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ANALYSIS OF EXISTENCE, EXISTENTIAL, AND AXIOLOGICAL LAYERS IN ALEKSANDR FAYNBERG'S POEM "QABRISTONGA BORDIM, QISH - BAHOR EMAS..."

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Annotation

This study provides a comprehensive analysis of the poem by Aleksandr Faynberg from the perspectives of ontological poetics, existential philosophy, symbolic-semantic structure, and axiological interpretation. Within the framework of the research, the cemetery space is examined as a liminal zone; the month of November is interpreted as a temporal nodal point; the metaphors of snow and the scarf are analyzed as mechanisms of symbolic transformation; and the image of the mother is explored as both an archetypal and axiological center of the text. Particular attention is devoted to structural devices such as repetition, parallelism, contrast, and semantic symmetry. As a result, despite its concise form, the poem is substantiated as a multilayered poetic system that embodies complex ontological and existential meanings.

Keywords

ontological space, liminal zone, temporal cyclicity, November motif, mother archetype, symbolic transformation, existential poetics, axiological center, lyrical subject, memory phenomenon.

Introduction.

The poetry of Aleksandr Faynberg occupies a distinctive place in Uzbek literary discourse due to its philosophical lyricism, psychological introspection, and sustained ontological inquiry. In the poet's creative work, questions concerning the human position within existence, the relentless flow of time, and the motifs of memory and loss emerge as central thematic concerns (Quronov, 2010).

Although the poem under analysis is concise in form, it demonstrates a high degree of semantic density. Each image functions on multiple levels of meaning. Through external descriptive elements, the text reveals profound internal emotional states. The depiction of winter and the month of November conveys an existential atmosphere characterized by coldness, solitude, and sorrow.

The relevance of this research lies in the fact that the poem raises the problem of the unity of life and death through the image of the mother. This thematic convergence presents significant scholarly interest from the perspective of ontological poetics, as it reveals the philosophical depth embedded within the lyrical structure of the text.

Cemetery — liminal ontological space and the boundary of existence

The poem opens with the line "I went to the cemetery," where the verb of motion immediately signifies an ontological shift. This "going" is not merely a physical, geographical movement but an inward, psychological journey. Within the cultural-semiotic system, the

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cemetery is interpreted as a liminal space. As Yu.M. Lotman notes, liminal spaces in texts generate points of semantic tension and connect opposing worlds (Lotman, 1992).

The cemetery functions as a metaphysical zone situated between life and non-existence, memory and forgetting, body and spirit. Here, time is not linear; rather, it manifests in a condensed form. As the lyrical subject approaches the cemetery, they are in effect approaching the limits of their own existence.

The mention of the winter season enhances the ontological sense of coldness. Winter represents the suspension of life processes and the retreat of nature into inner stillness. The negation “not spring” serves as a refusal of hope. Together, these two layers of negation (winter + not spring) indicate the absence of warmth in existence.

Thus, from the very first line, the poem establishes a metaphysical stage in which the human subject perceives their ontological state.

Winter–spring antithesis and mytho-poetic opposition

The line “Winter is not spring” presents more than a seasonal contrast; it embodies a mytho-poetic dualism. In ancient mythology, spring symbolizes rebirth, renewal, and divine grace. Winter, in contrast, signifies the approach of death, coldness, and stillness.

The negation of spring represents the impossibility of psychological renewal. For the lyrical subject, the natural cycle of life appears to have halted. This existential “break” resembles what M. Heidegger defines as a “liminal situation” (Heidegger, 1927).

The power of this antithesis lies in the fact that spring is mentioned but absent. This absence evokes the drama of longing for a hope that does not exist.

“The wind of measure” — metaphor of ethical self-assessment

The line “A wind of measure blew upon my heart” carries a complex semantic layer. The term “measure” (mezon) signifies a standard, a scale, or a symbol of justice. The wind, in turn, is invisible yet perceptible.

This metaphor conveys an internal judgment process: the lyrical hero seems to weigh their life against an internal standard. The wind striking the heart represents emotional agitation, existential anxiety, and introspective self-examination.

Here, an external natural phenomenon is transformed into an ethical and psychological process. The wind acts as psychological pressure, while the measure functions as moral evaluation.

Snow and scarf: from cosmic to personal

“Osmondan yog‘ayotgan oppoq qor emas,

Onamning bor-yo‘g‘i bitta ro‘moli.”

These lines exemplify poetic transformation. Snow—originally cosmic and universal—is negated and transformed into the mother’s scarf, a personal and intimate object. This represents the movement from the universal to the individual: snow is global, whereas the scarf is subjective memory. The whiteness unites both images.

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In Eastern cultural contexts, the scarf symbolizes a mother's love, purity, and protection (Rahmonov, 2006). The phrase "the only one" emphasizes the irreversibility of loss. The scarf thus becomes both a mnemonic and an emotional anchor, bridging the cosmic and the personal.

The mother archetype and metaphysical center: from the individual to universality

The semantic core of the poem is the image of the mother. However, this image does not remain solely at the level of biographical or personal memory; it is elevated to an archetypal scale. According to C.G. Jung's theory of archetypes, the figure of the mother represents a universal image residing in the collective unconscious, signifying the source of life, protection, love, and beginnings (Jung, 1964).

In the poem, the mother is not depicted directly; her presence is mediated through the scarf. This mediated representation enhances poetic subtlety: it is not the mother herself, but her scarf—the trace, memory, or sign she leaves behind—that is articulated. This indicates the depth of ontological loss: the person is gone, but the symbol remains.

The whiteness of the scarf aligns the mother with cosmic purity. Snow falls from the sky, while the scarf appears to merge with it. Here, the mother becomes the metaphysical center of the poem, positioned contrapuntally against the cemetery (the end) as the point of origin of existence.

The paymona image and sufistic-semantic layer

The line "It was my birthday, my paymona was filled" introduces a significant semantic pivot. The "paymona" is not a casual image. In Eastern poetics, paymona often serves as a measure of internal states—whether it be a measure of love, patience, guilt, or spiritual endurance.

The "filling" of the paymona has a dual meaning:

1. The internal torment has reached its limit.
2. Emotional and spiritual culmination.

Although a birthday is traditionally a day of personal joy, in the poem this day coincides with mourning. Consequently, the axiological interpretation of time is altered: a day of celebration becomes a day of existential distress.

A paradox arises: the beginning of life (birthday) is intertwined with the memory of death. Time ceases to be linear, acquiring an existential density.

The paymona image heightens the poem's internal drama, symbolizing invisible psychic pressure and the weight of unspoken emotions.

November — temporal liminality and metaphysical value of time

November is repeated twice within the poem, and this repetition reinforces its role as a temporal anchor.

November, the last month of autumn and the threshold of winter, represents a transitional phase. Transition inherently conveys instability, uncertainty, and liminality. If the space at the beginning of the poem (cemetery) is liminal, here time itself becomes liminal (November).

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M. Heidegger interprets time as the primary measure of human existence (Heidegger, 1927). Humans experience time fully when they acknowledge their mortality. In this poem, November functions as precisely such a point of existential awareness.

November represents:

1. The month of the mother's birth.
2. The time associated with the mother's passing.

The point of inner transformation for the lyrical subject.

Thus, November ceases to be a chronological marker and becomes an ontological dimension of time.

Cyclical ontology and existential paradox

“In November my mother came into the world,

In November, alas, I saw the world...”

These two lines are based on semantic symmetry. The first line signifies beginning, the second line signifies end. Yet both occupy the same temporal coordinate.

This illustrates cyclical ontology. Life and death are not opposites but rather two phases of a single process.

Existential philosophy emphasizes that human beings comprehend the essence of existence through the awareness of their own mortality. In the poem, this awareness is not merely personal; it is tied to the mother.

November of the mother's birth signifies the beginning of life. November of her death marks the end of existence. The lyrical subject stands between these two points.

Consequently, time forms a loop—a cyclical structure that unites metaphysical harmony with tragic beauty.

Compositional architectonics and semantic density

Although the poem is minimal in volume, its internal architectonics is structurally complex and conceptually saturated. The compositional organization is based on a system of semantic parallels and reflective correspondences that generate inner cohesion. The poem demonstrates a carefully constructed symmetry in which each image echoes and refracts another, forming an integrated ontological structure.

The following compositional parallels can be identified:

Opening Segment	Closing Segment
Cemetery	November
Winter	Death
Snow	Mother's scarf

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Birthday	“Evoh” (existential cry)
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his symmetrical arrangement creates an internal balance that intensifies the poem’s philosophical resonance. The cemetery as a spatial boundary at the beginning finds its temporal counterpart in November at the end. Winter as a seasonal metaphor corresponds to death as an existential reality. Snow transforms into the mother’s scarf, shifting from a natural phenomenon to a deeply personal mnemonic symbol. Finally, the birthday—traditionally associated with joy—is counterbalanced by the interjection “Evoh,” which condenses grief, realization, and existential acknowledgment.

Such structural mirroring produces semantic density. The poem operates according to the principle of poetic economy: minimal lexical material carries maximal conceptual weight. There are no superfluous descriptive elements; every image is functionally necessary within the semantic system. Each metaphor is interconnected, forming a compact yet multidimensional poetic microstructure.

From the perspective of structural poetics (Lotman, 1992), this symmetry is not merely aesthetic but meaning-generating. The internal parallels transform the poem into a closed semantic field where spatial, temporal, and emotional categories interact dynamically. The result is a lyrical miniature that encapsulates an entire ontological cycle within a compressed textual space.

Thus, the poem may be interpreted as an ontological miniature: a tightly organized poetic construct in which compositional symmetry reinforces existential meaning and emotional culmination.

“Evoh” — existential acknowledgment and poetic culmination

The interjection “Evoh” constitutes the emotional and semantic climax of the entire text. This single word encapsulates the inner torment of the lyrical subject.

This exclamation conveys:

1. Regret and sorrow.
2. Acceptance of reality.
3. Recognition and acknowledgment of pain.

The poem concludes precisely with this utterance, forming an open-ended closure. The lyrical subject does not deny suffering nor attempt to escape it; instead, they confront and accept it.

Thus, the poem ends not in existential resignation but in conscious acknowledgment, signifying a deliberate, reflective engagement with the experience of loss.

Conclusion.

Aleksandr Faynberg’s poem represents a sophisticated poetic system that unites ontological, axiological, and existential layers. The cemetery embodies spatial liminality, November signifies temporal liminality, the scarf functions as a mnemonic symbol, and the mother serves as the metaphysical center.

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The poem expresses the fundamental paradox of human existence—the coexistence of birth and death within a single temporal frame—through poetic minimalism. Time is not linear but interpreted as a circular loop.

Consequently, the text demonstrates the centrality of temporal perception, memory, and loss within Faynberg's poetics. It stands as a vivid example of ontological lyricism, combining emotional depth with metaphysical and symbolic sophistication.

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