

THE IMAGE OF WAR-TRAUMATIZED CHILDREN AND THE THEME OF CHILDHOOD IN THE WORKS OF O‘TKIR HOSHIMOV AND TOHIR MALIK

(In Comparison with English Literature)

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Annotation: This article explores the depiction of children and the psychological, moral, and social aspects of childhood during wartime in the works of Uzbek writers O‘tkir Hoshimov and Tohir Malik. It analyzes the artistic portrayal of children who suffered from the consequences of war and provides a comparative study with similar representations in English literature—particularly in the works of Ian McEwan, William Golding, Michelle Magorian, and John Boyne. The paper highlights how war affects the human psyche, especially the world of childhood, and shows how the image of the child serves as a powerful medium for expressing human tragedy and ethical concerns.

Keywords: war, image of the child, psychology, conscience, tragedy, Uzbek prose, English literature, comparative analysis.

Annotatsiya: Ushbu maqola o‘zbek yozuvchilari O‘tkir Hoshimov va Tohir Malik asarlarida urush davrida bolalar tasviri va bolalikning psixologik, axloqiy va ijtimoiy jihatlarini o‘rganadi. Unda urush oqibatlaridan aziyat chekkan bolalarning badiiy tasviri tahlil qilinadi va ingliz adabiyotidagi, xususan, Ian MakEvan, Uilyam Golding, Mishel Magorian va Jon Boyn asarlaridagi o‘xshash tasvirlar bilan qiyosiy tadqiqot o‘tkaziladi. Maqolada urush inson ruhiyatiga, ayniqsa bolalik dunyosiga qanday ta’sir qilishi ta’kidlanadi va bola obrazi inson fojiasi va axloqiy tashvishlarni ifodalash uchun kuchli vosita bo‘lib xizmat qilishi ko‘rsatilgan.

Kalit so‘zlar: urush, bola obrazi, psixologiya, vijdon, fojia, o‘zbek nasri, ingliz adabiyoti, qiyosiy tahlil.

Аннотация: В данной статье исследуется изображение детей и психологических, моральных и социальных аспектов детства в военное время в произведениях узбекских писателей Откира Хошимова и Тохира Малика. Анализируется художественное изображение детей, пострадавших от последствий войны, и проводится сравнительное исследование с аналогичными изображениями в английской литературе, в частности, в произведениях Иэна Макьюэна, Уильяма Голдинга, Мишель Магориан и Джона Бойна. В работе подчеркивается, как война влияет на человеческую психику, особенно на мир детства, и показано, как образ ребенка служит мощным средством выражения человеческой трагедии и этических проблем.

Ключевые слова: война, образ ребенка, психология, совесть, трагедия, узбекская проза, английская литература, сравнительный анализ.

Introduction. One of the defining directions of twentieth-century literature is the theme of war and childhood. Over the past two centuries, childhood has become one of the central motifs in world literature. War is the most painful test in human history: it destroys not only lives and cities but also the human spirit, destiny, and dreams. The most innocent victims of this devastation are, undoubtedly, children.

In Uzbek literature, especially in the works of O‘tkir Hoshimov and Tohir Malik, the image of the child becomes a key means of expressing national spirit, morality, and human

values. These writers vividly depict the psychological trauma and moral purity of children living through wartime. In English literature, the same theme finds expression in the works of Ian McEwan, William Golding, Michelle Magorian, and John Boyne. This article presents a comparative analysis of these two literary traditions—Uzbek and English—through the shared theme of children suffering from the aftermath of war.

Research Methodology. This study employs a qualitative research methodology based on descriptive and analytical approaches. The research analyzes literary texts through close reading, comparative analysis, and interpretative methods to reveal their thematic, artistic, and ideological features.

Literature Review. War and Childhood in the Prose of O‘tkir Hoshimov. O‘tkir Hoshimov’s prose is a sincere reflection of the people’s life. In his works, childhood symbolizes purity, honesty, and conscience—it is a sacred period infused with human values and moral integrity. However, war destroys this pure world.

In such works as *“Dunyoning ishlari”* (*The Affairs of the World*) and *“Ikki eshik orasi”* (*Between Two Doors*), Hoshimov portrays the lives of children orphaned or deprived of affection during wartime. In *“Dunyoning ishlari”*, the narrative of war-time childhood is conveyed through the protagonist’s recollections. The world is seen through a child’s eyes—innocent yet profoundly moral and sensitive. The author harmonizes the child’s psychology with philosophical reflections, showing that war takes away not only fathers but also childhood itself. Through childhood memories, Hoshimov re-examines the moral foundations of society. The child’s view is simple yet just:

“In childhood we believed everything: that people always tell the truth, that goodness triumphs over evil...”

In his artistic universe, the child embodies continuity of moral and national values such as respect for parents, diligence, and spiritual purity. The protagonist Muzaffar in *“Ikki eshik orasi”* illustrates both the innocence of childhood and the complexities of social life.

The Psychological Consequences of War in the Works of Tohir Malik

In Tohir Malik’s prose—particularly in *“So‘nggi o‘q”* (*The Last Bullet*), *“Taqdirlar”* (*Destinies*), and *“Falak”* (*The Fate*)—children growing up amid violence and conflict embody the struggle between humanity and cruelty. Malik’s characters often bear psychological scars, yet these wounds make them morally stronger. For the author, the child functions as an ethical yardstick through whose perspective injustice and moral decay in the adult world are exposed.

Analysis and Results. In his stories and novellas, young protagonists undergo trials that test their moral integrity. Malik perceives childhood as the foundation of one’s spiritual formation and a philosophical metaphor for human existence. Through a child’s dreams and perceptions, he reveals the ethical pulse of society.

This psychological and ethical conflict resonates with William Golding's depiction of children in "*Lord of the Flies*." Golding's boys on the island represent the innate savagery of humankind once social order disappears. Likewise, Malik's children experience an internal clash between the forces of good and evil.

Thus, in the works of Hoshimov and Malik, childhood manifests in two artistic modes: in Hoshimov, as a reflection of life philosophy and national upbringing; in Malik, as a means of exploring inner turmoil and moral confrontation. Both writers, however, see childhood as the only surviving source of humanity. The child becomes the voice of truth and conscience in a society that has lost its moral compass.

War-Traumatized Children in English Prose

English writers have examined the impact of war on children's psychology with remarkable depth.

Ian McEwan – *Atonement* McEwan unveils the tragedy of war through the consciousness of a child. Briony Tallis's naïve action, born of misunderstanding, ruins several lives, and war deepens her guilt. Like Hoshimov, McEwan portrays conscience and remorse through the child's psyche.

William Golding – *Lord of the Flies* Although Golding does not directly describe war, his portrayal of stranded children symbolizes the dehumanizing effects of war on civilization. The conflict between savagery and morality in the children's micro-society mirrors humanity's self-destruction. Similar to Tohir Malik, Golding treats the child as an embodiment of moral trial.

Michelle Magorian – *Goodnight Mister Tom* The novel tells the story of William Beech, a boy evacuated from London during the Blitz. He finds affection and healing under the care of a kind old man. The restorative power of love and compassion parallels the humanistic tone of Hoshimov's "*Dunyoning ishlari*."

John Boyne – *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* Boyne's narrative centers on eight-year-old Bruno, who befriends a Jewish boy inside a concentration camp. Their innocent friendship ends tragically, illustrating the cruelty and injustice of war. This emotional treatment of childhood tragedy aligns with Malik's moral vision.

Similarities and Differences between Uzbek and English Depictions of Childhood

Both Uzbek and English literatures employ the theme of childhood to promote humanistic and moral ideals. In Hoshimov and Malik's works, the child symbolizes the nation's future and moral awakening; in English literature, the child becomes the victim and witness of war's horror.

In Uzbek prose, childhood represents hope, faith, and purity, while in English narratives it is often associated with loss, guilt, and tragedy. Yet both traditions share a

common aim: to remind humanity of its essential virtues through the artistic image of the child.

Conclusion. Although the depictions of war and childhood in Uzbek and English literatures differ according to historical experience and national tradition, both serve one shared purpose—to reveal the danger of losing humanity in times of war. O‘tkir Hoshimov portrays childhood as a source of goodness and compassion; Tohir Malik reveals the moral trials of the human conscience.

Through their portrayals, the Uzbek writers reflect the moral resilience and spiritual endurance of their people during wartime. In contrast, English authors express the global human tragedy through the psychological wounds of children. In both literatures, however, childhood stands as a universal symbol of purity, humanity, and hope.

Regardless of nation or era, the war-affected child in literature remains the embodiment of humanity’s conscience and enduring hope.

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