

Analysis of the Portrayal of the Human Inner World in the Narratives of Shukur Kholmiraev

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Abstract: This study explores the literary works of Shukur Kholmiraev, a prominent writer who significantly influenced Uzbek literature during the 1960s. The focus is on examining how Kholmiraev portrays the spiritual realm of individuals in his stories, a theme of relevance in fiction. Through a comparative analysis of various narratives by Kholmiraev, insights into the writer's artistic representation of the human inner world are gained. The research particularly delves into Kholmiraev's story "The Blue Sea," shedding light on his distinctive artistic style and receiving feedback from literary scholars and writers.

Keywords: human inner world, spiritual world, depiction, description, Uzbek literature, Shukur Kholmiraev, landscape, portrait, interior, detail, literary style, analyze, artistically, traditions, values, sea.

Introduction

In every aspect of society, the activities within each sphere aim to serve human interests and contribute to human development. Fiction holds a unique position in this context, as literature, unlike other sciences, delves into the inner world and spiritual realm of individuals. Whether writers or poets, those in the realm of fiction depict the spiritual dimensions of human existence through various characters, fostering enrichment, positive transformation, and spiritual education. Skillful portrayal of the intricate aspects of the human spirit, a distinctive element of life, is a demanding task for writers. Shukur Kholmiraev, a notable figure in Uzbek literature since the 60s of the 20th century and renowned in the 21st century, stands out among our writers for his exceptional proficiency in this regard.

Literature Review

Renowned for his unique style and objective artistic portrayal of life, Shukur Kholmiraev, an adept writer in the realm of national prose, stood out among his peers throughout his fifty-year career. While engaging in various genres like short stories, novels, dramas, and essays, he consistently identified himself as a storyteller, maintaining loyalty to this art form. His dedication extended to elevating Uzbek storytelling to the level of global literary masterpieces, as he continuously worked on enhancing the possibilities of the small epic form. Shukur Kholmiraev's early works captivated readers and drew attention from esteemed literary critics, with the renowned speech artist Abdulla Kahhor acknowledging the young writer's rare talent after reading his initial short story, "To'lqinlar" ("Tides"), in the "Sharq Yulduzi" (The star of the East) magazine and expressing, "Good luck with your creative work!"

Research Methodology

During our research, we conducted a comparative analysis of the mentioned stories by the writer, examining the techniques employed to depict the inner experiences of the main characters. Through this analysis, we identified the prevalent artistic image tools in Shukur Kholmiraev's

prose. The renowned writer Odil Yakubov characterized the creative-artistic style of Kholmirzayev by stating, "Shukur Kholmirzayev is meticulous in his portrayal, almost as if he is not using words but paints... It's akin to observing a picture rather than reading." [1;90] Indeed, the author frequently emphasizes details in his work, where these details can be associated with various images in fiction.

In Shukur Kholmirzayev's literary works, the landscape, particularly the portrayal of nature, is prominently featured. This theme is consistently woven into all his narratives, including stories and short stories. When describing natural settings, the author pays meticulous attention to details, as exemplified by phrases like "There was a fog here. That's why the snow fell sparsely and softly" (from the story "Heart") and "Comrade director comes from the alley with disappointment, treading on the yellow leaves" (from the story "Bir korgan acquaint"). The former vividly illustrates a winter scene with sparse and gentle snowfall due to fog, while the latter uses the imagery of yellow leaves in the alley to metaphorically convey an autumn setting. [1;91]

Regarding portraits, Kholmirzayev employs descriptive details to bring characters to life, as seen in the passage "Then I saw a person speaking. He was wearing a black cotton shirt, a shaggy head, a sparse beard, and it was impossible to tell his age" (from "Blue Sea").

Furthermore, the author utilizes interior settings, a literary exposition tool, to convey the atmosphere within closed spaces. In a narrow sense, this refers to the internal area of a building, encompassing items and furnishings associated with that space.

The writer Shukur Kholmirzayev, dedicating his entire life to artistic creation, mirrors his dreams, pains, sufferings, aspirations, hatreds, and qualities in his works. His stories, crafted during the Soviet era, serve as a reflection of the psyche, thoughts, and emotions of the Uzbek people. Throughout this period, Kholmirzayev consistently pondered the inner world of individuals and their interactions with the world. Despite standing shoulder to shoulder with numerous short story writers in world literature, he acknowledges in his diary that his growth as a writer coincided with the period of independence, feeling as if he were reborn and discovered the essence of humanity and the world.

In contemplative moments, he engages in imaginary conversations with great creators, measuring their achievements against his own strength and will. The common thread among them is the profound question: "What am I looking for?" (Tolstoy), "What is the purpose of living?" (Dostoevsky), and "Did I follow what I said and respond to what I wrote?" (Goethe). The quest to grasp the essence of greatness and humanity, as pondered by Hemingway, adds to the introspective dialogue within Kholmirzayev's reflections. [6]

Results and discussion

In the stylistic realm of Shukur Kholmirzayev, a profound restraint is palpable, coupled with a compelling inclination toward philosophical observation. Throughout his extensive body of work, a consistent portrayal of truthfulness, sincere engagement with people, and a critical perspective on them emerges. The writer, driven by a compelling need to capture the pains and dreams of individuals, explores a diverse range of topics in his works, including notable pieces such as "Bukri tol" (Bent Willow), "O'n sakkizga kirmagan kim bor" ("There is someone who did not enter the eighteen"), and "Yur tog`larga chiqaylik" ("Let's go to the Mountains"). These works have established him as a skilled writer, weaving a tapestry rich in images of simple sincerity, the pains and worries, and the evolving mentality of our people through various social changes, all approached with modesty.

In Kholmirzayev's narratives, the depiction of the spiritual world of individuals takes center stage, achieved through sharp internal monologues that lend a natural and effective portrayal. The writer consistently encourages readers to evaluate characters as human beings foremost, with a focus on characters who bear responsibility for themselves, endowing them with vitality and believability that resonates deeply with the audience.

Artistically analyzing the complexities of the human heart is another hallmark of Kholmirezayev's works. Notably, the writer refrains from transforming characters, whether positive or negative, by the conclusion of a narrative. Selfish and self-interested characters remain unaltered, while the genuine nature of good-hearted heroes becomes evident through plot events, dialogues, and monologues. This approach invites readers to make their judgments, observe the unfolding story, and engage with the characters on a thoughtful level. For instance, in the story "Motherland," the writer subtly reveals the strength, resilience, forgiveness, and mercy of the hero named Mansur, allowing readers to discern these qualities through natural and uplifting storytelling. The writer skillfully unfolds Mansur's character through dialogues and events, allowing the reader to grasp his inner longings and honorable nature. Mansur's poignant yearning for his father is subtly revealed as he secretly enters the childhood hut, staring at his father's picture and uttering a heartfelt "who are you" when discovered by his godmother. The writer avoids direct statements like "Mansur missed his father very much" and, instead, artfully arranges a sequence of events, dialogues, and monologues that seamlessly complement each other. Through muffled screams, Mansur's pain becomes palpable, offering the reader an evolving understanding of the character and the narrative.

The writer employs dialogues strategically to emphasize Mansur's honor. In a conversation, when questioned about why he hasn't inquired about a letter received over thirty years ago regarding missing individuals, Mansur's response speaks volumes about his principles: "No, no. It's not necessary," he asserts with a guilty smile. Refusing to accept the possibility of a fallen comrade, Mansur vehemently declares, "No. I can't stand this shame," underscoring his unwavering sense of honor.[3;58]

As a young man with a lineage of wrestlers, Mansur grapples with the profound desire to communicate with his missing father. Despite the heartfelt longing, he resists probing into the possibility of his father being captured during the war, viewing such a fate as a stain on the honor of his generation. This short dialogue skillfully portrays Mansur's talent and emphasizes the significance of honor in his perspective.

While the author's works are dialogue-rich, monologues take precedence in unraveling the inner experiences of artistic characters. Through these internal reflections, the writer unveils the intricate inner world of the hero.

Shukur Kholmirezayev's pictorial style exhibits a unique language—cheerful, lively, and sincere, devoid of any artificiality or attempts to appease the reader. Dialectics are frequently employed to express the distinctive qualities of the setting and characters.

The events in Kholmirezayev's works unfold in the oasis of Surkhan, the land of the writer's birth and upbringing. The characters, like the setting, reflect the nuances of the inner world of the nation and its people. The writer refrains from passing judgment on the characters, focusing instead on revealing their hearts, spirituality, and attitudes toward external changes, leaving the reader to draw their own conclusions.

The writer's works form a cohesive tapestry where ideas seamlessly complement each other, drawing conclusions from the actions and nature of depicted characters. These narratives enrich one another, portraying various facets of our national identity through individual characters and offering a nuanced understanding of the overall image of the people.

In stories such as "Uzbek character" and "Freedom," the writer masterfully depicts the nature of tolerant, kind-hearted, and patient individuals, even in challenging circumstances. Notably, the works avoid overt characters, dry admonitions, or template expressions. Instead, the writer pioneers new images, introducing unique innovations in the compositional construction of the works and fearlessly experimenting. This approach leads to notable success, exemplified in stories like "Bodom qishda gulladi" ("Almond bloomed in winter"), "Tabassum" (Smile), "O'zbeklar" (The Uzbek), "Qadimda bo'lgan ekan" ("Once upon a time"), "Navroz," and "Xumor" ("Badass").

These characters defy conventional molds, displaying traits ranging from coolness to rudeness, and often representing small environments. Yet, each character possesses a unique, spiritually deep, simple-minded, and vital inner world. They remain loyal to their nation, preserving their identity and unwavering beliefs. For these characters, the values of homeland, people, traditions, and religion hold supreme importance. In their pursuit of justice and truth, they remain humble, with inner experiences marked by love, pain, and a profound sense of purpose.

In Shukur Kholmirezayev's "Tabassum," the main character, Jalil, sacrifices his life during the Soviet Union invasion, having been a participant in the war. As he ages and falls ill, his life unfolds before him, revisiting moments like capturing the rabbit warden during his active involvement with the Reds. Despite initially entering this path for religion and the people, the weight of having witnessed death makes him reflect with regret in his final days.

Approaching the end of his life, Jalil's grandson receives a proposal from the grandson of old Mumin, a former activist of the Reds who rose to lead the army and earned double medals. Knowing the cost of such distinctions on one's character and loyalty, Jalil experiences deep sorrow, reluctant to give his grandson to this family. He even entertains the fantasy that his death could have prevented this union, and as his demise approaches, a frozen smile graces his face, leaving the reason open to the reader's interpretation.

In the twilight of his life, Father Jalil expresses sympathy for the rabbit leader who sacrificed his life for religion and people. Shukur Kholmirezayev's unique nationalist perspective underlies his viewpoints, a challenging stance to express artistically during the strong Soviet era. However, through skillful artistic interpretation, Kholmirezayev adeptly navigates and communicates this complex idea within the narrative.

Shukur Kholmirezayev skillfully delves into the portrayal of individuals, capturing both their unique qualities and the negative aspects of their character, exploring the intricacies of their inner psyche with unmatched artistry. Among his works, "The Blue Sea" particularly stands out in its profound depiction of the inner world of a person.

This story, emerging from the final stages of Uzbek storytelling, transcends its cultural context and rightfully earns a place among the exemplary works of the 20th century in this genre. "The Blue Sea" unfolds as a narrative that goes beyond its Uzbek origins, encapsulating the tragedy of a nation during the era of Union ownership and Russification through the lens of a small hero.

The protagonist, Umrzak, originally from Altai, was a university teacher specializing in folklore before the Shora era. However, the implementation of teaching lessons in Russian led to a series of unfortunate events – from getting drunk and fighting with a Russian individual to losing his job at school. Subsequently, he faced arrest with charges of nationalism and incompetence, encapsulating the harsh consequences of the Soviet era on an individual's life.

In Umrzak, who initially appears disillusioned with life and society after his release, the reader gradually discovers a deep love for his nation. Despite spending nights in a basement, engaging in menial work to survive, he remains connected to his nationality and identity. Umrzak gathers children around him with captivating riddles, revealing that, in Altai culture, a riddle symbolizes ingenuity and mental sharpness. Through these interactions, he fosters a sense of inter-ethnic closeness and kinship, demonstrating his loyalty to both his native Altai people and the Uzbek nation.

The story reflects on the fate of the Altai people, expressing the thoughts and sufferings of its characters about their potential extinction. Umrzak emerges as a person deeply rooted in love for his country, language, and traditions, remaining steadfast in his loyalty to identity and nation. His sincere and genuine love for the Uzbek people is evident as he decides to leave his beloved basement life and embark on a journey to the Uzbek land, driven by the desire to witness the "blue" (Aral) sea and connect with the spirit of his ancestors.

Upon analyzing the writer's works, it becomes apparent that he frequently turns to nature to express the inner world of his characters, enhancing the artistic expressiveness of his narratives.

In Kholmirezayev's stories, the portrayal of nature serves not only as a representation of the natural world but also as a poetic tool, influencing the formation of the hero's outlook and contributing to the overall beauty of the narrative.

Conclusion

In "The Blue Sea," the author ingeniously employs natural elements, specifically the "sea" and "lake," to articulate the inner world of the characters, adding a distinctive and valuable layer to the story.

The narrative begins by introducing the Black Lake, tarnished by the toxic effluents of a factory, initially seeming like a mere setting detail. However, as the story unfolds, the reader comes to realize that this lake serves as a pivotal visual tool in conveying the central theme. Throughout history, communities have thrived near water bodies, relying on lakes and seas for sustenance through fishing. Umrzak, a representative of the Altai people, finds his people facing extinction due to Soviet russification policies masked as "friendship." They lose access to sea fish, while factories and industrial influence spread, impacting various regions.

Umrzak shares that there are three such seas, with one located in the Uzbek land, home to the hero's brotherly friends. Umrzak's decision to come to Uzbekistan is driven by the desire to witness this sea, reconnect with his nationality and identity, and live by its shores. He expresses a profound commitment, even willing to become sustenance for the sea's fish, aspiring to contribute as a shaman to preserve life in the sea and prevent the loss of Turkic customs and ways of life. The bottom of the sea becomes a symbolic space where Umrzak strives to safeguard the identity and traditions of his people from fading away.

The old man's sufferings and emotions are intricately connected to the symbolism of the sea in the story, as the sea represents life and its drying up signifies the tragic loss and extinction of a nation. The dispersion and disappearance of people and their culture embody the erosion of identity and national pride. The presence of a sea, water, and life signifies the continuation of traditions and values.

In the narrative, when Umrzak visits the Black Lake and witnesses its pitiable state, he is profoundly affected by the stagnant life in the lake and the absence of grass around it. His emotional response is visceral, akin to a wolf's howl, expressing the depth of his sorrow:

"Then he will howl like a wolf! I became a piece of wood. Tagin is suffering:

- Death, death, death...

- True, brother.

"Oh, my dear!" – He started punching him in the head. – There is no arm, no yort, no old man...

I sat down with tears in my eyes. But for the lake, he was burning a hundred times more than me."[3;75]

These poignant lines emphasize the old man's intense emotional connection to the lake's condition, portraying his grief as profound and heartfelt. The absence of life in the lake becomes a metaphor for the broader tragedy he perceives, where the loss of cultural elements and traditions weighs heavily on his heart.

The poignant dialogue in "The Blue Sea" allows the reader to deeply sense the internal turmoil of the hero, experiencing the anguish of the loss of brotherly Turkic peoples and the profound pain of helplessness. This is a testament to the writer's unique skill in artistic interpretation, vividly describing images with simple, vernacular language that easily reaches the reader's heart.

Shukur Kholmirezayev's mastery draws inspiration from Abdulla Qahhor, learning the secrets of sparing words, infusing great meaning into details, succinctly depicting the conflicts in characters' psyches, and crafting lively scenes through dialogues. The influence goes beyond external appearances, rooted in the shared artistic principles reflecting the spiritual world of the heroes.

Nature serves as the cornerstone of Kholmirezayev's creative credo, with characters embodying a divine power akin to nature for deeper self-understanding. His depiction of nature reflects a comprehensive, complete, and deep knowledge, showcasing diverse images of mountains, deserts, and rural landscapes, each unique and non-repetitive.

Kholmirezayev's characters, traditional in form yet innovative in content, embody a profound understanding of life and the ability to discern shifts in the human psyche. Grounded in the laws of nature, his works emphasize the importance of maintaining naturalness, highlighting the potential disasters and tragedies that can arise from its violation.

As a prominent figure in Uzbek literature, Shukur Kholmirezayev's sincere and truthful style has left an indelible mark, contributing significantly to the perfection of future generations. "The Blue Sea" stands as a remarkable example of his admirable creativity, offering a profound exploration of spirituality and identity as indispensable aspects of life.

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