

# Hamza Hakimzoda Niyoziy In International Studies: Interpretations And Approaches

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**Abstract:** This article examines the representation of the life and creative legacy of Hamza Hakimzoda Niyoziy in foreign literary scholarship, with particular emphasis on the works of the American scholar Edward Allworth, and analyzes how these interpretations have been received in Uzbek literary studies. The study critically investigates the objections raised by scholars such as Laziz Qayumov, Matyoqub Qo'shjonov, and Marat Nurmuhamedov toward Allworth's views, focusing on their underlying causes and scholarly foundations. Special attention is given to issues of translation accuracy, ideological factors, and the influence of the Soviet-era academic environment on interpretations of Hamza's personality and legacy. In addition, Hamza Hakimzoda's death, his dramatic heritage, and his role in the development of theatrical art are evaluated objectively on the basis of Allworth's works. The article substantiates the necessity of revisiting international scholarly interpretations of Hamza Hakimzoda's legacy through a comprehensive and contextual analysis.

**Keywords:** Hamza Hakimzoda Niyoziy, Edward Allworth, Uzbek literary studies, translation issues, Soviet ideology, Jadid literature, drama and theater.

**Introduction:** A considerable body of research has been devoted to the life and activities of Hamza Hakimzoda Niyoziy. Scholarly studies conducted several decades ago by researchers such as Yu. Sultanov, L. Qayumov, and M. Rahmonov continue to be developed systematically today. Some of these studies differ from others due to the diversity of their methodological approaches. In particular, certain works by Laziz Qayumov—especially those addressing specific representatives of Hamza studies—clearly illustrate this tendency.

In his study *Olamshumul shoirimiz* [9, pp. 25–34], Qayumov frequently objects to particular statements found in Edward Allworth's *Uzbek Literary Politics*. While the cited information may be accurate from the standpoint of translation, the logical sequence of ideas is often disrupted, as only selectively extracted short passages are presented. Within the original context, however, these passages convey a different and more nuanced meaning, thereby diminishing the validity of some of the objections raised.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

For example, L. Qayumov criticizes Edward Allworth for

allegedly failing to include Hamza among the successors of poets such as Muqimiy, Zavqiy, and Furqat, interpreting this as an implication that Hamza merely followed the Jadids. However, Allworth's work presents the opposite view:

At the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries, after the incorporation of Central Asia into Russia, advanced Russian culture greatly influenced the development of Uzbek democratic literature and the art of its outstanding representatives: Muhammad Amin Muqimiy (1851–1903), Zakirjan Furqat (1858–1909), Ubaydullah Salih Zavqiy (1853–1921), Avaz Otar-oghli (1884–1919), Hamza (1889–1929), and others [3, p. 218].

This passage clearly demonstrates that Hamza is explicitly included among the prominent representatives of Uzbek democratic literature. It should be noted that Allworth made minor inaccuracies regarding the birth years of certain authors; for instance, Uzbek-language sources indicate that Muqimiy was born in 1850 and Furqat in 1859.

These discrepancies suggest that only fragmentary portions of Allworth's work were available to the critic,

or that the translation itself pursued a specific ideological objective. Moreover, the historical period in which Qayumov's critique was written may have contributed to such a sharply critical approach. It is important to emphasize that Qayumov devoted a substantial part of his scholarly career to the study of Hamza Hakimzoda's life and work, producing major studies such as *Inqilob kuychisi* (1962), *Inqilob va ijod* (1964), *Inqilobiy drama* (1970), and *Hamza* (1973).

## METHODOLOGY

This study employs comparative textual analysis, contextual-historical interpretation, and reception studies methodology. Edward Allworth's original English-language works are examined in comparison with Uzbek scholarly responses in order to identify distortions arising from selective quotation, translation inaccuracies, and ideological framing characteristic of the Soviet academic environment.

## DISCUSSION

In Uzbek Literary Politics, Edward Allworth presents numerous facts concerning Hamza Hakimzoda, some of which remain controversial to this day. One of the most debated issues concerns the circumstances of Hamza's death, which are described differently across various sources. It is known that in the early months of 1928 an organization known as the *Xudosizlar jamiyati* (Society of the Godless), which also published its own periodical, was active. Allworth states that Hamza Hakimzoda Niyoziy served as a leader of this organization during that period.

Hamza's activities in this sphere provoked strong resentment among devout Muslims, and in 1929 he was killed by an enraged local crowd in Shohimardon while leading a group involved in converting a religious site into a so-called "Red Museum." The second issue of *Qizil Qalam* published that year was dedicated to this "martyr." Initially, Soviet authorities attributed the murder to religious Muslims or individuals incited by them; later, the narrative expanded to include "agents of imperialism" and "bourgeois nationalists." It is possible that Hamza's death proved more ideologically useful to the Soviet regime than his life, leading to the construction of a complex mythology of martyrdom. A monument was erected in Shohimardon, and the settlement was renamed Hamzaobod, a development contrasted with the commemoration of the Jadid figure Mahmudxo'ja Behbudiy in Qarshi [3, p. 122].

Marat Nurmuhamedov expressed dissatisfaction with Allworth's account of Hamza's death, arguing that the American scholar treated the subject carelessly [8, p. 66]. However, a close reading of Allworth's works reveals no negative portrayal of Hamza Hakimzoda; rather, Allworth maintains a neutral tone and relies on

available historical evidence.

## RESULTS

Various accounts of Hamza Hakimzoda's death also circulate among the general population, including orally transmitted elegiac songs and laments [7, pp. 144–150], which reflect the deep emotional resonance of his death in popular memory.

Hamza's death received extensive coverage in the press. One of the most significant contributions is N. Karimov's article *Hamzani kim o'ldirgan yoxud Shohimardonning qora bahori*, published in *Yoshlik* magazine, which is particularly valuable for its reliance on historical documentation [5, pp. 50–59].

When discussing Hamza Hakimzoda's dramatic works, Allworth notes discrepancies regarding the first staging of *Boy ila xizmatchi*: some sources date it to 1919, while others cite 1922. He suggests that both dates may be correct, proposing that partial versions were performed earlier, whereas the complete production was staged at the Uzbek Theater in 1922 [3, p. 216]. Allworth also characterizes Hamza as a leading figure among Russophile dramatists in Uzbek theater. According to him, the plays *Farg'ona fojiasi* and *Xorazm inqilobi* have not survived [3, p. 218]. Indeed, *Farg'ona fojiasi*, although lost, was staged in several cities during the author's lifetime and was even criticized by Cho'lpon [6, p. 152]. Hamza also offered a renewed interpretation of the traditional Eastern fable *Toshbaqa va chayon*, known from the works of Jomiy and Gulxaniy [3, p. 239].

Literary scholar Matyoqub Qo'shjonov likewise expressed dissatisfaction with Allworth's treatment of Hamza, claiming that Allworth deliberately avoided discussing works that laid the foundations of Uzbek realistic drama [10, p. 74]. However, this criticism appears to be based on a selective reading of Allworth's work rather than on a systematic analysis. Chapter XXIV of *Uzbek Literary Politics*, entitled *Drama and Theater*, explicitly discusses Hamza's leadership of the *O'lka sayyor dramatik truppassi* established in Fergana in 1918 and lists his major dramatic works, including *Zaharli hayot*, *Paranji sirlari*, *Boy ila xizmatchi*, *Maysaraning ishi*, and *Tuhmatchilar jazosi*, as well as other plays written for the stage [3, p. 218]. Similar objections can also be found in the works of M. Nurmuhamedov, which may be explained by the selective nature of translated materials and the tense Soviet-American relations of the period.

In his 1982 article "A Document about the Cultural Life of Soviet Uzbeks outside the USSR," Allworth reflects on a 1973 theatrical performance of *Zaharli hayot yoxud ishq qurbonlari*, evaluating it as lacking both creative and organizational quality [1, pp. 103–125]. In

Modern Uzbeks, he interprets the same work as depicting the catastrophic consequences of profound human tragedy within the family and as advocating the free choice of Jadid-style reforms [4, p. 150].

In *Modern Uzbeks: From the Fourteenth Century to the Present. A Cultural History*, Allworth notes that Hamza authored a school manual titled *Yengil adabiyot*, consisting of forty-five lessons containing short didactic stories encouraging education, modesty, honesty, and piety. Each lesson begins with simple rhymed verses addressing religious themes [4, p. 136].

In *Central Asia: 130 Years of Russian Dominance. A Historical Overview* (1994), Allworth discusses *Yangi saodat: milliy roman* and *Boy ila xizmatchi*, observing that by this period Central Asian theater had introduced the image of “weeping women,” as reflected in works such as *Nodonlik qurbonlari*, *Boy ila xizmatchi*, and *Qayg’uli Kakey*.

## CONCLUSION

The international scholarly interpretation of Hamza Hakimzoda Niyoziy’s life and creative legacy is closely linked to issues of translation accuracy, ideological mediation, and methodological approach. Although Edward Allworth’s works contain certain debatable aspects, his research has played a crucial role in introducing Hamza’s literary heritage to the global academic community. A comparative analysis of original sources and their reception in Uzbek literary studies demonstrates that many critical responses to Allworth were shaped by selective translation practices and Soviet-era ideological frameworks. Reconsidering these interpretations allows for a more balanced and objective assessment of Hamza Hakimzoda’s contribution and clarifies his place within the broader context of world literary history.

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