COMPARISON OF WOMEN, SOCIETY, AND LOVE IN KODIRIY'S "OTKAN KUNLAR" AND AUSTEN'S "PRIDE AND PREJUDICE"

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Abstract. This paper compares "Bygone Days" (called O'tkan kunlar in Uzbek) by Abdulla Kodiriy and "Pride and Prejudice" by Jane Austen, focusing on their treatment of tradition, individual agency and the role of women in society. Both novels depict protagonists

navigating societal expectations, particularly in matters of love and marriage. Set in distinct historical and cultural contexts-19th century Turkestan and Regency-era England, both novels criticize rigid social structures and explore the struggle between personal desires and societal norms. This analysis highlights key thematic parallels and differences, shedding light on how literature form different cultures addresses the universal human experience.

Key words: literature, literary meaning, context, emotions, current literary themes, societal norms, women's role, tradition, love, individual agency.

Literature is the voice of the human soul, the fruit of thought, and the reflection of the spirit. It is the expression of society, just as speech is the expression of man. The President of Uzbekistan Sh. M. Mirziyoyev, has also defined literature in this way: "Literature is one of the most important pillars of human spirituality. It is the heart of the nation, it reflects the spirituality of the people. In today's complex time, we must use the powerful influence of literature to reach people's hearts and inspire them toward noble goals" [1]

There are such literary works that, no matter how many articles we write about them. We always feel the urge to write more. Two such masterpieces are "Bygone Days" (1926) and "Pride and Prejudice" (1913). Every literary work serves as a mirror reflecting the society of its time. These two world-renowned works explore love, conformity to societal expectations and universal themes, making them timeless for future generations.

Both novels employ symbolism to reflect societal values and character development. Otabek's chapan and doppi symbolize loyalty, while Kumush's tragic fate illustrates how societal pressure crushes personal dreams. Similarly, Lydia Bennet's elopement reveals the fragility of women's reputation in 19th century England. We would really like to emphasize this as well. Thought Kumush submitted to traditions and accepted her fate, deep in her fate, deep in her heart, the fire of freedom and happiness burned. Her patience and devotion shone like a bright star, even in the face of the hardest trials. She might have brought about positive changes in society and left his mark on it. It is no surprise that she contributed to the spiritual elevation of human relationships.

Love is one of the strongest forces that ensures human freedom. The love between Otabek and Kumush is not just an emotional connection but also a reflection of the struggle between tradition and modernity. Similarly, Elizabeth Bennet remained true to her beliefs and values, refusing to yield to society's constraints but instead facing them with courage. Her intelligence and independent thinking transformed love from more emotion into a rational choice built on equality and respect. In its turn, Elizabeth Bennet symbolizes how personal and social expectations crash in some points. Ultimately, the freedom of will and options have to be left as a deciding factor for each person.

In early 19th century England, women had little autonomy in marriage, as economic stability often dictated their choices. Elizabeth Bennet's decision to marry based on love rather financial security was a bold act of defiance for her time. Let us briefly talk about marriage during this period. According to statistical data in Regency-era England (1811-1820) the average marriage age for women was 20-23. However, upper-class girls often married earlier (18-19) due to societal pressure. And also, in England, before 1870, married women had no right to own property; any wealth they inherited automatically belonged to their husbands.

In Turkestan, the average marriage age for girls was 14-16, and they had no say in choosing their husbands, as marriages were arranged by their parents. But in Turkestan, women technically had property rights, but in practice, most had little economic independence. This contrast explains the societal pressures surrounding marriage in both novels and helps contextualize Elizabeth Bennet's desire for independence and Kumush's lack of agency in financial matters.

In Bygone Days, parents prioritize their social reputation over their children's happiness. As a result, Kumush and Otabek's love is sacrificed to societal norms. In this novel portrays fate as predetermined, with individuals bound to the rules of society. In Pride and Prejudice, parental influence varies. Mr. Bennet values his daughters' happiness, while Mrs. Bennet focuses solely on finding wealthy suitors. This contrast reflects two different perspectives on marriage and parental control in that era. And it suggested that with personal determination, one can resist social pressure and shape their destiny. This contrast highlights the differences in Eastern and Western societal structure regarding personal agency. As Fyodor Dostoevsky mentioned: "Man wants to be free, but he also fears his freedom".

In Bygone Days, Otabek and Kumush dream of freedom but remain trapped by societal norms. Pride and Prejudice, however, shows that internal courage can break social constraints. These two renowned novels, based on various social issues, explore themes of love and duty, the clash of traditions, national identity, social stratifications, marriage and personal growth. Bygone Days primarily depicts historical transformations and fixed social idioms, while Pride and Predujice focuses on moral values.

It should be also noted that distinguished by its unique style and narrative approach, Bygone Days reflects romantic and cultural aspects, as well as, personal and political transformations. In Pride and Predujice, personal relationships take precendence with social satire, dialogue and irony playing a central role.

Let us briefly discuss some of the most notable characters. Kumush, described as unmatched in loyalty, embodies a woman who endured the hardship of her time and remained faithful to her love. Her powerful words serve as proof of this: "I cannot sacrifice my happiness for the wishes of others". [3]

Meanwhile, Elizabeth, in Pride and Predujice, a woman who values her own destiny, is portrayed as ambitious, strong and patient- an iconic literary figure known worldwide. Elizabeth's statement: "My courage always rises with every attempt to intimidate me" [4]

It is a testament to her determination and bravery. It is worth emphasizing Simon de Beauvoir's remark that 'One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman'. This aligns with Kumush and Elizabeth Bennet's experiences. Both women are shaped by societal expectations, yet they strive to define themselves on their own terms. Bygone days shows that no matter how sincerely and moderately a person tries to find solutions to societal challenges, society itself remains unyielding and intensifies its resistance.

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