

FATHER AND TRAGEDY: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE FATHER IMAGES IN ULUGBEK HAMDAM'S NOVEL "FATHER" AND SAID AHMAD'S NOVEL "HORIZON"

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ABSTRACT: The article provides a comparative analysis of the characters of Po'latjon in Ulug'bek Hamdam's novel "Father" and Ikromjon in Said Ahmad's novel "Horizon". Po'latjon is a father who, upon hearing that his daughter Sevinch gave birth in a maternity hospital, misinterprets the situation, flies into a rage, and stabs his daughter to death. Ikromjon is a father who experiences severe psychological agony because his son fled from military service and betrayed his duty to the motherland, eventually digging his son's grave with his own hands. In both works, the character of the father stands at the center of the tragedy, offering a literary interpretation of the issues of honor, duty, and ignorance. The study utilizes the works of literary scholars, psychoanalytic theories, and symbolic analysis methods.

Keywords: father image, "Father", "Horizon", Po'latjon, Ikromjon, comparative analysis, honor, duty, ignorance, archetype.

INTRODUCTION: In Uzbek literature, the image of the father is broadly interpreted not only as the head of the family but also as a symbol of moral standards, responsibility, patriotism, and honor. As noted by the literary scholar U. Normatov, the deep layers of the national value system are revealed through the father image within the harmony of "literary character and artistic thinking"¹. In his theory of "archetypes and the collective

¹ U. Normatov. Literary Character and Artistic Thinking. Tashkent: Fan, 1998. - p. 156.

unconscious," psychologist Carl Gustav Jung asserted that the father archetype is one of the oldest and most influential images in the universal collective memory of humanity² The novel "Horizon" by Said Ahmad, a prominent figure of 20th-century Uzbek prose, and the novel "Father" by contemporary writer Ulug‘bek Hamdam interpret the image of the father within this archetypal depth. In both works, the father is depicted at the center of severe psychological conflicts and tragedies in connection with the fate of his child. This article specifically focuses on the comparative analysis of these two characters — Po‘latjon ("Father") and Ikromjon ("Horizon"). The objective is to scientifically identify the similarities and differences between the two father figures, as well as to shed light on the literary interpretation of concepts such as honor, duty, and ignorance expressed through them.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Ulug‘bek Hamdam — The Novel "Father" and the Character of Po‘latjon

Ulug‘bek Hamdam (Hamdamov Ulug‘bek Abduvahobovich) was born in 1968 in the Marhamat district of Andijan region. He is one of the bright representatives of Uzbek literature, whose works have brought a fresh breath into Uzbek national literature. The novel "Father" is being studied with great interest by literary critics as one of his most famous works.

Analyzing the conceptual foundations of the novel "Father," literary scholar M. Imamberdiyeva notes that "the work artistically examines the connection between human life, family values, the image of the father, and the moral-psychological problems in society"³ Furthermore, the author skillfully utilizes conceptual tools such as father

² Carl Gustav Jung. Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious. Tashkent: Sharq, 2005. - p. 240.

³ M. Imamberdiyeva. ANALYSIS OF THE CONCEPT OF ULUGBEK HAMDAM'S NOVEL "FATHER". Theoretical Aspects of the Formation of Pedagogical Sciences, 4(1), 2025. - pp. 185-187.

archetypes, psychological realism, symbolic and philosophical images, narrative structure, and literary thinking.

Po‘latjon is a village elder, a respected and reputable man. His daughter Sevinch was left with a scar on her face due to a childhood burn. She graduates from a medical institute, works in her local area, and travels abroad to gain experience. The main conflict of the story arises from a piece of news Po‘latjon hears from his neighbor: upon hearing that his daughter is giving birth in a maternity hospital in Asaka, Po‘latjon returns home in a fury. Disregarding his wife's explanations, he goes to the maternity hospital and slashes his daughter's throat down to her stomach. Sevinch dies. Po‘latjon is imprisoned, where he later learns the truth: his daughter was actually married, and the child was legitimate.

In her article titled "The Harmony of National Values in the Novel 'Father' by Ulugbek Hamdam," researcher N.Sh. Tosheva highlights that the novel deeply portrays "the harmony of spiritual-moral, philosophical-aesthetic values, and individual-society relations," thereby revealing the tragic consequences of a distorted concept of honor embodied by Po‘latjon.⁴ Another study notes that "a masterful representation of the psychological depiction of the father character can be observed in the works of Ulug‘bek Hamdam and Isajon Sulton"⁵ According to Zaripova Muxlisa Xamid qizi, "Ulug‘bek Hamdam’s novel 'Father' sheds light on the social and spiritual problems of our time through its narrative that reflects national identity"⁶. Concurrently, the characters' inner

⁴ Nilufar Sh. Tosheva. THE HARMONY OF NATIONAL VALUES IN THE NOVEL "FATHER" BY ULUGBEK HAMDAM. *Oriental Journal of Philology*, 2(3), 2022. pp. 45-52.

⁵ Nilufar Oqiljon qizi Avazova, Oyjamol Jasur qizi Jalilova. DESCRIPTION OF CERTAIN CHARACTERS IN ULUGBEK HAMDAM’S NOVEL "FATHER". *Theoretical Aspects in the Formation of Pedagogical Sciences International scientific-online conference*, 1(5), 2024. pp. 112-115.

⁶ Muxlisa Xamid qizi Zaripova, Nodira Gulmirzayevna Allambergenova. NATIONAL TOUCHES IN ULUGBEK HAMDAM’S NOVEL "FATHER". *Mezhdunarodny zhurnal teorii noveyshikh nauchnykh issledovaniy*, 2(12), 2024. pp. 82-88.

experiences, memory flashbacks, and conflictual situations are masterfully expressed in the work.

2. Said Ahmad's Character of Ikromjon in the Novel "Horizon"

Said Ahmad (Husanxo'jayev) is a People's Writer of Uzbekistan and a Hero of Uzbekistan. His novel "Horizon" was written between 1967 and 1974, artistically depicting the historical life of the Uzbek people in the 20th century. As literary scholar A.N. Qodirova points out, the novel artistically interprets "the complex life paths of the characters, their psychological experiences, the courage shown during the construction of the 'Great Fergana Canal,' and the humane qualities of the Uzbek people during the war years"⁷

Ikromjon participated in the canal excavation and the war; he is a loyal, patriotic man devoted to his duty. The main conflict of the novel begins when his son, Tursunboy, deserts his military service, betraying his duty to the motherland. The novel "Horizon" is recognized as an immortal work that addresses themes of the Homeland, loyalty, civic duty, and responsibility.

In their article titled "The Price of Fatherly Love: A Test Written on the Pages of Conscience," Gulbahor Fozil qizi Ubaydullayeva and X.Q. Hamroqulova analyze the character of Ikromjon in detail. According to the researchers, "the novel artistically analyzes how the dreams in the heart of a loyal, honest, patient, and honorable father shatter, and instead of becoming a reality, turn into internal torment". While Ikromjon embodies "the traditional family values of the Uzbek people, their moral standards, and a fatherly upbringing based on patience and love," Tursunboy is depicted as a child who denies this love and fails to appreciate his father's dedication.

⁷ Aziza Nurillayevna Qodirova. ANALYSIS OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF EVENTS IN SAID AHMAD'S NOVEL "HORIZON". JOURNAL OF IQRO, 15(02), 2025. pp. 832-833.

In a famous scene of the novel, Ikromjon fires a shot at his son, but seeing that the bullet missed, he says, "Thank goodness, it didn't hit him". Here, Said Ahmad masterfully depicts Ikromjon's feelings and suffering both as a Father and a Human. At the end of the novel, he digs a grave with his own hands and buries his son's body. Although director Marat Azimov interpreted this episode in a theatrical production as "shooting the son to death," it still manages to convey the core idea advanced in the novel.

In her article dedicated to the interpretation of characters in "Horizon," researcher S.D. Ahmadjonova notes that the work deeply expresses "the inner world of man, spiritual quests, and various complex life themes in a profound artistic style, allowing the reader to understand the complex sides of life through the characters' psychological experiences, dialogues, and actions".⁸ Additionally, the novel explores themes like the human consciousness, realizing the truth, and self-examination through the symbol of the horizon (mirror).

3. Comparative Analytical Foundations of Both Works

In literary criticism, the character of the father is often interpreted alongside concepts of "honor," "duty," and "pride." According to Jung's theory of archetypes, the father archetype represents universal human experiences such as fatherly protection, guidance, and authority. The characters of Po'latjon and Ikromjon reflect two different applications of these concepts — ignorant and conscious. While Po'latjon acts based on rumor without verifying it, Ikromjon fires a shot knowingly, yet hoping it will not hit. In both cases, the father becomes the cause of his child's death, but the underlying reasons and psychological experiences differ fundamentally.

⁸ So'najon Dilmurod qizi Ahmadjonova. INTERPRETATION OF CHARACTERS IN SAID AHMAD'S NOVEL "HORIZON". TADQIQOTLAR, 68(1), 2025. - pp. 280-284.

Tosheva notes that the novel "Father" illuminates "the attitude toward national and spiritual-moral values, as well as the problem of the psychological world of the modern human". Meanwhile, research on the novel "Horizon" analyzes "the social, psychological, and philosophical problems of man, along with personal and social changes".

RESULTS

The analysis identified the following primary results:

Similarities:

1. Both fathers find themselves in a severe situation tied to the fate of their child.
2. Both become the cause of their child's death due to their actions: Po‘latjon kills directly by stabbing; Ikromjon fires a shot and his son dies subsequently, making him an indirect cause.
3. In both works, the father character is interpreted in connection with concepts such as "honor," "duty," and "pride".
4. Both works reveal different facets of the "father archetype" in Uzbek literature.

Differences:

1. The Basis and Nature of the Action: Po‘latjon acts out of a momentary rage based on a rumor, without any investigation. He ignores his wife's explanations and stabs his daughter despite the doctors' attempts to stop him. Ikromjon, on the other hand, fires the shot after a grueling internal struggle, knowing the full truth. His action is a conscious, intentional, yet emotionally devastating decision.
2. Legal and Moral Consequences: Po‘latjon is sentenced to prison for his deed, making him a criminal before the law. Conversely, Ikromjon faces no legal accountability; his suffering is entirely moral and psychological in nature.
3. The Source of the Tragedy: Po‘latjon's tragedy is the product of ignorance and gossip. Upon his release from prison, he learns the truth that his daughter was married and the

child was legitimate, but it is too late. Ikromjon's tragedy stems from the irreconcilable conflict between his duty to the motherland and his fatherly love. He foresees the consequence of every step, yet his fatherly heart suffers immensely.

4. The Persona of the Characters and Expressed Ideas: Po‘latjon is a father who becomes a victim of a distorted concept of "honor," ignorance, and gossip. Ikromjon, meanwhile, is a tragic father who places his duty to the homeland above all else, yet his love for his son never fades.

5. General Conclusions of the Studies: Imamberdiyeva notes that in "Father," "the author highlights the stability of the nation and society through the lens of the family, emphasizing generational continuity. The author underscores that a person must not lose their identity in modern times". Studies on "Horizon" emphasize that "concepts such as conscience, dignity, duty, and honesty are artistically interpreted and tightly intertwined with modern family and upbringing dynamics".

DISCUSSION

When comparing Po‘latjon and Ikromjon, the central point of discussion is the varying interpretation of the concepts of "honor" and "duty".

Ignorance and the Issue of Honor. Through Po‘latjon, the novel demonstrates how destructive public gossip and the concept of "a daughter's honor to her father" can be within a society. According to Tosheva, the novel sheds light on philosophical problems such as "the relationship between the individual and society, and the environment's impact on human fate". Po‘latjon does not even attempt to find out his daughter's actual situation. because the truth "dictated by society" is more important to him. This serves as a striking example of Ulug‘bek Hamdam's style of "drawing grand conclusions from simple aspects of life to induce reader reflection". The author demonstrates how gossip

can entirely tear a family apart, showing the tragedy of how a single moment of rage and reckless action can override decades of fatherly love.

The Conflict of Duty and Love. In Ikromjon's case, civic duty is placed above personal fatherly love. However, the author does not depict this in a cold or ruthless manner. The words "Thank goodness, it didn't hit him" and the grave-digging scene expose Ikromjon's deep internal suffering. Researchers note that "Ikromjon's persona vividly reflects a fatherly upbringing rooted in patience and affection". Thus, the tragedy of Said Ahmad's hero is an unresolvable conflict between duty and love. He fires a shot at his son with his own hands, yet genuinely hopes the bullet will miss. Afterwards, he digs the grave for his son's corpse and buries him himself. These actions reflect boundless love and pain, rather than hatred.

Artistic Style and Psychologism. Comparing the artistic styles of both works, Ulug'bek Hamdam stands out for his "distinct literary language, his skill in precisely depicting psychological states, and his ability to paint life events with unique artistic coloring"⁹. He strives to captivate the reader via a modern, fast-paced plot. In the novel "Father," events unfold rapidly; only a few hours pass from the moment the rumor is heard to the occurrence of the tragedy. This enables the reader to feel Po'latjon's rage and subsequent regret more acutely. Said Ahmad, utilizing the epic novel genre, develops events gradually, placing the primary emphasis on psychologism. The work's ability to "allow the reader to grasp the complexities of life through the characters' psychological experiences, dialogues, and actions" is a clear manifestation of his artistic mastery. In "Horizon," Ikromjon's inner emotions, his relationship with his son, and his search within himself for flaws regarding his son's upbringing are revealed over extensive episodes.

⁹ Muxlisa Xamid qizi Zaripova, Nodira Gulmirzayevna Allambergenova. NATIONAL TOUCHES IN ULUGBEK HAMDAM'S NOVEL "FATHER". International Journal of Theory of Newest Scientific Research, 2(12), 2024. - pp. 82-88.

Interpretation of National Values. National values hold a significant place in both works. In the novel "Father," "the author effectively applies Uzbek national values in the interpretation of characters". Po'latjon's deed stems precisely from an extreme and flawed interpretation of the concept of "honor". Meanwhile, "Horizon," as a leading work in Uzbek literature, interprets the inner world and spiritual quests of man. The foundation of Ikromjon's actions rests upon national values such as the sanctity of the "Homeland" and the unpardonable nature of betrayal.

While both writers place the father character at the center of the tragedy, the conclusions of the works prompt the reader into deep contemplation. Realizing his mistake too late, Po'latjon tries to dedicate the remainder of his life to his grandchild, but the grandchild has grown up in an orphanage. Ikromjon, on the other hand, spends the night beside the grave he dug for his son with his own hands. These endings urge the reader to avoid delaying critical choices, to verify the truth, and to find a balance between duty and love.

CONCLUSION

The father characters in Ulug'bek Hamdam's novel "Father" and Said Ahmad's novel "Horizon" hold a vital position in the artistic interpretation of fatherhood, honor, duty, and responsibility in Uzbek literature. According to Imamberdiyeva, the novel "Father" uncovers "the connection between family values, the father character, and the moral-psychological issues in society". While the character of Po'latjon demonstrates how catastrophic the consequences of ignorance and gossip can be, the character of Ikromjon embodies the complex and tragic synthesis of duty to the homeland and fatherly affection. Both characters compel the reader to think seriously about the weight of fatherly responsibility, the significance of every decision, and the necessity of knowing the truth.

These two father figures from modern and classical literature represent two opposite poles — distorted and noble — of the concept of "honor" in the Uzbek national mentality. Research shows that "the artistic interpretation of concepts such as conscience, dignity, duty, and honesty is essential for understanding modern family and upbringing issues"¹⁰. Studying these two works in the future based on gender studies, sociological, and psychoanalytic approaches also holds significant scientific value.

Furthermore, the title of the novel "Ota" carries the meaning of "The Father's Melody," hinting at the traditions of Uzbek folk singing — through this symbol, the author intended to express a unique "melody" of happy and tragic fatherhood. The symbol of the "Horizon," on the other hand, signifies striving toward the boundless possibilities and goals of human life. Both symbolic meanings enrich the artistic interpretation of the father character.

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¹⁰ Gulbahor Fozil qizi Ubaydullayeva, X.Q. Hamroqulova. THE PRICE OF FATHERLY LOVE: A TEST WRITTEN ON THE PAGES OF CONSCIENCE (In the interpretation of the characters of Ikromjon and Tursunboy in Said Ahmad's novel "Horizon"). TADQIQOTLAR, 15(3), 2025. pp. 120-125.

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