

## CONTENTS

<i>EDITORIAL BOARD</i> . . . . .	3
<i>TEXTS AND MANUSCRIPTS: DESCRIPTION AND RESEARCH</i> .	4
<b>I. Ianbay.</b> New Data on the Literature and Culture of the Krimchaks . . . . .	4
<b>Sh. Iakerson.</b> Hebrew Incunabula collection in the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America in New York . . . . .	14
<b>M. Vorobyova-Desyatovskaya, E. Tyomkin.</b> A Fragment of the <i>Prātimokṣa-sūtra</i> from the P. I. Lavrov Collection at the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies . . .	24
<b>N. Serikoff.</b> Identifying “Acephalous” Manuscripts . . . . .	30
<i>TEXT AND ITS CULTURAL INTERPRETATION</i> . . . . .	34
<b>D. Kimmage.</b> <i>Sūra</i> 106 in <i>Tafsīrs</i> : Qur’ānic Commentary as a Historical Source . . . . .	34
<i>ORIENTAL MANUSCRIPTS AND NEW INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES</i> . . . . .	44
<b>A. Bazarov, S. Syrtypova, Ol. Rinchinov, H. Garmaeva.</b> The <i>Thor Bu</i> Group of Tibetan Books in the Institute of Mongolian, Buddhist and Tibetan Studies: Creation of a Database . . . . .	44
<i>PRESENTING THE MANUSCRIPT</i> . . . . .	49
<b>T. Pang, G. Stary.</b> On the Discovery of a Printed Manchu Text Based on Euclid’s “Elements” . . . . .	49
<i>OUR ARCHIVE</i> . . . . .	57
<b>V. Germanov.</b> Georgy Nikolaevich Chabrov (1904—1986) and His Works . . . . .	58
<b>G. Chabrov.</b> On the Study of Central Asian Book-binding . . . . .	60
<i>BOOK REVIEWS</i> . . . . .	67
<i>Manuscripta Orientalia</i> in 2000, vol. 6, Nos. 1—4 (list of contributions) . . . . .	70

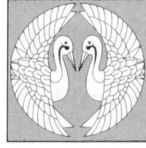
### Front cover:

“The Holy Family with Attendants”, *Muraqqa’* (E 14) in the collection  
of the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies, Lucknow school, mid-18th century,  
fragment of folio 91a, 10.0×13.3 cm. Watercolour, gouache.

### Back cover:

“The Madonna Praying before the Crucifix” (top left), “The Madonna of St. Luke” (top right)  
and “Ibrāhīm ibn Adham and Angels” (bottom), *Muraqqa’* (E 14) in the collection of the St. Petersburg Branch of  
the Institute of Oriental Studies, attributed to Manohar Dās, Mughāl school, ca. 1590—1595, folio 53a.  
Sizes: 6.0×7.2 cm, 2.8×5.8 cm, 14.8×19.5 cm. Watercolour, ink and gold on paper.

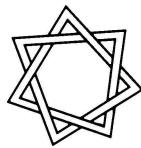
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## OUR ARCHIVE

*Dear colleagues,*

*The article published below opens a new rubric — “Our archive”. It is hardly a secret that many of the Russian-language publications on Eastern manuscripts and documents have remained inaccessible to our colleagues in the West, either because of the language barrier or because these publications were often issued in small editions for specialists only. However, a significant number of them still remains topical, introducing into scholarly circulation little-known or even unknown manuscripts or containing the analysis of facts collected over decades of research on sources and documents.*

*Dozens of Russian scholars dedicated their lives to studying the written legacy of the peoples of the East. Alas, time marches on and many names have been forgotten amid the colossal changes which have overtaken Russia and the huge amount of information Orientalists now confront. Luckily, library shelves have preserved for us the results of the inquiries and hopes, reflections and research of our colleagues from numerous scholarly centres of the former USSR.*

*A vast area encompassing many newly independent states continues to use the Russian language as a common tongue for intellectual discourse. One of the many Russian scholars who devoted his life to the study of the Eastern written legacy was Georgy Nikolaevich Chabrov (1904—1986). It is to his memory that we dedicate the first publication in our new rubric, and it is his article that we publish on the pages below.*

*Familiarizing the readers of **Manuscripta Orientalia**, who live in 30 countries, with the scholarly heritage of famous Russian Orientalists, we are fortunate to be able to rely on the help of our friends from all the former republics of the USSR and our friends in the West. The biographical information on G. N. Chabrov which follows is based on materials prepared by V. Germanov at the journal's request and under the direction of Dr. Vincent Fourniau, Director of the Institut Français d'Études sur l'Asie Centrale (IFEAC), to whom we express our sincere gratitude.*

*We are also much indebted to our French and Uzbek colleagues for their help in readying this publication.*

*E. Rezvan, Editor-in-Chief*

## ON THE STUDY OF CENTRAL ASIAN BOOK-BINDING

The history of bookbinding has ancient roots. It became known in Europe in the first century A.D. The well-known Soviet Oriental studies scholar A. A. Semenov dates the appearance of bindings among the people of the Near East to the time of the Sassanids [1]. It would seem that such an ancient art should have attracted substantial study. Indeed, foreign researchers have done a great deal of work on Iranian bookbinding of the sixteenth — eighteenth centuries, which attained a high level of sophistication [2]; but virtually nothing has been done to study Central Asian bookbinding. Only recently have Soviet descriptions and photographs appeared of the most interesting examples of Central Asian binding art of the fifteenth — eighteenth centuries [3].

Unfortunately, each Oriental studies scholar describes Central Asian bindings in his own fashion, although by 1939 A. A. Semenov had already developed a well-considered system for their description [4]. Semenov distinguishes full leather bindings and half-leather. A full leather binding is a single piece of leather which encases the board covers of a manuscript. As concerns half-leather bindings, it features boards lined with leather and fastened with a leather back. In Semenov's descriptions, he always notes the colour of leather, sometimes its type (shagreen, *sawra*), and the quality and condition of the binding ("good", "old", "worn"). He always notes the presence and nature of imprints and the names of binders located within figured stamp marks applied with *mühr* stamps. But Semenov almost never notes the material and colour of the back, as well as the decoration of the book's fly-leaves. In the five-volume description of manuscripts at the Uzbek SSR Academy of Sciences edited by him and produced with his personal participation, in most cases only special bindings exceptional in form are reviewed. In such cases, the descriptions are accompanied by photographs (monochrome, unfortunately), the most interesting of which are photographs of a binding from plane tree boards (early 19th century) and a lacquered binding with extremely beautiful decorations of Central Asian origin dated to 1799 (both in the third volume). Of note in the fourth volume is a photograph of a luxurious binding of poured silver for a Qur'ān made in Bukhārā in 1841, and a lacquered binding from 1862. The latter is notable for its depiction of flowers borrowed from the adornments of Chinese porcelain, which was imported in large quantities to Central Asia beginning in the 1790s.

Also, N. D. Miklukho-Maclay made no small contribution to the description of Central Asian bindings; he drew

up an extensive "Description of Tajik and Persian manuscripts of the USSR Academy of Sciences Institute of Oriental Studies", Moscow, 1955. Miklukho-Maclay calls bindings with board covers lined in leather "Eastern". Among their varieties he identifies Central Asian bindings of the *muqawwā'* type. These are the same as the bindings that A. A. Semenov terms "half-leather". In his descriptions, Miklukho-Maclay always notes the binding material, and often adds information on the quality or condition of the leather in the binding ("smooth", "soft", "old"). But the colour of the leather is quite often omitted. In other cases, without giving information on the quality of the leather, the description notes the presence of imprints (simple and "with gilding"). The colour and type of leather in backs is never indicated. Descriptions of fly-leaves are extremely rare; the presence of flaps and names of craftsmen in imprints are usually given.

The descriptions of A. T. Tagirdzhanov [5] also discuss Eastern bindings (leather, board); he considers Central Asian *muqawwā'* bindings one of their varieties. In these descriptions, the colour of the leather is always indicated, and there is sometimes information on its quality. Also listed are the presence of imprints and names of craftsmen in stamps. But fly-leaves are here described only in exceptional cases.

Binding descriptions by the Orientalists of Tajikistan are unfortunately extremely schematic [6]. They distinguish two types of bindings: Eastern and Central Asian (avoiding the term *muqawwā'*). "Eastern" bindings are described without an indication of their material. As concerns "Central Asian" bindings, their description is frequently accompanied by terms hardly comprehensible to the non-specialists such as "usual", "ordinary", "local". In characterizing "Central Asian" bindings, the compilers limit themselves to general information on the material (leather, lacquer), but say nothing about the colour or type of leather in backs, although they give detailed information on the colour of leather in bindings: dark green, yellow-green, greenish, dark crimson, bright red, etc. Information on how the leather was processed and the presence of binders' names in stamps is given only in exceptional cases; the same is true of the processing of fly-leaves.

What conclusions can we draw from these varied descriptions? In our view, descriptions of bindings should necessarily include information on the type of binding ("Eastern", *muqawwā'*, lacquered), the material, and the

colour of the covering and back, as well as how the covers and fly-leaves of the book were processed. Only then will catalogues and manuscript descriptions of Eastern manu-

scripts contain sufficient information for Orientalists and art historians who study the bindings of Central Asian manuscript books.

\* \* \*

A. A. Semenov noted that Central Asian bindings are worthy of the most scrupulous study: "Later Central Asian bindings," he writes, "fashioned only in the Bukhārā, Samarkand, Khūqand, Tashkent, and others) were exceptionally original; there is nothing like them elsewhere in the East" [7]. Which characteristics are typical of Central Asian bindings of the eighteenth — nineteenth centuries, when binding art achieved in Central Asia a remarkable degree of originality? Primarily, this is the ubiquitous presence of *muqawwā* bindings covered in coloured leather with red and green covers and an imprint. Brown, variously toned red, and green leather was pasted on the board base of bindings. (A Khīwan innovation of the eighteenth century was bindings of black leather, unknown elsewhere.) Book covers were made from red, and also "specially processed blue (green-blue) bumpy leather from male donkey" (A. A. Semenov). Such leather was called *saura* or *sawra*. The tops and bottoms of backs ended in small scraps of leather so that one could easily remove a book from the shelf by taking hold of one of these scraps.

As before, the eighteenth century also witnessed the production of bindings from a single piece of brown leather with no decoration. In such books, imprints adorned only the fly-leaves, which were made from the same leather (No. 2777) [8]. At the same time, we also know of bindings from brown leather with red backs; such bindings could be adorned with embossed stamps between which were located embossed decorations reminiscent of bows (No. 2071). Bindings from red leather with green-blue backs were also decorated with embossed stamps. These stamps differed in colour from the bindings: they were not red, but dark brown. A relatively simple red binding of this type could have a magnificent fly-leaf of red leather with embossed floral ornamentation (No. 10565).

But the colouration of embossed stamps was not the only distinguishing characteristic of ornamentation on eighteenth-century bindings. Stamps might include "prints of binders' seals" with their names. Such stamps were located on the upper and lower board twice: at top and bottom, usually with a significantly larger stamp filled with floral ornamentation between them. Stamps with the names of binders also came in colours. On one binding of green leather with a red back, the name stamps are cherry-coloured and the middle stamps are red-gold (No. 3064). Curiously, name stamps were not located at a standard distance from the ornamental stamp. If the distance from the ornamental stamp to the upper name stamp was 3 cm, then it was only 2.5 cm to the bottom stamp. The frequent use of this device indicates that it was not an accidental mistake, but a conscious aesthetic effect. Binders of the eighteenth century developed several other methods to enrich the appearance of books. A. A. Semenov notes, for example, that a leather border of a different colour could be pasted around the edges of a monochrome binding "some three millimetres from the edge" [9].

Half-leather bindings with multicoloured backs predominated in Central Asia in the eighteenth century. In rare cases, we also find lacquered bindings of extremely crude

work. Neither in the eighteenth century nor later do we find the "lovely lacquered bindings of papier-mâché with a surface covered in painting" described by V. Dolinskaya [10]. But their existence is confirmed by photographs in one of the volumes which describe the collection of the Uzbek SSR Academy of Sciences [11]. They were apparently produced in limited quantities.

Unlike their Persian counterparts, Turkestani lacquered bindings never contain depictions of living things (birds, animals). Such are the distinguishing characteristics of Central Asian book bindings of the eighteenth century.

In studying nineteenth-century bindings, we observe the further development and enrichment of methods invented in the eighteenth century. At the same time, we witness a fairly significant difference between bindings produced in the first half of the century and those produced after Central Asia became part of the Russian Empire. In both halves of the century, one still encounters bindings made from single pieces of coloured leather decorated with embossed stamps which frequently tell us the names of the binders. But *muqawwā*-type bindings clearly predominate: they cost far less and at the same time better satisfied the aesthetic requirements of buyers. In this period, *muqawwā*-type bindings were also made of yellow leather. Methods invented in the eighteenth century to colour stamps in hues which differ from the colour of the binding were further developed and enriched in the first half of the nineteenth century. Red bindings then generally featured green stamps and black bindings gold stamps, which were unknown in the eighteenth century. Bindings in yellow leather had red stamps.

The decoration of bindings with borders should be considered an innovation developed by nineteenth-century craftsmen. Borders were made up of embossed line decorations and edging of various widths. The space closer to the edge of the binding was usually filled with lanceolate elements or, more rarely, wavy lines. We know of cases where the border consists of a single line made up of lanceolate elements. In addition to embossed borders, there are also painted borders: red on brown bindings, green on red, and brown on green.

In books from the first half of the nineteenth century, leather is no longer used to decorate fly-leaves. Paper fly-leaves of grey or green tinted paper appear. One notes the fly-leaf of a manuscript from the first third of the nineteenth century on violet paper with traced designs: brown "grasses" and white and blue "fruits" (No. 3465). On some fly-leaves, the covers of Indian lithographs were used for decoration.

Research on bindings from the second half of the nineteenth century is made easier thanks to the work of Russian scholars. Curious members of the Russian intelligentsia, for whom Turkestan became a second homeland, carefully studied the works of local artists. They were especially interested in local bookbinding. The first museum in Turkestan, opened in Tashkent in 1876, included among its exhibits "examples of the natives' book-binding art" [12].

The book-binding mastery of Samarkand craftsmen was also studied by the folklore specialist Yu. O. Yakubovsky. In 1896, he published the article "Bookbinding craft of the natives of Samarkand" [13]. The materials gathered by

Yakubovsky are of great interest. He indicates that bindings of paperboard covered in leather and "multicoloured paper of its own hue" were made in Samarkand. Three colours were favourites for leather and paper for bindings at that time: red, yellow, and green. Bindings continued to be decorated with imprints in the form of borders and stamps. The latter were applied with a *muhr* stamp made of yellow brass in Khūqand. The stamp was placed over the freshly pasted leather or paper of the cover and applied with blows of an iron pestle (*kuwā*) with broad flat ends. For linings, craftsmen used ordinary Russian paper, pasted it on, and then coloured it red, green, and sometimes blue with lacquer oil paint. Craftsmen also knew of special Russian binding paper, but were not eager to use it; it was not as strong as paper processed in the manner just described.

Residents of Khūqand were considered the best bookbinders during Yakubovsky's time. They were the ones who produced simple binding tools for their colleagues, which were difficult to obtain in Samarkand. Yakubovsky is the only person to provide us with information on the cost of bindings: "An average Sart binding costs from one to two *tenga*, 15–30 kopecks". But one master-binder informed Yakubovsky that his workshop could also fashion expensive bindings "with decorations based on metal". Such bindings cost around four rubles.

There is interesting information on book-binding in Bukhārā in the special chapter "Bookbinding and items from papier-mâché" from an ethnographic study by O. A. Sukhareva [14]. There, in the capital of the Bukhāran khānate, binders were called *sawad* or *muqawwāsāz*. They lived not far from the Ghāziyān quarter. Book-sellers also bound their wares. Craftsmen lined the board covers of bindings with paper usually coloured a swampy green. The traditional means of decorating a binding — imprints — was widely employed there as well. In speaking of papier-mâché items, Sukhareva mentions only *qalamdān* boxes for writing instruments, saying nothing of lacquered bindings. This art had apparently already been lost in Bukhārā. In the dictionary of Bukhāran craft terms drawn up by Sukhareva, we find the leather types *kimukht* or *sāghrī* (shagreen), made from the hide of a horse's or donkey's croup by *kimukhtgar* craftsmen.

Of course, the great mastery of Central Asian bookbinders in the second half of the nineteenth century is confirmed by the artful objects they produced. A typical example of a manuscript binding from this period presents a binding in red leather lined along the edges with a strip of green *sawra*. The back is of brown leather and the binding is also edged in brown leather. Interesting is the decoration of a border in which one edge is filled with tear-shaped decorations (No. 3762, see *fig. 1*).

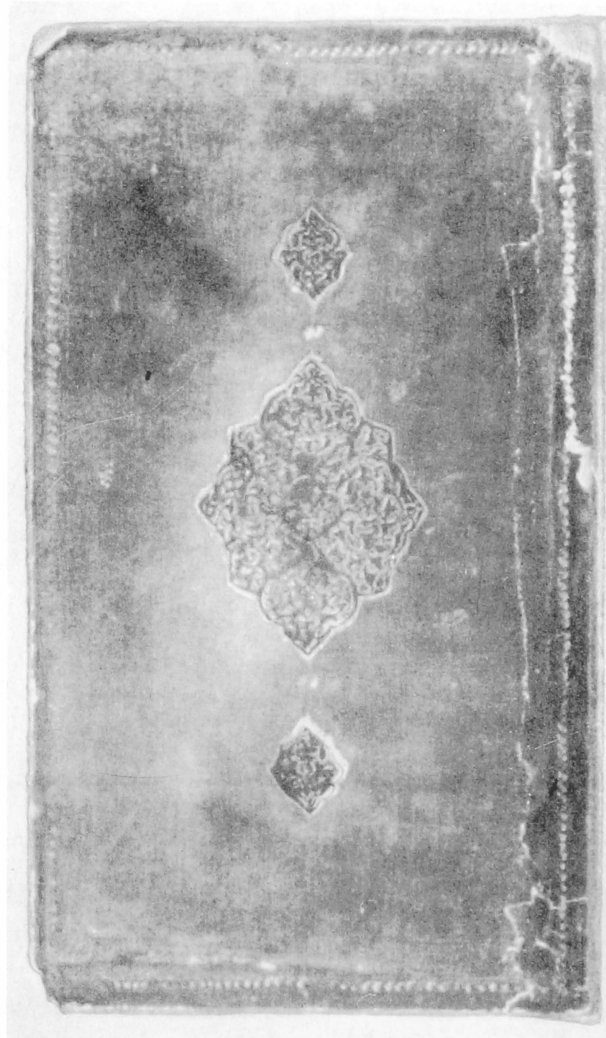
During this period, lacquered bindings were made only in Khūqand and Khīwā. One of the Khūqand bindings from the 1870s is decorated in paint on a red background. The board is surrounded on all sides by a relatively wide border. The central part bears traditional figured stamps and brown "bows" (No. 3806). Very effective is a Khīwan lacquered binding with a back of black leather. The covers of the binding are decorated in floral designs, filling several parallel rows of strips. They alternate with strips of text embossed on a black background. The rich fly-leaves of this book are executed in the same fashion (No. 2858, see *figs. 2 and 3*).

Evidence of a conscious return to eighteenth-century methods can be seen in a number of more recent bindings produced either in the early twentieth or very late nineteenth century. One such binding, of brown leather with a red back and lined along the edges with *sawra*, is decorated only with a plain border of very simple design (No. 4150). The binding of a book made in 1901 successfully reproduces older methods of decoration. The brown leather which covers the book is decorated only with embossed stamps. The same modest style marks the book's fly-leaves of brown, undressed leather (No. 3620).

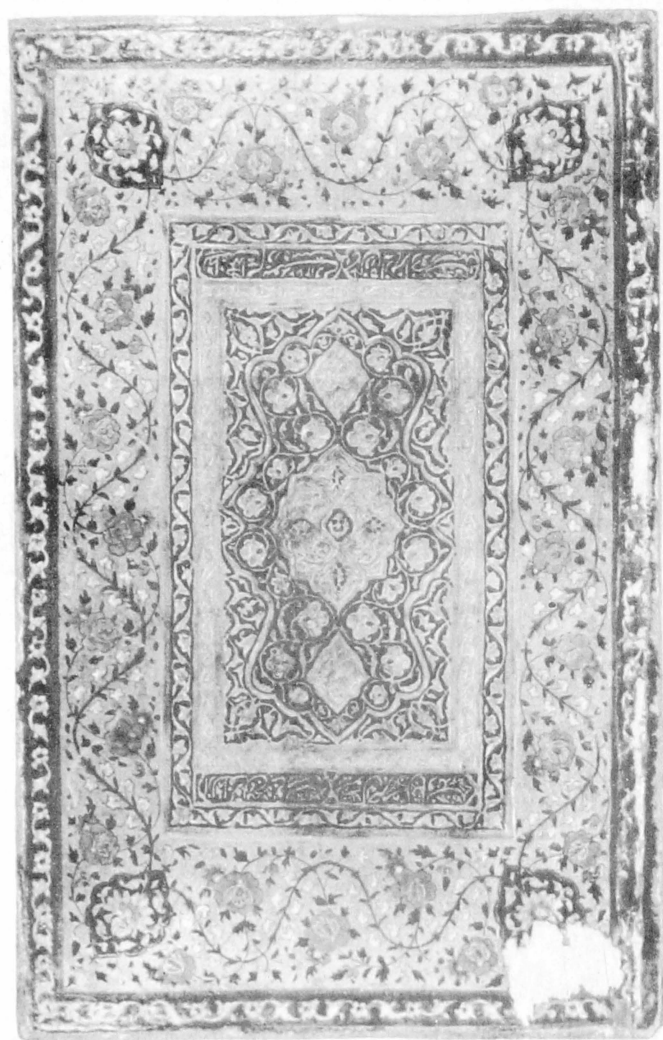
A few observations can be added concerning book-binding format. For the eighteenth — early twentieth centuries, a binding height of 24–27 cm and width of 17–18 cm can be considered the dominant format. Formats of 18.0×11.0 cm were employed as well. Large-format books (height 30–45 cm and width 27–28 cm) are comparatively rare. Such formats are typical only for a few types of "luxurious" lithograph books. The stamps which decorate bindings of the eighteenth — early twentieth centuries are relatively uniform. Small stamps come in variations of a shield filled with floral ornamentation or text with the binder's name. Large stamps, which Russian binders often termed *sredniki* (lit. "midders", or so-called medallions — *eds.*), were more diverse in form, ranging from an extended oval to whimsically cut shields. The formats for stamps are unusually diverse, although one can identify regularities. For example, small stamps are usually of the following dimensions: 1.8×1.5 cm, 2.0×1.5 cm, and 2.9×3.0 cm. The height gradually increases; stamps with a height of 3 to 9 cm should be considered large. The width of such stamps varies from 2 to 6.5 cm. Books of 18.0×11.0 cm had small stamps no higher than 2 cm; large ones ranged from 3 to 7 cm.

When the only lithograph books available in Central Asia were of Iranian and Indian origin, the bindings of lithograph books were the same as the bindings of manuscript books. But at the very end of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth, local lithograph production underwent impressive development and the bindings of lithograph books diverged entirely from traditional book bindings [15]. A. A. Semenov formulated the overall tendencies to simplify lithograph book bindings as follows: "In place of the complex work of a *ṣaḥḥāf* (bookbinder — *G. Ch.*), which included providing the binding with a leather back, lining the edges of the board covers with leather, and pasting in and colouring paper to cover them; in place of all this, they began to print ready paper covers for bindings either glossy green or matte blue in colour. Leather was no longer required for the back; ordinary calico would do" [16].

Semenov's observations are entirely correct. One should only note that this evolution was gradual: it was only at the beginning of the twentieth century, when the most powerful enterprise in the pre-Revolutionary national printing trade, Gulām Ḥasan Arijanov's Tashkent lithography, established itself on the book market, that half-leather bindings were completely supplanted by bindings pasted over in paper such as those described by Semenov. We add to his remarks that designs on new print covers frequently imitated old book bindings, even bearing traditional stamps printed in bronze. On such covers, local traditions were whimsically combined with a wide array of European type-set ornaments.



*Fig. 1*

*Fig. 2*



## BOOK REVIEWS

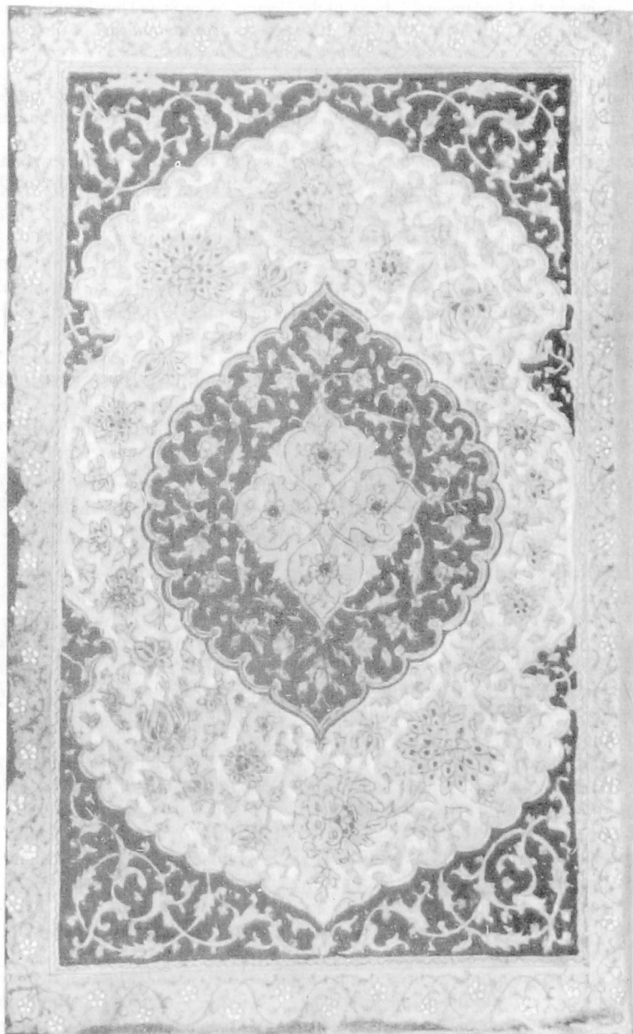


Fig. 3

## Notes

1. See A. A. Semenov, "Geratskaia khudozhestvennaia rukopis' epokhi Navoi i ee tvorsty" ("The Herat artistic manuscript in the era of Nawā'i and its creators"), *Alisher Navoi* (Moscow, 1946), p. 171.
2. See F. Sarre, *Islamische Bucheinbände. Buchkunst des Orients* (Berlin, 1923); A. U. Pope, *A Survey of Persian Art from Prehistoric Times to the Present* (London, 1938), v; H. Rodenberg, *Buchkunst des Morgenlandes* (Leipzig, s. a.).
3. See *Sobranie vostochnykh rukopisei Akademii nauk Uzbekskoi SSR* (Collection of Eastern Manuscripts at the Uzbek SSR Academy of Sciences), 5 vols. (Tashkent, 1952—1960).
4. See A. A. Semenov, *Opisanie vostochnykh litografiĭ Fundamental'noi biblioteki Sredneaziatskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta* (Description of Eastern Lithographs in the Fundamental Library of the Central Asian State University), manuscript held in the Fundamental Library of the V. I. Lenin Tashkent State University, Tashkent, 1939; cf. his *Opisanie tadzhikskikh, persidskikh, arabskikh i tiurkskikh rukopisei Fundamental'noi biblioteki Sredneaziatskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta im. V. I. Lenina* (Description of Tajik, Persian, Arab, and Turkic Manuscripts at the Fundamental Library of the V. I. Lenin Central Asian State University) (Tashkent, 1956).
5. See A. T. Tagirdzhanov, *Opisanie tadzhiksikh i persidskikh rukopisei Vostochnogo otdela biblioteki Leningradskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta im. A. A. Zhdanova* (Description of Tajik and Persian Manuscripts in the Eastern Section of the Library of the A. A. Zhdanov Leningrad State University) (Leningrad, 1962), i.
6. See *Katalog vostochnykh rukopisei Akademii nauk Tadzhikskoi SSR* (Catalogue of Eastern Manuscripts of the Academy of Sciences of the Tajik SSR), vol. I, ed. by and with the participation of A. M. Mirzoev and A. N. Boldyrev (Dushanbe, 1960).
7. A. A. Semenov, *Khudozhestvennaia rukopis' na territorii sovremennogo Uzbekistana* (The Artistic Manuscript in Contemporary Uzbekistan), manuscript held in the Fundamental Library of Tashkent State University, Tashkent, 1948, fol. 8.
8. Here and elsewhere we cite inventory numbers from the manuscript collection of the Uzbek SSR Academy of Sciences Institute of Oriental Studies in Tashkent.
9. A. A. Semenov, *Khudozhestvennaia rukopis' na territorii sovremennogo Uzbekistana*, fol. 8b.
10. V. Dolinskaia, "Miniatiurnaia zhivopis' v Srednei Azii" ("Miniature painting in Central Asia"), *Zvezda Vostoka*, 4 (1957), p. 152.
11. See *Sobranie vostochnykh rukopisei Akademii nauk Uzbekskoi SSR*, iii, p. 377.
12. *Turkestanские ведомости* (Turkestan Gazette), No. 28 (1876).
13. See *Spravochnaia kniga Samarkandskoi oblasti na 1896* (Reference Book of the Samarkand Region for 1896), issue IV (Samarkand, 1896), pp. 63—4.
14. O. A. Sukhareva, *Pozdnefeodal'nyi gorod Bukhara kontsa XIX — nachala XX stoletia* (The Late-Feudal City of Bukhara at the End of the 19th — Beginning of the 20th Century) (Tashkent, 1962).
15. For information on the distinguishing characteristics of bindings for Turkestani lithograph books, see G. N. Chabrov, "Khudozhestvennoe oformlenie turkestanskoi litografirovannoĭ knigi (1880—1917)" ("The artistic format of Turkestani lithograph books: 1880—1917"), *Trudy AN Tadzhikskoi SSR*, vol. XXIX: *Iskusstvo tadzhikskogo naroda*, collection of articles, issue 2 (Dushanbe, 1960).
16. A. A. Semenov, *Khudozhestvennaia rukopis' na territorii sovremennogo Uzbekistana*, fols. 17—18.

## Illustrations

**Fig. 1.** A nineteenth-century bookbinding of *sawra* with a border edge, filled with tear-shaped decorations.

**Fig. 2.** A Khīwān lacquered binding with a back of black leather. The covers of the binding are decorated in floral designs, filling several parallel rows of strips. They alternate with strips of text embossed on a black background.

**Fig. 3.** Another sample of a similar binding.