

THE IMAGE OF MIRZAKARIMBOY-UDDABURON CHARACTER

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A true reader naturally gains sufficient skills, knowledge, and aesthetic pleasure while reading a work. However, there are certain works that require the reader to repeatedly read in order to grasp their essence and discover new meanings with each reading. The novel "*Qutlug' qon*" (Blessed Blood), a masterpiece that has preserved its value over the years and remains a focus for thousands of readers, is one such work. It has been more than 70 years since Oybek authored this novel. Before "*Qutlug' qon*", there were only a few notable novels in our national literature. Specifically, readers were familiar with works like A. Qahhor's "*Sarob*", A. Qodiriy's "*O'tkan kunlar*" (Bygone Days), "*Mehrobdan chayon*" (Scorpion from the Sanctuary), and S. Ayni's "*Qullar*" (Slaves). Certainly, unlike these, "*Qutlug' qon*" elevated historical novel writing to new heights. A reader of the novel witnesses not only Oybek's talent as a writer but also as a skilled economist. For an ordinary reader, the theme of love is predominant in the novel. However, through love, Oybek aims to portray the relationships between two opposing social classes. The large-scale landownership relations visible in the 20th century are depicted through the fate of a single family — the Yolchi family.

As a symbol of the oppressive regime's ideology, Mirzakarimboy was accepted as a cunning rich man who "licks the snake's poison." However, from today's socio-economic perspective, attitudes toward this character have started to change. After the work was published and introduced to the public, some literary critics condemned Oybek's portrayal of Mirzakarimboy as purely negative, fostering a negative view toward the writer. With the passage of time, this puzzle is beginning to find its expression: nowadays, the character of Mirzakarimboy is recognized as representing a businessperson — a "farmer" or "entrepreneur."

Yolchi is the protagonist of the novel. He is a simple, sincere village youth. Facing life's difficulties, he seeks refuge with his uncle Mirzakarimboy. From their very first conversation, it is clear they belong to opposing social classes. The arrogance and selfishness typical of other rich people are also traits found in Mirzakarimboy's character. Oybek's skill lies in introducing the reader to the ongoing events through Yolchi's perspective. During the conversation between Mirzakarimboy and Yolchi, the reader realizes, through Yolchi, that the rich man's estate is quite large and spotless.

Indeed, through the image of Mirzakarimboy, we see a powerful official who rules over the poor people, plundering their wealth and fully owning the land and property. According to Oybek, Mirzakarimboy was "a man who coveted land." His respect for land is evident from the advice he gives to Yolchi about land:

"...A person who sells land is not a person. Land does not sell land. We have seen many who sold land, and in the end, they became paupers. Indeed, land sells for money. Money is the father of everything. Money is the strength to the belt and the crown to the head. Without money, a person cannot move even a step from their place! Ah!.. Money is such a precious thing, nephew..."

These words are Mirzakarimboy's reproaches when he learns that Yolchi sold his land. However, Yolchi had his reasons for selling the land. The debt burden on his dying father threatened their family's future. "While I'm alive, I want to get rid of debt, so I can rest peacefully in my grave. Will Yolchi take care of the household? Will he repay my debts?" Surely, these troubles are common for

any poor person. Eventually, Yolchi sells the piece of land that was the source of livelihood for his family.

Upon hearing Yolchi's story, the rich man says:

"...Debt is a bad thing, nephew. To get rid of debt, one must sell themselves like a slave, not even land. Nephew, if you have wisdom, don't betray anyone's penny. A penny is also money, and a hundred so'm is money. Always ask from Allah; if He gives, well and good; if not, don't be upset, be grateful for fate, an honorable poor man..."

These words show that calling Mirzakarimboy an "honorable rich man" is somewhat ambiguous. These words belong to a person who has found his way to wealth.

Oybek also uses metaphorical meaning in giving nicknames. Mirzakarimboy was called Karim Chittak in his youth. Mirzakarimboy was originally the son of a humble grocer. His journey from this background to becoming a wealthy man in Tashkent was long and challenging. Mirzakarimboy's potential and resourcefulness lie in the fact that he did not sell the three tanobs (land measure) inherited from his father but retained them for his use. On the contrary, he sold his wife's "useless items, good only for decorating the house" to start his own business. This was a wise choice. Had Mirzakarimboy taken the same path as Yolchi in this situation, he might have remained an "honorable poor man."

While reading "*Qutlug' qon*", considering the historical context, the philosophy behind the rich becoming wealthy through honest means like Mirzakarimboy, and the poor like Yolchi struggling to become rich through their hard work, is quite complex.

The rich man's ideas about money may not fully align with today's views. True, today's wealthy do not deify money as much. However, this does not imply a fundamental difference between Mirzakarimboy and modern rich people. Mirzakarimboy might even serve as a "mentor" to today's wealthy. Consider his thoughts:

"...There are many qualities in the land. The land gives birth. If you stick a grass into the land, it grows into a tree that spreads its branches. What about money? Money also gives birth. A lot, quickly. Especially in these times, money has become spoiled. But holding money is difficult... Money is like a wild bird. If you hold it loosely, it flies away. Land both gives birth and shackles money. Land that is bought flourishes, land that is sold withers. Understand the essence of this, nephew!"

As noted, Oybek, primarily as an economist, adapted this work to the spirit of the new era. Through Mirzakarimboy, he makes the reader reflect on property relations and economic processes. Oybek tried to reveal the economic foundations of that era not only as a writer but also as an economist.

Land is an ancient value. This is evident from the activities of the Jadid reformers. At the beginning of the 20th century, due to the railway cutting through all Turkestan regions, the value of land declined, prices increased, and people were forced to sell their lands and homes to survive. This directly threatened the Jadid heroes, as land was not only an inheritance from ancestors but also the livelihood for future generations. Leaders like Cho'lpon were absolutely against the depreciation of land value. As a person, Oybek deeply understood these great figures' efforts as representatives of future generations.

“*Qutlug‘ qon*” is a work with a broad historical scope. It depicts the most tragic moments of life in Turkestan. The 1916 uprising lies at the center of the novel. At that time, the author was an 11-year-old adolescent, but he was aware of the national liberation struggle. Oybek did not explicitly highlight the causes and goals of the uprising in “*Qutlug‘ qon*.” If that were his intention, he could have portrayed the entire work around the uprising or written it in smaller genres. However, Oybek’s goal was to reveal the chaos caused by the uprising and to show the harsh living conditions and psychological experiences of the people. The writer compares the political views of different social classes. The conflicts between the rich and the poor, as well as familial ties, unfold within this political context.

Through his fruitful creativity, Oybek contributed not only to our literature but also to the emergence of our national identity. His legacy continues to serve as a guide for today. Research on the life and works of the author is still ongoing.