

# Meaningful vectors of Uzbek story at the turn of XX-XXI centuries

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**ABSTRACT**--As we know, the genre of storytelling enters the literary arena due to its mobility and promptness in transitional periods when there is a "reevaluation of values", when the worldview changes, and the new reality and the system of views on the individual is only tested and found. These properties allow the story to focus on current, contemporary issues. It follows from the above that the story is one of the first to react to the change of the epoch, to the "new round" of social development, becomes a "landmark" genre of time, a kind of starting point in the change of character of social life. The peculiarity of the story is that it is actualized and manifests itself at a time when the main contradiction, which determines the essence of man and his time, just emerging and is in its infancy, hovers in the air and the main purpose of the story - to capture, demonstrate this contradiction. This article reveals the originality of the status relationship between the author, narrator and protagonist in the Uzbek story of the turn of the XX-XXI centuries through the prism of the problem and thematic fields of flash fiction of Uzbekistan. Three substantial vectors of the Uzbek story of the period under study are distinguished. The analysis of stories from these angles allows not only to show originality of development of a genre of the Uzbek story, but also to reveal a spectrum of the problems fixed by the story the end of XX - the beginning of XXI centuries reflecting a true picture of a human existence of the given period.

**Keywords**--Modern literature, story, boundary of XX-XXI centuries, Uzbek literature, narrative-anti-utopia, author, narrator, protagonist, theme, problems, subject of flash fiction.

## I. INTRODUCTION

After gaining Independence (in 1991) Uzbekistan chose its own path of socio-economic, political, cultural development, search and approval of moral-ideological and cultural guidelines. This has led to the emergence of various ideological and aesthetic tendencies in the contemporary Uzbek literary process, expressed both in the renewal of style, genres and visual and expressive means capable of adequately depicting the phenomena of contemporary reality and in the search for ethical and ideological support in the heroic past of the Uzbek people. In the conditions of aesthetic pluralism Uzbek literature tries to "embody the multidimensional content (summing up the results of the Soviet, history, realization of the consequences of the collapse of the Soviet Union, artistic exploration of the new market reality with attempts to understand the ongoing social processes, stating the emergence of a consumer society, attempts to anticipate the future, etc.), using all the traditions of different creative methods, the available arsenal of artistic means of expression and embodiment, mixing them and combining them. It should be noted that, at the turn of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, the subject matter of Uzbekistan's

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flash fiction was developed in a specific way. As one can suppose, such a movement is connected with the fact that the story tries to look into the vague landscapes of the transition time, how to fix the current problems and peculiarities of social development, and how to guess and predict the consequences.

In this article we deem it necessary to reveal the originality of the status relationship between the author, narrator and protagonist in the Uzbek story of the turn of the XX-XXI centuries, turning to the texts, many of which, as we think, can be considered key to the actual existence of the genre, because they fit into the main, in our opinion, problem-thematic fields of flash fiction.

The purpose of this study is to make an analytical analysis of contemporary Uzbek stories reflecting the problem-thematic fields as options for extrapolating the aesthetic trends of prose in the 60-80s of the twentieth century, in the context of the analysis of the triad of "author- narrator- protagonist ".

The review of scientific researches on this problem has shown that the question of studying the poetics of the story genre is not new in theoretical and methodological terms. A number of scientists quite actively investigated the specifics of the story as a genre. The presence of a number of fundamental researches is a vivid proof of this. These include the research of N. Vladimirova and N. Sultanova "Uzbek Soviet Story", M. Koshchanov "Generosity of Talent", A. Rasulov "Stories of the eighties" and others.

The theoretical aspect of the genre specifics of the story was analyzed back in the 20s and 30s of the twentieth century in the works of I.A. Vinogradov, B.M. Eikhenbaum, V.B. Shklovsky, V. Hoffensheffer and others. Since the mid-20th century, the reflexion of scientific thought has moved towards the separation of the genre of story from novel, essay, and structural and semantic reflection (V. Skobelev, F. Golovenchenko), as well as the creation of an intraspecific classification of stories (A. Metchenko, S. Petrov, P. Vyhodtsev).

In the study of the story genre the scientists followed the chronological principle. Thus, the authors of the fundamental publication "Russian Soviet Storytelling/Essays on the History of the Genre" comprehend the originality of stories by periods: the story of the first years of the revolution; the story of the second half of the 20s; the story of the 30s; the story of the war years; the story of the postwar years; the story of the 50s

In the Uzbek literature criticism of the narrative genre, literary critics proceeded from the analysis of the general state of epic genres in a certain historical period, as well as in the prism of artistic method and style. In the matter of narrative theory, Uzbek literary critics adhered to the concept of Timofeev and Abramovich, not distinguishing the story from the novel. At the end of the twentieth century, Uzbek theorists expanded some concepts of theoretical poetics, in particular the genres of Eastern literature, but the theory of the genre of storytelling is interpreted in a traditional way.

The question of the development of poetics of the narrative genre of the end of XX - beginning of XXI centuries in fiction, despite its topicality, turned out to be beyond a serious historical, literary and complex research. The genre of story is analyzed in the problem-thematic prism only in the context of the work of some writers, and this analysis has a review character

The Uzbek literary science also lacks a comprehensive analysis of the poetics of contemporary national narrative. One of the most recent detailed works is a study by N. Vladimirova, which provides a general history of the formation and development of this genre in Uzbek literature. The chapters in the multi-volume edition of the "History of Uzbek Literature" of the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan are devoted to an overview of the Uzbek story of the second half of the twentieth century. They trace the dynamics of the genre of flash fiction and reveal

the line of its artistic search, as well as the specifics of reproducing objective reality in the prism of comprehending national traditions.

These researches, operating with huge system and theoretical and analytical material, contain curious and talented observations on the literary process of the turn of the century, and on the genre of story in particular. However, in literature studies, due to the author's goals, researchers were not interested in the conceptual problem of developing the genre of storytelling at the end of XX - beginning of XXI centuries in Uzbek literature.

## **II. METHODS**

The research methodology is determined by a set of methods of comparative-typological, content analysis, structural-semantic analysis and discursive analysis.

For example, in systematizing Uzbek stories from the perspective of problem and thematic blocks, methods of structural-semantic, systematic and complex research of contemporary Uzbek stories in the paradigm of artistic-aesthetic, ethical-philosophical, historical-social and psychological realities of the turn of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries have been applied, which gives a holistic view not only of the evolutionary development of contemporary literature in Uzbekistan, but also of the epochal worldview as a whole.

The goal and objectives of this research are achieved with the help of content analysis, discursive analysis and typological method, which allow us to characterize the triad of "author- protagonist " in the flash fiction of Uzbekistan in the context of problematic-thematic modes and reveal typological properties/differences of the analyzed art texts.

## **III. DATA, ANALYSIS, AND RESULTS**

For the detailed analysis of dynamics of mutual relations of the author, the narrator and the protagonist in the modern story we have allocated three problem-thematic fields which seem to us extremely important for modern flash fiction. The matter is that characteristic tendencies of development of Uzbek prose of 60-80s of XX century were prolonged by modern flash fiction of Uzbekistan and resulted, as we believe, in three vectors:

1. Crisis of historical, socio-cultural perspective;
2. The drama of the permanent crisis and disintegration of Soviet civilization, the echo of large and small wars;
3. Drama of the extinction of agrarian civilization and the associated patriarchal peace-building.

In addition, these problematic and thematic fields will be considered through the analysis of relations in the triad "author - narrator - protagonist ", which, we believe, will not only show the originality of the genre, but also to identify the spectrum of problems recorded by the story of the end of XX - early XXI century, reflecting the true picture of human existence in this period.

We emphasize the special importance of the author's problem in thinking about the fate of the genre. Let us recall that the author's problem as one of the fundamental issues in the philological science of the twentieth century was a thorny way of disputes and discussions. Let us also recall the concept of M.M. Bakhtin's dialogics and his provisions about the directions that may lead to a crisis of authorship, the theory of "death of the author", the speculations about "resurrection of the author", about "the flow of consciousness of the author", about "the author after the author", etc.

Putting the author's problem at the centre of theoretical disputes is not a coincidence. We can confidently assert that the listed concepts, one way or another, reflect both the spectrum of crisis characteristics of the traditional understanding of the author as a subject of creativity, as a literary category, and modern collisions of theoretical and practical nature associated with the definitions of authorship.

***The author, narrator and protagonist status in the modern story in the context of the crisis of socio-cultural perspective.***

By the end of the century, the Soviet official vision of historical, socio-cultural perspective was completely discredited and went into oblivion. The single and only picture of the future did not replace him. And in general, the image of the future has lost its certainty.

The story in this context changes, expands its functions:

1) He comes from fixing the new, which is called further, trying to anticipate, anticipate the spiritual line of movement, both human and society as a whole;

2) Writers state the topical issues of modern reality, testifying to the imperfection or even absurdity of the modern world order: crisis of spirituality and morality, dependence/release from totalitarian consciousness, deformation of society and depersonalization of man. Here, the conditional future is an occasion to talk about modernity or about very close possible perspectives, about the state of man today.

The appearance of Uzbek stories - an anti-utopia is connected with the comprehension of turning points in the history of our state, with the change of public consciousness on the one hand, and with the activation of modernist and postmodernist methods of writing in literature on the other. The most interesting experiments in this field are presented in the stories of "Adashboy" ("The Lost One") by R. Rahmat and "Haykallar Oroli" ("Vanity Island") by U. S. Lomonosov. U. Hamdam. It should be noted that these works focus on the problems of morality, the crisis of spirituality, deformation of personality. Thus, in the story "The Lost One" by R. Rahmat, the conflict "personality and society" is realized through the characterization of relations between an individual and a crowd. The protagonist of "The Lost One" finds himself in a strange kishlak, where *"strange yellow people with their mouths that do not close"* live who have telepathy. Synthesis of fantasy and reality, as well as the use of elements of surrealism in creating a closed space kishlak help the author to highlight in the mirror reflection of the spirituality of society, the loss of traditional moral guidelines, the transformation of consciousness, and the role of the crowd in the process of levelling the personality. In the story, the narrator performs the function of a detached observer, and using the terminology of B. Uspensky, we can say that the narrator, as close as possible to the main character, actively uses the "external and internal points of view" in the organization of the narrative. In other words, the author's position is presented as a synthesis of objective (narrator) and subjective (main character) plans. Such technology allows fixing more convexly the influence of the crowd (kishlak residents) on the consciousness of an individual. Episodes - "accidents", described in the text, register negative trends that have appeared in modern society. For example, the scenes of destruction and arson of graves, as well as a fragment of children riding on coffins, testify to a break in the continuity of generations, the kinship of connections, the story of a woman with the muscles of a wrestler, about women mermaids - about the redistribution of gender roles in society (not by chance, here the image of the protagonist's wife, who brewed tea from her own tears and flew to heaven, is presented as an amplification); a description of a 'mental hospital', where "...rows of bunk beds stood on which,

smiling, people of indefinite age lay in the same clothes, stretching their arms at the seams, and *looking indifferently into the sky, as if all together were carrying out one order*"; "Only by their smiles could one guess that they were alive. It seemed to Adashboy that their smiles were the result of some waves coming from wires implanted in their brains, which deprived these poor people of consciousness and will" - testifies to the vitality of totalitarian consciousness. In the finale of the work, the motive for the loss of inner freedom of personality is as sharp as possible: "The black clouds have fallen to the shoulders of Adashboy. I will not find my kishlak, and I will stay here for life, he thought, and looked away. But a huge black cloud closed the horizon. A little while later, Adashboy was absorbed by this dark cloud. It was as if he had dissolved into it, disappeared. Only one thing remained - the ability to dream". So, the use of elements of anti-utopia in the compressed space of the story allows the author to translate the problem "man and society" in the sphere of spiritual and psychological. The struggle of freedom and violence is concentrated in the soul of the main character, with the outcome of this struggle R. Rahmat connects and his artistic predictions.

So, in the Uzbek story we can observe the active use of elements of anti-utopia in the coverage of topical issues of modern reality and understanding the prospects of man and society. The concentration of events around "threshold" episodes allowed to reveal the negative sides of the social system and to outline the deformation of the soul of a contemporary. In addition to social prediction, the stories emphasize the spiritual component of the modern man in a changing world, hence the list of philosophical questions considered in flash fiction (getting rid of totalitarian consciousness, personal freedom, man and state, leveling personality, etc.).

***The drama of the Soviet civilization collapse, the echo of wars in the mirror story and the status of the author, narrator and protagonist.***

When comprehending one of the main questions of the turn of the XXth - XXIst centuries - the change of spiritual and moral values of the society as a whole and the consciousness of a person separately, the authors of the stories resort not only to forecasting, but also to other means of reflecting reality.

In Uzbek literature, the narrative refers to the dramatic events of the twentieth century, trying to comprehend history in the inextricable link between past and present. Stories such as "Where are you, Moriko?", "Good", "Ice Cream" by A. Yakubov; "Lepeshka" by M. Ali and others tend to be concentric, using the "ego" form or narrative model, using the "story in story" technique, as well as depicting events in the present time and modifying the narrator's functions.

The story "Ice Cream" by A. Yakubov is dedicated to the dramatic period in the history of the twentieth century - Stalinist repression. Structurally, the story is divided into two parts. The first one presents the events through the prism of consciousness of a boy who witnessed the arrest of his father and later found himself under the "pressure" of public opinion, as the son of an enemy of the people. The format of the "heroic author" triad is autobiographical in nature, where the author's image is designed on the basis of the principle of disaggregation into "omnipresent" and "witness". The "omnipresent" narrator expresses his own view of what is happening, and the "witness" represents a subjective perception: "When they saw the military, mom and sister were petrified for a second, and when they came to their senses, they rushed into the house screaming. Machine lowering the handle of the well, I followed them, too. At that time, I did not know what was happening not only in our country, but even in our city, and, of course, I did not guess the true reason for Mom and Sister's worries and cries. But if not with my mind, I

suddenly felt danger in my heart. Then I learned what was happening in Turkestan: people were arrested every day, every minute ...". The primary form of narrative allows building the image of the author, forming the plot narrator's intentions and author's reflection in the hidden mechanism of plot development. In the story, the narrator performs the function of an "autobiographical" protagonist, who reveals himself in the text in meditations and dialogues with himself: "This unexpected praise of the captain has stuck my heart. Later, as an adult, I hated myself for then, even for a second, despite the screams and groans in the house, I rejoiced at the praise of the executioners who came to arrest my father. But in those moments, unfortunately, I was proud of the captain's words, and it's a terrible truth!"

A. Yakubov builds the narrative of his childhood from fragments about his father, mother, and episodes that reveal the unfair treatment of children of "enemies of the people", and the narrative moves not at the expense of the plot's dynamism, but by changing the author's accents (from the rapturous (arrival of his classmates) to the ironic (an episode with school notebooks), and sometimes openly revealing inscriptions).

The story shows the father's image in the process of evolution. Originally he is presented as a person who sincerely believes in the ideals of revolution, and then as an epiphany. However, the process of evolution is not disclosed deeply and comprehensively, as is customary in a major epic form, and is presented with one stroke: "This time during a date father never said, or the name of Stalin, or the words repeated on the day of arrest: "I am not guilty of the party! Comrade Stalin will not allow me to be humiliated!". His face has become different: an enlightened-grown look, extinct eyes poured out hopeless determination interspersed with a firm *calm* ...". Creating a full image of the father was not the writer's task, it was important for him to show the tragedy of the son of an enemy of the people, to capture the traumatic experience, to focus on the suffering, to accept the pain and share it. It is not by chance that the text is written in pieces, where the author's position is expressed with all frankness, the author, merging with the protagonist - narrator, openly declared: "*What crimes* were not solved in the years of personality cult. And no matter how terrible these crimes were, in my opinion, the most terrible of them - to force such as me, small children to look at everything with suspicion, everywhere looking for evil intrigue, as if adults are not enough for it". The second part of the story has the character of an epilogue, where the "autobiographical protagonist" moves from a retrospective layer to a prospective one, where the author's position is almost unreadable. Here the method of interchange of narrative forms is used: the third person is replaced by the first one every now and then, thus combining or distinguishing the views of the author- narrator and the protagonist - narrator. This principle makes it more difficult to clearly define the common author's position, leaving the "casting vote" to the reader. So, by combining different levels, the "autobiographical" protagonist exists in several "places" at once, which makes it possible not only to diagnose the personal "tragedy" as a way of cognizing oneself, but also to distinguish the confession of prose as one of the author's thinking features.

Summarizing the above, we can state that the stories dedicated to the rethinking of the historical past, the fate of the people in the twentieth century, the "domestic" war, stand out three types of triad format "author- narrator- protagonist" - objective, objective-subjective and subjectified.

***The extinction drama of the agrarian civilization and the associated patriarchal peacebuilding in the mirror story and the status of author, narrator and protagonist.***

Unlike stories that reflect a rethinking of the past and the theme of war, in which the author's position is blurred and ambiguous, the flash fiction of the village is distinguished by the certainty of the author's position. In this sense, the stories "Kichkirik" by H. Dustmukhammad, "Farewell, Beauty" by A. Yuldashev, "Brothers", "Son of the Miller" by S. Unar and "Melody of Evil" by S. Wafo are of particular interest.

These texts attempt to capture the changes that have taken place in the consciousness of a modern villager, to identify the spiritual component of the protagonists and outline the prospects for its development. As a rule, Uzbek stories on rural subjects are performed in an objective and subjective form related to the categories of evaluation, emotional and moral-ethical plan.

In "Farewell, Beauty" by A. Yuldashev - the vision of the moral component of the villagers. Lifelessness and boredom reign in a nameless aul in the center of a dry and waterless desert. A young man, on behalf of whom a narrative is being written, paints a joyless picture of rural life: "Most of the men of our village were not averse to drinking, so weddings did not do without fights, and women all day long slapped around the house. In the evenings, gathered for dastarkhan, watched endless soap operas..." And then one day an "event" happens - in the aul appears a beautiful daughter-in-law Aysulu. Her mysterious attractiveness, charm, tenderness delights all villagers. In the center of the story - almost Bunin's "light breath" of femininity, which in a short time when confronted with the real world of the inhabitants disappears. Beautiful Aysulu turns into a wicked and grumpy old woman in a year. An important role in the transformation process was played by women - residents of the aul, who threw all their efforts to "reeducate" naive daughter-in-law. For them, the sophistication and grace of Aysulu is a real challenge to their grey, monotonous life.

The "author- narrator - protagonist" triad in this story is based on narrative polyphonicity and antithesis. Femininity and elegance are contrasted with the ordinary vulgar world, romanticism with the earthiness of life, tenderness and fragility with roughness and forwardness. The narrative polyphonicity is characterized by the presence of an impersonal author - a narrator and quite a certain storyteller protagonist. The impersonal narrator shows himself in meditations on a theme of female destiny, in discussions about a terrible role of "crowd opinion" and impersonalization of men. The episode of transformation of "beauty into ugliness" is shown through the prism of consciousness of the young storyteller, endowed with a sense of beauty and spiritual purity. The life in the aul is shown by his eyes, the maximalism and irreconcilability is felt in the estimates of the description of the everyday life, but its excessive emotionality is corrected by the author's voice, giving the text a deep psychology and deep meaning: "Is this hunched young woman in torn overshoes the daughter-in-law Aysulu whom the children called "Bride Kumush"? Did the terrible daily life, taking care of a piece of bread in a year turn this once divinely beautiful woman into an old lady? Where is the charm, shyness, shame of Aysulu's sister-in-law? Where is the fire that I saw in her eyes? Today, for the sake of two buckets of water, she was ready for anything and, having received this water, she felt happy, who, who is responsible for such a change... Is it really so now will be human life...?" This two-subject approach - the barely discernible transition from the narrator's speech to the author's speech - allows turning a quite prosaic case into a story of the victory of the common people and the spiritual poverty of the crowd over the inner beauty of man. The author's position is more complex than the narrator's point of view and it manifests itself indirectly. There is no edification or mentorship, but only an attempt to reflect together with a romantic narrator on the "prose" of life, its contrasts: on the one hand, the purity of the soul, femininity and beauty, on the other - the imperfection of the surrounding world, life that rejects elegance and purity. The sense of contrast

of being, the moral force of bourgeoisie and the fragility of the human soul enhances the sense of catastrophic transition era (in the story details indicate the period of 90s), the disorder in society, social cataclysms.

So, in Uzbek stories on the village theme, the balance of power in the triad of "author- narrator-protagonist" is presented as an expression of the open author's position, where there is a drift from the objective form of narrative to the objective-objective.

#### **IV. DISCUSSION**

On the basis of the literature analysis reflecting problem-thematic fields as variants of extrapolation of aesthetic tendencies of prose of 60-80s of the XX century, in a prism of triad "author- protagonist " we can state the following:

1.The artistic and substantive level of Uzbek stories, which realize the crisis of socio-cultural perspective, is associated with the prognostic world modeling and comprehension of the prospects of man and society, as well as fixation of the deformation of the spiritual consciousness of the individual in the modern world. The embodiment of multidimensional philosophical tasks (getting rid of totalitarian consciousness, personal freedom, man and state, leveling the individual, etc.) is carried out with the help of an author - a narrator, endowed with various functions (observer, fixer, commentator), and a protagonist - a narrator and a protagonist, as a rule, are present in all texts, but at different points of contact (maximum convergence or distance), which in turn "makes" the author's position transparent. In Uzbek stories - antitopiasis, there is a parable orientation that signals dangerous trends leading to disaster.

2.The stories that we attribute to the problem-thematic field of "the drama of the collapse of civilization and the echo of wars" have a summarizing character. They sum up the results of the tragic 20th century, where the authors resort to different ways of comprehending the past reality, where frustration and critical pathos prevail, and where the view of history is variable and is understood as drama and predestination.

3.The third problem-thematic field - the drama of the extinction of agrarian civilization and the patriarchal world associated with it - continuing the traditions of "country" prose of the 60-80s of the 20th century, reaches an entirely new qualitative level. As a rule, Uzbek stories on rural themes are performed in an objective and subjective form connected with categories of evaluative, emotional and moral-ethical plan.

#### **V. CONCLUSION**

In our opinion, it is legitimate to speak about the process of changing the status of the revealed authorship represented by the text, about the beginning of the change of quality of the presented in prose author's consciousness. We are talking about the gradual loss of the author's privileged position as "all-knowing" and "all-seeing" "Master". Distancing from this position, the contemporary author, in fact, dissolves to a strong degree in the "multi-level dialogue of points of view". In this case, the narrator's point of view does not dominate, thus creating conditions for a "variative interpretation of the character depicted".

Within one work, alternative viewpoints (worldviews) of both the narrator and other actors sometimes coexist.

As a result, the objective picture of reality ceases to be a narrative task; subjective slices of reality prevail in the perception of some persons present in the narrative. No one has the answer to all questions of being, and the



one who thinks he or she has them is likely to be mistaken. The reader should always find a trace of the author's presence in a special way - or be content with a picture of a world where this trace does not exist at all or not at all.

As for the protagonist of the story, it should be noted: if in the 70-80s of the twentieth century in the story prevailed "social portrait" (A. Yakubov, N. Kabul, U. Hoshimov, S. Kholmiraev, E. Agzamov and others.), then in the story of the post-Soviet period there was a rotation, there was a gravitation to reflect the existential crisis of modern man, to embody in prose the experience of the protagonist of the loss of universal values of existence, the thinning of spiritual life.

The image of such a protagonist is not a statement; its basis is not a typical character, but a hypothesis, a question, a paradox, a problem.

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