

THE FEATURES OF THE CHARACTERS IN O'TKIR HOSHIMOV'S STORY
"TWO TIMES TWO EQUALS FIVE"

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Annotation. *O'tkir Hoshimov, one of the skillest writers of the 20th century, in his satirical story "Two Times Two Equals Five" (written in 1987), depicts the shortcomings of society, the difficult situation of the oppressed people of that time, their hard labor, and the lives of ordinary people who were not given sufficient privileges for their work. Under the events of the story, the feeling of struggle for social justice is expressed. The events are presented objectively without exaggeration.*

Keywords. *Communism, Soviet society, bribery, mental hospital.*

O'tkir Hoshimov, who never lied and always made it a habit to speak the truth, once again won readers' love through his satirical story "Two Times Two Equals Five." The language of the work is simple, because of directing toward depicting real life, both young and old can understand and enjoy reading it. Beneath the events of the story, the dreadful politics of the Soviet era and the misfortunes imposed on the people by local officials of that time were depicted.

Literature is a very complex form of art. Conveying diverse destinies and their experiences to the reader's heart requires great skills from the writer. The main protagonist of "Two Times Two Equals Five" — Qo'shoqvoy — has a very complicated life. In his youth, he was mischievous and prone to lying, much like G'afur G'ulom's "Shum Bola" (The Naughty Boy). Over the years, he experiences many hardships, trials, and even betrayal (similar to Shomurod in "Between Two Doors"). Eventually, as he grows older, he becomes very simple and gentle (like Mo'min Chol in Chingiz Aytmatov's "The White Ship").

The highest form of friendship is also depicted in this story. The sincere, selfless friendship between Qo'shoqvoy, the son of the village accountant Salim aka, and Shodivoy, the son of the chairman, is described without any benefit motives. Even when the chairman takes them to Tashkent, enrolls his own son in school, and sends Qushoqvoy back to the village, their friendship remains tightly. At the end of the story, when dark forces attempt to imprison Qo'shoqvoy by using Shodivoy's legal profession against him, their friendship — tempered by trials and hardships — prevails, and the plan fails.

The story features many positive and negative characters:

- The protagonist Qo'shoqvoy Alimov
- His friend Shodivoy Salimov, the chairman's son
- Tractor driver Tursunboy
- Teacher Muhabbatxon

- Physics teacher Usmon aka

The teachers Usmon aka and Muhabbatxon deserve special mention. Both are dismissed early from their duties despite their dedication to spreading knowledge. Qushoqvoy's mischievousness—giving wrong answers in math class to annoy Muhabbatxon, yet answering more complex questions correctly than his level before the director—ultimately leads to her dismissal. Even Usmon aka, during final exams, makes the “mistake” of keeping students focused on exams instead of sending them to fieldwork, which results in his removal as well.

Through these two teachers, we can see that in every era there are people who care about the future of the nation and the literacy of the next generation. Yet in that time, their efforts were not valued, and they were dismissed by officials who considered themselves Soviet “devotees”.

Alongside the teachers, Ergashev—whom the chairman labeled a troublemaker—was in fact devoted his life to the peace and welfare of the country. Although hardworking, Qo'shoqvoy had suffered a head injury after falling from the tree and staying inside of the mud in childhood, this affected his intellectual capacity later. In this situation, the chairman exploited this by appointing him as a brigade leader, knowing he was easy to deceive. Chairman warned him beforehand, saying Ergashev would trick him. When arriving, Ergashev told him the truth: the land must be preserved and producing fifty -three centners of cotton from per hectare was impossible. But Qushoqvoy obeyed the chairman blindly. This reflected the Soviet system, which required not intelligent people but obedient workers. Therefore, Ergashev who told the truth was imprisoned.

Other officials: Chairman - Toshmamat Alimov, “Uncle Fermer” Shaydul cashier, Jovli Mengliyevich, regional committee representative Gadoyev, trade achiever Qo'shshayev, and Viktorov—were all officials who exploited the nation's strength while deceiving the local people for years instead of rewarding their labor. Rather than protecting their homeland and its soil, they pursued personal gain, oppressing both the people and the agricultural lands. Without realizing and misusing communism under its guise, they spiritually and morally tormented nation and ordinary citizens.

Communism—derived from Latin—means “common” or “universal.” It is an ideology of a social order without classless, moneyless, and stateless social order. Despite leaving its mark in the 19th century, communism envisioned complete social ownership of the means of production and the elimination of private property.

As a child, saying “two times two equals five” seemed like a joke. But in reality, such absurdities has existed in the world! Officials could make everything possible, exploit the people, accumulate wealth, deceive the state, and still be hailed as “heroes”, if they would like.

From the above-mentioned idea , we may understand why the story is titled “Two Times Two Equals Five.” The actions of officials at that time clearly contradicted humanity. We can know that to gather wealth and impress Soviet leadership, they were ready to commit the

most disgraceful acts which mankind can not do. When Qo'shoqvoy tried to expose executives' misdeeds, they declared him insane and kept a healthy man in a mental hospital during four months.

Definition of "Insane":

1. Mentally deranged; mad
2. Foolish behavior. "Are you insane?"
 - Insanity: the state of being insane.
 - Mental hospital: institution for the mentally ill.

Conclusion. To conclude, we can say that the story is rich in unique and invaluable information. Its events and plot construction are masterful, captivating every reader. It contains humorous scenes as well as tragic events that provoke deep thought. Each character's fate and experiences put the reader into deep thinking. The conflicts continue until the end and this serves keeping the reader's interest alive until the end. Through the image of Qo'shoqvoy, we can witness nearly all human emotions and experiences are depicted:

- Boldness – exaggerating events in his youth
- Joy – when his father bought him a donkey
- Mischief – when he sneaked into the chairman's house to cut a mulberry branch
- Satisfaction – when he exceeded cotton quotas as a brigade leader
- Hatred – when the chairman killed his donkey
- Betrayal – Nargiz's secret relationship with the chairman

These emotions directly affect the reader's spirit. The officials of that era strove only to enrich themselves and maintain their positions, indifferent to the people's living conditions. The themes addressed in the story were pressing issues of that time, many of which remain unresolved today. In short, the story is not only enjoyable to read but also deeply thought-provoking.

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