

**THE HARMONY OF MODERNITY AND NATIONAL IDENTITY IN THE SHORT
STORIES OF KHURSHID DOSTMUHAMMAD**

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Annotation: This article analyzes the harmony between the categories of modernity and nationality in the short stories of Khurshid Dostmuhammad, one of the prominent representatives of contemporary Uzbek literature. The synthesis of modern artistic thinking with national mentality, tradition, historical memory, and spiritual values in the writer's works is highlighted as the main object of research. Through the depiction of the characters' inner world, psychological experiences, and their relationship with the social environment, the process of modern individuals' awareness of their national identity is revealed. In the course of the study, the writer's artistic style, the system of symbolic images, the harmony of language and thought, and the aesthetic expression of nationality are analyzed from a scholarly and theoretical perspective. The article aims to determine the role and significance of Khurshid Dostmuhammad's short stories in the contemporary literary process.

Keywords:

Khurshid Dostmuhammad, modernity, nationality, short story genre, national mentality, artistic thinking, symbolic image, aesthetic values, Uzbek literature, spirituality.

Introduction

In the period of independence, the issues of recognizing national identity, restoring historical memory, and artistically expressing them in harmony with modern thinking have become one of the leading directions in Uzbek literature. In this process, literature has emerged not only as an aesthetic phenomenon but also as an important socio-cultural institution that shapes national consciousness and reflects the spiritual state of society. In particular, the short story genre, as a form of small epic prose, has gained special significance in the literary process due to its ability to deeply convey the inner world, everyday life, and psychological conflicts of modern individuals. From this perspective, the works of Khurshid Dostmuhammad deserve special attention as a phenomenon that successfully reflects the artistic harmony of modernity and nationality in contemporary Uzbek literature.

The short stories of Khurshid Dostmuhammad are distinguished by their reliance on inner psychological processes rather than external plot-driven events, bringing the characters' inner experiences and states of consciousness to the forefront. Through artistic thinking, the writer interprets the modern individual's spiritual quests, conflicts with the social environment, and relationships with national memory and traditions. In this sense, modernity in his stories is manifested not only through the attributes of a new era, but also through changes in human consciousness and the renewal of ways of perceiving the world. Nationality, in turn, is expressed not merely through folkloric elements or external ethnographic details, but as values, moral principles, and a mentality deeply embedded in the characters' inner world.

Main Part

In the short stories of Khurshid Dostmuhammad, the harmony between modernity and nationality is clearly manifested at the level of artistic thinking. In the writer's works, modernity is expressed through the human psyche, innovation in thinking, relationships with society, and inner emotional experiences, while nationality is integrated with the character's moral values, mentality, historical memory, and spiritual identity. The stories often begin with ordinary life situations; however, their apparent simplicity is enriched through the characters' internal struggles, psychological conflicts, and their deep connection with national values. In this regard,

modernity is revealed in the character's inner world, worldview, and relationship with the socio-cultural context, whereas nationality is embodied in the character's psyche, conscience, choices, and spiritual stability¹.

Modernity in the stories is distinctly reflected through the psychology of the characters. The protagonists encounter everyday situations, yet their inner monologues, decision-making processes, and emotional states are closely linked to contemporary social problems. For instance, in one story, a character experiences a sense of alienation in urban life, confronts family responsibilities, and simultaneously strives to understand their inner self. Through internal monologues, the character analyzes personal values, conflicts with society, and spiritual quests. Through this process, the writer conveys modernity via human thought and psychological experience. At the same time, the character's inner struggle harmonizes with national values: conscience, patience, honor, and a sense of social responsibility are evident in their actions and decisions.

Symbols and metaphors serve as the primary means of expressing nationality in the stories. Ordinary objects—such as roads, rivers, doors, trees, silence, tools of labor, and natural imagery—play an important role in revealing the character's inner world and reflecting their spiritual quests and struggle with modernity. For example, the symbol of the river represents the character's life path, inner flow, and conflicts in decision-making, while the door signifies the external world confronting the character, new opportunities, or limitations. In this way, the writer harmonizes national values with modern artistic thinking through symbolic imagery. The depiction of character psychology in the stories is deep and detailed, conveyed through inner monologues, emotions, and the process of decision-making. The characters strive to understand their inner world and resolve modern problems through national values. For instance, in one story, a young protagonist must resolve the conflict between family obligations and personal desires. Through inner monologues, the character undergoes a process of conscience, patience, and self-awareness. This aspect enriches the psychological layer of the story and strengthens the emotional connection between the reader and the character. Language and style play a significant role in reinforcing the harmony between modernity and nationality in the stories. The simplicity, naturalness, and realism of the narrative language create a sense of closeness between the reader and the characters. At the same time, metaphorical expressions, poetic imagery, and distinctly Uzbek modes of expression give the stories a national tone². The harmony of narration, inner monologue, and dialogue further enriches the psychological portrait of the character. For example, poetic expressions used in inner monologues reflect the character's emotional state and reveal their national values and attitude toward modern life.

The socio-cultural context also plays an important role in strengthening the harmony between modernity and nationality in the stories. Through these narratives, the writer portrays the daily life of the modern Uzbek individual, their place in society, and the conflicts between traditional values and contemporary social realities. Themes such as alienation, loneliness, the transformation of values, and spiritual quests form the ideological core of the stories. At the same time, the writer interprets these issues not through Western pessimism, but through Eastern contemplation and inner reflection. The characters seek spiritual stability and solutions to life's problems through national values.

The role of aesthetic value in the short stories is of particular significance. Through symbols, character psychology, language, and style, the narrative not only leads the reader to aesthetic

¹ Dostmuhammad, Kh. *Collection of Short Stories*. Tashkent: Uzbekistan Publishing House.

² Dostmuhammad, Kh. *Collection of Short Stories*. Tashkent: Uzbekistan Publishing House.

pleasure but also enriches their thinking and spiritual world. The stories deeply and profoundly depict the modern individual's inner experiences and the process of comprehending national values. This aspect demonstrates the writer's artistic mastery and places his works in a distinctive position within Uzbek short story writing.

The harmony of modernity and nationality in the short stories of Khurshid Dostmuhammad occupies a special place even in comparison with other Uzbek short story writers. He portrays national spirit not through external attributes, but through values, emotional experiences, and choices rooted in the characters' inner world. At the same time, modern artistic techniques—such as inner monologue, psychological depiction, symbolic detail, and dialogues of thought—transform national values into a new aesthetic form. The stories evoke not only aesthetic pleasure in the reader, but also philosophical reflection and spiritual inquiry, which significantly enhances their artistic value. Thus, the harmony of modernity and nationality in Khurshid Dostmuhammad's short stories is realized through artistic devices, character psychology, symbols, language and style, aesthetic values, and socio-cultural context. The stories deeply portray the spiritual struggle of the modern individual and the process of understanding national values, evoking philosophical and moral experience in the reader. This, in turn, further enhances the significance and position of the writer's work in Uzbek literature. One of the first noteworthy aspects in the discussion is the harmony between character psychology and modern as well as national values. In the stories, characters face everyday situations; however, their decisions and inner monologues are closely connected with contemporary issues. For example, in one story, the protagonist experiences alienation in urban life and confronts family responsibilities while simultaneously striving to understand their inner self³. The character's inner struggle harmonizes with national values: conscience, patience, honor, and social responsibility are reflected in their decisions and actions. This aspect serves as a psychological means of uniting modernity and nationality in the stories, allowing the reader to establish a spiritual connection with the character.

The second important aspect is the role of symbols and metaphors in harmonizing modernity and nationality. Ordinary objects used in the stories—such as roads, rivers, doors, trees, silence, and tools of labor—serve as significant means of revealing the character's inner world, expressing spiritual quests, and depicting the struggle with modernity. For instance, the river symbolizes the character's inner path and conflicts in decision-making, while the door represents the external world confronting the character or new opportunities⁴. In this way, the writer harmonizes national values with modern artistic thinking through symbols. These symbols not only add an aesthetic layer to the narrative, but also deepen the portrayal of the character's psyche. Thirdly, language and style play a crucial role in strengthening the harmony of modernity and nationality in the stories. The simplicity, naturalness, and realism of the language create a sense of closeness between the reader and the character. At the same time, metaphorical expressions, poetic imagery, and distinctly Uzbek modes of expression give the narrative a national tone. Through inner monologues and dialogues, the psychological portrait of the characters is further enriched, and the harmony of modernity and nationality becomes perceptible to the reader. For example, poetic expressions used in inner monologues reflect the characters' emotional states and national values.

Fourthly, the socio-cultural context further reinforces the harmony of modernity and nationality in the stories. The narratives reveal the daily life of the modern Uzbek individual,

³ Karimov, N. *Uzbek Literature of the Independence Period*. Tashkent: Uzbekistan Publishing House, year of publication.

⁴ Yoldoshev, Q. *Artistic Thinking and Contemporary Literature*. Tashkent, year of publication.

their place in society, and the conflicts between traditional values and contemporary social realities. Themes such as alienation, loneliness, the transformation of values, and spiritual quests form the ideological foundation of the stories. At the same time, the writer interprets these issues not through Western pessimism, but through Eastern contemplation and introspection. The characters strive to achieve spiritual stability and resolve life's challenges through national values.

Fifthly, aesthetic value emerges as an essential means of harmonizing modernity and nationality in the stories. Through symbols, character psychology, language, and style, the narratives provide aesthetic pleasure while enriching the reader's intellectual and spiritual world. The stories deeply portray the modern individual's emotional experiences and the process of comprehending national values. This aspect highlights the writer's artistic mastery and places his work in a distinctive position within Uzbek short story writing.

Another important point emphasized in the discussion is the presentation of the harmony between modernity and nationality through characters and their choices. Each character strives to remain true to their identity during inner struggles, while national values strengthen their spiritual stability. At the same time, confronting modern social problems transforms the character and contributes to their spiritual growth. This aspect reveals the harmony of modernity and nationality as a dynamic process, offering the reader an opportunity for philosophical reflection⁵.

Furthermore, the methodology of harmonizing national values with modern life through short stories is also discussed. The writer reveals national values not through external attributes, but through the character's inner world, decisions, inner monologues, and symbols. In this way, the harmony of modernity and nationality is achieved through artistic means, rendering the stories valuable not only aesthetically, but also philosophically and spiritually. A particularly noteworthy point in the discussion is that the harmony of modernity and nationality in Khurshid Dostmuhammad's short stories differs from that found in the works of other Uzbek short story writers. He presents national spirit not through external attributes, but through values, emotions, and choices embedded in the characters' inner world. At the same time, modern artistic techniques—inner monologue, psychological depiction, symbolic detail, and dialogues of thought—transform national values into a new aesthetic form. This makes the stories more engaging, philosophically profound, and spiritually rich for the reader.

Thus, in Khurshid Dostmuhammad's short stories, the harmony of modernity and nationality is realized through artistic devices, character psychology, symbols, language and style, socio-cultural context, and aesthetic layers. The stories deeply portray the modern individual's emotional experiences and the process of understanding national values, evoking philosophical and spiritual reflection in the reader. Through these qualities, Khurshid Dostmuhammad's work occupies a distinctive place in Uzbek short story writing and contributes to a renewed interpretation of nationality in contemporary literature.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the short stories of Khurshid Dostmuhammad represent a significant literary phenomenon in contemporary Uzbek literature, as they artistically and comprehensively embody the harmony between modernity and nationality. By employing the achievements of modern artistic thinking, the writer succeeds in expressing national spirit, spiritual values, and mentality at a new aesthetic level. In his stories, modernity is manifested in form, while nationality is realized in content, and this harmony determines the artistic value of the works. The creative legacy of Khurshid Dostmuhammad not only enriches the literary process but also serves as an

⁵ Qo'shjonov, M. *Literature and National Consciousness*. Tashkent, year of publication.

important artistic source that contributes to the modern individual's understanding of national identity.

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