ЛИТЕРАТУРЫ НАРОДОВ МИРА/LITERATURE OF THE PEOPLES OF THE WORLD

HAMIDUDDIN BALKHI: THE FOUNDER OF *MAQĀMĀT* GENRE IN CLASSICAL PERSIAN-TAJIK PROSE

Research article

Rashidova D.A.[1], *

[1] Khujand State University named after academician Bobojon Gafurov, Khujand, Tajikistan

* Corresponding author (dilafruz.kayumzoda[at]mail.ru)

Abstract

The given article dwells on the pivotal role of Ḥamiduddin Abu Bakr Muḥammad Balkhi as a foundational figure for *maqāmāt* genre in classical Persian-Tajik prose. Employing a qualitative, descriptive-analytical, and comparative methodology grounded in philological-textual critique of primary sources and secondary historical-biographical texts, the study rectifies the persistent misidentification of the author's identity. Furthermore, the analysis highlights Balkhi's broad scholarly acumen, encompassing Islamic sciences, philosophy, and various other disciplines, and acknowledges his significant poetic output, including a mystical "Safar-name". The findings affirm Balkhi's multifaceted contributions into 12th-century Persian-Tajik literature, solidifying his stature as a polymath and a seminal prose and poetic writer.

Keywords: Ḥamiduddin Balkhi, maqāmāt genre, Persian-Tajik prose, classical literature, literary genealogy, 12th century.

ХАМИДУДДИН БАЛХИ: ОСНОВОПОЛОЖНИК ЖАНРА *МАКАМЫ* В КЛАССИЧЕСКОЙ ПЕРСИДСКО-ТАДЖИКСКОЙ ПРОЗЕ

Научная статья

Рашидова Д.А.[1], *

[1] Худжандский государственный университет имени академика Бободжона Гафурова, Худжанд, Таджикистан

* Корреспондирующий автор (dilafruz.kayumzoda[at]mail.ru)

Аннотация

В данной статье исследуется ключевая роль Хамидуддина Абу Бакра Мухаммада Балхи как основоположника жанра *макамы* в классической персидско-таджикской прозе. Используя качественную, описательно-аналитическую и сравнительную методологию, основанную на филолого-текстовой критике первоисточников и вторичных историко-биографических текстов, исследование исправляет устойчивую ошибку в идентификации авторства. Анализ также подчеркивает обширную эрудицию Балхи, охватывающую исламские науки, философию и различные другие дисциплины, и подтверждает его значительное поэтическое наследие, включая мистическую «Сафар-наме». Полученные результаты подтверждают многогранный вклад Балхи в персидско-таджикскую литературу XII века, утверждая его статус как эрудита и выдающегося прозаика и поэта.

Ключевые слова: Хамидуддин Балхи, жанр макамы, персидско-таджикская проза, классическая литература, литературная генеалогия, XII век.

Introduction

It is well-grounded that the "Maqāmāt" by Ḥamiduddin Abu Bakr Muḥammad Balkhi (d. 559 AH/1164 CE) stands as a pivotal literary achievement within classical Persian-Tajik prose. The relevant work is recognized as having been meticulously composed in deliberate emulation of its Arabic antecedents, particularly the foundational maqāmāt genre established by authors such as al-Ḥariri and Badiʿ al-Zaman al-Hamadhani. However, a critical distinction lies in the profound linguistic and cultural localization of Balkhi's work. The inherent genius of the Persian-Tajik language, characterized by its distinctive lexical nuances, syntactic melodies, and expressive potential, profoundly imbues Balkhī's "Maqāmāt" with a unique cultural resonance and literary vitality that transcends mere imitation. This linguistic essence endows the work with a distinct aesthetic and rhetorical coloration, setting it apart from its Arabic models.

Theoretical frameworks

A persistent issue in the scholarly discourse surrounding this work has been the misidentification of the author's identity, frequently conflating Ḥamiduddin Abu Bakr Muḥammad Balkhi with his father, who bore the name Ḥamiduddin Abu Bakr ʿUmar ibn Maḥmud Balkhi [4, P. 1-3]. This erroneous attribution, which significantly complicates the literary genealogy and biographical accuracy, has been traced back to early biographical anthologies, notably "Tazkira" by Awfi [4, P. 2]. Such historical and biographical inaccuracies underscore the critical importance of rigorous textual scholarship in establishing precise authorship and literary context.

The author's full and accurate name is definitively identified as Qożi Ḥamiduddin Abu Bakr Muḥammad ibn ʿUmar ibn ʿAli Balkhi. He was a distinguished figure in the intellectual and literary circles of the 12th century, recognized as one of the preeminent poets and prose writers of his era. Beyond his acclaimed "Maqāmāt", Ḥamiduddin Balkhi`s extensive literary output is further attested by the attribution of other significant works to his pen. These include the prose treatise "Rawzat-ur-Riza" (The Garden of Contentment), a work that likely explores themes of ethics, spirituality, or contentment, consistent with the intellectual currents of the period. Additionally, various other treatises (rasāʾil), often short epistolary or didactic compositions, further demonstrate his prolificacy and intellectual breadth.

Moreover, the esteemed scholar Munzavi meticulously documents the existence of a copy of Ḥamiduddin Balkhi`s poetic "Safar-name" (Book of Travels) in his comprehensive "Fehrestvare" (Catalog). The above-mentioned work is characterized by

its evident mystical themes, indicating the author's engagement with Sufi thought and spiritual journeys, a common intellectual and literary preoccupation in the 12th century. This comprehensive understanding of Ḥamiduddin Balkhi's oeuvre underscores his pivotal role in shaping the literary landscape of his time and enriches our appreciation of the context of "Maqāmāt" within his wider intellectual pursuits [9, P. 105].

Research methods

This study employs a qualitative, descriptive-analytical, and comparative research methodology. The primary method is a systematic textual analysis of "Maqāmāt" by Ḥamiduddin Balkhi and other attributed works.

The empirical basis for this research consists of:

1. Primary texts: "Maqāmāt" by Ḥamiduddin Balkhi (as the main object of study).

2. Secondary historical and biographical sources: Classical "tazkirahs" (e.g., Awfi's "Lubab al-Albab" and "Tazkirat al-Awliyaʾ"), historical chronicles (e.g., Badaʾuni's "Muntakhab al-Tawarikh"), and specialized catalogs (e.g., Munzavi's "Fehrestvare").

Main results and discussion

The intellectual stature and scholarly acumen of Ḥamiduddin Abu Bakr Muḥammad Balkhi are highly lauded in early biographical sources. Awfi, in his authoritative "Tazkirat al-Awliyā`" provides a glowing assessment of Balkhi's character and intellectual prowess, unequivocally ranking him among the preeminent experts in foundational Islamic sciences such as jurisprudence (fiqh) and principles of Islamic law (uṣul al-fiqh), in addition to other virtues [2, P. 199]. The relevant commendation by a contemporary or near-contemporary biographer underscores Balkhi's recognized eminence within the scholarly community of his time.

It is worth mentioning that "Maqāmāt" serves as a primary textual repository for these diverse intellectual engagements with explicit and implicit references to each of these scientific domains meticulously woven into its narrative background. This interdisciplinary approach is a hallmark of comprehensive scholarly training in the medieval Islamic world.

Furthermore, Balkhi's extensive scientific knowledge is not confined solely to his prose works. It is also evident through several of his scattered poetic verses found in various "tazkirahs". These verses, often epigrammatic or didactic in nature, frequently betray an understanding of diverse scientific principles, further solidifying his reputation as a polymath of the 12th century.

For example:

Ey khudoe, k-az tu tartibi falak,
Barra ro bar rūyi javzo mekashad [2, P. 201].

Proceeding from the assumption of the above-adduced prose, we can briefly discuss it using the example of "Maqāmāt", but according to some sources and as is evident the fact that Hamiduddin Balkhi was also a very powerful poet. The majority of sources have alluded to this point. Among them, "Lubab-ul-Albab" by Awfi praises him with the phrase "and his poetry is extremely elegant" [2, P. 199]. In certain other sources, samples of his poetry have been recorded. For instance, it appears in "Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh" by Bada'uni:

Qazi Hamid Balkhi says. Verse:

Khusravi ghāzī, Mu'izzu-d-Dīni va-d-Dunyā, ki hast
Rūzi hayjā bā humāyūn-rāyatash hamsar zafar.
Bul-muẓaffar shahrīyāri Sharq, k-andar ma'rakah
Gūyā dārad humā-yi chatrash andar par zafar [5, P. 26].

Or, Imam Shamsuddin Daqiqi, who wrote letters addressed to Hamiduddin Balkhi and had a friendly relationship with him, writes in one of his letters:

Be naẓm-i laṭīfat, ey Ḥamīdu-d-Dīn,
Dil naqsh-i nigīn-i 'aysh nan-māyad.
Tūmār-i savād-i naẓm u nasr-i tu,
Rukhṣārah-yi āftāb mē-bāyad [4, P. 4].

Namely, many sources, while the prose-specificity of the author of the maqāmāt is more prominent and famous, have taken the trouble to bring samples of his poetic style and have written about the purity of his verses. In addition to this, attention to the linguistic elements of his maqāmāt will also strengthen this point. That is, the prose of the maqāmāt, being composed in saj' (rhymed prose) and possessing a particular balance, its imagery is captivating to a degree, and the perceptiveness of its points is remarkably insightful, leading our Persian-speaking brethren to call it "prose poetry" (she'r-i mansur). Furthermore, poetry is considered one of the very firm elements of the language of maqāmāt, and in this regard, the author's own verses, which are certainly plentiful among the verses of others with which the "Maqāmāt" is replete (though, as its style demands, it is not explicitly indicated there), are very significant. As including thematically unified verses with varied expressions and imagery at the end of each maqāmāt supports this claim. The author informs the reader through a poem — usually consisting of two lines —by having the narrator of secrets or a world-wise sage, who appears in different guises and attire, emerge unexpectedly. For example:

Ma'lūm-i man na-shud, ki zamāna kujā-sh burd
V-az jām-i rūzgār kujā khūrd ṣāf u durd?!
Dast-i amal varā ba kadōmin taraf fikand,
Pāy-i ajal varā ba kadōmin maqar supurd [6, P. 51].

Seemingly, Hamidi expressed nearly twenty different variations of a single theme with diverse diction at the end of each maqāmāt and also demonstrated his poetic power. Another distinctive feature of his poetry is that he also managed to compose pleasing verses in Arabic This phenomenon is well understood by the reader from the study of "Maqāmāt", and there is no need for explanation or repetition. However, one point must certainly be mentioned that Hamidi Balkhi being skilled in various

styles of Persian and Arabic poetry and having tested his talent demonstrates unique methods of application that may have been rarely used before or after him. For example, in the last maqāmāt, on the historical subject of the caliphate and listing the names of caliphs from the beginning until the author's time, he composed a poem in two languages. The difficulty is that both poems are in nearly the same meter and with identical rhyme. For instance:

Arabic:
Ayyuha rifqata al-fityāni ẓi al-'aqli wa al-baṣar,
Qif wa isma' qawlī fa qawlī mu'tabar [6, P. 206].

Tajik:
Barkhūnam, ey pisar, ba tū imrūz in samar,
Tā pand girī az raviši charkhi pūribar [6, P. 209].

Into the bargain, after the completed study of qasa'id (odes), if you are versed in both languages, you will discover the extent of the poetic power of the author of the first Tajik maqāmāt. Among other things, his standing in poetry is acknowledged by the best poets of his time. For instance, Anvarii Abervardi — one of the powerful poets of his era and, by some accounts, the messenger of the qasida — has striking references to him in several of his poems and everywhere speaks of his knowledge, virtue, and power in verse. For example:

Ba ḥamd u sanā chun kunam rāy-i naẓme,
Na dushwār gūyam, na āsān firistam.
Valēkin ba 'ālījānāb-i Ḥamīdī,
Agar waḥy bāshad, harāsān firistam [1].

During the time of Qazi Hamiduddin, prose works such as "Kashf-ul-Asrar" (Unveiling of Secrets), "At-Tawassul ila at-Tarassul" (The Means to Chancery Style), "Chahar Maqala" (Four Discourses), "Kimiya-ye Sa'adat" ("Alchemy of Happiness"), "Nasihat-ul-Muluk" (Counsel for Kings), "Taj-ut-Tarajim" (The Crown of Biographies), "Safar-name" (The Book of Travels), "Sindbad-name" (The Book of Sindbad), and dozens of other works were composed, each possessing a unique brilliance in Tajik prose. Despite all this, we can consider the style, method, language, and expression of the "Maqāmāt" as entirely outside the current of the prose of its period. That is, Qazi Hamiduddin seems to have been outside the sphere of the taste and worldview of the prose writers of his time and produced a work so uniquely flavored and seasoned that it is both groundbreaking in terms of subject matter and idea, and also in terms of linguistic acrobatics. Qozi Hamiduddin`s literary production was already acknowledged by his contemporary — Nizami Aruzii Samarkand, and it was precisely this highly eloquent and balanced language composed in saj' that led Nizamii Samarkand to recommend it as a desk book for secretaries, alongside the greatest works of artificial and highly ornate prose [10, P.43]. Or, it was mentioned in another work by the author's contemporary — Mahmud ibn Muhammad ibn Hasan Isfahani entitled "Dastur-ul-Wuzara" (Manual for Viziers) [8, P.133-135]. Subsequently, many of its elements had a noticeable influence on the ethical, narrative, historical, and instructional prose of Persian-Tajik. Although the author of "Maqāmāt" was influenced by Arabic-language literature, he is not merely an imitator, and in writing maqāmāt he also employed unconventional methods. For example, whereas in maqāmāt before Hamidi, the narrator of stories and the relater of tales is a single imaginary person with a specific name and attributes, in Hamidi's writings, the narratives mostly come from the name of one of his friends. Or, whereas in earlier maqāmāt, the knower of all secrets is usually one person, whom the narrator sees in different corners of the world, and that sage appears among people in the guise of a beggar and preaches, but in the Tajik maqāmāt, the sage of secrets sometimes appears in the guise of a learned jurist (faqih) and at other times in the form of a physician and astrologer. We can count many such differences in "Maqāmāt" by Hamidi.

A point that must be mentioned here above all is that "Maqāmāt" is considered to be one of Hamiduddin Balkhi`s most important literary productions. Namely, among the author's own works, even though we have provided much information about his poetry and as it became known, many powerful poets of his time praised him as a poet, it is precisely this "Maqāmāt" that holds a solid position and has caused the author's fame to increase beyond before. Hamiduddin Balkhi founded it in our literature with a style different from other works of his time and a subject matter deviating from customary topics, and this factor has been the cause of his great fame in the Eastern world. Even Arabophone historians have paid attention to this work and mention it in many Arabic-language works. For example, it is stated in "al-Kamil fi-at-Ta`rikh" by Ibn al-Athir: "and he has maqāmāt in Persian on the pattern of "Maqāmāt" by al-Hariri in Arabic" [7, P. 314]. Therefore, he has (referring to Hamidi) maqāmāt in Persian like Hariri`s "Maqāmāt" written into Arabic. Most researchers are of the opinion that the primary reason for the fame of the former in question is its linguistic mold and extraordinary expression, which, to be precise, was close to translate into the Arabic maqāmāt [4, P. 11] and had a strangeness in Persian-Tajik prose.

Conclusion

Thus, the corpus of our study rigorously affirmed Ḥamiduddin Balkhi's foundational role in the maqāmāt genre within classical Persian-Tajik prose through qualitative, descriptive-analytical, and comparative textual analysis of primary and secondary sources.

Firstly, the research decisively corrected the historical misattribution of "Maqāmāt"s authorship, definitively identifying Qozi Ḥamiduddin Abu Bakr Muḥammad ibn ʿUmar ibn ʿAli Balkhi as its true author, critical for accurate literary genealogy.

Secondly, the analysis revealed that "Maqāmāt" by Balkhi, though emulating Arabic antecedents, achieved unique linguistic and cultural localization, endowing it with distinct aesthetic and rhetorical coloration that transcends mere imitation.

In a nutshell, the corpus of our study's contributions is therefore significant for specialists in Persian-Tajik literature, Islamic studies, and comparative literary analysis offering a refined understanding of a key figure in medieval Central Asian intellectual history. Future research could further explore the specific intertextual relationships between "Maqāmāt" by Balkhi and his other works, and its reception and influence on later Persian-Tajik prose writers being taken into account as well.

Конфликт интересов

Не указан.

Рецензия

Все статьи проходят рецензирование. Но рецензент или автор статьи предпочли не публиковать рецензию к этой статье в открытом доступе. Рецензия может быть предоставлена компетентным органам по запросу.

Conflict of Interest

None declared.

Review

All articles are peer-reviewed. But the reviewer or the author of the article chose not to publish a review of this article in the public domain. The review can be provided to the competent authorities upon request.

Список литературы / References

1. Абевардӣ А. Девон / А. Абевардӣ; ба эҳтимоми М. Мударриси Разавӣ. — Теҳрон : Бунгоҳи тарҷума ва нашри китоб, 1340. — Ҷ. 1. — 300 с.

2. Абевардӣ Анварӣ. Девон / Абевардӣ Анварӣ; ба эҳтимоми Муҳаммадтақӣ Мударриси Разавӣ. — Теҳрон : Бунгоҳи тарҷума ва нашри китоб, 1340. — Ҷ. 1. — 300 с.

3. Анвор Саййид Абдуллоҳ. Муқаддима / Анвор Саййид Абдуллоҳ // Ҷаҳонкушои Нодирӣ. — Теҳрон : Анҷумани осор ва мафохири фарҳангӣ, 1377. — С. 1–32.

4. Анзобинажод Ризо. Пешгуфтор / Анзобинажод Ризо // Мақомоти Ҳамидӣ. — Теҳрон : Маркази нашри донишгоҳӣ, 1372. — С. 1–17.

5. Бадоунӣ Абдулқодир ибни Маликшоҳ. Мунтахабу-т-таворих / Бадоунӣ Абдулқодир ибни Маликшоҳ; ба тасҳеҳи Мавлавӣ Аҳмад Алии Соҳиб. — Теҳрон : Анҷумани осор ва мафохири фарҳангӣ, 1379. — Ҷ. 1. — 500 с.

6. Балхӣ Ҳамидуддин Абӯбакр Умар ибни Маҳмудӣ. Мақомот / Балхӣ Ҳамидуддин Абӯбакр Умар ибни Маҳмудӣ; ба тасҳеҳи Ризо Анзобинажод. — Теҳрон : Маркази нашри донишгоҳӣ, 1372. — 450 с.

7. Ибни Асир Иззуддин Абулҳасан Алӣ ибни Абулкарам. ал-Комилу фи-т-таърих / Ибни Асир Иззуддин Абулҳасан Алӣ ибни Абулкарам. — Байрут : Дору-с-содир, 1375. — Ҷ. 11. — 350 с.

8. Исфаҳонӣ Маҳмуд ибни Муҳаммад Ҳусайн. Дастуру-л-вузаро / Исфаҳонӣ Маҳмуд ибни Муҳаммад Ҳусайн; ба тасҳеҳ ва таҳқиқи Ризо Анзобинажод. — Теҳрон : Амири Кабир, 1364. — 320 с.

9. Мунзавӣ Аҳмад. Феҳриствораи китобҳои форсӣ / Мунзавӣ Аҳмад. — Ҷ. 1. — Теҳрон : Доирату-л-маорифи бузурги исломӣ, 1384. — 550 с.

10. Самарқандӣ Низомии Арӯзӣ. Чаҳор мақола / Самарқандӣ Низомии Арӯзӣ; таҳия ва тавзеҳи Фахриддин Насриддинов. — Хуҷанд : Ношир, 2015. — 380 с.

Список литературы на английском языке / References in English

1. Abervardī A. Dīwān [Collected Poems] / A. Abervardī; ed. by M. Mudarris-i Razawī. — Tehran : Bungāh-i Tarjumah va Nashr-i Kitāb, 1961/1962. — Vol. 1. — 300 p. [in Persian]

2. Abervardī Anvarī. Dīwān [Collected Poems] / Abervardī Anvarī; edied by Muḥammadtaqī Mudarris-i Razawī. — Tehran : Bungāh-i Tarjumah va Nashr-i Kitāb, 1961/1962. — Vol. 1. — 300 p. [in Persian]

3. Anvār Sayyid Abdullāh. Muqaddimah [Introduction] / Anvār Sayyid Abdullāh // Jahāngushāy-i Nādirī [History of Nādir's World Conquests]. — Tehran : Anjuman-i Āsār va Mafākhir-i Farhangī, 1998/1999. — P. 1–32. [in Persian]

4. Anzābinizhād Riẓā. Pīshguftār [Preface] / Anzābinizhād Riẓā // Maqāmāt-i Ḥamīdī [Ḥamīdī`s Maqāmāt]. — Tehran : Markaz-i Nashr-i Dānishgāhī, 1993/1994. — P. 1–17. [in Persian]

5. Badāʾūnī ʿAbdulqādir ibn Malikshāh. Muntakhab al-Tawārīkh [Selections from Histories] / Badāʾūnī ʿAbdulqādir ibn Malikshāh; ed. by Mawlawī Aḥmad ʿAlī Ṣāḥib. — Tehran : Anjuman-i Āsār va Mafākhir-i Farhangī, 2000/2001. — Vol. 1. — 500 p. [in Persian]

6. Balkhī Ḥamīduddīn Abū Bakr ʿUmar ibn Maḥmūdī. Maqāmāt [The Maqāmāt] / Balkhī Ḥamīduddīn Abū Bakr ʿUmar ibn Maḥmūdī; ed. by Riẓā Anzābinizhād. — Tehran : Markaz-i Nashr-i Dānishgāhī, 1993/1994. — 450 p. [in Persian]

7. Ibn al-Athīr ʿIzz al-Dīn Abu al-Ḥasan ʿAlī ibn Abū al-Karam. al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh / Ibn al-Athīr ʿIzz al-Dīn Abu al-Ḥasan ʿAlī ibn Abū al-Karam. — Beirut : Dār al-Ṣādir, 1955/1956. — Vol. 11. — 350 p. [in Arabic]

8. Iṣfahānī Maḥmūd ibn Muḥammad Ḥusayn. Dastūr al-Wuzarāʾ [Manual for Viziers] / Iṣfahānī Maḥmūd ibn Muḥammad Ḥusayn; ed. and research by Riẓā Anzābinizhād. — Tehran : Amīr Kabīr, 1985/1986. — 320 p. [in Persian]

9. Munzawī Aḥmad. Fihristvāra-yi Kitāb-hā-yi Fārsī [Catalog of Persian Books] / Munzawī Aḥmad. — Vol. 1. — Tehran : Dāʾirat al-Maʿārif-i Buzurg-i Islāmī, 2005/2006. — 550 p. [in Persian]

10. Samarqandī Niẓāmī Arūẓī. Chahār Maqāla [Four Discourses] / Samarqandī Niẓāmī Arūẓī; prep. and comm. by Fakhriddīn Naṣriddīnov. — Khujand : Noshir, 2015. — 380 p. [in Tajik]