



A WRITTEN SOURCE DEDICATED TO THE PILGRIMAGE SITES OF THE KHWARAZM REGION

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Abstract. This article analyzes the Islamic and spiritual milieu, Sufi traditions, and the history of pilgrimage sites formed in the Khwarazm region on the basis of manuscript sources. Particular attention is given to the work entitled *Khwarazm ta'rifī va undagi ziyāratgāhlar bayāni (A Description of Khwarazm and an Account of Its Pilgrimage Sites)*, preserved in the manuscript collection of the Al-Biruni Institute of Oriental Studies under inventory no. 7700. On the basis of this source, the article examines renowned awliyā' of Khwarazm, their pilgrimage sites, and the terms applied to Sufi authorities and spiritual leaders. The study demonstrates the source value of the manuscript and highlights the place of Khwarazm in the broader history of Islamic civilization.

Keywords: awliyā'; pilgrimage sites; Islamic civilization; spiritual heritage; Sufism; Khwarazm; Khwarazmian Sufism; manuscript sources.

INTRODUCTION

The Khwarazm region occupies a distinctive place in the Islamic civilization that developed on the territory of present-day Uzbekistan. This region is known not only for its architectural monuments, but also for its religious and spiritual environment, Sufi traditions, and pilgrimage sites formed over many centuries. For a long time, Khwarazm functioned as one of the important centres in which the Islamic sciences and Sufi teaching developed.

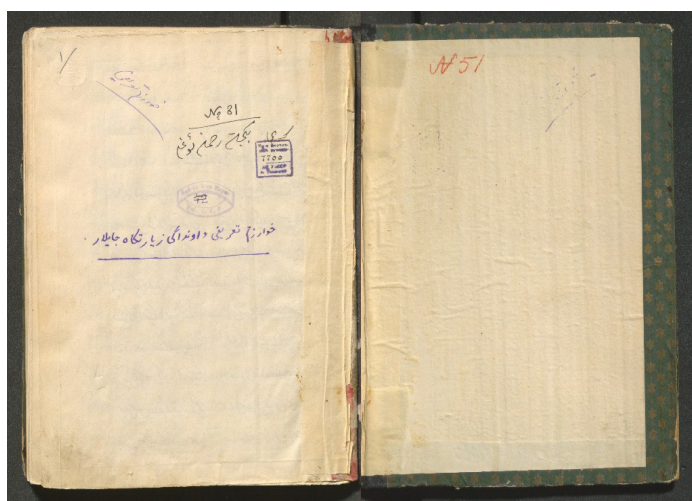


Kuhna Urgench.

MAIN PART

The manuscript source

Valuable information on the spiritual life of Khwarazm and its pilgrimage traditions has reached us through manuscript sources. Among them, the work entitled *Khwarazm ta' rīfi va undagi ziyāratgāhlar bayāni* (A Description of Khwarazm and an Account of Its Pilgrimage Sites), preserved in the manuscript collection of the Al-Biruni Institute of Oriental Studies under inventory no. 7700, is of particular importance. The work is composed in verse, and its opening section is devoted to the narration of certain events from Islamic history.



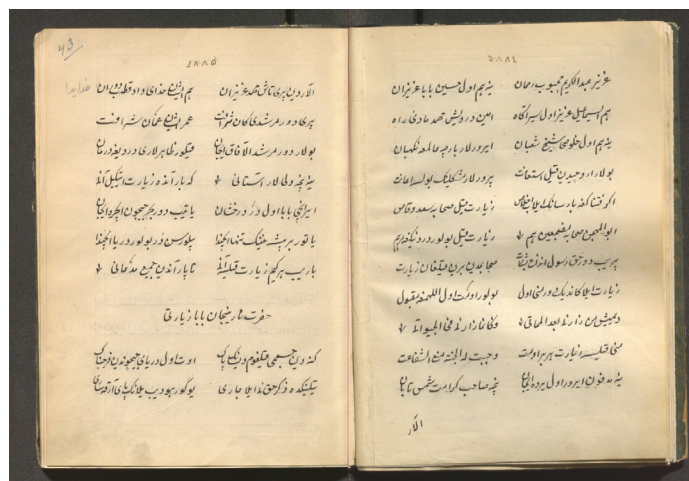
Folio 1a of manuscript no. 7700, preserved in the main collection of the Al-Biruni Institute of Oriental Studies.

Pilgrimage sites recorded in the manuscript

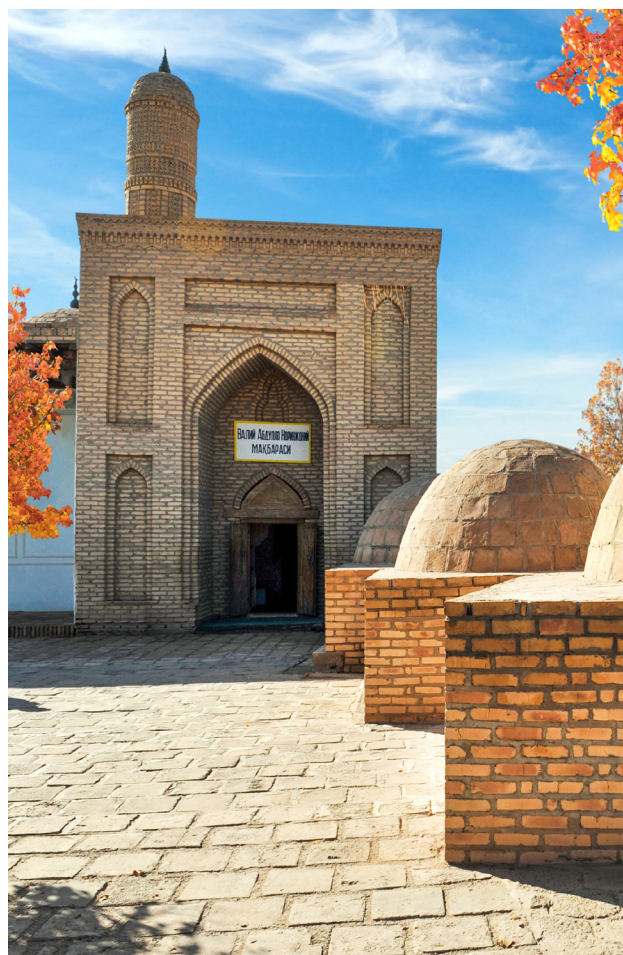
The subsequent sections of the manuscript provide systematic information about famous awliyā' and pilgrimage sites located in the territory of Khwarazm. In particular, the manuscript contains detailed accounts of the shrines and sacred places associated with the awliyā' of Ḥaḏārāsp, Ḥaḏrat Narinjon Bobo, Ḥaḏrat Sulṭān Uvays, Shaykh 'Abbās, Sayyid Mohravī, Taza Urgench and Kuhna Urgench, Qonghirat, Manghit, Qipchaq, as well as Ḥaḏrat Ḥakīm Ata and Sayyid Ata.

The topics recorded in the manuscript are arranged as follows:

- An account of the pilgrimage to the awliyā' of Ḥaḏārāsp (folios 41a–43a);
- the pilgrimage of Ḥaḏrat Narinjon Bobo (folios 43a–46a);
- the pilgrimage of Ḥaḏrat Sulṭān Uvays (folios 46a–51b);
- the pilgrimage of Ḥaḏrat Shaykh 'Abbās (folios 51b–52b);
- the pilgrimage of Ḥaḏrat Sayyid Mohravī (folios 52b–55a);
- the pilgrimage to the awliyā' of Taza Urgench (folios 55a–58a);
- an indication concerning travel to the pilgrimage sites of Kuhna Urgench (folios 58a–59a);
- the pilgrimage to the awliyā' of the locality of Kot (folios 59a–59b);
- the pilgrimage to the awliyā' of the Shahabad fortress (folios 59b–61a);
- the pilgrimage to the awliyā' of the Tashhovuz fortress (folios 61a–61b);
- the pilgrimage to the awliyā' of the Hiloliy fortress (folios 61b–63b);
- the pilgrimage to the awliyā' of the Gurlan fortress (folios 63b–65b);
- the pilgrimage to the awliyā' of Manghit and Qipchaq (folios 65b–66a);
- an indication concerning binding at the graves (folios 66a–67b);
- the pilgrimage to the awliyā' of Khoja Eli (folios 67b–71a);
- the pilgrimage to the awliyā' of Kuhna Urgench (folios 71a–81b);
- the pilgrimage to the awliyā' of Qonghirat (folios 81b–85a);
- an indication concerning the pilgrimage of Ḥaḏrat Ḥakīm Ata, may God have mercy upon him (folios 85a–86b);
- an indication concerning the pilgrimage of Ḥaḏrat Sayyid Ata, may God have mercy upon him (folios 86b–89a);
- an indication concerning the karāmāt, or saintly miracles, of Ḥakīm Ata, may God have mercy upon him (folios 89a–97b).



A manuscript opening containing poetic passages related to pilgrimage traditions.



A shrine complex associated with the sacred landscape of Khwarazm.

Terminology and the sacred geography of Khwarazm

The work also mentions the names of prophets, Sufi shaykhs, scholars, and rulers. The use of such terms as sayyid, khwāja, īshān, bobo, ota, shaykh, and khalfa in relation

to Sufi authorities is especially significant, since it indicates the deep-rooted character of Sufi culture in Khwarazm. Through these terms, the spiritual rank and social influence of the awliyā' are expressed.

The place names recorded in the manuscript also show that Khwarazm possessed broad geographical and cultural connections. The mention of sacred and historical centres such as Bukhara, Samarqand, Turkistan, Medina, Karbalā', and the Ka'ba confirms the close relationship between the religious thought of the region and the wider Islamic world.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the work *Khwarazm ta'rifi va undagi ziyaratgāhlar bayāni* makes it possible to identify important information about numerous Sufi scholars who lived in ancient Khwarazm, their activities, and the spiritual traditions connected with pilgrimage sites. This manuscript serves as an important source for the study of Khwarazm's place in Islamic civilization and in the history of Sufism.

Transliteration Note

Personal names, place names, and technical terms have been rendered in a simplified academic transliteration suitable for English-language publication. Established English forms such as Khwarazm, Bukhara, Samarqand, Medina, Karbalā', and Ka'ba have been retained, while manuscript and Sufi terms are transliterated consistently in accordance with common scholarly usage.

REFERENCES

1. *Khwarazm ta'rifi va undagi ziyoratgohlar bayoni* [A description of Khwarazm and an account of its pilgrimage sites] (Manuscript No. 7700). (n.d.). Al-Biruni Institute of Oriental Studies, Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Uzbekistan.