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Settling the past: Soviet oriental projects in Leningrad and Alma-Ata

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Chapter I: The Leningrad Connection: Oriental Projects of Source Editions

1.1 Classical Oriental Studies and Soviet Politics

With the establishment of the Asiatic Museum in St. Petersburg (1818) a new center of Russian Oriental Studies emerged which became famous for its rich manuscript collection and for its historical and philological studies of written sources. Even after the transfer of the academic Institute of Oriental Studies from Leningrad to Moscow (1950), the center of manuscript studies remained in its former place as the Leningrad Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies, which continued to be regarded by foreign and native observers as a school of classical, non-political, philological Oriental Studies. The supposed distance from politics is the common feature for Leningrad Orientalists. The perceived ‘non-politicization’ of classical Orientalists is connected to the image of the Leningrad intelligentsia in general, which has been described as devoted to high ideals and values and not interested in politics. In his account of the history of the Leningrad intelligentsia in Soviet times, philologist Sergei Averintsev (1937-2004) remarked in 2004 that Leningrad was characterized by “the strongest [in comparison with Moscow] repressive-ideological atmosphere... The optimal stability of cultural values guaranteed a special pathos of professional honesty of the best members of the oppositional Leningrad intelligentsia... In Leningrad it was possible to meet real priests of science (*zhretsy nauki*) which seemed to be a special kind of people; the last citizens of Atlántida...”⁴⁰ However, my argument is that since the 1917 Revolution, the Leningrad intelligentsia and the Orientalists among them found themselves in a situation in which involvement into politics became unavoidable.

In the given chapter I will study several philological projects conducted mostly by Leningrad Orientalists in the 1930s-70s. These projects deservedly became a matter of pride for Soviet research. At the same time, they clearly demonstrate the mechanism of

⁴⁰ S. Averintsev, “Opyt peterburgskoi intelligentsii v sovetskie gody – po lichnym vpechatleniiam”, *Novyi mir* 6 (2004). In Soviet Oriental Studies the most evident example of fidelity to principles is Arabic scholar I.Iu. Krachkovskii (1883-1951). See: I.Iu. Krachkovskii, “Ispytanie vremenem. Mysli k 45-letiiu nauchnoi raboty”, ed. by A.A. Dolinina, *Peterburgskoe vostokovedenie* 8 (St. Petersburg, 1996), 564-596; A.A. Dolinina, *Nevol'nik dolga* (St. Petersburg, 1994).

involvement of Oriental philologists into politics. My thesis is the following: even though the source studies of Leningrad Orientalists remained remote from the most vulgar ideology of the state and party, the publication projects in the field of Oriental Studies were instigated and directed by political demand, and were later used as the main sources for the official historical narratives, especially in the new Soviet meta-histories of the individual Soviet republics of Central Asia. As for the Leningrad source publications of the 1930s, after WWII they were taken as the basis for comprehensive republican histories meant to demonstrate continuity from ancient times to the mid-20th century.

Traditionally, scholars explain the allegedly non-political image of the St. Petersburg/ Leningrad school of Oriental Studies through the obvious influence of German Orientology, supposedly less connected to colonial politics than Oriental studies in Britain and France. Many great Russian Orientalists of the early 20th century were of German origin and represented the German model of textological Oriental studies,⁴¹ mainly focused on ancient texts.⁴² David Schimmelpenninck van der Oye underlines the idea that in 19th-century Russia a sophisticated scholarly approach dominated in St. Petersburg (sure, with some exceptions), while in the Kazan school priority was given to the practical needs for educating translators in state service.⁴³ This supposed German neglect of politics is for example reflected in the words of Dutch Arabist J.J. Witkam, who remarked about his famous colleague Carl Brockelmann (1868-1956): “He survived the [Second World] war as a private scholar, and was never compromised in any official capacity before, during or after the war.”⁴⁴

Did the Orientalists-philologists manage to keep distance from the current Soviet politics? How did they behave in the new system of scholarship created by the Bolsheviks? In what extend did the prerevolutionary traditions of classical Orientology in St Petersburg

⁴¹ Tolz, *Russia's Own Orient*, 73-79.

⁴² B. Lewis, *Islam and the West* (New York, 1993), 108-18; E. Said, *Orientalism*, 19.

⁴³ D. Schimmelpenninck van der Oye, *Russian Orientalism: Asia in the Russian Mind from Peter the Great to the Emigration* (New Haven & London, 2010), 121, 175

⁴⁴ J.J. Witkam, “Brockelmann’s *Geschichte* Revisited”, in: C. Brockelmann, *Geschichte der arabischen Literatur (GAL)* (Leiden; New-York; Köln, 1996), vol. 1, ix. See, however, Ursula Wokoeck’s book about involvement of German Orientalists: U. Wokoeck, *German Orientalism, The Study of the Middle East and Islam from 1800 to 1945* (London, 2009); cf. also J. Jenkins, “German Orientalism: Introduction,” in: *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, 24:2 (2004), 97-100; G. Hagen, “German Heralds of Holy War: Orientalists and Applied Oriental Studies,” *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, 24:2 (2004), 145-162.

continued, or one can speak of a radical break with the past? Is there a link between source editions and nation-building in Central Asia? What was the fate of Islamic scholarship in the field of source studies? Did the Islamic scholars cooperate with the new system or did they try to escape from any contacts with the Bolsheviks? How different were source studies in different centres of scholarship: Leningrad, Almaty and Tashkent? Is it possible to see the very language and methods of classical Oriental philology implemented in Central Asian republics as colonial? These are the questions which I seek to answer in this chapter.

1.2 Towards the New Scholarship: Planning and Collective Work

Throughout the 1920s, the Soviet government paid serious attention to the foreign Orient which was regarded as an object of exporting the Bolshevik revolution.⁴⁵ Already at that time also the study of the Soviet Orient received the attention of the government, but the Civil war, the anarchy of institutions, and difficult relations with the Tsarist intelligentsia made serious and large-scale investigation programs impossible. The Bolsheviks decided to intervene directly in scientific structures and management. They understood the power of institutions and of large-scale research organizations through which it is possible to organize solid and broad investigations. The problem was that there were many scientific institutions of the Tsarist time in Leningrad that had very few employees and were unable to solve the issues which the Bolsheviks liked to see addressed. In response, the government tried to organize its own, parallel institutional network. The significance accorded to the Soviet Orient as a scientific topic of state priority resulted in the establishment of the Communist University of the Workers of the East (*Kommunisticheskii universitet trudiashchikhsia Vostoka*, KUTV) in Moscow in 1921.

Four years later, on 18 May 1925, Joseph Stalin formulated the main tasks of this teaching institution as a University which united students from the Soviet and foreign Orient. According to Stalin, the KUTV had to prepare specialists from among the Oriental peoples in order to develop the “socialist construction” in the republics as well as the cultivation of national culture; the latter had to be “proletarian in its content and national in its

⁴⁵ For a detailed study of personalities, scientific institutions, and research journals about the foreign Orient see: M. Kemper, “Red Orientalism: Mikhail Pavlovich and Marxist Oriental Studies in Early Soviet Russia,” *Die Welt des Islams* 50 (2010), 435-476.

form.”⁴⁶ This idea was further elaborated in May 1930 when the Institute of the Peoples of the Soviet Orient at the Scientific Committee of the Central Executive Committee (TsIK) of the Communist Party of the USSR was set up in Moscow. Most probably this was just a bureaucratic office, but the fact that TsIK – one of the two parallel governmental structures of the early USSR – created an institute of this kind shows how important research on the Soviet Orient was for the Bolsheviks. The main task of the Institute was “to study the actual problems of socialist development of the peoples of the Soviet Orient and to train scientific and practical workers from among the local population.”⁴⁷ Curiously, the Bolsheviks’ turn to the study of the Soviet Orient clearly resembled the call of Arabist Viktor R. Rozen’s (1864-1908) pre-revolutionary school of Oriental studies for research on ‘Russia’s Own Orient.’⁴⁸ The Soviet officials decided to use professional academics for their nationality policies in the Central Asian republics.

The large scholarly institution that was to become a bridgehead for the Soviet system of scientific work was, however, the Academy of Sciences. This was the main organization where Soviet Oriental studies were developed. However, it took the Bolsheviks several years from 1928 to 1931 to reconstruct and redirect this old institution which in many aspects did not fit into the new regime. Its location in Leningrad made it difficult to control. In the Tsarist time the Academy was rather a tight circle of privileged intellectuals than a collective of scientific workers. In Soviet parlance such an institution was regarded as a remnant of the bourgeois past. In the late 1920s the government decided to undertake efforts to achieve the so-called ‘Sovietization’ of the Academy. The ‘Sovietization’ of the Academy of Sciences started in 1928 with the anti-Academic campaign in the newspaper *Leningradskaiia Pravda*. On its pages the Academy was called a center for people of the Tsarist past.⁴⁹ The authorities changed the social composition of its members and the entire manner of work. A significant feature of Soviet scholarship was its planned character (*planirovanie*). This system existed in the economy as well as in sciences. Every five years

⁴⁶ I.V. Stalin, “O politicheskikh zadachakh Universiteta narodov Vostoka (rech’ na sobranii studentov KUTV, 18 maia 1925),” in: I.V. Stalin, *Sochineniia*, vol. 7 (Moscow, 1952), 138.

⁴⁷ *Vestnik Komakademii* (Moscow, 1931), No. 10-11, 54.

⁴⁸ V. Tolz, *Russia’s Own Orient*, 10-13.

⁴⁹ A.N. Goriainov, “Leningradskaiia Pravda” – kollektivnyi organizator “velikogo pereloma” v Akademii nauk,” *Vestnik Akademii Nauk* 8 (1991), 107-114.

a given scientific institution received official orders (*direktivy*) from the Presidium of the Academy of Sciences that pointed out the important areas of research and gave general instructions on how to organize work. It was on 3 October 1930 that the general meeting of the Academy of Sciences accepted the system of five-year plans.⁵⁰ In the same year of 1930 the Soviets also set up a number of new scientific Institutes that were to provide a new structure to the USSR Academy of Sciences as a whole, with the Presidium as its leading organ. Each Institute in the framework of the Academy included several thematically orientated sub-divisions (groups, sectors). The introduction of planning had a long-lasting effect on the Soviet scientific production. Scholars were given orders which scientific topics are actual and necessary for the state, because the Academy of Sciences was a state-sponsored institution and all its employees were on state service. Research tasks were to be fulfilled within a particular period of time, while the personal research interests of individual scholars were mainly ignored by the administrative management. This fact became crucial for generations of Orientalists who were forced to work in an established framework, and to regularly publish papers on a given topic, leaving aside their own pursuits and agendas.

Already in 1930 the administration of the Institute of Oriental Studies, at that time led by academician Sergei F. Ol'denburg (1863-1934), was obliged to compile its first plan. Academician Ol'denburg was a renowned organizer of science in his position as permanent secretary of the Russian/ Soviet Academy (1904-1929) as well as director of the Asiatic Museum (1916-1930) and of its successor, the Institute of Oriental Studies (1930-1934).⁵¹ In the Archive of Orientalists in St. Petersburg I have found detailed documentations for each five-year plan (*piatiletka*) of the period 1930-1970 describing research topics, the schools attached to them and the time schedules. The first document of this kind, prepared by the Presidium of the Academy of Sciences, goes back to the year 1930. This is

⁵⁰ "Materialy k khronike sovetskogo vostokovedeniia, 1917-1941," *Kratkie soobshcheniia Instituta narodov Azii*, 76, *Materialy k khronike sovetskogo vostokovedeniia, Istoriiia Mongolii i Kitaia* (Moscow, 1965), 81.

⁵¹ About him see: B.S. Kaganovich, *Sergei Fedorovich Ol'denburg: Opyt biografii* (St. Petersburg, 2006); V. Tolz, *Russian Academicians and the Revolution: Combining Professionalism and Politics* (London, 1997), 108-122. Nicholas Poppe wrote that "when Lenin was alive, i.e. until 1924, Ol'denburg's authority was fully recognized by the Soviets... Lenin always listened to him attentively and, whenever possible, Lenin always fulfilled Ol'denburg's entreaties" (N. Poppe, *Reminiscences*, ed. H.G. Schwarz (Western Washington, 1983), 51). Kaganovich shows that this was probably exaggerated. Already "in October 1929 Oldenburg was stripped of his post as permanent secretary, and he spent the following nights sleeping fully dressed in anticipation of arrest by the OGPU secret police (Schimmelpenninck van der Oye, *Russian Orientalism*, 197)."

very important because the period of 1928-31 is known as ‘the Great Break’ in the Academy of Sciences, when the whole institution was reshaped and redirected towards tasks which were defined by the Bolsheviks.⁵² The instructions for drawing the first work-plan of the Institute of Oriental Studies, produced in the Academy’s Presidium, contain an introduction and three paragraphs: network, scientific staff, and financial/ material support. The introduction states the general scientific goals that mirrored the state demands: 1) to connect scientific works with tasks of economic and cultural development and 2) to centralize studies in order to “speed up the building of socialism.”⁵³ The section on networks contained an order to set up a scientific plan which covered the whole network of scientific institutions in Oriental studies from all over the Soviet Union. The projected work had to be coordinated with other institutions in order to avoid duplication; therefore each institution should have a clear specialization. The authors of the document suggested the establishment of big scientific centers, which were to be provided with competent staff and material support. These centers were obliged to adapt their scientific production to the political demand. These documents display the powerful influence of state politics on the development of science. This is not surprising, since the Academy was directly subordinated to the Council of the People’s Commissars and lost its former independence.⁵⁴

On the basis of the above mentioned document, administrators of the former Asiatic Museum (since 1930 the Institute of Oriental Studies) formulated *The Work Plan of the Asiatic Museum in 1930-1934*. The anonymous author (most probably the director of the Institute, Sergei Ol’denburg) formulated the general task of the Institute as to collect, keep and study Oriental books and manuscripts and European literature related to academic Oriental studies. At the same time Orientalists had to work on the history, art and literature of the Soviet Orient.⁵⁵ In addition the Institute of Oriental Studies in Leningrad was also

⁵² About the ‘Sovietization’ of the Academy see: L. Graham, *The Soviet Academy of Sciences and the Communist Party, 1927-1932* (Princeton, 1967); A. Vuchinich, *The Soviet Academy of Sciences* (Stanford, California, 1956), 8-13; F.F. Perchenok, “Akademiia nauk na velikom perelome,” *Zven’ia* 1 (Moscow, 1991), 163-238.

⁵³ *Direktivy po sostavleniiu piatiletnego plana nauchno-issledovatel’skogo dela*, f. 21; in: AV IVR RAN, F. 152, Op. 1a, №168, D. 212, 1930 god, *Direktivy po sostavleniiu piatiletnego plana; piatiletnii plan Aziatskogo muzeia (1930-1934); svodnyi plan vostokovednykh issledovaniu po Akademii Nauk SSSR*.

⁵⁴ A. Vuchinich, *The Soviet Academy of Sciences*, 12.

⁵⁵ AV IVR RAN, F. 152, Op. 1a, №168, D. 212, 1930 god, *Direktivy po sostavleniiu piatiletnego plana; piatiletnii plan Aziatskogo muzeia (1930-1934); svodnyi plan vostokovednykh issledovaniu po Akademii Nauk SSSR*, f. 25; AV IVR RAN, F. 152, Op. 1a, D. 140, *Proekt reorganizatsii vostsektora AN SSSR v edinyi*

aimed to study the history and culture of Soviet Oriental peoples.⁵⁶ This task is also mentioned in Oriental publishing projects which were carried out in the 1930s. For example, in an introductory account (1938) devoted to the Persian sources on Turkmen history in the 16th-19th centuries, Iranian studies scholar Aleksandr A. Romaskevich (1855-1942) referred to “the task, which was formulated by the Party and government, of studying the civil history (*grazhdanskaia istoriia*) of the peoples of the USSR and the peoples of Soviet Central Asia.” This task was presupposing a close investigation of original sources.⁵⁷

The status of classical Orientalology however remained ambivalent. In the early 1930s the official press openly turned against the ‘old’ philological Oriental Studies.⁵⁸ Due to the pressure inside and outside of the Academy of Sciences many Orientalists decided to cooperate with the regime and fulfill the state requirements. While before 1917 some scholars dreamed that their research might gain more influence on the exercise of political power,⁵⁹ the opposite occurred after the ‘Sovietization’ of the Academy: scholarly work was put under close political control. Already before the October Revolution Vasilii V. Bartol’d pointed out the political significance of studying the Orient through classical texts and antiquity as opposed to any direct and unprepared investigation of the contemporary situation. In Bartol’d’s view, “[e]quipped with the theory-based knowledge of Oriental languages, literature, history and geography of Eastern countries, a future diplomat, admin-

institut vostokovedeniia s prilozheniiami: deklaratsii tseli i zadach IV, struktura Instituta, shtaty, smety, polozenie ob IV, dokladnye zapiski Krachkovskogo i Ol'denburga, f. 15.

⁵⁶ The first steps in this direction were conducted by the Institute of Oriental Studies in collaboration with the Historical-Archeographical Institute. See the following reports: “Rabota nad istochnikami po istorii Vostochnoi Evropy i Kavkaza v Akademii nauk SSSR” and “O rabote arkheograficheskogo sektora Instituta istorii Akademii nauk SSSR” *Istoriik-marksist* 1 (1937), 197-198, 250-253. On the appearance of Soviet Orient as a new research field see: S. Panarin, “The Soviet East as a New Subject of Oriental Studies,” in: V. Naumkin (red.), *State, Religion, and Society in Central Asia: a post-Soviet Critique* (London, 1993), 1-16.

⁵⁷ A.A. Romaskevich, “Iranskie istochniki po istorii turkmen XVI-XIX vv.,” in: *Materialy po istorii turkmen i Turkmenii*, vol. 2, XVI-XIX vv., *Iranskie, bukharskie i khivinskie istochniki* (Moscow, Leningrad, 1938), 28.

⁵⁸ Kaganovich, *Ol'denburg*, 205; G. Kara-Murza, “Marksizm i burzhuaznaia sinoligiia,” *Problemy Kitaia* 4/5 (1930), 105-118; A. Novichev, M. Kokin, D. Smirnov, “Protiv reaktsionnogo vostokovedeniia,” *Problemy marksizma* 8-9 (1931), 210-218; S. Maizel’, “13 let akademicheskoi arabistiki,” *Sovetskaia etnografiia* 3-4 (1931), 251-257.

⁵⁹ V. Tolz, *Russia's Own Orient*, 69-84.

istrator or tradesman will not find it difficult to acquire in a short period of time the specific language he needs, to learn about current politics, trading patterns in the East, etc.”⁶⁰

Since the early 1930s the study of the Soviet Orient was carried out in the framework of joint projects and large scholarly teams. Next to the imposition of planning, the collective form of Soviet Oriental studies through uniting the forces of individual scholars in research groups became one of the main features of its development. Already in 1933 Sergei F. Ol'denburg (perhaps in close collaboration with his colleagues at the Institute) projected the second five-year plan of the Institute of Oriental Studies, in which he argued for enlarging the academic staff of the Institute. “The scientific staff should be trained under the organizational leadership and with financial support of the Institute of Oriental Studies, but also of the national republics which are interested in scientific employees and can pay for that”. And then the document stated: “An important place in the process of training the new staff should be given to the advanced training of national employees under the directorship of the Institute of Oriental Studies and through conferences, academic exchange trips for concrete subjects, and through participation in joint projects.”⁶¹ This envisaged a close collaboration of the center of Orientalology in Leningrad with local centers in the republics. While the national republics were mentioned as initiators of projects and the main expenses were to be covered by the national republics to which a given project was related, this did not mean a less significant role for the Leningrad Institute. It is important to know that the system of long guest studies (*stazhirovka*), conferences and work groups was established already in 1930 and remained common practice until the end of the Soviet Union. Special attention was paid to the training of national scientific personnel under supervision of the Institute of Oriental Studies. For this purpose Ol'denburg suggested to organize common conferences, mutual scientific visits (from the Center to the republics and the other way round), and participation in common projects (“research topics”, sing. *tema*). The work groups in this five-year plan comprised a large number of scholars (but not yet from republics). As Ol'denburg's document explained, “science cannot be a privilege of a narrow circle of scholars; even an unprofessional employee deprived of an Oriental studies

⁶⁰ V.V. Bartol'd, “Po povodu proekta S.F. Ol'denburga [1902],” in: V.V. Bartol'd, *Sochineniia*, vol. 9 (Moscow, 1977), 492-3. Quoted in V. Tolz, *Russia's Own Orient*, 78 and 84.

⁶¹ *Proekt vvedeniia k nametkam piatiletnego plana Instituta vostokovedeniia Akademii Nauk SSSR*, f. 6, in: AV IVR RAN, F. 152, Op. 1a, №293, D. 212, *Plany nauchno-issledovatel'skoi raboty Instituta vostokovedeniia na vtoruiu piatiletku, 1933-1937, tom 1*.

background can do some scientific work. For that reason it is necessary to work in collectives (*brigady*). The group work will help to share the experience and to support the participation of employees without professional education.”⁶² In this way the document proposed the solution of a social task: “to dilute” self-sufficient circles of scholars by including persons (‘non-professionals’) from the proletariat and to avoid the ‘harmful’ individualization of academic life. This system became very common for the Soviet Oriental projects: the self-organization of scholars in private circles (such as the circles for Altaic and Arabic studies in Leningrad⁶³) was replaced by the concentration of specialists at official academic institutions.

The document of 1933 also highlights the main goal for the emergence of source edition projects: “In the context of the new tasks [of Soviet scholarship], the work of sectors dealing with the Soviet Orient should be intensified. It is necessary to set up a Sector for the Soviet Orient.”⁶⁴ This special sector in the Institute of Oriental Studies in Leningrad was organized only in early 1938 (see below), but the study of the culture of Soviet Oriental peoples (the majority of them being Muslim) was systematically pursued since the early 1930s. In 1934, in the general course of the subjection of scholarship to the Soviet power the Academy of Sciences was moved from Leningrad to Moscow in order to be under closer control of the government. Two years later the ‘collectivization of the Academy’ was started: it presupposed the start of large collective projects, whereas individual studies beyond the general plan were regarded as harmful.⁶⁵

However, there still was space for individual initiative. Not all works published by Russian Orientalists in the 1930s and 1940s were the result of a general scientific program set up in Leningrad. Research also continued on an individual basis, yet also in those cases we observe a strong collaboration between the center and the federated republics. In 1935,

⁶² Ibid., f. 7. According to Nicholas Poppe the introduction of team work was a consequence of the purge of the Academy of Sciences in 1929 (Poppe, *Reminiscences*, 117).

⁶³ The circle of Altaic scholars was established at V.V. Radlov’s place in 1915; Arabic scholars formed an unofficial circle in I.Iu. Krachkovskii’s apartment in 1928 and gave it the name of the famous Russian Arabic scholar V.R. Rozen: see: Dolinina, *Nevol’nik dolga*, 223-231; G.F. Blagova, “A.N. Samoilovich kak uchenyi-tiurkolog – lingvist, issledovatel’ istorii sredneaziatsko-tiurkskikh literatur i istorii literaturnykh iazykov,” in: A.N. Samoilovich, *Tiurkskoe iazykoznanie. Filologiya. Runika* (Moscow, 2005), 26.

⁶⁴ *Proekt vvedeniia k nametkam piatiletnego plana Instituta vostokovedeniia Akademii Nauk SSSR*, f. 6, in: AV IVR RAN, F. 152, Op. 1a, №293, D. 212, *Plany nauchno-issledovatel’skoi raboty Instituta vostokovedeniia na vtoruiu piatiletku, 1933-1937*, tom 1.

⁶⁵ A. Vuchinich, *The Soviet Academy of Sciences*, 13.

i.e. simultaneously with other projects of this kind, Iranian studies scholar Aleksandr N. Boldyrev (1909-1993) began to prepare a critical text of the *Badāyi' al-Waqāi'* (*Amazing Events*) by 15th-16th century Herat chronicler Zayn ad-Dīn Maḥmūd Wāṣifī. Boldyrev started his work in the Tajik Base of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, continued it in the Sector for the Orient of the State Hermitage, and finished it in the Institute of Oriental Studies in 1949; yet it was only in 1961 that his work was published.⁶⁶ The Tajik side was highly interested in this edition and supported Boldyrev. This situation is perhaps comparable to the editions of sources on individual republics, when the work was sponsored by respective republican institutions.

As a parallel to the Leningrad projects, in Central Asia source editions and classical Orientology were represented in the works of Aleksandr A. Semenov (1873-1958).⁶⁷ Until 1917 Semenov worked in various official functions in Central Asia. He then entered academic institutions, but in the early 1930s he was arrested in Dushanbe and exiled to Kazan. Starting in 1935 Semenov worked in Tashkent at the Scientific Institute of Art Studies (*Nauchno-issledovatel'skii institut iskusstvoznaniia UzSSR*), where he studied medieval historiography and Arabic-script epigraphy of Central Asia. Even though he had a 'dubious past' as a Tsarist official, Semenov participated in various Leningrad projects, and for a while he even directed the Rashīd al-Dīn project (see below).

Already in the 1920s, Semenov was involved in the identification of Islamic manuscripts in Soviet Uzbekistan, and compiled a list of sources on the history of the Uzbek people.⁶⁸ Shortly before WWII he formulated his own plan of manuscript editions, and this project was started at the historical faculty of Central Asian State University (SAGU) in May 1940. In October 1942 a commission for the translation of Central Asian Arabic-script manuscripts at the State Public Library of the Uzbek SSR obtained the order to publish major historiographical works on the history of Tīmūr (d. 1405). For this project Aleksandr A. Semenov translated the fifteenth-century Persian chronicle of Ghiyāth al-Dīn

⁶⁶ Zayn ad-Dīn Wāṣifī, *Badāi' al-Waqāi'*, kriticheskii tekst, vvedenie i ukazateli A.N. Boldyreva, 2 vols. (Moscow, 1961). The first Russian translation with historical and philological comments is under preparation by Moscow Iranist Evgeniia Nikitenko.

⁶⁷ See his detailed biography in the fourth chapter. Cf. E. Coisnel, "Alexandre Alexandrovič Semënov (1873-1958). Un aperçu de sa vie et de son œuvre," in: *Cahiers d'Asie centrale* 8 (2000), 161-169.

⁶⁸ A.A. Semenov, *Ukazatel' persidskoi literatury po istorii uzbekov Srednei Azii* (Tashkent, 1925). See also his catalogue of manuscripts in the Bukhara library: A.A. Semenov, *Katalog rukopisei istoricheskogo otdela Bukharskoi Tsentral'noi biblioteki* (Tashkent, 1925).

‘Alī Yazdī *Kitāb-i rūznāma-yi ghazāwāt-i Hindustān* (A Diary of [Timur’s] Holy War in India).⁶⁹ Later Semenov published a series of important written sources in Persian and Chaghatay Turki, such as the *Tā’rīkh-i Muqīm-Khānī* (*The History of Muqīm Khān*), the *‘Ubaydullāh-nāme* (*The Book of ‘Ubaydullāh*) and *Tā’rīkh-i Abū-l-Faiḍ-Khān* (*The History of Abū-l-Faiḍ-Khān*).⁷⁰ Semenov combined his translation of Central Asian historiographical works with the start of a large catalogue program of rare manuscripts in the Tashkent Institute of Oriental Studies.⁷¹

Work in the mausoleum of the Gūr-i Mīr occupied a special place in Semenov’s biography, because his investigation of the Tīmūrids’ burial place in the summer of 1941 had a great political significance. The expedition was sanctioned by no less than Stalin, who regarded Tīmūr as a great warlord and statesman. Simultaneously, Tīmūr’s figure was also canonized by one of the greatest ideologists of the Central Asian republics’ histories, Aleksandr Iu. Iakubovskii.⁷² He made Tīmūr a hero of Uzbek history, a strong and powerful leader who united separated provinces and tribes and who even contributed to the unification of the Russian lands through his wars with the Golden Horde in the 1390s.⁷³ That Soviet scholarship put considerable efforts in building up the great image of Tīmūr had both political and scientific consequences. Anthropological material taken from the mausoleum was brought to Moscow by Mikhail Gerasimov (1907-1970),⁷⁴ who produced anthro-

⁶⁹ Ghiiasaddīn ‘Alī, *Dnevnik pokhoda Timura v Indiiu* (Moscow, 1958).

⁷⁰ Alatorseva, “Materialy k khronike sovetskogo vostokovedeniia,” 130; Muhammed Iusuf Munshī, *Mukim-khanskaia istoriia* (Tashkent, 1956); Mir Muhammed Amin-i Bukhari, *Ubaydulla-name* (Tashkent, 1957); Abdurrahman-i Tali’, *Istoriia Abulfeiz-khana* (Tashkent, 1959). The 18th-century works *Tārīkh-i Muqīm-khānī* by Muḥammad Yūsuf Munshī, the *‘Ubaydullāh-nāme* by Mir Muḥammad Amīn-i Bukhārī, and *Tā’rīkh-i Abū-l-Faiḍ Khān* by ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān Tāli’ are devoted to the history of the Ashtarkhanid dynasty (or Janids) of Bukhara. For Semenov’s bibliography see: D.G. Voronovskii, “Bibliografiia nauchnykh rabot A.A. Semenova,” in: *Sbornik statei po istorii i filologii narodov Srednei Azii, posviashchennyi 80-letiiu so dnia rozhdeniia A.A. Semenova* (*Trudy Akademii Nauk Tadzhikskoi SSR, vol. 17*) (Stalinabad, 1953), 7-22.

⁷¹ *Sobranie vostochnykh rukopisei Akademii nauk Uzbekskoi SSR*, ed. by A.A. Semenov, vol. 1 (Tashkent, 1952); vol. 2 (Tashkent, 1954); vol. 3 (Tashkent, 1955); vol. 4 (Taskent, 1957); vol. 5 (Tashkent, 1960); vol. 6 (Tashkent, 1963). After Semenov’s death the edition of the catalogue has been continuing up to present day.

⁷² See Iakubovskii’s detailed biography in the second chapter.

⁷³ A.Iu. Iakubovskii, “Timur. Opyt kratkoi kharakteristiki,” *Voprosy Istorii* 8-9 (1946), 42-74.

⁷⁴ About Gerasimov see: M.M. Gerasimova, “‘Pechal’naia otrada vspominat’: Mikhail Mikhailovich Gerasimov,” in: V.A. Tishkov, D.D. Tumarkin (eds.) *Vydaiushchiesia otechestvennye etnologi i antropologi XX veka* (Moscow, 2004), 292-330.

pological reconstructions on the basis of cranium measuring.⁷⁵ The excavated skull allowed him to determine who was buried in the Gūr-i Mīr, and he reconstructed the physical outlook of several Tīmūrīds, including Tīmūr himself. There is a legend that Tīmūr's spirit was even used during the Battle of Moscow in 1942, when his remnants were flown over the Soviet capital as a protecting charm. After the war the Soviet government allocated about a million rubles for the restoration of the Tīmūrīds' mausoleum. Semenov translated Arabic inscriptions on Tīmūr's tomb stone, which, as people believed, contained Tīmūr's curse of anyone who would desecrate his burial place (though Semenov did not identify such an inscription in the mausoleum).⁷⁶ The whole expedition in Samarqand was surrounded by rumors and mystifications. Some said that it was no coincidence that the Germans attacked the Soviet Union on the very day the sarcophagus was opened on 22 June 1941.

In Leningrad several works, which party activists used to call "incongruous with our times,"⁷⁷ fell under the knife of censorship. For example, already in 1928 Leningrad Orientalist Nicholas Poppe (1897-1991) envisaged a philological edition of the Mongol part from the Arabic-Persian-Turkic-Mongolian dictionary *Muqaddimat al-Ādāb*.⁷⁸ This is how Nicholas Poppe described this edition himself:

"The work was finally published in 1938-39, but not quite as I had planned it. In addition to the changes by censorship, I had to change the word "Chagatai" in the title to "Turkic" because Samoilovich, who had helped me much with the Turkic part, objected to the term "Chagatai" and insisted on using "literary language of Central Asia." Ironically, I also had to omit Samoilovich's name from my list of acknowledgements because in the meantime he had been arrested and disappeared in the summer of 1938. Likewise, I had to drop all mention of F.A. Rozenberg, specialist in Iranian and particularly in Sogdian, who had helped me with Persian words. He had been forced to retire and become a kind of "non-person." I also had to omit all mention of Fitrat and

⁷⁵ M.M. Gerasimov, "Portret Tamerlana (Opyt skul'pturnogo vosproizvedeniia na kraniologicheskoi osnove)," *Kratkie soobshcheniia Instituta istorii material'noi kul'tury*, vol. 17 (1947), 14-21.

⁷⁶ A.A. Semenov, "Nadpisi na nadgrobiakh Tīmūra i ego potomkov v Gur-i Emire," *Epigrafiika Vostoka II* (1948), 49-62.

⁷⁷ Poppe, *Reminiscences*, 118.

⁷⁸ N.N. Poppe, *Mongol'skii slovar' Mukaddimat al-Adab*, vols. 1-2 (*Trudy Instituta vostokovedeniia*, vol. 14) (Moscow, Leningrad, 1938), vol. 3 (Moscow, Leningrad, 1939).

Ghazi ‘Ali Yunusov,⁷⁹ two Uzbek scholars who had been instrumental in procuring a copy of the dictionary. Both were arrested and shot during the liquidation of the Uzbek intellectuals in 1937 [...]. Another taboo was any discussion of the genetic relationship of the Mongolian languages because the party was afraid that awareness of this relationship might foster nationalistic ideas and bring about Pan-Mongolism [...]. I had to eliminate all references to Buryat, Kalmuck, and Khalkha, and to replace “Buryat” with “North Mongolian” and “Kalmuck” with “West Mongolian.”⁸⁰

However, Poppe was ready to collaborate with the Bolsheviks. This readiness was the reason that in 1932 he obtained an award from the directorship of the Institute of Oriental Studies for his active work and high level of socio-political awareness. Moreover, the administration underlined that “the last works written by N.N. Poppe proved that he is armed with the Marxist-Leninist methodology.”⁸¹

In the course of the 1920s and early 1930s the Bolshevik government changed the whole structure and spirit of the Academy of Sciences. This central scholarly institution in the country found itself under strong political pressure; its goals were reoriented toward areas in which the Party was most interested. Even the very style of everyday work was drastically transformed. The introduction of five-year plans and large scientific centres and collectives as well as long-term projects and research programs made a Soviet Orientalist quite dependent on the goals and rules the new type of scholarship. But this did not mean that all scientists readily accepted the imposed regulations. While in Leningrad almost all Orientalists were concentrated at the Asiatic Museum/ Institute of Oriental Studies and were given long-term plans to work on, scholars in Tashkent were freer in organizational terms and could pursue their own research agendas.

⁷⁹ ‘Abdurauf Fitrat (1885-1938) was a leader of the Central Asian Jadidiyya movement; executed by the Soviets in 1938. An Uzbek historian and folklorist Ghazi ‘Ali Yunusov was shot in 1942. See: *Liudi i sud’by: biobibliograficheskii slovar’ vostokovedov – zhertv politicheskogo terrora v sovetskii period (1917-1991)*, ed. by Ia.V. Vasil’kov and M.Iu. Sorokina (St. Petersburg, 2003), 392, 437-38.

⁸⁰ Poppe, *Reminiscences*, 119. Poppe’s memoirs are full of venomous remarks on Russia, on the eccentricity of eminent Russian Orientalists (from Boris Vladimirtsov to Vasilii Bartol’d), and his hatred of the Bolsheviks. Poppe (who had a long and tragic life) escaped from the Soviet Union during WWII when he and his family found themselves on occupied territory. Still, Poppe’s treatment of early Soviet times (until the end of the war) is often supported by reminiscences of scholars who remained in the country. See, for instance: A.N. Boldyrev, *Osadnaia zapis’ (blokadnyi dnevnik)* (St. Petersburg, 1998); I.Iu. Krachkovskii, “Ispytanie vremenem”. I would like to thank Allen J. Frank (Takoma Park, USA) and Napil’ Bazykhan (Almaty, Kazakhstan) for providing me with Poppe’s book.

⁸¹ AV IVR RAN, F. 152, Op. 1a, D. 247, ff. 24, 48. See also: Kaganovich, *Ol’denburg*, 206, footnote 681.

1.3 The First Attempts: The Political Topicality of Classical Texts

On 27th November 1930, i.e. one month after the introduction of the plan system, Krachkovskii delivered a paper at the meeting of the Branch of Social Sciences of the Academy of Sciences, entitled *On the Preparation of a Corpus of Arabic Sources for the History of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia (The Tasks of Arabic Source Publication)*.⁸² In this speech Krachkovskii demonstrated how important Oriental sources are for the history of the Soviet Union. This speech was one of the first manifestations of the long-term source edition program which Leningrad Orientalists pursued during the 1930s.

In late 1932 a collection of medieval Russian translations of official Arabic-script documents on the history of the Uzbek, Tajik, and Turkmen republics was published in Leningrad under the editorship of Aleksandr N. Samoilovich.⁸³ Several documents were represented only in typed Arabic script without translation, others only in old chancellery translation. This volume was prepared by the Leningrad Institute of History and Archeography of the Academy of Sciences (*Istoriko-arkheograficheskii institut*)⁸⁴ in collaboration with the Institute of Oriental Studies. The book was also supplied with an article of A.P. Chuloshnikov, a specialist in Kazakh history, on the trade relations between Russia and Central Asian peoples. In the early 1930s, both the Institute of History and Archeography and the Institute of Oriental Studies were charged with the task of publishing sources on the history of the Soviet peoples. Also the later Turkmen project was con-

⁸² I.Iu. Krachkovskii, "O podgotovke svoda arabskikh istochnikov dlia istorii Vostochnoi Evropy, Kavkaza i Srednei Azii (Zadachi publikatsii arabskikh istochnikov)", in: *Zapiski Instituta Vostokovedeniia AN SSSR* 1 (Leningrad, 1932), 55-62; A.I. Alatortseva, G.D. Alekseeva, I.N. Petinov, "Materialy k khronike sovetskogo vostokovedeniia, 1917-1941," in: *Kratkie soobshcheniia Instituta narodov Azii 76: Materialy k khronike sovetskogo vostokovedeniia, Istoriiia Mongolii i Kitaia* (Moscow, 1965), 82. The active work on Arabic source edition at the Institute of History and Archeography and at the Institute of Oriental Studies began only since 1937: *Istoriik-marksist* 1/59 (1937), 197.

⁸³ *Materialy po istorii Uzbekskoi, Tadzhikskoi i Turkmenskoi SSR*, vol. 1, *Torgovlia s Moskovskim gosudarstvom i mezhdunarodnoe polozhenie Srednei Azii v XVI-XVII vekakh* (Leningrad, 1932).

⁸⁴ Since 1936 this Institute was transformed into the Leningrad branch of the Institute of History of the Academy of Sciences with its head office in Moscow.

ducted by both institutions.⁸⁵ The Institute of History and Archeography (renamed Institute of History in 1936) also participated in the publication of sources about the Volga Tatars.⁸⁶ Here I will analyze only projects related to Central Asian history; Krachkovskii's program also included the Volga-Ural region and the Caucasus, because he also paid serious philological attention to materials from Daghestan and the Caucasus in general. In the 1930s and 1940s Leningrad Arabists published the chronicle of al-Karakhi and extracts from the correspondence of Imam Shamil (1797-1871).⁸⁷

After more than a decade of the predominance of vulgar ideological works, the program of source edition and archeological investigations became the starting point of a 'renewal' of classical Orientology. In the 1930s, the edition and study of Oriental manuscripts became the main direction of works at the Institute of Oriental Studies.⁸⁸ It is difficult to compile a comprehensive list of all planned and implemented philological projects and publications of the 1930s to the 1970s. Below I provide a list of the major projects with references to the time period, title and scientific staff involved:

- 1932: *Materials on the History of Uzbek, Tajik, and Turkmen Soviet Republics, first volume, Trade with Moscow State and International Status of Central Asia in the 16th-17th Centuries*,⁸⁹ edited by A.N. Samoilovich, with articles by A.Iu. Iakubovskii and A.P. Chuloshnikov.

- 1934-1939: *Materials on the History of the Turkmens and Turkmenia*.⁹⁰ Scientific staff: V.I. Beliaev, S.M. Bogdanova-Berezovskaia, S.L. Volin, I.N. Lemanov, G.V.

⁸⁵ *Protokol zasedaniia brigady po sobiraniuu materialov k istorii Turkmenii*, ff. 2-3, in: AV IVR RAN, F. 152, Op. 1a, №345, D. 632, *Protokol zasedaniia brigady po sobiraniuu materialov k istorii Turkmenii, Programma rabot, smeta i perepiska s Narkomprosom Turkm.SSR po voprosam napisaniia istorii Turkmenii, 31 ianvaria-16 dekabria 1934*.

⁸⁶ *Istoriia Tatarii v materialakh i dokumentakh, pod redaktsiei N.L. Rubinshteina* (Moscow, 1937).

⁸⁷ *Khronika Mukhammada Takhira al-Karakhi, O dagestanskikh voynakh v period Shamilia*, vol. 1, *Perevod s arabskogo A.M. Barabanova, predislovie I.Iu. Krachkovskogo* (Moscow, Leningrad, 1941); vol. 2, *Arabskii tekst, podgotovlennii A.M. Barabanovym* (Moscow, Leningrad, 1946); I.Iu. Krachkovskii, A.N. Genko, "Arabskie pis'ma Shamilia v Severo-Osetii," *Sovetskoe vostokovedenie* III (1945), 37-59. I would like to thank Shamil' Shikhaliev (Makhachkala) for his consultation.

⁸⁸ N.A. Kuznetsova, L.M. Kulagina, *Iz istorii sovetskogo vostokovedeniia 1917-1967* (Moscow, 1970), 83.

⁸⁹ *Materialy po istorii Uzbekskei, Tadzhikskoi i Turkmenskoi SSR*, vol. 1, *Torgovlia s Moskovskim gosudarstvom i mezhdunarodnoe polozhenie Srednei Azii v XVI-XVII vekakh* (Leningrad, 1932).

⁹⁰ *Materialy po istorii turkmen i Turkmenii*, vol. 1, *VII-XV veka: Arabskie i persidskie istochniki* (Moscow, Leningrad, 1939); vol. 2, *XVI-XIX veka: Iranskie, bukharskie i khivinskie istochniki* (Moscow, Leningrad, 1938).

Ptitsyn, E.A. Razumovskaia, O.I. Smirnova, I.Iu. Krachkovskii, D.V. Semenov, A.A. Romaskevich, Z. Aksakov, A.K. Arends, G.N. Balashova, A.K. Borovkov, D.M. Diakonova, P.P. Ivanov, G.A. Mirzoev, A.M. Belenitskii, A.Iu. Iakubovskii, A.N. Samoilovich.

- 1935: *Materials on the History of the Karakalpaks*,⁹¹ A.N. Samoilovich, P.P. Ivanov, N. Pal'mov, and A. Ponomarev.

- 1936-1965: Rashīd ad-Dīn. *Jāmi' at-tavārīkh* [*The Collection of Histories/The World History*],⁹² E.A. Bertel's, A.K. Arends, A.A. Romaskevich, A.N. Romaskevich, I.Iu. Krachkovskii, A.I. Orbeli, A.A. Freiman, A.A. Ali-Zade, O.I. Smirnova, N.N. Poppe, A.Iu. Iakubovskii, V.A. Kazakevich, Iu.P. Verkhovskii, L.A. Khetagurov, A.A. Semenov, B.I. Pankratov.

- 1936-1941: *Collection of Materials Connected to the History of the Golden Horde*, vol. 2, *Extracts from Persian Sources Collected by V.G. Tizengauzen and Elaborated by A.A. Romaskevich and S.L. Volin*,⁹³ A.A. Romaskevich, S.L. Volin, P.P. Ivanov, A.I. Ponomarev, A.Iu. Iakubovskii, N.N. Poppe.

- 1954-1957: *Materials on the History of Kirgiz and Kirgizstan*,⁹⁴ V.A. Romodin, M.Iu. Iuldashev, O.F. Akimushkin, R.M. Aliev, Z.N. Vorozheikina, A.A. Kondrat'ev, K.B. Starkova, N.N. Tumanovich, L.Z. Pisarevskii, E.I. Kychanov.

⁹¹ *Materialy po istorii karakalpakov: Sbornik (Trudy Instituta vostokovedeniia Akademii nauk SSSR, vol. 7)* (Moscow, Leningrad, 1935). This book is a great rarity, because after the deportation of the Karakalpaks (1944) it was banned and withdrawn from libraries. See also another collection of documents and narratives on the history of Karakalpaks, which was obviously prepared for edition, probably by Aleksandr Samoilovich: AV IVR RAN, Razriad 2, Op. 6, № 46, *Istoricheskie svedeniia o karakalpakakh, sobrannye iz opublikovannykh na russkom iazyke aktov, arkhivnykh materialov i drugikh istoricheskikh istochnikov*, 339 folios.

⁹² Rashid ad-Din, *Sbornik letopisei*, vol. 1, part 1, *Perevod s persidskogo L. Khetagurova, redaktsiia i kommentarii A. Semenova* (Moscow, Leningrad, 1952); vol. 1, part 2 (Moscow, Leningrad, 1952); vol. 2, *Perevod s persidskogo Iu. Verkhovskogo, kommentarii Iu. Verkhovskogo i B. Pankratova, redaktsiia I. Petrushevskogo* (Moscow, Leningrad, 1960); vol. 3, *perevod s persidskogo A.K. Arends, pod redaktsiei A.A. Romaskevicha, E.E. Bertel'sa i A.Iu. Iakubovskogo* (Moscow, Leningrad, 1946); Faḍlallāh Rashīd ad-Dīn, *Jāmi' at-tavārīkh*, vol. 1, part 1, *Kriticheskii tekst A. Romaskevicha, L. Khetagurova i A. Ali-Zade* (Moscow, 1965); Faḍlallāh Rashīd ad-Dīn, *Jāmi' at-tavārīkh*, vol. 3, *Kriticheskii tekst, podgotovlennyi A. Arendsom* (Baku, 1957); Faḍlallāh Rashīd ad-Dīn, *Jāmi' at-tavārīkh*, vol. 2, part 1, *Kriticheskii tekst, predislovie i ukazateli A.A. Ali-Zade, redaktsiia persidskogo teksta E.E. Bertel'sem i A.A. Romaskevichem* (Moscow, 1980).

⁹³ *Sbornik materialov, otnosiashchikhsia k istorii Zolotoi Ordy*, vol. 2, *Izvlecheniia iz persidskikh sochinenii, sobrannye V.G. Tizengauzenom i obrabotannye A.A. Romaskevichem i S.L. Voilinyam* (Moscow, Leningrad, 1941).

⁹⁴ *Materialy po istorii kirgizov i Kirgizii*, vol. 1 (Moscow, 1973).

- 1955-1969: *Materials on the History of the Kazakh Khanates*,⁹⁵ S.K. Ibragimov, V.P. Iudin, K.A. Pishchulina, N.N. Mingulov, O.F. Akimushkin, M.A. Salakhedinova. The prolonged timeframe of some of these projects demonstrates how much these projects shaped the activities of Soviet Orientology. All projects were elaborated and organized by several prominent scholars through the Presidium of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR. Borrowing a term from Michael Kemper, several scholars emerged as ‘monopolizers of science’.⁹⁶ In archeology and ethnography this role was played by Sergei P. Tolstov (1907-1976), a Soviet ethnographer and archeologist of Central Asia. In the 1940s and 1950s he served as director of the Institutes of Oriental Studies and of Ethnography, as Dean of the Historical Faculty of Moscow University, and as Academic Secretary of the Academy of Sciences. In these functions Tolstov exerted great influence on the development of historical research, especially on Central Asian studies.⁹⁷ In the field of philological Oriental studies a crucial role as organizer of ambitious projects was played by specialist of Iranian studies Evgenii Bertel’s (1890-1957) and by Arabist Ignatii Iu. Krachkovskii (1883-1951). A certain role was also played by Vasilii V. Bartol’d who tried to start the publication of sources on the history of Central Asia. Usually it was claimed that the initiative for the publication and the financing of these works came from the respective Central Asian republican institutions (although we will see that such a request was often an obligation rather than an expression of sincere interest), and eventually all publications of sources for the republican histories were financed by those republics. This is mentioned in the final products as well as in a number of archival documents.

The aforementioned 1932 volume on the history of the Uzbek, Tajik, and Turkmen republics represented Central Asian sources in a regional Central Asian perspective, rather than in a national framework. In fact, the edition followed Bartol’d’s selection of Arabic

⁹⁵ *Materialy po istorii kazakhskikh khanstv XV-XVIII vekov, Izvlecheniia iz persidskikh i tiurkskikh sochinenii. Sostaviteli: S.K. Ibragimov, N.N. Mingulov, K. A. Pishchulina, V.P. Iudin* (Alma-Ata, 1969).

⁹⁶ M. Kemper, “Introduction: Integrating Soviet Oriental Studies”, in: M. Kemper, S. Conermann (eds.), *The Heritage of Soviet Oriental Studies* (London, 2011), 20. He mentioned in this context Nikolai Marr (1864-1934) and Liutsian Klimovich (1907-1989).

⁹⁷ On Tolstov’s biography and role in Soviet ethnography: S.S. Alymov, “Kosmopolitizm, marrizm i prochie ‘grekhi’: otechestvennye etnografy i arkheologi na rubezhe 1940-1950-kh godov,” *Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie* 97 (2009), 7-38; Iu.A. Rapoport, Iu.I. Semenov, “Sergei Pavlovich Tolstov: vydaiushchisia etnograf, arkheolog, organizator nauki,” in: V.A. Tishkov, D.D. Tumarkin (eds.), *Vydaiushchiesia otechestvennye etnologi i antropologi XX veka* (Moscow, 2004), 184-232. For a more recent account in the context of writing Central Asian national histories: S.N. Abashin, “Ethnogenesis and Historiography: Historical Narratives for Central Asia, 1940s-1950s” (forthcoming).

texts for his famous *Turkestan Down to the Mongol Invasion* (1898).⁹⁸ However already by 1932 this approach did not suit the political demand to conduct a cultural separation between the republics; in result, the envisaged framework of a common series for those three republics was not continued. The following editions of sources were exclusively devoted to the history of one individual republic and a given titular nation, or to individual literary monuments like Rashīd ad-Dīn's chronicle. This request from above also dictated a selective approach to the sources: the translators and editors had to choose which fragments of texts were relevant for each given nation, and which were politically acceptable. The rules of this game led to numerous manipulations of texts which are mostly difficult to discover in the final publications.

However, later scholars revealed a number of interferences in the translations of original texts conducted by Soviet Orientalists. For example, St. Petersburg scholar of Turkic studies Tursun I. Sultanov (b. 1940) drew my attention to Mikhail A. Sal'e's (1899-1961) Russian translation of Zāhīr ad-Dīn Muḥammad Bābur's (1483-1530) memoirs, the *Bābur-nāme*. According to Sultanov, this book was published with essential cuts: most Persian insertions in the Turkic narrative were omitted and also the passages against Bābur's opponents (Shībānī Khān, 'Alī Shīr Nawa'ī) were taken out of the translation after censorship.⁹⁹ Another example is the Russian translation of Ármin Vámbéry's (1832-1913) travel account to Central Asia. It was performed by the wife of Iranian studies scholar Vadim A. Romodin (1912-1984), Zinaida D. Golubeva.¹⁰⁰ According to Sultanov, this book does not contain Vambery's negative views on the Turkmen people which are very prominent in the original text.¹⁰¹

Yet in spite of the general turn to the perspective of individual Soviet republics, 'regional' studies were produced all through the 1930s up to WWII. One major representative of this perspective was Pavel P. Ivanov (1893-1942) who participated very actively in the early phases of several philological projects, especially in the edition of the 'Turkmen'

⁹⁸ V.V. Bartol'd, *Turkestan v epokhu mongol'skogo nashestviia*, vol. 1, *Teksty* (St. Petersburg, 1898). This volume contains only typed texts in Arabic, Persian, and Chaghatay languages without translations; it was never re-published because later the majority of these narratives later appeared in European translations.

⁹⁹ *Babur-name*, perevod M. Sal'e (Tashkent, 1958).

¹⁰⁰ A. Vamberi, *Puteshestvie po Srednei Azii* (Moscow, 2003).

¹⁰¹ Interview with Tursun I. Sultanov; Oriental faculty of St. Petersburg University, 25 January 2010.

volume. During the second half of the 1930s and the beginning of the 1940s he finished four books on the history and source studies of Muslim Central Asia: *From the Archive of the Juibari Sheikhs: Materials on Landownership and Trade Relations in the 16th Century* (1938); *The Archive of the 19th-Century Khans of Khiva* (1940); *The Economy of the Juibary Sheikhs* (1941); *Essays on the History of Central Asia* (1941).¹⁰² The last one, most probably, was a commissioned work. It had already been finished before WWII but was only posthumously published in 1958. This book was an introduction to Central Asian history, written not from a national but from a regional perspective. In the 1958 edition Ivanov's introduction, in which he explained his regional approach, was cut out and replaced by a short foreword by Aleksandr K. Borovkov (1904-1962),¹⁰³ a Leningrad scholar of Turkic studies who was known as an orthodox Communist.

The idea of using ancient texts for studying modern nations was outlined by Ignatii Krachkovskii in his 1939 Preface to the edition of the tenth-century account of a travel to the Volga region by Ibn Faḍlān, an Abbasid diplomat from Baghdad. Krachkovskii noted that “with the present book the Academy of Sciences of the USSR starts a series of translations of Arabic sources on the history of the Soviet peoples. The idea to prepare a corpus of these sources appeared already in the early 1930s, when a note [by Krachkovskii himself] published in the journals of the Academy of Sciences described the plan and methods [of

¹⁰² *Iz arkhiva sheikhov Dzhuibari. Materialy po zemel'nyim i torgovym otnosheniiam Srednei Azii v XVI veke* (Moscow, Leningrad, 1938); *Arkhiv khivinskikh khanov XIX veka. Issledovanie i opisaniia dokumentov s istoricheskim vvedeniem* (Moscow, 1940); P.P. Ivanov, *Khoziaistvo Dzhuibarskikh sheikhov. K istorii feodal'nogo zemlevladieniia v Srednei Azii v XVI-XVII vekakh* (Moscow, Leningrad, 1954); P.P. Ivanov, *Ocherki po istorii Srednei Azii (XVI-seredina XIX veka)*, (Moscow, 1958). In fact Ivanov's *Khoziaistvo* should be seen as a collective monograph because it also included materials of Ivanov's colleague, scholar of Iranian studies Fedor Borisovich Rostopchin (1904-1937) who worked at the Institute of Oriental Studies and the State Hermitage and was exiled, then executed in Northern Kazakhstan in January 1938 (*Liudi i sud'by (1917-1991)*, 329-330). At the moment of publication both authors had already died, and the editors decided to mention only the authorship of Pavel P. Ivanov. This story was told me by Oleg F. Akimushkin during our interview, St. Petersburg, 28 January 2010.

¹⁰³ Aleksandr Konstantinovich Borovkov was born in Tashkent and obtained his education at the Oriental Faculty of the Central Asian University in Tashkent. The famous linguist Nikolai Marr supervised his second dissertation in Leningrad. In 1938-1959 Borovkov was head of the Central Asian cabinet of the Leningrad Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies. In the war time Borovkov worked in Tashkent with other evacuated colleagues, where he organized and directed an office of Turkic studies. Many native Uzbek students studied there. Borovkov's main scientific interests were Uzbek and Chaghatay grammar and literature. It is no exaggeration to say that Borovkov contributed much to the creation of the modern Uzbek language. His Uzbek-Russian dictionary, which was repeatedly published in Tashkent (1941, 1951-55, 1959), is still the best work in this field. My thanks to Dmitrii Rukhliadev (Institute of Oriental Manuscripts, St. Petersburg) for providing me with this information. See also: [A.N. Kononov,] “Tiurkologiia,” in: *Aziatskii muzei – Leningradskoe otdelenie Instituta vostokovedeniia AN SSSR* (Moscow, 1973), 423-424.

the project]. Originally it was planned to publish a large collection of volumes. This would require a long period of time and demand much preparation. [However,] the high speed of development in the historical science in our country and the rising interest in Arabic sources demands the [quick] publication of different books devoted to a certain author or to a group of related texts.”¹⁰⁴

The edition and translation of Ibn Faḍlān’s book equipped with a large and detailed philological commentary, was in fact the work of the Ukrainian scholar of Arabic studies Andrei Petrovich Kovalevskii (1895-1969) who worked at the Arabic Cabinet of the Institute of Oriental Studies in Leningrad between 1934 and 1945. As he was arrested in 1938, his translation of Ibn Faḍlān was published without mentioning his name.¹⁰⁵ In this publication, neither Krachkovskii nor Kovalevskii could mention the Bashkir scholar and politician Ahmet Zeki Velidi-Togan (1890-1970) who had discovered the unique manuscript of Ibn Faḍlān in Mashhad (Eastern Iran).¹⁰⁶ The reason is that besides his successful scholarly enterprises Velidi-Togan was an anti-Soviet politician who tried to organize a Bashkir Republic and who was therefore denounced as a public enemy in the Soviet Union. After the defeat of the Mujahid (so-called Basmachi) movement in Central Asia, in which he had also participated, Velidi-Togan emigrated to Afghanistan in 1923, then to Iran and Turkey. During this journey he visited local libraries and was lucky enough to discover several unique historical manuscripts, including the above-mentioned book by Ibn Faḍlān in 1923¹⁰⁷. Later Velidi-Togan indignantly wrote about the self-glorification of Soviet Orientalists and blamed them for plagiarism, also in the studies of the Old Khwarezmian language. He mentioned that in 1936 a Tatar scholar, S.A. Alimov, discovered in the city of

¹⁰⁴ *Puteshestvie Ibn-Fadlana na Volgu*, perevod i kommentarii pod redaktsiei akademika I.Iu. Krachkovskogo (Moscow, Leningrad, 1939), 5.

¹⁰⁵ E.G. Tsygankova, “Ocherk istorii vostokovedcheskikh uchrezhdenii v Khar’kove v 20-30 gody 20 veka”, *Visnik Kharkivs’koi derzhavnoi akademii dizainu i mistetstv*, *Zbirnik naukovikh prats* 9 (2008), 16.

¹⁰⁶ A. Zaki Velidi-Togan, “Ibn Fadlan’s Reisebericht,” in: *Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes*, Band 24/3 (Leipzig, 1939). About Velidi-Togan see his autobiographical book (covering events only up to 1925) and its German paraphrase and study by Friedrich Bergdolt: Z. Velidi Togan, *Hâtralar: Türkestan ve diğər müslüman doğu türklerinin millî varlık ve kültür mücadelesi* (Ankara, 1999); F. Bergdolt, *Der geistliche Hintergrund des türkischen Historikers Ahmed Zeki Velidi Togan nach seinen Memoiren* (Berlin, 1981).

¹⁰⁷ M.N. Farshkhatov, “Ahmet-Zeki Validi Togan and the Travel Accounts of Ahmad ibn Fadlan,” in: *Saint Petersburg Annual of Asian and African Studies*, 1 (Würzburg: Ergon Verlag, 2012), 15-38.

Astrakhan a copy of the *Risāla* of Jamāl al-Dīn ‘Imādī,¹⁰⁸ and presented it to Institute of Oriental Studies in Leningrad. Afterwards,

“the Russian scholars S. Volin and A. Freimann, who appropriated this discovery, in their publications of 1939 on the Khorezmian language mentioned incidentally the research I have been making since 1927 by remarking that “researches on the Khoesman language is also carried out outside Russia”, without specifying any name (*Zapiski Instituta Vostokovedeniia*, VII, 1939, 89, 309, 319), and they presented themselves as the discoverers of the monuments of this language. A. Freimann, in his subsequent publications (*Sovetskoe vostokovedenie*, V, 1948, 191-199) completely ascribed this material to them [i.e., to Freimann and Volin] and reproduced the information in W. Wenning’s writings without deeming it necessary to mention his name or even to hint at his studies. They likewise appropriated Ibn Faḍlān’s *Rihla*, of which I had announced the publication as early as 1924, and published it in 1939 at the same time as my publication. They also used throughout their translation, and without mentioning any name, the information about the results of my investigations in my article *Der Reisebericht Ibn Faḍlāns* published previously in *Geistige Arbeit*, 1937, No.19.”¹⁰⁹

Velidi-Togan knew the Russian tradition of Oriental Studies from inside and was in close relationship with such famous scholars as Vasilii V. Bartol’d (1869-1930), Nikolai F. Katanov (1862-1922), and Ignatii Iu. Krachkovskii (1883-1951). His view and criticism of both Russian Oriental textual studies and archeology demonstrates how much Soviet scholarship was oriented toward seeking scientific priority even when they just repeated what colleagues had already established. Elsewhere Velidi-Togan made a distinction between scholars who agreed to cooperate with the new regime and those who preferred to

¹⁰⁸ *Risālāt al-alfāz al-khwārazmiya allati tujad fi Qunyat al-mabsūt* by Jamāl ad-Dīn al-‘Imādī al-Jurjānī is a dictionary of Khorezmian language discovered by S.A. Alimov (1872-1936), a teacher of Arabic language in Astrakhan’ who was distantly employed at the Institute of Oriental Studies between 1936 and 1938. He collected manuscripts locally on the Institute’s demand and sent to Leningrad a quite solid amount of books – 472 exemplares, some of them, like the 12th century biographical dictionary of al-Andarasfanī, of exceptional importance. Most probably, Togan knew him personally (he calls Alimov “a scholar of Kazan”). See: O.F. Akimushkin, “K istorii formirovaniia fonda musul’ manskikh rukopisei institute vostokovedeniia AN SSSR,” in: *Pamiatniki pis’mennosti Vostoka 1978-79* (Moscow, 1987), 12, 14; S.M. Prozorov, “Unikal’naia rukopis’ biograficheskogo slovaria kh^varizmiiskogo avtora vtoroi poloviny XII v. iz sobraniia SPbF IV RAN,” in: *ibid.*, *Islam kak ideologicheskaia sistema* (Moscow, 2004), 354; Dzh.S. Mingnullin, “Sabir Galim uly Alimov,” in: *Vostochnye rukopisi: Sovremennoe sostoianie i perspektivy izucheniia* (Kazan’, 2011): 224-226.

¹⁰⁹ Z. Velidi-Togan, *Documents on Khorezmian Culture, Part 1, Muqaddimat al-Adab, with translation in Khorezmian* (Istanbul, 1951), 6, footnote 4.

remain true to their values. Sometimes he was too suspicious of his colleagues who remained in the Soviet Union, accusing them of espionage. For example, when Aleksandr N. Samoilovich (1880-1938) visited Istanbul in 1925, Velidi-Togan frankly blamed him for espionage for the Soviets, adding that Bartol'd and Krachkovskii would never have done something like this.¹¹⁰

The figure of Velidi-Togan represented a bridge between classical Islamic scholarship (his father was a Sufi shaykh) and Oriental studies. While Velidi-Togan emigrated from the Soviet Union to save his life and preferred to preserve his own library in Istanbul, what happened to Islamic scholars in his fatherland?

1.4 Islamic Scholars and Classical Orientology

It was not only 'secular' Orientalists who found themselves in difficult situations since the late 1920s. Since its very beginning, Russian Orientology had incorporated scholars of Muslim origin into its ranks — like in the 19th century Aleksandr Kazem-Bek (1802-1870)¹¹¹ who had converted to Presbyterianism and worked at Kazan and St. Petersburg Universities, and the Khal'fin family¹¹² at the gymnasium in Kazan. Velidi Togan suggested a typology of Orientals who participated in secular Islamic Studies: a) those who “show indirect influence of Western scholarship, while, however, remaining essentially Oriental”; b) those who “studied in Europe or at least knew one foreign [i.e. European] language and could therefore profit directly from scientific European publications”; c) those who were able to “fully comprehend European scientific methods, conducted research work on this basis and published works in both eastern and European languages.”¹¹³ In Togan's mind both sides, Islamic scholars and Western Orientalists profited from mutual collaboration, because Orientals were able to reflect upon Islamic topics applying the methods of European literary criticism, while Orientalists were improving their knowledge of Islamic

¹¹⁰ Z. Velidi Togan, *Hâtralar*, 525-527.

¹¹¹ D. Schimmelpenninck van der Oye, “Mirza Kazem-Bek and the Kazan School of Russian Orientology,” *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, vol. 28, no. 3 (2008), 443-458.

¹¹² S.M. Mikhailova, *Formirovanie i razvitie prosvetitel'stva sredi tatar Povolzh'ia. 1800-1861 gg.* (Kazan, 1972).

¹¹³ A. Zeki Velidi Togan, *Scientific Collaboration of the Islamic Orient and the Occident. A Lecture Delivered in the Faculty of Law on 17th May 1950* (Istanbul, 1951), 3-4.

sources being in close contact with bearers of this culture. Moreover, Togan prophetically mentioned that “Islam seems to be in the process of becoming an eastern religion in Western accoutrement.”¹¹⁴

What was the fate of Islamic scholarship in Soviet times? Mostly these Orientalists of Muslim background were involved in philological studies like the edition of written sources and the production of grammars, manuals, and dictionaries. Some secular or religious Muslim intellectuals were directly involved in politics. One interesting episode about a cooperation of Orientalists and Muslim authorities goes back to the spring of 1921 when the Uzbek government decided to establish “a special commission which would work to harmonize (*soglasovanie*) the provisions of Islamic and Soviet law” and “to fight the backwardness of Muslim culture, support the modernisation of the Muslim way of life (*byt*), and introduce the modern norms of Soviet legislation to the indigenous Muslim population of the Republic of Turkestan.”¹¹⁵ The Arabists and historians Aleksandr E. Shmidt, Vasilii L. Viatkin, and Evgenii A. Beliaev together with a Muslim scholar Shāmī Dāmullā were included into this commission, whose work revealed the incompatibility of Soviet and Islamic law and recommended to avoid the use of force. According to the commission, the only way to harmonize relationships was educating people. Iranist Paolo Sartori, who provided us with a translation and study of this recommendation, demonstrated that the document was compiled by Muslim scholars rather than by Orientalists. Soviet authorities obviously approved this tandem, even though it is unclear whether this document did have any impact on official decisions.

Orientalists preserved manuscripts, saving them from destruction. On 7 August 1933 the Mufti of the Central Muslim Spiritual Assembly in Ufa, Riḍā ad-Dīn b. Fakhr ad-Dīn (Riza Fakhretdinov, 1859-1936), dared to write a message to the Presidium of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR. At that time the merciless anti-religious campaign developed into the repression of religious authorities and led to the destruction of the literature written in Arabic script. Mufti Fakhretdinov had spent a lot of time and energy in the collection of

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 14. This argument is fully elaborated in O. Roy, *Globalized Islam: The Search for a New Ummah* (New York, 2004).

¹¹⁵ P. Sartori, “What Went Wrong? The Failure of Soviet Policy on Shari‘a Courts in Turkestan, 1917-1923,” in: *Die Welt des Islams* 50 (2010), 412-415.

rare books and manuscripts, and in the early 1930s he tried to save his own collection¹¹⁶ and also to do something for other rich libraries all over the Soviet Union. In his letter to the Academy leadership he mentioned that after the repression of various Muslim scholars (*'ulamā'*) the Soviet authorities used their manuscript collections as waste paper. At the same time Fakhretdinov “had information that in the majority of these libraries there were old manuscripts obtained from Muslim countries,” some of which were “written in the time of the ‘Abbasid caliphate’ or by ancient Tatar scholars.”¹¹⁷ The Mufti asked the Academy to collect at least the remaining manuscripts, because he was impressed by the rich collection of Oriental books and manuscripts of Asiatic Museum which he had seen during his Leningrad visit in 1925 when he was invited to the jubilee of the Academy of Sciences.¹¹⁸ After the Mufti’s wake-up call urgent manuscript expeditions were organized to collect and preserve the Islamic written heritage. It might be that Krachkovskii participated in the organization of these expeditions. At the celebration of the Academy’s jubilee in 1925 he had had a long conversation (in Arabic) with Fakhretdinov. In general, the close relations of the Mufti with the school of classical Oriental studies in St. Petersburg are of great interest for the history of the discipline, unfortunately they have not yet been explored.

The Presidium of the Academy reacted quickly to this letter, seemingly because it fitted well with the new academic program of source publication on the history of Soviet Muslims, promoted by Krachkovskii. One of the secretaries of the Academy (*nepremennyi sekretar'*), V.P. Volgin, appealed to the Cultural Department of the Communist Party to organize two manuscript expeditions to Central Asia. One expedition to Central Asia was indeed conducted by Iranian studies scholar Evgenii Bertel’s, and another one, to the Volga-Ural region by the Tatar scholar and book collector Sagid Vakhidov (1887-1938). The latter also decided to donate all of his manuscripts, which amounted to several thousands,

¹¹⁶ In 1935 Mufti Riḍā ad-Dīn sent the most valuable materials to the director of the Leningrad Institute of Oriental Studies, Aleksandr N. Samoilovich (1880-1938). Today these unique Arabic-script sources are kept at the Archive of Orientalists of the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts, collection number 131.

¹¹⁷ AV IVR RAN, F. 152, Op. 1a, №308, D. 680, *Perepiska ob organizatsii vostokovednoi arkhograficheskoi ekspeditsii v Sredniuiu Aziyu i Povolzh'e*, ff. 4-5.

¹¹⁸ For some memoirs about the Leningrad visit see the account of Riḍā al-Dīn’s daughter: E. Sharaf, “Etkeem turynda istekekler”, in: *Rizaetdin Fekhretdin: Fenni-biografik zhyentyk* (Kazan, 1999), 67-69 (Tatar original), 135-136 (Russian translation).

to various scientific institutions in Leningrad and Kazan.¹¹⁹ Officially, these expeditions were just launched because “the Institute of Oriental Studies and the Historical-Archeographical Institute are working on the collecting, processing, and publication of documents on the history of the Soviet peoples”¹²⁰ with no mention of the special urgency after Fakhretdinov’s letter according to which it was exactly the Soviet politics that threatened the Islamic heritage. Both expeditions were successfully carried out between 1934 and 1936; the collected manuscripts were archived in the Institute of Oriental Studies.¹²¹ Similar efforts for collecting old manuscripts were undertaken in Uzbekistan: in 1933 the Council of the People’s Commissars (*Sovet narodnykh komissarov*, i.e. government) of the Uzbek Republic declared the State Public Library in Tashkent to be the central depository of manuscripts for the whole republic. It was on the basis of this manuscript collection that the Tashkent Institute of Oriental Studies was established in January 1944.¹²² It was originally planned that Bertel’s would compile a catalogue of all manuscripts discovered in Central Asia, but this task was impossible to be carried out by one person alone.¹²³

This cooperation between local Muslim scholars and Soviet academics came to an end in the 1930s when most ‘*ulamā*’ were either obliged to keep silent, or to leave the Soviet Union. If not, they were exiled, and their large manuscript collections were destroyed. The local Muslim scholarship was to be replaced by new Communist scientists trained in

¹¹⁹ M. Gosmanov, “Säet Vakhidinynig igelekle mirasy,” in: M. Gosmanov, *Ütkännän – kiläçäkkä* (Kazan, 1990), 80-90; M. Gosmanov, *Kauryi kaläm äzennän. Arkheograf iazmalary*, second print (Kazan, 1994), 24-34.

¹²⁰ AV IVR RAN, F. 152, Op. 1a, №308, D. 680, *Perepiska ob organizatsii vostokovednoi arkheograficheskoi ekspeditsii v Sredniuiu Aziyu i Povolzh’e*, f. 9.

¹²¹ The total amount of Arabic-script manuscripts brought by these two archeographical expedition reached 1534 volumes. L.V. Dmitrieva, A.M. Muginov, S.N. Muratov, *Opisanie tiurkskikh rukopisei Instituta Narodov Azii*, vol.1, *Istoriia*, pod redakstiei A.N. Kononova (Moscow, 1965), 4; V.A. Zabirov, “Predvaritel’noe soobshchenie o rabote arkheograficheskoi ekspeditsii Akademii Nauk,” in: *Istoricheskii sbornik*, vol. 4 (1935), 269-282; A.B. Khalidov, “Predislovie,” in: *Arabskie rukopisi Instituta vostokovedeniia, Kratkii katalog*, pod redaktsiei A.B. Khalidova, part 1 (Moscow, 1986), 25. Manuscripts from the Volga-Ural region formed almost one half of the entire collection of Persian manuscripts of the Leningrad Institute of Oriental Manuscripts. Refer to: N.D. Miklukho-Maklai, *Opisanie persidskikh i tadzhikskikh rukopisei Instituta vostokovedeniia*, vol. 3, *Istoricheskie sochineniia* (Moscow, 1975), 12-13.

¹²² B.V. Lunin, “Po sledam posleoktiabr’skikh poezdok V.V. Bartol’da v Sredniuiu Aziyu (Organizatsiia i uroven’ vostokovedcheskikh issledovaniia, sostoiianie i deiatel’nost’ bibliotek i muzeev v 20-e gody i v nashi dni),” in: *Blizhnii i Srednii Vostok: tovarno-denezhnye otnosheniia pri feodalizme (Bartol’dovskie chteniia, 1978)* (Moscow, 1980), 249.

¹²³ AV IVR RAN, F. 152, Op. 1a, D. 409, №680, *Plan ekspeditsionnykh rabot i nauchnykh komandirovok na 1935 g., perepiska ob ekspeditsiakh*, f. 3.

Moscow and Leningrad. The U.S. historian Edward Allworth hinted at this monopoly of Soviet Orientalists in his analysis of the celebration of the 500th birthday of the Turkic poet ‘Alī Shīr Nawā’ī in February 1926. At the occasion of this event one book on Nawā’ī was published by a scholar with an Islamic background and another one by Leningrad Orientalists. “Three books appeared in Baku, one in Ashkhabad... One of those edited by Professor Chobanzada reproduced Mīr ‘Alī Shīr’s Waqfiya (1926) just when Russian authorities were forcing that benevolent tradition out of existence in Central Asia and made the scholar vulnerable to the Communist Party’s retaliation. Politicians purged him [...] in 1937.”¹²⁴ Only Russian Orientalists (Bartol’d, Samoilovich, Bertel’s, etc.) participated in the official celebrations, without any of their Muslim colleagues. This demonstrates that the secular Leningrad Orientology slowly became the only source of opinion on the classical past of the Soviet Orient.

During the Soviet period of his life (1917-1936) Mufti Fakhretdinov produced a considerable amount of works devoted to the history of Islam.¹²⁵ In 1935 Fakhretdinov sent his most important manuscripts to Aleksandr Samoilovich, director of the Institute of Oriental Studies in Leningrad. This transfer symbolized the turn in the possession of Islamic knowledge. Since the 1930s only Orientalists were able to save, translate, analyze, and interpret Muslim written heritage. However, some scholars with Islamic background or their children also moved to Oriental Studies.¹²⁶ The best examples in this regard were prominent Tatar scholars Iranist Abdurakhman T. Tagirdzhanov (1907-1983),¹²⁷ Arabists

¹²⁴ E.A. Allworth, *The Modern Uzbeks: From the Fourteenth Century to the Present. A Cultural History* (California, 1990), 224-225; *Mir Ali Shir, Sbornik k piatisotletiiu so dnia rozhdeniia* (Leningrad, 1928). A Crimean Tatar, Bekir Vagapovich Choban-zade (1893-1937), as he claimed, was the first professor of the Soviet Orient (as a linguist he studied the Azerbaijani language). In the early 1920s he actively participated in the public life of the Crimea, but later (1925) he was forced to move to Baku. In 1937 Choban-zade was accused of anti-Soviet Pan-Turkish activities and executed. F.D. Ashnin, V.M. Alpatov, “Delo professora B.V. Choban-Zade,” *Vostok* 5 (1998), 125-133.

¹²⁵ The detailed description of Mufti Riḍā al-Dīn’s huge manuscript archive in Ufa has been prepared by Arabist Ramil’ M. Bulgakov. Its publication is forthcoming. The Leningrad part of the archive was discovered by Mirkasym A. Usmanov, and later also well described by employees of the Leningrad Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies. M. Gosmanov, *Ūtkännän – kilächäkkä* (Kazan, 1990), 65-67.

¹²⁶ M. Kemper, R. Motika, S. Reichmuth, “Introduction,” in: *Islamic Education in the Soviet Union and Its Successor States* (London, New York, 2010), 17.

¹²⁷ Tagirdzhanov was a son-in-law of famous Tatar theologian Musa Bigiev (1873-1949), who was forced to leave Russia by the Bolsheviks. On Tagirdzhanov’s Islamic background as the best Qur’an declaimer in the St. Petersburg Mosque, see the collection of historical documents: A.N. Tagirdzhanova, *Kniga o Museefendi, ego vremeni i sovremennikakh* (Kazan, 2010), 314-328.

Baky Z. Khalidov (1905-1968) and his son Anas B. Khalidov (1929-2001), and ethnographer Balkys Kh. Karmysheva (1916-2000). The latter's mother, Galiia Sh. Karmysheva (1888-1971) was married to the son of Muḥammad Fatīḥ al-Ilmanī (b. 1843), one of the authors of local history of Novouzensk district *Tawārikh-i Alī Atā* (1910).¹²⁸ Generally speaking, a part of the former Islamic learned elite was incorporated into the group of professional Orientalists,¹²⁹ who in the Soviet times monopolized the right of exegesis and interpretation of ancient texts.

Islamic scholars did not regard 'secular' specialists in Oriental languages as spies and servants of the system (except, probably, for Togan who was quite suspicious of his Soviet counterparts). Rather, they regarded classical Orientology as one of the most desirable preoccupations for a person well-versed in Islamic sciences as well as in Russian language and culture. Their trust in Orientalists was the reason that some of 'ulamā' transferred their wealthy book-treasures to scholarly institutions (Riḍā ad-Dīn b. Fakhr ad-Dīn, Saghīd Vakhīdī), others actively collaborated (Mūsā Bīgī) or even jointed Orientalist circles (Abdurakhman Tagirdzhanov). Institutes of Oriental Studies in the Soviet Union became places where highly-developed Islamic thought in written form continued its existence, while the living tradition throughout the country was severely destroyed by the Bolsheviks since the 1930s.

1.5 Dividing Sources into National Pieces: the Turkmen Project

In 1934-1939 a special group at the Sector for Central Asian studies of the Institute of Oriental Studies compiled a compendium of sources about the Turkmen. Officially this project was an initiative of a certain Avsent'evskii, Minister of Education (*Narkompros*) of the

¹²⁸ A.J. Frank, "Tatar Memoirs of Republican-Era Xinjiang," in: *Central Eurasian Studies: Past, Present and Future* (Istanbul: Maltepe University, 2011), 464. I am very grateful to Allen J. Frank (Takoma Park, USA) for providing information on Karmysheva's family. About Muḥammad Fatīḥ al-Ilmanī see: A.J. Frank, *Muslim Religious Institutions in Imperial Russia. The Islamic World of Novouzensk District and the Kazakh Inner Horde, 1780-1910* (Leiden, Boston, Köln, 2001), 34-36. See also Galiia Sh. Karmysheva's memoirs: G.Sh. Karmysheva, *K istorii tatarskoi intelligentsii. 1890-1930-e gody* (Moscow, 2004).

¹²⁹ A similar tendency was evident in Daghestan and Tajikistan: S.A. Dudoignon, "From Revival to Mutation: the Religious Personnel of Islam in Tajikistan, from de-Stalinization to Independence (1955-91)," in: *Central Asian Survey* 30/1 (2011), 53-80; *Die Islamgelehrten Daghestans und ihre arabischen Werke. Naḍīr ad-Durgilīs (st. 1935) Nuzhat al-adhān fī tarāḡim 'ulamā` Dāḡistān (Muslim Culture in Russia and Central Asia, vol. 4)*, ed. by Michael Kemper and Amri R. Šixsaidov (Berlin, 2004), 4-7.

Turkmen Soviet Republic.¹³⁰ On this issue Gaik Papaian¹³¹, an Academic Secretary of the Leningrad Institute of Oriental Studies, had an active exchange of letters with the *Narkompros* of the Turkmen Republic. On 22 March 1934 he wrote to Avsent'evskii: "According to the concluded contract, our Institute organized two work collectives (*brigady*): 1) a group focusing on the 16th-19th centuries, under the leadership of Academician Samoilovich; 2) a group studying materials from before the 16th century, under the direction of Academician Krachkovskii. The first group, which was expected to finish its work in the course of 1934, comprised fifteen employees. The second group is supposed to work during the period of 1934-1935."¹³² Iranist Pavel Ivanov was ordered to produce a list of sources and elaborated a very large program which included about fifty handwritten books in Turkish and Persian languages. At a work meeting Academician Krachkovskii agreed that the list was correct from a scientific point of view, but he also said that it was impossible to carry this program out within the short period of time that was granted (half a year for one volume).¹³³ At the same time a specialist in Turkic history Vali Zabirov (1897-1937), who at that time was a PhD student at the Institute of Oriental Studies, suggested to also collect, when studying these manuscripts, everything that is mentioned on other Muslim peoples of the Soviet Union, obviously in view of future projects. The start was difficult: at that time Orientalists had to work intuitively, 'by touch': they found a lot of historical manuscripts that possibly included data about Central Asian peoples, but there was also the risk that whole volumes were explored in vain.

"The work program on the materials for the history of Turkmens in the 16th-19th centuries" presupposed a budget of 11.200 rubles, including costs for studies and scientific trips to Tashkent and Ashkhabad, for the copying and translating of texts and for their final editing.¹³⁴ According to the decision of the Presidium of the USSR Academy of Sciences,

¹³⁰ Unfortunately, I did not find any information about him.

¹³¹ Sinologist Gaik Kegamovich Papaian (1901-1937) obtained his education at the Oriental Institute in St. Petersburg. In 1936, already during the Turkmen project, he was arrested and shot. See: *Liudi i sud'by*, 296-297.

¹³² *Protokol zasedaniia brigady po sobiraniuu materialov k istorii Turkmenii*, f. 24, in: AV IVR RAN, F. 152, Op. 1a, №345, D. 632, *Protokol zasedaniia brigady po sobiraniuu materialov k istorii Turkmenii. Programma rabot, smeta i perepiska s Narkomprosom Turkmenskoi SSR po voprosam napisaniia istorii Turkmenii, 31 ianvaria 1934 - 16 dekabria 1934*.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, f. 1.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, f. 17.

all these expenses were to be covered by the Turkmen Republic. The young republic faced difficult circumstances: there were several financial problems, but two volumes of sources were indeed published in time, though a number of interesting translations remained unpublished in the archive of Orientalists.¹³⁵ The following methodological principles were used for this edition: 1) each extract should be introduced by biographical data on the author, the time of compilation, a historical evaluation of the source and bibliographical references; 2) the publication of sources was to follow a chronological order; a thematic classification was deemed impossible; 3) the comments should be short and general, because a lot of problems were yet unexplored.¹³⁶ No original Arabic-script texts included in these volumes, neither as facsimile nor in typed form. In their introduction to the first volume (1939) the editors acknowledged that “it is impossible to study the history of the Turkmen and Turkmenia in full isolation from those historical conditions in which they lived. It is impossible to separate it from [the history of] Khwarezm, Mawara’annahr, Gurgan, and Khurasan. Especially the latter region was closely tied to Central Asia for the main part of its history.”¹³⁷ Thus, even after the finishing of the first book entirely devoted to the medieval history of a particular republic, Romaskevich found it necessary to defend his regional approach, based on the historical evidence that Central Asian peoples lived in close interaction.

A similar project of collecting materials for the history of the Kara-Kalpak was carried out in 1935.¹³⁸ The methods applied by the Institute of Oriental Studies were successful: a research group investigated and published sources in a very short period of time, while the national republic or, in the Kara-Kalpak case, a national autonomy within Uzbekistan, paid for all the work.¹³⁹ Unfortunately, I do not have any additional information on

¹³⁵ AV IVR RAN, Razriad 2, Op. 6, D. 79, Volin S.L., *Materialy (pervody rukopisei), podgotovlennye dlia sbornika ‘Materialy po istorii turkmen i Turkmenii,’ 1939*, vol. 1. 48 folios.

¹³⁶ *Protokol zasedaniia brigady po sobiraniuu materialov k istorii Turkmenii*, f. 6, in: AV IVR RAN, F. 152, Op. 1a, №345, D. 632, *Protokol zasedaniia brigady po sobiraniuu materialov k istorii Turkmenii. Programma rabot, smeta i perepiska s Narkomprosom Turkmenskoi SSR po voprosam napisaniia istorii Turkmenii, 31 ianvaria 1934 - 16 dekabria 1934*.

¹³⁷ *Materialy po istorii turkmen i Turkmenii*, vol. 1, VII-XV veka. *Arabskie i persidskie istochniki*. (Moscow, Leningrad, 1939), 4.

¹³⁸ *Materialy po istorii karakalpakov. Sbornik (Trudy Instituta vostokovedeniia Akademii nauk SSSR*, vol. 7) (Moscow, Leningrad, 1935).

¹³⁹ AV IVR RAN, F. 152, Op. 1a, №448, D. 632.1, *Protokoly zasedaniia brigady po izucheniiu istorii Karakalpakii: dogovor i perepiska*, 22 Dec. 1936.

the Kara-Kalpak edition, but it is clear that it was part of the series on Central Asian nations.

The first results of these source investigations were used for the compilation of the general histories of the Soviet peoples as well as for a world history to be taught at high school: a number of documents in the Archive of Orientalists show that the Institute's work was meant to be used for these textbooks of the late 1930s. These textbooks were intended to be used in higher education and were different from republican historical narratives that started to appear later. For this purpose a special historical sector was established at the Institute of Oriental Studies in January 1938. It united all historians of the Institute and was divided into two groups devoted, respectively, to the Soviet Orient (group leader Aleksandr N. Bernshtam) and the foreign Orient (led by M.S. Ivanov). The entire sector was directed by academician Vasilii V. Struve, but his management was rather weak. The sector's members did not approve of the work plan, for the high speed of work that was demanded from them would impact the quality of work. A certain comrade Adzhan stated at one of the meetings that "nothing is clear to the authors. The initiative is important, but we cannot do it in a hurry." Another point of discussion was the heterogeneity of the scientific staff. Semen Volin mentioned the bad selection of collaborators: "Klimovich, Tolstov, and Tardov are not reliable. Because of the urgent order to achieve these works, Pavel P. Ivanov cannot finish his text about the Sheibanids. This is a great pity."¹⁴⁰ Liutsian I. Klimovich (1907-1989) is notorious for his anti-religious books and malicious attacks on classical Oriental studies and was obviously disliked because of his ideological engagement.¹⁴¹ Strikingly, hot-tempered Semen Volin placed Klimovich and Tolstov on the same level, but because of different reasons: Klimovich was not capable to do philological work, while Tolstov was too busy, and for the same reason of active political position. Another thing they had in common was their active participation in various ideological campaigns against Islam and against classical Orientology (Klimovich), and local studies (Tolstov), in the 1920s.¹⁴²

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., №590, D. 632.14, *Istoricheskii sektor, Otchet o rabote sektora za 1938 god, protokoly zasedanii i stenogramma po obsuzhdeniiu knigi A. Iakubovskogo i B. Grekova "Zolotaia Orda", 29 ianvaria-17 dekabria 1938*, f. 5.

¹⁴¹ Kemper, "Ljutsian Klimovič," 93-133

¹⁴² For more details see: S.S. Alymov, "Na puti k 'Drevnei istorii narodov SSSR': maloizvestnye stranitsy nauchnoi biografii S.P. Tolstova," in: *Etnograficheskoe obozrenie* 5 (2007), 135-141; V.A. Germanov, "Glas

Another scholar, a certain Mochanov, expressed his doubts in more evident form: “Klimovich is a defective candidate [for the work at the sector] who has [only] written several anti-religious articles and does not even know the Arabic language.”¹⁴³ The concerns of the scholars cited above suggest that the policy to expand the scientific staff resulted in the employing of scholars with low qualifications from whom one could not expect meaningful contributions. This enlargement of intelligentsia circles led to serious criticism by the professionals. At the same time, the high speed of political requests forced specialists to neglect their own scientific plans: to take an example, it seems that Ivanov’s work on Sheibanid history, which was mentioned above, was never published.

Shortly after the appearance of translated sources on Turkmen history began the writing of the general, ‘canonized’ histories of the various Central Asian republics. Already in 1943 the official history of the Kazakh republic was published, with the communist activist Anna Pankratova (1897-1957) as chief editor.¹⁴⁴ During the war time it was planned to compile a Turkmen national history from the very beginning of Turkmen ethnogenesis in the 7th century up to the Russian invasion in the 1860s, i.e. covering the classical epoch of Islamic Central Asia. This work was finished only in 1952¹⁴⁵; the part on the period until the 15th century was written by Aleksandr Iu. Iakubovskii, who managed to participate in the volume shortly before he passed away. Analogous volumes on republic-scale histories were published during the following five decades based largely on translations produced by Leningrad Orientalists; in some cases the translations and the narratives were produced by the same specialist. This two-step drafting of republican histories (sources plus a general historical outline) played a crucial role in defining chronology, space, and symbols of the national identities of the newly-established Central Asian nations.

vopiiushchego v pustyni. Al’ians diktatora i uchenogo,” in: *Kul’turnye tsennosti, Cultural values, Bibliotheca Turkmenica, Mezhdunarodnyi ezhegodnik, 2000-2001* (St. Petersburg, 2002), 13-34; Kemper, “Ljutsian Klimovič,” 93-133.

¹⁴³ AV IVR RAN, F. 152, Op. 1a, №590, D. 632.14, *Istoricheskii sektor, Otchet o rabote sektora za 1938 god, protokoly zasedanii i stenogramma po obsuzhdeniiu knigi A. Iakubovskogo i B. Grekova “Zolotaia Orda”, 29 ianvaria-17 dekabria 1938*, ff. 5-6.

¹⁴⁴ *Istoriia Kazakhskoi SSR s drevneishikh vremen do nashikh dnei* (Alma-Ata, 1943).

¹⁴⁵ *Ocherki po istorii turkmenskogo naroda i Turkmenistana v VIII-XIX vv., pod redaktsiei A.Iu. Iakubovskogo* (Ashkhabad, 1954). The next codified volume appeared already in 1957: *Istoriia Turkmeniskoi SSR*, 2 vols. (Ashkhabad, 1957). Turkmen scholars regarded the latter edition as the most qualitative for their country: S.G. Agadzhanov, “Rol’ medievistov Leningrada i Moskvy v izuchenii srednevekovoi istorii Turkmenistana,” in: *Izvestiia Akademii Nauk Turkmeniskoi SSR, Serii obshchestvennykh nauk* 4 (1974), 35-36.

1.6 Semen Volin: Bartol'd's Unacknowledged Successor

The preparation of the source editions was performed by a number of internationally acknowledged Orientalists, but several less well-known employees also participated in the projects. In what follows I will pay special attention to the fate of one of the latter, the above-quoted Semen L'vovich Volin (1909-194?). Although Volin had great talents and ambitions, he was not recognized as a distinguished scholar. This was partly due to the acridity of his character, but also to the short period of time that was granted him to perform active scholarly work (five years, 1936-1941). He was a true member of the classical St. Petersburg/Leningrad Orientology who also had the courage to defend his own positions in debates with ideologically engaged scholars. At the same time Volin intensively worked in several groups which conducted Oriental projects.

Volin's valuable contribution to science is almost forgotten today and there is no special literature dedicated to his scholarly life. Fortunately, his undated autobiography has been preserved in the Archive of Orientalists in St. Petersburg.¹⁴⁶ This is a widespread type of narrative that had to be written from time to time by any Institute's employees. These autobiographical accounts, usually even autographs, contain very short (from one to three pages maximum) information on a scholar's background, education and professional career, sometimes supplemented by short remarks on family status. In what follows we will encounter this source type several times. Sometimes the data provided was incorrect or too smoothly put, because the narrative's author did not want to make known certain aspects of his private life, even though such accounts were not intended for a broad public. According to his autobiography, Semen L'vovich Volin was born in Karlsruhe (Germany) in 1909. After one year his family moved to St. Petersburg. In 1917 his mother divorced from his father who was an employee at a gold-mining company. In 1926 Volin's father was arrested and charged with participation in 'economic counterrevolution'; thus the future Orientalist became the son of a public enemy. In the document Volin tried to distance himself from his father, emphasizing that his mother divorced at an early point, when his father had not been yet charged. In 1927 Semen L'vovich started his education at the Oriental, and later Historical Departments of Leningrad University. He wrote: "At the University I stud-

¹⁴⁶ [S.L. Volin,] *Avtobiografiia*, ff. 12-13, in: AV IVR RAN, F. 152, Op. 3, №131, *Volin Semen L'vovich*.

ied Arabic under supervision of academician Krachkovskii, Persian with professors Freiman, Romaskevich, and Bertel's, Turkish with professor Dmitriev, Uzbek with professors Malov and Iudakhin, and Oriental history with Academician Bartol'd *whom I regard as my teacher* [emphasis added – A.B.].” Such a solid educational background, intentionally underlined by Volin, would promise a successful career in science, but already in 1929 Semen L’vovich was excluded from the university for having concealed his father’s execution when filling out the university entrance documents. After his expulsion (obviously, without finishing his higher education) he went to Tashkent where he worked as an archivist from 1930 to 1933. In his autobiography Volin wrote that in Tashkent he became disappointed by Oriental studies as a whole. Thereupon he went to the Donbas (Ukraine) where he worked as a metallurgist until 1935. In 1936 he returned to Leningrad where he continued his proletarian career. Surprisingly, he mentioned in his autobiography that he took a job at the Institute of Oriental Studies where he translated different Arabic and Persian sources only because he needed extra earnings. Probably, somebody from the Institute (perhaps Evgenii Bertel’s¹⁴⁷) invited him to participate in a program of source editions. The Institute of Oriental Studies needed Volin because it lacked specialists like Volin who were well-versed in several Oriental languages and Islamic manuscript tradition, and therefore searched for suitable workers who, for whatever reasons, did not yet work at the Institute. This policy is also reflected in the second five-year plan to which I referred above; according to this document, the administration of the Institute “did not manage to bring together at the Institute [of Oriental Studies] a large group of [Leningrad] Orientalists; the majority of our staff are quite valuable specialists, but they have only a very limited experience in scientific work. The gathering of [scientific] forces is the most important task in the second five-year plan.”¹⁴⁸

Volin’s self-proclamation as Bartol’d’s disciple became crucial in his relationship with colleagues at the Institute. Even in the context of ideological persecutions academi-

¹⁴⁷ In April 1936 Bertel’s asked administration of the Institute to include Al’fred K. Arends into the Iranian cabinet in order to enforce the edition of Rashīd ad-Dīn’s chronicle. Something similar could have happen to Volin. See the letter signed by Bertel’s: AV IVR RAN, F. 152, Op. 1a, №451, D. 633, *Plan, smeta, protokoly zasedanii, dokladnye zapiski i perepiska po izdaniuu “Istorii Rashid ad-Dina”, 1 ianvaria 1936- 29 ianvaria 1936*. f. 9.

¹⁴⁸ *Proekt vvedeniia k nametkam piatiletnego plana Instituta vostokovedeniia Akademii Nauk SSSR*, f. 6, in: AV IVR RAN, F. 152, Op. 1a, №293, D. 212, *Plany nauchno-issledovatel’skoi raboty Instituta vostokovedeniia na vtoruiu piatiletku, 1933-1937, tom 1*.

cian Vasili Bartol'd, who died in 1930, had always been an unquestionable authority for Orientalists both within and outside of the Soviet Union. Being his follower did not necessarily mean to follow his methodological approach, and his views. Aleksandr Iu. Iakubovskii, whose sincere Communist views and important contributions to the creation of Central Asian republican histories are well known, was often regarded as Bartol'd's successor in the field of Central Asian studies,¹⁴⁹ although he held views opposite to Bartol'd's regional approach.

Both claiming to be 'new Bartol'd,' Volin and Iakubovskii became competitors and uncompromising antagonists. For example, in 1938 Volin spoke with fierce criticism about Iakubovskii's book on the history of the Golden Horde. Iakubovskii even asked Volin to be more civilized in his criticisms. The great ambitions of Semen Volin were not supported by his colleagues.¹⁵⁰ Probably his discreditable origin and large pretensions in scientific circles paved the way for Volin's repression: on 5 July 1941 he was sentenced to exile and sent to Siberia, where he died (the date of his death is unknown). Some of his works were published after his death without mentioning their author's name.

Just like that of a number of his colleagues, Volin's philological work contributed significantly to the continuity of pre-revolutionary and Soviet Orientology in St. Petersburg / Leningrad. Volin was employed in the project of editing parts of the major work of a famous Russian Orientalist, Baron Vladimir G. Tizengauzen. Volin's detailed work for preparing Persian narratives related to the history of the Golden Horde for publication has symbolic meaning, in so far as Volin continued the tradition and fulfilled the duty of Russian scholarship, because the volume of sources collected by Tizengauzen had been waiting for edition already for several decades.

Baron Vladimir G. Tizengauzen (1825-1902), a collaborator of the Archeological Committee in St. Petersburg, who was also a famous numismatist had compiled extracts from medieval Muslim historiographical manuscripts from materials in famous European

¹⁴⁹ See, for example: "Aleksandr Iur'evich Iakubovskii (1886-1953)," in: A.Iu. Iakubovskii, *Razvaliny Sygnaka* (Almaty, 2008), 54-60; N.N. Negmatov, "A.Iu. Iakubovskii i ego vklad v razvitie nauki v Tadzhikistane", in: *Pamiati Aleksandra Aleksandrovicha Semenova. Sbornik statei po istorii, arkhologii, etnografii i iskusstvu Srednei Azii* (Dushanbe, 1980), 97-114.

¹⁵⁰ *Zasedaniia istoricheskogo sektora: Obsuzhdenie knigi prof. A.Iu. Iakubovskogo "Zolotaia Orda"* (5.03.1938), f. 50, in: AV IVR RAN, F. 152, Op. 1a, № 590, D. 632.14, *Istoricheskii sektor. Otchet o rabote Sektora za 1938 god, protokoly zasedanii i stenogramma po obsuzhdeniiu knigi A. Iakubovskogo i B. Grekova "Zolotaia Orda", 29 ianvaria-17 dekabria 1938.*

libraries by. Tizengauzen planned to publish an impressive number of sources in the original texts with Russian translation in four volumes. But before the death of count S.G. Stroganov, his sponsor and the Chairman of the Archeological committee, Tizengauzen managed to publish only the first volume which contained Arabic sources without translation (1881). Until the present day this edition remains a reference book for every scholar in the world who studies medieval Central Eurasian history.¹⁵¹ All other materials, partly translated into Russian, partly only in original languages, remained in manuscript form in the scholar's private archive. The necessity to publish these valuable extracts from Oriental manuscripts was already discussed in 1911 when Tizengauzen's family turned his papers to the Archive of the Asiatic Museum in St. Petersburg.¹⁵² The processing and description of the scholar's archive were entrusted to Iranist Aleksandr A. Romaskevich. The latter, however, did not finish this work,¹⁵³ most probably because of the Revolution and of the hard conditions for scientific work in the subsequent years. Around 1936, when Semen Volin became a co-worker of the Institute of Oriental Studies, the administration of the Institute decided to publish the Persian materials collected by Vladimir Tizengauzen. The ensuing publication, edited by Romaskevich and Volin in 1941, copied the structure of the first volume of 1881, according to which each text was accompanied by some information on the author of the respective chronicle, bibliographical references, and a Russian translation. However, in their introduction Romaskevich and Volin placed Tizengauzen's work in the new context of studying Soviet peoples. According to the editors, "the present volume will give new [information] on the history of many peoples of the Soviet Union, [namely] Russians, Ukrainians, as well as Tatar, Chuvash, Azerbaijani, Ossetian, Circassian, Daghestani, Noghay, Kazakh, and Uzbek peoples."¹⁵⁴

¹⁵¹ *Sbornik materialov po istorii Zolotoi Ordy, otnosiashchikhsia k istorii Zolotoi Ordy*, vol. 1, *Izvlecheniia iz arabskikh istochnikov*, ed. by V.G. Tizengauzen (St. Petersburg, 1884).

¹⁵² Now this is collection number 52 in the Archive of Orientalists of the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts (St. Petersburg).

¹⁵³ *Sbornik materialov, otnosiashchikhsia k istorii Zolotoi Ordy*, vol. 2, *Izvlecheniia iz persidskikh sochinenii, sobrannye V.G. Tizengauzenom i obrabotannye A.A. Romaskevichem i S.L. Volinym* (Moscow, Leningrad, 1941), 6.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*: 12. The Editors did not mention a number of mistakes in translation of Persian sources. See: T.I. Sultanov, "Mu'izz al-Ansāb and Spurious Chingīzids," *Manuscripta Orientalia*, vol. 2, no. 3 (September 1996), 3-7.

For several years in the late 1930s Semen Volin translated and commented upon manuscripts for different compendiums. Yet while several collective works saw the light of the day before WWII (Tizengauzen and the Turkmen volume), one other project remained unfinished. The archeologist Aleksandr Bernshtam (1910-1956) mobilized several Leningrad Orientalists, including Semen Volin and Aleksandr Belenitskii (1904-1993), to translate historical Arabic-script sources into Russian, in particular sources related to the history of the Talas valley.¹⁵⁵ The idea to produce such a compendium was connected to a demand by archeologists: the identification of ancient settlements required a list of their historical names and the descriptions of their locations as laid down in Arabic and Persian sources. The Institute charged Semen Volin with compiling a short description of the new project; this task was seen as a continuation of the volumes on the Turkmen history (see above). This draft was called *Arabic, Persian, and Turkic Authors about the History of the Kirgiz and Kirgizstan in the 9th-16th Centuries*.¹⁵⁶ This preliminary plan of work does not have a date, but it must have been produced in the early 1940s (1940-1941), i.e. before Volin's arrest.

The idea was quite similar to the Turkmen project: an attempt to create a possibly full collection of historical reports about an individual people of Central Asia. Even the sources were more or less the same. Volin understood the complexity of the national approach for Central Asian history and suggested to distinguish two categories of sources: 1) sources about the history of the people called Kirgiz on the Yenisei River as well as in other places; 2) sources about the history of the territory of modern Northern and Southern Kirgizstan. As in other publications, it was foreseen to provide short introductions and brief commentaries to each translation. This plan found Soviet support, because the state was guided by the concept of autochthonism; that is, it was interested in support for the theory that Central Asian peoples have always been living on their present territories.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁵ Interview with Sergei G. Kliashorny in the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts of the Russian Academy of Sciences, St. Petersburg, 24 September 2009.

¹⁵⁶ *Prospekt raboty "Arabskie, persidskie i tiurkskie avtory ob istorii kirgiz i Kirgizstana v IX-XVI vekov"*, 2 folios, in: AV IVR RAN, F. 93, Op. 1, №32, *Volin Semen L'vovich*.

¹⁵⁷ L.S. Klejn, *Das Phänomen der sowjetischen Archäologie: Geschichte, Schulen, Protagonisten* (Frankfurt am Main, Berlin, Bern, New York, Paris, Wien, 1997), 75-97; M. Laruelle, "The Concept of Ethnogenesis in Central Asia: Political Context and Institutional Mediators (1940-50)," in *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 9, 1 (Winter 2008), 169-188.

Volin, however, suggested to also cover the history of the Yenisei Kirgiz, obviously to study the subject in broader geographical borders, from a trans-republican perspective.

However, this book was not finished because of the war and Volin's repression. True, it was suggested to include Volin's first selection of extracts under the title *Reports of Arabic and Persian Sources on the History of Isfijab Region and the Valleys of the Talas and Chu Rivers* in one of the publications of the Institute of Material Culture in Leningrad. Yet after Volin's arrest in 1941 the editors quickly excluded his article from their volume. Eventually, the article was published in 1960 due to the efforts of the Kazakh historian Sapar K. Ibragimov.¹⁵⁸ The idea of a source volume for the Kirgiz Republic was taken up again in the 1950s, after Stalin's death, but it was carried out in another theoretical framework, namely with a focus on the Kirgiz people in Central Asia. The autochthonous conception gained another victory.

To sum up, Volin's skills and ambitions were used in three Oriental projects (including one unfinished): Arabic and Persian sources on the Turkmen and Kirgiz peoples, and the edition of Tizengauzen's papers. Besides, Volin compiled a description of Bartol'd's archive, which was later used for the edition of the great Orientalist's collected works. This story is told in details in a following chapter.

1.7 Evgenii Bertel's and the Crown of Source Editing:

Jāmi' at-tawārīkh

Evgenii Bertel's (1890-1957) obtained his education as a musician and then studied jurisprudence, but eventually he became a world-famous specialist in Iranian studies. Bertel's studied Islamic languages at Petrograd University from which he graduated in 1920. In that year he began to work at the Asiatic Museum (later the Institute of Oriental Studies). During the 1930s to 1950s he was a 'monopolizer' of Soviet Persian studies whose name regularly appears in the archival materials on the Oriental projects. A scholar of classical Iranian and Islamic studies in the Soviet Union, Evgenii Bertel's became very loyal to the Communist Party after several short-term imprisonments in the 1920s-1930s. There is no

¹⁵⁸ S. L. Volin, "Svedeniia arabskikh istochnikov IX-XVI vekov o doline reki Talas i smezhnykh raionakh," in: *Novye materialy po drevnei i srednevekovoi istorii Kazakhstana (Trudy Instituta istorii, arkhologii i etnografii Akademii nauk Kazakhskoi SSR, vol. 8)* (Alma-Ata, 1960), 72-92. A typewritten version is kept at the archive of the A.Kh. Margulan Institute of Archeology in Almaty (a digital CD copy is available at the institute: doc. no.18).

doubt about his outstanding scientific merits: a corresponding member of the Academy of Sciences since 1939, Bertel's was the organizer of several prominent Oriental projects in the area of source publication, and his works created a fundament for Central Asian Iranian studies. On the other hand, Bertel's, because of his fear of repression, played an unseemly role in the fates of some of his colleagues in the late 1930s. For example, in 1938 during his interrogation by the secret police Bertel's claimed that his colleague L.F. Veksler, who participated in the Rashīd ad-Dīn project, "has always been an initiator and activist of anti-Soviet propaganda." Later Bertel's also denounced the Arabist A.N. Genko with a similar charge.¹⁵⁹

Bertel's played leading roles in a series of projects which had huge political significance: the jubilees of Firdawsī (1934), Nawā'ī (1941), Nizāmī (1937-47), and Avicenna (1954)¹⁶⁰, the translation and publication of the works of Sa'dī and other poets who wrote in Persian and whose works were significant for the Soviet definition of culture of the Soviet Orient. On 20-30 May 1934 the Institute of Oriental Studies together with the State Hermitage conducted a united session devoted to jubilee of Firdawsī. Iosif Orbeli (1887-1961), the Hermitage's Director, stated at this conference: "For many of the Soviet peoples [Firdawsī's epos] the Shah-name is a cultural heritage which united their past with the past of the Persian people".¹⁶¹ For this jubilee a special exhibition of Persian art was conducted at the State Hermitage. These jubilees, conferences, publications, and exhibitions served the purpose of evaluating the Persian cultural heritage which played a first-rate role for the history of all Central Asian republics (including southern Kazakhstan) as well as Azerbaijan in the Caucasus. Of special significance was the question of Firdawsī's national identity and where he and other prominent poets and writers were born.

¹⁵⁹ G.A. Genko, "A.N. Genko – zakliuchennyi", *Vostok 4* (2004), 138-141. A digital version of this article has essential addenda from archival documents. Refer to: <http://www.nplg.gov.ge/caucasica/Caucasology/RUS/2004/No5/Summary/7.htm>.

¹⁶⁰ On the role of Bertel's in the 'nationalization' of Nizami see: A.O. Tamazishvili, "Iz istorii izuchenii v SSSR tvorchestva Nizami Giandzhevi: vokrug iubileia – E.E. Bertel's, I.V. Stalin i drugie," in: *Neizvestnye stranitsy otechestvennogo vostokovedeniia*, vol. 2 (Moscow, 2004) 173-198. The participation of Bertel's in the celebration of the nine-hundredth anniversary of Abū 'Alī Ibn Sinā (Avicenna, 980-1037) was mentioned by Iranist Aleksandr Boldyrev, "Nauchnoe nasledie Evgeniia Eduardovicha Bertel'sa," in: E.E. Bertel's, *Izbrannye trudy. Istoriiia persidsko-tadzhikskoi literatury* (Moscow, 1960), 12.

¹⁶¹ D.V. Valieva, *Sovetsko-iranskie kul'turnye sviazi (1921-1960)* (Tashkent, 1965), 26; *Ferdovski, 634-1934* (Leningrad, 1934), 1-21.

Yuri Bregel, in 1980, described the whole evolution of the ‘nationalization’ of Islamic cultural heritage as follows: “[M]any Soviet works try to show that Central Asia produced a large number of great men and in their lists everybody is included who was born in Central Asia (even if he left it in his childhood), who died there, who came for a visit (very much like the medieval hagiographic local histories), and often, also, those who lived in neighboring countries, especially Iran. The tendency to encroach upon Iran in seeking “great ancestors” was especially strong after the WWII, when almost all Persian poets and writers (some of whom lived in southern Iran and never even approached the borders of Central Asia) were described as Tajiks. Later these claims were somewhat moderated and Central Asian historians began to speak about the “common cultural heritage” of Central Asia and Iran. On the other hand, this is supplemented by inner quarrels between various republics, each of them claiming its own part of the Central Asian cultural heritage. Suffice it to mention here the appropriation of Nawā’ī (together with Chaghatay language) by the Uzbeks, not to the delight of other Central Asian Turks. In the same way the Kazakhs recently tried to claim al-Fārābī.”¹⁶²

Some historical narratives, however, were difficult to ‘nationalize’. In this case another interpretation was chosen: it was claimed that their works were of value to Soviet history, in particular to the history of Soviet Central Asia. The world history written by Rashīd ad-Dīn was one of these narratives, because, as Barthol’d mentioned, this is “a vast historical encyclopedia of which there was nothing comparable in the possession of any individual people in the Middle Ages, neither in Asia nor in Europe.”¹⁶³

Rashīd ad-Dīn Faḍlallāh was born in Hamadan (Western Iran) in 1247 and was executed in Tabriz in 1318. Copies of his works spread around the Muslim world. They were widely known in Central Asia and the Volga-Ural region and were even translated into the Volga-Ural Turki in the early 17th century.¹⁶⁴ His chronicle *Jāmi‘ at-tawārīkh* was devoted

¹⁶² Y. Bregel, *The Role of Central Asia in the History of the Muslim East (Occasional Paper 20, Institute of Asian and African Affairs, Hebrew University of Jerusalem)* (New York, 1980), 2.

¹⁶³ W. Barthold, *Turkestan down to the Mongol Invasion* (London, 1968), 46.

¹⁶⁴ A short and supplemented version of Rashīd ad-Dīn’s chronicle was compiled in the Khanate of Kasimov by Qadīr ‘Alī Bek. Two manuscripts of the work have been preserved in Kazan and Leningrad. See: H.F. Hofman, *Turkish Literature: A Bio-Bibliographical Survey*. Section III. Part 1, vol. 5 (Utrecht, 1969), 112-115. For the printed text see: *Biblioteka vostochnykh istorikov, izdavaemaia I. Berezinyam*, vol. 2, part 1, *Sbornik letopisei, tatarskii tekst s russkim predisloviem* (Kazan, 1854). For a Russian paraphrase and analysis, see M.A. Usmanov, *Tatarskie istoricheskie istochniki XVII-XVIII vekov* (Kazan, 1972), 33-96.

to the history of the leading Mongol dynasty in Iran, the Ilkhans, and consisted of several volumes. Volume one, *Tā'rikh-i Ghāzānī*, is a history of the Mongols from the very beginning until the reign of Ghāzān Khān (1271-1304). According to scholar of Iranian studies John A. Boyle, in the second volume of his work "Rashīd ad-Dīn set the formidable task of compiling a general history of all the Eurasian peoples with whom the Mongols had come into contact. Beginning with Adam and the Patriarchs the volume recounts the history of the pre-Islamic kings of Persia; of Muḥammad and the Caliphate down to its descendants, the Turks; of the Chinese; of the Jews; of the Franks and their Emperors and Popes; and of the Indians, with a detailed account of Buddha and Buddhism."¹⁶⁵ For a long time, the last, third, volume under the title *Shu'āb-i panjgānā* (*Five Genealogies*, or in earlier version *Suwār al-Aqalīm – Figures of the Climates*) was considered lost or never written until the Bashkir emigrant professor Zeki Velidi-Togan discovered a unique manuscript in the Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi in Istanbul in 1927.¹⁶⁶

It is evident that such a giant compendium was not written by one person alone. Rashīd ad-Dīn used his administrative power as a *vezir* at the Khan's court: he used original documents of the khan's chancellery and had a number of assistants who helped him in collecting the material. One of them, Abū-l-Qasīm b. 'Alī b. Muḥammad al-Qashānī in his chronicle *Ta'rikh-i Uljaytū* even claimed the authorship of *Jāmi' at-tawārikh* for himself.¹⁶⁷ The *Ta'rikh-i Uljaytū* was never published in Russia, but the work of Rashīd ad-Dīn gained indisputable interest among the scholars. In a 1980 critical edition of the second volume of Rashīd ad-Dīn's chronicle, the Azerbaijani Orientalist Abdulkirim Ali-Zade (1906-1979) evaluated Rashīd ad-Dīn as a "philosopher and legislator of his time, and a reform-minded thinker." Moreover Ali-Zade built a link between the modern Azerbaijani Soviet Republic and Rashid al-Din: "His life, career, permanent living place, and current position as a *ṣāhib-dīwān* were directly tied to Azerbaijan. The main part of his life Rashīd ad-Dīn spent in Azerbaijan, where he wrote almost all his works on different scientific areas and where he held important state positions at the Ilkhanid court." Ali-Zade did

¹⁶⁵ J.A. Boyle, "Rashid ad-Din: the First World Historian," *Iran* 9 (1971), 21.

¹⁶⁶ A.Z.V. Togan, "The Composition of the History of the Mongols by Rashid ad-Din," *Central Asian Journal* VII/ 1-2, 60-72. Manuscript's location: Shu'āb-i panjgānāh, Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi, MS Ahmet III, No 2937. The edition of this masterpiece is currently under preparation by Kazan specialists.

¹⁶⁷ Abū-l-Qasīm 'Abdullāh b. Muḥammad al-Qashānī, *Tā'rikh-i Uljaytū, be ehtemām-e Mahin Hambli* (Tehran, 1969), 16-19.

not even exclude that Rashīd ad-Dīn had a Turkic origin of Rashīd ad-Dīn (who, as it is commonly assumed, probably was a Muslim of Jewish origin), writing that “as far as both Persian and Turkologists wrote mostly in the Persian language, it is difficult to identify their ethnic belonging.”¹⁶⁸ Thereby Rashīd ad-Dīn underwent the process of Soviet ‘nationalization’.

In the Soviet Union the grandiose idea to translate and study the greatest Persian historical work, *Jāmi‘ at-tawārīkh*, was part of a larger phenomenon: the investigation of the Soviet Orient. The majority of the southern territories of the former Russian Empire was part of the Islamic civilization and had been heavily influenced by the Arabic and Persian cultures. For example, it was impossible to study the past of what was now called Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan without being familiar with the Persian literary tradition. Moreover, since the end of the 19th century also Iran was in the area of Russian imperial interests. Even after the signing of the new ‘equal’ pact between the Soviet Union and the Iranian Republic in 1921, the Soviets were still attempting to ‘export’ the revolution to Iran. Still, in the interwar period the character of Soviet-Iranian relations was quite friendly, and only later it deteriorated due to the pro-German orientation of the Iranian government. Leningrad became a place where the friendship between these two countries was celebrated. In 1925 the State Hermitage opened an exhibition of the Iranian, Central Asian, and Caucasian medieval cultural heritage. The governmental turn towards studies of the Soviet Orient in the early 1930s also brought about another, permanent exhibition of the Oriental Section in the State Hermitage.¹⁶⁹ This event was of special importance because foreign delegations visited the Hermitage, in addition to thousands of Soviet citizens who wanted to admire the culture of Persia in artifacts and paintings.¹⁷⁰ Evgenii Bertel’s had close ties with employees at the Hermitage who conducted the first exhibitions of Iranian and in general

¹⁶⁸ A.A. Ali-Zade, “Predislovie,” in: Faḍlallāh Rashīd ad-Dīn, *Jāmi‘ at-tawārīkh*, vol. 2, part 1, *Kriticheskie tekst, predislovie i ukazateli A.A. Ali-Zade, redaksiia persidskogo teksta E.E. Bertel’sem i A.A. Romaskevichem* (Moscow, 1980), 3-4. The origin of Rashid ad-Din was also discussed by B. Spuler, *Die Mongolen in Iran* (Leipzig, 1939), 247-249; W.J. Fishel, “Azerbaijan in Jewish History,” in: *Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research XXII* (1953), 1-21. Abdulkarim Ali-Zade was right that the city of Hamadan, where Rashid ad-Din was born, historically belongs to Azerbaijan. Even the residence of the Atabeks was there over certain periods.

¹⁶⁹ Valieva, *Sovetsko-iranskii kul’turnye svyazi*, 26.

¹⁷⁰ At the same years, 1929-1934, the Soviet government ‘pillaged’ the treasures of the Hermitage by selling many masterpieces abroad. R.C. Williams, *Russian Art and American Money* (Cambridge, 1980); Iu. Zhukov, *Stalin: Operatsiia “Ermitazh”* (Moscow, 2005).

Muslim art. An important role in the organization of the Hermitage's exhibitions was played by Aleksandr Iakubovskii, who was working exactly at that time on the problems of Oriental feudalism, the Oriental city, and socio-economic relations in the Orient. As a result, Iakubovskii wrote several works for exhibitions of Oriental artifacts in Hermitage.¹⁷¹

Generally, the school of Iranian Studies in Leningrad was so strong because of the large collections of manuscripts and other artifacts preserved in the city's museums. Evgenii E. Bertel's, Aleksandr A. Romaskevich and Aleksandr A. Freiman were the main representatives of the Leningrad School of classical Iranian Orientology at that time.¹⁷² This concentration of well-trained scholars of Iranian studies in the city made it possible to host, in September 1935, the Third International Congress on Persian Art and Archeology in the State Hermitage. This was the first experience of Soviet Orientology to organize such an important meeting of scholars from all over the world; the next event of this international category would come only with the 25th International Congress of Orientalists, held in 1960 in Moscow. Besides the proceedings of the conference,¹⁷³ the organizational committee of the Congress, personified in the Director of the State Hermitage Iosif Orbeli, also agreed upon the publication of a number of books in Persian and Russian languages on Iranian poetry, miniatures, and art. The main aim was to strengthen Iranian sympathies towards Soviet culture and scholarship, the latter paying extraordinary attention to the Persian heritage.¹⁷⁴ The international leadership of the Congress organization had been negotiating with the Soviet government since the close of the Second International Congress of Persian Art and Archeology in London in 1931,¹⁷⁵ that means the interest of Soviet authorities in cultural partnership with Iran and the desire to demonstrate Soviet achieve-

¹⁷¹ A.Iu. Iakubovskii, *Kul'tura i iskusstvo Srednei Azii. Putevoditel' po vystavke* (Leningrad, 1940); A.Iu. Iakubovskii, "Sredneaziatskie sobraniia Ermitazha i ikh znachenie dlia izucheniia istorii kul'tury i iskusstva Srednei Azii do XVI veka," in: *Trudy Otdela Vostoka Gosudarstvennogo Ermitazha*, vol. 2 (Leningrad, 1940), 7-24.

¹⁷² A brief review on the Persian studies in Leningrad with some bibliography see: M. Atkin, "Soviet and Russian Scholarship on Iran," *Iranian Studies*, vol. 20, no. 2/4, *Iranian Studies in Europe and Japan* (1987), 223-271. Cf.: I.P. Petrushevskii, "History of Iranian Studies," in: *Fifty Years of Soviet Oriental Studies (Brief Reviews)* (Moscow, 1968).

¹⁷³ *III mezhdunarodnyi congress po iranskomu iskusstvu i arkheologii* (Moscow, Leningrad, 1939).

¹⁷⁴ RA GE, F. 1, Op. 17, D. 275/ 284, vol. 1, *Dokumenty o podgotovke k tret'emu mezhdunarodnomu kongressu po iranskomu iskusstvu i arkheologii, 1934-1935*, ff. 11, 26.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., D. 276/ 285, vol. 2, *Dokumenty o podgotovke k 3-mu mezhdunarodnomu kongressu po iranskomu iskusstvu i arkheologii (na russkom i angliiskom iazykakh), 1934-1935*, f. 49.

ments to the world go back at least to the early 1930s and probably even further to the 1920s. The negotiation even included the issue of a mutual exchange of scholars between the Soviet Union and Western countries. In particular, Americans were interested in the investigation of Timurid architecture in Central Asia.¹⁷⁶

It is in this light that in 1936 Evgenii Bertel's came up with a detailed plan how to publish the first volume of Rashīd ad-Dīn's chronicle *Jāmi' at-tawārīkh*, known as *Tā'rīkh-i Ghāzānī*. Most probably, this idea was first discussed during the Congress of Iranists that was held in the fall of 1935, but the details are unknown from archival sources. For the first time we learn about negotiations of the Leningrad Orientalists for gaining the copies of the *Tā'rīkh-i Ghāzānī* manuscripts in January 1936. Before studying details I want to reproduce the text of Bertel's' draft project, fortunately preserved in the Archive of Orientalists in St. Petersburg. Written with great talent, this application could be successful even today:

“A report on the publication and commented translation of Rashīd ad-Dīn's Persian chronicle dated from the 14th century.

The work of Rashīd ad-Dīn, containing about a hundred printer's sheets [Rus. *pechatnyi list*, 40.000 signs] of Persian text, is a first-range source for Persian historiography as a whole. Written in the early 14th century, this book includes rich [historical] material, because the author pursued the aim to collect historical data about all peoples from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean. Along with the history of the Mongols, much material represented in this book is on the history of Iran, India, China, the Turkic peoples, the Franks, the Jews and others. Unfortunately, the four or five manuscripts which are known to Western Orientalists are extremely confusing: they abound in later insertions, which misrepresent the meaning of the lost original, and they contain many mistakes in the rendering of geographical and proper names. [In addition, they are full of] special legal, administrative, economic, political Mongol, Turkic, and Iranian terms the meanings of which have been lost a long time ago. Moreover, the [manuscripts] are written without diacritics and with a huge amount of obscure words. In spite of the exceptional scientific value of this chronicle and its interest for international scholarship in past and present, this book remains an inaccessible source for Orientalists. If this chronicle was published, it would provide elucidation for all

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., f. 89-91 (a letter of director of American Institute for Persian Art and Archeology Arthur Upham Pope to Academician Iosif Orbeli).

epochs, and it would open unknown pages in the life of various peoples. It is no exaggeration that this work will signify a great victory of international importance – not only because it resolves various scientific problems, but mainly because it contains inexhaustible material on the history of peoples of the Near East, Western Europe, China, and India. [This material] could make a revolution in science. The grandiosity of the idea, the extensiveness of material, the scope of the work, the character of the scientific tasks, and its general importance for Oriental Studies would make the investigation and translation of Rashīd ad-Dīn one of the greatest historical events in scholarship.

The first attempt to publish the work of Rashīd ad-Dīn was undertaken by the French scientist [Antoine Chrysostome] Quatremère [(1755-1849)], hundred years ago. Quatremère planned a big series but published only two volumes [of the chronicle] with text and translation in 1836.¹⁷⁷ After 75 years, in 1911, one more volume with an original text was published in the same country [France] by [Edgard] Blochet [(1870-1937)].¹⁷⁸ In the 19th century from among Russian Orientalists only Professor I[l'ia] N. Berezin [(1818-1896)] had studied Rashīd ad-Dīn. He intended to publish the whole chronicle, but he released only the text and translation of the introduction on the Turkic and Mongol peoples (two volumes).¹⁷⁹ Thus since 1836 there were only three attempts [at publication]. Their results were more than modest, because it was only the initiatives of single scholars who embarked upon a work that required collective efforts. If in the 19th century and even in the early 20th century the work of the above-mentioned Orientalists did not find successors who would finish the project of the first pioneers, in the present time of the crisis of capitalism and the decline of Iranian Studies [in the West] even attempts in this direction are impossible in the West.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁷ [*Histoire des Mongols de la Perse, écrite en Persan par Raschid-Eldin, publiée, traduite en français, accompagnée de notes et d'un mémoire sur la vie et les ouvrages de l'auteur par M. Quatremère*, t. I (Paris, 1836).]

¹⁷⁸ [*Djami et-tevarikh, Tarikh-i moubarek-i Ghāzāni, éditée par E. Blochet, t. II, contenant l'histoire des empereurs mongols successeurs de Tchinkiz-Khagan* (London, 1911).]

¹⁷⁹ [Reshid-eddin, *Sbornik letopisei. Istoriiā Mongolov, Sochinenie Rashid-Eddina, Vvedenie: O turetskikh i mongol'skikh plemenakh, Perevod s persidskogo, s vvedeniem i primechaniiami I.P. Berezina* (*Zapiski Imperatorskogo arkheologicheskogo obshchestva*, vol. 14) (St. Petersburg, 1858); *Trudy vostochnogo otdeleniia Rossiiskogo Arkheologicheskogo obshchestva*, vol. 5 (St. Petersburg, 1858), vol. 7 (1861), vol. 8 (1868), vol. 15 (1888).]

¹⁸⁰ [Here it should be added that in 1935 – just a year before Bertel's proposal – Nicholas Martinovitch stressed the question of necessity to publish the whole *Jāmi' at-tavārīkh*: N.N. Martinovitch, "Die verlorene Handschrift von Rašid ad-Din," in: *Artibus Asiae*, vol. 5, no. 2/4 (1935), 214. The work in this direction was started by the Austrian Orientalist Karl Jahn shortly before WWII, when he published a critical text of the

Today Soviet scholars should be the pioneers, who, in contrast to their bourgeois predecessors, can begin the work on Rashīd ad-Dīn's chronicle *not merely out of goodwill* [here and following the emphasis is mine – A.B.] which would not commit a single accidental scholar to do something, but in order to realize *a demand of the state*, with a precise work plan, with the joint participation of all scholars useful [to the project], and in *full awareness of their responsibility towards the state*. It goes without saying that the critical edition of the text with translation and comments would enhance the prestige of Soviet Iranian studies so much that they would fairly take the first place on the international arena. At the same time there is no country which is so much concerned with the publication of Rashīd ad-Dīn as the Soviet Union. *The [work's] extraordinarily rich information on the history of the Mongols, the Turkic peoples of Central Asia, the Caucasus, Siberia, and on the history of the Golden Horde – is all of first-rate interest to Soviet scholars*. Though the expenses will reach an impressive sum, these expenses are trifling in comparison with the scientific fruits. In addition to the invaluable work experience for our scholars, the published manuscript could refund all expenses. According to tentative data, *about one thousand exemplars could be sold to world libraries and to individual foreign scholars*. If the price of one complete set of the edition in three volumes will be set at 100 gold rubles, then the income [from marketing the book] will be 100 000 gold rubles.

After the termination of the planning works the Soviet specialists will be able to fulfill the investigation of Rashīd ad-Dīn's chronicle in six years. Four sectors of the Institute of Oriental Studies (the Iranian, Central Asian, Mongolian, and Caucasian Sectors) expressed their unanimous consent to organize and prepare this difficult work in this short period of time. In the middle of the 19th century the Russian professor N.I. Berezin published about ten sheets with translation in a more or less satisfactory manner. Today the Soviet scholarship has a huge amount of Orientalists at its disposal, who have achieved much higher standards [in their work and education] than [their colleagues] a hundred year ago. The Redaction Committee for leading the work will comprise the following [group of scholars]:

1. E. E. Bertel's
2. A. Romaskevich. [Both] Iranists

first volume: *Ta'riḫ-i-mubāraki-Ġāzānī des Rašīd al-Dīn Faḍl Allāh Abī-l-Hair, Geschichte der Ilkhāne Abāgā bis Gaihātū (1265-1295). Kritische Ausgabe mit Einleitung, Inhaltsangabe und Indices von Karl Jahn (Prag, 1941).*]

3. Academician A.N. Samoilovich for the Chaghatay text and as a scientific supervisor on questions about Turkic peoples
4. Academician I.Iu. Krachkovskii for the Arabic and Persian texts
5. Academician I.A. Orbeli, Iranist
6. Corresponding member [of the Academy] A.A. Freiman, Iranist
7. A.Iu. Iakubovskii, for historical research on the history of the Mongol and Turkic peoples
8. Corresponding member N.N. Poppe
9. V.A. Kazakevich, for the Mongol terminology and history
10. G.V. Shitov, Iranist, scientific secretary of the redaction committee.

It is planned to involve an employee of the Iranian sector, L.F. Veksler, for scientific-technical work. Moreover it is planned to include about ten experienced translators-Iranists with good language skills. The above-mentioned difficulties, which made the success of work impossible for researchers who could not combine skills in the Mongol, Arabic, Turkic, and Iranian terminology and the history of different Oriental tribes and peoples, will be overcome by the joint efforts of scholars with various specializations, and by involving the high number of scholars which is required by the big size of the manuscript.

The Directorate of the Institute of Oriental Studies appointed the chief of the Persian sector [Evgenii Bertel's] for managing the whole project. (...) [In the following, Bertel's describes the official duties of the chief and his assistants and provides a calculation of the costs.] Because the chronicle contains huge material on the history of the Mongols and of the Turkic peoples of Central Asia, the Mongol National Republic and the Uzbek SSR will be interested in its publication as well. Hence it will be reasonable to discuss [also] the edition's material support with scientific committees of those republics.

In conclusion, it is worth mentioning that the annual expenses of 39.850 rubles are relatively small and quite acceptable for the budget of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR for a duration of six years. The results of the planned investigation will open up a new world for the history of the different peoples and will be so encompassing that the Academy hardly needs more solid arguments.”¹⁸¹

¹⁸¹ *Dokladnaia zapiska o kriticheskom izdanii i kommentirovannom perevode persidskoi istoricheskoi rukopisi nachala 14 veka Rashid ad-Dina*, ff. 34-39, in: AV IVR RAN, F. 152, Op. 1a, №451, D. 633, *Plan, smeta, protokoly zasedanii, dokladnye zapiski i perepiska po izdaniiu "Istorii Rashid ad-Dina", 1 ianvaria 1936- 29 ianvaria 1936.*

This application was written in summer 1936 and already contained a clear definition of how the project should look like in many details. As Bertel's draft aimed mainly to prove the necessity of the project and to receive financial support from the government, this document was sent to the Presidium of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, which decided whether to accept Bertel's proposal or not. The Bertel's project to publish Rashīd ad-Dīn's chronicle, in the form outlined in the cited document, seems to be his personal (or collective together with his fellows) initiative, because he had to argue why exactly this historical source was of importance and what benefits it would produce for the Soviet state. Certainly, the whole project was born in the context of the Congress of Persian Art and Archeology, though Bertel's did not explicitly refer to it.

Bertel's proposal is a classical example of Soviet Oriental projects, and is interesting from several points of view. It reflects a number of issues that also appear in other official papers produced by the Academy in the early 1930s. First of all, the chronicle is presented as a central major source on the history of the Soviet Orient. The importance of this source for the history of Iran, Azerbaijan, Central Asia and Mongolia was elucidated by scholar of Iranian studies Il'ia P. Petrushevskii in his introductory article to the first volume (1952) of the translated chronicle, entitled *Rashīd ad-Dīn and His Historical Work*.¹⁸² In other words, Rashīd ad-Dīn could be used for the history of the Soviet peoples as well as for the intensification of Soviet political influence on the Muslim world through the mass of information it contains on many nations. It should be mentioned however that at that time there were no attempts to claim Rashīd ad-Dīn as a symbol of a particular republic in the Soviet Union. Second, suggesting a group character of scientific work (in the light of the second five-year plan of the Institute of 1933-1936¹⁸³), the project work was indeed to become a great school for the new, post-war generation of Leningrad Orientalists, who benefitted from the work with prominent researchers who already enjoyed a world reputation in the 1930s. However, the work on Rashīd ad-Dīn had not been included in the second five-year plan of 1933-1937, and scholars had combined the complex work on its translation with other ongoing tasks. It was also in concordance with five-year plan that the author of

¹⁸² I. P. Petrushevskii, „Rashid ad-Din i ego istoricheskii trud,” in: Rashid ad-Din, *Sbornik letopisei*, vol. 1, part 1, 7. Il'ia Pavlovich Petrushevskii (1898-1977) was a first-rate Soviet specialist of Iranian history and socio-economic relations.

¹⁸³ *Proekt vvedeniia k nametkam piatiletnego plana IV Akademii nauk SSSR*, f. 7, in: AV IVR RAN, F. 152, Op. 1a, №293, D. 212, *Plany nauchno-issledovatel'skoi raboty IV na 2-iu piatiletku 1933-1937*, vol. 1.

the project suggest to share expenses with those republics that were supposed to be interested in the edition of Rashīd ad-Dīn. Third, in order to guarantee the Party officials that also economically the project will be a success, Bertel's referred to financial profits from selling the copies of the translated chronicle to foreign scholars. He knew that foreign currency (*valiuta*) was a convenient argument in negotiations with the authorities.

Finally, Bertel's claimed the 'unquestionable' superiority of Soviet scholarship at a time when Persian studies in the bourgeois world were in crisis. Bertel's wrote that this unprecedented initiative was too demanding for capitalist societies, but that it would be successfully completed in 'the country of victorious socialism' and improve the knowledge of the history of the Soviet peoples. This anti-imperialistic critique and rhetoric against Western scholarship goes back to Sergei Ol'denburg, who "[a]lready in 1896 (...) dwelled on the inability of the Europeans to understand 'or even attempt to understand' life in Asia." By the 1930s Ol'denburg came up with his critique of European Orientology in past and present, whereas "the Soviet regime engendered new scholarship of non-European societies, free from Eurocentric prejudices and stereotypes," as he claimed.¹⁸⁴ Already the 1935 International Congress on Persian Art and Archeology at the State Hermitage successfully demonstrated, in the eyes of the Soviet organizers, the superiority of the Soviet Iranian Studies.

Bertel's personally knew Stalin's repressive machine in action, so he understood that an outstanding success of his enterprise had to be motivated not just by "good will", but rather because of a direct "state demand" and the scholars' "full awareness of their responsibility towards the state." From our perspective – and certainly also in Bertel's' own persuasion – these words are terrible and run against the fundamental conviction of academic liberty, but they precisely reflect the situation of Soviet scholarship at that time. The modern Tatarstani scholar of Iranian studies Alsu Arslanova, a specialist on Persian manuscripts, has already remarked that Bertel's reflected the "spirit of his time."¹⁸⁵ Nevertheless, the phenomenon was much deeper than just that.

¹⁸⁴ V. Tolz, *Russia's Own Orient*, 95.

¹⁸⁵ A.A. Arslanova, *Ostalis' knigi ot vremen bylykh...* (Kazan, 2002), 122. This book is peculiar since it is devoted to the historiography of Russian/ Soviet Iranian studies of the Mongol period as well as to textological corrections in the publication of Persian historical accounts on the Golden Horde collected by Baron Tizengauzen and first published by Semen Volin and Aleksandr Romaskevich.

The draft project proposal by Bertel's was preceded by another document by the same author of January 1936 on the chronicle's edition which suggested the following tasks: 1) to identify and decode the social terminology from the text of the manuscripts, and to produce a terminological dictionary; 2) to use the experience of Quatremère, Berezin, Blochet, and other Orientalists; 3) to study other Oriental narratives on Mongol history; 4) to achieve a special decision of the Presidium of the Academy of Sciences confirming the project; 5) to publish an article on the project of publishing Rashīd ad-Dīn in the Soviet Union; 6) to procure the Arabic and Chaghatay translations of the chronicle; 7) to obtain photocopies of the first volume of the chronicle from foreign countries.¹⁸⁶ Old translations into the Volga-Ural Turki were not taken into account because they did not contain the complete text. The list of expenses clearly demonstrates the idea that translation and publication of the medieval chronicle was not just part of a scientific program: it was a political event. Bertel's designed the work for a period of five years: from January 1, 1936 to January 1, 1941, but in reality it took more than forty years to implement the preliminary idea.

After its approval by the Presidium of the Academy of Sciences (probably in the second half of 1936) the government was interested in how the project was proceeding. Thus in 1937 Evgenii Bertel's and Andrei Kovalevskii published two memoranda on the state of the translation work of Rashīd ad-Dīn's opus.¹⁸⁷ Bertel's underlined the idea that only in the USSR this project could be brought to success because the Party, government, and the Presidium of the Academy of Sciences paid special attention to the history of the Soviet peoples. Difficulties were solved by abundant financing, by the acquisition of manuscripts from London, Paris, Istanbul, and Ardebil, and by the collective efforts of specialists in history and languages of the Islamic and Turk-Mongol worlds.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁶ *Plan raboty po izdaniuu i kommentirovannomu perevodu istorii Rashid ad-Dina*, f.1, in: AV IVR RAN, F. 152, Op. 1a, №451, D. 633, *Plan, smeta, protokoly zasedanii, dokladnye zapiski i perepiska po izdaniuu "Istorii Rashid ad-Dina"*, 1 ianvaria 1936- 29 ianvaria 1936.

¹⁸⁷ E.E. Bertel's, "Podgotovka izdaniia polnogo teksta i perevoda 'Sbornika letopisei' Rashid ad-Dina", in: *Istoriik-marksist* 3 (1937), 222-224; A.P. Kovalevskii, "Rabota nad istochnikami po istorii Vostochnoi Evropy i Kavkaza v AN SSR," *Istoriik-marksist* 3 (1937), 197-198. The next official report saw the light in 1940. Refer to: AV IVR RAN, F. 152, Op. 1a, №692, D. 060, *Informatsionnyi material dlia TASS o nauchnykh rabotakh Instituta Vostokovedeniia i Rashid ad-Din*.

¹⁸⁸ E.E. Bertel's, "Podgotovka izdaniia", 224.

The total budget for 1936-1941 was fixed as 239,105 Soviet Roubles and 500 gold rubles¹⁸⁹. In 1936 one US Dollar was officially equivalent to 1.15 Roubles. The huge budget for collective work led to turf wars: for example, there was a conflict around the financing of consultations provided by scholar of Mongol studies Kazakevich. When he was officially on vacation, Kazakevich was ordered to give consultations to the members of the project. In his memorandum he intelligently complained that nobody paid him for that overtime work. In addition, he claimed that “the Mongolian cabinet [where Kazakevich worked] was vitally concerned with the realization of this edition and even *the initiative* of this project substantially *came from the Mongolian cabinet*.”¹⁹⁰

The project presupposed a large international network in Europe, the Near East and Central Asia, including collaboration with ‘bourgeois’ scholars. The work plan included making photocopies from the Bibliothèque Nationale (Paris) and the British Museum (London), trips to Iran and Turkey for the search of manuscripts, and trips to Tashkent and Samarkand for work with Persian and Chaghatay texts. I know two cases when the Iranian cabinet of the Institute of Oriental Studies asked the Presidium of the Academy to help in international affairs. First, Academician Samoilovich and Bertel’s asked three thousands French Francs and fifty-seven British Pounds for copying French and English manuscripts. Second, one previously unstudied copy of Rashīd ad-Dīn was brought to Leningrad in May 1936: an Iranian diplomatic delegation brought this copy to the exhibition of Persian art in the State Hermitage. This manuscript, even though it was a late copy (from 1595-96), had been made from a good original, and it rendered all names in a clear manner. The Leningrad specialists were surprised to find that this manuscript was a full copy of the first volume of the chronicle (including a unique story of Uljaytū Khān’s reign which was not known from any other manuscript) also featuring ninety-eight miniatures of an Indian school.¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁹ *Smeta raskhodov na kriticheskoe izdanie i kommentirovannyi perevod persidskoi istoricheskoi rukopisi nachala 14 veka Rashid ad-Dina, na shest’ let, s 1 ianvaria 1936 po 1 ianvaria 1941*, f. 3, in: AV IVR RAN, F. 152, Opis 1a, №451, D. 633, *Plan, smeta, protokoly zasedanii, dokladnye zapiski i perepiska po izdaniuu “Istorii Rashid ad-Dina”, 1-29 ianvaria 1936*.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, f. 32 (italics are mine).

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, f. 15. Other manuscripts which were used in the edition of Rashid ad-Din’s chronicle are described in: Rashid ad-Din, *Sbornik letopisei*, vol. 3, perevod s persidskogo A.K. Arendsa, pod redaktsiei A.A. Romaskevicha, E.E. Bertel’sa i A.Iu. Iakubovskogo (Moscow, Leningrad, 1946), 9-14; B.W. Robinson, “Rashid ad-Din’s World History: The Significance of the Miniatures,” *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* 2 (1980), 212-222.

There was a methodological problem: how to translate this difficult text into Russian? Is it correct to translate an old text into a modern style? If not, what is the alternative? During one of the first meetings the redaction committee decided to use the Russian language of the 19th century and to ask academician Boris Grekov (1882-1953) about a Russian historian of the past whose style they could use for translation. Scholar of Iranian studies Oleg Akimushkin (1929-2010) told me during an interview that the style of the Great Russian historians Vasilii O. Kliuchevskii (1815-1850) and Sergei V. Solov'ev (1820-1879) was chosen as most appropriate.¹⁹² The Russian language of the 19th century was accepted as best-suited for the translation of a medieval source. Putting aside philological nuances, one might think that this was not just a coincidence or simply an expression of Boris Grekov's admiration of the Tsarist historians. First of all, in the aftermath of Stalin's Great Retreat, 19th-century imperial historiography enjoyed a comeback, while early Soviet historians like Mikhail N. Pokrovskii (1868-1932) had long fallen out of grace.¹⁹³ This was connected to the re-evaluation of the role played by the Russians in the building of the Empire, not as an 'absolute evil,' but rather as an 'elderly brother,' who helped to develop colonized territories. The world history written by a Persian historian was now intended to speak in the tongue of Russian classic of history writing.

As our list of Oriental projects (see above) shows, the majority of the best Soviet Orientalists and almost the whole Institute of Oriental Studies took part in the translation of Rashīd ad-Dīn. While this project did not have problems with financing, the publication suffered from serious delays that resulted from the Second World War. Before the war, in 1939, only the translation by Iranist Al'fred K. Arends (1893-1977)¹⁹⁴ of the third volume was ready for publication. All other parts, including the original Persian text, were only published in the course of the 1940s and 1950s.¹⁹⁵ Two members of the redaction commit-

¹⁹² Interview with Oleg F. Akimushkin, St. Petersburg, 28 January 2010.

¹⁹³ L. Tillet, *The Great Friendship. Soviet Historians on the Non-Russian Nationalities* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1969), 26-31.

¹⁹⁴ Arends worked at the Institute of Oriental Studies between 1936 and 1942. As a German he was sent in exile to Nizhnii Tagil. In 1947 Arends managed to settle in Tashkent, where he chaired department of Iranian philology at Central Asian State University and continued publication of Oriental manuscripts.

¹⁹⁵ Rashid ad-Din, *Sbornik letopisei*, vol. 1, part 1, *Perevod s persidskogo L. Khetagurova, redaktsiia i kommentarii A. Semenova* (Moscow, Leningrad, 1952); vol. 1, part 2 (Moscow, Leningrad, 1952); vol. 2, *Perevod s persidskogo Iu. Verkhovskogo, kommentarii Iu. Verkhovskogo i B. Pankratova, redaktsiia I. Petrushevskogo* (Moscow, Leningrad, 1960); vol. 3, *perevod s persidskogo A.K. Arends, pod redaktsiei A.A. Romaskevicha, E.E. Bertel'sa i A.Iu. Iakubovskogo* (Moscow, Leningrad, 1946); Faḍlallāh Rashīd ad-

tee (Aleksandr Romaskevich and Pavel Ivanov) died during the first years of the war; and Nicolas Poppe fled from the Soviet Union, as we have seen earlier.

Much later, at a special Rashīd ad-Dīn celebration seminar (Tehran, 1-6 November 1969) A.K. Arends, one of the main translators of the chronicle, held a paper on the history of studying *Jāmi' at-tawārīkh* in the Soviet Union.¹⁹⁶ According to this article, the research group (including A.A. Romaskevich, L.A. Khetagurov, A.A. Ali-Zade, O.I. Smirnova, B.I. Pankratov, and A.K. Arends) decided to start their work with the third part of the volume one. The reason for starting with this part was that it had hitherto been almost unavailable for scholars. In 1939 the translation of this part was completed, but due to the war it was published only in 1946 (the second edition appeared in 1957 together with a critical text).¹⁹⁷ After the war, the collective of researchers, who at that time were working on the edition and translation of other parts of the first volume of Rashīd ad-Dīn's chronicle, changed its composition, with Semenov being the new supervisor in place of Bertel's who passed away in 1957. The remaining two parts of the first volume appeared in press in 1952.¹⁹⁸ While one sometimes reads that the Soviet scholars published the entire text of the chronicle, the project presupposed only the publication of the *Ta'rīkh-i Ghāzānī*, i.e. of the first volume (in three parts) of the original chronicle, and not the second volume on the history of Europe, the Hebrews and India.¹⁹⁹ In the introduction to the publication of the first part of the first volume Il'ia Petrushevskii specified that the Soviet project only meant the translation of *Ta'rīkh-i Ghāzānī*, i.e. the first volume (in three parts) of Rashīd ad-Dīn's chronicle. Petrushevskii also underlined the scientific significance of Rashīd ad-Dīn's vol-

Dīn, *Jāmi' at-tawārīkh*, vol. 1, part 1, *Kriticheskii tekst A. Romaskevicha, L. Khetagurova i A. Ali-Zade* (Moscow, 1965); Faḍlallāh Rashīd ad-Dīn, *Jāmi' at-tawārīkh*, vol. 3, *Kriticheskii tekst, podgotovlennii A. Arendsom* (Baku, 1957); Faḍlallāh Rashīd ad-Dīn, *Jāmi' at-tawārīkh*, vol. 2, part 1, *Kriticheskii tekst, predislovie i ukazateli A.A. Ali-Zade, redaksia persidskogo teksta E.E. Bertel'sem i A.A. Romaskevichem* (Moscow, 1980).

¹⁹⁶ A.K. Arends, "The Study of Rashid ad-Din's Jami'ut-Tawarikh in the Soviet Union," *Central Asiatic Journal: Rashid ad-Din's Commemoration Volume (1318-1968)* vol. 14, nos.1-3 (Wiesbaden, 1970), 40-61.

¹⁹⁷ Rashid ad-Din, *Sbornik letopisei*, vol. 3, perevod s persidskogo A.K. Arends, pod redaktsiei A.A. Romaskevicha, E.E. Bertel'sa i A.Iu. Iakubovskogo (Moscow, Leningrad, 1946; 2nd edition: Baku, 1957); Faḍlallāh Rashīd ad-Dīn, *Jāmi' at-tawārīkh*, vol. 3, *Kriticheskii tekst, podgotovlennii A. Arendsom* (Baku, 1957).

¹⁹⁸ Rashid ad-Din, *Sbornik letopisei*, vol. 1, part 1, *Perevod s persidskogo L. Khetagurova, redaktsiia i kommentarii A. Semenova* (Moscow, Leningrad, 1952); vol. 1, part 2 (Moscow, Leningrad, 1952).

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 55.

ume on the Non-Muslim peoples, but did not explain why this other part was not included in the publication.²⁰⁰ This means that the editors knew about the second volume of the chronicle, but did not publish it, because it did not fit into the task of studying the Soviet Orient. Other volumes of the chronicle devoted to the history of the Jews, Europe, and India were evaluated as less interesting from the historical perspective, because more precise and detailed data were given in other sources. In the 1970s-80s these parts were published in the original and in German translation by Karl Jahn,²⁰¹ and therefore one might argue that there was kind of labor division between Jahn's personal life-long efforts and the Soviet collective of Orientalists.

Soviet scholars of Iranian studies were aware of a parallel initiative of editing Rashīd ad-Dīn's chronicle by the Czech Orientalist Karl Jahn (1906-1985). The latter defended his dissertation on Arabic epistology in Prague in 1931. After that his interest in Central Asian history was intensified by short studies in Berlin and by a meeting with Ahmet Zeki Velidi, who had discovered the third volume of Rashīd ad-Dīn's chronicle in Istanbul in 1927 (see above). Obviously, Zeki Velidi influenced Karl Jahn's scientific interests and "became a lifelong friend of Jahn."²⁰² As a result, Karl Jahn started working on Rashīd ad-Dīn, went to Istanbul in 1934, and then presented his Habilitation on the first volume of the chronicle known as *Ta'rīkh-i Ghāzānī* at the German University in Prague in 1938.²⁰³ Even though the Soviet side and Karl Jahn, who edited the parts from Rashīd ad-Dīn's oeuvre for the whole of his life,²⁰⁴ knew about the work of each other, no collaboration or contacts be-

²⁰⁰ I. P. Petrushevskii, „Rashid ad-Din i ego istoricheskii trud,” in: Rashid ad-Din, *Sbornik letopisei*, vol. 1, part 1, *Perevod s persidskogo L. Khetagurova, redaktsiia i kommentarii A. Semenova* (Moscow, Leningrad, 1952), 31.

²⁰¹ *Die Geschichte der Kinder Israels des Rashid ad-Din* (Wien, 1973); *Die Frankengeschichte des Rashid ad-Din* (Wien, 1977); *Die Indiangeschichte des Rashid ad-Din: Einleitung, vollständige Übersetzung, Kommentar und 80 Texttafeln* (Wien, 1980).

²⁰² J.T.P. De Bruijn, "Jahn, Karl Emil Oskar (1906-1985), Czech Orientalist who Specialized in Central Asian History, Persian Historiography, and Turkology," in: *Encyclopedia Iranica*, Online Edition, 15 December 2008, available at <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/jahn-karl-emil-oskar>. Date of visit: 22.04.2012.

²⁰³ *History of Ghāzān Khān. Geschichte Ġāzān-Hān's aus dem Ta'rīh-i-Mubārak-i- Ġāzānī des Rašīd al-Dīn Faḍlallāh b. 'Imād al-Daula Abū-l-Hair* (London, 1940).

²⁰⁴ *Ta'rīkh-i-mubāraki-Ġāzānī des Rašīd al-Dīn Faḍl Allāh Abī-l-Hair, Geschichte der Ilkhāne Abāgā bis Gaihātū (1265-1295)*. Kritische Ausgabe mit Einleitung, Inhaltsangabe und Indices von Karl Jahn (Prag, 1941); *Rashīd al-Dīn's History of India: collected essays with facsimiles and indices* (The Hague, 1965); *Die Chinageschichte des Rašīd ad-Dīn* (Vienna, 1971); *Die Geschichte der Kinder Israels des Rašīd ad-Dīn*

tween them are traceable. The very first time when Karl Jahn visited the Soviet Union was the year 1980, when he traveled to Samarqand and Bukhara by an invitation of the Soviet Academy of Sciences.

Some interesting details on the history of Rashīd ad-Dīn's project were mentioned by Oleg F. Akimushkin during our interview, conducted shortly before Akimushkin's passing away in 2010. According to Akimushkin, the text and Russian translation of the second volume, carried out by Lev A. Khetagurov (1901-1942), were thought to have been destroyed during the German siege of Leningrad. It was a great surprise for Iurii P. Verkhovskii (1891–1962), one of the translators of Rashīd ad-Dīn, when Oleg F. Akimushkin, at that time a new employee at the Institute, discovered both text and Verkhovskii's translation in one of the Institute's offices in 1957. Iosif Orbeli, director of the Leningrad branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies at that time, even though there was a tension between him and Verkhovskii, understood the importance of the rediscovered materials, and soon the book saw the light.²⁰⁵

In 1958, after the death of Aleksandr A. Semenov, Iranist Il'ia P. Petrushevskii replaced him in the position of project leader. The Russian translation of the second volume and the Persian text of the first volume of the *Ta'rīkh-i Ghāzānī* were published under Petrushevskii's direction in 1960 and 1965 respectively.²⁰⁶ The 1971 edition of another part of Rashīd ad-Dīn's heritage, his *Maktūbāt (Correspondence)*, could be regarded as a continuation of the entire project.²⁰⁷ The last part of the edition of the text of *Ta'rīkh-i Ghāzānī* appeared as part of the old Leningrad project under editorship of Abdulkarim Ali-Zade in Baku in 1980.²⁰⁸ Anyway, a full publication of the *Ta'rīkh-i Ghāzānī* in the form suggested by Evgenii E. Bertel's in 1936 was not achieved, because not all Russian translations were accompanied by a critical text of the original. A.K. Arends, in 1971, men-

(Vienna, 1973); *Die Frankengeschichte des Rašīd ad-Dīn* (Vienna, 1977); *Die Indiangeschichte des Rašīd ad-Dīn* (Vienna, 1980).

²⁰⁵ Rashid ad-Din, *Sbornik letopisei*, vol. 2, *Perevod s persidskogo Iu. Verkhovskogo, kommentarii Iu. Verkhovskogo i B. Pankratova, redaktsiia I. Petrushevskogo* (Moscow, Leningrad, 1960).

²⁰⁶ Ibid.; Faḍlallāh Rashīd ad-Dīn, *Jāmi' at-tavārīkh*, vol. 1, part 1, *Kriticheskii tekst A. Romaskevicha, L. Khetagurova i A. Ali-Zade* (Moscow, 1965).

²⁰⁷ Rashid ad-Din, *Perepiska*, ed. by A.I. Falina (Moscow, 1971).

²⁰⁸ Faḍlallāh Rashīd ad-Dīn, *Jāmi' at-tavārīkh*, vol. 2, part 1, *Kriticheskii tekst, predislovie i ukazateli A.A. Ali-Zade, redaktsia persidskogo teksta E.E. Bertel'sem i A.A. Romaskevichem* (Moscow, 1980).

tioned that the remaining materials “have also been prepared for the press and are awaiting their turn of publication.”²⁰⁹ As far as I know they are “awaiting” until the present day in the Archive of Orientalists among other almost finished books that for some reason did not see the light of the day.

The *Jāmi‘ at-tawārīkh* was an important milestone in the series of Soviet philological Oriental projects: we can regard Rashīd ad-Dīn’s publication as the fundament of the grandiose series of source publications under the series title *Monuments of the Literature of the Peoples of the East (Pamiatniki pis’mennosti Vostoka)*, which started in 1959. The Rashīd ad-Dīn project was continued by the edition of the Persian epic by Firdawsī, *Shāh-nāme*. Nine volumes of the latter were published between 1960 and 1971 under the scientific editorship of Evgenii Bertel’s. The start of this series was connected to the 25th International Congress of Orientalists in Moscow in 1960. By 2011 fifty-nine volumes of the *Monuments* series have been published. The main task of this series is still to publish texts and Russian translations from the written heritage of Oriental peoples, from North Africa to Korea.

The edition of Rashīd ad-Dīn’s chronicle was really an event of all-Soviet scale which symbolized the continuity from the pre-revolutionary tradition of Oriental Studies in St. Petersburg to the Soviet scholarly system of collective work. However, this literary monument was not officially tied to one particular Soviet republic (at least until the 1980 Baku edition). The project was central in the creation of a new type of scholarship, i.e. Soviet Oriental studies, since it trained a new generation of scholars. Previous projects had largely been confined to scholars of the pre-revolutionary generations. In the late 1950s and 1960s students entering scholarship saw them as examples of how good work should look like. Next to the much-celebrated works of the ‘classics’ like Bartol’d or Krachkovskii, the new generation now had a model of how philological methods could be combined with Marxist ideology.

1.8 The Kirgiz Group in Leningrad

To turn to the next Oriental project of that era, the Kirgiz project had already been planned by Semen Volin in the late 1930s (probably under Bernshtam’s influence). His plan re-

²⁰⁹ A.K. Arends, “The Study of Rashid ad-Din”, 51.

mained topical after the war and after the end of the Stalin era. In 1954-1957 a special “Kirgiz group” was established at the Leningrad branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies. Scholars were working on Arabic, Persian and Turkic (later also Chinese) sources on the history of the Kirgiz in the 9th-19th centuries. It was Oleg F. Akimushkin, Zoia N. Vorozheikina, Sergei G. Kliashturnyi, Vadim A. Romodin, and Munira A. Salakhedinova who were charged with identifying and translating suitable texts. Obviously, this group was created in order to support the writing of the history of the Kirgiz SSR, which was published as soon as 1956.²¹⁰ Initially, the materials on the history of the Kirgiz were not intended to be published, but rather to be used in typed form in the republic itself. The first volume of this book, which covered Arabic and Persian narratives, appeared only in 1973.²¹¹ The collected translations of sources dealt only with the territory of the Kirgiz SSR and not with the history of the Yenisei Kirgiz in Siberia. The different developments that this ethnic denomination underwent before and after the Mongol invasion was not discussed in the volume.²¹² The technical aspects of the publication (translations, short historical comments with bibliography) were the same as in previous projects. Arabic-script texts were excluded from the publication, which therefore contained only translations, no originals.

According to official data, in 1952 the Kirgiz Branch of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR (since 1955 the Academy of Sciences of the Kirgiz SSR) asked the Leningrad Orientalists for help in the writing of the republic’s history.²¹³ The Kirgiz capital Frunze (Bishkek) had few historians, no Institute of Oriental Studies, and even no collection of manuscripts during the entire Soviet time. It was inevitable that the Kirgiz history would be written by Moscow and Leningrad specialists. Yet I would go even further and argue that even the request for Leningrad help was inspired by Party officials in the Centre. The creation of republics’ histories was too important to leave it to local cadres. In 1952-53 the

²¹⁰ *Istoriia Kirgizii*, ed. by M.P. Viatkin, B.D. Dzhangerchinov, A.P. Okladnikov, et. al (Frunze, 1956).

²¹¹ *Materialy po istorii kirgizov i Kirgizii*, vol. 1 (Frunze, 1973; the 2nd edition: Bishkek, 2002).

²¹² Discontinuities in the history of the ethnic denomination are discussed in: W. Barthold, G. Hazai, “Kirgiz,” in: *EI²*, vol. V (Leiden, 1986), 136; J. Paul, “Nomaden in persischen Quellen,” in: S. Leder, B. Streck (eds.), *Nomadismus aus der Perspektive der Begrifflichkeit. Beiträge der 1. Tagung am 11.7.2011* (Halle, 2002) (*Orientwissenschaftliche Hefte* 3; *Mitteilungen des SFB “Differenz und Integration“* 1), 46.

²¹³ O.F. Akimushkin, “Kirgizskaia gruppa pri institute vostokovedeniia AN SSSR, Stranitsy istorii (1954-1957),” in: *Materialy po istorii kyrgyzov i Kyrgyzstana*, 2nd edition (Frunze, 2002), 310-311.

Presidium of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, the highest scientific institution in the country, repeatedly examined the Kirgiz project, decided to form a special 'Kirgiz group' at the Institute of Oriental Studies and calculated that the costs would amount to 500.000 rubles for a five-year duration. The project was initially led by a certain M.Iu. Iuldashev, who was later replaced by Leningrad scholar of Iranian studies V.A. Romodin. The work team included a number of experienced specialists of Iranian studies, namely Natalia N. Tumanovich (1928-2005), Oleg F. Akimushkin (1929-2010), and Zinaida N. Vorozheikina.

When the scholars who worked in the Kirgiz group jointly compiled a short note on the project with a description of its goals and structure. It was argued that the project should not lead to quick publications; rather the texts were to be disseminated first in typed form among the scholarly community in order to acquaint the specialist with the first results so that they could already be used for the writing of the republic's history. Significantly, this idea was explained by the need for broad historical material for writing the history of the Kirgiz SSR,²¹⁴ which at that time, unlike in the other Central Asian republics, was still to be written. Among the sources to be translated and annotated in Russian Zinaida Vorozheikina also included Central Asian parts of hagiographical literature preserved in the Leningrad Branch of Institute of Oriental Studies, in order to elucidate the process of Islamization among the Kirgiz of the Tien-Shan, but with a special accent on pre-Islamic beliefs.²¹⁵ This fact is remarkable, since the scholars obviously focused not only on court historiography, as was the case in previous source edition projects, but also on religious literature, therefore Islamic Studies in the form of Oriental textology were also taken into account.

The entire translation work of Arabic, Turkic, Persian, and Chinese sources (46 manuscripts!) was finished in 1957, and two volumes of texts were sent in type-script to the Institute of Language, Literature, and History of the Academy of Sciences in Frunze. In 1958 the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kirgizia, satisfied with the results of this research, asked Bobodzhan Gafurov (1908-1977), the Director of the Institute of Oriental Studies, to continue the work of the Kirgiz group for five to seven more years in

²¹⁴ AV IVR RAN, Razriad 2, Op. 6, № 58, *Kratkoe poiasnenie k materialam po istorii kirgizov i Kirgizstana*, f. 1.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, f. 6.

order to translate more sources on Kirgiz history. Moreover, the Kirgiz official A. Kazakbekov frankly asked to publish the finished translations in Moscow, because the typographies in Frunze did not have Arabic-script letters and had no specialists who would be able to correct the text in Oriental languages. Kazakbekov even suggested to achieve the publication before the 25th International Congress of Orientalists, which was to be held in the Soviet Union in 1960.²¹⁶ Unfortunately, I do not know the reason for the long delay of the publication: the first volume with Muslim narratives appeared only in 1973, and the Chinese volume was published as late as in 2003.²¹⁷ Obviously in the Kirgiz case the cooperation did not work so smoothly. As in the previous projects, the final goal was achieved by close collaboration of specialists from Leningrad, Moscow and Frunze, and the Kirgiz Republic received its codified history, based on the previous text edition by Leningrad scholars, in 1956.²¹⁸ This fact allowed Gafurov to stop the work of the Kirgiz group in 1958: the money provided by the Presidium was already spent, the Republic got the result of the work, and local specialists even started writing more specific historical books on the basis of the unpublished translations from Leningrad.²¹⁹

1.9 The Kazakh Project: Completion of the Program

Most probably already before Kazakbekov's letter Gafurov had decided to support the new project in Kazakhstan instead of continuing the Kirgiz project: in 1954 Ivan S. Gorokhvodatskii, the director of the Institute of History, Archeology and Ethnography in Alma-Ata, sent a description of the Kirgiz project as a model for a similar Kazakh project to Dinmukhamed A. Kunaev (1912-1993), who was then President of the Kazakh Acade-

²¹⁶ AV IVR RAN, F. 152, Op. 1a, №1288, D. 633.1, *Perepiska s TsK KP Kirgizii, Institutom istorii AN Kirgizskoi SSR o sokhranении kirgizskoi gruppy pri LO IV i izdании sbornika ee rabot, 27 sentiabria 1958-mart 1959*, f.2. The Kazakbekov's letter is dated from 27 September 1958.

²¹⁷ *Materialy po istorii kirgizov i Kirgizii*, vol. 1; *Materialy po istorii kyrgyzov i Kyrgyzstana*, vol. 2 (Bishkek, 2003).

²¹⁸ *Istoriia Kirgizii*, ed. by M.P. Viatkin, B.D. Dzhamgerchinov, A.P. Okladnikov, et. al (Frunze, 1956). More three editions of the Kirgiz history were published in the Soviet times (1963; 1967-68; 1984-1990). All of these new editions were based on the translated by the Kirgiz group sources, but at a different degree. For example, the 1963 edition does not have references to this project at all; quotations from Oriental texts were given without mentioning the actual source. All of the editions were written collectively by local Kirgiz historians and their Moscow and Leningrad colleagues.

²¹⁹ K.I. Petrov, *K istorii dvizheniia kirgizov na Tian'-Shan' i ikh vzaimodeistvie s oiratami v XIII-XV vv.* (Frunze, 1961); K.I. Petrov, *Ocherki feodal'nykh otnoshenii u kirgizov v XIII-XV vv.* (Frunze, 1961).

my of Sciences and later Secretary General of the Communist Party of Soviet Kazakhstan.²²⁰ Gorokhovodatskii underlined that the investigation of Oriental sources has a great significance for the historiography of Kazakhstan.²²¹ The first attempt to identify a corpus of sources for Kazakhstan had already been undertaken in 1936-1937 by Aleksandr Semenov. Gorokhovodatskii however claimed that the Kazakh project was an initiative of the Institute of History in Alma-Ata (which was established only in 1945). Even if he meant the Kazakhstani Base of the Academy of Sciences that already existed in the 1930s,²²² it is more correct to view the Kazakh project in the context of the other Central Asian/Leningrad projects of source editions which were developed simultaneously and in a centralized manner. In his letter to Kunaev, Gorokhovodatskii mentioned that Aleksandr A. Semenov, who was working in the Turkmen research group at that time, translated several passages on Kazakhs from Arabic and Persian manuscripts of the 14th century (unfortunately, there is no mention of which texts he had in mind).²²³ However, the Kazakh project had been stopped several times in 1936-1937, 1938-1939, and 1946-1947 because of the absence of specialists in Alma-Ata and the lack of funding.²²⁴

In 1946 the publication of sources on the history of the Kazakh Republic was included in the five-year plan of the Institute of History, Archeology and Ethnography in Alma-Ata. It was planned that the first volume would contain narratives on the pre-modern period, i.e. from before the 18th century.²²⁵ This difficult task was assigned to Alkei Kh.

²²⁰ Dinmukhamed Akhmedovich Kunaev (1912-1993) headed the Central Committee of Communist Party in the Kazakh Republic in 1960-1962 and again in 1964-1986. This tenure symbolized the crystallization of Kazakh national consciousness and the sharpening of various forms of nationalism.

²²¹ OVA KN MON RK, F. 2, Op. 10, D. 83, *Perepiska s Institutom istorii, arkheologii i etnografii po nauchnym voprosam, 1954*, f. 164. A year later, in 1955, the similar letter on the necessity of Oriental Studies for the Kazakh SSR was sent by Ivan S. Gorokhovodatskii to the Presidium of the Academy of Sciences of the Kazakh SSR. See details in the paragraph *Reincarnations of the Kazakh Orientalology* in the third chapter.

²²² E.W. Sievers, "Academy Science in Central Asia, 1922-1998," *Central Asian Survey* (June-September, 2003) 22 (2/3), 259.

²²³ OVA KN MON RK, F. 2, Op. 10, D. 83, *Perepiska s Institutom istorii, arkheologii i etnografii po nauchnym voprosam, 1954*, f. 164. See also remarks on Semenov's translations in Viatkin's report about his visit to Alma-Ata in 1940. Viatkin had seen the ready translations, but I did not find these materials in the archive. See: TsGA RK, F. 2057, Op. 3, D. 791, ff. 1-4.

²²⁴ OVA KN MON RK, F. 2, Op. 10, D. 83, *Perepiska s Institutom istorii po nauchnym voprosam za 1954 god*, f. 164.

²²⁵ OVA KN MON RK, F. 11, *Institut istorii, arkheologii i etnografii imeni Chokana Valikhanova Akademii Nauk Kazakhskoi SSR*, Op. 1, D. 7a, Sv. 1, *Tematicheskii plan nauchno-issledovatel'skikh rabot Instituta na 1946 god*, f. 1.

Margulan (1904-1985) who had studied in Leningrad before WWII. Margulan defended his first dissertation (*kandidatskaia*) at the Leningrad Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies with a thesis about official documents of the Golden Horde (*yarliq* and *bitik*).²²⁶ Hence the Kazakh scholars assumed that Margulan knew the necessary Oriental languages and had skills in reading old manuscripts. But in fact Margulan failed to provide results, and the work was prolonged until the end of 1949.²²⁷ In 1947, criticizing the year work plan of the Kazakh Institute of History, Leningrad historian Mikhail P. Viatkin asked in an internal document: “Is there any publication of sources on the history of the Kazakh SSR? It is desirable that this work would not be frozen.”²²⁸ Eventually, the whole idea collapsed because of the absence of elementary monographs on the main questions, mostly in the area of source studies, but also in methodology.

Against the background of this early but failed attempt Gorokhvodatskii suggested in 1954 to ask the Coordination Council at the USSR Academy of Sciences to oblige the Kirgiz group to collect materials related also to Kazakh history. He recommended sending Sapar K. Ibragimov, a collaborator of the Institute of History in Alma-Ata, to Leningrad in order to include him into the Kirgiz group.²²⁹ Sapar Ibragimov, a Kazakh historian who had obtained his education in Alma-Ata and then went to the Leningrad branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies, indeed joined the Kirgiz group. His figure personified the succession of different Oriental projects in the philological area. The title of his own source edition project on the Kazakhs even underlined this continuity: it was called *Collection of Materials on the History of the Kazakh Khanates*. This title was similar to that of the two volumes of Tizengauzen’s materials on the history of the Golden Horde, the second of which had been published in the stream of the Soviet Oriental projects in 1941.

²²⁶ [A.Kh. Margulan,] *Avtobiografiia*, f. 7, in: AV IVR RAN, F. 152, Op. 3, №392, D. 339.2, *Margulan Al’kei Khakanovich (soiskanie stepeni doktora istoricheskikh nauk po teme “Epicheskie skazaniia kazakhskogo naroda”)*, 24 sentiabria 1945 – 8 iunia 1946. His work on the Golden Horde Khans documents was not published and is totally forgotten today. There are absolutely no references to this dissertation in the literature.

²²⁷ OVA KN MON RK, F. 11, Op. 1, D. 5, Sv. 1, *Piatiletnie plany nauchno-issledovatel’skikh rabot instituta i ego sektorov na 1946-1950 gody*, f. 14.

²²⁸ *Ibid.*, D. 34, Sv. 2, *Tematicheskii plan nauchno-issledovatel’skikh rabot Instituta na 1948 god i zamechaniia k planu*, f. 6.

²²⁹ OVA KN MON RK, F. 2, Op. 10, D. 83, *Perepiska s Institutom istorii po nauchnym voprosam za 1954 god*, f. 165.

Around 1958 Sapar Ibragimov changed his conception of the volume and wrote a general plan for a new edition of medieval written sources on the Kazakh history. The project was entitled *Collection of Materials Related to the History of Kazakhstan in the 13th-16th Centuries*.²³⁰ According to the document, the project was supposed to be completed in 1958-1959, which must have been very unrealistic. The book was to have two parts: the second edition of Tizengauzen's Arabic volume and an original part called *Kazakhstan in the 13th-16th Centuries*. Ibragimov's plan also mentioned the idea to edit some Persian and Arabic texts, but without an explanation of concrete steps and without mentioning which texts were envisaged for publication. In other characteristics this book was to follow the previous editions of this kind (translations with descriptions of texts and a bibliography). In 1958 there were only two Kazakh scholars who participated in the project: Ibragimov and Nadzhib N. Mingulov (in Alma-Ata). Ibragimov also promised to attract more specialists from the Leningrad branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies. Two famous Soviet Orientalists, Turkologist Aleksandr N. Borovkov and Arabic specialist Evgenii A. Beliaev, were supposed to be members of the redaction committee.

A little earlier, in 1957, Akai N. Nusupbekov became director of the Institute of History, Archeology, and Ethnography in Alma-Ata and undertook active efforts for the establishment of a Kazakh center of classical philological Oriental studies. Actually, this was a result of the 20th Party Congress of 1956 and its call for the creation of new outposts of Oriental Studies in the republics of the Caucasus and Central Asia.²³¹ In the late 1950s and early 1960s a series of projects to translate and publish Oriental narratives appeared in the Institute of History in Almaty. They were so numerous that sometimes it is unclear whether these projects duplicated each other or simply developed and changed their titles and content over time.

Between 1956 and 1960 Ibragimov published a multitude of short extracts from sources related to political and socio-economical topics.²³² His activity was tragically

²³⁰ OVA KN MON RK, F. 11, Op. 1, D. 231, Sv. 17, *Plan rabot po temam, prospekt monografii za 1962-1969 goda*, f. 163.

²³¹ P.M. Shastitko, *Vek ushel: stseny iz istorii otechestvennogo vostokovedeniia* (Moscow, 2009), 64.

²³² S. K. Ibragimov, V. S. Khrakovskii, "Makhmud Kashgarskii o rasselenii plemen na territorii Kazakhstana v XI veke," in: *Vestnik Akademii Nauk Kazakhskoi SSR* 11 (1958), 53-58; S. K. Ibragimov, "Nekotorye istochniki po istorii Kazakhstana XV-XVIII vekov," in: *Vestnik Akademii Nauk Kazakhskoi SSR* 9 (1956), 51-60; S. K. Ibragimov, "Sochinenie Mas'uda b. Osmana Kukhistani "Tarikh-i Abu-l-khair-khani," in: *Izvestiia Akademii Nauk Kazakhskoi SSR. Seriya istorii, arkhologii i etnografii*, 3/8 (1958), 85-102; S. K.

brought to an end by his unexpected death in 1960. His work on the collection of sources was not finished. The project was one more time facing the danger of collapse. But exactly in this year, 1960, Nusupbekov employed a new researcher, Veniamin P. Iudin. As a member of the Sector of the Pre-Revolutionary History of Kazakhstan, Iudin became leader of the project and decidedly changed its structure. The new program seemed to be more independent from Leningrad influence. Particularly, there is no mention anymore of a second edition of Tizengauzen²³³; rather, emphasis was now put on the collection of Muslim, Chinese, and Russian sources on the history of the Kazakh khanates. These sources were meant to complement the information from Tizengauzen's manuscripts. In 1959 Ibragimov's book under the title *Materials on the History of the Golden Horde* was sent to the Moscow publishing house *Vostochnaia literatura (Oriental Literature)*, but was not published (perhaps because of Ibragimov's death).²³⁴ However, the idea itself remained quite topical for the Soviet and then post-Soviet scholarship. In the second half of the 20th century Leningrad Arabist Anas B. Khalidov voiced his intention to produce a new edition of Tizengauzen's books, but his plan was not realized. In the early 2000s the materials on the history of the Golden Horde were finally published in Moscow²³⁵ and Almaty.²³⁶ How-

Ibragimov, "Shaibani-name" Binai kak istochnik po istorii Kazakhstana XV veka," in: *Trudy sektora vostokovedeniia Akademii Nauk Kazakhskoi SSR*, vol. 1 (Almaty, 1959), 190-207; S. K. Ibragimov, "Qazaq Tarikhinin keibir zhana derekteri zhoninde," in: *Izvestiia Akademii Nauk Kazakhskoi SSR. Serii istorii, arkhologii i etnografii*. 1/9 (1959), 75-78; S. K. Ibragimov, "Futukhat-khani" Binai kak istochnik po istorii Kazakhstana vtoroi poloviny XV veka," in: *25 mezhdunarodnyi kongress vostokovedov. Doklady delegatsii SSSR* (Moscow, 1960); S. K. Ibragimov, "Novye materialy po istorii Kazakhstana XV-XVI vekov," in: *Istoriia SSSR* 4 (1960), 152-158; S. K. Ibragimov, "K istorii Kazakhstana XV veka," in: *Voprosy filologii i istorii stran sovetskogo i zarubezhnogo Vostoka* (Moscow, 1961), 172-181; S. K. Ibragimov, "Mikhman-nama-i Bukhara" Ruzbekhana kak istochnik po istorii Kazakhstana XV-XVI vekov," in: *Novye materialy po drevnei i srednevekovoi istorii Kazakhstana. Trudy Instituta istorii, arkhologii i etnografii Akademii Nauk Kazakhskoi SSR*, vol. 8 (Alma-Ata, 1960), 152-153.

²³³ OVA KN MON RK, F. 11, Op. 1, D. 288, Sv. 21, *Spravka o prichinakh uprazhneniia otдела istorii sopredel'nykh stran Zarubezhnogo Vostoka, 1963*, f. 3.

²³⁴ Ibid., Op. 1, D. 304, Sv. 21, *Protokoly zasedanii otдела istorii dorevolutsionnogo Kazakhstana, 1963 god*, f. 64.

²³⁵ *Zolotaia Orda v istochnikakh*, vol. 1, *Arabskie i persidskie sochineniia, Sbornik materialov, otnosiashchikhsia k istorii Zolotoi Ordy, v perevodakh V.G. Tizengauzena*, Sostavlenie, vvodnaia stat'ia i kommentarii R.P. Khrapachevskogo (Moscow, 2003).

²³⁶ *Istoriia Kazakhstana v arabskikh istochnikakh*, vol. 1, *Sbornik materialov, otnosiashchikhsia k istorii Zolotoi Ordy, Izvlecheniia iz arabskikh sochinenii, sobrannye V.G. Tizengauzenom, pererabotannoe i dopolnennoe izdanie* (Almaty, 2005); *Istoriia Kazakhstana v persidskikh istochnikakh*, vol. 4, *Sbornik materialov, otnosiashchikhsia k istorii Zolotoi Ordy, Izvlecheniia iz persidskikh sochinenii, sobrannye V.G. Tizengauzenom i obrabotannye A.A. Romaskevichem i S.L. Volinym, dopolnennoe i pererabotannoe izdanie* (Almaty, 2006).

ever, the edition by Roman Khrapachevskii was devoid of Arabic and Persian texts as well as of some of Tizengauzen's comments, while the Kazakh Orientalists not only reproduced the original books (1881, 1941), but also performed the necessary corrections of the readings and provided references to the new literature. However, some extracts from Turkic (Ottoman and Chaghatay languages) manuscripts remained unpublished at the Archive of Orientalists in St. Petersburg.

The next five-year plan (1959-1964) included as a research topic *The Kazakh Khanates in the 15th-18th Centuries*, a project led by T.Zh. Shoinbaev.²³⁷ Among the scholars involved in this plan were V.Ia. Basin, V.S. Kuznetsov, K. Zhunisbaev, A.A. Ibragimova, N.N. Mingulov, and V.P. Iudin. The anonymous author of this project (obviously, Veniamin Iudin) admitted that the lack of sources was the main obstacle for the study of major questions: the formation of Kazakh nationality (*narodnost'*) as well as statehood, socio-economic relations (the question of feudalism) and international relations in the medieval epoch. The Russian tradition of ethnographic studies presupposed a triad of successive historical forms of ethnicity, namely tribe – nationality – nation (*plemia – narodnost' – natsia*). Ideally, these stages corresponded with respective socio-economic formations in the Marxist historical framework, thus tribes belonged to primitive system, nationalities appeared in the feudal epoch, and the nation was a result of capitalistic development.²³⁸

In 1964 the scope of work had expanded significantly as is obvious from a special document²³⁹ (*spravka*) devoted to the correction of research plans. Now it was planned to collect, translate and publish not only Persian, Turkic, and Arabic texts, but also Chinese and Slavic sources. The new version of the project suggested also writing articles based on this fresh material.

A similar project on sources was developed simultaneously also on the history of Eastern Turkestan (mostly Chinese territory at that time). Since its foundation in 1946 the Institute of History in Alma-Ata had a section of Uighur studies. This topic was of special interest for the Soviet government because of the unstable relations with the People's Re-

²³⁷ OVA KN MON RK, F. 11, Op. 1, D. 231, Sv. 17, *Programma rabot po temam, prospekt monografii za 1962-1969*, f. 79.

²³⁸ M. Laruelle, "Continuité des élites intellectuelles, continuité des problématiques identitaires. Ethnologie et 'ethnogenèse' à l'Académie des Sciences d'Ouzbékistan," *Cahiers d'Asie centrale* 13/14 (2004), 56.

²³⁹ OVA KN MON RK, F. 11, Op. 1, D. 341, Sv. 24, *Spravka po teme "Sbornik materialov po istorii kazakhskikh khanstv v XV-XVIII vekakh"*, 1964 god, 6 ff.

public of China during the second half of the 20th century.²⁴⁰ Hence Uighur studies in the Soviet Union (especially in Kazakhstan) underwent a spasmodic development.²⁴¹ The project on Uighur history was drawn up in a way quite similar to the Kazakh project. This was perhaps because both of them were written by Veniamin Iudin, a specialist in Uighur studies.²⁴² The project on Eastern Turkestan, intended for the same five years (1959-1964), was entitled *Socio-Economic Relations and State Development in Eastern Turkestan in the 9th to the First Half of the 18th Century*.²⁴³ Among the researchers (a leader was not mentioned) were the specialists in Uigur studies I.N. Kabirov, Iu.G. Baranova, Kh.Kh. Vakhidov, Sinologist Aleksandr Maliavkin, and Iranist Klavdia Pishchulina. It was planned to work with manuscript collections in Leningrad and Tashkent as well as with the Soviet and Western European literature on the history of Central Asia, Eastern Turkestan, and Mongolia. The work was divided into two parts: sources and articles. A later document mentions plans to edit already three volumes of sources and two monographs on socio-economic relations and state development in Eastern Turkestan in the 9th to 12th and the 13th to the first half of the 18th century, respectively.²⁴⁴ None of these ambitious plans materialized, partly because material resources were lacking, partly because of the lack of specialists.

Chinese sources continued to be an object of study in the project on medieval Kazakh history. In 1964 the expected results of work were discussed in an anonymous document (*spravka*)²⁴⁵; judging from the style of this text, it was written by Veniamin Iudin, the head of the research group. One of my arguments in this thesis is the continuity of Soviet Oriental research; in particular I maintain that all Soviet Oriental projects in the historical-

²⁴⁰ This project had nothing to do with the pre-revolutionary tradition of Russian expeditions and investigation of non-Islamic cultures in Eastern Turkestan.

²⁴¹ A. Kamalov, "Uyghur Studies in Central Asia: A Historical Review," in: *Asian Research Trends, New series*, 1 (2006), 1-32 (offprint); A. Kamalov, "The Uyghurs as a Part of Central Asian Commonality: Soviet Historiography on the Uyghurs," in: *Situating the Uyghurs between China and Central Asia* (Aldershot, 2007), 31-45.

²⁴² See about him my paragraph *Veniamin Iudin: an Oppressed Orientalist* in the third chapter.

²⁴³ OVA KN MON RK, F. 11, Op. 1, D. 231, Sv. 17, *Programma rabot po temam, prospekt monografii za 1962-1969*, f. 30.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, D. 184, Sv. 13, *Problemno-tematicheskii plan Instituta na 1959-1965*, f. 21.

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, D. 341, Sv. 24, *Spravka po teme "Sbornik materialov po istorii kazakhskikh khanstv v 15-18 vekakh"*, 1964 god, 6 ff.

philological area – also the Kazakh one – followed the same methodology and style of investigation that was based on the experience of the Leningrad school of classical Oriental studies. This is why I would like to place here the full text of Iudin’s report, showing that it clearly reflects in style, structure and political claims the spirit and intention of the Rashīd ad-Dīn edition project that had been written by Evgenii Bertel’s in 1936.

“At present, medieval studies is one of the most important scientific areas of Soviet historical scholarship. But if questions of the Russian Middle Ages are poorly studied, the same issues related to Kazakhstan are even less investigated. The absence of published sources is the main obstacle on our way. The Kazakhs did not have their own historiography.²⁴⁶ Existing information is dispersed over different sources which were written in other countries by other peoples in various languages, first of all in Oriental tongues. The available translations have become obsolete; they do not comply with the modern [standards of] Oriental Studies, they are short and also became a bibliographical rarity. *The true history* [here and in the following: italics mine, A.B.] of medieval Kazakhstan can not be reconstructed on this basis.

At the same time, the study of medieval history has enormous importance because it allows us to disprove *wrong opinions and various speculative fabrications (izmyshleniia) of certain foreign circles which pursue political aims, in particular in territorial questions.*²⁴⁷

Hence the topic *Collection of Materials on the History of the Kazakh Khanates* was included into the scientific work plan of the Institute of History, Archeology and Ethnography in 1960. The work was finished by the collective of scholars in 1964. The collection contains extracts from important Persian, Turkic and Chinese sources containing the most important information on the history of Kazakhstan in the 15th to 18th centuries. Some of these sources were known to us previously, others were completely unknown. The list of sources comprises works as the *Ta’rīkh-i Rashīdī*, *Bahr al-Asrār*, *Ta’rīkh-i Qipchāq-khānī*, ‘*Abdallāh-nāme* (in Persian), *Ta’rīkh-i Kāshghar*,

²⁴⁶ [This claim contradicts Iudin’s own conception of ‘oral steppe historiography’ which will be treated in details in the third chapter, but perfectly fits into the early Orientalist discourse on the Kazakhs as a non-historical people].

²⁴⁷ [This reference certainly referred to Chinese territorial claims on Semirech’e. After the 20th Party Congress Soviet-Chinese relations deteriorated. Exactly in 1964, when Iudin wrote this proposal, Mao claimed that capitalism has won over in the Soviet Union. S. Radchenko, *Two Suns in the Heavens. The Sino-Soviet Struggle for Supremacy, 1962-1967* (Washington, Stanford, 2009).]

Islām-nāme, Ta’rīkh-i amniye (in Turkic), *Da Qing Gaozong Chun huang di shi li*, and *Huang Chao Fan Bu Yao Lue* (in Chinese)²⁴⁸ etc.

Extracts from such Oriental sources allow for a new investigation of medieval Kazakh history, in particular with regard to the ethno-genesis and formation of the Kazakh nationality (*narodnost’*), the origin and development of Kazakh statehood, the ethnic history of the Kazakh people, socio-economic history, the formation of the Kazakh Hordes (*zhuz*), as well as political, economic, and cultural relations with neighboring peoples and countries. In particular, *the entire corpus of texts allows us to reject certain statements that large regions [of the Kazakh SSR] have for ages belonged to China.*

It is worth mentioning that in the Soviet Union there are no recent studies of sources on the medieval history of Kazakhstan, except some insignificant articles and extracts from sources for very specific questions.²⁴⁹ This lack is even more striking in comparison with the numerous monographs, source publications and translations in the republics of Central Asia and *even in Kirgizia.*²⁵⁰

The present volume received approval from specialists from Alma-Ata, Moscow, and Leningrad. In the interest of the development of historical science, a speedy publication of the already [compiled and translated] *Collection of Materials* is demanded. It is necessary to publish the book in two parts by 1967:

1. Extracts from Persian and Turkic sources
2. Extracts from Chinese sources

The first part contains an introduction “The Persian and Turkic Sources on the History of the Kazakh Khanates in the 15th-18th Centuries”,²⁵¹ a corpus of extracts

²⁴⁸ [According to St. Petersburg Sinologist Vladimir A. Beliaev, the first of these two Chinese titles refers to the work entitled 大清高宗純皇帝實錄 and written during the reign of Qian Long, Emperor of China, Qing dynasty (1711-1799), who ruled between 1735 and 1796. The second one is nothing else but 皇朝 藩部 要畧, which was published in 1846 in the years of Emperor Dao Guang’s rulership (Qing dynasty). I am very grateful to Vladimir Beliaev for his comment upon this entry.]

²⁴⁹ [This statement indicates Iudin’s authorship of this text. According to my interview with Prof. Tursun I. Sultanov (Oriental faculty of St. Petersburg University, 25.09.2009), Sapar Ibragimov tended to make mistakes in translations (especially, of Persian narratives), that is why Iudin rejected almost all of Ibragimov’s drafts and regarded the latter’s work (without directly saying so) as ‘unsubstantial’. Cf. also: OVA KN MON RK, F. 11, Op. 1, D. 304, Sv. 21, *Protokoly zasedanii otдела istorii dorevolutsionnogo Kazakhstana, 1963*, f. 41.]

²⁵⁰ [Indeed, at that time the Kirgiz colleagues had a solid number of published translated sources in their possession. Several years after Iudin’s complaint a monograph on Oriental sources was published in Frunze: O. Karaev, *Arabskie i persidskie pamiatniki 9-12 vekov o kirgizakh i Kirgizii* (Frunze, 1968).]

²⁵¹ [This introductory part was issued only in 2001, because of a personal conflict between Iudin and the Institute’s administration (from an interview with Irina V. Erofeeva by the author, Institute of Nomadic Stud-

from various sources, references and indexes (...). S.K. Ibragimov, V.P. Iudin, K.A. Pishchulina, N.N. Mingulov, A.A. Ibragimova as well as O. Akimushkin and M. Salakhedinova, employees of the Leningrad branch of the Institute of Peoples of Asia and Africa²⁵² of the Academy of Sciences, participated in the preparation of the first part of this compendium (...).

The second part will have the following structure: analytical introduction, translated texts, comments, and indexes. Extracts from the chronicle of the Tsing dynasty and several other works will form the core of the second volume.”²⁵³

The project in question and Rashīd ad-Dīn’s project have a number of similarities. First of all, they suggested to bring into circulation sources that had hitherto been poorly studied or unknown. Second, the authors of the projects frankly underlined the political background of the works they initiated. Seemingly, the first Marxist scholar who brought up the opposition ‘Soviet Orientology vs. bourgeois Orientology’ was Mikhail Pavlovich, targeting director of Asiatic Museum, Sergei Ol’denburg, in 1922. Ol’denburg appropriated the same expression in his article in 1931. He wrote that Soviet scholarship used the method of dialectical materialism and that it united the study of the West and the East.²⁵⁴

Anti-imperialistic and anti-bourgeois rhetoric in scientific works was an important instrument of legitimacy not only against ‘Western’ scholarship, but also towards the heritage of pre-revolutionary Russian Oriental Studies. Even Academician Vasilii Bartol’d fell under strong Marxist criticism (especially in 1930, shortly before his death) as a bourgeois historiographer who supposedly did not understand and did not use Marxist methodology.²⁵⁵ In 1956 Geoffrey Wheeler wrote that “until recently Soviet writers have contrived to

ies, Almaty, 22 June 2010). See: V.P. Iudin, “Persidskie i tiurkskie istochniki po istorii kazakhskogo naroda XV-XVIII vekov,” in: V.P. Iudin, *Tsentral’naia Aziia v XIV-XVIII vekakh glazami vostokoveda* (Almaty, 2001), 17-71].

²⁵² [This was the official name of the Institute of Oriental Studies of the USSR Academy of Sciences in 1960-1969.]

²⁵³ OVA KN MON RK, F. 11, Op. 1, D. 341, Sv. 24, *Spravka po teme “Sbornik materialov po istorii kazakhskikh khanstv v 15-18 vekakh”, 1964 god*, ff. 1-6.

²⁵⁴ S.F. Ol’denburg, *Vostok i Zapad v sovetskikh usloviakh* (Moscow, Leningrad, 1931), 14-15. This link was brilliantly studied by Vera Tolz, who compared this critique with that of Edward Said. See: Vera Tolz, *Russia’s Own Orient*, 88-101.

²⁵⁵ Iu. Bregel, “Barthold and Modern Oriental Studies,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, vol. 12, no. 3 (Nov. 1980), 391-395.

give the impression that most of the work of Tsarist Orientalists was of little or no value... [a] frequent criticism of Tsarist Orientalists is that they were too ready to defer to and quote from the works of Western scholars.”²⁵⁶ Attacking their Western colleagues and Tsarist predecessors, Soviet Orientalists were setting up their own identity and a belief in their leadership in the international field. This relational self-identification is apparent from the title of the new central journal, *Soviet Oriental Studies* (*Sovetskoe vostokovedenie*), launched in May 1955. There was no journal with an analogous name (for example, “French” or “German Oriental Studies”) in Europe. There were mainly journals of institutions, such as the *Journal asiatique*, the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* or *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*. However, this opposition to the West was not an exclusive feature of Soviet science but characteristic for the entire Soviet system. According to Yuri Bregel’s notes on the 1930s, this black-and-white picture was part of the whole Soviet propaganda: “Soviet citizens should know that they not only lived better than people in other parts of the world, they also had a better history. The glorious present must have a counterpart in the glorious past [...]. Soviet historians of Central Asia are required to demonstrate the great cultural heritage of the peoples of Central Asia to counteract the bourgeois falsifiers of history who allegedly try to depreciate this heritage.”²⁵⁷

In addition, the text of the projects reveals a competition between the Kazakh Republic and the Kirgiz Republic. Already the start of the collection of narratives about the Kazakh history was tied to the analogous project on the history of the Kirgiz people in the early 1950s that we have analyzed before. The geographical location of Kazakhstan and Kirgizia made it necessary to take into account Chinese sources and historical accounts which related to the history of Eastern (“Chinese”) Turkestan, i.e. Xinjiang. This factor stressed the political significance of Muslim sources which gave legitimacy to the modern boundaries of the USSR and China. Kazakh Uighur studies confirmed existing boundaries without challenging China’s claim on Xinjiang. Next to the investigation of Kazakh history, the study of the Uighur people was a central element of post-WWII scholarship in Alma-Ata.

While the debates around the Kazakh history had already flared up immediately after the publication of its first official historical outline in 1943, the most significant endeavor

²⁵⁶ G. Wheeler, “Oriental Studies in the USSR,” *Soviet Studies*, vol. 7, no. 3. (Jan., 1956), 296.

²⁵⁷ Y. Bregel, *The Role of Central Asia*, 2.

of this kind took place in the 1970s when archeologists and Orientalists united the results of their long-time investigations in a five-volume series *History of the Kazakh SSR*. The texts translated in the *Materials on the History of the Kazakh Khanates* of 1969 were widely used in the second volume of this edition.²⁵⁸

In fact, the Kazakh project was the last among the philological projects devoted to the publication of sources on the history of a particular republic. Formally, the project had close ties with the Leningrad Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies: in particular, Oleg F. Akimushkin and Munira A. Salakhedinova translated several texts for the volume. The bulk of the work, however, was done by scholars of the Institute of History in Alma-Ata. This sets the Kazakh project aside from the Turkmen and Kirgiz projects: the local research group became able to do the work which had hitherto been dominated by Leningrad scholarship. On the other hand, all of the participants of the project had studied in Moscow and then worked together on several themes. While thus conditions were good for establishing a separate school of Oriental studies in Kazakhstan, in Chapter III we will see that this did not materialize.

The history of philological projects had a post-scriptum. In 1974 the Kazakh scholar of Arabic studies Bulat I. Kumekov, Head of the Sector of pre-Revolutionary History of Kazakhstan at the Institute of History in Alma-Ata, tried to continue with the identification and translation of Islamic sources on the history of the Republic. Kumekov designed an ambitious project of studying manuscripts from Turkey, especially in Istanbul archives.²⁵⁹ The directorate of the Institute (i.e., Director Akai N. Nusupbekov and his deputy Grigorii F. Dakhshleiger) asked support from the Presidium of the Academy of Sciences of the Kazakh USSR. These highest echelons of Kazakh scholarship however rejected Kumekov's request.

In his application Kumekov was arguing that the most important sources are kept in the archives of Istanbul due to the active efforts of the Ottoman rulers who collected rare

²⁵⁸ *Istoriia Kazakhskoi SSR. S drevneishikh vremen do nashikh dnei, v piati tomakh*, vol. 2, *Razvitiie feodal'nykh otnoshenii. Obrazovanie kazakhskoi narodnosti i Kazakhskogo khanstva*, ed.by S.G. Agadzhanov, B.E. Kumekov, A.Kh. Margulan, K.A. Pishchulina (Alma-Ata, 1979). More details on writing national histories are in the second chapter of this thesis.

²⁵⁹ OVA KN MON RK, F. 11, Op. 1, D. 1036, Sv. 96, *Dokladnye, svedeniia i perepiska po voprosam izucheniiia Stambul'skogo fonda vostochnykh rukopisei (Turtsiia), raboty po izucheniiu arkhologicheskikh pamiatnikov v zone Kapchagaiskogo moria i raiona Chulak-Tau po organizatsii Otdela istorii kul'tury*, 1974, ff. 1-4.

books and manuscripts from all over the Muslim world. Large Turkish archives had been of special interest for Russian Oriental Studies since the publication of Bartol'd's 1926 report on the manuscript collections there.²⁶⁰ Kumekov was very persistent in his aim to go to Istanbul: he claims to have submitted his letter no less than fifteen times, but without any result. In an interview he explained this failure with the difficulties of international scholarly exchange in the Soviet time.²⁶¹ This is certainly true, but in my opinion his lack of success was rather due to the lack of political interest and financial possibilities from the side of the Presidium. In the early 1970s the Kazakh Republic had already obtained both the complete set of historical books according to the well-known model: a collection of translated sources and a general outline of the history from ancient times until the present day. The Academy's main efforts at that time were concentrated on the archeological investigations in the middle Syr Darya valley and on the reconstruction of the mausoleum of Khwāja Aḥmad Yasawī in the city of Turkestan (on which see chapter four).²⁶² Yet even in the 1970s the investigation of Turkestan began slowly, suffering from a lack of specialists and resources.

Obviously, the idea to collect sources on the Kazakh history in Istanbul had the same methodological direction as the earlier Oriental philological enterprises of the 1930s-70s. However, this project was not supported because it was an individual enterprise, and also because it lacked the connections to the central centers of Orientology in Moscow and Leningrad, that were so crucial in all previous philological projects.

Conclusion

The Soviet government and the national republics generously supported philological Oriental projects led by the Leningrad Orientalists and, later, also by local specialists in collaboration with Leningrad colleagues. By cutting medieval court historiography into national pieces Orientalists contributed much to the process of history-writing in Central

²⁶⁰ V.V. Bartol'd, "Otchet o komandirovke v Turtsiiu [1926]," in: V.V. Bartol'd, *Sochineniia*, vol. 8, *Raboty po istochnikovedeniiu* (Moscow, 1973), 462-464.

²⁶¹ Interview with Bulat Kumekov by the author, Institute of History, Almaty, Kazakhstan, 12 July 2010.

²⁶² OVA KN MON RK, F. 11, Op. 1, D. 923, Sv. 80, *Dokumenty po voprosam nauchno-issledovatel'skikh proektnykh i restavratsionnykh rabot na arkhitekturnom komplekse khodzha Akhmeda Iasavi*, 1972-1976, f. 42.

Asian republics. It was a necessary step towards a national delimitation in the cultural sphere which, as history has clearly demonstrated, appeared to be even more powerful than just the establishment of political borders between the republics. I would not go as far as claiming that these projects envisaged the full nationalization of the medieval texts themselves, even though the authors of the published sources were often claimed as representatives of this or that particular nation or at least a carriers of the cultural heritage of this or that nation. Still, Soviet Orientalists for the first time read classical texts through an ethnic prism, trying to filter out only the historical information that pertained to one particular republic.

The philological projects of the Soviet Oriental Studies of the 1930s-70s had a number of common features. They comprised the discovery, translation, and publication of Arabic, Turkic, Persian, and later also Chinese written sources on the history of the newly established Soviet Republics where Muslims were the majority population. According to official documents of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, the study of the Soviet Orient became the main task of the Institute of Oriental Studies in Leningrad. This task of the Institute was defined by the Presidium of the Academy of Sciences in 1930. In contrast, the Tashkent centre of classical Oriental studies hardly played any significant role in this process, slowly losing its former role as a regional metropolis for Central Asian studies. It is clear from the archival sources that all of the seven projects were planned already during the 1930s (and some of them were already completed before WWII). This period is very important for understanding the mechanisms and development of Soviet Orientology until the end of the USSR – and even beyond 1991 to the present day. According to the idea of the Party officials the creation of national republics in Central Asia was to be accompanied by the collection of sources (the translation of Islamic texts and the organization of the large-scale complex archeological expeditions) and the production of an official, codified version of history for each republic. Producing these volumes was a task of two generations of Soviet Orientalists: the old generation that began their career in the 1920s and the 1930s and the young one that entered the Institutes in the 1950s. Philological projects were carried out only by ‘secular’ Orientalists without any participation of Islamic religious scholars; they were excluded from the interpretation of historical narratives. This niche was fully taken by scholars at scientific institutes under governmental control, and on state and Party demand.

Leningrad Orientology also comprised the production of manuscript catalogues and often huge edition of the Oriental literary monuments. In this chapter I studied only that part of the history of the Leningrad Orientology which was strongly connected to the development of the discipline in the local republican centers. The publication of sources in the framework of a certain scientific program followed several general rules. The majority of the projects had a striking ‘anti-bourgeois and anti-imperialistic’ bias which was stressed as a watershed between the pre-revolutionary and European Orientology on the one hand and the new Soviet scholarship on the other. Still, also the new scholarship had to take as its basis the work of bourgeois scholars like Tizengauzen. As in other spheres of the social life in the USSR, the projects claimed an unquestionable superiority of the Soviet collective style of work and of its central planning and huge scale. However, the planned science system rarely if ever succeeded according to the plan: most projects ran far beyond the originally assigned frameworks of time, manpower, and money. While some projects were carried out very quickly (as the Turkmen project or the edition of Tizengauzen’s translations), others ran for more than five years, and the publication of Rashīd ad-Dīn’s chronicle took in total more than forty years. While the officials and ‘monopolizers of science’ stressed the independence of Soviet Orientology, it was still necessary to contact colleagues from abroad in order to get copies of manuscripts and literature, and the foreign partners were even “planned in” as potential customers of the scientific production (as suggested by Evgenii E. Bertel’s in his project), to legitimize the huge budget. In the Rashīd ad-Dīn edition one might even argue that there was a complementary division of labor with Western scholarship.

My approach is to study scholarship from different perspectives: from central institutions and from local view-points, from different groups inside the Soviet discourse, and as developing over decades. My overview of major Oriental projects leads to an important conclusion that contradicts the still prevalent interpretation of Soviet Oriental studies in Russia. There was no possibility to work outside of the system, and several scholars from the early Soviet period who have always been regarded as the best representatives of classical non-political Oriental Studies, directly participated in the state projects; several of them were later subject of political repressions.