



## Archaeological and Artistic Analysis of Shahrokhi's Merajnameh Miniatures

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### Article Information

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**Abstract:** The illustrated manuscripts of Iran in the Islamic period have various cultural, archaeological, social, historical, religious, artistic, and other information, and this information is important for historians, archaeologists, and scientists of various sciences. Kings counted as the main supporters of creating illustrated manuscripts with different topics such as heroic, religious in the Taymurid period. So many books such as Khavaran Nameh, Shahnameh, and Khamseh, were rewritten and illustrated by the same kings in the Taymurid period. Generally, Shahrokhi's Merajnameh is one of the most important illustrated manuscripts in the Taymurid period and this book has almost 58 miniatures with illustrated pages that are written in Turkish, Uighur and Arabic languages. Shahrokhi's Merajnameh has valuable miniatures that indicate us cultural and artistic and historical information about the Taymurid period. One of the main purpose of this article is to introduce the illustrated manuscripts in Merajnameh as one of the study sources in the field of history, art and archeology in the Taymurid period. Archaeological and artistic analysis of the miniatures of this book is another goal of this research. In this research, with fieldwork and library studies, a number of illustrated miniatures of Merajnameh have been studied with descriptive and analytical methods and sometimes with a comparative approach. The result of this research shows the importance of Merajnameh miniatures in the cultural reconstruction of the Taymurid period in Iran.

**Keywords:** Merajnameh, Muhammad (PBUH), Miniatures, Ascension, Taymurid.

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## **1. Introduction**

The Merajnamehs show the stages of Muhammad's ascension to God's court. The word Meraj means night journey and it is also the name of one of the surahs of the Holy Quran. In the first part of Surah Mi'raj, the ascension of the Holy Prophet from Mecca and Masjid al-Haram to Masjid al-Aqsa and Bait al-Maqdis is described. From the 1st century AH / 7th century, the story of the Ascension has been combined with Arab folk stories, theoretical, mystical, literary and Islamic interpretations and belief in the Day of Judgment. Illustrating manuscripts in the Taymurid period became more popular with the support of the rulers of this period. One of these Illustrated manuscripts is Shahrokhi's Illustrated Merajnameh in the National Library of Paris and its 58 miniatures are so important in archeological studies and other sciences. The writings of this book show the attention of the Taymurids to Uyghur script and language, along with Persian and Arabic, and its illustrations show the features of Taymurid painting art.

With the help of the special characteristics of the miniatures of Merajnameh, it is possible to identify the scattered and undated illustrated sheets of the Taymurid period and to reconstruct the architectural and clothing styles of this period. Studying all the miniatures of this important book of the Taymurid period is not possible in this research. The author has only included a number of them for archaeological analysis.

### **Research Methodology**

The research method in this study is descriptive and analytical. In this research, 57 miniatures of Shahrokhi's Merajnameh have been described, but only a few of them have been examined and analyzed artistically and archaeologically. In final stage, we try to attention the importance a number of these illustrated pages of this manuscripts in archeological studies and cultural & artistic reconstruction during the Taymurid period in Iran. In this research, comparative studies are used to express the importance of Merajnameh paintings in Iranian art and culture studies.

### **Research background**

The main version of Shahrokhi's Merajnameh during the Taymurid period maintained by national library in Paris. First, Marie Rozesgai wrote this book again from the main version and brief explanation in French language. Pave Ducourty wrote this book again in English language (2004AD) then translated and published it. Mahnaz Shayesta Fard has translated and published the Shahnameh of Shahrokhi along with its miniatures in a book entitled: "Mirajnameh, the miraculous journey of the prophet" in Persian language in 2006 AD. In this book, there are explanations about the manuscript of Merajnameh, miniatures and the concept of Meraj.

Neda Vakili has published an articles in relation to Ascension from the perspective of ancient mythology in "Comparative Art Studies" magazine) year 11 and autumn and winter in 2022AD. The article entitled "Mystic symbols in the heavenly pictures of Mir Haidar's Marajnameh " based on Quranic verses and Islamic thoughts was published by Mehdi Mohammadzadeh and her colleagues in Elhat Honar magazine in 2019 AD, number 9. Investigating mythological and mystical concepts along with the description of miniatures has been the scientific goal of previous researchers. However, in this research, in addition to the artistic and archaeological analysis of the miniatures of the Shahrokhi manuscript, the author has also discussed the importance of the paintings of this manuscript in the reconstruction of the culture and art of the Taymurid period. Studying and introducing the specific characteristics of the miniatures of this illustrated version in order to know the unknown written works and miniatures of the Taymurid period has been one of the other goals of this research.

### **Introducing the Shahrokhi's Illustrated Merajnameh**

According to the last page, Shahrokhi's Illustrated Marajnameh was written in Uyghur Turkish script and language for Shahrokh Mirza Taymuri in 840 AH/1436 AD. This book has a description in Arabic. This manuscript is one of the most magnificent illustrated manuscripts of the first half of the 9th century AH/15 AD.

Merajnameh consists of two parts: the first part of this book describes the story of the Prophet's ascension, and the second part contains: the book "Tazkrato Oliya" by Farid Adin Attar Niyshaburi. This book was written by Malik Bakhshi in the 9th century AH / 15 AD in Uyghur script and language. Merajnameh has about 265 pages and has miniatures with dimensions of 24 x 34 cm (Rosesgai, 2006: pp. 1-10). Shahrokhi's Merajnameh written from the main version by Marie Razesgai's attempting and later it was translated from French into Farsi by Mrs. Mahnaz Shaistefard and it has 58 miniatures) Akbari. 2009:69 (It is necessary to explain that all the miniatures of Shahrokhi's Mirajnameh in this research work are taken from the book translated into Persian under the title "Mirajnameh, the miraculous journey of the prophet". The first painting in Merajnameh on the title page is made in colors such as: gold, lapis lazuli and other colors (Fig. 1). And the upper part of the title is decorated with four-leaf flowers with a trange frame and Uyghur text. The title of the text is written in Turkish Uyghur language. Below this text, there is a description in Arabic script. Writing the title of this book in Uyghur script and language indicates that during the Taymurid period, the Uyghur script was an official and court script in the Taymurid period and many people were familiar with this script. Uyghur script and language were used to create Manichaean texts at the same time as Sasanian period in Turkes-tan region (Akbari, 2011: 106-120).

### **Archaeological description and analysis of Shahrokhi's Merajnameh miniatures**

There is a picture in Merajnameh and we call it (Fig. 2). it is about Holy Gabriel (One of



Fig. 1: The headline of Merajnameh seen with the title and Uyghur text and tangerine pattern



Fig. 2: Gabriel calling out Muhammad PBUH for his ascension



the four close angels to Holy God) who showed himself to Prophet and called out the Prophet the doors of the seven heavens are open to him and the angels are waiting for his ascension (Adib, 2002:50-60). In this picture, we can see our holy Prophet and something like flames of fire around his head and sounds he is listening to Gabriel talking. holy aura seen as flames of fire, it is one the characteristics of painting art in the Taymurid period and Patriarchs and Seljuk periods this kind of Halo seen as circle of light around heads of holy individuals. The text of this painting and the lower & upper parts of Rectangular box, something written in Turkish and Arabic languages also from the decorative motifs in miniatures can be used in artistic and archeological studies. In this painting, we can see Architectural decorations which indicated well as well as the use of mosaic tiles with slimy patterns and designing likely the artist inspired by Tile decorations of the Taymurid period. and a sample of this Mosaic and hexagonal tiles can be seen in current buildings and structures left from the Taymurid period.

Third painting in Merajnameh is about our holy Prophet riding on a shiny in the road of from Mecca to Jerusalem (Fig. 3). In this miniatures, we see the azure sky with golden stars and angels with royal crowns in this picture and some of them are without hat. Somethings different which separate the pictures of this book from other pictures of manuscripts before Patriarchs and Seljuk periods, it is about Golden tail clouds in gilding and people in two-layer dresses with long sleeves dress from down and short sleeves dress from up.

When Holy Muhammad PBUH, was on the way to Jerusalem he stopped around at Mount Sina. During on the way to Jerusalem, Muhammad (PBUH) stopped near to Mount Sina, it was a place called Hebron where the place of Ibrahim's tomb and the birthplace of Jesus. In each of these places the Prophet prayed as two rakats and after praying, he reached to holy place in Jerusalem (Fig. 4): It is about this event and Muhammad (PBUH) attendance in Al-Aqsa Mosque. this is another painting in Merajnameh. In picture (4) our Holy Prophet is in jade color dress and the aura around his holy head is higher than his height. but in the architecture of this holy place you can see, some beautiful gable arches and Mosaic tile decorations. The architecture and decoration methods counted as one the characteristics of the architecture in the Taymurid period (Akbari, 2021:188). In fact, as we aforementioned above, these particular methods in architecting belong to the Taymurid period (pirniya, 2008:98-105, Tahmasebizave, 2024).



Fig. 3: holy Prophet with aura around his head between angels for the beginning of his Ascension



Fig. 4: Holy Prophet is in Al-Aqsa Mosque. this place decorated by Gable arches and mosaic tiles (2.4) shows Ghayathieh Khargerd School (1.3) with Gable arches and mosaic tiles (Akbari, 2021:188).

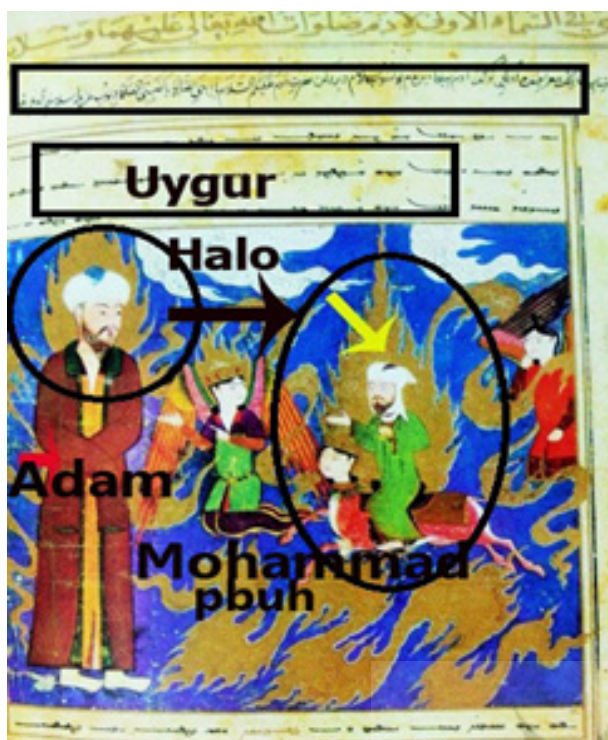


Fig. 5: The Prophet meets Hazrat Adam into the first heaven

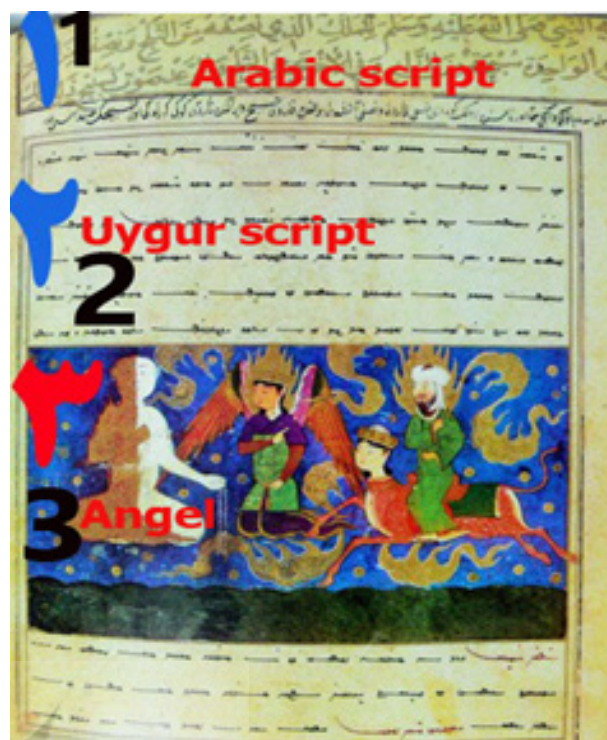


Fig. 6: Prophet and his meeting with N0.3: snowy and fire angel No.2: describing with Arabic script and No.1: Uyghur script

It is about one of the miniatures of Merajnameh which shows the Prophet enters the first turquoise sky under the guidance of Gabriel (Fig.5). In this sky, the Prophet meets Adam Almighty and we can see white clouds with long tail in the blue sky that it is obvious in the background of this picture. In this painting we can see our Holy Prophet who has a hat like turban on his head and obviously, his hands are also hidden in his sleeves unlike Adam Almighty. In this miniature, Adam Almighty is depicted in a larger dimension than the Prophet, which can be considered as the high position of Adam Almighty in Islamic thinking.

In fact, before leaving the first heaven, (The tenth image of the Merajnameh) the holy Muhammad saw an angel (half of it was snow and half of it was fire) and he had a snowy rosary in his left hand and iron rosary in this right hand (Fig. 6). In eleventh image of Prophet's Merajnameh indicated that in the second sky Muhammad (PBUH) was riding on a shiny horse in front of Gabriel and Gabriel had a Royal crown in his head and stood between other angels. In this page, its scripts and language is Arabic and Turkish which they are Descriptor the painting of this page. The twelfth miniature of Merajnameh is about Prophet and his meeting with the angel of death means Azrael. This great angel his feet was into the ground and his head was the in the highest place of the sky and was sitting on the gold bed. Based on this painting of the page, he had a feather-like and golden head dress.

And in 13th picture of Merajnameh shows an angel with Colorful wings it is almost 32 colorful wings and this angel could meet holy Prophet by helping Gabriel and Muhammad (PBUH) was riding on a shiny in this picture. According to the text, the angel in this image is a worshipper who has seventy heads and each of his head has seventy tongues and each tongue also worships God in seventy ways. On the lower part of this image, there is a meeting between holy Prophet and Hazrat Zakaria and Yahya (peace be upon them) and both welcome to Muhammad (PBUH)



for entering to the second heaven. the prophet moves towards the third heaven on a shiny horse by leading Great Gabriel and during the way he reached to a white sea that is not obvious in the image. The Fifteenth images of the Merajnameh, is about welcoming winged angels to Holy Prophet in the presence of Gabriel. the figures of angels in this painting is just like other paintings in this manuscript which mean the angels are in short sleeves vest on the long sleeves dress. This type of body covering in the miniatures, counted as It is one of the painting characteristics of Taymurid period. The sixteen and seventeen paintings of the Merajnameh is about meeting between Muhammad (PBUH) and Hazrat Yaqub , Hazrat Joseph, Hazrat Suleiman and Hazrat Dawood. In both images seen a leader angel with Colorful wings and fiery feet and Hazrat Yaqub's face with Hazrat Suleiman's face are so younger than Hazrat Dawood's face and Hazrat Joseph's face. In these images, Arabic script and Turkish language are Descriptor of the painting scene. In 18th image of the Merajnameh is about Prophet meeting with the seventy-headed angel (based on picture 7) this meeting happened for Muhammad (PBUH) before leaving the third sky (Fig.7). although in Turkish text said something about seventy-headed angel but the angel in the picture has forty-five heads. lower part of this picture, three angels who have three cups in their hands.

In 19th image of the Merajnameh is in the field of Holy Prophet and his entrance to the fourth heavens. In this scene, the angels are welcoming the Prophet with bare heads and hands on their chests in front of the door of heaven. we should recall that here baring heads of angels means symbolic. Because, it was so common between some eastern tribes such as the Uighurs because one of their customs to remove the hat when entering the presence of the Sultan to show respect.

After the 19th image of the Merajnameh, some parts of manuscripts removed for some reasons thus we cannot see the Prophet and his entrance to the fourth heavens. Some reasons for



Fig. 7: Holy Prophet meeting with seventy-headed angel

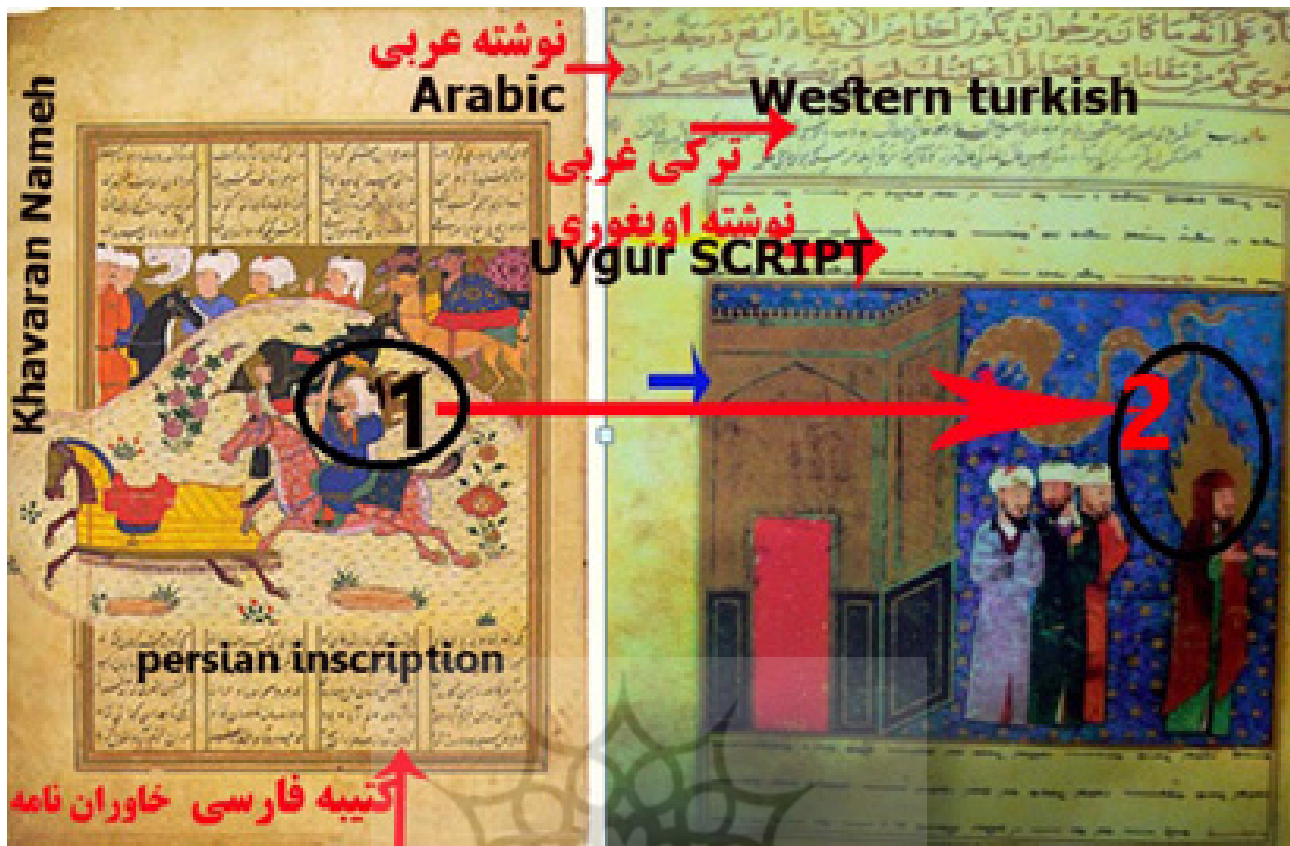


Figure 8: an image of Merajnameh and the subject in this picture is about meeting between Muhammad PBUH and Hazrat Moses and in left hand it is an image of Khavaran Nameh of ibn Hossam Khosfi (seen a kind of similarity between these holy auras in Two illustrated works 1.2(Khosfi,2002:51).

this claim is about final word on page 22 that it is not fit with next word but obviously in this between a page lost. the 20th scene of the Merajnameh painting including two parts: part one is about Muhammad (PBUH) meeting with other Prophets such as Hazrat Ishmael, Hazrat Isaac, Hazrat Aaron and Hazrat Lot .part two in the bottom section of the page is about Muhammad (PBUH) on the shore of the fiery sea. In part one, Muhammad (PBUH) with leading Gabriel and riding on the shiny horse enters to the fifth heaven where it is full of gold and he meets with 4 other Prophets who they played so important role for leading human being. In this image, some Prophets such as Hazrat Ismail and Hazrat Ishaq seen beside Hazrat Harun and Hazrat Lot and something in this picture is so considerable and it is about other Prophets who are greater than Hazrat Ismail and Hazrat Harun and their figures shown which white beard and even older and Hazrat Ishaq & Hazrat Lot shown with barley bread and younger. in this image other Prophet called Muhammad (PBUH) and they say to him "Muhammad, whatever you ask from God tonight will give you, so ask Him for salvation and the salvation of those who have converted to your religion" "The most Prophet's journey in the Merajnameh, the move of his shiny horse means high sky and there is nothing under the feet of shiny horse in the heaven but the roof of the sky is full of clouds and golden stars. In the thoughts of eastern people such as the Turkic people, usually horses are able to fly and can fly toward the sky. In the Chinese civilization, there were spiritual journeys before the Christian period and people riding on wind and Dragon could continue to their journeys in to the skies. Based on Mithraism thoughts which was one of the most important religion before Christian in Iran and Rome, the height of kindness between human and holy God done by 4 white horses and the image of sixth heaven is observable in 21th image of the Merajnameh. what we can see in this picture is holy Prophet riding on shiny horse

to enter sixth heaven and the guardian angels are also welcoming him. In 23th miniatures of the Merajnameh was about in continuing the holy Prophet's journey to the depths of the sky. In 23th image of the Merajnameh is another scene of holy Prophet and his meeting with Hazrat Moses and while aura seen around his head, he raised his hands for giving thanks to God. In aforementioned above picture, there is no aura around the head of Prophet Moses. based on narratives in this field, Prophet Moses felt sorry after the mission of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Because he thought that he reached to the highest position. but soon he understood that Muhammad (PBUH) and his position was higher than him. In the picture 23 you can see this scene of Moses' impression of Muhammad (PBUH) mission as well. of course, In this time, Holy God said to Hazrat Moses about Muhammad (PBUH) and his position. because Muhammad (PBUH) spoke face to face with God and also from Holy God mentioned to Hazrat Moses about Muhammad (PBUH) and how he could be saved from the hands of his enemies and to Moses is ordered to be thankful for these divine blessings (Gray, 1990:201). In the picture (Fig. 8) , if you see it well, there is building next to Prophet Moses, with gabled arches similar to the arches used in the Timurid period. this is an example of making arch and different methods in it in Timurid. same image shows, the aura around the Prophet's head and is so similar to aura around Hazrat Ali's head in the illustrated version of Khavaran Namah in the Timurid period (Khosfi, 2002:51).

The 24th painting of Merajnameh is allocated to Muhammad PBUH meeting with other Prophets such as Hazrat Idris and Hazrat Noah. as you can see in this picture all three Prophets have 8 halos around their heads in the form of flames. In the twenty-fifth an image of Merajnameh, which shows the presence of the Prophet in the seventh heaven, which is full of light. what we can see in the twenty-sixth image of Merajnameh, is about Prophet's meeting with Hazrat Ibrahim. In this scene, Hazrat Muhammad's hands on the chest and riding on his shiny horse is introduced to Hazrat Ibrahim by a winged angel, and Hazrat Ibrahim in this picture shown as an old man with a white beard. Obviously in this picture, Hazrat Ibrahim is sitting on the pulpit made of emerald green material and this pulpit has a special plants and geometric decoration. these pulpits are decorated by Quranic verses which counted as the most important characteristics of pulpits in Islamic era. In the back part of the pulpit, there is a space of the mosque with mosaic tile decorations in blue and yellow colors and slimy designs. These decorations are similar to the decorations of the Taymurid diaphoretic tiles of Gohar Shad Mosque in Mashhad and also the tomb of Sharin Beg Agha in Samarkand and artist in his own paintings inspired by Timurid architectural decorations (Akbari, 2021:174).

Next picture is about Prophet's Merajnameh and when he found himself in front of two groups of Muslims. one group are in white robes and second group is in black & white robes and only Muslims in white robes are allowed to enter the holy place for praying. and men in second group who are standing out of the palace are so astonished. based on Islamic ideas, Hazrat Muhammad's dress is a green robe and there are different interpretations for this color because it is the symbol of peace and salvation. currently, the Prophet's children, who are called Sayyad, are known by wearing green hats. In 28th painting of the Merajnameh shows Prophet who he is above the sea in black color and many winged angels as young girls with bare heads are in the heart of the Black Sea. In this miniature, one of the angels is in front of the Prophet with his hands on his chest and he looks like so big and his feet are on the ground and his head reaches the throne of God. In 29th image of Merajnameh seen Muhammad (PBUH) who is riding on his shiny horse and guided by Gabriel to a place and Muhammad (PBUH) saw an angel with seventy heads and other big angel who was worshipping God in different ways (Fig. 9). then in 30th image of Merajnameh continues with Muhammad (PBUH) meeting with angels close to GOD by





Fig. 9: right hand image is about Muhammad (PBUH) and his meeting with close angel to God in Merajnameh and left hand image is based on A miniature of Khavarannameh of this Hossam Khosfi (Khusfi Birjandi,2002 :81).

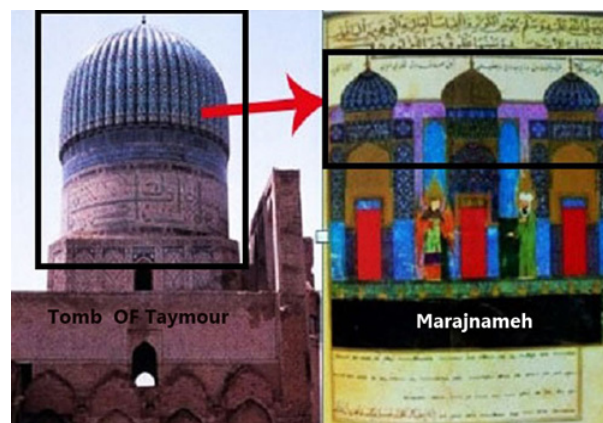


Fig. 10: right hand is about Miniatures in Merajnameh and in left hand is about grooved dome just like Tomb of Amir Taymur Gorkani in Samarkand (manzo,2001: 152).

Gabriel. In picture 9, shows an angel with thousand wings is with other angel with four-heads and his head was combination of human, cow and lion or eagle. what we can see in this image is about the aura around the Prophet's head that is so similar to the aura around the head of Hazrat Ali in the Khavaran Nama illustrated in the Timurid period (Pakbaz.2005:100). It is notable that the idea about composite animals as God or a mediator between God and human, angel and hero was very common belief in the pre-Islam era among different ethnic groups in Iran and outside Iran. these composite creatures such as lamasso , gryphon , sphinx , which shows itself in the art of Achaemenid and Sasanian periods. Of course, in the Islamic period, there is a type of compound creature called harpe , which was thought to be a woman and a bird (Khusfi Birjandi,2002:81).

In 31th image of illustrated page of Merajnameh, there is a place where the Prophet reaches the Sidrat al-Muntaha. In this place, there is a tree with branches and a trunk made of emeralds and pearls, and four rivers flow between there. Based on many narratives in the field of Sidrat al-Muntaha this is the ultimate closeness to God for servants (special human). In 33th painting of this Merajnameh including angles with 3 cups who they provided these cups to the Prophet. In one of these cups, there is some milk, in another one is some wine, and in another honey, the Prophet chose the milk among these three cups and drank it. In this picture, there are three angels with a female face who are sitting in front of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and they provided the cups to him. the dishes or (cups) are so similar to the common Chinese dishes in the Timurid period and Probably, the artist inspired by nature could paint them. in 33th miniatures of the Merajnameh, seen the real size of Gabriel based on the Prophet request, while his head reached heaven and his feet were on the ground. in next picture (34th image) of the Merajnameh, the Prophet is without shiny horse and an angel enters into a luminous space in Throne of God without the presence of his shiny horse and the angel. and in 35th picture of Merajnameh seen something in Arabic and Turkish text. in this part the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) requests from God to reduce the number of daily praying. In this picture, the Prophet is surrounded by a halo of fiery light while he is standing in front of Hazrat Moses. Given of his presence in Divine presence, Hazrat Moses said to Muhammad (PBUH) for asking GOD to reduce the number of daily praying Then Muhammad (pbuh) accepted Hazrat Moses' request to Holy God and Finally after expressing six times his request from God, thus, Holy God reduced the number of praying from fifty times to five days. In picture 36 of the Merajnameh, the Prophet sees beyond the seven

heavens, an infinite space that made of the curtains of light, rubies, hyacinths, pearls and gold and a group of angels who are guards in front of these curtains. The Prophet passed through these seven thousand curtains by helping angels to reach the throne of God which is made of red hyacinth. In 37th image of the Merajnameh shows his entrance behind these curtains where faced him with seven hundred thousand tents on the throne of God. The 38th picture of the Merajnameh shows the presence of Prophet Muhammad while his head is placed on the ground of God's throne. He utters this word on the throne. Greatness and praise belong to God. and in his returning he saw the divine throne held by four angels with complete clarity. In 39th picture of the Merajnameh, another stage of the prophet's ascension begins. Time to leave from the divine throne, the Prophet met Gabriel again. Gabriel spoke about new mission for Prophet and it is about visiting heaven. in this time, Gabriel guides the prophet to the Kausar Pond, where there are three gates of heaven with domes of pearls, rubies and emeralds. what we see in this picture is about, Gabriel who is standing in front of a gate and this is one of the gates of heaven and Gabriel is a leader for the Prophet Muhammad to visit there (Fig. 10). Based on image 10, in front of the Prophet, there is the Kausar Pond and some cups made of gold, silver, emeralds, and pearls and about this painted page it is notable that the existence of domes in this scene, are exactly similar to the onion domes and grooved domes of the Timurid period. a sample of these Domes is like Taymur's tomb in Samarkand (Blair, 2001:55). it is notable that the mosaic tile decorations are widely used inside this holy place and Mosaic tile is one of the most important decorative elements of the buildings in the Taymurid period Given the pre (Manzo, 2001:149). Vious paragraphs, the miniatures of Merajnameh contain cultural information from the Taymurid period in Iran.

In 40th picture of Merajnameh, Gabriel guided Prophet to heaven. and obviously in this picture we can see the heaven where full of plants and rivers flow there. The Prophet with Gabriel and another angel are present in front of heaven. On the head of the gate in heaven two testimonies are written in Kufic script is like the rectangular frame of the Gate of Heaven that decorated with plant and slimy designs similar to the gilding on the covers of books and Qurans in the Islamic period. In the next picture, Muhammad (pbuh) enters heaven riding on a horse guided by Gabriel, he sees young women in gardens full of flowers and blossoming trees. In 42th image of the Merajnameh is about introducing heaven and the fun of nymphs there. in 42th image of the Merajnameh shows the meeting of the Prophet with the first Muslim women in heaven. and in this picture, the Prophet is guided by an angel to a palace where four women are waiting to meet the Prophet. Each of the women wears a special hat, and one of them, who probably has a higher spiritual status, appears in the picture with a royal crown (Akashe, 2001: 193)..This is the last place of heaven where the Prophet visits in the images of the Merajnameh (Fig. 11).

After visiting heavens, Gabriel was leading the Prophet to visit seven levels of hell to understand the conditions of people there. in 45th miniatures of the Merajnameh is about the Prophet who saw the tree of Zakum (based on Surah Safat verses 62) based on narratives about the tree of zakum, this tree is in the depths of hell, whose thorns are like spears and whose fruits are more bitter than poison and in the shape of animals like lions, pigs, elephants, wolves, etc. under this hellish tree seen this tree is cut by Red or blue demons with terrible red eyes, But it will not take long for their bodies to grow again it grows so fast to punish sinner people means People who drink alcohol, commit adultery and other sinful acts. in 46 image of this Merajnameh, is about the punishment of evil-speakers in hell and in this scene, Hazrat Muhammad is riding on a horse next to Gabriel, watching the torment of this person. Uighur and Arabic inscriptions describe the scenes of this painting and in 40th week of the picture, while Muhammad (pbuh)





Fig. 11: Prophet's visiting with the first Muslim Women .Uyghur script in upper part of this image and seen a Flowering bush on the corner of the picture



Figure 12: miniatures of the Merajnameh with this subject: torture of sinner people for eating rights of orphan children and there is a Fiery halo around the heads of the Prophet and angel

is riding on shiny horse, visiting a part of hell where the greedy were thrown into the fire with their naked bodies. In next image of the Merajnameh, the Prophet saw the hypocrites in one of the dark realms of hell and as we see in this illustrated page the Prophet is riding on shiny horse with Gabriel and both are watching the hypocrites who are in the fire and the red devils are hitting them with spears. and next image of this Merajnameh is about the Prophet with Gabriel are watching the punishment of people that pretend to be religious to gain material benefits. In 50th illustrated page of Merajnameh seen the scenes of the torment of Immoral women. what we see in this painting is about immoral women who had illicit relations and they are hanging by their hair on the fire and most of their body parts are naked. In 51th miniatures of the Merajnameh shown scenes of torture of prostitutes and a page of this book show the situation of those who have eaten the right of orphans. In this picture the Prophet visits from hell and based on image 12 there are sinners that devils are pouring poison into their mouths. This poison made of Zakkum (Fig.12) and Uyghur script and language at the top and bottom of the picture describe the scene of the painting. In the upper part of the image, you can see the Turkish text with the Arabic alphabet in low quality, which probably was added to this part in the later era.

In 53th picture of the Merajnameh, seen the torture of adulterous women by a red demon in the presence of the Prophet. In 54th picture of the Merajnameh is about the torture of some people by the black demon who refused to pay zakat. In this painting (Fig. 13) the Prophet is on the shiny horse and Gabriel and the Prophet are watching the scene of torture of sinners in hell. It is notable that this painted page and some other pages (miniatures 53 and 54) don't have Arabic alphabet or Turkish text. Only other text is in Arabic and Uyghur Turkic which they describe the pictures of pages based on the author of this text and due to the lack of Turkish Arabic text in the frame and the low quality of this text than to Arabic & Uyghur text it can describe that this type of text is western Turkish in a period of time. Then, other version from the manuscripts of this Merajnameh prepared in this way. And for this reason, some images of the Merajnameh have no western Turkish text. But it is possible that the Timurid ruler who intend-



ed to donate this manuscript to the Ottoman, Turkoman, other rulers ordered that because the Western Turkish text, which was common in Anatolia and Northwestern of Iran at that time, was added to it along with the Persian language.

In 55 Picture of Merajnameh, the Prophet Muhammad is riding on shiny horse with the guidance of Gabriel visiting the scene of torture of hypocritical and flattering people in hell. in Surah Insan verse 4 and Surah Al-Imran verse 106 Holy GOD said something about the torture of hypocritical and flattering people (Fig.14( .in this page we see that sinners are hanging from their necks while their wrists and feet were tied with chains and thrown into the fire and the red demon with fiery breath is guarding against their freedom(based on image 14) this scene described in Arabic and Uighur scripts.

In 56 illustrated page of the Merajnameh including two parts: the scenes of Torturing and punishment liar (Those who told false testimony and disobey God's commands).In the picture above, the sinners were changed into animals and thrown into the fire. In the picture below, Prophet Muhammad and Gabriel saw the torture of sinners (Fig. 15).

In 57 picture of the Merajnameh, while the Prophet Muhammad was riding on the shiny horse saw a group of people who were punished for Intoxicating liquids by red color demons. In this scene, the demons take a poison made by zogum and they are pouring this poison into sinners' mouths, (Fig.16). The last and fifty-eighth image of the Ascension is dedicated to the torment and torture of the arrogant. In this illustrated page, Prophet Muhammad and Gabriel are watching the scene where the arrogant were thrown into a fiery cage and were bitten and tortured by poisonous creatures such as snakes and scorpions (Surah Nahl verse 23 and Surah Luqman verse 18).

### **Conclusion**

Miniatures of the Merajnameh which including the Prophet's ascension to the seven heavens and his visiting to heaven and hell. Most of the illustrated pages of the Merajnameh are painted based on different descriptions of the life of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in the verses of the Holy Quran.of course, sometimes what influences in it, is the Imaginations of painters and other oral and written stories of people in different periods. one of the main characteristics of these paintings of the Merajnameh is to use some colors such as light and golden blue and also drawing white clouds with tail and this type of characteristic seen in the most illustrated manuscripts during Timurid period. other characteristics of this illustrated book is about its large size and other roles. In fact, the Merajnameh counted as a Masterpieces of Turkish Uighur art. and with having various miniatures can play so important roles in archeological studies during Islamic period. By reviewing the miniature characteristics of this illustrated manuscript, it is possible to access the criteria for identifying other undated manuscripts and paintings of the Timurid period. The sacred aura in the form of flames, various architectural elements, people's clothing, flowering bushes are among the characteristics of Merajnameh miniatures and all of the can help us to identify and introduce other illustrated manuscripts or unknown illustrated manuscripts during Islamic period. The descriptions of all the miniatures of Merajnameh are written in Uyghur Turkish script & language. hence, Arabic script and language are used in the titles of the pictures. Turkish language with the Arabic alphabet and Arabic script are both used in a limited and low-quality way to describe some paintings. Therefore, the low quality of these lines and their inappropriate placement in the composition of the miniature page indicate the possibility that this type of line was added after the completion of this manuscript. Writing the book of Merajnameh in Uyghur Turkish language and script shows the importance of this script



Fig. 13: A miniature sheet of the Merajnameh and torture of people who never pay zakat



Fig.14: Miniatures with the subject of torture hypocrites and flatterers

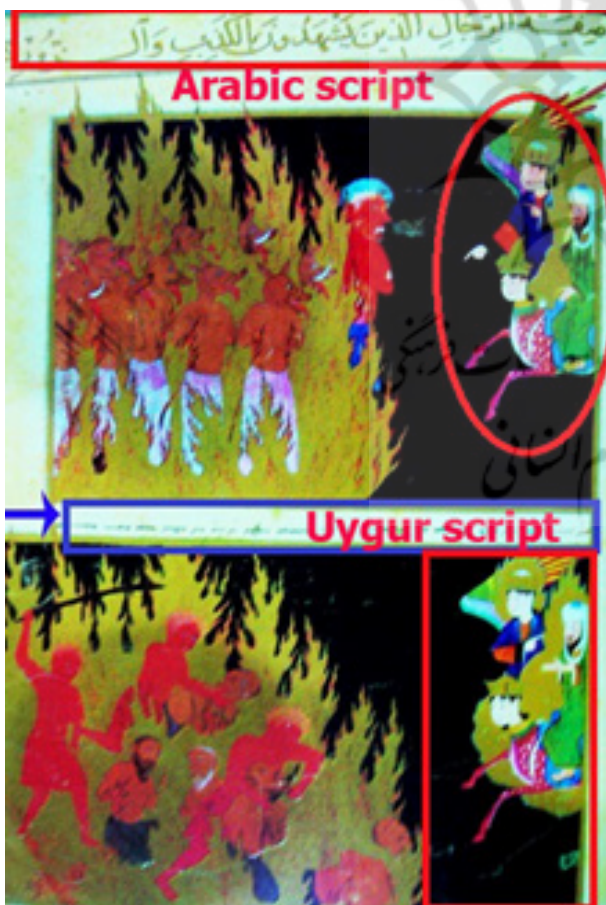


Fig. 15 .Torturing and punishment with false testimony and disobey of Cod commands



Fig. 16: visiting prophet from hell and watching scene of torture of drunkards

and language in the Timurid period, along with Persian and Arabic language and script.

**Conflict of Interest:** The authors declare that they agreed to participate in the present paper and there is no competing interests.

**Authors' Participation:** Taymour Akbari was written and analyzed data.

## Appendix

<sup>1</sup>God bless him and his family )PBUH).

<sup>2</sup>Uyghur Alphabet: The Uyghur alphabet is an alphabet that was used in the 2nd century AD by the people of Central Asia, Turkestan, and especially the Uyghur Turks. Many Buddhist, Manichaeian, Nestorian and Zoroastrian texts as well as non-religious writings such as inscriptions on coins, inscriptions and legal documents are written in this script. Uyghur script was written horizontally and from left to right. The Uyghur script was the official script of the Mongol and Timurid empires.

<sup>3</sup>lamasso: An imaginary creature with a human head and a cow's body

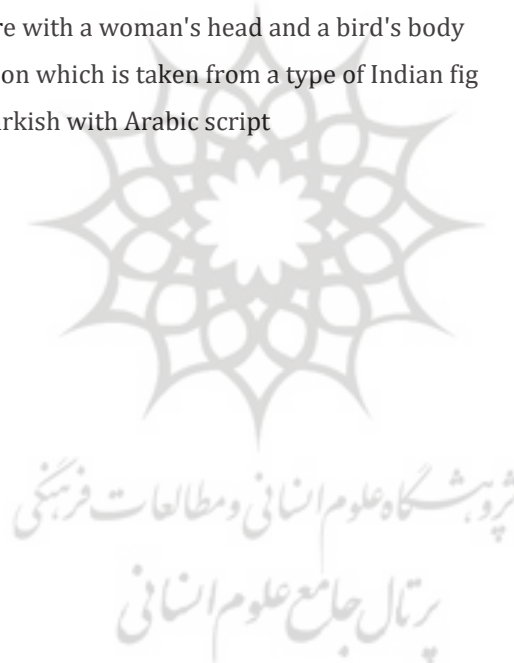
<sup>4</sup>Gryphon: An imaginary creature with the head of an eagle and the body of a lion

<sup>5</sup>sphinx: An imaginary creature with a woman's head and an animal body

<sup>6</sup>Harpy: An imaginary creature with a woman's head and a bird's body

<sup>7</sup>Zogum: means a kind of poison which is taken from a type of Indian fig

<sup>8</sup>western Turkish: Writing Turkish with Arabic script





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