

Specific Characteristics of Style in Uzbek Jadids Poetry (Example of Poems of Fitrat, Elbek and Botu)

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Abstract: The main style of Uzbek poetry until the beginning of the 20th century, until the modern era, was a silent form based on a certain pattern, mainly visual means, word games. By the time of the national renaissance, some changes took place in the form as well as in the style. First of all, it can be observed that the poets looked at literature and poetry as a means of propagating their ideas and tried to convey them in a simple, vernacular language as much as possible. True, in the last years of the Khanate period, enlightened poets wrote many poems in new styles, which are somewhat different from classical literature. First of all, it can be observed that the poets looked at literature and poetry as a means of propagating their ideas and tried to convey them in a simple, vernacular language as much as possible. Also, in some cases, there are cases of following European and Turkish poetry and imitating their style. It was impossible to widely promote the ideas of national independence without modern literature. Fitrat's grassy poems, Behbud's and Hamza's painful dramas, Qadiri's novels narrating the dirtiest and darkest days of history, Cholpon's multifaceted rich creative products, say a word to the people who are ready to submit to slavery. it was impossible to shoot like a rilik. For this reason, one of the styles of modern Uzbek poetry was the extreme socialization. Jadid literature also has its own approach and way of each creator along with the general style of the period. The poems of Fitrat, which are full of emphasis and questions, open disclosure of pain, and create in a way that can affect the depths of the heart, reveal their author at a glance. One of the peculiarities of modern Uzbek poetry is the richness of emphasis, expressed in light and impressive sentences. It is true that in some cases there are rhymes and stanzas. But if we connect it to the formation of the first experiences and the youth of the poets, everything will fall into place. For example, several of Elbek's poems are written in a simple and fluent language under the influence of folklore. Modern Uzbek poetry had a great influence on the literature of the next period. Whether we take the literature of the 30s of the XX century or the later periods, even in the poetry of the period of independence, the influence of modern poetry can be felt in some sense.

Keywords: jadids literature, Fitrat, Botu, Elbek, style, form, individual style, motive.

INTRODUCTION

When discussing style in literary art, we encounter various perspectives and principles. Just as no two individuals in the world have identical fingerprints, the works of skilled poets and writers never completely resemble one another. Certain aspects—such as meaning, content, or even form—may be similar, but the manner of writing, the style, differs. One poet may emphasize form, while another focuses more on meaning; some prefer a detailed, narrative approach, while others favor brevity and conciseness. There are many such styles, and numerous creators follow them. However, no one can perfectly replicate a style created by a truly talented individual.

When considered in a broader sense, style can also be characteristic of a particular nation or era. Fitrat touched on this, stating:

"Just as every nation has its own unique style in the fine arts, so too does every era have its own distinctive style" [Fitrat, (2006: 14)].

Modern literary criticism also offers numerous definitions of style. In To'xta Boboyev's *Foundations of Literary Studies*, style is defined as: *"Style is the aesthetic unity of figurative-expressive details (the form corresponding to the content) in a literary work; it is the manifestation*

of the writer's individuality and uniqueness in the use of artistic imagery and devices." [2002: 549].

In Xotam Umurov's *Literary Theory*, style is defined as follows: *"Style is the product of a writer's active engagement with the events and realities of their time. It is the key factor that demonstrates the writer's originality and distinguishes them from other authors. The more talented the writer, the more vividly their style is expressed. Only an author who has developed their own style can be considered a true literary artist."* [2002: 550].

The literary scholar N. Shukurov writes: *"...Individual style... is the writer's unique perception of reality and their distinctive way of reflecting events and phenomena through original imagery and expressive means."* [Shukurov, N, 1978: 7].

Taking into account the individuality and uniqueness of style, the famous phrase *"Style is the man himself"* is attributed by To'xta Boboyev to the French naturalist Georges-Louis Leclerc de Buffon, while X. Umurov considers it a quote from Goethe [Umurov, H, 2002: 235]. Regardless of its origin, the perfection and distinctiveness of

an author's style are indicators of their talent and greatness.

As the definitions above suggest, no matter which era or creator a style belongs to, it reflects their uniqueness. Considering that style can have both general and individual characteristics, we will first discuss the general style of Uzbek Jadid poetry.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The unique styles of 20th-century Uzbek Jadid poetry are analyzed using the works of Abdurauf Fitrat, Mashriq Yunus (Elbek), and Batu. The examples substantiate the fact that formal innovations and various shifts in meaning and content in the poetry of this period created new styles.

Cultural-historical, sociological, and comparative-typological analysis methods were used to study the problem.

RESULTS AND THEIR ANALYSIS

Until the Jadid era, the main style in Uzbek poetry was a certain pattern, based mainly on figurative means and wordplay. The style of poetry of this period requires a separate study. By the Jadid era at the beginning of the 20th century, along with the form, changes also occurred in style. First of all, it can be observed that the poets of that period viewed poetry as the main means of promoting their ideas and tried to convey them in a simple, understandable language to the people. Also, in some cases, there were cases of following European and Turkish poetry and imitating their style.

Although the styles characteristic of Uzbek Jadid poetry differ from one another, they also share many unifying features. In terms of content, works with educational aims—calling the people to enlightenment, learning, freedom, and independence—became increasingly common. As the Jadids viewed literature as a tool to achieve their goals, they assigned it specific functions, placing more emphasis on meaning and ideas than on form.

Examples of this include Fitrat's prose pieces, Elbek's fables, Cho'lpon's works such as *Binafsha*, *Buzilgan o'lkaga*, and *Kishan*, as well as Botu's emotionally charged and passionate poems. For instance, consider Fitrat's poem *Mirrix yulduziga* and Botu's *Temir qoziq yulduziga*. It is not difficult to detect stylistic and thematic similarities between them. In both poems, the star is addressed as a poetic device to reflect earthly

problems—depicting colonialism and destruction in their homeland.

One of the stylistic innovations in Uzbek Jadid poetry was the introduction of new motifs. For example, the motif of shackles in the sense of restriction of freedom, slavery; the motif of a bird in a cage in the sense of captivity, longing for freedom; the motif of a bright star, moon in the sense of leading to noble dreams, showing the right path, etc. In addition, motifs characteristic of folk oral art also began to be widely used during this period. Appeals were made to our great ancestors and history. New styles were created by mixing didactics, which is an oriental style, with lyricism.

One of the most important characteristics of that era was the strong emphasis on education and upbringing. Indeed, it would have been impossible to widely promote ideas of national independence without Jadid literature. Without Fitrat's passionate poems, the poignant dramas of Behbudiy and Hamza, Qodiriy's novels depicting the darkest and most tragic periods of history, or the rich and multifaceted works of Cho'lpon, it would have been nearly impossible to convey any message to the oppressed masses ready to submit to enslavement. Just recall the impact Behbudiy's *Padarkush* had on the people—how it stirred the nation!

Cho'lpon did not lament in vain when he wrote: "*A nation without literature, that does not contribute to the development of its literature and does not produce writers, will one day lose its capacity for emotion, thought, and reflection—and will slowly decline. This cannot be denied. A nation that denies it only confirms that it is already in decline.*" [Cho'lpon, 1914]. In his book *Theory of Literary Studies*, literary scholar Xotam Umurov writes the following about style: "*Style is the writer's perception of reality and humanity, their ability to uncover the truth within the human soul, and to express it through words in an artistic form—it is the art of fulfilling these tasks in an individual ('distinctive') manner.*" [Umurov, H, 2002: 236].

Such individuality is not evident in the work of every poet. That is why, when describing poets, people often say "a creator with their own unique style." For example, it is easy to distinguish Alisher Navoi's metaphoric and philosophically infused ghazals from Babur's delicately crafted, light, and fluently readable ones. Or in modern

literature, Abdulla Oripov's distinctive style is fundamentally different from Erkin Vohidov's rhythmic playfulness with words. Likewise, when comparing the works of G'afur G'ulom and Oybek, or Rauf Parfi and Usmon Azim, one can often identify the author without being told, simply by recognizing their literary fingerprint. This difference is what is referred to in literature as individual style.

In modern literature, along with the general style of the era, each author has his own approach and path. Fitrat's poems, which are full of emphasis and questioning, openly reveal pain, and create in a way that can affect the depths of the heart, reveal their author at a glance. In particular, there are few authors who can write prose poems that convey the rhythm of Fitratism. Emphasizing, questioning, intense exclamations in prose, passages that contain great meanings, references to historical figures, a series of images, and bitter confessions that sound like the cries of a person with a burning heart, all of these indicate the unique nuances of Fitrat's style.

*Sening Turoningni o'zim talatdim,
Sening turkligingni o'zim ezdirdim,
Sening omonatlaringga xiyonat o'zim qildim.
Men uch kunlik umrimni tinchgina yotib
o'tkazmoqchi bo'lmasa edim, shularning birortasi
bo'lmas edi.
Men qo'limg'a topshirdig'ing qilichni tashlab,
cholg'uni olmasa edim, Turonim talanmas edi!..
Men yolg'iz qonli ko'z yoshlarimni bu
sag'anangga to'kmak uchun emas, o'z
yoziqlarimni iqrar etarg'a keldim, XOQONIM
[1990: 7].*

It was I who let your Turan be plundered,
It was I who crushed your Turkic spirit,
It was I who betrayed the trust you placed in me.
Had I not wished to spend my brief life in peace
and comfort, none of this would have happened.
Had I not thrown aside the sword you entrusted to
me and taken up the flute instead, my Turan would
not have been ravaged!
I have not come to this grave only to weep blood-
soaked tears,
But to confess my own guilt,

In the excerpt from Fitrat's *Yurt qayg'usi* (Before Timur), the artistic style of the sensitive poet is clearly evident. In the first three lines, the repetition of the words "sening" (your) and "o'zim" (I) in the same position gives the poem a distinct rhythm and tone. In the following three

lines, the repetition of the word "Men" (I) at the beginning of the lines serves the same purpose. This is a feature of the style's formal characteristics.

Another key aspect of Fitrat's style is reflected in the content of his poems. He primarily focuses on themes such as freedom and oppression, a reflection on the past, respect for ancestors, the consequences of despotic regimes, how invaders have ravaged the people, the paths to liberation, and the pursuit of knowledge and enlightenment. In his works such as *Yurt qayg'usi*, *Mirrix yulduziga*, *Shoir*, *Behbudiyning sag'anasin izladim*, *O'gut*, *Sharq*, *O'qitg'uvchilar yurtig'a*, and *Mening kecham*, one can clearly see the poet's sincere emotional struggles and his Jadid ideas. Perhaps it is for this reason that these poems were regarded as "counter-revolutionary" or as expressing "nationalistic pessimism" at that time. As Professor Hamidulla Boltaboyev writes, "If you look at the literature textbooks published during the Soviet era, you will find that they claim Fitrat's *Mening kecham* and Cho'lpon's *Buzilgan o'lkaga* were written with a 'fierce nationalist and pessimistic sentiment,' and in opposition to these 'nationalistic works,' Botu and G'ayratiy's poems like *Mening kunduzim* and *Tuzalغان o'lkaga* were included as they were seen to reflect a countervailing spirit" [Boltaboyev, H., 2007: 76].

However, subsequent research has proven how inaccurate these claims were. Indeed, it is clear that Botu and G'ayratiy did not simply write poems opposing Fitrat and Cho'lpon on their own accord. The support and encouragement from the elder poets were crucial. This can be seen in the fact that in the 1924 issues 9-10 of the *Inqilob* journal, poems by both Fitrat and Botu were published together. Through such acts, the tolerant masters supported and motivated their students.

When discussing Fitrat's style, it is important to mention his particular attention to the purity of the words he used. In his Uzbek poems, he strives to use pure Turkic words, avoiding Arabic and Persian terms. This is why he also attempts to write in the *barmaq* meter instead of the Arabic-influenced *aruz* meter, which he considered foreign to the Turkic language. He condemns the careless use of foreign words. As he put it, "Poets who introduced Arabic and Persian words into Turkic poetry, at least had some understanding of the words. They would place them in context, grasping their meanings. Today's poets, however,

wander aimlessly and without rules.” [Fitrat, 2006: 9].

Fitrat turned such criticism into a strict personal rule, striving throughout his creative life to preserve the purity of the Uzbek language, avoiding the unnecessary use of Arabic and Persian words wherever possible.

The influence of European and Russian literature is more evident in Botu’s work. Perhaps this is because, being younger than others, she was more influenced by these sources. Academic Naim Karimov writes about this: “...*Young people, not only as supporters but also as creators of new ideas, come into the world with their innovations. Botu, too, through her works, sought to enter the lives of these young people, infect them with her dreams and aspirations, and, in this way, contribute to the victory of innovation.*” [Karimov, N, 2004: 12].

Botu’s unique style of creativity is evident in these very innovations. Experimenting with the broad possibilities of the *barmoq* and free verse meters, Botu places more emphasis on form. The poet’s work was highly valued during the former Soviet era. She was recognized as a symbol of struggle, the romanticism of speed, and the romanticism of victory and a bright future. The fact that one of her collections was titled *To‘lqin tovushlari*, and that many of her poems had titles such as *Bizning tovush*, *Suyunch kuylari*, *Yosh yurak to‘lqinlari*, *Qo‘zg‘alish*, *Isyon*, *Kurash to‘lqinlari*, and *Ko‘klam taronasi* was seen as deeply meaningful. In her poem *U kun*, she wrote “*Bizning vaqtimiz tezlik, chopqirlik*”, while in *Kichkina armug‘onim*, she says “*Ilgarilash ashulasin aytaber.*”

Botu’s passionate poems were interpreted in a special way during the Soviet era. The poet was regarded as the greatest representative of proletarian literature, and much trust was placed in her. [Mamajonov, S, 1980: 10].

However, today’s research should deeply examine Botu’s “deviations,” exploring their reasons and objectives. Despite her youth, she was educated at major institutions, easily climbed the career ladder, and was seen as deserving of prestigious positions. News of her acceptance into and graduation from school was published in newspapers, where she was warmly welcomed and continually supported by government representatives with praise and commendations. Despite this, did Botu abandon her principles and beliefs? In our view, no. Her poems, her efforts to preserve the purity of the

language, her scholarly articles on orthographic reform, and the deeper meaning in her stories and epics do not allow us to think otherwise. It is true that some “red” poems were created as a result of the political climate of the time and the pressures placed on her youthful soul. Works on the lives of the poor, land reform, and prosperous living conditions emerged with their own particular style. Yet, at their core, even these works reflected the fate, present, and future of this country and people.

One of the peculiarities of Batu’s style is its richness of emphasis, its ability to express itself in light and touching sentences. True, in some cases there are some irregularities in rhyme and meter. But if we attribute this to the formation of early experiences and the poet’s youth, everything falls into place.

“*Yosh yurak to‘lqini*” poem can be considered one of the first experiments written in free verse during that period. The harmony of its tone and content gives it a unique spirit. The young poet’s heartbeat is fast, meaning his heart is hot: it doesn’t stay in one place and doesn’t let its owner rest either. The meter of the poem, written in sync with the heartbeat, is also proportional to the emotional state.

*To‘xtamayman,
To‘xtamayman,
To‘xtamayman hech!
Gapga solma!
Vaqtini olma!
Mendan oldin
O‘tmasin hech!*

*I won’t stop,
I won’t stop,
I won’t stop at all!
Don’t try to talk!
Don’t waste time!
Let nothing
Pass before me!*

*Ketdigim yo‘l,
Keng,
Uzun:
Er yigitga
O‘ng,
So‘l
Chip-chiroylik
Shod butun.
[6. p. 47-48].*

*The road I take
Is wide,*

Long:
For a brave man,
Both
Right
And left
Are bright,
Joyful,
Full of life.

The poem's emphatic opening with the thrice-repeated phrase "I won't stop!" intensifies the meaning and reflects the poet's passion and urgency. The lines, composed of 4 or 5 syllables—not as a strict rule—and some built from words of only 1–2 syllables while others reach up to 12 syllables, create a remarkable rhythm reminiscent of a cardiogram's waves. This form established a foundation for the later introduction of formal experimentation in Uzbek poetry. Similar rhythms and tonal fluctuations can also be observed in poems such as *O'gut*, *So'zimiz*, *Zolimlar o'lkalarida*, *Qo'zgalish*, *G'oya yo'lida*, and *Alanga*. During the former Soviet era, Botu's work was interpreted one-sidedly, analyzed through the lens of the prevailing ideological atmosphere. It was emphasized that the poet believed in communist ideals and that the October Revolution, the ideas of communism, and the excitement of a new life transformed him into such an enthusiastic poet [Mamajonov, S, 1980: 10]. It is also noted that Botu wrote dozens of militant poems dedicated to ideological struggle, in which he passionately defended and promoted the ideological-aesthetic principles of proletarian literature [Mamajonov, S, 1980: 12].

We know that Fitrat's plays such as *Hind itilochilari* and *Chin sevish*, though dedicated to the national liberation movement in India and depicting the uprisings of Indians against the British, in essence portray the colonial reality of Turkestan and the dynamics between Russian colonizers and the local population. If the words "Indian" and "British" in the dialogues and monologues are replaced with "Turk" and "Russian," the core meaning remains unchanged—on the contrary, it becomes even clearer.

In this context, Botu's poems such as *Ison alangasi* and *Yana qon*, dedicated to the events in China, and *Kurash uchquni*, written in response to the bloodshed of revolutionaries in Sofia, Bulgaria, also convey the idea of the struggle for freedom and expose the brutal consequences of colonial aggression.

He seeks to express through certain symbols the notion that without unity, without aligning goals and ideals, and without becoming a single fist, uprisings will end in tragedy. True freedom, he implies, can only be achieved through organized struggles and revolutions.

"Kurash uchquni" she'radagi mana bu satrlarga nazar tashlaylik:

*Kuchayli zanjirlar – kishanlar tovshi,
Bo'sh zindon qolmadi... mozorlar to'ldi;
Erk degan erlarning chirog'i so'ndi;
Yashnamoq istagan ko'p gullar so'ldi* [Botu, 2012: 57].

The clanking of chains and shackles grew louder,
No prison was left empty... the graves filled up;
The light of those who lived for freedom was extinguished;
Many flowers that longed to bloom withered away.

Without the epigraph stating, *"In the city of Sofia, Bulgaria, a hellish machine destroyed a building where government officials had gathered. In response, the government handed over thousands of workers, peasants, and revolutionaries to the clutches of death,"* no one would doubt that the massacre described is in fact a reflection of the very same repression that has persisted in our own land since the arrival of Russian colonizers. Perhaps it was precisely because the pain and the conditions felt so familiar that the poet chose this subject. The next stanza of the poem is even more poignant:

*Zo'raydi yalang'och bolalar dodi,
Qoldimi to'zimning ko'nglida chidam?!
Ucharmi yo'qlikka vahshatning yodi,
O'tsa-da to'lqinli, to'lqinsiz ko'p dam?!*

The cries of naked children grew louder,
Does my heart have any patience left to endure?!
Will the memory of terror vanish into nothingness,
Even if many moments pass — with waves or without?

Indeed, the memory of such atrocities does not fade from a people's consciousness, no matter how many years pass. On the contrary, with the emergence of new research, the hidden truths continue to be revealed. Literary scholars have offered numerous definitions and perspectives on style. One such view states: *"Style is simultaneously content, form, idea, and motif. It is the fusion of all these elements that ensures the integrity of a literary work. Therefore, it is incorrect to limit a writer's style solely to words or*

language — to the uniqueness of their usage. True, literature is the art of words, and language is its primary element, yet style is not limited to language alone. Rather, language is just one of the essential means through which style is realized.” [Umurov, H, 2002: 236]

A prominent example of unique literary style is Mashriq Yunusov – Elbek, who thoroughly studied and compiled folk oral literature, fought for the purity of the Uzbek language, and stood at the forefront of script reform. His works stand out for their distinctive language, and his deep engagement with folk literature significantly influenced his creative style.

Elbek’s stylistic voice is shaped not only by his linguistic choices but also by his ideological and cultural immersion, especially in the rich traditions of the people. His commitment to both national identity and literary innovation places him as a key figure in the development of modern Uzbek literary aesthetics.

As is well known, like all colonial powers, the Russian invaders first and foremost sought to destroy our national values, our ancient traditions — in essence, our very identity. Alongside architectural monuments and spiritual wealth, they aimed to erase our national literature, which draws nourishment from deep historical roots.

Aware of this threat, the *Jadids*, under the leadership of Fitrat, formed the “Chig‘atoy gurungi” circle with the goal of preserving our cultural essence. In this movement, Elbek committed himself to collecting and continuing the traditions of folklore, playing a pivotal role in defending literature from being molded into a rigid, uniform form. He actively resisted attempts to suppress literary diversity and heritage. As Doctor of Philology Haydarali Uzoqov writes: “The political views in Elbek’s poetry are conveyed through the glorification of our values” [Uzoqov, H, 1999]. The critic substantiates this claim by citing the following lines from Elbek’s poem “*Yana aldading*” (“You Deceived Again”), written in 1920 and dedicated to the *Chig‘atoy gurungi* literary circle:

*Qo‘llaringda ushlab turgan cholg‘ungni
Bir ko‘rishda chin cholg‘u deb o‘yladim.
O‘yladim-da, yuragimning tegidan
Chin sevinch-la turli kuylar kuyladim.*

*Kuylarimni sekin-sekin tinglag‘och,
Yolg‘ondan bir aldabgina yig‘lading!*

*Yig‘lading-da turub-turub uzoqdan,
Menga boqib, bir necha so‘z so‘zlading.*

You held your instrument in your hands,
At first glance, I thought it was true.
And thinking so, from the depth of my heart,
I sang many melodies with sincere joy.

But when you slowly listened to my tunes,
You wept — with false tears, deceiving me!
You wept and then, from afar,
You looked at me and spoke a few words.

Elbek’s poems and epics, as well as his parables, were well received, especially because they were written in the vernacular, very close to everyday speech. They were included in many textbooks and reprinted repeatedly. Their ideas, traditions, and important social problems that were unique to the Uzbek people quickly attracted the attention of readers.

Elbek’s poetic style was shaped not only by his engagement with folk literature and world literature through his translations but also by his significant contributions to linguistics. As a scholar, in 1924, he was one of the first to compile a historical explanatory dictionary. In this work, he used the literary works of figures like Alisher Navoi, Lutfi, Babur, Sofi Oloyor, and the *Shajarayi turk* by Abulghazi Bahadur Khan as guiding references, providing examples from these texts in his explanations.

In several of his poems, Elbek incorporates examples from folk literature, presenting them alongside new words and offering their meanings. This not only contributes to the preservation and enrichment of the Uzbek language but also deepens the connection between traditional and modern expressions.

For example, his poem “*Ko‘rgilik*” (often translated as “The Evil” or “The Misfortune”) begins with a passage from one of the most famous works of folk literature, grounding his poem in the rich heritage of Uzbek oral tradition. This blending of folk motifs with contemporary language and themes further exemplifies Elbek’s unique ability to fuse tradition with innovation, ensuring the continuity of cultural and linguistic expression.

*“Ko‘rmayin bosdim tikanni, tortadirman jabrini.
Ko‘rsam erdi, bosmas erdim, tortmas erdim
jabrini”.
Ko‘rgilik, ey ko‘rgilik, bizdan yo‘qol sen mangulik,*

Biz bu dunyo ichra sendan ko'rmadik bir yangilik
[Elbek, 1999: 62].

Unseeing, I stepped on a thorn, now I endure its pain.

Had I seen it, I would not have stepped, nor would I bear this strain.

Misery, oh misery, vanish from us for eternity —
In this world of ours, we've never seen novelty in thee.

Poems like this can be found in abundance in Elbek's work, and they could be the subject of extensive research.

CONCLUSION

Until the beginning of the 20th century, that is, until the era of the Jadids, the main style in Uzbek poetry was a certain pattern, based mainly on figurative means and wordplay. By the time of the national revival, along with the form, some changes occurred in style.

It was impossible to widely propagate the ideas of national independence without Jadid literature. Without Fitrat's fiery poems, Behbudiy and Hamza's painful dramas, Qodiriy's novels telling about the dirtiest and darkest days of history, and Cholpon's multifaceted rich creative products, it would have been impossible to correctly convey a single message to the masses ready to bow their heads to slavery. Therefore, one of the styles characteristic of Uzbek Jadid poetry was the extreme intensification of sociality. One of the unique features of Uzbek Jadid poetry is its richness of emphasis, expressed in light and touching sentences. True, in some cases there are some irregularities in rhyme and stanzas. But if we attribute this to the formation of early experiences and the youth of the poets, everything falls into place.

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