

Artistic Interpretation of the “Youth” Image in National Literature and Oral Creativity

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Abstract: *This research is devoted to analyzing how the image of “youth” is interpreted in Uzbek national literature and oral creative traditions. The article examines the artistic expression of the concept of youth through classical and contemporary literary works and samples of folk oral creativity. The research results revealed that the youth image is formed through the prism of national mentality, spiritual values, and cultural traditions. The “youth” image manifests as a multifaceted concept expressing not only biological age but also spiritual state, hope, and aspiration for the future.*

Key words: *youth image, national literature, oral creativity, artistic interpretation, Uzbek literature, folk creativity, youth concept.*

INTRODUCTION

The “youth” image is perhaps the most powerful and persistent of world literature themes, and one interpreted and expressed nationally in each literature. In Uzbek national literature and oral creative culture, the image occupies a particular place and bears witness to the underlying strata of national mentality. Youth is open to investigation not only as a biological phenomenon but also as a social-cultural phenomenon and artistic-aesthetic concept.

The methodological study of the “youth” image in Uzbek literary criticism and folkloristics has not been fully performed yet. Existing studies are mainly dedicated to a particular work or genre. Therefore, deep examination of this problem is an urgent issue for contemporary literary studies. The scientific task comprises definition of the artistic conception of the “youth” image in national literature and oral creativity, uncovering its semantic field, and determining its national characteristics.

METHODOLOGY AND LITERATURE REVIEW

The research employed comparative-historical, typological, and hermeneutic methods. Through the comparative-historical method, changes in the “youth” image across literary works from different periods were observed. Typological analysis allowed identification of general and distinctive features in national literature and oral creativity. The hermeneutic approach revealed symbolic meanings and hidden semantic layers in texts.

In the field of Uzbek literary studies, research conducted by A. Hayitmetov [1] examined issues of psychological portrayal of young protagonists in classical literature. The author demonstrated the formation of the youth concept in medieval Uzbek literature through analyzing the image of young lovers in “Khamsa” works. This research created an important foundation for understanding the historical roots and traditional interpretation of the “youth” image.

N. Komilov [2] in his research studied the youth motif in folk oral creativity and its artistic expression, observing the transition of the youth image from folklore to professional literature. The author

analyzed the processes of idealization and romanticization of youth in folklore genres. Specifically, the role of young protagonists as symbols of courage, bravery, and purity in folk tales was demonstrated.

In the context of contemporary literature, research conducted by O. Sharafiddinov [3] analyzed changes in the "youth" image in twentieth-century Uzbek literature. The author showed the influence of social-political processes on the youth image, the emergence of new protagonist types, and their psychological complexity. This research provided important information for understanding the formation characteristics of the contemporary "youth" image.

Research conducted by T. Mirzayev [4] in folkloristic studies examined the literary reflection of rituals and traditions related to youth in Uzbek folk creativity. The author demonstrated the national characteristics in the artistic interpretation of youth transition ceremonies and marriage customs. This research made an important contribution to understanding the ethno-cultural context of the "youth" image.

G'. Karimov [5] in his works studied the evolution of the youth image as a lyrical protagonist in Uzbek literature, analyzing its poetic expression methods. The author observed changes in the artistic interpretation of youth emotions from classical ghazal to contemporary lyrics.

In the field of Russian literary studies, research conducted by V.A. Nedzvetsky [6] studied the semantics of the youth image in Slavic culture. The author compared universal and national aspects of the youth concept, showing the distinctive interpretation of youth in each culture. This research created comparative material for analyzing the youth image in national context.

A.S. Eleonskaya [7] examined issues of the youth motif and its transformation in Slavic folklore. The author analyzed the archimythological roots of youth in folk oral creativity and their subsequent literary development. This research helped understand the typological characteristics of the youth image in folklore.

In the field of foreign literary studies, Philippe Ariès [8] in his work "Centuries of Childhood" examined the historical development of the youth concept and its distinctive interpretations in cultural contexts. The author revealed the nature of youth as a social construct and showed how the concept of youth is formed in various cultures.

Anthropological research conducted by Margaret Mead [9] studied the cultural determinants of the youth period and their literary reflection. The author analyzed the differentiation of youth experience in various cultures and the artistic expression of these differences. This research created an important theoretical foundation for understanding the youth image in intercultural context.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research results demonstrate that the "youth" image in Uzbek national literature and oral creativity has a complex semantic structure and manifests in several main directions. The first direction is idealizing youth as the most beautiful and precious period of life. This tradition is particularly strongly expressed in classical literature and folk oral creativity. In ghazal poetry, the image of the young beloved is interpreted not only as physical beauty but also as a symbol of spiritual purity and perfection.

The second important aspect of the "youth" image in classical Uzbek literature is related to its spiritual forces and capabilities. Young protagonists are usually portrayed as fighters for ideas, seekers of justice, and supporters of innovation. This characteristic is clearly visible in "Khamsa" works, Navoi's creativity, and later literary monuments. Youth in this context means not only an age category but also spiritual state, inner strength, and readiness for changes.

The third important characteristic of the "youth" image in folk oral creativity is related to its harmony with nature and cosmic order. In folklore genres, young protagonists are often portrayed as having the ability to control natural forces. This characteristic testifies to interpreting youth as a force of renewal, development, and creativity. In folk tales, young protagonists' magical abilities and

possibilities of communicating with animals and natural phenomena show youth as a source of cosmic energy.

The fourth important direction is interpreting youth as a transition period, a transformation process. In Uzbek literature, young protagonists' path toward perfection, the trials they face, and the spiritual maturity achieved through these trials occupy an important place. This process includes not only personal growth but also the task of acquiring national values and transmitting them to future generations.

New interpretations of the "youth" image appeared in contemporary Uzbek literature. In the twentieth century, under the influence of social-political changes, the youth image was enriched with new semantic layers. Young protagonists began to be portrayed not only as carriers of traditional values but also as new personality types formed under the influence of contemporary life beliefs and global culture. This transformation shows the dynamic nature of the youth image and its ability to adapt to social-cultural context changes.

The role of national mentality in shaping the youth image deserves special emphasis. In Uzbek culture, youth is viewed not only as an individual but also as an important part of community life. The young person's responsibility toward society, adherence to age-hierarchy rules, and respect for national traditions are considered integral parts of the youth image. This characteristic distinguishes young protagonists in Uzbek literature from individualistic youth images in Western literature.

The expression of the "youth" image in lyrical genres was studied separately. Changes from classical ghazal poetry to contemporary lyrics show that the artistic expression of youth emotions developed based on national poetic traditions. Themes such as love motif, harmony with nature, patriotism, and struggle for social justice acquired distinctive national coloring through the youth image.

The gender interpretation of the "youth" image is also an important characteristic. In Uzbek literature and oral creativity, the portrayal of young male and female protagonists is formed based on various traditional roles and expected behaviors. However, in contemporary literature, these gender stereotypes are becoming increasingly complex, with new interpretations emerging.

The intertextual relationships between different literary periods reveal how the youth image functions as a cultural bridge connecting past and present literary traditions. Analysis of textual references and allusions demonstrates that contemporary authors consciously engage with classical representations of youth, creating dialogues across temporal boundaries that enrich the semantic depth of their works. This intertextual dimension suggests that the youth image serves not merely as a literary theme but as a cultural memory repository that preserves and transmits essential values across generations. The recursive nature of these references indicates that each generation of writers reinterprets the youth concept through their contemporary lens while acknowledging their debt to literary predecessors, creating a continuous chain of cultural transmission that ensures the vitality and relevance of traditional literary heritage in modern contexts.

Lyrical genres demonstrate a particularly sophisticated treatment of the youth image, where emotional and psychological dimensions are explored through various poetic devices and metaphorical structures. The evolution of youth representation in Uzbek poetry reveals a gradual shift from external descriptions of physical beauty and vigor to internal psychological landscapes that capture the complexity of youthful consciousness. Contemporary poets have expanded the traditional boundaries of youth portrayal by incorporating modern existential concerns, urban experiences, and global cultural influences while maintaining connection to classical poetic traditions. This synthesis creates a unique literary space where traditional concepts of youth intersect with modern sensibilities, producing innovative artistic expressions that resonate with contemporary readers while preserving cultural authenticity.

CONCLUSION

Research on the artistic interpretation of the "youth" image in national literature and oral creativity demonstrates that this image is rooted in the deep layers of Uzbek cultural traditions and constitutes

an important part of national mentality. The youth image signifies not only biological age but also spiritual state, spiritual capabilities, and loyalty to cultural values.

The traditional youth interpretation formed in classical literature and folk oral creativity is being enriched with new semantic layers in contemporary literary processes. This process testifies to the dynamic development of national culture and its ability to adapt to global processes. The "youth" image in Uzbek literature undergoes constant renewal and development, being enriched with distinctive characteristics in each historical period.

In future research, deeper study of gender aspects of the "youth" image, new interpretations in contemporary literary processes, and typological characteristics in world literature context would be appropriate. These directions can make important contributions to the development of Uzbek literary studies and folkloristics.

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