

Bright Life Pages

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Abstract: *This article presents new information about the scientific biography of the representative of Uzbek classical literature, poet, publisher Sayid Haybatullahkhodzhi Hislat. The literary environment of Tashkent and the place of the poet in it, literary directions, and creative activity were studied.*

Key words: *Enlightenment, “Armugani Hislat”, Anthology, Ghazal, Marsiya, Translation, Publisher, Family Tree*

Introduction

Many enlightened writers, poets, and scholars in the history of our people have served the development of the nation, religion, science, and the progress of the homeland. Appreciating their honorable contributions, studying their works, and presenting them to the wider public are among the important tasks of today[1].

The literature of the national awakening period, which emerged in the second half of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, occupies a special place in the history of our national literature[2]. The creators of this period renewed traditional poetry both in content and form. Through their works imbued with the spirit of enlightenment, they initiated a stage of progress not only in literature but also in the life of society and the nation as a whole[3].

One of the devoted sons of his people, a compiler of bayaz, poet, publisher, translator, and scribe, Sayid Haybatullohoja Xislat was one of the active enlighteners of his time[4].

The poet’s full name was Haybatullohoja Sayid Orifxoja ogli, and “Xislat” was his literary pseudonym. The word “Xislat” (from Arabic) means “quality,” “characteristic,” or “trait,” and in explanatory dictionaries it is defined as an important positive feature, attribute, or virtue of a person or object[5].

As noted in the preface of the book “Tarannum”, “The full lineage of the poet Xislat is Sayid Haybatullohoja Eshon ibn Sayid Orifxoja Eshon, and he is a descendant of Hazrat Shaykh Zayniddin Ota ibn Hazrat Shaykh Shahobiddin Suhrawardi” [6].

Methodology

This study applies a qualitative historical-literary analysis to examine the scientific biography and literary activity of Sayid Haybatullokhodzhi Xislat. The research is based on primary and secondary sources, including archival manuscripts, published anthologies, genealogical records, and scholarly studies related to Uzbek classical literature.

The methodology consists of three main approaches. First, a textual analysis was conducted to study Xislat's literary works, including his ghazals, translations, and anthologies such as *Armug'oni Xislat* and *Taranum*. Second, a biographical method was applied to reconstruct the poet's life, educational background, and creative environment using historical documents and scholarly literature. Third, a comparative analysis was used to evaluate Xislat's role within the literary environment of Tashkent and to identify his contribution to the development of enlightenment literature.

The research also incorporates elements of source criticism to assess the reliability of historical data and interpret genealogical and literary evidence. This integrated methodological approach enables a comprehensive understanding of Xislat's intellectual legacy and his place in Uzbek literary history.

Results and Discussion

According to the information provided by the researcher Ozod Mo'minxo'ja, the father of Shaykh Zayniddin Bobo – Shaykh Shahobiddin – lived in the 12th century and served as a minister and envoy of the Baghdad Caliph Nasir. He is also considered the founder of the Suhrawardiyya teaching. Shaykh Shahobiddin's work "Awarif al-Ma'arif" explains the foundations of the Suhrawardiyya Sufi doctrine. In the early 13th century, Shaykh Zayniddin Bobo settled in the Kukcha area of Tashkent as a propagator of this teaching (the word "Kukcha" derives from Persian "kuh" meaning "mountain," i.e., "small hill") [7].

In the article "The Genealogy of Shaykh Zayniddin Bobo" by the philosopher and scholar Omonulla Sayid Fayzullaxo'ja o'g'li, who belongs to the lineage of Haybatulloho'ja Xislat, the following information is presented: "Our ancestors have been living for over 800 years in the Kukcha district, at the foothills of the cemetery of Shaykh Zayniddin Bobo (1164–1259)... Shaykh Zayniddin Bobo is the greatest among the sayyids, a noble and miraculous figure among honorable people, the spiritual pole of the enlightened, and a reliable guide. The well-known poet Xislat is one of the 43rd generations in the lineage of Shaykh Zayniddin."

It is also noted that the genealogy of Shaykh Zayniddin Bobo consists of 44 generations. Additionally, three more ancestral levels are mentioned in genealogical records. It can be added that three further generations — the 45th, 46th, and 47th — are currently living. Thus, in total, there are about 50 generations, representing approximately 1200 years of lineage. The original ancestor, Sayid Muhammad Sultan Bakriddin, was a contemporary of the great scholar Muhammad al-Khwarizmi [8].

The genealogical record covers a period of approximately 1200 years, and a document bearing the seals of 19 chief judges (*qozikalon*) is attached to the article.

The poet was born in 1880 (according to some sources, 1882) in the Chorsu neighborhood of the Beshyog'och district in Tashkent.

His grandmother, Shamsi oyim, a literate and wise woman of her time, recognized his exceptional abilities and sent him to study under Eshon oyim, who lived near the Kukcha gate. After studying there for 4–5 years, Haybatulloh was sent to Rozia otin, who resided in the Ishqobod neighborhood of Tashkent, in order to further deepen his knowledge.

It was during this period that the young poet first developed an interest in poetry. He once heard a girl named Saidakhon, one of Rozia otin's students, recite a ghazal in a melodious voice beginning with the line: "Ko'zlarining cho'higa Mirrix-u Cho'lpon o'xshamas..." This deeply impressed him and awakened in him a passion for writing poetry.

Having a strong inclination toward literature and poetry, he began practicing verse writing from the age of nine. Under the guidance of Rozia otin, he reached a high level of preparation and entered school already literate.

During his school years, the young Haybatulloh avidly read the works of Alisher Navoi, Muhammad Suleiman ogli Fuzuli, and Mirza Abdulqodir Bedil. In 1898, he entered the Kukaldosh madrasa, where he studied under the respected scholar Eshonxo‘ja qori. At the same time, there is information that he also received education from teachers at the Khoja Ahror and Kesak Qorg‘on madrasas.

While continuing his studies, he devoted much of his time to writing poetry. In his autobiography, he writes: “As soon as I entered the madrasa, I devoted myself to reading and writing poetry. Some teachers would warn me, saying that I might remain without proper knowledge and should not engage too much in poetry. However, without paying attention to their words, I became increasingly passionate about writing poetry” [9].

Due to financial difficulties and hardships within the family, the poet studied at night and learned a craft during the day. Initially, he became an apprentice to a lantern maker named Qoraxo‘ja and, over the course of a year, mastered the art of making lanterns (according to his relatives, a lantern crafted by Haybatulloh himself is preserved in the house of Usta Usmon). He later learned traditional carpentry and construction from Usta Komil and remained devoted to these crafts throughout his life.

One of the prominent poets who played a significant role in Haybatulloh’s intellectual and creative development was Karimbek Sharifbek ogli Kamiy (1880 – 1923). Recognizing a number of distinctive qualities in him, Kamiy gave him the literary pseudonym “Xislat.” It was also Kamiy who helped shape his poetic talent and introduced him to literary figures such as Muqimiy, Oraziy, and Toshxo‘ja Asiriy. The poet himself recalls this encounter as follows:

“By chance, I once visited a friend’s house. On a shelf, I noticed a book. When I opened it, I saw written in beautiful handwriting: ‘Ghazal of Mawlono Kamiy Tashkandi’:

‘Which rose-faced beloved’s memory made you lament, O nightingale...’

This deeply affected me. It rekindled the extinguished flame in my heart. I quickly returned from the visit and went back to the madrasa, searching for Kamiy. After much searching, I found him in the Beglarbegi Madrasa. He was a modest, neat man, with a well-groomed beard and mustache, soft-spoken and refined. I told him about my interest in poetry. Kamiy was very pleased and said it was good. From that day on, he began to guide and educate me” [10].

There is also information indicating that Xislat maintained creative collaboration with the poet, writer, and scholar Gafur Ghulam. As Muminjon Muhammadjon ogli Toshqin writes: “Among his close friends and companions were Tuychi Hafiz Toshmuhammad ogli, the instrument repairmen brothers Usta Usmon and Usta Abdurahim Zufar ogli, musicians Shoqosim and Shorahim, as well as writers such as Gafur Ghulam and poets like Shoaskar Shoqosimov (‘Tamkin’) and others” [11].

“...My uncle, the famous poet Xislat, hosted Abdullah Qodiriy, Sulaymon Khojaev, and Gafur Ghulam in his home,” writes Omonulla Fayzullaev. “They were close friends and kindred spirits in poetry and the arts. Xislat and Gafur Ghulam shared a father-son-like bond. In 1941, during preparations for Nizomi’s jubilee, it was Gafur Ghulam who recommended entrusting Xislat with the task of translating this great poet’s works into Uzbek” [12].

During his lifetime, Xislat showed a deep interest in the works of Bedil, which was widespread among Uzbek intellectuals of the time. In his scholarly work *Mirzo Bedil*, academician Ibrohim Muminov mentions Xislat as a member of the “Bedilkhonlar” group [13].

Omonulla Fayzullaev recounts an episode highlighting the meeting of Xislat with Gafur Ghulam

and Ibrohim Muminov and their shared engagement in Bedil studies:

“It was April 1945. Gafur Ghulam and Ibrohim Muminov were staying in adjacent rooms at the ‘Moscow’ hotel for several days. On the last day, when Gafur entered Ibrohim’s room, Ibrohim was still working on Bedil manuscripts. Gafur began, ‘You’ve been sitting on Bedil day and night, like Majnun, sighing morning and evening, just like Xislat.’ Ibrohim replied, ‘What can I do? My heart longs for the garden strolls of the beloved.’ After this poetic exchange, the two shared their thoughts about Xislat, the head of the Bedilkhon school in Tashkent. When they came to Tashkent, Gafur promised to introduce Ibrohim to Xislat. Ibrohim later told me in conversation, ‘Gafur took me to Xislat’s courtyard in Kokcha, and in a sense, the three of us engaged in Bedilkhon study’” [14].

At the time when Xislat’s poetry began to resonate deeply with the public, and the people of Tashkent started calling him “Poet Xislat” or “Xislat Eshon,” dark days shadowed his personal life. His daughter Malohat, aged four, and his son Nisbathon, aged five, died of measles, and shortly afterward, his wife Sarvihon passed away after a severe illness.

Xislat’s close friendship with the renowned poet Mulla Toychi Toshmuhammad oghli (1868–1943) provided him with significant creative energy and revitalized his spirit.

One of Xislat’s initiatives in publishing was pioneering among Uzbek calligrapher-poets by printing his own manuscripts, marking an important stage in the development of Uzbek literature. His initiative was later supported by subsequent poets. Xislat carefully selected the finest works of classical and contemporary poets and published them in manuscript collections. His four anthologies—Armugoni Xislat, Savghoti Xislat, Tuhfai Xislat, and Hadyai Xislat -gather over 100 of his own poems and more than 300 poems by 86 other Uzbek poets. Prominent poets and musicians of the time, including Mulla Toychi Toshmuhammadov, Akbarqori Haydarov, and Ghulom Ganiev, set Xislat’s ghazals to music alongside the works of Navoi, Mashrab, Ogahi, and Muqimi.

An important aspect of Xislat’s literary work was his activity as a translator. He entered this field at an early age. According to historical records, while studying at the madrasa, Xislat translated the philosophical narrative *Mushu Gurba* (“The Mouse and the Cat”) by the famous Persian writer Obayd Zakoni (1270 - 1370) from Persian into Uzbek. This translation was printed in 1903 and quickly gained popularity among the general public, with some excerpts even incorporated into school textbooks. At the time, Xislat was only 20 years old, yet he rendered *Mushu Gurba* into a sophisticated masnavi form, demonstrating the skill of a mature poet.

Following the success of this translation, Xislat pursued further literary and translation work with great dedication. He writes about his efforts:

"Thirty-five years ago (in 1906), I translated and published the prose-based epics *Layli va Majnun* and *Farhod va Shirin* by the Persian poet Omar Baki, as well as the first volume of *Jangnoma*, called *Barzuyi sher*, by the famous Iranian poet Ferdowsi (446 pages). I also translated Sheikh Bahawuddin Amili’s 740-verse Arabic-Persian collection of moral tales, *Non va Halvo*, into verse" [Jalolov A.].

Conclusion

In addition, Xislat translated a number of shorter poetic works from Persian. In 1940–1941, on the occasion of the 800th anniversary of the great Azerbaijani poet Nizami Ganjavi, Xislat translated Nizami’s epic *Layli va Majnun* into Uzbek. An excerpt from this translation was published in issues 11–12 of the journal *Yangi Hayot* in 1940. Later, in 1947, in Tashkent, a collection of excerpts from Nizami’s *Panj Ganj* was published under the title *Guldasta*, dedicated to Nizami’s birth. This

publication became the second printed work resulting from Xislat's creative efforts after Mushu Gurba. However, the poet himself did not live to see this book [15].

Xislat wrote the following verses in his own poetry:

"I wished day and night to mark this world, To leave a sign of myself behind... I said, my purpose is - to leave a work, for my friends, a message, kind and kind..."

The poet achieved his purpose. His poems and ghazals remain cherished in the hearts of the people, his songs continue to be performed, his students and followers carry on his traditions, and his works elevate the spiritual life of society. Studying Xislat's oeuvre, bringing his reflective and educationally valuable works to a wider audience, preparing his poems for publication, and highlighting his achievements in translation and publishing remain important tasks today.

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