

# About Mirza Sanglakh's Life, Creativity and His Work Called "The Book of the Examination of Scholars"

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**Abstract.** The sources that talk about the life and creativity of the scribe-calligraphers of Azerbaijan, who lived and created in the Middle Ages, are of great importance. Tazkiras have a special place among these sources. In addition to giving information about the life and creativity of the individual persons – poets, writers, saints, murshids, scientists, various artists, etc., according to their themes, the tazkiras are also the carriers of precious information and facts about the historical, social-political, economic, religious-ideological conditions, the science, literature and culture of the relevant period. Tazkiras are the embryos of the textual studies. One of the tazkiras, which talks about the life and creativity of the scribes and calligraphers who lived and created in the Eastern world, including the historical territory of Azerbaijan, is "The Book of the Examination of Scholars" by the 19<sup>th</sup>-century Iranian author Mirza Sanglakh. This work is mainly known as "Tazkiratul-khattatin" – "The tazkira about the calligraphers".

**Keywords:** tazkira; a scribe-calligrapher; written monuments; manuscripts; M.Sanglakh; "The book of the examination of scholars".

## INTRODUCTION

"Tazkira" is an Arabic word (تذكرة), derived from the root word "zikr" (ذكر a remembering, a commemorating) and means information, a notification, a remembrance, a commemoration, a memory, a note, etc. 20<sup>th</sup>-century Iranian scientist and philologist Dr. M. Moin (1918-1971) briefly explains tazkira in his explanatory dictionary. He states that tazkira is an anthology and book containing the biographies of poets and writers [4, p. 1057]. The prominent scholar of Azerbaijan, Aziz Mirahmedov (1920-2002), states in his "Dictionary of the literary terms" that a tazkira is a scientific and literary work that was very common in the Middle Ages in the East, including in Azerbaijan. A.Mirahmedov notes, that these sources, written mainly by the literary and historical scientists, provide information about the prominent literary personalities, events, individual works, and examples of works. The biographical aspects and issues of craftsmanship dominated the tazkira. The tazkiras can be considered a scientific source for the literary history of the Middle Ages [2, p. 168]. A.Mirahmedov also noted the importance of tak-

ing a critical approach to the information in the tazkiras. He also stated that literary studies as a science in Azerbaijan began to emerge in the Middle Ages, and the first works on literary studies were the literary anthologies called tazkira. He added that "the works of travelogue, historical chronicle, games, etc., also have many elements of literary studies; in these works, are given the biographical information about the writers, the quotations from the works, the date of their creation, plot, etc. [3, p. 67]. Let's note that the tazkiras are also considered the primary sources for studying the cultural history of medieval Eastern peoples. The tazkiras can be called the first – elementary encyclopedias. The tazkiras were mainly dedicated to poets and writers in the early periods. Still, later, they included the wider groups in society – the murshids, saints, owners of various sciences and arts, historical figures and others. We remind you that the first tazkira among the Turkic-speaking peoples is the work of the great Uzbek poet Alishir Navai (1441-1501), called "Macalisun-nafais" – "The assemblies of the refined" (1491). The first tazkira of Azerbaijan is the work "Tohfeyi-Sami"

– "Sam's contribution" written by the poet scientist Sam Mirza (1517-1567), the second son of Shah Ismayil Khatai. This tazkira contains information about the Azerbaijani and Persian poets of the XV-XVI centuries. The work is written in Persian. The first tazkira written in Azerbaijani Turkish is "Gulshani-shuara" – "The garden of poets" by the 16<sup>th</sup>-century philologist poet of Azerbaijan Ahdi Baghdadi. In this tazkira, Ahdi Baghdadi gave information about the life and works of many poets of Azerbaijan and Ottoman poets who lived and created in Baghdad in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The philologist of Azerbaijan, the doctor of philological sciences Vusala Musali, in her monograph entitled "The Azerbaijani tazkira history" (2012), for the first time, investigated the stage of Azerbaijani tazkira in the period from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, analysed and studied about the 40 tazkiras of the tazkira authors of Azerbaijan. In her monograph, Vusala Musali showed that 46 tazkira were composed by 41 Azerbaijani authors in the 16<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> centuries and the only work in the tazkira genre in the 21<sup>st</sup> century was written by Shahin Fazil (2006) [6, p. 57]. As it is known from the research conducted by V. Musali, the establishment of tazkiras was the most productive period in the life of the people of Azerbaijan in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The tazkira is one of the genres of the epic type of literature, and the origin of the tazkira is the "tabaqat" that appeared in Arabic literature in the early Middle Ages ("tabaqat" – the layers). In her "The arab literature" textbook on the 5<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> centuries, Azerbaijan's scholar of Oriental studies, prof. Aida Gasimova gave detailed information about the genre of tabaqat, the era of its creation and the authors of the first tabaqats. Prof. Aida Gasimova has shown that Arabic literature has gone through several stages in its development:

1) The Arabic literature during the late antiquity – the Age of Jahiliyyah (Ignorance); 2) The early Islam and the Umayyad period; 3) The Abbasid period. This period itself is divided into several half-periods:

a) A renewal period (This period covers the initial stage of Abbasid rule; 750 – the 3<sup>rd</sup> decade of the 9<sup>th</sup> century); b) The classicism, or the period of return to the traditions (the period from the third decade of the 9<sup>th</sup> century to the end of that century); c) The period of stabilisation of the traditions, or the period of literary synthesis (X-XI centuries); d). During the period of stagnation (XII c. – until the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century); And

from the 19<sup>th</sup> century, modern Arabic literature was born and developed [7, p. 5-10].

The first example of tabaqat was created by Hammad ar-Rawiyya (695-772); he collected the poetries and gave information about poets' lives. A comprehensive philologist, Abu Abdullah ibn Sallam al-Jumahi (756-846) had exceptional merit in creating tabaqats. He had two works of tabaqat about the poets of the Jahiliyyah and Islamic periods. As prof. A. Gasimova stated, it is likely that these two works were later combined, and the word "Tabaqat full ash-shura" was created: a poet of the Jahiliyyat period, a city poet, a lament poet, a Jewish poet, an Islamic period poets. He collected Arabic poetry based on the principle of historicity and grouped poets according to their talents [7, p. 575]. "It was a new direction. He created the history of Arabic literature for the first time, albeit very simply. The path he opened was later developed by philologists such as Ibn Qutayba, Yaqut al-Hamawi ar-Rumi [7, p. 575]. Ibn Qutayba Abu Muhammad Abdullah ibn Muslim al-Dinawari, in his work "The Poetry and Poets", reported the biographies and works of 194 poets who lived and created in four centuries [7, p. 581]. Similarly, Abdullah Ibn al-Mutazz (861-908) had a special merit in developing the tabaqat genre in Arabic literature. His work "Tabaqat al-shuara" is vital [7, p. 584]. As stated by A. Gasimova, during the period of stagnation of the Arabic literature, muntakhabats, dictionaries, tabaqats, etc., multiplying: "That is, in this period, great work is being done in the field of collecting literary examples of previous periods. The activities are carried out to preserve scientific knowledge, preserve literary achievements, collect examples of poetry and prose and pass them on to future generations" [7, p. 1229]. Let's note that tazkira is not a literary term in Arabic literature. Many treatises and tazkiras cover the life and creativity of scribes and calligraphers – 'the living printing presses', who were the most important factors in the creation of written monuments, including the manuscript books in the Eastern world in the Middle Ages. One such tazkiras is "Kitabi-imtahanul-fuzala" – "The book of examination of scholars" by the 19<sup>th</sup> century Iranian author Mirza Sanglakh, which consists of tazkira about the calligraphers. This tazkira is presented as "Tazkiratul-khattatin" in almost all sources – the existing literature, and is generally known as "Tazkiratul-khattatin".

Certainly! Here is the whole text incorporating both the methods and materials for conducting

research on the genre of tazkira in Arabic and Persian literature.

## METHODS

The research will commence with an extensive literature review to gather information on the history, significance, and evolution of the genre of tazkira in Arabic and Persian literature. The focus will be on works by scholars such as M. Moin, A. Mirambedov, A. Nabai, and V. Musali to understand the nuances of tazkira and its impact on literature.

Relevant texts and scholarly articles discussing tazkira will be collected. Special attention will be given to works analysed in the introduction, such as "Macalisun-nafais" by A.Navai, "Tohfeyi-Sami" by Sam Mirza, and "Gulshani-shuara" by A.Baghdadi. Additionally, the study by V.Musali will be considered for further insights.

The collected data will be systematically analysed to extract information regarding the characteristics, content, and historical context of tazkiras. This analysis will focus on biographical details, literary analysis, and the cultural significance of the works discussed in the literature.

A comparative analysis of various tazkiras mentioned in the introduction will be conducted to identify common themes, differences, and genre evolution over time. By synthesising this information, a comprehensive understanding of the tazkira tradition will be achieved.

Original tazkiras like "Macalisun-nafais," "Tohfeyi-Sami," and "Gulshani-shuara" will be consulted to extract firsthand information about the poets and writers mentioned in the introduction. These primary sources will provide valuable insights into the lives and works of the individuals documented in tazkiras.

Scholarly works, research papers, and monographs on tazkira literature, including V.Musali's "The Azerbaijani Tazkira History" and other relevant academic publications, will be secondary sources for a deeper analysis. These sources will offer critical perspectives and interpretations to enrich the research findings. Access to online databases, academic libraries, and archives will be crucial for retrieving scholarly articles, historical documents, and research material related to tazkira literature. These resources will provide diverse information to support the research and enhance the depth of analysis.

By following these methods and utilising the specified materials, a comprehensive study of the genre of tazkira in Arabic and Persian literature can be conducted, shedding light on its historical significance, literary value, and cultural influence.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

There is little information about Mirza Sanglakh's life and creativity, and the available data is similar to that of another 20<sup>th</sup>-century Iranian scientist, Dr. Muhammad Moin (1918-1971) gave brief information about M.Sanglakh in his explanatory dictionary and stated that he lived during the reign of Agha Muhammad Shah (1742-1797), Fatali Shah (1791-1834) and Nasiraddin Shah (1831-1896) from the Qajar dynasty. He had a talent for poetry and calligraphy and lived for 110 years. According to the information provided by M.Moin, M.Sanglakh died in Tabriz in h.l.1294 [5, p. 813]. Sources state that he lived for 110 years, but he mentions in a part of his tazkira that he is currently 120 years old and is sitting and writing in Tabriz.

According to the information obtained from the sources, the actual name of Mirza Sanglakh is Muhammad Ali Guchani. Mehdi Bayani (1908-1969), a 20<sup>th</sup>-century Iranian scholar – doctor of the sciences in Persian language and literature the founder of the National Library of Iran, presents M.Sanglakh as Muhammad Ali Guchani in his work "Ahval va asari-khoshnevisan" – "The life and works of calligraphers" and states, that he is a representative of the generation of Guchan city of Khorasan [1, p. 797]. Let's note that in the latest – new edition of the work (tazkira) "Danishmandani-Azerbaijan" – "The scholars of Azerbaijan" (2015/16) by Muhammadali Tarbiyat (1874-1940), the prominent scientist educator democrat, public figure of Azerbaijan, M.Sanglakh is presented as Bocrurdi Khorasani and brief information about his tazkira about the calligraphers is given [11, p. 10]. We remind you that the Guchan and Bocrurd were two neighbouring cities belonging to ancient Khorasan and located in the province of Khorasan. M.Sanglakh was also introduced as Bocrurdi because they were adjacent in terms of geographical location, and the representatives of the garai generation lived in both places. Guchan is now a large city with certain suburbs located north of Khorasan. In general, M.Sanglakh is from Khorasan, and he repeatedly mentions this and presents himself as the Sun of Khorasan in his works. "Sanglakh" is

the nickname he gave himself, and it means rocky place". In the new edition of "the "Tazkiratul-attain", edited by Mehdi Gurbani and published in Mashad in h.l. 1386 (2007/08), Mehdi Gurbani gives the following explanation about this nickname of M.Sanglakh: for about ten years, he worked hard to get a large piece of the stone that could be useful for his work in the mountain, carved that piece of stone, and carried out engraving and calligraphy work on it. Ascetics also had a characteristic: retreating to the mountains and caves for a while, purifying one's soul, and completely distancing oneself from worldly desires and passions [9]. Let's note that M.Sanglakh worked on about 70 pieces of stone to prepare the inscriptions for certain buildings. These reasons justify his giving himself the nickname "Sanglakh". As for the word "Mirza", it is a shortened form of the word "emirzade" and means "son of a prince", "prince", also means munshi (secretary), educated person, learned person and is a sign of a respectful at the was used at the beginning and the end of names.

M.Sanglakh did not get married, lived a carefree and dervish life, was homeless, and devoted his life to more trips and travels. Giving this information, M. Bayani states that he visited the countries of Central Asia, Afghanistan, India, and Asia Minor and spent 25 years of his life in the Ottoman state and Egypt. M.Sanglakh communicated with the nobles of those states and won their respect (gained their sympathy). He met with scientists and artists in every country he travelled to and lived behind many quotas and inscriptions written by his hand in every city. We remind you that with the creation of a new type of handwriting style of Nastaliq by Mir Ali ibn Ilyas at-Tabrizi (1330-1446), the great calligraphy of Azerbaijan of the 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup>centuries, a completely new page was opened in the history of the writing culture, written monuments, including the manuscripts not only in Azerbaijan, but in the Eastern world as a whole, and new genres were created in the writing culture. One of these genres was a "gita" (a part, a piece). A genre of calligraphy, the quota is made by glueing a piece of paper on a piece of cardboard in sizes 9x15 sm – 20x30 sm (in the later periods, the dimensions of the quotas changed, and larger quotas were also created). The poetry on worldly topics was written on that paper with the excellent handwriting style Nastaliq (later, other types of handwriting style were also used) [2, p. 78]. The quotas were prepared and made with a very high level of artistic design,

and the painters and illustrators had a unique role in this regard. It is possible to mention the inscriptions in the mosque of Muhammad Ali Pasha in Cairo. M.Sanglakh wrote them in the beautiful style of Nastaliq. Let's note that in the life and work of M.Sanglakh, the piece of stone known as "Bismillah stone" had a special place. We will provide detailed information about that stone piece later in this article.

Continuing his opinion about M.Sanglakh, M. Bayani states that he had a particular ability in poetry and prose: his poetry is average and weak. He had certain merits in the Persian and Arabic dictionary; he wrote the nastaliq and skate types of handwriting styles very well, and he could recognise and identify the types of handwriting styles very well [1, p. 797]. Let's note that there are different opinions about the creativity, personality and works of M.Sanglakh: some present him as a very high-level poet and calligrapher, while others put forward views that are entirely contrary to this. By the way, we should note that the definitive and accurate conclusions and evaluations about M. Sanglakh's personality, creativity and works originate from the M. Sanglakh's works, first and foremost, from the "Tazkiratul-khattatin". So, on the one hand, we see M.Sanglakh, a dervish, not interested in worldly goods, a very hardworking, arrogant, poor, meek, helpless, lonely, simple-hearted, homeless, familyless, childless, self-controlled, humble. On the other hand, we now know M.Sanglakh, who is extremely satisfied with himself and his works and the products of his work, and has a very high opinion of himself. To confirm this opinion, paying attention to the preface (introduction) of the 1<sup>st</sup> volume of M.Sanglakh's tazkira about the calligraphers, published in Tabriz is essential.

On the 10<sup>th</sup> page of the last – new edition of M.Tarbiyat's "Danishmandani-Azerbaijan" tazkira under the title "Tazkiratul-khattatin" the following information is given: "Tazkiratul-khattatin" is a book written in Persian language about the rules of calligraphy and the life of calligraphers, the other name of the work is "Imtahanul-fuzoda". This work was published for the first time in Istanbul in one volume in h.l. 1276 was published for the second time in Tabriz in two volumes in h.l. 1295 [11, p. 10]. By the way, let's note that both copies of this tazkira – Istanbul and Tabriz copies are available in the Institute of Manuscripts named after Muhammad Fuzuli of ANAS and are. The Istanbul copy: VI-

178/2143; The Tabriz copy: vol. 1; XIII-184/4143; vol.2: XIII-181/4140.

Both copies are exquisite manuscripts printed using lithographic methods. Both copies are original. Since the cover and title page of both volumes of the Tabriz copy were damaged, restoration work was carried out on them (by the restoration department of the Institute of Manuscripts named after Muhammad Fuzuli of ANAS), and they were bound with dark grey, strong cardboard. Since the first pages of the <sup>first</sup> volume were defective (the edges of the pages were torn off), they were repaired by the photo facsimile method.

But there was a mistake here: on one side of the sheet, a copy of the letter written to M.Sanglakh, and on the other side, a page belonging to a completely different part of the text of the work was mistakenly placed. The Istanbul and Tabriz copies were printed on industrially produced white Near and Middle Eastern paper. The writing and artistic composition are the same. At the beginning of the text of the tazkira, a one-page letter written by M.Abdurrahim Khan, the general consul of Iran in Tiflis to M.Sanglakh, regarding the "Bismillah stone" mentioned above, was placed. The order of the pages is indicated in the Oriental style: the first word written on the next page is marked at the bottom of each" page on the left. The work is written in the tahkiya style typical of the epic genre, with alternating parts of verse and prose. This tazkira is written in layers and is mixed in its subject matter. So, this tazkira covers not one but several topics: a tazkira about the calligraphers, a travelogue, and a literary collection (an anthology). The tazkira about the calligraphers is written in the form of layers: an ancient calligraphers, a calligraphers who was a student of M.Sanglakh, the calligraphers of the Ottoman state, the calligraphers of recent times. The sections-layers about the calligraphers are presented under the heading "ahwalat" – "a stories": "ahwalati-talamiz" – "the stories of the students", "ahwalati-khattatini-doulati-Osmaniye" – "the stories of the calligraphers of the Ottoman state", etc. Let's note that throughout the work – in the text of the tazkira, the parts dedicated to individual calligraphers are also presented under the title "ahwal": "ahwali-Abu Muhammad Husayn ibn Mogleyi-farsi" – "The story about the Abu Muhammad Husayn ibn Mogleyi-farsi", etc. In the "Tazkiratul-khattatin", an introduction is given at the beginning of each defined part, and the end of each part, a "qalatnama" – "a correc-

tion of the errors" is provided. At the beginning of the section dedicated to the trips and travels of M.Sanglakh, it was mentioned that M.Sanglakh's travel determination and goals were his. In the part that we present as a literary collection – an anthology based on the subject, there are copies of Sultanali Mashad's "Sirat as-Sotur", Mir Ali Heravi's "Midad al-khotut", M.Imad Qazvini's "Adabul-mashq", as well as verses with advice and reminders and Mirza Ahmad's "Ahwalat naskhnevisan". As we mentioned, in one volume, M.Sanglakh's tazkira about the calligraphers was first published in Istanbul. The Istanbul copy is small in size and only tells about the life and work of ancient calligraphers. The Tabriz copy also begins after an introduction with a layer related to ancient calligraphers, and there is no difference between those sections in both copies.

No doubt, the author later continued his work – Tazkira- and decided to write new parts and layers on new topics, and thus, the Tabriz copy consisting of two volumes was created. The information about 41 calligraphers was given in the part (layer) dedicated to the ancient calligraphers, the information about 27 calligraphers was given in the part (a layer) dedicated to the students of Mirza Sanglakh, and the information about the 14 calligraphers was given in the part (a layer) dedicated to the calligraphers of the Ottoman state. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> volume of the Tabriz copy, the author talks about the calligraphers who lived and created in recent times. The 2<sup>nd</sup> volume begins with an introduction (dibacha – a preface). In this volume, the life and creativity of 32 calligraphers are discussed, and copies of the works mentioned above are placed. The part dedicated to ancient calligraphers talks about the life and creativity of the great Azerbaijani calligraphers M.A.Tabrizi, A.Tabrizi, A.Heravi, M.Deylami, M.Muhammad, H.Tabrizi, A.R.Tabrizi, B.Tabrizi, M.Shafi, M.I.Qazvini and others, who played an unparalleled and vital role and had very great merit in the creation and enrichment of the magnificent material-spiritual heritage not only in Azerbaijan but in the Eastern world in general, with their activities and creativity. Unfortunately, in this layer, the author did not dedicate a single part to the great Azerbaijani calligraphers M.Q.Zarringalam, A.Seyrafi, etc. The part devoted to the calligraphers of the Ottoman state talks about life. The works of Sheikhu-islam Valiaddin Efendi, Dervish Abdi Movlavi Bukharayi, Muhammad al-Yasari Istanbuli, Mahmud Chelebi Istanbuli, Katibzade Muhammad Rafi Efendi, Is-

mayil Rafiq Efendi, Dadazade Muhammad Efendi and others. In the story about each calligrapher, the author presents the information he knows about the life and activities of that calligrapher. At the end of each story, he describes the known causes of the death of the relevant person under a brief title and reflects the pain of mourning and separation, using verses, especially laments, to express the loss – expresses the sadness and grief born from the death of an incomparable calligrapher and valuable person. The pieces of poetry can be verse, poem, verse, fard (single verse), etc., and appropriate titles of mourning were presented under the cases.

The part (layer) dedicated to the calligraphers of the Ottoman state talks about the life and creativity of SheikhuIslam Valiuddin Efendi. Darvish Abdi Movlavi Bukharayi, Muhammad al-Yasari Istanbuli, Mahmoud Chelebi Istanbuli, Kara Ahmed Chelebi Istanbuli, Katibzade Muhammad Rafi Efendi, Ismayil Rafiq Efendi, Dadazade Muhammad Efendi and others. In the story about each calligrapher, the author presents the information he knows about the life and activities of that calligrapher. At the end of each story, the known causes of the death of the relevant person are briefly described, and the pain of mourning and separation is reflected, using pieces of poetry, especially laments, to express the loss-express the sadness and grief born from the death of an incomparable calligrapher and valuable person. Throughout the tazkira, pieces of poetry are presented under the headings of beyt (two verses), misra (a verse), fard (a verse), nazm (a poetry), madh, madhiyyah, lamentation, etc. It does not indicate who the authors of the verses are, and thus, we conclude that their author is M.Sanglakh himself. Examples of poet Arifi's poems were given in individual cases throughout the work (this tazkira), and Arifi was remembered with great respect. It is likely that the author meant Arifi Heravi (died in h.l.791) and used his poems. Arifi's most important works are a Sufi poem and "Halname", which contain 500 verses. We want to state that we closely know M.Sanglakh's tazkira about the calligraphers. We witness the richness of this work not in terms of content and information. Still, in terms of lavish expressions and "abundance" of words, the author uses various words and phrases from different languages and dialects.

In most cases, synonyms of almost all sentence members are used within one sentence. The author uses words belonging to the Arabic, ancient

Persian, Zand, Indian, and Turkish etc. languages and dialects, including words belonging to ancient Khorasan dialects, etc., as if he wanted to reflect that he is a great linguist (words belonging to the Azerbaijani language are also used in this tazkira). By the way, many parts of the work were only possible to understand if it was an explanatory dictionary of the individual words and phrases given in the margins by the author throughout the work. We agree with M.Bayani on this issue and his point of view [1, p. 799].

In general, the language of the work is complex. After expressing his opinion about this, M.Bayani added that to be able to use this work efficiently, he selected and separated unnecessary words and spent several months studying and evaluating the expressions, and as a result, which is essential in terms of obtaining information and knowledge, the number of the pages was less than 100 [1, p. 799]. We remind you that the Istanbul copy of M.Sanglakh's "Tazkiratul-khattatin" consists of 198 sheets (396 pages), the 1<sup>st</sup> volume of the Tabriz copy has 459 sheets (918 pages), and the 2<sup>nd</sup> volume has 218 sheets (437 pages). In the copy of this work, published under the name "Tazkiratul-khattatin" in h.sh.1386 in the "Qaf-e Mashhad er-Reza (a) the printing house in Mashhad, both volumes of the Tabriz copy were published together – as one book. We compared that copy with the Baku copy and witnessed no difference.

Ultimately, a scanner printed the Mashhad copy to preserve this work's lithographic printing. This copy is published in the form of an elegant book, the table of contents for each work, and at the end, the table of contents covering the names of persons' works, works of calligraphers, books and treatises (in alphabetical order), explanatory dictionary prepared by the authors in the margins throughout the text in "Tazkiratul-khattatin" (in alphabetical order) selected parts from M.Sanglakh's work "Dorci-javahir" and a dictionary chosen were published. And after that part, M. Sanglakh's painting (his portrait in "Tazkiratul-khattatin" was published – this painting is a beautiful work of art and is placed in a frame framed with elegant, beautiful plant and bird paintings. As we already mentioned, the Mashhad copy was published with the research and editing of Mehdi Gurbani and the "preface" written by M. Gurbani was published at the beginning of the book. Talking about the life and activity of M. Sanglakh, M. Gurbani, fortunately, presented several works that were copied in the

tazkira of M.Sanglakh as works of M.Sanglakh. We remind you of the names of those works: the copies of the works "Sirat us-sotur" by Sultanali Mashhadi, "Miidadul-hotut" by Mir Ali Heravi, "Adabul-mashg" by Mir Imad Qazvini, "Ahvalati-naskhnevisan" by Mirza Ahmad.

In the life and activity of M.Sanglakh, a piece of stone known as the "Bismillah stone" had a unique and special place: M.Sanglakh has prepared and worked on that piece of stone (a length - 2 m 70 cm; a width - 1 m 30 cm and a thickness - 35 cm) for the mausoleum of prophet of Islam His Holiness Muhammad (pbuh.), and worked on that stone for eight years as an engraver, calligrapher and painter. He worked hard in the mountains of Egypt for about two years to get that piece of stone. By the way, a colour photo of the "Bismillah stone" is placed in the force of the Mashhad copy of "Tazkiratul-khattatin" and its dimensions are given. Those dimensions are slightly different from the dimensions shown by M.Bayani: a length - 3 m 80 cm; a width - 1 m 33 cm. M.Sanglakh did not manage to transport that stone from Egypt to Medina.

For this reason, he presented him to the sultan of Egypt, Muhammad Ali Pasha, and asked for a large amount of money. But because he did not get this wish, he brought it to Istanbul by ship and presented it to the Ottoman sultan. However, he still did not get his wish - he did not want to pay money in exchange for that stone. Thus, with the help of Mirza Jafar Khan, a moshiraddovla (a state adviser) who lived in Istanbul at that time, she brought this stone to the city of Tabriz via the Caucasus. The one-page letter published at the beginning of all copies of "Tazkiratul-khattatin" - the letter written by Mirza Abdurrahim Khan, the jeneral consul of Iran in Tiflis at that time, to M.Sanglakh, is about the issue of the transporting and delivering that stone to Iran. M.Sanglakh placed that stone in Tabriz for people to see and intended to take it to Mashad and put it at his grave. But he did not achieve this wish too; as M.Bayani and M.Gurbani reported, M.Sanglakh placed the "Bismillah stone" on the wall in front of Sayid Ibrahim's tomb in Tabriz, but after some time M. Sanglakh died and was buried next to Sayid Ibrahim's grave in front of the same stone [1, p. 798; 8]. M. Gurbani states that the "Bismillah stone" was taken to the Tabriz Museum, which is currently located there. The stone where Sayid Ibrahim's grave is located is a model of that stone [2]. It should be noted that "Bismillah Stone" is a beautiful work of art that involves

carving, engraving, calligraphy, painting, and embellishment.

Based on the information we received from the sources, M.Sanglakh had correspondence with the dignitaries of the Egyptian and Ottoman states. Haji Huseyn Agha Nakhchivani wrote a separate article about this. The work "Dorci-javahir" by M.Sanglakh was printed in Egypt in h.l. 1272. This work consists of a collection of M.Sanglakh's signatures. M.Sanglakh collected the signatures he left at the end of the "kita" s and inscriptions he wrote and, generally, at the end of his writings, and published it as a book under the title "Dorci-javahir". If it can be called a work, this work was translated by the author of this article from Persian to Azerbaijani. Another work of M.Sanglakh is called "Majmaul-ousaf" and consists of poems dedicated to him by the poets and admirers.

M. Gurbani states that due to his research, lead printing published M.Sanglakh's treatise "Dar sovari - argham" in Egypt in 1266. He adds that another work of M.Sanglakh called "Borji-zavahir" (consisting of 176 pages) was printed in h.l. 1276 by lithographic method. He notes that both works' subjects are literature, vocabulary, and poems, sometimes expressing M.Sanglakh's ideas.

## CONCLUSIONS

One of the tazkiras, which talks about the life and creativity of the scribe-calligraphers, who created a written monument, including manuscripts thanks to great effort, in the Middle Ages in the Eastern world, including in Azerbaijan is the tazkira of 19<sup>th</sup> century Iranian author M.Sanglakh, called "The book of the examination of the scholars" and known as "Tazkiratul-khattatin". This bazkirah, written in a layered manner, is provided with information about dozens of scribe-calligraphers of Azerbaijan, the Ottoman state - the Eastern world in general, and a separate layer is dedicated to the author's travels to different countries, works written by several calligraphers were presented.

Despite certain flaws and shortcomings, this tazkira covers writing and book culture, the scope of the activity of the scribe-calligraphers, historical, socio-political, and economic conditions, science, literature, culture, art, religions etc. in the Middle Ages in the Eastern world, includ-

ing in Azerbaijan. It gives information about and creates ideas.

This work is an essential source in oriental studies, literary studies, textual studies, history, material-spiritual culture, and especially Azerbaijani

studies, and it is necessary to be involved in comprehensive research. Let's note that the author of this article translated this tazkira from Persian to Azerbaijani for the first time.

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