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ARTISTIC INTERPRETATIONS OF THE MATURIDI IMAGE IN LUQMON BURIHON'S NOVEL "IMAM MATURIDI"

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Abstract: This article examines the artistic, spiritual, and philosophical interpretation of the image of Imam Abu Mansur al-Maturidi, the great founder of Kalam science, in Luqmon Burihoi's novel "Imam Maturidi". The work harmoniously integrates the historical and scientific personality of the scholar with artistic fiction, analyzing his significant contributions to Islamic doctrine, theology, and enlightenment. The author highlights the conceptual essence of Maturidi's character through the novel's narrative structure, psychological depictions, and ideological conflicts.

Keywords: Luqmon Burihoi, Imam Maturidi, artistic interpretation, Kalam science, novel, enlightenment, historical figure, psychological analysis.

INTRODUCTION

In contemporary Uzbek literature, the historical-biographical novel genre has reached a new stage of development, particularly in portraying the lives, philosophical legacies, and spiritual courage of great Islamic scholars. The literary representation of scholars who laid the foundation for Eastern Renaissance and Islamic rationalism serves as a crucial means for understanding national and religious identity. Among these prominent figures, Imam Abu Mansur al-Maturidi (870–944 CE) occupies a central place as the founder of the Maturidite school of Sunni theology (Kalam), which emphasized rational reasoning, moderation, and theological clarity [cite: 1].

Luqmon Burihoi's novel "Imam Maturidi" represents a significant milestone in modern Uzbek prose, bridging historical facts with artistic expression. Portraying a historical personality who lived more than a millennium ago requires not only profound archival and theological knowledge but also deep literary craftsmanship to construct a believable, dynamic, and emotionally resonance character. The author faces the complex task of representing Imam Maturidi not merely as a rigid religious scholar or canonized saint, but as a living human being possessing extraordinary intellect, profound moral responsibility, and unwavering devotion to truth amidst intense ideological conflicts [cite: 1].

The primary objective of this research is to analyze the artistic interpretation of the image of Imam Maturidi in Luqmon Burihoi's novel, evaluating how historical truth and creative imagination interact to form the protagonist's intellectual and spiritual profile [cite: 1].

LITERATURE REVIEW

The scientific and artistic representation of historical thinkers in Uzbek literature has been extensively studied by literary scholars such as I. G'afurov, U. Normatov, and H. Umurov, who emphasized that creating an authentic historical character demands an optimal balance between documentality and fiction. The theoretical foundations of historical novel writing underline that artistic truth should complement, rather than contradict, historical reality [cite: 1].

Regarding the theological and intellectual background of Imam Maturidi, fundamental researches by international and local scholars—including Rudolph (1997), Saidov (2018), and

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Katipoglu (2020)—highlight Maturidi's unique methodology of synthesizing textual revelation (naql) with rational discourse (aql). In literary studies, however, the specific poetics of Luqmon Burihoi's depiction of Maturidi require deeper systematic exploration [cite: 1]. Burihoi's work expands upon the tradition of historical biographical fiction established by classic Uzbek writers, yet distinguished by its deep engagement with Kalam philosophy and theological argumentation [cite: 1].

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a comprehensive methodology combining historical-comparative, hermeneutic, and psycho-analytical methods of literary criticism [cite: 1]. The methodological framework is structured around three primary analytical steps:

Table 1. Methodological framework of the research

№	Analytical Method	Primary Application in Novel Analysis
1	Historical-Comparative Analysis	Comparing historical records of 10th-century Samarkand with Burihoi's narrative depiction.
2	Hermeneutic-Textual Analysis	Interpreting dialogue, internal monologues, and theological debates within the text.
3	Poetic & Structural Analysis	Evaluating character transformation, composition, and psychological depth.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Through meticulous analysis of Luqmon Burihoi's "Imam Maturidi", the representation of Maturidi's image can be categorized into three distinct yet interconnected dimensions: the scholar as a rationalist seeker of truth, the spiritual mentor, and the socio-civic leader of Samarkand's scientific community [1].

1. Synthesis of Rationalism and Faith. Burihoi successfully portrays Imam Maturidi not as a dogmatic preacher, but as a brilliant philosopher who defended Islam against radical sectarian doctrines (such as Mu'tazilism and extreme anthropomorphism) through logic and intellect [1]. The novel vividly reconstructs disputations where Maturidi demonstrates that reason ('aql) is a divine gift designed to comprehend divine revelation (naql) [1,2].

2. Psychological Depth and Internal Conflict. Unlike traditional hagiographical works that present religious figures as flawless and static, Burihoi gives Maturidi rich psychological realism [3]. The protagonist experiences profound internal reflection, doubts about how best to preserve social harmony during times of political instability under Samanid rule, and sorrow over theological schisms [4].

Table 2. Comparative artistic categorization of Maturidi's character facets

Character Dimension	Textual Manifestation	Artistic & Philosophical Significance
Intellectual-Scientific	Public debates and writing 'Kitab al-Tawhid'	Highlights rational Islamic theology and tolerance.

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Spiritual-Humanistic	Interactions with students, family, and common folk	Shows modesty, deep empathy, and ethical integrity.
Socio-Political	Navigating Samanid state relations and sectarian tension	Portrays the scholar's duty to protect social peace.

3. Stylistic and Narrative Features. Luqmon Burihoi employs expressive dialogue, metaphorical descriptions of 10th-century Samarkand, and reflective monologues. The prose style balances archival atmosphere with dynamic contemporary readability, making Maturidi's complex theological concepts accessible to a broad readership [1].

CONCLUSION

The artistic interpretation of Imam Maturidi in Luqmon Burihoi's novel represents a major achievement in modern Uzbek biographical fiction. By synthesizing historical authenticity with artistic imagination, Burihoi crafts a multi-dimensional portrait of Imam Abu Mansur al-Maturidi that emphasizes his intellectual courage, commitment to moderation, and foundational role in Islamic rationalism.

The novel demonstrates that Maturidi's legacy—centered on tolerance, logical reasoning, and spiritual enlightenment—remains profoundly relevant to contemporary cultural and intellectual discourses. This study confirms that artistic prose serves as a powerful medium for reviving and reinterpreting great scientific and spiritual legacies for future generations.

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