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The Poetic Interpretation of Nature and Human Relations in Contemporary Uzbek Lyric Poetry (Based on The Works of Erkin Vohidov)

Zamira Kabulova *

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Abstract

The article examines the artistic interpretation of nature and human relationships in contemporary Uzbek lyric poetry, with a particular focus on the works of Erkin Vohidov. It highlights the evolution of traditional poetic images and demonstrates their organic connection with human emotions and social reality. The study shows that transforming natural phenomena into poetic images serves not only aesthetic purposes but also addresses ecological, ethical, and philosophical issues. In Vohidov's poetry, nature is not merely a backdrop or scenery; it functions as a means to understand the balance between humanity and the natural world, to raise ecological awareness, and to emphasize human responsibility toward nature. Poetic images such as "Aral Sea," "Tree," and "Water" harmonize natural elements with human qualities, combining ecological, social, and spiritual meanings.

Keywords: Uzbek lyric poetry, nature, human-nature relationship, ecological consciousness, Erkin Vohidov

Çağdaş Özbek Şiirinde Doğa ve İnsan İlişkilerinin Erkin Vohidov'un Eserlerinde Yorumlanması

Öz

Bu makale, Erkin Vohidov'un eserlerine özel olarak odaklanarak, çağdaş Özbek lirik şiirinde doğa ve insan ilişkilerinin sanatsal yorumunu incelemektedir. Geleneksel şiirsel imgelerin evrimini vurgulamakta ve bunların insan duyguları ve sosyal gerçeklikle olan organik bağlantısını göstermektedir. Çalışma, doğal fenomenleri şiirsel imgelere dönüştürmenin sadece estetik amaçlara hizmet etmediğini, aynı zamanda ekolojik, etik ve felsefi konuları da ele aldığını göstermektedir. Vohidov'un şiirlerinde doğa, yalnızca bir arka plan veya manzara değildir; insanlık ve doğal

*PhD., Associate Professor, Karakalpak State University. Uzbekistan, Nukus city.
xonzodatemurzoda@gmail.com. ORCID ID 0009-0005-5172-9154

dünya arasındaki dengeyi anlamak, ekolojik farkındalığı artırmak ve insanın doğaya karşı sorumluluğunu vurgulamak için bir araç işlevi görür. “Aral Denizi”, ‘Ağaç’ ve “Su” gibi şiirsel imgeler, ekolojik, sosyal ve manevi anlamları birleştirerek doğal unsurları insan nitelikleriyle uyumlu hâle getirir.

Anahtar sözcükler: çağdaş Özbek lirik şiiri, doğa, insan-doğa ilişkisi, ekolojik bilinç, Erkin Vohidov

Introduction

Contemporary world literature reflects the emergence of an ecological mindset that reinterprets the relationship between humans and nature. This mindset in literature has led to artistic explorations that approach nature not only as a landscape depiction but also as a social, ethical, and philosophical category. The disruption of natural balance caused by human activity, ecological disasters, water and air pollution, and land desertification have become significant themes in literature. In this process, literature has ceased to be merely a means of recording reality and has begun to function as a force that awakens human conscience and reminds readers of moral responsibility.

The relationship between humans and nature has always been central to literary and aesthetic perception, starting from ancient mythological thought. Initially, nature was deified, and its phenomena were understood as sacred forces. During the evolution of artistic thought, however, images of nature acquired symbolic, philosophical, and social meanings. Humans sought to understand themselves through nature, while comparing natural phenomena to human emotions and experiences. In this way, natural phenomena were elevated to the level of poetic imagery, reflecting the inner world of the human soul. This process has reached a new stage in contemporary literature in the form of ecological consciousness.

Materials and Methods

Ecocriticism, or ecological literature, is a scientific field that studies the relationship between nature and humans in literary texts. This approach is relatively new and was first introduced by Rueckert in 1978. Ecocriticism allows not only the analysis of literature but also the study of culture and society within an ecological context (Rueckert, 1978).

From a methodological perspective, the analysis of ecological literature is based on examining the interactions between nature and humans, considering cultural and

social contexts. The term nature refers to the natural world existing independently of human intervention, whereas environment refers to the surroundings influenced by human activity (Baldick, 2008; Phillips, 2003). Therefore, ecological literary analysis distinguishes between the independent existence of nature and the impact of humans on it.

Contemporary studies show that ecological literature is viewed not only as a means of aesthetic evaluation but also as a tool to communicate ecological and ethical questions to the reader. Ecocriticism explores human-nature relationships through various genres-poetry, essays, short stories, or place-based literature-enriching research methodologies (Maran, 2006; Slovic, 2010;). Furthermore, the study of ecological literature addresses global environmental problems, human responsibility toward nature, and the interplay of cultural and life experiences.

In contemporary Uzbek lyric poetry, the creation of poetic images from natural phenomena and landscapes relies on historical-mythological, aesthetic, and socio-philosophical foundations. Poetic images are formed through human emotions, perception of nature, and evaluation of social reality. The study focuses on the following methodological aspects:

1. Analysis of artistic thought: The process of transforming natural phenomena into poetic imagery and its evolution within traditional poetic contexts was examined. This process is theoretically inspired by G.W. Hegel's theory of poetic thought.

2. Semantic and symbolic approach: Semantic and symbolic approach: Poetic images were interpreted within historical, social, and ecological contexts, reflecting the interconnection between humans and nature. For example, Erkin Vohidov conveys the ecological tragedy of the Aral Sea through symbolic imagery, personification of nature, metaphors of desolation, contrasting images, emotional lyricism, and apocalyptic landscape descriptions, all of which intensify the poetic representation of environmental destruction and human suffering.

3. Analysis of poetic objects: The artistic and socio-philosophical semantics of natural elements such as trees, water, and seas were analyzed. These images harmonize with human emotions and social realities while enhancing ecological awareness.

4. Ecological culture approach: The imbalance between humans and nature, ecological distress, and issues of environmental protection were considered essential methodological criteria in poetic depictions. In this way, poetry is studied as an ecological category.

Results and Discussion

The art of creating poetic imagery using natural phenomena or landscapes as artistic objects has always been a fundamental and inherent aspect of traditional poetics. "Humanity has long followed the principle of comparing and measuring itself against the natural world, and vice versa, the natural world against the human sphere." It is well-known that ancient humans highly deified natural phenomena, perceiving all elements of existence as alive and mysterious. This approach-sacralizing celestial bodies and natural events-gave rise to the earliest forms of poetic imagery: natur-mythological symbols. As G.W. Hegel rightly noted, "The initial stage of poetic thought was closely connected with religion; therefore, the earliest works of art have a mythological character."

Although mythological symbols were primitive, they were crucial as the beginnings of transforming the universe into artistic images. These symbols embodied ancestral aspirations to find goodness and harmony in nature, the desire to understand the causes of natural phenomena, and ancient notions of revering the universe as a sacred force. Elements such as the tree of life, life-giving water, birds, seeds, and ancestors' totems belong to these natur-mythological images.

During the evolution of artistic thought, the tradition of depicting nature as imagery became more sophisticated. Direct perception of natural phenomena and objects did not always meet the intended artistic goal. Comparing and associating them with human nature, behavior, and other phenomena allowed a deeper and more profound exploration of poetic objects. Consequently, the leading techniques in artistic thinking-parallelism, analogy, and qualification-gave rise to the tradition of creating poetic imagery.

In folk oral literature, natural symbols or nature-related poetic images stand out for their universality and connection to popular life. These poetic images provided a crucial foundation for the development of written literature and its flourishing. The

character of poetic symbols and images in literary tradition is constantly renewed, shaped by historical events, social transformations, the worldview of the creator, aesthetic principles, and artistic perception of nature. Some traditional poetic images may become archaic, while new artistic ideas consolidate into the evolving tradition.

Every poetic image has a specific basis in life. In contemporary Uzbek lyric poetry, how are nature-related poetic images formed, and which life experiences and traditional creative practices do they draw upon?

Firstly, the foundation of poetic imagery is the creator's artistic sensitivity, which gathers the spiritual world, thoughts, and observations related to society and nature and illuminates them with a strong metaphorical "light." The appeal of a poetic image depends on this radiant focus. Today, lyrical reflection in poetry allows poets to combine aesthetic attitudes toward nature and social reality with historical perspectives, integrating the past, present, and future. As a result, poetic reflection conveys the depiction, essence, and historical core of reality as filtered through the poet's vision, illustrating the scope and level of their ideological and aesthetic objectives. Poetry, by its nature, cannot remain indifferent to subjectivity, historical reality, or the demands of life.

The works of Erkin Vohidov have been extensively studied in both Uzbek and Turkish literary scholarship, and various aspects of the poet's poetics—including language and style, national spirit, poetic thinking, artistic imagery, translation poetics, and aesthetic conception—have been analyzed from scholarly and theoretical perspectives. In Uzbek literary criticism, the earliest academic views on the poet's творчество began to appear in the press during the 1960s. In particular, the articles by Turob To'la (1961) and Ozod Sharafiddinov (1962) examined issues related to talent, responsibility, and poetic spirituality in Erkin Vohidov's poetry. Solijonov (n.d.), in turn, focused on the problems of psychological imagery and poetic contemplation in the poet's works.

In subsequent years, Erkin Vohidov's works became the focus of monographic and theoretical studies. Rahmatilla Inog'omov's books "Shoir bo'lish osonmas" ("It Is Not Easy to Be a Poet", 1996) and "Shoirlik qismati" ("The Destiny of Poethood", 1999) illuminate the poet's creative formation, personality, and artistic thinking through

biographical materials and memoirs. In “Ko’ngillarga ko’chgan she’riyat” (“Poetry That Moved into Hearts”, 2006), U. Normatov analyzed the poetic features of the poet’s creative path, national spirit, and lyrical thinking, while H. Boltaboyev, in “So’z sehri” (“The Magic of the Word”, 2006), investigated poetic imagery, artistic-aesthetic thought, and Erkin Vohidov’s mastery of word usage.

Memoirs and literary portrait collections also occupy an important place in the study of the poet’s legacy. Among them are Abdig’affor Gadayev’s “Erkin Vohidov saboqlari” (“Lessons of Erkin Vohidov”, 2016), “Erkin Vohidov saboqlari: adabiy portretga chizgilar” (“Lessons of Erkin Vohidov: Sketches for a Literary Portrait”, Oripov et al., 2016), as well as the collections “To quyosh sochg’ayki nur” (“Until the Sun Spreads Its Light”, G’afurov, 2018) and “Inson o’zing” (“Be Human Yourself”, Mirvohid & Obid, 2022), which highlight the poet’s literary heritage, aesthetic views, and the recollections of his contemporaries. Ahmadjon Meliboyev’s “Erkin Vohidov imzosi” (“The Signature of Erkin Vohidov”, 2021) also provides valuable insights into the poet’s creative environment, personality, and spiritual world.

Specialized dissertation research devoted to Erkin Vohidov’s works has also occupied a significant place in literary scholarship. G. Keldiyorova (2000) examined the poetic function of antithesis in the poet’s works, while S. Maksumova (2012) studied the expression of connotative meanings in his writings. Sh. Xo’jamberdiyeva (2019) developed methodological approaches to teaching Erkin Vohidov’s life and works at different educational stages. Antonina Iplina (2019), in turn, comparatively analyzed the poetic problems arising in the English and Russian translations of Erkin Vohidov’s poetry. Furthermore, S. Shomurodova (2022) investigated the poet’s works in connection with the traditions of divan literature, while Z. Baltayeva (2022) explored the problem of artistic integrity in his lyrics. X. Yuldasheva (2023) analyzed the poetic expression of national spirit in Erkin Vohidov’s poetry, and Rohataliev (2021) studied the lexical-semantic and artistic features of the poet’s works, thereby revealing the richness of his poetic language.

In Turkish literary scholarship, the study of Erkin Vohidov’s works became particularly active beginning in the 1990s. In this regard, Turkish scholars such as Ertuğrul Yaman, Timur Kocaoğlu, and Veli Savaş Yelok conducted significant research

on the poet's legacy (Kocaoğlu, n.d.; Yaman, 1996). Especially noteworthy is Veli Savaş Yelok's doctoral dissertation "Erkin Vahidov'un Şiirleri Üzerine Dil ve Üslup Çalışması" ("A Study on the Language and Style of Erkin Vahidov's Poetry", 2007), which is considered one of the major academic studies devoted to the linguistic and stylistic features of the poet's poetics. In his articles, Yelok evaluates Erkin Vohidov as one of the leading representatives of modern Uzbek poetry and emphasizes that collections such as "Yoshlik devoni" ("The Divan of Youth"), "Tirik sayyoralar" ("Living Planets"), "Sharqiy qirg'oq" ("Eastern Shore"), and "Yaxshidir achchiq haqiqat" ("Bitter Truth Is Better") vividly express poetic interpretations of human spirituality and thought (Yelok, 2008).

Similarly, Turkish scholar Timur Kocaoğlu, in his article "Çağdaş Özbek Şiiri" ("Modern Uzbek Poetry"), analyzes the formation and development of modern Uzbek poetry and notes the predominance of national spirit and ideas of freedom in the works of Erkin Vohidov, Abdulla Oripov, Jamol Kamol, and Rauf Parpi (Kocaoğlu, n.d.). Abdullah Karataş (2015), in his article "Erkin Vahidov kimdir?" ("Who Is Erkin Vahidov?"), provides information about the poet's biography and works, describing him as a great artist who "held a mirror" to the spiritual life of the Uzbek people. Turkish artist Onur Akay, in his article "Türk Dünyasının Büyük Kaybı, Vahidov Vefat Etti" ("A Great Loss for the Turkic World: Vahidov Passed Away"), quoted translations of Erkin Vohidov's poems and expressed the deep respect of the Turkish people for the poet's legacy and their sympathy for the Uzbek nation (Akay, n.d.).

Thus, the scholarly studies carried out in both Uzbek and Turkish literary criticism demonstrate that Erkin Vohidov's works constitute a multilayered artistic-aesthetic phenomenon. Research has extensively examined such aspects of his poetics as language and style, national spirit, poetic imagery, translation poetics, connotative meaning, artistic integrity, and ecological-aesthetic thinking, thereby confirming his outstanding position within Uzbek and broader Turkic literary thought. Secondly, the life basis of poetic imagery is also connected to the era, its significant events, the way people live, work, create, and achieve cultural accomplishments. Recent research has refined and transformed traditional views of nature. Human exploration of space, as well as in-depth study of flora and fauna, has

expanded the possibilities of artistic perception of nature. The deepening of philosophical and aesthetic understanding of the universe has accelerated the semantic evolution of poetic images in contemporary poetry.

Thirdly, poetic imagery is inherently modern and resonates with the life of the era and society, constantly renewing itself. In contemporary youth poetry, poetic images serve as realistic depictions with significant social functions. In recent years, the ecological situation of our country has become of global importance. Poets who understand the consequences of the false triumph over nature strive to protect its beauty, strengthen the connection between society and nature, restore destroyed gardens, and relieve nature from the distress imposed upon it. Vivid poetic images of nature perform the function of symbolizing creation, purity, and beauty, while highlighting the urgency of ecological crises. The artistic transformation of natural phenomena into poetic imagery reflects the poet's complex creative potential, skill, and insight.

It is evident that each artistic image derived from nature is interpreted differently depending on the poet's skill and principles of depicting the universe. Natural phenomena transformed into artistic imagery reflect the poet's individual vision of existence.

Poetic imagery is a multifaceted and meaningful artistic construct, serving as the aesthetic center that embodies the ideological and emotional power of a poem. The artistic idea the poet wishes to convey, and the magic of the words used, are contained within these images. The brilliance, vitality, realism, and originality of poetic imagery depend on the depth of the poet's worldview and the perfection of their aesthetic ideals. The skillful use of poetic imagery, logical development of artistic ideas, proportionality between images and natural objects, and the effort to depict the universe in natural colors are all indicators of artistic mastery.

It is well-known that several poets can write about the same natural phenomenon, each creating poetic imagery according to their artistic principles. This individuality is reflected in contemporary youth poetry through images of trees, flowers, soil, mountains, rain, wind, snow, fog, clouds, the dawn, ants, birds, grass, leaves, fire, light, stars, the sun, the moon, autumn, spring, and summer. While

observing natural phenomena, the poet seeks to convey hidden meanings close to their aesthetic, intellectual, and spiritual sensibilities.

The Aral Sea. Erkin Vohidov's poem "Ships Abandoned by the Sea" is created in the spirit of contemporary ecological literature. The Aral Sea disaster is presented not merely as a local issue, but as a moral and ecological catastrophe for all humanity. Through poetic imagery, the poet reveals the disturbed balance between nature and humans. The powerful waves of the Aral Sea striking the shore and scattering into the sky are recalled from memory, contrasting sharply with the current silence, white sand, and emptiness. This contrast conveys the scale of the ecological disaster with strong aesthetic impact.

Orol
Aral, what have we done to you,
Our mother sea,
What is happening,
What is all this?
Like a heart abandoned by love,
Like a fairy tale we believed in as children,
But later found to be false.
Separated from a mother's palm,
Deprived of a child's warmth,
Like a forlorn, orphaned cradle,
They lie tilted upon the sand -
The ships abandoned by the sea.

In the poem, the sea is perceived as a living entity and a mother. The phrase "Mother Sea" elevates the human-nature relationship to a moral dimension. The images of ships separated from the sea, the child apart from the mother's palm, and hearts abandoned by love convey the ecological problem as a human tragedy. This

approach reflects a common trend in global ecological literature: the destruction of nature parallels the destruction of human inner life, memory, and future.

Is there an answer for our guilt?
If we do not stand by nature,
If we do not have such a law within us,
The merciless law it has created
Will condemn us in the end.
If we protect the life of the Aral,
If we shatter the shield of poisoned air,
If, instead of white sands, blizzards of snow
Are granted by our justice –
Then perhaps the secret will flow again,
The Amu will flow as the Amu once did,
The Aral will roar with storms again...
But humanity – what will humanity do?

The poem further asserts that natural law surpasses human law: if humans do not protect nature, nature itself will punish humanity. This philosophical notion emphasizes that exploiting nature inevitably leads to disaster. The poet presents humans as dependent on and responsible to nature rather than dominant over it.

Ultimately, the image of “ships abandoned by the sea” becomes a universal symbol of humanity, directionless and deprived of a foundation, destined to live a meaningless life if separated from nature. The poem concludes with a general ideological message: it raises ecological awareness and urges humans to acknowledge their responsibility toward nature.

Water. In Vohidov’s poem “Empathy”, words serve not merely as expressive tools but as a spiritual force accountable to the era and history. Depicting the Aral Sea

disaster, the poet transforms it from a mere landscape into a living reality through words. The image of “the sun trembling in the Aral mirror” unveils the inner tragedy behind the calm exterior. Here, silence is not absence, but unspoken pain that words must reveal. Words, in this context, carry the role of empathy.

If I fly to Kyiv, along my way perhaps
The sun will shimmer in the mirror of the Aral.
But it is not the wavy sea that Shevchenko saw,
It is the tear in the eyes of a grieving kobzar.

Life is merciless, and time is cruel,
Nature does not yield to tyranny or claims.
Is it truly what we will leave behind –
Drugged fields, and rivers without water?

The poem also evokes historical memory: “It is not the wavy sea Shevchenko saw.” Comparing the Aral Sea to the tears in the eyes of a koboz (folk musician) intensifies the emotional power of words. Words unite human and natural suffering, becoming a medium to express the silent lament of nature. In Vohidov’s interpretation, words also function as instruments of accountability. Lines like “Life is merciless, time is cruel; unjust acts against nature will not be excused” underscore the moral authority of language. Rhetorical questions emphasize responsibility toward future generations.

In the context of the poem, words act as a weapon: unlike material wealth or nature itself, spoken words endure in historical memory. In this sense, sharp words target conscience rather than body. In Vohidov’s poetry, the power of words derives from their union with truth, conveyed without embellishment or dilution, but in the form of pain and moral insight.

Tree. Just as every poetic image has a life-based reason for its creation, the elevation of the tree image to an artistic symbol in our poetry is also the result of certain historical and mythological processes. In Uzbek poetry, the image of the tree has been widely represented, for example, in Zulfia's "Tree", A. Muhtor's "Sapling" and "Young Tree", E. Vohidov's "Loyalty", X. Saloh's "White Birch", Yu. Shomansur's "Trees I Did Not Pass", Rauf Parfi's "Somewhere I Saw You", Muhammad Solih's "Tree" and "If Trees Were Poets", O. Matchon's "Under a Plane Tree", "Burning Tree", "Trees Bright at Night", U. Azimov's "The Last Song of a Tree", M. Jalil's "Tree", T. Jura's "Tree Struck by Lightning", S. Salimov's "Tree, Your Hands Are Many", "No, I Cannot Become a Tree". These examples show how the tree has become an object of poetic expression. This, first of all, is connected with the fact that our people's way of life has always been closely linked to agriculture and gardening.

According to folklorists, our ancestors' mythopoetic ideas about the tree of life were rooted in ancient beliefs. The tree of life was understood as a symbol of vital power connecting the three layers of the world - underground, earth, and sky. Its roots were in the earth, its leaves stretched toward the sky, and birds perched on its top. This universal semantic model, found in the creativity of many peoples, served as the artistic basis for the poetic image of the tree in our literature.

In Erkin Vohidov's poem "Loyalty", the tree becomes a symbol of the highest human virtues - fidelity and loyalty. While describing the fate of an old elm, the poet expresses the inseparable connection between a person and the homeland, person and roots, individual and history. The tree is portrayed not just as a natural element but as a living being with moral qualities.

They exposed the roots
Of the old elm,
Looped two ropes tight around its waist.
Yet it dug its claws into the soil,
And would not move

From the place it had grown...

At last, with a heavy crash, it fell to the ground,

They cut it, then carried it away — but still

Within its grasp it took along

A handful of earth

From the land where it had lived.

The pulling of the old elm's roots with ropes represents external violent force and forced separation. This reflects the historical and social implications of a person being forcibly removed from the land of their roots. However, the tree's "digging its claws into the soil" without moving expresses inner resilience, spiritual resistance, and loyalty. The poet interprets the roots not as a biological feature but as a symbol of memory, history, and spiritual attachment.

The tree's eventual fall is not defeat but tragic greatness. Physically defeated, it is spiritually unyielding. Most importantly, the elm takes a piece of the soil with it — a metaphor for the highest form of loyalty: even when separated from the body, the spirit and memory remain faithful to the homeland and roots. Here, the soil symbolizes the homeland, living space, and the inseparable part of selfhood.

In the poem, the humanization of the tree is natural and profound. Expressions like "claw," "pulled by the waist," and "taking away" make the tree appear as a living being, close to human fate. Through this, the poet transforms the abstract concept of loyalty into a perceptible, emotionally tangible phenomenon. The tree's resistance until the last moment equates it with human honor and conscience.

The image of the tree in "Loyalty" also resonates with our people's ancient mythopoetic ideas of the tree of life. Through its roots, the tree connects with the earth; through its trunk, with time; and through its branches, with the future. By taking the soil with itself, the elm illustrates that even in the face of violence, spiritual ties remain

unbroken. This makes the poem a comprehensive poetic text uniting ecological, social, and moral meanings.

Erkin Vohidov, through the tree image in “Loyalty”, expresses human loyalty, devotion to the homeland, and fidelity to one’s roots at a high artistic level. The old elm urges humans to remain faithful to their land, history, and spiritual sources. Even when physically removed, it does not part from the soil - a supreme, tragic, and yet magnificent expression of loyalty.

The poetic interpretation of the tree in our poetry is diverse and rich. Literary critic N. Rahimjonov rightly wrote: “Trees also have wings. They fly with wings from the richness of their branches, the feeling of flowers. Over the boundless sky, white clouds are the vivid memories of trees. Flying with wings over golden borders, they carry the light lost by humans, the strikes of ax, the green of lawns in their hearts. People should allow them to write leaves, thrive and flourish”. These views demonstrate the harmony between ecological consciousness and aesthetic contemplation, as the author calls upon humanity to preserve nature and sustain the continuity of life by “allowing trees to put forth leaves.” From this perspective, the image of the tree in poetry rises beyond a merely artistic-aesthetic element and attains the level of an ecological and philosophical concept.

When social-philosophical meaning is added to the tree image, its semantic form becomes typical, giving rise to subtle symbolic interpretations. During the development of lyric poetry, the tree became a means to interpret human nature artistically, to study and understand human thoughts and emotions. Once transferred from nature to poetry, trees express the psychological states and moods of the lyric hero, the ideals, interests, and aspirations of the people of a given era.

The tree image serves as an important artistic device to portray the world ritual-mythologically, emotionally-psychologically, and socially-philosophically. Studying Erkin Vohidov’s works, we can confidently say that poems devoted to nature, such as “Plea” (“Iltijo” / “Yalvarış”), “An Alyor Sung in Qo’ng’irot” (“Qo’ng’irotida aytilgan alyor” / “Qo’ng’irot’ta söylenen alyor”), “Negligence” (“G’aflat” / “Gaflet”), “Nature and the Little Girl” (“Tabiat va qizaloq” / “Doğa ve küçük kız”), “Companionship in Sorrow” (“Darddoshlik” / “Dert ortaklığı”), “The Same Old Bathhouse, the Same Old Basin” (“Eski

hammom eski tos" / "Eski hamam eski tas"), "Ships Abandoned by the Sea" ("Dengiz tashlab ketgan kemalar" / "Denizin terk ettiği gemiler"), and "The Burden of Time" ("Davron yuki" / "Devrin yükü"), form a separate artistic series. In these works, the unique artistic code of our homeland's nature is created, with the poetic perception of nature, the study of its laws, aesthetic principles, and poetic methods expressed clearly.

By artistically assimilating nature, the poet creates a generalized poetic image of the natural world. The poet seeks human qualities in nature, compares it with his life and emotions. Therefore, in contemporary Uzbek lyrics, nature is not just depicted; it is perceived as an artistic category with its philosophical and aesthetic meaning. Observing nature allows reflection on life complexities and human perceptions, a unique feature of modern Uzbek poetry.

In the works of Erkin Vohidov, the relationship between humans and nature is interpreted as one of the leading artistic and aesthetic themes of Uzbek poetry. The poet portrays nature not merely as a background or descriptive element, but as a living poetic space reflecting human spirituality, inner emotions, and the destiny of society. In his poetry, the disruption of harmony between humans and nature is presented as both an ecological and a moral tragedy through profound poetic contemplation.

Erkin Vohidov interprets love for nature, its preservation, and appreciation of its beauty as essential criteria of human perfection. In poems such as "Plea" ("Iltijo"), "Nature and the Little Girl" ("Tabiat va qizaloq"), "Companionship in Sorrow" ("Darddoshlik"), and "Ships Abandoned by the Sea" ("Dengiz tashlab ketgan kemalar"), nature is depicted in close connection with the human spirit. Particularly in his poems devoted to the Aral Sea tragedy, ecological problems are revealed alongside the moral crisis of humanity. Through the image of the drying sea, the poet artistically generalizes the catastrophic consequences of humanity's careless attitude toward nature.

In Vohidov's poetics, nature often becomes a poetic medium expressing the inner experiences, sufferings, and emotional states of the lyrical hero. Elements of nature such as wind, rain, trees, the sea, and birds acquire symbolic meanings and reflect pain, hope, longing, and spiritual suffering within the human soul. By comparing

natural phenomena with human destiny, the poet philosophically emphasizes the inseparable connection between humanity and existence.

Ecological consciousness in Erkin Vohidov's works harmonizes with a strong sense of civic responsibility and patriotism. The poet interprets the protection of nature not only as an ecological issue, but also as a national and moral duty. From this perspective, the relationship between humans and nature in his poetry emerges through the unity of aesthetic contemplation, philosophical reflection, and ecological awareness. Poetic perception of nature shows the poet's ability to transform reality into artistic truth. Simple facts become poetic details, landscapes, or images, reflecting the poet's worldview, knowledge, beliefs, and expressive skill. Nature-related poetic images emerge from artistic interpretation of reality and embody long-term poetic experience. Trees, soil, rain, wind, fog, stars, sun, grass, birds, water - in contemporary Uzbek poetry, they are original symbolic images reflecting the spirit of the era.

Conclusion

The process of poetically interpreting the relationship between nature and humans in contemporary Uzbek lyric poetry demonstrates a close interconnection between the evolution of traditional poetic images, human emotional experience, and social reality. The results of the study indicate that transforming natural phenomena into poetic images not only meets aesthetic criteria but also addresses ecological, ethical, and philosophical concerns.

In Erkin Vohidov's works, nature is not merely a landscape or backdrop; it serves as a crucial medium for understanding the balance between humanity and the natural world, raising ecological awareness, and highlighting human responsibility toward nature. In poems such as "Plea" ("Iltijo" / "Yalvarış"), "An Alyor Sung in Qo'ng'iro't" ("Qo'ng'iro'tda aytilgan alyor" / "Qo'ng'iro't'ta söylenen alyor"), "Negligence" ("G'aflat" / "Gaflet"), "Nature and the Little Girl" ("Tabiat va qizaloq" / "Doğa ve küçük kız"), "Companionship in Sorrow" ("Darddoshlik" / "Dert ortaklığı"), "The Same Old Bathhouse, the Same Old Basin" ("Eski hammom eski tos" / "Eski hamam eski tas"), "Ships Abandoned by the Sea" ("Dengiz tashlab ketgan kemalar" / "Denizin terk ettiği gemiler"), and "The Burden of Time" ("Davron yuki" / "Devrin yükü"), poetic images such as the "Aral," "tree," and "water" integrate natural elements with human qualities,

combining ecological, social, and spiritual meanings. Through these artistic representations, the poet portrays the disruption of harmony between humans and nature as both an environmental and a moral tragedy.

Furthermore, the study reveals that poetic images reflect human interaction with nature, emotions, memory, and historical experience in an artistic form. Images such as trees, water, and the sea are interpreted not only as natural phenomena but also as symbols of human virtues, loyalty, patriotism, and spiritual attachment.

Consequently, in contemporary Uzbek lyric poetry, the depiction of nature is not limited to aesthetic function; it occupies a central role as a means of artistic thought, ecological consciousness, and philosophical reflection. Thus, the poetic dialogue between humans and nature serves as a source of creative innovation and semantic richness in modern Uzbek literature.

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