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FLORISTIC AND FAUNISTIC IMAGERY IN SHUKUR KHOLMIRZAEV'S SHORT STORIES

Khayrieva Nargiza Ikhtiyor qizi
PhD Doctorand, Department of Uzbek Language and Literature,
Bukhara State University
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Abstract. This article offers a comprehensive scientific and theoretical analysis of floral and faunal imagery in Shukur Kholmirzaev's short stories, examining their functional significance in plot development, the realization of the author's artistic intent, and their aesthetic attributes. Drawing upon rigorous textual analysis, the study elucidates the writer's narrative technique, the principles of his realistic depiction, and his distinctive approach to the artistic generalization of national values through the integration of floristic and faunistic motifs.

Keywords: short story, flora, fauna, proper name, character, artistic image, literary characterization.

INTRODUCTION

In the second half of the twentieth century, Shukur Kholmirzaev's contribution to Uzbek short story writing was characterized by his creation of short prose pieces that remain unparalleled in both quantitative and qualitative dimensions. Literary scholars widely acknowledge that Kholmirzaev's creative endeavors elevated the potential of the short story genre to a remarkably higher level following the legacy of Abdulla Qahhor. Notably, Kholmirzaev's short stories diverge substantially from the works of his contemporaries who were also recognized masters of this genre. Specifically, within his minor prose forms, the author reinforces the interconnectedness and eternal, indissoluble bonds between humanity and nature. The author exhibits a profound reverence for nature and all living entities, demonstrating a persistent drive toward their preservation. This intrinsic characteristic, seamlessly transposed into his narratives, deeply resonates with and emotionally engages the reader. Consequently, the author's philosophical insights evolve into a structured ideological discourse, functioning as a conceptual framework that compels individuals to coexist harmoniously with nature and mobilizes them toward environmental conservation.

MAIN BODY

In the short stories of Shukur Kholmirzaev, the intrinsic and inseparable connection between humanity and the environment – including flora, fauna, avian species, fish, reptiles, mammals, and all manifestations of both animate and inanimate nature – is elucidated through indissoluble thematic bonds. One can observe a profound coexistence with mother nature, the attitude toward the animal kingdom, and the significance of plant life – such as flowers, trees, fruits, vegetables, and related organic elements – in plot development, alongside the artistic, philosophical, and symbolic meanings they carry. This thematic orientation is discernible even within the nomenclature of the stories. Specifically, a profound affinity with nature is evident in titles such as *"Bulut to'sgan oy"* (The moon hidden by clouds), *"Uyqusiz tun"* (A sleepless night), *"Olis yulduzlar ostida"*(Under distant stars), *"Quyosh-ku falakda kezib yuribdi"* (The Sun Roams the Sky), *"Ko'k dengiz"* (The Blue Sea), *"Qish hangomasi"*(A Winter Story), *"Bahor"*(Spring), *"Bodom qishda gulladi"* (The Almond Blossomed in Winter), *"Kuzda bahor havosi"* (Spring

Weather in Autumn), *"Oy yorug'ida"* (In the Moonlight), *"Zov ostida olishuv"* (The Struggle Beneath the Gorge), *"Ora yo'l"* (The Midway), *"Tikan orasidagi odam"* (The Man Amidst Thorns), *"Arpali qishlog'ida"* (In Arpali Village), *"Bahor o'tdi"* (Spring Has Passed), *"Shudring tushgan bedazor"* (The Dew-Covered Alfalfa Field), *"Ota yurt"* (The Fatherland), and *"Oqtosh"* (White Stone); as well as in stories like *"Boychechak ochildi"* (The Snowdrop Has Bloomed), *"Yovvoyi gul"* (The Wild Flower), *"Yovvoyi olmazor qaroqchisi"* (The Pirate of the Wild Apple Orchard), and *"Olma yemadim"*(I didn't eat the apple).

Concurrently, faunistic imagery serves a pivotal role in the semantic architecture of stories such as *"Ot egasi"* (The Owner of the Horse), *"Omon ovchining o'limi"* (The Death of Omon the Hunter), *"Cho'loq turna"* (The Lame Crane), *"Bandi burgut"* (The Captive Eagle), *"Qushlar qishlovdan qaytdi"* (The Birds Returned from Wintering), *"Qush tili"* (The Language of Birds), *"Qumrilar"* (The Turtledoves), *"Kakku sayrayapti"* (The Cuckoo is Singing), *"Ozodlik"* (Freedom, wherein the chukar partridge image functions as a crucial narrative driver), and *"Uchinchi hamroh"* (The Third Companion, which centers on the character of a loyal Dog as the primary protagonist).

The primacy of the human factor is dominant in narratives like *"Odam"* (Man), *"Qariya"* (The old man), *"Farzand"* (The Child), *"Qochoq"* (The Fugitive), *"Aqlli bolalar"* (The Smart Children), *"Qaroqchilar"* (The Bandits), *"Xorun ar-Rashid"* (Harun al-Rashid), *"Jarga uchgan odam"* (The Man Who Fell into the Abyss), *"Sanobar"*, *"Ahad Mirzo yig'ladi"* (Ahad Mirzo Wept), and *"Yosuman"*.

National identity and cultural heritage come to the fore in stories such as *"O'zbek xarakteri"* (The Uzbek Character), *"O'zbekning soddasi"* (The simple Uzbek), *"Bir guzar odamlari"* (People of one neighborhood), *"Xorazm, jonginam"* (Khwarazm, My Soul), *"Navro'z, Navro'z"* and *"Mangu yo'ldosh"* (The Eternal Companion, dedicated to the Navruz festival).

Professional identities, vocations, and operational processes frame the prevailing perspectives in *"Ustoz"* (The Master), *"Yovvoyi gul"* (The Writer), *"Jo'raboshi"* (The Leader), *"Podachi"* (The Herder), *"Qurt sotuvchi"* (The Silk Worm Seller), *"Keksa g'ijjakchi"* (The Old Gijjak Player), *"Sirli militsioner"* (The Mysterious Militia Officer) and *"Omon ovchining o'limi"*.

Furthermore, idyllic depictions of childhood and sincere camaraderie are illustrated through engaging incidents in stories titled *"To'p o'yin"* (The Ball Game), *"Chillak o'yin"* (The Chillak Game), and *"Quloqcho'zma"*, which encapsulate elements of Uzbek folklore, specifically traditional children's games.

Finally, philosophical resolutions and the celebration of latent human emotions are articulated in works such as *"Qadimda bo'lgan ekan"* (It Happened in Ancient Times), *"Hayot abadiy"* (Life is Eternal), *"Og'ir tosh ko'chsa"* (If a Heavy Stone Moves), *"Bitikli tosh"* (The Inscribed Stone), *"Kimsasiz hovli"* (The Deserted Courtyard), *"Hukumat"* (The Government), *"Haykal"* (The Statue), *"Yig'i"* (The Wailing), *"Arosat"* (Purgatory), *"Uh"* (The Sigh), *"Kechagi kun – kecha"* (Yesterday is Yesterday), *"Darvesh"* (The Dervish), *"Bir ko'rgan tanish"* (An Acquaintance from a Single Meeting), *"...Ikki ko'rgan bilish"* (A Knowing from a Second Meeting), "*Nimadir yo'q bo'ldi"* (Something Was Lost), *"Miltiq otildi"* (A Rifle Was Fired), *"Sog'inch"* (Longing), *"Ko'ngil"* (The Soul) and *"Tanholik"* (Solitude) – the latter being a philosophical exploration dedicated to the renowned Russian writer Leo Tolstoy.

DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

"Fauna refers to the animal life of a particular region, country, or geological period; the collective assemblage of animals that inhabited or currently inhabit these spaces". The faunal realm coexists alongside the floral world as two inseparable components of material existence.

Representatives of fauna are distinguished from plants by their capacity for locomotion, heterotrophic nutrition, and a highly developed nervous system.

"Flora denotes the total plant population existing within a specific geographic area or geological epoch; the plant world in its entirety".

The author's short story *"Qush tili"* opens with the epigraph: "Lord, protect children and animals under Your custody" (the title of a film by the American director Stanley Kramer). In this narrative, while nature is masterfully depicted through verbal artistry akin to a painter's brush, blackbirds are initially introduced, followed by a myna bird and a cat, both of which assume crucial roles in plot progression. The inclusion of images of a dog, a grasshopper, a beetle, a brown butterfly, an earthworm, a fish, a parrot, and a swallow positions these creatures and insects as primary narrative catalysts. The story systematically demonstrates that human interaction and emotional resonance with nature cannot manifest without the mediation of animals, birds, and insects. Through the characters of Qamariddin and his son Jahongir, who endeavor to rescue a wounded myna bird, the text presents a generalized archetype of individuals who manifest active benevolence toward animals. Qamariddin explains to Jahongir the mimicry skills of the myna, noting its ability to meow like a cat, bark like a dog, or sing like a nightingale. Through the myna, the richness and multifaceted nature of avian communication are illuminated.

"Qush tili" underscores an explicit appeal for compassion and protective stewardship toward domestic animals, birds, and all sentient non-human organisms. This is exemplified in Qamariddin's dialogue with his son regarding those who shot the myna bird: *"...Human nature is inherently peculiar; it defies simple categorization... You see, we humans appeal to certain animals or birds, while others harbor an aversion to us... Ultimately, they evaluate us within the framework of their own languages..."* ["Tabassum", 4:16]. In this instance, the ecologically conscious author channelizes his own ideological stances through the voice of Qamariddin.

The narrative also integrates profound philosophical perspectives concerning plant life and trees: *"...When trees are cut down, they experience physical pain. When a tree is deprived of water, it emits a groaning sound. This has been scientifically verified! It is merely that we – human beings – fail to perceive it!"* ["Tabassum", 4:19]. These empirical, life-based observations are similarly articulated through the voice of Qamariddin.

"...A wise man once noted: 'Even when a human being is entirely wretched, they must remain grateful. For they might not have even witnessed this existence.' A profound statement, is it not? Do you comprehend it?" ["Tabassum", 4:20].

Alternating between the guise of an objective sage and the perspective of Qamariddin, the author intensely contemplates his existential outlook, emphasizing that every living entity within nature requires protection and affection, and advocating for the preservation of fragile fauna, flora, and trees. Regardless of adversity, the text urges a resolute forward momentum even in the darkest moments. Furthermore, the author strives to convince both himself and those around him that gratitude constitutes one of the highest virtues.

The central protagonist, Qamariddin, operates as an instructor of "Ancient World History" at a technical college and contributes historical articles to newspapers. Consequently, he remains incapable of indifference toward surrounding events and social injustices. His distinct affinity for the natural world is systematically manifested through his actions, behavior, and discourse. As he notes: *"...We are exceedingly indifferent, my wife! Perhaps because our history boasts an abundance of great scholars and luminous historical figures, we have grown accustomed to treating them with complacency..."* ["Tabassum", 4:22].

Such philosophical reflections, along with the profound respect accorded to our glorious historical legacy and ancestors, resonate as though they are direct enunciations of Shukur Kholmirzaev himself. Evidently, embedding such expressions of patriotism and national pride within literature during the year of the story's publication (1982) constituted a formidable challenge for writers and poets of that era.

"...Nature is structured this way. It is so, my wife! Do you know why I revere nature? It encapsulates a boundless eternity! Suppose you are profoundly distressed, or your soul is wounded by some historical aberration, or conversely, you are happy without any discernible cause. In such moments, immerse yourself in nature—you will achieve instantaneous tranquility! You will realize that the ultimate truth of the universe resides precisely here, my wife" ["Tabassum", 4:26].

It is readily discernible from the aforementioned passages that the author possesses an intrinsic reverence for nature, coupled with a profound commitment to valuing and preserving all living entities within his narrative style. The writer positions himself as an intimate companion and confidant to the natural world. He consistently channelizes his discourse through the voices of the characters he conceptualizes, while simultaneously granting these entities the agency to articulate their perspectives within the framework of their own expressive capacities. Kholmirzaev fundamentally comprehends the complex, interdependent relationship between humanity and nature, systematically integrating this thematic paradigm into both his short prose and larger literary works.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Shukur Kholmirzaev's short stories comprehensively articulate ideological constructs and empirical narratives centered on the surrounding world, environmental phenomena, natural marvels, and their distinct socio-psychological impacts on the human factor. These works underscore a profound stewardship toward nature, positing that every living organism – functioning as a miraculous manifestation of existence – constitutes an autonomous and intricate domain, thereby reflecting the unfathomable mysteries of the expansive universe. The core essence of his works is defined by artistic and philosophical views demonstrating that human beings are inextricably intertwined with the animal (fauna) and plant (flora) kingdoms, making it impossible to conceptualize them in isolation, as every living creature holds its own distinct place in life. Ultimately, the conceptual synthesis and structural unity of humanity and nature serve as the fundamental aesthetic and artistic cornerstone of the author's short story writing.

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