



THE ROLE OF ADULT CHARACTERS IN THE PROTAGONIST'S MORAL DEVELOPMENT IN KHUDOYBERDI TUKHTABOYEV'S SORROWFUL EYES

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Abstract: This thesis explores the features of the Bildungsroman genre in Uzbek literatures, specifically focusing on Khudoyberdi Tukhtaboyev's novel "Sorrowful Eyes" ("Mungli ko'zlar"). It analyzes the complex relationships between adults and children, highlighting the shift from traditional pedagogical models to a psychological-compensatory model of education. Through the contrasting images of parents obsessed with wealth, positive figures like teacher Ataullo, and the brother Akbar, the paper examines how the social environment and life trials serve as the main educators. Ultimately, the study reveals how moral conflicts, society, and severe spiritual struggles shape the teenage protagonist's worldview and personality.

Key words: Bildungsroman, Uzbek children's literature, Khudoyberdi Tukhtaboyev, "Sorrowful Eyes", educational models, moral values, spiritual trials, upbringing.

In the formation and development of Uzbek national novel initially Russian and then Western novel writing principles played a major role. It should be emphasized that Bildungsroman began to take shape in Uzbek literature much later than in English literature, at the end of the 20th century. However, before that, Sadridin Aini's stories "Yetim", "Odina", Gafur Ghulam's "Shum bola" were created, in which one can clearly see the features typical of Bildungsromans. In these stories, the difficult life path of the hero, his trials, adventures and the process of reaching maturity are highlighted through his conflicting relationships with people of different categories. All of them feature an orphan as the main character, and the rich exploit them for their own benefit, torture them, insult them, and in short, treat them unfairly. However, they are not elevated to the level of novels and are written in the form of a smaller prose work - a short story.

In Uzbek literature, the signs of Bildungsromans are especially evident in the work of children's writer Khudoyberdi Tukhtaboyev. The writer's works "Heavenly people", "Sorrowful eyes", "The boy with five children" are significant in this regard. In all three works, events are presented through the story of the main



character as typical to Bildungsromans and they depict the protagonist's life experiences. Among the characters skillfully created by Khudoyberdi Tukhtaboyev, the images of orphans stand out for their richness in the depiction of real experiences and sincere feelings. Because the writer himself lost his parents at early age and was raised by his grandparents. Therefore, it is noticeable that he closely feels the psyche of orphans. At this point, it is worth recognizing the writer's works "Heavenly people" and "The boy with five children".

The works of Khudoyberdi Tukhtaboyev, one of the great figures of Uzbek children's literature, plays an important role in educating the younger generation, forming their worldview and instilling socio-moral values. In almost all of the writer's works, the psyche of children, their behavior, relationship with society and the process of upbringing are deeply revealed through artistic depiction. In particular, his novels, such as "Mungli ko'zlar" ("Sorrowful eyes"), "Besh bolali yigitcha" ("The boy with five children") and "Jannati odamlar" ("Heavenly people"), which belong to the "Bildungsroman" genre, have a strong educational

In the work of Khudoyberdi Tukhtaboyev, the system of Bildungsromans, unlike the traditional pedagogical model, interprets the educator not only as a separate person, but also as a set of social environments, life experience and spiritual trials. Especially, in the above-mentioned works, the images of educators are not directly manifested in the form of a teacher or mentor, but in a multi-layered and dynamic form. For example, in the novel "Sorrowful eyes", the educational process is formed, through a lack of parental attention and spiritual suffering: here there is almost no traditional educator, on the contrary, the inner experiences and life trials of the hero become his main "teacher". In the work, education takes place through the pain in the child's heart and the need for understanding, that is, this represents a psychological-compensatory model of education.

In "Sorrowful Eyes", the main educator image is the teacher Ataullo. Since the eldest child of the family, Akbar, is disabled, he is educated and raised in the home of a primary school teacher named Ataullo Isayevich who lived in their neighborhood. Akbar, who spent his youth in the circle of this teacher's family, begins to notice a different atmosphere in his own family. He openly describes this difference between the two families in the following conversation with his father: – *Ular har kuni bahsli suhbatlar qilishadi.*

– *Qanaqa suhbat?*

– *Rostgo'ylik, halollik, birovning haqini yemaslik to'g'risida. Ularnikiga chiqsam, negadir yayrab ketaman. Majruhligimni ham unutaman. Keyin, dada, ular negadir quvnoqroq.*





– Biz-chi?

– Biz nuqul “uf” tortamiz. Keyin, dada, ochiq aytganimga xafa bo‘lmang ularning noni halol.

– Bizniki-chi?

– Bizniki ... harom bo‘lsa kerak ...¹

It is clear from this conversation that the boy, comparing the situation in the two families, realizes that people who have a lot of money are not calm, live in anxiety, because their money was not earned in a honest way. Through this, the author emphasizes that people who live honestly are sagffzmore cheerful, and that real happiness is not in having much money. Akbar’s parents blame teacher Ataullo for their son’s thinking, believing that this teacher has poisoned his brain, and they even use their forces to imprison the teacher, calling him a “slanderer”. After that, Akbar completely opposes his parents.

He starts fighting and arguing, saying, “*Dadam vijdonli odamni nohaq qamatdi, o‘zimni o‘ldiraman*”² – “My father has unjustly imprisoned an honest man, I will kill myself,” and runs away from home several times. Finally, his father agrees to release the teacher Ataullo from prison. However, Akbar’s views do not change. He does not eat for three days, saying “*it is forbidden to eat this food obtained by sin,*” ... “*I will live halal by working hard and earning my bread myself*”. He even makes a habit of selling flowerpots, sitting in front of the shop in the neighborhood. This was a craft which he learned at the teacher Ataullo’s house.

It is important to note that when the family was in trouble and all their trusted friends betray them, only Barno xola and Ataullo teacher take care of family’s four children. The protagonist Zafar’s father, Said aka, realizes his mistakes, and understands that his son Akbar and teacher Ataullo were right. However, it is too late, and he is imprisoned for eleven years. Teacher Ataullo later helps Zafar a lot, trying to set him on the right path with his advice. Saying, “*Jinoyatni jinoyat bilan tugatib bo‘lmaydi*”³ – “You can’t end a crime with a crime,” he tries to dissuade Zafar from taking revenge. When Zafar was sent to a mental institution, Ataullo tries his best addressing to the authorities and rescues the boy.

Khudoiberdi Tukhtaboev’s work “Sorrowful eyes” consists of three parts and is called “Crime”, “Punishment” and “Consequence”. The novel is about parents who value wealth above all else and ultimately cause the bitter fate of their innocent children. The story is told the protagonist – Zafar, who was imprisoned at the age of

¹ To‘xtaboyev X. Mungli ko‘zlar. – Toshkent: Yangi asr avlodi, 2015. – B. 84.

² To‘xtaboyev X. Mungli ko‘zlar. – Toshkent: Yangi asr avlodi, 2015. – B. 87.

³ To‘xtaboyev X. Mungli ko‘zlar. – Toshkent: Yangi asr avlodi, 2015. – B. 281.



sixteen. The work pays great attention to education and upbringing of young personalities. First, the reader is introduced to the wealthy family, how proud Zafar is when he sees his parents pull down the curtains and count money, and how he considers himself superior to his classmates.

However, his disabled brother Akbar, who is three years older than Zafar, was not happy with this wealth. His father's corruption and his mother's embezzlement did not give him peace. He even hated their actions, he would never let his mother show her feelings towards him, kiss or hug him. He read a lot of books, and his outlook on life was different from that of his family. The feelings, emotions, and concepts of the teenage hero, that was being formed between fantasy and real life, were interpreted in a natural, sincere, and very life-like manner. His father, however, was worried that his son was too addicted to books and that he might gradually go crazy. Because, in his opinion, the world in books is fundamentally different from the real world, and a person who follows the path of books will always be ruined. Here, the writer reveals a unique life theory of people blinded by money. Akbar, on the other hand, is a figure who looks at life in the right way and warns against crooked deeds. Therefore, he often cannot get along with his family. This situation is also confirmed by his mother's words:

*"I'm surprised by this brother of yours. He's our son, but he lives in our house like a stranger, unable to fit in."*⁴

Here we can see that the teenager's character is not formed in the family under the upbringing of his parents, but rather under external influences. He does not have a warm relationship with his parents. The main reason is that his views on life are fundamentally different from those of his parents.

In "Sorrowful eyes", officials, judges, prosecutors, and others who are addicted to wealth and corruption, and who consider themselves superior to everyone, are severely criticized. Khudoiberdi Tukhtaboyev openly exposed the times when knowledge was despised and money was revered. The contemptuous attitude of such people towards honest teachers is also reflected in their negative impact on the upbringing of the younger generation. This is especially evident in the image of judge Sultan Mukhammedov, who bought a new car for his son, who was in eighth grade. Zafar's younger brother Zufar, despite his youth, also drives a car, makes fake keys, and steals money from homes. His perverse behavior is the result of his parents' irresponsible approach to upbringing. Parents who are obsessed with money and solve everything with money do not even realize that they are harming their children.

The writer deliberately chooses as the main characters children who live in a big city, in a luxurious house, who are accustomed to a full life, who do not

⁴ To'xtaboyev X. Mungli ko'zlar. – Toshkent: Yangi asr avlodi, 2015. – B. 26.





experience any needs, who are spoiled and fractious. His goal is to show that money and wealth can have a negative impact on upbringing. At the beginning of the work, arrogance is evident in the psyche of children. For example, Zafar's dislike of the children who achieve good results and respect, his being exited with pride when he sees his parents counting money, and his thoughts related luxury dressing up are clearly visible.⁵ At the end of the work, his spiritual world, like his life, is turned upside down. As a result of the misfortunes that befell him one after another, (his father's imprisonment, his mother's death, his brother Akbar's self-immolation, his brother Zafar's death in a car accident, his younger sister Nigora's sudden illness, and his own imprisonment) Zafar becomes a completely different person.

The way his aunt treats the orphaned children as if they were her own, the betrayal of those he considered friends of the family, and other life blows ignite the feelings of rebellion and struggle for truth in his character. The spirit of the teenage boy was powerless to bear such a heavy burden, the injustice and oppression in society, suffering and contradictions. The poet points out that the social environment plays a great role in both nurturing and educating a child and in leading him to decline.

Based on the analysis of the novel, it can be said that the formation of the main character Zafar as a person is depicted not with the help of a single traditional teacher, but through a system of different, contradictory educator images. Each of these images leaves a certain mark on his worldview.

First of all, his parents - Asad Karimov and Yakutkhan - are depicted as incorrect educators. Their character is revealed through excessive devotion to wealth and indifference to moral values. In the work, they consider it their main task to provide their children with material benefits; for example, they give Zafar expensive clothes and a comfortable life, but do not engage in his inner upbringing. This situation forms in Zafar's mind the erroneous view that "money is the criterion of everything." This idea is also reflected in Zafar's own thoughts: he perceives wealth as the main sign of respect and success. Some ideas of his parents vividly describe their attitudes to life:

*Ota-onam hamisha, har bir kishi o'z qadrini bilishi, uni ulug'lashga harakat qilishi kerak, o'zini hurmat qilmagan kishi birovdan ham hurmat ko'rmaydi, deb aytishardi. Biz o'zimizni juda hurmat qilardik. O'zgalar ham bizni hurmat qilishi uchun qo'limizdan kelgancha harakat qilardik.*⁶

This passage is one of the important images that reveals the educational views of Zafar's parents, which reflects their unique, but misguided approach to raising

⁵ To'xtaboyev X. Mungli ko'zlar. – Toshkent: Yangi asr avlodi, 2015. – B. 11.

⁶ To'xtaboyev X. Mungli ko'zlar. – Toshkent: Yangi asr avlodi, 2015. – B. 12.





their children. Although the quote puts forward concepts such as “knowing one’s worth”, “respecting oneself”, these ideas are actually interpreted as being far from deep moral content, and are associated with external prestige and social status. That is, for parents, self-respect is not an inner conscience, honesty or humanity, but is equated with showing oneself “greater” to others, demanding respect.

The image of the teacher Ataullo is embodied as a positive educator. His character is distinguished by honesty and principle. In the work, he not only imparts knowledge to his students, but also encourages them to be conscientious. For example, during the lesson, he puts forward ideas along the lines of “what makes a person human is his honesty”. Through this, he tries to instill alternative moral criteria in Zafar’s mind. Although Zafar initially ignores these words, later, in the process of life’s trials, these very teachings come back to life in his memory. His brother Akbar also tries to instill the same thoughts in his father: “*Muallimim halol, pokiza odam. Endi usiz yashay olmayman. Meni ajratmang undan. Bo‘lmasa, butunlay ketaman*”.⁷

Another educator image in the life of Zafar is his brother Akbar. The image of Akbar plays an important role as an indirect educator. His character is determined by inner purity and loyalty to the truth. Akbar rejects the illegal path of his parents and chooses to live honestly. For example, he does not renounce his faith, opposing the wrong ways of gaining wealth. In the following discussion with Zafar he expresses his opinion openly:

“*Boyvachchalar, senlar nafsingni tiyib, kamroq maqtanganlaringda, oyim bilan dadam pul topish uchun o‘zlarini bunchalik qiynamagan bo‘lishardi.*”⁸

These sentences convey Akbar’s painful feelings. He blames his brothers for his parents’ obsession with making money. He believes that his parents are trying to earn more because of their lack of thrift, their reckless spending, their lack of appreciation, and their boundless desires.

Akbar did not like this way of life of his family, and he was worried that one day they would face trouble. However, no matter how hard he tried, he could not stop them from doing so. Through this, he tries to show Zafar an alternative way of life, but Zafar does not accept it at this stage. It is this contradiction that intensifies the conflict in Zafar’s inner world.

Also, society itself appears in the novel as an important educator. In the work, the respect for people with wealth and positions, has a strong impact on Zafar’s consciousness. This situation is expressed in the work through the “*normalization of wrong values*” of the social environment. As a result, Zafar considers his family’s upbringing to be in harmony with the situation in society.

⁷ To‘xtaboyev X. Mungli ko‘zlar. – Toshkent: Yangi asr avlodi, 2015. – B. 85.

⁸ To‘xtaboyev X. Mungli ko‘zlar. – Toshkent: Yangi asr avlodi, 2015. – B. 72.





The most important educator turns out to be life itself. The difficult trials that Zafar experiences - losses, suffering and mental shocks - radically change his worldview. In the last part of the work, he reassesses his life and rejects the views that he previously considered wrong (a meaningful quote). This process indicates his inner awakening.

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