



## THE WORK AND ROLE OF ZULFIYA ISRAILOVA IN UZBEK LITERATURE

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<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.19185520>

### Abstract

This article examines the creative legacy of Zulfiya Isroilova, her contribution to the development of Uzbek literature and the formation of women's poetry in Central Asia. It analyzes the main themes of her works, their artistic characteristics, and their influence on subsequent generations of poets. Particular attention is paid to her role as a public figure and symbol of the spiritual strength of Uzbek women.

**Keywords:** Zulfiya, Uzbek literature, poetry, women's literature, lyric poetry, Uzbek culture, creativity, social role

### Introduction

Uzbek literature of the 20th century experienced significant changes associated with socio-political transformations and the cultural development of society. One of the key figures of this period is Zulfiya Isroilova, an outstanding poet whose work became a symbol of feminine spirituality, love, and devotion to her homeland.

Her works are distinguished by their sincerity, depth of feeling, and social significance, which has earned her a special place in the literary history of Uzbekistan.

### Biography and career

Zulfiya Isroilova was born on March 1, 1915, in Tashkent to a family of artisans. Her childhood was spent in an atmosphere of respect for labor, folk traditions, and culture, which later had a significant influence on the formation of her worldview and artistic style.

From an early age, Zulfiya showed an interest in literature, poetry, and the art of words. She studied at a pedagogical college, where she began actively writing poetry. Already in her youth, her works were published in periodicals, a testament to her talent and early recognition.

The beginning of her creative career dates back to the 1930s—a period of active development in Uzbek Soviet literature. Zulfiya's first collections of poems were distinguished by their sincerity and emotion and reflected the spirit of the times: a desire for social renewal, faith in the future, and the ideals of the younger generation.

A significant milestone in her life was her meeting and marriage to the renowned Uzbek poet Hamid Olimjon. Their union was not only familial but also creative: they influenced each other, developing their poetic mastery and supporting literary initiatives. However, the tragic death of Hamid Olimjon in 1944 became a turning point in Zulfiya's life.

After this loss, themes of grief, memory, loyalty, and spiritual fortitude intensified in her work. Her poetry became deeper, more philosophical, and more emotionally charged. She addressed themes of human destiny, inner strength, and overcoming life's challenges.

In the post-war years, Zulfiya continued to work actively, creating new poetic works, publishing poetry collections, and participating in the country's literary life. She also held

important public and cultural positions, including serving on the editorial boards of literary journals and participating in the activities of the Writers' Union of Uzbekistan.

Her creative path spanned several decades, during which she rose from a young poet to a recognized classic of Uzbek literature. She actively represented Uzbek poetry on the international stage, participating in cultural exchanges and literary conferences.

Working with young authors was particularly important in her life. Zulfiya supported aspiring poets, shared her experience, and contributed to the development of the literary process in the country. Thanks to this, she left behind not only a rich creative legacy but also a whole host of followers.

For her work, Zulfiya Isroilova was awarded high state awards and titles. Her contribution to literature and culture was widely recognized both in Uzbekistan and abroad.

She passed away in 1996, but her work lives on and inspires new generations of readers and poets.

### **Main themes of her work**

#### ***1. Love and Loyalty***

One of the central themes in Zulfiya's work is love—both a personal feeling and a spiritual attachment to her homeland and people. Her lyrics are filled with sincere emotions and profound experiences.

#### ***2. Women's Destiny and the Image of Women***

Zulfiya played an important role in shaping the image of a strong, educated, and spiritually rich woman. Her heroines are symbols of resilience, loyalty, and inner beauty.

#### ***3. Homeland and Patriotism***

Her poems often feature the theme of love for her native land, culture, and traditions. She extols the beauty of Uzbekistan and pride in her people.

#### ***4. Theme of Loss and Memory***

After the tragic death of her husband, the poet Hamid Olimjon, themes of grief, memory, and spiritual strength intensify in her work.

### **Artistic features of Zulfiya's poetry**

Zulfiya's work is distinguished by the following characteristics:

- Lyricism and emotional depth
- Simplicity and expressiveness of language
- Use of folk motifs
- Symbolism and imagery
- Harmony of form and content

Her poems are easy to understand, yet they contain profound philosophical meaning.

A gifted poet and writer, and a keen connoisseur of human spiritual impulses, she created works in various genres: poems, ballads, elegies, lyric poems, short stories, essays, journalistic articles, and newspaper articles. Many of her poems were dedicated to the struggle for peace and friendship among the peoples of the USSR. During the war, she wrote patriotic poetry. She also wrote librettos for operas by Uzbek composers, including the libretto for the opera "Zeynab and Aman." She also wrote a fairy tale play based on the poem "Semurg" by her husband, Hamid Alimjan.

Her most famous poems include: "Khulkar" (1947), "I Sing the Dawn" (1950), the collection of poems "Close to My Heart" (1958), "Heart on the Journey" (1966), "Gift of the Valley" (1966), "My Spring" (1967), and "Waterfall" (1969).

Other works: "Confession," "Spring Has Come, Asking About You," "Mother," "Envy," "Zeinab and Aman," "Towards the Song of the Alatau," "To My Friends," "Starry Lullaby," "Tulips," "Nameless Gift," "Lilac," "Pages of Life," "Moonlit Night," "Dream," and "I Was Born Here."

### **Role in Uzbek Literature**

Zulfiya Isroilova's work occupies a key place in the development of 20th-century Uzbek literature and the formation of its humanistic and lyrical direction. Her contribution extends far beyond poetry—it encompasses the cultural, social, and spiritual development of society.

Above all, Zulfiya was one of the first women in Uzbek literature to not only establish herself but also gain widespread recognition alongside male poets. In a traditional society, this was of great significance: she paved the way for subsequent generations of female authors, demonstrating that the female voice can be strong, profound, and meaningful.

Her work shaped a new trend in Uzbek poetry—women's lyric poetry, which places particular emphasis on the individual's inner world, feelings, experiences, and spiritual values. Unlike earlier poetry, which focused on epics and collective themes, Zulfiya strengthened the individual and personal element in literature. She played a special role in the development of literary language. Her poems are distinguished by their simplicity, clarity, and musicality, making them accessible to a wide range of readers. She skillfully combined traditional folk motifs with modern forms, thereby creating a bridge between classical and modern Uzbek literature.

Zulfiya also actively participated in the country's literary life:

- supported young poets and writers
- contributed to the development of literary circles and associations
- participated in international literary forums, representing Uzbek culture

Her work influenced many Uzbek authors, including her followers, who continued to develop the themes of women's destiny, love, fidelity, and patriotism.

Furthermore, an important aspect of her role was her cultural and educational function. Her works shaped the moral values of society: respect for family, devotion to the homeland, spiritual purity, and strength of character. Thanks to this, Zulfiya became not only a literary figure but also a moral compass. Thus, Zulfiya Israilov's role in Uzbek literature can be defined as systemically important: it influenced the development of genres, themes, language, and the social significance of literature.

### **Social activities and recognition**

In 1984, she was awarded the title "Hero of Socialist Labor." She also became a laureate of the USSR State Prize.

In 2004, the Zulfiya State Prize was established in Uzbekistan. It is awarded annually on the eve of International Women's Day, March 8, to gifted young women aged 14 to 22 for achievements in literature, art, science, culture, and education. To date, the number of Zulfiya Prize laureates has reached 98.

Zulfiya's poetic work is an inspired hymn to her native Uzbekistan, a hymn to the working people, a hymn to love and truth on earth.

Many years of Zulfiya's glorious creative work have passed, great changes have occurred in the fate of the republic and its people, and "the fiery power of love still warms the reader's soul, stirs their heart and mind."

On March 1, 2008, a monument to Zulfiya was unveiled in Tashkent.

### **Conclusion**

In summary, it should be noted that Zulfiya Israilova's work is a vital part of Uzbekistan's national literary heritage. Her poetry not only reflects the era in which she lived but also transcends it, remaining relevant in the modern world.

The main value of her work lies in its humanistic focus. Zulfiya reveals the human inner world, addressing such timeless themes as love, loyalty, loss, hope, and spiritual fortitude. Her works teach empathy, respect for human feelings, and an awareness of one's own responsibility to society.

Of particular importance is her contribution to the development of the image of women in literature. Thanks to her work, women are portrayed not only as custodians of the home, but also as individuals with a rich inner world, capable of deep feelings, creativity, and social activity. This image has had a significant impact on the formation of gender balance in literature and culture.

Equally important is her role as a public figure. Zulfiya Israilova became a symbol of cultural progress, enlightenment, and spiritual development. The establishment of a state award named after her demonstrates recognition of her achievements and the continuation of her mission to support talented youth.

In the modern context, her work retains its significance. It continues to be studied in educational institutions, inspires new authors, and serves as an important element of Uzbekistan's cultural identity.

Thus, Zulfiya Israilova's legacy represents not only literary value but also a spiritual guide for society. Her contribution to Uzbek literature can be characterized as fundamental, having had a lasting impact on the development of national culture and art.

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