

**THE SINGER OF HUMAN BEAUTY – ABDYLLA SHABENDE****Haytbayev Awazbek Aybek ogly****Ajiniyaz Nukus State****Pedagogical Institute, Faculty of Philology****Turkmen Language and Literature, 2nd Year Student**<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.20062944>

Abstract: This article provides detailed information about Abdylla Shabende, a prominent representative of 18th-century Turkmen literature. It reveals the poet's life journey, level of education, creative characteristics, and his role in public life. It is also noted that Shabende was known not only as a poet, but also as a skilled horse trainer (seyis), a singer (bagshy), and a traveler. The article draws attention to his relationships with other classical poets, particularly with Magtymguly. A significant place in the poet's work is occupied by the glorification of human beauty, his contribution to the art of music, and his participation in historical events.

Keywords: Abdylla Shabende, Turkmen literature, 18th century, poetry, horse training, singing, epic tales (dessans), Gül-Bilbil, Khojamberdi Khan, travelogue, relationship with Magtymguly, art of music.

Shabende was born around 1720 in a place called Was, near the Akdepe district of Dashoguz province. The poet's real name was Abdylla (in some sources Abdyl Nazar), and Shabende was his literary pen name. There is a folk legend about how he acquired this name: One of Shabende's close friends fell captive to the Shah of Iran. When Shabende inquired about him, someone told him: "Your friend is imprisoned in the Shah's dungeon." At that moment, he said to himself: "From this day on, do not call yourself a man upon whom God has bestowed favor – that is, Abdylla, Abdyl Nazar. You are a man cursed by God. What difference is there between you and your friend languishing in the Shah's dungeon? Therefore, let my name no longer be Abdylla, but Shabendi." The people then slightly altered it and called him "Shabende." There is also information that the poet adopted the name Shabende when he himself was imprisoned. Perhaps, as with many other classical Turkmen poets, the poet's pen name is directly connected to his own creative work. Shabende placed human beauty above all other beauties in the world – even above divine and mythological beauty. As we know, in the past, poets used words such as "rose, cypress, moon, parrot, dove, gazelle, sultan, king" to describe the beauties they praised. If that is so, it is possible that Abdylla Shabende used this literary pen name in his works to mean: "I am the singer of human beauty – one who is captivated (bendi) by human beauty, a captive of the king."

Shabende's father was called Mami. He was a literate man who enjoyed great respect among the people. Mami the mullah took care to raise his son as a learned and educated person.

Shabende first studied at a village school, then at one of the madrasas in Khiva. Despite the religious nature of education in the schools and madrasas of that period, Shabende thoroughly studied literature in Persian and Turkic, the history of the East, philosophy, and several other sciences.

From his youth, Shabende was also interested in horse training (seyischilik). He participated in many festivals and races, gradually perfecting this craft. Later, he became a

highly respected horse trainer. The horses he trained and cared for participated not only in races in the Khiva region, but also in competitions held in other parts of Turkmenistan – in the Etrek, Gorgan, and Ahal regions – winning major prizes. One legend tells of Shabende's participation in a race at a celebration in Gorgan, together with a man named Musa Garyn. After arriving at the festival grounds with his companion Musa Garyn, they set out to learn about the condition of the other horses competing. An experienced elderly man had also come to that festival from Ahal – one who knew well the hidden secrets of horse training. He could tell the condition of any horse just by looking at it. The people gathered at the festival the day before crowded around him, asking him to predict which horse would win. He replied: "There are ears in the walls. If I now say which horse is in what condition and what its weakness is, they will fix it by tomorrow. And we will end up with no prize." When those around him kept pleading, "Come on, there's nobody here, just say it!" the old horse trainer finally agreed to share his thoughts. He looked around and said: "The horse from Khiva should be faster than all the others. However, it has a slight weakness. Having come a long way, it is somewhat tired and has caught a little cold. If tomorrow morning a lamb or a goat is slaughtered and its skin, while still warm, is placed on its back, and then it is made to sweat, the prize should be theirs."

Shabende, having overheard the old horse trainer's words, trained his horse the next morning exactly as instructed. In this way, he won the grand prize. There is other information as well about the poet's involvement in horse training. The people even gave him the title "Trainer of Trainers" (Seyisler Seyisi). That Shabende was a skilled horse trainer is also confirmed by his poem "Arab Horse" (Arap at), as well as by the prominent place given to the praise of horses in his epic tales.

Shabende maintained close contact with several Turkmen poets. When Magtymguly visited the Göklenings in Khiva, Shabende met with him. Magtymguly stayed as a guest at Shabende's home for several days; they recited poems together at festivals and gatherings, conversed with passersby, and went on excursions to Was, Uzboy, and Üstürt. Later, Magtymguly returned to his village and invited Shabende to visit him in Etrek and Gorgan. Shabende visited Magtymguly's homeland several times. The poet had close relatives there as well. Another account reports that Shabende and Magtymguly engaged in a riddle-verse exchange (tapmaja gosgy aydys).

The legend of the journeys of the three poets – Shabende, Kemine, and Talyby – has become even more widely popular among the people.

These three poets first stayed as guests at Shabende's home in Khiva, and then set off on a journey to Ahal and Mary. While staying as guests at the home of a woman named Gözel in a village along the way, Shabende composed his famous poem "Gözelim" (My Beauty). At that time, Kemine composed "Zülpün" (Your Locks), and Talyby composed "Gezme Yırtık Jinde Bilen" (Do Not Wander in Torn Garments). The friendly relationships and literary collaboration among the poets also led to the emergence of certain common features in their works. The closeness in terms of meaning, content, and artistic expression is clearly felt in their poems. There is no doubt that the poets' establishment of such connections at a time when no literary organization existed had a positive influence on the development of classical Turkmen literature.

Like several other Turkmen poets, Shabende also had a good knowledge of the art of music. In the book "Turkmen Music" by the well-known musicologist Professor V. Uspensky,

Shabende's name is mentioned among a number of famous musician-singers (sazanda-bagshy). Showing great respect for music, the poet also intertwined his poems with it. Shabende performed his own poems and Turkmen epic tales (dessans) set to music skillfully before the people. He also made a considerable contribution to the development of Turkmen musical art. According to available information, Shabende also composed several melodies (saz): "Nejep" ("Jygaly").

Shabende was a wandering poet. He traveled through many parts of the Turkmen land. He also visited several major cities of Central Asia, as well as the Caucasus, Astarabad, Tehran, and Isfahan. After traveling through many places, there is information that Shabende also wrote a work entitled "Syyahatname" (Travelogue). The poet's travels were mainly connected with his lifelong pursuits: horse training, poetry, and singing. Shabende had no other purpose in mind when traveling. Wherever he went, he participated in horse races, recited poems, sang songs, and played music. In doing so, he brought joy to the people and received their blessings. In short, the poet was a beloved figure among the people.

Shabende lived in the midst of the historical events of the 18th century. He witnessed several plundering invasions of Turkmen land by the Khanate of Khiva, the Emirate of Bukhara, and the Shah of Iran. The poet maintained a close relationship with his contemporary Khojamberdi Khan. As is known, Khojamberdi Khan, deceived by the Iranian Shah Aghamohammad Shah, participated in several of his campaigns. Ultimately, his fate came to a tragic end. Shabende dedicated to him his epic tale "Khojamberdi Khan." However, in this epic, the poet was unable to clearly show that this khan had strayed from the interests of the people, and that it was for this reason that his fate had taken such a grim turn. This indicates that Shabende was not fully able to understand some of the complex historical events of his time. For this reason, his epic "Khojamberdi Khan" did not turn out to be a success.

Shabende most likely created the epic "Shabahram" in the early period of his creative work. Because the ideas put forward in this epic are developed further in his "Gül-Bilbil" epic, which he composed in the final years of his life.

Shabende passed away around the year 1800. His grave is believed to be in Was, near the tomb of Ashykaydyng.

Shabende's descendants live in the "Turkmenistan" collective farm of the Göroğly district of Dashoguz province, in the collective farms of the Köneürgenj district, and in Karakalpakstan.

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