

PRESENTING THE COLLECTION

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

Collection of Magomedrasul Gajiev

The owner of the richest collection, Magomedrasul Gairbekovich Gajiev (65 years old, native of Khunzākh) belongs to the 'Ālimchulal *tukhum*, a family of scholars, whose ancestor 10 generations ago was also renowned as a scholar. The 'Ālimchulal 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 Dāghistāni 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 *ustād*. 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) *Isam* which was written by outstanding scholar, great expert and buttress of Islam, *shaykh* Muḥammād, son of Mūsā [al-Quduqī]".

Isam is the shortened title of a work on behalf of its "glosser", author of the first half of the 16th century Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad b. 'Arabshāh Isfarā'īnī, known as *Isam al-Dīn*, under the name *Hashiya Kitāb al-Shafiya*.

Muḥammad, son of Mūsā al-Quduqī is one of the best known Dāghistāni scholars and experts on Arab grammar and *fiqh*, "the founder of Dāghistāni scholarship", as academic I. Iu. Krachkovskii wrote of him. His work on Arab grammar was one of the most popular textbooks in Dāghistāni *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

Muḥammad, son of Mūsā al-Quduqī, copied by Ṭayyīb from Kharakh (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-Nawāwī's book *al-Rawḍa* — collection of *ḥadīths* by al-Nawāwī, renowned *ḥadīth* expert and *ḥafīz*; 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 *qiblas*, contains previously unknown Dāghistāni works: *Talkhīṣ al-ḥikma* by Qurbān 'Alī from the Awār village of 'Akālchī; a work on determining *qiblas* and time by 'Ḥasan Ḥusayn from Khalkhāl, a province near Ardabīl, — he was *mudarris* in Shammākha in 1006", i. e. 1597–98.

An important acquisition of the expedition is the *fihrist* 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 Ḥusayn, son of 'Ālimchu, son of 'Abd al-Qādir from Khunzākh, kept by other people" — 17 titles. And the book *al-Fawā'id al-dīyā'iyya* by 'Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī, one of the most popular textbooks of Arabic in Dāghistāni *madrasas*, has the note: "From the books of Ḥusayn, son of 'Ālimchu". There are many such notes. For example, the ancient manuscript with the name *al-Aḥkām al-sharī'a wa masa'il al-dīn* copied in 769/1368 also has the possessory note: "From the books of Ḥusayn, son of 'Ālimchu". In another manuscript copied in Dāghistān in 1858, 20 titles are indicated, and all of them belong to the 'Ālimchu clan.

Here is also a very important report about the ways that the collection of 'Ālimchu, son of 'Abd al-Qādir, was formed. The main contents are: 'Ālimchu has an "abundant" number of manuscripts. The ways they were acquired: (i) through a *waqf*, especially from Maḥmūd; (ii) copying; (iii) received from his father as a genuine *mulk*; (iv) purchase.

A more detailed list is given at the end of the work by Ibn Ḥajar *Tuhfat al-muḥtāj Sharḥ al-Minhāj*: