
Historical Background for the Formation of Manuscript Book Art of the Tatars

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Abstract:

The chosen theme is relevant since in the modern world researchers address to the study of national traditional cultures. Comprehension of the book art significance in its historical evolution is one of the conditions for solving not only the preservation of spiritual and material culture monuments but it is also the study of the cultures genesis and finding the way for their further development.

The article is aimed at revealing the factors of the formation and development of the book art traditions, determined by objective historical conditions. In this the worldview of the mystical and ascetic teachings of Islam - Sufism, which is characterized by the cult of poverty, played a fundamental role.

The research of the problem is based on the classical methods of various sciences: history, cultural studies, art history, which allows creating a holistic picture of the book art development in the culture of the Tatars.

Keywords: *Asceticism, Sufism, history, calligraphy, handwritten book, styles of Arabic writing.*

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1. Introduction

The centuries-old history of the Tatar people development shows that in its richest spiritual culture a special place was given to scholarship and education, which gave rise to a reverential attitude to the book as a source of knowledge. The Tatar manuscript book is distinctive; it differs from the book of other peoples. Its formation was influenced by those objective factors of the history of the state development, within which it was formed. The culture of the Arab-Muslim countries with which the state of the Volga Bulgaria (during all stages of the development) and later the Kazan Khanate (which became the successor of the Bulgarian culture) were in constant political, economic, trade contacts influenced the development of the Tatar manuscript book art. In the first half of the XIX century, the Tatar traditional culture, which embodied the centuries-old achievements of the world's Muslim art, is experiencing the stage of revival. The researchers call it the classical period or the "Tatar Renaissance." For the purposes of discussion, the genesis of the Tatar manuscript book of the period under study can be divided into two periods: the first period covers the period of the Middle Ages and up to the 19th century; the second - the late XIX - the early XX century (before the revolution of 1917).

In the centuries-old history of national identity, a special role belongs to the Muslim religion, officially adopted in the 10th century in the state of the Volga Bulgaria. Islam had a decisive influence on the life of the Tatar people, their spiritual and material culture. The Muslim religion, which had its own features on the territory of the Tatar people residence, also affected the image of the Tatar book. The analysis of the principles of the Tatar book culture development is considered in the context of those events that occurred within the Muslim religion itself in the region.

2. Methodological Framework

2.1. Objectives of the study

During the research, the following tasks were solved:

- To study the historiography of the question of the manuscript book art formation on the territory of the Volga region during the VIII - early XX centuries;
- To identify the stages in the development of book art in the culture of the Tatars.

2.2. Theoretical and methodological basis of the study

The article is written at the intersection of the following sciences: history, cultural studies, art history and it is based on a holistic system approach to the study of the history of the book art in the culture of the Tatars of the Middle Volga region. A topic at the top of priorities in the article is the use of the classical comparative-historical method, including synchronous and diachronic analysis. The methodology of art criticism analysis is complex and includes a formal stylistic approach to the evaluation

of empirical material, cultural and historical analysis, a comparative-descriptive method. The article also uses the general scientific and cultural genetic method itself, which makes it possible to make a diachronic section and trace the process of the manuscript book art formation in the Middle Volga region.

2.3. Research base

The basis of the study covers the collection of manuscript books in the collections of the Department of Manuscripts and Rare Books of N.I. Lobachevsky Scientific Library of Kazan Federal University (DMRB Lobachevsky SL KFU), the Center for Writing and Music Heritage of G. Ibrahimov Institute of Literature and Arts of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Tatarstan (G. Ibrahimov CWMH ILA, AS RT), the Department of Rare Books and Manuscripts of the National Library of the Republic of Tatarstan, the National Museum of the Republic of Tatarstan (NM RT), the National Archives of the Republic of Tatarstan), The Graphics Department of the State Museum of Fine Arts of the Republic of Tatarstan (SMFA) and private collections.

3. Results

The adoption of the new religion of Islam in 922 by the Volga Bulgaria state facilitated the establishment of close contacts with the countries of the Middle East and Central Asia. Thanks to trade relations with these states, written literature (primarily of religious and scientific content) was distributed among the Bulgarian population, as the markets were the centers of book.

Since the Xth century, in the Volga Bulgaria, Arabic graphic arts, which became the language of science and religion, replaced the runic one (Karimullin, 1971). The state opens educational institutions - maktabs and madrasahs, in which scientists who received education in the Muslim world countries taught. Such prominent Bulgarian scholars as Abu-l-Ali Hamid Ibn Idris al-Bulgari, Suleiman ibn Daoud al-Saxini, Burhan ad-din al-Bulgari, the Taj Ad-din brothers and Hasan ibn Yunus al-Bulgari and many others were educated in the largest educational institutions of Bukhara and Nishapur in Central Asia, and also in Iraq (Haliullin, 2000). On returning to their homeland, they write essays on religious subjects (commentaries on the Qur'an, books on fiqh, collections of hadiths), essays on astronomy, medicine and other sciences. Thus, we can say that in the Volga Bulgaria of the pre-Mongol period there were prerequisites for the development of the art of the book. Inkwell discovered by archaeologists and metal book covers (Darkevich, 1976) serve to show the evidence of the foregoing. In the collection of the Bilyar historical-archeological and natural museum-reserve of the Republic of Tatarstan there is a unique metal cover of the book, made in the filigree and granulation technique, with the scurf, which makes it possible to assume the existence of the book art within the state. Due to objective reasons, the books copied by the calligraphers of the Volga Bulgaria did not survive. Chervonnaya (1978) explains this by the fact that the material for writing was paper, which is an undurable material.

The relationship of the Bulgarian scientists with the countries of the Muslim East, especially with Central Asia were continuous in the succeeding periods of the state development. In 1236, after the Mongol-Tatar invasion, the Volga Bulgaria is merged in the Golden Horde, being its autonomous part. At the beginning of the XIV century, the Golden Horde officially adopted Islam. Cultural contacts between Bulgaria and Central Asia continued (it also became part of the Golden Horde state), contacts were established with the Crimea, Turkey and Egypt. Diplomatic and trade relations with these states contributed to the penetration of manuscripts imported into the Bulgarian society along with other goods.

During this period, the greatest works of medieval Tatar literature were written, such as the poem "Gulistan Bit Türki" by Saif Sarai, "Khosrov wa Shirin" by Kutba, "Muhabbat-namei" by Khorezmi, the prose work "Nahj al-Faradis" by Mahmud al-Bulgari and others. In the works of poets, they discussed the problems of Muslim philosophical thought, ethical categories. The authors also wrote about the need for every Muslim to strive for knowledge (Sketches, 2000). The latter fact was to contribute to the formation of a special attitude to the book as a source of knowledge and the development of book art in the Tatar culture. The epigraphic monument (dated to the XIII-XIV centuries) with the inscription "... son's of the Bakhshi Musa grave sign" (Hakimzyanov, 1978), found in the village of Staroe Romashkino near the town of Chistopol in the Republic of Tatarstan, is a proof of the existence of professional scribes. The term "bakhshi" in the Golden Horde period meant a position and specialty of the scribe, secretary, master, who knows the art of calligraphic writing.

Unfortunately, the examples of manuscript art of the Golden Horde period, introduced into scientific circulation, are not so numerous. The documents of record keeping (khan's labels) on the territory of Ulus Dzhuchi (nomad camp) are the proof of the heyday of the beautiful writing art in the Volga Bulgaria of the Golden Horde period. The labels researcher Usmanov (1979) points to the existence at the khans palaces of the chancellery, where the scribes formed labels. At the end of each label, the scribe secretary left the private data. For example, the names of the secretaries Mustafa, Sha'ban and Halk-Aman, who served in the khan's chancellery and practiced calligraphy professionally (Usmanov, 1979) are indicated on Sahib-Girai labels. The given facts allow us to make the assumption that in the chancelleries professional calligraphers carried out orders for rewriting books.

In the creation of labels calligraphers used various styles of Arabic letter writing. Usmanov (1979), studying the documents of chancellery work on the territory of Ulus Dzhuchi, emphasizes the dependence of the use of different writing styles on the international political situation in which the state developed in that period of time. Based on the study of the granted labels of the Golden Horde khans, the author notes, that "the basic styles of writing in the khanates of Ulus were the handwriting of "sulce" and "divani" (Usmanov, 1979). The style of the "divani", developed in the Ottoman Empire, first penetrates into the work of Ulus Dzhuchi in the XIV century,

when the state maintained close contacts with Egypt (Zakirov, 1966), where exactly this style was used for taking formal notes (Usmanov, 1979).

Since the mid XV century, after the Golden Horde state collapsed into separate khanates, the process of forming the culture of the Tatar people again takes place in the conditions of an independent state, the center of which is Kazan. The Kazan Khanate had a high level of development of material and spiritual culture. The trade and diplomatic ties between the state and the countries of the Arab-Muslim East and Central Asia were intense. Tatar scholars and clergy went to study in Bukhara, Turkey, Dagestan. In the early 16th century the prominent poets and scientists Muhammadiyar, Muhammad Amin Garifbek, Kul Sharif, Muhammedsharif, Ibrahim al-Kazani and others lived in Kazan. In Muhammadyar's poem "Tuhvah-i mardan" there are lines which mention "the people writing on a sheet" (Sidorenko & Hakim, 1957), which is a proof of the existence of a scribe profession in the state and says about a special attitude towards them.

The fact of the existence of manuscript art on the territory of the Kazan Khanate is also confirmed by the record keeping documents (the Khans' Ibrahim and Sahib Girai labels). The label of Khan Ibrahim (the founder of the Kazan Khanate Ulug Mohammed's grandson) is preserved in a copy-imitation of the XVII century (the place of storage is Central State Archive, F. 1173 / I, item 1, unit of the library 196, sheet 1). The original of Sahib Girai label, who ruled the Kazan Khanate in 1521-24, is kept in the National Museum of the Republic of Tatarstan (inv. No. 5757). Sahib Girai is a representative of the dynasty of the Crimean khans. This fact makes it possible to assume that during that period, Turkish influence manifested itself in the work of the Kazan Khanate and in the manuscript art in general, where the styles of "divani", "sulce", and "rikya" dominated.

In 1562, the Kazan Khanate was conquered by the troops of Ivan the Terrible. Since that time, the culture of the people is developing in the mainstream of the policy of the Russian state. Despite the difficult political situation with the fall of the Kazan Khanate, the traditions of manuscript art continue to live in the people's environment (Shamsutov, 2001); in some large villages, scribes of religious writings and the Koran are working in mosques.

The leading role in the Muslim communities belonged to scientists. During this period, the connection of Tatar scientists with the major Muslim educational centers of Bukhara, Samarkand was not as intense as in previous years, but it was continuous. It is known, for example, that in 1688-1691 the Tatar scientist Yunus Ivanai made a hajj to Bukhara (Kemper, 2008).

Representatives of the Bolgar-Tatar clergy and scientists maintained constant contacts with the Central Asian cities, where they improved their education and here, through their teachers, embraced the ideas of Sufism. Thus, as long ago as in the 10th century, the mystical and ascetic teaching of Islam, the Sufism, penetrated into the Middle

Volga region from Central Asia and significantly strengthened its positions in the world of the Bolgars. Kemper (2008) suggests, that "since the Golden Horde time the local Sufis were associated with the Central Asian mystical tradition".

In the XII-XIV centuries, several fraternities (tariqah) were organized inside Sufism. Domestic and foreign researchers (Amirhanov, 1993; Yuzeyev, 2001, 2007; Kemper, 2008; Frank, 1996) suggest that in the Volga region Sufism, from the late Middle Ages to the XVIII century, was influenced by the Yasaviya tariqah. Ahmed Yasawi is a mystical poet, one of the leaders of Sufism, the founder of the Sufi brotherhood of Yasaviy, was born in 1091 in Turkestan (Nabiev, 2004). We can find the confirmation of the Yasaviya brotherhood influence in the works of Tatar Sufi poets of the XVI, XVII, XVIII centuries.

For example, one of the poems of the outstanding Tatar poet and religious figure, the head of the Muslims (Seid) of the Kazan Khanate, Kul Sharif (? -1552) is dedicated to the son of the Central Asian Sufi poet Suleiman Bakyrangani, whose works were widely distributed among Tatars before XX century. Suleiman Bakyrangani was a disciple of Ahmad Yasawi (Kemper, 2008). The hickmets of the famous Muslim Sufi poet Mavlya Koly, who lived in about 1080 in Kazan (Kemper, 2008), also trace the features of A. Yasawi's poetry. Yasawi and his followers preached the idea of an all-consuming aspiration to comprehend God, detachment from all earthly problems. The attitude for social passivity, the priority of spiritual wealth before the material influenced the artistic and aesthetic development of the surrounding world.

By the XV century in Central Asia, the most widespread tariqah is Naqshbandiyya, named after Bahaaddin Naqshbandi (Nabiev, 2004). In the conditions of the liquidation of statehood, the offensive against the foundations of spiritual life, attempts to eradicate the Muslim religion, which resulted in the forced Christianization of Tatar Muslims in the middle of the 16th century, Bolgar-Tatar scholars and representatives of the clergy continue maintaining contacts with Central Asia. Since the late XVII century "the Bolgar scientists with ever increasing frequency go to Bukhara. Here they came under the influence of Naqshbandiyya, who displaced Yasaviya or assimilated with him"(Kemper, 2008). Kemper (2008) notes, that "it is obvious that in the second half of the 18th century the Naqshbandiyya brotherhood became the leading one in Tatarstan".

Together with fundamental differences in matters of faith, the brotherhoods of Yasaviya and Naqshbandiyya are united by the concept of strict asceticism. In his poetic works M. Koly, emphasizing the fragility of secular life and the need to curb instincts (Hickmet, 1, 2, 3), preaches the idea of asceticism. The problem of the importance of asceticism for the Sufi also rises in the writings of the Tatar poet Abdarrahim al-Bulgari (Utyz Imyani). In his treatise, as-Saif Is-sarim, he stresses: "You should know that asceticism in this world is a true degree of stopping for one who walks on the [Sufi] path. Asceticism is for the failure to perform activities that are only a pleasure for the soul "(Kemper, 2008).

The cult of poverty, so characteristic of the Sufis, is of fundamental importance in the formation of a certain worldview of the Tatar people and their culture. One of the ideologues of Sufism, Al Ghazali, who defined mystical love for God as the peak of man's spiritual perfection, asserts that "the Sufi must, in loving God, strive to withdraw from all the worldly" (Ishmuhametov, 1979).

We can assume that the teaching of Al Ghazali, according to which Tatar medieval Sufi literature developed, had an impact on the development of manuscript book art. Sufism, which became a spiritual component of society, brought up certain traits of character, such as: asceticism, rejection of everything vulgar, excessively bright, the advantage of poverty over wealth, which, in our opinion, was reflected in the formation of the image of the Tatar manuscript book. For example, the concept of asceticism led to the rejection of pictorial elements in the design of the Tatar manuscript book. In addition, the binding of the Tatar book does not contain ornamental design made in the technique of imprint, so characteristic of the book culture of the Arab-Muslim world countries.

The studied artifacts show that in the design of the book page, Tatar scribes paid great attention to color. Books were copied on the white paper using black ink for rewriting the main text, red ink for highlighting the most important fragments in the text, less often was used green color to emphasize or highlight some words. We assume that the choice of this color variety was not accidental, and we find an explanation for this phenomenon by the fact that Sufism is guided by the mystical knowledge of God. In Muslim mysticism, color plays an important epistemological function, characterizing the state of the soul of the mystic, the degree of its purity (Vasil'cov, 2009).

The mystical writings of famous Tatar Sufis Tadjeddin Yalchigul and Nigmatullah bin Umar al-Uthari state that the Sufi on the path of mysticism must observe persistence in mentioning the name of God. As a supplement to the prerequisites of mystical knowledge, the authors describe ten phases of dhikr (a silent mention of the name of God). Each of them corresponds to a color association and any part of the human body. The first five steps of dhikr are defined as "little holiness" (Kemper, 2008). Each of these stages of the Sufi is possible to recognize by the color scheme (Kemper, 2008). The first substance is the Heart, it corresponds to the Red color, and the next stage is the Spirit, which is denoted through a white color (Vasil'cov, 2009). When the heart becomes clear, red color appears, and after purifying the other substances, white, green, and black appear (Vasil'cov, 2009).

The government of Catherine II changed its policy towards the national minorities of the Volga region, including the Tatars. In Kazan, and later in other cities of the former Khanate, they allow construction of mosques and madrassas, which become the centers of copying books. The madrasahs shakirds were engaged in this, because, firstly, they needed books for educational purposes, and secondly, calligraphy was among the compulsory disciplines. The well-known archeographer R.G. Ignatyev in his study "Legends, Tales and Songs in the Manuscripts of the Tatar Writing",

published in 1875, concluded that "in Kazan ... there must have been a whole corporation of copyists" (Karimullin, 1971). We cannot confidently state the existence of the centers of book copying in Kazan and other cities as not many books copied in the XVIII century survived and those that survived do not have a colophon (part of the manuscript book, where the place and time of copying the manuscript and the name of the copyist are indicated).

The next stage in the development of manuscript art in the culture of the Tatars began in the middle of the XIX century. The formation of capitalist relations that influenced the formation of the national self-consciousness of the Tatar people was reflected in its spiritual culture. The opening of the Kazan Gymnasium (1758), Kazan Imperial University (1804) made it possible for Tatar- Muslims to receive secular education. In the last quarter of the 19th century, the modernization of the Tatar society was manifested in progressive transformations in all spheres of spiritual and material life of society. The movement "Jadidism" took a wide scale (Fahrutdinov, 2015). The ideas of reformism, which proclaimed the freedom of utterances - *ijtihad*, with the restriction of traditions, and the proclamation of "innovations", helped revive the manuscript art that showed its characteristic features in the book art.

A significant number of remained Tatar manuscripts dating back to the 19th and early 20th centuries were made using a high level of calligraphy. We can state the fact of the existence in the specified period of workshops of hand-written calligraphy in rural and urban madrassas. Significant role in the development of the manuscript book art belongs to the Kazan University, where the Oriental faculty opened. It is interesting that all the listed facts, as well as the opening of the printing house at the Kazan Gymnasium and University, the functioning of libraries affected the change in the appearance of the Tatar manuscript book. The book is now influenced not only by Central Asian traditions in the design of the book block, but also by Russians and Europeans. We should note changes in the design of the manuscript book, with the appearance of pictorial elements in the form of *unvan* - ornamented right page of the second broadside of the book. Famous Tatar calligraphers – book scribes A. Mahmudov and Sh. Tagirov, who worked at the turn of the XIX-XX centuries, left beautiful monuments of the Tatar manuscript book art. A. Mahmudov and Sh. Tagirov mastered the new handwriting styles of the Arabic letter (*nastalig*, *shikaste*, *nash*) not used before them in the Tatar manuscript calligraphy. They introduced the ornamental element of *Unvan* in the context of the book design, and also enriched the coloring of manuscripts.

4. Discussions

Various aspects of the history of the book art development in the culture of the Tatars are considered in the works of Usmanov (1979), where the influence of Central Asian traditions on the formation of the Tatar book art is substantiated. The genesis of the Tatar book was studied in the fundamental works of Karimullin (1971). Fahrutdinov (2015) studied the development of the political history of the Tatar people.

The development of Tatar religious and philosophical thought found its reflection in the works of Russian researchers - Amirhanov (1993), Yuzeyev (2001, 2007), as well as in the studies of leading foreign scientists - Algar (1976), Frank (1996), Kemper (2008), who pay attention to the issues of Sufism in the Volga region.

Since the early 20th century, the phenomenon of the Tatar book was reflected in the works of Russian art historians - Dulsky (1916, 1921, 1930), Ulemnova (2005), Chervonnaya (1978), Shamsutov (2001), who touched upon the issues of artistic design of the book to varying degree. Vagapova (2015) studied the fundamentals of the formation of the manuscript book art in the culture of the Tatars and made a chapter in her dissertation work, where she first addresses the issue of influence of the Sufism ideology on the development of the Tatar book art. Vagapova & Donina (2015) continued the study of this topic in their article.

5. Conclusion

The concept of understanding the book as an integral structure proposed in the article, the individual elements of which are formed under the influence of certain factors, revealed that the artistic and image-bearing content of the Tatar book was predetermined by the ideology of Sufism with its concept of asceticism and mystical knowledge of God. Experiencing the influence of the book art of the Arab-Muslim world countries, the Tatar book, by some features, differed from its eastern counterparts. This is due to the fact, that the traditions of book art in the culture of the Tatars are formed in the conditions of the development of their own statehood.

6. Recommendations

The results and conclusions of this study lead to a new level of understanding the history of the formation of manuscript book art in the culture of the Tatars of the Middle Volga region. This perspective of research can be applied to the development of practical and specialized courses: "Culture and Art of the Peoples of Tatarstan", "History of the World Culture", "History of Culture and Religion".

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