



Article

Studying The Author's Personality Through Letters

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Abstract: This article discusses the work of Rauf Parfi, a unique artist who left a bright mark on Uzbek literature in the second half of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century, and the artistic aspects of his three-line poems. The content and essence of these creative experiments, the skill of using words, and the nuances of poetic meaning are analyzed and interpreted. Conclusions are made about the literary and artistic significance of the poet's experiments.

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1. Introduction

It is impossible to adequately evaluate a writer's spiritual and intellectual world merely by reflecting superficially on some of his or her literary works. From this perspective, the character, worldview, and life philosophy of a creative individual become more clearly discernible not only through the works they have produced, but also through a deeper examination of their correspondence, diaries, and personal notes addressed to contemporaries and close acquaintances [1, 2].

According to the renowned Russian scholar Vissarion Belinsky, when embarking on the study of a writer's творчество, it is first and foremost necessary to understand the "mystery of his personality." Indeed, the writer's personality and the surrounding social environment constitute the fundamental basis for literary analysis in such cases [3]. If the analytical process makes it possible to reveal the creator's individuality, the historical period in which they lived, and their attitude toward the realities of life depicted in their works, then achieving the intended objectives of analysis becomes considerably easier [4, 5].

The use of letters occupies an important place in the process of continuous literary education. In particular, in literature classes for grades 5–11 of general secondary education schools, the study of the works of writers such as G'afur G'ulom, Abdulla Qahhor, Mirtemir, Said Ahmad, Saida Zunnunova, and O'tkir Hoshimov can be enriched through the use of their personal correspondence, which often leaves a warm and lasting impression on students [6, 7].

2. Materials and Methods

The tradition of letter writing has existed among creative intellectuals since ancient times. In Uzbek classical literature, the noma evolved into a distinct literary genre; the word itself, translated from Persian, means "letter" or "epistle." The Maktubot of the revered saint Jalal al-Din Rumi, who lived between 1207 and 1273 and addressed 147

letters to his contemporaries, stands as vivid evidence of the flourishing of the epistolary genre in the ancient East.

Historical sources clearly demonstrate that the noble correspondence between great poets such as Abdurahmon Jomiy and Alisher Navoiy further strengthened the bonds of friendship between them. Indeed, the “Second Maqolat” of Xamsatul-mutahayyirin is significant for comprising writings imbued with the thinkers’ noble aspirations for national prosperity and social peace. The productive use of this genre in Alisher Navoiy’s creative work is also reflected in his compilation of *Munshaot*, a collection of his correspondence with Husayn Bayqara and others.

3. Results and Discussion

In classroom instruction, students encounter historical facts illustrating that the poet’s life unfolded amidst contradictions and hardships. For example, during the reign of Abusaid Mirzo, numerous misfortunes befell Navoiy. After seizing power, Abusaid Mirzo oppressed the close associates of Husayn Bayqara, a claimant to the throne. Navoiy’s family was not spared [8]: his inherited property was confiscated, his uncles Kobuliy and G’aribiy were executed, and he was forced to leave Herat. Deeply distressed by these adversities and by the suffering of the people, Navoiy wrote a letter to Said Hasan Ardasher, who had become like a father to him, describing both the nation’s plight and his own emotional state [9].

If, in literature lessons, it is logically explained that the first *divan* of Khazoyin ul-Maoniy—G’aroyib us-sig’ar—consists of poetic epistles in the form of *hasbi hol*, glorifying human dignity and addressed to his mentor, students can better understand the poet’s personality not through abstract statements, but through concrete life events [10].

Epistolary works that have fascinated peoples across the world throughout history possess unique characteristics in that they often reflect societal interests and contribute to the development of particular fields. For instance, one may cite the correspondence between the Uzbek historian B. Ahmedov and such scholars as Russian orientalist and Vladimir Minorsky, Cambridge University professor; American scholar Devin DeWeese; Mongolian academician Shagdarin Bira; and Viennese German scholar Karel Jahn on issues related to the history of Movarounnahr, Turkestan, and Central Asia [11, 12].

“I have long been interested in Rashid al-Din’s Turkic translations,” wrote the Hungarian orientalist István Vásáry in a letter dated November 2, 1987. He referred to an article by G’ozi Olim Yunus published in the 1929 journal *Maorif va o’qitg’uvchi* and inquired about a manuscript allegedly preserved in Samarkand and translated during the Timurid era. This letter exemplifies how epistolary communication can serve as a medium of scholarly inquiry and international academic exchange [13].

When discussing the history of Uzbek literary criticism, one inevitably recalls Fitrat’s article “Yopishmagan gajaklar” (“Unattached Curls”), written as an open letter to J. Boybo’latov. As B. Qosimov notes in the preface to *Alloma adib*, this work was not merely a response to unfair criticism; rather, it was a profound protest against shallow aesthetic judgment, unprofessionalism, and the growing tendency to undermine genuine literary scholarship. Even today, scholars continue to analyze this work. For example, Professor O. Safarov compares Fitrat’s skillful response to baseless accusations and his call for realistic evaluation to Vissarion Belinsky’s famous “Letter to Gogol.”

It is also important to note that the epistolary traditions of Russian classics such as Alexander Pushkin, Anton Chekhov, Ivan Turgenev, and Fyodor Dostoevsky significantly influenced the development of this field in the literatures of other nations. In particular, the correspondence of the Kazakh writer Sobit Muqanov with contemporaries such as A. Tolstoy, A. Fadeyev, K. Fedin, and others demonstrates the richness and diversity of his epistolary heritage. These letters stand out for addressing urgent issues in Kazakh

literature and for serving as a means of collecting information from the people for future literary works [14].

Letters are classified into various groups according to the personal and social relationships they express. The letters of the prominent German literary figure Friedrich Schiller to contemporaries such as Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Wilhelm von Humboldt, Friedrich Schlegel, Immanuel Kant, and others provide readers with vivid insights into the writer's inner world, worldview, creative style, way of life, and the political, cultural, and literary life of the country. As we become acquainted with such epistolary heritage, we recognize the truth of Professor Sh. Karimov's characterization of letters as "a gallery of colorful realistic portraits and scenes rich in national color."

The literary correspondence exchanged among the representatives of the Kokand literary milieu of the second half of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century—such as Muqimiy, Furqat, and Zavqiy—may be classified as letters of a personal nature. The poetic letters written by Furqat to his close friends during his stay in Yarkand and Istanbul are closely connected with the leading motif of his творчество: the anguish of separation from his homeland [15]. Among them, the letter sent to Muqimiy from Bombay is especially notable for its detailed portrayal of the natural environment of India and the living conditions of its urban population.

In the correspondence among Mirtemir, Ibroyim Yusupov, Sobit Muqanov, and Quvonchbek Malikov, one can easily perceive not only discussions on the art of translation but also the idea of interethnic solidarity among fraternal peoples whose hearts and aspirations were united. Such letters may be characterized as a means of strengthening literary, cultural, and political ties.

In the treasury of twentieth-century Uzbek literature, letters encouraging young writers to master the secrets of literary creativity occupy a significant place. It may be noted that letters written by such sensitive masters of the word as G'afur G'ulom and Abdulla Qahhor to emerging talents entering the literary process served as a benchmark in shaping their future literary style. Moreover, such correspondence vividly reveals the humane qualities of mentor-writers who deeply cared about the development and future of national literature.

The primary objective of literary education—the cultivation of a well-rounded and morally mature individual—can be effectively achieved by organizing lessons through the use of thematic letters. For instance, in core literature classes, studying the life and works of Abdulla Qahhor through his letters helps reveal his characteristic attentiveness, compassion, and high standards. His letter to the young student O'tkir Hoshimov, whose first literary attempt had just been published, demonstrates his support and goodwill toward developing talent. In this letter, Abdulla Qahhor warmly praises Hoshimov's work *Cho'l havosi* ("Desert Air"), acknowledges its sincerity and readability, and offers constructive criticism regarding its epistolary form, while expressing his hope that the "flame" of the young writer's creativity would never fade.

In the garden of Uzbek literature, there are many writers whose personal lives and moral virtues can serve as exemplary models for today's students. One such figure is the distinguished storyteller and Said Ahmad, recipient of the title "Hero of Uzbekistan." It is well known to readers that during his youth, like many Uzbek intellectuals, he became a victim of unjust political repression and spent five years in the mines of Jezkazgan in Kazakhstan. Those years of exile tempered his will like steel and strengthened his belief that truth can never be defeated. The names of those who devoted their entire lives, strength, and heartfelt devotion to the interests and independence of their people remain forever immortal.

In the literature curriculum of general secondary schools, a certain amount of time is devoted to studying the life and works of Said Ahmad. If his biography is taught in conjunction with the letters he wrote to his wife, Saida Zunnunova, during his

imprisonment, students are provided with a basis for independent reflection on important aspects of his personality, the oppressive atmosphere of the Soviet period, and his relationships with those around him. For this purpose, it is advisable to organize extracurricular activities dedicated to such letters. To achieve the expected outcomes, it is necessary to prepare a project in advance, carefully plan educational objectives, correctly select methods and approaches, and develop a system of tasks aimed at revealing the essence and significance of the topic under study.

When organizing independent research, the clearer the tasks assigned, the easier the students' activities become. Before the lesson, students may be assigned tasks such as studying the theme, structure, and central idea of the letters; identifying artistic devices; expressing their impressions; and determining the distinguishing features of the works of writers from the previous century and the independence period. Recommendations should also be provided on using information-library resources to locate sources, accompanied by a bibliography. The completion of assignments should periodically be monitored individually or collectively through question-and-answer sessions and discussions.

The purpose of such lessons requires students to reflect on complex human emotions and draw specific conclusions. Therefore, they are expected to approach creatively the sentences that reflect the author's inner experiences. Indeed, a writer's character traits and intellectual outlook find profound expression not only in literary works but in every word of their letters. The heartfelt lines transferred from the heart onto paper can transform students' perspectives on life, while the difficult yet admirable life stories of literary figures can undoubtedly serve as moral inspiration. In the correspondence that emerged as a product of inner emotional need, one can sense the sincere love between the couple, their struggles for their ideals, and tones of dissatisfaction with the injustice of the society in which they lived.

The writer masterfully portrays his emotions, surging like a violent storm, with remarkable wit and sensitivity, reassuring his "true friend" that brighter days will come:

"... In your letter, you wrote: 'When I tried to write of my sorrow, the pen caught fire and the paper burned.'

The flame of that burned pen and paper ignited a fire in my own heart as well. Do not burn the pen. Let it be tempered and strengthened in the fire of separation. The darker the pen, the more vividly it can create living scenes upon the white page. We must make a pathway to the future from the scenes we depict on these pages. Yes, we must go there together. Do not lose heart spiritually. Let books and the pen be your closest companions.

I am doing exactly the same..."

In response to his appeals, Saida Zunnunova proved even more resolute than Said Ahmad had expected and never bowed before dishonorable individuals. Enduring humiliation, persecution, and persistent demands to renounce the so-called "enemy of the people," she became a monumental symbol of patience, loyalty, and resilience—an embodiment worthy of commemorating the strength of Uzbek women.

While revealing the author's inner self, these letters also vividly portray the image of a man in a foreign land, consumed by longing for his homeland:

"... The radio is broadcasting from Tashkent. Familiar voices, a concert, and finally the melody 'Cho'li Iroq' played on the dutar.

I surrendered my whole being to the trembling sounds of the strings; perhaps tears came to my eyes—I did not even notice..."

In time, his dreams came true. The writer was exonerated and released. He stood before his homeland and his people with honor and dignity. Yet, of course, this was not achieved easily.

Thus, it can be noted that these letters served as a mirror of the couple's spirituality, a realization of their sorrows and aspirations, and a source of hope for the triumph of truth.

To achieve the expected outcomes of literary analysis, conducting question-and-answer sessions provides students with an opportunity to share their reflections and opinions regarding the transformations in the writer's personality.

1. Do you consider it fair that the writer blamed only himself for the misfortunes that befell his family? Support your answer with evidence from the letters.
2. In the congratulatory letter written on the eve of the holiday, explain the meaning of the lines:
 "... I would renounce the rest of my life tomorrow,
 I would renounce my very soul, in gratitude."
3. What emotions do you think gave rise to the poet's lines:
 "Perhaps, one day,
 Fortune will smile upon my destiny"?
4. Explain the meaning of the sentence from one of the letters:
 "Can one wrap an ember in paper?"
5. What aspects of the writer's character can be inferred from his belief that pleading with a woman is a sign of weakness and humiliation?
6. What does it indicate that the climate of a distant land and the moods of its people did not escape the writer's attention?
7. Why do you think the monument erected in Tashkent depicts the writer and his spouse side by side?

4. Conclusion

The In the cultivation of an independent individual with sound thinking and steadfast commitment to their beliefs, the study of examples of the epistolary genre acquires particular relevance and significance. Letters provide insight not only into the author's creative path, but also into their personality, convictions, position in life, relationships with others, and aspirations. These aspects contribute to the development of learners' moral qualities and aesthetic taste, as well as to the refinement of their artistic and critical thinking.

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