

The Artistic Image of the “Little Man” In Odil Yoqubov’s Prose

Jahongir Komiljonov

Lecturer at KIUT Namangan Branch, Independent Researcher at Namangan State University, Uzbekistan

Received: 25 June 2025; **Accepted:** 21 July 2025; **Published:** 23 August 2025

Abstract: This article examines the artistic interpretation of the “little man” concept in the works of Odil Yoqubov, highlighting the image of the ordinary person and its significance in our national literature. Through the examples of the writer’s novels such as “Diyonat” (Conscience), “Ko’hna dunyo” (The Ancient World), “Ulug’bek xazinası” (The Treasure of Ulugbek), “Adolat manzili” (The Abode of Justice), as well as several of his dramas, the inner world of the ordinary person, their participation in social processes, aspiration for justice, and spiritual experiences are analyzed. Moreover, the article reveals the harmony of national mentality and universal values in Yoqubov’s works. Written from the perspective of modern literary studies, the article aims to scientifically substantiate the new stage of the “little man” phenomenon in Uzbek prose.

Keywords: Odil Yoqubov, little man, image of the ordinary person, psychological analysis, spiritual struggle, national context, universal values, Uzbek prose, psychological novel.

Introduction: The concept of the “little man” holds an important place in literary analysis and scholarly research within Uzbek literature. Through this image, writers have sought to depict the daily life of ordinary people, their spiritual experiences, their sense of responsibility before society, and their relationship with the social environment. In world literature, the image of the “little man” (as seen in the works of A.S. Pushkin, N.V. Gogol, and F.M. Dostoevsky) emerged as an important layer of literary tradition beginning in the 19th century [14.50]. In Uzbek literature, however, this tradition began with the works of Abdulla Qodiriy, Cho’lpon, and Fitrat, and was later elevated to a new stage in the prose of Odil Yoqubov.

Odil Yoqubov interpreted the “little man” phenomenon in Uzbek prose through artistic and psychological approaches, granting it a significant place in modern literature. In his works “Diyonat” [1.320], “Ko’hna dunyo” [2.340], “Ulug’bek xazinası” [2.280], and “Adolat manzili” [4.290], the life destiny of ordinary people, their spiritual struggles, their social battles, and their moral decisions are deeply analyzed. For this reason, the writer’s creative legacy holds importance not only in our national literature but also in the artistic

representation of universal values.

METHODOLOGY

In literary studies, the concept of the “little man” has been widely researched both in world literature and in Uzbek literature. In world literature, its early manifestations appeared in A.S. Pushkin’s “The Stationmaster”, N.V. Gogol’s “The Overcoat”, and F.M. Dostoevsky’s “Poor Folk” [14.89]. These characters were portrayed as individuals marginalized in society, living amidst material and social difficulties, yet possessing a rich inner world. Thus, the “little man” phenomenon in 19th-century realism became a crucial artistic tool for addressing issues of humanity, justice, and social equality.

In Uzbek literature, the historical roots of this concept can also be traced in oral folk traditions and in the works of Alisher Navoi. However, it found its clear artistic form in the Jadid literature of the early 20th century. In Abdulla Qodiriy’s “Bygone Days” [10.158] and Cho’lpon’s “Night and Day” [10.187], the life destinies, societal roles, and spiritual experiences of ordinary people were depicted. Later, writers such as Oybek, G’afur G’ulom, and Hamza continued to develop the image of the “little man” in different

interpretations.

Odil Yoqubov's work elevated this tradition to a new stage. In his prose, the social, spiritual, and moral dimensions of the "little man" image were revealed through deep psychological analysis. In works such as "Diyonat", "Ulug'bek xazinasi", and "Adolat manzili", the life of the ordinary person, their struggles of conscience, and their social contradictions are placed at the center of artistic focus. Yoqubov's style allowed the "little man" phenomenon to harmonize with national mentality while simultaneously expressing universal values.

As a methodological approach, this study applies comparative-analytical methods. The similarities and differences between the "little man" images in world literature and the ordinary person in Yoqubov's works are identified, highlighting their artistic and aesthetic significance. Additionally, the harmony of psychological analysis and social context serves as a key methodological principle in exploring the inner world and societal struggles of Yoqubov's characters.

RESULTS

The research findings demonstrate that the concept of the "little man" in Odil Yoqubov's works was elevated to a new artistic stage within Uzbek literature.

First, the writer's characters are ordinary workers, honest and devoted individuals who face social injustice, moral trials, and life's obstacles. Through these characters, Yoqubov deeply analyzed both the socio-political environment of his time and fundamental human values.

Second, the image of the ordinary person in Yoqubov's works is enriched through psychological analysis. The characters' struggles of conscience, moral sufferings, and spiritual conflicts are closely intertwined with their external lives. This feature demonstrates the writer's significant contribution to the psychological novel genre.

Third, Yoqubov's prose depicts the lives of ordinary people in harmony with those of historical figures. In the novel "Ulug'bek xazinasi", for instance, the historical figure of Ulug'bek is portrayed alongside the lives of ordinary individuals. Through this, the writer generalized the issues of humanity, justice, and morality against the backdrop of historical processes.

Fourth, Yoqubov's creative legacy reflects the harmony of national identity and universal values. The spiritual world of ordinary people, their pursuit of justice, and qualities such as honesty and conscientiousness are interpreted not only as relevant to Uzbek society but also as universal human values.

Fifth, in Yoqubov's works, the "little man" phenomenon

takes shape as a socio-philosophical concept. In the image of the ordinary person, the writer created characters who struggle against social injustice and strive to preserve moral purity.

As a result, this study proves that the "little man" concept in Odil Yoqubov's prose has acquired new artistic-aesthetic, socio-philosophical, and psychological dimensions in Uzbek literature.

DISCUSSION

In Odil Yoqubov's prose, the image of the ordinary person occupies a central place. His characters mainly emerge from among the people, directly confronting various social problems, and attracting the reader through their life experience and inner world. In the novel *Diyonat* ("Conscience"), the social struggles of ordinary individuals who adopt honesty and integrity as a principle of life, as well as the torments they endure in the face of injustice, are depicted artistically. In this work, the writer reveals the conflict between personal interest and social responsibility through the psychology of the characters.

In the novel *Ko'hna dunyo* ("Ancient World"), Yoqubov portrays historical processes with a broad epic scope, while simultaneously acquainting the reader with the complex layers of reality through the destinies of ordinary people, their place in social relations, and their hardships. The image of common heroes, interwoven with the historical context, enhances both the artistic-aesthetic value and the social significance of the novel.

In *Adolat manzili* ("The Abode of Justice"), too, the image of the ordinary person emerges as a vehicle carrying the main ideological message. In this novel, the violation of human values, and the role of justice and fairness in social life, are illuminated through the figure of the common character. Through such heroes, the reader comes to a deeper understanding of social problems and perceives the writer's moral-psychological standpoint.

Although Yoqubov's ordinary characters are hardworking, honest, and conscientious, their lives are often far from free of hardship. They encounter social injustices and are caught in the whirlpool of life's contradictions. The writer discloses their spiritual world, moral suffering, and attitude toward their own fate through deep psychological analysis. Therefore, the image of the ordinary person in Yoqubov's works reflects not only lifelike realism but also high artistic quality.

In Yoqubov's creative output, the figure of the ordinary person is frequently depicted in close connection with historical events. In his renowned novel *Ulug'bek xazinasi* ("The Treasure of Ulugh Beg"), although the

historical figure of Ulugh Beg is at the center, the narrative is harmonized with the destinies of common people, their role in social life, and their experiences. While presenting the greatness and tragedy of historical figures, the writer also portrays the torments and spiritual quests of ordinary individuals who lived alongside them. Thus, the novel reflects not merely a historical biography but also the spiritual world and social experiences of the people in an artistic interpretation.

In this work, the lives of ordinary people are revealed in organic relation with historical events. Against the backdrop of Ulugh Beg's scientific and political activity, the life choices, social position, moral suffering, and spiritual struggles of ordinary people are extensively portrayed. Through this approach, the writer links the grand ideas of historical figures with the life of the people, thereby creating harmony in artistic representation.

The depiction of the inner experiences of the ordinary person, their personal life, and social position within a historical context [13.40] represents one of the most significant artistic innovations of Yoqubov's prose. By turning to the destiny of the common man in his portrayal of historical reality, the writer imparts vitality, psychological depth, and social relevance to his works. Thus, in Yoqubov's creative output, the images of historical figures and ordinary individuals harmoniously intertwine, inviting the reader to grasp not only the essence of a historical period but also the eternal and universal dimensions of human destinies.

One of the most essential features of Odil Yoqubov's prose is his deep psychological analysis of characters' inner worlds. Beyond narrating the development of events, the writer pays great attention to revealing the spiritual realm, inner suffering, and moral outlook of his heroes. For instance, in the novella *Er boshiga ish tushsa* ("When Misfortune Befalls a Man") [5.280], the protagonist's life choices and struggle of conscience form the central artistic layer of the work. The narrative highlights the ordinary person's moral anguish, responsibility, and torment along the path of honesty, rather than their external trials.

Through the protagonist's loyalty to loved ones, his sense of responsibility before conscience, and the determination he shows in making life decisions, the novella expresses a profound psychological interpretation of the "little man" image in Uzbek literature. The hero's moments of hesitation, his internal struggle between life's truths and personal interests, also put the reader to a moral test.

Yoqubov's heroes often struggle more with inner turmoil than with external difficulties. Their pursuit of

honesty and fairness in their hearts frequently collides with the injustices of society. Therefore, the writer's works deeply analyze the inner world of the "little man," linking it with broader social processes.

In this respect, the distinctive feature of Yoqubov's psychological approach is that he engages the reader not only with the event itself but also with the hero's emotional experiences. As a result, the reader comes to share the character's suffering and reconsiders the meaning of human values. The depiction of internal struggles in *Er boshiga ish tushsa* not only demonstrates the author's mastery but also marks a new stage in the development of psychological prose in Uzbek literature.

In Yoqubov's prose, the images of ordinary people are depicted in close connection with the realities of national life. However, these figures are not limited to the national context; rather, they resonate with universal values, thereby acquiring broader artistic meaning. His heroes are often simple, hardworking, and resilient individuals, distinguished by their spiritual depth, struggle of conscience, quest for justice, and commitment to honesty — qualities of a universal nature. For this reason, the "little man" in Yoqubov's works transcends the boundaries of national literature and emerges as a literary symbol that embodies the collective human experience.

Yoqubov's creative mastery lies in his ability to harmonize the spiritual experiences and moral character of his heroes with the national mentality. For example, in *Diyonat* ("Conscience") or *Adolat manzili* ("The Abode of Justice"), the characters symbolize national values such as loyalty, integrity, honesty, and diligence. Yet, these qualities also manifest as universal virtues relevant to all humanity. In this way, the writer achieves an artistic synthesis of the national and the universal.

As a result, the "little man" phenomenon in Yoqubov's works is elevated to a new artistic stage. The image of the ordinary person not only reflects the historical life and spiritual values of the Uzbek people but also addresses ethical and psychological issues of importance to all humankind. In this respect, his works may be regarded as a literary phenomenon appreciated not only within Uzbek literature but also in the broader context of world literature.

CONCLUSION

Odil Yoqubov's prose occupies a unique and distinctive place in the development of the "little man" phenomenon in Uzbek literature. Through his works, the life struggles of ordinary individuals were elevated to the level of an artistic-aesthetic principle within national literature.

The writer's protagonists are usually simple working people, whose emotional experiences, life trials, and struggles of conscience are revealed through deep psychological analysis. In this respect, Yoqubov's works also subject the reader to a kind of spiritual trial.

In Yoqubov's creative output, the social position of the ordinary person is depicted in harmony with such moral-ethical values as justice, honesty, and integrity. This transforms his characters into representatives not only of national life but also of humanity's shared spiritual world.

In historical works such as *The Treasure of Ulugh Beg*, historical figures and ordinary people are interpreted in a unified artistic harmony. Through this approach, the author highlights the significance of both historical processes and the life destinies of common individuals.

In Yoqubov's prose, the ordinary person is portrayed as a vivid embodiment of national mentality and traditional values, while also standing out for their universality. Qualities such as honesty, loyalty, and the pursuit of justice turn his characters into timeless moral symbols relevant to all humanity.

Yoqubov's creative legacy made a significant contribution to the formation and development of the psychological novel in Uzbek prose. In particular, the new interpretation of the "little man" in his works elevated this image to a high artistic stage, marking the beginning of a new era in modern Uzbek literature.

REFERENCES

- Yoqubov, O. (1985). *Diyonat*. Tashkent: G'afur G'ulom Publishing House.
- Yoqubov, O. (1974). *Ulug'bek xazinasi* [The treasure of Ulugh Beg]. Tashkent: Yozuvchi.
- Yoqubov, O. (1996). *Ko'hna dunyo* [Ancient world]. Tashkent: Sharq.
- Yoqubov, O. (1986). *Adolat manzili* [The abode of justice]. Tashkent: Yozuvchi.
- Yoqubov, O. (1977). *Er boshiga ish tushsa...* [When misfortune befalls a man]. Tashkent: Yozuvchi.
- Karimov, N. (2000). *O'zbek adabiyotida realizm tamoyillari* [Principles of realism in Uzbek literature]. Tashkent: Fan.
- G'aniyev, B. (2010). *XX asr o'zbek romani taraqqiyoti* [The development of the Uzbek novel in the 20th century]. Tashkent: Universitet.
- Rasulov, A. (2005). *Adabiyot nazariyasi* [Theory of literature]. Tashkent: Writers' Union of Uzbekistan.
- Zohidov, T. (1978). *O'zbek romanchiligida obraz va tip masalalari* [Problems of character and type in Uzbek novel-writing]. Tashkent: Fan.

Mirvaliyev, A. (2012). *O'zbek adabiyotida psixologik tahlil* [Psychological analysis in Uzbek literature]. Tashkent: Universitet.

Nazarov, B. (2005). *O'zbek adabiyoti tarixi* [History of Uzbek literature]. Tashkent: Fan.

Mirziyoyev, Sh. M. (2008). *Yuksak ma'naviyat – yengilmas kuch* [High spirituality is an invincible power]. Tashkent: Ma'naviyat.

Lukács, G. (1971). *The theory of the novel*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Bakhtin, M. M. (1972). *Problemy tvorchestva Dostoevskogo* [Problems of Dostoevsky's poetics]. Moscow: Khudozhestvennaya Literatura.