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ALISHER NAVOIY VA UILYAM SHEKSPIR ASARLARIDA MA'RIFAT G'OYASINING BADIY TALQINI: QIYOSIY-TIPOLOGIK TADQIQOT

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Annotatsiya.

Maqolada Alisher Navoiy va Uilyam Shekspir asarlarida **ma'rifat** tushunchasining badiiy va falsafiy talqini qiyosiy-tipologik nuqtayi nazardan tadqiq etiladi. Garchi ular turli adabiy, diniy, falsafiy va madaniy an'analarga mansub bo'lsalar-da, ularning asarlarida bilim, o'zlikni anglash, axloqiy kamolot, haqiqat, adolat va inson shaxsining o'zgarishi masalalariga katta badiiy e'tibor qaratilgan. Mazkur maqolada *Hayrat ul-abror*, *Saddi Iskandariy*, *Hamlet* va *Qirol Lir* asarlaridan misollar keltiriladi. Navoiy asarlarida ma'rifat ilohiy bilim, ruhiy poklanish, hikmat, adolat, nafsni tarbiyalash hamda tasavvufiy komil inson konsepsiyasi bilan chambarchas bog'liq. Shekspir tragediyalarida esa bilim, asosan, shubha, tajriba, iztirob, o'z-o'zini tahlil qilish va axloqiy tanlov orqali qo'lga kiritiladi. Maqolada ikki adabiy tizim o'rtasida bevosita tarixiy ta'sirni izlashdan ko'ra, funksional va tipologik mushtarakliklarni aniqlash maqsadga muvofiqligi asoslanadi. Qiyosiy tahlil shuni ko'rsatadiki, Navoiy komillikni, asosan, bilim, axloq va ilohiy haqiqat o'rtasidagi uyg'unlik sari ruhiy yo'naltirilgan harakat sifatida talqin etsa, Shekspir bilimni o'zlikni, boshqa insonlarni hamda insoniy mavjudlikning axloqiy tuzilishini anglashga olib boruvchi beqaror va ko'pincha iztirobli jarayon sifatida dramatik tarzda yoritadi.

Kalit so'zlar: Alisher Navoiy, Uilyam Shekspir, ma'rifat, qiyosiy adabiyotshunoslik, tipologiya, ruhiy bilim, o'zlikni anglash, komil inson, *Hayrat ul-abror*, *Saddi Iskandariy*, *Hamlet*, *Qirol Lir*.

ХУДОЖЕСТВЕННАЯ ИНТЕРПРЕТАЦИЯ ИДЕИ ПРОСВЕЩЕНИЯ В ПРОИЗВЕДЕНИЯХ АЛИШЕРА НАВОИ И УИЛЬЯМА ШЕКСПИРА: СРАВНИТЕЛЬНО-ТИПОЛОГИЧЕСКОЕ ИССЛЕДОВАНИЕ

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Аннотация.

В статье с сравнительно-типологической точки зрения исследуется художественно-философская интерпретация понятия **просвещения (маърифат)** в произведениях Алишера Навои и Уильяма Шекспира. Несмотря на принадлежность авторов к различным литературным, религиозным, философским и культурным традициям, в их произведениях значительное художественное внимание уделяется вопросам знания, самопознания, нравственного совершенствования, истины, справедливости и духовной трансформации личности. В статье рассматриваются примеры из произведений «*Хайрат ул-аброр*», «*Садди Искандари*», «*Гамлет*» и «*Король Лир*». В творчестве Навои маърифат тесно связан с божественным знанием, духовным очищением, мудростью, справедливостью, воспитанием нафса и суфийской концепцией совершенного человека. В трагедиях Шекспира знание, напротив, обретается преимущественно через сомнение, опыт, страдание, самоанализ и нравственный выбор. Обосновывается целесообразность выявления функциональных и типологических общностей между двумя литературными системами вместо поиска непосредственного исторического влияния. Сравнительный анализ показывает, что Навои трактует совершенство преимущественно как духовно направленное движение к гармонии между знанием, нравственностью и божественной истиной, тогда как Шекспир драматически представляет познание как нестабильный и зачастую мучительный процесс, ведущий к осмыслению собственной личности, других людей и нравственной структуры человеческого существования.

Ключевые слова: Алишер Навои, Уильям Шекспир, маърифат, сравнительное литературоведение, типология, духовное знание, самопознание, совершенный человек, «*Хайрат ул-аброр*», «*Садди Искандари*», «*Гамлет*», «*Король Лир*».

THE ARTISTIC INTERPRETATION OF MA'RIFAT (ENLIGHTENMENT) IN THE WORKS OF

ALISHER NAVOI AND WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: A COMPARATIVE-TYOLOGICAL STUDY

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Abstract.

This article examines the artistic and philosophical interpretation of the concept of **ma'rifat** (enlightenment and spiritual knowledge) in the works of Alisher Navoi and William Shakespeare from a comparative-typological perspective. Although the two authors belong to different literary, religious, philosophical, and cultural traditions, their works devote considerable artistic attention to knowledge, self-understanding, moral perfection, truth, justice, and the transformation of the human personality. The article draws on examples from *Hayrat ul-Abror*, *Saddi Iskandariy*, *Hamlet*, and *King Lear*. In Navoi's works, *ma'rifat* is closely associated with divine knowledge, spiritual purification, wisdom, justice, the discipline of the *nafs*, and the Sufi concept of the perfect human being. In Shakespeare's tragedies, by contrast, knowledge is acquired primarily through doubt, experience, suffering, self-examination, and moral choice. The article argues that, rather than seeking direct historical influence between the two literary systems, it is more appropriate to identify their functional and typological affinities. The comparative analysis demonstrates that Navoi primarily interprets perfection as a spiritually oriented movement toward harmony among knowledge, morality, and divine truth, whereas Shakespeare dramatically presents knowledge as an unstable and often painful process leading to an understanding of the self, other human beings, and the moral structure of human existence.

Keywords: Alisher Navoi, William Shakespeare, *ma'rifat*, comparative literature, typology, spiritual knowledge, self-understanding, perfect human being, *Hayrat ul-Abror*, *Saddi Iskandariy*, *Hamlet*, *King Lear*.

Introduction. The issue of human knowledge and perfection occupies a central role in the intellectual and literary traditions of both the East and the West. However, this problem is articulated differently according to the philosophical, religious, and aesthetic systems of particular cultures. In classical Eastern thought, especially in Islamic and Sufi traditions, the notion of *ma'rifat* possesses a complex semantic structure. It may involve knowledge, spiritual perception, wisdom, recognition of divine truth, ethical purification, and the gradual perfection of the human being [10; 11]. Consequently, *ma'rifat* should not be reduced to intellectual knowledge in the narrow rationalistic sense [10].

In the Western literary tradition, there is no exact conceptual equivalent of *ma'rifat* in its classical Sufi meaning. Nevertheless, important parallels can be observed in notions such as knowledge, self-knowledge, wisdom, moral awareness, virtue, human dignity, and the discovery of truth [6; 8; 9]. Renaissance humanism, in particular, intensified attention to human agency, education, moral judgement, individual dignity, and intellectual capability [6; 8].

Alisher Navoi and William Shakespeare represent two of the most influential literary traditions of the East and West, respectively. Their artistic worlds emerged under historically and culturally different conditions. Therefore, equating Navoi's Sufi conception of *ma'rifat* directly with Shakespearean humanism would be methodologically unsound. At the same time, both writers investigate fundamental questions concerning what a human being should know, how truth can be attained, what prevents a person from recognizing truth, and how knowledge influences moral behaviour [1; 4]. The main aim of this study is to clarify the common and distinctive features of the artistic representation of *ma'rifat* and human perfection in selected works of Navoi and Shakespeare.

The semantic development of *ma'rifat* in Eastern intellectual thought is closely related to such concepts as **ilm**, **hikmat**, **irfon**, spiritual perception, ethical behaviour, and the perfection of personality [10; 11]. Within the Sufi worldview, knowledge is not simply accumulated information; true knowledge transforms the individual [10]. This principle is particularly important for interpreting Navoi. Intellectual knowledge that does not lead to ethical improvement cannot represent the highest form of *ma'rifat*. Knowledge becomes valuable when it affects human character and action. Wisdom, justice, humility, generosity, self-restraint, truthfulness, and service to others consequently emerge as practical manifestations of spiritual knowledge [1; 2; 10; 11]. The concept of the **komil inson**, or perfect human being, provides one of the central models through which such development may be understood in Eastern philosophical and Sufi thought [10]. Perfection does not depend exclusively on intellectual ability or social status; it presupposes a unity between cognition, morality, and spiritual development [10; 11].

In Western thought, similar questions were articulated through somewhat different categories. Classical philosophical concepts of virtue and human flourishing were later reconsidered in Christian and Renaissance intellectual culture. Renaissance humanism increased attention to human agency, education, moral judgement, individual dignity, and the intellectual capacities of the human personality [6; 8; 9]. Shakespeare's dramatic works, however, rarely provide a completed philosophical model of perfection. Instead, they dramatize the instability of knowledge. Characters frequently acquire understanding only after illusion has collapsed, and recognition often emerges through conflict, error, suffering, reflection, and moral choice [3; 5]. Thus, while Navoi frequently associates knowledge with movement toward spiritual order, Shakespeare often represents knowledge as a discovery arising from disorder.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The primary literary material of the study consists of Alisher Navoi's *Hayrat ul-abror* and *Saddi Iskandariy* and William Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and *King Lear* [1–4]. These works were selected because they contain substantial artistic material relating to knowledge, wisdom, justice, self-knowledge, moral development, error, recognition, and human perfection. The principal methodological approach is comparative-typological analysis. The study does not presuppose direct literary influence between Navoi and Shakespeare. Instead, it identifies functional correspondences between culturally and historically distinct literary systems. Historical-comparative and interpretative approaches are also employed in order to contextualize the concepts of ma'rifat, self-knowledge, spiritual development, and moral cognition.

In *Hayrat ul-abror*, Navoi presents moral and philosophical ideas through didactic reflection, symbolic narrative, exemplary stories, and characters who embody particular ethical principles. The work establishes a close relationship between knowledge and moral responsibility. The wise person in Navoi's artistic universe is not merely someone who possesses information; wisdom must become visible through behaviour. Consequently, justice, generosity, honesty, moderation, spiritual discipline, and concern for others constitute essential signs of genuine knowledge [1; 10; 11]. The exemplary figures appearing in the work perform an important artistic function by transforming abstract philosophical principles into concrete forms of human behaviour. Through stories of rulers, sages, ascetics, and spiritually developed individuals, Navoi highlights both virtuous and flawed models of human behaviour.

The relationship between knowledge and ethical action becomes particularly significant when considering the struggle against the *nafs*. From a Sufi perspective, pride, greed, excessive desire, arrogance, and excessive attachment to worldly interests may prevent an individual from perceiving truth correctly [10]. Therefore, the acquisition of ma'rifat requires inner purification and moral discipline [10; 11].

In this respect, Navoi's artistic conception of knowledge possesses both epistemological and ethical dimensions: to perceive truth correctly, the individual must also become morally capable of receiving and applying it.

Saddi Iskandariy develops the problem of knowledge in connection with political authority, justice, wisdom, and leadership [2]. Iskandar is significant not simply as a conqueror or ruler but as a figure whose development is associated with intellectual inquiry and interaction with wise individuals [2]. The ruler's value is measured by his ability to subordinate power to wisdom and justice [2]. Knowledge therefore acquires a social dimension. Ma'rifat is not restricted to individual spiritual development; it also influences the relationship between ruler and society.

In Navoi's interpretation, wisdom performs a corrective function in relation to political power. A ruler who possesses authority without knowledge risks injustice, whereas wisdom directs authority toward morally legitimate purposes [2]. Iskandar's encounters with sages and learned individuals consequently demonstrate the importance of intellectual and spiritual guidance [2].

The structure of Navoi's works also emphasizes the role of the teacher, sage, spiritual guide, or exemplary personality [1; 2]. Knowledge is transmitted through instruction, dialogue, moral example, and reflection. This feature corresponds to the broader Eastern model of the spiritual master–disciple relationship (*murshid–murid*) within the Sufi tradition [10]. Navoi's characters expressing the idea of ma'rifat can therefore perform several different functions. Some represent relatively established ideals; some communicate wisdom to others; others undergo development; and certain characters demonstrate the destructive consequences of ignorance or uncontrolled desire [1; 2].

The question of knowledge occupies an equally important but aesthetically different position in Shakespeare's tragedies. In *Hamlet*, knowledge is problematic from the opening stages of the drama [3]. Hamlet seeks the truth concerning his father's death, but the information available to him cannot initially provide absolute certainty [3; 5]. This ambiguity produces one of the central epistemological conflicts of the tragedy: how can an individual act morally when knowledge remains incomplete? Hamlet's investigation therefore extends beyond the identification of Claudius's guilt and develops into a broader inquiry into truth, appearance, mortality, moral responsibility, and the limitations of human understanding [3; 5; 7].

The dramatic world of *Hamlet* repeatedly contrasts external appearance with hidden reality [3]. Courtly behaviour, political speech, friendship, love, and theatrical performance become connected with the problem of interpretation. Hamlet must learn to distinguish between what appears to be true and what can be established as truth [3].

The play-within-the-play is particularly significant in this respect. Hamlet uses theatrical representation not simply for entertainment but as a method of testing Claudius's reaction and examining the reliability of the Ghost's accusation [3]. Art thus becomes an instrument of knowledge. Nevertheless, the acquisition of knowledge does not immediately result in harmony. Hamlet's growing awareness deepens his psychological and ethical conflict [5; 7]. Knowledge imposes responsibility, while certainty remains difficult to achieve. This provides an important contrast with Navoi: in Navoi, knowledge tends toward the establishment of ethical and spiritual order, whereas in Shakespeare, greater knowledge may initially intensify instability.

A related but distinct form of cognitive transformation appears in *King Lear* [4]. At the beginning of the tragedy, Lear possesses political authority but lacks adequate understanding of himself and the people surrounding him [4; 5]. He mistakes verbal performance for genuine loyalty and fails to distinguish sincerity from flattery [4]. Cordelia's refusal to transform love into rhetorical exaggeration is interpreted by Lear as disobedience [4]. The tragedy consequently begins with an error of perception and judgement. Lear's subsequent suffering gradually transforms his understanding. The loss of political authority exposes him to forms of human vulnerability that had previously remained outside his direct experience [4; 5]. His movement from royal power toward physical and emotional exposure simultaneously becomes a movement toward self-knowledge.

The storm scenes are particularly significant in this process. Lear begins to recognize the condition of those who possess neither social protection nor material privilege [4]. Suffering thus creates a form of moral knowledge. The transformation is tragic because recognition arrives only after irreversible mistakes have already been committed [4; 5]. Shakespeare consequently presents knowledge not as a stable possession but as something that may be achieved through painful experience.

RESULTS

A productive comparison of Navoi and Shakespeare requires a distinction between genetic influence and typological correspondence. Similarities between the writers do not in themselves demonstrate direct literary influence. Their works should therefore be examined within their respective cultural traditions while identifying comparable artistic functions. From this perspective, characters related to knowledge and perfection can be provisionally classified according to their dominant artistic functions.

The first category may be described as **ideal characters**. Such figures embody moral principles that the literary text presents as exemplary. In Navoi, this function may be associated with sages, spiritually developed individuals, just rulers, and characters whose behaviour demonstrates the unity of knowledge and virtue [1; 2].

In Shakespeare, Cordelia, Kent, and Horatio possess qualities associated with ethical consistency, loyalty, and truthfulness [3; 4]. However, they should not be treated as direct equivalents of Sufi ideal figures, since their philosophical and cultural foundations are different.

The second group consists of **wise or guiding characters**. Their primary function is not necessarily personal transformation but the communication of moral or intellectual orientation to other characters. Navoi's texts contain numerous sages and spiritually authoritative figures who perform this role [1; 2]. Shakespeare's tragedies, by contrast, provide a less institutionalized form of wisdom. Guidance may appear through loyal friendship, truthful speech, experience, or dramatic contrast [3; 4].

The third category involves **dynamic characters**, whose relationship with knowledge changes significantly during the development of the plot. Lear provides one of the clearest examples. His movement from misjudgement toward recognition constitutes a central cognitive structure of the tragedy [4; 5].

Hamlet is also dynamic, although in a different sense. His development does not involve a simple progression from ignorance to knowledge. Rather, his consciousness repeatedly questions the reliability and consequences of knowledge itself [3; 5; 7].

The fourth category may be described as **relatively static characters**, whose established ethical position helps reveal the transformation or moral limitations of others. Cordelia's consistency, for example, highlights Lear's initial inability to recognize genuine loyalty [4].

Such a functional typology makes it possible to compare the two literary systems without artificially treating historically and culturally different characters as identical.

The principal distinction between Navoi and Shakespeare may be observed in the orientation of their respective models of cognition. Navoi's representation of ma'rifat develops largely within a spiritually oriented structure. Knowledge directs the individual beyond the limitations of the ego toward divine truth, ethical purification, wisdom, justice, and spiritual maturity [1; 2; 10; 11]. Human beings achieve higher spiritual status not through power alone but through their capacity to overcome the *nafs* and subordinate personal desire to higher moral principles [10]. Shakespeare's tragedies, in contrast, develop a predominantly dramatic and experiential structure of cognition. Characters come to knowledge by confronting contradiction, uncertainty, error, suffering, and moral responsibility [3; 5]. Hamlet must confront deception, mortality, doubt, and the problem of ethical action [3; 5; 7]. Lear must experience the collapse of political authority and personal illusion before he can perceive human relationships more clearly [4; 5]. Nevertheless, this disparity should not overshadow important common features. Both writers establish a close relationship between knowledge and morality. Intelligence without ethical responsibility is insufficient within both artistic systems. Both demonstrate the destructive consequences of false judgement, selfish desire, injustice, and the inability to distinguish appearance from truth.

A second common feature concerns the transformative function of knowledge. Genuine knowledge changes the human personality. Iskandar's relationship with wisdom affects his conception of authority [2]; Lear's suffering changes his understanding of humanity [4]; and Hamlet's search for truth transforms his relationship with action, mortality, and responsibility [3].

A third shared feature is the relationship between knowledge and justice. In both literary traditions, erroneous perception may produce moral and social disorder [1–4]. Conversely, the recognition of truth is associated with the possibility of creating a more just relationship between the individual, society, and moral values.

The principal difference lies in the ultimate horizon of this transformation. In Navoi, perfection is closely connected with a divinely oriented conception of existence and spiritual development [1; 2; 10; 11]. In Shakespeare, knowledge remains deeply connected with human experience, uncertainty, ethical conflict, and the consequences of individual choice [3–9]. Therefore, Sufi ma'rifat and Renaissance humanist self-knowledge should not be treated as identical philosophical categories. Their comparative value lies precisely in the combination of functional similarity and cultural difference.

DISCUSSION

The comparative examination of Navoi and Shakespeare demonstrates that the artistic representation of knowledge cannot be separated from concepts of personality development. In Navoi, the progression from knowledge toward wisdom and moral perfection produces a relatively integrated model. The intellectually developed person must

also become ethically developed. Knowledge, justice, spiritual discipline, and proper action form interconnected elements of perfection [1; 2; 10; 11].

Shakespeare's dramatic model is more conflict-oriented. The road to recognition frequently passes through error, and characters often discover truth only after the consequences of ignorance or errors of judgement have become destructive [3–5]. The difference can also be observed in narrative and dramatic structure. Navoi frequently presents moral truth through authorial reflection, exemplary narrative, philosophical dialogue, and the words of wise individuals [1; 2]. Shakespeare allows truth to emerge through dramatic confrontation, irony, misunderstanding, reversal, and recognition [3; 4]. Thus, the formal characteristics of the genres themselves contribute to different representations of knowledge.

The study also confirms that the category of ma'rifat may serve as a productive comparative framework, provided that it is not imposed mechanically upon Shakespeare. Shakespearean characters should not be described as Sufi seekers, nor should Renaissance humanism be identified directly with Eastern *irfan*.

Instead, comparison should operate at the level of literary function: How does the character acquire knowledge? What prevents correct perception? What ethical consequences follow from knowledge or ignorance? How does recognition transform the individual? What role do suffering, guidance, reflection, or spiritual discipline play in this transformation? Such questions create a more methodologically balanced basis for East–West literary comparison.

CONCLUSION

The comparative-typological analysis of Alisher Navoi's *Hayrat ul-abror* and *Saddi Iskandariy* and William Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and *King Lear* demonstrates that knowledge and human perfection constitute important artistic problems in both literary systems. In Navoi, ma'rifat develops through the interconnected categories of knowledge, wisdom, spiritual perception, ethical purification, justice, and the disciplining of the *nafs*. The ultimate orientation of this process corresponds to the ideal of spiritual and moral perfection.

In Shakespeare, comparable questions are explored predominantly through self-knowledge, doubt, moral choice, experience, suffering, and recognition. His protagonists do not move toward a fixed philosophical model of the perfect human being. Instead, the dramatic process reveals the complexity and fragility of human understanding. The essential distinction lies in the mechanisms and cultural foundations of this transformation. Navoi predominantly presents perfection through divine guidance, wisdom, spiritual purification, moral instruction, and the harmonious relationship between knowledge and virtuous action. Shakespeare presents knowledge through conflict, suffering, reflection, uncertainty, and individual moral decision. Consequently, the comparison of Navoi and Shakespeare reveals neither simple identity nor complete opposition between Eastern and Western models of human perfection. Rather, it demonstrates two culturally distinctive artistic systems addressing a universal literary problem: the transformation of the human being through movement from ignorance and illusion toward knowledge, self-awareness, ethical responsibility, and truth.

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