



THE FATE OF MAQSUD SHAYKHZODA: HISTORICAL TRUTH UNDER THE SHADOW OF REPRESSION

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Abstract: *This article analyzes the arrest of Maqsud Shaykhzoda, one of the prominent representatives of Uzbek literature, and the historical events associated with his life. It highlights the literary heritage of the writer and his contribution to national literature despite the repressions of the Soviet era. The article provides insight into political pressure, ideological persecution, and the fate of creative intellectuals of that period.*

Keywords: *Maqsud Shaykhzoda, Soviet repressions, nationalism, literary heritage, political persecution, dramaturgy, Uzbek literature*

Introduction

In the history of 20th-century Uzbek literature, Maqsud Shaykhzoda stands out not only for his literary talent but also for his independent thinking. His poems, plays, and translations were widely recognized; however, the ideological pressure of the Soviet period caused him severe persecution.

At that time, many intellectuals were accused of “nationalism” and “opposition to Soviet ideology.” Such repression caused irreparable damage not only to individuals but also to national culture and literature. Maqsud Shaykhzoda was arrested in 1952 and became one of the victims of these repressions. This article analyzes the reasons for his arrest, his creative legacy, and his contribution to Uzbek literature.

Main Part

Maqsud Shaykhzoda’s Literary Activity and His Role in Uzbek Literature Born in 1908, Maqsud Shaykhzoda made a significant contribution to Uzbek literature as a poet, playwright, and translator. His works focus on humanity, justice, and national consciousness. His drama “Jaloliddin Manguberdi” reflects strong ideas of patriotism and national independence. As a translator, he rendered many works of world literature into Uzbek, enriching national culture and supporting young writers. In 1952, Maqsud Shaykhzoda was arrested on charges of nationalism and anti-Soviet ideology. Like many other writers of his time, he endured imprisonment under harsh conditions. His works were accused of promoting national ideas and historical pride. Despite imprisonment, Shaykhzoda continued his creative work. Although later released, censorship and ideological pressure prevented many of his works from being published.

Today, Shaykhzoda’s works are being republished and studied. His plays are staged, and his literary heritage is recognized as an invaluable part of Uzbek culture. His life and work serve as a lesson on freedom, justice, and national identity. One aspect that is often overlooked,



in studies of Maqsd Shaykhzoda is his **philosophical worldview and intellectual synthesis of Eastern and Western literary traditions**. Unlike many of his contemporaries, Shaykhzoda consciously sought to harmonize classical Eastern poetic heritage with modern European dramaturgical principles. His familiarity with world literature allowed him to introduce new artistic forms and narrative techniques into Uzbek drama, contributing to the modernization of national theatre.

Another significant but less discussed dimension of Shaykhzoda's legacy is his **role as a literary scholar and mentor**. Beyond his published creative works, he actively participated in shaping literary criticism and theatrical aesthetics in Uzbekistan. He provided guidance to young playwrights and poets, emphasizing ethical responsibility, historical awareness, and artistic integrity. His pedagogical influence extended informally through literary circles and discussions, leaving a lasting imprint on subsequent generations of writers.

Shaykhzoda's interest in **historical memory** deserves special attention. He viewed history not merely as a background for artistic representation but as a moral resource for contemporary society. By revisiting historical figures and events, he aimed to restore a sense of continuity in national consciousness that had been disrupted by ideological uniformity. This approach distinguished him from writers who treated history solely as a decorative or symbolic element.

In addition, Maqsd Shaykhzoda demonstrated a distinctive **ethical resistance** to ideological pressure. Rather than openly confronting the Soviet system, he employed subtle artistic strategies—such as allegory, symbolism, and historical parallels—to convey ideas of dignity, freedom, and moral choice. This indirect form of resistance allowed his works to survive censorship while preserving deeper philosophical meanings.

Finally, Shaykhzoda's posthumous rehabilitation played an important role in the **re-evaluation of Soviet-era cultural policies**. The renewed study of his works after political liberalization contributed to broader discussions about artistic freedom, historical injustice, and the responsibility of the state toward intellectuals. Today, his legacy is not only literary but also ethical, serving as a reminder of the resilience of creative thought under authoritarian constraints.

Conclusion. Maqsd Shaykhzoda was not only a great writer but also a defender of national values. His arrest demonstrates the destructive effects of Soviet repression on literature. His works remain relevant today and continue to inspire future generations.

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