

THE ARTISTRY OF CREATING A FEMALE IMAGE BY AHMAD LUTFI QOZONCHI (ON THE EXAMPLE OF THE NOVEL “STEPMOTHER”)

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Abstract

This article scientifically analyzes the mastery of creating a female image in the novel “Stepmother” by Ahmad Lutfi Qozonchi, one of the prominent representatives of modern Turkish literature. The study substantiates that the writer depicts the female image free from traditional stereotypes, in a harmony of complex psychological and social layers. In the work, the female image is interpreted not only as a person within the family circle, but also as a symbol of moral support, patience, endurance, and devotion in society. The article reveals the role of artistic psychologism, internal monologue, conflict, and character creation methods in раскрытие the female image.

Keywords: Ahmad Lutfi Qozonchi, “Stepmother”, female image, artistic psychologism, character, family, social problem.

Introduction

In world and Turkish literature, the female image has always been one of the central aesthetic problems. The place of a woman in the family and society, her inner world, emotional experiences, and confrontation with social problems are considered important themes of the literary process. Especially in modern literature, the tendency to view the female image in a new way and to depict her not only within traditional roles but also as an independent individual has intensified.

In Ahmad Lutfi Qozonchi’s works, the female image appears as a product of such modern artistic thinking. The writer’s novel “*Stepmother*” stands out for its creation of a female image based on deep psychological analysis. In the work, the



inner sufferings of a woman, her condition under social pressure, and her spiritual strength are artistically well illuminated.

The purpose of this article is to analyze the methods of creating the female image in the novel “*Stepmother*”, as well as its psychological and social layers.

When we hear the word “stepmother”, first of all, a person with a negative connotation, somewhat far from goodness, appears before our eyes. For some reason, we call them “mother”, but cannot evaluate them positively. However, among them there are also those who, even if they cannot be like a real mother, are able to show affection.

First of all, every woman is a mother. But not all mothers are equally kind and sweet-speaking. Here the question “why” arises. Let us better turn to the work that caused us to have such thoughts.

...The work is the famous novel “*Stepmother*” by Ahmad Lutfi Qozonchi, a bright representative of Turkish literature.

“There are works that, when you read them, arouse interest, and you finish them in one sitting. However, the impressions and excitement you receive do not last long.

There are also works whose excitement and interest settle into your heart and take root. Now you cannot drive it out. The reason for this may be the author’s sincerity, the purity of his personality, and the embedding of the warmth of his heart into the work,” — it is said in the preface of the work.

Indeed, the novel translated by the talented poet and translator Yo‘ldosh Eshbek and its protagonist take a worthy place in the hearts of readers. It encourages admiration for the being called woman and not to interpret the term “stepmother” one-sidedly.

In Ahmad Lutfi Qozonchi’s works, the female image is depicted not as a passive character, but as a person actively influencing the development of events. The writer presents the female image not only as a mother or wife, but as a person with a complex inner world.

In the novel “*Stepmother*”, this concept deepens even further. In the work, the female image stands at the center of various social contradictions. She faces step-relationship, alienation, and social injustice within the family environment. Through this, the writer reveals the inner strength, patience, and spiritual height of the woman.

The female image at the center of the novel is revealed through complex psychological experiences. Although the status of a stepmother is often associated with negative stereotypes in society, Ahmad Lutfi Qozonchi interprets this image in a new way. He depicts the stepmother not as a cruel or indifferent person, but as a human being full of inner suffering and love.

Through the internal monologues of the female character, her self-questioning, and emotional sufferings, her psychological state is deeply раскрывается. Through this method, the writer brings the reader closer to the character's psyche and forces them to feel her experiences.

The novel begins with the marriage of nineteen-year-old beautiful Fotima to a man with two children. Can a stepmother show love to children like their own mother, even more than that? What forced a girl like Fotima—who is exemplary in beauty, knowledge, and manners—to marry an ordinary man with two children, even against the wishes of her relatives? Could she not have spent her youthful years with a suitable young man?

...Fotima's neighbor Ismoil loses his mother at the age of three. His later life passes under the oppression of his stepmother. Especially after the birth of his stepsister, the unequal treatment towards the two adds to Ismoil's pain. The suffering he experienced at such a young age evokes sympathy in the reader:

“-Wretch, you made the child cry again, I will show you now!

From the window above, a young girl spoke:

– Aunt Saniha, it's not Ismoil's fault. The child fell by himself. I saw it with my own eyes.

Saniha replied in a tone indicating dissatisfaction with her вмешательство:

– If he watched carefully, would he fall, sister? Blind boy, he doesn't look after the baby at all.

Then she turned to the children.

The girl above (this was Fotima):

– By God, he is not guilty! – she shouted. But Saniha did not listen; after slapping the older one once or twice, she took the younger into her arms:

– Come, my lamb, my only one!

Then turning to Ismoil:

– Aren't you ashamed? What do you mean just two slaps? I would have kicked you under my feet... – she scolded and left towards her house, dragging her child.” [1]



Fotima tries to do everything she can to cheer up the kind-hearted child a little. However, can the painful life of the neighbor's child fully become the reason for the young girl to become a mother of two children at once? Yes, this is a reason close to reality. But...

As we get acquainted with the work, one thing does not fail to attract the reader's attention. That is—the presence of two stepmother images. One is Saniha, the other is Fotima. Both have the same status, but the difference between them is as great as heaven and earth.

With great mastery, the writer managed to create a second positive stepmother without denying the ancient negative views about stepmothers. This is reflected in the dynamics of the novel's plot.

The image of Fotima in this work is not only a good mother, but also an incomparable spouse in intelligence and wisdom. To her husband, who was ashamed to go to the mosque because he ate onions and garlic, she said: "I would give them up to go to the mosque," thus educating him. A girl who never removes her headscarf even when alone, remembering that God is always watching—can such a person harm even strangers, let alone orphans? She is such a noble-hearted woman that she does not even want her deceased co-wife to be forgotten. This deserves admiration!

"...Because Odilbek's eyes were lowered, he did not see that Fotima's eyes filled with tears. If he had not been ashamed to the point of wanting the ground to swallow him, he could have known from her voice that she was crying. But there was no such possibility. Realizing once again that his wife—more precious than a jewel—stood before him, he was amazed by the human example she showed. The fact that a woman could think so much about her husband's deceased wife and show such humanity astonished him." [2]

With these qualities, Fotima changes the views of her husband Odilbek and the readers that "a real mother is a human, a stepmother is her shadow." Fotima does not want the children to forget their own mother; at night she prays for that woman and encourages her husband to do the same. Eventually, she teaches the children as well. During this time, Fotima gives birth to a daughter, but never treats her own child differently from the stepchildren.

In our imagination, Fotima appears as a great woman in the novel. As we know, she also gives birth to a daughter, yet treats all three children equally. There is even a situation in the work that once again makes us admire her behavior.

As described in the work, Fotima's stepdaughter was taking care of her infant daughter. When the baby cried, the girl tried to calm her by giving her a chickpea she was eating.

"Fotima's forehead was covered with sweat, and tears flowed from her eyes, showing her state. She looked at Odila, who was playing as if nothing had happened.

– Odila, what did you give your sister to eat?

– I gave her a chickpea. She was crying...

An inner feeling urged Fotima to leave the baby and beat Odila properly, at least slap her once. In such a moment of panic, this would be the easiest thing. At least it would ease her heart. But would beating Odila help Samia? Would the child recover from two slaps? Did Odila do this intentionally?

Thinking this, Fotima refrained from hitting her, and Odila continued playing, unaware. Seeing her innocent state, Fotima prayed:

– O Lord, for the sake of orphans with broken hearts, for the sake of my two orphan children, save my child! For the sake of Your Prophet who was orphaned at a young age. For the sake of those who support, help, and protect the rights of orphans..."

Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be said that in this work the writer managed to depict a stepmother who is even better than a real mother—a noble Woman whom no one had previously portrayed. He ensured the credibility of this image and proved what a real woman and a real mother should be like. In Ahmad Lutfi Qozonchi's novel "*Stepmother*", the female image is created with high artistic mastery. The writer removes the female character from traditional frameworks and depicts her as a complex psychological and social personality. Through the female image, ideas of compassion, patience, devotion, and spiritual strength are promoted. This novel can be evaluated as one of the important examples of interpreting the female image in modern literature.

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