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THE ROLE OF REGIONAL BIBLIOGRAPHY IN PRESERVING THE HERITAGE OF BUKHARA REGION: ACHIEVEMENTS AND DIGITAL PROSPECTS

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Abstract. Established in 1921, the Bukhara Regional Information and Library Center named after Abu Ali ibn Sina is one of the major cultural treasures of Central Asia and has preserved an immense historical heritage. This article examines the library's brief history, its principal areas of work in regional bibliography, its achievements, and its future plans. Over the decades, the library has developed a robust reference and bibliographic apparatus (RBA) and has introduced modern software systems such as UZNEL. The article presents a model of "Bukhara Digital Bibliography."

Keywords: Bukhara Information and Library Center, regional bibliography, library achievements, metadata integration, digital data.

Regional and local-history bibliography plays a decisive role in preserving the continuous cultural memory of the historic centres along the Great Silk Road. Among them, the Bukhara oasis holds a special place owing to its thousand-year contribution to world scholarship, Islamic theology, and architecture. The systematic preservation and documentation of this heritage largely depend on the professional work of local information and library institutions. Since its establishment in 1921, the Bukhara Regional Information and Library Center named after Abu Ali ibn Sina has served as a foundation for regional documentation.

The Bukhara Regional Information and Library Center was established in 1921 on the basis of the library of the law school attached to Amir Olim Khan Madrasah in the Emirate of Bukhara. The initiative to open it came from Musojon Saidjonov, Minister of Education of the Bukharan People's Republic. At the time of its establishment, the library held 1,187 books and served 350 readers. On 30 June 1921, it was renamed the Bukhara City Library; in 1938, by a decision of the People's Commissariat of Education of the Republic, it became the Bukhara Regional Library and was named after the great thinker Abu Ali ibn Sina. In the post-war years, the library became a centre of cultural life. During this period, permanent and temporary mobile libraries were established at city enterprises and educational institutions. Various requests from readers aimed at improving library services were addressed. Later, readers from all professions could obtain the books they needed through interlibrary lending, even when those books were not available at the library.



Bukhara City Library

The library began collecting manuscripts and books from the residents of the city. Among its rare collections are periodicals received by the library since 1921. These include Bukhoro Akhbori (1921–1923), Ozod Bukhoro, Akhbori Bukhoro, Kambag'al Dehqon, and Qizil O'zbekiston (1927–1929). In April 1958, a periodicals

reading room was opened at the regional library.

From 1959, the library began applying an advanced method: open access to its book collections. The year 1971 left an unforgettable mark on the library's history. That year, a purpose-built new building designed to accommodate 500,000 books was commissioned. It housed an assembly hall for readers, a city lending department, information and bibliography, youth, and research and methodology departments. By a decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Council of Uzbekistan dated 23 June 1971, the Abu Ali ibn Sina Regional Library was awarded the Certificate of Honour of the Presidium of the Supreme Council of Uzbekistan in recognition of its outstanding contribution to the promotion of books and on the occasion of its 50th anniversary.

Today, the Regional Information and Library Center (ILC) holds more than 300,000 books, documents, and electronic resources, and operates 14 services and sections. The "Uzbekistan," "Youth," and "Lending Services" reading rooms provide regular services to readers.



Building of the Bukhara Regional Information and Library Center (present day)

One of the priority areas of the ILC's research activity is its scholarly and bibliographic work. This is an information activity aimed at preparing and disseminating information about documents and meeting users' needs for bibliographic information. It includes analysing and describing documents, preparing bibliographic guides, creating shared information resources, and providing both traditional and online services to readers. The library's bibliographic work is carried out in accordance with the main areas of the field. Bibliographic processes are reflected in the development of the Reference and Bibliographic Apparatus (RBA), bibliographic services, bibliographic education, and research and methodological activities in bibliography.

The Regional ILC's Information and Bibliography Service was established in 1940. On its basis, local-history information and legal information sections operate. The traditional (paper-based) "Local-History Catalogue of Bukhara Region," maintained by the Bukhara Regional Information and Library Center, is a unique bibliographic phenomenon that preserves the memory of the region. This traditional catalogue has been maintained since 1941 and contains more than 40,000 records. For over eighty years, it has systematically recorded every significant article published in the region's periodicals (newspapers and journals) on the history, archaeology, architecture, economy, culture, arts, and notable personalities of Bukhara.

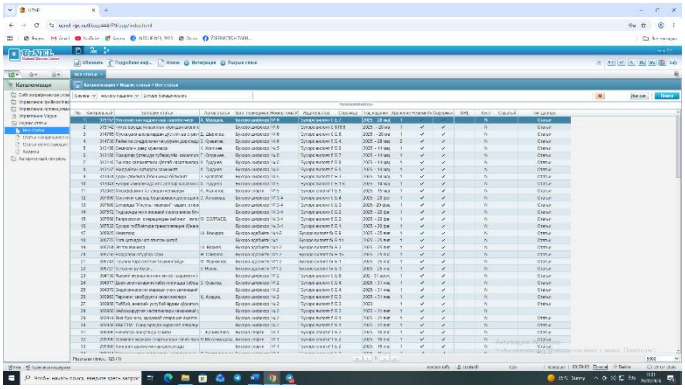
The Library's Traditional Catalogue

Globalisation and the development of information systems created a need to digitise this manual archive within the library's collections and integrate it into the global information space. In the Bukhara experience, the conversion of traditional catalogue records into electronic format (retrospective conversion) went through two stages of technological evolution:



1. **Initial stage: The internationally widespread IRBIS (Integrated Regional Library Information System) automated information and library system was used to lay the foundation for the electronic database and convert manual records into digital form.**
2. **Modern stage (the last 7 years): In line with national reforms in the sector and the centralisation of library and information processes, all retrospective databases**

have been transferred to the platform of UzNEL (Uzbekistan National Electronic Library), the unified national information and library system, over the past seven years. This marked the transition to active digitisation.



Local-History Electronic Catalogue UZNEL National Information and Library System Platform

Technological transition and modern systems. In line with contemporary information requirements, the library has made significant progress by transferring a substantial part of its local-history data to the national UZNEL software system. The library has successfully created local electronic catalogues, enabling visiting researchers to conduct rapid searches and promptly access article-level information. Examples include electronic catalogues of historical and cultural monuments, the collection of Oriental literary manuscripts, and the collection "Lithographic Publications of the Late 19th and Early 20th Centuries" in Cyrillic script.

In particular, the following databases have been created in Uzbek and Russian:

- Abu Ali ibn Sina
- Alisher Navoi;
- The Great Silk Road;
- Bukhara and World Culture;
- Bukhara's Unique Architectural Monuments;
- Bukhara's Caravanserais and Bathhouses;
- Society, the Individual, and the Law;
- Articles on Library Science;
- Amir Temur, the Great Commander;
- Methodological and Bibliographic Guides;
- Oriental Manuscripts;
- The Collection of Oriental Lithographic Publications;
- Literature on Local History;
- Uzbekistan's Scholars, Historians, and Archaeologists;
- Cities of Uzbekistan;
- Customs and Traditions of the Uzbek People;
- Painting in Uzbekistan.

Although the library has achieved significant success in creating local bibliographic systems, modern library science requires international integration. This study assesses the sustained bibliographic achievements of the Bukhara library ecosystem and proposes a technological model for integrating it into the global open digital environment.

An empirical analysis of the Bukhara Regional Information and Library Center's activities demonstrates the model established in the field of local history and its considerable potential for

digital transformation. With its broad chronological coverage and important publications, the library possesses a rich local collection spanning more than a century.

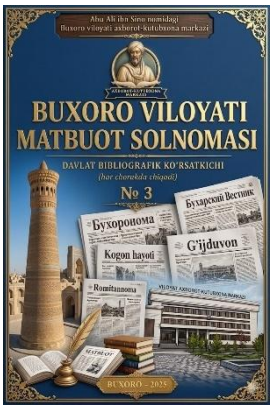
The Information and Bibliography Service maintains a comprehensive Reference and Bibliographic Apparatus (RBA) covering the history of the restoration of Bukhara's architectural monuments, traditional crafts, and the works of scholars. The department's principal institutional publications include: Retrospective bibliographic guides: indexes of the major scholarly works published on the history, geography, and archaeology of the oasis.

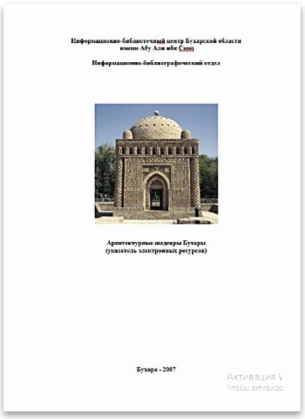
Biobibliographic indexes: comprehensive guides devoted to prominent people born or active in Bukhara, including the great scholar Abu Ali ibn Sina, on the occasion of his birth anniversary.

Calendar of Historic and Memorable Dates: an annual publication highlighting the region's historical events and cultural activities, essential for the mass media and researchers.

The full-text database is also regularly updated with publications such as "The Moon Shines over Lyabi-Hauz…" (dedicated to the 400th anniversary of the Lyabi-Hauz complex); "The Charm of the Palace of Stars" (dedicated to the 110th anniversary of the Sitorai Mokhi-Khosa Palace); "The Twelve Gates of Bukhara"; "A Rare Gem of the Past" (the 810th anniversary of the construction of the Khalifa Khudoydod complex, 1211); "Two Gems in One Neighbourhood" (the 455th anniversary of the construction of the Kosh Madrasah, 1566); "A Place Reflecting Life" (the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the Bukhara Music and Theatre, 1921); and "A Multifaceted Creative Talent" (the 105th anniversary of the birth of Mutal Burhanov (1916–2002), Honoured Artist of Uzbekistan and composer).

The Information and Bibliography Service maintains the state bibliographic record of publications issued in the Republic of Uzbekistan and develops a national bibliographic database. In particular, four issues of the "Chronicle of the Regional Press" are published annually and uploaded to the ILC website so that users can access articles of interest published in periodicals within the region. In cooperation with the 12 district (city information and library centres that are part of the Regional ILC, relevant articles published in regional and district newspapers and journals, including those devoted to important anniversaries of the region, are regularly collected for the Chronicle, and bibliographically described lists of publications are compiled.





The sustained achievements of the bibliography department of the Bukhara Regional Library demonstrate the institution's successful adaptation to new conditions. While many regional libraries around the world have faced challenges during the digital transition, the Bukhara Centre has successfully digitised its records through national systems while preserving its traditional, high-precision catalogue methodology.

However, the transition from a local system to a global cloud network creates infrastructural and conceptual challenges. Because of its multilingual historical layers (Uzbek, Russian, Persian, and Arabic documents), the Bukhara Regional Library requires a special approach; the proposed DBB model addresses this through unified semantic tags. Another important factor for the future is the regular training of staff to work with international metadata. Expanding these local records to the

level of global cloud catalogues will further strengthen the library's regional leadership in information dissemination.

Modern library science recognises institutional case studies and the transition to open systems as important methodologies for understanding regional data management. Scholars (for example, Smith, 2022) emphasise that regional bibliographic databases are a fundamental pillar of local-history research and the digital humanities.

In conclusion, the Bukhara Regional Information and Library Center named after Abu Ali ibn Sina has demonstrated that it is an invaluable guardian of Central Asia's regional heritage through its systematic information and bibliography service. 1. Systematic excellence: The library has created a comprehensive and detailed Reference and Bibliographic Apparatus that successfully encompasses a century of local knowledge. 2. Sustained performance: Through the systematic publication of calendars of dates, retrospective indexes, and biobibliographies, the centre actively provides the scholarly community with verified reference materials. 3. Next steps: As this year marks the 105th anniversary of the Bukhara Regional Information and Library Center named after Abu Ali ibn Sina and the 86th anniversary of its Information and Bibliography Service, we considered it appropriate to prepare a reference guide dedicated to the library's activities. This guide will cover the history of the library's establishment, its historical figures and directors, its structural divisions and their activities, its dedicated veteran employees, its current staff, and the library's important and memorable dates (chronicle). At the same time, work is underway to compile a full-text bibliographic index entitled "A Centre of Knowledge and Enlightenment – 105 Years Old!"

Building on these solid achievements, the library's future development will focus on expanding its electronic databases into global semantic networks, ensuring that Bukhara's historical heritage becomes fully accessible to the international scholarly community.

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