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POETICS OF NATURE AND HUMAN EXISTENCE IN ALISHER NAVOI'S "FUSULI ARBA'A" QASIDAS

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Abstract. This thesis examines the poetic representation of nature and human existence in Alisher Navoiy's Fusuli Arba'a, focusing on the symbolic and aesthetic functions of the four seasons. Particular attention is given to the interaction between seasonal imagery, the concept of time, human spiritual experience, and the idealized image of the ruler. The study also considers how classical poetic devices transform natural phenomena into philosophical and artistic meanings.

Keywords: Alisher Navoiy; Fusuli Arba'a; Persian qasida; poetics; seasonal imagery; symbolism; classical literature.

INTRODUCTION

Alisher Navoiy's Persian poetic heritage occupies an important position in the development of classical Turkic and Persian literary interaction, revealing the poet's profound engagement with the aesthetic principles, imagery, and intellectual traditions of the Eastern literary canon. Among his Persian qasidas, Fusuli Arba'a holds a distinctive position because its artistic structure is organized around the representation of the four seasons, allowing natural phenomena to become a complex poetic language through which temporal change, human experience, beauty, transience, and the ideal order of existence can be expressed. The significance of the work therefore extends beyond descriptive landscape poetry: seasonal imagery functions as an active structural and semantic element of the qasida. Each season acquires an individual aesthetic atmosphere through color, movement, sound, spatial imagery, and metaphorical transformation, while the succession of seasons establishes a broader conception of cyclical time and change. At the same time, descriptions of nature are connected with human and social meanings, particularly through the poet's construction of the idealized ruler and the relationship between cosmic harmony and political order. From this perspective, the study of Fusuli Arba'a provides an opportunity to investigate how Navoiy transforms conventional motifs of classical Persian poetry into an interconnected system of original poetic meanings. The present study therefore focuses on the interaction between seasonal imagery, poetic time, symbolic meaning, and human existence, considering these elements as components of Navoiy's broader qasida poetics rather than as isolated artistic features.

THE PLACE OF FUSULI ARBA'A IN NAVOIY'S PERSIAN QASIDA HERITAGE

Fusuli Arba'a occupies a significant position within Alisher Navoiy's Persian literary heritage and demonstrates the poet's ability to work creatively within the established conventions of the qasida genre. Rather than reproducing the traditional structure of panegyric poetry in a purely conventional manner, Navoiy develops an artistic framework in which the natural world becomes closely connected with social, philosophical, and aesthetic meanings. The four seasonal sections provide the composition with an internal progression, creating a poetic movement from one temporal state to another and allowing nature to function as more than an ornamental background. Within this structure, the description of each season is characterized by carefully selected images, metaphors, comparisons, personifications, and sensory details that construct a distinct artistic

environment. The changing landscape simultaneously establishes a temporal dimension, since the movement from spring to summer, autumn, and winter evokes the continuous transformation of existence. This structural principle is particularly important for understanding Navoiy's qasida poetics because the work demonstrates how a conventional descriptive motif can become a means of organizing an entire poetic conception. The natural cycle is also related to the representation of human and political ideals, especially in passages associated with the ruler praised by the poet. Consequently, Fusuli Arba'a can be approached as a multidimensional poetic composition in which genre tradition, seasonal imagery, philosophical reflection, and panegyric intention interact with one another. Its artistic originality lies not simply in describing four seasons, but in transforming their succession into a coherent poetic system through which Navoiy explores change, harmony, beauty, power, and the relationship between the natural and human worlds.

THE FOUR SEASONS AS POETIC TIME AND ARTISTIC SPACE

One of the most distinctive features of Fusuli Arba'a is Navoiy's transformation of the four seasons into a complex poetic system of time and space. Spring, summer, autumn, and winter are not presented merely as successive natural conditions; each season possesses its own visual, emotional, and semantic identity, while their chronological sequence creates an internal movement within the composition. Spring is associated with renewal, vitality, awakening, and the restoration of beauty, whereas summer introduces a different sensory atmosphere through heat, brightness, intensity, and the heightened activity of the natural world. Autumn changes the poetic landscape by introducing images of decline, transformation, maturity, and the gradual disappearance of earlier abundance. Winter, in turn, creates an atmosphere of coldness, stillness, and temporal closure. Yet these meanings should not be reduced to fixed symbolic formulas, because Navoiy's artistic method depends on the interaction of imagery and context. The seasons collectively establish a cyclical understanding of time in which emergence, flourishing, decline, and apparent cessation form parts of a continuous natural order. At the same time, seasonal change creates a poetic space populated by plants, celestial bodies, winds, clouds, gardens, flowers, birds, and other elements of the natural environment. Through personification and metaphorical transformation, these elements acquire agency and participate in the poetic action. Thus, nature in Fusuli Arba'a becomes an active artistic environment rather than a passive setting. The movement of the seasons also creates an implicit dialogue between permanence and change, suggesting that individual states are temporary while the larger cycle continues. This interaction between temporal progression and spatial imagery significantly contributes to the philosophical depth of the work and demonstrates how Navoiy converts natural observation into an organized poetic representation of existence.

POETIC DEVICES AND THE ARTISTIC CONSTRUCTION OF SEASONAL IMAGERY

The artistic power of Fusuli Arba'a is closely connected with Navoiy's sophisticated use of classical poetic devices through which natural phenomena are transformed into meaningful artistic images. Seasonal descriptions acquire their expressive force through a combination of metaphor, simile, personification, contrast, hyperbole, allusion, and other forms of figurative expression. Particularly significant is personification, through which flowers, winds, clouds, gardens, celestial bodies, and other elements of nature appear to possess human qualities, actions, or emotional states. This technique removes the boundary between the natural and human worlds and enables the landscape to participate directly in the poetic narrative. Metaphor performs a similar function by transferring meanings between different semantic spheres and allowing a natural phenomenon to represent an emotional, philosophical, or social idea. Contrast is especially important in the organization of seasonal imagery because the movement from warmth to cold, abundance to scarcity, flowering to withering, and movement to stillness creates a dynamic aesthetic structure. Sensory imagery further strengthens this effect: color, temperature, sound, fragrance, movement, and visual form contribute to the creation of distinctive poetic environments for each season. Navoiy's use of these devices should therefore be understood not as decorative ornamentation but

as an essential mechanism of meaning production. A flower, for instance, can simultaneously function as an element of landscape, a symbol of beauty, and a reminder of temporal fragility depending on its contextual position. In this respect, the poetic devices employed in Fusuli Arba'a establish connections between concrete natural images and abstract concepts such as transience, renewal, harmony, power, and human experience. The artistic construction of the seasons consequently demonstrates Navoiy's ability to integrate formal elegance with conceptual depth, making natural description an important component of the qasida's broader philosophical and aesthetic architecture.

SEASONAL IMAGERY, HUMAN EXISTENCE, AND THE IDEAL RULER

A deeper reading of Fusuli Arba'a reveals that the representation of nature is inseparable from Navoiy's understanding of human existence, social order, and ideal rulership. The succession of seasons creates a poetic model of continuous transformation in which growth, maturity, decline, and renewal appear as interconnected stages rather than isolated events. This cyclical structure provides a conceptual framework for reflecting on the transient nature of human life and the instability of worldly conditions. Within such a framework, the beauty of spring and the abundance of summer may suggest vitality and flourishing, while autumn and winter introduce images through which change, limitation, and temporal decline become more perceptible. However, Navoiy does not simply establish a direct equivalence between individual seasons and fixed moral meanings; instead, he allows natural imagery to generate a broader reflection on the relationship between permanence and change. The panegyric dimension of the work becomes particularly important in this context. The praised ruler is represented against a poetic background in which the natural world itself appears ordered, harmonious, and abundant. The relationship between the ruler and nature therefore acquires an ideological and aesthetic dimension: cosmic harmony provides a metaphorical environment for representing political order, prosperity, justice, and ideal governance. The natural world can consequently be read as a poetic mirror through which the qualities attributed to the ruler become more visible and conceptually intensified. This interaction also distinguishes Fusuli Arba'a from a purely descriptive treatment of seasonal change. Nature, human existence, and rulership form interconnected semantic levels, allowing a landscape image to participate simultaneously in aesthetic description and philosophical reflection. The work thus demonstrates how Navoiy expands the conventional panegyric function of the qasida by embedding praise within a larger poetic conception of time, change, harmony, and existence. Such an approach strengthens the relevance of Fusuli Arba'a to the study of Navoiy's qasida poetics and demonstrates the multilayered relationship between natural imagery and human-centered meaning in his Persian literary heritage.

CONCLUSION

Fusuli Arba'a demonstrates Navoiy's distinctive ability to transform seasonal description into a multidimensional poetic system. The four seasons function simultaneously as natural images, markers of poetic time, and vehicles for philosophical and human meanings. Through metaphor, personification, contrast, and rich sensory imagery, Navoiy connects the changing natural world with ideas of beauty, transience, renewal, harmony, and human existence. The seasonal cycle also creates an artistic framework for the panegyric representation of Sultan Husayn Bayqara, linking natural harmony with the ideal of social and political order. Thus, Fusuli Arba'a occupies an important place in Navoiy's Persian qasida heritage and demonstrates the conceptual depth of his poetic treatment of nature.

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