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PRIORITY AREAS OF PHILOLOGICAL RESEARCH IN THE 21ST CENTURY

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ABOUT ARTICLE

Key words: comparative and contrastive studies, scientific-theoretical, historical-literary and methodological approaches, unified system, axiology, national mentality, philosophical reflection.

Received: 10.06.25 **Accepted:** 12.06.25 **Published:** 14.06.25 **Abstract:** The article discusses the necessity of improving the system of scientific-theoretical, historical-literary, and methodological approaches as a unified structure in modern literary studies. At the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries, the thematic scope of literary research has been partially renewed. Understandably, ideological and political themes — key components of these studies have undergone transformations. There is a shift toward axiology, national mentality, philosophical reflection on the rich heritage of peoples, and comparative studies of both individual literatures and the works of specific writers. In the field of literary studies, textbooks, manuals, and anthologies are being published and republished for schools, lyceums, and higher education institutions. There is a wealth of scholarly work on Russian literature, comparative literature, and translation studies, covering both the history of literature and literary theory. The article also explores the scientific concepts of two Uzbek female scholars — S.E. Kamilova and N.M. Petrukhina.

Introduction

The 21st century is the century of globalization, and this also applies to literary studies. A one-sided approach to research no longer meets the demands of modern, competent investigation into the multilayered issues of the field. These challenges have arisen due to the current stage of dialectical-logical cognition, which has been transformed by global trends in the development of artistic and scientific thinking, as well as the integration and globalization of scientific knowledge. As a result, there is a growing need to improve the system of scientific-theoretical, historical-literary, and methodological directions as a holistic system within modern literary science.

In the first two decades of the 21st century, the thematic scope of literary studies has been partially renewed. Understandably, ideological and political themes—core components of previous research—have also undergone transformation. The focus has shifted toward axiology, national mentality, philosophical interpretation of the rich cultural heritage of peoples, and the comparative and contrastive study of both individual literatures and the works of specific writers. This trend is evident in both major Russian research and in literary dissertations and monographs produced in independent Uzbekistan.

In these regions, the primary focus has been on the study of national literatures and languages. In Russia, research is conducted under the following specializations:

- 10.01.01 Russian Literature (Philological Sciences)
- 10.01.02 Literature of the Peoples of the Russian Federation (specifying a particular literature or group of literatures) (Philological Sciences)
- 10.01.03 Literature of Foreign Countries (specifying a particular literature) (Philological Sciences)
 - 10.02.01 Russian Language (Philological Sciences)
- 10.02.02 Languages of the Peoples of the Russian Federation (specifying a particular language or language family) (Philological Sciences)

In sovereign Uzbekistan, scientific research is carried out in the fields of language and literature under the following specializations:

- 10.00.01 Uzbek Language
- 10.00.02 Uzbek Literature
- 10.00.04 Languages and Literatures of the Peoples of Europe, America, and Australia (Philological Sciences)
- 10.00.06 Comparative Literary Studies, Contrastive Linguistics, and Translation Studies (Philological Sciences)

In Russia, scientific research on theoretical issues of language and literature is conducted under the specializations 10.01.08 – Theory of Literature. Textology (Philological Sciences), and 10.02.19 – Theory of Language (Philological Sciences). In Uzbekistan, theoretical scholars work under the specialization 10.00.07 – Theory of Literature.

Prof. A.S. Likhodzievsky of UzGUMYA, in his 2013 review titled "Scientific Innovations of Philologists – Russianists of Uzbekistan", noted:

"Over the past three years, scientific and publishing activity has clearly intensified, despite objective difficulties in publishing books and collections. Literary scholars and linguists–Russianists have produced a fairly extensive and diverse output" [3, p.186].

In the field of literary studies, textbooks, teaching aids, and anthologies are being published and republished for schools, lyceums, and universities [4].

"Prominent philologists of Uzbekistan have released individual monographs, which also play a significant role in the training of philology students. Among them, Doctor of Philological Sciences, Professor A.N. Davshan stood out with two substantial studies: Asia in Russian Literature of the 20th Century and The Works of Mikhail Prishvin in the Context of World Literature."

A number of monographs were published by Russianists at UzGUMYA:

- Candidate of Philological Sciences, Associate Professor N.M. Petrukhina The Works of Dostoevsky and the World "Classics" (2012),
- Candidate of Philological Sciences, Associate Professor G.T. Garipova The Artistic Model of Existence in the 20th Century (2012),
- Candidate of Philological Sciences, Associate Professor O.Ch. Khegai Russian Prose at the Turn of the 20th–21st Centuries (2012),

• Candidate of Philological Sciences, Associate Professor N.A. Syzdykbayev – Artistic Neomythologism in the Literature of the Second Half of the 20th Century (2012).

The overview of recent scientific works by Russianists allows us to conclude that Russian studies in Uzbekistan are on the rise [3, pp.187–188].

Among the literary dissertations defended in recent decades, one may highlight the work of M.V. Tsai, devoted to the works of Dina Rubina – a talented writer of Tashkent origin and a graduate of the Philological Faculty of Tashkent State University (now National University of Uzbekistan) [8]. One should also mention works at the intersection of linguistics and literary studies [9].

Thus, the textbooks, manuals, monographs, and dissertations by Uzbekistani Russianist literary scholars are diverse in theme and in scientific concept. It is also worth noting that these works are generally accompanied by numerous publications in collections and journals, including international ones.

Among the works written in the Uzbek language and relevant to our review are the candidate dissertations of D.A. Khatamova [7] and P.O. Ruzmanova [6], of a science-studies nature.

Works on Russian literature, comparative literary studies, and translation studies are richly represented in both the history of literature and literary theory. Noteworthy among these are the dissertations by S.E. Kamilova [2] and N.M. Petrukhina [5].

The doctoral dissertation by S.E. Kamilova titled "The Development of the Poetics of the Short Story Genre in Russian and Uzbek Literature of the Late 20th – Early 21st Century", submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philological Sciences under the specialization 10.00.06 – Comparative Literary Studies, Contrastive Linguistics and Translation Studies (Philological Sciences), is devoted to the study of evolutionary changes in the poetics of the short story genre, based on concrete examples from Russian and Uzbek literature at the turn of the 21st century.

The identification of Uzbek literature within the global context is a pressing task for Uzbek writers, translators, and literary scholars. In this regard, Kamilova's dissertation deserves special attention for its relevance, originality, and innovative approach to the research problem.

Identifying universal patterns in the global literary process and the national specificity of individual literatures in the modern era—particularly in the development of the poetics of genre—is one of the fundamental challenges of philological science. The modern Uzbek and Russian short story is a distinct phenomenon shaped by the literary developments in their respective countries and by world literature as a whole. The need for a scholarly analysis of the evolution of the contemporary short story in Uzbek and Russian literature—as a genre reflecting the general patterns of literary development and the state of culture—is driven by the aspiration to comprehend the dynamics of world literature. This issue is meticulously examined in Kamilova's research.

Given that scientific inquiries into the genre of the short story—its poetics, evolution, and its role in the contemporary literary process—are actively pursued at leading research institutions and universities around the world, the scholarly work of S.E. Kamilova is timely and significant in terms of placing Uzbek literature within the global literary context.

It is worth emphasizing the thorough exploration of the problem and the researcher's scholarly intuition in analyzing the artistic features of the short stories. The high-quality literary translations of Uzbek authors' short stories into Russian reflect the deep patriotism and dedicated labor of S.E. Kamilova—not only as a scholar and educator but also as a translator.

In Uzbekistan, the comprehension of the short story genre is approached in two directions: through the analysis of the general state of epic genres during specific historical periods (N. Vladimirova, M. Sultanova, Kh. Dostmukhamedov), and from the perspective of artistic method and style (I. Sultan, U. Normatov, N. Rakhimjonov, B. Nazarov).

At the end of the 20th century, Uzbek literary scholars began to actively explore the poetics of Eastern literary genres. The theory of the short story genre began to be interpreted within a cultural framework (Kh. Boltaboev, D. Kuranov).

The need for a scholarly analysis of the evolution of the contemporary short story in Uzbek and Russian literature—as a genre that reflects the general patterns of literary development and the state of culture—stems from the aspiration to understand the logic of the progression of world literature.

In the dissertation, the poetics of the modern Russian and Uzbek short story is systematized through the triad "author-narrator-character," which allows the short story of

the late 20th – early 21st century to be identified as an aesthetic phenomenon in the modern literary processes of Uzbekistan and Russia.

Moreover, the study demonstrates a tolerant and balanced comparative approach to Russian and Uzbek short stories, not only from a literary point of view but also from a cultural perspective. This contributes to the development of intercultural relations and fosters respect for both one's own and other cultures.

Through the analysis of Kamilova S.E.'s doctoral dissertation, it becomes clear that in selecting material, the researcher paid particular attention to stylistic and genre-defining elements of the short story, which are the core subject and object of the research. From the vast corpus of short prose, works were selected for general review and detailed analysis that are marked by distinctive genre structure and verifiable artistic value—stories that have, to varying degrees, received critical acclaim and public recognition. These include Russian and Uzbek short stories that fit the key thematic fields of short prose; Russian stories shortlisted for the Yuri Kazakov Literary Prize for Best Short Story between 2000–2011; as well as notable stories from the 1990s, considered landmark events in the literary transition at the turn of the century. The Uzbek short stories selected belong to authors for whom the short story is a dominant form in their work and whose writing is distinguished by topical content and innovative artistic form. [2]

It is also worth noting the theoretical contributions of Russian literary scholars such as M. Remizov, N. Ivanov, S. Chuprinin, and E. Ermolin. We join Kamilova S.E. in her conclusion that "in the analyzed concepts, literary development is traditionally interpreted as the succession of artistic systems, albeit in a somewhat modified form" [2, pp. 26–27]. It is rightly observed that at the turn of the 20th–21st centuries, both Russian and Uzbek literatures underwent a transition in their systems of artistic expression, including in the short story genre. The paradigms analyzed by Kamilova S.E. in the context of the modern literary process are based on aesthetic and theoretical-literary principles, highlighting the opposition between "progressiveness, logic, linearity" and "discontinuity, non-linearity" in the development of literature during this transitional period.

The researcher pays particular attention to short stories with a prognostic function that emerged in Russia during the transitional period at the turn of the 20th–21st centuries. These

include works by L. Petrushevskaya (New Robinsons (Chronicle of the 20th Century), Hygiene), V. Makanin (the cycle Surrealism in the Proletarian District), V. Babenko (New-Moscow, Games on Red Square (Monologue of an Impotent Man)), M. Weller (Career to Nowhere, Monument to Dantes), and V. Pelevin (Day of the Bulldozer Operator, among others). In Uzbekistan, notable examples include N. Eshonkul (Muolaja [Healing], Ajr [Retribution]), U. Hamdam (Haykallar oroli [The Island of Vanity]), and R. Rakhmat (Adashboy [The Lost One]).

As noted earlier, the conceptual themes of these stories revolve around liberation from totalitarian consciousness, personal freedom, the relationship between the individual and the state, and the erosion of individuality.

Another important contribution to literary studies is the doctoral research of N.M. Petrukhina, titled The Works of F.M. Dostoevsky in the Context of 20th-Century World Literature, submitted for the Doctor of Sciences (DSc) degree in Philology, specializing in 10.00.04 – Languages and Literatures of the Peoples of Europe, America, and Australia (Philological Sciences).

Currently, Uzbek literary studies are also increasingly focused on the scholarly exploration of prominent writers who have achieved global recognition. Of particular interest is the system of multi-level correlations between Dostoevsky's creative and philosophical vision and the literary systems of 20th-century Russian, Western European, and Uzbek literature.

In Petrukhina's dissertation, the formation of a receptive system for Dostoevsky's aesthetic and artistic-philosophical concepts is examined through a unified conceptual lens. The study identifies the role, significance, and patterns of influence that Dostoevsky's artistic system has had on shaping the world literary process of the 20th century—including its impact on Russian, Western European, and Uzbek novelistic traditions.

It is also worth emphasizing that this dissertation contributes to identifying the Uzbek novel of the 20th century within the global literary context—an important objective for Uzbek writers, translators, and literary scholars. The study traces the evolutionary changes in the poetics of the Uzbek novel through works such as Abdullah Qodiri's Bygone Days and Ulugbek Hamdam's Revolt and Submission.

Identifying the general patterns of the world literary process alongside the national specificities of individual literatures—especially as they interact through genre poetics—is one of the fundamental objectives of philological science in the modern era.

The artistic interactions related to Dostoevsky's work are explored at multiple levels: individual works, individual authors, and within the broader framework of world literature. By constructing a receptive field for research—both in terms of the influence of Russian and world cultural traditions on Dostoevsky's creative concept, and the influence of his work on the evolutionary development of Russian, Western European, and Uzbek literary processes of the 20th century—the researcher has aimed to consider all the key dimensions of artistic interaction.

As the researcher notes, Dostoevsky's cultural era has long surpassed the literary period of Russian literature of the late 19th – early 20th centuries, extending its influence across the entirety of 20th-century world literature. The most paradoxical comparative studies of Dostoevsky's work within the system of the global literary process are fully justified by the various levels of interliterary communication.

Studying Dostoevsky's oeuvre within the multi-layered system of world literature allows us to determine the genesis and logic of complex interconnections, which in turn highlights the methodological significance of Dostoevsky's artistic system in analyzing the global literary process.

In her doctoral dissertation, N.M. Petrukhina investigates the formation of a receptive system for the aesthetic and philosophical-artistic concepts of Dostoevsky's work through a unified conceptual framework. She identifies the role, significance, and regularities of the writer's artistic system and its influence on the development of 20th-century world literature—including Russian, Western European, and Uzbek novelistic traditions.

Based on the content-related aspect of N.M. Petrukhina's research, it may be concluded that this is a fundamental scholarly work. It explores the multi-level reception of Dostoevsky within 20th-century Russian, Western European, and Uzbek literature, and the depth of the author's philological expertise enables her to engage with a vast and complex body of material.

The researcher, addressing the dynamics of the formation of the world literary tradition through the prism of Dostoevsky's artistic system, clarifies the methodological issues of

studying the writer's texts within the contextual field of global literary tradition. She defines the principles of receptive aesthetics and positions Dostoevsky's works as a foundation of the "heritage of continuity" within the Russian realist tradition. This, in turn, has fostered the development of multi-layered artistic thinking in numerous writers, including M. Zoshchenko, O. Forsh, Y. Trifonov, V. Pietsukh, V. Makanin, and D. Galkovsky.

Particularly valuable are N.M. Petrukhina's reflections, such as: "Paradoxical as it may seem, it is Dostoevsky the realist who stands at the origins of the formation of existential literary consciousness" [5, p. 164], a claim supported by the views of French and German existentialists.

As the researcher points out, existential issues are not merely present in Dostoevsky's system—they become a strategy in the conceptualization of realist postulates, achieved through the dismantling of the "truth" behind existential resolutions to the core existential question: nothing can be higher than the Absolute Freedom of the Individual. Hence, the recurring themes of alienation, loneliness, and Napoleonic ambition. Dostoevsky offers a clear realist response to this dilemma: in contrast to Absolute Freedom, he posits the Idea of self-restraint of the Individual, attainable through self-sacrifice, suffering, and ultimately—catharsis [5, p. 166].

By defining the writer's artistic thinking as "existential realism" and emphasizing the existential orientation of Dostoevsky's worldview and the realist poetics of its artistic resolution, N.M. Petrukhina concludes that Dostoevsky's ideological principles exerted a powerful influence on Western European existentialists. This insight opens up a compelling line of inquiry into the reception of existentialist writers through the lens of Dostoevsky's tradition.

One of the merits of N.M. Petrukhina's research lies in her meticulous exploration of the interrelation between the East and Dostoevsky's creative output. Her evaluation of the current state of serious research on the reception-based interaction between Dostoevsky's works and the "East"—understood through concepts such as "Eastern mentality," "Eastern tradition," and "Oriental themes"—is grounded in the recognition that very few studies address this complex issue. Of particular note is the quotation cited by Petrukhina:

"The East does not appear in Dostoevsky's works sporadically, merely as ornament or in the form of exotic scenes; rather, it plays a crucial role in his aesthetic conception of the world and of humanity. The East entered organically and profoundly into his artistic thinking, manifesting itself throughout the intricate system of Dostoevsky's imagery, and became an integral part of his artistic cosmos." [1, pp. 4–5]

Further, Ashitova underscores the importance of framing the issue not merely in terms of identifying individual coordinates, but within a system of philosophical and worldview correlations—not "Dostoevsky and the East" or even "The East in Dostoevsky's Works," but precisely: "The East in Dostoevsky's Artistic Consciousness." As the scholar notes:

"The question of Dostoevsky's direct influence on the development of Eastern literatures, in all their geopolitical diversity, is a highly complex one, and today it represents one of the most promising directions in global literary studies." [5, pp. 192–193]

The researcher refrains from making emphatic claims about Dostoevsky's direct impact on the formation and evolution of the Uzbek novel tradition, deeming this a complex and nuanced matter. However, she does offer a bold insight: despite Past Days (O'tgan kunlar) being the first Uzbek novel, its generic coordinates align fully with M.M. Bakhtin's novelistic concept, which justifies analyzing it within the context of Dostoevsky's novelistic tradition.

Today, there is broad scholarly consensus on the invaluable influence of Dostoevsky's works on the development of the stream-of-consciousness technique throughout world literature—including Russian, European, Latin American, Eastern, and other literary traditions.

Of particular interest is the chapter dedicated to the novelistic polyphony of F.M. Dostoevsky and its reflection in the Uzbek literary process of the 20th century. In this context, the study examines the first Uzbek novel of the 20th century, Past Days (Oʻtgan kunlar) by Abdulla Qodiriy, and one of the early novels of the 21st century (representing a transitional period between the 20th and 21st centuries), Rebellion and Humility (Bunt i smirenie) by Ulugbek Khamdam. A comparative analysis is carried out between Qodiriy's Past Days and Dostoevsky's novelistic poetics, with particular focus on the artistic interpretation of the religious-Christian "cathartic" conceptual sphere in Dostoevsky's Crime and Punishment and Khamdam's Rebellion and Humility. The selection of Qodiriy's classical Uzbek novel and Khamdam's contemporary work is methodologically sound and well-justified.

The study traces the transformational processes of aesthetic and ideological novelistic contexts in the development of the Uzbek novel and reveals the extent to which Dostoevsky's

novelistic model—particularly in its theoretical elaboration through M.M. Bakhtin's concepts—has influenced Uzbek literature.

The identified functional role of Dostoevsky's work in Uzbek literature is accurate and, indeed, difficult to overestimate. His concepts of the polyphonic and ideological novel, as well as his psychological and artistic innovations, have become a "reservoir of continuity" for many Uzbek writers.

In our own doctoral research on the developmental trends of contemporary Uzbek novels, we also noted the reception of Dostoevsky's aesthetics. Particularly during the period of Uzbekistan's independence, many Uzbek novelists have sought to assimilate Dostoevsky's stylistic approaches. It is also important to note that theorists predominantly employed M.M. Bakhtin's theory of the novel, given that Bakhtin's theoretical framework is fundamentally rooted in the analysis of Dostoevsky's works.

Undoubtedly, the consideration of S.E. Kamilova's dissertation "The Development of the Poetics of the Short Story Genre in Russian and Uzbek Literature at the Turn of the 20th–21st Centuries" and N.M. Petrukhina's dissertation "The Work of F.M. Dostoevsky in the Context of 20th-Century World Literature", within the framework of translation theory and the methodology of comparative literary studies, significantly enriches not only national but also global literary scholarship.

We would like to emphasize that in any literary process, one can trace the shifting systems of artistic coordinates, which presents a challenge for literary scholars applying analytical methods. In conducting her doctoral research, S.E. Kamilova utilized methods of comparative-typological, comparative-historical, and structural-semantic analysis, as well as hermeneutic principles (interpretation of texts) and traditional literary analysis techniques. In turn, N.M. Petrukhina applied historical-functional and structural-typological methods within the framework of receptive aesthetics, as well as intertextual and bi-intertextual analysis, elements of comparative literature methods, principles of literary hermeneutics, and motif analysis. In other words, both researchers developed structural systems of analysis for the respective problems under investigation.

It should be emphasized that the dissertations of S.E. Kamilova and N.M. Petrukhina greatly enrich both national and international literary studies, and they are likely to become

methodological foundations for future research. What is shared between these two studies is their foundation in comparative literary scholarship.

In conclusion, we would like to quote one of the leading Uzbek literary scholars of the 20th century, Ozod Sharafutdinov:

"Comparative literature plays an important role in the study and development of national literary histories. Interliterary relations most effectively contribute to identifying and solving problems within each national literature—especially when it comes to typologies of genres, movements, and styles—which in turn enables a deeper understanding of their development." [10, p. 3]

Having analyzed the doctoral studies of S.E. Kamilova and N.M. Petrukhina, we affirm the fruitfulness of the interconnectedness between Russian and Uzbek artistic traditions, while also acknowledging the undeniable independence and distinctive originality in the development of the Uzbek short story at the turn of the 20th–21st centuries and the Uzbek novel of the 20th century—making them especially appealing for further scholarly investigation.

Due to the limitations of a single article, we have highlighted only the dominant aspects of the research conducted by Kamilova and Petrukhina.

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