THE DUAL NATURE OF THE "INVESTIGATOR" IN UZBEK DETECTIVE LITERATURE

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Abstract: The article examines the distinct artistic - literary functions, and hidden ethical features of the detective figure in modern Uzbek detective fiction. Contrary to Western classical models - where the detective functions primarily as a cold, analytical machine solving an intellectual puzzle by his exclusive logic and reasoning - Uzbek detective prose introduces an investigator who operates on a dual plane: as a legal enforcer (law officer) and as a moral guide. The paper suggests fictional hero "Uzbek police detective" as an empathetic and merciful figure from cultural perspective. Analyzing key detective stories this study demonstrates how the Uzbek investigator prioritizing psychological empathy, moral rehabilitation, and societal restoration over simple forensic deduction or retributive justice. Utilizing narratological and linguopoetic frameworks, the article establishes that the detective's primary goal is not merely to uncover who committed the crime, but to diagnose the moral decay that enabled the transgression and to seek the restoration of the criminal's soul.

Keywords: Uzbek detective, dual investigator archetype, morality, spiritual counselling, restorative justice, symbolic narrative

Introduction

The detective prose is the newest literary movement for Uzbek literature. The genre hasn't been developed due to several cultural and social reasons common in Uzbek mindset. Firstly, Uzbek mentality doesn't accept any immoral acts and wrongdoing among members of close-knit community. For ages actions opposed to Uzbek moral standards (compassion, kindness, mercy, prudence, honour, modesty, chastity, honesty, justice and truthfulness, patriotism, respect for elders and young people) such as: evil, revenge, envy, hatred, sinfulness strongly condemned. Furthermore, Uzbek people are regarded as communal and compassionate nation who always cares about their neighbours, folks and religious leaders. For centuries, reflection of morality and spirituality in a literature is considered controversial topic since these concepts are too generic and abstract for literary context. If we look at the literary scene, crime fiction and detective fiction are valued not only as a means of depicting enigmatic and mysterious events, but also as an artistic means of

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symbolically highlighting social, moral and ethical problems of society. More than any other genre, detective fiction provides a profound replication on human nature and the inner spirit through the dynamic polarity of the detective and the criminal. The reasons for the popularity of detective literature are also related to the strength of this socio-cultural influence and the level of spiritual and moral impact. From the moment of its birth, the detective genre proclaimed faith in the power of analytical reasoning, and consequently, in the possibility of human nature. Fictional figures in detective fiction have their own roles according to events of storyline. The detective or private investigator acts as a key figure since it drives the actions and moves the plot. All events and scenarios somehow related to protagonist- investigator or detective. But the figure has its personal and professional peculiarities based on their national affiliation and background. For instance, concept of private detective or investigator that operates independently from police department doesn't exist in some parts of the world.

Methodology

The study adopts a comparative framework by mapping shared narratological functions of main detective character to determine how generic archetypes are culturally recontextualized.

To make the comparison systematic, the study examines each detective figure through five criteria: social and institutional position (private, police, or amateur); investigative method and use of evidence; relation to authority and the community; narrative function in the movement from mystery to resolution; and the ethical or social concerns attached to the investigation. These criteria distinguish recurring detective types from traits specific to a particular literary and historical context. Tracing them across Uzbek detective fiction makes it possible to identify the investigator's role and changes in characterization, methods, and social meaning over time. The analysis therefore treats typology not as a fixed classification but as a framework for examining how detective figures are adapted in response to changing genre conventions and national literary conditions.

This review synthesizes contemporary Uzbek detective traditions and deep context analysis to determine culturally adapted functions of the main figure - investigator. The evidence base combines Uzbek literary studies, comparative detective-genre scholarship, Soviet police-procedural history, criminology, legal-education research, and studies of Uzbek legal and ideological context. The synthesis prioritizes papers that directly address Uzbek detective authors or the Soviet procedural model, then uses regional and historical studies only where they clarify the institutional and moral logic shaping Uzbek detective fiction.

Results

In Uzbek context the term "detective" both real and fictional form is considered as an authorised police officer who carries out all crime related activities: investigation,

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interrogation, forensics, law enforcement detention and so on. Unlike the Western hard-boiled detective (who operates in an existential void) or the golden-age sleuth (who treats crime as an abstract logic game), the investigator in Uzbek detective prose serves a dual societal function. It serves as a guardian of moral and legal justice, fairness, equality, compassion and human dignity. According to Tibor Keszthelyi detective's personality and nature, which is a constant source for exceptional atmosphere of the narrative is essential factor to make the story meaningful. Personality traits like determination, eccentricity, and mannerism are universally common in detective stories. A seemingly unsolvable puzzles of the crime expect Herculean - albeit intellectual feats from the detective, which means he must be an extraordinary person capable of complex analysis, an individual with a compassionate soul and delicate sensibilities. A detective simply must be an artist, or at least possess some artistic qualities (Keystegi, 1979, p. 125). Taking this into account, apart from exclusive intellectual, analytical and logical skills detective character is decorated with high level of empathy, compassion and understanding in eastern context. Analysis of local detective stories detective earns high reputation and special status among the members of society and is esteemed as honoured guest of any social gathering. Local police investigator's legal function consists of gathering evidence, identifying legal infractions, and implementing formal law enforcement procedure. The moral function of the investigator is more influential as it affects social and personal life of the suspect or criminal. Acting as a moral anchor who engages with the accused not as an object of punishment, but as a spiritually strayed individual. In this script "*Is this really how books have brought you up?" the investigator asked, becoming even more irritated"* detective surprised how well-educated man became such an immoral son (Muxtorov, 2008, 56). Another pattern from the text Mo'jiza *"It is impossible to expect anything good from a person like you who, in a moment of disaster, takes care of his collection and covers up the incident"* emphasizes how investigator pushes the suspect to confess what has been actually done in crime scene by mentioning national moral values and didactic admonitions (Muxtorov, 2008, 68). This humanistic approach highlights mercifulness and sympathy for the guilty even though he commits brutal crime. Authors intentionally uses detective figure to illustrate social and moral decay and problems associated social life. Moreover, Uzbek detective figure treats female suspects with respect and care. Representing a weak and helpless figure for masculine investigator female respondents will be approached as mother, sister or even daughter. Analysing this script "*It is hard for me to say. Uncomfortable. When I think about it, my heart breaks. - Get it off from your chest. Speak anyway, sister. I need to know and help you, - said the investigator*." it can be understood that sleuth talks to the woman with respect, care, empathy and compassion (Muxtorov, 2008, 79). It verifies that apart from seeking the facts and evident, investigator wants to identify the reason or motive

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of the crime from ethical viewpoint. "*Aliyev thought that with this question, he could calm Zukhra down a little, so as not to cause her agitation, otherwise the poor girl might torture herself and fall ill. Aliyev agreed with him in his heart.*"

Discussion

This duality redefines the interrogation scene. Instead of an adversarial battle of wits, the interaction between detective and suspect often transforms into an ethico-philosophical dialogue reminiscent of traditional Central Asian didactic literature. In standard procedural narratives, physical evidence (fingerprints, ballistics, timelines) constitutes the core of the investigation. In Uzbek detective prose, physical clues are merely preliminary steps toward a deeper "spiritual diagnosis". Cultural belief, values, collective upbringing deeply influence the personality and professional identity of Uzbek Detective. While specific literary scholarship focused exclusively on Uzbek detective texts is absent from the current indexed corpus, regional and comparative studies illustrate how Soviet and post-Soviet crime traditions shaped the dual identity of the investigator as both an ideological state servant and an objective analytical seeker of truth.

In post-Soviet and Central Asian contexts, detective fiction inherited strict structural and ideological demands from the Soviet literary traditions. Unlike the classic Western archetype of the eccentric, private ratiocinator established by Edgar Allan Poe and Arthur Conan Doyle, the investigator within regional traditions was framed as a representative of state legality and collective morality. According to Ospanova (2026) the detective genre possesses a unique educational function, helping readers establish a clear system of values around "good and evil". Detective stories foster a specific type of analytical thinking in readers. (Ospanova, A. K., & Mambetov, Z. O. (2026)). Consequently, the investigator character embodies a core structural tension: they must champion socialist or communal justice while exercising independent empirical analysis and logical deduction.

Furthermore, the duality manifests across neighbouring literary traditions that navigated identical historical contexts. In Azerbaijani and Kazakh detective prose, foundational authors balanced official ideological constraints - such as framing crime as an external disruption or moral betrayal - against national realities and the human psychology of law enforcement (Ospanova, A. K., & Mambetov, Z. O. (2026). The investigator is tasked with operating within rigid legal frameworks while deploying creative tactical advantages, psychological manoeuvring, and scientific inquiry to uncover the truth. In local context private investigation experience or independent crime interrogation are considered inapplicable since local police and judicial system act reasonably.

The internal conflict within the investigator figure also mirrors broader legal and psychological dualities inherent to investigative roles. In modern procedural analyses,

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an investigator faces a structural paradox: legally positioned within the prosecution, they are simultaneously bound to remain impartial, protecting the accused by establishing objective truth rather than merely securing convictions. This legal tension between accusation and objective fact-finding directly mirrors the dramatic dual nature seen in regional crime fiction within close-knit Uzbek society. Furthermore, a distinctive feature of a good detective story is the moral idea embedded within it, connected to the exposure and punishment of the criminal" (Gerasimenko, 2013, p-54).

Furthermore, forensic psychology emphasizes that the investigator must navigate complex psychological dynamics during interrogation and detection. By exploiting the cognitive tension between a suspect's concealed truth and fabricated narratives, the investigator acts as both an empathetic listener and a calculating strategist. In literary representations, this manifests as an investigator who must understand the criminal psyche while upholding unwavering social and moral integrity. Modern Uzbek prose frequently blurs classical narrative modes with investigative tension and dramatic social critique. Within contemporary Uzbek literary scholarship, the modern novel exhibits significant genre-style hybridity across various representative authors. O'lmas Umarbekov incorporates elements of moral crisis and criminal investigation into works like Fotima and Zukhra. Works of another prominent author Omon Muxtar also showcases post-soviet Uzbek detective fiction traditions blended with deep eastern mentality, police-procedural investigation, collective harmony and didactive narrative. One of his outstanding detective novels "Mujiza" suggests typical Uzbek procedural investigation of the crime caused by deep moral corruption, family-related conflicts, revenge and other social issues. Contemporary Uzbek detective novels regularly display genre-style contamination, mixing social realism with crime frameworks. Broad structural examinations include related works by authors such as Togay Murad, Shukur Kholmirzaev, Utkir Khashimov, Ulmas Umarbekov, Komil Sindarov and others.

While wider regional scholarship frames authors such as Toxir Malik and Komil Sindarov as central developers of legal (police-procedural) and detective themes, peer-reviewed indices remain sparse regarding dedicated textual analyses of their specific investigator figures. T. Malik's works notably explore ethical accountability and underworld mechanics, whereas Sindarov's literature draws directly on forensic realities. In Uzbek detective literature, the investigator is generally not an autonomous private sleuth but a figure embedded in law-enforcement or legal procedure, and this institutional role is paired with a second function: shaping the moral judgment of suspects, offenders, and readers. Uzbek criticism places the genre's emergence alongside cooperation with police officers, early "modern detective" experiments, and later works by O'lmas Umarbekov and Tohir Malik that helped define the national form (Nematilloyevna, 2019).

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That profile aligns closely with the broader Soviet police-procedural model, where the investigator is a representative of official legality, works collectively rather than as a lone genius, and pursues an ideological and educational mission in addition to solving crime (Pandžić, 2026; Braterska-Dron, 2020). Comparative work on regional Soviet literatures shows the same pattern: detectives are official law-enforcement representatives, procedure matters, and teamwork outweighs the private-eye model and there is no independent decisions or solo actions. Throughout the crime investigation process every step should be followed by plan of actions decided by chief executive. (Kara, 2025; Shylina, 2025). Within Uzbek-specific studies, Tohir Malik's and Omon Muxtar's detective prose foregrounds investigation, court process, and moral judgment, while Komil Sindarov's fiction is explicitly tied to criminalistics, professional ethics, and legal education rather than freelance detection.

The investigator's second role is moral influence. Since Uzbek society is considered community-oriented, family-centric culture that blends deep Islamic and traditional Eastern values. Soviet procedural fiction casts policing as a educational force devoted to re-education and socialist values, and Soviet detective culture more broadly was expected to educate readers morally as well as entertain them (Pandžić, 2026; Braterska-Dron, 2020). That moralizing logic persists in Uzbek contexts, where detective prose is described as offering spiritual nourishment, deeper philosophical content, and legal-ethical formation. (Nematilloyevna, 2019; Bozorova, 2026)

Tohir Malik's "Murdalar gapirmaydi" is especially clear on this point. Its crime language repeatedly frames criminality through spiritual approach - sin, punishment, and moral consequence, revealing a narrative world where lawbreaking is judged ethically as well as legally (Markhabo, 2025). Related work on the detective stories in Uzbek context reads the crime as the product of spiritual decline and social injustice, again making the detective frame a vehicle for moral correction rather than neutral case-solving (Eshmatova, 2026). The evidence for the "not a private eye" claim is moderate-to-strong because it is supported by direct Soviet police-procedural studies, regional comparator literatures, and Uzbek genre criticism, all pointing in the same direction: the detective is institutionally attached to police or legal procedure (Pandžić, 2026; Kara, 2025; Nematilloyevna, 2019).

Conclusion

Very few papers state this proposition explicitly for multiple Uzbek novels; much of the Uzbek-specific inference comes from genre history and author framing rather than close readings of investigator characters across a large canon (Yusufovna, 2021; Sultonova, 2023). From contextual analysis of Uzbek detectives reveals that the evidence for the role "moral influencer" claim is not fully proven and maintained. It is strongly grounded in the Soviet model's educational task of the literature and language and in Uzbek studies of moral judgment, spiritual decline, and legal-ethical instruction,

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especially Malik and Sindarov (Pandžić, 2026; Braterska-Dron, 2020; Markhabo, 2025). Still, the corpus more often shows moral framing in the narrative and educational use of the texts than direct scene-level evidence of investigators reforming suspects through dialogue. A final caveat is historical layering. Uzbek detective literature appears to inherit Soviet educational legality, but it also sits in a post-independence moral environment and ethical beliefs shaped by unique mentality, legal liberalization, and renewed emphasis on human rights and ethical state service.

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The use of AI tools

The authors used AI to preserve the scientific style of the text and increase literary and linguistic accuracy.

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