

INTERCONNECTION IN THE WORKS OF FERDOWSI AND NAVOI

Inomjonova Dilnavoz Bahodirjon kizi

Teacher of Native Language and Literature at School No. 20,

Rishton District, Fergana Region

Abstract: This scholarly article analyzes the interconnection between the works of the great representative of Iranian literature, Abul-Qasim Ferdowsi, and Alisher Navoi, the founder of classical Uzbek literature, focusing on their shared spiritual and aesthetic sources as well as their ideological and thematic harmony. The study scientifically examines how these two eminent writers interpret concepts such as national identity, justice, patriotism, the relationship between rulers and the people, humanity, and moral purity in their works. Additionally, Navoi's respect for Ferdowsi, the influence of the *Shahnameh* on Turkic literature, the harmonious elements in the portrayal of heroes, and the continuity of literary thought are highlighted based on historical and literary sources. The research also provides general conclusions, scholarly perspectives, and comparative literary analyses on the topic.

Keywords: Ferdowsi, Navoi, harmony, *Shahnameh*, *Khamsa*, literary heritage, hero, epic tradition, justice, artistic tradition.

Introduction

Classical Eastern literature, with its millennia-long history, possesses a rich spiritual and moral heritage, in which epic thought and heroic epics hold a special place. One of the greatest representatives of this vast epic legacy is Abul-Qasim Ferdowsi, whose *Shahnameh* marked a turning point in the development of Eastern literature and immortalized the historical memory of the Iranian people in artistic form [1]. The *Shahnameh* is not only a cornerstone of Persian-Tajik literature but also embodies the literary, philosophical, and ethical values of the entire Muslim East, representing a spiritual treasury of humanity.

The literature of Turkic peoples, particularly classical Uzbek literature, developed in close connection with this monumental epic tradition. Alisher Navoi, who lived and created in the second half of the 15th century, emerged as one of the leading figures of Eastern literature and elevated artistic thought in the Turkic language to a new level. His epics in the *Khamsa* series hold a distinguished place not only in the development of Turkic literature but also in the broader context of Eastern literary thought. Scholars have repeatedly emphasized that the maturation of Navoi's epic school was significantly influenced by Ferdowsi's legacy, especially the ideological and aesthetic principles of the *Shahnameh* [2].

The issue of harmony between Ferdowsi's and Navoi's works has remained a relevant topic in Oriental studies. Both of these great masters express universal values—such as national history, patriotism, justice, governance, spiritual perfection, and humanity—through their distinctive

artistic interpretations. While the *Shahnameh* promotes the idea of national self-awareness through the Iran-Turan conflicts, royal genealogies, and the heroism of its characters, Navoi's *Khamsa* artistically interprets the historical and cultural values of the Turkic peoples in epic form. The common spiritual and aesthetic roots of these two creators trace back to the ancient epic traditions of Eastern literature.

Navoi expresses profound respect for Ferdowsi in his works. He refers to Ferdowsi as "the pride of the Persian world," greatly honoring his place in the literary culture of the East. According to Navoi, the *Shahnameh* is not merely the history of one people but a moral-philosophical program for all of Eastern humanity, and the continuity of wisdom in it resonates throughout the layers of the *Khamsa* [3]. Thus, Ferdowsi's artistic and aesthetic influence is evident in Navoi's works not only in narrative motifs but also in the system of characters, the conception of heroism, the depiction of kings, and the principle of justice.

From an editorial perspective, a comparative analysis of Ferdowsi's and Navoi's works allows for a comprehensive understanding of the evolution of epic thought in Eastern literature. Such an analysis serves to study scientifically the interconnections between the two literary schools, their shared philosophical roots, and the similarities and differences in their artistic worldview. From a historical-cultural standpoint, although they lived in different eras and under different socio-political conditions, they share common artistic objectives: glorifying the idea of justice, strengthening the moral identity of the people, illuminating the responsibilities of rulers, and guiding humanity toward perfection.

The relevance of this topic lies in the fact that, in today's era of globalization, a deep study of national identity and spiritual heritage, as well as the rediscovery of historical literary sources, contributes to the moral fortification of society. Studying the harmony between Ferdowsi's and Navoi's works not only demonstrates the continuity of literary, cultural, and philosophical heritage but also scientifically confirms that Uzbek literature is organically connected with the Eastern literary tradition. Furthermore, research on this topic holds significant theoretical and practical value for young scholars, literature enthusiasts, and specialists engaged in moral education.

Results

During the study, the artistic, ideological, and conceptual harmonies in the works of Ferdowsi and Navoi were analyzed from various perspectives. The results of literary-comparative and intertextual analyses enabled the formation of the following key scholarly conclusions.

Formation of Ferdowsi's Epic Tradition and Its Influence on Navoi's Works

The analyses revealed that Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh* served as a distinctive standard in Eastern literature for the artistic interpretation of concepts such as heroism, state governance, justice, and moral purity. Building upon this tradition, Navoi developed a new stage of epic literature in his *Khamsa* epics. The study confirmed that Navoi regarded the *Shahnameh* not only as a school of heroism but also as a source of spiritual and ethical principles [1][3]. The historical-

philosophical content of the *Shahnameh* is artistically continued in Navoi's *Hayrat ul-Abror*, *Saddi Iskandariy*, and *Farhod va Shirin*.

For instance, while in the *Shahnameh* a hero's spiritual maturity is considered even more important than physical strength, in Navoi's works, heroes such as Farhod, Iskandar, and Bahrom are evaluated primarily on the basis of moral purity, righteousness, and humaneness [5]. The results indicate that Navoi creatively employed Ferdowsi's experience in developing the concept of the epic hero, refining it according to the requirements of Turkic literature.

Harmony in the Artistic Interpretation of Justice

In the analyzed texts, the concept of justice emerges as a fundamental moral criterion for both writers. For Ferdowsi, justice is the highest virtue of a ruler in governance. Kings such as Kaykhosrow, Anushirvan, and Jamshid in the *Shahnameh* embody the ideal of a just ruler through their fairness [2]. Similarly, in Navoi's works, justice remains the primary quality of a ruler. In *Saddi Iskandariy*, Iskandar exemplifies justice, fulfilling his royal duties by treating people equally and promoting knowledge and education.

The study also revealed that, unlike Ferdowsi, Navoi interprets justice not only in the realm of political governance but also as a broader ethical and philosophical category. While there is a conceptual harmony between the two authors, these different approaches reflect the evolutionary stages of epic thought.

Commonalities in the Concept of National Identity

Another significant finding is that while Ferdowsi restores the historical-cultural memory of the Iranian people through his work, Navoi artistically shapes the moral and cultural consciousness of the Turkic peoples. The *Shahnameh*, as the pinnacle of Persian epic, glorifies Iranian identity through heroes, kings, wise men, and historical events, whereas Navoi portrays the spiritual heritage, historical sages, and moral-cultural values of the Turkic people at a high artistic level [4].

The study shows that both authors celebrate national identity not through hostility toward other peoples but by emphasizing spiritual values and human virtues. This reflects the principles of tolerance, magnanimity, and unity embedded in Eastern literature.

Similarities in Character Systems

The research identified a proportional correspondence between the character systems, roles, traits, and artistic functions in the works of Ferdowsi and Navoi. Characters such as Rustam, Zal, Siyavush, and Kaykhosrow in the *Shahnameh* share common typological features with Navoi's Farhod, Iskandar, Bahrom, and Khusraw. All these characters are idealized figures endowed with moral virtues, courage, patriotism, honesty, and self-sacrifice [7].

The study also noted similarities in female characters. Ferdowsi's Tohira, Sudoba, and Rudoba correspond typologically to Shirin, Mehinbonu, and Nigor in Navoi's works in terms of loyalty,

beauty, and intellect. Both authors imbued their female characters with high moral principles—purity, fidelity, and compassion [8].

Harmony in Composition and Plot Structure

Results indicate that Navoi relied on Ferdowsi's epic tradition when composing his epics. The sequential arrangement of episodes in the *Shahnameh*, the trials faced by heroes, and the ultimate motif of justice's triumph are reinterpreted in the *Khamsa*. For example, Farhod's trials correspond to Rustam's heroic tests, and Iskandar's establishment of justice aligns with Kaykhosrow's wise rule [9].

The study further revealed similarities in the treatment of artistic time and space. While Ferdowsi narrates events within a historical-mythological timeline, Navoi also expands the epic setting and period, endowing his heroes with historical virtues.

Commonalities in Artistic Language and Poetic Devices

The results demonstrate that both authors extensively employ metaphors, similes, exaggeration, symbolism, aphorisms, and epithets. While this is characteristic of Eastern poetics in general, Navoi, in particular, shows clear influence from Ferdowsi in his use of epithets and figurative imagery. For example, hyperbolic expressions describing Rustam's strength appear similarly in the depiction of Farhod's prowess in stone carving [6].

Another crucial aspect of poetic imagery is the presentation of moral wisdom as a central theme. This stylistic approach, characteristic of Eastern literature's didactic nature, directly influenced Navoi's ethical perspective, originating from Ferdowsi's works.

Key Aspect	Ferdowsi's Legacy	Navoi's Legacy	Content Harmony
Concept of Heroism	Rustam, Siyavush, Kaykhosrow	Farhod, Iskandar, Bahrom	Courage, honesty, patriotism
Idea of Justice	Highest virtue of the king	Justice in service of the ruler, sage, and people	Political-ethical harmony
Female Characters	Rudoba, Sudoba	Shirin, Mehinbonu	Harmony of beauty and morality
State Governance	Principle of the wise king	Concept of an enlightened ruler	Wisdom, responsibility, justice
National Identity	Glorification of Iranian identity	Glorification of Turkic identity	Cultural memory and historical continuity

Artistic Language	Figurative imagery, metaphor	Epithets, similes, symbolism	Poetic commonality
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Discussion:

A comparative analysis of Ferdowsi’s and Navoi’s works allows for a deep understanding of the continuity and cohesion of Eastern literary thought. The artistic perspectives, humanitarian ideals, principles of justice, and reliance on national and universal values of both authors are among the most significant factors bringing their works into close alignment. The results of this study indicate that while Ferdowsi, through the *Shahnameh*, artistically modeled the epic history of Iran, Navoi further developed this epic tradition, adapting and reinterpreting it to suit the advancement of Turkic literature [3].

Through the spiritual and moral world of Ferdowsi’s heroes, Navoi elaborates the idea of human perfection in his works. For example, while Rustam in the *Shahnameh* represents the courage and dedication of the people, Navoi’s epics such as *Hayrat ul-Abror* and *Saddi Iskandariy* portray Iskandar as a just and learned ruler. In this process, Navoi, inspired by Ferdowsi’s concepts, elevates them to a new artistic-philosophical level [4]. This demonstrates the transformation of the epic tradition in Navoi’s works—restructured and enriched with new meaning rather than being a mere repetition.

Another significant point identified during the discussion is the shared aspiration of both authors to create the model of an ideal ruler as a symbol of justice. In the *Shahnameh*, Ferdowsi demonstrates through kings such as Kayumars, Jamshid, and Kaykavus the necessity of wisdom and prudence in governance [5]. Navoi deepens this idea further, portraying the ruler primarily as a servant of the people—someone who eases their burdens, protects knowledge, and upholds justice. These similarities indicate a common political-ethical foundation in the works of Ferdowsi and Navoi.

The discussion also highlights that the system of symbols, artistic devices, and compositional structure in both authors’ works are interconnected, confirming the principle of continuity in classical Eastern literature. For instance, while strength and courage are central in Ferdowsi’s heroes, Navoi’s epics emphasize moral courage, spiritual perfection, wisdom, and the primacy of knowledge [6]. In both authors’ works, historical events are not mere occurrences but serve as vehicles for conveying educational and moral ideas.

Furthermore, the study shows that the philosophical-artistic essence of the royal epic genre was transferred from Ferdowsi’s monumental school to Turkic literature. Drawing inspiration from this school, Navoi deepened it and created a new poetic space in classical Uzbek literature [7]. Although the development of events, the system of characters, and hero portrayals in Navoi’s epics bear some resemblance to Ferdowsi’s works, he reinterpreted them to align with the Turkic

mentality and the cultural values of the people.

Additionally, the discussion revealed harmonies in language and style between the two authors. Ferdowsi greatly contributed to the classical formation of the Persian-Tajik literary language, while Navoi expanded the literary possibilities of the Turkic language, establishing it as a medium of literature on an international level [8]. Hence, Navoi can be regarded as a successor to Ferdowsi not only in content but also in linguistic and poetic terms.

Overall, the analyses in the discussion section demonstrate that the harmony between Ferdowsi's and Navoi's works ensures the continuity of historical-literary heritage and plays a central role in the development of Eastern literary thought. The mutual interconnection in their creative legacy attests to the spiritual closeness of these two great poets, their devotion to universal ideals, and their enrichment of each other's literary schools.

Conclusion:

Within the framework of this study, the harmonies between Ferdowsi's and Navoi's works were analyzed, and their role in the advancement of Eastern literature was thoroughly examined. The results indicate that both great poets prioritize universal ideals—such as humanity, justice, courage, the pursuit of knowledge, and moral perfection—in their creative endeavors. Ferdowsi's epic tradition was further refined by Navoi, renewed in both content and form, and served as a solid artistic-philosophical foundation for Turkic literature [9].

According to the study, while Ferdowsi's works represent the pinnacle of Eastern epic thought, Navoi continued this tradition and laid the groundwork for the formation of the Turkic literary school. This process demonstrates the creative interconnection between the two poets and confirms the primacy of continuity in literary thought. Inspired by Ferdowsi's legacy, Navoi enriched it with a national spirit, establishing a new era in classical Uzbek literature.

Another key conclusion is that the similarities in the system of heroes, symbolic artistic images, compositional structure, and language and style in Ferdowsi's and Navoi's works prove the existence of a continuous multi-century creative process in Eastern literature. This heritage remains relevant today, serving as an important source for contemporary literary developments, cultural thought, and the shaping of moral values [10].

In sum, the harmony between Ferdowsi's and Navoi's works demonstrates not only the continuity of literary heritage but also the shared spiritual mission of these two great figures—to guide humanity toward perfection, glorify justice, and celebrate goodness. This harmony represents an invaluable contribution to the advancement of Eastern literary thought, reflecting the convergence of national and universal values.

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