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## THE USE OF NATURE DETAILS IN THE POETIC REFLECTION IN KARABAKH INCIDENTS (IN POEMS AND EPICS)

*The main aim of the article is to study the use of nature in the poetic reflection. Thus, the article is dedicated to the use of nature in the poetic reflection in Karabakh incidents. There is no century in history that has not witnessed a war dragging human society to the brink of destruction. The some points are determined in the article. Actually, when humans learned to hold stones, they also learned to throw them at others, too. The desire to possess more, human greed, has led to countless wars that destroyed people, homes, cities, and historical monuments. Additionally, the most of the oldest known literary works are devoted to themes of battles, wars, and heroism both in world literature and in Azerbaijani literature, The “Iliad” and “Odyssey” in Greek literature, the “Book of Dada Korkut,” “Manas,” “Gilgamesh,” and other epics are examples of heroism dedicated to great conflicts and wars and opened, discussed in the resaerch as well.*

*Lyric poetry responds most swiftly reflects to the events. The expressive nature of the genre allows the creator to depict events briefly and concisely, making such works more memorable and ensuring their transmission to future generations. Karabakh events represent one of the greatest injustices a nation can experience. Over 30 years of history related to these events have inspired thousands of poems, epics, and prose works in Azerbaijani literature, both major and minor. In such works, nature often takes on the role of a central character. The beautiful nature of Karabakh inspires creators, enabling their works to be more poignant and artistically powerful. This article identifies the characteristics of references to nature details in poems and epics dedicated to the Karabakh war and provides analyses based on examples in order to prove the use of nature in the poetic reflection.*

*Application importance: the material can be used in lectures and seminars in higher education institutions.*

**Key words:** verse, epic, nature, social, lyric poetry.

**Formulation of the problem.** It would not be wrong to say that war is the oldest theme in world literature. At the very least, numerous examples from masterpieces of world literature that have reached us confirm this idea. Homer’s “Iliad” and “Odyssey,” Virgil’s “Aeneid,” the “Book of Dede Korkut,” “Manas,” “Maaday Qara,” considered monuments of ancient Turkic culture, and even the ancient Sumerian epic “Gilgamesh,” along with hundreds of epics, tales, stories, poems, and poems known to us from ancient Chinese, Indian, and Egyptian sources, are primarily focused on the history of battles and wars. As long as wars continue in the world, works dedicated to this theme will never lose their relevance. Perhaps this is why a special branch in literature stands out: war literature. Catherine Calloway wrote in her research “War in literature and drama”: “It is as universal as themes of love or death or time or human frailty. The proliferation of recent scholarship on war serves only to remind us that war is still very much a contemporary issue and that war literature is a popular topic for publication. Since 1890, the literature of war has generated almost 23,000 books, essays, theses,

dissertations, and other materials – far too many to enumerate in this selective article – as well as special collections of war materials at many universities, Journals and journal issues, and numerous conference sessions. A century after the first scholarship appeared, in the 1980s and 1990s especially, a growing number of scholars began writing in earnest about war and literature, and their efforts have continued into the 21st century” [11].

**Main part.** The purpose of the article is to analyze the using of nature in the poetic reflection of Karabakh incidents (in poems and epics).

War literature serves as a herald of the tragedy, pain, suffering, and protest of millions of people, and sometimes, conversely, of enthusiasm, as well as the inherent human desire for destruction, devastation, and annihilation. While some scholars attempt to characterize war literature as a separate genre or type, we believe this is entirely incorrect. If this were the case, then love would need to be classified as a separate genre, and peace as another. Such an approach would create chaos within the solid rules and structures of literary studies.

No matter what events occur in the world, literature, and by extension poetry, provides the most rapid response. The expressive and concise nature of the lyrical genre allows poets to convey their intended message in the most impactful way. Such poems do not merely depict lyrical scenes related to war; they also reflect the poet's emotions, the consequences of war, and the feelings of everyone affected, from soldiers confronting the aftermath to ordinary individuals.

War does not end solely with the death of a soldier. The families left fatherless, orphaned children, cities and villages reduced to ruins, and historical and cultural monuments turned to rubble are just the visible material aspects of the immense tragedy. The thousands or even millions of lost emotions and shattered dreams represent the spiritual dimensions of this catastrophe: "Poetry has been incredibly important in both a literary and historical function over the years, and it's often a tool to see a soldier's journey throughout the conflict, the reader witnessing the gradual toll war takes on the poet. Of course, the most famous war poets were writing in WWI: Rupert Brooke was famous for his idealism and enthusiasm for war, while Siegfried Sassoon and Wilfred Owen encapsulated the anger, frustration, and fear that soldiers were feeling, as well as exploring abstract, moral perplexities" [12].

The Karabakh War took place at the turn of two centuries between two peoples who were once considered "brotherly." The Armenians' territorial claims on Karabakh, an ancient and eternal part of Azerbaijan, and the many tragedies they caused there with the support of powerful allies, naturally did not escape the attention of Azerbaijani literature. Over decades, these events became one of the dominant themes in literature. From a general perspective, it can be said that there is hardly a home or family in Azerbaijan that has not been affected by this tragedy. Perhaps this is why it would not be an exaggeration to say that the events of Karabakh turned many into poets.

**Literature review.** Karabakh did not remain confined to artistic literature. Poems, epics, stories, novellas, novels, and others were also addressed in academic literary studies. Scholars of the time analyzed the works and expressed their views. In monographic studies such as Salida Sharifova's "Genre Characteristics, Problematics, Characters, and Artistic Language of Works Reflecting the Karabakh Theme in the Independence Period of Azerbaijani Literature", Elchin Mehraliyev's "The Karabakh Theme in Azerbaijani Literature: Idea and Artistic Features", and Marziya Najafova's "Our Poetry's Karabakh War – Patriotic War", as well as

in hundreds of scientific articles, various aspects of the issue have been clarified. However, we have not encountered a separate research study dedicated to the use of nature details in poetic works on the Karabakh theme. Within the scope of this article, we will attempt to address this issue scientifically.

Literary scholar T. Alishanoglu expressed his unique perspective on the Karabakh theme, writing: "The poetry of lamentation, the literature of cry, Khojaly ... the pen has reached places where it falters; whatever we wrote, wherever we directed it, we have ended up at Karabakh. Sometimes, inner censorship has not allowed it. The state of helplessness, the deficiency complex we lived through, the syndrome of incompleteness, created psychological barriers. The voice of poetry became muffled. Novel characters drowned within themselves, story plots hit dead ends and could not escape..." [1, p. 14]. However, our poets wrote, created, and tried to heal the bleeding wound. Hundreds of poetic works dedicated to the theme emerged, spanning every genre from folk songs to epics. To claim that all of these were perfect examples would be a mistake. Most of these poems were forgotten the day after their publication. Among the writers of these poems were both seasoned poets and emerging ones.

When Fikrat Goja picked up his pen, the "brotherly" great country was still experiencing its flourishing era. Perhaps those who claim that he aged on the poetic stage of two different eras are not mistaken. After the restoration of Azerbaijan's independence, the unique style of the poet did not change. However, new themes were added. As a citizen-poet, Karabakh became the central theme of his works. Perhaps this is why, when the burden of Karabakh's sorrow became too heavy for his pen, the People's Poet transitioned from verse to prose, replacing poetry with stories, novels, and dramas. Alongside F. Goja's numerous poems dedicated to Karabakh, he also wrote epics such as "Martyrs' Alley", "Ballad of a Soldier", and "The Sons Who Carried the Flag". The epic "Martyrs' Alley" is dedicated to Azerbaijan's National Hero Chingiz Mustafayev, who was not only a witness to the events in Karabakh but also captured them on his video camera, crying out to Azerbaijan and the world. Tragically, he lost his life to enemy bullets during a new filming.

The epic begins with Chingiz expressing regret over the injustices in Karabakh and the loss of territories due to the incompetence of the negligent leadership. He emphasizes that the Azerbaijani people and leadership at the time were far superior to what was essentially a "handful" of enemies. The homeland is betrayed by treachery. In subsequent

episodes, we see the “Karabakh Karbala” of Khojaly and Chingiz capturing it on his camera. The horror of the tragedy freezes Chingiz’s blood, and the poet once again turns to nature:

Körpə bir qız qar üstündə  
Donub zərif çiçək kimi,  
Çingizin qolları üstə  
Ölüm yuxusunda yatır  
balaca bir mələk kimi.  
Yerlə göyün arasında  
Dəhşət içrə Çingiz çaşılıb  
tale kimi, fələk kimi. [7, p. 314]

Meaning of the poem:

The image of a little girl frozen on the snow evokes a chilling sense of innocence lost amidst the brutality of war. Comparing her to a delicate flower highlights her fragility and the stark contrast between her purity and the harshness of her surroundings.

“I have forgotten how to smile; I will smile when I avenge Khojaly,” said the poet.

When the first sounds of victory were heard, the poet once again turned to his pen. The news of victory perhaps soothed his weary heart, his now aged and frail nerves. With its last strength, the pen wrote the song of triumph. During those days, the poet did not forget that everywhere was Karabakh. This land is enough for all of us. This land, made even more precious and dear to us by the blood of those who died for it, belongs to us all.

Qonşu torpağını zorla alanı  
Kül eylər, üstündə bitər O Torpaq!  
Yaşarsan, görərsən gələndə vaxtı...  
Hər kəs O Torpaqdı – O Qarabağdı! [2, p. 7]

Meaning of the poem:

The poet suggests that those who take their neighbor’s land by force will ultimately face destruction and failure. The phrase “kül eylər” (turns to ashes) symbolizes the inevitable downfall of aggressors. The land, despite being forcefully taken, will reject the oppressor, as if it belongs to its rightful owners by nature.

Poet Alamdar Guluzade is one of the artists who frequently addresses the topic of Karabakh. His poems, such as “Martyr’s City” and “Karabakh Game”, are notable works. The poem “Martyr’s City” is dedicated to one of the darkest chapters in human history, the Khojaly tragedy, which is considered the pinnacle of injustice and inhumanity. The poet also lost his father on that bloody night. This unforgettable event deeply wounded the poet, just as it profoundly shook everyone with a sense of humanity. It compelled

him to inscribe his most profound emotions into the history of Azerbaijani literature with the “blood of his pen.” If we were to describe the poet’s entire body of work as a “Karabakh Chronicle,” this poem might well serve as its prelude. In the poem, the poet skillfully employs vivid depictions of nature to lyrically convey the pain and sorrow of the tragedy, creating a profound emotional resonance.

Dünyanın baharı qışdan seçilmir,  
Çillədə yağan qar nə bitirəcək?  
Bu dərdi hər ölkə daşıya bilmir,  
Bir qələm çiyinə nə götürəcək? [8, p. 7]

Meaning of the poem:

The poet starts by suggesting that the distinction between spring and winter, symbolizing hope and despair, is not always clear. This could be interpreted as the difficulty in seeing a way out of suffering, where even hope (spring) and despair (winter) blend together in the harsh realities of life.

The poet emphasizes that the world lacks justice and seems to anticipate what a bloody, dark night might bring. Snow, winter cold, pain, and inevitable death are symbols in this context. The poet knows that the burden of the events occurring on this bloody night cannot be carried by the pen. M.Najafova, commenting on the poem Şəhid şəhər, refers to it as an “elegy” not only for the people of Khojaly but for all our lands. She says, “Şəhid şəhər” is a history textbook written in blood, addressed to my future. It is not just the tragedy of Khojaly but also the ‘martyrdom’ of our lost lands, which fell victim to betrayal by the enemies. It is not only the martyrs of Khojaly but also the elegy for all the occupied territories of ours. It is not just the poet’s voice but the voice of the children of this nation, raised to the heavens, the sound of our burning hearts and the sighs of our unfulfilled desires [6, p. 37]. The poet seems to intensify the emotional impact of the work by incorporating elegiac bayati verses in certain parts of the poem. In this, nature plays a central role in expressing pain and suffering through its artistic effectiveness:

Dərə sızlar, döş mələr,  
Daşda qaldı eşmələr.  
Bu üzde gözümdədir  
O üzdəki çeşmələr. [8, p. 21]

Meaning of the poem:

This poem expresses deep sorrow and a sense of loss. The valley cries, the chest wails” evokes feelings of grief, as though nature itself is mourning. The “Daşda qaldı eşmələr” (“The traces are left on the stone”) suggests that the pain and memories are

permanent, imprinted in the surroundings, impossible to erase. The final line, “On this face, it is in my eyes; the springs on that face” reflects the contrast between the present and the past – while the poet may still be haunted by the lost, painful memories, the tears or “springs” from the past remain vivid in their mind.

One of the poems dedicated to the Xojali (Khojaly) tragedy is “Khojaly Symphony” by Nurangiz Gun. The title “symphony” does not refer to a typical musical composition but is meant to convey the enormity of the tragedy’s pain. The poem is written within the colorful possibilities of free verse, reflecting Nurangiz Gun’s unique style. At various moments, the poet turns to nature, sometimes blaming it, sometimes making it a witness, seeking its help to escape the weight of the tragedy. However, nature here is powerless, “helpless,” and “defenseless.” Through the figure of Nurangiz Gun, nature has no answer to give to the Azerbaijani woman or mother.

Ah, yetim baxır nəbatat...  
O küknar hələ də ağlayır...  
Yonur-tökür saçlarını yoncalar,  
o balaca qız üçün.  
Çöl boyu qaçısan  
“can gülüm can” oynayan uşaqlarçın  
darıxır yoncalar... ağaclar!  
Bu ayrılıq felinə Sizsiniz günahkar,  
Bəşəri Zalımlar! [3, s. 7]

Meaning of the poem:

The speaker depicts the natural world – trees, grass, and plants – as witnesses to the suffering of the innocent, especially the children. The “yetim” (or orphan) gaze of nature represents the lost innocence and the devastation caused by the tragedy. The “küknar” (fir tree) continues to cry, as it remains a symbol of the pain and mourning that has not yet ceased. The image of “yonclar” (weeds or grass) “burning and shedding their hair” symbolizes the helplessness of nature, which, in its innocence, cannot prevent the suffering of the child.

After the Khojaly massacre, the tragic state of Karabakh, where even a single flower finds it hard to bloom, is horrifying. Nature, bewildered by the actions of the “Human Tyrants,” bears the anguish of separation from its literary inhabitants. The poet writes with deep heartache about the most painful aspect of the tragedy – the transformation of children into targets and victims. Even nature, mourning the loss of those children, knows the perpetrators very well; it is aware of the human, the barbaric killers’ address.

In the poem, through the voice of the lyrical hero, the author’s emotions, thoughts, and desires

are expressed. Through the character, Nurangiz Gun reveals the points she wants to convey to the reader. The description of the tragic fate of the children murdered in the Xojali massacre by the author is impossible to read without heartache.

The poet Alirza Hasrat’s “Gunpowder-scented Flower”, a lyrical-philosophical poem, was written after our great victory in the Second Karabakh War. The lyrical hero of the poem blends the pain of years with the sweet taste of victory. The poet symbolizes the blood of martyrs under the concept of a “gunpowder-scented flower.” The poem is rich in symbolism throughout. Hasrat, like other poets, turns to nature to describe the development of events. In various parts of the poem, the poet directs his focus to nature to capture both the beauty of Karabakh and the long-standing longing experienced over the years:

Qanadıyla Günəşi yelpikləyən o quşun, –  
Ahından köz götürüb addımlayırdı qoşun.  
Hər şəhidin köksündə çiçəkləyəndə qurşun,  
Yaxanıza medaltək siz də taxın Günəşi. [4, s. 20]

Meaning of the poem:

The bird here can be seen as a symbol of hope, freedom, or defiance, trying to bring light or hope (the Sun) amidst the darkness or destruction of war.

The soldiers or warriors are depicted as enduring great pain and suffering (“groans”), but they persist, driven by their duty, almost as though the pain fuels their advance, symbolized by “embers” (the remnants of burning grief and determination).

This powerful line symbolizes the sacrifice of the martyrs. The “blooms” refer to the blossoming of lives lost to violence, with “bullets” representing the cause of death. The image of blooming amidst death suggests the transformation of pain into honor and remembrance.

This line encourages those who remain behind to honor the fallen by symbolically wearing the “Sun” (hope, light, or the legacy of the martyrs) as a medal, carrying forward the sacrifice and spirit of those who died.

The poet, who compares the attack of the heroic Azerbaijani army to the wrath of the legendary Simurgh and the Emerald bird, describes how the blood of every brave soldier, struck by enemy bullets, blossoms like a flower on the homeland’s soil when their chest becomes the target of the enemy. We are the children of the Land of Fire, and fire flows through our veins. Therefore, the expression “wear the Sun like a medal on your chest” should not seem like an exaggeration. The strength of the Azerbaijani



man derives from fire and the Sun. His fury also rains down on the enemy as fire.

Düşmən öz ətəyini özünə yelpik tutar,  
Hər yanı sarı sünbül, bağ-bağat, çəltik tutar.  
Xarıbülbül başını bundan belə dik tutar,  
Millətin Qarabağa qayıdışı başladı. [4, s.22]

Meaning of the poem:

This line suggests that the enemy is trying to manipulate or take control of the land, symbolized by their “skirt” which they are fanning themselves with. It represents an attempt to dominate or change the nature of the land.

The poet paints a picture of fertile land, rich with golden wheat, gardens, and rice fields. This is a symbol of prosperity and growth, contrasting with the previous image of manipulation. It implies the natural beauty and bounty of the land, which remains resilient despite attempts to take control.

The “Xarıbülbül” is a symbolic flower of Karabakh, representing the spirit and pride of the region. The line indicates that, after the struggles and challenges, the flower now “holds its head high,” symbolizing pride, strength, and resilience. The land and its people are reclaiming their dignity and autonomy.

The final line signifies the return of the people to Karabakh, the return to their roots, their homeland. It marks the beginning of the reclamation of Karabakh by the Azerbaijani people.

As we know, after the great victory, the Khari-Bulbul flower finally received the recognition it deserved over the years – it became the symbol of victory. For years, the land of Karabakh, waiting with its head bowed for its eternal and everlasting inhabitants, seemed to straighten up with the first steps of the soldiers, and the homeland once again blossomed and revived with the first echoes of return. The Khari-Bulbul flower, no longer bowing its head, bloomed even more beautifully, shining not only on the soldiers’ chests but now on the chests of all Azerbaijanis.

One of the artists who has never remained indifferent to the Karabakh war, and who has been echoing the voice of the people since the early years of the war, is Firuze Mammadli. “Firuze Mammadli’s poetry (and even her prose) is, from beginning to end, an artistic-aesthetic expression of the theme of citizenship. Whatever she writes, her topics ultimately come to one point: the pain and sufferings of her birthplace, the bloodied mothers and sisters, the martyrs’ sons of the homeland, the looted homes, the ruined, wind-scattered villages, and in the background, the savage, bloodthirsty enemy – the Armenian figure” [6, p. 41].

Even in 1988, when talking about the events in the Topkhana forest, Firuze Mammadli demonstrated her understanding of the Armenian nature and expressed her astonishment at the Armenian claim to the ancient lands and national places of our ancestors. This astonishment is expressed in the poet’s poem “Ağ Ulus – Aqlis – Əylis.”:

“Aqlis” – deyirlər, bu – “Ağ ulus”dur,  
Ad özü səsləyir: “Gəl məni ara”.  
“Ağ ulus” – “böyük kənd, oba” deməkdir,  
Canım, “ulus” hara, erməni hara?! [5, p. 197]

Meaning of the poem:

In this poem, the poet reflects on the confusion and disbelief surrounding the claim of Armenians to certain territories. The term “Aqlis” (or “Ağ Ulus” in Azerbaijani) is referenced, which translates to “White Nation” or “Great Village, Settlement.” The poet questions the legitimacy of this claim, asking, “Where does ‘ulus’ (nation) belong, and where does the Armenian belong?” This rhetorical question highlights the poet’s disbelief that the Armenian people, who have no historical or cultural connection to these lands, are laying claim to them.

By using the phrase “Ağ ulus” or “great village,” the poet is emphasizing that the land in question has been a part of Azerbaijani heritage for centuries, and it is inconceivable to associate it with the Armenians.

As is known, place names are a part of the nature motif. Here, the poet discusses the history of the village of Aylis and cannot comprehend its current different name given by the Armenians. The poet is surprised by the ancient Turkish word “ulus” (nation) being used by Armenians. Furthermore, in many of the poet’s works, such as “Azerbaijan in Flames,” “On the Paths of Freedom,” “Migration,” “Martyrs’ Graves,” “Immortals, or 37–57,” “The Revenge Will Be Harsh on That Day,” “The Battle is Waged,” “Get Angry, For God’s Sake,” “Lachin,” “My Revenge is Shusha,” and many others, the suffering of Karabakh is portrayed from various perspectives. The poet’s longing for his homeland is conveyed through the power of his pen.

In the poet’s work, the theme of Karabakh existed even before the deterioration of historical Armenian-Azerbaijani relations. The poet, who depicted Karabakh as a land of villages and settlements, was powerless in the face of Karabakh’s beauty; his only strength was to describe it with his pen. At that time, many intellectuals, including F. Mammadli, sensed that this beauty might also be Karabakh’s “curse.” Perhaps that is why there was a rush to write works about Karabakh.

A. Rafiyeva wrote: “In some works, the impact of the war’s disaster on both the country and

individuals is discussed. These works are considered psychological due to their profound emotional depth. In these psychological works, the main characters are those whose lives were changed by war. Writers, by cursing the disasters that befall these characters, directly show an artistic stance against wars, which are the greatest calamity of the world. War, in the end, brings the destruction of society. Artists who sense this, in fact, call on humanity to avoid wars.” The scholar emphasizes that war is one of the most significant factors influencing the psychology of a period and its people.

**Conclusions.** Karabakh was a wound that our people believed would never heal. Perhaps that is why Karabakh poetry was primarily built on pessimism. Regardless of the theme, nature motifs are often decorations of the subject matter. In our opinion, the prominence of nature motifs in poems dedicated to Karabakh is not just a traditional appeal to nature by poets, but also a significant reflection of Karabakh’s mysterious nature. Among the hundreds of examples dedicated to the issue, there is not a single poem where the poet does not turn to nature to enhance the emotional impact.

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#### Валісва Дж. Е. ВИКОРИСТАННЯ ДЕТАЛЕЙ ПРИРОДИ

#### В ПОЕТИЧНОМУ ВІДОБРАЖЕННІ КАРАБАХСЬКИХ ПОДІЙ (У ПОЕМАХ ТА ЕПОСАХ)

Основною метою статті є дослідження використання природи в поетичному відображенні. Отже, стаття присвячена використанню природи в поетичному відображенні карабахських подій. Немає жодного століття в історії, яке б не було свідком війни, яка тягнула людське суспільство на межу знищення. Деякі моменти визначені в статті. Насправді, коли люди навчилися тримати каміння, вони також навчилися кидати їх в інших. Бажання мати більше, людська жадібність призвели до незліченних воєн, які руйнували людей, домівки, міста та історичні пам’ятки. Крім того, більшість найдавніших відомих літературних творів, як у світовій літературі, так і в азербайджанській літературі, присвячені темі битв, війн, героїзму. «Іліада» та «Одіссея» в грецькій літературі, «Книга Дада Коркута», «Манас», «Гільгамеш» та інші епоси є прикладами героїки, присвяченої великим конфліктам і війнам і відкритим, обговорюваним також у дослідженні.

Лірика найшвидше реагує на події. Експресивний характер жанру дозволяє творцеві коротко й лаконічно зображати події, що робить такі твори більш запам’ятовуваними та забезпечує їх передачу майбутнім поколінням. Події в Карабасі являють собою одну з найбільших несправедливостей, яких може зазнати нація. Понад 30 років історії, пов’язаної з цими подіями, надихнули тисячі віршів, епічних і прозових творів в азербайджанській літературі, як основний, так і другорядний. У таких творах природа часто виступає в ролі центрального героя. Прекрасна природа Карабаху надихає творців, роблячи їх роботи більш зворушливими та художньо сильними. У статті визначено особливості звернення до деталей природи в поемах і епосах, присвячених карабаській війні, на прикладах наведено аналіз використання природи в поетичному відображенні.

Прикладне значення: матеріал може бути використаний на лекціях та семінарах у вищих навчальних закладах.

**Ключові слова:** вірш, епос, природа, соціальна лірика.