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Tradition and Innovation in the Prose of Erkin A'zam

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Abstract

This article examines the interaction of national literary tradition and artistic innovation in the prose of the People's Writer of Uzbekistan Erkin A'zam. The study focuses on the continuity of realistic representation, psychologism, the concept of the "little man," everyday environment, colloquial speech, and ethical conflict in his short stories, novellas, and screen novellas. It also identifies the writer's innovations in characterization, the transformation of ordinary details into broader artistic generalizations, the creation of individual neologisms, and the synthesis of prose, drama, and cinematic expression. A historical-comparative approach relates A'zam's work to the legacy of Abdulla Qodiriy, Cho'lpon, and later Uzbek realist prose. Typological analysis reveals similarities and differences in characters, conflicts, and plot construction. Linguopoetic analysis explains the semantic and stylistic functions of authorial units such as *juftgarchi, sho'x-shalayim, erkashotirlar, Olashovur, g'aribohang, tovuqtovon, chantrimore,* and *kalamakatore*. The findings show that tradition is not mechanically repeated in A'zam's prose but creatively reinterpreted to express the psychology of modern individuals and social-everyday contradictions. In *Javob, Bayramdan boshqa kunlar, Zabarjad, Suv yoqalab, Qarzdor,* and other works, ordinary events, dialogue, detail, and inner speech become instruments for revealing major moral issues. The screen-novella form combines psychological depth with dramatic movement and visual imagery. The article concludes that Erkin A'zam's individual style emerges from a creative synthesis of national prose heritage, folk speech, irony, and intergeneric experimentation. This synthesis defines his place in contemporary Uzbek prose and provides a basis for further comparative research into artistic language, character, composition, and genre transformation.

INTRODUCTION

In the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, the process of reinterpreting the national heritage in a new aesthetic light intensified in Uzbek prose. The principles of realistic and psychological depiction initiated by Abdulla Qodiriy and Cho'lpon were enriched by later generations of writers with the spiritual quests of the modern individual [1]. Within this literary process, Erkin A'zam created a distinctive style by portraying the complex inner world of the ordinary person and the moral contradictions in family, neighborhood (*mahalla*), and everyday relationships. The writer's works such as "Javob," "Bayramdan boshqa kunlar," "Pakananing oshiq ko'ngli," "Zabarjad," "Suv yoqalab," and "Qarzdor" stand out for their combination of realistic observation, irony, and psychological analysis. Studies have particularly noted the

writer's prose for its characterization, its transformation of everyday detail into artistic generalization, its use of colloquial speech, and its inclination toward intergeneric synthesis [2], [3]. However, it is important to study these features as a holistic dialectical unity of tradition and innovation. The aim of the article is to identify the traditional elements and the signs of renewal in Erkin A'zam's prose and to reveal their function in the construction of character, conflict, language, and genre. The object of the research is the writer's novellas and screen novellas, and its subject is the creative reworking of national literary experience in them. The analysis serves to determine the place of the writer's style in the development of modern Uzbek prose [4], [5].

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research applied historical-comparative, typological, contextual, and linguopoetic methods in combination. The historical-comparative method made it possible to evaluate realism, psychologism, the image of the "little man," and moral conflicts in Erkin A'zam's prose in relation to the traditions of Qodiriy, Cho'lpon, and later Uzbek prose. The typological approach was used to compare the models of hero, situation, plot, and conflict in the works "Javob," "Bayramdan boshqa kunlar," "Zabarjad," "Suv yoqalab," "Qarzdor," and "Chapaklar va chalpaklar mamlakati." In the contextual analysis, the function of everyday detail, dialogue, inner speech, irony, and symbol in a particular episode was examined in connection with the overall ideological and compositional system of the work. The linguopoetic method was directed at determining the artistic effect of the individual neologisms created by the author, units characteristic of colloquial speech, repetition, antithesis, and expressive syntactic constructions. The corpus of sources included the writer's published novellas, short stories, and screen novellas, his literary interviews, and scholarly articles, monographs, and dissertations devoted to his work. The conclusions were drawn not by merely listing individual examples but by generalizing recurring poetic principles. To avoid unfounded extrapolation, the interpretations relied only on the features of character, language, and genre in the selected texts. This methodological combination made it possible to see tradition and innovation not as opposing phenomena but as mutually complementary aesthetic systems within the writer's individual style.

In literature, tradition means the preservation and development by subsequent writers of themes, images, modes of depiction, and stylistic principles formed over generations. Innovation, in turn, is not the negation of existing experience but its re-comprehension on the basis of the aesthetic needs of a new era. For this reason, these concepts are mutually complementary aspects of literary development. In Uzbek prose, Qodiriy's novelistic art and Cho'lpon's prose opened a new stage in the depiction of the human psyche. Erkin A'zam's work took shape at the point where national tradition, realistic observation, and modern artistic experience intersect. In his works, traditional moral questions acquire new content through the everyday life of his contemporary, his inner hesitations, and his relationship with the social environment.

The Continuity of Realistic Traditions: the "Little Man" and Moral Conflict

The main traditional feature of Erkin A'zam's prose is its attention to the human being and his inner world, that is, its fidelity to psychological realism. At the center of the writer's works there is often a person who lives with everyday worries but whose inner world is complex. In the screen novella "Zabarjad," the experiences of the "little man" are depicted on the basis of a moral-spiritual conflict. The tragic knot — that Zabarjad's father, Jo'raboy, survived drowning in the Qizilsoy at the cost of another's life — becomes the moral yardstick for the subsequent events. The theme of the "little man," which has a long history in world and national literature, is linked in the writer's work to the Uzbek way of life and to the environment of the neighborhood and the family. The clash of good and evil, honesty and self-interest (*nafs*), compassion and indifference is shifted from the level of external events to the level of the character's individual spiritual experience. In this way, the traditional conflict is enriched with a new psychological quality.

Innovation in Characterization and the Depiction of Everyday Life

An important manifestation of the writer's innovation is that he turns the depiction of everyday life into a means of revealing the hero's psychology. The character shows his essence in ordinary relationships within the circle of family, neighbors, and colleagues. In the novella "Javob," Nuriddin Elchiyev's life-summing reckoning is connected with his observation of his family environment and of the dispositions of his wife and children. In the course of events, the hero moves toward understanding himself and his life. In "Bayramdan boshqa kunlar," the everyday environment is depicted more broadly, and its influence on the formation of character is deepened. In works such as "Suv yoqalab," "Qarzdor," and "Jannat o'zi qaydadir," everyday episodes become the supports of the composition. The disclosure of a great meaning through a small situation, a detail, and a psychological nuance is a consistent principle of the writer's style.

Innovation in Language and Style

Erkin A'zam creatively uses the possibilities of language and creates individual units based on colloquial folk speech. Units such as *juftgarchi, sho'x-shalayim, erkashotirlar, Olashovur, g'aribohang, tovuqtovon, chantrimore,* and *kalamakatore* perform a distinct function in expressing the character of the personage and the reality around him. Some of them are formed by compounding, while others are colloquially altered forms of existing words or names. In context, these units acquire new semantic content, concisely express the hero's social image, and lend the depiction laughter, irony, and light mockery. Although the roots of the neologisms go back to folk language and oral speech, their incorporation into the literary text in a new form defines the author's individual style. Syntactic repetition, parallelism, and dialogic echoes also serve to create textual integrity and psychological dynamics.

Renewal of Genre and Form

In the writer's work, the boundaries between prose, dramaturgy, and the screen novella are fluid. The screen-novella form combines the psychological depth of prose with the dynamics and visual possibilities of the language of the screen. In works such as "Chantrimore," "Piyoda," "Dilxiroj," "Erkak," "Zabarjad," "Suv yoqalab," "Qarzdor," and "Parizod," the fate of the contemporary is inseparably linked with socio-moral problems. The interaction of prose and drama strengthens dialogue, inner speech, and the depiction of situations; character is revealed through brief, meaningful exchanges, action, and detail. The conventional-allegorical depiction, symbol, epigraph, and journalistic elements in the novella "Chapaklar va chalpaklar mamlakati" show yet another direction of the writer's explorations. Thus, while preserving existing genre traditions, the writer adapts them to modern artistic tasks.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the analysis showed that in Erkin A'zam's prose, tradition and innovation do not negate one another but form a single poetic system [6]. First, the writer continues the experience of national prose, such as realistic depiction, psychologism, the theme of the "little man," and moral conflict [7], [8]. Second, these traditions are transferred to the modern everyday environment: in "Javob" and "Bayramdan boshqa kunlar," family and everyday relationships reveal the hero's process of self-understanding [9], [10]. In "Zabarjad," "Suv yoqalab," and "Qarzdor," a small event, a silence, a dialogue, or a detail leads to a socio-moral generalization. Third, individual neologisms, folk expressions, irony, and syntactic repetitions individualize the speech of the personages and strengthen the expressiveness of the text [11], [12]. This result indicates that the novelty in the writer's language has not broken away from folk language but, on the contrary, has activated its inner possibilities. Fourth, turning to the screen novella and dramatic forms enriches psychological depiction with visual action, brief dialogue, and stage-like situations [13]. The features of irony, image, and poetic language noted by Shofiyev and other researchers confirm these observations. The discussion shows that the writer's innovation lies not in sharp formal experimentation but in redirecting

traditional content and means of depiction toward new psychological, everyday, and generic functions [14], [15].

CONCLUSION

The study showed that the artistic nature of Erkin A'zam's prose rests on the organic unity of tradition and innovation. The writer continues the attention to the human psyche, the moral criterion, the national environment, and the theme of the "little man" that are characteristic of Uzbek realist prose. However, these elements are not repeated in his works as ready-made molds. By placing at the center his contemporary's inner hesitations, family relationships, and everyday trials, the writer raises the traditional conflict to the level of individual psychological experience. Everyday detail, ordinary conversation, irony, silence, and inner speech produce great spiritual generalizations. Individual neologisms and folk expressions enliven the speech of the personages and concisely convey features of social image and character. The fusion of the possibilities of prose, drama, and the screen novella, in turn, expands the means of showing events, activating dialogue, and revealing psychological states visually. Thus, Erkin A'zam's innovation lies not in negating national tradition but in reworking its semantic and formal possibilities in accordance with the needs of a new era. The writer's individual style is composed of the stable unity of realism, psychologism, folk language, irony, everyday observation, and intergeneric synthesis. These features determine his important place in the development of modern Uzbek prose. In the future, it would be expedient to study the writer's short stories, journalism, and screen novellas comparatively with the work of Shukur Xolmirzayev, Tog'ay Murod, and other contemporaries, and also to investigate neologisms, syntactic repetition, and screen poetics on the basis of a separate corpus.

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