



SKETCHES ON THE EPIC POEM  
“TOSHKENTNOMA” BY MAQSUD  
SHAYKHZODA

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***Abstract:** Maqsud Sheikhzadeh was a versatile talent interested in art, literature, history and philosophy. He was also a skilled translator. His works are our spiritual heritage and wealth. This article talks about the poem "Tashkentnoma" by the poet.*

***Key words:** classical poetry, poetic symbols, researcher, musical fluency.*

Maqsud Shaykhzoda, as a poet inclined toward creating a lyrical plot, drew upon folk legends, pages of historical memory, as well as the lives of his contemporaries. By doing so, he introduced ballad-like poetic features and various poetic details into his poems, while also taking deliberate measures to enhance the role of the word within the poetic structure. At the same time, Maqsud Shaykhzoda discovered new artistic possibilities of rhyme and introduced new metrical patterns and formal structures into Uzbek poetry. This creative principle, characteristic of the poet's oeuvre, found particularly vivid expression in his lyrical epic "Toshkentnoma" (1958). In 1958, the writer composed the lyrical epic "Toshkentnoma" dedicated to the ancient yet ever-youthful city of Tashkent, depicting its history, past cultural heritage, and international connections.

As Shaykhzoda himself acknowledged, in poetry he sought to depict contemporary reality, while in dramaturgy he turned to the historical past, striving to express the painful issues of the people and the nation

through works devoted to history. Through his epic poems, he conveyed the labor heroism of the people, struggle and battle, freedom and friendship, happiness and sorrow, the beautiful landscapes of the homeland, and the spiritual beauty of the human being, noting that all these themes became familiar to his pen and meaningful to his heart. It is beyond doubt that Shaykhzoda's poems and epics enriched Uzbek poetry not only through their thematic diversity, but also through their composition in various metrical patterns and literary genres.

In the lyrical epic "Toshkentnoma" the poet wrote as follows:

My life's foundation rose in Azerbaijan,  
My childhood passed in that blossoming land.  
The homeland of Nizami, the realm of Ganja,  
Filled my native soil with the breath of poetry...  
Yet the delicate fate of being a poet  
Smiled upon me in the basins of the Syr Darya.  
The true fatherhood of the Uzbek sun  
Was reflected in brimming ceremonial bowls.  
Across the Uzbek valleys I urged my steed,  
With dear companions I journeyed and endured.  
No, I harbor no grievance toward my destiny—  
The title of poet is a gift of my happiness.

In the poet's creative biography, the epic poem "Toshkentnoma" occupies a special place. It would not be an exaggeration to say that this work was created as an expression of his love for the great city that became his refuge and shelter during the most difficult days of his life.

Maqsud Shaykhzoda has left us a vast legacy. His poetry continues to delight hearts, and his dramas are still being staged in theaters.

Maqsud Shaykhzoda is a symbol of the enduring friendship between the Uzbek and Azerbaijani peoples and, as a son of both nations, belongs to eternity.

One of the works that testifies to Maqsud Shaykhzoda's creative maturity is the epic poem "Toshkentnoma". At the time of its publication, the literary community regarded this epic as one of the poet's major creative achievements in our literature. Indeed, "Toshkentnoma" stands as the most accomplished among Shaykhzoda's epic poems, in which the distinctive facets of the poet's personality are revealed with particular clarity. The uniqueness of the epic lies in the fact that the work is not constructed around a single, unified narrative event.

\*Cities are eternal, while life is fleeting,  
Rivers are constant, their waters ever moving.  
Each leaves a trace within their native town:  
Either great mastery in building raised,  
Or a sweet anecdote, an invention made,  
A tree, a child, a bridge, or a single line,  
A song, a cure, a school, a healing art—  
In short, some goodness left upon the world...

Once, praising you my city with great pride,  
As I described its virtues, you paused and sighed:  
"Can it be so?"—you doubted, half in play,  
"We'll judge it when we see," you waved away.  
And then you said, once you had seen it through:  
"Your praise was scarce—your home is finer too!"

So that the garment may suit the noble frame,  
So love and heartfelt devotion to my city's name  
Might pour into an epic—such my plea;  
Forgive me, friend, for writing late, you see.

To those who stand here now, or once have seen,  
Or long to see it with a hopeful dream,  
Or ask about the form my Tashkent takes,  
Or carry its design within their hearts...  
To you I bring this melody, this tune as gift:  
Prose walks with heavy steps—verse runs swift.

Maqsud Shaykhzoda, as a scholar of literature and a possessor of multifaceted talent, was able to apply the principles of psychologism in his works. According to Academician M. B. Khrapchenko, from the first half of the nineteenth century onward, the study of the artistic exploration of the human inner world intensified, and the development of the principles of psychologism (the psychology of the soul) began.

Once, as I praised my city before you  
And spoke of its virtues, you paused a while.  
“Can it truly be so?”—you doubted,  
Gesturing, “We shall judge it when we see.”  
And later, after seeing it yourself, you said:  
“Your praise was too little—your home is finer still!

In these lines, the poet primarily emphasizes life itself as well as realism and its deepening. His praise and depiction stimulate his companion's desire to see Tashkent, intensifying emotional responses

and contributing to intellectual growth, the development of creative potential, active defense of one's rights, awareness of personal dignity, elevation to a central position within society, and the deepening of thought. Through psychologism (the artistic representation of the inner emotional world), the poet succeeds in analyzing the inner world of the characters in his works.

The inner spiritual world of the human being is dialectical. Like Hegel, Maqsud Shaykhzoda left behind valuable reflections on literature as a depiction of the human condition.

So that the garment might suit the noble form,  
So that heartfelt love and devotion to my city  
Might be poured into an epic—I wished it so;  
Forgive me, friend, for writing it so late.

Those who stand here now, or those who have seen it,  
Or those who long to see it one day,  
Or those who ask about the shape of my Tashkent,  
Who carry its image engraved within their hearts...

At the core of Maqsud Shaykhzoda's psychoanalytic approach lie humanism, ethics, philosophy, and the development of human consciousness. In analyzing the epic poem "Toshkentnoma" the poet sought to avoid falseness, indifference, hypocrisy, localism, nepotism, egoism, careerism, the backwardness of national consciousness, and escapism from political responsibility, while skillfully employing the methods of psychologism such as memory, reflection, imagination, reevaluation, inner monologue, portraiture, re-expression, and other techniques.

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