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CODICOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION AND SOURCE-STUDY IMPORTANCE OF THE SIXTH VOLUME OF THE WORK "RAWZAT AL-SAFA"

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Abstract: This article analyzes the Turkic translation of the work "Rawzat al-safa" (registered under inventory number 7417), preserved in the manuscript collection of the Abu Rayhan Biruni Institute of Oriental Studies under the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Uzbekistan, from the perspectives of source study and textual criticism. Based on the physical structure of the manuscript, codicological features, history of translation, and information provided in the preface, the environment of its creation has been clarified. The research analyzes data demonstrating that the translation was initiated by Muhammad Amin Khwarazmshah, with the active participation of Muhammad Yusuf Mahdum and Muhammad Nazar. Furthermore, the article highlights the significance of the manuscript in studying Timurid history, 19th-century Khwarazmian historiography, and the traditions of Turkic translation.

Keywords: Rawzat al-safa, Mirkhwand, Turkic translation, Timurid history, manuscript, codicology, source studies, textual criticism, Muhammad Amin Khwarazmshah, Muhammad Yusuf Mahdum, Muhammad Nazar.

Introduction: Created in the 15th century, Mirkhwand's "Rawzat al-safa fi sirat al-anbiya wa-l-muluk wa-l-khulafa" ("The Gardens of Purity in the Biography of the Prophets, Kings, and Caliphs") stands as one of the monumental monuments of medieval Islamic historical thought in Eastern historiography. The work exerted a profound influence not only on Persianate and Khurasanian historiography but also on the historical traditions of Central Asia. In subsequent centuries, numerous copies were transcribed, and specific sections were translated into various Turkic languages[1].

Translations executed during the period of the Khiva Khanate played a pivotal role in integrating national historical heritage into the local linguistic environment. Among the historical works produced in the Turkic language during the reign of Muhammad Amin Khwarazmshah, the translation of "Rawzat al-safa" occupies a distinctive place. Extant in manuscript form, this translation serves today as an essential primary source for investigating Timurid history, the 19th-century literary language, and the Khwarazmian school of translation.

The manuscript under investigation is preserved under inventory number 7417 in the manuscript fund of the Abu Rayhan Biruni Institute of Oriental Studies[2]. It comprises the sixth volume of "Rawzat al-safa" and encompasses the complete text of the section dedicated to the history of Amir Timur and the Timurids.

The manuscript consists of 441 folios and is written in the *Nasta'liq* script[3]. The dimensions of the folios are 29×50 cm. The text on each page is arranged in a single column, containing 23 lines per column. Russian factory-made paper was utilized for its production, which constitutes a crucial codicological marker confirming that the manuscript was transcribed in the 19th century.

The text is written primarily in black ink, while section and chapter headings are distinguished in red ink. This rubrication technique was widely employed in medieval and early modern manuscripts to delineate textual structure. The presentation of headings in red ink served to clarify the composition of the work and facilitate reading comprehension.

The preface of the manuscript commences with *hamd* (praise to Allah), *na't* (praise to the Prophet), and encomiums to the Companions of the Prophet. This convention is characteristic of Islamic historical works and establishes the religious and spiritual tone of the text.

The preface preserves critical historical details regarding the background of the translation. It notes that the translation of the sixth volume of "Rawzat al-safa" into the Turkic language was initiated by the decree of the ruler of Khwarazm, Muhammad Amin Khwarazmshah[4].

According to the preface, the task of translation was initially entrusted to Mullah Muhammad Yusuf Mahdum. However, due to his engagement with other administrative duties, the progress of the translation slowed down. The text indicates that Muhammad Yusuf Mahdum completed the translation up to the events concerning Amir Timur sending an envoy to Husayn Sufi, the ruler of Khwarazm[5]. Subsequently, the task of continuing the translation was assigned to Muhammad Nazar[6]. Referring to himself as "the servant of humility, Muhammad Nazar," he states that he commenced writing the remaining portion of the translation after the month of Dhu al-Hijjah in the year 1268 AH (1852 CE).

This evidence demonstrates that the translation was not the work of a single individual but was executed in two distinct phases. This stands as significant historical testimony to the existence of collaborative translation practices within the 19th-century Khwarazmian literary environment.

The language of the manuscript serves as a key specimen of the 19th-century Uzbek literary language. Although the Turkic linguistic stratum forms the core of the text, Arabic and Persian lexical layers are extensively preserved[7]. The active application of Arabic religious terminology, Quranic verses, and Hadiths is particularly prominent in the preface. Stylistically, the text synthesizes the traditions of *hamd*, *na't*, panegyric, and historical prose. The inclusion of Persian poetic fragments indicates that the translators were well-versed in the traditions of Persian literature. Concurrently, a Turkic prose style remains dominant in the narration of historical events.

Although a clear effort to remain faithful to the original Persian text is observable, explanatory elements were occasionally introduced by the translator to render the meaning more accessible. This indicates not only the translator's linguistic competence but also an active endeavor to comprehend the essence of historical occurrences.

The core section of the work focuses on the genealogy and political career of Amir Timur. The manuscript traces Timur's lineage through Qachuli Bahadur and Qarachar Noyan. The author links the origins of the Timurid dynasty to Mongol-Chagatai traditions. Information regarding the status of Qarachar Noyan within the Chagatai Ulus, the rule of his descendants in the Kesh region, and the formation of the Barlas tribe holds immense value for studying the foundational stages of Timurid statehood.

Furthermore, the work contains valuable data regarding political relations during the reign of Amir Timur, interactions with Khwarazm, and events transpiring within the territory of the Chagatai Ulus. In this regard, the manuscript can be evaluated as one of the most vital Turkic-language primary sources on Timurid history.

Below is a scholarly transliteration and adaptation of select fragments from the work:

Description of the August Lineage of Sahibqiran[8] Gitistan[9] Amir Timur Kuragan

It is brought to the enlightened attention of the master of historical sciences that, although the noble ancestors of the said Sahibqiran are as conspicuous as the moon and independent of descriptive definitions or explanatory praises, it was the custom of the Turkic and Mongol nobility to preserve their genealogies and inform their descendants thereof, so that each might remain aware of their own tribe and lineage. For this reason, eloquent historians have detailed the lineage of that triumphant Sahibqiran in their books as follows:

Sultan Kamran Qutb al-Din Amir Timur Kuragan, son of Amir Taraghai Noyan, son of Amir Bargul Noyan, son of Amir Ilingiz Noyan, son of Amir Ijil Noyan, son of Amir Qarachar Noyan, son of Amir Sughan Chichan, son of Amir Irumchi Noyan, son of Qachuli Bahadur, son of Tumanay Khan, son of Baysunghur Khan, son of Qaydu Khan, son of Dutumin Khan, son of Buqa Khan, son of Buzanjar Khan, son of Alanqu Khatun.

"And some accounts of Alanquva (Alankuwa) were related in the fifth volume. And there were divisions among the descendants of Tumanay Khan bin Baysunghur Khan, the ancestors of Genghis Khan, regarding the branch of Amir Timur Kuragon. Among the sons of Tumanay Khan, Kabul Khan, known by his title, is the fourth ancestor of Genghis Khan, and his son named Kachuli Noyan is the eighth ancestor of Amir Timur Kuragon.

And Amir Kachuli is the root of the Barlas tribe. And at the time when Genghis Khan bestowed some of his dominions upon his second son, Chagataichan, he assigned a group of his esteemed amirs to serve him, and appointed Amir Qarachar to the position of Amir al-Umara (Commander-in-Chief) of Chagatai Khan. And Qarachar Noyan is the fifth ancestor of Amir Timur Kuragon. And Amir Qarachar undertook such governance of the realm and the pacification of the military and the peasantry with such diligence and devotion that both the elite and the commoners spoke words of praise for his excellence; and he proceeded with the regulations of world-conquest and the requisites of empire-expanding in such a manner that no greater abundance could be imagined. And the signs of Qarachar's courage and valor, and the lights of the warmth of his benevolence were bright and manifest to the people of the world. And even after the demise of Chagatai Khan, Qarachar remained the sovereign authority during his passing, until the days of ultimate destruction emptied the citadel of his life of its governing spirit. And when Qarachar departed from this world, treacherous time and unaccommodating heaven manifested that which was necessitated by their nature. And night and day, the calamities continuously plundered and launched night assaults upon the realm of Chagatai Khan, such that in the lands of Mawarannahr (Transoxiana) and Turkestan, eyes were dazzled and hearts were dismayed by the gleam of swords and spears. And such discord manifested among the descendants of Chagatai Khan that the tongue of the pen and the pen of the tongue fell weary and incapable of its description and characterization. And due to the abundance of sedition and turmoil, the children of Qarachar Noyan came to Kesh (again, which is also called Shahrisabz) and pitched the tents of their residence. Generation after generation, and lineage after lineage, the descendants and ancestors of Amir Qarachar were charged with the governance of that realm. And whichever monarch raised the banner of might and majesty in the province of Mawarannahr, he confirmed and conceded that governance to this noble house."

Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be stated that Manuscript No. 7417 represents a valuable Turkic (Uzbek) translation of the sixth volume of the work *Rawdat al-Safa*, which is dedicated to the history of the Timurids. The codicological features of the manuscript clearly demonstrate that it is a product of the 19th-century Khwarazm scribal and book arts environment. The data preserved in the preface allows for the determination that the translation work was initiated by Muhammad Amin Khwarazmshah, while Muhammad Yusuf Makhdum and Muhammad Nazar were the primary participants in this process.

This manuscript serves not only as an essential source for Timurid history but also holds significant value for researching the 19th-century Uzbek literary language, translation traditions, and the Khwarazm scholarly environment. Therefore, the scholarly description of this copy, the preparation of its critical text, and its introduction into wide academic circulation remain among the most urgent tasks.

References

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