INTRODUCTION

The collection of oriental manuscripts in the „Beruni“ Institute of Oriental Studies (Academy of Sciences, Republic of Uzbekistan) is one of the richest collections of this kind in the world. Its holdings contain about 45,000 works represented in 26,000 volumes. They have been described in part in the 11 volumes published in the series which is well known to specialists all over the world under the abbreviation SVR (Sobranie Vostochnykh Rukopisei Akademii Nauk Uzbekskoi SSR) which lists 7574 items.

Another part of its holdings are the precisely 7329 volumes which belonged to the Institute of Manuscripts „H. Suleimanov“ (Academy of Sciences, Republic of Uzbekistan), now merged into the Institute of Oriental Studies by governmental decree, dated July 5, 1998. A small part of these has also been described in the corresponding catalogue (Katalog fonda Institutu Rukopisei, pod red. A.P. Kaiumova, two volumes, Tashkent 1988-1989, listing about 800 items, mostly literary works). (For details about the holdings of the Beruni library, see A. Muminov: „Fonds nationaux et collections privées de manuscrits en écriture arabe de l’Ouzbékistan“, in Cahiers d’Asie Centrale 7 (1999), p. 20, 36). The mentioned numbers show that cataloguing these manuscripts is not nearly finished a task.

Moreover, using the SVR catalogue is not made easier by the way manuscripts that thematically belong together are dispersed over its volumes. This has led to the decision to continue describing manuscripts in thematically defined groups; in this process, already published descriptions are being taken up again. Some of the results have been published thanks to the efforts of this project, two volumes covering history and natural sciences, respectively (Sobranie Vostochnykh Rukopisei Instituta Vostokovedenia AN Respubliki Uzbekistan: Istoriia. Tashkent 1998 compiled by D.Iu. Iusupova and R.P. Dzhalilova; Sobranie Vostochnykh Rukopisei Instituta Vostokovedenia AN Respubliki Uzbekistan: Tochnye i estestvennye Nauki. Tashkent 1998, compiled by A.B. Vil’danova). Hopefully, the catalogue covering medicine will be published in the foreseeable future.

The project itself is financed by the German Ministry of Economic Cooperation and the German Society for Technical Cooperation (GTZ, Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit) and organised by the Martin-Luther-Universität Halle/Wittenberg (Germany).

The handlist of manuscripts presented here to the specialists is meant to be a first step in working with one part of the yet uncatalogued holdings of the library, that is to say those works and copies which for one reason or other were not included into the
SVR. The handlist also is the basis for a detailed catalogue which will include descriptions of the most interesting and rewarding texts. We hope that making these texts available will serve as an incentive to research in this seriously neglected field; this publication will thus hopefully serve to widen our knowledge about one of the least studied periods in the history of Central Asia - the 18th through 20th centuries.

The present handlist offers short descriptions of 2009 copies (out of which 595 are to be found in the 11 volumes of SVR, this means that 1514 copies are presented here for the first time; out of these, 379 are registered in the so-called Doublette collection) representing 570 texts; out of these, 274 have not been catalogued in the SVR.

The bodies and institutions who funded and organised the project set before them basically the following goals and tasks. Above all, they sought to continue the creative cooperation and useful contacts between scholars in Germany and Uzbekistan. It is hoped that research on this body of manuscripts, their cataloguing and publication will stimulate activities of scholars in both countries and contribute to the study of the history and culture of the peoples of Central Asia. Moreover, another goal which particularly retained the attention of the project was to familiarise young scholars working in the Institute of Oriental Studies with the professional skills in cataloguing. This goal (we can now be positive about that) has been fully attained. This has meant to teach the participants the methodological principles of cataloguing elaborated by German and other European scholars. In this context, a six-months stay in Germany was organised. During this period, the participants worked at cataloguing a body of texts kept at the Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin; 65 works were catalogued in all.

The manuscripts presented here concern works written during the 18th - 20th centuries; they are grouped together under the overall heading of „Sufism“. However, in selecting and structuring the body of texts which at first sight seemed to belong under this general heading, we had to decide how inclusive our understanding of „sufism“ should be. Finally, we chose to adopt a larger definition of sufism than would derive from the classical literature produced by mystics of Islam. As is well known, sufi biographical literature (of the manâqib and tadhkira types) was heavily influenced by all sorts of popular stories and legends. On the other hand, sufi literature itself in a large measure enriched popular literary genres. For instance, the symbolic masters of Muslim mysticism came to be the heroes of many popular works, oral as well as written, and also the protectors of local communities and professional groups. The structure and moral internal rules of the latter (which were laid down in writing) repeated, by the way, the corresponding structures of the sufi brotherhoods. It is maybe not out of place, either, to recall the example of the medieval poets of the Muslim east whose works are closely tied to Islamic mysticism. These and other reasons well known to the specialists led us to include not only sufi works in a narrow understanding, but also works belonging to other literary genres (and their translations and commentaries). We suppose that thus, we have enlarged the circle of specialists interested in the results of our work. Besides, this larger and more complex approach allows to demonstrate one more time the role and importance sufism has held and still is holding in the region’s history and cultural heritage.
The catalogue contains the names of many authors, sufi leaders and poets, translators and commentators and other people hitherto unknown whose activities can be supposed to have been instrumental in shaping the cultural and religious life of the period.

As our work progressed and the sheer volume of the task could be outlined more precisely (it had continually to be enlarged and corrected), we decided to include in this handlist also those manuscripts already to be found in the SVR. This series is a bibliographical rarity for a long time now and specialists cannot be expected to have the possibility to always have it at hand. Moreover, as we checked the data in the SVR, we had to correct some of them and added some more.

In the hitherto undescribed body of texts a fairly large group is made up of mujaddidi literature, including the biographies of well-known and less well-known shaykhs of this brotherhood and its local branches as well as theoretical treatises and explanatory descriptions of ritual features (above all the dhikr). We find new details on the diffusion of the Mujaddidiyya in Mawarannahr in the work by Abd al-Ḥāyy al-Ḥanafi al-Mujaddidi called "Kamālāt-i mujaddidīyya va maqāmāt-i Āḥmadiyya" (nr. 159). No less interesting a body of texts refers to the history of this tariqa in India and Eastern Turkistan.

For the first time, works giving detailed descriptions of the types and forms of the Yasavi dhikr are here presented to the scientific world. They name the formulas used and discuss the legitimacy of the loud dhikr.

There is a remarkable and in its size respectable body of translations of sufi texts into Turki (53 items). This is important in outlining the religious and overall ethno-cultural traditions of the period. In this context, it is worth noting that the famous letters written by Āḥmad al-Ṣarīndī al-Sirhindī have been translated into Chaghatay Turki on the request of the Turkmen tribe Ersari (nr. 19). A perhaps unique translation of Ghazali's "Kīmiyā-yi saʿādat" made in Khwarazm also was found (nrs. 27 and 28).

Among the other texts which hitherto have been unknown to the scientific world we would like to mention works which give a written form of the "sacred history" existing for some towns (Sairam, Tashkent, Osh, Nur Ata). Some versions include biographies of sufi shaykhs and holy men (or people who were thus regarded) who are said to have accomplished heroic deeds in the process of the region's islamisation. In the same body of texts, the rules and forms regulating visits to their shrines have been laid down.

In the process of our work we faced a number of problems. Some of them had some influence on the quality and completeness of this work. In part, they directly derived from the very nature of the works selected for the handlist - it has been stated above how seriously understudied they are. The evolution and specifics the religious history of Central Asia presents, in particular the history and ritual practice of the sufi brotherhoods, the works of many mystical poets, the activities of prominent sufi leaders have been even more neglected. We very clearly saw that two tasks are mutually interdependent: in order to have a more or less adequate understanding of how the sufi brotherhoods evolved in the region and which transformations they underwent, it is indispensable to study the corresponding body of source materials; but in order to
describe them according to the standards set, it is likewise indispensable to have a clear understanding of the phenomenon itself which after all is reflected in a given manuscript. This closed circuit gave rise to a number of problems. For instance, the rather crude and one-sided terms used to characterise the subject of a given work are in a way due to this dilemma; we were forced to take over from other published catalogues some of the not always lucky terms, some of them fraught with cliché.

To give another example: the works of mystical poets such as Bidil, Şüfi Allâh Yâr, Imlâ', Huvaidâ and others are represented in impressing quantities. However, in these series we find copies of seemingly the same work, but of very different length, ranging from 5 to 200 folia and more. Moreover sometimes, they include verse taken from more than one of a given author, and thus, they were perhaps copied as an aide-mémoire by some lover of his poetry. In spite of all this, the copies present the same beginning and end in the overwhelming majority of cases which has led to include them as copies of the same work. As no critical editions of these works are at present at our disposal and no specialised studies on them either, we had to limit ourselves to giving general descriptions and a simple register of these works. In this, we tried to keep track of all manuscripts present in the holdings of the Oriental Institute („osnovnoi fond“ and „dubletnyi fond“), hoping that this will prove helpful for such specialists as might want to address themselves more particularly to the works of the poets named above.

Yet, a relatively close textual analysis of the works by the celebrated poet Raḥîm Bābâ-yi Mashrab (d. 1711) whose writings have been considered as more or less well studied has led to a more precise identification of works he wrote and those which were ascribed to him, as is the case with the biographical work called „Manāqib-i Mashrab“ which was in fact written by one of his murids (whose name we do not know). Besides, we arrived at the conclusion that two well-known works ascribed to this poet, „Mabda’-i nūr“ and „Kimiyā“, in fact belong to the pen of his imitator who also chose the same pen name, Rûzî Bây Mashrab-i Thânî (fl. in the 19th century). Anyhow, it is hoped that our reflexions lead to new studies.

Sometimes, the works of some authors (e.g., Muḥammad Darvîsh and Mashrab) which have not been included into the SVR, were given conventional titles by either their previous owners or the authors of the fiche catalogue at the Oriental Institute. These titles more often than not do not really correspond to the contents of the given work. In such cases, by a concern of unification, we chose one of these conventional titles, choosing that one that in our view gives a relatively fair idea of the contents of the work.

At present, the holdings of the Oriental Institute include three different collections which also have independent shelf numbers. These are: 1. the basic collection (osnovnoi fond) which was initially formed at the beginning of the 1930s on the basis of the collection held at the Public Library „Navā‘i“, 13 378 volumes. 2. the so-called Doublette collection (dubletnyi fond, 5 248 volumes) which was allegedly formed in order to take care of works represented in very numerous copies, but in fact came to be a repository of religious literature, among which an important part of sufî literature, which was not looked upon as a subject worthy of cataloguing. This lack of interest in such literature was of course enhanced by the anti-religious politics of the official regime. It should be noted that in the present handlist, this collection is taken into account for the
first time in the history of cataloguing the holdings of the Institute of Oriental Studies "Beruni". Finally, after the dissolution of the Institute of Manuscripts, its holdings were transferred into the Institute of Oriental Studies and thus became its third independent collection (7329 volumes). Of course, the old shelf numbers were not changed. Since the transfer of the last named collection occurred in the middle of our work, we did not have access to it, and thus, we had to accept that we would not be able to cover it. Moreover, lack of time and financial resources put this task out of our reach.

It is evident that renumbering all the holdings now is out of the question since the old numbers are mentioned in the published catalogues. In order to avoid misunderstandings, we were thus obliged to give conventional names and abbreviations to the separate collections:

IVRUz 1 is the "basic collection" (osnovnoi fond)

IVRUz 2 is the "doublette collection" (dubletnyi fond).

The handlist has been arranged according to authors' names, including collectors and commentators. In this arrangement, the Arabic article "al" was taken into account.

The names of translators have been included in the index of personal names. Anonymous works and those whose authors could not be ascertained are listed in the second part of the handlist.

Indexes have been arranged according to the Persian alphabet. The article has been disregarded. References are to entry numbers, those referring to the numbers of works (right column) are given without brackets, those referring to numbers of copies (left column) are given in brackets in the indexes.

The entries in the handlist are arranged in two columns. In the right column, all data concerning the work itself are given, and in the left column, data concerning the copy.

In the left column, entries are arranged according to the following matrix: Number of copy, number of description in SVR (if applying), collection, shelf number, year of copying, quantity of folia, which folia (if more than one work in volume), size of sheet, number of lines per page, number of columns (in poetry, marked by an asterisk), type of handwriting, copyist, remarks of owners (if applying), stamps of owners (if applying), stamps of bookbinders (if applying), remarks. However, in this handlist, remarks and stamps of owners are not given in full.

The index of authors, collectors, commentators and translators has been integrated into one. Conventional abbreviations together with their translation into English are given at the end of the catalogue as well as the transcription used for the letters of the Arabic alphabet, vowels and diphthongs.

To conclude, we would like to express our deeply felt gratitude to all those who helped in calling the project into life and in seeing it through its work:

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