

Work in progress on this collection, which includes description and attribution of various items was started last year.

Keywords: collections of manuscripts, arabographic manuscripts and early printed books, Karakalpakstan, book culture, Turkic poetry, Sufi Allah Yar.

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Исторические науки

Коллекция С. Бауатдинова в составе рукописного фонда Каракалпакского института гуманитарных наук ОАН РУЗ в Нукусе

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Аннотация. Статья продолжает серию материалов, посвященных рукописям и книгам Фонда восточных рукописей Каракалпакского Института гуманитарных наук Каракалпакского отделения Академии наук Узбекистана (г. Нукус, Каракалпакстан). Он насчитывает несколько сотен рукописей, старопечатных книг и литографий на арабском, тюркских и персидском языках, ярко иллюстрирующих развитие книжной культуры региона вплоть до середины XX в., и объединяет поступления из разных источников. Среди поступлений недавнего времени — коллекция рукописей, литографий и старопечатных книг, поступившая от Сали Бауатдинова, насчитывающая около 150 единиц (по предварительным подсчетам). Коллекция состоит из рукописей, литографий и печатных книг и прежде описанию не подвергалась. Хронологические рамки собрания можно обозначить как рубеж XIX и XX вв. до середины XX века (и чуть позднее). С жанровой точки зрения состав коллекции довольно пестрый: это тафсиры, сочинения по фикху, тюркская и персидская поэзия (сочинения Суфи Аллаяра, Хафиза), арабская художественная литература XX в. (типографская печать), и др. Работа над описанием и атрибутированием коллекции была начата в прошлом году и в данный момент продолжается.

Ключевые слова: коллекции рукописей, арабографичные рукописи и старопечатные книги, Каракалпакия, книжная культура, тюркская поэзия, Суфи Аллаяр.

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The Manuscript Collection of the Karakalpak Institute of Humanities of the Karakalpak branch of the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan (Nukus, Karakalpakstan, the Republic of Uzbekistan) contains about three thousand manuscript books, early printed books and lithographed books in Arabic, Persian and Turkic languages. Books written in Arabic script both handwritten and printed and lithographed are usually connected with the history of Islam in the region, in particular with the development and functioning of the Karakum-*ishan madrasah*. Chronologically, the Manuscript Collection of the Karakalpak Institute of Humanities covers the period from the end of the 18th to the beginning of the 20th centuries.

The cataloguing of the Collection was commenced before 1991 and was conducted continued by the staff of the Karakalpak Scientific Research Institute of Humanities, namely by M. A. Karlybaev and A. R. Idrisov. These scholars were involved both in the field work and the subsequent identification of discovered books. However, the Union Catalogue of the whole Collection has not yet been published¹. Only a part of the whole Collection received a proper description [Muminov et al., 2020].

This Collection comprises several sub-collections. These sub-collections have similar provenance. Usually, they have been purchased from individuals as complete lots. Therefore, they bear names of collectors and a topographic reference. The so-called “Chimbay Collection” is connected to Uzak Rakhmetullayev². Some other items, however, are not connected either to an individual or to a particular place/toponym.

Among the recent acquisitions is a sub-collection of ca 150 handwritten items, lithographed and early printed books, received from Mr Sali Bauatdinov.

¹ It is known about the preliminary work done on this Collection (See a report preserved at the archive of the Karakalpak Institute of Humanities of the Karakalpak branch of the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan) [Preparation for Publication, 2011; see also Karlybayev, 2021, p. 130].

² The so-called “Chimbay Collection” comprises ca 300 items. This sub-collection is important for scholars who work on the history of the Karakalpak culture and literature. Among the items preserved there are such unique works as “The History of the city of Chimbay” by M. Orazymbetov, poems by the Karakalpak classical writers Azhiniyaz and Berdakh and many others. The collection received its name from Chimbay (or Shymbai), a city in Karakalpakstan, in the south-eastern Aral Sea region, on the river Kegeyli. During this time, Chimbay was called Shakhtemir and, according to a number of researchers, was “the second main center of trade of northern Khorezm after Kungrad” [Abishov, 2019]. It became known by its present name only in the first half of the 19th century. The person who collected manuscript and printed books was Uzak Rakhmetullayev. He bequested the whole sub-collection to the Academy of Sciences in 1994. His father, Rakhmetulla Seyilkhan-uly, studied at the Karakum-*ishan madrasah* (Kutly-khoja *ishan*). The *madrasah* was famous because of its library holdings, which made the place the most important and the largest manuscript and printed books depository in the area [Karlybayev, 2020, p.112, Karlybayev, 2021; Anikeeva, Idrisov, 2021; Anikeeva, 2022].



The history of the Bauatdinov sub-collection³

Professor Sali Shaykhovich Bauatdinov is a specialist in chemistry⁴. He received his Doctorate in technical sciences, once an employee of the chemical laboratory of the Karakalpak branch of the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan⁵. He authored a significant number of research papers on agriculture in Karakalpakstan.

Genealogically, Sali Bauatdinov is a descendant of the Karakum-*ishan*, and up to the present day he plays a significant role in the spiritual life of the city of Nukus. The Karakum-*ishan madrasah* was once one of the largest in the Khiva Khanate, the most important spiritual centre in the entire Aral Sea region, precisely on the territory of the modern Bozatau district. The *madrasah* was part of the ritual complex which did bear the same name [Karlybaev, 2022]. Along with the library it also included a cemetery, which is famous because there was buried the famous Karakalpak poet Berdakh (1827–1900). The founder of the *madrasah* was Kutlykhoja *ishan*, popularly known as Karakum-*ishan*⁶. There are many legends about the personality of Karakum-*ishan* (refer to 1870s).

According to Sali Bauatdinov, part of the present sub-collection was discovered by him at a certain modern mosque (built in the 1990s on the site of the old one) in the former Chimbay (now Bozatau) district. The exact place was not revealed. He said that: “Apparently someone just brought it there”. The manuscript books he discovered there in the 1990s were stored in cloth bags, which were used to transfer the items to the Academy of Sciences of the Karakalpak Republic and subsequently to the library of the Institute of Humanities about 10–15 years ago⁷.

According to Sali Bauatdinov, he did not contribute to this sub-collection in any way. There are also no “books of his grandfather and father there⁸. Who brought it, who left it — is still unknown”. As an employee of the Academy of Sciences, he decided to transfer the discovered manuscript and printed books to the Academic depository.

Therefore, because the name of the original collector remains unknown, we suggested to supply to the sub-collection the name of the person who discovered it, i. e. Sali Bauatdinov. M. Karlybaev and R. Idrisov expressed some thoughts regarding its provenance. According to them, the person who collected the items might have

³ Based on the interview with S. Bauatdinov, recorded by the present author (28th Sept 2022), 2022; this interview was arranged through the good offices of Makset Karlybayev and Abdusalim Idrisov.

⁴ His PhD thesis (1978) was the investigation of “nitrogen-sulfuric acid processing of Karakalpak phosphorites for a complex concentrated fertilizer”.

⁵ Senior research fellow of the Chemical Laboratory of the Scientific Research Institute of Natural Sciences of Karakalpakstan, Karakalpakstan Branch of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

⁶ One of the mosques was built by him on a sandy area, where its name does originate from.

⁷ I.e. at the latest in 2012. Since that time they have not been described.

⁸ According to Sali Bauatdinov, the Karakum-*ishan madrasah* library was ill-fated: “It was burned in nine yurts together with the actual yurts”. It is known that in the 1920s the books of Karakum-*ishan madrasah* library were burned by the authorities [Karlybayev, 2020, p. 112] as the “retaliation” for anti-Soviet uprisings.



been a pilgrim (or pilgrims) who took his/their own collection to the cemetery (to *ziyarat*), to the mosque: “Since the earliest Soviet times, in order not to be a subject of persecution we had to take all the book written in Arabic script, the “Quranic” books to the cemeteries... the cemeteries are neutral” [interview, 2023]. By the words of Sali Bauatdinov, “whoever kept the books was considered as a potential subject to persecution” [ibid.].

Many people (as recorded by Makset Karlybaev during his field work), “in the 1920s — 1930 were in danger if they kept old [i. e. Arabic] books and manuscripts at home. This was what automatically could make them “enemies”. Therefore, people used cemeteries to hide the suspicious books...” [Karlybayev, 2020, p. 106]. Another record says: “I studied at the *madrasah* of Khadji-ishan in the city of Chimbay. His son Mamut once collected the books of Khadji-ishan. He wanted to leave the country. However, he didn't have time. I heard that when he was on the run, he took the books to the cemetery called ‘*Zhumai nanbaz*’...”. According to the informants' records (from the mid 20th century), “there were about two car loads of books in the Karakum-ishan library. Basically, these were books from the library of Idris-ishan *madrasah* (one of the representatives of Karakum-ishan. — M. K.). He was collecting books. In 1928, these books were confiscated and taken to Zair (the district centre of that time. — M. K.) and disappeared there. Idris-ishan died in 1925” [ibid.].

Almost all holdings from the Karakalpak Institute of Humanities, as well as the Berdakh Museum in Nukus, which originate from mosques or personal collections⁹ due to the political circumstances of 1920s bear the same physical characteristic features. Large number of manuscripts is badly damaged (water stained, traces of fire, worm-eaten, etc.). The evidences of conservation are rare, many missing folios, incomplete binding¹⁰. Many items lack information about time and place of their origin¹¹, which can only be ascertained on the basis of secondary evidences (paper, handwriting, ink, binding, owner's notes and seals, etc.).

The content of the Bauatdinov sub-collection

The sub-collection comprises hand-written, lithographed and printed books. Chronologically, the provenance items can be identified between 1900 up to the 1950s. The collection is diverse. Among the holdings are *tafsirs*, works on *fiqh*, poetry — the works of Sufi Allah Yar (“Thabat al-‘Adjiz”, “Maslak al-Muttaqin”), Hafiz, and printed Arabic fiction from the 20th century, the “Chahar kitab”, Persian works on astronomy, textbooks on mathematics, etc. Regardless the work in progress, it is already possible to establish an obvious difference between the holdings of this sub-collection and the holdings of other collections, which originate from the same

⁹ The collector already mentioned above, with whose name the Chimbai collection is associated, Uzak Rakhmetullayev, also kept and hide it in a barn in bags.

¹⁰ Bindings of many manuscripts are often replaced by bindings of Soviet books or school textbooks or magazines in Russian. Most likely, they were embedded in these bindings for disguise.

¹¹ The absence of an indication of the place of copy of the manuscript book (including the exact one — *madrasah*, etc.) is a common feature for the manuscripts copied in Central Asia [Sultanov, 1987, p. 494]. This fact has been also observed by N. Toshov with regard to a completely different collection — the library of Khiva khans [Toshov, 2023].



area. The manuscript books from the library of Khiva khans (according to N. Toshov), thematically “cover only a part of the branches of medieval sciences and literature, which is quite natural for such a not very large book collection”. Quantitatively, prevail historical works (especially with its medieval “expanded” meaning), poetry and fiction. There are also works on Muslim law, Sufi teachings, theology and ethics, as well as some biographical works. There are several works on medicine and divination. The collections of prayers are approximately equal to them in number [Toshov, 2023, p.76–78].

The principles of selection of the books for the Bauatdinov collection are unknown. It is also unknown whether the collection was inherited and if yes, then when and by whom and who was instrumental in its subsequent enlargement. Therefore, the standard protocol for describing such collections cannot be applied. According to some documents (notes in biro, medical certificates of the 1960s, enclosed in manuscripts, one can assumed that until the items became a single unit they were separately preserved in different families.

The manuscripts and books of this collection quite often contain texts, which were widely known among the *madrasah* students in Central Asia and more generally on the Islamic territory in the former Russian Empire at 2nd half of the 19th century — the beginning of the 20th century. Thus, the works by Sufi Allah Yar are represented in this sub-collection both in handwritten and lithographed forms Sufi Allah Yar was a Turkic poet, a native of the village of Minglar near Samarkand. A Russian scholar W. Bartold calls him one of the most popular poets of the so-called “Uzbek era” — a short period when the Turkic Chagatai language dominated poetry in Bukhara (in the Bukhara Khanate), which was later quickly replaced by the Persian [Barthold, 1968, p. 609]. In addition to the “Thabat al-‘Adjizin”, Sufi Allah Yar is credited with the authorship of the poems in Persian “Murad al-‘arifin” (“The Goal of Those Who Know the Truth”) and “Maslak al-muttakin” (“The Way of the Pious”¹²) and other works¹³; also, according to some legends, Sufi Allah Yar and his brothers were the founders of the city of Kattakurgan [Barthold, 1965, p. 287]. He died in 1721 (or according to some sources — in 1724) [Tosun, 2016, p. 522] in the village of Katta Vakhshivor (now Altynsay district of Surkhandarya region in Uzbekistan). Sufi Allah Yar's poem “The Support of the Weak” occupies a special place in the history of Turkic literary traditions. Being composed on the territory of the Bukhara Khanate in the Chagatai language, it became an integral part of the Turkic-speaking literary tradition of Central Asia of the 17th century. Soon the “Thabat al-‘Adjizin” became a textbook in *madrasahs* throughout Central Asia (in Bukhara itself, Khiva, Kokand, Karakum-*ishan madrasahs* in the Aral Sea region, etc.) and the Volga region (where it acquired a special popularity), beyond the Urals, in the Caucasus. The “Thabat al-‘Adjizin”, containing a set of moral rules of a Muslim, circulated in the form of manuscripts (this work by Sufi Allah Yar is present in almost every manuscript collection), lithographs (editions in Tashkent, Baku, Bukhara and Kazan) and printed books, was reprinted on a frequent basis.

¹² About the duties of a Muslim — almsgiving, fasting, prayers, purification; in *madrasahs* it was also used as a textbook.

¹³ Such poems as “Siraj al-adjizin”, “Nejat al-talibin” are also attributed to Sufi Allah Yar [Tosun, 2016, p. 522].



R-7. Sufi Allah Yar. Thabat al-‘Adjizin. Language: Turkic. Lithograph print. 12 x 21 cm.

R-28. Sufi Allah Yar. Maslak al-muttaqin. Manuscript. Language: Persian. Binding is missing, fols. 17 x 22 cm, buff Russian paper; stamp No. 5 in an oval. Black ink, *nastalik*, catchwords. 18–21 lines. Approximately 254 fols. (a lot of pages are stuck together). Copied: 1318 AH/ 1900 AD.

The same work is also found as a lithograph: **R-93.** 15 x 24 cm. 462 p. Binding: missing. Incipit/explicit: missing. Paper: thin, newspaper type [Scheglova, 2011, №№ 86–94]; Allah Yar’s “Murad al-‘arifin” printed edition (**R-10**).

R-31. Chahar Kitab (A traditional textbook, a miscellany consisting of four works, i. e. “Muqaddimat al-salat” by Sharaf al-Din Bukhari; anonymous ‘Chahar fasl’; ‘Mukhimmat al-Muslimin’ and fragments of ‘Pend-nameh’ by Farid al-Din Attar written in verse and prose form, expounding the dogmas of faith, fasting, Hajj, rules for performing ritual duties of a Muslim (purification, prayers, fasting), etc.). Manuscript. Language: Persian. The front cover of the binding is missing, the number of folios is difficult to determine, both as the format (14 x 24 cm?), since the back cover of the binding is badly damaged, the pages have stuck together (also torn out, worm-eaten, occasional traces of mould, etc.). 17 lines per page. Black and red ink, catchwords. No date and place of copy.

The sub-collection also comprises natural sciences: there is a textbook on astronomy in Persian, a textbook on mathematics (printed in Kazan in “Magarif” publishing house). Particular attention is paid to separate fragments (torn apart,



Fig. 1. Manuscript. R-28. Sufi Allah Yar. Maslak al-muttakin.

Рис. 1. Рукопись. R-28. Суфи Аллаяр. Маслак ал-муттакин



Fig. 2. Manuscript. R-31.
Chahar Kitab.
Рис. 2. Рукопись. R-31.
Чахар китаб

traces of burning) of books in Arabic, published, apparently in the 1960s (fiction). This is an evidence that this collection was occasionally enlarged during the Soviet years. The availability of recently printed texts written in Arabic script can be explained that somebody had to hide the “suspicious” fragments out of fear to be persecuted for having them (see the interview as above).

Thus, it is obvious that a certain part of the manuscripts of the Ishan libraries could survive and was preserved and therefore saved. The cataloguing restores the remains of a sometimes larger book collection of the famous madrasah that once operated in the area. Since the recent arrival of the sub-collection of Sali Bauatdinov one can assume that many manuscripts are still kept in private possessions and hopefully will continue to join the holdings of the Academy of Sciences of Karakalpakstan.

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