

PAPER

DYSTOPIAN GENRE IN UZBEK LITERATURE IN THE EXAMPLE OF AHMAD AZAM'S "DREAM OR JOURNEY TO G'ULISTON", ITS STYLISTIC AND CONCEPTUAL HARMONY

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Abstract

This article includes information about one of the most famous novels in Uzbek literature, how it plays a role in the dystopian genre of Uzbek literature. Ahmad Azam, in the introduction to his novel "Dream or Journey to G'uliston" states, "...regardless of what kind of work it turns out to be, whether I call it a story, a novel, or observations, perhaps they are impressions from the journey; if you read it and are aware of the events within, that is enough." He leaves the classification of the genre of the work up to the reader's interpretation. Although we observe a synthesis of the aforementioned genres in the work, we accept it as a novel due to its artistic scope, the relations between the individual and society encompassing a significant period from a temporal perspective, and finally, its ideological and philosophical aspects. Furthermore, this work also meets the somewhat general and traditional criteria that have been used in literary studies for the novel genre[1].

Key words: dystopia; uzbek literature; G'uliston; G'uliy; G'uliya; chains; newspeak; freedom; society.

Introduction

First, let's address the questions about which literary style this novel belongs to, and what type of novel it is. A. Camus, in his article "Revolt and Style," states: "Reality and imagination are inseparable parts of a whole. The artist selects elements from reality and harmonizes them with imagination through artistic language, ensuring the completeness of the artistic world they create; this is called style." In literary studies, there are various styles, often referred to as schools, directions, or even genres, such as romanticism, realism, modernism, postmodernism, detective fiction, and fantasy, along with utopian and anti-utopian styles.

The utopia genre entered literature with Thomas More's 1516 work "Utopia: A New Island and the Construction of an Ideal State," which is both useful and interesting. The term "utopia" means "a place that does not exist" in Greek. In dictionaries, this genre is described as being close to science fiction, representing the author's perspective on the depiction of a superior societal form, a

fictional invention, and expressing unattainable dreams. A utopian work arises from the author's dissatisfaction with the state of society in which they live, its laws and regulations, and the social relationships, along with a desire to envision them at an ideal level [2].

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In this sense, Abu Nasr Farabi's book "The Virtuous City" is a

masterpiece in this genre. In anti-utopian works, individual and societal interests are separated, and the hopes and even thoughts of individuals are subordinated. The concepts of spiritual freedom or individual thought are suppressed, and one is conditioned to accept a tyrannical society and its norms as happiness. Interestingly, the anti-utopian works that emerged as a parody of the utopian genre also make individuals aware of themselves and their environment, teaching them to overcome fear and contemplate the ideal individual and society. "In the anti-utopia, the world of society where oppression and tyranny prevail is revealed through the emotional experiences of a person who has tested the laws of that society, and the most important feature of the anti-utopia is the conflict between the individual and the totalitarian society.

That is why this genre was prohibited in Soviet literature," writes literary scholar M. Chernyak. In Uzbek literature, the issue of the individual and society has been reflected to some extent in realistic, detective, historical, and adventure works, but it has not been written in a purely anti-utopian style until the 21st century. If we consider the principles described in the works of anti-utopia theorists and in literary dictionaries, as well as the ideas, plot structures, and character functions presented in examples of anti-utopian works, we can say that Ahmad A'zam's novel "Ro'yo yoxud G'ulistonga safar" can also be regarded as a work written in an anti-utopian style. However, there are certainly some minor differences.

For example, in typical anti-utopian works, heroes who fight against the existing regime usually perish. In "Ro'yo...", however, the narrator-hero returns home. The second difference is that most anti-utopian works take place in a distant future, while in "Ro'yo...", the hero transitions to an imaginary country today, but the time there is vague. Prior to "Ro'yo yoxud G'ulistonga safar", only Erkin A'zam's tale "Chapaklar yoki chalaklar mamalakati" contained some characteristics of anti-utopian style. However, "Chapaklar yoki chalaklar mamlakati" has not been studied from the perspective of elements of anti-utopian literature. Based on theoretical and practical research on the anti-utopian style, I believe it is necessary to compare these two works by Ahmad A'zam and Erkin A'zam with the experience of world literature in the future, especially with Ye. Zamyatin's novel "We". Every event, character, dialogue, and depiction of the country in Ahmad A'zam's novel can be interpreted and explained with comparisons similar to those in "We." [3].

Ahmad A'zam's novel "Ro'yo yoki G'ulistonga safar" is built around the description of a country that the narrator-hero, who sets off from Tashkent, inadvertently veers into while traveling along the Jizzakh road, and the events that unfold during his visit. The name of the country is G'uliston, derived from "g'ul" – meaning "chain." Therefore: "Both the officials and the drivers, as well as the large and small soldiers guarding them, in short, everyone is entangled in chains... They have become so accustomed to it that they cannot walk without it; those who do not walk do not even conceive of walking." People have no names; they call each other "G'uliy." Everyone sings their praises, referred to as "G'uliy," in unison. From the moment they begin to walk, they are bound by chains. Not only every step of the people but even their gazes are monitored for the benefit of the chain, using spies and the most modern surveillance equipment.

This invisible kingdom of slavery is governed by a higher authority, yet they worship it and the chain as if it were God: "One day I asked Xoldor G'uliy: – Who is your leader? He pointed to a picture on the wall that I had never paid attention to before. However, the picture did not understand me; naturally, it did not explain anything to me either; it was merely commanding" [4]. The life of the country is built on strict order and lies. Newspapers and magazines that change every moment with the miracle of electronic ink are filled with lies that strengthen belief in the chain. The supreme goal of G'uliy's apple cultivation is to increase iron in the body so that eventually children are born bound by chains: "In Fuliston, there

is a widespread effort to give birth to chained children; the entire G'uliy people are confident that today or tomorrow, or in the near future, such exemplary offspring will come into the world, and they create with inspiration in this direction." Citizens are informed that those living in chain-free countries are wild, beast-like creatures.

Those who think differently face the ultimate punishment of being deprived of their chains. Finally, to determine the purpose of the narrator-hero's visit to G'uliston, they read a book found in his car, which gives rise to the idea that it is possible to live without chains and shakes their beliefs. After the narrator-hero speaks with the chief inspector Xoldor G'uliy, he says: "In my stories, tales, and novellas, I carelessly wrote such words that were aimed at influencing G'uliy, which are modern spells, all coded with specific ciphers. Here are dozens, perhaps hundreds of words like 'sky,' 'cloud,' 'birds,' 'wide fields,' 'pleasant abode,' 'unrestrained thoughts,' 'flight,' 'running,' 'aspiration,' 'striving' that profoundly and fundamentally impact the steadfast heart of G'uliy, urging him to reconsider his life once again.

That is why lines have formed for those who read my book to undergo a cleansing lesson; there is a growing risk of significant conflict between those who have gone through the lesson and those who have not." Indeed, citizens are divided into supporters and opponents. Even a G'uliy girl who fell in love with the narrator-hero at the state's behest goes so far as to tell the chief inspector, "I will not return now; while fulfilling the program, I found a heart that resonates with mine." Those who have read the book begin to undergo the cleansing lesson. The leadership of G'uliston allows the narrator-hero to leave with a gesture. When he arrives at his destination in Jizzakh, neither the car's odometer nor the passage of time confirms that he has been in G'uliston for several months [5]. It is evident that there is a consistency in the depiction of the regime in the imaginary state, the structure of the plots according to their essence, and the presentation of the author's ideas through exaggerated inhuman situations in these works. The traditions of the anti-utopian style are adhered to in terms of time-space and ideological perspectives, as well as in how the issues are presented within the narrative traditions, including the construction of motives, knots, conflicts, climaxes, and resolutions.

However, Ahmad A'zam's novel differs from the aforementioned works due to the detailed nature of its descriptive style and the inclusion of numerous stories within stories to substantiate situations and thoughts.

Conclusion

In Ahmad A'zam's novel, two hopeful rays remain. The first is the book found in the author-narrator's car and the sense of unchained walking that has spread among the citizens of G'uliston, as well as the open-ended fate of G'uliston. The second ray is when one of the children brought in to wear chains catches sight of the narrator-hero in a shop: "As his mother was leading him by the hand, the boy, being a child, did not cry. When he sat on the knee of a male employee, he looked at me, and even while tightening the collar around his neck and putting shackles on his hands and feet, he kept his eyes on me without blinking. Even when the chains were put on him, and his parents and two brothers were shouting while others were clapping, that little boy kept staring at me. In all that crowd, he was the only one who looked at me! I wondered what he wanted to say with his gaze: was he asking, 'You are free, look what they have done to me?' or was he trying to say, 'Look at this person; he has no chains'? I didn't know, but I squinted my eyes at him; he smiled a little, and his smile was childishly innocent, completely unlike the grown-up G'uliy."

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