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# THE CONCEPT OF "IDENTITY" AND ITS ARTISTIC INTERPRETATION IN WORLD AND UZBEK LITERARY STUDIES

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## Abstract

The concept of identity has become one of the central categories in modern literary studies, reflecting the complex relationship between the individual, society, culture, and historical consciousness. This article examines the theoretical foundations of the notion of "identity" in world and Uzbek literary criticism and analyzes its artistic interpretation in literary texts. Special attention is paid to the ways identity is constructed, transformed, and represented through narrative strategies, character development, and symbolic imagery. The study explores national, cultural, social, and personal dimensions of identity, highlighting their interconnection with historical memory, tradition, and linguistic expression. By comparing Western theoretical approaches with Uzbek literary-critical perspectives, the article reveals both universal and culture-specific features of identity formation in literature. The research employs comparative, structural, and hermeneutic methods, which allow for a comprehensive interpretation of identity as a dynamic and multifaceted phenomenon in artistic discourse. The findings demonstrate that literature functions as a key medium for reflecting and shaping identity, contributing to the preservation of national self-awareness while engaging in global cultural dialogue.

## Keywords

identity, literary studies, artistic interpretation, national identity, cultural memory, character representation, Uzbek literature, world literature, narrative discourse

In contemporary humanities, the concept of identity occupies a central position as a key category for understanding the interaction between the individual and society, culture and history, language and consciousness. In literary studies, identity is not merely a sociological or psychological construct but a complex artistic phenomenon shaped through narrative structures, imagery, and symbolic representation. Literature, as a form of artistic cognition, reflects the processes of identity formation, crisis, transformation, and self-realization, thereby revealing the deep cultural and ideological foundations of human existence.

The growing scholarly interest in identity is largely обусловлено by the processes of globalization, cultural integration, and the intensification of intercultural communication. These processes have challenged traditional notions of national, cultural, and personal identity, prompting literary criticism to reconsider classical approaches and develop new interpretative paradigms. In this context, literary texts serve as an important space where conflicts between tradition and modernity, collective memory and individual experience, national self-awareness and universal values are artistically articulated.

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World literary theory has produced a wide range of conceptual approaches to identity, drawing on philosophy, cultural studies, psychoanalysis, post-structuralism, and postcolonial theory. Scholars such as Erik Erikson, Stuart Hall, and Paul Ricoeur have contributed significantly to the theoretical understanding of identity as a dynamic, relational, and historically conditioned phenomenon. These theoretical frameworks have influenced literary analysis by shifting attention from fixed character typologies to fluid subjectivities, fragmented narratives, and multiple voices within the text.

In Uzbek literary studies, the issue of identity has traditionally been examined through the prism of national consciousness, historical continuity, moral values, and linguistic expression. Classical and modern Uzbek literature reflects the formation of identity in close connection with cultural heritage, ethical norms, and collective memory. Following the independence of Uzbekistan, literary criticism has increasingly focused on reinterpreting national identity, rediscovering historical narratives, and analyzing the individual's place within rapidly changing social realities. This shift has expanded the methodological scope of Uzbek literary studies and facilitated dialogue with global theoretical trends.

Despite the growing body of research, a comprehensive comparative analysis of identity in world and Uzbek literary criticism remains insufficiently explored. Many studies tend to focus either on Western theoretical models or on national literary traditions in isolation. This article seeks to bridge this gap by examining the concept of identity as a shared yet culturally differentiated category, emphasizing both its universal dimensions and its national specificities. By analyzing the artistic representation of identity, the study aims to demonstrate how literature functions as a mediator between personal experience and collective consciousness.

The relevance of this research lies in its interdisciplinary orientation and its contribution to the understanding of literature as a dynamic cultural system. The findings may be applied in literary theory, comparative literature, cultural studies, and higher education curricula, particularly in courses related to modern literary criticism and national literature. Ultimately, the study underscores the importance of identity as a fundamental artistic and theoretical concept that continues to shape literary discourse in both global and Uzbek contexts.

The analysis of identity in world and Uzbek literary studies demonstrates that identity functions not as a static or fixed category but as a dynamic, context-dependent construct shaped by historical, cultural, and narrative factors. In literary discourse, identity is articulated through character psychology, narrative perspective, symbolic systems, and intertextual references, which together create a multilayered representation of the self. The discussion of identity, therefore, requires an integrated approach that considers both theoretical frameworks and artistic realization.

In world literary criticism, identity is frequently interpreted through post-structuralist and postmodern paradigms, which emphasize fragmentation, multiplicity, and the instability of subjectivity. Literary texts often depict characters experiencing identity crises, displacement, or hybridity, reflecting broader social phenomena such as migration, colonial legacies, and globalization. From this perspective, identity is understood as a process of continuous negotiation rather than a predetermined essence. Narrative strategies such as unreliable narration, shifting focalization, and nonlinear temporal structures reinforce this fluid understanding of identity, allowing readers to perceive the self as constructed through discourse and memory.

By contrast, Uzbek literary studies have traditionally approached identity through the lens of national self-awareness, ethical responsibility, and cultural continuity. Literary characters are often portrayed as bearers of collective values, historical memory, and moral ideals. However,

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contemporary Uzbek literature increasingly integrates individual psychological depth and personal experience into its representation of identity. This shift reflects changing social realities and the influence of global literary trends, leading to more complex and nuanced character portrayals that balance national identity with personal autonomy.

A comparative perspective reveals both convergence and divergence between world and Uzbek literary interpretations of identity. On the one hand, both traditions recognize identity as a multidimensional phenomenon shaped by time, space, and social relations. On the other hand, the artistic priorities differ: world literature often foregrounds individual fragmentation and existential uncertainty, whereas Uzbek literature emphasizes moral integrity, cultural belonging, and continuity. These differences should not be viewed as oppositional but rather as complementary expressions of identity shaped by distinct historical and cultural contexts.

The artistic interpretation of identity in literature also highlights the role of language as a key marker of selfhood. Linguistic choices, narrative voice, and stylistic devices serve as means through which identity is articulated and transformed. In Uzbek literature, the use of national language, folklore elements, and culturally specific symbols strengthens the representation of collective identity. In world literature, multilingualism, code-switching, and hybrid discourse often reflect complex identity negotiations within multicultural environments.

Furthermore, the discussion underscores the significance of literature as a space for identity reconstruction. Through artistic imagination, writers re-evaluate historical narratives, question dominant ideologies, and offer alternative visions of selfhood. This function is particularly important in societies undergoing rapid transformation, where literature becomes a medium for preserving cultural memory while simultaneously engaging with modernity. In this sense, identity in literature is both reflective and constructive, mirroring social change and actively shaping cultural consciousness.

Overall, the discussion confirms that the concept of identity occupies a pivotal position in both world and Uzbek literary studies. Its artistic interpretation reveals deep connections between individual experience and collective values, tradition and innovation, national specificity and universal human concerns. Recognizing these interconnections enables a more holistic understanding of literary texts and reinforces the relevance of identity as a central analytical category in contemporary literary criticism.

The study of the concept of identity in world and Uzbek literary studies confirms that identity represents a complex and multifaceted phenomenon that cannot be reduced to a single theoretical or artistic model. In literary discourse, identity emerges as a dynamic process shaped by historical context, cultural memory, linguistic expression, and individual experience. Literature, therefore, serves not only as a reflection of social reality but also as an active space in which identity is constructed, questioned, and redefined.

The comparative analysis demonstrates that world literary criticism predominantly conceptualizes identity through fluidity, hybridity, and multiplicity, emphasizing the fragmented nature of the modern subject. Uzbek literary studies, while traditionally grounded in national consciousness and moral values, increasingly incorporate individual psychological depth and personal self-awareness. This convergence illustrates the growing interaction between global theoretical paradigms and national literary traditions.

The artistic interpretation of identity reveals the central role of narrative strategies, character development, and symbolic imagery in expressing both personal and collective dimensions of selfhood. Language emerges as a crucial medium through which identity is articulated, preserving cultural specificity while enabling engagement with universal human

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concerns. As a result, literary texts function as cultural documents that transmit historical memory and ethical values across generations.

The findings of this research highlight the relevance of identity as a key analytical category in contemporary literary studies. By examining identity within both world and Uzbek contexts, the study contributes to a deeper understanding of literature as a dynamic cultural system that mediates between tradition and modernity. The results may be effectively applied in comparative literary analysis, cultural studies, and higher education curricula, particularly in courses focused on modern literary theory and national literature.

In conclusion, the concept of identity remains a central and evolving issue in literary criticism. Its artistic interpretation not only enriches the analysis of literary texts but also enhances our understanding of cultural self-awareness in an increasingly interconnected world.

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