

The Aesthetics Of The Novel: The Writer's Style As A Carrier Of Spiritual And Educational Ideas

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ABSTRACT

This article discusses the artistic style and poetics of the novel in English and Uzbek literature. It compares the works of James Joyce and Khurshid Dustmuhammad, analyzing the continuity of skill and experience inherited from Abdulla Qodiriy and their distinctive role in contemporary Uzbek novel writing.

Keywords: Novel, style, aesthetics, image, era, space, idea, plot.

INTRODUCTION

It is well known that from the earliest stages of human artistic thinking to the present, literature has gone through many stages before the emergence of written art. Artistic thinking did not automatically evolve into its present conceptual essence — it developed through creative influence, stylistic transformation, and the dynamic interaction between human consciousness and social needs. The human ability to adapt to different eras, to respond to societal challenges and inner spiritual demands, has always shaped the development of artistic imagination.

The novel, as one of the most flexible and evolving literary genres, reflects these changes most vividly. Each nation's literary chronicle reveals that the novel's form and function have continually transformed — from the ancient epic to the complex narrative structures of modern times. Since Aristotle's era, the epic scale of storytelling has undergone countless mutations, adapting to new realities and expressive forms.

There are no strict universal rules that define the novel. Each era measures it by its own standards, interpreting it according to the intellectual and cultural environment of the time. The writer's worldview — his perception of

reality, human psychology, ideals, and moral vision — plays the central role in shaping the novel's compositional and aesthetic structure. Consequently, the “novelistic” mode of thinking continues to expand, striving to depict the “compressed universe” of human experience in a coherent artistic form.

The Uzbek novel, too, did not emerge spontaneously. Its roots trace back to folklore and the mirror-like reflection of the people's life, crystallized through the traditions initiated by Abdulla Qodiriy in the early 20th century. As literary scholars note, while classical genres such as the ghazal and the rubai entered Uzbek literature under Arabic and Persian influence, the novel — as the grand form of epic narration — developed through interaction with Arabic, English, French, and Russian novelists.

In comparing James Joyce and Khurshid Dustmuhammad, one can observe that both authors, though emerging from distinct linguistic and cultural backgrounds, reveal striking similarities in their pursuit of spiritual and existential truth through language.

James Joyce, particularly in *Ulysses* and *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, revolutionized the concept of

narrative consciousness. His use of stream of consciousness and interior monologue techniques elevated the novel into a medium of spiritual introspection. Joyce's Dublin is not merely a geographic setting — it is a symbol of human entrapment, tradition, and the eternal search for identity. His characters exist in an intricate web of memory, religion, and national consciousness.

Khurshid Dustmuhammad, on the other hand, reimagines similar existential struggles through the lens of Uzbek cultural memory. In works such as *Jimjitlik*, *Tun panjaralari*, and *So'nggi nafas*, Dustmuhammad constructs a space where mysticism, historical consciousness, and moral philosophy converge. Unlike Joyce's dense linguistic experimentation, Dustmuhammad's prose is marked by spiritual restraint, symbolic imagery, and deeply Sufi-inspired reflection. The silence, solitude, and inner questioning of his heroes reveal a metaphysical dialogue with time, fate, and divine order.

Both writers use language as a moral and intellectual instrument. Joyce's language dissects the chaos of modernity; Dustmuhammad's language seeks to restore inner harmony amid post-Soviet disillusionment. Where Joyce deconstructs faith, Dustmuhammad reconstructs it. Where Joyce's irony borders on nihilism, Dustmuhammad's irony becomes a form of spiritual purification.

Thus, Joyce's modernist approach and Dustmuhammad's postmodern-mystical method converge in their desire to portray the human soul's dialogue with reality. Both transform the novel into a field of moral experimentation — a search for the self in a fragmented world.

According to Prof. Sobir Mirvaliev, "Although traces of the novel can be found in ancient literature, its emergence as a distinct genre from the 12th–13th centuries is natural. The Greek and Roman novels arose during the period of societal decline; they were born but not destined to live." Thus, ancient novels failed to achieve the fame of the *Iliad* or the *Odyssey*, since they reflected only domestic, everyday concerns rather than the profound psychological and social dimensions of life.

In English literature, the term novel — derived from novella — gained real significance only when it became an integral part of social consciousness in France and later spread across Europe and Russia. Initially, novels were written in poetic or dramatic form, as in Firdawsi's

Shahnameh or Alisher Navoi's *Khamasa*, which contained elements foreshadowing the later prose novel. With the rise of written literature, primitive perceptions gave way to an art form capable of expressing the full dialectics of human emotion and experience.

Until around 1750, the novel remained a controversial genre. Poets and dramatists regarded novelists as idle dreamers producing unrealistic fantasies for popular entertainment. The French writer and poet Walter Scott once remarked that novels were "nothing more than amusement for frivolous youth." Thus, the novel faced strong resistance before being accepted as a serious literary form. As social awareness grew and people began to recognize their rights, the novel became a true medium of human and societal reflection.

The French dramatist and philosopher Pierre Nicole (17th century) declared that "modern novelists corrupt the soul and defile the heart; young people should be discouraged from reading such books." Despite such criticism, writers continued to create, enriching their narratives with imagination and emotion, and expanding their readership.

By the 19th century, the novel had undergone a profound transformation. Great writers of France, Germany, Italy, England, and Russia elevated it to a leading position in world literature. As the German poet and thinker Johannes R. Becher observed: "New art never begins with a new form; it is born with a new human being." Every artistic renewal thus corresponds to a renewal in human consciousness and social being.

In the 20th century, both English and Uzbek literatures witnessed the rise of philosophical and mythological novels that incorporated elements of Sufi mysticism, combining ethical, aesthetic, and psychological dimensions in intricate narrative structures. These works blended myth, legend, and allegory, reflecting both spiritual and social realities. The fall of the Soviet empire further deepened these symbolic and existential explorations in Uzbek prose.

After Romanticism, Realism emerged as the dominant movement, later giving way to Modernism. The ideological oppression of the 1930s prevented many Uzbek writers — such as Abdulla Qodiriy, Cho'lpon, and Fitrat — from freely depicting the painful realities of their time. Following Stalin's death, literature began to recover, yet a lingering sense of fear and censorship persisted.

As Prof. Dilmurod Quronov notes, “The success of O‘tgan kunlar lies in its foundation upon genuine national literary traditions. If Uzbek literary soil had not been fertile, the appearance of the Uzbek novel in the 1920s would have been impossible.” Indeed, the epic heritage stretching back to Mahmud al-Kashgari and the folklore rich in heroism and wisdom gave the Uzbek novel its own distinct foundation, setting it apart from Western models.

From the 1950s to the 1970s, Uzbek novelists such as Oybek, Abdulla Qahhor, Odil Yoqubov, Pirimqul Qodirov, O‘lmas Umarbekov, O‘tkam Usmonov, Shukur Xolmirzayev, and O‘tkir Hoshimov advanced stylistic and structural innovation. They mastered the achievements of world literature — including Arabic, English, and American fiction — while forging their own authentic styles.

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