



**Figurative In The Works Of Russian Classics And Tatar Poets Of The Early XX  
Century**

**Angelina A. Khaybullina<sup>1</sup> Alsu Z. Khabibullina<sup>2</sup>, Elvira F. Nagumanova<sup>3</sup>, Akmaral  
B. Almenova<sup>4</sup>**

**1 Kazan Federal University, Leo Tolstoy Institute of Philology and Intercultural  
Communication, Email: angelina.khaibullina@mail.ru**

**2 Kazan Federal University, Leo Tolstoy Institute of Philology and Intercultural  
Communication**

**3 Kazan Federal University, Leo Tolstoy Institute of Philology and Intercultural  
Communication**

**4 Kyzylorda State University named after Korkyt Ata**

**ABSTRACT**

The article deals with the comparative study of the poetics of figurative in various national literatures. This topic has not previously become the subject of special philological works, but the study of it in a comparative aspect based on the material of Russian and Tatar poetry is important. The actual basis of the article is well known works of Russian classical poetry and Tatar literature of the early 20th century. A comparison of the figurative devices has showed that in the Tatar lyric poetry, which goes back to the traditions of the Arab-Muslim cultures, the poets aimed to emphasize the idea of variability, incompleteness of everything existing, of human entity. And on the contrary, the idea of the triumph of God, that is at the head of everything that seeks a form, was spontaneously expressed in their literary works. A special role in creating a pictorial image is played by Sufi symbols (female curls, full moon, star), which gave rise to the semantic duality of the works of Tatar poets. The analysis of the figurative ekphrasis in a comparative aspect confirmed that it is not typical for the poetics of Tatar literature of the early 20th century, first of all, in its content that has developed in Russian and Western European traditions. Such feature of poetics is explained by the national identity of Tatar literature, its connections with religion which denied the idea to use words in order to plastically and sensually depict a work of fine art, for instance, a picture or a portrait.

**Keywords:** picturesque, Russian classics, Tatar poetry, juxtaposition of literatures, identity.



## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Figurative in literature is a phenomenon that is based on the ability of literature to interact with other kinds of art, in particular, with painting. According to E. Sedykh writes, “painting in word (the depiction with the word, verbal painting) - special stylistic properties of rich coloristic verbal work. It is based on the use of various unusual figurative devices which are called “tropes”. Using them, the writer “paints” a portrait or a landscape, depicts a thing, accentuates the reader’s attention to the symbolic detail” (Sedykh,2011).

The most important feature of vivid figurativeness in literature is its connection with the literary context, the traditions of creating an image in different kinds of art. Thus, A. Losev emphasized *the variability* of the depicted image created by word, its instability, which may have a subjective character: “a picturesque picture always changes, always “floats” or “influxes”, “always grows” (LosevA,1982).

Thinking about figurative in the cross-literary context, it is necessary to take into account not only the similarities of its nature, but also the differences that are objective in comparative study. It is right to state that the representation of figurative in literatures that are outlined by linguistic, cultural and religious traditions, such as Russian and Tatar, may have a completely unique content.

## **2. METHODS**

The undertaken research is carried out in the light of the ideas of comparative literary criticism, based on the notion that “comparison implies preservation of the uniqueness (distinctive character) of each of the literatures included in the scope of the study. This can be facilitated by a description as a research method”( SafiullinY,2010).

The idea of value of differences between the phenomena of different national literatures in the field of comparison developed also in the works by V. Amineva (2015, January 2015), M. Ibrahimov (2015), R. Bekmetov (2016), A. Finger (2014).

In comparative studies, the fact that the “collision” of different traditions and identities is a necessary condition for emerging a dialogue between literatures is emphasized.

The concept of the study was influenced by the works of native and foreign scholars devoted to hermeneutics and the problem of interpretation of literary texts (BakhtinM,1986, Gadamer,1988). Thus, G.-G.Gadamer notes that “a hermeneutically



educated consciousness must be receptive to the otherness of the text from the very beginning” (Gadamer,1988).

R. Panikkar puts forward one of the original ideas of philosophical hermeneutics. In his work “Indology as Cross-cultural Catalyst” the so-called “homological principle”, which characterizes new approaches to hermeneutic analysis is introduced. According to the scholar, “the homological principle, which is an internal interpretation of the phenomenon, proceeds from the rule: <...> any interpretation arising beyond the tradition must meet all the requirements of this tradition and at least coincide phenomenologically with self-interpretation, i.e. from within” (Panikkar,1971).

Based on the principle of homology, we proceed from the view of the problem of figurative in multinational literatures as a phenomenon in which the principle of correlation (coexistence) of similar but not interchangeable and untranslatable elements of poetics in the works of Russian and Tatar authors is valuable. It is not the identity of similar phenomena, that, on the one hand, allows to avoid misinterpretations of literary works that are closely interrelated, and, on the other hand, indicates the originality of the individual methods of creating figurative in each of the juxtaposed literatures.

**The purpose** of the research deals with the examination of unique elements of the poetics of figurative in lyrical works of the Russian classics of the 19th century. and Tatar poets of the early 20th century.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Tatar poetry of the early 20th century, genetically related to the culture of the Arab-Muslim East, preserves similar features of poetics of figurative in literature. First and foremost, in the eastern medieval tradition, vivid imagery in literature was not aimed at creating a reliable portrait of the character and his human appearance. By means of various literary tropes, and, in particular, metaphors, Oriental poets (Nizami, Saadi, Jami) emphasized the variability, fundamental incompleteness and imperfection of everything existing, human entity, and, on the contrary, the triumph of God being above everything which strives to take shape.

A special place in creating figurative image in Tatar poetry was taken by traditional Sufi symbols, which acquired a semantic duality. According to N. Yusupova, in the works of Tatar poets “first of all, there are Sufi cultural codes which are present the form of transformed stated Sufi symbols. In a similar way, Sufi poetry has become the basis of



symbolic thinking” (YusupovaN,2014). Symbols that go back to Sufism in Tatar literature of the early 20th century acquire a synthetic character.

So, the poem by Derdmend “*Тиң bulyrmy yoldyz tulgan ayga*» – «*Razve sravnitsya zvezdochka s polnoy lunoy*” has the features of ambiguity. Within the scope of Sufi aesthetics, here is the image of the moon is on the foreground, with which an eastern beautiful lady was traditionally compared, and she, in turn, symbolized the beauty and greatness of God (the full moon is the manifestation of divine beauty). A star striving to her is the way of the Sufi to the Creator, who keeps the feelings of divine love. Like the eastern ghazals of Saadi, Hafiz, in the poem of Derdmend the following stated antithesis is rendered: the lover (sufi) - a beauty (god). The lyrical character is afraid of looking at her, she is drifting apart, leaving him just a remembrance, burning of a love feeling (experience of divine love).

*Тиң bulyrmy yoldyz tulgan ayga –  
Ul buyga-synga, achyk chyrayga!  
Omtylgan iläk kebek yöreshläre,  
Ul moңly, matur kыз sөzeshläre.  
Yalvaru kiräkmäs, kiräk naz gyna,  
Ul da – uryny belän, az-az gyna!* (Dermend Шигыръләр,2009)

*Razve sravnitsya zvezdochka s polnoy lunoy?  
Etot stan i litso — u tebya lish' odnoy.  
A pokhodka tvoya, kak u stroynoy gazeli,  
Vzglyad tvoy grusten, stoyu pred toboy orobelo.  
Bez mol'by, lish' privetlivey nuzhno vzglyanut',  
S laskoy nezhnoy, i to — inogda, i chut'-chut'. (Translation – L. Grigorieva).*

It is interesting to note that, painting the image of a beauty, Derdmend uses *comparison* with a gazelle (a doe) (“*Походка твоя, словно лани устремленной*”/“*Your gait, like a doe rushing*”), which, like the symbolic images of the sky, distance us from the perception of a full and plastic female image.

In many respects, such feature of poetic picturesqueness was marked by the literary tradition of depicting God in literature and Oriental art. According to Shukurov, “people are not given an ability to see authentic things not only due to fundamental distance and



inexpressibility of the object of cognition, but also the imperfection of the natural qualities of a contemplator”( Shukurov,1989).

The lyrics by Dermend comprises the poem "*Rāsem (Nəvoidan)*" – "*Portret (Iz Navoi)*", which is also devoted to a woman.

*Tānkāen ak, tūshkāilāren kiḡ iaratkan,*

*Bitkāeneḡ iḡ ochynda miḡ iaratkan;*

*Saklar əchen zifa buen iaman kyzdən,*

*Chəchkāilāren aiak belən tiḡ iaratkan!* (Dermend ШИГЫРЬЛӘР,2009).

*Kozha belaia, grudi prostor shirok,*

*Nezhno rodinka ukrasila litso,*

*Stroinyi stan khrianiat ot glaz durnykh,*

*Kosy v pol - tak vozliubil Prorok!* (Подстр. перевод)

As in the poem "Razve sravnitsja zvezdochka s polnoj lunoj", its basis is a female portrait written in the oriental spirit, as indicated by the appeal to Navoi. The work has two ideas of expression: on the one hand, it creates an image of woman, which emphasizes the individual features that depict her appearance - white body, a birthmark on her face, long hair. They create an impression of not full (it's a kind of sketch), vague, but directed to the future an image of a beautiful young lady. On the other hand, the details of the portrait can also be "read" in the Sufi clue, for instance, hair curls, woman's plaits in Oriental poetics meant a difficult way of the lover (Sufi) to God, knowledge of the highest truth. In the light of this interpretation, the picturesqueness of the female image distances us from the authentic portrait of the beauty, acquiring ineffable features that lead him to the sphere of the religious- mystical world - understanding God.

Let us turn to the poem of Tatar poet S. Babich «*Əjdə, kūḡelem*» – «*Dusha moja*».

Picturesque is created in it by means of antithesis: land – sky.

*Əjdə kykkə, monda jam' juk, kyktə jam' bar, anda nur,*

*Mondə nərsə? – Jam'le synnar...Anda hur bar, anda hur.*

*Əjdə, gomrem, əjdə, bəhtem, əjdə, kūḡelem, bergələp,*

*Monda bulsa kybələklər, andadyr barlyk mələk* (Ramiev S,2005).



*Vzletim na nebo, zdes' krasoty net, na nebesah est' krasota i raja svet.*

*A zdes'?' - Prekrasny tol'ko obrazy... Lish' tam, v rajju, dusha najdet na vsjo otvet.*

*O zhizn' moja, o schast'e, o, dusha, my v nebo voznesjomsja vmeste s vami,*

*Zdes' – babochki zemnye, i lish' tam prekrasnym raem nasladimsja s angelami*

(Interlinear translation).

In Babich's work, there are no colourfully rich details, expressive Sufi symbols, as, for instance, in the poems by Derdmend. However, the mention of paradise with the angels, the light of paradise, which are opposed to the fluttering of "earth butterflies", allows to see the eastern code in it. The motion of soul of the lyrical character from earth to heaven strengthens in the reader's consciousness the idea of God and visual associations with the picture of an infinitely beautiful paradise as the world of dream. We believe that it is the last line of the work in which the poet speaks of the sky of great beauty as the place of paradise, that creates an imaginary picture of paradise beauty in the reader's consciousness, which, however, as in the work of oriental poets, has the features of a changeable, moving.

In Koran the way of this description of Paradise is expressed in its own way. The God said: "I have prepared for My servants what no eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no human heart can imagine" (Surah as-Sazhda ayat 17).

Let us consider the manner in which Russian poetry of the 19th century conveyed the idea of figurative.

To illustrate the idea of the originality of the poetics of figurative in Russian literature, let us turn to M. Lermontov's poem "Dream". There are colourful details and images, which allow to speak about the figurative start in the lyrics of the Russian poet.

The work conveys the perception of colouristic richness of the two colours:

yellow ("Isolncezh gloihzheltye vershiny") and red, turning into garnet

("Glubokaja eshhe dymilas' rana, / Pokaplekov' tochilas' jamoja"; "Vegogrudi, dymjas', chernelarana, / Ikrov' lilas' hladejushhejstruej") (Lermontov M, 1988).

The very beginning of the poem already creates a picture of lyrical character's death, which is intensified by means of various images associated with the elements of fire



(“*вполдневный жар*”, “*солнцежгло*”, “*Ижгломеня – носпалямертвымсном*” / “*in the midday heat*”, “*the sun scorched*”, “*and burned me - but I was dead to the world*”).

Unlike Babich’s poem, which depicts the light of paradise (“*кыктә jam’ bar, anda nur*”), the element of fire here is coloured by the semantics of death approaching to yellow and red colours to icy white one. This is most clearly emphasized by the epithets in the last strophe of the work: “*V ego grudi, dymjas’, chernela rana, / I krov’ lilas’ hladejushhej struej*”. In the Russian language, the word “*холод*” / “*cold*” creates the ideas of cold, death, which are traditionally conveyed through a white colour.

Thus, in Lermontov’s work

“*Dream*”, the motifs of death and loneliness, opening through the image of dream in which the lyrical hero appears killed twice (first in his dream and then in the dream of his beloved) in foreign country, are intensified by the colour semantics of the images: from bright yellow of the scorching sun and yellow peaks to red and black-and-red colours of blood. Then, in the last verse, the colour palette becomes more complex and contrasting - now finally it points to the death of the character. Hence, though not presented in its strict content, the antithesis arises: a black wound - a freezing stream, i.e. a freezing stream that turns a person into white, that is, into death.

#### 4. **DISCUSSION**

Figurative in literature is closely connected with a phenomenon such as **ekphrasis** (from the Greek language “*ekphrasis*” from “*ek-phraso*” – “*express*”, convey) - presentation of one art by means of another, for instance, the verbal expression of works of painting. In M. Urtmintsev’s opinion, “if we are talking about a pictorial ekphrasis in the structure of a literary work, then it should be accepted that the suggested aesthetic object (the art of painting) has a continuous, diverse nature, and literature - discrete. <...> Only aliterary work, that has *a figure* denoting it, lends itself to a verbal description” (UrtmintsevM,2010). It is worth emphasizing that there are a lot of works dealing with the problem of ekphrasis in contemporary foreign literary criticism (Rubins,2000; Tan J.2010; Rusieshvili,2015).

The aim at description and closeness in it with to the fine arts – sculpture and painting – is characteristic to “*anthological*” poems in Russian poetry from Batyushkov to Fet. These are the descriptions of sculptures in particular. For instance, Pushkin describes, as the name of the poem indicates, a real statue of the Tsarskoye Selo:



*Urnu s vodoj uroniv, ob utes ee deva razbila.*

*Deva pechal'no sedit, prazdnyj derzha cherepok.*

*Chudo! ne sjaknet voda, izlivajas' iz urny razbitoj;*

*Deva, nad vechnoj struej, vechno pechal'na sedit (PushkinA,1987).*

But creation of “living sculpture” of the same kind is possible in this genre without a really existing external object as well, as in the poem “Nereid”.

*Sredi zelenyh voln, lobzajushhih Tavridu,*

*Na utrennej zare ja videl nereidu.*

*Sokrytyj mezh derev, edva ja smel dohnut':*

*Nad jasnoj vlaguju poluboginja grud'*

*Mladuju, beluju kak lebed', vozdymala*

*I penu iz vlasov strueju vyzhimala (PushkinA,1987).*

## **5. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

Thus, ekphrasis, being a peculiar result of the interaction between literature and other kinds of arts appears to be a special model of the collaboration of literature and painting.

In this case, the function of ekphrasis in Russian and Western European literature remains unchanged: the integration of the constancy and sensual beauty of plastic images with the dynamics of verse is realized by means of it as a way to poetic immortality (RubinsM,2003). Figurative ekphrasis is not typical for Tatar poetry.

In Tatar poetry of the early 20th century, the figurative was reflected in a different way than in Russian classical literature: here one resisted the desire by means of word to plastically and sensually describe a piece of art, for example, a picture or a portrait, to correlate it with a lyrical character of the work. This feature of poetics is determined by the cultural values and identity of the Tatar people, who revealed themselves in their own way in national poetry, that goes back to the Oriental traditions.

## **6. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The work is performed according to the Russian Government Program of Comparative Growth of Kazan Federal University.

## **7. REFERENCES**

Amineva V.R. Phenomenon of border in interliterary dialogues // Journal of Language and Literature. – 2015. – V. 6 (2). – P. 246-249.





- Amineva V.R., Ibragimov M.I., Nagumanova E.F., Khabibullina A.Z.G. Tukay's poetry:  
the aspects of national identity // *XLinguae European Scientific Language  
Journal*. Volume 8. Issue 1, January 2015. P. 79 – 87.
- Bakhtin M.M. *Towards Methodology of Humanities // Aesthetics of Literary Works*. – M.:  
Art, 1986. – P. 381-393.
- Dermend ШИГЫРЬЛӘР = Poems. – Kazan: Tatar Publishing House, 2009. – 160 p.
- Edikhanov I.Zh., Bekmetov R.F. Dostoevsky and East // *Journal of Language and  
Literature*. – 2016. – v. 7 (3). – p. 176–179.
- Finger A. *Comparative literature and interart studies // Companion to Comparative  
Literature, World Literatures, and Comparative Cultural Studies*. – January,  
2014. – P. 124-136.
- Gadamer H.-G. *Truth and Method: Bases of a philosophical hermeneutics*. – M.:  
Progress, 1988. – 704 p.
- Ibragimov M., Kamaliyeva R. Multiplicity of identification in the cycle by  
R. Bukharayev «The agony in the garden» // *Journal of Language and Literature*.  
– 2015. – v. 6 (4). – p. 385 – 387.
- Losev A.F. *The Problem of Variation Functioning of Pictorial Imagery in Fictional Literature //*  
*Literature and Painting*. – L.: *Science. Leningrad Section*, 1982. – P. 31-65.
- Lermontov M.Y. *Writings: in 2 volumes*. – M.: Pravda, 1988. – V.1. – 720 p.
- Panikkar R. Indology as a cross-cultural catalyst (A new task of indological studies:  
cross-cultural fertilisation) // *Numen*. – 1971. – v. 18, № 3. – p. 173–179.
- Pushkin A.S. *Writings: in 3 volumes*. – M.: Fiction, 1987. – V.1. – 735 p.
- Ramiev S.L., Babich Sh.M. *Works*. – Kazan: Magarif, 2005. – 287 p. (in Tatar).
- Rusieshvili-Cartledge M., Dolidze R. Ekphrasis and its multifaceted nature: Ways of its  
usage in literature and cinematography // *International Journal of Literary  
Humanities*, 2015. – №13(3). – p. 1-8.
- Rubins M. *Plastic Pleasure of Beauty (Ekphrasis in Works of Akmeists and European  
Tradition)*. – SP: *Academy Project*, 2003. – 354 p.
- Rubins M. *Crossroad of Arts, Crossroad of Cultures: Ekphrasis in Russian and French  
Poetry*. – New York: *Palgrave*, 2000. – 302 p.



- Sedykh E.V. Towards the Problem of Intermediality: Picturesque in Poetic. 2011.  
URL: <http://elar.urfu.ru/bitstream/10995/26942/1/paverman-02-2014-14.pdf>,  
Free. Verified 14.06.2017.
- Safiullin Y.G. Comparison of Literatures // *The Theory of Literature: The Dictionary for Students.* – Kazan: Kazan University Press, 2010. – P. 97-99.
- Shukurov Sh. About Portraying Prophet Muhammad and the  
Problem of Concealment of Representation of Face in Islamic Medieval Culture //  
*Sufism in the Context of Muslim Culture.* – M.: Science, 1989. – P. 252-267.
- Tan J.Q. Ekphrasis and adaptation: Keats's Grecian Urn in modern American poetry //  
*Foreign Literature Studies*, 2010. – №32 (2). – p. 26-39.
- Urtmintsev M.G. Ekphrasis: Scientific Problem and Methods of its Studying // *Herald of  
N. I. Lobachevsky Nizhny Novgorod University.* – 2010. – № 4(2). – 975-977.
- Yusupova N.M. Symbolization in Tatar Poetry of the Beginning of the Twentieth Century //  
*Herald of the Udmurt University. History and Philology.* – 2014. – Issue 4. – P.  
111-114.