

Abdulla Qodiriy – A Master Of Words

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Abstract

This article explores the satirical mastery of Abdulla Qodiriy, one of the pioneers of Uzbek prose and a distinguished literary figure. It analyzes Qodiriy's use of language, his precision in word choice, and the unique role of satire in his literary works, especially during the 1920s. Special attention is given to his satirical stories such as "From the Diary of Kalvak Mahzum" and "What Does the Irritable Toshpolat Say?", which reflect the social contradictions and absurdities of the time through humor, irony, and criticism. The study highlights Qodiriy's ability to subtly convey sharp political and cultural critique under the guise of humor, demonstrating his unmatched linguistic talent and literary depth. His contribution to Uzbek literature remains influential and continues to serve as a model of stylistic excellence and intellectual courage.

Keywords: Satirical criticism, sarcasm, irony, master of words, the character Kalvak Mahzum.

When speaking of Uzbek novel-writing, it is impossible to overlook Abdulla Qodiriy and his literary legacy. Novels such as "O'tkan kunlar" ("Bygone Days") and "Mehrobdan chayon" ("Scorpion from the Altar") are universally acknowledged as a rich treasure for our people and literature. The famous Kazakh writer Mukhtar Auezov remarked: "Abdulla Qodiriy (Julqunboy) created magnificent novels. His works appeared in the 1920s as if the Pamir Mountains had suddenly arisen in a flat desert" [6]. Upon becoming acquainted with Qodiriy's work, one realizes that he was not only a novelist but also a significant figure across many branches of literature. The diversity of his oeuvre includes poetry, plays, short stories, essays, journalistic and literary-critical articles, translations of world literary classics, and a unique collection of sharply-worded satirical pieces. His title "King of the Feuilleton" is well-earned. The satirical stories and anecdotes he created in the 1920s are considered a rare find of that era and serve as a school of mastery even for contemporary literature.

Abdulla Qodiriy is widely regarded as the founder of Uzbek novel-writing and a

masterful stylist whose satirical and literary contributions have profoundly influenced the development of Uzbek literature. The reviewed article provides a detailed examination of Qodiriy's satirical artistry, linguistic precision, and commitment to literary responsibility.

1. Thematic Range and Literary Breadth

Qodiriy's versatility as a writer is evident through his diverse body of work, which includes novels (O'tkan kunlar, Mehrobdan chayon), short stories, essays, plays, critical articles, and high-impact satirical sketches. The article emphasizes that Qodiriy never used words without purpose — every phrase in his texts serves a literary or ideological function.

2. Satire as a Tool for Social Criticism

A central focus of the article is Qodiriy's use of satire to address the socio-political issues of the 1920s. His works "From the Diary of Kalvak Mahzum" and "What Does the Irritable Toshpo'lat Say?" are analyzed as prime examples of "character-based humor." These stories expose religious ignorance, social hypocrisy, and bureaucratic absurdities through the voices of fictional but realistic characters.

3. Language, Style, and Folkloric Influence

Qodiriy's linguistic craftsmanship is praised for its richness in idiomatic expressions, proverbs, and culturally resonant phrases. His satire is deeply rooted in Uzbek folk traditions, yet elevated by classical literary techniques. Critics such as Izzat Sulton highlight his effective use of piching (sarcasm) as a defining feature of his satire.

4. Narrative Technique and Characterization

The article notes Qodiriy's use of inner monologue, self-revealing character speech, and external behavior to develop his satirical figures. Kalvak Mahzum and Toshpo'lat are not mere caricatures but socially symbolic figures — each representing the contradictions of their time. Importantly, Qodiriy often assigns biting social criticism to these naïve or flawed characters, protecting himself from direct political persecution.

5. Critical Reception and Legacy

The review draws on scholarly evaluations by Umarali Normatov and others who emphasize Qodiriy's contribution to the realist tradition in Uzbek prose. Normatov notes that even in satire, Qodiriy avoids tonal monotony and demonstrates stylistic color and emotional range. His work is praised as a literary "school of mastery" for both his contemporaries and modern writers. Throughout his creative career, Qodiriy never used words inappropriately or merely for decorative purposes. Every sentence in his works serves a specific role and function. In his article "To Our Writers," he emphasizes the importance of responsibility in the use of language: "When constructing sentences, one must exercise great consideration. It is a serious fault if only the writer understands his meaning and others do not. True writing means being able to convey one's ideas clearly to everyone, avoiding misunderstandings. Words and sentences that do not aid in expressing a thought have no place in writing" [1:230b]. As can be seen, Qodiriy

calls upon himself and his peers to be precise in both word and thought, urging a sense of creative responsibility.

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