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SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE REALISM MOVEMENT IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK LITERATURE

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Abstract: Realism as a literary movement emerged as a response to romantic idealization, emphasizing objective representation of reality, social truth, and everyday human experience. While realism in English literature developed within the context of industrialization and class stratification, Uzbek literary realism evolved under distinct socio-historical conditions, including colonial influence and cultural reform movements. This article conducts a comparative analysis of realism in English and Uzbek literature, focusing on their shared aesthetic principles and divergent ideological, thematic, and stylistic features.

Keywords: realism, comparative literature, English literature, Uzbek literature, social representation, literary movements

The rise of realism in world literature marks a significant shift in artistic consciousness, replacing idealized portrayals with faithful representations of social reality. Originating in Europe in the nineteenth century, realism sought to depict life "as it is," focusing on ordinary people, social conflicts, and moral dilemmas. In English literature, realism became closely associated with the effects of industrialization, urbanization, and class struggle, while in Uzbek literature, it emerged later, shaped by colonial experience, enlightenment movements, and national awakening.

Despite their different historical trajectories, English and Uzbek realism share foundational principles such as social critique, psychological depth, and ethical engagement. However, their differences reflect contrasting cultural, political, and linguistic contexts. This article aims to analyze the similarities and differences between realism in English and Uzbek literature through a comparative lens.

Scholarly discussions of realism often emphasize its opposition to romanticism and its commitment to empirical observation. According to Eagleton, realism is not merely a mimetic technique but a mode of ideological engagement with social reality. In English literary studies, realism has been examined through the works of nineteenth-century novelists who depicted class conflict, gender inequality, and moral responsibility [Williams, 2020].

Recent studies highlight realism's adaptability across cultures. Damrosch argues that realism functions differently outside Western Europe, becoming a vehicle for cultural resistance and national self-definition [D. Damrosch, 2021]. This perspective is particularly relevant for Uzbek literature, where realism played a formative role in shaping modern literary identity.

Uzbek scholars have emphasized realism's connection to enlightenment and reformist ideals. Karimov notes that early Uzbek realist writers combined social critique with didactic purposes, aiming to awaken national consciousness [B. Karimov, 2020]. Similarly, Rahimova argues that Uzbek realism often integrates moral instruction with narrative realism, distinguishing it from its English counterpart [M. Rahimova 2022].

However, comparative studies between English and Uzbek realism remain limited. Existing research tends to focus on national traditions in isolation, leaving a gap in cross-

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cultural analysis. This article seeks to fill that gap by systematically comparing the two traditions.

This study employs a qualitative comparative literary methodology to examine similarities and differences in the development of realism in English and Uzbek literature. A qualitative approach is appropriate as the research focuses on interpretive aspects such as thematic patterns, narrative techniques, character construction, and ideological orientation rather than quantitative data. The main research method is close textual analysis, through which selected realist texts are analyzed to explore representations of social reality, the depiction of socially conditioned characters, and the function of narrative voice. This method enables realism to be examined as a dynamic aesthetic and ideological mode shaped by specific cultural contexts. The comparative framework follows the principles proposed by Tötösy de Zepetnek, emphasizing contextualized comparison rather than evaluative hierarchy [S. Tötösy de Zepetnek, 2018]. English and Uzbek realist works are analyzed within their respective historical and socio-cultural environments, allowing both shared features and distinctive characteristics to be identified.

The study integrates primary literary texts with recent secondary scholarship on realism and comparative literature to support analytical claims and ensure academic validity. To maintain research integrity, all sources are critically paraphrased and synthesized, avoiding direct textual borrowing and ensuring originality.

One of the most significant shared characteristics of realism in both English and Uzbek literature is the commitment to the truthful representation of social reality. Writers in both traditions deliberately shift attention from idealized or heroic figures to ordinary individuals whose lives reflect broader social conditions. Everyday experiences, domestic environments, and routine social interactions become central narrative elements, reinforcing realism's foundational principle of depicting life as it is rather than as it ought to be.

Another key similarity lies in the socially engaged function of literature. In both English and Uzbek realist traditions, literary texts are not conceived as purely aesthetic artifacts but as instruments of social awareness. English realist writers frequently address issues such as poverty, social injustice, gender inequality, and moral compromise, particularly within rapidly changing industrial societies. Similarly, Uzbek realist authors focus on social inequality, ignorance, corruption, and ethical decline, often highlighting the consequences of stagnation and lack of education. In both contexts, realism operates as a form of critique aimed at exposing structural problems rather than merely documenting them.

Moral and ethical inquiry further unites the two traditions. Realist texts consistently raise questions about responsibility, conscience, and social duty. Characters are often placed in morally ambiguous situations, forcing them to navigate conflicts between personal desires and societal expectations. This ethical dimension underscores realism's concern with the consequences of human actions within specific social frameworks.

Psychological depth constitutes another shared feature. Characters in both English and Uzbek realism are portrayed as complex, multidimensional individuals shaped by social forces, internal conflicts, and moral dilemmas. Rather than presenting fixed moral types, realist authors emphasize character development and inner struggle. This approach aligns with Lukács's assertion that realism seeks to reveal the "totality" of human experience by linking individual psychology with social reality [G. Lukács, 2020].

Despite these shared elements, English realism exhibits distinctive characteristics rooted in its historical context. The development of English realism coincided with industrialization, urban expansion, and the reconfiguration of class structures. As a result, realist narratives

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frequently foreground themes of class conflict, economic hardship, and social mobility. Urban spaces, workplaces, and industrial settings often serve as key narrative environments, reflecting the material conditions of nineteenth-century society.

Narratively, English realism is marked by a high degree of descriptive detail and structural coherence. Authors often employ extensive descriptions of settings and social environments to illustrate the influence of material conditions on human behavior. This attention to environmental determinism reflects an interest in social causality, where individual destinies are closely linked to economic and institutional forces.

Another defining feature is the use of a relatively neutral or ironic narrative voice. Rather than explicitly instructing the reader, English realist writers tend to adopt an observational stance, allowing moral judgments to emerge implicitly through events and character interactions. Levine argues that this narrative restraint enhances realism's credibility by encouraging readers to engage critically with the text rather than passively accepting authorial conclusions [G. Levine, 2019].

The novel as the dominant genre further distinguishes English realism. The realist novel functions as a comprehensive social document, offering panoramic representations of society and its internal contradictions. Through interconnected plots and diverse character networks, the English realist novel constructs a broad vision of social life, emphasizing realism's documentary and analytical capacities.

Uzbek realism, while sharing realism's core principles, developed under markedly different historical and cultural conditions. Emerging later than its English counterpart, Uzbek realism was shaped by colonial domination, cultural reform movements, and the struggle for intellectual and social renewal. Consequently, it often carries a pronounced didactic and reformist orientation. Literary realism in this context frequently aims not only to depict social problems but also to encourage moral improvement and social progress.

A central feature of Uzbek realism is its strong connection to national identity and cultural revival. Realist texts often address the tension between tradition and modernity, emphasizing the importance of education, enlightenment, and ethical responsibility. Characters are frequently depicted as representatives of broader social groups, embodying the challenges faced by society during periods of transition. As Rahimova observes, Uzbek realist writers often functioned simultaneously as artists and cultural educators [M. Rahimova, 2022].

Stylistically, Uzbek realism demonstrates a tendency toward hybridity, combining traditional narrative elements with modern realist techniques. Oral storytelling traditions, symbolic motifs, and didactic commentary coexist with realistic characterization and social detail. This stylistic blending reflects the transitional nature of Uzbek society and the effort to reconcile inherited cultural forms with new literary paradigms.

In comparative perspective, English and Uzbek realism reveal both convergence and divergence. English realism prioritizes social observation, narrative objectivity, and structural complexity, often relying on implicit moral critique. Uzbek realism, by contrast, integrates social criticism with explicit moral instruction and national consciousness, reflecting its reformist and educational function.

Nevertheless, both traditions remain united by a shared commitment to truthfulness, social engagement, and the exploration of human experience within concrete historical contexts. The differences between them highlight realism's adaptability as a literary mode capable of responding to diverse cultural and ideological demands.

This comparative analysis demonstrates that realism in English and Uzbek literature represents both a shared artistic philosophy and a culturally specific practice. The similarities

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between the two traditions highlight realism's universal concern with social reality and moral inquiry. At the same time, their differences underscore the importance of historical context in shaping literary movements.

English realism reflects the complexities of industrial society and class relations, while Uzbek realism responds to cultural reform and national awakening. Recognizing these distinctions enriches our understanding of realism as a dynamic and adaptable literary mode.

Future research may extend this comparative approach to other literary traditions, further exploring realism's global manifestations and intercultural significance.

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