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## The Evolution Of The Art Of Calligraphy And Its Representation In 16th-Century Tazkiras

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### ABSTRACT

This article analyzes the historical development stages of the art of calligraphy (kitobat) and its manifestation in 16th-century Central Asian, particularly Uzbek, tazkira (biographical anthology) literature. Initially emerging as a form of writing, the art of calligraphy gradually evolved through distinct historical phases to become a pinnacle of artistic and literary expression. In 16th-century tazkiras, the poetics of calligraphy were vividly reflected through decorative and visual elements within poetic compositions. Using the examples of Hasanxoja Nisoriy's "Muzakkiri ahbob" and Mutribiy Samarqandi's "Tazkirat ush-shuaro", the article explores the literary-aesthetic value of calligraphy and highlights significant insights into the development of written culture and the art of manuscript illumination. The study reveals the role and importance of calligraphy in classical Uzbek literature and its contribution to the shaping of literary and aesthetic thought.

**KEYWORDS:** Calligraphic art, evolution, tazkira, 16th century, Uzbek literature, manuscript, literary-aesthetic perspectives, Hasanxoja Nisoriy, Mutribiy Samarqandiy.

### INTRODUCTION

Calligraphic art is one of the oldest and most significant branches of artistic expression, whose development is manifested through written traditions, aesthetic views, and cultural thought. In Eastern countries, particularly in the Central Asian region, calligraphic art is distinguished by its unique forms and directions. The 16th century marks an important stage in this process. During this period, calligraphy developed not only as a writing technique but also as a means of expressing literary and artistic-aesthetic values. The tazkiras of this era — works reflecting the lives and creative outputs of poets and writers — serve as invaluable sources for studying the advancement of calligraphic art and its role in classical Uzbek literature.

This article is dedicated to the gradual development of calligraphic art, its manifestation in 16th-century Uzbek tazkiras, and the important aspects related to literary-aesthetic perspectives within these works. Through tazkiras, not only the artistic form of calligraphy but also the creative approaches of scribes, stylistic features of manuscripts, and cultural contexts are studied. In Mutribiy's "Tazkirat ush-shuaro", for example, the poet Hasanxoja Nisoriy's work is illustrated with the image of a "mutayyir-qush" (a specific bird motif) within a qasida (ode), and elsewhere

the al-mushajjar qasida is presented in the form of a tree: “Like a true tree, firmly rooted underground, its branches spread wide in the sky” (p. 382).

Thus, the article highlights the unique position and gradual development of calligraphic art within the 16th-century literary environment of classical Uzbek literature.

Calligraphy as an art form dates back to the earliest periods of human literature. Writing and ornamentation were also used on gravestones, exemplified by the inscriptions of Bilga Khagan, Tonyukuk, and Kul Tigin. In the 16th century, calligraphy experienced significant development. During this era, scientific centers such as Samarkand and Bukhara witnessed the emergence of aesthetic and artistic forms of writing. Calligraphy was enriched by the personal taste of scribes, their creative approaches, and contemporary styles. The evolution of calligraphic art progressed from being primarily a writing technique and means of communication to becoming an integral part of written culture and literary-aesthetic thought.

Tazkiras, as valuable sources providing information about the lives and works of poets and writers as well as the state of written culture, shed light on the development of calligraphic art. The 16th-century Uzbek tazkiras, especially Hasanxoja Nisoriy’s “Muzakkir ahbob” and Mutribiy Samarqandi’s “Tazkirat ush-shuaro”, clearly demonstrate the role of calligraphy within the literary and cultural environment.

Although Hasanxoja Nisoriy’s tazkira does not explicitly discuss calligraphic art, it evaluates the writing styles and artistic skills of poets through concise and precise descriptions. This indicates the inseparable connection between calligraphy and the personality of the writer and poet.

In contrast, Mutribiy Samarqandiy, in his work “Tazkirat ush-shuaro”, provides detailed information about manuscript decorations, page layout, and writing styles. He regards the art of writing as an integral part of a poet’s creative work, presenting manuscript examples and emphasizing their aesthetic and artistic significance. This approach demonstrates that calligraphic art found its full expression in the 16th-century tazkiras.

In tazkiras, calligraphy is viewed as an essential element of a poet’s personality, creativity, and cultural environment. Through the elegance and stylistic features of the writing, one can infer the poet’s artistic taste, spiritual world, and social standing. This forms the basis for appreciating tazkiras not only as historical but also as cultural and aesthetic sources.

Thus, the 16th-century tazkiras serve as an important source for studying the development of calligraphic art. They reveal not only changes in writing styles and decorations but also the evolution of literary-aesthetic perspectives. In this regard, tazkiras hold unparalleled significance in exploring the rich cultural heritage of classical Uzbek literature.

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