

SOME COMMENTS ABOUT THE LIFE AND WORK OF OJIZ

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Abstract: Xudoybergan Akhund who is the son of Nizamiddin, who gained a place in the hearts of the people with his justice, “truthfulness” and poetic talent, lived and worked in Ojiz Khwarazm, under Muhammad Rahim Khan Feruz II. Information on the life and work of Ojiz was given on the basis of notes in the tarzkiras of Bobojan Tarroh – Xodim’s “Khwarezm poet and nawazanda”, Hasanmurod Laffasi’s “Tazkirai shuaro”, Ahmad Tabibi’s “Majmuat ush-shuaroyi payravi Feruzshahiy”.

The article covers the life and work of Ojiz, his career as an official, and manuscripts in which his poems were copied.

Ojiz’s life and literary heritage were studied in the aspect of textual and resource studies.

Keywords: Ojiz, manuscripts, tazkira, g’azal, muxammas, musabba’, taxmis.

At the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, the literary environment of Khorezm became a distinctive period marked by the development and refinement of art, literature, translation, and poetry, bringing together many talented individuals. Khan Muhammad Rahim Khan II, also known as Feruz, was not only a sophisticated poet but also a musicologist. Under Feruz's decree, a circle of palace poets was established, as described in Ahmad Tabibiy's "Majmuat ush-shuaroyi payravi Feruzshohiy." This tazkira provides information about 33 poets of that era. Among them, ranked 16th, we find references to the personality and works of the poet Ojiz, along with examples of his creativity.

“So’zi ham o’zi mo’tamad” Ojiz was born in the village of Niyozmat Arbob (also known as Niyoz Muhammad Arbob) near Urgench. In *Majmuat ush-shuaro*, his birthplace is mentioned in the following verse: *“Ki asli makoni oning Urganch”*.

There are no specific references to the year of Ojiz's birth in the sources, but regarding his death, Bobojon Tarroh states that he "passed away at the age of 60 to 70" (*Bobojon Tarroh-Khodim. Khorezm Poets and Musicians. – Tashkent: Tafakkur Qanoti, 2011. – p. 110*). In his tazkira, Laffasiy notes that the poet lived for 82 years and indicates 1919 as the year of his death (*Laffasiy, Hasanmurad.*

Tazkirai Shuaro [Prepared by Bobojonov P.] – Urgench: Khorezm, 1992. – p. 92). Based on this information, it can be estimated that Ojiz was born between 1837 and 1845. These tazkiras also include thoughtful remarks regarding the poet's burial site. For example, in *Tazkirayi Shuaro*, it is mentioned that "his disciples buried him in the "qorixona" (A room where the Qur'an is recited) he built himself within the fortress of Urgench" (*Laffasiy, Hasanmurad. Tazkirai Shuaro* [Prepared by Bobojonov P.] – Urgench: Khorezm, 1992. – p. 92). In *Khorezm Poets and Musicians*, the following information is recorded: "... shoir Xudoybergan oxun Urganch rayon, Niyozmat arbob qavmida tug'ilishi munosabati bila shu qishloqdog'i qabriston Shovaladdin xo'ja qabristonida qo'yilg'on". However, it is important to note that the opinions presented in these tazkiras are speculative and open to interpretation.

In Bobojon Tarroh's *Khorezm Musicians*, published in 1994 (*Bobojon Tarroh-Khodim. Khorezm Musicians*. – Tashkent: Gafur Ghulam Literature and Art Publishing House, 1994. – p. 59), it is stated that the literary pseudonym of Khudoybergan Akhund was "Ojiz," and his father's name was Nizomiddin. The poet is said to have chosen the pen name "Ojiz" (meaning "helpless") because he was blind in one eye (*Bobojon Tarroh-Khodim. Khorezm Musicians*. – Tashkent: Gafur Ghulam Literature and Art Publishing House, 1994. – p. 59). In the 2011 edition of the work, it is mentioned that the poet's father was referred to as "Nizom Mulla" (*Bobojon Tarroh-Khodim. Khorezm Poets and Musicians*. – Tashkent: Tafakkur Qanoti, 2011. – p. 103). Additionally, it is noted that the pseudonym "Ojiz" was chosen by the poet himself and later accepted by Shah Feruz (*Bobojon Tarroh-Khodim. Khorezm Poets and Musicians*. – Tashkent: Tafakkur Qanoti, 2011. – p. 103). Both editions of the work agree that Ojiz originated from a religious family background. Ojiz is described as "a tall man with a full beard, slightly pockmarked face, eloquent speech, and a generous nature" (*Bobojon Tarroh-Khodim. Khorezm Musicians*. – Tashkent: Gafur Ghulam Literature and Art Publishing House, 1994. – p. 60). Information about the poet's biography is presented more precisely in Bobojon Tarroh's tazkira compared to the notes in Laffasiy's tazkira.

*Edi Ojiz ul mufti-yu ham faqih,
Ki yo'q yaxshilig'da anga hech shabih,*

- is stated in Tabibiy's tazkira. Indeed, Ojiz was not only a knowledgeable person but also someone who practiced what he preached. This is evidenced by the real-life events concerning Khudoybergan Akhund mentioned in Khodim's tazkira. During the reign of Isfandiyar Khan, his supporters accused Nazir



Sholikorov and Polvon Khoji, members of the "Dom Sivet" [from Russian "Dom Sovet" – council house], of denying Sharia. The accusers brought the case to Khudoybergan Akhund, also known as Ojiz, who at that time served as a judge.

When the judge confronted the accused, saying, "Nazirboy, Khoji Bobo, you have denied Sharia," they responded, "We did not deny Sharia; we stated that its rulings are no longer enforced." Khudoybergan Akhund ruled in favor of the accused, asserting, "They did not say Sharia does not exist." He dismissed the accusations and provided a fair resolution to both parties.

This incident illustrates that Khudoybergan Akhund maintained excellent relations with the public during his tenure as a judge. Had he not been a just and fair individual, he could have heeded Isfandiyar Khan's supporters and declared Nazir and Polvon Khoji guilty. Instead, he upheld justice, demonstrating his integrity and truthfulness (*Bobojon Tarroh-Khodim. Khorezm Poets and Musicians.* – Tashkent: Tafakkur Qahoti, 2011. – p. 105).

A similar account is recorded in Polvonniyoz Khoji Yusupov's memoirs: "Reflect on your own conscience and fairness—do you think I would say there is no Sharia?" I said. At that time, Chief Judge Khudoybergan Akhund replied, "We do not believe you would say Sharia does not exist," thereby defending the accused (*Polvonniyoz Khoji Yusupov. Youth Movement of Khiva.* [Online] Available at: [<https://kh-davron.uz>]).

"Ojiz was a humble, kind-hearted, and noble individual. A poet whose motto was benevolence, he strived to help others in every way possible and sought to uplift spirits through his poetry. Perhaps for this reason, Tabibiy described him as unparalleled in his kindness" (*Matkarimova S. (2007). Tabibiy – Tazkiranavis.* – p. 91. *Philological Sciences Candidate Dissertation. Tashkent*).

Ojiz graduated from an old village school and one of the madrasas in Khiva. After completing his studies, he worked as an *akhund* (religious scholar) at a madrasa. Having trained numerous students, he was eventually promoted to the positions of *mufti* and later *qozikalon* (chief judge). Bobojon Tarroh noted, "His scholarly level can be described as first-rate." It is mentioned that Ojiz was well-versed in Persian-Tajik and Arabic languages, though there are claims that he "could not write" (*Bobojon Tarroh-Khodim. Khorezm Musicians.* – Tashkent: Gafur Ghulam Literature and Art Publishing House, 1994. – p. 104).

In our view, Ojiz, having mastered such a wealth of knowledge, was capable of writing but was not a calligrapher and did not practice calligraphy. This explains why there are no autograph versions of his divans. Ojiz dictated his poems to his students, who could write, while he focused on madrasa teaching.

Khudoybergan Ojiz enjoyed gathering Khorezm scholars for intellectual discussions. However, it is noted that he was unfamiliar with the science of music or the playing of musical instruments.

When discussing Ojiz's poetic mastery, the following couplet is enough to remember:

Aruz-u qavofi maoniy ango,

Erur o'ylakim, abjad-u ibtido [Uzbekistan Academy of Sciences, Institute of Literature Manuscripts Fund, inv. № 1152.]

When considering Tabibiy's criteria for evaluating poets—such as the artistic level of the creator, their knowledge of rhyme, and their understanding of poetic and semantic subtleties—it becomes evident that this description significantly elevates the status of the poet Ojiz.

In conclusion, the life and works of Khudoybergan Akhund have not been studied in depth before. This article is the first to examine his biography within a monographic framework.

The study of Ojiz's life and creative activities from the perspectives of textual criticism, literary source studies, and literary criticism remains an important task today. Indeed, it is a source of pride for the Uzbek people to know and celebrate their great scholar-poets.

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