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The Portrayal of Autumn in Classical Poetry

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Abstract: This article examines the portrayal of autumn in Uzbek classical poetry. It analyzes the artistic interpretation of autumn, its figurative devices, and symbols in classical poetry. The symbolic meanings of autumn in literary traditions are highlighted, particularly the artistic images associated with the fading of life, allusions to the end of human existence, and scenes of grief and separation. Additionally, it is demonstrated that in the works of classical poets, autumn is depicted not only as a source of sorrow but also as a means of philosophical contemplation, perception of reality, and understanding divine wisdom. The study analyzes examples from the works of poets such as Alisher Navoi, Babur, and Ogahiyy, exploring the poetic features of autumn imagery.

Keywords: Classical poetry, autumn imagery, artistic symbol, symbolism, poetic mastery, philosophical contemplation, lyric poetry, Alisher Navoi, Babur, Ogahiyy.

Introduction: In Uzbek classical literature, there are several recurring images that have persisted for centuries. Poets in their works connect all four seasons with human life, expressing profound philosophical thoughts through them while relying on extremely subtle artistic taste and symbolism in their depiction. Moreover, these seasonal images play a crucial role in reflecting not only natural landscapes but also the human psyche, inner world, social and philosophical ideas, as well as contemporary issues. One of these seasons is autumn. Autumn stands out from other seasons with its golden leaves, pleasant breeze, and close connection to the human psyche. Poets typically utilize these characteristics in their poems, particularly focusing on the darkening of the sky, the falling of leaves, and the fading colors of flowers and foliage. Through these comparisons, it was easier to convey the pain or condition of people in those times. Additionally, leaves falling in the gentle breeze, the moderate air temperature, and the resulting weary nature affect the human psyche. Consequently, many poets were influenced by this atmosphere and incorporated such imagery in their poems.

In classical poetry, autumn is typically interpreted as a symbol of tranquility, calmness, separation, corresponding melancholy, and most often, transience. On one hand, this is connected with the falling of leaves, the wilting of flowers, and the onset of cooler

weather in nature. On the other hand, it symbolically relates to the "mature period" of human life, that is, the middle or later stages of life. Several scholars have studied the symbolic meanings of the seasons expressed in Uzbek classical poetry. In particular, literary critic Yakubjon Iskhakov, reflecting on the depiction of seasons in Alisher Navoi's poetry, writes: "In ghazals, which are considered true examples of landscape lyrics, the poet uses the portrayal of nature as a backdrop to reveal the psyche and experiences of the lyrical hero. More precisely, in the depiction of nature, each detail serves to reveal a certain aspect of the lyrical hero's state". It appears that the image of seasons in the poet's ghazals served to express the psyche and mood of the lyrical hero.

N. Komilov, commenting on Navoi's qasidas, writes: "Foniy wrote four more Persian qasidas under the name 'Fusuli araba' ('Four Seasons'), in which he described the characteristics of each season and its impact on the human psyche." Indeed, in classical poetry, the image of the seasons served as an artistic device for expressing the human psyche. Continuing his thoughts on "Fusuli araba", the scholar notes: "The human body, which is this great world, consists of four elements (air, fire, earth, water), and a person's temperament is also fourfold: hot, cold, wet, dry. Nature also consists of four seasons: spring, summer, autumn, and winter. In this qasida, the characteristics

of the four seasons, which are a manifestation of Allah's power, are described one by one: the revival of nature in spring, the blooming of flowers and tulips, the blowing of pleasant winds, the life-giving nature of rain, and so on. Similarly, the summer heat and scorching days, the calmness of autumn, its gradual drowsiness, the pleasure of harvest time, and the severe cold of winter are also vividly depicted, connected with the perception of human imagination and emotions. The poet compares spring to a young child, summer to a teenager, autumn to maturity, a person who has reached adulthood, and winter to the end of life." From the study of the image of seasons in Navoi's work, it becomes clear that the great poet paid special attention to the depiction of nature's seasons in his works. In Navoi's poetry, the depiction of seasons is presented in two directions:

1. There are also examples of poetry in the work that reflect the portrayal of seasons from beginning to end, which can include genres such as ghazals and qasidas;
2. In the genres used in the poet's work, spring, summer, autumn, and winter are personified in accordance with the mood of the lyrical hero.

In both cases, the seasons of nature are placed in parallel with human moods, joys, and sufferings, and are depicted in harmony. In Navoi's poetry, autumn - the season of falling leaves - holds a special place. In nature, autumn is known as a time of decline, falling leaves, and the end of life. In the poet's interpretation, however, autumn serves to effectively express the motif of hijran - "a lover separated from their beloved," which is widely used in classical lyrics. It should be noted that the motif of separation is a frequently recurring poetic image in the works of our classical poets. It is considered one of the traditional motifs used in lyrics, such as "lover - beloved - rival", "waiting lover - absent beloved", "lover who has forgotten himself - indifferent beloved", and is significant because it is very frequently used in the works of Alisher Navoi. In the works of the great poet, there are many instances where separation is juxtaposed with autumn scenes and natural phenomena of this season. In this regard, two ghazals - the 386th and 450th ghazals - depicting autumn scenes in the "Garoyib us-sigar" divan is particularly noteworthy. In these poems, the poet skillfully paints a landscape of autumn nature in accordance with the state of the lyrical hero:

Bog' mendek sarg'arib, bulbul meningdek bo'ldi lol,
Go'yo mundoq bo'lur bir guldin ayrilg'ang'a hol.

From the opening couplet of the ghazal, it is evident that the poem speaks of separation. "The yellowed garden", "the nightingale parted from its flower", and "the lover left without a beloved" are united in a single

emotional thread, depicted in harmony. In the subsequent verses, the poet sequentially describes the phenomena that occur in nature during autumn. This creates a beautiful example of gradual progression in poetic arts. The image of autumn, which forms the foundation of the ghazal, is consistently developed until the end of the poem. It gradually unfolds from the minutest details of autumn to its distinct characteristics. In turn, the changes in the environment correspond to the mood of the lyrical hero and reflect his spiritual anguish.

Yerdagi yofrog' g'aribu xoksor ar bo'lmasa,
Men kibi ne vajhdindur yuzi sarig', ashki ol?

It appears that the next simile for the lyrical hero's mood is a yellowed leaf in autumn. This expresses the state of a lover who has turned yellow with the pain of separation. The yellow color of the leaf is likened to a face that has yellowed from suffering, and this is considered an absolute simile. In the subsequent lines of the ghazal, the yellow face and tears are depicted in a different manner:

Bu sarig' ruxsor uza har sari ashkim o'xshashur
Bir xazonlig' bog' ichinda har taraf ravshan zulol.

The poet's tears shed in separation are likened to water flowing through an autumn garden strewn with fallen leaves. Navoi's keen eye also observes how the waters flowing in autumn become clear. In the following couplet, the autumn season serves as a foundation for drawing a philosophical conclusion. In the poet's view, excessive pride and coquetry are futile. Indeed, just as a garden cannot escape the fallen leaves of autumn, youth, beauty, and charm are equally transient:

Bu chaman ra'nolari sarkashlik etgandin ne sud
Kim, xazon torojidin emin emastur bir nihol.

Throughout our lives, valuing time and spending life meaningfully has been one of the fundamental principles of literature, art, and the philosophy of life in general. "Indeed, recognizing and cherishing each moment of life is one of the main characteristics of wisdom and prudence". As a philosopher-poet, Hazrat Navoi understands this very deeply, and the aforementioned profound verse, expressed through the autumn season, has firmly secured its place among the jewels of classical poetry. For example, although autumn scenes are not directly mentioned in Alisher Navoi's works, it can be noted that he often uses seasonal imagery as comparative symbols. Especially in his ghazals, autumn scenes are conveyed indirectly through the wilting of flowers and gardens, the passing of spring, and the gardener's sorrow. Behind such images lie the transience of life, the fleeting joy of love, and the themes of separation and parting.

Consequently, it is not difficult for readers to understand the protagonist's mental state and experiences, and it is with such mastery that Navoi ensures his lyrical and prose works are fluent and comprehensible. Furthermore, in Navoi's poetry, we observe not direct, but epistemologically understandable manifestations of autumn imagery. He employs natural phenomena in his works as symbols of experiences or mental states, drawing parallels with the life journey of the lyrical hero. Although the poet worked more extensively with spring and floral symbolism, the concept of autumn emerges through images expressing the fading of beauty, the transience of love, and the dissipation of feelings. In this context, autumn holds its place as an evolutionary stage of beauty and love, representing a period of their decline and weakening. Moreover, through these images, Navoi harmonizes with themes such as changes in the human psyche, periods of separation, and ephemeral love. For instance, in Navoi's ghazals, one can find the following lines:

Chun lola to'kuldi, lolagumjom ichma,
Gul fasli tugandimayi gulfom ichma.

In the verses above, the falling of tulip petals and the end of the flowering season portray a scene characteristic of autumn. Although words specifically related to autumn are not used in these lines, they nonetheless indicate the arrival of fall. Moreover, through these images, the poet conveys the transience, separation, and changeability of life. These depictions, associated with the conclusion of the flowering season, symbolically represent the fleeting stages of human existence.

Xil'atin to aylamish jonon qizil, sorig', yashil,
Shu'layi ohim chiqar har yon qizil, sorig', yashil.

In this ghazal, Navoi depicts the changes in nature through three colors - red, yellow, and green. The yellow color is characteristic of autumn, representing the yellowing and falling of leaves. Through these colors, the poet symbolically portrays various stages of human life. In this verse, the colors of nature are depicted through the beloved's clothing. Red represents the revival of spring, green symbolizes the flourishing of summer, and yellow depicts the golden landscape of autumn. The poet illustrates various stages of human life through these color images.

These images are not found solely in the works of Alisher Navoi; we can also find numerous autumn depictions in the works of other poets. In their poetry, autumn plays an equally important role, serving to vividly and clearly portray each detail. One of our poets who continued his unique style and poetic traditions is

Ogahiy. In one of his ghazals, drawing a comparison between autumn and age, he writes:

...Oqardi chun boshing, uz, Ogahiy, o'zdan umidingkim,

Xazon yetkan nishonidur qirov gar tushsa bog' uzra.

The image presented in this verse appears to simply indicate the arrival of autumn. In reality, however, the author transforms this image into a metaphor with a broader meaning. It suggests that when "frost", or white hair, appears on one's head, it signifies the arrival of life's autumn season. The falling leaves symbolize the end of life and represent old age.

Images associated with autumn include: falling leaves, the autumnal equinox, separation, and parting. In Alisher Navoi's works, "union and separation" are portrayed through depictions of spring and autumn; separation and parting are interpreted as the autumn of a lover's life. The great thinker expresses autumn in terms of fallen leaves, an autumnal garden, the ravages of autumn, and autumn's blade. From this perspective, he employs artistic expressions such as "fallen leaves", "autumn leaves", "reddened leaves", "yellowed garden", "yellow face", "yellow cheek", "straw-colored face", and "amber cup" ("xazon", "xazon yafrog'lari", "qizargan barglar", "sarg'aygan bog'", "sarig' yuz", "sarig' ruxsor", "kohl yuz", "qahrabo jom" singari badiiy ifodalar ifoda etgan. "Bahori husn", "navbahori orazing", "jonparvar havo"). The description of spring is conveyed through metaphors like "spring of beauty", "the early spring of your face", and "life-nurturing air".

According to I. Haqqulov, in the works of Alisher Navoi, nature is depicted primarily as a true pillar of freedom and a realm of liberty. Love for nature and special attention to each of its season's stem from a love for life. In Navoi's works, he calls upon people to delight in the natural world, live in harmony with it, and draw strength from its power in their struggles. Thus, the philosophical aspects and aesthetic value of depicting nature in poetry are presented. Simultaneously, while analyzing Ogahiy's poems, the literary scholar pays particular attention to the imagery of nature's seasons: "Ogahiy made a significant contribution to enriching the realistic principle in poetry through his depiction of various events and phenomena characteristic of nature's seasons, distinct scenes from early spring to harsh winter, and in harmony with these, portrayals of both uplifting and melancholic human moods". Hence, the literary scholar emphasizes that the seasons of the year served to express human emotions in poetry.

Attention to autumn and the harmonious portrayal of nature's seasons in poetry can also be found in the works of Zokirjon Kholmuhammad ugli Furqat. In Furqat's verses depicting the autumn season, he

expresses the state of a lover suffering from love. We present the following ghazal with the radif "The season of spring has come...":

Bulbul o'qug'och yig'lab, subhidan xazon faslin,
G'uncha qon yutub, yuz chok etti gul giribonlar.

This verse depicts a nightingale weeping at dawn, reminiscing about the autumn season. This situation awakens the inner turmoil of the bud: "swallowing blood," that is, suppressing inner torment, it "tears open a hundred times", meaning it bursts open. This imagery is beautifully revealed through the art of husni ta'lil. That is, the blossoming of the bud is portrayed as a response to the nightingale's lament; although this is a biological process, the poet expresses it in a poetic manner.

One of the poets who portrayed the autumn season in his works through nature imagery is Zahiriddin Muhammad Bobur, who stands out from others for his loving approach to nature. He depicted autumn in both realistic and symbolic images. He often associates autumn with longing, change, and loss. In the poet's poetry, this season can be analyzed from two aspects:

- 1) it expresses the state of a lover in separation - this is its primary meaning;
- 2) it reflects the anguish of longing for one's homeland - this is the true essence of the lines where autumn imagery is employed.

Therefore, the following ghazal supports our ideas:

Xazon yafrog'i yanglig' gul yuzung hajrida sarg'ardim,
Ko'rub rahm aylagil, ey lolarux, bu chehrai zardim.

It is known that in classical poetry, the word "xazon" means "autumn". The lyrical hero of the ghazal gives the impression of a lover in separation in the opening lines. He has turned yellow like an autumn leaf in separation from his beloved. Citing his "pale face" as evidence, he seeks mercy from his beloved, whose beauty is likened to a brightly burning tulip-faced flower. The juxtaposition of the metaphors "lolarux" (tulip-faced) and "chehrai zard" (pale face) in the verse not only vividly expresses the lover's distressed state but also serves as a beautiful example of the art of tazod (contrast).

Sen, ey gul, qo'ymading sarkashligingni sarvdek hargiz,
Ayog'ingg'a tushub, bargi xazondek muncha yolbordim.

The beloved in the author's description is not merely beautiful, but also so proud that she falls at her lover's feet like autumn leaves, indifferent to his pleas. In the subsequent verses of the ghazal, the poet's true intention behind the content becomes clear. In the image of the beautiful beloved, the enduring figure of the Eternal Homeland emerges:

Latofat gulshanida gul kibi sen sabzu xurram qol,
Men archi dahr bog'idin xazon yafrog'idek bordim.

Indeed, human life is as fleeting as the seasons. Only our native soil that brought us into this world, only the Homeland, belongs to eternity. The melancholic mood, which aligns with the spirit of the season, manifests not only on the face of the lyrical hero but also penetrates deep into his soul, revealing itself in the form of bloody tears:

Xazondek qon yoshim, sorig' yuzumdin el tanaffurda,
Bahar range, bihamdillah, ulusdin o'zni qutqordim.

The misfortunes in Babur's fate are conveyed through the metaphor of a "yellow face". Generally, the poet artistically embodies the image of a lover tormented by love using the imagery of autumn. This image gradually evolves into the portrayal of a person longing for their homeland - a face yellowed from nostalgia for the Motherland. It can be said that the depiction of the lyrical hero's state of melancholy and the experiences of a sorrowful heart are deeply embedded in Mirzo Bobur's verses. Overall, the autumnal imagery created in the poet's couplets takes on a unique symbolic and metaphorical significance.

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