

PAPER

THE PHILOSOPHY OF GRATITUDE AND PATIENCE IN SAIDA ZUNUNOVA'S POETRY

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Abstract

This article examines how Saida Zununova's lyric poetry articulates her life-philosophical views, the spiritual world of women, and attitudes toward labor, honesty, and human values through poetic devices. Based on an analysis of a selected poem, the study provides scholarly justification that the poetess has created a new moral and aesthetic model in Uzbek women's lyric poetry, in which the philosophical categories of gratitude and patience are interpreted in an original manner within the framework of Uzbek poetic thinking.

Key words:

Saida Zununova, philosophy of gratitude, concept of patience, psychologism, poetic thinking, artistic devices, motif, honesty.

INTRODUCTION

In twentieth-century Uzbek literature, one of the writers distinguished by an original artistic mode of thinking, a refined poetic worldview, and subtle psychologism is Saida Zununova. Her poetry marked a new stage in Uzbek women's lyric writing and is notable for its profound illumination of the lyric persona's inner world and for its delicate artistic rendering of spiritual experiences through nuanced poetic means. The complexity

of the writer's oeuvre is manifested in her poetic language, system of imagery, symbolic layers, and, notably, in the creation of a new poetic model of women's emotional experience.

In contemporary literary scholarship, the phenomenon of women writers, along with the issues of inner monologue and psychological representation in women's lyric poetry, is increasingly taking shape as an independent field of research. At a time when the artistic interpretation of psychological depiction, inner monologue,

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and moral–ethical experience in women’s lyric poetry is emerging as a distinct scholarly direction, Saida Zununova’s work constitutes one of the principal sources for such studies. However, the poetess’s literary legacy—particularly her poems expressing the philosophy of life and struggle—has not yet been examined in a comprehensive and systematic manner. Therefore, this article analyzes Saida Zununova’s well-known poem written in 1964, with the aim of examining, through contemporary theoretical approaches, the poetic interpretation of such artistic and philosophical concepts as gratitude, patience, labor, honesty, and the spiritually resilient image of womanhood, as well as the conception of the lyric hero, the system of imagery, and the poet’s aesthetic views.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Scholarly assessments of Saida Zununova’s oeuvre have developed along two main directions: (1) studies of her poetry and (2) analyses of her prose works.

Initially, reviews of the collection “Qizingiz yozdi” presented critical reflections on the poetess’s lyric poetry and offered analyses of selected poems [1, pp. 116–123]. Beginning in the 1950s, reviews and articles devoted to her collections of short stories were published [17]. In the volume “Uzbek Soviet Women Writers”, particular attention was paid to the author’s mastery in creating prose works [18, p. 30]. Saida Zununova’s life and creative activity [19, p. 23; 21, p. 32; 20, p. 113; 22, p. 23], studies on the development of the lyric epic [14, p. 162], issues of epic poetics [9, p. 284], as well as research on the problem of the creative personality and the lyric hero in the poetess’s lyric poetry [3, pp. 4–5], have been examined by literary scholars from various perspectives. In addition, a number of articles, forewords, and critical reviews published by literary critics contain valuable observations on the study of the poetess’s work [6, pp. 227–228].

METHODOLOGY

In the studies cited above, Saida Zununova’s life and creative work have generally been examined in a broad manner; selected poems have been interpreted, their achievements and

shortcomings substantiated, and the author’s works approached primarily from a social perspective and analyzed through the method of socialist realism. In particular, Sh. Ergasheva’s reflections on the poetess’s concept of the lyric hero, creative personality, and the poetics of femininity are grounded in the perspective of national independence and are carried out using biographical and historical-comparative methods. However, the distinctive features of the writer’s literary heritage—such as her artistic explorations; the depiction of a woman’s inner world; states of spiritual resilience, the concealment of sorrow, and the sharing of happiness; the use of artistic expressive means; and the interpretation of key poetic images—have not been subjected to a comprehensive analysis through a psycho-biographical method and a comparative approach. Nor have these aspects been systematically examined within a specialized research framework employing hermeneutic methods, particularly in comparison with the poetess’s philosophy of life, the traditions of classical Eastern literature, and the Qur’anic principles of patience (*sabr*) and gratitude (*shukr*).

RESULTS

The poetess is esteemed as a creative figure who introduced psychologism, honesty, sincerity, the philosophy of labor, women’s spiritual strength, and moral suffering into Uzbek lyric poetry. Her poems captivate readers with their simplicity and fluency, while simultaneously revealing profound layers of meaning and life-affirming views.

In Saida Zununova’s lyric poetry, the struggle for life, the value of labor, happiness and longing, the spiritually mature image of womanhood, the criteria of honesty and conscience, and the concept of dignity occupy a central position. As noted, “the lyric hero of Saida Zununova’s poems remains faithful to her convictions and is uncompromising toward depravity and baseness” [1, p. 76]. The poetess interprets life as a harmony of pain and happiness, joy and trials. In particular, the woman’s perseverance and patience form a distinctive poetic system in Saida Zununova’s poetics.

Her poem beginning with the line “Hayotdan nolisira birov, suymayman” (“I do not love those

who complain about life”) [4, p. 60] may be analyzed as a vivid illustration of this idea. The ideological core of the poem artistically reveals the dual nature of life as the constant unity of joy and sorrow, happiness and grief, ease and испытание (trial). The concept of the lyric hero is embodied as a resilient, industrious, honest, conscientious, and pure woman. The philosophy of gratitude and patience permeates each stanza through emotional and spiritual layers: gratitude is reflected in the appreciation of life’s blessings, while patience manifests itself in endurance in the face of trials. The system of artistic devices reinforces the poetess’s poetic intention. It can thus be concluded that repetitive elements in the poem’s rhythmic structure emphasize the firm and resolute stance of the lyric hero.

DISCUSSION

This poem represents a distinctive example of the poetess’s poetic credo, encapsulating her life-philosophical views. In particular, Said Ahmad noted that “these lines resemble the image of Saidakhan as portrayed in the poem” [3, p. 189]. The poem’s structural features, system of artistic images, rhythm, and style fully reveal the poetess’s lyrical portrait. At the ideological core of the poem lies the poetess’s self-presentation as a resilient woman engaged in a direct struggle with life, grounded in an honest worldview and a steadfast commitment to living according to conscience.

Already in the opening stanza of the quatrain, the poetess’s interpretation of humanity and life becomes evident:

Hayotdan nolisa birov, suymayman,
Ayniqsa, sog‘ bo‘lsa qo‘li, oyog‘i.

Translation:

I do not love those who complain about life,
Especially when their hands and feet are sound.

Through these initial lines, the poetess does not merely criticize those who complain about life; rather, she calls all of humanity to value life itself. In her view, the very opportunity granted by life is a great blessing. When a person possesses the strength and ability to work, there is no place for complaint. This poetic principle may be regarded as characteristic of nearly all of Saida Zununova’s poetry.

In the following two lines, the poetess’s philosophy of life is articulated with particular clarity:

Hayot siylar bizni quvonch, baxt bilan,
Ne ajab, bo‘lsa goh alami, dog‘i.

Translation:

Life caresses us with joy and happiness;

It is no wonder if at times there is pain and sorrow.

The dual nature of life—the coexistence of joy and pain, happiness and affliction—serves as a fundamental principle of the poetess’s poetics. In this regard, the Qur’an likewise states that “with hardship comes ease” [2, p. 5]. Drawing on the common belief that happiness and misfortune go hand in hand, like a shadow, the poetess conveys the idea that life tests everyone and that ease follows hardship. As a result, her philosophy of life is readily and naturally internalized by the reader as a guiding principle of human existence.

The second quatrain of the poem demonstrates the poetess’s active approach to life, while the depth of artistic expression further intensifies:

Kurashsiz, mehnatsiz shodlik, kulguni
O‘g‘irlik mol deyman, qilaman hazar.
Qalbimning parchasi singmasa agar
Rozimasman birov hadya etsa zar.

Translation:

Without struggle or labor, I call joy and laughter
Stolen goods, which I reject.

Unless a fragment of my heart is embedded within it,

I will not consent to gold offered as a gift.

These lines express a highly distinctive spirit in Uzbek women’s lyric poetry—one of activity, resilience, and industriousness. Womanly perseverance and struggle constitute a creative principle in Saida Zununova’s poetics. The poetess values only the happiness earned through one’s own labor; ready-made benefits and easily obtained joy are, in her view, devoid of meaning. In these lines, the core of artistic expression is realized through the motifs of labor and struggle. This is because the metaphor “a fragment of the heart” encapsulates the meanings of labor, suffering, and spiritual trial. In Saida Zununova’s conception, material wealth that is not acquired through labor is ultimately devoid of value.

In the third stanza, states such as concealing sorrow and sharing happiness, which reflect the poetess's subtle inner sensibility, are brought to light:

G'amimni aytmasam, toki o'zganing
Ko'ngliga bir on ham g'ashlik solmasam.
Baxtimni do'stlarga xushnud yoysamu,
Lekin uni hech vaqt yig'ib olmasam.

Translation:

I do not speak of my grief, so that I may not, even
for a moment,

Cast sorrow into another's heart.

I gladly share my happiness with my friends,
Yet I never seek to reclaim it.

These lines may be interpreted as a moral and ethical portrait of the Uzbek woman. The compassionate woman conceals her own suffering in order to protect the feelings of others—an image characteristic of the Uzbek cultural mentality. The depiction of sharing happiness without seeking personal gain reflects a high moral virtue and reveals the purity and generosity inherent in the poetess's spiritual world.

The concluding stanza of the poem conveys the lyric hero's triumphant and resolute outlook on life:

Hayot to'qinida bir xasdek ojiz,
Uvol atalishga qilmasman toqat.
Umrinning bir oni o'tmasa beiz,
Xuddi ana shunday yashasam faqat.

Translation:

Like a frail straw upon life's waves,
I will not endure being called insignificant.
If not a single moment of my life passes in vain,
Only then would I wish to live in such a way.

The simile "like a frail straw" signifies human smallness in the face of life; however, this frailty is overcome through inner strength. The poetess refuses to accept helplessness before life. These lines bring the author's life credo to its conclusion. The conviction that "not a single moment should pass in vain," together with the values of activity, aspiration, and honesty, constitutes the core principle of Saida Zununova's artistic and philosophical worldview.

Within the poetess's poetics, this poem occupies an exceptional place. It encapsulates the core dimensions of the author's poetic system: a philosophy of life grounded in struggle and labor;

women's moral purity and spiritual resilience; the ethical standards of honesty and conscience; the mentality-specific tradition of sharing happiness while concealing sorrow; and an understanding of the complex, dual nature of life. In this poem, the poetess's personal life philosophy and creative principles converge with the inner world of womanhood, forming a unified artistic and philosophical whole.

Among the distinctive features of the poem's poetics are its fluent tone and moderate tempo, which harmonize with the coherence of the ideas expressed. Repetitive structures and rhythmic emphases such as "Hayotdan nolisa..." ("If one complains about life..."), "Kurashsiz, mehnatsiz..." ("Without struggle, without labor..."), "G'amimni aytmasam..." ("If I do not speak of my sorrow..."), and "Umrinning bir oni..." ("A single moment of my life...") enhance the poem's emotional and spiritual intensity. Such constructions undoubtedly reinforce the lyric hero's firm convictions.

The poem employs a variety of artistic devices and poetic means, including metaphors such as "a fragment of my heart" and "the waves of life"; a simile, "like a frail straw"; and contrasts (antithesis) such as sorrow–joy, happiness–affliction, and labor–"stolen goods." In addition, the poem incorporates philosophical reflections on the dual nature of life, the value of labor, and moral purity.

This poem by Saida Zununova makes it possible to elucidate the distinctive poetic system she developed within Uzbek women's lyric poetry. The poem foregrounds such central values as women's moral responsibility, the avoidance of causing sorrow to others, the sharing of happiness, an active and honest attitude toward life, and the interpretation of labor as a fundamental value. In the poetess's poetic worldview, an understanding of the complex and trial-filled nature of life is combined with the principles of gratitude, appreciation of opportunity, and the resolve not to let a single moment pass in vain. These aspects resonate with the sabr–shukr (patience and gratitude) concept characteristic of Eastern philosophy. The poetess places particular emphasis on spiritual resilience and on the role of labor, honesty, and determination in overcoming life's

hardships. In the poem, the elevated qualities of a woman's spiritual world—such as generosity, the concealment of personal suffering, the avoidance of causing emotional pain to others, and the generous sharing of happiness—are expressed through poetic imagery as values deeply rooted in national cultural traditions.

CONCLUSION

At the end of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

Saida Zununova created a new poetic model in Uzbek women's lyric poetry, in which the image of the resilient woman and such moral qualities as industriousness, honesty, conscience, patience, and gratitude occupy a central position.

In her poems, the poetess articulates an active attitude toward life, an appreciation of happiness earned through labor, the spiritual strength of womanhood, and ethical principles such as concealing sorrow while sharing happiness.

The analyses demonstrate that Saida Zununova's poetic legacy is of significant value for contemporary literary scholarship, as its psychologism, artistic symbolism, and philosophical reflection mark a new stage in the development of women's poetics in Uzbek poetry.

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