



A GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THE LIFE AND WORK OF A.S. PUSHKIN AND SAID AHMAD

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Abstract

This article provides a comparative analysis of the life and creative work of the great representative of Russian literature, Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin, and one of the prominent figures of Uzbek literature, Said Ahmad. The study examines their artistic style, attitude toward language, mastery in expressing national values, and aesthetic approaches to the concept of loyalty. The paper analyzes Pushkin's role in simplifying the Russian literary language and Said Ahmad's contribution in bringing elements of the Uzbek folk language and oral traditions into artistic prose. The similarities and differences in their contributions to national literary thought, their views on language, morality, loyalty, and national identity are discussed.

Keywords

A.S. Pushkin, Said Ahmad, national literature, artistic language, loyalty, realism, folk oral creativity, linguistic style, national values, artistic thought.

Introduction

In the development of the literary process, every nation has distinctive representatives who reflect the spirit of their era, national values, and universal human ideals in their works. Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin, considered the father of Russian literature, and Said Ahmad, a well-known representative of Uzbek literature, made invaluable contributions to the progress of artistic thought. Their lives and works led to the emergence of literary symbols reflecting the historical, cultural, and spiritual state of their respective nations.

Pushkin was born on June 6, 1799, in Moscow, into a noble family. His father, Sergey Lvovich Pushkin, came from ancient Russian nobility; his mother, Nadezhda Osipovna, was the granddaughter of Abram Hannibal, an Abyssinian (Ethiopian) nobleman who served under Emperor Peter I. Thus, through his mother, African blood entered Pushkin's lineage.

A.S. Pushkin (1799–1837) is regarded as one of the founders of modern Russian literature during the Russian Empire. His life was filled with education in St. Petersburg and Moscow, political persecution, and personal challenges. Recognized as the "Founder of the Russian Literary Language," the "Father of Realistic Prose," and the "Heart of Literary Romanticism," Pushkin worked in poetry, drama, and prose, laying the foundation for major literary schools. Pushkin first studied at home and later at the Imperial Lyceum in Tsarskoye Selo, where he became acquainted with the progressive intellectual and literary movements of his time. There he wrote his first poems and entered the world of "serious" literature.

During his studies, Pushkin became acquainted with the Decembrist movement, whose ideas of political freedom, justice, and equality deeply influenced his literary worldview. His poem "Ruslan and Lyudmila" (1820) marked the beginning of a new era in Russian literature.

His famous works — “Eugene Onegin,” “Boris Godunov,” “The Captive of the Caucasus,” and “Ruslan and Lyudmila” — explore themes such as the aristocracy, human emotions, and the conflict between society and the individual. Pushkin analyzed such moral and ethical issues as loyalty and betrayal through love, friendship, and patriotism. For instance, in “Eugene Onegin”, Tatiana’s devotion to Onegin and his emotional detachment reveal deep moral conflict (Belinsky, “Article on Pushkin”, 1847).

Pushkin is recognized as the founder of Russia’s “national awakening” in literature. His work had a profound influence on shaping the Russian literary language. Simplicity of expression, closeness to folk speech, natural imagery, symbolism, and lyricism define Pushkin’s stylistic essence.

As V.G. Belinsky noted: “Pushkin is the embodiment of national consciousness, national language, and artistic thought. In his art, nationality and universality are harmoniously united.” (Belinsky V.G., Complete Works, Vol. 6. Moscow: 1955)

Pushkin’s legacy spans various genres:

- Lyric poetry: “Winter Evening,” “The Poet,” “Arion,” “My Genealogy”, etc., exploring themes of love, patriotism, personal reflection, and social responsibility.
- Epic works: “Ruslan and Lyudmila” (1820), “The Captive of the Caucasus” (1821), “The Fountain of Bakhchisaray” (1823), “The Bronze Horseman” (1833).
- Drama: “Boris Godunov” (1831) — regarded as the true example of Russian historical drama.
- Prose: “The Captain’s Daughter” (1836), “Dubrovsky” (1832–1833), and “The Tales of Belkin” (1830) — these works established a new stage of realism in Russian prose.

Pushkin’s greatest work, “Eugene Onegin,” a “novel in verse,” captures early 19th-century Russian society: the aristocratic world, intellectual struggles, love, and loyalty, all rendered through a highly poetic form. Pushkin was not only a writer but a creative school for subsequent generations — his aesthetic principles deeply influenced Lermontov, Gogol, Turgenev, Tolstoy, and Chekhov.

D.S. Likhachov wrote: “Pushkin is not the peak of Russian literature but its beginning. He is the foundation of Russian artistic thought, the creator of its literary language, and the symbol of national culture.”

(Likhachov D.S., “Pushkin and World Literature,” 1975, p. 7)

For Likhachov, Pushkin represents not only literary genius but the formation of Russian cultural identity. He considers Pushkin’s writings a “mirror of national culture,” through which the Russian people began to understand themselves. In Pushkin’s works, loyalty — to language, history, nation, and moral choice — serves as a central ethical pillar.

According to Likhachov: “Pushkin is the harmony of beauty and morality. He viewed art as a means of nurturing the human soul. His works, through moral dilemmas, urge us to reflect on our duty before ourselves, society, and history.”

(Likhachov D.S., “About Pushkin,” Moscow: Sovetskiy Pisatel, 1990)

S.N. Brodsky, in his book “Pushkin and Russian Culture” (1969), calls Pushkin “the heart of Russian literature,” describing him as not just a master of artistic word, but the echo of the nation’s soul.

Pushkin died on January 29, 1837, after being mortally wounded in a duel with D’Anthès. His death was a national tragedy. Today, his legacy continues to inspire scholars and readers

worldwide; universities, schools, and cultural institutions bear his name, and June 6 is celebrated as "Pushkin Day" in Russia and beyond.

Pushkin remains not only a figure of Russian but of world literature — a moral and aesthetic educator whose "school" symbolizes harmony between language, thought, and humanity.

Said Ahmad (1920–2007) was one of the major representatives of 20th-century Uzbek literature — a people's writer, playwright, and publicist. Born in Fergana and active in Tashkent, he reflected the profound social transformations of the post-World War II period in his writings. In works such as "Stillness," "Horizon (Ufq)," "Gift," and "Man's Heart," he explores human nature, loyalty, conscience, love, and betrayal with philosophical and aesthetic depth.

He promoted national spirit, the values of the people, and fidelity to cultural identity. In "Horizon (Ufq)", the character Tursunboy symbolizes duty to one's homeland, respect for one's mother, and the tragic consequences of betrayal. Said Ahmad once said, "Literature is the school of life; I am the student, and the people are the teacher." (Said Ahmad, 1980)

Literary scholar M. Quronov wrote: "Said Ahmad brought into Uzbek literature the symbols of sorrow, fidelity, and pride. His characters are filled with pain yet strength, loyalty yet restlessness."

(Quronov M., Theory of Literature, Tashkent: University Press, 2002, p. 57)

Quronov emphasized that Said Ahmad's works, deeply realistic and psychologically rich, portray ordinary people — workers, tragic heroes — through the prism of loyalty and conscience. He links every character to society, history, and the collective spirit of the people.

Language, as the writer's primary tool, expresses both thought and spirit, serving as a bridge between the author and the nation. In the works of A.S. Pushkin and Said Ahmad, language is not merely an artistic medium but a reflection of national psychology and a vessel of cultural heritage.

When Pushkin entered literature, the Russian literary language still carried the formal rigidity of Church Slavonic. He harmonized it with the spoken vernacular, simplifying it and infusing it with natural rhythm and life. As Likhachov noted,

"Pushkin is the father of the Russian literary language. He made it lively, natural, and close to the people."

(Likhachov, "Pushkin and World Literature," 1975, p. 73)

Pushkin made extensive use of Russian folklore, proverbs, and idioms. His famous line from "Ruslan and Lyudmila" — "There are wonders there; the wood-sprite roams..." — embodies the spirit of folk tales and brings oral tradition into high art.

Similarly, in "Eugene Onegin", he used the colloquial language of everyday life, bridging the gap between the elite and the common people.

N.G. Chernyshevsky noted:

"Through the people's language, Pushkin discovered the soul of the people — and preserved this spirit in his works. Language was the core of his national identity."

(Chernyshevsky N.G., "Aesthetics and Literary Theory," 1855)

In Uzbek literature, Said Ahmad mastered the expressive possibilities of the Uzbek language. He elevated folk speech, idioms, and proverbs to true artistic language.

Z. Khojayev wrote: "In Said Ahmad's artistic speech, Uzbek proverbs, wordplay, and allegories are skillfully used, revealing his deep loyalty to national spirit."

(Khojayev Z., "Artistic Speech in Uzbek Literature," 2015, p. 33)

In “Ufq”, the speech of the characters reflects authentic folk tone — concise, vivid, and expressive. Their language reveals social background, moral outlook, and national character. As a playwright, Said Ahmad shaped dramatic dialogues in lively, colloquial Uzbek. His play “Rebellion of the Brides” portrays gender psychology through speech: the women’s language is soft and ironic, the men’s — strong and honor-bound.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS: Similarities and Differences

Aspect	A.S. Pushkin	Said Ahmad
Source of language	Russian folk oral tradition, classical poetry	Uzbek proverbs, folk oral art
Approach to language	Simplified literary language, closer to people’s speech	Blends literary and folk language
Nature of expression	Lively and poetic in both prose and verse	Folk-oriented, psychological, and dramatic
Means of imagery	Metaphorical and philosophical	Folk-based, humorous, or dramatic tone
Aim	To bring literature closer to the people	To embody national identity and social spirit

Both Pushkin and Said Ahmad sought to make their national literature closer to the people’s language and spirit, though in different sociocultural contexts — Pushkin during the literary standardization of Russian, and Said Ahmad during the national consolidation of Uzbek. For both, language was not just a tool of expression but a symbol of national consciousness and the linguistic embodiment of loyalty.

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