

Linguistic Representation of the Ethnographic Chronotope in Tagay Murad's Story 'Twilight When The Horse Neighed'

NADIRAKHAN RUSTAMBEKOVNA SULTONOVA
National University of Uzbekistan Tashkent, Uzbekistan

ABSTRACT

The article examines the linguistic means of representing the ethnographic chronotope in Tagay Murad's story 'Twilight When the Horse Neighed.' Particular attention is paid to the analysis of lexical, phraseological, and discursive means through which the national-cultural worldview is formed.

Keywords: Ethnographism, chronotope, linguoculturology, discourse, Tagay Murad, national worldview.

INTRODUCTION

In modern linguistics, a literary text is regarded not only as an aesthetic phenomenon but also as a form of representation of the cultural memory of a people. Within the anthropocentric approach, language is understood as a means of preserving and transmitting the national worldview; therefore, the study of ethnographism as a linguocultural phenomenon acquires particular relevance.

The works of Tagay Murad are of considerable interest in terms of studying the linguistic mechanisms of representing traditional culture. The story 'Twilight When the Horse Neighed' is distinguished by a high degree of ethnographic richness and demonstrates a complex system of interaction between space, culture, and language.

According to the methodology of V. I. Tyupa, the plot structure of a literary text is based on the triple unity of place, time, and action (actant):

In other words, the chain of imaginary events is manifested through a system of episodes that form a continuous sequence of text segments characterized by a triple unity: a) place, b) time, and c) action, more precisely, the composition of actants (characters or acting forces). Thus, the boundary between two neighboring episodes is marked by a transfer in space, a break in time, or a change in the composition of characters. [1]

These elements form the structure of episodes and determine the dynamics of narrative development. In Tagay Murad's story 'Twilight When the Horse Neighed' each of these categories acquires a special semantic significance and becomes a bearer of the ideological and emotional energy of the work.

In analyzing the categories of space and time in Tagay Murad's story 'Twilight When the Horse Neighed,' the term "chronotope," first introduced by M. M. Bakhtin [2], is employed. However, the methodological basis of the analysis relies primarily on the concept developed by Yu. M. Lotman, since the scholar assigns dominant importance to space within the spatio-temporal continuum:

The language of spatial relations is important because it belongs to the primary and fundamental ones. Even temporal modeling often represents a secondary superstructure over the language of space. [3]

The structure of textual space," the scholar argues, "becomes a model of the structure of the universe, while the internal syntagmatics of textual elements forms the language of spatial modeling"; textual space "turns out to be one of the principal means of comprehending reality through the depiction of objects. [3].

Based on Lotman's concept, it can be argued that in the story the category of space plays the dominant role, whereas temporal parameters perform a subordinate and auxiliary function.

The chronotope of the story is organized through the contrast between the city and the village. The rural chronotope includes

the steppe, mountains, home, and collective farm, while the urban chronotope includes the bazaar, teahouse, police station, and court.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research material consists of fragments from Tagay Murad's story 'Twilight When the Horse Neighed,' reflecting the peculiarities of the spatial organization of the text and the linguistic representation of folk culture.

The methodological basis of the study includes:

- the theory of chronotope developed by M. Bakhtin;
- the concept of spatial modeling proposed by Y. Lotman;
- the principles of linguoculturology developed by V. Karasik.

The study employs methods of contextual, linguocultural, and discourse analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The opening episodes of the story unfold in a Surkhandarya village associated with the open space of the steppe, which correlates with M. M. Bakhtin's concept of the opposition between open and closed spaces. This space serves as the starting point of Ziyadulla's world, where a person lives in unity with nature and tradition. The steppe becomes a space of freedom and trial, where human character is revealed. Key events take place here, including the choice of a horse and the ulak competitions. The steppe performs a structure-forming function in the narrative and serves as the basis for the unfolding of the ethnographic context of the work. The open environment is filled with breath, movement, and light, symbolically expressing the natural rhythm of folk existence.

The open Surkhandarya land is described with ethnographic precision: the scorching sun, dusty roads, the smell of isryk, the cries of horsemen, the rustle of ropes, and the sound of hooves create an audiovisual density of folk life. The sounds of the

dombra, karnay, and surnay are heard here – all these are not merely details of everyday life, but an acoustic code of the folk world that fills space with an internal rhythm.

Ethnographic details lend realism and authenticity to the space. At the very beginning of the story, the author mentions the toponyms of the Uzbek region: “After selling several sheep, I tied the money into a waist scarf and went to Obokli together with the skilled horseman Namaz. Obokli is located in Okkapchigay. Okkapchigay is a desert without end or edge” [4]. The toponyms *Obokli*, *Okkapchigay*, and *Obshir* form the geographical network of the folk world in which the hero lives and acts. These toponyms not only indicate the place of action but also convey the ethnographic texture of southern life, where space is perceived as living, sacred, and filled with the memory of ancestors.

In the ulak episodes (14-31), the open steppe space turns into an arena of folk unity: it is here that masculine courage, honor, strength, and will are revealed. In these scenes, the image of the steppe merges with the image of the people – the collective hero that becomes the ethical criterion for evaluating Ziyadulla’s actions.

If the steppe symbolizes horizontal infinity, movement, and the rhythm of life, the mountains embody the vertical dimension of spirit, trial, and closeness to a higher principle. In describing the mountains, the author achieves almost epic grandeur, combining ethnographic precision with philosophical depth: “That white mountain in the west is called Kiragatag. It is a continuation of the Gissar Mountains. It cannot be said that Mount Kiragatag is nearby. These mountains are enormous, and therefore it seems as if they are only one step away...” [4]. From an ethnographic perspective, the mountain landscape is also filled with life and mythological codes: *archa* serves as a sacred tree used in purification rituals, while wolf tracks and bird feathers symbolize the natural cycle and the balance between humans and nature.

These details give the landscape an archaic significance – the mountains become a sacred space where nature preserves ancient laws.

The chronotope of the collective farm is examined in Episode 9 of the story, where the kolkhoz in Tagay Murad's 'Twilight When the Horse Neighed' appears as a dual space situated at the intersection of the traditional folk world of the village and Soviet ideological reality. It becomes a meeting point of two cultural paradigms: the living oral tradition based on memory, faith, and craft, and the official artificial language of Soviet modernization.

The correspondent meets Ziyadulla, who comes with an open heart, wishing to speak about his life and labor. However, he encounters only indifference and a formal attitude. Ziyadulla's simple and sincere confession about his education – "We are not very educated. Our head managed to contain only five classes" [4] – sounds not as an excuse but as a natural expression of a working man, full of modesty and dignity. In response, the correspondent, using his power over language, imposes meaningless clichés upon the hero: "Write: Since childhood I dreamed of becoming a shepherd..." [4].

This fragment juxtaposes two fundamentally different languages: the living folk language born from personal experience and the formal artificial language dictated by instructions. Ziyadulla expresses his thoughts sincerely, relying on his own life experience, whereas the correspondent follows ideological prescriptions. The phrase "I will write the artistic part myself. You are not capable of it" [4] vividly demonstrates how ideological culture treats ordinary people, perceiving them as passive objects deprived of the right to their own voice.

Ziyadulla respectfully declares: "My concern is to preserve the songs and legends of our ancestors for future generations. And the dombra, as the keeper of these traditions, is always with me." In this context, the dombra functions not merely as a musical instrument but as an ethnographic symbol embodying the continuity of generations and the soul of the people. When Ziyadulla takes the dombra and sings about the beloved girl, the bonfire, and the horse: "The girl I adore, captured my heart forever. My horse will carry me to her, biting tightly on the reins" [4]. He does not simply perform a song but revives

collective memory, restoring ancient customs, rituals, and the worldview of his ancestors.

“Jew’s harps and bonfires – all this is outdated. It is not modern. This is the atomic age...” [4], the correspondent, a representative of the “atomic age,” states indifferently. This remark serves as vivid evidence of the rupture between epochs and cultural paradigms, where the poetry of folk life becomes devalued under the pressure of technocratic ideology. In his understanding, neither meaning nor soul is important – only “urgent problems” [4] and “the spirit of the age” [4] matter. Ziyadulla’s second dastan: “Take care of your horse so that always, it has both fodder and water. Do not be lazy to comb its mane, do not spare your labor for it” [4] which he considers his best work, evokes nothing but yawning from the correspondent. He is incapable of comprehending the folk wisdom contained in these lines – the philosophy of responsibility and harmony with nature. For the representative of the new era, these principles appear “irrelevant.”

Thus, this fragment exposes the conflict between the people and authority, between sincerity and formality, between living oral tradition and official written discourse. The dombra, the jew’s harp, the bonfire, and the bride on horseback become vivid ethnographic images embodying living culture, which in the perception of the radio correspondent appear merely as “archaic” remnants. The story captures the moment when folk poetry is pushed to the margins of public attention, while the folk singer becomes an observer of a disappearing world.

Despite the fact that most of the events in the story unfold in open spaces, in Episode 79 the closed space of the home acquires special significance, becoming the most intimate and limited space of the narrative. The home embodies the world of inner harmony, immersion in the past, and inseparable family ties. It is here that the hero finds solitude, allowing him to encounter himself and his loved ones. The father-and-son storyline develops through the lullaby song, which becomes a continuation of the hero’s spiritual world and an expression of inner peace and love. The lyrical intonation of the song echoes the folklore tradition in which songs always perform an educational function.

Through it, the father transmits to his son the code of folk memory and the ideals of courage and dignity: “On my knees is my child, You will become my comfort. Listen to what I sing to you, Hush-a-bye. The horse is covered with a blanket – it means You too will ride a horse. You will brighten my life, Listen to what I sing to you” [4].

Ultimately, the rural chronotope in Tagay Murad’s story is formed within a system of semantic duality based on the opposition between traditional folk space and the ideologically organized collective-farm order. The village appears as a mental space of collective memory in which traditions, values, and perceptions of the world are concentrated, whereas the collective-farm space represents a different externally imposed model of life organization that breaks the connection with the folk past.

In this context, the rural chronotope acquires a dual meaning:

1. It symbolizes the primordial and free world of folk life based on tradition, memory, and the organic unity of human beings with nature;
2. It functions as the hero’s inner psychological space in which, under conditions of duality, his moral choice and value position are formed.

The urban chronotope is sharply contrasted with the village. In the story, the city is depicted as a space opposed to rural life, deprived of harmony, internal rhythm, and spiritual warmth. While for Ziyadulla the steppe symbolizes freedom and the home embodies silence and tradition, the city appears as a world of alienation, bureaucracy, and depersonalization, where a person loses their natural connection with the land and culture.

Episode 50 describes the bazaar – the first urban chronotope – where the protagonist goes to sell grapes. Here the conflict between the *dehqan* and the “man in a tie” unfolds; peasant labor is contrasted with urban office work:

“The gifts of nature are the sweat of the *dehqan* – What is your merit here? The sun and moon shine for everyone – They do indeed. But everything from your clothes to your food is the sweat of the *dehqan*. You sit in offices with papers – neither food

nor clothes fall to you from the sky. Of what the dehqan earns, he gives ninety percent to you and keeps only ten for himself!" [4].

The contrast between the dehqan and the office worker symbolizes the conflict between traditional labor values and the modern pursuit of financial profit, which leads to the devaluation of physical labor.

The chronotope of the teahouse (Episode 51), traditionally considered the center of male communication and a symbolic crossroads between the personal and the public in Uzbek culture, appears in Tagay Murad's story in a different light. It transforms into a symbol of destroyed harmony: "I looked inside and almost suffocated. The teahouse was packed full. Stuffy. Even the wooden platform outside was crowded. If counted, there would be about a hundred people..." [4]

This example demonstrates how traditional space has become distorted. It has lost its sacred essence, turning from a place of meetings and dialogue into merely a crowded public space. For Ziyadulla, this becomes another stage of alienation: if the bazaar devalues labor, the teahouse destroys the very essence of human communication. The hero feels that the bond that once united the people has dissolved in the bustle of urban life.

Within the chronotope of the police station, the opposition between authority and the people also becomes evident. In total, the protagonist appears at the station three times: first, when Ziyadulla refuses to surrender his horse "for meat" and is arrested for disobedience (Episodes 34-37), and later during interrogations connected with the bazaar fight (Episodes 58 and 61).

In the first case, the hero demonstrates the position of a protector. Trying to save his horse Tarlan, he hides him far away from the authorities:

At midnight I saddled Tarlan. Like a whirlwind I rushed to Obshir. In the western part of this village there are many white clay hills and elevations. There were ravines on their slopes. In one of them I tied Tarlan. At sunrise I returned home and, in high spirits, went to my pasture. [4]

Ziyadulla's refusal to sell the horse "for meat" becomes a moral protest and an expression of his personal freedom and folk sense of justice.

Through the image of the horse, the author reveals the deep conflict between ordinary people and state authority. For the peasant, the horse is part of the family, a loyal friend, and a symbol of dignity: “Tarlan is not just a horse, he is a hero. Dzhumanbulbul and Fazyl Yuldash sing songs and compose legends about such horses. How can one send celebrated heroes to slaughter?” [4].

For representatives of authority, however, the horse is merely an object that can be taken away without hesitation by official order: “The brigadier went around the yards and, pointing upward with his finger, said: ‘We have nothing to do with it – the order came from above...’”

Through this situation, the writer demonstrates how distant the authorities are from the aspirations of ordinary people and how indifferent they remain to the values that form the foundation of peasant communal life.

After resisting, Ziyadulla is forcibly taken to the police station and beaten:

I did not manage to finish speaking. The bald начальник struck me hard in the jaw. His hand turned out to be weak, almost like a woman’s – it did not hurt much. I finished my sentence. Then the bald начальник decided to kick me in the stomach. [4]

At the police station, facts are deliberately distorted: reality is falsified, and truth is replaced with fiction. The actual beating of the shepherd is concealed, while a false version is constructed accusing Ziyadulla himself of attacking a law enforcement officer:

He cursed at me. He insulted both my mother and my wife. Then with one blow he pushed me into the pit. The evidence is obvious – I am covered in dirt. Your colleagues are witnesses. And the chairman of the collective farm is here as well. Isn’t that right, chairman? – Right, right! He pushed him into the pit! [4]

This inversion of events serves as an artistic reflection of the bureaucratic and moral degradation of the system, where lies become a mechanism of self-justification for authority.

The statement: “Well, did you hear that, Comrade Kurbanov? Soviet police do not beat people” [4] sounds like an ironic formula of official discourse in which ideological rhetoric replaces truth. In this way, the story exposes the depersonalizing nature of the Soviet administrative system, depriving ordinary people of the right to express their opinions and defend their truth. The episode culminates in the hero’s unjust punishment – ten days of imprisonment – which reinforces the themes of powerlessness and social inequality.

In the episodes ‘Before the Court and Conscience’ (50-62), the protagonist, as an eyewitness to the incident, is summoned for interrogation at the police station. Out of fear of authority, no one provides accurate or truthful information. Two policemen who had been in the teahouse and had seen everything falsely claim that they had not been there at all. The owner of the teahouse and the fish seller are also summoned. The behavior of the teahouse owner reveals servility and fear: “The teahouse owner bent over and greeted them. In confusion, he almost grabbed the pencil with both hands, but then pulled his hands back and sat where he was told” [4].

The fish seller, on the contrary, demonstratively argues with the captain, but his “folk protest” is limited to verbal insolence and ends with the meaningless phrase: “That’s all!” [4].

Only the protagonist fearlessly recounts everything, confirms the facts, and identifies the attackers.

In this episode, it is important to note that authority and the people do not directly oppose each other but rather form a vicious circle. The people, fearing punishment, remain silent or resort to hypocrisy, while the authorities, absorbed in formal procedures, lose the ability to perceive truth. As the captain remarks: “We do not need witnesses in this case – we have medical expertise” [4].

Instead of searching for truth, the authorities rely on formal documents, replacing real facts with official reports.

The final urban chronotope is the courtroom (Episode 80), where Ziyadulla conscientiously fulfills his civic duty. The space is clearly divided into three parts: “On one side sat the boys who

had beaten him, on the other sat my friend Rakhman. The authorities sat above” [4].

Ziyadulla recounts in detail everything he saw and heard: “After questioning me, the authorities were satisfied with my answers” [4].

However, this very act turns against him. In Episode 82, the same young men, driving a red car, catch up with Ziyadulla and beat him, mocking him and calling him: “Don Quixote of the twentieth century” [4].

In the eyes of his opponents, the hero’s honesty and kindness appear ridiculous and provoke only ridicule. They do not perceive his actions as courageous but rather as a comic attempt to portray himself as a noble knight.

Here, too, the opposition between different systems of understanding becomes evident. For the urban young men, Ziyadulla’s actions are incomprehensible. Rakhman is not related to him in any way; Ziyadulla defended another person simply out of conscience, without personal gain or kinship ties. Yet in the eyes of the city dwellers, such behavior appears absurd.

CONCLUSION

The conducted analysis demonstrates that in Tagay Murad’s story the chronotope functions as a complex linguocultural system based on the opposition between traditional folk space and ideologically organized space. This opposition is represented through a system of linguistic means, including ethnographic vocabulary, toponymic units, folklore elements, as well as the contrast between folk and official discourse.

It has been established that the rural chronotope is formed through linguistic markers of folk culture reflecting the traditional way of life, collective memory, and national values. In contrast, the collective-farm and urban chronotopes are characterized by the predominance of ideological and bureaucratic speech, which creates the semantics of alienation and the destruction of natural ties between human beings and the traditional world.

A special role in the linguistic organization of the text is played by the opposition between living folk speech and official discourse, which allows the author to reveal the conflict between different models of worldview. Folk speech in the story functions as a means of preserving cultural memory and national identity, whereas official language represents an impersonal system of ideological values.

Thus, the chronotope in the story performs not only a compositional but also a linguocultural function, becoming one of the principal means of linguistic representation of the national worldview.

Agar ushbu adabiyotlar ro‘yxatini xalqaro jurnal formati uchun ingliz tilida berish kerak bo‘lsa, quyidagicha yozish mumkin:

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NADIRAKHAN RUSTAMBEKOVNA SULTONOVA
LECTURER, DEPT. OF RUSSIAN LITERARY STUDIES,
NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF UZBEKISTAN,
TASHKENT, UZBEKISTAN.
E-MAIL: <NADIRASULTONOVA94@GMAIL.COM>