

Poetic principles in depicting the socio-psychological spirit of the father figure in 20th-century Uzbek stories

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Received: 20 January 2025; **Accepted:** 19 February 2025; **Published:** 17 March 2025

Abstract: This article discusses the socio-psychological approach to creating the image of a father in 20th-century Uzbek storytelling, the writer's unique style, the coverage of the 20th-century social environment in Uzbek storytelling, and the unique aspects of the human image. It also discusses poetic principles in depicting the psyche of the character.

Keywords: Socio-psychological, harmony, image, writer, style, repression, passage, spirit, principle, character.

Introduction: In the 20th-century stories, the integration of artistic depiction and socio-psychological views began to bring significant changes in the creativity of writers. As a result, the issue of choosing a character and bringing it to the center of the story was gradually depicted in connection with real life. It is no coincidence that each story's events were increasingly dedicated to social life problems and their consequences.

Previously, we often witnessed that World War I and its consequences, repression and human destinies, the impact of World War II, and the losses in the Afghan war tested the people's endurance and resilience. As a result of the misfortunes that befell the people, not only those who were martyred but also their family members who were left behind experienced a fundamental change in their lives, which was reflected in many stories.

The depiction of these processes in artistic literature required a special approach from writers, so it can be said. "The artistic excellence, longevity, unique qualities, charm, and enchantment of any literary work are primarily manifested in the construction of the author's speech. The author's speech, considered a mirror reflecting the beauty of a work of art, appears in the fabric of the literary work's language in the form of a monologue." [1] "In this regard, the depiction of the inner experiences and psychological states of story characters in writers' works inevitably relies on the writer's skill. This is because the reader initially receives

information through the details provided by the author. As a result of these details, the reader's interest in the story increases.

At the beginning of the 20th century, when the epic genre was just beginning to gain popularity in our literature, the uniqueness of such works lay in the fact that the essence of the events depicted could be understood either through the dialogue between the characters or solely through the author's narration. Of course, for this information not to remain superficial, the author must have a deep understanding of life, be able to analyze it in all its complexity, and use words in a way that directly influences human emotions." [2] "In particular, a writer's skill is evaluated by how deeply a reader connects with the character—crying when the character cries, rejoicing when they rejoice. In the process of creating a character, the writer considers the character's social status and psychological state. Likewise, in depicting the character, the reader's perception of reality is also taken into account." "It is known that every literary work is created by a specific individual—an artist. Artistically mature works, created by true talents, renew poetic thinking in one way or another, laying the foundation for the emergence of new trends, movements, and directions in literary life. At the same time, they also influence the development of social thought." [3]

"Before studying literary works, it is necessary to determine the methods and levels of their analysis. "Poetics" (from the Greek 'poietike technē' – the art of creation) is, in a broad sense, a component of literary

theory and a doctrine about literary works. Understanding poetics as general literature and the science of verbal art—literary theory—has been a tradition since ancient times.” [4] “Before studying a specific literary work, obtaining information about it allows for a better approach to its analysis. In this regard, poetics holds great significance. Some writers begin their work from the climax, while others start from the knot of the plot. This, in turn, defines the writer’s unique style and, in some cases, has a distinct impact on the reader’s psychology.

For example, most of A. Qahhor’s stories begin with a knot and conclude with a resolution. The final interpretation, however, is always left to the reader. That is why readers interpret A. Qahhor’s stories differently and read them with a unique emotional connection.”

“Abdulla Qahhor’s place in Uzbek storytelling is unparalleled. He is honored in Uzbek literature as a writer who first introduced realistic themes into the short story genre. Although his creative approach aligns with that of the Russian writer Chekhov, it is impossible not to notice that Abdulla Qahhor remained true to national principles in his works.

In his stories, the reader renames the story through the depiction of characters and their portrayal. The brevity of his story titles and the deep meaning embedded in each title are commendable. In Abdulla Qahhor’s short stories, we often witness the “Father” figure and the events surrounding this character.

“When a writer uses the artistic means of language in a literary text, their primary goal is not only to achieve imagery and expressive impact but also to convey their artistic intent and idea through an implicit method within the internal structure of these means.” [5] “Abdulla Qahhor’s short story “So’nggi vulqon” also belongs to the category of stories that begin with a knot.

“At eleven o’clock at night, Sheramat aka called our house and said, ‘Make some pilaf, add some chickpeas, I’ll be there in less than an hour.’ Since we were well aware of his habits, we always had the ingredients for pilaf ready like a loaded rifle. The pilaf was prepared, and Sheramat aka arrived. A steaming plate of pilaf was placed on the table.” [6]

At the beginning of the story, several questions arise for the reader: Who is Sheramat aka? Why is he instructing these people to prepare pilaf? Who are these people, and why do they comply with his request? For whom is the pilaf being prepared?

To find answers to these questions, the reader must continue reading the story. As the narrative unfolds,

the knot introduced at the beginning gradually unravels, providing answers to these questions.

Similarly, in A. Qahhor’s other stories, such as “Mahalla,” “Kartina,” “Xotinlar,” and “Yillar,” the stories begin with a knot and progress toward its resolution. This technique is evident in nearly all of his works, which is why A. Qahhor is considered a writer with a distinct literary style.” “In Abdulla Qahhor’s short story “Asror bobo,” not only is the “Father” figure deeply portrayed, but his emotional and psychological state is also vividly illustrated.

“Asror bobo’s son, Yodgor, was killed on the front. He received an official death notice. However, Asror bobo hid this news from his wife. At the same time, he worked in a teahouse, instilling hatred toward the enemy among the people. He read newspaper reports and carried out propaganda. His wife, who accidentally found out about their son’s death, also hid the news from her husband out of pity for him.”

This depiction highlights the emotional resilience and silent suffering of parents during wartime, a recurring theme in A. Qahhor’s works.” [7] “In this story, the deep love and compassion between the two characters are expressed through their efforts to protect each other. Asror bobo carries immense sorrow—not only is he a grieving father who has lost his son, but he also sees it as his duty to instill hatred toward war in people’s minds. He believes that by doing so, he is actively fighting against the enemy. Through this, he seeks to ease his inner pain and find solace.

In this story, the writer uses Asror bobo as a representation of the suffering and hardships endured by the people during wartime. In reality, Asror bobo is just one example of the many fathers who lived through the tragedies of World War II. During that time, such losses had tragically become an everyday reality.” “Analyzing the structure of a literary work, identifying the writer’s style, and paying close attention to descriptive techniques enhance the work’s appeal and emotional impact.

Description (tasvir, from Arabic—meaning depiction, representation) is the artistic portrayal of objects and events in reality through literary devices, allowing the reader to perceive them directly and comprehensively, along with their unique and inimitable characteristics.

Although the term description is primarily associated with visual arts, it is also applicable to other forms of art, particularly literature. In literary works, description is conveyed through words. Unlike visual arts, where images are physically represented, in literature, the depicted events and objects are perceived through the “inner eye.” Through the sequential arrangement of words, the features of an object or event are gradually

revealed, ultimately forming a vivid mental image in the reader's imagination." [8] "This demonstrates how the short story genre, as a form of prose, plays a crucial role in depicting events concisely yet vividly through description. Due to its brevity, the short story relies heavily on imagery to convey deep emotions and meaning.

For example, in O'ktam Mirzayor's short story "Tuproq hidi" (The Scent of Soil), the character Istam embodies a son with a profound respect and devotion to his father. Through his thoughts, it is revealed that he carries a deep regret for not being able to care for his mother. This remorse leads him to return to his village for his father's sake.

Even though he has responsibilities elsewhere, Istam chooses to stay by his father's side, prioritizing his service over everything else. For him, even the opinions of others hold no significance.

"Otajon, isingizga bir to'yay..." (Father, let me fill my lungs with your scent...), Istam said.

"Nari tur-e, po'rim! Is qobtimi," (Stay back, fancy boy! Has the scent disappeared?) his father rasped. Then, as if something was stuck in his throat, he struggled to swallow. His long fingers interlocked tightly, and he let out a deep sigh. Istam understood from his father's heavy sigh that it meant, "My days are numbered." [9] For a child, witnessing their father wither away day by day is an unbearable burden. In the story, Istam even goes as far as digging a grave to earn his father's approval. Despite being engaged in scholarly pursuits in the city and only having visited the cemetery last when his mother passed away, he cannot refuse his father's request. He respects his father's decision without hesitation.

The story portrays the "setting and interactions" in a simple yet heartfelt manner. Even the "process of digging the grave, its structure, the texture of the soil, and its scent" are vividly described.

"When Istam and his younger brother returned to the yard, someone had moved Nafas Buva to the thick shade of the apricot tree. Their father was hunched over, dozing off. Covering his mouth with his palm, Istam signaled his brother to be quiet. He then carefully lowered himself onto the small stool across from the cart and gazed at his father, who was snoring lightly like a child. 'Thank God!' he murmured contentedly." [10]

Dilbar Saidova's short story "Yig'i" starkly contrasts with the previous narrative. In this story, the father figure, Sadriddinxoja, is portrayed as a heartless, stubborn man who never wavers from his own desires. He disregards the feelings of his children and acts cruelly even toward his wife.

When he married 14-year-old Maxfirat, he treated her with merciless indifference, evoking the reader's resentment. At first, he refused to recognize his daughters as human beings. When his first daughter, Karomat, was born, and later his second daughter, Salomat, he responded by raining blows upon Maxfirat.

As the saying goes, even death turns away from the wicked—Sadriddin returned from war unscathed. But instead of softening, he became even more obstinate and ill-tempered, making life unbearable for those around him.

"The children had grown up. 'Be careful with your daughters. If I hear anything, I won't spare any of you,' said her husband. Matchmakers began coming to ask for Karomat's hand, but she kept refusing. However, one day, she remained silent when a certain group of matchmakers came. She immediately sensed that her daughter had feelings for them.

'I agree. But you should consult her father,' she said. However, the father refused. He claimed that the groom's lineage was inferior. Nevertheless, the matchmakers kept coming.

'Don't come anymore. That's it. If my daughter agrees, I will disown her. And if my wife dares to support such a thing, I will divorce her with three talaqs,' the father declared to the matchmakers, who were waiting for his approval on the veranda.

It was clear that, to the father, his child's wishes meant nothing. However, at that moment, the words the mother had swallowed for years burst forth like a volcano. Maxfirat, who stood up against her husband, received three talaqs. From that day on, although they lived under the same roof for nearly fifteen years, they never spoke to each other.

'Mother, dear mother,' she cried, embracing her mother tightly. 'It was because of me that you had a falling out with my father. Please, make peace now. Let my father rest in his grave in peace....'

The old woman's heart ached. What kind of children had she raised—how could they be so merciless?" [11] There are such stories in Uzbek literature where the blessing called upbringing is even greater than human emotions and experiences. In this story, even though the father's unworthiness of his role is evident, the mere fact that he is a father compels his child to respect him.

When a writer begins crafting a work, an idea for the piece emerges first. The composition of the work is then created. After that, the writer refines and analyzes the idea in their mind. Once a fully formed character takes shape, they gather the events and situations that align with this character and connect them through a

structured plot. As a result, a literary work is born.

In short stories, characters should be more multifaceted compared to other literary forms. This is because a limited number of characters must effectively convey the entire storyline.

"Imaginative memory is a type of memory associated with images, life scenes, sounds, tastes, colors, and shapes. It refers to the ability to clearly retain the essence of events, their distinct features, and connections in memory, solidifying them in the mind and recalling them when needed. Consistent characterization is divided into both positive and negative types." [12] When a writer selects a character, they inevitably consider social and psychological aspects. This is why some short stories become timeless works. They remain engraved in the minds of readers, never fading from memory.

In the 20th century, Uzbek literature underwent significant reforms and advancements. One of the most notable developments was the recognition and growth of the short story as an independent literary genre, which played a crucial role in shaping Uzbek literature. However, this era also witnessed the tragic repression of many literary figures. The period of purges serves as a stark example of such repression.

"The 20th century's emphasis on intellect and rationality inadvertently led to the marginalization of emotional depth, causing shifts in people's spiritual worlds. Disregard for natural laws and the desire to dominate nature not only resulted in severe ecological disasters but also fostered a dismissive attitude toward religion, literature, and art, paving the way for moral crises. In this sense, it can be said that transitional periods and turning points in human history prompt self-reflection, repentance, purification, and a renewed pursuit of a reformed way of life." [13] Such processes inevitably influenced the psychological and emotional state of humanity. In the 20th century, the content of literature underwent significant changes. Writers began to expand their stylistic approaches, and in some cases, external interventions in their creative processes became apparent. In short stories, events increasingly transformed into realistic and tangible character types.

The art of selecting characters in literature demanded greater sharpness and insight from writers, as the portrayal of characters—whether positive or negative—was increasingly judged by readers independently of the writer's intended style. This shift also signaled the development of literary criticism, as readers became more analytical and discerning in their evaluations of literary works.

In Odil Yoqubov's short story "Vido", the inner turmoil and suffering of Master Qobil are vividly portrayed. The

story explores a father's longing for affection from his son, Nodir—his silent hope of hearing the word "Dada" just once more. Through his inner reflections, the story highlights the ease of becoming a scholar but the difficulty of truly being a compassionate human being.

"The master's pain resides in his stomach. It feels as if a greedy hedgehog has entered his insides, scratching and tearing at his intestines for a month, at times clutching and squeezing them, at others searing his already aching spot as if pressing a burning coal against it..."

Through this powerful imagery, the writer enables the reader to feel Qobil ota's pain, allowing us to sense his illness and sympathize with his suffering. As the story unfolds, an invisible wall between father and son becomes apparent. The reader not only pities the father but also develops a sense of resentment towards Nodir for his coldness, making the emotional gap between them all the more poignant. "At the head of the room sat Aziz Domla, whose hair had turned completely white, yet he still appeared relatively young. Beside him was Nodir, dressed in a sky-blue silk blazer. Beneath it, a delicate silk undershirt revealed his round, snow-white belly, resembling a plump dumpling."

This description sharply contrasts the characters, subtly emphasizing Nodir's detachment from traditional values. His polished, modern appearance juxtaposes the wisdom and dignity embodied by Aziz Domla. The imagery of his exposed belly, almost exaggeratedly soft and privileged, hints at his carefree and perhaps self-indulgent nature, reinforcing the emotional and generational divide between him and his father, Qobil ota. [15] In this depiction, the author masterfully blends both visual and psychological elements to contrast the father and son. Qobil ota appears as a frail yet kind-hearted and hardworking figure, embodying selflessness and resilience. Meanwhile, Nodir is portrayed as self-centered, emotionally detached, and indifferent to his father's struggles. His words and actions irritate the reader, evoking a sense of disappointment and frustration. This stark contrast naturally leads us to sympathize with Qobil ota, feeling his silent pain and yearning for affection.

However, not all children are like Nodir. The story also presents an alternative—Abdullajon, a devoted and caring son. Unlike Nodir, he remains close to his father, sharing in his concerns and ensuring that no day passes without caring for him. Through this dual portrayal, the author emphasizes the dichotomy of filial devotion, highlighting how different children perceive and treat their parents.

"--You didn't understand the issue!

"Nodir!"—flashed through the master's mind..

- You just don't understand, brother! I mean, you can see it yourself!

It was Abduljaliljon's voice.

- "I can see it. But you should also consider it—if I support this time, the issue will be delayed for six or seven months."

So what if it's delayed? While our father is lying in this condition..."[16]

As Uzbek storytelling evolved, writers began to adopt new approaches in their literary works. Through their stories, authors started depicting characters who were oppressed in real life, deprived of compassion, yet hopeful for a renewal in life. According to L. N. Tolstoy, in order to create a certain type in literature, a writer must select and artistically unify the characteristics common to many people of that category. To depict a shopkeeper, an official, or a worker, the writer needs to study the lives of many shopkeepers, officials, and workers, identifying the key social-class traits, habits, and other defining aspects that shape their identity. Thus, while a literary character may closely resemble real people, they are not an exact replica of any individual. [17] Indeed, it is natural for the protagonist of a story, particularly a father figure, to resemble someone's real-life father or even appear more ideal than others. In literary fiction, the depth of a character depends on how well it is portrayed. Through creative exploration and artistic skill, a writer can craft a compelling and well-rounded character, enhancing the emotional impact of the story. The ability to evoke a specific image of a father in readers' minds is a testament to the writer's mastery.

In the 20th century, Uzbek short story writers paid great attention to the creation of the father figure. Their approach to shaping this character was based on the overall theme of the story, the social status of the father, and the broader concept of the national paternal image. Every writer, when developing a protagonist, examined the character traits and social standing of the people around them, generalizing these observations to create a well-rounded figure.

When analyzing these characters, it becomes evident that they are not always valued equally. Depending on their role in the story, they are classified as either positive or negative figures. Fathers in literary works are often evaluated in this manner as well. In most cases, the father's position within the family remains significant and is depicted through an Eastern cultural perspective. In this regard, the portrayal of father figures in Uzbek stories differs fundamentally from those in Western literature. The social and

psychological aspects of fathers are frequently considered in literature, with many scenes depicting their emotional experiences. As a result, terms like wise father, scholarly father, entrepreneurial father, thief father, cruel father, and unkind father are often heard. If such descriptions did not exist in real life, they would not find their way into literature, nor would they be portrayed as purely fantastical elements.

In 20th-century Uzbek storytelling, the longing for paternal love and the deep yearning for fathers became significant social issues. The devastations of war led to fathers being drafted, causing many children to grow up with an abstract, often unrealistic understanding of what a father truly is. At the same time, children spending their lives in anticipation of their father's return became a painful psychological reality for humanity.

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