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MANUSCRIPT HERITAGE IN THE COLLECTIONS OF THE “ӘЗІРЕТ СҰЛТАН” MUSEUM-RESERVE: TEXTUAL, HISTORICAL-DOCUMENTARY AND CULTURAL ANALYSIS

Annotation. This article examines the historical, scholarly, and cultural significance of the written heritage preserved in the National Historical and Cultural Museum-Reserve ‘Aziret Sultan’ in Turkistan. Its aim is to characterize the formation and composition of the museum’s book collection and assess its potential for research on Turkic-Islamic intellectual history. The study draws on the collection descriptions and the manuscript, printed-book, and facsimile examples identified in the article. Source analysis, thematic classification, and selected paleographic and codicological observations are used to distinguish types of material and assess their research value. The collection is described as comprising nearly seven hundred items, including 158 manuscripts and approximately five hundred printed works. The analysis considers Qur’anic studies, Hadith, Islamic theology, jurisprudence, logic, philology, and poetry, with particular attention to a Katta Langar Qur’an facsimile, an edition of Sahih al-Bukhari, a manuscript of Mishkat al-Masabih, and copies of Diwani Hikmet. The findings identify the collection’s interdisciplinary importance while revealing the need to verify individual catalogue data, restore bibliographic consistency, and undertake systematic textual description. The article concludes that preservation must be accompanied by cataloguing, comparative study, and responsible scholarly access.

Keywords: Khoja Ahmed Yasawi, manuscript heritage, museum collection, Turkic-Islamic civilization, codicology, written culture, Diwani Hikmet.

Аңдатпа. Мақалада Түркістан қаласындағы «Әзірет Сұлтан» Ұлттық тарихи-мәдени музей-қорығында сақталған жазба мұраның тарихи, ғылыми және мәдени маңызы

қарастырылады. Зерттеудің мақсаты – музейдің кітап қорына қатысты қалыптасу тарихы мен құрамын сипаттап, оның түркі-ислам әлемінің зияткерлік тарихын зерттеудегі мүмкіндігін айқындау. Деректік негіз ретінде мақалада келтірілген қор мәліметтері, қолжазбалар, баспа кітаптар және факсимиле нұсқаларының сипаттамалары пайдаланылды. Деректанулық талдау, тақырыптық жіктеу, сондай-ақ палеографиялық және кодикологиялық бақылау тәсілдері қолданылды. Қарастырылған сипаттамаға сәйкес, қорда жеті жүзге жуық бірлік, соның ішінде 158 қолжазба мен шамамен бес жүз баспа кітап бар. Құрантану, хадистану, ислам теологиясы, фикһ, логика, филология және поэзия салалары қамтылып, Катта Лянгар Құранының факсимилесі, «Сахих әл-Бұхари» басылымы, «Мишкәт әл-Масабиһ» қолжазбасы және «Диуани Хикмет» нұсқалары арнайы талданады. Нәтижелер қордың құндылығын көрсете отырып, жекелеген есептік деректерді нақтылау, библиографиялық сипаттамаларды біріздендіру және мәтіндерді жүйелі зерттеу қажеттігін анықтайды. Қорытындыда жазба мұраны сақтауды каталогтау, салыстырмалы зерттеу және ғылыми қолжетімділікпен ұштастыру ұсынылады. Түпнұсқа қолжазбалар, кейінгі көшірмелер, баспа басылымдары мен факсимиле нұсқалары ажыратылып, қолда бар сипаттамалар негізінде жасалатын ғылыми тұжырымдардың шектеулері де көрсетіледі.

Кілт сөздер: Қожа Ахмет Ясауи, қолжазба мұра, музей қоры, түркі-ислам өркениеті, кодикология, жазба мәдениет, «Диуани Хикмет».

Аннотация. В статье рассматривается историческое, научное и культурное значение письменного наследия, хранящегося в Национальном историко-культурном музее-заповеднике «Эзірет Сұлтан» в Туркестане. Цель исследования — охарактеризовать формирование и состав книжного собрания, а также определить его возможности для изучения интеллектуальной истории тюрко-исламского мира. Источник базу составляют сведения о музейной коллекции и приведённые в статье описания рукописей, печатных изданий и факсимиле. Применяются источниковедческий анализ, тематическая классификация, а также отдельные палеографические и кодикологические наблюдения. Согласно рассматриваемому описанию, собрание насчитывает около семисот единиц, включая 158 рукописей и примерно пятьсот печатных книг. Анализ охватывает Коранистику, хадисоведение, теологию, фикх, логику, филологию и поэзию. Особое внимание уделяется факсимиле Корана Катта-Лянгар, изданию «Сахих аль-Бухари», рукописи «Мишкат аль-Масабиһ» и экземплярам рукописи «Диуани Хикмет». Результаты показывают междисциплинарную ценность собрания и необходимость уточнения отдельных учётных сведений, унификации библиографических описаний и последовательного текстологического изучения. Сделан вывод, что сохранение рукописного наследия должно сопровождаться каталогизацией, сравнительным исследованием и обеспечением научного доступа. В работе разграничены оригинальные рукописи, поздние списки, печатные экземпляры и факсимиле, а также обозначены пределы выводов, основанных на имеющихся описаниях.

Ключевые слова: Ходжа Ахмед Ясауи, рукописное наследие, музейная коллекция, тюрко-исламская цивилизация, кодикология, письменная культура, «Диуани Хикмет».

Introduction. Manuscripts and early printed books preserve evidence of intellectual exchange, religious instruction, linguistic practice and the circulation of texts across generations. Their historical importance extends beyond the works they transmit, a particular copy may contain information about scribes, readers, owners, methods of production and local teaching traditions. For

this reason, the study of a museum collection requires attention both to the content of individual works and to their material forms, provenance and later custodial histories.

The manuscript and book heritage associated with the Mausoleum of Khoja Ahmed Yasawi provides a case in point. The Mausoleum in Turkistan, built on the orders of Amir Timur, became a prominent religious and cultural site

and the literature surrounding Yasawi and the monument has attracted historians, Orientalists, archaeologists and architectural researchers (Muminov et al., 2013: 8). Yasawi's teaching and its subsequent reception are also discussed in studies of Sufism and Turkic religious culture (Altıntaş, 1989; Hazini, 1995: 56). The relationship between the mausoleum and written culture, however, is most clearly investigated through the surviving books and the documented history of their acquisition.

The article's underlying collection description reports that the former mausoleum library suffered significant losses in the twentieth century: some items were destroyed, others entered different collections and some passed into private possession. The restoration of a book collection accompanied the establishment of the museum in the late 1970s. Archaeological work undertaken in 1978–1979, associated in the source account with Uzbekhali Zhanibekov and other museum personnel, contributed to the acquisition of written monuments. The museum's opening is dated in the article to 30 September 1978. The different references in the source material to work beginning in 1977 and to expeditions in 1978–1979 should be resolved against museum records before publication.

The objective of this study is to describe the formation and thematic composition of the written collection, examine selected items as evidence for Islamic and Turkic intellectual history and also identify what is required to bring these holdings into more systematic scholarly use. The research questions are: what kinds of material are represented, what can be inferred from the selected manuscripts, editions, and facsimiles and what limits are imposed by incomplete catalogue and provenance information? Rather than treating all holdings as original manuscripts, the article differentiates manuscript copies, lithographic and other printed editions and reproductions.

This investigation corresponds to the historical, philological, and cultural-heritage dimensions of Yasawi studies. Its immediate contribution is an integrated account of the museum's written holdings and a source-

sensitive interpretation of several named examples; it does not claim to establish definitive dating or complete textual genealogies for the works considered.

Research Methods. The study is based on the descriptions of written monuments and publications included in the supplied museum-collection account. The principal objects discussed are a facsimile of the Katta Langar Qur'an (inventory no. KK 2791), a printed edition of Sahih al-Bukhari (KK 3733), a manuscript of Mishkat al-Masabih (KK 338/40), Qasidat al-Burda (KK 958) and several copies of Diwani Hikmet (KK 1653, 3406, 3425, and 4195). Inventory numbers are retained to enable subsequent verification against the museum's accession and scholarly catalogues. These collection records are cited in footnotes rather than presented as secondary scholarship.

Source analysis is used to distinguish an object's reported date, its textual author or compiler, the date of a particular copy or edition and the history of its entry into the collection. This distinction is essential where a medieval composition survives in an eighteenth or nineteenth century manuscript or where a modern facsimile reproduces an early Qur'anic witness. Thematic classification groups the materials into Qur'anic studies, Hadith, Islamic theology, jurisprudence, logic, philology, poetry and miscellaneous fields.

The original study also identifies paleography, codicology, historical comparison and textual analysis as relevant approaches. The present article reports such observations only where the underlying description gives material evidence, such as script, ink, layout, missing leaves, or marginalia. Because photographs, complete codicological descriptions and a verified comparison corpus were not included in the source manuscript, any broader dating, comparison or attribution remains provisional rather than a newly demonstrated result. The combined approach thus separates observable collection features from interpretations requiring further examination.

Analysis. Formation, composition and condition of the holdings. The collection account gives a present total of nearly seven hundred works, of which approximately five

hundred are described as printed books and 158 as manuscripts. Newer publications and documentary materials make up the remainder. It also refers to more than four hundred lithographically printed books. These quantities should not be added together without checking the underlying inventory, since lithographs may already be included among the approximately five hundred printed items. The account nonetheless makes clear that handwritten manuscripts constitute only one component of the written holdings.

The reconstruction of the library in the late 1970s is particularly important for understanding the collection as it exists today. An item now held by the museum need not have belonged to the historic mausoleum library. For each acquisition, the accession date, former owner, place of acquisition and evidence of use at or near the mausoleum need to be documented separately. The absence of such distinctions can obscure the difference between a collection associated institutionally with Yasawi's mausoleum and a corpus proven to have circulated there historically.

The source account notes binding and collation problems in a number of books, some arrived unbound, while other volumes were later sewn together with displaced folios or unrelated excerpts. A bound volume therefore cannot automatically be treated as a complete and internally coherent text. Scientific cataloguing should describe the physical unit and where necessary also identify the independent works or fragments within it. Such problems give the collection particular codicological significance, since the history of rebinding and use may itself preserve evidence of past transmission practices. According to the source description, the holdings are stored in a designated room under temperature controlled conditions and arranged systematically on shelves. The article does not provide measured temperature, relative-humidity records, conservation reports or an inventory audit accordingly the adequacy of environmental controls is not independently assessed here. The immediate research priority is the establishment of stable descriptions and

access conditions alongside physical preservation.

Languages and disciplinary structure. The examined account describes more than four hundred lithographic books and estimates that approximately half contain combinations of Arabic with Persian or Turkic, while about one quarter in Turkic and one quarter in Persian. These proportions are useful as an initial characterization but need a clearly defined counting unit, because a multilingual book may be classed by main text, commentary or marginal glosses. The prominence of Arabic and its interaction with Persian and Turkic point to a collection shaped by multilingual scholarship and teaching.

Eight broad thematic categories are identified: (1) the Qur'an and Qur'anic sciences, (2) Hadith, (3) Islamic dogmatics or 'aqīdah, (4) fiqh, (5) logic, (6) philology, (7) poetry and (8) miscellaneous works (*mutafarriqāt*). This arrangement makes the collection's range visible, but thematic boundaries are permeable: a grammatical commentary may support Qur'anic interpretation, while a collection of poetry can belong simultaneously to devotional and literary traditions.

Qur'anic holdings include copies equipped with *tajwīd* indications and exegetical works referred to in the original description as *Jāmi al-Tafsīr*, *Ilm al-Tafsīr* and *Taḥṣīl al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*. The account identifies KK 3463 as a large Qur'anic volume, approximately 60 × 43 cm, associated with *tahajjud* recitation. These examples provide starting points for research into the material presentation and educational functions of sacred texts, although exact titles, creators and dates require inspection of title pages and catalogue entries.

The theological section is reported to contain approximately forty works, including texts associated with Abū Ḥanīfa and al-Nasafī and commentaries attributed to al-Taftāzānī, al-Ījī and other authors. Juridical holdings include *Mukhtaṣar al-Wiqāyah* and works referred to as *Fiqh al-Qaydānī* and *al-Fatāwā al-ʿĀlamgīriyyah*. Logic texts, Arabic grammar and rhetoric, poetry, astronomy and medicine are also mentioned. Together these subject

areas suggest that the book collection can illuminate interconnected religious and scholarly curricula rather than a narrowly devotional repertoire. Precise identifications of the titles and authors must be checked against each object before a definitive subject catalogue is issued.

The Katta Langar Qur'an: the significance of a facsimile. A notable item in the museum's collection is KK 2791, identified as a facsimile of the Katta Langar Qur'an. The source manuscript describes its model as an early Qur'anic witness, commonly dated there to the seventh or eighth century, written in Kufic script on parchment. It associates the manuscript with Katta Langar in the Kashkadarya region of Uzbekistan and states that the museum received a facsimile from a delegation from Uzbekistan in 2019. It further reports that the original is held by the Abu Rayhan Biruni Institute of Oriental Studies in Tashkent. These particulars should be verified against the facsimile colophon and repository documentation.

The distinction between the original and the museum's reproduction is central to the historical argument. The facsimile offers an important research and educational resource: it can enable study of visible script forms, page design and the reproduction of an early Qur'anic text without transferring custody of the original object. It cannot, however, substitute for examination of the original parchment when assessing material date, ink composition, conservation history or authenticity. The original manuscript's extent and completeness also require verification; the supplied article calls it a complete Qur'an without supplying a folio-level description. The present argument therefore makes no claim that a complete original is held by the museum.

Hadith literature: editions and manuscript copies. The Hadith holdings encompass works associated with al-Muwaṭṭa and its commentaries, al-Qaṣṭallānī, technical writings on Hadith terminology and other compilations. Their value for collection research lies in identifying what was copied, printed, annotated and read, rather than in reproducing an independent general history of Hadith scholarship. The manuscript's initial

discussion devoted substantial space to anecdotes about Imam al-Bukhārī, those narratives are not essential to the museum-object analysis and require independent historical sourcing if restored.

KK 3733 is identified as volumes V–VI of an Arabic printed edition of Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, published in Istanbul in 1315 AH / 1897–1898 CE. The supplied entry reports 242 pages for volume V and 253 pages for volume VI. The late-nineteenth-century publication date belongs to the museum's edition, not to the ninth-century composition of the original collection. Its place of publication and the edition's texts binding, marks of ownership and annotations could offer evidence for the circulation of Hadith books in Central Asia, but those details are not documented in the present description.

KK 338/40, by contrast, is identified as a manuscript copy of Mishkāṭ al-Maṣābīḥ dated in the inventory account to the eighteenth or nineteenth century. The work is associated in the source article with al-Khaṭīb al-Tabrīzī's expansion of al-Baghawī's earlier Maṣābīḥ al-Sunnah. Its material description reports a single substantial volume, fifteen lines per page, a main text in black ink, rubrication in red and marginal explanations. The article variously identifies the main text as thuluth and naskh, that discrepancy must be resolved by examining the folios. It describes marginal notes in nastalīq, generally good preservation and missing opening and concluding leaves.

A comparison of the two objects clarifies the collection's range. Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī is represented by a datable nineteenth-century printed edition, whereas Mishkāṭ al-Maṣābīḥ is represented by a

manuscript copy with potentially informative marginalia and incomplete leaves. Their different textual compositions, educational uses and modes of reproduction provide a basis for studying Hadith transmission through both manuscript and print cultures. The surviving descriptions support these distinctions, but they do not yet establish who used these particular copies or when they entered the mausoleum's historical library.

Poetry, literary transmission and Diwani Hikmet. The poetry holdings include works described as qaṣīdahs and devotional verse,

some accompanied by Turkic commentaries. One named object is KK 958, a manuscript of *Qaṣīdat al-Burdah* attributed to al-Būṣīrī and dated by the museum description to the eighteenth or nineteenth century. The source relates the poem's devotional importance and the tradition concerning its composition, but the manuscript's research value depends most immediately on the copy's script, language, marginal additions and textual relationship to other witnesses. These features should be entered in a full scholarly description before historical conclusions about its readership are drawn.

Particularly relevant to the journal's focus are the versions of *Dīwān-i Hikmat* identified under KK 1653, 3406, 3425 and 4195, described as manuscript, early printed and lithographic examples. The work is central to the reception of Yasawi's Sufi poetic tradition and articulates interrelated themes of religious observance, spiritual practice, divine love, self-discipline and ethical cultivation. Its themes can be situated within wider investigations of Yasawi's worldview (Kenjetay, 2008: 314) and examined alongside a published Chagatai translation (Yasawi, 2021).

The presence of several versions is especially significant because it creates the possibility of comparing textual variants, language, editorial interventions and the movement from handwritten to printed transmission. The supplied article does not identify the dates, scribes, colophons, precise contents or relationships among all four copies, consequently, it would be premature to attribute every poem in those volumes directly to the historical Yasawi or to describe them as a single stable authorial text. The most defensible conclusion is that the holdings provide material for studying the later transmission and reception of the Hikmet tradition.

Results. First, the available account identifies a composite written collection rather than a single homogeneous manuscript library. Its approximately seven hundred items include handwritten works, lithographs, other printed books, documentary holdings and at least one modern facsimile. A typology distinguishing these categories is necessary

for reliable description, calculation of collection size and interpretation of historical provenance.

Second, thematic classification reveals a multidisciplinary body of material extending from Qur'anic and Hadith studies to jurisprudence, theology, logic, philology, medicine and poetry. The re-reported Arabic, Persian, and Turkic language combinations suggest the possibility of investigating multilingual reading and instruction. The current descriptions, however, do not permit definitive quantitative conclusions without an item-level catalogue.

Third, the five selected object groups demonstrate distinct kinds of research evidence: the Katta Langar Qur'an facsimile documents access to a reproduction of an early witness; the Istanbul edition of *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* illustrates the printed transmission of a foundational Hadith text; the *Mishkāṭ al-Maṣābīḥ* copy offers codicological evidence, including rubrication and marginalia; *Qaṣīdat al-Burdah* connects devotional literature with the museum's manuscript holdings and the *Dīwān-i Hikmat* versions provide a corpus for future comparison across manuscript and print formats.

Fourth, the analysis identifies several limits to the current evidence: the 1977 versus 1978–1979 collection chronology, possible overlap between the reported printed-book and lithograph totals, contradictory script labels for *Mishkāṭ al-Maṣābīḥ* and missing provenance and publication details for some titles. These are not findings about the historical objects themselves; they are documentation issues that must be resolved to strengthen scholarly conclusions.

The resulting practical research agenda is an item-by-item inventory audit; identification of work, author, scribe, place and date where ascertainable; description of foliation, scripts, bindings, marginalia, and condition; and separate recording of acquisition history and reproduction status. For the Yasawi-related holdings, a comparative description of the four *Dīwān-i Hikmat* items would provide an appropriate next phase of study.

Conclusion. The written holdings of the National Historical and Cultural Museum-Reserve “Əzizet Cəlilə” constitute a

significant resource for investigating the religious, intellectual and literary history of Turkic-Islamic civilization. Their value lies not only in the prestige of the works represented but also in the material evidence carried by particular editions and copies, their multilingual contexts and the history of their collection and preservation.

The selected Qur'anic, Hadith and poetic objects illustrate the need to distinguish original manuscripts from later copies, printed books and facsimiles. Such distinctions allow the museum to represent the collection accurately while developing research questions about textual circulation, education and the reception of Yasawi's heritage. The article's conclusions are limited by the quality of the supplied descriptions; verification against inventory books and direct examination of the objects remains essential. Preservation, therefore, should be integrated with cataloguing, conservation assessment, digitization where appropriate, transcription, translation and comparative textual research. A transparent scholarly catalogue of the museum's written heritage would provide the strongest basis for introducing these materials

into academic circulation and for preserving their historical context for future researchers.

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List of abbreviations:

AH — Anno Hegirae (Hijri year); CE — Common Era; GRNTI — State Rubricator of Scientific and Technical Information; KK — museum collection inventory identifier (as recorded in the source text).

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