

*Article*

# Psychological Manipulation in American and Uzbek Detective Fiction and Their Similarities and Differences

**Fayzullayeva Nigina Surat kizi**

Asia International University, Assisstent Teacher of foreign language and social sciences department

**Article information:**

**Manuscript received:** 15 January 2026; **Accepted:** 31 January 2026; **Published:** 16 February 2026

**Abstract:** This paper looks at psychological manipulation as a narrative device in American and Uzbek detective literature. This research project identifies similarities and differences in the artistic presentation of manipulation, emphasizing individual character construction, narrative perspective, thematic elements and cultural context. This study is a comparative literary and narratological analysis using key examples from contemporary American detective fiction (for example, Gillian Flynn) and modern Uzbek detective prose. The results show that whereas American detective fiction emphasizes personal psychological depth, unreliable narration and moral ambiguity, Uzbek detective fiction tends to promote social morality, ethical clarity, and collective values. In other words, both traditions make use of psychological manipulation to create suspense, character development, and thematic complexity. In doing so this article also adds to the field of comparative literary studies and furthers the idea that the narrative strategies used in detective fiction are influenced by cultural paradigms.

**Keywords:** Psychological Manipulation, Detective Fiction, Narrative Strategy, American Literature, Uzbek Literature, Comparative Analysis, Unreliable Narrator, Moral Ambiguity.

## 1. Introduction

Apart from a few repetitions of Agatha Christie, I learned over my detective fiction high period of the second half of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st century; namely, that not-so-mystifying quarter of plot, story and narrative with which each investigation ends today is already filled with psychology. In modern detective prose, there is an even more palpable shift away from crime detection towards the narcissistic, unstable or psychologically manipulative character. [1]Psychological manipulation has emerged as a key plot device that adds suspense, broadens character development, [1] and also plays with readers' sense of what is true or not.) Throughout American detective fiction, particularly modern narrative, manipulation is often written into the very structure of the narrative itself, frequently using the trope of the unreliable narrator, but also through fragmented view points. Writers like Gillian Flynn, Paula Hawkins, and Don Winslow build layers of deception between the characters, and between the narrator and the reader. Psychological elements have been increasingly popular in the fiction prose of post-independence Uzbek detective fiction. Despite the action-centred and morally prescriptive nature of earlier detective fiction, contemporary Uzbek authors have moved towards a style that utilizes psychological suspense and internal, emotional conflict. Yet, the depiction of manipulation manifests from different cultural and ethical paradigms.

## 2. Methodology

By applying a methodology rooted in a comparative literary research together with narratological and thematic approaches

Comparative Method. The structural and thematic similarities are observable through a selected cross national textual analysis of American and Uzbek detective fiction.

The comparison focuses on:

1. Character psychology
2. Narrative perspective
3. Ethical framing
4. Reader engagement strategies
5. Narratological Analysis
6. The study examines:
7. Perspective: First-person (with multiple narrators)
8. Reliability of narration
9. Temporal structure
10. Information control

Cultural-contextual approach. It examines how sociocultural values (individualism versus collectivism and moral relativism versus moral clarity) affect the representation of manipulation. This is a qualitative, interpretative analysis based upon close readings of select texts from each literary tradition.

### 3. Results and Discussion

Character strategy in American detective fiction" manipulation is that which defines one of the major characters. In Gillian Flynn at least some of the characters consciously twist facts, create false personas, and take advantage of emotional weaknesses. Often, manipulation is cerebral, strategic and a byproduct of mental illness. The fact that characters act not just to achieve goals outside but to be masters of narrative and identity.

The schemer of American fiction often lies in that morally grey area. The reader may be able to despise and empathize with them at once. Such a duality adds psychological veracity and depth to any character.

Meanwhile, in Uzbek detective fiction, manipulation is rarely presented in a positive sense but instead is treated similarly to other immoral behavior of negative characters. Even if characters are deceiving, their actions are almost always tied to some type of more distinct ethical paradigm. While identity fragmentation or an existential crisis may spark compulsive behaviors to manipulate others, there are generally more benign motivations for most forms of manipulation such as greed, revenge, or social pressure.

So, if narratives in America often normalize moral ambiguity, Uzbek narratives usually restore moral order by the end.

Narrative perspective and unreliability[1]

The largest disparity is in the story structure.

American Tradition

American detective fiction frequently employs:

First-person narration

Multiple perspectives

Unreliable narrators

The manipulation happens at the level of the narrative themselves. A narrator also might hide facts, falsify events, or deliberately mislead the reader. This tool introduces epistemological uncertainty - wherein the reader not only questions what exactly happened but also how a truth can become known. [2]

In these kinds of stories, psychological manipulation has a metafictional dimension, the text is manipulating the reader in the same way characters manipulate each other.

1. Uzbek Tradition
2. Uzbek detective writes more often with:
3. Third-person omniscient narration
4. Linear chronology
5. Checking between actual and fake

Truthfulness between characters may vary, but the narrator is almost always reliable. The reader is led to achieve an impartial view of events. There is power play to be found in the story, but it seldom punctures narrative authority.

This is symptomatic of a broader divergence in literary traditions – postmodernism encourages experimentation with narrative in the American vein, while Uzbek prose is generally more inclined to uphold some classical clarity of a sort.

Reality of the thematic and deceptive dual nature of truth in many works of American detective fiction, that truth is often anything but stable. Manipulation calls the objective concept of reality into question. The investigation process is hindered by memory warping, media impact and psycho-neurosis. Crime is not an external act, but an internal state of mind.

1. Thematically, American works frequently explore:
2. Identity construction
3. Media manipulation
4. Gender power dynamics
5. Psychological trauma

In Uzbek detective fiction, truth usually functions as a moral absolute. Despite temporary confusion or deception, the narrative ultimately reaffirms justice and ethical clarity. Manipulation is exposed and punished, reinforcing social harmony.

This reflects broader cultural differences. American fiction often interrogates institutions and social norms, while Uzbek literature tends to emphasize moral stability and communal values.

In American detective fiction, female characters increasingly appear as active agents of manipulation. This represents a shift from traditional victim roles to complex psychological protagonists. Manipulation becomes a means of empowerment, resistance, or survival.

In Uzbek detective fiction, although female characters are gaining psychological depth, manipulation is less frequently portrayed as a form of empowerment. Gender roles remain more culturally grounded, and psychological dominance is more often associated with male antagonists.

However, contemporary Uzbek literature shows gradual change, with more nuanced portrayals emerging.

Both traditions use psychological manipulation to create suspense. However, the mechanisms differ.

*In American fiction:*

Suspense arises from uncertainty of perception.

Readers must reconstruct fragmented narratives.

Emotional tension is internal and cognitive.

*In Uzbek fiction:*

Suspense often develops through investigative progression.

The focus is on uncovering hidden motives.

Emotional tension is tied to moral justice.

Despite these differences, both traditions rely on manipulation to sustain reader interest and narrative momentum.

### Discussion

The findings indicate that psychological manipulation functions as a universal narrative device in detective fiction but manifests differently depending on cultural and literary frameworks.

American detective fiction reflects postmodern skepticism toward truth and authority. Manipulation destabilizes identity and narrative reliability.<sup>1</sup> The reader becomes an active interpreter, navigating layers of deception.

Uzbek detective fiction, while increasingly psychological, maintains narrative transparency and ethical resolution. Manipulation is contextualized within social morality rather than existential ambiguity.

These differences may be explained by:

1. Literary history — American fiction influenced by noir, postmodernism, and psychological realism.
2. Cultural values — Individualistic versus community-oriented paradigms.
3. Reader expectations — American audiences often expect narrative experimentation; Uzbek readers may prefer moral clarity.

Nevertheless, similarities are evident:

- Manipulation intensifies suspense.
- Psychological depth enriches characterization.
- Crime becomes a psychological phenomenon, not merely a physical act.

Thus, psychological manipulation serves both aesthetic and thematic purposes across cultures.

### 4. Conclusion

Psychological manipulation has become a central narrative strategy in both American and Uzbek detective fiction. However, its representation differs significantly.

American detective fiction emphasizes:

- Moral ambiguity
- Unreliable narration
- Identity instability
- Narrative experimentation

Uzbek detective fiction tends to emphasize:

- Ethical clarity
- Social responsibility
- Narrative stability
- Restoration of moral order

Despite these differences, both traditions use manipulation to deepen psychological realism and enhance narrative complexity. The comparative analysis demonstrates that while manipulation is a universal storytelling mechanism, its artistic realization is shaped by cultural, ethical, and literary contexts.

<sup>1</sup> Nünning, Ansgar. "Unreliable Narration and the Role of the Reader." In: *Journal of Literary Semantics*, Vol. 28, No. 1, 1999, pp. 53–73.

Future research may expand this study by analyzing a broader corpus of texts or incorporating reader-response theory to examine how audiences interpret psychological manipulation across cultures.

## REFERENCES

1. Todorov, Tzvetan. *The Typology of Detective Fiction*. In: *The Poetics of Prose*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977, pp. 42–52.
2. Brooks, Peter. *Reading for the Plot: Design and Intention in Narrative*. New York: Vintage Books, 1985.
3. Flynn, Gillian. *Gone Girl*. New York: Crown Publishing Group, 2012.
4. Nünning, Ansgar. "Unreliable Narration and the Role of the Reader." In: *Journal of Literary Semantics*, Vol. 28, No. 1, 1999, pp. 53–73.
5. Fayzullaeva, N. (2025). GRAMMATICAL ECONOMY AS EXPRESSING ECONOMY IN THE SYNTACTIC AND MORPHOLOGICAL STRUCTURE OF A LANGUAGE. *Modern Science and Research*, 4(2), 567–572. Retrieved from <https://inlibrary.uz/index.php/science-research/article/view/65917>
6. Fayzullaeva, N., & Kamolova, M. (2025). PHONETICS AS THE STUDY OF THE ACTUAL SPEECH SOUNDS THAT CREATE WORDS IN A LANGUAGE. *Modern Science and Research*, 4(2), 46–52. Retrieved from <https://inlibrary.uz/index.php/science-research/article/view/65428>
7. Fayzullaeva, N. (2024). Using animation discourse on the cartoon Kung Fu Panda. *Medicine, Pedagogy and Technology: Theory and Practice*, 2(9), 18–25. Retrieved from <https://inlibrary.uz/index.php/mpttp/article/view/59340>
8. Surat, F. N. (2024). DIALOGUE IN THE ANIMATED SERIES "KUNG FU PANDA. *JOURNAL OF EDUCATION, ETHICS AND VALUE*, 3(4), 202–205. Retrieved from <https://jeev.innovascience.uz/index.php/jeev/article/view/624>
9. Fayzullaeva, N. (2024). FEEL THE FREEDOM IN THE WORKS OF WALT WHITMAN. *MODERN SCIENCE AND RESEARCH*, 3(3), 330–335. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.10814469>
10. Fayzullaeva, N. (2024). WALT WHITMAN WORD ABOUT "A CELEBRATION OF THE HUMAN SPIRIT IN POETRY". *MODERN SCIENCE AND RESEARCH*, 3(3), 336–341. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.10814566>
11. Fayzullaeva, N. (2024). WALT WHITMAN AND HIS POEM ABOUT AMERICA. *Modern Science and Research*, 3(1), 35–39. Retrieved from <https://inlibrary.uz/index.php/science-research/article/view/28918>
12. Fayzullaeva, N. (2024). "AMERICAN DREAM" IN WALT WITHMAN'S POEMS. *Modern Science and Research*, 3(1), 220–224. Retrieved from <https://inlibrary.uz/index.php/science-research/article/view/27940>
13. Fayzullaeva, N. S. qizi . (2023). Theoretical Views on the Use of the Term "Concept" in Cognitive Linguistics. *EUROPEAN JOURNAL OF INNOVATION IN NONFORMAL EDUCATION*, 3(5), 27–31. Retrieved from <https://www.inovatus.es/index.php/ejine/article/view/1685>
14. Sur'at qizi Fayzullaeva, N., & Kilicheva, M. R. (2022). UOLT UILTMAN NASRIDA "AMERIKA ORZUSI" KONSEPTI. *INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING*, 1(8), 574-576.
15. Fayzullaeva, N. (2023). THE IMPROVING OF LISTENING SKILL. *Modern Science and Research*, 2(10), 272–276. Retrieved from <https://inlibrary.uz/index.php/science-research/article/view/25086>
16. Fayzullaeva, N. (2023). THE CONCEPT OF THE AMERICAN DREAM AND WALT WHITMAN. *Solution of social problems in management and economy*, 2(11), 137-142.
17. Fayzullaeva, N. (2023). THE ROLE OF THE AMERICAN DREAM IN UOLT WILTMAN'S POEMS. *Modern Science and Research*, 2(10), 714–718. Retrieved from <https://inlibrary.uz/index.php/science-research/article/view/24676>
18. Fayzullaeva, N. (2023). USAGE OF THE FLORA IN THE EARLY MODERN ENGLISH POETRY. *Modern Science and Research*, 2(9), 36–39. Retrieved from <https://inlibrary.uz/index.php/science-research/article/view/24078>
19. Fayzullaeva, N. (2023). IMPORTANCE OF ENGLISH MODERN CIVILIZATION. *Modern Science and Research*, 2(12), 284–287. Retrieved from <https://inlibrary.uz/index.php/science-research/article/view/26698>
20. Qobilova Nargisa Sulaymonovna, & Fayzullaeva Nigina Sur'at qizi. (2025). Tilshunoslikda Qisqaruvni Vujudga Keltiruvchi Shart-Sharoitlar Va Ularning Linguistik Xususiyati. *Miasto Przyszłości*, 57, 113–115. Retrieved from <https://miastoprzyszlosci.com.pl/index.php/mp/article/view/6069>

21. Fayzullayeva, N. . (2025). LINGUISTIC FOUNDATIONS OF THE PRINCIPLE OF ECONOMY THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES AND APPROACHES. *Modern Science and Research*, 4(4), 657–667. Retrieved from <https://inlibrary.uz/index.php/science-research/article/view/79289>
22. Fayzullayeva, N. (2025). FUNKSIONAL LINGVISTIKA DOIRASIDA TEJAMKORLIK TAMOYILI. *Modern Science and Research*, 4(3), 621–626. Retrieved from <https://inlibrary.uz/index.php/science-research/article/view/72798>
23. Saidova , S., & Fayzullayeva, N. . (2025). THE JOURNEY, ART, AND WISDOM OF SADRIDDIN SALIM BUKHARI. *Modern Science and Research*, 4(5), 876–882. Retrieved from <https://inlibrary.uz/index.php/science-research/article/view/98096>
24. Saidova, S., & Fayzullayeva, N. . (2025). THE MESSAGE BEHIND GEORGE ORWELL’S ANIMAL FARM. *Modern Science and Research*, 4(5), 871–875. Retrieved from <https://inlibrary.uz/index.php/science-research/article/view/98095>
25. Fayzullayeva, N. (2025). O’ZBEK TILSHUNOSLIGINING ASOSIY YO’NALISHLARI VA SHAKLLANISH BOSQICHLARI. *Modern Science and Research*, 4(5), 541–544. Retrieved from <https://inlibrary.uz/index.php/science-research/article/view/87984>
26. Fayzullaeva , N. . (2025). THE EVOLUTION OF LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT AND CHANGE IN LIVING LANGUAGES. *Modern Science and Research*, 4(6), 541–550. Retrieved from <https://inlibrary.uz/index.php/science-research/article/view/105563>
27. Ботировна , С. О. . (2024). Склонение Имён Существительных. *Miasto Przyszłości*, 46, 531–535. Retrieved from <https://miastoprzyszlosci.com.pl/index.php/mp/article/view/2895>
28. Саидова Олима Ботировна. (2024). КОНЦЕПТ "ЛЮБВИ" В ЛИРИКЕ АЛЕКСАНДР СЕРГЕЕВИЧА ПУШКИНА. МЕДИЦИНА, ПЕДАГОГИКА И ТЕХНОЛОГИЯ: ТЕОРИЯ И ПРАКТИКА, 2(9), 59–66. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.13774212>
29. VERB CONJUGATION IN RUSSIAN LANGUAGE. (2024). *MEDICINE, PEDAGOGY AND TECHNOLOGY: THEORY AND PRACTICE*, 2(5), 197-206. <https://universalpublishings.com/index.php/mpttp/article/view/5627>
30. THE IMAGE OF NATURE IN THE WORK OF A.S. PUSHKIN. (2024). *MEDICINE, PEDAGOGY AND TECHNOLOGY: THEORY AND PRACTICE*, 2(4), 563-573. <https://universalpublishings.com/index.php/mpttp/article/view/5222>
31. Саидова Олима Ботировна. (2024). ЗНАЧЕНИЕ ОТЧИЗНА В ТВОРЧЕСТВЕ МИХАИЛ ЮРЬЕВИЧ ЛЕРМОНТОВА. *Miasto Przyszłości*, 49, 472–475. Retrieved from <https://miastoprzyszlosci.com.pl/index.php/mp/article/view/3919>
32. Саидова, О. (2025). ГЛАВНЫЕ ЧЛЕНЫ ПРЕДЛОЖЕНИЯ И СПОСОБЫ ИХ ВЫРАЖЕНИЯ КОТОРЫЕ СОСТАВЛЯЮТ ОСНОВУ ЛЮБОГО ПРЕДЛОЖЕНИЯ. *Modern Science and Research*, 4(2), 553–558. Retrieved from <https://inlibrary.uz/index.php/science-research/article/view/65915>
33. Саидова , О. (2025). ОБРАЗ ПРИРОДЫ В ПОЭЗИИ СЕРГЕЯ ЕСЕНИНА. *Modern Science and Research*, 4(5), 535–538. Retrieved from <https://inlibrary.uz/index.php/science-research/article/view/87978>
34. Саидова , О. (2025). СЛОЖНОПОДЧИНЁННЫЕ ПРЕДЛОЖЕНИЯ В РУССКОМ ЯЗЫКЕ КЛАССИФИКАЦИЯ И МЕТОДИЧЕСКИЕ АСПЕКТЫ. *Modern Science and Research*, 4(4), 644–656. Retrieved from <https://inlibrary.uz/index.php/science-research/article/view/79285>
35. Fayzullayeva, . N., & Akmamedova, S. (2025). EXPLORING SOCIAL STRUCTURE, GENDER ROLES, AND CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT IN JANE AUSTEN’S “PRIDE AND PREJUDICE”. *Modern Science and Research*, 4(6), 559–563. Retrieved from <https://inlibrary.uz/index.php/science-research/article/view/115593>
36. Fayzullaeva , N. . (2025). THE EVOLUTION OF LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT AND CHANGE IN LIVING LANGUAGES. *Modern Science and Research*, 4(6), 541–550. Retrieved from <https://inlibrary.uz/index.php/science-research/article/view/105563>