

Transformation of Female Beauty Cultural Codes in Uzbek Jadid Poetry

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ABSTRACT

This article provides a comprehensive analysis of the conceptualization, semantic evolution, and axiological transformation of female beauty through cultural codes in Uzbek Jadid poetry. The research corpus comprises the poetic works of Abdulla Avloniy, Hamza Hakimzoda Niyoziy, Abdulhamid Cho'lpon, and Elbek. Integrating cognitive linguistics, linguaculturology, and linguopoetics, the study investigates the textual implementation of cosmomorphic, floromorphic, luminar, landscape, color, and somatic cultural codes. The analysis reveals that while traditional aesthetic codes were retained in Jadid poetry, their conceptual locus underwent a fundamental shift. Images such as the moon, flowers, spring, light, and the human persona – which primarily denoted romantic ideals and physical attractiveness in classical poetry – were repurposed into cultural codes conveying ideas of national awakening, enlightenment, motherland, liberty, human dignity, and social progress. Consequently, aesthetic meaning was enriched with national-axiological significance. Based on these findings, a cognitive model for the transformation of female beauty codes in Jadid poetry is formulated, demonstrating how cultural codes evolved from stylistic devices into a conceptual system that shaped a new national aesthetic paradigm.

Keywords: Jadid poetry, concept of female beauty, cultural code, cognitive model, linguaculturology, linguopoetics, conceptual transformation.

INTRODUCTION

In the early 20th century, Uzbek Jadid literature initiated a fundamental shift in national social thought, aesthetic ideals, and poetic expression. During this period, the primary function of literature extended beyond mere representation of reality to awakening the nation, advocating enlightenment, and forming a modern national consciousness. According to linguaculturological and cognitive linguistic frameworks, the conceptual system of "beauty" is not restricted to visual-aesthetic metrics; rather, it constitutes an abstract-axiological category reflecting a society's highest value hierarchy (Stepanov 2004; Maslova 2001). Shifts in historical and socio-cultural paradigms necessitate a dynamic transformation of linguistic concepts and their enrichment with new semantic layers. Consequently, traditional imagery and poetic symbols acquired novel conceptual dimensions. Cultural codes expressing female beauty and grace underwent significant structural reorientation within Jadid aesthetics.

In classical Uzbek poetry, motifs such as the moon, sun, flowers, nightingale, spring, light, cypress, fairness, face, and eyes functioned primarily to articulate romantic and aesthetic ideals. These imagery units formed the core of a poetic framework designed to depict the external charm and idealized features of the beloved. Jadid poets did not reject this literary heritage; instead, they preserved its structural elements while reinterpreting them against the demands of a new historical context. As a result, the semantic field of these cultural codes expanded, their axiological functions altered, and aesthetic contents were infused with national-enlightenment values.

An axiological-cultural paradigm of beauty became dominant in Jadid poetry. Writers reconstructed traditional linguistic codes of female beauty not as static descriptions of physical appearance or romantic objects, but as conceptual mechanisms articulating national awakening, state liberation, enlightenment, and human worth. In this way, "beauty" shifted from a visual attribute to a fundamental linguaculturological category that evaluated the socio-spiritual condition of both the nation and women while establishing a renewed national aesthetic discourse.

In the poetry of Abdulla Avloniy, the homeland, knowledge, and enlightenment serve as the foundational metrics of beauty. For instance, in his poems *Ilm* (Knowledge) and *Maktab haqida* (About the School), enlightenment is conceptualized as the most sacred human value. In the works of Hamza Hakimzoda Niyoziy, beauty is closely linked with education, valor, and national liberation. His poem 'Ey, ahli vatan...' ('O, People of the Homeland...') employs the dichotomy of darkness and light to frame ignorance versus knowledge, presenting the school and enlightenment as aesthetic values defining the nation's future.

In Abdulhamid Cho'lpon's poetics, this structural shift assumes greater complexity. In works such as 'Go'zal' ('The Beautiful'), 'Tabiatka' ('To Nature'), 'Yorug' yulduzga' ('To the Bright Star'), 'Sharq qizi' ('Daughter of the East'), and 'Binafsha' ('The Violet'), traditional tropes including the moon, stars, light, flowers, spring, and female form evolve into multi-layered cultural codes of national freedom, personal dignity, and spiritual rebirth. Similarly, in Elbek's poetry, imagery of nature, birds, language, and liberty acquired new thematic depths. In 'Tutqun qushcha' ('The Captive Bird'), the cage represents subjection while the bird signifies the pursuit of freedom; in 'Ko'z yoshlarim' ('My Tears') and 'Uyg'on, ko'nglim' ('Awaken, My Soul'), imagery of light, sun, and darkness aligns with ideas of social revival.

It should be emphasized that cultural codes in Jadid poetry do not function in isolation; they operate as an interconnected conceptual framework. Cosmomorphic, floromorphic, luminar, landscape, color, and somatic codes collectively shape a modern national aesthetic model. Thus, analyzing these components not merely as rhetorical devices, but as representations of national cognitive thought, remains highly relevant.

The objective of this paper is to identify the semantic, cognitive, and axiological transformations of female beauty codes in the poetry of Abdulla Avloniy, Hamza Hakimzoda Niyoziy, Abdulhamid Cho'lpon, and Elbek, and to characterize the national aesthetic model of Jadid poetry from linguocognitive and linguacultural perspectives.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Beauty represents one of the oldest universal aesthetic categories in human cognition, examined extensively across philosophy, aesthetics, literary theory, cultural studies, and linguistics. Since the mid-20th century, scholarly attention has shifted toward analyzing beauty through linguocognitive and linguacultural lenses. Within this trajectory, concept theory, cultural codes, conceptual metaphor, and literary discourse analysis have established dedicated academic traditions.

Y. S. Stepanov describes the concept as the primary semantic unit of national culture, emphasizing that it forms at the intersection of language, culture, and cognition (Stepanov 2004: 42-67). He argues that every concept encapsulates historical memory, societal values, and collective experience (Stepanov 2004: 42-67). V. N. Teliya defines cultural codes as a nation's mode of perceiving reality, noting that concepts of nature, color, anatomy, space, and time transform into semiotic systems through linguistic units (Teliya 1996: 214-239). Consequently, artistic imagery must be evaluated as a carrier of cultural information rather than a mere decorative trope (Teliya 1996: 214-239).

The theoretical foundations of the linguocognitive approach were further articulated through Conceptual Metaphor Theory, established by G. Lakoff and M. Johnson, who demonstrated that metaphor serves as a basic cognitive mechanism rather than a stylistic ornament (Lakoff & Johnson 1980: 3-32). G. Lakoff and M. Turner applied these principles to poetic metaphor (Lakoff & Turner 1989), while R. Langacker provided a cognitive grammar framework for understanding linguistic structures in literary representation (Langacker 2008: 30-67).

The linguacultural dimension of concepts was elaborated by V. A. Maslova (Maslova 2001: 27-61). Z. D. Popova and I. A. Sternin outlined the multi-tiered cognitive architecture of concepts, consisting of core and peripheral layers (Popova & Sternin 2007: 120-164). A. Wierzbicka highlighted the ethnolinguistic basis of cultural concepts and color semantics (Wierzbicka 1996: 211-240). Regarding the literary text as a

secondary modeling system, Y. M. Lotman holds a key position (Lotman 1970: 18-49), while P. Stockwell delineates the application of cognitive poetics in modern textual analysis (Stockwell 2020: 18-44).

In Uzbek linguistics, conceptual and linguacultural inquiries have been conducted by Sh. Safarov, D. Khudoyberganova, B. Yuldoshev, N. Mahmudov, Sh. Usmonova, G. Ashurova, and M. Galieva. Specifically, Sh. Safarov interprets the concept as a mental construction (Safarov 2006: 89-132). D. Khudoyberganova establishes methodology for anthropocentric and linguacultural studies (Khudoyberganova 2013: 53-96). N. Mahmudov examines language-culture interactions, while Sh. Usmonova investigates theoretical and practical issues in linguaculturology (Mahmudov 2017; Usmonova 2019). Z. Marufova has researched the verbalization of the beauty concept using classical and modern sources (Marufova, 2024).

However, an examination of existing scholarship reveals that the concept of beauty has predominantly been studied either as a general aesthetic category or within isolated lexical-semantic fields. The systematic manifestation of this concept through cultural codes in Jadid poetry-particularly the cognitive transformation of cosmomorphic, floromorphic, luminar, landscape, color, and somatic codes-has not been specifically investigated. This study addresses this scholarly gap by offering an integrative analysis of female beauty codes in Jadid poetry at the nexus of cognitive linguistics, linguaculturology, and linguopoetics.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This research investigates the transformation of cultural codes representing female beauty in Uzbek Jadid poetry by combining cognitive, linguacultural, and linguopoetic methodologies. The analytical corpus was compiled from Abdulla Avloniy's collection *Adabiyot yohud milliy she'rlar* [Literature or National Poems], Hamza Hakimzoda Niyoziy's *To'la asarlar to'plami* [Complete Works] (5 volumes, Vol. 1: Divan, Tashkent: Fan, 1988), Abdulhamid Cho'lpon's collection *Binafsha* [The Violet]

(Tashkent: Adabiyot, 2021), and Elbek's selected poems including 'Tutqun qushcha' (*The Captive Bird*), 'Ko'z yoshlarim' (*My Tears*), 'Til' (*Language*), and 'Uyg'on, ko'nglim' (*Awaken, My Soul*).

The corpus selection adhered to three primary criteria:

1. Frequency of occurrence of lexical units and metaphorical expressions relating to beauty and grace;
2. Presence of stable cultural images functioning as aesthetic symbols;
3. Conceptual significance of these images within the broader poetic discourse.

The methodological framework synthesizes several complementary approaches (Lakoff & Johnson 1980; Langacker 2008; Teliya 1996; Maslova 2001; Lotman 1970; Stockwell 2020). Within this study, 6 principal cultural codes are distinguished: cosmomorphic code, floromorphic code, luminar code, landscape code, color code, and somatic code.

The textual analysis follows a structural analytical model, as demonstrated in the following sample analysis:

Why were you plucked, O violet, before opening a little,
 Without laughing freely even once?
 Why were you bent down, stretched to the ground, O violet,
 Before your fragrance could scatter?
Binafsha, nimaga bir ozroq ochilmay,
Bir erkin kulmasdan uzilding?
Binafsha, nimaga hidlaring sochilmay,
Erlarga egilding, cho'zilding?

In this excerpt, the "violet" (*binafsha*) serves as the central phytonym, representing a vivid manifestation of the floromorphic cultural code. Lexically, verbs and participles such as "unopened" (*ochilmay*), "plucked" (*uzilish*), "unscattered fragrance" (*hid sochilmaslik*), and "bent to the earth" (*erga egilish*) initially appear to describe the botanical decay of a flower.

However, within Jadid poetic discourse, this cultural code undergoes significant cognitive transformation: "being plucked unopened" and "not laughing freely" do not merely denote biological wilting. Instead, the plucking of the flower constructs a conceptual metaphor signifying the deprivation of aesthetic grace and liberty – that is, a state of captivity. The "unscattered fragrance" becomes a linguacultural symbol for national potential, enlightenment, and inner capabilities suppressed by colonial constraints.

Thus, in Cho'lpon's poetics, the violet ceases to be a simple symbol of modesty and fragility as it was in classical literature; it emerges as a cognitive representation of subjugated Turkestan and a nation deprived of its freedom. This aligns with the social-educational interpretations of spring and garden imagery found in Avloniy and Hamza, constructing a shared national-axiological continuum.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Cosmomorphic-luminar cultural code: Transformation of celestial bodies and light imagery in Jadid Poetry

The cosmomorphic-luminar cultural code is structured around celestial bodies (sun, moon, stars) and light phenomena (rays, radiance), expressing beauty, goodness, and spiritual perfection (Stepanov 2004; Teliya 1996). From a cognitive perspective, light is conceptualized in human thought as knowledge and virtue, whereas darkness is conceptualized as ignorance (Lakoff & Johnson 1980).

In classical Uzbek poetry, collocations such as "moon-faced" (*oy yuz*), "star-eyed" (*yulduz ko'z*), and "radiant visage" (*nurli chehra*) served to idealize romantic physical appeal. Jadid poets assigned new educational and social functions to this code. In Abdulla Avloniy's poem 'Ilm' (*Knowledge*):

Knowledge is a rare jewel that never perishes or ends,
 Knowledge is a radiant light whose shine never fades...
Ilmbirgavharinoyob, yo'qo'lmas, bitmas,
Ilmbirnuriziyodurki, jilosiketmas...

Here, “light” and “radiance” (*nur, ziyo*) do not describe physical luminescence, but conceptualize education and progress.

In the works of Hamza Hakimzoda Niyoziy – specifically in *Ey, ahli vatan...* (*O, People of the Homeland...*) and ghazals from Volume 1 of his *Divan* – the light of knowledge and enlightenment is deployed against the darkness of ignorance. Lines such as:

Breeze, carry my plea, let the moon-faced one come and go once...
Saboarzimni yetkur, mohitobonbirkelubketsun...

demonstrate how the classical code *mohitobon* (moon-faced) shifts from traditional romantic affection toward a symbol of spiritual salvation.

In Abdulhamid Cho'lpon's poetics, this code forms a more intricate cognitive web. In ‘Go'zal’ (‘The Beautiful’):

Gazing at the sky in the dark night, I ask the brightest star for you...
 And it replies: "In my dream, I met rosy cheeks buried in white...
 She is more beautiful than I, more beautiful than the sun!
Qorong'u kechada ko'kka ko'z tikib, Eng yarug' yulduzdan seni so'raymen...
...Ul-da aytadirki: Qizil yanoqqa Uchradim tushimda, ko'milgan oqqa...
Mendan-da go'zaldir, kundan-da go'zal!)

the elements of light, moon, and sun articulate internal spiritual purity and the ideal of freedom rather than simple physical attractiveness. In ‘Yorug' yulduzga’ (‘To the Bright Star’), the star is compared not to the beloved's eyes, but to national destiny and liberty, projecting the image of the nation's future through the beauty of the beloved.

In Elbek's poem ‘Ko'z yoshlarim’ (‘My Tears’):

Then slowly appeared the benevolent, blessed, radiant sun,
 It looked upon the world, glowing and smiling gently...
Shuchoqko'rindisekin, ezguqutli, nurliquyosh
Ochungasoldiko'zin, bolqunib-dakuldiyuvvosh...

the luminar code synthesized via the "radiant sun" (*nurli quyosh*) merges with the grace and benevolence characteristic of female beauty. Here, the sun represents ultimate aesthetic perfection and a restorative power alleviating social distress. Traits traditionally attributed to female beauty – "virtue," "radiance," and "gentleness" (*kuldi yuvvosh*) – are transferred onto the sun image, generating a novel linguopoetic representation where beauty aligns with socio-spiritual needs.

Floromorphic cultural code and the transformation of the beauty concept in Jadid Poetry

The floromorphic cultural code (flower, violet, tulip, tree, garden, weeping willow) consists of linguacultural units expressing national values. While flowers signified romantic charm in classical poetry, in Avloniy and Hamza's works they become symbols of spring and prosperity, serving as metaphorical models for an enlightened society.

The highest poetic realization of the floromorphic code in Jadid poetry occurs in Abdulhamid Cho'lpon's 'Binafsha' ('The Violet'). The poet assigns a new aesthetic and conceptual role to the violet – a classic trope for female delicacy, soft grace, and beauty:

Violet, is it you, violet, is it you,
Sold on the street for a coin?
Am I the violet? Am I the violet,
Caught in your love and your sorrow?
Binafsha, senmisan, binafsha, senmi,
Ko'chada aqchaga sotilgan?
Binafsha menmanmi? Binafsha menmi,
Sevgingga, qayg'ungga tutilgan?

The repetition of the lexeme *binafsha* (violet) functions as a subject-shifting poetic mechanism. The poet first addresses the flower as an external source of beauty ("Violet, is it you?"), then maps this delicate code onto the internal experience of the lyrical hero ("Am I the violet?"). Consequently, the boundary between human subject and floral object dissolves, transforming the violet into a linguopoetic model of an unfree homeland and nation.

In the subsequent stanza:

Why were you plucked, O violet, before opening a little,
 Without laughing freely even once?
 Why were you bent down, stretched to the ground, O violet,
 Before your fragrance could scatter?
Binafsha, nimaga bir ozroq ochilmay,
Bir erkin kulmasdan uzilding?
Binafsha, nimaga hidlaring sochilmay,
Yerlarga egilding, cho'zilding?

the verbs and participles portray not botanical facts, but the tragic fate of the nation through the violation of beauty and grace. "The blooming of the flower" signifies liberty and promise, whereas "the plucking of the flower" denotes deprivation of freedom and the ultimate aesthetic ideal.

In subsequent stanzas, Cho'lpon employs verbs such as *sanchalar* (they pierce), *uzalar* (they snap), and *yancharlar* (they crush) to depict colonial oppression and the trampling of beauty. In the resolution, a path toward salvation for the aesthetic ideal is revealed:

Do not weep, violet, violet come here,
 Join your sorrow to my sorrow.
 Violet, for you my chest is a realm of freedom,
 From this place, soar to the heavens.
Binafsha, yig'lama, binafsha, kel beri,
Qayg'ingni qayg'umga qo'shgil.
Binafsha, sen uchun ko'kragim erk eri,
Bu yerdan ko'klarga uchgil

Through the phrase "my chest is a realm of freedom" (*ko'kragim erk eri*), the poet conceptualizes the human heart as a sanctuary for liberty and a defensive domain preserving fragile beauty. Grace that is trampled in the external world finds liberation within the individual's inner spiritual realm. Literary scholar Abdulla Sher similarly emphasizes that the violet evolved into a poetic archetype for subjugated Turkestan and violated aesthetic ideals (Sher 2008).

Where flowers and spring signify national revival in Avloniy, spiritual perfection and the ideal garden in Hamza, and vital freedom in Elbek, Cho'lpon condenses the tragedy of an unfree motherland and national fate into the single image of the violet.

Landscape cultural code: Nationalization of the beauty concept through space and nature imagery

In the landscape cultural code, space and nature (homeland, earth, mountain, desert, garden) function not merely as backdrops for events, but as a semiotic framework constructing cultural meaning. In Cho'lpon's 'Tabiatka' ('To Nature') and 'Buzilgan o'lkaga' ('To the Ruined Land'), Elbek's 'Sahroda' ('In the Desert') and 'Kechqurun' ('In the Evening'), and Abdulla Avloniy's 'Ushbu 'Adabiyot'a Turkiston ahllindan javob' ('Answer from the People of Turkestan to this 'Literature)'), landscape features are personified as empathetic entities sharing the lyrical protagonist's inner suffering. Attributes of grace, beauty, and renewal inherent to natural objects merge with the spiritual condition of the nation, making nature an aesthetic mirror of the national soul.

In Cho'lpon's poem 'Tabiatka' ('To Nature'):

Come, angel, come, come, fairy, come... Do not come, do not come, O fairy, your body is light... Ominous, pitch-black clouds cover the face of the sky...

Kel, malak, kel, kel, pari, kel... Kelma, kelma, ey pari, sen, tanlaring nurdir sening...Ko'k yuzini qop-qora, mash'um bulutlardir o'rar...

the grace of nature is presented as an inseparable synthesis of female beauty and the spirit of the motherland.

Color cultural code: Axiological transformation of the beauty concept through color imagery

The color cultural code (white, black, green, red) expresses national, moral, and social values within Jadid poetry (Wierzbicka 1996; Maslova 2001). In the poetics of Avloniy and

Hamza, the axiological opposition between white (enlightenment, virtue) and black (ignorance, tyranny) assumes a central position.

In Abdulla Avloniy's poem 'Maktab' ('The School'), this color opposition is verbalized as follows:

The school, seeking to deliver you from ignorance,
Opened a path for you, spreading the white wings of the future...
Maktabsizniberaydebjaholatdinnajot,
Ochdisizgayo'l, ochibistiqbol-oqqanot...

Through the metaphor "white wings" (*oq qanot*), the white color code acquires symbolic significance. While "white" traditionally denotes purity in native culture, in Jadid poetic discourse it is projected onto enlightenment and academic salvation. "White wings" serves as a cognitive-axiological marker liberating the nation from the "darkness" of ignorance and illuminating its future.

In Hamza Hakimzoda Niyoziy's work, the "black" cultural code is deconstructed to represent social and spiritual backwardness. Lines from "Ey, ahli vatan..." ("O, People of the Homeland...") illustrate this shift:

Lying in negligence, you do not open your eyes,
You do not flow to illuminate your black face, even a little...
G'aflatdayatib, ko'zlarigniochmaysan,
Qorayuzingnibirozbo'lsa-dayoritib, oqmaysan...

Here, "black face" (*qora yuz*) is a syntagmatic synthesis of somatic and color codes, denoting not physical complexion, but the moral and social distress of a nation trapped in ignorance. By establishing an axiological contrast between "black" (ignorance, lethargy) and "flowing/illuminating" (knowledge, enlightenment, light), the poet urges moral purification. Thus, in Avloniy and Hamza's poetics, color codes transcend descriptive roles to become linguacultural categories assessing the ethical and educational status of society.

Somatic cultural code: Spiritualization of the beauty concept through anatomical imagery

The somatic cultural code (face, eyes, heart, soul, chest) shifts from physical description toward conceptualizing the spiritual and aesthetic realm of the individual (Teliya 1996; Maslova 2001). In Cho'lpon's 'Binafsha,' the expression "my chest is a realm of freedom" (*ko'kragim erk eri*) transforms an anatomical concept into a spiritual space safeguarding delicate beauty and liberty. In his poem 'Go'zal,' the line "your eyes are light, your face is light" (*ko'zlarining nur, yuzlarining nur*) uses the somatisms "face" and "eyes" to reflect both physical grace and inner spiritual purity.

In Cho'lpon's poems 'Sharq qizi' ('Daughter of the East') and 'O'zbek qizi uchun' ('For the Uzbek Girl'), somatic expressions articulate the spiritual anguish of women in captivity:

I am a daughter of the East, like the East itself,
My entire body and soul are a nest of reverie. My black eyes are
like the eyes of a deer...

Men bir Sharq qizimen, Sharqningo 'zidek

Butuntanim, jonim-xayoluyasi. Menimqorako 'zimkiyikko 'zidek...

Across Jadid poetry, cosmomorphic-luminal, floromorphic, landscape, color, and somatic cultural codes cease to function as decorative elements; instead, they operate as semiotic mechanisms representing the nation's spiritual experience, social consciousness, and cultural memory. In Avloniy, these codes align with educational reformism; in Hamza, with social justice and spiritual salvation; in Elbek, with romantic national ideals; and in Cho'lpon, with the dramatic experiences of national destiny.

CONCLUSION

This research achieves its main objective by delineating the cognitive and linguopoetic transformation of female beauty concepts and associated cultural codes in early 20th-century Uzbek Jadid poetry. The analysis demonstrates that in the poetry

of Abdulla Avloniy, Hamza Hakimzoda Niyoziy, Abdulhamid Cho'lpon, and Elbek, female beauty transcended the visual-aesthetic and romantic boundaries of classical poetics, evolving into a complex cognitive system encapsulating national-spiritual, educational, and socio-political values.

Jadid poets did not simply replicate the cosmomorphic, floromorphic, luminar, landscape, color, and somatic cultural codes established in classical heritage. Instead, they expanded their semantic fields and reoriented their conceptual locus from a "romantic object" to a "national-spiritual subject". In this process, elements such as the moon, sun, stars, light, flowers, violets, and somatic references (chest, face, eyes) were transformed from markers of physical attractiveness into semiotic mechanisms expressing ultimate aesthetic ideals—national liberation, intellectual awakening, the motherland, and human dignity.

The theoretical and practical significance of this study lies in its proposed cognitive-linguacultural model, which serves as a philological framework for analyzing the activation of cultural codes and the evolution of national aesthetic thought in Uzbek literary discourse. Furthermore, the applied linguopoetic methodology offers a theoretical and practical foundation for academic courses in cognitive linguistics, linguaculturology, and textual analysis, as well as future inquiries into literary discourse.

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