



## The Description of a Symbolic Habitat in a Novel

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### ABSTRACT

*This article discusses the poetico-functional importance of symbolic habitat in the novel "Plato" by Omon Mukhtor.*

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### INTRODUCTION

It is known from the world literature that the art of word has changed sometimes slowly, sometimes fast but never faced up sharp changes as in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It is interesting that at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, especially in the twentieth in our literature there was a strong willingness to novelty and serious researches on this way. Unfortunately, for some reasons they were not fully formed. By the end of the 80<sup>th</sup> close to the Independence, when the barriers were taken away, a new untraditional modern way of expression appeared intensely. It was the result of not someone's wish or pretending to Western literature, but it was natural live inner necessity. At the end of the century real Uzbek poets tried to occupy the opportunities missed during the century. Omon Mukhtor's novels written during this short period, especially, the novel "Plato" was also the result of those attempts and necessity.

### DISCUSSION

The means of human's imagination and thought is boundless. The writer leads his/her characters to this

boundary covering the struggle of emotions, memories and conscience with literal clothing and raising his/her literal characters to the degree of a traveler of limitless places and time. In the novel the time and place differing through centuries connects the reality, the chrono-topic distance between today and past withdraws. The depiction of unreal situations given by symbolic means in the text of the novel such as road, dessert, well, city, particularly, expressed by the thoughts of the main character Usman, his wandering between past and present, historical realities revealed through this process. Thus the character of Usman can be identified as a key for revealing the truth concerning Rauf's life and fate. Mysterious question concerning Rauf's fate is unraveled by three generation ; brother Said, Usman's father who loses a chest with Rauf's writings, Usman, who is strolling down in different imaginary places to find the lost chest, and Rauf's son Sobir, who finds the chest and delivers the stories about Rauf's adventures to people.

The author's way of writing of this novel is especially notable. At the beginning of the novel he misleads the readers as well as the characters of the novel. His characters and readers by the authors' wish wanders sometimes in the isolated deserts, sometimes in dreams, sometimes in reality, sometimes on the ground; sometimes underground (a well). As if the author's purpose is not to create a novel depicting the destiny of a person, but just to put some notes on a piece of paper. There are quite many ways reminding modernistic way of writing in the novel, such as accidental ideas not connected with the plot of the novel and contradictory events and conclusions connected with the characters' adventure. This process gets into its paths by the end of the novel. The author gets the characters of the novel and the readers whom he misled earlier out of the maze himself.

In literature, chronotop, including, expression of literal place in such way is considered as a new method. M.Bakhtin, who studied the matter of the connection of time and place thoroughly, used Greek adventure novels as a basis for his researches. As he claims, in this kind of novels one can face up a chronotop which is worked out deeply from different sides.<sup>1</sup> The necessity of events happening in the novel in an amusing way opens ways to the different expressions of the chronotop in Greek adventure novels as the nature of adventure novels demands various dramatic conditions connected with the notion of time and place. In Greek adventure novels the characters' time spent in a day or at night, at home or on the road, at exile or in prison, at war or at the time of the fulfillments of their dreams, in happiness, moments, hours, weeks, months and years are expressed so systematically that proves Bakhtins claims. Yet, in the novel "Plato", especially, in the extracts connected with Usman depicting the notion of time and place, we can not observe such reality and succession. Thus investigation of the depiction of the notion of time and place in the novel demands a certain approach.

The adventures of Usman's thoughts among imaginary places take almost one of three parts of the novel. The following events starts like this:

"At last, Usman sets off to see Rukhsora.

(Chu, my steed, with golden mane,

Chu, where is my happy refuge?!)

He doesn't understand..... if the people on the way joined him or he joined them?!

There are many riders of horses and camels. Passers-by are more than them. Sometimes a cart can also be seen. Everybody is lumbering towards the rising morning sun as well as Usman. The whole caravan!

The people are moving towards the well hardly and feebly through saxaul, the tamarisk and red thorn bushes, spread on the hills. (p 11)

The road described in the novel is life, spinning wheel of life. The life, indeed, does not cross smoothly. It is full of the time of hardships like a dessert with saxaul and thorn bushes. Everybody lives to satisfy his/her needs in life. Water described in the novel is the symbol of such demand. As people are different in this life, their needs are also different. Someone is in need of wealth; others are taking care of others, helping them. Usman is an example of the latter. That's why Usman manages to get water as he comes to this dessert not to satisfy his thirstiness but to help others to get rid of their need for drinking water. Throughout the novel one can come across the depiction of the step, road and thirsty caravan several times. Every time Usman can get water from the well. The symbol of the well has also got its significant role in the text of the novel. It is a symbol of the history of ancient Bukhara, the spiritual food of the nation, as beneath of the well Usman comes across the history, talks with his already passed away father and his companions, wanders through ancient city, looks for a book in the "land of intellectuals". Yet, during the revolution the pages of the book were darkened on purpose, "the well" has also dried out. It is known that ideology of that time blamed us and threw at our national history stones in order to get a certain degree in their lives. In the novel Usman symbolized those three people who got into the well with their feet with heads torn off, with body torn up and who got shot and died. The well is the symbol of those who used their positions for their own benefits. Those people are convicted to suffer from thirstiness! They dried up many rivers, seas.... The ground is in chaos. Don't feel sorry for them... They destroyed themselves." (p 14).

To respect past is Usman's main spiritual duty as he is the son of this nation, this land. Moreover, his job duty demands him this. ( But in the novel it is only said that he was just a scientist, but analysis of former chapters we proved that he was historian.) Thus he gets into the well with his head, not with his feet. (Surround the copper bowl "why did you come with your head" they were interested. "To come with feet would be disrespect for you" (p 14).

The travel of the main character to unreal place remind the "must" motive of Uzbek folk tales. In folktales by the tricks of a step mother or dishonest minister a hero sent to bring a mysterious object is put another condition. This continues as a chain. In the novel Usman gets into the well to find Rukhsora and to get water for thirsty people but people in the well tell him to find Rauf in order to get water from the well. Such motives concerning the notion of a place can be found in the novel many times. So, Usman throws a coin into the well to see the picture of Rauf.

"The water starts boiling....

The, there appears three images in the lake

Out of them one is a slim man wearing a robe, a turban on the head with a beard

The other is a handsome man with black suit, a tie, with calm shaven face and big eyes, The last one is messy worn with pale face, sad eyes middle height slim man

All three men reflected in the water is Rauf (p 33). The reflections given in the water gives information to the reader of Fitrat's life from different stages. That firstly, he is as an active member of "Young Bukharians", later as a statesman of the Republic of Bukhara, and finally, the one who is imprisoned as "nations enemy".

One macro places depicted in Usman's imaginary world is a city-land underground. Initially, when the

hero comes here to look for Rauf the palace is depicted as following: “The city-land is new; there is not any mosque or madrassah, or ancient building. The buildings are tall and majestic with clean surroundings....

But surprisingly, though there are many invisible lights and chandeliers, the place is dark. (p 19). Although there words such as “clean”, “majestic”, only the word “dark” gives us different understanding of the passage. Through his depiction, the reader can easily realize that Bukhara which was once the center of East culture, the capital of the country now is turned into darkness, which means deprived from its independence and history. Seeing Rauf’s reflection in this lake, he finds him in his son’s Sobir’s symbol. Later, when he gets underground to find Rauf’s chest, the same city is depicted in different way: “The city-land is old, about thousand years. Many mosques and madrassah, palaces, caravan houses, bazaars...

Different from previous description:

Many people. “This time he himself (Usman) comes across the city-land with full of lights ” (p 83).

The author compares this city with the city of intellectuals as Forobiy states. Usman finds here that chest with writings left by Rauf, lost by his father aka Said.

In the novel among symbolic personages there are also some women characters. At the beginning of the novel on page 5 there is “very charming, majestic woman dressed in white” who predicts Socrates’ death. To open literal personage Usman there is also a woman character, Rukhsora, plays a great role. In fact, the novel’s main knot is given by this character, Rukhsora, as Usman’s actions in the novel is built on his motives to look for Rukhsora. First, Rukhsora is described abstractly in the novel, but later it gets more realistic. In fact, Rukhsora is Usman’s father - Said’s “beshikkerti” (fiancée appointed from her birth). Yet, after she joins her aunt singer and takes part in the feast at the king’s palace, the king’s mother Eshonoyim forces her stay at the citadel for the king’s service. After this event, Rukhsora’s fate in her real life remains unknown. In order to find her, Usman talks with her in his imagination. The interesting thing is that Rukhsora, plays the role of not a simple 11-year-old girl, who is left in unreal place, but she is like a lighthouse, strength which calls upon the main character for goodness. Though in the novel it is spoken much about Rukhsora, Usman meets her only once, in the imaginary place – in a desert and talks. “You are behind the people”, says Rukhsora. ( She doesn’t say the caravan). “I served them, I got water for them. I am not able to carry everyone in my hands in this desert”, murmurs Usman to justify himself. “You are changed. Before you were eager to help people”, says Rukhsora. Thinking a bit, she adds, “You haven’t found Rauf. We can’t meet until you have found him.” Saying this, Rukhsora disappears either to the sandy hills or flies like a feather. [3, pp.36-37]

It is surprising that though they know Rukhsora is their father’s fiancée, both Usman and Sobir treat her like their beloved. It can obviously be seen from this extract:

“My heart is heated by fire,

Did I keep myself for him?!

I waited for you impatiently,

For weeks, months and years...

But you are so proud and free

With amazing thoughts

Every step is hundred gust

Yet free of a game..." [3, pp.11]

From this extract it can be understood that in the imaginary place Rukhsora is loaded with a literal burden. In this life there is the only concept which can be regarded both as a mother and beloved girl. This is motherland. That is to say, Rukhsora in the novel is meant to be motherland. Her being forced to stay at the king's service, Usman's looking for her, putting the condition of finding Rauf in order to meet with Rukhsora makes us come to this conclusion. Furthermore, there are some other women characters in the novel such as Mavjuda and the symbol of Hur Qiz who are absorbed by this idea.

In this way the symbols in the novel are revealed. In the literal area of the novel Rauf(Usman) is the symbol of devotion, thirst for independence, Rauf's chest is a symbol of national self-awareness, Rukhsora( Mavjuda, Hur qiz) is the symbol of country's independence. Owing to Rauf's followers such as Usman (also Sobir who is brought up in a Russian way, supported Russians and served in their Army) the nation later brought their motherland to the Independence. The remnants left after attackers (who came to find wealth) on the suburbs of the city are the symbol of the wound after the oppression.

Such thoughts in the characters' mind remind us "the flow of the mind" from modernism. Irish writer J. Joyce was the founder of the trend modernism and in the novels of this trend the events which are the result of the author's literal creation is depicted through the characters' memory. The flights of the memory, imagination which are based on the real events are not limited. This imagination is constantly moved into the character's spirit and a certain "area of the mind" appears as a result.

"In modern literature there is not a demand for coincidence of objective reality, claims Norwegian writer D. Sulstad. –Modern novel cannot be demanded to be realistic. A novel can be realistic or not. It doesn't play any role. Yet, there is a demand for importance. For instance, if there is mentioned a word "stool" in the novel, the word bears the task of organizing the structure of the novel, the meaning of this word intentionally given as a whole thing, that is, the word itself it stops to be surrounding, motion or character. There is created such a wholeness that some of its parts has a meaning in this wholeness and if some elements is unsuccessful, the wholeness splits up. Such literal text is always in motion. The reason is not that the interest for subjective thing is in the first place, but it is the independence of the motion and its development, the appearance of subjective world and life are always together. Most novels in the style of modernism are so meaningful or consist of essential prose. [1, pp. 373]

So, Omon Mukhtor's work "Plato" is a complete type of modern literature with its untraditional description of micro places and a certain structure of the plot.

In general, this method is initial in most of Omon Mukhtor's works. For example, in his novel "Square" he describes the tragedy of people who are lost in the habitation of goodness and the dessert of evil. The author's purpose is to narrate about the memory and feelings deep in the people's heart, about the people who are wandering between evil and awareness. Such description of symbolic places appears throughout the novels "Thousand faces", "A person in front of the mirror".

For instance, in the first part of the novel "Thousand one faces" there are some episodes where Abdulla Hakim's adventures in the next world is described, that is, despite he has made few mistakes in his life, his sufferings in the hell symbolizes that a person is responsible for each deed he or she

has done in life.

In the second part of the novel because of a strong storm a sudden movement of the nine-stored building to another place without harming anyone inside, who continue sending reports and orders to other workplaces, reveals the real faces of the people who are careerists in life.

In the novel “A man in front of the mirror” there is also given a literal analysis of a person’s feelings by the description of a habitat surrounded with imaginary fantastic events. The main character of the novel Valijon retells amusing events from his own life and it attracts readers’ attention with its adventure stories. The main incident which interests the main character is the mysterious death of a nature lover teacher Siroj and a pilot Badalbek who spills poison in the fields. The death of these two enemies during the disaster hugging each other is more interesting. The matter is that the main character meets teacher Siroj sitting at the teahouse in the suburb of the city and reading a newspaper after they have buried him in the graveyard with honor and respect. Moreover, in the basement of the house of a beautiful girl whom he falls in love and her aunt there is another teacher Siroj lying sick...

## RESULTS

Omon Mukhtor’s novel “A slum on the hill” analyzing the traditions of society and social surrounding which turns honest person into dishonest one, also contains reality and thoughts, mysterious incidents, scenes which are beyond a person’s understanding, different time and place mixed with each other and this challenges make people think actively opening eyes of one’s heart. A famous literary critic U. Normatov interprets it in the following way: “In Omon Mukhtor’s series of novels there are many qualities reminding us examples of the world modern literature. There is not a concept of real time and place in them which is traditional for realism, there is also not a description of events as in reality, revealing characters’ psychology under the realistic concepts, reality and thoughts, dreams are mixed up, that is, the events happen not in real life but in the thoughts of the character where there is created a literal model of life; mysterious world mixes up with reality and thoughts; the boundary between this and next life disappears; the alive turn into the dead; the spirit leaves the body and examine each other; the dead get into contact with the alive and people from different centuries come across with each other. [4, pp. 4]

## CONCLUSION

As the scientist emphasizes, above mentioned things in the chronotop supply the structural wholeness of the novel. Especially, imaginary habitats in the novel play a great role and by revealing the symbolic keys the creative purpose of the writer gets clear.

Moreover, such approach, which is unusual for depiction of a habitat in traditional writing, supplies the superiority of the method in modernism, as well as strengthening the originality and literal value of the novel. Omon Mukhtor’s short but rich with symbolism novels create foundation for a new approach in writing novels.

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