

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE IMAGE OF THE "WOLF" IN LITERARY WORKS

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Abstract: This article provides a comparative analysis of the novella “Ovul Oralagan Bo‘ri” by Normurod Norqobilov and the short story “Lobo” by Ernest Thompson Seton. In both works, the image of the wolf occupies a central place and reflects the complex and often conflicting relationship between humans and nature. In “Ovul Oralagan Bo‘ri,” the wolf’s approach to the village and its confrontation with people reveal human attitudes toward nature, including fear and aggression. In “Lobo,” the wolf is depicted as a symbol of intelligence, leadership, and loyalty, with particular emphasis on its strategic thinking and independent character. The article comparatively examines the plot structure, system of characters, and the ideological and artistic features expressed through the image of the wolf.

Keywords: wolf image, comparative analysis, literary work, human–nature relationship, loyalty, leadership.

Symbolic representations formed in ancient myths, legends, and folklore have been enriched with new artistic interpretations in written literature. In particular, the tradition of expressing human qualities, social relations, and moral criteria through animal images has developed extensively. In this process, the image of the wolf, relying on its ancient mythological roots, has turned into a complex symbol representing various meanings. This aspect is clearly visible in the novellas about Mowgli. In this work created by Rudyard Kipling, wolves are depicted not simply as ordinary predatory animals, but as a community with a clear social system. They live in the form of a “wolf pack” and obey strict rules and laws. This situation is harmonized with ancient totemistic concepts, reminding us of the ancient meaning of the wolf as a symbol of collectivism and order.

In the work, wolf characters manifest in several important symbolic layers. First of all, the character of the mother wolf — Raksha — holds special significance. She protects and cares for Mowgli as if he were her own cub. This motif is directly connected to the idea of “the wolf as a mother and protector” in ancient Turkic and other mythologies. As in the legend of Ashina mentioned above, here too, the wolf is interpreted as a force that saves the life of a human child and raises him.

The second important aspect is the internal order of the wolf community and its adherence to the “law of the jungle.” Through this, the author shows wolves not as disorganized, wild creatures, but as a society with its own moral system. The leader among the wolves — Akela — is a symbol of wisdom, justice, and responsibility. As the one who

manages the pack and makes decisions, he resembles the image of an elder or chief in ancient societies. Furthermore, the wolves serve for Mowgli not only as physical protection, but also as a school of socialization. It is precisely by living among the wolves that he learns the "law of the jungle," that is, he goes through the process of forming as a human being. This shows another symbolic meaning of the wolf image — being a nurturing and guiding force. This aspect also spiritually harmonizes with the ancient legends about the "Blue Wolf" (Ko'k bo'ri). However, the image of the wolf in the work is not interpreted only positively. In some episodes, natural instincts such as strength, the struggle for survival, and competition for leadership are also reflected through young wolves or conflicts within the pack. This reveals the dual nature of the wolf — both as a positive symbol (protector, symbol of collectivism) and as a natural wild force. Consequently, in the stories about Mowgli, the image of the wolf is an artistic continuation of ancient mythological and totemistic views. It is interpreted not only as a predator, but as a symbol of social order, loyalty, protection, and upbringing. Through this, the author loads the image of the wolf with deep philosophical and spiritual meaning.

Crucially, although symbol and allegory are two different phenomena, they are described in the textbook "Introduction to Literary Studies" by N. Shukurov, N. Hotamov, Sh. Kholmatov, and M. Mahmudov as symbol being a type of allegory: "A symbol is one of the types of allegory, and it refers to words and phrases used conditionally to express a life event or concept." Furthermore, Laylo Mirzoxidova, who studied the artistry of allegorical depiction in the 11th-12th centuries, interprets symbol and allegory as the same phenomenon in her research. According to her views, regardless of whether symbols, allegories, metaphors, metonymies, tropes, etc., are described as similar or slightly different based on their formation methods, they are identical from the perspective of essence and function; that is, they are phrases used in a figurative sense other than their literal meaning. Therefore, in artistic literature, transferring words and phrases, things, and events from their original meaning to another meaning is referred to as allegory.

The wolf is one of nature's most loyal and intelligent animals; it is not just a predator, but also a symbol of family devotion, collectivism, and mutual loyalty. In history and literature, many meanings have been attributed to the image of the wolf. Through the symbol of the wolf, writers have also expressed the complex inner world of humanity and the problems of social life. From this point of view, Normurod Norqobilov's novella "Ovul oralagan bo'ri" ("The Wolf that Roamed the Village") and Ernest Seton Thompson's short story "Lobo" allow for a unique comparative analysis of the wolf image.

In Normurod Norqobilov's novella "Ovul oralagan bo'ri," the delicate aspects of the wolf's nature are highlighted. In the work, the events take place in a small village (ovul), reflecting people's attitudes toward wolves. The inner world of the wolf, its similarities to humans, and even feelings of loyalty, devotion, love, and compassion—which are rarely found in humans—are depicted through the character of Cho'ngkalla. The wolf, who is the main protagonist of the novella, expresses the complexities of hunting and village life

through its own life. For instance, the wolf's arrival in the village and its confrontation with humans show that humans put their own interests above nature. Salom Mergan (Salom the Marksman) is one of the central human characters in the work, whose life is closely connected with hunting and nature. The marksman understands nature well and treats it with respect, but his attitude toward wolves is not positive. This is related to his interests as a human being, expressing man's desire to adapt nature to his own interests in the struggle between livestock and wolves.

The wolf is depicted in the work not merely as a predator, but as an integral part of nature and a loyal animal. The wolf's approach to the village signifies that the boundary between man and nature has been breached. He risks his life for his mate, Oqyol, which reveals his courage and self-sacrifice. Salom Mergan views the wolf as a threat and strives to destroy it, but throughout the work, he comes closer to understanding the wolf's unique way of life. This reflects man's capacity to fully comprehend nature. The wolf's attack on the village shows that the balance between man and nature has been disrupted. The characters of Salom Mergan and the wolf are emotionally close to each other. Just as Cho'ngkalla shows courage in protecting his family, Salom Mergan fights with nature to provide for his family. This reflects the similarity in their life goals and perspectives. At the end of the work, the marksman realizes the loyalty the wolf showed for its mate. This expresses the need to restore the balance between man and nature.

Ernest Seton Thompson's work "Lobo," on the other hand, describes the tragic life of Lobo, a huge wolf that lived in the Kurrumpo Valley. Through his being viewed as prey by man and his glorious life, the author glorifies the wolf's heroism, courage, and loyalty. When Lobo's lover, Blanca, dies after falling into a trap, Lobo's entrapment by man due to grief heightens the real-life drama.

The main character in Ernest Seton Thompson's "Lobo"—Lobo—is depicted not merely as a predatory wolf, but as a wise and powerful leader of the pack. His leadership skills are revealed through the main events of the story, and this quality makes the image of Lobo even more sublime. Lobo's pack is always successful in hunting because he uses his intelligence to deceive his enemies and avoid traps. He takes an extremely meticulous approach when planning hunts for his pack. For example, he develops complex strategies to keep his pack out of danger while hunting farmers' sheep or other animals. He skillfully detects and avoids poisoned meat. He gathers poisoned cheese and buries it under his dung. These qualities show Lobo as a majestic leader rather than a typical predator. We see that he is even smarter than the hunters.

Lobo takes responsibility for the safety of his pack. This quality becomes even more prominent, especially in his relationship with his lover, Blanca. When Blanca is captured by hunters, Lobo strives to save her. This shows not only his loyalty to the members of his pack, but also his responsibility toward them as a leader. Lobo's leadership capacity is also manifested in his courage and determination. He fights fiercely against the traps set by the hunters and risks his life for his pack until the very end. These aspects show that he is not

only a strong manager but also loyal and brave to his pack. Lobo used many tactics that amazed and distracted the hunters. For instance, his ability to escape traps or his pre-planning of the time and place of attacks on the hunters' livestock represents his ability to control his enemies. Lobo's leadership traits reveal the similarities between human and animal life values in the work. The author created the character of Lobo not just as a part of nature, but as a hero distinguished by leadership qualities and communication skills in pack management. Through this, Thompson urges the reader to understand the complex social relations within the world of wolves.

In both works, different approaches to the image of the wolf are observed. While Norqobilov depicts the wolf as a bridge between nature and humans, Thompson portrays the wolf as a strong personality. In Norqobilov's novella, it is emphasized that people are destroying nature for their own benefit, while wolves are fighting to save their lives. In Thompson's work, the loyalty and heroism of the wolf are glorified to the highest degree. The wolf in both works is considered an "arloni," meaning the leader of the pack. This shows that both characters stand out from other wolves due to their size and strength. Wolves are loyal to their mates and family-oriented. They try to protect them even when dying. We can see proof of this statement in both works. The elusive Lobo falls into a trap and perishes while trying to save his mate. The hunter who trapped him admires the wolf's loyalty and buries Lobo and Blanca together. Cho'ngkalla also comes to the village looking for his mate and is shot dead by humans. However, Salom Mergan acknowledges the wolf's greatness. Showing respect to its corpse, he digs the ground and buries it without skinning it. The marksman acknowledges the wolf and its loyalty. The names of the female wolves in the works (Blanca means pure white or white in Spanish) as well as their character traits are similar to each other. By character, both female wolves are depicted as stubborn yet naive, to the extent that they can freely show anger or sulk at their mates, whom other wolves fear. It was precisely this disposition that led them into the trap.

In conclusion, it is worth saying that the wolf is an image that has been used in our literature for many years, serving as an effective symbol for reflecting the inner experiences of humanity. The wolf images in the works of Normurod Norqobilov and Ernest Seton Thompson reveal the authors' perspectives on the balance between nature and man. Both works remind the reader of the mutual need of nature and man, as well as their responsibility toward one each other.

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