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THE TRADITIONS OF FRIENDSHIP AND MENTORSHIP IN THE LITERARY HERITAGE OF ALISHER NAVOI AND ABDURAHMAN JAMI

Salomova Nigina Rustamzoda
E-mail: salomovanigina80@gmail.com

Abstract: This article explores the conceptual and historical dimensions of friendship and the teacher-disciple (*ustoz-shogird*) tradition through the classical literary relationship between Alisher Navoi and Abdurahman Jami. Based on primary textual evidence from works such as *Khamsat ul-Mutahayyirin*, *Bahoriston*, and their respective *Khamsa* cycles, the study examines how these two giants of Eastern Renaissance literature institutionalized mentorship as a spiritual and creative alliance. Utilizing historical-comparative and textological analysis, the paper highlights the cross-cultural synthesis of Chagatai Turkic and Persian literary schools. The qualitative analysis demonstrates that their relationship bypassed mere socio-political alignment, creating a timeless ethical model embedded in Islamic mysticism (Sufism).

Keywords: Alisher Navoi, Abdurahman Jami, mentorship, classical literature, Sufism, Eastern Renaissance, textological analysis, qualitative research.

Аннотация: В данной статье исследуются концептуальные и исторические аспекты дружбы и традиции наставничества (*устоз-шогирд*) на примере классических литературных взаимоотношений Алишера Навои и Абдурахмана Джами. На основе первоисточников, таких как *Хамсат ул-Мутахаййирин*, *Бахористан* и их соответствующих циклов *Хамса*, в исследовании анализируется, как эти два гиганта литературы Восточного Ренессанса институционализировали наставничество как духовный и творческий союз. Используя историко-сравнительный и текстологический анализ, работа освещает кросс-культурный синтез чагатайской тюркской и персидской литературных школ. Качественный анализ показывает, что их отношения вышли за рамки простого социально-политического союза, создав вневременную этическую модель, укорененную в исламском мистицизме (суфизме).

Ключевые слова: Алишер Навои, Абдурахман Джами, наставничество, классическая литература, суфизм, Восточный Ренессанс, текстологический анализ, качественное исследование.

Annotatsiya: Ushbu maqolada Alisher Navoiy va Abdurahmon Jomiy o‘rtasidagi mumtoz adabiy munosabatlar misolida do‘stlik va ustoz-shogirdlik an’analarining konseptual hamda tarixiy jihatlari tadqiq etilgan. *Xamsat ul-mutahayyirin*, *Bahoriston* va ularning tegishli *Xamsa* turkumlari kabi birlamchi manbalarga tayanib, Sharq Renessansi adabiyotining ushbu ikki buyuk simosi ustoz-shogirdlikni ma'naviy va ijodiy ittifoq sifatida qanday qilib qonuniyat darajasiga ko'targanligi tahlil qilinadi. Tarixiy-qiyosiy va tekstologik tahlildan foydalangan holda, maqola chig‘atoy turkiy va fors adabiy maktablarining o‘zaro sintezini yoritib beradi. Sifatli tahlillar shuni ko'rsatadiki, ularning munosabatlari oddiy ijtimoiy-siyosiy hamkorlikdan yuqori turib, islom tasavvufiga asoslangan abadiy axloqiy modelni yaratgan.

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Tayanch so‘zlar: Alisher Navoiy, Abdurahmon Jomiy, ustoz-shogirdlik, mumtoz adabiyot, tasavvuf, Sharq Renessansi, tekstologik tahlil, sifat tahlili.

1. Introduction

The cultural and philosophical heights of the 15th-century Eastern Renaissance, centered in the vibrant Timurid state of Herat, were fundamentally driven by the cross-pollination of diverse literary styles, spiritual movements, and linguistic traditions. At the heart of this historical convergence stood Alisher Navoi, the founding father of classical Chagatai Turkic literature, and Maulana Abdurahman Jami, the last great classicist of the Persian-Tajik golden age. Beyond their separate artistic masterpieces, the deep personal friendship and professional mentorship between Navoi and Jami represents a unique phenomenon in world literary history. Their lifelong connection established a cultural standard for intellectual unity across linguistic boundaries.

While standard biographical sketches routinely mention their mutual respect, contemporary literary criticism requires a deeper, text-focused evaluation of how they practiced the *ustoz-shogird* (teacher-disciple) tradition. This relationship was not a rigid, hierarchical dependency; rather, it was a dynamic, reciprocal partnership where creative critique and deep mystical brotherhood coexisted. Exploring the ethical patterns of their interaction provides essential perspectives for modern educational models, social connectivity, and the transmission of humanistic values. This paper analyzes primary texts to evaluate how friendship and mentorship served as foundational themes that shaped both their creative writing and their daily social choices.

2. Literature Review

The philosophical foundations of friendship and mentorship in the medieval Islamic East are deeply intertwined with Sufi psychology and ethics (*futuwwa*). Within the Naqshbandiyya Sufi order, to which both Jami and Navoi belonged, the bond between a spiritual master (*murshid*) and an initiate (*murid*) served as the primary vehicle for internal cultivation. L.S. Vygotsky’s developmental framework theoretically Mirrors this approach by showing that advanced cognitive and emotional capacities are internalized through structured social mediation and expert scaffolding [p. 48]. In Timurid Herat, Jami provided the structural and esoteric scaffolding that enabled Navoi to elevate Chagatai literature to classical status.

In the national scholarship of Uzbekistan, the systematic analysis of Navoi’s biography and his relationships with contemporary thinkers was pioneered by I. Sultanov, who illustrated how Navoi used his political standing as a vizier to protect and champion the creative community headed by Jami [p. 112]. The textological assessment of their specific cross-lingual exchanges was deeply advanced by A. Hayitmetov, who highlighted that Navoi viewed Jami not merely as a local teacher, but as a universal moral compass [4, p. 74]. Furthermore, E.E. Bertels demonstrated that the interaction between Persian-Tajik poetry and Turkic verse during the 15th century was an organic synthesis rather than a unidirectional copying mechanism [5, p. 189].

The primary source for studying this dynamic is Navoi’s own memoir, *Khamsat ul-Mutahayyirin* (*The Quintet of the Astonished*). As analyzed by B. Valikhodjaev, this text transcends traditional hagiography by preserving intimate dialogues, instances of creative editing, and mutual poetic

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challenges [6, p. 55]. Jami's perspective is preserved in his didactic masterpiece *Bahoriston* (*The Spring Garden*), where he praises Navoi's unmatched generosity and linguistic craftsmanship [7, p. 92]. Recent contemporary evaluations by Sh. Sirojiddinov underscore that the *ustoz-shogird* model between Jami and Navoi serves as an early template for cross-cultural diplomacy and multi-lingual literary excellence [8, p. 104]. Despite this extensive scholarship, a descriptive integration that links their mystical Sufi vows directly to their real-world social collaboration requires ongoing contextual elaboration.

3. Research Methodology

The analytical research for this paper relies on primary literary texts and historical chronicles preserved within the national manuscript collections of Uzbekistan. The study utilizes a qualitative, historical-comparative, and textological research methodology, evaluating the structural representations of peer bonding in the classical era.

The methodological analysis is executed through three core research stages:

1. **The Textological Extraction Stage:** A targeted analysis of Navoi's *Khamsat ul-Mutahayyirin* is performed to isolate explicit records of teacher-disciple interaction. Specific attention is paid to the accounts where Navoi submits his early poetic drafts to Jami for structural editing and metrical validation.
2. **The Comparative Thematic Structural Mapping:** The structural design of Navoi's epic poems is cross-examined against Jami's earlier works. Specifically, the introduction sections of Navoi's *Hayrat ul-Abrar* are mapped against Jami's *Tuhfat al-Ahrar* to extract how Navoi explicitly defines Jami's spiritual authority.
3. **The Socio-Pedagogical Contextualization Stage:** The study links their literary expressions to their actual historical actions, such as their collaborative funding of public madrasas, libraries, and Sufi lodges (*khanqahs*) in Herat. This stage bridges abstract poetic expressions with their functional role as community organizers.

4. Results

The qualitative and textological analysis of the primary sources demonstrates that the relationship between Alisher Navoi and Abdurahman Jami operated on three real, interconnected levels that transformed the literary landscape of the Timurid era.

The descriptive field insights reveal the following key dimensions:

- **The Structural-Poetic Scaffolding:** Textual tracking confirms that Jami served as the primary editor for Navoi's early Chagatai compositions. Navoi's submission of his *Khamsa* chapters to Jami was not a mere formality, but a rigorous peer-review process where Jami checked semantic clarity and rhetorical flow. This direct feedback loop allowed Chagatai Turkic to achieve structural parity with Persian poetic models.
- **The Spiritual Egalitarian Alliance:** In *Khamsat ul-Mutahayyirin*, Navoi preserves instances where Jami refused to treat him as an inferior student. Instead, Jami addressed Navoi as a "spiritual peer" and a dear friend. This structural egalitarianism within the *ustoz-shogird* tradition broke rigid

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bureaucratic boundaries, showing that intellectual partnership overrode state positions and age differences.

- **The Practical Socio-Cultural Collaboration:** The research highlights that their friendship was structurally expressed through coordinated cultural patronage. Jami provided the spiritual vision and educational curricula, while Navoi leveraged his political power and personal wealth to build the infrastructure. Together, they turned Herat into a resilient sanctuary for free scholarship and cross-lingual artistic development.

5. Discussion

The outcomes of this research illustrate that the *ustoz-shogird* and friendship traditions between Navoi and Jami must be understood as an active, structural methodology for cultural preservation rather than an idealized historical myth. Traditional literary accounts often present their relationship as simple flattery. However, textological breakdowns show that their partnership was a strategic alliance designed to maintain ethical governance and protect intellectual independence under the turbulent political conditions of the late Timurid state.

From a pedagogical perspective, the success of this mentorship template lies in its non-punitive, collaborative nature. Jami did not enforce his personal poetic style upon Navoi; instead, he encouraged him to develop the expressive capacities of the Turkic language, which culminated in Navoi's defense of the language in *Muhakamat ul-Lughatayn*. This shows that a true master scaffolds the disciple's unique identity rather than demanding imitation. Their relationship serves as an early proof that cross-cultural and multi-lingual collaboration does not dilute local identity. Instead, it strengthens and expands national artistic expression within a broader global context.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

The historical and literary traditions of friendship and mentorship exemplified by Alisher Navoi and Abdurahman Jami constitute a core cultural heritage for the modernization of humanitarian education and social work paradigms in the Republic of Uzbekistan. Based on the qualitative and textological insights established in this study, the following institutional recommendations are put forward:

1. Contemporary academic curricula in higher philological and pedagogical institutions should redesign modules on classical Eastern literature to highlight the *ustoz-shogird* tradition as an active methodology for cross-cultural communication and collaborative learning.
2. The ethical models of friendship and social responsibility extracted from *Khamsat ul-Mutahayyirin* should be adapted into training programs for modern social work specialists to enhance community-level cohesion, cultural mediation, and interpersonal empathy.

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