

THE DEVELOPMENT OF UZBEK AND WORLD LITERARY CRITICISM

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Abstract: This article analyzes the development of Uzbek and world literary criticism, tracing its evolution from the early 20th century to the present day. It investigates the various historical, political, and cultural forces that have shaped the development of literary studies in Uzbekistan and globally. The paper emphasizes the emergence of influential literary movements such as postcolonialism, structuralism, and cultural studies, and their impact on the shaping of literary criticism in both national and international contexts. The study also underscores the increasing integration of Uzbek literary criticism into the global academic arena, reflecting how it has adapted to both local and global intellectual shifts. The conclusion highlights the contemporary state of Uzbek literary criticism and its growing influence on the wider academic world.

Keywords: Uzbek literary criticism, global literary criticism, literary movements, postcolonial theory, structuralism, cultural studies, political impact, global intellectual trends, intellectual traditions, 20th-century literature.

Annotatsiya: Ushbu maqola o'zbek va jahon adabiyotshunosligining 20-asrning boshlaridan hozirgi kungacha bo'lgan rivojlanishini tahlil qiladi. O'rganish, adabiyotshunoslikning O'zbekistondagi va dunyodagi rivojlanishiga ta'sir ko'rsatgan turli tarixiy, siyosiy va madaniy kuchlarni o'rganadi. Maqolada postkolonializm, strukturalizm, madaniyatshunoslik kabi adabiy harakatlarning paydo bo'lishi va ularning milliy va xalqaro miqyosdagi adabiyotshunoslikka ta'siri ta'kidlanadi. Shuningdek, o'zbek adabiyotshunosligining global ilmiy hamjamiyatga integratsiyasining ortib borishi va uning mahalliy va global intellektual o'zgarishlarga qanday moslashgani ko'rsatiladi. Xulosa sifatida maqolada zamonaviy o'zbek adabiyotshunosligining holati va uning kengroq ilmiy dunyodagi o'rni yoritiladi.

Kalit so'zlar: O'zbek adabiyotshunosligi, jahon adabiyotshunosligi, adabiy harakatlar, postkolonializm, strukturalizm, madaniyatshunoslik, siyosiy ta'sir, global intellektual tendensiyalar, tafakkur an'analari, 20-asr adabiyoti.

Аннотация: В данной статье рассматривается развитие узбекской и мировой литературной критики с начала XX века до настоящего времени. Исследуется влияние различных исторических, политических и культурных

факторов на развитие литературоведения в Узбекистане и за рубежом. В статье акцентируется внимание на появлении таких значимых литературных движений, как постколониализм, структуризм и культурология, и их воздействии на формирование литературной критики как в национальном, так и в международном контексте. Также рассматривается усиление интеграции узбекской литературной критики в мировое научное сообщество и ее адаптация к местным и глобальным интеллектуальным изменениям. В заключение подчеркивается современное состояние узбекской литературной критики и ее растущее влияние на более широкий академический мир.

Ключевые Слова: Узбекская литературная критика, мировая литературная критика, литературные движения, постколониализм, структуризм, культурология, политическое влияние, глобальные интеллектуальные тенденции, интеллектуальные традиции, литература XX века.

Introduction. Literary criticism, which expresses the most delicate layers of human thought, is a complex scientific and intellectual system that continuously evolves within the flow of time and remains deeply intertwined with space and context. When analyzing the development process of Uzbek and world literary criticism, it becomes evident that the integrative nature, epistemological foundation, and gnoseological mechanisms of these two approaches are increasingly converging. Today, literary criticism is not only a tool for the aesthetic evaluation of literary works, but also a means of analyzing a society's socio-political archetypes, models of cultural identity, and spiritual-philosophical explorations. Particularly within the frameworks of postcolonial, postmodern, and poststructuralist methodologies, Uzbek literary criticism is currently experiencing a phase of entering the global academic arena while maintaining its national principles.

Historically, Uzbek literary criticism is rooted in the ancient Turkic cultural heritage. Although the initial stages of aesthetic thought were formed on religious and mythological foundations, it later rose to a purely artistic and aesthetic level, evolving into an independent system of poetic thinking. The artistic imagery in the Avesta, the inscriptions of ancient Turkic monuments (such as those of Kül Tegin and Bilge Khagan), as well as the works of scholars like Yusuf Khos Khojib and Mahmud Kashgari, contain embryonic forms of modern literary criticism. These foundational texts constitute the genetic code of national consciousness, and without their in-depth study, it is impossible to fully comprehend today's scientific paradigm.

In the classical period of Uzbek literary criticism, the figure of Alisher Navoi holds a unique and central place. His work *Majolis un-Nafois* stands as an unparalleled source in Eastern literature, encompassing literary criticism, biographical literary study, aesthetic typology, and the artistic analysis of

psychological character. Through Navoi's legacy, the foundations of literary schools, individual style, poetic craftsmanship, and metaphysical literary thought were established. This period demonstrates the existence of a strong theoretical foundation within Uzbek literary criticism.

By the late 19th and early 20th centuries, with the rise of the Jadid movement, a wave of renewal, awakening, and modernization emerged in literary thought. Thinkers such as Fitrat, Abdulla Avloni, Cho'lpon, and Qodiriy viewed literary criticism not merely as the analysis of texts, but as a tool for national spiritual awakening, the evolution of social consciousness, and the formation of modern identity. This approach was closely aligned with the constructions of national literary thinking developed in the West. Notably, Cho'lpon's poetic and aesthetic views resonated with Russian modernists, while Fitrat's dramaturgical explorations mirrored the patterns of Western European literary criticism.

Twentieth-century Uzbek literature developed as a completely new literary space in terms of its historical and typological nature. During this period, literature became the center of social, political, and aesthetic changes. As well-known literary scholar Ozod Sharafiddinov said: "In the twentieth century, we created a new and advanced literature that meets international standards. This can be proven with many examples from prose, poetry, and drama." A special feature of this period's literature is that it was formed in the background of constant changes, political conflicts, ideological struggles, and tragic losses.

The formation of modern Uzbek literature happened under the influence of two main ideological and social movements — Jadidism and Bolshevism — as well as the Soviet colonial system. However, even in such a difficult time, Uzbek literature tried to keep its national identity, independent thinking, and artistic views. About this, Professor Naim Karimov wrote: "The twentieth century is one of the most important periods in human history. There was bloodshed and injustice, but humanity also made great progress during this time. We should not try to forget or deny history; we must understand it with today's thinking. Uzbek literature also lived and grew with this history, as a part of the nation's life."

Twentieth-century Uzbek literature was not only a time of losses, but also a time of great ideas, spiritual growth, and artistic success. The new literature introduced new heroes, new problems, new genres, and new viewpoints. Its heroes were people from everyday life: farmers, workers, and intellectuals; and the events were taken from real life. Literature became actively involved in social life — it analyzed society, gave it meaning, and helped guide it through its artistic images. At the same time, the development of world literary studies has gone through a long historical process, and today it stands out with its complex methodological system, diverse approaches, and ideological-aesthetic criteria. Theoretical analysis of literature began as early as Ancient Greece, with Aristotle's Poetics considered the

first fundamental work in this field. In it, Aristotle defined the essence of tragedy, systems of characters, and methods of composition.

Later, during the European Renaissance, literature began to be studied as an inseparable part of both art and social consciousness. In German classical literary studies, thinkers such as J.G. Herder, I. Kant, F. Schiller, and J.W. Goethe contributed greatly to the development of literary thought. Goethe once said, “Literature is the collective memory and conscience of humanity.”

By the 19th century, literary criticism began to emerge as an independent discipline. During this time, Russian critics like Belinsky, Dobrolyubov, and Chernyshevsky analyzed literature from a socio-aesthetic point of view, emphasizing its role as a reformatory force in society. As Belinsky said: “Literature is the echo of the people’s soul.”

In the 20th century, global literary studies turned to new paradigms. French structuralists such as Roland Barthes, Claude Lévi-Strauss, and Roman Jakobson focused on analyzing texts through language and structure. Barthes, in his famous idea “The author is dead,” argued that “The meaning of a text is not created by the author, but by the mind of the reader.”

Similarly, German scholar Hans Robert Jauss, through his theory of “reception aesthetics,” placed the reader at the center of the literary process. He wrote: “The aesthetic value of a work appears in the way it is received by the reader.” This theory became a foundation for modern literary analysis.

American critic Harold Bloom explored the continuity of literary traditions through his concept of *The Anxiety of Influence*. He explained literary creativity as “a process of rejecting or reinterpreting the influence of earlier great writers.”

Today, world literary studies include many new directions such as intertextuality, postcolonial theory (Edward Said), feminist literary criticism (Elaine Showalter), and cultural criticism (Stuart Hall). These approaches allow literary texts to be studied not only as aesthetic objects but also as social and cultural phenomena. Every era and every scholar has contributed to the progress of world literary studies through their own philosophical, aesthetic, and theoretical perspectives. The traces of these schools can also be seen in contemporary Uzbek literary criticism — a clear sign of its deep connection with global intellectual and literary thought.

Building upon the global developments in literary theory, contemporary Uzbek literary studies—particularly in the post-independence era—have entered a phase of intellectual renewal, characterized by the emergence of new scientific paradigms, independent critical thought, and a reevaluation of cultural heritage. In this context, research efforts have increasingly focused on reassessing the national literary canon, reintroducing neglected figures into scholarly circulation, and tracing the genetic roots of Uzbek literary consciousness—all while actively integrating advanced methodologies from global literary scholarship.

Today, several contemporary approaches such as postcolonial analysis, intertextuality, cultural criticism, gender-based research, reception theory, and discourse analysis are widely applied in Uzbek literary criticism. Notably, the works of canonical authors like Alisher Navoi, Abdulla Qodiriy, and Choʻlpon are being interpreted through the lens of modern aesthetic and theoretical frameworks, reflecting a shift toward more nuanced and globally aware readings. In addition, a new generation of researchers is engaging in active dialogue with the international academic community—publishing in foreign scholarly journals, participating in international conferences, and contributing to transnational intellectual exchange. This increasing global engagement signifies the growing integration of Uzbek literary thought into the broader sphere of world literary studies. Significant contributions are also being made by national institutions such as the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan, the Alisher Navoi Institute of Language and Literature, and major universities in Tashkent, where scholars like Prof. Erkin Komilov, Acad. Naim Karimov, Prof. Shuhrat Rizayev, and Prof. Bekzod Hidoyatov are leading efforts to build academic schools and foster methodological innovation. Furthermore, the growing presence of Uzbek literary research in international databases such as Scopus and Web of Science, along with the increasing visibility of national scholarship in indexed journals, reflects the strengthening position of Uzbek literary studies within the global academic landscape. This trend underscores an important stage in the process of internationalizing national literary criticism. Undeniably, contemporary Uzbek literary scholarship—grounded in rich intellectual traditions and cultural depth—is striving to claim its rightful place in the global literary sphere. In this process, interdisciplinary approaches, the adoption of advanced theoretical models, and, above all, maintaining a balance between preserving national identity and engaging in global academic dialogue, have become defining features of its development.

CONCLUSION. Uzbek literary criticism, with its deep historical roots and cultural significance, entered a new stage of development after gaining independence. In the 21st century, it has not only strengthened its position within the country but also made its mark on the global academic scene. The independence period brought about new approaches and methodologies in literary studies, with contemporary methods like postcolonial analysis, intertextuality, cultural studies, and gender literary criticism pushing the field in new directions. World literary criticism, which has been developing for many years, has now become a strong and influential system that shapes global intellectual thought. Scientific schools in Europe, America, Russia, and the East have contributed various approaches to the field. Theories such as structuralism, post-structuralism, feminist analysis, and postcolonialism have all had a major impact on contemporary literary criticism. Uzbek literary criticism is increasingly integrating into the global scientific community. Research is being

published in international journals, and new ways of analyzing Uzbek literature are emerging. This process is helping establish Uzbek literary criticism as an important discipline in global academia. Furthermore, modern literary criticism plays an important role not only in academic discourse but also in shaping societal values. By connecting with global literary criticism, Uzbek literary studies are bridging the gap between national and international intellectual thought. These developments contribute not only to the enrichment of Uzbek literature but also to the broader cultural landscape worldwide.

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