

TOSHPO'LAT HAMIDOV AND THE HISTORY OF THE BUKHARA LITERARY MILIEU DURING THE SOVIET ERA

Obloqulov Doston O'ktam o'g'li

Instructor, Bukhara Academic Lyceum of the Ministry of
Internal Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan

Abstract

This article investigates the historical role of the personal factor, creative compromise, mentorship, and generational continuity in the development of the literary milieu of the Bukhara oasis during the 1950s–1970s. At the center of the study stands Toshpo'lat Hamidov's activity as a poet, organizer, and mentor. Under conditions in which literary institutions functioned under ideological supervision during the Soviet era, the article demonstrates that the stability of the regional literary milieu was determined not only by the workings of formal organizations, but equally by the initiative of specific writers, their social networks, and their experience of working with younger generations. The article interprets 'creative compromise' as a historical category, elucidating its nature as a complex strategic position between open resistance and complete ideological submission. Drawing on the experience of the Bukhara oasis, the study shows that mentorship served not only as a mechanism for transmitting artistic skill, but also as a means of adapting young writers to the institutional and ideological conditions of the era. The research concludes that the interaction among individual agency, milieu, and institution constitutes a crucial factor in determining the historical stability of the regional literary process.

Keywords: Bukhara oasis, Soviet era, personal factor, creative compromise, Toshpo'lat Hamidov, mentorship, literary milieu, young writers, generational continuity, regional poetry, cultural history.

Introduction

In the study of Soviet-era cultural history, particular attention to the role of the state and institutions is natural. However, an exclusively institutional approach fails to fully illuminate the internal dynamics of the regional literary process. The mere existence of formal organizations does not guarantee the formation of a literary milieu. In specific historical circumstances, the initiative of individuals, their capacity for organization, their cultivation of networks among writers, and their role in transmitting experience to subsequent generations are equally significant.

This question is especially pronounced in the case of the Bukhara oasis. Although the regional literary milieu of the 1950s–1970s operated within the framework of the Soviet ideological system, leading writers played a pivotal role in ensuring its internal stability. The materials under review interpret Toshpo'lat Hamidov, precisely as poet, organizer, and mentor, as a central figure in the formation of the regional literary milieu.

The principal scholarly problem of this article is that the role of the individual writer in the Soviet-era literary process cannot be explained solely by reference to the existence of the ideological system. The writer appeared simultaneously as a subject operating within ideological constraints and as an individual striving to preserve their aesthetic convictions.

The aim of this research is to identify the historical role of the personal factor and creative compromise in the development of the literary milieu of the Bukhara oasis during the Soviet era, and to demonstrate the significance of mentorship and generational continuity in the regional literary process through the example of Toshpo'lat Hamidov's activity.

The scholarly novelty of this article lies in explaining the stability of the Bukhara oasis literary milieu not solely through the activity of the state or official literary organizations, but through the mutual interaction of individual agency, milieu, and institution. Creative compromise is interpreted not as simple conformity, but as a strategic mechanism that served to ensure the continuity of literary activity under specific historical conditions.

Methodology

The article employs biographical, historical-genetic, institutional, and historical-sociological methods. The biographical method makes it possible to situate Toshpo'lat Hamidov's activity within the historical conditions in which he lived and created. The institutional approach serves to analyze the influence of mentorship, the press, literary circles, and creative organizations on the writer's activity. The historical-genetic method enables identification of the processes of formation and consolidation of the literary milieu over time. The study also notes the bidirectional character of the relationship between individual and milieu: just as a leading figure shapes the milieu, so the political and social conditions of the milieu determine that figure's strategies of action.

Analysis and Discussion

The Personal Factor and Institutional Conditions. The personal factor in historical processes does not exist outside institutional conditions. On the contrary, the activity of the individual takes shape in relation to the prevailing political, social, and cultural system. For this reason, Toshpo'lat Hamidov's activity cannot be studied in isolation from the regional literary milieu of the Soviet era.

During the Soviet period, literary organizations and the press system operated under ideological supervision. Under such conditions, the responsibilities of an experienced writer were not confined to the creation of his own works. He was also required to draw young writers into the literary process, to edit their work, to establish contacts with the press, to maintain the creative milieu, and to operate in accordance with the existing political boundaries.

The materials under review identify Toshpo'lat Hamidov's organizing and mentoring activity as one of the factors that ensured the stability of the regional literary milieu. The significance of the personal factor lies in the fact that, while formal institutions typically created general organizational opportunities, concrete creative connections, master-apprentice relationships, and the entry of young writers into literary life were realized through personal initiative.

Creative Compromise as Historical Strategy. The concept of 'creative compromise' holds particular scholarly significance in the study of Soviet-era literature. By creative compromise is meant the writer's striving to preserve his artistic and aesthetic potential without wholly rejecting prevailing ideological demands.

Such a strategy occupies a position between two extremes — open resistance and complete ideological submission. The writer took official demands into account, yet through the choice of subject matter, poetic form, imagery, and individual sensibility, continued to strive to preserve his creative identity.

The materials under review interpret creative compromise as a strategy of adaptation, subject-selection, and preservation of artistic thought. They indicate that the dependence of regional writers on the center in matters of publication, the risk of punishment for ideological errors, and the necessity of maintaining social standing strengthened compromise strategies.

However, explaining compromise solely through fear or passivity diminishes the complexity of the historical process. Under specific conditions, creative compromise served to preserve the continuity of the literary process. Writers, while remaining within the formal system, created conditions conducive to the formation of a new generation and the continuation of literary experience. From this perspective, creative compromise deserves assessment not merely as an individual psychological phenomenon but as a broader historical and cultural strategy.

Studying Toshpo'lat Hamidov's activity in conjunction with the internal dynamics of the Bukhara oasis literary milieu reveals the bidirectional connection between individual and milieu. While the leading figure strove to shape the milieu, the existing milieu in turn defined the directions of his activity.

The ideological conditions of the Soviet era restricted open confrontation. Accordingly, preserving the literary milieu, supporting young writers, and ensuring the uninterrupted continuation of the creative process became the more effective strategies. The materials under review show that a leading figure consolidated the milieu organizationally and created a space of dialogue among writers; simultaneously, the milieu itself shaped that figure's creative strategy — specifically, abstaining from open resistance, adopting a compromise-based position, and realizing aesthetic potential within relatively safe thematic domains. This relationship reveals an important regularity of the historical process: an

individual may transform the historical milieu, yet his activity remains bounded by that milieu's political and social limits.

Mentorship constituted an important sociocultural mechanism in ensuring the stability of the Bukhara oasis literary milieu. Mentorship was not confined to offering creative advice or editing verse. It encompassed the acculturation of the young writer into the literary milieu, the expansion of his opportunities within the publishing and press system, the formation of artistic discipline, and the transmission of the experience of creative work under the historical conditions of the time.

The materials under review indicate that mentorship provided young writers with artistic discipline, a culture of working with the text, and the skills to navigate the demands of the era.

In this respect, mentorship may be assessed as an 'institution for transmitting cultural memory.' The personal experience of the accomplished writer passed to the next generation not only as artistic mastery, but also as the social conventions governing conduct within the literary milieu.

As a result, generational continuity took shape within the regional literary milieu. The materials note that the system of young writers in the Bukhara oasis developed not as a one-time initiative but as a long-term cultural process, giving rise to several successive generations of writers. A young writer's entry into the literary field depended not only on personal talent but also on social connections and institutional opportunities. In this process, the mentor's recommendation, press contacts, and literary circles served as vital instruments.

The regional press ensured the literary legitimation of the young writer. However, publication in the press also implied passing a certain process of selection. Mentorship and the press therefore functioned as mutually reinforcing mechanisms: the mentor prepared the young writer, while the press served to have him recognized in the literary field.

The research materials note that publication in the press introduced young writers to the literary public, strengthened their creative confidence, and transformed them into participants in the official literary process.

The experience of the Bukhara oasis demonstrates that the Soviet-era regional literary milieu can be examined at three fundamental levels. The first level is the political and ideological system, which defined the general boundaries of literary activity. The second level consists of institutions — the press, literary

organizations, and circles — which shaped the practical mechanisms of these political demands. The third level is the individual, who, drawing on the existing system and institutions, determined the actual substance of the creative process. The mutual interaction of these three levels ensured the historical stability of the regional literary milieu. Had only the political system existed without the formation of personal networks among writers, the internal continuity of the literary milieu would have been weakened. Conversely, the mere existence of individual talent, without institutional support, could hardly have developed into a broad literary process. For this reason, in the study of the literary history of the Bukhara oasis, the personal factor must not be isolated from institutional and political processes. This relationship also reveals that evaluating the regional literary milieu as a 'peripheral' phenomenon is insufficient, since a particular region can function as an independent cultural space with its own internal creative traditions, master-apprentice system, and historical memory.

Conclusions

The development of the Bukhara oasis literary milieu during the 1950s–1970s was shaped not only by the ideological and institutional conditions of the Soviet era, but also by the activity of specific individuals. The example of Toshpo'lat Hamidov illustrates the role of the individual writer in shaping the regional literary milieu, supporting young writers, and transmitting literary experience across generations.

The research concludes that creative compromise, under Soviet-era conditions, was not passive conformity but a historical strategy that served to preserve the literary process. This strategy enabled writers, within the existing ideological boundaries, to maintain their artistic and aesthetic potential and to contribute to the formation of subsequent generations of writers.

The personal factor in the experience of the Bukhara oasis manifested along three principal directions: organization, mentorship, and the maintenance of creative equilibrium. These factors complemented one another in ensuring the continuity of the regional literary milieu.

Mentorship was an informal yet historically effective institution for transmitting literary experience. It formed in young writers not only poetic mastery but also the skills needed to work within the complex literary and institutional conditions of the Soviet era. Accordingly, studying the history of the Bukhara Soviet-era

literary milieu exclusively as the history of state ideology yields a one-sided outcome. Investigating this history as the mutual interaction of the triad 'ideological system – institutional milieu – individual writer' affords a deeper understanding of the actual historical substance of the regional literary process. Practical Significance. The conclusions of this article may be utilized in research devoted to the cultural history of the Bukhara oasis in the twentieth century, the Soviet-era literary process, the regional literary milieu, and the history of the intelligentsia. Future incorporation of Toshpo'lat Hamidov's personal archive, his publications in the periodical press, the memoirs of his contemporaries, and documents pertaining to literary circles will make it possible to define the historical scope of the personal factor with greater precision.

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