THE ARTISTIC REPRESENTATION OF THE HUMAN BEING AND THE INNER WORLD IN O‘LMAS UMARBEKOV’S SHORT STORIES

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Abstract: *This article examines the artistic representation of human personality and inner experience in five short stories by O‘lmas Umarbekov: Boboyong‘oq, Qiyomat qarz, Mehr, Shirinsoy oqshomlari, and Husn. Through qualitative close reading, it considers how narrative perspective, memory, dialogue, material detail, and endings make emotional and ethical tensions available to the reader. The argument distinguishes the representation of a character’s thoughts from the interpretation of that character by others. It proposes relational interiority as a working concept for understanding the connection between private feeling and social recognition. Rather than treating moral value as a fixed attribute, the analysis asks how responsibility becomes visible through situations of uncertainty, attachment, and vulnerability. Particular attention is given to the limits of reconciliation and to the difference between narrative invitations to empathy and demonstrated reader responses. The study offers a focused account of psychological characterization within a selected group of Umarbekov’s short stories, without claiming to describe his entire literary production.*

Keywords: *O‘lmas Umarbekov; Uzbek short fiction; psychological characterization; inner world; focalization; memory; ethical responsibility; narrative empathy.*

INTRODUCTION

The artistic representation of a human being involves more than a description of appearance, occupation, or social position. Literary characterization also requires an account of what a person values, fears, remembers, and cannot easily communicate. The phrase inner world is therefore used here to designate the narrative construction of thought, feeling, desire, and self-evaluation. These dimensions become critically useful when connected to the specific formal decisions through which a story makes them perceptible.

Umarbekov’s short fiction provides material for examining this relationship between psychological experience and artistic form. The present study addresses a focused question: how can a brief narrative disclose a complex person without reducing that person to an illustration of a moral proposition? A related question concerns mediation: does a story present consciousness directly, reconstruct it through a witness, or invite inference from observable conduct? These questions shift

attention from naming admirable qualities to explaining the literary processes through which judgments about people are formed.

The article’s contribution is an interpretive framework termed relational interiority. This is a working analytical designation, not a claim that Umarbekov formulated a theory under that name. It treats inwardness as an experience that acquires significance through relations with other people, remembered obligations, and shared environments. Within this framework, the distinction between an individual and a community is an object of analysis rather than a predetermined opposition. A community may sustain a person, misunderstand that person, or do both simultaneously.

Theoretical Framework and Method

Niederhoff’s (2013) account of focalization provides a precise starting point: narrative information is selected in relation to the knowledge and experience available within a story. For this study, the distinction between the voice that narrates and the perspective through which an event is apprehended is especially useful. A third-person sentence may remain closely aligned with a character’s uncertainty, while a first-person account may reveal as much about the speaker’s interpretive position as about its apparent subject. Accordingly, narrative access to consciousness should not be assumed from grammatical person alone.

Keen’s (2013) discussion of narrative empathy supports a second distinction. Formal devices can invite emotional engagement, but their presence does not prove that every reader will respond identically or become more ethical. The analysis therefore identifies opportunities for perspective-taking rather than making claims about measured psychological effects. Empathy is also distinguished from agreement: understanding the emotional force of a decision does not require endorsing every value on which it depends.

The material consists of five Uzbek-language short stories available in the Ziyouz electronic anthology. They were selected purposively to permit comparison among different narrative situations, including recollection, witness narration, emotional self-questioning, and mediated portraiture. This is a qualitative textual study, not a statistical survey or a reception experiment. Novels, novellas, and dramatic adaptations are excluded. Each reading considers the arrangement of information, the relation between speech and conduct, and the extent of resolution offered by the ending.

References cite the electronic texts by their displayed posting dates; dates attached to individual stories should not automatically be equated with the first publication dates of the online versions. The sources are unpaginated, so no print page numbers are supplied. Uzbek titles are retained to avoid implying the existence of established English translations. The English glosses used below are explanatory renderings for this article. No biographical inference about the author is drawn solely from a fictional speaker’s experience.

Analysis of the Selected Stories

Memory and Recognition in Boboyong‘oq

In Boboyong‘oq, G‘ulomqodir ota accepts the prospect of village improvement but is distressed by the threatened destruction of a walnut tree. Its history links his personal life to a dead man and to the subsequent growth of an orchard. The narrative gives access to his hesitation, bodily reactions, and self-directed speech. His inability to cut the tree exposes a conflict that his initial public agreement conceals. The eventual preservation of the tree makes recognition tangible (Umarbekov, 2013a).

The central interpretive point is that attachment need not be dismissed as opposition to change. Here, a practical decision becomes psychologically legible only when its remembered associations are considered. The tree can be read as a material bearer of continuity: its value exceeds usefulness because it connects lives across time. This reading also qualifies a purely individualistic account of memory. Recognition requires a response outside the remembering subject. The ending consequently suggests an accommodation between development and remembrance, rather than demanding that emotional injury be accepted as the inevitable price of improvement.

Responsibility and Unfinished Time in Qiyomat qarz

Qiyomat qarz follows Sarsonboy ota’s continuing search for Haydarali, who entrusted two sheep to him before disappearing in wartime. More than twenty years later, he still tends their descendants and visits the market in hope of finding their owner. Advice to transfer the animals does not settle his difficulty: he considers their return a personal obligation. The story ends with continued hope rather than a reunion (Umarbekov, 2013d).

This arrangement makes duration an ethical problem. Time can change the practical circumstances of an obligation without dissolving its subjective authority. Sarsonboy’s persistence may be interpreted as fidelity, but the physical and emotional cost prevents that interpretation from becoming uncomplicated praise. Responsibility is represented as something lived repeatedly, without assurance of completion. The unresolved ending is therefore essential: it preserves the difference between a duty’s meaningfulness and its achievable fulfilment. The reader is invited to consider whether an obligation can be transferred administratively when its deepest force lies in a particular human relationship.

Witnessing and Associative Memory in Mehr

In Mehr, a first-person narrator watches an elderly park caretaker return a fallen bird to its nest. The action evokes an image of wartime destruction and the narrator’s own rescue. He wonders whether the caretaker could be his rescuer, but the text does not establish this identity. A small present action thus becomes the occasion for an emotionally charged association (Umarbekov, 2013c).

The distinction between resemblance and verified identity is crucial. The caretaker’s act does not need biographical confirmation to acquire significance. On this reading, the narrator discovers a continuity of care rather than solves a historical mystery. Psychological depth emerges through the movement between perception and recollection; the observed person remains partly unknown. This economy is

particularly appropriate to the short story, since a limited encounter can reorganize an observer’s understanding without supplying a complete life history. The title’s sense of affection or compassionate care is consequently enacted through attention to vulnerability, not merely asserted as an abstract virtue.

Emotional Interpretation in Shirinsoy oqshomlari

Shirinsoy oqshomlari presents Nazira’s unreciprocated love for Qosimjon and her impulse to leave the village. Her recollections reveal how she invested gestures and conversation with expectations that were never explicitly secured. Nurmat aka’s intervention and paternal care interrupt her departure. Her renewed attention to the community and its music suggests a widening emotional horizon, without documenting a new romantic relationship (Umarbekov, 2013e).

The psychological issue is the distance between what an interaction means to one participant and what it commits another participant to. Nazira’s self-questioning makes interpretation itself part of the action. The ending can be read as a reorientation of attention rather than a complete cure for disappointment. It also leaves a critical tension: communal support may restore belonging, but returning a distressed woman to a place she intended to leave raises questions about agency. An adequate reading should preserve both the consolation offered by care and the need to consider whose decision directs that care.

Mediated Characterization and Dignity in Husn

Husn, meaning beauty, constructs Ma’pirat largely through her mother’s account. The narrative recalls disability-related humiliation, wartime bereavement, and her later leadership. Her insistence that collectively owned hay be returned even when her mother has obtained it makes integrity visible within family relations. Public achievement does not erase her grief for Sherzod, while the mother’s worry about her health complicates admiration for tireless work (Umarbekov, 2013b).

The mother is therefore a mediator, not a transparent recording device. Her affection, pride, and anxieties organize the portrait. The story invites a reassessment of beauty through conduct, yet its gendered expectations and judgments also require critical distance. Dignity should not be understood as something a disabled person earns only by exceptional productivity. A more careful interpretation recognizes the force of Ma’pirat’s agency while questioning any equation of human worth with usefulness. Psychological characterization becomes richer when praise and vulnerability remain visible together, rather than allowing achievement to cancel the person’s continuing needs.

Discussion

The comparison suggests that a useful account of literary inwardness must distinguish access, evidence, and evaluation. Access concerns what the narration permits the reader to know. Evidence concerns the words, actions, and remembered circumstances on which an interpretation rests. Evaluation concerns the moral conclusions subsequently drawn. These operations are related, but they are not

interchangeable. A narrator’s certainty does not eliminate the critic’s responsibility to examine how that certainty is produced.

Relational interiority offers a way to connect these operations without treating the character as a psychological case file. The critic begins with a relation that matters within the narrative and asks what becomes difficult to communicate or sustain within it. Attention then turns to the form of disclosure: a pause, a remembered episode, a change in perspective, or a discrepancy between speech and action. Finally, the ending is examined for what it resolves and what it leaves outside resolution. This sequence keeps interpretation anchored in textual construction while allowing ethical questions to remain open.

Such a method also requires restraint when discussing cultural specificity. A literary scene cannot establish that all members of a society think or feel alike. Forms of address, domestic practices, and collective institutions belong to represented situations; their significance depends on their narrative placement. An English-language discussion should explain unfamiliar terms where necessary without converting particular characters into illustrations of a timeless national mentality. This is especially important for comparative literary work, where easy claims about universal humanity can obscure the differing conditions under which a person becomes recognizable to others.

The translation of psychological characterization poses a related methodological problem. A translator must preserve not only propositional meaning but also the degree of certainty attached to an utterance. Questions, hesitations, repetitions, and shifts between narrated explanation and personal reflection can affect how much authority a reader grants a voice. Smoothing these features into uniformly fluent exposition may alter the representation of consciousness. The present article does not evaluate published translations; it identifies these features as priorities for a future comparison of Uzbek originals and English renderings.

The study remains limited by its purposive selection and reliance on online transcriptions. It does not establish the frequency of particular techniques across Umarbekov’s complete oeuvre, compare textual variants, or document historical reception. A broader investigation could collate the stories with print editions, extend the sample, and examine how different translations handle perspective and evaluative language. Reader studies would be needed to test whether the interpretive invitations identified here actually produce the responses hypothesized by critics.

Conclusion

The analysis proposes that the artistic representation of a human being is best examined through the interaction of narrative form and ethical interpretation. Psychological complexity depends on how a text distributes knowledge, gives significance to remembered experience, and permits a person’s commitments to remain vulnerable to misunderstanding. Relational interiority names this analytical connection between private experience and the conditions of its recognition. It does not resolve the tensions between obligation and self-preservation, care and agency, or

achievement and continuing loss. Instead, it allows those tensions to remain central to the reading.

For the selected Umarbekov stories, this approach supports a view of characterization as a process of disclosure and reconsideration, with the reader responsible for distinguishing understanding from unqualified approval.

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