

The Musammat Genre in Ahmad Tabibiy's Lyrics

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Abstract:

This article examines the poetics and aesthetic features of the musammat genre in Uzbek classical literature, particularly as manifested in the works of Ahmad Tabibiy, a prominent bilingual poet, anthology compiler, and translator of the 19th century. Despite Tabibiy's significant place in the history of Uzbek literature, his works, especially his poems in the musammat genre, have not yet been fully studied. This research analyzes the historical development of the musammat genre, its structural and compositional peculiarities, and provides a detailed examination of Tabibiy's mastery in all forms of this genre except musallas. The study reveals that Tabibiy created 367 musammat poems in Uzbek, making him one of the most prolific contributors to this genre. Through textual analysis and comparative study, the article demonstrates how Tabibiy's musammats enrich our understanding of genre development in Uzbek classical literature and reflect the poetic traditions of his time.

Keywords: musallas, mukhammas, murabba, musammat genre, genesis, poetry, literary heritage, genre development, aesthetic features.

Introduction

The creative legacy of any author is primarily manifested in their works and the divans (poetry collections) they compiled. Ahmad Tabibiy is one of the creators who holds a special place in the history of Uzbek national literature. He occupies an important position in Uzbek classical literature as a bilingual poet, anthology compiler, epic poet, and translator. Although some research on the poet's work was conducted during the Soviet era and the independence years, the scholarly community is not fully aware of his creative heritage, particularly his divans and the lyrical works in the musammat genre contained within them.

Research conducted by F. Ganikhujayev, Sh. Amonov, and S. Matkarimova has focused on the poet's biography and his Turkish divans. According to Sh. Amonov, "These studies contain repetitive information. The main purpose of analyzing sources related to the poet's biography and

determining the scope and thematic range of Turkish divans has not been set in the conducted research. Additionally, very few examples from the poet's Turkish divans have been published over the years, with their number not exceeding 50" [1]. This necessitates a comprehensive study of the poet's divans and their poetic and artistic features.

This article aims to examine the poetics of the musammat genre in Tabibiy's works, its literary-aesthetic significance, and its place in the development of Uzbek classical poetry.

Literature Review and Research Methodology

The musammat genre occupies an important place in Uzbek classical literature. The term "musammat" is Arabic, meaning "pearls strung on a thread" which metaphorically describes the structure of this poetic form. As Atoullah Husayni noted, "Some Arabic scholars have said that tasmit in language means stringing pearls on a thread, and in terminology, it means that all parts of a verse or some of them are rhymed differently from the usual rhyme, and the verse is like a pearl thread and the rhymed parts are like beads strung on it" [2].

The origin of the musammat genre can be traced back to ancient Arabic literature (pre-Islamic Arabic literature). Literary sources note: "Musammats appeared in the 9th-10th centuries in Andalusian Arabic (Arab-Spanish) literature. They gained great importance in the development of later literature. As a result of literary connections and influence, they became widespread in the literature of Eastern peoples, including Uzbek classical literature" [3].

The development of musammat in Arabic literature is associated with poetic forms such as "zajal" and "muwashshah". Ibn Khaldun in his work "Muqaddam" states: "Zajal is one of the poetic forms formed on the basis of muwashshah. These poetic forms later spread to the eastern regions of the Arabs, and in the 12th-13th centuries, new forms emerged under their influence. Among them, the most widely spread were poetic types used with the terms "tashtir" and "takhmis" [4].

The musammat genre entered Turkish literature through Persian-Tajik literature, but it is not an exact copy of the Arabic or Persian-Tajik forms. Over centuries, Turkish creators' creative approach resulted in the development of national individuality in the genre. According to A. Abdusattorov, "The forms of musammat that existed in Arab-Spanish literature at the end of the 9th century entered Persian-Tajik literature in the 10th-12th centuries through the works of Rudaki, Manuchehri, and Ma'sudi Sadi Salmon, and were developed" [5].

Musammat has a unique stanzaic structure, with each stanza having its own rhyme pattern. The number of lines in each stanza can vary, forming different types of musammat:

1. Murabba – four lines per stanza
2. Mukhammas – five lines per stanza
3. Musaddas – six lines per stanza
4. Musabba – seven lines per stanza
5. Musamman – eight lines per stanza
6. Mutassa – nine lines per stanza
7. Muashshar – ten lines per stanza

Sheikh Ahmad Tarazi in his work "Fununu-l-balogha" provides information about poetic genres: "Know that in the terminology of all poets, the types of poetry that are considered reliable are ten types: qasida, ghazal, qit'a, rubaiy, masnavi, tarje', musammat, mustazad, mutavval, fard" [6]. He dedicates a separate chapter to musammat, titled "Al-nav'u-s-sobeun fil bayonu-l-musammat" (The 7th type of poetry is an explanation of musammat) and indicates five types of this genre:

musammati murabba, musammati mukhammas, musammati musaddas, musammani musamman, and musammati muashshar.

The aesthetic elements of musammat include its unique composition, where each stanza carries a separate meaning while conforming to the architectonics of the whole poem. The thematic range encompasses romantic experiences, socio-philosophical thoughts, and human emotions. This integrity and harmony is one of the main elements ensuring the artistic quality of the work.

Ahmad Tabibiy not only continued classical literary traditions worthily but was also an innovative creator in classical lyric forms. According to research, Tabibiy used 24 genres in his lyrics, demonstrating that his lyrical works were mature in both form and content. This information confirms that Tabibiy was one of the most accomplished and progressive representatives of his time.

“When discussing the scope of Ahmadjon Tabibiy’s literary heritage, it is impossible not to mention the poet’s musammats. This is because Ahmad Tabibiy may be the poet who wrote the most musammats in the history of our literature. The study of sources containing Tabibiy’s lyrical works currently shows that the poet wrote a total of 367 musammats in the Turkish (Uzbek) language” [7]. This indicates that after ghazals, musammats are the most active genre in Tabibiy’s literary heritage.

In Tabibiy’s works, almost all forms of musammat (except musallas) are present, from murabba to muashshar. It is noteworthy that none of the other representatives of Uzbek literature has the complete form of musammat in their works.

Tabibiy’s musammats can be divided into two types:

1. **Tab’i khud musammats** (independent musammats) – original compositions not based on works of other creators
2. **Tazmin musammats** – compositions based on or expanding upon the works of other poets

According to Sh. Amonov’s research, Tabibiy wrote takhmis (a form of tazmin musammat) based on the ghazals of 85 poets, including Lutfi, Navoi, Husayni, Fuzuli, Munis, Ogahi, Feruz, and others. The most active form of tazmin musammat in Tabibiy’s Turkish divans is mukhammas, with over 300 examples, followed by musaddas with 20 examples.

F. Ganikhujayev provides the following statistics about Tabibiy’s musammats in Turkish (Uzbek): murabba’ - 17, mukhammas - 307, musaddas - 30, musabba - 1, musamman - 10, mutassa - 1, muashshar - 1. However, Sh. Amonov, after detailed study of manuscript and lithographic sources, provides slightly different numbers: murabba - 15, mukhammas - 307, musaddas - 20, musabba - 1, musamman - 10, mutassa - 1, muashshar - 1.

The aesthetic features of Tabibiy’s musammats reveal his poetic mastery and deep understanding of genre conventions. His works demonstrate the following characteristics:

1. **Thematic diversity:** While love themes predominate, Tabibiy also illuminates philosophical reflections, social issues, and human emotions.
2. **Metrical variety:** Tabibiy uses various meters within the aruz system, showing his technical mastery of prosody.
3. **Richness of artistic devices:** His musammats are enriched with figurative language, using various poetic devices such as metaphor, simile, and symbolic imagery.
4. **Structural integrity:** Each stanza in Tabibiy’s musammats functions both as an independent unit and as part of the overall composition, creating a harmonious aesthetic experience.
5. **Innovative approach:** While adhering to classical traditions, Tabibiy brings his own creative vision to the genre, enriching it with new expressions and poetic techniques.

In tab'i khud musammats, where Tabibiy exercises complete creative freedom, G. Khalliyeva notes specific characteristics: "Often in this type of musammat: 1. The last line in the stanzas is repeated in the same way; 2. Unlike most musammats created on the basis of ghazals, the last two lines in the first stanza do not have the same radif; 3. The pseudonym is given in the upper parts of the last stanza, not in one of the last two parts of the last stanza as in ghazal maqta" [8].

Conclusion

Ahmadjon Tabibiy's significant contribution to the musammat genre highlights his important place in the history of Uzbek classical literature. His mastery in musammat forms from murabba to muashshar and his creation of 367 musammats in Uzbek make him one of the most prolific and skilled creators of this genre.

Studying Tabibiy's musammats enriches our understanding of genre development in Uzbek classical literature and reflects the literary-aesthetic views of his time. His works demonstrate both adherence to classical traditions and innovative approaches, revealing him as a multifaceted poet.

The musammat genre continues to maintain its significance in modern Uzbek literature, with contemporary poets and literary scholars continuing its rich traditions by creating new works. As an integral part of Uzbek literature and culture, musammat has made a significant contribution to its development.

Further research is needed to fully appreciate Tabibiy's literary heritage, particularly through publishing his divans and more in-depth analysis of his works. Such studies would contribute to preserving and developing our cultural heritage and would play an important role in transmitting Uzbek literature to future generations.

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