

The Figurative Representation of Nature Imagery in the Poetry of Erkin Vohidov and Abdulla Oripov

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Abstract: *Twentieth-century Uzbek literature is distinguished by its multilayered nature and semantic depth. Literary works of this period, created in the spirit of freedom and aspirations for independence, were often perceived as acts of resistance against the dominance of the authoritarian regime. Therefore, writers and poets attempted to express their genuine intentions and ideological aspirations through diverse artistic and figurative means. One of such expressive devices is landscape imagery (peyzaj), in which depictions of nature, colors, and even seasons function symbolically according to artistic intention. This article analyzes the figurative representation of nature imagery in the poetry of Erkin Vohidov and Abdulla Oripov.*

Keywords: *Poetry, Nature, Seasons, Colors, Figurative Expression*

1. Introduction

Writers enrich their literary works through various artistic devices to convey their aspirations and ideas more effectively. This process becomes even more prominent in lyric poetry. In particular, landscape imagery, namely the figurative depiction of nature, enhances the aesthetic appeal of poetic texts, intensifies the impact of ideas, and conveys emotional and psychological experiences [1].

In literary studies, the depiction of animate and inanimate natural scenery is referred to as landscape (peyzaj). The primary and simplest function of landscape is to indicate the setting in which events occur. Although this function may initially appear simple, its aesthetic impact on the reader should not be underestimated. In many cases, the description of place in a literary work plays a significant role in the development of the plot, the formation of mood, and the expression of psychological states [2].

The poetry of Erkin Vohidov and Abdulla Oripov is significant for its figurative depictions of natural scenery and symbolic meanings. If we consider poems written on similar themes by both poets, this feature becomes particularly evident. Both poets produced numerous poems devoted to the eternal and traditional theme of the Motherland. In Erkin Vohidov's poem "O'lka" ("Home land") and Abdulla Oripov's "Men nechun sevaman O'zbekistonni?", ("Why Do I Love Uzbekistan?") love for the homeland is represented through extensive use of landscape imagery [3].

"When I wandered through your gardens, you lived within my heart, my homeland.

When I wrote poetry about the beauty of the gardens, I dedicated it first to you".

The stanza demonstrates that the garden is perceived as an inseparable and sacred part of the homeland. Furthermore, the lexical image of the "garden" symbolizes the poet's imagination of the homeland as a place of beauty. In subsequent stanzas, the chronotope of the garden intensifies figurative expression. Literary images are not formed solely through words or metaphors; they are also shaped through chronotopes. The chronotope gives vitality and emotional depth to literary texts, enabling readers to perceive events vividly [4].

In the second stanza, the image of the garden is supplemented by figurative depictions of trees, while celestial elements such as the sky, moon, cosmos, and stars are personified through human

actions such as smiling or scattering light [5].

Likewise, Abdulla Oripov skillfully employs landscape imagery to describe the homeland:
“Why do I love Uzbekistan?

2. Methodology

Turning its soil into sacred kohl for my eyes, why do I call earth and sky holy?”.

In this poem, natural elements such as soil, earth, and sky serve philosophical purposes. The poet emphasizes that love for one’s homeland originates not from admiration for grandeur but from reverence for its humble soil. In later stanzas, images of cotton, sunlight, gardens, snow, and ice are presented figuratively.

Whether writing about nature, celestial bodies, human emotions, or diverse experiences, Abdulla Oripov consistently foregrounds the symbolic image of the homeland.

Examining the mutual correspondence between these poems reveals that both poets employ the image of the garden in representations of the homeland. The inclusion of this chronotope appears natural, as the symbolic image of the garden is associated with paradise (Jannah) in Islamic thought and sacred texts. Numerous Qur’anic verses may be cited in support of this association. For instance, verse 25 of Surah ʿAl-Baqaraʿ describes gardens beneath which rivers flow as a reward for the righteous.

Subsequently, the garden motif entered classical literature as a symbolic artistic image. This is exemplified in the following verse from Alisher Navoi’s ʿSab’ai Sayyorʿ:

“This world is like a rose garden, each flower therein a sign of paradise”.

Undoubtedly, both distinguished poets perceive the homeland as an earthly reflection of paradise, which explains their reliance on this landscape element.

3. Results

In the lyrical works of both poets, one may also observe the artistic device of personification (tashxis), in which elements of nature become animate interlocutors.

For example, this tendency appears in Erkin Vohidov’s “Conversation with the Mountain” (ʿTog‘ bilan suhbatʿ) and Abdulla Oripov’s “Elm Tree” (ʿQayrag‘ochʿ) [6].

“I say: Your head wrapped in clouds, covered in white mist, the sun pours light upon you.

O proud companion rising before me, what distant horizons do you gaze upon?

The echo replies: the mountain!”.

The first stanza suggests that the lyrical persona engages in an intimate dialogue with the mountain, an element of inanimate nature.

Similarly, in Oripov’s poem:

“Greetings, dear elm tree, perhaps I am your nephew and you my elder.

We differ only in one thing: you have no tongue, no feet to walk, no road to travel”.

Here, the lyrical persona addresses an elm tree, a representative of the plant world, as a living interlocutor [7].

A comparison of the two poems demonstrates both similarities and differences. First, both poets adopt similar strategies in their titles by foregrounding natural imagery. The use of landscape in titles prepares the reader aesthetically and conceptually for the central role of nature in the poetic text. In a sense, the presence of landscape in the title functions as a preparatory gesture, emphasizing the artistic force of natural imagery [8][9].

4. Discussion

Indeed, both poems are constructed around landscape imagery from beginning to end. However, their methods of expression differ. Erkin Vohidov structures his poetic vision through dialogue, whereas Abdulla Oripov conveys his ideas through monologue. This distinction reflects each poet's individual artistic perspective [10].

The conclusions of the poems also reveal differing emotional orientations. "Conversation with the Mountain" concludes in an uplifting, motivational tone:

"My wish is this, my companion—you are right indeed.

Before me still stand mountains of knowledge, waiting to reveal their treasures.

I shall return to your embrace again—wait for me!" [11].

Despite the philosophical depth of Vohidov's poetic thought, his mode of expression remains gentle and refined. His poetry contains passionate appeals, yet these appeals do not urge destruction or upheaval; rather, they invite profound reflection upon the world and its order [12].

By contrast, "Qayrag'och" conveys a melancholic worldview:

"One request remains: let us exchange places,
let me live for a while like a tree.

And you—look upon this world as a human being,
even if one day I am burned as firewood" [13].

The poem's conclusion reflects the lyrical persona's pessimistic attitude toward life. Nevertheless, this emotional state is conveyed through distinctive figurative expression. As Professor N. Jabborov argues, Abdulla Oripov is a philosophical poet capable of achieving highly original artistic generalizations beyond ordinary imagination [14][15].

5. Conclusion

Human beings constitute an inseparable part of nature. Every aspect of human existence—daily activities, livelihood, and movement—develops in relation to the natural world. For creative individuals, sensitivity toward nature is often particularly profound. Painters represent nature in their artworks, and similarly, poets and writers reveal emotional and psychological experiences through landscape imagery.

Metaphorically speaking, just as sunlight passing through rainwater transforms into a rainbow, literary creation passes through the prism of the author's personal experience, ultimately revealing the diverse colors of artistic imagination.

Talented writers focus on the most significant problems of reality and illuminate them through effective artistic device. Among these expressive means, landscape imagery occupies a central position. As demonstrated above, both Erkin Vohidov and Abdulla Oripov establish profound spiritual connections with various elements of nature in their poetry. This interconnectedness testifies to the inseparable bond between humanity and nature.

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