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JON FAULZNING “FRANSUZ LEYTENANTINING AYOLI” VA ULUG‘BEK HAMDAMNING “MUVOZANAT” ROMANLARIDA POSTMODERN NARRATIV USULLAR

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Annotatsiya. Ushbu maqolada Jon Faulzning “Fransuz leytenantining ayoli” va Ulug‘bek Hamdamning “Muvozanat” romanlaridagi postmodern narrativ usullar qiyosiy tahlil qilinadi. Tadqiqotning maqsadi metafiksiya, muallif aralashuvi, fragmentatsiya, intertekstuallik, turli nuqtayi nazarlar va ochiq yakunning badiiy funksiyalarini aniqlashdan iborat. Tadqiqotda qiyosiy adabiyotshunoslik, narratologik va tarixiy-kontekstual tahlil metodlaridan foydalanildi. R. V. Bafoyevaning postmodernizmga oid ilmiy qarashlari nazariy asos bo‘lib xizmat qildi. Natijalar ushbu usullar Faulzda tarixiy voqelik va hikoyachi mavqeini, Hamdamda esa ijtimoiy-psixologik hamda ma’naviy ziddiyatlarni yoritishga xizmat qilishini ko‘rsatadi.

Kalit so‘zlar: postmodernizm, metafiksiya, tarixiy metafiksiya, narrativ usul, muallif aralashuvi, fragmentatsiya, intertekstuallik, narrativ noaniqlik, turli nuqtayi nazarlar, Jon Faulz, Ulug‘bek Hamdam, “Fransuz leytenantining ayoli”, “Muvozanat”.

ПОСТМОДЕРНИСТСКИЕ НАРРАТИВНЫЕ ПРИЁМЫ В РОМАНАХ ДЖОНА ФАУЛЗА “ЖЕНЩИНА ФРАНЦУЗСКОГО ЛЕЙТЕНАНТА” И УЛУГБЕКА ХАМДАМА “МУВОЗАНАТ”

Аннотация. В статье проводится сравнительный анализ постмодернистских нарративных приёмов в романах Джона Фаулза «Женщина французского лейтенанта» и Улугбека Хамдама «Myvozanat». Цель исследования заключается в выявлении художественных функций метафикции, авторского вмешательства, фрагментации, интертекстуальности, множественности повествовательных перспектив и открытого финала. Использованы методы сравнительного литературоведения, нарратологического и историко-контекстуального анализа. Теоретическую основу составляют научные положения Р. В. Бафоевой о постмодернизме. Установлено, что у Фаулза данные приёмы

проблематизируют историческую репрезентацию и авторитет повествователя, а у Хамдама раскрывают социальные, психологические и духовные противоречия.

Ключевые слова: постмодернизм, метафикция, интертекстуальность, фрагментация, авторское вмешательство, нарративная неопределённость, повествователь, Джон Фаулз, Улугбек Хамдам.

POSTMODERN NARRATIVE TECHNIQUES IN JOHN FOWLES'S "THE FRENCH LIEUTENANT'S WOMAN" AND ULUGBEK HAMDAM'S "MUVOZANAT"

Abstract. This article comparatively examines postmodern narrative techniques in John Fowles's *The French Lieutenant's Woman* and Ulugbek Hamdam's *Muvozanat*. The study aims to identify the artistic functions of metafiction, authorial intrusion, fragmentation, intertextuality, multiple narrative perspectives, and open-endedness. Comparative literary analysis, narratological analysis, and historical-contextual analysis are employed. The theoretical framework draws on R. V. Bafoyeva's scholarly perspectives on postmodernism. The findings indicate that Fowles uses these techniques to question historical representation and narrative authority, whereas Hamdam employs comparable tendencies to explore social, psychological, and spiritual conflicts within the individual's experience.

Keywords: postmodernism, metafiction, historiographic metafiction, narrative technique, authorial intrusion, fragmentation, intertextuality, narrative uncertainty, multiple perspectives, John Fowles, Ulugbek Hamdam, *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, *Muvozanat*.

INTRODUCTION

Postmodernism challenges traditional relationships between author, text, reader, history, and reality. Unlike conventional realist fiction, which generally presents a coherent fictional world and an authoritative narrator, postmodern literature questions the possibility of representing reality as a single objective truth through techniques such as fragmentation, metafiction, intertextuality, irony, and self-reflexivity. R. V. Bafoyeva identifies fragmentation, pastiche, irony, metafiction, subjectivity, and formal experimentation as significant characteristics of postmodern literature [1, P. 147-154]. These features provide a theoretical basis for examining how postmodern narrative challenges conventional literary structures and questions the authority of the narrator. They are particularly relevant to historical fiction, where the representation of the past is mediated by language, cultural memory, and narrative selection.

John Fowles's *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, published in 1969, combines a Victorian setting with twentieth-century narrative experimentation. Through narrator intervention and alternative endings, Fowles exposes the constructed nature of fiction and challenges conventional expectations of narrative closure. Rather than providing a single definitive resolution, the novel encourages readers to participate in interpreting the characters' destinies. Previous research similarly emphasizes the relationship between historical reconstruction, fiction, and narrative mediation [2, P. 879-884].

Ulugbek Hamdam’s *Muvozanat* offers a contrasting literary context, exploring social transformation, psychological conflict, moral choice, and the search for balance. Research highlights the symbolic and poetic significance of balance as a central principle of the novel’s artistic structure [3, P. 1346-1351]. Although both novels contain narrative tendencies relevant to comparative postmodern analysis, they should not be classified as identical examples of postmodern fiction. Fowles foregrounds metafictional experimentation and the instability of historical representation, whereas Hamdam focuses more directly on the social, psychological, and philosophical challenges experienced by individuals in a changing society.

Building on existing scholarship, including Bafoyeva’s research on postmodern literary features [1], this study aims to identify and comparatively analyse the principal narrative techniques in *The French Lieutenant’s Woman* and *Muvozanat*. Particular attention is given to metafiction, authorial intrusion, fragmentation, intertextuality, multiple perspectives, narrative uncertainty, and open-endedness.

The study addresses the following research questions:

1. What postmodern narrative techniques can be identified in the two novels?
2. How does authorial intervention influence the reader’s perception of narrative reality?
3. How do fragmentation and multiple perspectives contribute to meaning-making?
4. How is the relationship between history and fiction represented in the selected works?
5. What similarities and differences emerge in the functions of narrative techniques within British and Uzbek literary contexts?

The scientific novelty of the study lies in its **functional comparative approach**, which moves beyond identifying shared postmodern features to examine how their artistic functions differ according to the cultural, historical, and aesthetic contexts of the two novels.

RESEARCH OBJECT AND METHODS

The research object comprises John Fowles’s The French Lieutenant’s Woman and Ulugbek Hamdam’s Muvozanat. The research subject is the narrative techniques through which the authors construct and reinterpret literary reality.

The study employs comparative literary analysis, supported by close reading, narratological analysis, historical-contextual analysis, and structural-semantic interpretation. Close reading examines narrator interventions, shifts in perspective, structural discontinuities, and self-reflexive passages. Narratological analysis focuses on narrative authority, temporal organization, the narrator-reader relationship, and uncertainty in the construction of meaning.

Historical-contextual analysis considers Fowles’s combination of a Victorian setting with a modern narrative consciousness, as well as Hamdam’s representation of social and spiritual transformations in contemporary Uzbek society. In Muvozanat, the concept of balance serves as a central semantic principle for exploring psychological and social instability [3, P. 1347-1350].

The theoretical framework draws on R. V. Bafoyeva’s research into fragmentation, metafiction, intertextuality, irony, subjectivity, and formal experimentation [1, P. 148-153]. A key methodological principle is the distinction between formal and functional similarity: the

same narrative device may serve different artistic purposes depending on its cultural and historical context.

Accordingly, the analysis follows this sequence:

Narrative technique → textual manifestation → artistic function → cultural context → comparative interpretation.

This approach enables the study to identify experimental tendencies in both novels without automatically classifying Muvozanat as an equivalent of Fowles’s postmodern fiction.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Scholarship on postmodern narrative has focused on the instability of literary meaning, narrative authority, historical representation, and the boundary between fiction and reality. These theoretical perspectives provide a basis for comparing the narrative structures of The French Lieutenant’s Woman and Muvozanat. Patricia Waugh defines metafiction as fiction that draws attention to its own status as a constructed artefact, thereby questioning the relationship between fiction and reality [4, P. 2-3]. This concept is relevant to Fowles’s novel, whose narrator openly reflects on the process of storytelling. Linda Hutcheon’s theory of historiographic metafiction further explains how historical fiction combines references to the past with an awareness that historical representation is narratively constructed [5, P. 3-4]. Brian McHale’s distinction between epistemological and ontological concerns in modernist and postmodernist fiction provides an additional framework for examining how narratives question both the knowability of reality and the boundaries of fictional worlds [6, P. 9-11].

R. V. Bafoyeva’s studies contribute to the analysis of postmodern literary techniques, particularly fragmentation, metafiction, intertextuality, irony, subjectivity, and formal experimentation [1, P. 147-154]. Her research also highlights the relationship between literary texts and earlier cultural and literary discourses, demonstrating the importance of intertextual connections in the construction of meaning [7, P. 1-5]. Her discussion of metafiction emphasizes self-reflexivity, the questioning of authorship, and active reader participation [8, P. 1-4]. Taken together, these approaches support an analysis of narrative techniques as interconnected devices rather than isolated stylistic features.

Studies specifically devoted to The French Lieutenant’s Woman emphasize the novel’s experimental narrative structure. Hye-Jin Baek examines its metafictional qualities, arguing that authorial intervention exposes the conventions of Victorian fiction and makes the storytelling process visible [9, P. 187-214]. The novel’s alternative endings are particularly significant because they challenge conventional closure and invite readers to participate in interpreting the characters’ destinies [9, P. 207-213]. David Leon Higdon similarly interprets the endings as an expression of narrative openness and reflexivity, through which closure itself becomes a subject of literary reflection [10, P. 350].

Research on polyphony further emphasizes the coexistence of competing perspectives and the absence of a single, fully authoritative interpretation in Fowles’s novel [11]. Studies of its historiographic dimension likewise demonstrate that the representation of the Victorian past is inseparable from narrative mediation and the questioning of historical objectivity [12]. These

approaches establish metafiction, authorial intrusion, multiple perspectives, and narrative openness as central areas for analysing Fowles’s narrative strategy.

Research on Muvozanat, by contrast, has primarily examined its symbolic, psychological, social, and philosophical dimensions. Uralova identifies “balance” as a central symbolic and poetic principle through which social transformation and psychological instability are represented [3, P. 1346-1351]. Mahmudova’s discussion of the relationship between the individual and historical time in contemporary Uzbek literature similarly highlights the influence of social change on psychological and spiritual development, including in Hamdam’s fiction [13, P. 383-386].

However, Muvozanat should not automatically be classified as a fully postmodern novel. Research characterizes it primarily as a realist work while acknowledging modernist and experimental tendencies in its artistic structure [14, P. 49-50]. This distinction is essential because the presence of particular experimental techniques does not necessarily determine the literary paradigm of an entire novel.

The reviewed scholarship therefore reveals a comparative research gap. Although Fowles’s novel has been extensively studied in relation to metafiction, historiographic representation, authorial intrusion, and alternative endings, research on Muvozanat has concentrated more heavily on symbolism, psychological experience, social change, and the philosophical idea of balance. A functional comparison of how narrative instability, fragmentation, multiple perspectives, intertextuality, and openness operate in these culturally distinct works remains a valuable direction for further analysis.

The present study addresses this gap by distinguishing similarity of narrative technique from identity of artistic function. In Fowles’s novel, narrative experimentation primarily challenges the authority of the narrator and the stability of historical representation. In Hamdam’s novel, comparable experimental tendencies are examined in relation to social transformation, moral choice, psychological conflict, and the search for spiritual equilibrium.

The subsequent analysis is guided by three interconnected dimensions:

1. Metafictional: authorial intrusion, self-reflexivity, narrative authority, and reader participation.
2. Structural: fragmentation, multiple perspectives, narrative uncertainty, and plurality of meaning.
3. Historical-cultural: the relationship between historical or social reality, fictional reconstruction, and cultural context.

These dimensions provide a consistent framework for the comparative analysis of the two novels.

DISCUSSION

The comparative analysis reveals that narrative experimentation serves different artistic purposes in John Fowles’s The French Lieutenant’s Woman and Ulugbek Hamdam’s Muvozanat. In Fowles’s novel, metafiction is expressed through the narrator’s direct interventions, reflections on storytelling, and comments on Victorian society. These features make the reader aware that the fictional world is deliberately constructed. Baek identifies

authorial intrusion and multiple endings as central elements of the novel’s experimental form [9, P. 193-200].

The alternative endings challenge the conventional expectation of a single, definitive resolution to Charles and Sarah’s relationship. By leaving the reader to consider competing outcomes, Fowles makes narrative closure itself a subject of interpretation [9, P. 207-213]. Higdon likewise emphasizes the significance of the novel’s open and reflexive endings [10, P. 350]. Intertextual references to Victorian literature further enable Fowles to engage with the conventions of the nineteenth-century novel while critically reconsidering them.

In Muvozanat, narrative complexity is more closely associated with social transformation, psychological conflict, moral choice, and the search for spiritual balance. Uralova’s analysis identifies balance and imbalance as important symbolic principles through which changes in social life and human psychology are represented [3, P. 1346-1351]. Thus, while Fowles foregrounds the artificiality of narrative construction, Hamdam’s novel explores the individual’s response to changing social and spiritual conditions. The comparison establishes an important distinction: similar narrative tendencies do not necessarily perform identical artistic functions. Fowles uses narrative experimentation to question historical representation and narrative authority, whereas Hamdam’s symbolic and psychological strategies illuminate social instability and the individual’s search for equilibrium.

RESULTS AND THEIR ANALYSIS

The comparative analysis identifies differences in the prominence and function of the selected narrative techniques. Table 1 summarizes the principal findings.

Table 1. Comparative characteristics of narrative techniques in the selected novels

Narrative technique	**The French Lieutenant’s Woman**	**Muvozanat**
Metafiction	Explicit self-reflexivity	Less explicit; not established as a dominant feature
Authorial intervention	Prominent narrator interventions	Requires further textual verification
Multiple perspectives	Competing interpretations and alternative endings	Different characters’ experiences illuminate social and psychological tensions
Fragmentation	Narrative and structural experimentation	Psychological and social discontinuities
Intertextuality	Engagement with Victorian literary conventions	Cultural and literary connections require closer textual analysis
Narrative uncertainty	Strongly associated with alternative endings	Primarily associated with moral and philosophical conflict
Openness of meaning	Alternative endings resist a single resolution	Symbolic meanings allow multiple interpretations
Principal artistic function	Questioning narrative authority and historical representation	Exploring social change, psychological instability, and spiritual balance

Source: compiled by the author on the basis of the comparative analysis and the cited studies.

The table indicates that the clearest formal evidence of postmodern experimentation occurs in Fowles’s novel, particularly in its self-reflexive narration and alternative endings [9, P. 193-213; 10, P. 350]. In Muvozanat, the stronger documented emphasis is on symbolic representation and the relationship between social change and psychological imbalance [3, P. 1346-1351]. Accordingly, the comparison distinguishes between directly observable formal techniques and broader interpretive similarities.

On this basis, the author proposes the following functional model:

Historical or Social Reality → Narrative Construction → Narrative Perspectives and Structural Choices → Interpretive Uncertainty → Reader Interpretation → Plurality of Meaning

Figure 1. Functional model of narrative meaning-making in the selected novels.

The model illustrates how narrative choices mediate the relationship between represented reality and reader interpretation. In Fowles’s novel, this process is made explicit through metafiction and alternative endings. In Hamdam’s novel, the relationship between social reality and interpretation is explored primarily through symbolic and psychological representation. The model therefore provides a comparative framework without assuming that both works belong to the same literary paradigm.

The findings also suggest three implications for comparative literary research:

1. Narrative techniques should be examined in relation to their historical and cultural contexts.
2. Formal similarities should be distinguished from similarities in artistic function.
3. Claims about postmodernism should be supported by textual evidence rather than inferred solely from a novel’s ambiguity, symbolism, or psychological complexity.

These principles strengthen the functional comparative approach and provide a basis for further research into the relationship between narrative form, cultural context, and literary meaning.

CONCLUSION

The comparative analysis of John Fowles’s *The French Lieutenant’s Woman* and Ulugbek Hamdam’s *Muvozanat* demonstrates that both novels challenge the stability of conventional literary representation, although they employ different narrative strategies and operate within different cultural contexts. Fowles’s novel most clearly demonstrates metafiction, authorial intrusion, multiple perspectives, intertextuality, narrative uncertainty, and multiple endings. These techniques undermine the authority of a single narrative interpretation and encourage the reader to participate in constructing meaning [9, P. 193-213]. In *Muvozanat*, narrative complexity is primarily connected with social transformation, psychological conflict, symbolism, and the search for spiritual balance [3, P. 1346-1351]. Therefore, the novel should not simply be regarded as an equivalent of Fowles’s postmodern fiction. Rather, it demonstrates how experimental and pluralistic narrative tendencies can operate within a different national literary context.

The main scientific conclusion of the study is that similar postmodern narrative techniques may perform different artistic functions in different literary traditions. Fowles uses narrative experimentation primarily to question the authority of historical and fictional representation, whereas Hamdam uses narrative complexity to explore the instability of social, psychological,

and spiritual reality. The comparative analysis confirms that the interaction between history, fiction, authorial position, and reader interpretation represents one of the productive areas for further comparative study of British and contemporary Uzbek prose.

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