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### **The Tandem of Time and Society in Artistic Symbolism**

The transformation and change of symbols can vary depending on the poet's perspective on time and ideological structure, and may evoke different associations in the work of each poet. Sometimes, the different interpretations of the same image-symbol in the works of different poets aim to reveal their stylistic characteristics, as well as their moral-ethical, ideological, and political views. The emergence of various shades of meaning in the same symbolic image appears to be rooted in the poet's social and political views, as well as the influence of the prevailing structure. Therefore, a symbol cannot change or renew itself independently. The research highlights that a symbolic image gains its content when the artistic text demands three dimensions: artistic thought, ideology, and the factor of time. The transition of the symbolic image, object, or subject to a new context occurs when the contours of time and the socio-political environment are altered and renewed. Time, in this sense, is the image that arises from the essence of the idea generalized in an artistic symbol or symbolic depiction. If the text is considered outside of this factor, it will inevitably lose the power to generalize its idea and emotional content. The symbol, therefore, is the generalization of the specific features of time and its more prominent aspects within the artistic image. It must always have the context of the era. If time and ideology do not change, symbols remain static and unchanging. The key factor in the interpretation of the image and the formation of symbol transformations is time, as well as the mechanism of perceiving and evaluating it.

**Keywords:** poetry, artistic symbol, time factor, society, ideology

#### **Introduction**

Among poetic categories, the artistic symbol stands out due to its universality, multiplicity of meanings, and complexity. It has the ability to renew the deepest layers of canonical cultural codes in various contexts, according to new parameters of thought. A symbol preserves its integrity of meaning; it does not fade, die, or fade from memory. The repetition of the artistic symbol, which exists at the core of cultural memory, reflects not only an individual's view of life and their environment but also becomes a central criterion for the norms of time and society. In this sense, the symbol not only performs an aesthetic function but also transforms into a philosophical, psychological, and historical-literary text in memory. If we look closely, the psychology of each era, in a narrow sense, draws from the author's "self" and then directs itself towards the psychology of time and society.

#### **The Time Factor and Ideological Distinction in the Artistic Symbol**

Many theories that emerged in the 18th century revisited the problem of the symbol, allowing for an understanding of the ideological affinity between different concepts and offering the possibility of resolving the issue from various perspectives. Thinkers such as J.W. Goethe, I. Kant, F. Schiller, and G.F. Meier often juxtaposed and confused the concepts of symbol and allegory in their theoretical works, leading to certain

ambiguities and self-contradictions. In the 20th century, mythological theories and studies of mythology provided new opportunities to evaluate the symbol problem from a fresh theoretical perspective. In his work *Symbolism and Mythology*, F. Kreiser attributes to the symbol qualities such as "infinity" and "undecipherability." By distinguishing between the symbol and allegory, Kreiser highlights the differences in how these terms are characterized.

A key difference, in our view, is the emphasis on the category of time, which holds particular significance in the theory of symbols. The variability within symbols, the differentiation of symbols existing in separate symbolic systems, their recreation, and the time factor that grants symbols immortality, are crucial elements. On the other hand, the idealized image in the symbol represents the existence of a particular idea, the real content of an abstract concept, or a vivid manifestation of reality at a specific time. As such, "a symbolized entity can give birth to countless symbolized ideas, and conversely, a symbolized entity can be symbolized in an infinite number of ways" (Todorov 1999:322). The symbolized idea can be repeated, changed, and renewed in a sequential manner in the stages of cultural development based on a symbolized object. In this process, the same object can be updated and acquire new symbolic content in line with the thematic concerns of a particular time. "For the symbol, a certain 'spiritual content' gradually and indirectly, as if by accident, secondarily, and even vaguely, but at the same time, it has the characteristic of delivering the idea effectively and at a high level until the end... This arises when it is impossible to convey that idea, its infinitely deep meaning, through the rigid framework of language or other sign systems" (Heydarova, 2023, p. 53-57). A symbol is not something that is conceived and completed in a single direction. As the factors of time, ideological structure, and thought parameters change and renew, the symbol is updated and changed in context, while maintaining its original traits and form, acquiring new content. The time factor, along with the symbolic image formed on its basis, plays a crucial role in creating the ground for the reconstruction of the symbolic system and the restoration of symbolic types, while also determining the parameters of artistic thought for a specific era. The symbol is also a factor of thought; without the renewal of thought, the symbol cannot be renewed either. Therefore, "symbols, as any sign, always emerge only through the unconscious establishment of relations between objects through evolution; they are not invented or applied suddenly" (Todorov, 1999, p. 340). According to the founder of classical German philosophy, Immanuel Kant, "the symbol is the way in which consciousness expresses ideas through sensation; the understanding of the symbol is the intuitive comprehension of the infinite and inexhaustible idea, which cannot be expressed" (Kant, 1966, p. 564). The fact that a symbol carries an idea means that it is characterized by comparison and selection within its qualities. An image without an idea cannot create a distinction between a sign and an image. Thus, both the sign and the image aspects of a symbol's relationship to the idea are simultaneously different and individual, as well as legal. According to J.W. Goethe, "symbolism transforms an event into an idea, and an idea into an image, in such a way that the idea remains infinitely influential and incomprehensible in the image. Even though it is expressed in all languages, it remains unexpressed" (Goethe, 1964, p. 520).

### **Artistic Symbolism in the Lyrical "I" and Society**

The psychological manifestations of time in the Azerbaijani poetry of the 1920s were reflected in distinct symbols and images in the artistic thought of that era. During this period, some of the most prominent symbols in Mikayil Mushfiq's poetry, such as the wind and the cloud, primarily reflect the poet's psychology and spiritual realm, becoming key expressive tools of his character traits and emotional state. Thus, the symbolized image is not one-sided or linear, but always carries an element of generalization. In Mushfiq's poetry, the diverse associations created by the images of clouds, wind, and breeze are, on one hand, connected to "the psychology maturing in the spirit of his inner freedom" (Quliyeva, 2023, p. 66),

referring to the individual-psychological aspects of the creative person, and on the other hand, they serve as a new means of cognition and understanding of the individual's "I" in the changing structure and time.

Time and the social environment context can change symbol types according to their moment of expression. When time or ideology changes, symbols are renewed, altered, and new nuances of meaning arise. Here, we can consider cosmogonic, astral symbols, symbols of cultural memory, religious symbols, romantic symbols, and individual-intuitive symbols. All symbol types have the characteristic of changing and reappearing. One of the main features that conditions the functionality and immortality of a symbol is this. Just as every era has its own literary style, it also has a stylistic key, which is the main tool for characterizing, studying, and analyzing that era. Among the tools performing this function, symbols play a crucial role. In the creative process, the means that will lay the foundation for the creation of a symbol gradually unfold. It is not just the image that is selected and becomes a carrier of specific meaning, but the time, social-public content, worldview, and leading idea that extend beyond the image's characteristics and limits are crucial. The specific individual characteristics of the lyrical "I" are also revealed by the qualities of the selected image. To express our thoughts more clearly, we will try to represent the different manifestations of a symbol's semantics by contrasting different periods, against the backdrop of time and societal change.

### **Change of Symbolic Model in the Tandem of Time and Society**

In the second decade of the 20th century, the fall of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic and the Soviet Union's programmatic system of governance manifested itself in the change and renewal of the symbolic model in the artistic thought regarding time and ideological construction. In 1927, Mikayıl Müşfiq wrote the poem "October". As the title suggests, the sign directly evokes positive images of the Soviet regime. However, through symbolic details, the landscape accentuated by the author in his creative process, the arrangement and harmony of natural elements, aims to direct the message and purpose entirely in a different direction. Both the lyrical "I" and the poetic landscape of the time are thus characterized.

October! The roaring fiery mountain of history,  
You burned the old world with your fiery lava,  
I am sure the corners of the earth will be adorned  
With the flames you spread all around (Müşfiq, 1927, p. 38).

The artistic perception of time and the process of individual comprehension and realization through image-symbols becomes the main tool for understanding a particular ideological construction. Of course, this may differ in terms of the author's acceptance and evaluation of the political-ideological environment. However, the simultaneous realization of both the idealized society and the unreal environment through artistic symbols allows for a fuller, more substantial representation of the author's position in the symbolic context. Müşfiq's poem "Spring in the Midst of Autumn" (Müşfiq, 1988:30) is one of the examples in this regard. In the poem, each image and detail that unveils the essence and character of the Soviet system carries a symbolic trait, and through the opposition of autumn to spring, the characteristics of two opposing structures are revealed. Through the author's position, the real image of the time is directly presented through symbols.

### Symbol-Images as a Tool for Expressing the Philosophy of Time

Symbol-images are among the main tools that condition the poet's philosophical view of time. The change and transformation of symbols depend on the poet's perspective on time and ideological construction and can evoke different associations in the creative works of different poets. Sometimes, the different interpretations of the same image-symbol in the works of various poets aim to elucidate their style, and generalize their moral, ethical, ideological, and political views. One of the functional symbols in Azerbaijani poetry of the 1920s is the image of the "northern wind". This image appears in folklore and classical poetry in various shades. In the works of poets such as A. Cavad, A. İldırım, and M. Müşfiq, the image of the northern wind consistently evokes negative associations, symbolizing Soviet Russia, the fall of Azerbaijan's independence, and the emergence of a despotic regime. However, in S. Vurgun's works, the image of the "northern wind" is used in a completely different, opposite context.

The word gathered my mind to my head,  
I forgot all love, I forgot my beloved;  
A new universe appeared before me,  
As I kissed my forehead, the northern wind.  
(Səməd Vurğun, 2005, p. 88)

In Vurgun's poem *"Revolutionary Homeland"*, the "northern wind" creates a different set of associations that reflect the individual's attitude toward the psychology of the time, transforming the symbolic image into one of the leading tools for the poet's nuanced response to changes in time.

### Time, Social Structure, and the Renewal of Symbolism

The change in time and social structure, the moral and spiritual values created by each system, and the new psychology can alter and renew the functional role of artistic symbols. This is one of the key factors in the transformation of symbols, leading to the renewal of ideas. This brings us to a theoretical point about symbols: one of the important aspects often noted by scholars is their complex, aesthetic nature, and their multiple meanings. However, a symbol cannot change or acquire a new meaning on its own. Each image has the potential to become symbolic, but this is not an absolute or necessary condition. The symbolic function of an image becomes meaningful when it retains its figurative function and acquires symbolic content, provided the artistic text involves three essential dimensions: artistic thought, ideology, and the factor of time. As the contours of time and the social environment evolve and renew, the object, event, or image that acquires symbolic meaning moves into a new context, and the symbol is renewed. Time, as an artistic symbol, is an image that arises from the generalized idea expressed in a symbolic description. If the text is considered outside of this factor, it will, of course, lose its power to generalize the thoughts and emotions it carries.

If ideology does not change, and artistic thought is not renewed, the symbol remains stable; in all cases, it does not alter its specific characteristics, which belong to the concretely marked object. The context remains unchanged, while another factor is time. As time and the contours of social and cultural interference evolve, the object, subject, or thing that acquires the symbolic quality transitions into a new context.

In artistic creativity, a symbol is not premeditated, measured, or goal-oriented. The creation of a symbol is guided by the factor of time and social environment, which directs the poet's thoughts around a specific object towards an idea that, at first glance, may not be immediately apparent. A specific description, event, situation, or object creates an impression that allows the plot to transform into a symbol. The impact

of time and environment on the lyrical hero opens the possibility for deep, thought-provoking philosophical generalizations. Samad Vurghun wrote his poem *"The Forgotten Single Grave"* in 1946. In the literary text, the poet walks through the cemetery, which is overgrown with weeds, where "there is no headstone, no name or address, no companion or relative," representing the "forgotten single grave." This image directs the poet's thoughts from the initial sensory stage of symbol creation to the second stage – the psychological impact and conceptualization of the idea. As the first stage, which serves as the foundation for the idea, transitions into the second, the surrounding associations emerge from the external aspects, creating a more logical and ideational focus. At this point, the general, visible part of the plot is broken, and the "graveyard" and "single grave" begin to form a new idea in the context of the individual's thoughts.

The poet asks an experienced old man guarding the graveyard who the forgotten grave belongs to:

From an old man, a worldly-wise man,  
I asked if you know,  
Who owns this single grave?  
....You, too, do not know?  
It is yours, the single grave,  
It was cursed by fate;  
Those who speak much, but write little,  
Are forgotten in this world.  
(Samad Vurghun, 2006, p. 153)

In the artistic-philosophical designation of "graveyard" and "single grave," the symbolization of the world's image and the logic of futility and nothingness imbue the text with a profound, ideologically charged meaning.

In the 1960s, Azerbaijani poetry saw the emergence of a series of symbolic representations of time. On the one hand, this reflected the changing times and new trends within time, linked to the moral and psychological descent into the human soul. On the other hand, it was related to the increased speed of society, with technological advancements rapidly progressing. The changing criteria of time were also not without influence on artistic thought. Many poems of this kind were approached from the philosophical poetry perspective. In the works of R. Rza, F. Qoca, A. Kerim, B. Vahabzade, M. Araz, and others, time was transformed into various symbolic meanings. During this period, objects such as trains, clocks, stones, fog, and other individual items and subjects were described, and the thoughts, ideas, and concepts emerging from them became symbols of time. In F. Qoca's poem *"The Train"*, the harmony and rhythmic frequency created in accordance with the character of the image transformed into a symbolic representation of time.

It escapes,  
It flies,  
Wagon by wagon,  
Heart,  
Desire,  
Hope,  
Salvation.  
Catch the train,  
Hold the train.  
....I am time,  
Reach me,  
Catch me...  
Those who reach, reach!  
The rest remain! (Fikrət Qoca, 2004, p. 141)

The symbol is the artistic generalization of the specific features of time, its more prominent aspects in an artistic image. It always reflects the context of its era. In the works of R. Rza such as "The Old Crocodile", "Elephant and Elephant Keeper", "Before the Flood", H. Arif's "The Valleys Draw", "The Willow Branch", H. Kürdoğlu's "The Oak Burns, it burns alone", M. Araz's "A Tree Fell", and others, the emphasis on social issues, the image, description, and objects in the context of time contribute to the transformation of certain social-philosophical themes into an idea. One of the key aspects of these works was both tracking the dynamics of the specific time and shaping the individuality of the artistic symbol in the polyphony of the poet's personal style. In R. Rza's poem "The Old Crocodile", the issues relevant to the 1960s, such as the fate of small nations turned into colonies of large powers, are generalized in the symbolic-allegorical text, which provides a clearer and more precise expression of the idea. In the poem, small fish symbolize the colonized countries, and the large crocodile represents the great powers, generalizing the tragedy of small nations becoming victims of large states.

### Conclusions

The symbol is an artistic mechanism. It always has the potential to be repeated, renewed, and emerge in a completely new context within a cyclical process. What stands out here is the way the artistic symbol, with its inherent qualities, is updated in accordance with ideology, time, and societal psychology. The transformation and renewal of symbolic types in poetry, according to the psychology of time and the individual, is inevitable. In this regard, the artistic symbol generalizes and transforms social relations, the specific characteristics and dynamics of time, into an idea, through the lens of a concrete, functional image, object, or subject. If time and ideology do not change, symbols remain static and unchanging. The interpretation of the image and the transformations of the symbol are primarily shaped by the factor of time, as well as the mechanisms of perceiving and evaluating it.

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