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THE WRITTEN MONUMENTS OF AZERBAIJAN, THE MANUSCRIPTS OF AZERBAIJAN, THE SCRIBE-CALLIGRAPHERS OF AZERBAIJAN (THE ETERNAL AND GLORIOUS WEALTH)

ПИСЕМНІ ПАМ'ЯТКИ АЗЕРБАЙДЖАНУ, МАНУСКРИПТИ АЗЕРБАЙДЖАНУ, ПИСАРІ-КАЛІГРАФИ АЗЕРБАЙДЖАНУ (ВІЧНЕ І СЛАВНЕ БАГАТСТВО)

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The material, material-spiritual, spiritual-cultural heritage, including the written monuments of the people of Azerbaijan are the best spokesmen and guides of the ancestry, identity, history of this people, and they are the best sources, that reflect the skill and talent, intelligence and outlook, taste and spirituality, science, literature, culture and art, in short, all the truths of the life of this people. During a very long period of time from the "Avesta" to the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century the written monuments, including the manuscripts of Azerbaijan were created, lived and reached today thanks to the hard work of our scribes and calligraphers. The main aim of the research is to investigate the written monuments of Azerbaijan, with a particular focus on the manuscripts and the contributions of scribe-calligraphers. The study explores the role of these calligraphers in preserving and enhancing the writing and book culture of Azerbaijan, and their influence on the development of calligraphy styles, especially during the Middle Ages. It emphasizes the importance of understanding the lives and works of these calligraphers, as well as their impact on the cultural and historical heritage of Azerbaijan. Additionally, the research examines the role of tazkirahs, particularly Mirza Sanglakh's "Tazkiratul-Khattatin," in documenting the history of these calligraphers and their contributions to the art of writing. The study is intended to highlight the global significance of Azerbaijani manuscript culture and its contributions to the broader Islamic and Eastern world.

The comprehensive study and research of the life and creativity of the scribes and calligraphers of Azerbaijan is not only from the point of view of the Azerbaijani studies and oriental studies, but also it has a great universal importance as a whole, covering the history and literature, science and culture, religious-ideological, social-political situations, outlooks. The sources, that talk about the life and creativity of the scribes and calligraphers of Azerbaijan, who lived and created in the Middle Ages, including the tazkirahs, are very valuable in this regard. One of the such sources is the work of the 19th century Iranian author Mirza Sanglakh, called "The book of scholars examination", which consists of a tazkirah about the calligraphers. This work is mainly known as "Tazkiratul-khattatin".

Key words: the written monuments of Azerbaijan, the scribe-calligraphers, the writing and book culture, the eternal values, M. Sanglakh, "Tazkiratul-khattatin".

Матеріальна, матеріально-духовна та духовно-культурна спадщина, включаючи писемні пам'ятки народу Азербайджану, є найкращими представниками та провідниками родоводу, ідентичності, історії цього народу, і вони є найкращими джерелами, що відображають майстерність і талант, інтелект та світогляд, смак і духовність, науку, літературу, культуру та мистецтво, коротше кажучи, всі істини життя цього народу. Протягом дуже довгого періоду часу від «Авести» до кінця XIX століття та початку XX століття писемні пам'ятки, включаючи манускрипти Азербайджану, створювалися, існували та дійшли до сьогодні завдяки важкій праці наших писарів і каліграфів. Основною метою дослідження є вивчення писемних пам'яток Азербайджану, з особливою увагою до манускриптів і внеску писарів-каліграфів. Дослідження розглядає роль цих каліграфів у збереженні та розвитку культури письма та книгодруку Азербайджану, а також їхній вплив на розвиток стилів каліграфії, особливо в середньовіччі. У дослідженні наголошується на важливості розуміння життя та творчості цих каліграфів, а також їхнього впливу на культурну та історичну спадщину Азербайджану. Крім того, дослідження вивчає роль тазкір, зокрема «Тазкіратуль-хаттатін» Мірзи Санглаха, у документуванні історії цих каліграфів і їхнього внеску в мистецтво письма. Метою дослідження є підкреслення глобального значення азербайджанської манускриптно-культури та її внеску в ширший ісламський та Східний світ.

Всеосяжне дослідження життя та творчості писарів і каліграфів Азербайджану є важливим не лише з точки зору азербайджаністики та орієнталістики, але й має велике універсальне значення в цілому, охоплюючи історію та літературу, науку та культуру, релігійно-ідеологічні, соціально-політичні ситуації, світогляди. Джерела, що розповідають про життя та творчість писарів і каліграфів Азербайджану, які жили та творили в середньовіччі, зокрема тазкіри, є дуже цінними в цьому контексті. Одним з таких джерел є праця іранського автора XIX століття Мірзи Санглаха, яка називається «Книга іспиту вчених», що складається з тазкір про каліграфів. Ця праця в основному відома як «Тазкіратуль-хаттатін».

Ключові слова: писемні пам'ятки Азербайджану, писарі-каліграфи, культура письма та книгодруку, вічні цінності, М. Санглах, «Тазкіратуль-хаттатін».

Introduction. The very diverse and rich material and material-spiritual monuments, including the written monuments, created in the historical territory of Azerbaijan since ancient times are the evidences and incomparable and glorious sources covering the history, social, economic, religious-ideological, political situation, the science and literature, culture and art, in other words, all areas of the life of Azerbaijan and Eastern world in general. The magnificent material, material-spiritual, spiritual-cultural heritage, created by the ancestors of the people of Azerbaijan thousands of years ago are the very valuable, unparalleled and eternal wealth not only of Azerbaijan and Eastern world, but of the humanity in general. In fortunately, many of the material and material-spiritual monuments created in the historical territory of Azerbaijan were destroyed and has not reached us to this day as a result of the various historical events, natural disasters, robberies, wars, biased attitudes, reasons arising from the socio-political and religious-ideological situations, fires, etc.

The written monuments, especially manuscripts, created in the historical territory of Azerbaijan in the ancient times and in the Middle Ages are the most valuable witnesses and very reliable spokespersons of the history of the development of not only the one nation and one region, but also the humanity in general. The many different examples of the manuscripts, written by the scribes-calligraphers of Azerbaijan during the Middle Ages are protected in the many museums, libraries, scientific-research institutes, in the science, literature and culture centers and funds, private collections, etc., in the world today. These monuments have a special place in the world cultural treasury with their value and importance. It is extremely important and necessary to perfectly and thoroughly investigate, research and present the results of the studies of the manuscripts, as well as the life and creativity of their authors and scribes-calligraphers, who gave them the life through the writing. This is of unparalleled importance not only in terms of Azerbaijani studies and oriental studies, but also in terms of the revealing the realities and values of the humanity and accurately presenting them to humanity. Let's remember, that the scribe-calligraphers of the people of Azerbaijan, who are the part of the humanity, were not only the executors, they were also the creators – inventors of the new handwriting styles, and they played a great and important role in the development of the arts of the calligraphy, writing and book cultures, and most of them were the well educated people, who knew many fields of the science, literature and art, and in some cases, they were the figures close to the ruling circles and active participants in the social-political life, too. Their activities and creativities are of global and universal

importance – the eternal riches, that are useful and beautiful, serve mankind and humanity as a whole. And knowing the truths is always very important and very necessary.

Methods and Materials. This investigation relies on a qualitative analysis of historical Azerbaijani manuscripts, with a focus on understanding the role and evolution of scribe-calligraphers. Primary sources include a range of manuscripts and tazkirahs from the Middle Ages to the 20th century, particularly Mirza Sanglakh's "Tazkiratul-khattatin." The study draws on archival research conducted at the Institute of Manuscripts in Baku, Azerbaijan, where original manuscripts and lithographic copies are preserved. Additional primary resources were examined in museums and private collections that hold Azerbaijani manuscripts, providing a broad perspective on both the content and stylistic features of the calligraphy.

The research methodology integrates philological analysis, art historical study, and historical contextualization. Philological analysis was applied to evaluate the language, vocabulary, and structure of the manuscripts, shedding light on their evolution and cultural significance. Art historical methods enabled a detailed study of calligraphic styles, tracing the development and unique contributions of Azerbaijani scribe-calligraphers. Additionally, historical contextualization provided an understanding of the social, political, and religious influences on the manuscripts' production, particularly in connection with Islamic art and the development of writing systems in the region.

The materials studied include both physical manuscripts and lithographic reproductions, which were carefully documented and analyzed for stylistic and content-related details. The research also incorporates secondary sources, including scholarly texts on Azerbaijani and Islamic calligraphy, to frame the findings within existing literature. The combination of primary and secondary sources, alongside multi-disciplinary methods, enables a comprehensive understanding of Azerbaijan's manuscript heritage, emphasizing the scribe-calligraphers' contributions and the significance of their work within the broader cultural and historical landscape.

Results. It all started with the small lines and signs, with the small and different lines and signs, scratched, carved, engraved by the most ancient people on the ground, snow, clay, stones, rocks, woods, bones, skin, etc., with the various means.

A person expressed his opinion, goal, wish and dream through the word and speech, and communicated through the talking. A language – speech, which is the most important and necessary means of the communication for every person, was created between the people, within the society, and gradually

developed and enriched as a human consciousness, understanding, lifestyle and society in general, and evolved and became richer step by step over the centuries. However a spoken and vocal language could not satisfy the necessary and essential needs of the persons and masses of people to record and store the certain information and transmit it over the different distances. A person understood his need and desire to preserve, record, engrave, store, convey and transmit his idea, goal, knowledge and the certain information, and a person had to resort to another means. Those lines, signs, images, drawings gradually increased as necessary, went beyond the scope of simplicity, were gradually arranged and systematized. And thus, those various lines, signs, images and drawings became the first steps on the way to the emergence of the writing, which is the greatest success and the greatest miracle in the human life and human history. A writing, which was the result of the first steps taken thousands of years ago, developed along with the development of the human and society. The lines, images, drawings, the very short or large sentences, engraved on the various bodies and objects, that are visible in the certain areas and incised in the certain areas as a result of the archaeological researches the written monuments has an unparalleled importance and great value as the sources of the information about the people, society and humanity in general, covering the human history. Let's note, that all these factors also reflect the importance of the textual studies, which is one of the important scientific fields of philology. As is known, there have been the important stages in the history of the creation and development of the writing over the millennia. Thus, the types of the writing appeared: a pictographic writing (a pictorial writing; emerged during the transition to the Neolithic period in the VIII–VI millennia BC); an ideographic writing (a conditional sign of object); a logographic writing (a verbal writing); a syllabic writing (one sign represents a whole syllable; 2nd millennium B. C.), a phonetic writing (XI–X centuries B. C.) [1, p. 30–31; 2, p. 5; 3, p. 10–11]. The phonetic writing was invented for the first time by the Phoenicians. Let us remind you, that almost all of the world's phonetic alphabets are derived from the Phoenician alphabet [4, p. 563]. The creation of the sound (phonography) writing led to the formation of the alphabet. In the East, the Aramaic script was created based on the Phoenician alphabet [5, p. 48–49]. The Aramaic script was used among the Semitic peoples in a large area from Asia minor to India and the Jewish, Syrian, Iranian (Pahlavi), Arabic, ancient Turkish (Uyghur), Mongolian alphabets were formed based on that writing [5, p. 49]. These posts are written from right to left. The alphabets in the Western world are also derived from the Phoenician alphabet – around the

8th century B. C. the Greek alphabet derived from the that alphabet underwent certain changes and was improved, acquired new features (the signs for vowel sounds were created, the direction of the writing changed from left to right and alphabets used in the Western world are also derived from the Greek alphabet [5, p. 49].

Azerbaijan is one of the oldest human settlements and one of the oldest cultural centers in the world. The various material and material-spiritual monuments, created in the historical territories of Azerbaijan thousands of years ago are evidences of the past and ancient times of this land and the best guides and interpreters of the truths about the life, activities and abilities of our ancestors, who lived in these territories. The information about the historical territory of Azerbaijan and the life of the people, who lived there – mainly the Turkic ethnic groups – was obtained thanks to archaeological research and written sources. Note that there are few written sources covering those periods. Due to the fact that the sources of ancient Azerbaijan have not reached us, the information about the most ancient and ancient periods of its history, as well as the early Middle Ages obtained from the cuneiform inscriptions of the Sumerian, Akkadian and Assyrian states, that existed in Mesopotamia, as well as the state of Urartu (III–I millennia B. C.), the ancient sources (5th–3rd centuries B. C.), especially the works of the Greek historians and the historians of Rome and the Greek and Roman geographers, including the work “History” of the ancient Greek historian Herodotus (490/80 B. C. – 425 B. C.), the work “Geography” of the ancient Greek historian and geographer Strabo (64/63 B. C. – 23/24 A. D.), etc. There are the important information about the Caucasian Albania, the geographical position and conditions of Atropathena, its inhabitants, the city of Gazaka (Shiz), etc. in this work of Strabo. The written sources of the early Middle Ages (IV–X centuries), including the Byzantine, Arab, Albanian sources (the sources belonging to Albania, one of the ancient states of Azerbaijan), the epigraphic inscriptions contain very valuable information about the historical territory and inhabitants of ancient Azerbaijan. The 7th century Albanian historian Musa Kalankatli's work “The history of Albania” is one of the most important sources.

As a result of archaeological epigraphic researches conducted in the different periods in the territory of Azerbaijan, especially in the middle of the 20th century, a very valuable facts and information relating to thousands of years ago were obtained. These studies confirm, that the formation and settlement of the oldest-primitive people took place in the historical territory of Azerbaijan millions of years ago. The historical territory of Azerbaijan is included among the regions, where a primitive man was formed on the Earth [6, p. 20–21]. Azikh, Taglar caves in Karabakh,

Zar cave in Kalbajar, Gazma cave in Nakhchivan, Dashsalahli, Aveydag, Damjili cave camps in Gazakh, etc. are the cultural remains of the Paleolithic period (started 2, 7 million years ago), Gobustan (near Baku), Gillikdagh (Khanlar region), the Yanigtepe (near Tabriz) and others are cultural remains of the Neolithic period (starting from the 8th millennium B. C.). The Guruchay archaeological culture discovered in the Karabakh region of Azerbaijan is one of the oldest human cultures in the world, it is more than 1,5 million years old. The Guruchay valley near the city of Fuzuli and the Azikh cave located on its edge are one of the oldest known human settlements in the world, and it has the same date (the Paleolithic) as the Olduvai culture located in Africa (Tanzania) and according to the archaeological scale, it belongs to the pre-Acheulean stage [6, p. 20–23; 7, p. 183]. In this cave, there are six halls connected to each other with the narrow passages, and in those halls, the various hunting and farm tools from the oldest times, as well as a jaw bone belonging to a person, who lived approximately 400 thousand years ago, were discovered. The oldest hearth remains found here are about 700 thousand years old.

The various items: a simple dishes, or a dishes with the beautiful patterns and paintings engraved on them, the animal figures, pitchers, seals, ornaments, belts (especially a bronze belts with the charming patterns, belonging to the Gadabay-Khojali culture), household, the farm and hunting tools, etc. found in Gadabay, Gazakh, Khojaly, Ganja, Mingachevir, Nakhchivan, Shamakhi, Gabala, Zangilan, Absheron, etc. regions of Azerbaijan belongs to the oldest and ancient times – IV–I millennia B. C. The sound of the material and material-spiritual monuments of the people of Azerbaijan comes from thousands of years ago, from the ancient states such as Aratta, the first state formed in the southern part of the historical territory of Azerbaijan in the first half of the III millennium B. C., Lullubum, the second early state, which was established in the southern part of Azerbaijan in the second half of the third millennium B. C., the state of Kuttium, which was formed in the western part of the historical territory of Azerbaijan in the second half of the third millennium B.C., Manna (early 1st millennium B. C.), Media (728 B. C. – 549 B. C.), Albania (4th – 3rd centuries B.C.), Atropathena (4th B. C. – 5th century A. D.). The people of Azerbaijan are among the peoples with the ancient traditions and experience of statehood [6, p. 65].

Gobustan – nowadays Gobustan open inherited from the XV–XII millennia B.C. and one of the oldest human settlements in the world is located near Baku, at the foot of the Boyukdash mountain. About 4000 signs, images engraved by the oldest people thousands of years ago on the hundreds of stone and

rock fragments in Gobustan are the best examples of pictographic writing. The working and hunting tools, ornaments, etc., discovered as a result of archaeological research in the Gobustan area, provides very interesting information about the oldest people – an ancestors of the people of Azerbaijan.

The researchers conducted in the territory of Azerbaijan revealed very valuable facts and evidences about the lifestyle, outlook and beliefs of the people, who lived in this ancient land during the Middle Paleolithic (120/100-40/30 millenniums B. C.), Mesolithic (XII–VIII millenniums B. C.), Neolithic (VII–VI millenniums B. C.), Eneolithic (VI–IV millenniums B. C.), Late Bronze and Early Iran (XIV–VIII centuries B. C.), Ages. Our goal in reminding them is the existence of the necessary conditions for the creation and development of material, material-spiritual, spiritual-cultural monuments in the historical territory of Azerbaijan from the earliest times, to create a general idea about the material and material-spiritual heritage created by the ancestors of the people of Azerbaijan, to briefly describe our distant past, and to take a brief trip to our very distant past.

The worldview, religious-philosophical, spiritual and moral ideas, conclusions and views of the thinker, philosopher and poet Zarathustra, who was born in Shiz (Gazakha) in the territory of ancient Azerbaijan (Atropathena) in the 7th century B. C., were written down in “Avesta”. “Avesta” was written on the parchment made of 12000 ox hides in the 6th century B. C., and it is one of the largest examples of the flat book type (canon) in the world. As the prominent scientist of Azerbaijan, prof. J.Kahramanov stated, the history of the book of Azerbaijan, for now, is calculated starting from the date of creation “Avesta” [8, p. 5]. The “Avesta”, which was created about three thousand years ago and became famous not only in the Eastern world, but also in the world in general, was written in the alphabet of “dindabira”, and was written from right to left, and its language is fundamentally different from the languages of the peoples of Central Asia, as well as the eastern peoples of Iran. The language of “Avesta” belongs to the western part of Iran – Azerbaijan [9, p. 27–29]. It should be noted, that “Avesta”, which is considered the first book of Azerbaijan, was first destroyed during the invasion campaigns of Alexander the Great (IV century B. C.) and later it was not possible to restore its text as it was. A third of the “Avesta” was composed in the Pahlavi language during the reign of the Sasanians (IV century) [9, p. 27–28]. And the second time “Avesta” was destroyed during the Arab invasions (VII century). But many of the Zoroastrians, who had to emigrate to India at that time tried to restore their books and established their own centers in the city of

Bombey [10, p. 4–5]. Undoubtedly, our great written monument like “Avesta”, which invites the people to the spiritual and moral beauty, purity, goodness and benevolence, to be honest and fair, was not created suddenly and in a vacuum. Based on this book, it is possible to come to a general conclusion about the writing and book culture of the people of Azerbaijan in the relevant periods. And beginning with this written monument, the unique writing and book culture of the people of Azerbaijan undoubtedly developed over a long period of time, including the early Middle Ages. And in ancient times, in the early Middle Ages, a single alphabet was not used in the historical territory of Azerbaijan. We would like to remind you, that as early as B. C. in the 3rd millennium and subsequent millennia the cuneiform alphabet (the cuneiform alphabet was created by the Sumerians at the end of the IV millennium B. C., and later it was used by the other peoples, mainly the neighboring peoples) was used in the southern part of Azerbaijan, and not one, but the several were used in the northern part. Ancient Albania had its own alphabet. This is proven and confirmed by the archaeological research: 21 letters, 52 letters, etc. the existence of alphabets is also confirmed by the epigraphic inscriptions. The existence of 21 letter and 52 letter, etc. alphabets is also confirmed by the epigraphic inscriptions. There was a rich literature in Albania in the 5th century, and the 5th–8th centuries were the period of the flowering of the Albanian writing, book and literature. During the reign (637–680) of the Albanian ruler Javanshir (616–680), in the VII–VIII centuries, the Albanian book experienced its peak period [11].

By the way, we would like to remind, that as confirmed by the sources covering 3rd–1st millennium B. C. and the 1st millennium A. D., the inhabitants of the historical territory of Azerbaijan were Turkish speaking – the early Turks from the earliest times, and the main ethnic composition of the population remained stable for millennia, and those, who immigrated to this area in the later times were mainly of Turkic origin [6, p. 220]. This idea also applies to Caucasian Albania. Strabo in his work “The Geography” clearly showed the dialect differences among the inhabitants of Albania (a tribes speaking in 26 dialects) [4, p. 44]. It goes without saying, that the other ethnic groups also lived in this area. As confirmed by the archaeological and epigraphic studies, the several alphabets existed in the territory of ancient Albania. M. Adilov, the scientist of Azerbaijan, the doctor of philological sciences, in his work “The paleography of Azerbaijan” gives detailed information about this and reminds that 18 letters, which are often used in the Albanian script found in Mingachevir in 1948–52, do not exist in the Albanian script discovered in 1937. Also, 13 letters belonging

the Turkish runic (Orkhon-Yenisei script) were used 65 times in the Albanian epigraphic samples discovered in 1948–52 [1, p. 44]. M. Adilov reminds, that in the VI–VII centuries, they used the Turkish runic alphabet in Khazar Khaganate, located north of the Darband fortress of ancient Azerbaijan [1, p. 46]. Thus, in ancient Azerbaijan, which is one of the beautiful and rich corners of the Old East and a part of the great Turkic world, the Orkhon-Yenisei – Turkish runic alphabet was also used first by the Albanian tribes, and then by the other Turkic tribes [1, p. 47].

Thus, in the historical territory of Azerbaijan, the writing culture was created and developed step by step, passing a long and complicated path. And the top of this development path is book, book culture. Our book culture itself has gone through a very large and complex development path, and our great book called “Kitabi-Dada Gorgud” has a special place on this road. This magnificent monument, a relic of the 10th–11th centuries, is a historical epic, that describes the ancient culture of the people of Azerbaijan, the social life conditions, political-administrative, military-geographical environment in the language of oral folk literature [12, p. 3]. And this work, which consists of ancient Oguz epics, reflects the spiritual and moral values, the fine traditions, the bravery and heroism of the people of Azerbaijan, and this work is a life lesson full of admonitions told by the wise of Dada Gorgud, the spiritual leader of the people.

During the attack of the army of the Arab caliphate in the 40’s of the 7th century, Azerbaijan was the part of the Sassanid Empire – in the 3rd century, the ancient lands of Azerbaijan included Albania, Atropathena, etc. was conquered by the Sassanians and included in the Sassanian Empire (III–VII centuries). The Arab invasion led to the collapse of the Sassanian empire, and thus, like many countries, the historical territory of Azerbaijan was included in the Arab Caliphate. Gradually, the rule of the Arab caliphate (VII–XI centuries) covering a very large area from Spain to the borders of China, as well as Egypt, North Africa, a large part of the Liberian Peninsula, etc., caused the radical changes in the life of the people of Azerbaijan as well as many peoples of the world. We would like to remind, that in the early Middle Ages, as a result of unite of the various Turkic ethnic groups, the universal Azerbaijani (Turkish) language was formed in the 7th–8th centuries, and the Turks of Azerbaijan were formed as a single nation [6, p. 237]. And it goes without saying, that this nation included an other ethnic groups, who were the inhabitants of the historical territory of Azerbaijan. It should be noted, that in the period up to the 7th century, the ancient nation of Azerbaijan was one of the nations with developed writing and book cultures, and with a schools and libraries [13, p. 56–57].

“Like a number of developed nations, the Turks of Azerbaijan also had a developed culture until the 7th century, a considerable number of religious and secular books rich a philosophical judgments related to the ancient traditions, and in the IV–VII centuries Darband, Shamakhi, Tabriz, Sheki, Nakhchivan, Ganja, Gabala, Barda, etc. cities of Azerbaijan were distinguished by their highly developed cultural life and rich book wealth” [13, p. 56–57].

At the beginning of the 7th century, a great event took place in the human history, a turning point event in the human history, an event, that opened a completely new page in the human life. In 610 the first verses of the Holy Quran were revealed to Muhammad ibn Abdullah (570/71, Mecca – 8.6.632, Medina), a descendant of Bani Hashim of the Gureysh tribe, for the first time in Hira cave on the mount Nur by God’s command through Gabriel. After the first revelation, there was a break of three years, and after three years, for 23 years the verses of the Holy Quran were revealed to Hz. Muhammad (pbuh.) [14, p. 183–185; 15, p. 534]. As soon as the Quran was revealed (610–632), the companions memorized it, and the scribes wrote down the Quran’s verses. At first, the verses of Quran were written on the parchment, papyrus, palm leaves and back bones of animals. The first examples were written in Kufic, and sometimes in Hijazi script [14, p. 199]. In 630, Mecca, and then a large part of Arabian Peninsula was captured by the first muslimes, who were the followers of Hz. Muhammad (pbuh.), and the first Muslim Arab state was established. From the end of the 7th century, the religion of Islam began to spread in the Central Asia and Transcaucasia (especially in Azerbaijan), and in the 9th–11th centuries in the North Caucasus, Volga-Kama basin and Urals.

It should be noted, that the Himyar language and the Himyar script were used in the southern part of Arabia in the period of Jahiliyyat – before the Islam – until about the 10th century. Later, a language and script of the northern part of Arabia overtook it and eliminated it [14, p. 82]. In the northern part of Arabia, there were two types of script: a naskh script derived from the nabati script and a kufic script derived from the syriac script [14, p. 13]. Since the kufic script was widespread in Hira, it was also called the hiri script. After the establishment of the Islamic religion, a writing was given the special importance and value. The Arabic alphabet was formed on the basis of nabati script [14, p. 82]. We remind you, that the arabic language belongs to the southern group of semitic languages, and the nabateans, a group of ancient arab tribes living in the northern part of the Arabian Peninsula, used the aramaic script for a long time, and in the 3rd century they created the alphabet, that forms the basis of modern Arabic script [16, p. 215].

Like many other nations within the Arab caliphate, great changes took place in the life of the people of Azerbaijan. This was primarily related to the Holy Quran and Islam. In connection with the Islamic religion, the completely new aspects and characteristics appeared in the people’s way of life, traditions, trainings, fields of education and science, literature, culture, art, religious beliefs, etc. A new alphabet entered the life of the people of Azerbaijan – the Arabic alphabet, the Arabic writing. The Azerbaijan’s material and material-spiritual culture acquired a completely new shades. The Arabic was declared the official language. The Arabic alphabet, which we call “the old alphabet” today, dominated the writing culture of the people of Azerbaijan for many centuries – until 1929. Let’s note, that the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic, which was established in the northern part of Azerbaijan at the beginning of the 20th century (1918–1920) and was the first democratic republic in the East, created a special commission in 1919 with the aim of canceling the use of the Arabic alphabet in this republic, and adopting and applying the latin alphabet. The parliament of ADR adopted a corresponding decision. However, after the fall of the ADR, this decision was invalidated. In the years 1929–1939, the latin alphabet was established in the Republic of Azerbaijan, in the years 1939–1991, the cyrillic alphabet, and since 1991, the latin alphabet was established again. And over many centuries, the Arabic script itself has undergone the great development path, underwent changes, was enriched and raised to a high levels, thanks to new styles and manners, and a new types of handwriting styles.

Like other nations within the Arab caliphate, in the early stages a writing down copies of the Holy Quran, hadiths, a various works on religious topics, including interpretations and commentaries, was the main place in the writing and book culture of the people of Azerbaijan, kufi and naskh handwriting styles, were used. The Holy Quran was mainly written in the kufic script, but from the beginning of the 12th century the naskh script supplanted the kufic scrip and gained dominance. Due to the expansion and development of the writing and book culture, the expansion of the subject and scope, and the attitude of the society to written monuments, especially manuscript books, a new types of handwriting styles – first of all, the classic six handwriting styles, popularly known as “the classic six”, appeared (in later periods, other handwriting styles appeared and the number of handwriting styles increased significantly): the suls (created by the arab calligrapher Abu Ali Muhammad ibn Mugla in the 10th century); the reyhani and muhaggag created by Ali ibn Hilal, known under the pseudonym “Ibn al-Bawwab” in the 11th century); the ruga and touqi (created by the Abdulfazl Dinavari, the poet

and calligrapher of Baghdad in the 13th century), and the naskh handwriting style, which we mentioned earlier. The classic six handwriting styles was applied to the subject and control of various texts and manuscripts, to the purpose and purpose, and to the certain moments. As the economy, socio-political relations, science, literature, culture, art, religion conditions and conditions, in general, as the society developed, the writing and book culture also developed. A speed, quality and beauty, were an important factors in the writing. Always it is one of the most characteristic human characteristics to search for something more appropriate, more convenient, better quality, more efficient and more beautiful in his life and activity. And it goes without saying, that calligraphy was born and developed from these characteristics. This factor was related not only to the writing equipment.

Unlike the ordinary writing, the beautifully, clearly and expressively writing, based on certain norms and rules, led to the creation of calligraphy as a necessity. It should be noted, that due to known reasons, when we talk about the calligraphy in Azerbaijan in the Middle Ages, we are talking about the Arabic script and within the frame of Arabic script. And in the Middle Ages, the formation and systematization of the calligraphy in the historical territory of Azerbaijan occurred in the X–XI centuries. We remind you, that in the period up to the VII–VIII centuries, as confirmed by the sources, the developed writing and book culture, scribe-calligraphy existed in Azerbaijan. Born out of the needs and requirements of time and circumstances, calligraphy developed and rose in the later stages of the Middle Ages enriched thanks to new types of the handwriting styles, a new styles, and rose to the level of wonder. And in this fields there was a special and great role of the people of Azerbaijan. Created by the great calligrapher of Azerbaijan of the 14th century Mir Ali Tabrizi as a result of combining the handwriting styles of “naskh” and “taliq”, the nastaliq opened a new and beautiful page in the world of Arabic writing, and became the most and widely used type of handwriting styles; the wonderful “shikaste” handwriting style, created by the 18th century calligrapher of Azerbaijan Murtuzaqulukhan Shamlu was of great importance in terms of ensuring speed in the writing, also stood at a special moment in terms of artistic writing; the great calligrapher of Azerbaijan of the 14th century, Abdulla Seyrafi Tabrizi, created the “musenna” writing style (a reflection of the writing in a mirror), and gave the writing a new charm, and expended the possibilities of artistic writing, etc.

Many scribe-calligraphers, who lived in different periods of the Middle Ages – Mubarakshah Qutb Zarringalam, Mir Ali Tabrizi, Abdulla Seyrafi, Azhar Tabrizi, Malik Daylami, Molla Muhammad Huseyn

Tabrizi, Ali Reza Tabrizi, Darvish Abdulmajid Talegani, Mir Imad Ghazvini, etc. – written monuments created by them, including manuscripts, are incomparable wealth and rare pearls not only of Azerbaijan and the Eastern world, but also of the world’s cultural treasure in general. As it is known, the manuscript book was created as a result of the great efforts of several artists; a scribe-calligraphers, papermakers, bookbinders, miniature painters, painters-muzahhibs, who produce and prepare paper. It goes without saying. That the most important factors of our writing and book culture were scribe-calligraphers. Note that, the prominent scientist of Azerbaijan prof. J. Gahramanov (1927–1995) evaluated a manuscript books in terms of layout and divided them into three party; an ordinary books, a moderately designed books, a high-level works of art [17, p. 9].

The establishment of the first printing house and the first book printing in the territory of Azerbaijan took place in the city of Tabriz, which is one of the scientific and cultural centers not only of Azerbaijan, but of the Eastern world as a whole, and the world in general. The sources provide the different information about the history of that event: 1812, 1817, 1818, 1819, etc. Abbas Mirza (1789–1833), the eldest son of Fatali shah (1766–1834), a ruler of Azerbaijan from the Qajar dynasty, made a special contribution to the establishment of a printing house in Tabriz. It was under his personal initiative and patronage, that Mirza Jafar from Tabriz was sent to Moscow to bring a litographic printing press and learn the art of printing in this printing press. Abbas Mirza sent Mirza Saleh Shirazi to England for the same purpose. He returned to Tabriz in 1819 and brought a printing press with him. In 1819 the great poet of Azerbaijan Muhammad Fuzuli’s poem “Leyli and Majnun” was published in Tabriz. According to some sources, the first book printed in Tabriz was “Jahadiyya” by Isa ibn Husayn Qaimmaqam Farahani. Thus, the first printing house in Azerbaijan was established in the first quarter of the 19th century in the city of Tabriz. And the last creator of exquisite manuscripts in the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan was an outstanding scientist, pedagogue, bibliophile and calligrapher Abdulgani Nukhavi Khalisagarizade (1817–1897) and his son Abdulla.

Thus, starting from “Avesta”, which we consider our first book, over a very long period of time, including the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, the written monuments of the people of Azerbaijan, including the manuscript books, were created, existed and developed thanks to the scribe-calligraphers.

The written monuments, including the manuscript books, created by the great genius, are always valuable, as a unique and very important heritage. As we

already stated, according to the reality born from the known historical circumstances, the life and creativity of scribe-calligraphers of Azerbaijan are investigated and studied within the framework of a great period starting from the 8th century. And in that period, an Arabic script types went through the great development, went beyond the framework of the “classic six” and became numerous.

Tazkirahs have a special place and a special significance among the sources, that talk about the life and creativity of scribe-calligraphers of Azerbaijan, who lived and Azerbaijan, who lived and created in the Middle Ages. Tazkirahs, which has an encyclopedic feature, are scientific-literary works, that provide an information about the poets, scientists, artists, etc., in the Eastern world. And they are one of the epic genres. The origin of tazkirahs is the works of the arabs, called “tabaqat” (the layers). “Tazkirah” is a word of Arabic origin, derived from the word “ziker” (to remember), and means “to remember”. In the Arabic literature, the 11th-12th centuries are characterized as a period of renewal. It happened in the Abbasid period and is manifested in the last period of the Arab caliphate. During that period, the Arabic literature developed, a dictionaries, anthologies and biographical works called “tabaqat” proliferated. The initial period of renewal covers 8th-9th centuries. The first samples of tabaqat were created in that period. Hammad ar-Raviyyah (695–772), Abu Abdullah ibn Sallam al-Jumahi (756–846; he had two works “Tabaqat” about the poets of Jahiliyyah and Islamic period), Ibn Qutayba (828–889), Ibn al-Mutazz (861–908) were the creators of the first tabaqats. In these tabaqats information about the life and creativity of poets and writers was given in a manner divided into layers based on a certain principle, and examples of works were presented. Let’s remember, that although “tazkirah” is a word of Arabic origin, but it was not used in arabs as a literary term. Among the Turkishspeaking peoples the first tazkirah was created by the great uzbek poet Alishir Navai (1441–1501) – the tazkirah called “Majalisun-nafais”. “Tohfeyi-Sami” written by Sam Mirza (1518–1567) is the first tazkirah of Azerbaijan. In terms of being able to correctly assess the historical conditions, literary, socio-political and economic situation, scientific and cultural environment of a certain period, the tazkirahs are of the great importance and are considered primary sources for the study of the history of culture of the Middle Ages Eastern peoples. Thus, it is of great importance to translate tazkirahs and to study them thoroughly.

One of the tazkirahs, that tells about the life and creativity of the scribe-calligraphers the Eastern world, Azerbaijan, who lived and created in the Middle Ages, is the 19th century Iranian author Mirza Sanglakh’s “The examination of scholars”,

or the tazkirah about the the calligraphers. Mirza Sanglakh lived and created during the reign of Agha Muhammad shah (1742–1797), Fatali shah (1771–1834) and Nasiraddin shah (1831–1896) from the Qajar dynasty. He lived for 110 years, he had the talent of poetry and calligraphy, and was the sufi and dervish [18, p. 813]. This work (“Tazkiratul-khattatin”) of him for a first time translated from Persian to Azerbaijani language by the author of this article, thoroughly researched and included in the research. The information about the M.Sanglakh’s life and work and creativity is limited and scarce. The relatively complete information about him was presented by the 20th century Iranian scientist Mehdi Bayani (1908–1969) in his work “The life and works of calligraphers”. It is also possible to obtain the certain information about M.Sanglakh from his own tazkirah. Considering, that M.Sanglakh lived for 110 years and died in h.q. 1294/1877 in Tabriz, we can say, that he was born in h.q. 1184/1767.

On the page 10 of the “Danishmandani-Azerbaijan” – “The scientists of Azerbaijan” the work of prominent scientist, educator, social-political figure of Azerbaijan Muhammadali Tarbiyat (1877–1940), edited and republished by Gulamrza Tabatabai in h.sh. 1394/2016, the following information is given under the heading “Tazkiratul-khattatin”: “Tazkiratul-khattatin” is a book written in Persian about the rules of calligraphy and the life and creativity of calligraphers, its author is Mirza Sanglakh Bocnurdi Khorasani (died in h. sh. 1294), another name of this work is “Ketabi-imtahanul-fuzala” – “The examination of scholars”. This work was published for the first time in one volume in h.q. 1276 in Istanbul, and for the second time in two volumes in h.q. 1295 in Tabriz by lithographic method [19, p. 10]. In the Institute of Manuscripts named after Muhamad Fuzuli of the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences, there are both copies of this work – Istanbul and Tabriz copies.

He wrote the nastalik and shikasta-nastalik handwriting styles very good and he knew and identified the handwriting styles. It is known from his works that he was a dervish, without an eye for worldly goods, the humble, poor, helpless, lonely, homeless, familyless, childless servant. Similarly, we witness his excessive self-satisfaction, excessive praise and exaltation of himself and his works, boasting, arrogance and self-adoration.

On the page 10 in the last edition of the “Danishmandani-Azerbaijan” – “The scientists of Azerbaijan” the work (tazkirah) of the prominent scientist of Azerbaijan, the educator, democrat, public figure Muhammadali Tarbiyat (1877–1940), edited and republished by Gulamrza Tabatabai in h.sh. 1394 (2015/16), under the heading “Tazkiratul-khattatin”

the following information is given: “Tazkiratul-khattatin is a book written in Persian language about the rules of calligraphy and the life of calligraphers, the author is Mirza Sanglakh Bocnurdi Khorasani (died in 1294 h.l.), the other name of the work is “Imtahanul-fuzala” (Bajnurd or Bijengord is one of the cities included in the territory of Khorasan, it is located in its northwestern part, bordering Guchan country). This work for the first time was published in h.l. 1276 in one volume in Istanbul, and for the second time was published in h.l. 1295 in two volumes in Tabriz by the lithography method [19, p. 10]. Let’s not, that the both copies of this work are available at the Institute of Manuscript named after Muhammad Fuzuli of ANAS, and they are protected under the following codes: VI-178/2143 (the Istanbul copy); XIII-184/4143 (I volume of the Tabriz copy); XIII-181/4140 (II volume of the Tabriz copy). Both copies are the exquisite manuscript books. The Istanbul copy consists of 398 pages (199 sheets); the first volume of the Tabriz copy consists of 928 pages (464 sheets), and the second volume consists of 446 pages (223 sheets). Both copies are original. Since the cover, and title page of both volumes of the Tabriz copy were damaged, the restoration work was carried out on it (by the restoration department of the Institute of Manuscripts named after Muhammad Fuzuli of ANAS), it was bound in blue-gray, strong car board. Both copies are lithographically published on the industrially produced white near and Middle Eastern paper and are the palaeographically indistinguishable, including the writing and artistic design of the work. At the beginning of both copies – before the beginning of the text of the work, a one page letter written to M. Sanglakh by Mirza Abdurrahim khan, the general consul of Iran in Tiflis regarding the fate of the work of art known as “Bismillah stone” was placed. The order of the pages is shown in the Oriental style. Regarding the structure of the work, we say, that it is written in a layered manner, that is, it is divided into layers – parts according to a certain principle. This work is written in tahkiyya style, the verse and prose parts are alternated. The Istanbul copy consists of a preface and a text dedicated to the calligraphers of ancient times and after both parts, the corresponding galatnama – the correction of errors in the writing – was presented. There is absolutely no difference between the Istanbul copy and the Tabriz copy in the relevant part of the first volume. It’s just, that the author continued his work based on the topic and content, and wrote the new parts. Thus, the first volume of the Tabriz copy consists of parts such as the preface, calligraphers, of ancient times, M. Sanglakh’s travels to the different cities, M. Sanglakh’s students, calligraphers of the Ottoman state. The second volume of the tazkirah

consists of a preface, a section dedicated to the calligraphers of recent times, and after this section, the copies of “The Siratus-sotur” by Sultanali Mashadi, “The midadul-khoatut” by Mir Ali Heravi, “The adabul-mashq” by Mir Imad Ghazvini, the verses containing advice (the advisory), the part dedicated to well-known calligraphers of the handwriting style of naskh have been presented. Thus, the different and unique aspects of this tazkirah in terms of subject matter and content and structure are clearly evident.

Although the work consists of a tazkirah about the scribe-calligraphers, its subject covers several aspects: the life and creativity of scribe-calligraphers; a travel document – sayahatname; an anthology. An explanatory glossary compiled by the author is given in the margins throughout the work. Taking into account that the language of the work is very difficult, and the author uses many words in zand, pazand, hindi languages and the many words in the different dialects, we must say, that many parts of this work would be incomprehensible if it were not for the explanatory dictionary provided by the author in the margins.

As we have already stated, M. Sanglakh’s tazkirah is about the calligraphers, first of all talks about the life and creativity of the famous calligraphers of ancient times, and among these calligraphers there are dozens scribe-calligraphers of Azerbaijan; Mubarakshah Zarringalam, Abdulla Seyrafi, Mir Ali Tabrizi, Mir Abdulla, Abdulbagi Tabrizi, Ala bek Tabrizi, Mulla Muhammad Huseyn Tabrizi, Ali Reza Tabrizi, Azhar Heravi, Malik Deylami, Mir Imad Ghazvini, Abdulmajid, Taleqani, etc.

In M. Sanglakh’s tazkirah about the calligraphers, a separate section is devoted to the scribe-calligraphers of the Ottoman state, and in this section are told about the life and creativity of Sheikhulislam Valiaddin Efendi, Muhammad al-Yasari Istanbuli, Mahmoud Chelebi Istanbuli, Katibzade Muhammad Rafi Efendi, Toremishzade Efendi, Ismayil Rafiq Efendi, Dadazade Muhammad Efendi and others.

The section about the each scribe-calligrapher is presented under the heading of interpretation of the corresponding person’s population. And the parts of poetry throughout the work given as the verses, bayt, fard, kita, etc. after getting acquainted with the content of the work, we come to the following conclusion; the volume of the work is large, and the content is incomplete, the information presented in the cover of pompous, in many cases, unnecessary expressions and sentences is incomplete, inaccuracy and sometimes flawed.

It should be noted, that in M.Sanglakh’s tazkirah about the scribe-calligraphers and as reported by some Iranian researchers, he also has works such as “Dorji-javahir” (“The jeweler of jevel”) and “Majmaul-ousaf”

(“The collection of description”). The work “Dorji-javahir” published in Egypt and it was translated into Azerbaijani language by the author of this article and involved in research. “Majmaul-ousaf” consists of the praises and descriptions of M.Sanglakh by others, and “Dorji-javahir” consists of a set of signatures – statements written by M. Sanglakh within the certain order at the end of his writings.

About the “Bismillah stone”, let’s note that the same stone was used by the M.Sanglakh for the tomb of Hz. Muhammad (pbuh) the prophet of islam. But he could not achieve his wish, and he did not succeed in moving the stone to the apartment and in the end, he brought the stone to Tabriz, placed it on the wall in the mausoleum of Seyyid Ibrahim. And when he died, he was buried in front of that wall.

Conclusion. The written monuments, including the manuscript books, created by the scribe-calligraphers of Azerbaijan, who lived and created in the Middle Ages, are the rare pearls, that have a special place in the culture of humanity and the world’s cultural treasure. And the source, that talks about the life and work of scribe-cal-

ligraphers of Azerbaijan is important in terms of uncovering and presenting the truth. Despite the certain flaws and short-comings, “The book of scholars examination, or the tazkirah about the scribe-calligraphers by the 19th century Iranian author M.Sanglakh gives an information about the culture of writing and book in the Eastern world, including the Azerbaijan in the Middle Ages, the life and activities of scribe-calligraphers, historical conditions, socio-political, economic? Religious-ideological situation, attitude to art, science, literature, culture, etc. this work once again confirms, that medieval scribe-calligraphers of Azerbaijan, were not only engaged in writing, but also worked in the various field’s of science, culture and art, and were remembered for their literary activities, M. Sanglakh’s tazkirah about the scribe-calligraphers is interesting and important as a source from the point of view of history, material and moral culture, literary studies, oriental studies And Azerbaijani studies. It is important to involve this work, which was translated from Persian into Azerbaijani for a first time by the author of this article, into the comprehensive study.

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