

PHILOSOPHICAL INTERPRETATION OF THE CONCEPT OF "NAFS"
(SOUL/SELF) IN ALISHER NAVOI'S DASTAN "HAYRAT UL-ABROR"

Maxsumov Maqsud Maxmut o'g'li

Doctoral student of Shakhrisabz state university e-mail: maqsudmaxsumov7@gmail.com Tel: (90)
392-92-22 <https://orcid.org/0009-0004-2637-5596>

Abstract: *The article provides a comprehensive analysis of the artistic and philosophical interpretation of the concept of "nafs" (soul/self) in Alisher Navoi's dastan "Hayrat ul-abror". Through the image of the Prophet's (peace be upon him) "nafs-i karim" in the second na't and the nafs(soul/self) of a tyrannical ruler in the third maqola, the highest and lowest states of nafs(soul/self) are revealed. It is shown that Navoi interprets nafs not as a static condition, but as a force that can be elevated through education, purification, and divine guidance. The compositional role of nafs(soul/self), its poetic devices (metaphor, comparison, repetition), and philosophical significance are examined. The study emphasizes the connection between the theme of nafs(soul/self) in Navoi's work and personal moral upbringing as well as social justice.*

Keywords: *nafs, nafs-i karim, "Hayrat ul-abror", Alisher Navoi, Sufi ideas, perfect man, tasawwuf, moral education, artistic interpretation.*

Alisher Navoi (1441–1501) is a great representative of Uzbek literature and the entire classical literature of the East, a thinker poet and statesman who left a great legacy not only in poetry, but also in the fields of philosophy, ethics and mysticism. His first epic in the "Khamsa" series - "Khairat ul-abror" (1483) is considered one of the most perfect examples of the artistic interpretation of Islamic-ethical and Sufi ideas. This work is 3988 verses long and consists of 63 chapters, 20 essays and 20 stories. The introductory part includes 21 chapters. The main purpose of the epic is to lead a person to perfection, reveal the struggle in his inner world and illuminate moral problems in society.

The unique feature of "Hayrat ul-abror" is that it artistically reflects various aspects of life - such as rule, justice, oppression, the spiritual and physical struggle of man, and the education of the soul - with great originality. In this work, Navoi used the traditional forms of the classical masnavi genre (hymn, exhortation, story), enriching them with deep philosophical and Sufi content. The work serves not only to give a moral lesson to the reader or listener, but also to deeply analyze the complexity of human nature and its internal contradictions.

The theme of the soul occupies a central place in Navoi's work. In the teachings of Sufism, the soul is usually interpreted as a symbol of "nafsi ammor" - low passions, egoism, animal nature and worldly ambitions. However, the great poet presents the soul not in a static, unchanging state, but as a force that can be elevated and purified through education, purification, asceticism and divine guidance. This idea determines the entire composition of the epic and becomes one of the main philosophical centers of Navoi's work. Navoi interprets the soul as the main obstacle to human perfection and, at the same time, as a means leading to higher spiritual levels, if properly educated.

The period of creation of "Khairat ul-abror" coincides with the heyday of the Timurid state. In writing this work, Navoi extensively used not only the Quran and hadiths, but also the teachings of great mystical thinkers (Jalaluddin Rumi, Imam Ghazali, Khoja Abdullah Ansari, etc.). The work also sharply criticizes the socio-political problems of that time - oppression, hypocrisy, greed, careerism, and moral decline. Navoi reveals the theme of the self not only at the level of religious exhortation, but also in a philosophical, moral, and social context. This took the work beyond the boundaries of its time and gave it universal significance.

The compositional structure of the epic also serves to deeply reveal the theme of the soul. Starting from the introduction and verses, various stages of the soul (the soul of the soul, the soul of the soul, and the soul of the soul) are gradually illuminated through articles and stories. Navoi artistically depicts the soul through animal symbols (dog, goat, elephant), satanic images (dajjal, iblis) and positive symbols (mirror, anqo bird, bud). These images allow for a sharp comparison of the negative and positive poles of the soul. In Navoi's work, the theme of the soul is seen not only as a matter of personal upbringing, but also as the moral basis of society and state governance. A tyrannical ruler, a hypocritical sheikh, or a slave of greed oppresses society as a result of the triumph of the human soul. On the contrary, a person whose soul has been purified and has reached the level of "noble soul" (the embodiment of the Prophet (pbuh)) is an example of justice, compassion, and perfection. Thus, the theme of the soul has become the artistic and philosophical centre of the epic. This article reveals the general artistic and philosophical interpretation of the concept of the soul in the epic "Khayrat ul-abror", using the image of the noble soul of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and the example of the ruler's soul in the third essay. Based on the analysis, the relevance and significance of Navoi's idea of the education of the soul for today are shown.

In the second line of the epic, the Prophet's soul is called "the noble soul." Here, Navoi describes in detail the difficulties of the Prophet's (pbuh) life: "no matter how many times the poison of oppression was crushed into a cup, it gave his mouth the taste of milk and sugar; when bitter things happened that made him cry, he repelled them with sweet behavior; when the people of hypocrisy threw stones at him at night, he smiled like dawn and advised people with good prayers. The poet, citing the verses "Azzama Qadrah" and "Karrama Wajhah", reinforces the great morality and noble soul of the Prophet with the Kuran.

This image reveals the highest level of the soul - the embodiment of a perfect person. As literary critic M. Muhiddinov noted, Sufis point to Hazrat Muhammad as the highest example of perfection. The saints, the qutubs, the abrors, and the ascetics are at the next level. "Noble soul" is the state of the soul, completely free from base desires and serving divine virtues (generosity, forbearance, justice, compassion). Here, the soul no longer becomes a means of personal gain, but a means of service to humanity and divine approval.

Navoi considers man to be a being between angels and animals. Man is created from a luminous spirit and earthy dust. If he listens to the soul, he becomes close to an animal; if he follows the soul, he becomes like an angel. The mystic scholar I. Hakkulov writes about the opposition between the soul and the soul: "In order to know the literature of Eastern

mysticism and classical philosophy, and to correctly interpret even the most complex and enigmatic topics covered in them, it is necessary to deeply understand the meaning and essence of two contrasting concepts. One of them is the soul and the soul, and the other is the science of death and death. In ancient times, in some sects, these were taught in the form of the science of death, the science of the soul, and the science of death and death." While the soul brings a person closer to God, the soul attracts him to worldly temptations. This opposition is the basis of a person's internal "struggle." Therefore, perfection is achieved by freeing the soul from the soul.

Angels are completely free from the impurities of the self: "Whoever is free from the impurities of the self, he is free from the impurities of the self." Thus, the idea of becoming a perfect person through the education of the self forms the main philosophical core of the epic. "There is no need for dry, blind obedience to Allah Almighty. Performing a good command out of fear of His wrath is not a sign of loyalty, but a show. Therefore, Sufis widely propagated the idea of loving Allah with all your heart, recognizing and knowing His essence and attributes, purifying the heart from the dust of lust and greed, and reaching God in an inner pure state and enjoying it."

In the third article, the theme of the self is explored in more depth using the example of rulers. The chapter begins with a call to justice for the sultans and a warning against the domination of the self. Navoi first describes the sultan as being so majestic that he is above the height of the sky, and the moon and the sun serve him: "O you who are above the height of the sky, you who are the stars, you who are the stars." However, he immediately reveals the danger of the ego, expressing it with the metaphor of a "dog": "In the sky, you are like a leopard, but in the path of the ego, you are a cruel one." The ego encourages the ruler to drunkenness, debauchery, and oppression. The curtains of the palace are described as being made of the souls of the people, and the stones are made of the blood of the people:

"The ties of the curtains are from the lives of the people,
The blood of the people is the blood of the people."

This powerful metaphor shows that the ego is not only a source of personal but also social oppression.

The structure of the article is typical of the classical masnavi style: moving from praise to warning, then advice and repentance. First, the ruler is idealized (the style of a hymn), then the state of being a slave to the ego, and finally a call to justice and gratitude is given. This anti-culmination method awakens moral alertness in the reader. Among the poetic devices, the metaphor of the "dog of the soul", the comparison of daytime oppression and night-time debauchery, the rhythmic repetition of the word "oppression" and Quranic allusions play an important role. Philosophically, the victory of the soul is interpreted as spiritual death, and justice as salvation. Gratitude is a means of overcoming the soul, leading to the acquisition of divine blessings: "One is grateful for the blessing of a who is grateful, will receive more."

In the initial part of the epic, the soul is revealed through two poles: the noble soul of the Prophet (high example) and the soul of the oppressive ruler (low state). This comparison emphasizes the need for the education of the soul and creates a foundation for subsequent articles. Navoi transforms the theme of self-interest into not just a religious

exhortation, but a philosophical basis for social justice, the morality of rulers, and human perfection. This interpretation is still relevant today, as the struggle for self-interest continues in the inner world of every person.

In Alisher Navoi's epic poem "Khayrat ul-abror", the concept of the ego is deeply and multifacetedly interpreted, becoming the artistic and philosophical center of the work. In the first chapters of the epic, the theme of the ego occupies an important place in terms of composition and forms the content core of the entire work. Navoi shows the ego not simply as a negative force, but as a complex dialectic of human nature: on the one hand, it is a source of base ambitions, egoism and oppression, on the other hand, through proper upbringing, purification and divine guidance, it reaches the level of "noble ego" and becomes a force leading to perfect humanity.

Through the image of the noble ego of the Prophet (peace be upon him), Navoi demonstrates the highest example of the ego, responding with meekness, gentleness and kindness even in the face of oppression and suffering. This image proves that the ego can be freed from egoism and elevated to a state that serves divine qualities. In contrast, the third article describes the ego of a tyrannical ruler through the metaphor of the "dog of ego," showing how the triumph of ego leads to personal and social destruction. This polar comparison further highlights the need for ego education.

Navoi's interpretation of the ego is a vivid example of the combination of Sufi philosophy with fiction. He sees the ego as the key to human perfection, calling the reader to self-knowledge, inner struggle and purification. The epic not only illuminates the moral problems of its time, but also raises issues that are relevant in any society - justice, oppression, greed and perfection. In today's globalized world, when materialism and consumerism are increasing, Navoi's idea of self-education is especially relevant. If a person does not control his ego, it becomes difficult to achieve justice, peace and spiritual elevation in society. Thus, in the epic "Khayrat ul-abror" the theme of ego is interpreted not only as a personal upbringing, but also as an important factor determining the moral basis of society and state governance. Navoi thereby showed the reader the way to become a "perfect person" and transformed mystical ideas into a vital and practical content. This work remains the most perfect Sufi-moral model of self-education in Navoi studies and can serve as a spiritual guide for today's generation.

REFERENCES:

1. Alisher Navoi. A perfect collection of works. 20 volumes. Volume 7: Hayratul-Abrar. T.: "Science", 1991. - 390 p.
2. M. Muhiddinov. A perfect person is the ideal of literature. - T.: Ma'naviyat, 2005. - 208 p.
3. Komilov N. Sufism. - T.: Uzbekistan, 2009. - 447 p.
4. Hakkulov I. Spirituality and sensuality // "World literature", 2015, issue 10.
5. Z.R.Yaxshieva. Theoretical Approaches And International Experience In Teaching Sciences. Multidisciplinary journal of science and technology. Volume-5, Issue-10.

6.Yaxshieva. Z.R. The Role Of Innovative Pedagogical Practices And Digital Technologies In Education. International Conference on modern Development of Pedagogy And Linguistics, 2(9), 187–195. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17409521>.
<https://universalconference.us/universalconference/index.php/icmdpl/article/view/5467>.

7.Yakhshieva. Z.R. International Experience In Teaching Sciences Uzing Interactive Whiteboards. International conference on interdisciplinary science, 2(10), 182–184. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17406024>