



Article

# The Hadith That Laid the Foundation for the Arba'in Tradition

Gulrukh Mahamedova\*<sup>1</sup>

1. PhD Candidate, Department of the History of Uzbek Literature and Textual Studies Tashkent State University of Uzbek Language and Literature named after Alisher Navoiy
- \* Correspondence: [Mahamedova.g@icloud.com](mailto:Mahamedova.g@icloud.com)

**Abstract:** This article examines the Hadith that established the theological and ritual foundation for the Arabian tradition within Islamic culture. It explores how this Hadith evolved from a concise prophetic statement into a central component of Shi'a religious consciousness and ritual expression. This research contextualizes the Hadith historically, spiritually and socioculturally, and examines its exegesis interpretations from classical and contemporary aqueduct. The study examines the interplay between prophecy, collective memory and ritual enactment via comparative textual analysis. Special focus is placed on how this Hadith went beyond textuality to become a performative teaching turning dhikr into a form of mandatory moral and theological duty. The results demonstrate that the Arabian ritual, based on this Hadith, constitute not only a remembrance of martyrdom and struggle, but also a symbolic practice of spiritual continuity and identity formation among Shi'as. The research finally proves that the compositional and symbolical aspects of the Hadith influenced and mainly impacted the Islamic ethics and the structures of collective faith.

**Keywords:** Compilation, Duty, Manuscript, Arabian, Weak, Hadith

## 1. Introduction

In recent years, Uzbekistan has established a comprehensive system for training highly qualified specialists in the field of religious and educational studies. Several research institutions including the Center of Islamic Civilization in Uzbekistan, the International Islamic Academy, the Mir Arab Higher Madrasa, the School of Hadith Studies, and international research centers named after Imam Bukhari, Imam Termizi, Imam Maturidi, and Bahauddin Naqshband have been founded to study and promote the intellectual and spiritual legacy of Muslim scholars. The restoration and architectural attention to the Imam Bukhari Memorial Complex, and the commemoration of the "Year of Alisher Navoi" in the Navoi region all indicate an increasing national interest in source studies and cultural scholarship.

Heirs of a rich tradition of scholarship, modern day scholars highlight that Islam is a religion of peace, reason and humanity. The contemporary scholarly community, based on the principles articulated by President Shavkat Mirziyoyev [1], considers as its sacred duty to retain and hand down this intellectual legacy to the generations to come. In the context of globalization and digital transformation, textual studies have gained renewed importance. As Zufarov [2] notes, when societies drift away from classical script and calligraphic traditions, theoretical and philological scholarship becomes the only bridge connecting modern readers with the intellectual world of the past.

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Among the most prominent examples of such classical heritage stands Alisher Navoi's *Arba'in*, written in the Turkic language. Rooted in national and religious traditions, the work belongs to the genre of religious-educational literature entirely devoted to hadith. Composing works in the *Arba'in* form became a respected Islamic tradition, inspired by a well-known prophetic saying: "Whoever preserves forty hadiths for my ummah concerning its religion, Allah will raise him on the Day of Judgment as a jurist, and I shall be for him an intercessor and a witness" [3]. Although the chain of transmission of this hadith is considered weak (*da'if*), scholars have accepted it for its moral and spiritual value.

The Arabic term *da'if* ("weak") contrasts with *qawi* ("strong") and in hadith terminology refers to a narration lacking one or more conditions of authenticity. Imam al-Bayquni defines it as "whatever falls short of the level of *hasan* is weak" [4]. The degree of weakness varies from slightly weak (*da'if*) to very weak or even fabricated (*mawdu'*). However, according to Muhammad Sodiq and other hadith scholars, the weak hadiths may be used in the context of virtue (*fada'il al-a'mal*) or moral encouragement, as long as the hadith is not extremely weak, the meaning is not wrong, and it is not believed with knowledge to be authentic.

Both through verse and in prose, Alisher Navoi — god bless his soul, let the heavens be the highest abode of him — reflects this nuance in his theological writings and in his *Arba'in*. In the opening lines of his poetry he states that he hopes that love of the Prophet will act as intercession on the Day of Judgement. Thus, Navoi's poetic and theological synthesis transforms the hadith tradition into a literary act of faith bridging the moral discipline of scholarship with the aesthetic dimensions of Turkic poetry.

## 2. Methodology

The present research employs a multidisciplinary approach combining methods of textual analysis, historical contextualization, and comparative literary study. The primary objective is to examine the *Arba'in* of Alisher Navoi as a poetic manifestation of the hadith tradition, focusing on how composition, structure, and meaning interact to create a unified spiritual and aesthetic system. The research aligns with classical poetics, viewing lyrical compositions not only as aesthetic artifacts but as theological discourse inherently informed and circumscribed by the epistemology of hadith sciences.

The methodology combines three levels of analysis in its design. All of this begins with the historical-descriptive method, tracking the beginnings and development of the *Arba'in* tradition in Islamic literature. It requires linking Navoi's oeuvre to his earlier Arabic and Persian forty hadith collections and discerning the impact of hadith research on the compositional structure of his work. The second focuses on structural-semantic, which analyzes the meticulous and proportional use of rhythm, symmetry, and semantic balance Navoi accesses in building the lyrical-and-didactic integrity of the text. Finally, using comparative hermeneutic, he analyzes how Navoi's reading of weak (*da'if*) hadiths matches rules set forth by scholars like Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani and Imam al-Bayquni.

Basic sources are Navoi (2020), tracks of classical Arabic commentaries, and research of modern scientists Kamolov (2020), Pulatova (2021), and Abdulmajid (2023). Secondary literature on hadith typology and poetic composition was also consulted to contextualize Navoi's methodology within broader Islamic intellectual traditions. The integration of literary and theological frameworks allows the study to approach the *Arba'in* not only as a poetic creation but as a reflection of spiritual cognition a synthesis of art and belief that bridges the textual and metaphysical dimensions of Islamic culture[5].

## 3. Results

The analytical examination of Alisher Navoi's *Arba'in* reveals a unique synthesis of poetic artistry and theological reasoning. The poet successfully transforms a genre rooted

in prophetic tradition into a lyrical, reflective form that bridges spirituality and aesthetics. His approach demonstrates how composition in didactic poetry can function as a vehicle of both faith and intellect, embodying the unity of form and meaning emphasized in classical literary theory [6].

At the level of structure, the *Arba'in* follows the classic mould of forty hadiths but transforms it into a poetic architecture beyond bare number. The compositional symmetry of each section connects the formal cadence of the quatrains with their semantic heart. This is what Qodirov described as "semantic proportionality", where the spiritual density of an idea conforms to the measured accuracy of the poetic form [7]. This manipulation of themes from godliness and humility to knowledge and justice emphasizes his belief that poetic craft is a major form of mental worship (Navoi 1st).

The outcomes of this research underscore three core compositional principles. Semantic hierarchy is one of them, with which Navoi correlates hadiths on an ascending scale of moral weight. Studies of the poems themselves reveal that the former reflect basic spiritual obligations, and the latter address the perfection of the soul and its quest for divine closeness over time. This ascending order reflects both poetic and mystical progression, consistent with Sufi cosmology. The second principle is lyrical unity, achieved through recurring motifs light, word, and heart that serve as symbolic bridges between individual sections. The third principle is intertextual coherence, where each hadith interacts dialogically with Quranic verses and other prophetic sayings, revealing Navoi's mastery of theological integration [8].

A key finding has to do with Navoi treating weak (*da'if*) hadiths at all. Some scholars have excluded them, unlike Navoi who selectively included them in a way that highlighted moral instruction rather than technical reality. The method he employs is his equivalent of Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani's lenience of interpretation allowing a weak hadith to be utilized when dealing with matters of aethics and devotional aspects of life. This selective adaptation reflects Navoi's apparent familiarity with hadith sciences and a desire to balance spiritual sincerity with cautious scholarship. It also buttresses the idea that maybe poetic truth can articulate theological intent even when concrete certainty is not remarkable [9].

On linguistic grounds, this study exposes Navoi's persistent attempt to assimilate Arabic religious lexicon into Turkic poetic diction. With phonetic harmony and fulminating rhythmical repetition, he carries the divine names and moral attributes, so that the sound structure itself remains pious. This combination corresponds to Umarov's concept of "spiritual phonetics", where the sound form of poetry reinforces its metaphysical content [10].

The second significant result is related to the proposed tripartite structure of the *Arba'in* in modern lyric studies: formal, semantic, and affective dimensions. Formally speaking, however, Navoi works within the limits of a traditional, almost *rubā'i*-like metric pattern that gives the composition a fairly precise structure. At the semantic level, things work in allegorical layers, as earthly images reflect spiritual realities the light symbolizes divine knowledge, the garden, paradise, and dust, the ordinariness of humanity. On the emotional level, Navoi's tone alternates between reverence and supplication, transforming the act of reading into a contemplative spiritual exercise. This triadic model illustrates that lyric composition in Navoi's framework is not a linear narrative but a cyclical reflection each poem is both complete in itself and part of a greater spiritual architecture.

The results further demonstrate how Navoi's *Arba'in* embodies the principle of *nazm* the harmonious alignment of words and meanings which classical critics like Avdeyev considered the essence of poetic perfection. By structuring his collection around divine wisdom Navoi raises the formal structure of poetry to that of worship, in which beauty becomes its own form of worship. Indeed, its organum: Poetic discipline makes

forty hadith a synecdoche universe, an anthology in which divine speech is arranged by man aesthetic (in hariri, from the poet/compiler, to the ear and eye of the interpreter), in some doubly precarious relation to oral traditions.

In conclusion, the study verifies that the lyric composition of the couplets/robaʿa of Navoi's Arba'in represents a poetic answer to a theological question, how spiritual truth can be articulated without crossing the limits of aesthetic representation. Navoi, in turn, addresses this tension with symmetrical design, symbolic vocabulary, and rhythmic coherence to make poetic structure a revelation in and of itself. His approach is an instance of the synthesis of beauty and doctrine that defines the Timurid Renaissance an age of considerable intellectual synthesis and artistic innovation.

This, the compositional arrangement of Arba'in is not accidental artistically but is an intentional theological construction. It affirms that in Navoi's worldview, poetry functions as a sacred instrument for transmitting divine wisdom. The results of this research suggest that lyric composition, when informed by spiritual intention and intellectual rigor, can serve as a vehicle of metaphysical insight, transforming poetic language into a medium of faith, cognition, and enlightenment.

#### 4. Discussion

The findings of this study reaffirm that lyric composition in Alisher Navoi's Arabian operates not merely as an aesthetic framework but as a philosophical system that connects poetic structure with theological discourse. This paper argues that Navoi encoded divine knowledge poetically by employing certain compositional choices rhythm, symmetry, and layers of symbols as interpretive lenses. Such a method is consistent with what Barthes imagined as text's "semantic plurality," where the model of meaning is produced through the constant interaction between structure and reader identity [11].

1) As an example, in the case of Navoi, the form of the composition works as a conversation between divine truth and poetic creativity. Each hadith becomes a semiotic nucleus that unfolds new meanings through its lyrical rearticulation. By reworking religious material into verse, Navoi transforms divine instruction into an aesthetic experience, creating what Elam terms a "performative text," one that activates meaning through rhythm and voice [12]. This transformation suggests that composition is not a static literary device but a dynamic mode of cognition a way of thinking through poetry.

That discussion also locates Navoi's work within wider developments in the poetics of Islam and comparative theology. Fischer-Lichte too has provided a new discourse from which we can approach Navoi[5] through Arba'in as an act of spirituality and performance [13]. These are not just poems that tell of prophetic wisdom; they are prophetic acts. So when they read or recite these verses, the act becomes a ritual of intellectual and emotional participation where the Sufi belief that dhikr or simply remembrance serves as a kind of creative act.

Furthermore, Navoi's engagement with da'if (weak) hadiths introduces an ethical dimension to poetic composition. His inclusion of these narrations reflects the theological principle that spiritual benefit may transcend textual rigidity. In this sense, his lyric composition becomes a metaphor for mercy the idea that divine truth can manifest even through imperfection. This interpretive flexibility resonates with Brook's argument that theatrical or poetic minimalism intensifies rather than diminishes spiritual meaning [14]. There is a similar restraint in both form and diction between Navoi and Brook, where minimalism unveils a stable ground for complex human emotions and metaphysical awareness.

Culturally, Navoi uses his Arba'in to exemplify the process through which Turkic literary consciousness appropriated and remolded Arabic-Persian paradigms. His composition is actively not imitative, but an intentional adaptation, a cultural synthesis. Moment: The moral clarity of Arabic hadith melts into the rhythmic discipline of Persian rubā'i poetry, producing some of Central Asia's most distinctive lyrical theology. This

intercultural mediation corresponds to Taylor's analysis of scenographic communication, where artistic form becomes a site of cross-cultural dialogue and shared symbolism [15].

Therefore, the discussion concludes that Navoi's lyric composition represents an early model of integrative poetics a system that unites theology, philosophy, and aesthetics. It demonstrates that poetic composition can embody epistemological truth, not merely express it. The study emphasizes Navoi's Arba'in as presaging contemporary interdisciplinary perspectives that consider art to be a cognitive and moral act.

In conclusion, the writing of lyric in Navoi is not limited to the scope of poetic generation. This metaphysical architecture a structured manifestation of divine order within the beauty of language. The dance between rhythm, refrain, and iconography turns poetic discourse into a reflection of spirit. By blending artistic rigor with devotional sincerity, Navoi establishes a model of composition that remains relevant to contemporary literary and religious studies, affirming the enduring capacity of poetry to mediate between the visible and the unseen.

### 5. Conclusion

In conclusion, Arba'in refers to the art of expressing the meanings of forty well-known and authentic hadiths in poetic form more precisely, in the structure of a single ruba'i (quatrain). In usage, the term has come to denote collections of forty selected hadiths compiled into a single work. Composing works in this style became a respected tradition throughout the Islamic world, serving as an effective means for making the profound teachings of hadith accessible to the general public. Through poetic language, these works helped ensure that the essence of the hadiths could be more easily understood, memorized, and preserved by ordinary people.

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