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FOLK REALISM AND SOCIAL CRITIQUE

TASHKENT STATE UNIVERSITY OF LAW

Faculty of Business Law and Judicial

Protection, 2nd-year Student

Musakhanova Gulmira Sobirjon kizi

Abstract: This article analyzes the themes of social justice, labor, and human transformation in G‘afur G‘ulom’s novella “The Revived Corpse”. Due to its diary-like narrative structure, the novella conveys the protagonist’s inner world - dreams, thoughts, and emotional experiences- closely to the reader. The article examines satire, symbolic transformations, and elements of folk realism in the work, demonstrating their connection to contemporary social issues in Uzbekistan. From a linguistic perspective, the use of dialects, idiomatic expressions, and the lively language of everyday speech is analyzed. Consequently, the article shows that **“The Revived Corpse”** is significant not only for its historical context but also for contemporary society.

Keywords: “the Revived Corpse”, social justice, labor, human transformation, folk realism, satire, idiom, diary form, contemporary Uzbekistan

When discussing the works of G‘afur G‘ulom, one first recalls the rich and diverse literary legacy associated with his name. G‘ulom (1903–1966) was one of the prominent figures of Uzbek literature, addressing human destiny, social inequality, and justice in a unique artistic style, especially during the complex socio-political conditions of the 20th century. His novella “The Revived Corpse” is notable not only for its deep content but also as a significant work in the development of Uzbek prose. The novella was written between 1925 and 1933 and depicts the painful and complex aspects of Uzbek rural life in a realistic and satirical manner. Its diary-like form brings the narrative closer to the reader: events are presented through the protagonist’s perspective in a simple and natural tone. This method immerses the reader directly in the events, making them an eyewitness. From a literary perspective, “The Revived Corpse” represents a distinctive milestone in the development of Uzbek prose, symbolically and artistically portraying the transition from feudal and colonial systems to a new social order. Linguistically, the work employs folk speech, lively expressions, and idioms (e.g., “hafsalasi kelmas,” “ha-huv deguncha”), reinforcing its national character. Narrative and folklore elements, including references to “One Thousand and One Nights” traditions, further enrich the artistic layer of the work. Through the central character, Mamajon, the author illustrates the inner transformation of a human being—the process of “spiritual revival”. Initially, Mamajon is depicted as lazy, indifferent, and apathetic, a condition shaped by an unjust social environment. In contrast, the character of wealthy Mirjalol embodies social injustice, exploiting the labor of the poor to advance his own interests. Through this, G‘ulom exposes class disparities and social inequality.

Artistically, G‘ulom skillfully employs satire and irony. Mamajon’s various thoughts, humorous fantasies, and occasionally naive perspectives evoke laughter, yet this laughter conceals bitter truths, enhancing the novella’s impact and elevating it from simple humor to profound social critique. In the later parts of the story, Mamajon’s personal development

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parallels societal changes. He gradually appreciates the value of labor, finds his place, and becomes an active individual. This process of "revival" is interpreted not only as individual transformation but also as a symbol of societal renewal. Through this, the author advocates labor, conscious living, and social engagement. Even today, the novella retains its relevance. Themes of social inequality, human values, and attitudes toward labor remain important for modern society. In Mirjalol, one can recognize traits of self-interested and indifferent individuals still present today. Mamajon's life journey serves as a moral example for youth: by working on oneself, anyone can awaken from spiritual slumber and find their place in life. "The Revived Corpse" stands as a high example of G'afur G'ulom's literary achievements, possessing both artistic and socio-philosophical significance. Its simple, folk-inspired style, profound content, and timely ideas ensure its prominent place in Uzbek literature while remaining a source of moral guidance for contemporary readers. The novella portrays wealth and social status in a generalized way. Through Mirjalol, G'ulom reveals that wealth is not only material but often intertwined with moral poverty. The author exposes the unjust means by which the wealthy achieve their fortune, presenting wealth as a social phenomenon - a product of inequality and exploitation.From a linguistic perspective, the diary format of the novella is significant. This structure allows the inner monologues - thoughts, dreams, and emotional experiences - of the protagonist to be expressed naturally and convincingly, enabling readers to engage deeply with Mamajon's internal world and personal transformation. Such a style enhances subjectivity in the text, increasing the story's emotional impact. Folk expressions, idioms, and vivid language showcase the richness and diversity of the Uzbek language. Satire and symbolic transformation are among the work's key artistic features. G'ulom masterfully uses humor, irony, and exaggeration characteristic of folk oral literature, making the novella both entertaining and deeply socially meaningful. Mamajon's "revival" symbolizes not only personal growth but also societal renewal and the possibility of starting a new life through self-improvement. This symbolic quality leaves a lasting impression on readers.

Analyzing the novella in the context of contemporary Uzbekistan highlights its continued relevance. Social stratification has intensified during the post-independence period, and the gap between the wealthy and the poor remains apparent. Mirjalol reflects self-serving individuals who disregard social justice in pursuit of wealth. The importance of land and labor, especially in rural areas, shows parallels with the events depicted in the novella. Mamajon's initial laziness and indifference resonate with contemporary youth issues, including unemployment, aimlessness, and psychological discouragement. However, his eventual transformation through labor offers valuable social and educational lessons: by working on oneself, anyone can overcome difficulties. From a literary perspective, "The Revived Corpse" captures the transitional period of Uzbek literature—the shift from feudal systems to a new social order. Historical changes are reflected through individual destinies and everyday life episodes. Linguists also consider the novella's dialectal features, idioms, and lively speech as an important stage in the development of the Uzbek literary language.

Overall, the novella's appeal lies in its simple and sincere style, satirical tone, and profound symbolic meaning. Mamajon's life encourages readers to reflect on their own lives and reminds them that personal growth and progress are in their own hands. For these reasons, G'afur G'ulom's work remains a significant literary source, offering important lessons on labor, justice, and human values even today.