

## The Landscape in the Works of Asqar Mahkam

*Baxtiyorova Gulshoda*

*Student, Urgench state university Faculty of uzbek philology*

### ABSTRACT

*This article examines the unique characteristics of landscape depictions in the lyrics of Asqar Mahkam, the beloved poet of both the Tajik and Uzbek people, known for his radiant writing.*

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### Introduction

Landscape (from the French "paysage," meaning "country" or "place") refers to the depiction of nature through artistic language in literature. The function of landscape in a literary work varies depending on the writer's chosen style and approach. Through descriptions of nature, the writer expresses their relationship with their homeland and the natural world. Landscape imagery is an integral part of the plot structure, enhancing the thematic and aesthetic power of a work, accelerating or decelerating plot progression, and revealing the inner world of the character. In this way, landscape helps to portray characters in a more comprehensive manner.

### Literature review

Renowned literary theorist I. Sulonov describes landscape as follows: "The depiction of nature is a component of the plot, enhancing the thematic and aesthetic power of the work. In artistic literature, natural phenomena and views can also serve as factors that accelerate or slow down plot development. However, the use of nature to reveal the emotional state of characters is a common phenomenon in literature. In such cases, nature's depiction deepens the drama in the characters' lives or provides them with inner strength, thus influencing the plot's further progression. The ability of landscape to manifest character psychology is one of its most important features in literature. We cannot imagine a literary work without the psychological portrayal of the character, that is, their inner experiences, dreams, hopes, and moods. Without these elements, the work's impact and literary value would diminish. This is something that the versatile creator Asqar Mahkam has understood well, skillfully using landscape—nature's depiction—in his poetry. His mastery of portraying nature distinguishes him from other poets and writers, as he often employs nature imagery that reflects a somber mood.

### Discussion and results

For instance, let us examine the poet's verse beginning with, "Not a woman, but the winds put on a veil...":

Not a woman, but the winds put on a veil,

The sunset too was wrapped in veils of color.

The Muslim rivers pray,

Bowing sadly against the stones on the shore.

A reader encountering these lines for the first time will undoubtedly be captivated by the poet's unique artistic expression and his extraordinary way of depicting nature. In the first line, "veil"—a garment that traditionally covers women—is metaphorically put on by the wind. Imagining a veiled wind creates a stunning image. In the second line, we see the sunset's depiction, where it "wears a colorful veil." The rivers, in the next line, are likened to Muslims performing prayers, their waves slowly touching the stones on the shore like a person bowing in worship. Through personification, the poet uses imagery like "Muslim rivers" and "the winds wearing a veil," creating a vivid artistic scene.

Another fragment from Asqar Mahkam's poem *Manzara* (Landscape) also presents a landscape description:

The moon moves on, sad and low,

Its path far from distant lands.

It whispers behind the wall,

The winds drunkenly murmur.

Here, the poet captures the final days of autumn. We can infer this from the line, "Autumn... the last leaves fall..." As winter approaches, the moon at dusk is no longer as bright as it was in summer; instead, it appears faint and hazy. The poet describes it as "sad" and "low," portraying its journey as long and weary. On one such hazy night, the winds whisper behind the wall, intoxicated and subdued. The poet's skill in depicting this scene leaves the reader in awe. While he could have conveyed the meaning of this stanza in simpler terms, he refrains from doing so, as Asqar Mahkam is a true literary artist.

This passage can also be interpreted with philosophical and Sufi overtones. The lyric hero resembles the moon—sad and weary, troubled by hardship. The path is long, indicating the struggle and discipline needed to achieve enlightenment and virtue. There are those who cast slander and spread rumors, portrayed by the "winds' tongue." Like the fleeting gusts of wind, these people's criticisms are ultimately ephemeral.

In another poem, the lyric hero eagerly anticipates autumn:

I awaited you with longing, autumn leaves,

The leaves turned yellow from waiting.

At dawn, the dew fell in beads,

Near and far were covered in fog.

In Asqar Mahkam's works, autumn scenes appear more frequently than other seasons. The lyric hero awaits autumn with longing, and as he waits, the leaves turn yellow. Here, the author uses the poetic device of *husni ta'lil* (beautiful reasoning), revealing the lyric hero's psychological state. The arrival of autumn and the withering leaves reflect a melancholic mood. At dawn, dewdrops fall like beads on the grass, and nearby and distant places are shrouded in fog.

By depicting landscape in his poetry, Asqar Mahkam indirectly conveys the inner feelings of his characters, employing psychological imagery. His talent for portraying landscape in a way that captivates readers is undeniable. Asqar Mahkam does not merely describe nature; he breathes life into it, infusing it with emotions. His mastery of artistic metaphor enthralls those familiar with his work, drawing them into the charm and magic of words. They become convinced once again of the spirit that lies within words.

## Conclusion

Asqar Mahkam's landscape descriptions are not simple portrayals of nature but deeply infused with the inner lives and emotions of his characters. His unique approach to depicting seasons, particularly autumn,

reveals an intricate link between external landscapes and the psychological landscapes of his lyric heroes. Mahkam's poetry embodies an artful blend of nature and human sentiment, where every scene carries emotional resonance and philosophical depth.

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