THE SACRED BASIS OF KUBRAVIYAH TARIQA
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Abstract: Kubraviyah tariqa emerged because of Sheikh Najmuddin Kubra’s accomplishments in shariah sciences and gained knowledge for several years. The results of the analysis show that kubraviyah tariqa was not removed from Turkistan, after the invasion by the Mongol empire the students of Najmuddin Kubra left for their countries and therefore kubraviyah tariqa that was originated and developed in Turkistan started to be developed in other countries. The tariqa such as firdavsiyah in India, nuriyah in Baghdad and rukniyah in Khorasan arouse.

Keywords: Najmuddin Kubra, Abu Tolib’s, Sufism, Tariqatu-z-zahabiya, Nakshbandiyah and Yassaviyah.

It is known that the period Najmuddin Kubra lived was a period when Sufism tariqa arouse across the whole Islamic world (XI-XII-XIII). As well as being


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a national and scientific heritage Sufism is a universal value. Sufism tariqa is an integral part of philosophic sciences leading humanistic ideas. Sufism is a philosophic instrument that analyses and judges a human’s values, his role in a society, honesty, perfection/idealism, conscience, faith. One of such tariqa is Kubraviyah tariqa.

Kubraviyah tariqa emerged as a result of sheikh Najmuddin Kubra’s accomplishments in shariah sciences and gained knowledge for several years. Kubraviyah tariqa also attained a nationwide acclaim as “Tariqatu-z-zahabiya” (golden tariqa) due to his accomplishments².

It should be noted that Kubraviyah tariqa was not so pro-public and popular which might have served as a reason to spread widely in the nation.

There were such trends in the Sufism studies as “The series of Sheikhs” (the chain), “The system of Murshids”, “The series of Roviy” (the chain of myth narrators. F.Husanov). The sacred basis of Kubraviyah tariqa has the following sequences:

1. Mukhammed (s.a.v. died 632.);
2. Ali (r.a., Died 661.);
3. Hasan (died 675.);
4. Huseyin (died 680.);
5. Zaynu-l-obidin (died 713);
6. Mukhamad Baqo (died 733);
7. Jafar Sodiq (died 765);
8. Muso Kozim (died 799);
9. Ali Rizo (died 818);

10. Maruf Karhiy (died 815);
11. Sirri Saqatiy (died 865);
12. Junaid Bagdodi (died 909);
13. Abu Ali Ruzburiy (died 933);
14. Abu Usmon Magribi (died 983);
15. Abu Kosim Kurkoni (died 1076);
16. Abu Bakr Nassoj (died 1094);
17. Abu Najib Sukhravardi (died 1168);
18. Sheikh Ammor Yosir (died 1186);
19. Sheikh Ruzbekhon Misri (died 1188);
20. Sheikh Ismoil Kasri (died 1193);
21. Sheikh Najmuddin Kubra (died 1221)³.

As you see from the above sequence, the system of 21 murshids is directly connected with prophet Mukhammed (s.a.v). Prior to Mukhammed (s.a.v) this system is connected with Abu Tolib (r.a.).

As we know the series of sheikhs in all the sufism tariqa of ahli sunna va-l-jamoa (sunni community) prior to Mukhammed (s.a.v.) are connected with Abu Bakr (r.a.). This is the main difference between Kubraviyah tariqa and Nakshbandiyah and Yassaviyah tariqa.

As well as followers of a sunni community Kubra school hosted those of a shia community. Though Kubra belonged to the Sunni community he treated hazrati

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(holy) Abu Tolib’s (r.z.) family with respect. He tried to avoid the outbreak of the conflict and hatred between Shia and Sunni communities⁴.

Najmuddin Kubra led coexistence among mazhabs (sects derived from Arabic) in his visions preventing the rise of sectarian strife in sects and hatred that was quite inevitable at his time. The western scientist of oriental studies D.De. Wiss however, noted that towards the end of XV-XVI centuries due to the political tensions Kubraviyah tariqa lost its power and was swept off from Turkistan and Nakshbandiyah and Yassaviyah tariqa replaced it⁵.

The results of the analysis show that kubraviyah tariqa was not removed from Turkistan, after the invasion by the Mongol empire the students of Najmuddin Kubra left for their countries and therefore kubraviyah tariqa that was originated and developed in Turkistan started to be developed in other countries. The tariqa such as firdavsiyah in India, nuriyah in Baghdad and rukniyah in Khorasan arouse.

Najmuddin Kubra expressed his views and reactions to theoretical issues concerning the importance and purpose of stages of Sufism such as shariah, tariqa and truth. Kubra compared sharia to a ship, tariqa to a sea, truth to a pearl. He says that the one who wants to obtain a pearl has to board on a ship and swim and dive across into the sea to get the pearl, for a follower the most important is shariah, the purpose of which is to fulfill the orders of Allah and Mukhammed (s.a.v.)⁶.

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⁵ D.De Weese. The Eclipse of the Kubraviyah in Central Asia // Iranian Studies, XXI / 1-2, 1998, - P. 47.
Based on these views we can conclude that Kubra explained the stages of shariah, tariqa and truth with life experience based examples to his new followers. From this viewpoint it is evident that since shariah played a vital role in kubraviyah tariqa he moreover prevented them from doing anything contradictory to shariah.

As for Shariah, tariqa and truth Najmuddin Kubra said as follows: “tariqa is the way that refrains you from the comforts of this life and shortens the distance between you and Allah. Truth is the achievement of the purpose, to ponder over Truth. Praying to Allah is - shariah, an effort to reach his place is - tariqa, to ponder over Him is - truth”

According to the above-mentioned concepts we can say that Najmuddin Kubra - the owner of tariqa did not mean – falling into quietism by refraining yourself from the comforts of this life and nearing to Allah. Since he mastered the shairah sciences he never violated its laws.

According to Najmuddin Kubra the ways leading to Allah are as endless as breath of creatures. The path we are trying to seek is the closest of all. That is why Najmuddin Kubra elaborated his own method to help his followers reach perfection/idealism, this way he raised his students. Though there are several paths leading to Allah in kubraviyah tariqa, they are divided into 3 main groups: 1. Tariqi ahyar 2. Tariqi abror 3. Tariqi shattor.

The first path, tariqi ahyar - the path of prayers and pilgrims doing good deeds. The followers, pilgrims of this path are usually engaged in following pillars of Islam such as obligatory prayer, Koran reading, fasting and pilgrimage to

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8 The manuscript kept under № 503-X in the Institute of Oriental studies named after Abu Raykhon Beruniy at the Science Academy of Uzbekistan. – B. 2426

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Mecca. This perception was rather popular in the generation of tobein (submissive). It was possible to meet the followers and pilgrims of tariqi ahyar in Mecca and Medina, Ash-Shamā Kufa, Egypt, Baghdad, Al Basrah. Among them were those who fast during the whole year except for on holidays (Iid fitr and Iid Kurban Ait), therefore they were called “Soimu-d-dahr” (permanent fasting man, F.Husanov). Some of them were engaged with reading namaz (saying prayers) from night till dawn, reading Koran and making several pilgrimages to Mecca. Najmuddin Kubra noted that there were only very few who could reach Allah through that way. Therefore, these followers were occupied with doing good deeds, this path should be called “The path of faith” rather than “The path of lovers” because this path reflects the practices of zohiriy (following outer, external learning sciences). Sufism is a science pondering over with a heart. Those who approached Allah through the tariqi ahyor make up few.

The second path, tariqi abror – is the path of having a pure heart with good personal qualities. The number of those who reached Allah through this way is more than the previous one. The followers of this path strictly condemned the misdeeds like impatience, egoism, wealth, career ambition. They put their faith only in Allah as heart doesn’t shine like a ray unless it is clean, pure and transparent. The heart gets impure when Allah is alienated from it. Since a lot was focused on the purification of a heart in the tariqi abror, the number of those

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9 The same source. – B. 242
11 The manuscript kept under № 503-X in the Institute of Oriental studies named after Abu Raykhon Beruniy at the Science Academy of Uzbekistan. – B. 242
12 The same source. – B. 243

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who reached perfection/idealism exceeded those in the tariqi ahyor. Because heart is a symbol of good and bad deeds.

The third path, tariqi shattor - is a path of love and inspiration, a path of those who travel for the sake of Allah, and the number of those who reached perfection/idealism exceeds those in the above paths. Travelling here implies transition from one state in shariah to another, from one state in Sufism to another, spiritual stage, and spiritual travel. Murid (holy scholar) always tries to reach Allah in this way. This way condemns negligence, indifference, laziness but favors continuous motions in pursuit of perfection/idealism. Najmuddin Kubra in noted that he followed this path. We can infer from this that Najmuddin Kubra used the third path to lead his followers to reach the level of perfection/idealism and spiritual enrichment quickly. As a result, he achieved the title of valiytarosh – the master of valiys (holy people).

Najmuddin Kubra bases his Sufism visions on three main principles: 1. Reducing food consumption gradually. 2. Being under the supervision of a perfect murshid (scholar). 3. Following eight compulsory principles of Junaid Bagdodiyan (being always clean, quiet, fasting, doing zikr (citing good deeds), robitayi sheikh (binding a heart with sheikh), purifying the memory, being content with whatever Allah gives, destines).

This method of raising followers is based on these three stages. Refraining yourself from greed by reducing food consumption gradually, supervision by

14 The manuscript kept under № 503-X in the Institute of Oriental studies named after Abu Raykhon Beruniy at the Science Academy of Uzbekistan. – B. 2433.
Murshid enables to follow up eight principles of Junaid Bagdodiy and control himself. We will resume the discussion on those principles in details in further chapters.

Najmuddin Kubra did not advocate citing zikr performed through songs, ruboiyhonlik Kubra always led the motto “Our path is chemistry, that is converting the minerals into gold”\(^{18}\), which implies that he led the people into perfection/idealism, finding the path to Allah through his sufism. The hallmark of doctrine in Sufism lies in perfecting humanity, his upbringing and morality.

Najmuddin Kubra followed the way of “sahv” (discretion, caution) in his tariqa following the death of Junaid Bagdodiy (died 909), a sign of his attention to mental ability. Because this was Junaid’s trend developed as a method contradicting Boyazid Bistomiy’s trend “sukra” (unconsciousness, drunkenness). Boyazid (died 875) perceived spiritual conception through sufism having lost his mental and physical condition. Boyazid noted that recognition of Allah was not possible through mental and cautious abilities. Junaid Bagdodiy in contrast said that sufi can only make use of his morality for himself as a divona (tramp, a man living in seclusion) and stays halfway on the path to Allah\(^{19}\).

In our viewpoint, such Movarounnahra sheikhs as Najmuddin Kubra, Akhmad Yassaviy and Bahauddin Nakshband approved the way of Junaid Bagdodiy but none of them expressed their hatred against Boyazid Bistomiy, which is confirmed in the works of E.E.Bartels, N.Komilov, A.Sh.Juzjoniy\(^{20}\).

\(^{18}\) The same source. – B. 22.
The characteristic features of Kubra’s tariqa are reflected on his outlook and his practical activities. First of all, it is worthy saying that Sheikh Najmuddin Kubra as a noble personality studied the psychology and spiritual features of people. He was the first who applied the famous theory of his time “Ofoq and anfus” in Sufism philosophy. According to this theory, the universe as a whole “olami kubra” (universal kubra) consisted of the union of “divine world” and “olami sugro” (human world). The divine world and human world are dialectically associated with each other. That is why all the changes taking place in the mind and activities of human beings are undoubtedly associated with universal kubra “olami kubra” dialectically according to Najmuddin Kubra21.

In Kubra’s viewpoint, a human “olami sugro” – is micro universe and it possesses all the features of macro universe “olami kubra” and as human progresses he can gain all the qualities except for Allah’s “Rahim” and “Rahmon” (derived from Arabic meaning Great and Merciful) but he needs leadership by a perfect supreme and holy scholar on his way22. According to him one of the main features of a human is that if a human endeavors hard he will find out the secrets of divine and human world and without a perfect murshid (scholar), a follower will be misled.

According to Kubra, the sacred features are located on different layers of the sky. Unless we know the main features of the human world we can’t be sure of the sacred world. A human can neither see nor hear the secrets of a divine world but may feel spiritually by analyzing deeply in mind. That is why Najmuddin

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Kubra emphasized the importance of intuitive thinking in perceiving the sacred world\textsuperscript{23}.

Due to his excellence in a state of mind of a human he developed a theory of “latoif” (affable, merciful, jolly from Persian) according to which human’s state of mind consists of invisible centers of latif. This is something between mind and feeling, spirit and a body. This is so tiny that hardly can it be noticed\textsuperscript{24}. Najmuddin Kubra founded the theory of “latoif” in kubraviyah tariqa based on which he explained all the changes in human’s state of mind such as the rise of excitement, different feelings in different shapes and colors.

According to Kubra, the changes taking place in a human’s state of mind occur in different shapes like dot, stain, circle and colors. There is some sense in its occurrence in shape and color. Circle – the revolving of the universe, stain – a symbol of the universe, dot – vahdat (derived from Arabic – unity)\textsuperscript{25}.

As a circle revolves around its axis, it continuously tries towards the dot, which is why a human conceives the importance of a sacred world by recognizing the importance of a dot. A human’s state of mind is defined by the changes of a circle, dot and a stain. According to Kubra, cwhite, yellow, blue, green, violet, red, black colors express the perfection/idealism level of human’s state of mind; white color represents - Islam, yellow – iman (faith)– иман, blue – giving, green – confidence, violet – full confidence, red – cognition, black – excitement\textsuperscript{26}.

As you see the sufistic states of colors define the stages of the path towards Allah and the diversity and changes colors express the state of mind of a human.

\textsuperscript{23} The human philosophy. – Tashkent: The national association of philosophers of Uzbekistan, 2007. – B. 230
\textsuperscript{24} Komilov N. Sufism (Tavhid asrori – The path to recognition of Allah, the path to salvation). – Tashkent: G.Gulom, Uzbekistan, 1999. – B. 175
Based on the Hadis “Die before you die” of the prophet Mukhammed (s.a.v.) Najmuddin Kubra developed the four staged theory of “death”.\(^27\). The first stage, “mavti ahmar” – red death, a human overcomes his feelings of lust, the second stage “mavti abyoz” – white death, a human overcomes his hunger staying hungry, the third stage “mavti ahdar” – green death, a human gets rid of his new clothes and wears the old ones, since a new cloth is a sign of desire for material benefits, wealth, the fourth stage “mavti asvad” – black death, a human undergoes patience through the bad deeds of the public\(^28\). So, Najmuddin’s theory of “death” is rather moral and aimed at refraining yourself from any material comfort and he used colors to express his views by associating them with a human’s psychology and insight.

According to Najmuddin Kubra, the most important reason of reaching a spiritual and moral enrichment is - not to waste time, as a human’s life passes very quickly and there is nothing further than a dream, closer than death and judgement day, more beautiful than calmness. A human’s moral oblique is furnished with courtesy, and spoiled by jealousy\(^29\).

According to Kubra, a human’s moral values are also defined by his overcoming lust, the strongest man is a man who can train himself, refrain himself from any comfort and satisfaction\(^30\). Therefore he values time.

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Sheik Najmuddin Kubra developed his own method to bring up his students and based on his ten principles he demonstrated ways to follow up tariqa and obtain good moral skills.

As in other Sufism tariqa, kubraviyah tariqa also has ten rules called also “main rules”. They are repentance, asceticism, placing hope solely on Allah, strong will, seclusion, spiritual transmission (transmitting knowledge to your student, follower), patience, control over his emotions and desires, giving, content\textsuperscript{31}. Therefore by those ten rules Kubra referred to them as the basis of tariqa, showed their moral sides and the purpose of which is to approach to Allah. The theoretical and practical basis of Nakshbandiyah’s spiritual featureas are based on: shariyah, tariqa, morality and truth and consist of seven principles: repentance, caution of a tongue, asceticism, destitution, patience, placing hope solely on Allah and content\textsuperscript{32}. As you see some principles of nakshbandiyyah tariqa are available in kubraviyah tariqa.

After his death (1221) his death his students continued teaching his doctrine not only in Movarounnahra but also spread in Iran, Egypt, Iraq and Afganistan\textsuperscript{33}. Particularly, firdavsiiyah tariqa originated by one of the famous khalifas Badriddin Firdavsiiyah was launched to be spread by Kubra’s student Sayfiddin Said Boharziy Buhorii. Firdavsiiyah tariqa was widely spread in India by Firdavsiiyah’s student Najibuddin Mukhammad (died 1300).

\textsuperscript{31} The manuscript kept under № 503-X in the Institute of Oriental studies named after Abu Raykhon Beruniy at the Science Academy of Uzbekistan. – B. 2436.


Nuriyah tariqa – a branch of kubraviyah tariqa in Bagdad, is originated associated and originated with the name of Nuriddin Abdurahmon Isfahoniy (died 1317), the master and scholar of Alou-d-davla Simnoniy.

Rukniyah tariqa – a branch of kubraviyah tariqa in Khorasan (a city in Iran, once a state) is associated and originated with the name of Rukniddin Abu Akhmad ibn Sharafiddin (died 1336).

Khamadaniyah tariqa – a tariqa extracted from rukniyah tariqa of kubraviyah tariqa and this branch name is associated and originated with the name of Sayid Ali ibn Mukhammad Khamadaniy was widely spread in Kashmir, India. Born in 1314 in Khamadan, Sayid Ali Khamadaniy dies in 1385 and buried in Khuttalan, Tajikistan. On his visit to Kashmir Sayid Ali Khamadaniy took nearly 800 mystics of kubraviyah tariqa.

Igtishashiyah tariqa – this suluk (spiritual Sufic path) also being a Khorasan branch of kubraviyah tariqa was founded by Ishok Huttalaniy (died 1423). His student Abdulla Barzishabadiy founded a zahabiyah tariqa, a branch of kubraviyah in Mashhad and Shiraz (cities in Iran).

Nurbahshiyah tariqa – the path also being a Khorasan branch of kubraviyah tariqa is associated and originated with the name of Mukhammad ibn Abdullah Nurbahsh (died 1464), a student of Ishok Huttaloniy and Sayid Ali Khamadaniy34.

Nematullahiyah tariqa – was founded by a famous mystic wise man Nematullah Vali(1330-1431), he shortly lived in cities of Samarkand, Bukhara and Karshi. He was profoundly affected by Ibn Arabiy’s vahdatu-l-vujud doctrine, hojagon doctrine, esp. kubraviyah tariqa. “hilvat dar anjuman” and


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silent zikr (citing Koran silently) play an important role in Nematullah’s doctrine, the followers of this tariqa dwell in Iran, England and the USA. Therefore kubraviyah tariqa played a vital role in the social, cultural and spiritual, moral lives of people in Movaraunnahra, Khorasan, India of that time making a significant influence on the other Sufism tariqa.

Based on the analysis the following conclusions can be made:

- Kubraviyah tariqa was evolved through the years of achievements in world and shariah sciences, which is why it earned an acclaim of “Golden Tariqa” in the public. However, it should be noted that kubraviyah tariqa was not pro-public and public approved tariqa which might have been the reason of its gradual development in the public;

- As known from the series of Kubra’s tariqa, the chain of 21 murshids (scholars) is directly connected with Mukhammed Prophet (s.a.v.) the scholars of this system are connected with Abu Tolib (r.a.) prior to Mukhammed Prophet (s.a.v.);

- Najmuddin Kubra led peace and coexistence of mazhabs (sects) in his visions preventing the rise of sectarian strife in sects and hatred that was quite inevitable at his time;

- Kubraviyah tariqa was not removed from Turkistan, after the invasion by the Mongol empire the students of Najmuddin Kubra left for their countries and therefore kubraviyah tariqa that was originated and developed in Turkistan started to be developed in other countries. The tariqa such as firdavsiyah in India, nuriyah in Baghdad and rukniyah in Khorasan arouse;

- Kubra explained the stages of shariah, tariqa and truth with life experience based examples to his new followers and moreover prevented them...
from doing anything contradictory to shariah since shariah played a vital role in kubraviyah tariqa;

- In our viewpoint Kubra - the owner of tariqa did not mean – falling into quietism by refraining yourself from the comforts of this life and nearing to Allah. Since he mastered the shairah sciences he never violated its laws;

- Najmuddin Kubra elaborated his own method to help his followers reach perfection/idealism, this way he raised his students. Though there are several paths leading to Allah in kubraviyah tariqa, they are divided into 3 main groups:
  1. Tariqi ahyar
  2. Tariqi abror
  3. Tariqi shattor;

- followers of “Tariqi ahyar” were to be occupied with doing good deeds, this path should be called “The path of faith” rather than “The path of lovers” because this path reflects the practices of zohiriy (following outer, external learning sciences). Sufism is a science pondering over with a heart. Those who approached Allah through the tariqi ahyor make up few;

- tariqi abror – since a lot was focused on the purification of a heart in the tariqi abror, the number of those who reached perfection/idealism exceeded those in the tariqi ahyor. Because heart is a symbol of good and bad deeds35;

- Najmuddin Kubra used the third path to lead his followers to reach the level of perfection/idealism and spiritual enrichment quickly. As a result, he achieved the title of valiytarosh – the master of valiys (holy people);

- Najmuddin Kubra developed his own method of raising his students. This method of raising followers is based on these three stages. Refraining yourself from greed by reducing food consumption gradually, supervision by

35 The same source. – B. 243

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Murshid enables to follow up eight principles of Junaid Bagdodi and control himself;

- The hallmark of Sufism doctrine lies in perfecting humanity, his upbringing and morality;

- Such Movarounnahra sheikhs as Najmuddin Kubra, Akhmad Yassaviy and Bahauddin Nakshband approved the way of Junaid Bagdodi but none of them expressed their hatred against Boyazid Bistomiy, which is confirmed in the works of E.E.Bartels, N.Komilov, A.Sh.Juzjoniy;

- The divine world and human world are dialectically associated with each other. He named divine world “olami kubra” and (human world) “olami sugro”;

- According to Kubra, one of the main features of a human is that if a human endeavors hard he will find out the secrets of divine and human world and he should be led by a perfect murshid (scholar) on this way;

- Najmuddin Kubra founded the theory of “latoif” in kubraviyah tariqa based on which he explained all the changes in human’s state of mind such as the rise of excitement, different feelings in different shapes and colors;

- the sufistic states of colors define the stages of the path towards Allah and the diversity and changes colors express human’s state of mind;

- Najmuddin’s theory of “death” is rather moral and aimed at refraining yourself from any material comfort and he used colors to express his views by associating them with a human’s psychology and insight;

- According to Kubra, a human’s moral values are also defined by his overcoming lust, the strongest man is a man who can train himself, refrain himself from any comfort and satisfaction and value his time;
Therefore by those ten rules Kubra referred to them as the basis of tariqa, showed their moral sides and the purpose of which is to approach to Allah. The theoretical and practical basis of Nakshbandiyah’s spiritual features are based on: shariyah, tariqa, morality and truth and consist of seven principles: repentance, caution of a tongue, asceticism, destitution, patience, placing hope solely on Allah and content. As you see some principles of nakshbandiyah tariqa are available in kubraviyah tariqa;

- Kubraviyah tariqa played a vital role in the social, cultural and spiritual, moral lives of people in Movaraunnahra, Khorasan, India of that time making a significant influence on the other Sufism tariqa.

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8. The manuscript kept under № 503-X in the Institute of Oriental studies named after Abu Raykhn Beruniy at the Science Academy of Uzbekistan. - Б. 242⁵

9. The same source. - Б. 242⁵


11. The manuscript kept under № 503-X in the Institute of Oriental studies named after Abu Raykhn Beruniy at the Science Academy of Uzbekistan. - Б. 242⁵

12. The same source. - Б. 243a


18. The same source. - Б. 22.


31. The manuscript kept under № 503-X in the Institute of Oriental studies named after Abu Raykhon Beruniy at the Science Academy of Uzbekistan. – B. 243.
