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THE EVOLUTION OF THE IMAGE OF THE DOG IN 20TH-CENTURY LITERATURE

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Abstract:

This article analyzes the artistic and philosophical interpretation of the image of the dog in 20th-century literature and its semantic evolution related to society, human psychology, and cultural values. The transformation of the dog image in literature is primarily explained by the reconsideration of the social and moral boundaries between humans and animals. The 20th century, characterized by wars, technological progress, and the crisis of human values, enriched this image with new meanings. The article provides a literary analysis of several examples from English and Uzbek literature — Jack London's "White Fang", George Orwell's "Animal Farm", Cho'lp'on's "Kecha va kunduz", and representations of the dog image in contemporary Uzbek short fiction.

Keywords: image of the dog, symbolism, anthropomorphism, loyalty, realism, animal metaphor, modernism, social criticism.

XX ASR ADABIYOTIDA IT OBRAZINING EVOLYUTSIYASI

Annotatsiya:

Ushbu maqolada XX asr adabiyotida it obrazining badiiy-falsafiy talqini va uning jamiyat, inson ruhiyati hamda madaniy qadriyatlar bilan bog'liq semantik evolyutsiyasi tahlil qilinadi. Adabiyotda it obrazining o'zgarishi, avvalo, inson va hayvon o'rtasidagi ijtimoiy-axloqiy chegaralarning qayta ko'rib chiqilishi bilan izohlanadi. XX asr o'zining urushlar, texnologik taraqqiyot va insoniy qadriyatlarning inqirozi davri sifatida bu obrazni yangi mazmun bilan boyitdi. Maqolada ingliz va o'zbek adabiyotlaridagi ayrim namunalar — Jek Londonning "Oq so'yloq" (White Fang), Jorj Oruellning "Hayvonlar fermasi", Cho'lponnaing



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“Kecha va kunduz” asari hamda zamonaviy o‘zbek hikoyachiligidagi it obrazlari misolida badiiy tahlil olib boriladi.

Kalit so‘zlar: it obrazi, ramziylik, antropomorfizm, sadoqat, realizm, hayvon metaforasi, modernizm, ijtimoiy tanqid.

Introduction:

The literature of the 20th century stands out as a period shaped by sharp contrasts between man and nature, society and the individual, loyalty and betrayal. In this process, animal images — particularly the image of the dog — occupied an important place as artistic means reflecting the state of the human psyche and society. Previously, in folklore, the dog had been a symbol of loyalty, devotion, and protection, but in 20th-century literature, it acquired a more complex philosophical meaning. During this period, writers began to use the image of the dog not merely as an animal, but as an artistic model through which to reveal human qualities and the problems of the age. Especially against the backdrop of wars, political repressions, technological progress, and moral crisis, this image gained new and multifaceted interpretations.

Main Part:

Literature of the early 20th century, particularly during the formation of realism and naturalism, sought to reflect the relationship between society and nature by linking animal images to human traits. The dog image at this time was viewed as an artistic model symbolizing loyalty, self-sacrifice, and the conflict between nature and civilization.

Jack London’s famous novels — “White Fang” (1906) and “The Call of the Wild” (1903) — are among the brightest examples of this symbol. Through the instinctive life of the animal, the author reveals humanity’s moral crisis and the violence-based essence of civilization. In “White Fang”, the dog is portrayed as a symbol of the transition from savagery to civilization — representing both humanity’s detachment from its natural roots and its potential to rediscover compassion and love. Through



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this work, London employs an anthropomorphic style, interpreting the animal not merely as a background element but as a psychological and philosophical center.

In Uzbek literature, interpretations of the dog image connected with loyalty and humanity are also present. For example, although the image of the dog does not play a leading role in Cho'lpon's novel "Kecha va kunduz", human attitudes toward animals serve as an important means of reflecting social and moral contexts. In this respect, the dog image has been firmly established in Uzbek culture as a traditional "symbol of loyalty," and this tradition continued in 20th-century realism.

Thus, in this period, the dog image became an artistic and metaphorical device expressing the complex balance between human instincts and moral consciousness. The mid-20th century was marked by two world wars, totalitarian regimes, political repressions, and restrictions on human freedom. In the literature of this period, the image of the dog ceased to be merely a symbol of loyalty and came to represent the metaphor of power, obedience, and submission.

This transformation is clearly visible in George Orwell's novel "Animal Farm" (1945). In this work, dogs are portrayed as loyal servants of the pig dictator Napoleon, showing how loyalty degenerates from a moral virtue into a tool of political manipulation. Through the image of the dogs, Orwell exposes "blind obedience" and "loyalty that justifies violence" in totalitarian systems. Here, loyalty is no longer a virtue but a product of moral degradation.

In Uzbek literature, during the totalitarian regime, animals, including the dog, served as a symbolic means to express social problems that could not be criticized directly. In some stories, dogs symbolize the falseness of human relationships, hypocrisy in society, loyalty to authority, and selfishness. Through this, writers encouraged readers to reflect on the destructive idea of "tragic loyalty."

By the mid-20th century, the image of the dog had lost its traditional moral and positive aspects and had become an artistic sign serving political, satirical, and social-critical functions. The second half of the 20th century is characterized by the widespread development of modernism and postmodernism. During this time, writers focused less on external social problems and more on the inner world of the individual, spiritual suffering, and the meaning of existence. Consequently, the dog image transformed from an external social symbol into an internal psychological and



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existential one. In modernist works, the dog appears as a representation of a person's "shadow self," expressing unconscious instincts and emotions. In Samuel Beckett's dramatic works, animal images are used to depict the absurdity of human life, alienation, and a sense of emptiness. In Ernest Hemingway's writings, animals, including dogs, symbolize harmony between man and nature and the striving for simplicity in life.

In contemporary Uzbek short fiction (for example, in Xurshid Do'stmuhammad's "Tushda kechgan umr", Erkin A'zam's "Suv yoqalab", and Nazar Eshonqul's "Yolg'izlik"), animal images, including that of the dog, carry an important psychological function in expressing states of conscience, affection, and loneliness. In these stories, the dog represents human warmth, sincerity, and lost trust. It is depicted not merely as a living being but as a companion that tests one's humanity and serves as a spiritual partner.

This tendency is also reflected globally: at the end of the 20th and beginning of the 21st centuries, animal images, especially that of the dog, began to be interpreted in posthumanist literature as a "nonhuman subject." This approach brings animals into the center of moral, aesthetic, and psychological analysis and establishes an anti-anthropocentric stance.

Throughout the 20th century, the interpretation of the dog image encompassed not only artistic but also cultural and philosophical transformations. Once seen as a symbol of loyalty and protection, it became a universal sign illuminating issues such as moral choice, the conflict between society and the individual, and human alienation in the technological age.

In English literature, this image reflected the conflict between civilization and moral values, while in Uzbek literature, it served as a means of expressing the contrast between national traditions and modernity. Thus, the evolution of the dog image in both literatures is closely related to humanity's historical process of self-awareness.

Conclusion:

The evolution of the dog image in 20th-century literature demonstrates its transition from traditional notions of loyalty, protection, and devotion to a symbol of the complex relationship between man and society, political oppression, and moral



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crisis. This image is no longer merely an animal figure but a means of exploring self-awareness, analyzing society, and testing moral boundaries. The development of the dog image in 20th-century literature represents not only artistic but also philosophical and sociological change. Through this image, writers promote the idea of preserving humanity's most important values — loyalty and humaneness.

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