

**THE SYMBOLIC MEANING OF THE IMAGES OF KUMUSH AND ZAINAB IN
THE NOVEL “DAYS GONE BY” BY ABDULLA KADYRI**

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Abstract: The article provides brief information about the literary work of Abdulla Kadiri and compares the main female characters: Kumush and Zainab, the wives of the protagonist Atabek. Their behavior in key episodes of the novel, the motivation behind their actions, and their attitudes toward their husband are analyzed. Particular attention is paid to the inner world of the heroines, the contrast between their characters, and the influence of social conditions on their destinies.

The purpose of this research is to determine the author's view of the place and role of women in the society of his time, as well as to examine how the author reveals the social and moral problems of his era through the characters and destinies of the heroines. The research methods include descriptive and comparative analysis, as well as the study of individual episodes of the novel.

Keywords: Love, tradition, comparison, spiritual purity, humility, inner strength, moral stability, family relations, envy, co-wife.

Introduction

Abdulla Kadiri is a famous Uzbek poet, writer, playwright, and publicist. His works are devoted to the life and destiny of the Uzbek people.

*Necha chog'lar bo'lubdurkim, qochibmiz biz taraqqiydin,
Bu kun bir iltifot birlan bu yo'lg'a bir guzor o'lsun [4].*

(“How long have we been running away from progress?
Let today become a guide to this path through a single act of kindness.”)

The poet wrote these lines in his well-known work “**Millatimga bir qaror**” (“An Appeal to My Nation”).

Relevance of the Study

The novel “**Days Gone By**” occupies a special place in Uzbek literature and is considered one of the first realistic novels. Its author, Abdulla Kadiri, depicted the complex social relations, family traditions, and spiritual values of the society of his time.

Female characters play a particularly important role in the work, among whom Kumush and Zainab stand out. These characters embody different personality traits, outlooks on life, and attitudes toward love and family. Studying their images makes it possible to better understand the artistic intention of the writer and reveal the peculiarities of portraying female characters in Uzbek literature.

Therefore, the analysis of the images of Kumush and Zainab remains relevant for literary studies and helps to better understand the ideological and artistic content of the novel.

The **object of the research** is Abdulla Kadiri’s novel “*Days Gone By*”, and the **subject** is the artistic features and characteristics of the images of Kumush and Zainab in the novel.

Research objectives:

to examine the ideological and artistic features of the novel;

to analyze the image of Kumush and her role in the work;

to reveal the character and features of Zainab’s image;

to compare the images of Kumush and Zainab and determine their significance in revealing the main idea of the novel;

to show the importance of these characters for understanding the themes of love, family, and moral values in the work.

Course of the Research

Abdulla Kadiri (literary pseudonym – Julkunbay) was born in 1894 in Tashkent in the family of a wealthy merchant. The environment in which he grew up included merchants, rich and poor farmers, talented craftsmen living in constant poverty, and landless peasants.

He graduated from a **madrasah**, an old-method school, and later studied at a **Russian-native school**. From a young age, he was interested in reading the works of classical Uzbek literature such as Alisher Navoi, Lutfi, Muqimi, Furqat, Cholpon, Fitrat and others.

This original writer was formed at the turn of two centuries – a complex and contradictory time marked by social, political, and moral upheavals. Naturally, the era in which he lived left a deep imprint on his works and worldview. One of the highest goals of his creative search was to find clear answers to the urgent social problems of his time by realistically and deeply depicting both contemporary life and historical reality.

The pearls of Abdulla Kadiri's творчество are the historical novels "**Days Gone By**" (1926) and "**Scorpion from the Altar**" (1929). These works became the first historical novels in Uzbek literature.

The writer's interest in history was explained by his desire to better understand the past of his people and to show the patience, diligence, and heroic struggle of the Uzbek people for freedom and independence. By turning to the past, Kadiri sought to see and understand the roots of the problems of the present.

Abdulla Kadiri is also the author of the major social novel "**Abid-Ketmen**", the well-known essay "**Mallaboy-aka from Girvan**", as well as many other stories and essays that made a significant contribution to the development of Uzbek literature.

Literature Review

The famous literary scholar **Izzat Sultanov** wrote:

"Abdulla Kadiri entered Uzbek literature like a thunderclap and, like a flash of lightning, attracted everyone's attention."

The Kazakh writer **Mukhtar Auevov** highly appreciated the writer's work:

"We read Abdulla Kadiri's novels with great enthusiasm in our youth. We admired his mastery in shaping human characters, conveying the storm of human passions, and elevating his heroes through love."

Many works of Abdulla Kadiri, the founder of the novel genre in Uzbek literature, have received wide recognition not only in Uzbekistan but also in many countries of the East and the CIS [3].

The Uzbek literary scholar **Saydulla Mirzaev** wrote in his book "*Uzbek Literature of the 20th Century*" that "*Days Gone By*" was the first swallow not only in Uzbek novel writing but also in the novelistic systems of other Central Asian literatures [5].

The famous orientalist **E. E. Bertels** also highly appreciated the writer's work:

"There are five schools of novel writing in the world: French, English, Russian, German, and Indian. Now a sixth one has appeared — the Uzbek school of the novel — created by Abdulla Kadiri" [5].

Research Methodology

The article applies a complex of literary research methods. The main method is **textual analysis**, aimed at studying the artistic means and portrait characteristics of the images of Kumush and Zainab in Abdulla Kadiri's novel.

The **comparative-typological method** is used to identify similarities and differences between the heroines and determine their role in the ideological and artistic structure of the work.

Cultural-historical and psychological approaches are also used, which allow the female characters to be considered in the context of the social environment of the era and the inner world of the characters.

Discussion and Results

Female characters play a particularly important role in the novel, through which the author reveals the key social and moral problems of the era. The heroines become not only participants in the plot but also important carriers of the artistic idea.

Among them, the central place is occupied by **Kumush and Zainab**, two heroines who embody different types of female behavior, worldview, and social position. Comparing their images allows for a deeper understanding of the author's concept of women and the reflection of traditional and new values in Kadiri's prose.

The image of **Kumush** occupies one of the central places in the novel, representing spiritual purity, moral stability, and sincere devotion. Kadiri creates her as an idealized yet realistic female character combining gentleness, inner dignity, and selfless love.

In her behavior, there is no excessive emotionality; her feelings are expressed through loyalty, patience, and the ability to maintain inner peace even in difficult situations.

Her relationship with Atabek is based on respect, openness, and deep trust. Her love does not contradict traditional social norms, yet it goes beyond the usual notion of female obedience: she is capable of independent moral choice and shows a rare strength of spirit.

Thus, Kumush appears in the novel as a **moral ideal**, through whom the author expresses his views on true femininity and moral beauty.

The character of Kumush is revealed from her very first appearance, where Kadiri uses delicate artistic techniques to convey not only her external beauty but also her inner refinement. Her appearance symbolizes purity, modesty, and emotional sensitivity.

The poetic metaphor "**She was a rose among tulips, a full moon among stars**" emphasizes the uniqueness and nobility of Kumush's image.

In contrast, the image of **Zainab** is constructed as the internal and external opposite of Kumush. Unlike the gentle and spiritually refined Kumush, Zainab appears as a woman dominated by pride and emotional instability.

Her behavior is often driven not by sincere feelings but by a desire for recognition, social superiority, and the satisfaction of her own ambitions.

Although Zainab possesses certain positive qualities—she is intelligent, observant, and capable of deep emotions—her emotional intensity often manifests itself in destructive forms such as jealousy, suspicion, and impulsive decisions.

Her tragic fate stems from the contradiction between her desires and social reality. Feeling unloved and unnecessary in the household, she gradually accumulates jealousy and resentment, which eventually leads to tragic consequences.

Conclusion

Thus, in the novel **“Days Gone By”**, Abdulla Kadiri depicts two sides of women’s destiny through the images of Kumush and Zainab.

Kumush symbolizes happiness and mutual love. In this character, the author embodies the ideal of an Eastern woman in new conditions: pure, sincere in her feelings, decisive, faithful, and reliable.

Zainab, on the other hand, represents suffering, jealousy, and unhappiness. This character embodies old traditions and the destructive consequences of forced marriage and social inequality.

Through the contrast of these two characters, the writer masterfully highlights themes such as **family relationships, the freedom of a woman’s soul, and the power of human emotions.**

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