Research Incentive Fund Report

AKRAM HABIBULLA
Middle Eastern, Central Eurasian, and Islamic Studies Librarian
Herman B Wells Library
Indiana University, Bloomington

In May 2017 I was awarded an InULA grant, which was used to support my book buying trip to Kazakhstan and travel to the International Congress in Saint-Petersburg, Russia.

I attended the Eurasian Book Fair 2017 in Astana, Kazakhstan. Acquisition of books, periodicals, and other materials from Central Eurasia is not easy process. Publications in Central Eurasian languages, given limited print runs and other constraints, are not easily available for purchase. We cannot just order them online. Book dealers located in the USA most times are not able to supply needed material or their prices are very high. Therefore, the local book fairs are best ways to access academic, independent, and commercial publishers, and book sellers. My attendance at the Eurasian Book Fair was very productive. I was able to bring and add to the collection 23 volumes of books and 9 issues of periodicals. In addition, I met with the Director of Nazarbayev University Library and discussed the possibilities of establishing a literature exchange program.

After the Book Fair I traveled from Astana to Saint Petersburg to attend the XXIX International Congress on Historiography and Source Studies of Asia and Africa «Asia and Africa: Their Heritage and Modernity». My paper was competitively selected for presentation at this Congress and it was about the 14th century Arabic manuscript held by the Library of Moscow University of International Relations. In my presentation I tried to shed light on some questions left unanswered by previous researchers. I also tried to correct errors and mistakes of modern catalogs in description of the manuscript.

I would like to thank the InULA Grants and Scholarship Committee for this opportunity.