
RESEARCH ARTICLE

Literary-social Interpretations of the 'Stagnation' Period in 20th Century Uzbek Literature

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ABSTRACT

The period from the 1960s to the 1980s under Brezhnev is stamped in history, both Soviet and Uzbek, as "stagnation." Particularly for Uzbekistan, this period is known for such stigmatized events as the "cotton" or "Uzbek" scandal – the investigation into Uzbek First Party Secretary Sharaf Rashidov (1917-1983) for misrepresenting cotton harvest results during his twenty-four-year tenure – and the Afghan war (1979-1989). The experience of striving to save the nation from the aggressive system and stereotypes of society, from the "values" of slavery and subordination, is reflected in some examples of 20th-century Uzbek literature. The most prominent figures in XX Century's Uzbek literary history, Said Ahmad (1920-2007) in his novel *Silence* (Jimjiltlik, 1988) and O'tkir Hoshimov (1941-2013) in *Lives Passed in Dream* (Tushda kechgan umrlar, 1992) fell apart from the literature written as the Soviet Union describes the events of this period through a prism of moral monikers. Their understanding of their place in the world has always been through their connection to the nation. Social anxiety for them is inextricably linked to artistic anxiety and vice versa. Writers took it upon themselves to unmask the sins associated with this period, such as "two-facedness" (qiyofasizlik), bribery, fraud, cruelty, and bloodthirstiness (in reference to the Afghan war). The novels focusing on the "stagnation" period played an important role in transforming these moral criticisms of Soviet rule into criticisms of Soviet rule as colonial exploitation and serve as an attempt to unmask the horrors and misdeeds behind Soviet officialdom that have long gone unnoticed. In this paper, I will examine some of those moral constructions and how they framed the period in the minds of post-Soviet Uzbeks. The literary interpretations of the problems in stagnation will be analyzed in the historical, cultural, political and literary context. I hope this paper contributes to the research carried out on Central Asian studies, including Uzbek Literature Literary history, which is known very little worldwide.

KEYWORDS

Stagnation, mass repression, national identity, alienation, Uzbek literary politics, Afghan War.

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1. Introduction

Uzbek literature, including Uzbek Literary politics, has never been included in the anthology of World literature, which is taught across the World. Universities and readers worldwide have no exposure to Uzbek or any Central Asian history and culture. During the Cold War, some Western scholars such as Allworth D. Montgomery carried out a number of research in this field and made a big contribution to Central Asian Studies. Yet because of ideological battles in the Cold War between Uzbek and Western scholars and since they couldn't directly access the original resources written in Uzbek, in most cases, their research faced subjunctive conclusions.

Twentieth-century Uzbek literature, from Jadid (new) thinkers at the beginning of the century to Soviet and post-Soviet writers, has had a deeply political bent because most national writers have been deeply attracted to the idea of the nation and the homeland. Socio-political events happened in the history of Uzbekistan, as well as national revivals and moments towards national identity; in general, the black pages of history were successfully reflected in the best examples of Uzbek Literature.

The novels *Silence* (Jimjitlik) by Said Ahmad and *The Lives Passed in Dream* (Tushda kechgan umrlar) by O'tkir Hoshimov, involved in the current article analysis, are also about the recent history which is stamped as "stagnation" both in Soviet and Uzbek. This period, from the 1960s to the 1980s under Brezhnev, is also known for such stigmatized events as the "cotton" or "Uzbek" scandal – the investigation into Uzbek First Party Secretary Sharaf Rashidov (1917-1983) for misrepresenting cotton harvest results during his twenty-four-year tenure – and the Afghan war (1979-1989) for Uzbekistan. In novels written as the Soviet Union fell apart, the events of this period are reflected through a prism of moral monikers. Writers took it upon themselves to unmask the sins associated with this period, such as "two-facedness" (qiyofasizlik), bribery, fraud, cruelty, and bloodthirstiness (in reference to the Afghan war). Their art is found directly in the way they develop their characters around social questions. Scholars in Uzbekistan lately have attempted to abstract their inquiries from questions of social and political standing, but given the politicization of the Jadid and Soviet periods, such an approach is questionable.

In the current article, I will analyze how Uzbek writers have framed the experience of striving to save the nation from the aggressive system and stereotypes of society, from the "values" of slavery and subordination. And how they have reflected the period in the minds of post-Soviet Uzbeks.

I hope this paper contributes to the research in the field of Central Asia Studies in the following aspects: 1. Provides an initial overview of twenty centuries of Uzbek literature and literary politics, which is almost unknown among foreign specialists, experts and readers. 2. It provides an opportunity for researchers to study world literary politics in the context of Uzbek Literature using the comparative typological method. 3. Enrich sources regarding Central Asian studies with new perspectives, including interpretations of the stagnation period in Uzbek literature from the point of cultural, social and historical context

2. Literary Review

The period from the 1960s to the 1980s under Brezhnev is stamped in history, both Soviet and Uzbek, as "stagnation." Particularly for Uzbekistan, this period is known for such stigmatized events as the "cotton" or "Uzbek" scandal – the investigation into Uzbek First Party Secretary Sharaf Rashidov (1917-1983) for misrepresenting cotton harvest results during his twenty-four-year tenure – and the Afghan war (1979-1989).

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These moral terms and their colonial interpretation find reflection in the novels of arguably the two greatest writers, Said Ahmad's (1920-2007) *Silence* and O'tkir Hoshimov's (1941-2013) *Lives Passed in Dream* of this period.

Both Said Ahmad and O'tkir Hoshimov are some of the most prominent figures in Uzbek literature and had a great contribution to developing the XX Century's national literary art. Both writers lived and created in the years when the advanced intellectuals of the nation were involved in serving the false theory of class struggle, in whose works they were forced to reckon in part with this principle. It was impossible for writers to get rid of the impact of Marxist-Leninist ideology, and the method of socialist realism was dominant in studies of the Uzbek Soviet literature and literature itself during that period. As a result of literature becoming the most trusted servant of the Soviet government, there were thousands of literary writings that were completely ideological and political by nature and shallow and poor by artistic value, portraying a false picture. [Mirzaeva 2020]. Many artists fell victim to social, political, and ideological views, and many more became the eyes, ears, and voices of the Communist Party in the field of fiction. "From tribunes, Soviet writers promised that they would write 'according to the command of the heart.' And their hearts said that they wholly belonged to the party" [Rasulov 2002: 52].

During these years, the literary policy of the so-called totalitarian regime of the Soviet Union was not at all interested in a comprehensive description of the heroic past of Central Asia, especially the Uzbek people, the struggle of national devotees for freedom and solidarity. Ideologues of the Soviet period described the writing about the cultural and social life, customs, socio-political life, and beliefs of Uzbek peoples as an "idealization of the past" and "denial of current times." This dogmatic approach brought to writers' impossibility. During the Soviet era, some of the most talented and potential writers were physically destroyed, while another category was forced to be cautious. It was true that fear and caution were rampant, religion and philosophy were denied, and not only ancient values but also the inner world was governed - the personality was subordinated to society, and the dominant social mood of the time was reflected in the prose of the environment. While schematism, utopian ideas of false humanism, and a tendency to analyze from the point of view of the social classes were developed in literary works in the 1960s-1970s, Said Ahmad and O'tkir Hoshimov avoided interpreting communist ideology. Although characters in Ahmad's famous novels

"Skyline" (or Horizon) ("Ufq") and Hoshimov's "Between Entrance and Exit" (Ikki eshik orasi), "The Affairs of the World" (Dunyoning ishlari) were Soviet people, the social features of the human life were intertwined with their identity, and over generalization, a common characteristic of Soviet Literature, was avoided. Moreover, these works depicted an array of the complex issues of the nation, including fierce struggles between truth and injustice, and these works became favorite writings of the common people. In addition, society had enough of the dry absurdities of the socialist realism method and needed works of literature with heroic characters who were morally rich, pure, honest, and courageous and exhibited a variety of moral and ethical posits. Secondly, readers were tired of works written under the influence of socialist realism with its one-sided approach to life, por-traying characters only as purely positive or negative and with an inadequate idealization of the Soviet people.(see more Mirzaeva, 2020) On the contrary, the portrayal of individuals from different sides in the works mentioned above, including "Between Entrance and Exit" by Hoshimov and "Skyline" by Ahmad, appealed to the reader.

Uzbek literary critic Umarali Nomatov, in his book "Hopeful Principles" (Umidxash tamoyillar), says: "During the years of independence, many Soviet-era writers were forced to re-edit their earlier works in terms of the ideology of independence. But O'tkir Hoshimov's works did not need such editing" (Normatov, 2000:27).

Another respected scholar Nazarov says: " J. Barret, an American scholar, in his research on O'tkir Hoshimov's works says that Hoshimov started reflecting the deepest of human feelings, as the heralds of the national awakening of one of the leading nations in Central Asia in his early writings such as "Listen to your heart" appeared in 1970s and *Lives Passed in Dream* is a novel which authors' feelings of freedom completely and clearly reflected. (Nazarov,27)

Both Said Ahmad (1920-2007) and O'tkir Hoshimov (1941-2013), in their respective novels *Silence (Jimjilik, 1988)* and *Lives Passed in Dream (Tushda kechgan umrlar,1992)*, address questions of "stagnation" through examinations of Soviet life and its moral implications. Though the unprecedented freedom of *glasnost'* allowed these authors new freedom to express the previously inexpressible, I argue that, in keeping with the tradition of Uzbek twentieth-century literature, both authors hide some of their messages through a set of symbols traded amongst writers across the century. Uzbek literature of the Soviet-era specifically recommends reading allegory as "third-world literature", as Fredric claimed. (Fredric, 1986, 65-88).

3. Discussion and Result

The novel "Silence" was regularly published in 1986-1987 in the magazine "Sharq yulduzi" (The Star of the East), one of the leading journals in Uzbekistan in the Soviet period. And then, the novel appeared as a whole book in 1989, 150 000 copies. But the soviet censorship cut the "risky places" off the novel without warning the author. As a result, the crippled work reached the hands of the reader. The author has tried to recreate the novel over the past fourteen years, but all his efforts have been in vain. And finally, the original version of the novel "Silence" was republished in 2008 in the "O'zbekiston" publishing house. (Ahmad, 2008)

In *Silence* and *Lives Passed in Dream*, through their main characters (Tolibjon Usmonov and Jayrona in *Silence* and Rustam Shomatov in *Lives Passed in Dream* each of the two authors puts forward the acutely colonial concept of alienation from one's native land. Both novels' main characters enter the stories after returning from long absences from their place of origin. They feel distant and disconnected from their families and loved ones; they have even been forgotten in their own homes.

"Will you stay in the village, or will you leave again and come back when you are getting old? You see, people have forgotten even your name; I could hardly remember you as you haven't come to your own land for a long time. There is no worse to be forgotten in your own land. It is really bad, my friend, said Mirvali to Tolibjon angrily. (Ahmad, 23)

Tolibjon and Jayrona's extensive komandirovka ("business trip") Rustam's violent experiences in the Afghan war serve as the causes of these characters' alienation from their loved ones, their inability to procreate, and their early deaths.¹ Ultimately, their trips "abroad" disrupt their sense of place and belonging in the space in which they grew up. The aesthetics of the authors of both novels illuminate how heroes readapt to their homeland and how their new knowledge of the outside world makes the corruption of their homeland intolerable.

Alienation serves as a means of realizing exploitation and injustice in the homeland. While those at home are not aware of their colonial subjugation, upon returning from their "komandirovka," Tolibjon and Jayrona now apprehend the wickedness of such characters as Mirvali Rixsiev and Shavkat Rahimovich, who care only for personal gain and additional "Red Stars" on their chest. These latter villains have grown accustomed to their misdeeds such that little startles them. They are completely indifferent to the

¹ As Tolibjon was tired of all chaos and bloodshed in his own time where he was living he wanted to stay in quiet, silent place but unfortunately he couldn't find this place. The only way to have silence was to leave for another world.

fates of their countrymen: Mirvali notably murders five friends because they are potential witnesses to his corruption. (Mirvali thinks if he doesn't destroy these witnesses, sometimes they will open all his corruptions)

During the reign of the former Soviet Union, the immediate extermination of skilful intellectuals every ten years became a strict political tradition. For example, 1917 -because of the revolution; 1927 clearing of party ranks; The temptation to destroy the "enemies of the people" in 1937; In the forty-seventh year of 1947 in the act of capturing spies; 1957 Defendants in the "cult of personality" process; concerned about the disappearance of bribes in 1967; The Afghan war in 1977; 1987 The Case of the Uzbeks (Encyclopedia, 168-169) a number of intellectuals or highly educated people who regarded as possessing culture and political influence were destroyed.

O'tkir Hoshimov, in his novel *Lives Passed in Dream*, covers the four periods that formed the basis of the period of stagnation, that is, repression in the thirties, purge in the war years, post-war repression and the Afghan war. More precisely, the description of the events of these four periods of the last century, or rather the whole episodes from the four periods, shows the basis of the "Uzbek affair". The novel is structured as a criminal investigation file and is therefore made up of diaries, witness testimonies, and interrogations. However, the investigation does not lead to the arrest of the murder of the main character, Rustam-protagonist: the reader discovers that he, in fact, committed suicide. Instead, the investigation file indicts a culprit outside the novel, the Soviet state, as a murderer of nations and cultures.

The novel "*Lives Passed in Dream*" by O'tkir Hoshimov starts as follows:

"Fall is like a dying patient. Sick fallen leaves groan underfoot ... In early spring, canals, which have been rushing to the shore, become clearer. Realizing that all efforts have been in vain, they look at the world with sadness ... Now, at the bottom of the water lies not a grass swaying happily, but dying leaves ...The earth and the sky are covered with a white fog like winding-sheet. Out of the white darkness come cries of raven foretelling something bad ... Sooner or later, clouds in mourning dress appear in the sky. There will be a long crash on the ground, and there will be bitter tears. It will pour heavily; in four days, it will mourn and weep silently for nature, which did not fit into the world and finally gave up its life ... How old am I? Twenty-two? No, I'm seventy-two! Maybe eighty-two? What's the difference?! "Wise people watch life in silence ..." (Hoshimov, 1)

The main reason for the beginning of the first part of the novel, which includes the death of the protagonist Rustam, is that other parts of the novel are about his unfortunate history or about his painful past life. Besides, these first sentences, which describe Rustam's pain in his spirit, slightly infect the reader. "Autumn is my death is like a bedridden patient" applies not only to Rustam's terrible past but also to Uzbek's miserable past misfortune history of the nation; more precisely, the whole people were in a frenzy like a patient on his deathbed.

Rustam's alienation first manifests itself when he is drafted and sent to Afghanistan. In an uncanny episode in which he encounters an enemy combatant—a *dukh*,² to use the terminology of the war, he loses his sense of self. The *dukh* turns out to be an Afghan Uzbek, and when he discovers that he and Rustam speak the same language, he castigates Rustam for his authenticity. To the *dukh*, a person cannot be both Soviet and Uzbek.

In Uzbek:

Senlar o'zbekmi?- "dux" yorilgan lablari orasidan qon tupurib, tishlarini g'ijirlatdi.- Yo'q! Senlar o'zbekmas! Senlar musulmonsan!- U esidan og'gandek xoxolab kuldi.- Senlar "sho'raviy"! Kim chaqirdi seni buyerga! O'z yurtini sotib bo'lib, endi Afg'onni ham harom qilmoqchimisani! To'ng'iz! (Hoshimov, 56)

Translation

Are you Uzbek? Dux spat blood from his cracked lips and gritted his teeth. - No! You are not Uzbek! You are Muslim! " He laughed as if he had lost consciousness. " You are a Soviet! Who called you here! Selling your own country, and now you are going to befoul Afghanistan! Pig! (Hoshimov, 56)

Dukh's reprimands serve as one of the most important factors in understanding the tragic fate of the nation for Rustam, who, along with his peers, is a volunteer fighter and has witnessed the horrific wars in Afghanistan. Why did he really come to war? Who is he fighting for? For whom did he become the killer of thousands of innocent people? For a council that has ruined its people, its nation? As dukh said, can he be both Soviet and Uzbek?

² Dukh is a Russian word, it is used here as a noun. The soldiers who have a big experience in serving Army, who is spiritually powerful, brave and mental superiority are called dukh.

Here is another example that refers not to the image of the losers or victors of the Afghan war but another appearance of the tragedy of the people who have been victims of injustice and cruelty.

In Uzbek

Vayronaga aylangan, tutab yotgan uy ichidan bola yig'isi eshitildi. Zum o'tmay vayrona ostonasida nimcha kiygan, ammo ishtonsiz bir yarim- ikki yoshlardagi o'g' il bola ko'rindi...Oyoqyalang tuproq kechib, alpang- talpang yurgan ko'yi ayol (jonsiz yotgan) tepasiga keldi. Bir zum turib qoldi: yig'lashdan to 'xtadi. Ayolning yoniga cho'kkaladi-da, yosh to 'la ko 'zlari bilan negadur g 'udranib kuldi. Tuproqqa belangan qo'lchalari bilan onasining mammasini changallagancha ema boshladi. Birpas emdida, ilkis boshini ko 'tardi. Hayron bo'lib, goh onasiga, goh itga, goh menga mo 'ltiradi. Og'zini kap-katta ochib, chirqillab yig'lab yubordi. Go'dakning og'zidan so'lak aralash qon oqar edi. Avval ich-ichimdan titroq keldi. Keyin qo'limning barmoqlari muzlay boshlaganini his qildim.Undan keyin oyoqlarim qaltiray boshladi. Tankka qanday yetib bordim, esimda yo'q.

— Otaman! — dedim o'kirib. — Hammangni otaman! O'zimniyam otaman! (Hoshimov 62)

In English

A child was crying in the rubble of a dilapidated house. A moment later, on the threshold of the ruin, a boy of one and a half to two years old, dressed in a tunic but without trousers, appeared. He stopped crying. He sank down next to a woman and, for some reason, burst out laughing with tears in his eyes. He began to eat, clutching his mother's nipples with his hands on the ground. After a while, the first one raised his head. Surprised, sometimes looking at his mother, sometimes to me. He opened his mouth wide and burst into tears. Saliva and blood flowed from the boy's mouth. At first, I had a shiver in my stomach. Then I felt my fingers freezing. Then, my legs started to tremble. I don't remember how I got to the tank. "I shoot!" I shouted. "I'll shoot them all!" I will shoot myself, too! (Hoshimov, 61)

That was a terrible face of the war, the Afghan war, which had no significance for the Uzbeks, causing the deaths of thousands of Uzbeks; young men³ like Rustam remained in history as the horrific events of the stagnation. Description of innocent people who untimely died in the Afghan war, incidents such as the mental and physical disability of the younger generation who have lost their national identity, the lives of Afghans which the war destroyed have risen to the level of national tragedy, more precisely tragedy of humanity. Being far from his own native land, Rustam realized that the Uzbek had been deceived for more than sixty years. He understood that the main mission of the Soviets was to destroy the nationalists of the people under various pretexts, and the main causes of the Afghan tragedy were the representatives of the Soviet system, and the victims of the tragedies were just ordinary people.

Rustam in the *Lives Passed in Dream* feels alienated, particularly because of his inability to acquire housing. The Soviet Union always struggled to make the housing supply match demand in urban spaces, but Rustam's demand for a home upon his return from Afghanistan as a supposedly honored war veteran takes on colonial overtones. He accuses colonists, those from other parts of the Soviet Union, of being favored by the Soviet housing industry: "*Why are there no homes for Uzbeks, but there are plenty ready for those who just got off the train?*" Rustam's observation is echoed by other positive characters, who now see the Soviet government's relocation of people as a colonial act meant to destroy the Uzbek nation. One journalist in the novel claims that the new influx of settlers after the "Cotton scandal" is a Soviet plot: "'Do you know why the center is doing this [relocating settlers to Uzbekistan]? There is an international law: if the native population of a given land falls below fifty percent, it becomes a "national minority," which means it can lose its right to ownership of that land. That's it, that's the goal!" Such accusations are not at all out of place with the time; articles submitted to journals that went unpublished accuse the idea of the "planned family" as a plot to decrease the national birthrate. Hoshimov's novel is part of a broader trend among Uzbek thinkers at the end of the Soviet Union that began to see the Soviet politics of the planned economy as colonial politics.

The question that both *Silence* and *Lives Passed in Dream* attempt to address in their artistic works is specific to the period of "stagnation," that of "two-facedness" (qiyofasizik). The novels serve as an attempt to unmask the horrors and misdeeds behind Soviet officialdom that have long gone unnoticed. The question of "faces" is precisely how Said Ahmad's character, Abdulla Qahhor (a fictional version of the actual Uzbek writer), voices the problem at play. "I know your director [Mirvali Rixsiev – Z. M.] well. It is difficult to describe his character [qiyofa. One side of it is an incomparably adept organizer, the other – needlessly cruel. Both are the utter perfection of those qualities... The two of them live independently from one another. The two of them occupy one body in turns. While one sleeps, the other is waking" (Ahmad, 143)

Similarly, *Lives Passed in Dream* transforms a Soviet villain into a villain of Soviet colonialism by placing the character alongside a representative of "traditional national character."- Commissar (Komissar spelling in Uzbek- Z.M) His real name is G'aniev Soat G'aniyevich, seventy-five years old. Union-wide retiree. Without nationality, a single member of the party since 1941. He was

awarded the Red Star, Order of the Red Banner of War, and a gold medal. Yet, Hoshimov introduced him not by his name but officially with his position as Commissar. Commissar himself wants people to call like "Comrade Commissar". While reading the novel, we could understand why the author especially emphasized "Commissar".

In Uzbek

Bu odamning Soat G'aniyev degan ismi – sharifi bor. Biroq, ismi –sharifidan ko'ra Komissar degan laqab unga munosib. U shaxs emas, kasb,mansab, martaba, mafkura, siyosat odami. Eng muhimi, bu tildagi "sovetlashgan" qahramonlar milliy koloritdan mahrum, oddiy insonlarga xos bo'lgan his – tuyg'ulardan ham bebahra, ongu shuurida har qanday topshiriqni so'zsiz bajarish lozim, degan tushunchadan boshqa hech narsa yo'q.

In English

This man has the name Soat Ganiev. However, he deserves the nickname Commissar rather than his name. He is not a person; he is a man of profession, career, position, ideology, politics. Most importantly, the "Sovietized" heroes of this language are devoid of national color, devoid of the feelings of ordinary people, and have no choice but to perform any task in the subconscious.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the Russian Empire in Turkistan strengthened propaganda against religion to separate people from their roots of religious faith, encouraging the imitation of European culture. This cultural loss that occurred as a result of Soviet modernization produced people like Commissar, who encouraged the imitation of the culture and traditions of other nations. O'tkir Hoshimov has his NKVD/KGB villain, the commissar Soat G'aniyev, who plays a role opposite his God-fearing, truly Uzbek Qurbonoy. The Commissar, Hoshimov notes, is responsible for all the evil and suffering in Uzbek's life, just like Qurbonoy. He is a symbol of seventy years of oppression, not simple, very dangerous mankurt- a person who has lost touch with his historical, national roots, who has forgotten about his kinship, plays an active role in fighting tyranny, totalitarianism, and terror. He says he has been a Chekist since he was fifteen and that a Chekist should be born a real Chekist. He was a savage man who lived in suspicion of everyone, even his own wife and child, who sowed only the seeds of fear and terror among the people. In his opinion, the more the people are afraid, the better! There will be order; there will be discipline.

At an early age, Commissar arrests and executes Qurbonoy's pious father for his religious affiliation, sentencing her to a life of orphan hood. This, of course, is just one of his deeds as he spends a good part of the novel rooting out enemies of the people and sentencing them to death. Qurbonoy, however, is forced to confront him on a daily basis; in each of their encounters, he belittles and ridicules her beliefs: "'Fine,' she said slowly, 'I'll put it to God.[...] 'As if God has nothing else to do but deal with your problems! As if his eyes are only searching for the complaints of such-and-such believer.'" (Hoshimov 37) Here, G'aniyev fulfills the role of a Soviet atheist, mocking the faith of a believer, but Hoshimov makes it clear that the believer is specifically Uzbek. The novel includes dossiers of each of the characters as they are introduced, including the nationality of that character. Qurbonoy, as we can expect, is Uzbek, while G'aniyev, despite the suggestiveness of his name, is listed as without nationality. A Soviet passport without nationality is a highly significant marker since no such Soviet passport ever existed. Hoshimov uses this not-so-subtle hint to convey his idea that the Soviet form of oppression is a specifically colonial one.

There is another character, Grigory (Grisha) Stepanovich Vasiliev, who is very close to Commissar in the story. He told his neighbors that he had been invited to Uzbekistan as a best (rare) specialist and had come to Uzbekistan to help Uzbeks. In fact, his mother (Mar'ya) made him come to Tashkent to live as long as he couldn't find a good job in Smolensk (Russia) and indulge in alcoholism. Grisha already had negative thoughts of Uzbekistan since his brother Dima said, "Uzbekistan became a second Afganistan. There is going war, a real war! Everywhere is bribe-taker! Everywhere is deceivers! Everywhere are brigands! Do you understand? Uzbekistan needs leaders and principled people to save it? (Hoshimov 30)

In the 1980s, the "Uzbek affair" (o'zbek ishi) and the "cotton affair" (paxta ishi) were the most important problems in the stagnation period, and these issues were dominated the social environment. "Principal" individuals who came to Uzbekistan from Moscow to "establish justice" caused the tragic fate of the skillful, believer, honest, trustful leaders, the patriots who tried to defend Uzbekistan and the nation; Grigory and Dima Stepanovich are typical representatives of such rulers in the novel *Lives Passed in Dream*. Moreover, Grigory Stepanovich Vasiliev as a colonial figure who is still in power in Uzbekistan, a symbol of the Soviet system, a Russian / Soviet character that reveals the colonialists' hatred of the Uzbek people, its values, customs, beliefs and ancient traditions.

In Uzbek

Bularning to'yi g'alati bo'larkan. Bir kun oldindan domning tagida kechas bilan g'ovur-g'uvir. Shovir-shuvir... Terak shoxiga minginchi lampochka osilgan. Birovi sabzi tozalayapti. YAna bittasi ketmon bilan er kovlab yotibdi. Nariroqda gozon! Shunaqangi kattaki, borsh pishirsang, butun boshli polkka etadi... Kechasi bilan dimog' iga allaqanday notanish

hidlar kirib, mijja qoqmay chiqdi.... ..Stolda o'tirishini tomosha qilsang bularning! Xudo haqqi, qoshiq ushlashni bilmaydi! Oshni qo'lda eydi. Qo'da! Chollar-ku mayli, boshqalar-chi? Boshlarida shlyapa, bo'yinlarida galstuk, oshni qo'li bilan eydilar. Ertalabdan bir lagan palovni urib qorni yorilib ket maganini! Osh eb bo'lib, yuziga fotihayam tortadi. Naq kinoning o'zi. Xudo haqqi, dekoratsiya kerakmas!» (Hoshimov 2002: 23)

In English

Their (means Uzbeks- ZM) wedding is really strange. The day before, there was a nightmare under the roof. Noise ... A thousand light bulbs are hanging on a poplar branch. Someone is cleaning carrots. Another is digging with a hoe. Cauldron in the distance.

If you cook such a big borsch, it will reach the whole regiment... At night, some unfamiliar odors came into his mouth and came out without a hitch..... watch them sit at the table! By God, they don't know how to hold a spoon! They eat osh³ by hand. By hand! The old is ok if they even eat by hand. What about the others? They wear hats on their heads, ties around their necks, and eat osh with their hands. Look at them! Swallowed a whole plate of pilaff from the morning and didn't get blown up! And even say a prayer after that! What a movie! My God, you won't even need decorations if you want to make a movie with them! (Hoshimov 2002: 39-40)

Gregory's satirical, sarcastic speech reflects his negative attitude and hatred for the Uzbek nation. According to him, all Uzbeks are bribe-takers, oppressors and thieves. Thus, one of the main ideological goals of the author was to reflect the beliefs formed in the former Soviet Union - the indifference to other nations, including the Uzbek people, and the influence of the spirit of the times on the traditions of the nation.

The ancient values, traditions, attitudes and customs of any people or nation are the most important aspects of the identity of its people. In this context, O'tkir Hoshimov brings national values and the expression of national spirituality to the forefront in the novel "*Lives Passed in Dream*", as well as the revelation of the colonial past through the Russian / Soviet character. In addition, the author aimed to examine the period of stagnation through the symbolic language of the novel and reflect Russian/ Soviet character with the national image of Rustam.

In 1940-1970, the method of socialist realism in Uzbek Soviet Literature forced writers to describe Russian/ Soviet characters as a hero of a "new life" and builders of "modern life". A person (for instance, Uzbek) at the lower levels of society, like a servant, had to be raised under the influence of a Russian hero. The works of writers who did not show revolutionary progress through the image of a Russian person were heavily criticized in preliminary discussions, and the authors had to rewrite their works to artificially introduce a Russian character. (Mirzaeva 2020) Apart from these subjunctive approaches, Hoshimov, in his *Lives Passed in Dream*, refers to the Russian character Grigoriy Stepanovich as an heir of the colonial period. He is the most important participant in the tragedy of the "modernization project" that the Soviet Union promised to Central Asia.

The American researcher of Uzbek literature Ahmet Ag'ir, writing on Hoshimov's novel, comes to the following apt conclusion: "Towards the end of the novel, the writer represents ultimate purpose for the creation of Soviet character as a means of gaining identity of his Uzbek character; however it is a quite painful and costly process. (Ag'ir, 212)

Truly, for the two Uzbek writers at hand, the subjugation of Uzbekistan under Brezhnev differs little from its colonial subjugation in the past. For Hoshimov, stagnation loses its historical uniqueness and becomes part of a general timeless history of colonialism in Uzbekistan. The novel evokes a sense of timelessness or the repetition of historical periods through its inter subjective structure. Through interviews and memories, characters give their recollection of the past, its cruelty and bizarreness, and their own participation in it. The commissar's narratives are particularly evocative because they demonstrate the repetitiveness of his behavior throughout Uzbekistan's various historical periods. He participates in dekulakization and the destruction of Uzbekistan's intellectual classes, Stalin's post-war purges, and even disowns his own son, who emigrates to escape the Soviet Union. Though officially retired for the novel's main events, he pursues Stalin-like purges anyway. His final quote in the novel is telling in this regard. Again speaking with Qurbonoy, she asks: "'Are you ok?' asked Qurbonoy, unable to find a better question. 'Me?' the commissar laughed. 'Heh-heh-heh! You want to ask, 'When are you going to die?' Busy, I see. I won't die! Heh!'"(Hoshimov,242)

The surrealism of the novel's final lines perhaps undermines Hoshimov's claim to be a realist writer, but more importantly, it reminds us that Hoshimov sees the commissar and the Soviet Union, which he represents, as a colonial destroyer of nations. The commissar, like the Soviet Union, uproots and erodes society (recall that Tolibjon and Rustam die without being able to procreate

³ Osh is famous national food of Uzbek people made with rice and carrot

because of their participation in Soviet agriculture and the Afghan war, respectively). As long as this force is alive, national tragedies will continue unabated in a repetitive cycle whereby one event is largely indistinguishable from another.

The cruelty of the heirs of colonialism and the national tragedy that emerged from the Soviet Union's efforts at modernization became one of the main issues in these novels. The commissar Soat G'aniev, who, in seeking his own gain, leads to countless tragedies, is the pride of a colonial system that secretly eats away at nations. Komissar Ganiev is a representative of the source of cruelty and evil. He cannot be destroyed but finds countless ways to destroy the nation.

In Ahmad's novel, the personal tragedy of the protagonists is made to reflect the national tragedy of Uzbekistan's colonial suppression. The Soviet Union's reigning ideology had sunk its roots so deep and made such an impression on national consciousness that the nation did everything to win the approval of Stalin and subsequent leaders. People sacrificed their lives to fulfill the plan. Isroil (a "hero of the epoch", s self –a sacrificing person who is always ready to complete cotton plans in any kind of situation) dies after having his blood poisoned by the provocative oxymoron "poisonous medicine" (pesticides) for cotton plants. He fearlessly keeps working as the crop-dusting helicopter does its job, thinking little of himself and only of the plan."And now he (Mirvali Rixsiev-Z.M) is standing over the dead body of Isroil Malikov, who poisoned by pesticides with the same as cotton and died as "hero of epoch". Could Mirvali think that his double "Golden starts" in his chest received cost the life of young people like Isroil who were sacrificed his life for five million. (Ahmad, 193)

4. Conclusion

All of twentieth-century Uzbek literature, from Jadid thinkers at the beginning of the century to Soviet and post-Soviet writers, has had a deeply political bent because all of these writers have been deeply attracted to the idea of the nation and the homeland. Their understanding of their place in the world has always been through their connection to the nation. Social anxiety for them is inextricably linked to artistic anxiety and vice versa.

For two of the greatest Uzbek writers of the last fifty years, their novels have to be evaluated from this perspective. Their art is found directly in the way they develop their characters around social questions. Scholars in Uzbekistan lately have attempted to abstract their inquiries from questions of social and political standing, but given the politicization of the Jadid and Soviet periods, such an approach is questionable. We might say that the social and political realities in the two novels examined here only increase their artistic value.

We should highlight that these two novels, both of which were written as the Soviet Union fell apart, have now been analyzed from sociological and political science perspectives. New international and theoretical possibilities have given researchers the chance to apply the theories of Herbert Spencer, Emil Durkheim, and Max Weber in their analyses of these novels.⁴ Researchers and the authors themselves have also had the opportunity to reveal some of the taboo topics discussed within them. Nevertheless, ready-made theories cannot simply be applied to unique national heroes without some adjustments to Uzbekistan's unique historical context.

The cruelty of the heirs of colonialism and the national tragedy that emerged from the Soviet Union's efforts at modernization become one of the main issues in both respective novels, *Silence* and *Lives Passed in Dream*. Both authors express their colonial interpretations through the symbols and ambiguities, and these novels are left as writings that transform moral criticisms of Soviet rule into criticisms of Soviet rule as colonial exploitation in the XX Century's Uzbek literature.

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2. I know three young men from my own village, in Fergana, who were involved in the Afghan war in 1985. They are Islom Do'stmatov, Sami Abdullaev and Qodir Mamatov. One of them didn't come back, and the other two ones returned disabled. They became addicted to alcohol, and before long, they both died of liver cancer. They were 25 years old when they passed away.
3. According to pomnirod.ru, 14453 young men died in the Afghan war in 1979-1989 in Uzbekistan.

⁴ An American scholar Ahmet Agir analyzed O'tkir Hoshimov's "Lives Passed in Dream" and applied theories of world researcher Herbert Spencer, Emil Durkheim, and Max Weber. Analyzing Uzbek novels based on world literature produced new views and conclusions which we can't see in Uzbek Literary Study. See: Ahmet Ag'ir. From Colonial to Post Colonial Future: Three Uzbek Novels (Qodiriy, Oybek, Hoshimov). Wisconsin University. Madison, 2003.

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