



**MATYOQUB QO‘SHJONOV’S MASTERY OF LITERARY
PORTRAITURE: LITERARY-CRITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS AND THE POETICS
OF MEMORY**

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Abstract, This article investigates the distinctive features of literary portraiture in the critical heritage of Matyoqub Qo‘shjonov, one of the most influential representatives of twentieth-century Uzbek literary criticism. The study focuses on the critic’s literary-critical consciousness, compositional methodology, poetics of memory, lexical diversity, and psychologically nuanced portrayal of literary figures. Through analytical observation and textual interpretation, the research demonstrates that Qo‘shjonov transformed the literary portrait from a merely biographical-critical genre into a complex aesthetic phenomenon synthesizing scholarly reflection, memoiristic narration, and artistic interpretation. The article further argues that the critic’s portraits embody a unique convergence of documentary precision and figurative expressiveness, thereby occupying a significant place in the development of Uzbek literary-critical thought.

Keywords, Matyoqub Qo‘shjonov, literary portraiture, Uzbek literary criticism, poetics of memory, artistic interpretation, psychological analysis, compositional integrity, literary consciousness.

The evolution of literary criticism within the broader framework of cultural and intellectual history has consistently reflected the spiritual and aesthetic condition of society. Literary criticism not only evaluates artistic production but also contributes to the formation of collective cultural consciousness, aesthetic perception, and philosophical reflection. Within this context, the genre of the literary portrait occupies a particularly significant position, since it seeks to reveal the multifaceted essence of a literary personality through an organic synthesis of biography, textual interpretation, historical observation, and artistic narration.

In Uzbek literary criticism, the literary portrait gradually evolved into an independent critical genre characterized by analytical depth and artistic sophistication. Critics such as Ibrohim Sulton, Ozod Sharafiddinov, Umarali Normatov, and Ibrohim G‘afurov substantially contributed to the enrichment of this genre. However, among these literary scholars, Matyoqub Qo‘shjonov occupies a unique position due to his ability to combine rigorous scholarly analysis with emotionally expressive artistic narration.

Qo‘shjonov’s literary portraits transcend the boundaries of traditional biographical criticism. Instead of presenting writers merely as historical or literary figures, he reconstructs their spiritual world, intellectual evolution, and aesthetic worldview through psychologically



charged details and memory-based narrative structures. Consequently, his portraits should be interpreted not simply as critical essays but as aesthetically integrated literary-critical texts possessing both documentary authenticity and artistic persuasiveness.

The literary portrait represents one of the most sophisticated genres of literary criticism because it requires the simultaneous realization of several methodological objectives. On the one hand, the critic must preserve historical and biographical accuracy; on the other hand, he must reveal the inner logic of the writer's artistic individuality through expressive artistic devices. Such dual functionality transforms the literary portrait into a genre situated at the intersection of criticism, memoir literature, and artistic journalism.


Qo'shjonov approached this genre with exceptional methodological sensitivity. His portraits are distinguished by conceptual integrity, semantic density, and emotional authenticity. Rather than relying on generalized descriptions, the critic constructs literary personalities through concrete episodes, symbolic details, and psychologically meaningful recollections. This method allows the reader to perceive the literary figure as a living and dynamically developing personality rather than a static biographical subject.

A defining feature of Qo'shjonov's literary portraits is their reliance on factual precision combined with figurative expressiveness. Documentary materials, historical evidence, personal observations, and memoiristic fragments are carefully interwoven into a coherent artistic structure. Consequently, scholarly objectivity does not suppress artistic imagery; instead, both elements coexist in productive harmony.

One of the most distinctive dimensions of Qo'shjonov's literary-critical methodology is the poetics of memory. Memory in his portraits functions not merely as a source of information but as an aesthetic mechanism shaping the compositional and emotional structure of the text. Through recollections, personal encounters, and symbolic episodes, the critic reconstructs the atmosphere of an entire literary epoch.

This memory-based narrative strategy enables the critic to transcend chronological narration and create emotionally resonant portrayals of literary figures. The remembered detail often becomes the semantic nucleus around which the entire portrait is organized. Such compositional techniques reveal the critic's sophisticated understanding of artistic structure and narrative psychology. For example, in portraits dedicated to Pirimqul Qodirov and Odil Yoqubov, seemingly insignificant memories acquire symbolic and philosophical significance. A recollection related to student life, an old journal page, or an ordinary conversation gradually evolves into a metaphorical representation of the writer's creative destiny and moral worldview. Through this method, memory becomes an instrument of psychological revelation and artistic generalization.

Moreover, Qo'shjonov's recollections are characterized by a high degree of emotional credibility. The reader does not merely receive factual information but experiences the spiritual atmosphere surrounding the literary figure. This experiential quality significantly enhances the aesthetic impact of the portraits and strengthens their persuasive power.



Another remarkable feature of Qo‘shjonov’s literary portraits is the precision of psychological observation. The critic demonstrates an exceptional ability to reveal human character through seemingly minor details. Facial expressions, gestures, conversational intonations, and everyday habits are transformed into psychologically meaningful artistic signs.

Such an approach reflects the influence of realistic literary traditions in which external details function as indicators of internal emotional states. However, Qo‘shjonov enriches this tradition through literary-critical interpretation. Every detail in his portraits possesses semantic and symbolic significance, contributing to the revelation of the writer’s intellectual and spiritual individuality.

Importantly, the critic avoids excessive idealization. While emphasizing the literary achievements and moral qualities of writers, he also acknowledges contradictions, weaknesses, and moments of creative difficulty. Nevertheless, these shortcomings are interpreted dialectically—as inevitable components of artistic and personal development. Such balanced representation increases the authenticity and scholarly value of the portraits.


From a stylistic perspective, Qo‘shjonov’s literary portraits demonstrate remarkable lexical richness and syntactic flexibility. His language combines academic precision with artistic expressiveness, resulting in a sophisticated literary-critical discourse. Scientific terminology coexists with metaphorical constructions, emotionally charged epithets, rhetorical parallelisms, and complex syntactic formations.

This stylistic hybridity enables the critic to maintain analytical rigor while simultaneously achieving aesthetic influence. Particularly noteworthy is his ability to construct multilayered sentences characterized by semantic depth and rhythmic balance. Such syntactic complexity contributes to the intellectual intensity of the text and reflects the critic’s highly developed literary consciousness.

Furthermore, the critic’s language frequently acquires philosophical resonance. Concepts such as creativity, memory, artistic responsibility, and spiritual integrity are explored not merely as literary categories but as existential dimensions of human experience. Consequently, Qo‘shjonov’s portraits transcend conventional literary criticism and approach the level of philosophical-aesthetic reflection.

In conclusion, Matyoqub Qo‘shjonov made an outstanding contribution to the development of Uzbek literary criticism and, in particular, to the evolution of the literary portrait genre. His portraits are characterized by the harmonious integration of scholarly analysis, psychological observation, memoiristic narration, and artistic interpretation. Through the poetics of memory, symbolic detail, and compositional integrity, the critic succeeded in creating multidimensional representations of literary personalities.

Qo‘shjonov’s literary portraits should therefore be regarded not merely as critical-biographical essays but as complex aesthetic texts reflecting the intellectual and spiritual dynamics of Uzbek literary culture. Their enduring significance lies in their ability to unite



documentary authenticity with artistic persuasiveness, thereby preserving both the historical reality and the inner human truth of literary figures.

For contemporary literary scholarship, Qo'shjonov's critical heritage remains an important methodological and aesthetic source. His portraits continue to demonstrate how literary criticism can simultaneously function as scholarly inquiry, artistic creation, and cultural memory.

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