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PROBLEMS OF STUDYING MEDIEVAL MANUSCRIPTS IN ARABIC AND PERSIAN: THE CURRENT STATE

Abstract

Medieval manuscripts in Arabic and Persian are among the main sources covering the period of state, ethnic formation of the history of Kazakhstan. These manuscripts deal in detail with the issues of political, spiritual and socio-ethnic development of the Kazakh Khanate. This article analyzes the state and problems of modern study of medieval manuscripts in Arabic and Persian. We assume that currently in the Russian historical science, the category of the main tasks of studying manuscripts includes work on electronic storage and high-quality translation of manuscripts. The work on cataloging and digitizing manuscripts continues in libraries and special centers. In this context, we pay special attention to the work of special research centers organized in recent years. A number of issues arise in the translation of manuscripts into Kazakh and source analysis.

We understand the importance of training and stimulating specialists in Arabic and Persian for the future results of this direction. During the years of independence, work has been intensively carried out to bring medieval manuscripts related to the history of Kazakhstan from the funds of the states of the far and near abroad to our country. Scientific projects have been funded by the State on this issue and corresponding results have been achieved. From our point of view, now the category of tasks consists of attempts at correct historiographical analysis and comprehension of the achieved scientific heritage.

Keywords: Arabic and Persian manuscripts, Oriental studies, cataloging, Tarikh Rashidi, digitalization, scientific projects.

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АРАБ ЖӘНЕ ПАРСЫ ТІЛІНДЕГІ ОРТАҒАСЫРЛЫҚ ҚОЛЖАЗБАЛАРДЫ ЗЕРТТЕУ МӘСЕЛЕЛЕРІ: БҮГІНГІ АХУАЛЫ

Аңдатпа

Араб және парсы тіліндегі ортағасырлық қолжазбалар Қазақстан тарихының мемлекеттік, этникалық қалыптасу кезеңін қамтитын негізгі дереккөздердің қатарына жатады. Аталған қолжазбаларда Қазақ хандығының саяси-рухани және әлеуметтік-этникалық даму мәселелері жан-жақты қарастырылған. Бұл мақалада араб және парсы тіліндегі ортағасырлық қолжазбалардың қазіргі зерттелу ахуалы мен мәселелеріне талдау жасалынған. Қазіргі таңда отандық тарих ғылымында қолжазбаларды зерттеудегі негізгі міндеттердің санатына қолжазбаларды электронды сақтау мен сапалы аудару жұмыстарының енетіндігін пайымдаймыз.

Қолжазбаларды каталогтау, сандастыру жұмыстары кітапханалар мен арнайы орталықтарда жалғасын табуда. Осы тұрғыда соңғы жылдары ұйымдастырылған арнайы ғылыми орталықтардың жұмыстарына ерекше мән береміз. Ал, дереккөздерді қазақ тіліне аудару және деректанулық талдау істерінде

бірқатар сұрақтар орын алуда. Бұл бағыттың болашақтағы нәтижелеріне араб және парсы тіліндегі мамандарды даярлаудың және ынталандырудың маңызды екендігін түсінеміз.

Тәуелсіздік жылдары Қазақстан тарихынан хабар беретін ортағасырлық қолжазбаларды алыс және жақын шет мемлекеттердің қорларынан алып келу жұмыстары қарқынды іске асырылды. Бұл бойынша мемлекет тарапынан ғылыми жобалар қаржыландырылды және тиісті нәтижелерге қол жеткізілді. Біздің көзқарасымыз бойынша ендігі міндеттердің санатын қол жеткізілген дүниелерді дұрыс тарихнамалық талдау және пайымдау әрекеттері құрайды.

Кілт сөздер: Араб және парсы қолжазбалары, шығыстану, каталогтау, Тарихи Рашиди, сандастыру, ғылыми жобалар.

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ПРОБЛЕМЫ ИЗУЧЕНИЯ СРЕДНЕВЕКОВЫХ РУКОПИСЕЙ НА АРАБСКОМ И ПЕРСИДСКОМ ЯЗЫКАХ: СЕГОДНЯШНЕЕ СОСТОЯНИЕ

Аннотация

Средневековые рукописи на арабском и персидском языках относятся к числу основных источников, охватывающих период государственного, этнического становления истории Казахстана. В этих рукописях подробно рассмотрены вопросы политико-духовного и социально-этнического развития Казахского ханства. В этой статье анализируется состояние и проблемы современного изучения средневековых рукописей на арабском и персидском языках.

Мы предполагаем, что в настоящее время в отечественной исторической науке в категорию основных задач изучения рукописей входят работы по электронному хранению и качественному переводу рукописей. Работа по каталогизации, цифровизации рукописей продолжается в библиотеках и специальных центрах. В этом контексте мы уделяем особое внимание работе специальных научных центров, организованных в последние годы. А в вопросах перевода рукописей на казахский язык и источниковедческого анализа возникают ряд вопросов. Мы понимаем важность подготовки и стимулирования специалистов на арабском и персидском языках для будущих результатов этого направления. За годы независимости интенсивно осуществлялась работа по привезению средневековых рукописей, имеющих отношение к истории Казахстана, из фондов государств дальнего и ближнего зарубежья в нашу страну.

По этому вопросу государством профинансированы научные проекты и достигнуты соответствующие результаты. С нашей точки зрения, теперь категорию задач составляют попытки правильного историографического анализа и осмысления достигнутого научного наследия.

Ключевые слова: арабские и персидские рукописи, востоковедение, каталогизация, Тарихи Рашиди, цифровизация, научные проекты.

Introduction. Arabic and Persian manuscripts play a special role in the description of the medieval history of Kazakhstan. The manuscripts contain data on the formation and development of state structures that existed in the history of Kazakhstan. In the XXI century, 3 ongoing works on the introduction of Arabic and Persian manuscripts into scientific circulation in Kazakhstan can be noted: 1. Search for Arabic and Persian manuscripts in Kazakhstan or their import from abroad and their translation. 2. Catalogization of individual manuscripts. 3. Translation of manuscripts into digital format. In the early 2000s, within the framework of the state program "Cultural Heritage", intensive work was underway to import medieval manuscripts from abroad and publish their translations. In addition, the work on the catalogization of manuscripts was organized at a qualitative level in central libraries and manuscript centers. In 2017, due to the adoption of the Digital Kazakhstan program by the Government of Kazakhstan, much attention was paid to the work on repurposing archival documents and rare manuscripts. In this regard, several Arabic and Persian manuscripts, which are highly relevant in the description of the medieval history of Kazakhstan, have switched to digital format [1].

Their safety and accessibility to the reader have increased. From our point of view, the work on the catalogization and information of medieval Arab-Persian manuscripts and collections is currently being carried out

in an effective direction. There is reason to believe that the issues of their safety and electronic accessibility for applicants have been resolved positively. But there is one problem, the solution of which becomes more complicated from year to year in the work with existing manuscripts-their translation at the academic level. Most researchers who are able to translate Arabic and Persian manuscripts academically are specialists of the Soviet-era school. Many of them today have limited opportunities to engage in scientific work due to reaching retirement age.

And the staff of young specialists capable of translating Arabic and Persian manuscripts is extremely scarce. In the university system, the number of students entering the Arabic and Persian language majors is decreasing from year to year. In Kazakhstan, only a few universities are engaged in the training of Persian language specialists. But the number of the contingent in them is several times less than that of students of another language. Our research work puts this current situation among the urgent problems. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the results of work with Arabic-Persian manuscripts in the academic space of Kazakhstan up to the present time and to analyze existing problems.

Materials. The article uses scientific publications of Russian scientists of the beginning of the XX century, informing about the study of medieval manuscripts. In addition, the judgments and data of the works of individual researchers published in electronic scientific resources have been applied.

Methodology. Since this research work has interdisciplinary significance, the methods of humanities and social sciences were widely used. It should be recognized that the work on the study and introduction of Persian manuscripts into scientific circulation was effectively carried out during the Soviet period of Kazakhstan. Taking this into account, in order to determine the quantity and quality level of translated manuscripts of Soviet and independent Kazakhstan, a comparative analytical method was used. We relied on the method of induction in assessing the results of work with individual medieval manuscripts of particular importance for the history of Kazakhstan, and determining its contribution to the theoretical development of general historical science. The historical-genetic method was used to analyze the origin of the manuscripts and the reasons for the changes in the data contained in them. The classification of manuscripts by type and character was based on the help of structural methods.

Results and discussion. In Kazakhstan, there are special organizations engaged in the study and storage of medieval Arabic and Persian manuscripts. Research organizations include academic institutions, universities, and research centers. Libraries, museums, foundations and special centers will work with the preservation, cataloging and translation of manuscripts into digital format. The names and activities of the above organizations are systematized in Table 1 below (Table 1).

Table 1. Organizations engaged in the storage and study of manuscripts in Kazakhstan

№	Organizations	Direction of activity
1	National Central Library Of The Republic Of Kazakhstan	Storage, cataloging and digital conversion of manuscripts
2	Museum of rare books	Museum of rare books
3	National Center for manuscripts and rare books	Storage, cataloging and digital conversion of manuscripts
4	Rare books, manuscripts and National Literature Fund	Storage of manuscripts
5	Institute of Oriental Studies	Discovery, scientific translation and publication of manuscripts
6	Ch.Ch. Ualikhanov Institute of history and Ethnology	Analysis and publication of manuscripts

Among the above-mentioned organizations, the activities of 2 institutions are active: 1. National Central Library of the Republic of Kazakhstan. 2. Institute of Oriental Studies. The National Central Library of the Republic of Kazakhstan has achieved a number of high achievements in the preservation, cataloging and translation of medieval Arabic-Persian manuscripts into digital format. At the request of this organization, work was carried out on the translation and cataloguing of medieval Persian manuscripts into the new Persian language. In 2019, a catalog of about 80 Arabic-Persian manuscripts stored in the collections of the National Central Library was developed. A number of manuscripts have been translated into the new Persian language [1].

This is because medieval Persian is slightly different from modern Persian. This is the first major result in the history of the study and preservation of old manuscripts of independent Kazakhstan. At the initiative of the Institute of Oriental Studies of Kazakhstan, qualitative results were obtained in the search for medieval Persian manuscripts, the import and translation of copies from foreign funds, publications. Historians and translators profoundly proficient in medieval Arabic-Persian in Kazakhstan work within the walls of this institute. Thanks to their work on the translation, analysis and publication of manuscripts, several volumes concerning the history of Kazakhstan have been published. In 2007, the Institute of Oriental Studies published a 5-volume collection "The History of Kazakhstan in Persian sources" [2]. This collection reflects translations and reviews of original Persian sources telling about the political, cultural, ethnic, socio-geographical life of the Kazakh people of the XIII-XIX centuries. The research paper describes the translations of many Persian data that had not previously entered scientific circulation, and their analysis is carried out. The materials are arranged in chronological order. In addition, the authors of the collection conducted a source analysis of the origin of Persian manuscripts and the level of reliability of the information contained in them.

According to the authors of the collection, the degree of reliability of data in a number of works in the Persian language of the XVI-XVII centuries requires critical analysis. This is due to the fact that the political, diplomatic and military factors that formed in Central Asia of that period forced the authors of works to write from a one-sided point of view. Most of the works were commissioned by the palace rulers and had a strong influence of the authorities. Since the works were written mainly with an emphasis on the history and biography of a certain dynasty of power or personality, many facts were written with distortion. In our opinion, medieval Arab-Persian manuscripts with an indirect description of the history of the Kazakh people and the state from a source point of view are divided into 3 groups: 1. Works written in a neutral position. 2. Works written by authors of hostile states. 3. Works written by the authors of the Friend States. Works written from a neutral position constitute works written before the formation of the Kazakh statehood. They have undergone extensive theoretical and source analysis by world orientalists. The list of works in Arabic-Persian written in a neutral position is shown in table 2 below.

Table 2. Manuscripts in Arabic written in a neutral position on the history of Kazakhstan

№	Manuscript name	Author of the manuscript	Written period
1	Tarikh-i Jahangusha	Ata Melik Juveini	XIII
2	Jami at-Tawarih	Rashid al-Din	XIII-XIV
3	Al-Mulhakat bi-s-surah	Jamal al-Karshi	XIII-XIV

The above-mentioned manuscripts contain interesting facts about the cities, ethnic composition and size of the territory of medieval states that inhabited the lands of Kazakhstan. But in the translation and introduction into scientific circulation of these manuscripts, the studies of independent Kazakhstan did not take a direct part. The work on their translation into Russian and English was carried out by the activities of Soviet and Western scientists. The history of the Kazakh Khanate is described mainly in manuscripts in Persian [3, p. 41]. To determine the level of reliability of data for this period, researchers widely rely on the methods of historical genetics, critical analysis, comparative analysis, induction. This is due to the fact that, depending on the known event, the information in the manuscript may be presented differently in the second manuscript. Drawing up general conclusions, summing up data from different sources, comparing them with each other, determining the origin, of course, requires a lot of work. Persian works of the XVI-XVII centuries, written in relation to the history of Kazakhstan, are divided into two groups in terms of political and ideological orientation:

- 1) Works written by order of political opponents against the Kazakh state;
- 2) Works written by authors of countries allied to the Kazakh state. Works related to the second direction have a small volume compared to the first. Those who study medieval manuscripts note that they constantly remember the above facts. In the works written by the authors of the political opponents of the Kazakh state, the life of the Kazakh people was considered indirectly. Undoubtedly, the political and military processes described in them require comparison with data from other sources. In our opinion, in this direction there is a need for works that make analytical conclusions.

The Persian manuscripts written by the authors of the states-friends of the Kazakh state reflect the true signs of the description of historical trends. They give an equal assessment of the political and economic successes and failures of the Kazakh statehood. The vast majority of Persian manuscripts of the XVI-XVII centuries

entered scientific circulation through the activities of the Russian Empire and Soviet scientists. Among them, the role of the famous orientalist V.V. Bartold is of particular importance. But thanks to the works of historians and orientalists of modern Kazakhstan, the translation and publication of a number of Persian manuscripts into Kazakh-Russian is being implemented qualitatively. The Persian-language manuscript "Tarikh-i Rashidi", written by Muhammad Haidar Dulati, who ruled in the Kashmir region of India in the 1530s and 1550s, has undergone several repeated translations or additions into Kazakh over the past thirty years. An updated version of the latest translation of the manuscript "Tarikh-i Rashidi" into Kazakh was published in 2020 [4]. Thus, the processes of translation of Persian manuscripts related to the history of Kazakhstan into Kazakh-Russian are divided into 3 historical periods (Table 3). But the work on their cataloging and information continues to this day.

Among the medieval manuscripts, the work "History-and Rashidi" stands out, which attracted the attention of historians of Kazakhstan and Persian scientists. As a distinctive feature of this work from other manuscripts, 3 factors can be mentioned:

1. The proximity of the origin of the author of the work of Muhammad Haidar Dulati to the Kazakh ethnic group;
2. For the first time, the ethnonym "Kazakh" and descriptions of the political and economic life of the Kazakh Khanate appeared in the manuscript on a neutral position;
3. The existence of the author of the work in the state of Mogolstan, which was considered a partner to the Kazakh state. In connection with these factors, Kazakh historians and orientalists have actively engaged in the translation and publication of the manuscript "Tarikh-i Rashidi" into Kazakh. In addition, catalogues of this manuscript in libraries have been widely created and included in the digital formatting system for the first time in comparison with other medieval manuscripts. It should be noted that today the work of translating and introducing medieval Persian manuscripts into scientific circulation is mainly done by representatives of the old generation. Most of them are representatives of the Soviet school.

It is clear, of course, that their number is decreasing over time. In the academic system of modern Kazakhstan, a number of questions arise on the study and introduction into scientific circulation of medieval Arab-Persian manuscripts. These issues are often discussed on the pages of the media. The main issue is the phenomenon of an annual decrease in the number of students studying in the Persian language specialty in the university system. It is also possible to note a decrease in interest in medieval topics among students studying in the specialty "history" in master's and doctoral studies. The two above-mentioned issues may seriously resist the current and future directions of the development of historical science in Kazakhstan. Despite the fact that the university is actively working to attract school graduates to the Persian language specialty, the number of interested persons is not increasing. Experts attribute the origin of the Persian language to the current political and economic situation in Iran as reasons. That is, there is an opinion in the public environment that learning Persian is financially and socially inefficient.

Discussion. The history of the study of manuscripts in Arabic and Persian in Kazakhstan dates back to the beginning of the XX century. The historiography of the study of Arab-Persian manuscripts is generally divided into 3 historical periods: 1. The period of Tsarist Russia. 2. The Soviet period. 3. The period of independent Kazakhstan. During the period of tsarist Russia, the first works were carried out on the collection, translation and cataloguing of Persian manuscripts in libraries. Russian scientists gave priority to the translation of Persian manuscripts, not their analysis. At the same time, an outstanding Russian scientist V.V. Bartold plays a special role. In V.V. Bartold's work "Information about the Aral Sea and the lower reaches of the Amu Darya from ancient times to the XVII century" [5], a typology of Arab-Persian manuscripts related to the problem was developed and a general description of their content was given. In the work of another Russian scientist N.I. Veselovsky [6], an analysis of the lives of the authors of Persian manuscripts is given and an approach to the motives for writing manuscripts is outlined. The work of the Kazakh historian Kurbangali Khalid "Tauarikh Hamsa" [7] is written on the basis of medieval Persian manuscripts and is devoted to the history of the Kazakh state.

The author sought to create a genealogy of Genghis Khan's descendants based on the data of Persian manuscripts. During the Soviet period, the process of introducing medieval Persian manuscripts related to the history of Kazakhstan into scientific circulation was formed in a new direction. Soviet Orientalists and historians have achieved a number of successes in the translation, source analysis and classification of Persian manuscripts. In addition, the first steps were taken in the system of catalogues of Persian manuscripts in libraries. In the works of scientists of the Soviet period A.P. Chuloshnikov [8], V.V. Bartold [9], S.K. Ibragimov [10], S.M. Abramzon [11], B.E. Kumekov [12], references are made to the data of medieval Arab-Persian manuscripts and a critical

analysis is reasoned. Scientists of the Soviet period paid priority attention to the cultural and social aspects of the data written in Persian manuscripts. This is due to the fact that, according to the Marxist-Leninist principle, in the Soviet period, special attention was paid to the cultural and social history of peoples in historical science. And the question of political and religious history remained outside the scientific form. In this regard, the contexts of the political and religious orientation of medieval Persian manuscripts were not subjected to source analysis. We are well aware that the main content of medieval Persian manuscripts was devoted to political power and religious situation.

The period of systematic scientific analysis of medieval Persian manuscripts from the historiographical and source points of view corresponds to the period of independent Kazakhstan. During this period, medieval works underwent a theoretical and methodological system and underwent digitalization. Historians and orientalists of Kazakhstan have demonstrated a number of achievements in copying and translating copies of new Persian manuscripts from foreign libraries and museums. In the works of such scientists as S.G. Klyashtorny [13], T.I. Sultanov [14], M.K. Kozybayev [15], K.A. Pishchulina [16], B.B. Karibayev [17], a comprehensive assessment of the nature and content of medieval Persian manuscripts is given. In these scientific works, the author's approaches to the discussions of Persian manuscripts on determining the date of creation and political events of the Kazakh Khanate were reflected. The problems of translated works of medieval Arab-Persian manuscripts and methods of their analysis are reflected in the work of the famous orientalist M.H. Abuseitova [18]. Unlike Soviet scientists, theoretically and methodologically independent Kazakh researchers, they actively showed a critical approach, paying deep attention to the political and religious content of medieval Arab-Persian manuscripts. In this regard, the foundations of the author's goals and the motives for writing medieval manuscripts have become known to the scientific community. Scientists of independent Kazakhstan have made proposals for the organization and maintenance of catalogues of medieval manuscripts in libraries and implemented scientific projects in this direction.

Conclusion. We have seen that the study of medieval Arabic-Persian manuscripts in Kazakhstan has reached a new level over the years of independence. The work on the translation of manuscripts, source classification and analysis was carried out in a truly scientific direction. In parallel, work was underway on the catalogization and decoding of translated manuscripts in libraries. There are no problems in working in this direction either. From our point of view, it should be noted that the translation of medieval manuscripts at the scientific level, research work in the future may be in a difficult position. This is due to the fact that the tendency to reduce the number of specialists who speak Persian to an academic degree is observed today in the scientific space of Kazakhstan. Due to the retirement of the overwhelming majority of representatives of the Soviet School of Oriental Studies, there is a shortage of Arabic-Persian language skills among the younger generation of scientists. We support the fact that the ways to solve this problem in the education system have been comprehensively considered and found the right solution.

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