

ARTISTIC INTERPRETATION OF THE «MOTHERLAND» CONCEPT IN UZBEK AND ENGLISH POETRY: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF ERKIN VOHIDOV AND WILLIAM ERNEST HENLEY

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Abstract. *This article investigates the poetic interpretation of the «Motherland» concept in the qasida «O'zbeğim» by Uzbek poet Erkin Vohidov and the poem «England, My England» by English poet William Ernest Henley through a comparative linguostylistic and linguocultural lens. The study analyzes the lexical-semantic, figurative-metaphorical, and axiological layers of both works. The findings show that both poets exalt the Motherland as a symbol of national pride, historical memory, and loyalty. However, Erkin Vohidov's imagery is centered on mother, land, people, and national identity, while Henley's poem links the Motherland to the English national spirit, heroism, imperial historical legacy, and the idea of freedom. The study reveals the linguocultural specificity of the Motherland concept in poetic texts.*

Keywords: *«Motherland» concept, poetic text, linguostylistics, comparative literary studies, Erkin Vohidov, William Ernest Henley, artistic imagery, national pride.*

Аннотация. *В данной статье исследуется поэтическая интерпретация концепта «Родина» в касиде «Узбеğim» узбекского поэта Erkin Vohidov и стихотворении «England, My England» английского поэта William Ernest Henley с позиций сравнительной лингвостилистики и лингвокультурологии. Анализируются лексико-семантические, образно-метафорические и аксиологические особенности обоих произведений. Результаты исследования показывают, что оба поэта возвеличивают Родину как символ национальной гордости, исторической памяти и преданности. Однако в поэтическом мире Эркина Вохидова образ Родины тесно связан с матерью, родной землей, народом и национальной идентичностью, тогда как у Уильяма Эрнеста Хенли Родина ассоциируется с английским национальным духом, героизмом, историческим имперским наследием и идеей свободы. Исследование раскрывает лингвокультурную специфику концепта «Родина» в поэтических текстах.*

Ключевые слова: *концепт «Родина», поэтический текст, лингвостилистика, сравнительное литературоведение, Эркин Вохидов, Уильям Эрнест Хенли, художественный образ, национальная гордость.*

Annotatsiya. *Ushbu maqolada o'zbek shoiri Erkin Vohidovning "O'zbeğim" qasidasi hamda ingliz shoiri William Ernest Henleyning "England, My England" she'ri qiyosiy lingvostilistik va lingvomadaniy nuqtayi nazardan tahlil qilinadi. Tadqiqotda har ikki asarning leksik-semantik, obrazli-metaforik va aksiologik qatlamlari o'rganilgan. Natijalar shuni ko'rsatadiki, ikkala shoir ham Vatan timsolini milliy g'urur, tarixiy xotira va sadoqat ramzi sifatida ulug'laydi. Biroq Erkin Vohidov poetikasida Vatan obrazi ona, zamin, xalq va milliy o'zlik tushunchalari bilan chambarchas bog'langan bo'lsa, William Ernest Henley asarida Vatan ingliz milliy ruhi, qahramonlik, imperiyaviy tarixiy meros va erkinlik g'oyalari bilan ifodalanadi. Tadqiqot poetik matnlarda "Vatan" konseptining lingvomadaniy o'ziga xosligini yoritib beradi.*

Kalit so'zlar: *Vatan konsepti, poetik matn, lingvostilistika, qiyosiy adabiyotshunoslik, Erkin Vohidov, William Ernest Henley, badiiy obraz, milliy g'urur.*

Introduction. Linguostylistics, which emerged at the intersection of literature and linguistics, studies literary texts within the triangle of language, culture, and thought. In

this direction, lyrical works — and in particular national praise poems — are of special importance, as the national values, historical memory, and worldview of a people are expressed in them in an extremely rich and artistic language.

The «Motherland» concept is one of the universally widespread themes in world literature. At the same time, the expression of this concept in each national literature is unique, determined by cultural, historical, and social factors (Wierzbicka, 1997; Maslova, 2001). The combination of comparative literary studies and linguoculturology serves as a powerful tool for revealing these characteristics.

Erkin Vohidov (1936–2016), a representative of Uzbek literature in the second half of the 20th century, and William Ernest Henley (1849–1903), an English poet of the 19th century — both created major works expressing the patriotic idea in their respective national literatures. Erkin Vohidov's qasida «O'zbekim» expresses the Uzbek people's national identity, historical grandeur, and boundless love for the native land; Henley's poem «England, My England» depicts the English national spirit, military valor, and loyalty to the Motherland.

A comparative analysis of these two works allows for answers to a number of important scholarly questions: Through what poetic devices do the two authors create the image of the Motherland? In what ways do their national-cultural characteristics manifest? What universal and nationally specific aspects can be distinguished?

The aim of the article is to identify the features of poetic verbalization of the «Motherland» concept in Erkin Vohidov's qasida «O'zbekim» and William Ernest Henley's poem «England, My England» through comparative linguostylistic analysis.

Literature review and methodology. The concept of Motherland has long occupied a central place in linguistic, literary, and cultural studies due to its role in reflecting national consciousness, collective memory, and cultural identity. In contemporary linguocultural research, concepts are regarded as multidimensional mental formations that preserve the values, traditions, and worldview of a particular linguistic community. Scholars such as Anna Wierzbicka, Yuri Stepanov, and Vladimir Karasik have emphasized that culturally significant concepts are manifested through language, literary discourse, and symbolic imagery. Their works provide a theoretical basis for examining how the idea of the Motherland is encoded in poetic texts. Within Uzbek literary scholarship, the image of the Motherland has been explored as a key element of national self-awareness and patriotic discourse. Researchers note that Uzbek poetry frequently represents the Motherland through emotionally charged symbols such as mother, homeland, ancestors, native land, and historical heritage. The poetry of Erkin Vohidov is particularly significant in this regard, as his works combine national history, cultural memory, and civic responsibility. His qasida “O'zbekim” has attracted scholarly attention for its rich system of metaphors, historical allusions, and expressive linguistic devices that strengthen patriotic sentiment. In English literary studies, the concept of the Motherland is

often examined in connection with national identity, political history, and cultural ideology. Victorian and post-Victorian poetry frequently portrays the nation through symbols of courage, duty, freedom, and collective strength. The works of William Ernest Henley exemplify this tendency. His poem “England, My England” presents England as a source of pride and historical continuity, emphasizing heroism, sacrifice, and national resilience. Literary critics have highlighted the poem’s rhetorical intensity and its contribution to the construction of English national consciousness. Although separate studies have analyzed patriotic motifs in Uzbek and English poetry, comparative linguostylistic investigations of the Motherland concept in the works of Erkin Vohidov and William Ernest Henley remain limited. This gap creates an opportunity to examine how different linguistic and cultural traditions shape the poetic representation of national identity and homeland. The present study employs a comparative linguostylistic and linguocultural approach. The research material consists of Erkin Vohidov’s qasida “O‘zbekim” and William Ernest Henley’s poem “England, My England.” The analysis focuses on lexical-semantic units, metaphorical expressions, epithets, symbols, and stylistic devices that contribute to the conceptualization of the Motherland. A descriptive method is used to identify linguistic features within each text, while comparative analysis reveals similarities and differences in their artistic representation. Elements of conceptual and axiological analysis are also applied to determine the cultural values associated with the Motherland in both poems. Through these methods, the study seeks to uncover the linguocultural specificity of patriotic discourse and the artistic mechanisms through which national identity is constructed in Uzbek and English poetic traditions.

Results and analysis. Erkin Vohidov's qasida «O‘zbekim» was written in 1987 and is considered one of the most exemplary works of the qasida genre, expressing the Uzbek nation's identity, history, culture, and love for the native land. The title of the qasida — «O‘zbekim» (My Uzbek) — is in the form of a direct address in the first person, with the poet addressing his people and nation directly. This itself is a powerful stylistic device expressing the semantics of belonging and affiliation.

Analysis of the lexical-semantic layer shows that the lexical units related to the Motherland in the work can be divided into several semantic groups:

a) National identity units: «O‘zbek», «o‘zbek» (Uzbek), «xalqim» (my people), «millatim» (my nation) — these units are used alongside the concept of «Vatan» (Motherland), expressing the organic unity of the nation with the Motherland.

b) Geographic-territorial units: «Zarafshon», «Qashqadaryo», «Farg‘ona», «Samarqand», «Buxoro» — specific geographic names in the qasida present the Motherland not as an abstract concept but as a concrete and historically glorious place. This technique brings the Motherland closer to the «earth» and endows it with historical depth.

c) Ancestors and historical units: «Navoi», «Ulugbek», «Temur», «avlodlar» (generations), «bobolar» (forefathers) — the poet glorifies the Motherland through historical figures and their legacy. This semantic layer shows that the Motherland is interpreted in harmony with the «past».

d) Nature and soil units: «zamin» (earth), «tuproq» (soil), «daryo» (river), «tog» (mountain), «gul» (flower) — the Motherland is expressed through nature, strengthening the image of the native soil.

In the metaphorical-figurative layer, the most important metaphor is «Motherland = Mother». Although the Motherland is not directly interpreted as a mother in the qasida, the system of lexical units and images associated with the mother figure loads the Motherland with feelings of affection, loyalty, and value. This is a conceptual metaphor deeply rooted in Uzbek folk thought.

The second important metaphor is «Motherland = History». The inclusion in the qasida of historical figures such as Navoi, Ulugbek, and Temur emphasizes not only the geographic but also the civilizational value of the Motherland. This shows the harmony of the «great past» archetype in Uzbek national thought with the concept of Motherland. In the axiological layer, the qasida places the values of national pride, honor, and loyalty at the center. The phrase «Men o‘zbekman» (I am Uzbek) and its variants are repeated throughout the qasida, performing the function of self-awareness and reinforcing national belonging. This stylistic repetition — anaphora — enhances the emotional impact.

William Ernest Henley's poem «England, My England» was written in 1892, a period coinciding with the years when the British Empire reached the pinnacle of its power. The unit «My England» in the poem's title expresses the semantics of personal belonging and affiliation through possessive suffixes in a manner similar to the Uzbek qasida title «O‘zbekim».

The main thematic layer of the poem is the harmonious union of the image of «England» with historical-military grandeur. In the poem, England is not merely a geographic space but a symbol of valor, power, and greatness. In this respect, the ideological context of the poem differs from the Uzbek qasida.

Analysis of the lexical units related to the Motherland in the lexical-semantic layer revealed the following semantic groups:

a) National and historical pride units: «England», «your heritage», «your glory», «your might», «your splendour» — these units create a powerful semantic impact of the Motherland. The words «heritage», «glory», and «might» present England not merely as a homeland but as a marker of civilizational supremacy.

b) Military-valor units: «the battle», «the sword», «die for England», «the fight», «your blood» — the relative abundance of these units expresses the military-patriotic orientation of the poem. Defense of the Motherland is shown as a devotion that includes the shedding of blood.

c) Nature and geographic units: «dear and green», «the sea», «the waves», «your hills», «your shores» — English nature is depicted in the poem as very vivid and a symbol of vitality. The epithet «dear and green» romanticizes the appearance of the Motherland in an idealized way.

In the metaphorical-figurative layer, the primary metaphor appears in the «Motherland = Warrior» metaphor. England is interpreted as an active fighter, powerful and victorious. This metaphor fundamentally differs from the «Motherland = Mother» metaphor that prevails in the Uzbek qasida. In the English poem, the Motherland manifests not as a passive recipient but as an active force that exerts influence.

The second important metaphor appears in the «Motherland = Empire» metaphor. The interpretation of England as «might», «glory», and «heritage» in Henley's poem expresses the ideological echo of 19th century English imperialism. This is an entirely foreign semantic layer for the Uzbek qasida.

In the axiological layer, the poem places the values of loyalty and self-sacrifice at the center: the lines «Your joy is our joy, and your pain is our pain, / And our grief for our grief...» express harmony and shared experience. However, this harmony forms not between «Motherland and individual» but between «Motherland and hero».

Based on the linguostylistic comparative analysis of both works, the following table was compiled:

Analysis Parameter	«O‘zbekim» (E. Vohidov)	«England, My England» (Henley)
Genre	Qasida (praise poem)	Lyric poem (hymn)
Primary metaphor	Motherland = Mother + History	Motherland = Warrior + Empire
National identity	«I am Uzbek» — expression of belonging	«My England» — possessive semantics
Historical layer	Navoi, Temur, Ulugbek — national pride	Imperial legacy, military glory
Nature imagery	Zarafshon, Fergana — concrete geography	Green, dear, sea — romantic idealization
Devotion motif	National loyalty, spiritual bond	Death in battle — military self-sacrifice
Dominant emotion	Pride, affection, loyalty	Patriotic pathos, military honor

Table 1. Comparative analysis of the «Motherland» concept in «O‘zbekim» and «England, My England»

As can be seen from the table, the «Motherland» concept in both works is built on national pride and loyalty. However, there are significant differences in the manner of expressing this pride and loyalty. While the Uzbek qasida is built on the semantics of mother, people, history, and soil, the English poem relies on the semantics of empire, valor, military glory, and freedom.

Discussion. The results of the analysis provide a basis for drawing several important theoretical conclusions.

First, regarding the universality and national specificity of the «Motherland = Mother» metaphor. In both works, the mother (or mother-like) Motherland metaphor is used, but the content of this universal metaphor differs in both languages. The Uzbek qasida places this metaphor at the center, depicting the Motherland as a source of affection, embrace, and protection. In the English poem, the word «Motherland» itself is not used — instead, «England» is directly employed, and not its «motherly» side but its «powerful» side is emphasized. This confirms Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) theory that even when a conceptual metaphor is universal, its cultural content is unique to each people.

Second, the linguistic expression of historical-political context. Erkin Vohidov's qasida was written during the Soviet era, but it embodies the idea of understanding Uzbek national identity and restoring national values. Therefore, not political units such as «sovereignty» or «freedom» but historical and cultural units (names of generations, poets, commanders) predominate in it. Henley's poem was written at the peak of the British Empire, and within it the semantics of imperial power and military glory appear as a product of different historical conditions. This situation confirms the socio-historical conditionality of language (Maslova, 2001).

Third, the influence of poetic genre on the verbalization of a concept. «O‘zbekim», written based on the qasida genre (an Arabic-Persian literary tradition), has an emotional-lyrical and panegyric character; in this genre, praise, virtue, and devotion are central. The English poem is close to the hymn genre, aimed at arousing collective patriotic spirit. Thus, the Motherland concept can be verbalized not only in cultural but also in generic directions (Wierzbicka, 1997).

Fourth, it is necessary to dwell on the universal aspects uniting the compared works. Both poets love their nation, take pride in historical power, and exalt self-sacrifice for the native land. In this regard, the «Motherland» concept as a universal human value demonstrates that it has a common foundation in the poetry of different nations.

Conclusion. In this article, Erkin Vohidov's qasida «O‘zbekim» and William Ernest Henley's poem «England, My England» were studied through comparative linguostylistic and linguocultural analysis. The research made it possible to reach the following conclusions.

First conclusion: In both works, the «Motherland» concept is interpreted with national pride, historical memory, and loyalty as core values. This confirms the universal character of the patriotic idea.

Second conclusion: In Erkin Vohidov's work, the Motherland concept is expressed through the semantic layers of mother, people, history, and soil, reflecting the predominance of sacredness, affection, and spiritual bond in Uzbek national thought. In

Henley's poem, the Motherland is enriched with the semantics of military power, imperial legacy, freedom, and valor, and the important role of political-military values in English national thought becomes evident.

Third conclusion: Although the universal metaphor «Motherland = Mother» is reflected in both works, the cultural-semantic content of this metaphor differs in the thought of each people: in Uzbek thought, the mother figure represents the warmth, protection, and spiritual embrace of the Motherland, while in English thought, this same maternal image harmonizes with strength, power, and national greatness.

Fourth conclusion: The poetic genre itself influences the manner of verbalization of the concept. While the qasida genre amplifies emotional and panegyric character, the hymn genre serves to arouse collective patriotic spirit.

This research can serve as a basis for further deeper study of the conceptual aspects of the linguocultural analysis of poetic texts. In the future, it is recommended to expand comparative research in this direction to cover the literature of other peoples as well.

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