

Title VIII Research Scholar Program

Final Report

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My research project, which I was able to conduct with the help of the Title VIII Research Scholar Program, is entitled “Central Asian Students in the Medreses of the Russian Empire (late Nineteenth- and Early – Twentieth Century).” It is part of my dissertation research on the literary culture and social change in the Semirech’e oblast of Russian Turkestan. My research goal during my trip to Russia, which took place in spring and summer of 2011, was to look for and study the archival and library collections that could shed some light into the experiences of the Central Asian students who travelled to study in the medreses of the cities of Kazan, Ufa, and Orenburg in the early twentieth century. In addition, I planned to look for the material that also exposed their activities during the early Soviet period.

I spent three months doing my research in three different cities in Russia. My first stop was Kazan, Republic of Tatarstan. Here, I divided my time between the National Archive of the Republic of Tatarstan (NA RT), the Rare Books and Manuscripts collection of the National Library, the Lobachevsky Library of the Kazan State University, and the archive of the Institute of Language, Literature, and Arts named after Ghalymzhan Ibrahimov.

I examined several collections in NA RT. The most useful of them all that had materials related to my own research were collections (Fond) 977 of the Kazan University which contained personal files of the Kazakh/Kirghiz students, Fond 420 of the Kazan Temporary Committee of Print Affairs, Fond 1 of the Chancellery of the Governor of Kazan, Fond 969 which is a personal file of Nikolai Katanov, one of the members of the Kazan Temporary Committee of Print Affairs, who reviewed books published in Kazakh and Kyrgyz languages from 1906 till 1916.

The Rare Books and Manuscripts collection of the National Library had a good collection of the periodicals published before 1917 in Arabic script. I examined the newspapers and journals, such as *Ang*, *Al' Islakh*, *Shuro*, and *Yuldziz*. I was able to find in these contemporary periodicals some articles pertaining to the famous medreses of that time period and their programs. The National Library of Tatarstan also has a rich collection of the publications in Tatar that are not accessible in the United States. I was able to familiarize myself with the recent scholarly publications on the mosques and medreses of the region and their founders and particular Tatar intellectuals.

The Lobachevsky Library of the Kazan State University has a rich collection of books in Tatar and other Turkic languages from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Here, I was able to make some copies of the works of Sabir Gabdelmanov, a Tatar intellectual who lived and worked on the territory of the present-day Kyrgyzstan in the early twentieth century and published his works in Kazan. I also examined the collection of dissertations that were written in the past ten years on the Tatar intellectual life of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Some of the dissertations that I was able to examine are Galimzianova, L. *Prosvetitel'stvo kak faktor stanovleniia i razvitiia obchshestvenno politicheskoi mysli na rubezhe XIX-XX vekov* (Kazan, 2006); Gimazova, R. *Prosvetitel'skaia deiatel'nost Nigmatullinykh-Bubi (konets XIX-nachalo XX vv.)* (Kazan, 2004); Salakhov, I. *Modernistskie tendentsii v tatarskom obchshestve v XIX-nach. XX vv.* (Kazan, 2007); Khisamutdinova, L. *Obchshestvenno-politicheskie vzgliady tatarskogo prosvetitelia Ghalimzhana Barudi* (Kazan, 2004); Shakurov, F. *Razvitie istoricheskikh znaniu u tatar v kontse XIX – nachale XX vv.* (Kazan, 2003), and others.

The Rare Books and Manuscripts collection of the Lobachevsky Library also contains Russian-language books published before 1917. I was particularly interested on the views of the Russian missionaries, scholars, and the state officials on the medreses of Kazan and other

regions. I read I. A. Koblov's *Konfessional'nye shkoly Kazanskikh tatar* (Kazan, 1916) and his *Mechty tatar magometan* (Kazan, 1908); K. Prokopiev's *Shkol'noe prosvechshenie inorodtsev Kazanskogo kraia* (Kazan, 1905); *An ABC for Kirghiz* published by the Translation Commission of the Kazan Education District (Kazan, 1908), etc. I was also fortunate to find and make a copy of a memoir written by Khabib Zeini, a former student of the medrese *Ghaliya* in Ufa.

Finally, the last place that I visited in Kazan was the archive of the Ibrahimov Institute. This archive has a collection of personal files of some of the Tatar and Bashkir writers and intellectuals that studied in the medrese Ghaliya in Ufa along with their Kyrgyz and Kazakh counterparts in the early twentieth century. I made some copies of the memoirs of V. Khangildin's *Gomeremnen kyskacha tarikhi* (f. 85, op. 2, d. 4) and an autobiography of Ghalimzhan Ibrahimov (f. 65, op. 2, d. 2), a teacher of Tatar literature at the medrese *Ghaliya*.

Besides the archival and library research, I also visited many historical sites in Kazan. Most of the medreses that functioned in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century were located in the old Tatar quarters. I was able to find and take some pictures of the medrese Mukhammadiya which is still functioning as a medrese today. I was also able to locate a publishing house of the Karimov brothers which, in the beginning of the twentieth century, published many books in Tatar and other Turkic languages.

I spent the second month of my research in Ufa, Republic of Bashkortostan. My main research goal here was to look at a specific collection in the Historical Archive of the Republic of Bashkortostan pertaining to the medrese *Ghaliya*. This medrese opened in Ufa in 1906 with the initiative of Ziia Kamali, a famous Tatar thinker and enlightener. It was one of the most advanced medreses of its time and along with religious subjects it taught such secular subjects as

geography, psychology, history, French and Russian languages, music, and physical education. Its fame spread throughout the Russian empire and, in the beginning of the twentieth century, many students from Central Asia came specifically to this medrese in order to advance their knowledge of the world. The archival collection R-4765 contains 68 files. It consists of the biographies of the students and the teachers of the medrese, their memoirs and books about their life and activities of some of the famous students that graduated from the medrese at different times, it also has some pictures of the building of the medrese and group photos of the teachers and students, works written by the students of the medrese, and some reminiscences of the students of the medrese written in the 1980s. I was able to examine the whole collection and was able to make copies of some of the documents.

Besides the collection of the medrese Ghaliya, I also checked Fond 187 of the *Ufimskoe gubernskoe zhandarmskoe upravlenie (GZHU)*. This collection contains some files with the lists of the medrese students (f. 187, op.1, d. 521), its teachers (f. 187, op.1, d. 522), and the correspondence between the Police Department and the Ufa GZHU on the activities of the Muslim students (f. 187, op.1, d. 504). There is also a rich material on pan-Islamic movement among the Russian Muslims (f. 187, op.1, d. 412) and the correspondence between different GZHU of the Russian provinces (Kazan, Perm', Ufa) (f. 187, op.1, d. 333) in this collection.

Unfortunately, due to an ongoing renovation project, the National Library of the Republic of Bashkortostan named after Ahmet-Zeki Validi Togan was closed during my stay in Ufa. I was only able to get the permission from the Director of the library to look at the library collection for three days. I was able to browse the catalogues and look at the secondary literature in Bashkir and Russian languages. It was not possible to make any copies, so I only was limited to taking brief notes. I was able to look at several articles on Muslim schooling in general and the medrese

Ghaliya and its founder Ziia Kamali in particular in *Ural-Altai: cherez veka v buduchshee (Materialy Vserossiiskoi nauchnoi konferentsii)* (Ufa, 2005); M. Farkhshatov's article on the history of the mektebs and medrese on the territory of nowadays Bashkortostan in the second half of the nineteenth century in *Maloizuchennye istochniki po istorii Bashkirii* (Ufa, 1986), etc.

I spent the last month of my research in the archives and libraries in Moscow. I divided my time in Moscow between the Russian State Archive of the Social and Political Documentation (RGASPI), the State Archive of the Russian Federation (GARF), and the Russian State Library (RGB).

RGASPI contains the documents on the national delimitation of Central Asia in the 1920s. I was interested in the collection of the Central Asian Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (TSKVKP(b)) (Fond 62). Some of the Kyrgyz students who studied in the Russian medreses in the early twentieth century became quite active during the first years of the formation of the Soviet Union and they stood at the roots of the creation of the Kyrgyz state in 1924. I looked at the correspondence between the Semirech'e *obkom* of the Communist party of Turkestan on the creation of the independent Mountainous region, which later was to become the Kyrgyz ASSR, then Kyrgyz SSR (f. 62, op.2, d. 43), the correspondence between the leaders of the Central Committee of the Communist Party with the leaders of the regional branches on the process of national delimitation ((f. 62, op.2, d. 88), protocols and minutes of the meetings and participants' responses to the question of the national delimitation ((f. 62, op.2, d. 101), letters of the Kyrgyz *obkom* of the Communist Party and representatives of the *volosts* on creating a Kyrgyz Autonomous *oblast* ((f. 62, op.2, d. 183), etc. The holdings of RGASPI in general and the material related to the early Soviet history of Central Asia in particular are vast. This archive is open only three days a week (MWF) however, and it is one of its downsides for researchers

who only are able to visit Moscow for a short period of time. It takes a while for the archivists to retrieve the material and leaves only a few days to closely examine them.

GARF was the next archive where I spent my time examining materials pertaining to my research. This archive contains the documents on the Russian imperial history and the history of the Temporary Government. Here I looked at the Fond of the Executive Committee of All-Russian Muslim National Council ((f. 3923, op.1, d. 1) which contains the minutes of the meetings of the Muslim society on the make-up of the Muslim Committee, Fond on the division of the area into economic zones (*raionirovaniie*) ((f. 6892, op.1, d. 32) which was discussed along with the national delimitation of the region.

I have also worked with the primary and secondary sources relevant to my field and my research topic in the collections of the Russian State Library. Among the primary sources, memoirs, travel journals, diaries, and reports written by the Russian officials proved to be most helpful in further expanding my knowledge of the region. I examined such works as, F. Girs *Otchet revizuiuchshogo po vysochaishemu povelenniu Turkestanskii krai, Tainogo sovetnika Girs* (1884); I. Gasprinskii *Russkoe musul'manstvo: mysli, zametki I nabliudeniia musul'manina* (1881); A.I. Makshev *Istoricheskii obzor Turkestana i nastupatel'nogo dvizheniia v nego russkikh* (Saint Petersburg, 1890); N. Veselovskii *Kirgizskii rasskaz o russkikh zavoevaniakh v Turkestanskom krae* (1894); I. Geier *Turkestan* (Tashkent, 1909); A. Budilovich, ed. *Trudy osobago sovechshaniia po voprosam obrazovaniia vostochnykh inorodtsev* (Saint Petersburg, 1905); N. Il'minskii *Vospominaniia ob Altynsarine* (Kazan, 1891); O. Shkapskii *Kirgizy-krest'iane (iz zhisni Semirech'ia)* (Saint Petersburg, 1905). Among the secondary literature, I found the following works most relevant to my research: K. Sultanbaeva *N.F.Katanov – vydaiuchshiiisia uchenyi, vostokoved, tiurkolog, prosvetitel'* (Abakan, 2009); G.

Sultangalieva *Zapadnyi Kazakhstan v sisteme etnokul'turnykh kontaktov (XVIII-nachalo XX vv.)* (Ufa, 2001); articles from the collection *Medrese "Mukhammadiya": preemstvennost' traditsii* (Kazan, 2008), etc.

My archival research trip to Kazan, Ufa, and Moscow provided me with sufficient material to further my dissertation research. I can say that I had a quite positive but different experience doing my research in each one of the cities. It was easy to navigate in Kazan and Ufa; the archives were much smaller, the distance to travel between the archives and libraries was much shorter, and the staff was more personal. I was able to copy most of the material I needed and the fees for copying were somewhat reasonable. Doing research in Moscow, however, was quite challenging and it took more time and planning in advance. It was impossible to make any copies in the archives in Moscow, so I had to take notes by hand which was quite a time consuming process.

My research plan was rather complicated in terms of my travel plans and I am very grateful to my Program Coordinator, Sarah Krueger, for helping me in preparation for this trip. She responded to each of my inquiry in a timely manner and made sure the trip went without any obstacles. In Moscow, Jon Smith, the resident director of the Russian-language program, helped me with registration and promptly answered all my questions during my initial stay. I am grateful to ACTR/ACCELS for the Title VIII Research Scholar Program Fellowship which presented an opportunity for me to travel and expand my knowledge of the region, its history, and people.

I plan on spending four months in 2012 doing research in the archives and libraries in Bishkek and Almaty. A year after that I will spend closely examining materials that I gathered from my research trips and writing up my dissertation. I also would like to some parts of my

project at the scholarly conferences in the United States. Finally, I plan on completing my Ph. D. in spring of 2013 and looking for a teaching position in one the colleges in the United States.