

The Literary Father: An Analysis of Paternal Images in Modern and Classical Uzbek Literature

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Abstract: This article analyzes the image of the father in Uzbek literature through works by Abdulla Qodiriy, Erkin Vohidov, O'tkir Hoshimov, Xurshid Davron, Shuhrat, and Said Ahmad. The study explores the artistic, social, and psychological dimensions of the father figure as portrayed in literature, highlighting its role in family, society, and national memory.

Keywords: Father figure, Uzbek literature, literary interpretation, psychological analysis, family relations, national memory.

Introduction: There are many nations in the world, and with them diverse cultures. The language, culture, and history of the world's nations are vividly reflected in their literature. As literature conveys life through images, the characters in ideologically and artistically mature works allow us to gain broad and accurate insights into the social life of a specific era.

The image of the father is one of the most widespread figures not only in national but also in world literature. In literary works, fathers generally take on three primary roles across different cultures: protector, helper, and educator. Like mothers, fathers are pillars who foster the emotional well-being of children. A father is a wise mentor who can answer all of a child's questions, a role model, a loving person who shows his affection through actions rather than words, and a unique figure in expressing love. He is like a guiding light in all our actions and is a child's first hero. The most remarkable feature of a father's love is that he believes the best of everything should be for his children before himself. With a father, one feels safe—fathers are protectors who warn of any danger.

METHOD

In Uzbek literature, the artistic interpretation of the father figure has evolved with layered and historically conditioned development. For instance, in Abdulla Qodiriy's novel *"Days Gone By"*, the character Yusufbek Hoji embodies the father figure as a person who ensures social and spiritual stability and commands great respect among the people. He is portrayed as a devout, tradition-bound man who lives by religious beliefs and defends his views with determination. The strength of this image lies in how the author reveals the historical and social role of the father within Uzbek family life. However, Yusufbek Hoji also remains within the bounds of traditionalism, opposing his son's choices and acting as a force against modern changes. We believe Qodiriy uses this character to illustrate the conservative elements of society and the conflict between these traditional views and the aspirations of youth. This work teaches how fathers should balance the preservation of family honor with respect for the independence of their children. The novel, being a classic of Uzbek literature, offers deep insights into parenthood and family relations through the comparison of past and present. The writer uniquely portrays the role of the family in

society, the interactions among its members, and the educational responsibilities of parents.

In Erkin Vohidov's poetic cycle *"The Spirit of the Father"*, the father figure is interpreted in a lyrical and philosophical manner. Through his love and devotion to his father, the poet reveals his inner world, turning the father into a symbol of ancestral memory, patience, and honesty. The poetic analysis shows that the father figure is not depicted as a direct reality, but rather as a spiritual and cultural echo, giving it a generalized, humanistic weight. The strength of the image lies in its elevation to poetic metaphor. However, at times the symbolic nature of the image may lack specific social context, staying within a philosophical rather than realistic framework. We believe the poems explore the spiritual and moral aspects of the father figure, reflecting the individual's inner struggles and sense of responsibility toward family and society. Vohidov's poetry reveals the depth and personal conflicts of the father figure.

Another notable depiction of a father appears in O'tkir Hoshimov's novel *"The Affairs of the World"*, in the character of Odil aka—a vivid literary example of the modern Uzbek father. He is portrayed as an honest, hardworking man from the common people. Through his qualities—patience, kindness, and justice—Hoshimov highlights the noble values of the Uzbek people. The image's strength lies in its lifelike authenticity, created as a realistic character from among the people. However, in some instances, this figure seems overly idealized, with the author's sympathy being too evident. This might have slightly weakened the work's realism.

In Xurshid Davron's poem *"Father"*, the image is presented as a symbolic essence. Though brief, the work (Shuhrat, 2007) conveys strong emotional impact through its compact form and semantics, focusing on the psychological states related to war and its aftermath. Here, the father symbolizes constant sorrow and longing—a painful hero in the national memory. The poem's power lies in its symbolic approach and emotional brevity, although the figure lacks concrete, lifelike attributes, remaining a poetic symbol. Nevertheless, this figure has become a significant part of the collective memory.

Shuhrat's novella *"The Father's Suffering"* is another work devoted to the father figure. Although the father is absent physically, he remains a powerful presence in the child's psyche. The story, focusing on war, loss, loneliness, and longing for love, creates an idealized yet tragic character. Its strength lies in the strong psychological analysis and the father's portrayal through the emotional perspective of a child. The

weakness may be the romanticization of reality and the dominance of childhood emotions, resulting in a weaker social context.

Said Ahmad's tragedy *"Horizon"* offers another profound exploration of the father figure. This play, significant in Uzbek dramaturgy, analyzes the complex psychological dimensions of parental figures and their role in raising children. In this work, Jahongir aka is depicted as a person who deeply cares about his children's future but faces internal conflicts and struggles to maintain his position amidst social and spiritual shifts. As a father, he instills values like hard work, patience, and honesty, yet finds it difficult to adapt to societal changes. His expectations for honor and dedication from his children sometimes clash with generational differences. We believe this conflict allows Said Ahmad to portray the father not merely as an idealized figure but as a realistic, psychologically complex character. Through the family environment, the author deeply analyzes parental positions, love, responsibility, miscommunications, and the societal pressures shaping modern and traditional parenting.

Overall, these works present the father figure through various artistic styles, genres, and historical contexts, each revealing different facets of the father symbol in Uzbek literature. The father appears as a mentor, a symbol of honest labor, and sometimes as a lost yet unforgettable source of love. The analysis shows that in Uzbek literature, the father is portrayed not only within family dynamics but also as a significant artistic figure in social, spiritual, and national memory.

CONCLUSION

In the works analyzed in this article, the image of the father has been shown to be a multifaceted and deeply meaningful symbol in Uzbek literature. Through this figure, authors have interpreted social change, parental responsibility, and core human values. The father is depicted not only as the pillar of the family but also as an integral part of national spirit and historical memory. In each work, the father figure is expressed in harmony with the specific era, context, and ideological meaning. This highlights the enduring relevance and spiritual significance of the paternal image in Uzbek literature. Thus, the image of the father emerges as a central theme for writers—not only in aesthetic terms, but also as a reflection of social and moral concerns.

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