

CULTURAL CONTEXT AND THE REPRESENTATION OF FEMALE PSYCHOLOGICAL EXPERIENCE IN UZBEK AND ENGLISH SHORT FICTION

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Annotatsiya. Maqolada Nodira Ibrohimo va Katherine Mansfield hikoyalarda madaniy hamda ijtimoiy kontekstning ayol qahramonning psixologik tajribasini ifodalashdagi roli qiyosiy tahlil qilinadi. Oila, ijtimoiy mavqe, genderga oid kutishlar va kundalik muhit qahramon ruhiyatining tashqi 'sababi' sifatida emas, uning o'zini va boshqalarni qanday idrok etishini shakllantiruvchi narrativ omillar sifatida o'rganiladi. Tadqiqot milliy madaniyatlarni soddalashtirib qarama-qarshi qo'yishdan voz kechib, madaniy kontekstning hikoya ichida konkret munosabat, makon, xatti-harakat va sukut orqali qanday badiiylashtirilishini ko'rsatadi.

Kalit so'zlar: madaniy kontekst, ayollarning psixologik tajribasi, ijtimoiy muhit, genderga oid taxminlar, oila, sinf, o'zini o'zi anglash, qiyosiy qisqa metrajli badiiy asar, Nodira Ibrohimo, Ketrin Mansfild.

Аннотация. В статье сопоставительно исследуется роль культурного и социального контекста в изображении психологического опыта женщины-героини в рассказах Нодир Иброхимовой и Кэтрин Мэнсфилд. Семья, социальное положение, гендерные ожидания и повседневная среда рассматриваются не как внешние 'причины' психологии персонажа, а как нарративные факторы, влияющие на её восприятие себя и других. Исследование избегает упрощённого противопоставления национальных культур и показывает, как контекст художественно реализуется через конкретные отношения, пространство, поведение и молчание.

Ключевые слова: культурный контекст, женский психологический опыт, социальная среда, гендерные ожидания, семья, класс, самовосприятие, сравнительная короткая проза, Нодира Иброхимова, Кэтрин Мэнсфилд.

Abstract. This article comparatively examines the role of cultural and social context in the representation of female psychological experience in the short fiction of Nodira Ibrohimo and Katherine Mansfield. Family structures, social position, gender expectations, and everyday environments are treated not as external causes of character but as narrative conditions shaping how the heroine

perceives herself and others. Rather than reducing Uzbek and English fiction to a fixed cultural opposition, the study traces how context is textualised through relationships, space, behaviour, and forms of silence.

Keywords: cultural context, female psychological experience, social environment, gender expectations, family, class, self-perception, comparative short fiction, Nodira Ibrohimova, Katherine Mansfield.

Psychological experience is personal, but it is never produced in a social vacuum. A character learns what may be said, what should be hidden, which relationships carry authority, and what kinds of behaviour are recognised or discouraged within a particular environment. In literature, these conditions do not appear only as background information. They enter the heroine's consciousness through habits, expectations, spatial boundaries, language, and the gaze of other people.

Comparative study creates a particular risk here. When texts from Uzbek and English traditions are placed side by side, it is tempting to explain every difference through a broad opposition such as collective versus individual, traditional versus modern, or family-centred versus self-centred. Such formulas may be convenient, but they usually exceed what a small corpus of short stories can prove. They also flatten individual authorial technique.

This article therefore treats cultural context at the level of narrative mediation. The question is not 'what are Uzbek women like compared with English women?' but 'how do the stories make social expectations psychologically visible?' Four channels are examined: family authority, social and class position, gendered self-monitoring, and the relation between private need and everyday responsibility. The approach remains textual: context matters when it becomes observable in perception, behaviour, dialogue, silence, or the organisation of space.

Family Authority and the Formation of Inner Boundaries

Family is one of the most immediate contexts through which psychological limits become internalised. In Mansfield's "The Daughters of the Late Colonel", paternal authority continues after the father's death because it has already entered the sisters' habits of thought and decision [3]. The cultural and familial context is therefore not a background explanation added from outside the story; it is embodied in their inability to sustain independent choice.

This distinction is important. Josephine and Constantia are not psychologically defined by an abstract statement about patriarchy. The story



makes authority visible through hesitation, unfinished decisions, and the persistence of deference after the external authority has disappeared. The social relation becomes a narrative form of consciousness.

Ibrohimova's stories also place female experience within family and intimate relations, but the psychological emphasis often falls on the negotiation between attachment, responsibility, and a need that cannot be fully absorbed by everyday roles. In "Voz kechilgan kitoblar", books bring a previously displaced intellectual dimension of the heroine's life back into view [2]. The tension is not adequately described as family versus freedom. The more precise issue is how routine responsibilities have altered the position of a personal need within the heroine's self-understanding.

Context therefore operates differently from a deterministic cause. Family does not automatically produce one psychological response. It creates a field of expectations within which the heroine interprets what is legitimate to desire, postpone, or recover.

Social Position, Class and the Experience of Belonging

Mansfield frequently places psychological experience within visibly stratified social spaces. "The Garden Party" organises class difference through proximity: the Sheridan household and the dead workman's family inhabit neighbouring but socially separated worlds [3]. Laura's movement between these spaces becomes a test of the categories she has learned inside her own environment.

The story's cultural meaning is carried by concrete details — the organisation of the party, the aesthetic pleasure of the garden, family responses to the death, Laura's clothing, and her movement beyond the protected space. The psychological effect arises because an inherited social interpretation becomes difficult to sustain when the heroine encounters a reality that does not fit comfortably within it.

In "Miss Brill", social position is less explicitly economic but equally dependent on recognition by others [3]. The heroine constructs a sense of belonging through the public ritual of the park. Her interiority is therefore connected with the social gaze: she feels meaningful when she can imagine herself as part of the scene, and her self-perception is wounded when others assign her a very different place.

These examples demonstrate why class or status should not be treated merely as thematic content. Social hierarchy becomes psychological when it



shapes what the heroine notices, what she assumes about her place, and how vulnerable that self-positioning is to another person's judgement.

Gender Expectations and Self-Monitoring

Gender expectations can become narratively significant even when no character states them as a rule. They may appear through self-correction, embarrassment, restraint, or the feeling that a personal need requires justification. This form of pressure is especially important because it turns an external norm into internal monitoring.

In Ibrohimova's "Chorshanba uchun ko'ylak", the heroine's preparation and waiting can be read within an interpersonal context in which recognition from another person carries emotional weight [1]. Yet the story is more complex than a simple image of female dependence. The psychological interest lies in how the heroine invests an ordinary routine with value and how the prolonged expectation changes her relation to herself. Socially recognisable ideas about feminine appearance and attention become individualised through a specific emotional history.

Similarly, "Farzand isi" makes maternal experience personal rather than exemplary [10]. The heroine's inner response emerges through sensory memory rather than through an idealised statement about motherhood. This distinction matters for cultural analysis: a role such as 'mother' belongs to the social world, but literature transforms the role by showing how one particular consciousness inhabits it.

Mansfield also resists reducing female characters to social types. Bertha in "Bliss" appears to possess many markers of social success, yet her inner certainty is unstable [4]. Her experience is shaped by marriage, friendship, domestic sociability, and the conventions of her milieu, but the story does not allow those structures to explain her completely. Free indirect discourse keeps the reader close to her interpretation while leaving room to recognise its limits [8].

Everyday Environment as a Psychological Medium

Context becomes most convincing when it is embedded in ordinary life. A room, clothing choice, meal, visit, book, or family conversation can carry the pressure of a larger social structure without turning the story into sociological commentary. The short story is especially effective at this concentration because it can make a small scene stand for an extensive network of expectations.

Ibrohimova often works through such everyday density. A dress may contain the emotional structure of waiting; books may expose the distance between routine and an earlier personal need; sensory memory may reveal the



continuing force of maternal attachment. The environment does not simply surround the heroine. It supplies the objects through which she recognises what has been neglected, preserved, or emotionally unfinished.

Mansfield's environments are frequently more visibly unstable because the heroine's reading of them can be overturned. A park shifts from belonging to humiliation; a garden party shifts from aesthetic pleasure to moral uncertainty; a domestic evening in "Bliss" becomes a scene in which emotional confidence proves unreliable. In each case, context becomes psychological through a change in perception rather than through explanatory narration.

This comparison suggests that cultural context should be approached as a medium rather than a label. It is the set of relations and signs through which inner experience becomes intelligible. The same social category may therefore produce different literary effects depending on how the author organises focalisation, detail, action, and silence.

Avoiding Cultural Simplification in Comparative Reading

A responsible comparison must distinguish textual tendency from national essence. It would be unjustified to conclude from these stories that Uzbek female experience is fundamentally relational while English female experience is fundamentally individual. Both corpora contain family pressure, personal desire, social judgement, memory, loneliness, and attempts at self-definition. What differs is the configuration of these elements within particular stories.

Ibrohimova often gives greater narrative weight to continuity — memory, close relationships, everyday responsibility, and the recovery or preservation of an inner need. Mansfield frequently foregrounds unstable perception, social observation, class difference, and the sudden breakdown of an assumed position. These patterns are useful for comparative interpretation precisely because they remain authorial and textual rather than being converted into universal cultural rules.

The distinction also has methodological value. If context is treated as a fixed national explanation, analysis becomes circular: a heroine behaves in a certain way because she belongs to a culture, and the culture is then defined by the heroine's behaviour. A better method identifies the specific textual evidence — who speaks, who remains silent, what space is entered or avoided, what behaviour is repeated, what object acquires value — and only then asks what social expectation becomes visible through it.



Such a method preserves both cultural specificity and psychological individuality. It allows the critic to recognise that social norms matter without making the heroine a passive product of those norms.

Comparative Findings

The analysis identifies four principal channels through which cultural context enters female psychological experience: family authority, social or class position, gendered self-monitoring, and the distribution of personal needs within everyday responsibility. These channels are not independent. Family may shape self-monitoring; class may determine access to space; gender expectation may influence what desire can be voiced.

In Ibrohimova's stories, psychological experience is frequently connected with relational continuity, memory, and the pressure to accommodate personal needs within an existing network of responsibility. In Mansfield, the heroine's psychological position is often tested through social observation, class boundaries, interpersonal distance, and an unexpected challenge to her own interpretation. Both writers, however, resist reducing women to roles.

The strongest common principle is therefore contextual rather than categorical. Female interiority becomes legible at the point where private feeling meets a social world. The story does not merely tell us that a norm exists; it shows how that norm enters attention, behaviour, silence, and self-evaluation. Cultural context becomes literary when it is transformed into narrative evidence.

Conclusion

Cultural and social context plays an active role in the representation of female psychological experience in the short fiction of Nodira Ibrohimova and Katherine Mansfield. Family structures, class or status, gender expectations, and everyday environments matter because they shape the heroine's field of perception and the range of responses she considers possible.

Ibrohimova frequently represents this interaction through memory, relational responsibility, neglected personal needs, and the emotional continuity of everyday life. Mansfield often exposes it through social observation, class boundaries, internalised authority, and the instability of a heroine's assumed place among others. These tendencies illuminate different narrative emphases without justifying a rigid opposition between two cultures.

The comparative perspective therefore works best when culture is treated as narratively mediated rather than as a predetermined explanation. Female psychological experience is neither purely private nor mechanically produced by





society. It emerges through the heroine's ongoing interpretation of the relationships, spaces, expectations, and silences that constitute her social world.

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