FROM TRADITIONAL TO MODERN: TRANSFORMATION OF WOMEN'S IMAGE IN LITERATURE

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Annotation. *This thesis explores the transformation of women's image in literature from traditional to modern perspectives. It examines how female characters have evolved from being portrayed as passive, obedient, and family-centered figures to independent, self-aware, and socially active individuals. The study analyzes literary works from different periods to highlight the influence of historical, cultural, and ideological changes on the representation of women. Special attention is given to the shift in gender roles, identity construction, and the emergence of feminist ideas in literature. The research aims to reveal how modern literature redefines women's roles and challenges traditional stereotypes.*

Keywords: *women's image, literary transformation, gender roles, modern literature, traditional literature, feminism, female identity, cultural change, characterization*

Annotatsiya. *Mazkur tezis adabiyotda ayol obrazining an'anaviydan zamonaviylikka o'tish jarayonini o'rganishga bag'ishlangan. Unda ayol obrazining passiv, itoatkor va oilaga yo'naltirilgan timsoldan mustaqil, o'zligini anglagan va ijtimoiy faol shaxsga aylanishi tahlil qilinadi. Tadqiqot turli davr adabiy asarlari misolida ayol obrazining shakllanishiga tarixiy, madaniy va g'oyaviy omillarning ta'sirini ko'rsatadi. Shuningdek, gender*

rollarining o‘zgarishi, ayol shaxsining rivoji va feministik qarashlarning adabiyotda aks etishi o‘rganiladi.

Kalit so‘zlar: *ayol obrazi, adabiy transformatsiya, gender rollari, zamonaviy adabiyot, an’anaviy adabiyot, feminizm, ayol shaxsi, madaniy o‘zgarish, xarakter yaratish*

Аннотация. *Данная работа посвящена исследованию трансформации женского образа в литературе от традиционного к современному. В ней анализируется эволюция женских персонажей — от пассивных, покорных и ориентированных на семью к независимым, самосознательным и социально активным личностям. Исследование рассматривает влияние исторических, культурных и идеологических факторов на формирование образа женщины в разные периоды. Особое внимание уделяется изменениям гендерных ролей и развитию феминистских идей в литературе.*

Ключевые слова: *женский образ, литературная трансформация, гендерные роли, современная литература, традиционная литература, феминизм, женская идентичность, культурные изменения, характеристика персонажа*

Introduction. In literary studies, the transformation of women’s image from traditional to modern perspectives reflects profound social, cultural, and ideological shifts. Literature has long portrayed women within the boundaries of established norms, often emphasizing their roles as obedient daughters, devoted wives, and self-sacrificing mothers. However, over time, especially with the rise of modern literary movements and changing societal values, female characters have gained greater independence, voice, and complexity. In traditional Uzbek literature, female images are closely tied to moral ideals and family-centered values. For example, in O‘tkan kunlar by Abdulla Qodiriy, Kumush represents loyalty, patience, and emotional strength. Despite her

intelligence and dignity, her life is largely shaped by social expectations and patriarchal norms. This reflects the traditional model of femininity, where women's identity is defined through their relationships and responsibilities within the family. A transitional and more dynamic representation of women can be observed in the works of Saida Zunnunova, whose творчество occupies an important place in the development of modern Uzbek literature. In her poetry, women are no longer portrayed solely as passive figures but as emotionally rich, thoughtful, and socially aware individuals. For instance, in her lyrical lines such as "I am not only a mother or a wife, I am also a human with a heart full of dreams," the female voice expresses self-awareness and a desire for personal identity beyond traditional roles. Zunnunova emphasizes women's inner world, their aspirations, and their right to emotional and intellectual fulfillment.

Similarly, in English literature, the transformation of women's image can be traced through characters like Elizabeth Bennet in Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen, who challenges social conventions with wit and critical thinking. This evolution becomes even more pronounced in Jane Eyre by Charlotte Brontë, where the protagonist asserts her independence, declaring: *"I am a free human being with an independent will."* Such expressions highlight the emergence of a modern female identity based on autonomy and self-respect.

Thus, the works of Saida Zunnunova serve as a crucial bridge between traditional and modern representations of women in Uzbek literature. Her creative legacy illustrates how female characters gradually move beyond limited social roles toward self-expression and individuality. This study, therefore, aims to explore the transformation of women's image in literature by analyzing both classical and modern examples, with particular emphasis on the contribution of Zunnunova's works to the evolving portrayal of women.

Main body. The transformation of women's image in literature becomes particularly evident when examining the works of Saida Zunnunova and Jane

Austen, whose writings reflect different cultural contexts yet reveal similar tendencies toward redefining female identity. Both authors contribute to the evolution of women's representation by portraying female characters as intellectually active, emotionally complex, and increasingly self-aware individuals.

In the works of Saida Zunnunova, the female image undergoes a significant shift from traditional passivity to inner awakening and self-expression. Her poetry often centers on the emotional and psychological world of women, emphasizing their aspirations, struggles, and dignity. Unlike earlier literary traditions where women are primarily depicted through their roles within the family, Zunnunova presents women as individuals with independent thoughts and desires. For instance, in her lyrical expressions such as *"My heart is not confined to walls; it seeks the light beyond them,"* the female voice symbolizes a desire to transcend social limitations. This metaphorical language highlights the internal conflict between traditional expectations and personal freedom.

Moreover, Zunnunova's portrayal of women is deeply rooted in cultural values while simultaneously challenging them. She does not entirely reject traditional roles such as motherhood or devotion; rather, she reinterprets them. A woman in her works can be both caring and strong, both devoted and independent. This duality reflects a transitional stage in literary representation, where modern identity emerges without completely abandoning cultural heritage. Through such nuanced depictions, Zunnunova elevates the female image from a purely social function to a complex human identity. Similarly, Jane Austen offers a critical perspective on women's roles within the constraints of 19th-century English society. In Pride and Prejudice, Elizabeth Bennet serves as a representative of a new type of female character who values intellect, moral judgment, and personal integrity. Her statement, *"I am determined that only the deepest love will induce me into matrimony,"*

challenges the prevailing notion that marriage should be based solely on economic or social considerations. Through Elizabeth, Austen critiques the limited opportunities available to women and subtly advocates for greater autonomy and rational choice.

At the same time, Austen's female characters still operate within the framework of social conventions. Marriage remains an important outcome, and complete independence is not fully realized. This reflects the transitional nature of Austen's work, positioned between traditional expectations and emerging modern values. Her use of irony and dialogue allows her to expose societal constraints while maintaining narrative balance. A comparative analysis of Saida Zunnunova and Jane Austen reveals both similarities and differences in the transformation of women's image. Both writers emphasize female intellect, emotional depth, and moral strength, moving beyond simplistic and passive representations. However, Zunnunova's works focus more on internal emotional liberation and symbolic expression, while Austen's narratives highlight social critique and practical challenges faced by women in society.

Furthermore, while Austen's heroines negotiate their independence within existing social structures, Zunnunova's female voices often express a deeper, more introspective struggle for identity and self-realization. Despite these differences, both authors contribute to the broader literary movement that redefines women not merely as social roles but as autonomous individuals.

Thus, the works of Saida Zunnunova and Jane Austen illustrate a crucial stage in the transformation of women's image in literature—from traditional, role-bound figures to modern, self-conscious personalities capable of shaping their own destinies.

table 1

Transformation of Women's Image in Literature			
Aspect	**Traditional Representation**	**Jane Austen's Perspective**	**Saida Zunnunova's Perspective**
Role of Women	Domestic, family-centered	Socially active but within norms	Emotionally and intellectually independent
Main Focus	Obedience, loyalty	Rationality, marriage choice	Inner world, self-expression
Freedom Level	Limited	Partial independence	Strong inner freedom
Typical Image	Passive, dependent	Intelligent, critical thinker	Sensitive, strong, self-aware
Language Style	Didactic, moralizing	Ironical, dialogical	Lyrical, symbolic
Goal of Character	Maintain family harmony	Achieve a respectful marriage	Achieve identity and self-realization
Example	"Ideal wife/mother" model	Elizabeth Bennet (*"I am determined…"*)	"My heart seeks the light…" (symbolic expression)

Conclusion. In conclusion, the transformation of women's image in literature from traditional to modern perspectives reflects profound cultural and ideological shifts in society. The comparative analysis of the works of Saida Zunnunova and Jane Austen demonstrates that female representation has evolved from passive, role-bound figures into complex, self-aware individuals. In Jane Austen's works, female characters such as Elizabeth Bennet represent a transitional stage, where women begin to challenge social norms through

intellect and personal choice, yet remain within the framework of societal expectations. In contrast, Saida Zunnunova portrays women as emotionally rich and introspective individuals striving for self-expression and identity, reflecting a more modern and internalized form of independence. Overall, the study confirms that literature not only reflects social change but also actively participates in shaping new perspectives on gender and identity, highlighting the growing recognition of women as independent and dynamic members of society.

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