PRESENTING THE COLLECTION

MUSLIM TREASURES OF RUSSIA. II:
MANUSCRIPT COLLECTIONS OF DĂGHİSTÂN. PART II

Collection of Magomedrasul Gajiev

The owner of the richest collection, Magomedrasul Gajievskiy Gajiev (65 years old, native of Kızılkızık) belongs to the “Alimchulal rüşûm, a family of scholars, whose ancestor 10 generations ago was also renowned as a scholar. The “Alimchulal family library is kept in a separate room specially designed for this, on wooden shelves. Every year, Magomedrasul Gajiev examines manuscripts, and takes the simplest measures to preserve them. His father Gairbek, an expert on Dâghistân literature, left notes on many books about his ownership rights.

The collection is distinguished by the number of manuscripts (over 150) and the wide thematic diversity. Many copies have an excellent dark-brown binding with latches (cardboard covered in leather), and numerous, sometimes extremely informative, citations and glosses, notes on the “origin” of the book under the guidance of the author. There are many old manuscripts from the 14th—17th centuries, and also important information about the composition of book collections of the 18th century.

One of the most valuable books in the collection is a

“subcommentary (on) Isâm which was written by outstanding scholar, great expert and treasurer of Islam, ɑbû muhammad, son of ṣâliḥ (Abd al-Qadir).”

Isâm is the shortened title of a work on behalf of its “glosser”, the author of the first half of the 16th century İbrâhîm b. Muhammed b. Ṭangârî b. Ṭangârî, known as Isâm al-Dîn, under the name ɑbû muhammad, son of ɑbû muhammad, son of ɑbû al-Qadir, who is the best known Dâghistân scholars and experts on Arab grammar and fağh, “the founder of Dâghistân scholarship”, as academic I. I. Krachkovskii wrote of him. His work on Arab grammar was one of the most popular textbooks in Dâghistân madrasas. At the beginning of the manuscript there is an introduction by the author explaining the reason for compiling this “commentary on a commentary”. Here there is the second copy of

Muhammad, son of Mişâ al-Qadîq, copied by Taşâb from Khañrâg (late 17th or early 18th century).

There are two ancient manuscripts: one on old oriental paper, ca. the 14th century. It is the third part of al-Nawawi’s book al-Rawda — collection of hadîth by al-Nawawi, renowned hadîth expert and fağh; the other on old oriental paper, also ca. the 14th century.

Several combined manuscripts were found in the collection. One of them, besides generally known works on making astrolabes and determining qîbah, contains previously unknown Dâghistân works: ɑbû Muhammed قئرہînî’s “All from the Awâr village of ɑkseki; a work on determining qîbah and time by “Hasan husayn from Khalkhalî, a province near Ardabil, — he was musâkatîn in Shamshînî in 1806”, i.e. 1557–98.

An important acquisition of the expedition is the fihrîs of book collection which have not survived. For example, in the collection of M. G. Gajiev, at the end of the Arab grammar there is special mention of a “List of books of Husayn, son of ɑbû al-Qadir”. In another manuscript copied in Dâghistân in 1858, 20 titles are indicated, and all of them belong to the ɑlîmchulal clan.

Here is also a very important report about the ways that the collection of ɑlîmchulal, son of “Abd al-Qadir, was formed. The main contents: “Alîmchulal has an “abundant” number of manuscripts. The ways they were acquired: (i) through a waqf, especially from Muhammed; (ii) copying; (iii) received from his father as a genuine ɑrkâ; (iv) purchase.

A more detailed list is given at the end of the work by Nuṣār al-Fâṭih al-muhtâb, Ṣâḥîb al-Manâhîs

© A. Shikhzadev, 2007
"Waqt — to all relatives — from family to family — from the books of contemplate 1/2s:ayun: number (list of books), at... in Fārsā (Pardīlī)" (04 books named).

In the book Kūth al-farā'id on inheritance law we found an important note by the scribe on the genealogical chain of representatives of 'Ālimu'llūlīm:

"I am the contemptible scribe Muhammad-bālíjī, son of Husayn-bālíjī, son of 'Ālimu'llūlīm, son of ‘Abd al-Qādir-bālíjī, son of Muhammad-bālíjī, son of Isma'il-bālíjī, son of Muhammad-bālíjī, son of ‘Abd al-Qādir-bālíjī, son of Mal Muhammad-bālíjī, son of Ahmad-bālíjī, son of Muhammad-bālíjī..."

Every year new collections were discovered. Each year brought around 20 manuscript collections and hundreds of manuscripts, which specialists did not have any idea existed. Every collection has its own appearance, its own distinguishing features.

Collection of Charan Chanarovan

The collection of Charan Charanovan from the village of Muḥtār in the Gergeb region, widely known in the past for its scholars and experts on Arabic, has a complex of Muslim religion institutions (mālah, mosque, madrasa).

The village had several manuscript collections which existed in the 19th century, but which came from earlier times. The fullest and most thematically diverse was the collection of Charan Charanovan [3], the head of the village administration, son of Muhammad and grandson of Charanovan of Muḥtār, renowned mawāzir founders and teachers, experts on Arabic literature and gath-erers of the book collection. Despite the "variable conditions" of the activity of specialists in Arabic studies in the USSR, the collection was preserved, thanks to the efforts of Muhammad, Charanovan’s son (d. 1964) and his son Charan Charanovan.

Charanovan’s collection is distinguished by its chronological and thematic characteristics, and combination of printed and manuscript books. It has over 200 printed books from the late 19th—early 20th century (Egypt, Turkey, Qazan, but mainly from the printing house of M. Mavrin in Dāghistān, in the town of Tirmidh-Šāhān). There are 82 manuscript books in the collection, but the number of works (items of description) is much greater, around 270 (there are many combined manuscripts in the collection, sometimes including up to 20 separate works). Chronologically, the collection was formed irregularly — there are old manuscripts (14th—15th centuries) and next to them, a large number of works copied or created in the 18th—first half of the 20th century, with a small number dating from the 16th—17th centuries. Several of the manuscripts are particularly valuable:

1. Kūth al-farā'id al-qādīyyu is a theological treatise written by al-Ghazālī. The copy was made in Ramadān 836/April 1433, in the Middle East. A note on the acquisition at the beginning of the 20th century reads:

Ahmad-bālíjī, son of Muhammad-bālíjī — A. Sh., al-farā'id — may Allah forgive them and make heaven their place of rest. I was appointed qādī and leader of the people of Khūmārī... In 1295/1878, at the time when the inhabi-tants of the Awāristān nīlāqāt were led by ‘Alīshāhī.

The genealogical line of the scholars has 11 names, the earliest of which can be traced to the 16th century. The name of Ahmad, son of Muhammad, was already encountered in the 16th century.

Particularly impressive were the collections found in the ancient Dāghistān villages of Muḥtār, Thqāghal (Sograt), Aqūla, Taṣdāqar, Ḫūmārī, Urqārīq, Urqāk (Urqākhī) and others.

"Book acquired by Muhammad, son of Ahmad from a citizen from ‘Azīr, i.e. from the village of Isbars for another book."

2. Mašāsit fi Shahr al-masālīb by al-Zaydānī. The time of copying is the 14th century, or the first half of the 15th century. Possessor notes: "This book came from Sayyid, son of Ansār (Ghamīqī, 1857): "From the books of Muhammad, son of Charanovan". This manuscript (357 folios) has importance for the history of scholarship and education in Dāghistān, and the history of the formation of local manuscript collections. The possessor note has been preserved: "From the books of sayyid Ahmad al-Yaḥyā. The note shows that book collections already existed here in the mid-15th century, and this refutes the opinion that the 18th century is the time when the first Dāghistān libraries were formed.

3. Al-farā'id al-dīyāyya by ‘Abd al-Rahmān Jāmī is a textbook on the Arabic grammar, which was ex-tremely popular in Dāghistān. It was written in the form of a commentary on a work by Ibn al-Hājī with the name al-Kitṭīyya. The book was copied in Dāghistān in 1185/1772. Several readers’ notes have been preserved, including that about reading the manuscript:

"Ali, son of Nūr al-Dīn Aqūla in the village of Bīnghal from my favourite ustād, the gentle, worthy and perfect ṣāḥib Maḥbūb qādī from al-Murkī (Mureqā)."

4. Al-baṣar fi du‘āl min Taḥfīz al-muḥtaṭār Shahr al-Mābījī is the second part of the four-volume legal treatise by Ibn Ḥajar al-Ḥaytāmī. The manuscripts
from the 19th century, and the scribe is "poor Hasan, son of Kay Khassraw al-Ghumadi". The possessory note reads:

"From the books of poor Khatri Muhammad, son of 'Alī sayyid Hasan Husayn, son of 'Alī sayyid 'Alīyāt al-Ghumadi al-Dīghāstānī. 1335/1916".

Scribes often show an interest in the book collections of their predecessors, although they describe these collections in the most general terms. An example of this "inventory" may be the note with indication of works on folios 175—6 in the manuscript Kūth al-dhīfī fī tā'īfī asaduq al-muṣāfātī dated 1717. This is the earliest list of manuscripts of one collection in Dīghāstān. The list looks as follows:


Although these lists are primitive and brief, they nevertheless make it possible to follow the thematic nature that is traditional for local collections. More complete is the thafsīr of books from the collection of Charanov, son of Muhammad on 7 pages, headed "Names of Books of Charanov, Son of Muhammad of Muḥīk". This is not just a list of books, but a thafsīr systemised under thematic headings, it lists the entire collection according to "sciences". Thus a kind of standard was set for describing manuscript collections. Specifically, this list looks as follows:

*Books on taṣawwuf — 16 titles given, books on grammar — 38 titles, books on logic — 10 titles, books on the art of dispute and forms (of Arabic) — 10 titles, books on rhetoric, stylistics, poetics — 4 titles, books on religious, 22 titles, divine, literature; lectures (al-muḥākārāt) — 42 titles, tafsīrs — 8 titles, hadīthey — 8 titles, books on taṣawwuf — 6 titles, various books — 6 titles, books on ilm al-hagha — 4 titles, books about meanings of words — 1 book, books on taqīd — 5 titles, books on ʿarʿād — 4 titles, books on ʿuṣūr — 8 titles, books on the bases of Mustatīrī — 4 titles.

Thus, the entire book collection of Charanov, son of Muhammad, consisted of 209 titles, although without clarifying whether they were printed books. Even a superficial familiarisation with this list and a comparison with the book collection of today show that the collection has undergone serious changes over the last 30—40 years. To a certain degree, this can be explained by the testament of the owner warning descendents not to divide up the collection, but allowing people to borrow the books for three months under condition of compulsory return "when the book is no longer needed".

According to the materials of this collection, it can also be seen that the job of Khatri takes on a special status, and this finds its reflection in the genealogical rows recorded on the title page or in the colophon:


However, the main determining feature of the library (both the manuscript and the printed part) is the presence of a large number of works of local, Dīghāstānī authors in Arabic. Works of local origin occasionally came into other collections, but the Muḥīkī (and the Ṭahgrāh, about which see below) represents a drastic advance in collection activity, designed for the preservation and study of works of local authors. The archaeological expedition discovered works by Dīghāstānī scholars — authors who were mainly previously unknown to scholarship, and this makes it possible to understand better the literary process in pre-revolutionary Dīghāstān and the role of the Arabic language and Arabic literature in this process.

Here is a list of previously unknown works by Dīghāstānī authors discovered in the book collection of Charanov from Muḥīk:

1. Al-taṣawwuf — a treatise on Ṣūfīm compiled by Muḥīk from Muḥīkī on the basis of a treatise on Ṣūfīm written in 1282/1865 by an unknown author.
2. Essay on tawāwīl. Author: Ḥājjī ʿAlī, maʿṣūlān al-Aṣqālānī of Aṣqālānī, second half of the 19th century. As extensive and comparative citations, entire excerpts from legal works of Dīghāstānī scholars of the 17th—19th centuries have been preserved: Saʿīd of Harākāt, Abū Bakr from Tḥuṭḥa, Dūmāṭīn from Muḥīk, Ibn Rāḥīm from ʿUṛaḍ,
Muhammad-nâzîr from ‘Aymâk, and Musâf Muhammad from ‘Inâqarāl.

3. Hâdishtâ li-fu'âd al-maštâfika min suhbat mu'ašâfârîsqa bi-‘âyîn zubdât al-akâmah fi kâfiyyat al-irtîs. This is a kind of abstract on the work of the renowned Dâghîstânî scholar, secretary and historiographer, inâmî Shârîf Muhammad Tâhir al-Khânîrî (1809–1880) on issues of inheritance law. The copy was made by Charanov, son of Muhammad from Mulukî in 1380/1921.

4. Poems by Muhammad Mamma-kishî from Endi-yêy on sûfî şaykhî, including Dâghîstânî şaykhî; his notes (autographs) on individual texts made for “my brother Usman” [— 4, Sh.] al-Qumâqî, second half of the 19th century.

5. Najî al-anâm fi riwâyat al-imâmîn. Treatise on Sûfîm and şarîqa orders written at the end of the 19th century by Muhammad-eftînî from Kûkûn. The scribe al-Hâjî Muhammad, son of ‘Uthmân, was also from Kûkûn, d. 1313/1895. This copy is also valuable because on one of the pages there is information about the life and preaching activity of a Dâghîstânî scholar of Yaman origin, inâmî Aḥmad, son of Ibrâhîm al-Yammâni. Poems by the author of the treatise are also written down here.

6. Washâ‘î al-lahîb şarîh fakâ‘î l-ul-habîb. The author is one of the most important and earliest Dâghîstânî theologians Abû Bakr of ‘Ayâmî. He was one of the leading preachers of Islamic studies in Dâghîstân, the founder and teacher of a madrasa, a poet and scribe. The work, which was written in 1167/1750, and copied in the early 19th century, is a biography of the prophet Muhammad. There are possessory notes: “from the books of Charanov from Muhîlîzî” and “from the books of poor Shâmîl, the beggar of Hâzârî” and a stamp with the name of Shâmîl and a six-pointed star. There is a note on purchase: “I, Husayn, son of ‘Alîm, bought this book — Washâ‘î al-lahîb şarîh fakâ‘î l-ul-habîb, for one ‘abîdân on 4 Ramadan 1302 / 27 May 1887.”

This book falls into the genre of biography, which is widely distributed in Arab countries; it tells of the tribe of Quraysh, the beginning of Muhammad’s activity as a prophet, of his character, habits, appearance, everyday behaviour, etc. The work by Abû Bakr (‘son of Mu‘âwîya, son of Mu‘âwîya, son of ‘Abî al-Dhibîr of Bûrîf, Makka, Quraysh”), was widely known in Dâghîstân in the 19th—early 20th century; nowadays there are several copies, but this one is the most complete and could be the basis for an academic edition of this main work by the renowned Dâghîstânî šâlîm.

7. Hâdishtâ li-quwâ‘î al-shaykhî al-imâmî al-tâmîh Muhammad b. Mîsâ b. Muhammad b. Ahmad al-Qumâqîyyan — a previously unknown story about the life (in Dâghîstân and countries of the Arab world), study, scholarly activity, creative contacts with Arab scholars (primarily with Sâ‘îh al-Yammâni) of the major Dâghîstânî scholar, legal expert and educator Muhammad from Qudâq, who left a significant manuscript legacy.

8. Chronological notes — extremely valuable information on the history of Dâghîstân, recording the course of events, mainly in the 17th—19th centuries. These notes, chronograms, grew into a special genre in the 19th century, and were widely distributed in Dâghîstân together with the genre of genealogies and biographies. Each new discovery of these notes is of major interest because this area of Dâghîstân historiography has not been studied. As an “appendix” to the chronological notes, there is a history of Russian-Dâghîstân relations from the late 17th—early 19th century, and much new information about the campaign of Count Zubov in Dâghîstân in 1796.

9. Al-risâla al-sharî‘î al-mansûbâ fi al-tâmîh al-murâdî Abî ‘Ubayd. The work is extensively annotated with the excerpts from works on Muslim law, adapted for the needs and conditions of Shâmîl’s inâmî, especially on issues of the essence and legitimacy of the inâmî, and relations between sharî‘î and norms of ordinary law. The scribe is a resident of Kirmîch (Genichuly) village. Date — 6 Shîr‘î 1312 / 1 March 1385.

10. Combined manuscript (220 folios), consisting entirely of previously unknown poetic and prose texts written by Dâghîstânî scholars, legal experts and poets (a list of saints, including Dâghîstânî saints; texts on the history of Qumîq, poems by Muhammad from Qudâq; a treatise on the sharî‘î and Dâghîstânî legal norms, written by the first inâmî Ghâzî Muhammad, in a copy of 1288/1877; poems by Muhammad al-Yarîgî, ideologist of the people’s liberation movement of the 19th century; letters by Ismîl al-Dîn of Ghâzî-Qumîq, a renowned scholar, pedagogue, murîdî of the Naqshbandî şarîqa, etc.)

If we make an attempt to give general characteristics of the book collection, then we may emphasise the following. Charanov’s collection is distinguished by its comparative size (around 450 printed and manuscript books), was formed systematically, and has a unity of manuscript, lithographic and printed books. Repeating traditional book collections in its contents, it is characterised by a large number of works by Dâghîstânî authors and chronologically encompasses the period until the 1860s, thus providing an important source for studying the history of Dâghîstân Arabic literature. Researchers will be provided with valuable material on the intellectual life of Dâghîstân society in the era of the national liberation wars of the 19th century in Dâghîstân.
Thughral Collection

Thughral is one of the oldest Dîghîstânî villages, a major political, economic, cultural and religious centre of Awātîri, the centre of the union of ‘Andalîl societies. The village played a leading role in the political life of Dîghîstân in the 17th—19th century—it was one of the organizers of the armed resistance to the large army of Nâdir-shâh, and their defeat on the territory of ‘Andalîl (1742), and one of the main centres of the anti-colonial struggle in 1877.

Thughral is also renowned as one of the leading centres of the religious life of Dîghîstân, the homeland of many Ithâlim (Altira of Thughral, Muhammad al-Yariqî, who had spent many years here, and others), whose work has in recent years become the subject of close attention of researchers. Many future Dîghîstânî specialists in Arabic studies, experts on Muslim law, grammar, ethics, and the poetic works of the Middle East, etc. studied at the Thughral madrasa. Before the early 20th century there were over 10 large book collections here, but many of them have not survived. So far, five collections have been found in the village, but the most important and representative is the collection of the secondary school.

The history of the creation of the school collection of manuscripts is primarily linked with the name of the former headmaster of this school, a position he held for many years, who is now a history lecturer and honoured teacher of the Republic of Dîghîstân, Magomed Akhmedovich Aïkudkerov, who was able to save and unite many ownerless manuscripts, organize their storage and their initial treatment. All the books are numbered and registered. The collection consists of three parts: printed books in Arabic, manuscript books; documents and materials.

The Thughral manuscript collection includes 299 works and contains valuable texts of the 14th century—1690s, and is distinguished (like the Muhûd collection) by its wide thematic diversity, and predominance of the combined manuscripts (thematically united or connected), original treatises, and works by Dîghîstânî authors. The examples below give a general idea of the Thughral school collection of manuscripts:

2. Al-Munâwâr fi al-muhtâr min jâvâhir al-bahar al-かりkhî by renowned scholars shâhid Sâîh al-Yamani. The copy was completed on 9 Shahrî‘a 1113 / 8 January 1702. There is a possessory note: “Wafat from the books of ‘îlîm ‘Abû al-Qâdir from Thughral in the Friday mosque of Thughral”. However, it can be assumed that the first owner of the book was Dîghîstânî scholar Muhammad from Qudîq (1652—1717), pupil of Shâhid al-Yamani, who became the owner of the teacher’s entire library. The copy was made, in all likelihood, from the autograph.
3. Combined manuscript, including works by Dîghîstânî authors: poems by shâhid ‘îlîm ‘Ali al-Thughîrî, Hâji Muhammad, son of shâhid ‘îlîm ‘Abû al-Rahmân al-Thughîrî, poems by renowned political figure Najm al-Dîn al-Hûrul (of Gotoob) (d. 1925) on the death of the leading scholar and educator Hasan Alqâdimî, poems by Habîb Allâh, son of Mâk-Shîrîf al-Charîfî, whose work is about the cholera epidemic in Dîghîstân, and his reply to the qâdî of Man‘ûdî al-Hamîshî.
4. Numerous treatises showing the interest of Dîghîstânîs in issues of Arabic grammar, astronomy and mathematics.
5. Replies by Mâhî Muhammad al-Thughîrî to questions by Dîghîstânî ‘îlîms on rationalistic and natural sciences.

The Thughral collection of manuscripts includes, along with the copies of the Qur‘an and tafsîrs, the most popular in the Arab East of the Middle Ages works by Arab authors on law, grammar, logic, and copies of works by Abû al-‘Alî and Imnûr al-Qays. At the same time, this collection shows the beginning of the rebirth of an interest in Sîfîm in the 19th century (al-Pâaghûrî al-‘alîhîyya), in the works of al-Ghûzî (al-Rasîd al-Ghûzîyîyya in the copy of 1288/1828 and Nasîrî al-mulâikî in the copy of 1269/1850). Works on law are represented exclusively by authors of the qâdî’s school, and this feature is characteristic of all the Dîghîstânî collections. As for the scribes, they are virtually all Dîghîstânî by origin, natives of Thughral (Muhammad, son of qâfî Muhammad al-Thughîrî, Muhammad ‘Abd Allâh Shâbîn al-Thughîrî, Muhammad, son of ‘Ali al-Thughîrî). Of special interest to researchers is the relationship between the main texts and the glosses and quotations, especially made on the margins of manuscripts, and frequently exceeding in size the original text. The literature cited is extensive, and an important place is occupied by excerpts from works by Dîghîstânî authors (al-Qudnûqî, Sa‘îdî of Harakûdîn, Murūdî ‘Ali from ‘Urda, Zhârî al-Ghûmûsî and many others).

What both of the collections described briefly above have in common are the printed books, a large number of works by Dîghîstânî authors, combined manuscripts, and thematic diversity. However, the Thughral collection has the largest number of texts by Dîghîstânî authors, and most of them belong to Muhammad, son of ‘Abd Allâh, son of Shâbîn al-Thughîrî. The Thughral collection is distinguished by its abundance of poetic texts, most of which were not known by researchers until now. It is on the basis of these texts that the Dîghîstânî Arabic literature of the 20th century can be studied. This opens a new page in literary and artistic work in Dîghîstân.