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ARTISTIC INTERPRETATION OF MORAL-SPIRITUAL EDUCATION AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE WORKS OF ERKIN A'ZAM

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Abstract. This article examines the artistic interpretation of moral and spiritual values, personal development, and national identity in the works of Erkin A'zam, one of the prominent representatives of modern Uzbek literature. Through an analysis of the stories *"Sovuq" (Cold)*, *"Ostona" (Threshold)*, *"Navoiyni o'qigan bolalar" (Children Who Read Navoi)*, and *"Fideldan salom" (Greetings from Fidel)*, the study explores the representation of moral education, the concept of the ideal human being, spiritual growth, and ethical values. The findings reveal the significance of Erkin A'zam's works in the spiritual and moral upbringing of the younger generation.

Keywords: spirituality, moral education, ideal human being, national values, spiritual development, artistic interpretation, spiritual heritage, humanism, reading culture, Erkin A'zam.

Introduction. In the era of globalization, preserving national values and instilling moral and ethical virtues in the younger generation have become urgent tasks. In this process, literature serves as an important educational tool. It possesses the power to influence the human soul, shape worldview, and guide individuals toward spiritual maturity.

One of the Uzbek writers who has profoundly portrayed human psychology and the spiritual world is Erkin A'zam. Through the lives of ordinary people, his works illuminate the moral issues of society, human relationships, and ethical values with remarkable artistic skill. Enhancing the spirituality of young people and fostering respect and loyalty toward national values are among the primary objectives of today's educational system. In this regard, the scientific study of the moral and ethical ideas presented in Erkin A'zam's works and the identification of their educational potential are highly relevant.

Research Methodology. The study employed comparative-analytical, descriptive, artistic-aesthetic, and interpretive methods. The content, system of characters, and ideological-artistic features of the writer's stories were analyzed through a moral and ethical perspective.

The article provides a comprehensive analysis of the system of moral and spiritual values reflected in Erkin A'zam's stories. The concepts of the ideal human being, spiritual growth, humanity, and national identity in the writer's works are examined from contemporary pedagogical and literary perspectives.

Moral and spiritual education is one of the most important factors in the development of any society. The formation of an individual's personality, worldview, beliefs, and ethical principles is closely connected with spiritual upbringing. The issue of human perfection occupies a central place in the works of Eastern thinkers such as Abu Nasr al-Farabi, Abu Ali ibn Sina (Avicenna), Alisher Navoi, and Bahauddin Naqshband. Their teachings interpret the education of the ideal person as a fundamental condition for social progress. In *The Virtuous City*, Al-Farabi emphasizes that the prosperity of society

depends on educating enlightened and morally mature individuals. Ibn Sina highlights the invaluable role of knowledge and education in achieving human perfection. In Navoi's works, the concept of the ideal person is interpreted through the principles of humanism, justice, generosity, and goodness.

Literature is one of the most effective means of moral education. Through literary works, readers observe life events, empathize with the emotional experiences of characters, and understand the ideas promoted by the author. Therefore, literature plays a significant role in educating the younger generation in the spirit of spiritual maturity.

In literary studies, spirituality and morality are regarded as essential categories that determine the ideological and aesthetic content of literary works. Particularly in Uzbek prose of the second half of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first century, special attention has been paid to depicting the inner world, psychological struggles, and spiritual quests of individuals. Among the writers who contributed to this trend, Erkin A'zam occupies a special place.

One of the most distinctive features of Erkin A'zam's stories is the predominance of psychological realism. Rather than focusing primarily on external events, the writer pays greater attention to revealing the psychological processes occurring within the human soul. As a result, although his characters are ordinary people, they emerge as figures possessing profound spiritual and philosophical significance.

The relationship between the individual and society, moral choice, conscience, and responsibility are among the leading themes of his works. Through the inner monologues, emotional experiences, and life decisions of his characters, the author explores the spiritual world of human beings.

National values and universal principles are harmoniously integrated in Erkin A'zam's writings. Respect for parents, love for the homeland, appreciation of human dignity, honesty, and justice are depicted in connection with the national mentality. At the same time, freedom of the individual, moral choice, and spiritual purification are interpreted as universal human values.

Erkin A'zam's story *"Sovuq"* portrays the problems of moral decline and alienation among people in modern society. The work depicts how the dominance of material interests weakens human relationships and reduces kindness and sincerity. Through the development of events, the author reveals the negative impact of spiritual poverty on social life. The story *"Ostona"* focuses on human relationships, family values, and the feeling of longing. Using a retrospective narrative structure, the author highlights subtle aspects of human psychology. Memory is portrayed as a spiritual treasure that connects a person's past and future. The work also emphasizes the importance of respecting human dignity and showing affection toward loved ones.

This story reveals the spiritual and educational significance of the great thinker Alisher Navoi. Through the character of Janobiddin Sayfiddinov, the ideas of devotion to knowledge, loyalty to faith, and aspiration toward perfection are promoted. The author demonstrates that an individual's choice of a spiritual ideal directly influences his worldview and personal development.

Written in a satirical style, *"Greetings from Fidel"* portrays a person's perception of life and the process of understanding reality. Through the character of Otaxon, the author reveals human simplicity and trustfulness. By means of satire, readers are encouraged to reflect more deeply on the realities of life.

The general content of the writer's works promotes such virtues as patriotism, justice, kindness, loyalty, honesty, and humanism. Through his characters, the author encourages readers to think independently, make ethical choices, and strive for spiritual maturity. In this respect, his works possess significant pedagogical value in the upbringing of the younger generation.

Today, protecting young people from various ideological threats, developing their independent thinking skills, and strengthening their spiritual immunity are among the most pressing tasks. In this process, literature—and particularly the works of Erkin A'zam—offers considerable educational opportunities.

The characters in his stories encounter life's realities, face complex moral choices, and strive for spiritual growth. This encourages young readers to reflect deeply on their own lives and behavior.

The story *"Children Who Read Navoi"* contributes to the development of reading culture and fosters respect for the heritage of great ancestors. *"Ostona"* promotes awareness of family values and human relationships. Meanwhile, *"Sovuq"* and *"Greetings from Fidel"* highlight moral problems within society and encourage readers to draw important life lessons.

Results. The analysis demonstrates that issues of moral and spiritual education occupy a central place in Erkin A'zam's creative work. The writer portrays the human psyche and spiritual world through psychological realism. The harmony between national and universal values emerges as one of the defining characteristics of his literary heritage. The findings of this study contribute to identifying the role of Erkin A'zam's works within the system of moral and spiritual education. The materials of the article may also be used in teaching Uzbek literature, literary theory, and spirituality-related subjects in higher educational institutions. Furthermore, the results can serve as a valuable source for future research on the spiritual education of youth.

Conclusion. In conclusion, Erkin A'zam's works represent an important literary source for understanding issues of moral-spiritual education and personal development. Through deep psychological portrayal, the writer reveals the inner world, ethical choices, and spiritual quests of individuals. His works combine national and universal values, promoting ideas that encourage the younger generation toward spiritual maturity.

Therefore, a comprehensive scholarly study of Erkin A'zam's literary heritage, the effective use of its educational potential within the educational system, and its application in shaping the spirituality of young people possess significant scientific and practical importance.

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