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**ALISHER NAVOIY'S "FARHOD VA SHIRIN" EPIC AND THE ATTITUDE  
TOWARD FARMING**

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**Abstract:** This article provides a deep analysis of how farming-related terms, symbols, and metaphors in Alisher Navoi's epic "Farhod va Shirin" play a crucial role in highlighting the moral-ethical, social-political, and literary issues. These aspects are explored through the artistic interpretation of these terms.

**Key words:** Alisher Navoi, "Farhod va Shirin," masnavi, farmer, farming, soil, crops, land, water, symbol, metaphor, "waqf land," waqf, wheat, barley, grain, mulberry, silk, bee.

In his great work "Khamasa," Alisher Navoi brilliantly covers various aspects of moral-ethical education. In the thirty-sixth chapter of "Farhod va Shirin," he writes: "Within marriage, one seeks to renew, A crown like a pearl, with joy it grew."

From the lines of the masnavi, it can be understood that where there is salt, there is the saltweed, and where there is a flower, it blooms in the garden, meaning that the farmer plants crops in fertile, sweet soil. The great poet used this farming image to convey the crucial matters of state and society—specifically family and marriage. According to Alisher Navoi, in order for a man to have a blessed, pure child, he must first marry a pure, virtuous, and modest girl. The pure offspring that ensure the continuity of generations are nurtured in the form of a wise and virtuous woman. A child born to an unsuitable woman cannot be molded into a person of noble character. As the great predecessor of Alisher Navoi, Shaykh Muslihiddin Sa'di, said: even if the cloud brings all the rain, fruit will not grow on the branch of a poplar tree. One cannot extract sugar from the rough reed. Changing the natural characteristics of a child born to an unsuitable woman is very difficult. This is why a wise farmer plants his seeds in good soil:

"Even if the upbringing is little or much, Nature will not change, no matter the touch."

As the wise farmer said: "The seeds need fertile land."

The use of farming metaphors, symbols, and figures of speech in "Khamasa" serves as a key to understanding the essence of countless moral-ethical and spiritual issues, providing a way to unravel deep philosophical and social matters.

In the fifty-first chapter of "Farhod va Shirin," after the tragic death of Farhod, which was caused by the deceit of King Khosrow's son, Sheruya, and after the subsequent cruelty inflicted upon the people of Armenia, Alisher Navoi concludes with a didactic verse regarding the fate of tyrannical and ignorant rulers:

"Better to suffer from oppression than from betrayal, Loyalty and love should be cultivated with care."



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"Whatever seeds you sow in the field, The harvest will carry the eternal seed."

"Whoever seeks to escape from the harvest, Must first sow goodness with care."

Similarly, in the second epic of the "Khamsa," the same idea is expressed through a story from the 13th century Turkic literature, "Qisasi Rabg'uzin," written by the prominent writer Nasiruddin Burhonuddin Rabg'uziy. The story, related to the wise Luqmon, gives a similar artistic interpretation of the farming metaphor:

"One day, Luqmon went to plant crops. His master said, 'Plant wheat.' Luqmon went and planted barley. The master asked, 'Why didn't you plant wheat?' Luqmon replied, 'If I plant barley, wouldn't it grow like wheat?' The master said, 'By no means! Barley will never turn into wheat.' Luqmon said, 'You are committing a mistake. How could you expect a good result from poor soil?'"

This passage emphasizes the importance of proper actions and the consequences of the choices made, highlighting how the right results can only be achieved through the right choices and preparation. The story, reminiscent of the features of the genre of jokes and riddles in folk oral literature, includes the use of popular proverbs, such as "The farmer takes what he sows, the gardener reaps what he plants," and "Who sows barley will reap barley, and who sows wheat will reap wheat" (6, 34). In the verses of the masnavi from *Farhod va Shirin*, expressions like "tuxm" (seed), "ekmak" (to sow), "ma'zra" (field), "sochmoq" (to scatter), "doni" (grain, seed), "mahsul" (crop), and "hosil" (harvest) are used in a didactic and educational manner, ensuring that the moral and educational message reaches the reader clearly and concisely.

Alisher Navoi skillfully integrates the significant role of agriculture in shaping the farmer's fate with the overall theme and spirit of *Farhod va Shirin*. The depiction of farming and the farmer's life in his epic is harmonized with artistic finesse, which aligns perfectly with the work's central themes. A similar conclusion can be drawn from the story *Luqmon va uning xojasi* by Nasiruddin Burhonuddin Rabg'uziy, where the author also uses artistic metaphors and parables to convey moral lessons. Both authors use allegorical and symbolic expressions to emphasize life's universal truths. Their intention to highlight the life of a farmer, with its inherent virtues such as honesty, hard work, integrity, and goodness, deeply enriches the aesthetic and philosophical foundation of their texts.

In both works, the use of vivid, life-like examples rooted in everyday experience makes the artistic evidence compelling. Rabg'uziy's story, written in a concise prose form, skillfully creates a typical yet individualized depiction of life. In this narrative, the characters of Luqmon and his master, along with their dialogue, serve as the primary vehicle for the moral lesson. In contrast, in *Farhod va Shirin*, every verse is expressed in a sophisticated and high artistic form, where the poet uses the laws of nature related to farming to explain the deeper themes of resisting tyranny, showing kindness to others, and performing good deeds.

The art of contradiction (the tension between cruelty and kindness) within the masnavi, as well as the portrayal of unique metaphors like "the sowing of loyalty and love" and "the sowing of goodness," strengthens the moral and spiritual message. The verses of



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Alisher Navoi elevate the philosophical nature of the text, turning it into a powerful social commentary. The depiction of tyranny and the contrasting virtues of loyalty, love, and goodness, alongside the farmer's constructive activities, serves to expose the miraculous power of goodness and its social significance.

Both authors, through their mastery of language and their use of agricultural metaphors, create rich narratives that resonate with the social and moral dimensions of life. In these works, the depiction of farming not only serves as a backdrop but also functions as a vehicle to explore deep ethical and spiritual matters, connecting personal growth to societal well-being.

In Alisher Navoi's interpretation, the farmer highly values the soil where seeds are planted, treating it as a living entity of nature. He cares for the land, avoids stepping on it, and ensures that no one else's feet touch it. In the farmer's work, no factor can replace another; each element plays a crucial and distinct role in the cultivation process. Only by properly managing the growth and development of the crops can the farmer create an opportunity for a high-quality and abundant harvest. One of the most fundamental factors is providing the plants with timely water. As we read in *Farhod va Shirin*:

"Do not delay even for a moment, Tend to this water, and give it its due."

These lines carry deep meaning. In the verses, the great poet's understanding and observations of farming are expressed. If water is insufficient or not provided in time, all the farmer's hard work will be in vain. Thus, the great thinker elevates the act of watering the land to the level of the farmer's personal dignity and honor, emphasizing the importance of timely irrigation.

According to Alisher Navoi, patience is the greatest virtue. Through endless effort, the silkworm transforms the mulberry leaf into silk, and the bee turns the flower's nectar into honey (Volume 14, B.104). The farmer, with immense patience, endures all hardships and tends to the soil with great care, ensuring that the land produces the finest harvest and blooms. The soil, nurtured with such love and attention, will surely yield a bounty of flowers, fruits, and crops. Flowers will spread their fragrance, and the nightingales will fill the world with their song:

"It is inevitable that the melody will bloom, One flower will not suffice; it will bloom in many hues."

"The world is adorned with color and beauty, And the nightingales sing their joyful melodies."

In the final chapter of *Farhod va Shirin*, Alisher Navoi compares his artistic work to the laborious efforts of the farmer and the results of his work. The great thinker encapsulates his life, existence, and the processes related to farming and labor through his personal observations, research, and experiences, reflecting them in a high artistic form.

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