

THE CONCEPT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PERCEPTION IN THE POETRY OF UZBEK POET RAUF PARFI

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Introduction

The enduring relationship between humans and the environment has been reflected in literary texts for centuries. Ecocriticism scrutinizes not only the environmental aspects but also the value judgments and concepts of self embedded within the text belonging to the artist [Oppermann S., 2012. -25]. A poet or writer creates their work under the influence of the profound effects that nature has on their personality. Consequently, each artist's approach to the environment becomes individualized. This study examines the unique environmental perception reflected in the works of Rauf Parfi, a significant figure in contemporary Uzbek poetry.

Environmental Perception in Rauf Parfi's Poetry

An examination of Rauf Parfi's poetics reveals that he closely aligns with a symbolist approach to poetry. The ambiguity, enigmatic lines, and the style of expression through symbols and metaphors observed in Parfi's poetry are among the prominent characteristics of the poet's artistic and aesthetic mindset [Fayzullayeva A., 2010. -174]. Regarding symbolic elements, Parfi frequently incorporates aspects of nature into his poetry, particularly elements like stars, the moon, the sun, the wind, snow, and rain. "For him, everything in nature serves as a means to express emotions" [Koraş H., 2009. -62]. In Parfi's poetry, nature emerges with traces of both traditional and contemporary environmental perspectives.

Parfi's perspective on the environment, especially in terms of similes, is dominant in his poetry. The poet, by stating that "Yér şäri, muqäddäs bir kitäb." [Koraş H., 2009. -318], expresses his respect for the world he inhabits. He reiterates this metaphor in another poem, describing "Dünyâ, oqılmägän bir kitäb." [Koraş H., 2009. -376]. To the poet, the world is akin to a revered text that deserves respect. However, Parfi's poetry also contains a contrary attitude towards the world. In his address to his mother, "Tubänlikdä yäsumän cäri," [Koraş H., 2009. -339), he expresses a negative stance towards the environment he inhabits. In this world, where the wicked prevail, "Zäminlärning nidäsi bekär." [Koraş H., 2009. -343]. The environment, subjected to human oppression, cries out in desperation. In his poem "Thäkurning Äxirgi Şe'ri" Parfi subtly criticizes the degradation of key environmental elements—air and soil—by humanity, with the lines, "Hävâni qizğänmäng, âzâd hävâni, /Tuprâqni bulğätmäng, äybdir, yetär!" [Koraş H., 2009. -602].

Addressing nature as "Á, ânä täbiät, mä'yus ânäcân," [Koraş H., 2009. -441], Parfi acknowledges the oppression of nature by humans. The negative imagery in his poetry, although rooted in nature, is largely human-induced. In this context, the lines "Şâirni küylätgän täbiät emäs, /Şâirni küylätgän häzrâti insân." [Koraş H., 2009. -442] directly attribute the source of negativity to humanity. In these lines from the poem "Şâir" Parfi links the primary elements of his poetics—metaphors—to humans. According to the poet, the environment is not culpable for negative influences; the real source lies in anthropocentric thought and action. This notion aligns with the modern ecocritical perspective, which seeks to dismantle human dominance over nature. For many years, humans have been "caught in the belief that everything exists for their benefit" [Yılmaz Z. G., 2012. -130], thereby subjugating nature. Consequently, respect for the right to life and the existence of non-human beings has been marginalized. Parfi, too, challenges this traditional perspective in his poetry.

The traditional view of nature also manifests in the attitudes toward other living beings within the environment. In a nature dominated by a traditional, humanist perspective, animals are perceived as being at the service of humans. The lack of respect for the inherent right to life of animals is another issue addressed by Parfi. His four-line poem "Ärävä Tärtäyâtgän Ätgä" is structured as a dialogue between a human and a horse: "–Uf, bunça uf tärtäsän bundäy, /Yemişing säz, hänsirämä, bäs!– Özim şundäy, ädätim şundäy,/Mén şunägä âlämäm näfäs." [Koraş H., 2009. -449]. Here, the horse's natural neighing and its most fundamental right to eat grass are not respected by the human. Despite economic hardships, the horse's consumption of grass is not met with approval by its owner. The horse, prioritizing its own existence, responds meaningfully to the human. Thus, it is conveyed that respect should be shown to the horse's existence, even if the human has seemingly justified reasons. In his relatively long poem "Muhäbbät" the poet again seeks solace in nature, saying, "Täbiät, määdäd bér, yétmäs öz küçim." [Koraş H., 2009. -490]. The poet, who believes he cannot alter the selfish perspective of humans, directs his cry towards the environment in which he lives. In another poem, the line "Tänggäçä suhbät qurdim därextlär bilän," [Koraş H., 2009. -566] also demonstrates his close connection with nature. Thus, the traditional view of human superiority gives way to an understanding of human equality with nature. However, Parfi does not entirely abandon the traditional perspective. In the poem "Şämällär" where symbolic elements dominate, the grief over the cutting of trees is expressed through metaphors that reflect a human-centered perspective: "Kesilgän därextlär, töngäk/kesilçüvi başlärgä" [Koraş H., 2009. -395]. The poet laments the cutting of trees, as they are reduced to stumps and used as tools for beheading. Although the poet intends to highlight the brutality against humans, the destruction of trees is overlooked. The loss of the trees becomes secondary to the message being conveyed. The respectful attitude towards the horse

and nature seen in earlier poems is not evident in these lines. Similarly, in his ironic poems "Mämätning Quturgän İti Uçun Märsiyä" and "Häqberdining Bäytäli Uçun Märsiyä" the deaths of the dog and horse are treated with a mocking tone. This derogatory perspective stems from the symbolic messages Parfi wishes to convey through nature. In one of his later poems, where he previously condemned the pollution of air and soil in "Thäkurning Äxirgi Şe'ri" the poet continues the traditional metaphor of earth as woman by stating, "Änämdir tupraq," [Koraş H., 2009. -602]. In the traditional view, where cultivating the land is seen as a male trait, the soil is likened to a woman. Although Parfi respects the soil by likening it to his mother, he fundamentally adheres to the traditional metaphor of earth as woman, subconsciously perpetuating male dominance over the environment.

Conclusion

Rauf Parfi, a prominent figure in contemporary Uzbek literature, predominantly conveys his intended messages through symbolism in his poetry. The artist frequently utilizes elements of the environment as symbols. In Parfi's view, nature serves both as a place deserving of respect and as a medium through which he can reach his audience. He is acutely aware that nature has been marginalized by human actions. Nonetheless, by continuing to adopt a human-centered traditional perspective, Parfi sometimes relegates the environment to a secondary role in his poetry. Yet, considering the circumstances of his time, Parfi's approach to the environment remains significant. The challenging years he endured prevented him from fully embracing a modern ecological perspective. Despite these adversities, Parfi's approach of equating humans with nature presents valuable insights, especially in the context of today's environmental crises and their consequences.

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