

## **Analysis of Some Views About the Author and Period of Creation of the Work “Muntakhab Ul-Aruz”**

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**Abstract.** *The science of aruz has held a foundational place in classical Persian-Tajik poetics, evolving through centuries via concise treatises and integrated commentaries. One such lesser-known work is Muntakhab ul-aruz, which, despite its rich instructional content on poetic meters, remained outside scholarly attention until its recent rediscovery and publication by Urvatullo Toirov in 2007. Existing literature has failed to definitively establish the authorship and exact period of composition of this treatise, leading to contradictory conclusions and attributions, including incorrect association with Mawlana Nizamiddin of the 16th century. This study aims to critically reassess the historical, literary, and structural origins of Muntakhab ul-aruz, establish a more accurate chronology, and examine its scholarly significance in the context of 18th–19th century aruz studies. Through textual comparison with known works such as Mi'raj ul-aruz (1827), as well as analysis of embedded poetic examples from 16th-century authors like Urfi Shirazi and Nasirali Sarhindi, the research concludes that Muntakhab ul-aruz was composed in the second half of the 19th century by an unknown author. The article refutes previous assumptions of 16th-century origin and authorship, offering clear philological and intertextual evidence that repositions the treatise within a later historical framework. The findings contribute to a more accurate mapping of Persian-Tajik aruz scholarship, while reaffirming the instructional value of Muntakhab ul-aruz in modern poetic theory and pedagogical practice.*

**Key words:** *poem, verse, aruz, source, text, 19th century aruz studies, Arabic aruz, Persian aruz, modern poetics.*

**INTRODUCTION.** The XIX century also saw ideological changes in the Persian-Tajik literature system influenced by European culture and literature. The research of Tajik literary scholars Rasul Khadizadeh and Subhan Amirkulov to some extent reflected the literary-scientific environment of that time, the state of development of Tajik literature. In the 18th-19th centuries, as culture and literature flourished in India and Iran, the need and interest in the sciences of aruz, rhyme, and badi' increased. It is worth noting that in these centuries the science of aruz developed in a unique style. Now, during this period, scientists aimed to create brochures with a more educational and methodological aspect. In these centuries, the emphasis on simple and ambitious thinking about the science of literary theory became even more intense. Especially one of the three directions of poetry, and in combination with this, the most complex, the science of aruz, was made by the authors a great effort to educate the disciples in an easy and concise way [1].

In the 13th-19th centuries, the science of aruz was often not studied in separate independent treatises. During this period, works on the science of aruz appeared within the framework of other philological sciences, in the margins of copies of works by theorists of ancient times, in explanatory dictionaries

and works created in the spirit of an encyclopedia that briefly covered several sciences. For example, “Mi’raj ul-aruz” was created in the form of a treatise as part of the dictionary “Ghiyos ul-lugat”, while “Muntakhab ul-aruz” was written by an unknown author in the margins of one of the copies of the work dedicated to the commentary on “Nisab us-sibyon” by Abunasr Farahi. The work “Risalai rubaiy”, which was small and concise in terms of size, was also created as an addition to another work, just like “Muntakhab ul-aruz” [2].

**METHODS.** Although “Muntakhab ul-aruz” (“A Selection on the Science of Aruz”) was written in the 19th century, it remained unknown to scholars until the early decades of the 21st century. The renowned literary critic Urvatullo Toirov played a vital role in translating and publishing the text in the Cyrillic script, a contribution that cannot be overstated [3].

In 2007, Toirov brought together “Muntakhab ul-aruz” with two other theoretical texts “Risolai rubaiy” and “E’jozi Khusraviy” and published them as a single collection. Later, in 2015, he included a concise version of the treatise in his work “Kitobhoi ta’limii adabi” (“Literary Textbooks”), presenting it alongside over twenty other sources related to poetic science and providing a comprehensive introduction for readers. A particularly noteworthy aspect of Toirov’s contribution is the commentary section he compiled for the treatise. In this section, he not only addressed and corrected various errors made by the original author but also applied his own scholarly and critical insights. As such, the commentary offers a valuable perspective on both the treatise itself and Toirov’s approach as a literary scholar [4].

Since the treatise “Muntakhab ul-aruz” was only discovered in recent decades and has not yet been thoroughly examined by literary scholars, assessing its scientific, theoretical, and educational value within the context of 18th to 19th-century Aruz studies remains a pressing issue in contemporary literary research. Exploring the author’s perspective and approach to classical Aruz plays a crucial role in identifying the developmental principles of Aruz scholarship during that era. For this study, we have chosen to rely on the earliest complete edition of the treatise “Muntakhab ul-aruz”, “Risolai rubaiy” and “E’jozi Khusraviy” edited by Urvatullo Toirov and published in Dushanbe by Humo in 2007 (p.88), as our primary source [5].

This article employs comparative-typological, comparative-historical, and statistical analysis methods to determine the treatise’s date of composition, identify its author, compare it with other classical Aruz treatises, and highlight both its similarities and unique features. These methods also help in formulating new perspectives on how the treatise contributes to modern poetic theory [6].

**DISCUSSION AND RESULTS.** One of the notable works in the field of Aruz (the science of poetic meter) that holds both scientific and educational value is the treatise “Muntakhab ul-aruz”. Unfortunately, this 19th-century work has long been overlooked by scholars. As suggested by its title, “Muntakhab ul-aruz” is a compilation of carefully selected material on the science of Aruz. In this treatise, the author systematically presents the subject from beginning to end, giving it an instructional quality that made it a valuable resource for students of that time. In the introduction, the author states the purpose behind the work and the context of its creation: “...it was compiled by selecting from books and writings of scholars of the science of Aruz for the benefit and enjoyment of students of knowledge” [7].

From this, it becomes clear that the content of “Muntakhab ul-aruz” was drawn from a wide array of earlier texts and teachings by both classical and contemporary masters in the field. The title itself reinforces this idea, implying that the treatise presents selected themes and elements related to Aruz. As readers go through the treatise, it becomes evident that the author drew upon a range of influential sources such as Shams Qais Razi’s “Al-mu’jam”, Abdurrahman Jami’s “Risalai aruz”, Sayfi Bukhari’s “Aruzi Sayfi”, Khoja Hasan Nisari’s “Chahor Gulzar” and Muhammad Ghiyosiddin’s “Mi’raj ul-aruz” among others [8].

The treatise is organized into an introduction and four concise chapters. The introduction outlines the literal and technical meanings of poetry, acknowledges Khalil ibn Ahmad as the founder of the science of Aruz, and provides basic concepts such as the bayt (verse) and fundamental components of Aruz meter [9].

**Chapter one** discusses the core structures of Aruz and the nineteen bahrs (metrical patterns).

**Chapter two** explains specific bahrs of Arabic poetry: Tawil, Madid, Basit, Wafir and Kamil as well as those unique to Persian-Tajik poetry like Qarib, Mushakil, and Jadid. It also examines eleven bahrs shared by both traditions, such as Hazaj, Ramal, Rajaz, and others, and analyzes patterns formed by repeating one or two rukns (metrical units), along with the concept of salim rukn (the unmodified metrical unit).

**Chapter three** focuses on identifying the meter of poetic lines based on rukn and their variations.

**Chapter four** covers the metrical circles and seas introduced by Khalil ibn Ahmad and expanded upon by his followers.

The authorship and exact date of “Muntakhab ul-aruz” remain unknown. However, its history is often linked with the educational work “Nisab us-sibyon” by Abunasr Farahi. Literary critic Urvatullo Toirov notes that a concise version of “Muntakhab ul-aruz” appears appended to the end of “Nisab us-sibyon”. The following passage appears in that text: “It is no secret that “Nisab us-sibyon” is essential and beneficial for beginners and all readers... This treatise was added during the editing phase, as its content pertains to the science of Aruz” [10].

From this, Toirov inferred that Muntakhab ul-aruz was likely inserted into the text of “Nisab us-sibyon” later on by editors or copyists [11].

Another respected Tajik literary scholar, Misbohiddin Narzikul in his academic work “Adabiyotshinosii forsi-tajiki dar asrhoi XIII–XIV” (“Persian-Tajik Literary Studies in the 13th–14th Centuries”), proposed a similar theory: that the treatise either originated with the author of “Nisab us-sibyon” or was appended to it at a later date by scribes [12].

Given the challenging Arabic vocabulary in “Nisab us-sibyon” many scholars throughout the centuries wrote commentaries to help readers understand it. One such commentary was written by Mawlana Nizamiddin, the son of the well-known 15th-century thinker Husayn Va'iz Kashifi. Tajik scholar Saidamir Aminov, in his introduction to “Nisab us-sibyon”, confirms this with the following note: “In the 16th century, Mawlana Nizamiddin, son of Mawlana Husayn Voiz Kashifi, authored a commentary on “Nisab us-sibyon”. Others continued this tradition afterward” [13].

At the end of “Muntakhab ul-aruz”, the author offers some insights that shed light on its inclusion with Nisab us-sibyon, stating: “Let it be known to the esteemed and learned that these interpretations, thoughts, and insights were added to Nisab us-sibyon in the margins of a copy of the commentary written by Mawlana Nizamiddin, son of Mawlana Husayn Al-Voiz Al-Kashifi” [14].

According to this information, “Muntakhab ul-aruz” was added to the commentary “Nisab us-sibyon” compiled by Mawlana Nizamiddin in the 10th century and which has survived to this day. Urvatullo Toirov, in his latest research, concludes that “Muntakhab ul-aruz” was created in the 16th century and its author is Mawlana Nizamiddin [9.18]. The literary critic came to this conclusion taking into account two aspects. According to his first argument, “Muntakhab ul-aruz” contains some poetic examples from the 15th-century aruz treatises (Jami's “Risalai aruz” and Vahid Tabrizi's “Jami'i mukhtasar”). The second basis is the above information about the author of the treatise, in which the name of Mawlana Nizamiddin is mentioned. However, after getting acquainted with the work, it turned out that the literary critic had come to the wrong conclusion about the author and the time of creation of the work “Muntakhab ul-Aruz”. To prove this idea, we can cite two important facts from the work [15].

The first fact is that the treatise also provides information about the meter of the works of some creators, including the avzons of the masnavis of Nasirali Sarhindi, Zuloli Khansari, Bahauddin Amuli, which were mentioned by the author as information during his research on the bahrs and their net meters. These writers created in the 16th century. Also, the ghazals of Urfi Shirazi and Nasirali Sarhindi are used as examples for comparing different meters, which proves that “Muntakhab ul-Aruz” was not created in the 16th century and does not belong to the pen of Mawlana Nizamuddin.

The second fact is that in the process of researching the sources of the treatise “Muntakhab ul-aruz”, it became clear that the author of this treatise referred to “Mi’raj ul-aruz” many times. As a result of comparisons, it was concluded that the main source of the treatise “Muntakhab ul-aruz” was the treatise “Mi’raj ul-aruz” by Muhammad Ghiyosiddin. If we look at the period of creation of this work, it becomes clear that “Muntakhab ul-aruz” was created by an unknown author after the creation of the work of Muhammad Ghiyosiddin and was added to a copy of the commentary on “Nisab us-sibyon” by Mawlana Nizamuddin.

**CONCLUSION.** Thus, “Muntakhab ul-aruz” was created by an unknown author in the second half of the 19th century. Its author is still unclear, and an analysis of some views showed that literary scholars have come to erroneous conclusions about the period of its creation and author. The article sheds light on the period of the creation of the work. The views of other literary scholars about its author were refuted with scientific grounds.

“Muntakhab ul-aruz” is a treatise that combines the issues of the science of aruz in a certain order and chronology, and the author set himself the goal of creating an important software tool for students of this science, created in a concise and simple language. The advantage of this treatise in studying the science of aruz of the 16th-19th centuries is that the language and methodology of teaching the science of aruz are simplified to a certain extent. The author, relying on the treatise “Chahor Gulzar” and, more specifically, the treatise “Me’raj ul-aruz” created in these centuries in the teaching of the science of dreams, created a very important source for the science of dreams of the 20th-21st centuries.

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