

## Literary and Linguistic Legacy in Uzbek Classical Literature: A Historical and Cultural Perspective

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### ABSTRACT

*This article is dedicated to the study of the works of Alisher Navoi, a prominent representative of Uzbek literature, a great thinker, and poet. Navoi's creativity holds an important place in the development of Uzbek culture and literature, and his works continue to evoke deep scholarly interest not only in his own time but also today. The article analyzes the uniqueness of Navoi's poetic and prose heritage, their content and essence, as well as their study in terms of language and style. Additionally, it examines the portrayal of human values, enlightenment, and moral-ethical issues in his works.*

*The study highlights the historical and cultural context of Alisher Navoi's creativity, his role in Uzbek literature, and important aspects of preserving and developing his legacy in contemporary times. The article also examines modern methods used in studying Navoi's works, including comparative literature, linguistic, and philosophical analyses. Furthermore, it discusses the application of Alisher Navoi's creativity in educational processes, as well as the opportunities to foster national identity and develop connections with international culture through his works.*

*The article also emphasizes the necessity of a deep and comprehensive study of Navoi's works and presents ideas on new approaches in literary and cultural research. As a result, it highlights that studying Alisher Navoi's creative legacy is not only important for literary scholarship but also plays a crucial role in the process of studying and preserving the culture of an entire nation.*

**Keywords:** Historical lexicology, lexicography, dictionary, Hayrat ul-Abror, secretary, lexical layer.

## INTRODUCTION

The study of Alisher Navoi's works dates back to a very long history. Even during Navoi's lifetime, his works were collected, compiled, and copies were made. The four-volume publication *Explanatory Dictionary of the Language of Alisher Navoi's Works*, prepared under the leadership of the prominent linguist E. Fazilov at the Department of Historical Lexicology and Lexicography of the Institute of Oriental Studies named after Abu Rayhan Beruni of the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan, with the participation of distinguished specialists in oriental languages – Q. Muhiddinov, Yu. Shokirov, N. Khodjaev, J. Lapasov, I. Nosirov, Z. Hamidov, and B. Bafoev – is one of the scientifically highly significant works.

This dictionary is not only the work of linguists but also the product of specialists engaged in the ancient history, science, and culture of the East. For this reason, it is still considered a source of great practical significance today.

Abduhamid Pardayev was the first to present to the scholarly community the poetic rendition of the first poem of Alisher Navoi's "Khamasa," titled "Hayrat ul-abror" ("The Wonder of the Righteous").

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

An article titled 'Excerpts from Alisher Navoi's 'Hayrat ul-abror' Poem,' authored by the well-known journalist Oqil Abdubarnoyev, was published on the official website of the weekly literary, scientific-educational, and social newspaper *Jadid*. This article is based on the prose version of the poem and presents commentary on all sections enriched with literary descriptions.

Nowadays, special attention is being paid in our country to studying the heritage of our ancestors, preserving and restoring our rich cultural values. Necessary conditions are being created

for a deep study of the lives and scientific activities of our great scholars from historical, socio-economic, and cultural perspectives, as well as for widely promoting their works among the public.

The tradition of writing the “Khamsa,” one of the highest examples of the art of epic poetry in the Eastern literary heritage, was first established by Nizami Ganjavi. With his five epics – *Makhzan al-Asrar*, *Khosrow and Shirin*, *Layla and Majnun*, *Haft Paykar*, and *Iskandarnama* – he created a complete literary school in this genre. In the following centuries, poets who lived and created works continued this tradition, composing their own Khamsas while adhering to the themes, plot structure, system of characters, poetic meter, and the order of the works.

This literary genre demanded high artistic talent and skill from its creators. Alisher Navoi, however, took this tradition to a new level, bringing the “Khamsa” genre to perfection within Uzbek and, more broadly, Turkic literature, enriching it with new meaning and artistic depth. He elevated the Khamsa school established by Nizami Ganjavi to great heights and left a unique legacy in our literature.

The manuscript collection of the International Scientific Research Center named after Imam Bukhari is continuously enriched year by year with valuable and rare works. This collection includes not only religious manuscripts but also priceless works of fiction. For example, alongside Saadi Shirazi’s *Gulistan* and *Bustan*, Hafez Shirazi’s *Divan of Hafez*, Fuzuli’s *Complete Works of Fuzuli*, and Mirza Bedil’s *Divan of Bedil*, the manuscript of Alisher Navoi’s epic *Khamsa*, known as the “Sultan of the Ghazal Realm,” as well as a printed edition of the *Divan of Navoi*, are also preserved.

Alisher Navoi’s *Khamsa* can be described as an ocean full of wisdom and spiritual richness. In the years of independence, opportunities to deeply understand such invaluable heritage and to study and research the work of the great poet have expanded. The *Khamsa* epic represents the highest peak of Navoi’s creativity, where the poet fully demonstrated his literary mastery.

In her article titled ‘Hayrat ul-abror’ Leads a Person to the Pinnacle of Perfection, Irada Dourbekova, a researcher at the

Imam Bukhari International Scientific Research Center, provides detailed information about a copy of *Hayrat ul-abror* written in Turkic in 1881, including the following details:

1. Author: Nizomiddin Mir Alisher
2. Date of transcription: 1298 AH / 1881 AD
3. Language: Turkic
4. Paper: [not specified]
5. Page size: 30 × 15 mm
6. Script type: Nastaliq
7. Ink type: chapter titles, sections, and names are written in red ink; the main text is written in black ink
8. Text size: 21 × 9 mm
9. Marginalia: written in red ink on pages 5a and 10a
10. Binding: present

The above-mentioned article also states that this manuscript copy is preserved in the manuscript collection of the Imam Bukhari International Scientific Research Center under the number 230. The work consists of 3,988 verses, 63 chapters, 20 maqolats, and 20 stories. Since the manuscript is incomplete, it begins not from the introduction but from the first supplication.

In May 2022, a journalistic work titled ‘Why Do We Read ‘Hayrat ul-abror’ with Wonder?’ by Doctor of Philology and professor at Samarkand State University Muslihiddin Muhiddinov was published on social media. In this essay, it is highlighted that in Alisher Navoi’s *Hayrat ul-abror*, the poet portrays the figures of the sheikhs and saints he believed in, promotes ideas of human perfection, faith, and belief, and includes wise stories related to representatives of Sufism such as Bayazid Bastami, Ibrahim Adham, Abdullah Ansari, Shaykh Iroqi, Imam Fakhriddin Razi, Khoja Muhammad Porso, and Abdullah Mubarak – all of which are illustrated with remarkable literary depictions.

The second part of “Hayrat ul-abror” depicts stories involving characters such as two loyal friends, the bohemian Bani Israil, the honest beauty, and her lover. Additionally, Navoi’s work includes instructive episodes drawn from the lives

of historical figures – Noshervan, Khotam-i Tai, Bahram Gur, and the Prophet Job.

The common feature of these stories is that each conveys Sufi ideas in a simple, meaningful, and memorable manner. Through every story, Navoi strives to deliver a profound spiritual message that calls for moral and spiritual perfection – what Muslihiddin Domla refers to as true wonder.

On the eve of Alisher Navoi's birth anniversary, Lola Azimova, an associate professor at the Department of Uzbek and Foreign Languages of the International Islamic Academy of Uzbekistan, posted her creative work titled *A World of Wonder in Alisher Navoi's 'Hayrat ul-abror'* on social media. In this piece, she deeply analyzes how Alisher Navoi's works serve as a source of spiritual purity, goodness, and enlightenment, playing an important role in elevating the human spirit. Despite more than five centuries having passed, his rich and meaningful legacy remains relevant today and continues to be studied through profound philosophical analysis and reflections.

#### RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This once again confirms the profound and comprehensive genius of Navoi. Additionally, L. Azimova demonstrates that the moral values advocated by the poet in his works – such as justice, generosity, patience and contentment, loyalty, humility, modesty, etiquette, and honesty – remain relevant today. She also shows, with examples, how the poem sharply criticizes vices like hypocrisy, arrogance, and envy, encouraging individuals to work on their spiritual development. Through this, Navoi's deep thinking, life philosophy, and lofty humanistic ideals are clearly revealed.

The virtues emphasized by the great thinker serve not only the individual's perfection but also the progress of society. Indeed, the moral and normative views put forward by Navoi continue to call for understanding and adhering to values such as humanity, conscience, and the essence of life, even in today's era of globalization. The artistic world he created gives meaning to human life and brings spiritual harmony to existence.

In the process of creating the scholarly-critical text of Alisher Navoi's *Khamsa*, Porso Shamsiyev relies on six ancient manuscripts. He thoroughly analyzes each manuscript based on textual criticism criteria and provides detailed descriptions of each. The main goal of the scholar is to compile a complete and scientifically grounded critical text of the *Khamsa*, strictly adhering to the scientific principles of textual criticism.

In particular, in his article titled 'Scholarly-Critical Texts of the 'Khamsa' Epics and the Principles of their Compilation,' P. Shamsiyev expresses the following thoughts about Navoi's "Khamsa" manuscript:

To create the scholarly-critical text of Navoi's 'Khamsa,' we selected as the base copy a manuscript preserved in the manuscript collection of the Abu Rayhan Beruni Institute of Oriental Studies at the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan (inv. 5018). The manuscript is written in fine and beautiful Nastaliq script, although the paper is slightly torn. Nine folios are missing at the beginning and three at the end. We identified that folios 45 and 46 are missing, folios 305 and 306 have been restored by another person in a different handwriting, and folios 273 and 319 are damaged. As we have noted many times, this manuscript was copied during the poet's lifetime and is the most important among all manuscripts. [5]

According to the scholar's information, Uzbek researchers began the work of creating scholarly-critical texts of Alisher Navoi's works in the 1940s. Specifically, S. M. Mutallibov prepared the critical text of *Hayrat ul-abror*, and G. Q. Karimov prepared the critical text of *Layli and Majnun* in 1944. These texts are considered the first steps in the textological study of Navoi's creativity. The editors relied on three manuscripts and later published printed editions when preparing these texts.

Additionally, in his research, P. Shamsiyev notes that Alisher Navoi's *Hayrat ul-abror* was completed in the year 888 AH (1483 AD) [Navoi 1970: 201]. However, it has been clarified that the colophon of the epic indicates that the manuscript was copied by Abduljamil in 889 AH, in the month of Rabi' al-Akhir, which corresponds to April 1484 AD. This shows that there is a certain

time gap between the composition of the epic and the process of its manuscript copying.

Tohir Khodjayev, an associate professor at the Navoi State Pedagogical Institute, in his monograph titled 'Navoi's 'Khamsa': Character, Artistry, and Essence,' beautifully depicts the characters and events in Alisher Navoi's *Khamsa* from an artistic perspective.

The fourth chapter of this monograph is devoted to the analysis of the stories in *Hayrat ul-abror*, providing a comprehensive exploration of the structure, themes, characters, and artistic qualities of the epic's narratives.

According to T. Khodjayev, the *Khamsa* features prophets such as Adam, Noah, Jesus, Moses, Solomon, and Joseph (peace be upon them), as well as mythological figures like Khizr and Surush, along with the character of Bahram. These symbols hold an important place in the interpretation of events within the work.

In the epic *Hayrat ul-abror*, life lessons are conveyed for all social groups – young and old, men and women – encompassing moral and normative rules that every person should follow. Today, deeply studying and applying these lessons remains a pressing duty for each of us.

The monograph notes that the main structure of *Hayrat ul-abror* consists of twenty *maqolats* (chapters) and twenty connected stories. Each *maqolat* is followed by one story, with an additional supplementary story at the end of the epic. In total, there are twenty-one stories in the work. These stories vary in length: the shortest is fourteen verses (twenty-eight lines), while the longest contains forty-two verses (eighty-four lines).

The stories in *Hayrat ul-abror* cover various themes and feature characters of diverse personalities. Studying the artistic perfection of the epic, as well as the skillful use of poetic arts and descriptive means, is also an important scientific task.

In the scholarly article titled 'The History of the Study of the 'Hayrat ul-abror' Epic,' written by Behzod Rustamov, a philologist at Navoi State Pedagogical Institute, it is mentioned that parts of Alisher Navoi's *Khamsa* were gradually copied by the Herat scribe Abdujamil. This important manuscript is currently preserved in the card file No. 5018 at the Abu Rayhon

Beruniy Institute of Oriental Studies of the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan, located in Tashkent. The article also notes that another rare copy of the *Khamsa* is held at the Saltikov-Shchedrin State Library in Saint Petersburg.

This manuscript was copied in 1492 by the famous calligrapher Sultanali Mashhadi from Herat. It has also been proven that four copies of the *Khamsa* created during Navoi's lifetime have survived, and that in subsequent centuries, this work was copied multiple times in manuscript form. Additionally, the article emphasizes that the Institute of Oriental Studies currently holds more than 75 manuscript copies of the *Khamsa*, created between the 15th and 19th centuries. Among these, the most significant are the copies numbered 1679 II, written in Herat at the end of the 15th century and the beginning of the 16th century.

In the article titled 'The Bright Reflection of Sufism Interpretation in the Stories of Alisher Navoi's 'Hayrat ul-abror' philologist X. G. Nazarova from the Uzbekistan-Finland Pedagogical Institute discusses the eight ranks of poverty (*faqr*) in Sufism: repentance, prayer, love, patience, gratitude, contentment, asceticism, and gnosis. The article also highlights that the rank of patience (*sabr*) is inherited from the Prophet Ayyub (Job, peace be upon him).

Khurshid Lutfullayevich Maxammadiyev, a lecturer at Jizzakh State Pedagogical Institute, in his scientific article titled 'Clothing Lexemes Adopted in Alisher Navoi's Works,' discusses how the 15th-century works of Alisher Navoi provide insights into the lifestyle and cultural life of the Uzbek people of that era. In particular, he emphasizes that through the names of clothing items mentioned in these works, it is possible to study the clothing culture that existed at that time. The researcher explained that some of the clothing names mentioned in Navoi's works trace back to ancient written sources, illustrating this with the following examples: words such as *xil'at*, *qabo*, *jubba*, *xirqa*, *hulla*, *abo*, *rido*, *taylason*, *toqiya*, *amoma*, *burqa*' are mainly borrowed from Arabic and form a distinct lexical layer related to clothing. He provided detailed commentary on these terms,

noting that many of them are still used in modern Uzbek, albeit with slight phonetic or semantic changes.

#### CONCLUSIONS

Alisher Navoi's works, especially his *Khamsa* and the epic *Hayrat ul-abror* represent a rare cultural heritage not only of Uzbek literature but of the entire Turkic world. These works deeply express spiritual, moral, and cultural values, remaining relevant and worthy of study today. Through the efforts of many scholars in collecting manuscripts and producing critical editions, various aspects of Navoi's creativity – language, artistry, mysticism, historical figures, and social meanings – are thoroughly analyzed. Additionally, cultural and social details within Navoi's works, such as clothing terminology, provide valuable insights into the lifestyle and culture of his era. This contributes to a deeper contemporary understanding of the great scholar's legacy and plays a crucial role in passing it on to future generations.

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