



TURKIC POET HAYDAR KHWARAZMI'S WORK "MI'RAJNAMA" IN TURKIC

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ABSTRACT

This article discusses the study of the work "Mi'rajnoma," dedicated to the Mi'raj event of the Prophet Muhammad, written in Turkic language. It includes opinions on whether the work genuinely belongs to Haydar Khorezmi, as examined by various scholars.

KEYWORDS

Spirituality, thought, mi'raj, work, art, writing, Uyghur, text, research, event, enlightenment.

INTRODUCTION

Due to its religious nature, the work "Mi'rajnoma," authored by Haydar Khorezmi and dedicated to the Mi'raj event of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), was not mentioned or made widely available during the Soviet era. In recent years, however, due to the emergence of religious freedoms, such works have begun to be studied by contemporary scholars.

Researchers approach "Mi'rajnoma" from different perspectives: art historians examine its illustrations, designers study the clothing styles of that era, theologians analyze it from the standpoint of Islam,

and philologists investigate the literary and linguistic qualities of the text. Among the notable contributions are Turkish scholars such as Akar Metin's "Mi'raj Works in Turkish Literature in Verse," Cihan Doğan's "Was Mi'rajnoma Written in Khwarezm Turkic?," Hüseyin Durgut's "Certain Features of the Turkish Version of Ivan Lutskevich's Mi'rajnoma," and Osman Sertkaya's work on editing the text of "Mi'rajnoma." Uzbek scholars I. Haqqul and S. Rafiddinova have also published parts of Sulaiman Baqirgani's "Mi'rajnoma."

Qosimjon Sodiqov's article, "A Manuscript in Uyghur Language Stored in the National Library of France," along with other research works, offers various



opinions on "Mi'rajnama." However, definitive conclusions regarding Haydar Khorezmi's authorship remain absent.

Nevertheless, the claim that Haydar Khorezmi is indeed the author of "Mi'rajnama" was first substantiated by artist Shomahmud Muhammadjonov during a conversation with Asqar Mahkam. He noted:

"Today, what we refer to as folk applied art is still known in the West as Islamic art. For over a thousand years, this art form evolved in accordance with the laws of Islam, which shaped all aspects of life. Denying that it developed based on established principles would be a sign of spiritual blindness.

According to tradition, the Prophet (peace be upon him) had a depiction of a bee on his ring, while Hazrat Ali's seal featured an image of a lion. Some beliefs suggest that visual forms derived from these motifs, yet the baseless notion that Islam forbids depictions of living beings is refuted by the 45 miniatures in Haydar Khorezmi's "Mi'rajnama," preserved in Paris. All these miniatures are divine in theme, illustrating and describing the Prophet's ascension during Mi'raj. If such unfounded claims held any truth, who then created the 32,000 miniature artworks housed in Istanbul's Topkapi Museum?"

The Uyghur-script edition of Haydar Khorezmi's "Mi'rajnama" was published by Pavet de Courteille in Paris in 1882. This publication includes excerpts from the poet's "Gulshan ul-Asrar" and "Mi'rajnama." The basis for this edition was the manuscript Suppl. Turc. 190, housed in the French National Library. "Mi'rajnama" is featured on pages 1–43 of the publication.

Jahongir Turdiev, in his research on Turkic "Mi'rajnama" texts, also referred to the Uyghur-script manuscript Suppl. Turc. 190, preserved in the French National Library under inventory number Suppl. Turc.

190/1513II. He notes that this manuscript contains both Haydar Khorezmi's "Mi'rajnama" (folios 1b–68a) and Fariduddin Attar's "Tazkiratu-l-awliya" (folios 69b–264b).

Iranian scholars Naghmai Harazian, Marjan Mortazavi, and Abbas Nowbakht explored Haydar Khorezmi's authorship of "Mi'rajnama" in their article titled "The Eastern Mi'rajnama Narrative by Mir Haydar." They highlight that during the Timurid prince Shahrukh Mirza's reign (839–840 Hijri), numerous artists worked under the leadership of Baysunghur Mirza. During this period, Malik Bakhshi of Herat transcribed "Mi'rajnama" in Uyghur script, and the manuscript features 60 illustrations.

Both studies—by Turdiev and the Iranian scholars—identify the preservation number of the "Mi'rajnama" manuscript in the French National Library as Suppl. Turc. 190. However, Turdiev does not explicitly attribute the work to an author, likely because he based his research on Pavet de Courteille's publication, which does not mention the author's name but only lists the manuscript number.

The Iranian researchers attribute the authorship of "Mi'rajnama" to Mir Haydar and note that Malik Bakhshi of Herat translated it into Uyghur script and Turkic languages. The manuscript's 61 illustrations depict the Prophet Muhammad's journey through colorful, celestial realms, accompanied by angels, starting from the blue and golden grounds of paradise.

Sumayya Ramazan Mohi from Iran's Tebyan Cultural Section published an article titled "Mi'rajnama by Mir Haydar," detailing that Shahrukh Mirza's reign was a pinnacle of cultural development, particularly in the art of manuscript creation at the Shahrukh Library in Herat. She notes that the manuscript, measuring 34x22 cm with 265 folios, is preserved in the French National Library. The illustrations, created for Shahrukh in 1435



(839–840 Hijri), showcase the peak of artistic skill of that era.

The "Mi'rajnama" by Haydar Khorezmi is also known as "Mi'raji Shahrukhi" due to its composition during Shahrukh Sultan's reign. Mir Haydar's work, translated into Uyghur script and Turkic languages by Malik Bakhshi of Herat, contains 61 illustrations vividly depicting the Prophet Muhammad's miraculous journey, accompanied by vibrant, multicolored-winged angels. The manuscript captures the awe-inspiring stages of the ascension, bringing the experience vividly to life for readers and viewers alike.

Mir Haydar's "Mi'rajnama" stands out for its vibrant colors and grandeur. The depiction of Jibreel (Gabriel) with his multicolored wings under a canopy of gold and silver stars amidst the celestial skies reflects unparalleled artistic splendor.

The vibrant colors of the Timurid era, as highlighted in Sumayya Ramazan Mohi's article, extend beyond porcelain to textiles and wall coverings, with hues like bright purple, crimson, gold, indigo, yellow, light green, and the radiant tones of carpets dazzling the eye like stained glass in every depiction.

The article includes brief interpretations of miniatures from the "Mi'rajnama" manuscript, such as "The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) Observing a White Rooster in Heaven," "The Black Sea," "The Angel of Half Fire and Half Snow," "The Seventy-Headed Angel," and "The House of Impure Women." Each illustration explicitly notes its source as the National Library of France. The original manuscript provides broader descriptions in Arabic and Turkic languages.

For instance, the depiction of the "White Rooster" is explained in the manuscript as follows:

"The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) reached the first heaven and saw a white rooster

whose head touched the Throne and whose feet rested upon the earth."

The illustration "The Angel of Half Fire and Half Snow" describes:

"The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) observed an angel between the first and second heavens, half of its body made of snow and the other half of fire. In one hand it held snow, in the other, fire. The heavens echoed the sound of its glorification."

Regarding "The Seventy-Headed Angel," the manuscript notes:

"The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) encountered a great angel with seventy heads near a riverbank."

In "The Black Sea," the manuscript elaborates:

"The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) saw the Black Sea, filled with angels. When asked by the Prophet what this sea was, Jibreel (Gabriel) replied, 'None but Allah knows.' The Prophet also saw an angel whose head reached the Throne and whose golden feet touched the earth."

Iranian researcher Riza Tehrani's article, A Comparative Analysis of Structural Elements in Ahmad Musa's and Mir Haydar's "Mi'rajnama," examines eight miniatures from the "Mi'rajnama" works of Ahmad Musa and Mir Haydar Khorezmi. The study explores similarities and differences in their compositions. Ahmad Musa's miniatures emphasize religious-historical narratives, the arrangement of figures, relationships with architectural elements, and the use of natural depth, integrating general Mongolian ornamentation. In contrast, Mir Haydar's illustrations reflect poetic, surreal, and abstract settings, distinguishing themselves in their imaginative interpretation.



The analysis also highlights the illustration titled "On the Path to Quds" from Mir Haydar's manuscript. The Arabic annotations in the manuscript are faded, but the Turkic commentary states:

"The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) mounted Buraq, while angels gathered in service, holding the banner in his presence."

Another illustration, titled "Three Cups of Light," is described in Arabic in the manuscript. These cups are symbolic elements representing various stages of the Prophet's ascension.

Such detailed analyses of miniatures from "Mi'rajnama" reveal the depth of Timurid artistry and the manuscript's blend of poetic imagination and spiritual themes. The vivid colors and intricate depictions stand as a testament to the artistic and cultural zenith of the era.

و خضار الملايكة الاجل النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم ثلاثة اقداح . الواحدة لبن و الاخر شراب و الاخر عسل و شرب النبي قدح اللبن لا غيره فقال له الملايكة ما فعلت يا محمد بشربك اللبن وحده ولم تشرب غيره فان امتك يخرجون من الدنيا بالايمان و فرح بهذا الكلام

The manuscript contains a detailed Turkic interpretation of the miniature titled "Three Cups of Light":

"For the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), three angels stood at the Bayt al-Ma'mur holding three cups made of light. One contained milk, another wine, and the third honey. The Prophet took the milk and drank it, leaving the others untouched. Jibreel (Gabriel) praised him, saying, 'You refrained from drinking wine. Had you done so, your nation would have fallen into error.'"

Another miniature, titled "Worship," depicts an important spiritual event. While the Arabic commentary on the margins of the manuscript has

been partially erased due to damage, the Turkic explanation reads as follows:

"The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) led in prayer all the prophets who were present at Bayt al-Maqdis. He stood as their imam during this sacred moment, demonstrating his spiritual leadership over all the prophets (peace be upon them)."

These detailed Turkic annotations enrich the understanding of the manuscript, providing cultural and theological insights into its miniatures. They serve as key narratives, linking the Prophet's spiritual journey to broader Islamic teachings and traditions.

بررسی سیر تخول تیموری براساس نگارهای مکتب هرات بر پوشش بانوان (سبک تزینات نقوش) در خراسان بزرگ عصر

The article titled "The Evolution of Women's Clothing Based on Herat School Paintings in the Great Khorasan during the Timurid Era (Decoration Methods of Patterns)" analyzes two illustrations from Haydar Khwarazmi's work *Mi'rajnama*.

In her research, Elaheh Rezanazhad Yazdi emphasizes that the women's clothing styles and decorations in miniatures of the Shahrukh period can be effectively studied using the valuable manuscript of Mir Haydar's *Mi'rajnama*, written during Shahrukh's reign, as a primary source. The author of the article analyzes two miniatures titled "The Prophet's Visit to Paradise," which are located on folios 49b-50a of the manuscript. These illustrations are accompanied by explanations provided in Arabic and Turkish.

The Turkish explanation states: "On Friday, the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, saw the houris in paradise. Constantly, they were smiling at each other, saying 'Marhaban' (Welcome), playing, and strolling together." The Arabic description conveys a similar sentiment. و ايضا رواية النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم كرما في وسط الجنة و فيه جماعة كثيرة من



الحوار بعضهم جالسة على الكارسي و بعضهم تلعب مع بعضهم

In the description of the second illustration, it is stated: "The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, saw a grand palace in paradise. Inside, there were many houris, and he asked, 'To whom does this abode belong?' It was answered, 'It belongs to Umar, may Allah be pleased with him.'"

The Arabic sentence conveying this statement is provided below.

روية النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم للحوار في يوم الجمعة و هن راكبات على الجمالى و تضحكن و تراحب بعضهم على بعض و هن فى السيرة

Elaheh Rezanazhad Yazdi attempted to study the style of women's headwear from the period when the manuscript was created, using these miniatures as a reference. She explains: "In the first stage, women's clothing is analyzed, beginning with head coverings and then, correspondingly, body and leg coverings are examined. The paintings titled *Mi'raj* depict five types of headwear."

1. The first type: a rounded headpiece with three loops at the front, adorned with four feathers.
2. The second type: a golden crown with trapezoidal edges, decorated with red pearls.
3. The third type: a simple straw hat in the Chinese style.
4. The fourth type: a dome-shaped headpiece adorned with flowers, featuring colorful and green leaves.
5. The fifth type: a similar elongated headwear, featuring a raised-winged bird. The sixth variant is simply made of plain fabric that covers the top of the head.

The illustrations are interpreted from an art historical perspective with these detailed explanations.

In Haydar Khwarazmi's *Mi'rajnama*, each illustration in the manuscript, written in Uyghur script, is

accompanied by annotations in Arabic and Turkish. For example, in the first illustration, the moment of the arrival of Jibril (Gabriel), peace be upon him, to the Prophet is depicted. The annotation provides the following bilingual description:

"Jibril (Gabriel), peace be upon him, came to the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, and said: 'This night is the Night of Ascension (*Laylat al-Mi'raj*). The Almighty invites you to His noble presence, the celestial gates will open, and all the angels are prepared to honor you.'" This explanation is rendered in Turkish as follows:

جبريل ع م صلى الله عليه وسلمغه كلوب بو كيچه ليلة المعراج در حق تعالى سيني حضور شريفه دعوت ايتور كوكلى قابوسى اچلوب جمله ملايكة سيزگه منظور ديو خبر بيرديگى محلى

يجى الجبريل عليه السلام و اخباره للنبي عليه السلام من الليلة له ليلة المعراج و ان الله تعالى يطلبك

The sentence is provided in Arabic. In the final illustration of the manuscript, the condition of men who have committed numerous sins and are being tormented in hell by living scorpions is depicted. This illustration includes an annotation only in Arabic, with no Turkish explanation.

The Arabic annotation reads as follows:

صفة الرجال الذين نفوسهم كبيرة و اخلاقهم سيئة و يتكبرون على الخلق و اذا ماتو فان الله تعالى يعذبهم يوم القيامة بين العقارب الحيات

The characteristics of arrogant individuals are described as follows: they possess pride and conceit and have poor morals. If they die, Allah the Almighty will punish them on the Day of Judgment with living scorpions.

In general, the Turkish annotations in this manuscript were added later by another scribe. This is evident because the Arabic and Turkish scripts were written in two distinct handwriting styles.



Studying the miniatures created for this work from various perspectives is considered a pressing task today. As the artist Shomakhmud Muhammadjonov emphasized, works like these "have not yet produced their discoverers in painting and Sufism." Therefore, linking the illustrations of classical works with Sufi interpretations is also a necessary approach.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, although the author of the Mi'rajnama written in Turkish is not mentioned in some sources, the findings of recent research provide grounds to attribute it to Haydar Khwarazmi.

The work dedicated to the Mi'raj event is valuable among other works for several reasons. On one hand, it incorporates profound theological and Sufi discussions; on the other, it includes unique aspects of ascension by linking the narrations with Qur'anic verses. From the perspective of Islamic teachings, Mi'rajnama not only reflects deep beliefs about the Day of Judgment but also encapsulates delicate Sufi and philosophical views about good and evil, highs and lows, happiness and sorrow.

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