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The Establishment and Activities of the Mahammad Fuzuli Institute of Manuscripts under the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences (Up to 1987)

Abstract

This article presents a comprehensive analysis of the establishment, development stages, and scientific-organizational activities of the Mahammad Fuzuli Institute of Manuscripts under the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences, covering the period up to 1987. It highlights the historical necessity of founding the Institute and substantiates its pivotal role in the advancement of Azerbaijani science and culture. Based on archival and documentary sources, the study details the formation of structural divisions, the identification of core research areas, and efforts in the collection, preservation, and classification of manuscript heritage. Furthermore, the article examines the Institute's collaboration with leading domestic and international research institutions, the preparation of scholarly publications, and the accomplishments in the study of classical written heritage. The findings suggest that by 1987, the Institute had fulfilled a

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significant scientific and cultural mission in preserving, researching, and disseminating the national manuscript legacy.

Keywords: Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences, Mahammad Fuzuli Institute of Manuscripts, manuscript heritage, scientific research, cultural preservation, historical scholarship

Mahammad Fuzuli Elyazmaları Enstitüsü'nün Azərbaycan Milli Bilimler Akademisi Bünyesindeki Kuruluşu ve Faaliyetleri (1987 Yılına Kadar)

Öz

Bu makale, Azərbaycan Milli Bilimler Akademisi bünyesindeki Mahammad Fuzuli Elyazmaları Enstitüsü'nün 1987 yılına kadar olan dönemdeki kuruluş sürecini, gelişim aşamalarını ve bilimsel-organizasyonel faaliyetlerini kapsamlı bir şekilde analiz etmektedir. Enstitünün kuruluşunun tarihsel bir zorunluluk olduğu vurgulanmakta ve Azərbaycan bilim ve kültürünün gelişimindeki kilit rolü bilimsel verilerle temellendirilmektedir. Arşiv ve belge kaynaklarına dayanarak, yapısal birimlerin oluşumu, temel araştırma alanlarının belirlenmesi ve elyazması mirasının toplanması, korunması ve sınıflandırılması yönünde yürütülen çalışmalar ayrıntılı şekilde incelenmektedir. Ayrıca, Enstitünün yurt içindeki ve yurt dışındaki önde gelen bilim merkezleriyle iş birliği, akademik yayınların hazırlanması ve klasik yazılı mirasın incelenmesinde elde edilen başarılar da ele alınmaktadır. Araştırma, 1987 yılına gelindiğinde Enstitünün, ulusal yazılı mirasın korunması, araştırılması ve yaygınlaştırılması konusunda önemli bir bilimsel ve kültürel misyon üstlendiğini ortaya koymaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Azərbaycan Milli Bilimler Akademisi, Mahammad Fuzuli Elyazmaları Enstitüsü, elyazması mirası, bilimsel araştırma, kültürel koruma, tarihsel araştırmalar

Introduction

The emergence of culture in human history is closely linked to the invention of writing and, subsequently, to the development of the manuscript book. In Azerbaijan, as well as in other Eastern civilizations, manuscript books existed even before the Christian era. For manuscript books to come into existence, both a physical medium and an alphabet reflecting specific linguistic and structural principles were required. Without writing—that is, without an alphabet—and without the material substrate we now call paper, the manuscript book could not have emerged. The culture of writing, having passed through a long and intricate process of evolution, has ultimately reached its current modern form.

The Azerbaijani manuscript book stands as one of the rarest and most distinguished cultural treasures our nation has contributed to the global heritage. It is no exaggeration to state that few major libraries or manuscript collections dedicated to Eastern culture are without examples reflecting the material and spiritual legacy of the Azerbaijani people. In cities such as New York, London, Paris, the Vatican, Dresden, Cairo, and Istanbul, numerous works authored by prominent Azerbaijani scholars and poets are preserved and protected.

Throughout the history of the Azerbaijani people, manuscript books have fulfilled a multidimensional socio-cultural function. Some of the most significant examples of oral tradition—epics, literary works, and scientific treatises—have endured through the centuries thanks to these manuscripts. Serving as vessels of historical memory, these works provide valuable

insight into the cultural, intellectual, literary, and scientific development of not only Azerbaijan but also the broader Near and Middle Eastern regions. Each manuscript book serves as a living document, a voice echoing through the pages of time.

Among these historical manuscripts are hundreds of letters, decrees, *munsha'at* (collections of official correspondence), *waqf* deeds, treatises, genealogies, testaments, petitions, certificates, and other archival records. These materials constitute vital primary sources for reconstructing and interpreting the social, political, and cultural dynamics of their respective eras.

Revised Text with Proper Academic Editing & Citation Integration:

Among the monuments preserved at the Mammad Fuzuli Institute of Manuscripts of the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences (ANAS), the earliest works written in the Azerbaijani language hold particular importance. It is known that the first Islamic manuscript book written within the territory of Azerbaijan dates back to the 11th century. The earliest surviving examples of Azerbaijani literature, which has deep historical roots, belong to the 13th and 14th centuries. The poetic works of such authors as Izzaddin Hasanoglu, Nasir Bakuvi, and Qazi Burhanaddin are vivid examples of this literary heritage.

Among the earliest Azerbaijani-language narrative poems, valuable manuscript copies of works such as *Dastani-Ahmad Harami* (anonymous), *Yusif and Zuleikha* by Ali, *Varqa and Gulsha* by Yusuf Maddah, and the poems of Suli Faqih are preserved at the Institute of Manuscripts of ANAS, formerly known as the Republican Manuscripts Fund until 1985.

Since ancient times, Azerbaijani scribes and scholars produced exquisite manuscripts in Arabic, Persian, and Turkic languages, bringing the intellectual legacy of global thinkers to Azerbaijan and contributing to the enrichment of the national book culture. Historical sources indicate that during the medieval period, over one million manuscript books were collected within the territory of Azerbaijan (Əlyazmalar xəzinəsində, 1987).

Among the manuscripts preserved in the Republican Manuscripts Fund, there are also invaluable works reflecting the bibliographic and scholarly contributions of prominent Azerbaijani intellectuals. This immense and irreplaceable treasury is maintained within the Manuscripts Fund of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

In 1924, realizing that the nation's written heritage faced the threat of extinction, Azerbaijani intellectuals adopted a resolution at the First All-Azerbaijan Congress of Regional Studies. The

decision emphasized the importance of collecting manuscript books, archival documents, and early printed works in a single, specialized repository. Based on this initiative, a scientific library was established under the Azerbaijan Research and Exploration Society, which included a dedicated department for the preservation and study of manuscripts and early printed books.

In 1929, this organization was reorganized into the Azerbaijan State Scientific Research Institute. Its Manuscripts Department continued operating as part of the Nizami Institute of Literature in subsequent years (Adilov, 2003; Qəhrəmanov, 1984; Qəhrəmanov, 1986; Qəhrəmanov, 1989).

It should be noted that the establishment of such a dedicated library and manuscript department was a progressive achievement for its time. However, until 1945, the working conditions remained significantly inadequate. The department was located on the fourth floor of the Nizami Museum, confined to only two small rooms that lacked appropriate preservation and research facilities. According to archival records, no systematic research was conducted, and rare manuscripts were stored alongside printed materials on common shelves without classification. There were no proper catalogs, bibliographic records, or indexing systems in place. Critical organizational work such as classification by format, coding, and registration had yet to be initiated.

Despite these challenges, the situation began to improve due to the initiative of the staff of the Manuscripts Department of the Nizami Institute of Literature, with support from the Azerbaijan Academy of Sciences. A series of measures were introduced to address these issues and to lay the foundation for structured scientific research within the Manuscripts Fund. It is important to note that by 1945—after nearly 15 years of activity—the Fund had acquired only around 7,000 manuscript and early printed books.

Between 1948 and 1950, significant efforts were undertaken to examine, classify, and catalog the materials preserved in the Republican Manuscripts Fund. These initiatives also included the formulation of long-term plans aimed at systematic research and institutional development. Thanks to the dedicated efforts of the Fund's staff and the consistent support of the Presidium of the Academy of Sciences, the number of preserved manuscript and early printed books grew rapidly—rising from approximately 7,000 in 1945 to 11,000 titles by 1950. This substantial growth rendered the initial two-room storage facility inadequate and necessitated the expansion of available space.

In 1949, by decision of the Presidium of the Academy of Sciences, the “Manuscripts” Department was transferred to the first floor of the Nizami Museum. Fourteen specially renovated rooms were allocated exclusively for manuscript preservation. The new facility was equipped with specially designed book cabinets, a basement ventilation system, and various technical instruments to meet preservation and research needs. While some archival sources refer to 17 rooms, most records confirm the use of 14 designated rooms.

By 1950, the continuing increase in the number of manuscripts and the need for professional storage conditions under controlled environments led the Presidium of the Azerbaijan Academy of Sciences to propose the establishment of a separate institution. Consequently, the Council of Ministers of the Azerbaijan SSR issued Decree No. 1410 on October 12, 1950, formally creating the Republican Manuscripts Fund under the jurisdiction of the Azerbaijan SSR Academy of Sciences (Azərbaycan KP MK, 1981).

According to the decree, the following actions were mandated:

- The “Manuscripts” Department of the Nizami Institute of Literature was to be reorganized as the Republican Manuscripts Fund and directly subordinated to the Academy;
- All educational institutions, libraries, research organizations, and relevant entities in the Azerbaijan SSR possessing rare manuscripts, early printed books, or bibliographic collections were obligated to transfer them to the Fund in accordance with official procedures;
- The Presidium of the Academy was tasked with ensuring the proper maintenance, preservation, and scholarly utilization of the Fund’s materials.

Following the enactment of this resolution, the State Committee ratified the Fund's official staffing structure, which consisted of 11 positions:

- Head of Department (1),
- Bibliographer (1),
- Inventory Specialist/Cataloguer (2),
- Junior Research Fellow (1),
- Manuscript Restorer (1),
- Head of Reading Room (1),
- Assembler (1),
- Cleaning Staff (1),

- Security Guard (1) (Abasova, 2024c).

Subsequently, a comprehensive reorganization of the Fund's operations was initiated. This included the systematic classification and coding of all manuscripts and early printed books, the compilation of new catalogs, and the revision of existing ones.

The Republican Manuscripts Fund today preserves invaluable ancient manuscripts across various disciplines—history, literary theory, belles-lettres, linguistics, medicine, astronomy, mathematics, natural sciences, and jurisprudence (*fiqh*). These works constitute an integral part of the cultural heritage of the peoples of the Near and Middle East. Remarkably, all of these manuscripts—written in Azerbaijani, Uzbek, Tajik, Turkmen, Persian, Arabic, Georgian, Russian, and other languages—were collected exclusively from within the territory of Azerbaijan. This fact alone attests to the high level of cultural consciousness maintained by the Azerbaijani people throughout history in safeguarding the intellectual and artistic legacies of various civilizations (Abasova, 2024b).

The oldest manuscript preserved in the Republican Manuscripts Fund is approximately 1,100 years old—a Qur'anic surah written in Kufic script on leather. The collection also includes invaluable works such as *Sihah al-Lughah*, compiled in 1117 by the eminent scholar Jawhari, and *The Canon of Medicine (al-Qanun fi't-Tibb)*, written in 1140 by the renowned philosopher and physician Abu Ali Ibn Sina (Avicenna).

The Fund also houses some of the oldest *divans* and collected works of classical Azerbaijani poets, including Khagani, Nizami, Mahmud Shabustari, Nasimi, Assar Tabrizi, Khatai, Fuzuli, Vagif, and Zakir. Alongside them are masterpieces by Persian and Tajik poets such as Firdowsi, Khayyam, Anvari, Mas'ud ibn Salman, Saadi, Kamal Khojandi, Hafiz, Salman Savaji, and Jami; Uzbek scholars and poets Alisher Navoi and Ulugh Beg; Turkmen poet Magtymguly; Ottoman poets Nedim, Sabit, and Lami; Indian poets Amir Khusrow Dehlavi and Hasan Dehlavi; and Arab poet al-Mutanabbi and grammarian Ibn Malik. These rare and exquisitely preserved volumes form an irreplaceable literary treasury.

Some of these works are autographs—the only known copies in existence—while others were transcribed shortly after the authors' deaths and are of exceptional value for textual criticism and historical research (Bayramov & Mahammadli, 2025). These manuscripts serve as primary sources for the preparation of critical editions, scholarly commentaries, and academic dissertations across a wide range of fields.

In addition to ancient and rare texts, the Republican Manuscripts Fund preserves the personal archives of more than 50 Azerbaijani poets, writers, artists, actors, composers, and scholars, according to 1986 data. Of particular importance are the archives of Mirza Fatali Akhundov, Jalil Mammadguluzadeh, Mammad Said Ordubadi, Jafar Jabbarli, Uzeyir Hajibayov, Azim Azimzadeh, Huseyngulu Sarabski, Najaf Bey Vazirov, Suleyman Sani Akhundov, and Yusif Vazir Chamanzaminli, whose collections are distinguished by their depth and historical significance. The Fund also contains decrees issued by Safavid and Qajar shahs, firmans of Ottoman sultans, hundreds of other historical documents, and a broad range of pre-revolutionary newspapers and periodicals.

Among the earliest archival publications undertaken by the Republican Manuscripts Fund was the description of the archive of Mirza Fatali Akhundov, initiated in 1949. This effort, the first of its kind, marked a turning point in the Fund's publishing activity and held special importance for the institution's staff (Abasova, 2024a). It is important to emphasize that Akhundov himself played a vital role in preserving his legacy: he meticulously copied his correspondence, literary works, and other documents, ensuring they would endure for future generations. Consequently, his archive remains one of the most comprehensive collections preserved by the Fund.

This archival project was overseen and edited by the then-director M. Sultanov and executed by junior researcher A. Ibrahimov. Initially completed in 1952 as a 15-sheet volume, it was later expanded to 20 sheets. Although the initial publication was planned for 1953, it was ultimately released in 1955 as a 294-page book. Additionally, a one-sheet summary of the archive appeared in the fifth issue of the *Proceedings of the Institute of Literature*. In 1962, a Russian-language version of Akhundov's archive was also published.

In 1953, efforts to systematically study the manuscripts and early printed books in the Republican Manuscripts Fund were institutionalized. Each employee was instructed to work on a specific topic within the collection. This initiative laid the foundation for academic research and introduced Azerbaijani manuscript heritage to both national and international scholarship (Rasporyazhenie i postanovlenie Prezidiuma AN Azerb. SSR otnosyashchikhsya k Institutu, 1950). In 1954, by decision of the Presidium of the Academy of Sciences, the Republican Manuscripts Fund (RMF) was transformed into an independent division within the Academy. For the first time, the Fund's staff schedule and institutional structure were formally developed and approved (Spravki o Respublikanskoy Rukopisnoy Fonde AN, 1952).

Later that year, a significant development took place: more than 10,000 early printed books and periodicals from the Central Library of the Academy were transferred to the RMF by the order of the Department of Social Sciences. This decision greatly expanded the Fund's collection and enhanced its institutional importance.

In 1950, the RMF held approximately 11,000 to 12,000 items, including manuscripts, early printed books, historical documents, photographic materials, and the personal archives of Azerbaijani classical writers. By 1955, that number had already reached 26,000 (Khalafova, Mahammadli, & Manafova, 2025). These manuscripts and early printed books, having survived the passage of centuries, were naturally subject to deterioration due to chemical, biological, and environmental factors. From its early years, the leadership of the Fund demonstrated awareness of the urgent need for restoration. Although a plan was devised in 1953 to restore 2,000 manuscript pages by 1955, only 400 pages were successfully restored during that period. The restoration work was conducted with the assistance of trained calligraphers (Abasova, 2024c). Given the steady influx of rare and valuable manuscripts from private individuals, state institutions, and various organizations, the establishment of a dedicated restoration department became essential. Its primary purpose would be to ensure the long-term preservation of these manuscripts in stable, undamaged condition for future generations (Mammadov & Mahammadli, 2025). However, the absence of a specialized restoration workshop limited the staff's ability to combat further deterioration (Əlyazmalar İnstitutu – 50, 2000). In 1954, Mammadaga Sultanov, then Director of the RMF, together with his staff, proposed the creation of a Restoration and Conservation Department within the Fund. Unfortunately, this proposal did not receive full institutional support at the time. The Presidium of the Academy approved only a small-scale restoration workshop, and even that decision was subject to delays in implementation.

Eventually, the necessity of such a unit became evident. In 1973, the Presidium of the Azerbaijan Academy of Sciences formally discussed the growing problem of manuscript degradation and loss. As a result, Resolution No. 7 was adopted, establishing the “Laboratory of Book Hygiene, Restoration, and Conservation,” tasked with chemically treating manuscripts and protecting them from bacterial and microscopic damage.

Another milestone occurred earlier, on April 4, 1967, when the Department of Social Sciences and the Scientific Council of the RMF jointly decided to establish two new specialized divisions: the “Department for the Study and Publication of Written Monuments” and the “Archive

Department.” Despite the importance of this decision, its implementation had been delayed for unknown reasons (Mehraliyeva & Mahammadli, 2025). Since its inception, the Fund had accumulated vast amounts of manuscript and documentary material, and these departments were necessary to facilitate systematic research and publication.

One of the key indicators of the RMF’s institutional growth between 1950 and 1980 was the gradual expansion of its research staff. The increasing number of researchers reflected the Fund’s transformation from a storage repository into an active scholarly and cultural center. The growth dynamics of scientific personnel in the Fund during this period are clearly illustrated in the following table (see Table No. 1).

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of research staff</i>	<i>Ph.D.</i>	<i>Doctor of sciences</i>
1950	4	1	no
1955	9	2	no
1960	18	5	no
1965	29	7	1
1975	33	10	1
1980	42	13	2

Thus, while only four research employees worked at the Fund during its early years, by 1980 their number had increased more than tenfold, reaching forty-two. This growth clearly demonstrates that the staff of the Republican Manuscripts Fund (RMF) continuously improved their professional skills and actively engaged in scholarly research (Table 1).

Another important area of the Fund’s activity was personnel training. The low level of staffing at the RMF had long hindered its expansion and development. The Fund primarily met its demand for specialists through graduates of the Oriental Studies program at Azerbaijan State University (now Baku State University). However, this process required considerable time, as these graduates had to undergo extensive practical training within the walls of the Fund itself. Specialists who fully met the specific requirements of the RMF were not being systematically trained elsewhere.

As a result, problems persisted within the Fund—particularly the lack of professional personnel capable of conducting bibliographic research on manuscript books, which are part of the spiritual and cultural treasury of the Azerbaijani people. Consequently, many important tasks were either delayed or left unaccomplished. In 1964, following repeated requests by the Republican Manuscripts Fund to address the shortage of qualified personnel, two postgraduate (*aspirantura*) positions were allocated specifically for the training of specialists in this field. The postgraduates studying under this program were to be prepared in accordance with the Fund’s profile and specific requirements.

By examining the structure of the Republican Manuscripts Fund of the Azerbaijan Academy of Sciences as of October 1, 1970, it becomes evident that the existing organizational framework no longer met the Fund’s growing needs. This can be seen more clearly in the following table (see Table No. 2).

№	“Departments of the scientific institution”	Year of establishment	Director (Full name, academic degree, academic title)”	Employee field	Scientific profile of each department
1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	Department of manuscripts	1958	Seyidov Fazul Sadix oglu (Ph.D.in philology science)	85.2 kv.m	Compilation, dissemination, systematization, and cataloguing of manuscripts
2.	Department of early printed	1958	Mammad Aziz Hajiali oglu	258.1 kv.m	Compilation and systematization of the

	books and periodicals				bibliography and catalogues of early printed books and pre-revolutionary periodicals
3.	Department of the study and publication of written monuments	1967	Gahramanov Cahangir Vahid oglu (Ph.D.in philology science)	170.25 kv.m.	Research, paleographic description, philological analysis, and publication of medieval written monuments
4.	Department of archives and historical documents	1967	Jafarzade Aziza Mammad qizi (Ph.D.in philology science)	45.0 kv.m.	Department of archives and historical documents

According to Resolution No. 38 of the Azerbaijan Academy of Sciences dated October 21, 1970, and taking into consideration the proposal of Mammadaga Sultanov, Director of the Republican Manuscripts Fund, several structural changes were made within the Fund. (Table 2).

The new organizational structure of the Republican Manuscripts Fund was established as follows (see Table No. 3).

№	<i>Existing Positions</i>	<i>Number of Employees</i>
1	Director	1
2	Scientific secretary	1
Department of Research, description, and publication of Azerbaijani and Turkic-language manuscripts		
1	Head of department	1
2	Senior research fellow	1
3	Junior research fellow	3
4	Senior laboratory assistant	2
5	Typesetter	1
Department of Research, description, and publication of Arabic and Persian-language manuscripts		
1	Head of department	1
2	Senior research fellow	2
3	Junior research fellow	4
4	Senior laboratory assistant	2
5	Typesetter	1
Department of diplomatics, bibliography, and services		
1	Head of department	1
2	Junior research fellow	3
3	Senior laboratory assistant	3
Hall for the Preservation of manuscripts, early printed books, archival materials, and periodicals		

1	Responsible keeper (Junior research fellow)	6
2	Chief cataloguer (Junior research fellow)	1
Chemical-mycological, restoration, and phototechnics laboratory		
1	Chemist-mycologist	1
2	Phototechnician	1
3	Restorer-binder	1
4	Laborant	2

After the structural reforms carried out in 1970, further reorganization took place under the resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Azerbaijan SSR dated July 21, 1981, titled “*On Improving the Future Activities of the Republican Manuscripts Fund of the Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan.*” Based on this resolution, the following structural divisions of the Republican Manuscripts Fund (RMF) were established:

- *Department of Azerbaijani Written Monuments;
- *Department of Oriental Written Monuments;
- *Department of Bibliography, Cataloguing, and Scholarly Description of Manuscripts;
- *Department of Scholarly Research and Cataloguing of Personal Collections of Azerbaijani Cultural Figures;
- *Department of Scholarly Exhibition and Archeography;
- *Department of Book Hygiene and Restoration (Table 3).

During this period, the Republican Manuscripts Fund established active relationships with other research institutions and manuscript collections. Among these were major libraries in Leningrad (now St. Petersburg) and Moscow, the Georgian Institute of Manuscripts, and the Institute of the Peoples of the Near and Middle East of the USSR Academy of Sciences, among others. Of particular importance was the RMF’s scientific collaboration with the Institute of the Peoples of the Near and Middle East of the USSR Academy of Sciences. The Fund also took an active part in the activities of the Central Commission on Textology of the USSR Academy of

Sciences and participated in the editorial commission responsible for publishing the written monuments of Soviet and Far Eastern peoples.

The staff of the Republican Manuscripts Fund maintained close scholarly relations with a number of foreign researchers, including Jan Rypka (Czechoslovakia), Mehdi Bayani (Iran), Z. Zaynchkovsky and Jan Reychman (Poland), as well as several other prominent scholars from abroad. These collaborations played a significant role in the development of international relations, as well as in the coordination and dissemination of research related to written monuments.

Although neighboring Transcaucasian republics such as Georgia and Armenia had long since transformed their manuscript institutions into full-fledged research institutes, this process was delayed in Azerbaijan. Considering that Azerbaijan surpassed both Georgia and Armenia in terms of territory, population, and the quantity of manuscript materials, the absence—or rather, the late establishment—of a Manuscripts Institute in Azerbaijan raises a legitimate question. This delay was, in fact, a manifestation of the discriminatory policy pursued against the Azerbaijani people during that period (up to 1987). It should be emphasized that through manuscripts we learn about our historical past. Those who sought to obscure or distort these facts and truths were not interested in the development and elevation of this institution to the level of a scientific institute.

Finally, on December 12, 1985, by Resolution No. 1478 of the Presidium of the Academy of Sciences, the Republican Manuscripts Fund was transformed into the Institute of Manuscripts. At that time, the Fund's collection contained approximately 40,000 materials, including 11,463 Arabic-language written monuments, 12,100 items from personal archives, 2,458 historical documents and fragments, 12,479 early printed books and periodicals, as well as 1,902 microfilms and photographic copies.

Conclusion

The Manuscripts Fund undertook the crucial mission of collecting ancient manuscripts and early printed books from libraries, universities, and various research institutes throughout the Republic, ensuring their registration, cataloguing, and preservation for transmission to future generations. The written monuments preserved in the RMF encompass a broad spectrum of knowledge, including history, law, medicine, literature, linguistics, philosophy, astronomy, geography, mineralogy, mathematics, logic, ethics, and many other disciplines.

Although the majority of these manuscripts pertain to Azerbaijani culture, the collection also contains numerous works reflecting the cultural heritage of nations across the Near and Middle

East and North Africa—from Spain and Morocco to India. The Fund's golden collection includes exquisite manuscripts, early printed books, and the personal archives and collections of distinguished Azerbaijani intellectuals and enlighteners of the 19th–20th centuries, such as Abbasgulu Agha Bakikhanov, Mirza Fatali Akhundov, Abdulghani Efendi Khalisagarizade, Huseyn Efendi Gayibov, Bahman Mirza, Mir Mohsun Navvab, and others, as well as pre-revolutionary periodicals. As demonstrated, the Manuscripts Fund of the Republic of Azerbaijan has carried out its activities in various directions. Consequently, several aspects of the work of this major scientific center deserve particular attention. One of the main areas of the RMF's activity has been the study, research, and publication of manuscripts across different fields of science and scholarship. In this context, a number of prominent philologists, historians, literary scholars, and bibliographers working at the RMF have produced and published valuable scholarly works—articles, monographs, books, and brochures—on these subjects. From this perspective, studying the publications and research output of the Fund's scholars and specialists serves as an important means of evaluating the scientific and cultural significance of the Manuscripts Fund's overall activity.

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