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THE ESSENCE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF ATTENTION TO THE HERITAGE OF OUR GREAT SCHOLARS IN NEW UZBEKISTAN

Abstract. *This article examines the large-scale work being carried out in New Uzbekistan to study and widely promote the rich scientific and spiritual heritage of the great scholars of the region. It reviews the activity of the scholarly institutions established for this purpose, their cooperation with international organisations such as IRCICA, ICESCO, and UNESCO, and the state's attention to figures such as Imam al-Bukhari. It surveys the contributions of leading scholars – among them Imam al-Bukhari, al-Maturidi, al-Zamakhshari, al-Marghinani, al-Khwarazmi, Ibn Sina, al-Farghani, Mirzo Ulugbek, and Alisher Navoi – and concludes with a set of recommendations for the further study of this heritage, including the cataloguing and investigation of the manuscripts preserved in Uzbekistan.*

Keywords: *scholarly heritage, New Uzbekistan, Imam al-Bukhari, al-Maturidi, al-Zamakhshari, al-Khwarazmi, Ibn Sina, manuscripts, Third Renaissance, Islamic civilisation.*

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, large-scale work has been carried out in our country to study and widely promote the rich scientific and spiritual heritage of our great scholars.

A significant contribution to this work is made by the scholarly institutions currently operating in Uzbekistan – the Center of Islamic Civilization, the Imam Bukhari, Imam Termizi, and Imam Maturidi International Scientific Research Centers, the Bahauddin Naqshband Scientific Center, the International Islamic Academy of Uzbekistan, and others.

In cooperation with prestigious world organisations, research centres, and universities such as IRCICA, ICESCO, and UNESCO, these institutions organise

international conferences, symposia, and forums under the slogan “New Uzbekistan – the Third Renaissance.”

At the 72nd session of the UN General Assembly, the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Sh. M. Mirziyoyev, openly pronounced the name of Imam al-Bukhari and emphasised that the youth of today are being brought up on the basis of this heritage.

Deeply studying, on a scholarly basis, the peerless heritage of our great scholars who made an immense contribution to the religion of Islam, and widely making known among our compatriots and the international community that our sacred land has from time immemorial been the homeland of great scholars and venerable saints, is one of the most important tasks of the present day.

MAIN PART

Our scholars created prolific scholarly works in the Islamic sciences. In particular, one may mention Imam al-Bukhari, Imam al-Tirmidhi, Imam al-Maturidi, Mahmud al-Zamakhshari, Burhan al-Din al-Marghinani, al-Qaffal al-Shashi, Abu Mu‘in al-Nasafi, Abu al-Barakat al-Nasafi, Ala al-Din al-Bukhari, and many other Bukharans, Nasafis, and Samarqandis, as well as, in the science of Sufism, Abd al-Khaliq al-Ghijduwani, Bahauddin Naqshband, al-Mustamli al-Bukhari, al-Kalabadhi al-Bukhari, Najm al-Din Kubra, al-Hakim al-Tirmidhi, Aziz al-Din al-Nasafi, Ahmad Yassawi, and many other Sufis.

The ideas of the religion of Islam, imbued with a call to knowledge, goodness, tolerance, and constructive endeavour, gave intellectual nourishment and inspiration to the people of learning. The Holy Qur’an graciously states: “...Allah will raise those who have believed among you and those who were given knowledge by degrees; and Allah is aware of all that you do” (Qur’an, 58:11).

In addition, very many noble hadiths concerning knowledge and its virtues have been narrated from our Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him. It is narrated from Sa‘d ibn Abi Waqqas, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: “For me, the merit of knowledge is more beloved than the merit of [supererogatory] worship; and the best part of your religion is scrupulousness (wara‘) – abstaining from doubtful things.”

If we speak of Imam al-Bukhari alone, there are educational establishments, scholarly centres, a museum, a mosque, and street names associated with his name. Over the past period, more than ten presidential decrees and resolutions, as well as resolutions of the Cabinet of Ministers, have been adopted – among them, the “Imam Bukhari” Order was established, and Uzbekistan’s rich scientific and educational heritage is presented at the UN and other international organisations.

Mahmud al-Zamakhshari was a major scholar who studied the grammar of the Arabic language deeply, earned high respect among the Arabs, and created priceless works in the sciences of tafsir, hadith, literature, and jurisprudence. His famous work “al-Kashshaf” is still taught today as an important textbook on Qur’anic exegesis in the Islamic universities of the world.

In the development of the science of kalam (theology) in the 9th–10th centuries, the place and significance of the scholarly heritage of Abu Mansur al-Maturidi are very high. From the essence of his works and the ideas he advanced, it may be understood that the various doctrinal errors, disputes, and disagreements of that time gave rise to the need for his teaching. Although his work “Ta’wilat al-Qur’an” (“Interpretations of the Qur’an”) is a commentary on the Holy Qur’an, the verses are explained in it as a refutation of various doctrinal views; in this respect, the book may be called an important work with firmly elaborated doctrinal systems that provides information about the religious currents of that time.

Among the scholars of the later period, Abu Hafs al-Nasafi also supported the views of Abu Mansur al-Maturidi and, as a continuer of his ideas, expounded purely doctrinal questions through his work “Aqaid al-Nasafi.”

Burhan al-Din al-Marghinani’s work “al-Hidaya” is one of the valuable sources and has for many centuries been studied as a consistent and complete manual on the science of jurisprudence.

Another of our thinker-forefathers is Muhammad al-Khwarazmi. The arithmetic operations used by the whole world today, and the functioning of modern technologies, rest on the rules created by this forefather of ours. The whole world highly values al-Khwarazmi’s contribution to the development of science and regards with special respect the land that raised him.

The books of Abu Ali Ibn Sina, who created perfect laws of medicine, are still used in world medicine as a practical guide. If we pay attention, in his “Canon of Medicine” everything is taught, from complex surgery to the ordinary culture of nutrition.

Al-Farghani – our compatriot and a contemporary of the scholars mentioned above – is considered the first to have measured the water volume of the Nile River.

Mirzo Ulugbek, in his work “Zij-i Guragani,” compiled a table of the stars and made the science of astronomy known to the world.

In Alisher Navoi’s works “Majalis al-nafais” and “Nasaim al-muhabbat,” the descriptions and characterisations of our ancestors are beautifully expressed, and more than five hundred poets and learned men are acknowledged.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the great scholars who arose from this land made an immense contribution to the development of world science. Even after many centuries, their heritage, without losing its scholarly and educational significance, continues to serve as an important and priceless spiritual treasure for the perfection of the human being and the enlightened development of society.

In this connection, a number of tasks remain to be carried out by the scholars and researchers of the field:

– not even one in a hundred of the nearly 100,000 manuscripts of our great scholars preserved in Uzbekistan has yet been studied;

– the scholars of the first Renaissance period have been studied more, but the scholars of the period after the 11th century have not yet been sufficiently studied;

– no definite system has been created in the study of the scholars – that is, a general list of them, their works, and their manuscripts has not been compiled in order, and they have not been classified by science (such as Qur’anic studies, hadith, jurisprudence, creed, linguistics, the natural sciences, and the social sciences);

– it is necessary to form a register of those engaged with manuscripts and the heritage of the scholars in our country, and to organise seminars and conferences that bring them together;

– research on the works of our scholars abroad has not been generalised;

– studies on the investigation (tahqiq) of manuscripts remain very few.

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