



## Historical Development And Modern Trends Of Library Activities In Bukhara Region

**Rakhmatulloyev Umid Ashrafovich**

Lecturer, Faculty of History, Bukhara State University, Uzbekistan

### ABSTRACT

Bukhara is one of the regions with centuries-old scholarly and book culture traditions. Book collections formed in palaces, madrasas, waqf institutions, and private households laid the historical foundations for the subsequent development of the library system. Alongside religious works, historical collections preserved manuscripts on history, philosophy, medicine, astronomy, and logic. The tradition of collecting manuscripts and lithographic publications continued into the early twentieth century. In particular, it is recorded that the library of Mir Muhammad Siddiq Hashmat contained more than one thousand volumes of Oriental manuscripts and hundreds of lithographic works [1, 341–342]. This evidence demonstrates that private libraries in Bukhara played an important role in accumulating scholarly and educational heritage and transmitting it to subsequent generations. Thus, the later development of librarianship in the region was based on the long-established tradition of manuscript and lithographic collections.

### INTRODUCTION

Studies on the history of librarianship in Central Asia have treated manuscript collections, the formation of libraries, and the composition of book holdings as important areas of research. Sh.Y. Ziyodov analyzed the formation of historical collections through seals and ownership records found in manuscripts [2, 5–7]. This approach makes it possible to determine the origins of collections and the stages of their formation on the basis of primary sources. Therefore, seals and ownership notes constitute an important source-study tool for reconstructing library history. R.S. Reymbaev, in turn, emphasizes the need for the integrated use of historical-retrospective, comparative, and statistical materials in studying the history of librarianship [3, 10–11]. This view indicates that library history should be examined not merely descriptively, but through the interrelation of various indicators. Such a comprehensive approach helps reveal more precisely the causes and consequences of changes in regional library systems. By the early years of independence, Bukhara Region had an extensive library network inherited from the Soviet period. In 1993, there were 494 libraries in the region, including 2 regional libraries, 12 central libraries, 29 children's libraries, and 442 branches [8, 29]. This situation indicates that, in the early 1990s, library services had broad territorial coverage across the region. The existing network served as an important organizational basis for maintaining library services during the subsequent period of reforms. These figures demonstrate that the library network covered the cities and districts of the region.

As of January 1, 1994, the holdings of the regional libraries contained 4,565,175 copies of publications. During one year, 147,356 new items were added to the collections, of which 95,679 were in the Uzbek language. During the same period, 169,139 items were withdrawn from the collections, including 93,740 items, or 55.4 percent, in Uzbek [8, 29]. The simultaneous

acquisition of new publications and withdrawal of a large number of items indicate that the composition of the collections was being reviewed. This process makes it possible to understand that library holdings were gradually adapted to the requirements of the new period. These figures reflect not only quantitative changes in the collections but also the process of their substantive renewal.

The composition of the collections in 1993 also reflects the substantive orientation of library activities. Fiction and children's literature accounted for 66.8 percent of the holdings, Uzbek-language publications for 53.3 percent, and Russian-language publications for 46.1 percent [8, 29]. These proportions show that fiction and children's literature occupied a substantial place in the collections. At the same time, the high share of Uzbek-language publications reflects the increasing adaptation of the collections to the national language and the needs of local readers. No major changes were observed in the shares of natural science, technical, and agricultural literature. This indicates that, during the initial stage of independence, library collections were not transformed abruptly but were gradually restructured.

The economic difficulties of the 1990s also affected the material and technical condition of libraries. Some libraries operated in adapted premises, while difficulties arose in supplying new literature and maintaining branches. Although the total holdings of regional libraries reached 4,579,408 copies in 1995, 56,518 worn-out or substantively outdated items were withdrawn that year, including 20,499 books in Uzbek [8, 30]. This figure shows that, alongside preserving the size of the collections, there was a need to sort and renew outdated literature. Thus, in the mid-1990s, collection management was carried out under difficult economic conditions. In the case of Gijduvan District, it was recorded that in 1997 there were 52 branch libraries and 2 children's libraries, while some institutions faced problems related to premises, rent, electricity supply, and renewal of collections [8, 30]. The example of Gijduvan District shows that the functioning of the library network was directly dependent on material and technical conditions. The fact that libraries continued to operate even under such circumstances indicates that they remained important educational institutions for the local population. Despite these challenges, libraries continued to fulfil the task of meeting the reading and educational needs of the population.

When assessing library activities, it is important not to limit the analysis to the size of collections, but also to examine indicators such as the number of users, visits, circulation, and collection turnover. Differences between urban and district libraries in terms of buildings, technical equipment, provision of new literature, and staff capacity require territorial analysis. Therefore, statistical data reveal the actual condition of the system only when examined within a historical dynamic.

At the same time, statistical figures should not be interpreted separately from the methods of their calculation and the institutional context. In different years, the procedures for calculating indicators such as 'user', 'visit', or 'circulation' may have changed. Therefore, when making comparisons over time, taking into account both the meaning of the figures and the accounting criteria by which they were generated increases the reliability of historical-statistical analysis. At the later stage of the independence period, electronic resources, databases, and electronic catalogues began to be introduced alongside traditional services. The adoption of the Law 'On Information and Library Activities' on April 13, 2011 strengthened the legal foundations of the sector. The electronic catalogue became an important tool for revealing the composition of

collections according to multiple criteria and providing users with remote search opportunities [4, 4–6; 6, 162–167]. This change indicates that library services gradually began to shift from traditional forms to an electronic information environment. As a result, opportunities for searching for and using information expanded, and the service model of library activities began to be renewed.

Local history collections and digitization are of particular importance for libraries in Bukhara Region. The systematic collection of monographs on regional history, local periodicals, bibliographic indexes, and publications related to cultural heritage contributes to the preservation of historical memory [5, 124–131]. This direction strengthens the role of libraries in concentrating sources on local history in one center and introducing them into scholarly circulation. The systematic maintenance of local history collections provides an important basis for preserving the historical memory of the region. Creating digital copies of rare and scarce sources, in turn, protects them from physical deterioration while expanding opportunities for remote access by researchers [7, 22–27]. Digitization broadens access to rare sources and simultaneously protects originals from excessive physical handling. Therefore, the formation of digital collections is emerging as one of the important directions in the development of modern librarianship.

In regional comparisons, it is also necessary to consider that the capacities of libraries in Bukhara city and the districts are not identical. Population size, the density of the library network, educational institutions, and transport and communication conditions influence user activity. Therefore, district-level analysis makes it possible to identify more precisely differences in the distribution of resources, quality of services, and rates of development.

In conclusion, library activities in Bukhara Region have developed in close connection with the region's ancient traditions of book culture and scholarly and educational life. During the initial years of independence, the main tasks were to preserve the existing network, renew collections, and maintain services, whereas at the subsequent stage electronic catalogues, digitization, and remote information services became new directions of library activity. In this respect, the libraries of the region function as important socio-cultural institutions that preserve historical memory and serve the spiritual and educational needs of the population.

## References

1. Temirov Sh.T. The Role of Mir Muhammad Siddiq Hashmat's Private Library in the Scientific and Literary Environment of Bukhara // FarDU. Scientific Bulletin. – 2024. – No. 2. – pp. 341–342.
2. Ziyodov Sh.Y. History of Librarianship in Central Asia from the 15th to the Early 20th Century (Based on the Analysis of Manuscript Sources and Their Seals): Abstract of the Dissertation for the Degree of Doctor of Sciences (DSc) in History. – Tashkent, 2022. – 60 p.
3. Reymbaev R.S. History of Librarianship in Karakalpakstan (1919–1991): Abstract of the Dissertation for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in History. – Nukus, 2024. – 54 p.
4. Ganiyeva B.I. Library Catalogues. – Tashkent, 2012. – 136 p.
5. Ganiyeva B.I. Information and Library Catalogue and Collection. – Tashkent, 2016. – 211 p.
6. Ganiyeva B.I. Cataloguing and Classification. – Tashkent, 2021. – 216 p.
7. Ganiyeva B.I. World Information Resources. – Tashkent: Nihol Print, 2021. – 200 p.

8. Rakhmatulloyev U.A. Distinctive Features of Library Activities in Bukhara Region // International Scientific-Methodological Journal 'Pedagogical Acmeology'. – 2026. – No. 8 (37). – pp. 27-31.

