

**THE INTERPRETATION OF HAMD IN CLASSICAL LITERATURE**

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**Abstract:** The article provides an ideological and artistic analysis of the traditional hamd chapter and the sections related to it in works of Uzbek classical literature. During the analysis, special attention is paid to words requiring explanation and to artistic devices, and an evaluation of poets' creative mastery is presented.

**Key words:** Alisher Navoi, hamd, tradition, Khamsa, Islam, the Holy Qur'an, traditional chapter, artistic mastery

**Introduction.** Hamd is an Arabic word meaning praise and gratitude (hamdu sanā' – praise and thanksgiving). In Eastern classical literature, beginning a literary work by citing the Basmalah and then offering hamd became a fundamental principle. The main reason for this tradition is imitation of the Holy Qur'an, the Book of Allah. This is because the first surah of the divine book begins with "Bismillāhir raḥmānir raḥīm" and is followed by hamd, that is, the verse "Praise be to Allah." This feature of the Qur'an, which serves as the guiding principle of the Muslim world, was elevated to the level of a special literary tradition.

**Purpose of the Research.** The purpose of this study is to analyze the chapters containing hamd in Uzbek classical literature, particularly in Alisher Navoi's Khamsa.

**Methods and Materials.** Hermeneutic and comparative analysis methods were employed in the study. Alisher Navoi's Khamsa served as the primary material.

**Results and Discussion.** In Sufism, the power of the word is widely emphasized, and similarly, in classical literature, composing special chapters dedicated to its praise became a tradition. The great talent who continued and enriched the traditions of classical literature with unique innovation was Alisher Navoi. In his monumental Khamsa, the poet consistently followed this tradition. In Hayrat ul-Abror, the opening poem of the Khamsa, the hamd chapter follows the chapter of Basmalah. While praising Allah, Navoi makes use of incomparable metaphors. He continues these reflections in his epics Farhod and Shirin and Layli and Majnun as well. The hamd in Hayrat ul-Abror begins with the following prose heading: "Praise be to that Creator who revealed the artistry of His pen to imagine all created animate and inanimate beings, who adorned the beauty of His wise pen, who bound every bud of the heart to a flower of beauty by the chain of longing, and connected every star of the eye to a crescent-like eyebrow through the thread of love." After the prose heading, verses related to hamd are presented:

Vahdati zotig'a quyoshdek tonuq,

Zarradin afzunu quyoshdin yoruq.

Continuing the praise of Allah, Navoi emphasizes that the human body and soul are directly connected to the Creator. He likens the body to the celestial sphere and the soul to the sun, concluding that it is Allah who makes the soul radiant:

Jism sipehrini masir etguchi,

Ruh quyoshini munir etguchi.

The Almighty Creator is depicted through metaphors as having created the lofty heavens, stars, and the sun:

Gulshani firuzani chekkan baland,

Gullaridin mehrni guldasta band.

Alisher Navoi's epic Farhod and Shirin consists of 54 chapters and 5,782 couplets, with its introduction comprising 11 chapters. The epic contains two hamd chapters (Chapters 1 and 2). The inclusion of two hamds is not accidental but carries deep artistic and ideological significance. In the first hamd, Allah's creative power, wisdom, and sovereignty over the entire universe are praised. Through this, Navoi aims to begin his work with divine light and to strengthen it with spiritual foundations. In the second hamd, Navoi briefly introduces the general content of the epic, its main characters, and their emotions. Special emphasis is placed on the concept of love (ishq). According to Navoi, by bestowing love upon the human heart, the Creator guides humanity toward enlightenment and virtue. Therefore, love is praised both as a source of suffering and trials and as a force leading to spiritual perfection. The presence of two hamds in the epic demonstrates Navoi's fidelity not only to the traditions of Eastern classical literature but also his philosophical and individual approach to each work. In this way, he ensures not only the artistic value of the epic but also its educational and moral significance.

The opening chapter of Farhod and Shirin is untitled and begins with an address to God. The first hemistich of the chapter is in Arabic, and its general meaning clearly reflects the content of the entire chapter. In the opening couplet, divine assistance is sought to open the gates of meaning and comprehend the truth.

Since the remaining epics of the Khamsa constitute integral parts of a unified whole, they also begin with hamd. The primary reason for this is imitation of the Holy Qur'an. As noted earlier, the first surah of the Qur'an begins with the Basmalah and then with hamd, namely the verse "Praise be to Allah." This Qur'anic principle, which serves as the guide for the Muslim world, has also influenced literature. Accordingly, the epic Layli and Majnun also begins with hamd. It is known that Allah created His servants and granted them the rank of spiritual elevation. He gave them the capacity to acquire knowledge and to understand the world and the hereafter. However, there exist secrets of the unseen (ghayb) that none but Allah can know. The fact that no secret is hidden from Allah, including the unseen, is emphasized in the hamd of Layli and Majnun.

**Conclusion.** Alisher Navoi is not only a towering figure of Uzbek literature but also a great thinker of the entire Islamic-Turkic cultural world, a poet and intellectual who elevated literary traditions to a high level and laid the foundation for a new poetic school. Through his epic, lyric, and mixed prose-poetic works, his artistic heritage defined the spiritual image of his era and played a significant role in advancing universal human values. It should be emphasized that the introductory chapters of the Khamsa epics are structured as independent literary and artistic works. These chapters are not merely traditional elements but represent essential structures that express the poet-thinker's worldview, social outlook, and spiritual ideals. By adhering to artistic principles of reasoning, Alisher Navoi not only prepares the reader for the main events but also guides them toward spiritual and moral cultivation. The ideas advanced in these chapters have

not lost their moral and ethical significance even today. The promotion of goodness, truthfulness, enlightenment, and morality within them continues to serve as an important life lesson for the present generation.

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