

The Artistic Mastery of Luqmon Borikhan in Crafting Literary Characters

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Abstract: This article analyzes the art of character creation in Luqmon Borikhan's novel *Imam Moturidi*. The process of creating the character of Imam Moturidi, its historical and philosophical significance, as well as the compositional structure and plot characteristics of the novel, are examined. Additionally, the religious and philosophical views presented in the novel, artistic imagery, and the writer's attitude towards historical truth are analyzed. The article highlights that the plot of the novel is constructed in a retrospective style, with the system of characters formed based on historical sources.

Keywords: Novel, composition, plot, commentary, science of Kalam, time and place, artistic intent, content and idea.

Introduction: The restoration of national-religious values and the in-depth study of the activities and vast intellectual legacy of scholars like Moturidi, who wrote numerous works dedicated to various fields of Islamic thought in the past, is one of the most urgent matters. Such research, on the one hand, is of special importance in the education of spiritually perfect individuals who are crucial for our society, and also in shaping a healthy religious mindset.

In Luqmon Borikhan's *Imam Moturidi*, the portrayal of the theologian Imam and his significant contribution to the development of doctrine and Kalam science is presented, and through the figure of Moturidi, the novel serves as an important source for nurturing the younger generation with noble universal ideas. The protagonist, Imam Moturidi, is depicted as an individual who displayed exceptional virtues during the rule of the Samanids. His actions and qualities, particularly in relation to the Islamic faith, are presented as exemplary and inspiring. The saying "The world will be saved by Moturidi" in world Turkology reflects this profound significance. The establishment of the "Imam Moturidi International Research Center" in New Uzbekistan is also recognized as a symbol of respect and admiration for this great figure. Luqmon Borikhan, by studying historical materials related to Imam Moturidi's life and work, skillfully created the

character of Imam Moturidi for the first time in Uzbek prose. In Uzbek literature, which has a century-long history of novel writing, works have been created in genres such as romantic, adventure, scientific fiction, social-political, memoir, essay, historical, everyday life, and more. Luqmon Borikhan's *Imam Moturidi* is the first philosophical-doctrinal novel in our national literature, focusing on depicting the faith, worldview, emotional state, and thoughts of the human character. "This novel reflects the level of modern Uzbek artistic thought, showing how much it has advanced" [2]. The author referred to historical sources such as Abu Bakr Muhammad Narshahi's *History of Bukhara*, Abu Tahir Khodja Samarkandi's *Samariya*, and Alisher Navoi's *Nasoyimul-muhabbat* while creating this novel, studying them meticulously. Particularly, by examining historical sources related to the Samanid period (IX-X centuries), scientific facts, and sacred texts like the Qur'an and Hadith, the writer successfully depicted the artistic image of our enlightened ancestor and the founder of the Moturidi school, Imam Abu Mansur Moturidi. The writer himself commented on his approach in the postscript of the novel, saying, "As a writer, I attempted to portray the personality of our great thinker, his path in life, the purity of his beliefs, and the firm struggle he led" [3;286]. Uzbekistan Hero Ibrahim Gafurov emphasized Luqmon Borikhan's artistic skill, noting that the writer's portrayal of

historical figures from the pages of history, through careful analysis, succeeded in presenting Imam Moturidi's character in a human and vivid manner. The scholar wrote: "The protagonist of the novel appears as a healthy, highly intellectual, humane, and just person. He corrects various false religious views with deep reflection, relying on both reason and tradition, and achieves a pure doctrinal position through his scientific talent, using the solid confirmation of logic" [3;4]. The researcher B. Shukurova also comments on the novel, particularly emphasizing the attributes of Imam Moturidi as a perfect person. "In today's globalized world, increasingly rising religious extremist ideas, Luqmon Borikhon's new novel was created as a response. The novel depicts the life of the theologian and his contributions to the development of doctrine and Kalam, portraying Imam Moturidi's personality to educate the younger generation with noble humanist ideas" [6;13]. She stresses that the novel also portrays Moturidi as a humble and noble character. Not only scholars of literature, but young researchers have also studied various aspects of the novel. For example, Sh. Normurodov, Y. Ro'ziyeva, and G. Jo'rayeva focus on the theoretical issues of the novel's poetics, such as character, idea, plot, composition, conflict, artistic mastery, and the writer's ability to create historical figures [7;176]. In his article "The Plot of the Imam Moturidi Novel and the Parallelism of the Author's Concept," Sh. Normurodov highlights how the writer Luqmon Borikhon introduced the concept of the historical figure of Imam Moturidi, portraying his psychological state, and views through his imaginative fantasy. The researcher observes, "The writer succeeds in portraying a resolute believer, a brave protector of the Islamic doctrine, a man of religious tolerance, and an intellectual character in his novel" [7;176]. Thus, from the standpoint of the author's concept, the gradual revelation of the main character's ascetic nature, beliefs, and character development is presented.

Researcher G. Jo'rayeva, in her article *The Harmony of Image and Idea in Imam Moturidi*, notes that Luqmon Borikhon's work is a historical novel that reflects the social, political, and religious-cultural issues of Samarqand in the early 10th century. She analyzes why the writer specifically chose the life of Imam Moturidi to form the basis of his narrative. The historical reality in the novel is explained in the context of ideological struggles between different religious schools during the time. The researcher emphasizes that the writer parallels the religious extremism and terrorism of the 21st century with the issues raised in the 10th century, using the historical figure of Imam Moturidi to warn against such destructive movements [9;29]. Indeed, in

the novel, the intellectual and ideological struggles between Imam Moturidi and followers of the Samanid dynasty, the Muqaddas Fitna, and other radical groups are portrayed. The author masterfully revives past events while drawing attention to current issues. Along with historical figures such as Imam Moturidi, Ahmad Ibn Ismoil, Khalid Khalaj, and Ash'ariy, numerous fictional characters also appear in the narrative, such as Surayo, Idris Shomi, Irzo Dovot, Vosiq ibn Qosim, Totiya Khanim, Bibinor, Inoyat, Khatot Nuri, Gulsum, Gulziyo, and Sora. The novel is divided into an introduction and three sections. In the story, the writer highlights ideals such as pure faith, justice, truth, and discipline as aesthetic ideals through the portrayal of Imam Moturidi and events during the Samanid period. The image of Imam Moturidi as a humble person, one who renounced worldly possessions and lived for devotion to Allah, is skillfully illuminated. The dominant narrative style of the novel is retrospective, which does not hinder the reader's understanding of the events. The writer uses the conflicts between characters, their contrasting personalities and internal contradictions to portray Imam Moturidi as a humble yet exalted individual.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it can be said that the events from the past depicted in the historical novel help form perceptions of the future or the time in which the author lives, creating an understanding of historical continuity in human consciousness. As a result, the past and present merge in a unified historical space, ensuring the systematic functioning of social thought. This, in turn, guarantees that the values and ideas that became central to a nation's past will continue to endure in the future.

Historically, Imam Moturidi was known as an unparalleled intellectual and one of the most learned individuals of his time, which led him to be called the "Sultan of Saints." Imam Moturidi earned the highest titles, such as "Imam of Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jama'a" and "Imam al-Huda," not only from his supporters but even from his adversaries. He is regarded as a miraculous figure in Kalam science, with his Moturidiya doctrine distinguished by its closeness to the Qur'an, Hadith, reason, logic, and truth. Imam Moturidi promoted tolerance, moderation, and humanity in Islam through his teachings.

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