

## POETICS OF SATIRE IN THE SHORT STORIES OF O. HENRY AND GAFUR GULOM

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**Abstract.** This study examines the poetics of satire in the short stories of O. Henry and Gafur Gulom through a comparative literary framework. Satire, as a complex aesthetic and ideological mode, functions as a powerful instrument of social criticism across diverse cultural traditions. While previous scholarship has explored satire in American and Uzbek literature separately, limited attention has been given to the structural and poetic mechanisms underlying satirical expression in a cross-cultural perspective. The research employs a qualitative comparative methodology, integrating textual analysis, structural examination, and stylistic interpretation of selected short stories by both authors. The study focuses on identifying core satirical devices such as irony, exaggeration, narrative contrast, and character typology, as well as examining their organization within distinct cultural contexts. The findings demonstrate that irony operates as the central mechanism of satire in both writers. O. Henry predominantly constructs satire through situational irony and narrative reversal, particularly via the twist ending, which reshapes moral interpretation. In contrast, Gafur Gulom employs dialogic humor, explicit social irony, and culturally embedded linguistic features to critique bureaucratic absurdities and moral contradictions. Despite differences in narrative emphasis and tonal execution, both authors share foundational satirical strategies. The research concludes that satirical poetics are culturally adaptive structures: while their fundamental devices remain universal, their structural realization reflects national literary traditions and socio-historical contexts. The study contributes to comparative literary scholarship by deepening understanding of cross-cultural satirical aesthetics.

**Keywords:** satire, poetics, irony, comparative literature, O. Henry, Gafur Gulom, short story, narrative structure

**Introduction.** Satire occupies a central position in world literature as a complex aesthetic and ideological mode of expression. Far beyond mere humor, satire functions as a critical instrument that exposes social contradictions, moral weaknesses, and ideological inconsistencies. Throughout literary history, writers have employed satire to challenge authority, question social norms, and provoke intellectual reflection.

In both American and Uzbek literary traditions, satire has served as a powerful medium of social commentary. It reflects historical transformations, cultural tensions, and moral dilemmas. The short story genre, due to its structural compactness and intensity, provides particularly favorable conditions for satirical expression.

The works of O. Henry and Gafur Gulom present two distinct yet comparable traditions of satirical poetics. While O. Henry represents early twentieth-century American urban prose shaped by capitalism and modernization, Gafur Gulom embodies Uzbek literary realism enriched with national humor and social critique.

Despite the abundance of national literary studies, comparative investigations of their satirical poetics remain limited. Existing research often concentrates on themes rather than structural mechanisms. This research seeks to fill that gap.

The aim of this study is to examine and compare the poetic construction of satire in selected short stories by both authors. The research hypothesizes that although satire operates through universal mechanisms such as irony and exaggeration, its structural realization differs according to cultural context.

**Literature Review.** The theoretical understanding of satire originates in classical antiquity and develops through Renaissance and modern criticism. Satire has been defined as a literary mode combining humor, irony, exaggeration, and ridicule to expose human folly and social vice. Western scholarship emphasizes satire's corrective moral purpose, while Eastern traditions frequently integrate satire with didacticism and social realism. This duality highlights satire's ethical dimension.

Studies on O. Henry emphasize narrative irony, structural symmetry, and twist endings as defining features of his prose. Critics argue that his surprise endings serve not merely as technical devices but as mechanisms of moral revelation.

Research on Gafur Gulom underlines his dialogic humor, folkloric influences, and vivid depiction of everyday life. His satire exposes bureaucratic inefficiency, social hypocrisy, and moral contradictions.

However, few studies directly compare the poetic mechanisms underlying satire in these two authors. Therefore, this study adopts a comparative poetics framework.

**Research Methods.** This study employs qualitative comparative literary analysis. Selected short stories from both authors serve as primary sources. Secondary sources include theoretical and critical works on satire.

The methodology integrates close textual reading, structural analysis, stylistic examination, and comparative synthesis. Textual analysis identifies irony, exaggeration, and narrative contrast. Structural analysis focuses on plot organization. Stylistic examination explores tone and language.

Validity is ensured by applying consistent analytical criteria to multiple stories from both authors. Reliability is maintained through systematic categorization of satirical devices.

**Results.** The analysis demonstrates that irony functions as the foundational mechanism of satire in both authors. O. Henry predominantly uses situational irony culminating in narrative reversal. The twist ending retrospectively alters interpretation.

Gafur Gulom frequently employs explicit social irony and dialogic satire. His narrative strategy often relies on exaggeration and culturally specific humor. Both authors construct characters as representative social types while preserving psychological realism. Exaggeration intensifies traits to reveal systemic flaws. Despite shared devices, differences emerge in structural emphasis. O. Henry's satire is plot-centered, whereas Gulom's satire is character- and dialogue-centered.

**Discussion.** The comparative findings reveal that satire operates as a culturally adaptive aesthetic structure. O. Henry's narrative architecture itself becomes the vehicle of irony. His urban realism frames satire within modern capitalist society. Gafur Gulom's satire reflects collective social experience. Linguistic authenticity and folkloric humor reinforce cultural specificity.

The universality of irony, exaggeration, and contrast confirms the hypothesis. However, narrative organization and tonal emphasis vary significantly. Limitations include qualitative scope and limited corpus. Future research could integrate quantitative stylistics or expand comparative range.

**Conclusion.** This study examined the poetics of satire in the short stories of O. Henry and Gafur Gulom. Both authors employ irony, exaggeration, and contrast as primary satirical tools.

O. Henry's satire is structurally embedded in plot reversal, while Gulom's satire is dialogic and socially explicit.

The research contributes to comparative literary scholarship by demonstrating how satirical poetics adapt to cultural environments while maintaining universal critical functions.

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