



EXPRESSION OF ORPHANS' LIFE THROUGH THE THEME OF "HUNGER" IN BILDUNGSROMANS

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Article history:	Abstract:
Received: June 10 th 2023 Accepted: July 10 th 2023 Published: August 14 th 2023	Bildungsroman is a type of novel, depicting the physical and moral development of the main hero, covering the period from childhood to adulthood. As the hero is usually an orphan child the path towards maturity becomes harder, demanding her or him to overcome various obstacles. "Hunger" is one of the most common motifs that writer uses to describe the real adversities of orphan children. This article provides some examples taken from Bildungsromans.

Keywords: bildungsromans, orphan hero, motif, hunger, adventure novels

Although the description of the image of orphans in literature increased mainly in the 19th and 20th centuries, its roots go back to folklore examples. British researcher Melanie Kimball analyzed 50 folktales of different nations and showed that although the stories of orphans differ from each other in terms of the description of details, there are elements that are common for most of them.¹ In particular, it was found that in most of the analyzed fairy tales, the main character is an orphan, and most of those orphans use their intelligence to overcome various life obstacles. So, it can be said that such type of fairy tales inspired the development of "adventure novels" that showed the life of a hero who moved from place to place experiencing amazing adventures. over time. Moreover, at the end of the fairy tales about orphan girls, it is observed that they married a smart guy as a reward. These series lead to the conclusion that these fairy tales served as a basis for the emergence of family novels of a social orientation.

According to M. Kimball, orphaned images are a symbol of separation of people, from each other and from society. They will not even belong to the simplest social unit of society - the family.² In some societies, orphans are seen as people who need to be protected and cared for, while some nations treat them as people who are separated from other members of society. Because of this, orphans are often characters condemned to loneliness, and realistic depictions of their lives and emotions are common to all literature. Since orphans do not have parents to guide them through the good and the bad, the way society treats them, be it negative or positive, obviously has an impact on their character and destiny.

The author who covered the most orphan characters in English literature is Ch. Dickens. Indeed, the educational novels of Ch. Dickens have a didactic character, and allows to reveal constructive and destructive mechanisms of society.³ William Makepeace Thackeray describes Dickens's novels, noting that he had a ⁴ "great talent" for creating orphan characters. Compared to the works of other writers created in that period, Dickens' novels are distinguished by the fact that they illuminate the most relevant, sensitive points of life. As proof of our opinion, we can cite the following sentences that the Indian scientist BP Chaudhuri (1992) said about Charles Dickens: "*Dickens has a unique position in English literature for his special form of self-expression in prose, fiction. Dickens's artistic method, his choice of material and his manner of rendering that material, is Dickens's style*"⁵ Here, the scholar emphasizes that Dickens's artistic method, choice of material and way of expressing this material constitute his original style.

In almost all English and Uzbek Bildungsromans, the hero is often not satisfied with the food given to him and almost always described being hungry. That is, the authors vividly show that since the orphan child does not have a

¹ Melanie A. Kimball. From Folktales to Fiction: Orphan Characters in Children's Literature. – Library trends. Vol. 47. No. 3. – Winter 1999 . – P. 557-558.

²The same source. - P.558-578.

³ Simhachalam Thamarana. Origin and Development of Bildungsroman Novels in English Literature. International journal of English Language, Literature and Humanities, Volume III, Issue VI, August , 2015 – ISSN 2321-7065 .

⁴ <https://www.themorgan.org/collection/A-Letter-from-Charles-Dickens/41>

⁵ Ali Albashir Mohammed Alhaj. Charles Dickens's David Copperfield: New Critical Reconsiderations. English Language and Literature Studies; Vol. 5, No. 4; 2015, ISSN 1925-4768 E-ISSN 1925-4776

close relative, often his mother, no one is interested in his condition, whether he is hungry or not. In addition, "hunger" is illustrated as the most convenient way to punish or scare those children. For example, Jane in "Jane Eyre" by Sh. Bronte, Harry in "Harry Potter" by J.K. Rowling, Oliver in "Oliver Twist" and David in "David Copperfield" by Ch. Dickens were often kept hungry as a form of deliberate punishment.

The motif of "hunger" is very impressively expressed in such English and Uzbek works as "Oliver Twist", "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer", "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn", "Nicholas Nickleby", "The Boy with Five Children" ("Besh bolali yigitcha"), "Naughty Boy" ("Shum bola"), "The streets of Childhood and Adolescence" ("Bolalik va o'smirlik ko'chalari"). For example, in Erkin Malik's novel "The streets of Childhood and Adolescence" in the chapter called "Ko'zbo'yama osh", the boy feeding the animals in the barn thinks that his belly is never full of food, and says, "It's really great for animals, there is someone like me who will feed them."⁶ But, remembering Acha Khola, Yaxshi amaki, Mujgon opa, Makhsimcha aka, who treat him well, he says to himself, "There are people who think of you too, don't be ungrateful." The appearance of the child is fully revealed in the sentences quoted by the hero: "yorilgan koptokdek shalvirab yuraman, qachon qornim to'yib non yeganimni bilmayman, qo'llarim paxta savaydigan savag'ichga o'xshaydi, qovurg'alarim ko'yilagimni turtib chiqib turadi" ("I walk around like a broken ball, I don't know when I've had enough to eat, my hands are like a cotton scutching stick, my ribs are sticking out of my shirt.")⁷ By these sentences the appearance and his living conditions of the hero can also be clearly imagined. He was embarrassed by the boldness of his clothes, he would sneak into the classroom and quietly sit down.

Through the following words that the stepmother always repeats, her unkind treatment and unloving attitude is understood clearly: "chillashirsan, hademay o'lib ketasan, senga non ham, kiyim ham hayf" ("... you are gonna die soon, giving you food and clothes is just a waste of sources.")⁸ One day, because the fodder was hard as a rock, the boy added more water to the fodder, and as a result, the cattle did not eat this fodder. Then the stepmother presses the child's head to the manger telling him to eat the fodder, beats him with a wooden broom that is used for cleaning the cattle's waste. She didn't stop with this. On that day, she adds a cup of water to a bowl of food and gives it to the child as a continuation of the punishment. All these actions of the stepmother are depicted to show the hardships that the orphan child had to overcome.

The author often used insulting words in the speech of a stepmother such as "dog's back leg", "hungry ghost" and many more which also serve to reveal the attitude towards the orphan. The chapter called "Good uncle" ("Yaxshi amaki")⁹ tells about the "Tolmachoy" incident. According to it, on the teacher's table all children put the food they have brought from their home, they sat around the table and eat the food together. On such days, the hero, who cannot afford to share anything, either has a "toothache" or a "stomachache", because of shame. As another shameful situation in the school, it is described that the child takes pieces of bread left under the children's desks and puts them in his bag and fills his stomach with these pieces on the way. The boy goes home with a full stomach and wants to make his mother happy, because he knows very well that if he says "I'm hungry" he will be "cursed" by unpleasant words of his stepmother again. On the days when there were no bread pieces left, he got his food from aunt Acha's house: "Topildi qurdalar bo'lmagan kuni noiloj Acha xolanikiga kiraman. Shundog' ham kunini zo'rg'a ko'rib turgan kampirning noniga sherik bo'lishdan uyalmayman". ("On days when there are no scraps to be found, I reluctantly go to aunt Acha's house. Even so, I am not ashamed to share the bread of an old woman who is barely making her life.")¹⁰ It is understood that although the old woman is not full herself, she always welcomes the child with an sincere kindness. In the image of this woman, the author revives the image of a mother waiting for her son, who left home for the war. Also, through the image of the hero going to the old woman's house knowing that what he is doing is wrong, it can be felt that the author embodied the situation of the helpless child. The boy, who has had his stomach filled at Aunt Acha's, shouts: "There is no one happier than me in this world."

In Khudoyberdi Tokhtabayev's work "A Boy with Five Children", the author repeatedly refers to the motifs of hunger and helplessness. At the beginning of the novel, one can feel how hard was the life of people due to the war. This helplessness was vividly depicted through Omon's crying "Usmon ate my bread", when Sulton exchanged all his school supplies for bread or fruit, when he ate all the porridge that had been saved for breakfast and Orifjon, Zulayho and Usmon went to school without eating anything. When Orifjon and his brothers lost their parents, they were sent to an orphanage. At first, they lived in the orphanage in good conditions, with clean clothes, having a meal three times a day, being surrounded by the kindness of the director and educators, but soon more difficult days came to them. The carefree days ended very soon as the orphanage where they lived was closed, and the children were taken to different orphanages in Tashkent. It was very hard for the children to leave their home and their friends who have already become as a family for each other. Separated from his brothers, Orifjon was in a depressed state, and his parents' words "chirog'imiz o'chmasin" ("may our light not turn off") echoed under his ears all the time. However, the dream of gathering his family and returning home did not leave him for a moment. Orifjon, who suffered from need and loneliness, was in a completely helpless situation, especially when his younger sister Robiya was taken to the hospital. Although he didn't have a penny in his pocket, as a caring brother, he was even forced to commit a theft in order to take away a melon

⁶ Malik E. Bolalik va o'smirlik ko'chalari. – Toshkent: O'qituvchi, 2019. – B.8.

⁷ The same source. – P.10.

⁸ The same source. – P.10.

⁹ The same source. – P.118.

¹⁰ The same source. – P.24.

and grapes that his sick sister wished to eat. The struggle between good and evil, which breaks his heart, is described by the author as follows: "Nima bo'lganda ham qovunmi yoki bir-ikki bosh uzummi olib borishim kerak, bechora singillarim akam qachon keladi deb, kasalxonaning qizil darvozasi oldida ko'zlarini miltillatib mung'ayib o'tirishgandir. Olib boraman, o'lsam-o'lamanki, lekin, albatta olib boraman..... Nima, bitta qovun o'g'irlagani bilan odam o'g'ri bo'lib qolarmidi. O'zimga bo'lsa-ku hecham qilmasdim-a, lekin kasal singlimga juda achinib ketyapman".¹¹ ("I must take a melon or a couple of grapes to my poor sisters who is blinking and muttering in front of the red gate of the hospital, wondering when her brother will come. No matter what happens I will take it, even if I die, but I will definitely bring it... Why would a person become a thief by stealing a melon? I wouldn't do it for myself, but I feel sorry for my sick sister.") Unfortunately, the desire of making his sister happy leads him to prison.

Despite great difficulties, Orifjon managed to find his brothers and sisters and bring them home safely. However, these six simple-hearted naive children, who set out from Tashkent to Kokand on foot, face very difficult trials. When they run out of food, they begin to suffer from hunger. Expression of these sufferings through Omonjons whims contributes to enrich the work with truthful images and increase its artistic value:

At such times, Omon could be calmed down either with bread or with a new fairy tale. Then Dilbar begins to tell him a new tale. However, at the end of the story, Omon, who heard that the animals lived a happy life where there was plenty of food, starts to cry again because the animals were full and he was hungry. We can see that the writer uses small details to illuminate the inner experiences of orphans so skillfully, that the reader clearly feels the sufferings of the heroes.

Uzbek writer Gafur Ghulam also gives the description of the hero's hunger in the work "Naughty boy" ("Shum bola") in a humorous way: "Ammo, badanda bir sarkash a'zo bor, u mening ixtiyorimdan tashqari, o'zboshimcharoq. Unga mening hukmim o'tmaydi. Bilmaganlar bilsin, u a'zo kamdan-kam kishilarga vafo qilgan – qorin. U badan mulkining hokimligini ba'zan qo'ldan olib qo'yadi. Boshqa a'zolar ham uning isyonchi talablariga qo'shila boshlaydi".¹² ("However, there is an inobedient member in the body, it is out of my control. My judgement will not pass on it. Let those who don't know be aware that it was loyal to few people - the belly. It sometimes takes control over the body. Other members of body also begin to agree with his rebellious demands.") Here can be seen the unique style of the author in creating an artistic image. He is not only describing the hunger of the hero, but also hinting at the consequences of hunger. That is, it is skillfully revealed that a hungry person's eyes fall on haram food, his hands are reached out towards people, and his feet can take him to unexpected places. For this reason the heroes of these type of novels go either begging or stealing.

An English writer Ch. Dickens also brings the suffering of an orphan child to the level of a special theme in his works. This can be found in the novels "David Copperfield", "Nicholas Nickleby" and "Oliver Twist". Oliver, the hero of the author's novel "Oliver Twist", suffered from hunger like other children growing up in the "Workhouse". Oliver's experiences of hunger and loneliness are described in the following lines: "... what Oliver wanted a great deal more, a piece of bread and butter..."¹³ Despite being forbidden, young Oliver, overcome by hunger, finds the strength to ask for more food: "... he was desperate with hunger and reckless with misery. He rose from the table and advancing to the master said: Please sir I want some more."¹⁴ But it was inexcusable for the children to ask for food like this, and as a result, Oliver spent a week in the dark, he was sentenced to confinement in the room. Because of this guilt, the tyrant named Mr. Hemfield wants to sell the boy to a chimney cleaner.

In Nicholas Nickleby, the orphans of "Dotboys Hall" school are also always hungry. Despite the children were given a little and untasty food, they were forced to take stinky medicine every day before a meal in order to kill their appetite.

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