

Epithets created relating to the four elements

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Abstract: In this article, we tried to study the peculiarity of the use of epithets, which are a type of tropes in current Karakalpak lyric poetry, in relation to water, air, fire, and earth, which are considered vital elements, using the example of the lyric poetry of K. Karimov, J. Izbasqanov, and B. Genjemuratov.

Keywords: Poetics, image, tropes, epithets, elements of existence.

Introduction: It is well-known that epithets are the most commonly used trope in the artistic portrayal of events, objects, and especially characters in lyrical works. In this article, we aim to create a literary and aesthetic interpretation of the usage characteristics of epithets related to the four core elements: water, air, fire, and earth, which are the main factors and essence of life and creation. We will explore poets' perspectives, emotions, and influences regarding these elements both as a part of life and as creators.

The four elements continue to appear in songs, either as images or as descriptive objects. They are primarily used in landscape songs and in conveying the feelings of the lyrical hero, particularly when natural landscapes are the focus. Among them, the air element is the most frequently used, encompassing wind, storm, fog, whirlwind, and other similar phenomena. Wind is the most productively used named object within this category. In J. Izbasqanov's works, wind is described with epithets in more than twenty poems, while in K. Karimov and B. Genjemuratov's works, it appears in more than ten poems. However, in most poems, it remains one of the descriptive objects, and the defining epithets are often traditional or ordinary. For example:

Unable to find a place for myself,
I embrace the fullness, the cheerful wind, everything.
Like lovers with the cheerful wind,
You were whispering on the golden shore. [1:47]

Autumn is approaching. Cold winds
Have chilled me and drained my strength. [2:99]

Swaying in the silky wind, the willows awakened,
Kisses burned like fire on the lips. [3:55]

The epithets such as cheerful, cool, and silky in the given examples characterize different states and types of wind. Cheerful and happy winds are used to describe pleasant natural phenomena, beautiful and enjoyable situations, while the epithet "silky" aims to depict elegant scenery and subtle feelings arising from admiration of beautiful nature.

The characteristics of the wind are determined by seasons expressing time with words like autumn, spring, and summer. The resulting artistic epithets found in the works of poet J. Izbasqanov (brown autumn wind, summer wind, morning winds, autumn winds) and K. Karimov (autumn winds, morning winds) are connected to the overall content. However, they do not reflect the feelings and thoughts of the lyrical hero as images, but rather identify and describe auxiliary objects.

Among the four vital elements, water plays one of the most important roles in terms of frequency of use and degree of depiction. This element (image) is given special attention in all the objects of our research. For example:

In the scorching heat like boiling copper
I dream of
The waters of a gurgling spring [4:126]

Rivers and streams with cool water,
You might see along the way. [5:102]

A sip of cool water was shimmering,
In the bird's palm, like a drill. [6:29]

In all examples, water is used as the main qualifying element of the epithet. Each instance is reflected as a phenomenon that captures the attention and gaze of the lyrical hero. In the first example, the lyrical hero's longing is directed towards water, while in subsequent examples, we encounter a lyrical hero influenced by the aesthetics of water. However, the epithets are traditional and simple. In the description of this water, there is a complex epithet - silver, which is common to most poets in Karakalpak lyric poetry. Describing water as silver has already become an artistic principle of poets:

The mysterious silver-watered stream laughed playfully,

I took off my cautious armor from my shoulders. [7:53]

A silver drop from the first leaf
slides down... [8:14]

Let there be silver water in a stone jug,
Let whoever is thirsty quench their thirst. [9:23]

It may seem that silver water is depicted in the examples in relation to the color of water, but there is a deep meaning behind this chain of imagery. Silver is one of the most precious metals, possessing both natural and divine properties. Based on these characteristics, writers reflect this chain of epithets. So, what is the secret behind this classification of water, and why have all the creators described water as having the natural properties of silver? "Silver water is portrayed as a nourishment that awakens the creative spirit of humans and develops their natural potential. The poet reflects the creative maturity and productivity of people nurtured by silver water through numerous tropes". In the first example, the stream of silver water, laughing cheerfully, shimmers in the mind of the lyrical hero. The silver drop (water) in the second example was used to artistically depict the beauty of nature in relation to the natural properties of silver and water, where attention was paid not to awakening, but to beauty and aesthetic quality. In the last example, the silver water chain also describes the natural properties and divinity of silver and water.

Silver drop, the epithet of water, is one of the most unique elements used to refer to water in the works of poets. Additionally, in J. Izbasqanov's works, there are sweet floods, green lakes, autumn streams, mysterious currents, and autumn rain; B. Genjemuratov uses

orphaned Aral, scratchy springs, gusty rain, poetic birds, night downpour, pearl drops, and crimson ice; K. Karimov employs epithets such as old Aral, reckless flood, living water, and silver water. In J. Izbasqanov's work, water is mainly used as an element, detail, or object in reflecting the beauty of nature, and remains within this boundary. In some of his poems, water is used as a symbol or image to describe the lyrical hero's experiences, but although water as a metaphor or simile has risen to the level of the main, central image of the poem, within the epithet it is limited to a detail or auxiliary image. For example, in his poem "A word to a Baxtiyar poet":

True, it's human nature... your doubts may arise
With snowy storms playing, your lament smoldering,
This sorrow spreading mist over the heart,
I've often overflowed with sweet torrents. [11:338]

The sweet epithet in the song portrays the lyrical hero's feelings, depicting the floods as an image of joyful past memories and emotions, and the water, indicating that these feelings arose from a positive event. This, of course, is a phenomenon related not only to the poet's shortcomings in artistic exploration but also to his principles and goals. In K. Karimov's lyrics, the water element is depicted as an object of description, a detail within the poem. Unlike in J. Izbasqanov's work, it does not rise to the level of a central image in the song. The representation of the water element with epithets as the main image of the poem, reflecting the holistic content and serving as the source of artistic thought and idea, is found in B. Genjemuratov's lyrics. The poet's poem beginning with "Black stallions - black clouds..." aims to depict the lyrical hero's past experiences and an event that strongly influenced him, with the artistic plot starting from the onset of rain. The song takes on an artistic quality in expressing feelings such as separation, unhappiness, and sorrow through metaphorical images. Hunters of separation, the moon, and the wolf are all metaphorical images, but all these tropes are centered around and connected to the image of rain. Rain is a manifestation of the water element. In the song:

Black stallions - black clouds
were whipped by giants in the sky.
The rain that washed the Nukus-Boston stone road
drips into my heart.
It drips into my frozen heart,
drops of an early spring.
Pressing its chest against the deep ravine,
The lost -month dog sighed. [12:111]

In the song, the epithets describing the rain washing the stone road from Nukus to Boston and the droplets of early spring serve to reveal the entire content of the plot. In this imagery, epithets play the main artistic role in depicting water as objective-subjective-real (rain-sorrow-tears), expressing its natural absorbency and changing properties artistically.

Elements represented by few and traditional epithets in the research object are earth and grass. These two life elements, which are factually independent of each other, do not conflict in nature or in fiction. The reflection of earth and fire with epithets is represented by word combinations such as “silver fields”, “green shores”, “white gravel coasts”, “camel-humped sands”, “night grasses” in J. Izbasqanov's work; “hundred-year waterless deserts”, “yellow sands”, “green fields”, “water-drained land” in K. Karimov's work; “thousand-year-old pristine, terrible sands”, “thousand-humped yellowish sands”, “incomprehensible grasses”, “shimmering fire”, “sacred fire”, “blazing fire” in B. Genjemuratov's work. Among these chains, in terms of imagery, the “silver fields” presenting landscape aesthetics in J. Izbasqanov's work, “water-drained land” reflecting autumn scenery in K. Karimov's work, and “thousand-year-old pristine, terrible sands” and “sacred fire” in B. Genjemuratov's work can be viewed as examples where an individual creative approach to depicting earth and fire elements has been achieved. Analyzing the epithets created for the four elements of life discussed in this section, their portrayal of imagery, and how the poem as a descriptive object sometimes becomes the central focus of the content, reveals not only the poets' mastery in landscape lyrics and their skill in using these elements as artistic details and images but also serves to uncover their creative philosophical views on life and their aesthetic-ideological attitude towards these elements.

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