

**THE INFLUENCE OF ARABIC LITERATURE OF THE ABBASID PERIOD ON UZBEK
LITERATURE**

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Abstract. The article discusses the work of one of the founders of Eastern literature, Amr ibn Bahr al-Basri al-Jahiz, who lived and worked during the Abbasid period, and the creativity of Ubaydi, one of the Shaybani sultans. In particular, al-Jahiz's relationship with the Abbasids is explored based on historical sources.

Keywords: Baghdad, Iraq, Al-Mas'udi, Ibn Khaldun, Ibn Qutayba, Abbasids, Watwat, Al-Hayawan, Faza'il al-Atrak, Al-Jahiz, history, poet, Abul Hasan Akhvasi, Mubarrid, Lughatnoma, Ubaydi, Adab al-Katib.

Introduction. According to historical sources, Eastern literature developed in a shared literary environment. As a result, it is undeniable that both the first and second renaissance periods took place in the East. As Ubaydi, a royal poet who contributed significantly to classical Turkic literature with his poetry in Turkic, Persian, and Arabic, noted:

Ҳақ неъматин тўё ебон ,тўғри юринг,
Эранлардек кўринғондин маъни сўринг.
Маъни олиб, маънили эл била юриб,
Маънисизлиғ хирманиға ўтлар урунг...

Translation:

Walk upright, having tasted the blessings of truth,
Seek meaning as the noble Persians did.
Embrace meaning, walk with the people of meaning,
And burn the harvest of meaninglessness...

Indeed, the literary atmosphere of the Abbasid era corresponds to the age of “possessors of meaning” and the “golden age” (زمان ذهبي), during which the East became known worldwide as a

“nation of meaning.”

The Arab philosopher al-Jahiz, in the introduction of his book: “البيان والتبيين”

“ليس العلم بكثرة التعلم، إنما هو نور، يقع في قلب من يريد الله أن يهديه.”

Translation:

Knowledge is not attained through much learning; rather, it is a divine light that shines in the heart of one whom God wishes to guide. When power shifted from the Umayyads to the Abbasids (750–1258 CE), the new rulers chose Baghdad in Iraq as their capital. Cultural life flourished extraordinarily in Baghdad, Basra, and Kufa. As interest in science and culture grew and government support increased, scholars from other regions gravitated toward the center. Many of them settled in Baghdad and Basra. Fields such as Quranic exegesis, hadith studies, Arabic linguistics, translation studies, and Arabic literary language saw unprecedented development. Among the key figures was Abdulmalik ibn Quraib al-Asma'i (760–821 CE), a leading scholar during the reign of Caliph Harun al-Rashid (786–809 CE). Historical sources note that Qur'an, hadith, jurisprudence, and poetry were central in these scholarly gatherings, and even the caliph himself would attend as a participant. Due to this scholarly and cultural revival, an unparalleled Arabic literary legacy emerged, reflecting both the cultural richness and the intellectual character of the golden age. According to the historian Ibn Khaldun, significant attention was given to education and enlightenment during the time of Harun al-Rashid and his son al-Ma'mun. Writers affiliated with the Baghdad Literary School include: Ibn Qutayba, author of *Adab al-Katib*, Al-Mubarrid, author of *Al-Kamil*, Abu Uthman al-Jahiz, author of *Al-Bayan wa al-Tabyin*, Abu Ali al-Qali, author of *Al-Nawadir*, born in Diyarbakir (modern-day Turkey). Historian Abu al-Hasan Ali ibn al-Husayn al-Mas'udi, a descendant of the companion Abdullah ibn Mas'ud, wrote in his historical work *Muruj al-Dhahab*:

"...Among both early and later scholars, I have not seen one like al-Jahiz. He was the 'Key to Entering the Arab World' (مفتاح دخول عالم العرب)." Amr ibn Bahr became known in scholarly circles under the nickname *al-Jahiz*, meaning “the one with bulging eyes.”

Al-Jahiz – Abu Uthman Amr ibn Bahr (d. 869 CE) – was born in a poor family in Basra.

According to *Rashiduddin Watwat* in his work "*Hada'iq al-Sihr fi Daqa'iq al-Shi'r*" ("The Gardens of Magic in the Subtleties of Poetry"), Amr was a short, cheerful boy. His neighbors gave him the nickname *al-Jahiz* due to his prominent eyes, but his deep and wise words overshadowed his physical appearance. He was orphaned at a young age. While studying at a madrasa, he also worked after classes selling bread and fish in the market to support his family. Despite his responsibilities, he was deeply passionate about books — even in the streets or markets, he would be seen reading, ignoring his mother's scoldings. According to one account, one day after class, Jahiz told his mother he was hungry and asked for food. She brought out a covered tray, set it in front of him, and said, “Here, my son, is your food.” When he uncovered it, he found books and papers instead. Surprised, he looked at her, and she said, “My son, this is your nourishment now. There is nothing else left in the house.” Around this time, he had completed his famous philosophical and scientific book *al-Hayawan* ("The Book of Animals"). The caliph's officials had requested a copy be sent to the palace. Jahiz gave a manuscript to one of the scribes to be copied. Moved by his mother's gesture, he took the copy directly to the caliph. The caliph flipped through the large volume and was so impressed that he gifted Jahiz 50,000 dinars. He returned home with the grand reward and presented it to his mother.

Stories like this often mark moments of divine favor in the lives of great people. As the poet Ubaydi said:

If divine grace and generosity descend from God,
All of my affairs shall be taken care of sufficiently.

Al-Jahiz's love of knowledge helped him grow into a prominent scholar. He first studied at his local madrasa, then under well-known scholars of his era, including: Abu Ubayda, Abdul Malik ibn Quraib al-Asma'i, Akhvash.

Under Asma'i's leadership, scientific gatherings were held in the caliphal palace. These gatherings became a source of great comfort and joy for Jahiz. His versatility in knowledge is evident in his writings. In many of his works, he repeatedly returned to the theme of "man and the universe." He described matters of etiquette, human virtues and vices, and divine miracles in the animal world in both prose and poetic styles. This timeless quality is why his works have remained appreciated across generations. Al-Jahiz is said to have authored around 360 works. Though many were lost during the Mongol invasions, a significant number have survived:

1. البيان والتبيين – *Al-Bayan wa al-Tabyin*

This book explores eloquence and rhetoric, the science of expression, and includes discussions of eloquence in hadith literature. It was published with commentary in Egypt (1333 AH).

2. كتاب الحيوان – *Kitab al-Hayawan*

Published in seven volumes by "Al-Taqaaddum" publishing house in Egypt (1323 AH), it is a philosophical and scientific encyclopedia about animals.

3. رسائل الجاحظ – *Rasa'il al-Jahiz*

A famous multi-volume collection (11 volumes), published in Egypt (1323 AH), translated into several languages. Each volume includes multiple chapters.

One notable section:

في مناقب الترك و عامة جند الخلافة – On the Virtues of the Turks and the Common Soldiers of the Caliphate

This was dedicated to the caliph's Turkish commander and vizier, Fath ibn Khaqan al-Turki.

It was published in London in 1903 by the British Orientalist Von Flotow and details the bravery, virtues, and noble character of Turkish soldiers serving in the caliph's army.

4. فضائل الاتراك – *Fada'il al-Atrak (The Virtues of the Turks)*

Written at the request of the Abbasid vizier Fath ibn Khaqan, the introduction praises the Turkish people's valor, moral excellence, and sincere Islamic beliefs, emphasizing their respected role in the caliphate.

Published in 1898 by "Matba'at al-'Umumiyya" in Egypt.

Educational Philosophy and Influence

Two more notable works of al-Jahiz are:

1. كتاب المعلمين – *Kitab al-Mu'allimin (The Book of Teachers)*

2. تهذيب الأخلاق – *Tahdhib al-Akhlaq (Refinement of Morals)*

These books discuss the relationship between teachers and students, and the proper methods of acquiring knowledge. Interestingly, they bear strong resemblance to the later work of Imam al-Zarnuji, who lived two centuries later in Central Asia.

Imam al-Zarnuji's famous treatise,

تعليم المتعلم – *Ta'lim al-Muta'allim (Instruction of the Student)*

...is thematically and stylistically similar to al-Jahiz's works. It is likely that Imam Zarnuji studied al-Jahiz's writings and drew inspiration from them in composing his own educational manual.

Influence on Uzbek Literature and Poets

Just as al-Jahiz influenced Zarnuji, his impact extended into the Turkic literary tradition as well. Several great figures in Uzbek and Turkic literature may have drawn upon al-Jahiz's style and themes, including:

1. Alisher Navoi

His works such as:

- محاكمة اللغتين – *Muhakamat al-Lughatayn (The Judgment Between the Two Languages)*
- محبوب القلوب – *Mahbub al-Qulub (The Beloved of Hearts)*

...reflect rhetorical styles and ethical themes similar to those found in al-Jahiz's writings.

2. Ubaydi

In his epistolary genre works like:

- Ghayratnoma (Book of Zeal)
 - Shavqnoma (Book of Joy)
 - Sabrnoma (Book of Patience)
- ...we can detect parallels to the content and stylistics of Jahiz's philosophical and moral prose.
- 3. Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur

In his historical and autobiographical work:

- Baburnama

- ...the tone and analytical approach may have been influenced by al-Jahiz's *Kitab al-Hayawan* and similar writings.

These connections are not surprising — as the narrative techniques, moral reflections, and analytical depth of al-Jahiz were widely admired and served as models across the Islamic world. It is likely that al-Jahiz's works were part of the personal libraries of major literary figures like Navoi, Babur, and Ubaydi. If we say they made productive use of his ideas, it would not be an exaggeration.

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